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AUSTRALIA'S NO.1 VIDEO GAMES MAG

HYPERR

Star Wars

X-Wing Alliance review
Taking the PC by Force

Castlevania

Vampire vengeance on N64

Sega Rally 2

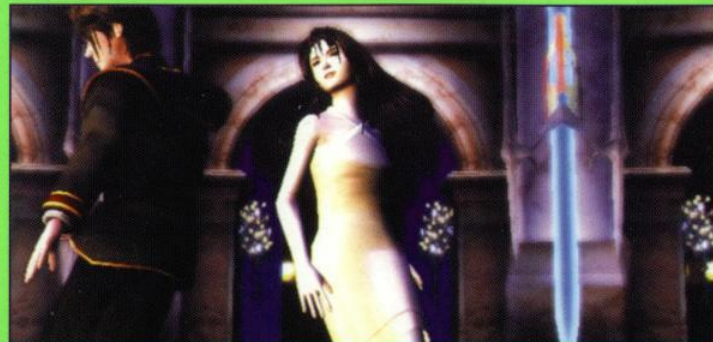
Sneak preview of the Dreamcast racer

Metal Gear Solid Guide

Complete walkthrough

Sony's next console

SPECIAL SCOOP!
Latest news, info
and official tech
specs revealed!



PLUS: SNEAK PEEK AT FIRST SCREEN SHOTS

Gamestock 99 - Special preview feature

next gaming
9 771320 745001
67
SIXTY SEVEN

A detailed view of the Millennium Falcon, a large, complex spaceship, shown from a low angle in a dark hangar. The ship's intricate details, including its engines and various panels, are illuminated by bright lights, creating a dramatic effect. The background is dark, with some structural elements of the hangar visible.

ONLY A SELECT FEW IN THE GALAXY
HAVE FLOWN THE *MILLENNIUM FALCON*.

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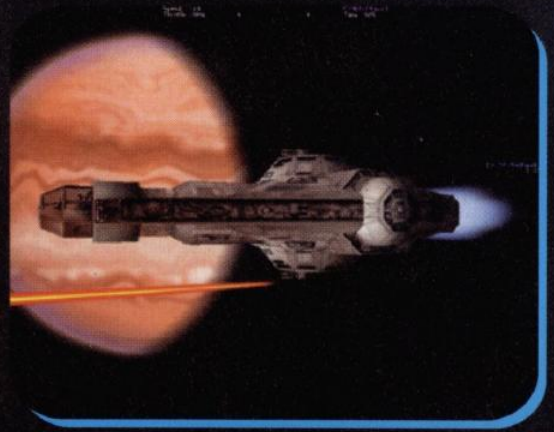
GENERAL

(8 YEARS & OVER)
LOW LEVEL
ANIMATED VIOLENCE

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Imperial fighters in spectacular 3D missions. Finally, if you're worthy, you will find yourself in the cockpit of the legendary *Millennium Falcon*, flying against the massive Imperial fleet in the climactic Battle of Endor. Ultimately, it will be your agility, resolve and combat skills in these maneuvers that will determine your destiny. Not to mention, the fate of the entire galaxy.



EDITORIAL

Well, the console that there has been so much speculation about has finally taken some sort of form... Sony have announced the hardware specs for their next console "PlayStation 2" or whatever it's going to be called. When I wrote the System Wars feature, I spent a lot of time laughing at the fact the Dreamcast outperformed the PlayStation in terms of 3D capabilities by 2000%... and now we're looking at a console that Sony claim will be able to push around 6 to 7 times the amount of polygons as the Dreamcast!

I'm going to sound like a bit of a cynic here, but I'm a little sceptical about Sony's next console coming out on time if it is like they say it is. The "graphics synthesiser" is supposed to use 0.18 micron technology... which no one has managed to produce before. NEC, one of the leading chip manufacturers have been trying, with millions upon millions spent on the research and development, so the question is, where's the genie that Sony are using to magic up all this unbelievable hardware in time for a Japanese launch by March next year, at an affordable price? It doesn't add up.

We have seen some video sequences of "real time rendered" PSX2 graphics, and it looks like the polygon count was amazing, but we noticed pixelisation that showed there was no mip mapping or smoothing, thus, no complete "graphics synthesiser", which do make my doubts about the system being just like the announced specs quite justified.

Despite my cynicism, it should be noted that many said Sony would not be able to cut it with Sega and Nintendo when they decided to enter the home console market... and they went on to become the leader in this field on their first attempt. So maybe Sony will surprise me and will manage to produce the machine they've described. In fact, I'll be stoked if they do prove me wrong here, as it will mean that gaming technology is taking great leaps forward.

On a completely different note, a big goodbye to Steve Scott, who wandered off early this issue. His contribution to improving Hyper's look was fantastic, and we miss him already. At the same time, a big hello to our new Art Director, Brooke.

Au revoir till next month's rant,

Dan

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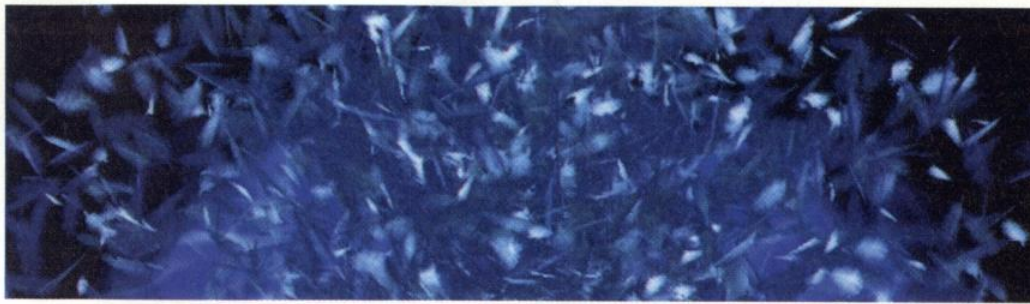
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In answer to Sega's Dreamcast, Sony have released the technical specifications of their new console, and if you thought the Dreamcast sounded powerful, wait till you see this!



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Konami's Metal Gear Solid can get quite tricky. Fortunately Kevin Cheung has finished the game several times through, and has the solutions for you.



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What can you expect out of Intel's latest CPU? Is it a must have for PC game fanatics? Initial reports sound promising.



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LucasArts triumphant return to space combat shooters gets our seal of approval thanks to awesome multi-player action.



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THE NEXT PLAYSTATION ANNOUNCED!!

After something like a year's worth of speculation and rumour, Sony have finally come clean on their still-untitled "PlayStation 2" at a games industry get-together in Tokyo, Japan. Surprisingly, half the rumours you heard about the next Sony console have turned out to be true! Before we even look at any of the specs for the machine, listen to this... PlayStation 2 will be fully 100% backwards compatible with all the current PlayStation games! Incredible. So while you're waiting for new PlayStation 2 games to be released, you'll be able to pop in your copy of Final Fantasy VIII and keep playing through on your new Sony console. It won't accelerate your old games, but it will reproduce them faithfully. If that doesn't thrill you, then pop in a DVD disc and watch a movie. Yes, the PSX2 will have full DVD capabilities and it will use MPEG2 image decompression technology allowing for complex image data for texture maps and background data which can be decompressed in real-time - basically this will mean for truly photo-realistic images in some games. Sony have announced a Japanese launch for the as-yet untitled next PlayStation for March 2000! However, we won't be seeing the machine here until late in the year 2000. At the moment, everyone is simply wondering how much the console will cost, considering the incredible hardware inside it - which is said to even outperform Intel's Pentium III in floating-point calculations. So what is the actual hardware like?

Here are the official specs released by Sony...

CPU

- 128 Bit "Emotion Engine" @ 300 MHz

Memory

- Direct Rambus (Direct RDRAM) 32MB
- Memory Bus Bandwidth: 3.2GB per Second

Co-processor

- -FPU (Floating Point Unit)
- Floating Point Multiply Accumulator x 1
- Floating Point Divider x 1
- -Vector Units: VU0 and VU1
- Floating Point Multiply Accumulator x 9
- Floating Point Divider x 3
- 3D CG Geometric Transformation: 66 Million Polygons per second

- Compressed Image Decoder: MPEG2

Graphics Synthesizer

- -Clock Frequency: 150MHz
- DRAM Bus bandwidth: 4.8GB per Second
- DRAM Bus width: 256bits
- Pixel Configuration RGB:Alpha:Z Buffer (24-bit:8-bit:32-bit)
- Maximum Polygon Rate: 75 Million Polygons per Second
- Sound: "SPU2+CPU"
- Number of Voices ADPCM: 48ch on SPU2 plus definable, software programmable voices
- Sampling Frequency: 44.1 KHz or 48 KHz (selectable)

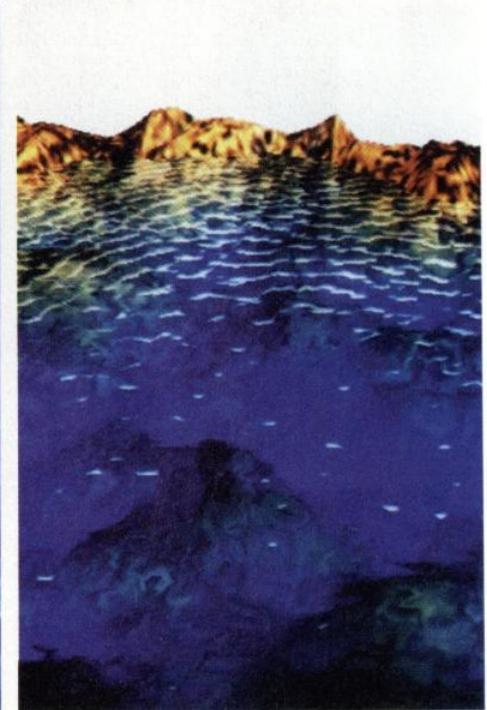
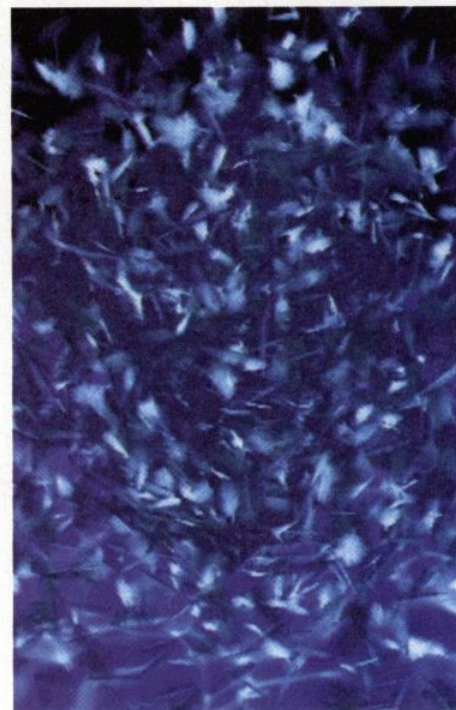
Disc Device

- CD-ROM and DVD-ROM

IOP I/O Processor -

to provide backwards compatibility

- CPU: Core PlayStation (current) CPU
- Clock Frequency: 33.8MHz or 37.5MHz (Selectable)
- Sub Bus: 32-Bit
- Interface Types: IEEE1394, Universal Serial Bus (USB)
- Communication via PC-Card (PCMCIA)



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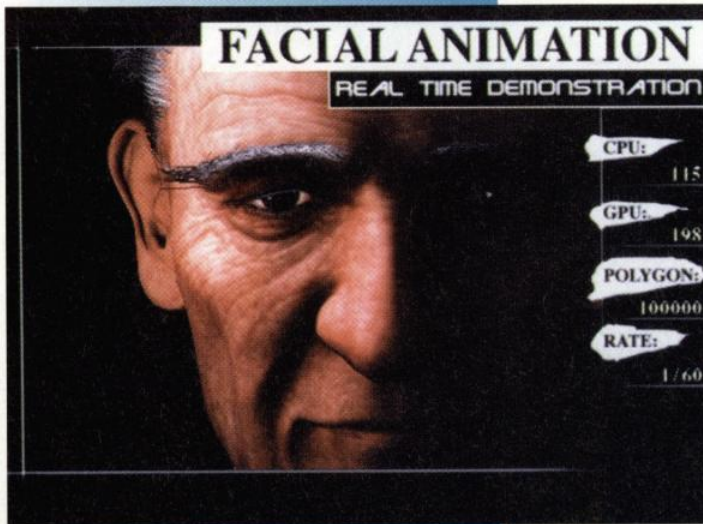
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Pretty impressive specs, eh? This hardware is reportedly capable of generating over 16 million polygons per second, with full lighting and effects (and around 66 million per second without effects), compared to the Dreamcast's comparatively low 3 million per second with effects, the current PlayStation's reported 300,000 polygons per second, and the Nintendo 64's 100,000 per second. Clearly a remarkable technological feat, which requires certain hardware (.18 micron) which hasn't yet been built on a mass-scale as is needed for the production of a games console.

Whilst you would imagine that most of the industry is shocked at how powerful the PlayStation 2 appears to be, Sega and Nintendo are both putting on a brave face. In fact, Howard Lincoln, head of Nintendo America has already confirmed that by the end of this year, Nintendo will announce the specs for the next Nintendo console. It's a complete mystery as to what Nintendo will possibly build to compete with the PlayStation 2, so we'll all be waiting eagerly to hear what they have to say around Christmas time, but they have confirmed that it will not use cartridges. Sega meanwhile have been fairly quiet, focusing on promoting the Dreamcast as the console to beat, though unbelievably rumours have already surfaced that they have initiated plans for a Dreamcast 2! We simply won't believe that one until Sega themselves mention it. The next PlayStation may blow everything out of the water in terms of polygon-crunching hardware, but as we all know, it comes down to the games. Will the game developers have the know-how to exploit this killer hardware? More information soon...



COMPETITION WINNERS

Rejoice! For free games and goodies are yours!

South Park

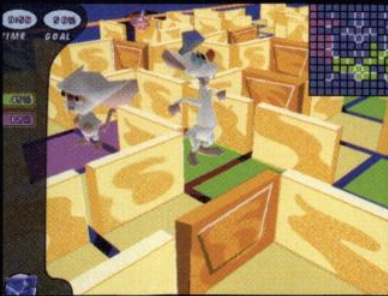
Duane Jackson, Vic.
Jon Kerney, Vic.
Julian Austin, SA.
Nicholas Webb, Qld.
Simon French, WA.

Grandstream Saga

Walter Bracey, NZ.
Steve Milich, SA.
Glen Wallace, NSW.
Luke Cheung, NSW.
Daniel Douglas, Tas.

Tribes

Luke Walsh, Vic.
Michael Dean, ACT.
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Jacob Ranga, Qld.
The Teaser, NSW.



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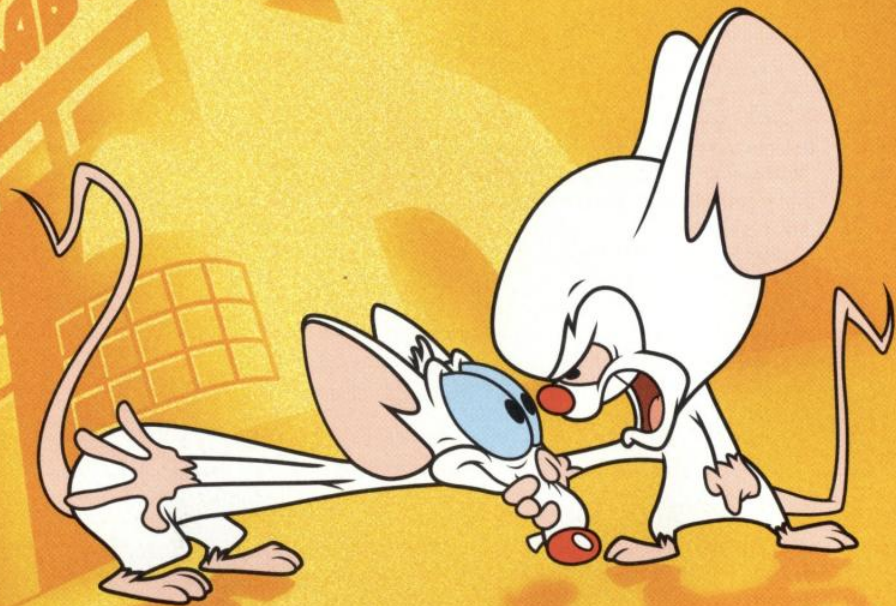


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LABS



You see Pinky, the plan is to develop a secret hypnotic message that will make humans think I am their almighty ruler, and embed it in an action-packed video game. Naturally we will be the stars. People will play the game by themselves and become horribly addicted. Then they will want to play the game with their friends, and their friends will become addicted. Soon, they will play the game over the Internet, a silly little information infrastructure that humans use to "chat" with each other. Anyway, once we control the Internet, every human being will bow down before me, their rightful master. And by the turn of the new millennium, the world will be ours!

World Conquest™

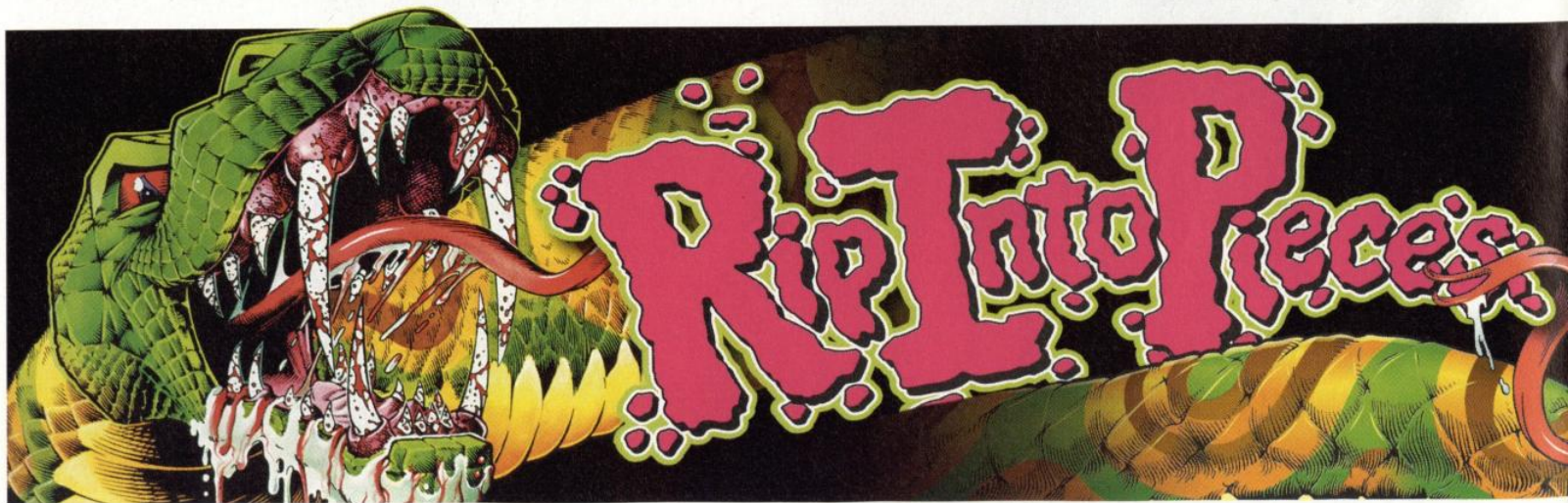
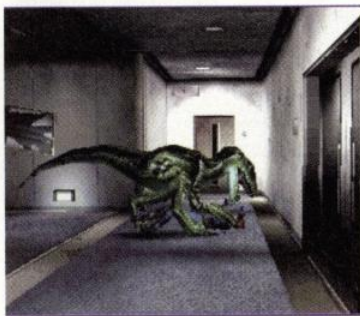
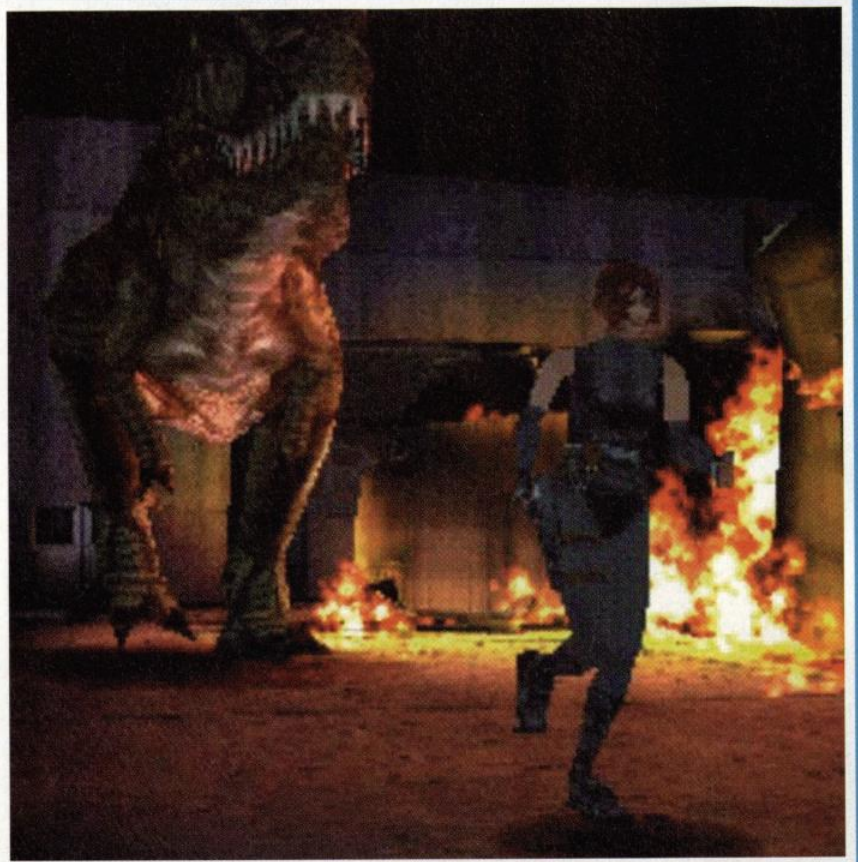
multi-player maze game



CAPCOM UNVEIL DINO CRISIS

When Capcom released Resident Evil, they invented a new game genre called "Survival Horror" - or at least that's what they tell us. The concept is that the player is stuck in a menacing 3D world, where they must fight their way to the end, experiencing a host of terrifying scenarios along the way. Resident Evil 2 expanded this concept even further, and whilst the world waits to see what Capcom cook up for the Dreamcast and PlayStation 2, they have announced the next game in their "Survival Horror" genre - Dino Crisis.

One look at Dino Crisis and you would swear you were looking at a Jurassic Park tie-in, but Dino Crisis is supposedly something quite different. On the island of Ibis, a mad professor has developed a new energy principle which will provide a new source of energy to release the current burden off our dying planet. A female SWAT team is sent in to capture the Professor and his work, and you get to play one of the female commandos. Of course, the island is strangely populated with dinosaurs (probably due to the Professor's secret experiments) and for most of the game, you'll find yourself trying to outrun big hungry dinos. Luckily, Dino Crisis has been created by Shinji Mikami - the genius behind Resident Evil - so hopefully his experience will shine through with this potential hit. From what we've seen, the game looks very cool, with very Resident Evil 2 style gameplay, and a fully 3D polygon world so you can interact with your environment in real time. As long as Capcom are working hard on RE3 & RE4 for Dreamcast and PlayStation 2, we'll be quite happy to take a look at Dino Crisis when it comes our way...



UM JAMMER LAMMY

No we didn't make a typing error - that's the name of the upcoming sequel to Parappa the Rapper from Sony! What is Um Jammer Lammy then? Um Jammer Lammy is the grunge-rock chick equivalent to Parappa and his stylin' jams. The story is about a wanna-be rock star called Lammy who starts her own band called Milk Can - all in that gorgeous yet highly trippy 2D cardboard style animation of Parappa fame. Again, the gameplay is based around repeating musical phrases by pressing the right buttons at the right time, kind of like Beat Mania. The difficulty of Um Jammer Lammy is that much higher than Parappa, that even Parappa masters here at Hyper HQ were finding it hard to keep up with the game. As Lammy gets around town, she finds herself in precarious situations which require her to imagine that flying a plane is like playing the guitar for instance. You have to see it to believe it. There are a variety of musical styles here, yet all based around Lammy's hot guitar licks, with some of the stuff sounding truly "out there". Once the game is completed it unlock a great two-player mode as well as Parappa himself. Very funky, y'all.



QUAKE 3 ARENA FASHION?



Well we know that dedicated Quakers like to sport their Quake caps, and maybe even the odd black Quake 2 t-shirt, but now you can purchase Quake III Arena hockey jerseys through an online store. At <http://www.minnesotaproshop.com/-actionimprints/> you can check out this rather questionable fashion statement. This Minnesota shop usually just makes fan clothing for their local Minnesota basketball, hockey, football and baseball teams - but possibly a few of the staff members are after-hours Quakers. Heh. Your Q3A jersey can be personalised, but the drawback is that it's going to cost your over \$100 to order one of these babies. Ouch.

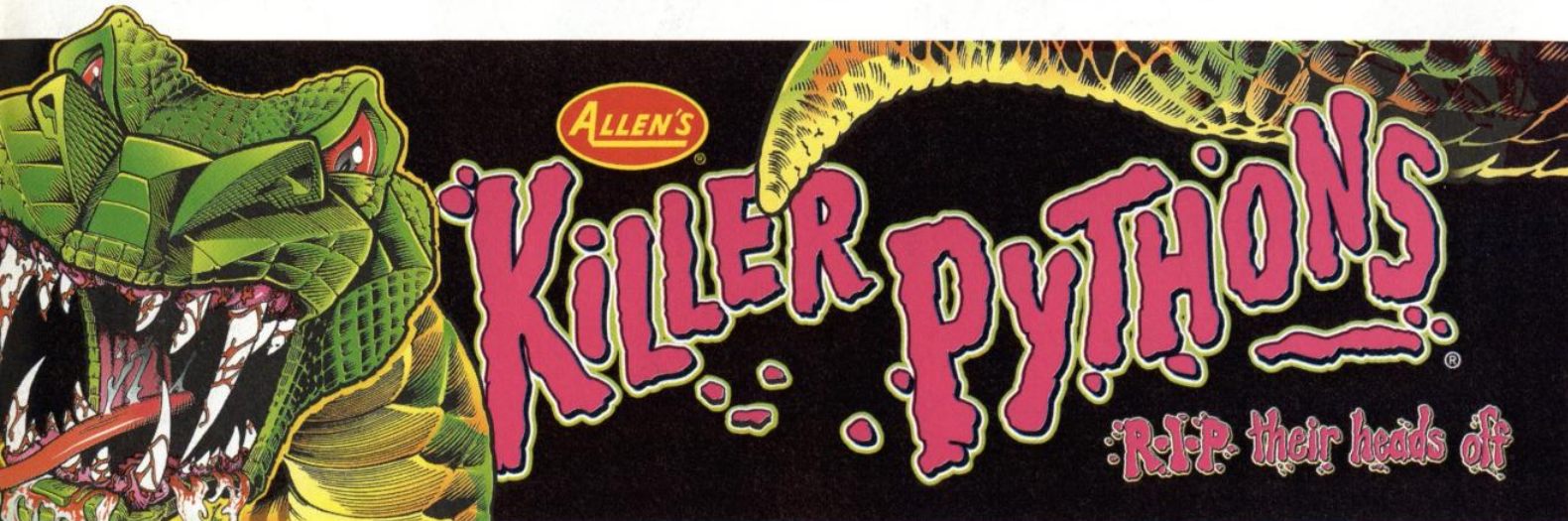
WORLD'S FASTEST SUPERCOMPUTER

A Salt Lake City company, Star Bridge Systems, has built what is easily the world's fastest supercomputer - nicknamed "Hal". Hal is capable of operating around 60,000 times faster than a Pentium 350-megahertz PC, and yet is still only the size of a desktop PC requiring a normal power outlet! Hal can access it's HD at 10 Gigabytes per second, has a HD size up to 18 Terabytes (18,000 Gigabytes), and cost roughly 26 million dollars to develop over a 15 year period. How would you like to play Quake 3 Arena on that baby? =)

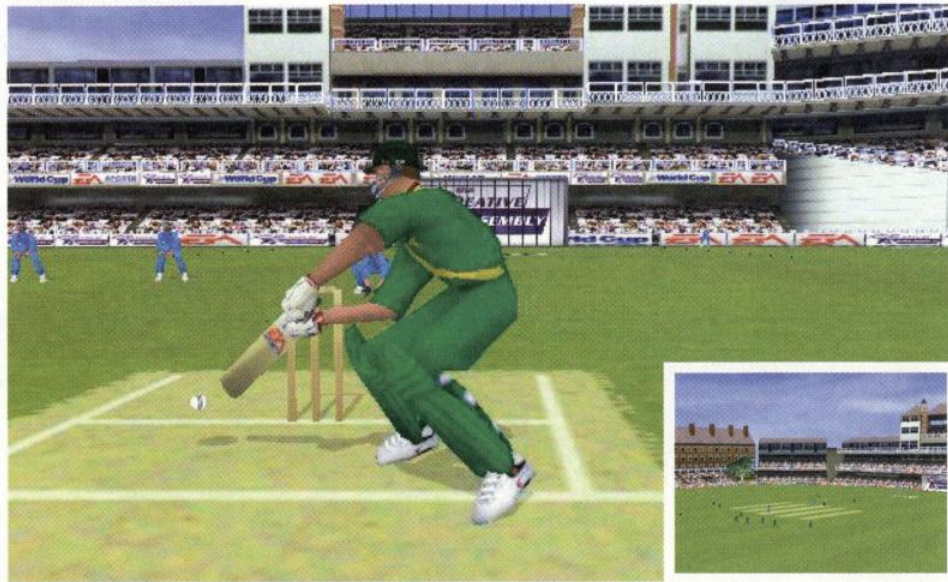
CHARTS

Charts kindly supplied by Hitech World

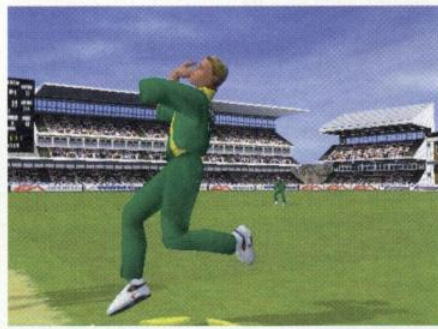
PLAYSTATION	NINTENDO 64	PC
1 Metal Gear Solid	1 Starwars - Rouge Squadron	1 Commandos:Behind Enemy Lines
2 Shane Warne Cricket	2 Golden Eye 007	2 Falcon 4.0
3 Formula 1/98	3 Mario Kart	3 Superbikes
4 Colin McRae Rally	4 Zelda 64	4 Baldur's Gate
5 Crash bandicoot 2	5 NBA Live 99	5 Duke Nukem 3D Platnium
6 Duke Nukem: Time to Kill	6 Aero Gauge	6 Caesar 3
7 Mickeys Quest	7 Pilot Wings	7 Fallout 2
8 Gex 3D	8 Banjo Kazooie	8 Starcraft Brood Wars
9 Knockout Kings	9 Nascar	9 Myth 2
10 NBA Live 99	10 Mario 64	10 Sim City 3000



CRICKET WORLD CUP CANNED



Bad news for PlayStation owning cricket fans... no Shane Warne hasn't been made the new captain of Australia (collected sigh of relief), but EA Sports have some equally depressing news. The planned World Cup Cricket '99 for PlayStation has been removed from the release schedule and development on the PlayStation game has been scrapped. The reason for this unfortunate turn of events, is that the development cycle of the game was going to mean that the eventual release of the game would totally miss the actual World Cup over in England. If you've been waiting for World Cup Cricket '99 on PC though, you can relax as the game will still be released for Win 95/98 - woohoo! All the work that has gone into the PlayStation version has not been a total waste though - the developers will continue to work on the cricket game for the PlayStation and release it later in the year when it's done under the title ICC World Cricket, which will feature test match, one-day, 4 day, county, provincial and state cricket. Sounds like it might all be worth the wait! EA Sports seem dedicated in turning their cricket franchise into the "FIFA" of console cricket sims - which basically means it should be really bloody good. Let's pray.



OVERFLOW

Good old Beam Software in Melbourne, are unfortunately rumoured to be sold off to Infogrames. Famous for fantastic games like Shadowrun on the SNES (which holds a special place in the heart of a particular Hyper staff member), it will be very sad to see the legendary Beam Software cease to exist... this is also hot on the tails of Infogrames buying around 66% of Australian Sega distributor, Ozisoft.

Speaking of Infogrames, it has been confirmed that the company is developing Alone in the Dark 4 for the Sega Dreamcast and PC platforms. The series that virtually created the third-person 3D action game genre, will make a big return sometime around the beginning of the year 2000.

Cripes, we wouldn't have thought it was possible, but Wizard Works the company responsible for Deer Hunter, have broken away from games of such a violent nature to bring us... Bird Watcher. That's right, Bird Watcher. Thrill to the sight of virtual birds sitting in virtual trees, and learn all 'bout the little critters. Thankfully, there will be no option to shoot them out of the branches. Can't wait to see this one...

Take-Two Interactive have been given the go ahead to make yet another third-person Duke Nukem console game. Whilst their previous efforts haven't exactly been startling, this next installment is being developed for one of the "next-generation" consoles. We predict the Sega Dreamcast is the lucky piece of plastic.

Intel have been testing a Pentium III running at 1 Gigahertz, whilst most the world is still dribbling over the upcoming 650MHz machines which are on the way. A spokesperson for Intel has said that home users can expect to be able to get their hands on a 1 Gig PIII by the end of the year 2000...

Paramount studios, the bunch who will be responsible for the upcoming Tomb Raider film, are apparently trying to decide whether it would be better to make a fully CGI feature, as opposed to trying to cast a real-life Lara. Surely they are kidding themselves if they think people will sit in a theatre for 2 hours to watch what would essentially be lots of Tomb Raider FMV.

DREAMCAST SATURN EMULATOR?

At the time of writing, strong industry rumour has it that Sega is about to reveal that they are working on a Saturn emulator for their new Dreamcast console. Possibly to be called the "Sat-Cast", once you load it into the Dreamcast's memory, you will be able to pop any old Saturn CD into your Dreamcast and play away. Sounds like the news of the PlayStation 2 being backwards compatible has kicked Sega into gear on this one. There are no details as of yet on release dates, or even confirmation on a western release.

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ALL ENTRIES CLOSE APRIL 6TH 1999

ROLLERCOASTER TYCOON

If you've ever taken a rollercoaster ride and thought it was lame, or on the other side of the coin, if you've had a ride which induced your life to flash before your eyes, then you're going to want to have your revenge in Rollercoaster Tycoon! In this hilariously funny sim, you can create some incredibly mad rollercoaster rides and watch all the little sim patrons throw up their hamburgers, or you can be as benevolent as Walt Disney and give them clean flash toilets to throw up in instead. Whatever you decide to do, you'll have a stupidly fun time doing it, because this is a top game. Thanks to the fine folk at Hasbro Interactive, we have six copies of Rollercoaster Tycoon for PC, and six great Rollercoaster Tycoon mousemats for you to win if you send in the best entry. To be in with a chance to win, send us a brief description of a theme park of your own creation and the best six submissions will score some prizes. Keep your entry less than one hundred words.

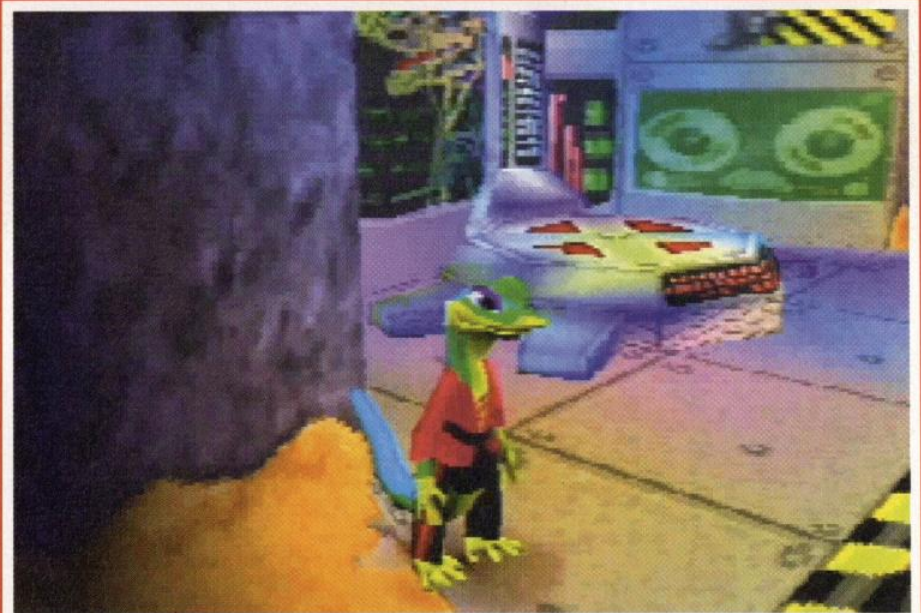
Think up your creation and send it off to: **Loony Park, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Good luck!**



GEX 3!

The gecko is back, and he has a damsel in distress to save! Why an attractive young woman would find a gecko attractive is beyond us, but hey, it's her life. More power to Gex, eh? This 3D action series just keeps getting prettier and prettier, and this time around the environments have been tweaked to fool you into thinking this is something that could have come out of Nintendo's Rare studios. Gex also has a dry wit as sharp as his tail, and a tongue that's more versatile than you would ever care to imagine. If you'd like to grab a free copy for your PlayStation, and we have five to give away thanks to Ozisoft, send us a funny Gex limerick of your own creation, and the best five will win a copy!

Send your entry, along with your name and address, to: **A Lizard Tale, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**





Dear Mrs. Johnson,

It is with my deepest sympathy that I write this letter to inform you that your son, Joe, was mostly melted yesterday in a skirmish with a unit of Tan soldiers.

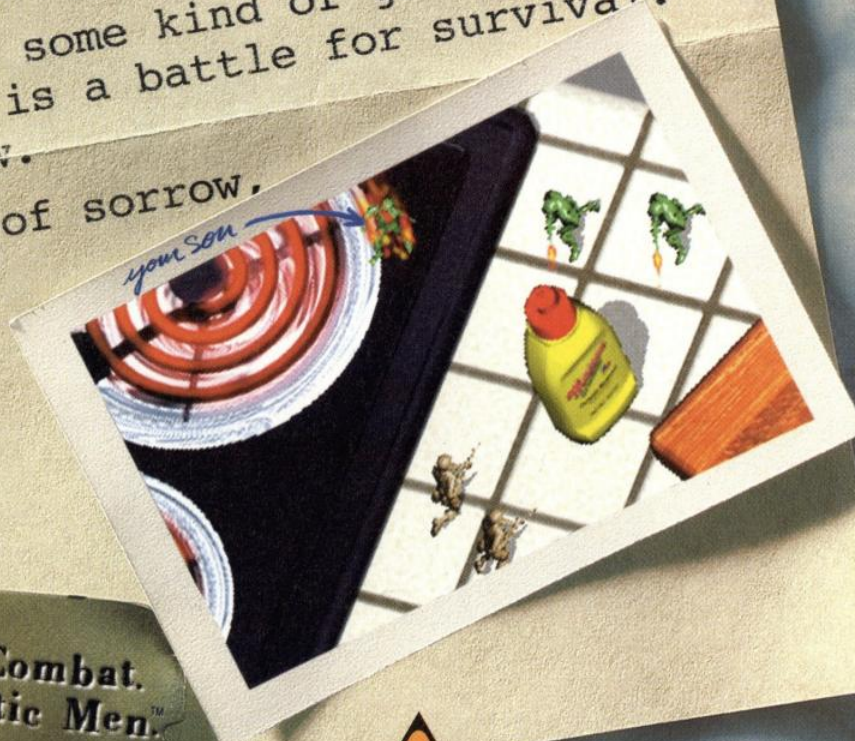
What is left of Joe I've enclosed in this little baggie. I thought you might like to keep it. If anything else turns up, we will forward it immediately.

You should be proud to know that Joe fought bravely till the very end. As a keepsake, I've attached a photo of Joe in action.

Most people think it's some kind of game out here. For us, every day is a battle for survival. Joe understands that now.

With you in your time of sorrow,

Sarge
Sarge



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If you're anything like us, you probably have at some stage shut your eyes, reached out with your hand and tried to use the Force to move the salt shaker across the kitchen table or fantasised about what you'd do if you had a lightsaber at school...

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Discworld Noir

PC/PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: MAY

CATEGORY: ADVENTURE

PLAYERS: 1

PUBLISHER: GT INTERACTIVE

Someone's been playing Grim Fandango, there's no question about it. The world of Discworld has gone Noir, as in Film Noir, and introduced is a Humphrey Bogart-esque character named Lewton - a Private Investigator. Out on the streets of Ankh-Morpork, things are pretty seedy and Lewton is just

about to stumble upon the case of his life thanks to a mysterious stranger named Carlotta who has just walked into his office. Although Terry Pratchett (the author of the Discworld books) had nothing to do with the story or characters in Discworld Noir (although he did "approve" the game), it looks to still follow along the same wacky lines as the two previous Discworld adventures, albeit with a darker tone. This is classic point and click adventuring, and judging from the previous two Discworld games, Discworld Noir should provide adventure game fans with a few weeks worth of devious adventuring. There doesn't seem to be anything groundbreaking with this title, just some good solid fun.



