

PS2 - PLAYSTATION - DREAMCAST - PC - N64 - X-BOX - GAME BOY

HYPER

RIDGE RACER 64

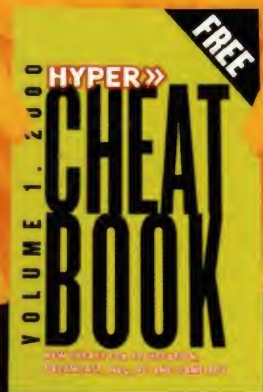
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editorial

The PlayStation 2 is killing me. I can't bear it any longer! If I don't get one soon, I think I'll just have to relocate to Japan. Ahh well. We still have a few nice distractions... Fear Effect, Ridge Racer 64, Battlezone 2 and the Dreamcast version of Tomb Raider IV for starters. We also managed to go through all your Reader Award entries to find out what was hot and what was not, according to YOU. We agreed with most of the winners, and we laughed ourselves silly at some of your ridiculous responses in some categories. Good stuff. Some cool games came in at the last minute too, which we'll be loving up for next issue - Cricket 2000, Force Commander, Medieval 2 and Daikatana 64 are sitting in my IN tray right this very moment. Mmmm... fresh games. Most importantly, Microsoft have finally come clean about the X-Box console! Read about it in our news...



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HERE ARE THE SURPRISING RESULTS OF OUR RECENT READER AWARDS, INCLUDING "DUMBEST READER ENTRIES". BEST GAME OF THE YEAR GOES TO...



36..... WIN A GATEWAY 500MHZ PC!

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issue

79

MAY 2000

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X-BOX ANNOUNCED!

Microsoft finally lifted the veil of secrecy on its X-Box home videogame console when Bill Gates addressed the Game Developers Conference in March. Incredibly, it seems that Microsoft have very aggressively targeted the Sony PlayStation 2 as its main rival, boasting that the X-Box will do everything the PS2 will do and more, and be almost half the price! Here are the specs...

X-Box

- Intel Pentium III with streaming SIMD Extensions (600+ MHz)
- 300 Mhz X-Chip designed by nVidia
- 64 MB total memory
- 6.4 GB/sec memory bandwidth
- 300 million polygons per second (untextured, unlit)
- 150 million polygons per second with all features on
- 4 simultaneous textures per polygon
- 4.8 G/Sec anti-aliased pixel fill rate
- 8:1 texture compression
- Full scene anti-aliasing
- 4x DVD drive (plays DVD movies)
- 8GB hard disk drive
- 8MB memory card
- 4 controller ports
- USB
- Ethernet 10/100 communications port
- AC3 encoded game audio
- 64 channel sound chip
- 1920x1080 maximum resolution
- HDTV support
- Fall 2001 launch

We can't stop drooling. These specs are pretty amazing, and hey, this thing has four controller ports (did you read that Sony?). As a dedicated games console, this thing currently blows everything else out of the water — on paper at least. Those who saw the tech demos running have said that it produces graphics more like Toy Story 2 - it looks like nothing we've seen before. Would we expect any less from Microsoft? Because the OS is by Microsoft themselves, developers have stated that port-

ing PC games to the X-Box is so simple, that you can be almost guaranteed that anything released for PC is an X-Box release also. As Bill Gates said, "We want X-Box to be the platform of choice for the best and most creative game developers in the world." X-Box will be released to the world mid-2001. Is this the console to save your pennies for? We'll bring you more news next issue! You can also stay tuned to www.hyperactive.com.au for the latest.



64DD GOES ONLINE

Nintendo 64 users in Tokyo, Japan, have finally received an internet service through their 64DD add-on. Using a Randnet disk, N64 users have access to email, browsing and even e-commerce facilities through their 64DD. Unfortunately, most of the "typing" has to be achieved with the N64 controller, although a keyboard will be available by the end of April. Resolution on your TV screen is pretty low, considering the Dreamcast's internet access at 640x480 looks low-res, you can imagine what the Nintendo 64's browser looks like. The chances of this type of service coming to Australia, are about as likely as the 64DD being released here. Zip.



MICROSOFT REVEAL MECHWARRIOR 4!

Microsoft were unleashing all their big guns at their GameStock 2000. For starters, they announced Mechwarrior 4 for PC... with the possibility of an X-Box port! Your eyes will pop out of your head when you get to see this one in motion, although the screenshot does a pretty good job of showing you how gorgeous the new 3D engine looks. Mechwarrior 4 will also support full co-operative play, and a bunch of other new features which we'll cover in our big Gamestock run-down next issue...





CAPTION THIS! PART 6

What is slowly becoming one of our most popular new sections, Caption This!, is back for a sixth instalment. Here's a screenshot, ponder over it for a while, and then send us your best caption. Don't forget to turn to Incoming Mail to see last issue's winner. Write your caption on the back of an envelope and post it to: Caption This! Part 6, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. You can also email your entry to freakscene@next.com.au with Caption This Part 6 in the subject line. Good luck!



FUNNY WORDS GO HERE



OVERFLOW

Amusingly, Square have registered the domain names for Final Fantasy 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15! It could be that they're just being careful about the future – you know, 'just in case'. Then again, Sony have already mentioned the PlayStation 3 in passing...

Sony Computer Entertainment have decided to supply their PlayStation 2 circuit boards to arcade machine manufacturers. Supposedly, the arcade manufacturers have been extremely keen to get their hands on the technology...

Dino Crisis is being ported to the PC. Capcom want to bring the creepy reptilian action to the wonderful world of 3D accelerators, so get ready for some high-res survival horror.

UK prisoners are being rewarded for good behaviour with Game Boys and Nintendo 64s! Wow, free bed, free food and free games! Who said crime doesn't pay?

An eleven-year-old kid in the USA had his Pokemon cards confiscated by a hall monitor who then proceeded to lose the cards. As is typical behaviour, the kid then sued the school and was awarded \$1500 in damages.

Namco has teamed up with Digital Hollywood in Japan to begin a PlayStation 2 developer training program. At Namco's creative center in Yokohama, the course will train developers in all the necessary techniques for making great PS2 games. What a clever way to get more games made for the system...

Ultima Online now has over 150,000 users! That's a huge amount of custom-made characters exploring the lands of Britannia don't you think? If you want to get in on the action, don't forget we have an Australian server now – Oceania and the Discovery Edition was just released.



OZ DREAMCAST NETWORK LIVE

Telstra and OziSoft have finally got the Australian Dreamcast Network online. The internet access disk (the DreamKey) was sent out to all current Dreamcast users, allowing them to register and use some free hours on Telstra's Bigpond service. Comma.com.au will be users' main portal for Dreamcast info and lifestyle content, giving the console users access to the internet via their TV set. Check the official Dreamcast site for more info. www.dreamcast.com.au



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If you point your browser to www.networknext.com you'll discover that networkNEXT, Australia's premiere entertainment and technology portal has launched. Offering web coverage of music, film, TV, IT, Internet and gaming, networkNEXT incorporates the editorial spark from leading titles such as Australian Rolling Stone, Internet AU and PC PowerPlay. Australia's favourite games site, Hyperactive, is now up to version 3.1 and will now be more exclusively associated with Hyper mag itself. Get into it at www.hyperactive.com.au for all the latest news, previews and reviews.



DOLPHIN DELAY?

Horrid rumours are emanating from third party games publishers that the Nintendo Dolphin may not surface until the end of 2001... if this is true, then it gives the PS2 a long time to strengthen its user base. It could also be that the Game Boy Advance doesn't see the light of day until late 2001 either... nasty rumour or unfortunate fact from the inside?

VIP – THE GAMES!



Pamela Anderson Lee. Is she the next set of polygonal breasts to beat Lara Croft about the head? Well, be prepared for a set of VIP video games based on the TV show of the same name. Taking control of Pam (ahem), as Vallery Irons, you'll be doing the female bodyguard thing in a variety of skimpy outfits. Could VIP the game surprise us with some awesome gameplay? Well, we can dream. The game will be made by Ubi Soft and will appear on every platform known to humanity – yes even the PS2, Dolphin and X-Box! So get excited kids!



GAUNTLET LEGENDS GETS DREAMY

Coming in late June to the Dreamcast is the awesome Gauntlet Legends which was an office fave on the Nintendo 64. With the four controller ports on the DC, this should be an instant hit. It's looking really pretty too... at least this will arrive in time to get our adrenalin pumping for Gauntlet Legends 2: Dark Legacy.



THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH

Bond will be back late this year on the PlayStation, PlayStation 2 and PC! Using the Quake 3 engine in the PC and PS2 versions, The World is Not Enough will be packed with all the usual action-packed features we've come to expect from the Bond games. Electronic Arts seem to be doing an exceptional job on this one.



SONIC ADVENTURE 2...

Good news for Dreamcast! Rumours are bouncing off the walls that this year's E3 (electronic games expo) will feature none other than a sequel to Sonic Adventure. We suspected that the Sonic team would be up to this, so we should have some more concrete information in the next few months on "Sonic Adventure 2".

... AND SOUL CALIBUR 2 TOO!

Sega aren't going to stop there. Soul Calibur 2 is a hot contender to pop up in Japanese arcades in the next few months, running on the Dreamcast compatible Naomi arcade board. The machine will also have a slot for VMUs, so undoubtedly, Soul Calibur 2 will make its way to the Dreamcast at some stage. Cool!!

WINNERS

Here you go... free games!!

- QUAKE 3 ARENA: Mike Healy, Qld – Mark Lacerenza, WA – Robin Tyro, Vic
- MEDAL OF HONOR: Ogrodnik, NSW – Brendon Pardy, NSW – Luke Cook, Qld – Daniel Robertson, Qld – Alex Schiele, NSW





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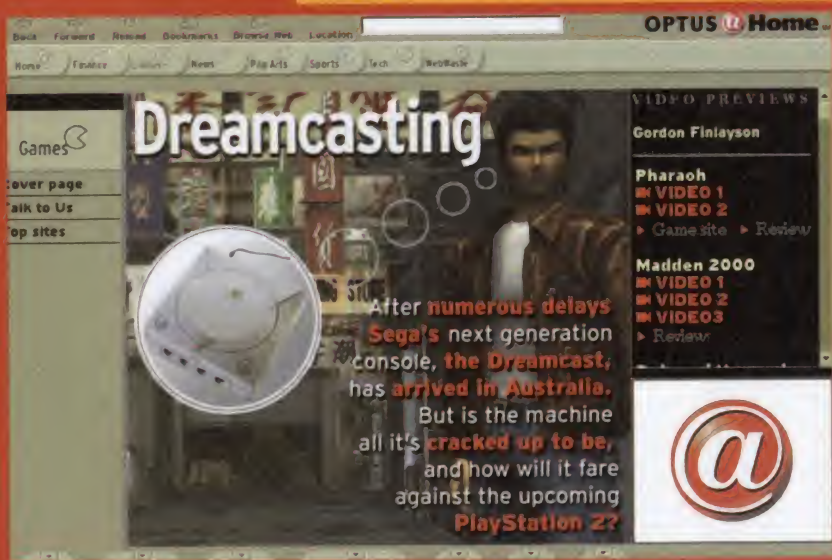
OPTUS@HOME – ONLINE GAMING NIRVANA!

BE A LOW PING BASTARD!

Affordable cable modem internet access is now a reality thanks to the new Optus@Home service... and you know what that means for us gamers? LAN-like performance in our multiplayer games! Cable access is roughly 100 times faster than a 28.8k modem connection, which means that web pages load virtually instantly and downloading those huge 80MB game demos now only takes a matter minutes. Cable access is also a permanent connection to the internet – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – so you don't need to dial-in, and whenever your PC is on, you have access.

As far as dedicated games servers go, Optus@Home have their own beasts running the latest First-Person Shooters like Unreal Tournament and Quake 3, so when you jump in, you'll be gaming with a ping as low as 50 – much like a LAN. The servers are also "open" so even gamers who aren't using Optus@Home can join the server and... well, have their butt kicked by you! The cable connection is so fast however, that it will make playing any multiplayer game on any server so much more trouble free. The Optus@Home service also has a whole games site which allows you to see which game servers are running at any time, plus they will have the latest game demos and patches stored locally on their servers for ultra-fast downloading.

The Optus@Home service is incredible value, and comes in two different flavours. The Accelerator plan



has a small installation fee of \$200 (a technician hooks you up with your cable modem and installs an ethernet card in your PC) and you then only pay \$69.95 per month for UNLIMITED access, but you must sign for 12 months. The Velocity Monthly plan, has a more expensive set-up (\$398), but it's cheaper per month (\$59.95) for the same unlimited access. The plans also come with 5 email accounts and about 50MB of server space for home pages. Up until now, cable access has been restricted by data charges where you pay for the amount of data transferred to your PC. Optus are smart enough to realise that no-one (especially gamers) wants to pay for the data on top of a monthly charge. This way, you can happily play games all day long, download as much as you want and surf the night away at blistering speeds for the one flat fee. It's an awesome deal. Optus@Home is currently available in Sydney and Melbourne, but will soon expand into Brisbane.

Visit www.optushome.com.au for more details.

HYPER» the game

The Electronic Arts Gold Coast studio has a number of games in development, one of which is sure to be a massive hit – Hyper the Game. In the style of cheesy old sims like Pizza Tycoon comes the Hyper Magazine sim where you actually get to play as Eliot, Cam or David and manage the magazine month to month, scoring games and meeting deadlines. You start out with a small budget and have to work hard at keeping your readers entertained whilst maintaining the basic daily functions. We personally can't wait to see how they render us in 3D, and we're glad they took us seriously when we suggested it at last year's Games Developers Conference in Sydney.

Look for it late 2001.



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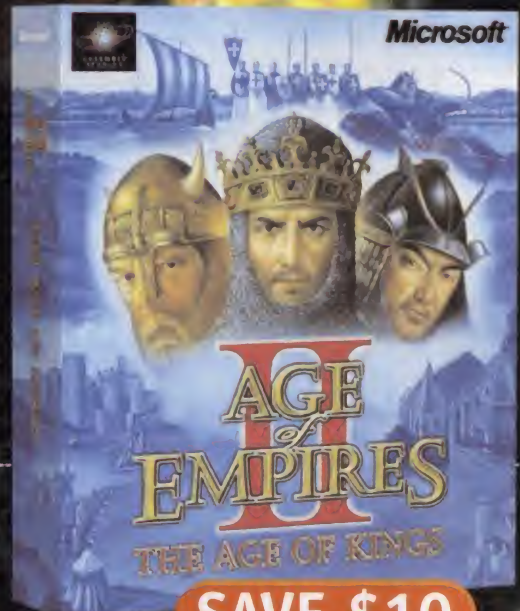


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PLAYSTATION 2 SPECIAL!

DUAL SHOCK 2

Sony have stuck to their original Dual Shock design with the Dual Shock 2, which will please the hordes of PlayStation owners who have developed their own playing style with the controller. Whilst the only obvious change is the colour (from grey to black), there is a more dramatic change just beneath the surface. Whilst the controller has the obviously analogue dual control sticks, the previously digital only buttons (the D-pad, shoulder buttons and four action buttons) are now all complete with analogue functions! Whilst it makes sense that the ability to "squeeze" the shoulder buttons will be most useful in driving games and the like, the thought of an analogue D-pad is an interesting concept. Press hard to the right and watch your character break into a run, or just gentle hold down for a slower walk. Whilst we could do this already with the control sticks, some of us prefer to use the D-pad in character controlled games, plus it frees us the sticks for other in-game functions. Now think of the buttons — hit hard and you'll do a heavy punch or some such move, whilst if you just tap, you'll get a series of quick strikes — which will quite dramatically change how we play our games. In the long run, we'll see how successful this blend of old design with new functionality works. How long will the analogue buttons retain their accuracy and sensitivity with all this "hard" pressing? Obviously, certain styles of games will see an immediate benefit, but fighting games and platformers will be the true test of the new Dual Shock 2... we'll see how Japanese gamers react.



8MB MEMORY CARD



It's the same size, and roughly has the same look as the old card but is packed with a few new features. Well, it's pretty obvious that 8 Megabytes is more capacity than previous PlayStation memory cards by a long run. But the new PlayStation 2 8MB card also has faster transfer rates to reduce save and load times. There is also the inclusion of the new MagicGate encryption and authentication system on the card which we can only assume will come into play once PlayStation 2 users are connected to the broadband network.

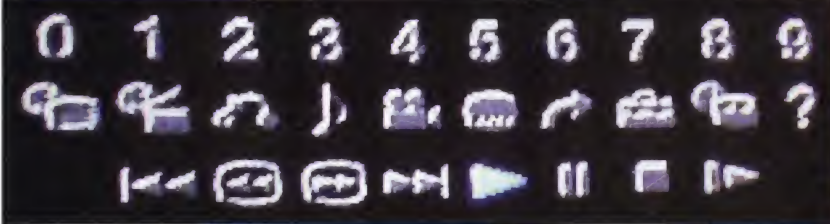
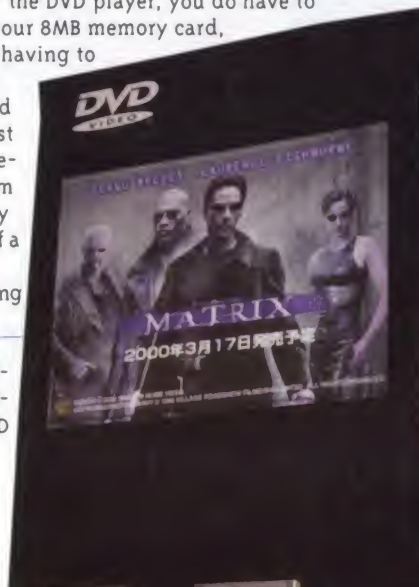


DVD CAPABILITIES

We're all fascinated with the PlayStation 2's DVD capabilities. There were rumours that it would not have all the standard DVD special features and that possibly it would require a CD boot-up disc. Of course, this is all false. The PS2 DVD functions are exactly the same as a standard high-quality stand-alone DVD player, and Sony proved this by showing off the Matrix running on the PlayStation 2 at the recent PS2 Festival in Japan.

The Dual Shock 2 controller acts as a "remote" for controlling all the usual rewind, fast-forward, play and other DVD functions,

although the PS2 does have a USB port possibly allowing for future cordless remote controllers to have an infra-red device slotted into the machine. In terms of "booting-up" the DVD player, you do have to upload a driver from your 8MB memory card, but it's hardly akin to having to use a CD first, you just keep your memory card slotted in the PS2 whilst you watch. If you somehow delete the file from the card, you can simply reload it into the card of a utility disc which will come with the PS2. Having the drivers in software also means they can be upgraded when connected to the broadband network, to improve the DVD features.



IRIA: ZEIRAM THE ANIMATION



CATEGORY: Sci-fi

PRODUCTION COMPANY: Crowd/Bandai Visual

ANIMATION: 8

PLOT: 7

JAPAN-NESS: Low

OVERALL: 9

Originally produced in 1994, the anime known as Iria has quite a history... no doubt many people will have encountered the questionable live action film. Iria is actually the creative product of Masakazu Katsura, who is also well known for Video Girl Ai and I's. In spite of the six years that have passed since its original production, it hasn't lost one iota of its appeal.

At the heart of the story is a mysterious alien being of legend. A so-called "unkillable" creature called Zeiram that destroys anything in its path. Many years ago, a law was passed prohibit-

ing anyone from trying to harness the power of one of these beasts, but the attraction of money would lead the Teddan Tippedai Corporation to secretly attempt otherwise. Unfortunately, something goes wrong. And during a rescue mission being conducted by the

bounty hunter Gren, assisted by his sister Iria (who looks suspiciously like Karin from another Katsura creation, DNA), the interstellar cargo they were sent to recover goes missing, and the crew's remains are horribly strewn about the ship. The cargo was Zeiram, and Iria could do nothing as her brother was butchered by the monster. From that point on, the series becomes a tale of conspiracy and revenge as Iria

becomes the target of government factions that want to cover up the incident.

In a nutshell, Iria is arguably better than the current futuristic bounty hunter sensation, Cowboy Bebop. The story is far more condensed and concise as a six episode series, and it doesn't patronise you with boring explanations of the surrounding society. Like a good sci-fi flick, this series is filled with incredibly imaginative alien technology that leaves it to you to guess what's going on and how things operate. This is perhaps its greatest asset. And it all gels together surprisingly well, thanks to the excellent direction and editing. Definitely an all-time favourite for sci-fi fans. ■



MASTER OF MOSQUITON VOL. 1



CATEGORY: Action/Comedy

PRODUCTION COMPANY: Mosquiton Project/ Nippon Columbia

ANIMATION: 8

PLOT: 7

JAPAN-NESS: Low

OVERALL: 7

This adventure takes place in the 1920s. The main character is a beautiful young heiress named Innaho. Not content with beauty or fortune, she goes out in search of a mythical artifact called The O-Part, which will grant her eternal youth. A very cynical way of looking at this series is to say it's like Tomb Raider, except the main character is a self-

absorbed materialist.

At any rate, Mosquiton is a vampire she controls, who in turn has a couple of underlings of his own who wield awesome powers of fire and magic. The relationship between Mosquiton and Innaho is part of the appeal of this series, being about a woman who's dependent on a vampire for her work, but who also runs the risk of becom-

ing a vampire every time he sucks her blood in order to regain his super powers.

The only thing that's particularly outstanding about this series is its artistic style. It has quite a unique vibe about it. Beyond that, it's a somewhat predictable tittie-fest whose main novelty is its setting in the 1920s. Maybe this series will get better in the later episodes. ■



KONAMI

FATAL JUDGEMENT SILENT SCOPE 2

After saving the President of the USA and being rewarded with a holiday to Iraq, you have been recalled to duty by no other than the Queen of England. A bunch of terrorists have hooked up with Alpha Squad (ex-anti terrorist group) and have captured several VX gas missiles from a factory in Europe. They plan to use the missiles against London because they were refused entry to a trendy night club ("sorry no uzis or balaclavas allowed in lads"). And to make matters so much worse, the love of your life - Laura (who used to be a member of Alpha Squad) has been taken hostage. To help you on your merry way, HQ has designated a soldier of fortune to share in the carnage. He is a cold-blooded killer (unlike you who is a warm-blooded killer) who goes by the name of Raven. He also has a personal attachment to the mission as he is Laura's brother.

GUN GO BANG BANG

After the success of Silent Scope, Konami have been quick to keep the barrel rolling by expanding on the silent scope world with the introduction of a 2 player mode in which you can either assist each other in Story Mode or compete against each other in Duel Mode.

The story mode will start you off in a shoot-out at the inspiration of that great nursery rhyme of all time - London Bridge. Then you will jet over to Europe to engage in a bit of factory assault, ski combat, a high speed runway chase, a bit of stealthing about in a warehouse, some aquatic action and an

attack on a medieval castle.

Linking most of these scenarios is a battle against an end of stage boss. Most bosses have to be hit 5-10 times, though a clean headshot will ensure they will cause no more trouble. Just like the 2D shooter games of old, the bosses usually follow a pattern which will allow you to line up a good head shot. Predicting a head shot for the back of the Hercules runway chase boss is a situation where this is most applicable. Depending on which character you choose, you will take up different firing positions and routes ala Time Crisis 2. This is great for game longevity as once you complete the game with one character, you will want to finish it with the other. Another thing which adds to game longevity (and is probably a first to the arcade industry) is the addition of a KIC mode which allows the machine to be internet enabled. This lets you see your world-wide ranking and also allows you to start at the higher stages of the game with extra enemies and characters - which is great if you have mastered the game.

A VIEW TO A KILL

A couple of new additions to the game is that you now have thermal and X-ray vision which is designed for taking out bad guys



lurking behind walls or in low light conditions. Other changes to the game is that the terrorists are not highlighted so quickly and are often well camouflaged which means that your long distant spotting skills will have to be utilised. At times this can cause a minor panic attack as the time constraints to this game are very fine.

In the Duel mode you get to play a best of 5 rounds against a friend, associate or arcade hanger. You start off on opposing banks of a river and you have to use your search skills on the big screen (look for movement of a couple of pixels) and then check to see who it is in your scope. Make sure you are dead certain of a kill as missing may give away your location due to muzzle flash. Other scenarios include a close range shoot-out on boats and a fire fight in waist-high water.

If you were a fan of the previous game then you will be in sniper heaven. All of the good bits have been included and all the other bits tweaked to make the experience just that little bit more challenging. This is one of the arcade games that cannot be replicated properly (if at all) on a home console or PC - so if you are a hermetic home dweller, you should make the trek down to the arcade for one of the best "shooters on rails" for this millennium. ■



9/10

NOX NOX. WHO'S THERE?

Oh, it's just Nox. So what the Hell is it? Westwood Studios have knocked this online RPG together using Diablo as some hefty inspiration. Just take a look at our review this issue, and you'll see what we're talking about. Well, the game is killer multiplayer, so you'd better go and see what the latest news is.

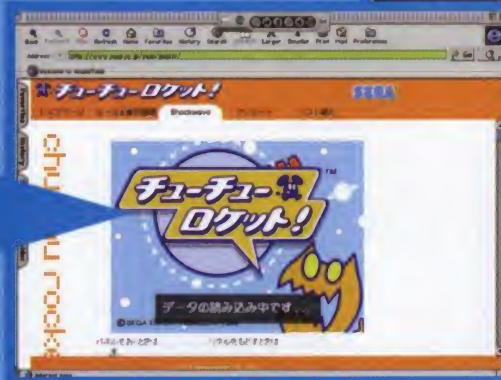
<http://www.westwood.com/newindex.html>



CHU CHU ROCKET ONLINE

Sega have put up a Shockwave version of Chu Chu Rocket on their website which will have you glued to your monitor for hours! They have made over 50 levels available which almost makes you wonder why you need to go buy the game. The instructions are in Japanese, but it's all very simple. There are diagram instructions anyhow.

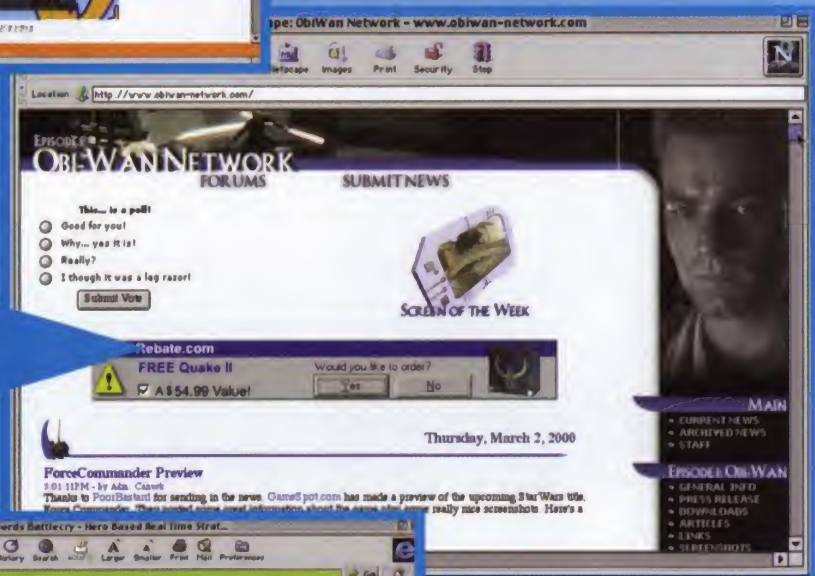
<http://www.sega.co.jp/sega/puzzle>



OBI-WAN NETWORK

If you're a fan of Jedi Knight and Dark Forces, then you're more than likely looking forward to Obi-Wan from LucasArts. For an unofficial news source on the progress of the game, head on over to the Obi-Wan Network where you can find out how things are progressing and when the game will be available.

