

HYPER

39

GAMES REVIEWED



ABE

Still the king of
platform adventure

ABE'S EXODDUS

This year's unreal killer...

HALF-LIFE

Taking PC action shooters to another level

> PLUS

- Shogo MAD
- Grim Fandango
- TOCA 2
- European Air War
- Body Harvest
- Extreme G-2
- Cool Boarders 3

WIPEOUT 64

The long awaited N64 futuristic racing game



WIN!

TUROK 2, EXTREME G 2

& A YEARS SUPPLY OF JOLT

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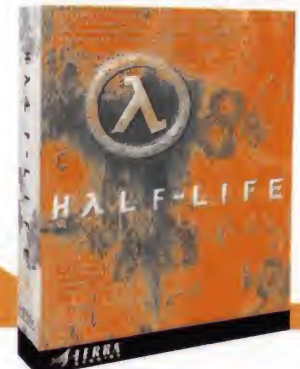
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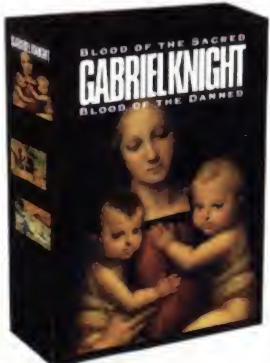
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EDITORIAL

At last, a lineup of games and news that truly herald the arrival of the Christmas season. If you can't find a game in this issue that you'd enjoy, then you need a good smack up the head! Flight sims, first person shooters, sports games, platform games, RPGs, space shooters, strategy games, racing games, and adventure games all in one month.



Besides the awesome horde of killer games this month. We've also started two new regular sections of Hyper, up towards the back of the magazine. Multiplayer is going to be where we cover all sorts of gaming leagues and competitions around the country, whether they be PC or console based. Retrospect is our other new section, looking at things that aren't new. We plan to look at both old classics so we can all sit around sighing happily about "the good ol' days", and so new gamers can see where it's all come from. There will also be updates on recent releases which would change our opinion of the game since our review, so if some game gets patched, and goes from being bad to good... we'll let you know.

Besides Half Life, which has still got me bouncing around madly waiting for a release so I can start playing people online, the thing that really excited me this issue was a video I saw of Virtua Fighter 3 on the Dreamcast. Put simply, it looked like a perfect translation of the arcade game, and Sega Rally 2 also looked astounding. At this stage the release date for the Dreamcast in Australia has not been confirmed but it should be some time between April and August.

With all these awesome games... and a whole lot more next issue... and the Japanese launch of the Dreamcast just weeks away... now is a good time to be a gamer.

Dan

REGULARS

10 News

Report on the Tokyo Game show where the Dreamcast has made its debut. Confirmed Dreamcast release list. South Park 64. Dan and Lara talk about hair care, and more!



Win Turok 2, Extreme G2 and a years supply of JOLT

17 Win Win Win

Check out the SUPER prizes available for both subscribers and regular comps alike..

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Dirty Pair Flash

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Half Life

Vavle's stunning work on Half Life is hard to fault. Four page review on the best game of '98.

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The much loved Psygnosis futuristic racing game comes to the N64. Full review.



100 The dawn of fighting games

Ever wondered where fighting games came from? Discover the wonders of the ancient game... Karate Champ.



36 How to choose your 3D card

A no-nonsense summary of what card is best for people in various situations.



"The solid control, incredible graphics and unique gameplay experience make Tenchu one of the sleeper games of the year."

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DREAMCAST LATEST



As you read the words on this page, chances are Japanese Gamers are queuing up to buy their very own Sega Dreamcast. With the official release date slipping a week to November 27, Sega have been diligent with ensuring that there would be enough consoles manufactured to meet the outrageous retail demands. The delay was possibly also engineered to give Sega's in-house development teams that little bit of extra time to tweak Virtua Fighter 3: Team Battle and Sega Rally 2 which should be available straight off the bat - arcade perfect and all.

MORE SEGA GAMES

Though possibly not ready for the Dreamcast launch, Sega are working on a fantastic looking action/adventure called Blue Stinger. From what can be determined from screen shots, the game looks similar in style to the Resident Evil series. Apparently, the story goes a little like this... thanks to an earthquake in Mexico, a new islands pops up off the Yucatan Peninsular. Government authorities go check it out and end up building a secret research facility there. Seventeen years later, weird stuff starts happening, so a special elite squad is sent in to check out what's happening.

Sounds very Resident Evil, but who cares if the game rocks hard. Certainly, looking at the screen shots makes you wanna pre-order your Dreamcast NOW! This looks hot! Oh, did I mention that the hero's name is Eliot? Cool.

CONSOLE EMAIL

One of the funky Dreamcast features to look forward to, is Dream Flyer. This is basically a program that will allow you to send and receive email all around the world using your Dreamcast console with it's 33.6k modem! You can even place sweet little animations into your mail... Awww....

Top: The Nephilim from Blue Stinger.
Above: Serious firepower!
Left: It'd be hard to miss wouldn't it... the hero with a rocket launcher.
This game looks just like a cartoon!

A new Dreamcast game or port is announced virtually every day, and currently the following games are in development for the "looking-better-all-the-time" console...

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Agartha | Grandia | Monster Breed |
| Akolyte | Gutherman | Rampage World Tour |
| Blood Bullet: House of the Dead | Half-life | Rayman 2 |
| Gaiden | Harley-Davidson | Red Dog |
| Blue Stinger | House of the Dead 2 | Resident Evil 4 |
| Burning Rangers 2 | Incoming | Sega Rally 2 |
| Cho Hamaru Golf | Let's Make a Pro Baseball Team | Senguko Turb |
| Climax Landers | Let's Make a Pro Soccer Club | Seventh Cross |
| D2 | Looney Toons | Street Fighter III: Second Impact |
| Daytona USA 2 | The Lost World: Jurassic Park | Sonic Adventure |
| D-Jump | Marvel vs Capcom | Sonic/Knuckles RPG |
| Drakan | Mercurius Pretty | Speed Busters |
| Elemental Gimmick Gear | Messiah | Turok 2 |
| Evolution | Metropolis | Unreal |
| Fighting Vipers 2 | Monaco Grand Prix Racing | Virtua Fighter 3: Team Battle |
| Furballs | Simulation | Virtua Fighter RPG |
| Galleon | NBA Action 2000 | Virtua Striker 2 |
| Godzilla Generations | NFL Blitz | Warzone 2100 |



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RADICA:



SOUTHPARK 64

The Nintendo 64 Southpark game is closer to completion and should hopefully be available around Christmas. All the characters from the show will be playable, in your race to curtail Southpark's turkey population which has gone nuts due to a strange comet approaching Earth. Weapons include a Cow Launcher, a Fart Doll and an Auto Egger, and rumours have it that Kenny's face will be revealed! As can be expected, the game will be packed with soundclips from the show, and a multiplayer mode will let you get medieval on Mr. Garrison, Terrence and Phillip and Mephisto. Some of the multiplayer modes include Capture the Flag and Kick the Baby, whilst the single player game is spread over six episode-based missions. All the characters are fully 3D, unlike their 2D TV counterparts, and they actually look really, really good! It seems like an M rating is inevitable. Kick Ass!



When Dan met Lara . . .

After meeting up, Lara and Dan struck a deal to get him to be the official stunt double for the upcoming Tomb Raider movie on account of his hair. Although Dan is consulting his stylist on whether or not he can claim a fake tan and a breast job as a tax deduction. (only one of those pony tails are real... guess which!)

Competition Winners

Booty comin' atcha!

TENCHU
Kim Greaves, NSW
Steve Barrett, SA
Veronica Kirkham, Qld
Kayla Guner, NSW
J. Evans, NSW

SPYRO
First Prize: Natalie Kelly, WA
Kenny Baker, WA
Travis Fong, Vic
Craig Skelton, NSW
Minh Bui, WA

QUAKE 2: GROUND ZERO
Arron Hayden, NSW
Jasper Ghent, NSW
Charlie Scudamore, WA
Tim Baker, NSW

Tracey Clarke, SA
OZISOFT GAMES
Mat Brady, Qld
William Barnes, Qld
Adam Bennett, WA

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Ultimate Fight
For Justice,
There is
no Rival

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14 Brand new playable characters

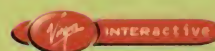
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AUTUMN TOKYO GAME SHOW '98

The Dreamcast makes it's real debut and does not disappoint



It's game show time again, and this time the Hyper crew heads to Japan, for the bi-annual Autumn Tokyo Game Show. With a certain new hardware launch looming, in Japan at least, the excitement mounts well before entering the huge Makuhari Messe hall where the show was taking place. In fact, right from the show bags at the local train station on the way to the show, we were seeing orange. Dreamcast orange, that is! With \$100 million dedicated to each of the major launch territories for pre-launch marketing, Sega made sure that they wouldn't be missed, by anybody. Inside the hall, and one guess who had the largest (and orange-est) booth, and where everyone headed first!

Sonic Adventure was the premier showcase of the Dreamcast. It was probably by far the most anticipated game of the show, and it didn't disappoint. Zipping through the city-based level was truly mind-boggling. The speed of the game, an astonishingly high frame rate, some of the best visuals you are ever likely to see, and that trademark Sonic gameplay are sure to amount to one of Sega's best ever sellers on release. The second playable level, a race down a mountainside between Sonic and Tales, further showcases the Dreamcast's potential, with an awesome avalanche effect. The Dreamcast's

controller felt great, with a comfortable and ergonomic all round design, which was likened by all gamers.

A long cue gathered behind one of Sega's flagship arcade conversions, Virtua Fighter 3: Team Battle. And the almost finished Dreamcast version was about as arcade perfect as its going to get, without popping in the coins.

Strangely absent from the Dreamcast's playable game list was Sega Rally 2, only shown in video form. Looking well below par when compared with its arcade counterpart, and sporting some very noticeable pop-up, it's very likely that Sega pulled the playable product in a marketing decision. It would be strange for this game to be

this far back, with a launch only 6 weeks away.

Sony were showing off their PDA, the now re-named PocketStation, hanging off the necks of Sony Staff, but none were available for the eager public and journalists to fiddle with. The most notable of over 30 titles announced to be compatible with the PocketStation included Street Fighter Alpha 3, Final Fantasy VIII and Crash 3. Apart from the PocketStation and Crash Bandicoot 3, there was little else of note at a low-key Sony booth. But thanks to their strong 3rd party showing, there weren't many places to go without the presence of a PlayStation.

SNK's Neo Geo Pocket handheld made a memorable showing, **(continued next page)**

Charts

Charts kindly supplied by Hitech World

PLAYSTATION

1. Tekken 3
2. C&C: Retaliation
3. Medieval
4. Colin McRae Rally
5. Gran Turismo
6. WWF Warzone
7. Crash Bandicoot 3
8. Street Fighter Collection
9. Final Fantasy VII
10. Point Blank

NINTENDO 64

1. Goldeneye 007
2. Mario Kart
3. F-1 World Grand Prix
4. Banjo Kazooie
5. WWF Warzone
6. Diddy Kong Racing
7. Mortal Kombat 4
8. ISS Pro 98
9. Mission Impossible
10. Chopper Attack

PC

1. Need For Speed 3
2. Commandos
3. Dune 2000
4. Creatures 2
5. Mechcommander
6. Bass Masters Classic
7. Grand Prix Legends
8. Final Fantasy VII
9. Starcraft
10. Unreal

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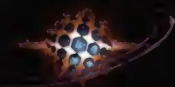
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AUTUMN TOKYO GAME SHOW '98 continued

with strong 3rd party support, and even a colour prototype. However, with Colour Game Boy expected in a few weeks, the chances of an Australian Neo Geo Pocket release are slim, at the best of times.



With Nintendo now a customary absentee, it seemed like everyone else stayed home as well, in the wake of the Dreamcast. There was very little else of note displayed at the show. Square had Final Fantasy VIII, with some of the best FMV seen, and a new "junction" control system, only vaguely explained and implemented at this early stage. Saga Frontier 2 and the Mario Kart-like Chocobo Racing, were other titles of note at Square, if only shown on video.

Namco's highlight of the show was Ridge Racer Type 4. With grand prix style, season-based racing contests and a 2 player mode, the title is set to feature more depth than any of its predecessors. While it plays similarly to past RR games, the visuals are truly breathtaking, and this game is set to give Gran Turismo a run for its money. As per usual, Namco will be releasing their own force-feedback (yes force feedback, not just rumble effect) LogCon controller specifically for RR4, featuring a



jog shuttle mechanism, reminiscent of a mini steering wheel on the actual pad.

Enix have acquired the Japanese distribution rights to Tomb Raider 3, and as expected, Lara Croft was everywhere. Disappointingly, Dragon Quest 7 was only shown on video, and even that was limited to a few seconds of footage.

Capcom were showing off Street Fighter Zero 3, arguably their best 2D PlayStation conversion to date, and as a sign of the times, there was no Saturn version in sight. Capcom also used the occasion to unveil its N64 Disney/Tetris-based game, while Power Storm and Bio Hazard: Code Veronica (Resident Evil!) for the Dreamcast were extremely impressive.

Konami made a strong showing, with the latest version of the delayed Castlevania 64, and its much anticipated RPG Hybird Heaven (N64), playable for the first time. On the PlayStation front, Konami had Silent Hill, an impressive Resident Evil-style adventure game with a full 3D engine, easily one of the most impressive PlayStation titles on show.

In all, the TGS proved to be a rather laid-back event, with very few surprises. That is, with the exception of Sega, who ultimately stole the show with an extremely strong launch for the Dreamcast. If the response from the public here was any indication, then after a few false starts, Sega finally have a hit on their hands. Now, did someone say PlayStation 2?

Create your own funky PSX electronica!

MUSIC by Codemasters

It makes a lot of sense for developers to utilise the huge, and quite mature PlayStation user base by creating non game software. Codemasters have done just that with "Music", giving you the freedom to create electronic music in an easy to navigate environment. Whether you're into banging minimal techno, or sassy funk up house, Music allows you to craft relatively complex rhythms and soundscapes. Not only this, but you can also create elaborate visuals to accompany your creation or simply let Music generate it's own video for your track or audio CD.

Music puts you in control of a 16 channel mixing desk. Sound samples are arranged into broad

musical styles, within which are banks of track components, such as sets of high hat or snare samples. It's simply a matter of searching through the sample banks, finding one you like and pasting it in. There's a decent catalogue of samples to muck around with, but you're not restricted to simply using the banks provided. You can edit the samples, or create your own using the 6 octave keyboard, instrument banks and effects. This is where Music's depth lies, as there's a surprising number of sound parameters to alter including reverb, ASDR (attack, decay, sustain and release), stereo panning and slide. Fortunately, the controls are well laid out and comprehensive. Music won't appeal to everyone, but if you're into dance music then check it out.

Overflow

Acclaim have announced that Turok 2 will appear on the Sega Dreamcast console, looking bigger and better than the Nintendo 64 version. Chances are it will simply be identical to the 3D accelerated PC version, though possibly Acclaim has something up it's sleeve...

LucasArts have disappointed gamers around the globe, delaying the release of their RTS game Force Commander until late 1999. The reasons for the delay are unknown, though rumour has it that they are either switching to a new 3D engine, or incorporating elements of Star Wars: The Phantom Menace movie which debuts mid '99...

Resident Evil 3 no longer looks to be coming to the PlayStation. Capcom have decided that the Sega Dreamcast would be a better platform for what they have planned. Maybe we'll see Resident Evil 4 on the PlayStation 2? Ahhh...

The ultra-violent fighting game, Thrill Kill, has been canned worldwide due to it's graphic nature. However, there are a bunch of hungry publishers out there who are seriously considering purchasing the game for release. We think the dollar signs in their eyes are clouding their vision...

Bandai are currently working on a Neon Genesis Evangelion video game for the Nintendo 64!! It looks to be a bit of an adventure/fighting game hybrid at the moment, but we can assure you that we will be taking a close look at this one when we get some more info...

Publishers have been signing up to develop for the Dreamcast like it's going out of style. In one of the most surprising announcements, Namco have announced that they are developing for the system. Why is this a surprise? Well Namco have traditionally been Sega's main arcade rival, but it seems the Dreamcast must be that good...

Sony Japan has recently split it's internal divisions into two halves - one for continuing PlayStation support and the other for development of PlayStation 2 strategies and game production. Looks like the news of a PlayStation 2, including tech specs may be upon us sooner than we think...

For those of you keen to play a Tomb Raider game on the upcoming Dreamcast console, bad news... Eidos have officially confirmed that no Tomb Raider game will ever appear on the Sega console. No real reasons have been given, though we suspect Sony have a hand in it...

One last piece of Dreamcast news... MDK2 will be coming to the console, as apparently it has the hardware to achieve everything the development team has planned for the game. The folk responsible for the upcoming RPG Baldur's Gate are the programmers, if that's any indication...

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Third Prize: One six pack of Jolt Cola, 1 pair of Jolt boxer shorts, Turok 2 and Extreme-G 2 for PC or N64!

Two runners-up will also win Turok 2 and Extreme-G 2 for PC or N64!

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ALL ENTRIES CLOSE DECEMBER 2ND 1998



ABE'S EXODDUS

Abe is back in this excellent sequel to the hugely popular Abe's Oddysee, rescuing Mudokons, killing Sligs and generally farting his way to success. Don't be deceived by how similar the game may appear to the original, as it's all new puzzles and darn addictive gameplay will keep you chained to your PlayStation for weeks. GT Interactive in their generous wisdom, have given us these great Abe packs which include a copy of Abe's Exoddus for PlayStation and an Abe baseball cap

To win one of five packs, answer this question...

Which is the odd one out? A) Rupture Farms; B) Scrabania; C) Paramonia; or D) Bilbobaggins?

Put your answer on the back of an envelope with your name and address, and send it to: **Fart-tastic!, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**



NBA JAM '99

Yeah boyee. Basketball games come and go, but the NBA Jam series has always had style and gameplay. NBA Jam '99 for the Nintendo 64, is no exception - in fact it's the possibly the best N64, B-ball game out there. Acclaim have been cool enough to put up five copies of NBA Jam '99 for you to win, so get in quick because they're gonna go fast! To be in with a chance, just answer this question...

What colour is Denis Rodman's hair?

A) Blue; B) Red; C) Green; or D) Any damn colour he chooses?

Put your answer and name and address on the back of an envelope and send it to: **Bouncy, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Coolio.**



THE ABSOLUTELY AWESOME ACTIVISION GIVEAWAY! **QUAKE - THE OFFERING**

Where else can you win prizes as unbelievably good as this?! Activision have blessed the gaming world with more cool first-person shooters than you can poke a rocket launcher at... there's simply no question that both Quake and Quake 2 have become complete religions. Both Sin and Heretic 2 are upon us now too, and look just as stunning in their own right. Well, to celebrate the release of Quake: The Offering, Activision are going to give away this huge bonanza of PC games! Just take a look at what you could win!

QUAKE: The Offering which includes...

- QUAKE**
- QUAKE: Scourge of Armagon mission pack**
- QUAKE: Dissolution of Eternity mission pack**
- QUAKE 2**
- QUAKE 2: The Reckoning mission pack**
- QUAKE 2: Ground Zero mission pack**
- SIN - plus Sin T-shirt**
- HERETIC 2**
- Mounted Quake poster signed by id Software!!**

All in one big mega-pack! One winner wins everything!

Yep, we weren't kidding when we said it was absolutely awesome.

To be in it to win it, solve this retro question...

NAME FOUR ATARI 2600 ACTIVISION GAMES

Put your answers on the back of an envelope with your name and address and send it to:

Triple A Giveaway, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Good luck!

STEALTH ASSAULT

Here at Hyper we like to encourage you to take a break from staring at your computer monitor for days on end, and give your console a rest... get outside, breath the fresh air and slap a Radica Stealth Assault hand-held Virtual Motion Sensor device to your face! Essentially an LCD hand-held shoot-em-up game, the trick is that your gun sight moves with actual real-world movement of the VMS. You may look a bit strange, standing there with this thing held up to your eyes, moving your head around at strange angles - but you'll be locked into completing 10 levels of shooty. To win one of 10 of these babies thanks to the good folk at Hasbro Australia, answer this question...

What does LCD stand for?

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PlayStation

G

Formula 1 98

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PlayStation

G

Psybadek

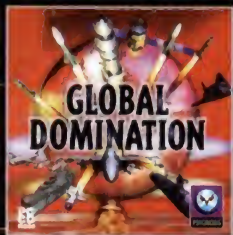
Psybadek combines 3D platform action with the thrills and spills of hoverdek stunt riding. You'll need to master the ways of the hoverdek before you'll have a chance of beating Krakken, the ultimate villain.

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could travel the planet in search of the ultimate Intensity. Magic and Reality. Experience the hair-raising reality and awesome power of **The French Formula 1 Grand Prix**. The mind blowing Magic of the hottest bands on earth at the **UK's Glastonbury Festival** and the anti-gravity reality as you train to become a fighter pilot at **NASA's Sky Warriors Camp**.

There are **five Intensely Magical Reality Tours to be won**. When you buy any of these games from Psynosis fill in the entry form and you could win.

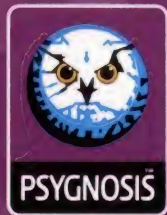
See entry form for full details.
Competition closes 31/1/99.



ES
M15+

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PSYGNOSIS



ES
M15+

O.D.T.

O.D.T. uses incredible graphics and state of the art technology to create a huge, involving action adventure game packed with engaging characters, violent conflicts, puzzle solving and exploration.

G8+

Colony Wars: Vengeance



PlayStation

The universe's peace is about to be shattered as imprisoned descendants of those defeated in the Colony Wars attempt to wreak revenge. The tables are turned and this time you're fighting against the mighty League of Free Worlds.

ES
G

Newman Haas Racing



Developed in association with the Newman Haas racing team of Michael Andretti and Christian Fittipaldi, this action-packed racing game brings the excitement of Indy Car to your PC.



Groove are back, though this time it's your chance to get behind the wheel as Taurus and save Groove instead. Jade's sister Skye appears as a mohawked biker gal, and becomes the new vixen too. The Eighties setting allows for hot-pink t-shirts, New-Wave music and some classic dialogue, which (depending on your age) is certain to send some gamers into fits of frenzied laughter - this is exactly what we imagined Interstate '82 would be like. Cheesy.

The new hardware-only graphics engine looks brilliant - yep you will need a 3D accelerator to play the game - with some effects



looking almost photo-realistic! There's also the ability to leave your car and venture forth on foot, which is something we only dreamt about doing in Interstate '76. The environments range from dusty desert highways, to the streets of Las Vegas - casinos and all. There are a few opportuni-

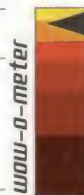
ties in the game when you can "car-jack" another vehicle if your own car has met with a few too many bullets, or maybe you'd like to speed off on a motorcycle...

Throughout the 30 or so missions, you'll get your hands on a range of new vehicle-mounted weapons... the Acid-Thrower for instance, converts the flamethrower and deals out some hefty damage, but is a bit of a load to carry around and will cause your car to perform sluggishly. Or maybe you'd like to try the Karpoon, which can launch a variety of different harpoons which pierce the chassis of your opponent and cause varying effects. There's always the Carbide Cutters too, which stick out like two huge blades out of the front bumper bar, ready to shred anything in it's path. Mix those up with an array of missiles, machine guns, and of course your handy pistol, and you have a cool-ass arsenal. Interstate '82 won't be finished until around February, but by jove it'll be worth the wait!

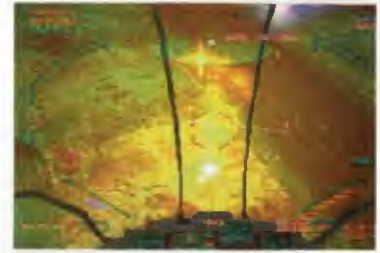
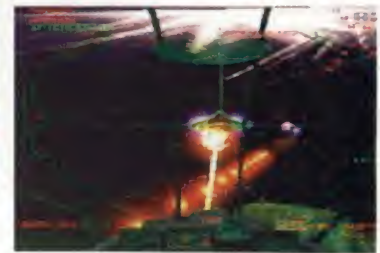
Interstate '82

PC

AVAILABLE: FEBRUARY
 CATEGORY: CAR COMBAT
 PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
 PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION



Now that we have our hands on a fully playable copy of Interstate '82, we thought we would take a "look under the bonnet", so to speak. As we all know, this is the follow-up to the hugely successful Interstate '76, which wowed us with it's awesome soundtrack and difficult mission-based vehicular combat - all with flared pants, afros and sexy cars. Well, now we've moved six years on to 1982, and Taurus and



G-Police 2

PLAYSTATION/PC

AVAILABLE: 1ST QUARTER '99

CATEGORY: ACTION

PLAYERS: 1

PUBLISHER: PSYGNOSIS



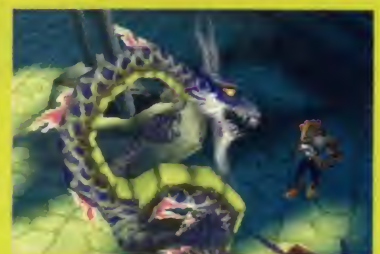
G-Police made quite a splash when it appeared on the scene a while ago now, and what an engrossing bit of sci-fi shooter it was too. Well, finally, Psygnosis are warm-

ing up to unleash G-Police 2 upon the gaming populace. We took a look at the PlayStation version to see how things are shaping up.

First off, G-Police 2 plays much faster than it's predecessor, which means for a more accurate and thrilling game, and you can improve the frame-rate by toggling how close things "draw-in" and by adjusting the level of detail which is nice for a PlayStation game. Everything still looks very much like the original G-Police on first inspection, but once you get a little closer, you see how the game has been tweaked to play even better than before.

At this stage, G-Police 2 is looking like something for those who couldn't get enough of the original, feeling almost like a "mission pack" add-on consisting of a whole new storyline. There's tons of techy FMV if you love that sort of thing, and we look forward to seeing how this one turns out.

EF



T'ai Fu

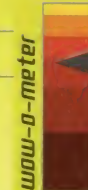
PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: JANUARY '99

CATEGORY: PLATFORMER

PLAYERS: 1

PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION

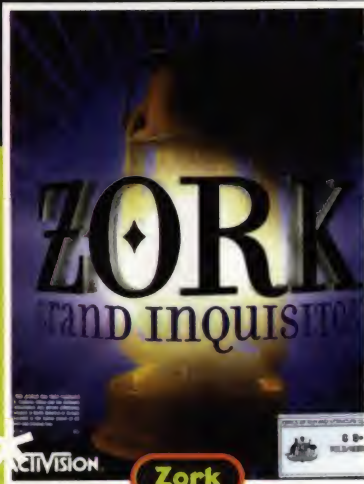


Tai'Fu is a bad-ass kung-fu tiger, out to clear his name and his clan's reputation, after being accused of killed the peaceful panda monks. Of course, this means traveling the land and beating up on other animals. A bit like Fighting Force meets Crash Bandicoot, T'ai Fu is a combination platformer and beat 'em up, with T'ai Fu having a variety of cool tigery moves to dispatch his foes with. Besides all the usual kung-fu moves (punching, flying kicks etc), T'ai Fu can use Chi, which is basically a form of magic, but hell it looks pretty on screen. You can use the

analog pad if you so wish, as the worlds in T'ai Fu are all in 3D, so moving about the landscape isn't always along a linear path. In this preview version, the camera angles were automatic, and generally pretty good, though there were times when you wished you were watching the action from a better perspective. Maybe in the final release, there will be a manual camera option... developers you listening?!

T'ai Fu looks promising, with some very pretty levels, and excellent character animation. There's even a bit of a Disney platformer feel about it, which is actually a good thing. Looking cool.

EF



Zork



Ignition



Battle Zone



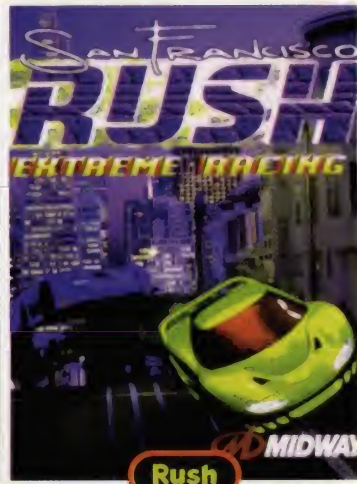
Treasure island



Bio Freaks



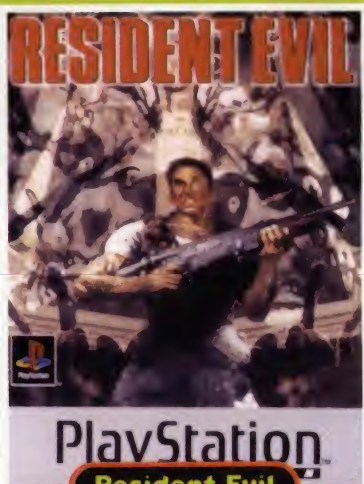
Mech Warrior 2



Rush



Dark Reign



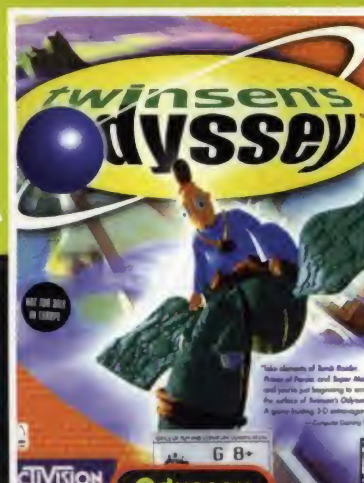
Resident Evil



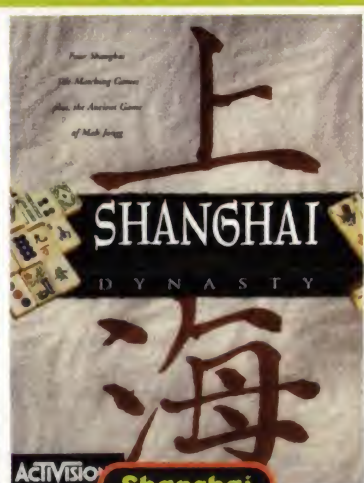
Heavy Gear



Mortal Kombat 4



Odyssey



Shanghai



Netstorm



Duke Nukem

boot_up **next**
gaming

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Entry Form All you have to do to be in the running for these fabulous prizes is fill in the entry form, answer one simple question and post it back to: Mega Christmas Competition, Next Publishing, 78 Renwick St, Redfern NSW 2016. Entries Close on 24 December 1998.

