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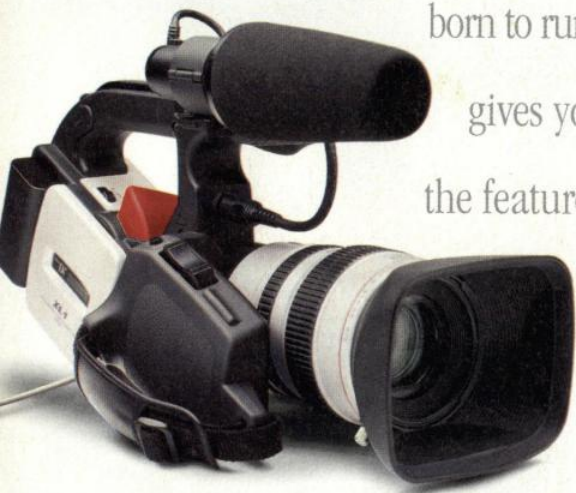
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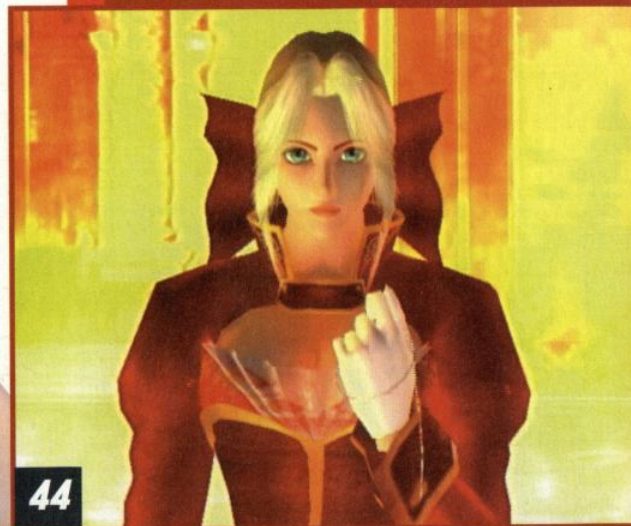
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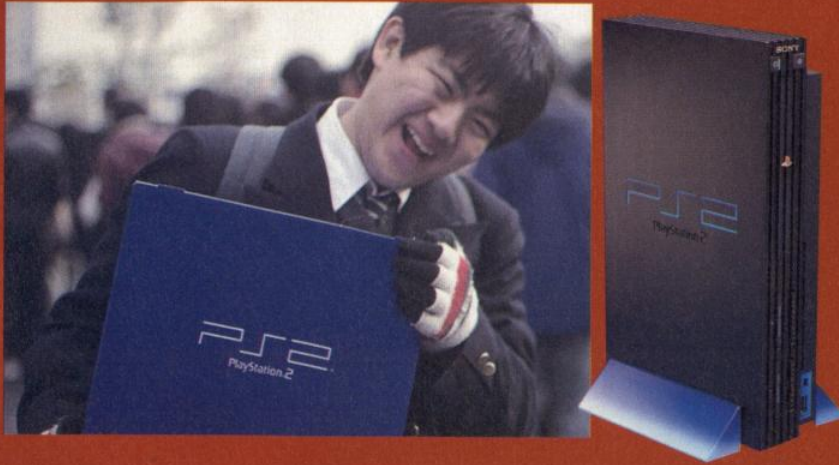
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editorial

Big games in this issue, there are. Adventure, excitement, crave them we do! Talking in this funny voice, I am, because big Star Wars issue this is. Mihihhi. Ahem. Sorry, just momentarily possessed by a little green Jedi Master. As you could tell by the cover, we've reviewed Jedi Power Battles on PlayStation which is a great romp through Star Wars: Episode One. But the Force is strong with this issue, and we also have Force Commander on PC, Yoda Stories on Game Boy and big news on the upcoming massively multiplayer Star Wars Online in news! Bigger than a Bantha! We also took to the streets of Japan to see what the punters think of the PlayStation 2, cornered the developers of Medieval 2 for a chat and then spent the rest of the month playing Dead Or Alive 2 on the Dreamcast. Now how are we going to find the time to play Thief 2, Starlancer and Pokemon Stadium? Too many amazing games...

issue

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JUNE 2000

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ELIOT FISH >> EDITOR



5 >> HYPER



JACK IN THE X-BOX

There seems to be a little confusion out there about Microsoft's X-Box. Some people refuse to believe that it's a dedicated games console, or that Microsoft even want it marketed as a console, rather than a set-top box or strange "hybrid" PC. Let us put this confusion to rest. Bill Gates is absolutely serious about the X-Box being a successful dedicated games console to rival the PlayStation 2, Dreamcast and Nintendo Dolphin. It may be DVD, have a hard drive and online features, but then so do the other consoles! Microsoft have already received a lot of verbal support from the big Japanese developers like Namco and big time US developers like Electronic Arts. It's already looking like the X-Box will be hard to beat in 2001! Many readers are also getting their knickers in a knot over the X-Box specs (PIII 600 Mhz compared to the PS2's 300 Mhz). Whilst the specs sure are impressive and the machine will be powerful, we know by now that it's the quality of the software which results in a console's success or failure. Everything is pointing to the X-Box having an excellent line-up of titles, but it still may not beat out the PS2 in terms of quantity or the Nintendo Dolphin in terms of quality (can you say Miyamoto?). On a side note, some developers have been ruffled by Microsoft's entry into the console market. Richard "Lord British" Garriott of Ultima fame was quoted as saying, "It is still too early for me to read response to the X-Box. I suspect Microsoft will put a lot behind it. Sounds to me like they are stabbing Dreamcast in the back, which they helped make... A usual Microsoft move. I feel Microsoft is a terrible monopoly, and so I have a hard time wanting to support anything Microsoft!" Ouch.



GAME BOY ADVANCE ADVANCES!

The next handheld from Nintendo, the Game Boy Advance, due to appear on retail shelves sometime in the year 2001, will incorporate some exciting new mobile phone technology which will allow users to send and receive data. Essentially, this is making their handheld "online" which opens up some pretty cool new potential features for the device. Imagine being able to download Game Boy games and email, directly into your portable Game Boy Advance. Here we have a Nintendo artist's impression of what the Game Boy Advance could look like... nice.

STAR WARS ONLINE

LucasArts, Sony Online Entertainment and Verant Interactive (the makers of the online RPG Everquest) have teamed together to bring the world an online multiplayer Star Wars action/RPG! Yes, it's finally true, there's going to be an online playable Star Wars RPG, something some of us have been dreaming about for years! Interestingly, Verant Interactive had initially begun work on an online Star Trek RPG, but have now canned those plans in favour of Star Wars.

The game will take place on Tatooine and another as yet unannounced planet in the "classic" Star Wars time period, with players being able to take on the role of anything from Bounty Hunters, Stormtroopers, Rebel soliders and Jedis to Wookies and Sith lords! This will be a perpetual universe, filled with NPCs and missions across the wastelands. Characters from the movies will even appear in the game, controlled by the master computer. John Smedley, CEO of Verant Interactive has said "We couldn't possibly ask for a better universe in which to create a massively multiplayer game. Star Wars offers such an incredible amount of depth and detail that we'll be able to create a place for fans to feel right at home. This game is going to be incredible!" After Verant's stunning work with Everquest, you can assured that Star Wars online will be fantastic. Verant understand the technology and gameplay issues, so there's every chance in the world that Star Wars Online couldn't be done better by any other company.

The fact that Sony Online are also involved (even though Sony Online host Everquest) has led many to believe that the RPG will be available on the PlayStation 2 as well as PC. Expect Star Wars Online in 2001!



DREAMCAST BANNED IN THE USA?

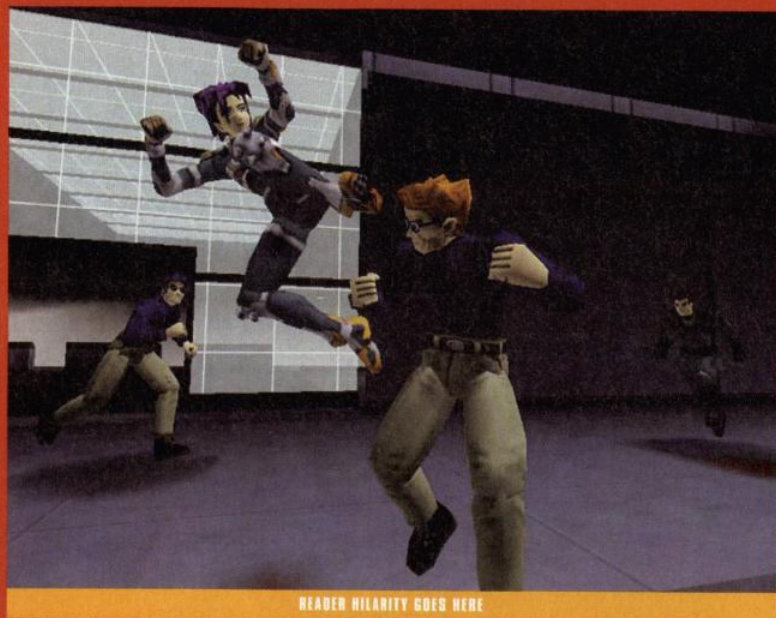
Rambus Inc. are currently investigating whether Sega infringed upon a microprocessor patent which could ultimately prevent Sega from importing the Dreamcast into the USA. The Dreamcast uses the Hitachi SH series processor, and Rambus want to halt the importation and sale of this infringing technology in the US. This is terrible news for Sega, considering that the Dreamcast has been doing incredibly well in the USA, and new titles like Dead Or Alive 2 and Crazy Taxi have been hugely popular. If Rambus are successful, you won't be able to buy a Dreamcast in the USA, which could be horrendous for Sega. We'll keep you updated...





CAPTION THIS! PART 7

Goodness gracious, great balls of captions! You're doing a marvellous job, readers. Lovely. We've spent many hours rolling about the office floor at some of your entries. Here's number seven in the series, so start licking those pencils... or something. Send your captions to Caption This! Part 7, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Or email it to freakscene@next.com.au with Caption This Part 7 in the subject line. Best of luck!



READER HILARITY GOES HERE

DREAMCAST DEATHMATCH

Quake 3 Arena on the Dreamcast is being developed under the watchful eye of id Software, and from what we've heard of the features, it's going to be a big hit for the console. The Dreamcast version will feature brand new maps, a new interface, a two and four player splitscreen option as well as the ability to play over the net — against PC players no less! Hopefully local servers will be set up for Dreamcast-only matches, but at least the option is there for the console gamers to mix it up with the PC players. Quite revolutionary we think! Id Software also hinted that Quake 3 Arena would appear on another console. If Hyper were to have a guess, we'd say X-Box...



FIRST NINTENDO DOLPHIN GAME SIGHTED?

The industry is buzzing over a short video showing what could be the first FMV from a Nintendo Dolphin game. Developer, Saffire, put the footage online, but wouldn't confirm which next generation system the demo was made for. As Saffire are a leading Nintendo 64 developer, the answer could be that this is in fact, a First Person Shooter they are working on for the Nintendo Dolphin. Before we get too excited, Saffire have also indicated interesting in developing for both the PS2 and the X-Box, so we won't jump and down just yet. Check out the screens and see what you think...



OVERFLOW

EA, Sega and Nintendo have joined together in an unlikely alliance to sue web portal Yahoo! for allowing the sale of pirated software on its auction site. Apparently Nintendo informed Yahoo! of the illegality of what they were doing many times but never received a response. The result? Yahoo! are being taken to court by three of the games industry's biggest players! Ouch!

Sony have got into a little bit of trouble with PS2 users in Japan using the RGB output on the console to tape DVD content with their VCRs. To do this is actually illegal, but Sony are currently stating that their RGB interface complies with DVD specs.

Big news. Sega have decided to give away the Dreamcast for free. Huh?! Yep, over in the USA, if you sign up with Sega.Com as your ISP, then they will send you a free Dreamcast for paying the US\$21.95 a month ISP charge. Will Ozisoft offer something similar here in Oz? More news next issue!!

Characters from Final Fantasy IX on PlayStation have been used in a Japanese advertising campaign for Coca-Cola. Unfortunate to see big corporations make use of something some of us consider sacred, but when big dollars are involved, I guess it's hard to say no...

EA's Quake 3 engine based James Bond title, The World Is Not Enough, will make an appearance on the Nintendo 64. Good news for Nintendo fans worried about support for the console falling away, but can it live up to Goldeneye?

An expansion pack for the hugely popular PC game, The Sims, is currently being put together by developer, Maxis. The add-on should be ready later in the year, with more details on what the pack contains at this year's E3. Meanwhile, go get the latest patch.

Resident Evil was planned for Game Boy Color, however the powers that be over at Capcom have decided that they didn't like what they saw of the development. As a result the title has been canned completely. Life sucks.

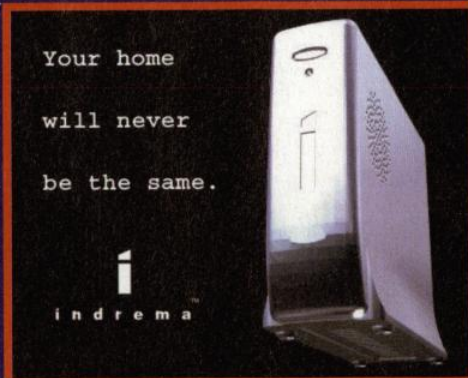


PS2 DVD SCANDAL

It's true that Sony had to recall the Utility Disc which shipped with the PlayStation 2. The reason for the recall, is that the first million discs that went out had DVD drivers on them which allowed the Japanese PS2 to play US DVDs as well as Japanese DVDs. All future versions of the disc will have a new driver that restricts the PS2 to Japanese DVDs. When the PS2 is released locally, you can bet that the utility disc comes with DVD drivers which allow for only local DVDs.

ANOTHER NEW CONSOLE!

A company called Indrema have announced that they will be releasing a console onto the market. Called the L600 entertainment system, the machine boasts a 600Mhz CPU, 64MB of memory, 4 USB controller ports, a 2/8/30 or 50 GB hard disk and a host of features that lead us to believe that Indrema are marketing this more as a home entertainment system rather than a dedicated games console. Using a Linux operating system, the console is already compatible with an array of software and will ship with Quake 3 or Unreal Tournament. It also has a 100MB/s Ethernet port for internet accessibility. Indrema will make the system available in the USA sometime this year, at an "affordable" price point. Will it go the same way as the Nuon? Obscurity? Or does the power of Linux actually give the Indrema something unique to offer to home users? Being an extremely new company, it will be a tough road for Indrema, but Hyper wishes them all the best with their courageous new system.



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THQ Game Boy Pack

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- P. Ashurst, NSW
- P. Henderson, NSW
- A. Ivens, VIC
- A. Schmitz, SA

Planescape Torment

- T. Strangeraven, VIC
- M. Dotton, NSW
- T. Paladin, QLD
- M. Kueh, WA
- D. Ford, NSW



...SPEAKING OF NUON...

VM Labs' NUON set-top box has received some attention from UK developer, Total Arkade. Their game Freefall 3050 AD has been developed for the Nuon, inspired by legendary game designer Jeff Minter. We've seen the screenshots, and they look a little dubious to us. A bit of Photoshop trickery here we think, although the game may very well be real, we don't think it's actually going to look like this... or at least we hope not. It looks awful!



CASTLEVANIA: RESURRECTION... OR MAYBE NOT!

The much anticipated Castlevania game for Dreamcast is no more. What many were considering would be the true beginning of the Castlevania series in 3D (just check the screenshots out!), Resurrection has been officially canned by Konami. As waves of protest sweep the nation (or at least the nation's chat-rooms), responses from Konami as to why the game has been cancelled have been less than forthcoming. Perhaps shifting development to a rival platform could have something to do with it, or it could simply be an example of quality control. If the later is indeed the case, then perhaps a number of other developers (Cam eyes South Park games sitting in the bin) could take a leaf out of Konami's book.



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NINTENDO GET HAND JOB



We warned you in our review of the first Mario Party game that your controllers would break at an unprecedented rate, but what we didn't warn you about was the damage that long bouts of joystick jiggling and wiggling may do to your hands. According to an investigation by New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, the sub games in Mario Party that encourage players to use the palm of their hands to rotate the joystick as rapidly as possible leads to a variety of hand injuries, including cuts, blisters and sores.

Nintendo have actually agreed to provide protective fingerless gloves with a padded palm – up to four per household owning the game – to remedy the situation. Now here's the amazing part. In addition to providing \$75,000 for the cost of the investigation, Nintendo are also committing \$80 Million for the gloves themselves! Money well spent? We think not...

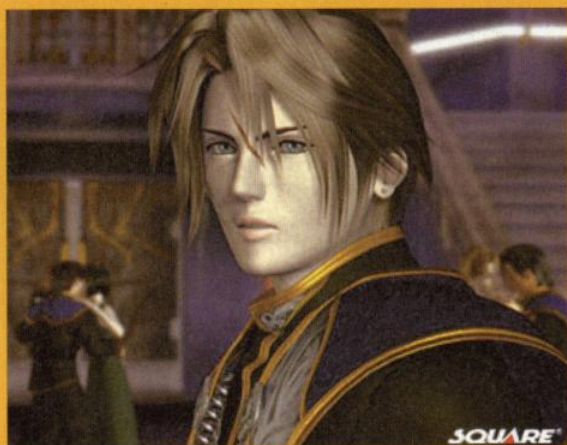
DC, DC, WHERE FOR ART THOU DC?



As much as we love the Dreamcast, it seems that the Australian gaming public still isn't responding to the 128 bit call... to the extent that "The Games Wizards", a popular chain of game stores in NSW, have officially announced that they will no longer be supporting the Dreamcast as a platform. This includes sales and orders of the console, all software and peripherals. Managing Director Robert Lukic had this to say on the matter: "The future is very unclear for Dreamcast. We have been unable to make any profits on this format to date and taking into account budgeted sales forecasts it appears highly unlikely that this will change." Let's hope that Ozisoft can turn this unfortunate situation around. After all, the hardware kicks ass, and with games like Dead Or Alive 2 around, the Dreamcast's future should be bright. Fingers crossed.

SQUARE TO RELEASE CD OF SAVES

Square have thought of a fairly unique idea – release a CD packed with saved games for all their titles to help gamers who are stuck or can't be bothered playing through. That's right, you slap the CD into your PlayStation and then download the saves you want to your memory card. Saved games include a spot just before the final boss in Final Fantasy VIII and all the weapons at the beginning of Parasite Eve 1 & 2. At the moment, their plan is to only release this disc in Japan, but lord knows we could all do with it. C'mon Square!



GAMERA TERRORISES THE PS2

Take a look at this screenshot. It's from Gamera, the game. Gamera is another Godzilla-like monster which is hugely popular in Japan, and has been the subject of many feature films and cartoons already. Essentially a giant turtle, Gamera likes to smash down big buildings and generally do giant monster stuff. The game will be ready in time for the local release of the PS2, coming from a wonderful yet unknown Japanese developer, AI. Will this be a repeat of the Dreamcast's Godzilla launch title? We hope not.

That Nintendo article has to be fake right? Nintendo would have to spend \$80 million on fingerless gloves! Um...actually, that's true! Okay then, as if a major games retailer would drop all support for the most powerful games machine on the market! Uh uh, that's true too! Square and their save game CD? That's also true! Then what's fake? The Gamera game. Yep, that one we made up. Would be cool though...

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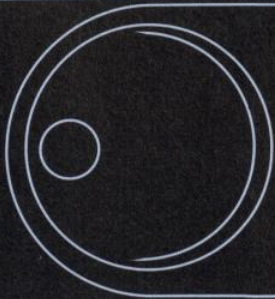


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When the PlayStation2 hit the streets of Japan back in early March, Sony may have had their trumpets of hype blaring from the rooftops, but what did the people down on the street think of it all? Hyper correspondent Liam Walsh brought us this report from the front lines...





Seventeen-year-old Yuta Nosaka skips past hundreds of people lined up on a street in Tokyo's "Electric Town" and punches the air. In his other hand is his hot-off-the-rack PlayStation2. He's got an English exam in a few hours. But instead of cramming, as students are known to do for Japan's notoriously competitive exam system, he came here at 3:20 a.m. to be one of the first kids at his school to score Sony's latest device. He's one of reportedly 5,000 who've descended on Akihabara, Tokyo, for the first-day release of the PlayStation2.

Yuta has to go straight to school with his prized possession, and suspects his new purchase will draw attention from his classmates. "They'll say, 'Give it to me,'" he says. Not that there's a chance of that happening. "I'll tell them to get lost."

School has to end before he can load up his new games, but there's no wait for 23-year-old Koichi Shirai, an economics university student. Koichi looks tired, he got here at 3 a.m., and wearily gives the thumbs up while clutching his PlayStation2 in his other hand. Still he's not going to sleep yet. First thing after he gets home, he'll launch into KOEI's strategic simulation, Kessen. PlayStation is already a three-to-four-hour-a-day habit for Koichi. "I don't study, I only play games," he says.

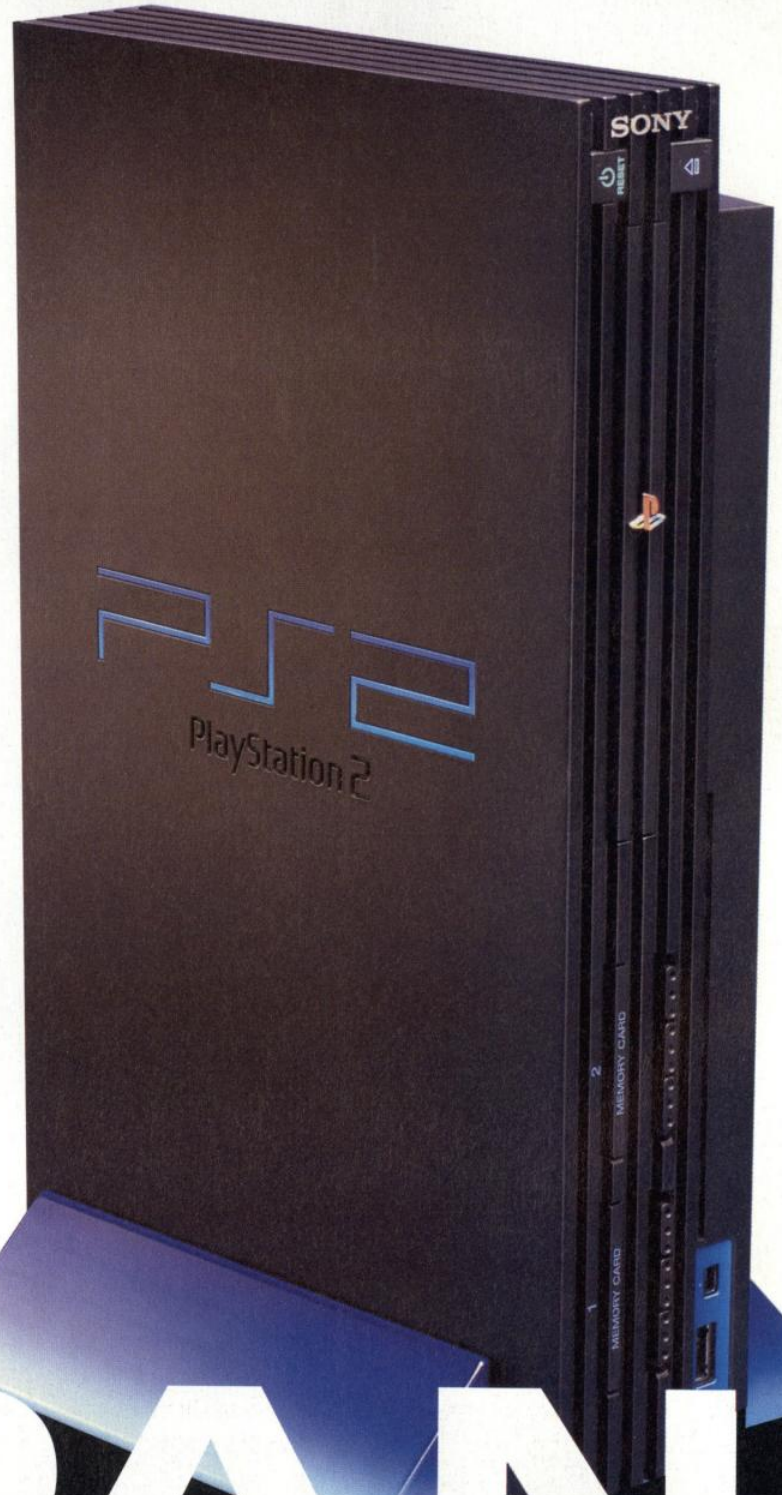
Sony is placing its hopes in mass sales of the 128-bit machine to gaming freaks like Koichi. If all goes well, the new system will rack up sales as successful as the original PlayStation. Since 1994, Sony's first console has racked up worldwide sales of over 70million. And if official estimates are anything to go by the new con-

sole should reach that target sooner rather than later. Sony established a Web site so customers could place their orders online. So many people swamped the site on the first day that it crashed. After it came back up, it reportedly continued to record about 500,000 hits a minute.

For Koichi, the two-week delay between placing an order through the Net and delivery of the system was not an option, nor was buying it on the second day of its release. He wanted it today. "It's great that I could buy it," he says. Getting his hands on the PlayStation2, which is retailing for 39,800 yen (around \$590 dollars), was a battle in itself. "The first place I was at ran out of tickets," he says. Stores here handed out a limited amount of slips to those lining up to make sure first come was first served. He ventured to another shop, where he was able to nail a slip.

But it's not only video-game freaks, or otaku, who are standing fairly patiently in the hugely long lines here. Katsumi Maeda, a 48-year-old electrician, is under orders from his kids. "Buy it, dad, buy it!" they said. Katsumi tells Hyper while queuing up. He doesn't know what games he'll get for his son, a first-year high school student, and daughter, in her sixth year at elementary school. However, he is definitely coming home with the device. "If this place was sold out, I'd go somewhere else."

He's not too sure if he'll use the digital video disc player (DVD) that comes with the device, but it is some way that the family can use it together. The DVD will be a definite drawcard for some. Given the price tag, the PlayStation2 is one of



JAPAN

shost in the machine

Like anything to do with the latest technology these days, the PlayStation2 launch wasn't without its share of glitches.

First up was the number of units Sony managed to ship to retail outlets. Initial forecasts of 2 million on the first day weren't met, probably due to a shortage of the 8Mb memory cards. Extra peripherals, including the cards and the promised MultiTap didn't make the launch date.

In just over a week Sony had managed to sell about one million units, but those memory cards caused yet more problems when reports of faults and rumours of a mass recall began to circulate.

The utility disk that ships with the console contains the drivers that allow the unit to play DVDs. These drivers are then supposed to be downloaded to the memory card. Sony spokespeople have said that reports of faulty memory cards have reached around 1,000 and that there have been a few reports of consoles having overheating problems and freezing during DVD playback. Still, with less than 0.1% of the initial memory cards having problems and Sony enforcing stricter quality control on future batches, the problems are hardly disastrous for the PS2's future.

One thing that has caused a bit of controversy is the glitch in the initial version of the DVD drivers that allows region lockout to be overcome with the use of a digital-only controller. By plugging a first generation controller into port one and holding UP while the DVD screen launches, PS2 owners have discovered that they have a 95% chance of overriding the unit's region protection, allowing the playback of DVDs from anywhere in the world.

Sony have announced that all units shipped after March 14 will contain an updated DVD driver on the utility disk, but Hollywood movie studios are still reportedly pissed off with Sony's oversight.

From an end users point of view, being able to override region protection is a big plus as it expands the choices for DVD viewing.

Hyper is guessing that the first utility disk that shipped with the buggy DVD drivers will become hot property in the months to come.

the cheapest DVD players on the market. Aside from the DVD capability, the amazing game visuals have created a big buzz that's drawn in the punters. "The graphics will be really clear," Takuya Sakamoto, a 26-year-old computer engineer says. He's invested in a copy of Ridge Racer V. Like some others, he will fire up the console as soon as he's left his shoes at the entrance to his house, even though he's been queuing since 8 p.m. the night before.

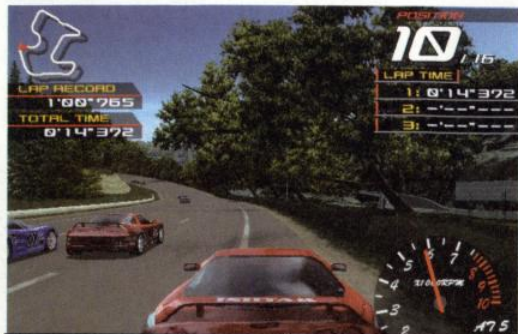
Even with the long lines and people camping out from four days beforehand, there were no fights, a Laox shop employee says. If anything, people were just noisy, he reports. There was one tale of woe for a teenager who saved up his pocket money to buy the system on the release day, according to newspaper reports that came out later. A duo on a motorbike snatched his brand-new machine straight from the basket on his bike as he was riding back from the store.

But for Yuta, the bouncy school student, the future looks bright. He hopes to get a girlfriend. "I might be able to meet a girl through the Internet," Nosaka muses. And the PlayStation2 might just be his Cupid. From next year, owners will be able to connect to digital cable networks, broadening the entertainment focus of the machine into the online world. And what kind of girl does Nosaka want? One who has similar hobbies - like games, of course.



FIRST IMPRESSIONS LAST

The PlayStation2 has succeeded in becoming the world's most successful console launch. No big surprise here. While demand has way outstripped supply for the consoles, there's been no shortage of software for the launch. Launch titles are traditionally rushed affairs that in no way represent the full power of a console. Even though there's nothing revolutionary in the lineup there's enough familiar concepts with enhanced graphics to grab people's attention. So, after only eight or nine months in development what's the verdict on the initial efforts of the big Japanese developers?



RIDGE RACER V



Ridge Racer V

Namco's famous series looks great on the PS2, if a little patchy. Not much change in the gameplay from the previous version, and many are disappointed with Reiko's flag girl replacement, Ai Fukami. Not that it effects the game much. Ridge Racer V is a good bit of eye candy, but don't expect anything too revolutionary.



Street Fighter EX3

Great looking character models and a cool character edit mode, but although the characters and environment are all hi-res 3D, the fighting mechanics are still very 2D. Some interesting game modes add to the package, but the animation is quite poor and it could have been much better with some more time in development.

Fantavision

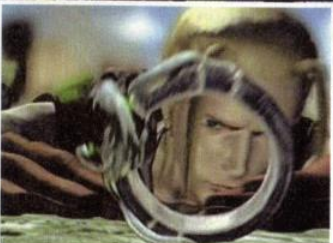
An awesome demonstration of particle physics at work. Fantavision does a take on the old Missile Command game, but uses beautiful fireworks explosions.



STREET FIGHTER EX 3



DRUM MANIA



ETERNAL RING



FANTAVISION



KESSEN

Drum Mania

Konami's bemani arcade port doesn't really push the PS2 hardware too much, but is fun nevertheless. The game comes packaged with the drum kit controller, which is a bit on the small side. The extra feature of being able to jam with the Guitar Freaks peripheral adds some appeal.

Eternal Ring

The first-person RPG genre is an interesting hybrid. On the most part visually impressive, there are still some glitches that should have been ironed out before release. Movement is a bit slow, there's no character speech (text only) and the lack of a map is frustrating. Other than that, Eternal Ring deserves credit for trying something a bit different and as the first RPG on PS2, it's not a bad game.

Kessen

Lots of depth in this one - a must for any strategy game fan. The steep learning curve might worry some, but the result is worth it. Great historical storyline and character development immerses the player in feudal Japanese warfare. Graphically full of detail, but the best scenes aren't controlled in real time.

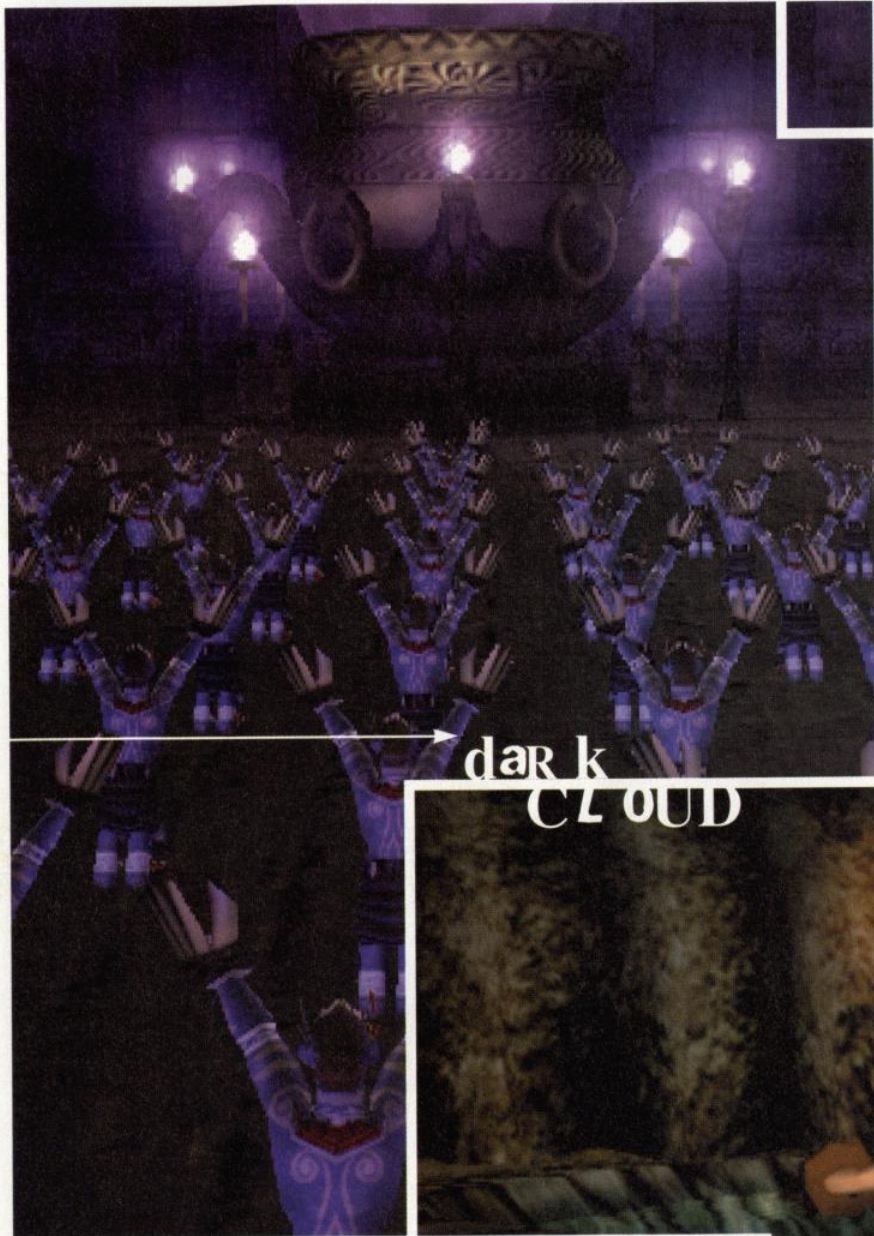
Stepping Selection

Another rhythm-based arcade port, Stepping Selection makes some nice use of MPEG-2 video and if you're into dancing and pop music (Britney Spears anyone?) this could be fun. It's a bit expensive with the special peripheral though, and practically useless without it.

Games We'll Never See

The Japanese gaming world is full of titles that would never shift more than a handful of units if released anywhere else. The PlayStation2 launch lineup has its share too. A Train 6, Mah jong Taikai Millennium League, and two different Shogi titles (Japanese game like chess) are destined never to leave their home country. But train spotters or hardcore Japanophiles might consider these rather niche titles as an import choice.





dar k
CLOUD



Dark Cloud

PLAYSTATION 2
SCEI

This RPG from Sony's in-house development studio is looking incredibly lush. The PS2 has the ability to realise such gorgeous landscapes and wonderfully realistic effects. If it weren't for Final Fantasy X, this would be the one we would be dreaming about playing.

