AUSTRALIA'S NO.1 VIDEO GAMES MAG

HYPER »

TOMB RAIDER 3
Lara's third coming
FULL REVIEW

Full reviews of:
FIFA '99
Populous 3
Shane Warne Cricket '99
Crash Bandicoot 3
WCW vs NWO Revenge
Silicon Valley
Carmageddon 2
Sin

TUROK 2
Makes other N64 action shooters look pre-historic

Hyper Reader Awards
Australia's gamers cast their verdict!
Final Fantasy VII... This year's winner

MEDIEVIL
Complete walkthrough
to the PlayStation action adventure

SIXTY THREE

63

HUGE GAMES LINEUP - 40 GAMES REVIEWED!!

EDITORIAL

Well, there goes another year. A year of impressive tech specs if I've ever seen one. PC game fanatics were tempted by a host of new 3D accelerators... and they certainly needed them when it came to games like Unreal, which really pushed the limits of today's standards.

It's the console tech specs that are really staggering right now though, with the Sega Dreamcast packing an absolutely huge amount of raw power. By the time you're reading this, we will be getting in early and gaming hard on a Japanese machine. Word is that NEC have not been able to meet the supply demand for the Dreamcast production line, so there may be a shortage of machines for a while. The video footage we have seen of all the titles that are all set to come out was nothing short of mind blowing, which is such a relief... Gaming is still growing. Things are still getting better and better.

This time next year there will be four major gaming systems available, so if you thought that it was confusing keeping track of everything getting released now... you ain't seen nothing yet.

Something that has really impressed me this month is the difference that the 4MB expansion pack has made for the Nintendo 64. The washed out blur effect had pretty much worn thin by now, but with the hi-res graphics that are achievable with the expansion, the Nintendo 64 is looking better than ever.

The Reader Awards were once again interesting, with some categories being won by a landslide, and others were nail-bitingly close. Final Fantasy VII's victory for game of the year has proven that RPGs are not overlooked by the majority of the gamers in this country, which will hopefully provoke publishers to make PAL versions of more Japanese RPGs.

Anyhow, have a game intensive Christmas, and we'll be seeing you next year!

Dan

REGULARS

REVIEWS

FEATURES

THE DREAMCAST IS HERE

Well not here exactly, but over there. When you read this, the Dreamcast will be on sale in Japan. Woohoo! However, current speculation points to Sega having major manufacturing woes, and there may not be enough Dreamcast consoles available to meet the incredible demand. The Dreamcast's graphics chips are being manufactured by NEC and VideoLogic, and Sega have admitted that a delay in their manufacturing means that they could receive only half of the expected stock! Cripes. Unfinished software is also looking like a minor hitch in their plan. Sonic Adventure probably one of Sega's most anticpated launch titles, has been delayed by the development team, so they can finish a few things they are unhappy with. Whilst many Sega fans are disappointed with the Sonic delay, no-one would complain about eventually receiving a better, solid game. To offset these delays, a bunch of new Dreamcast games have been announced, pushing the total tally to something around 80 titles! Some tasty titles are still rumoured to be in development, but haven't been confirmed, such as... Alone in the Dark 4, Command and Conquer, Battlezone 2, Dead or Alive 2, Duke Nukem Forever and even Metal Gear Solid 2! If all goes well, the Hyper crew are going to spend their entire Christmas playing Virtua Fighter 3 Team Battle. Muahahaha!!

THE BONEYARDS

Games publisher Blizzard have been kicking ass with their online service, Battle.net; and now Cavedog Entertainment, the makers of Total Annihilation, are entering the fray with their new online multiplayer service - The Boneyards. Entering Beta-testing through December, the Boneyards will be compatible with select future GT Interactive and Cavedog games such as Amen: The Awakening, TA: Kingdoms, Elysium and Good & Evil. To co-incide with the launch, Cavedog have developed the first online game modification of Total Annihilation, called Galactic Wars. Once you log on to Boneyards, and fire up Total Annihilation, you can take part in the co-operative mulitplayer mayhem which is Galactic Wars. At the end of every day, results are tallied and ladders are adjusted, so hot TA players can see themselves rise through the ranks in one huge continuing war. Players don't have to take part in the ladder system, as Galactic Wars will also allow for pure one-off matches, and playing on the Boneyards will not exclude TA players from also logging on to other online servers for a game. Good luck Cavedog.

FINAL FANTASY - THE MOVIE
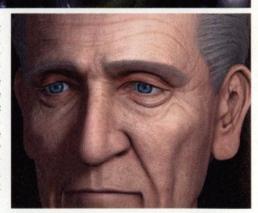
MARIO WITH A ROCKET LAUNCHER?!

The Nintendo 64 port of Quake 2 is just around the corner! Whilst development of Quake 2 for PlayStation is coming to a close, N64 gamers can expect to be gettin' gibby around February. A four-player deathmatch mode will make it into the final game which is pretty huge news, and as far as the single-player game goes, this is no direct port. The levels, monster and even weapons have been slightly altered to suit the console experience. There are even a couple of extra items not seen in the PC version - the Disintegrator which totally... erm... disintegrates your enemies; the flare-gun which lights up dark areas; and mines which you can lay for those stoopid grunts to step on. We're extra keen to see how this has turned out on console... so bring it on!

Final Fantasy the movie is no longer rumour, Columbia Pictures have officially announced that the full-feature length CGI film is in production and will debut in North American cinemas in the year 2001. Incredibly, the script is being written by Academy Award winning writer Al Reinert (Apollo 13) and will be animated for English audiences - Japanese movie-goers ironically receiving a dubbed version! The movie is being directed by Hironobu Sakaguchi (head of Square USA) at Square Pictures' Hawaiian studios. Square state that their aim is to create such realistic computer generated characters, that human emotion is depicted flawlessly. The movie will be set in the year 2065 and will feature a brand new cast of characters. But you can bet your booty that there will be an awesome videogame tie-in with the film. Now that's something to look forward to!!

COMPETITION WINNERS

Sorry about the premature announcement of the November winners, here are the winners for October (minus MediEvil which has been sent out already)...

DR.KATZ

Joel Evans, NSW
Monty Loader, Vic
Garth Strong, SA
Peter Mogridge, Qld
Rees King, Qld
Morgan Richards, NSW

Alex Truskin, Vic
George Thoms, NSW
Nathan Hurley, NSW
Brett Munckton, Vic

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

Evan Williamson, Vic

Luke Kenny-Hems, NSW
Aaron Gurrood, WA
Ross Goldman, Qld
Brin Paulsen, Qld

KKND 2

Adam Sherman, NSW
Ben Sullivan, NSW

Nhan Nguyen, Vic
Jaime Zanotto, NSW
N. Sawyer, WA
J. Croston, WA
Gregory Fahey, Qld
Phillip Brown, Vic
Luke Teghe, Vic
Eli Yarrow, Vic
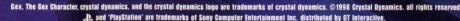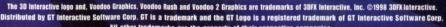
ZELDA 64 ARRIVES!

Probably the Nintendo 64's biggest trump card, The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time, will be on Australian store shelves when this issue of Hyper come out. Due to Nintendo's veil of secrecy regarding the game, we were not able to secure a copy of the game for review this issue. Whilst hordes of you will be running out to buy the game now, we WILL have a big Zelda review next issue (as long as the office dog doesn't chew on the cart or something), so we'll let you know what we think. Currently, reviews in Japan are declaring it better than FFVII, Metal Gear Solid and Super Mario 64 and word is that it's Shigeru Miyamoto's best game ever (he's the Japanese genius who created Mario and Zelda amongst others). Meanwhile, here are some pretty screenshots from the game to whet your appetite.

CHARTS

Charts kindly supplied by Hitech World

PLAYSTATION	NINTENDO 64	PC
1. Spyro the Dragon	1. Body Harvest	1. Sin
2. Tenchu	2. Goldeneye 007	2. Shogo: MAD
3. Gran Turismo	3. Mario Kart	3. Dune 2000
4. Duke Nukem -Time to Kill	4. Banjo Kazooie	4. Caesar III
5. Formula One '98	5. Mario 64	5. Need For Speed 3
6. Tekken 3	6. F-1 World Grand Prix	6. Commandos
7. Grand Theft Auto	7. F-Zero X	7. Rainbow 6
8. C&C: Retaliation	8. 1080 Snowboarding	8. Colin McRae Rally
9. Colin McRae Rally	9. Allstar Baseball '99	9. Grand Prix Legends
10. Bust A Groove	10. Silicon Valley	10. Knights & Merchants

GAME BOY GOES COLOUR

Nintendo finally released their long-awaited colour Game Boy in Japan recently, and gamers have gone nuts for it. Not to be confused with the coloured casing Game Boy, this colour Game Boy gets it's name because it has an actual colour palette of 32,000 colours! You won't get these all on screen at once though, and it's probable that that the maximum on screen is around 56.Though still using a Liquid Crystal Display, the games look remarkably good - certainly good enough for Nintendo to decide they would need one million of these suckers every month just to satisfy demand. One of the bonuses of this new Game Boy Colour, is that the screen is no longer backlit,
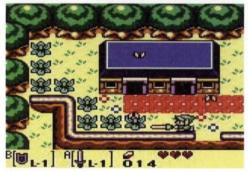
Though a whole new lineup of specially designed colour games will be coming out for the Game Boy Colour, you can still play all your old Game Boy games on the new handheld, and the bonus is that they will utilise some of the colour features so you can add colour to your old games. Nintendo are also re-releasing Zelda: Link's Awakening, the colourised version, which will have a whole new dungeon in the game to sweeten the deal even more. Probably the biggest selling Game Boy Colour cart though, will be the next in the Pokemon series, which will utilise not only the colour graphics, but the infra-red trading option... cool.

EF

so you will be able to play the Game Boy sitting outside in the full sun - hence the contrast control has been removed! The CPU is also twice as beefy as the original Game Boy, along with more RAM and larger ROM sizes for games. A small infrared port at the top of the Game Boy, now allows players to trade items and characters without having to utilise the link cable. Head-to-head gaming will still need the link cable though, but again the new Game Boy colour has improved serial ports, so it will be faster and more reliable.

PROJECT X IS NUON!

The low-key multimedia console which is the Project X has now been officially named the NUON. Basically a DVD player with features which allow it to also play videogames, much has been talked about what the machine is capable of, but little or no games have been

NUON

announced for it as of yet. The NUON has a suspiciously 3DO vibe about it (the 3DO being another multimedia device which survived about 6 months in the gaming wilderness), so hopefully VM Labs (the team behind NUON) will do their best to get game developers all warm and fuzzy about their hardware.
More info when it comes to hand.

OVERFLOW

Microstar, makers of an unofficial Starcraft add-on "Stellar Force", have lost a court battle with Blizzard Software and agreed to destroy all remaining stock of the game and pay damages. Blizzard wanted to prove that end-user license agreements were enforceable, and show that unofficial add-on products using a publisher's content were clearly illegal...

Rumours are circulating that the PlayStation 2 will use a new chip supposedly manufactured by Toshiba which supports DVD playback. This simply adds more fuel to the fire that the PlayStation 2 will abandon CDs for a DVD format. Risky move or inspired decision? Time will tell... Oh, and a little birdie is tweeting that the console will be dubbed PlayStation 2000...

Valve Software are apparently tossing up whether to port their incredible PC shooter Half-Life to the Nintendo 64! A spokesperson for Valve commented that as soon as all work has finished on the PC version (including making patches), they will take a look at other platforms for the game. Dreamcast anyone?

A new product called Game Commander over in the states allows for full voice recognition commands in a range of popular games. Whilst still using the keyboard and/or mouse, you now will have the ability to simply yell "Attack!" to order your units to perform that specific function. Interesting. Now gaming geeks will look more stupid than ever! Game Commander currently supports Starcraft, Quake 2, Battlezone, Descent Freespace and a few more as yet unannounced titles.

Nintendo are developing a 3D fighting game for the Nintendo 64 which includes all their famous game characters! Mario, Yoshi, Donkey Kong, Link from Zelda, Luigi they will all be in there and more. No this isn't a nasty rumour, the game already has a Japanese title - Nintendo All-Star Dai-Rantou Smash Brothers! We think it won't be long before the game is announced for Western release, with a shorter, snappier title... heheheh...

Sega have a new arcade machine in Japan called Star Wars Trilogy. Based on their model 3 technology (Virtua Fighter 3), the game allows you to either attack the Death Star in Episode IV, fight over Hoth in Episode V or ride speeder bikes through the Endor forest in Episode VI! We're all hoping that this is better than their last Star Wars effort, and we can't wait to play it...

Systran and Origin have teamed up to provide Ultima Online: the Second Coming with revolutionary language translation features. Breaking down the barriers between players from different ends of the world, the clever language system can simply translate chat between players using different languages. Awesome stuff, which truly expands multiplayer gaming even further...

Gran Turismo 2 is quickly becoming a reality. This time around it's rumoured you can take a spin in a Ferrari and Porsche, which were not included in the first game!

GET READY TO CRASH!

Crash Bandicoot 3: Warped is out for PlayStation, and Sony Computer Entertainment have been generous enough to donate five copies of this great platformer for some lucky punks to win! Has anyone else ever thought that Crash doesn't look much like a bandicoot? Well, to win a copy of Crash 3 for your PlayStation, tell us what animal you think Crash truly is...

A) a party animal; B) a big rat; C) the game designer's dog; or D) of course he's a bandicoot you tools!

Put your answer on the back of an envelope and post it off to: **Bang! Crash!, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Good luck!**

Win an EXCLUSIVE Turok 2 KIT BAG!

Acclaim have generously donated an awesome exclusive Turok 2 kit bag to give away to one lucky Hyper reader! As you'll read in our review this issue, this is not a game to miss, so get your entries in quick to be in with a chance to win all this great stuff... the kit includes a Turok t-shirt, baseball cap, special Turok binoculars, magna-lite torch, Turok zippo lighter and a copy of Turok 2 for PC or N64 (please specify).

To win, answer this question...

Is Turok an A) Indian; B) American Indian; C) Eskimo or D) mutant?

Put your answer on the back of an envelope and send it to: **Do it... the Turok Rock, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**
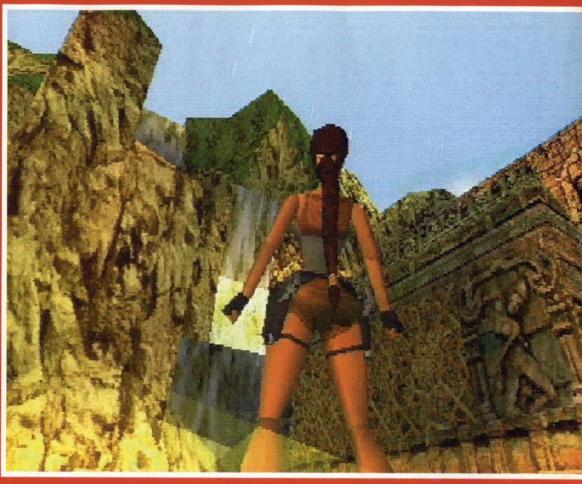
Tomb Raider III
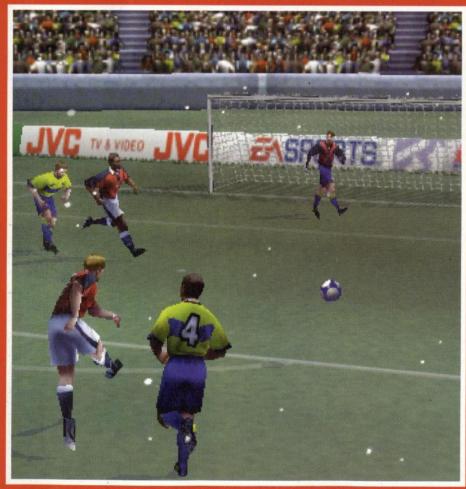
Win Lara! Yeah, you wish. We do however, have copies of Tomb Raider III to give away, so that's the next best thing. Thanks to Ozisoft, we have five cool Tomb Raider III packs to give away, which include a t-shirt and copy of the game for either PC or PlayStation (please specify on your entry). To be in with a chance to get your hands on Lara (so to speak), see if you can answer this question...

Who should play Lara Croft in the Tomb Raider movie?
A) Dan Toose; B) Liz Hurley; C) Catherine Zeta-Jones or D) Demi Moore?

Put your answer on the back of an envelope and post it away to: **Lovely Lara, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**

FIFA '99

It's time for you to evolve from a soccer hooligan to a soccer hero! EASports have been pumping out the hits for years now, and the FIFA series has always been darn excellent. FIFA '99 for PC is just so very pretty, that we begged EA to let us giveaway five copies to our readers. EA were kind enough to say "Yes! Have free games!", so we thank them, and we urge you lot to get your entries in quick for copies of this excellent sim. To be in with a chance, answer us this question...

Which British soccer player is more than a little friendly with a certain Spice Girl?

Write your answer, along with your name and address on the back of an envelope and post it to: **FIFA Fo Fum, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Goaaaaaal!**

Command & Conquer: Tiberian Sun

WOW-O-METER

PC

AVAILABLE: 1ST QUARTER '99
CATEGORY: STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1-8
PUBLISHER: WESTWOOD STUDIOS

When we first previewed Tiberian Sun, the much anticipated sequel to Command & Conquer, I think God was just a boy. Last word from the front line, was that it was showing at this year's E3 and still looking like the strategy game to beat. As long as Westwood get the game out, Tiberian Sun could be one of the most successful strategy games ever. We've heard some funny rumours as to why the game hasn't been released yet (even though it looked more than finished at E3), such as the actors demanding to re-shoot all their FMV scenes and James-Earl Jones sounding too much like Darth Vader in his voice overs. The truth is, Westwood Studios are just being ultra-fussy about making it "the best strategy game ever". Let's see what we can look forward to...

Twenty years on, the NOD and GDI are still going at it, with a third bunch, the Forgotten entering the story. You can't play as the Forgotten, but you will be able to side with them during the game, and it seems like they've been exposed to Tiberium a little more than lots. In fact the NOD have been experimenting wth Tiberium to see it's effect on a variety of lifeforms and there is also the rumour that Kane is still alive...

Unlike the new breed of polygon based 3D strategy games, Tiberian Sun has gone in another direction completely. Whilst still moving into 3D territory, the game engine is actually based on voxel technology (3D pixels as opposed to polygons) and plays from a fixed isometric perspective (though you can zoom in and rotate the map). The fixed perspective will keep the feel of the game very much like the original Command & Conquer, but the new voxel-based graphics will mean smoother more realistic animation, 3D effects and glorious coloured lighting. The lighting isn't just for effect though... The deadly toxic Tiberium now glows eerily, and you can set up perimeter spotlights around your base to help find and then blind enemy troops at night. Whilst the voxel-based engine means that having a 3D accelerator won't help you much, you will be pleased to know that a voxel engine is far less demanding on your CPU, though more memory hungry - so invest in some RAM if Tiberian Sun is at the top of your list.

New units include big chunky mechs, hover tanks, tunelling flame tanks, hunter-seeker drones, and jet-pack equipped troops - there are even NOD tanks which scoop up Tiberium and use it as ammo for warheads! Your units will now also gain experience as they survive battles, earning higher experience "points" depending upon what enemy units they manage to destroy. As they earn points, they will rise in speed and power and gain access to new abilities, which will mean your units are far more valuable over the course of an entire game, so you won't be sending them off willy-nilly in a grunt attack. You're going to need all the help you can get too, as now you'll have bizarre weather conditions to fight in. Snow and ice-covered landscapes can be both hazardous and helpful, windy conditions can carry toxic gases, and random Ion storms can take out certain units and render others inoperable. Hopefully, Tiberian Sun will be keeping us up late at night early '99.

NINTENDO 64

GEKKO GAMES
Computers and Peripherils

PlayStation

NINTENDO 64

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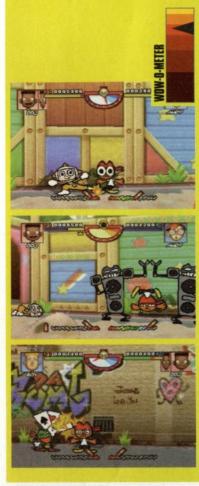
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Rakuga Kids

NINTENDO 64

WOW-O-METER

AVAILABLE: TBA
CATEGORY: FIGHTING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: KONAMI

There's something appealing about silly-lookin', squat little cartoon fighters. I don't know what it is... maybe because it's one step closer to being able to slap around Parappa the Rapper that makes Rakuga Kids so much fun. Whatever, just don't be fooled by this game's timid exterior... Rakuga Kids is a clever fighting game. Sticking to simple cardboard-cutout 2D, means for some truly bizarre and unique animation, as well as a lightning fast bout of fighting. As you punch each other around, a power-gauge begins to build, unleashing a silly special move when it becomes full - much like unleashing specials in most other fighting games. However, the special moves in Rakuga Kids are quite simply bizarre. For example the cowboy character summons a very stupid looking squiggle that looks like a bull to come stampede your enemy... or the space man straps his opponent to a rocket and then fires them into orbit (the screen actually goes into space to watch it happen).

The music seems to really stand out as some of the best we've heard so far for the N64, and it looks like a rather classy production all round. Full review next issue. **EF**

Alpha Centauri

PC

WOW-O-METER

AVAILABLE: JANUARY
CATEGORY: STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1-7
PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS

The geniuses behind Civilization and Civilization II - Sid Meier and Brian Reynolds respectively - have teamed together to develop a sci-fi strategy fest called Alpha Centauri. Their highly respected names alone, have made this one of the most promising new strategy games slated for the new year. Taking place in the 22nd century, seven different factions have slowly formed on a colony ship whilst it has travelled to a planet orbiting the star Alpha Centauri for colonisation. Now that they are there, the factions split off and attempt to develop their own territories. Each faction is strongest in a particular area, whether it be the militaristic Spartan Federation, the environmentally conscious Gaia's Daughters or the business-savvy Morgan Conglomerate, with each faction being lead by a specific personality and receiving bonuses in their field of expertise. Winning the game may be achieved through conquering land or even simply evolving your people to the next stage of human development.

The terrain of the planet you play on is fully 3D, though the game is turn-based, so your units still have to deal with a contoured landscape (which you can terraform to your heart's content). There are also bizarre native alien lifeforms to contend with during your struggle against the other factions, changing weather and a randomly generated planet every time you restart your game. You can choose to quietly ally yourself with another faction, whilst secretly developing technologies to use against them at a later date, or just waltz right in with your freshly built army.

The overall mood of the game is somewhere between something Star Trek and Starcraft, with a dash of Civilization thrown in for good measure. We get the feeling this is going to be an utterly consuming game, and a little daunting, so start buying your tinned food now. **EF**

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FORMULA 1 98

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100 X 25 300 1st 0 3:30

100 X 22 1st 0 1:13

100 X 15 300 1st 0 9:44

100 X 22 1st 0 1:13

100 X 25 1st 0 7:24

Quake III Arena

PC

WOW-O-METER

AVAILABLE: APRIL 1999
CATEGORY: FIRST PERSON SHOOTER
PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: ID SOFTWARE
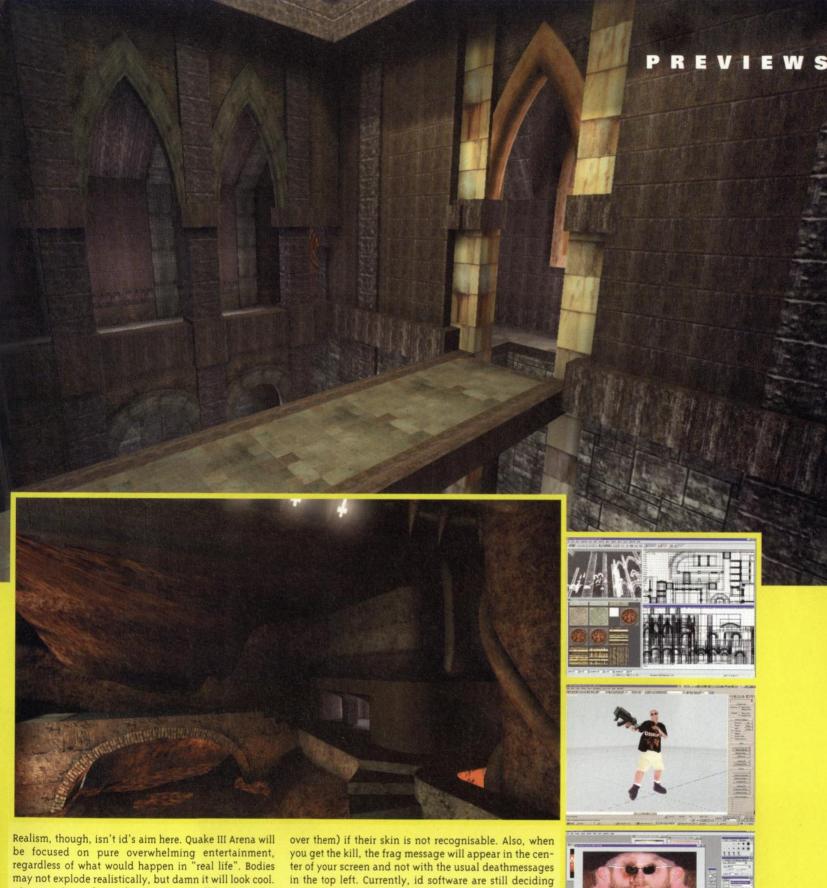
Quake III Arena originally started out as an official id mission pack for Quake 2, until the programmers stumbled upon too many cool ideas to squeeze into the game. Thus the idea for Quake III was spawned, eventually acquiring the title Quake Arena, and it's now become one of the most anticipated PC games ever. Essentially, id have admitted that the multiplayer aspect of the Quake series is what has not only kept the games alive over the years, but elevated it to the status of "religion" amongst throngs of gamers everywhere. Thus, Quake III Arena will be focused almost entirely upon a multiplayer experience, whether you are online or not. The single-player game will still be intact, but it will be more of a "challenge" style showdown against bots (computer controlled players). Because of this, there won't be "monsters" as such, but a bizarre array of opponents for the single-player to stumble upon. As opposed to traversing 30 levels in a linear mission-based way, players will be required to "learn" a smaller number of worlds, and eventually master them.

Id's main aim is to keep the code as clean as possible, to ensure a smooth, fast game - regardless of how complex the models, textures and lighting effects become. If something looks amazing, but slows down the deathmatch, it will be dropped for the sake of faster play. Gamers salute you id!

Currently, the graphics in Quake Arena look lightyears ahead of the previous Quake games. More colour, detail and atmosphere has been pumped into the game, as well as obscenely realistic player models (digitally mapped faces for instance) with a greater array of animation. Gamers will even be able to add their own custom taunts and death animations into their player.

100 X 25 300 1st 0 2:06

Realism, though, isn't id's aim here. Quake III Arena will be focused on pure overwhelming entertainment, regardless of what would happen in "real life". Bodies may not explode realistically, but damn it will look cool.

A new twist to the Quake experience will be the inclusion of three different player classes - light, medium and heavy. The light class player will be extremely fast on their feet, but weaker in terms of maximum health, whereas the heavy class player will take a lot of damage before they go down but will move slowly. This can only mean some truly interesting Teamplay games, with Clan's comprising of different class players... maybe even some maps will be better for a certain class and thus a Clan will field a different team. Other additions, include player-id crosshairs, so when in the middle of a fire-fight you can see who it is you are up against (their name appears on screen when you pass the crosshair over them) if their skin is not recognisable. Also, when you get the kill, the frag message will appear in the center of your screen and not with the usual deathmessages in the top left. Currently, id software are still deciding how to balance the guns - should the new Rail Gun have a tiny amount of splash damage at point of impact? Should the flamethrower they are working on be included? Maybe even something unexpected with the BFG...

Even though id would not admit it, the Quake III Arena world looks close to the kind of creepy atmosphere Epic acheived with Unreal - the difference here being that Quake III Arena will undoubtedly play faster than Unreal ever could or will. Hanging mist, curved pipes and archways, coloured lighting and sexy weapons - hopefully including a flamethrower - will make Quake III Arena one of the prettiest multiplayer games to not only play, but watch too. **EF**

PLAYER MODELS, SKINS AND GAME MAPS GETTING THEIR BITS TWEAKED IN THE ID QUAKE ARENA EDITOR...

Metal Gear Solid

PLAYSTATION

DEVELOPER: KONAMI
GENRE: ACTION/ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
SUPPORTS: DUAL SHOCK
AVAILABLE: MID 1999

WOW-O-METER

First, it was Square and Final Fantasy VII. Following that was Capcom and Resident Evil 2. While the question as to which game has unquestionable market dominance in the present time is still up in the air, there is one very definite certainty about the future: that Konami and Metal Gear Solid will have their time to bask gloriously in the sun.

Back in the early 1980s when Metal Gear was but a humble but ambitious project on the MSX and later the NES, Hideo Kojima's character, Solid Snake, was introduced to a then young and wide-eyed videogame community that soaked up anything new. 'Spy game', they called it. It was a 2D top-down action game where you had to hide from your enemies, sneak past them when they fall asleep, steal weapons, use them, and complete the mission objectives that are relayed through on your radio transceiver.
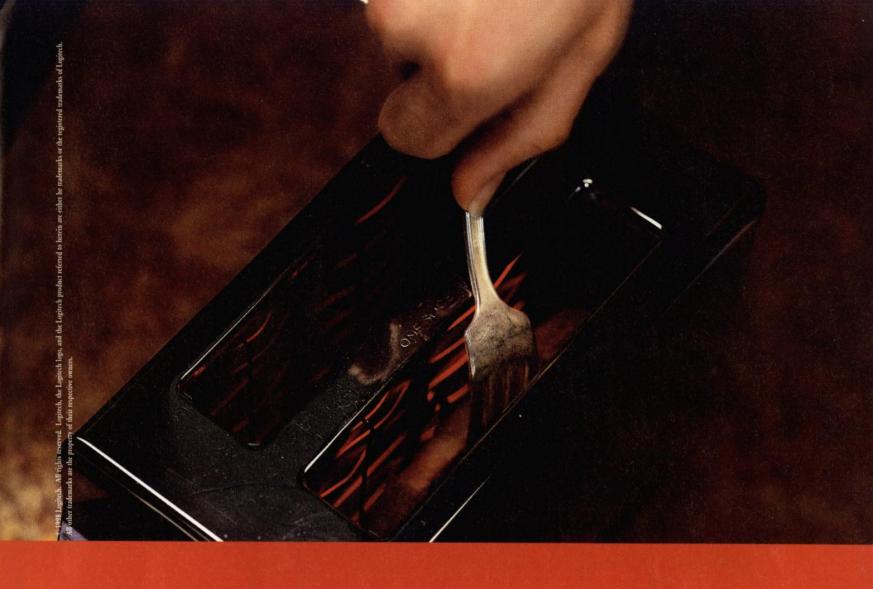
So what does Metal Gear Solid offer? Basically the same thing, except it also makes use of the PlayStation's mon-

strous (compared to the NES, anyway) 3D graphics engine, CD quality sound, and Dual Shock control pads. The final result, from what Hyper has been able to play of the Japanese version, is an experience beyond words, beyond reproach, beyond anything that the gaming community has ever seen. Let's try to conceptualise it in these terms: you are a spy. You move within a polygonal environment from a top-down perspective, where pressing yourself against a wall will change the viewpoint, allowing you different views of the situation. Using a radar, you can avoid areas where guards are present; and if ever you're not sure, you can switch to first person mode to scan through the area and examine it to the last detail. How detailed, I hear you ask? Well, let's put it this way: if you can think of it, it's there. Smoke from ventilation shafts? Done. Footprints in the snow? Done. Computers in an office? Done. Disk drives and power switches on those computers? It's all there. Every possible detail you'd look for is there. And that's not to mention the plethora of hi-tech gadgets, and weapons that Snake can carry, making Batman's utility belt look embarrassingly outdated.
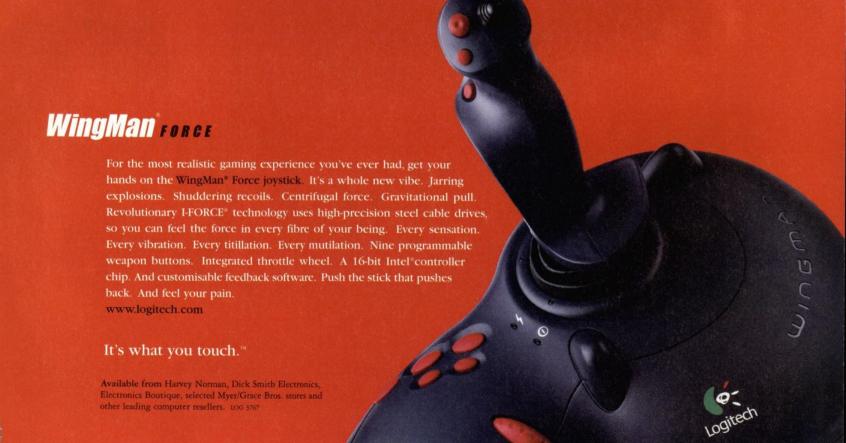
Metal Gear Solid represents something very lacking in the industry: originality. It is the first game to truly exploit the concept of 'immersive' 3D environments in that every gameplay perspective, whether it be first person, top-down, and so on is equally important. Every wall, every object, every tunnel, and every vehicle matters.

Throw that in with 3 difficulty settings, different endings, and a training mode, and Metal Gear Solid promises to be a game that will define a new approach to gameplay as it laces patience, brainwork, realism, and a damned good storyline together. Word has it that the English version will be a deadly accurate translation of the Japanese version - so accurate, in fact, that America has rated the game M15+ because of blood, gore, violence, and sexual themes. Hats off to Konami for not chickening out in the face of censorship. There are three words left to say: watch this space. **KC**

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Devil Dice

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: JANUARY
CATEGORY: PUZZLE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: THQ

WOW-O-METER

The PlayStation has had a wonderful track record with puzzle games - Kula World, Kurushii, Bust A Move, Super Puzzle Fighter and now Devil Dice is emerging from the Sony stable. The game is played out on a grid seven blocks wide by seven deep, and it involves controlling a small little devil around the screen, rolling big dice to match numbers and align enough dice to clear the grid. For instance, you may have a die sitting there with the number five showing... if you can roll another four dice up against it, all with the number five showing - the dice will vanish, making it easier to complete the puzzle. Make sense? Well, once you get your hands on it, it's simple and addictive. The trick is knowing where to roll your dice, as the "exposed" number changes every time you roll it over, though your little devil can hop down and push a die along the grid as well.