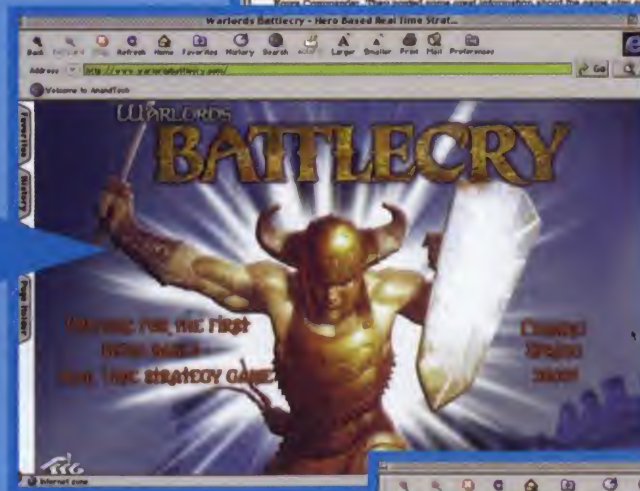
<http://www.obiwannetwork.com>



WARLORDS BATTLECRY

After reading our preview a while back, you may be pretty keen to know how the latest Warlords instalment is going. There is an official website up and running, so you can find out if the game is looking any good. Strategy freaks spooge!

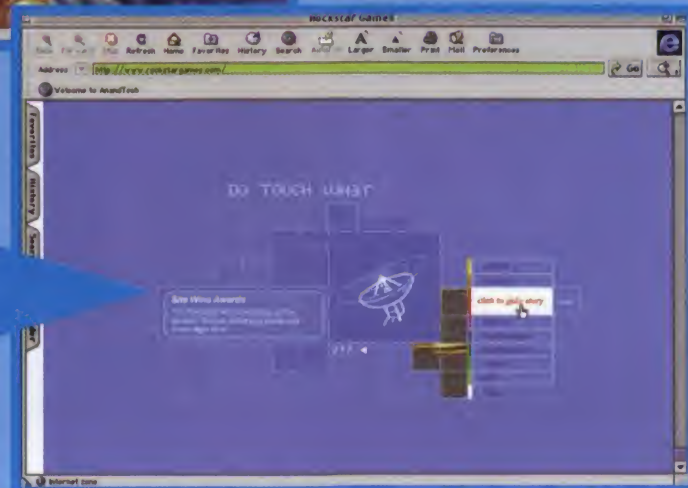
<http://www.warlordsbattlecry.com>



ROCKSTAR

Rockstar Games have recently upgraded their site with all sorts of nice Flash animation. They also have news on their upcoming PlayStation 2 games, along with all the other funky titles that they've already delivered to the gaming populace. Log on and get fresh with their phat flash baybee.

<http://www.rockstargames.com>





JOHN CARMACK



VS



SHIGERU MIYAMOTO

At first, we had envisioned writing a piece about a showdown between John Carmack and Shigeru Miyamoto - a "celebrity deathmatch of the gaming world" if you will. After thinking about it for a while, however, we realised that Shigeru Miyamoto is too nice to get involved in a fracas, and John Carmack is simply too obsessed with programming to bother with such frivolities. Thus, we began thinking about what would happen if these two illustrious men sat down and created a game together.

As far as we're concerned (we? - Ed.), this could be the most fruitful combination in gaming history. Think about it. John Carmack is arguably the world's best programmer, and Shigeru Miyamoto is arguably the world's best game designer. Their strengths complement each other perfectly. John

Carmack would handle the game engine and core technology, whilst Shigeru Miyamoto would work purely on game design. Not only that, but they're both perfectionists and visionaries, and they both command serious respect in the industry... it's a match made in heaven.

That is, if heaven wasn't made up of multinational companies. There's no way that Carmack would leave id Software, or that Miyamoto would turn his back on Nintendo. On the other hand, Miyamoto has stated recently that he wants Mario to grow up for his next game. We really can't see that happening at Nintendo, despite the fact that they're broadening their target user demographic. Can you see Hiroshi Yamauchi (president and iron fisted ruler of Nintendo) giving the thumbs up to a sex, drugs and rock'n'roll Mario? Uh uh.

MARIO IN THE FRAG PIPE

Carmack is the man to help Miyamoto let Mario grow up. If this is to be achieved, Miyamoto needs to leave Nintendo and join id Software. Either that or they both leave and form their own startup. Indeed, if they did form their own company, they could call it Miya-Mack Enterprises (pronounced "Me-A-Mack"), and if the game side of things didn't work out, they'd have the perfect name to start pipping hoes.

As far as games go, turning Mario into some kind of sleazy Leisure Suit Larry style character probably wouldn't be the way to go, but perhaps arming him with a rocket launcher would be. A grown up Mario wouldn't bother with jumping on the heads of his foes, he'd smite them into a fine red mist dammit! Also, Mario's probably sick to death of saving

Princess Peach (especially only to be rewarded with cake) and would love to give her a good hard fragging right about now... if you know what we mean.

The Carmack-Miyamoto alliance wouldn't have to result in an overly violent game. It could simply be another Mario platformer, but from a first person perspective. Y'know, traditional platform fare, but with rocket jumps instead of Mario's triple jump, jump pads instead of koopas, cacademons instead of koopas, Hunter instead of Princess Peach, upside down crosses and disembodied corpses instead of clouds and green pipes, and fast paced gameplay. And the best part would be that Mario could finally have a REAL showdown with Bowser.

Opposites attract? Food for thought at least...



“A sex, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll Mario?”

Uh uh.

Perhaps arming him with a rocketlauncher would be the

way... ”





BATTLEZONE

BY ELIOT FISH

BATTLEZONE 2 MAY HAVE BLOWN US AWAY THIS ISSUE, BUT ATARI ORIGINALLY BROUGHT THE SERIES TO LIFE WITH THEIR BATTLEZONE ARCADE CABINET ALL THOSE YEARS AGO...

Back in 1980, some pretty important events were taking place. George Lucas was finishing off the Empire Strikes Back, Robert Smith of the Cure was putting the final touches on Seventeen Seconds, and Eliot Fish was probably pumping coins into a Battlezone arcade cabinet. True! I remember a dark, rainy day at the arcade where I discovered this incredible 3D tank simulation. Scooping out my forty cents, I slipped the coins into the machine and put my face up into the "visor" to see what kind of new exciting imagery would be thrown at me. My eyes went wide with wonder as the green vector graphics came tumbling at me in 3D and I was instantly transported to another world! The futuristic atmosphere of alien tank warfare in Battlezone was frighteningly realistic at the time, with the tense one-on-one gameplay offering an edgy arcade experience which had not previously been experienced — this

game was in the First Person! Sure, these days we could probably program something better than Battlezone on our bedside clock radios, but back in 1980, this was WAR!

TANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

Battlezone's controls were unique. Two joysticks were used to move your tank forward, backwards and to rotate it around by a combination of stick movements. For instance, pushing the left joystick up and the right joystick down resulted in your tank rotating to the right. Weaponry consisted of a single cannon, which could destroy your enemy with one shot. Your deadly green wireframe rocket had to be well timed to anticipate your opponent's movements in-between the landscape's obstacles. Strange triangular objects and square blocks were the only things to protect you and your enemy from the firefight. Battle played out like a game of cat and

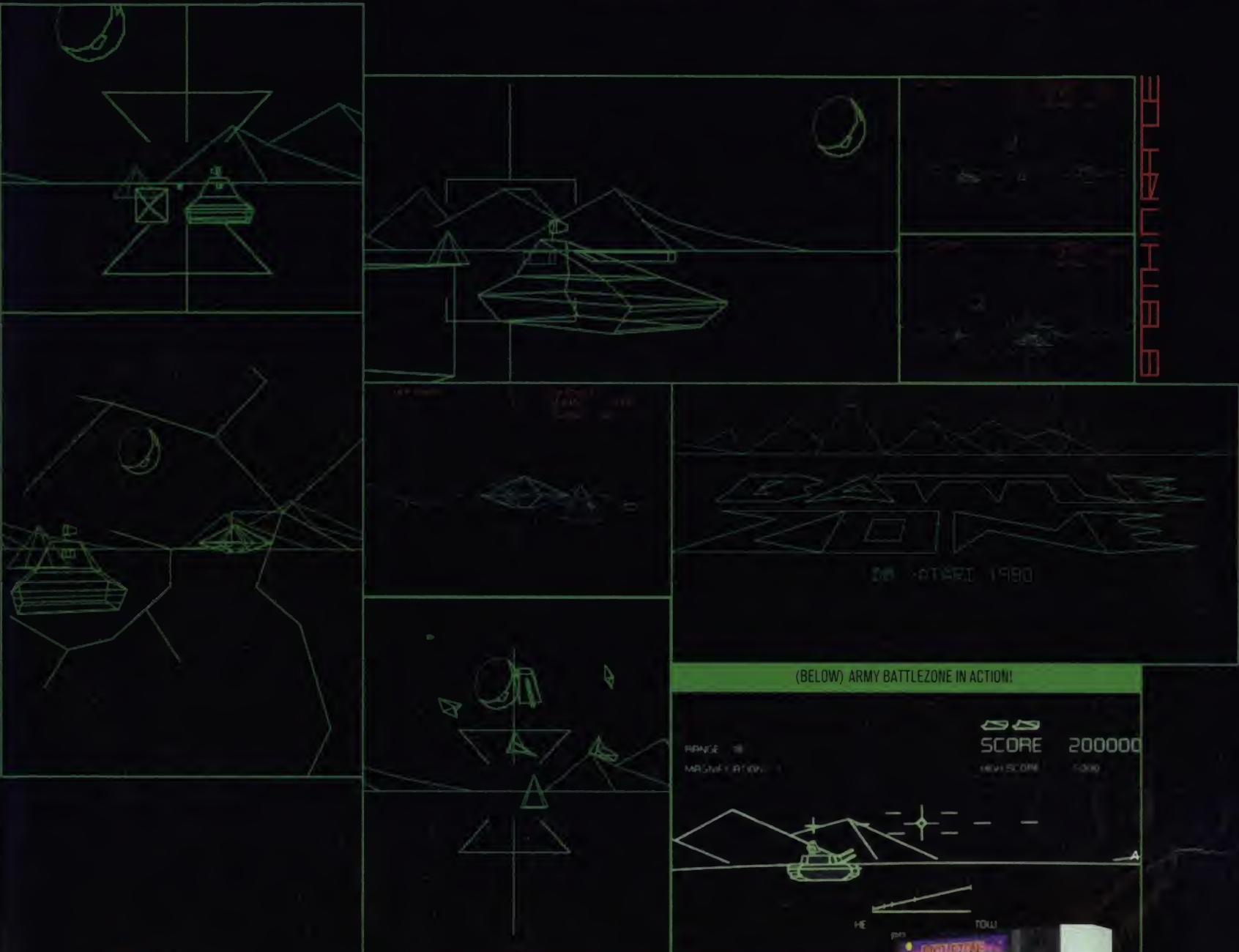
mouse, although most players I knew at the time just charged in and went for it like true commandos. The craggly alien mountain range in the distance was a tempting destination, however the 3D engine was designed so that you never actually were able to travel beyond the "Battlezone". If you strayed too far from combat, a well-timed missile from the AI tank would ensure you didn't get very far. Visually, the 3D vector graphics were outstanding, and even though the Battlezone display was only green on black, the manufacturers placed red cellophane across the inside of the screen so that the warning messages and radar were in red! Another impressive feature was that the 1812 Overture by Tchaikovsky would play at the High Score Table — sure it was bleeps and blops, but it was classical! Having the player place their face into a set of "goggles" also increased the immersion factor, and as a result, Battlezone

became so popular that Atari shipped 75,000 units. Much to the delight of project leader, Morgan Hoff, Battlezone was a certified hit!

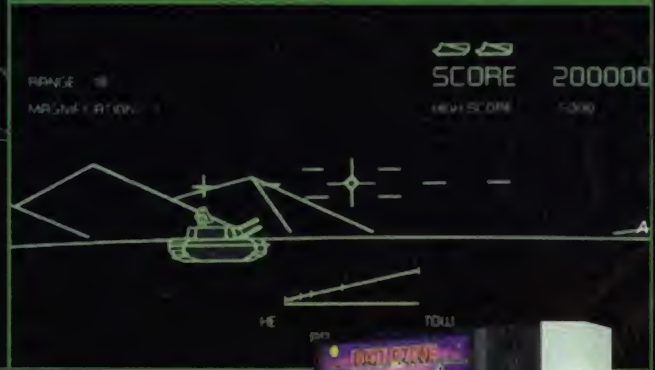
TANK ME LATER

Someone at the Pentagon thought Battlezone was pretty darn impressive too, because Atari were commissioned by the US military to re-program the game to be used as a training simulator. The controls were changed and expanded upon, the steering and magnification was altered and roughly 30 variations in gameplay were included with both Russian and American tanks as targets. Players were no longer controlling the tank, but operating the guns and firing upon moving targets. The exact trajectory would have to be entered for each shot, with the aim being to kill the enemy tank with your first attempt, otherwise the retaliation could kill you. Finally, when the game was finished

THE ATARI 2600



(BELOW) ARMY BATTLEZONE IN ACTION!



being coded, it was named "Army Battlezone" and was placed in military rec rooms for soldiers to play on their time off. It also cost a whopping \$30,000 and thus was never widely manufactured. Only two prototypes are known to still exist.

Of course, most of the Atari programmers at the time were very anti-war, and many refused to be involved in the programming. In fact, lead Battlezone programmer Ed Rotberg quit Atari after helping to convert Battlezone for the military. We don't know if Army Battlezone ever helped the US win any ground battles, but we do know that Battlezone changed the lives of many arcade-going gamers in the early Eighties. Thanks to Activision, the essence of Battlezone has been brought into the next millennium with Battlezone 2, but nothing will beat the creepy warfare in the original arcade machine. ■



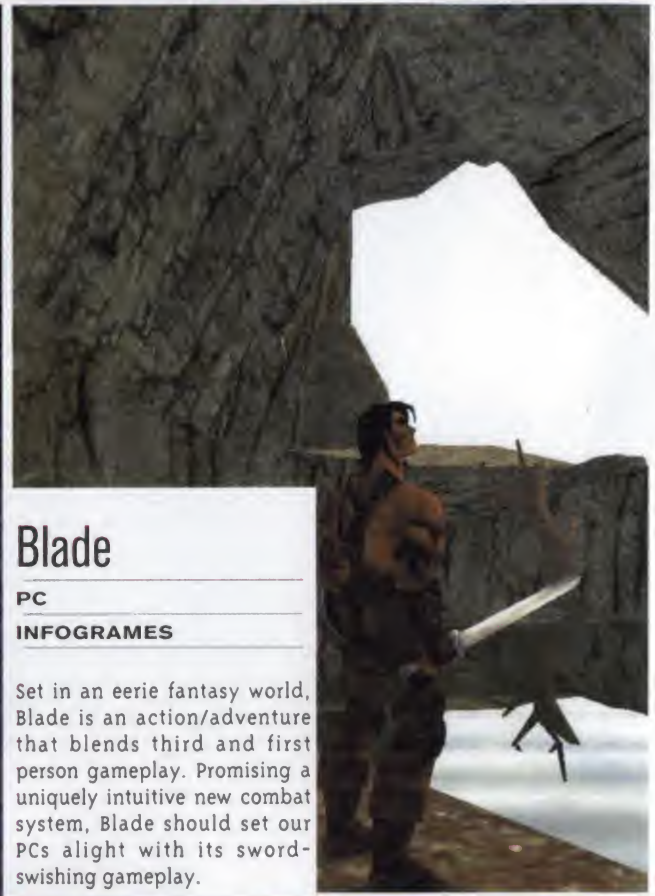
BELIEVE THE HYPE!

Here are some of the features Atari hyped in their ads for Battlezone...

- Supertanks compete in outerspace.
- Exclusive Quadrascan monitor.
- Special visual effects – spectacular explosions.
- Realistic "3D" playfield view.
- Unique Radar display warns of enemy approach.
- Special sound effects including "1812 Overture".
- Bonus scoring.
- High Score Table display.



eye candy



Blade

PC
INFOGRAMES

Set in an eerie fantasy world, Blade is an action/adventure that blends third and first person gameplay. Promising a uniquely intuitive new combat system, Blade should set our PCs alight with its sword-swishing gameplay.



Blade



V&A

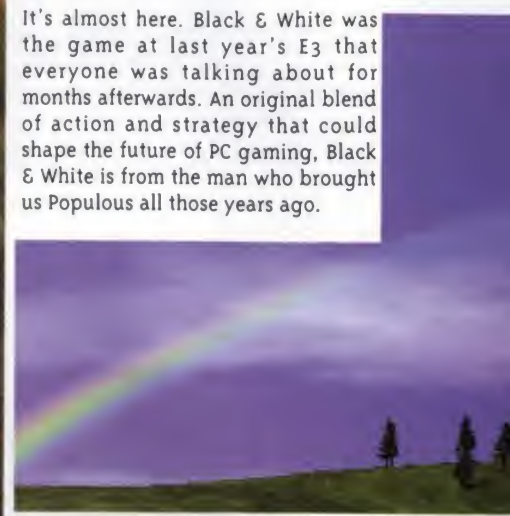
eye candy

Black & White

PC

EA

It's almost here. Black & White was the game at last year's E3 that everyone was talking about for months afterwards. An original blend of action and strategy that could shape the future of PC gaming, Black & White is from the man who brought us Populous all those years ago.



gran turismo

2000



PLATFORM: Playstation 2
 AVAILABLE: TBA
 CATEGORY: Racing
 PLAYERS: 1-2
 PUBLISHER: Sony

WOW-O-METER



Gamers have been served up two exceptional racing games on the PlayStation 2 over in Japan – Ridge Racer V from Namco and Gran Turismo 2000 from Sony. Ridge Racer V is obviously more the arcade racer, whilst GT 2000 is

the driving sim that we've come to expect from developer Polyphony Digital. Whilst many people have been worried that Gran Turismo 2000 would be nothing but GT 2 with prettier graphics and better sound, now that the PlayStation 2 is out those fears have vanished. The lucky folk who have been able to sit down and play the game have noted that GT 2000 has much more to offer than just eye candy...

GENTLEMEN, START YOUR EMOTION ENGINES!

As was expected, GT 2000 "feels" like a Gran Turismo game – the basic

approach to the gameplay has been the same as with previous instalments in the series. But with new features, like support for the fully analogue Dual Shock 2 controller, GT 2000 feels that much better. Using the shoulder buttons for acceleration, you have to squish those buttons in hard to squeeze out a higher top speed in your car, making driving a tight series of laps quite exhausting. After getting used to the controls, much more subtle driving techniques can be employed to shave off those vital seconds from the clock. With the viewing distance now stretching as far as the eye can

see, better driving strategies can be concocted for approaching twists and bends. Essentially, Gran Turismo 2000 is far more realistic than it's predecessors in every respect. Now just take a look at those cars...

The actual four-wheeled beasts you get to drive in Gran Turismo 2000 are exceptional. They look like they been laboured over by a team professional polishers, and possibly they even go through the odd wash and wax in the pit lane they look so showroom-ready. The lighting effects off their reflective exteriors is superb, with the piercing sun and passing street lamps causing all



sorts of wondrous effects. They have that solid real-world vibe too, with a real sense of weight and speed. The replays now look more incredible as ever – also because the road-cam now shows a wave of heat emanating off the tarmac, thanks to the PS2's new library of visual effects. If anything, the environments don't quite match up to the incredible scenery in Ridge Racer V. There isn't quite the same level of detail. So whilst some would say that Ridge Racer V looks even better, Gran Turismo 2000 is certainly like no other racing game you've yet seen running on a con-

sole – or PC for that matter. The Dreamcast's SegaGT is the closest contender, but you can read all about that later on in this issue...

BROOOOOOM BROOOOOOOOM

What Sony has managed to do with Gran Turismo 2000 is blur the line between gameplay and FMV more than ever before. We know that the game will ship with a ridiculous selection of cars (some speculate that Sony will ensure 1000 cars in the final release) and unlockable cars and tracks, we know that the cars will be tweakable beyond belief, and we know

that there will be enough game-play options here to satisfy even the most hardcore gamer. But what we haven't quite been prepared for, is this level of graphical "wow". Of course, there's one big question that still remains, and that is whether Gran Turismo 2000 will actually play as nicely as it looks. Certainly, GT 2000 has stunned everyone who has sat down with it for a brief session, but after the game is released and is devoured by the gamers out there, we'll find out if the game-play offers an experience akin to the knock-ye-socks-off graphics.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE

We're hoping that Polyphony will finally include a real damage model to the game. Bumping around the track will be that much more punishing, and GT needs to be more of a challenge...

in»sight



Sega GT



PLATFORM: Dreamcast
 AVAILABLE: TBA
 CATEGORY: Racing
 PLAYERS: 1-2
 PUBLISHER: Sega

WOW-O-METER

Going head to head with the PlayStation 2 and Gran Turismo 2000 is Sega's attempt at a "serious" driving game — Sega GT on the Dreamcast. You could cynically say that Sega are so insecure about the PS2, that they've had to come up with a "Gran Turismo Killer" to keep the driving game nuts from jumping ship to the admittedly superior looking PS2 platform. But really, it's only natural that an extremely popular and successful style of game is going to be replicated on other platforms. Sega GT is out now in Japan, so Hyper picked up a copy to see how things are looking behind the wheel. Whilst it's possible that the local PAL release could be slightly different, we spent an afternoon ripping around a few tracks in the Japanese version of the game to see how it was shaping up...

THE GOOD, THE BAD...

Before we can go any further with this preview, we have to mention the fact that the music in Sega GT is completely and utterly horrid. It's like a nightmare mix of Sale of the Century with cheesy session-muso jamming sessions. If you find something to strap over your head, like a pair of plump pillows, you can then go on to enjoy what seems to be one of the best driving games out there. Certainly, Sega GT has the visual slickness to put it way ahead of Gran Turismo 2 on the PlayStation, however, in comparison

with the preview movies we've seen of Gran Turismo 2000, it looks like Sega GT will have to try and win the race with depth of gameplay instead. However, there's no doubting that the game is exceptionally pretty. There are some fancy lighting effects, the cars look weighty and solid and have a nice gloss and high level of detail. The cars "look" right and when you see them spinning around the track in the replay (which is the biggest giveaway that this is a Gran Turismo clone), you'll find yourself smiling at how cool it all looks at times. If there could be any criticism of Sega GT's graphics, it would be that the backgrounds are a bit of a let-down at times in that they don't look all that thrilling and the design of the tracks feels a little uninspired.

In terms of mechanics though, the actual control of the cars is extremely solid, and we can happily report that the physics in Sega GT are top notch. Even though there's still that disappointing arcade-style "bounce" when you smack into a wall, the car handling is far more realistic than any other racer we've seen yet. Once you settle into the sensitivity of the Dreamcast's controls, you'll be pulling hand-brake corners and power-sliding your way around the joint like a maniac.

The different cars all feel brilliant, and switching between car types only proves how well each individual model has been designed to perform differently. Before you race, you can also choose between "Grip" and "Drift" racing styles, as well as tweak your beast for driving perfection.

... AND THE AVERAGE

There seems to be so much depth to Sega GT, that if you own a Dreamcast, this really looks like it will have to be a must-buy title. The variety of racing locations is fabulous, the amount of cars and tweakage is excellent, and you'll impress your friends with how good the game is presented visually. There's only one niggling problem we have with Sega GT, which is that it's really nothing new. Sure, we can tell this is an excellent driving game from the time we had

playing around with it, but we've also had no huge desire to get back and dig within every inch of the gameplay. It just feels a tad generic. Is it because it borrows that heavily from Gran Turismo that we feel we've seen it all before? Or is it that this style of driving game has just become a bit stale? At least, all you need to know, is that we'll get our hands on a finished PAL version of the game and report back with a full review in the next issue of Hyper. At this stage, Sega GT is still one very sweet looking package.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE

It would be great if Sega could replace the soundtrack for the PAL release. Please God make it stop.



CHRONO CROSS



i PLATFORM: PlayStation
 AVAILABLE: TBA
 CATEGORY: RPG
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: Sony

WOW-O-METER

Regarded by many as one of the top RPGs of the SNES era, five years after its release *Chrono Trigger* continues to have a cult-like following, and for good reason. Play it now and you'll still be impressed by the immersive storyline, great gameplay mechanics and memorable score. The good news is that the sequel — *Chrono Cross* — is out in Japan and is on its way to the West. The even better news is that *Chrono Cross* is being hailed not only as a great sequel, but as one of the greatest RPGs ever.

HOW TIME FLIES...

Where *Chrono Trigger* explored the theme of time travel, and the ramifications of changes made to the past, *Chrono Cross* focuses on interdimensional travel. A gaming version of "Sliders", the main character, Serge,

travels to an alternate dimension where his alternate self was killed in mysterious circumstances years earlier. Thus, he must uncover the truth behind his own death. Sounds cool already right?

What follows is, unsurprisingly, a quest of epic proportions. Searching for the Frozen Flame artifact (that allows the user to manipulate reality at will), and with 40 playable characters that can join your adventuring party, *Chrono Cross* is an engaging and addictive play. Amazingly, the huge cast of characters doesn't water down *Chrono Cross*' plotline one iota. All the characters are worthwhile in their own right, with no token additions or weak links, and you'll have to explore every one of the myriad of story branches to meet them all. Kudos to Square for not using the huge character count as a gimmick, but for implementing it in a seamless way that brings new layers and complexities to the gameplay.

WE CAN'T WAIT TO GIVE THIS GAME A GOOD HARD JUNCTIONING...

Chrono Cross utilises a great combat system that's something of a hybrid of many of Square's games. As in the original, enemies are visible onscreen whilst trekking around, so encounters can be avoided if necessary. The fighting mechanics are really cool, incorporating both real time and turn based elements. Based around a stamina points system, any person can attack at any time provided they have at least one stamina point (out of seven) available. Obviously, the more powerful the attack, the more stamina points required, with three used for the

strongest attack (as seen in *Xenogears*). The magic system is based around elements, and is hugely customisable. Elements are organized into three pairs of colours and each entity in the game has an affinity with one colour, and conversely, a weakness for spells harnessing the other, so you must use this knowledge and equip appropriately depending on the foe. We'll save the details of building up your element grid, equipping and rearranging elements, and other information about combat for the review, as there simply isn't enough space here. Rest assured, however, it's sublime.

The graphics are of a similar quality to everything else in the game — stunning. Not so much in terms of technical prowess, although they're certainly on

a par with anything Square have done previously, but in terms of their amazingly organic feel. The design is nothing short of incredible, sucking the player ever further into the world.

RPG heads, the wait is almost over! *Chrono Cross* is here, sickeningly huge and disturbingly deep. It's a way off Western release, but we're already getting out the big rubber stamp in anticipation.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE

A definite Australian release date. We don't want to see this classic go the same way as other gems like *Xenogears*, *Parasite Eve*, *Brave Fencer Musashi* and *Bushido Blade 2* that were released in the states, but not here.