Name

HP/max

PP/max

Guardian Crusade

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: TBA

CATEGORY: RPG

PLAYERS: 1

PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION

Final Fantasy VII has probably influenced a billion games that are released in Japan that never see the light of day here on western shores. Guardian Crusade (called Knight and Baby in Japan) is clearly one of these FVII inspired RPGs that ruthlessly borrows all the seemingly

brilliant elements of the game and reinvents it with its own characters. Even as obviously unoriginal as it may seem, there is every chance in the world that Guardian Crusade will turn out to be an extremely playable adventure, and there is the twist in the form of your side-kick Baby. Baby is a bizarre little creature who must be returned to his home by you the gallant Knight. Interestingly, Baby can actually evolve throughout the game as would a virtual pet, depending upon your actions and interactions with it. Replacing FVII's materia and summons, are Living Toys, which can be summoned to fight along side you and essentially do the same thing as Materia in FVII. Another good addition to the gameplay, is the fact that enemies can be seen on the world map, allowing you to avoid the turn-based combat if you so desire. Visually, the game is quite pretty, though I must say the character design is quite over-the-top and the music sounds like what is piped over the speakers in K-Mart. Could be quite special...





System Shock 2

PC

AVAILABLE: TBA

CATEGORY: RPG/FIRST-PERSON ACTION

PLAYERS: 1

PUBLISHER: EA



The first System Shock was ahead of its time - a first person shooter which combined role-playing elements and adventuring, but all in a sci-fi techy setting. It was so cool, that at least three of us here at Next Gaming thought it was one of the best PC games they'd ever

played. Of course, we must wipe away the veil of nostalgia and look upon System Shock 2 with an objective eye.

Obviously, the graphics are where System Shock 2 is immediately improved over its predecessor - accelerated 3D graphics, with an almost Half-Life like ambience. The engine was a bit slow, but the game is still very much in development, so things will hopefully improve there. The gameplay elements seemed to be identical to the original System Shock, even down to hitting mutants with pipes! All the great things about System Shock were here in spades, and it was obvious that there was so much more

here than was immediately apparent - the role-playing side of things seems to have been made even more interesting. As you adventure, you can stop at training terminals and improve your psionic skills, or your strength or endurance - allowing you to become the sort of character you'd like over the course of the game. You also need a variety of cyber skills so you can hack security terminals and fight the evil computer brain controlling your environment. In a way, System Shock 2 felt almost too similar to the original to provide any real excitement. But if it turns out even only two-thirds as good as the original, it'll still be a must play.



Third World

PC

AVAILABLE: TBA

CATEGORY: STRATEGY

PLAYERS: 1-8

PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION



Talk about whipping up a virtual slushy of game genres! Third world is part real-time strategy, part role-playing game, part tactical squad-level combat action and all within an isometric 3D world. The alien world you're on is fast becoming a battle-ground for gangs of mutants, smugglers, androids, alien criminals and misfits and it's up to you to assert your dominance over the lot of them! Putting together your own gang of up to five crazy characters (even customising how they look with a cool "facemaker" system), allows you to choose race, class and abilities much like an RPG - carefully keeping your gang well balanced between brain and brawn. As you win fights and climb your way up the ladder, your gang members learn new skills and develop more powerful technology, hopefully making your rise more swift than you anticipated.

Whilst there is certainly a strong single-player experience to be had here, Third World is very appealing as a multiplayer game - almost along the same lines as Diablo, it is always better with friends. The real-time



combat results in fire-fights with deadly weaponry or psionics, depending on how you've structured your team, and whilst it's all real-time everything is still manageable through the excellent display system. Games can be joined

at any time, much like most action games, and LAN provides support for up to eight aspiring alien gangsters to duke it out for victory. Of course, if you desire there is always room for a bit of trading or diplomacy. Coming soon.





Sega Rally 2

DREAMCAST

AVAILABLE: TBA
 CATEGORY: RACING
 PLAYERS: 1-TBA
 PUBLISHER: SEGA

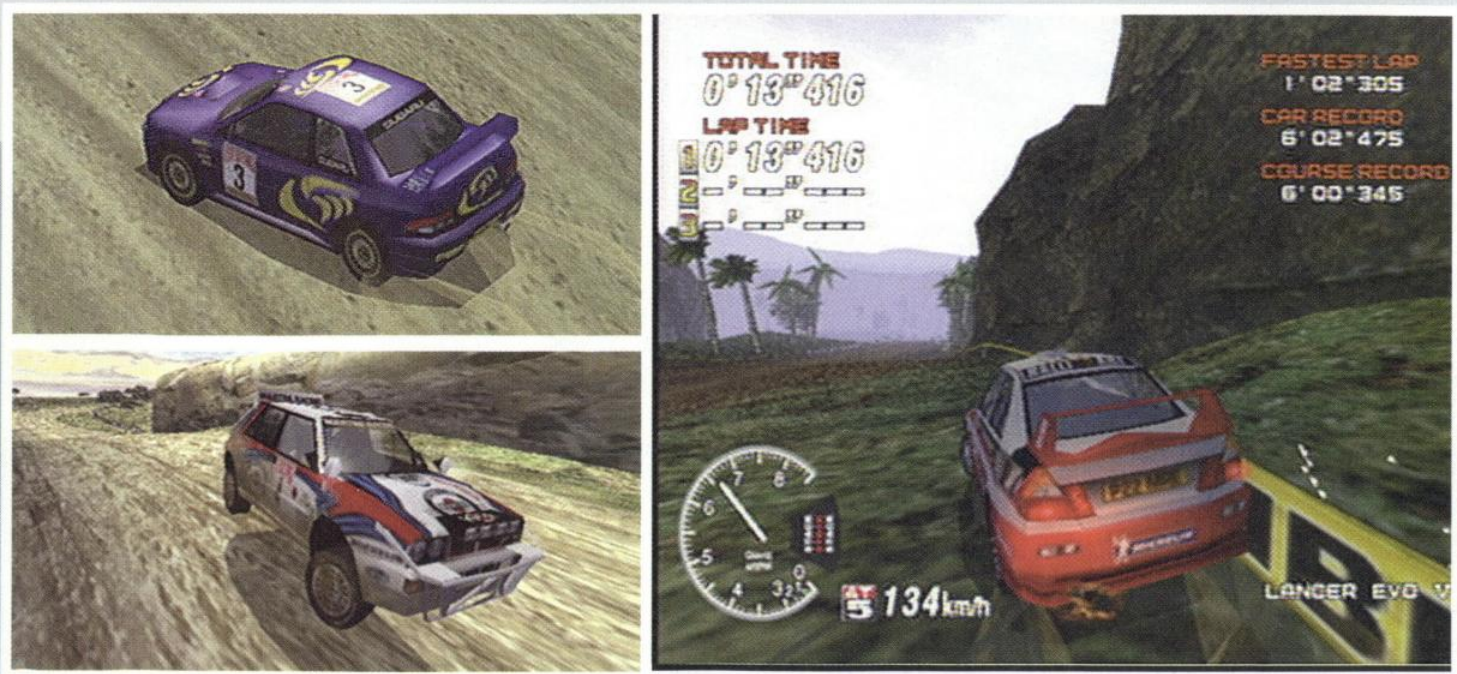
Sega Rally Championship is easily one of the most eagerly awaited Dreamcast titles on Western shores. Currently on sale in Japan, Sega Rally 2 has received a mixed reaction from the ever-growing Dreamcast fanbase - some love it, others feel it could have been that little bit better. We can assume Sega would have rushed the game's development slightly to ensure it's release near the Dreamcast's launch, which could explain some inconsistencies in the guts of the game, but should they have held it back to tweak it even further? Clearly, for a home console racing game, Sega Rally 2 is excellent. Here's what we thought when we put it through the Hyper testing lab procedure...

The tracks are the same three from the arcade, with some console specific circuits... Desert, Riviera, Muddy, Snowy, Isle and Mountain, making for some challenging racing in a variety of conditions. Every track has a few different routes to be raced, varying in difficulty, so there's plenty to see here - this is no simple arcade port. In fact, there's a 10



year championship which will test the patience of any hardcore driving game nut - no the game doesn't literally last 10 years! Successfully coming first in each "year" awards you with a fancy new car to drive, so eventually you can boast a pretty impressive collection of wheels. The game doesn't appear to be too easy either, so you'll have to be persistent if you want to unlock everything Sega Rally 2 has to offer. Of course, the multiplayer options are quite exciting, allowing you to utilise the Dreamcast's modem to get online and play other Sega Rally 2 owners, but we'll have to wait and see how they incorporate this feature on Australian shores.

Visually, the game goes from looking simply fantastic to appearing a little under-done. There's virtually zero pop-up of distant objects, so that's a major plus (pop-up is probably the greatest flaw in most racing games), but the frame-rate does tend to drop here and there and the odd glitch is apparant. The visuals seem to sway between a gorgeous 60 frames per second to a noticeably slower 30 frames per second in most corners, and complex areas of track. The different weather conditions look fantastic though, and generally atmospherics are very pretty indeed. Racing at night works remarkably well for instance, with your car's headlights actually functioning in a realistic and useful way - and damn it looks pretty. Sega Rally 2 really does give any PC racing game a run for it's money, and we'll all be playing it towards the end of the year.



World Driver Championship

NINTENDO 64

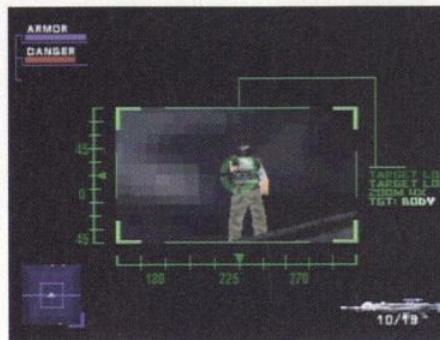
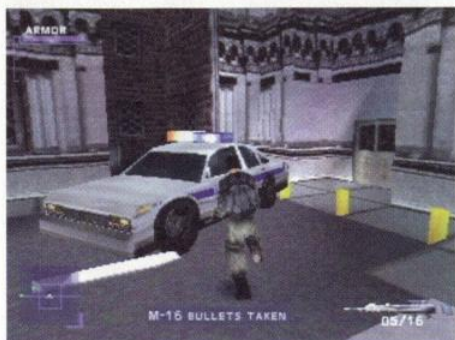
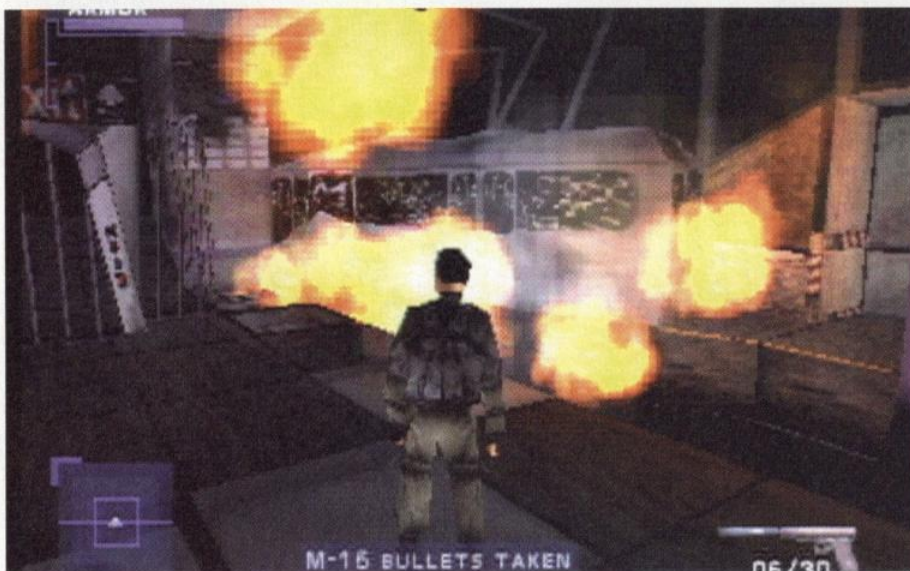
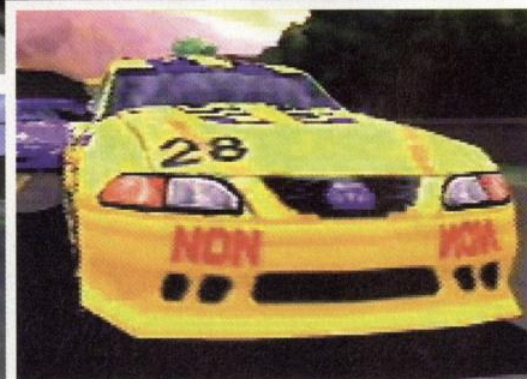
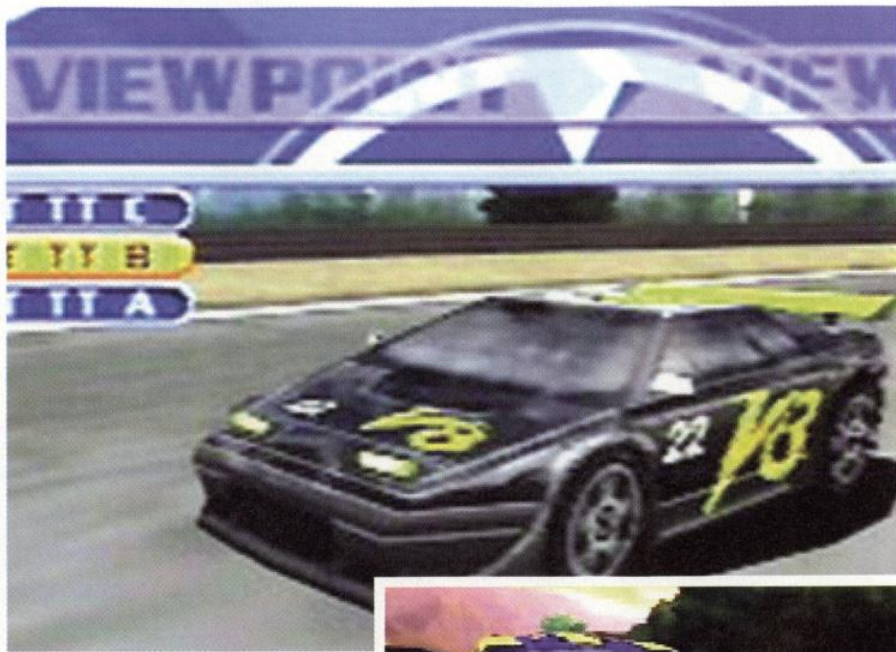
AVAILABLE: JUNE

CATEGORY: DRIVING

PLAYERS: 1-2

PUBLISHER: MIDWAY

Yeah, just what the Nintendo 64 needs - another driving game! Well, as long as it's really good, I'm sure we'll all be happy to add it to our collection. World Driver Championship is being developed by the same team which brought us Top Gear Rally, and it's looking a damn sight better than GT 64. In fact, this could turn out to be the Gran Turismo for the Nintendo console, considering how tasty this game looks so far. Visually, World Driver Championship will offer a high-resolution mode which doesn't require the N64 Expansion pak, though the screen becomes letter-boxed with this option. There's a possibility that the expansion pak will be supported, but we'll have to wait until June to find out. Around 30 cars should be selectable in the final game, with tracks from countries all over the world. As you successfully race a track, new sections of the track becomes unlocked, meaning that there are essentially going to be more than enough variation in terms of circuits to race - especially when you consider the implementation of a mirror mode too. If Midway can get this right, you may never need another N64 racing game ever.



Syphon Filter

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: TBA

CATEGORY: STEALTH/ACTION

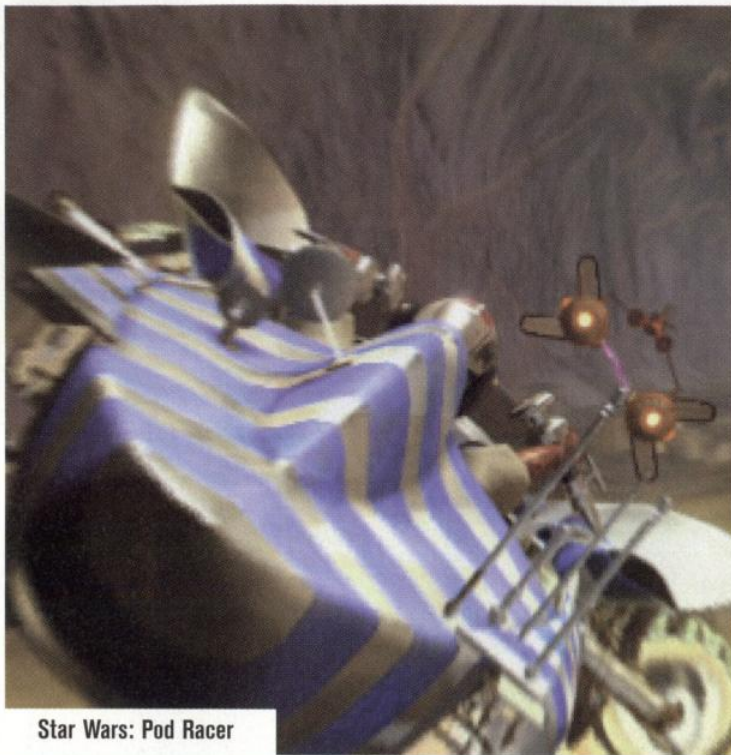
PLAYERS: 1

PUBLISHER: 989 STUDIOS

Syphon Filter is the result of an American games company deciding they can make a game better than Metal Gear Solid. After playing the game for a while, it's apparent that whilst Syphon Filter does not really deliver the same sort of engaging gaming experience as Metal Gear Solid, it still manages to entertain in its own brilliant way. As the secret agent Gabe Logan, gameplay involves marching around in a third-person perspective, performing a number of missions and using a bunch of cool gadgets. For instance, one mission has you picking off snipers with your ultra-cool telescopic gunsight and then entering the buildings off the street and taking them out a bit more up close and personal. If you run out of bullets, you can always whip out your Taser and fry the baddies to a crisp, which is quite hilarious to watch. The interaction with the environment is excellent, and there's more to do here than in most action/adventures. The control system is kind of like Tomb Raider on steroids (what a scary thought) and Gabe can do just about anything you can think of, and more. There are moments of Mission Impossible and Metal Gear Solid gameplay here, but Syphon Filter is no re-hash of ideas - there's lots of cool new ideas in here to get any PlayStation veteran a thrill.

UPCOMING RELEASES

The complete guide to what's coming out over the next month here in Australia



Star Wars: Pod Racer



Diablo 2

★ Hot stuff on the way...

PC

- MAY
- Alien Resurrection
 - Attack of the Saucer Men
 - Castrol Honda Superbikes 2
 - Darkstone
 - Diablo 2 ★
 - Expert Pool
 - FA 18/E Super Hornet
 - Hidden and Dangerous
 - Jane's Fleet Command
 - Kingpin
 - Might & Magic VII ★
 - Nascar 3
 - Nascar Shootout
 - Quake 3 Arena ★
 - Red Baron Dogfight
 - Shadow Company
 - Star Wars Episode 1: Pod Racer
 - Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace
 - Street Wars
 - The Ravaging
 - TNT Xtreme Drag Racing
 - Wargamer: Napoleon 1813

PlayStation

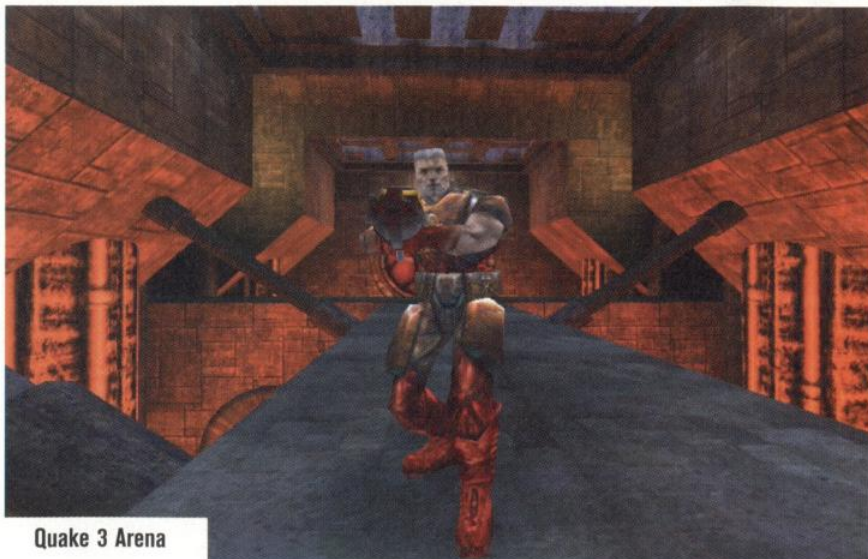
- MAY
- Attack of the Saucer Men
 - Diver's Dream
 - G-Police 2
 - GTA London
 - Le Mans
 - NHRA Drag Racing
 - Quake 2
 - R-Type Delta
 - Rainbow Six
 - Rogga Hub
 - Trap Runner
 - WWF Attitude

N64

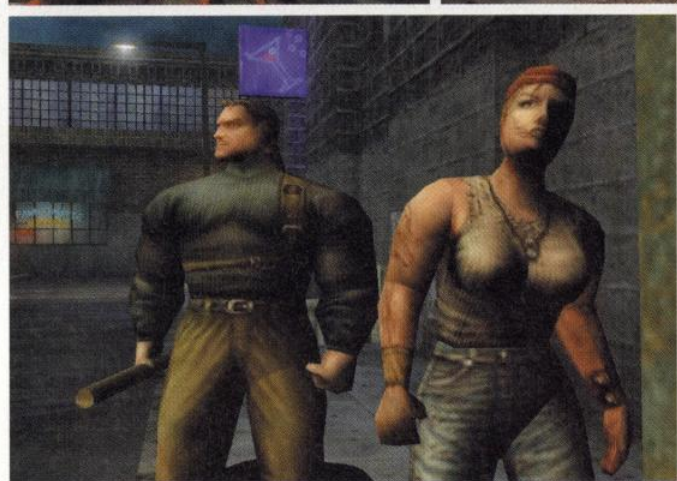
- MAY
- NHRA Drag Racing
 - Quake 2
 - Star Wars Episode 1: Pod Racer



Might & Magic VII



Quake 3 Arena

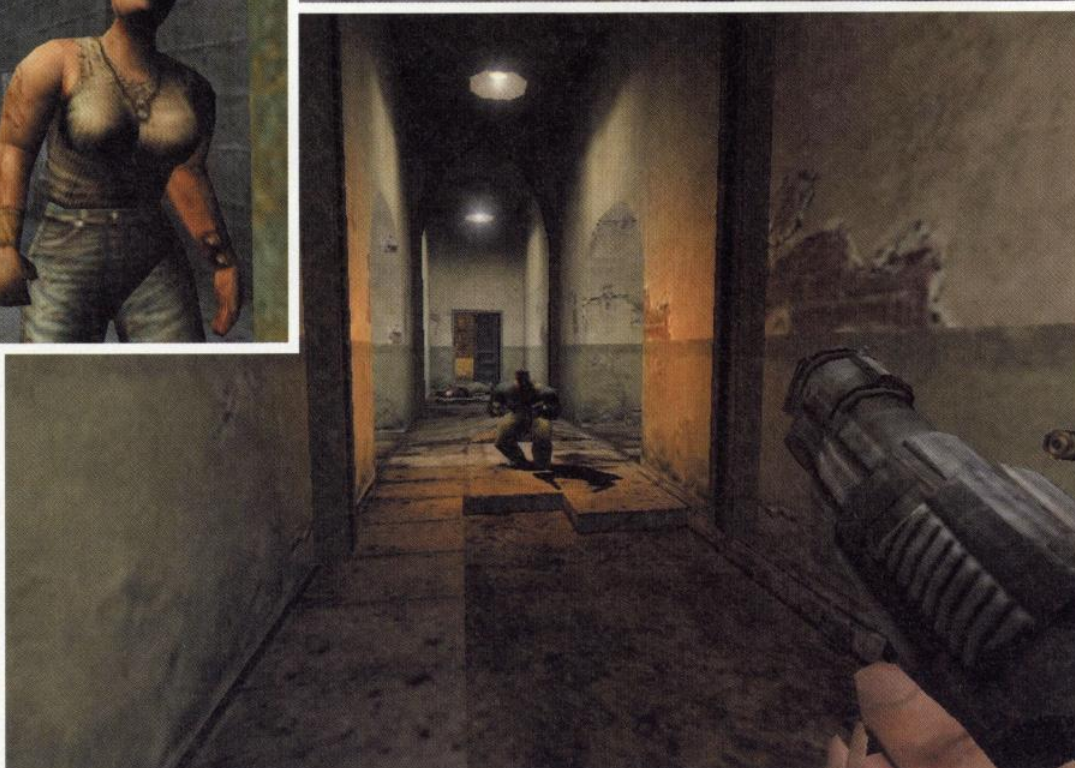


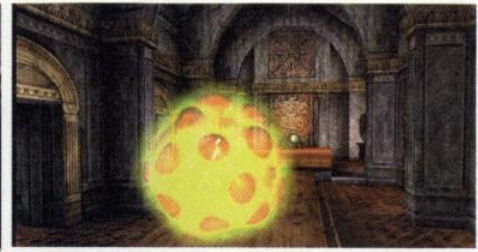
Kingpin

PC

INTERPLAY

The Quake 2 engine has been pushed to its limits it seems, as Kingpin simply looks incredible considering it's using a year-and-a-half old 3D engine. Set in the seedy back alleys of a gangster-ridden town, look forward to some cool fire-fights and a stylish array of weaponry.



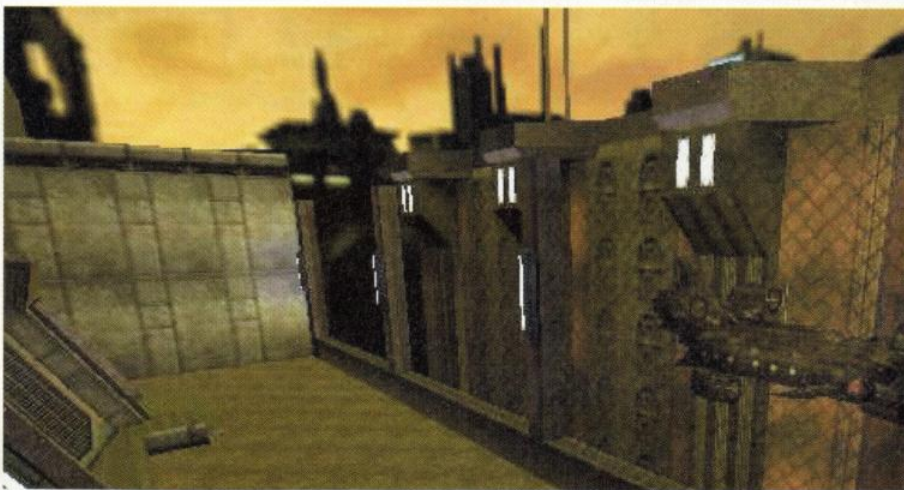


Wheel of Time

PC

GT INTERACTIVE

Based on the hugely popular series of books, Wheel of Time is an exciting mixture of strategy and First-Person action using the sexy Unreal engine. It was last year's "pick of E3" for most industry-types, and will no doubt be a stunner this time around also. We're kinding hoping it'll be released before then though!

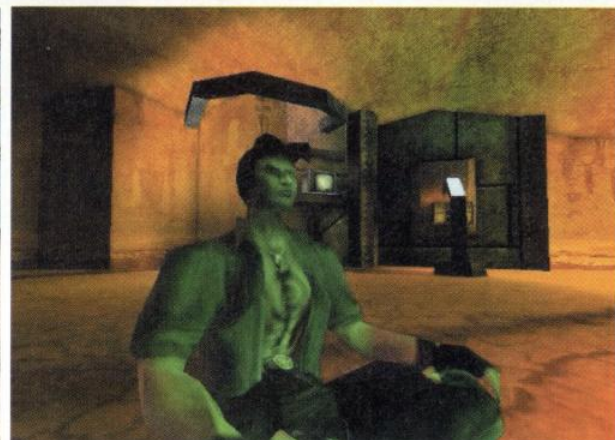


Prey

PC

GT INTERACTIVE

Another game lost in Development Hell. Prey was one of the most promising FPS games last year, but this far down the track it's potentially going to end up looking only as good as we expect it to be - not as mind-blowing as it may have been last year. Still, Prey has some interesting features and could yet surprise us all.

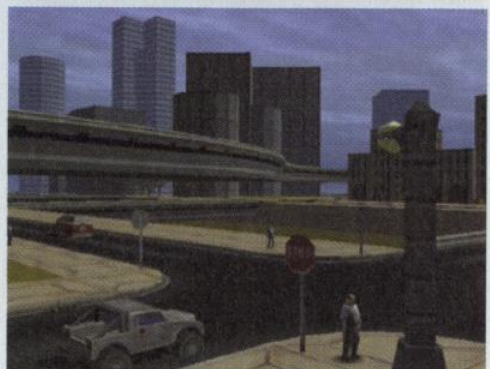
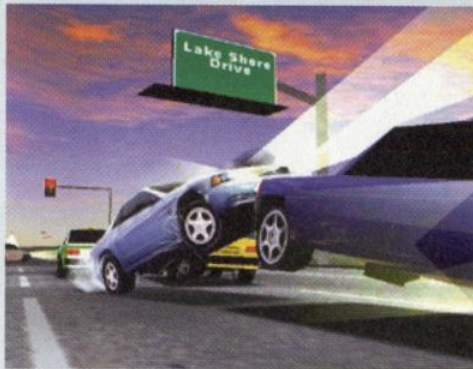
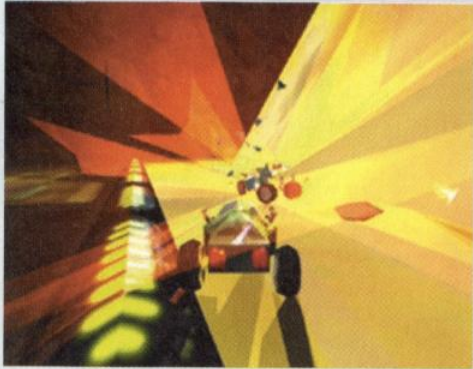


Once a year, Microsoft gather their development teams to their head office in Seattle to give a demonstration of their upcoming titles, they name this event, Gamestock. Hyper was there to get an extra early look at what Microsoft have on offer. Two years ago, Microsoft's games division used the catch phrase, "Microsoft Knows Games". At the time, this was the subject of much chuckling, but it was only a short matter of time before they dropped the somewhat arrogant slogan, and went about simply doing it right by taking on experienced game developers who had a proven track record. Soon enough games like Age of Empires and Motocross Madness appeared, and with some of the impressive titles on the way, Microsoft are emerging as a successful games publisher, rather than "That big company who is trying their hand at games".

Sto chopiling

The Games Garage

It would seem obvious that Microsoft believe there is a large enough market for car based titles out there, even after recent releases like Powerslide, Deathkarrz, and others. Three of their upcoming releases are car based, although one of them is more of a first person shooter that happens to involve driving cars. Interestingly, none of these games are sim style racers, so perhaps some market research has shown very few actual "sims" succeed.



Full Auto

Developer: Pseudo Interactive

Players: 1 - 16

Estimated release date: Sept - Nov

Many years ago, there was a pen and paper game called Car Wars, based on the idea of auto-vigilantes battling one another in custom built cars. This game has inspired a few computer games over the years, but most have been extremely lackluster. Lustrous is a word that springs to mind when you first see Full Auto, as this car combat game features some impressive lighting effects and shiny environmentally mapped cars.

Players choose from a diverse selection of car types, and then go about tailor making their vehicle for the arena or mission at hand, with engines, weapons and extras available.

The missions vary from straight out destruction, exploration, high speed chases, through to defending bases. As missions are completed, the player earns cash to spend on improving their vehicle. Some of the weapons available break away from the stock standard ideas - like the web gun which "sticks" the target to the ground or wall with a successful hit.

Besides simply racing and deathmatching, there is also a capture the flag mode, which is something rather different for a car based game. A good way to sum up Full Auto would be to call it a very souped up Vigilante 8 or Twisted Metal 2. The action is faster, the visuals sharper and more impressive. Should be a hit with those that like fast paced multiplayer action games.

Midtown Madness

Developer: Angel Studios

Players: 1 - 8

Estimated release date: June - Sept

To carry on the tradition of their "Madness" titles, we see another arcade racing title, this time with a very urban theme. Midtown Madness is a bit of a destruction derby style racing title set in the streets of Chicago.

There are a variety of racing scenarios, to help give the game a bit more dimension. We spent most of our time playing the waypoint mode, where you simply have to drive through a series of waypoints, in any order you like, in the fastest time possible. You can take whichever way you like so strategies develop once you get to know the area better (I'm sure the folks in Chicago will be rather good at this game). There's classic circuit racing (why you'd want to bother in a game where the whole novelty is that you don't have a circuit we don't quite know), free driving, and a cops and robbers mode.

To help add to the chaos, you're not only forced to deal with the other racers, but everyday traffic as well, so you could say it's a bit of a small scale Cannonball Run.

There's already talk of a follow up title set in London. Maybe it will be used as a simulator for taxi cab drivers.

Loose Cannons

Developer: Digital Anvil

Players: 1 - 8

Estimated release date: Mar - May 2000

Okay this isn't exactly a car game, but there are enough cars in the game for it to be thrown into the same basket. An overly simplistic way of describing Loose Cannon would be to call it a first person shooter where you can also drive a car.

The game is set in the near future after an economic collapse, and the United States has become totally crime infested. You play a mercenary who is up against the leader of a crime syndicate.

The action moves from city areas, and out into rural districts as well, with the player using vehicles to move from one mission location to the next. The city areas will feature traffic, people wandering about, and even a functioning police force.

There are 15 customizable vehicles, each having their own handling, and traits. Some vehicles may seem useless in most situations, but may be necessary for certain missions for getting around inconspicuously etc.

The potential for manhunt missions in this game are quite awesome, where you may be following someone in a high speed car chase, which ends up with you having to pursue them on foot into a building, or into some foothills or some other place you can't drive.

Should be an interesting tangent for those that like first person shooters.

The Online Onslaught

Here's a bold move, developing Internet only games. Microsoft do not seem afraid to go this way though, and with the "MSN Gaming Zone" they have plans to launch some killer "massively multiplayer" games. The downside here is, unless Microsoft set up Australian servers, we can't expect decent performance out of these games. Australia has a very high number of Internet users per capita, so perhaps once these Internet only games come out, Microsoft will invest the money in a server down here.



Asheron's Call

Developer: Turbine Entertainment

Players: 1 - thousands

Estimated release date: 3rd quarter '99

Here we see another online RPG in the making. If anyone out there has played and enjoyed MUDs, they will instantly warm to Asheron's Call. The game is played in a 3D environment, with an interface vaguely similar to Heretic II. While not having the quite the same sort of visual flair as H2, for an online RPG, this is definitely a leap forward.

The character creation system allows so many options on skills and appearance that each character created will seem unique. However this is not as impressive as some of the gameplay concepts that Turbine have come up with. To get around the problem of veteran players not wanting to give new players any help, there is an incentive system. A player can swear allegiance to a higher level character, and every time they earn experience points, the person to whom they have sworn allegiance also gets a small amount of experience too. This way, someone who helps people will reap the benefits as "weaker" players pass on a trickle of bonus XP, and it can work as a pyramid structure, so you can get XP from someone who is several steps down the chain of allegiance. To help prevent any one spell from being "the dominating force" in the game, there is a "magic economy". If a spell is cast frequently across the game world, then it becomes less potent. In MUDs, it was often a case of getting to a point where you learned a certain spell, and then you jumped drastically in power, in Asheron's Call, it will be far more balanced.

Of course, unless there is an Australian server available, it would seem unlikely that Asheron's Call will take off down here considering there is an Australian Ultima Online server.



Allegiance

Developer: Microsoft

Players: 1-350

Estimated release date: 4th quarter '99

If you liked Tribes, or at least the concept behind Tribes, and you're a fan of space combat games, then Allegiance should be of great interest to you. Allegiance not only offers online team based space combat on a scale far greater than ever before (like the simple skirmishes in games like X-Wing vs TIE), but also offers more variety in what craft you can pilot and what roles you can play. Ever wanted to be a turret gunner on a space station? You can. This is actually quite similar to Tribes, but with the numbers that Allegiance can handle, and the fact that it's a different style of game to actually play, this could be THE online team based game for all of you that aren't into first person shooters.

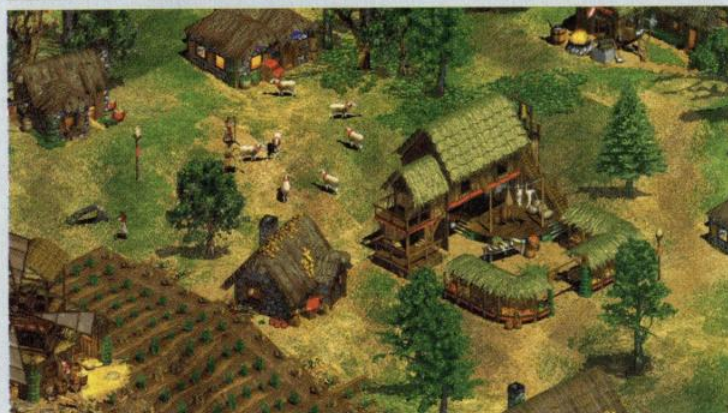
Allegiance will keep track of the efforts of individuals, and since the game will only be playable online on "the Zone" there will be a global ranking system, meaning you'll be able to see when the world's number one player logs on, etc.

To enhance teamplay concepts, as the players earn money within the game, they can choose how this money is spent for the team's tech tree development. Or alternatively, players can redirect their earnings to another player, so someone can take on the role of spending the teams earnings, thus creating a specialist role.

This was one of the most exciting titles at Gamestock in terms of what new things it could offer, but unless we see an Australian based server, this may be one we miss out on.

The Think Tank

With the success of Age of Empires, Microsoft seem confident that they can do strategy games right, and their course of actions seems like a split between something safe, and something new. The safe option was obvious, release a sequel to Age of Empires, and what we see here is the natural progression, Age of Empires II: The Age of Kings



Age of Empires 2: Age of Kings

Developer: Ensemble Studios

Players: 1-8

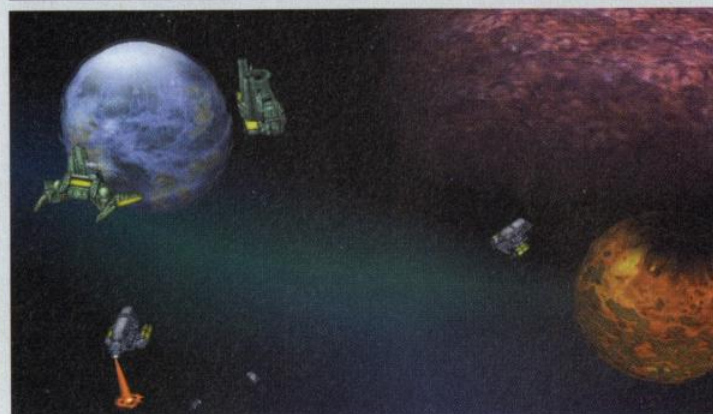
Estimated release date: Sep - Nov

Although it may not have been the best selling strategy game across the board, Age of Empires was definitely well received by the gaming community and has developed a sizable following. Good news for the fans, the sequel, Age of Empires II: Age of Kings, looks to include enough new features to make it a little more progressive than your average sequel.

The simple changes are the obvious ones you'd expect like improved pathing and AI, larger maps, hotkeys for unit groups etc. The more significant changes are 13 races to play as, with each race having very distinct differences in appearance (far more so than in AOE), and this also carries on to unique attributes, units, and technologies. The tech tree itself now has over 100 nodes, which is more than far more than you could develop in the course of one game, so using different tech tree strategies can have a huge affect on the outcome of the game.

As an alternative to simply crushing your enemies, victory conditions can also be set to victory by either economic supremacy, or by building and defending the wonders of the world (Civ anyone?). There is also an additional game type called Regicide, where the aim is somewhat like chess... Kill your enemy's king while defending your own.

Considering most strategy games on the horizon are featuring picturesque 3D visuals, perhaps Microsoft may hurry this one ahead to "beat the pack" so to speak, so as not to end up looking like the old school game in the new wave of pretty RTS titles.



Conquest: Frontier Wars

Developer: Digital Anvil

Players: 1-8

Estimated release date: Dec '99 - Feb 2000

It would seem Digital Anvil have come up with a very clever way to combat the common problem with RTS games... Ever noticed that once you amass a large number of units and send it forth, that once it has a couple of encounters, you can pretty much tell after the first fight whether or not this force can go on to wipe out the rest of the enemy forces? It's all too common that the strategy is all in amassing the units, rather than actually having to do anything clever with them. Conquest has a supply system, which prevents ships from being able to perform at their optimum after they start engaging in battles. You can keep a chain of supply ships going to your fleet, but of course you may need to escort those as well.

There are two races to play through the game with in single player, and four races available for multiplayer. Each race has its own traits and special units, similar to Starcraft.