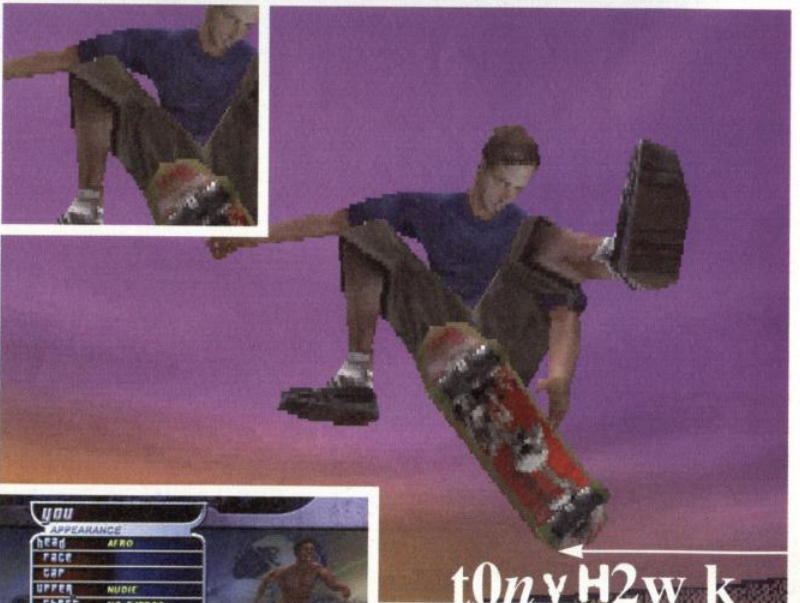
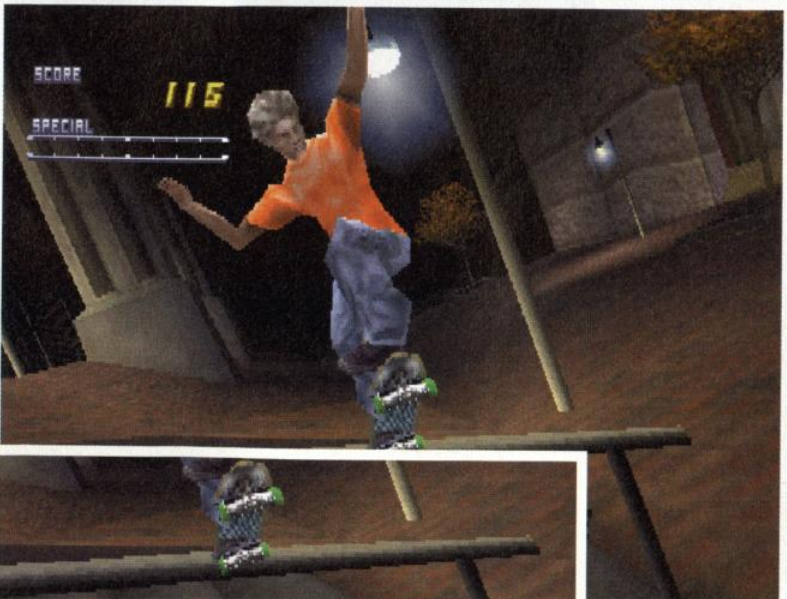
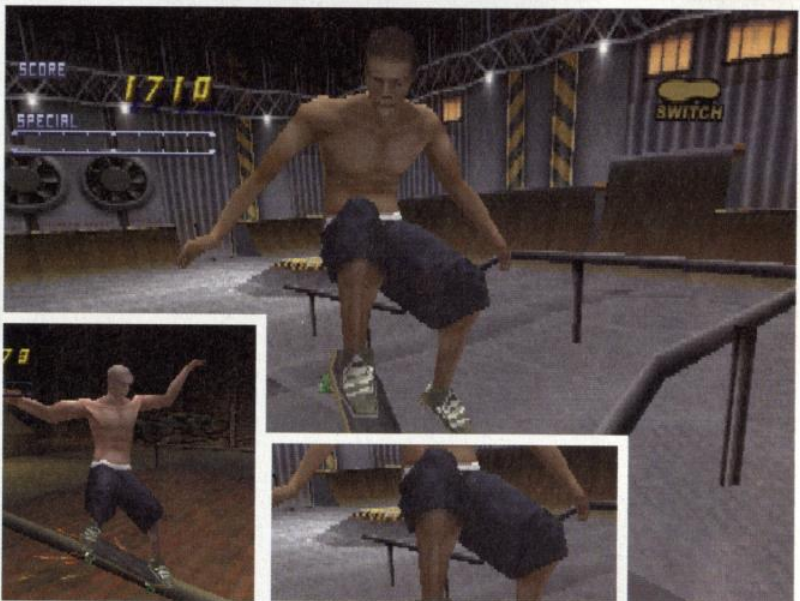
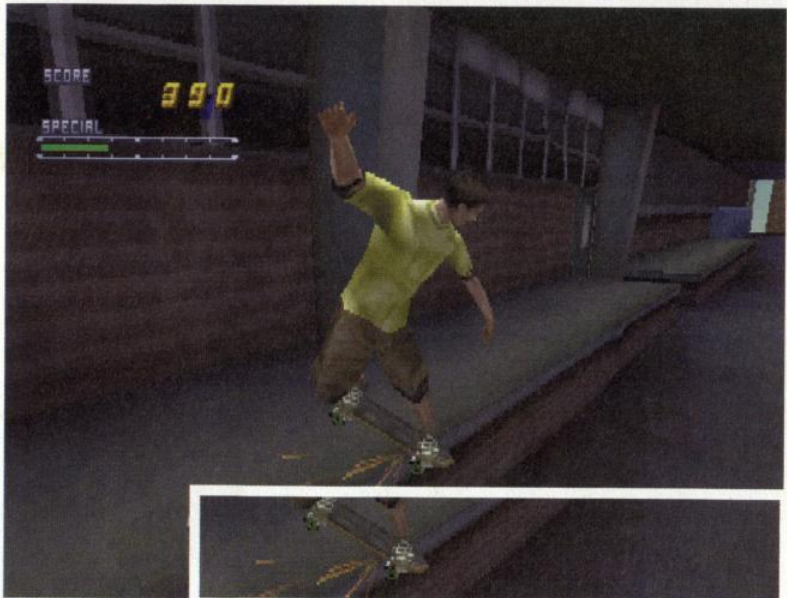
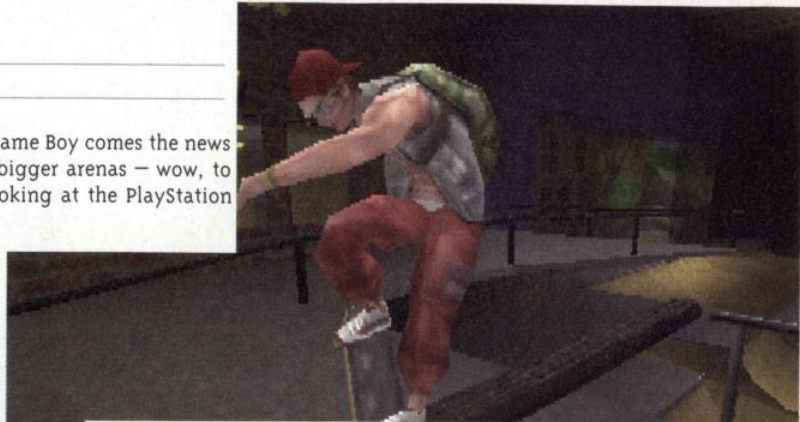


Tony Hawk Skateboarding 2

PLAYSTATION

ACTIVISION

Hot on the heels of Tony Hawk for N64, Dreamcast and Game Boy comes the news of Tony Hawk 2! More tricks, better character models, bigger arenas – wow, to think this game could get any better! Could we be looking at the PlayStation game of 2000 already?



YOU	
APPEARANCE	
HEAD	Afro
FACE	
CAP	
UPPER	NUDIE
CHEST	NO TATTOO
BICEP	NO TATTOO
FOREARM	
LOWER	BAGGY
SHIRT	PANTS
SHOE	LOW OLIVE

D-pad: reject, change, accept, back

tony hawk 2



THE FUTURE... from **MICROSOFT!**



GameStock is Microsoft's annual opportunity to show off all the in-house games they have in development before the spotlight shifts to the Tokyo Game Show or E3. This year's Microsoft GameStock was possibly the strongest yet, with a number of A grade titles on display for the gaming press. **CAM SHEA** flew all the way to Seattle to get a hands-on experience of Microsoft's gaming future. Here's a quick rundown on the PC games we saw, many of which will undoubtedly be appearing on the new X-Box console!



MOTORCROSS MADNESS 2

CATEGORY: Sport/Action

WOW-O-METER

Motocross Madness is still one of our all time favourite racing games, so as you'd expect we gave the beta a complete work-out at GameStock 2000.

Aside from the addition of two new play modes — Pro

Circuit Racing (career mode) and Enduro Racing, Motocross Madness 2 is really just a substantial tweak of the original, which is fine by us, cos if it ain't broke...



Graphically, this is one impressive game. Worlds are up to nine times the size of the previous game, and the outdoor courses have also been spruced up considerably. Many people complained (myself excluded) that the original was too barren — there were no trees, buildings or shrubs. This has been remedied in a spectacular fashion for Motocross Madness 2, and the result is a world that seems

much more alive. There's vegetation everywhere and all sorts of interactive scenery, such as freight trains, bulldozers, buildings etc. Indeed, each world can support up to 100,000 trees and bushes. We'll have our hands on a previewable beta any day now, so expect a comprehensive preview very soon. The thought of Motocross Madness 2 on the X-Box (with its four controller ports) in multiplayer mode is enough to soil our pants.

MECHWARRIOR 4



CATEGORY: FPS/RTS

WOW-O-METER
 Mechwarrior 4 focuses on a grand storyline of betrayal, honour and revenge, with a greater emphasis on character interaction, helped along by over 600 audio and video sequences. Encompassing a dynamic mission structure across 15 campaign maps, this is the most varied and interesting Mechwarrior outing thus far. Battles no longer take place in sparsely populated, barren worlds, but in richly detailed, and at times elabo-

rate environs. Missions include a palace assault and a one-on-one face-off with a battleship. Mechwarrior 4 also sees the player assume greater responsibility in the overall battle. No longer just a grunt, you'll be commanding mechs on the field, determining which battles to engage in and the tactical deployment of troops (much like Battlezone 2). You'll be able to select from over 21 mechs, including six new designs never before seen in Battletech. Stunning graphics, extensive customi-

sation options, a map and mission editor, and a development team with a sense of humour (we were shown a real time sequence of a mech in a Motocross Madness 2 map, hunting down and killing the riders), this series is on the up and up.



CRIMSON SKIES

CATEGORY: Combat Flight Action

WOW-O-METER
 Crimson Skies hit us straight out of left field, with one of the most refreshing game designs and intensely playable experiences we've seen for a while. The philosophy of Crimson Skies is essentially to create a flight combat game with gameplay "in" the terrain, as opposed to "over" the terrain. Thus, missions involve plenty of dangerous low flying runs, and swashbuckling, daredevil adventure (no, seriously). Incorporating the idea of "danger zones" that have you rescuing a damsel in distress from the roof of a moving train or landing in an

airborn zeppelin's hanger, Crimson Skies has more "skin of your teeth" escapes than an average Indy film, and a sense of speed rarely seen in air combat games. The best part, though, is the comically alternate-reality 1937 created for the game (and board game), and the huge amount of personality that comes with it. This is a very different world, where the skies are the only means of trade and transportation. Independent nations in all four corners of the United States have formed, and engage in fierce rivalries. You take on the persona of a handsome gentlemanly air pirate, Nathan Zachary,

the leader of the "Fortune Hunters", in search of adventure, notoriety and fame. In classic Hollywood style, you'll come up against deadly arch-rivals and femme fatales in the fight for control of the skies. The physics are arcade-like, and designed for maximum fun — daredevil stunts and wild dogfights are the guts of the game. It really is a lot of fun, and the Errol Flynn meets Indiana Jones meets Pod Racing meets WW2 design aesthetic works brilliantly. Crimson Skies will be out in the second half of the year, and is sure to be an instant classic.

CONQUEST: FRONTIER WARS

CATEGORY: Real Time Strategy

WOW-O-METER
 A 3D RTS set in space, Conquest is an odd title. Sure, the 3D graphics look nice, and the scope of the game is impressive, but battles still take place on a 2D plane... in space, no less! After playing Homeworld, limiting the player to two dimensions of movement seems a strange decision, but we'll have

to wait for the final product to see what Digital Anvil have up their sleeve.





Ten years into the series, and Links 2001 is certainly the most comprehensive upgrade the series has ever seen, with a number of new features and ideas that many gamers will regard as truly landmark.

Links 2001 features a rebuilt rendering engine, that supports such crucial course elements as cliffs, arches and bunker overhangs, as well as graphical effects like bilinear filtering, alpha blending and anti-aliasing. This is one sweet looking game, and another step closer to photorealism. The digitised players are also impressive, and actually look part of the environment instead of simply superimposed over it.

As you'd expect, Links 2001 comes with a whole host of new courses, faithfully recreated from their real life doppel-



gangers. Most impressive in creating these courses has been Microsoft's dedication to the smallest, but (to serious players) most important details. For

instance, Microsoft have used the latest Global Positioning System (GPS) technology, taking 500 readings per green to ensure complete accuracy. When playing the game, you'll now be able to use the Green Analyser real-time 3D tool to gain the best possible read of the green. Ball physics have also been tuned.



But now for the biggest announcement. This will be the first Links title to ship with a comprehensive course architect tool. In fact, it's basically the same tool that the developers themselves used to create the courses in the game. What is different, however, is that the interface has been considerably reworked to make

LINKS 2001

CATEGORY: Sport Sim

it more user friendly. It will come with a massive library of every graphical component you could need, and will truly enable you to recreate your local course down to the smallest of details. Perhaps the most ambitious part of the Links plan, however, is the launching of a Virtual Golf Association (VGA) tour, which will essentially be a massive online tournament with a \$100,000 first prize! The VGA tour will be trying to recreate the scope and magnitude, and even pressure and adrenaline of the real life professional tour, and to help gaming take the next step towards being recognised as a serious sport. Running from now until November 2000 using Links 1S, you can compete or just watch gameplay at <http://www.zone.com/vga/>.



LOOSE CANNON

CATEGORY: Action/Adventure/FPS

WOW-O-METER

Loose Cannon is yet another hybrid genre game, merging car combat, mission based tactical action, adventure and first person shooters. Set in the near future, you play a renegade bounty hunter making his living in a world

overrun by crime. Drastically understaffed, law enforcement agencies are forced to use individuals such as yourself to swell their ranks.

Loose Cannon takes place across nine huge cities and their outskirts. Each city is roughly based on actual cities, from New York to San Fran. Moving from the West coast to the East, there are over 20 involv-

ing missions including hostage rescues, car chases, convoy escorts and taking on enemy compounds single handed.

Loose Cannon looks to be the first game to successfully blend First Person action on foot and car based action in a seamless and meaningful way. As an example of how the game plays, you may be driving around when you intercept a police radio calling for assistance in stopping a bank robbery in progress. You drive to the bank, pull up outside alongside the cops, get out your sniper rifle and snipe the robbers as they exit the bank, or possibly pursue them on foot with a pistol. You're paid for your assistance and can use the money to upgrade your car and

equipment in weaponry and armour. Loose Cannon has a very unique look, and if the mission structure and cities are as freeform as they appear to be, we have another must play game on our hands. We can expect an X-Box port of this one also - this is action in spades.



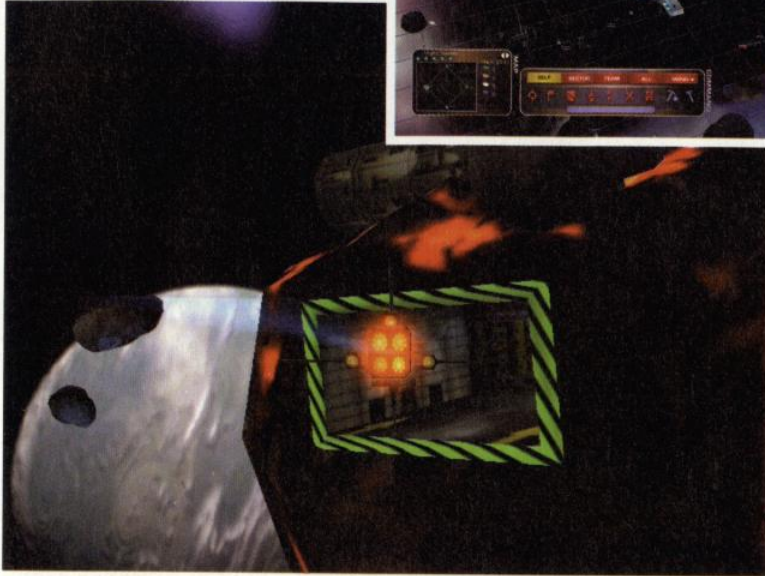
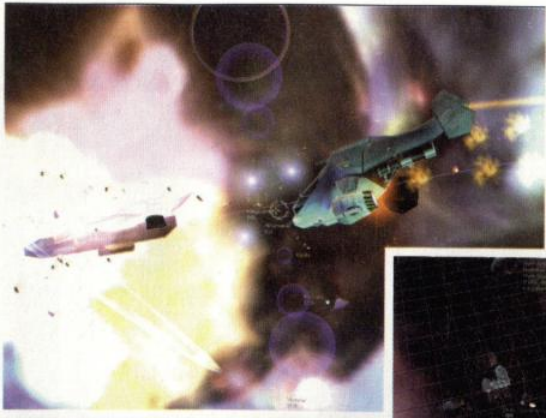
STARLANCER

CATEGORY: Space Combat Sim

WOW-O-METER

From Digital Anvil and the Roberts brothers (of Wing Commander and Privateer fame) comes StarLancer. This space combat title is looking great, with the best graphics seen thus far in the genre, and some very cool design. With a dynamic mission structure, immersive storyline (with 25 minutes of computer generated cinematics - phew, no more Mark Hamill!), and state of the art flight engine, StarLancer scored a huge 90% in our review section this issue!





ALLEGIANCE

CATEGORY: Strategy/FPS/Multiplayer

WOW-O-METER

Developed by Microsoft Research (and possibly the first game by a pure research group), Allegiance is a huge squad-based space-combat game allowing several hundred people to be

playing simultaneously. There are a huge number of roles available for each person to take on, from fighter pilot to turret gunner, and bomber to capital ship captain, or base defender. Possibly the coolest of these is the role of God-like base commander. Viewed from an RTS style viewpoint, this person watches the battle from the macro scale, and can issue strategic information and advice to anyone in the game. Better yet, if the action is getting too hectic and confusing, any player can shift to this viewpoint to get a better perspective of what's happening on the play field. It's not just combat either, as MS Research have also incorporated rich strategic elements. Allegiance has

controllable assets, researchable technologies and command features, so brute force isn't the be all and end all. Indeed, investing in new technologies will often be paramount to gaining the upper hand. Allegiance has three unique civilizations, 18 fighter craft and 20 different over the top weapon types. A number of different gameplay options range from a quick deathmatch, through to an in depth game of Conquest where management of resources is the key to success. In Conquest mode, the further in you play the greater the tree of technology available. It won't be long before the gameplay changes drastically thanks to new weaponry like sniper rifles and new equipment like the cloaking device. Another interesting touch includes being ejected in an escape pod into space when your ship is blown up... and then waiting for a team mate to pick you up before an enemy finishes you off for good. Another genre buster? We play test Allegiance next issue.

DUNGEON SIEGE

CATEGORY: Action/RPG

WOW-O-METER

Developed by Gas Powered Games, and headed up by Chris Taylor (of Total Annihilation fame), Dungeon Siege is an action fantasy RPG with a few unique twists. It's still early in development, but is showing promise.

characters, and will be out next year. You can bet your bottom dollar this baby will make it to the X-Box...

One interesting design decision is that the player isn't forced to make any artificial character choices at the start (ie wizard, warlock, archer etc). In Dungeon Siege, your character evolves to fit the way you play. For instance, if you decide to primarily fight with a sword, the more you use it, the more adept your character becomes with that style of weaponry. The game is fully 3D, with impressive scope to the terrain that allows the player to actually zoom down to see the ground underneath what appears to be a bridge over a bottomless precipice. It also features seamless transitions between outdoor and indoor environments. No loading, just straight through. Dungeon Siege will allow you to adventure with a party of up to ten



COMBAT FLIGHT SIMULATOR 2: WW2 PACIFIC THEATER



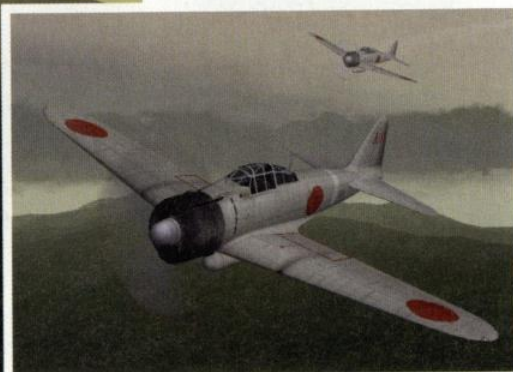
This game was overshadowed at the show somewhat by Crimson Skies, but for the true flight sim nut, this will be one of the definitive WW2 sims. Starting out as a rookie, you'll be able to fly in over 120 missions as either an American or Japanese pilot in the Pacific Theater of Operations 1941-1943, one of the most intense air

WWW2 PACIFIC THEATER

CATEGORY: Combat Flight Sim

battles of World War 2. In addition to incredible realism when playing the game, Microsoft are also trying to add an emotional aspect to the game, following the credo that "the realism goes beyond the aircraft". Thus, they're trying to recreate the way it would actually have felt to be involved in conflicts at this time.

To accomplish this, a huge amount of time has been invested into painstakingly thorough research. MS have interviewed WW2 pilots, and read countless documents from WW2, including first hand accounts of the experience and how the planes actually handled (as opposed to how the manufacturers claimed they "should" handle). This is shaping up to be an incredibly comprehensive sim.



MIDTOWN MADNESS 2

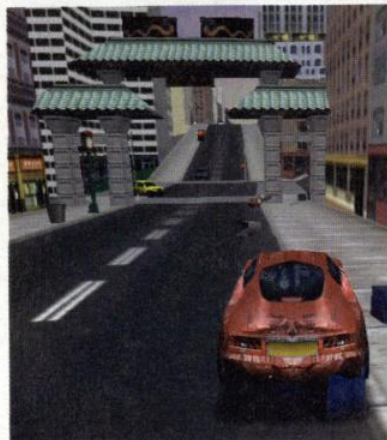
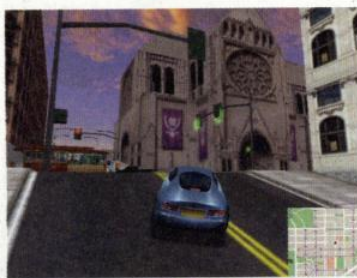
CATEGORY: Driving/Action



WOW-O-METER

One of the more disappointing titles on display at GameStock, Midtown Madness 2 failed to impress with a very samey look and distinct lack of innovation. Improved driving physics, two new courses and a new

play mode won't be enough to impress in the post Crazy Taxi world. Angel Studios have a long way to go with this one. Let's hope we're in for a pleasant surprise when the game nears completion. Could be another one for the X-Box.



MECH COMMANDER 2

CATEGORY: Action/Strategy

WOW-O-METER

The sequel to the well-received MechCommander is on the way. Commanding a squad of mechs, this real time strategy game has tactics and eye candy in equal measure. Fully 3D environments lends extra depth to tactical play, as you'll have to take into account things like line of sight and height differences when planning how to proceed. You'll have a wide range of extra tactics to recover and retaliate, including requesting reinforcements, calling for a recovery team to take away and recycle the defeated enemy mechs, or calling in an air strike.





PLATFORM: Dreamcast/PC
 AVAILABLE: August
 CATEGORY: Underwater Action
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: Ubi Soft

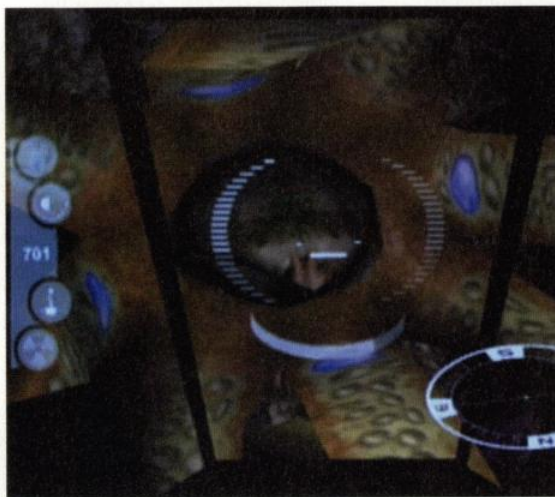


We seem to remember that the last underwater action title we played, Sub-Culture, also came from the house of Ubi Soft. What is it with those french gamers and the open ocean?

Anyway... Deep Fighter thrusts you into the cockpit of an armed sub, deep in the frightening waters, charged with the duties of protecting the sea-life and maintaining underwater equilibrium. Either that, or to rustle up some stock for John West, we're not entirely sure. What we do know, is that Deep Fighter takes the concept of mission-based vehicle-equipped first person action (ala Descent) and puts it into a deep water context. Refreshingly, this change of environment allows for a great deal of variety in gameplay, as opposed to just "finding the key". Fighting off deadly sea-life and enemy subs, protecting the natural eco-system and helping to maintain the underwater environment are all part of your duties which are

barked at you by your commander. Don't be fooled by the Greenpeace comparisons, as Deep Fighter involves plenty of combat, and seeing as it's underwater, it's a little different to what you may be accustomed to. Control of your craft can only be

likened to Descent and you could throw a few Space Combat influences in there as well. Of course, the murky environment of the deep ocean means that you sometimes don't know where your enemy is at all times, which makes for a pretty tense experience — and yes, some excuse for major fogging. Let's hope this one from Criterion Studios is a tad more exciting than Sub Culture.



WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

Hordes of marauding sharks, maybe an Abyss style menace and hey, why not a few sea-monsters too!

X-MEN: MUTANT ACADEMY



PLATFORM: PlayStation
 AVAILABLE: July
 CATEGORY: Fighting
 PLAYERS: 1-2
 PUBLISHER: Activision



With the X-Men movie currently in post-production, it's no great surprise that Activision would be slapping on the claws and getting in on the action. X-Men: Mutant Academy is a 2D fighter using a 3D engine,

developed by the same team who brought us Thrill Kill. Probably the most promising thing about X-Men at this stage, is the clean and detailed graphics engine. The characters all look true to the comic, and all their trademark moves are in the game, with Wolverine being the Hyper fave. The fighting mechanics are pretty standard stuff, so the personality of each X-Men character

is what helps to lift this title out of the scrap heap of fighting games.

Training Academy is a cool mode which teaches you all your character's moves with the help of Professor Xavier, whilst the other game modes consist of the standard Versus mode and Arcade mode. Fans of the comic series will spooze at the cast of fighters, as it features probably the ten most popular characters the X-Men series has ever featured... Wolverine, Cyclops, Storm, Magneto, Toad, Mystique, Rogue... need we go on? If you're a fan, you're probably going to love this! Full review in the very near future. In the meantime, keep an eye out for those pesky mutants.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

Hopefully some of the classic characters will be unlockable. How about Beast and Nightcrawler? Now THAT would be cool.



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OPEN 7 DAYS

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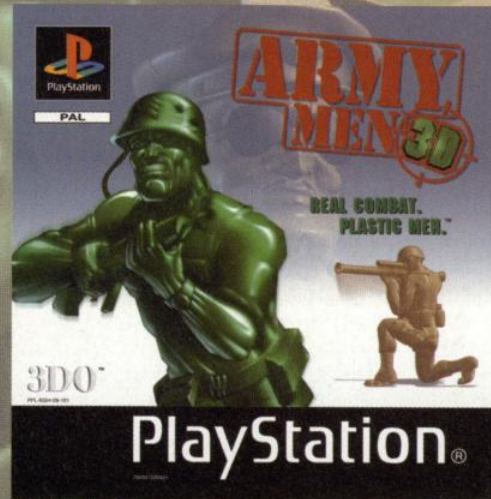
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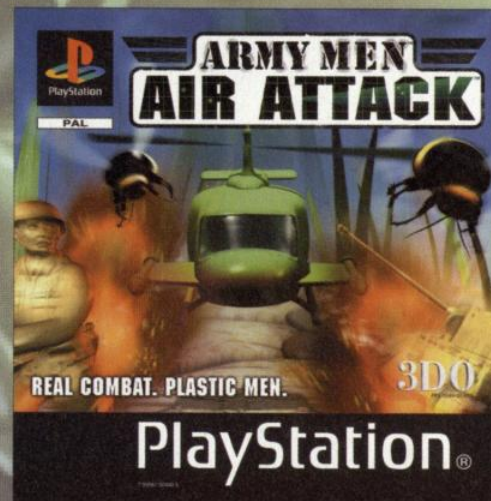
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Harvey Norman



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EVIL DEAD: HAIL TO THE KING



PLATFORM: PlayStation
 AVAILABLE: TBA
 CATEGORY: Survival Horror
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: THQ

WOW-O-METER

Ever had one of those holidays where everything goes wrong? You know the story. You take time out to relax with friends at a quaint old house in the woods, hoping to drink some moonshine and possibly get some hot hoochie action going with your girlfriend, and it's downhill from the word go. You discover the Necronomicon and accidentally wake the evil dead who are, er, just a tad pissed off. Anyway, to cut a long story short, all your friends are possessed... so you kill them, your hand gets possessed... so you lop it off and strap on a chainsaw in its place, your girlfriend gets possessed... so you're forced to lop off her head, chop her into little

pieces and bury her in the woods... and then to top it all off, Decide go and write a song about it.

Ash, played by Bruce Campbell in Sam Raimi's Evil Dead films, has been through all this and he's about to go through a whole lot more. THQ have acquired the Evil Dead license and are making a shotgun wielding, undead slaying, gorey as all hell game for PlayStation... and we can't wait! Just when the Resident Evil games have started to get a little tired, this could be the title to rejuvenate the horror/adventure genre.

Bruce Campbell returns to do voice overs for the game, which will add greatly to the appeal. After all, Ash is the original wisecracking "take no shit" hero. Even Duke Nukem is little more than an Ash wanna be - where'd you think "come get some" came from? If THQ can retain both the violence and the humour of the films, and combine it with some meaningful adventuring, this will be one Hell of a title.



WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

Hail to the King on Playstation 2!

ARMOURED CORE: MASTER OF ARENA



PLATFORM: PlayStation
 AVAILABLE: TBA
 CATEGORY: Mech Action
 PLAYERS: 1-2
 PUBLISHER: Ascii Entertainment

WOW-O-METER

With the spectacular Armoured Core game for PlayStation 2 just around the corner, can From Software whet our whistle with one last Armoured Core title for the aging PlayStation? We've played the US release of this title, and whilst it's the best game so far in the series, let's just say that it has a similar level of innovation as Tomb Raider: Last Revelation... almost none.

Arriving on two CDs, Master Of Arena has ten new arenas, thirty new parts with which to customise your mech, and twenty new missions. It's certainly the largest and most cus-

tomisable edition yet, but is beginning to feel just a little too familiar. The graphics in particular are rather horrid, even for a PlayStation title. Indeed, the graphics have barely improved since the sketchy looking original game all those years ago.

There are plenty of positives for Master Of Arena though. Aside from the immersive and highly customisable gameplay, you'll be able to use old save games to import your own custom mechs into this one. Plus, any PlayStation heads out there with a link cable should start dusting it off right now, because Master Of Arena supports this option, and going head to head in full screen mode is hella cool.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

A budget price for this title so we can keep saving our pennies for a PlayStation 2.



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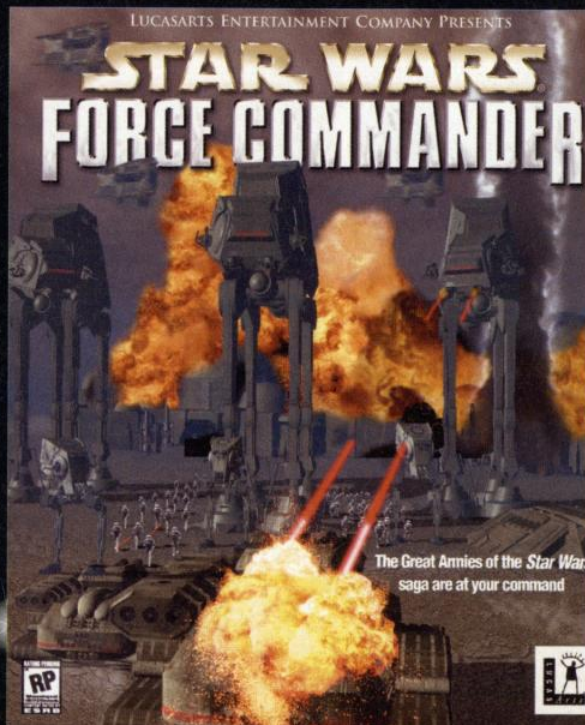


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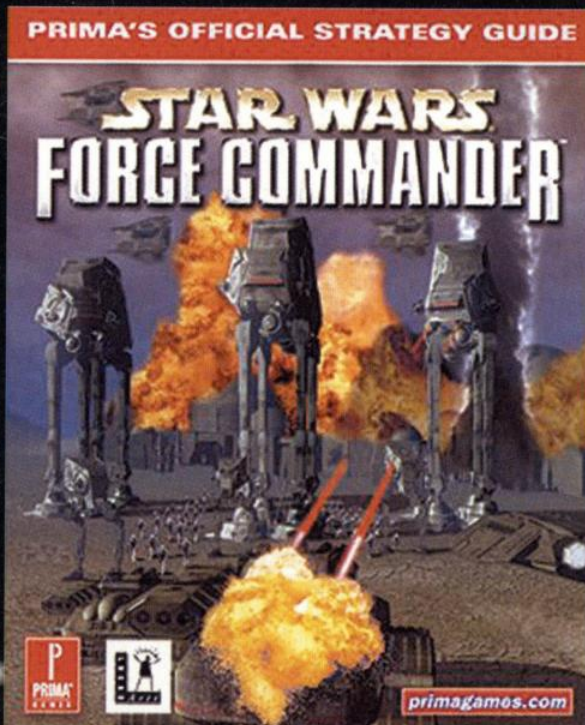


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THE BIG HYPER LIST OF GAMES TO BE RELEASED WITHIN THE NEXT MONTH!

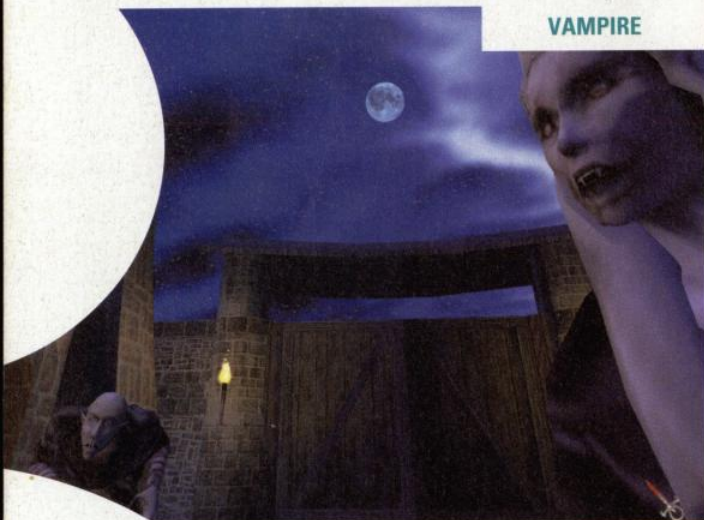
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PlayStation

JUNE

Alundra 2
AST 2000
Colin McRae Rally 2
Disney Magical Racing Quest
Gauntlet Legends
Hogs of War
Infestation
Rally
Wacky Races
World's Scariest Police

Dreamcast

JUNE

4 Wheel Thunder
Arcatera
Deep Fighter
F1 Racing Championship
Hidden and Dangerous

Game Boy

JUNE

F1 Grand Prix
F1 Racing Championship
Hype
Pocket Racing
Tomb Raider
UEFA Soccer Boy
Wacky Races

PC

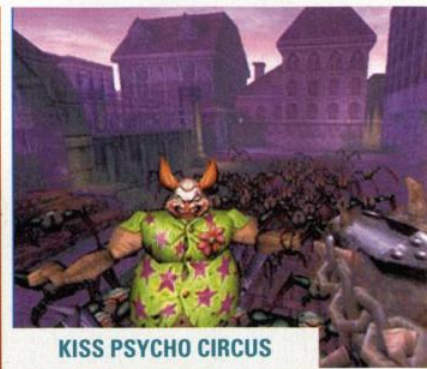
JUNE

Aiken's Artifact
Arcatera
AST 2000
Daikatana
Dark Reign 2
Deep Fighter
Deus Ex
F1 Manager 2000
Hogs of War
Infestation
Kiss Psycho Circus
Klingon Academy
Oni
Quake 3 Arena: Mission Pack
Sanity
Star Trek: Conquest Online
Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force
Suzuki Alstare Racing
Ultimate Golf
V-Rally 2
Vampire: Masquerade Redemption
World Championship Snooker
World's Scariest Police
Z 2

Nintendo 64

JUNE

International Superstar Soccer 2k
Perfect Dark
Taz Express

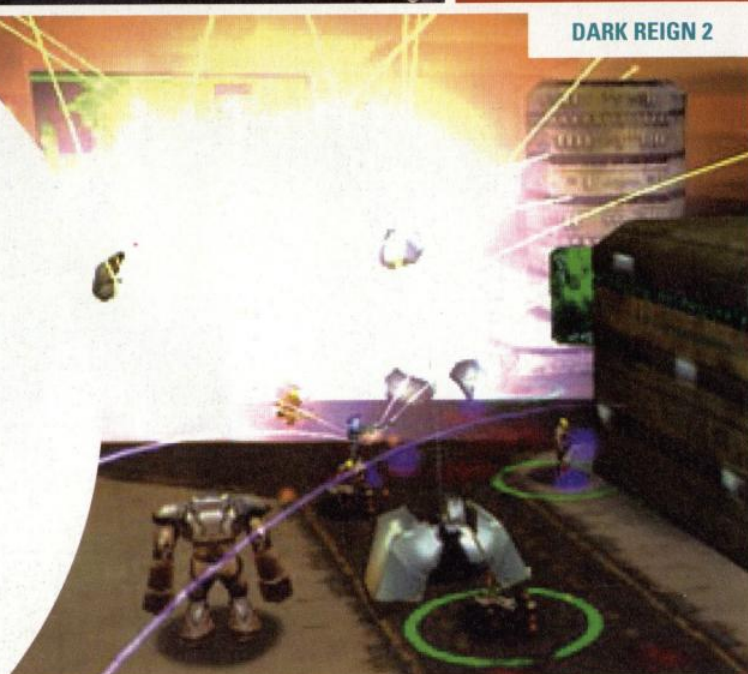


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SPECIAL WAREZ GUIDE

HOW TO BUY A GAMING BEAST!

Buying a new computer can be a thoroughly confusing affair. The sheer amount of conflicting standards and incorrect advice around does not make it an easy task. Add to this the manipulative 'sales talk' of your local computer peddler, and it can be a veritable nightmare.