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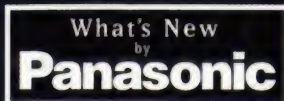
Postcode

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Your prize preference

Question: How many bytes in a bit?

Terms & Conditions: 1. Entry is open to all residents of Australia & New Zealand except employees and the immediate families of Next Publishing and its agencies associated with the promotion. Only entries completed with these Terms and Conditions will be eligible. 2. Competition begins 4/11/98 and entries close at midnight 24/12/98. 3. In determining eligibility the judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. 4. Winner will be drawn at 9.00am on 25/12/98. 1998 at Next Publishing Pty Ltd, 78 Renwick Street, Redfern NSW 2016. 5. Prizes must be taken as offered and are not redeemable for cash. 7. Total prize value, valued on 20/10/98 is \$13,472 and consists of 1st Prize: 1 Compaq Presario 5170 (valued at \$5700) 1 Panasonic TV (valued at \$799), Sony PlayStation or Nintendo 64 (\$187), Activision game packs (valued at \$600), Telstra Big Pond 1 year Internet access package (valued at \$600) 2nd Prize: 1 Panasonic TV (valued at \$799), Sony PlayStation or Nintendo 64 (valued at \$187), GT Interactive game packs (valued at \$600), 3rd Prize: Virgin Interactive game pack (valued at \$300), Telstra Big Pond 1 year Internet access package (valued at \$600) & 50 Consolation Prizes: Telstra Big Pond 1 month Internet Access (valued at \$50 each) 8. Winners will be notified by mail and results published in Hyper on sale 6/1/99, PC PowerPlay on sale 3/1/99, Official PlayStation Magazine on sale 20/1/99, N64 Gamer on sale 20/1/99. The promoter is Next Publishing Pty Ltd ACN 002 645 647 of 78 Renwick Street, Redfern, NSW, 2016. TP-Pending.





Apocalypse

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: DECEMBER
 CATEGORY: ACTION
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION



You can't get enough of Bruce Willis, that's what my mother always used to say. She also ate dogfood and got around in a straightjacket, but that's besides the point. Bruce is a man of action, a kick-ass all-American dude with a big gun and a major bank balance. This is a bit of a first, getting a movie star to be the central character in a game, without it tying in to a major motion picture, but Bruce said yes when they showed him the cheque. Apocalypse is almost identical in gameplay style to the action-fest which was One, the furious shoot 'em up

from GT Interactive.

The game involves you controlling Bruce through a variety of 3D environments, with the camera angle dynamically zooming in and out of the action as it plays out. Your gun can be powered up with various hidden bonuses, from its default machine-gun to guided missiles and a variety of beam weapons. Simply charge through the level and shoot everything you see, jumping across the odd chasm and flicking the odd switch. Eventually you get to the end, and that's it. This is very straightforward stuff, yet it's compelling and addictive gameplay. The



difficulty level has been adjusted to make things easy enough so you never really get stuck anywhere, yet there's also enough of a challenge here to keep you coming back for more. The inclusion of Bruce Willis is, ironically, completely unnecessary. This is the sort of game that would work with any generic Duke Nukem style character. The final version should kick booty. **EF**



Shadowgate 64: Trial of the Four Towers

NINTENDO 64

AVAILABLE: 1ST QUARTER '99
 CATEGORY: RPG
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: KEMCO



For those of you who graduated from the Nintendo Entertainment System to the SNES and then to the Nintendo 64, you may remember an early NES game called Shadowgate. It was a pretty simplistic, yet fun, RPG set in a series of 3D corridors with surprisingly engrossing gameplay for such a basic game. Well, the Nintendo 64 is



going to be the vehicle for the rebirth of this classic game - Shadowgate 64 is shaping up to be as involving as the original, but with gorgeous 3D environments to explore. Kemco have done

their homework, and kept the focus on adventuring as opposed to including token "action" bits in this first-person RPG. The aim is to fully explore all the environments and interact with a variety of objects and items to solve puzzles, in a similar vein to games like Riven on the PC. Don't fret if that doesn't cut your mustard though, because there will still be plenty of classic RPG elements, such as character interaction and a slowly revealing plot to keep you hooked. The environments currently look all dark, spooky and atmospheric, so this should be one of those N64 games that the adventure game freaks go nuts for. As long as Kemco ensure that the graphics engine is speedy, this should be an interesting adventure. **EF**

Jackie Chan's Stuntmaster

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: 1ST QUARTER '99
 CATEGORY: ACTION
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: MIDWAY



Jackie Chan is a living legend. Not only is he a movie star kung-fu master, but he's one of the only people in the world, brave (or stoopid) enough to perform all his own death-defying stunts - even if it means breaking his legs in the process! Obviously, he's the perfect guy to have as an action game character, thus Jackie Chan's Stuntmaster was born. In the game, you play as Jackie himself and fight your way through a series of levels, pulling off incredibly dangerous stunts in the process. The idea, is that Jackie is on the set of his new movie, but something evil is afoot, and some of the extras are actually assassins. As you perform a variety of amazing feats, you score higher "box office" takings, so the incentive is to get Jackie to risk life and limb for the pleasure of the

cinema patrons. Graphically, the characters have that smooth rounded look of the fighters from Tobal 2, which will hopefully mean that Stuntmaster will play fast and smooth. Jackie Chan himself was also motion-captured for all his movements in the game, which is truly cool. Amongst all the action, you can expect some hilarious moments too, as Jackie Chan's great sense of visual humour has not been ignored, and Stuntmaster should be truly entertaining.

EF



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WinBack

NINTENDO 64

AVAILABLE: JANUARY '99
 CATEGORY: ACTION/ADVENTURE
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: KOEI



Previously only developers of PC, Saturn and PlayStation games, Koei are stepping into the Nintendo 64 arena with a title that is sure to be a massive hit - WinBack. Odd title, sure, but WinBack is looking like the Nintendo 64's answer to Konami's Metal Gear Solid for the PlayStation. Like MGS, WinBack is played from a third-person perspective with stealth being the key to success. You play the role of Jean-Luc



Cougar - the lovechild of John Mellancamp and Captain Picard... Okay so that's not true... Er, actually you are a special operative in a secret government outfit called SCAT, and with your tasty arsenal of weapons, funky Bondesque items and non-squeaky sneakers, you'll be infiltrating a number of enemy installations and carrying out a series of tough missions. In a plot similar to GoldenEye, a terrorist organisa-

tion has captured a laser-toting satellite, and it's up to you to reclaim it for good before they blow the crap out of everything.

Gameplay involves tip-toeing around guards, silently taking down sentry points and basically killing everyone before they realize that you're there. Whilst we've seen similar gameplay in GoldenEye and Metal Gear Solid, WinBack seems to take the best bits of both games and combines them - including a 2-player deathmatch, where the aim is the kill your opponent using stealth, and a gun of course.

The potential for WinBack to be brilliant is massive, with the graphics looking damn impressive too, so we can't wait to see how it turns out... **EF**



Chameleon Twist 2

NINTENDO 64

AVAILABLE: JANUARY 1999
 CATEGORY: 3D PLATFORMER
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: SUNSOFT



Chameleon Twist made a pretty quiet entrance into the Nintendo 64 software lineup, promising some uniquely original platforming but not really delivering the goods. The game was sparse, low on excitement and the four-

player mode just didn't really work. The chameleon hero with his muscular tongue was a refreshingly different character though, and hopefully with Chameleon Twist 2, the gameplay has been improved to take advantage of what was initially a great concept.

In Chameleon Twist 2, the multiplayer mode has been sacrificed for some deeper single-player gaming, which I'm sure no-one who played the original will complain about. Again, traversing the levels requires your character to throw his tongue around a variety of objects and use it to either pull himself to safety or to tonk his enemies. Already, CT2 is looking more colourful, more detailed and generally more attractive than it's predecessor, and SunSoft are making sure the adventure is suitably more engaging this time around.

Hopefully Chameleon Twist 2 will surprise everyone with some much-improved gameplay, as there ain't nothing finer than using your tongue in new and interesting ways... **EF**



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UPCOMING RELEASES

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



★ Hot stuff on the way...

PC

DECEMBER

- ACM 1918
- AFL '99
- Alien Intelligence
- Asteroids
- Baldur's Gate
- Dead Unity
- Earthworm Jim 3
- Falcon 4.0 ★
- Fighter Squadron
- Fighting Steel
- Future Cop: LAPD
- Half-Life ★
- Heretic 2
- NFL Quarterback Club '99
- Mordor 2
- Panzer Elite
- Pro 18 The World Open
- Sim City 3000
- Star Trek: Birth of the Federation
- Star Trek: Starfleet Command
- Thief: Dark Project
- TOCA 2 ★
- Top Gun 2
- Turok 2 ★
- Wild Metal Country

JANUARY

- Alpha Centauri
- Battle Group (Aegis)
- Shane Warne Cricket
- Tunguska

PlayStation

DECEMBER

- Apocalypse
- Crash Bandicoot 3 ★
- Dead Unity
- Dolphin's Dream
- Knockout Kings
- Libero Grande
- Professional Sports Car Racing
- Rival Schools
- Tiger Woods '99
- Ubik
- VIVA Football
- WCW Nitro 2

JANUARY

- Asteroids
- Big Air
- Devil Dice
- Dodgem Arena
- Eliminator
- KKND 2
- NFL Extreme
- Pro 18 The World Open
- Pro Boarders
- Quake 2
- Shane Warne Cricket
- The Contract

N 64

DECEMBER

- Deadly Arts
- Extreme-G 2



- Golden Nugget Gaming
- Magic Flute
- NHL '99
- Star Wars: Rogue Squadron
- Tonic Trouble
- Turok 2 ★
- WCW Revenge
- Zelda 64: Ocarina of Time ★

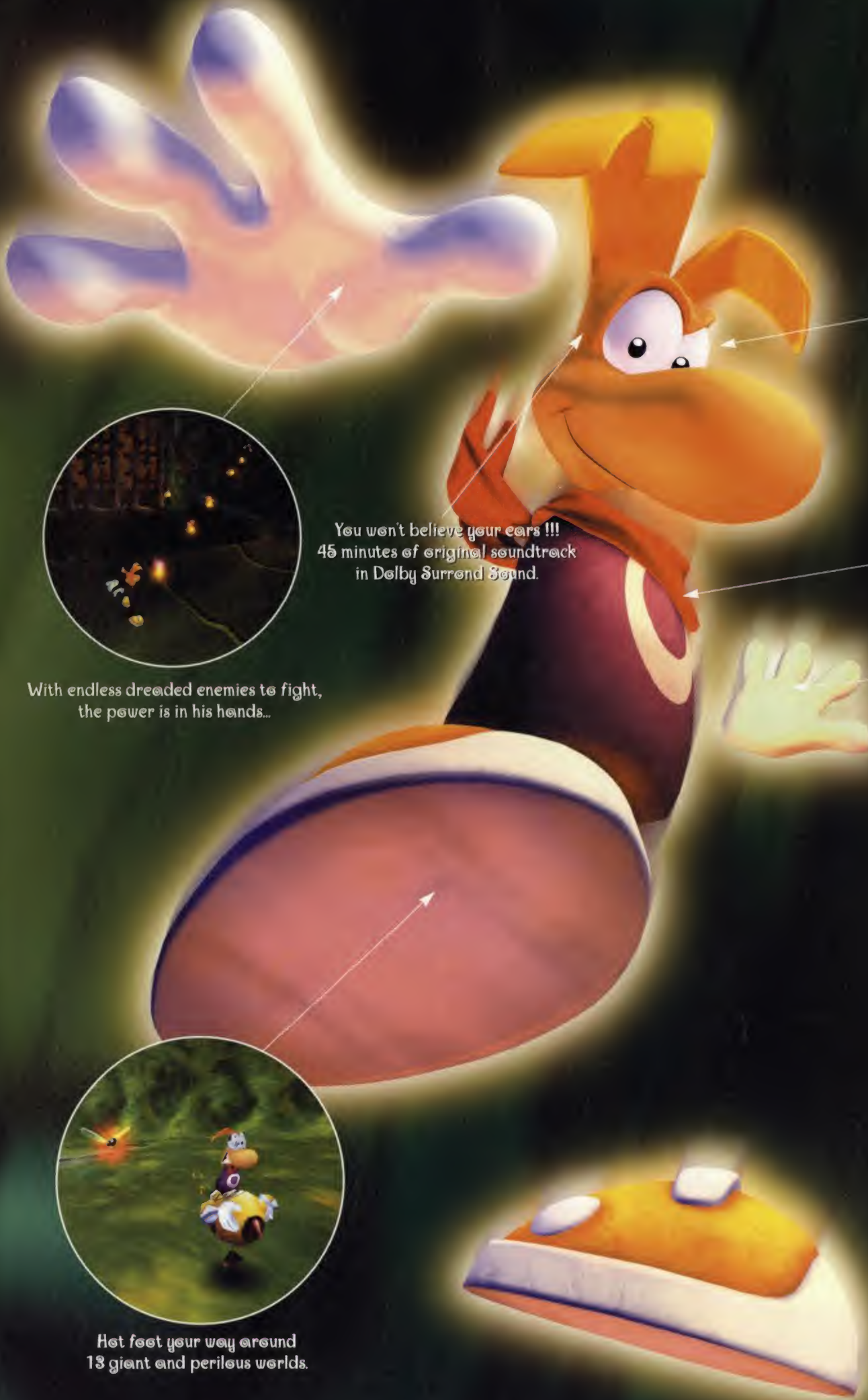
JANUARY

- Bust A Move 3
- Command and Conquer
- Looney Tunes: Space Race
- South Park 64 ★



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swims, skis, climbs..

RAYMAN 2

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HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR

3D CARD

Hardware Special
by Dan Toose

Every time a new video card comes out nowadays, it tends to shine in one area that no other card has. However, I've noticed that due to several factors, sometimes what may be the best 3D card for one PC owner, may not be best for another. The reasons for this can be thought of in a simple way, in that some video cards will perform better with a faster CPU, and some others have definite peak performance, which may work irrespective of how powerful your CPU is. Some cards also do one type of 3D acceleration well, but another poorly, or sometimes, not at all.

Basically there are only so many cards that are out right now that you should be looking to buy. Also, there's always the possibility that you may have the video card that is right for your current system, and that you should not bother buying a new one till you have a better CPU.



WHAT MAKES A VIDEO CARD GOOD?

Fill Rate: How many pixels a card can draw at its peak performance. This is rated in Millions of pixels per second. A high rating here results in a lower dependency on having a powerful CPU. Higher fill rates are the direct result of a higher clock speed.

RAMDAC: RAM Digital Analogue Converter speed is purely a rating of how the card translates the digital signal to an analogue signal for your monitor. Only a real issue if you are working with very high resolutions, as you start having to take into consideration the refresh rate.

Polygon Throughput: How efficient the card is at calculating polygons. The higher it is the less CPU dependant the card is.

Type of 3D acceleration: These include Direct 3D, OpenGL, Glide, and others such as Rendition, and PowerVR. At this stage, Rendition and PowerVR leave much to be desired, so stick with cards that do the first three.

Slot type: AGP or PCI. At this stage PCI cards are benchtesting just as well, and in some cases better than AGP cards, but this will change with AGP 4x.

Frame rate to resolution comparison: Once you have an accelerator, you won't want to play in any resolution that is under 45 frames per second. A card may run in 1024x768x32, but if it does so at a slow 20 fps, then who cares?

The Riva TNT cards are an excellent choice if you know you just want one video card for a 2D/3D solution. The fact that it can process 32 bit colour at decent resolutions is what sets it apart from the Voodoo Banshee, as both cards perform similarly on a mid range PC (the TNT performs better on faster CPUs, with Banshee faster on lower end systems). The clarity of image due to this is excellent, and looks better than a Voodoo2 (though you need side by side comparison to see the difference). If you want to use a Riva TNT at the higher resolutions and get good performance, you'd really want a P2-333 or higher.

Continued page38



WHAT CARDS SHOULD I CONSIDER NOWADAYS?

The Main Players

Riva TNT (nVidia)

Available cards: Diamond Viper 550, Creative TNT, Canopus Spectra 2500
 Est Price: \$450-500
 Type: 2D/3D card
 CPU Dependency: High
 2D performance: Excellent
 Max 2D Res: 1920 x 1200 x 24
 3D performance: Very good
 Max 3D Res: 1600 x 1200 x 32



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Voodoo Banshee (3DFX)

Type: 2D/3D card
Available cards: Maxi Gamer Phoenix, Creative Banshee
Est Price: \$300
CPU Dependency: Low
2D Performance: Very Good
Max 2D Res: 1920 x 1440 x 24
3D Performance: Good
Max 3D Res: 1600 x 1200 x 16

This is the card for those of you out there that have a low end (P200 or lower) system, and don't see themselves upgrading

immediately. In lower resolutions, these cards outperform the Riva TNT substantially, but once you go to 800 x 600 in 3D, the Banshee hits a brick wall. The Banshee cards are also a bit cheaper than TNT, and if you're hanging on to a lower end system for a while, this will be important.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The dream set up (money no object): Two Voodoo 2 cards, with a Riva TNT as the 2D/3D card, or if you can afford it, an MGA-G200 card like a Matrox Millennium (which has the best 2D performance).

The best value for money card for someone with a Pentium 233 or lower: Voodoo Banshee

The best value for money card for someone with a Pentium 2 - 266 or higher: Riva TNT

The best value for money decision for someone with a Pentium 133: If you're not going to upgrade your CPU in a hurry, get a Voodoo1 card or a Riva 128 card, as anything more powerful will be wasted on your low end system. Saving for a better CPU first could be your best bet.

Voodoo 2 - (3DFX)

Available cards: Diamond Monster 3D II, Orchid Righteous 3D II, Pure 3D II, Creative Voodoo2, and more

Est Price: \$350 for 8MB \$500 for 12MB

Type: 3D card

CPU Dependency: Medium

2D performance: -

3D performance: Excellent

Max 3D Res: 800 x 600 x 16
 (With SLI - 1024 x 768 x 16)

Voodoo 2 cards are currently a bit of an all-or-nothing right now, in that unless you have two of them, then other cards like the Riva TNT make a more worthwhile purchase. Reason being, it takes TWO Voodoo2 cards to get 1024 x 768 resolution, and to also get a frame rate which jumps out in front in the lower resolutions too. The frame rate of two Voodoo2 cards working together (SLI), is way out in front of the pack at this stage. Whilst Voodoo 2 cards will always help a lower end system, it's not worth the money unless you plan to upgrade very soon. Recent drivers have improved the performance of V2 cards in Direct3D enough to have cancelled the huge gap Riva TNT had over V2 in this area.

SideWinder Force Feedback Wheel



PC

Type: Steering Wheel

Distributor: Microsoft

R.R.P.: \$399

Microsoft are proving once again, that when it comes to quality peripherals, they're right on the money. The new SideWinder Force Feedback Steering Wheel and pedal set is a breeze to set up and install - simply plug it in and install the driver and you're away. In fact, the calibration screen is one of the coolest yet, with a photo-realistic pic of the wheel and pedals which turn and move in real time so you can see if it's responding correctly. Here you can also test the variety of force feedback sensations, from a tyre blow-out (where the wheel realistically drags suddenly to the side) or even different terrain sensations (like the bizarre sliding sensation of an icy road) to simple engine idling rumbles.

The wheel is solid and heavy, though plastic, and feels very comfortable to grip - it's easily clamped to your desk too - and though the pedal tension is great, the plastic base could have been a bit heavier to make it a bit more immovable. Tested with Monster Truck Madness, the wheel was excellent and performed without a hitch. The Force Feedback was brilliant and it's certainly damn powerful - strong enough to pull your hands in another direction completely. However, at times, there was a slight delay with the feedback and sometimes none at all... but this could be down to the terrain being too complex for the wheel to accurately respond too. Certainly, simple collisions and driving over train tracks for instance, felt darn perfect. Though a little pricey, it does come packaged with full versions of Monster Truck Madness and CART Precision Racing... and it is one of the best wheels on the market.

Buyers Guide

	Item	RRP	Notes
PSX			
Memory Card	Memory Card 2MEG	\$29.95	It costs the same as the Sony card, but stores twice as much.
	Nyko Memory Card x 8	\$49.95	A better buy for those that don't think 120 save game slots is enough at any one time.
Digital Controller	Std Sony Controller	\$29.95	It's certainly not the cheapest, but it has the best feel and reliability.
Analogue Controller	Sony Dual Shock	\$59.95	Great analogue control with a rumble effect. Widely supported now.
Arcade Stick	Namco Arcade Stick	\$49.95	Solid as all hell, really authentic sensitive arcade button, and a stick that's perfect for whipping out fireballs. Hado-Ken!
Steering Wheel	Gamester Rumble Force	\$169.95	One of the more expensive wheels, but is solid and has a vibration effect.
Pc			
3D Accelerator	Maxi Gamer Pheonix	\$299	Better performance than Voodoo 1 cards. The best cheap option to get 3D.
	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	Professional Sound	\$89.95	It's PCI does SB support, 3D Direct sound, and is dirt cheap!
Video Card	ET6100	\$99.95	The best value buy for those who own, or who plan to own a dedicated 3D accelerator
	Maxi Gamer Pheonix	\$299	A 2D/3D card in one. The best value card for those who want some 3D acceleration, and don't have a PII-300 or better. Great 2D performance.
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	Gamester Tremor Pak	\$29.95	Not the cheapest Rumble Pak, but it DOESN'T need batteries, making it excellent value.
	Tremor Pack Performance	\$19.95	Two rumble modes, with the strongest being REAL strong. Great for those wanting to put it into a wheel.
Gampad	Mako Pad 64	\$59.95	Expensive, but its design allows you to hold the controller and press every button without moving your hands.
	Docs Controller	\$39.95	\$10 cheaper than the Nintendo standard. Feels better, and comes with auto-fire and slow as well.
Racing Wheel	V3 Racing Wheel 64	\$149.95	Gears on the wheel, really sturdy, great feel, and configurable buttons. Also all allows for Rumble Pak.
	Mad Catz	\$129.95	Cheapest of the actual wheel controllers, includes a gear stick, and built in Rumble Pak. Not amazingly sturdy though.

REVIEWS

This month we got overloaded with new games. Normally we'd review everything we get sent that issue, but so many of the games we sent deserved a decent amount of space, and as a result we've got a little pile of games already for next issue, so don't think we're just going to forget about them!

Some of these upcoming games include Shane Warne's Cricket, Turok 2, Tomb Raider 3, Crash Bandicoot 3, and FIFA '99, and more.

Nintendo 64 owners got a good variety this month, with the futuristic racing of Wipeout 64 and Extreme G 2, the sports action of NBA Jam '99 and Quarterback Club '99, and even some 3D platform/adventure stuff like Body Harvest and Starshot (although we can forget about that one).

With Turok 2 next month, and Zelda 64 out in December, it's a good Christmas for Nintendo fans.

PlayStation was the hardest category to decide game of the month for, as Abe's Exoddus, TOCA 2, and Colony Wars Vengeance were all good enough to deserve the title. Abe fared best on the universal appeal factor though, so it got the prize.

And Finally the PC... Half Life blew us all away (even the console freaks), and it will no doubt be a big hit online with the Quake community hungry for new challenges. Grim Fandango proved to be worth the long wait, and is one of the classiest adventure titles of all time. We also saw two killer flight sims with Total Air War and European Air War.

A total of Eight big rubber stamps this issue prove that the quality is out there right now. Here's hoping it stays this way for a while longer.



GAME OF THE MONTH HALF-LIFE

reviewed on page 84



NINTENDO 64 GAME OF THE MONTH WIPEOUT 64

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PLAYSTATION GAME OF THE MONTH

ABE'S EXODDUS

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Dan



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80



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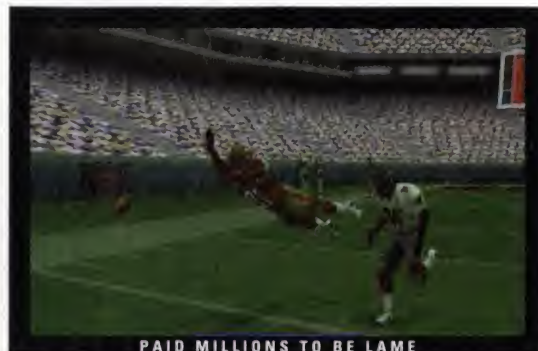
THE HYPER REVIEW SYSTEM

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.

NFL Quarterback Club 99

A pumped up Kevin Cheung steps up and prepares to wipe the boyish grin from Brett Farve's face.



PAID MILLIONS TO BE LAME

THE 4 MEG ADVANTAGE

QB Club 99 is compatible with Nintendo's upcoming 4 Meg RAM Pak, which allows the game to run at the N64's drool-worthy hi-res mode (ie. better graphics). The visuals score is based on the use of the expansion pak. Without the expansion pak, the animations are just as good but the textures are less detailed. Subtract 5 marks from the visuals and 3 from the overall score if going without the expansion pak.



can be like Madden and simulate crash-tackles, jumps and so on - but my heart almost stopped when I watched all 22 players lining up for a play, squatting, preparing for cross-blocks, getting borked into false-starts and encroachments... right down to the simple things like breathing! When the quarterback calls out the signals, you can even see his head bob down as makes a hard count! It's nearly impossible to describe QB Club's sheer visual beauty to any degree of justice without resorting to profanity to make the point. Hopefully, the point is made. As an aside, the sounds effects are good, especially the large amounts of speech.

GAMEPLAY MATTERS, RIGHT?

In spite of the visual beauty, QB Club plays like a limp sausage. Firstly, the responsiveness of the controls leaves a lot to be desired. You basically press a button, and the corresponding action is always a split second too late. Secondly, the playbook is just too small and lacking in strategy-invoking variety. Sure, some of the plays emulate the actual strategies of the real-life teams, but you only get two or three of them; and the only 'variety' available to you is the ability to select between good hands, big blockers, and so on that doesn't really change the plays at all. In other words, there's not much depth to the strategy. Finally, some of the AI in the game is completely dodgy. For instance, you can pick a run

Last year, Acclaim made a pretty big impression on the critics with its first QB Club effort on the N64, especially for the fact that the 3D graphics were executed so well. Games like Madden 98 were left to eat the proverbial dust. It's now time for all the 1999 sports titles, and with the battle lines already drawn between Madden and Blitz, where exactly does QB Club stand?

The first thing to mention about QB Club is the fact that it is the most drop-dead gorgeous NFL game ever created. Each and every player and referee is superbly modelled and rendered, moving around the seamless field in jaw-droppingly realistic form. The motion capture is the most incredible stuff to watch. Sure, anyone

play on 4th and long, and the CPU cornerbacks won't even move because they're waiting for a punt.

In the end, QB Club is best suited to newcomers to NFL. Some critics believe that its awesome graphics alone make it the best NFL game around, but these are the same people who can't tell the difference between a line judge and a lineman. The game's real let-down is its lack of strategy and a decent control interface. Nevertheless, QB Club 99 is worth a look even for hardcore NFL fans, even if only to gawk at the awesome graphics.

AVAILABLE: Now

CATEGORY: Sports

PLAYERS: 1-2

PUBLISHER: Acclaim

PRICE: \$99.95

RATING: G

SUPPORTS: Rumble Pak, Memory Pak.

PLUS

The graphics are quite stupefying. N64 in hi-res rocks hard.

MINUS

Everything bar the graphics and sound is only so-so.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

91 88 93

OVERALL

80

While the gameplay is severely lacking, the great visuals are a major drawcard.



DICKHEADS



coming soon
for Gameboy

GENERATION SILICON VALLEY

It was towards the end of the year 3000 that the Space Station Silicon Valley wandered back into the solar system. The Silicon Valley project had been mankind's first attempt to produce intelligent, self replicating, evolving machines. Too dangerous to be conducted on Earth, huge orbiting Space Stations were created to house fabulously expensive new technology needed to grow robots. The flagship was named 'Silicon Valley'.