Different modes will provide a variety of challenges, such as time limits and quickly spawning dice, and the multiplayer "war" mode will make or break friendships with it's frantic gameplay. We can't wait to review this one. **EF**

South Park

NINTENDO 64/PC

AVAILABLE: JANUARY
CATEGORY: ACTION
PLAYERS: 1-4 (1-16 ON PC)
PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM

WOW-O-METER

The four horsemen of the Apocalypse (that's Stan, Kyle, Kenny and Cartman) are here. Surely a South Park video game means the end of the world, right? Okay, okay... South Park the game is nigh, and Lord Almighty it's a First Person Shooter! Every 666 years, a weird comet approaches the Earth and all sorts of bizarre happenings take place in South Park. For one, the turkey population goes completely nuts, deadly robots appear in town and people get abducted by aliens. What does this mean? Well, pick your favourite South Park character, grab your weapon (choose from a MooMoo2000 Cow Launcher, Phillip and Terrence farting dolls, even toilet plungers) and get out there to give 'em what for. Based on Iguana Entertainment's Turok engine, every character appears in full polygonal 3D form... which is bizarre after staring at their flat 2D faces on the TV for hours on end! Matt Stone and Trey Parker (South Park creators) have stepped in and recorded a whole bunch of new dialogue for the game too, so we won't just be treated with classic samples from the TV show. The multiplayer prospects of the PC version are pretty huge, with up to 16 players going head to head (thanks to Capture the Flag style options). South Park still looks on target for January, so fingers crossed we'll soon be reaching for those Cheesy Poofs. **EF**

UPCOMING RELEASES

The complete guide to what's coming out over the next month here in Australia
★ Hot stuff on the way...

PC

JANUARY

Actua Hockey
Alpha Centauri
Baseball Pro '99
Basketball '99
Battle Group
Blade
Diablo 2 ★
Extreme-G 2
FA18/E Super Hornet
Malkari
Mayday
MIG Alley
Nascar Racing 3
Premier Manager 99
Road To Moscow
Saga
Shadowpact
Tank Racer
Tanktics
Theocracy
Tribal Lore
Tunguska
Ultrafighters
Wild Metal Country

PlayStation

JANUARY

Asteroids
Big Air
Devil Dice
Dodgem Arena
Eliminator
Flying Corps Gold
Global Domination
KKND 2
NFL Extreme
Pro 18 The World Open
Pro Boarders
Quake 2
Wild Arms

N 64

JANUARY

Bust A Move 3
Command & Conquer
Fighting Force 64
Looney Tunes Space Race
Rogue Squadron
South Park ★

Diablo 2

Asteroids

Quake II (PSX)

KKND2 (PSX)

Fighting Force 64

You and a friend

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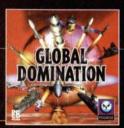
There are **five** Intensely Magical Reality Tours to be won. When you buy any of these games from Psygnosis fill in the entry form and you could win.

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

Colony Wars: Vengeance

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.

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.

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.

Global Domination

The year is 2015. From the ULTRA command base in a corner of the globe, launch yourself and your missiles into an intense and ruthless battle against those who strive for world domination.

PSYGNOSIS

GAMESTER DUAL FORCE STEERING WHEEL

PlayStation
Type: Steering Wheel
Distributor: Livewire
R.R.P: $169.95
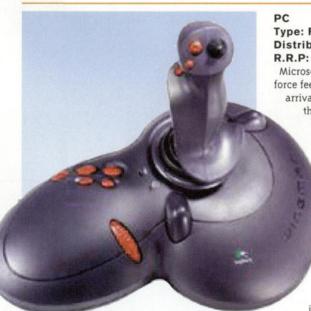
The Gamester Rumble Force wheel didn't take too long to get superceeded by another Gamester product now did it?! The Rumble Force Wheel relied upon sound to activate the vibration effect on the wheel, which of course means you don't get a very realistic effect overall.

Gamester have addressed this issue by going for full Dual Shock support. What this means is that you'll get the same rumble effects that you'd get when you use a Dual Shock controller. This means a far more realistic rumble in racing games, so you actually get vibrations when you hit things, rather than when you do something that makes noise.

There's one tiny problem... The Gamester Force Feedback wheel does not allow analogue accelerating and braking whilst being in Dual Shock mode. So getting the authentic Dual Shock rumbles comes at the cost of having digital acceleration and braking (so it's either not on, or like putting your foot to the floor, with no inbetween).

You can use this wheel in such a way where the pedals are analogue, but that's the NegCon mode, which doesn't support any rumbling effects. If Gamester remedy this problem for these wheels made in the future, we will let you know.

Besides that, the wheel feels good, and we'd recommend this over the other Gamester wheels so far (and they're good!). There is a competitor to this Gamester Wheel, which we'll be checking out next issue (with the analogue pedal issue in mind). **DT**

LOGITECH WINGMAN FORCE

PC
Type: Force Feedback Joystick
Distributor: Logitech
R.R.P: $269.95

Microsoft have had a bit of a free run in terms of force feedback controllers for the PC, and the arrival of the Logitech Wingman Force heralds the start of yet another peripheral war.

Much of this report will be a direct comparison to the Microsoft Sidewinder Force Feedback Pro.

The stick itself is reasonably comfortable, but relative to the MSFFP, it is a bit chunky, and won't suit as wide a variety of hand sizes and shapes. There is a button at the thumb rest, which gives you less reason to move your thumb up to the hat position, which will be a welcome relief in intense battles. The only really major difference with the stick is that this one does not rotate on its axis, where the MSFFP does.

The left hand rests on the throttle and extra buttons, and in this location the LWF does it better than the MSFFP. It basically comes dow to sheer comfort... with Logitech's throttle being easier to use accurately this way, and the buttons rest perfectly under the fingers.

The main feature of both joysticks is the actual force feedback, and there are some notable differences here too. If you like it hard (erm), then the MSFFP is your stick straight away, as the LWF does not come close to being as rigid if you choose to turn the rigidity up. However, in terms of smoothness, the LWF edged ahead, with far less discernable feel of moving against a set of motors. Apparently the LWF can produce 300 vibrations per second and the MSFFP can only do 25, but to be honest I really couldn't feel a difference in the thick of gaming. In terms of actual vibration effects, it was too hard to pick a winner, as both sticks did a great job.

So which joystick wins? Well it's pretty much a tie, so if one of the above factors means more to you than the others, then base your choice on that. If you have that cliche grudge against the company behind the Sidewinder Force Feedback Pro, then the LWF will keep you happy, but for me, the ability to rotate the stick on its axis was a major plus in the games I like, and I found it more comfortable to use over a long period of time.

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 Dual Force	$169.95	One of the more expensive wheels, but is solid and has Dual Shock support.
Pc			
3D Accelerator	Maxi Gamer Pheonix	$299	Better performance than Voodoo 1 cards. The best cheap option to get 3D.
	Diamond Monster 3D II	$399	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	The most comfortable of the PC Force Feedback joysticks available at the moment.
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	$24.95	This rumble pak 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.

Let's have a moment of silence for those we've left behind.

C.H.A.O.S Deathmatch

QWar2

LET US PREY. IT'S SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST (AND THE FASTEST).
AND QUAKE II IS AT THE TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN. NO OTHER GAME
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MORE DEVOTED FANS THAN QUAKE II. WITH ALL THIS ATTENTION,
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AROUND. IT'S THE PERFECT COMPLEMENT TO AN ALREADY SUPERIOR
BREED OF GAME. FACE IT, YOU BROUGHT THIS ON YOURSELF.

UNMATCHED. UNMISTAKABLE. BUT DEFINITELY NOT UNREAL.

QUAKE II™ NETPACK I: EXTREMITIES™

97-98

This event has inspired more entries than any other in Hyper history. After crazy amounts of mind numbing data entry (not every day is a new adventure at Hyper), we got the verdict from the hardcore gamers of Australia (that's you guys and gals!) as to what were the games most worthy of praise... and a slap on the wrist over the past twelve months. Enough idle banter... on to the presentation of the Hyper Reader Awards.

BEST 3D FIGHTER

1. **Tekken 3**
   (arcade/PSX) - Namco (75% of vote)
2. **Dead or Alive**
   (arcade/PSX) - Temco (8% of vote)
3. **Bushido Blade**
   (PSX) - Squaresoft (5% of vote)

To say that the Tekken series has been rather popular in the arcades and in the PlayStation scene would be a ridiculous understatement. Tekken 3 was not a huge technical breakthrough in the arcade, but the PlayStation conversion was extremely impressive considering how less powerful the PlayStation is compared to the System 12 arcade board. We do wonder if many of the votes for Tekken 3 came before people played the PAL version on PSX, which is extremely slow, and may be an issue for many gamers.

BEST 2D FIGHTER

1. **Marvel vs Capcom**
   (arcade) - Capcom (78% of vote)
2. **King of Fighters '97**
   (arcade/Saturn/PSX) - SNK (14% of vote)
3. **Gem Fighter**
   (arcade/PSX) - Capcom (5% of vote)
   Please... someone make a better 2D fighting game than Capcom... just for variety sake! The novelty of having classic Capcom characters such as Megaman, Ryu and Strider, in there with Hulk, and Spiderman, has obviously proven extremely successful, as this was clearly the most popular 2D fighter this year amongst our readers. A Dreamcast version should be out here next year... woohoo!

BEST ROLE PLAYING GAME

1. **Final Fantasy VII**
   (PlayStation/PC) Squaresoft (83% of vote)
2. **Might and Magic VI**
   (PC) New World Computing (5% of vote)
3. **Lands of Lore II**
   (PC) Westwood (4% of vote)

In the same way that Diablo had mass appeal last year, Final Fantasy VII has done it this year. With an awesome storyline, gorgeous artwork, great characters, and so many hidden extras within the game, Final Fantasy VII was always going to be a big hit. The Hyper crew were stoked to see Might and Magic VI also get a few votes, as it is a great epic itself.

BEST ADVENTURE GAME

1. **Blade Runner**
   (PC) Westwood (33% of vote)
2. **Curse of Monkey Island**
   (PC) Lucasarts (31% of vote)
3. **Broken Sword 2**
   (PC/PSX) Virgin (19% of vote)

This was perhaps the closest of all the categories. After a couple of hundred votes, there was less than five between all the nominated games! Eventually (after several hundred more votes), Blade Runner and COMI pulled away to a clear lead. Blade Runner broke ground in terms of a graphics engine for an adventure game, and the replayability of the game also would have helped it earn those extra votes that gave it the title this year.

BEST PLATFORM GAME

1. **Banjo-Kazooie**
   (Nintendo 64) Rare (56% of votes)
2. **Abe's Oddysee**
   (PSX/PC) Oddworld (28% of votes)
3. **Heart of Darkness**
   (PSX/PC) Infogrames (10% of votes)

Just as Super Mario 64 was the undisputed platform game of '96-'97, the next big Nintendo 64 platform game took the honours this year too. Rare's effort with Banjo-Kazooie really helps point out how they're the best developer for the Nintendo systems, with the exception of Nintendo themselves (although some would say Rare do a better job). Abe was far from forgotten though, and considering how the video gaming world is so heavily geared towards 3D, to see a 2D platform game become so popular gives us sickening warm fuzzies... aww.

BEST FLIGHT SIM

1. **Longbow 2**
   (PC) Janes (50% of votes)
2. **F22 ADE**
   (PC) DID (25% of votes)
3. **Janes F15-E**
   (PC) Janes (12% of votes)

We're a tad curious as to whether or not Longbow 2 won this category because it was at the top of the multiple choice list we provided, as the game didn't sell so many copies to suggest it should get this big a following. All that aside, it was an outstanding game, and our money was on either that or F22 ADE, so in the end it's about right.

With awesome flight sims like Total Air War, European Air War, and others all recently released it will be interesting to see if they're remembered in a year's time for the next awards.

BEST SPACE FLIGHT SIM

1. **Descent Freespace**
   (PC) Interplay (40% of votes)
2. **Wing Commander Prophecy**
   (PC) Origin (38% of votes)
3. **I-War**
   (PC) - Ocean (13% of votes)

If you're into this genre, '97-'98 was a great year. Wing Commander Prophecy basically took Origin's long running series another step further, and offered drool worthy visual effects. I-War was astounding, offering that "whole ship" experience, with the ability to man individual stations of your ship, and also giving those without 3D accelerators awesome visuals which had been limited to those that had them. Descent Freespace offered a blend of the best elements of previous space games, and the best missions and capital ships yet, and these obviously had an effect on the gamers' voting.

BEST STRATEGY GAME

1. **Starcraft**
   (PC) Blizzard (38% of votes)
2. **Total Annihilation**
   (PC) - Cavedog (29% of votes)
3. **Age of Empires**
   (PC) - Microsoft (22% of votes)

All you had to do to see how hugely popular Starcraft had become, was to get on Battle.net

and take a look at the number of games running at any given time. Oozing character and humour, whilst also having a new twist by having three races to choose from, each with their own strengths and weaknesses, Starcraft was always going to be another winner for Blizzard.

Total Annihilation did exceptionally well considering it is now quite old, and also required a decent PC to get a smooth game out of.

BEST ACTION GAME

1. Forsaken
(PC/PSX/N64) Probe/Iguana
(43% of votes)

2. Lylat Wars
(Nintendo 64) Nintendo (29% of votes)

3. Battlezone
(PC) Activision (17% of votes)

Forsaken took the Descent style game to new levels of spiffyness with super smooth frame rates, gorgeous lighting effects, and an outstanding soundtrack. It is possible that Forsaken had a slightly unfair advantage in this category since it was an all formats title, but then again a developer that ensures all gamers can play their game should be rewarded

BEST GUN GAME

1. Time Crisis
(arcade/PlayStation) Namco
(61% of votes)

2. Point Blank
(arcade/PlayStation) Namco (28% of votes)

3. House of the Dead
(arcade/Saturn/PC) AM2 (10% of votes)
Talk about dominating a field!

Namco have proven they can do the gun game better than anyone else. Namco's outstanding G-Con light gun has made the difference, with super accurate gameplay being possible with this funky peripheral. With Namco now working on Dreamcast titles, will we possibly see Time Crisis 2 with 2 player support just like in the arcades!? Damn we hope so!

BEST SPORTS GAME

1. FIFA 98 World Cup/RTWC
(PC/PSX/N64) Electronic Arts
(44% of votes)

2. 1080 Snowboarding
(Nintendo 64) - Nintendo (42% of votes)

3. Total NBA '98
(PlayStation) - Sony (4% of votes)

The FIFA games played extremely well, and with authentic commentary, real players, and a variety of playing conditions and great control and outstanding visuals made them this year's favourite sports games.

This is the first time we've seen a niche sport like snowboarding make a real impact in the genre, and the gap between FIFA and 1080 was so small that snowboarding games have obviously developed a cult following.

BEST RACING GAME

1. Gran Turismo
(PlayStation) Sony (62% of votes)

2. Colin McRae Rally
(PlayStation) Codemasters (16% of votes)

3. TOCA Touring Cars
(PlayStation/PC) Codemasters
(8% of votes)

PlayStation owners had really already voted with their dollar earlier this year... as Gran Turismo was one of the best selling games across the board this year. With awesome visuals, and that replay mode which had everyone drooling (more so than watching the actual gameplay), Gran Turismo made a lot of people happy. We can't help but feel a little sorry for Colin McRae and TOCA, which were better sims, but weren't really aimed at the mass market, and probably ended up being forgotten by many voters.

BEST 1ST PERSON SHOOTER GAME

1. Goldeneye 007
(Nintendo 64) Rare (50% of votes)

2. Unreal
(PC) Epic Megagames (22% of votes)

3. Quake 2
(PC) id Software (18% of votes)

Much to the dismay of the Hyper crew, a gazillion of you voted for Goldeneye over the two killer PC 1st person shooters... oh well Goldeneye was definitely an awesome game. Perhaps this is an indicator as to how few people have both a top end PC and an internet connection to get the most out of a game like Quake 2. Goldeneye's real world environment and gameplay were top notch, and topped off with 4 player split screen gaming for those who wanted to deathmatch their buddies, made for an excellent no-nonsense first person shooter experience.

What was the deciding factor here? If it came down to the real world environment, then will Half Life be considered an even better 1st person shooter by the masses? Or is it all a case of people wanting these sort of games on an affordable system? You tell us...

BEST MUSIC IN A GAME

1. Gran Turismo
(PlayStation) Sony (32% of votes)

2. Final Fantasy VII
(PlayStation/PC) Squaresoft (27% of votes)

3. PaRappa the Rapper
(PSX) Sony (30% of votes)

It seems that a collection of known songs has proven more popular than original music for video game music. Gran Turismo featured tracks from Garbage, Korn, and Cubanate with perhaps the best track for the game, Oxyacetylene. Squaresoft's FF7 impressed many with the huge amount of music custom made to suit various situations within the storyline, which will hopefully happen in more RPGs as time goes on.

BEST PC GAME

1. Quake 2
id Software (35% of votes)

2. Unreal
Epic Megagames (23% of votes)

3. Starcraft
Blizzard (21% of votes)

The two most popular genres in PC gaming are first person shooters and real time strategy games, so the results weren't really a big surprise this year. Quake 2 has developed a huge multiplayer following over the past year, with new players still joining the ranks of players every day. Unreal set new standards in visuals and in the single player experience in a first person shooter. Starcraft was without a doubt the most popular strategy game this past twelve months, and was always going to get a high place in this category.

BEST PLAYSTATION GAME

1. **Final Fantasy VII**
   Squaresoft (27% of votes)
2. **Tekken 3**
   Namco (24% of votes)
3. **Tomb Raider 2**
   Core (18% of votes)

Final Fantasy VII has managed to remain popular all year round and come out on top of all the PlayStation titles. Titles that were just outside the top three included Gran Turismo and Resident Evil 2... which means of the top five games, four were from Japan.

BEST GAME CHARACTER

1. **Abe**
   Abe's Oddysee (39% of votes)
2. **Lara Croft**
   Tomb Raider 2 (16% of votes)
3. **Sephiroth**
   Final Fantasy VII (13% of votes)
4. **Jin Kazama**
   Tekken 3 (11% of votes)

Well, who ever would have thought that a wrinkly green creature who farts as a means of communication would ever be more popular than a woman like Lara? Sephiroth got enough votes to imply that a cool villain will always be loved as much as a hero.

BEST GAME OF '97-98

1. **Final Fantasy VII**
   (PSX/PC) Squaresoft (19% of votes)
2. **Goldeneye 007**
   (Nintendo 64) Rare (16% of votes)
3. **Tomb Raider 2**
   (PSX/PC) Core (13% of votes)
4. **Tekken 3**
   (arcade/PSX) Namco (12% of votes)
5. **Unreal**
   (PC) Epic Megagames (10% of votes)

This was such a tight contest, and so many games got votes... in fact over 70 different titles were nominated, but of course many of them only got a few votes. Final Fantasy VII obviously impressed a lot of people to take out the title this year, but Goldeneye was never far behind.

The amazing thing is that it is a Role Playing Game that won. This has traditionally been one of the least popular genres in gaming (if sales figures are anything to go by), so this is huge achievement by Squaresoft.

BEST NINTENDO 64 GAME

1. **Goldeneye**
   Rare (66% of votes)
2. **Banjo-Kazooie**
   Rare (23% of votes)
3. **1080 Snowboarding**
   Nintendo (6% of votes)

This proves that Goldeneye was clearly the most popular N64 game this year, and also that Rare are undoubtedly responsible for keeping the N64 alive in the eye's of the gamers in this country. Banjo and Goldeneye took 89% of the vote... truly outstanding.

With the success of Goldeneye, the Nintendo 64 became the console of choice for those wanting a 1st person shooter machine, other than buying an expensive PC.

WORST GAME OF '97-98

1. **Spice World**
   (PSX) Sony (19% of votes)
2. **Dual Heroes**
   (N64) Konami (12% of votes)
3. **Pax Corpus**
   (PSX) Cryo (6% of votes)
4. **Banjo-Kazooie**
   (N64) Rare (5% of votes)
5. **Forsaken**
   (N64/PSX/PC) Probe/Iguana (5% of votes)

Well, even though the gamers of Australia hated Spice World with a passion... we have bad news for them... It sold by the truckload. Doh! Dual Heroes was in a way the real loser, because Spice World isn't really a game. We can only assume that Banjo and Forsaken got vote due to some strange angst some gamers have about these two titles.

UNNECESSARY USE OF BREASTS

1. **Dead or Alive**
   (arcade/PSX) Temco
2. **Tomb Raider 2**
   (PSX/PC) Core
3. **Deathtrap Dungeon**
   (PSX/PC) Eidos

If you haven't seen Dead or Alive, then you've been missing out on the most misguided perception of how breasts behave. The most amusing thing about this category for us was that a small group of people voted for a new category "There's no such thing as unnecessary use of breasts".

WORST ENDING IN A GAME
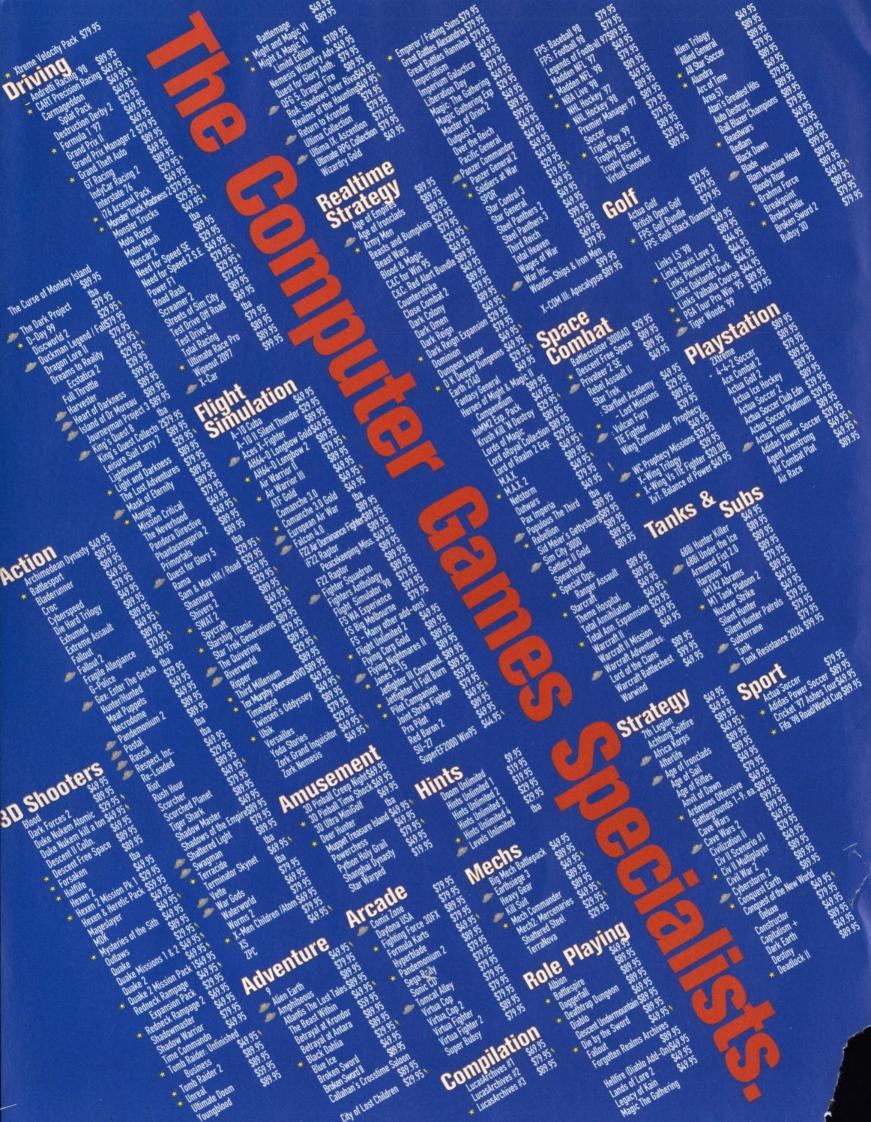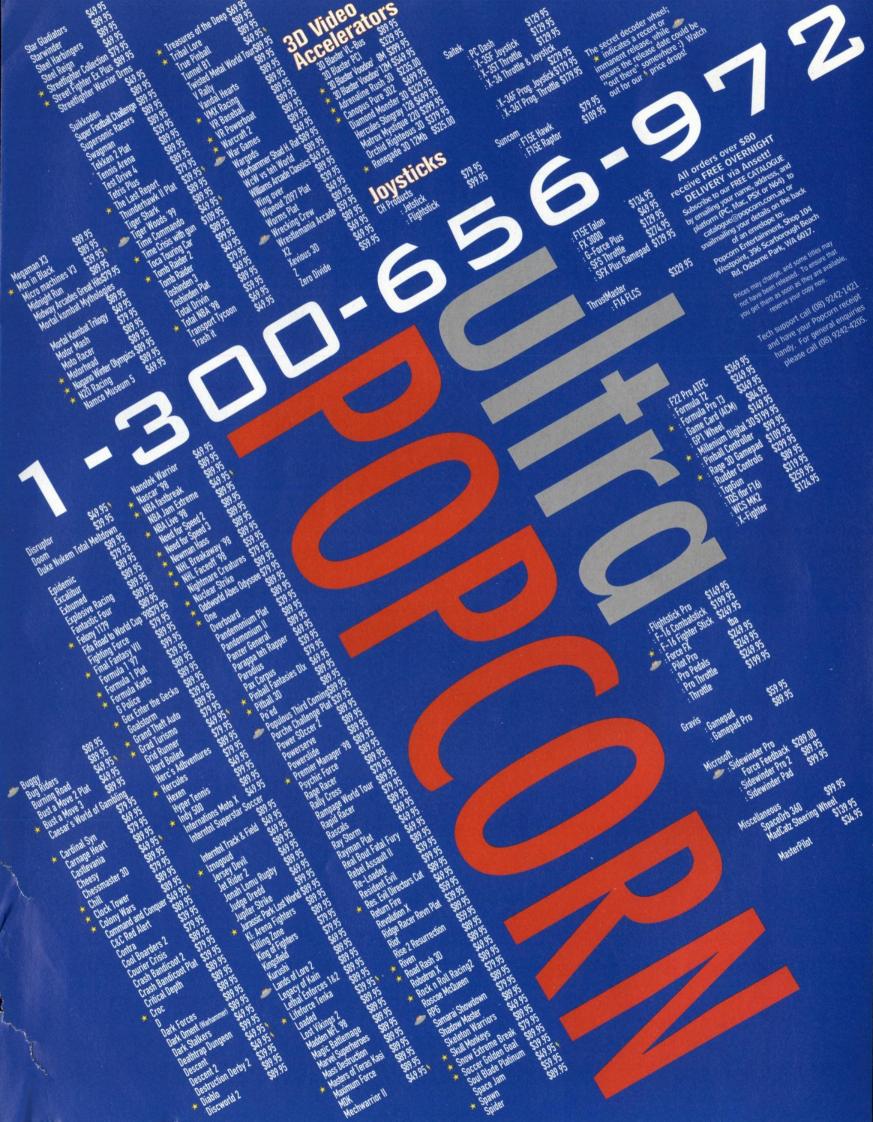
1. **Quake 2**
   (PC) Id Software (35% of votes)
2. **Point Blank**
   Namco (27% of votes)
3. **Tomb Raider 2**
   Core (25% of votes)

After destroying the largest threat to the existence of the human race, you get a brief does of B-grade FMV of an escape pod crashing into a barren planet, and to see your fist emerge from the hatch. Well wasn't that worth it? Pfft!

Hostage executed!

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Africa Korps $49.95
Afterlife $89.95
Age of Ironclads $79.95
Age of Salt $49.95
Age of Rifles $89.95
Anvil of Dawn $89.95
Ardennes Offensive $99.95
Battlegrounds 1-9: ea. $89.95
Cave Wars $79.95
Cave Wars 2 $49.95
Civilization 2 $89.95
Civ II Scenario #1 $89.95
Civ II Multiplayer $89.95
Civil War 2 $89.95
Cyberstorm 2 $49.95
Conquest Earth $79.95
Conquest of the New World $49.95
Deluxe $89.95
Constructor $89.95
Capitalism + $99.95
Dark Earth
Destiny
Deadlock II

Sport
Actua Soccer $49.95
Adidas Power Soccer $89.95
Cricket '97 Ashes Tour $49.95
Fifa '98 Road/World Cup $99.95

REVIEWS

It would seem that most of the console games have been pushed to come out a little earlier this Christmas, because there's a surprisingly low number of PlayStation and Nintendo 64 games this issue, and the only real big console game that didn't quite make it in time, that is still going to be out before Christmas is Zelda 64.

The good news is that there are some fine games this month, across all systems. As usual, there aren't many N64 titles around, but what is there is really strong. Turok 2, Spacestation Silicon Valley and WCW vs NWO are all very different, and quality and variety around for the N64 right now, it would seem the system is not about to die an early death from lack of titles as many have been speculating.

PlayStation owners finally get a good cricket game in the form of Shane Warne Cricket 99. Lara is back, and it's pretty much like last year... more of the same, but the fans will be back for more nonetheless. Crash Bandicoot Warped was also better than we expected, and should be more than enough to satisfy those that liked the first two games.

Once again, there's a bunch of good games for the PC, but with so many titles coming out, this is really to be expected. Sin is yet another cool first person shooter based on the Quake 2 engine... yet it's not quite another Half Life. Fallout 2 is yet another one of this month's "worthy sequels", and with Populous: The Beginning also being a follow up to some old classics, it has actually made it clear that developers are turning to sequels of successful games to make the big bucks at Christmas.

Will I be writing about Tomb Raider 4 and Turok 3 this time next year?

Dan

GAME OF THE MONTH TUROK 2

reviewed on page 46

PLAYSTATION GAME OF THE MONTH TOMBRAIDER 3

Reviewed on page 66

PC GAME OF THE MONTH FALLOUT 2

Reviewed on page 78

44 »HYPER

50

64

72

84

62

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.

Turok 2: Seeds of Evil

After weeks of harassment and late night obscene phone calls, Dan finally handed the Turok 2 cart over to **Cam Shea**.

HYPER BIG RUBBER STAMP OF APPROVAL

FRAG AWAY MY GOOD MAN!

Turok 2 isn't just a comprehensive one player experience, as the deathmatch options are just as polished. Players can select from eight characters then frag it out in the many deathmatch arenas. There are no restrictions, you can run, jump, climb and swim. Tonk away!!

The original Turok was an enjoyable game that was soon somewhat overshadowed by the critical acclaim surrounding Goldeneye. Turok's time is nigh, however, as Turok 2 is a superlative effort.

Turok: Dinosaur Hunter was let down by excessive fogging, creature regeneration, and the use of precision jumping as an overriding gameplay element.

Fortunately, for Seeds of Evil, Iguana have delivered big time. Turok 2's graphics engine is almost unrecognisable, such is the degree of improvement. The fog has been pushed back a long way, creating a sense of scale sorely lacking in the original. Dinosoids can now be spotted from a great distance, in contrast to Turok 1 where enemies would suddenly burst forth from the claustrophobic fog. Iguana have capitalised on the improved engine with much improved gameplay.

Not only that, but dead creatures no longer regenerate, they simply stay dead. The platform game elements from the original are gone too. No longer is Turok forced to prance from tiny platform to tiny platform where falling means certain death. There's now a much greater emphasis on action and exploration.

Right from the start Turok 2 is an immersive and compelling game. The first level is a port town under bombardment, with fires burning and explosions all around. As you progress you'll come across gutted buildings, fallen support arches, scorch marks, dead bodies, and the sound of combat in other areas. The build in intensity is masterful. Much of the path is set in dark passages and rooms. Progress through this foreboding black wilderness is made by firing a flare up ahead, and gradually moving forward. This design forces a cautious approach, with the constant fear of attack from the unknown.

"TEK BOW, SNIPER CAPABILITY ENABLED". DAMN THAT SAMPLE'S FUNKY FRESH!

The action moves flawlessly from huge outdoor areas to winding labyrinthine corridors. Combat combines close quarters fighting and long range sniping. Sniping adds immense depth to the gameplay, as stealth

MY WHAT A BIG... KNIFE YOU HAVE

THIS IS WHAT HAPPEN TO BUGS WHEN THE MORTEIN DOESN'T KILL EM - THEY MUTATE AND GROW

HELLO, FRAGAHOLICS ANONYMOUS? I HAVE A PROBLEM...

As we all know, Nintendo have traditionally shunned blood and gore in games for its system, so Turok 2 is something of a land-

mark. The graphic nature of the bloodletting is a delight to behold and is certainly some of the most extreme yet seen in a game. Blood splatters the walls, creatures are decapitated, have arms sliced off and have holes blown clear through their chests. The blood itself looks rather unrealistic, as it is a bit too dark and gooey, and it always flies in thick streams with no fine arterial spray. Still, it's damn entertaining! Bring on the cerebral bore!

becomes a valid option. It's so satisfying sneaking in view of a guard without alerting him to your presence and placing a tek arrow square between the eyes... then watching his head get blown off! The distance sniping weapons can zoom is fantastic, and really shows off the graphical improvements.

Graphically Turok 2 is a stunner. Alien and level design is awesome, and there's some serious variety on offer. The six levels are so huge you'll often be left wondering whether an end even exists. Among others, levels take place at night, in an insectoid layer, and on the primagen lightship. Each level has several mission objec-

tives to accomplish and there's plenty of variety in graphics and gameplay within each level.

For instance, the beginning of the second level has Turok leaping aboard a huge Triceratops dinosaur armed with unlimited twin rocket launchers and charging through a battle scarred city. The dinosoids are heavily entrenched and have set up barriers, drawbridges and rocket turrets. Accompanied by the monstrous sound of the dinosaur's feet pounding the ground and its "bloody big beast" grunts, Turok must charge the enemy stronghold and take out dinosoids and gun turrets on the ground as well as in high vantage points. This section

WEAPONRY: YOU DOWN WITH O.T.T? YEAH YOU KNOW ME!

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

(6)

(7)

(8)

(9)

(10)

(11)

(12)

(13)

(14)

(15)

(16)

(17)

(18)

Turok can tote an absolutely huge arsenal of kickass weaponry. All the weapons are funky in design and set off some of the most spectacular effects yet seen in a FPS.

FLARE: (1) Unlimited. Not a weapon as such, but damn handy to have when traversing dark areas.

WARBLADE: (2) Upgrade from the Talon. Most basic weapon, used in hand to hand combat.

TEK BOW: (3) Sniper capability. Two types of ammo. Arrows will stick in the targets body and can be retrieved. Tek arrows explode on impact. Very handy.

MAG 60: (4) Upgrade from the pistol. Fires in short bursts.

TRANQUILLISER: (5) Knocks dinosoids out cold for a while. Some enemies are immune though.

SHOT GUN: (6) Powerful, but slow rate of fire. Useful at close range. Two types of ammo - normal shells and explosive shells.

CHARGE DART RIFLE: (7) Powerful, but difficult to use. Fires charged particle beams that bounce off most surfaces.

SHREDDER: (8) Fires a group of laser bolts that rebound off walls. Works around corners

PLASMA RIFLE: (9) Sniper capability. Fires tracer like plasma bursts.

FIRESTORM CANNON: (10) Once it winds up, the ferocity of this weapon leaves the unfortunate recipient shredded and on fire.

SUNFIRE POD: (11) Releases a blinding light that temporarily blinds any enemy within range. Best used on cave dwellers that never see the light.