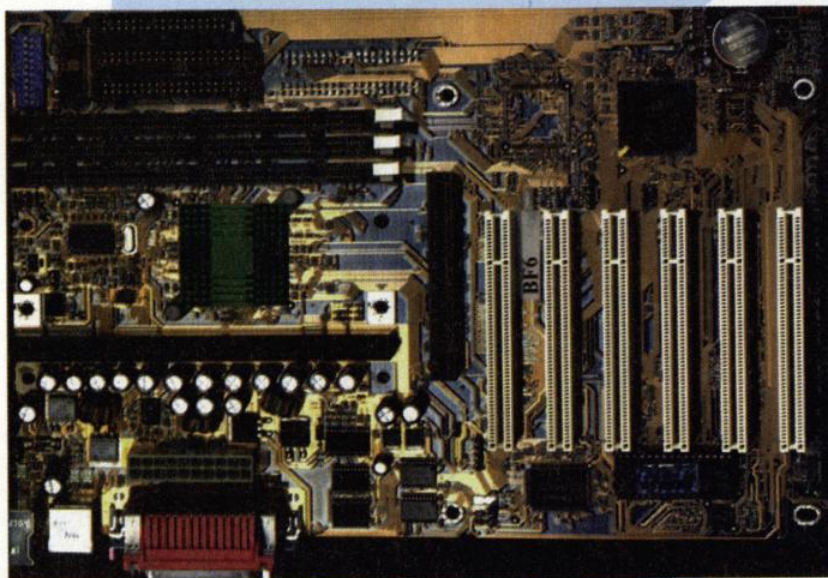
In fact, buying a superior PC doesn't require a degree in computer science. Just a little patience and the issue of Hyper before you... **Hugh Norton-Smith** tells us how to buy that gaming beast!

Most of the major online retailers (Dell, Gateway etc) allow you to configure a PC exactly to your desired specifications. However, if you have the requisite knowledge and patience, building your own PC is definitely the cheapest option available. Be warned: this is Hyper. We aren't concerned about word processing, databases, spreadsheets or Encarta. This is the computer that we, the enthusiasts, would buy: a low fat, juiced up, finely tuned ninja gaming system. Not only do we create a wickedly fast machine, but match it with some impressive peripherals! Obviously, budget must be taken into account. Like you, we have to temper our desire for the hottest machine with our limited pennies. In all, we go for a decent balance between price and kick-arse performance, with a definite emphasis on performance!

MOTHERBOARD

The motherboard is perceived as one of the most mysterious components in any new rig. All too often, people buy a motherboard based upon price alone. However, your choice of motherboard will have a huge impact upon system stability and overall performance. A decent motherboard may also include a host of other features, including overclocking tools, dual processor support, temperature monitoring and exceptional expandability. As it is the cornerstone of your rig, look for quality.

WE RECOMMEND: ABIT BF6.



CPU

The last few months has witnessed a quantum leap in CPU performance, including the release of the Pentium III and AMD Athlon at 1Ghz. We don't recommend you choose the most expensive CPU: Although the CPU is one of the most critical elements of a new computer, the top-end CPUs command a significant premium for an incremental real-world performance improvement.

WE RECOMMEND: INTEL PENTIUM III 'COPPERMINE' 800MHZ.



VIDEO CARD

For the discerning gamer, this is definitely the most important decision to make. For the highest possible frame rates and image quality, people should look at a solution based upon nVidia's GeForce 256 chipset. With a built in GPU (Geometry Processor), impressive fill-rate and up to a whopping 64meg of DDRAM, the GeForce will make you feel mighty! Until the nVidia NV15 and the Voodoo 4/5 arrive there aren't really any other options worth considering. If you're on a really tight budget, you might want to consider an nVidia TNT2 or a Voodoo 3 based product.

WE RECOMMEND: ANY NVIDIA GEFORCE 32MEG DDR BASED BOARD.

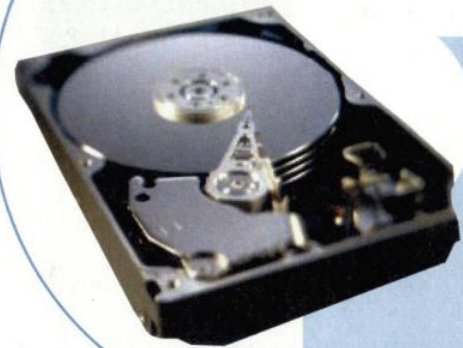


HARD DISK

The rapid advancements in magnetic storage technology, fuelled by the increasing size of software, have seen hard disks get cheaper, faster and much larger. For instance, most recent games take at least 200mb for installation. Couple this with a large collection of mp3s, a few bloated Microsoft applications and you'll be screaming for room. In sum, aim to buy the most colossal disk you can afford.

Platter speed is another important issue. Look for at least a 7,200RPM drive, coupled with ATA/66 support. The sizeable performance gain is well worth the minimal outlay.

WE RECOMMEND: QUANTUM FIREBALL KX PLUS 28GIG.



MONITOR

The monitor is probably the single most important purchase in any new computer. Thankfully, they are one area of the modern PC that doesn't require a bi-annual upgrade. Indeed, CRT technology has been around for almost 50 years, and is likely to stick with us for quite a while soon. A good, high specification monitor will last you years.

Nevertheless, the market is changing, and large monitors are becoming much more common. It seems just a short while ago, owning a monitor larger than 17" was unheard of, unless you had won the lottery. The price of 19" monitors has plummeted, and strikes a great medium between the prohibitive cost of a 21" screen and the inferior screen real estate of a 17" product. As a new monitor can be the most expensive component in your new rig, make sure you try it out BEFORE buying!

WE RECOMMEND: SONY 19" CPD-G400 TRINITRON

SOUND CARD

When building a dream PC, one item that frequently gets overlooked is the lowly sound card. We've become so accustomed to our trusty SoundBlaster Pros (et al) that we often forget that far better audio is available! Times have changed, and most soundcards now operate via the high-speed PCI bus. So what do you get when you upgrade to a PCI soundcard over the antiquated ISA standard? Primarily, you get rid of obsolete ISA transfers. This can degrade the entire system's performance at critical moments. Second, the added bandwidth afforded by PCI allows you far more simultaneous audio streams. Finally, and most importantly, you are able to achieve genuine 3D audio on your PC.

3D audio is created in a variety of competing ways. The important 3D audio APIs (programming languages) are EAX, DirectSound and A3D. As a general rule, the Aureal soundcards are best at A3D, whereas Creative products produce the most convincing EAX. If you are a DVD or audio aficionado, you might want to consider a product that includes S/PDIF and optical outputs.

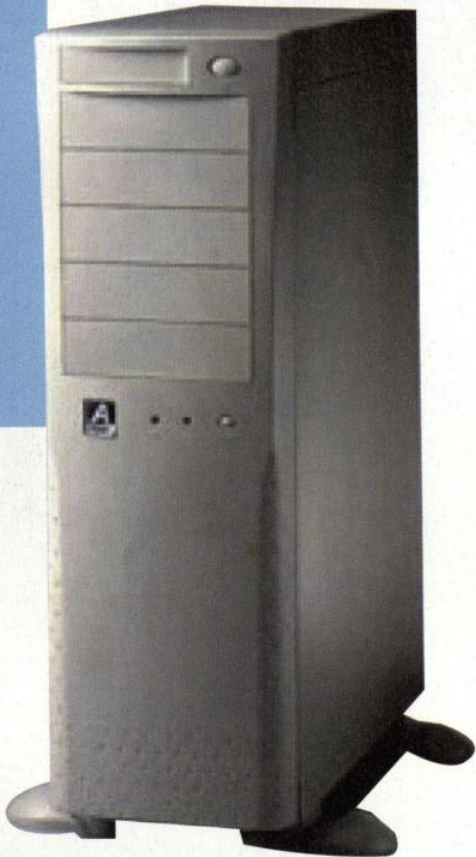
WE RECOMMEND: CREATIVE SOUND BLASTER LIVE! VALUE OR DIAMOND MONSTER SOUND MX400.



SPEAKERS

For us, hi-fidelity audio is almost as important to the overall gaming experience as high frame rates. A good speaker setup is like your monitor: you'll keep it forever. Besides, there's no point in getting a decent sound card, without some high quality speakers to match. Acceptable 3D sound, for instance, requires a 4-speaker setup and a sub-woofer. If you're a DVD or Audio nut, choose a solution with built-in Dolby Digital Decoding and an S/Pdif connector. However, if you already own a first rate home hi-fi system, connect it to your PC for the ultimate in aural nirvana.

WE RECOMMEND: CREATIVE DESKTOP THEATRE DTT2500 DIGITAL



CASE

The case is another long-term investment, which could conceivably last you through years of upgrades. Although it might seem quite a trivial decision, your choice of case may have a large bearing upon overclocking success, system stability and expandability. Cooling is one of the most important issues when building a new PC. As PCs have evolved, their power consumption has increased to meet the demanding requirements of high-end graphics cards and superscalar processors. This increased power consumption has, in turn, made computers much hotter. Ergo, buying a larger case and adding an auxiliary case fan will ensure you the best possible system stability, particularly over the warm summer months. In our experience, full tower cases are preferable.

A few hints: Make sure you purchase an ATX compliant case, with at least a 250w certified power supply. A large power supply allows for more peripherals and a 'cleaner' current.

WE RECOMMEND: AOPEN HX-08 FULL TOWER CASE.

OPERATING SYSTEM

Windows 98 has always had a stanglehold upon the consumer OS market. Despite the inherent stability problems of Windows 98, the simple interface and built-in multimedia have ensured its popularity amongst gamers. Thankfully, times are changing. Increasingly, Windows 2000 and Linux have been making inroads into a domain once exclusively held by Windows 98, and Windows Millennium is almost here.

Despite the familiar interface, Windows 2000 is a radically new beast. With a fully 32-bit kernel (no more blue screens!) and an integrated version of DirectX7, it is looking like a very viable option for gamers. Nevertheless, it still lacks the widespread compatibility of Windows 98. It also has significant system overheads.

There's been an awful lot of hype for Linux recently; Linux is the freely available UNIX based operating system that works an 'open source' development model. Dramatic improvements in the graphical user interface have allowed Linux to capture a sizeable portion of the desktop market. Some very important games have been written for Linux, including Quake 3, Myth II, Civilization: Call to Power, Descent, Doom, Ultima Online and Unreal Tournament. Many more are on the way. The advantages of Linux include fully 32-bit operation, support for multiple CPUs and rock solid stability. However, Linux has several major flaws. Primarily, it lacks decent hardware driver support. Also, it is notoriously difficult to install and configure correctly. Basically, it is an exotic OS designed with the computer elite in mind. Expect this to change soon as Linux becomes more commercially accepted.

Advanced users should be able to partition their hard drive in order to use several operating systems simultaneously. The best of both worlds.

WE RECOMMEND: WINDOWS 98SE AND WAIT FOR WINDOWS MILLENNIUM EDITION.

RECOMMENDED ONLINE RETAILERS

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EYO TECHNOLOGY

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Formerly known as Frank's Compware, EYO are a friendly Sydney based on-line computer retailer. Select your components and they will build your systems for a \$35 fee. They stock a wide range of quality gear at the lowest prices.



COMPUTERMARKET

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Sell a huge range of PC components. They even do Cash On Delivery.



DELL

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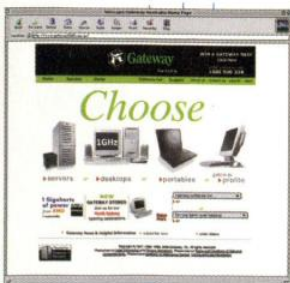
Dell offer high quality PCs at quite reasonable prices. Unlike many system manufacturers, Dell avoid generic, low quality components.



GATEWAY COMPUTERS

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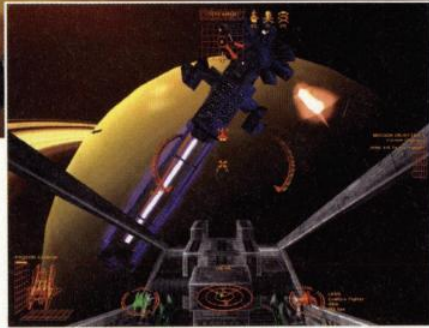
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WINWINWIN 5 COPIES OF STARLANCER for PC



Microsoft and Digital Anvil have brought us the next killer Space Combat game to pick up the slack where X-Wing Alliance, Freespace 2 and the last Wing Commander game left off. With one of the new Microsoft Force Feedback joysticks, Starlancer is a pretty thrilling experience. This is great escapism for all budding starfighters. Thanks to Microsoft, we have five copies of Starlancer to just giveaway to some lucky readers! Phwoar! To be in with a chance of winning, answer the following question...

What is the name of the next game in the Starlancer series?

Put your answer on the back of an envelope with your name and address and post it off to: Free Lancer, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Huge clue there, heheh.



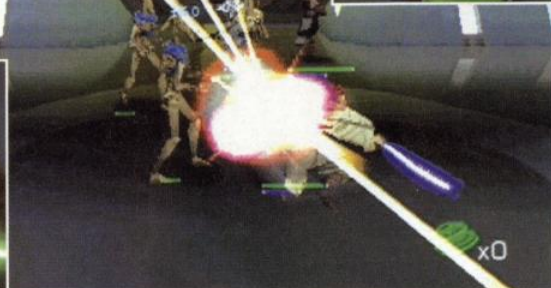
10 COPIES OF JEDI POWER BATTLES for Playstation

The first five drawn will also win a copy of The Phantom Menace on video!

Star Wars: Jedi Power Battles is getting flogged to death here at the Hyper office, but maybe that's because we're all big Star Wars fans. Not only do you get to be a Jedi, but a friend can join you in the action as your apprentice! Thanks to Metro Games, we have ten copies of Jedi Power Battles to giveaway! TEN copies! What is even cooler, is that the first FIVE correct entries drawn will also win Star Wars: Episode One - The Phantom Menace on video! Awesome!

To be in with a chance, send us a drawing of a Jedi Knight in action, or if art isn't your thing, think up a cool new Star Wars character and describe them in 50 words or less.

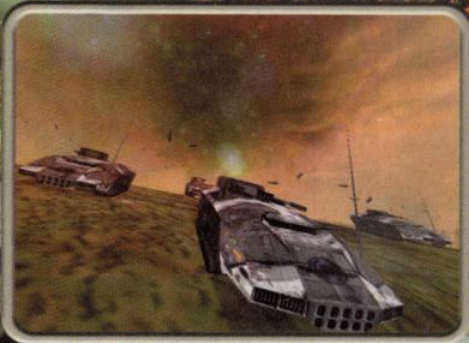
Send your entries, with your name and address on the back of your artwork or character description to: Jedi Rocks, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. May the Force be with you.



Entries close May 23rd

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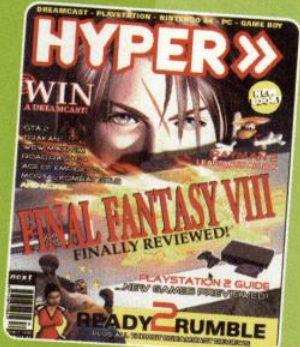
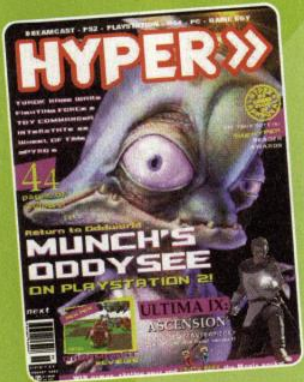
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Hyperactive 3.0 has been Hyper magazine's online presence for almost 5 years now, and after a slight hiatus, it's back - bigger and better than ever in version 3.1!

Established

in early 1995, Hyperactive has been Australia's premiere gaming site. Now it's back in the form of Hyperactive 3.1 and yes, you guessed it, it's bigger and better than ever before! Hyperactive has always had all the fine things you want from an Internet gaming site - the latest news, hot game previews, honest reviews, a plethora of the latest cheats and codes, interviews with the people who make the games we play and fantastic competitions. Mmmm... free stuff. But now Hyperactive 3.1 is here with more of what you want, and more frequently too. Hyper has always had a loose association with Hyperactive, but improvements to the latest version mean you can expect more of the things you love about this magazine on the website. Hyper and Hyperactive are now more entwined than ever to bring you the best both on and offline. If you surf over to www.hyperactive.com.au you'll find that the site offers you the opportunity to continue enjoying the magazine when you're online...

There's plenty of Eye Candy, where we bring you the pick of stunning screenshots and character designs from upcoming games. There are more downloads of the latest demos that are available for your PC, and desktop themes and wallpapers for your favourite console games too. Want to test your wit and see if it's up to the standard of the Hyper caption writers?

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efforts put on display

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Similarly, we'll be inviting opinions on issues raised on our Versus Mode page. Don't agree with the Hyper verdict? Well you can check the opinion poll and see if the numbers are on your side. Hyperactive will also give you a sneak peek into upcoming issues of Hyper, as well as online chats with the Hyper team, game developers and maybe even the odd celebrity or two.

BUT WAIT THERE'S MORE!

With more next generation consoles on the horizon and PC technology changing all the time, it's becoming increasingly important to stay informed in order to make the right gaming choices. Hyperactive 3.1 has the goods on all the systems - we'll cover the Microsoft X-Box's transition from vapourware to whatever it becomes; we're already bringing you total coverage of the battle that's hotting up between Dreamcast and the PlayStation2 and what about the Nintendo Dolphin? Maybe you'll just have to come to the website and see... all this plus the latest for the PC, PlayStation, Nintendo 64 and Game Boy.

If you can't wait for your monthly issue of Hyper to know the latest news, Hyperactive 3.1 is the place to be. Now run along, fire up your modem, and get into it at www.hyperactive.com.au

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next

MediEvil 2

EVIL TEAM



MediEvil was a hit amongst gamers looking for that "Ghouls and Ghosts 3D" game. Was this old classic (Ghouls and Ghosts) an inspiration for the MediEvil games?

Chris Sorrell — There were two main inspirations behind MediEvil: the arcade classic 'Ghouls 'n' Ghosts' for its spooky feel and platform/shooting gameplay mix, and the art style of Tim Burton's 'Nightmare Before Christmas'. Rather than closely copying either, we wanted to fuse together elements of both and present a look and feel quite different to any previous PlayStation game.

What other games or things influenced MediEvil 1 & 2?

CS — Essentially, just as Tim Burton obviously did with Nightmare Before Christmas, we wanted to explore the imagery and tongue-in-cheek horror surrounding Halloween and bring this to life as a game world and characters. This feel is exemplified by words such as 'ghoulish', 'spooky' or 'icky', all of which could be used to describe MediEvil's content!

What did you set out to achieve with MediEvil 2?

Andrew Kennedy — The first thing we did as soon as we had an idea of what we planned to do with MediEvil2, was to organise some focus groups in Europe and the US to see what the punters themselves thought of the original title, and what they were after in a sequel. Using this and the feedback from magazine reviews we set about a 3-month Design period, and endless discussion meetings aiming to identify absolutely every area we had to simply address or wanted to improve...

Improved enemy AI

We found that the combat in MediEvil1 was accused of being too

'hack'n'slash' (though it also is worth pointing out that a lot of people liked that non-too-strategic balance). We aimed to give the enemies better AI to increase the combat strategy, such that they would react better to the player's approach, blocking, retreating, attacking, etc.

More powerful and diverse range of strategic weapons

We aimed to give the player a better balance of weapons to increase the strategy side of the game, and to encourage the player to get the level chalices. Also, as it was to be set in the Victorian age, we wanted to give Dan some more 'oomph' in the selection of weapons, and better clarity as to their effectiveness on specific enemies.

We also wanted the player to be able to deal with enemies at long and short ranges simultaneously, without having to pause the action to change weapon, plus we wanted more gruesome reward for the player. We wanted to be able to chop bits off zombies, set fire to them, decapitate them, squash them... you get the idea.

Improved puzzle-play

Puzzle-play was a well-received part of MediEvil1, but some criticism was aimed at the lack of any sort of difficulty curve with these. Some players felt they were thrown in at the deep end, and some puzzles actually prevented some players from progressing. We obviously did not want this to happen again, so we aimed to simplify the clarity and execution of puzzles, and present them to the player in such a way that they learn techniques from each that help them in the later, more complex ones.

Bigger more detailed levels

The exploration aspect of MediEvil1 was essential and very much appreciated by players because the

WIN!!!

Want a copy of MediEvil 2? Thanks to Sony Computer Entertainment, we have five copies to give away! Just answer the following question...

Name all the members of the Addams Family.

Put your answer on the back of an envelope with your name and address and post it off to: Bone me up, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.

Hyper caught up with Andrew Kennedy (Producer), James Shephard (Creative Director) and Chris Sorrell (MediEvil 1 Producer), the developers behind MediEvil 1 & 2, to pick their brains about MediEvil 2, developing games and the PlayStation 2...



levels were so beautifully crafted. However, there was some criticism that the levels were too linear.

We wanted to allow the player to roam about much larger areas, but keep the graphical variation and quality (as larger doesn't always mean better). Also, it seemed obvious to extend the maps up as well as out, so we needed to give Dan the ability to climb.

Improved characterisation and story line
Level selection on MediEvil1 was accessed through a static 2D screen. We wanted the player to stay as Dan for as much of the gaming experience as possible, so level selection needed to be part of the gameplay.

Similarly, the roles of the help and shop mechanisms in MediEvil1 were supplied by static gargoyles, so we replaced them with a cheeky help ghost and a wheeling-dealing spiv.

More playable characters

The idea of allowing the player to be a second and complimentary character appealed to us greatly, so DanHand was born. He would be essential not just for gameplay variation, but to offer reward and level revisits to the player.

Additionally, the Dragon armour idea from MediEvil1 was we liked by the punters, and so we wanted to give Dan some new disguises and outfits to wear.

Improved player control

There were a few frustrating areas of Dan control in MediEvil1, specifically, he could push but not pull, so rooms could not have corners or he would not be able to retrieve an object that was pushed into a corner. So we had to have 'pull'. Also, the desire to expand the map sizes for exploration purposes promoted the need for Dan to climb, and finally because of some of the platform areas of the game, we felt a need to tighten Dan's control. We wanted him to be able to land on a 'sixpence'!

How long did it take to make and what is the average day like in a development studio?

AK — From initial brief to completed product the game took 18 months to complete. There is no average day in the development studio. We all start at 9:00am, half the team break off around 12:30 to play network Quake, (These guys rock! — Ed.) and then instead of going home at 5:30pm, the curries get ordered around 7:00pm and they provide sustenance to get through to midnight. There have been people here all night on occasions, but as a rule, in comparison to other titles developed in this studio, MediEvil2 has been quite straightforward, hitting the milestones on time, and not causing the team to have to do too many late nights.

The actual Production phase itself lasted just 4 or 5 months, but we needed a team of 30 people to reach Alpha on time, and since then the numbers have slowly reduced as we have travelled through Post-production towards Master Submission.

There's a lot of humour in the game, did you have a lot of fun making it?

James Shephard — Yes we had our moments, but writing a funny script is just as much hard work as a serious one, sometimes harder as people have very different ideas about what is funny.

However, a number of things in the game always make me laugh, such as when you squash a fat lady with your powered up hammer, always gets me every time!

It is rewarding for us to see people play the game and laugh at all the right moments.

Was there anything you didn't have time to include, or cool things you thought of when it was too late?

JS — Dan can take his head off and put it on a severed hand, to form Dan-hand. Late in development, we realised how cool it would be for Dan to have the ability to place a bomb on a hand to form 'bomb-hand', that could run to the nearest enemy and blow him to smithereens.

We put in a number of costume changes, because Dan is such a quirky character, he looks even more ridiculous when done-up in a fancy costume, so there were some other costume changes that we considered getting into the game.... Such as 'Deep-sea-diver-Dan' and 'Chicken-Dan'.

Would you ever want to see MediEvil become an animated CGI movie or something similar?

AK — That would be brilliant! A whole CGI movie in the style of our in-game FMV. There have been some enquiries and efforts made in this area by a number of people in different countries, and as far as we know these are still on-going, so you'll have to watch what happens in the future.

JS — A live action movie would be good too... as long as Catherine Zeta-Jones got to play Kiya, naked apart from her bandages... phwoarr!!!

Have you had thoughts of MediEvil 3 yet?

JS — In truth yes... of course. The whole team has enjoyed working on MediEvil2 immensely, and there is strong support for doing a sequel. However, it is highly unlikely Dan will be back on PlayStation1, but as for Fortesque on PlayStation2? Personally I would love to bring him back as I've grown quite attached to the bony little bugger.

AK — It would be true to say there are thoughts about doing a second MediEvil sequel, but for the time being, just completing this title is

taking 100% of our concentration, so ask us in July!

We also really have to see if MediEvil2 is a success first... We have tried to offer the public more than just a sequel with MediEvil2, and reaction to that could go either way. However, we are very pleased with the results, and confident the game-playing public will like it too.

As for the setting, with a fantastical game such as MediEvil, there are no restrictions... especially as Dan has the ability to 'time-travel'. Perhaps your readers could suggest some new scenarios for us?

What do you see in the future for gaming?

JS — The clichéd response would be internet gaming, and to be honest it is likely to be a massive influence on future gaming. But also, with the advent of PlayStation2 and similar next generation consoles, there is definitely a place for graphically beautiful story-led adventures, and further 'self-pleasuring'.

To explain... just as people enjoy reading books by themselves, so game players throughout the world will continue to enjoy immersing themselves in action adventure titles, and this area will probably grow as the technology to create almost 'real' worlds develops.

What's your next project?

AK — We are pleased to say that we are to stay as a team, and shall be working on a PlayStation2 title. We have to cross the T's and dot the I's on MediEvil2, then we shall be free to catch up on missed holiday, and return refreshed for a new start in a few months... Can't wait!

Thanks guys!

DREAMCAST

DEAD OR ALIVE 2



42 »HYPER

The Dreamcast proves once again why it's the console of choice for fighting game fans. Dead Or Alive 2 totally blows us away! Jiggly goodness.



REVIEWS



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

PLAYSTATION

- 48.....SYPHON FILTER 2
- 60.....STAR WARS: JEDI POWER BATTLES
- 66.....MEDIEVIL 2
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- 75.....CRICKET 2000
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DREAMCAST

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PC

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- 68.....STARLANCER

NINTENDO 64

- 56.....DAIKATANA 64
- 64.....POKÉMON STADIUM
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GAMEBOY

- 81.....YODA STORIES
- 81.....TONY HAWK SKATEBOARDING
- 81.....MICRO MACHINES 1 & 2
- 81.....TOY STORY 2



48



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58



56

THE HYPER CREW'S TOP 5

ELIOT FISH – Editor

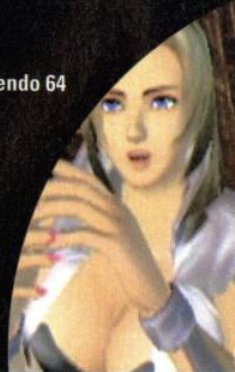
1. Jedi Power Battles – PlayStation
It's so addictive! I can feel the Force flowing through me!
2. Dead Or Alive 2 – Dreamcast
3. Asheron's Call – PC
4. Force Commander – PC
5. Cricket 2000 – PlayStation

CAM SHEA – Deputy Editor

1. Diablo 2 – PC
Beware the sand maggots and baboon demons.
2. Dead Or Alive 2 – Dreamcast
3. Quake 3 Arena – PC
4. Tony Hawk Skateboarding – N64
5. Medievil 2 – PlayStation

ARTHUR ADAM – Reviewer

1. GoldenEye – Nintendo 64
Simply put, GoldenEye still has the finest gameplay mechanics for any first person shooter. Xenia looks mighty fine as well in her tight leathers. Grrrrrr...
2. Unreal Tournament – PC
3. Pokémon Stadium – Nintendo 64
4. Soldier of Fortune – PC
5. Donkey Kong Jr. – Intellivision

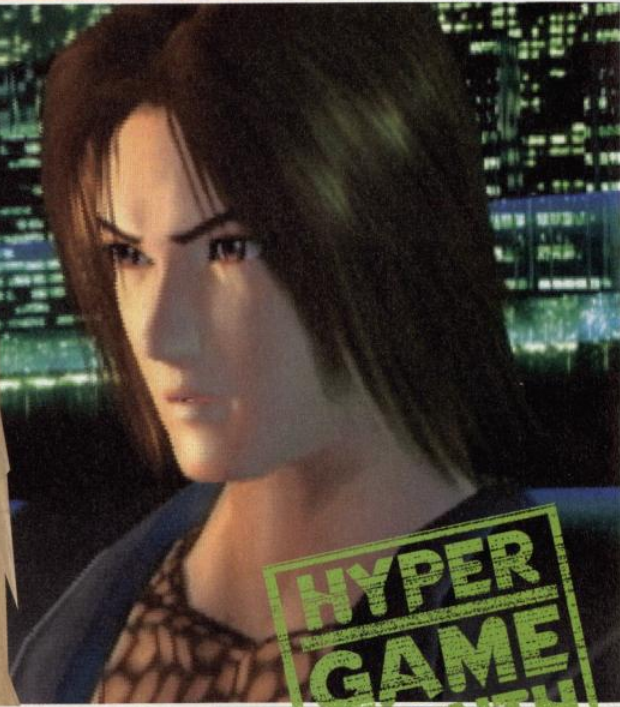
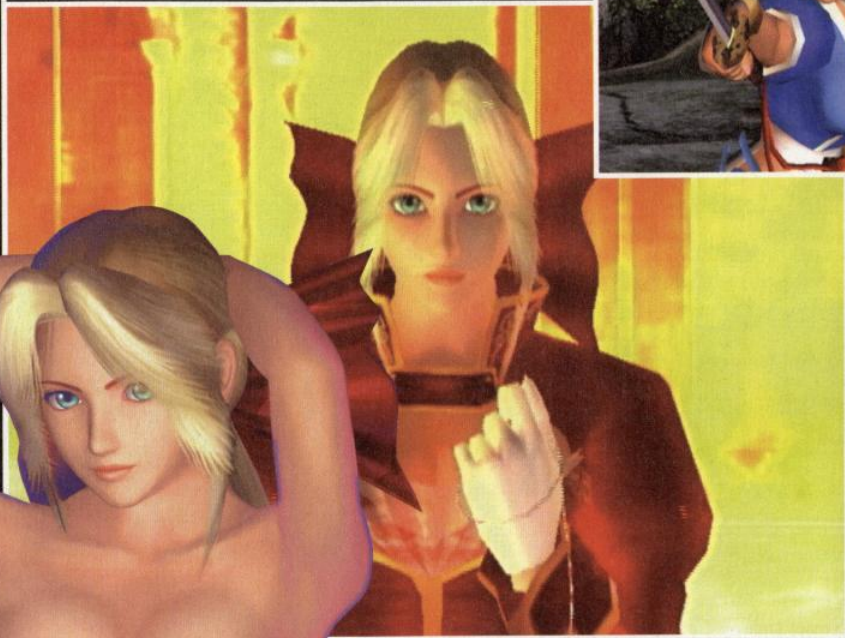
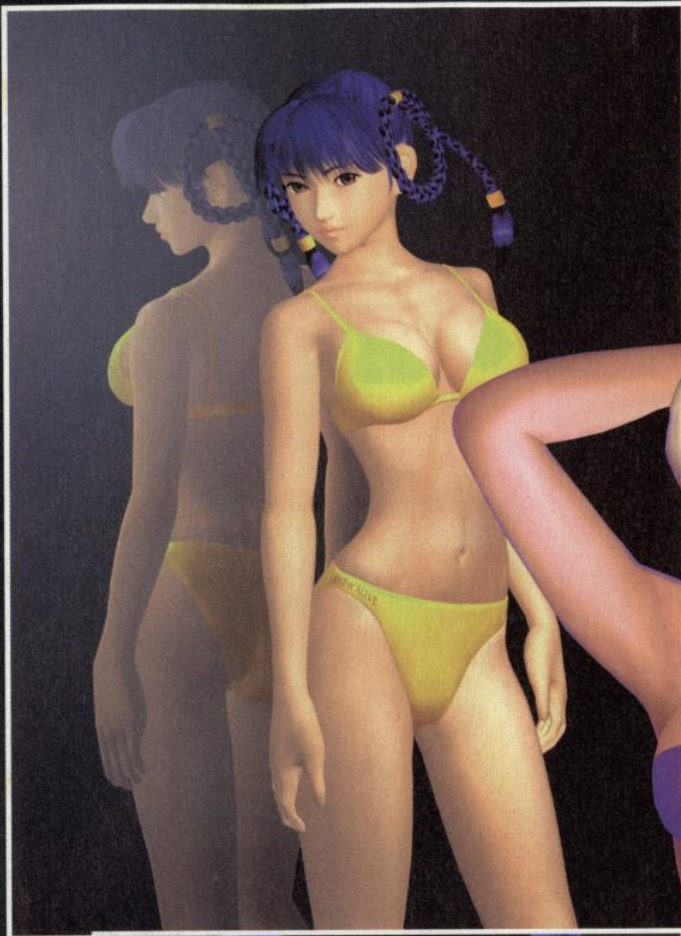


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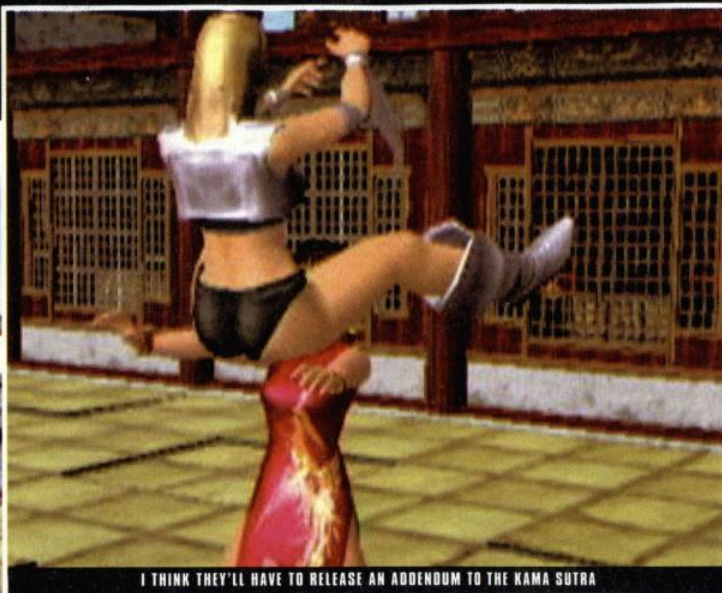
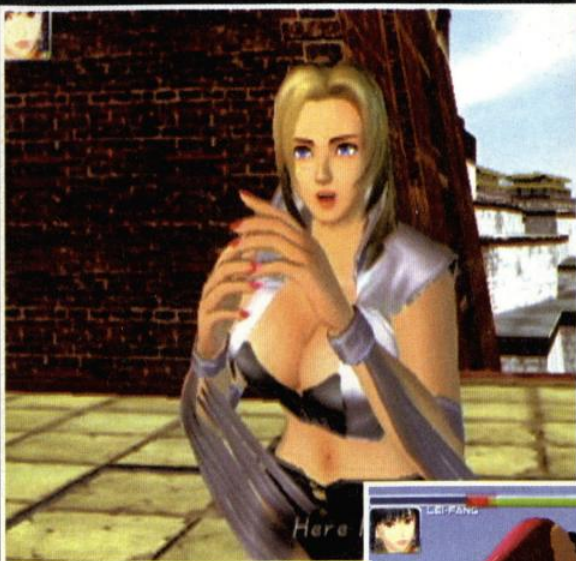




**HYP
ER
GAME
OF THE
MONTH**

OR DEAD ALIVE 2

He had the nude cheat, so we had to give this review to **Kevin Cheung**.

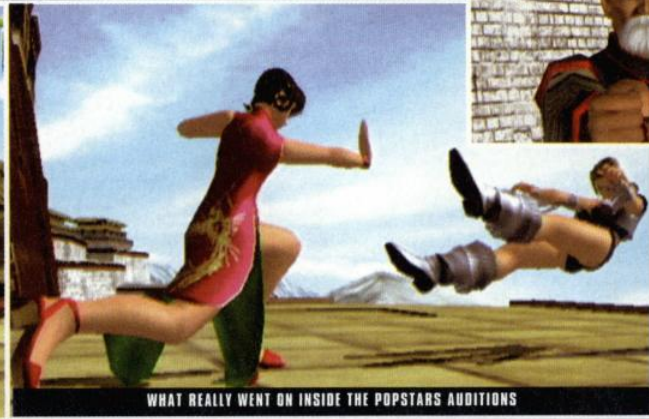


I THINK THEY'LL HAVE TO RELEASE AN ADDENDUM TO THE KAMA SUTRA

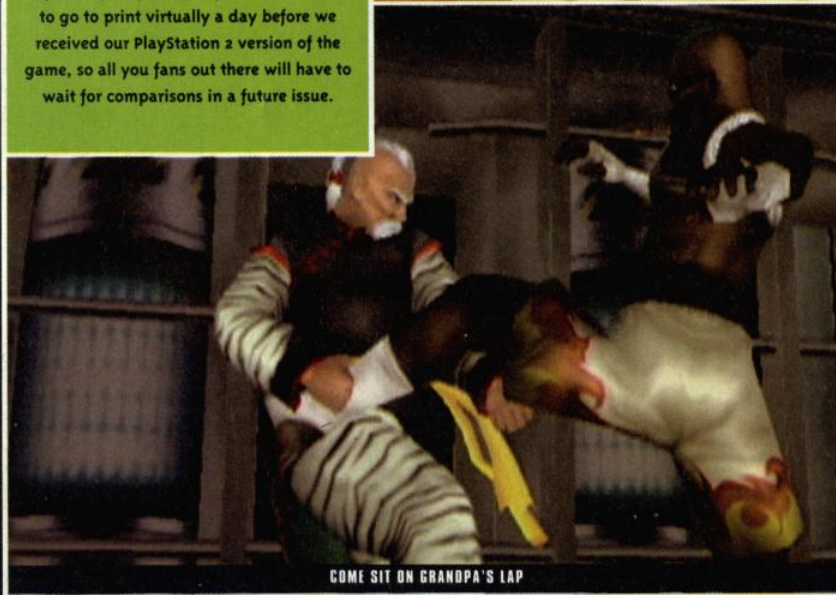


HEAD TO HEAD WITH THE PLAYSTATION 2

Dead Or Alive 2 will prove to be one of the main battlegrounds as comparisons are being made between the Dreamcast and PlayStation 2. The PlayStation 2 version is already out in Japan. The game supports 4-player simultaneous, is encoded in DVD format and boasts 1.5 million polygons more than what the Dreamcast hardware is capable of. Unfortunately, this review had to go to print virtually a day before we received our PlayStation 2 version of the game, so all you fans out there will have to wait for comparisons in a future issue.