It was built in the year 2001 and, seven minutes after being launched, it vanished...



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Body Harvest

Unlike wine, **Cam Shea** believes this long delayed N64 title hasn't matured with age...



MIKE AND MAL GO BUG CATCHING



TRAVEL ALL OVER THE COUNTRYSIDE

in time in an effort to head off the alien invasion and change the course of history. Drake travels to Greece 1916, Java 1941, America 1966, Siberia 1991 and the Alien Homeworld in 2046.

GOTTA LOVE THE DRAKE...

Body Harvest is a curious fusion of genres. Part action, part adventure, and part RPG. Drake must solve various puzzles in order to progress in the game. These are generally overly simple, like finding dynamite to clear an obstruction in the path. Still, some are cool, like ferrying villagers in the path of an active volcano to another village. Drake can enter many of the buildings and talk to people. Unfortunately, all the character interaction is mind numbingly dull.

The Bloodbottler in "The BFG" claims that eating humans is "guzzly and glumptious". The aliens in Body Harvest would probably agree. You see, this particular race of aggressive aliens have had enough of that awful vacuum sealed space food, so they've seeded various planets with scrumptious lifeforms. That way when they're in the area, they can come and harvest their crops, kinda like a cosmic drivethrough. Unfortunately, the main course for this rather ferocious race of insectoid aliens are... yep, humans. Just as humans are nearing the brink of extinction in 2050, a secret weapon - a time machine, reaches completion. The future of the Earth is in the hands of just one man - Adam Drake. In the role of the Drakemeister, players travel back

Environmental interaction is surface level at best. Sure, you can ignite torches on the wall, search through water barrels, even bang a chest of drawers (like Fonzie bangs a juke box) to get powerups. But that's basically where it stops. Rooms have a barren, lifeless feel to them. Any interactivity feels tacked on to the game, rather than being an integral part. This feeling is compounded by the linearity of tasks which is a shame considering the large size of the maps.

Combat in Body Harvest isn't particularly entertaining and there's a constant struggle with the controls. Most of the time the auto aiming mechanism must be used because aiming manually is haphazard. Drake can't run



they're so easy to kill.

Unfortunately, it seems that only Rare and Nintendo can really make the N64's hardware sing. Body Harvest's graphics have that all too familiar washed out low res feel. The game engine suffers from clipping problems, low frame rates and uncomfortably close fogging. The fogging prevents any appreciation of landscape design and is disorienting. Constantly accessing the map only serves to break up gameplay. The music is suitable B-grade sci-fi fare. It sounds rather 16 bit and lacks variety, but is context sensitive, so the pace will shift depending on the situation.

and shoot at the same time either which can be a strategical handicap, although he can commando roll to either side and do 180 rolls. Basically though, the best technique is to stand in one spot, point your weapon in the enemies general direction and shoot. This doesn't lead to compelling gameplay. Taking vehicles into combat is better, since they provide more manoeuvrability and any hits taken are absorbed by the vehicle's armour. Not only that, but some types of aliens can be run over. Drake can commandeer over 60 diverse vehicles, including jeeps, bi-planes, hover tanks, boats and cable cars. The variety of vehicles add replay value, as each handles terrain in different ways.

THE BLOB'S BACK IN BUSINESS BABY!

The aliens beam down in teams, so there are many different types of aliens, each with different abilities and roles. Drone aliens ram buildings to force humans out. Harvester aliens lay blob like entities that go after the humans, trap them and bring them back to be harvested. Another alien is like a hopping proximity mine. It bounces towards Drake and explodes on impact. Supposedly there are over 50 different types of aliens to contend with. They're cool in design, it's just a pity that



Body Harvest struggles unsuccessfully to convey a living, breathing world. The level layout and general design ranges from bland to inspired. Interiors tend to be dull and samey. Some levels use interesting, unique textures, but much of the design suffers from a lack of character. Although the concept is great, the RPG elements in the game don't really work, and the combat needs considerable tweaking. I can't help but think that Body Harvest would be much more fun if the story were the other way around. Who wouldn't want to play as human devouring aliens?!



MAN, YOU REALLY BUG ME



DUFUS? YO!

Whoever designed Drake's outfit either has a perverted sense of humour, or is a bit of a dufus. Remember the school scene at the start of Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey? Everyone's wearing these huge boots and suits that look like they're made out of foam. Drake's costume is like that, but in bright orange with grotesque black tights. Maybe the aliens will die from laughing too much...

AVAILABLE: New
CATEGORY: adventure/shoot em up
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Gremlin
PRICE: \$99.95
RATING: TBA
SUPPORTS: Rumble Pak

PLUS

Maps are huge, so there's plenty of playing time on offer.

MINUS

Not compelling due to underdeveloped gameplay elements.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
70	67	72

OVERALL

73

Originally scheduled for release almost two years ago, Body Harvest innovates, but fails to live up to expectations.

Wipeout 64

Dan Toose, veteran of the F5000 Anti-Gravity racing league prepares for another season...



Nintendo 64 Wipeout game, ever since the N64 was released... and at last it's here.

Psygnosis have gone about ensuring that the latest version of Wipeout is not just a long awaited port, by offering a completely different set of tracks, new music, new challenges, and most importantly, split screen multiplayer racing. For those new to gaming, Wipeout 64 is a futuristic racing game, where you race very fast anti-gravity vehicles on tracks that



BETTER THAN F-ZERO X?

After talking with the N64 Gamer boys about this, it's obviously going to be a matter of personal taste rather than an unanimous decision the whole world round. There's the school of thought that the physics of Wipeout offer a far greater sensation of anti-gravity racing than F-Zero X. Others believe the "speed" of F-Zero X and the frame rate make it a better title. Quite frankly, the speed in F-Zero X is just a stupid number with no real bearing on how fast your vehicle is actually traversing the environment. Track design in Wipeout is far more intricate and requires much greater knowledge of the track, and mastery of timing your air brakes. F-Zero X is much easier to pick up and play straight off... so the pros and cons are quite even. I'd choose Wipeout 64, but I'd be advising gamers to give both titles a rent to make their decision, because it's a tricky one.

Not long after the PlayStation was launched, Wipeout proved to be one of the most exciting and original games for the system, and Wipeout 2097 then bettered it just over a year later, being perhaps one of the finest examples in video game history of high production values and going all out in every department... from the money spent on acquiring the music licences, through to the metallic finish on every single page of the manual... it oozed class. As a result of all this, we've been swamped with questions about the release of a

really exploit the nasty possibilities of such a racing format. The visuals are nice, with a little more pop up than on the PlayStation, but slightly better textures as well.

BANG ON!

Why has it taken this long to come across a Nintendo 64 game with great electronic music? Wipeout 64, comes with eight upbeat, funky, techno tracks to race along to. Someone out there used their brain and realised that loop based music could be crammed onto a cartridge, and the





DAN ON HIS WAY TO WORK...



DON'T LET THAT PUT YOU OFF...



result is excellent. Two of the tracks are done by Fluke, and Propellerheads also chip in with "Bang On".

The Nintendo 64 analogue gamepad makes for an excellent controller with Wipeout 64. Taking long gentle turns is a breeze, and feels perfect. Being rumble pak compatible, this is also the first time Wipeout fans

can not only use their eyes and ears to tell what's happening to their craft.

VERY CHALLENGING

Like the PSX Wipeout 2097, there are both tracks and vehicles to unlock, giving incentive to play through the various challenges, which force you to use a certain vehicle on a certain track, with various weapons turned on or off. There's also time trial and weapon challenges, which focus on sheer racing ability and weapons proficiency respectively. Trying to kill a certain number of opponents and still finish the race on time is harder than you may first think.

Wipeout 64 is an excellent racing title, and if you've already got WO 2097, and enjoyed it, the new tracks and challenges will not disappoint (although master players will probably only really be tested by about a 3rd of the challenges). It's a shame that the four player game is quite cut back and hard to play, but played two player, it does make a good multiplayer game. Will we see Wipeout DC some day? Hope so...

BETTER WITH FRIENDS?

Despite the coolness of the whole concept, due to the nature of the courses and the speed of the game, Wipeout 64 has a few problems when it comes to delivering a great split screen experience. For starters, once you go into a split screen mode, the N64 is forced to draw a lot more polygons, and this is not the machine's strong area. As a result, the pop-up is pretty severe, and while this is not an issue in a slow racing class, it does present a big problem when you're going really fast, since you basically don't see corners and walls until you hit them. Worse still everything but the track is removed in a 4 player game, which gives you very little in the way of landmarks to judge where you're going. F-Zero X makes for a better multiplayer game if you're after this sort of thing.

AVAILABLE: November

CATEGORY: Racing

PLAYERS: 1-4

PUBLISHER: Psygnosis

PRICE: \$79.95

RATING: G

SUPPORTS: Memory and Rumble Paks

PLUS

Split screen action is great for two players.
Excellent music.
Fantastic feel to the controls.

MINUS

Pretty hefty popup in any non single player game.
4 player multiplayer is disappointing.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

88 95 94

OVERALL

93

Another excellent Wipeout game from Psygnosis.
Definitely the game to buy if you found F-Zero X a bit too dinky.

Extreme-G 2

Mild mannered gamer **Cam Shea** sets the record straight on Extreme-G 2.



SLIGHT INCLINE AHEAD

Extreme G 2 is as poor a sequel as they come. It fails to address any of the major problems that plagued the original (of which there were many), and basically offers only shallow improvements. This is clearly demonstrated by playing Extreme G 2 for a while and then moving back to the original. What is immediately noticeable is that the Extreme G 2 has a lower frame rate, the same close fogging and similarly poor gameplay.

The feel of the bikes in Extreme G 1 was sloppy. The handling in Extreme G 2 is more responsive but somehow lacks the all important precision. The way the bike interfaces with the track has also been altered. You are now far more likely to end up facing the wrong way for entirely trivial reasons. This simply shouldn't happen as it's against the grain of Extreme G's "racing excessively fast" gameplay ethic.



UMM... A SEQUEL IS MEANT TO BE AN IMPROVEMENT OVER THE ORIGINAL.

Graphically, Extreme G 2 is eerily similar to Extreme G 1. There's slightly more detail, but still the same horribly grainy quality to the visuals. Probe have improved the weapon special effects, and the actual bike and weapon designs are significantly better. These are surface level improvements, however, and add nothing to the game. The graphics engine doesn't seem to really utilise Nintendo's hardware, as Extreme G 2 chugs along at a noticeably poor frame rate, and slows down further when there's considerable action on screen. Extreme G 2 certainly has a higher top speed than Extreme G 1, but the slower frame rate is a questionable tradeoff.

Extreme G 2 has a generous twelve tracks in all, with each having three variations. The tracks are less colourful this time around and the path can be very deceptive to follow. Although there are sections that are entertaining, much of the track design seems to revolve around hiding the fogging rather than providing innovative courses. Thus, there are constant sharp twists and turns, and none of the gracefully arcing drops and rises as seen in F Zero X.

USING MONKEYS AS PLAYTESTERS MAY SAVE MONEY, BUT WILL ONLY END IN TEARS.

Extreme G 2 has many instances of remarkably poor track design. For instance, there are several ramps placed so cunningly that going off them relatively fast results in crashing into an overpass. Design elements like this are common and reduce the incentive to play on. Even so, the splitscreen option is quite good, and along with the standard single race/tournament options, features an improved tank battle mode.

Extreme G 2 ends up feeling like a poor Wipeout clone... again. Indeed, just as the Wipeout series moved from a trancey soundtrack to a drum'n'bass soundtrack for it's second installment, so too has Extreme G. Wipeout was an innovator, carved from solid creativity. Extreme G 2 isn't. Pseudo sequels like this are an insult to the gaming populace's intelligence. Do yourself a favour and pick up Wipeout 64 or F Zero X, as they both stomp all over this game.



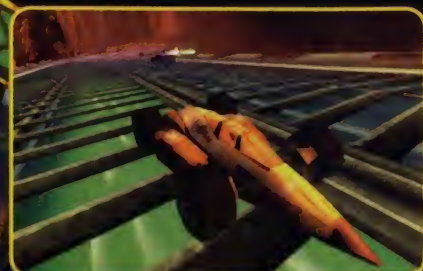
LAY OFF THE ACID

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: futuristic racing
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: Acclaim
PRICE: \$99.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: memory pak
PLUS Many tracks, good multiplayer.
MINUS In need of serious playtesting and better use of Nintendo's hardware.
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY 68 78 67
OVERALL 69 No sir, I don't like it.

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arcade machine



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NBA Jam '99

B-Boy meets B-Ball as **Cam Shea** takes on NBA Jam '99.



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Basketball simulation
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: Acclaim
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Memory Pak

PLUS
High resolution visuals, suitable for any level of realism.

MINUS
Commentary off the mark, Jam mode not quite as extreme as in days of old.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
88	81	84

OVERALL
84

NBA Jam '99 rejuvenates the series and is easily the best N64 basketball title currently available.

There's even a Jam mode for some old-school frivolity - the ball has a weird trail effect, dunks are over the top, and anything goes. Fortunately, in spite of attempting to cover every style of play from arcade to simulation, NBA Jam '99 does play a good game of basketball, and it looks superb to boot.

LEAPS AND BOUNDS AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION.

More than 300 NBA players are included with real faces and proportional sizes. Some even have their own signature moves. Iguana West have motion captured more than 500 moves for the game, so the animations are nice and smooth. The

Ahh... NBA Jam. I have fond memories of playing multiplayer NBA Jam on the SNES. The speed-fuelled arcade play style, crazy dunks, cool cheats and sense of humour kicked serious booty. Over the years though, my enthusiasm for NBA Jam and it's derivatives has waned severely, and it's rebirth onto other consoles passed by without a care. Indeed, the old NBA Jam style of play may never succeed again outside the arcades, and Acclaim realise this. Thus, NBA Jam '99 represents a radical departure in play and graphical style for the series.

NBA JAM IS BACK, AND IT WANTS RESPECT.

NBA Jam '99 has shifted from the old two on two, to a five on five matchup in an attempt to be a serious contender. Indeed, no expense has been spared. All 29 NBA teams with authentic play styles and exact representations of their arena floors are here. Players can dribble their way through the actual 1998-99 NBA schedule, or jump straight to the playoffs. Season length and schedule can be altered. Players and teams can be created, and the team's play style customised. For those interested in management options, there's the ability to trade, draft, sign and release players in a more egalitarian system than any other basketball game.

The level of realism within the game is adjustable in every way, including player fatigue, injuries and penalties. There's also a play calling feature that includes a selection of around 50 offensive and defensive plays. Even classic NBA situations from the past can be replayed. All the options are here so you can play how you want to play.



real icing on the cake is the graphical detail and crispness. NBA Jam '99 runs on the same high resolution engine as NFL Quarterback Club '99. As opposed to most N64 titles, everything is sharp and defined. Player skin textures are smooth, the courts look fantastic, and player motion is smooth and realistic. There are plenty of little touches like reflections on the court from player's shoes and from the ball as well.

Perhaps the only let down in NBA Jam '99 is the commentary. Whilst the quality of sound is reasonable, you'll get thoroughly sick of hearing the same calls over and over. Often the commentary is inappropriate and sometimes completely inexplicable. For instance: "He rides the magic carpet in for two", "With no regard for human life", "He's playing tennis", and "He's going mad, he's got mad cow disease"... hmm.



Some like to walk...



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DIGITAL STATION SHOCK 2



EASY 64

and Some like to drive...



RACE STATION Shock 2



RACE 32/64



RACE 64

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Madden NFL 99

Kevin Cheung lines up to rush Gridiron King-Commentator John Madden.



TEAM	PTS	STATS	TEAM	OPPONENT
Steelers	23	98	49ERS	63
POINTS/GAME	155	88	POINTS/GAME	120
RUSH YDS/GAME	181	212	RUSH YDS/GAME	190
TEAM RECORD	11-6-0		TEAM RECORD	11-6-0



As a dedicated follower of the Madden series since the Megadrive days, the very notion of a polygonal Madden game is tantamount to blasphemy. The N64 had already committed such an act with Madden 98, and it amounted to being disappointingly sub-par. One would think that the lesson would be learned there. Yet here I am sitting with another 3D Madden incarnation. Surprisingly, this one is actually good.

REAL-TO-LIFE NFL SIMULATION

What we have, first of all, is classic Madden strategy with a few changes. The play selections remain quite huge, offering all of your basic offensive formations with flip and linemen variations; as well as defensive plays that adequately cover the oft neglected nickel and dime formations. The supposed drawcards to 99's play system are firstly the custom playbook and secondly that the default playbooks are team-specific. That is, they reflect the styles of each team, so the Miami Dolphins won't ever get run-crazy and you can count on the Colts having trouble in the air.

There are several problems to complain of in this department. Firstly, there appears to be less plays available than before. Previous Madden games offered option of sending on specialists such as ball-handlers. In 99, these features are gone, taken with it a grander element of strategy. This might be explained by the initially novel team-specific playbook, which eventually

becomes a tad frustrating. For instance, the game won't allow the 49ers to use a shotgun formation because it's supposedly not what they do. Sorry, but I know for a FACT that they do, I've seen it on TV, and so have several million other fans in the US.

GAMEPLAY THAT COULD'VE BEEN, BUT WASN'T.

When the game is set in motion, these problems are of secondary importance. In polygonal form, Madden 99 is a vast collection of real-life stadiums and motion-captured players who juke, tackle, and charge in frighteningly realistic fashion. The polygon count might be a little low, but that's understandable given the huge geometry taking place on screen. The sounds are also of great quality, especially the realistic crowd samples that roar in Dolby Surround glory.

The use of polygons has opened up so many new gameplay possibilities that no other game has ever done. The cameras are close-up and low to the ground, which is perfect for passing and realistic for running. It's a shame, then, that there aren't as many new offensive manoeuvres as you'd want, particularly the ability to under/overthrow a receiver. For that reason, the gameplay is stacked heavily in favour of the defence. Unfortunately for the defence, the cameras are so close up behind the quarterback before the snap that it's impossible to read what kind of play it's going to be. This is mostly compensated by the ability to shift your linemen and secondary.

In the end, many of the problems I've pointed out are more pedantic than realistic, given that I'm such a hardcore fan of the game. It's probably more realistic to say that the frame rate and loading could have been tweaked a little more. Nevertheless, Madden 99 remains the best NFL sim anywhere. Forget Gameday 99: it might have prettier visuals, but it has nowhere near the strategy; and Gameday's automated commentary can't even get the team names right, much less sound as charismatic as John Madden.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Sport
PLAYERS: 1-8
PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

PLUS

Madden's strategy level is without peer, making it a superlative NFL sim.

MINUS

Choppy graphics and hardcore appeal. Free agency sucketh hard, even in a videogame.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80	81	85

OVERALL

82

A slightly flawed NFL sim that can easily be improved upon next year.



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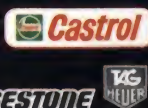
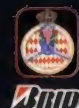


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Breath of Fire 3

No, this is not a game about eating KFC's hot n' spicy chicken. Kevin Cheung explains.



One of the funny things about Final Fantasy 7 in Australia is that most people have never bothered to ask where the previous six are. It's funny because prior to FF7, the Australian market had only dabbled a little in the console-RPG scene with games like Zelda and Secret of Mana. Games like Breath of Fire, Dragon Quest, and even Final Fantasy were, in those days, completely unknown to us. I'd wager that many of them still are. Nevertheless, Australian distributors have grown to realise that there's money to be made in the RPG genre, which is why Breath of Fire 3 is coming down under even though most of us have never seen the previous two.

The game combines polygonal environments with lush textures and animated sprites, viewed from a three-quarter perspective that can be rotated to a limited degree. Visually, BOF3 can easily be accused of looking snessey, but take it on good advice that the SNES never produced 2D effects this good. The environments are furnished with pleasing detail and it never gets pixellated. It's unfortunate that the characters themselves are so lacking in animations. Most of the time, they just sit there lifelessly and let the text scroll by, flashing their swords only when you've told them to. And speaking of text, the programmers should be

soundly beaten for not giving us the ability to skip or at least speed up the rate at which the text scrolls by. Word of advice: set it to 'fast' when you start a new game. The other aesthetic category, sound, is a collection of standard effects accompanied by an oddly 'lounge' arrangement of music, which is sometimes annoying.



NEW LITTLE FEATURES.

BOF3 doesn't offer much that's new for seasoned RPG fanatics. But for newcomers, such as those

who started on this genre with FF7, there are some noteworthy features. Firstly, every character can actively learn the attacks of the enemy, and there is a gene system that allows you to combine the powers of various dragons. During exploration, you can swap controls between other characters who appear simultaneously on screen. The latter is a bit of a dummy feature, though, since the turn-based battle system negates the possibility of putting your characters to active use like in Secret of Mana.

Overall, hardcore fans will find it a little ordinary, but most others who give it a try and get into the great storyline will find it very likeable.



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: RPG
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Capcom
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Memory Card

PLUS
Great story, and the gameplay is simple, laid-back, and easy to enjoy.

MINUS
Inappropriate music, poorly designed text system, and generally lifeless sprites.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91	88	93

OVERALL
80
A solid piece of work that won't break any new records, but is entertaining nonetheless.

YOU WERE THE BAD GUY?

BOF3's premise is interesting. You start out as a quiet, withdrawn little boy of unknown origins who winds up working for a couple of street kids who make a living out of thievery. Before anyone exclaims 'what the Dickens' and dismisses this game as an Oliver 'pulls-at-the-heartstrings' Twist game, it turns out that you belong to an ancient race of beings who once tried to take over the world. The game then becomes a quest for the truth behind your past as you seek out your old companions and slowly uncover a wicked conspiracy of unspeakable evil amongst the nobles of the realm.





Odd to the last drop!

AN ALL-NEW ACTION EPIC
FROM THE CREATORS OF
ODDWORLD: ABE'S ODDYSEE



Evil rules - but Abe's new powers mean you're up to the task!



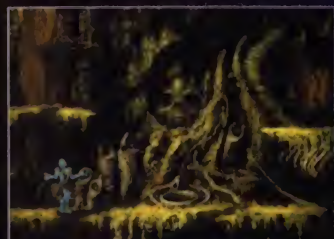
Fart possession! No other game has it - no other game wants it!



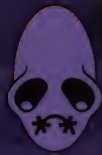
Slap some sense into those Mudokons - but look out for laughing gas!



A full - on Exoddus requires more stealth than a ninja army.



Save your race...again!
Save your game...anywhere!



Some cry because of the challenging gameplay.

Others cry for their enslaved brothers. But most Mudokons cry because electrodes are attached to their tear glands, stimulating the ingredients for SoulStorm Brew, the best-selling nauseating elixir from SoulStorm Brewery.

In the classic Oddworld tradition, Abe's Exoddus delivers more intuitive communication and entrepreneurial evil than ever before. Richer language. Lusher environments. Tougher challenges. Deadlier farts.

Welcome to the tastiest gaming brew ever concocted.

Slug it down.





ODD WORLD ABE'S EXODDUS

CONTENTS: SOULSTORM BREW

M 15+
LOW LEVEL
ANNATED VALUEES



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HYPERR >> Neon Genesis Evangelion

Rogue Trip

It's a bit hard to be an auto-vigilante with only a skateboard, but **Cam Shea** will give it a go.



Turns out that the year 2012 is going to be a biggie for Humanity. According to Terence McKenna's Novelty theory, on the 21st of December history will end, and Humankind will encounter some kind of transdimensional object. This may not be such a bad thing considering the picture that Rogue Trip paints for the world by this time. Essentially, the Earth has become a desolate wasteland crippled by pollution, radiation and greed. A ruthless kingpin known as Big Daddy has monopolised the vacation industry by securing the only pristine sites left. Only the exceedingly wealthy elite can afford to take a vacation Big Daddy style. Everyone else must simply dream of escaping the poverty and scum, or hire an automercenary to take them on a highly illegal party crashing tour of Big Daddy's resorts.

THE TOURISM INDUSTRY GETS NASTY

As one of these insane automercenaries, you'll need to pick up a tourist and take them to various photo opportunities in the levels. The twist is that other psychos are out to steal the tourist away from you and put you out of the business... permanently. So, in a cool new twist on the car combat genre, Rogue Trip involves not just taking out the other drivers, but trying to keep the tourist and earn valuable cash with which you can heal yourself and upgrade your weapons. If the tourist is snatched away, you can get him back by shooting the appropriate vehicle with an eject powerup. This sends the parachute clad tourist high into the air, and literally up for grabs.

THE TWISTED METAL TEAM TRY TO TAKE THE CROWN BACK FROM VIGILANTE 8.

Rogue Trip is commendable for trying a different approach, but the execution is substandard. The battle to get the tourist, keep the tourist and take the photos without dying can be extremely tough. This wouldn't matter so much if the environments weren't so lame. Level design and graphics are really dull and far from compelling. Plenty of secret areas and destructible objects do little to hide the absence of creativity in both setting and design. The developers also seem to have forgotten the premise of the game when designing the levels. If these



are exclusive holiday destinations then the rest of the world must just be a gigantic soggy turd, because I sure wouldn't pay exorbitant amounts of money to go to a post apocalyptic New York.

The selection of vehicles and characters are pretty cool, and combat is good but there's nothing that doesn't invoke *deja vu*. The vehicles handle unpleasantly, as they react instantaneously and don't seem to have any suspension. Rogue Trip fails to inspire visually either and comes no where near *Vigilante 8* in style or sophistication. In fact, despite the gameplay twist, *Vigilante 8* is far superior in all areas. Of note, however, is that the link cable can be used for four player games, which would certainly be a lot of fun.



AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: Car combat
 PLAYERS: 1-4
 PUBLISHER: GT Interactive
 PRICE: TBA
 RATING: TBA
 SUPPORTS: Link cable, Dual Shock

PLUS

Auto-vigilante tourism is a cool idea.
 Supports link cable.

MINUS

Gameplay doesn't come together.

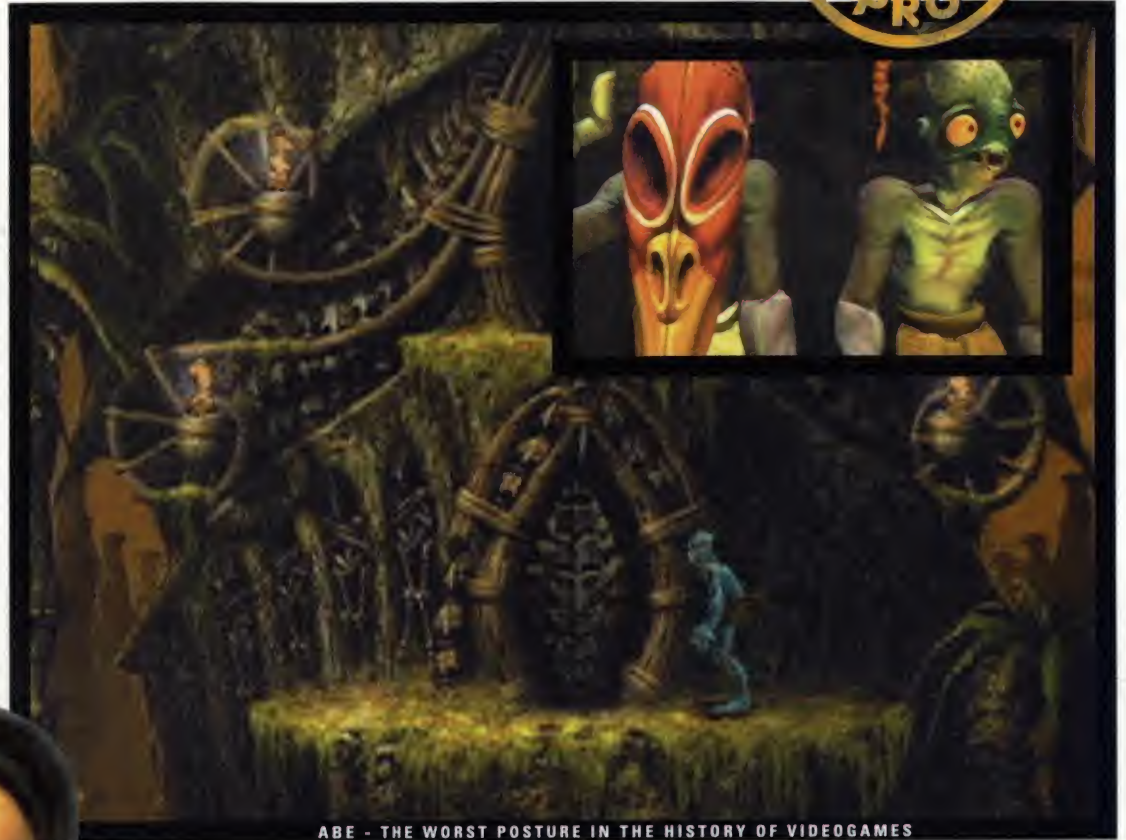
VISUALS 77 SOUND 74 GAMEPLAY 75

OVERALL
76

Despite attempting to put a new gameplay spin on a familiar genre, *Rogue Trip* falls flat.