CEREBRAL BORE: (12) Oh baby. This weapon ROCKS!! It locks onto the brain signals of the target and fires a high speed drill that bores its way through the skull and into the brain. Watch as blood and grey brain matter spew out the top of the targets head, before the head explodes. Useless against droids and creatures with low intelligence.

P.F.M. LAYER: (13) stands for Proximity Fragmentation Mines... nuff said.

GRENADE LAUNCHER: (14) What good is a FPS without a grenade launcher?

SCORPION MISSILE LAUNCHER: (15) Fires a barrage of heat-seeking missiles. Powerful weapon as it often lands multiple strikes in one attack.
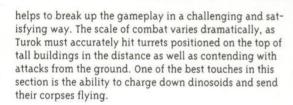
FLAME THROWER: (16) Awesome to watch and just as powerful.

RAZOR WIND: (17) Another brilliant addition. The razor wind is a Predator style metal disc with deadly sharp blades. Unlimited fire as it boomerangs back. Very powerful, but requires practice. Capable of slicing off body parts and even blowing a hole through the chest of hapless enemies.

NUKE: (18) Turok's ultimate weapon. Cataclysmic power

SHOULDN'T HAVE MADE FUN OF HIS NEW COLOURED SHADES

helps to break up the gameplay in a challenging and satisfying way. The scale of combat varies dramatically, as Turok must accurately hit turrets positioned on the top of tall buildings in the distance as well as contending with attacks from the ground. One of the best touches in this section is the ability to charge down dinosoids and send their corpses flying.

DANG BUNCH OF FREAKS...

Turok 2 has an astonishing cast of creatures, with many unique and slick designs. There are around 40 in total, and they're all rendered using soft skin techniques. This creates a holistic appearance, so there are no visible joins or blocky polygons, only smooth, realistic skin textures. Turok's creature menagerie are all highly detailed with superb textures and animations. Throw in advanced real time lighting and heavenly weapon special effects and you've got a game as tasty as cheesy poofs. Amazingly though, it gets better, as Turok 2 supports the big N's new 4MB expansion pak. Running in high res, Turok 2 is a sight to behold. Despite a slightly lower frame rate, the gameworld is deliciously sharp.

Each enemy has unique animations, sounds and AI. Whilst not without it's flaws, the AI is generally excellent and certainly a step above Goldeneye. Each enemy attacks and reacts differently, so some dinosoids hide behind boxes, and move to the opposite side as you try and outmanoeuvre them, popping up only to lob grenades. These kinds of techniques force a more guarded approach.
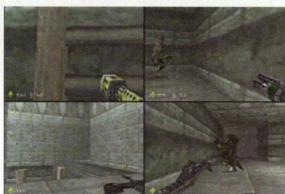
SUSPECT IS HEADLESS... REPEAT, HEADLESS.

The death animations are disconcertingly fluid and natural. For instance, if you kill a guard on a ledge he may stumble forward and step over the ledge causing him to fall off. The days of dead bodies hovering halfway off a ledge are over, as realistic physics apply. Other death animations are almost painful to watch. Seeing a decapitated dinosoid rolling around on the ground, twitching spasmodically with blood spraying from its neck forming an ever expanding pool is a tad disturbing.

The sound effects are comprehensive and sharp. For

instance, with the pistol if you shoot a concrete wall, you'll hear a ringing, reverberating "ping" sound and sparks will fly. If you shoot a wooden pole, you'll get a dull, flat "thud" sound and a puff of wood dust. If on the other hand, you shoot a dinosoid, there's a juicy "bullet impacting flesh" sound effect. The music is a mildly suitable orchestral score. The biggest downside soundwise is the sketchy, muffled quality of Adon's voice. Adon is Turok's sage who lays out mission objectives and gives hints at the start of each level.

The only faults in Turok 2 are minor. There's occasional slowdown, particularly in multiplayer games. The idea of "lives" is entirely pointless and serves only to introduce another collectable (get 100 diamonds for an extra life). And last, powerups that need to be uncovered (eg. by shooting a barrel) disappear way too fast. Aside from this nitpicking, Turok 2 is a mammoth game of the highest quality, with excellent four player support, high res support, and action a plenty. Go get it!

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	First person shooter
PLAYERS:	1-4
PUBLISHER:	Acclaim
PRICE:	$99.95
RATING:	M15+
SUPPORTS:	4MB Expansion Pak, Rumble Pak

PLUS
Gripping gameplay combined with high res. graphics and four player mayhem.

MINUS
Some slowdown, damn hard to beat.

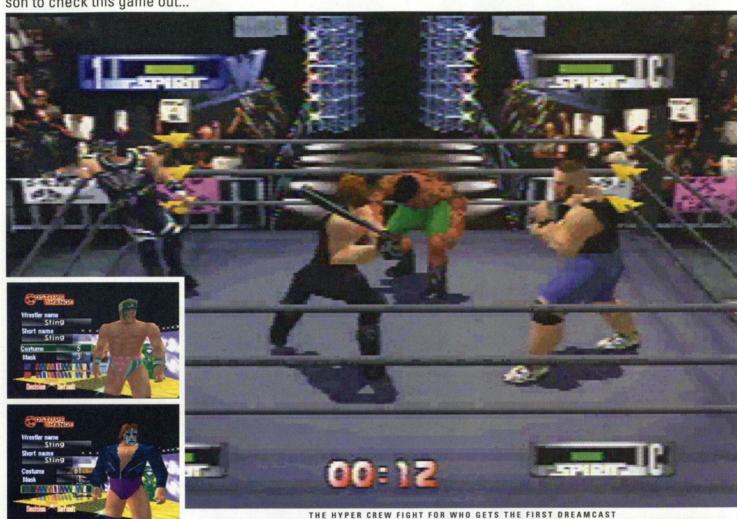| VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92	88	91

OVERALL
91

An excellent example of what a sequel should be like. Turok 2 addresses every problem in the original then goes much further.

WCW/NWO: Revenge

Cam Shea is something of a stranger to colourful tights and pectoral implants, so maybe he's not the best person to check this game out...

THE HYPER CREW FIGHT FOR WHO GETS THE FIRST DREAMCAST

MANAGER TO THE RESCUE... YEAH RIGHT.

Just as in the real thing, fights often stray outside the ring, other wrestlers often interrupt the fight if their team mate is in trouble, and even accompanying managers can make an appearance (and disappearance once you've decked them!).
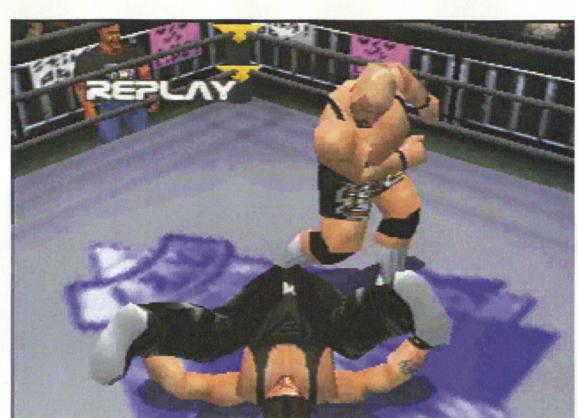
Wrestling can be fun to watch as long as you treat it like Arnie doing action/comedy, and laugh at it and not with it. World Championship Wrestling is basically an on going soap opera. Everything is staged and rather ridiculous, the stars are beefy guys and beautiful babes with no acting skills, and most importantly, each week is packed full of deceit, backstabbing and intrigue. What more could you want? Well, WCW/NWO Revenge comes with the answer!

EVERYONE KNOWS HOLLYWOOD HOGAN'S CAREER BEGAN AND ENDED WITH THE HILARIOUS "MR NANNY".

Revenge picks up where World Tour left off. There's now a humungous total of over 60 wrestlers in the game, which is even more impressive given the accurate face maps, builds and even tattoos. Many wrestlers have their own signature moves and similar mannerisms to their real life counterparts. Indeed, some of those big hunks of meat are more

REPLAY

HEY IT'S MR.METHANE!

The grappling system is quite free flowing and leads to some intense battles as any grab or attack can be reversed or countered. This means that an opponent can grab the bat from your hands mid swing, or stop your kick and deliver a swift blow to the nads... ouch! Indeed it's the flexibility of moves and counters available, combined with the huge number of fighters of different sizes and style that make this such an awesome multiplayer game.

convincing as human beings in their polygonal form! The wrestlers have smoother animations than the original and collision detection has been improved.

The downside is that the polygonal models are starting to look a little primitive. Whilst by no means ugly, Revenge would benefit greatly if it used soft skinned models, such as those in Turok 2 and WWF Warzone. This technique smooths over joins and basically make the models more solid and realistic. However, although the polygonal seams are clearly evident, it doesn't detract from the gameplay.

The gameplay and moves are largely untouched from World Tour, which is no bad thing. Basic movement is controlled by the D-pad, whilst taunts and special moves are left to the analogue. The A and B buttons control grappling and hitting. Tap lightly for a weak move, and hold for a heavy move. Proximity also plays a role. For instance, a heavy attack close in may result in a spinning punch, whereas from further away, the wrestler may launch into a flying kick. Blocking attacks and avoiding/countering grabs are controlled by the L and R buttons. The C buttons control functions like running, climbing in and out of the ring, getting weapons, climbing the turnbuckles and changing your focus when fighting against multiple opponents.

The controls give you the flexibility to do just about anything. Bounce off the ropes and knock your opponent out, then perform a boston crab, then maybe climb the turnbuckles and body slam him, before the final touch of leaving the ring to reach into the crowd and come back with a baseball bat, garbage bin or even a stop sign. It's good, clean family fun people! Not only can you brutally bash your opponent, but turning the realism mode on brings a healthy smattering of blood to the fray, and there's an excellent mid round replay feature on particularly heavy hits.

WHERE'S THE BEEF?

Once again, the game is let down by the sound. Anyone who has seen Wayne's World 2 or just about any Kung Fu film knows just how much of an impact sharp, over emphasised sound effects can have on the action. Unfortunately, whilst not particularly bad, Revenge's sound effects aren't quite beefy or crisp enough. That said, the sound of wrestlers getting pounded into the mat is rather good.

The music is excruciatingly poor, and there's little in the way of speech save for the referee's count and the odd wrestler's cry. I'd really love to have the excessively cheesy "Let's get ready to rumble" at the start of each fight. Commentary is also sorely missed. In the real life bouts the commentators get ridiculously worked up, call every move and even argue with each other. The reality is though, that with the sheer volume of wrestlers, moves and possible scenarios, there's no way to fit that amount of sound on the cart.

WCW/NWO Revenge is basically an update on last years World Tour. However, an entertaining wrestling game is now even better as Revenge improves upon the original with an updated roster, more fighters, improved graphics, options and overall presentation. Whilst the gameplay is basically untouched, Revenge perfectly captures the insanity of wrestling, and I can't recommend it enough as a four player game.

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

PLUS
Brilliant multiplayer, flexible control system, kick Hollywood Hogan's butt!

MINUS
Mostly an update to World Tour.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
85	73	86

OVERALL

86

Beefcake, BEEFCAKE!!!

Space Station Silicon Valley

Currently dating a little known Hollywood model, **Cam Shea** already knows his way around one silicon valley...

OBJECTIVE COMPLETE!
You got a husky!

A HUSKY WHAT? THROAT?

WHERE'S THE PHAT, STINKY SKUNK MON?

The sheer number of different animals you can host are impressive. These include a Walrus, King Penguin, Elephant, Racing Fox, Heli-Rabbit, Ram, Dog, Hyena and Gorilla. Each animal has a unique set of attributes that have a huge bearing on the gameplay. Here's an example:

Type: Racing Mouse
Environment: Europe
Skill A: Speed Boost
Skill B: Tail Attack
Water Resistance: Poor
Mass: Tiny
Armour: Light
Strength: Weak
Traction: Average
Fall Distance: Medium
Production: Very Short
Engine: 2.0
Intelligence: High

Silicon Valley is an orbiting space station that mysteriously disappeared for a thousand years and has now reappeared in the solar system. It was created as an experiment in artificial life with a whole host of intelligent, self replicating robotic animals. In order to solve the mystery of its disappearance, you become Evo, a spider-like computer chip that can hop into any dead AI lifeform and reanimate it.

REJUVENATING A DEAD GENRE...

Silicon Valley is a creative step in the stale 3D platforming genre. The gameplay is puzzle based and revolves around using the different abilities of each animal. The goal of each area is to complete several subtasks that will then unlock the exit. Levels are relatively small with a carefully chosen set of animals, and each must be used in some way to complete the tasks.

The best way to illustrate the game mechanics is by example. In one of the snow levels, Evo in penguin form reaches a platform where there are four switches on the ground, all of which need to be activated at once to open the exit. However, each switch turns off a split second after Evo touches it. The solution is to kill the other pen-

guins below and leave their inanimate bodies on the switches. The catch, however, is that once outside a host, Evo is extremely vulnerable. Its life goes down fast, and any fall will also cost life. Thus, Evo must leave a penguin on one of the switches, then exit the body and quickly navigate down to the next penguin's body, taking it up to another switch and so on. If this doesn't sound interesting, throw a Polar Bear with tank wheels that shoots grenades and lays mines, as well as a crazy sled mounted Ice Husky that fires rockets!

Activating the switches is only one part of the level though. The other part involves getting to a higher elevation in order to kill a troublesome bird. This requires the Ice Husky, as its turbo boost allows it to boost right over chasms separating ledges. First though, it must be killed. As a penguin you can throw snowballs at it, but this is highly risky. It is, after all, equipped with twin rocket

WHAT SORT OF FERTILISER DO THEY USE?

launchers! The more stealthy approach is to lure it down to where the Polar Tank is, get out of the way and let them fight to the death! Once you have the Ice Husky it moves at an absolute snail's pace without the use of its turbo boost. However, it has low traction, so it recoils when firing a rocket and slides all over the place when boosting. Combine this with a very short fall distance, where any size fall will result in health loss, and the challenge of killing a flying bird high up on narrow ledges becomes more interesting.

EVER PLAYED POLAR BEAR PINBALL? WELL NOW YOU CAN!

The graphics in Silicon Valley are bright, cheery and comic. Although a little plain, it is suffused with personality and detail. For instance, there's the adorable way the penguins waddle, the funky dance of the Gorilla, footsteps left in the snow, reflections on ice and glass, steamy breath in snow levels and coloured lighting.

The music is suitably wacky elevator fare. A cool addition are the speakers that are positioned throughout each level. The music rises and fades depending on your proximity to a speaker. A very cool touch is that if you're close to a speaker the bass notes are played on the rumble pak!

The sound effects are all excellent, from the Hyena's laugh to the manic pitter-patter of the sheeps' feet.

The biggest drawback in Silicon Valley are the jumpy camera mechanics. Despite a reasonable amount of control, the gameworld is often confusing. Still, this is a common problem in most 3D platformers, and is worth persevering with.

Silicon Valley succeeds because creative new challenges and sets of animals are constantly being presented. The difficulty is also nicely balanced, with just the right number of health powerups scattered around the levels. It won't take you aeons to beat, but Silicon Valley is addictive to the end.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	3D platformer
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Take 2
PRICE:	$99.95
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	Rumble Pak

PLUS
Sick sense of humour, well crafted puzzles, huge number of animals and an original approach.
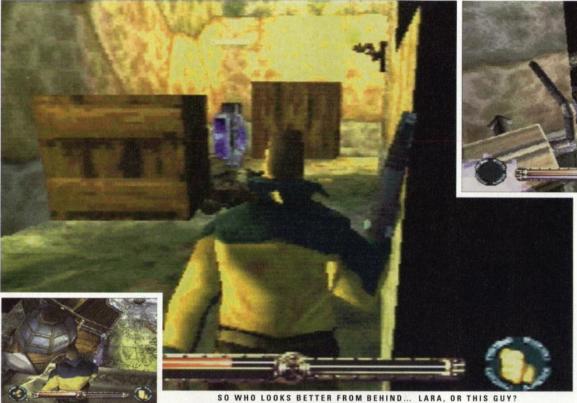
MINUS
problematic camera, simplistic graphics.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
81	82	89

OVERALL
88

Silicon Valley is a well balanced, quirky game that's sure to appeal.

GEEZ. SNOWBOARDING BITS ARE COMPULSORY THESE DAYS.

O.D.T.

Peter Jankulovski had to review this game, or die trying.

SO WHO LOOKS BETTER FROM BEHIND... LARA, OR THIS GUY?

Four characters are at your disposal, each with their own strengths and weaknesses, although a little more variety in their abilities and weaponry would have been nice. The element of magic is also present here, with spells being spread throughout stages, and in true RPG fashion, require the collection of spirit points before they become of any use. In all, there is a good mix of different style of weaponry, which requires some selection strategy for use against the well-varied enemy throughout the game.

The huge levels in the game are well designed, and the environment is very appropriate, fitting the storyline well. Pre-rendered cut scenes and the moody soundtrack add to the overall involvement and development of the storyline. However, all the finesse of the design is greatly let down by its own game engine and the very sub-standard control system.

CATCH ME I'M FALLING...

As is the case with many titles in this genre, the camera is often a problem in this title, and it consistently seems to be in the wrong place, making it difficult to judge obstacles and jumps. Very often, the view of your character is obstructed by other in-game elements, and it's also the culprit for more-than occasional polygon clipping. Controlling your character's movement with any accuracy in this game comes pretty close to nigh-on impossible. This is one and long difficult game, but the high difficulty level can mainly be attributed to the pointless loss of lives through accidentally falling of a ledge. Control is too loose and requires for tiptoeing around the levels, to simply avoid accidentally falling off the side. Running in a straight line can pose a challenge in itself. The close draw in of the graphics does not help things, and often makes it impossible to distinguish whether it is the edge of the map, or a section of the level that you can't see unless you move in closer.
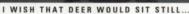
O.D.T. has all the elements that should have made this game a stand-out for RPG/adventure fans, had it not been for the poor control system and the frustration it creates while playing this title. With Tomb Raider III and the looming launch of Metal Gear Solid, one would be hard pressed to be playing O.D.T.

Here's one for those that like a bit of challenge, and can persist with the downfalls of its execution.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	3D Adventure/RPG
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Psygnosis
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	M15+

PLUS
Good mix of gameplay, a great involving atmosphere and storyline...

MINUS
..let down in a big way by its inaccurate control system and below par game engine

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
78	84	72

OVERALL
74

A good, challenging adventure/RPG, if you can persist with its frustrating controls and don't fall off the side of the level too much.

With a library of 300 odd game titles on the PlayStation, there seems to be a clear line developing between the true innovators and genre trend setters, and the dozens of "me too" titles which follow over the upcoming months/years, trying to cash in on the success of their more established counterparts.

O.D.T., which stands for Or Die Trying (a good thing Psygnosis chose the acronym), combines action, adventure, puzzle and RPG elements in a third person over-the-shoulder environment a la Tomb Raider. While it brings together a tight and involving storyline and some interesting gameplay elements, the lack of quality overall execution leaves O.D.T. well short of 'must-have' status.

PLENTY OF VARIETY

O.D.T. takes place in the "Forbidden Zone", where a captain and his crew of four become stranded, after their ship is forced to make a crash landing. Your mission, for the most part, becomes one of "search-and-collect", while blowing up absolutely everything that gets in your way.

Apocalypse

Bruce Willis in a videogame? **Kevin Cheung** would like to see that!
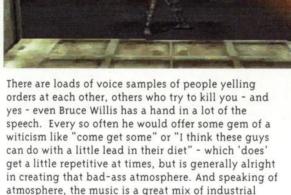
I WISH THAT DEER WOULD SIT STILL...

Bruce Willis. You either love him or you hate him. If it's not for his done-to-death portrayals of action heroes in movies like Hudson Hawk, it's for his constant on-screen use of smart-ass tough-guy one-liners. Funnily enough, Mr. Willis has now made his way to a sci-fi action videogame called Apocalypse - and dislike him as you may, this game is actually surprisingly good.

The background story runs something along the lines of a post-apocalyptic future where you play a nano-physicist, Trey Kincaid (who looks amazingly like Mr. Willis), whose goal is to escape from prison and bring an end to the reign of terror of 'the Four Horsemen' (of the Apocalyse). Cute as the religious connotations may be, this game requires you to simply run and jump your way across 3D environments from a largely top-down perspective, pick up weapons and bring a hail of flaming death upon anyone who gets in your path.

SPECIAL EFFECTS, JUST LIKE IN THE MOVIES.

Graphically, Apocalypse is a stunning piece of work. The environmental details are superbly rich and pleasing to the eye, supplemented by dazzling lighting effects that perfectly depict the futuristic atmosphere. Everything from the prison compounds to sewers are perfect. The character animations are also very cool, with lots of funny death animations, blood, and so on.

The sounds and music are also of a high standard.

There are loads of voice samples of people yelling orders at each other, others who try to kill you - and yes - even Bruce Willis has a hand in a lot of the speech. Every so often he would offer some gem of a witicism like "come get some" or "I think these guys can do with a little lead in their diet" - which 'does' get a little repetitive at times, but is generally alright in creating that bad-ass atmosphere. And speaking of atmosphere, the music is a great mix of industrial and techno, which is kept low on the volume so as not to detract too much from the action - and Mr. Willis' voice as well, I'm sure.

SMASH TV, ANYONE?

The really great thing about Apocalypse, however, is the gameplay. With a Dual Shock, the left knob lets you run, and the right knob allows you to shoot in whichever direction you choose. So simple is this interface that you'll be running around your enemies and causing the most awesomely explosive mayhem with the greatest of ease. What's better is that the game's not just a straight run-and-shoot game either. There are lots of platforms to jump around on and alternate paths to run.

It's a pity, then, that there's no 2 player option to Apocalypse, otherwise it would have scored much higher. But that's not so bad when you realise that there aren't any PlayStation games that offer this action with 2 players anyway. All in all, Apocalypse is top stuff, and it's the best action game to hit the PlayStation in a long time.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Action
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	TBA
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	MA 15+
SUPPORTS	Dual Shock

PLUS
Great mindless violence, and Bruce Willis fans will probably love it too.

MINUS
No 2 player mode.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90	86	85

OVERALL

88

Great mindless violence, and Bruce Willis fans will probably love it too.
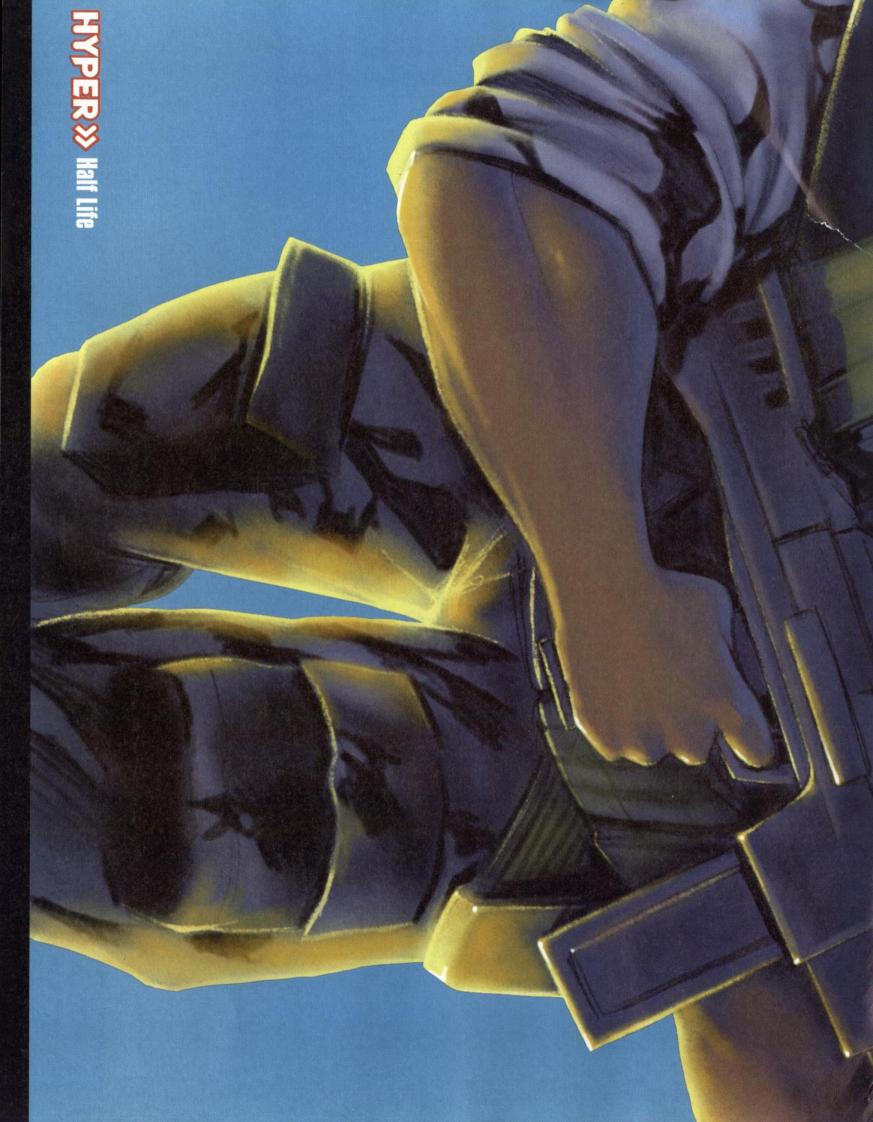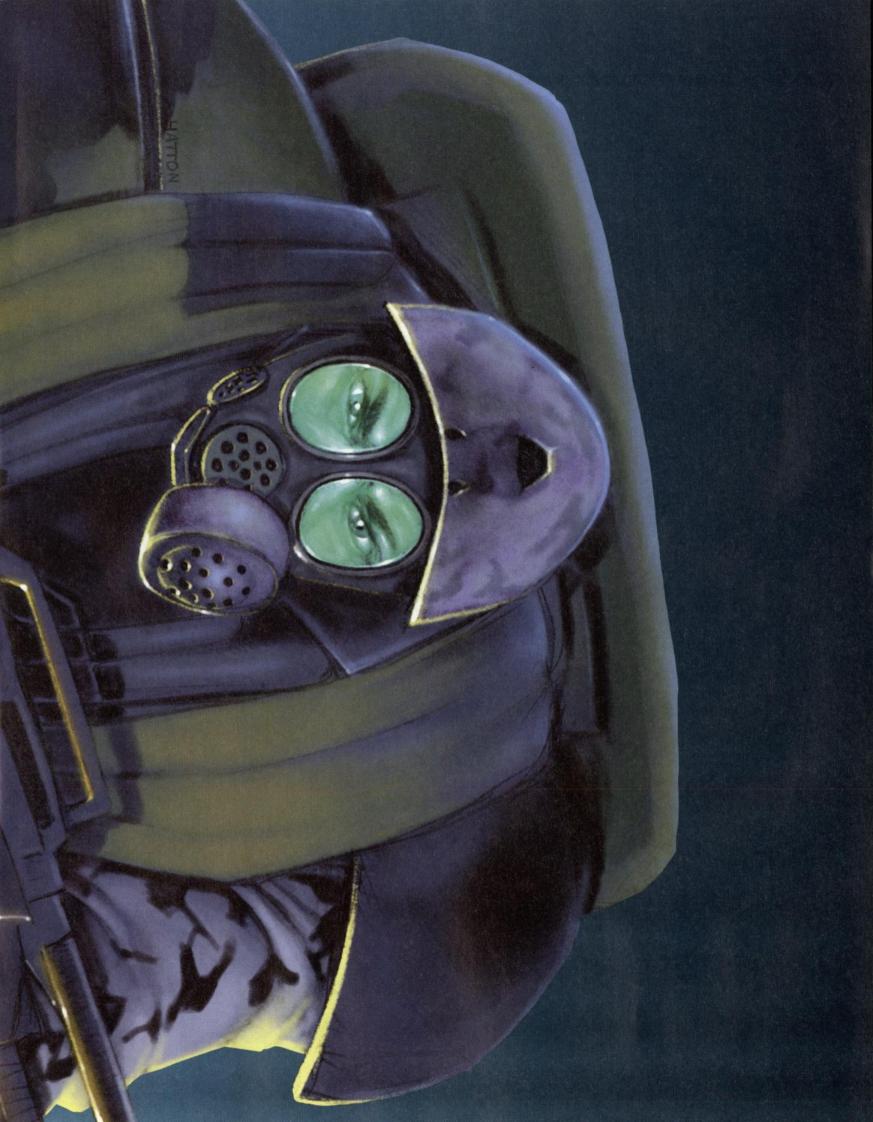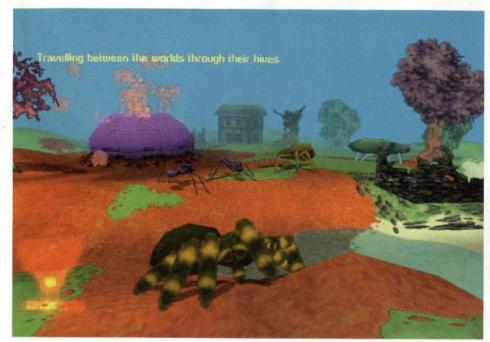
V2000

How awful of us to give **David Wildgoose** a new kind of virus… Actually, it's not that bad.

Travelling between the worlds through their hives

It's rare to find a game that really challenges you these days. By that, I mean a game that doesn't hesitate in throwing something completely new at the player, something that isn't instantly accessible nor immediately user-friendly, something that requires a significant learning process as you adapt and grow accustomed to its more unusual aspects. V2000, or Virus 2000, to give it its full name, does exactly that. It's undoubtedly an original game and, even better yet, one that - aside from a couple of flaws - proves to be thoroughly enjoyable to play.

Those flaws first, then. V2000 is a third-person, 3D shooter, which it does very well indeed. The two problems, however, concern the controls and the limited view you have of the world. Adjusting to the controls of this game constitutes perhaps most of the challenge of the game - they're complex and initially frustrating as you crash into trees and buildings and often head in totally the wrong direction, but with experience allowing you to pull off some incredibly fine manoeuvres, they also open up a whole new dimension of immersion. Detracting from this, though is the heavy fogging and subsequent "pop-up" visual effect- especially on the PSX version (which is also

dogged by a slow framerate).

Setting the scene is a flimsy plot concerning an insect invasion that has somehow lead to the wide-scale spread of a deadly virus. Naturally, it's up to you to eradicate this virus from the numerous insect-infested worlds and restore peace and harmony to the planet. To do this, you are given a cool hovercraft-style ship to fly about in and a gun to shoot those vermin with. In each world, all the insects have to be killed before you can start attacking the "hive" (this pulsating purple dome - ugh!) from which they spawn. Unfortunately, the insects can fight back and often they're at least as big as you - you'll definitely need more than a fly swat!

Assisting your task are lots of little scientist blokes who can be rescued from the insects and returned to your base located elsewhere on the level - a gameplay element reminiscent of the arcade classic, Defender. There, they will research weapons and other power-ups for you to collect at a later stage. This is an absolutely, gob-smackingly brilliant idea, but you'll have to play it to see why.

Cleverly, you can carry equipment between worlds, but there's always the limited space on board your ship to consider. On some levels, then, there are bonus cargo upgrades

that will increase your ship's capacity. You need not find any of these to complete a world, but it's bloody useful if you do take the time out to search for them. There are 30 worlds to explore over the course of the game, though, in a positive move towards non-linearity, you will regularly have several to choose from at a time. PC owners will also be able to engage in some deathmatching over a network.

V2000 is a beguiling sort of game. At first it appears simplistic - just fly and shoot - but you'll soon realise that the gameplay stretches much further than that. Completing each world not only requires sharp reflexes, but some astute tactical planning as well. I'd go as far as to call this the thinking man's shoot 'em up, and I'd also recommend it to anyone who enjoys a challenge.

RENT-O-KILL'S AIRBORNE DIVISION

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Action
PLAYERS:	1 (PSX), 1-8 (PC)
PUBLISHER:	Grolier Interactive
PRICE:	$TBA
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	P100, 16MB RAM, 4xCD
DESIRED:	P166, 32MB RAM, 3D card

PLUS
Tasty shoot 'em up with extra strategic depth.

MINUS
Bizarre controls will take some getting used to.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
76	70	83

OVERALL

80

A great sequel to one of the 80s most innovative and different games..

Crash Bandicoot 3: Warped

Bears in shorts. Bright orange bandicoots in Harleys. **Kevin Cheung** doing naked cartwheels on the street.

NON-PLATFORM HI-JINX

MOTORBIKES
Crash has to use his Harley to avoid obstacles, jump crevices, and avoid cops to get to the finish line first.

DOGFIGHTING
Crash and Coco can fly planes that shoot copious amounts of ammunition at anything that would look cool plummeting to the ground.

BOAT RACES
In these jet ski levels, Coco has to avoid mines, pirate ships, cannon balls, and other water-related hazards.

ANIMAL RIDES
Jump on an animal, run like crazy. What could be simpler?

THOU SHALT NOT PASS...

Considering that we live in a generation where government conspiracies and anti-institution sentiments are the popular discourses - and sci-fi pulp like the X-Files can become a cultural phenomenon - it's a wonder how a series like Crash Bandicoot can find any measure of success. Yet here we are. Crash Bandicoot has returned for his third and final instalment from the folks at Naughty Dog, bringing to a close an interesting chapter in the PlayStation's life with this de-facto mascot. As a staunch advocate of a videogame culture that doesn't play on blatant commercialism (cough, Lara, cough), many of us would approach a game like this with natural suspicion and perhaps even cynicism. However, it is this very approach that makes Crash 3 all that more surprising a game.

TIME-TRAVELLING CAVEMEN
In this adventure, Ooga Booga's evil twin, Ooka Ooka crash-lands in New Zealand and intends to take over the world with the help of Dr. Cortex and his 'time twisting device' by collecting 25 crystals scattered across time. Taking control of Crash and Coco, your goal is to hunt down these crystals before Cortex and his goons can find them, and somehow bring an end to the threat being posed by Ooka Ooka.
Anyone who's been following the Crash continuity will probably know what this all means. To the rest of us, it's

a ridiculous gobbledegook tale wrapped around a well-known linear 3D platform game where you jump around, collect items, kill things, and generally have a good time of it. For genuine newbies, Crash is a bandicoot with an ability to spin around like the Tasmanian Devil, killing anything that gets in his path. Coco, the female sidekick, has the ability to cause mayhem as she rides around on animals and vehicles.
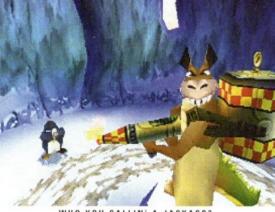
THE SPICE OF LIFE
Compared to its previous games, Crash 3 is a very different game. Crash 2 gave you around 75 levels of land-based action that even hard-core fans admit was a bit of overkill. In this sequel, you don't get quite as many levels, but the bonus is that there is an amazing diversity to the gameplay. In addition to the familiar 'running

LYLAT WARS INCLUDED AS A SUB GAME

WHO YOU CALLIN' A JACKASS?

towards the screen' sequences, there are underwater levels, shooting levels, and driving levels, all of which adds to the variety, entertainment value, and lasting appeal of the game. Crash 3 also seems to borrow from the ideas of other platform games such as Banjo Kazooie in that each level contains a series of hidden gems that can only be obtained by fulfilling certain objectives, such as beating a record time. These extra items are actually quite difficult to get. Therefore, in spite of the fact that the game is very easy to finish, it's actually hard to finish it 'properly'. This kind of gameplay is the stuff that lovers of platform games really dig.