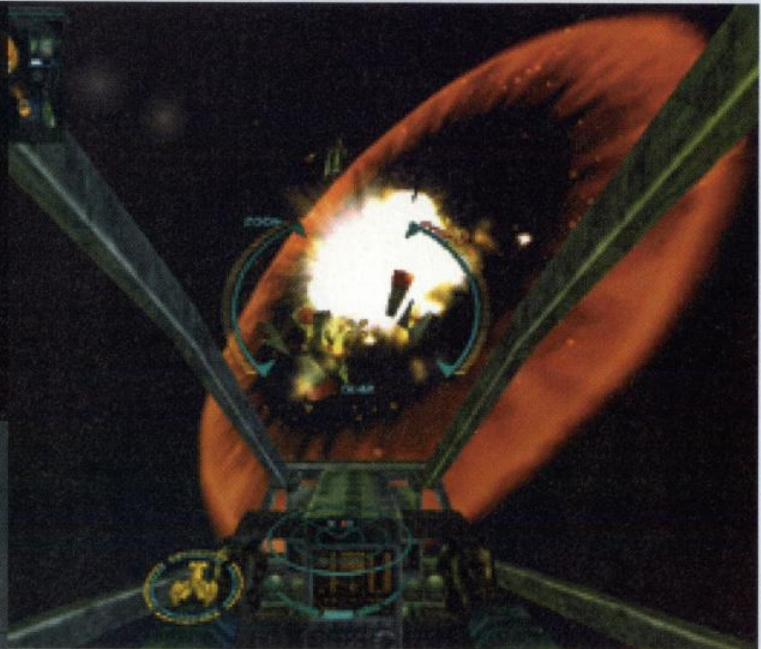
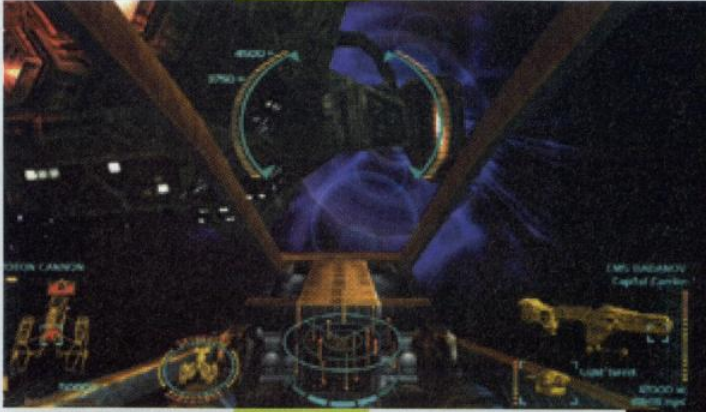
The interface is very much like that of Myth, where you can pan around, zoom in and out, etc. All the units are in 3D, but in terms of controlling your forces, it behaves like a 2D game, with units automatically positioning themselves at different heights, rather than the player having to arrange them.

Players also "develop" Fleet Admirals, who gain experience from battles won, and thus learn new tactics, and can go on to control larger and larger fleets. This helps makes the overall focus of the game more on strategic decisions, rather than lightning fast mouse clicking and interface control like in Starcraft.

It will be interesting to see how this ends up faring with Homeworld, another space fleet strategy game coming up soon.

The Space Race

Microsoft's "star" development team would have to be Digital Anvil, which is headed up by Chris Roberts, and Erin Roberts. The pair are best known for their work on the Wing Commander games. Two of their upcoming titles are "more of the same" from these two, but that is not a bad thing, because they seem like they're really set to take things to new heights.



Starlancer

Developer: Digital Anvil

Players: 1-8

Estimated release date: Dec '99 - Feb 2000

You could say that Erin Roberts is "carrying on the Wing Commander baton" with Starlancer. In fact, besides the break away from the "Colonel Blair" plotline, this could easily be mistaken as Wing Commander VI.

Predictably, this title has slightly better visuals than other space combat games to date (the most common trend in this genre). In most aspects Starlancer is not breaking new ground, rather it is simply doing it better in every major field. For example, there are more than a dozen craft you can pilot, and over 80 types of craft in the game in total, which is a far greater lineup than in any other space combat game before. Let's not stop there... There's 6,000 unique speech samples, over 25 minutes of FMV cinematics, and 40 music tracks to help make this a true audiovisual treat.

Digital Anvil claim that the game will feature far more "neutral activity" than we've seen in a space game, with other ships just "carrying on about their business", but this was not really implemented in the version we played.

Attention to detail seems to be a major part of the focus of this game, ranging from the ability to feed the fish in your living quarters, through to being able to see your gun turrets rotate as you fire (shells popping out and all) when taking an external view of your craft.

There is one new feature though, and that's the ability to play through the game as a multiplayer experience, rather than just as a single player game. No, we don't mean you can fly some skirmishes with mates, we mean you get to play through the whole plot with your friends. The developers claim you'll be able to save and still be able to continue if one of you can't show up for a particular session, resulting in an extremely versatile way of playing through the game.

Freelancer

Developer: Digital Anvil

Players: 1 to many (possibly 100+)

Estimated release date: 4th quarter 2000

Actually, the real draw card of all of Microsoft's upcoming games was one that we "weren't allowed to play". There were no screen shots available, however we will be receiving some at E3. The game in question was Freelancer, another Digital Anvil title, with Chris Roberts producing this outstanding looking title.

As the name implies, you play the part of a mercenary, and just for a change, Chris Roberts has set the game in space... All jokes aside, he and his team look to be doing it better than anyone else has before by a long shot. To point to the most similar game to Freelancer, you couldn't look past Privateer 2. Like Privateer 2, Freelancer is a game where you can travel from system to system, buying and selling commodities, taking missions, and from what I saw, unlocked a storyline.

There were four main factions controlling various systems, each faction being descendants from a nation of Earth, with the Americans, English, Germans, and the Japanese. There is also an alien race that dominates a small group of systems on the corner of the system map (it just screams interstellar war imminent).

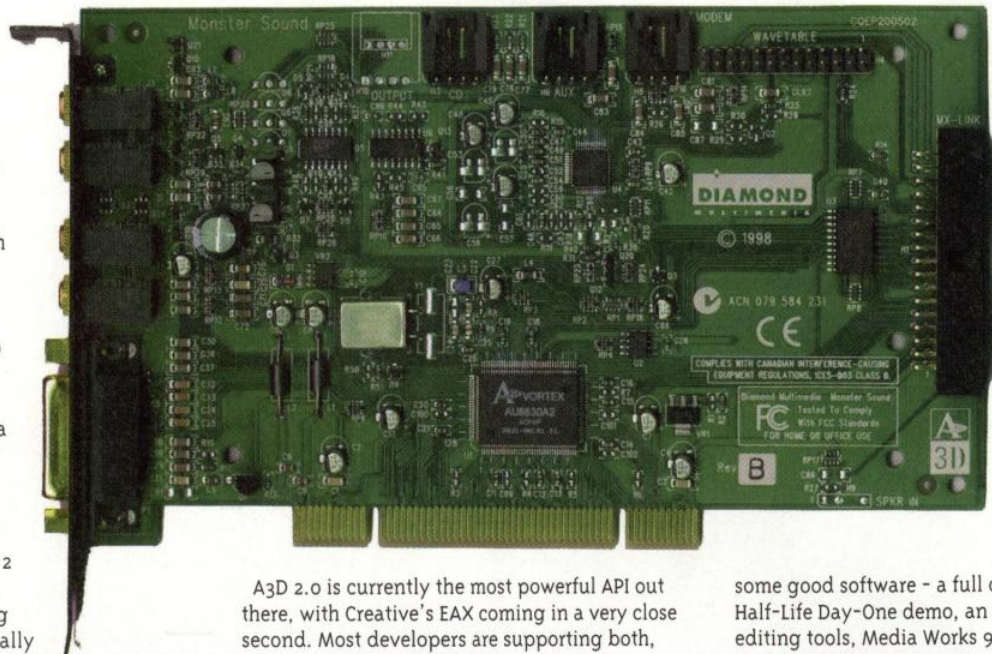
Visually, this game was better than any other PC title I have seen to date. The lighting was so frighteningly real. The demonstration we were given was more akin to watching a sci-fi film than a computer game. Besides the in flight visuals, things "on the ground" were also very impressive. Each player can tailor their character's appearance to suit. "What do you mean each?" I hear you ask... The thing that really makes Freelancer a potential legendary title is that it will support large scale multiplayer gaming. So in other words, you can log onto some ongoing server and fly around with heaps of other gamers, where everybody's actions have an affect on things like the economy, police activity, etc.

More news and info on this title after E3, although we can break the bad news to you already... this title is not due to be released till well into next year, possibly not till Christmas 2000.

MONSTER SOUND MX300

PC
TYPE: SOUND CARD
RRP: \$249
DISTRIBUTOR:
 DIAMOND MULTIMEDIA

The Monster Sound MX300 is the next in the Monster Sound series from Diamond, providing us with a fully A3D 2.0 compliant card. This PCI soundcard is extremely well designed, providing both CD and DVD Dolby Digital support, DirectSound3D and full Aural 3D 2.0 sound, with a hard-wired Vortex 2 processor on-board and 4 speaker output (with the option to upgrade with a daughter card). The Vortex 2 takes the load off your CPU when it comes to processing the audio, which will generally improve performance in most games - with Tribes I noticed a subtle framerate increase. The Vortex 2 provides 76 DirectSound 3D streams in hardware, meaning that it's never going to be straining to process everything a game can throw at it.



A3D 2.0 is currently the most powerful API out there, with Creative's EAX coming in a very close second. Most developers are supporting both, though EAX has the slight edge. A3D 2.0 is a superior API though, so it should almost definitely be supported in all the major gaming releases. A3D 2.0 has some very sexy features - besides positional 3D sound (things behind, above and to the side of you), A3D 2.0 can do wave tracing, in

some good software - a full copy of Recoil, the Half-Life Day-One demo, an MP3 player, WAV editing tools, Media Works 98, Stereo Recording Session, and the Zoran DVD software. The MX300 control panel also has a ten-band graphic EQ, which is great for tweaking MP3s or just a plain old audio CD. Installation was a breeze, and the cutting-edge sound quality was immediately apparent - highly recommended!

which sounds "bounce" off the architecture of your environment amongst other impressive features. You only have to fire up Half-Life with the MX300 to hear how amazing it sounds. The gameport on the card is also a cut above the rest, utilising DirectX acceleration circuitry to provide unparalleled peripheral response.

The MX300 also comes bundled with

THRUSTMASTER FORMULA SPRINT

PC
TYPE: STEERING WHEEL W/PEDALS
RRP: TBA
DISTRIBUTOR: PLAYCORP

Upon initial inspection the Thrustmaster Formula Sprint racing wheel presents itself well with a Formula 1 inspired design in both the wheel, with its F1 style paddles, and the pedals which are quite small, more like a real F1 than any family car. A firm feel to the wheel itself gives further good impressions, overall the design of the package looks good, and is only marred slightly by the choice of materials which were most likely chosen purely on a cost basis.

The wheel attaches to the desktop with two clamps that give a good grip preventing all movement in all but the most aggressive driving manoeuvres. However the pedals rely on five small rubber pads that may not cope well on surfaces like wooden floors, etc. The small size of these pedals may in fact lead you to try the true F1 driving style with left foot braking as moving your foot side to side to use these pedals is not very comfortable. The design of the pedals is one of the packages major flaws. The angle of the pedals demands the use of the arch on each foot, if you choose to use the ball of the foot the pivot point of each pedals makes the action uncomfortable.



The other big problem which takes some getting used to is the large dead zone in the centre of the wheel which feels like about 40% to 50% of movement which is even more significant when you consider that the wheel only has 180% of movement.

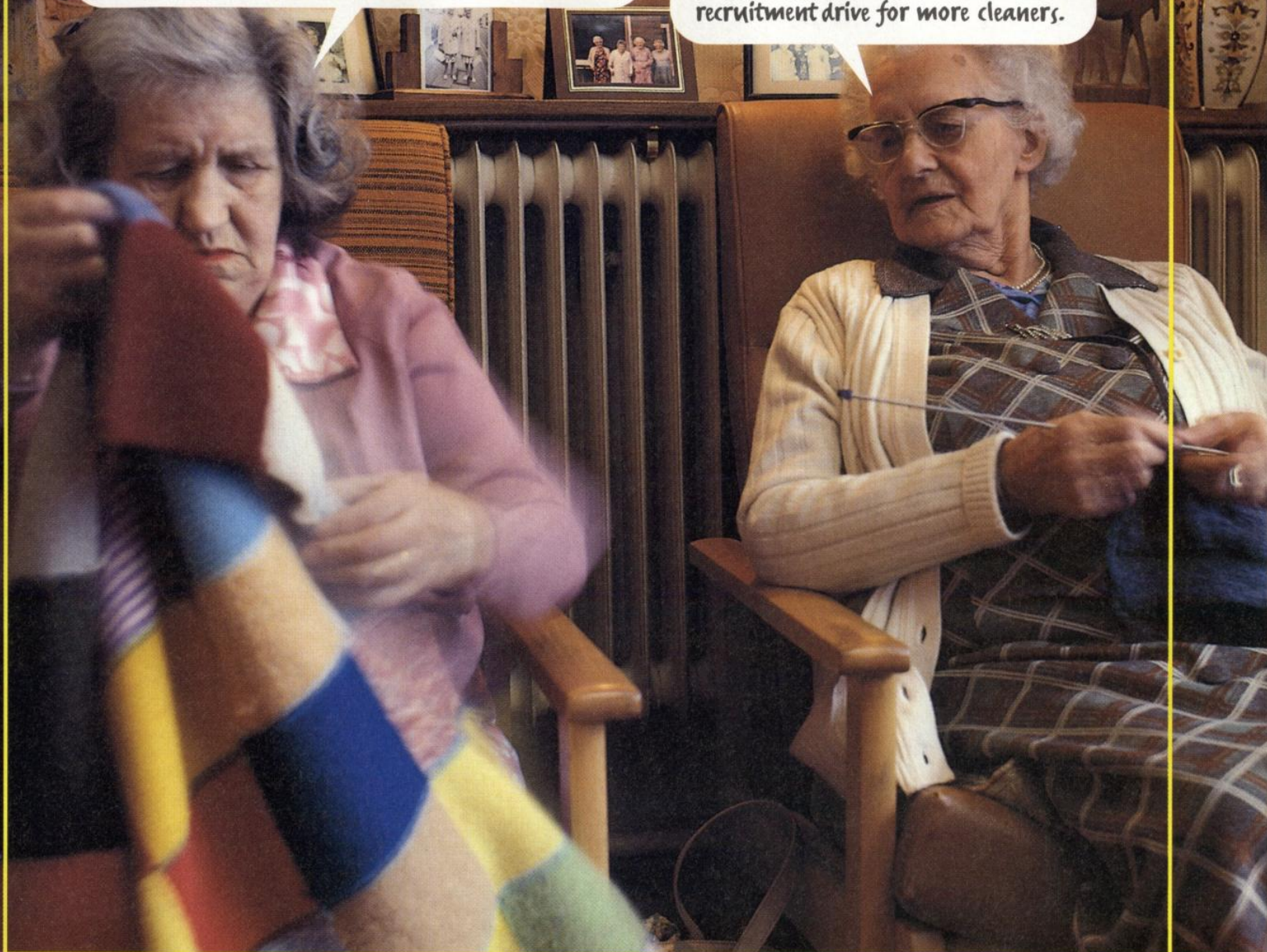
The wheel does sport the two paddles as well as 4 buttons all of which are programmable. This

makes for good useability whilst avoiding a situation where too many buttons could make things complicated whilst making that mad overtaking move

Overall the Formula Sprint could have been a fantastic controller but just a few design flaws really do lower the enjoyment and results in an average wheel and pedal package.

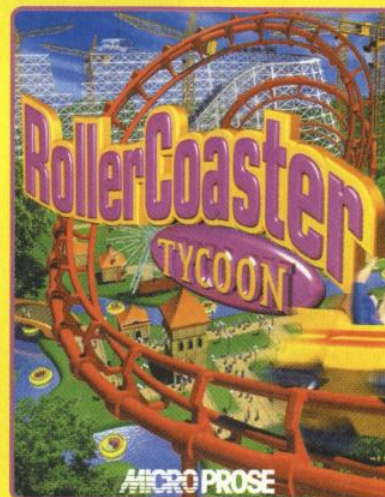
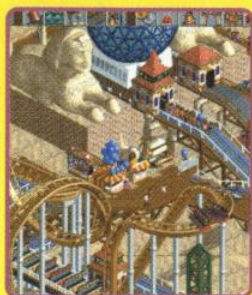
I can't believe it, I researched for months to get the ultimate Corkscrew. On the first ride, 2 people died of shock, and the other 32 threw up their hamburgers!

In that case, you'll have to lower the price, rename the ride and do a recruitment drive for more cleaners.



With Roller Coaster Tycoon, building the biggest, scariest rides ever experienced is only just the beginning. You've then got to manage the park as a successful, profit-making business; hire and fire staff, research new rides, set prices, advertise, monitor your customers' moods ... Sounds fun?

Sounds like there could be a Roller Coaster Tycoon in you itching to get out.



Roller Coaster Tycoon - a shrewd investment in long-term amusement.



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MICROPROSE

GAMESTER DUAL FORCE JOYPAD

PLAYSTATION

TYPE: ANALOGUE CONTROLLER

RRP: \$49.95

DISTRIBUTOR: LIVEWIRE

The Gamester PlayStation analogue pad is an alternative to the official Sony pad, but offering a few more features such as Turbo mode and Auto mode. Whilst the pad generally feels on par with the Sony pad there are some marked differences. The Gamester pad unfortunately is uncomfortable to hold due to some sharp edges in the moulded plastic near the shoulder buttons. After using the pad for extended periods, depending on the size of your hands, you may find it hurts to grip the pad in certain ways. The D-Pad also feels a little "squishy" to the touch, although it seems to respond well when in use which is the most important thing. The analogue sticks though could have been better. The tension in each stick is simply a bit too stiff, making it hard to execute precise and subtle movements. In comparison, the Sony analogue sticks feel as smooth as butter, so the Gamester pad doesn't quite match up in this regard. In terms of the pad's force feedback, it certainly does the job adequately. Considering the price of the Gamester joypad (it's ten dollars cheaper than the Sony pad) and the Turbo and Auto fire features (if they are important to you as a gamer) then this controller is certainly worthy of your attention. Hard to really recommend it over the Sony Dual Shock though.



INTEL PENTIUM III PROCESSORS

PC

TYPE: CPU

RRP: VARIES

DISTRIBUTOR: INTEL

With the AMD K6-3 CPUs appearing, Intel was faced with the need to step back out in front, possibly more in terms of business applications than anything else, but of course it affects us PC game nuts as well.

What is the difference between a Pentium II chip and a Pentium III? The main difference for gamers is SSE (Streaming SIMD Extensions), which is essentially the same sort of advancement that MMX was for the Pentium chips. In English, this means there is a new set of instructions developers can utilise to increase performance with multimedia and 3D applications. This is very much like with 3Dnow for the AMD CPUs, except the difference seems more profound. This will directly affect Internet applications and 3D gaming. With direct3D gaming, Rage's Dispatch has shown that it's possible to get a 100% increase in frame rate through use of SSE. It must be pointed out that this is an extremely CPU intensive game, so in games that are coded to run smoothly on low end systems, the difference will be less noticeable. Bottom line, when Quake 3 comes out, the person using the Pentium III CPU will have the edge.

The price? The price from the distributor to retail excluding tax is around \$807 for a P3-450 and \$1136 for a P3-500. As with all PC component purchases, prices from retail will vary dramatically, so basically you'll need to shop around.

Interesting points to consider... For starters, these CPUs are frequency locked, so you can forget about turning your P3-500 into a P3-600, it can't be done. Reason for this? Primarily because some dodgy retailers have been known to "pre-overclock" the CPU before sale, and sell it as a more powerful CPU than it is "safely" rated as. This results in CPU failure, and naturally makes Intel look bad, so this is their defence mechanism. The other interesting point of note is serial number recognition. This could be useful for security reasons, in the event a network may be set up to only allow certain serial numbered CPUs to have access to certain things, etc.

So is this the CPU to get? We'll only really know as we see how well SSE games and applications run as we see them in large numbers. It could turn out that Dispatch is a

freaky game that gets far more of a benefit from SSE than other games will, but considering the P3 CPUs ran this game faster than any other CPU WITHOUT SSE enabled, it would seem that P3 CPUs will be king of the hill until someone else can come up with a CPU that has an instruction set that allows the same sort of huge jump in 3D gaming performance.

If you're a business CPU shopper (why are you reading Hyper as a guide?!) then AMD K6-3 is a far more affordable way to get top end performance.



BUYERS GUIDE

The guide to purchasing the best value games hardware around!

	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	\$159.95	One of the more expensive wheels, but is solid and has Dual Shock support.

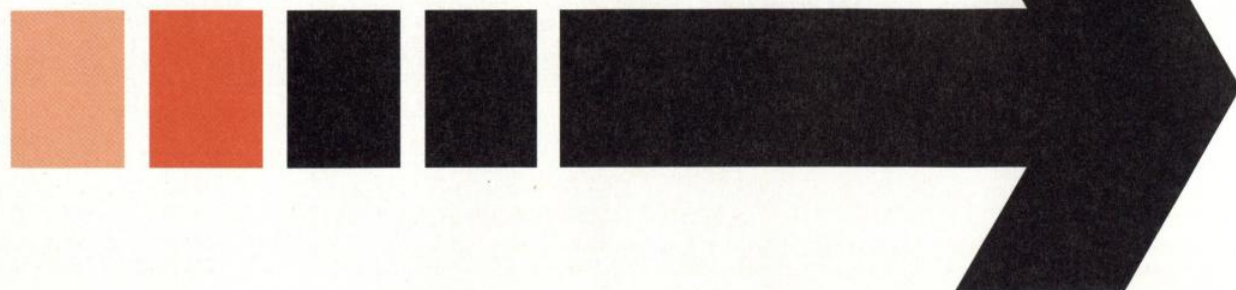
Pc			
3D Accelerator	Maxi Gamer Pheonix	\$299	Better performance than Voodoo 1 cards. The best cheap option to get 3D.
	Diamond Monster 3D II	\$399	The top end of the "affordable" 3D accelerators. Best results require a Pentium2, but P1 users will still benefit.
Sound Card	Professional Sound	\$89.95	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	Gamester Tremor/1MB	\$44.95	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 Pak 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	Gamester N64 Rumble Steering Wheel	\$149.95	Includes analogue pedals and a built in Rumble effect
	Mad Catz	\$129.95	Cheapest of the actual wheel controllers, includes a gear stick, and built in Rumble Pak. Not amazingly sturdy though.



Cliches

When you're falling in love with the latest game in the market, it's very easy to become so engrossed in the gameplay that you lose sight of what's realistic. And if you've played enough games within a particular genre, some things just become standard. The following is a list of Hyper's favourite gaming cliches, designed for the jaded gamer in all of us.



1st person shooter



WHO SAID THE ARMED FORCES ARE OVERPAID? LOOK AT WHAT THIS POOR GIRL HAS TO CARRY

Big arsenal phenomenon:

Not only can our intrepid hero carry as many weapons as he or she can find, they can also move at full speed regardless of the weight they are carrying.

Quick draw:

Even when changing between two guns that are both about as big as the player themselves, the amount of time required to do so is pretty much zero.

The considerate enemy rule:

All evil empires/demons/tyrants order their minions to place ammo and health packs

throughout their strongholds, even though their own weapons don't use these ammo types sometimes.

"Falling cat" rule:

All creatures falling a great height will remain in an upright position the whole way down, and not even have to bend their knees once they hit the ground. Falling 10 meters is no different to falling 10 cm.

Patient monster rule:

Regardless of how long your enemies have been stuck in this tiny enclosed space, they will always be awake, and ready for combat.

Faultline construction rule:

All enemy bases will be built on a faultline so as to ensure that a steady flow of lava can conveniently be piped into rooms throughout the levels.

The Aquarius Non-Intervenius Rule:

Even if you're wearing full body armour and carrying a rocket launcher, you can still swim around like a fish.

Tardis like body syndrome:

Regardless how tiny the body, approximately 200kg of blood and gore will fly in all directions when an enemy is shot to bits.

Hard of hearing:

The twenty monsters in the surrounding rooms will not come to investigate any sounds you make, even if you've just set off a small nuclear explosion. Sticking your toe around the corner in a dimly lit corridor will alert them however.

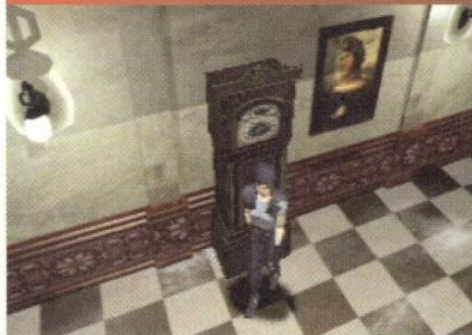
The Rocket Jump Rule:

Rockets can always be used to increase the height of your jump, even though you should theoretically be blown to smithereens by the blast wave.

The Armour from Hell Rule:

When you're wearing armour, nothing can kill you. Not even a direct hit from a rocket.

AdventureGame



LOUD CLICKING FROM CLOCK...
COULD IT MEAN SOMETHING?



The hidden key rule #1:

At least 2 keys in an adventure game will be hidden in a top draw of a desk that you shouldn't be going through.

The hidden key rule #2:

Your adversaries will never keep their keys in a place a normal person would, like their pocket.

Obscure developer's puzzle:

Every adventure game will contain at least one puzzle that only the developer will understand. Everyone else is forced to abandon traditional notions of logic and resort to trial and error.

The Water Obsession:

Always look behind the waterfall.

The Law of Sedative Solutions:

Situations that would be easily be solved with an act of extreme physical violence must be solved, instead, by a tediously passive yet outrageously implausible solution - such as chess pieces, multiple switches or magic passwords.

The Clock Insecurity:

Something always happens when the grandfather clock hits a particular time.

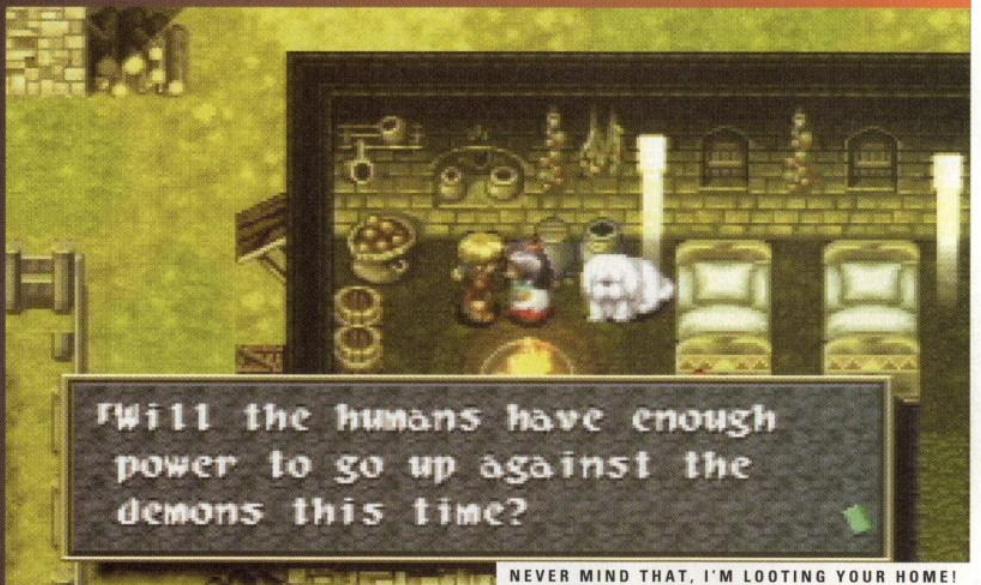
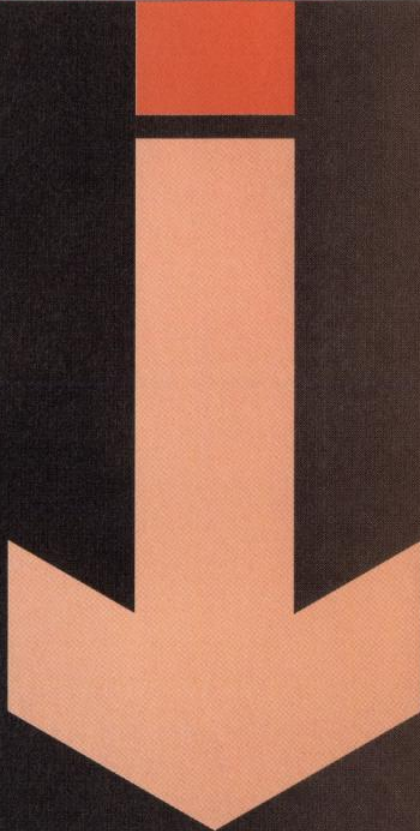
Ill-fitting Footwear Rule:

Every character in an adventure game either has badly-fitting shoes or a carrot wedged someplace uncomfortable, causing them to walk in a very unnatural fashion.

The Cryptic Art Phenomenon:

You can always count on a painting to have some kind of riddle.

RPG



Inhibition resistance law:

Regardless how many times you drink in a pub or tavern, your characters will not become drunk. All characters in medieval fantasy games have specially enhanced livers.

Broken record rule:

A horrible disease affecting the populace of towns in RPGs, where every time you speak to a character again, they say the same thing. Sometimes this disease affects the community as a whole, so different people all say the same thing.

Ugly sword rule:

Without fail, the best weapon that you can find in the game will look completely stupid, especially next to the second best weapon, which will look infinitely cool.

Extremist eating habit rule:

An RPG will either require the characters eat constantly to a point where it is annoying and obtrusive to interesting gameplay, or absolutely never.

The open house law:

When the adventuring party wanders into somebody's home, they will not be questioned or asked to leave, even if they start going through the resident's belongings.

The doomed parents law:

Any parental figures of members of the party will die during the course of the game. They will pass on any belongings they own to the party.

The lovesick puppy:

The most attractive female in the game will always fall in love with your main character. She will always be single, and have no hang ups. She will, however, require rescuing from the forces of evil at least once in the game.

Deaf ears rule:

Any attempts to decline a gift or some form of reward will always be dismissed. You will be given the reward/gift/help regardless of your desires.

Pointless purchase rule:

After spending all of your party's savings on an extremely powerful weapon, you will find it for free after the next battle you encounter.

Loyal minions rule:

Even after slaughtering hundreds of guards in plain sight, then next guard who walks along will not hesitate to throw himself upon your sword in the name of his soon-to-be-dead king.

Gold bearers:

Each monster in an RPG is actually part of a secret cult whose soul mission is to bring you gold pieces. Despite having absolutely no use for



money, monsters shall carry some with them. Even monsters without limbs or means to carry objects can have gold on them.

Exclusive club law:

If you've already got 6 characters, regardless of how desperately you need a newly-befriended character, you're going to have to kick out the character you spent the most time and effort on developing in order to induct this new character.

The Final Fantasy Rule:

It's never the final fantasy.

Fighting Games



THE OBLIGATORY BAD-HAIR USA FIGHTER



The Law of Equal Opportunity:

In the interests of political correctness, the lineup of characters in any fighting game will vary in sex, age, height, and weight. And judging from the buff male characters in rough-trade outfits, it would seem that differing sexual orientations are also catered for.

The altered gravity law #1:

As soon as a character is knocked off his or her feet, the gravity of the earth and moon will mysteriously switch, allowing you to land more hits into your opponent before they eventually float to the ground.

The altered gravity law #2:

Female fighting game character's breasts are not affected by gravity, regardless of size or weight. They remain horizontal or even upright at all times.

The Panty Law:

All fighting games contain at least one female character dressed in a skirt, typically the Asian schoolgirl, whose fighting movements just 'happen' to give you an eyeful of her panties.

The Ring-out life sucker rule:

Any character who steps out of the ring will

instantly fall lifelessly to the ground, even though he or she had a full life-bar just beforehand.

Absence of plot rule:

No fighting game shall ever have a decent or plausible plot, if any. However, fighting games may be used as the basis of a plot for a big-budget motion picture.

The Clone Law #1:

Every fighting game has at least one pair of characters whose moves are exactly the same.

The Clone Law #2:

In-game clones somehow always end up fighting when two people are challenging each other.

The Adamantium Skeleton Effect:

Nobody's bone ever breaks in a fighting game. Nobody's neck is ever broken accidentally.

Obligatory characters rule #1:

Every fighting game will feature a sagely old martial arts expert dressed in a simple gi.

Obligatory characters rule #2:

Every fighting game will feature a petite Asian

girl, usually dressed in her school uniform or with an option to dress her as such.

Obligatory characters rule #3:

Every fighting game will feature a burly unshaven American male with a bad haircut and a very annoying voice.

Forearms of steel rule:

The act of simply sticking out your forearm in front of you will prevent any bodily harm from attacks aimed at your head or torso.

The Charter of Male Victory Stances:

All male characters must say something that implies they are as stupid as they look.

The Charter of Female Victory Stances:

All female characters must either kneel, bend over, or present their cleavage, and say something either cute or slutty.

The Law of Solemn Respectability:

Even though it might be filled with cute girls, supernatural monsters, and fluffy animals, every fighting game contains one male character who is pure of heart, searching for truth and justice as he seeks to hone his fighting skill.

The Frustration Phenomenon:

Every fighting game has a cheap character.

Foot sweep law #1:

A 35kg girl will always be able sweep a 150+ kg behemoth off his or her feet with a simple swing of her leg along the ground, irrespective of the futility of every other attack.

Foot sweep law #2:

The computer will always fall for the foot sweep.

Foot sweep law #3:

A human opponent never falls for the foot sweep.

The Useless Blade Rule:

An opponent has to be impaled at least several times before they hit the floor and supposedly die. And even then, they'll happily bounce back to their feet for round 2.

REVIEWS



A sleepy time of the year as far as release schedules go, this is that "Christmas is well and truly over" bit. The fact that £3 is around the corner also seems to keep some games at bay for a while too, so we're not seeing the entourage of games like we were a couple of months ago.

Nintendo 64 owners may be a little miffed at the lack of titles on offer again. Castlevania is okay, but considering it's a medieval 3D action adventure, it's easy to compare it to Zelda, which is a very tough act to follow. Mario Party is also a little less inspiring than Smash Bros, prompting the question, where are the Nintendo 64 titles? The console is no longer young, there shouldn't be such a drought.

PlayStation owners don't have it any better really this month either, although Gex 3 is a decent continuation of the series, we're in one of those rare months when Sony aren't distributing a pillar title. Finally a PlayStation skateboarding game arrives, but like many of the snowboarding titles, it does the sport no justice.

So what is good this month? Well, Heroes of Might and Magic III is an absolute corker, as is Alpha Centauri, but for novice PC gamers out there, be warned these are both turn based strategy games, and they're not everyone's cup of tea. X-Wing Alliance is the game we can see appealing to the larger audience this month, as it perpetuates the high standard of quality that we've come to expect from Star Wars space combat sims in the past. In fact there was only one really disappointing title on PC this month, and that was Starsiege, which wasn't a bad game, but just wasn't quite the head turner that Starsiege: Tribes was.

Dan



GAME OF THE MONTH X-WING ALLIANCE

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NINTENDO 64 GAME OF THE MONTH CASTLEVANIA

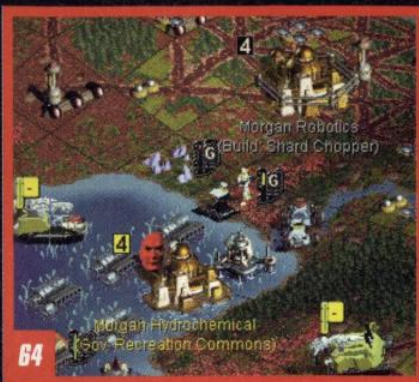
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PLAYSTATION GAME OF THE MONTH GEX 3

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THE HYPER REVIEW SYSTEM

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

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

Castlevania

Cam Shea was taught everything he knows by Buffy, which certainly helps explain the whip fetish...



Updating classic eight or sixteen bit titles for this generation of machines can be a tricky business. Nintendo's in house gurus have, on the whole, been very successful in their efforts to translate the classic franchises to the N64. Games like Mario 64 and Zelda 64 retain the magical essence that made the previous titles so much fun, whilst truly exploring the possibilities that an exponentially more powerful system (not to mention 3D mechanics) offers.

Konami held back from 3D with their first foray into the post sixteen bit world. Castlevania: Symphony of the Night for Playstation was a standout title that took the series to a new level whilst remaining true to its roots. Konami are now taking the plunge into 3D, and the result is... well, mixed. After an amazing fourteen games in the series, some fans may feel the change refreshing, whereas I suspect that many will be disappointed to see much of the lush artwork, animation and style lost in the translation.

HAVE AT YOU VAMPIRE SCUM...

Castlevania features two selectable characters. There's Carrie, the young girl talented in magic, and Reinhardt, the seasoned vampire hunter out to take Dracula down. The two characters are distinguished by their general

abilities (speed, jumping and strength) as well as weaponry. Carrie has a projectile attack and rings, whereas Reinhardt has the trademark whip and a dagger for close encounters. The characters also take slightly different paths, with three unique levels apiece.

2D GAMEPLAY IN A 3D GAME. HMM...

The gameplay is average. There's an over reliance on standard platform fare, a relatively small cast of enemies and poor AI routines. There are also limited pick ups, and only four subweapons - holy water, throwing knife, cross and axe.

Frustrating gameplay elements abound, including a lot of climbing and platform hopping. These elements simply don't succeed. There are far too many jumps over certain death, and difficult climbs. Replaying certain sections can get very annoying, and the levels aren't overly large either.

Whilst this kind of level design was acceptable in earlier Castlevania games, the jumps and climbs lack the kind of precision that they need to be anything but frustrating. The camera plays a large role in the many inevitable deaths, as it often sits in poor positions and even



GETTIN' GIBBY WITH IT

WHO'D CHOOSE EASY ANYWAY?

Castlevania has two difficulty levels (actually three - hard is hidden within the game!), but I don't recommend bothering with the easy mode, as the game can't be finished - the quest simply ends five levels in.



THESE CHARACTERS ARE A LITTLE LOOSE...

Character control is loose, but fine once into the game. There's the standard array of moves and they're easily accessible. Each character can jump, climb, hop back and to the side, crouch and slide. In addition to a primary and secondary weapon, there are subweapons that can be picked up. There's also a lock on feature when in combat. Unfortunately, its implementation pales in comparison to *Zelda's*. Although partly due to the nature of the game, combat tends to feel like it's out of the player's control. It's a little too automatic, and is often little more than a matter of running along and repeatedly pressing attack.



YOU'RE TOO UGLY TO LIVE!



Vincent:
He is not the sort
of opponent for
an amateur like you!



WHIP IT... WHIP IT GOOD



Normal view



Rosa:
I wish to
water the roses.
Please step aside.

obstructs your view. Much of the game is simply hacking and slashing coupled with the old "flick switch to open door" routine that has become dated. Even a day/night cycle fails to breathe life into the title.

On a more positive note, there are frequent save points, which help make the jumping sections more bearable, and plenty of well executed cinematics that move the story along, and give the game a level of sophistication. These cut scenes feature good direction and subtle touches.

THE STIFFS ARE A LITTLE STIFF...

The *Castlevania* games have traditionally featured inspired artwork and animation, and in these departments *Castlevania 64* falls somewhat flat. Some of the enemy animation is good, but the main characters are

rather stiff. The bosses are quite impressive though. The graphics are cleaner than many N64 games, but are low in detail and a little uninspired. There are some nice touches, but Konami simply haven't exploited the potential on offer.

An area in which *Castlevania* does live up to its heritage however, is in the sound department. The previous titles have always had excellent scores, and the music in *Castlevania* is no exception. Although sparse at times, it helps immerse the player in the game's dark world. The sound effects are also first rate.

Despite the many criticisms, *Castlevania* is a competent title and a fun game, it just feels like a distant relative of the series that has had so many gamers glued to their screens for so many years.



AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Action/Adventure
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Konami
PRICE:	\$99.95
RATING:	TBA
SUPPORTS:	Mem pak

PLUS

Vampire tonking action, and cool cut scenes.

MINUS

Could have been markedly better in gameplay and design.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
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79	86	80
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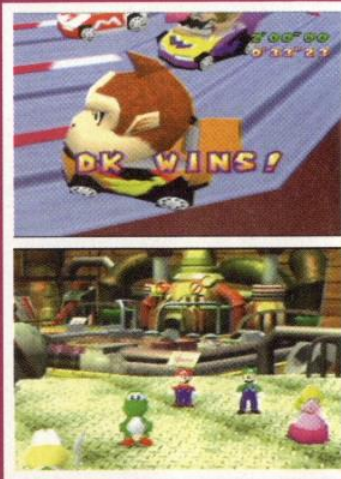
OVERALL

80

Castlevania has lost some of the magic in its journey to 3D, and in the post *Zelda 64* world, is definitely a try first title.

Mario Party

It's me Mario... er no, **Cam Shea** actually.

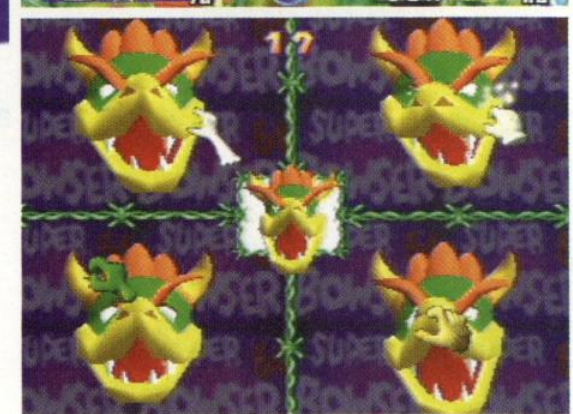
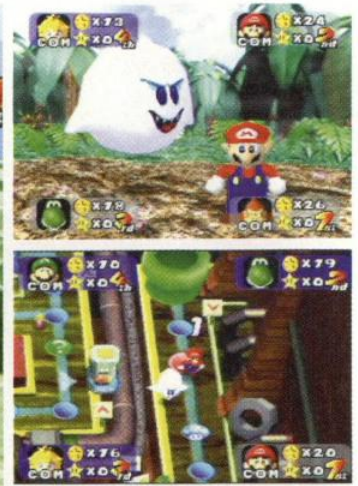


WHERE DO CONTROLLERS GO WHEN THEY DIE?

I've already had a couple of controllers croak on me, but Mario Party looks set to add a few more to the graveyard out back. You see, many of the mini games revolve around spinning the analogue stick as fast as you possibly can, and they're already such fragile dang things. The sensible thing to do is to get each person playing to bring (and risk) their own controller.