Abe's Exoddus

Of all the things **Kevin Cheung** has to imitate from Abe, it's farting loudly in public...



ABE - THE WORST POSTURE IN THE HISTORY OF VIDEOGAMES

The Sligs are back, baby! That's right, Abe, the unlikeliest hero who rescued all 99 of his fellow Mudokens from Rupture Farms, has returned for a new adventure called Abe's Exoddus. In this little tale, Abe has been visited by the ghosts of his forefathers, who explain to him that the evil Glukkons are using blind Mudokens to mine and otherwise dig up their remains. Fuelled with a desire for truth and justice, Abe sets out to find the bones of his elders, and winds up embarking upon a grand quest not only to bring peace to the spirits of the dead, but also to release all the Mudokens who have been enslaved.

For those of you who don't know about Abe (you'd probably think that was the most outrageous paragraph of text you've ever read), Abe was the star of a massive revival in 2D platform gaming last year, taking the form of Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee. The original game was a masterful combination of lush 2D animation, awesome other-worldly graphical designs, wickedly brain-teasing platform puzzles, water-tight controls, and good clean home-cooked entertainment for the whole family. The fantastic FMV sequences and off-beat humour - such as the farts - helped a little as well. Abe's Exoddus brings all of that high quality stuff back - fart movie included. Some of the buttons have been changed around and Abe seems to have a larger vocabulary at his disposal, but generally, the game looks exactly the same and as good as its predecessor.

GAMEPLAY THAT'S SEQUEL-WORTHY

On that fact alone, I was prepared after playing the game for five minutes to write off Exoddus as a case of 'more of the same'. However, to judge the game on appearance alone would be entirely wrong. You see, the magic of Abe is in the game's ability to challenge us with new graphically-based puzzles, which of course is limited only by the programmers' imaginations. On that aspect, Exoddus does not disappoint.

Firstly, Exoddus provides brand new puzzles to solve, which is a must for any sequel of this kind. Secondly, Exoddus provides a host of brand new characters in addition to the usual scrabs, sligs and paramites, which introduces a great new set of dynamics and strategies in tackling the puzzles. Thirdly, Exoddus introduces different types of Mudokens such as blind, sad, sick, angry, or just plain silly from inhaling too much happy gas. This demands even more strategies in tackling the game. For



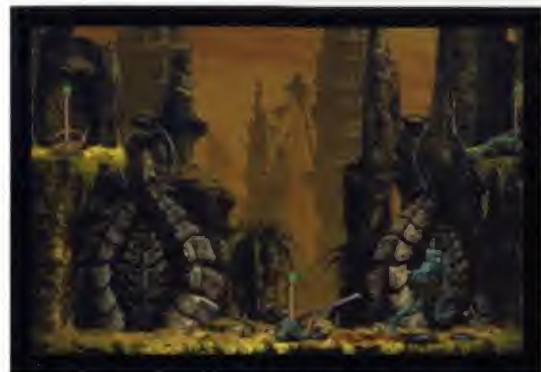
instance, when directing a blind Mudoken towards an escape ring, you actually have to take note of the fact that it is blind and it doesn't know where it's going, and it will keep on walking straight ahead unless you tell it to stop. As compared to its predecessor, Exoddus is a much deeper and complex game, making it a worthy sequel in spite of the same-ness of the graphics and sound effects.

One of the main complaints from gamers about the original Abe, though, was that it was too damned cerebral or difficult to pull off. While Exoddus nevertheless remains on the difficult/cerebral end of the scale, the level designs contain a notable change in focus from pure brain-power to explosive mindless mayhem, where

you get to randomly tear about the area, blowing things up and not caring about the consequences. All credit should go to the programmers for providing these changes in pace, as they give us gamers a nice emotional break from the oft immersive and serious mood of the game. However, this new gameplay feature comes at a very slight price. You see, many of these high-action sequences involve over ten animated sprites running around on screen, accompanied perhaps by many explosions in the background, which results in the odd bit of slowdown. Ordinarily, this would not matter in most other games. In Abe, however, timing is absolutely crucial, meaning that tight controls must always be maintained. The slowdown obviously detracts from that goal, but not by much.

IS IT WORTH IT?

There would now be two final questions begging at the lips of every game player: is Exoddus worth buying? And how is it as a



sequel? By itself, Exoddus is a fantastic game. It might be a little brainy, and it will certainly be too hard for some people, but most everyone will find something to love in it. As a sequel, Exoddus is a very worthy addition to the series. The only people who won't like Exoddus are the people who didn't like the original Abe. For the vast majority of us who loved it, Exoddus is 2 CDs long. Added with the new puzzles, characters, and Mudoken interactions the game is sure to provide many hours of mind-bending entertainment. Definitely a top buy for true lovers of platform games.



ALTERNATIVES

There is, quite frankly, no game out there that matches the raw 2D platforming quality of Abe's Exodus, save perhaps Abe's Oddysee. If Abe is too cerebral for you, and you're into more action-oriented platform games, then Wild 9 might suit you better.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: 2D Platforms
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: GT Interactive
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Memory Card

PLUS

A great new adventure bringing back everything we loved in the first place, plus more.

MINUS

A bit difficult for some.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

91 88 93

OVERALL

92

Could be accused of being a rehash, but as soon as you play it, you're hooked.

Libero Grande

After a quick perusal, **Eliot Fish** was hooked by that Namco magic...

Most soccer games make you feel as though you're directing the action from the Whitman's balloon, or tied to the underbelly of a large pigeon with the godlike power of possessing the central nervous system of any player you so choose. Whilst this is fun for soccer freaks who are into playing thoroughly realistic strategic games, it's a bit daunting for the casual gamer who likes the sport but doesn't want to read pages of stats and be required to do everything bar slice the oranges. Libero Grande is the PlayStation port of the Namco arcade game, and it's a godsend for those of you who are after a quick, entertaining game of soccer with an all-new twist.



THE GOALIE'S DISTRACTED BY THE CUTE REF



LET'S FOLLOW THE YELLOW ARROW!



though, you'll just be getting them to pass the ball to you, so you can attempt to take it all the way down the field and slam it into the back of the net yourself. You will find that the opposing teams eventually get harder to the point where

you are forced into playing more as a team, which is excellent. However, Libero Grande is arcadey enough for you to simply charge and shoot your way through a match.

A nice addition is the player challenge mode where you can try out a variety of cool soccer skills in an attempt to beat current records. From dribbling a ball around witches hats to trying to hit a target in a net and learning how to curve the ball, this is one of the most addictive things about the game.

There is also a two-player mode where you can either team up or play against each other in a speedy aggressive exhibition match. Impressively, there are an amazing range of moves your player can perform, and the game adheres quite realistically to actual real-life rules - though you can turn them all off. All up, Libero Grande is fun, addictive and succeeds remarkably with its unique one-player third-person take on the soccer sim. Just beware that its arcade origins have dictated an unfortunately easy game and the novelty could wear off rather quickly. Recommended though.

HE SHOOTS, HE SCORES!

Get this. In Libero Grande, you play as only one member of an international team, and play through every match from the perspective of that player. No player switching, no plethora of camera angles and next-to-no realism. This is a good thing, and it works surprisingly well. Playing from the third-person is confusing at first, but the game is engineered to be played this way, and once you suss out the controls, you'll slip into the rhythm of the game. By keeping the X button depressed (you know, telling it how hopeless it is) your player will always "track" the ball, so you never get lost on the field. The action is fast and furious, and if you desire, you can simply charge down anyone with possession and use some footwork to take the ball off them. Libero Grande is for the gamer who just wants to score, score, score.

Various buttons will order your teammates to pass the ball to you, tackle an opponent or shoot for a goal, so there is a small amount of tactical play. Most of the time

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Sport
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: Namco
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G

PLUS
Excellent challenge mode, addictive gameplay.

MINUS
Limited arcadey appeal. A tad easy.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY
80 75 79

OVERALL
79

Not hard to like, though getting used to the fixed perspective is tricky.

IT MAKES THE REST LOOK TAME

S.C.A.R.S

"Whiplash action and killer graphics provides gripping replayability. Nine tracks, completely unique environments and alternative routes keep the pace frantic".



It's here! The racing game that makes the

others look like a drive in the park. Half animal, half machine these cars are ready to rip the roads to shreds. In a no holds barred adrenaline charged speed fest, you can take on 4 players on split screen on the PSX and N64 with multi player mayhem on the PC. Staggering 3D graphics and sheer driveability make S.C.A.R.S. a game that will really leave it's mark.



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The Unholy War

Kevin Cheung goes the full tonk in Archon 98... err... Unholy War.



POWER VACUUM IN THE GENRE

Unholy War has practically no competing alternatives, save Front Mission 2, Final Fantasy Tactics, Archon (not a big seller anymore), and Kartia, which are only available in Japan and the US. Why we never see these games in Australia is anyone's guess...

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Strategy/Action
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: Crystal Dynamics
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock, Memory Card.

PLUS

The attention to technical detail will get you hooked.

MINUS

Not exactly 'great' strategy compared to other games. The average execution doesn't help much either.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
82	78	85

OVERALL
84

If you enjoyed Archon in years gone by, you'll love The Unholy War.



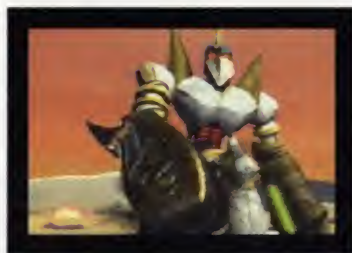
In gameplay terms, this puts you in control of several units on a hex-based map, each unit possessing unique powers and attributes. While on this chess-board, you can cast all sorts of spells like healing, attacking, spawning, and so on. When you get close enough to an enemy unit, the game enters a real-time 3D combat zone where the two units fight it out with each other.

THE BEAUTY'S IN THE STRATEGY

Graphically and aurally, Unholy War can't be said to have been executed brilliantly. The polygon counts are a low and the backgrounds are sparse, but the game gets by with smooth textures and lots of individual character designs that animate well and have their own distinctive charm. It's a shame, then, that the real-time battle controls are so loose. The programmers probably wanted to create the feeling of fast-paced action, but the experience ends up being imprecise at times frustrating. The execution is therefore, at best, above average.

However, if you play a few levels into Unholy Wars and get to know it better, it is an absolutely enthralling game. Every unit-type has vastly different energy and ammo attributes, special weapons, weaknesses, strengths, movement abilities (such as flight), and so on. With a little time, you'll find yourself meticulously planning the movements and positioning of each warrior, making sure that your healer is close enough to everyone, backing up each front-line warrior... this is the what 'real' strategy games are about.

Unholy War is not what you'd consider a hardcore strategy title. The real-time battle sequences were designed to appeal specifically to action buffs who enjoy mindlessly blowing things up. That's why there's a separate Mayhem Mode. But aside from that, Unholy War will no doubt earn itself a cult following, as it's a game that will appeal to almost everyone.



Turn-based strategy battle games are far and few between on the PlayStation, probably because they've literally been overrun by their real-time equivalents. This

is unfortunate, considering the immense popularity of the genre on the PC. As such, a game like Unholy War is always a welcome surprise. The question now is whether or not this game plays as well on a console as its PC counterparts usually do.

MY GUYS VERSUS YOUR GUYS

Unholy War pits two main warrior clans against each other. You have the Arcanes, who are a bunch of peace-loving wizards, swordsmen, and monsters with immense destructive powers; and the Technos, who are a collection of cybernetic warriors. The object of both clans is to claim dominion over the land of Xsarra. Seeing as neither side is willing to compromise over the territories, it seems as though one clan will have to be completely wiped out for there to be any re-establishment of peace to the realm.



TOCA Touring Car Championship 2

Serious Racing critic **Simon Bailey** didn't have many criticisms to make of Toca 2.

Ohhhh myyy Godddd!!! How the hell do they do it? Let me be the first to boast that the best Touring Car racing game for the PlayStation just got better! And I'm not just talking of a minute change in vehicle polygon count, or one more 'Bonus' track. I'm talking some Major League improvements here that make you wonder just where Codemasters can possibly go from here!

To start with, this is not just a game that simulates the UK's 2nd most popular form of motor sport, but a game that whacks you smack-bang in the middle of the auto racing lifestyle! Let me elaborate.



ented Van Diemen Formula Ford. From these two classes you can progress, by accumulating enough points that is, to further categories such as the High-powered Lister Storm or Jaguar XJ-220 series. Anyway you cut it, there is some serious fun to be had mastering this game. The handling on all the cars, especially (I can't really explain the fuzzy feeling I got when I first raced them) the Formula Fords is pure silk. You can throw the car around and it will just smile and go wherever you want it to go. I love that!!! This new feature alone is enough to distinguish it from its older brother and warrant immediate purchase.

Another cool feature of TOCA 2 is the test track. Here you can select any car you want, including the support cars, and go for a hoon around any one of 5 variations of the purpose built half dirt, half bitumen, test track. This is major fun in the wet!

4-PLAYER, SPLIT-SCREEN THRILLS AND SPILLS!

The rest of the game consists of the standard time trial, arcade and 2-player mode. This time you can actually have a 2-player championship, competing against all the other computer controlled cars. Codemasters have also included a multi-player link-up mode, where you can join 2 consoles together for all together I'd have to boast that this game is quite amazing, and with nearly every conceivable idea included it comes ever so close to being perfect. But we all know there's no such thing.



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Race Driving
PLAYERS: 1-4 Link-up
PUBLISHER: Codemasters
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock, Steering Wheels, Link-up, Memory card.

PLUS

Totally ingenious game modes provide a great learning and awesome longevity.

MINUS

Analogue control is a bit touchy. Fairly hard on your neck after 5 hours straight!

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

91 91 93

OVERALL

93

If you like racing games and you don't buy TOCA 2.. you're a bloody idiot!

First, the actual Touring Car Racing side of the game is basically the same as TOCA 1, but has been updated with all the official 1998 teams and drivers. 8 cars to choose from, 8 'real' tracks to race, with a further 9 being unlocked as you progress through the game. But the real genius in this new incarnation lurks in the 'Support Car Championship' Mode. What are Support Cars? Well, held before all motor racing events on this fine planet are, short, sprint type races known as support races, in which the young, up and coming Schumacher's and Hakkinen's (as well as the wealthy 35-60 year old) show their stuff.

GOOD SUPPORT

In Support Car Mode you race against cars that are all the same make and model. You can start with either a Ford Fiesta production car, or go for the more driver ori-

Cool Boarders 3

The darling of the 'Aspen turtleneck skivvy society, Cam Shea, needs a serious lesson in cool.



YOU'D BETTER SWATCH YOURSELF.

Cool Boarders 3 has officially licensed boards from Burton, Ride and Swatch. Oddly enough, Levi's, Arnette and Butterfinger are also involved. Unfortunately, their corporate logos are boldly plastered all over the courses... pretty true to real life snowboarding tournaments actually.



There's no business like snow business at the moment on PlayStation. Snowboard this and snowboard that seems to be the catchcry as snowboarding games constantly materialise from the development ether. Given the success of the Cool Boarders series, it comes as no surprise to see a third installment.

Cool 3 isn't so much a sequel, however, as an entirely new gaming entity, as UEP Systems have handed development duties over to Idol Minds. Fortunately, whilst retaining the arcade emphasis of previous Cool Boarders titles, Cool 3 is a more mature and complete package.



START FLAPPING THOSE ARMS DUDE

blazing, as there are multiple branches and the path is often quite wide, allowing many different racing lines and death defying runs. Cool 3 also succeeds where Cool 2 failed, in creating competitive opponents that are fun to race against. Splitscreen play is worth a look, but racing feels a lot slower and there is no tournament mode.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Snowboarding
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: 989 Studios
PRICE: \$69.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Dual analogue controller

PLUS

Options and secrets galore. Plus, has funky street style.

MINUS

Need more two player options, the music blows chunks, and tournaments can be very demanding.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
86	77	87

OVERALL
86

The Cool Boarders series finally comes of age.



NO, IT LOOKS GREAT!

Gamers familiar with Cool 2's "look ma, I've built a snowboarding run out of lego" graphics engine, where slopes were constantly splitting at the seams, and riders were blocky low polygon models will really appreciate just how tasty Cool 3 looks. The riders are gourard shaded and well animated, and the terrain undulates smoothly and realistically. The engine is good, allowing reasonable viewing distance, as well as conveying the sensation of speed. Control of your board is also solid. The control configuration is quite intuitive and now features a railslide button for all those fallen trees, logs, pipes and benches just waiting for a radical dude to get busy on, as well as introducing the ability to punch opponents on either side (a la Road Rash).

Cool 2 was characterised by raw speed, deviously narrow, windy sections of steep track, and tricks of herculean proportions. Cool 3 has drastically different gameplay and course design. Tracks feel more like trail-

SLOPE STYLE TESTS YOUR DOPE STYLE... YEAH BOYEE.

Cool 3 is quite a comprehensive snowboarding experience, and you'll need to be proficient in several areas to successfully unlock all the mountains and secrets. Cool 3 has at least six mountains to conquer, each with six events. Win a tournament on one mountain and you'll unlock the next one. Tournaments consist of racing in all



BIG LOG JOKE GOES HERE

six events: downhill, boarder cross, slalom, half pipe, big air, and slope style. Each tests the boarder in different ways, the aim of slope style, for instance, is to accumulate the most points in a freestyle stunt session down a course littered with railsides, obstacles and jumps. Each event is explored in full across the six mountains, so even all six half pipes are distinct in design. With such a commitment to depth and variety, as well as excellent visuals and riding feel, Cool Boarders 3 comes highly recommended.

Megaman Legends

Kevin Cheung. Megaman. Nuff said.



described as Tomb Raider without the cumbersome and sluggish rotation controls. Megaman moves around quickly and smoothly, even though the screen jerks around a little; and the game offers the ability to upgrade your weapons and use other special tools of mass destruction. The combination of quirky plot with your personal involvement in Megaman's development is a nice combination in keeping you hooked to the game. Although the focus is more on the shooting/fighting elements as opposed to TR's exploration and timed acrobatics, Megaman Legends is actually a very decent, if not superior alternative to the 'more hype than substance' adven-

Dedicated fans of the Megaman series will be in for a bit of a shock: Megaman has no helmet, and he has hair. Not only that, but gone are Doctor Wiley and his band of merry robots. Replacing them is a new all-encompassing storyline that will appeal to the insatiable thirst of anime fans out there. You see, the planet is covered almost entirely by water. The societies getting by on the islands left behind are surviving by digging up old technology, literally, from the ground. In particular, they're looking for power sources called quantum refractors. Megaman's role in this world is that of an adventurer, helping a young lass named Roll find her parents whilst at the same time looking for the fabled Mother Lode, which can supposedly solve the world's energy crisis.



tures of Lara Croft. It's a pity Megaman isn't endowed with quite as large a star status.

At the end of the day, Megaman Legends isn't what you'd consider to be a ground-breaking game. It's all been done before. What sets it apart from the rest is, firstly, that the gameplay is executed very well compared to its competition, and secondly it has a good on-going plot to bring meaning, flow, and continuity to the game. Some games don't even offer that. As such, Megaman Legends is recommended for fans of the series, anime fans, and those who are looking for a nice spot of adventure.

ANIME TOMB RAIDER?

The game begins with a simple quest in a tower where you are looking for a refractor. From there, the game plays out in a scripted fashion where you explore, run, jump, shoot, and climb your way through vast polygonal environments. Various goals and sub-quests must be accomplished to unlock certain areas, and the plot eventually reveals itself along the way. What's amazing about Megaman Legends is the sheer size of the environments and the attention to detail. For instance, the town at the beginning of the game is unbelievably large and lavishly detailed in its depiction of every minute peculiarity of the buildings and the people walking around. Heck, the streets are so hectic you can even get hit by a car! Granted, some cynics will say that the graphics are too simple and a little pixellated, but if you consider the fact that Capcom's intention was to create an anime-style game, the graphics are actually spot on. Megaman Legends is by no means meant to look anything like Tomb Raider, even though the controls are similar.

That brings us to the gameplay, which is best



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action/Adventure
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Capcom
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Memory Card

PLUS
 Anime-style plot with easy-going yet addictive action.

MINUS
 Seen it all before, and the voice acting is pretty bad at times.

VISUALS **SOUND** **GAMEPLAY**
87 **79** **83**

OVERALL
83

A great action title to breathe yet more life into everyone's favourite blue bomber.

THE ALL TIME GREATEST RACE AGAINST TIME




Not
RECOMMENDED
FOR HUMAN PREY
UNDER THE AGE OF 15



NOBODY
HAZARD
COMING SOON!

Colony Wars: Vengeance

If they had included a Death Star, **Eliot Fish** would declare this PlayStation game of the year...



The tables have turned. It's 100 years after the setting of the original Colony Wars, and this time you're flying for the Colonial Navy, thirsty for vengeance after being weakened by the League and caught in a struggle with opposing tribes. Re-emerging again as a military force, the Navy re-opens the warhole and you're back at war with the League. In fact, you're attempting to find their homeworld in the Gallonigher system, and you're still led by Kron who works for the Navy. Whilst the original Colony Wars was top stuff, and a delight for console gamers hungry for a space combat sim, it still had room for improvement. Now is it just me, or is Colony Wars: Vengeance something more than just a tweaked sequel...?

BIG-BADA-BOOM

If Colony Wars tickled your goolies, then Colony Wars: Vengeance is going to blow your mind. From the get-go, this is superb stuff, and truly an example of masterful programming. If you didn't believe a decent space combat sim could be achieved on the PlayStation, then get on your knees and start singing "Hallelulah!" because this is the best console space-sim ever. Whilst Colony Wars

was certainly good, CWV manages to improve on it so greatly, that you'll want to play this sequel even if you played the original to death. It may look like more of the same from screenshots, but the flight engine has been improved to perfection. We're talking smoother, faster, prettier and cooler. Your craft now works beautifully with the analogue control, including the shock feedback, and cruising around with the stick is like carving butter on a very hot day. Using the shoulder buttons to thrust and reverse, as well as roll the craft and engage turbo just feels good, and the rumble is used subtly thus enhancing the effect when it kicks in. The speed and smoothness of the space flight is joyous, and jumping in and accurately navigating amongst other space craft is easy. All



the pretty graphical effects from Colony Wars are still there, but they've been enhanced - including spacecraft models and textures which are all now sharper and cleaner than before. The atmosphere is brilliant, with distant planets, nebulae, jumpgates and asteroids all looking utterly convincing. CWV is just a treat to play.

GAME OVER, MAN, GAME OVER!

The first few missions ease you back into the game-world, with some simple dogfighting and side-objectives, such as lancing asteroids embedded with crystal and defending Navy cruisers. As you venture further into the complex story, missions will become tough as nails, and yet the game is compelling enough to keep you replaying them happily. Each "Act" comprises of roughly three missions at a time, so you can't save the game until after you've completed the "Act", which certainly ups the

difficulty level. The missions have been constructed with some truly original and fun objectives, like towing reactor cores and sling-shotting them into a jumpgate - carefully avoiding getting sucked into it's vortex when you release your grapple-cable. Oh, and why not help defend the Navy installation whilst you're at it!

What will please those of you who played the original to death, is that CWV includes ground-based missions with a new fighter craft. Cruising over hilltops and taking down enemy defenses is very successful and makes a great diversion from the space-based missions.

All sorts of funky new weapons have been included in CWV, like the Particle Gun which you charge up and then unleash upon your foes. There are also Pods which hover behind your craft for added offense and defense or even repair friendly craft. The enemy AI has been given an edge too, and they seem to respond more realistically to your actions, which means for more exciting dogfighting. Because of the branching mission-structure which was so popular with the original Colony Wars, you'll find yourself tempted to replay earlier missions just so you can see what would have happened if you got it wrong or vice versa. Some of the missions are so unique, that you won't complain too much about having to replay them over.

Colony Wars Vengeance is such a well-rounded game, that Psygnosis should be applauded for not churning out an average sequel to make some quick bucks. If you didn't play the original Colony Wars, then drop this mag now and go buy Colony Wars: Vengeance today. It rocks.



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Space Combat
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Psygnosis
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G8+
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock Controller
PLUS Amazing graphics, both pretty and fast.
MINUS Help me mummy, it's a bit too hard!
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY
90 88 92
OVERALL 90
A truly brilliant game which will leave you with withdrawal symptoms.

Ring

David Wildgoose loves a good adventure game... But Ring wasn't quite up to Cryo's usual standards.



Games with the word "ring" in the title are usually either boxing sims or subject to reams of amusing innuendo - often both. However, Cryo's Ring is a little different. It's got nothing to do with boxing and it's not really the sort of game for which butt jokes seem appropriate. You see, this is meant to be a sombre and portentous experience. Based upon the grand Ring Cycle opera by the bombastic 19th century German composer, Richard Wagner, Ring is an overly serious adventure game with some pretty heavy mythical and mystical leanings.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Adventure
PLAYERS: One
PUBLISHER: Cryo
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P133, 16MB RAM, 8xCD
DESIRED: P200 MMX, 32MB RAM, 24xCD

PLUS
Typically gorgeous artwork we've come to expect from Cryo

MINUS
Overly complicated and confusing plot. Unrewarding puzzles.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92	70	50

OVERALL
57
A stunningly pretty, yet confusing and lifeless clone of better adventure games.



A STORY ABOUT WHAT?

As far as the plot is concerned I'm afraid I haven't a clue. The manual unhelpfully witters on about the legend of the Nibelungen, mnemogenetics, a metascient brain called ISH (that's you, by the way) and the complexity of the human soul. Fascinating ideas all, I'm sure, but I'm not so certain that a few brief pages in the CD inlay is necessarily the best place to explain them, especially when the actual game that follows is even less forthcoming. The single most lasting impression I have of playing Ring is a feeling of total and utter confusion. What is ERDA? Who are all these people? Why have these familiar Teutonic gods (Wotan, Freia, etc) become half-robots? And why are they floating through space on asteroids?

RING IS ATTRACTIVE

Perhaps a more telling question, though, would be to ask why everyone is trapped within a Myst-clone of the most spectacular, but deathly dull proportions. Undoubtedly, Ring is a lavish visual feast, boasting stunning in-game rendered sequences that most other games could only manage in intros and cut-scenes. Cryo's Omni 3D engine has beefed up immensely since the last time I witnessed it in action and the results are rarely less than amazing. In terms of its graphics alone, Ring has enough to keep you interested for a while at least. The orchestral musical score is similarly impressive (as long as you like Wagner, that is).

MECHANICAL GAME MECHANICS

Where Ring runs into deep trouble is with its gameplay. The in-game logic is baffling, thanks to the addition of far too many artificial (and unexplained) restrictions on your actions, and to describe the story (and your role in it) as perplexing doesn't come close to doing justice to its sheer incomprehensibility. As a Myst-clone, there's a typical over-reliance upon mechanical puzzles, solved via the manipulation of levers and the like. In fact, several sections are eerily reminiscent of some parts of Riven. My real problem with these games is that they simply feel so empty - the mystery is evoked merely by there being so little happening, so little to do and so little reward for doing it. Ring breaks up proceedings with the occasional conversation that your character engages in with one of the other inhabitants of this surreal game world. Without exception, though, they're all non-interactive and far, far too lengthy - some dragged on for a good ten minutes or so. Coupled with the regularly (and surprisingly) awful voice-acting, sadly misplaced attempts at humour and mind-numbing tedium of the dialogue, the prospect of any future conversation kept me in a constant state of terror.

I suppose that someone, somewhere, will find much pleasure and enjoyment in deciphering the more intricate aspects of this game. I'm just glad it isn't me.

Total Air War

Hyper's new flight sim expert Thom McIntyre, checks out the latest DID flight sim, and it's a winner.



You're on the Red Sea, resolving disputes between North African and Near Eastern nations - but before you think this'll be a 60's jet turkey shoot in your hotrod F-22 stealth fighter, remember there's oil in the 'hood, and China, France, Russia and the US dig ally-swapping. They all pack serious hardware; even the crusty MiG-21s have been souped-up.

After DID's 1995 PC sim EF2000 they were hired to build the military Eurofighter simulator. So does TAW deliver? In spades.

THIS ONE'S GOT THE LOT

Action is hard, fast and nail-biting. Advanced avionics don't reduce play to point and shoot; TAW can tax your dogfighting skills to the limit. The strategic demands are totally involving too. The real-time AI campaign engine, honed over years, is a DID drawcard - playing the same campaign again builds a different war. Alliances may shift! The enemy responds intelligently. (If you already have ADF, this is the major addition.)

The well-illustrated manual is exhaustive, covering tactics, strategy, avionics and munitions plus info on the F-22 and its combative cohorts from aviation heavy Bill Sweetman.

Installation is painless. The slick interface is intuitive and options are easily set. Flight and radio training is generously catered for (did you say phew!?!); lessons cover takeoff, landing, emergencies, wingmen, midair refuelling, then air to air, air to ground weapons training and AWACS command.

FLUFFY CLOUDS

TAW's highly evolved F-22 graphics engine renders smoothly contoured terrain, the best fluffy clouds yet, haze, fog and sun glare, detailed airbases, roads, buildings, convoys, and tons of aircraft. And filthy, oily explosions. Pulling g's and using vectored thrust will have vortices streaming around your plane. Outstanding in SVGA like EF2000, TAW shines under 3DFX.