WANT THE HOTTEST...

WE'VE GOT IT

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*We will match any retailer's price on a like software item. The software item must be in stock. An original copy of an advertisement for the software item must be presented, including price. The advertisement must be current. This does not include mail-order catalogues or Internet sites. Pricing presented must be in Australian dollars.

SUPER MARIO *adventure*

PLATFORM: Nintendo 64
AVAILABLE: TBA
CATEGORY: RPG
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Nintendo



Super Mario Adventure is the sequel to the fantastic Mario RPG for SNES (if you've never heard of it, that's because it was never released in PAL territories). The isometric viewpoint, and super-deformed RPG-ish characters of the original have been ditched in favour of a more 2D Yoshi's Story style look. Indeed, Super Mario Adventure looks very much like a kid's pop up picture book — all the characters are hand drawn 2D paper cutouts, and the scenery pops up and folds down from scene to scene as if you're turning the pages of a book. It's a bizarre technique, but an effective one as it works to make sure that everything you need to see is always in view.

As well as a healthy dose of RPG adventuring, collecting items, unlocking areas, turn-based fight sequences and so forth, Super Mario Adventure also has many influences from previous Mario games, including a few of the



locations, and "Mario logic" such as hitting question mark blocks for coins. Also in typical Mario fashion, it's quite a friendly RPG, as Mario will need to make friends with many different characters in order to use their abilities. In one sequence we saw, Mario summoned a Bobomb to clear a blocked path in front of him.

Don't dismiss this title as just another kiddie Nintendo game. The gameplay is shaping up nicely, it has a fresh and original graphical style, and by the look of things that magic Nintendo touch is there too.



WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

Hopefully, Super Mario Adventure will have a Game Boy Pak support for unlocking new levels or bonus games.



NIGHTMARE creatures 2

PLATFORM: PlayStation/Dreamcast
AVAILABLE: July
CATEGORY: Action/Adventure
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Konami



We get the feeling here at Hyper that games developers are investing more time and money into coding realistic blood splatter animation than actual gameplay mechanics. "Hey Frank, check this out, I programmed some curved flesh chunks! What sort of game is it? Er... I dunno. But look — they bounce!" Take a look at Beserk on the Dreamcast — it's a gore-fest, and now

Nightmare Creatures 2 from Konami looks all set to be the bloodiest game we've seen yet. Thankfully, Nightmare Creatures 2 seems to have some semblance of entertaining gameplay to match its gruesome effects. The story takes place a whole one hundred years after the first game, with Dr. Crowley returning to get up to more evil antics with the player stuck right in the middle of it all. In fact, you play the role of the evil Doctor's walking experiment — Wallace. Feel like a little revenge on the creep who's been torturing you on the operating table? Here's your axe...

Visually, Nightmare Creatures 2 is a massive improvement over the original. We're serious when we say that the game looks stunningly smooth and detailed

compared to its chunky predecessor. There are 18 expansive levels to explore and a whole cast of funky new creatures to lop into tiny bits. Gameplay looks like a barrel-load of fun, however at this stage it's not looking terribly original or thrillingly innovative. We look forward to seeing if the Dreamcast version has anything more to offer than just prettier graphics.



WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

Currently, it seems to be Tomb Raider meets Spawn. How about Metal Gear Solid meets Bushido Blade?





NEED FOR SPEED:

porsche unleashed

PLATFORM:	PC/PlayStation
AVAILABLE:	May
CATEGORY:	Racing
PLAYERS:	1-8
PUBLISHER:	EA

WOW-O-METER



We've become accustomed to tweaks here and new play modes there with the Need For Speed series, but for the fifth title EA have gone back to the drawing board, and are crafting the racer that Porsche Challenge should have been — the ultimate celebration of this prestigious car manufacturer.

INTELLIGENT COCKPITS... HAS THE WORLD GONE MAD?

That's right, NFS' traditionally huge range of sports cars are to be replaced with an inspiring collection of the best the Porsche stable has had to offer in its 50 year history. The PC and PlayStation versions of the game are being developed independently — a first for the series, and an indication that the PlayStation can no longer compete with what EA want to do with the PC version of the game. Thus, NFS: Porsche Unleashed will come packing a gorgeous new graphics engine that allows for realtime car damage, a fully polygonal cockpit, and the new four point physics model for more realistic driving. Better yet, the cockpit viewpoint is actually intelligent, so rather than staying static, it will mimic a real driver's head movements giving you the

best possible view of the action. In other words, if you're approaching a massive hill, normally you'd just see the road and the base of the hill. With Porsche Unleashed, however, the view will lower itself a little, allowing you to see further up the incline.

Porsche Unleashed will have an awesome Evolution mode, where you can literally drive through the history of Porsche, starting with their earliest models, right through to the super cars of today. In addition to the 80 or so available models, you'll also be able to buy and sell cars, as well as upgrading each car along the way with parts from that time period. Oh, and did I mention that there are over 700 parts from the official Porsche catalogue for all your upgrading needs? Heh heh, thought that might get you excited.

Another new mode is Factory Driver, where you have the enviable job of test driver, and

must take the lineup of Porsche cars through their paces in a series of task-based missions through urban environments and closed circuits.

DEEPER THAN BILL GATES' POCKETS...

Porsche Unleashed will come packing five closed courses and nine point-to-point runs complete with branching paths, stiff competition, copious traffic, police and the cool track design the series is renowned for. Everything a Porsche fan could want will be included, from videos and statistics to detailed historical information. Internet synergy is also a high priority, with eight-player modem and LAN support available out of the box, and more car downloads to come.

Porsche Unleashed is going to breathe new life into the Need For Speed series, with a classic lineup of cars, and more depth than ever before. The sooner we get our hands on the 2000 911 Turbo and GT1 racer the better.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

Concept cars and lots of 'em... and from what we've heard, we're likely to be disappointed.





PERFECT DARK



PLATFORM: Nintendo 64
 AVAILABLE: June
 CATEGORY: Action
 PLAYERS: 1-4
 PUBLISHER: Rare

WOW-O-METER



Could Perfect Dark be any more anticipated? Coming from the house of Rare who have brought us GoldenEye 007 and Donkey Kong 64, Perfect Dark could turn out to be the best Nintendo 64 game ever developed. By now, you probably already know the plot involving a hidden alien menace and all about secret agent Joanna Dark herself, so we'll just get straight to the facts...

SCARED OF THE DARK?

A lot of you who don't own a Memory Expansion Pak are probably wondering if you'll still be able to play Perfect Dark without one. Well, surprisingly, the answer is "yes", however the ability for three and four player games won't be possible. If you want access to the full four-player deathmatch then you'll need the Expansion Pak. If you don't have a Pak, you will still be able to play the one and two player multiplayer modes, but not the main single-player game. Perfect Dark will have bots in the form of "Simulants", so you can deathmatch away on your own if you desire. There will also be co-operative play, so you can kill stuff with a friend on your side (playing through the missions as Joanna Dark and her sister) and even counter-operative play so that two of you can play — one as Joanna and the other as the enemy trying to stop her. Whilst the Simulants look fabulous, and possibly better than any N64 game characters we've seen yet, the much publicised feature of mapping your own face onto the characters using the Game Boy Color camera has been dropped from the game due to technical problems. You'll still be able to cus-

tomise your character though, much like the "create-a-player" feature in most wrestling games which is very cool. Don't forget also, that Perfect Dark on the Game Boy will be compatible with Perfect Dark on the N64 using the Game Boy Pak. This will allow you to transfer game info between the two for some pretty cool bonus features.

Because the development team stuck to the GoldenEye engine, much of that game's goodness will flow on to Perfect Dark. However a few changes have been made, besides the obvious tweaks to the eye candy. Joanna Dark still won't be able to jump, but she will be able to fall off ledges, unlike Bond in GoldenEye. This is because many of the levels will require you to go exploring a bit more carefully. The environments will be so far more interactive than we've yet seen in a Nintendo 64 game, with one particular weapon, the FarSight, even allowing you to see through walls and shoot through them. All our favourite guns from GoldenEye will still be featured on top of all the new weapons that Joanna will be carrying around — it is the year 2023 after all. Some of the new weapons include the "Drug Gun", the "Lap Top Gun" and the "Super Dragon" whilst the usual array of pistols, rocket launcher, cross-bow and grenades will feature for a total of about 44 weapons. You'll be able to select from about 10 different controller set-ups too, so there should be a mode for everyone.

As far as the game performance goes, it seems that Rare are still ironing out problems with a fairly chugging frame-rate — the same problem which dogged GoldenEye. For optimum play, it's obvious you'll want that Expansion Pak, but even so, no huge improvements have been made with speeding up the gameplay from GoldenEye days although the game looks visually superior.

All up though, Perfect Dark is still looking absolutely killer.



WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

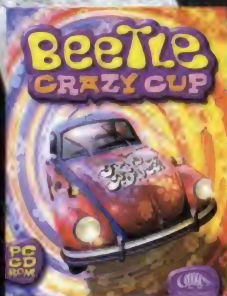
If rare manage to squeeze out some faster frame-rates and still get the game out in June, we'll be pretty darn happy.



PC
XBOX
PS2

ROAD RAVE!

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Beetle CRAZY CUP



OZ



DEUS EX



PLATFORM: PC
 AVAILABLE: May
 CATEGORY: FPS/RPG
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: Ion Storm

WOW-O-METER
 The never-ending wait for Daikatana has been cushioned by the other projects that Ion Storm have been working on. One of those is Deus Ex, which is shaping up to be a huge hit. Set five minutes before the apocalypse (Gee, it won't be a very long game! — Ed.), you play the part of a nano-technology augmented operative named J.C. Denton who is plunged into an ocean of conspiracy and betrayal. With a huge collection of Non-Player Characters to interact with, Deus Ex could be one of those PC titles that happily destroys your sense of reality. This could be one which beats System Shock 2 out for pure engrossing gameplay.

THE FUTURE IS GOING TO SUCK

As most games promise us these days, the future is going to be full of evil aliens, deadly viruses, the return of the anti-christ, Hell's legions, robotic armies bent on the destruction of humanity and so on. In Deus Ex, the story is pretty much the same, but at least Ion Storm are keen for it to be a little harder to piece together. "Deus Ex" comes from the saying Deus Ex Machina, which loosely means the unexpected introduction of something (a person, thing or God) which results in the solution or a resolve to a situation which was previously unsolvable. In that lies a hint for the gaming experience which Deus Ex promises to deliver. However, the plot behind the game is going to be no easy thread to unravel, and you'll constantly be unsure of where your loyalty should lie... with the organisation you work for, or the terrorists

you've been assigned to destroy?

Deus Ex is the style of game where your every decision can result in changes to your character and the NPCs around him. In that sense, it has many strong RPG elements, however there is as much FPS action in the game as adventuring. It's one of those cross-genre titles that we're seeing more of these days... thank the maker!

The artificial intelligence in the game sounds like nothing else we've seen yet in a PC game. As programmer Scott Martin describes — "I was standing on top of a three-story building with a pistol. Guards were patrolling below me, oblivious to my presence. I fired off a couple of rounds, which the guards shouldn't have heard because the pistol was silenced. But one of the guards drew his weapon, turned, and started looking around for me, because the

shell casing from my pistol had fallen three stories and landed next to him, and he heard it." Awesome.

Deus Ex uses a variation of the Unreal graphics engine, with enough new tweaks to have us drooling all over again. One of the most startling features, is the incredible "real world" architecture we've seen in the game, which will allow us to become that much more convinced that the game is "alive". We simply can't wait to review it!

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

We know we want Ion Storm to start work on a mission pack straight away! There's nothing worse than loving a game to death, and then sadly having to shelve it forever.



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40 Winks
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ALIEN RESURRECTION



SHOGUN

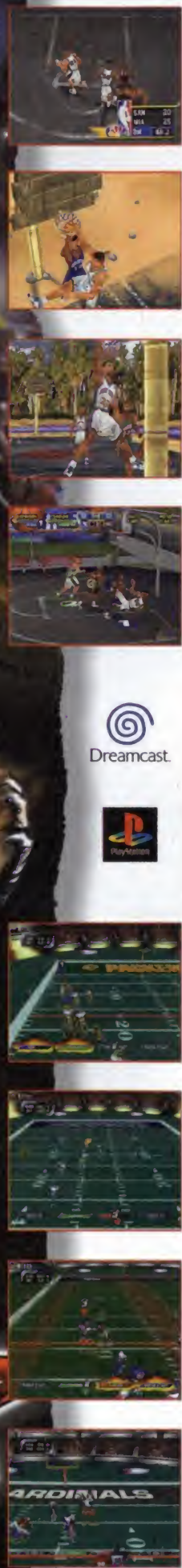
NBA SHOWTIME

NBA on NBC



two new titles for the

Dreamcast



no refs... no rules... no mercy... no mercy...



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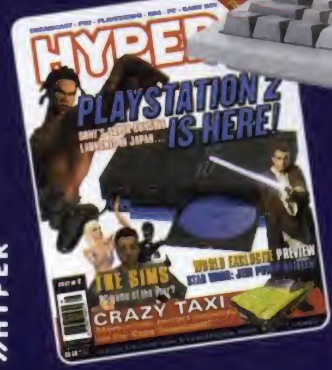
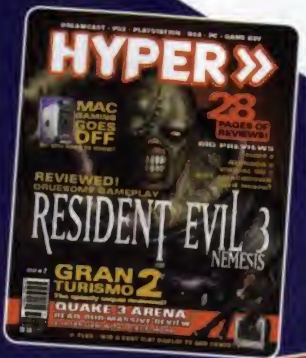
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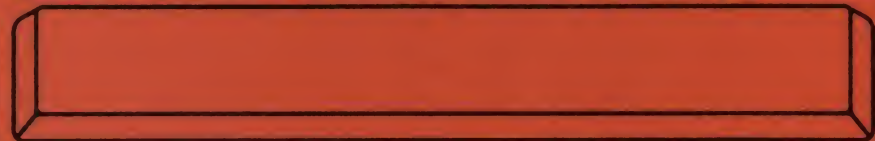
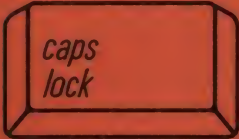
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HYPER reader awards



R E S U L T S

Well, the Hyper office was flooded with mail, and our computers were bursting with online entries for our 'Best of '99' Reader Awards. After hooking up a keg of coffee with an intravenous drip, we jumped into the pile of mail and collated the results. We were quite surprised by some of your entries, and as usual, a lot of our personal faves didn't make the top three in some categories. Next to the winning games we have printed the percentage of entrants who voted for that particular title. Of course, the percentages in the top three won't add up to 100% because many of you voted for your own choices which we didn't get enough votes for to be listed here with our winners. Until next time...

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the best of 99



BEST STRATEGY GAME

Tough category, because a lot depends on personal taste, but Microsoft won the golden thingy.

The Winner: AGE OF EMPIRES 2 — PC (44% of votes)
 2nd place: C&C Tiberian Sun — PC (28%)
 3rd place: Homeworld — PC (21%)

Dumbest reader entry: "Myth 2 - I'm pretty sure I haven't played this game."

BEST FIRST PERSON SHOOTER

We thought this would be a lot closer than it was.

It seems that Quake 3 has that mass appeal.

The Winner: QUAKE 3 ARENA — PC (54% of votes)
 2nd place: Unreal Tournament — PC (28%)
 3rd place: Kingpin — PC (14%)

Dumbest reader entry: "Goldeneye." (What year are we in? — Ed.)

BEST SPORTS GAME

Another tough category to choose in, but FIFA won out probably due to it's strong heritage.

The Winner: FIFA 2000 — PC (35% of votes)
 2nd place: Ready 2 Rumble Boxing — Dreamcast (27%)
 3rd place: NBA Live 2000 — PC (18%)

Dumbest reader entry: "Deer Hunter."

BEST RACING GAME

Pow! Wipeout 3 pips Sega Rally 2 on the line! Very close.

The Winner: WIPEOUT 3 — PlayStation (32% of votes)
 2nd place: Sega Rally 2 — Dreamcast (30%)

3rd place: Star Wars Episode One: Racer — PC/Nintendo 64 (22%)

Dumbest reader entry: "I like DRIVING games, not racing."

BEST FLIGHT SIM

A confusing category for a lot of you. But the freaks voted for their fave.

The Winner: FALCON 4.0 — PC (54% of votes)
 2nd place: Microsoft Flight Simulator 2000 — PC (33%)
 3rd place: Flight Unlimited 3 — PC (12%)

Dumbest reader entry: "The one in Excel. You know, the hidden one."

BEST SPACE COMBAT GAME

Whilst Freespace 2 was an excellent game, X-Wing Alliance came through due to pure depth of gameplay.

The Winner: X-WING ALLIANCE — PC (50% of votes)
 2nd place: Freespace 2 — PC (32%)
 3rd place: Colony Wars Vengeance — PlayStation (16%)

Dumbest reader entry: "Rebel Assault 2."

BEST PUZZLE GAME

A fun category, even though our beloved Devil Dice only came third.

The Winner: BUST A MOVE 3 — PlayStation/N64 (37% of votes)
 2nd place: New Tetris — Nintendo 64 (32%)
 3rd place: Devil Dice — PlayStation (18%)

Dumbest reader entry: "Gran Turismo 2." (Now that's puzzling. — Ed.)

BEST SIM GAME

Any of these games are worthy of the top spot, but the infamous Sim City goes on...

The Winner: SIM CITY 3000 — PC (34% of votes)

2nd place: Theme Park World — PC (25%)

3rd place: Rollercoaster Tycoon — PC (22%)

Dumbest reader entry: "Simulating what?"

BEST MULTIPLAYER CONSOLE GAME

Worms rocks. We still play this in the office all the time. Very worthy winner.

The Winner: WORMS ARMAGEDDON — Nintendo 64 (38% of votes)

2nd place: Crash Team Racing — PlayStation (22%)

3rd place: Gauntlet Legends — Nintendo 64 (17%)

Dumbest reader entry: "Grandia."

BEST ONLINE PC GAME

Not sure if we agree with this one, even though we love our Quake. What about Everquest?!

The Winner: QUAKE 3 ARENA — PC (51% of votes)

2nd place: Unreal Tournament — PC (20%)

3rd place: Team Fortress — PC (12%)

Dumbest reader entry: "Pointless, my ping is shit."

WORST LOADING TIMES OF '99

The list could have been a mile long, honestly.

The Winner: DRIVER — PlayStation (37% of votes)

2nd place: Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine — PC (27%)

3rd place: Chef's Luv Shack — PlayStation (14%)

Dumbest reader entry: "Time is not important, only life matters."

WORST VOICE ACTING OF '99

Yes, Sega's HOTD2 is clearly the crappiest voice acting EVER.

The Winner: HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2 — Dreamcast (32% of votes)

2nd place: Dino Crisis — PlayStation (30%)

3rd place: Blue Stinger — Dreamcast (17%)

Dumbest reader entry: "FIFA 2000." (eh?! — Ed.)

MOST UNORIGINAL GAME OF '99

Another category which could have filled the Titanic.

The Winner: Tomb Raider IV: The Last Revelation — PlayStation/PC (41% of votes)

2nd place: Crash Team Racing — PlayStation (30%)

3rd place: Wrestlemania 2000 — Nintendo 64 (17%)

Dumbest reader entry: "I don't care, here's my money."

CLOSEST THING TO SEX

Some hilarious "other" responses in this category. From the frightening to the bizarre...

The Winner: FINAL FANTASY VIII (how romantic) — PlayStation (34%)

2nd place: Soul Calibur (ouch!) — Dreamcast (27%)

3rd place: Wipeout 3 (hot) — PlayStation (24%)

Dumbest reader entry: "Alone in the Dark."

UPCOMING GAMES NO-ONE GIVES A CRAP ABOUT

The irony is, Kiss Psycho Circus actually looks awesome!

The Winner: BARBIE MAGIC MAKEOVER — PC (58% of votes)

2nd place: Kiss Psycho Circus — PC (12%)

3rd place: Centipede — Dreamcast (11%)

Dumbest reader entry: "Kiss Psycho Circus — the only thing worse would be Mick Jagger."





BEST PC GAME

Yes, it does rock hard. We're still surprised it wasn't a closer race though.
The Winner: QUAKE 3 ARENA (43% of votes)
 2nd place: Unreal Tournament (22%)
 3rd place: Age of Empires 2 (18%)
 Dumbest reader entry: "Pressing Ctrl-Alt-Delete at least ten times a day."



BEST PLAYSTATION GAME

Another surprising winner here. We thought MGS would rip this up.
The Winner: FINAL FANTASY VIII (38% of votes)
 2nd place: Metal Gear Solid (30%)
 3rd place: Tony Hawk Skateboarding (17%)
 Dumbest reader entry: "PSXs suck arse. Really they do."



BEST NINTENDO 64 GAME

Wow, Donkey Kong smashed Smash Bros AND Zelda had a pathetic show of support.
The Winner: DONKEY KONG 64 (54% of votes)
 2nd place: Smash Brothers (16%)
 3rd place: Zelda: Ocarina of Time (12%)
 Dumbest reader entry: "Poof bros. Suck suck suck. I love every system except N64."



BEST DREAMCAST GAME

Yes, it's probably the system's "must have" title — still!
The Winner: SOUL CALIBUR (56% of votes)
 2nd place: Sega Rally 2 (15%)
 3rd place: Sonic Adventure (9%)
 Dumbest reader entry: "'Best' and 'Dreamcast' are never used in the same sentence."



BEST GAME CHARACTER

Pretty darn close, and there were a huge amount of "other" entries, hence the low percentages.
The Winner: SONIC THE HEDGEHOG (21% of votes)
 2nd place: Squall Leonhart (FFVIII) (20%)
 3rd place: Ivy (Soul Calibur) (17%)
 Dumbest reader entry: "Lara Croft cause she has huge tits"



THE BIG ONES

WORST GAME CHARACTER

Everyone is totally sick of Lara it seems. What was surprising, was how many of you voted Voldo from Soul Calibur as your most hated. Not quite enough to make the top three though...

The Winner: LARA CROFT (Tomb Raider) (31%)

2nd place: Spyro the Dragon (29%)

3rd place: Ed (Tonic Trouble) (15%)

Dumbest reader entry: Jigglypuff the Pokemon!



BEST GAME OF '99

The big award goes to the Dreamcast and Soul Calibur. Impressive. Another very close category, including a huge amount of "other" responses.

The Winner: SOUL CALIBUR - Dreamcast (19% of votes)

2nd place: Final Fantasy VIII - PlayStation (16%)

3rd place: Metal Gear Solid - PlayStation (15%)

Dumbest reader entry: "Barbie Magic Makeover."

(Yes, very witty - Ed.)



WORST GAME OF '99

No confusion here. Superman 64 sucked!

The Winner: SUPERMAN 64 - Nintendo 64 (53% of votes)

2nd place: South Park - PlayStation/Nintendo 64/PC (17%)

3rd place: Mortal Kombat Gold - Dreamcast (12%)

Dumbest reader entry: "That Barbie horse game."



BEST GAMING PLATFORM

Whilst the consoles all hung around the same percentage of votes, the PC wins out probably because of its technological edge.

The Winner: PC (38% of votes)

2nd place: PlayStation (23%)

3rd place: Dreamcast (22%)

Dumbest reader entry: "My butt."



MOST EXCITING NEXT GEN CONSOLE

Sony will be happy to see this. The PS2 is everyone's most anticipated console. The Nintendo Dolphin came home pretty strongly also, leaving the poor Dreamcast flailing around 16% of the votes. The Microsoft X-Box barely raised a murmur.

The Winner: PLAYSTATION 2 (49% of votes)

2nd place: NINTENDO DOLPHIN (26%)

3rd place: DREAMCAST (16%)

Dumbest reader entry: "A pizza box."



THE BIG ONES

NINTENDO 64

RIDGE RACER 64



46 »HYPER

Namco bring their Ridge Racer experience to the Nintendo 64. Does it stand up to the PlayStation incarnations? Maybe the Game of the Month award is a pretty good hint...



REVIEWS

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77.....	ECW Hardcore Revolution
.....PC.....	
60.....	MESSIAH
66.....	NOX
72.....	BATTLEZONE 2
81.....	IMPERIUM GALACTICA 2
.....GAMEBOY.....	
87.....	FIFA 2000
87.....	ODDWORLD ADVENTURES 2
87.....	METAL GEAR SOLID
87.....	RAYMAN



GREEN FOR DREAMCAST
 YELLOW FOR PC
 RED FOR NINTENDO 64
 BLUE FOR PLAYSTATION



THE HYPER CREW'S TOP 5

ELIOT FISH – Editor

1. Planescape Torment – PC
Wow, there's more to this game than I thought. Epic!
2. Starlancer – PC
3. The Sims – PC
4. Battlezone 2 – PC
5. Metal Gear Solid – Game Boy

SINGE GRAHAM – Reviewer

1. Unreal Tournament – PC
It just rocks – especially with the new add-on pack.
2. Ultima Online – PC
3. Quake 3: Arena – PC
4. FF Anthology – PSX
5. Hype: The Time Quest – PC

KEVIN CHEUNG – Reviewer

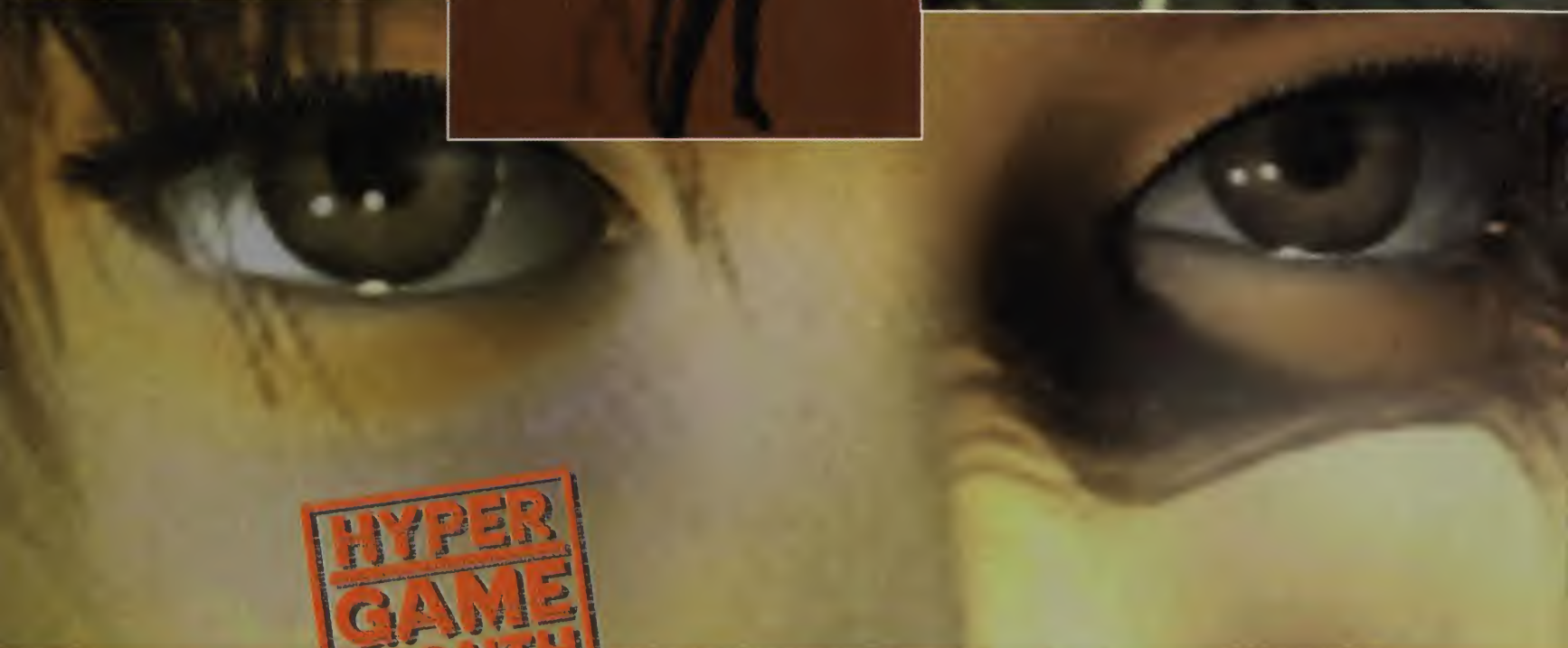
1. Dead or Alive 2 – Arcade
I am utterly in love with this game. I don't know how many credits I've spent on DOA2, but I'm going nuts knowing that this game is headed for the PlayStation 2. TTT blows chunks compared to this.
2. The Sims – PC
3. Space Channel 5 – Dreamcast
4. Quake 3: Arena – PC
5. Star Ocean Second Story – PSX

HYPERR

All in-house PC previews and reviews are done on Gateway computers.

www.au.gateway.com





RIDGE RACER 64

The greatest racing game on the N64? **Cam Shea** finds out...