C'MON TOADIE, GIMMIE A KISS



The genre that no one takes seriously - interactive boardgames, has been given a new lease of life. Mario Party will not be to everyone's liking, but credit to Nintendo and Hudson for providing the gaming public with an interesting take on the four player gaming experience.

Mario Party is set out much like a board game, with six characters - Mario, Luigi, Yoshi, Wario, Peach and Donkey Kong, and six (plus two unlockable) boards to play on. Each board is based around a character's theme, like Peach's Birthday Cake, Wario's Battle Canyon and Luigi's Engine Room, and have a recognisable theme, tricks and traps as befits the character.

The goal of the game is simple - to amass more stars and coins than your opponents. Sessions are always played as a four player contest, so computer players fill in if you don't have enough friends over. Game boards are radically different, with all manner of different gameplay devices.

GO DIRECTLY TO GAOL PEACH. DOESN'T REALLY WORK, DOES IT?

Once into the game, the mechanics are very simple. Each character rolls a number from one to ten, and moves the according number of spaces. There are all manner of different squares to land on, some good, some bad. You may receive coins or have them taken away. You may win an extra turn or lose one, you may play a mini game,

meet mishap with Bowser, and so on. There are also other characters hanging around on the board. Boo, for instance, can steal coins or stars from other players, whereas Toad is the star merchant, and if you have enough coins, you can buy one each time you see him.

YOU'LL NEED THREE FRIENDS TO PLAY THIS GAME PROPERLY... DOH!

After each player has had one role of the dice, a random mini game is played. This is where the competition really heats up. All the players are involved, but depending on the space that each player has landed on, games can be 3 vs 1, 2 vs 2, all characters working together or all characters against each other. There are over 50 of these mini games in all, and they range from great fun to rather poor. They are all quite simple, and cover every-



MARIO KART ON DREAMCAST



thing from frantic button mashing events (press a button the fastest) to simple puzzles and platform style games. Generally speaking, the controls are a little sloppy, but the variety of silly ideas is impressive.

Some cool mini games include a skateboarding run where you have to beat the others to the finish line, all while jumping over blocks and trying not to fall off the path that's rapidly disintegrating behind you. Another is like a variant of Kai's Power Goo where each player is given a picture of Bowser and must morph his face to match the example. Yet another involves blowing up huge inflatable Bowsers. The winner is the character who pops him first!

HUDSON DON'T POLISH MARIO AS MUCH AS NINTENDO DO...

Mario Party isn't overly polished graphically. The boards look damn good, as do some of the mini games, but others are rather rough. Who cares though? Certainly not the friend that you're lambasting over the head for maliciously stealing a star near the end of the game.

There are three different length settings and games can take between an hour and four hours. At the end of a

game, an additional three stars are awarded, and the winner is declared. Whether the winner is deserving or not is always debateable. Although skill is involved in some of the mini games, hard earned coins and stars can be lost in the twinkle of an eye through nothing more than luck. This doesn't matter so much, as the riling and dissing that goes on between players is entertainment enough.

A BORED GAME? NO, IT'S NOT MONOPOLY...

Mario Party has more depth than one might assume. Not only are two more boards unlockable, but after each game, all the coins earned during the game can be saved in the mushroom bank. Once you've saved enough, you can buy your favourite mini games to play at anytime, or introduce many extra features into the game.

Mario Party won't appeal to the hardcore gaming crowd. The random nature of winning and losing, coupled with the slowish pace, will prove more frustrating than fun. That's not to say that Mario Party is purely a kids game though. I'd recommend it to almost anyone interested in a none too serious four player fest. Once you've accepted the mechanics of the game, you may discover a strangely addictive and social game.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action/Puzzle/ Board game thingy
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: Nintendo
PRICE: \$99.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Rumble Pak

PLUS

Lotsa mini games, lotsa friends, lotsa fun!

MINUS

Little skill involved, a VERY lonely one player experience.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

78 78 80

OVERALL

79

Mario Party is a game that you'll either love or hate. Give it a go with three friends to find out.

Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko

Kevin Cheung couldn't resist the idea of rescuing a Playboy centrefold...

ALTERNATIVES

Gex 3 is one of those games with universal appeal, as the mascot-based action appeals to younger audiences while the humour and hard-core platform action will probably appeal to slightly maturer audiences. Spyro is the first obvious alternative for the kids out there, but MediEvil is easily the classier product out of all of them.



ELEMENTRY MY DEAR GECKO



Ever since Spyro proved that the PlayStation is capable of vast three-dimensional action games of the Mario 64 vein, many companies have since made their own attempt at a similar game of their own. That's how games like MediEvil came about; and even though Crash 3 isn't really a fully immersive 3D game, it still had some pretty impressive visuals. In any case, Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko is the latest offering for the genre, bringing with it Gex's own brand of wiley humour and off-beat satire. Is it as good as Spyro or MediEvil? In a manner of speaking, yes; but there are certain failings that action-game pundits will want to take note of.

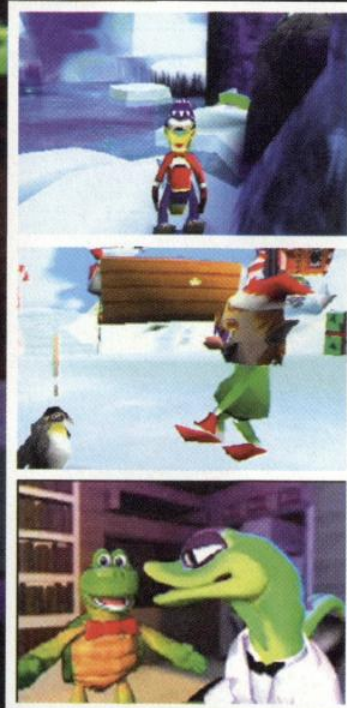
BABES IN CYBERSPACE

In this latest instalment of Gex, our brave lizard-protagonist is a super spy on a mission to rescue a very blonde and very well-endowed Playboy centrefold from a Virtual Prison. Those of you who are accustomed with the likes of Spyro or Banjo Kazooie will be in familiar territory as Gex must travel into different levels in search of magical remote controls, which should eventually grant him access to other levels and ultimately wherever the damsel in distress is being held. In the process of finding these remote control devices, Gex will also have to complete different sub-quests within each level.

Gex 3's gameplay is brought to life by some very impressive graphics. Much like Spyro and particularly MediEvil, the use of more efficient texture compression methods has allowed for the creation of some of the most magnificent 3D environments on the PlayStation. There are a lot of soft and coloured textures that give both the characters and environments a well-rounded look. To give you an idea of the majesty and detail behind the backgrounds in Gex 3, you have to understand that games like Spyro and MediEvil got away with using copious amounts of repeating textures because of the inherently bland nature of caves, grass, and so on allowed for it. Gex 3, on the other hand, is much more intricately designed. You could walk into a library, and it would be adorned with bookshelves, carpet, chandeliers, wood panelling... none of which would get away with repeating textures. Heck, there are even some instances of gorgeous reflective texturing along marble floors!



HEY GEX... WHILE YOU'RE DOWN THERE



GRAPHICAL COMPROMISES

The sheer level of detail only becomes apparent when you switch to first person mode and look at the action from any angle you choose. The disappearing point stretches all the way to the opposite end of the area, and you can see where absolutely everything is located. This is as distinct from Spyro, which used soft pop-up and a close disappearing point, which made it impossible to familiarise yourself the overall environment.

The drawback to this high level of detail is a very harsh one: the large amounts of textures and geometry is pushing the PlayStation's warhorse processor very hard, which has resulted in dropped frame rates and slow-down, which further translates to slightly jerky controls.

Even so, Gex 3 comes off as a highly polished and entertaining game. A lot of its appeal has to do with the satirical humour and wise-cracks made by Gex, which are all related to the theme that Gex is playing under. The Control Room, for instance, looks like Joel Schumacher's ungodly version of the Batcave, while the Sherlock Holmes level resembles something out of Jumanji. The wise cracks are all mildly funny, which adds a lot of character to the game. Unfortunately, there is so much repetitive wise-cracking that there will come a point where you'll wish Gex would just shut his hole.

In the end, there is a very cruel reality that the designers of Gex 3 are going to have to face: a joke can only last so long, and graphics mean nothing without properly-executed gameplay. To put it bluntly, the gameplay borrows heavily from Banjo Kazooie, but has neither the flow or depth of control (Gex has a 'very' limited number of moves). The blue-collar humour sustains a little interest, but it's not something that carries the game. Gex 3 is still a pretty good game. If the control problems were fixed, it might've scored a rubber stamp.



AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	3D Platformer
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Crystal Dynamics
PRICE:	\$89.95
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	Dual Shock

PLUS

Excellent visuals and a nice sense of humour to break up the seriousness of it all.

MINUS

Highly unoriginal in terms of gameplay, and there's limited depth in character controls and moves.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90	82	83

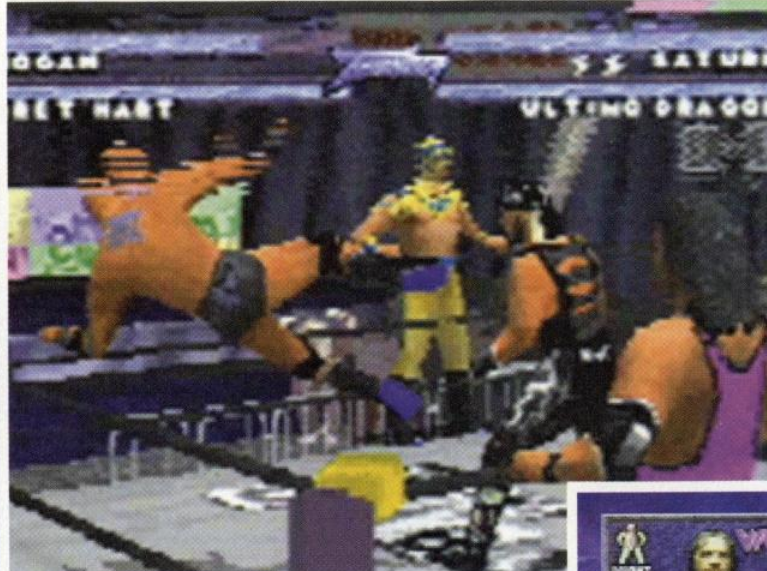
OVERALL

83

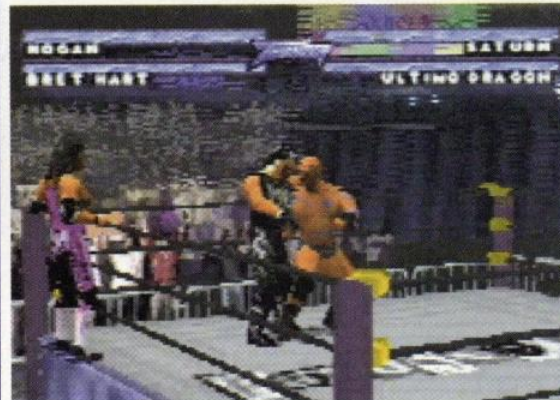
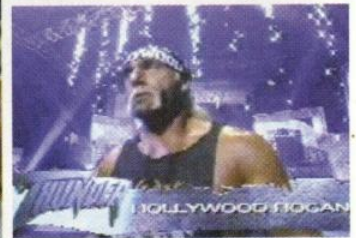
A decent platform game with decent humour. The framerate can't be helped but they could've at least given Gex more moves.

WCW/NWO Thunder

He gets around like he's the God of Thunder, so we let **David Wildgoose** let loose on this one...



ROUGH TRADE HOGAN



JUST PICK THE ONE YOU HATE THE LEAST



Without doubt the funniest thing about this World Championship Wrestling farrago is the fact that - beneath the homoerotic leather tights and hilarious gurning faces, the ludicrous make-up and theatrical pratfalls, and the utterly fantastic names like Macho Man Randy Savage, Rowdy Roddy Piper or, my favourite, Buff Bagwell - these guys are actually real people. Don't know about you, but I find it truly surreal to think that I exist in the same world as someone called Diamond Dallas Page or Hollywood Hogan. On TV, they're comic book superheroes brought to life, hamming it up to the increasingly insane crowd and milking such hysterics for all its worth. Out of the ring, they're just regular blokes who go home to the wife and kids and maybe even unwind sitting on the couch with the PlayStation switched on. What would they make of THQ's latest wrestling game, I wonder?

GIVE IT TO ME BABY, U-HUH U-HUH

No doubt they'd be thrilled by the lavish presentation on display in WCW/NWO Thunder - which, as an aside, isn't exactly the catchiest game name I've ever seen, but never mind. It's all here, from the dazzling clips of our well-oiled and artificially tanned gladiators making their

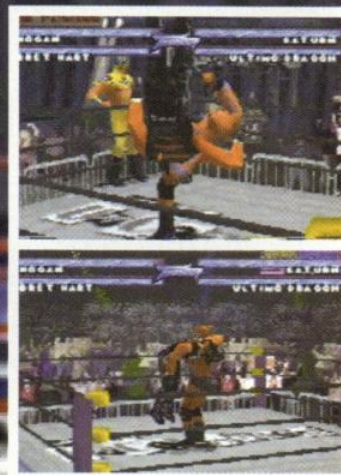
glamorous entrances before each bout to the amusingly camp taunts given by every wrestler on the selection screen and the TV blokes providing a level of insightful commentary rarely attained by most sports games. You may read that last statement as ironic, if you wish. From the opening titles to the post-bout celebrations, Thunder simply screams its campness loud and proud. And, hey, if that's what turns on red-blooded American males (and their pre-teenage sons who made this the best-selling PSX game in the US over January), then good luck to them, I say.

You can begin by testing your mettle in the single player tournaments. The aptly-named TV Title challenges you to survive five successive matches against increasingly tougher opponents, while the US Heavyweight championship goes two better with seven bouts-in-waiting. Of course, the expert player is unlikely to turn down the opportunity to claim the World Heavyweight championship by defeating the combined might of ten opponents. Forgive my ignorance, though, but since all the wrestlers are American anyway, what's the difference between

the US and World titles? Whatever the answer may be, even on the default difficulty, winning either is a tough enough task. The other play options can be used by the solo player, but, as you would expect, all will be better appreciated by two players. The Battle Royal is basically an every-man-for-himself fight to the death, so to speak, with four blokes entering the ring at once. More tactically minded players can opt for the Tag Team bout, while the perverse among you will enjoy the Cage Match which, pleasingly, takes place in a huge cage. Yet the obvious problem is that all these are limited to a mere two players. This is a game that should surely have included multi-tap support.



PEOPLE PAY TO SEE A BUNCH OF BOOFY BLOKES IN THEIR UNDIES



Visually and aurally, Thunder is a mixture. The wrestlers appear very solid and somewhat realistic, yet are let down badly by clunky animation. The stadiums, while packed with much to catch your attention (crowd chants

are a particular delight), are typically messy. Speech is used well throughout the game and, overall, I think justice has been done to the atmosphere of the "sport". Where the game really suffers, though, is in the gameplay. The controls are stiff and very unfriendly, while the wrestlers move far too slowly. Frequently, you'll be left cursing the overly complex button combinations for the special moves that each wrestler possesses. When not doing that, you'll instead be deploring the small amount of moves available in the first place. Where's the long term challenge in a fighting game where each character has only a handful of moves? The addition of weapons thrown into the ring from the crowd spices things up to a degree, and it is fun to whack someone upside the head with a baseball bat or water cooler, but Thunder simply lacks the sheer variety and playability that any number of PSX fighting games already boast.

WCW/NWO is faithful to a fault. Like the wrestling itself, this is a showy, but ultimately shallow and superficial gaming experience where the novelty will wear off pretty rapidly. With a lack of long-term gameplay, Thunder is probably an ideal game for a rent and a few laughs. Don't expect more and you won't be disappointed.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Fighting
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: THQ
PRICE: \$TBA
RATING: TBA
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

PLUS

About as close to the full WCW experience as your PSX is going to get.

MINUS

Weak controls and few moves means a limited game. Only for one or two players.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY
64 70 60

OVERALL
63

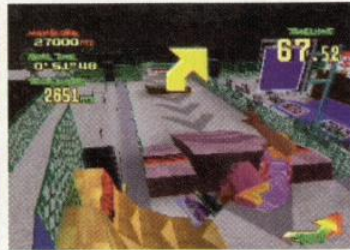
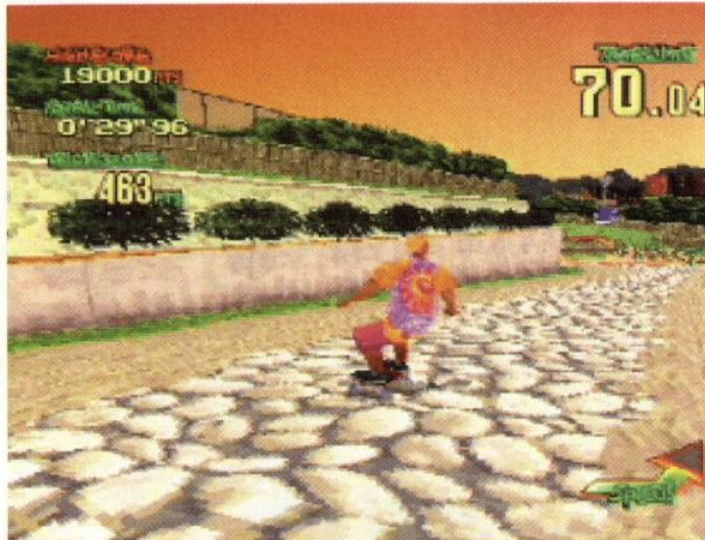
Doesn't offer quite as much as other wrestling games out there.

Street Sk8er

Cam Shea had to name all the members of the Bones Brigade to get this review...



OFF TO THE CHIROPRACTOR TOMORROW?



AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: Skateboarding
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: EA
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Mem card, Dual shock
PLUS Skateboarding on PlayStation.
MINUS A piss poor representation of Sk8ing on PlayStation.
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY 65 72 68
OVERALL 68
Skate or Die on the Commodore 64 is a more accurate portrayal of skating, and was more fun to boot.

Well, a Playstation skateboarding game has finally surfaced amongst a blizzard of snowboarding titles. Unfortunately, Street Sk8er does very little to differentiate itself, and in the end may as well be a rollerblading game.

Street Sk8er was developed in Japan, then snapped up by EA for release out here. Rather than tinker with the mediocre arcade gameplay and tiny track count, however, EA decided to muck around with more peripheral features. The dope turntablist soundtrack, for instance, has been replaced by a reasonably competent skate-band fest soundtrack. They've also done little stuff like adding Powell boards from the 1998 range (although there's no difference between boards) and EA banners and so forth trackside. In a strange move, Street Sk8er features rumble support but not analogue control.

WHAT ELSE IS UP OUR GOATS?

What really gets up our goats though, is the shallow way that EA have attempted to add longevity to Street Sk8er. In the Japanese version, each of the three runs had many branching paths. In our version, the branches have been closed and must be progressively "unlocked" by beating the game with each character. New characters and boards must also be unlocked.

"There's nothing wrong with that" I hear you cry. In principle, you're right, but the multiple paths are one of the only redeeming features in Street Sk8er that place it on the fun side of mediocre. Without them, the game is far less appealing, and the process of unlocking them wears thin fast.

Street Sk8er has gameplay from a bygone era - not only of gaming, but of skating as well. It's highly unlikely that anyone who skates seriously would enjoy this game. There may be casual skaters, or non skaters out there who would dig it though.

The reason being that the gameplay is simplistic with no real depth to the tricks. You're presented with three street runs and a few typical stunt courses like a bowl and a ramp. The courses lack any real creativity and revolve around huge air and complex looking (but overly simple to perform) tricks. You can grind on benches and rails as well, but the layout of each track is pretty appalling.

THIS AIN'T FREESTYLE...

Aside from the simplicity of the trick mechanics, the other big problem is that you can only bust tricks off "designated" ramps and objects. Thus, even though you have this huge floaty ollie, you can't pop 360 flips when skating along on the flat, try out innovative runs, or even use natural path undulations to bust tricks off. Street Sk8er also sports some bland graphics, terrible handling and absolutely appalling commentary. Not only that, but the two player mode is turn based rather than split screen, which kinda defeats the purpose.

Like I said before though, as a senseless arcadey diversion Street Sk8er isn't too bad, but if you have a passion for skating, you won't want to see how this game disrespects it. Let's just hope that "Thrasher: Skate and Destroy" or "Tony Hawk Skateboarding" do this diverse and skilled sport justice.

Monster Seed

He's often accused of being super deformed, but that's never stopped **Cam Shea**...



HAVE AT YOU... I GUESS

Monster Seed is definitely one for the more hardcore gamers out there. You play Daniel (now there's an appropriate name for a young warrior out on a quest) and the basic gameplay involves hatching, breeding and raising monsters, then summoning them as allies in turn based battle sequences. We're not just talking Final Fantasy style turn based though, we're talking the whole gridmapped "move three paces forward, then one left, then use this item" system. It's not exactly fast paced, but there's a fair amount of strategy, and the sheer number of moves and monsters will have some players quite excited.

Daniel? Ya might as well call him Meego...

The fights are tied to an RPG-ish quest revolving around rival gangs who are trying to take over and tap a lucrative vein of monster seeds buried in a mountain near the town of Rempearl (yes, I know how ludicrous that sounds). In typical quest fashion, Daniel must take on the robbers, as well as perform tasks for the villagers, and compete in monster fighting tournaments in the village. Just like the sixteen bit games of this type, Monster Seed has no spoken dialogue, but scrolling text boxes that pop up on screen. The text is mostly pretty stilted, and conveys about as much personality as the graphics. Especially weird is the way that enemies that you've never met before often repent on their death bed, saying stuff like "in my heart, I thought of you as my big brother..."

Hatching monsters is easy and a lot of fun. Whilst

not as free form as Monster Rancher (where you can pop a CD in the drive to determine what monster you'll get), there are many variables that determine your monster. First, you must pick a seed, then choose the ingredients, then set the hatching temperature. All these parameters determine not only what type of monster hatches, but its predisposition and level of ability in a whole host of areas. There are over fifty different monster eggs to find, and almost one hundred monsters to spawn. Once in battle there are around 150 fighting commands and 200 magical commands. This all translates to some funky monsters, cool attacks and spells, and interesting fights.

The graphics are old school, and none too impressive. The backgrounds that the intrepid Daniel treks through are pre rendered and nice enough, but the super deformed characters are simple, move in a clunky way and don't really fit in with the background illustrations. The graphics can be charming in a simple way, but are basically out of date.

Obviously though, graphics aren't what will compel a gamer to buy a title like Monster Seed. It's the depth that the game offers. Along with this depth though, comes a very slow game, and you'll need some persistence to really get into it. You'll also need a fair amount of patience (the text that's constantly popping up is annoying, and the fights can take forever), so if you're into more action oriented games, stay away.

AVAILABLE: TBA
CATEGORY: Turn-based Adventure
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: Sunsoft
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Mem card, Dual shock

PLUS

Immersive, plenty of depth.

MINUS

Slow pace, simple graphics.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
70	68	74

OVERALL

74

For those with a lot of time on their hands, and a love for hatching monsters!

Heroes of Might & Magic III

He looks pretty good in chainmail, so **Eliot Fish** was sent off to fight this battle...



NEXTGAMING, REDFERN



Snurkle the goblin had a lonely childhood in the dark forest, picking the legs off spiders, spitting in the river and popping his satanic pimples... and then one day, a mighty warrior galloped into a clearing at the south end of the forest with a small group of Cavaliers and Griffens trailing behind him. Snurkle hesitated, and then stepped out of the darkness to get a better look at this powerful-looking hero. "Urrr... Who are you?" mumbled Snurkle humbly. The gleaming armoured figure leant forward on his steed and pushed back his visor. "I am Alarcar, the Knight, and Hero of Erathia! I am searching for the Grail! Join us in our quest, my friend..." Snurkle giggled nervously and shook his head. "Er...nurr...me too small..." he mumbled. The knight let out a big gruff laugh and slapped his thigh, making a funny clanking sound. "Would you rather I fed you to my Griffens? Hohoho!", the

knight said as he motioned back towards the ferocious looking beasts hovering amongst the trees. Snurkle didn't need any more encouragement than that, so he grabbed his knapsack and away they went, to explore some distant land and encounter strange creatures and wild treasure... every minute of playing Heroes of Might & Magic 3, a scenario just like this plays out in my head. If you love fantasy games, there is so much here to capture your imagination, that you'll be addicted in no time at all. It's been a while since such a seemingly simple game has been so captivating...

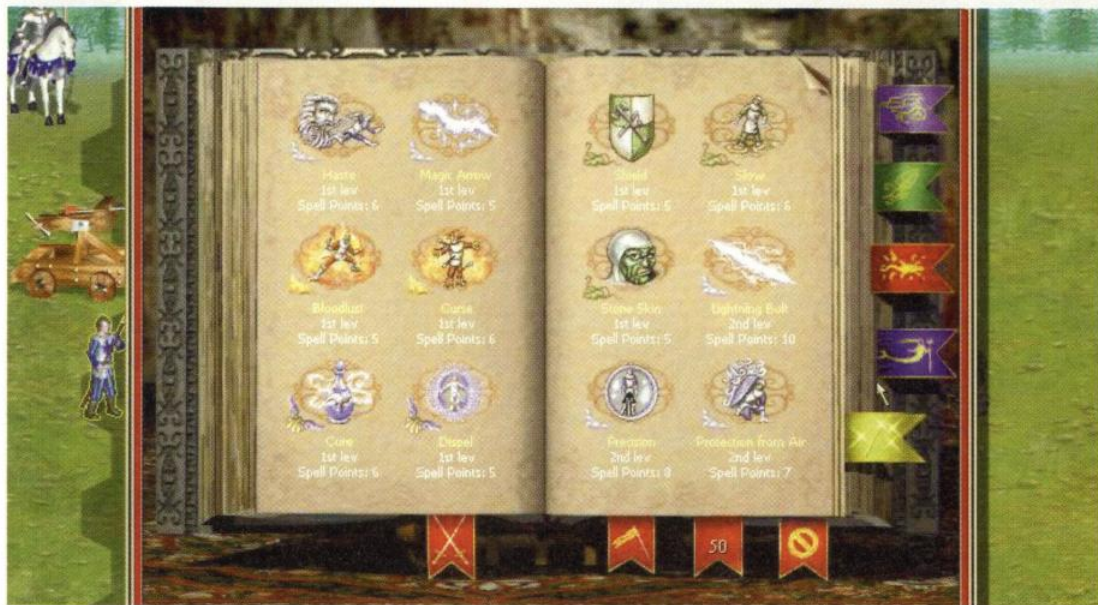
TAKE A NUMBER

If you have never seen nor played any of the previous Heroes of Might and Magic games, then a quick rundown is probably necessary... this is turn-based strategy gaming very much along the

lines of SSI's Warlords games. Yet, the Heroes games manage to incorporate a number of adventure game and role-playing elements into the mix to ensure that you're drawn deeper and deeper into the game as you play through. The average game commences with one Hero under your control, and one town. Your Hero can learn magic, skills, be equipped with weapons and artifacts that provide you with bonuses in battle and it's your Hero who basically leads your armies around. Your towns generate troop types, and to send them into battle, a Hero has to visit the town and rally them together. Of course, it's wise to keep a strong force behind in the town too, in case an opposing Hero comes snooping around your neck of the woods. Out on the world map, there are many things to explore. From gold deposits, timber mills, ore mines and other resources to "tag"



YOU WON'T GET FAR WITH THAT PITIFUL ARMY



in the name of your town (and thus reap the ensuing resources which will help you build stuff in your town) there are mysterious locations to visit to learn new spells, be trained in certain skills or granted bonuses for the remainder of the day's journey. There are also artifacts scattered around the world, which once found can be equipped on your Hero for special bonuses. Playing a campaign, your Hero carries through to the next scenario, allowing for them to eventually become quite strong and kitted out with all sorts of funky magical items. You can of course trade these rare finds between your Heroes if they meet on the map in a bid to share the power around.

EAT MY SWORD

When combat is engaged, the game switches to a hidden grid where you can strategically play your troops off against your enemy. Your Hero can cast spells during the combat to either aid your units with bonuses in combat or defense, or you can cast nice offensive spells to smite your opponents. Most of the spells will be familiar to those of you who've played the Might and Magic RPGs.

Besides the standard array of fantasy-based troops, you can also take ballistas or first aid tents into battle - the depth in HOMM3 with what exactly you can do is fantastic. Really, you can play out the game anyway you desire... Upgrading your towns, recruiting new Heroes from the tavern, upgrading troops, or searching around for artifacts, all whilst trying to complete your mission objectives - it's totally up to the player to achieve these goals in any order they deem appropriate. This makes for a very non-linear strategy experience, and an immensely satisfying one, as you truly feel as if you are conducting the outcome of the game right down to where single troops stand on the battlefield.

The game allows for single scenario play, campaign play (which gives you the option of playing for Good, Neutral or Bad, with different scenarios for each), multi-player where you can play against up to eight friends (this is quite brilliant) or even create your own maps for some truly unique adventuring. Heroes of Might & Magic 3 is also damn gorgeous to look at too, with some excellent atmospheric music to boot. Highly recommended!

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Strategy
PLAYERS: 1-8
PUBLISHER: 3DO
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P133, 32MB RAM
DESIRED: P166, 64MB RAM, lots of spare time

PLUS
Too many good things to mention!

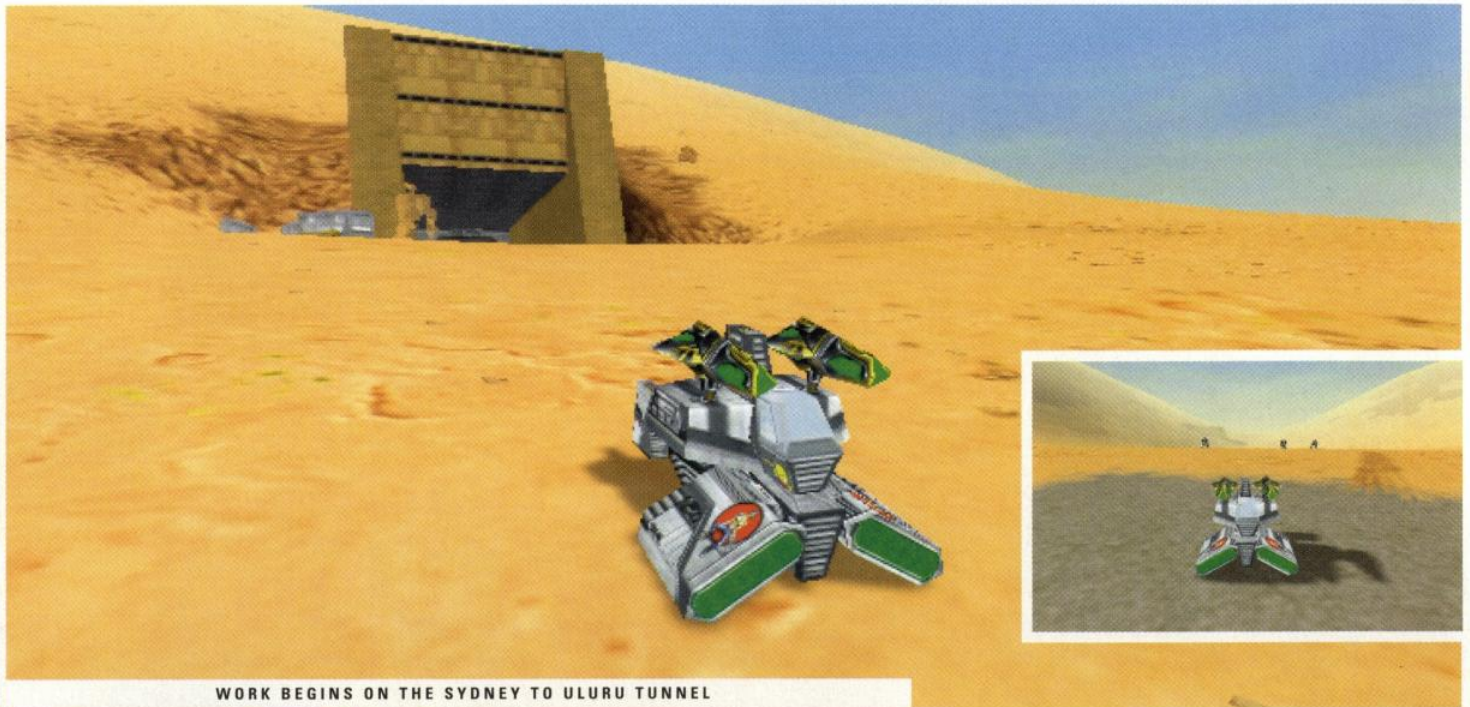
MINUS
Games take a long time to get through.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80	89	89

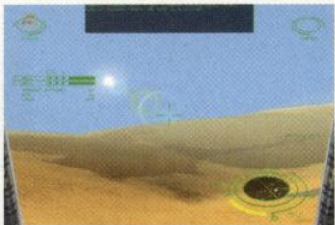
OVERALL
90
HOMM3 is possibly an acquired taste, but it's a meal which will satisfy anyone hungry for adventure.

Starseige

Jackson Gothe-Snape clammers aboard the slower, clunkier half of Dynamix "dual release" of Starseige titles... Tribes is the better half in this relationship.



WORK BEGINS ON THE SYDNEY TO ULURU TUNNEL



ONCE UPON A TIME

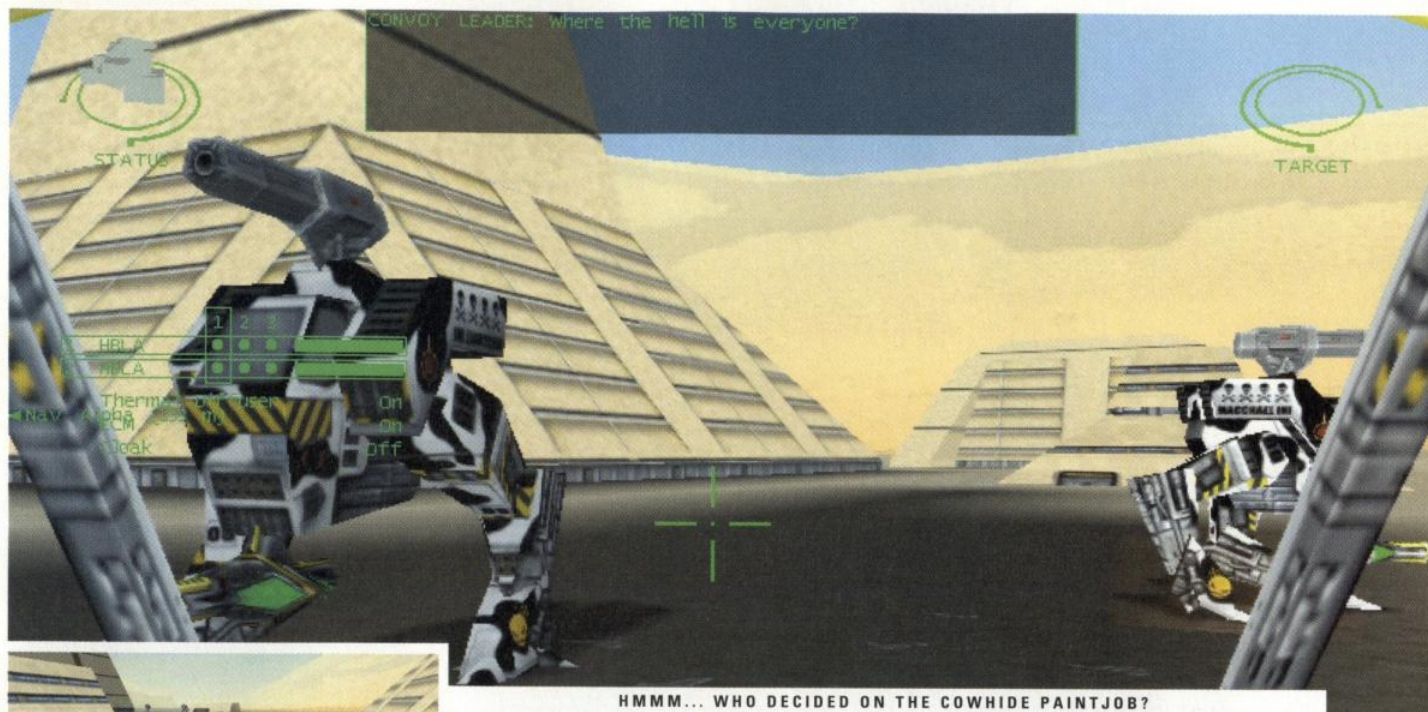
More than any other genre, mech-combat games are set in complicated universes and involve in-depth storylines. Starseige is no exception. Entering the game you are treated to an entertaining and informative intro that brings you up to speed with the events that have led to the situation that the game places you in. You are fighting for the Martian colonies against the evil Empire. Previously a mere mining community, after the discovery of alien weaponry technology you and your colleagues have taken up arms against their tyrannical rulers. You are the hot new rookie, the rebellion's one hope against the might of the Emperor (sound familiar?). However, you drive big slow robots.

Hopping into the training missions, you are treated to the standard "press the arrows to move, now practise moving" etc. However training does help with the satellite map and the more subtle controls, and prepares you well enough for campaign mode.

The campaign is just a collection of missions strung together, with resources and technolo-

gy carrying over from mission to mission. The story does keep you interested, especially the personal relationships between your superior commander and you. It seemed strange though that after only a mission or two, I had this amazing reputation and I was thrown straight into Commander Harabec's (aka: The Big Guy) squad.

The missions are solid, with a decent degree of difficulty. The type of vehicle you choose affects the way you carry out your mission, particularly with the help of primary and secondary objectives. These allow for a greater degree of freedom as opposed to just charging in and shooting everything. For example, if your primary order is to take out a dropship before it takes off, and your secondary objective is to destroy all enemies, choosing a lightweight vehicle will allow you to bolt in, take out the ship and get away. The more difficult strategy is to choose a larger vehicle and complete both objectives, which you are rewarded for in the form of more salvage and a higher rank.



HMMM... WHO DECIDED ON THE COWHIDE PAINTJOB?

The vehicle depot is comprehensive in that you have a large array of weapons, engines, armour and special items at your disposal. The usual rules for mech-style games apply such as maximum weight when outfitting your vehicle. As the game progresses you have a wider choice of vehicle types and other components. One annoying aspect was that it did take a while to work out what each item did and its strengths and weaknesses.

The game also enables you to choose up to 3 wingmen to help on any one missions. These characters all have their own strengths and weaknesses and also obtain higher rank with the more experience they get.

UNINSPIRING, LIKE BORIS YELTSIN

The game is pretty uninspiring in the visuals department. There are some nice explosion effects and the terrain is quite convincing, but the vehicles look pretty standard with rather low polygon counts. The menu interface is also a tad dull. Tribes, which was also made by Dynamix looks a lot better, but to be fair the subject matter in Tribes was more detailed and allowed the most to be obtained from the game engine.

The sound is perhaps of a slightly higher standard than the visuals, with good wingmen speech and nice atmospheric effects.

The combat itself is similar to other mech games and is perhaps a little slow, but still enjoyable. The interface is well thought out and

gives you simple access to your vehicle's functions. The major fault is that it has simply been done before, from the weapon systems to the shield design. There are a couple of exceptions however. Firstly, cloaking adds the element of stealth to combat, as does the radar system which is similar to that of flight sims, yet very much simplified. Sneaking up on people is therefore a treat, especially in multiplayer.

The physics also let the game down. If you take out a vehicle's leg, the vehicle is destroyed. It is always nice in other mech-games to first demobilise the mech, then finish it off. Also, there is no sign of jump jets in the game, which remove another exciting part of combat.

The addition of tanks to the game is nice however, and does offer a change from the standard robots as whole new strategies have to be devised for these vehicles.