Also reminiscent of EF2000 is the flight model. On the easy side but not unsatisfying, it won't bite you. However I suspect this is attributable to the real plane's flight computers as fly-by-wire is used these days to provide 'artificial stability' and consequently extra agility.

Incremental aircraft damage, screaming turbofans, loud, visually spectacular armament and accurate radio chat all complete the immersion.

A custom combat option warms you up before ten campaigns unleash the game's full scope. In the War Room you review intelligence, strategies and damage reports while the clock counts the hours remaining in your budget. Initial missions offer patrol and escort flights plus the crucial AWACS command. The AWACS flight is where you take care of the strategic side of your war, vectoring your airfleet around to intercept, identify and avoid enemy aircraft. Your planes also request guidance to tankers when they hit bingo fuel.

When you get promoted, airstrikes become available on the roster where Mavericks, rockets, laser guided and cluster bombs ensure you can make a dog's brekky of enemy bases. These flights comprise up to sixteen aircraft which handles your air cover.

With three difficulty levels, multiplayer support and meticulous attention to detail TAW packs a long-term challenge. A choice of aircraft to fly would appeal; however TAW lives up to its name and shapes up as classic. No combat simmer should do without.



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Air Combat Sim
PLAYERS: 1-network
PUBLISHER: DID/Ocean
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P133, 16 MB RAM
DESIRED: P166+, 64 MB RAM, 3D accelerator, Joystick.

PLUS
Very strong visuals; smart blend of action and strategy.

MINUS
AI'ded AI could use some tweaking. And who hid the fire extinguisher?

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

94 92 94

OVERALL
93

A tidy, compelling and durable package. Great for first time flight simmers and veterans alike.

Grim Fandango



Eliot Fish thought the "Day of the Dead" was when everyone turned up to work on Monday...

Who would ever have thought it'd be fun to be dead. Well, as soon as you pull Grim Fandango out of its plastic, you'll be the happiest dead guy alive... er dead. You know what I mean. Manny Calavera is a travel agent at the Department of Death, selling packages to the afterlife - the better person you were in real life, the better travel package you'll receive for your four year journey to Eternal Rest.

As Manny, you're finding it impossible to sell anything better than a walking stick to your clients, and the boss is breathing down your neck. When you stumble across a woman named Mercedes Colomar, who was purer than gold in her time in the land of the living, and yet doesn't qualify for a decent package according to your computer, your suspicions are aroused. Something shonky is going on at the Department of Death and you're gonna find out what it is and set things straight...

GETTING A BONER...

Grim Fandango is unique. Here is a "classic" adventure game which not only reinvents the "point and click" concept by removing it all together, but it throws in fully 3D characters with an engine which supports 3D hardware! The result is an adventure game which is completely and utterly absorbing - never is there text or icons on the screen, as the entire adventure is played with a brand new control system which leaves the characters and environments untouched by anything to remind you you're playing a game.

You move Manny around the rendered environments with the directional arrows (much like Alone in the Dark), and as he walks past objects of interest, his head will turn and look in the direction of the item! This means exploring the room is played out much like in real life - you walk Manny over to the desk, and as you shuffle past, he will "look" down at the drawer, or possibly direct his gaze at a picture on the wall. When Manny has noticed something, you can then simply tap a key on the keyboard to tell him to perform an action - like E for examine, U to use and P to pickup. Manny will then either do what you tell him to, or crack some line to let you know why he can't. If an object is picked up, Manny just slips it inside his jacket. To access your inventory, you hit I and the camera shows a close-up of Manny pulling an object out of his jacket - you then just cycle through till you find what you want him to use and hit U to use it. Simple and yet incredibly original. What this means, is a seamlessly convincing gameworld that you really feel a part of.



ELTON JOHN BEFORE THE OPERATION



THE HYPER GAMING LOUNGE



THE TREE TRUNK OF DOOM



DROP-DEAD GORGEOUS...

LucasArts just never seem to fail when it comes to adventure games. Look at the Monkey Island series, or Sam and Max, even the now-ancient Day of the Tentacle is more entertaining than most current point-and-click affairs. Tim Schaffer, who created Day of the Tentacle and the great but short Full Throttle, is the mastermind behind Grim Fandango, and this production is possibly his best work yet. The game is beautiful and hilarious to watch, with great character design and

animation, as well as some truly hilarious voice-acting! The demon driver Glottis is sure to have you cracking your sides with laughter! The puzzles and situations in Grim Fandango are also original and tricky enough to keep you smiling and subsequently pacing your room in the feverish pursuit of finding a solution to the seemingly unsolvable mess Manny is caught up in. However difficult it may seem at times, there are always logical solutions here - it just requires a heavy dose of lateral thinking.

Grim Fandango just excels in all areas - brilliant music, gorgeous graphics, fiendish puzzles and nutty humour to keep you laughing whilst you go mad with desperation trying to solve a puzzle. The setting of the land of the dead is perfect for an endless array of wacky jokes, as well as an original and intriguing story. The characters you will meet on your journey are sure to go down in the LucasArts hall of fame...

If you haven't yet experienced a LucasArts adventure game, go and do whatever you can to get a copy of this game. If you have played one of their adventure games in the past, then I think it's safe to say that you went and bought Grim Fandango without even reading this review...



AVAILABLE:	Now	
CATEGORY:	Adventure	
PLAYERS:	1	
PUBLISHER:	LucasArts	
PRICE:	\$89.95	
RATING:	G	
REQUIRED:	P133, 16MB RAM, 4XCD-ROM	
DESIRED:	P166, 32MB RAM, 3D accelerator	
SUPPORTS:	3D cards	
PLUS		
Intuitive interface and a superbly funny script		
MINUS		
A few of the puzzles are a tad linear		
VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
94	94	92
OVERALL		
93		
Yet another stupidly good adventure game from LucasArts. How do they do it?		

Shogo - Mobile Armor Division

Hi-tech anime stuff and first person shooters all at once... Dan Toose's dream come true.



Very few 1st person shooters have something really new to them other than engine enhancements and AI tweaks. Monolith have obviously noticed this and decided to do something about it, because Shogo Mobile Armor Division clearly has a new direction to it that will probably be the norm for the next generation of first person shooters.

From the instant the intro cuts in, the anime influence to Shogo is immediately apparent. If you shut your eyes you'd swear you were listening to some Japanese import anime film. Yep... poxy keyboards and some petite Japanese femme singing a happy, upbeat song, to the imagery of mechs, guns, and death.

ANIME ACTION ADVENTURE...

You play the role of Sanjuro Makabe, a young commander in the United Corporate Authority, who goes through a series of missions, some on foot, others in a



mech (MCA - Mobile Combat Armor) which unlike other FPS (first person shooters), all tie together as part of a story, rather than just being a series of maps. Unreal had the best sense of a coherent journey with a world that "worked", till Shogo, which really puts any other FPS to shame in terms of having a real plot. There are narrative sequences at the beginning, and often during a map/mission, which are really what drive the plot.

Shogo's visual engine is extremely inconsistent. At times, you'll be dazzled by the beauty of the scenery and the weapon effects, only to then come across some really b-grade polygonal character who casts a shadow that hovers out into space from the ledge they are standing on. Compared to Quake 2 and Unreal, Shogo runs a bit jerky, and polygon count and character animation are definitely below par compared with what we've become used to over the past year. Oddly (or maybe not so odd), some of the death animations look staggeringly life like and realistic, which really prompts the question as to



YOU KNOW, YOU REALLY SHOULD PICK ON SOMEONE YOUR OWN SIZE...

why Monolith didn't get this right across the board.

The weapon effects for the MCA's guns are awesome, since most result in trails of smoke, fragments, and lovely spherical explosions. They truly deliver the sense that anything in their path is toast. The effects for the missions on foot aren't nearly as spectacular. However, if you like blood and bodily dismemberment, you'll have fun in these maps anyway.

TRIAL AND ERROR

There's a good learning curve with Shogo, and missions do get progressively harder, although there's a few easy criticisms to make of what makes Shogo difficult. For starters, it's extremely easy to be killed in an instant, and basically this happens frequently in the missions on foot. All this does though is present you with a real trial and error scenario. Approach doorway, fire at where you think enemy will be standing, if correct, enemy dies, go straight to go and collect \$200... if incorrect, he shoots you with his shotgun, you die... you reload, and do it all again, firing at the right spot, advance to next doorway.

The AI really could use a shot in the arm, and this would have allowed Monolith not to rely on the "bastard enemy placement" method of making the game challenging. Enemies simply wait for you, and do very little in the way of evading fire. Sometimes you even get enemies facing you, in plain sight, that just wait for you to kill them. There's also a lack of variety in enemy types, which may suit the storyline and plot, but after a few hundred kills, you're aching for some variety.

At this point of time, Shogo suffers from the same problem that Unreal had (or should I say has), in that the game has "Mr. Hanky" networking efficiency. On a LAN, you can have a ball with Shogo, but till Monolith get a patch out (which they have vowed to do), you can forget about playing online. Due to the nature

of damage and game mechanics, don't expect a fast free flowing deathmatch game like with Quake.

FLAWED, BUT FUN

Don't let these negatives I've stated overshadow the main issue at hand, which is that I had lots of fun playing this game, particularly when piloting the MCAs. As an anime fan there are some things about the game that felt like in jokes for me, like seeing the door leading to R.Hunter's quarters. The voice acting throughout adds heaps to the game, not just because it helps the plot and vibe of the game, but also because it will remind anime fans of the awful American voice acting commonly used in dubbed anime.

Shogo M.A.D isn't the greatest first person shooter this year, due mostly to its engine, and the fact that multiplayer is going to be limited to LAN for a while (which may kill the interest out there for many FPS fans). However, Shogo does break new ground in terms of having plot and character in this genre, and makes other FPS single player experiences seem hollow and lifeless.



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: First person shooter
PLAYERS: 1-Network
PUBLISHER: Monolith
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: MA15+
REQUIRED: P166, 32MB RAM video card
DESIRED: P2-233, 64MB RAM, 3D accelerator

PLUS

Breaks ground in this genre for having a plot. Cool weapon effects

MINUS

Somewhat B-grade engine and A.I. A bit short, and gets repetitive.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
87	90	82

OVERALL

84

An excellent choice for anime lovers who want a Quake-style game to suit, but not for multiplayer gaming.

European Air War

We didn't send **Tom McIntyre** to France, but we did send him to his room to play European Air War... almost as good.



This game will appeal to a lot of folks - anyone who read Biggles and daydreamed of lining up the evil von Stalhein in their gunsights should give this a look. You can fly for England, America or Germany at any time in the Second World War.

For starters EAW's interface is attractive and many detailed screens set the WW2 mood. Options are manifold so the game can be easily tailored to different skill levels and systems. There are quick start, single mission and 'career' options available and the wealth of newsreel and aircraft movie footage provides a strong sense of history.

Single missions allow some flexibility e.g. weather, home base and destination, what and how many planes you and the enemy fly, and difficulty levels. Checking 'instant action' will skip the long cruise to your target, dropping you straight in. Time acceleration is also available.

HISTORY ALWAYS REPEATS

Campaigns unfold on a semi-historical basis, so for instance if the Allies aren't doing their bit, apparently Hitler's Operation Sea Lion (the invasion of England) will commence. The Axis can't win, however - apparently due to popular opinion. I concede the war's outcome beats marching through the town square every day but hey, this is a game, not a time machine. Even though the Luftwaffe briefings are in German!

EAW offers classic fighters of the day, each with their own cockpits and flight models, from the Hawker Hurricane I through the Messerschmidt 262 jet. Several variants of most planes are available to you. You have 20 types in all to fly. It's good to see some twins - the Messerschmidt 110 and 262, and the American P-38 Lightning - but the DH Mosquito, wooden wonder of the English, is unavailable to you.

Externally, aircraft look good. Things missing are moving ailerons, rudders and other hinged bits but landing gear and props are well animated. The terrain is excellent. Rivers, cities, farmland and forests merge nicely although the forests appear blocky down low. Clouds and haze, among the lushest I've seen, add hide-and-seek to the dogfighting.

Each cockpit is a good facsimile of the real thing. As well as fixed views there's a virtual cockpit where you can pan your view around from the pilot's seat. This doesn't hinder the display frame rate, and the instruments on the panel work in this mode, so it gets a big thumbs up. There are also handy pad-lock and chase plane views.





YOU DON'T SOUND SO GOOD...

Engine sounds could be a shade beefier as these were some of the largest and most powerful piston engines ever built. Looped samples also caught my ear. Still, the effect as other planes cruise around you works nicely and gunfire sounds are satisfying.

The flight models seem essentially sound, allowing sideslips, spins, asymmetric thrust conditions in twins, and other things real planes do. Absent are propeller pitch, and fuel mixture controls which could help tame an overheating engine or stretch range for the long trip home over the Channel.

Behaviour like stalls and spins, engine torque, overheating, limited ammo, easy gunfire 'hits' and easy landings are optional, so the Sunday flier needn't feel swamped. Unsurprisingly for a Microprose release, EAW is a game with a healthy dose of realism rather than a purist sim. An optional HUD system also allows you to pick friend from foe at a distance, and displays range to target - much like the beloved Chuck Yeager's Air Combat of old.

REALITY COMES AS AN OPTIONAL EXTRA...

If you select all available realism, EAW will cut your work out for you, giving you a taste of what WW2 pilots faced. If you choose limited ammunition and realistic 'hits' it will take you some time to rack up any kills. Spinning during a furball costs thousands of feet of altitude that you probably won't regain as once your engine heats up, scorching climb rates are off the cards.



ANHH IT'S SO PRETTY



NAZIS. I HATE THOSE GUYS.



Disabling these phenomena leads to a more satisfying shoot-em-up, but the choice is there.

Different subsystems of the planes can be damaged by gunfire as you'll learn when you attack your first bomber formation. They didn't call the B-17 the Flying Fortress for nothing! Your control surfaces get shot up, your hydraulics can fail, and pilots (yes, you!) may be killed in flight. So break out the rockets and watch your target disintegrate at 25 000 feet. The first time I managed this on a Liberator bomber, I nearly impaled its severed wing on my spinner! Impressive.

BOLD MISSIONS... BAH

Probably the biggest advance that EAW brings to the table is the number of planes in the air - up to 256! This is what recreates the skies of the period for you - wave after wave of bombers and their fighter escorts will at once blow your mind and make you wish for a Pentium II. I haven't seen anything like this before. Depending on the skill levels you assign computer aircraft, they can be very savvy, quickly losing you and getting on your six.

EAW is the first game in its genre for quite some time, but will have some heavy competition very soon from forthcoming Parsoft/Activision and Microsoft releases.



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: WW2 Flight Sim
PLAYERS: 1 to network
PUBLISHER: Microprose
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P166, 32 MB RAM
DESIRED: P200+, 64 MB RAM, 3D accelerator, joystick, rudder pedals

PLUS

Dynamic missions, gargantuan dogfights and a choice of aircraft take you back to air war's glory days.

MINUS

Aircraft systems won't wow the purist; engines could sound gutsier.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

93 89 95

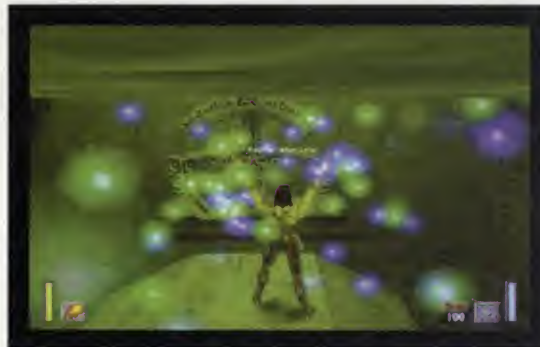
OVERALL

93

A hugely enjoyable flight sim that provides all that old glorious dogfighting action.

Heretic II

A third-person perspective shooter which plays well? **Eliot Fish** double takes...



Corvus is cool. For a guy with pointy ears, that's not bad. The fact is, he is the hero that you played in the original Heretic, and as the FMV intro will show you, after defeating the Serpent Rider D'Sparil at the end of Heretic, Corvus steps into a portal and is whisked away to the land of Parthoris. When he gets there he is shocked to discover that something horrible has happened whilst he was away tonking demons. The people of Parthoris are infected with some strange magical plague which attacks their brain and turns them insane - sorta like people who vote for the Liberal party - so you're left with no choice

but to try and put a stop to it...

Interesting to note that Heretic II is played solely in the third-person, even though Heretic, Hexen and Hexen II were all first-person shooters. It may be tempting to write off Heretic II as another victim of the Tomb Raider disease, but the game mechanics in Heretic II remain true to its first-person origins and remarkably it works incredibly well.

HAVE AT YOU!

Heretic II uses the Quake 2 engine, so gamers familiar with this will instantly be able to use all the same console commands to tweak away as well as simply adjust to the mechanics of play. Though set in the third-person, you can control Heretic II just like Quake 2 - with the mouse and keyboard. This is awesome, as it makes the game a breeze to jump in and play, though of course you'll find yourself having to bind new keys for a bunch of funky stuff that Corvus can do. Much like Lara Croft, Corvus can do combat rolls, backflips, flip off walls, climb up onto ledges, swim underwater and all that jazz. However, Corvus has some new moves such as the flying kick, where he uses his staff to "pole vault" into enemies, through crates or across gaps. Corvus also has an IQ which makes Lara Croft look as brainy as a boiled potato, because you never have to line him up exactly in front of switches to press them, and you never seem to bang your head or bounce off ledges when you try to jump and grab them. This simple character-control improvement on the third-person genre alone, makes Heretic II one of the most enjoyable third-person games to date.

As far as weaponry goes, Corvus doesn't run around wielding rocket launchers or even a big munny sword, as he is primarily a magic user. But don't let this put you off. Casting spells is as easy as selecting a weapon and pressing "fire" - there's even a crosshair option so you can see exactly where your fireball will be cast. The magic in Heretic II is cooler than cool, with Corvus wield-



LORD SEAFOOD GOES EXPLORING...

Whilst the magic effects are amazing, what really makes Heretic II a great game are the fantastic environments that you will explore throughout your journey and the compelling atmosphere which pervades most of the game. The level design on a whole is excellent (Raven had help from Fantasy artist Brom), with multiple paths to destinations, an amazing attention to detail (casks behind the bar in a tavern even drip) and most importantly - convincingly moody atmosphere. Exploring through dark cobbled streets, for instance, only to discover that you can climb up and travel over the rooftops if you desire, makes Heretic II unstoppably engrossing. The story really helps to propel the action too, with scripted events taking place during a level, and seamless animations where the game switches from gameplay to animated sequence within the engine when you meet other characters.

The monsters range from utterly stupid to ball-tearingly hard, and overall the AI is pretty solid. Weakened lesser monsters will usually try to escape, whilst the harder ones keep coming at you, and some of their attacks range from billowing poison gas to deadly magic. There are even good old rats to squish. Fighting is fairly intuitive, and an autoaim feature will help belt your fireballs home if you're having trouble dodging and aiming at the same time, but at times it becomes utterly confusing, as Corvus's magic effects sometimes obscure your surroundings.

If you dig RPGs, then you should know that Heretic II is almost the perfect game to live out your adventuring hero fantasies, and first-person shooter fans will be surprised at how playable this is in the third-person. All up, fans of the series and gamers new to this sort of thing will both be entertained.

ing a bunch of powerful offensive magic, as well as having Defensive magic up his sleeve also. The Defensive magic works almost like the Inventory items do in most first-person shooters - they're mostly secondary "specials" which repel the enemy, add to your defense or even cast light for those especially creepy areas. There are a few magic bows to collect in the game too, such as the Phoenix bow which will obliterate most foes with one shot. If you run out of mana, Corvus can summon his sword-staff and get up close and personal for some old-fashioned slice and dice. The staff itself can also be powered up to deliver an extra punch, and the coloured, transparent lighting effects of the magic involved will leave you spooging in delight.



AVAILABLE: December
CATEGORY: Third person shooter
PLAYERS: 1-32
PUBLISHER: Activision
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: P133, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P200+, 64MB RAM, 3D card
SUPPORTS: 3D Accelerators

PLUS

Looks amazing at times, good overall design.

MINUS

Can get confusing during a hectic fight.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
93	85	85

OVERALL

87

Role-playing comes to life!
Good mixture of adventure and action.

Half-Life

Dan Toose has finally found this year's true Quake killer... Half Life.

**HYPER
GAME
OF THE
MONTH**



Looking back over the past few years, it's quite understandable for most gamers not to be all that excited about yet another Doom or Quake clone. Many of the people that never got into these kind of games have told me that they simply can't relate to the games, due to the environments not looking like any place familiar, and there being a lack of plot to help give a real purpose to why you're risking your neck to kill all these enemies. Perhaps Valve have come up with a game that might satisfy these people.

IN THE BEGINNING, THERE WAS ATMOSPHERE...

From the moment the intro starts, the game is spell-binding. You are Gordon Freeman, a young scientist on his way by monorail, into the Black Mesa research facility. After travelling through some jaw dropping environments, your carriage drops you off at the Anomalous Materials facility, where you are to participate in an important experiment. How do you know this? Because the guy at the front desk literally speaks to you and tells you... as will some other people if you bother them while they're at work. Unfortunately the experiment doesn't go that well, and in the resulting chaos, Half Life truly begins. By this time, you have a sense of identity, and a real sense of where you are and what is happening, which is what makes Half Life such a great single player game.

Half Life is based on a modified Quake 2 engine, and there are some technical advancements that have added to the overall visual effect of the game. For starters, creature models have varying levels of texture detail at dif-

ferent parts of their bodies. This has allowed for highly detailed faces on the characters, while leaving things like lab coats and jackets less detailed, so as to put less strain on your computer.

Just like in Unreal, there is a corona around light sources, although not quite as over the top as Unreal, which results in something that looks a little more realistic.

Best of all the new effects (although not unique to Half Life due to Sin) is the way you can mark the environment. If you fire a rocket into a wall, it leaves a big black mark. If you run past a guard and shoot him with a machine gun, his blood will spray onto the wall behind him... in the right direction!

Besides these technical improvements to the appearance of a Quake 2 engine, the Valve team have to be congratulated for their outstanding level design. While Half Life doesn't have that same breathtaking visual smack in the face that Unreal did, it does have the most convincing and realistic environments in a 3D game to date, and there is no point of time in the game where you can't relate to what's going on around you (except perhaps in the very last stages of the game, but this ties in with the plot). I'd advise anyone who plans to play Half Life to do the game's awesome visuals justice by only doing so with a 3D accelerator.

SOUNDS GOOD...? YES IT DOES

Not only does Half Life look amazing, but it sounds unbelievably good too. Half Life supports Aureal 3D sound, but it didn't work with the build I reviewed. Even



without A3D, the game sounded better than any other first person shooter yet, so I can only drool at how it will sound with A3D. The acoustics of every environment you enter are superb, and the sound reflecting qualities of the surfaces around you seem to have an effect on the sound, with realistic reverb and echoes.

Weapon sound effects are meaty enough to satisfy fans of the genre, but the thing that will impress all gamers is the speech, which really helps separate Half Life from its predecessors by giving the humans in the game both character, identity, and an interactive quality. Perhaps the only flaw here is that while you meet heaps of people in the game, you only hear a handful of different voices.

At this point you could be forgiven for believing that what has impressed me about Half Life has been the audio-visual experience, but in truth they are just proof of the excellent production values Valve have put into Half Life, to accompany the really impressive gameplay.

As stated before, the sense of being in a real environment is unparalleled, and this is not only due to the environment itself, but the creatures within it too.

Throughout the game, you will come across scientists and security guards, and what Half Life does that no other game in this genre before has done is have these characters react to you and environment intelligently, and also "take orders" from you. Admittedly your orders are limited to "follow" and "stay", but they do the rest, so there's no real need for any extra commands. Security guards are like extra firepower, in that they shoot enemies upon sight. They're surprisingly pro-active about it too. I was under the impression they just stood by you and fired until I saw one chase after an enemy that fled around the corner ahead.

The scientists are timid nervous creatures, but they can be of great use by allowing you to get through certain doors by going through retinal scans for you (the common way doors are unlocked in Half Life), and also by giving you a shot in the arm if you're extremely unhealthy (health boost).

At various points in the game, certain individuals have something special to tell you, to help you figure out what you have to do, and to also add plot and story to the game.



AUSTRALIA, YOUR CHICKEN IS READY



GO DO YOUR TRAFFIC REPORT SOMEPLACE ELSE!

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE

Like Unreal, Half Life also has vastly improved enemy AI over the vast majority of first person shooters out there. The AI is directly affected by the difficulty level you select, ranging from dim-witted, through to extremely crafty. For example, on the easy setting, if you burst into a room and open fire on three enemy soldiers, they will fire back, and at the most, take cover. On the hardest setting, they will fire back instantly, forcing you to take cover, and while you can't see them, they will run to new positions to give them a tactical advantage, even going so far as to run around behind you if you're not



TRAINING GROUNDS

Unlike every first person shooter before it, you don't have to take on the insurmountable odds while you're still getting used to moving around and aiming straight. Half Life comes with a training mode, which goes through every physical activity in the game you can do, and even has a firing range so you can get a grip of how to use the guns.

IMPLEMENTS OF DESTRUCTION

No first person shooter would be any good without an interesting and useful lineup of weapons, and Half Life doesn't disappoint at all.



[4]



[1]



[2]



[3]



[5]



[6]



[7]



[8]



[9]



[10]



[11]



[12]



[13]



[14]

CROWBAR [1] Your common every-day lump of steel with a hooked end. Extremely useful for breaking open boxes, doors, and skulls.

9MM SEMI-AUTO PISTOL [2] The first firearm you acquire. While not overly powerful, this automatic pistol is quite accurate, and works quite well for taking out smaller targets, or those at a great distance.

.357 MAGNUM REVOLVER [3] Can you say Dirty Harry? Only holds six bullets in the chamber before you need to reload, but each shot packs an incredible punch.

SEMI-AUTO SHOTGUN [4] A low rate of fire, but packs a heavy kick. Some enemies go down from one shot, making it a very handy weapon.

MP5 [5] A machine gun with a built in grenade launcher. Perhaps the most versatile weapon in the game, but not the most powerful.

CROSSBOW [6] Used for firing darts coated with a toxin to help disable your opponent. A must for taking out enemies underwater where regular firearms do not work.

ROCKET PROPELLED GRENADE (RPG) [7] Unlike Quake, the rocket launcher comes with very little ammo around to pickup. It is however far more deadly, with the rockets following wherever you aim your crosshair, meaning you can literally shoot around corners, or even in spiral patterns.

GLUON GUN [8] Two firing modes: Rapid fire, which uses one unit

of nuclear energy, and shoots at a healthy rate. The other mode is a wind up shot, which does more damage depending on how long you spend holding down fire before releasing (uses more ammo). Particles that hit walls at sharp angles will bounce off.

TAU CANNON [9] A powerful beam weapon that will make short work of anything that it touches for long. Has two firing modes, offering different beams.

HIVEHAND [10] This alien technology not only fires guided shots (one or many depending on which firing mode you use), but also regenerates its own ammo, making it very efficient. Lacks a lot of punch though.

FRAGMENTATION GRENADE [11] You pull the pin out and throw it. Got that?

SATCHEL CHARGE [12] Just like the pipe bombs in Duke Nukem. You place the explosive package, and then whip out your remote control to detonate the package at your leisure.

LASER-TRIGGERED CLAYMORE [13] Another "Duke" weapon. Can be placed on any solid surface, and then projects a beam that if "tripped" over, will cause the mine to explode. Ouch!

SNARK [14] Seriously. You throw them at the enemy and they bite them to death! Careful though, they're not fussy about who they eat, including you.



DEATHMATCH

Our LAN experience with Half Life was extremely enjoyable, and although having such a limited number of us able to play the game at once in deathmatch made it hard to judge how a large game would run, we did learn the most important issues. Firstly, the networking code

seems efficient like Quake 2, and should be just as good online. Secondly, the mix of weapons, and the way they are placed in the game (lying on the ground inconspicuously) will result in a more tactical and cautious experience in many cases. Laser Tripmines and explosive charges

will force a little care from players... Else they'll die an awful lot. Team Fortress II is being sold separately soon, and we'll review that as soon as it's out, and also have another look at Half Life DM along with it, once we've got to play it online with more people.



careful. Don't think being out of sight makes you safe either, as soldiers are quite capable of throwing a grenade to where you are hiding. Being able to hear soldiers call out and communicate to each other is also particularly cool. A little more speed and manoeuvrability on the part of the soldiers would have been the only way I could see to improve the challenge.

While combat is never boring in Half Life, the only possible complaint I can come up with is that there isn't a huge variety in opponents. Basically you fight humans: soldiers (two uniforms), gunships, and tanks... and aliens: Headcrabs, mutated scientists, mutant sharks, alien soldiers, alien slaves, and a couple of alien animals resembling squids and chickens (I know... I know). Perhaps it just seemed this way because the game is reasonably long and I just came across them so many times.

There are however a couple of awe inspiring "boss" monsters, which don't go down with conventional means, creating sub missions for you to be able to defeat them, which is cool.