WHAT REALLY WENT ON INSIDE THE POPSTARS ADDITIONS



COME SIT ON GRANOPA'S LAP



button from the first game. The Free button is basically for blocking, but it is also used in concert with the Punch button for throws, as well as for countering and free 3D movement.

MORE BOUNCE AND BODY

Thanks to Tecmo's use of Sega's new Naomi arcade technology, Dead Or Alive 2 is one of the most visually impressive games yet seen on the Dreamcast. The most obvious graphical feat is the level of realism achieved by the animation and super high-resolution textures on each character. Every one of them move, punch, kick, and throw with extraordinary grace, with one grapple and throw flowing seamlessly into another. Through the clever use of dynamic camera angles, you will never encounter one of those instances in which a throw will result in one of the characters magically shifting two centimetres to the left so that the animation looks right. Hair and clothing drift carelessly in the wind. Leather looks like leather. Zack's metallic costume puts Dural to shame. And yes, even the breasts animate so well that you don't notice them anymore.

However, the crowning achievement of Dead Or Alive 2 is in the level designs. Each level is multi-tiered and modelled in full 3D. This means that instead of fighting on just the one battleground, it's possible to fight on multiple levels. The end result is nothing short of spectacular, producing

visual delights that not even Soul Calibur's flashy transparency effects can hope to compare to. On one level, you could be fighting inside a clock tower, and if everything is positioned correctly, you can smash your opponents through the stained glass window, send them hurtling down to the ground amid a shower of shattered glass. But that's not all: you can jump down and continue beating seven shades out them in an even bigger arena! Or how about kicking an opponent over the edge of a waterfall? Or smashing an opponent through the safety fences of a Chinese temple? In strict visual, gameplay, and fun-factor terms, this kind of fighting action beats everything the Dreamcast has seen before hands down.

Aurally, Dead Or Alive 2 is strong in every department. It's a source of immense delight to this reviewer that the voices have been kept in their original Japanese form, with an option to switch English subtitles on and off! The in-game music is also brilliantly composed to suit the bassy effects, but for some reason, the Western programmers have chosen to include a terribly inappropriate metal track in the opening sequence. You can't miss it: it's the only part of the game that doesn't sound Japanese.

As if providing an awesome fighting game isn't enough, Tecmo have also gone to the effort of providing several excellent modes of play. The most

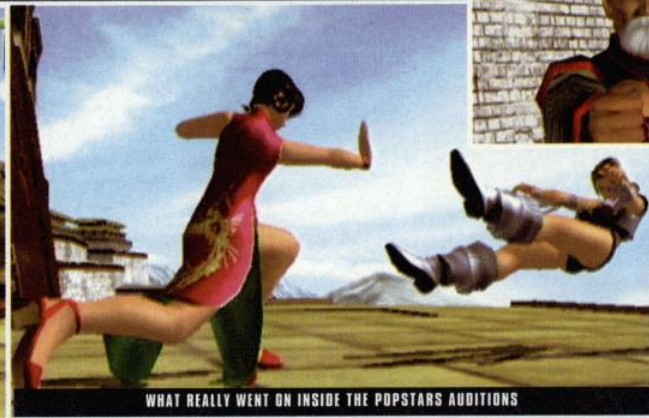


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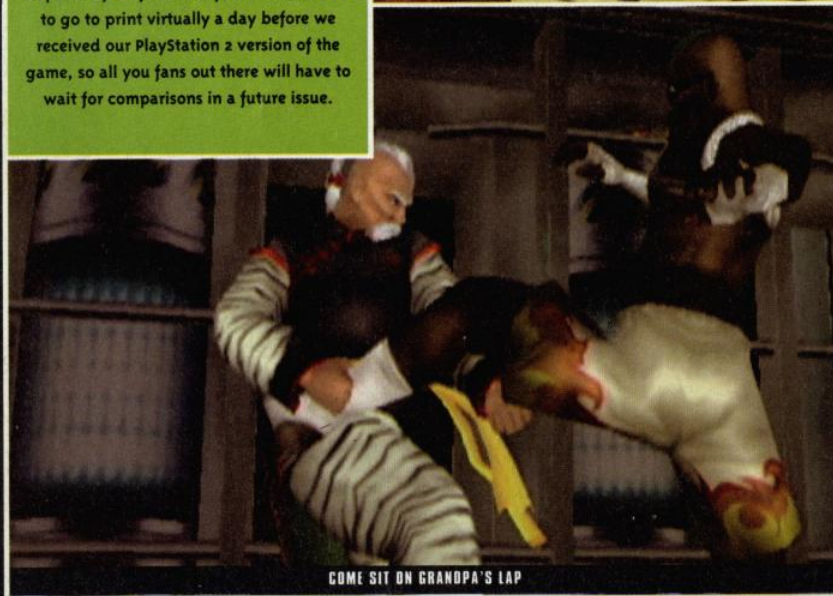


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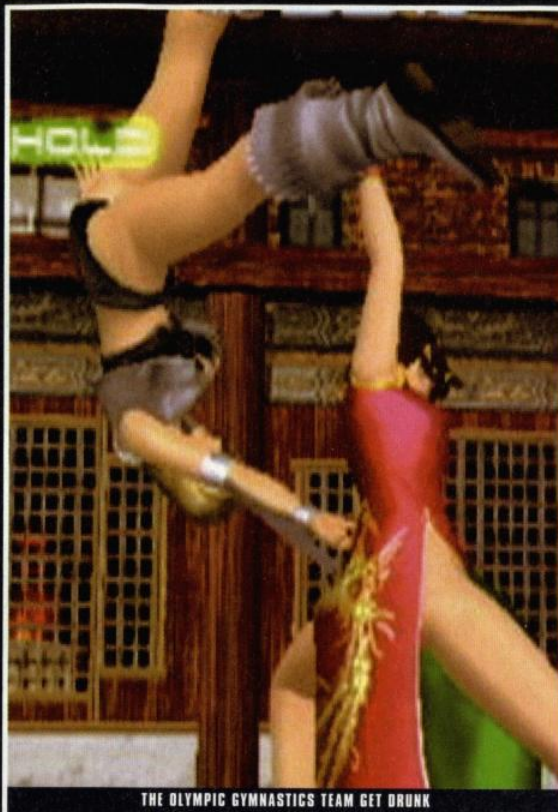
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As if providing an awesome fighting game isn't enough, Tecmo have also gone to the effort of providing several excellent modes of play. The most

If ever there was a reason to go out and buy the Dreamcast arcade stick, this is it. Just think of the extra enjoyment you'll get out of DOA2, as well as Soul Calibur.



THE OLYMPIC GYMNASTICS TEAM GET DRUNK



NUDE CODE!

This is not a hoax. Dead Or Alive 2 has a Nude Code and we unlocked it! (Above) Check out this one 'least harmful' screenshot we could print!

notable of these is the Tag Match, where you and a tag-team partner fight it out against other partners. This opens up a whole new range of combos, manoeuvres, and co-operative attacks. While this mode works almost perfectly, it's disappointing that the Tag Match only lets you fight in one arena.

It's interesting, though, that the Tournament Mode lets you pick up to 5 players for a series of traditional battles. The fact that there are no load times between each character would suggest that it's possible to "tag" between characters any time you wanted. We're all a little baffled that such a feature wasn't incorporated.

BEWARE THE CHEAP PLAYERS

While there's visually nothing to complain about — except the odd bit of slowdown — there is much to be said about Dead Or Alive 2's gameplay and design. First of all, some of the character attributes are way out of proportion. Some combos are just too powerful and too easy to pull off over and over again without somebody throwing the control pad on the floor screaming "this is bullshit!". The fact that a character like Jann Lee can have so many powerful moves (thus giving any player an automatic advantage) cheapens the value of the game.

Secondly, the controls haven't been translated very well to the Dreamcast. The new Free Button is confusing

enough as it is to come to grips to. The Dreamcast version allows you to use the analogue thumbpad for 3D movement, but this removes virtually all sense of precision as you press out the D-pad combinations. This is bound to turn off any fighting purist. For that reason, unless you have great dexterity, arcade sticks are strongly recommended.

Finally — and this is from a hardcore fighting fan's perspective — the collision detection resembles Tekken. That is, when you block an attack, your character will be gradually shifted back on the horizontal plane. This is as opposed to Virtua Fighter 3, which more correctly portrays the momentum and bodily disorientation from the direct point of limb-to-body contact. This is probably the only serious technical design gripe to be had of the game.

At the end of the day, Dead Or Alive 2 is a fighting game you must have. Whether you're a newbie or an experienced fighter, this game is possessed of a very easy learning curve that leads to a decent depth of gameplay. Those of you who thought Virtua Fighter 3 was too much of a sim will appreciate the awesome fantasy elements of the game. While there are numerous oversights to the mechanics of the fighting action, the potential that is offered by the countering and multi-tiered arena systems is too tantalising a prospect to ignore. ■



ARE YOU OLD ENOUGH TO PLAY?

When you go through your options screen, you'll find that Dead Or Alive 2 has a setting where it asks how old you are. The lowest age you can set is 13 — in which the ladies' breasts are smaller and rock solid, with zero bounce, drawing the least possible attention to them. Their breasts get slightly bigger and bounce a little more as you set your age higher. A little experimentation of our own found that 28 is the age for optimum size and bounce to set the game at. Of course, the maximum age you can select is 99 — in which case we'll leave the results to your imagination.



BRASSIERE-O-METER



PLUS

Wonderfully dynamic gameplay. Brilliant visuals and choreography.

MINUS

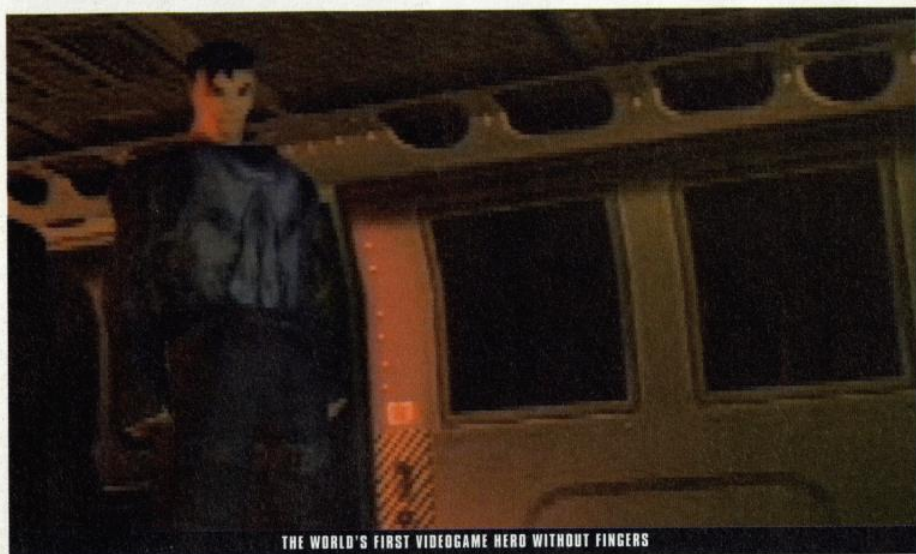
Fidgety controls take a bit of getting used to. That damned metal guitar track is awful.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
95	87	90

OVERALL

92

The most enjoyable fighting game on the Dreamcast to date. Beginners and experts alike will love this game.



THE WORLD'S FIRST VIDEOGAME HERO WITHOUT FINGERS



SYPHON FILTER 2

With a nickname like 'Python', **DMC** was the only man for the job.

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action/Adventure
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: 999 Studios
PRICE: \$69.95
RATING: M
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock, Memory Card

i The original Syphon Filter was a surprise package from the small developing house Eidetic, and it rocked the PSX hard. A spy game that mixed equal doses of stealth and slaughter, loaded with cinematic atmosphere, it suffered due to the success of its stealthier cousin, Metal Gear Solid. So what have Eidetic offered this time around to mark Syphon Filter 2 out for greatness in the increasingly crowded spy game market?

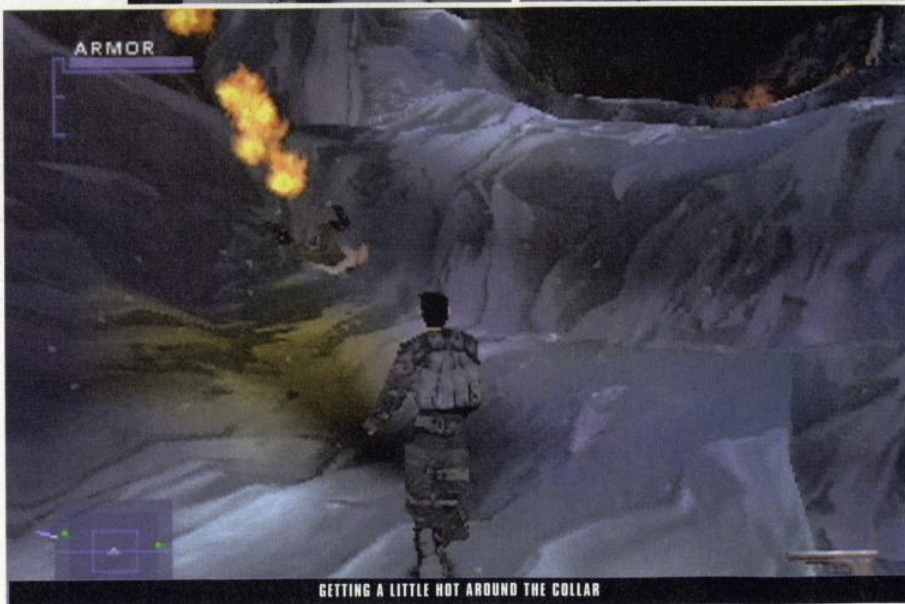
HOW CAN THE SAME THING HAPPEN TO THE SAME GUY TWICE?

In the great tradition of sequels, we are presented with a package that brings us more of the same, only better (well, mostly). The story starts immediately where the original left off, and in the same cinematic vein. Agents Gabe Logan and Lian Xing have been sold out by 'the Agency'. Gabe has the dirt on their evil plans to keep developing the Syphon Filter Virus and sell it the highest bidder, while his partner Lian

has been infected with it, and taken prisoner as an integral part of it's development.

Unfortunately this is all rather convoluted, and assumes that you know the story of the original. If you jumped straight into this, it could take some time to figure out what the hell is going on. Even having played the original, getting a handle on the labyrinthine plot is a task. This epic (and somewhat cliched) story of tough guy versus government corruption, is developed through copious in-game FMV.

The game develops the story from the perspective of both Gabe and Lian. As you complete a level with one, the game switches to the other. Your missions are co-ordinated via radio with another operative, whose information weaves the two stories together. Playing two people allows for a diversity of gameplay and locations, that would not be possible through controlling one character alone. This helps develop the complex narrative, and give



GETTING A LITTLE HOT AROUND THE COLLAR

the world in which you play depth.

You begin as Gabe and his team parachute into the alps from their burning plane, and you must find a way out of the mountains, while under constant attack. These missions tend to be action oriented, featuring copious slaughter and constant movement. They have an adrenaline pumping edge to them that keeps you moving: pressing in from all sides, the enemy knows where you are, and are hunting you down like a dog.

By contrast, stealth and patience is of the utmost importance as Lian sneaks around an airbase where she is being held prisoner. Being spotted means setting off the alarm and failing your mission. Neither are you allowed to kill any of the soldiers, who have been duped the Agency to believe you are a terrorist. You must observe the guards and their movements, and suddenly the taser, the policeman's best friend, becomes of utmost importance. Of course this means the often difficult task of getting

close enough to fry someone's arse, without getting spotted.

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE

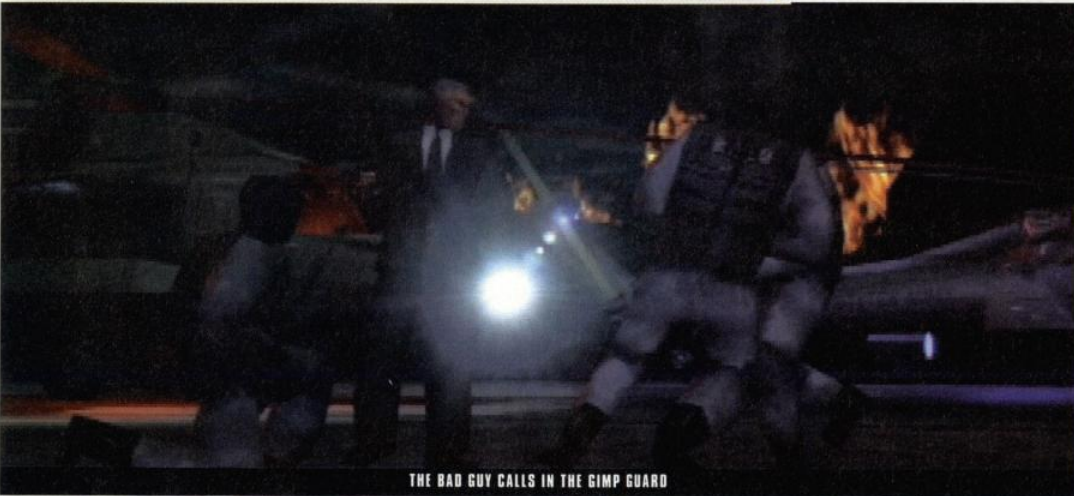
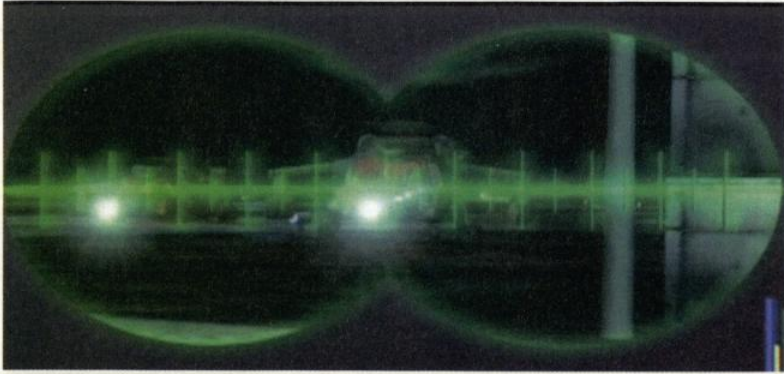
The greatest beauty of the game is the sheer variety of tasks you need to perform to complete your missions. Apart from full on blasting, you are constantly being required to find creative solutions to things (usually involving sneaking about the place). This can range from sneaking up behind snipers to stuff a grenade up their date (metaphorically of course), to taking out searchlights, or blowing up obstructions with C4. As the game cuts between Gabe and Lian, the gameplay is developed in different ways. This all adds up to a game with a variety of tasks, and a nice balance of brainwork and blasting that keeps you pushing on to see what it offers up next.

In an admirable step, the missions have been structured in a realistic way (well, at least it mirrors my chaotic existence). By this I mean that things never go according to

plan. Rather than having your mission objectives defined entirely at the beginning of a level, they unfold as you progress through the level. At first your mission may have three seemingly simple objectives. No problemo Uncie Herb. But as you progress, the vagueries of the real world intervene, and right royally screw things up for you. You might find your path blocked by a cave-in, trapped by snipers, or discovering an agent to extract valuable information from. By the time you finish the level, you'll have completed up to ten tasks. Each of these forms a mid-level save point, which are more prevalent than in the original. A double edged sword, this makes the game less frustrating, but slightly easier.

AND NOW YOU DIE...

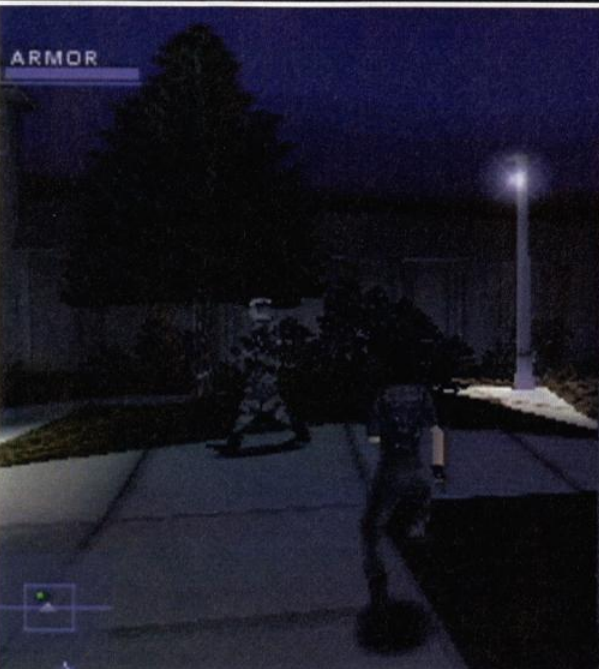
Like it's predecessor, the control in this game is fluid and intuitive, and less anal than many 3D adventure romps. This is perfect for hooning about the place laying waste to your



THE BAD GUY CALLS IN THE GIMP GUARD



OUR HERO DONS HIS BULLET-PROOF HALTER TOP



ARMOR



HEALTH

45 AMMO MAXED

32



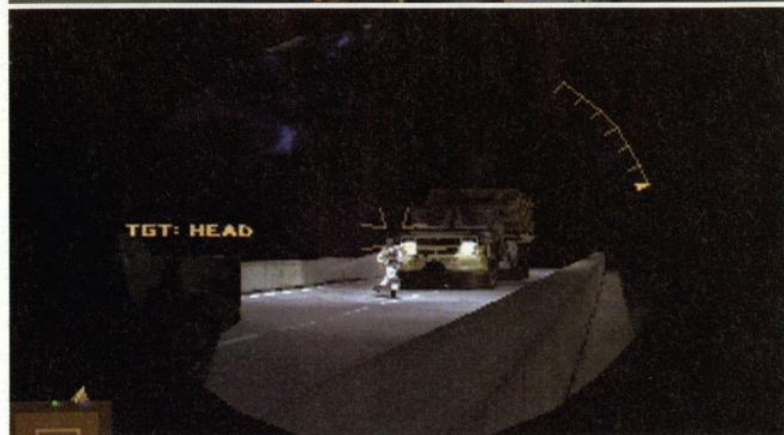
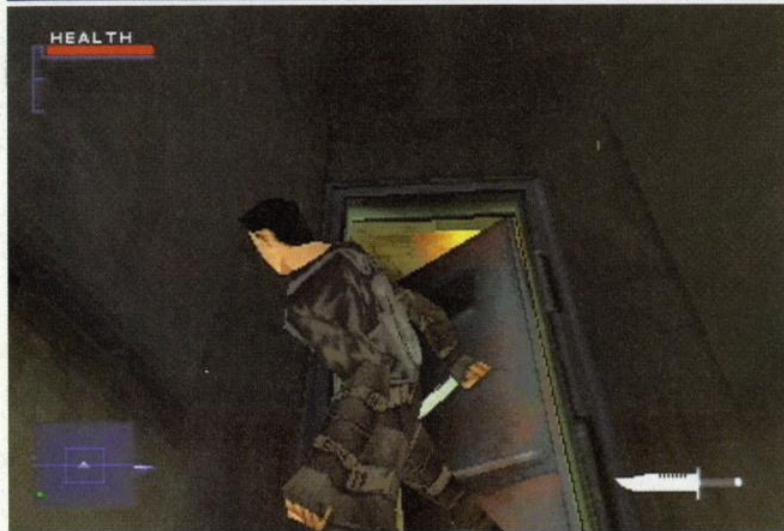
15/15

LOVE EACH OTHER? WE WANT TO KILL EACH OTHER!

Eidetic have added a two-player death-match option. There is a large selection of maps, players and weapons to choose from, but unfortunately the game mechanics and style of Syphon Filter don't really lend themselves to multiplayer. The maps are quite small, the graphics suffer, and headshots mean that games are often short and one sided. An interesting addition, but it's really only a diversion.



THE MENU SYSTEM REMINDS OUR HERO WHERE HE STUCK HIS BINOCULARS



enemy (or fleeing the battlefield with loud cries of 'I'm a sissy boy, please don't hurt me'). This has its disadvantages though, as precision movement is sometimes difficult, and leads to repeated plummeting off assorted precipices. To remedy this Eidetic have given the analogue control greater precision, and Gabe and Lian now have the ability to walk.

You can take out your enemies in two ways. There is an automatic lock on function. Multiple clicks will cycle you through all the enemy soldiers in your field of vision. This can be useful simply to strategically assess a situation, discovering the number and location of the enemy. Depending on your target's distance, their level of cover, and how long you are locked on them for, the 'targeting bar' in the corner builds up. The beauty of this targeting system is you can lock on your foe, and run and fire at the same time. No matter which way you turn, you'll keep your lock. While you sacrifice accuracy, this will save your arse in many tight situations.

Alternatively, you can aim manually. The targeting system differentiates between shots on a soldier's head, torso, limbs, and weapon, with

a bullet to each region causing different amounts of damage. Head shots take someone out in one swift blow, and the game kindly tells you when you've got a lock on someone's grey matter. As your opponents start to take the sensible precaution of wearing flak jackets, deftly plugging a hole in someone's head becomes an important skill. One flaw with the game is combat at extreme close range. While Gabe may be able to put a slug through an unsuspecting grunt's head at a thousand yards, somehow when you get up close, he loses all clue and can't seem to understand that a useful part of the process of killing someone is to point your gun in their direction.

Like all good sequels, one of the biggest improvements is the size of the arsenal. There are 25 weapons in total now, including an assortment of machine guns and pistols, a taser, sniper rifles and a flame thrower. The sniper rifles are particularly entertaining!

THERE'S A HOLE IN MY GAMEPLAY

This game's biggest flaw is the very trial and error nature of the gameplay. There are many situations that, first time around, you simply won't have a

! Metal Gear Solid 2 is under construction in the depths of Konami at the moment. This should be a killer sequel if ever there was one. If you like Syphon Filter 2, then keep an eye out for this one...



THAT'S ONE WAY TO SOLVE YOUR TAX BILL



"HEY WHERE DID THESE FINGERS COME FROM?"

clue how to play. Or, if you do, you make a small mistake, you're spotted, and it's all over. A large part of this is that, unlike Metal Gear Solid, there is no enemy 'field of vision' marked on your map. So there is no way of telling when you are in the line of sight of the enemy, or when you are close enough for them to spot you. It often comes down to 'try, try and try again', (and eventually, if that doesn't work, yell very loudly and throw something large and heavy through the television). Thankfully a couple of goes is usually all it takes to solve your sticky situation, but it does get tedious after a while.

Graphically, Syphon Filter 2 closely resembles its predecessor. While the original looked good in its time, the sequel is looking a bit messy and dated. However, the sound is highly appropriate, and very cinematic. The art of movie music is, quite frankly, a bizarre one. A soundtrack has to keep the tension high, yet not be so prominent that it takes away from the visuals or the narrative. The Syphon Filter soundtrack fits the bill perfectly, creating an air of generalised tension and urgency, without ever being remotely memorable. The voice act-

ing hasn't improved however. Gabe is so throaty, he sounds like he's either dying of throat cancer, or should be acting on a late night phone sex ad. He also still runs like he's laid something unpleasant in his pants.

The original was a beautiful and thoroughly compelling game to play, largely because of its freshness. While derivative in style, it served up the fine art of killing people in always innovative and interesting ways, adding something new every level to keep you addicted. The compulsion was amplified by a complex movie-style story, cinematic effects, and an atmosphere so chunky you could carve it. Syphon Filter 2 brings us all this, and there are as many brilliant and interesting missions and ideas throughout the game. Unfortunately, the creativity starts to run out towards the end, and the same old stuff starts to wear a little thin.

While Eidetic have succumbed to that most unfortunate of developer's diseases, sequel-itis, this is still a quality production that thoroughly entertains. Despite its flaws, this is still barrels of action-packed, stealthy fun. ■

WIN!!!

Thanks to Sony Computer Entertainment, we have five copies of Syphon Filter 2 to give away! To be in with a chance to win yourself a copy, answer this question...

Name another game from 989 Studios.

Put your answer on the back of an envelope and send it to: i Spy, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.



SEQUEL-O-METER



PLUS

Good mix of puzzle solving, stealth, and killing. Diversity of missions.

MINUS

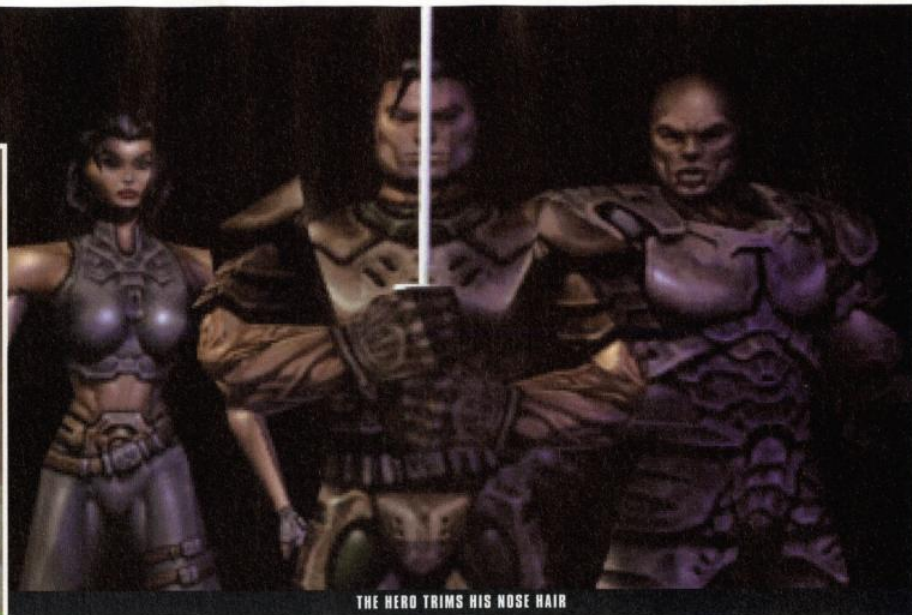
Very similar to the original. Gets a bit samey towards the end.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
85	88	90

OVERALL

89

Close to being a classic title.



DAIKATANA



AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: FPS
 PLAYERS: 1-4
 PUBLISHER: Kemco
 PRICE: \$89.95
 RATING: M
 SUPPORTS: Rumble Pak, Memory Card, Expansion Pak

Something is wrong. Daikatana has surfaced... and on the N64! **Arthur Adam** investigates.

Every now and again, a phenomenon will pass us by, causing people to pause and muse in interest for a few moments before they get bored and continue on with their lives. One such phenomenon relates to the game Daikatana. Extraordinarily, this first person shooter (FPS), which has been developed primarily for PC gaming, has hit the N64 first. Huh? The N64's going to get Daikatana before any other system? Now that the novelty of this revelation has worn off: On with the show.

DONKEY KONG, FISHCAKES AND RUBBER CHICKENS

John Romero may not be a name as commonly recognised as say, Donkey Kong, but his work literally helped shape the FPS genre. Working as part of the id Software team, John Romero played an important part in landmark games such as Doom and Quake. After a rather nasty incident at the office involving a rubber chicken and three meters of gaffer tape, he left id to form his own company, Ion Storm Entertainment. This is where Daikatana steps in.

Using Quake engine mechanics, Daikatana has tried to veer from the beaten track of your average FPS. Firstly, your character has a set of attributes (strength, agility, speed, etc), not dissimilar to an RPG, which can be built upon making your charac-

ter even spiffier than before. Daikatana also takes you across the globe through four time periods. The places you'll visit include Viking Norway, 25th Century Japan, Ancient Greece and 21st Century San Francisco. And what better way to frolic about in the time continuum but with a Japanese sword, known as a daikatana.

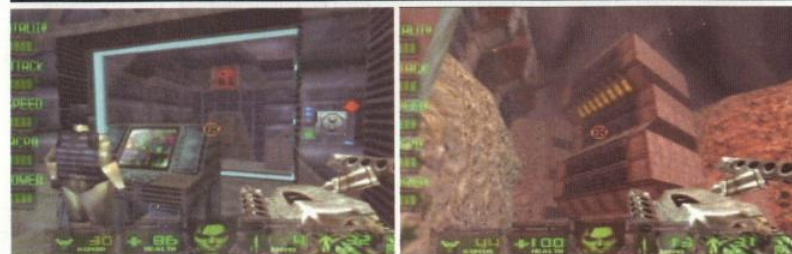
The story goes a little something like this; an archeologist who discovers this magical daikatana is slain in cold blood and the sword pilfered by his evil assistant (not very helpful for an assistant really). The evil assistant plans to go back in time and steal the cure for AIDS, letting him reap the rewards of notoriety and a money windfall. It is up to you to reclaim the sword and put it to good use, like going back to when you were in high school and telling your younger self not to eat that fishcake from the fridge before the formal.

FENCE SITTING GRAPHICS

Although the graphics in Daikatana are nice, they're somewhat of a mixed bag and generally consist of a palette mostly displaying dull colours. The levels are detailed enough, although not to the standards as seen in Rare's classic, GoldenEye. At times you'll wander into a room that appears unadorned, then move into the next that is quite comprehensive, with computer terminals, furniture,



SO THIS IS WHERE CHICKEN McNUGGETS COME FROM!





When will Daikatana be released on PC? The release schedule now says June. Will it happen? If so, we could have a review for you next issue!



FOURSOME FUN

The multiplayer option in Daikatana plays exceptionally well. Unlike *Armored Core*, Daikatana runs at a decent frame-rate, permitting some serious deathmatches. The levels are laid out perfectly, accommodating for all types of players. There are sniper spots, open frag-fest areas and plenty of escape routes. You'll have a blast here if you can find three friends with plenty of time.

humans frozen in cylindrical cases and the likes. The characters also share this weird mix of varied detail. For example, some of the soldiers look flat and move about with careless animations. If you punch one of them, they'll spray what looks to be mucus into the air then use basically the same death animation as always. Some of the first enemies are (get this) green tree frogs and horseflies. Your character may be receiving damage from an unknown source and after a while you'll work out that a toad is nibbling on your toe. On the other hand, you will encounter huge mech-like bots with rotating bits and pieces that charge towards you convincingly. They'll fire rockets and machine guns that light up the surroundings and cause nifty looking explosions.

The levels themselves tend to be linear and filled with switches to progress. To some extent, they resemble those seen in *Doom*. For instance, in one section I had to push a flashing red switch that activated a bridge above, then catch an elevator and run across the bridge before it receded. Still, Ion Storm have tried to achieve some credible shrewdness in relation to moving through the levels by adding character interaction, which again is really just as straightforward as pressing a switch. You may find a door that is impassable and notice someone loitering nearby.

Upon speaking to them, they'll tell you that they have the keys and then without question unlock it for you. Not exactly brain taxing stuff.

UNINTELLIGENT INTELLIGENCE

The enemy's artificial intelligence isn't at all convincing either, but rather a case of soldiers or robots charging towards you, seemingly blasé about the bullets bouncing off their foreheads. Again I'm compelled to compare Daikatana to *GoldenEye*, which to many console gamers is still arguably the finest FPS. Rare managed to create enemies that seemed to think for themselves. They ran if injured, begged for their lives, called for back up, commando-rolled to safety, used objects as cover and possessed a plethora of death animations. Daikatana doesn't implement any of these techniques. The enemies are as clever as a duck shooting out from the back end of a 747 engine. That said there still is fun to be had if you enjoy gamboling through levels blasting anything that moves.

In the end, Daikatana isn't what we were hoping for but instead a FPS that sits slightly above average. Sure, there are 25 weapons that differ between time periods; plenty of bot-blasting, a deep plot, silky smooth frame-rates and a finely tuned control system, but it's no *GoldenEye*. Bring on *Perfect Dark*... ■

DOOM-O-METER



PLUS

Interesting storyline, plenty of weapons, enemies and a solid four player deathmatch mode.

MINUS

Still sits in the shadow of *GoldenEye*.

VISUALS
78

SOUND
77

GAMEPLAY
80

OVERALL

80

A sneak peek of what Daikatana will be like on PC? Hopefully not!



DAMN THOSE AT-ATS. ALWAYS SLEEPING ON THE JOB!

FORCE COMMANDER

Having watched Star Wars about 100 times, **Eliot Fish** is more than qualified to lead the Empire into war...



AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: 3D Real Time Strategy
 PLAYERS: 1-4
 PUBLISHER: LucasArts
 PRICE: \$89.95
 RATING: G
 REQUIRED: PIII 266, 32MB RAM, 3D Card
 DESIRED: PIII 500+, 128MB RAM

The classic Star Wars trilogy has spawned more than a few brilliant PC games — Dark Forces, Jedi Knight, the X-Wing space combat series... wonderful, immersive gaming for fans and non-fans alike. Of course, LucasArts aren't infallible and a few of their Star Wars games have only had limited appeal, even for hardcore fans — Rebel Assault, Masters of Teras Kasi and The Phantom Menace. Now, Force Commander returns us to the classic trilogy once again for the long awaited 3D strategy title fans have been having sleepless nights over. First impressions of the game might lead you to believe that this is everything we prayed for, however after some extensive playtesting, Force Commander reveals some Death Star style weaknesses...

THE EMPEROR HAS NO CLOTHES...