AVAILABLE:	TBA
CATEGORY:	Racing
PLAYERS:	1-4
PUBLISHER:	Nintendo
PRICE:	\$99.95
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	Rumble Pak

In a case of better late than never, Ridge Racer 64 is coming to a cartridge slot near you. Developed by Nintendo's new American studio — Nintendo Software Technology Corporation (NST), Ridge Racer 64 is something of a homage to the arcade heritage of the series, and a very fine play indeed.

IT'S WHAT YOU DO WITH THEM THAT COUNTS...

A juicy cocktail of gaming goodness, Ridge Racer 64 features the complete courses from both Ridge Racer and Ridge Racer Revolution, as well as a new beast that NST cooked up themselves. The claim on the box that

Ridge Racer 64 has nine courses is something of a lie in the tradition of the series, as there are really only three base courses, each with several significant variations. Each variation can also be raced in reverse, making for good replay value, but nine courses there are not.

NST have, however, gone to extra lengths to ensure that Ridge Racer 64 has more options than you can poke a control stick at. For instance, if I were to tell you that you could choose from three different drift modes — Ridge Racer Classic, Ridge Racer Revolution, and RR64, as well as two different sets of collision detection would you be impressed?

Hell yeah! Unfortunately, from a hardcore fan's perspective, they've done a pretty average job. The "Ridge Racer Classic" drift set feels nothing like the original's, bearing a greater similarity to Ridge Racer Revolution than anything else. This leaves you with two variations on the Revolution drift set, and as any Ridge Racer freak will tell you, the original's handling was a lot tighter than the sequel's, leaving no reason to use these extras at all. Thus, Ridge Racer fanatics hoping to play the Revolution courses with the original's drift will be disappointed.

On the plus side, NST's own drift model "RR64", which is the default, is

As much as stalwart Nintendo owners would hate to admit it, there's been nothing approaching the PlayStation's Ridge Racer series on the system. There have been some great racers such as F Zero X and Mario Kart, but all the traditional sports car style arcade games have been average efforts destined to be quickly forgotten.



HYPER

Die Hard Trilogy 2

HYPERR» *Nox*







absolutely first class, and completely makes up for any false advertising. It's smooth, tight and reliable, and lets you rip up the courses like never before. The RR64 drift mode even allows for reverse 360 powerslides around corners with no loss in speed. Steer against the turn, do a full 360 rotation and jet out of the corner! Although cheap, as it requires almost no skill, it looks cool, and will certainly impress your friends.

Both the courses that have been ported are completely faithful to their PlayStation brethren in terms of track layout. We didn't notice a single undulation or centimetre of precious tarmac missing. The same cannot be said, however, for the scenery, which has been hacked apart and reinvented... in my mind unsuccessfully. Indeed, despite the obvious emphasis on replicating the simpler, more arcade oriented PlayStation Ridge Racer games, NST

have decided to go with a more realistic colour palette, which is at odds with what the first two games were all about. Gone are the bright, eye catching — and at times garish colours — replaced by oh-so-dull greys and browns.

NOT THAT THERE'S ANYTHING WRONG WITH IT...

It's not that there's anything wrong with this more realistic looking approach, it's just that NST have chosen to replicate the track design and gameplay exactly, but have failed to realise that the old visuals complemented it perfectly. Although the courses look crisp and smooth, the textures that have been used are in many cases inferior to the original's. Just check out the appallingly barren building at the end of the first straight in the Ridge Racer course and you'll see what I mean. Indeed, NST have made a few some-

what controversial decisions that are sure to grate with fans. For instance, the decision to turn the extra path in the novice track of Revolution from a beachside run, complete with palm trees and clear blue water, into an uninspired country drive sporting nothing more than grass and a couple of Cherry Blossom trees is mystifying. NST seem to have missed the point of the entire Ridge Racer series. The first two games were brash and in your face, which was, of course, part of the appeal. They screamed "ARCADE". This game does not.

Ridge Racer has always been about fanging through cities and decidedly urban environments. This is the design element that gives the series its tone. Even the mountain runs in R4 still feel like they're part of an urban sprawl. It's bad enough that NST have turned the first two tracks into a drive through the countryside, but their ineptitude really shows

with their own "Renegade" course as it's set, of all places, in the desert. Not the desert outside Vegas, with runs through the blaring lights and sounds of the city... but the middle of the desert. That is, winding roads with boring mountains on either side, without any buildings, let alone skyscrapers, to be seen. This

SIDE SPLITTING SPLITSCREEN SLIDES...

After some multiplayer action? Then bring on the four-player splitscreen racing! The graphics are still remarkably clear, but the frame rate drops to strobe light levels. Even so, if you have four skilled players who are able to anticipate the corners from experience, than you'll get something out of it. The two-player mode, on the other hand, is flawless. Fast and sleek, it even has the oft-ignored option to choose how many drone cars you're racing against.



track is good fun to race on, and it's well designed, but it doesn't feel like Ridge Racer. Another point of complaint is that NST could have used this track to do things that the other two tracks don't. For instance, in contrast to the first two games, Rage Racer and R4 both utilised steep hills and mad, winding, downhill runs. NST could have used the opportunity to bring some variety into the game by having a course that felt more like the later games. They didn't.

CAM STEPS BACK FROM THE BRINK...

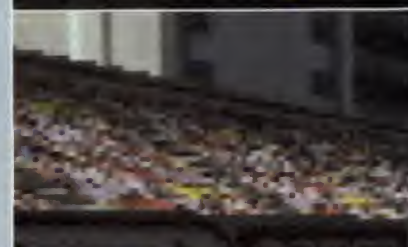
All this criticism is a little unfair, as it's from a hardcore fan's perspective, and the bottomline is that Ridge Racer 64 is an exceptionally polished game, and one that we'd recommend to any Nintendo owner

in a second. Indeed, even though I disagree with many of the design decisions, I'm still playing it compulsively every day, and that's what counts - hence the high score and the game of the month award. Now onto the good bits!

Ridge Racer 64 is smoother than any Nintendo 64 racer before it, with the exception of F Zero X. It's also one of the best looking, if not the best looking, racing game on the system. The graphics have a convincingly solid look to both the track and surrounds that Nintendo games often lack. Plus, there's no fog! Just crisp, fully polygonal environments. Other subtle graphical touches include working headlights, motion blur on the tail lights, lens flares (a mixed blessing) and smoking tires. Ridge Racer

64 really stands out, however, thanks to its blistering frame rate. As you unlock faster cars (there's 25 in all), the game just keeps cranking out greater and greater speed with no hit to the frame rate. Can this be said about any other Nintendo 64 racing game on the market? No... Ridge Racer 64 is clearly the best racing game for the console to date.

Put the incredible, white knuckle speed alongside the classic track design, and the best arcade power-slide mechanics we could hope for, and you've got yourself a winner. Finally, an arcade racing game N64 owners can be proud of! And as always, we had to wait for an in-house Nintendo production team to do it. Start hassling your local games shop for RR64 now! ■



TWO'S COMPANY, THREE'S A CROWD...

The only serious issue graphically is one that is still plaguing the PlayStation series. That is, the third person perspectives look... wrong. It's very hard to believe that the car you're controlling is actually on the track, as it kind of floats and jiggles its way through the course. The upside to this problem, of course, is that it will force players who usually race from a third person perspective into the first person viewpoint. Don't get us wrong, there are plenty of racers that we play in third person, but the Ridge Racer games aren't among them. First person is the only way to race, simple as that.



PLAYING CRESS WITH SUPER-POWERED SPORTSCARS ISN'T TERRIBLY PRACTICAL



STOP LOOKING AT US THAT WAY, REIKO! DOWN!

"RACERS, START YOUR ENGINES..."

NST have featured Reiko prominently in both the intro sequence (looking disturbingly Westernised I might add), and on the main menu screen, so why isn't she doing anything useful? Rage Racer was the first game to dispense with the incredibly annoying American announcer who basically shouted at you from start to finish, to be replaced by a far more bearable female voice - Reiko's. NST have taken the visual style from Rage Racer and the dodgy tire screech sound effects, so why not the voice-over as well? At least the music has more in common with the later games in the series.

While we're on the subject of sound, the car noises in the original games were a hell of a lot more ballsy than this effort. They revved up beautifully to an incredibly high pitched whine that sounded like you were going to break the sound barrier at any second.

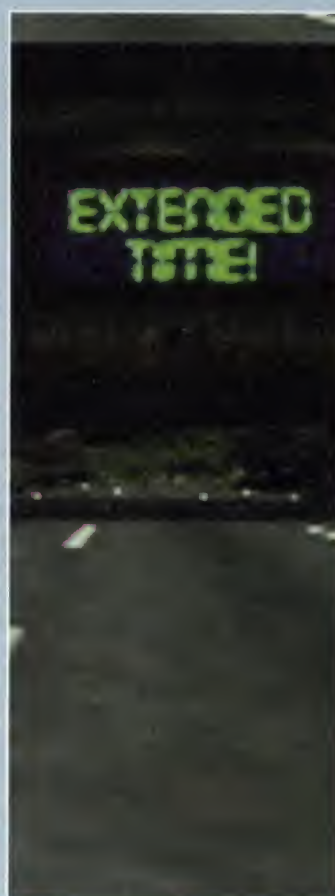
**PLAYSTATION RIDGE RACER VERSUS
NINTENDO 64 RIDGE RACER**

Here we have screenshots comparing identical sections of track from both the PlayStation versions and the Nintendo 64 game. Judge for yourself which looks better, and whether NST have managed to capture the look of these classic PlayStation titles.

Ridge Racer Original
(Nintendo shots on the left)



Ridge Racer Revolution
(Nintendo shots on the left)



NAMCO-D-METER



PLUS

Sweet powerslides and hernia-inducing speed. Typical Nintendo in-house spit and polish.

MINUS

A variety of nit-picky things that only Ridge Racer fans would be upset about.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
87	80	90

OVERALL

90

A great way for Nintendo 64 owners to find out what all the powersliding fuss is about. Pure distilled gameplay...



FEAR EFFECT

56 »HYPER



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action/Adventure
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Eidos
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: M
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock, Memory Card.

DMC has a strange knack for playing female characters, so...



It's obvious that Eidos are trying to market Hana like Lara Croft. Just go to their website, www.eidos.com, and you'll see Hana lying about in very little clothing.



Fear Effect takes its cues from the horror/suspense adventure genre, one created and long ruled by the Resident Evil series. However unlike Capcom's many RE sequels, Fear Effect jacks into the matrix and messes with the program, blending in elements of cyberpunk, anime and adventure games such as Alone in the Dark. In the process they have created a new and beautiful gaming experience

Kronos studios' objective when designing Fear Effect was to immerse you in a compelling story, and then wrap you up in its detailed environment. As a result, Fear Effect drops you in a world instantly recognisable from the realms of anime and cyber-

punk. As the game begins, rain hammers at a Neo-Hong Kong skyline, instantly conjuring the urban claustrophobia of Bladerunner.

LARGE QUANTITIES OF GREEN

For most games, narrative is an unnecessary extra, into which a minimum of time and effort is put. Chuck a few cliches into a FMV intro, and there you have it: a thin pretext for blowing stuff up. By contrast, in Fear Effect the story is the driving force behind the action, and the thing that keeps you playing. The story is detailed, almost labyrinthine in its complexity, and thoroughly compelling. Wi-Ming Lam, the daughter of a powerful Chinese businessman has disappeared, appar-

ently held for ransom by a member of the Triad. You take on the role of three different bad-ass mercenaries with shady motives. At different times, you'll control Hana, a tough arse manga babe, Glas, and Deke, an Aussie with an obligatory shoddy accent, as they try to recover Wi-Ming before her father does, in order to extort large quantities of green from him.

The game will take you through four environments: the urban cyberpunk setting of the Lam building, a river village, Madame Chen's restaurant, and Chinese Hell. These are all gorgeously rendered, full of complex and interesting design. The first level in particular conjures perfectly the gritty urban squalor of much manga.

Excellent sound effects also add greatly to the feel of the game.

Approaching the character design from a different angle, Kronos have also replaced conventional polygon characters with 2D drawn characters. The game is regularly punctuated by cut-scenes that further the story, and are full of quite graphic violence, swearing, and even a bit of nudity. The design gives continuity between the cut scenes and in-game play, and Fear Effect oozes atmosphere and class from every electronic pore. Between the beautifully crafted environments, atmospheric sound, characters, and compelling and intricate story, sitting down with Fear Effect is like playing a beautiful anime film.



WE GET THE FEELING HE'S NOT HAPPY WITH THE BLUE TURTLENECK



TAKING AN UZI TO THESE GUYS WOULD BE A PLEASURE





STRIKING FEAR INTO THE HEART OF THE ENEMY WITH... SPARKLERS?!



TAKE A LOOK AROUND

Fear Effect sprawls across a massive four discs. Whilst a large game, this is largely due to the use of streaming audio and video. Rather than waiting for each individual room to load, a la Resident Evil, the game streams data directly from the disk to continually create Fear Effect's environments taking them beyond the traditional flat bitmaps. They now team with detail. Clambering about the Lam building on the first disk, advertising billboards change pictures, neon signs flash, sparks fly from faulty wiring, cars navigate the streets floors below you, and flames lick at wreckage.



HANA SOLO

Many a beautifully 'cinematic' game has floundered in the crucial gameplay department (remember Dragon's Lair?). No such problems here my friend. Control over your characters is comprehensive and reasonably intuitive (it does take a little getting used to). Included are a 180 degree spin move, sneak, and evade (duck and roll). This is incredibly useful in combat, particularly against bosses, who will mow you down in short order if you don't keep moving. Quick toggling through your inventory also becomes an important skill. Unlike Resident Evil, you cannot pause to access your inventory, so you are often forced to quickly change weapons and/or items in realtime during combat, in order to prevent your untimely death.

Gameplay is a nice combination of wasting bad guys and puzzle solving (sometimes if you're lucky, both at the same time). The puzzles are well crafted, and usually fairly straightforward, cutting down on frustration levels. Fear Effect also indicates whenever you are standing nearby something that you can use, a highly useful function that saves a lot of time wandering about the place going "now, where the hell is the stupid (insert object here)!!!", an experience that has plagued many an adventure gamer.

AND THIS IS THE MACHINE THAT GOES PING!!

The game begins with you controlling Hana (a babe so tough she makes Lara look like a girl scout) as she makes a rendezvous with a contact. Things inevitably go wrong, and soon

you find yourself playing Glas, as he tries to find her. This pattern continues throughout the game, as every 10-15 minutes (and sometimes more often) there is a cut scene and a change of perspective. While this may sound rather odd, it functions beautifully to further the story, which becomes the interaction between the three different perspectives. Cutting between three characters allows much greater narrative complexity and depth than would playing only one at a time.

A nice selection of weaponry has kindly been included, including knives, pipes, pistols (which each character can wield two at a time, John Woo style), and automatic weapons. However access to the more powerful weapons is restricted to certain appropriate situations. Fear Effect is by no means a blast-fest — there is plenty of killing to be had, but it isn't too gratuitous. Rather, it is designed to heighten fear and suspense.

Two innovations make the gameplay experience that much smoother and more interesting than your average action/adventure title.

Rather than have your old run of the mill plain vanilla health meter, Kronos have created the 'fear meter'. This an ECG-style (i.e. the 'machine that goes ping') meter that starts pulsing in the top corner of the screen whenever you are in danger (also accompanied by an excellent heart-beat sound). This has a dual function. It acts as a kind of 'spidey sense', indicating when there's trouble around the corner. It also effects your performance when you are afraid: you become less accurate and you can be killed more easily.



A second excellent innovation is the introduction of cross hairs during combat to indicate that you have someone in your sights. This appears in a letterbox space above the main screen, to avoid visual confusion. This makes combat a far less random affair than in some other action/adventure titles. The crosshairs also flash red to indicate that you have a fatal shot lined up: excellent for sneaking up behind people and popping a cap in their neck unawares.

On the downside, there is a certain 'jerkiness' to the feel of the game. You are often placed in situations which are utterly impossible to pass first (second or third) time around. You'll get slaughtered over and over again as you suddenly find yourself completely unarmed and confronted by automatic weapon wielding freaks, and it will take MANY replays before you figure it out. Annoyance is multiplied when you hit several of these situations in a row, which can often happen. This stop start feel is also compounded by frustratingly long loading times. While the camera angles add greatly to the 'cinematic' feel of the game, they do give rise to problems with perspective, making it hard to exactly locate objects within the virtual space of the game. The music is also a bit of a downer. While the game utilises atmospheric analogue synth drones to great effect, the SAME drone for hours on end does tend to fray the nerves a bit.

Fear Effect is a classy production all around, that brings something new and fresh to the world of action/adventure gaming, and hours of fun to your PlayStation. ■



HANA HAVING A "BAD POLYGON DAY"



DECKARD-O-METER



PLUS

Compelling story, beautiful graphics, intuitive control.

MINUS

Stop-Start gameplay sometimes leads to a jerky gaming experience.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91	87	90

OVERALL

90

A deep and compelling game. Will keep you playing just to find out what happens next.



MESSIAH

Singe Graham is more like Diablo than Bob the angel...

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Action/Adventure
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Interplay
PRICE:	\$89.95
RATING:	M
REQUIRED:	PII 233, 64MB RAM, 3D card
DESIRED:	PII 300+, 128MB RAM, 3D card (16MB+)

Bob's a regular angel having a really bad day. Somewhere in the far distant future, Earth has become a distant shell of what it once began as. All traces of democratic governments were discarded and replaced with a heartless regime controlled solely by a man known as "Father Prime". Father Prime has gathered his scientists and constructed a gateway to Hell in order to get to know, and eventually control, Satan. Their theory is that the Devil will be easier to control than God himself, and then with the knowledge they gain from controlling Satan, then be able to conquer heaven.

Needless to say, God's not too happy about this. In his infinite wisdom he creates that which he believes to be his first, last and best line of defence. Bob. Sending him down to Earth with little more than a pat on the back, Bob himself is not too sure what he's meant to be doing down there. As time progresses however, his reason for being starts to become more and more apparent as his quest to stop Father Prime begins...

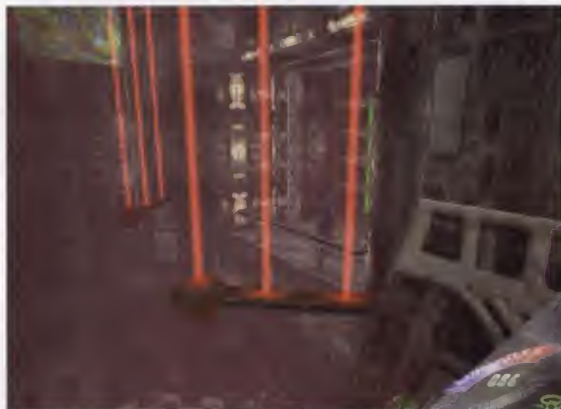
HOLY GUACAMOLE

From the start, Messiah is a hoot. Its smooth gameplay and slick graphics

make it an instant attention-grabber, and you'll be hooked at first sight. Bob starts the game in possession of a lightly armed cop and must make his way through the various levels possessing and dispossessing various living beings (human or otherwise) in order to make his way undetected through the world. After all, people might tend to freak out if they see a 3 foot tall baby with wings running towards them... who knows what kind of rash actions they might take?

Messiah utilises an advanced 3D engine that plays VERY smoothly. There are short loading points whenever you traverse through a doorway into a new area, but the loading time is negligible and doesn't really affect the way the game plays or feels. Characters within the game move realistically, with each character having their own distinct swagger when they walk/run. Bob runs along like... well, like a short, stubby angel with wings, cops run along like muscular guys would, and female commanders have a definite sway in their step.

Boasting an excellent techno-esque soundtrack, Messiah's music is really quite pumping for a game which you'd think would be filled with plenty of choir music and angelic classical (There must be more to Bob than meets the eye. Behind closed doors this little baby-faced cherub is probably a hardcore raver). Screams, grunts, shouts, speech and gunshots fill the game superbly, bringing with them a definite dark-city type of ambience.



! Shiny have an official website for Messiah, which you'll probably need to visit for some patches: <http://www.messiah.com/>



JUST ANOTHER DAY IN THE DEADLY RADIOACTIVE HIGH-TECH WEAPONS FACILITY

The most interesting (some would simply just call it 'weird') feature of the game is the ability to possess people. Bob (not possessing a proper soul of his own here on Earth) actually has the ability to jump inside of any other living being and control them directly. Whilst inside this host, Bob can gain access to many places that would otherwise be inaccessible to a three-foot tall angel. To get inside a security barracks, possess a cop and walk right in without a second glance. On the other hand, you may not be able to gain access to a special laboratory with that same cop, you'll need to jump out and possess a scientist to get inside. Or if none of the above works, jump inside and take control of one of the many rats scurrying about the city and crawl around un-noticed and un-detected from any of the city dwellers. This kind of play style opens all sorts of doors with regards to potential character combinations and solutions around different problems. Obviously when faced with a radiation-saturated area you'll want to possess a radiation worker, but in many other situations that you'll face throughout the game you'll probably find several solutions to the problem at hand.

DEVIL INSIDE...

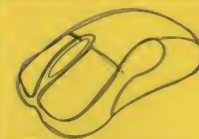
Possibly the biggest downer (for some) with Messiah is its difficulty. Even on easy, Messiah still manages to

dole out the punishment to poor little Bob, making this game one that relies much more on stealth and avoidance rather than outright combat. This isn't to say that Messiah doesn't hold its own in the 'stupidly messy weapons' department. From the standard shotgun type weapon, to a rocket-propelled harpoon that impales your enemy against walls, Messiah's arsenal isn't to be scoffed at. Cops also have the ability to zoom in using their on-board sniper scope (ala MDK), allowing you to zoom in close to the enemy's head while they can't see you for a quick and easy kill.

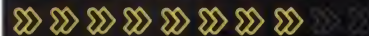
Shiny have developed many top-notch titles in the past such as Earthworm Jim and MDK, Messiah has been a long time in the coming but the end result is more than worth the wait. It's a brilliant romp, through a dark Earth, with a kickass angel, for a good cause. It's easy to learn, packed with action, has just the right amount of puzzles to keep your brain working without frustrating you with obscure answers to them and is a definite step in the right direction in terms of its originality and playability. Difficult to flaw, Messiah is definitely bound to be an instant classic. ■



HE'S GOT THE HEART OF AN ANGEL... HEY WAIT A SECOND, HIS HEART 'IS' AN ANGEL!



CHERUB-O-METER



PLUS

Great plot, fast-paced, lovely graphics.

MINUS

Absurdly difficult in places.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92	85	88

OVERALL

90

All hail the shiny new Messiah!



ISS PRO EVOLUTION



When it comes to balls, **Adam Roff** is a master...

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Sports
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: Konami
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: MultiTap, Dual Shock

It was a bit of a shock to see ISS Pro Evolution nominated in the best PlayStation game category at ECTS '99. What was more of a shock is that it beat the likes of Final Fantasy and Resident Evil Nemesis to actually win the accolade! A single exhibition match is enough to show you why.

GUT WRENCHING

Playing ISS is like learning soccer all over again. Your initial clumsiness means that the only thing you can do reliably is give away penalties. Once your passing skills improve, and you learn to run onto the ball, you can begin to play tactically. Several hours later you'll have nailed the through ball and scored with your first bicycle kick.

This potentially gut wrenching process is made bearable by some outstanding graphics. The character animation is so satisfying it creates a whole new dimension of gameplay. Players must actually have control of the ball before they can offload, something that can only be included with the most subtle nuances of player movement. The momentary loss of control as a result of a turn or failed trap must be taken into account and bashing at the shoot or pass button won't do a thing till the player is good and ready. The fact that these players even have human failings is pretty innovative. They will stumble if you sprint them too hard and not every pass or shot will be on target. If only game designers could get players to run at individual speeds we'd have a real game on our hands.

The camera angles aren't just for show and can actually change how you relate to the game. The TV angle makes it





Konami are also working on Jikkyou World Soccer for the PlayStation 2. Start saving now!

reviews

look just like it is on the box, with replays you can save for posterity, whereas the wide angle makes you feel like you're actually there (albeit in cheap seats). The close-ups reveal the excruciating detail the developers went to replicating the dreaded mullet cut.

Soccer has never been a high scoring game and it's good to see a simulation strive for authenticity. Most of the game is spent in the midfield with short periods of attacks and counterattacks. To win you need serious quantities of perseverance and genuine originality when it comes to strategy. It is so difficult to dribble past even a single player the necessity to play "total football" is paramount. This may sound frustrating on paper but in the game it just makes scoring more jubilant. It's certainly a challenge but the CPU controlled players lack any real inventiveness. They rely too heavily on single player breaks and lobbed crosses. On the other hand they defend well and are almost unbeatable under high balls. In the long run you get the feeling the CPU isn't going to surprise you too much. That's why it's a stroke of genius to include multi-tap support.

There's no slow-down in a multi-player game of this nature and con-

tests can get pretty absorbing. Surprisingly it's just as much fun playing on the same team as it is to play opposing sides. It effectively replicates the team dynamics of the real game including post goal euphoria and violent frustration.

THE CROWD GOES WILD

The range of international cups should satisfy and there are even some club sides for use in a fictitious European Masters Championship. That means you have access to the cream of the crop across Europe, teams like Man U, Barcelona and Inter Milan.

ISS has finally included some management aspects so now you can trade players and have detailed access to formations and team strategy. The better you play the more points you'll accrue and the sooner you can put Ronaldo in your forward line. The game automatically compiles a limited set of statistics to aid this side of the game. Where it starts to get dodgy is when you take a close look at the player names. They're close enough to be recognisable but have a few letters changed to avoid legal action. Mark Bosnich becomes Mark Bosnish —

you get the picture. There is an option to change the names manually and save them to the memory card for those that cannot tolerate how shonky it is.