Half Life works more as a long seamless journey rather than a series of levels. Loading times are extremely low, and moving from one area (map) to another takes seconds, and does not really interrupt play at all.

Many of the weapons come with two firing modes (like in Unreal), and with fourteen of them available, that



HIS PERSONALITY IS ELECTRIC

makes for a lot of variety. Speaking of variety, the various challenges and puzzles you are presented with in Half Life will challenge and please all comers.

With a complete mind blowing visual, audio, and gameplay experience, Half Life doesn't really have a weak area at all. It should interest some people that previously didn't see the real appeal to games like Quake, and other similar titles. If you're really into it, there's even Worldcraft 2.0 lite packaged in, so you can make your own Half Life maps (requires time and patience). At this stage, Half Life gets my vote for game of the year.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: First person shooter
PLAYERS: 1-64 (network/online)
PUBLISHER: Sierra
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: MA15+
REQUIRED: P133, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P200, 64 MB RAM, 3D accelerator
SUPPORTS: Aureal 3D sound, Direct 3D sound, OpenGL

PLUS

Outstanding visuals, sound, AI, level design, and basically everything. Comes with a map editor too.

MINUS

A few more voice actors and a few more alien types could have helped... but it's not a big deal.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
97	97	97

OVERALL

97

Half Life takes every element of a 3D game conceivable and does it better than ever before. Astounding.

Dune 2000

Did **Ross Clarksmith**, die hard fan of the classic Dune 2 fall for the sequel, Dune 2000?



tion on the world of Arrakis, or Dune as it is otherwise known. The three houses, the noble Atreides, the insidious Ordos and the evil Harkonnen, all have differing strengths and weaknesses, loosely based on the old trade-off of strength versus speed. The houses all have the same base units they did in the original, with a few specialties, Sonic tanks, Deviators, Ornithopters and Devastators only being available to specific houses. To liven things up a bit, three other combatants have been thrown into the fray, mercenaries, smugglers and the native desert dwelling Fremen. All three groups have the potential to be enemies or exploited as allies.



The look and feel of Dune 2000 is pretty much the same as it was for Dune 2, and hey if you are on to a good thing... Westwood Studios has souped up the graphics to 16 bit High colour, and some of the visual effects are stupendous, especially when vehicles or buildings explode. The majority of effort here seems to have been misdirected into the cinematic cut scenes. These pop in before every mission, give a bit of a briefing, and a lot of dramatic effect. Not that they are not enjoyable, but more attention could have been paid to more important aspects of the game, like the AI, or developing new and different units. The interface is very Red Alert-ish.

The best feature of the game, where it diverges from the original, is the multiplayer options. There is head to head via modem, up to six people can thump each other on a LAN, and four players can connect over the internet. Now this seems pretty standard of late, and compared to other games like Starcraft which already allow for more, a little lacklustre.

For fans of real time strategy Dune 2000 allows you to play a classic game built to today's standards. Some of the earlier missions are dead simple, but the final few for each house are frustratingly difficult. If you are in two minds as to whether this is a game worth buying, check out the video and see just how cool the desert world of Dune can be.

Products that sport the name Dune have a long history of being associated with the big names in entertainment. First up there were the books by Frank Herbert, then came the movie, written and directed by David Lynch. The original computer game was an RPG, but most people remember the sequel Dune 2, released in 1993, a lot more. This was the very first of the real-time strategy games, which lead on to the hugely successful Command and Conquer titles. So it was with great anticipation that Dune 2000 was awaited.

Dune 2000 has the same basic idea as its predecessor, three great houses vying for the control of spice produc-

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Real Time Strategy
PLAYERS: 1-6
PUBLISHER: Westwood Studios
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: PG
REQUIRED: P90, 16MB RAM, Win 95, 16Bit video.
DESIRED: P133, 2MB video RAM

PLUS
The original returns in a new shiny suit.

MINUS
Visuals are disappointing when compared to other recent titles in the genre.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80	78	85

OVERALL
81

A good game, but offers nothing new for the fans of modern real time strategy games.

Caesar III

Grab some cos lettuce, bacon, parmesan cheese... oh hold on... **Eliot Fish** goes back to the drawing board.



The Caesar series from Sierra has been chugging along nicely now, maturing and evolving into a robust, well-rounded sim. Caesar III is easily the best so far in the series, as the gameplay has been honed into something instantly playable and yet deep and challenging. You don't need a master's degree in ancient history to be able to play Caesar III - hell, if you've been to a toga party, that's all the experience you need - the design is so good, it teaches you all you need to know as you play...

MAN, I'VE GOT A SORE BACK...

The aim of the game is to rise through the roman ranks from Citizen to Caesar by building and managing your own roman city. Whilst it sounds like a simple Sim City-esque task, Caesar III is far more complex and challenging than a straightforward city management sim. You begin the game by simply building housing and making sure it has access to water, then build a farm with a granary and market to provide food, prefects to keep the peace, engineers to keep the buildings in shape, temples to appease the gods, er... a senate to collect tax and er... you see, it starts simply and suddenly becomes quite

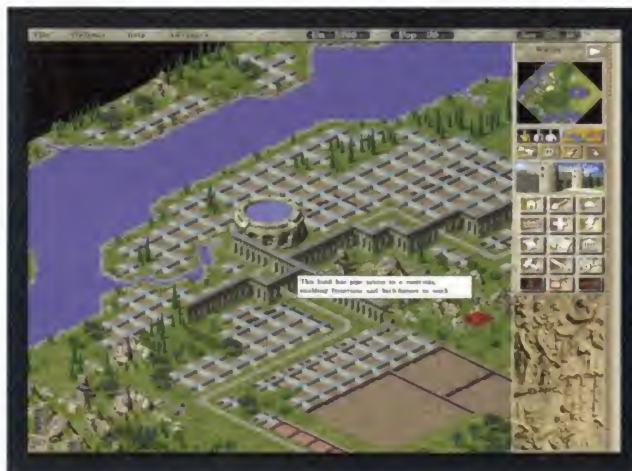
fiddly and tricky to manage! Thankfully, not only are the menus clear and informative, well structured and easy to access, but the graphics are brilliantly drawn and it's a cinch to visually keep track of what's going down in your town.

Everything is animated to give you an indication of how things are going - high unemployment for instance, will result in citizens sitting around the steps of the Senate. If it feels like there are a million things to keep track of, you can simply change the overlay to display only specific elements like waterways,

crime hotspots or icons showing you where it's desirable to live or how much tax is coming in - it's never really a chore and keeping the balance between all these factors is the guts to the game.

DEADLY ELEPHANTS...

Religion and war are two areas where Caesar III is entertaining and unique. Appeasing the gods becomes crucial to survival, with each god requiring temples with staff to keep them and your citizens happy. Happy gods will grant you bonuses, however get the gods on your bad side, and they'll smite you with famine, war or natural disaster! As far as the warfare goes, it isn't very demanding in comparison to the city management, but it can be enough of a headache on it's own. When you're city is becoming prosperous, your enemies may decide to "expand" and you've got a fight on your hands. You can build a variety of troops, from legionaries and javelin-throwing infantry to cavalry and then simply send them off to fight. There are a variety of formations to play with, but essentially it's a matter of numbers and quick decision making. Having planned your city well, can make a huge difference too, and there your challenge awaits...



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Sim/Strategy
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Sierra
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P90, 16MB RAM,
 Win 95/98
DESIRED: P133, 32MB RAM

PLUS

Great presentation and damn addictive work.

MINUS

The warfare is a little basic, but that's kind of a relief.

VISUALS **SOUND** **GAMEPLAY**
85 **80** **87**

OVERALL

87

Great balance of sim and strategy. Caesar III will keep you inside for months.

Megaman X4

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: 2D PLATFORMS
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: CAPCOM
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: MEMORY CARD



It's a little hard to believe, but Megaman is 10 years old. Well, it actually, seeing as Australia came a year late to the party. At any rate, Megaman X is here for his fourth instalment. Since the Saturn version will probably never see the light of day here, it is, for all intents and purposes in Australia, a PlayStation exclusive.

The plot is something of a cross between Bladerunner and the robot-related madness of Astroboy. Basically, in the distant future, humans and robots (or reploids, as they are known) are headed towards a terrible war of spawned of hate and scare-mongering, mostly because innocent groups of reploids have been accused of being associated with Maverick (read criminal) reploids. Naturally, your role as either Megaman X or Zero is to protect the humans, but also to prevent all-out war from breaking out and to unravel the little conspiracy that's taking place in the background.

To cut a long story short, Megaman X4 is a 2D platform game where you run, dash, jump, climb, and shoot things up. Like every other previous Megaman game, you can select the order in which you tackle each stage, and you scavenge the weapons of the bosses that you defeat. Graphically and aurally, Megaman X4 is the stuff of old-time classics. The sprites are colourful and nicely animated, there are plenty of huge explosions, and the sounds are anime-ish PCM.

Unfortunately, compared to newer games like Klonoa or Abe, X4 is a little plain and lack-lustre both in the aesthetic and gameplay stakes. If it came out over a year ago (which it did in Japan), it would definitely have fared much better. Nevertheless, old-school platforming gamers, fans of the series, and anime nuts like myself will probably enjoy it.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
80	77	75	78

NHL 99

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ICE HOCKEY SIM
PLAYERS: 1-12
PUBLISHER: EA
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P166, 16 MB RAM
DESIRED: P200, 32 MB RAM, 8XCD-ROM, 3D ACCELERATOR.
SUPPORTS: NETWORK OR MODEM PLAY, WINDOWS SUPPORTED CONTROLLERS.



NHL 98 was arguably the best ice hockey game to be released last year, so how will EA top it? The list of improvements, tweaks and additions in NHL 99 are impressive. For all you ice hockey virgins, EA have made the game more user friendly by including a beginner play mode. There are also Coaching Drills for practicing basic play mechanics or focusing on specific weaknesses in your game. NHL 99 is a step closer to feeling like the real thing - your teammates and opposition are more intelligent, puck physics feel more realistic, and more coaching strategies are included.

NHL 99 also looks stunning. Player models are solid and feature quite detailed faces. Incidental details like reflections on the ice from both the players and the overhead lights, as well as ice spray from their skates are well implemented. Player animations are smooth and

realistic, thanks to the freshly motion captured moves taken using pro NHL players. EA have also used professional stuntmen to motion capture all the hits, thrills and spills of the game. There's still no blood on the ice, but the fighting mechanics now include three punches, the hook, jab and haymaker, as well as the ability to duck punches. It still looks a little staged, rather than being a spontaneous melee, but hell, it'll help release some of that pent up aggression - hack the bone!! NHL 99 is an intense game of ice hockey and has an truckload of options, but try before you buy if you already own NHL 98.

CAM SHEA

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
90	89	90	89



Bust A Move 3 DX

Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: PUZZLE
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: TAITO
PRICE: \$99.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: RUMBLE PAK, MEMORY PAK.

Considering what a disaster Bust A Move 4 has turned out to be, N64 owners can reconcile themselves with the fact that at least they're getting Bust A Move 3 DX, which is by and large the best out of the entire series. For those not in the know, BAM 3DX is a puzzle game where you are meant to destroy all the bubbles on the screen before they come crashing down to kill you. This is accomplished by shooting your own bubbles, and linking up 3 or more bubbles of the same colour, thereby causing the offending bubbles to explode.

This third instalment has plenty of new features. There are new characters to use, each of whom carry their own 'counter' bubble sets in the multiplayer modes; as well as brand new bubble types, such as bowling balls and rainbow balls that change colour depending on what was next to it.

BAM 3DX is surprisingly faithful to its arcade parent. The graphics are large, bright, and colourful, sporting all of the humorous animated touches that the fans of the series have grown to love. Controls are tight, the physics have all been accurately reproduced, but the music is a horrible PCM adaptation of the original.

As a single player game, BAM 3DX is a bit on the easy side, and will leave all those people out there without mates feeling a little ripped off. As a multiplayer game, however, BAM 3DX is monstrously addictive and fun. What's better is the 4 player mode, which can generate levels of puzzling madness not seen on other systems (probably because other versions don't have 4-player). As always, if you're a puzzling fan, this is top stuff. However, I suspect that the bulk of the action-loving N64 community will probably chicken out on this one.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
80	75	85	83



Echelon

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: REALTIME STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: ARENA GAMES
PRICE: \$69.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P100, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P166, 32MB RAM

Send in the clones! Yes, the increasingly-tiresome stream of C&C wannabes shows no sign of abating in the lead-up to Christmas - quelle surprise! What's perhaps most remarkable is that they seem to be getting worse. Or maybe it's just that we're becoming less tolerant with each new release. And why not? Why should we put up with third-rate cack like Echelon, for example, when we're still playing Total Annihilation and Dark Reign (or Red Alert, for that matter) and can see Homeworld and Tiberian Sun looming ever larger on the horizon?

Echelon is a shockingly retrograde game for several reasons.

It hasn't got any multi-player capabilities at all, thus restricting its longevity to the appeal of the solo game. Here, it makes a fair start with the inclusion of three apparently distinct warring tribes (like Starcraft), but then throws it away by making them utterly devoid of personality. Worse, each tribe has only five missions on offer, the first of which are a trio of variations on the run-your-squad-round-the-map-and-kill-the-outnumbered-enemy routine that every RTS uses to ease you into its controls.

Quite why Echelon needs three of them, especially when there's only fifteen missions in total, simply beggars belief. Compounding these crippling flaws even further is the extremely poor AI - the enemy won't respond until you enter their tiny range of vision and the thickness of your own units demands eternal vigilance. Meanwhile, the graphics are about on a par with KKND. On a slightly more positive note, Echelon may well win the award for the worst designed box of 1998. Excruciatingly amateurish.

DAVID WILDGOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
55	50	35	39

Jetfighter Fullburn

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: FLIGHT/COMBAT SIMULATOR
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: TAKE2/MISSION STUDIOS
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G8+
REQUIRED: WIN 95, P133, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P200, 32MB RAM, 3D ACCELERATOR

Flight Simulators are always released notoriously late, and if you invited one to a dinner party, you'd have to tell them it was a week earlier just so they would turn up on time. It's acceptable, though, if extra time is needed to craft a spectacular flying experience...

Jetfighter Fullburn is closer to Wing Commander than Jetfighter III. The whole idea behind Fullburn was to create a flight sim that is fun and interesting, rather than dull and anal in approach. Sure it's been seen before (remember Strike Commander?), but this time, rather than dulling down the sim aspect, the hardcore sim elements remain very much intact. What you do get is 3 CD's full of a respectably shot storyline, full of sordid romance, political instability, and naughty games of war and brute force. You also get the chance to fly your opponents aircraft as well, bringing the number of useable warplanes in this one up to three (the F/A-18, the F-22N and the MiG-42).

Mission-wise, Fullburn can hold its head up.



Documentation wise, it can hold it up even higher. Graphics-wise, things aren't so steady. Fullburn looks atrocious without a 3D accelerator and in low-detail, low-res modes. You're going to need a grunty PC with preferably a 2nd gen 3D card in it to experience the splendour of graphics engine with a respectable frame rate. Sound-wise - oh dear. It's 1998. Midi just doesn't cut it any more. The engine noises fall below par as well. The game comes on 4 CDs. Surely some more attention and effort could have been paid to the sound department.

Fullburn is an honourable attempt at making the hard-core flight sim more accessible and appealing to the masses. The story/cut-scene element is cool, but first and foremost, Fullburn is a flight sim. And a respectable one at that.

MARCH STEPNIK

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
81	48	80	78

Zero Divide 2

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: 3D FIGHTING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: ZOOM
PRICE: \$69.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: MEMORY CARD



The definitive phrase to use from the outset is 'wasted potential'. The first Zero Divide was a bit of a novel game, offering an alternative form of robotic fighting action that actually exploited the unique features of its characters. For this sequel, however, Zoom has just gone for the bong-headed option of prettier graphics. What we have now is basically another bunch of robots, ranging from nurses and scorpions to a giant yeeros with legs, fighting at a super-cool 60 frames per second. That, dear people, is all there is to boast about. The rest of the graphics are terribly pixelated, the sounds and music are amazingly non-descript, and the gameplay is, at best, Fighting Vipers on valium.

It's not like Zero Divide 2 is a horrible game, though. You see, this game was actually released eons ago in Japan - around the same time we Australians were discovering games like Soul Blade. Zero Divide 2 would have easily merited a

higher score had it been released in Australia at that time. By today's standards, it just doesn't stand up. What bothers me as both a reviewer and consumer is that games like Zero Divide 2 or Megaman X4 take well over a year after the Japanese release to hit Australian shelves - yet Gran Turismo and Tekken 3 took less than 6 months. If the distributors thought that this game was not good enough to be rushed over to Australia immediately, why did they even bother the token gesture of bringing it out so late? To have a bigger software line-up than Nintendo? Why bother? If there be method to this madness, I don't see it. The best equivalent game for fighting fans is Bloody Roar.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
64	61	60	62



iF/A-18E Carrier Strike Fighter

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: AIR COMBAT SIM
PUBLISHER: INTERACTIVE MAGIC
PLAYERS: 1-NETWORK
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P166, 24 MB RAM, 8X CD-ROM, JOYSTICK
DESIRED: P200+, 64 MB RAM, 24X CD-ROM, 3D HARDWARE ACCELERATOR, JOYSTICK, THROTTLE AND RUDDER PEDALS.

Set to full realism, this revamped F/A-18 takes time to tame. With any but the smoothest handling, inertia causes slight oscillations typical of real airflow. Any stall not dead level will spin or even flat spin it. Proper spin modelling has eluded even FS 98 and Flight Unlimited II, but here it is and it demands a sick bag. This is no Piper either, so normal recovery routines don't apply - be ready to punch out, even with the flight computer's help.

Other ideas that make your cockpit tangible are the diabolical 'physics lab' radar (yes, with an 'easy' mode) and an apparently accurate instrument panel.

The opening videos are okay but the music is woeful. Training missions are sketchy but adequate. You have two theatres using dynamically generated missions, so there won't be constant replays. The mission planner is comprehensive. Finally, the graphical game interface, a mouse-driven navy base and carrier, is quite decent... Sadly it's all downhill from here.

The satellite-photo terrain renders quickly but looks pretty rough anywhere but at high altitude. The cockpit view perspectives aren't quite right.

The enemy AI is a bit faint. The dinky radar display is imperfect. At the bottom of the barrel we find the flap sound is pinched from the FS98 Cessna (howl), and your Super Hornet spontaneously dives into the drink seconds after landing! A patch reportedly fixes this bug but not the last-minute feel of the game.

The publishers have put this jelly on the table before it set. Exceptional flight model but crying out for a cut and polish.

THOM MCINTYRE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
68	72	75	72



Lemmings

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: PUZZLE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: PSYGNOSIS
PRICE: \$39.95
RATING: G

Lemmings. Never has there been such a hilarious videogame concept. As they wander single-file to their deaths, it's up to you to save their stupid little green noggins by guiding them to the exit. Each level becomes increasingly more complex, until you're so darn frustrated that you're quite happy to see them throw themselves into the void. To solve each level, you must instruct each lemming to perform a certain task - from digging holes, to blowing things up and even drifting with the aid of an umbrella. To make things even more painful, each level has a time limit too. Nasty.

As far as gameplay goes, this is classic stuff. Whilst I expected something different, Lemmings for PlayStation is an exact port of the original Lemmings Amiga/PC game, with Oh No More Lemmings thrown in for good measure. Strangely, the original code doesn't seem to have been touched one iota, and as soon as the game fires up on your TV, you're going to be asking yourself why the hell you paid money for it (that's if you never played it before). The good thing is, Lemmings is still a brilliant game and very addictive, so the persistence will pay off. Why they couldn't have simply improved the graphics or music is beyond me, and the lack of mouse support is just outrageous. Lemmings relies on quick thinking and lightning fast reflexes, so playing with the standard controller is just crazy. But... just one more go....

ELIOT FISH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
35	30	79	70



Starshot

Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: 3D PLATFORMER
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMES
PRICE: \$99.95
RATING: G

After Rare demonstrated that any bum can make a Mario 64 clone (although execution quality is another thing), everyone decided to join the bandwagon and make their own variation. Starshot is among the first of them. On one hand, Starshot can be completely written off as a direct clone of Banjo Kazooie, ranging from the multiple object-retrieval system for points and power-ups to the garbled imaginary speech. The difference: poor execution. Graphically, the cameras unexpectedly jerk back and forth, the framerate is chuggy enough to create a strobe effect, and everything has a strange fuzzy hue. The sounds are a collection of forgettable PCM tunes that don't even try to sound like the gay little picnic that Banjo did. The controls are also very shallow. You get your basic jump and attack moves, and the rest of the attention is on lots of intricate camera control functions. I'm at a loss as to why the latter feature wasn't devoted to more moves.

The irony is that when you break all of the gameplay elements and look at them objectively, Starshot and Banjo are one and the same. The difference is purely in the aesthetics and execution. Yet when it comes to premise, there is more reason to respect Starshot than Banjo because its story is more thoughtful. In Starshot, your travelling space circus is going out of business because people would rather be entertained by a 'virtual circus'. Social satire? Whatever it is, it's more interesting than the overt toy-market orientation of Banjo.

In that respect, don't be fooled by the final score. Gaming connoisseurs know that execution flaws can easily be remedied with time and tweaking. It is ideas, originality, and ingenuity that matter. Starshot's conceptual similarities to Banjo only lends credibility to my belief that this genre is already close to dead.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
55	42	49	50



Assault

PlayStation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: PLATFORMS/SHOOTING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: TELSTAR ELECTRONIC STUDIOS
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: DUAL SHOCK, MEMORY CARD.

It's funny how fiction always portrays extra terrestrials in one of two ways: highly intelligent life forms who speak perfect American; or in the alternative, giant evil parasitic monsters with frightful skeletal exteriors who have no interest in eating you, but would prefer nothing more than ripping you into confetti. The latter category always seems to make for more dynamic entertainment, so it's no surprise that Assault is a game where you blow these critters up.

Assault takes a fairly tried-and-true no-frills approach to the idea. All you do is run and jump your way across the linear-as-hell levels, pick up the weapon bonuses, and blast seven shades of shinola out of the seething hordes of bugs. Graphically, the game is not bad, displaying the PlayStation's usual array of explosive lighting effects while being marred by the PlayStation's usual warping, clipping, and pixellisation. This is complemented by a bass-heavy techno soundtrack, ornamented by sound effects that, aside from the fact that the exploding aliens sound like wind chimes, aren't all that bad.

Assault's main fault lies in its piss-weak difficulty level. Sure, there are heaps things to shoot at, lots of weapons, power-ups, and energy gauges. However, whatever depth or tension that could've been derived is negated by the fact that your weapon can be so ridiculously tanked-up that you can blanket the entire screen with one shot!

However, while Assault is a tad simple in single-player mode, it is deceptively addictive when a second player tags along. Granted, the gameplay is totally mindless and the action is devoid of any real strategy, but there is something alluring in jumping around blasting everything up with a mate. Call it mob mentality, call it stupid - whatever it is, it's the kind of fun we all had back in the SNES/Amiga days with Contra.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
70	59	64	66

Dead Reckoning

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: 3D SHOOTER
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: PIRANHA INTERACTIVE
PRICE: TBA
RATING: M
REQUIRED: P133, 16MB RAM, 4X CD-ROM DRIVE
DESIRED: P200, 3D ACCELERATOR, 32MB RAM, 12X CD-ROM DRIVE
SUPPORTS: 3D CARDS

Dead Reckoning is an interesting take on the 360 degree tunnel shooter paradigm (games like Descent). Rather than navigating a maze of tunnels and taking out various evil drones, Dead Reckoning focuses more on deathmatch style gameplay. Each battle takes place in a giant cylinder and consists of you and two wingmen taking on three opposing aliens. The oft used technique of hiding behind a corner, strafing out and shooting, then popping back won't work, as your opponents have more room to manoeuvre and are smarter than that. Combat boils down to skill, team tactics and knowledge of the arena.

The setting has "the Master Race" forcing you and 11 other humans to take part in brutal space combat against other unwilling alien races. Each cylinder uses unique textures and design, and a different alien race to take on. There are 15 cylinders in all, with the difficulty steadily rising until the final confrontation with the master race themselves. Goldtree have focused on producing realistic AI that will use team play to win. Each



race has different strengths and weaknesses, and hence different strategies. At the start of each round, you choose your wingmen and your ship. Picking a well rounded team is important, as is commanding your wingmen. Each can be assigned specific tasks from the obvious "take out the enemies" to "find an energy pylon and powerup weapons".

Character and ship designs are really cool. Unfortunately though, the controls are a little unreliable and the graphics engine regularly slows down significantly, preventing an even matchup. Also, Dead Reckoning is incredibly ugly to look at and there's entirely too much fogging. There are, however, versatile practice options and also support for multiplayer games over network or modem. Overall though, not compelling enough to warrant a second look.

CAM SHEA

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
62	76	75	70

Deer Hunter 2

PC

AVAILABLE: NOVEMBER
CATEGORY: HUNTING SIMULATION
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: WIZARDWORKS
PRICE: \$29.95
RATING: VIOLENCE
REQUIRED: P133, 16 MB RAM, 8XCD ROM.
DESIRED: P200, 32 MB RAM, 3D ACCELERATOR.
SUPPORTS: 3D CARDS

Imagine you're a strapping young deer, living in a beautiful forest (or a messy assortment of pixels, as the case may be). After wandering in the woods all day, you decide to lie down under a big, shady tree. You lower yourself onto a comfortable patch of grass, slowly close your tired eyes, then... BAM! Some stupid jackass with a big, fat gun blows your brains out! If this kind of "noble sport" appeals, then Deer Hunter 2 is the game for you.

Moral and ethical objections aside, Deer Hunter 2 is a completely crap game. The premise is this, you create your hunter (I named mine "Slack-jawed Yokel"), choose from 9 weapons with which to maim and slaughter, including the always discreet semi-automatic shotgun, and head out into one of 12 hunting locations. There are 13 tools available to help spot and attract deer, and remain undetected, like a "Doe bleat call" and "Cover



scent". Tracking down your cute little kill is a matter of using the tools, and looking for telltale markings like hoof prints and deer droppings.

Deer Hunter 2 uses a graphics engine that is about as competent as Keith Richards teaching advanced Quantum theory. In other words, it's ugly, slow and constantly stuttering. Even with 3D accelerator support and PC hardware way above the recommended specs you can almost count the number of frames per second the game runs at, mouse-look is unreliable making aiming difficult, the objects (like trees and deer) on the landscape are horribly pixelated, the deer themselves have about ten frames of animation, and so on. Indeed, any potential enjoyment of the "sport" Deer Hunter 2 purports to "simulate" is lost before you even start. An intensely objectional piece of software.

CAM SHEA

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
35	50	25	35



Wetrix

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: PUZZLE
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: OCEAN
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P90, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P166, 32MB RAM

Wetrix is a puzzle game where the object is to build a water enclosure with a series of falling blocks, water, and various hazards like bombs. Like a zillion puzzle games before it, the pieces in this puzzle game come faster with time, and thus make the game harder.

It's pretty rare that I get really inspired by a puzzle game, and whilst I wouldn't go as far as to say that Wetrix gave me wood, it certainly had something about it that appealed to me instantly. Maybe it was just the subtle difference that it holds from most other puzzle games in that you not only build something with what's thrown at you, but also have to then put something (water in this case) into what you've created. There's something strangely addictive about this title, just like old classics like Tetris.

Wetrix is geared to encourage you to try and do tricky things, in order to get more points. Playing a safe game is quite simple, and it wasn't long before I was able to get to level 10 in each game I played, which is the fastest/hardest rating. Playing a little differently though, I got a higher score, and had only got to level 3.

To ensure you don't get bored of the game in a flash, there are various handicap modes, which offer a variety of challenges you don't normally have to deal with. Naturally there is also a two player split screen option so it's not just a solo game.

The people I'd really recommend Wetrix to are folks that sit around in chat programs like ICQ and need something to play inbetween chats and messages, without booting up some sort of game that demands your attention for a long time. Heck, just play it in a window. It's not the game you've always wanted, but it's cool for what it is.

DAN TOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
70	82	80	78



S.C.A.R.S

Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: RACING
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: MEMORY PAK, RUMBLE PAK.

SCARS, without mincing words, is basically Mario Kart 64, minus the fairly floss. The graphical setting is something of a post-apocalyptic blend of high technology and nature gone wild. The cars you drive, for instance, are powerful off-roaders that can collect power-up items and cause general mayhem with the vast array of weaponry scattered along the tracks. And yet they all have some kind of animal theme. Some tracks have a really cool jungle-cum-Ancient Mayan Temple backdrops, accompanied by strange mechanical buildings and constructs that 'just happen to be there'. Overall, the game is executed very well. The graphics are solid, fast, and impressive; and the controls are responsive enough to allow for well-timed power slides, which is the litmus test for games of this type.