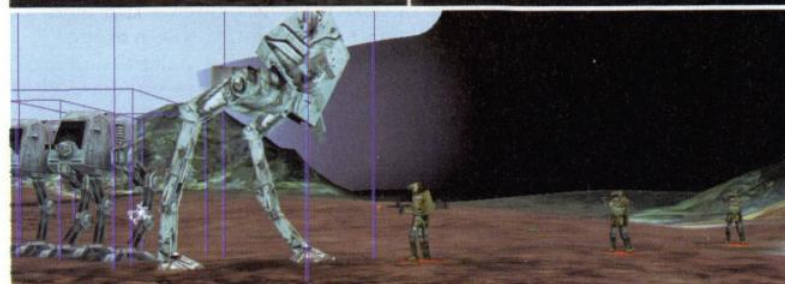
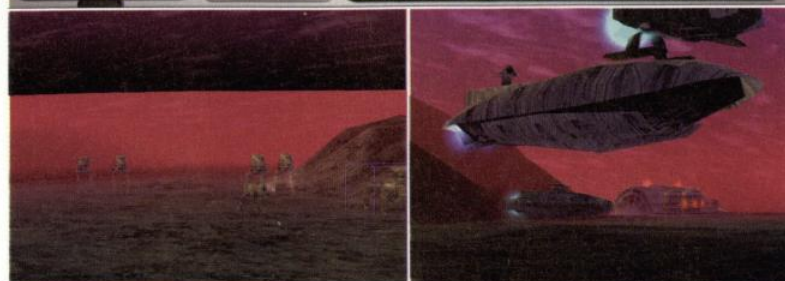
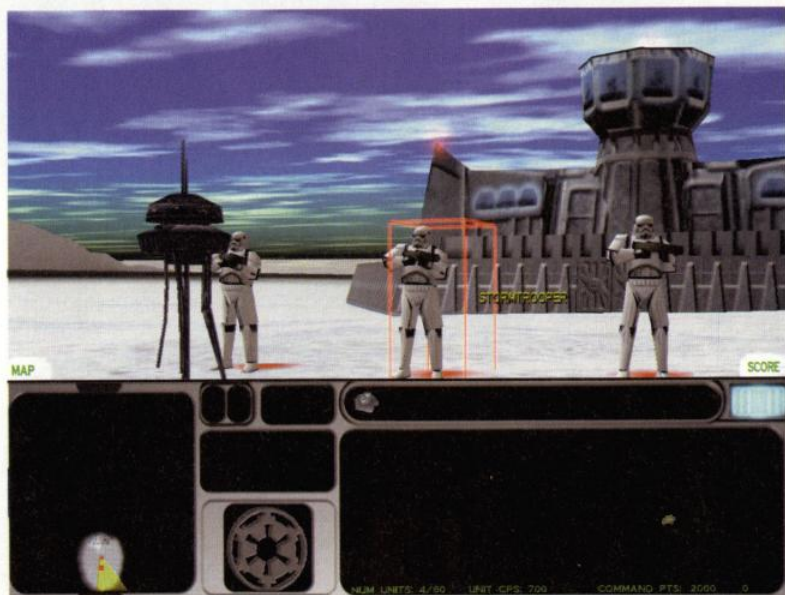
Here's Force Commander's biggest drawcard — the 3D engine and Star Wars theme. To totally immerse yourself in everything Star Wars, you need only fire up Force Commander and begin moving your units into attack, then use the 3D camera to zoom right up into the action and watch things

play out. The camera is incredibly powerful, allowing you to go from a top-down bird's eye view of the environment (in classic RTS style) to an extreme close-up of a Stormtrooper firing his blaster rifle. However, it proves to be difficult to use in the thick of it, as it becomes necessary to continually adjust the angle. What looks cool is unplayable and vice versa.

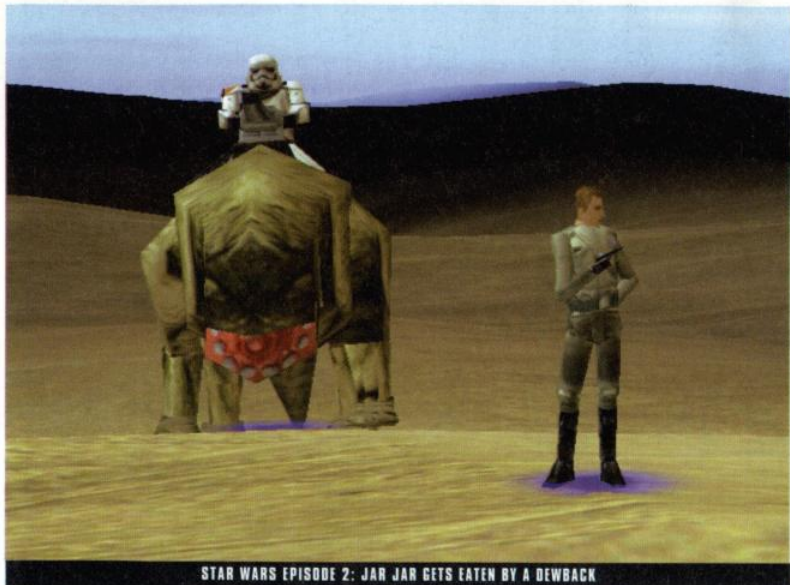
The audio is environmental, so that when you zoom the camera past the legs of a walking AT-AT, you hear the classic grinding of gears, clunks and whines of its machinery get close and then fade away as your camera moves over the next hill. This is a very immersive gameworld, and doubly so for fans of the movies who can appreciate all the small details which have been included — from obscure droids to actual locations on the map. Whilst the game looks marvellous and is incredibly accurate to the universe, there are some real problems with the game mechanics.

For starters, there is no "game speed" option. When you order a set of units to march from one side of the map to the other, or you order some units to be built, it's a standard feature in all other RTS games to be able to speed up the "game time" to achieve what you want quickly without having to wait for it to play out.

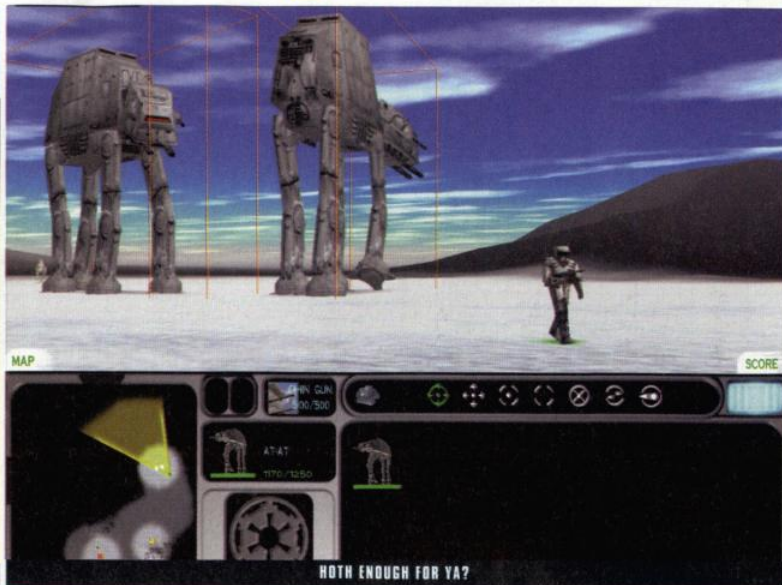
Unfortunately, Force Commander has no game speed option, meaning that you literally have to wait for your slow AT-AT units to clump their way to their destination, which can become tedious



Star Wars Episode 2 is currently about to begin filming at Fox Studios right here in Sydney. Keep an eye out around town, you may even see George Lucas about!



STAR WARS EPISODE 2: JAR JAR GETS EATEN BY A DEWBACK



HOTH ENOUGH FOR YA?



— especially if there's nothing else to do. Big walking hunks of metal aren't the fastest units, so it's strange that LucasArts forgot this basic feature. However, the mission design is full of variety, so most of the time, the game speed isn't a huge problem as you'll have other things to worry about — like setting up a communications relay network or rescuing a particular unit.

... AND THE JEDI ARE STUCK WITH UGLY BROWN ROBES

Whilst there is no resource management as such, you do have to think carefully about how you spend your "command points". As you play through the game, kill units and achieve secondary objectives, you are awarded command points which is in effect like being given galactic credits to "spend" on units. At any time during a mission, you can order a unit of Stormtroopers, a group of swoop bikes, a collection of AT-STs or whatever the Empire has to offer at the time — if you have the points to pay for them. You'll realise half-way through some missions that you don't have necessary troops for what you intend to do, thus you have to get that Star Destroyer on the comlink and put in a request. Unfortunately, like many RTS games, the secret to winning a fight usually just comes down to the pure number of units at your disposable rather than any clever strategic thinking. At times you feel like it's just down to blind luck whether you'll win an encounter or not, even though you may

have put your troops in what seems to be an effective formation. There's certainly no fear of drowning in Force Commander's depth of gameplay.

There's an okay story here that threads through the game, but annoyingly, if your "character" gets killed during any mission, it's an instant failure and you have to go back to a saved slot or the beginning of the mission. What this means, is that you always have to keep him out of the actual front line action by making him trail behind, stay inside an armoured vehicle or even leave him at base until the coast is clear. This becomes tedious babysitting and an annoying mission objective. A drawback though, is experiencing some classic moments from the trilogy — like the ground battle on Hoth, or the search for the stolen droids on Tatooine with a unit of Stormtroopers. Amusing stuff for fans.

Force Commander is an enjoyable game, but it suffers from some seemingly avoidable flaws which is frustrating for us, and probably also annoying for LucasArts in hindsight considering how long they've spent working on the game. It can't beat the excitement of Starcraft or the grit of C&C: Tiberian Sun, but it's a fun experience for Star Wars fans. Strategy nuts, however, may find that Force Commander lacks true depth. For a game which has been so long in development, it's a shame to see that the fundamental issue of exciting and truly fun gameplay somehow slipped through their fingers. ■



IT IS YOUR... DESTINY!

Even though you start out playing as the Empire, the whole game isn't spent being evil. Mid-way through the game your character defects to the Rebel Alliance, allowing you to play with all the other cool units in the game — like Snowspeeders, the funky rebel spacecraft and a variety of units designed especially for the game. This is a refreshing change that helps to make up for a lot of repetition and slow gameplay when playing as the Empire. Plus, we'd rather take orders from the sexy Princess Leia than Darth "Yipee!" Vader.



GUNGAN-O-METER



PLUS

Fantastic sound, graphics and atmosphere. No Jar Jar.

MINUS

Light on true strategic gameplay, some small bugs.

VISUALS
88

SOUND
89

GAMEPLAY
70

OVERALL

74

Force Commander is lacking some serious excitement. Best in small doses.



JEDI POWER BATTLES



AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: Action
 PLAYERS: 1-2
 PUBLISHER: LucasArts
 PRICE: \$99.95
 RATING: G
 SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

BATTLES

Help us, **Eliot Fish**, you're our only hope...

When Jedi Power Battles was first announced, there was an audible groan here at the Hyper office. It sounded like it was another sign of LucasArts completely going off the rails... another Star Wars fighting game after the awful Masters of Teras Kasi? Then details started emerging that Jedi Power Battles was, in fact, more aligned with the older "Super" series which appeared on the SNES (Super Star Wars being one of the most popular platformers ever). This sounded much more interesting... could LucasArts really return to the good old gameplay that they were once renowned for? Well, it seems that they haven't completely fallen to the dark side...

HATE LEADS TO ANGER...

In the tradition of the classic platformer - like the Super Star Wars series - comes Jedi Power Battles, based on the events in *The Phantom Menace*. Choose to play as Obi-Wan Kenobi, Qui-Gon Jinn, Mace Windu, Plo Koon or Adi Galia, and then go completely nuts with your lightsaber. That's the general idea. From the moment the heavy Trade Federation doors swoosh open, and the Jedi you've chosen steps out of the gas into the path

of a number of hapless Battle Droids, you realise that Jedi Power Battles has the pizzazz which has been lacking from the last four or five Star Wars games. For starters, the game sounds fantastic. The hum and crackle of the lightsabers as they carve through Battle Droids is awesome, and you could literally just stand there waving your saber about for hours until you actually start getting into the game. It's just that cool. The character models look just like the movie characters (albeit with a low polygon count), and the animation of their graceful lightsaber moves is great. You really do feel like you have complete control over your actions. The system works with a Horizontal, Vertical and Heavy attack which can be strung together to pull off some of the fancier moves seen in the film, like Obi-Wan Kenobi's blind backward stab. There are also Force powers which you can use. (they work like a Special Attack) when the going gets tough or you find yourself surrounded. Each character has signature moves which look great in the thick of the action and if you're a fan of the film then you'll be grinning from ear to ear within minutes of playing.

The enemies look great too, with Battle

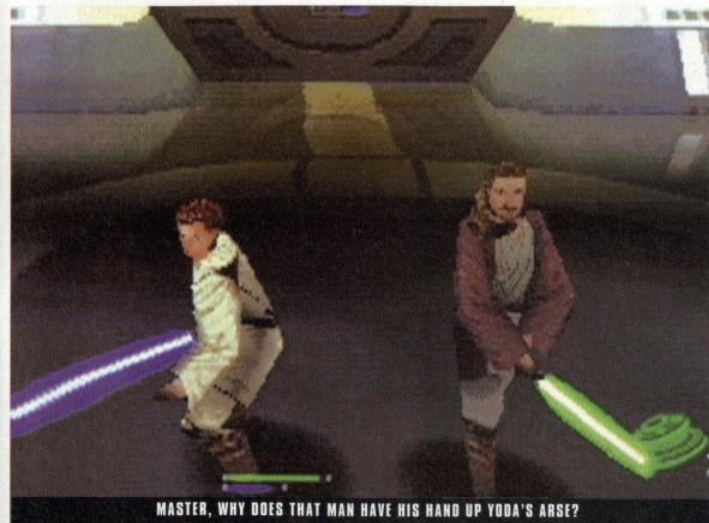
Droids, Destroyer Droids, Jawas, Sandpeople, Bounty Hunters and Darth Maul all looking very authentic, with excellent sound effects to match. LucasArts didn't slack off with the environments either. All the locations from the film (expanded upon for the game) are here with all the appropriate details - shiny floors in the corridors of the battleship, clanging engine rooms, sandy canyons on Tatooine and hover cars in the lofty heights of Coruscant.

...ANGER LEADS TO BROKEN CONTROLLERS

The core gameplay is basically slashing everything to pieces with your lightsaber. Each enemy needs a number of swift moves dealt upon them to sever their head or carve them completely in half. The Jedi also block laser bolts remarkably well, and if you block just before a bolt hits you, it will reflect it back at the aggressor, which is a nice tactic to use in certain situations.



Jedi Power Battles is also coming to the Dreamcast. We can't wait to see how fantastic it will look on this powerful system. We'll keep you updated



MASTER, WHY DOES THAT MAN HAVE HIS HAND UP YODA'S ARSE?



I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS



Sometimes you'll just casually walk through an area, blocking at the right times and avoiding any need for hand-to-hand. Damn cool looking too.

Whilst there are platforming elements, they don't dominate the gameplay too much which is nice. However, they are the weakest moments in the game. The guts of the platforming is jumping over precarious gaps with the Jedi double-jump (another tip of the hat to the Super Star Wars games). Some sections of the game are designed rather poorly, and you'll find yourself falling to your death because of bad polygon clipping (passing through walls and floors) or just badly drawn polygons which don't clearly make out where you are meant to jump to. This is the most frustrating part of the game. A bit more playtesting was needed to remove the many accidental and unfair deaths which take place. When there are so few continue points, instant deaths just mean replaying huge sections of the level which simply sucks. Still, for a fan, the gameplay is compelling enough to keep you coming back to try and master the flaws and get to the next bit. The levels are enormous, each with a mid-way boss and a deadly end boss, which leads us to our next criticism. The game seems way too hard.

With only five credits (lives) when you begin, it sometimes seems impossible to get to the end of a level. In co-operative mode (a very fun way to play), some horrid jumps need to be timed with both players and the 3D camera moves at the worst time possible. If your friend is left off screen for too long, you also lose a credit which seems rather unfair, especially when you are sometimes separated due to poor level design glitches. Sometimes you fall a long drop to your death, sometimes the Jedi land like cats with no damage whatsoever. Unreliable.

All up though, we can't help but recommend Jedi Power Battles. It's awesome fun for anyone who got into the film, and the ability to play through as Obi-Wan with a friend as Qui-Gon - right up to the climactic duel with Darth Maul - is worth the price of admission alone. ■



MIDICHLORIAN-O-METER



PLUS

Huge long levels, and 10 of them. Points earn you stat increases too!

MINUS

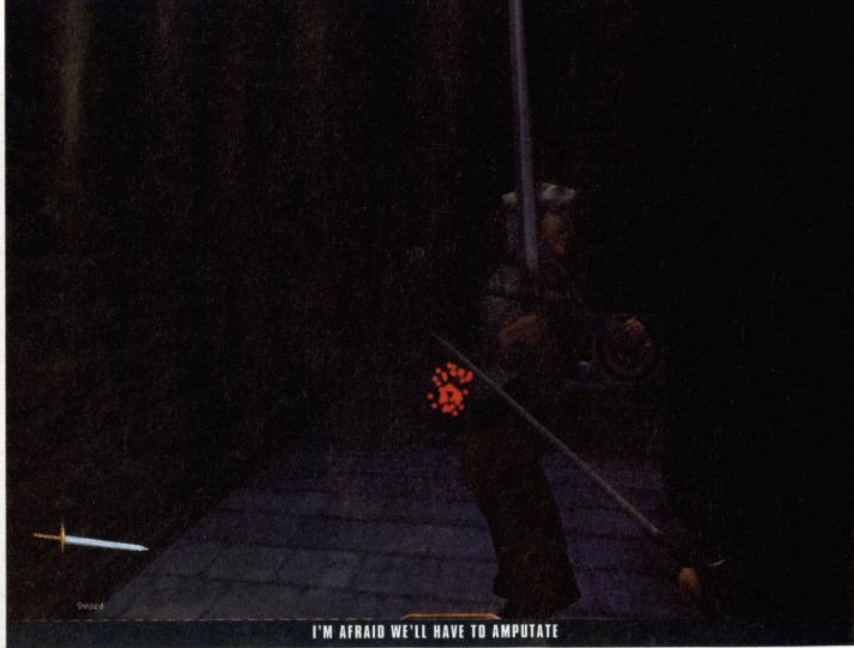
Very glitchy, which could lead to some broken PlayStations.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
85	90	82

OVERALL

84

The Force is quite strong with this one.



THIEF 2: THE METAL AGE



Singe Graham snuck into the office after hours and shoved this game in his bag, so...



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: First Person Sneaker
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Eidos Interactive
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: PII-266, 48MB RAM, 3D Card
DESIRED: PII-400+, 64MB RAM

Garrett is at it once again in Thief 2: The Metal Age, but this time around, with the aid of a new mechanical eye, he is more prepared than ever to tackle (or more appropriately, evade) anything that comes his way. It seems as though the original Thief wasn't released that long ago, and it caused quite a stir with its unique style of FPS ("First Person Sneaker") gameplay. Thief placed the emphasis MUCH more upon stealth and deception to move throughout the world, rather than a kick-the-door-in-with-guns-blazing approach as so many other First Person Shooters do. In T2:TMA, Looking Glass Studios once again adopt the same style of gameplay with 16 shiny new missions to keep you would-be footpads in thieving bliss for a while yet.

TURN TO THE DARK SIDE

It's been about a year since Garrett defeated the Trickster in Thief. During that time a new Sheriff named Gorman Truart has blown into town and insists upon making life as difficult for Garrett as he possibly can, including placing a bounty upon his

head. It's your job to stop the Sheriff (or anyone else for that matter) from turning Garrett into a Thief Kebab by sticking to the shadows, climbing up walls and clubbing people over the head when they're not looking.

The mechanics of Thief 2 are virtually the same to the original. In fact, one could almost be forgiven for thinking that this is merely an expansion to the original. There are several new items that are added to Garrett's arsenal (Such as potions of invisibility, potions of slow fall and remote camera orbs), but for the most part many of the original items & weapons have been retained from the original. While this may seem a bit of a downer for anyone that expected a breathtakingly new game, rest assured that the new levels and missions leave no doubt in anyone's mind that this is nothing but an improvement over the original.

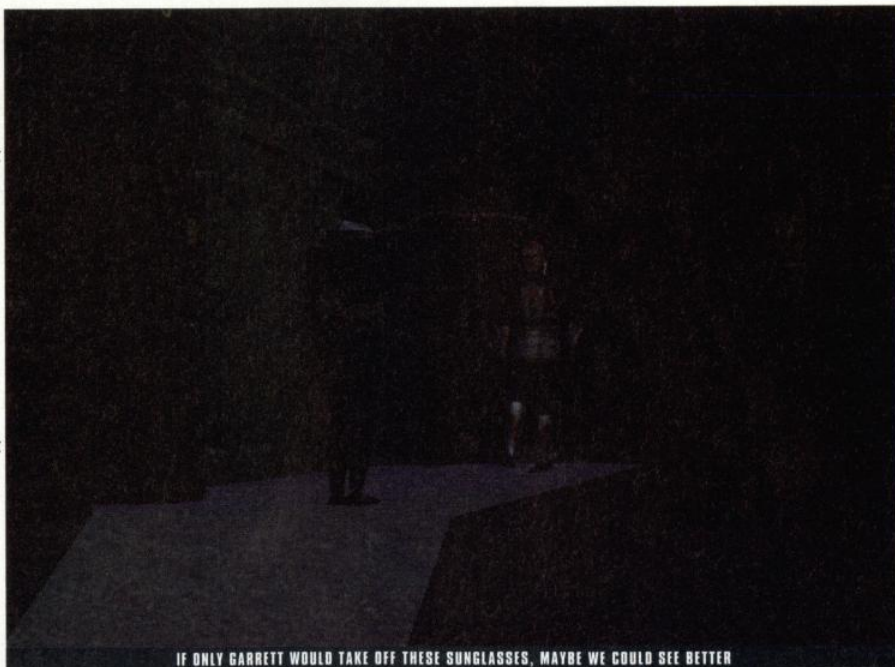
Looking Glass have done an absolutely monumental job in creating just the right ambience throughout each of the missions. You'll creep along quietly down a deathly-silent corridor, waiting for just the slightest creak of a floorboard to indicate an approaching guard, or finding yourself standing

behind a door, leaning into it in order to hear the discussion of the guards behind it. T2 places more reliance upon sound than almost any other game. If you have surround-sound speakers, then you'll be at a definite advantage to those that do not. The game is also filled with many little soliloquies, both from the unsuspecting guards and Garrett. Whilst offering somewhat of a humorous interlude, often times you'll want to listen closely to them, as guards or civilians may actually

mention something of importance that you'll want to note down.

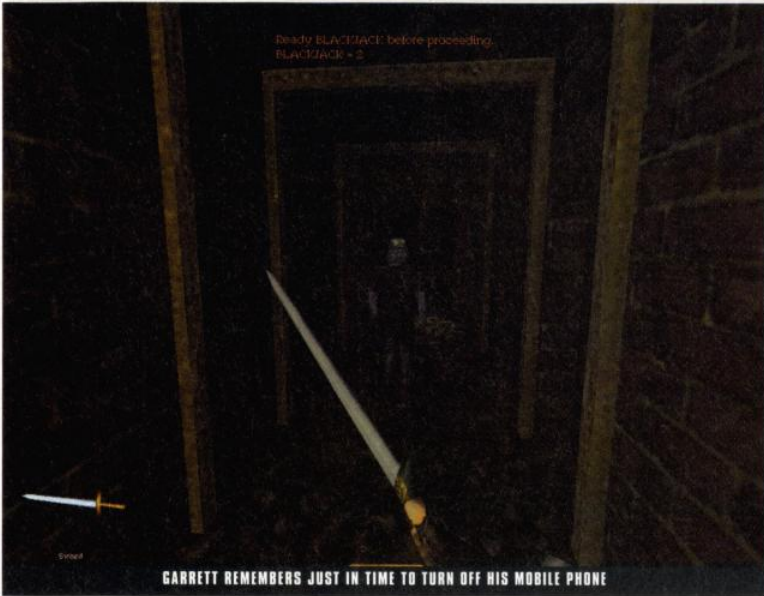
CREEPY CREEPING

T2 utilises the same graphics engine as the original Thief. Fans of Quake 3 or Unreal Tournament might feel a little bit disoriented and awkward at first as Garrett appears to stand quite high off the ground in addition to moving a little slower. Yet once you get your bearings, the mechanics of T2 are excellent. Garrett is able to haul himself onto boxes, climb up ropes





Go straight to the source and get your patches, check out the demo or read up on some game tips.
http://www.eidosinteractive.com/thief_metalage/index.html



and ladders, pick up unconscious bodies and throw them over ledges into the ocean below (gotta clean up the evidence remember?) and zoom in (with the aid of his new mechanical eye) for easy bow and arrow kills. The engine might appear slightly outdated, but you tend to concentrate upon all of the sounds much more than the visuals, and as mentioned earlier, the sounds are simply superb.

Thief 2 does have a couple of problems though. Firstly, it feels like an expansion pack rather than a sequel.

The new missions are great, but the game plays and looks the same to the original. Coupled with the fact that there aren't a whole lot of new items, and you're left wanting a little more in your arsenal than what you're given. Secondly, levels take a long time to load. Granted, each mission is very large and doesn't require any loading time once playing, but the initial time spent waiting for the levels to load (especially upon re-loading save games whilst in the mission) are a little bit aggravating.

Looking Glass have done a very good job with Thief 2. The biggest and best part being the new missions and the incredible atmosphere within. One can only hope that Thief 3 will finally bring forth Garrett into a new engine, a new world, and newer, bigger adventures. ■

SLOW & STEADY

- Rule #1:** Stick to the shadows. Light is the tool of the devil.
- Rule #2:** Don't run. Walk or creep!
- Rule #3:** Guards are half-deaf. You can safely sneak up behind them and club them without them noticing.
- Rule #4:** Anything valuable you see is yours. Share the wealth, that's how it always is ain't it?
- Rule #5:** Don't get caught!



OILS-O-METER



PLUS

Excellent level design. Superb sound.

MINUS

Not a whole lot of new features.

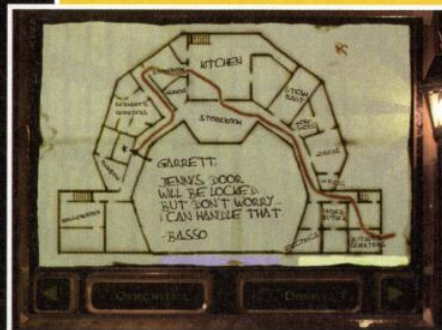
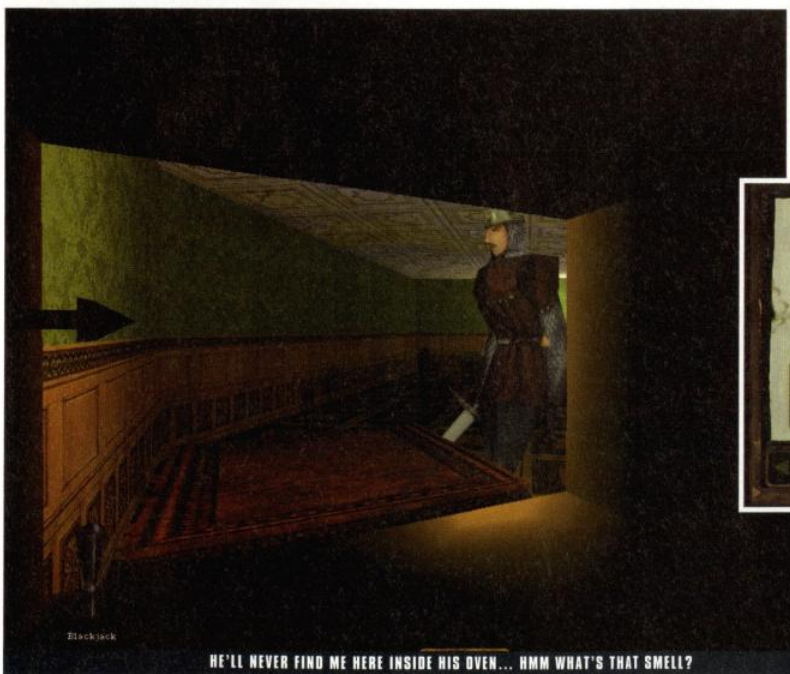
VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
85	92	92

OVERALL

90

Take to those dingy alleys once more...

63 »HYPER





POKÉMON STADIUM

Arthur Adam speaks fondly of his own pocket monster...



AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: Pokémon!
 PLAYERS: 1-4
 PUBLISHER: Nintendo
 PRICE: \$89.95
 RATING: G
 SUPPORTS: GB64 Pack, Rumble Pack

Everyone by now has heard the word 'Pokémon'. Talk to some native cannibal child living in a far off African jungle, and he'll tell you that pokémon number 175 is Togepi. Nintendo's cash-pig is storming the world, seeping into every nook and cranny possible with movies, clothes, music, playing cards, video games and the list goes on. Consider that 'pokémon' is the most used word on Internet search engines. Consider that in the whole of 1999, Pokémon video games listed 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 (Donkey Kong 64 secured fourth place) as the best selling games across all gaming systems in the USA. Nintendo's creature-swapping title has managed to crush all the big names like Final Fantasy VIII, Metal Gear Solid, Quake III, Unreal Tournament and any others you want to throw in for good measure in terms of sales. Anything with the golden word 'Pokémon' attached will send money pouring Nintendo's way.

WHAT THE POKING HELL IS IT ALL ABOUT?

Firstly, it should be noted that Pokémon Stadium (PS) is closely linked with its Game Boy (GB) counterparts. A GB64 Pack (transfer pack) will be given away free with PS, allowing you to upload (or download, depending on your inclinations) your very own poke-vermin onto the big screen in full 3D and colour. You can even use a built in emulator to play the GB versions. Therefore, a quick run down on the GB versions is required.

The premise is simple; hunt down up to 302 pocket monsters (including the Silver and Gold GB versions), train them, fight them and trade them with friends. All this takes place in a huge world cleverly named Pokémon Island. There are quests to complete, tournaments to partake in and the evil Team Rocket to thwart. Each creature you catch must be trained and put into

battle in order to raise its level and attributes. Pokémon can be divided into categories, such as grass, electric, poison, water, fire, normal etc. Some are weaker against other types but stronger against others and each can then be taught attacks and defences, which again have various effects depending on which pokémon you're tonking it out with. The combinations are endless. And that, in a rather large nutshell, is it.

GOTTA BUY 'EM ALL!

Unlike its Game Boy cousin, PS ditches the exploration elements of gameplay and focuses more towards the fighting side of things. You visit a variety of large arenas where your creatures go to war against friends or other computer-controlled pokémon trainers. With the GB64 Pack, you can bring your flat GB creatures to life and use them in PS. So now, you'll be

able to view your 80th level aerodactyle in full 3D. However, if you don't have 'built up' pokémon, then you will have to 'rent' them. The disadvantage here is that these pocket monsters aren't very powerful.

Fighting is turn-based, meaning that you'll have to choose a monster to use, choose the attack/defence wanted and then watch as the attack/defence is executed. This form of fighting may sound uninteresting, but when you regard that with the hundreds of moves and various effects on different species, the battles become quite technical and strategies must be quickly formulated. During the battle, you can withdraw a pokémon and bring in another, albeit you forfeit a turn.

Your ultimate goal is to climb the ladder and collect all pokémon badges and trophies, which are handed to you after fighting 'master' trainers.



OPTIONS, OPTIONS AND EVEN MORE OPTIONS

Photographs

Take snaps of your pokémon in battle and save them. You can display these pictures in high-resolution on the television set or print them out on the Game Boy Printer.

Game Boy Emulator

Play Pokémon Red and Blue on your television using the Transfer Pak and then upload caught monsters into PS's memory for battle.

Battle Now!

If you haven't a clue about Pokémon games, then this mode will basically get you used to the whole bizarre concept. You can only rent in this mode and can't bring in your beef-cake pokéturds here.

Pokémon Lab

This is where the lovely act of sweaty, uninhibited hanky-panky takes place between the Game Boy and N64. Operating the GB64 Pack, you can upload your pocket monsters and ready them for a new 3D world. By slotting the GB cartridge into the GB64 Pack and then the pack into the control pad of the N64, you are ready to kick ass. Furthermore, this mode allows you to form an album so that you can arrange your collection of species for trading between friends. Take note that when trading, you have to give up one of your own pokémon to get another.

Kids Club (nothing to do with young goats)

Similar to Mario Party mini-games, this mode allows four players to play against each other or the computer using a variety of pokémon. There are nine mini-games in all.

VS Event Battle

Not for the faint hearted. Be prepared to have your butt spanked hard, as the pokémon trainers here aren't fairies and will throw at you hard-core pocket beasts from every direction. You can set the time limit for the overall fight, which range between 5-90 minutes and also the time between each attack. If no one has been knocked out, then whoever has retained the highest hit points wins.

Hall of Fame

All tournament champions are catalogued here. The creature types used can also be viewed.

Pokémon Stadium

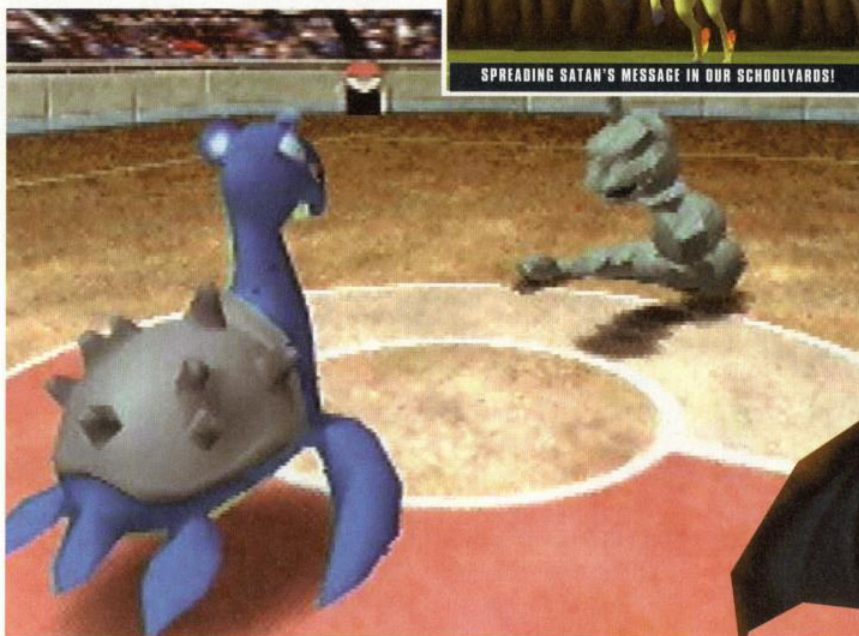
The main mode in PS. This is where you battle it out for trophies and badges from pokémon 'masters'. If you thought visiting your mother in gaol was tough, wait 'til you battle these guys.

Free Battle

The coolest mode in PS. Get four friends to war it out in a 2 Vs 2 tag team-like fight. Each player has three pokémon and there are six in a team. You can tag your partner whenever you like during a battle.



Wow. Pokémon Stadium actually comes with a free Transfer Pak so you can upload your Game Boy Pokémon into your Nintendo 64! Rock on.

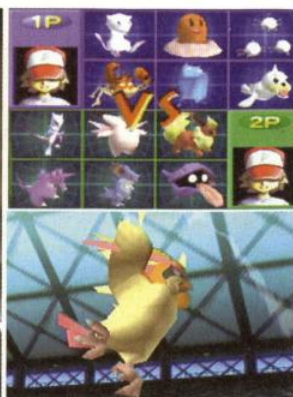
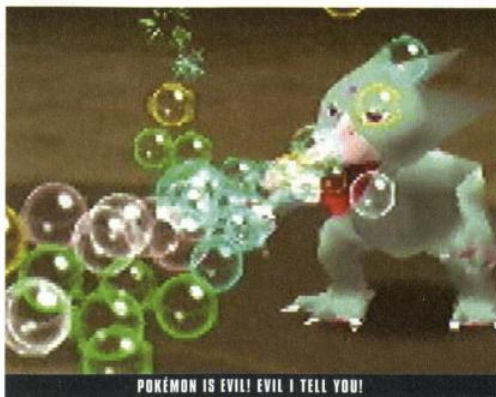


HEY, DON'T POKE ME THERE

PS simply looks stunning. Each pokémon has been carefully constructed to the smallest detail. The animations run at a silky smooth 60fps, never interrupted by clipping or stiff movement. Where PS excels, is in the attack/defence animation, which literally light up or engulf the screen. For example, one attack by a squirtle will flood the arena in water and then cause a huge wave to roar towards an enemy knocking them silly. Pikachu's electric attack explodes until the screen is white with lightning, which then is shot towards whatever poor sod is on the receiving end. Brilliant I say! Other attacks may see pokémon burrow underground until the next turn when they shoot up from under an enemy, throwing boulders and rocks about the place. There's a lot of crazy shit going on when battling, especially when using psychic or poisonous assaults.

The backgrounds are nicely constructed as well, with various themes. There's an ancient Greek stadium, open fields and football-like ones. Of course, other than the pokémon and attacks, there isn't much else going on, freeing up your N64 to produce these A-grade visuals.

Summing this title up is difficult. PS may turn people off who aren't familiar with the Pokémon phenomenon, especially if turn-based fighting isn't your cup of tea. Don't expect fast paced action, as these battles require wit and trained pokémon. Nevertheless, if you want something different or to simply experience some type of movement in your pants when you see a pikachu, then you'll have a ball with PS. It has stunning animations and visuals, cracking sound effects tied in with the pokémon moves, commentary during battles and loads of features to sink your teeth into. ■



reviews



666-O-METER



PLUS

Awesome animations and detailed creatures.
2 Vs 2 tag team option.

MINUS

No adventure elements such as the Game Boy versions.

VISUALS **92** SOUND **80** GAMEPLAY **89**

OVERALL

90

Pokémon are aiming for world domination. They're nearly there.

65 »HYPER



MEDIEVIL 2

Mumford the magician taught **Cam Shea** everything he knows about the occult, which explains why he thinks that the magic words are "a la peanut butter sandwiches"...

AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: Action/Adventure
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: Sony
 PRICE: \$49.95
 RATING: G
 SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

⚡ If dabbling in the black arts has taught me anything (aside from how to get stubborn blood stains out of the carpet), it's that spell books are all well and good, but they're not to be trifled with. Just look at the havoc wreaked from the conservative tosser spell that was cast on John Howard as a child... and now Australia's stuffed. Not only that, but I haven't been able

to reverse the ugly spell I cast on Arthur yet... poor bugger.

SHINE YA SHOES, GUVNA?

In any case, Medievil 2 picks up where the first left off, only 500 years later in Victorian England. London in the late 1800s was a happy go lucky kind of place. After all, what other city could claim the same levels of industrial pollution and overcrowding, unsanitary disease-ridden living conditions and depressingly drizzly weather? With recreational activities like hoarding coal, beating children to death and drowning kittens in rivers, London was party central. And let's not forget England's sterling

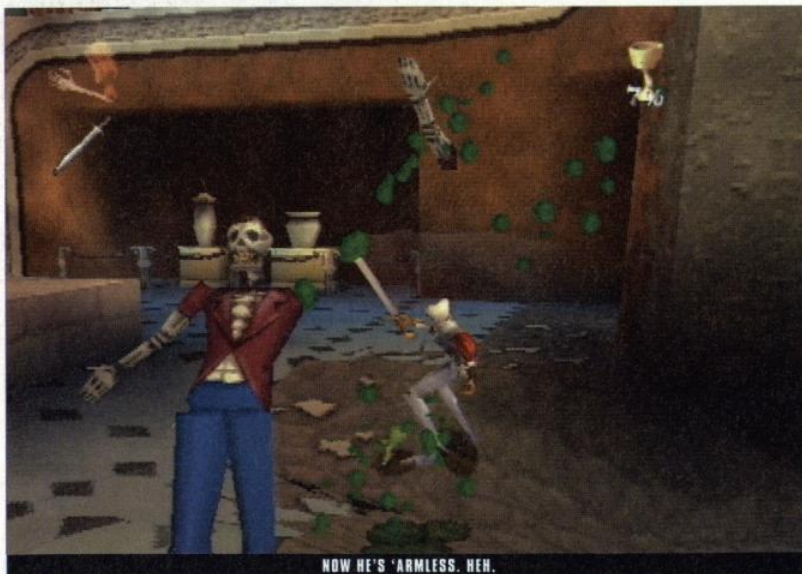
efforts to colonise and culturally rape every country they could get their hands on. Those wacky Brits!

Amongst all this peace, love and singing chimney sweeps, however, lived Lord Palethorn, a man who makes Ebenezer Scrooge seem like Shary Bobbins. Stumbling across a few of the pages from the spell book of Zorak (see Hyper issue 60), he casts the spell of Eternal Darkness, unleashing an army of the undead on fair London town. Fortunately for London, he inadvertently revives a hero as well. You play as Sir Dan Fortesque, a walking, talking half dead skeleton man - kinda like Sir Cliff Richard, except a little less ancient.

THE UGLIEST MAN IN GLASGOW IS BACK...

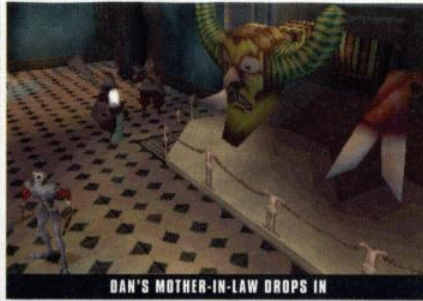
What all this boils down to is a third person perspective action/adventure game with a twist. The twist is that it's actually good, blending together hack'n'slash tonking, well designed puzzles, and quirky humour into an attractive package.

Whilst the graphics aren't a huge step up from the original, Medievil 2 sports a number of gameplay refinements that push it beyond the "cash cow sequel" category. The gothic setting is a far cry from the graveyards, castles and forests of the original, as is the level design. Levels are larger and multi-tiered (Dan can now climb up



NOW HE'S 'ARMLESS. HEH.





Want to rediscover the magic* of Mary Poppins? Then check out the official site at: <http://www.marypoppins.co.uk/>
*A polite way of saying complete and utter tosh.



certain surfaces), with plenty of exploration required to solve puzzles and uncover secrets. Once again, the puzzles are of a high standard and satisfying to complete.

The best weapons from the original have returned, along with a cool selection of newbies, including bombs and a steam-powered gatling gun. Dan isn't exactly precise to control, but you'll be too busy chopping off limbs and blowing away bearded women to care. More importantly, the gameplay always feels fresh, thanks to a number of playable permutations of Dan, including a headless Dan in search of his noggin that must team up with "Dan-hand" (Adam's Family

style) to help get him back in one piece, and the "Dan-kenstein" level that sees you killing bizarre mutants and harvesting their body parts for a mad professor. Then, just when you think you've seen it all, a love interest for Dan enters the picture! As weird as this may sound, girls supposedly like guys with a big bone (or so I've been told), and being a skeleton, Dan is nothing but bone, baby!

AMPUTEE DEVOTEES – THIS PARAGRAPH'S FOR YOU...

As in the original, *Medieval 2* is chockablock full of idiosyncratic humour, whether it be in conversations with eccentric characters or visual

gags. For instance, the zombies redefine the term "never say die". With each swing of your sword, a limb is sent flying. Even after you've lopped off a zombie's head and arms, it still comes after you, with nothing more than a stump on legs! Have at you zombie freaks!

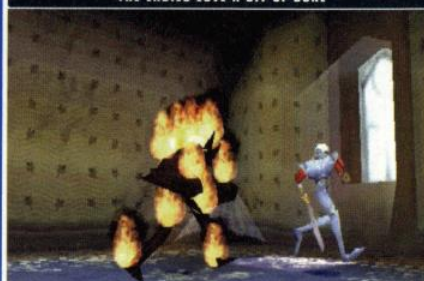
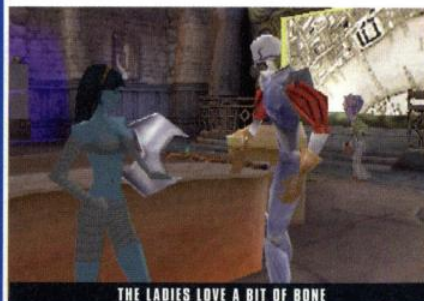
Medieval 2 is a great example of how a hack'n'slash adventure game should be made. With plenty of weapons and items to collect, hordes of the undead to heroically slay, entertaining boss battles (for once), and personality to spare, *Medieval 2* is a deeper and more compelling experience than the original. Leaps and bounds ahead of dross like *Gex* and *Fighting Force 2*. ■

GRIZZLED 18TH CENTURY BOOT-BLACK ANY!

In the spirit of *Medieval 2*'s ye olde London setting, we were going to write a handy Hyper guide to picking pockets, but given the legal ramifications of printing such an article, here's a guide to Cockney Rhyming Slang instead. Confuse your family and friends by slipping in these terms at inappropriate points of a conversation:

Read (and write) - Fight
River Ouse - Booze
Grasshopper - Copper (also: John Hop - Cop)
Adam (and Eve) - Believe
Joe Rook - Crook
Lemon Squeezer - Geezer
Lemon Squeezy - Easy
Bees (and Honey) - Money
Trouble (and Strife) - Wife
Ship (in full Sail) - Pint Of Ale

Elephant's (Trunk) - Drunk
Twist (and Twirl) - Girl
Inky (Smudge) or The Barnaby Rudge - Judge
The Garden Gate - Magistrate
Alligator - Later
China (Plate) - Mate
Eighteen (Pence) - Sense
Bubble and Squeak - Informer who speaks to the police
Cash and Carried - Married
Ponce, Fish and Shrimp, Candle Sconce, Alphonse - Pimp
A Brass (Nail) - Prostitute (tail)
A Jane Shaw or Jane Shore - Prostitute (whore)
Raspberry Tart - Fart
An Aristotle - Bottle of Liquor
To Pipe (Your Eye) - Cry
Holy Friar - Liar



PORRIDGE-O-METER



PLUS

Quirky humour and compelling gameplay.

MINUS

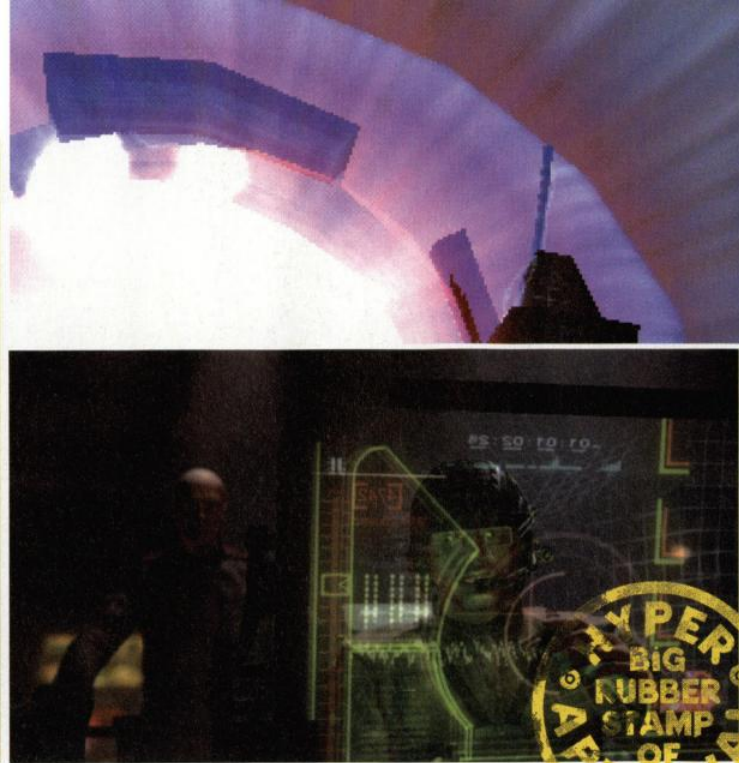
Sloppy controls. Dick Van Dyke doesn't make an appearance.

VISUALS **82** SOUND **83** GAMEPLAY **86**

OVERALL

86

Dickensian undead tonking action...
Please sir can I have some more?



STARLANCER

Where did **Dan Toose** go? Deep space... or was that cyberspace?

i

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Space Combat Sim
PLAYERS: 1-8
PUBLISHER: Microsoft
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: P266, 64MB RAM, 3D Card
DESIRED: P11-400, 64MB RAM, Voodoo 2 or better

Perhaps I'll offend a couple of developers here, but when it comes to space combat simulators, there are really only three truly noteworthy franchises to think about... Lucasarts' X-Wing games, Interplay's Freespace titles, and of course the Wing Commander series by Origin. The latter of the three was largely made a success by the efforts of the Roberts brothers, Chris and Erin. These two have since headed up Digital Anvil, a crack devel-

opment team in the Microsoft stable, and have produced a new space combat sim that proves they're back on top of things in this genre which they reigned supreme in for so long.

MOVING YOUR YOKE

The game in question is Starlancer, which sees you take the role of a pilot for the Western Alliance, which represents nations such as Britain, Germany, Spain, France, USA and Japan. The Alliance has taken a beating from the Eastern Coalition (Russia, China, and the Arabians), who have not simply taken over the world, but most of the solar system. Your aim is to progress through a series of missions to help see the Alliance regroup from the Coalition onslaught, and regain what you naturally feel is your own home. You could say it's taking a

"World War" scenario into space, as the sides are a bit of a democrat/com-mie stereotype, but this brings a welcome human element over the idea of fighting off some obscure alien race.

The Freespace games from Interplay really made the Wing Commander series look quite lack-luster, but the Roberts brothers have proven they weren't going to be beaten for too long, as Starlancer goes one up on Freespace 2 in numerous ways.

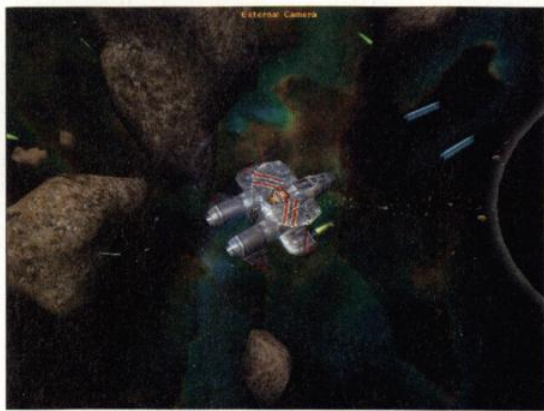
Starlancer is a very pretty game. All of the space fighter craft look good, and more importantly, look like fighter craft. In other games in the genre, we've seen some ships that don't look like anything in particular.

Of course, the technical features make the difference in this genre, and Starlancer does not disappoint.

While not having the funky nebula effects present in Freespace 2, Starlancer's space environments look more bright and colourful, and on the whole, better. If anything the backgrounds are reminiscent of Homeworld. We all know the real razzle-dazzle comes with the lasers, missiles, explosions, and lighting effects, and Starlancer really shines in all of these areas. Enemy fighters produce a nice "bursting polygons" effect as they go up, but even more impressive is how capital ships go down bit by bit, in a most cinematic fashion. Even the HUD looks cool, with each component of the HUD offering more than just a flat, lifeless readout, and the actual cockpit is in view, with your hands moving the yoke appropriately.

Even little touches like the brief





! Still to come from Digital Anvil is the following title, *Freelancer*, which lets you travel the universe doing whatever the hell you feel like. Pirating, trading, bounty hunting...



PLANET SODOMISING CRUISER SPOTTED CAPTAIN

video images of your wingmen yakking to you during the mission look crystal clear, and really go to show how polished the whole game really is.

KILL YOUR FRIENDS

In terms of atmosphere, *Starlancer* sits somewhere in between the *Wing Commander* and *Freespace* games. There's no B-grade acting that we've all come to grow tired of in *Wing Commander*, but there are cool character elements, like a huge roster of pilots throughout the Alliance fleet, and a killboard, so you can keep track of just how slick you are compared to your computer controlled buddies. There are also news reports and other bits of information you can check out in "ITAC", but it must be noted that it's a little hard to grasp exactly what the overall status of the war is at any stage.

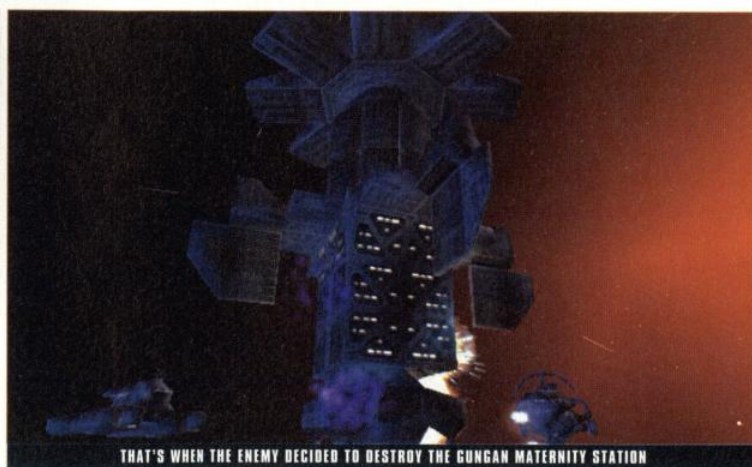
There are plenty of in game cinematics that help make each mission a little more story like, but these can be a little annoying when you're replaying a mission you've been having difficulty with, as you can't skip through them.

The music is the standard orchestral affair that this genre is notorious for, but the weapon effects and speech are quite noteworthy. A few more responses would have been nice, as it's easy to tire of your co-pilot rattling off the same compliments when you rack up another kill. But there is a whole mess of mission specific dialogue which helps keep things interesting, and there's really little need to pay much attention during debriefing, as your wing leader will keep you updated verbally anyway.

The ability to play through the single player game co-operatively is a

truly welcome bonus in a game with this much character, and it also makes the computer introduce more ships, which makes for a far more action packed experience visually. The only real addition to the genre in terms of control was the strafing ability, which may seem kind of pointless at first, but when you're trying to take out laser turrets on a space station, it becomes an extremely handy feature.

Starlancer doesn't really drive the genre further, rather than polish it, and give us a true "no-nonsense" *Wing Commander* game. It doesn't feel quite as technically detailed as *Freespace 2*, but it does come across as a faster and more entertaining dog fighting game, which helps make it the best multiplayer space combat game ever. ■



THAT'S WHEN THE ENEMY DECIDED TO DESTROY THE GUNGAN MATERNITY STATION

SO WHAT'S MISSING?

Starlancer is a brilliant game, but there are a few points where it falls short next to the already established *Freespace 2*. For starters, the capital ships in *FS 2* are still far and away the most impressive in a game of this type. Digital Anvil weren't very ambitious when it came to making the big ships something to fear and respect. Another feature that *Starlancer* really could have used was the ability to call in a supply ship to rearm you, which would have been extremely handy, since there are so many long missions. There are fewer missions, ships and weapons than in *Freespace 2*, but on the whole *Starlancer's* extra character makes up for this, and produces a bit of a dead heat between the two games.



KILRATHI-O-METER



PLUS

Super smooth gameplay. Great multiplayer. Plenty of character.

MINUS

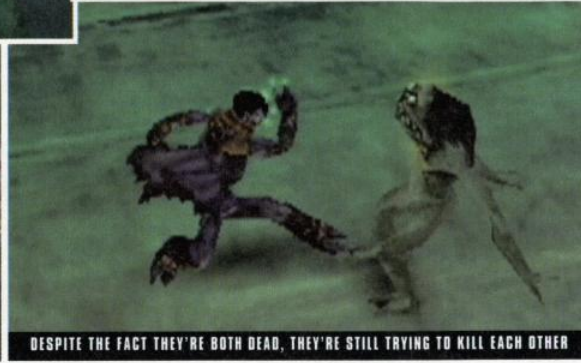
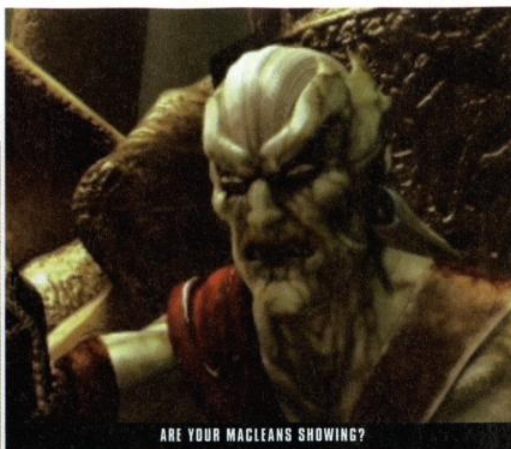
Retrying long missions becomes tedious. Capital ships are uninspired.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
93	88	90

OVERALL

90

The style of *Freespace*, and the glory of *Wing Commander* without all the b-grade acting. Great stuff.



LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER



Arthur Adam lives in two different worlds, so we thought he'd like this.



AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: Action/Adventure
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: Eidos
 PRICE: \$89.95
 RATING: MA 15+
 SUPPORTS: Vibration Pack, VMU

Ever wondered what would happen if Shadow Man and Zelda fancied each other at a party, ended up having some unrestrained rumpy-pumpy, then woke up in the morning to regret it? I know I have. Well, the offspring of such an event would be Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver.

Finally, the Dreamcast gets an in-depth title. Not only that, this would have to be one of the finest in its collection to date, regardless of the fact that it has been out for PlayStation and PC gamers for some time. Having played all versions, the DC's incarnation sits at the top of the heap, delivering eye-popping visuals, a profoundly deep story line, complex puzzles and exploration to boot.

So what's it all about then? You are Raziel, a lieutenant in a dark army. The ruler of this evil army is Lord Kain (or Percival to his friends), an evil entity wanting to conquer the world. To cut a long story short, you are banished and thrown down an abyss for growing

wings, which somewhat bothered Kain after having a bad hair day.

WHERE'S GANONDORF?

As mentioned earlier, LOK: SR has many elements seen in Zelda: Ocarina of Time. The game is played in a third person perspective, you can lock onto enemies for easy fighting, there is a huge emphasis on puzzle solving and adventuring through massive levels and more interestingly, you must travel between two realms. In this game, there is a living realm and dead realm.

Traveling between Nosgoth and the Spectral realms, you'll notice the enormity of the game. This, along with gameplay that is unobstructed by linear movement, makes exploration an important ingredient. Strewn throughout the realms are puzzles, most being enjoyable and clever, whilst some the opposite. Pushing and matching large blocks to solve puzzles is okay the first few times, but later may become tedious.

Fear not, you won't only be nutting out puzzles, as Raziel will encounter a plethora of enemies to slay. Ridding your enemies is done by Raziel slashing and combining moves for some wicked attacks, casting spells, luring enemies to their deaths or using the most powerful weapon in the game, a sword called

Soul Reaver. Kicking enemy ass also helps to replenish your energy coil, by consuming their souls, which gives you power to exact more damage on baddies. You can't die as such, as Raziel is immortal, but when your coil reaches its end, you'll be transported back to the beginning of the level. Some funky methods of killing these vampire beings are to push them into flames, water, and sunlight or onto a wooden stake. Watch out for the gorgeously constructed bosses. Awesome.

DREAMCAST OWNERS REJOICE!

Graphically, LOK: SR is dyn-O-mite. Think of high res visuals, meticulously detailed textures, godly lighting and transparency effects, 60 fps animations and an overall crispness that lacks fogging, clipping or pop-up all rolled neatly into one game. This is top stuff readers. The atmosphere is a Tim Burton style of gothic, which never appears dull, regardless of the dark and somber environment presented. All this adds up to a title, which offers a visual feast that will slap your eyeballs about with a ping-pong paddle. Add dialogue that would put Reservoir Dogs to shame and moody music and you have a game that all DC owners must own. Buy it now! ■

There is another Legacy of Kain title in the works as we write this. Very little information has made its way out of Crystal Dynamics, but we can bet it's for the PlayStation 2 and Dreamcast.



GOTH-O-METER



PLUS

A polished title in all departments.

MINUS

Some puzzles are repetitive.

VISUALS 93 SOUND 87 GAMEPLAY 92

OVERALL

92

An enthralling adventure which will scare the pants off ya!



! Unlocking secret characters in Smackdown results in brand new shiny heads to choose from in the create-a-wrestler mode. Hilarious!

WWF SMACKDOWN

'Is there any midget jelly wrestling in this?' **Arthur Adam** asked...

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Fighting/Wrestling
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: THQ
PRICE: TBA
RATING: M
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

Many people hate wrestling due to the fact that large apish men galavant about, binding themselves into positions that more or less see each other's faces wedged between the other's butt cheeks. Others love wrestling for the same reason. Anyhow, without exaggerating too much, the amount of wrestling games across all platforms run into the zillions. Okay, so maybe that was a little exaggerated, but really, there are more wrestling titles about than you can poke a used pair of spandex undies at. THQ, the makers of the N64's awesome WWF Wrestlemania 2000, have now brought us WWF Smackdown, one of the better titles of the genre.

RING WRESTLERS

All your favourite superstars are here, thirty-six in all; The Rattle Snake, The Rock, Kane, The Undertaker and Mankind are just a few. Also included are three buxom babes donning rather large, well, egos. Of course, each have their own special move (you know, the ones that if you tried in real life, would probably kill you) along with the standard ones. Unfortunately the create-a-wrestler mode isn't so in-depth. You'll try and make a cool wrestler but end up with someone that looks like Urkle or myself.

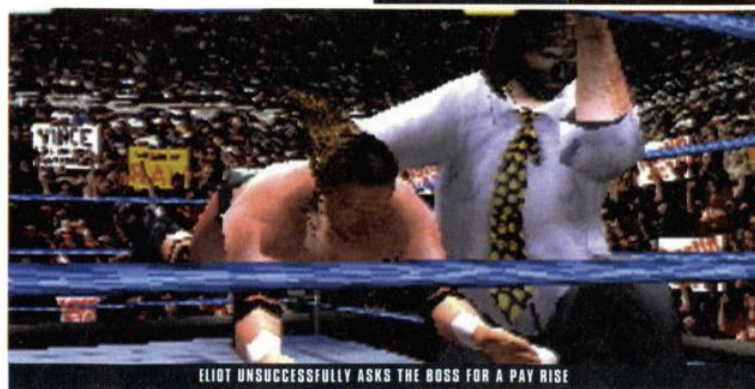
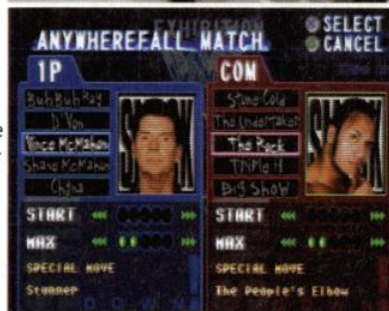
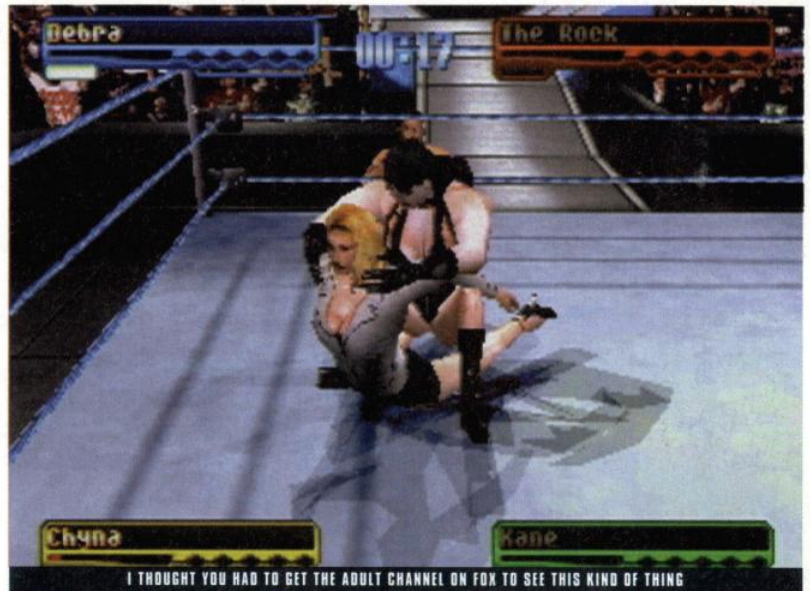
Thankfully, WWF Smackdown offers some new fighting modes, such as the 'I Quit' match. This sees you belting your enemy about the ring (wrestling ring that is) until he/she is in so much pain that they say the words 'I quit' into a microphone that you need to hold to their mouths. Another feature that seems to be the rage in wrestling games these days is that you can fight backstage. When you find yourself fighting out back, you aren't just restricted to one room. You can literally smack someone's ass all

over the place, from room to room. Added to this madness is the fact that you can pick up objects to give anyone who is in the way a right bludgeoning (who said video games are too violent?). In WWF Smackdown, you can even be a referee for crying out loud! Just like the real show, if you are a ref, you can count slowly for friends or fast for enemies. Be warned though, the wrestlers have short tempers and may decide to use your head as a punching bag, regardless if you're a ref or not.

IS THAT A BARBED-WIRE BASEBALL BAT IN YOUR PANTS, OR ARE YOU JUST HAPPY TO SEE ME?

Straight to the point, the graphics are fantastic. Your eyes will fall in love with this game as your television screen hands them a box of chocolates, wrapped in detailed textures, super-smooth and realistic animations and faithfully recreated moves. An example of the work that has gone into the visuals can be seen with wrestler's faces moving. The Rock will look at the crowd and lift his eyebrow or Mankind will just gape and open his gob. If Heather Graham were a video game, I'm sure she'd look something like this title... maybe. The entrances encompass catchy rock music and FMV of the real show. Though, the mix of live video and in game graphics doesn't seem to mesh 100%.

Although some complaints arise like no actual voice sampling and the career mode being a little dull, PlayStation owners have finally received a decent wrestling title. For wrestling fans, add five extra points to the overall score and start saving your cookies. ■



BEEFCAKE-O-METER



PLUS

Superbly animated and highly detailed visuals. Spandex never looked so good.

MINUS

No voice sampling and a dull career option.

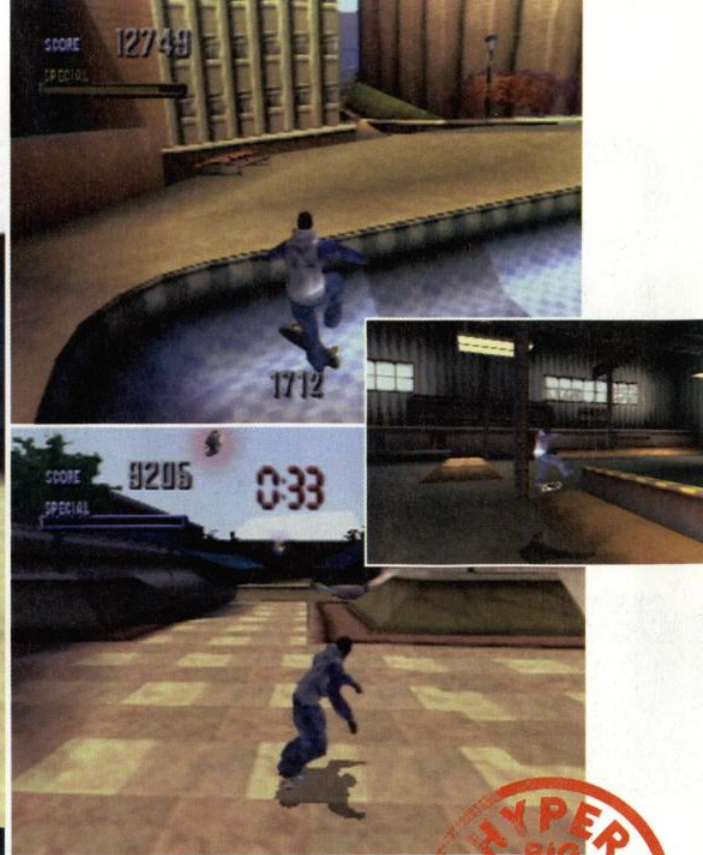
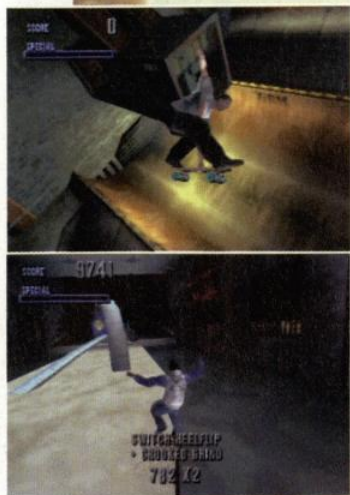
VISUALS **84** SOUND **69** GAMEPLAY **82**

OVERALL

84

WWF Smackdown pile-drives all other PSX wrestlers!

! Tony Hawk Skateboarding 2 is in development, as you saw from our Eye Candy. There has even been a mention of Tony Hawk Skateboarding coming to the Microsoft X-Box already!



CAM'S HOLIDAY SNAPS OF HIS HARD WORK IN SEATTLE AT GAMESTOCK



TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING

Cam Shea scores another Tony... what a talented chap!

AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: Skate Sim
 PLAYERS: 1-2
 PUBLISHER: Activision
 PRICE: \$89.95
 RATING: G
 SUPPORTS: Rumble Pack

✂ Tony Hawk Skateboarding is one of those titles that has an almost universal appeal — skaters and non skaters, gamers and non gamers — everyone seems to love it, and with good reason. This is more than just the best skate game there is, it's a demonstration of the art of crafting finely tuned gameplay.

THE BATTLE OF THE CONSOLES...

Tony Hawk N64 style has the same basic courses and objectives as the PlayStation version, with minor changes here and there, but no big differences. Changes to the controls are also relatively minimal. There are no longer any instant 180 degree rotations, just incremental rotation, which is fine by us. Coming from the PlayStation version, the N64 controller feels awkward at first, what with those dinky little C buttons and all, but it doesn't take long for it to become second nature. The analogue stick works quite nicely here, which is the real bonus because Tony Hawk felt a bit weird with the PlayStation's dual analogue pad.

So what does Hawk 64 have going for it? Intuitive controls, a huge number of

tricks, a compelling combo system, great physics, excellent animations, sharp graphics, brilliant course design and a rockin' soundtrack... as you can tell, we're rather enamoured of this game. The gameplay mechanics in Tony Hawk are almost flawless, with a sweet learning curve making it easy to get into, but challenging to master. Unlike Thrasher, the difficulty comes not from overly complex button presses, but from working the course layout and graceful timing.

WORK THE STREETS LIKE A PRO...

There are ten pro skaters to choose from and nine levels that range from a shopping mall and a dope warehouse setup to famous real life skate spots. It's the freeform nature of the game mechanics that allow you to go absolutely wild, and will have you coming back for more. The better you get, the more trick opportunities and strategies for approaching each level will begin percolating in your mind.

Aside from skating around for fun, there's also the career mode, where you take one skater through all the courses and competitions, collecting tapes along the way. To be honest though,

this mode is a little disappointing, as there just isn't enough meat in the skate stew... but it's still fun.

WARNING: BY READING THIS REVIEW YOU'RE WASTING PRECIOUS TONY-TIME™

Graphically, Hawk 64 is top notch, and on par with the PlayStation version. The skaters are nicely rendered, the environments are solid, and the game zips along quite nicely thank you very much. The only significant difference from the PlayStation version is that the environments tend to look a little fuzzier in the middle distance, reducing the impression of space and depth.

Overall, Tony Hawk will keep you busy for a long, long time. Although we would have liked to see some extras included for all the Nintendo fans who had to wait for this game - like a couple of extra levels, or perhaps a course editor that gave you an empty warehouse and a whole heap of components to fill it with, there's really nothing to complain about. Tony Hawk is a must buy title, and has some of the best gameplay you'll ever see on N64. Guaranteed. ■



BUCKYRULES-O-METER



PLUS

Intensely playable and fiercely addictive.

MINUS

Career mode could be better.

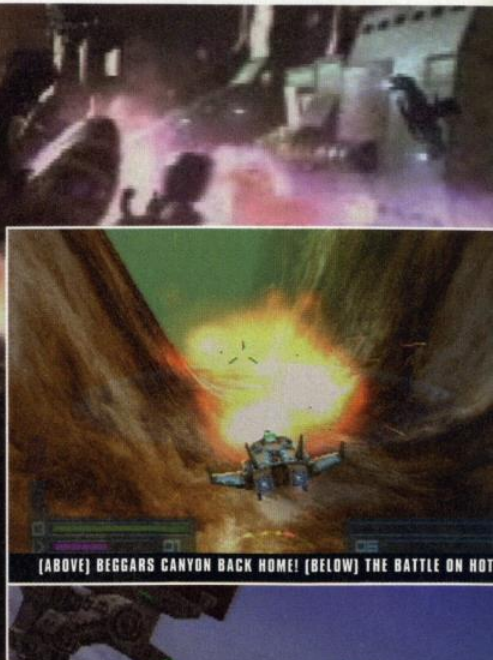
VISUALS **89** SOUND **86** GAMEPLAY **94**

OVERALL

92

The best skateboarding game ever made. A breath of fresh air after so many stale "Xtreme" sports games...

COLONY WARS: RED SUN



(ABOVE) BEGGARS CANYON BACK HOME! (BELOW) THE BATTLE ON HOT



Colony Wars looks so good on PSX, we hope that Psygnosis are hard at work on something for the PS2... they've got a great game to work with.



GREATSHOTKID-O-METER



PLUS

Variety of missions, compelling narrative, superb sound.

MINUS

If you've played the previous games, you won't be thrilled.

VISUALS **90** SOUND **92** GAMEPLAY **88**

OVERALL
90

Blasting action wrapped in an epic space drama. Superb!

73 »HYPER

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Space Combat
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Psygnosis
PRICE: \$49.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

Can it cut it the third time around? Renowned intergalactic scum, **DMC**, answers the question.

Colony Wars: Red Sun is the third in Psygnosis' epic deep space shooter series. The franchise has always been marked by classy production and depth of gameplay, beautifully crafting epic space dramas packed with action. Red Sun is no exception.

A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY?

A beautifully produced FMV opening introduces you to the universe of Colony Wars, one riven by conflict. The fecal matter is about to hit the fan, so to speak, as Empire forces and the Colonial Navy face off for the 'final battle to decide the fate of mankind', for which the Empire have built the super battleship 'Red Sun'. You are Valdemar, a mercenary nobody, suddenly plucked from obscurity by a bizarre dream. The game is punctuated by regular cutscenes that flesh out this story, as you struggle to understand the mystery of the Red Sun, and your own identity.

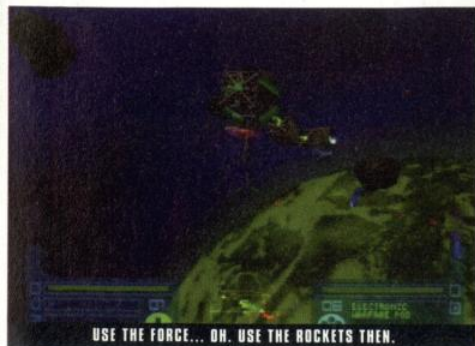
Control over your craft is intuitively simple, and easier to master than in previous installments. There are a good variety of missions (over 50 in total), from destroying rebel smugglers in deep space, to escorting convoys and attempting rescue missions. Most of them are relatively short and sweet, which keeps the interest levels up, and the game moving along. The story

weaves these together, regularly dropping tidbits of narrative to keep you wondering, and the game compelling. As with the last installment, the way you play them, and the missions you choose, effects the way the story unfolds.

Graphically, Red Sun is an improvement over Vengeance, squeezing about as much out of the PSX as possible. Particularly praiseworthy is the sound, which creates a large part of the game's atmosphere. In stark contrast to the scant attention that most games pay sound, (with their crappy General Midi tunes pumped out of the cheapest synthesiser they could find at the local Cash Converters), the soundtrack has been recorded by a live orchestra. It borrows heavily from the brassy and dramatic styling of Star Wars and Star Trek, and

the superb atmospheric sound oozes the cold, dark vibe of films such as Alien. For those of you lucky enough to have the equipment, all this is produced in Dolby Surround, immersing you in a futuristic and dramatic sonic world to pleasure your eardrums.