There are a few more flaws that just can't be overlooked. The lack of a license is crushing but Konami have made things worse by giving us an ugly front-end. And the music! Why must we continue to endure repetitive MIDI muzac when the PlayStation has the capacity for CD quality sound? And the less said about the commentary the better.

No soccer fan could be disappointed with the purchase of this game. The initial inaccessibility and uninspiring front-end pales when you undergo the life-like learning process. What you end up with is a well-balanced, multi-player masterpiece with an unprecedented mastery of character animation. Get some. ■



AUSTRALIA BEATING BRAZIL? ONLY IN A VIDEOGAME...



CHALK AND CHEESE?

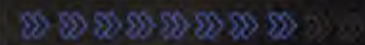
FIFA 2000 may not be top dog anymore but it is still a hell of a package. The game is considerably more accessible due mainly to its intuitive controls. The music rocks, the real teams, competitions and colours rock and the whole thing is so well polished it seems like better value. In the long term though the depth in the gameplay is what keeps you coming back and there's so much to learn in ISS Pro Evolution it just has to come out on top.



THEY NEED GOALIES FOR THEIR GOALIES



HOOLOGAN-O-METER



PLUS

Fantastic player animations.

MINUS

No official license.

VISUALS **89** SOUND **55** GAMEPLAY **94**

OVERALL

91

EA should give Konami the FIFA licence for free out of admiration.



SPACE CHANNEL 5

IMPORT

Cam Shea becomes obsessed with Ulala...

i	AVAILABLE: TBA (Out Now in Japan)
	CATEGORY: Dancing game
	PLAYERS: 1
	PUBLISHER: Sega
	PRICE: TBA
	RATING: G
	SUPPORTS: VMU

Sega have really let their hair down with this one. Space Channel 5 is one of the most original and just plain funky games we've seen in a long while. It's kind of like the logical successor to Bust A Groove and Parappa the Rapper, but with an energy and style all its own.

The story — or what we could make out of the story — revolves around an alien race called the Mororians that have come to Earth to wreak some havoc with their ray guns. Enter Ulala, famous news reporter, sex symbol and the new Hyper mascot. It's your job to guide Ulala and her funky groove thang through the levels, shooting the aliens and saving the humans that are under their control.

TELETUBBIES ON ACID... HANG ON A SEC, THE TELETUBBIES ARE ALREADY ON ACID

The game mechanics are essentially 'Simon Says'. The Mororians will do a short sequence, shouting the commands as they go and you'll have to repeat it in time. Controls are kept basic, with four directional presses — up, down, left and right, with the A and B buttons for shoot (A to kill the aliens, B to save the humans).

Sega have used visual clues to com-

pliment the audio commands very cleverly in Space Channel 5. Whatever level you're on, there's always a visual indication of what you'll be repeating. For instance, if the command is "left, shoot, right, shoot", a Mororian will pop up on the left, then on the right, making it easier to remember the command. The variety of ways that the enemies appear is very cool, ranging from shooting asteroids in space to a big blobby creature with Mororians in its tentacles.

An option that really would have been appreciated command-wise is a selection of different sound samples, as the Mororian's high-pitched voices will drive you crazy after a while. Imagine having the "shoot" sound as a booming

kick drum. "Left, BOOM, right, BOOM... BOOM BOOM". This could have added a further percussive component.

There are only six levels, but each is quite long with several distinct sections and an end of level boss. There's also an alternate path through each level to be unlocked. In addition to the Mororians, you'll have to contend with a rival news reporter, a "mecha-Ulala", humanoid spacemen and many others.

The game is broken up quite nicely, with Ulala never staying in the one spot for long. After whooping one set of aliens, she'll do a funky dance, the humans you saved will be zapped in behind you, and off you go. This game is worth buying just for the funky way that Ulala struts about the



place. There's so much poise in her movements, with every step very firm and stylised. Throw into the equation the fact that any humans you save will dance along behind Ulala, and you have one hell of a funky spectacle. The choreography is slick to begin with, but having a whole host of freaks doing it in unison makes it all the more striking.

ULALA'S SWINGING REPORT SHOW

Depending on how well Ulala's doing, her dancing style and moves will change. If you're performing really badly, the confident strut disappears and she'll be swinging her arms low as she walks or shielding her eyes with mock tears. Do well, however, and she'll be strutting chin high like she owns the joint.

As in Parappa, the music also reflects your competence. If you're bombing out, the music has a melancholy feel with many offnotes. Space Channel 5's soundtrack is great, and completely different to anything we've heard in

dancing games before. The main theme has a very attacking horn section and vibrant funky sound, somewhat reminiscent of James Brown at his peak crossed with a classic Bond soundtrack. The rest of the music is similarly groovalicious, ranging from slap bass funk to lightweight trance. More tunes would have been appreciated, and perhaps more radical changes in style depending on how you're progressing would also have worked well.

Graphically, Space Channel 5 looks nothing short of awesome. Sega have used polygonal characters set on an FMV backdrop, so both are incredibly detailed. The integration of the two is seamless, with frequent cuts in camera perspective and panning that works very well.

The retro sci fi design is striking and incredibly cool. During the game you'll journey to all sorts of bizarre locales, with no one level like the last. Space Channel 5 has a very retro design aesthetic, with old school ray guns, jetpacks, and kitsch sci-fi

design. Sega have successfully combined this with a 60s colour palette. Ulala wears a succession of orange outfits, and the backdrops are mostly in pastels — lime greens, pinks, yellows and purples. As gross as this may sound, it actually works a treat.

What can we say? Ulala is God. Good work Sega... and please bring Space Channel 5 to Australia! ■

! We'd really like to see Take 2 use the Austin Powers license to do a Space Channel 5 style game. He fits the bill perfectly, with mad sex appeal and the funky dance moves already in the bag. Oh behave!



HI-5 MEETS LDST IN SPACE. YIKES.



TIME TO GIVE THOSE JAPANESE PROGRAMMERS A DRINK TEST

SPACE MICHAEL

Take a look at the screenshots, and I guarantee you'll do a double take. Yep, Michael Jackson makes an appearance in Space Channel 5. Not a bad choice really, as he's so surreal these days that he fits right in. Look out for the choreography straight out of Thriller, and the frequent cries of "Hooooo"...



STOP IT CAM! YOU'RE DRIBBLING ALL OVER THE PROOFS!



FUNK-O-METER



PLUS

Tight, funky choreography, catchy music, great design... and ULALA!

MINUS

Like Parappa, this one would have scored in the nineties if it was longer...

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90	88	82

OVERALL

84

Space Channel 5 is the definition of style. It has a laid back funk, incredible retro styling, and "go girl" attitude.



NOX

Diablo 2? Not quite. **Dan Toose** brandishes his mouse...



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action/RPG
PLAYERS: 1-32
PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: MA 15+
REQUIRED: P200MMX, 32MB RAM
DESIRED: P2-266, 64MB RAM

Once Blizzard released Diablo several years ago, it was clearly obvious they had stumbled onto a formula that was destined to be cloned. It is quite remarkable that so few developers have attempted to jump on the bandwagon here. Ironically, we now see an action/RPG offering from Westwood, who were seen by many as being in competi-

tion with Blizzard when it came to Warcraft 2 and Command and Conquer.

Westwood's latest game in question is Nox, an action based RPG that sees you take control of a poor sod from a trailer park that happens to have a vital artifact from another world sitting on top of his TV. Someone from Nox creates a rift to grab the artifact while you're in front of the TV, and it sucks you through into their world. In order to get back to Earth, you need to complete a quest to rid Nox of Hecubah, the last of the line of Necromancers.

WHAT'S AROUND THE CORNER?

In direct comparison to Diablo, Nox is a far more "organic" looking game,

but it really is an issue of personal taste as to whether or not you could say it looks better. What Nox does have going for it is an innovative line of sight feature that blacks out any area your character is unable to see. Thus, if you run around a corner to get away from a monster, you won't see it till it comes around the corner into view. The ability to switch to higher resolutions is also a plus, but playing in 1024x768 really demands a beefy PC if you want a decent frame rate.

Character and monster animation is quite good, but once you have the screen moving, it looks far less impressive, and this happens a lot, since avoiding attacks by running

around is one of the most efficient ways to survive.

Nox features excellent music, and there are plenty of speech samples, although due to a thick Australian accent in there, it sounds like there were only two or three voice actors. Character interaction is basic, just like Diablo. The towns and villagers are full of people, and when monsters are about, other humans fight by your side, which definitely makes the game world feel a little more realistic.

INGENIOUS INTERFACE

If any one feature of Nox should be praised, it's the interface. Westwood have made it very easy to



Ok then, so what's the latest on Diablo 2? Blizzard have begun their Beta Test for the multiplayer side of things, and the game should ship in June.



not only assign different keys to the various functions you can perform, but also label the hotkey on your screen, so you don't have to keep looking it up till you learn it. Controlling your character is simple, with the right mouse button handling movement, and the left button being used for attacks, or object manipulation.

No points for originality in the character selection department, as the three classes available are extremely similar in breakdown to those in Diablo. The warrior can use heavy weapons and armour, the conjuror can wear light armour and use a bow, and also has some magical

abilities, and the wizard can use only basic armour and weapons, but has a strong magical lineup. In defense of Westwood's efforts, each character class starts in a different area of the game, and with the different nature of each class, there's enough there to warrant playing through each way. The conjuror and wizard have more interesting means of getting by with the ability to lay traps and charm or summon creatures, which can be given a variety of orders.

While enjoyable, the single player games in Nox are quite short, and are really only given any length by nature of the fact that you go down

very quickly in combat if you are cornered for a sec, or simply hit a couple of times by a powerful monster. This results in either a lot of reloading, or a very anal approach to the game. Progress through the game is made by figuring how to overcome monsters, as the puzzles are so simple, that you don't even think of them as puzzles at the time.

If you're after a new Diablo, you may be disappointed with Nox, purely because it really doesn't have the same kick in multiplayer that fans of this style of game crave. A good single player game, but not good enough to lay claim to furthering the genre a great deal. ■



GOOD TO GO?

What really made Diablo such a popular game was the multiplayer aspect, and besides the idiots who wanted to use cheats to try and ruin things, co-operative play was excellent fun. It is with great confusion that I ask, "Why no co-operative multiplayer mode?" Nox does have several team play modes, including Capture the Flag, Flag Ball, and King of the Realm. The only problem is that hitting someone while dealing with latency is extremely difficult, making warriors all but useless, and placing a huge emphasis on magical homing attacks. You can play with up to 32 people if you're so inclined, but this isn't the fun co-operative romp that fans of this genre love.



LAG-O-METER



PLUS

Great interface. Three different single player stories.

MINUS

Lackluster multiplayer. Not particularly original.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80	85	76

OVERALL

79

A decent single player RPG, but won't wow folks the way Diablo did.

TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION

Eliot Fish plays around in the dark with Lara...



TWO REASONS WHY THE SERIES HAS LASTED AS LONG AS IT HAS



AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: Action/Adventure
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: Eidos
 PRICE: \$89.95
 RATING: M
 SUPPORTS: VMU

It hasn't taken very long for Eidos to port over their latest Tomb Raider to the Dreamcast. Dreamcast users may be pleased, but as we expected, this is just a straight port of the PC version with some very minor differences — some good and some bad. With the news that Angelina Jolie is probably going to fill Lara's boots on the big screen, and that Tomb Raider V is coming to PlayStation this christmas (please God NO), it's hard to really be all that excited about another version of Tomb Raider on the shelves. Let's venture forth into that tomb one more time, and see how the Dreamcast shapes up.

THE RETURN OF MELON HEAD

With great anticipation, we loaded up Tomb Raider IV on the Dreamcast, knowing that the console is capable of some gorgeous graphical effects. High resolutions, detailed textures, great lighting effects... we knew that Tomb Raider would look great on this machine. Now, whilst we weren't exactly disappointed when we finally got to start playing, we were surprised that the game didn't look a lot better. Basically, the Dreamcast is capable of a lot more than this, and we get the impression that Eidos just rushed this port, satisfied that it had a few minor changes. Unfortunately, it doesn't match up to the PC version in many ways. For starters, the resolution of the game can't come any-

where near what is possible on a PC with a very good video card, and as a result, the textures on the Dreamcast look low and blurry in a lot of areas. There was an obvious problem with the frame rate in many sections of the game also, proving that this port is not as good as it should have been. There is no excuse for having the engine chug as much as it does it spots. We should be controlling Lara in an ultra-smooth consistent environment in at least 30 frames per second, but at times the game just seems to choke. It seems strange that with the hardware at hand, Eidos couldn't manage to iron out problems such as these.

Obviously, there are some very pretty sights to be seen in Tomb Raider IV on Dreamcast, and Lara herself looks lovely. The game does look stunning at times. There are some lovely lighting effects, shadows, and the sounds are nice and crisp, but anyone expecting to see the "power" of the Dreamcast is going to be left feeling that something's missing.

Visuals aside, the other problem lies in the controls. Because the Dreamcast pad has one less analogue stick than the PSX Dual Shock, one basic combination of moves has been dropped, which is the ability to walk and look around at the same time. It's minor, but still annoying, as the ability to look around corners and over drops as you run about made life a lot easier. Now you have to stand still to check out your environment. The other issue, is that the controls feel rather sluggish and a tad inaccurate. Turning Lara around seems to take forever, and negotiating tight corners can become quite frustrating. There is also the problem



of having to line up Lara to the pixel to achieve basic tasks like pulling levers, catching ropes and climbing up steps. This has plagued every port of Tomb Raider, not just the Dreamcast version, but it's disappointing to see that nothing has been improved upon for this version. The Dreamcast's analogue stick should also have been used properly — the ability to go from a safe walk to a full sprint, should be possible with an analogue stick, and yet these three "speeds" have to be initiated with other buttons.

YOU GO GIRL... UGH

If we brush aside all these gripes for a moment, we see that Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation on the Dreamcast is still a very good game. If you've never played a Tomb Raider game before, then you'll most probably have a great time playing this on your Dreamcast. The thing is, the majority of gamers have played a Tomb Raider game at least once, and whilst The Last Revelation is the best Tomb Raider since the first one, we all expected a lot more from the Dreamcast with this ver-

sion of the game. Edios really needed to make this something special, because everyone would agree that the series has become a tedious rehash. The thought of having to play a Tomb Raider V sends chills up the spine. Please, Edios, now is the time to re-invent the series with something strikingly original.

If you own a Dreamcast, then Tomb Raider IV is still a worthy purchase. Just don't expect it to be anything better than what you've already seen a million times before. ■



RAIDERS OF THE LOST GAMEPLAY

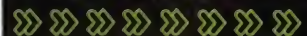


LARA BEFORE SHE LOST THE ABILITY TO SEE HER FEET

For news on the Tomb Raider movie, you may want to keep an eye on the movie studio's site. www.paramount.com



INDIANA-O-METER



PLUS

Best console version yet, but that's not hard.

MINUS

Soul Reaver kicks its arse.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
87	84	80

OVERALL

83

A good game, but this version should have been a whole lot better.

If you're really, REALLY serious about your Supercross, then you've probably already got this bookmarked. <http://www.supercross.com>



THERE'S NOTHING MURKY ABOUT THE GAMEPLAY



SUPERCROSS 2000

If we didn't give him this game, **Arthur Adam** would have been super cross. Heh.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Racing
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: EA Sports
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Mem Pak

Although motorbikes are as safe to ride as waving an American flag in Iraq singing Bruce Springsteen's 'Born in the U.S.A.', they are very cool nonetheless. Evel Knievel and the Fonz for example got around on these two-wheeled death traps, as did Tom Cruise in Top Gun. It's no surprise then that motor-cross racing is an extreme sport that fits snugly into the niche of being 'way cool'. N64 fans will be pleased to hear that a worthy game of the sport is here. We are of course speaking about Supercross 2000.

SKID MARKS IN YOUR UNDERPANTS

Unlike Top Gear Hyper Bike, you can't just expect to burn around a track pulling off an assortment of spiffy stunts. You are going to have to get used to each bike's physics, which effect braking, accelerating, leaning and sliding. Although more difficult to master than an arcade-like game, the satisfaction of perfecting tricks and getting about is enhanced by its realism. Many may whine that the difficulty of turning corners, constantly having to slow down and not being able to arcade-slide is a right pain in the

fudge pipe, amounting to little that resembles fun. It must be remembered though that Supercross 2000 is a simulation and rarely wanders off the track as being anything but. There are no power ups, turbo boosts or homing missiles to fire. This is pure dirt bike racing. Speed, balance and turning all play on each other, so finding the right equilibrium is imperative.

To most of us, dirt bike racing is taken up by helmet-wearing crackpots who fling themselves at insane heights through the air, but for followers of the sport, you'll be pleased to hear that up to 25 professional riders make an appearance in the game. Not only that, but there are 16 authentic tracks to race on. No doubt, the most fun is found in the 'Freestyle' modes, where stunts can be executed for points. Needless to say that the more complicated the move, the higher your score. This mode plays similarly to 1080 Snowboarding in the sense that big air can be achieved for crafty maneuvers, using twirls and button combinations on the controller pad. A nice touch is that another

smaller screen will pop up showing you a close up of the rider as he does his funky air stuff. Some moves you can perform include Cordovers, No-Handers, Layouts, Fender-Munches, Fender Grab Supermans and more. Extra points are tacked onto your score for higher jumps and how fluid it was looked. Excellent (to be read Montgomery Burn's style).

IT REALLY IS SUPER

Graphically, Supercross 2000 is splendidly crafted, with elaborate details furnishing both the riders and motor bikes combined with smooth animations, although, the arenas are to some extent lacking. Most display brown tracks and a mish-mash of crowds. With the aid of the 4mb expansion pack, high-resolution graphics can be selected, losing a minimum amount of frames but well worth the transcendence in visuals.

Summing up Supercross is difficult. On one hand the game is a true simulation of sorts, which will ultimately slap gamers in the face who want a quick, easy fix of gaming. Yet

others will appreciate the skill and gratification of the complex physics and stunts. If you are of the former opinion, then grab a copy of Top Gear Hyper Bike or Nintendo's own Excitebike over this. For anyone else, strap on those helmets and catch some big air. ■



MUD-O-METER		
Cool music by the Living End. Realistic physics engine.		
PLUS		
Realistic physics engine. Ordinary arenas.		
MINUS		
Realistic physics engine. Ordinary arenas.		
VISUALS 86	SOUND 88	GAMEPLAY 83
OVERALL 82		
If you take your Supercross seriously, grab this now!		



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PSX

reviews

SPEC OPS: stealth patrol

DMC employs excellent stealth when it comes to cleaning up the games room...



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Military Sim
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Talon Soft
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: M
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock



☒ Cue pompous, self important music... "Recognising that I volunteered as a ranger fully knowing the hazards of my chosen profession, I will always endeavour to uphold the prestige, honour and high esprit-de-corp of my ranger regiment.

Acknowledging that a ranger is a more elite soldier who arrives at the cutting edge of battle by land, sea or air, I accept the fact that as a ranger my country expects me to move further, faster, and fight faster than any other soldier. Never shall I fail my comrades. I will always keep myself mentally alert, physically strong, and morally straight. I will shoulder more than my share of the task, whatever it may be.

Gallantly will I show the world that I'm a specially selected, well trained soldier. Energetically will I meet the enemies of my country. I will defeat them on the field of battle, because I am better trained and will fight with all my might. Surrender is not a Ranger word. I will never leave a comrade to fall into the hands of the enemy, and under no circumstance will I ever embarrass my country."

Speaking of embarrassing, 'Spec Ops: Stealth Patrol' opens with this pile of pompous drivel, which provoked resounding cries of 'What a load of bollocks!!' around the Hyper office.

ROGER ROGER

This game looks and feels like a Tom Clancy film that's been subjected to testosterone implants and a full frontal lobotomy. It is full military types talking gruffly, stern music, and plenty of tech talk. Packed to the gunnels with detail, this is a military fetishists wet dream. However all this is all designed

to disguise the fact that there is actually very little of substance going on.

You take command of a group of Rangers, all specialists in various arts of killing (close combat, snipers, grenadiers etc). You select two at a time, load them up to the hind teeth with weaponry, and show those nasty terrorist types a thing or two. You begin in a forest in Bosnia, and progress through a range of environments including jungle, desert, and snow. The game is played in a 3rd person perspective, and you can switch between control over your two rangers.

Unfortunately this simple (and astoundingly cliched) premise for a game is flawed dramatically in its execution. The graphics are rendered in an amazing 16 shades of dull. Worse is the pompous music, that just makes you want to chew the end off a cigar and start yelling at the nearest person to shine their boots.

Perhaps worst of all is the lamely limited control. Your soldier is restricted to running about the place, crouching and rolling, and executing a charming little mosey to the side, which is so slow it verges on the completely useless. The slow and limited control is particularly annoying, considering you often can't spot your enemies until AFTER they've started gunning you down! The graphics are often so drab and muddy you can't see them until you spot their tracer as it tracks towards you (which then proceeds to tear the flesh from your limbs). Neither do they appear on your radar until after they open fire. All of which means you don't last very long. Even if you do, the firefights pack little drama or adrenaline. Despite the high gloss military packaging, this is a dull and passionless affair. ■



CREWCUT-O-METER



PLUS

You get to blow stuff up...

MINUS

... in a very unconvincing fashion.

VISUALS 72 SOUND 62 GAMEPLAY 60

OVERALL

65

A game that takes itself far too seriously, with little to show for it.

71 HYPHER



BATTLEZONE 2

The Hyper office is a battlezone, **Eliot Fish** can attest to that...



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action/Strategy
PLAYERS: 1-8
PUBLISHER: Activision
PRICE: \$49.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: P266, 64MB RAM, 3D Card
DESIRED: PIII 500+, 128MB RAM, GeForce DDR

» The long awaited sequel to what was one of the best PC games in recent years, Battlezone, is finally upon us. Battlezone II: Combat Commander returns us to the controls of those funky hover tanks, in the super charged action/strategy spin-off of the old Atari Battlezone concept which you can read about in Reverse Engineering this month. After marvelling at the Eye Candy this game delivered to us a few months ago, we now get to see it in action. Does the gameplay match up to the gob-smacking visuals?

TANKS VERY MUCH

If you've got a nice PC set-up, then you're in for a real treat with Battlezone II. Running on a PIII with a good video card like the GeForce DDR, this game looks absolutely stunning. From the moment the drop ship plonks you on the surface of the planet, you'll be hooked by the gorgeous atmosphere that Battlezone II manages to create. The cool hum of your craft, the haunting planets hanging off in space, the dark craters and looming mountainscapes of the ter-

rain in front of you, and the lovely-looking designs of the ships with their searchlights beaming off into the murky darkness. Your commander crackles through on the comlink, and then you're off, skating across the surface of the planet, catching the lip of a crater and hovering off over the terrain like you're falling in slow motion. The immediate feeling you get, is that you are really there. Battlezone II just sucks you right in from the get go. Make sure you pull the curtains, turn the lights off, and crank up the sound, because the eerie suspense you get from scouting the terrain in your first mission, is something that shouldn't be missed in all its cinematic glory. To be honest, I have no idea how well the game runs on a lower end machine, but like I said, if you know you have the hardware, then this is an experience you mustn't miss out on.

Another glorious thing about Battlezone II, is that fact that the controls are as simple as Larry. You can play the game the same way you play a First Person Shooter, with the mouse for turning/looking and the keyboard to move forward, backward and to strafe. You then have access to a few simple keys which will give you complete control over a whole variety of strategic functions and communications. At the top of the screen, any friendly units on patrol will be assigned an F key, which you can tap



EVER PLAYED TRIDES? BATTLEZONE 2 HAS A FEW SIMILARITIES...



FLICK HAVE TO RESORT TO TANKS IN THE YEAR 2035



! Pandemic Studios are working hard to keep Battlezone 2 in tip-top shape, so run along and get your patches like good children. www.pandemic-studios.com/



to immediately pop up with a selection of commands. Tell them to escort you, attack a target, pick you up (if you're on foot) or travel to a Nav point — it's all so easy that you can do it whilst you're still shooting at something with your mouse hand. This is essential, because Battlezone II will test your reflexes and intuition. As you progress through the game, you'll learn how to command units to build structures (which can then generate more units or powerups) or simply how to command a bunch of units in attack through assigning commands. Soon you'll realise that you're essentially playing a strategy game (ala Starcraft) and yet still taking part in the frontline action, with a lot less stress than you thought it would require. Mining for resources, building units and shooting the crap out of enemies is easy — Battlezone II is that user-friendly!

I CAN'T TANK YOU ENOUGH

During your campaign to hunt down an alien race and disclose an internal conspiracy, you'll get to pilot a variety of awesome vehicles and fire off a whole array of great weapons. From the classic Battlezone hover tank, to Scout hover bikes and a selection of other sexy craft, the controls feel fantastic. Accessing the interesting variety of weapons (from miniguns to mortar shells, ion cannons and guided rockets) is also a breeze, even in the heat of combat, and if you get destroyed, your pilot auto-ejects, allowing you to get about on foot with a laser gun and sniper rifle. You'll find you have to jump out of your craft in quite a few missions, for either accessing a communications bunker (from where you can enjoy some top-down strategic planning of your game) or even to sneak through the enemy camp unnoticed. One major criticism would have

to be that the controls when on foot are pretty horrid — very jumpy, stiff and at times a camera glitch makes the visuals flip upside down. However, most of the game is spent inside a cockpit, so it's not too bad. The enemy alien race, the Scions, look fantastic and you'll be grinning like a mad man at how fabulous the designs are in this game. Of course, if you're playing a multiplayer game, then you won't have time to appreciate the beautiful graphics, because it's one of the most competitive and exciting experiences out there. If anything, it would have been nicer to have more precise commands to give to your units, but as it stands, Battlezone II is still incredibly playable. In terms of the single-player experience, it rocks very hard indeed. If you loved the first game, then you may be a little let-down by the weaker storyline and some minor changes, but all up, this is a PC game you've got to own. ■



MOONPATROL-O-METER



PLUS

Gorgeous, sexy graphics and lush sounds.

MINUS

No quick save key, and a few small bugs still exist.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
94	90	92

OVERALL

92

Engrossing stuff. Battlezone II is true escapism.



THIS IS SOCCER

Welcome to a new Hyper recruit, **Anthony Holden**. Now let's kick balls.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Soccer Sim
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: Sony
PRICE: \$69.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

The PlayStation has had its fair share of quality soccer games, but for many the benchmark will always be International Soccer on the C64. Bundled in cartridge format with the Commodore back in the mid-80's (along with the ambitious 'Money Manager' software suite and the seminal edu-tainment title Tooth Invaders), International Soccer

established a host of soccer-sim conventions that retain their currency to this day. Many of these have been carried through to Sony's This Is Soccer title, such as the ability of CPU teams to run faster than you, the delightful hit-and-miss nature of passing to a player off the screen, and the endless fun of watching your idiotic CPU team-mates swan around while you do all the hard work. The only unfortunate oversight is not including the trusty 'double-back' or 'switcheroo' manoeuvre, used to outwit the CPU goalie and send him into a premature, and inevitably costly, face-down defensive stance. Similarities aside, This Is Soccer is not the genre-defining moment that International Soccer once was, but it definitely has its moments.