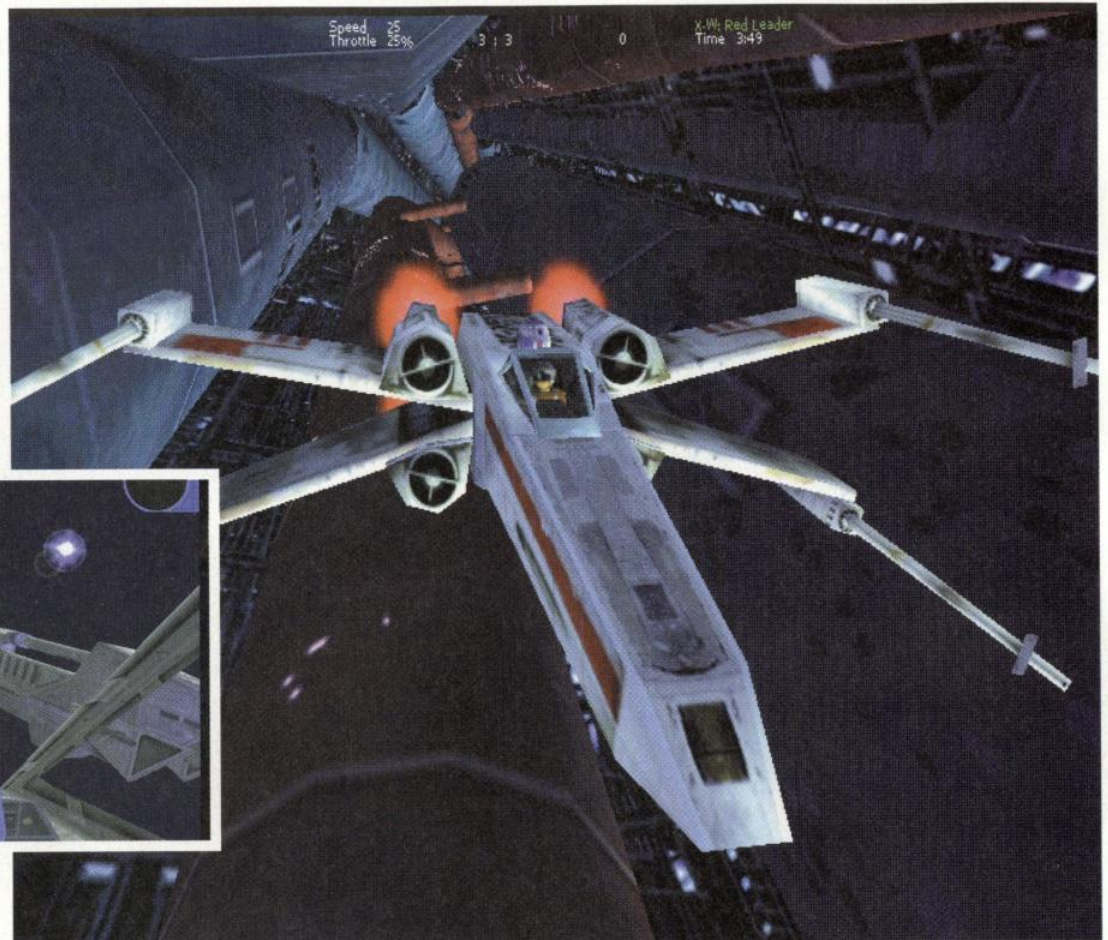
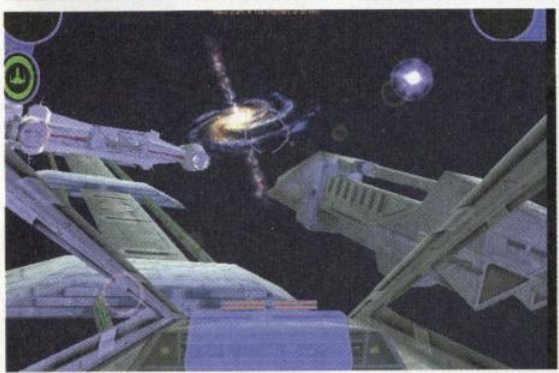
The game offers multiplayer support, with an easy to use interface, similar to that of Dynamix' other recent title, Tribes. However those seeking multiplayer action might have some difficulty finding it, because this title is bound to struggle against many other, and better, titles in terms of server support. Therefore us in Australia will probably be forced to play with sub-standard pings on foreign servers.

Overall, Starsiege is a decent title, but it is just too similar to other mech-based titles out there without providing enough new elements to keep you interested for very long.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Mech Combat
PLAYERS: 1-multi
PUBLISHER: Dynamix
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: P166+3D accelerator or P200
DESIRED: P11, 3D accelerator
PLUS Good story, good variety of vehicles and components.
MINUS Doesn't offer too many new elements to the genre, uninspiring graphics.
VISUALS 75
SOUND 81
GAMEPLAY 76
OVERALL 76 "Haven't I seen you somewhere before?"

X-Wing Alliance

We relayed the co-ordinates to the nav computer, fired up the hyperdrive and told **Eliot Fish** to "Punch it, Fishy!"...



R2. SEE IF YOU CAN REPAIR THE CAPPUCINO DISPENSER... I'M ONE THIRSTY JEDI

Last year's X-Wing Versus TIE Fighter was a minor disappointment to many gamers who had previously played both TIE Fighter and the original X-Wing. Sure, XVT was primarily a multiplayer game - and a brilliant one - but many simply found the experience a bit "dry" after the brilliant single-player experiences of the previous games. The later add-on, Balance of Power, attempted to provide more single-player excitement, but the lack of any great storyline also left it feeling a tad soul-less.

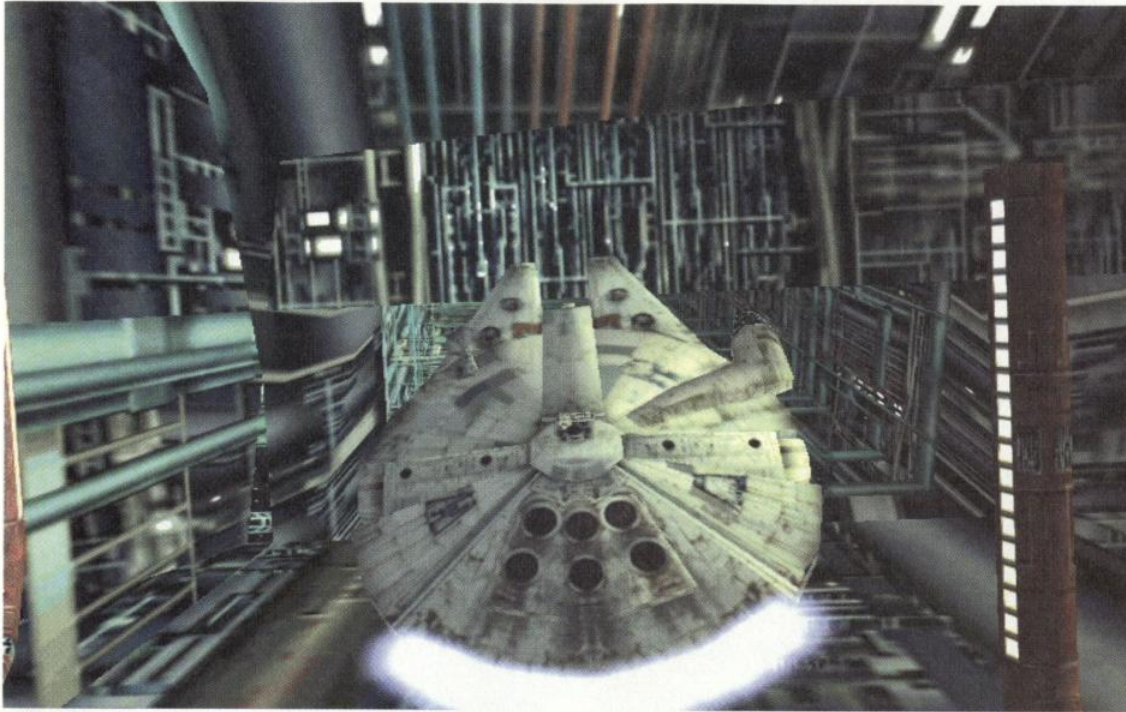
Well, to the delight of many gamers worldwide, the Larry Holland X-Wing series has returned to its single-player story-driven roots for the next chapter in this marvellous Star Wars space combat series. This is the kind of engaging, plot-driven space combat the series is renowned for... and yet, they've still maintained the brilliant multiplayer set-up and options for those who would rather fly with friends. In fact, it could be that this is the perfect hybrid of all the previous games, and the crowning achievement of the series. I mean, we can now fly the Millennium Falcon after all...!

...FOOD LEADS TO BEER...

You play Ace Azzameen, a pilot with your family's shipping company, hopping around the galaxy in your

Corellian freighter dropping off loads of Ewok slippers and Bespin baked beans. Times are pretty tough with the Empire breathing down your neck, the Rebellion seemingly causing trouble and another shipping service - the Viraxo - trying to put you out of business. The first half-a-dozen missions in X-Wing Alliance, pretty much lay out the story for you and let you do a few runs in the YT1300 (similar to the Millennium Falcon), where you fly with your droid co-pilot Emkay. In fact, in one mission, the droid pilots the freighter whilst you get to man the famous quad-laser turret and concentrate on blowing things up. Also of note, is that one of your brothers flies a Firespray (Boba Fett's ship class) which is another nice addition to the series, and having this fly on your wing is quite simply cool as heck. Alliance offers all new 3D cockpits, so that you can actually look around and out the windows of your Corellian ship to see other craft zoom past, which just all adds to the immersive quality of this title. Cockpits now react to firefights too, and you'll notice an obvious jolt and spray of sparks when you start to get hammered by laser fire. Whilst it looks incredibly cool, you may find flying with the cockpit graphic off is easier, because you can see more of your environment this way, which helps in a furious dogfight.

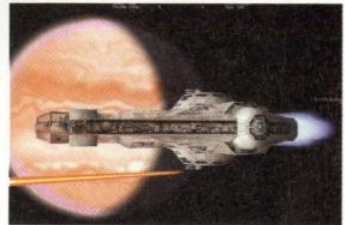
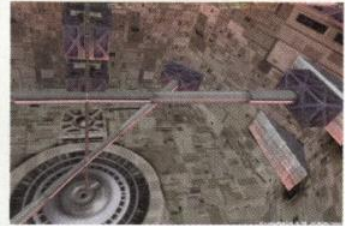
HYPER GAME OF THE MONTH



WHO WAS THE IDIOT WHO PUT THE COCKPIT HERE?



ARGH! WHICH WAY AM I FLYING??!



The missions are, of course, just as involving and challenging as you would expect from this solid series of X-Wing games. Common dilemmas involve having to protect certain cargo from attack, whilst dogfighting fighter craft, fending off bombers with your wingmen and maybe even escorting another craft safely out of the area. The danger really kicks up a notch when your character joins the Rebels and you're thrust into the X-wing, Y-wing and other Rebel craft to take part in very carefully planned strategical attacking or defensive missions. The depth to the gameplay is what keeps Alliance a head above the rest, allowing you full control over an enormous array of wingmen commands, and putting you in some truly tricky situations which sometimes require more than a few runs to figure out what is the best tactic to employ. The game is just so believable.

...BEER LEADS TO HANGOVERS

Visually, Alliance is another step forward from the other games in the series, though it uses the same 3D engine which existed in X-Wing versus TIE Fighter. Of course, everything is 3D accelerated with Direct3D and there are some gorgeous coloured lighting effects, engine flares and highly detailed textures, making this

one of the best looking space combat games around. It may not be quite as "realistic" as a game such as Freespace, but it's enough to have your jaw dropping open at times with it's utter coolness. All I need to say about the sound in Alliance, is that it supports 3D audio and is breathtaking to say the least, even for non-Star Wars fans. Brilliant.

The multiplayer option in Alliance is fantastic, and offers you just about any set-up you can imagine wanting to play. From Free-For-Alls, to teamplay (with up to eight teams!) to one-on-one tests of flying skill, the set-up is easy and yet powerful. For instance, you can fly the Falcon amongst a squadron of X-Wings controlled by the AI, and attempt to take down a Star Destroyer, a squadron of TIEs and your best friend who might just happen to want to fly a TIE Defender. Different squadrons can be given different orders, so the AI will play as part of a team in any given situation. The incredible variety of flyable craft on offer, to the astounding array of miscellaneous craft makes the multiplayer option alone enough to keep you playing for months on end.

Oh and one more thing. The final mission in the game requires you to blow up the second Death Star flying the Millennium Falcon into it's reactor core. What more reason do you need to buy this game?!

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Space combat sim
PLAYERS: 1-8
PUBLISHER: LucasArts
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P200, 32MB RAM
DESIRED: PII 350, 64MB RAM, 3D accelerator
SUPPORTS: Direct3D, 3D audio, "Force" Feedback - heh

PLUS

Engaging storyline, and the best gameplay balance in the series.

MINUS

Some missions seem bullshit hard, but that's good... right?

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
89	92	92

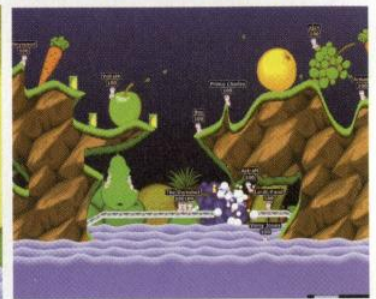
OVERALL

90

It'll grab you like a Force choke and never let go.

Worms Armageddon

Team 17 are responsible for the death of more worms than Combantrin, but it has come to an end with Worms Armageddon. **Dan Toose** reports.



WHERE'S THE COMBANTRIN GUN?

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Strategy
PLAYERS: 1-Multi
PUBLISHER: MicroProse
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P150, 32MB RAM, 2MB Video RAM
DESIRED: P11-200+, 64MB RAM, 4MB Video RAM

PLUS
Tons of variety and extra depth for Worms fans. Very polished.

MINUS
Despite the improvements, there's nothing ground breaking about WA.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
85	89	88

OVERALL
87
A fitting end to an excellent series of games. A perfect blend of serious strategy and ludicrous humour.



Here's a game that has changed very little from one version to the next, yet is still revered by gamers everywhere as a cool game.

For those unfamiliar with the Worms titles, the concept is very simple... Turn based tactical squad combat, with little worms as the soldiers. May sound ludicrous, and that's because it is, but it results in a wonderful blend of comedy and mind numbing strategy. There are over 60 weapons available to the worms, with which they attempt to take careful aim with and blow one another to bits.

ATTRACTIVE WORMS

While Worms Armageddon is still not about to challenge titles like Unreal and Half Life in terms of being drop dead gorgeous, Team 17 have allowed players to play in resolutions of up to 1024 x 768, and the overall visual quality of the game is far superior to Worms 1 & 2. Being able to play in a higher resolution allows you to see more of the battlefield at once, which is a definite advantage. The animations of the worms are proof that you don't need 15 different special 3D effects to make something look good.

AUSSIE ACCENTS!

Seeing as a lot of the appeal to Worms Armageddon is in the character of the game, the voices play a large part here, and there are a host of different accents to pick for your team of worms. Yes, they've included Australian accents, but some of the others like Indian or Rastafarian are even more amusing.

There are plenty of game options available. There are 30 missions to play through,

which range from being straight up battles, through to brain teasing puzzles of how to get your worms from one place to another (much like in Lemmings). For those that just want a quick brawl, there is a single player death-match mode, which you can develop your rank in... and speaking of ranking, Team 17 have set up "wormnet" with a global ranking system for online players!

Suitable training modes are available too, and completing these helps unlock various things to increase the longevity of the game overall.

BLOWING UP SHEEP AND OLD WOMEN

If you have something against sheep, there's extra reason to play Worms Armageddon. Sheep are used as a powerful explosive weapon, by setting them off towards the enemy and having them burst into flames at the opportune moment. Old women can also be used in this manner...

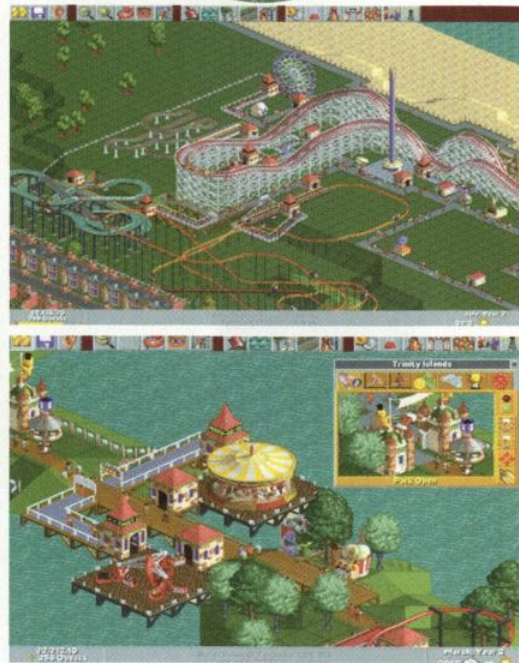
We're told this IS the last Worms title, and Team 17 should be commended on tastefully finishing this series with a quality product, rather than just flogging a good game till it becomes a bad one like so many developers do. Can't wait to see what they will come up with next.

Rollercoaster Tycoon

If there's one man who knows his vomit, it's **Ross Clarksmith**...



WIN A FLUFFY TOY IF YOU MANAGE NOT TO SPEW



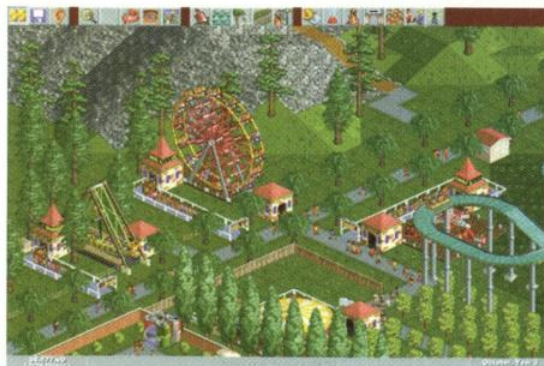
When a name like Chris Sawyer pops up on the title screen of a game, you know you are going to be glued to the screen for days - just think back to Transport Tycoon and Frontier: Elite 2. Chris has taken the idea of designing and constructing rollercoasters and has built them into a game every bit addictive and pleasurable as his previous offerings. The game starts off with a set landscape, and depending on the particular scenario, a set of objectives is given. These objectives range from having a certain number of guests, with a specified park rating, or reaching a set park value. There is the added time constraint to make things a bit more urgent. Other constraints can be thrown in like a limit to area, a lack of dry land, or not being able to alter landscape features. For those people who just want to get on with building and designing the best park they can, the game will continue in adnauseum after delivering a brief message saying that objectives were not met. The game also continues if the objectives are met. This is probably the best feature of the game, its complete lack of competition, which makes it more of a construction toy to play with rather than a game to compete against.

SHOOT THE LOOP

Rollercoaster Tycoon is played in an isometric view, and has a very similar look to Transport Tycoon - lots of bright colours, different scenery and types of landscape, all fully configurable. It is possible to see under both water and ground and the view can be rotated four different ways, which is really necessary to get both ends of the coaster to meet. Unfortunately there is no top down view, which made it difficult to build in certain circumstances.

The game provides the ability to build any rollercoaster track combination, with twelve different types to choose, from wood to steel to ice, standing to sitting, forward, reverse or even vertical. All coasters can be built underground, partially or fully, and the number of trains and carriages are configurable. There are additions like in ride photos or splashdowns to increase the level of excitement, and two identical rollercoasters built next to each other can be synchronised. Heaps of other attractions can be built to take the money from park patrons, from the tame Merry-go-round and Dodgem cars to vomit inducing swing ships and spinners. What good would vomit forming rides be without the drink, chip, pizza and candyfloss shops to provide ammunition? Rides can be individually tailored from entry price to number of rotations to all the different colours.

Every guest that walks into your theme park has a certain spread of things they look for in a ride, like intensity and nausea levels, so not every person will ride the triple corkscrew with double loop. It is also possible to see how they have spent their money and what they are thinking, which makes it easier to plan other attractions. Rollercoaster Tycoon is a winner of a game, or is that toy? Sort of what you would expect from one of the greats in the business.



AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Sim
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Microprose
PRICE:	\$89.95
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	P133, 32MB RAM
DESIRED:	P166, 64MB RAM

PLUS
More types of rollercoaster than you can poke a stick at.

MINUS
A 1st person view would have been good.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90	84	88

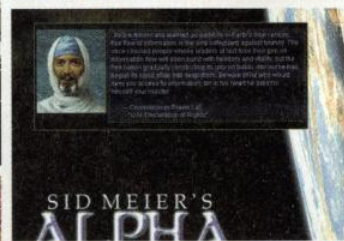
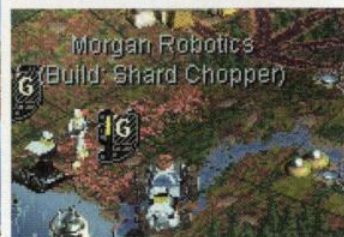
OVERALL
91

Screaming girls and old vomit smells. I love rollercoasters!



Alpha Centauri

Ross Clarksmith is an old hand at the Civ games, so we handed him a new one...



THE FATE OF THESE PIXELS LIES IN YOUR HANDS

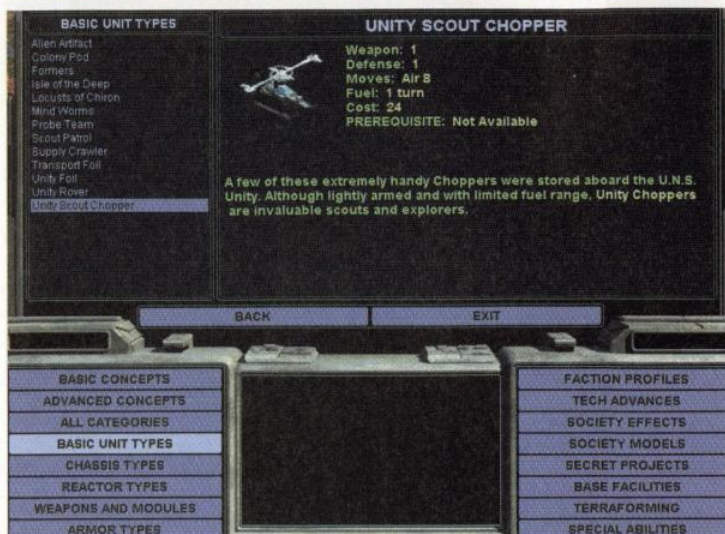
Remember the finish to *Civilisation* and *Civilisation 2* where the space ship reached Alpha Centauri, and you thought, "gee it would be cool to do that all again on a new planet!" Well someone was out there reading those very thoughts and programming away to allow you to do just that. That someone was Sid Meier, legendary amongst sim creators, and Alpha Centauri is the third in the series of Civ and Civ 2.

The game starts off with a colony ship reaching Alpha Centauri. During the long flight, several factions have developed, and decided upon different colonisation ideals for their new planet. The player must choose one of these groups to play, much as they would choose a race in the old Civ. Each race has different ethics and advantages to help them win the game. This allows players to pick a group that matches their playing style. So the conquest types can choose from a couple of different militaristic groups, and those who follow a research or economic path also have a few options.

OLD STYLE, NEW LOOK.

Alpha Centauri follows the successful formula of its predecessors in its basic design. Cities are built on an isometric landscape, containing different types of environments and resources. Cities use these environments to build structures, create wealth, and expand their population. Each faction's cities have their own distinct appearance much like the cities in "Warlords". One new concept is land height, which determines the amount of energy that may be produced by a square. This is also affected by sea height, which is possible to change during the game through terraforming. A city-scape is not available like in Civ, so all those space age improvements can not be viewed, which is really disappointing. A monument to a player's achievements takes the place of the old palace, and any firsts that the player perfects are recorded here.

A lot of the game mechanics that took ages to laboriously plod through in Civ can be automated in Alpha Centauri. Terraformers will assess the needs of cities and create that which is most needed, and will link all places together with roads. City production orders can be run by a governor, which will choose the most important improvement. These governors can be guided by choosing one of four different types of production, explore, discover, build or conquest. It is also possible to queue up to eight different orders. The game





can also be played with these options turned off for people who love to control every little aspect.

There has been a big change in units. All combat units now come from a few basic structures that can be customised with different types of armour, weapons and special ability. The number of options in each of these areas increases with the advent of new technologies. Combat has been rethought to a certain extent as well, which has made a lot of encounters a lot more believable in their outcomes. Psionic combat has been introduced, and is used mainly by Mind Worms, who are native of the planet, and behave very similarly to the barbarians in Civ. Alpha Centauri has many other similarities to Civ, which make it very easy to jump right in and start playing without having to make too many adjustments. Those little native villages in Civ that provide so much help to a starting colony are paralleled by crashed pods from the mothership. These give the discovering player help with energy, food, and forgotten knowledge.

The knowledge tree is not as easy to understand in its progression as in the previous games, but this is probably because it is almost entirely fictional. One area where there has been a huge level of improvement is diplomacy. There are now loads of options to make when dealing with other factions, whether they be human or computer

players. It is now possible to have a planetary council, where all teams vote on different events. One option is for everyone to vote to unite behind a single player as planetary leader, which is a new victory condition.

SHOW YOUR FRIENDS WHO'S MORE CIVILISED

There are seven different levels of difficulty, which range from the fairly easy to beat, to the nearly impossible. If that is not enough of a range, then it is possible to play head to head against a friend via, network, serial, modem or internet connection. This allows up to seven people to duke it out for planetary conquest, which was an option that was badly lacking in both Civs.

An extensive online manual can give information about every different aspect of Alpha Centauri, but it is rather unwieldy to navigate through. The individual cities and their units are minutely detailed both visually and with sound effects. The only place where the game is let down is with the pop up screens for cities, encyclopedia, achievements and unit building. They have a really Spartan feel about them, and they feel like tacked on elements, which can hardly be the case as they are central to the game. For those lovers of Civ and Civ 2 you can't go wrong with Alpha Centauri, and if you have a hankering for ruling a world, check it out.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Sim
PLAYERS: 1-7
PUBLISHER: Firaxis
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P133, 16MB RAM, WIN 95
DESIRED: P11, 32MB RAM

PLUS
Its Sid Meier at his very best.

MINUS
Lacks a few of the polished niceties of previous games.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
77	88	93

OVERALL
93

Now that the spaceships have made it to Alpha Centauri civilisation can continue.

Warzone 2100

We hurl young strategy boffin **Singe Graham** to the front with Warzone 2100.

From the inner-depths of newcomer Pumpkin Head Studios development labs comes a surprisingly tasty treat in the form of Warzone 2100. Take a pinch of C&C, add a Dash of TA, a smidgen of Robo-Pit and a whole bag of tasty 3dfx treats and you're getting close. WZ2.iK is starting to get closer to what RTS gaming is really all about, offering us the depth we demand with the control we desire (Almost), and the carnage we require. Yessiree, warm up them nanotek assemblers, we're in for one helluva ride.

Essentially WZ2.iK takes place after mankind has managed to successfully wipe itself out after a nuclear fall-out. Typical isn't it? We design a satellite to help defend

against nuclear attack, and some mad terrorist hijacks it and destroys the Earth. Eventually the humans are able to emerge once more and take a look around and start to pick up the pieces. The player comes into the game once we've managed to re-establish some pre war technology and are able to begin the long rebuilding process back to our former selves. Naturally this isn't going to happen without at least some degree of difficulty. An outcast breed of human known as the 'scavenger' already has a head start on you and has managed to establish small bases which house pre war artifacts which are vital to the success of your mission. Ultimately though you must

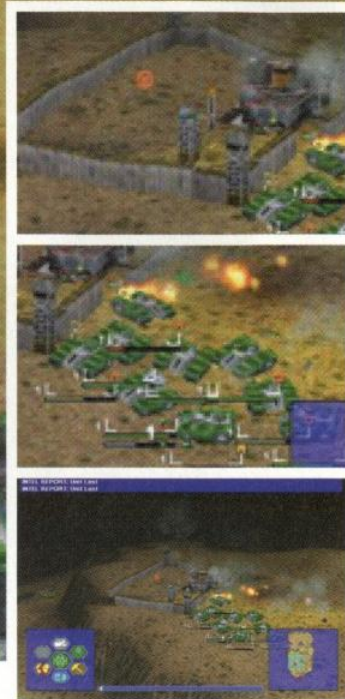


TAKING OUT THE ILLEGAL FIREWORK FACTORY





ROBOTIC CICADAS INVADE THE BAYGON HOMEBASE



expand your empire, uncover all the technology you can in order to build and manufacture newer and stronger units and in the end, confront the forces which originally destroyed the Earth in a final confrontation.

INTUITIVE INTERFACE

Control of Warzone is a breeze. Players already familiar with a user interface such as Total Annihilation will be able to jump in headfirst. The various menus are easily accessed through a convenient but subtle system, whilst orders can be issued with ease and efficiency. Unit pathing is very good, with units taking the most efficient way to any given point possible. This is often an area that needs work in a lot of RTS games (including the more popular games such as Starcraft) but WZ2.iK pulls through with flying colours. Perhaps an area that could have used room for improvement was that mini map interface. Rather than a simple click to center the map on a given place, I found I had to click and hold, then drag a little bit to center the map on the point I wanted. Granted this is a minor problem, but in the heat of battle the LAST thing you'll want to have to deal with is a map with a mind of its own.

Graphically the game is impressive. The terrain is a fully rendered 3d landscape (Albeit a somewhat bland one. Hey, what do you expect after a holocaust?) which beautifully compliments and emphasizes the detail gone into the individual units and structures. Explosions aren't quite as impressive as they could be but yet they get the job done.

D.I.Y. DESIGN

Yet possibly the more unique and interesting aspects of WZ2.iK is the unit design. As the you progress, you

must continually research and develop new weapon technologies and structural designs. With each new technological advance you are then able to DESIGN new units on the fly. Don't like that standard tank? Reckon that machine gun looks crap? Perhaps a flamer would be better? No sweat, simply open up the unit design window, select your vehicle body style, select its propulsion system (Wheels, Treads, Hover etc), then load it up with weapons and you're off. Warzone will then add your individually customized vehicle 'o' death to your repertoire and you're free to flame away. The units all are visually different as well depending on which components they have. So a tank with a flamer really DOES look like a tank with a flamer. Very cool.

So just what does Warzone offer that makes you want to go out and buy it? Well... admittedly there is no new groundbreaking technology used, no new totally off the wall feature to make your jaw drop and eyes bulge. Yet what it does have is an adequate challenge and a finesse that just isn't apparent in so many games these days. Once you start Warzone you WILL want to play it through until the end. Yes, I admit, I stank at it but I found that I would constantly throw myself against that turreted base time and time again, if only to find out what new and exciting goody or technology would be waiting inside. If you're new to the RTS genre then take your first steps warily, WZ2.iK is addictive, but might be somewhat daunting to the newbie gamer. Yet any hardcore TA or Starcraft fan will be able to jump right in with ease and come away with a great big smile on their face and a thirst for more.

AVAILABLE: Now		
CATEGORY: Strategy		
PLAYERS: 1-Multi		
PUBLISHER: Eidos		
PRICE: \$89.95		
RATING: TBA		
REQUIRED: P166, 16MB RAM		
DESIRED: P200, 32MB RAM, 3D CARD		
PLUS Sexy graphics. Good unit design system.		
MINUS Occasional control difficulty.		
VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
88	82	80
OVERALL		
87		
AN excellent effort from the new guys on the block. Keen an eye out for PH Studios.		

MS Golf 99

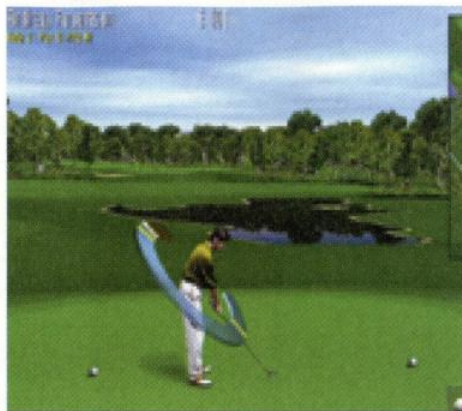
PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: GOLF SIM
PLAYERS: 1-8
PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT
PRICE: \$89.95
REQUIRED: P90, 16MB, WIN 95/NT
DESIRED: P150, 32MB RAM

After reviewing Links LS 99 this seemed a little sluggish with less detail and realism. With a maximum resolution of 800 x 600 and the geometry different than the earlier versions, it just didn't cut the mustard as finely.

Without the ability to change your stance and how you address the ball, this game does not allow the advanced golfer to customise each shot. It is instead replaced by a ball spin & height setting. For a beginner who just wants to play a few rounds it is fine. However if you are a golf nut (like me) and want to be able to see where your feet are in relation to the ball, angle of the club face, swing arc, etc. You will not be able to do that in this game. Playing with the height and spin settings allows you to hit with a draw or a fade on the ball, however in certain circumstances it doesn't allow you to hit the exact shot you need.

The sounds and commentary are virtually identical from previous versions, with the fog adding a nice touch to the graphics.



A few of the attractive features in this game were the ability to set your own personal distances for each club, so for those of you who keep forgetting how far you consistently hit each club you should get yourself on to the practice tee and hit all your clubs then enter those distances in. With seven courses included on the two CD-ROMs it will be a while before you master them all. The fact that the computer golfers play worse than you do is a comfort for your ego.

ANDREW ROBERTSON

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
68	69	70	68

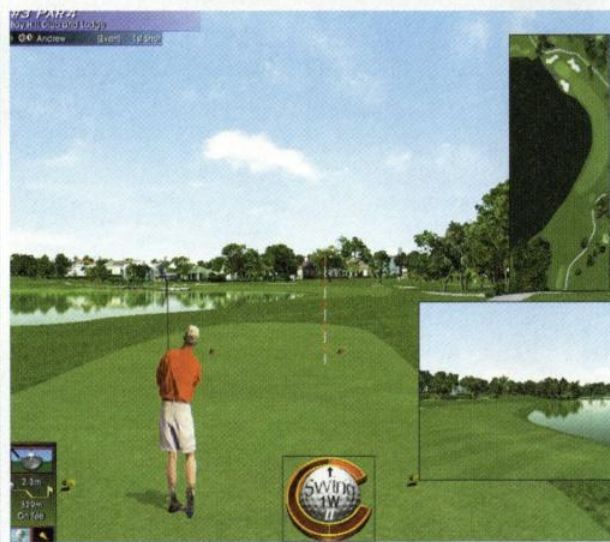
Links LS '99

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: GOLF SIM
PLAYERS: 1-8
PUBLISHER: ACCESS SOFTWARE
PRICE: \$89.95
REQUIRED: P150, 32 MB RAM
DESIRED: P166, 64 MB RAM

As a huge golf player (once or twice a week on a real course) Golf is one of my favourite games, however in the past on the PC it has lacked that certain realism of shots that the avid golfer craves for. Well I believe this little baby has come along way to bridging that gap. The first stroke I took using the two click method, sliced like I have never seen before, taking up a spot where elephants go to die. Saying to myself like I do on the course "Oh Man", the player representing me on screen said exactly the same thing - even the reactions - Freaky. Just a fluke I thought and moved on to play the next shot. An iron shot to the green, I popped it right next to the hole and again the computer said what I was thinking, "Yeah Baby!", made it very enjoyable to play.

The realism of the shots played, the path the ball took off the club, were all a realistic representation of what actually happens on the course, they even got the backspin on the



ball right! Customising your stance / shot type will greatly increase your distance and accuracy. Different "Live" camera angles can be used to track your ball better. You can even design your own methods of play, so you want to play team skins at a \$1000 a hole best ball lie, go for it.

Links LS 99 includes everything from a history lesson about the area surrounding the courses to detailed instructions on what to do. Great for beginner & advanced players alike.

ANDREW ROBERTSON

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	83	83	84



Kensei: Sacred Fist

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: FIGHTING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: KONAMI
PRICE: TBA
RATING: M

It's interesting when you think about a game like Virtua Fighter 3, particularly the fact that AM2 tried unsuccessfully to incorporate fully free three-dimensional movement into the fighting engine. Then when you move to a game like Tobal 2, you have a game that 'does' feature full 3D movement, but with it came a highly complex control interface that lacked the brilliant simplicity of VF3. Kensei: Sacred Fist, originally titled Buji in Japan, is a game that tries to bring the best of both of these games together: realistic character-to-character interactions combined with full 3D movement, and still featuring a relatively simple control interface.

Given that Konami is not particularly well known as a developer of fighting games, it should come as no surprise to anyone that Kensei falls short of its potential. The fighting engine and general aesthetics are all really fine, but the major stumbling points are in the speed of the game and the responsiveness of the controls. First of all, Kensei's motion is quite slow - more so than the Tobal games, which some hardened critics in the office frequently point out is slower than VF3. In that sense, the button sequences that you press feels very much on the sluggish side, causing you to compensate for response-delays, which should never really happen in any game.

Otherwise, the remainder of Kensei is executed remarkably well. The characters are finely detailed using a combination of textures and Gouraud shading, and each of them are loaded with animations that bring out the life of all the different fighting styles used on the game. The music and sound effects are average, but acceptable. It's a pity that Kensei should ultimately suffer for trying to do something intelligent with the genre, but at least it's better than a lot of other games out there. Recommended for fans looking for a thinking-person's fighter.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	73	72	79



Shanghai: True Valour

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: PUZZLE
PUBLISHER: SUNSOFT
PLAYERS: 1-2
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: MEMORY CARD, DUAL SHOCK.

If you own a PC, you'll know that Shanghai is one of the most popular desktop games next to Solitaire. If you've never played it before, Shanghai is a game where mahjong tiles are stacked in a particular configuration, and your goal is to clear the table of all the tiles by matching identical pieces.

It's not quite as simple as it sounds, though. First of all, there are an obscene number of different types of pieces, all in different suits. Many of the tiles also use Chinese characters, which will be confusing for many people. Secondly, you can only 'pick' a tile that doesn't have another tile above it or encircling it. You can only choose tiles that, if in real life, you'd be able to slide off the pile in the horizontal plane.

What Shanghai: True Valour offers is a very solid collection of Shanghai games. While the single player mode provides a good cerebral experience, the one mode that's worthy of mention is actually the two-player mode, where you're racing against your opponent to find the gold tile. Other variables are thrown in for good measure, such as an energy meter that requires you to remove tiles at a consistent rate, otherwise you'll lose. There are also 'special move' tiles that allow you to attack your opponent, such as by flipping their tiles upside down, reversing their controls, depleting their energy meter, and so on.

In the end, Shanghai: True Valour is a very enjoyable puzzle game. It's extremely cerebral, and it's certain to please all fans of the genre; but unless you can find it competitively priced, it's value for money leaves a lot to be desired.

KEVIN CHEUNG

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
74	65	88	75

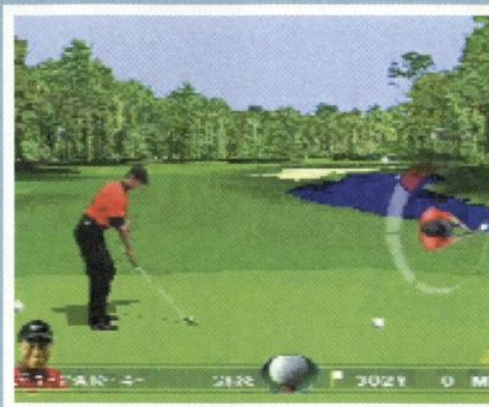
Tiger Woods 99

PLAYSTATION

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

Tiger Woods 99 has finally been released in this country - free of any gratuitous, gross and downright disgusting South Park references, you'll no doubt be pleased to hear. I mean, any kid could simply stick the CD into their PC and search the disc for the offending clip (because we all put our PSX games in our PCs, don't we?). Better to keep such depravity in places no one will ever see it, like on prime-time national television. Sigh. But never mind.

This is an excellent golf game. Notice I didn't say "golf sim", as the distinction is important. TW99 features all the usual golf sim stuff - a slew of play options, including foursomes, skins and stroke play (who says golf isn't sexy?), tournaments, tour play, and five different US courses to walk around in spiffy shoes and casual slacks. Yet it also adds several cool things that could only be possible in a game. There's the Overswing meter, for instance, that lets you go for a super-powerful shot, but with the cost of greatly decreased accuracy. Hit it right, though, and a high voltage charge of electricity will flow through Tiger and the ball will leave scorch marks down the fairway. Similarly, if you break par on three consecutive



holes, you can activate the Tiger Charge and unleash his ability to whack a small white ball further than any other man alive.

Another thing I've not seen in other golf sims is the after-touch. After striking the ball, you can influence its flight by holding down the D-pad - left and right emulate hook and slice, while up makes the ball run on and down imparts backspin. That's not to say, however, that TW99 is totally unrealistic, since the ball physics are pretty accurate and factors such as wind, hills, slopes and the lie of the ball are all portrayed well.

Golf "sims" normally leave me cold, but this is a great game.

DAVID WILDGOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
77	80	86	85

Pool Hustler

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: POOL SIM
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: SUNSOFT
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: DUAL SHOCK, MEM CARD

If my penchant for hip hop has taught me anything, it's that I should be out on the streets, pimping and hustling. Since my secure middle class upbringing has left me crippled in the gangsta world, it seems that the only way to play the role of hustler is through a PlayStation.

Unfortunately though, if Pool Hustler is anything to go by, I'll probably die of old age before making any serious moola, or getting shot for that matter. Whilst Pool Hustler is a competent pool sim, the "hustling" side isn't particularly exciting or well conveyed. The opponents are too sedate and the pace too slow.

There are four games to choose from - nine ball, eight ball, 14-1 and rotation. The controls are well laid out and the graphics reasonable. The music is rather poor though, and gets annoying very fast.

The tables are a tad fast, so the balls seem to take ages to come to a complete stop. This wouldn't matter so much, but there's no way to fast forward to

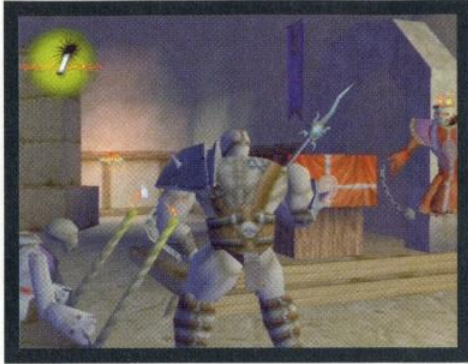


the end of the shot. Thus, for every single shot, you have to sit and wait until all the balls are still. This is further compounded by the camera angles which often fail to show exactly what you want to see.

On the whole though, Pool Hustler is good value for money. There's the story mode, where you travel around various pool halls in "Central City" (originality city), taking on increasingly skilled opponents and watching the stakes rise. You can also play against a friend, hone your trick shots through a large array of set pieces, or learn all the different ways to manipulate a stick in the lessons.

CAM SHEA

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
77	67	79	77



Dark Vengeance

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: THIRD PERSON ACTION
PLAYERS: 1 - MULTI
PUBLISHER: GT INTERACTIVE
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: P166, 32MB RAM
DESIRED: P233, 64MB RAM, VOODOO 2
SUPPORTS: 3D CARDS

Dark Vengeance is a third person perspective action game set in a fantasy world. It's innovative and creative in some areas, but buggy and frustrating in others. You're given a choice between three quite distinct characters, Nanoc the Gladiator, Kite the Trickster and Jetrel the Warlock. Unsurprisingly, each has his or her own backstory, specialties and weapons. The three characters are well balanced and each has their own array of funky weapons and attacks.