The only criticism one could level at this game is that it has been done before (twice, to be exact). But this isn't much of a criticism, especially for fans of the series, or those who haven't played Colony Wars at all before. Although it may have been done before, never has it been done so beautifully. Colony Wars: Red Sun completely immerses you in a complex universe and a compelling story, while affording the always welcome opportunity to blow stuff up. ■



USE THE FORCE... OH, USE THE ROCKETS THEN.



EVOLUTION

THE WORLD OF SACRED DEVICES

Kevin Cheung believes we all evolved from sprites.



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

Rejoice! The Dreamcast has finally got an RPG! Developed in Japan by Sting, Evolution is the first game to bring Sega's new console into the role-playing arena that it has long been criticised for simply not servicing. And for good reason too: like the Nintendo 64, the Dreamcast's market performance in the orient has suffered immensely due to a neglect of the RPG genre.

Evolution is a traditional RPG that embraces one of the new fads of the genre, dungeon exploration. That is, your adventure largely revolves around scouring through underground tunnels, fighting the beasts that lurk within, and laying claim to whatever hidden treasures there may be. It's a fad that can also be seen in games like Ehrgeiz and Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon.

MORE SILLY RPG CHARACTER NAMES!

In this game, you play the role of Mag Launcher, a young lad who is trying to live up to his father's name as a great explorer, adventurer, and archaeologist. He is joined by supporting characters like Chain Gun, Pepper Box, and the adorable Linear. Think of this game as Tomb Raider the RPG -

except with better design, better graphics, and a better story.

One look is all it takes to fall completely in love with Evolution. Rendered in high-resolution 3D, Evolution's visual quality is what every console-based RPG should at the very least be striving for. The backgrounds are strikingly realistic, and the characters are so well modelled and rendered that it completely redefines any love you had for anime in 3D. Let's put it in another perspective: it makes Cloud from Final Fantasy VII look like rubbish. Whether it's running around in the fully rotatable 3D towns or duking it out with pesky monsters, Evolution shines brilliantly.

However, for this particular review, it seems almost inappropriate to discuss the technical merits of the game's aesthetics. On a more human note, Evolution is simply the cutest and most adorable RPG there is. In the turn-based battle scenes, Linear will attack her opponents with a frying pan! And when she casts her heal spell, a couple of over-sized band aids will suddenly be applied to your face! And we can't forget Mag, whose primary weapon is a large mechanised fist that's attached to his backpack!

RAIDERS OF THE LOST ART

The music and sound effects are likewise very cute. It hasn't yet reached the stage of a fully orchestrated musical score, but thanks to the Dreamcast's sound capabilities, Sting

have been able to work in quite a decent selection of samples. The final product does admirably well in sustaining the adventurous yet comical flavour of the game.

If anything can sum up the magic of Evolution, it's that it is a very refreshing and light-hearted game that presents you with imaginative designs and technology ideas. Call it the bizarre combination of high-technology and magic with Indiana Jones-style adventure. For whatever reason you find of your own to fall in love with Evolution, Ubi Soft is deserving of the thanks of all RPG fans, and must be commended for bringing this game to the West. RPGs are a most important genre for the DC to crack, and Evolution is a fantastic start. All DC owners with a slight inkling towards RPGs should get this game, not simply because it's a fantastic game, but because it's going to be a very long wait until Grandia 2. ■



Want more RPGs for your Dreamcast? Then start holding your breath for Grandia 2, Shenmue, Arcatera and Baldur's Gate just for starters...

STYLE-O-METER



PLUS
 Incredibly hi-res graphics.
 Excellent comical atmosphere.

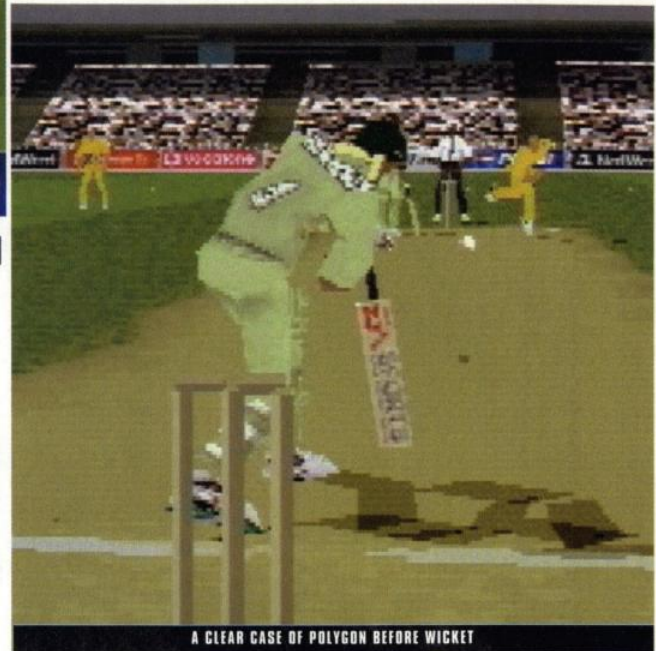
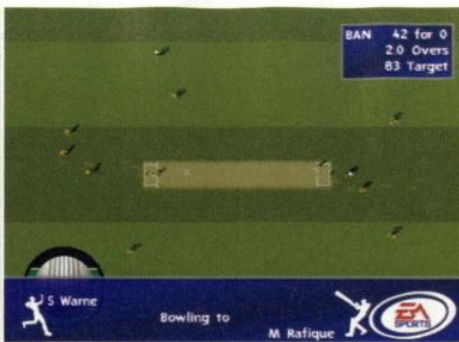
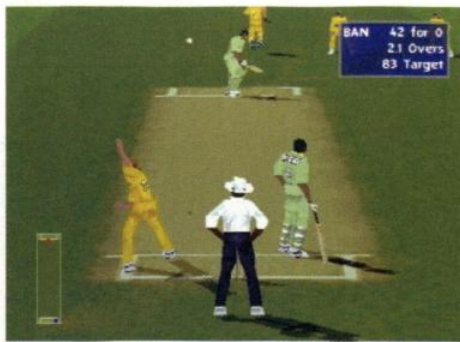
MINUS
 A very traditional game
 with few innovations on offer.
 Entirely text-based dialogue.

VISUALS 91 SOUND 89 GAMEPLAY 90

OVERALL

90

Evolution is an example for all prospective RPG developers to follow. A strong title that all fans of the genre should check out.



CRICKET 2000

As Editor, he's known for his excellent late cut, so **Eliot Fish** slapped on the pads...

AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: Sport
 PLAYERS: 1-2
 PUBLISHER: EA Sports
 PRICE: \$79.95
 RATING: G

The search for a satisfying cricket title seems to be an endless one. The games that have surfaced have either been too arcadey, too simmy, too difficult or horridly inaccurate – fun for a few moments, but ultimately frustrating and not what cricket fans want from a video game of the sport. Ironically, one of the most satisfying cricket games has been International Cricket Captain on the PC which is a management sim with no hands-on action in it at all! In terms of an action game which satisfies all our cricket urges, gamers have been waiting patiently for years. Clearly, EA Sports seem the company best equipped to get the job done, and Cricket 2000 (based on the Cricket World Cup PC title) is a step closer to giving us what we want.

BOWLING, SHAAAAANE

Featuring all the real players from the World Cup teams, a plethora of stadiums (mostly British, due to the focus on last year's World Cup) and some of the best cricket animation ever, Cricket 2000 gets off to a fabulous start. Jumping right in and having a bash is easy as pie, thanks to a stripped back control system which is easy to use.

Bowling utilises a common system – stop the floating marker at the spot where you'd like the ball to pitch, select your type of delivery, and then stop the moving "speed" meter to indicate how fast and accurate your delivery will be. Very simple, and yet visibly effective when used properly. Just about all the delivery styles are there – fast bowling, medium pace swing bowling and both types of spin. Whilst there is a lot of variety here, the reality is that what you bowl doesn't matter a hell of a lot due to the new batting system which favours the thrill of the slog.

The new batting system utilises an

"accuracy bar" which rises quickly as the bowler comes in to bowl. You have to time your button press just right, so that when the slider reaches the very top, you nail it. If you do, the bar will flash and you will hit a six – almost regardless of the type of shot you select. Shot selection is achieved by moving a cone of angle around with the d-pad to tell your batsmen to play a shot to that area of the field – point it behind him and he'll try to hook, for instance. Again, this is great for cricket lovers to appreciate, but the new batting meter system almost cancels out any need to think about where you should play a delivery – it all comes down to timing one button press. It's just too easy. Hitting a four or six on every delivery can be entirely possible, which kind of spoils the fun a little. Actually, it spoils the fun a lot. Playing against the computer is ridiculous sometimes, and you'll feel that your bowler's deliveries have almost no effect on the batsmen whatsoever.

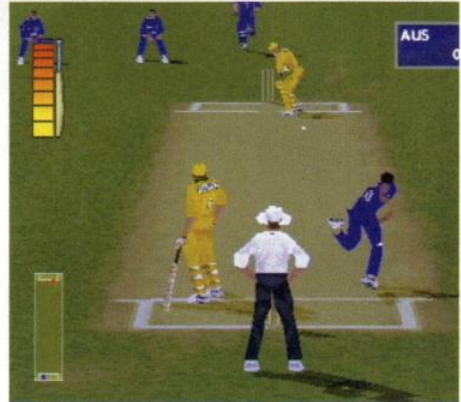
BOWLING BENAAAAUD

Whilst playing against the computer results in a fairly predictable match, Cricket 2000 shines a lot brighter when the game is played with friends. This comes down to the simple fact that a human opponent makes mistakes. A human opponent isn't going to always get the timing right. A human opponent will get nervous and may even choose to just go for singles! This results in a far more entertaining game. Whilst it's still possible for the match to end up being a slog-fest – negating the need to think about any bowling strategy – it's far more fun in the process and you'll also get more of a kick out the basic human interaction. You have the opportunity to sledge the crap out of each other!

Visually, it must be said that Cricket 2000 has the best cricket animation

ever. The movements are all incredibly realistic, and the engine is very smooth, resulting in some truly entertaining graphics. One huge gripe though, is the fact that the player models look absolutely NOTHING like their human counterparts. The same generic models get trotted out regardless of the player selected. Glen McGrath has blonde hair! So does Dale! This really ruins the illusion of playing as your heroes. Why couldn't this have been more accurate? A real shame. There's also commentary from Richie Benaud and David Gower, but it becomes tragically repetitive.

Cricket 2000 is a lot of fun for two players, but there's still a lot about this game which should have been better. Still... we're one step closer to the cricket game we've always wanted. ■



STREAKER-O-METER



PLUS

Play the World Cup, Super Sixes or Friendlies. Pretty to watch.

MINUS

Inaccurate player models. Only One Day cricket.

VISUALS **87** SOUND **78** GAMEPLAY **75**

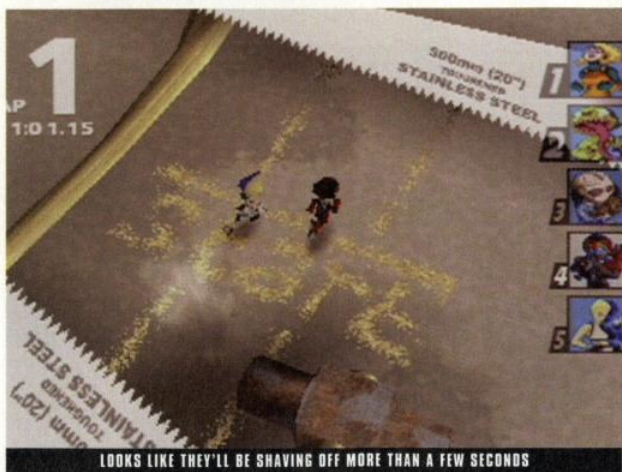
OVERALL

80

An admirable effort from EA Sports. Balances arcade action with sim elements fairly well.

75 »HYPER

The best online cricket resource.
<http://www.cricinfo.com/>



LOOKS LIKE THEY'LL BE SHAVING OFF MORE THAN A FEW SECONDS



MICRO MANIACS

After an encounter with Rick Moranis, a diminutive **DMC** limbers up at the starting line...



AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: Racing
 PLAYERS: 1-8
 PUBLISHER: Codemasters
 PRICE: \$79.95
 RATING: G
 SUPPORTS: Memory Card, MultiTap

Codemasters have been bringing us tiny racing games since the days of the original Nintendo Entertainment System. *Micro Maniacs* is the latest in the series, a follow up to the brilliant *Micro Machines V3*. The concept is basically the same as *Micro Machines*: tiny little things racing around normal sized environments. But in a bizarre conceptual leap, Codemasters have for the first time dropped the vehicles, and given us a motley band of mutants to race with.

HONEY, I SHRUNK THE... HANG ON, WHAT DID I SHRINK?

Substituting mutants for cars hasn't revolutionised the game. This is a good thing though, since the originals were so damn good. You still race tiny little things around bedrooms, gardens, kitchen tables, and bathroom sinks. The graphical presentation is still the same: beautiful, cartoony 3D environments (32 in all), viewed from a top down perspective. So, what's the difference I hear you ask?

First off, most of the races are on foot (which provides the aural comedy of frantically pattering little feet). Instead of each level featuring a different type

of vehicle, each with a different driving style, a la *Micro Machines*, the game features twelve characters, from which you choose and play through the game. Variety is provided through levels that feature little vehicles, such as skateboards, jet-skis and even bees.

The character design is particularly funky, including a turbo charged spandex wearing alienoid, and a breakdancing robot. While using the one character and mostly racing on foot limits the variety of gameplay, it provides some continuity. As you progress, your abilities upgrade, which is much needed as the game soon gets really tough. Each character handles slightly differently, and has two unique special attacks. The handling, at least in the foot races, is also more 'precise' than in previous installments, with less of the mega skidding that rocked so hard in *Micro Machines*.

The high difficulty level is the greatest problem with *Micro Maniacs*. The tracks are beautifully designed, but quite fiendish: narrow, and featuring plenty of obstacles and tight turns. The competition is tough, and every race is tight. Tracks need to be practiced over and over again to get them right. This isn't a problem in itself, but when you are given a measly 3 lives to complete the championship, it suddenly becomes a major stumbling block. Thankfully, to remedy this there is a time trial mode to help you practice.

While playing single player can sometimes be frustrating, the game

shines in multiplayer mode (up to 8 players). Get together with a few friends around this game and there are hours of hilarity and tight racing to be had. For some reason watching munchkins frantically go the baz around a bedroom is that much funnier with friends. ■



MIDGET-O-METER



PLUS

Unique racing action, great track design, fantastic multiplayer.

MINUS

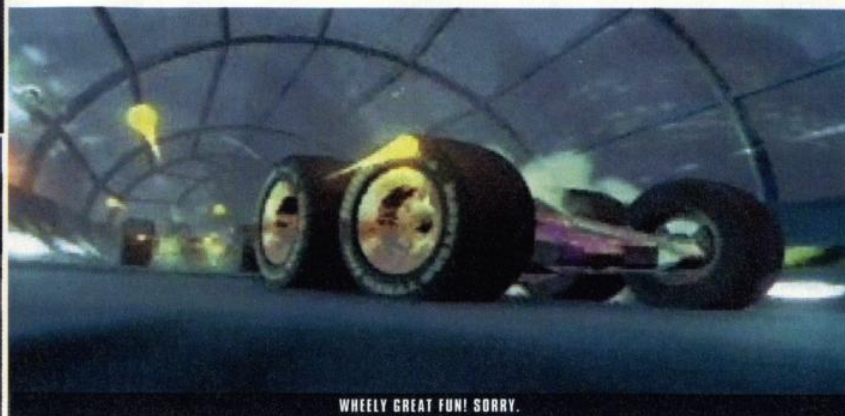
Unforgiving single player mode.

VISUALS 84 SOUND 80 GAMEPLAY 90

OVERALL

88

Fun in single player, but even better with friends.



ROLLCAGE 2

Kevin Cheung reviewed the first Rollcage long ago, so we wanted to see what he thought of the sequel...



Rollcage Stage 2 has also been released on PC, supporting 3D acceleration for some super smooth and gorgeous racing.

AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: Racing
 PLAYERS: 1-2
 PUBLISHER: Psygnosis
 PRICE: \$49.95
 RATING: G
 SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

Psygnosis enjoy an almost God-like reputation with their WipEout series. Lesser and disappointing games like Kingsley or F1 '98 don't even cause the fans to flinch. However, when word got out about its new futuristic racing game, the fans listened. It was called Rollcage, and it was a game where your ridiculously over-sized wheels allowed you to defy gravity and drive topsy-turvy. Unfortunately, the fans lost interest owing to the game's lack of serious challenge. Rollcage Stage 2 is Psygnosis' second shot at the game, so what did they change...?

ROCK 'N' ROLL

For those of you who aren't familiar with the title, Rollcage is a racing game where the laws of physics have been bent rather savagely. The tracks have been designed in such a way that your over-sized wheels can grip the side of the wall, allowing you to scream along at break-neck speeds along cliff faces, ceilings, and so on. The immense size of your wheels also mean that you can flip upside down and still continue on your path. In addition, collision damage is non-existent. Your vehicle is an indestructible speed demon. The end result was an incredibly fast game with enough spills and turns to make any WipEout fan proud. And let's also not forget the weapons of mass destruction, which could be picked up and used throughout the tracks.

Rollcage Stage 2 doesn't really change any of these rules. Barring the addition of some brand new weapons and a new set of music tracks, the amount of improvement over the original game is quite subtle. First of all, there is a slight graphical update. It's not that noticeable, but the game generally moves at a much smoother framerate than before, which lends a better

flow to the driving experience.

There are several new special effects that come into play with the new weapons. Some of them are utterly fantastic, such as the multiple green missiles that can be sent spiralling to their nearest rival car. On the other hand, some of them seem to be terribly overdone, completely blanking out the screen with a blinding light that literally prevents you from seeing the road. Sometimes it can be a cool effect. For instance, there are many overhanging buildings and signposts that you can blow up, causing them to come crashing down spectacularly to the earth.

These kinds of effects look great, of course. But when you've knocked down several of these things in a row, the awesome amount of fireworks that are involved are more than distracting. Then there are the special effects that should have been dropped entirely, such as the trippy motion blurring effects for when you are slowed down.

HANDLE WITH CARE

The other main improvement has been to the controls. The cars are now much easier to control, as opposed to the original game where the slightest movement of your thumb would send you into a frenzied spin in the wrong direction. Now, you can manoeuvre through all the winding paths up the sides of the walls with barely any effort, letting you enjoy the surreal mayhem unencumbered.

From a strict gaming perspective, subtle improvements like these should be enough to please anyone. However, Psygnosis seems to have ruined any prospect of even this meagre credit with its drop in track designs. Basically, you travel in a circle really fast and blow things up along the way. There's precious little variation to speak of: no alternate paths, no

racing lines to follow... there are a few obstacles to avoid, but they can hardly be considered to add any depth to the tracks.

Overall, Rollcage Stage 2 is a disappointing sequel. The refinements that have been made to the graphics and the control are, of course, all very welcome. However, the strikingly ordinary track designs are a surprising step backwards on the programmers' part. Perhaps younger audiences will be less critical of the track designs, but they're certainly not going to win any fans amongst the hardcore racers. ■

POINTLESS CHALLENGE MODE

As though following the latest trend for every game to feature some form of challenge mode or puzzle mode, Rollcage Stage 2 features a "Scramble Mode". Of all the new modes to incorporate, this is perhaps the most infuriating and redundant section of the game. Like Gran Turismo 2's license tests, you have to complete a certain turn or run within a given time, and stop on a predetermined spot. The road you drive on is suspended in space, and is barely wide enough to give you 2 inches of leeway on either side of the car - basically meaning that you fall off the edge and start again every 5 seconds. Sure, we've mentioned that the controls are slightly improved, but they're still wholly unsuitable to "precision driving".



CARSICK-O-METER



PLUS

Better controls, especially with analogue. New weapons really look cool.

MINUS

Simplistic track design. Some special effects are overdone.

VISUALS 86 SOUND 89 GAMEPLAY 77

OVERALL
79

Another otherwise fantastic game that's been let down by poor track design.

NHL FACEOFF 2000

PLAYSTATION

For the past five years, EA Sports and 989 Studios have battled it out for PSX Hockey supremacy, bringing out an update every season. The conventional wisdom is that EA have won it hands down every year, and EA's NHL 2000 recently set the bar very high. So what have 989 got to offer?

As with most 'game-a-year' sports series, the latest installment features little more than incremental improve-

ments over last year. On the upside, the game is fast and flows nicely, controls are intuitive, it's licensed by the NHL, and the sound (particularly the commentary) is excellent. Sports game commentary is usually limited to a few lines that are uttered with little relevance to what's going on in the game. The commentary in this is professional and comprehensive. You can play for ages without ever hearing the same comment twice, and it's always right on the mark.

Unfortunately, these upsides are more than obscured by flaws. Control is limited and lacks depth, despite the 'quickstart' and 'advanced' options. There are

big problems getting in close to the net. The animation gets so crowded it's impossible to see the puck. 989 have been flaunting their 'new improved' AI, developed with the help of NHL star Scotty Bowman, but it's pretty lame. Your opponents have great difficulty taking the puck off you, leav-



ing you to roam around with impunity.

This is a minor improvement over last year's outing, and beset by flaws. If you're a hockey nut (and let's face it, that demographic is pretty limited in our wide brown land), then this might be worth a look for its updated stats, and the few gameplay improvements it offers. For those with only a passing interest in going the tonk on ice, save your dollars. Fun for a quick session, but lacks depth.

DMC

i AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Sport
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: 989 Studios
PRICE: \$49.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
75	90	68	71

CASTLEVANIA: LEGACY OF DARKNESS

NINTENDO 64

With Castlevania 64 barely out of the shrink wrap, it may come as something of a surprise that another Castlevania title has arrived on our shores. Legacy Of Darkness (LOD) is actually more like a director's cut of Castlevania 64 than an all new title. A more cynical way to describe it would be that this is the game that Castlevania 64 SHOULD have been, and may more aptly be titled

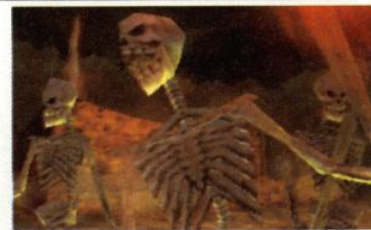
"Castlevania: Whoops sorry about the first one".

Assuming that you haven't bought Castlevania 64, there's a lot to like about this game. Although losing much of the elegance of the 2D titles in the transition to 3D, this is some of the best hacking and slashing you can get for your 64 at the moment. There's nothing hugely innovative about the gameplay and the graphics are decidedly first generation, but LOD has enough atmosphere and challenge to keep you coming back for more.

Set eight years before Castlevania 64, you'll be adventuring through many of the same levels, with a few differences here and there to keep the experience (relatively) fresh.

There are two entirely new scenarios, and four playable characters, including newcomers Cornell - a werewolf monk, and Henry - a sword and shottie wielding knight, so there's decent longevity.

Graphically, LOD is a step up from Castlevania 64, with higher detail textures, but it's still the same core engine, so washed out graphics and fog still run rampant. The 4MB expansion pak is supported, but the massive frame rate



hit renders it almost unplayable. If Konami had at least fixed up a few of the crucial problem areas from Castlevania 64, such as the sluggish control and dodgy camera mechanics, LOD would be much easier to recommend. As it stands however, LOD feels out of date, and a slap in the face for those who bought Castlevania 64.

CAM SHEA

i AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action/Adventure
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Konami
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: MA
SUPPORTS: Controller Pak, 4MB Expansion Pak



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
79	86	77	78

HYDRO THUNDER

NINTENDO 64

As far as water based racing goes, there are no development companies thus far who have been able to match the polish of Wave Race 64. Everything about the game is balanced perfectly, from gameplay, graphics and water physics. Hydro Thunder, a powerboat racer, we were hoping, was to claim the throne in this area. Unfortunately, as nice as the game is, it is lacking in

some key areas.

Firstly though, let's look at the finer points. Hydro Thunder is a notable rendition of its arcade cousin. The graphics are sharp and detailed in both the powerboats and landscapes. Each machine also has a spiffy 'Transformer' animation when boost pick-ups are used, with mechanical bits of jiggery-pokery setting up the engines for turbo usage. The levels consist of jungles, ancient lands, cities and so on. For example, you may be powering along and see a mountainous statue of a Greek god looming above.

On the down side, the game doesn't give the impression of speed to make it a worthwhile racer, feeling more like a gentle ride up an escalator being pow-

ered by monkeys pulling a rope. Another niggle is that the game doesn't excite. The level designs are uninspiring and generally Hydro Thunder doesn't make a splash (Ha! Get it? I made that one up myself, Eliot...)

If you don't own Wave Race 64, buy it instead of this. If you already do and want some more water-related sports (not including Wet T-shirt Competition 64), Hydro Thunder is the next best thing. Although, it's the only other water racer on the N64.

ARTHUR ADAM



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
82	70	60	72



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play nicely together**

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MICRO MACHINES 1 & 2: TWIN TURBO

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Racing
PRICE: \$49.95
PUBLISHER: THQ
FORMAT: Game Boy Color

TONY HAWK SKATEBOARDING

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action
PRICE: \$49.95
PUBLISHER: Activision
FORMAT: Game Boy Color

YODA STORIES

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

TOY STORY 2

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: 2D Platformer
PRICE: \$49.95
PUBLISHER: THQ
FORMAT: Game Boy Color

My NES bit the dust some time ago now, rendering a treasured collection of games useless. In amongst the stack of chunky old carts were some absolute classics, including the first two Micro Machines games.



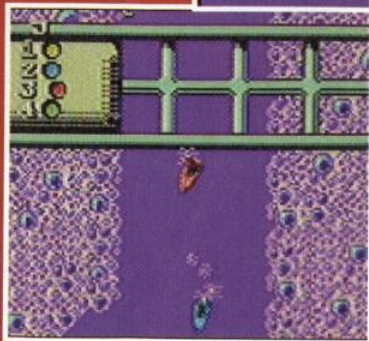
Just when I thought they'd ascended forever to the great silicon graveyard in the sky, THQ have resurrected these

two Codemasters classics and packed them into the one GBC cart.

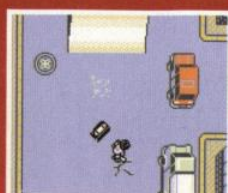
This is a great port, and these games are almost as much fun to play now as they were back in the eight bit era. I say almost, because there's one crucial option missing - link cable support. This is a mystifying and disappointing omission for a game series renowned for its addictive multiplayer component. Oddly enough, there is a limited two-player option, but this requires sharing the one Game Boy, and as you can imagine, is awkward at best.

Even so, Twin Turbo has gameplay in spades, retaining all the variety, depth and charm that made the original games so popular. With 60 courses spanning all manner of wacky environments, and 15 vehicles each with their own unique handling, this is the best GBC racing game on the market.

CAM SHEA

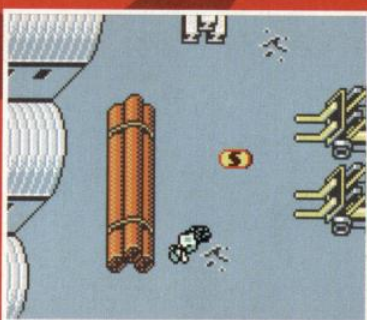


The inevitable Game Boy translation of everyone's favourite skate game is here... and by golly, it's not bad at all! Tony Hawk on Game Boy



has more in common with classic titles like 720 and Skate Or Die than the next gen games, which is definitely a good thing.

There are two basic play styles - a top down perspective street run, and side-on ramp skating. Whilst the ramps are cool, it's the street skating that will have you hooked. The courses are jam packed with rails, ramps, barrels, cars, water jumps and obstacles. They're designed so that you can almost go the entire way without touching the ground - launching from grind to grind, bouncing off the top of cars etc. These courses are particularly



good fun against a friend in link mode. Tricks are limited, but adequate. There are five grabs to perform in the air, and three different grinds.

The graphics are quite plain, but everything is easily distinguishable, and there's a decent impression of speed. The only real downside to Tony Hawk are the lack of flip tricks in the street courses, and the fact that there are only five courses. With a few more, Tony Hawk would have earned a perfect score. As it stands, it's still an excellent title, and a great way to take Tony on the road.

CAM SHEA

"Size matters not! Judge me by my size, do you?" Well, for all we know, Yoda may not have been talking about his height, but we'll take the little gremlin's words as pearls of Jedi Wisdom. The Game Boy may be tiny, but it has kept the money pouring into the doors of Nintendo when the N64 has been treading water. The great thing about the Game Boy, is that most of the games are designed to be picked up for 10 minutes at a time - perfect for bus trips and other times when you're



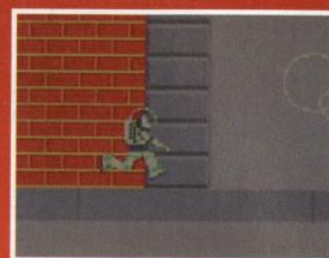
looking for a quick boredom fix. If you're a Star Wars fan, then Yoda Stories is exactly

what you're looking for. It's a quick time waster which requires very little brain power, and features all the cool little things from Star Wars which make you grin like a little kid again.

Yoda sets about training Luke in the ways of the Force, with you the player, taking control of Luke. You're equipped with your lightsaber, and Yoda gives you an object to start your quest with. Then you wander around, chopping up baddies with your saber and fiddling with items to solve puzzles. The characters are tiny on screen, which doesn't help sometimes in recognising things, but then, maybe Yoda made it that way to make himself feel better. The controls are also stiff, and the engine-based results in poor animation and choppy movement. If you're a Star Wars fan, this may be a fun diversion, but others may find this totally lacking in any real entertainment value.

ELIOT FISH

Groan... not another bloody Game Boy platformer. I don't know how much more of this mundane running from left to right I can take! The Story in brief. Woody - kidnapped. Buzz Lightyear - to the rescue. Exciting stuff huh? Journey through some of the locations from the film, such as Al's Toy Barn, the Airport and Andy's Room. As well as running, jumping and climbing, you'll also get to collect coins. Huzzah! Bet Shigeru Miyamoto wished he'd thought of that one first!



Of course, what Buzz is going to do with all those coins is up to your imagination. Personally, I suspect that he'll go and get loaded, to help try and take his mind off all these shoddy game appearances.

The bottomline with this title is that there's nothing here you haven't seen a million times before. There are some cool touches, but why bother when it bears no resemblance to the film? The stake through the heart of this blood sucking piece of merchandising, however, are the poorly designed controls. Why did Tiertex decide to double up one button as both run and jump? Sorry guys, this simply doesn't work. Better luck next time.

CAM SHEA



8/10

7/10

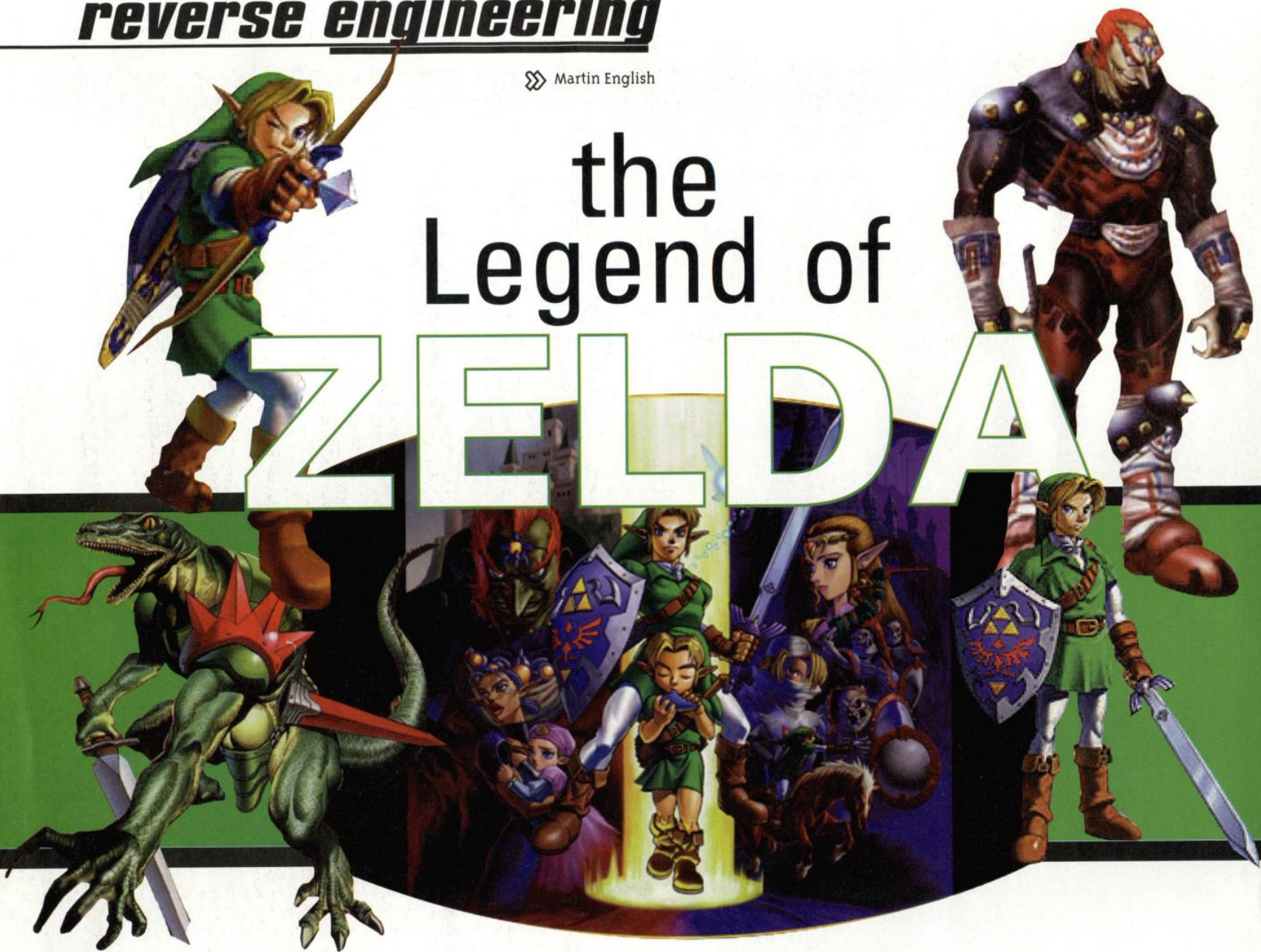
6/10

3/10

» Martin English

the Legend of

ZELDA



Ah the eighties, what a time to be alive. Television had only just begun to infect households around the world with images of Fat Albert, Mr.T and everybody's favourite bath mat, ALF. These chalky characters alone were enough to solidify a child on the carpet for hours, that is, until the advent of home console gaming. Pioneering the role-playing genre on the humble NES was the now legendary series of Zelda. Its monolithic success stole the imagination of a generation away from the geeky scenario of playground Dungeons and Dragons, tightly packing the snowball of an industry that's blitzing the market today.

BIRTH OF THE ACTION RPG

In 1986 the first Zelda was born, prompting idle hands to quit rolling the dice and start rolling their brothers for money to buy it. Shigeru Miyamoto, the brain behind Mario and Donkey Kong, was responsible for bringing the ambitious project to fruition. At the time, the idea of a fully interactive world was nothing

short of breath taking, made possible with a combination of what were killer graphics and compelling gameplay. The Legend of Zelda on the NES and its three subsequent sequels, which took place on the NES, SNES and N64 respectively, were highly successful. Of course, the current standard of console visuals shroud anything from previous decades in defecation, but this game invented inventory, with gameplay that arguably remains unchallenged.

Many games of the eighties relied heavily on a cliched, sexist, and generally linear plot line to fill in the gaps between moments of frantic violence. The Legend of Zelda was no exception to the rule, with all the token characters you'd expect from a team of male Japanese programmers. Gannon, an irrepressibly evil individual, kidnaps a princess and our good-natured hero Link must rescue her. To rock up and nab her back in the same fashion would be far too simple though, so his task involved collecting various pretty stones while

staving off the monstrous masses with his trusty sword and shield.

The designers had obviously saved their creativity for style and, with the aid of a top-down perspective structure, the result was a geographically enormous playing field in which you could lose yourself for hours. Sure, to many the opening screen resembled the insides of Mr. Miyamoto's left nostril, but it was rendered with an unprecedented six colours, each more lurid than the last. Running at approximately four frames per second didn't seem to impede the appeal of this adventure as its sheer weight and diversity distracted you from technological limitations. Unfortunately, the music sounded as if it were composed by a drunk on a broken casiotone keyboard.

ADVENTUROUS PROGRAMMING

Following on the heels of its money-spinning forbearer, Zelda II: The Adventure of Link arose the next year. This time players were offered both a top-down and side scrolling

perspective, along with a greater colour pallet to whet their palates, all wrapped neatly around an identical premise. Gannon, like any conscientious villain, chose to resurrect himself from the dead. Not taking murder too lightly, he avenges himself by placing princess Zelda under the kind of deep sleep previously induced only by re-runs of Pacific Drive. Once more Link opts for the more complex of solutions and, instead of the traditional nose holding procedure normally reserved for sibling slumber, he restores pretty stones to their rightful palaces in order to wake her. Again, his journey is made harder than John Holmes by the legions of armour-clad rodents, disgruntled rocks and surly sea monsters to rival the Octorox and Zoren of the first. Gamers were moderately satisfied with the same zany enemies and quests of the previous title and reflected as much in international sales figures. I was personally disappointed with Link's new psychedelic death sequence which, sadly, had replaced the little dance I'd



A HANDHELD AWAKENING

Zelda has been more than successful on the Game Boy also, with Link's Awakening being released in 1993 and proving to be just as enjoyable as its console cousins. There's plenty more on the way too, with another three Zelda Game Boy titles planned!



grown used to from number one. The music was far from compensatory.