The icing on the cake is that every part of Crash 3 is immaculately executed. The graphics are truly a marvel, displaying gorgeously detailed environments that combine soft textures and gouraud shading without any of the PlayStation's unique seaming problems whatsoever. The characters themselves are of a similarly excellent quality, both with their humorous designs and equally humorous animations. In the sounds department, the music and various spot effects elicit a great cartoon atmosphere which feels very much in place. The control department is the only place where Crash 3 suffers: the jump controls are still too unbalanced to perform quick, precise jumps. The important part, however, is that the

execution of the alternative gameplay sequences such as the motorbike racing are excellent. Games like Nagano 98 were spoilt badly by the fact that they tried to combine too many gameplay alternatives, so it's a credit to Naughty Dog that they can maintain the same level quality in this medley of pure gaming fun.

THE LAST HURRAH FROM NAUGHTY DOG?

To simply say that Crash 3 is the best in the series is a forgone conclusion. Crash 3 is a game with the most impeccable production standards ever seen in a platform game. Even a cynic like this reviewer is impressed by it. Its diverse, flashy yet water-tight presentation is very reminiscent of the SNES glory days when Donkey Kong Country was released. Granted, the game is also as easy as DKC, but it's hard to resist a game with as much funky twisted humour as this. At least it's far less patronising than Banjo Kazooie, for which this reviewer doesn't think very highly of.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Platforms
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Naughty Dog/Sony
PRICE:	$69.95
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	Dual Shock

PLUS
Spectacular graphics, great wacky atmosphere, and lots of character.

MINUS
Three words: easy as hell.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92	84	85

OVERALL

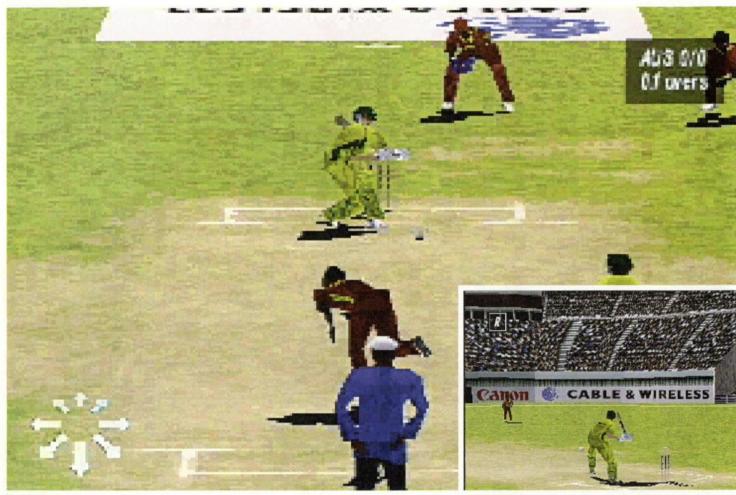# 87

A very entertaining showpiece that'll please everyone.

Shane Warne Cricket '99

Bowling, Codemasters! **Eliot Fish** wastes a stupid amount of time playing SWC'99...

TUBBY SWALLOWED HIS
CHEWING GUM THERE I THINK

Cricket games are hard to come by, and really good cricket games are as rare as hens teeth. Australian Cricket Captain on the PC is probably one of the best cricket "tactical sims", but as far as actual on-the-pitch-split-second-decision-sledge-fest action goes, Shane Warne Cricket '99 from Codemasters is the one. Shane Warne doesn't have to worry about what he's put his name to here (unlike that joke Pat Cash and the abominable Actua Tennis), as even though the game was developed as Brian Lara Cricket '99, there's no real difference and this is still a top game. If you love cricket, and have been hanging out for a decent game of it, then read on...

HOW MUCH CHEWING GUM DOES TUBBY GET THROUGH?

Woah. The motion capture in Shane Warne Cricket '99 is simply superb. Players run out onto the ground, umpires stroll, the bowler measures his run up, fielders stretch their arms, and batsmen even fiddle about at the crease – all with the realistic smooth motion of actual players. The brilliant animation immediately makes SWC appealing to watch for cricket fans, as well as making it that much more playable than cricket sims like Cricket '97 from Beam. Why? Well, it makes it that much easier to time your shots, because the bowler's movements on the popping crease are just like watching the game on TV. All the international sides are included in the game too, so each major player is rep-

resented and knowing their strengths and weaknesses can make SWC a hilarious and addictive piece of cricket gaming. The only real gripe you could have with the graphics, is the fact that all the players are made up of only a handful of models. Different skin colour and hair colour is the only way to tell them apart... "Oooh, we have to make Shaun Pollock! Let's just put a red blob on his head." That kind of thing.

The gameplay on the other hand, is simple and yet complex enough to satisfy fans of the sport. Batting and bowling is all played out with the push of a button or two, so your friends who are cricket virgins will still be able to sit down and play a match with you almost instantly. To bowl, you move a circular marker around and then press a button when it's where you want the ball to pitch, then depending on your bowler, you can decide to bowl a variety of deliveries by pushing the appropriate button on the controller. Easy. Batting is probably more challenging, as you have to gauge how the ball will be delivered, which way it will bounce, where it will land and then choose the right shot. You can play a standard ground shot, defensive stroke or lofted shot and then use the D-pad to dictate the style of shot – whether it be a cut on the onside, a sweep shot, hook shot or whatever. Probably the only area which is lacking is the fielding, as manually controlling the fielders is next to impossible and letting them field on autopilot can be really frustrating. When fielding manually, the default

SPOT THE BALLS

fielder selected sometimes seems illogical and lining up a catch can come down to pure luck because the ball is so tiny. When the computer controls the fielders, they rarely slide to stop boundaries, and tend to drop balls going straight down their throat, but it's the preferred option.
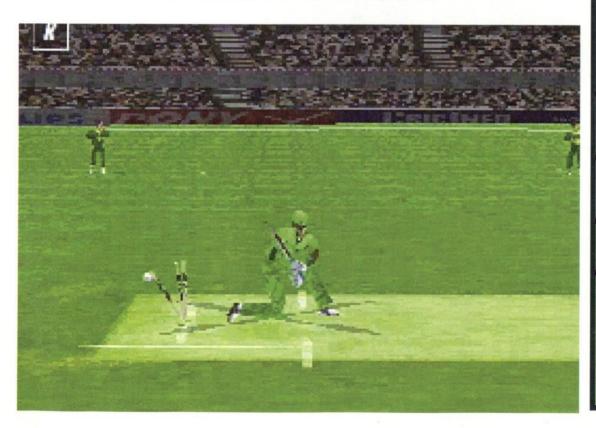
JUST PRESS THE SLEDGE BUTTON

Shane Warne Cricket '99 comes with a billion options. For starters, there are enough crazy camera angles here to put channel 9 out of business! Most are unplayable, but they can be awesome in replays. During the game, you can do everything from bowling around the wicket to changing your field (though the settings are preset), and even checking the weather. Everything about a game can be tweaked too, so One Day matches can be reduced to 10 overs if you desire and full blown Test Seasons can be played out (though you'll need your memory card!). Choose from friendly exhibition matches, Test Series and Season, World Cup and Series and even training in the nets! There is also a Classic Match option which challenges you to guide a specific team to victory in an historical match... such as preventing Michael Bevan's winning performance for Australia over the West Indies at the SCG in that classic New Year's Day match.

The multiplayer option in SWC is sensational. Up to four players can face off, with 2 friends batting at either end and two other friends bowling from either end. As long as you all enjoy cricket, you'll have an absolute riot - we did here at the office! Whilst there are still aspects of the game which cricket nuts will niggle over, SWC is easily the most entertaining cricket game for console yet. Unless World Cup Cricket from Electronic Arts is surprisingly good...

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Sport
PLAYERS:	1-4
PUBLISHER:	Codemasters
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS	Dual Shock, Multitap

PLUS
The most realistic player animation in a cricket game yet. Four players rocks.

MINUS
The controls sometimes feel unresponsive, and the players look inbred.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
87	84	84

OVERALL
84
The best PlayStation cricket sim you can get your gloves on.

Tomb Raider 3

What manner of man can say no to Lara Croft? **Kevin Cheung** shows us how... or can he?

WHAT'S NEW IN THIS GAME?

Unfortunately, Tomb Raider III doesn't offer anything radically new to the series. Mind you, this does not mean that TR III is poor. In fact, the game is 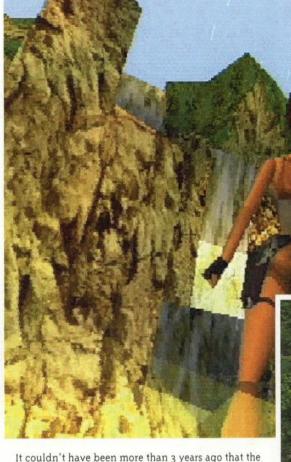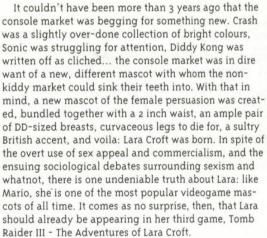quite fantastic, but its value as a sequel to those who are followers of the series is something important to take note of. First and foremost, the suggestion of Hyper's fearless leader, Dan Toose, to incorporate a crawling feature has been implemented as one of Lara's new set of moves (disbelievers can refer to Hyper #50 p.69 to be sure). Lara also has the ability to jump and swing around on certain mid-air objects Tarzan-style. The final addition to Lara's repertoire of acrobatics is the addition of the dash. By pushing R2, Lara will be able to dash for a limited period of time - so limited by a second energy 'dash' bar that appears at the top of the screen.

Tomb Raider III also comes with a set of new toys for Lara to play with. In the weapons department, Lara gets to play with uzis, desert eagles, grenade launchers, and rocket launchers. In the vehicular department, Lara gets to stomp around in quad bikes, mine carts, canoes, and funky underwater equipment.

The focus of the gameplay remains much the same, where drawn-out explorations are often rewarded by a skirmish with a host of bad guys, whose number seems to have increased and whose AI appears to have been slightly improved.

LARA LARA PANTS ON FIRE

It couldn't have been more than 3 years ago that the console market was begging for something new. Crash was a slightly over-done collection of bright colours, Sonic was struggling for attention, Diddy Kong was written off as cliched... the console market was in dire want of a new, different mascot with whom the non-kiddy market could sink their teeth into. With that in mind, a new mascot of the female persuasion was created, bundled together with a 2 inch waist, an ample pair of DD-sized breasts, curvaceous legs to die for, a sultry British accent, and voila: Lara Croft was born. In spite of the overt use of sex appeal and commercialism, and the ensuing sociological debates surrounding sexism and whatnot, there is one undeniable truth about Lara: like Mario, she is one of the most popular videogame mascots of all time. It comes as no surprise, then, that Lara should already be appearing in her third game, Tomb Raider III - The Adventures of Lara Croft.

A BIG STAR IN AN EVEN BIGGER STORY.

After completing her previous quest for the Dagger of Xian, Lara is now in search of 4 mystical stones whose history is as equally jaded in mystery as is the research company, RX, which is also searching for them. You see, these stones were actually fragments from a meteor that had crashed on the then green and bountiful Antarctic continent many centuries ago. Many years later, by which time the Antarctic had frozen over, a tribe of Polynesians settled at the crash site and worshipped the meteor. Funnily enough, they all died. Years after t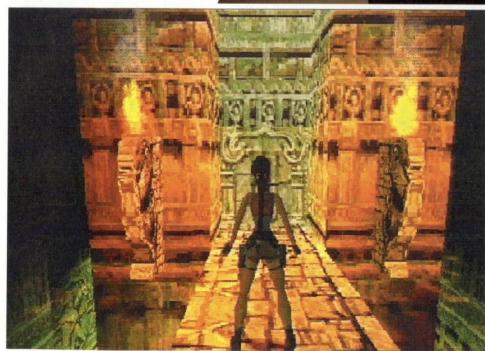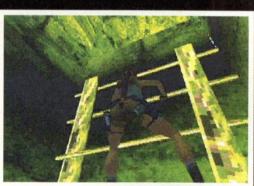hat, the intrepid explorer Charles Darwin chanced upon the site, whereupon 4 of his crew took a stone from the meteor and went about their separate ways around the world. These four people died as well. Lara's role in this tale is that of the unsuspecting hero. Just as she did in her previous Indiana Jones-style exploits, Lara is actually looking for an ancient Indian artefact known as the Infada, little knowing that the Infada is in fact one of the fragments of from the meteor. From that point on, Lara is drawn by fate to find the other meteorite fragments in competition with RX.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with Lara, the Tomb Raider series is not a game to be mistaken for a pulse-pumping high-action platform bonanza. In fact, Tomb Raider is about exploration; using precise, calculated, and measured movements to run, jump, swing,

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

Before playing Tomb Raider III, this reviewer actually checked out the graphics in other 3D-immersive games - namely, Spyro, Medievil, Apocalypse, and even a beta v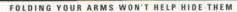ersion of Soul Reaver: Legacy of Kain. In every instance the graphics looked smoother, cleaner, and more pleasing to the eye whilst still displaying as much of the vaunted environmental detail of Tomb Raider III. On that cursory evaluation alone, any bum could stand up and say that Tomb Raider III looks pixellated and choppy. However, such a statement is an unfair trivialisation of the inner-workings of the game. If you look closely at a game like Apocalypse, the 3D environmental effects are just a single texture resting on top of a singular flat surface, meaning that in spite of the cool-looking effects, you're actually running around in a very flat and plain terrain. The environments of Tomb Raider III, on the other hand, are completely 3D modelled. When you look out towards the disappearing point, you are looking at a cliff face that's constructed of actual polygons, as opposed to a flat image of a cliff face being pasted on a flat wall. So the next time you want to complain that TR looks poor, think about the huge geometry that's taking place, and then realise the amazing things that are being done with the PlayStation's limited texture RAM. As a side note, PC owners with a 3D accelerator probably won't have to worry about this at all.

FOLDING YOUR ARMS WON'T HELP HIDE THEM

and swim your way through a series of puzzle-based 3D environments - or mazes if you will. Every so often you'll come across a few bad guys to kill. That's when Lara whips out her well-known pair of berettas and starts unloading on the nasty sod who's trying to kill her.

Each level can be broken down to being a search for a key, switch, or otherwise that will allow you passage to the next area. Within that search, Lara must be used to exploit every aspect of the 3D environments. She has to find ledges to climb on, secret passages to find hidden weapons, and then determine what route should be best taken to get from point A to point B, such as whether or not you can actually jump from one high ledge to another. Basically, it's a test of your wits to map out the environment you are in, and then to suss out the best way of getting through it.

In spite of all the whining that social commentators have made about Lara's use of sex appeal, and what they consider to be the logical conclusion that the game is without substance, the gameplay mechanics referred to above is what lays at the heart of Tomb Raider. It seems

slow at first, but before you know it, it is a completely engrossing, time-consuming experience. Thankfully, this approach has been retained in Tomb Raider III. The game is split into five distinct areas: India, London, Nevada, the South Pacific, and Antarctica. Each region contains 3 sub-levels to be tackled. As a matter of size, even though Tomb Raider III sounds like it is the same as the second game, it is actually a little larger and complex.
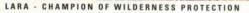
TOUCH-UPS ON LARA

Graphically, Tomb Raider III is a very impressive game, but any improvements over TR II are more inclined towards the one-off special effects. For instance, there is a greater use of real-time lighting, and transparencies, which are observable in the dense jungle stages with the sunlight breaking through the canopy; there is a more liberal use of coloured lighting, which can be seen in the reflective water textures and stained glass windows. The game also supposedly uses a vamped up graphics engine to allow for more 3D effects and processing, but any increase in speed is really very little - and some of the

effects, such as the swamps, just don't work well at all. Lara herself has been greatly improved, looking and moving in a much smoother fashion than before. I suppose her new costumes are also worth a mention... there: they've been mentioned.

As far as gameplay goes, Tomb Raider II was criticised for offering only cursory additions to the gameplay such as the ability to climb. Tomb Raider III, unfortunately, can be faulted on exactly the same grounds. While the game offers new many new features (see opposite), they aren't anything that add a new sense of depth to the gameplay. The puzzles are, by and large, exactly the same as what we've all seen before. You push around the same boxes to climb to the same door ways, pull the same switches, make the same jumps... the only difference provided by, say, the ability to crawl or the new vehicles, is a very

minor variation on doing what we've done before. Therefore, even though it is doubted that anyone who's a fan of Lara will care, Tomb Raider III is conceptually weak as a sequel. It would definitely have been nice to see the incorporation of new devices that do more than simply kill things, and instead play a more integral and interactive part in the exploration. For instance, if a device such as the grappling hook as seen in Tenchu were incorporated into a Tomb Raider game, then the exploration element of gameplay would truly have been deepened as it would require a greater understanding of the environments than a simple need to crawl or look for swinging space. As a last point, while the controls are perfect for exploration, they're actually still not very good for skirmishing.

So is this game worth shelling out the money for? Well, even though TR III is a case of 'more of the same', only executed better, it is nevertheless one of the best adventure games around. Fans will love it, adolescent males will kill for it, and, considering that Duke Nukem is the only Western alternative, so they should. I'd rather get some from Lara than Duke any day.

LARA - CHAMPION OF WILDERNESS PROTECTION

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Adventure
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Core
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	M15+
SUPPORTS:	Dual Shock

PLUS
Continues the tried and true traditions of the other TR games.

MINUS
It's not much of a sequel, and the level designs are very linear..

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92	84	85

OVERALL
90
Lara is THE reason to get the game. Would you buy it if it starred Crash?

Test Drive 5

Even serious racers need to go for a joyride now and then... **Simon Bailey** takes Test Drive 5 for a spin.

DROPPING IN FOR SOME LA DOLCHE VITA

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Driving
PLAYERS:	1-2
PUBLISHER:	Accolade
PRICE:	$79.95
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	Dual Shock, Steering Wheel

PLUS

Nice frame rates and good arcadey control will keep you entertained.

MINUS

We've all seen Gran Turismo, and Test Drive 4.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
84	76	78

OVERALL

76

If you're after a sound driving game that's not to 'Heavy', I give you Test Drive 5.

In the last year of PSX video gaming, there was one event that changed the way we racing fanatics think about driving simulators. And that one event was...Gran Turismo. Now, isn't it just common sense that if you were to make a game with a name like 'TEST DRIVE 5', and base the game around pretty much the same cars contained in the afore mentioned GT, wouldn't you make sure that the presentation (i.e. graphics and sound), gameplay, and general realism of the whole experience was second to none? Well, I guess that all depends on what you are trying to achieve.

GARGAMEL?

Lets bare the skeleton of Accolade's latest and greatest instalment in the Test Drive Series.

With a full compliment of game modes including the standard Quick Race: - One Race, any track, any car. Full Race: - Single Race, Time Trial, Cup Race, Drag Race and even Cop race, and a surprisingly good two player game. Test Drive 5 delivers a lighthearted, arcadey and fairly fun racing experience. But if it's realism you're after look elsewhere because these game mechanics have been lifted directly from Smurf-land!

Right from the get-go you have a fairly healthy 16 cars to punish, with a further 7 being unlocked, depending of course on how well you cut the mustard on the first 16 of a possible 24 eventual tracks. Starting right here in Oz, you can make your way around the world to exotic (is that the right word!) locations like Scotland, Russia, the US of A, Jordan! the UK, Italy, the land of the Swiss, and of course Japan. Now each one of these tracks has it's own theme if you'd like to call it that with the scenery being unique to the country you are in. For example: Fanging through the Australian course, which starts on the Sydney Harbour Bridge, you quickly descend upon a rather unlikely looking version of our beloved Opera House. In Jordan, you find yourself racing in the desert, and Russia looks just like it does in the movies!

OLD AND THE NEW

The selection of cars is quite generous and kinda retro in orientation. What with the old Camaros, Mustangs and Plymouths. Not to mention the new generation which includes the familiar Dodge Viper, Nissan Skyline and TVR Cerbera. It is however, like I mentioned before, unfortunate that the handling of each of these cars does not vary all that much and therefore does not provide a greatly rewarding 'driving' experience. And with a game like Gran Turismo lurking about out there, there's not too much for us all to get upset about. Anyway, as I said before. It is quite an entertaining arcade driving game, and some of you may possibly love it!

Asteroids

The classic is back! **Eliot Fish** gets dizzy doing all those 360s...

Asteroids. My how it munched my spare change back in the early eighties. Such a simple concept, yet amazingly fun and addictive (and expensive) to play! What I would do to have one of the original machines in my bedroom... well, Asteroids on the PC is the next best thing. As you would imagine, this new incarnation of Asteroids has been given much more than a simple paint job. Full-blown 3D accelerated lighting effects and gorgeous looking 3D objects spinning dangerously across space... this is Asteroids on 'roids. You wouldn't think that there would be much appeal in another retro update, but Asteroids feels timeless and there's still a lot of fun to be had with the original concept. The dead simple gameplay is still as

screen, usually tempting you to try and thrust your way over to pick up. These weapon powerups include cool little mines which you can drop around to help take out foreign objects, as well as lighting guns which instantly vaporise those dark rocks, ramming shields and classic "special" bursts of energy which wipeout anything surrounding your craft. You can choose different crafts at the beginning of the game, with dif-

OH GOD... NOT ANOTHER METEOR-APOCALYPSE PLOT

addictive as ever, and with all the pretty graphics, Asteroids will keep you hooked...

BIG ROCK ON THE PORT SIDE, CAPTAIN!

The good old single-player game of Asteroids has barely been improved upon, yet it remains damn good fun. Your teeny little craft begins in the center of the screen, and it's up to you to rotate and thrust around, shooting those big floating rocks into smithereens before they cream you. Because this is outerspace, one little burst of your engines will set you adrift unless you flip around and thrust in the opposite direction. Of course, this means that it's dead easy to accidentally go flying into a big chunky asteroid unless you're pretty deft with your gamepad. There is a shield button though, so you can protect your craft in moments of sudden danger (it's limited though, so the longer you keep your shield the quicker the energy depletes). Whilst you're trying to plug away at the oncoming asteroids, there are also alien craft shooting at you, and a host of new elements which Activision have introduced for this new 90s version of Asteroids. Various secondary weapon powerups randomly float across the

ferent strengths in firepower, shields or speed. Other new twists include crystalised asteroids which regenerate unless you destroy them quickly, and debris which explodes with a deadly shockwave. All the weapon effects, explosions and trippy space effects in the game look fantastic with a 3D card - transparencies and coloured lighting ahoy. The gameplay is classic stuff, and whilst it's darn basic, the pretty new graphics make this new Asteroids even better then the original.

Wave after wave of levels, will keep you fighting, with new levels introducing cool new elements, such as a Sun which randomly spits out solar flares, or a black hole which lurks ominously in the center of the screen. Whilst Asteroids will have you playing until you've seen everything it has to offer, the single player game won't last terribly long, so a lot of this game's success rests on the multiplayer side of things. What we find here, is a fun multiplayer deathmatch style experience with players on the same screen attempting to stay alive, but it's hardly one which is going to eclipse anything else out there. Just be wary that whilst Asteroids is top fun, you could get tired of it pretty quickly. Retro gamers will go nuts, though.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Shoot 'em up
PLAYERS:	1-2
PUBLISHER:	Activision
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	P133, 24MB RAM, Win95/98/NT
DESIRED:	P133, 32MB RAM, 3D card.
SUPPORTS:	3D hardware, gamepads.

PLUS
Basic, yet darn pretty graphics.

MINUS
Well, there's not much to it, so longevity is a prob.

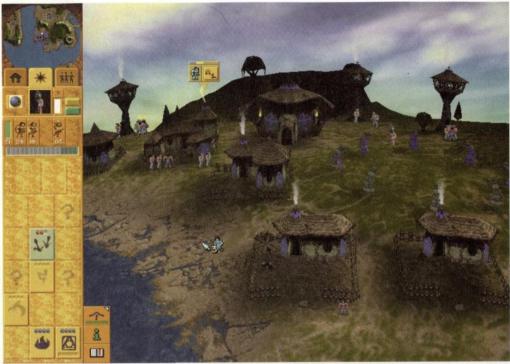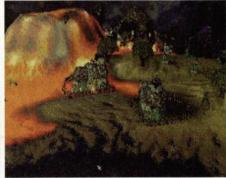| VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
82	77	78

OVERALL

75

Great while it lasts, but will be a little basic for some.

Populous: The Beginning

Dan Toose, being the megalomaniac of the Hyper crew is definitely the likely one to survive Populous: The Beginning.

SMALL RURAL DISPUTE GETS OUT OF HAND...

EAT THIS, PITIFUL MORTAL!

The spells of the shaman can instantly turn the tide of a battle, or even the whole match. Having her blast some preacher who is converting your troops can save you many men, or even more dramatically you could erode away the land under your enemy's most important structures, sending them into the sea. With only one shaman though, who can easily be cornered and killed (although she does get reincarnated over time).

Bullfrog gave birth to the god sim with Populous. Brutally original, Populous tried strategy in a completely different manner to all those that had been thrown at the gaming populace. The concept was that by playing god and acts of divine intervention, you would set about creating conditions so that your followers would slaughter the followers of your opposing deity. It was thoroughly addictive, and a sequel was inevitable. This sequel (Populous II), saw the introduction of developing your god, and using multiple types of heroes to overcome the enemy. Bullfrog's latest game is no half arsed update.

As the name implies, Populous the Beginning is about where it all started, and the answer is simple... with a mortal aspiring to be a god. More so than any previous Populous title, 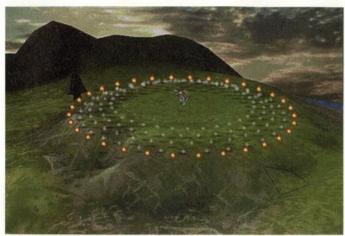PTB is a real time strategy game where you control individual units and send troops to attack certain targets etc. Previous Populous titles had been far less direct, and involved much stuffing around with getting certain units to move to a beacon you'd set for them.

POPULOUS 3D

The game engine is now 3D, very similar to Myth, in that you can move the screen around, and rotate it. To go one step further Bullfrog have allowed you to pull back to a global view, which helps give you a much clearer picture of just how far everything is away from everything else. The terrain is 3D, but the characters are sprites. Most noteworthy is that line of sight and height play a distinct role in the dealing with range and missile weapons/ attacks. To help your system cope as best as possible, you can adjust detail levels.

Potentially daggy of me to admit it, but as someone who once got into the new age stuff done by Mike Oldfield and the like, the soundtrack to this game is perfectly suited to the game. If this game music doesn't instill "Ye olde mystical natural stuff" in you, then nothing will. Besides the music, there are a host of neat little voice acknowledgements (all very North American Indian sounding), and sound effects for all the building, magic, destruction and mayhem that goes on throughout the game.

EVENTUALLY, YOU WILL LEARN THE CROP CIRCLE SPELL

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THAT HUT!?

The gameplay mechanics of Populous: The Beginning allow for a variety of strategies and tactics. At the start of the single player game, your shaman (femme who wants to be a god), starts with a very basic blast spell... And as she moves on to new worlds to conquer, she acquires new spells and building plans from Vaults of Knowledge. Your basic followers are braves, who you can assign to build structures, pray at objects, and fight (which they do very poorly). Extremely disconcerting is that you have no female braves, yet they still reproduce inside those huts you build for them... Eeep!

The buildings you can create include training facilities for your braves, to turn them into warriors, preachers, spies, and firewarriors. Building looks cool, with all your little guys putting up a frame work and tinkering away. The preachers are without a doubt the most devastating units if used correctly. Basically they convert enemy followers to your cause, even if they were rushing to attack. Of course other preachers aren't so easily conned, and thus you get groups of warriors travelling with a preacher to ensure they don't get talked into joining the other team.
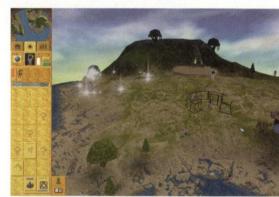
Challenges are created in each map by a set of circumstances that are quite evenly weighed against the spells and building options you have at your disposal at that given time. So there's a good learning curve throughout the game.

THE BAD BITS...

A lack of being able to assign a hotkey to select a group of units was a bit of a drag after being so used to it in other strategy titles (unless there's some non-intuitive way of doing it that I couldn't discover). There's really not to much to gripe about with PTB. However sometimes clicking to target a spell can be a bit of a fudged affair. Your units also just head into battle sometimes when you really want them to stand their ground, making some encounters fiddly.

Not unbelievably amazing, yet also quite hard to fault for the most part, Populous: The Beginning is a worthy addition to the very long running series that started on the Amiga so many years ago.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Strategy
PLAYERS:	1-4
PUBLISHER:	Bullfrog
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	P133, 16MB RAM
DESIRED:	P200, 32 MB RAM, 3D accelerator

PLUS
Good learning curve. Nice visuals. Simple to play, yet deep enough to last.

MINUS
Selecting and targeting can be a pain. Units always attack nearby enemies.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
86	88	89

OVERALL
88

Thank god we get a new real time strategy game that doesn't just follow today's cliche formulas.

FIFA 99

Dan Toose prepares for hours of pixelated hooliganism as he sits down with FIFA 99.

NO... I'M SURE HE'S GOING FOR THE BALL

AVAILABLE: Right about now
CATEGORY: Sports
PLAYERS: 1-20 (modem or IPX)
PUBLISHER: EA
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P100, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P2 233, 64 MB RAM, 3D accelerator, gamepad.
SUPPORTS: Direct 3D and Glide

PLUS
Stunning animation and appearence in general.

MINUS
Less special moves than before. Oi!

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
94	95	87

OVERALL

90

Not a major update, but refinement of visuals and team updates will keep most of the fans happy.

I'll spare you the flowery intro... It's another FIFA game, 'nuff said. FIFA 99 is basically a collection of all the European, USA, Brazilian, and International teams (sorry if you're a big fan of the South Korean league). You can play standard domestic leagues, or run a "Dream League", where you basically have an assortment of top teams all in the one league, to hopefully provide something a bit more tense and exciting than Manchester Utd playing Nottingham Forest.

AMAZING ANIMATION

As is typical of the FIFA games, FIFA 99 is just that little bit better looking than FIFA World Cup. Player animation is now absolutely astounding, and it really shows when it would count the most. For example, if you pass to a player just outside the goal box, and start pumping the "shoot" button, your striker will take a cracking shot on the fly, rather than just starting the shooting animation after he's collected the ball.

Not only are the actual gameplay animations impressive, but also the victory animations are pretty classic too... Ranging from a an excellent example of motion capture of real player behaviour... Through to the players doing a convincing job of pretending to be chickens that then fall over and die (you gotta see it to believe it).

The commentary in FIFA 99 is absolutely perfect. Motson and the boys call it just like it is, and even though you'll end up hearing pretty much every comment they have to make after a dozen games or so, I'm positive that in one instance, John Motson started to call that one thing was

happening/was going to happen, and then suddenly the ball went into the goal, and he changed his call mid way to follow the gameplay, rather than just finish one wav file before starting the next!

If you're into big beats music, there's also some tasty stuff like Naked & Ashamed by Dylan Rhymes, Rockerfella Skank by Fatboy Slim, and other funky tunes to listen to in the menu screens.

GRIPE TIME!

It's not all fair weather with FIFA 99. EA STILL haven't implemented TCP/IP support, and this will be a big disappointment to all those hoping for playing the game extensively on the internet.

A more curious downfall for FIFA 99 is that they've made the controls WORSE than FIFA 98/WC. There are now less special moves you can do, and the control method to do some of the simple moves like a basic swerve and sidestep has been made more difficult to execute, which seems ludicrous.

Another thing EA really could have addressed is that Konami's ISS games have had better passing in them for some time now, and EA didn't really seem to do anything to fix this by creating a good through ball move or anything like that. The passing move does this very slightly, but not in a very realistic manner as in ISS.

With heaps of gorgeous 3D stadiums, unparalleled player animation, an endless horde of teams and real players, team and player editing, a variety of weather effects, day and night play, numerous camera angles and replay facilities, and gobs of other little features that won't fit on this page, FIFA 99 ends up being a top product despite its flaws. However, if you're the kind to get upset about games that only seem to be minor updates of their predecessors, then FIFA 99 may leave you a little miffed. Fans of the sport will love it all the same.

Carmageddon II: Carpocalypse Now

Disturbingly, **Eliot Fish** said that it was just like driving to work... cripes...

It wasn't hard to guess that SCI would churn out a sequel to the hugely popular Carmageddon. Outrageous content always means bad press, and bad press is good press when it comes to selling a politically incorrect game. Regardless of whether or not you thought the first game was crap - a lot of people thought it was hilarious and - gasp - even a pretty decent racing game. There was room for improvement though, and Carmageddon II is an attempt to be bigger, better and bloodier. Firstly, Carmageddon II is 3D accelerated out-of-the-box, secondly pedestrians have been transformed into highly squishable polygons and thirdly the environments have been made more complex and smashable. With all these changes in place, Carmageddon II still plays exactly like the first game...

SCREEECH...AAHHHHH...SPLAT

Let's first take a look at the graphics... though the game is 3D accelerated, SCI seem to have implemented it rather poorly, as the game seemed to chug regardless. Even reducing detail options only improved the framerate marginally, and it may have something to do with the huge, complex go-anywhere environments. Still, the cars look great and the variety of tracks are great. Pedestrians now have limbs and heads which can be torn off, and depending on how you smash into them, they'll "gib" just like in Quake. Dead bodies can also be run over numerous times, and if you're tricky you can even flip

HELPING YOUR MATES WITH AN INSURANCE CLAIM...

CUNNING STUNT BONUS

open your car doors and take them out when they think they're smart enough to dodge your bumper bar. As the race is time limited, you must squish pedestrians to give yourself extra time to make the checkpoints. Simply passing through checkpoints won't win you the race, as there's only enough time to finish the race if you smash, squish and obliterate everything around you. Racing over powerups will help or hinder your cause too, with some powerups giving pedestrians funny heads, or making them tiny and hard to hit. Others act more like weapons/inventory items, and can be used against the opponent's cars to try and put them out of the race. Smashing your car up or getting smashed up is

darn easy, and like the first Carmageddon, you can just spend money on "instant" repairs which morphs your car back into shape before your eyes.

The car handling in Carmageddon II is actually pretty good... very arcadey, but very playable. The way you can handbrake around corners, attempt deadly jumps, roll your car to recovery and nudge other cars around the track displays a far better driving model than is found in many other serious racing games. Your car also seems to respond realistically (to a certain extent anyway) to the damage you incur, and a small damage readout is displayed so you know when you should use repairs.