THIS GAME HAS BALLS

Visually, This is Soccer is hard to fault, with fluid and convincing motion capture and solid-looking player models. Sonically it also maintains an excellent standard, featuring astute and reasonably un-repetitive commentary by British commentator Clive Tyldesley. Outside of central gameplay things are not so polished, and the live-action intro sequence must rank as one of the shoddiest ever. The massive range of options to play around with is suitably impressive, with over 230 authentic league and national teams, over 5000 international players, a comprehensive team editor and a huge range of tournament competitions. Custom teams and players can be created from scratch, or existing players used to build international dream-teams. The vast amounts of information suggest a very simulation-type approach to the game, but playing around with all the stats, formations and fixtures actually proves to be of little consequence to gameplay. This is good news for non-soccer-fans, since the initially daunting array of menus can be largely ignored if desired. Turn injuries and fouls off, set the umpire to 'blind', and there

you have it: full arcade mode.

Gameplay itself is fast and intuitive, though not without some significant flaws. The single player experience is essentially lacking due to poor AI routines and badly calibrated skill levels. Scoring anything but clumsy and chance goals with a team of CPU drones that do little but get in the way can be extremely difficult even on the lowest skill level. Constructing offensive plays requires a level of co-operation that is beyond the scope of the AI, even with the benefit of combo plays like the 'give-and-go'. More frustrating still is watching the other team put up a water-tight defence against your relentless one-man assault, and wondering why your team can't follow suit. Fortunately, these problems largely dissolve when another sentient player joins the fray. Co-op or versus, the game comes into its own in multiplayer, and any longevity the game has will likely arise from this. For all the simulation pretensions of its title, This is Soccer plays best as a fun arcade-style party game. ■

The sadly forgotten Tooth Invaders was one of the first home computer games Hyper Ed, Eliot, ever played. Ahhh, the memories that one conjures up!



GOODDDAAAAL-O-METER



PLUS

Nice smooth visuals and excellent motion capture.

MINUS

Dodgy AI makes for a frustrating single player game.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
73	80	60

OVERALL

69

Not the best soccer game on the platform, but one that could easily become a multiplayer favourite.



CHU CHU ROCKET

reviews



IMPORT

Kevin Cheung. Is he a mouse or is he a man?

AVAILABLE: On Import
 CATEGORY: Puzzle
 PLAYERS: 1-4
 PUBLISHER: Sega
 PRICE: TBA
 RATING: G
 SUPPORTS: VMU, Vibration Pack

» You can almost imagine what it's like in the Japanese offices of Sega Enterprises. Old Master System and Saturn memorabilia, the revered AM departments, Yu Suzuki keeping Virtua Fighter 4 closely under wraps... it's all very befitting of one of the most elite game developers in the world. What they forgot to mention was that hidden somewhere in the back corner of their building is a department that's filled with mad programmers, substance abusers, and other wild-haired eccentrics who concoct... well... 'different' games. Like Space Channel 5 (Ulala is a babe!). And Chu Chu Rocket.

CHEW ON MY ROCKET
 Sega are better known for their strong arcade titles, but Chu Chu Rocket takes a break from the old "quick thrill on one credit" game design in favour of something with a little more depth. Chu Chu Rocket is a puzzle game. A very fun puzzle game. What basically happens is you have a maze with a bunch of mice inside who need to be rescued from a giant saw-toothed cat. These mice are like lemmings, so they keep running in a straight line and turn right by default every time they hit a wall. If you let them keep going, they'll eventually start running loops, get eaten by the cat, or fall down the holes on the map. Therefore, it's your job to navigate them through the maze by placing pointer arrows on the ground, and to guide them to a rocket ship that will take them to safety. The more mice you rescue, the more points you score. With that system in mind, the true

beauty of Chu Chu Rocket comes through in its multiplayer mode. It is unlike any mayhem you've ever seen. Allowing up to four players with any combination of human and CPU players, Chu Chu Rocket becomes a frantic contest of stealing mice from each other. This calls for some conniving tactics as you direct the cats into an opponent's rocket (which knocks off around 100 mice from your opponent's tally), or place an arrow right in front of your opponent's rocket pointing in an opposite direction from his or her ship. And considering

you can only place a maximum of four or five arrows on screen at any one time, it calls for a balance between managing your own affairs whilst being nasty to others. There are also power-up mice that can change the course of the game. Typical power-ups include speed-ups, slow-downs, cats-only on screen, mice x10, swapping rocket positions, and so on. In the grand scheme of things, Chu Chu Rocket is one of the deepest multiplayer puzzle games on the market, and it will go down as one of the most innovative 'next gen' puzzle games

ever made. Much like the PlayStation's Devil Dice, which enjoys a similar distinction, this game provides multiplayer competitiveness in real time. That is as opposed to, say, multiplayer Tetris, which is virtually turn-based. Chu Chu Rocket is the perfect single-player game, as well as the perfect party game. It doesn't look anything like a showpiece title, but it's guaranteed to out-last them all. In two years' time, you won't be playing Soul Calibur or Sonic anymore — but you'll still be whipping out Chu Chu Rocket. ■



Just in case you don't read Net Trawlin' — shame on you! Go there now (page 16) for the URL to Sega's online shockwave version of Chu Chu Rocket!



MEOW-O-METER
 [Progress bar with 10 segments, 7 filled]

PLUS
 Versatile game engine for both single player puzzles and multiplayer games.

MINUS
 It's not out here yet!

VISUALS 70 **SOUND** 75 **GAMEPLAY** 90

OVERALL
87

Definitely not a showpiece title, but everything about it is sheer genius. Worth every penny.

75 » HYPER



DUKES OF HAZZARD

If they're going to dig up the Dukes of Hazzard, why not a game based on Miami Vice for chrissakes.



AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: Action/Racing
 PLAYERS: 1-2
 PUBLISHER: Southpeak Interactive
 PRICE: \$79.95
 RATING: TBA
 SUPPORTS: Deal Shock

Arthur Adam reminisces about the good ol' days when he was a young redneck...

"Ma momma said that I was special, but I know she was lyin', 'cause I'm just stupid." You may be wondering why I'm quoting Forrest Gump. Simply put, whenever speaking of country folk from America's deep south, images of Forrest Gump combined with various farm animal related antics (ahem...) arise. There's no doubt that the people inhabiting the

small town of Hazzard from the famous 1979 television show, The Dukes of Hazzard, where somewhat behind the eight ball. Regardless, a mixture of fast cars pouncing across rivers, police chases, bad guys, and the young Daisy Duke donning enormous snow blowers made for a good show. Now, this aging show is making an appearance on our aging PlayStations.

Lee has been faithfully re-constructed with her bright orange paint job and decals. At times, you'll even see Luke hanging out from the passenger side window, firing arrows at other vehicle's tires (which you control). The backgrounds are moderately sparse with rolling paddocks and a few cardboard cutout trees scattered here and there. You'll also encounter the odd vehicle on the road, thrown in to make driving more difficult.

out rivers to jump? There's plenty of that here, with country roads always crossing rivers. It seems as though down south, building bridges requires too many brain cells, so the townsfolk are happy just building ramps from clay.

THUNDERBIRDS ARE GO!

All of the action takes place from behind the wheel of that famous orange machine with welded doors and 'oi' decals, the General Lee. The Dukes of Hazzard isn't strictly a video game that falls into a racing genre, although you do race against the clock at times. Most of the action sees you either having to ram a baddie off the road, escape the police or get from point 'A' to 'B' within a certain time limit. These stages are strung together with computer generated FMV, which push the story line along and look something like the Thunder Birds. Bo's head for example looks like it's been stretched in some bizarre, ancient Chinese torture device. However, the actual in-game graphics are more than fitting. The General

The frame rates remain constant and do offer a sensation of speed. But this in itself is nothing extraordinary seeing that you'll generally have only two vehicles on screen at once. Driving however isn't so smooth. The physics engine in The Dukes of Hazzard is ruthless, making the General Lee spin about even for the smallest of bumps. This becomes even more evident when the generically simple-minded police officer, Roscoe P. Coltrane, rams you from every angle. The General Lee isn't indestructible either, and if rammed enough will be damaged and therefore slower. Yet, to assist you in your pursuits, there are a few power ups to find, like arrows, nitro and oil slicks. And where would the Duke's be with-

THE DUKES OF MEDIOCRITY

Breaking up the monotony a little, you will be able to hop into the seats of other vehicles from the television show. There's Boss Hogg's yank tank, Daisy's Jeep, Uncle Jesse's hotrod and Cooter's tow truck. None seem to handle differently, but are there to tie in with the plot.

The Dukes of Hazzard is an okay-ish game, with a cool story line and all your favourite characters (if you can remember them) but the game as a package is bordering very much on the average side of things, especially seeing that it is quite easy to finish. You won't be going back for more after completion, but the multi-player option does extend longevity. You can race or take part in a demolition derby with a friend. If you are looking for a racer, this isn't one, but if you want a ride down memory lane, this game will accommodate. ■

DAISY-D-METER

PLUS
 All your favorite cow-slappin' characters are here with their vehicles.

MINUS
 Slippery driving mechanics with average action.

VISUALS 68 SOUND 72 GAMEPLAY 63

OVERALL

65

Fun for a quick laugh, but pretty light on interesting gameplay.



! Not one joke about big sweaty men in underpants beating each other around the ring. Now that's self-control, Arthur.



ECW: **HARDCORE REVOLUTION**

Arthur Adam in tights? We don't even want to think about it...



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Fighting/Wrestling
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: Acclaim
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: M
SUPPORTS: Rumble Pack/Memory Pack

Back in the old days, professional wrestling was a failing sport (I use the word 'sport' very loosely). It wasn't long before Vince McMahon, the owner and brains behind the World Wrestling Federation (WWF), fashioned wrestling into a cash-cow, which ranked second on American television ratings last year. The concept was simple. Add soap opera style plots, firecrackers, blaring music and women flaunting huge snow blowers - and presto, you have an entertainment sport that has managed to snuff out real sports in the popularity stakes. It's unfortunate then, that Acclaim has lost the license for WWF after holding it long enough to produce WWF Warzone and Attitude. This is where ECW: Hardcore Revolution rears its butt-ugly head.

IS IT A BIRD? IS IT A PLANE? NO, IT'S RUBBISH...

It's somewhat acceptable that Superman was able to hide his identity from everybody by simply slapping on a pair of eyeglasses, and thus transforming into Clark Kent. It's possible that people in the 50's were (in the nicest possible way) imbeciles, and the eyeglasses trick was seen as rather clever. Today, Acclaim is trying to pull off the same ruse. Basically, ECW is WWF wearing a pair of badly designed spectacles. This is completely and

utterly the same game engine, but this time around with unfamiliar wrestlers.

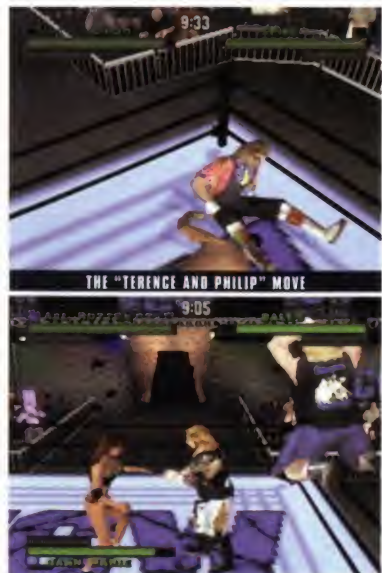
ECW in the USA is a wrestling federation that lacks any interest compared to the likes of WWF and WCW. It boasts exaggerated violence using street weapons and relies less on story lines and all that type of hoo-ha. ECW: Hardcore Revolution's only selling point then is in the violence department. Unfortunately, even this facet of the game has been ill contrived. The 'extra' blood is essentially a little more red colouring splashed onto the character models. The barbed wire match is also new, pitting wrestlers into a fighting ring surrounded by... yes, that's right, barbed wire. In all fairness, this option is quite funky, but the novelty will wear off quickly. Any other weapons found such as baseball bats, chairs, chains and ringside bells are straight from WWF Attitude. Another backward step is the fact that the entrances of the wrestlers into the ring aren't as fancy, giving you the minimum amount of fireworks and hubbub as the aforementioned title.

IF THEY CAN CLONE SHEEP THEN...

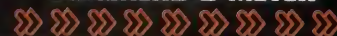
The wrestlers all share the same moves, button combinations and energy bar mechanics as before. Sharing the same characteristics as before isn't a total failure, as WWF Attitude was a good wrestling title. The graphics are sharp, clean and detailed and the frame-rate unruffled. The animations are still wooden, leaving you with the feeling that all the wrestlers share a severe case of hemorrhoids as they scuttle about the ring. In addition to this, ECW has been tweaked up in

speed and difficulty, making the whole experience more FRUSTRATING than anything amounting to fun and thus ruining what should have been WWF Attitude-like gameplay.

It took Acclaim five months from announcing ECW: Hardcore Revolution to the game actually being completed, suggesting that little, if any, serious thought went into the game. If you already own WWF Warzone or Attitude, then simply enter the create-a-wrestler mode and repeatedly select 'random'. This way, you'll have a whole bunch of unknown wrestlers leaving you with fundamentally a free copy of ECW: Hardcore Revolution. Acclaim will soon release another ECW title in months to come and if it hasn't changed to the last three, then expect a mark in the low 20's. 'Nuff said. ■



BONEHEAD-O-METER



PLUS

If you have WWF Attitude then you don't need to buy this game.

MINUS

If you don't have WWF Attitude then you can buy it instead of this game.

VISUALS 80 **SOUND** 70 **GAMEPLAY** 56

OVERALL

55

ECW manages to trip over its own laces.



STRANGELY, THERE'S ACTUALLY A GOATEE UNDER THAT HELMET THE SAME SHAP

TECH ROMANCER

IMPORT

Cam Shea likes games with funny names, so he was right at home here...



AVAILABLE:	On Import
CATEGORY:	3D Fighting
PLAYERS:	1-2
PUBLISHER:	Capcom
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	Arcade stick, VMU

Alongside Namco and Sega, Capcom are renowned for producing the best fighting games on the planet. Best known for, what else — the Street Fighter series, Capcom also have considerable talent for 3D renditions of one-on-one tonkffests.

Falling somewhere between Power Stone and their little known (Japan only) PlayStation 2D fighter Cyberbots, Tech

Romancer is a mech 3D fighting game. At first glance, it comes across as "Virtua On side on", but the two games actually have little in common, other than phenomenal mech design.

HARNESSING THE POWER OF THE SHIZUMA DRIVE...

There are nine initially selectable fighters, each with its own very distinct look and moves. Anime fans will notice influences and parodies from a whole range of different manga properties, from Neon Genesis Evangelion and Gundam to Giant Robo. Even if you don't pick these up, the variety of mechs and their sassy pilots is still impressive. Some of the mechs also offer a choice of pilot, giving you two

different sets of special moves to select from.

The controls are kept simple, with block, jump, and two attack buttons. The depth is certainly there though, with various combination moves and a wealth of specials. Button mashing is fun at first, but try to pull a stunt like that on an experienced player and watch them unleash their final attack, taking all your remaining life quicker than a vampire in a coma ward.

Bouts take place in semi destructible 3D environments. Although flat and relatively barren, each level has different obstacles like buildings and other structures to both smash up and use as cover. Better yet, explosions leave scorched craters behind, further adding to the

swathe of destruction the fight creates. The craters quickly disappear, which is a shame, but this only further compels the player to unleash another barrage, or to slam the opponent along the ground again, ripping up a trail of scarred landscape as metal plows through earth.

Although the mechanics are 3D in many respects, Tech Romancer is a step below Power Stone on the evolutionary ladder. Interaction in the environment is mostly for effect, and movement in three dimensions is really only important for avoiding attacks or picking up items. There's no building throwing fun to be had, or Virtua On style strafe-a-thons. That's cool though, because Tech Romancer has a solid fighting engine, and enough eye candy to feed the aver-



A BIZARRE MECH MATING RITUAL CAUGHT ON FILM



Mobile Suit Gundam rocks. We didn't realise it, but there's actually a very cool unofficial site at www.gundam.com

age gamer's sweet tooth.

As you can see from the screenshots, Tech Romancer is a gorgeous looking title, and just what we expect of the Dreamcast. Originally released in the arcades in Japan, and developed on the PlayStation-friendly System 12 board, Capcom have done an excellent job beefing the graphics up. The bitmap backgrounds are forgettable, yes, but the action is fast, the mechs detailed, and the special moves spectacular.

MAX THE ENVELOPE WITH POWER SAUCE...

Tech Romancer isn't exactly a game-play innovator, but it comes with a few interesting touches to help make it feel unique. Each fighter has a normal health bar, but there are two different types of damage. Red damage is permanent, whereas yellow damage will slowly recover over time if you can avoid taking hits. The action is pretty much non-stop, as any damage is carried over from one round to the next.

As seen in Street Fighter Alpha 3, each fighter also has an armour bar which gets depleted with every blocked attack. Obviously, the lower the armour rating, the more damage you'll take. A great way to stop block intensive turtles in their tracks.

In addition to the huge array of special moves, each character also has a final attack, which becomes active after a certain amount of damage has been dealt. Connecting results in an instant kill, but the attack takes time to wind up, and is fully blockable, so there's a reasonable balance.

An interesting twist on traditional fighting game mechanics seen in Tech Romancer are the items that are uncovered by destroying the scenery during the game. These award players with everything from offensive boosts to extra health to a variety of weapons and supers. Each fighter can hold onto five items at once, and the left trigger button is used to cycle through them. Like Power Stone, however, items can be beaten from

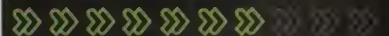
the opponent, so it's not wise to hoard items for too long.

As with all Capcom fighters, Tech Romancer is a great two-player game, but it also has a decent single player mode to back it up. Playing through the single player game rewards you with all sorts of nifty bonuses — extra characters, VMU mini games, funky artwork galleries, CG movies and extra items. Unfortunately, Tech Romancer has no training mode, so you'll have to learn the techniques through trial and error (or FAQs!). In addition to the standard arcade mode, there's also a story mode with a melodramatic narrative, character specific sequences, and choose your own adventure elements.

The Dreamcast already has a huge range of great fighting games, with more on the way (Dead Or Alive 2... yum!), so unless you're an anime aficionado, or a fighting game fanatic, there are probably better titles already out there. Even so, Tech Romancer is an addictive game that you're unlikely to regret purchasing. ■



MECHZILLA-O-METER



PLUS

Patented Capcom quality gameplay, cool design, and more than just an arcade port.

MINUS

So many DC fighters to choose from already.

VISUALS **82** SOUND **80** GAMEPLAY **84**

OVERALL
82

Another day, another great fighting game from Capcom. Anime fans should check this out.

INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD 2

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Sports
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: Konami
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock, Memory card

From the lofty heights of Mount Olympus, Zeus and the other Greek gods watched in amusement as humans pitted their skill, agility and strength against one another, temporarily ceasing wars and bringing the different states of Greece together. Today, athletics, or the Olympic Games to be precise, carries on the legacy, although drug cheating, money exchanging hands, Coca-Cola and terrorist attacks are a few new ingredients. But I digress. International Track and Field 2 couldn't have come out at a better time, especially with the Sydney Olympics beating at our doors.

UNLIKE THE IOC, KONAMI HAVEN'T BOLLOCKSED IT UP...

You begin by choosing from an Arcade mode or a Challenge mode, both allowing up to four-player



THIS GUY'S A SWINGER

interaction. After selecting a country to represent, you enter your name, inject some 'roids and head off to the games. Overall, there are a dozen events to enter, which are; the 100 meter sprint, swimming, javelin, diving, two bicycle events, canoeing, horse vault, weight lifting, shot put, high jump and long jump. Though, we were a little miffed not see an Irish cheese rolling contest anywhere. Each event plays slightly differently, so that mastering them won't happen quickly. For example, throwing a javelin requires a rhythmic two button press and a throw command, whilst the horse vault will have you pressing an insane amount of button combinations, paralleling in difficulty only to brain surgery. Some, however, like the one kilometre bicycle race is a little over the top. You'll find your fingers seizing up as you slog it out with the control pad for over a minute, just to keep your characters legs peddling.

The competition is fair enough, with a mixture of skilled athletes and others leaning more towards the inept side of things. At first, you'll have to beat the qualifying scores in order to move on. From here, the highest score (obviously) wins. When you think you're spiffy enough, you can always

go for the world records as scores are saved on the memory card.

AS ADDICTIVE AS 'ROIDZ?

On the down side, after playing through a few events on your own, you'll find that the appeal of the game will slip away quicker than a bar of soap in some Middle East gaol. Where International Track and Field 2 does excel is playing it with friends. You'll be taking turns for hours trying to beat each other's last score, which is addictive indeed. It will come down to shaving off split seconds or adding centimetres to a jump. Whilst playing against Cam, I found it amusing that I could ruin his concentration and chance of a world record just by sticking a wet finger in his ear. His distraction technique against me was to use a rolled up copy of Hyper as a microphone and belt out a few choruses of 'Islands in the Stream' by Dolly Parton.

In conclusion, it's fair to say that IT&F2 plays splendidly for a game of its type. This combined with the fact that the arenas and athletes are well created with plenty of detail and flaunting fluid, realistic animation make for a worthy game. IT&F2's strongest point though, is playing with friends. There are plenty of other mono-related activities (ahem) more enticing than this. ■



15.6



COME ON, THEY'RE LIGHTSAVERS RIGHT?



CANOE



OLYMPIC-TIE-IN-O-METER



PLUS

Looks good and excels in multiplayer.

MINUS

Single player lacks lasting appeal.

VISUALS 82 **SOUND** 67 **GAMEPLAY** 80

OVERALL

77

Fact: Gamers are lazy. This is the closest to athletics you'll get.



IMPERIUM GALACTICA 2

We think he's from another planet, so **Frank Dry** got the captain's chair...

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Strategy/Sim
PLAYERS: 1-8
PUBLISHER: GT Interactive
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G
REQUIRED: P233, 32MB RAM, 3D Card
DESIRED: P11 300+, 64MB RAM

Want to rule the universe? Sure, there are a lot of asteroid fields with big useless rocks, a few empty nebulas and the odd black hole, but just think... you do get to stick a little flag on all sorts of cool planets. Annoying locals? Just send in your destroyers and shoot the shit out of everything that moves. Works every time.

Imperium Galactica 2 gives you the opportunity once again to cruise through space boldly go where no man, woman or dog has gone before... and to basically be the biggest, most corrupt and evil dickhead in the universe if you feel like it. Cool!

EAT LASER BEAM FREAK

Much like Master of Orion 2, Imperium Galactica 2 puts you in front of a star map and essentially just lets you get straight to work, except of course here we're playing in real time. The game is so comprehensive, that the tutorial will take you hours to begin with, and once you're thrown into the actual game, you'll still be feeling completely daunted by the task ahead. You'll be doing everything from pushing fleets around the starmap, to building your colonies Sim City style, researching new technologies, building and upgrading ships, balancing diplomacy with covert spy operations, waging real-time ground battles with tank units... phew, the amount of depth to the game is quite stunning. If you devour these sorts of strategy titles with relish, then there will be no stopping you, however for the average gamer, Imperium Galactica 2 could



WHAT A FUN HAPPY PLACE TO LIVE IN

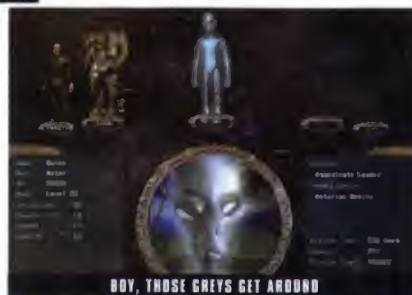
well be too much to handle.

Once you've built a little colony, you have to make sure it is maintained well enough so that your colonists don't revolt. This means keeping the taxes high enough to generate you money whilst maintaining a thriving atmosphere (and building a place for your colonists to go get pissed after work). Once your colony is pumping, you'll start to generate a space fleet and tanks, both of which will be used a little futher down the track in actual real-time battles. You'll have to manually control the outcome of each battle by selecting formations and deploying a

certain amount of tactics, though generally the biggest fleet or ground force wins. Thankfully, the game can be paused at any time, so figuring out strategies and organizing commands can be done with ease. With the new 3D engine, you can also zoom right in on the action — Homeworld style.

Imperium Galactica 2 has an excellent and intuitive menu system, and jumping from your spy academy to find out the latest gossip to checking on the research of that planet-sodomising weapon is only a few mouse clicks away. The presentation is excellent, and whilst it's confusing at first, you'll soon be hopping in-between menus like a pro.

Visually, the game is very pretty, and everything is in full 3D with a zoomable and rotatable camera, which makes keeping track of your moving units very easy.



BOY, THOSE GREYS GET AROUND



With three races to play as, and a random-mission driven plot, IG2 will have any strategy nut very happy indeed. Just be patient with it and you'll be having some very memorable gaming moments. ■



STARTREK-O-METER



PLUS

Very configurable, and you can automate lots of aspects.

MINUS

A tad overwhelming which could test your patience.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90	89	88

OVERALL

89

Scrumptious real-time strategy feast that'll leave you bloated.



HOW CAN WE SLEEP WHEN OUR BEDS ARE BURNING... ETC.



DIE HARD TRILOGY 2

Screaming something unprintable about 'Yipikayay', **DMC** takes on international terrorism.

i	AVAILABLE: Now
	CATEGORY: Action
	PLAYERS: 1
	PUBLISHER: Fox Interactive
	PRICE: \$79.95
	RATING: M
	SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

⌘ The original Die Hard Trilogy hit the PlayStation soon after the system's release, all those aeon's ago. Featuring three game modes, and most importantly a high body count that encouraged the sadist in all of us, it was an immensely and endlessly playable game. One could but hope that in the intervening five years, the franchise had matured like a fine wine.

AND SO THIS IS CHRISTMAS...

The original Die Hard Trilogy featured three game modes, each related to one of the films. You ran around a building and massacred terrorists in third person perspective, slaughtered bad guys in first person at the airport, and drove around New York like an amphetamine freak wired to the eyeballs in order to defuse bombs before they took out half of Manhattan. None of them were brilliant in their own right, but together they made a highly entertaining game.

This time around, all ties to the movies have been abandoned, apart from the main character, John McClane (and the gratuitous violence). The developers, n-Space, have created an entirely new excuse for blowing the

crap out of things (sorry, I mean a new story). John McClane, down and out (and wearing a stained singlet as always) is asked to visit a penitentiary near Vegas, by a buddy who has been made warden. All Hell breaks loose as the prisoners riot and an international terrorist breaks free. Once again, John is the only man who can save the day.

While messing with the story, n-Space haven't changed much else. The basic three-in-one game structure is the same, it's just that this time it all happens in the one place. The biggest alteration is the introduction of a 'movie mode', which cuts back and forth between the three separate modes to create a new narrative. The introduction of the movie mode creates a more unified feel to the game, shifting smoothly between game styles. Thankfully, the game still allows you to select your favourite mode and go the tonk.

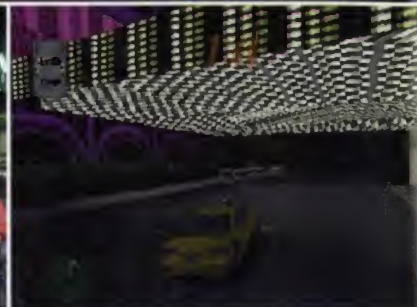
MORE OF THE SAME?