I know there will be people who are just dying to know the differences from the PlayStation version, so here they are: the N64 version moves just as smoothly as the PlayStation version, but the little animations such as wheel rotations are distinctly lacking. The N64 version also seems to have trouble dealing with light effects and transparencies. Aurally, the N64 version provides an 'okay' PCM soundtrack with the expected sound effects - but to be honest, they don't compare to the CD-quality sounds of the PS version. When it comes to multiplayer mode, the N64 wins hands down due to its sheer processing power. Finally, and most importantly, the physics engine in the N64 version is a little more realistic and balanced in that you can't go recklessly crashing about the track and expect to come out of it at top speed.

Unfortunately, both versions of SCARS suffer the same problem: the weapons are dull and unimaginative. The better physics in the N64 version certainly makes it a slightly more tactical racer, but without the benefit of more weapons, it's not by much.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	79	83	83



Battlespire

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: RPG
PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: BETHESDA
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: LOTS OF PATIENCE
DESIRED: A GAME OTHER THAN THIS ONE

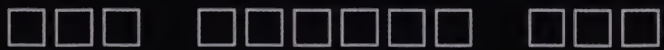
Daggerfall was one of the coolest RPGs of all time. It had a massive gameworld to explore, which you could travel through on foot if you were crazy enough, and it had seemingly endless quests to complete. The sort of game which you could happily hack away at for an entire year of your life if you so desired. The engine was also remarkably ahead of it's time, with true 3D landscapes and towns to wander through in real time. Battlespire, whilst not the "official" sequel, is Bethesda's RPG follow-up to Daggerfall. So, what the hell happened?

Installing Battlespire was a complete nightmare. You have to configure your soundcard in DOS to get sound happening in the game, as well as load DOS mouse drivers if you want to play the game using one (running under Windows 95/98 proved to be too unstable). After struggling with the installer, which also crashed on us numerous times, we finally got into the game and began creating the character... apart from the silly Ken Doll bits applying hilarious facial hair and hairdos, on the whole there was enough here to satisfy any RPG lover - tons of stats. But, then you enter the gameworld...

Battlespire has one true barker of a 3D engine. This horrendous pixellated mess, which has no support for 3D acceleration, is not even close to the games of 24 months ago, let alone current 3D games. What happened to the Daggerfall engine which was perfectly fine? Ahhhh! When you finally have an encounter, and you're hopelessly flicking your mouse around to get your character to swing his sword, you really start to question what the hell you're doing inside on such a lovely day. Let's hope Red Guard is a lot, lot better.

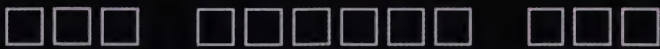
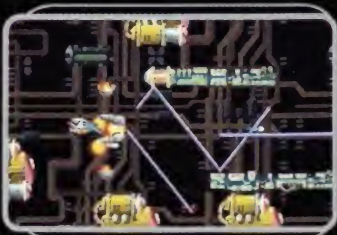
ELIOT FISH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
45	48	47	47



The beginning of the 22nd Century, the people of Earth had developed a peaceful and prosperous civilisation. Suddenly THEY appeared. Arriving through the inter-dimensional pulse. They invaded all forms of life, minerals and electronic devices. Existing as a parasite, they multiplied rapidly. They have ravaged nearby planets and have chosen Earth as their next target for colonisation.

R•TYPES



G 8+

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Now that the online gaming community has grown to huge proportions and there's always so much going on, Hyper is dedicating space to ensuring that you, the gamers are aware of what's going on around the country in terms of multiplayer gaming. We're starting with Quake 1 & 2, and will report on other comps as they happen.

Australian Computer Gamer Professionals

At long last there's a plan for Australian PC game enthusiasts to be able to have proper national leagues and competitions.

BY DAN TOOSE



Something bothered me after Gibcon this year... The sense that there was nothing really consequential about the results of the competition, other than the acquisition of some prizes for the players that won. Players that love their games with a burning passion want to compete against other like minded people, to take the experience to another level. All competitions that have existed thus far in Australia for PC games have been completely independent of one another, and as a result, a player may win one huge competition, and may get his or her prize, but that's not why we

play games competitively is it? Every crack gamer who devotes every ounce of spare time to their favourite game wants to be the best, or at least the best they can be. What I really wanted to see happen was a ranking system, with state and national finals, just like most sports have. I mentioned this to a couple of guys that I play Quake 2 with, and it went to show that I wasn't the only one who had thought about this, because a group of players and enthusiasts who had been running some of the large LAN events around the country had started going about

organising a big national league for Quake and Quake 2, as these are the two games that hold the biggest following in terms of both online play, and major LAN events. This group of dedicated gaming enthusiasts started plans for a national gaming league, and out of those discussions has come ACGP, Australian Computer Gamer Professionals on 1st of September. It is the goal of ACGP to provide the opportunities for gamers to become career players. Rather than replace the already existing LAN setups in each state, ACGP seeks to work with them to have state and national champions. At this stage, ACGP is starting with Quake 1 and 2, but plan to branch into other PC games, including strategy, racing and sports titles.

The ACGP will also offer it's members discounts on hardware and software, making their favourite past time not only more competitive, but also cheaper.

Hyper fully want to see the ACGP take off, and we'll be printing the results of all comps that they run, and print rankings and so forth when relevant. Active competitions should start next year. ACGP are having a summit with Wireplay to sort out the proposed workings of the national leagues, and there will also be a forum on the ACGP site so you the gaming community can offer suggestions as to how things should work or could be improved. Their web site is at <http://www.acgp.com.au/>. Alternatively you can email them at info@acgp.com.au.

The Australian Quake scene

If you want to find out about Quake 1 and 2 competitions and LANs in Australia, then the following list of web sites are an excellent way to get started.

Impulse '98
(<http://impulse98.playnow.com.au/>)

This year's biggest LAN event, held in Melbourne. The official Wireplay LAN Championships, run by Sons of Quad.

AusQuake
(<http://ausquake.newsninja.com/>)

This site holds a complete list of Australian Quake 2 clans, and has links to all major LAN events. Also hosts the

Australian Quake 2 ladder (for team Deathmatch).

Challenge-AU
(<http://www.challenge-au.com/>)

Run by the ever dedicated Hoony, this site focuses on International Quake challenges. Look out for the upcoming Australia vs New Zealand match!

ACGP
(<http://www.acgp.com.au/>)

The web site for the upcoming Australian Quake 1 and 2 national leagues (and in time, much more)..

VML
Victorian Multiplayer League
(<http://www.newsninja.com/vml/>)

The main regular Victorian LAN event home page.

MPU
Multiplayer United
(<http://www.mpu.com.au/>)

The main regular NSW LAN event.

Regen
(<http://www.regen.powerup.com.au/lan/>)

The main regular Queensland LAN event.

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

An excellent and very colloquial Quake news site run by Malby.

Q2 CTF League -
(<http://sas.ml.org/q2league/>)

Q2League is a CTF dedicated league for the clans that play on the Powerup servers.

OZTF1
(<http://oztf.newsninja.com/>)

The Australian Team Fortress League run an excellent league, on what has become the most popular Quake mod the whole world around... and it's Australian of course!



Tekken 3 Tourney

Sony Computer Entertainment Australia held a rather low key Tekken 3 tournament, with the heats in each state taking place in various niteclubs around Australia, and the winners will have met in Melbourne by the time you've read this, to determine who the national champ is. This player will fly off to England

to play their national champ. It's all a little unofficial, since only those over 18 could enter, but at least Sony will be sending one of the best players in the country to the other side of the world to see if we can beat the Poms, so it's a good thing. We'll keep track of who wins the national title, and how they go in England.

Wireplay

The best friend of Australia's online gamers

We've seen several online gaming services pop up over the past couple of years, but none have put in for the gamers as much as Wireplay have. Wireplay have made it a habit to sponsor any organised LAN event, to really help get the gamers together and get competitive gaming going forward in this country. Not only have they got behind large events, but even small non-publicised ones, such as a clan workshop LAN that Eliot and I attended with a bunch of other Quake 2 nutters from around Sydney, which Wireplay sponsored by hiring the venue for the players on extremely short notice... and it wasn't because there was press there, as they didn't know we were playing in the event.

If you're like me, and you have major hassles getting a smooth, playable game online, due to your phone line being a bit lame, or having an ISP that doesn't seem to give you good connections. Wireplay has been the only service I've played where I can always get a smooth game going, and can always find good opponents to play. If you've been umming and ahing about whether or not it's worth the money to sign up... it is. They host a lot of different games, not just Quake stuff! Go check out their web site at <http://www.wireplay.com.au/> Wireplay is also dedicated to branching out into other

games other than Quake 1 & 2, like their Red Alert comp they're currently running. They have been running the most ambitious online Quake and Quake 2 competitions seen in this country to date (the Wireplay Invades Brisbane comp), and at time of publication, the Quake 1 finalists were:

Thermal [SoQ]
[WAR] Dethon
Krazy Ivan [SoQ]
Bashar
[ao] VomitGod
Webby-MHCN
[kf] Rogue
JaC DeTH [AoD]
Drake [SoQ]
Radaghast
Wargel

Tim (winner of the Hyper botblast... go dude!)

The last Quake 2 finalists were still to be decided by our deadline, but we'll print the winners next issue. All of these players will be playing each other at three huge events on November 7, in Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane, with clan comps also being held at each finals venue.



FIFA Gaming

Just to prove it's not all just Quake and more Quake out there, here's a link to the AFML (Australian FIFA 98 Modem League), (<http://www.fifagaming.com/fifa98/tourney/austleague>)

It's run by our buddy Gareth Jones at PC Powerplay, and is only quite small at this stage, but the competitive spirit looks to be in full swing there, so any PC FIFA RTWC fans out there should check it out.



Console Comps

Don't think that this is going to be PC only, although due to net gaming and LAN events, most will be PC for sure. The Dreamcast will have networking and online capabilities, and as a result we expect to see big multiplayer things happen there when it launches next year. Once in a while console comps are organised, and we're keen to expose them!

Do you run or play in a league we don't know about?!

We don't just want to focus on Quake, so by all means, if you either run a league or ladder for some sort of multiplayer game, or even if you just play in one that we haven't mentioned at some stage, then let us know and we'll give it a mention, or even a full story if it's big enough.

Email us at: freakscene@next.com.au

Karate Champ (vs)

Ancient History

A new section to Hyper, where **Dan Toose** looks at the "good ol' days", and offers an updated opinion on more recent gaming events now that they've had time to sink in.

Format: Arcade

Players: 1-2

Released: 1984

Publisher: Data East

Many of today's younger gamers probably became aware of fighting games when Street Fighter II became such a huge phenomenon, but that was far from being the first of its kind. Data East were the first to bring out an arcade fighting game, with Karate Champ, but we think the more significant release was the updated version which came out not long afterwards, Karate Champ II (versus edition), as this was the first game to allow two players to fight one another.

The game was basically a karate tournament, with matches being won by earning points for landing a hit. Good hits would earn a full point, and average hits would earn a half point, with two points being required to win the round. Including moving left, right and crouching, there were 21 moves. Unlike today's fighting games, there were no buttons, but instead, two joysticks. Pushing the joysticks into different combinations resulted in various kicks and punches.

There were funky little bonus stages, including kicking blocks, beating up bulls (really!), and dodging rotten fruit and bottles being thrown at you. It wouldn't draw crowds today, but for its time, this was a truly awesome game.



Unreal

PC

There has been an ongoing saga with this awesome game, that has led to it falling short in a rather major area for a first person shooter... online multiplayer gaming. When we reviewed Unreal, we had a network game with two decent PCs, and thoroughly enjoyed it. With no online servers at the time, we naturally couldn't test how it would go online (which is how people play multiplayer the vast majority of the time). Unfortunate this was, and it would have affected the score, because the game performs terribly when trying to play over the Internet. Epic Megagames have been trying to address this with patches, but even this may not make a difference for us out here in Australia, because there don't appear to be any Australian servers active anyway.

We're keen to see exactly how well Epic go with fixing this problem, because essentially, any game that uses the same networking code is going to suffer online, and thus games like Duke Nukem Forever may not be an online hit as expected.



Modern History

Tekken 3

Modern History



PlayStation

Once we heard the PAL version of Tekken 3 would be identical to the Japanese version, we went ahead and did the review based on the Japanese version we had. Despite being a great game, the PAL version has a rather major shortcoming that we should point out to those looking to go grab it... it's VERY slow. So basically, if you've seen Tekken 3 in the arcades, that's the speed the Japanese and American versions run at. The PAL (European and Australian) version runs at something just over half that speed.

This sort of slowdown really isn't acceptable, and companies like Namco shouldn't release a PAL conversion till they can get the speed to a more reasonable level.

**save a rats love life...
 have a quick game of black jack &...
 venture deep into the jungles
 for an adventure filled with intrigue,
 mutant beings and fiery pits...**



Reservoir Rat:

Your girlfriend just happens to be the daughter of the head of the MOB. Marlon - The Godfather - Mozzarella has dispatched his henchmen to kidnap his Loretta back... It's now time to put on your shades, pick up your weapon and go get your girl back. Reservoir Rat is a platform/puzzle/shoot-em up with 5 worlds and 17 levels per world.



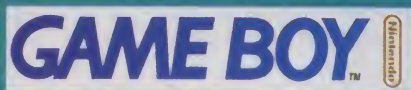
Cool Hand:

Cool Hand will appeal to all kinds of card players. There are three different types of game - Solitaire, Cribbage, and Black Jack, each offering 4 styles of play. Cool Hand includes a unique "Learn & Play" which you can call on at any time for help.



Montezuma's Return:

Montezuma's Return is a challenging platform puzzle game where you will have to fight your way through a maze of 150 rooms, climb ladders, slide down poles and avoid flaming pits of fire... All this just to find the treasure.



These titles are Yet to be classified.
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TechRomancer

CAPCOM

Tim Levy checks out Capcom's latest 3D fighter... Tech Romancer



That crew that has brought you the irrepressible Street Fighter series and Star Gladiators have some new tasty offerings for the discerning 3D fight sim/robot/mech lover. In the not so far away future, people have become bored with the barbaric (not to mention low-tech) idea of punching each other in the face, so they have invented giant air-conditioned robots, bristling with armaments to do their dirty work for them.

The whole TechRomancer package is very Japanese and several (if not all) of the robots have been seen in various manga and anime productions in the past (hell, I've even toyed with the G.Kaiser robot knight doll with spring loaded rocket fists when I was knee high to a dead pregnant grasshopper)

There are 8 Mechs to choose from, and all differ with speed, agility, and armour strength, weapon power, and weapon range. A wide array of robots is represented and range from military battle mechs, to robot knights to industrial demolition robots. Video footage and/or story-line (the reason for fighting) accompanies each robot and definitely lends a bit more character depth to the game.

The number of weapons that can be selected is huge. Some of the weapons at your command include: rockets, laser rifles, machine guns, flamethrowers, parachute mines, cannons, toxic bubbles, remote laser droids, light sabres, wrecking ball, mortars, howitzers, war axe, conventional mines, rocket fists, kicks, etc. etc. With all these weapons at your disposal, it doesn't seem like a battle any more, but more like a minor war.

The game's depth lies in mastering all these weapons

and knowing their range and strength and how they can be used in conjunction with other weapons. For example, you can lob some parachute mines and then dodge to the side to use a long range laser weapon. Or use the jump button and attack from above and then land next to the opponent and chop them with your light sabre. Knowing your opponent's weapons is also an advantage as some weapons will negate another, while some weapons will absorb another and keep on going towards the target. Special attacks are a prime example of this. Once the 'special attack' gauge is full, the power may be utilized by depressing all 4 buttons. A special attack will always override a standard attack. Fortunately/unfortunately special attacks have a slight time lag (barely enough time to jump out of the way) as the characters take a split second to form up or brace themselves whilst fir-

ing their 2 tonne mega weapons.

Battle locations are slightly unimaginative (flat) and peppered with buildings, TV transmitters and spacey things which can be destroyed by weapons fire. Also there are no ring outs, just invisible perimeter walls to stop you straying too far. But, this leaves the player more time to concentrate on the huge number of incoming attacks as well as trying to exploit the opponent's weaknesses.

The controls are fairly basic with Guard, A + B attack and Jump buttons being used in conjunction with a single joystick. Moving around the battlefield rapidly is accessed by either jumping, double tapping, or by holding C and double tapping. Mastering moving is the key to survival. Generally the faster the character, the lower the armour and firepower. The armour is depleted by enemy attacks which are blocked, and a gauge shows the amount of armour remaining. Once your armour is no more, your chances of survival are pretty slim. If the two 'bots collide, a 'grapple attack' begins where the winner is decided by who can depress the most buttons the mostest.

Occasionally, bonuses appear in the form of health, ability or weapon type. To use the item you must press A+B+J

simultaneously after picking the item up. Don't hold on to the item for too long as it can be knocked from your grasp by an enemy attack (and then used against you.)

So far, Virtual On by Sega is the only other credible mech combat game for the arcade. Mastering this game and making it past all 12 computer controlled robots is no easy feat and therefore a major challenge. So if you liked Star Gladiators, Virtual on, or even Heavy Gear, then TechRomancer may be the game for you.

B/I/O

Special thanks to Galaxy World for their assistance with our arcade section.



Dirty Pair Flash 1&2



No, it's not the latest panty vending machine craze to hit Japan, it's the latest action/adventure anime to hit our shores. Meet Kei and Yuri, two seventeen year old scantily clad "trouble consultants" who patrol the known universe working for a private policing organization called 3WA; (kinda like the Australian Securities Commission with weapons of mass destruction). Kei and Yuri are the Dirty pair, codename: Lovely Angels. They scored high on their physical aptitude tests but logged in record lows on their theory. They're actually so stupid they manage to fool their enemies into thinking that their incredibly smart and cunning. This remarkable trait, coupled with their amazing prowess with gun and sword, and a superhuman ability to break anything and everything around them make them the deadliest team in the universe!

Based on the best selling novels by Huruka Takachiho, I first got into the Dirty Pair through the Adam Warren comics of the same name published by Dark Horse Comics. Both the comic series and the anime seem to capture a world of high tech disintegration, where technology is as shonky as it is cool. It's pretty much taken for granted here that the human race has colonised the galaxy, where corporations strive to gain the largest cut of the market, where techno-junkies (were not talking ravers either) plug



into themselves for that all addictive personal pleasure and where high tech generally means a defective version of reality.

This is one of those series where the characters actually get so stupid that you can't help but laugh. Highlights being their city destroying rocket trip, and their idiotic personal rivalry constantly warping the minds of their enemies. Dirty pair is an anime that explains why transforming "mech" suits are actually a bad idea, why sailing near whirlpools of death means inevitable destruction, and why giving brainless idiots weapons of mass destruction often leads to cities in ruin (now if someone would care to outline that to the military please!). Kei and Yuri's special brand of humiliating their enemies with their exceptionally low IQ will have you on the floor rolling, coupled with gourmet binge eating and spittle spraying shouting matches.

We're looking at the old "lupin" style of animation here folks, with retro city scenes and caricatured characters. It's well executed, slick and polish yet the action scenes do tend to get a tad confusing. Had to take points off for an exceptionally bad dub, since the sound emanates like it's coming from inside a cardboard box.

Watch for Yuri's "naked sword" technique and you'll basically pin-point the source of all this confusion and mayhem.

An entertaining and funny comedy romp that's worth a good look.

B/I O

Rated PG 12. Available on Import through the Cartoon Gallery.



THE
CARTOON
GALLERY

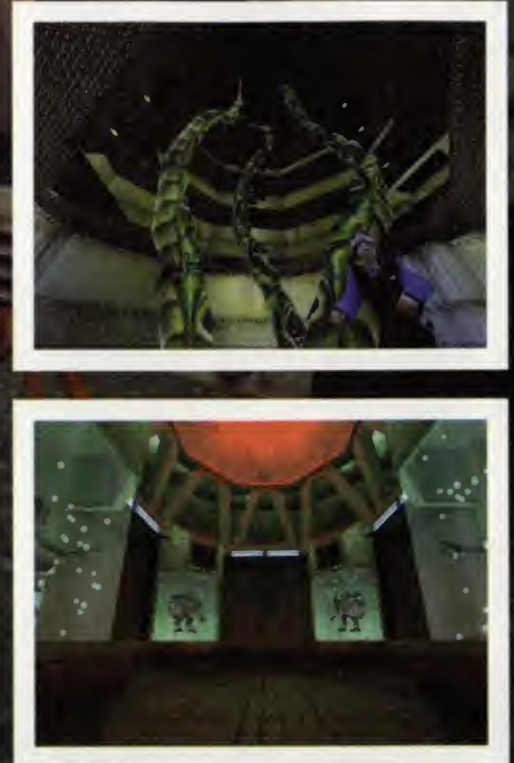
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Half-Life

Go direct to the source. Valve are the team responsible for Half-Life. The Hyper crew can't believe how good this PC game is, and if you've got some spare time on the Net, go see what Valve are doing - which is probably good things. All we know, is that they've tweaked the Quake 2 engine into something brilliantly, mind-bogglingly awesome.

<http://www.valvesoftware.com/>



BY ELIOT FISH

Sheep Against Spyro

In a bizarre web appearance, Toasty the Sheep has put up a web page protesting Spyro the Dragon's treatment of his fellow fluffy friends! Whether this is some promotional stunt by Sony or not is hard to figure out, but hell it's worth checking out just for a laugh. Maybe when you do, you can see if the Cows With Guns link is working!

<http://www.sheepagainstspyro.com/>

Comedy Central

Comedy Central is the American TV channel which screens South Park, Dr.Katz and a bunch of other cult cartoons which we don't get here yet! If you want to find out more about where these great shows come from, and check out all sorts of weird and wonderful Java games and generally odd stuff, then drop them a visit. It ain't hard to find. The South Park section, for instance, contains "Chef Aid: The South Park Album", South Park merchandise (of course), and even mini South Park clips using the Shockwave plug-in for your browser. You may even spot Terrence and Phillip! Blat!

<http://www.comedycentral.com/>

Lucasgames

For fans of all the great LucasArts games such as Jedi Knight, the Monkey Island series and for those of you waiting in anticipation for their upcoming titles like Grim Fandango and X-Wing Alliance, go check out this unofficial site devoted to everything LucasArts. Lucasgames has everything you need, from news to demos and walkthroughs for all the great adventure games and more. It makes a nice alternative to checking on the official LucasArts site... Enjoy!

<http://www.lucasgames.com/>

Mighty Toasty!

"Sheep and dragons don't mix, baby!"

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Breathing Fire On Sheep Is Dangerous To Your Health (Especially If You Are The Sheep In Question).

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Need For Speed 3: Hot Pursuit

PC
 Type the cheats below at any menu to activate the cheat.
 cars: Enable all cars!
 rushhour: Race with lots of traffic on the road
 empire: Race on the Empire City track
 elnino: Race with the El Nino car
 merc: Race with the Mercedes CLK
 CTR?
 gofast: Make your car go really fast in Single Race mode
 Type the cheats below then click RACE to drive the different non-player cars.
 9001: Miata
 9002: Toyota Landcruiser
 9003: Cargo Truck
 9004: BMW 5 Series
 9005: 71 Plymouth Cuda
 9006: Ford Pickup with Camper Shell
 9007: Jeep Cherokee
 9008: Ford Fullsize Van
 9009: 64/65 Mustang
 9010: 66 Chevy Pickup
 9011: Range Rover
 9012: School bus
 9013: Taxi - Caprice Classic
 9014: Chevy Cargo Van
 9015: Volvo Station Wagon
 9016: Sedan

9017: Crown Victoria Cop Car
 9018: Mitsubishi Eclipse Cop Car
 9019: Grand Am Cop Car
 9020: Range Rover Cop Car/Ranger Vehicle

Rainbow 6

PC
 To activate cheats press the ' key during the game and type in:
 TEAMGOD: Team God Mode
 AVATARGOD: Player God Mode
 STUMPY: Stumpy Mode On
 CLODHOPPER: Enlarges Player's Feet and Hands
 MEGANOOGIN: Mega Head Mode
 BIGNOGGIN: Big Head Mode
 5FINGERDISCOUNT: Refill Ammo
 NOBRAINER: Turns AI Off
 DEBUGKEYS: Debug Keys Enabled
 TURNPUNCHKICK: Changes Players from 3D to 2D
 1-900: Heavy Breathing
 EXPLORE: Victory Conditions On/Off

3D Ultra Minigolf

PC
How to score a hole in one!
Haunted House Hole:
 Hit the ball from the tee to the light grave on the left side of the house. If you do this correctly the ball will come out the back of the house. PS.This only works on the

first shot.
Abominable Snowman Hole:
 Putt into the middle tunnel for a hole in one.
Moon Base Hole:
 Hit your ball into the metro station when the sign says 3. If you haven't timed it correctly, the ball will fall into the construction pit.
Jungle Hole:
 Across from the pyramid with the hole there is a pool of water. Putt your ball at the bird next to the water. The bird will pick up the ball and drop it in the cup.

Deer Hunter

PC
On the map screen, enter the following codes:
 DHSTEALTH: Invisibility
 DHBAMBI: Shows all deer
 DHDOEINHEAT: Lures deer to you
 DHBUCKDOWN: Deer won't run if you shoot

FIFA Soccer '98

PC
 In the Player Edit screen, change any player name to these names and a Special Options box should appear:
 eac rocks: Big Head Mode
 johnny atomic: Take A Dive
 dohdohdoh: Crazy Ball

urlorus: Invisible Walls
xplay: Hot Potato
footy: Silly Moves

**Jedi Knight:
Dark Forces 2**

PC
During gameplay, press the "T" key to toggle console mode and type in the code. Press enter to activate it.
thereisnotry
(skips you to the next level)
whiteflag
(followed by a space and 1 or 0, enables/disables artificial intelligence)
deeznuts
(increases the power of the force)
eriamjh
(turns on fly mode)
jediwannabe
(followed by a space and 1 or 0, turns on/off invulnerability)
red5
(all weapons)
wamprat
(all items)
raccoonking
(gives you all force abilities of light side, dark side, and neutral side)
imayoda

(just gives you all force abilities of the light side)
sithlord
(just gives you all force abilities of the dark side)
5858lvr
(map will show everything on level)
slowmo
(followed by a space and a 1 or 0, enable/disable slow motion)

**Jedi Knight:
Mysteries Of The Sith**

PC
During gameplay, press T, enter the code, and press ENTER to activate:
boinga 1: God mode on
boinga 0: God mode off
iamagod: Uber-jedi
diediedie: All Weapons
gimmestuff: Full Inventory
cartograph: Show Map
gameover: Level Jump
statuesque 1: Freeze Enemies on
statuesque 0: Freeze Enemies off
trainme: Force Level Up
freebird: Fly Mode
trixie: Full Mana
gospeedgo 1: Slow mode on
gospeedgo 0: Slow mode off
freebird: Fly

quickzap: Warp to specified coordinate

Shadow Master

PC
Press F2+F3 at the Main Menu. CHEATS ON will flash on the screen. Press + and BACKSPACE for the cheat prompt, then type in these codes:
TURBO: Turbo mode
EVERY LEVEL SAVE: Enable save after each level
ALLOW SINGLE: Single player on multi-level
PAPARAZZI: Allows screenshots - press insert to take the shot. Images are saved in C:TEMPPIX
THE WHOLE OF CREATION: All cheats off
SCOUSER: Enable playtester keys which can be used during the game.
Playtester keys:
Shift-F9 - Skip level
F1 - Ammo cheat
F12 - Health cheat

Bio Freaks

PSX
First-Person View:
While fighting hold L2 + R2 and press the direction opposite the direction your player is facing. It

should say FIRST PERSON FIGHT CAMERA ON. To turn it off hold L2 + R2 and press DOWN.

Bomberman World

PSX
End Password:
To start at the last boss, enter the password 2203.

Bravo Air Race

PSX
Turbo GeeBee:
Rapidly tap X at the "Now Loading" screen until the GeeBee aircraft flies to the top of the screen. The word "Good!!" will appear to confirm that you were tapping quickly enough. The GeeBee will now fly over 100 mph faster than normal during game play.

N2O - Nitrous Oxide

PSX
Level Passwords
Level 2:
O, X, X, X, Square, O, Square, X
Level 3:
O, X, O, O, Square, Triangle, X, Triangle
Level 4:





O, O, Triangle, O, Triangle, O,
Square, Square

Level 5:
Square, Triangle, Square,
Triangle, Square, Triangle,
Triangle, O

Level 6:
Square, Square, O, Square,
Triangle, X, Triangle, X

Level 7:
X, Triangle, O, Square, X, Triangle,
O, Triangle

Level 8:
Square, O, O, Triangle, Triangle,
Square, Triangle, Square

Level 9:
Square, O, X, Triangle, Square,
Square, X, O

Level 10:
X, Triangle, Square, O, Triangle, X,
X, X

Level 11:
O, Square, Triangle, Square, O,
Triangle, Square, Triangle

Level 12:
O, X, X, X, Triangle, X, X, Square

Level 13:
Square, Triangle, Triangle, O, O, X,
O, O

Level 14:
Square, Square, Triangle, O, O,
Triangle, O, X

Level 15:

O, Triangle, X Square, O, Triangle,
Triangle, Triangle

Level 16:
O, Square, Triangle, X, O, O, O,
Square

Level 17:
X, O, Triangle, X, Square, Square,
Square, O

Level 18:
O, Triangle, O, O, Triangle,
Square, Square, X

Level 19:
Square, X, O, Square, O, X, X,
Triangle

Level 20:
O, Square, Triangle, Square,
Square, Square, Square, Square

Level 21:
O, O, O, O, Triangle, X, Triangle, O

Level 22:
O, X, O, Triangle, X, O, Triangle, X

Level 23:
Square, Square, Triangle, O,
Triangle, X, O, Triangle

Level 24:
O, O, Square, Triangle, Square,
Triangle, Triangle, Square

Level 25:
O, X, Triangle, X, Square, Triangle,
X, O

Level 26:
Square, O, O, O, X, O, X, X

Level 27:

Square, Square, Triangle, O, X, X,
Square, Triangle

WCW: Nitro

PSX

Unlock all wrestlers:

At the character select screen
press
R1, R1, R1, R1, L1, L1, L1, L1, L1, R2, R2, R2, R2,
L2, L2, L2, L2, select.