The action has a different feel to any other game on the market... The feel of a tree sloth covered in chains and tar. Fast paced medieval action games should play something like Heretic 2, but the interface to Dark Vengeance prohibits this. Basically, it's a cow to control, and you spend the game struggling with the controls more so than your enemies.

Dark Vengeance has some reasonable visuals, with some nice animations, but on the whole is not up to games such as Heretic 2 or Unreal. On the downside, the map graphics tend to be a little simple, and are functional more than anything else.

The most annoying aspect of the graphics, however, is that the camera often hovers way too close to your character and thus takes up a fair quantity of the screen. This obscures much of the playworld and items and enemies along with it. Unfortunately, all the interesting additions to the combat mechanics are almost made ineffective thanks to this lack of vision. Dark Vengeance could have been a good game, but ultimately falls on its face due to good ideas being overshadowed by poor implementation, and often buggy code.

CAM SHEA

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
60	75	50	55

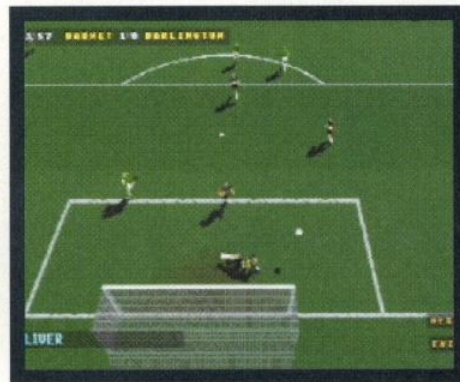
Premier Manager Ninety Nine

PLAYSTATION

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORTS MANAGEMENT
PLAYERS: 1 - 4
PUBLISHER: GREMLIN
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: MEMORY CARD

The last time I actively played a football management game was Player Manager on the Amiga, and it was my favourite game for about a year. Over the years there have been many football management games, and Championship Manager 2 has easily been the best, and last month we saw Player Manager 98-99 on PC. So how does Premier Manager Ninety Nine stack up?

For starters, the menu system is a little painful, but maybe that's just the result of me being so used to using a mouse for hauling through so many menus. However, there is a large assortment of things you can do. Put players up on the transfer lists, buy new players, upgrade your stadium,



install extra seating, obtain sponsorships, adjust player training and on field tactics.

The playback of highlights after a match has taken place is a complete waste of time really, purely because once you're into playing the game, there's no way you're going to want to wait for the extremely blocky low res engine of the on field highlights to be shown.

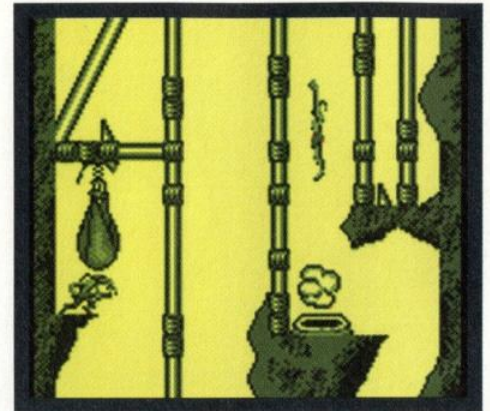
Players seem to get carded and injured with alarming frequency, and match scores tend to be a bit ludicrous, but it doesn't hurt the gameplay much.

There are two game modes: Career (manage a 3rd division team and also receive job offers to manage other clubs), or Manage (take a Premier League team and take them to the top). Purists will get more of a kick out of the career option. Bleed a team's finances dry to get a string of wins under your belt and get a better job offer just before your club sacks you for your financial damage to the club.

Not a bad game, but if you have a PC at all I'd strongly recommend you look at getting Championship Manager 3 on PC instead, as CM2 is STILL the best management game to date.

DAN TOOSE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
45	75	70	68



Oddworld Adventures

GAME BOY

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: PUZZLE/ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: GT INTERACTIVE
PRICE: \$TBA
RATING: M

It was always going to be in question. How do you cram all of that Mudoken goodness into a tiny Game Boy cart and do it any justice? Is not the appeal of Abe's Oddysee/Exodus the stunning backgrounds, brilliant character design and fluid gameplay, capped off by a fantastically cool storyline? The new Game Boy Colour is a wholesome wee little squat, but it's not that good. Try cramming all of what makes Abe's a magical gaming experience onto a tiny cart - and presenting it all in a drab monochrome colour scheme. Something's going to be lost in the process, eh?

Which is why Game Boy owners and fans of Oddworld should rejoice. GT Interactive and Oddworld haven't attempted a straight-up conversion of the PSX smash. They've opted to take all the good bits out of the core gameplay experience and cut them down for something the Game Boy can handle. So you don't have to save any fellow Mudokons, nor does the story unfold with stunningly rendered cut scenes. Instead you get a very simple (yet still an appropriate) version of Abe platforming fun. And yes, you can whistle and possess Sligs in it.

The stand out disappointment of Oddworld Adventures (other than it not fully supporting the Game Boy Colour is the control system. It's no where near the quality of the PSX version - so be prepared. It's nothing you can't get used to though.

It's a bit strange playing an Abe without all the subtle trimmings (and some of the more obvious ones). Most missed are Abe's vocals abilities (bleep, blap, etc on the GB- sigh) and the awe-inspiring back drops. But that's okay. Oddworld Adventures still is a mighty play. Just don't expect too much from this title and you'll walk away from the experience with a satisfied grin.

MARCH STEPNIK

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
67	47	86	78

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PLAYSTATION



MAC



PC-CDROM



CHAT



SEGA



ARCADE



NINTENDO 64

Welcome to Hyper's Metal Gear Solid Playguide. Here, you'll find a comprehensive walkthrough for every section of the game and an explanation of all the little puzzles you'll find along the way. Please bear in mind the fact that there is no singularly correct method of completing the game; and that this guide is designed to show you the basic motions of doing so.

This playguide is based on Metal Gear Solid's Easy Mode, basically because it was the way the game was originally intended. This is an opportune time to master your skills of stealth, learning to avoid troops, and generally how to infiltrate the base without the need for killing anyone. After that, you can go nuts with the other difficulty levels.

METAL GEAR SOLID PLAYGUIDE

〔01〕

DOCKS

Your basic objective in this area is to wait for the elevator at the top of the screen to come down, and then to get inside it. You have the option of picking the rations located at the corners of the room. You are not armed with any weapons, so don't try to kill anyone just yet. The best policy in this area is to simply avoid the patrolling guards. Watch out for the puddles of water: the guards can hear it if you run through them.

Tactical Positions:

- The top right corner just behind the forklift is the perfect hiding spot.
- If you get spotted, jump into the water from the wharf on the bottom right of the screen. That should allow you to avoid the guards with minimal fuss.

〔02〕

HELIPORT

The two most important things to do in this area is firstly to get the Socom, and secondly to reach the ventilation shaft located on the balcony at the top of the screen. The Socom is located in the back of the truck just beyond the helipad. If you're a chicken, you can crawl along the right side of the helipad to completely avoid detection. The alternative is to run

through the helipad itself, taking care to avoid the search lights, and picking up the chaff grenades in the process. You can also pick up the stun grenades in the room to the left of the helipad, but be sure to knock out the camera with chaff grenades before going in. To get to the ventilation shaft at the top of the balcony, go up the stairs on the right, wait for the guard to walk to the far left end, and then crawl in.

Tactical Positions:

- The enclave to the right of the stairwell is the perfect hiding spot if the guard on the balcony is walking towards you.
- The open space beneath the left entrance to the heliport is a good place to hide if you've been detected. At most you'll encounter one guard, who you can simply strangle if you take them by surprise.

〔03〕

BUILDING 1, TANK GARAGE

When you've crawled to the end of the ventilation shaft and climbed down, your objective is to get to the elevator located downstairs. Sneak past the camera on the top right and get the Thermal Goggles from the room on the right. Run around the railing to the left side of the screen and wait for the surveillance camera to sweep to the right before sneaking down the



stairs. Pick up the ammo if you need it, then go up to the elevator and press the button on the console to the right of the door. There's a slight delay, so watch out for the guard. When the elevator arrives, make your way down to level B1.

Tactical Positions:

- You can crawl under the tank, which allows you to avoid the guards whilst placing you directly in front of the elevator.
- The left side of the screen just before you reach the stairs is a good place to check where the guards are.

[04]

BUILDING 1, LEVEL B1

Follow the hall down and to the right, and climb up the ladder. When you get to the end, you'll find the DARPA chief, who'll then talk at length with you about the details of the mission. After he dies, the prisoner in the next cell will let you out, and then ambush you. You only need to worry when the guards start pouring in, in which case you should arm yourself and take out the guards one at a time. Watch out for the grenades when they get thrown in: run to the top left of the screen for safety. After the woman has disappeared, you should have a Level 1 Keycard in your possession. Go back inside the prison block and get the ammunition from the mini-office. Then take the elevator down to level B2.

[05]

BUILDING 1, LEVEL B2

This area contains 6 smaller rooms aligned 3 across and 2 down. The three passages lead-

ing downwards have trap doors that can be detected with the thermal goggles. Go first to the lower middle room and get the grenades. Then go to the upper middle room and get the C4. Go to the area just to the left of the elevator and place a block of C4 on the blue patch on the wall. Move away to a safe distance, blow a hole through it, and go in to get the goodies. Repeat this process with the blue patch on the right side of the elevator. When you've cleared out the two wall cavities, make your way to the bottom left of the room. Use a C4 to blow a hole through the blue patch, and make your way through. Run down, and you should see another blue patch on the wall to the right. Use C4 to go through. Ignore the blue patch on the right for now: that area comes later. Apply some C4 to the blue patch leading upwards. You will face off with Revolver Ocelot here.

[06]

REVOLVER OCELOT

Revolver Ocelot will run around in circles while firing at you, stopping after every 6 shots so he can reload. You must take care not to shoot the man strapped to the pillar in the centre of the room. Also, be sure not to activate the trip wires, otherwise the C4 will be set off.

Revolver Ocelot is very easily beaten with the Socom. If you're not sure of yourself, have your rations equipped so that they'll automatically kick in if your energy is depleted too quickly. Follow behind Revolver Ocelot as he runs away, and keep your socom trained on his back by keeping the square and X buttons pressed down. When you have a clear shot, pump a round into him. You might be able to pump in a few more rounds while he's stunned. If you run out of bullets, get the

ammo lying around the top of the screen. If Revolver Ocelot gets too far away, it's possible to stand your ground track him by keeping the square button pressed, and shoot him between the pillars.

After the sequence with the Cyborg Ninja, you'll be equipped with a Level 2 Keycard. Go back out to the main area with the 3x2 mini-rooms and use your new keycard to get into the bottom right room. Put on your thermal goggles and get the FA-MAS and ammo. Then go back to the elevator and make your way back up to the tank garage on level 1.

[07]

BUILDING 1, TANK HANGAR

Your main objective in this area is to contact Meryl so that she'll find an access path out of the area. Call her using the frequency "140.15", and she'll talk at length with you. You'll eventually have to wait for her to call you back, so in the meantime, stay on the lower level and go to the room on the right. Use your new Keycard to get in. Kill the sleeping guard and get the socom suppressor, which should automatically be fitted to your socom. Then go upstairs and go through the first door on the left to get the cardboard box and chaff grenades. Continue around the walkway and take out the guard with your socom. Avoid the surveillance camera and get into the room on the top right to pick up the Mine Detector.

Go back down the stairs, and hopefully Meryl will have opened the main garage door by now. Just go straight through. Strap on your thermal goggles and crawl your way through the moving laser beams. When you get to the end, use your keycard to go through the door.

[08]

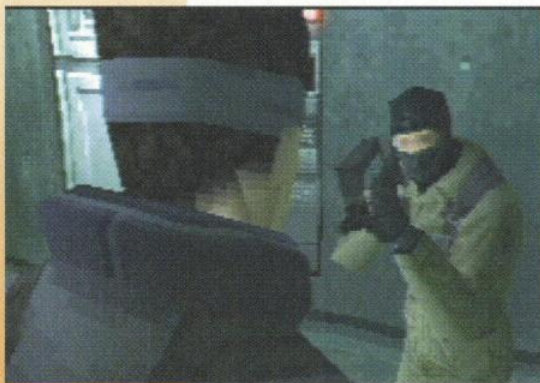
TANK YARD

Immediately in front of you is a series of mines. In order to avoid them, equip your mine detector so that they show up on your radar. To avoid them, simply step outside of their 'line-of-sight' cones. You can actually crawl up to the mines with the mine detector equipped, which allows you to disable and add them to your private stash of weapons. When you've travelled far enough up the screen, you'll face off with Vulcan Raven.

[09]

VULCAN RAVEN

The tank will attack you initially by its main gun turret, which can only be avoided by hiding behind hills and other obstacles. You have to physically run up to the tank, as it will not come to you. When you are a fair distance away, the tank will attack with its gun turret, which is both powerful and unforgiving if you picked a



bad spot to hide. When you get close enough, the tank will only attack you with its mounted machine gun, but it will still try to move out of range so that it can fire its main gun at you again. The best thing to do is to hug on of the walls and run directly to the tank. The only way to defeat it is to lob grenades down the entry port. To effectively do so, arm your grenades, hold down on the square button, and toss it in when you've come to a spot close enough to the tank. Don't get too close though, as your grenade runs a higher risk of bouncing off the main turret and missing its mark. The tank can even roll over you. Two direct hits are enough to take out the tank.

Tactical Positions:

- The metal obstacles on the top right hand corner of the map is not only a great spot to buy yourself some time, but it also has lots of ammo sitting around it. Note, however, that this area is not safe at all if you are being fired upon by the main gun.
- While it should realistically cripple the tank, don't bother trying to lure it into the minefield or even laying mines of your own in its path. It'll smile right at you and keep on coming.

(10) BUILDING 2: NUCLEAR WEAPONS STORAGE

Run all the way down the ramp and crawl under the main door. Your objective in this area is to get to the elevator located on top of the balcony, which is accessible via only the left or right staircase. To complicate things, your weapons have been deactivated. Getting to the elevator via the right staircase is pretty much ruled out. Direct access to it is covered by a surveillance camera, and the walkway above it is patrolled in its entire length. Your best option is to take the left staircase. The guard in this area walks a counter-clockwise patrol route around the missiles, and it's best that you run in the same direction around the missiles to get to the stairs. Wait for the guard above to walk away, and hustle up to the elevator. Go down to level B1.

Tactical Positions

- Mid-bottom of the left staircase. If you've followed the same patrol route as the left guard on ground level, you needn't worried if he's behind you. This position is high enough for you to check if the balcony guard is still there, and low enough for him not to see you.
- Between the missiles. It's about the only place you can hide, but if you're within earshot, your footsteps on the metal grating will

be heard.

(11) BUILDING 2: LEVEL B1 - THE OFFICE

Enter the men's bathroom on the left and take out the guard who is relieving himself. While it's possible to go as far as strapping a piece of C4 to this guy's back, you want to keep it as quiet as possible, so use the socom. After that, use your keycard to enter the main office, whose door is located directly opposite the elevator. Take out the guard inside and get the Nikita Launcher and Nikita Missiles. Go back to the elevator and go to level B2.

Tactical Position:

- Centre of the office room: this is the best place to actively track the patrolling guard. Take him out as soon as you have an open shot.

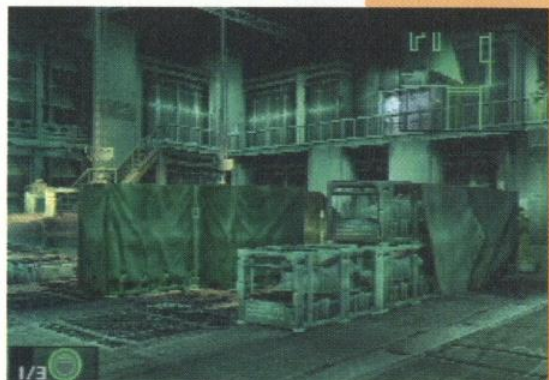
(12) BUILDING 2: LEVEL B2 - THE LAB

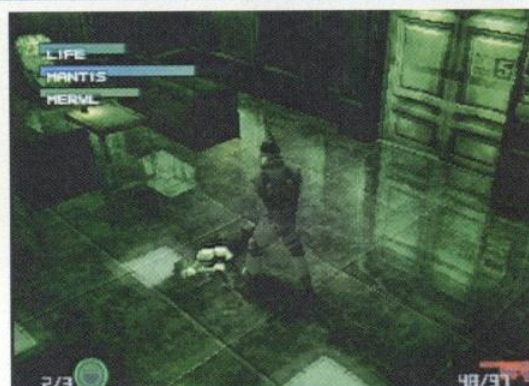
Go through the doors. You'll eventually come to a gas-filled corridor with an electrified walkway. The electrical junction box has to be taken out in order to proceed any further. Make sure your lungs are filled with air, then launch a nikita missile down the corridor. Go left on the screen, and then up through the office, and through the door on the top left that leads up. Take the missile right, through the door, and then into the junction box. While navigating the nikita missile, be wary of crashing into obstacles like bookshelves and monitors, or being shot down by one of the machine gun turrets. Go back out and fill your lungs with air, and then run down the harmless passage, pick-

ing up the Gas Mask along the way. When you get to the bottom of the corridor, run to the right on the screen and go through the door. Keep on going until you see the Cyborg Ninja, and follow him into the next room.

(13) CYBORG NINJA

Equip rations and disable all weapons. The Cyborg Ninja can only be defeated with hand-to-hand combat, so go in with the punches and kicks. The Ninja should only fight back with flip-kicks and stomping moves, all of which are easily avoided. Eventually, the Ninja will turn invisible. Equip your thermal goggles to see him. If you're low on energy, use one ration before going infra-red. Scan around - he'll be the sitting duck hiding in some corner of the room, leaving you free to beat him up some more. Eventually, the Ninja will stop using stealth and walk up to you throwing some very powerful punches. All you need to do is stand there and wait for him to walk up to you. He'll then teleport to the side right when he's in front of you, and then throw the punch. To counter it, simple run a little to the side to avoid where-ever he teleports and hit him when he misses his punch. When the Ninja is nearly through, he'll start going crazy and stand in a big blue ball. This is your chance to take him down with your socom or FA-MAS, after which he'll run away. After defeating the Ninja, Otacon will give you the Level 4 keycard. Make your way back to the elevator and go to Level B1.





[14]
BUILDING 2.
LEVEL B1:
THE OFFICE

Go into the main office and kill the guard who is initially patrolling on the right of the screen. Do not, under any circumstances, harm the guard on the left, as it is Meryl. Let her spot you, and then chase after her into the ladies' bathroom. Check the last cubicle. After your talk with Meryl, go up the passage to the left of the elevator and go through the doors.

[15]
SYCHO MANTIS

The first thing Psycho Mantis will do is to use Meryl against you. Remember: you can't kill her! Just use a stun grenade to neutralise the threat she poses. Psycho Mantis has a very specific attack pattern. First, he'll hover around the room under stealth, firing magic balls at you. Then, he'll start throwing the chairs, light fittings, ornaments, and paintings at you, all of which can be ducked

under. When you've hit him enough, he'll try to use Meryl again, first to kill you, and second to kill herself. Use a stun grenade in both instances. After that, Mantis will start using stealth to his advantage, making his attacks more erratic. Equip your thermal goggles to nullify his advantage and lay it into him.

Defeating Psycho Mantis can be done the easy way or the hard way. Under the hard way, Psycho Mantis can read your mind, so he'll be able to avoid your attacks. You'll only be able to hit him on every 8th attack. The best strategy there is to throw 7 well-placed punches, and then to shoot him with something.

The easy way is to prevent Mantis from reading your mind. When the screen goes black with the word "Hideo" on the top right corner, you must disconnect your control pad and reconnect it on the Player 2 Port. The idea is that Mantis can only read the left side of your brain, which is where the rational thought processes supposedly take place. When you're connected to the right control port, Mantis will not be able to read your mind, hence he cannot avoid any of your



attacks. In that case, equip your socom and blast him with gay abandon.

When Mantis is dead, go through the bookcase passage he opens for you.

(16)

THE CRUES

Let Meryl go off on her merry way. Follow the snowy path to the left and crawl through the rocky underpass. Head up and then right until you reach the lower right corner where you can crawl upwards through a hole to meet Meryl. If the wolves become too much of a nuisance, take them out with your socom. Go through the door at the top of the screen



(17)

SNIPER GROUNDS

After entering this area, just follow Meryl's instructions. She'll eventually be shot by Sniper Wolf. Get the hell out of there as soon as possible: the longer you stay, the more Meryl is going to be shot as she is being used as bait. Make your way back to Building 1 (the Tank Hangar). On the way there, stop off at the main office in Building 2 to get the Cardboard Box B. When you reach the Tank Yard, take care to avoid the new security measures - machine gun turrets and extra mines. When you get inside the tank garage, go down the elevator to level B2. Be careful, as the area is now crawling with guards. Use the keycard to enter the upper left room. Equip your thermal goggles and crawl in to get the PSG-1 and ammo. Run all the way back to the Sniper Grounds where you left Meryl and get ready to fight Sniper Wolf.



(18)

SNIPER WOLF

Whilst the PSG-1 is difficult to handle because it's difficult to keep the sights still, the real trick is in actually figuring out where Sniper Wolf is located. She's up on the balcony, and her positions are usually behind the pillars or behind the walls. Your shot has to be precise, as you'll be aiming at a small portion of her body and not the centre mass. Only in rare instances will she leave herself open for that.

To give yourself a rough idea of where Sniper Wolf is, press yourself against the wall so that you can see the entire length of the passage. The red laser beam she is using to target you should give away her location. Position yourself next to either the left or right wall, equip the PSG-1, and target Sniper Wolf. The rifle is deadly accurate, so your cross-hairs must be on the target for a clean hit. You won't get away with fudging around the edges. If she moves, follow her until she settles down and wait for her to expose herself to a shot again. Don't forget that you have to change positions every so often as well. The tell-tale red flash in your sights means that she's found your position, and that you're a sitting duck.

After defeating Sniper Wolf, run up along the passage way, picking up the ammo and rations as you go along, and enter the door on the right. At this point, you will be surrounded by the enemy and unceremoniously captured alive.

Tactical Positions:

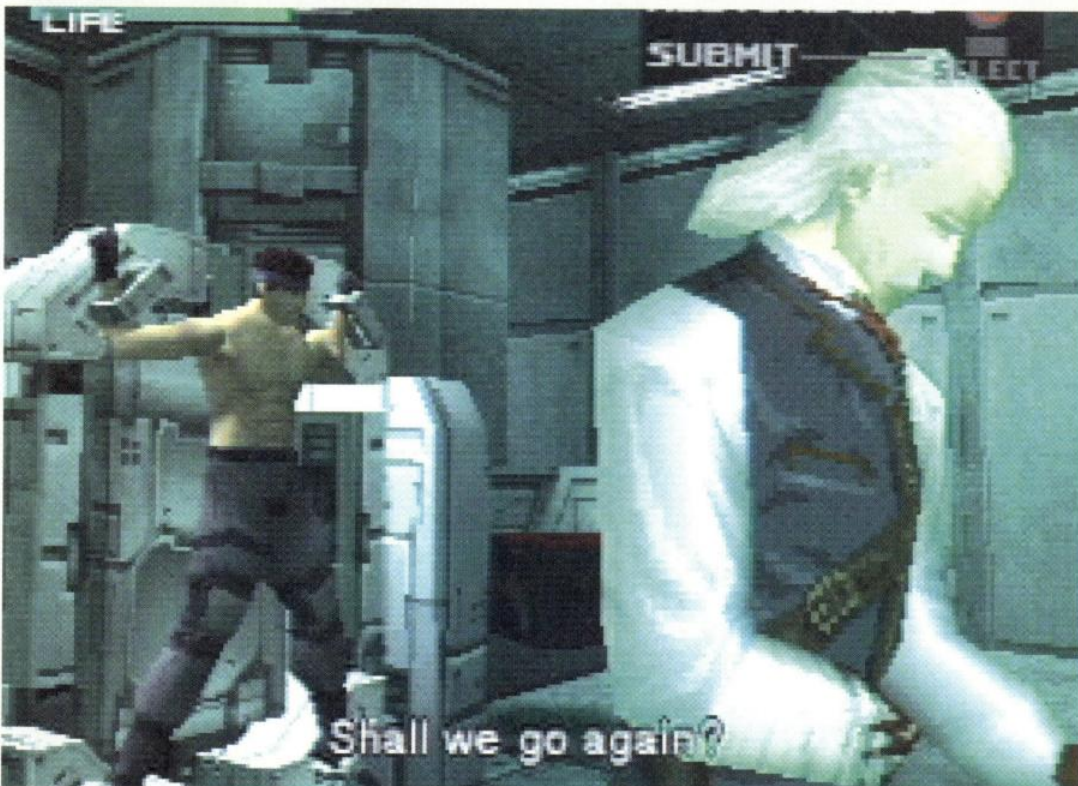
- While shooting at Sniper Wolf, it's best to stay next to either the left or right wall. That reduces the likelihood of being open to a shot.

- While changing positions, there's the real risk that you'll be hit by Sniper Wolf, which would probably encourage you to take your chances and run across the minefield. If you haven't figured it out by now, the entire minefield can be avoided simply by walking along the metal grating on the edges.

(19)

THE TORTURE CHAMBER

In this area, you've been stripped of all of your worldly belongings and strapped to an electrocution machine. While you're being zapped, press the circle button repeatedly to keep your energy level up. If you decide you want to give up, press the select button (in which case, it's game over without an option to continue). You'll be momentarily taken back to your cell, and then tortured again. This time, when you're taken back to your cell, you'll be paid a visit by Otacon. The guard will also be overcome by a toilet emergency, which will give you the chance to hide under your bed. When the guard returns, he'll think you've disappeared and open the cell door. Come out from under the bed and kill him. If you don't do this, then the Ninja will rescue you later on.



WEAPONS ITEM TIPS AND STRATEGIES.



[B] **Socom:** While the Socom is the bog-standard weapon, it is the most effective. Not only can the weapon be fitted with a silencer, but it is also the only weapon with which Snake can actively target and track enemy soldiers. In close-combat situations, the Socom is actually the best weapon to use, particularly when you're on a budget for ammunition. Hold down the X button together with the square button in order to run whilst armed with the Socom.

[L] **Chaff Grenades:** while chaff grenades have the ability to knock out surveillance cameras, it's important to realise that they also knock out your personal radar system. Therefore, make sure the area is clear of patrolling troops before throwing a chaff grenade, otherwise you might accidentally run into one. Chaff grenades are essential for getting through areas of the base that are covered by security machine guns.

[=] **Grenades:** Grenades are only useful once in the entire game - against Vulcan Raven in the Tank Yard. All you need to do is press the square button to pull the pin. Hold down on it to hang on, and when you want to toss it, release the square button. Just make sure you don't hold it for too long, otherwise you'll blow yourself up.

[d] **Stun Grenades:** When you don't have any weapons and don't have a place to hide, the stun grenade will probably buy you some time by knocking out the troops momentarily. It's only 'essential' when Psycho Mantis starts taking control over Meryl.

[E] **Keycards:** These are essential for getting through security doors. When you are in heavily guarded areas, you don't want to make the mistake of accidentally opening a door by running too close to it, which would leave you open to detection. It's good practice to switch the card on and off with the L1 button.

[F] **FA-MAS:** It's not as accurate as the Socom, and it's only useful when you have to deal with large clusters of guards - for instance in the Tower 1 section. It's also the quickest and most efficient method of disposing of guards with body armour, which is good when time is of the essence.

[9] **Cardboard Box:** The cardboard box is essentially a hiding implement when you've got no place to hide. You have to be using a box with the right markings on it, otherwise the guards will know it's in the wrong area and they'll kick it over. You can look out through the cut-out handles, but if you move too much, the guards will see you.

[H] **Nikita Launcher:** This is a remote-controlled missile launcher where pressing a direction on the digital thumb pad will determine the direction the missile travels relative to the screen. It's a very effective long range weapon, but it's unfortunately slow, which leaves it vulnerable to security measures like gun turrets.

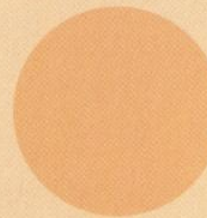
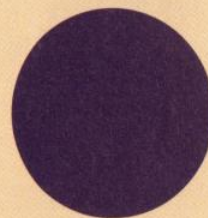
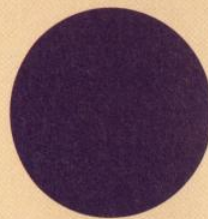
[i] **PSC-1:** The sniper rifle is one of the most useful weapons in Metal Gear Solid. It is also one of the hardest to use, especially because of the heartbeat that moves you around and the fact that you have to figure out what you're looking at. The best method of using this weapon is to aim yourself directly at the target and then equipping it.

[j] **Thermal Goggles:** This allows you to see things that are 'invisible'. While it's useful in key areas such as fighting the Cyborg Ninja or Psycho Mantis, it's actually a cheap but effective way of finding items. Anything you need to pay attention to is basically highlighted in red.

[H] **Stinger Launcher:** The biggest whoop-ass weapon in your arsenal. It takes you to first person mode, so all you have to do is point and shoot. Certain targets can also be locked-on to, such as Liquid's Hind.

[1] **Claymore Mine:** A useless weapon. You can pretty much use it for anything you want, but it's only for novelty value.

[r] **Rations:** If you leave rations equipped, they will automatically replenish your energy when you're about to die. If you want to use a ration manually, leave the L2 button held down while highlighting the ration and press the circle button.



When you're out of your cell, go back to the torture chamber and pick up the red box containing your belongings. Press the R2 button and cycle through the items till you find an item that shouldn't be there. It's a bomb with a timer device, courtesy of Revolver Ocelot. Hold R2 and press the circle button to get rid of it. Go out the door, then take the elevator down to level B2.

(20)

BUILDING 1 LEVEL B2

Run down through the hole you blasted on the southern wall, and make your way to the passage that's just before where you first fought Revolver Ocelot. At the end of that passage is another blue patch, which you can blow a hole through. Throw in a chaff grenade to disable the gun turrets and run in to both rooms to pick up the grenades and camera. After that, go back upstairs to the Tank Garage, through the Tank Yard, and all the way back to where you left Meryl.



(21)

TOWER 1

Go down the corridor and go through the door. The alarm will sound and you basically have no choice but to keep going forward. Make sure you get the Rope and Stun Grenades, and then run for dear life up the stairs. You'll have to stop every so often to take out the troops, who are all wearing body armour. The key to surviving this section is to get through it as quickly as possible. In order to do that, don't bother using the Socom as it takes too much time to kill these troops. Arm your FA-MAS and let rip into them. As you are running up, ignore the Level 6 Security door. A bridge to Tower 2 lies on the other side, but it's frozen shut and you have no choice but to run to the roof anyway.

When you get to the very top, go through the door. Liquid Snake will challenge you here with his chopper by blowing up the roof. Equip your rope and walk up to the edge of the building to start the rappelling sequence. All you really need to watch out for here is the jets of steam and the bullets that Liquid fires at you. When you get to the bottom, you'll be on the other side of the security door that was frozen shut - but don't bother going in.

Your goal now is to get across the bridge to Tower 2, which is guarded by 3 heavily armed troops on the other side of the bridge. Take them out with your sniper rifle, and be careful because they shoot back. Get to the other side and go through the door before you get shot up by Liquid.



(22)

TOWER 2

It is essential that you get the Stinger Launcher when you enter the room, as well as the stinger missiles. After that, go through the door and follow the stairway downwards on the right of the screen until you come to the broken stairs. Run back up to the elevator, where you'll meet Otacon again. Continue running up the stairs. This time, however, you have to look up before you start running up each flight of stairs, as the entire tower is loaded with mounted guns. All you really need to do is throw a chaff grenades to knock them out as you're running up the stairs. The guns occur at every fourth set of stairs, so if you throw chaff grenades at regular intervals whilst running all the way to the top, the entire tower should be passed with minimal fuss. When you get to the top, pick up the ammo, climb up the ladder, and go outside.

(23)

LIQUID SNAKE

Once outside, you'll face off with Liquid Snake and his chopper. Defeating the chopper is very, very easy. Liquid will fly all around the building firing machine gun rounds, which can be avoided as you use the obstacle in the centre of the roof. There's no specific position you need to be in to take down Liquid - just arm the Stinger Launcher and wait for a clear shot at him. To do that, the chopper has three lock-on points: the cockpit, the centre mass, and the tail. Shooting any of them will do the same damage. When Liquid has taken enough hits, he will fire off a missile which will need to be avoided. He'll then duck below firing range where you can't see him, and come up suddenly up for a surprise attack. To get around

this, you can actually track the chopper's movements by looking at your radar and pointing your Stinger Launcher at the ground. You'll still lock on to him, even though you won't hit him, and you'll be able to hit him with a rocket before he even fires off one round. After Liquid crashes and burns, go back inside the tower.

(24) TOWER 2

Run all the way back down the stairs and get in the elevator. Go to Level 1. On this elevator you will be surrounded by 4 soldiers wearing stealth suits and body armour. Equip your FA-MAS and thermal goggles and take them all out. When you get to Level 1, get the ration and PSG-1 ammo, and go through the door. Throw a chaff grenade, pick up the items, and leave through the next door into the snow field.

(25)

SNIPER WOLF 2

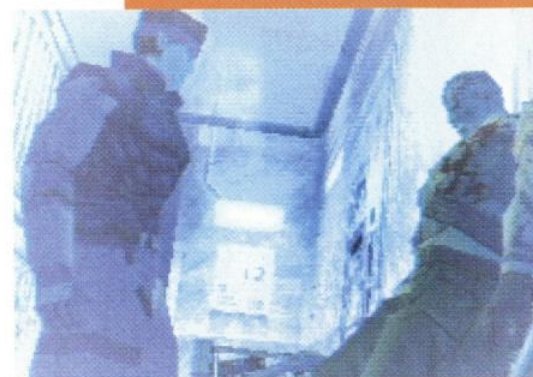
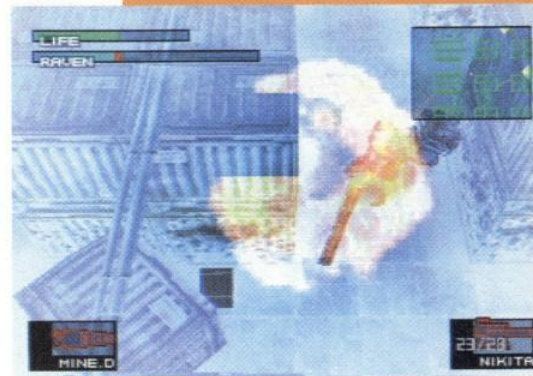
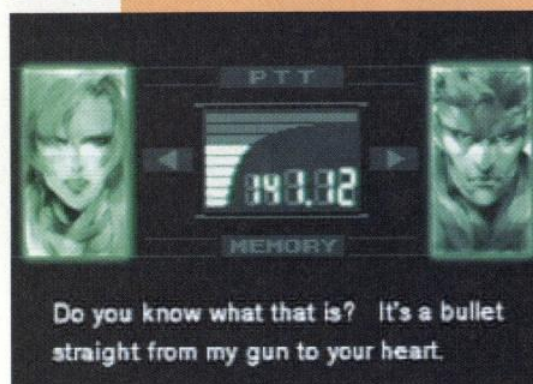
Run forward. Eventually, you'll be shot down by Sniper Wolf. Use the same strategy as before to defeat Sniper Wolf. When her little sequence is over, enter the building in the middle at the top of the screen, with the Level 6 Security door. When you go inside, toss a chaff grenade and run around to the top right of the screen. Going down the passage will bring an end to Disc 1. Insert Disc 2 to continue.

(26)

BLAST FURNACE

Take out the first guard with your socom and pick up the ammo. Go down the longer bridge and press yourself up against the wall. Notice the little opening on the side? Go through it. This will allow you to tip-toe your way across the ledge. Make sure you stay pressed against the wall, otherwise it's hasta la vista, baby. When the winch moves over, you'll have to duck, otherwise it will knock you into the fire pit. Go down the first set of stairs and pick up the ammo lying around. If the guard comes lurking about, kill him with the socom. Go down the next flight of stairs and then go through the south door into the steam room.

When you're in the steam room, just duck and run your way past the jets of steam. Go down, then crawl through the opening on the west wall. There are mounted guns here, so toss a chaff grenade and run around to pick up the Body Armour



and ammo. Get back inside the steam room, out the way you came, and then go through the main door right in front.

(27)

ELEVATOR SHAFT

Run around and pick up the ammo. When the lift arrives, get on and activate the console just as you would with a normal elevator. On the way down, you'll encounter a few troops who are easily taken out with the FA-MAS. When you get to the bottom, go to the next elevator on the right hand side. Be careful of the mounted gun between the elevators. The area around the second elevator is also loaded with mines. When you get to the very bottom, get the ammo lying behind the crates and go through the big door.

(28)

FREEZER ROOM - VULCAN RAVEN

Here's where you face off with Vulcan Raven man-to-man. He'll wander around searching for you, and for some reason he's pretty bad at it. However, he does have a very long range in terms of sight. In any case, once you've hit him enough, he'll start running around a little faster, but it's nothing to be particularly worried about.

The method by which you defeat Vulcan Raven is really up to your imagination. The only forms of attack that are categorically ruled out are the socom and the FA-MAS, which require you to run up really close. You can use any of the following either exclusively or in combination: the Stinger Launcher, the landmines, C4, and the Nikita Launcher. Exit through the north door when you're done with Vulcan Raven.

(29)

UNDERGROUND BASE

The passage immediately in front of you is loaded to the teeth with mounted guns and trapdoors. However, it's nothing that a little chaff grenade can't solve. Just toss one and then run for dear life to the north door.

Follow the passage up to the Metal Gear Rex. Go right and climb up the ladder. Then go left, up, and then up the next ladder. Then climb the ladder going over the Metal Gear Rex, climb back down on the other side, and follow the passage around. Kill the guard, keep following the passage, and go up the flight of stairs and watch the sequence in the control room.

(30)

PAL Key 1

Unfortunately, Snake has dropped the PAL Key all the way down at the bottom of the base. You have to climb all the way down to the bottom of Metal Gear Rex, and then go down the next ramp into the storm drain. There, you have to look for the PAL Key, which a rat has taken possession of. You have to look for the rat, and it's probably a little easier doing it with the thermal goggles on. If you find the rat, shoot it to pieces and get the card. You might have the fortune of picking up another one of Revolver Ocelot's bombs while searching for the PAL Card. Get rid of it in the same way as you did the last one.

When you find the PAL Card, you have to climb all the way back up Metal Gear Rex and get back into the control room. The room itself is covered by cameras, so toss in a chaff grenade before roving in. Equip the PAL Key and walk in front of the left laptop computer.

(31)

PAL Key 2

The second PAL Key is made by taking your original PAL Key to the Freezer Room where you killed Vulcan Raven. In other words, you have to climb all the way back down Metal Gear Rex and go to the Freezer Room. You have to wait around for your PAL Key to turn from yellow to blue - the status of which can be checked on your R2 inventory button. When the PAL Key has turned blue, go back to Metal Gear Rex, climb back up to the control room, and insert the key into the centre laptop.

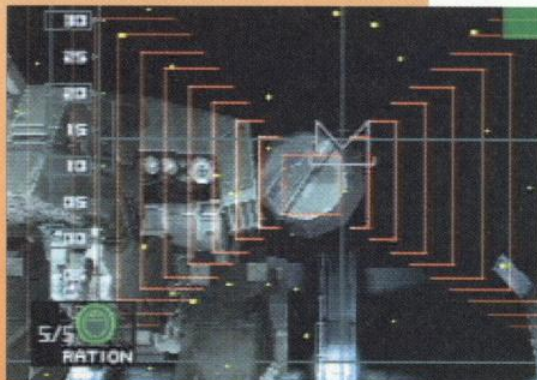
(32)

PAL Key 3

The PAL Key must now be warmed in order to be usable on the red laptop. To do that, you have to run all the way back to the blast furnace and wait for the PAL Key to turn red. On the way there and back, be wary that the Freezer Room is now crawling with guards. When you get back to the control room, insert the key into the last laptop.

When the alarms go off and the room starts filling up with gas, call up Otacon on frequency "141.12". He'll open the door for you. When you get out of there, you'll notice a half-naked man running to the right. Follow him.

(33)



METAL GEAR REX

You have to use the Stinger Launcher and Chaff Grenades to defeat Metal Gear Rex. Your target is the radar module positioned on Rex's left shoulder, which is on the right of the screen. That radar is central to Rex's targetting system because it is designed to locate you. Therefore, you must throw a chaff grenade, and then quickly switch over to the Stinger Launcher and fire one off at the radar. Unequip it and run away from the rockets being fired at you while throwing another chaff grenade, and repeat the process until the next automated sequence begins.

After Grey Fox has been killed, you'll note that you needn't worry about the radar module anymore. This time around, Liquid Snake has completely exposed himself as he has no other choice but to leave his cockpit open in order to see. Therefore, all you need to do is fire one stinger at a time at the cockpit. After each shot, unequip the launcher and avoid whatever Liquid fires at you. In addition to the rockets and machine guns, Liquid will also be firing a big blue laser at you. The laser is only effective at close range; and given that the Stinger Launcher has a very good range, you're better off keeping your distance. Just keep on hammering into Rex until it's dead.

(34)

LIQUID SNAKE

Now you'll be facing off with Liquid Snake in a fist fight. This part is actually very simple, except for the time limit on which Meryl's life is staked.