Carmageddon II is pretty darn funny, but it can get tiresome pretty quickly. This is good fun to fire up with friends and play the multitude of variations on the theme (racing for checkpoints or going for all-out carnage), and okay in single-player in short bursts when you need to cheer yourself up, but beware... this is a very silly game indeed and hardly any different to the first Carmageddon.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Racing/Splatter-fest
PLAYERS:	1-8
PUBLISHER:	SCI
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	M
REQUIRED:	P166, 16MB RAM
DESIRED:	PII, 64MB RAM, 3D card
SUPPORTS	3d Hardware

PLUS
Fun "go anywhere" environments! Stupid fun!

MINUS
Chugs a little. Hardly any different to the original.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
84	77	82

OVERALL
82

Dumb fun to be had, which is even better with friends.

Powerslide

The best looking PC racing game ever? **Eliot Fish** rubs his eyes...

As computer games get more and more visually complex, simply having a 3D accelerator is no longer a big deal – now it seems you need that latest Pentium II or AMD to get these cool new games to run smoothly. How then did Emergent (the Powerslide programming team) manage to produce a racing game which makes all the others on the market look like a Saturday morning cartoon, and yet keep the game running at an incredible framerate on an average system? The answer is undoubtedly deep within Powerslide's code, but frankly, who cares – they did it and boy did they do it well.

I'LL RIDE SHOTGUN

Here is a racing game which should put a smile on any gamer's face. If not for the beautiful visuals, then certainly for the crazy powersliding action which occurs out on the track. Your jaw will hit the floor when you see the game in action. The game ran at a constant 60 frames-per-second, which is incredible when you consider the detail and design of the environments. Huge rocky canyons with lazy sunlight yawning across the cliffs, snow-covered houses, city streets and scorching desert – the tracks in Powerslide are gorgeous and you'll lose your first few races from simply stopping to check out how amazing they look. Not only are they almost photo-realis-
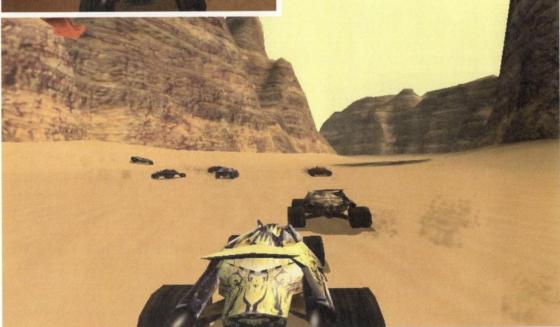
tic in places, but the freaky design is intense. Huge half-pipes, massive jumps and obstacle-laden streets – these tracks are awesomely fun to hoon around. They're also designed to send your car into barrel-rolls, flips, corkscrews and general chaos as you attempt to squiggle past your opponents, so be prepared to see a lot of the underbelly of your car. This is where the gripe begins.

Powerslide would have been one of the best action-packed racing games this year if it were not for the touchy handling. Sure, powersliding is the name of the game, but why should it feel like you're always racing across ice? The cars feel weightless, and you'll be flipping and rolling your way over the line, or sometimes even flying into the air after clipping a simple wooden post. What are we racing on? The moon? The cars also seem to have a hard time stopping, with wheels spinning and cars accelerating even after landing from a big stack. This can make the game exciting as hell, but generally it feels unrealistic and you get annoyed pretty quickly. Still, when you get a hang of how to keep the car in control, you'll start doing the business and there's plenty of thrills to be had.

There are a variety of cars to choose from, each with their own specific acceleration, top speed, traction etc and you can also choose to play as a different "radical" driver. The post-apocalyptic setting was a good idea, as the gloomy atmosphere and decaying environments really give the game a hard edge, though the sound of your car engine is a bit whimpy compared to how they look.

In multiplayer mode, Powerslide is that much more a riot, as are most games when networked with friends. There are options to play a Fox and Hound game (basically like Tag), even with weapons enabled, which will probably give the game added life after you tire of the single-player game. If the handling had been tighter and the physics made a little less outrageous, Powerslide would be unbeatable. Close finish.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Racing
PLAYERS:	1-8
PUBLISHER:	GT Interactive
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	P166 MMX, 16MB RAM, 4XCD-ROM
DESIRED:	PII 233, 32MB RAM, 3D card.
SUPPORTS:	3D hardware, wheels, force-feedback.

PLUS
Runs real fast on average systems with a 3D card.

MINUS
Slip-slop sliding away.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
95	89	88

OVERALL
89
Pretty exciting stuff, but still needs tweaking...

WE'VE BEEN DRIVING FOR HOURS... WHERE'S THE SURF?

Speedbusters

David Wildgoose checks out Ubisoft's latest arcade racing game, and it gets the "DW seal of approval".

YOU SHOULD WIN FOR THE PAINTJOB ALONE

WHO'S DRIVING? BLIND FREDDY?

Ubi Soft's track record when it comes to racing or driving games hasn't been too crash hot. Neither is mine when it comes to hilarious car-related puns either, but never mind. Their sims, such as F1RS and Monaco GP, have been too arcadey, while their less hardcore efforts have disappointed, the poor POD and Street Racer spring to mind. Seems this time, however, they've finally got it right - Speedbusters, terrible name notwithstanding, is an awesome amount of fun!

THIS IS NOT A SIM

For a start, this is arcade racing the way it should always be done. The car handling isn't anally realistic, yet it remains believable and fairly consistent. While you need not worry about perfecting the ideal driving line and speed through a corner, you will be required to hit the brakes (if not actually slam them) numerous times on all of the tracks. Basically, this is a driving model that everyone can appreciate and enjoy.

In the single-player game, each race is over three laps against as many or as few AI drivers as you desire. Since this is an arcade racer, the typical arcade racing rules apply. This means you're not only competing against the other cars, but also the clock. In other words, you've got to keep beating the timer to each checkpoint around the track. Normally, I don't mind this, but in Speedbusters it's

more frustrating than usual for one reason only - that is, as soon as the timer hits zero, it's game over. Other games let you crawl across a checkpoint with your remaining momentum (ie. when the timer hits zero, you can no longer accelerate, but you keep going for as long as you're still moving), but here it's unreasonably ruthless.

TOP TRACKS...

Thankfully, Speedbusters more than compensates for this flaw by including eight wickedly designed tracks. Let me offer a guide through some of the sights you'll see on these wild excursions into gaming heaven. Mexico boasts a huge temple with fire-belching statues, a series of treacherous lava-filled pits inside caves decorated with wicked voodoo stone carvings, a lengthy left-hand curve where you're travelling at full speed with hundred foot drops on both sides of the narrow track, and a waterfall that acts as a secret short-cut - always look behind waterfalls in EVERY game. The snow-covered mountains of Colorado feature landslides that send boulders tumbling across the road, snow-making machines spewing powerful jets of cold white stuff into the side of your car, unexpected avalanches that partially block the road, and even a bloody stupid hang-glider swooping overhead. California takes you through the Hollywood hills and down to a movie set where you run the gauntlet past King Kong, Godzilla, and the shark from Jaws! And there are five other tracks that are equally as cool and packed to the sunroof with amusing touches.

Not only that, but they look drop-dead gorgeous, too. This is one visually stunning game, that's for sure. The amount of trackside detail is very often a great distraction - but in a good way, of course. If only the same could be said of the somewhat lame sound effects and music.

Overall, though, Speedbusters is surprisingly terrific fun. I can certainly see myself playing this for a while to come, perhaps as a form of relaxation in between stern bouts of Grand Prix Legends. Congrats to Ubi Soft - finally!

AVAILABLE:	TBA
CATEGORY:	Racing
PLAYERS:	1-6 (but no splitscreen)
PUBLISHER:	Ubi Soft
PRICE:	$TBA
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	P133, 16MB RAM, 4xCD
DESIRED:	P200, 32MB RAM, 3D CARD

PLUS
Breathtakingly beautiful arcade racer with loads of cool stuff on every track.

MINUS
Time limits will bum you out.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92	73	84

OVERALL

86

A good-time racer that will give you a thrill every time you take it for a spin.

Fallout 2

Mutants, drunks with firearms, chicks with switchblades… **Eliot Fish** loves working here at the Hyper office…

MIND IF WE COME IN AND KILL ALL YOUR BUDDIES?

Post-Apocalyptic games come and go, but the original Fallout was something special. Besides the hilarious black humour, gorgeously detailed environments, gory animation and compelling story, Fallout was one of the most comprehensive RPGs to come our way in a looooong time. Character creation was hugely fun, with a whole bunch of crazy perks and skills, allowing you to turn your character into a wimpy but brainy scientist or a full-blown Rambo strong enough to lug around a rocket launcher. After about a year in the wilderness, Fallout 2 is finally here, and it seems Interplay have decided "If it ain't broke, don't fix it". This is the same game engine from Fallout, but the Black Isle team have improved upon the first game in just about every area of gameplay - as well as some visual improvments. Fallout 2, like Fallout, may seem like a daunting RPG to get into, but once you start playing it everything falls into place and you discover just how non-linear and exciting an RPG can be. My goodness, this just rocks so hard…

DUCK AND COVER!

First and foremost, the character creation and the ongoing character nurturing throughout Fallout 2 is one of the most satisfying aspects of the game. There's the usual Strength, Intelligence etc stats which affect the amount of weight you can carry and how many hit points you get each level and the like, but then there are skills and perks which really let you define your character. At the beginning you can choose a few skills (and

later in the game as you go up in levels, you can pick extra perks) such as proficiency with Big Guns (rocket launchers etc), Melee weapons (hammers, crowbars etc), Science (so you can better understand and exploit the technology in the game) or even gambling (so you can win money in the various seedy establishments you stumble across) just to name but a few of many. Perks are added abilities which usually have both bonuses and drawbacks… for instance, giving your character a small frame makes him faster and more agile but reduces his carrying ability, or maybe making him a quick learner will help improve your skills quicker. Hell, you can even give your character added Sex Appeal!

This excellent character development, coupled with the detailed inventory/weapon and combat system, makes Fallout 2 such an addicitive game, as you can be so specific
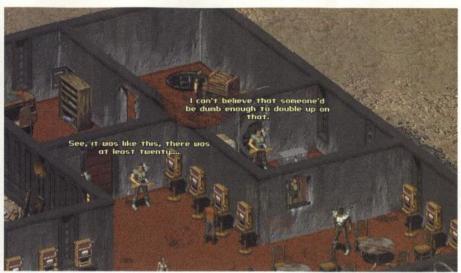
with every little aspect of your character.

The combat plays out turn-based, which works brilliantly, as depending upon your attributes you will have a certain amount of action points to use each turn. At the beginning of your go, you may have 10 action points to spend... so should you fire your gun (costing 5 action points), try for a location specific shot to your opponent's groin, eyes or whatever (6 action points), simply move into a better position, use a stimpack, ready a grenade or even use a melee weapon like some knuckledusters? Make sure you have enough action points left to reload your weapon, if need be, too! It may sound tedious, but combat is quick and easy to learn, and it allows you to be utterly anal with your ammo and/or unarmed combat (like attempting a 20% chance hit to your opponent's eyes, which may cause a critical hit and blind them).

GET BACK IN THE VAULT!

There are seemingly endless varieties of weapons and armour in the game, from simple pistols to laser rifles, leather jackets to full-welded mech combat armour and you can either barter, buy or kill for them. There are also animations for every weapon, item and armour, so you can watch your character get tooled up as you play. Non-player characters who join you on your mission, can now be tweaked with a set of menus to perform a certain way during combat - from how close they should stand to you and what weapon to use to how aggressive they should be. You can even give them items you don't want, so they can perform better.

The gameworld in Fallout 2 is massive. It's easily twice as big as the first Fallout, and travelling around from

town to town now means more random encounters - but not all are bad. Sure, you may stumble across a family of Radscorpions, but you also may encounter some traders and score some cool bargains (one trader will even accept an "alternative" form of payment if you don't have any cash! Eww!).

Each town is populated with a variety of different personalities - from drug dealers and prostitutes (give your character the Karma Sutra skill? I'm serious!) to animal trappers, slavers, police, religious fanatics, crazy doctors... it goes on and on, and you'll simply lose track of all the people you can interact with, barter with for items and receive quests from. The conversations are hilarious, allowing you to be a downright asshole to everyone you meet, or a polite do-gooder... you can even engage in a variety of crimes or maybe do the town a favour and blow away the local drug baron. The non-linear style of gameplay allows you to accept all sorts of quests, befriend whomever you choose and go about your main quest at your own pace. However, the plot is so much more complex than you think, that the game even allows you to continue playing after the main quest has been solved.

All round, Fallout 2 is a bit of an RPG masterpiece - improving upon all the problems gamers had with the original Fallout, and adding a whole bunch of cool new stuff. Buy this game and waste a few months of your life. It's totally worth it.

WHO ARE YOU CALLING LITTLE!?

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	RPG
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Interplay
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	M
REQUIRED:	P133, 16MB RAM
DESIRED:	P200, 32MB RAM

PLUS
Huge gameworld, fantastic character development.

MINUS
A few bugs still exist, which is understandable.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
88	86	94

OVERALL
92
One of the best RPGs since the first Fallout!

Monaco Grand Prix Racing Simulation 2

We managed to drag **Jackson Goethe-Snape** away from GPL in time to review GP2

Ubisoft's original Formula 1 Racing Simulation was in general quite well received. The most impressive feature of the first game was the magnificent visuals, supported by above average physics and decent gameplay. Channel 9 liked it so much they used it during their TV F1 coverage to demonstrate each track. However, in the last 12 months we have seen probably the most advanced racing simulation ever, in the form of Grand Prix Legends, and as a result every other sim simply pales in comparison. MGPRS2 is no exception.

CLASSIFICATION AFTER 1 LAP

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	F1 Racing
PLAYERS:	1-8 (1-4 split)
PUBLISHER:	Ubisoft
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	3D CARD! P133, 24mb RAM
DESIRED:	PII, Voodoo2 card, 64mb RAM
SUPPORTS:	Direct 3D, Voodoo 2, Force Feedback

PLUS
Lovely graphics, plenty of features.

MINUS
Simplified physics, no endorsements.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91	72	79

OVERALL
79
Best modern F1 game...but that's not saying much.

SETTLE JACKSON... STOP TRYING TO VEER INTO THE SPECTATORS...

SOLID START

MGPRS2 basically uses the same graphics engine as the original, but with quite a few tweaks with the resulting appearance is one of the best to date. It has the same visual feeling as its predecessor such as the lavish colour but as you play the game more the subtle graphical improvements become apparent. Also, special effects such as water and skidmarks are present.

The sound is not up to the same standard as the visuals but it does do its job sufficiently. The engine noises are quite good, but hardly inspiring. Also, the other affects all sound somewhat average, especially seen when you get some wheelspin, and the same sound sample is played over and over. However overall the sound is decent.

Bundled with the game are both texture and sound editors, so your creative talents can be displayed to the world.

HOPES HIGH

The best part of MGPRS2 is its number of features, although some don't work as well as they could have. The best feature of the game is the great career mode, where you start as a rookie driver in an incompetent team with an aim to eventually win the championship. Another good addition is the scenario mode, where you take control of a driver who is, quite literally, on a mission. For example you might have to somehow get your badly damaged car to a podium finish. Along with these there are the usual championship, single race and training modes. Also, all 17 current F1 tracks are included. As well as this, numerous setup adjustments can be made, with telemetry included to help you fine-tune your vehicle.

DISAPPOINTMENT

Ubisoft have included a "Retro Racing" mode. Unfortunately their attempt is a near hilarious copy of a title mentioned somewhere above. Another real disappointment is the lack of driver and team endorsement, meaning that you'll be driving alongside M. Schmidt instead of M. Schumacher. This also takes a lot of the meaning out of the career and scenario modes, however I am sure that new fan carsets will be available over the Internet.

Like the original, the one part of the game that prevents it being great is its physics model. Although being consistent and more or less racing-like, if you play this title immediately after a solid Grand Prix Legends sitting, its faults and inadequacies become apparent. However if you are keen for a modern F1 game, this is probably the one you want.

Deathkarz

Cam Shea doesn't care much for weapons mounted on his car, as long as there are tweeters on the dash and a couple of 15 inch subs in the boot, he's happy...

YEAH... BUT I BET IT HAS NO LEG ROOM!

Deathkarz is a vision of arcade style combat racing in the 25th century. The emphasis here is on speed, weaponry and powerslides, but underneath the bonnet a lot of work has gone into creating truly 3D courses and realistic handling.

The karz handle weirdly at first, as there's an unexpected heaviness unlike most arcade racers. Give it a little practice though, and the handling begins to reveal increasing realism. Beam have used a complex physics model for Deathkarz. It simulates various mechanisms within the car such as tire grip, engine, independent suspension, and weight transfer that will determine how it handles. Thus, cars lose acceleration up hills, gain it downhill and powerslides require a deft touch. Even so, a handbrake would have been a useful addition.

PHUTURE FUNK...

Track layout is solid and the scenery excellent. A real sense of space comes across when playing the game, as tracks are suspended high in the air, and undulate and roll wildly. There are some beautiful long arcing paths, huge jumps, steep hills and sharp hairpins. There are no invisible barriers, so karz can drive up the wall of a tunnel, into trackside buildings, or off an embankment into space. This freedom also allows high risk shortcuts for the daring or foolhardy.

There are four futuristic tracks, each with three variants to be unlocked. Likewise, there are four different car types with three increasingly powerful versions of each. A ghost mode has been implemented as well as full multiplayer options.

Deathkarz looks superb. The cars have an incredible surface sheen that give them an almost plastic appearance. Beam have used various impressive lighting effects, transparencies and futuristic design to make Deathkarz a

visual feast. Fortunately, the AI is also well implemented, as you'll often see karz muscling each other ahead on the track until one loses out and takes a plunge off the edge. When this happens, the car is regenerated back onto the track, resulting in only a slight loss in time.

FRAG OR BE FRAGGED...

To help fuel the racing spirit, the karz tote serious weaponry. Each vehicle is equipped with one of two weapons - a pulse laser or a pulse cannon. Special mention must be made to the way these weapons have been realised. They act just as a plasma projectile... err... would. Shoot one when going up a hill and the green orb will jet off into the sky. Hit a car, and the rear jumps up a little and sparks fly. Hit a trackside object and a burn mark remains. Impressive.

The tracks are also littered with a variety of other weapons and powerups including guided missiles, speed boosts and stealth car (the car disappears aside from a rippling green outline). Taking too much damage will destroy the car and put it out of the race. As in Wipeout, there are energy recharge pit lanes, as well as quick fix powerups. Deathkarz is a challenging, fast and violent racer. Good one Beam!

AVAILABLE:	November
CATEGORY:	Combat racing
PLAYERS:	1-8
PUBLISHER:	Melbourne House
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	P 200 MMX, 16 MB RAM, 6XCD ROM.
DESIRED:	PII, 32 MB RAM, 3Dfx 3D accelerator.
SUPPORTS:	Force feedback controllers.

PLUS
great visuals,
excellent soundtrack,
good learning curve.

MINUS
Need a fairly beefy machine.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91	87	85

OVERALL

86

Speed, style and high powered weaponry... oh yeah! Deathkarz is definitely worth a spin.

NBA Live 99

Well… It's a better name than NBA Dead '99. **Jackson Gothe-Snape** dribbles profusely.

PLAY OF THE DAY... AMPUTEE DUNK CONTEST

everything is not as smooth as you could have hoped for, for example the player's animations gets a bit jumpy when they come in contact with other players, but this never causes any gameplay problems.

The sound is also solid, with customary shoe squeaks (although somewhat out of time) and good commentary. The other sound effects do their job, but are nothing special. A mystery to me was that it just seems very quiet, like you're playing for the Wollongong South-West under-10s in front of a massive home , crowd of about 12. As well as this, the menu music is very uninspiring.

BYRANT FOR THREE...

The game recreates the feel of basketball quite nicely. All the strategy is there for the in-depth fans, while the rest of us are catered for nicely. The designers have struck a nice balance between total simulation and arcadey romp, although this may put off those craving for a true basketball sim. What's best about the gameplay though, is that it is versatile and fun. You can attempt numerous different tactics, until you find one which suits your style, and which gives you the more success.

The game offers an entertaining season mode, practice, as well as the three-point shootout, which is brilliant! Going three for three with a friend gives a nice break from the actual game. The season mode is great, with player trades and league leaders giving it a more involved feel. All the actual NBA teams are included, as well as Eastern and Western Conference All Star teams. Finally, the practice mode is a bit useless unless you have a few friends over, but fun nonetheless.

Overall, NBA Live 99 is a good game, that will please many basketball fans. For others, it's not a must-get, but is definitely entertaining. Like most other EA sports games however, owners of the previous year's version should think twice before buying the 99 version.

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	Basketball
PLAYERS:	1-8 (1-4 on 1 PC)
PUBLISHER:	EA Sports
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	P166, 32MB RAM
DESIRED:	P2-266, 64MB RAM
SUPPORTS:	3D Cards

PLUS
Nice balance between simulation and arcade fun.

MINUS
Average sound, far from brilliant graphics.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
82	79	87

OVERALL
85
Good, but owners of Live 98 think twice.

I remember back in the days of the Mega Drive where I would keenly await the weekend. Often, this would mean I could rent a game from the local video store! One of my favourites was NBA Live 95. Now, 4 years on, NBA Live 99 lands in my lap and how the memories came flooding back. I am happy to say that it is another quality EA Sports production.

MALONE OPENS WITH A SWISH....

After installing the game you are treated to a nice FMV intro as expected, although I feel others, such as NHL99's outshines it. Entering the game itself, you are confronted by a menu, which takes 20 seconds to get used to, but is subsequently very efficient. The whole production just shines of glitz and glamour, which is what the NBA is all about. From the start menu you can choose exhibition, season, practice and even a three-point shootout!

Jumping into the game, you are greeted by classy visuals although nothing special. Every NBA player's face has been captured and textured onto their virtual counterparts and each player is the correct size and shape. There are the typical reflections on the floor, as well as good motion captured player movements. One gripe is that

F-16 Aggressor

Thom McIntyre test pilots F-16 Aggressor, one of the last Christmas release flight sims.

Virgin enter the flight sim arena this month with this program from General Simulations Inc, starring the popular F-16 Fighting Falcon. So how does it fare on such well-trodden ground?

After installation a smooth but slightly fussy looking GUI greets you with soft spooky music, which although not to my taste, is well produced. Game options and creation of a pilot character are handled here before you select a single or multi player game. Going one-up produces a menu offering training (four lessons), instant action (semi-custom combat) or full missions. Multiplayer offers instant action or four scenarios.

In the hot seat, the first thing you notice is a decked-out head up display. Beyond that lie rolling hills, plains and mountains. The graphics engine does a fair job of blending the scenery together and the hills and mountains are rendered clearly. More textures would be good, and some of these aren't all that great. The clouds mostly work well but blocky edges detract from the effect a little.

AND WE THOUGHT COMING UP WITH CAPTIONS FOR RACING GAMES WAS HARD!

THAT'S A SOLID COCKPIT YOU GOT THERE...

The cockpit is a fairly solid piece of work. Panning around allows you to view all the gauges, instruments and the HUD while keeping an eye outside. Closeups of each section of the panel can be brought up with the keypad, much like DID's system and the HUD has ten different modes. External player and target views are available. Your F-16 is very detailed and other planes look up to scratch. Padlock view to your target is missing which will cramp some players' dogfighting style. The flight model handles nicely. Convincing without being overly difficult, it's the best overall feature of the game.

In the pre-release I reviewed the engine sound remained constant regardless of throttle setting. The game does feature 3D sound though and the explosions work well.

BE MORE DYNAMIC!

Newer military simulations being released now feature dynamic campaigns. F-16 Aggressor's reliance on simpler scripted missions sets it back. You have to complete each mission to progress to the next, which could take a while. Each mission has a briefing. A variety of AA and AG munitions are available. You must consider your ground and air targets and your budget when you load your plane out. Successful completion wins you more bucks.

Overall, this game is not bad, although it feels a bit dated. It faces some very stiff competition, especially the impending release of Falcon 4.0, which promises a dynamic campaign and many years in development.

AVAILABLE:	NOW
CATEGORY:	Combat flight simulation
PLAYERS:	1 - network
PUBLISHER:	Virgin Interactive
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	P133, 16MB RAM
DESIRED:	P200, 32MB RAM, 3D accelerator, joystick

PLUS
Good flight model and aircraft systems; well executed cockpit

MINUS
Sequential scripted missions; terrain could be sharper

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
72	70	74

OVERALL

73

For F-16 junkies only.

Sin

Looks like we'll have another contender for our "Most Unnecessary Use of Breasts" award next year. **Eliot Fish** gawks…

Since Quake 2 was dubbed the King of First-Person Shooters and adopted as the multiplayer game of choice, we've had Unreal come along and startle, Duke Nukem Forever drift into limbo and Half-Life tug fiercely at id's crown. So where does that leave Sin? Once highly anticipated, and the demo enjoyed by thousands of gamers, Sin has stumbled across the line behind the hulking behemoth which is Half-Life – and now Quake Arena is glittering on the horizon. Maybe, had it been released about 4 months ago, Sin would have been praised for it's fun Duke Nukem style gameplay, but now it's looking like the shabby third-cousin of Quake 2 which is in danger of being eclipsed by Half-Life. Whilst it won't win any awards, there's no doubting that Sin is a good romp with a gun which is packed full of laughs, action and new ideas. For those of you who can't wait for Duke Nukem Forever to rear it's Unrealed head, take a look at Sin – the Claytons Duke Nukem game.

CONFESS MY CHILD…

The city of Freeport is gripped with drug addiction, a nasty drug named U4 is catching on like wildfire, however it seems like something more than drug addiction is corrupting the city. Elexis Sinclaire, the mysterious buxom bio-chemist and head of SinTek is abusing the drug to create her own army of cyborg mutants, as in it's purest form, U4 has the ability to alter human DNA. It's up to you as Colonel John Blade, member of a private security force called Hardcorps, to get out there and kick SinTek's ass…

The inital appeal of Sin is the fact that the game takes place in a real-world setting. City streets, subways, construction sites, warehouses, abandoned buildings, mansions and secret facilities make up most of the game-world, and like Duke Nukem, this world is highly interactive. If you find a coin on the sidewalk, you can use it in the payphone in the subway (and be rewarded with a humourous joke), or if you see a computer terminal sitting on a desk, you can use it to shutdown security systems. In one hilarious moment, I realised that a particular terminal had a DOS prompt where you could start browsing sub-directories and even attempt to boot up a game called Gloom (but being DOS, the mouse was not detected! Heheh). Small touches like this help to lift Sin above the pack, but rarely do they do anything practical and it's usually just in there for amusement.

The level design is mostly excellent, with every object in the environment having an apparent purpose. Some levels have more than one exit, which makes you stop and think about which way you should be going, but how these alternate exits actually affect the game was not in any way obvious. Your character, Blade, is quite vocal throughout the game too (ala Duke Nukem), but you get double the trouble in Sin with your sidekick J.C. constantly piping through on the walkie-talkie with a smart-ass comment or two about what you're doing. It's usually

IF YOU WONT COME GET SOME... I'LL DAMN WELL GIVE YOU SOME

MULTIPLAYER

Multiplayer Sin is very much akin to Quake 2 multiplayer, however the hit-location damage and weapon balance makes it different enough to comment on. For starters, it makes sense to always target your opponent's head, which just gets a little tiring. Some of the weapons seem a little ineffective in multiplayer

too. The sniper rifle for instance, has such a slow animation that you are usually dead by the time it's ready to fire - unless you camp. There are thrills to be had with the Rocket Launcher, and the player models and game settings are interesting, but all up it just feels like a variation on the Quake 2 theme but without the fine balance in play. Still it's damn close to Quake 2 and the design of the multiplayer levels is brilliant in some cases. Maybe mods will help enhance the experience.

funny, but most of the time he's there to give you advice on what to do next. This really adds character to the game, and in fact, most of the speech is very good, such as guards chatting to each other about baseball or girls before you "school them".

COME GET SIN... ER... SOME

Gameplay in Sin seems to borrow from all the great first-person shooters. Sin uses the Quake 2 engine, and the Rocket Launcher, Grenade Launcher and Shotgun work in almost exactly the same fashion as they do in the land of Strogg. Then you have the Spider Mines which work like the pipebomb from Duke, the Sniper Rifle which we've seen in Unreal and the bizarre energy weapons which Half-Life has now excelled with. Sin doesn't really offer any new wonderful weapons to play with, but what's there is at least well designed, functional and fun if a little unexciting. Most of your targets are armour-clad humans, though as you venture deeper into the game you'll be pitted against mutant cyborgs and experiments gone wrong. As some of you will have noticed in the demo, taking down enemies is easiest with

a simple head shot. You can stand there are pump endless rounds into their bodies before they fall, yet manage to hit the teeny polygon which is their head and they'll go down faster than Monica Lewinski. Because head shots are so efficient, and human guards are so common in the game, over time it becomes dull and even boring always having to aim for the head. There are a few opponents who seem to take equal damage across their whole body, allowing you to go nuts with a chaingun or shotgun, but not enough. The AI in Sin seems okay, with your enemies taking cover and sometimes even running away to an area where they have backup. However, there were many moments where grunts would try and pursue me only to end up with their nose pressed up against an open door, running on the spot. There were some other dubious glitches too... such as the Mutant Mancini in the subway simply standing on the spot and allowing me to stick my gun in his torso and pull the trigger. I think he was meant to attack me. Other bugs include health packs which refuse to be picked up although you are desperately in need of health, doors which open out into you causing damage, and items lying around levels such as

pieces of fruit and pizza which your player couldn't pick up to use as sustenance. Something tells me they are there for you to use as health, but Blade wouldn't pick them up. Hopefully these annoying bugs will be fixed in a patch, although gamers should expect to purchase a fully functioning game off the shelf these days. Oh well.

SIT ON MY FACE AND TELL ME THAT YOU'LL GIB ME...

Progressing through Sin's levels seems rather unbalanced in terms of an ammo to health ratio. There's either not enough health and too much ammo, or not enough ammo OR health to achieve a particular objective. What this means, is that you'll find yourself having to replay some levels just to get through that really hard bit at the end which you didn't have enough health or ammo for the first time around. Games such as Quake 2 seem to have been playtested enough to resolve these problems - usually by supplying the gamer with excess health or ammo around the level "just in case". Regularly in Sin, you'll find yourself having to replay a level because you didn't do it the "right" way the first time. This is really unfortunate. In the missile silo level for instance, unless you found the injured marines (which was a secondary objective) and received a clearance code, you won't be able to prevent a missile launching at the end of the level and you will die. If you were unlucky enough to save your game past a certain point, the level cannot be finished. This is infuriating

for the gamer, who is then restricted to playing through the level again in a certain order, not the usual non-linear backtracking completion of objectives like we're used to in other games. Being punished for playing the game differently is simply unfair. The loading times don't help either. Sin has ridiculously long loading times, to the point where you would believe your PC has crashed. At times I went to watch TV or make coffee whilst waiting for the next level to load - almost a full three minutes once! The serious problem with this, is that whenever you die, the entire level reloads! There's no room for experimentation, because you dread the horrendous reload. Besides spoiling the flow and mood of the game, it becomes so frustrating that you may just rather play something else...

Sin does excel in a few areas... many of the levels require stealth over gun-toting bravado, especially when you first enter the SinTek facility. Your main objectives are usually to always avoid detection, so equipped with your silencer, you'll be crawling around under office windows and picking off guards before they see you. Once spotted, scientists will run for alarms and then the level will flood with guards and mechanised spider sentries until you can shutdown the security systems. Sin certainly keeps you on your toes, and even though at times it feels a little "rigged", the ability to encounter less enemies because you've been efficient and quiet in completing your objectives is a good incentive to play.

TOOLS TO TOOL WITH

(9)

(10)

SPEARGUN (1)
You'll only use this once in the game, but it's cool.
L2-357 MAGNUM (2)
Your standard issue pistol. Can take out some enemies with one head shot.
ASSAULT RIFLE (3)
More like a deadly accurate machine gun. Can be used with a silencer.
ROK-12 SHOTGUN (4)
Gibs will fly. Bit slow though.
H.V. CHAINGUN (5)
Fairly deadly cyborg chaingun. Doubles as grenade launcher.
GRENADE LAUNCHER (6)
Much like Quake 2's launcher, good for spamming.

SPIDER MINES (7)
Slide them along the floor and watch them latch onto your target. Boom!
ROCKET LAUNCHER (8)
Similar rocket speed as the Quake 2 RL. Pretty cool.
PULSE RIFLE/ PLASMA CANNON (9)
A secret weapon which you must find parts to throughout the game. Deadly.
QUANTUM DESTABILISER (10)
A planet-sodomising SinTek weapon. You need this.
SNIPER RIFLE (11)
Deadly piercing bullets can kill most opponents with 1 or 2 shots through full armour.

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

(6)

(7)

(8)

(11)

ERM... JUST LEAN OVER A TAD MORE...

YOU'RE TOO UGLY TO LIVE!

FRIENDLY FIRE

Mission objectives are varied and interesting with Blade being required to fulfill a number of tasks, such as attaching a modem to a computer, finding incriminating evidence, killing a certain enemy or even uploading a virus into a mainframe. There are always a variety of things to do, whilst attempting to either remain undetected or even just figuring out how to get through a particular area without being hammered by sentry guns. Most levels have some sort of event which will take place unless Blade can prevent it, meaning there is some replay value here. It may also mean some players will replay levels over to "get it right"

which seems a little annoying. Carving your way through enemies is certainly no cakewalk either, and you'll find yourself having to advance with extreme caution so as to not get picked off by snipers or cornered by cyborgs with munty chainguns. The story is always propelled well by in-game cinematics and end-of-level cinematics which really set up the progression of the story nicely. The end-of-game-boss is particularly awesome, and the final FMV craps on Quake 2.

Sin is certainly never boring. There are flaws which make it frustrating to play, but the missions are always entertaining and the game is very well paced. There's a lot of fun to be had with Sin, as long as you're prepared for it to not have the overall polish of something as solid as Half-Life. No doubt, Sin will acquire a legion of hardcore fans, but unfortunately the plethora of bugs means it's not quite the awesome game some of us were expecting.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	First Person Shooter
PLAYERS:	1-Multi
PUBLISHER:	Activision
PRICE:	$89.95
RATING:	M15+
REQUIRED:	P166, 32MB RAM, 4XCD-ROM
DESIRED:	Pentium II, 64MB RAM, 3D card
SUPPORTS:	3D Hardware

PLUS
Interesting level design,
awesome boss.

MINUS
Level loading times
ruin the fun.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
93	90	89

OVERALL

89

Moments of brilliance balanced
with moments that suck.

Age of Empires: The Rise of Rome

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: EXPANSION PACK
PLAYERS: 1-8
PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT
PRICE: $59.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: AGE OF EMPIRES
DESIRED: P200, 32MB RAM

Age of Empires was a foray by Microsoft into the real time strategy and resource management genres. Concentrating mainly on resource gathering and management, each game started with a tribe in the Stone Age, with the goal of progressing through the Tool and Bronze into the Iron Age. This was accomplished by researching new technologies and creating more advanced buildings.