Beginning in the third person perspective, you start searching through the prison complex gunning down prisoners and rogue guards. This section has an exploration/puzzle solving orientation (of course there is still plenty of slaughter to be had). You have to dodge security cameras, find access keys, all the while nailing every bad guy you see squarely between the eyes.

Reaching your objective you switch to first person, and proceed to plug



THIS IS FOR THAT REVIEW OF 12 MONKEYS. KAPRW!



bad guys full of holes, Time Crisis style. Somewhat stupidly, these sections are not Gun-con compatible, but the control is effective and easy to learn. There are only real problems when firing at long ranges, when the standard controller lacks the necessary precision to take out a small target.

Later on you'll hop in a car to chase down terrorists around the countryside and city streets. You need to ram them until they explode within a time limit, to prevent them from planting bombs. Progression between these modes is not linear, as the game cuts back and forth between them as the story develops.

The voice acting hasn't improved this time around. The Bruce Willis impersonator draws so chronically, he sounds like he's pissed out of his gourd. Unfortunately, neither has much else changed for the better. Most notably, there has been little graphical improvement, despite the intervening years.

While all the game modes are entertaining, they are merely rehashes of the first game. They are mostly well executed, but sometimes fall short. In

the first person sections, John isn't as nimble as the original. Enemy AI has improved, and the bad guys no longer moronically walk at you in massive waves. They are more dispersed, coming one or two at a time. This has its pluses, but it also reduces the sadistic bloodlust factor that was so prominent in the first instalment. One of the great attractions of Die Hard 1 was waiting around a corner as a horde of bad guys advanced on you, then cutting a swathe through them with a high powered automatic weapon, leaving the corridors jammed with their bloodied and mangled bodies. Another drawback is the elimination of the map, which was a great tool in the callous slaughter of your enemies.

The driving section is also fairly uninspired. As with the original, it is the weak point of the game, and won't have you coming back for more. The most entertaining part is sadistically mowing down the cows that populate the pastures you drive through.

A good jack-of-all trades game, Die Hard Trilogy 2 still entertains the second time around, but doesn't inspire like it used to. ■



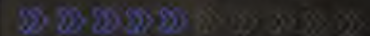
So why did Bruce agree to put his face and voice into Apocalypse and not Die Hard Trilogy 2? It's a tragedy! Come on Bruce, are you asking for too much money or what?



THIS IS FOR THAT REVIEW OF HOOSON HAWK. BLAM!



WILLIS-O-METER



PLUS

Plenty of killing. Three games in one.

MINUS

Muddy graphics.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
76	80	82

OVERALL

80

More of the same. Well executed, but not quite as entertaining the second time.

YOU'RE LUCKY IT'S NOT A GOLDEN SHOWER...

RAYMAN 2

DREAMCAST

Rayman is an infectious little guy. Look, he's made his way onto the Nintendo 64, PC, Game Boy and now Dreamcast, with a PlayStation version coming in September. Thankfully, Rayman 2 is a top notch platformer which is worthy of all the conversions possible.

Initial impressions of Rayman 2 on Dreamcast were that this was nothing

but the 3D accelerated PC version on a console. Just looking at the graphics was enough to see that not much has been done to really take advantage of the Dreamcast's power. However, upon closer inspection, we see that Ubi Soft have actually considered adding a lot more to Rayman 2 on the Dreamcast than meets the eye. Whilst it plays pretty much exactly like the PC version, there are lots of small additions here and there to the level of detail, that probably puts this Dreamcast version of Rayman 2 up there as the best of the lot. There's even a whole new level!

If you never read our Nintendo 64 review, then you need to know that Rayman 2 is an excellent platformer

which excels in interesting level design. With great character and personality, bizarre and beautiful graphics and enough tricky moments to have any jaded gamer wanting to come back for more over and over again, it's a treat to play through and we love it.

This is pretty much the first excellent platformer for the Dreamcast, in the traditional sense of the genre. Go grab it now!

ELIOT FISH



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
90	79	86	89

i	AVAILABLE: Now
	CATEGORY: Platformer
	PLAYERS: 1
	PUBLISHER: Ubi Soft
	PRICE: \$89.95
	RATING: G
	SUPPORTS: VMU

ROAD RASH: JAILBREAK

PLAYSTATION

Road Rash was one of the first games we played on the ill-fated 3DO console, and back then it blew us away with its speed and highly-detailed graphics. Of course, it actually started out originally on the Sega Mega Drive, all those moons ago. How could a series which started out so well, have stumbled so blindly into the



future? Road Rash on the N64 was average, and now Road Rash: Jailbreak on the PlayStation is another mediocre attempt that is relying more on its brand name than on decent value-for-money gameplay.

Whilst you could say the bike and biker animations are quite funky, and the brainless button mashing beat 'em up gameplay is amusing when coupled with fast racing action, there isn't anything here that made me want to finish the game. It's fun for a while, and fun with friends (you can play co-operatively with

a side-car if you want), but ultimately it just gets repetitive. The real problem probably lies in the lack of variety with the track design and locales. Road Rash: Jailbreak just feels like a novelty at best. The soundtrack is once again pumped full of hardcore underground metal and the like, but it actually becomes more annoying than fun to listen to whilst you play.

It seems pretty obvious that no-one working on this one had any decent ideas to offer to improve the series. Shame!

ANNA KYN

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
72	74	70	70

i	AVAILABLE: Now
	CATEGORY: Action
	PLAYERS: 1-4
	PUBLISHER: EA
	PRICE: \$79.95
	RATING: M
	SUPPORTS: Dual Shock, MultiTap

SAGA FRONTIER 2

PLAYSTATION

It's funny isn't it, how Square can slip out RPGs like Saga Frontier 2 almost completely unnoticed, when they are the developers of Final Fantasy VII and VIII, the PlayStation's most popular RPG series ever. The thing is, Square release RPGs all the time in Japan, it's just that they never get released here! Well, Saga Frontier 2 is here for our consumption, and whilst it's certainly nowhere near the

beauty of the Final Fantasy games, it's a worthy RPG that's fine for a rainy day.

Visually, Saga Frontier 2 uses the quirky anime style which we're pretty accustomed to these days, although they're only 2D. In terms of style though, the game looks pretty darn cool, even if it feels almost like a game from a few years ago, it's full of colour and life, with the game world being painted by hand. It's a shame then, that the game moves as slowly as it does. You'll find yourself wrapped up in more conversation with townsfolk than actually getting to enjoy



the combat system which is well designed and enjoyable. Combat can involve your party, or you can go "one-on-one" with your enemy to improve your character's specific weapons skills, which improve with experience.

Unfortunately, because the game's story is kind of dull, it may stop you from persisting through to see what happens — the only saving grace being that you can actually play the game from two different character's perspectives. Not a must-have title, but if you're desperate for an RPG, it'll do.

FRANK DRY

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
80	72	70	72

i	AVAILABLE: Now
	CATEGORY: RPG
	PLAYERS: 1
	PUBLISHER: Squaresoft
	PRICE: TBA
	RATING: M



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FIFA 2000

i AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Sport
PRICE: \$49.95
PUBLISHER: THQ
FORMAT: Game Boy/Game Boy Color

Wow, FIFA has made it to the Game Boy Color, something we thought we'd never see. It's nothing flash, but it's certainly possible to kick the ball around and experience a few thrilling moments of sporting glory. The main dilemma here is the controls, and how they're tried to offer a variety of moves with a combination of the A and B buttons. It feels a bit clumsy, and is hard to remember or even pull off with any great accuracy when



you're in the thick of it. For instance, passing the ball is hopeless, as it doesn't automatically direct to your nearest teammate, instead shooting off into nowhere half the time or into the feet of the opposition. Still, there are a huge array of options in this Game Boy version that should please those of you who've been waiting for this conversion. Full League mode, exhibition mode, Tournament, Playoff and even indoor modes are available. You can select the players in your team, change formations, choose from a variety of control set-ups and change playing conditions. Pity it's so frustrating out on the field.

FRANK DRY



METAL GEAR SOLID

i AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action/Adventure
PRICE: \$49.95
PUBLISHER: Konami
FORMAT: Game Boy Color

"Oh my f***ing God. You have got to be kidding me" were the first words uttered by this reviewer upon playing this game. Here, we have a Game



Boy version of one of the most critically acclaimed games on the PlayStation, arguably one of the most innovative console games of the 32-bit era, and it has been translated PERFECTLY.

Before I'm accused of being misleading, the perfection being referred to is the translation of the gameplay. It plays exactly the same as its 3D counterpart, except it's in 2D.

For the uninitiated, it's basically a spy game. You can hide, duck, crawl, press yourself against walls... the idea is stealth, as



opposed to indulging in a foolish Rambo fantasy. Your goal is pretty much the same as all the other Metal Gear games: there's a big robot of mass destruction, and a criminal organisation is using it to hold the world to ransom. You have to stop them. Take note that the story is completely different from the PlayStation version.

As a game in itself, Metal Gear Solid GB deserves top marks. The sheer brilliance and ingenuity of the conversion process is what has us all so awestruck. However, it is so incredibly long and deep that we're not even sure it's appropriate for a hand-held machine. Oh well — we'll let the consumers decide on that one.

KEVIN CHEUNG

RAYMAN

i AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Platformer
PRICE: \$49.95
PUBLISHER: Ubi Soft
FORMAT: Game Boy Color



It's been a Rayman explosion of late with Rayman 2 releasing on every gaming platforming, so having the original Rayman come to



the Game Boy Color is a nice bonus for us hand-held fans. From the moment you start pushing Rayman around the screen, you'll appreciate how awesome the animation is. This is lovely, fluid gameplay. It's standard platforming fare, sure, but it's rarely done as nicely as it is here. Rayman has all his usual moves, and whilst everything feels incredibly intuitive, we must gripe a little over the level design, which at times seems a little unsuited to the Game Boy Color screen size. There are plenty leaps of faith to be had here. Still, this is an excellent platformer, and if you're into the little French limbless freak, then you must go grab this now.

FRANK DRY



ODDWORLD ADVENTURES 2

i AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Puzzle/Action
PRICE: \$49.95
PUBLISHER: GT Interactive
FORMAT: Game Boy/Game Boy Color

Abe just exudes class. From his early PlayStation adventures, to these Game Boy outings, it's been Oddworld quality all along. Oddworld Adventures 2 is more of the classic Oddworld gameplay that we love —



using Oddspeak and Abe's limited moves to get him to safety and rescue Mudokons along the way. There is a bit of a problem with this game though. Abe's controls feel a little inaccurate, because he seems to move too quickly. Also, the backgrounds are confusing to figure out, and it's very hard to tell where you're meant to jump to, fall down or what you should avoid because too many colours are the same and there are no distinct "edges" — maybe this was so that the game could be played in black and white also. After playing for a while, you'll start to see things more clearly, but it isn't terribly user-friendly. Abe has a few new moves here, like visible farting which can be used to your advantage, so you'll still have a good chuckle whilst struggling with the graphics and controls. It's a good game underneath.

ELIOT FISH



5/10

9/10

8/10

7/10



THE TYCOON COLLECTION

i Available: Now
Category: Sim/Strategy
Publisher: MicroProse
Platform: PC

Do you remember Bullfrog's Theme Park? Of course you do! Do you remember how much fun it was building crazy rollercoaster rides that defied the laws of physics? And do you also remember how fun it was to charge ridiculous prices for drinks that were 2 parts sugar/1 part soda? Well if you're sitting around crying about the unfairly high specs required to run Theme Park World then cry no more because Rollercoaster Tycoon has just been repackaged for The Tycoon Collection. In what is a far superior game, Rollercoaster Tycoon has loads of options, heaps of rides and a crazy amount of scenarios and with an expansion pack now on the shelves, this game is better value than ever before. And best of all it runs on a lowly P90! What more could you possibly ask for? Well, knowing that we gamers are always out for a bargain, MicroProse have put together a juicy little compilation for us. Not only do you get Rollercoaster Tycoon but also Railroad Tycoon II and Transport Tycoon Deluxe, of which the former two are still retailing at around \$59.95. At \$89.95, for what is literally months of quality gaming, there should be no excuse for having nothing to distract you from school work!

VALUE-O-METER



MOVIOKE

i Available: Now
Category: Comedy
Publisher: Bandai
Platform: PC

Okay so it's not actually a game but Movieoke is a great idea. Karaoke is lots of fun right? So a game that allows you to be in the movie should be great! In theory yes. Basically, a scene from a selection of movies is presented before you and you get to fill in the dialogue using your PC microphone. Whilst this sounds like great fun, you only get 12 movies and they're old B-grade flicks that nobody has ever really heard of. Still, it could be a lot of fun to pull out at a party (ahem). Of course, the same amount of fun can be had using the audio-dub feature on your VCR. Retailing at about \$4.95 it needs only a low end Pentium to run - and don't forget the mic. Oh, and Dennis Miller hosts the game - if that means anything to anyone.



VALUE-O-METER



CYBERBALL

i Available: Now
Category: Pinball
Publisher: Metro Games
Platform: PC

Pinball games are few and far between these days - so how about an old one? Eclip design (a team we've never heard from since this game - maybe there's a reason) have tried to come up with something revolutionary here. This is not your standard vertical table. No no, what we have here is a squarish table with some circular shapes thrown in there. It's sort of like two tables side by side that the ball can jump back and forth in. To combat this you get six to eight paddles. A neat little idea is to give the player complete control over the physics of the table. If you think it's hard to keep an eye on that ball now, wait until you replace it with a rubber ball! You get four tables, standard pinball affair, with all the little bonuses that you'd expect. Depending on the resolution you want to play on, you'll need to be running a Pentium 75, although the tables don't look that great on anything higher anyway. As usual, price varies from store to store. I picked this one up for \$4.95 at a certain nation wide department store so it's readily available.

If this all sounds confusing then just wait until you play it. On second thoughts, just spend the extra \$15 and get Balls of Steel. It's the best available.

VALUE-O-METER



WINWINWIN

WIN



FEAR EFFECT for PLATSTATION



Thanks to Ozisoft, we have FIVE copies of Fear Effect to give away! Immerse yourself in the chilling atmosphere of this Resident Evil style action/adventure from Eidos Interactive that is inspired by classic games such as Alone in the Dark and Fade to Black. The unique cartoon-style graphics still have a cool gritty edge to them, and this is one game every PlayStation fan should experience. To win a copy, answer the following question...

Name another Eidos game which features a sexy female lead character...

Well, gee, that's really hard now isn't it? Put your answer on the back of an envelope along with your name and address and post it off to: FREE OF FEAR, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Yowza.

BATTLEZONE 2 for PC



WIN

From the funky retro memories of long afternoons in the arcade, to the day that Activision brought the series back to life on the PC, Battlezone has kicked big butt. Battlezone 2 is here to continue to push the series into new territory, as well as give us a whopping visual treat on our PCs. If you love your action with a heavy dose of strategy, then jump right into the commanders seat and grab the controls. Thanks to Activision, we have FIVE copies of Battlezone 2 to give away. To win a copy, answer the following question...

Who made the original Battlezone arcade game?

Slap your response on the back of an envelope along with your name and address and post it off to: WIN THE ZONE, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Boomshakalaka.





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NBA 2K

DREAMCAST

2D Player

Enter "SQUISHY" at the Code screen.

Beachball

Enter "BEACHBOYS" at the Code screen.

Big Feet

Enter "BIGFOOT" at the Code screen.

Big Heads

Enter "FATHEAD" at the Code screen.

Fat Players

Enter "DOUGHBOY" at the Code screen.

Hurt Coaches

Put in "COACHOUCH" as the password

Large Players

Enter "MONSTER" at the Code screen.

Sega Sports Team

Enter "DEVDUDES" at the Code screen to unlock NBA 2K, Sega Sports and Sega teams.

Small Players

Enter "LITTLEGUY" at the Code screen.

TOY COMMANDER

DREAMCAST

When you enter these cheats correctly, you'll hear a tone.

99 Heavy Ammo

Pause the game, then hold L and press A, B, X, Y, B, A.

All Rooms Available

Pause the game, then hold L and press A, Y, X, B, Y, X.

Fix Toy

Pause the game, then hold L and press A, X, B, Y, A, Y.

Max Fuel

While playing press B, Y, A, X, B, X when you are playing a mission that uses only 1 vehicle.

Upgrade Weapons

Pause the game, then hold L and press X, A, Y, B, A, X.

RE-VOLT

DREAMCAST

All cars

Enter "CARNIVAL" as a name.

All tracks

Enter "TRACKER" as a name.

Cycle through weapons

Enter "SADIST" as a name, then press L + R while playing a game.

FIGHTING FORCE 2

PLAYSTATION

Cheat mode

Hold L1 + L2 + R1 + Triangle + X + Left when "Press Start" appears at the opening screen. Select "Start Game" option and choose a level. Your character will have unlimited ammunition and invincibility during game. (Note: Enabling Cheat disables high scores.)

NBA LIVE 2000

PLAYSTATION

Legends

Enter one of the codes below at the Create Player menu to activate the corresponding player. (A message confirms correct entry.) Then go to "Unlock Legends" screen to activate player. Alternately, follow hints given during game to unlock the legends without cheats.

50s Legends

Player	Name codes
Andrew Phillip	Whiz Kid
Bill Sharman	Charity Stripe
Bob Cousy	B-Balls Cooz
Bob Pettit	Crash Boards
Carlo Braun	Hard Wood
Cliff Hagen	Hook Shot
Dolph Schayes	Set Shot
George Yardley	Yard Bird
Harry Gallatin	Iron Horse
Larry Costello	Cross Over
Paul Arizin	Pitchin' Philli
Richard Guerin	Play Maker

60s Legends

Player	Name codes
Bill Russell	All Defensive
Elgin Baylor	Offensive Force
Hal Greer	Jump Shot
Jerry Lucas	Lucas Layup
Jerry West	The Mr. Clutch
Lenny Winkins	Player Coach
Oscar Robertson	Bucks Big O
Sam Jones	Bank Shot
Tommy Heinsohn	Flat Shot
Walt Bellamy	No Comment
Willis Reed	Soft Touch
Wilt Chamberlain	Big Goliath

70s Legends

Player	Name codes
Bill Cunningham	Leaping Kangaroo
Bill Walton	Shot Blocker
Bob Lanier Big	Foot Duke
Dave Bing	The Head
Dave Cowens	Red Head
Earl Monroe	Magic Pearl
John Havlicek	John Hondo
Julius Erving	Doctor's In
Nate Archibald	Big Tiny
Pete Maravich	Passing Pistol
Rick Barry	Foul Shot
Walt Frazier	Cool Clyde
Wes Unseld	Glass Cleaner

80s Legends

Player	Name codes
Charles Barkley	Mound of Rebound
Dominique Wilkins	High Light
Earvin Johnson	Magical Guard
George Gervin	Chilled Iceman
Hakeem Olajuwon	The Dream Machine
Isiah Thomas	Bad Boy Zeke
James Worthy	Big Game
Karl Malone	Mailman Delivers
Kevin McHale	Sixth Man
Larry Bird	Celtics Pride
Michael Jordan	Come Fly With Me
Moses Malone	Free Throws
Patrick Ewing	Player President
Robert Parish	Celtic Chief

TARZAN

PLAYSTATION

Cheat menu

Press Left (x2), Right (x2), Up, Down, Left, Right, Up (x2), Down (x2) at the main menu. Then highlight "Cheat" option by pressing Down. Press Right when selecting a level to display extra levels. (Note: Cheat menu must be enabled before other cheats can be activated.)

Select level

Press L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1, L2, R2 at the cheat menu.

Unlimited lives

Press L1, R1, L2, R2, L1, R1, L2, R2 at the cheat menu.

CRIME KILLER

PLAYSTATION

Passwords

Level	Password
2	Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Square
3	Circle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle
4	Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Circle, Square, Square, Triangle, Square, X
5	Triangle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle
6	Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Circle, Square, X, X, X, Triangle
7	Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Circle
8	Square, Triangle, Square, X, Triangle, Square, X, Triangle, Square, X
9	X, X, Triangle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Circle
10	Circle, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Circle
11	Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle

- 12 Square, Triangle, Square,
Triangle, Square, Triangle,
Circle, Square, Triangle, Square
- 13 X, X, X, Triangle, Circle, Circle,
Circle, Square, X, X
X, X, X, X, Triangle, Circle,
Square, X, X, X, X, Triangle,
Square, X, X, Triangle, Circle,
Square, Triangle, Square

EHRGEIZ

PLAYSTATION

Alternate Costumes

At the arcade mode character selection screen, hold Up while selecting a fighter.

Extra Battles

To get two extra battles, you must defeat Sasuke in less than 3 min and 20 seconds, the door that looks like the entrance to the Gold Saucer (Final Fantasy VII) will open and you can fight Cloud and Tifa before the finale battle with Django.

Extra Costumes for Tifa and Cloud

For Cloud's 3rd Secret Costume defeat the game using Yuffie. For Tifa's 3rd Secret Costume defeat the game using Vincent.

Play Evil Panel

Defeat the CPU 10 consecutive times in

the Battle Panel Mini-Game. Then in the top menu select Battle Panel while holding L1, L2, R1, R2.

Play as Zack

To play as Zack, Cloud's mentor in Final Fantasy 7, beat the game with all of the Final Fantasy 7 characters. Zack has the same moves as Cloud.

Secret Characters

To get the secret characters, do the following:
Koji Masuda - Defeat the game using any Male Character

Clair Andrews - Defeat the game using any female Character

Yuffie Kisaragi - Defeat game using Cloud Strife

Vincent Valentine - Defeat game using Tifa Lockheart

Zax - Defeat game using all the FF7 Characters

Django (aka Neo-Red XIII) - Defeat game using all Ehrgeiz Characters (All except for the FF7 crew.)

Third Costumes for Normal Ehrgeiz Characters

To get the third costumes for normal Ehrgeiz characters, complete the following and they will be released.

1. Beat arcade mode without continuing.

2. Beat arcade mode and get EHRGEIZ with any character.
3. Perform a 10-hit combo in practice mode.
4. Get 35,000 points in Battle Beach.
5. Get 2,000 points in Infinite Battle.
6. Have all FMVs in the Movie Player.
7. Get a perfect score on Evil Panel (Computer must have 0 panels).
8. Beat the computer in Battle Runner on any level with any number of laps.

The costumes will be released in this order as you complete the objectives: Yoko, Han, Prince Doza, Inoba, Sasuke, Jo, Lee, and finally Godhand.

TINY TANK

PLAYSTATION

Cowboy Hat

When you kill Big Bart in the first level his hat will be laying there waiting to be put on. If you get killed you will lose the hat.

Easter Eggs

If you listen to the first six "intro" sounds in the sound test, listen for a few

seconds after the instructions and normal reports. You will hear Tiny give you random useless facts ("Poison Arrow frogs are the world's most poisonous animals"), a "special voice mail from a very special little girl," and a hilarious recording of the game testers singing Tiny's "Tiny Boy" ending theme song.

TOY STORY 2

PLAYSTATION

Debug mode

At the title screen press: X, Circle, Square.

Extra chick in chick search

In the level Al's Toy Barn, go up to the rooster and he will ask you to get him the chick that's in the egg at the other side of the level. After you get him the chick, he will ask you to go back for a Pizza Planet token that's in the egg. Get it, then exit the level. Go back in, and go back to the rooster. Talk to him, then get the chick again. Instead of giving it to him, keep it, and it will count as one of the 5 chicks that you have to get for the hen.

Outrun the RC car

In the second level, Andy's Neighborhood, you can defeat RC without the jet boots. Here is how: Every time the RC car attempts to pass you by,

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GBM

GAME BOY MANIA!



cheat mode

simply stand in front of it and wait for it to collide with you. It will stop for a short time. Keep running along and run into him at all costs. Be sure not to land in the cement mixture. You can repeat this process to get the Pizza Planet Coin.

Replenish Health

When your health is gone, quickly exit the level then return to it and you should be invincible.

Secret level

On level one if you get 100 or more coins go talk to Hamm and he will invite you to the secret room called Woody's workshop. Here you can collect extra hints, cheats, and tips in order to beat the other levels (this will make it easier and will show you where everything is at).

VIGILANTE 8: SECOND OFFENSE

PLAYSTATION

How to enter Passwords

Highlight "Game Status" at the Options menu. Then press L1 + R1 and press X twice.

Arizona Aliens

In the Arizona stage, blow up the observatory. Then wait near the crater and you'll see a huge meteor smash into it. Blow up the meteor and an alien that shoots laser beams will come out. Once you kill it another meteor will appear and the process keeps repeating.

Attract enemies

Enter this code at the password screen: UNDER_FIRE

Attraction mines

You need at least 2 mines for this. When you have the mines, press left, right, then down and machine gun at the same time to get an attraction mine.

Change car colour

When choosing your car press "0" Then you may select your colour. You can also control your brightness.

Crater Maker

While playing make sure you have at least 5 mortar shells. Then press down, down, down, up, machine gun.

Easy Weapons at the Launch Site

Go to the tower in the middle of the level. Now go to the tunnel that doesn't go through. Wait until the lights above are green then drive in. You will be taken up onto the tower and a booster rocket will be strapped to the back of your car. Then you will be shot into the air and dropped. There will be anything from specials to radar jammers. You can do this as many times as you want. (NOTE: this trick will not work if the tower is gone!)

Extra Salvage Points

To get 3 times as much salvage points, destroy your opponents using your special weapon.

Fast action

Enter this code at the password screen: QUICK_PLAY

Gives all cars big wheels.

Enter this code at the password screen: GO_MONSTER

High suspensions

Enter this code at the password screen: JACK_IT_UP

How to Fly

When you get Hover Power ups, hold UP and rapidly press X.

RAINBOW 6

PLAYSTATION

Extra Ammo

Pause the game, then hold L1 and press Square (2), Circle, Triangle, X, Triangle, X, Triangle. Note: This may also be done at the main menu.

Invincible Hostages

Pause the game and hold L1 then press: O, O, Square, Triangle, X, Triangle, X, O

Make the terrorists disappear

Pause the game, then hold L1 and press Triangle, Circle (2), Triangle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle. Note: This may also be done at the main menu.

Revive Health

Pause the game and hold L1 then press: Triangle, Triangle, X, O, O, X, Square, Square

Show All Maps

Pause the game and hold L1 then press: X, O, Square, Triangle, Triangle, Square, O, X

SUPERCROSS 2000

NINTENDO 64

Cheat screen

Press C-Up at the "Select Event" menu to display the cheat screen.

Additional views

Enter "MoR3C4MS" at the cheat screen.

All riders block you

Enter "BLoCKM3" at the cheat screen.

Big bikes

Enter "BiGbiK3S" at the cheat screen.

Big dirt sprays

Enter "BiGSPR4Y" at the cheat screen.

Cancel track reset

Enter "NooFFTR4CK" at the cheat screen.

Cancel track skip

Enter "SKiPPiNGoK" at the cheat screen.

COMMAND & CONQUER

NINTENDO 64

APC Trick

If you're playing as GDI, and you have access to APCs and Engineers, then you can try this trick. Build 2 APCs, and put them each to a C-button. Now build 10 engineers, split them into 2 groups of 5, put each group on a C-button, and load each group onto an APC. Now, drive the APCs over to the enemy base, and park them next to the NOD construction yard/barracks/airstrip. If the APCs are blown up, it's okay, the engineers will walk out still alive. Send all the engineers into NOD buildings, going into the construction yard first. Now, whenever you blow up a NOD building, they won't be able to replace it. And, if you captured their Hand of Nod or airstrip, then they won't be able to build any more units if you blow them all up.