(35)

THE ESCAPE

Now that Meryl is safe, your primary objective is to get the hell out of there. Before you go any further, go back through the door you came in from and get the rations, then run left, following Meryl's lead, and also pick up the rations next to the stairs. Follow Meryl into the jeep, and shoot down all the troops that try to stop you. Also, shoot down the barrels as a means of gaining an advantage - particularly because they explode.

After clearing past the first few security blockades, you will be pursued by none other than Liquid Snake. Just keep on shooting at him until Meryl gets the jeep out into the open.

Congratulations: You've just completed one of the greatest adventures ever on the PlayStation.

STARSIEGE TRIBES : TEAM BASED GAME OF 1999?!

Tribes is a first person shooter, akin to games like Quake. It has however been designed with a complete focus on multiplayer gaming. The only single player side of the game is a few training courses to show you the basics of playing the game. Each player is equipped with a jetpack, zoom facility (up to 20x – get some dry rations and camp out baby), and the ability to customise their weapon and armour selection at inventory stations. The real beauty behind tribes however is its command facility.

Team talk and commands are built into the game to the point where its possible to co-ordinate full team strategies without having your team members sitting across the table from you. If you had to compare Tribes with an existing game it would be Team Fortress (a mod for Quake1) that would come closest. With Team Fortress 2 coming out within the next couple of months though it will be interesting to see which game holds the community for team based games. Certainly Tribes is doing very well in the popularity stakes thus far, and if nothing else this progression of team based games shows that players are appreciating strategy as much as skill. Also, for those of you that figured you're not a crack FPS expert enough to cut it in Quake 1 or 2, Tribes has enough roles to allow new players to get in and play a real role without requiring you to have years of experience behind you.

On the Wireplay scene, there is to be a set of VIC vs NSW Tribes matches played over the months of April and May. The Victorians will be represented by a team of TR and SoQ members (notably the two best team based clans in Vic for Quake2 and very strong strategically). NSW will be represented by a conglomerate of the state's best Tribes players – uniting under the banner of Tribe of MPU (ToM). Check out their site for more details (www.mpu.com.au/tribes).

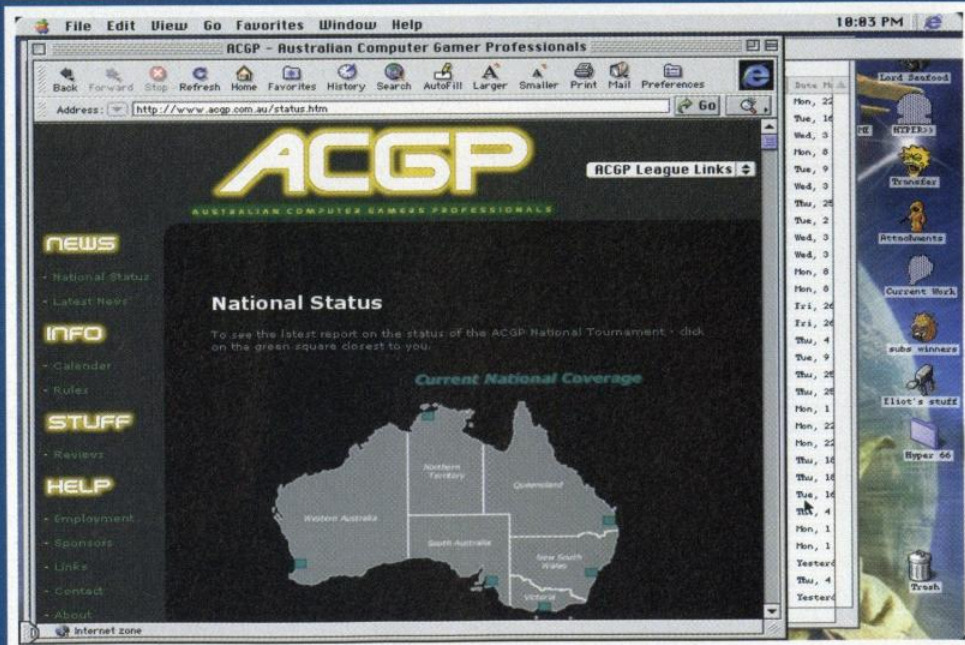


ACGP UPDATE:

With the completion of the first round in most states, the national tournament is running on schedule. The Victorian side will be announcing dates and venues by the time this issue comes out.

The interesting thing about this trial tournament is that its bringing the community together with a common goal – to further professional gaming in this country. Games will change, technology will advance, but what is being built here is something that will last a number of years. To quote Term, the QLD state rep for ACGP, "If nothing else this trial tournament will provide a framework for which to base a professional league on".

Once this framework is laid down and this first test tournament complete the next goal will be to setup a full scale professional tournament, covering the latest games, and culminating in a mini gamer's trade show. As in all competitive arenas, Australians have a significant amount of talent for such a small population, and its about time the country took its gaming seriously enough to provide services and support for its gamers. International representation (like Reload's jaunt to Sweden) is only a small stone throw from becoming the norm.



<http://www.acgp.com.au/>

SGL QUAKE2 TEAM DM ROUND 1



The Sydney Gamers League held Round 1 on the 6th March. Running under the Australian Computer Gamer Professional banner. Michael Price alias FireFly organised the event with the help of the boys at MPU.

The day went very well, with everything going to plan, all matches were finishing on time with some wild fragging going on. First game started at Middy, with 8 clans from Sydney turning up to wipe the floor with each other. The clans competing were: The Black Hand, coots, The Draconic Guild, Malevolence, Fueled By Destruction, Vortex, Generation X and Lords of Amoral. BH where the clan of the day taking out equal first with 6 wins and 12 points next the their name. coots and DG are also on 6 wins and 12 points.

BH won one the frags count and needed to buy extra mops & buckets to clean up the mess they made on the floor after a huge total of 709 frags. Interestingly, this was the first time a clan has defeated Draconic Guild in a LAN match. With 3 clans coming equal first and a tight battle for 4th, the next round is going to be a most exciting round.

Round 2 decides the top 4 clans which will go into the final round and battle it out for the SGL quake2 Team DM title. Unfortunately round 2 is being played on the 27th or march and it is way past our deadline, so you will have to wait till next month for the result or you can always see the up to date results on the Sydney Gamers League WebPages at <http://sgl.golsyd.net.au/>

SGL would like to say thanks to their sponsors for the day - MPU & Jolt Cola. Next month we'll be taking a look at the Queensland side of things.

TEAM	Points	Fraggs
The Black Hand	12	709
coots	12	678
Draconic Guild	12	670
Malevolence	8	499
Fueled By Destruction	6	568
Vortex	4	234
Generation X	2	197
Lords of Amoral	0	36



THE MULTIPLAYER DIRECTORY

A handy list of URLs for the PC multiplayer gaming community.

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.newsinja.com/vml/>

Victorian Multiplayer League. The major Victorian regular LAN event.

MPU - <http://www.mpu.com.au/>

Multiplayer United. A monthly NSW LAN event.

SGL <http://sgl.golsyd.net.au>

Sydney Gamers League providing the competition on MPU lans for the national league.

QGL <http://www.qgl.org>

Queensland Gaming League providing competition for the national league

NT <http://ausquake.newsinja.com/ntmg/>

New league / Lan formed in the Northern Territory providing competition for the National League.

SA <http://www.kastinet.net.au/sawonderlan/>

South Australian Lan & League providing competition for the National League.

WA <http://www.iinet.net.au/~stomp/WAGL/>

Western Australia Lan & League providing competition for the National League

Quake Scene

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

A site is dedicated to International Quake challenges.

AusQuake - <http://ausquake.newsinja.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.newsinja.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

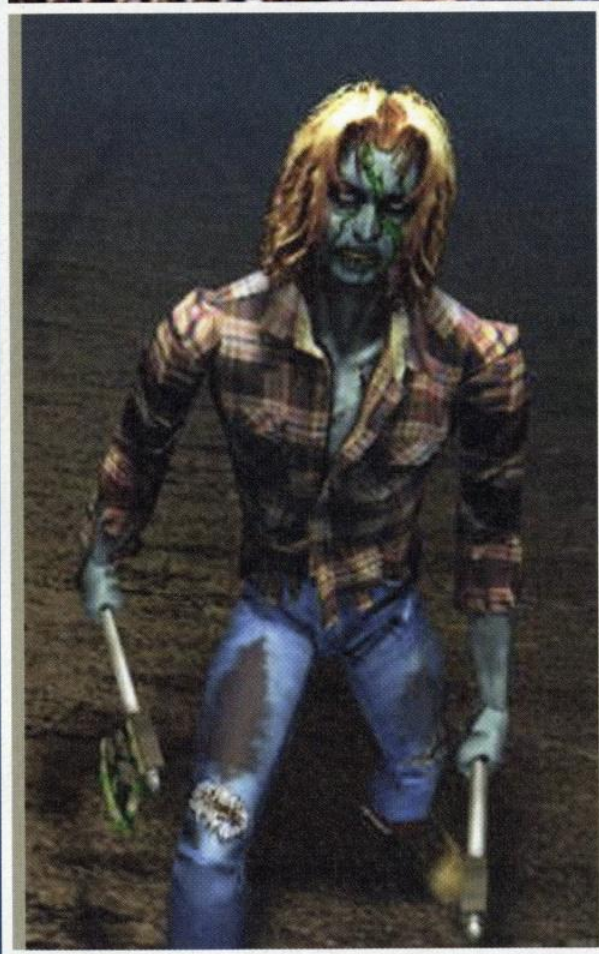
KSCL - <http://gameserver1.ogn.aust.com/leagues/sc/>

Kali Starcraft League. A dedicated Australian Starcraft ladder, separate from the Battle.Net ladder.

HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2

SEGA

BY TIM LEVY



and destruction and a net loss for the city's tourist industry. This mystery/adventure will take you through the city's locales by shoe, automobile and powered launch - though no matter where you go, there is a seemingly endless supply of possessed creatures awaiting to slice and dice your FBI ass.

At times, the game feels like your (or is it just mine) worst nightmare. It is nightmarish in the fact that it now takes MANY bullets to kill the incoming zombies. In other words, you'll find yourself maniacally blasting away with chunks of gamy crud and limbs flying off the zombie as it gets closer and closer and closer still. Then just as your trigger finger is becoming real tired, and just as that giant meat cleaver is about to descend into your forehead, the zombie finally keels over and dissipates into a pool of bubbling green ooze... that was (another) close one. In many parts of the game, you will have to rescue civilians who are being attacked by the zombies. If you save them by extremely accurate fire, you are awarded either a bonus immediately or when the stage is completed. Whatever you do don't shoot the humans as you'll lose a life. Saving humans is also the way in which the paths split to take you on an alternate route.

Just when the FBI thought it was safe to nail the case shut on the 1996 Genome Theory Case (a.k.a. House of the Dead I), another dangerous outbreak of zombism has occurred. This time, it's not just confined to a house, it's more on an epidemic full blown CITY scale. So start massaging that trigger finger cause it's about to get a major workout in Sega's new fear inducing polygon shooter on rails.

By taking control of FBI agents James and Gary, you will attempt to track down the evil Goldman who seems to be the lunatic responsible for causing death

Three arcade cabinet types are available, with the sit down booth being the best as it is 1) darker and therefore scarier 2) you can sit down 3) people can't see you being scared 4) there is surround sound.

HotD2 is a perfect example of what a sequel should be. Not only have the sound and graphics been technologically enhanced, but the level of intensity has been magnified to bring you a shooter of horrifically terrific proportions.

9/10

STAR WARS TRILOGY

SEGA



As we eagerly await the launch of the Star Wars prequels a whole host of merchandising (Yoda ear muffs, Boba Fett motorcycle helmets, Chewbacca door mats) has been released to whet our appetites. On the arcade front is Sega's latest 3D first person perspective shooter on rails which places you in those spectacular battles fought in the first 3 films.

In the games 3 MAIN stages, you will find yourself piloting: a speeder bike through the forests of ENDOR,



an X-Wing fighter near the planet YAVIN (Death Star I) and a snowspeeder over the icy surface of HOTH. In a couple of Hoth and Endor's sub stages (3 per main stage), you'll find yourself on foot and having to shoot it out against imperial ground troops with your blaster. Bonus stages include lightsaber battles against Darth Vader and Boba Fett. If you successfully complete all 3 stages, a fourth is revealed in which you attempt to take out the Death Star Mk II in your trusty X-Wing.

Overall, the game packaging is of a very high standard, with all the characters/sound effects/theme music from the film being accurately ported for the game. Unfortunately, the gameplay is at times lacking in depth and intensity, though if you are a hardcore Star Wars fan, then I'm sure you can overlook this, as the game is quite a roller coaster of a ride.

7.5/10

SABER MARIONETTE J, VOL. 1

EL HAZARD 2 VOL. 1&2

- Category: Romantic comedy, action
- Production Company: Pioneer LDC
- Available: On import



Lovers of the original El Hazard OAV will be pleased to know that a second series chronicling Makoto's adventures in the 'Magnificent World' has finally arrived. This series, sees the return of the complicated yet hilarious love triangle surrounding Makoto, Nanami and Shayla; which is further complicated by the lesbian tastes of Fatora and Alielle. Heck, even Fujisawa and Miz are meant to get married! The thread holding these concepts together is the discovery of Kalia, a mysterious girl who is somehow linked to Ifurita and likewise falls under Jinnai's control. Of course, Jinnai has some kind of maniacal plan for world domination involving Kalia.

Those who are unfamiliar with the hugely popular El Hazard series, might find themselves thrown into the deep end. If you're already a fan, you might be a little disappointed by the change in plot direction. The original series focussed on the introduction of new characters, learning about the magnificent world, and quest to ultimately get home. Here, it's about the on-going adventures, much like Ranma and Tenchi Muyo. At any rate, the new costume designs and animations are of a high standard, ensuring that the classic romantic comedy moments are explosive and funny as hell. El Hazard 2 is definitely worth checking out, but fans should be prepared for a change in focus

- Animation: 8 ■ Plot: 7 ■ Japan-ness: low
- Overall 7.5

- Category: Romantic comedy, action
- Production Company: Bandai Visual
- Available: On import

If you're a fan of the supernatural other-worldly action and slapstick humour of the Slayers or Tenchi series, then you're definitely going to want a look at Saber Marionette J. Somewhere in the future, the future of humanity is left to 6 men who crash-land on a planet known as Terra II. For the next 300 years, the entire

of taking on an imperial army. The romantic comedy is delightfully funny, especially when 2 more Marionettes that fall in love with Otaru. This is perfectly balanced by a more serious sub-plot, where the leader of a rogue empire is intent on taking over the world. This necessarily involves battles between even more Saber Dolls.

On these basic plot structures alone, Saber Marionette J has huge potential. Thus far, it's been outrageously funny and we can't wait to get our



planet grows in population through genetic cloning and engineering, but there's a catch: there are no women. In fact, there's a shrine dedicated to the memory of a human woman! The only thing remotely female in this world are emotionless androids called 'marionettes'. The story revolves around Otaru, who accidentally awakens a marionette called Lime. She's wild, she's loud, and she's fully juiced up with emotion. And for some reason, she's in love with Otaru. She also happens to be a high-performance Saber Marionette that's more than capable



hands on more. Hardcore anime lovers should also take note that Lime's Japanese voice actor is Megumi Hayashibara, the fan-favourite Japanese voice actress who's credits extend to Ayanami Rei in Evangelion and Lina Inverse in Slayers. In any case, this series is quirky and weird, and admittedly not the most original series ever made. But if you've been weaned on Ranma or Tenchi, you will love this just as much. Saber Marionette J is champagne anime.

- Animation: 8 ■ Plot: 9 ■ Japan-ness: medium
- Overall 9

News and Release Info

With Evangelion over, there's going to be an anime drought on TV. SBS and Madman are currently negotiating Gunsmith Cats, which is coming soon to video. Also look for a local release of Burn Up W. And the EVA movies? Australian distributors are negotiating them right now. We'll keep you posted.

Hyper's Hot 5 of the Month

1. Neon Genesis Evangelion
2. Saber Marionette J
3. Vision of Escaflowne
4. Fushigi Yuugi
5. Record of Lodoss Wars



All import videos supplied by The Cartoon Gallery, QVB, Sydney. Their website lists over 2,300 anime items. Phone: (02)9267-3022 <http://www.cartoongallery.com.au>

KEVIN CHEUNG

ROLE PLAYING GAMES

ELIOT FISH



If ever there was a game genre that demanded freak-worthy dedication online, it would be the Role Playing Game. Come take my hand and let me guide you to some special URLs for a few of the latest greatest fantasy-based games...

Heroes of Might & Magic III

This fantasy-themed turn-based strategy war game has rabid fans all over the globe, thus it's presence on the web is nothing short of burgeoning. If you're new to the series or have a hunger to know more about the land of Erathia, then start your journey across the web at the official site courtesy of 3DO studios.

<http://www.3do.com/products/pc/heroes3/>

Of course, what would a game be without its plethora of fan-created sites of worship? Try a few of these cool sites on for size...

<http://www.1stnettech.com/Holly/Heroes3/homm3.html>

<http://members.xoom.com/dunkeeper/>

Baldur's Gate

Venturing forth to smite demons with magical arrows, geared up in your enchanted platemail, there's always time to stop in at the tavern for a cold one. All around the net there are some virtual taverns where you can drop in for information, meet up with fellow adventurers or just gorge yourself on tips and tricks. Besides the official site at <http://www.interplay.com/> there are plenty of Baldur's Gate resources on the web. The BG Chronicles is like a complete D&D guidebook online, with everything you need to know about every little aspect of the game, as well as information on troubleshooting the game and figuring out Multiplayer hassles. Surf on over to <http://www.BGChronicles.com/> for the biz. There are also countless links here to other official and unofficial Baldur's Gate websites, such as Baldur's Gate Realms at

<http://www.bgrealms.com/> which is very cool. With its multiplayer options, it'll be a while before we see the end of Baldur's Gate fanaticism.

Final Fantasy VIII

Yep, this long awaited title has been out in Japan for over a month now, so those of you who are busting to find out some details on the game before the PAL release, can now tune into the site of gamers who have played through the whole thing. Did you know it came on four discs? Is it true there is a Sephiroth Summon? Find out...

<http://www.ff8world.com/>

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

<http://www.negativezero.com/ff8/>

<http://members.xoom.com/ff8net/home1.html>

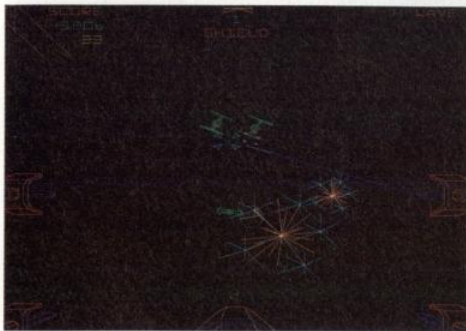
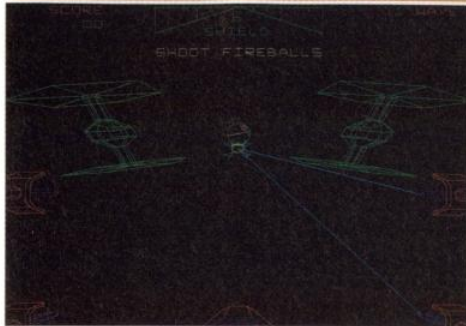
Wizardry 8

Keeping a fairly low-profile in comparison with 3DO's M&M7, Sir-Tech's Wizardry 8 is another game in a long-running series which has generated thousands of fans, which is seeing the light of day soon. You can go straight to the horse's mouth at <http://www.sir-tech.com/> for the latest news and information on the imminent release of the game. For a fan's perspective on the whole Wizardry series as well as Wizardry 8 news, head over to Snafaru's at <http://www.iosphere.net/~eric/wizardry/> to see what he has managed to dig up. There's also the Wizardry Gallery which is quite a comprehensive collection of information on every Wizardry title released. You can get to the Wizardry Gallery at <http://www.verinet.com/~xxa/Wizardry/index.htm>



STAR WARS-(1983) ATARI

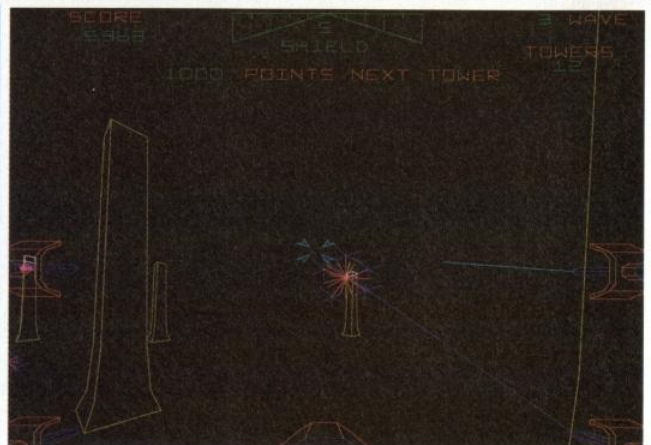
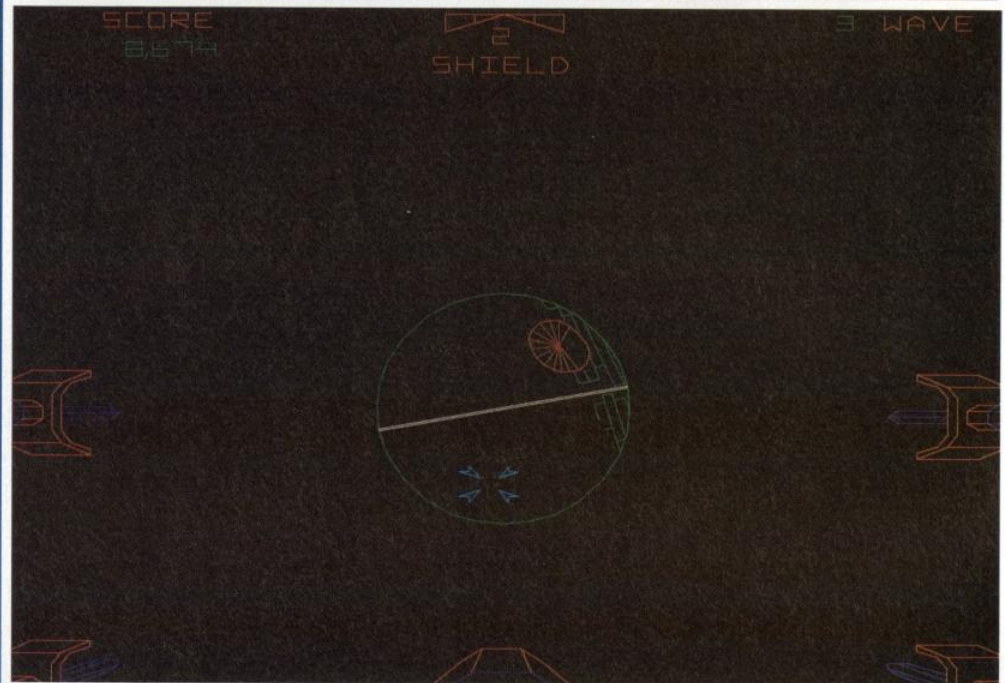
ANCIENT HISTORY



Many moons ago... oh wait, that's no moon! After Star Wars had been a worldwide smash back in the late seventies, the Empire Strikes Back had wowed fans across the globe and Return of the Jedi ended the "middle" trilogy, an arcade game popped up in amusement parlours (as they were known back then) which would captivate gamers at the time with its amazing visuals, sound and gameplay. This was the debut of the Star Wars arcade game in 1983, complete with sit-down cockpit cabinet and sampled speech, providing arcade goers with their first real chance to feel like they were "in" the movie.

The basic vector graphics were sensational at the time, as was the digitised speech from Obi-Wan Kenobi, Darth Vader and Red-5. Gameplay was pretty basic, and yet utterly addictive... approach the Death Star and shoot at TIEs whilst avoiding or blasting their fireballs. On the Easy setting you would go straight into the Death Star trench and dodge more oncoming "fireballs" until you reached the exhaust ports where you could slam home your proton torpedoes. In the ensuing stages, the difficulty would rise with more TIEs, faster fireballs and even a surface attack on the Death Star involving a forest of towers and turrets. If you had a keen eye you could spot Darth Vader's TIE amongst the oncoming fighters and try to get a few shots on the old rusty helmet himself, whilst the game's speakers (which were strategically positioned right next to your head) boomed out the Star Wars theme and eager young Jedi wannabes crowded around to marvel at this Star Wars spectacle. Superb little details like "using the Force", where you had to complete the Death Star trench without firing a shot along the way, added an extra challenge to the simple blast-fest, and it was hard to resist Obi-Wan's urging to "trust him". The crazy old hermit!

It didn't get any more exciting than this in the arcades at the time, and the Hyper crew seem to remember many a lost lunch-money being pumped into the cabinet for "one more crack at the Trench". Of course, another memorable thing about the Star Wars arcade game was the funky controller - a two-handed flight stick which gave you that "fighter pilot" feel, as opposed to just a standard old joystick and buttons. This has to have been one of Atari's most popular arcade games of the eighties, and is currently available in the darkest corners of the internet if you're brave enough to go poking around for it. A true classic, and the blueprint for countless future sit-down cabinet arcade games. *We love it still.*





ULTIMATE GAMES HOTLINE
For hot tips and expert technical support call...

Sega
1902 555 444

Calls charged at a rate of .95c per min. A higher rate applies from public and mobile phones.

Sega PC
1900 142 100

Calls charged at a rate of \$1.50 per min. A higher rate applies from public and mobile phones.

Roadshow Interactive
1902 962 000

Calls charged at a rate of \$1.00 per min. A higher rate applies from public and mobile phones.

Microprose
1902 262 667

Calls charged at a rate of \$1.50 per min. A higher rate applies from public and mobile phones.

Sony Powerline
1902 262 662

Calls charged at a rate of \$1.50 per min. A higher rate applies from public and mobile phones.

Electronic Arts
1902 261 600

Calls charged at a rate of .95c per min. A higher rate applies from public and mobile phones.

Virgin Interactive
1902 220 058

Calls charged at a rate of .95c per min. A higher rate applies from public and mobile phones.

GT Interactive
1900 957 665

Calls charged at a rate of .95c per min. A higher rate applies from public and mobile phones.



WCW VS NWO

PSX

Big Heads

At the title screen push R1 7 times, R2, SELECT.

Big Heads/Hands/Feet & Weapons Mode

At title screen press R2 7 times, R1, SELECT.

Change the Might Meter

At Title Screen Press L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, R2, R2, L1, L1, L1, L1, R1, R1, R1, R1, SELECT.

Hidden Wrestlers

At the title screen press R1, R1, R1, R1, L1, L1, L1, L1, R2, R2, R2, R2, L2, L2, L2, Select.

Secret Rings

At title screen press Rr, R2, R1, R2, SELECT to scroll through the rings.

Battlespire

PC

More Money

Click on "Create a new character". Click on "Magic items" and buy all the magic potions available (7 in all). Next save the data and click "Cancel". Click "Yes". Click on "Create a new character" again. This time click on "Equipments": you will notice that the potion's selling price is way higher than the purchase price. Click on "Deselect". Keep selling all the potions to get more points. Repeat all the steps above to get as many points as is desired.

Uprising 2

PC

While playing Press M, enter any of the codes below and press ENTER.

CHUMP: Invincibility
DANGEROUS: Unlimited weapons
TUFF ASS: Super weapons
SUPER CHUMP: Super speed, Invincibility
DANGEROUS CHUMP: Unlimited weapons, invincibility
stormy: Rainy.
way mo money: +5000.
slick: Die.done - Win scenario.
yoyo: Invincible.
clearsky: Clear.
flurry: Snow.

Independence Day

PSX

All Cheats Unlocked

To unlock all cheats available in the cheat menu, first go to the options menu and enter your name as GREG FM. Go back to the main screen using the exit option. Using triangle will not make the code work. Once you are in the main menu, (where the movie segments are playing) punch in the following sequence: Left, Right, Square, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Down. This should bring you to the menu. Then switch on the cheats you wish. (The plane selection option will always be enabled, giving you all available aircraft.)

Jet Rider

PSX

Easier Tricks

This cheat will make the tricks much easier and faster to perform but the problem is that you have to complete the game first, anyway. Once you've finished the game you'll see a bubble that says 'Codes Enabled'. Now press: Down, O, Left, L1, Left, Right, Left, Right.

Unlock All Tracks

This cheat will allow you to play any track that you want, without having to earn the right first. Firstly go to the Options screen and set the difficulty to Amateur, then set the trophy presenter to Male. Now return to the main screen by pressing Start and do the following sequence on the player one pad:

Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, Right, Down, Left.

Now go back to the Options screen by pressing Left once and X to select. Now set the difficulty to Professional and the trophy presenter to Rider's Choice. Return to the main screen again by pressing Start and enter the following code, again using the Player 1 pad:

Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right.

You will hear a sound to notify you that the cheat has worked. Now go off and race on any track you like.



Shogo MAD

PC

Cheats

Use the "T" key to enter chat mode then type:
 MPCOD: Godmode
 MPKFA: Full Ammo, Armor, and Health
 MPHEALTH: Full Health
 MPAMMO: Full Ammo
 MPARMOR: Full Armor
 MPCLIP: Clipping Mode on/off
 MPPOS: Show Position on/off
 MPCAMERA: Adjust Camera on/off
 MPLIGHTSCAPE: Adjust Light Scape on/off

Spyro

PSX

Crash Bandicoot Warped Demo
 Begin with 99 lives
 Pause game and enter inventory menu, then quickly input the code:
 Square, Square, Square,
 Square, Square, Square,
 Circle, Up, Circle, Left, Circle,
 Right, Circle
 To open all the worlds
 Pause game and enter inventory menu, then quickly input the code:
 Square, Square, Circle,
 Square, Left, Right, Left,
 Right, Circle, Up, Right,
 Down
 To show all the credits
 Pause game and enter inventory menu, then quickly input the

code:

Left, Right, Up, Down, Circle,
 Circle, Square, R1, R2, L1, L2

Vigilance

PC

Press [Enter] to display the chat console. Then, enter one of the following codes:
 *cheat: Unlimited health and ammo
 *fps: Display frame rate
 *ghost: Toggle no clipping mode
 *maxfps: Toggle maximum fps to 30 or 60
 *other: Toggle AI
 *state: AI status
 *suicide: You die
 (and yes, you must put in the *)

Colin McRae

PC

Enter any of these as the driver's name.
 All tracks: FREEWAY
 Bonus cars: LOTTOWIN
 Concept car: HIPPO
 Custom replay: SPECIALED
 Double power: BIGGUNS
 Fog mode: WHITEOUT
 Four wheel steering: ALLWHEELS
 Green jelly car: ALIENGOO
 Hover mode: DELOREAN
 Low gravity: GIANTLEAP
 Micro Machines mode: BORROWERS
 Mirror tracks: ONTHEWALL
 Nicky Crist drives: PASSEDOOT
 Nicky Crist has high pitched voice: HOIRBOY

Night tracks: DARKSIDE
 Rear wheel steering: TURNBACK
 Reversed tracks: BACKAGAIN
 Secret track: INTHECLOUDS
 Secret track: QUARRYVILLE
 Secret track: TROLLEYPARK
 Secret track: WILDAYWORLD
 Tap keys to accelerate: PRESSFAST
 Toyota Celica GT4: BEEFCAKE
 Turbo boost: ROCKETMAN

Rainbow Six

PC

To activate cheats press ' (that's the apostrophe key) during the game and type the cheat you want to use:
 TEAMGOD: Team God Mode
 AVATARGOD: Player God Mode
 STUMPY: Stumpy Mode On
 CLODHOPPER: Enlarges Player's Feet and Hands
 MEGANOOGGIN: Mega Head Mode
 BIGNOGGIN: Big Head Mode
 5FINGERDISCOUNT: Refill Ammo
 NOBRAINER: Turns AI Off
 DEBUGKEYS: Debug Keys Enabled
 SILENTBUTDEADLY: Makes players "FART".
 FASTACTIONRESPONSETEAM: ?
 TURNPUNCHKICK: Changes Players from 3D to 2D
 1-900: Heavy Breathing
 EXPLORE: Victory Conditions On/Off
 Other Cheats and Debug Keys:
 Press F10 to enter debug mode. These are the keys that work in debug mode.
 A: Artificial Intelligence On/Off
 M: Freezes you, most likely AI

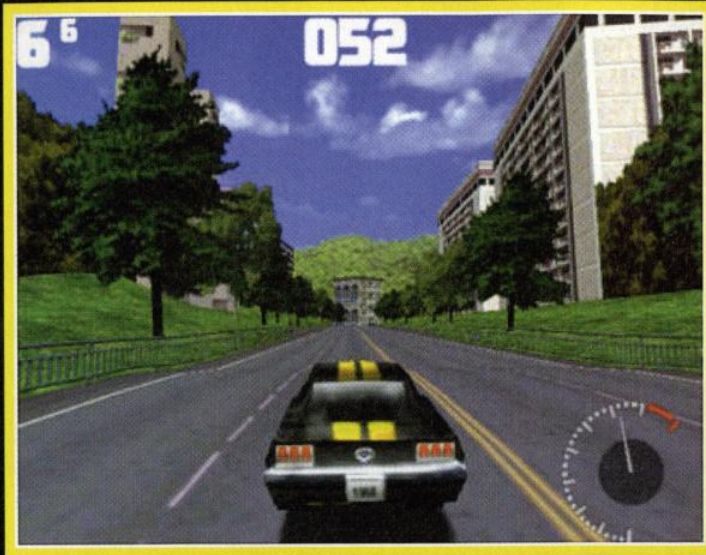
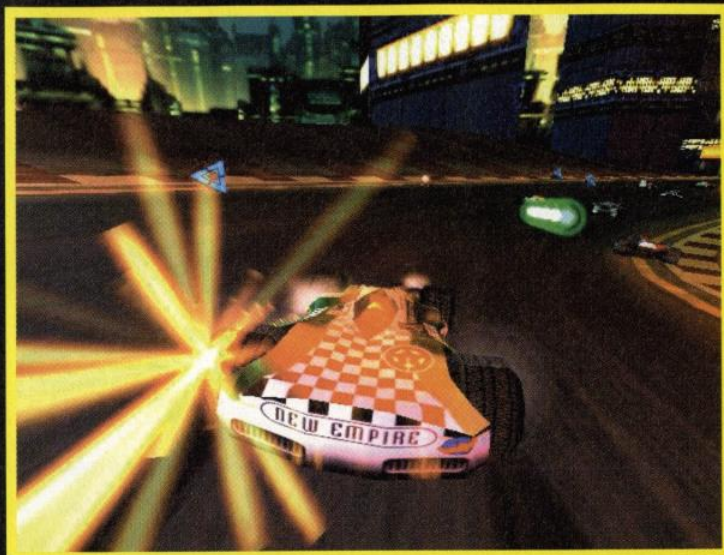
turned off for just YOU not teammates.
 1 and 3 on keypad- shrinks or grows the resolution of the screen.
 - and + on keypad- some type of brief zoom, unknown otherwise
 F6 : Look through the eyes of other people in the mission.
 F9 : Return to the player you were using to complete the mission.
 F10 : Switches from Debug mode to Normal mode
 F12 : Level Skip [and]: brighten and darken the screen
 " and " : Make the player float up or down.
 o-zoom in from F1 view
 p-zoom out from F1 view
 V-Rotates View
 B- Brings back to normal view
 /-Brings you down from floating

Railroad Tycoon II

PC

Press F1, then \$
 OR
 \$, \$, \$, \$
 To use the following press Tab while playing, then type the code, then press Enter.
 Viagra: Cities grow faster
 BigfootGold: Win Scenario GOLD
 BigfootSilver: Win Scenario Silver
 BigfootBronze: Win Scenario Bronze
 Bigfoot: Bypass Scenario
 BoBo: Lose Scenario
 Cattle Futures: \$1 mill player cash
 Slush Fund: \$1 mill company cash
 Powerball: \$100 mill company cash

CHEAT MODE



King of the Hill: \$100 mill player cash
 Let me in: Allows all access
 Speed Racer: Doubles Train Speed
 AMD103: Makes all trains AMD103
SHOW ME THE TRAINS: ALLOWS USE ALL TRAINS
 Overtime: Doubles Industrial Output
 Casey Jones: Crashes Opponents Trains

Army Men

PC
 If you press Escape while playing you can type in the following codes:
 PLETHORA: unlimited ammo for second weapon
 AEROBALLISTICS: fills up the air commands (strike, recon paratrooper)
 INVULNERABLE: makes Sarge invulnerable
 PARALYSIS: freezes enemies in place

TRIUMPH: you win! YAAAAAA!
 SUCCUMB: you lose! BOOOOO!
 OCCULTATION: Stealth mode, no one sees you until you fire on them
 PYROMANCER: Unlimited flaming!

Test Drive Off Road

PC
Cheat codes:
 When you are asked to enter your name, enter this (just enter 1 at a time):
 cheat1
 cheat2
 cheat3
 cheat4
 cheat5
 ciggies
 This gives you 4 more cars: the hotrod, the monstertruck, the 4x4 buggy and the stock-car. It also gives you all tracks and no-clipping (this is very cool

because you can drive through everything including the borders and other cars!)

Test Drive 5

PC
 Go to Options from the Main menu, and then quickly type the cheats in. You will hear a noise in the background letting you know the cheat was activated.
 cup of choice = unlock all cups that takes me back = enable backwards mode
 i have the key = unlock all cars and tracks.

Dethkartz

PC
 Firstly, press and hold Shift + Ctrl + C on the main screen to open the CHEATS option. On the Cheats Screen, type one of the following:
 GLOBAL (All tracks are selectable)
 DEV 6 (All cars are selectable)
 RACE CORPS (All seasons are selectable in Championship Mode)

Populous: the Beginning

PC
 While playing press [Tab] + [F11], type byrne and press [Enter] at the window that appears to enable cheat mode.
 Now try:
 [Tab]+[F3]-Spells
 [Tab]+[F4]-Buildings
 [Tab]+[F5]-Mana

Might & Magic VI

PC
9,999,999 Gold
 When you find the location of the lost hoard of the obelisks, the treasure includes 250,000 gold. Open and close the location or chest it's at before leaving the location and the gold will increase by 250,000 gold pieces every time. Repeat until you have 9,999,999 gold pieces.

Eliminator

PLAYSTATION
 The following cheat codes are entered on the 'ID' selection screen. To enter multiple cheat codes, enter the first cheat, exit the screen then return to enter the new cheat code.
 Invulnerability - CLEVALAD
 Access all your crafts, primary weapons - GUNCRAZY
 Access all your crafts, secondary weapons - MAXMEOUT
 Enable secret craft - NEWWHEELS
 Collect ten minutes for every time pick-up - WAITABIT
 Access the secret level - WAKYLEVL
Level Codes:
 Penitentiary level - GOTHLAND
 Penitentiary bonus level - BLOTHIC
 Penitentiary level boss - HOPALONG
 Maze Level - REDWORLD
 Maze bonus level - BLIO
 Maze level boss - BERNIHOT
 Asylum Level - CHEMWRKS
 Asylum bonus level - BLTITAN
 Asylum level boss - ITSCRATE
 Cage Level - INDEPTHS
 Cage bonus level - BLATOL
 Cage level boss - OCTOPUSSI
 Chasm Level - MARTIANS

Chasm bonus level - BLMARS
 Chasm level boss - MEANMECH
 Monastery Level - FRSTBYTE
 Monastery bonus level - BLICE
 Monastery level boss - FLOPPSIDE
 Tomb Level - INCATOMB
 Tomb bonus level - BLAZTEC
 Tomb level boss - VENOMGUY
 Fortress Level - DARKVOID
 Fortress bonus level - BSPACE
 Fortress level boss - THEQUEEN

Abe's Exodds

PLAYSTATION
 All Cheats are while holding R1
 Try these on the Main Menu
 All FMVs: Up, Down, Left, Right,
 Square, Circle, Triangle, Circle,
 Square, Circle, Up, Down, Left,
 Right Access All Levels: Down,
 Up, Left, Right, Triangle,
 Square, Circle, Triangle, Square,
 Circle, Down, Up, Left, Right Try
 this on in the game while
 playing
 Warp to Next Continue Point:
 Circle, Circle, X, X, Square, Square
Rally Cross 2 Bonus Tracks:
 Enter these codes at the NEW
 SEASON Enter Name Screen.

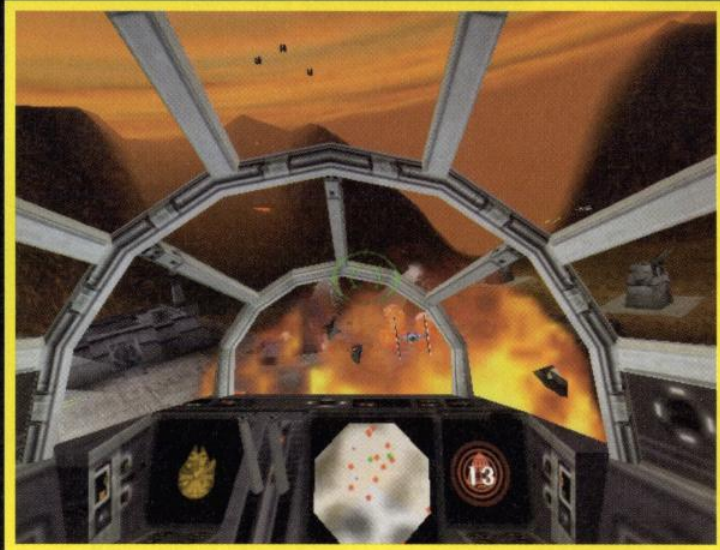
*SISAO = Oasis Track
 *ELGNUJ = Jungle Track
 *FOSTER = Little Woods Track
 *NIVEK = Frozen Trial Track
 *MIT = Dusty Road Track
 *KCIN = Rock Creek Track
 *BSIRHC = Hillside Track
Cheat Codes
 Enter these codes at the NEW
 SEASON Enter Name Screen.
 *PREALL = All Tracks and Cars
 (Except Vapor and Radia)
 *MOOBMOOB = All Cars
 *PREVET = Veteran Level Tracks and
 Cars
 *PREPRO = Pro Level Tracks and
 Cars
 *AIRFILLED = Low Gravity
 *LEADSHOT = Original Rally Cross
 game Physics
 *MOONEY = Restore Rally Cross
 game Physics
 *INCORPEREAL = Disable Collision
 Detection.