The Rise of Rome is an expansion pack, requiring the original game to play, so you should already be familiar with the style of play, visuals and sound. In these areas nothing has changed greatly from the original. One aspect that has been changed, is the ability to assign a builder a number of jobs in a row. This is really handy at the beginning of a game when there is a mountain of tasks to accomplish.

The Rise of Rome gives the player three campaigns at different stages in the life of the Ancient Rome, from its beginning as a city state battling the Macedonians to the glorious Roman empire trying to beat back the barbarian hordes. As well as the Romans players can assume the mantle of other civilizations from the same period and area like, Carthage and Hellenes. Each tribe has their own strength and weaknesses to discover and exploit.

Included in The Rise of Rome along with all the old favourites are a four new units, fire galley, camel rider, slinger and scythe chariot. Basically The Rise of Rome is an expansion pack, giving the player more campaigns. The new scenarios seem to run a bit smoother than the originals, but otherwise it's the same game

ROSS CLARKSMITH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
88	80	75	82

V-Rally '98

Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: RACING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMES
PRICE: $99.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: RUMBLE PAK

It's been a long time since V-Rally was one of the better PlayStation racing sims, and since then the Sony console has been graced with Colin McRae Rally - the best yet. So, how do Nintendo 64 owners feel about finally receiving a port of an old PlayStation game? V-Rally, whilst certainly not a terrible game, is definitely showing it's age... but ironically, the N64 doesn't really have any other really good rally games to compete with it. What we have then, is a title which is one of the best N64 rally games yet, and at the same time a slightly disappointing game.

Some would say V-Rally is extremely realistic. Whilst it's true that the cars must be driven with great care and patience, and crashing once during a race virtually rules you out from anything but coming last... if this is realism, does is it necessarily make for a fun racing experience? Powerslides are extremely uncommon, and you'll find yourself slowing and braking far more often than in any other rally game to date. Realistic maybe, but as a game a little dull. The track design in some

levels is pretty darn frustrating, with tight walls and grassy areas which throw your car into the air like you've hit a small fire hydrant. Where are the wide areas off the side of the track to allow for some outrageous powersliding, or even a bit of room to regain control of your car? Instead, V-Rally forces you to race with the concentration of Einstein.

However, with the selection of cars on offer, the huge mount of tracks, smooth visuals and challenging gameplay, V-Rally is definitely one for the racing game fanatics.

ELIOT FISH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
86	83	84	85

Pro Pinball - Big Race USA

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: PINBALL SIM
PLAYERS: 1-MULTIPLAYER
PUBLISHER: EMPIRE
PRICE: $69.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P90, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P233 MMX, 32MB RAM

Strap yourself in as you take a race across America in a taxi named Brusa. Well, relatively speaking of course. This is the third pinball sim from the devoted guys at Pro Pinball and is probably as close to the real thing as you can get. Not since my days at the pinny parlour have I enjoyed myself as much as I did while playing Big Race USA, it has the features of the real thing, the sounds of the real thing and the dynamics of the real thing.

Just like any other pinball game, the objective in Big Race is to get the highest score possible but unlike most pinnies you can't just sit back and idly hit the ball anywhere. The beauty of this game is that it sucks you right in by having a good storyline that has to be followed in order to get a good score, with skilful placement of the ball being vital to your success. The table that makes up Big Race USA has well over forty different actions that can be combined to give over two hundred different combos and events with things like video mode, super-loops, nitro boosts, magno-saves, police chases, stunt driving and cash dashes giving you big points if done in proper sequence.

The table looks and plays like a real machine with heaps of lights flashing and things going on all the time, made even better looking with high resolution graphics. The sounds, voice overs and background music are all very appealing, probably making the real machines seem a little boring and lifeless. The downer with BR USA is that there's just one table... Argh! All up, this is one hell of a great game that will keep you seated in front of your computer for days on end as you say to yourself, "Okay, one more go."

MATT ADAMSONS

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
95	75	81	79

Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: TEN PIN BOWLING SIM
PLAYERS: 1-32
PUBLISHER: THQ
PRICE: $48.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: WIN 95, PENTIUM 133, 16MB RAM, 4XCD ROM.
DESIRED: 3D ACCELERATOR CARD
SUPPORTS: 3D HARDWARE

Ten Pin Bowling... As far as I can see, it's a sport so unprofitable that bowling centres are forced to recycle old shoes from the local clown college. Drag me down to the local bowling alley and before you can say "Budweiser", I'll be over at the arcade games reliving classics like Golden Axe.

Okay, okay, hurling a bloody heavy ball at a bunch of pins can be fun, but who wants to put up with all the snotty kids and preppy losers? Why not take a trip to the local 24 hour supermarket late at night, grab a bloody huge ball of cheese (preferably White Castello) and arrange a big pile of whatever you want to smash (I recommend prune juice bottles) at the end of an aisle. Wanton destruction is only an accurate cheese roll away. Now there's a sport!!

Anyway, along comes Circuit Pro Bowling to revive my flagging bowling spirit. As far as bowling sims go, Circuit Pro is quite reasonable. Most importantly, the physics engine is dead accurate. The pins respond just as they should - they'll teeter, spin, roll and fly away. Gameplay is simple, yet comprehensive. Choose from six balls, position the bowler, adjust the spin, then time the power and accuracy sliding bars as you deliver the ball. There are 13 Brunswick Pro Staff Bowlers and many play modes to choose from including career, skins and cosmic bowling (glow in the dark disco bowling). The sound effects are spot on, and although average, the graphics do the job where it counts, in motion captures as well as great ball and pin reflections. It's certainly an accurate representation of the sport, but hard to recommend unless you're a bowling freak with a broken leg... or something. Not bad for the price.

By the way, I do not in any way condone the use of cheese balls as a violent projectile.

CAM SHEA

Rival Realms

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: RTS
PLAYERS: 1-8
PUBLISHER: TITUS
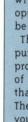**PRICE:** TBA
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P100, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P166, 32MB RAM

There are a growing number of Real Time Strategy games hitting the market at the moment, so it takes something special to make a game stand out from its competition. Rival Realms has done this by blending in many aspects of Role-Playing games into its RTS architecture. The game is played in a fantasy setting, with a war between humans, Elvish clans and Greenskin (Orc) tribes.

There is a small amount of resource management, but this has been largely automated once set up to allow players to concentrate on the battle side of game. The game is similar to Warcraft in this respect, as well as the way that different buildings produce different units. Unlike Warcraft, the player will grow more attached to their units, and feel less like using them as cannon fodder. Individual units gaining experience, and increasing in levels and skill achieve this. Each unit is also able to pick up and use four magical items to improve speed, strength, armor or damage. Further incentive to protect the lives of characters is the ability to save them for use in later campaigns.

The number of cool features in Rival Realms is too many to list, however the overall polish of this title is lacking, with animation being inferior to old RTS games like Warcraft 2. One interesting control, is the ability to record a game then play it back later. It is even possible to watch it from a gods eye view to analyse what the opposition was up to at a particular time. A large collection of good ideas with average finishing makes this a title really only suited to those gung ho about fantasy RTS games.

ROSS CLARKSMITH

Nightlong

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: ONE
PUBLISHER: MICROPROSE
RATING: M15+
PRICE: $69.95
REQUIRED: P100,16MB RAM, 4X CD
DESIRED: P133, 32 MB RAM, 8X CD

To be honest I've gone right off the idea of sexy robots ever since the incident with my new Breville Love Slave 180B. Blender and Jaffle irons aside, Nightlong is a classic graphic adventure in the Lucas Arts mould. Joshua Reeve is a no nonsense undercover investigator doing an important job for Union City's Mayor, a certain Mr. Martens. It seems that someone is out to discredit Martens by sabotaging major industrial installations around town and it's up to you to find out who is behind these terrorist acts and to stop them before they use the ensuing chaos to take over Union City completely.

As you might expect gameplay revolves around navigating your avatar through the game screens looking for useful items to pick up, puzzles to solve and new areas which hopefully reveal more of the game's plot.

Nightlong's world is quite big, taking up 3 CDs in fact, and quite imaginative with detailed backdrops and quite evocative soundscapes. The overall feel of this future world is very 'Blade Runner' with its' hover cars and the like (can anybody realy imagine giving the average Joe a license to fly around the skyline of a city in the same way we drive on the roads, can you imagine the carnage, every Hotel and office building would have to surround themselves with crash barriers on every floor and the opportunities for mucous hurling youths would be enormous)

The heart of any graphic adventure is its' puzzles and Nightlong offers the usual kind of problems and quests, but does fall into the trap of using some poorly designed brain twisters that'll have you gnawing your chair leg off. These titles are few and far between now so If you're a fan you probably should get it.

GEORGE SOROPOS

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
74	79	58	60

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
73	88	79	79

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
88	80	80	83

People's General

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1-4 VIA LAN, PBM OR IPX
PUBLISHER: SSI
RATING: G
PRICE: TBA
REQUIRED: P100,16MB RAM
DESIRED: P166, 32 MB RAM

SSI's General titles are only beaten by Ultima as the longest running PC game series of all time so they must be doing something right. People's General Takes the battle into the future, slightly, and thrusts you into a conflict between the Chinese and Western Alliance (Chinese alliance? China has fewer friends than a bankrupt stockbroker).

There are 19 countries involved in this stoush including North Korea, Australia (We get to send our Cricket team) , the UK, US and Japan so you could justifiably call it WWIII, but SSI haven't. There is a single campaign for each side and over 36 scenarios all up covering such diverse geography as the Ural mountains to the South East Asian jungle.

The latest weaponry has also been coded into People's General: T-99 tanks, Werewolf choppers, Starstreaks and Trackwolf recon units. SSI have also souped up the spotting system to take sattelites, AWACS and other high tech gadgets into account and there is also a totaly new system for controlling air units in battle. And to spice things up a bit there is also now a random events generator to keep you on your toes!

As you can see the backdrops in People's General are the best yet with photorealistic terrain in 16 bit colour, the audio is also great with loads of good samples. If you liked SSI's earlier efforts in this series you'll more than likely want to play this too. If you're a strategy novice, this may not appeal like RTS games such as Starcraft... This one's a little more serious.

GEORGE SOROPOS

Trespasser

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: FIRST-PERSON ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: DREAMWORKS INTERACTIVE
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: P166, 32MB RAM
DESIRED: PII-300/ AMDK6-2, 2ND GENERATION 3D CARD
SUPPORTS: MOST MAJOR 3D CARDS

Trespasser is an interesting title, promising much, but delivering little. The game starts off with a nice atmospheric intro, and you find yourself on a mysterious tropical beach, alone. This is the best bit about the game, the feeling that you really are alone. It's a good idea to hire out the Lost World from the video store, as the game is set a year after the events in the movie. From the beach, you start to explore...very slowly.

Dreamworks Interactive have attempted to implement a more realistic control method for first-person action games. This takes the form of your right hand, which can be moved about and used to pick up and throw objects etc. However, despite the promise shown by this system, it falls flat on its face, making for frustratingly slow gameplay. The movement is also a bit unresponsive. It's a relief that the dinosaurs are so slow, or the inadequacies of the control system would be exhibited more.

The engine chugs along at a pitiful rate, with many visuals having to be turned off just to get a good framerate, even on a PII-266 with a Voodoo2. After walking around for what seems like ages you finally meet your first few dinos. It's quite frightening with the lights off and the sound turned up to hear a raptor's growl seemingly only metres away. However once you do spot it, it's pretty straightforward to take it down, because they move so slowly. Guns and ammo are also plentiful so you're rarely caught in a tight situation. The sound is good, but is not enough to save the game. Overall a poor title, with irritating control and puzzles, slow visuals and no action to be found.

JACKSON GOTHE-SNAPE

Reah

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: PUZZLE/ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: ONE
PUBLISHER: PROJECT TWO INTERACTIVE
RATING: G
PRICE: TBA
REQUIRED: P90, WIN95/98, 16MB RAM, 4X CD

You will probably laugh at this but did you know that Myst is still one of the highest earning games around? It outsells it's sequel Riven by three copies to one, right now. Because of this we have games like Reah. Reah is an adventure which could be described as a cross between Cryo's Atlantis and Broderbund's Myst / Riven. It boasts a pretty fast graphics engine (even on slow Pentiums with 4-8 speed CD drives) that allows players to explore the world of Reah from a true 3D perspective.

The basic premise goes something like this: The player goes on a mission to investigate a military base on the planet Reah, where an ancient artefact is being examined by scientists. The researchers have discovered that the artefact is a portal, which allows access to another reality. Arriving at the site, the player is confronted with panicked scientists evacuating the area because the portal has, surprise surprise, become unstable. Of course you get sucked in and dumped in a world chock full of huge empty cities with huge empty buildings, with the occasional motion captured actor to keep you amused.

Over a hundred puzzles await you in Reah (Oh joy!) Most of which will make you want to do the washing up instead. Reah is a very pretty game and, like all these sorts of titles, is essentially a multimedia crossword puzzle. Thusly the sort of people who will like it and buy it are that same sort of people who love crosswords. Buy this as a gift for some poor office slob that you know. Reah is not a gamers game but rather a book readers game or an accountants game or basically anyone who owns a PC but isn't a gamer. It's a form of meditation, even relaxation and should be taken as such.

GEORGE SOROPOS

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
80	85	85	85

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
70	79	61	63

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	80	50	60

River World

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: RTS
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: CRYO
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: WIN 95, P133, 32MB RAM
DESIRED: P233, 64MB RAM, 3D ACCELERATOR, 8XCD.
SUPPORTS: DIRECT 3D, GLIDE

River World is based on Philip José Farmer's science fiction work. You'd be buggered if you could tell though – for River World strays from any story-telling medium and goes straight for real-time strategy adventure.

For the most part, it's a real time strategy fest, with a very Myth-like perspective. The aim of the game is to move closer to the source of the River, and uncover the secrets of River World by taking control of the Black Tower. There are a total of 80 territories to conquer along the way (though these are generally quite small), divided into four overall levels. Snore.

To conquer territories, you harness resources, build buildings, equip your forces and send them out to capture each territory's Grail Stone.

This is where the adventure game elements come in. Gaming characters litter the landscape , and the idea is to talk to them and rally their assistance. If certain conditions are met, these characters will join your ranks and give you access to new buildings and technology to play around with.

To keep things interesting, River World is played across eleven technological "ages". You start of in the Wood Age, and end up in the Stellar Age. The result of these ages? A fresh bunch of buildings and units throughout the game.

The final verdict? One of the things that most real-time enthusiasts often take for granted is the game interface. If it's all in order, it's given little consideration. River World's interface is atrocious. Yep, it's in 3D and it all looks pretty, but behind the screen's visuals is a shocking movement and control system. All the basic RTS elements are there too (like a 2D overhead map, unit menu, etc), though their functionality has been butchered. In the end, with a game like this, you just can't get past a distasteful control system.

MARCH STEPNIK

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	70	60	62

101st Airborne In Normandy

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: TURN-BASED STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1-MULTI
PUBLISHER: EMPIRE
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: P90, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P133, 32MB RAM

As all you history buffs would already know, the 101st Airborne Division of the US army played a significant role in the D-Day assault on German-occupied France at the climax of World War II. They jumped in the dead of night from their flimsy planes into the rolling fields of rural Normandy and proceeded to give old Adolf and his men a sound thrashing. Empire's latest ever-so-serious wargame is a wonderfully atmospheric attempt to recreate such decades-old excitement.

101st Airborne In Normandy – and, by the way, what a great title that is, it just rolls of the tongue, don't you agree? – is a turn-based, tactical wargame in the fine tradition of things like Soldiers At War. However, I should warn you, it is also incredibly hard-core. Not hard-core in the sense of dull hex graphics and endless statistics instead of animations, but hard-core in that there is a hell of a lot of cool things to get your camouflaged teeth stuck into. Prior to each mission a plethora of organisational duties ought to be attended to, while on the battlefield you've got so much more to concern yourself with than merely watching your action points and shooting the enemy - think morale, complex damage models, troops with distinct personalities, even parachute failure! Certainly, the combat engine is the most detailed and comprehensive I think I've seen, while remaining fairly accessible at the same time.

Undoubtedly, this is anal, tactical wargaming at its best. If you've enjoyed games like Soldiers At War or the X-Com series, then I'd advise you check this out, too.

DAVID WILDGOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
78	72	85	83

Return Fire 2

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ACTION/STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1-4 (1-16 NETWORKED)
PUBLISHER: RIPCORD
PRICE: $79.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: P200 (P133 WITH 3D CARD), 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P200 MMX, 64MB RAM, 3DFX CARD
SUPPORTS: GLIDE, OPENGL

Return Fire was a rather successful multiplayer experience, essentially a variation on the Capture the Flag theme, but with addictive strategic elements. Return Fire 2 is still exactly the same experience, but it's been enhanced greatly with 3D accelerated graphics. The game now functions from a variety of different camera perspectives from within each of your craft to bird's eye views and chase-cams. The 3D graphics help to revive what is now becoming a bit of a tired concept, which is to get out there and return with the enemy's flag. To achieve this goal, you'll need to utilise a limited supply of vehicles, from tanks and jeeps to jets and helicopters. Each vehicle is equipped to perform a certain task, so knowing when to deploy your unit (which you control in 3D) and use it well, is the key to capturing the enemy's flag and winning the game. As a single player game, the CPU is challenging, but it doesn't come close to the deadly game which is Return Fire 2 multiplayer. Up to four

players can play in split-screen on one PC which is novel and hilarious. On a network though, you can take part in huge wars and be addicted for hours.

Return Fire 2 suffers from one of the most user-unfriendly menu screens ever devised. Simply trying to figure out how to setup your preferred control method is a right royal pain in the backside, with everything on screen being icon-based and the accompanying manual explaining the process in a vague way. Setting up a game is also stupidly fiddly, as all the game options are represented with icons, so it takes twice as long to configure the game you would like to play. All up, RF2 is more of the same but with prettier graphics, which ain't enough really.

ELIOT FISH

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
83	85	79	78

Actua Tennis

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORTS SIM
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: GREMLIN
PRICE: $TBA
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P133, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P200, 32MB RAM, 3D CARD

In which Gremlin's sports franchise expands yet further, setting itself up as the Euro rival to EA Sports American monolith. Actua Tennis ain't bad, actually. Encouragingly, there are several novel gameplay ideas that work quite well. The serve control is similar to the that found in golf games and possibly the best around. Importantly, it won't show your opponent where you're planning to hit the ball, which is essential in any two or four player match. The single-player game is extensive, offering as it does a complete World Tour season for you to progress through. All the real players are there for you to compete with over rankings points. Two players can also play this way - in both singles AND doubles.

Like all games in the Actua series, Tennis is a visual delight. The players look good and are animated well - though, one of the drawbacks of motion capture is its lack of flexibility, and it shows here. Playing a match can often feel like hard work, as the sensation of hitting the ball isn't convincingly portrayed.
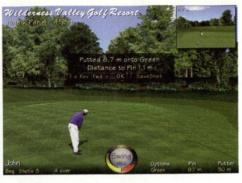
Yes, this is certainly a fine simulation, but I couldn't shake the nagging feeling all the while I was playing that I really wasn't having much fun. Technically superb it may be, but it also lacks that extra spark of life that makes for a great game. Actua could do with some of the charisma and personality Nintendo bring to all their titles. Just a thought.

Nonetheless, this is a quality title, but not for those who prefer their tennis games to emphasise fun over accuracy.

DAVID WILDGOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
84	68	80	81

Knights and Merchants

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: STRATEGY
PLAYERS: 1-6
PUBLISHER: INTERACTIVE MAGIC
PRICE: TBA
RATING: TBA
REQUIRED: P133, 24MB RAM
DESIRED: P166, 32MB RAM

I'm not going to pretend for one second that Knights and Merchants is based on any sort of original concept. In fact when I loaded this game up at home to start my review, a couple of friends who were watching said at the same time, "That looks just like Settlers".

Knights and Merchants is a real time strategy game, that like Settlers, is not just about churning out military units, you also go about creating a little thriving community, with all the basic requirements, for not only collecting resources, but also processing them into useful items.

Knights and Merchants certainly has it over Settlers when it comes to combat. You can organise units into various formations, and with a variety of different types of troops to churn out of your barracks, there's some depth in unit choice when going into battle.

Animation and sound are quite nice, and on a whole, the audio-visual presentation of the game is really very good.

There is however a rather hefty down side to Knights and Merchants... Time. For starters, you cannot adjust the game speed, and all reasonably switched on gamers will basically be waiting on the game most of the time. Something that really compounds this problem is that you have to build the various structures in a very set order, even though you should be able to build a whole variety of buildings at once. This leads to you having to do the same mundane work on every new map you play on, which makes the game lose appeal over time.

Plenty of missions, good presentation and decent gameplay make Knights and Merchants a cool game, but it would have been very easy to make it a better game with a speed control, and by being a little less rigid with building hierarchy.

DAN TOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
81	79	72	77

America's Toughest 18

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORT
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: BRILLIANT INTERACTIVE
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P90, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P166, 32MB RAM

With a proliferation of golfing games and simulations on the market do we really need another one? Well I say hell yeah! The sport (read relaxing bludgers romp on a paddock) of golf is enjoyed by more people than any other sport in Australia, so it's no wonder that the real games PC counterpart is also extremely popular.

America's Toughest 18 isn't to be scoffed at, the title is appropriately named. What this game lacks in variation it makes up for in design and elements with lots of variations depending on how well you play golf games. Novices are introduced to America's Toughest 18 with relative ease thanks to the plethora of options and settings available, while old pro's get to test how good they really are. And this is all on the same eighteen holes that have been individually selected from around the U.S of A.

The gameplay is very nice for a golf game with an intuitive swing and hit action. Intuitive because they've given us the option of having either a click, click, click approach or the usual hold, release, click that most games have. The swing meter is also pretty good, having an accurate rate of descent to it. As for the graphics, well they're pretty nice with clear and sharp course images while the players have been motion captured which is the norm these days.

Overall, a very appealing game if you like golf, with enough options to keep the only eighteen holes interesting. One must ask what happened to the multiplayer support!? However, it's important to understand the title because if you're after something with nice long drives and no sand bunkers you'd better look elsewhere.

MATT ADAMSONS

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
82	68	81	76

NHL 99

Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORTS
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: $99.95
RATING: G
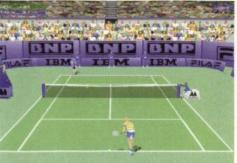**SUPPORTS:** RUMBLE PAK, MEMORY PAK.

With the bone-crunching thrills of NFL Blitz still coursing through our veins, the progression from beating each other senseless with our bare hands to using large sticks to accomplish the same goal seems logical enough a step. NHL 99, yet 'another' sports title from EA, hopes to fit that bill, while at the same time giving you the same tactical and technical detail of a simulation.

The combined effect of the visuals and sounds is very pleasing. Everything is well animated and the motion of the players and the puck is easily followed. It's good to see that programmers have finally given up on trying to make ridiculously large animated characters with roving camera tracking, which the Nintendo 64 clearly could not do well in previous hockey games. The traditional form of presentation offered here is an excellent well-executed compromise. Even the sampled sounds aren't bad - particularly the hard collisions, audience, and commentator.

With gameplay, however, I should say that I cannot profess to know the sport well, save for whatever I've derived from other sports and the odd SBS highlight. To that end, I felt that the in-game strategy was slightly lacking. Sure, there are flash moves like skating backwards, but the passing and character-switching systems are inaccurate and confounding; and there's little freedom in the direction you can hit your puck, which takes away a lot of strategy. The problem is further compounded by the slight sluggishness in the controls, which takes away the fast precision action. In the end, though, while NHL 99's controls aren't executed quite as well as they could have been, the hard-hitting action combined with glossy NHL logos and statistics makes it a worthwhile purchase for any recreational follower of the sport.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
83	80	78	81

Roland Garros 1998

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORTS SIM
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: GROLIER INTERACTIVE
PRICE: $TBA
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P133, 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P200, 3DFX

The first Roland Garros title appeared at the tail-end of last year into a PC market not exactly over-burdened with remarkable tennis simulations. I quite liked it, but that was probably more due to the dearth of competition rather than anything special on RG's part. A year later and, with the solid Actua Tennis, that competition is a bit tougher.

Unfortuantely, Roland Garros 1998 fails to improve on its predecessor in any meaningful way. Graphically, this is marginally better. The stadiums are dull and fail to inspire the necessary atmosphere. The players, however, while possessing that eye-catching agility that impressed me the first time round, also still appear to glide across the court instead of running. And again, just as in the first game, the umpire calls "Fault" when the ball simply goes out. I mean, really, how difficult could it be to record some bloke shouting "Out!"?

As far as options are concerned there is the usual basic selection - up to four players, singles or doubles matches, etc. A Season play is provided, but it doesn't scale the heights of that in Actua Tennis and seems pretty miserly in comparison. Perhaps the aspect of RG98 that I find most disagreeable is its control method. You use the up/down buttons to set the power of your shot, rather than holding down the shot button itself. The shot button instead determines the length of the shot. It's completely counter-intuitive and confusing as hell, even with practice.

If you're after a tennis game this month, then there's really only one choice - and this isn't it.

DAVID WILDGOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
70	50	63	60

Madden NFL 99

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORTS
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: EA SPORTS
PRICE: $89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P200MMX (P166 WITH 3DFX CARD), 16MB RAM
DESIRED: P2-300, 3D CARD, 64MB RAM

I'll make it quite simple, if you're a dedicated fan of gridiron that has a fair grasp of the rules of the game then Madden 99 is a game that you should invest in. If however you're like the majority of Australians that laugh at the silly uniforms and consider the play to be stop-start malarkey then Madden 99 is going to leave you cold. It's not that it's a bad game it's just that you have to know a lot about gridiron if you want to succeed in winning any matches. Sure you could sit back with the NFL Almanac and try to spark some interest in this great game but if you don't like NFL then don't bother getting to know the rules because it won't make things anymore exciting.

Following the tried and true formula that is Madden, this the latest instalment is sure to make any NFL fan happy. It has a full season roster, a quick match facility, training sessions and even arcade which is for those that like a fast game without all the tactics. You can also free-trade any of the players on any roster as you strive to make up the ultimate dream team to conquer the world. However, the real fun of Madden lies in the fact that it's a strategy sports title with heaps of different plays to experiment with.

So if you're like Homer Simpson and you've always dreamed of owning the Dallas Cowboys then this is the game for you. As a matter of fact, I would urge anyone that enjoys strategy games to give Madden 99 a go because that's the type of skill that is needed to get the full enjoyment out of the game and once you do get the hang of the rules, you can say goodbye to your weekends as this is one engrossing game. Madden 99 is probably the best NFL simulation money could buy.

MATT ADAMSONS

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	79	90	85

MPU CLAN WARS

DRACONIC GUILD: FRACAS, FIREFLY, DAE BREAKER, AND SOCCEROO

MPU CLAN WARS, GOIN' OFF!

MALEVOLENCE: LORDC-FOOD, ASTRAM, ARMAND, AND AJAX

In conjunction with the Wireplay Invades Brisbane final, MPU (Multi Players United) held a special Clan Wars event, with 20 Quake 2 clans entering the event in a double elimination competition. The first matches started at 11am, and the final finished not long after midnight... and what a final it was. Draconic Guild (DG) met Malevolence (MAL) in what can only be described as the most intense and evenly matched team deathmatch game this country has seen. DG scored a kill in the last second of the match to tie the scores, and then went on to win in overtime.

Tekken it Further

We now have a national champion for Tekken 3 who will be heading to the UK in January, in an effort to prove that Australian Tekken 3 players are the best in the world! Major congratulations to Carl Maxwell of Bentley, Victoria, who took on all comers from the other states around Australia, and won. Typically, the star gamer evaded the cameras, but we doubt he'll be able to do so once he's playing at the International level over in the UK, so expect mug shots of the best Tekken 3 players in the world in a couple of issues time.

Australian Starcraft Nutters Unite!

We want to see the Australian strategy enthusiasts out there get competitive, and there are some people who have already taken a step in the right direction by setting up the Kali Starcraft League. According to the site, they're not just restricted to Kali, so it seems that Battle.net play is fine, meaning anyone in Australia who wishes to put their Starcraft skills to the test is welcome! Their URL is

(http://gameserver1.ogn.aust.com/leagues/sc/)

Alternatively, if you want to take this a step further and go International (good luck getting a smooth game), you can try (Case's Ladder:
http://www.igl.net/kstarcraft/)

Australia vs New Zealand!

Watch this space! Next month we'll have the full report on the long awaited Quake match between Australia's best, versus a crack squad of team players from NZ.

AUSTRALIAN COMPUTER GAMER

Calender

ACGP have set up a calender on our site that will list every LAN based event happening across the country. Also any Gamer related events as well, like launches, when magazines go on sale, when new games are due for release or on sale. So if you have a LAN event that we do not know about or do you have a gamer related event or info that you feel is relevant to the wider community. If you do and you would like it to be added to our calender of events around australia the please email calender acgp.com.au with all the relevant details & contact numbers.

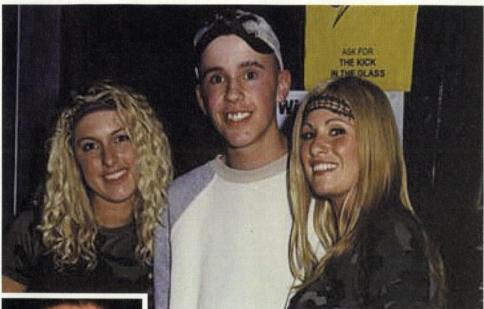### Training for newbie gamers & strategy training

ACGP is committed to helping the newbie gamers establish themselves and learn the basics from the top players. Also to hone the talents & strategies of existing gamers. So are you a newbie gamer, not sure how to control a rocket jump, or you want the finer points on game strategy for single player or team play. Well you should attend our Newbie training day or strategy day. ACGP will teach all the basics, what is the best configuration for you, check out the configuration of the top players, both hardware & keystrokes. Ever wondered what the top players are using in the way of hardware, how they train themselves to rail almost impossible shots, well we will tell you. If you are interested then email newbietraining@acgp.com.au or strategytraining@acgp.com.au with your details and we will let you know when the next day is on, places are limited so please get in early.

ACGP Summit

The ACGP National Summit was held on Wednesday 4th November. It was attended by the organisers of the

WIREPLAY INVADES BRISBANE FINALS

LEFT: TIM QUAKE 1 WINNER. ABOVE QUAKE 2 WINNER PREDATOR

Many months ago, hundreds of enthusiastic Quake 1 and Quake 2 fanatics entered into the biggest online competition this country has seen... the Wireplay Invades Brisbane competition. Matches were played as deathmatch free for alls, with a double elimination format. After many rounds, there were 12 finalists for the Quake 1 comp, and 8 for the Quake 2 comp. Wireplay set up large video projector screens to give the audience something to look at, and finalists in each of the three states (NSW, QLD, and VIC) played their guts out for prizes, and the crowds present that cheered them on.

Besides the finals, there were games being thrown out and offered to the crowd, and some very healthy young women to "inspire those present". Here are the results:

Quake 1 Final Placings
1. Tim
2. Webby
3. JaC DeTH
4. Dethon
5. Thermal
6. Wargel

Quake 2 Final Placings
1. PredaTor
2. HeLlFiRe
3. Thermal
4. Hillary
5. DeX
6. Borg

Well done to Tim. Earlier this year he also won the free for all comp at Gibcon, and also our Hyper Botblast comp, making him an extremely consistent player! Congratulations also to PredaTor, who has been a consistent ace player on the Wireplay Quake 2 servers.

PROFESSIONALS NEWS UPDATE

major LAN's in each state, media representatives, service providers like Wireplay and Multiplay and of course representative gamers themselves. The purpose of the summit was to get everyone moving together with a single focus towards a First National Quake 2 Tournament. Other games will soon follow.

• A national tournament is to be run across the following four leagues QGL, SGL, VML and the South Australian contingent that will finish in March 1998.

• The tournament will start in December for QGL (Queensland), and January for SGL (NSW), VML (Victoria) and South Australia. All leagues will use a standard set of rules and regulations - yet to be finalised.

• The winners of each state league will proceed to the finals of the tournament, which will be an event held in one of the four participating cities.

• ACGP will collate, sort and present results of the four leagues during the period of the tournament.

What's happening in the future - Well all of the LANs involved are sitting down with us at Impulse98 to nut out the finer points of the setting & format etc, Also Simon Foxe & Andrew Robertson will be on hand at impulse to answer any questions about ACGP or the ranking system, so if you see them, please say g'day, as they're keen to finally put faces to all the people they've have been dealing online with, and to meet other interested gamers.

Remember the ACGP is not just looking to cover Quake 2, so if you're involved in a gaming league or ladder of some sorts, or even if you're not, but you're passionate about a certain multiplayer game, enough to want to be involved in organising a national league or comp for it, contact ACGP and let them know!

THE MULTIPLAYER DIRECTORY

As more leagues and ladders appear, this list will continue to grow. If you run, or compete in a ladder or league not listed here, please let us know and we'll add it.

National Gaming Services

ACGP - http://www.acgp.com.au/
Australian Computer Gamer Professionals

Wireplay - http://www.wireplay.com.au/
An online gaming service currently catering to Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane

Multiplay - http://www.multiplay.com.au/
An online gaming service that is the official Australian licensee of the TEN (Total Entertainment Network) client

Major State LAN events

VML - http://www.newsninja.com/vml/
Victorian Multiplayer League. The major Victorian regular LAN event. Will be the Victorian part of the national league.

MPU - http://www.mpu.com.au/
Multiplayer United. A monthly LAN event, that will be hosting SGL (Sydney Gaming League) for the national leagues.

Regen - http://www.regen.powerup.com.au/lan/
The major Queensland LAN event, which is host to the QGL (Queensland Gaming League) for the national league.

Quake Scene

Challenge-AU - http://www.challenge-au.com/
Run by Hoony, this site is dedicated to International Quake challenges.

AusQuake - http://ausquake.newsninja.com/
The main Australian Quake 2 web page.

Quake.AU - http://www.quake-au.net/
A top Quake news site that covers a broad range of stuff, run by Malby.

OZTFL - http://oztfl.newsninja.com/
An Australian Team Fortress League.

OTFCR - http://otfcr.kanga.com.au/
The other major Australian Team Fortress League.

Q2 League - http://sas.ml.org/q2league/
A Quake 2 Capture the Flag league, based on the Power servers.

Starcraft

KSCL - http://gameserver1.ogn.aust.com/leagues/sc/
Kali Starcraft League. A dedicated Australian Starcraft ladder, separate from the Battle.Net ladder.

PANIC PARK

>TIM LEVY

When is the last time you played a physical contact video game? We're not talking chucking a temper tantrum and punching out the victor in a hectic game of Tetris or Street Fighter, but having to physically bump your opponent into burning lava or a high voltage fence. Fortunately the lava and high voltage fence are on a screen but the body bumping is a major component to this game.