All Missions

At the "Press Start" screen, quickly press B, A, R, R, A, right C, up, down, and A. There will be no indication that the code has worked. Go to the "Replay Mission" menu and press L. If you have done everything correctly, every variant of every mission will become available.

Camera Zoom

Are you tired of having to squint at those little guys? Hold L and press C-Up or C-Down to change your view.

Communications Center Trick

Once you have built an advanced communications plant, sell the old one. You will not need it once you've established an advanced version.

NAMCO MUSEUM 64

NINTENDO 64

Double Galaga ships

Okay when playing Galaga, wait for one of the birds to do the blue beam attack and fly into it. Your ship will be captured. Now when that bird starts to fly down, shoot it and not your ship it will come back down and you will have two ships!

Disarming Enemies

Just as in the arcade game, the Nintendo 64 version has the same cheat. In stage one, allow all enemies to get into formation, the bottom left-hand bee is the key to the cheat. Kill all of the other enemies except for him. After eliminating everyone except for him, place your ship in the bottom right hand corner. Allow him to fly around and attempt to bomb you. After

one pass with him not firing, allow him to pass again and if he is still not firing shoot him during this second pass. This will take approximately 15 minutes. This will disarm enemies for the rest of the game.

Pole Position - Starting Tip

Here's a cool tip to start a race. When the race starts, start in low gear. Then wait a few seconds until you reach 160k/m or so, then press R to change to high gear. You will get a nice head start!

NHL 2000

PC

Away Goal

Under the match you just type in AWAY-GOAL and the away team gets a goal.

Big Head mode

Enter this code at the "Credits" screen - without spaces: HEADBONE

Bigger goalies

Enter this code at the "Credits" screen: GULLIVER

Bigger players

Enter this code at the "Credits" screen: BUFFED

Crowd takes pictures

Enter this code at the "Credits" screen - without spaces: FLASH

Dark arena with spotlights

Enter this code at the "Credits" screen: NIGHT

Faster games

Enter this code at the "Credits" screen - without spaces: WARP9

High-pitched commentary

Enter this code at the "Credits" screen: SQUEAKY

Home goal

Type in HOMEgoal at the credit screen and the home team will score.

Instant Trades

In season mode, you can get any player you want. To do this, go to the commissioner menu off of the main season menu. Choose the teams with players you want as teams you control. Go to the trade menu and trade from one team you control to another. When you get all the players you want, go back to the commissioner screen and change all the teams you don't want to control to computer control. You will still have the players, but won't have to control the teams.

Larger rink

Enter this code at the "Credits" screen - without spaces: MASSRINK

Low-pitched commentary

Enter this code at the "Credits" screen - without spaces: BARRYWHITE

HYPER LETTERS

78 Renwick St.
Redfern, NSW 2016
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E-mail: freakscene@next.com.au

GUFFAW

Hyper,
The comic value of a game is one of its greatest aspects. But these days games simply aren't cutting it on the laugh-o-meter. As games get graphically better, faster, smoother and bigger, I think game designers are forgetting about this ancient art-form. They are forgetting about making a game truly funny. There are few games released these days that make me laugh. Recently, the Fallout series are the only ones that have done it for me - I played these games for days upon days, and it was always a laugh-a-minute activity. From the combat taunts ("Too bad YOU can't reload if YOU die...") to items (Condoms, Pornos, absolutely useless Instant Spaghetti) to random encounters (Monty Python's Bridge of Death scene, anyone?) These games are full of wittiness. We need to appreciate a good chuckle more. I think it can make or break a game.
May the funny be with you....

JEZZMAN

Hi there Jezzman,
We're right with you. How about those old LucasArts adventures also... that was milk-snorting stuff.

GRIN AND BARE IT

Hiya,
I was took one look at your March issue and I said to myself: "My that thing on the front cover has wonderful teeth! I'm serious! His gums are nicely rounded, his teeth are perfectly straight and all lined up! In real life, if this ugly... um... thing was made, you'd think that it would not have perfect teeth!" Oh well. I started on the mag and went straight to the Eye Candy and WOW! Right there was Ecco in all his glory. After ogling it I finally noticed Evergrace next to it and: "Gee Ecco looks much better! Hey, I thought that the PS2 was supposed to be MORE powerful than the DC!" By the way don't you think Crazy Taxi looks awesome!?

Now for some questions...

1. Who is Ed? He seems to be popping around more often. (Do I? - Ed)
2. Did some bastards REALLY steal Eliot's consoles?
3. Why the Hell aren't the DC internet services available in NZ yet?
4. Acclaim should stop making crap South Park games don't ya think?

Thanks heaps,

PETEMAN

P.S. I am not a dentist.

Dear PeteMan,
When they built Nemesis, they used Larry Emdur's teeth. Technically, the PS2 is more powerful, but maybe the Ecco programmers are better at their job...

1. Ed stands for Editor. That's me.
2. Yes they did. I lost my PlayStation, Nintendo 64 and all my games to some thieving shits who broke into my house.
3. They're working on it.
4. My word, yes.

EGG?

Hello Hyper,
I simply must share with you and the readers some groundbreaking information which I have received from an inside source who works for Ergonomic. Well, actually it is from a dirty old games magazine with no cover, which I found behind the back of a public lavatory bowl whilst I was rummaging around on the ground looking for my egg.
Anyway, back to the point. This magazine was writing about a new thing called a console. A computer game console! What this essentially means my friends, is that one day, it may just be a real possibility that we could all be playing actual real computer games. That's right. I'd lost my egg! Herman only gives me one every two days, so when I dropped it, I became frightened. I feared that I would go egg-less for two days. I was lucky though because there it was, behind the toilet bowl sitting on some scrunched up toilet paper. I was lucky that it didn't break. The toilet paper was a little moist, which probably helped to cushion the fall. I thought it was my lucky day. When I found the Magazine lying next to my egg, the man in the next cubicle told me it was my lucky day.

I think this new Ergonomic games console might be alright as the magazine states that it has "eight different functions including the ability to run a computer game cartridge at a whopping eight bit". One game that is currently being produced is entitled "Light Switch". A game described as a light switch simulator where the object is to switch the light on and off to the beat of a song. I don't want to give much more away because it won't be long before we could see the console on the TV program "Beyond 2000", but I will lastly mention one of the eight functions. It might not sound that great but this new Ergonomic console will feature a red LED light to indicate when the machine is on. The light amazingly fades off when the fuel is cut. Alright. I'll tell you about one of the other features but it's the last one. Take a deep breath. This new console has... wait for it... a slot where an extra one bit can be connected. This will enable smooth graphics and a greater potential to pack in more plot. I've made your day I know. Now we all have some-

thing to look forward to.
Sincerely,
GARRY SHEILA

Dear Garry,
You win the award for "Most Cynical Letter Ever".

THE END

G'day mates,
Something really annoys me. I hate it when I spend half my life playing a game and only to get some crappy 5 second video clip or a crappy message saying "CONGRATULATIONS". What mostly pissed me off is racing games. They have no endings. All you get is "CONGRATULATIONS YOU HAVE FINISHED 1ST" Why can't game companies spend more time creating better endings? They spend half their lifetime creating a great intro (the intro in RR Type 4 took six months) and spend 5 minutes creating a worthless ending.
The ONLY good ending I have seen is the one in Metal Gear Solid. I think Konami did a great job for that. You see them heading off into the sunset in a snow mobile. Pretty cool.

JEREMY HARRIS, ACT

Hi Jeremy,
It's been an age old problem my friend. If only they could be designed to spew out coins like a poker machine or have FMV of the lead characters showering down after a hard adventure. It would make it all much more worthwhile...

BEEFY

Dear Hyper,
For a few years now, I've sat back, remained quiet and withheld my opinions. Finally I have decided to take a stand and come out of the closet. Not in a George Michael public toilet shenanigans type way either. I don't have any class like that. What I am talking about is sticking up for my baby. The Sega Saturn. Never has a machine copped so much bagging. The 32X was forgotten too soon to be insulted so much, but the anti-saturn team has been hanging tough, not letting any opportunity slip to let out a quirk about my baby. Why am I passionate about my machine? I have never had the gaming experiences before which the Saturn has provided me - I probably never will again. Sure there are prettier games around on superior systems which boast more depth - but for some reason it's the Saturn that has kept me addicted for so long now. Sega Rally, Nights, Virtual On and Virtua Fighter 2 was enough to make my system worthy of pur-

Caption This Part 4 Winner!
We knew that this picture of the head of Sega (from the Dreamcast game Shenmue) would garner some funny responses. The winner is Matt Prider from South Australia.



"Goddamn it! One night out with the guys and look what happens. What the Hell am I going to do with 50 friggin' Dreamcasts?!"



chase - but there was plenty to back that up. Megamix, Last Bronx, Virtua Cop, Shining Force 3 and so many more. I've never had so much fun with games, and now it's finally time to hang up my 3D controller and move on to the Dreamcast, I'm glad to know that all my favourite games have sequels on the horizon, or are already here proving themselves worthy. Nights 2, Rally 2, Cop 3, VF3 and Virtual On 2. If these provide half the experience I've had, I'll be happy. Right now, I'm off to Cash Converters to pick up a couple more games - \$5 each, I guess there is an upside to the death of the Saturn.

LOVE BUCKET_O_BEEF

*Hi Mr. O_Beef.
I too lovingly hold on to my SNES for the same sentimental reasons. What a bunch of retro sops we are my friend. I even have my old Donkey Kong Game & Watch stashed away somewhere.*

GETTING LAYED

Hey Hyper, I'm so old-skool, I'm senile. For your retro amusement, please find an attached pic of a Galaxy 1000 gaming unit. News of broadband-width tech-

nology has like just lifted so much anguish out of our inner systems. Fibre optics "high bandwidth" more information faster" joy for more. The idea of



these cables being layed from continent to continent, trips me out so to speak. I can just see the headlines. Scientists find an ancient ocean bed trilobite biting on some gigabytes, which would just give a whole new meaning to a bug in the system. Or begrudging sea-bed crustaceans tapping into the broadband information super highway which un-invitingly cut through their dwellings are found to be

immensely more intelligent than dolphins. Due to this technology is there going to be, like a huge jump in the evolution of the homosapien's mind. On that note, gotta hoon now 'cause I got a date with Veronica which is a bit of a hazard.

BREIGN 1

P.S. Can someone tell 'Lord of Seafood' Eliot to stop prodding at the underwater fibre optic cables with his tri-spear.

*Dear Breign 1,
Lord Seafood is currently too busy trying to get the cable installed into his sea cave for ultra-fast fishy access.*

SOGGY CRACKER

Dear Hyper, Congrats on a great mag. I have thought of a cool idea that maybe Nintendo could add into the next generation console Dolphin. I, and many of my friends would like to see a piece of hardware that allows you to save your favourite songs onto the hard drive, so you don't have to listen to the crap music in some games. You could insert a cd/dvd and save it onto the hard drive. Imagine how cool that would be. Instead of listening to the pansy-ass music seen in many 3D platformers, u could be lis-

tening to Korn, Metallica or Limp Bizkit. I have a couple of questions for you.

- 1) What has happened to all of the posters in this great mag?
- 2) How will Banjo Toobie be able to link back to Banjo Kazooie?

Thanx Fellas
RICHARD

*Hi there Rich,
Playing MP3s on your console is actually a reality, and seeing as these new consoles have storage space and internet access, it's a no brainer. However, actually having the option in-game to listen to what you want is something else, as the developers would have to include the option. Using the old PlayStation however, you can always swap the game CD with a music CD and enjoy your own tunes whilst you play, though it doesn't work with all games...*

- 1. They look pretty good to us!
- 2. Probably using cheatcodes which you'll then have to go enter into Banjo, or possibly something saved to your memory pak which you can then load up.

MMM... MCDUALSHOCK

HYPER>>
I think that consoles are a bit like Fast food outlets.
PSX = McDonalds (mainstream), DC = Hungry Jacks ('the burgers are better



100% nintendo

▶ If you like the Nintendo 64 and you want to get ALL the latest news, previews and reviews on the hottest Nintendo games then this is your magazine!



on sale now!

at Hungry Jacks'), N64 = KFC (some good things/some bad), PS2 = Pizza Hut (everyone buys it because of the service it offered before), Dolphin project = Pizza Haven (no one really knows much about what goes on in the kitchen), 3DO = SuBway (Good for a while and then you realise it's a bit expensive), Jaguar = Service station hot food (no one really cares or buys from there), Phillips CD-i = That little Chinese restaurant that is located behind your newsagent near the railway station ("that's been there for 5 years? I've never heard about it until now!").

QTIP → **N. CHYMIAK**

Hey QTIP,

Does that mean that PCs are like Sizzler?

CHILDISH

Hi Hyper, I've been having a problem with your magazine lately. It's becoming a little childish. This is by no means an insult, I simply mean to point out the fact that your magazine no longer caters to my adult tastes. I feel I may have to start buying some of the other European magazines that do cater to an older age group. Have you forgotten that the older generation also play videogames? I'm 28 by the way. And while on the topic of your magazine, what's with the Anime? What

has that got to do with videogames? I love Anime, but I hardly see the relevance! Also, why didn't you criticise the Sega DC release more? It was an absurd release with hardly any advertising! Heck, I didn't even know it was out until I happened to come across it at a shopping centre. I think Sega Ozisoft should get a slap in their faces! I'll now wait for the PS2 and I doubt Sony will make the same mistake. Shame shame shame. One final criticism. Stop printing letters which criticise other systems. This in itself is simple adolescent garbage. Print some more interesting letters if you can. Enough from me. Hope you'll print this letter. Maybe if you can rectify these problems I'll continue reading your mag.

A female friend,

PSB

Hi PSB,

Sorry if you think we're being childish. We're just having more fun than ever, and we think the actual info we're supplying now is actually better than before. I'll never be out of touch with the older gamers, because I am one!

We have had Anime in Hyper since the mag launched in 1993, and considering how much Anime influences game character design and plot, we think it's very relevant indeed. As for the Dreamcast launch, we agree that it was

terrible, but as you read this you should notice a lot more advertising for the system popping up.

POOR AND PEEVED

Dear Hyper,

This is my second letter to you but you didn't print the last one. Why don't you print everyone's letters? If you have too many do you throw them away or something? Get your act together! Y'know, I used to think the Hyper crew are legends but when I turned to the reader survey, I was a little peeved when one of the questions said "How many games do you buy a month?" There are 3 boxes and one of them had 10+. Do you think we are bloody rich or something?! It's like you see a game over 90%, and you say buy it with our piles of cash. I'm only given one game every semester while some can only buy one game every year! I own a N64 and I can't pirate the games to make them cheaper. It's too hard to pirate cartridges!

JOHN TRAN

SUBSCRIBER #365

P.S. Will Perfect Dark be expansion pack compatible?

Dear Subscriber #365,

We get so many letters every day that if I printed them all, it would fill all 100 pages of the mag. As for the

survey questions, we have to include a decent range of answers to choose from, because some readers have a full-time job and buy two or more games a week! It's rare, but we have to give them something to tick, right?

TEN CLUES

Dear Hyper crew,

I believe I have worked out what has puzzled man from the dawn of time. Twelve ways to know if you're a Frag-a-holic!

- 12 - You can get 30+ frags and still have a conversation over who is sexier: "the chick from Austin Powers 1 or 2".
- 11 - You still smell after having a shower.
- 10 - You've got your own special "Quake playing" clothes.
- 9 - You don't even flinch during a horror movie.
- 8 - You think you play too much.
- 7 - Your ICQ list is thrice the size of your arm.
- 6 - You have tried jumping and throwing a firecracker at your feet to see if it propels you.
- 5 - When, or if, you sleep, you wake up in the middle of it 'cause you figured out how that guy fragged you on your favourite map.
- 4 - When you look like Mr. Fish (yes I mean you Eliot).
- 3 - Pizza Hut pizza looks actually edible.
- 2 - You ask yourself "what's that place that I go to during the week? I

THE FUTURE IS PAST

Dear Hyper Guys,

Having read your magazine for a few years, I know that when reading reviews, the first paragraph or two can be skimmed fairly quickly without losing much valuable information about the game itself (not that I'd ever actually do that). However, Arthur Adam's review of Re-Volt changed all that for me. In the second paragraph he mentions the "funky wood-panelled and gold trimmed Atari 2600". This got me thinking. None of the consoles out there today are presented in a cool way. Now I'm all for futuristic designs or whatever it is they're trying to achieve, but my theory is they should cater for a range of tastes. With controllers and memory cards etc. already coming in different designs, why not consoles?

To this end, I have created a design which Sony could consider using when they release a PlayStation with alternative facades, and have included photos of my "PSX 2600". To the argument that I have too much time on my hands, or money to waste, I say it took me about half an hour, and cost less than 2 bucks.

I hope this inspires others to convert and personalise their gaming machines.

Bookie

Dear Bookie,

You are an inspiration! After seeing your handiwork, Arthur and Cam turned the Nintendo 64 into a full size sit-down arcade cabinet.



**Gamester PSX
Dual Force Wheel.**

Don't forget to include your contact details ON your letter
You've won a Gamester Steering Wheel!
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next issue

NEXT MONTH, WE'LL HAVE MORE INFO ABOUT MICROSOFT'S X-BOX CONSOLE, PREVIEWS FROM THE MICROSOFT GAMESTOCK 2000 IN SEATTLE, PLAYSTATION 2 OPINIONS STRAIGHT FROM THE STREETS OF JAPAN, PLUS THE LATEST REVIEWS – SYPHON FILTER 2, CRICKET 2000, FORCE COMMANDER, DAIKATANA 64 AND A WHOLE LOT MORE! WE'LL ALSO GIVE YOU THE LOWDOWN ON DIABLO 2 AS WE TAKE PART IN THE MULTIPLAYER BETA-TEST. MMMMM... DIABLO 2...

HYPER



SOME ANONYMOUS QUAKE FREAK SENT US THIS FUNNY PIC. NICE ONE!

think it starts with a w....."
1 - You have a name for your mouse like "Fragster" or "Champ."
I believe the Hyper crew suffer from these symptoms. Not that it's a bad thing.
APE A.K.A PICCOLO

*Hello ApE,
That was quite amusing.*

ROCK THRUSTER

Hey Guys,
I am writing to you, my most favourite mag ever, to ask you one question: WHEN WILL DIABLO 2 COME OUT?
I have been waiting since the news hit the mags about the next greatest RPG, the sequel to Diablo. They told me about how there will be four towns and how the times will switch from night to day. When I heard of this I nearly creamed my pants.
Another question (I know I said one)

what will it be about? Will the guy who thrust the stone into his head become Diablo now or will it be something entirely different? And can you give a clearer background of the characters and why they want to hunt Diablo down?

Please answer my questions or I will be forced to commit suicide, possibly by thrusting a rock into my head. To me, Diablo 2 will kick any other games butt around the world and then some.

ANONYMOUS

*Dear Anon,
Diablo 2 is currently down for local release in June.
Supposedly, the hero from Diablo made a pretty silly mistake, because "sticking the rock in his head" damned his soul for all eternity and gave Diablo the ability to return... as for your other questions, we'll just have to wait and see.*

No Dribble, No Huge Ads

Just the facts and heaps of FUN!!!

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Whole set of Neon Genesis Evangelion tapes (Genesis 0:01 - 0:13) for \$190 ono (original price \$260). Also N64 games: Mission Impossible - \$30, N64 expansion pak (never been used) - \$30, Bomberman 64 - \$20, Castlevania 64 - \$30, Star Wars S. O. T. E. - \$20, Blast Corps - \$20. Game Boy games: Turok Battle of the Bionosaurs, Kirby's Dream Land 2 and Double Dragon, all \$10 each. Also many rare Pokemon cards available. **Ring (02) 4229 7030 (Ask for Jake), or e-mail jake13@bigpond.com.au**

Dreamcast, 2 controllers, 2 VMU, Soul Calibur, Sonic, Ready2Rumble. All brand new, boxed, hardly used, unwanted gift. \$750 ono **Ph: (02) 9521-1603, Sydney. Ask for Brendon.**

Sony PlayStation for sale (NTSC compatible), with over 100 games including Silent Hill, Dino Crisis, Rival School 2, V-Rally 2, Syphon Filter, Soul Reaver, Omega Boost, Ace Combat 3 etc. Also includes 2 controllers, 2 memory cards, 3 laser guns (includes the G-Con) and an Action Replay. Selling the lot for \$450. **Phone Ben on (08) 9444 4520 or mobile on 0411 069 946. Perth only.**

Sega Saturn analogue/3D controller and Burning Rangers game. Both new in perfect condition. \$60 for both. **Phone: (03) 9459 7250. Email: fishsticks@address.com**

N64 games for sale - all cheap. Killer Instinct Gold - \$15, World Cup 98 - \$25 ono, Madden 64 - \$20 ono, Blast Corps - \$15, Lamborghini 64 - \$15. Sydney buyers only. **Phone 0412 816 355 (from 12pm**

- 8pm) or e-mail hot_stuff_85@hotmail.com

For Sale: N64 - 4 games, Rouge, Mario, Mario Kart, Zelda, 2 controllers, RF switch, memory pak. \$200 ono **(02) 9876 3500 Sydney.**

I have 1 (original) copy of **Quake 3 Arena** for sale. Comes with everything; box, manual, etc. Cost \$90, sell for \$70. **Call (03) 9822 4487 Melbourne ONLY.**

Games (\$5-12.50, manuals - perfect nick, add-ons free with base game). Dark Reign, 7th Guest (2CD murder/mystery), Jedi Knight: Dark Forces 2, MechWarrior 2 Pentium Edition, NHL 96, DOTT w/ Maniac Mansion, Doom 2 w/ Doom Day, Hexen, Final Racing (hot blood version), Duke Nukem 3D w/ Duke Nukem 1&2, Myst, and Interstate 76. ROTT (Rise of the Triad) on disk \$2. C&C, w/ Covert Ops & dinosaur levels - \$15. Perth pickup only, UNLESS you wish to pay for postage. **E-mail BlottoWatto@hotmail.com**

N64, 2 control pads (1 is a makopad - funky), memory card, rumble pak (with batteries), Bomberman 64, ALL boxes, cords, manuals, all in perfect condition plus a few Nintendo magazines. \$140. Perth, pick-up only. **E-mail: Blottowatto@hotmail.com**

Nintendo 64 (Boxed), 4 Controllers, 2 Rumble Packs, 2 Memory Cards, "Games" - Banjo Kazooie - Turok 2 - Zelda - Goldeneye - Super Smash Bros - 1080' Snowboarding - Super Mario 64 - All Star Baseball 99 - FZero X - Pilotwings 64 - WCW vs. NWO Revenge - Mario Kart 64 - NHL 99 - Bomberman 64 - NBA Hangtime - Mortal Kombat 4. Have spent a lot of money to get it to this level. Over \$1,000.00 on the Games, let alone the extra hardware. How Much? How About \$600.00? ono. Happy to talk to anyone. Willing to send by certified mail. **(COD). Call Andrew, on 0414 649 578. A**

seriously good buy... But hey I'm the owner what would I know.

Nintendo 64 games: Lylat Wars - \$20, Bomberman 64 - \$20, Diddy Kong Racing - \$20, Hexen 64 - \$10. Will consider all offers. Western Australian buyers only please! **Call (08) 9401 6975 and ask for Dean or e-mail robinson_dean@hotmail.com.**

Light Gun for PC with 2 games; House of the Dead and Virtua Cop 2. Brand new. (Never been opened). Bought for \$150, will sell for \$100 ono. **Phone (02) 4973 3752 after 6pm. Newcastle residents only.**

For sale: **Microsoft Sidewinder Force Feedback wheel with TOCA**, Grand Prix 98, MTM 1 & 2 and cart. \$250 Microsoft Sidewinder Freestyle Pro with MXM \$90. Midtown Madness \$45. N64 South Park and Diddy Kong Racing \$50 for both, will sep. **Ring (03) 5156 6970 or e-mail B_R_A_D@hotmail.com**

For sale (on Dreamcast): Sonic Adventure and Soul Calibur, \$70ea. Must be willing to pick up. **Ph. (02) 4396 6476 Central coast area only.**

I have **VCD Player** for the PSX that only works with a PAL/NTSC TV. It comes with Mortal Kombat Annihilation VCD. Sell for \$100 You can contact me on **4926 8990 or spready@cyberinternet.com.au**

For Sale: **A Nintendo 64** with 2 controllers. Lylat Wars (with Rumble Pak), Goldeneye 007. Mario 64, Mario Kart, John Maden Football and Banjo & Kazooie. All games near perfect condition with boxes and manuals. All for \$200 ono. (Sydney only). **Contact me on (02) 9153 9079.**

For Sale: **Aussie Dreamcast**, Still in box, with one game and VMS \$550. Call Owen on **(02) 9971 7931 after 5pm. Sydney only.**

Dreamcast Games For Sale. All mint condition, some only weeks old. All PAL versions

with Instructions. Virtua Fighter 3 \$45, Trick Style \$40, Toy Commander \$50, UEFA Striker \$60, World Wide Soccer 2000 \$60, Sonic Adventure \$55, Soul Calibur \$65, Ready 2 Rumble \$55, Sega Rally 2 \$55. Contact Matt on **0414-703-685** and lets talk a deal. Also contact via e-mail at mattycee@bigfoot.com or on 8588-2319 (Ph/Fax).

SWAP:

I will swap PSX games Grand Theft Auto 2 for FIFA 2000. Call **Rosemary Kim on (02) 9873 6592.**

Will swap either Lylat Wars, Diddy Kong Racing, Bomberman 64 or Hexen 64 for WcW Revenge or WWF Wrestlemania. Will consider all offers. Western Australian callers only please! **Call (08) 9401 6975 and ask for Dean or e-mail robinson_dean@hotmail.com**

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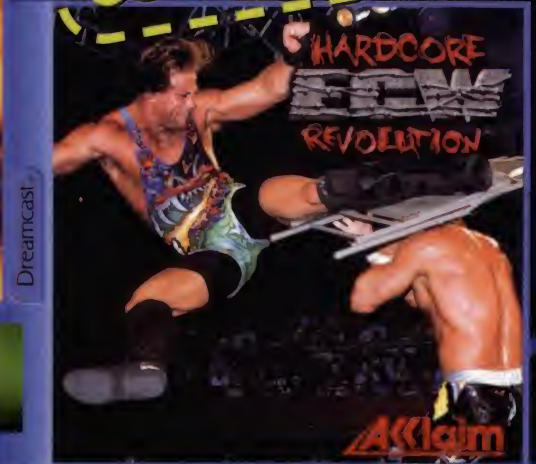
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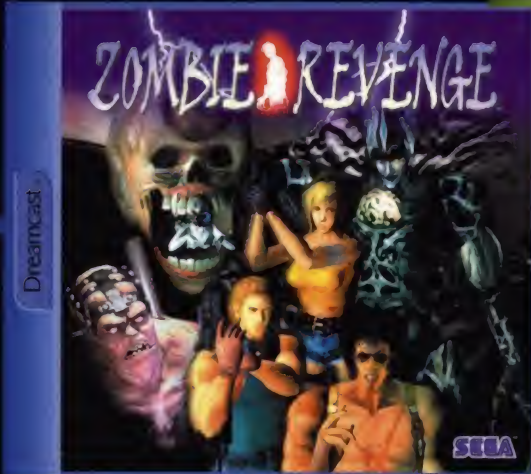


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