Rogue Squadron

NINTENDO 64
 Try any of these on the password
 screen:
 AT-ST Bonus Level - CHICKEN.

All Power-Ups -TOUGHGUY
 At the Movies and Concert Hall -
 DIRECTOR
 This will take you to a black
 screen. Highlight BACK to
 complete the code.
 Go back to the Pasword screen and
 enter MAESTRO. and it will take
 you back
 to the same black screen you were
 on earlier, but this time you will
 be able to access both the AT THE
 MOVIES and CONCERT HALL

options.
 Drive a Cadillac - KOELSCHE
 Now pick a mission where you can
 fly the V-Wing. You will be able to
 fly a black Cadillac.
 Fly the TIE Interceptor - TIEDUP
 The TIE Interceptor is hidden
 behind the Millenium Falcon in
 the hangar. You need to push up
 on the stick to get to it.
 Increase Difficulty - ACE
 Infinite Lives -IGIVEUP
 Level Select - DEADDACK



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NEWS
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PlayStation

- 001 Ace Combat 2
- 002 Actua Soccer 2
- 003 Actua Soccer 3
- 004 Adidas Power Soccer
- 005 Advan racing
- 006 Alien Trilogy
- 007 Alone in the Dark 2
- 008 Andretti Racing
- 009 Anamniacs: Ten Pin 2
- 010 Apocalypse
- 011 Armoured Core
- 012 Armoured Core 2
- 013 Assault Rigs
- 014 Assault: Retribution
- 015 Asteroids
- 016 Auto Destruct
- 017 Azure Dreams
- 018 B Movie
- 019 Battle Arena Tosh 3
- 020 Battle Arena Tosh 2
- 021 Beast Wars: Transform
- 022 Bio Freaks
- 023 Blast Chamber
- 024 Blast Radius
- 025 Blast
- 026 Blood Omen
- 027 Bloody Roar
- 028 Bomberman world
- 029 Brain Dead 13
- 030 Brigadine
- 031 Bubsy 3D
- 032 Bushido Blade 2
- 033 Bust-a-Groove
- 034 Bust-a-Move 4
- 035 C. Contra Adventure
- 036 Capcom Gen. 1
- 037 Capcom Gen. 2
- 038 Cardinal Sin
- 039 Cart World Series
- 040 Circuit Breakers
- 041 Code Name: Tenka
- 042 Colin McRae rally
- 043 Colonisation
- 044 Colony Wars

- 046 Colony Wars. Veng.
- 047 Command & Conquer. Retal
- 048 Command & Conquer.Red
- 049 Contra: Legacy of War
- 050 Cool Boarders 2
- 051 Cool Boarders 3
- 052 Courier Crisis
- 053 Crash Bandicoot 1
- 054 Crash Bandicoot 2
- 055 Crash Bandicoot 3
- 056 Crime Killer
- 057 Croc: Legend
- 058 Crusader. No Remorse
- 059 Cyberstred
- 060 Dark Forces
- 061 Dead or Alive
- 062 Death Trap Dungeon
- 063 Decent
- 064 Defcon 5
- 065 Destruction derby 2
- 066 Diablo
- 067 Die Hard Trilogy
- 068 Dragon Seeds
- 069 Duke Nukem. Time to Kill
- 070 Duke Nukem. Meltdown
- 071 Dynamite Boxing
- 072 Elemental Gearbolt
- 073 ESPN Extreme Games
- 074 Everybody's Golf
- 075 FIFA 98
- 076 FIFA 99
- 077 Fighting Force
- 078 Fighting Illusion: K1-Rev
- 079 Final Doom
- 080 Final Fantasy 7
- 081 Formula 1 97
- 082 Formula 1 98
- 083 Formula Karts
- 084 Forsaken
- 085 Frezzy
- 086 Future Cop L.A.P.D.
- 087 G Darius
- 088 G Police
- 089 Gex. Enter the Gecko
- 090 Ghost in the Shell
- 091 Gran Turismo
- 092 Grand Theft Auto
- 093 Grand Tour Racing 98

- 094 Guilty Gear
- 095 Heart Of Darkness
- 096 Hot Shots Golf
- 097 I.S. Soccer Pro 98
- 098 Independence Day
- 099 Indy 500
- 100 J. McGrath Super X 98
- 101 Jet Moto 2
- 102 Judge Dread
- 103 K-1 Arena Fighters
- 104 Kagero Deception 2
- 105 Klona
- 106 KnockOut Kings
- 107 Krazy Ivan
- 108 Kula World
- 109 Libero Grande
- 110 M.K. 4
- 111 M.K. Mythologies
- 112 M.K. Trilogy
- 113 Madden NFL 99
- 114 Madden NFL 98
- 115 Mass Destruction
- 116 Max Force
- 117 MDK
- 118 Medievil
- 119 Megaman Legends
- 120 Mervel S Hero's V's St. Fight
- 121 Metal Gear Solid
- 122 Metal Slug
- 123 Micro Machines V3
- 124 Monster Trucks
- 125 Moto Racer
- 126 Moto Racer 2
- 127 Motorhead
- 128 MTB Dirt Cross
- 129 N2O - Nitrous oxide
- 130 Nascar 98
- 131 Nascar 99
- 132 NBA Live 98
- 133 NBA Live 99
- 134 NBA Shoot Out 98
- 135 Need for Speed 2
- 136 Need for Speed 3
- 137 NFL Blitz
- 138 NFL Gameday 99
- 139 NHL 98
- 140 NHL 99
- 141 NHL Face Off 98

- 142 NHL Powerplay 98
- 143 Ninja : Shadows
- 144 Nuclear Strike
- 145 O.D.T.
- 146 Oddworld: Abe's Ex.
- 147 Oddworld: Abe's Odd.
- 148 One
- 149 Pandemonium 1
- 150 Pandemonium 2
- 151 Parasite Eve
- 152 Parrappa The Rapper
- 153 Pit Fall 3D
- 154 Pocket Fighter
- 155 Porsche Challenge
- 156 Poy Poy
- 157 Psybadeck
- 158 R-Type Delta
- 159 R-Types
- 160 Rally Cross
- 161 Rally Cross 2
- 162 Rally de Africa
- 163 Rapid Racer
- 164 Rayman
- 165 Rebel Assault 2
- 166 Red Asphalt
- 167 Reloaded
- 168 Resident Evil 2
- 169 Ridge Racer Rev.
- 170 Rival Schools
- 171 Riven: Sequel to Myst
- 172 Road Rash 3D
- 173 Rouge Trip. 2012
- 174 Running wild
- 175 SCARS
- 176 Shadow Master
- 177 Shane Warne 99
- 178 Side Pocket 3
- 179 Sim City 2000
- 180 Skull Monkeys
- 181 Small Soldiers
- 182 Smash Court 2
- 183 Soul Blade
- 184 Soviet Strike
- 185 Spice World

- 186 Spyro the Dragon
- 187 Star Wars. Masters Of Tor.
- 188 Steel Rain
- 189 Street Fighter Alpha 3
- 190 Street Fighter Coll 2
- 191 Street Fighter X-Alpha
- 192 Street Racer
- 193 Tales of Destiny
- 194 Tekken 2
- 195 Tekken 3
- 196 Ten Pin Alley
- 197 Tenchu
- 198 Test Drive 4
- 199 Test Drive 5
- 200 Test Drive Off Road
- 201 Test Drive Off Road 2
- 202 Tetris Plus
- 203 The Fifth Element
- 204 The Lost World
- 205 The Unholy War
- 206 Theme Hospital
- 207 Theme Park
- 208 Thrill Kill
- 209 Thunder Force 5
- 210 Tiger Woods 99
- 211 Time Crisis
- 212 Tobal 2
- 213 Toca Touring Car
- 214 Toca Touring Car 2
- 215 Tokyo Highway Battle
- 216 Tomb Raider
- 217 Tomb Raider 2
- 218 Tomb Raider 3
- 219 Tomba!
- 220 T. Makinen World Rally
- 221 Treasures of the Deep
- 222 Triple Play 98
- 223 Triple Play 99
- 224 Twisted Metal 2
- 225 Twisted Metal 3
- 226 V Rally
- 227 V's
- 228 Vigilante 8
- 229 VMX Racing
- 230 VR Powerboat Racing

- 231 War Games: Defcon 1
- 232 WarCraft 2
- 233 Warhammer
- 234 WCW Nitro
- 235 WCW/NWO Thunder
- 236 WCW V's The World
- 237 Wild 9
- 238 Wild Arms
- 239 Wipeout 2097
- 240 WWF In Your House
- 241 WWF War Zone
- 242 X-Men V's St. Fighter
- 243 Z

- 244 AHSat Baseball 99
- 245 Aero Gauge
- 246 Area Fighter Assault
- 247 Automobili Lamborghini
- 248 Banjo Kazooi
- 249 Bio Freaks
- 250 Body Harvest
- 251 Bomberman 64
- 252 Bomberman Hero
- 253 Buck Bumble
- 254 Bust-a-move 2
- 255 Chamellon Twist
- 256 Chopper Attack
- 257 Clay Fighet 63 1/3
- 258 Cruzzin USA
- 259 Dark Rift
- 260 Diddy Kong racing
- 261 Doom 64
- 262 Duke Nukem
- 263 Extreme G 2
- 264 F - Zero X
- 265 F1 Pole Position
- 266 F1 World Grand Prix
- 267 FIFA 98
- 268 FIFA 99
- 269 Fighters Destruction
- 270 Forsaken
- 271 Gex
- 272 Golden Eye
- 273 Hexen
- 274 ISS Pro 98
- 275 ISS Pro 99
- 276 Igg's Reckin' Balls

PSX
 N64
 DC

All you have to do is call and give the number corresponding to the game.

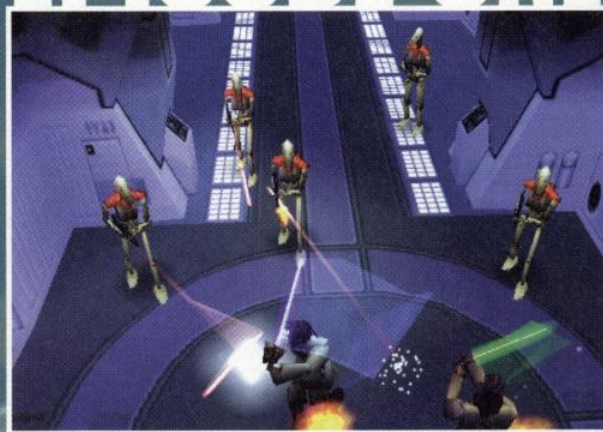
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HYPER»»
NEXT ISSUE

**EVEN MORE STAR WARS!
EPISODE ONE: THE PHANTOM
MENACE WILL HIT MOVIE
THEATRES ON JUNE 3RD, AND
NEXT ISSUE WE TAKE A CLOSE
LOOK AT TWO UPCOMING
GAMES FROM LUCASARTS
BASED ON EVENTS IN THE
NEW PREQUEL. STAR WARS:
POD RACER FOR PC AND N64
AND EPISODE ONE:
THE PHANTOM MENACE
ADVENTURE GAME FOR PC AND
PLAYSTATION ...LOOK OUT!**

EPISODE ONE



LETTERS

HYPER LETTERS

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

KEEPING UP WITH THE CUTTING EDGE

Dan,
After reading your superb article "System Wars" in the March issue of Hyper, I decided to write to you for the first time. I found the article to be both a very mature and unbiased insight into the current 4 major gaming platforms. Upon reading a number of letters appearing in recent issues regarding the "Dreamcast", I can't help but think, why these people couldn't have a similar unbiased attitude as yourself?

I regard myself as a mature aged gamer (34), having been around since the earliest days of the Commodore 64, through various Amiga models, to a 486 PC, and now I currently own 2 PlayStations. I have been governed purely by which platform best suits my needs at the time, not simply by which company produced it.

The PlayStation has given me years of pleasure, and I would say I am probably it's No.1 fan. However, I am definitely not so narrow minded as to see the absolutely exciting potential the "Dreamcast" will offer me as a gamer, despite who's name is, or isn't, written on the console.

As you say, why be a "Corporate Slave", surely these people could ignore their prejudices, take a long hard look at what hardware lies within the console, at the huge list upcoming titles, the number of software companies supporting the machine, and go for it!!

Approximately \$400-\$450 for a console with such raw power that the nearest PC equivalent would cost thousands of dollars, not to mention modem and networking capabilities. Are you kidding!! I for one do not intend to be left behind because of so called "Loyalties". Move on and enjoy your gaming. "What an exciting time to be alive!!"

ANDREW PORTER

Andrew,
As much as I am down on blind allegiance to companies, I do

sense a reason for pickiness right now, purely because of the next Sony console as another "next console" option. More investigation is going to have to be done on the tech specs of the machine (because frankly they sound so stupidly amazing we need to pinch ourselves for a month or two). The closer to the release of the Dreamcast the next Sony console is, the more the "PSX army" factor will have an affect on the sales of the Dreamcast. March next year is the estimated Japanese release date, so we can't expect it here till mid next year. The Dreamcast will have been on sale for 14 months in Japan prior to the next Sony console. The good news for gamers is that because the two machines will be in competition with one another, we should see price drops like we did with PlayStation and Nintendo 64. Because of the costs in manufacturing a machine as advanced as next Sony console are quite high, price drops may not be as drastic as in the past... guess we'll see.

HYPER'S TOO HYPED?

Hiya
Nice mag... and improving every year too...but recent issues of your mag are nagging me a bit... there are too much Dreamcast stuff in the mag and in my opinion you guys are getting a little too over excited (over-reacting in some cases) about this new machine. Well it is true that this machine is basically the most powerful machine and all but isn't this the case in every new console these days? Wasn't Nintendo 64 the most powerful console when it was released?

Surely Virtua Fighter 3 on Dreamcast is a good game with "Never seen before on console graphics", but so was Virtua Fighter 2 when it was released on Saturn, now we all know Saturn is as good as dead. The graphic details on the Dreamcast are death-defying for those who just awoken... from 5 years of sleep but for frequent gamers it is nothing more than "nice graphic" for a system release 2 years after the last new system (N64).

Also you guys said "Internet capability of Dreamcast can take away the advantage PCs

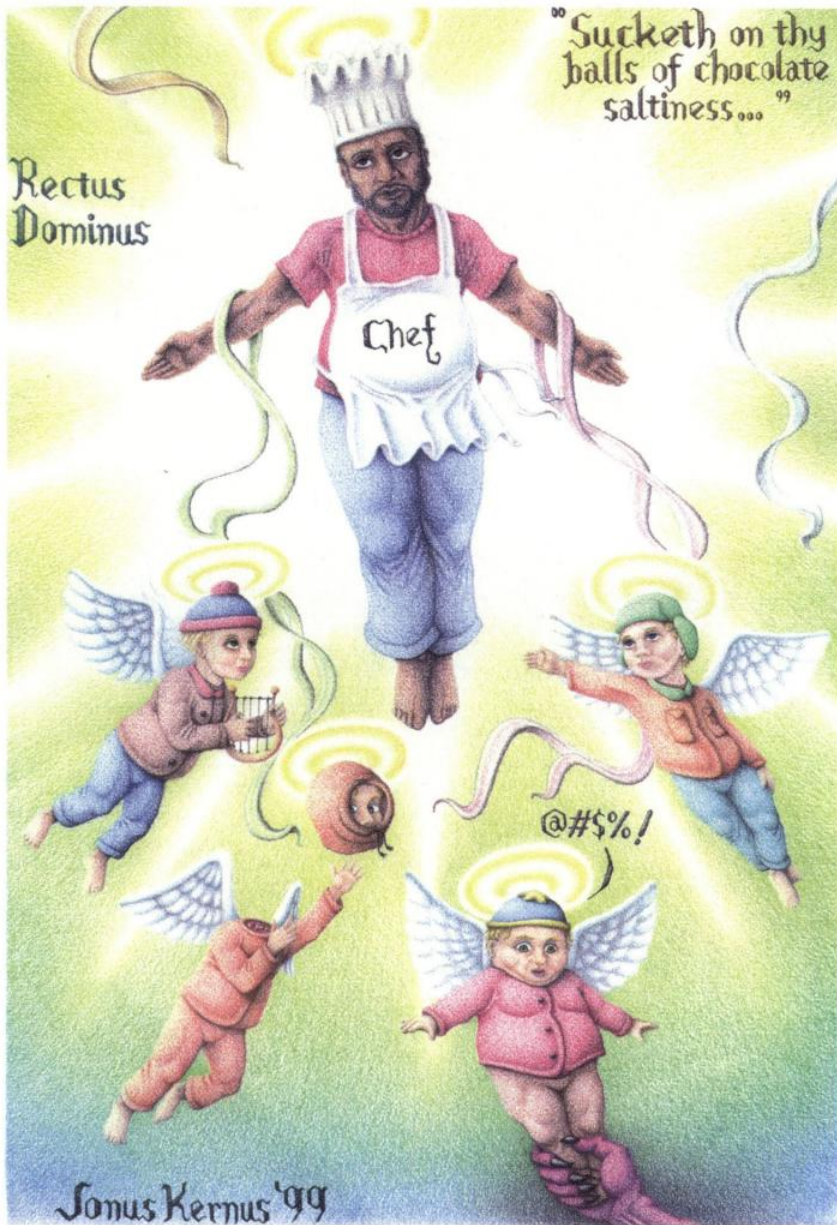
have over consoles", I disagree, sure you can play multiplayer games over the net with Dreamcast but it would never be the same as PCs internet capabilities. I seriously doubt Dreamcast would have ICQ, IRC, mp3s (while playing games or otherwise), emulators etc.. Can Dreamcast make a web page? I doubt it. Can Dreamcast have map editors for Quake 2, Starcraft etc? or download heaps from the net? well there are heaps other advantages PCs have over any console which I can't think of right now. But my point is PCs are still the most advanced machine for gaming, that's why they cost more and always cost more than any consoles.

I don't know, maybe I am just paranoid. Maybe I play too much games and losing my mind, but I most definitely hope I have made some valid points..

MACROS

Macros, You definitely have made some valid points, but there's "the other side of the coin" on most of the points too, which doesn't make your views wrong, but does show that a large factor in how people will judge the Dreamcast is up to their own perceptions.

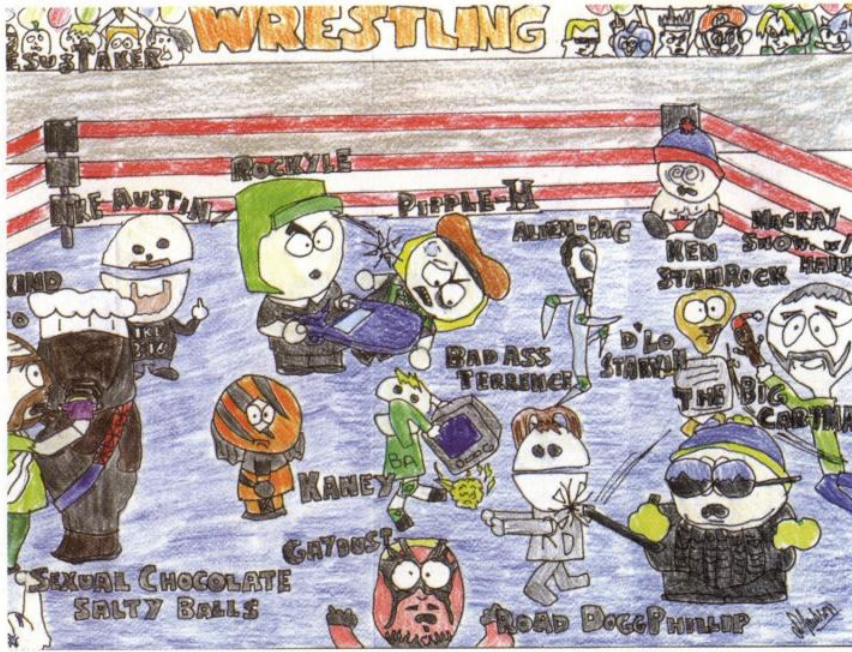
Your call on the jump in visuals for the Dreamcast just being "nice graphics" for the person who has kept up with gaming is a bit rough considering you haven't seen it first hand (unless you have, in which case I suspect the TV you saw it on was exceptionally bad). Everyone here who sees games like Virtua Fighter 3tb and Sonic Adventure running on the machine IS blown away. VF3 is not a surprising one, since we've all seen it in the arcade, but we put Tekken 3 and VF3 running next to each other, and the difference is staggering. Something that we hadn't stated till this issue is that the Dreamcast is getting a hard drive as an add on, which will allow you to download new maps, files, etc, from the Internet, and thus be able to get more out of your machine, just like with the PC. With the Dreamcast having a mouse, keyboard, modem and hard drive, there is no reason for the Dreamcast not to be able to receive programs like IRC and ICQ. The advantage I was talking about was purely for gaming, like playing Quake etc. Since it uses a Windows CE operating system, it can support TCP/IP. In fact the Dreamcast COULD be used to make a web page, its just an



issue of wether or not you can get a CD that comes with a program to let you do this. Yes, this means the Dreamcast isn't as versatile as a PC. Don't make the mistake of assuming more expensive means more advanced. In this case it means "more versatile". PCs are made to be able to do pretty much whatever you want (like map editing for example), however in terms of efficiency when running games, the PC is VASTLY inferior to the Dreamcast. I've already explained the difference in CPUs before, so I'm not about to go into it again. PCs aren't made to run games, consoles are. If PCs used RISC processors, PCs would be capable of running games that were far more detailed (in terms of environments,

etc) than what we're seeing on them today. As for emulators, word is that there's a PlayStation emulator in production for Dreamcast. Naturally Sony will have legal qualms about this. There will also be a Saturn emulator, although we suspect this may not excite many people. I can understand how you may feel we're doing a lot on Dreamcast, but considering we're the only Australian magazine that is actually going to say anything useful about this machine before its release out here, we feel it's our duty to tell you everything we can, so you know whether or not it's going to be a success or not out here. With Sony's official tech specs for their next console just in, you can be sure you're about to get a whole mess of PSX2 news.

No doubt there'll be some development in PCs soon that puts their tech specs for things like floating point calculations miles ahead of the consoles (it's up to Intel and AMD at this stage), and we'll have console gamers writing in saying we're focusing on PC tech stuff too much. C'est la vie. As I've said before, I'm primarily a PC gamer, and due to my limited funds (contrary to popular belief, we're not squillionaires), I don't have any other games besides VF3 tb as yet (although I'll have Marvel vs Capcom by the time you read this). My PC is still getting the vast majority of my attention. However, once we start seeing the DC get ports of the top PC titles, there should be less reason for me to play titles on PC rather than DC.



One thing, considering how often PC games get patched to "fix" stuff, I suspect DC conversions may come out over a month after the PC version, just to ensure they really have it right when they make it for DC, since patching on the DC would require the hard drive.

THAT'S NOT ON!

Dear Dan,
I desire to express a view on a recent advertising campaign for the re-release of PlayStation V-Rally I was fortunate to chance upon overseas. The adverts portrays a motor vehicle recumbent in a field, evidently after a traffic accident, police report. Firstly I would like to make the denote that I am able to separate fact from fantasy. I can think of no greater pleasure than beating the Hades out of my mate in Tekken 3, and I was looking forward to the distinctively repulsive Thrill Kill until Electronic Arts cancelled its release. We are dealing with fiction here - well rendered, graphically portrayed images that are no more harmful than the nightly news.

I do not want to alarm you or any of the Hyper staff, but while visiting another country (which name will not be bequeathed) I happened to chance upon a magazine which was hosting a competition in which the finest photo of any accident may it be "broken arms, limbs, road accident etc." will win an extensive PlayStation package. With all this in mind should

we draw the line on video games? Personally I assume that it is not the games as such, but the way developers select to represent them in the world today. I would be compelled in hearing other readers views on the subject.

PATRICK, SYDNEY

Patrick,
Well that's definitely past the point where the line should be drawn. To have violence or gore in games is one thing. To encourage people to go get photos of actual mutilations is completely irresponsible. How long is it before some rather impressionable young child injures someone just to get a photo of it for the competition? That may sound laughable, but its amazing how impressionable some people are. I'd be really curious to hear which country and magazine is responsible for this, it seems almost too far fetched.

PC PURCHASER'S PROBLEMS

Hyper,
Simply put, I need help. Big help. I currently have a Pentium 120 with 32MB of ram and a 1.2GB hdd. "Oh wow" you say, "how thrilling". Well good news, I'm selling the piece of crud and getting a whole new system (probably for less than i paid for my old one at the time). What I need help with is what I should get. I've been all over the place (I live in Adelaide) price matching and finding out what's the best deal

favour and give me a list of what would be best for me (trying to keep under the \$3000 mark and yes that's including probably a \$650 monitor, a 17" Mitsubishi) and give me some thoughts as to what the Celeron chip is like compared to the Pentium II.

Thanks for the time and you don't need to publish this in your magazine as it probably dosen't make any sense.

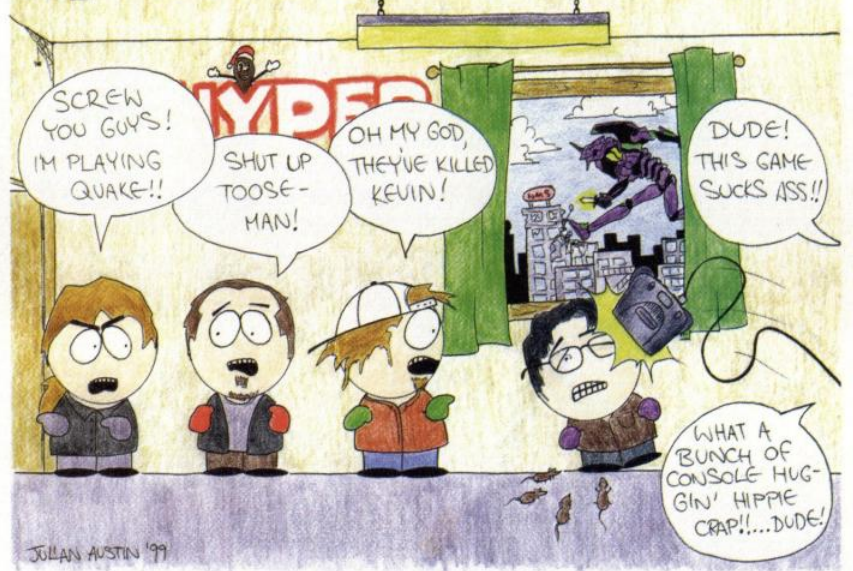
JOBAR@BOX.NET.AU
Jobar?

On the contrary, its good to print these sorts of letters from time to time so people can keep up with affordable PC hardware is up to date. Okay, here's the basic advice on getting an affordable "beast PC". If you're not going to be running serious

when we did our "Buying a gaming PC" feature, you need to make sure you are buying "fast" RAM. Ask for 7 nanosecond RAM. It is more expensive, but will overclock better. The Intel Seattle is not an overclocker's board (but is fine if you don't want to). If you do wish to overclock, look at an ABIT BH6 or AOpen AX6BC Slot-1 BX.

I would seriously consider getting the Diamond MX300 as your sound card, after Elliot got his, he's had excellent results with it, and I'm probably going to buy one shortly myself. SB Live is also very good, but it's considerably more expensive. For video cards, we're at one of those awkward junctions where some new cards are coming up, and it's uncertain as to which

THE HYPER OFFICE...AFTER TOO MUCH SOUTH PARK!!



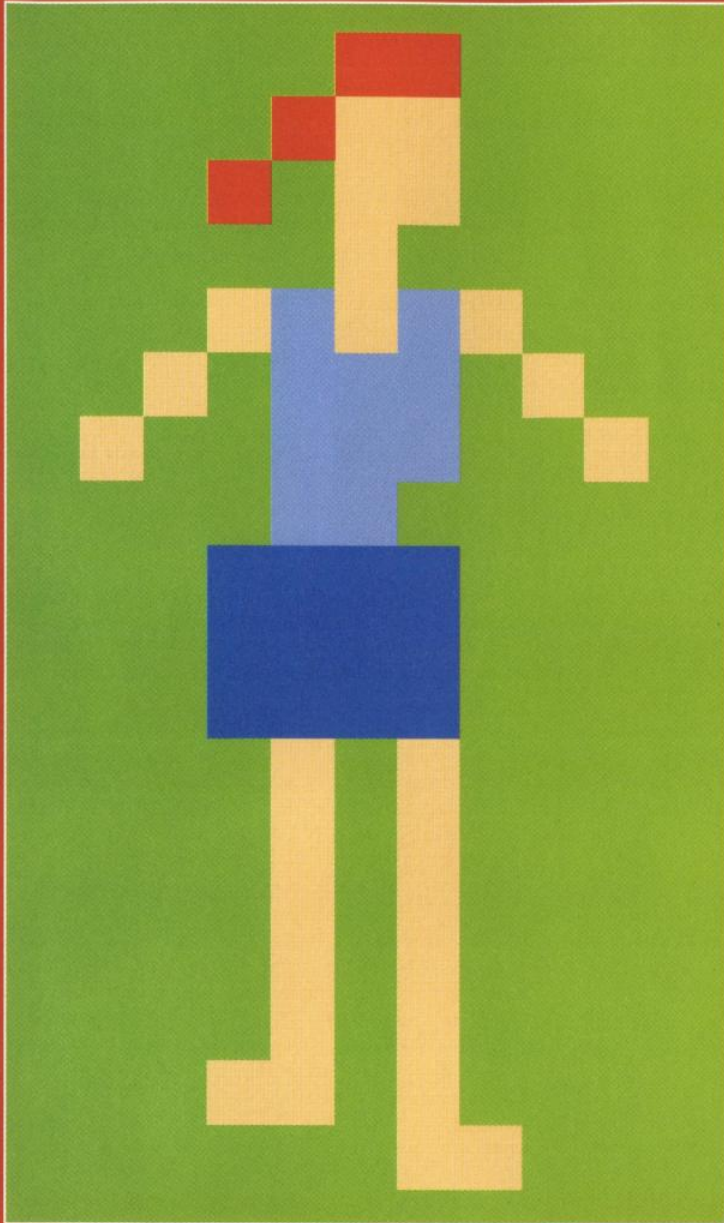
for me. Basically I want a bit of a gaming beast, but everyone i talk to seems too busy telling me what I want rather than giving me what I should get. They're just out to make their commission or whatever. So i have decided to consult the gods and come to you.

Basically this is what I'm after: Celeron A 366 or Pentium II 350, 64MB of RAM, God knows what mother board, probably Intel Seattle 1s-120, floppy drive, 8.4GB hdd, 12mb voodoo2 3dfx card, PCI 128 sound card, 36x Mitsubishi CD-ROM and of course just Windows 98 and a standard virus check as well as a keyboard and mouse. I was wondering if you could do me a

desktop applications for professional purposes, then a Celeron A is fine, rather than spending the extra for a Pentium II. Note that often you can get virtually the same performance from a "slower" CPU to the next one up thanks to overclocking. For example, I've overclocked my PII-333 to 400 MHz, and its solid as a rock. Of course, that is a calculated risk I've taken, and if you overclock, do so at your own risk. The thing is a PII-350 will only "reliably" overclock to 392MHz, and it costs more so in other words, you're better off with the cheaper, "slower" CPU! As we stated a while back

way to go is best. With Voodoo3 coming, purchasing a 2D card AND a Voodoo2 may be an expensive option considering V3 will be a 2D/3D card, and will basically provide the sort of frame rates you get with TWO Voodoo2 cards. There's also the option of TNT, and with PowerVR 2 coming as well, it may be best to wait till these cards are out before deciding. If the image quality is as good on PC as the PowerVR technology is on Dreamcast, then it should be a great card. I hope all this has helped. We'll have reports on the PowerVR2 and Voodoo3 when they become available.

Computer games have come a long way...



THEN:

Circa 1984, Commodore 64 computer.

This fetching object of desire required plenty of imagination to make the fantasy complete, which it never was, which is why the 30 year old nerds you see today are so f#@%ed up.



NOW:

Circa 1998, 'Dahlia' from the Dark Earth game.

Nobody reads books anymore, and as a consequence, imagination is a relic of a forgotten age. Luckily, thanks to modern PC games technology, you don't need an imagination.

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Australia's Computer Games Magazine



HOW'S THAT!

Hey Dan,

Something incredible happened this summer. Being an avid cricket fan, I have become accustomed to the ritual that is your spouse stamping their feet on the floor, rolling their eyes back exclaiming, "I'm bored, I don't know how you can sit here all day watching this s#%\$. Then when I heard that "Shane Warne Cricket" would be coming to the PSX, I imagined a "Dear John" letter arriving in my mailbox a couple of days after the game's release. This did not deter me. So with all the resolve in the world, I went down to my local games dealer and made that sucker mine.

Later that day I found myself rivetted to my seat with only 2 overs to go and 35 runs to score. The tension had never been so great. Suddenly, my fiance entered the room and sat by the couch with a very reserved look on her face as she witnessed South Africa rip through my last lines of defence. I had, sadly lost the match. Then the unbelievable happened. She challenged me to a match. Thinking this would be the perfect way to pick my bruised ego up off the floor, I humbly accepted. In short she kicked my arse and obviously took pleasure in beating me at my own game. The strange thing is the very game I thought would send me into damnation had saved my soul. She seemed to now be sitting down with me in front of the real matches screaming, "Bowled Shane" and appealing for L.B.W's and she even spent a day with me at the M.C.G watching us thrash the Poms. Somehow I feel like I'm in the twilight zone and none of this should really be happening, but I'm enjoying it too much to care. Thanks to the "Codemasters" and "Well Bowled Warnie". You saved my summer.

Keep up the good work HYPER. I've been here since issue one!

Cheers!

T-BOY

T-BOY,

That's beautiful man... "sniff". I hate to think what would happen if my next girlfriend gets into Quake and ends up developing an unusual interest in firearms and hunks of meat.



Gamester PSX Dual Force Wheel.

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

GOT IT TOO GOOD

Hyper the sexallent, Well aren't you something? After all this time you're still my favourite monthly stapled together pieces of paper with stuff printed on them. I was doing some thinking (I fit it in during the add breaks) and it occurred to me that gamers these day just don't know how damn good they have it. I know I sound a little like the stereotypical old dude with the "back in my day" crap, but hear me out.

I read a letter you got from one Joel McGarry complaining about how short and easy Zelda 64 is and how it does not live up to expectations. How fast is this guy stroking his rod? The game is AMAZINGLY good. While playing I often had to stop and just take in how cool it was and how much depth there was and how great the graphics are these days and how funny that big rock dude looked when he started dancing and etc, etc.

What I mean is that I just thought it was a real work of art and there are many games now that fall into that same category. The experience of playing a game like Zelda, Final Fantasy, Resident Evil 2, Metal Gear Solid or Turok 2 and many more is just so good it beats out watching most movies now days in my opinion. But people like Joel seem to take these games for granted or something. Christ, I remember playing through the entire Metal Gear on the old NES and digging it all the way, but man, I sure did have to put my imagination to good use back then with the graphics and sounds barely resembling the things they were attempting to.

Now the games are fully 3D and the graphics look remarkably like real environments. Frankly I think we're pretty damn lucky to be able to enjoy these games - I never would've dreamed that the next time I played a Metal Gear game it'd be like it is with Solid. So I just can't see how players can go through these awesome games and say, "Was that it?". I say, "Wow that was IT!" and I'm proud to admit, I sit there with a big stupid grin on my face the whole

way through. I'll admit that when the new systems first came out I wasn't overly impressed with the actual games under the good looks but now I believe they truly utilise the power and have surpassed any standards that I once held.

So maybe I should count my blessings I'm not from this new generation of gamer. Sincerely,

SAM "THE RAM" HILLIER

Sam,

I think your last sentence really sums it all up. Knowing where gaming has come from, and in how short a period of time it has come this far is something that should really inspire any gamer. It is kind of sad to think that there are gamers that have known nothing but detailed 3D environments, and CD quality sound, that can't see any merit in the games of the past. At the same time, it is understandable though. Let's face it, if the first game you played was Super Mario 64, your scope of what a game should be like would be quite different to that of someone who has played and enjoyed games that are far inferior to SM 64. If all you've known is quality, you become fussy.

IT WILL HAPPEN.

Dear Hyper, I feel that the Dreamcast will become bigger than we all expect. Upon reading your article that Quake 3 will need a killer PC (Maybe a Katami?) and a killer video card, PC gamers might see sense in spending around \$500 for a Dreamcast so they can enjoy Quake 3 at minimum cost, instead of shelling out maybe around a \$1000 for a new processor and video card. Of course this would only happen if Sega decides to release the keyboard and mouse to PAL countries, and gets their act together with decent advertising and marketing.

Well I've given my 2 cents worth to the Dreamcast discussion, that's about all.

DAMIEN YOW

Damien,

I'm sure they will release the keyboard and mouse out here, for the simple reason that Ozisoft have said there will be

servers for Dreamcast users to dial in to, so thus they'll need to make the keyboard and mouse available for those who want to use email and web browse.

NTSC ENVY

To the dudes at Hyper, Like most people, I am eagerly awaiting the arrival of the Dreamcast on Australian shores. I am sure that it would not disappoint. I am faced with a dilemma regarding about one thing though, and that is whether to buy the Australian (PAL) or American (NTSC) console. At this stage I am leaning towards the NTSC version because frankly, the games run much better and faster on it. I have been a game player all my life and basically had to put up with PAL crap all this time. Even going back to the earlier days of the SNES, the NTSC games were far superior in terms of gameplay. With the PlayStation, I can honestly say that all games (bar Gran Turismo which was especially re-programmed for PAL

machines) are much faster on their NTSC counterparts. However, I do acknowledge that PAL can display graphics in a more pretty way, but the disadvantages far outweigh the advantages.

I, speaking on behalf of the gaming public, pay more for our games than the Americans, we get taxed more (therefore limiting out income) compared to them, and we have to put up with inferior consoles and games. Fair enough I understand that there are zone restrictions, copyright, licensing etc, and some TV's are NTSC incompatible, but I'm not trying to act like some kind of specialist and offer solutions to overcome this limitation. All I am merely doing is expressing my opinion.

I can tell you this now, the NTSC Dreamcast will definitely be miles better. Therefore, if anyone takes their gaming seriously (I'm talking about the "Hard Core" gamers), they should go the NTSC and bugger PAL altogether. It shouldn't matter that we would have

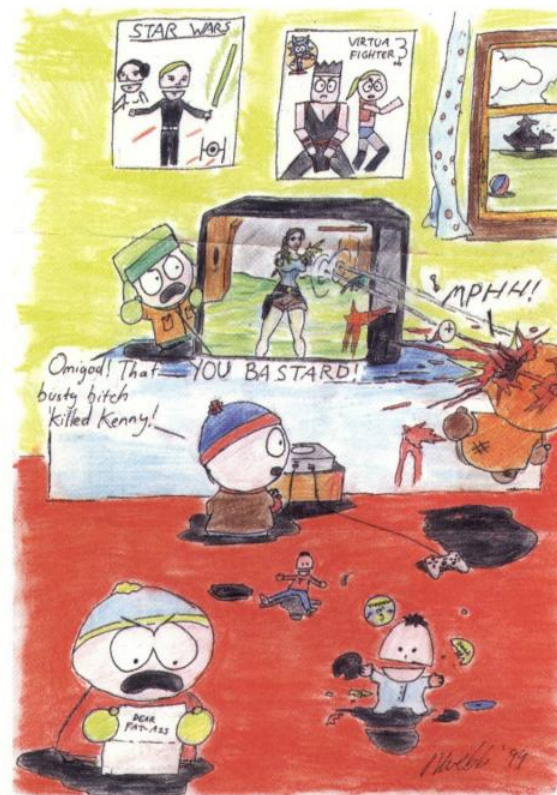
to buy the games through the net or from some import store if it means that we would enjoy the gaming experience more. I can also speculate that, by going on current PlayStation trends, it would actually be cheaper to get NTSC games because games are cheaper overseas (bearing in mind the exchange rate). But overall, even if I have to pay an extra 30 odd bucks or so, I would gladly do it so I can get a better overall game. Chances are you guys probably won't publish this letter just in case it affects the way people think about the PAL vs NTSC debate. However, I feel that being an independent gaming magazine, you should highlight any consumer concerns so game makers know about what's going on. Furthermore, although sounding a bit cliched, the public has a right to know.

REGARDS

DAVID
David,
We're not in the business of trying to silence the readers (unless its overly lewd or abusive, keep it

civil or it won't be in the running to get printed), and this is a good way to let the industry know what some gamers out there think.

However, I'm not sure I'm willing to say that your call on the PAL Dreamcast is going to hold true until I see one running.



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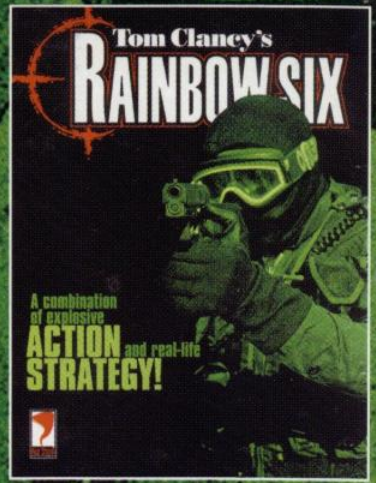
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