Panic Park could be likened to a very comedic futuristic game of gladiators. Your aim is to guide a little man through a series of 2D/3D courses and having to dodge an onslaught of incoming objects or to collect a pre determined amount of coins or a combination of both. To add to this already deadly combination, you can go 'mono e mono' with a human opponent. So instead of just trying to survive the course, you are also attempting to 'detour' your opponent into say an incoming giant mechanical chicken or a UFO's tractor beam or into the path of a giant hammer, which of course makes for one hell of a funny competition.

The control interface is unique in that it is a joystick which moves on a horizontal plane. The joysticks have rubberized bases allowing you to bump your opponents joystick and therefore their character into the countless dangerous obstacles.

Each game comprises of 5 courses selected at random from a total of 25. The courses range from easy to difficult, with the most difficult needing a very high level of concentration to complete (very challenging)

Panic Park is a refreshingly funny game which seems to borrow a few leaves out of Point Blank's book in terms of humour and level design. The game is also challenging in one player mode though it is in two-player mode that it gets the most laughs.

9/10
Thanks to Galaxy World

CALIFORNIA SPEED ATARI

vehicle is ever travelling TOO fast for the situation.

All this aside, the major draw card to Speed is that there are 14 tracks to choose from. Track difficulty ranges from easy to expert and all take you to a variety of off beat situations. For example, Silicon Valley is a semi-psychedelic experience where you leave the road and continue the race inside a computer full of giant microchips and video screens with Chaos Theory graphics. Other tracks take you through an aircraft carrier, along a razorback ridge, onto the streets of L.A and over various circuit racetracks. On several of the tracks, there are pedestrians who have foolishly strayed a little too close to the roadway and have become bitumen bait for your bumper.

The computer droid cars are driven by law abiding lamos and stick to their lane markings. In San Francisco Rush, the droids were driven by careless lunatics who were all too willing to dent some panels to finish first.

Fortunately, it seems that Rush 2 is nearing completion and whilst California speed is a good racing sim with a few novel twists to the norm, it lacks the punch which the original San Francisco Rush has previously delivered.

When your company has recently released the racing sim that others are judged by, you are left with the situation where you have to out do yourself. San Francisco Rush had the right combination of arcade style fantasy (six story jumps) and race car driving realism to satisfy the Aryton Senna in everyone. So the question is - how does California compare to San Francisco?

Starting in the car department, there are only 4 cars to choose from. None of the cars are defined as easy or hard, so you'll have to read the fine print and test drive each car. Even though there are speakers located in the seat headrest (Very cool), the cars engine/exhaust note lacks the macho bass and grunt of San Fran. The car physics don't compare to San Fran's either. In Rush, the car seemed to have a greater tendency to float realistically into corners and land badly if a jump wasn't negotiated (in both speed and trajectory angle) properly. In Speed, even with the car at full acceleration, you don't get the feeling that the

6.5/10

SLAYERS: THE MOTION PICTURE

Fantasy. It's about elves, magic, demons, sword and sorcery. It's about beating up local bad guys whilst stumbling upon an horrific plot to eat the souls of the local human population. It's usually about a group of adventurers (with differing skills at butchering their enemies) gathering together to raid the local dragon hoard just outside of town. Elves dance like zippies in the depths of the forests, twisted dwarves mine for gold in demon infested mountains while monsters of every shape and size roam the plains for that fresh taste of human blood. Enter: Slayers. The next big thing being watched by anime freaks around the globe.

YOUR WET DREAM IS NOW A FANTASY

That's right! Plug into Slayers and watch big breasts bulging with every spell cast, courtesy of Nagha the serpent side kick partner to the so-called small breasted powerful runt grrl Lina Inverse. It's not hard to see the appeal of Slayers to the teenage male dominated anime market in the west (kinda reminded me of "Sexy Girls with Sexy Guns"). Lots of skin mixed in with the sprays of blood and jelly fish.

Slayers the motion picture is like a cross between Dragon Half and Dungeons and Dragons. It's an action-adventure set in a far away land where anything can happen, including degenerating into humiliation and total absurdity for the characters.

I HAVE SMALL BREASTS BUT I CAN KICK YOUR ARSE!

Slayers Lina and Nagha are two of the world's most powerful sorcerers drawn to the hot springs of a haunted island masked as a famous tourist attraction. Once there they stumble upon a dreamweavers's spell, who convinces Lina to embark on a quest to rid the island of the "big boss demon" who eats dried squid and laughs like a turkey. Lina and Nahga are promised untold riches in return for their services, as well as a promised boob job for the insecure Lina. Along the way they battle the strongest men on the island, as well as swarms of jelly fish, water dragons, zombie villagers as well as

a respectable gathering of lesser demons. It's a race against time to travel into the past to save the future!

Based on the hit animated series of the same name, Slayers the movie is a wild and wacky offering set in a fantasy backdrop. It's a buddy film where the two characters aren't exactly buddies; where demons dress themselves as frogs and people are hypnotized to see dancing people dressed as mushrooms. Slayers is a well executed animation filled will lots of comedy and action. It seems pretty obsessive about breast size, and the humour gets so lame that it becomes down-right weird. A strange slow moving plot filled with weird-arse interludes. Fantasy boffins everywhere will love this.

8/10

Rated PG . Available on Import through the Cartoon Gallery.

DM1 by Tim Willits

Build a Cube

Solid
Hollow
Height 256
Width   256
Breadth 256
Wall Thickness 16
Group Name Rect

Item Names are:
Floor,Ceiling,Wall,Outside

Build   Help   Close

>ELIOT FISH

LEVEL EDITING

Most games released these days either come with level editors or are hacked to pieces by ardent fans and supplemented with home-made level editors on the internet. Making your own levels can be tedious and frustrating, but it can also be one of the most satisfying things you can achieve with your PC. The Hyper team have wasted many an hour tweaking our custom-made Quake levels for our own after-hours deathmatches. There are many online resources you can use to help you create your own masterpieces, from tutorials to troubleshooting guides as well as funky tools to help you create what you see in your head. Here's a net trawl this month of a few game editing programs and their websites...

WORLDCRAFT

http://www.planetquake.com/worldcraft/

Worldcraft is probably the most widely-used level editing program available. Thanks to this awesome tool, you can create your own single-player and multi-player levels for Quake, Quake 2, Hexen 2 and Half-Life! At The Forge, the official Worldcraft Editing site, you can read tutorials on how to create everything from a simple room to complex stairways and funky lighting. There are a bunch of texure WADs to download too, if you want to get creative. Most of the mission packs for the aforementioned games are supported too, so just about everything you would ever need is at this one site.

JED

http://www.darkjedi.com/

JED is a unofficial freeware level editor for Jedi Knight. The website also provides you with editors for Outlaws (LawMaker) and the original Dark Forces (WDFuse). Unlike the comprehensive all-in-one package of Worldcraft, these editors require a bit more technical knowledge and the ability to use a variety of editing tools. However, for fans of these games, this is the best place to be for info, tools, levels and help in creating your dream levels. There is even a messageboard where you can trade problems and hopefully help someone else solve theirs.

UNREALED

http://www.unrealed.net/

Unreal was one of the first games to come packaged with a functioning level editor. Though the editor is well presented enough for gamers to figure out fairly easily, there is a semi-official website devoted to providing assistance. With comprehensive info on scripting as well as standard level editing, you can go about creating a whole Unreal Mod or TC using the wealth of information at Unrealed.Net. Yes, there is a tutorial available online too!

STARCRAFT

http://www.blizzard.com/star/editor.shtml

Though nowhere near as difficult as creating entire 3D levels from scratch, the Starcraft Scenario editor is still a tool for fans to extend the life of this brilliant strategy game. Again, this editor actually comes with the game, so it's not too difficult to figure out on it's own. However, the net is bursting with info on how to get the most out of the scenario builder, and the official Blizzard site is a starting point as good as any.

AAsbSuit1   Abelt1

AForce1   Ainv1

AkevSuit1   APower1

Starcraft Campaign Editor - [[4]Opposing City States '98.scm]

File   Edit   Layer   Player   Scenario   Window   Help

Unit Layer   Player 7 (White Terran)

Brush Palette
Ground Units

Jungle World Terrain
Neutral Units
Player 1 (Red User S
Player 2 (Blue User S
Player 3 (Teal User S
Player 4 (Purple User
Player 5 (Orange Zer
Player 6 (Brown Prot
Player 7 (White Terra
  Ground Units
    Terran Ma
    Terran Gh
    Terran Vu
    Terran Go
    Terran Sie
    Terran SC
    Terran Sie
    Terran Fir
  Air Units

Map Pos (79, 34)   Player 7 (White Terran)   Human   Unit   Units: 0/100   Terran Siege Tank (Tank Mode)

GAUNTLET II

DAN TOOSE

FORMAT: ARCADE/AMIGA/C64
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: ATARI

If you want to talk about the history of multiplayer action games, then a good place to start is with Gauntlet. Atari stumbled across a formula for success... multiplayer gaming.

We had seen 2 player games before, but to take it a step further and offer a game that allowed four people to play at once was a major leap forward in terms of thinking for arcade games.

The basic concept behind the Gauntlet games was very simple. Simply navigate your way through the maze, and find the exit. Along the way you'd be attacked by endless hordes of monsters, and foul traps. Of course there were powerups and health to keep you going. Players could choose to be either a warrior, wizard, valkyrie, or elf. Each character had varying levels of shot damage, melee damage, armour strength, speed, and magic ability.

Gauntlet I allowed four players, but had a specific joystick for each specific character in the game, so it was a bit limited in that if you wanted to play as a warrior, and somebody was already using the warrior... Too bad. Gauntlet II in my mind was the true classic, as it allowed you to pick whichever character you wanted to be, and your joystick simply related to which colour you were.

Something that many an old arcade goer will remember the Gauntlet games for is the evil system Atari set up to allow you to get extra health. During the game, you constantly lost health, at a slow, yet steady rate. Unless you were moving quickly between health powerups, and not getting caught up in big battles, you would basically be dying most of the time. To avert death, you could slip in twenty cents (that was a bigger ask in those days), and you'd receive 750 health points.

The only way for players to really get on top of things was to play as a tightly knit team, although this is where the next twist came into play. It was possible to hurt your team mates on some levels, and on others it was even possible to stun them, making them helpless to fight against the monsters that were killing them.

Gauntlet II went on to inspire games such as Demon Stalkers for the Commodore 64 (The best Gauntlet style game ever in my opinion), Hexplore by Infogrames, and Get Medievil by Monolith. Whilst they have all improved on the surface, nothing that any of these games has offered has caused the same sort of intense excitement as the old Gauntlet II arcade machines... And no other clone in the future probably never will recreate that super cool multiplayer buzz that hit our arcades in 1986.

UNREAL PC

In an attempt to counter the legitimacy of our comments (okay, call us paranoid!), Epic Megagames released a patch for Unreal around about the time our last issue hit the streets. This patch included totally new network code, which has basically turned the game from being an online barker, to a smooth 1st person shooter like Quake 2. Of course, you still need a very grunty PC to get a good frame rate out of the game, but there have been some minor improvements for those with Voodoo 2 cards.
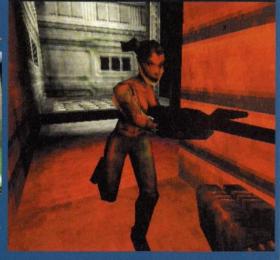
The main issue here is not so much for Unreal, but for those other companies out there that have developed new games using the Unreal engine. We can now rest assured that games like Wheel of Time and Duke Nukem Forever won't suffer the same fate that Unreal did when it comes to Internet play.

If you want to go get the patch, a good place to look for all things Unreal is at **http://www.plane-tunreal.com/**

Medievil

Sure, Medievil is the coolest looking game to have hit the PlayStation in a long time, but don't let the pretty graphics and Elfman-esque soundtrack fool you: the game does have quite a few devious little puzzles. What this playguide offers is a simple walk through the game, highlighting the main important parts within the game (ie don't expect every last secret).

DAN'S CRYPT [Level 1]

Nothing really special here. Just make sure you pick up the Small Sword, Throwing Daggers, Life Bottle, and Copper Shield. The red patch on the wall can be later bashed down with the club or hammer to reveal coins and a life bottle.

THE GRAVEYARD [Level 2]

Run through the path and pick up the Earth Rune on the right hand side. Keep on running till you reach the green fountain. Open the Earth Rune Gate to the left behind you and grab the Chaos Rune. Run up the stairs through the Chaos Rune Door, and then hit the Angel so that it rotates and opens the door to the chalice. When you've killed enough zombies to collect the chalice, get the chalice and then hit the Angel again twice to open the door on the opposite end. Go through those gates, pick up the life bottle and then the copper shield. Go over the bridge, avoid the deep water, and exit the stage. If you qualified for the Hall of Heroes, go to the first statue on the left to pick up the crossbow.

CEMETERY HILL [Level 3]

Stick to the left, use the skull chest as a super bomb, grab the energy vial, and use the Gargoyle in the stable to get some supplies. Then run over to where the boulders are coming at you. Dodge them, run up the first flight of step, then run to the left. Take the copper shield from the chest, and then jump down into the little enclosure. Get the club from the chest. You have to use the club sparingly since its power can run out. Smash through one of the three boulders, then go through the gates directly opposite to the other little enclosure. Use the Club to smash through the boulder, then go inside the Witches' Den. Use the sword to kill off all of the zombies, then go back outside. Set your club on fire by smashing it down on the fire, then go back inside the Witches' Den. When you get to the circular room, smash your flaming club down on the stone in the centre of the room. Kill off all of the baddies, then make off with the Energy Vial, Witch

Talisman, Copper Shield, Chalice, and coins.

Go back to the path with the boulders. Make your way up the hill, using the steps where necessary and ignoring the chests full of goodies for now. When you get to the top, the boulder problem should stop, so you can go back down and pick up the goodies you saw on the way up. Heal yourself at the fountain, then go through the door. At the Hall of Heroes, go to the statue immediately on the left and get the life bottle.

THE HILLTOP MAUSOLEUM [Level 4]

Run through the room killing all the baddies, then grab the club in the chest at the end of the room. Use the club to smash all the coffins and grab the money and energy vials. Smash the cof-

fin at the far right and jump down. Run along the tunnel, use the club to smash through the glass. Kill the baddies, smash through the glass wall on the left, and head down the path. Destroy the glass shards on the floor, kill the baddies, pick up the energy vial, and then get the Earth Rune. As the floor starts falling from beneath you, run back the way you came and then smash through the purple glass in the middle. Smash the shards, go through the Earth Rune Gate, and then make your way up the stairs. Go right, pick up the Moon Rune, then go right again to the skeleton organist and find the Chaos Rune. The gargoyle head should also be there if you're looking for supplies. Leave the Organ Room from where you came, go down to the coffins, then jump back into the hole under the coffin. When you get to

the junction again, smash through the glass on the right. Go down the path, smash the glass shards, and then go through the Moon Rune gate. Make off with the Energy Vial and Sheet Music. The ground will fall from beneath you again, so run back to the junction, run back up the stairs, and then make your way back to the organ room. Select the Sheet Music, and the Organist will play a tune to unlock a secret door for you. Make off with the money, and if you've killed enough baddies, make off with the Chalice. Leave the Organ Room, go left, down the stairs, and then go through the Chaos Rune Gate. Push the flame down the path until it rests underneath the frozen heart, which should then begin to melt. Now run back up to the area with the stained glass window just before the Organ Room. There, you'll meet the Stain Glass Boss. To beat him, just keep your distance every time he attacks. The only time this boss is vulnerable to attack is when it goes to the middle of the screen and pulls out its heart. The best weapon to use is the crossbow. If you ever run out of arrows, use the throwing knives. When the Boss is dead, take the Skull Key and get ready to enter the Hall of Heroes. If you do make it to the Hall of Heroes, get the Hammer from the statue on the far right.

RETURN TO THE GRAVEYARD [Level 5]

Kill all the zombies and run over the collapsing bridge. Run along the dirt path, dispatching yet more zombies, and use the Skull Chest for a super bomb. Collect the Energy Vial on the far corner, and look around for the Silver Shield and the Gargoyle to buy more supplies.

Run up the stone steps, then make a u-turn to the left down the grass ledge. Kill the zombies,

grab some coins, and then use the Skull Key to open the gate. Kill the wolves with the Hammer, and follow the path to the Star Rune gate. Go around to the other side of the hill, then run to the top of it to find the Star Rune. Go back and enter the Star Rune gate, collecting the coins and Energy Vial before going into the tunnel. You should see the Chalice when you come to a fork in the road. Go down the left path first, killing the baddies, then jump up when you get to the end of the tunnel. On the top ledge, push the stone till it falls off the end, then repeat the process for the stone on the lower ledge. Jump back down into the tunnel, run back to the fork, and this time take the right path. Jump up push the stone off the ledge, and you will have formed a makeshift bridge to get across the water. Pick up the Chalice if you've killed enough baddies, then come back out from the Star Rune gate. Jump across the stones you just pushed over, and then heal yourself at the fountain.

When you pass the next set of gates, you'll encounter the Graveyard Guardians - a pair of wolves that seem to disappear and attack at random. The only time you can attack these wolves is at the instant after they lunge at you. Your strategy should therefore be to wait in a position, and then run to the side at the last minute and attack. Alternatively, you could try using your shield, but it runs out pretty quickly.

THE ENCHANTED EARTH PART 1: ANT CAVES [Level 6]

At this stage in the game, you can only finish one section of this level. Use the crossbow to kill off the frogs and plants, make your way to the Witches' Cauldron, and use the Witch Talisman.

You'll then get miniaturised, and you'll enter the Ant Colony. Go down the little slope, and smash open the 'door' on the right to release the firefly. The firefly will then light the way down to the ant colony.

Your first task is to find 7 pieces of amber. These can be found by smashing the ant larvae found scattered across the colony. Your second task is to free all of the firefly's mates, who are trapped in the walls of the ant colony. When you're done collecting the amber and fireflies, you'll eventually find a big door next to the gar-

goyle's head (where you should stock up on more supplies). Smash the door open and go in to kill the queen ant.

When fighting the Queen, dispatch the drone ants with your Hammer. The only time the Queen is vulnerable is when she exposes her underbelly to you, which you should shower with your crossbow. Once she's dead, go through the portal to get a prize from the witch. If you've saved all the fireflies, you'll be taken to the Hall of Heroes, where you can get the Broad Sword from the far left statue.

SCARECROW FIELDS [Level 7]

In spite of the book's advice, kill off everything, including the scarecrows: otherwise you'll never get the Chalice. Keep moving forward, and you'll come to a wagon sitting in the way. Hit the wagon on the right to move it out of the way. Follow the path down to the fire, picking up the coins on the left and the energy vial on the right. Go through the left gap towards the windmill, where you'll encounter a large robot. All you have to do is shoot your crossbow at the head of the robot. You can run underneath its legs, and once the head is gone, shoot the critter that's controlling the robot. When it dies, get the Moon Rune, go around to the Moon Rune gate, and enter it. Kill off the bats and grab the Earth Rune.

Go back up to the windmill and enter the Earth Rune gate. Avoid the windmill blades, avoid the scarecrow, and heal yourself when you get to the fountain. When you get to the next robot, kill it in exactly the same way as before and avoid its fireballs. When it dies, grab the Chaos Rune and open the gate. Go read the book by the barn, and then go left around the back of the building. Hit the skull chest to release a serpent spirit, who'll help you kill off the scarecrows. Navigate your way through the corn field, making sure you don't touch it, then make your way to the next windmill. Time the movement of the blades and dash past them. When you get to the rotating grinder, run through it clockwise. In the next room, run clockwise again and take it slowly

(forget the coins - you'll get them on the way back). Use the fountain, then go around the outside of the next section, avoiding the flames. Go clockwise around the next section, then anticlockwise around the next. Get the Harvester Part, then make your way back through all the machinery you just came through. Go back to the barn, push the cart out of the way and enter the door. Flick the switch to lower the corn-cutting machine, then use the Harvester Part. Follow the path it makes, and then cross the bridge for an Energy Vial, coins, and the Chalice. After you get the Chalice, go all the way back through the machinery again, and exit on the right of the spinning wheel. In the Hall of Heroes, all you can get are some coins from the statue on the far left.

PUMPKIN GORGE [Level 8]

Head down the right tunnel by the branches and follow the path. Slash the tentacles that attack you and find the Moon Rune. Kill off the pumpkins and get some ammo from the Gargoyle if needed. If you smash the wall to the right of the Gargoyle, a path will be revealed that leads to the Chalice. Follow the path, dispatching more pumpkins and tentacles, and smash through the rocks with the Hammer. Go through the Moon Rune door, and run clockwise around the wheel to get the Chaos Rune. Go back outside, then go up the narrow ramp where you can go through the Chaos Rune gates (ignore the exit for now). Run around till you get to the first door. Enter it, then jump across the mushrooms and ledges to reach the stony path on the right, which will lead to the Earth Rune. Smash through more baddies, exit through the door, then go left and go through the Earth Rune door. Go up the winding path and kill the Pumpkin Man to get the Star Rune. Smash the boulder to exit.

Go back up via the mushrooms (or stony path) and get to the dirt path, which should lead to the Star Rune gate. When you go through, the Time Rune will be whisked away by a bunch of tentacles and baddies, which you must continually hack and slash at until the Time Rune comes back

down. Grab it, and open the doors on either side. Go left first, smashing everything in sight, and then taking a right turn at the fork. You might want to go back and pick up the Chalice now. Come back, and this time turn left when you get to the fork. Ride the mushroom to the exit. At the Hall of Heroes, go up the left stairs and get the Spear from the first statue.

PUMPKIN SERPENT [Level 9]

Get past the left tentacles to the witches' cauldron. Use the Witch Talisman. To wake the Pumpkin Serpent, you have to mash all of his 9 pods. Hit the one by the tight house, then the one near the arch. Go through, then take the first path on the left and hack your way through to the next pod. Come back to the main path and hit the pod by the tentacles. Head right along the offshoot to find the next pod. Use the fountain and grab the silver shield. When you get back, slash the pods near the Pumpkin Serpent. Avoid the tentacles, and don't hit the skull chests just yet. Slash the last 2 pods to awaken the Serpent. When fighting the Serpent, hit the skull chests and throw your spears. Heal yourself at the fountain, and when you've killed enough pumpkins for the Chalice, go get the Dragon Gem from the Witch, then jump into the well by the arch. Grab the Energy Vials and buy supplies, and grab the Chalice on the way through the tunnel. When you get to the other side, go to the exit just past the Serpent. In the Hall

THE ASYLUM GROUNDS [Level 11]

Go right through the gates, then right when you come to the cross-roads. The answer to Jack's first riddle is Stars. Go back to the cross-roads and go left to hit the first star by the Chaos Rune gate, then return over the cross-roads to hit the next star. From the cross-road again, turn right and go into the maze. Head right to find the next star. Go past the maze entrance (stay inside the maze), then turn left for the next star. Head down the steps and hit the last star.

Go back to Jack for the next riddle. Go back to the maze, go left, then to the left path just before the last set of steps. Follow the path and flip all the sad masks around to reveal their funny side. Flip the masks quickly in the following order: top right, bottom left, top left, bottom right, top. You'll know it when you've got it.

Go back to Jack for the next riddle, then go back to the maze, head left, and go through the gap on the right just before the steps. Get the Chaos Rune, go to the hand lock (near the start), and use it. Get the mouse to follow you. Go to the cross-roads through the gates, follow the path until you reach the elephant. Go back to the hand to collect some coins. Avoid the cats and use the mouse to frighten the elephant.

Go back to Jack for the last riddle. Go back to the elephant and go through the smashed wall behind it. At the junction, you can turn left for a fountain. Otherwise, drop down a hole on the left and exit the room. Push the 3 fire blocks next to the stained glass windows, then go back inside the room and stand in the light to be taken out of the maze.

Go back to Jack, then go to the elephant for the Chalice. Enter the maze from behind the elephant, turn right at the junction, then hit the chess pieces to move them on to their coloured squares. If done correctly, the exit will appear in the middle. Just jump in. At the Hall of Heroes, get the Flaming Longbow from the Centaur.

INSIDE THE ASYLUM [Level 12]

Kill the zombies, then jump down the hatch. Kill the zombies again to get through the gold door. Kill more zombies again, and jump down the hatch. Kill the straight-jacketed people, collect the vials, and talk to the Gargoyle and get your sword enchanted. Go through the gold doors. In the lava room, exit through the gold door on the right to get the Chalice and Earth Rune. Free the Mayor and get the second Dragon Gem. At the Hall of Heroes, go up the right stairs and get the Axe from the second statue.

THE ENCHANTED EARTH PART 2: SHADOW DEMONS [Level 13]

Go past the cauldron and make your way to the tree lift. Use the fountain just beyond the lift before going up if necessary. Go up the lift, make your way up the winding ramp, and push all of the eggs off the nest to get the Earth Rune. Come back down the lift, go to the pool cross-roads and turn left, turn left again at the fork, then open the Earth Rune door. Use the stones to jump across the water, then use the Shadow Artefact to open the hatch. Jump in. Step on the floor switches in the following order: Fire, Earth, Water, Wind, and grab the Shadow Talisman. Teleport out of there, then go through the gates. Head left back to the start of the level and get more ammo

of Heroes, go up either the left or right stairs and get the Longbow from the Centaur statue.

THE SLEEPING VILLAGE [Level 10]

Don't kill any of the villagers, as it will reduce your Chalice percentage. Find a Silver Shield in the iron smith, and a fountain in the church. Go all the way down the main road to the fountain (where the Chaos Rune is sitting on top). Go into the left house and grab the Moon Rune. Leave, then go into the next house to find the Moon Rune gate. Push a barrel on to the switch to open the hatch behind the fence.

Go through the gate and go down the hatch to get the Club. Exit right to the Earth Rune gate. Go upstairs and use the Hammer to get the Earth Rune, then come back down and go through the Earth Rune gate. Flick the switch and go back upstairs for the Landlord's Bust. Go back downstairs, go left, then upstairs, and then outside. Go kill the baddies when they start coming through.

Go down the stairs near the Moon Rune gate house and flick the switch to move the Chaos Rune off the fountain. Get it, then go open the door to the library. Read the books, then Hammer the middle bookcase for the Crucifix Cast.

Go back to the iron smith and put the Crucifix Cast in the hot forge, followed by the Landlord's Bust. Jump up and down on the bellows to heat it up, then go collect the Gold Crucifix when it pops out. Take the Gold Crucifix to the church and use it to open a secret panel at the back. Get the Safe Key, then go through the gate in the garden with the pool. Climb through the hole to get the Coins and Energy Vial. Get the Chalice if you've killed enough baddies. Climb back out, climb up the roof, and jump down the chimney of the main house. Open the blue safe with the Safe Key to get the Shadow Artefact. Flick the switch to open the fortress gates, then exit the garden and enter the fortress. In the Hall of Heroes, get the Gold Shield from the second left statue upstairs.

from the Gargoyle. Go to the pool and place the Shadow Talisman in the socket. Go up the stairs to get the Star Rune. The two demons here are best killed with the Spear and Longbow. When they're dead, heal yourself at the fountain near the top, then go across the bridge to get the Energy Vials. Drop down the hole, kill more demons, and when you've landed enough kills to get the Chalice, jump back over the water to the prison to pick up the Chalice. Teleport out of there, open the Star Rune Gate, and exit. At the Hall of Heroes, go up the right stairs and get the coins from the second statue.

POOLS OF THE ANCIENT DEAD [Level 14]

Cross the bridge and get the Energy Vial from the back of the tower. Turn left at the junction and talk to the boatman. Return to the junction and go around the path. Don't bother trying to kill the fat guys – just knock them into the water. Refill on ammo at the gargoyle, jump right to the stone bridge, kill off the baddies, and heal yourself at the fountain. Jump left to get the Helmet, then jump back to the fountain and go around to the left. Hit the Skull Chest for the Serpent Spirit, who'll lend you a hand in killing the knights.

Go over the first small bridge, pick up the Helmet, get the Chaos Rune, and get an Energy Vial and another Helmet from the tree. Jump over the small gap (pick up the Chalice from here when you've got 100%) and get another Helmet from the orange flag. Jump to the left area of land and come back past the stone bridge. Turn right at the junction to get the Energy Vial if needed. Otherwise, go straight, get the shield

and Helmet, then use the small rock near the helmet to jump to the next piece of land. Ignore the skull chests, grab the Helmet, and go through the Chaos Rune gate.

Get the Helmet on the right, kill off the skeletons, then run down the hill and jump to the other side to avoid the chariots. Go up the ramp for the final helmet, then kill as many skeletons and nasties as is needed till you can get the Chalice. Take all the helmets back to the boatman and onward to the next stage. At the Hall of

Heroes, go up the right stairs and get the Magic Sword from the first statue.

THE LAKE [Level 15]

When the Ferryman drops you off, head up the stairs and go along the walkway. Go left at the junction. Kill the green frogmen as you go. Go over the right path to get the Earth Rune, then go into either one of the doors opposite. Get the Energy Vial at the back of the water room, go

through the next door, then run between the eye and the water spout to get the Chaos Rune on the left. Wait around for some frogmen (the Star Rune will have to wait till later) and kill them, then go all the way back past the rotating junction and go down the pathway. When you get to the whirlpool, go around and take the second left path, activate the Earth Rune device, go back to the whirlpool area, and go left to collect the Time Rune. You can jump into the frozen whirlpool. Follow the tunnel - note the location of the Chalice here - and after the doorway go right to collect coins. Cross the bridge, get supplies from the Gargoyle, and then enter the door into the building. Go left, through the arch, and pick up the Star Rune.

Go back outside and go to the left of the fence. Turn right, go through a door, and hit the switch to

raise the gate back to the cross-roads. Go back to the cross-roads, turn right, and go through the water room to get to the Star Rune exit. Get the Longbow from the Centaur statue in the Hall of Heroes.

THE CRYSTAL CAVES [Level 16]

Cross the bridge and turn right at the junction (Chalice on the left). Talk to the Gargoyle, then go release the imp. Kill the imp, then turn right, then release and kill the next imp. Go left into the room with rotating beams to get the Earth Rune, then come back to the cross-roads and go to the area on the right. Kill the imp, then hit the skull chest to kill a few more. The rhinotaurs are best killed with the sword before they can get too close. Go down the next passage, kill more imps and rhinotaurs, get supplies from the gargoyle,

and then go through the Earth Rune gate. Go through the waterfall, jump the gap to collect the Star Rune, then awaken the Dragon by inserting the two Dragon Gems. To defeat the dragon, you have to use the Hammer on the ground and cause rocks to fall on the Dragon's head. You can't inflict any damage on it directly. The Dragon, once defeated, should yield the Dragon Armour.

From the waterfall, go through the large cavern, killing more imps, and then go through the door to kill more imps before jumping down the tunnel, where you'll end up at an earlier junction. Turn left to get to the Star Rune lock, and get the Chalice before leaving. In the Hall of Heroes, go through the opened doors to get the Lightning.

THE GALLOWS GAUNTLET [Level 17]

Read the book, then walk down the passage killing all the baddies. Forget the slime exit at this point: use your Dragon Armour to get through the fiery portal, and step on all the floor switches while avoiding the serpent spirit (you can't kill it). Go through the fiery portal and keep running till the serpent disappears. Go through all the gates you've opened, get the goodies - the floor switch opposite the dead dragon reveals the Chalice - and kill more baddies on the other side of the Star Rune gate. Get the Chalice and get out of there. In the Hall of Heroes, get the Life Bottle from the Centaur.

THE HAUNTED RUINS [Level 18]

Get the chickens to start eating from the grain pile on the floor to reveal a floor switch, which should lower the drawbridge. Go up the stairs to the left and get the Chaos Rune. Return right, kill the flying demon, then jump to the right to get to the courtyard. Equip your Magic Longbow and run left, killing all of the shadow demons before they start barbecuing the prisoners. Use the Hammer to put out the 3 fires, then step on the floor switch to release the prisoners.

Return right to go through the opened gate, run past the cannons, buy supplies from the Gargoyle, go up the stairs, and go around the walkway to the left. Go down the stairs, then go through the Chaos Rune Gate at the other side of the courtyard after picking up the goodies.

Use the Dragon Armour to get through the flames and go to the throne room. Go towards the throne, fall through the trapdoor, and then go through the left doorway to get the Crown. Leave the room, then go through the right door, heal yourself, then exit left and get back to the throne room. Go to the throne and use the Crown, which will summon the King, who'll teleport you to the floodgate lever. Get the Earth Rune at the bottom and hit the switch, which will then start a countdown.

Whip on your Dragon Armour and use your fire breath to push the stone golems over the ledge. Run through the gates, past the cannons, through the courtyard, through the doorway, and then to the Earth Rune Lock. Activate it, exit, go left, and go up the zigzag path to get the Chalice. Go back to the bottom, go past the books, and hit the switch to drop a boulder into the catapult. Get on the catapult and get thrown to the next stage. In the Hall of Heroes, get the Energy Vials from the first statue up the left flight of stairs.

THE GHOST SHIP [Level 19]

Go right, fight the skeletons, then go up the ramp to the mast to get the Moon Rune. Go back to the start, open the Moon Rune door, then buy supplies from the Gargoyle and get the Star Rune. Go to the right of the deck, jump up to the left, and go through the Star Rune door. Drop down to kill the skeletons, run down the right ramp, and get the Chaos Rune. Come back and open the Chaos Rune door on the right of the deck. Bounce across to the other side, then jump over the hinged platforms, then heal yourself at the fountain. Jump on a long blade on the rotating wheel and go up the right stairs to kill a few baddies. Come back down and jump in the cage for a ride. Jump out to get the items when necessary, and if the cage drops, just jump straight up so that it comes back up a bit. Be sure to get the Chalice. At the rotating blades, go up the stairs on the right, go through the right door and face off with the Captain. Get the club, light it in the fire, and use it to fire the cannons at the Captain. Just don't use the club to kill off the other skeletons. When the Captain falls arse over, go through the slime exit. Go up the left stairs in the Hall of Heroes to get some coins from the second statue.

THE ENTRANCE HALL [Level 20]

Kill the Imps with the Magic Sword. Go left at the junction, and go down both flights of stairs killing everything in sight. Go all the way back up the stairs, then go down the other side, killing the all of the imps there as well. Use the Flaming Longbow and try not to get your weapons stolen. Once all the imps are dead, you're free to get the Chalice, and you can go all the way to the exit at the Dragons Hall. Collect a Life Bottle from the first statue up the right stairs in the Hall of Heroes.

THE TIME DEVICE [Level 21]

Hit the switch, kill the guard, and run to the left. Ignore the flying clocks. Jump past the wrench and go left down the narrow ramp. Jump to the clock face, avoid the hands, get to the next platform, then go over the bridge. Go past the pendulum to another clock, and then head over to the next one. Go over the bridge, get the Time Rune, flick the switch, and go through the gate.