Bio Freaks

N64

First-Person View:

During a fight, press Start while
holding Left on the digital pad. To
return to normal view, hold Down
on the digital pad and press Start.

Mortal Kombat 4

N64

Play as Goro:

You must first enter the Secret
Options Menu. When on the
Character Select screen, choose
the Hidden cursor with the A
Button so your cursor disappears.
Using either the Control Pad or
Stick, press Up, Up, Left, then
press Run and Block

simultaneously. When the match
starts you will be playing as Goro!

Play as Meat:

On the Title screen, choose
Arcade, then choose 1 on 1 battle.
On the Character select screen,
have Player One choose the Group
button at the bottom center of the
screen and the computer will
automatically pick the first
character on the screen for you to
play. Have Player One keep
winning and keep choosing the
Group button until all the
characters have been chosen and
Player One has won all the battles.
After every Character has been
picked and won, choose any
Character and he will look like a
bloody skeleton, but will have the
Special Moves and Fatalities of the
Character you chose.

Play as Noob Saibot:

You must first enter the Secret
Options Menu. When on the
Character Select screen, choose
the Hidden cursor with the A
Button so your cursor disappears.
On the Control Pad or Stick, press
Up, Up, Left, then press Run and
Block simultaneously. When the
match starts you will be playing
as Noob Saibot!



PS none of these characters can be saved on your controller pak.

Alternate Character Outfits:

On the Character Select screen, highlight the Character of your choice, hold Start and press Block up to three times to find up to three different styles or colors of clothes for the Character you chose. Most Characters only have two different outfits, but some have up to three.

Secret Options Menu:

On the Title Screen, choose Options. Highlight Continues and hold Run and Block until you appear inside a special options menu where you can change several options. To exit the menu, highlight Exit and press the A Button. Options available to change:

Endings: On/Off. (Default Off) If you choose On, the game will automatically end after defeating the first Character in Arcade Mode and you can view the ending.

Fatalities 1 On/Off. (Default On) Use uppercut (Down+HP) to perform one of the character's fatalities.

Fatalities 2. On/Off. (Default On) Use uppercut (Down+HP) to perform the character's other fatality.

Level Fatalities. On/Off. (Default On) Use uppercut (Down+HP) to perform a stage fatality for the current stage.

Wild Choppers

N64

Level Select:

At the "Press Start" screen, press C-Up seven times for level select.

Presidential Bailout:

While playing, press Z + C-Up + C-Down, then launch a homing cluster at your opponent. If it

hits, you will see the president jump out of the plane.

Hunter X-treme 64

N64

Level select:

Press L, R, A, X, B, Y, A+C at the title screen, and you'll hear a loud growl. You now have level select! Press A on the level you want to choose.

God Mode:

At the Main Menu press L, R, Z, Z, B, A, Z.

Mortal Kombat 4

PSX

Cheat Menu:

Start a two player game and enter the vs. code 302-213. Exit the fight and Go to Options. Highlight Versus Screen Enabled and Hold Block+ Run for 10 seconds.

Play as Noob Saibot:

Defeat the game as Reiko, then enter the versus code 012 012 before a 2 player fight. Quit this fight and go to the character select screen. Select Hidden and press Up, Up, Left (you will be on Reiko), then press Run and Block to select Noob Saibot.

Play as Goro:

After defeating the game as Shinnok, select Hidden at the Character Select. Press Up, Up, Up, Left (you will be on Shinnok), then press Run and Block to select Goro.

Play as Meat:

You must keep choosing "group" in a two-player game. After you have WON with all the characters, select any character. Now, you will be that character, but with a different look. This is Meat, and all his moves are dependent on which character you choose. For example, if you choose Rayden, you will have Rayden's

moves, but look like Meat.

Alternate Outfits:

At the Select screen, hold down the START button. While holding down the START button, press either the Punch or Kick buttons. Each time you press one of the buttons, your character's picture will spin. Each spin gives you access to one of the new uniform/new weapon combinations. Use this chart to determine which uniform or weapon you will get.

Note that some characters DO NOT have new uniforms—instead, they will get different weapons.

NAM

PC

Cheat codes:

Enter these in during the game, Doom style.

NVAGOD: God mode

NVABLOOD: gives all weapons

NVACLIP: walk through walls (toggle)

NVALEVEL#: level warp (where # is the level number)

NVASHOWMAP: shows the whole map

NVUNLOCK: toggles all locks

Final Fantasy VII

PC

Sneaky Materia Cheat:

First get the W-Item Materia then equip it and start using it. Select the item, use it, then when it asks you for another item click on the same item. The arrow should hover above one of your characters. Now press cancel and the item will reappear. Keep pressing Enter then Cancel and you should eventually get 99.

Assault

PSX

These cheats are accessed by typing them in on the 'Assault - Press Start' screen within a 3 second period. When activated successfully, the screen will flash white with a 'whoosh' sound effect and the cheat name is displayed at the top of the screen. The cheat menu is then found on the options screen.

Level select, weapons, ammo and to view all the FMV sequences:

Triangle, Square, Circle, Left, Square, Triangle, Square, Circle, Left, Square

Flatten and mesh all the 3D characters with the exception of the bosses :

Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, X, Circle

Big heads:

Square, Circle, Circle, Square, Up, Square, Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle

Big heads on aliens and spitters:

Square, Circle, Circle, Square, Up, Square, Circle, Circle, Square, X

Run faster (activate with the circle button in game):

X, Square, Triangle, Circle, X, Square, Triangle, Circle, L2, R2

Sepia colour scheme:

Left, Left, Left, Left, Left, Left, Left, Left, Left (thats 10 left's, count if you like)

NEXT ISSUE . . .

HYPER»



TUROK 2

Sequel to the game that established the Nintendo 64 as the console of choice for first person shooter fans. Hi-res PC & N64 gaming comin' atcha!

Full review next issue...

HYPER Letters

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

ASPIRING ARTIST

Dear Hyper,

Great mag. Thanks loads for the Tekken 3 book. It soon had me goin' the tonk with the best of them.

I write to express my concerns over the N64. Recently Hyper had an article on how badly it has sold in Japan, and how Nintendo are already planning another console. Does this mean support for the N64 will drop? Already the lack of games forced me into buying a PlayStation. The N64 cannot afford to have only 2 games released a month again!

Yet, there is hope, with Wipeout 64, Zelda (Finally!) and hopefully a whole bunch of more difficult, less "kiddie" games. (I'm not knocking cutesy games, it's just there's only so many fluffy animals a sane person can handle.) It's a great console, it'd be a shame to see it go to waste. Now that's off my chest

1. When I'm not gaming, I spend most of my time drawing Manga characters and the like. Does anyone at Hyper know what courses could lead to being an artist at a company like Squaresoft? (Game gods of the universe)

2. In issue 60 letters you mention a Tekken Anime. Can you tell me more?

3. Is Ehrgeiz coming to PSX?

4. Will there be a PAL version of Brave Fencer Musashiden?

5. Has anyone heard of a game called Dragon Storm on N64?

Thanx guys

ASTRO GIRL

P.S What sort of music does Big Heavy Stuff play? And the Telemetry Orchestra?

AG,

Well things are certainly looking up over the next couple of months with Wipeout 64, Turok 2, and Zelda all coming before Christmas. There don't seem to be many original "Oh my god!" PSX titles flying around right now.

Tomb Raider 3, Abe's Exoddus, Crash Bandicoot 3, Toea 2, and Colony Wars Vengeance all look great, but they're all sequels. The most impressive PlayStation game we've seen lately is Metal Gear Solid, which Kevin has played through the Japanese version of. We're holding off to see an

English version before we cast the verdict on what the local version will be like.

1. My advice would be to get a portfolio of your art, and become proficient at using 3D modelling programs and other art applications.

2. Not at this stage. There seems to be very little news on this, but when we hear some more news, we'll do something on it in the anime section.

3. Yes. No PAL release date, but we do expect a PAL release.

4. We doubt it strongly.

5. Other than that it was being done by Interactive Studios and was an action based adventure game, not really. No screen shots have been seen, but there was talk of a similarity to Final Fight in the presentation (although we'd guess it'd look more like the A&E side scrolling beat em ups). P.S. The sure fire way to find out is to listen to their music (shameless plug). Big Heavy Stuff's last album is Maximum Sincere (they're recording another album right now!), and Telemetry Orchestra's new album is out mid November, called "Live better Electrically" (It's a mind blower folks! SS.)

SENSOR THIS!

Dear Hyper

Remember a few months ago, when the two young American boys shot some fellow students and some teachers in their school yard? It was around the time of this year's E 3 and Goldeneye one of the most popular games around at this point. Anyway, Bill Clinton declared that the problem originated from "Computer Games". He probably waffled on about them being "excessively violent these days..." etc

Instead of bagging games, I think that politicians should be enforcing the already in-place rating system. I mean, those kids were only about ten or twelve. I don't know about you guys, but I haven't seen any G 8+ games where you can blow someone's head off. (Realistically)

OK, that's my say, thanks, bye

BRIAN MORGAN

Craigmore SA

Brian,

Well, at least we know that President Clinton won't be pushing to enforce laws on games where you have sex with your interns now will he? Actually, there's probably a game of it in development in Japan at this very moment.



TIMING VS PIRACY

Dear Hyper,

I am concerned, very concerned about the rise and rise of video game piracy. I am a video games retailer from Perth and I have just been asked by a customer if I do PlayStation conversions to play NTSC games, this occurs regularly and it has just struck home to me why I can't seem to sell any copies of Tekken 3, it's because every man and dog in Perth has already played it months ago because a friend of a friend bought back a \$3 copy from Bali or they know someone who has the capability to copy games.

When are Sony going to address the issue seriously. I mean they themselves must be losing millions to piracy and yet they still release NTSC versions of games in Japan and the US six months before we get the PAL version, thus giving the pirates plenty of time to copy, distribute and profit from these games. If a simultaneous NTSC/PAL release date was made then there would be no profit for the pirates as people want the games now and not in a few weeks, so by the time pirate copies started appearing in Bali the game would be old and no one would buy them anyway even at \$3 a game.

This may only be a short letter but the message is very serious remember what happened to the Commodore 64. The games were too easy to copy and soon the system was doomed, take note SONY.

DEAN YOUNG

Perth

Dean,

It will be interesting to see how things go for the Dreamcast, as the DC CDs are non-standard,

holding much more information, and would require a CD burner that would not be commercially available, and thus, pirate CDs could not be made. Although there is talk of the DC being easily made able to play either NTSC or PAL games, so grey importing could still be an issue.

KEEP IT CLEAN...

Dear Hyper

I have had a few problems with CD cleaning and was wondering if you guys knew which substance is best for cleaning them. Being a big renter of games, you can see why I don't want to be wrecking anything. If you don't mind, I'd also like to ask a few questions?

1. Do you think Nell McAndrew is the best for Lara?
2. When you talk about PlayStation's high res mode, what exactly would the resolution for this mode be?
3. I am thinking of investing in a steering wheel for PlayStation. I was wondering if you knew of one that is compatible with both CM Rally and GT.

Thanks for your time, and many thanks from myself and friends for giving so much help over the years

TIM WALLIS, Newtown QLD
Tim,

I've always just used a t-shirt or something soft like that. If a CD is really dirty, I just breathe on the thing and then wipe it clean. I've never damaged a CD this way and doubt anyone else has either. There are CD cleaning kits available at most record stores if you're paranoid about scratching it yourself.

1. As the model... I guess, although I saw a photo of

Letter of the month

COMPUTER GAMES... AN ALTERNATIVE TO SMOKING

Hyper,

I'm writing this letter in response to Cockroach's letter in the September issue. He prattled on about VooDoo 2 cards and the worth that is accredited to the cost of high end computers for playing games as opposed to consoles. His arguments about the fickle world of how fast computers become absolute had some validity. Hardware technology is moving ahead at a frightening rate, but how anyone can see this as a negative thing is beyond me.

As for consoles being better to play games on, this sounded like the old "my console's better than yours" debate. He is right. Goldeneye is an awesome game, but to say that it is better than Quake 2 is a little absurd. I've never played Quake 2 but from what I have read it sounds to be a very different style of game to GoldenEye.

I own a PSX of which I purchased over the Saturn primarily because of the range of games that was available. When the N64 was released the support given to it was not overwhelming. Games are becoming more prevalent on the N64 and the quality is getting that good that I am seriously thinking about getting one.

I also own Pentium 233 MMX computer which I use mainly for my writing. What I am getting at, Mr Cockroach, is that every system has it's strengths (as the wise editor of this very magazine stated). How many flight sims are there for the PSX? Ace Combat 2 is a great game but it is not a Flight Sim. The PC is a far superior system for Flight Sims which is why fans of the genre own them. I love my PSX for it's accessibility and all the great sports titles but I prefer to play golf on my computer. I just find the computer suits golf better than consoles and heaps of course disks.

Mr Cockroach was right in one regard, it can be an expensive hobby as can all hobbies. Compared to some other past times, though, it is relatively inexpensive. The average smoker spends \$2080 on cigarettes a year. My computer set up cost me \$1700. It's specs are 233mmx, 24 speed CD drive, 2.3 Gig hard drive, 2 meg sound card, 15 inch SVGA monitor running windows 95. As I said I didn't buy it primarily for games but I do love a good flight sim so it serves more than one purpose. The issue of cost is relative to priority. Most smokers don't think of the money they spend on their health debilitating habit as I don't think about what I spend on computer gaming. I wait until I can afford what I want and then I get it.

Gee, what a mouth full. I just get a bit sick of having to justify, to people I know, what I spend on computer games. I am 33, don't smoke, don't gamble and don't drink (much). It's funny how a person can sit in front of you and harp on about what a waste of time and money computer games are when they've got a cigarette hanging from their mouth and are clutching their 6th schooner in their hand. It's all priorities!

LUKE SCOTT, NSW

Luke,

Well said.



You've won a Gamester Steering Wheel Luke! For either N64 or PlayStation.

*Next issue's "Letter of the Month" will also win a Gamester steering wheel
Contact us soon Luke...*



ONE OF THE UPCOMING GAMES ON THE DREAMCAST: BLUE STINGER

another model dressed as Lara who I thought looked even more like the character. As far as the movie goes... We have, and always will want Liz Hurley for the job.

2. 640 x 480 is the maximum resolution.

3. Yes, the Gamester steering wheels from Livewire works with both games.

DREAMY

Dear Hyper
I was so excited when I saw Hyper issue #58 with the big picture of the Dreamcast on the front. Of course being a Sega freak I took it off shelf of our local newsagent. Without even having a flick through the pages, I paid my \$5.95. Great mag guys! Anyway I'll get to the point. I hear the Dreamcast can handle resolutions of 800x600. If so will you need a high resolution TV to play this superior machine.

From **LIQUID DURAL**
P.S I still like Nintendo and Sony even though I'm a Sega Fan Dural,
No, the DC will only do 640 x 480, so there's no need to look into buying a new TV for it.

HOPEFUL

To Hyper
Great mag. I was just

wondering if there was any chance of an AFL or Rugby League game for the Nintendo 64?

SHEPPS
Shepps,
Nope

CURE FOR BOARDERS?

To the dudes,
I just want to comment on the N64 situation at the moment for the last 18-19 months the N64 has been promising all these things yet hasn't lived up to any of them. Like... bringing out more games at a steady rate. It seems the drought never ends! I mean, 18 months into the console's life it should be releasing more than 1 game in a month (ie. September). Sometimes I wonder if I should have even bought the damn thing! I mean, I have enjoyed some bloody great games on it, but it is rather disappointing. Another problem, is they seem to have no sense of time. I mean, you say they're going to release a game a certain month, but then it slips a month. Well that's OK, but then it slips again and again. E.g. Zelda 64, which could have been out ages ago. I could have had a copy on import months ago. I just don't get it. I understand the N64's biggest market is the American

and European market not the Japanese. All I can say is that Nintendo Australia will be losing my business, as I am only importing carts from now on. Now just a couple of quick questions...

1. I realise that Nintendo have got rid of borders on their games. Shall this become a standard on all future consoles? I know that the PSX doesn't do this but will the Dreamcast?

2. Do you have any info on a game called Hybrid Heaven?

Thanks
HEATH
In the last few months, the N64 has had a reasonable number of releases, and with titles like Mission Impossible, Banjo Kazooie and Wipeout 64, things haven't been that bad for N64 owners. Besides Tenchu, Tekken 3, Abe's Exoddus, and Medievil, there haven't really been any amazing PlayStation games either. With Zelda 64 coming, I think the big questions about what's going on for the Nintendo 64 really will become an issue after Christmas. We do find it amazing that you feel you can import Zelda 64... considering it hasn't been released anywhere in the world yet. Most big games released by Nintendo themselves have been coming out around the same

time worldwide lately.

1. Nintendo have not "got rid of borders". It's up to each individual developer on each title as to whether or not they manage to exclude borders. Borders most commonly occur when a NTSC game is converted to PAL.

2. The game is described by Konami as a 3D action RPG, although judging by the screen shots, it really looks more action based. Konami's description is that it is a futuristic special ops kind of game, which basically suggests it's their "Metal Gear Solid" for the N64. Info is very limited and sketchy at this point, so we'll preview it when there's more substantial details.

HYPER IS JESUS

Dear lucky bastards whose job is to play,

I really like your mag since you touch on all ages of gamers. However, I have some questions that I hope the shaman (Dan) can answer...

1. I read your hardware section in the August issue (congrats on ya new PC) on how to buy a Ninja PC. One question sprung to mind. How long would a normal PC (example 166 or 200) last until games will require a higher PC?

2. You give the impression of being like a crucified Jesus, ya know, having followers and criticizers but I wonder. Have the Hyper crew done anything wrong themselves? Sending the wrong prizes to wrong people perhaps?

3. The way you reply letters sounds like you're one calm bastard. Do you occasionally fly off the joystick? I mean how do you handle it when someone writes in and totally pisses you off?

4. Lastly, that Quake Bot frag 'em up comp you held, are we guys here in Fiji allowed to enter?

Anyway gotta pen off. Kudos (what does it mean?) to all your happy Hyper dudes, great mag, keep running your CPUs at peak performance.

NI SA UOCE

Kango Kokonut
P.S Have you (the Hyper crew) ever thought of making your own games, since you know games inside out? Gameplay in particular.

1. It all depends on whether you're after the latest 3D games or not. Having a 3D accelerator is a big issue now if you do want to play 3D games. I'd say by mid next year, those not using a Pentium 2 or AMD K6-2 processor will have to start settling for substandard performance with any 3D game. 2D games will be fine on a P200 for a while, but less and less PC titles are coming out these days that don't use some sort of 3D in their visuals.
2. We're human. I think we did send a prize to the wrong winner once... they sent it back and everyone lived happily ever after.

3. Why should I let what anyone writes piss me off? I'm more likely to get peeved by just missing the train and having to wait an extra five minutes than by having some reader disagree with me. It's okay for people to have different opinions... the world would get boring otherwise.

4. Sure. Anywhere where Hyper magazine is sold.

P.S. Yes, I have... but not as my own project, but as part of a team. Maybe one day I'll get into game design. I have a collection of game concepts, but sharing them freely may quickly make them someone else's concept if you know what I mean.

NINTENDO⁶⁴



GEKKO GAMES

Computers and Peripherals



PlayStation

NINTENDO 64

1080 SNOWBOARDING	\$ 79.95
AERO GAUGE	\$ 79.95
AIR BOARDER	\$ 99.95
ALL STAR BASEBALL	\$ 99.95
BIO FREAKS	\$ 99.95
BOMBERMAN 64	\$ 59.95
CLAYFIGHTER	\$109.95
CRUSIN USA	\$ 79.95
CRUIS'N WORLD	\$ 79.95
DIDDY KONG RACING	\$ 79.95
DUKE NUKEM 3D	\$ 99.95
EXTREME-G	\$ 99.95
FIGHTERS DESTINY	\$ 99.95
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GOLDEN EYE	\$ 79.95
GT 64	\$ 99.95
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PC

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COMMANDOS	\$ 89.95
COLIN McRAE	\$ 79.95
CRICKET 97	\$ 49.95
CROC	\$ 49.95
DARK EARTH	\$ 88.95
DARKREIGN	\$ 49.95
DARKREIGN EXPANSION	\$ 29.95
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DESCENT FREESPACE	\$ 89.95
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DUNGEON KEEPER	\$ 49.95
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Sony PlayStation. 3 months old. 1 controller, 1 memory card, 7 games include Final Fantasy 7, Castlevania, Alundra, Warhammer, Bushido Blade, Vandal Hearts and Syndicate Wars plus 2 demo disks. All in perfect condition. Worth \$880, sell for \$400. Or SWAP for Saturn and good games. Call Lucas on 02 6568 5468.

Nintendo 64 with 1 controller, 1 Rumble Pak and 1 memory card. Original cost \$245. Will sell for \$140. Optional games - Mortal Kombat Trilogy \$35, Mario Kart \$35 and Star Wars (Shadows of the Empire) \$25. Or Nintendo 64 and all games for \$230. Call Ryan after 5pm on 07 5539 6146. Preferably Gold Coast area.

PlayStation games- I would like to sell Soul Blade and Tekken 2. Both for \$80. Call Simon on 03 5881 3611.

Sega Saturn games - Theme Park, NBA Action, Virtua Fighter, Bug and Sega Rally. Name a price or will swap for other games. Call Peter James on 02 6931 1144.

I'm selling my Mega Drive with two controllers and 1 game (Spider Man) for \$20. Call Alastair after school on 02 6379 1236.

Warhammer: Dark Omen for PSX for \$40, Gran Turismo \$50. All good condition. Call Joel on 02 4474 2896. (NSW only)

2 PlayStation games and controller. Games include Tekken 2 and Need for Speed II. All in excellent condition. All for \$55. Please call 07 3876 7583.

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WCW vs NWO: World Tour for \$55 and WWF Warzone for \$85. Contact Yogo by e-mail: xundertakerx@hotmail.com or post: Yarden Malecki PO BOX 5887 G.C.M.C QLD 9726.

Super Nintendo system complete with RF switch, AC adaptor, 2 controllers, 4 games including Super Mario Kart, Super Mario Allstars, Donkey Kong country 1 & 2 plus a Super Game Boy with 1 game, Game Boy Gallery (5 games in 1) will sell the lot for \$200 o.n.o. Call 02 6654 3470.

Turok: Dinosaur Hunter \$70 (neg) + cheats, Golden Eye 007 levels 1-18 DK mode Magnum Enemy Rockets \$60 (neg). Lylat wars + Rumble Pak \$80 (neg). War Gods \$80 (neg) Star Wars: Shadows Of The Empire \$60 (neg) + Big Cheat. All PAL carts. Boxed with manuals. All N64 games. Call Kevin after school on 03 9561 7108.

WANTED

I desperately need a copy of 'Rock 'N' Roll Racing' on Mega drive will pay up to \$20. Call Toros on 03 9888 1834 weekdays 4-8pm, weekends anytime. Melb only.

Fighters Destiny, WWF Warzone, 1080, Mortal Kombat 4. Also a SNES with Zelda, Super Metroid or RPG's. Will swap/sell

Quake, Duke Nukem, Doom, Turok or Blast Corps. Call carl on 07 4168 9843

Any "Dragon Ballz" games for the PSX (PAL or NTSC). Call or Fax Nee on 08 9175 2328 Please include name of the game, format and price on the fax/answering machine.

Sega game gear: TV tuner adaptor desperately wanted. I'll take it as long as it works. I'll pay you a good price so please give me yours!! Call Leigh on 08 8396 1377. SA only.

Megadrive game Phantasy Star 3 desperately wanted. I will pay a reasonable price \$30. Must be in good condition. Call Simon on 02 6251 1872.

Resident Evil 2 (on PSX) will swap with other games or offer \$30-\$50 for very good condition game. Call Shayne on 07 3206 3499

Would like to buy Breath of Fire 2. It is a Super Nintendo game. It has to be in good condition and also has to come with it's original instructions and chart. Prefer to buy off somebody in the Perth metropolitan area. Call Phil on 08 9337 3915.

Broken Sword for PlayStation. I will pay \$30-\$40. If you have it please call 03 9404 4264. Please leave a message on answering machine if not home.

I need any Megaman stuff for PC! Megaman X or any other Megaman games. Even any posters, magazines or stickers of Megaman. I'm an obsessed fan! HELP! Call Paul on 02 9905 2884 after school hours

I would like to own Warcraft for PC at a very low price. I am willing to pay \$10-\$15. Call Brett on 02 9527 4668.

US version of NTSC WWF Warzone in good condition. Will pay \$20. Call Ross after 3.10pm on 08 9307 6460.

SWAP

I want to swap PC game Fade To Black for any PlayStation game or for PlayStation memory card. Call 03 5156 3326.

Nintendo 64, 2 x controllers, Super mario, Top Gear Rally,

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Sega Saturn console, 2 pads and gun, 9 games and 2 demo disks. Will swap for NES 64 and 2 games. Will swap a PAL N64 with LE Gold controller, for a NTSC Saturn with/without Samurai Showdown 4, X-Men vs Streetfighter or Marvel Super Heroes (NTSC). Will pay extra for these games. Genuine offer. Call Joel on 02 4474 2896 (NSW only)

I'll swap Theme Hospital, Ridge Racer Revolution, Re-Loaded, 8 demos (in excellent condition- hardly used) for 1080 Snowboarding, Final Fantasy 7, Super Mario 64 and Golden Eye 007. Call Lemuel on 02 4885 1959.

I will swap 2 Megadrive games (Sonic 1 and Aladdin) for a Rumble Pak or will sell for \$27. Call Grant on 07 3849 7828

I will swap my PSX game, Tomb Raider 2 in perfect condition with any other GOOD PSX game. (Eg Starcraft, Warcraft 2 or Time Crisis) Please call Shayne on 07 3206 3499

I want to swap Kid Clown in crazy chase for Super Mario Kart or another game. Will pay extra for a control pad. Call Nathan Hooke after school on 03 5722 4261.

I've got Theme Hospital, Ridge Racer Revolution, Re-Loaded, 8 demo's (in excellent condition- hardly been used) and I would like to swap for 1080 Snowboarding, Final Fantasy 7, Super mario 64 and Goldeneye 007. Call Lemuel on 02 4885 1959.

PENPALS

Hi de ho my name is Irene and I am a 14yr old girl looking for penpals aged 14 and up, preferably male. I own a Mega drive and a PC. I love Baseball, collecting Marvel Masterpiece cards and playing on the PC. My favourite games are Final Fantasy, Mortal Kombat, Street Fighter X, Alpha and Monkey Island. Anybody with the same

interest in games or whatever write to me and send a photo if you want. Reply guaranteed. Irene Eng, PO BOX 241, Howard Springs, N.T 0835.

Hi my name is Isaac. I am 11. I would like anyone any age M/F to write to me. I like Aqua, watching movies and reading books and playing on the computer, Nintendo or PlayStation games. I know cheats for almost every game. If you think I am your kind write to Isaac at 30 Westpark Court, Helensvale QLD 4212.

Hi my name is Ashley Murtha and I'm looking for a penpal aged between 12-14. I'm interested in N64, Ice Hockey, Rollerhockey and drawing anime style. If your interested write to 67 Vulcan St, Kingscliff, NSW 2487.

Hello, it's Matt here, and if you're anybody cool or sexy between the ages of 14+ then why don't you write to me. I'm 15 years old and I have a Sony PlayStation, play Soccer and I love music, especially the awesome Fear Factory, Sepultura, Pantera, Korn and Coal Chamber. I also devour chicks. Write to: Matt Thomas, 97 Stirling Street, Bunbury WA 6230.

I am looking for a penpal aged 13-16 M/F. My name is Sam Cant, I am 14 and am desperate to get a penpal. I will reply to all letters sent. My address is: Sam Cant, Prince Alfred College, Rushton House, PO BOX 571 Kent Town SA 5071.

Howdy strangers! Are you one of those people who enjoy playing the PSX, hates the 64 and reads Hyper just because your brother buys them? Oops! Forgot to introduce myself. Well I am a 12 year old boy seeking a penpal aged 12-13 (I prefer a female penpal) my name is Edmond, so grab a pen and write to: Egghead, 17 Fernleaf Court, Wattle Grove, NSW 2173 or e-mail me at edmond1@friendsfan.com. Well actually I am not a Friends fan but still like it!

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