Return to the entrance and kill the baddies on the other side. Note the time on the descending clock as you near the butterfly gates: you have to make the large clock face display the same time. Bounce on to it with the spring pads and set the time with the silver and gold buttons. Drop off, go through the gate, and heal yourself.

Spring back to the clock face, go over the bridge and go through the Time Rune gate. Note the time as you come near the butterfly gates, then run clockwise to the back to ride up the platform. Go right and up the circular platform, get past the pendulums and grab the Chaos Rune. Get back to the circular walkway, go over the rising platform, and jump into the pipe. Hit the switch to start the countdown. Hit one of the electric field junctions to disable the field, then go down the stairs to collect the Earth Rune.

Go left from the rising platform to go to the Chaos Rune gate. Go through it, and then through the Earth Rune gate. Push the arrow to rotate the train towards it. Jump into the wagon behind the train and go for a ride. When the train stops, shoot the guards, and bounce over to get the Moon Rune. Jump back in the train, open the Moon Rune gate, rotate the train towards it, jump in again for another ride. Go along either side of the track, hit both switches, and leave through the slime exit.

ZAROK'S LAIR [Level 22]

Spend all your money at the Gargoyle's, get the Silver Shield and Good Lightning, and go to the grey circle in the middle to place the Chalice. When your soldiers face off with Zarok, just spend your time topping up your soldiers' energy with good lightning. The more who survive, the more Energy Vials you get later. To beat the mounted champion, it's preferable to use the Longbow. Otherwise, just side-step the attacks and keep your distance from the force field. When Zarok turns into a lizard, run to the fountain and heal yourself. Basically keep your distance from him, avoiding the death breath and charges by running in circles. Zarok is only vulnerable when he rears up, and you have to slash him with the magic sword from behind. Be careful to avoid his force fields and lightning attacks. When Zarok is dead, sit back, relax, and watching the ending sequence.

Colin McRae Rally
PC

Add these cheats in the Name-Edit-Screen:
TROLLEY: Four-wheel steering
FORKLIFT: Back-wheel steering
HELIUMNICK: Copilot talks like Mickey Mouse
MOREOOMPH: Turbo mode
BLANCMANGE: Rubber car
BACKSEAT: Nicky Grist as copilot
PEASOUPER: All tracks in fog
OPENROADS: Choose all tracks
SHOEBOXES: Choose all cars

NHL 99
PC

When you're playing a game, press SPACE and enter these cheats:
Homegoal: Goal for the home team
Awaygoal: Goal for the guest team
Zambo: The ice machine comes on the field
Injury: A player of the team you're playing against becomes an injury
Check: Every player checks another player
Grab: Every player checks another player with his hockey stick
Spots: Turn off the lights in the hall

Flash: All spectactors use their cameras
Victory: Fireworks
NB: You must use Y for Z and Z for Y (American keyboard layout)

Get Medieval
PC

Within the game, type:
mpkfa: God Mode
protectme: gives lots of armor
diediedie: full weapon upgrade
thereisnotry: completes the whole dungeon 1 and 2
mppos: Global Position
mpfps: Frames per second

Lego Island
PC

Inside the Info Centre, keep clicking on the arrows until an elevator appears. Enter the elevator and click on the 3rd floor. Two arrows will materialize. If you click on the right one, a desk appears. Now, click on the middle drawer of the desk and you will be given clues about a cave code. Now, while playing the game, press T and Z simultaneously to make the flowers and trees dance.

Caesar III
PC

Money cheat:
Use this cheat when you get the option of going into the Senate. Click the Emperor icon in the Senate.
Give yourself a wage of 500 denarii (Caesar's wage). After a few months, when you accumulate around 3000 denarii, go to the same screen and press the "Give to city" button. Click the "all" button in the dialog. Then press the "give" button. Notice that you have no savings at all. Press the "Give to city" button again. (do not press the "all button again"). Just press the "give" button again, and your savings go into negative digits. Keep repeating this and you'll have a fortune.
Game file cheat:
There is a file named c3_models.txt in your Caesar 3 directory. This file will let you change just about everything in the game. Just read the simple instructions, then find out what all the numbers mean, and you're all set.
Another money cheat:
In the Caesar 3 directory, there is a file called c3_model.txt. Open that file and look for the word

dig. On the first line, change the number to a negative number, eg. -1000. Now, whenever you destroy some terrain or a building, 1000 denarii will be added to your funds.

The Fifth Element
PSX

Cheat menu:
From the main menu (new game, load game, options, etc.), press L1, L2, R2, R1, Select.
This will give you access to infinite lives, weapons, items, cut scenes, and all the levels.

Spyro the Dragon
PSX

In order to get a sneak preview of Crash Bandicoot Warped, simply pop the Spyro disc into your PlayStation, boot it up, and when you see the screen that says "Press Start," press the L1 and Triangle buttons simultaneously.

Run Faster:
To run faster, hold the RUN and JUMP buttons simultaneously.

Nascar 99
PSX

Waving Driver:
Select cockpit view, then hold Select until the driver waves.

Jersey Devil
PSX

Extra Life:
In the park level, follow the road from the start. Walk up to the second fountain you come to. Go left and follow the road come to until you see a statue on the right that looks like a woman holding a long piece of paper. Tail whip it 3 times. Each time you hit it the statue should wobble off balance. After 3 hits it should fall over and a life will pop out.

Unlimited Extra Lives:
In the beginning of the game, get the extra life on top of the fountain. Then, pause the game and check your status. Unpause the game and there will be another extra life on top of the fountain. Keep on doing this for as long as your cheating heart desires for unlimited extra lives!

Future Cop: LAPD
PSX

Passwords
Level 1: TAFRGYBLRR
Level 2: CRGRGYBLRY
Level 3: FUMRGYBLRL
Level 4: SICUGYBLLI
Level 5: TAFUGYBLLR
Level 6: CRGUGYBLLY
Level 7: FUMUGYBLLR
Level 8: SIFYGYBISR

NHL '99
PSX

Change Crowd Sounds:
After scoring a goal press and/or hold the triangle button and you will hear one of four sounds. They are: Crazed Fan, Bullhorn, another type of horn, and Fireworks.

Cheat Codes:
Enter these codes at the password screen.
STANLEY: View winning movie
GIPTEA: Easy win vs. team England
NHLKIDS: Players and goalies are tiny
PLAYTIME: Tiny players and large goalies
BIGBIG: All the players are huge
BRAINY: Players have big heads
EAEAO: Activates the EA Blades team
3RD: Selects team's third jersey if they have one
FREEEA: Adds game developers to the free agent list

MediEvil
PSX

Cheat Menu:
While playing, pause the game. Hold down the L2 button while you press Down, Up, Square, Triangle, Triangle, Circle, Down, Up, Square, Triangle.

Super Cheat Menu:
While playing, pause the game. Hold down L2 while you press Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Left, Circle, Up, Down, Right, Circle, Left, Left, Triangle, Right, Circle, Left, Left, Triangle, Circle, Down, Circle, Circle, Right.

NHL 99
N64

Enter these codes on the password screen.
3RD: Away team wears third jersey
BIGBIG: Big players
BRAINY: Big heads
FREEEA: EA Blades and EA Storm teams
SPEEDY: Faster game play
VICTORY: View ending sequence
Goal Sounds
After scoring a goal you can make some various sounds that are heard after goals. When the instant replay starts, hit Z to hear different sounds. Keep hitting it until you hear the sound you like and hold the button. This causes your opponents rumble pak to rumble continuously.

NASCAR 99
N64

Aerial Tricks:
Turn off damage in the options screen. While racing, turn around and slam into an oncoming car. You'll do aerial stuff like front flips and barrel rolls. It won't help you win the race, but it's fun.

Duke Nukem: Time To Kill
PSX

Pause the game and enter these codes. Be careful - if you put them in too quickly, they may not work. If they have been done correctly, it will write on the screen the name of the cheat that was entered.
INFINITE AMMO: L, R, L, R, Select, L, R, L, R, Select
ALL WEAPONS: L1, L2, U, L1, L2, D, R1, R, R2, L
ALL INVENTORY: R1 * 5, L2 * 5
ALL KEYS - U, R, U, L, D, U, R, L, R, D
INVISIBLE: L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1
DOUBLE DAMAGE: L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2
INVINCIBILITY: L2, R1, L1, R2, U, D, U, D, Select, Select
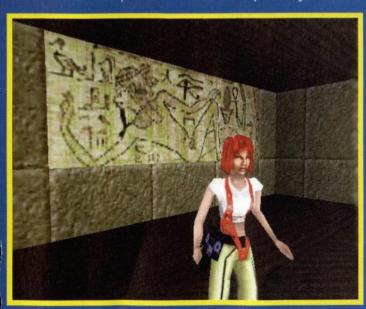BIG HEAD DUKE: R1 x 9, U
TINY HEAD DUKE: R1 x 9, D
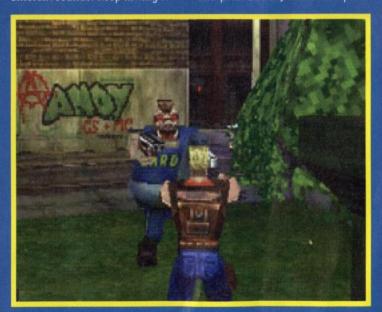BIG HEAD ENEMIES: R1 x 9, L
TINY HEAD ENEMIES: R1 x 9, R

Beat The Game:
Whilst playing hold L2 + R2 the press Square, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Start.

Level Select:
Whilst playing, pause the game and press Down 9 times then press

Up and it should say "Level Select". Now you must quit the game, and you will find an extra option on the Main Menu called "Time To Kill". Select it and press Right or Left to choose the level you want. Press X to play.

THE UNHOLY WAR
PSX
Secret Warriors and Mayhem Backgrounds:
To release two secret fighting backgrounds, beat Strategy Mode on Normal level with each side. The Arcane victory will release the Menhir Circle; the Teknos, the Dark Maze.
To gain control of two secret super-warriors, beat Strategy Mode on Hard level. The Arcanes earn the nasty MegaPrana, while the Teknos recieve the Beta-Razorfane, their first truly effective flying character.
NB: These caodes are usable in Mayhem Mode only.

ABES ODDYSEE
PSX
Try either of these on the main menu holding the R1 button:
Level Select
Down, Right, Left, Right, Square, Circle, Square, Triangle, Circle, Square, Right, Left
FMV
Up, Left, Right, Square, Circle, Triangle, Square, Right, Left, Up, Right

ABES ODDYSEE
PC
Try these on the main menu holding the Shift button:
Level Select
Down, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Up
FMV
Up, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Down

Parasite Eve
PSX
Get 60 rounds of bullets
On the first level, after you beat Eve on the Opera Stage, go backstage and you will see the hole. If you listen carefully at the hole you will hear sirens. Go back outside the Operahouse and ask the cop on the far right for bullets. He will give you 60 rounds.
Infinite Bullets
In the NYPD go downstairs and enter the left door. You can find the bullets in the box near the counter get it and go out to the New York map. Now return to that room for more bullets. Repeat as needed.
Infinite Medicine
This trick is similar to the code for infinite bullets. In Day 3:Selection, after the battle in the NYPD #17th District where Torres will die and Wayne will take over for him, whenever you leave the precinct and come back, visit the weapons room and check the chest to the right. There will always be a Medicine 2 or 3 waiting for you everytime.
Lots of Trading Cards
When you're at the hospital, just before you go to the 13TH floor, find the room that has the nurse who is looking for more hurt people. Now go to the top of the room to the fallen cabinet, look behind it to find lots of tradng cards. Make sure you have room for them in your inventory.
Weapons from Junk
Have you ever wondered why you got so much junk in Parasite Eve Have you also wondered why Wayne always asked you to get rid of junk Well, if you give Wayne more than 300 pieces of junk, he can make AWESOME weapons from them. Just make sure that you TELL him what to make, instead of letting him decide because he screws up sometimes.

NHL 99
PSX
Change Crowd Sounds
After scoring a goal press and/or hold the triangle button and you will hear one of four sounds. They are: Crazed Fan, Bullhorn, another type of horn, and Fireworks.
Cheat Codes
Enter these codes at the password screen.
STANLEY: View winning movie
GIPTEA: Easy win vs. team England
NHLKIDS: Players and goalies are tiny
PLAYTIME: Tiny players and large goalies
BIGBIG: All the players are huge
BRAINY: Players have big heads
EAEAO: Activates the EA Blades team
3RD: Selects team's third jersey if they have one
FREEEA: Adds game developers to the free agent list
Easter Eggs
Go get all of the easter eggs, win the tournament on pro level.

TRASH IT
PSX
Passwords
On Quest go to passwords and enter these codes:
Tank: Castle
Boggin: Chemical plant
pleb: Toy world
bostin: Launchpad
Minging: Planet core
Shatner: City
Glitter: Timmy temple
Smudge: Moonbeams lab

NEED FOR SPEED 2 SPECIAL EDITION
PC
Auto Pilot
At the main menu screen type SLOT to drive a car that will steer for you.
Bad Weather on Mystic Peaks
Type "rain" at the main menu to race with rain conditions in the Proving Grounds or Mystic Peaks tracks. (THIS CHEAT DOES NOT WORK WITH 3D FX CARDS.)
Bonus Cars
To access these vehicles, type one of these words at the Car Select screen.
vip: limo
go18: school bus
go19: commanche pick-up
go20: school bus
go21: semi
go22: school bus
go23: red car
go24: school bus
go25: shool bus
go26: red car-black
go27: vw fastback
go28: red car-blacktop
go29: school bus
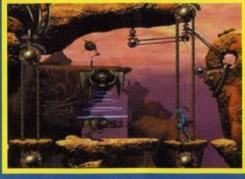go30: school bus
go31: army truck
go32: school bus
go33: snow truck
go34: monolithic studios tour bus

Aya『これが…
シーバ…!?』

go35: limo
go36: red car
go37: school bus
go38: fast school bus
go39: fast school bus
go40: airplane crate
go41: wheelbarrel
go42: Outhouse
go43: T-rex
go44: Western wagon
go45: Green souvenier box
go46: Blue souvenier box
go47: Red souvenier box
go48: Log
go49: Crate
go50: Box of Beer
go51: Stone cube
bomber: Bomber BFS
tombstone: Daytona Tombstone
fzr2000: Super car

Bonus Track
To race through Hollywood studios, type "HOLLYWOOD" at the track selection screen.

Chase Mode
When you are at the main menu screen type in the word CHASE. During the race, if u go close to a car and then continue driving the car will follow you. EX. If u crash he will crash too. This works on NFS 2 SE cars not the civilians.

Faster Engine
To upgrade all vehicles to the Pioneer engine, enter the password "PIONEER".

Ford Indigo
To drive the Ford Indigo, win the game in tournament mode or type "RED RACER" at the main menu.

Mad Cow Disease
Type "mad" at the main menu to have cows fly behind your car instead of dust. (THIS CHEAT WORKS ONLY WITH 3D FX CARDS.)

No "Walls"
Start the race on either the Mediteraneo or the Mistic Peaks track with the McLaren F1 in Simulation mode. At any time during the race drive in reverse, keep your horn blaring and hit any at moveable object (NOT A SIGN) at about 60mph now the cheat is enabled. To use the cheat you must drive over 80mph and hit any guard rail, bridge, etc. You will fly off track.

North Country Shortcuts
Prior to the 1st switchback right after the grey tunnel, slow down and go right down the hillside. You there is no fence to stop you in the middle. You will bypass the first switchback by doing this.
Offroad in Monolithic Studios
Race in Monolithic Studios until you reach the Jurassic Park segment. After you pass the first two huts on your right, drive about 20 feet and you will be able to turn right and enter the jungle.

Overhead Camera
While the game is loading, press and hold B and Right Shift 6 times. After the camera zooms to the car at the beginning of the race, press and hold these 6 times again. You will now be able to drive in the overhead camera view.

Pacific Spirit Shortcuts
1.At the part where you see the parking lot on the left, enter the parking lot. Now drive on the grass until you reach the road again.
2.Drive down a logging road. When you reach the long straightaway by the sea. Slow down veer right towards the trees. There is enough room to go in between them. Then you will have a straight stretch on a logging road that runs parallel to the road. Beware it ends where the black mountains start exit the same way, between the trees and to your left.

Play at Night
To play at night, hold 'N' while the race is loading.

Rainbow Car
Type "kcjones" at the main menu to drive a rainbow colored car. (This cheat works only with a 3d fx card.)

Roadrage
When you are in the main menu type in ROADRAGE. While racing, honk your horn to make the car in front of you crash.

Rush Hour
On the main menu, type 'rushhour'. While the playing, the cars around you will honk constantly.

Screenshots
To take a screenshot, press F10 while playing.

Slippery Tracks
Type 'slip' at the main menu to make the track really slippery!
Street Fighter Collection (PSX)
Original Ken and Ryu
In Street Fighter 2 Alpha Gold press start once and press any button to select them and they will have no power level bars on the bottom, meaning u can't use super moves.

Play as Akuma
Put the curser on Ryu then simultaneously press L1 and R1 to make Akuma appear.

Play as Cammy in Street Fighter Zero 2
Select Vega in arcade mode and complete the game in first place with a score greater than 50,000. Enter CAM as initials on the high score screen. Select versus mode, highlight M.Bison, and press START three times.

Play as Evil Ryu
Highlight Ryu on Street Fighter Alpha 2 Gold and press start TWICE. Then press any button to select him. He will be able to do Akuma's Teleport and 3 power bar special move "Raging Demon" aka "INSTANT HELL MURDER" by pressing Low punch, Low punch, Low kick, Forward, Hard punch FAST.
Play as Gouki in Super Street Fighter IIX
In the selection menu highlight Ryu, Hold L1 and press R1. Now you can play as Gouki

NEXT ISSUE . . .
HYPER »

ZELDA 64

Without a doubt the most long awaited Nintendo 64 game has to be The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time. The game should be out around the time this issue hits the streets, so we'll have the full review next issue. It could be a strong contender for the best game of the year...

L E T T E R S

HYPER LETTERS
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CHEAT HYPOCRISY
Hyper team
 my views on people using cheats is that they suck. If u need cheats to pass a game then u must have either a short attention span or u are totally crap at the game. What challenge is a game where u put cheats on so you dont die and there is no possibility of you losing. The creators of a game make the game to put a challenge to people and make something for people to enjoy. But once you use cheats on a game its never the same, you see how easy it is with the cheats on then when you try it without cheats on you see how hard it is then you put them back on and pass the whole game in like 5 min. Then the game becomes boring because its too easy to pass then the whole game is screwed and you just wasted $80 or whatever it costs to buy the game. Anyway off that subject and to say I really like the reviews in ur mag and maybe you should concentrate on reviews more than cheats. The company who makes the game cant be too happy with you publishing cheats. But anyway overall I think your mag is great maybe you could put a jokes section or something like that in it for something new.
 seeya
JAMES
James,
While we don't use cheats either ourselves, and basically agree with you, cheats are extremely popular with many gamers, and we're just providing our readers with what they want. As for the companies not being happy with us... they SEND the cheats out, so I don't know where you get that idea. We also get around to reviewing every game we get sent (and we request everything to be sent to us), so there's really no more to cover review wise than what we're doing. Lastly if using cheats is so wrong, why did this come just after an email from you asking when the link to the cheats section on Hyperactive would be up again?

WOT WE RECKON
 Hey Dan,
 I was just wondering what you thought about the Dreamcast. It looks pretty darn amazing doesn't it. But i am wondering what this means for the poor old PlayStation. Incidently, is the PlayStation the best console (other than the gameboy) on Earth in the history of videogames systems (in terms of sales), and in your opinion? Back to the real letter, i was just wondering how long you think it is gonna take before Sega catches up to Sony in all World Wide Videogame markets again? And what are your opinions of the dreamcast, and how do you expect it will perform?
 I would be very grateful if you could answer these questions for me,
 Thanks very much Dan,
 Yours sincerely,
DAVID PETRICEVIC
By the time you're reading this, I will be kicking Steve O'Leary's arse at Virtua Fighter 3... Heh. We're VERY excited about the Dreamcast. Every bit of video footage we've seen of the DC titles has looked stunning. All games will run in high res (so we're told), so 640 x 480 will be the minimum resoltion of any game you see on the machine. Apparently you can also plug them into a monitor with RGB connectors, so those of you out there with expensive monitors can get the absolute best image quality out of the machine. So I urge any PC purists to give the Dreamcast serious consideration, as you can use it with that horrendously expensive monitor you bought. As far as Sega taking over or catching up to Sony some time... I wouldn't count on it. Let's say for argument's sake that the Dreamcast is far superior not only to the PlayStation, but also the next console Sony release too... it really doesn't matter. The hard core gamers out there will care, and they'll put their money behind the better system, but when it comes to the real money, it's the mainstream, and they're more heavily influenced by good marketing than good hardware or gameplay. Sony have marketed the PlayStation far better than any other company has marketted any other console, and they've made a ton of money as a result. Sega's success depends on not only the machine and the

software, but also the marketing.

MARKET ANGST

Dear Hyper,

D'oh!, That was my reaction to the news that the wonderful Tobal No. 2 was not being released outside Japan. Oh well, I said, but then I discovered just how often this sort of crap happens. What about all the Jap RPG's that never see the light of day on PAL shores? The missing Evolution Disc that came with Rival Schools? Who were the smeg heads responsible for that? WAKE UP!! There is a BIG market for those kind of games, and it's growing all the time. All you have to do is read letter pages like these for proof of that fact. The worst thing is that most companies would rather release a crap western game than a cool Japanese one.

Could you now answer just one question? Will there be another Wipeout game on PSX? Cos we all know there's nothing quite like playing Wipeout at 4am with the music up full blast

Farewell

MR FLUFFY

Fluffo,
While we certainly share your sentiments about wanting an authentic translation of what the Japanese get with their games, there's some unfortunate truths to know. Firstly, there isn't a big market out here for those kinds of games. You, I and the rest of the serious gamers out there in Australia are actually a pretty small minority. The average person out there who buys a PlayStation or a Nintendo 64 doesn't actually look out for freaky Japanese stuff that all the hard core gamers will be hanging for. In fact the average console owner treats the thing more like a fad than a way of life (I know.. they're missing out). For a while at least, those gamers out there that want things like Jap RPGs will seriously have to consider buying an import console, importing the games you can't get out here, and learning to read the language!
As for Wipeout, Psygnosis have never hinted at a 3rd PSX Wipeout game. The going theory is that they want to
leave that series on a high note, rather than take the risk of not wowing everyone again.

ONE TRACK MIND PREVENTION

Dear Armand,

I've decided to give up video games until major end of year break (he's crazy) you'd say... Nope because video gamers have made me a complete moron. I mean 'the point of this letter ' is to say that there's a point in ones life where you realise that there are much more important things other than video games. Yep, I mean girls, school, uni and homework (I've sort of realised this a little late I know but after failing a few subjects in such a crucial year you begin to realise how much of a bum you've become). Come on people I know others used to be like me. You know the motto "Less work and more videogamers" so my great message to you bums out there is do something that will get you somewhere OK. Trust me, listen to my message and do good and even a bum can become smart, clean and intelligent like me... The wise one.

Thanks

Your great fan,

POLAND

Poland,
Just exercise moderation. I think your schoolwork references won't convince anyone, but for the younger guys out there, make sure you don't just think and talk about video games and nothing else, otherwise you'll be completely miserable when you meet some girl you like and you can't find anything to say that she'll find interesting. If you think that the kid in your year who spends all his time collecting fungus was boring... if all you do is collect games, then others will find you just as boring as fungus boy.
For girls it's a bit different, in fact it will probably work as an attractive feature rather than a deterrent, unless the guy you're after is a total technophobe.
I'd actually say your urge to give them up altogether for an extended period of time will actually just irritate you more than anything else. Just try
and cut down. If you can go cold turkey just like that, it makes me wonder how into gaming you were in the first place.

OH DEAR...

Dear Hyper

I've been watching this program I saw on T.V and to my surprise I saw this information about a "Virtual Sexuality" coming to some company in Japan. Well I was thinking (being me eager to know) if there will be a "Virtual Sexuality" game coming to our home systems, the PlayStation and Nintendo 64. If there is maybe they should take some of my ideas. Here they are: You should be able to go in 1st person view or 3rd person view. Also being able to pick your characters

MEN

Duke Nukem

Link

Mega Man

Bomberman

Mario

Banjo-kazooie

WOMEN

Lara Croft

Princess Toad

Cummy (SF)

Chun-Li (SF)

Sonya (MK)

And choosing if you're a man or woman. Also a level of difficulty, how experienced you are in the game. And if you're not satisfied you can start again. Oh, YES!! And don't forget the 2 player action on the Dual Shock controller so you and a friend can have heaps of fun guaranteed. But this game would only be able to be available to people over 18+ years old.

I hope you liked my ideas and maybe you might be able to do something about it.

P.S I love your mag. Great 5th birthday special.

C.T.

Dear CT,
You sir, are a freak! We must admit that the prospect of Bomberman getting wet and wild had us in fits of laughter. As for doing something about it, we're just going to advise you to give up on the idea as quickly as possible.

TO HELL WITH ORIGINALITY!

Hey Hyper dudes

For a while now I've heard people (including yourselves) complain about how you wish game developers would come up with some original ideas. I don't disagree totally, but lets be honest, what new ideas are you thinking about? It's not easy to come up with radical new ideas that are totally different to what is now on offer. Mario 64 wasn't original, just an ordinary platformer in 3D (Hunter on the Amiga was in 3D). You want originality...? How about a game where you're a pogo stick, and you jump around up and down in different locations, while a cook is baking a cake to throw at you while standing on his head! Extra points if you hit him between the legs!

How about them other two entertainment mediums, movies and music? They haven't changed much in the last 20 or so years either... just that gun slingers and gangsters have been replaced by aliens and computer generated graphics, but the plots stay the same!

So where am I going with this you ask me... Well, I'm just pointing out that I prefer fun, exciting and challenging games which are more often than not unoriginal! Originality isn't the spice of life, variety is. Enjoy all games,original or nay!

P.S Why isn't Final Fantasy Tactics coming out since all other RPGs are?

BILL NADJ Sheidow Park, SA

Bill,
Sorry I cut your letter down a bit, but it was either that or it was too long to print. You've pointed out something that I was going to bring up as a major discussion point. Ask yourself the question, "Now that we have done 1st person and 3rd person 3D games... what is next?". The thing is... that's it! For so many years, creating a real 3D environment was impossible due to the limits of technology, but now the only real limits are time (for the amount of detail we can go to), and money (you can't just develop games forever or you'll lose lots of money).
We get lots of comments on Quake and Doom clones, saying that the new games in this genre lack originality. Bill is right though... Originality doesn't always mean quality. I think what we need to start seeing is 1st person games that aren't just about running around with guns shooting folks. Like a real time adventure game where you need to use your eyes and ears to find clues to solve puzzles. The scope is huge, it's just a case of having the time and money to make such an immersive world. Time will bring more interactivity and better visuals. Don't expect a constant stream of original ideas... because most of them have happened.
P.S. Maybe it has to do with the fact that Vandal Hearts, a very similar game, did quite poorly out here, although I suspect the "Final Fantasy" branding would assure some reasonable sales figures.

Gamester PSX Rumble Force Wheel.

Don't forget to include your contact details ON your letter.
You've won a Gamester Steering Wheel Bill! For either N64 or PlayStation.

letter of the month

HYPERMART

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FOR SALE

PSX demo's; all cased and in excellent condition. $5 each. V-Rally cased with instructions and in excellent condition, hardly used. Only $50. Call Jonathan between 4-7 weekdays on 02 6772 5641

Unreal, Klingon Honor Guard $40 each or $70 together. Both in original packaging. Call Aundray on 02 9612 5466. Sydney only

Everything in perfect condition! Sony Playstation (in box), 1 digital controller, 1 dual shock controller (brand new), 15 slot memory card, RF Unit, 8 games (Gran Turismo, V-Rally, Rapid Racer Cool Boarders 2, Croc, Spider, Pga Tour 96, Die Hard Trilogy + light gun), 6 demo CDs, 5 magazines plus a Lara Croft poster. All with manuals and boxes. The LOT only $510 o.n.o. Call Chris on 02 9746 9474.

N64- I will sell 1080 Snowboarding for $50, Yoshi story $35 and Mission Impossible $75 or all for $140. Or I will sell my N64 with 6 games- 1080, Mission Impossible, Yoshi Story, Goldeneye, Banjo Kazooie and Mario Kart 64 plus 2 controllers for $499. My e-mail address is Berti senet.com.au or phone 08 9289 4734.

Original Black Gameboy, good condition with clear case that holds 5 games, $50. Also, Super Marioland 1 + 2, Mortal Kombat 3 and Killer Instinct all for Gameboy $12 separate or $100 for the lot. All games come with original booklets and Gameboy comes with batteries. Please call Paul after school hours on 02 9773 3734..

PC games for sale from $25. Call Sean 02 4454 0054.

PC games: over 20 for sale varying from $10-$30. Titles include Crusader:No Remorse, Command & Conquer, Dark Forces, Syndicate wars, The Need for Speed 2, X-wings vs Tie Fighters and many more. If interested call 02 9601 8319.

Playstation game 'GEX' 3d Enter the Geko, $55. Call Rowan on 02 4758 6997

PC Games- Ultimate race pro $40, Incoming $40 and G-Police $35 or all 3 for $95. Call mark on 08 9341 3482. W.A only.

James Bond 007 for Gameboy. Boxed with instructions $30. Call Nick after 5pm on 03 9836 9853

WWF Warzone for N64 $75, Lylat Wars without Rumble Pack $35. Includes manuals. Call Peter on 08 9405 2351.

Sony Playstation, 2 control pads, 15 black memory card, RFU adaptor, AXC power cord, Av cable , Resident Evil 2 and Destruction Derby 2 in boxes only. 1 year old all in excellent condition. The lot for $290. Call 07 4162 3287.

Ferrari F-40 $140,000. Heavily warn tyres, but comes with a spare railgun and 30 slugs. Call J.Carmack at 1800-idsoftware

Sony PSX grey control $15, White boxed control $15 or both for $25, Namco Negcon control boxed $25 (rrp $75), Games Firestorm $25, Ridge Racer 2 $30, Destruction derby 2 $30, Wipeout 2097 $35, V-Rally $45, Resident Evil 2 plus Hyper playguide $70. Demo 1, Shock demo and 2 other demo's call for details of games etc. Also N64 control pak $15 (boxed), Waverace $50. Call 08 9248 1871 WA only

Anime videos: Appleseed, Battle Angel Alita, Detonator Orgun, Fist of the North Star, Genesis Survivor Gaiarth Series, Macross Clash of the Bionoids, Macross II Series , Megazone 23, New Dominion Tank Police Series, Odin, Patlabor, Roujin Z, Vampire Hunter D, Vampire Princess Miya Series, The Wind of Amnesia. All good condition. Sell to anywhere, you pay postage.
Call Tristan on 02 6239 7764

SWAP

Fighters Destiny, 1 month old in brand new condition to swap for Mortal Kombat 4. Should be in similar condition. Phone Zein 02 9554 8207

Saturn games- Virtua Fighter 2 with cheats . Will swap for Virtual Cop 2, Steep Slope Sliders or Sega Rally and Shining the Holy Ark with walk thru and tips will SWAP for any of the above or any other good game. Call Tim on 03 5231 2725

I want to swap my Mario Kart for plain Mario in good condition. Call 03 9741 2940

I want to swap one of the following Playstation games for Suikoden. The Adventures of Alundra, Gex 3D: Enter the Gecko or Theme Hospital. Or if none of these games appeal to you, I will pay $40 for Suikoden which must be in good condition with case and manual. Call Rose after 4pm on 08 9345 2479 (W.A)

Will swap Interstate '76, N.F.S 2, or Quake with M.P #1 for Diablo. All in excellent condition. Ask for Rauli after 4pm on 02 6895 3868

If anyone wants to swap a N64 with between 5-15 games for my playstation with 3 controllers. 1 is red another is dual shock and the standard controller., 14 games and about 30 demo discs. Call Alex on 02 9571 9607 . Please leave a message if unavailable. (Games preferred are Goldeneye f zero x or Banjo Kazooie)

WANTED

Mortal Kombat 4, F Zero X. Others considered. Will swap/sell Quake, Duke Nukem, Doom, F1 Gran Prix, Turok, Diddy Kong racing, San Fran Rush or Blast Corps (all in perfect condition). Call Carl after 5 on 07 4168 9843.

Moto X and Wild Ride for PC for $15-$20 with manuals or I will swap for Destruction Derby or Normality. Call Michael on 02 6291 0021.

A PAL version of Disc World for the Playstation. Call Ricky on 02 9310 2985. Will pay $100.

Megadrive games. Alicia Dragoon, Shining Force 1 & 2, Buck Rogers, Zero Tolerance, Mutant league hockey, Zombies, landstalker, Toe Jam & Earl 1 & 2, and of the Phantasy Star series, Will Pay $15-20 depending on title and condition. Call Kane on (03) 9417 3572

Megadrive games. Super Street Fighter II, Splatterhouse 2, Streets of Rage 2 and 3, Ghouls and Ghosts and Sword of Vermilion. Instructions and boxes would be nice. Price neg. Call Josh 03 6272 5570. (TAS preferred)

PENPALS

Hi, I'm looking for a penpal, preferably a 12-13 yr old girl that likes Tekken 1,2 and 3, Resident Evil 1 and 2, Horror Movies and Happyland. I live in Sydney and like all those things plus BMX and I do Tae Kwon Do and I am not far away from Black belt. My name is Hwoarang. Write to me at 9 Tent St Kingswood NSW 2747.

Anime!! You like Anime then write to me: Troy Bickle, Unit 1/20 Valentine Street, Gympie QLD 4570. I'm 19 and I don't care who or what you are........just write!!

Write to me!! I'm a 15 yr old male looking for a penpal. I own a PSX, N64 and love to link up to whoever the hell I want. Write to Curtis at 20 gabriel St, Moray Field QLD 4506

Mr Cow, that's my name. That name again is MrCow!!. If you would like to chat with me then add me to your ICQ list. My ICQ UIN is 6305963. I play Quake 2, Starcraft, Worms 2 and more. So if you want a silly someone on your list then I am your piece of cheese

My name is Mitchell, I am 11yrs old and I'm looking for a male or female penpal aged 10-12. I have a PC megadrive and a master system 2. But I am mostly interested in my PC. I'll talk about anything. All letters will be replied to so if you want a penpal yet get your pen moving. My address is 7/6 Rutland St, Allowah NSW 2218

Hi my name is Vonne. I'm a 9 year old who is looking for a M/F penpal aged 8-11 who owns a playstation and who is interested in music and games. If you are interested write to me at 13 Aspinall Ave, Minchinbury NSW 2770

Who's really getting hurt by game piracy?

Pirating is not just copying, it's stealing. Every illegal copy robs money from the game developers and that means there's less to spend on creating the next generation of games. If it doesn't stop, the flow of ground-breaking new games will. And in the end, you'll be the one who gets hurt most by piracy. So don't support pirates. Report them. Phone 1800 248 885 or visit www.scum.com.au

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