A LINK TO THE PAST

Appearing as one of the earlier SNES titles, *Zelda III: A Link to the Past* upgraded all the prerequisite factors such as graphics and thankfully sound while leaving the heart of the game untouched. This wise manoeuvre hooked newcomers and veterans alike, treading further along the path of enthralling, epic adventures. Renewing his 'get out of hell free' card, Gannon came back to life for the second time in *Zelda III*, mischievously devising a parallel world where evil reigns, kind of like Western Australia. This literally added an extra dimension to the gameplay, with Link needing to traverse and use items from opposing worlds for successful completion of the levels. Of course, whilst many felt this was the best *Zelda* game ever, we hadn't yet hit 3D...

The rebuffed and souped up Nintendo 64 version of *Zelda*, confusingly entitled *Ocarina of Time* was the fourth

and most recent instalment of the series. The N64's vast processing capabilities increased the game's graphical potential exponentially and this suitably boosted playability as well. Chronicling the life of Link from child to adult, the game stayed true to its ludicrous tradition of dusting off Gannon's festering corpse for another go at poaching princess *Zelda*, and nobody complained.

Now in total 3D, *Zelda*'s controls diversified while its plot thickened nicely and the game wrestled with *Goldeneye* in the popularity stakes for a considerable period of time.

C'MON, GANNON, DIE ALREADY

But the story doesn't end there. *Zelda V: Majora's Mask*, the next title in the series, has aroused the excitement of fans the world over. Putting the N64's peripheral hardware to good use, the game will require the four-megabyte expansion pack. You need only peep at the screenshots to understand why. It seems this time round the story will benefit from a welcome change of

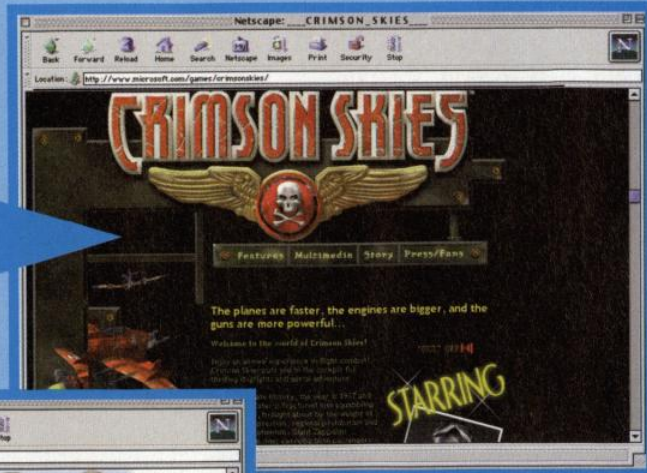
pace. Gannon's tenacity may finally have subsided in favour of an entirely new plot line, which begins where *Ocarina of Time* left off. On his way home Link is accosted by a strange man in a mask, who steals his horse and rides off into a nearby portal. Never shy of adventure, Link sprints through the rift after him into a world with familiar settings and faces. An enormous moon looms ominously overhead, rapidly descending towards the earth. Link soon learns of the new world's impending demise and cheerfully agrees to prevent it.

Masks largely replace the items and weapons of the earlier games, with three main ones used to gain abilities and enable access to innumerable locations, including swamps, snowy mountains and a giant clock tower. Link may take on the form of Goron, a rock-like creature with the ability to roll at high speeds and move heavy objects; Zora, a sea-man capable of underwater flight; and a Deku Scrub, which can fly around and shoot

seeds out his snout in defence. These beings will also conjure spells using bongos, horns and fish-bone guitars. Those familiar with its predecessor should feel comfortable with *Majora's Mask*'s control system, but punters have been promised all the twists expected of a game this long in development. Apparently, three days in the life of a world have been inscribed in real time on this cartridge, and I for one will be lining up, wearing the token green hood, to get it.

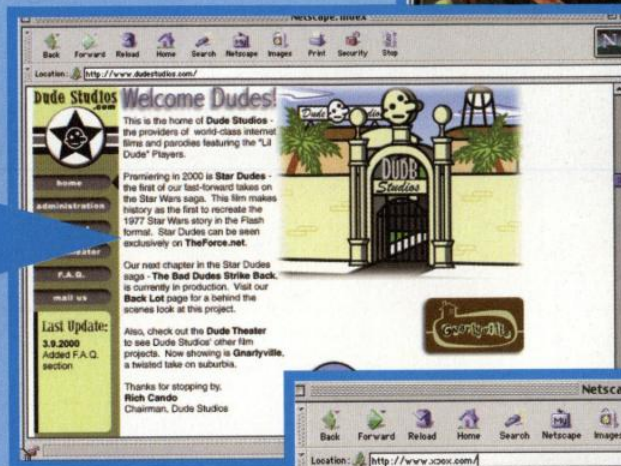
CRIMSON SKIES

Microsoft have a new flight combat sim on the way called Crimson Skies. The game is based on a board game of the same name, so there's plenty of "backstory" to the action. Microsoft have already set up an official site to bring us the story, features, downloads and more. Frighteningly, the lead designer of the game is named John Howard.
<http://www.microsoft.com/games/crimsonskies>



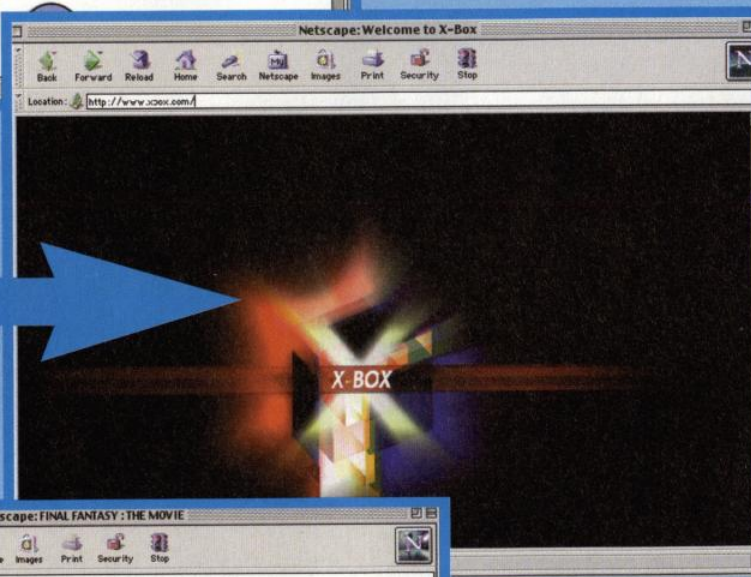
STAR DUDES

Dude Studios produce a variety of awesome little Flash animations, one of them being the excellent Star Dudes (a parody of Star Wars from beginning to finish and it's only 800k). We just love their site for its humour and style. It may even inspire you to run out and learn how to use Flash!
<http://www.dudestudios.com>



MICROSOFT X-BOX

Well, we knew that Microsoft registered this site about a month before they announced the system officially – so that was a bit of a giveaway. If you go there now, you'll find that the site is online and currently hosting a few press releases and some other minor info. Bookmark it now!
<http://www.xbox.com>



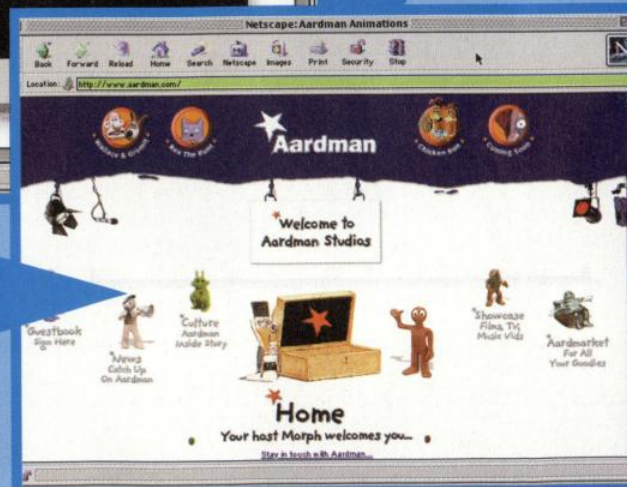
FINAL FANTASY THE MOVIE

When some short clips appeared online for the Final Fantasy movie, we downloaded them and all sat mesmerised at the mere seconds of CGI. This digital movie is going to be amazing to watch. Hey, the story might totally suck the arse out of a dead rat, but damn it's pretty.
<http://www.finalfantasy.com/>



AARDMAN ANIMATIONS

Hmm, it seems to be animation month at Hyper. Another awesome website is Aardman Animations, the company that produced Wallace and Gromit and Rex the Runt. There's tons of animated stuff to gawk at in your browser, and news of upcoming cool stuff. Just dig the talent behind this site.
<http://www.aardman.com/>



Lara Croft VS Indiana Jones

This face off has been coming for a long time. Let's see who is the true adventurer...

lara croft

Melon Head. That's what we like to call her. She just looks out of proportion with her spaghetti arms, tiny waist and monstrous forehead. The fact that she should be unable to get out of bed in the morning, due to the excess weight in the form of her two horrendous polygonal breasts, should rule her out of this contest from the very start. Well, let's see... she's handy with a pair of pistols "John Woo" style which is certainly an attraction to gamers who enjoy the action elements of her Tomb Raider series. But then, to be honest, the ever-continuing Tomb Raider saga which will receive its fifth instalment this Christmas, is kind of driving every one around the bend. If we have to stare at Lara's butt one more time... well, I guess that's the problem isn't it, lots of young gamers out there WANT to keep staring at her butt. You see, seeing as Angelina Jolie (Girl Interrupted) is being cast as Lara Croft, those gamers will soon be imagining it's Jolie's butt instead, and the series will never die! We'll be playing exactly the same game, with different graphics, on the PlayStation 4!

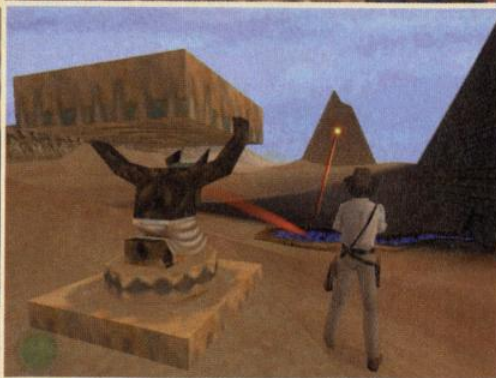
I guess Lara does win points for breaking the buff hero stereotype which is cool. It's still refreshing to jump in and control a young, nimble woman as opposed to kicking in doors with another Duke Nukem clone. The first Tomb Raider may also have been refreshing in the gameplay department, but after sitting on the shelves for as many years as it has, the mechanics are beginning to stink.

the verdict

Indiana Jones just has to win. He was the original and no matter how much we'd like to get personal with Angelina Jolie, she just won't be able to match Harrison Ford for coolness in the same kind of action role. Whilst Indy has struggled in the gameplay department, the Tomb Raider series has overstayed its welcome. Three cheers for Indy!

indiana jones

Indy has a few very obvious pluses going for him straight off the bat. Firstly, he's the original Tomb Raider — Raiders of the Lost Ark, Temple of Doom, The Last Crusade — Lara stole most of her ideas from this adventuring archaeologist. The only real difference between the two is the fedora hat and what's in Indy's pants... his whip that is. He also has that cocky, sarcastic american wit which is far more amusing than Lara's stiff upper lip. Oh, and Indy kills Nazis. However, after a strong start in videogames with Raiders on the Atari, and later, Fate of Atlantis on the PC, Indy has stumbled with his latest PC outing — The Infernal Machine. A good game, but ironically similar to Lara's very own Tomb Raider in many ways. Look out Indy, it's a trap! Whilst this is certainly a shame, Indiana still has the charisma of Harrison Ford behind him, whilst Lara has had nothing but a string of empty-headed models. That may soon change for Lara with her first feature film, but Harrison will be back in Indy 4 in a few years time and no doubt have some new games to help him strike back. Who knows... maybe by the time that happens, Lara will be a long forgotten idol in some tomb somewhere...



MAGIC KNIGHT RAYEARTH



i	CATEGORY: Fantasy, Action
	PRODUCTION COMPANY: Clamp
	ANIMATION: 9
	PLOT: 6
	JAPAN-NESS: Medium
	OVERALL: 7.5

You know how the opening theme of Neon Genesis Evangelion refers to a "Shounen"? Well, that means "boy" — and shounen anime is a specific 'category' in Japan. The same applies for "Shoujo" anime, which is designed for girls. They're easy to pick: Sailor Moon, Utena, Card Captor Sakura... one company that's made a real name for itself in shoujo anime is Clamp. Magic Knight Rayearth, which was also a game on the Sega Saturn, is one of their most successful series.

The series follows the adventures of three Tokyo schoolgirls who were teleported to a strange land by

Magic Knights. It is said in legend that they are powerful warriors/sorcerers who will cleanse the world of evil. Of course, they start out as anything but. The three clumsy girls have to work their way through the mysterious world, performing deeds, meeting people and so forth to earn their magic powers in a race to save the world.

The production standards, animation, and overall

Princess Emeraude in a last ditch effort to save her world from destruction. The three girls - Hikaru, Umi and Fuu — are the fated

execution are nothing short of excellent. Some of the direction and choreography really leaves you wondering why a similar RPG experience like Slayers didn't incorporate similar techniques. However, the story is so slow and predictable that you really have to go out of your way to care about the characters in order to be interested enough

to watch beyond the first tape. But then again, the same could be said for most shoujo anime. Check it out anyway. ■



EVANGELION: DEATH AND REBIRTH

i	CATEGORY: Sci-fi/Action
	PRODUCTION COMPANY: Gainax
	ANIMATION: 8
	PLOT: 9
	JAPAN-NESS: Low
	OVERALL: 9



Neon Genesis Evangelion needs no introduction. It was only the biggest anime TV series since Macross. However, in spite of the fact that the series is now almost five years old, the bulk of the Western world has yet to progress beyond the open-ended conclusion of episode 26. There are three

movies: Death and Rebirth (which were shown together), and End of Evangelion. Unfortunately, the people who are involved in negotiating the Western release don't seem to be getting their act together. It's hoped that this review will give them an idea of what their target audience is missing out on.

Basically, Episode 26 was

nowhere near the end of the story. Kaworu, the last Angel, might have been killed in the nick of time, but it leaves a vast body of questions unanswered — especially now that the true plans of NERV, SEELE, and the UN have been laid to bare. And don't forget Ikari Gendo still seems to have his own plans.

What can you expect to see? Well, "Death" is basically a summary of everything that

happened in the TV episodes. "Rebirth", on the other hand, sees the UN laying siege upon NERV headquarters, with its stormtroopers killing everyone in the compound. What follows is just awesome: Asuka comes back to her senses and takes on the entire UN army herself. By the end of the movie, you KNOW the shit's going to fly in the next movie as you see Production Units 05 through 13 circling above Asuka's Unit 02. ■

SEGA

VIRTUA TENNIS

(A.K.A. Power Smash)

Way back in 1958, a scientist named Higgenbotham, who helped create the first radar system and the timing system for the atom bomb, invented a simple tennis game which was played on a cathode ray tube. People queued for hours to play the game which was eventually released in the arcades in 1972 under the name Pong. Now Sega has released a very distant distorted cousin of the original game and has given the simple bat a humanoid body and a three dimensional court to play in.

Fans of tennis will be mistaken that they are now actually participating in their favourite sport as the game brings all the atmosphere of a mens singles tournament to the arcades.

You can choose from 8 of the top ranked mens singles players including: Moya, Courier, Kafelnikov, Hass, Henman and Australia's own Mark Phillippoussis. Each of these players have their own strengths such as volley master, big server, strong fore/back hand and all rounder.

To control your player, there is a joystick which not only to moves the player, but also controls the direction and depth of the shot. A hit button determines the strength of the shot, while a lob button is used for lobbing the ball over the opponents head if he is close to the net.



There are four different courts from around the world, each with its own surface type. Playing on the harder surfaces (concrete) enables the players to be very agile, whilst the softer surfaces (sand / grass) makes it hard for the players to change direction whilst on the run.

addictive game and a must play for any armchair or real time tennis player alike. My only personal complaint is that it is only a mens tournament which means Anna Kournikova and Venus Williams aren't playable.

8.5/10

Although simple in its gameplay, the 21st century version of pong is still an

TAITO

LANDING HIGH

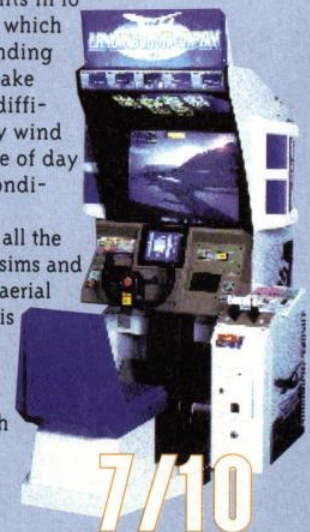


"Boimng" This is your head hostess speaking. Both our captain and co-pilot have died due to severe jet lag and we are wondering if any of our passengers have had any previous experience in landing a 747-481D?" As you watch the rest of the passengers totally freak out, you calmly raise your arm and say "I can land this baby" and sure-footedly make your way to the cockpit - after all, you've VIRTUALLY landed one of these things back in the arcades just a few days ago.

Taito's Flying High Japan is a no-nonsense sim in which you choose from 5 different air buses and attempt to take off and land at any of the major airports in Japan. The console and controls are set up to mimic the real thing and you must use all the instrumentation to achieve a pro level perfect landing. After you land

you are awarded points in 10 different categories, which goes to show that landing the real thing is no cake walk. The degree of difficulty is magnified by wind speed/direction, time of day and other weather conditions such as rain.

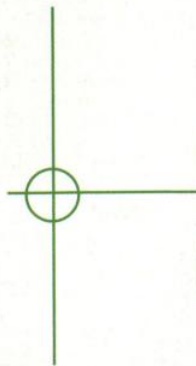
So if you're tired of all the unreality of the other sims and feel the need of some aerial education, then try this game on for size. The only thing really missing from this game is the fiery death usually included in crashing one of these 276 tonne monsters.



7/10

budget gaming

» BRETT ROBB



BALDIES

i Available: Now
Category: Strategy
Publisher: MicroProse/ Hasbro Interactive
Platform: PC

Well readers, I set out searching for Settlers for you all but to no avail. So what's the next best thing then? Why Baldies of course. Part of the SOLD OUT series of games, Baldies is a Real Time Strategy game with some slight changes to the norm. Played out over some 60 levels, Baldies sees you in control of a legion of little bald guys. I must stress that this game is extremely different from every other RTS game out there in the sense that you don't actually control the individual men so much as merely influencing them. You can designate the soldiers, scientists, builders and breeders. Yes, you breed little baldies. They appear to be male but perhaps the women are just very unattractive. Anyway, the object of the game appears to be to build up your colony and research weapons in order to cross over to the enemy's territory and kill them. There are some very funky weapons to research here too. You'll need to research your mode of transportation - be it angel wings or a rudimentary cannon to shoot you over the oceans. Weapons range from all sorts of booby traps (with quite funny animations) to basic grenades and guns. Heck, you can even cross-transport weapons with the animals you find around the place.

This is a great game if you have the patience to truly master it. Your men will do their own thing, which is usually wandering about aimlessly a lot of the time. The only say you have in where they go is by placing a shield icon on the map and hope that they follow it. There's no room for all-out blast fests here - if it's blast fests you want then head on over to Dune 2000.

VALUE-O-METER



UFO: ENEMY UNKNOWN

i Available: Now
Category: Strategy
Publisher: MicroProse/ Hasbro Interactive
Platform: PC

If Real Time Strategy is a bit hectic for you then why not get into some turn based strategy. Another SOLD OUT game, UFO - Enemy Unknown was an absolute gem in its day and according to some it can still hold its own today. What could possibly be more fun than shooting down a UFO and killing all that dwell within it? Why stealing all their weapons to use against them of course! This game is a whole lot of fun for the UFO enthusiasts amongst you - and we know you're out there. Take out a UFO in real time. Then track where it crashed and go waste those alien suckers with a team of specialists. Okay, it's an old game but has turn-based strategy really come that far since then? As for specs on this baby, you'll be looking at dusting off your old 386 - but don't worry if you don't have one because it runs just as good on one of those new-fangled Pentium deals. If you don't have at least a 386 or better then I suggest that perhaps you're not taking yourself very seriously. Go hang your head in shame whilst the rest of us live our lives blissfully ignorant of the fact that they even make new games these days.



VALUE-O-METER



DUNE 2000

i Available: Now
Category: Strategy
Publisher: MicroProse/ Hasbro Interactive
Platform: PC

It wasn't all that long ago that Dune 2000 was released - and already it's a budget game! Not that it's anything to get too excited about. Westwood claim to have used the Command and Conquer engine to create this game but it looks more likely that they just used Command and Conquer's editor to make some new maps and units. So it's basically C&C set in the Dune universe. Whilst this would be great if there was some sort of initiative shown by the developers with some new ideas it all plays a bit too much like its RTS counterpart, but with a far less engaging story. Having said that, it is by no means a bad game and if you are a fan of the Dune saga then it's definitely worth the reduced price.

! As for cost, all of games range between - \$30. About the price as a 386 in fact

BALDIES

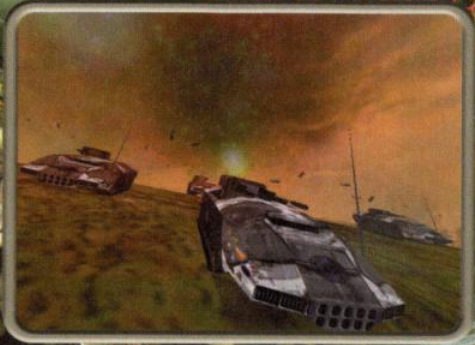
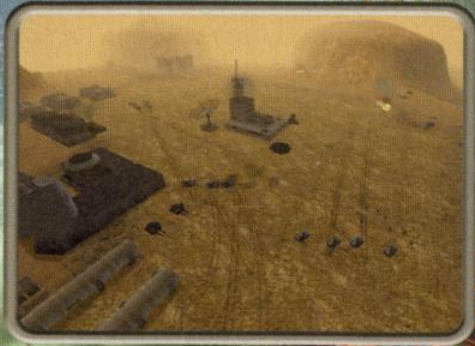


VALUE-O-METER



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ARMY MEN 3D

PLAYSTATION

All Weapons

Start a new game, then pause and press Square, Circle, R1, L1, R1+R2. You must enter the code within two seconds. The words POWER UP will appear to confirm the code.

Clear Mine Fields Quickly

When entering a mine field, select your minesweeper. Walk forward a few paces and then hold in the roll button and roll left/right to clear mines. This will save a considerable amount of time.

Invincibility

During the game, pause and press square, circle, L1, and then hold L1 and L2 together, but you must do this code under 2 seconds. The word Invincible will appear to confirm the code.

ARMY MEN: AIR ATTACK

PLAYSTATION

All Co-Pilots

In the passwords screen, type Up, Down, Up, Down, Up, Down, Up, Down.

Level Passwords

Mission 2: Going Car-Razy
X, Down, Left (x2), Square, Circle (x2), Right

Mission 3: The Train That Could

Triangle, Up, Left, Right, Down, Triangle, Square, Up

Mission 4: Tan Terror Troy

Down (x2), Square (x2), Left, Right, Circle, X

Mission 5: Bug Bath

Right (x2), X, Circle, Down, Up, Down, Up

Mission 6: Uninvited Guests

Square, Circle, X, Square, Triangle, Left, Up, Right

Mission 7: Ants in the Pants

Square, Circle, X, Square, Triangle, Left, Up, Right

Mission 8: Saucer Attack

Right, Down, Left, Up, Triangle, Down, Up, Down

Mission 9: The Heat Is On

Circle (x2), Right, Up, Right, Up, X (x2)

Mission 10: The Melting Pot

X, Down (x4), X, Left, Right

Mission 11: River Rapids Riot

Triangle, Up, Circle, Down, Square, Left, X, Right

Mission 12: Nightmare Teddy

Up (x2), Triangle (x2), Left (x2), Circle (x2)

Mission 13: Demolition Time

Left, Down, Left, Down, Square, Circle, Square, Circle

Mission 14: Pick Up The Pieces

Left(x2), Up, Right(x2), Up, Down, X

Mission 15: Have an Ice Day

Square, Right, Left, Circle (x2), Up, Down, Square

SOUL REAVER

DREAMCAST

Aerial Reaver

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press A, Right, Up (x2), Y, Left (x2), Right, Up.

All abilities

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press Up (x2), Down, Right (x2), Left, B, Right, Left, Down.

Raziel's Abilities:

Constrict
Force Projectile
Phase
Swimming
Wall Climb
Wall Crawl

Fire Reaver

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press Down, Up, Right, Up, Down, Left, B, Right, Down.

Force Glyph

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press Down, Left, Y, Down, Up.

Kain Reaver

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press A, B, Right, Y, Left (x2), Right, Up.

Maximum health upgrade

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press Right, B, Down, Up, Down, Up.

Maximum magic upgrade

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press Y, Right, Down, Right, Up, Y, Left.

Open all warp gates

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press Up (x2), Down, Right (x2), Left, B, Right, Left, Down.

Restore health

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press Down, B, Up, Left, Up, Left.

Restore magic

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press Right (x2), Left, Y, Right, Down.

Sound Glyph

Pause game. Hold L or R, and press Right (x2), Down, B, Up (x2), Down.

Stone Glyph

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press Down, B, Up, Left, Down, Right (x2).

Sunlight Glyph

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press



cheat mode

Left, B, Left, Right (x2), Up (x2), Left.

Upgrade health to next level

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press Right, A, Left, Y, Up, Down.

Water Glyph

Pause game. Hold L and R, and press Down, B, Up, Down, Right.

VIGILANTE 8: SECOND OFFENSE

DREAMCAST

WARNING! Once you put these codes in and SAVE a game that they will NEVER come off so please do this only when you are fooling around or if you are SURE you want to keep them on.

IMPORTANT!

To access the code menu, go to Options and then Game Status and press the A BUTTON twice and hold the back left and back right buttons and you should see some dashes appear at the bottom of the screen. Then you can type in the following codes...

JACK_IT_UP - faster and easier cars to

control

GO_SLOW_MO - slow motion

QUICK_PLAY - fast motion

MORE_SPEED - fast cars

BLAST_FIRE - stronger missiles

RAPID_FIRE - fire missiles more quickly

GO_MONSTER - huge wheels for cars

UNDER_FIRE - makes all the cars attack you

NO_GRAVITY - stay in air longer when falling

LONG_MOVIE - see all the ending movies

OLD_LEVELS - play all the original levels

MIXES_CARS - use all types of unlocked cars in multiplayer

QUICK_PLAY - selects cars for you

HOME_ALONE - option to have NO enemies in arcade mode

HI_CEILING - go higher with hoverpods



INCOMING

DREAMCAST

Cheat Menu

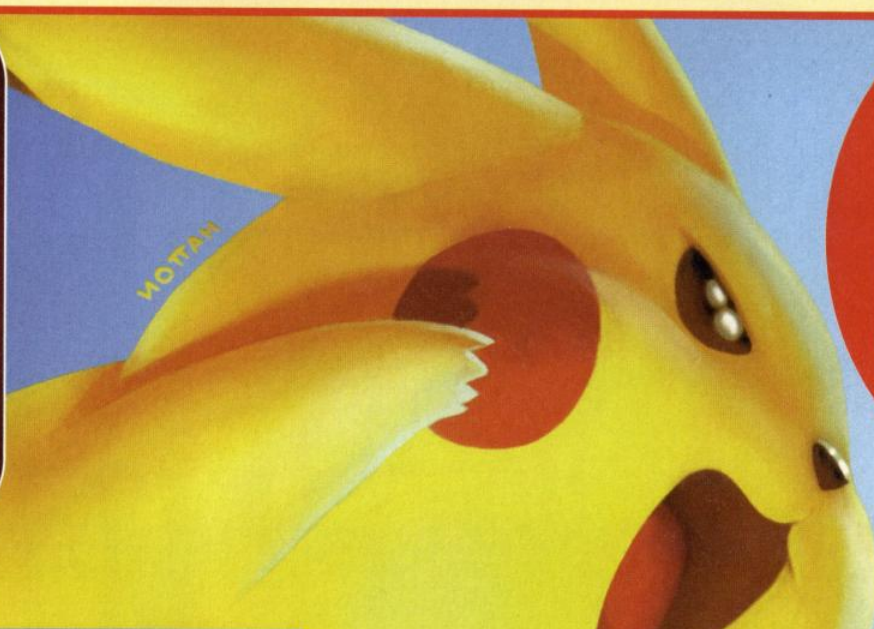
When you turn on the game, press START. When the main menu appears, press Up, Down, Left, Right, X, Up, Down, Left, Right, Y to reveal the cheat menu. Here you may choose your starting mission, infinite lives, infinite shields, etc.

TOP GEAR RALLY 2

NINTENDO 64

No damage or failures

At the title screen, press L, Z, Start, Up(2).



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cheat mode

100,000 sponsor credits in support van

At the title screen, press L, Z, Start, I(2).

Max championship points in support van

At the title screen, press L, C-Up, Left, I(2).

Speed-based aspect ratio

At the title screen, press Z, C-Left, L, Up, Right.

Speed warp view

At the title screen, press Z, C-Left, R, Up, Right.

Fat world

At the title screen, press Z, C-Right, L, Up, Right.

Thin world

At the title screen, press Z, C-Right, R, Up, Right.

Upside down world

At the title screen, press C-Up, Z, Start, Up, Down.

Bouncy cars

At the title screen, press C-Up, C-Left, R, Up, Left.

Large tire

At the title screen, press C-Left, Z, R, Down(2).

Wobbly tire

At the title screen, press R, C-Right, Start, Down, Z.

Hi-rez mode

At the title screen, press C-Left(2), Left, I(2). Note: This code requires the 4MB RAM expansion pak.

Repair power

At the race description screen, press L, Z, R, L, Start.

MONSTER TRUCK MADNESS 64

NINTENDO 64

Low rider trucks

Enter "YRDR" as a password.

Gut bomb

Enter "BRPS" as a password.

Full-time missiles

Enter "Y_WNT_T" as a password to have unlimited missiles. Then while playing a game, press Left to use the missiles.

Note: "_" indicates a space.

Turbo mode

Enter "CFNYN" as a password.

Alternate textures

Enter "JMPNG" as a password to change all textures in the game into pictures of one of the programmers of the game.

Change track color

Enter "JMPR" as a password. Select "Done" and "JIM" will appear in the square. Press Start, select "New Game", then choose "Summit Rumble". Select any number of players, but many CPU trucks. When the game begins, there should be black squares with aliens or other objects in the middle.

Aztec Valley track

Successfully complete a circuit on the easy difficulty setting.

Alpine Challenge track

Successfully complete a circuit on the medium difficulty setting.

Death Trap track

Successfully complete a circuit on the hard difficulty setting.

All tracks

To access all tracks in time trial or custom race, unlock the Death Trap track, then press B at truck selection screen. Start your own race or time trial on the expert difficulty setting and all tracks will be available.

Horn

While driving, press Down to use the horn. Note: There are many different type of horns that are randomly assigned at the beginning of a race.

Sound effects

While driving, press Up to hear "Yahos", burps, and farts.

XENA: WARRIOR PRINCESS

NINTENDO 64

Multiple Codes

To perform each code, you must first go to the main menu screen and hit: Right, Right, Left, Left, Right, Left, Right

Then you can enter the following codes:

Play as Despair
C-left, C-right, C-left, C-right

Xena vs Hope in Quest mode

C-left, C-left, C-left, C-left
Titan Difficulty Level
C-up, C-down, C-up, C-down

ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES

NINTENDO 64

All weapons

Enter "NSRLS" as a password.

Maximum ammunition

Enter "MMLVSRM" as a password.

Test information

Enter "THDTST" as a password.

Mini mode

Enter "DRVLLVSM" as a password.

Play as Tin Soldier

Enter "TNSLDRS" as a password.

Play as Vikki

Enter "GRNGRLRX" as a password.

Play as Plastro

Enter "PLSTRLVSVG" as a password.

Reverse weapon selection

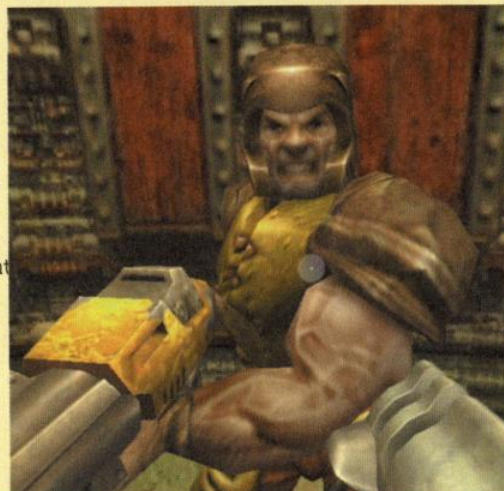
While playing a game, hold Z and press B to cycle through weapons in reverse order.

Restart level

While playing a game, hold L + R + C-Down to return to the starting location of the current level.

Level passwords

Attack - LNLGRMM
Spy Blue - TRGHTR
Bathroom - TDBWL
Riff Mission - MSTRMN
Forest - TLLTRS
Hoover Mission - SCRDCI
Thick Mission - STPDMN
Snow Mission - BLZZRD
Shrap Mission - SRFPNK
Fort Plastro - GNRLMN
Scorch Mission - HTTTTR
Showdown - ZBTSRL
Sandbox - HTKTTN
Kitchen - PTSPNS



Living Room - HXMSTR
The Way Home VRCLN

THIEF: THE DARK PROJECT

PC

Level skip cheat:

Press CTRL-ALT-SHIFT-END to advance to the next mission.

Alternate starting point:

To start the game at a mission other than Lord Bafford's manor, exit the game and edit the file dark.cfg. Add the line:

starting_mission X

where X is the number of the mission where you wish to begin. Save and exit the file, then start the game. When you select New Game, you will start at the mission you specified.

Money cheat:

To give yourself as much money as you want, exit the game and edit the file dark.cfg. Add the line:

cash_bonus X

where X is the amount of gold you want. Save and exit the file, then start the game. When you get to the "Loadout" screen, immediately hit ESC, then SAVE, then quit back to the Desktop. Re-enter the program and load the game you just saved. You'll return to the Loadout screen, and another 3000 gold will be added to your purse.

QUAKE 3: ARENA

PC

Unlock all levels at Skill 1

Bring down the console and type /IAMACHEATER

Unlock all levels at Skill 100

Bring down the console and type /IAMAMONKEY

If the server has cheats enabled, then try these...

/GOD - Invulnerability
/GIVE ALL - All weapons
/GIVE HEALTH - Gives health
/GIVE ARMOUR - Gives armour
/GIVE AMMO - yep, gives ammo
/GIVE PERSONAL TELEPORTER - guess
/GIVE QUAD DAMAGE - get the idea?

NERF ARENA BLAST PC

Cheat Codes

While playing a game, press **[F1]** to display the console. Then, enter one of the following codes and press **[Enter]** to activate the corresponding cheat function:

God mode
god

Full ammunition for all guns
allammo

Flight mode
fly

No clipping
ghost

Disable flight and no clipping modes
walk

Third person view
behindview 1

Level select
open [level name]

Level names
Use one of the following values with the "open [level name]" code:
AR-Asteroid

AR-Barracuda
AR-Luna
AR-Orbital
AR-Sequoia
AR-Sky
AR-Tut
Autoplay
Entry
Nerf
Nerf-Plaza
PM-Amateur
PM-Asteroid
PM-Barracuda
PM-Champion
PM-Luna
PM-Orbital
PM-Sequoia
PM-Sky
PM-Tut
PMX2-Luna
PMX-Asteroid
PMX-Luna
PMX-Orbital
RR-Amateur
RR-Asteroid
RR-Barracuda
RR-Champion
RR-Luna
RR-Orbital
RR-Sequoia
RR-Sky
SH-asteroid
SH-Barracuda
SH-Luna
SH-Orbital

SH-Sequoia
SH-Sky
SH-Tut

NOX

PC

While playing a game, press **[F1]** to display the console, then type "racoiaws" to enable cheat mode. Then, enter one of the following codes to activate the corresponding cheat function:

God mode
set god

Full health
cheat health

Full mana
cheat mana

Reset abilities
cheat ability

Set all spells to indicated level
cheat spells

Display cheat list
help cheat

Add indicated amount of gold
cheat gold [number]

Advance to indicated waypoint
cheat goto [waypoint name]

Advance to indicated coordinates
cheat goto [x y]

Advance to indicated level
cheat level [number]



MEGA CHEATS

PlayStation

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428 Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense
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442 Cool Boarders 3
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450 Cyberdred
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455 Decent
456 Defcon 5
457 Dragon Seeds

458 Duke Nukem: Time to Kill
459 Duke Nukem: Meltdown
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462 Eliminator
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464 Everybody's Golf
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468 Fighting Illusion: K1-Rov
469 Final Doom
470 Final Fantasy 7
471 Fisherman's Hat: A Bass
472 Formula 197
473 Formula 198
474 Formula Karts
475 Formula Kart
476 Forsaken
477 Frenzy
478 Future Cop L.A.P.D.
479 G Darius
480 G Police

481 Gex: Enter the Gecko
482 Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko
483 Ghost in the Shell
484 Gran Turismo
485 Grand Theft Auto 2
486 Grand Tour Racing 98
487 Guilty Gear

488 Heart Of Darkness
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490 I.S. Soccer Pro 98
491 Independence Day
492 Indy 500
493 J. McGrath Super X 98
494 Jet Moto 3
495 Judge Dread
496 K-1 Arena Fighters
497 Kagero Deception 2
498 Klonoa
499 Knockout Kings
500 Krazy Ivan
501 Kula World
502 LEGEND
503 Libero Grande
504 M.K. 4
505 M.K. Mythology
506 M.K. Trilogy
507 Madden NFL 99
508 Madden NFL 98
509 Madden Destruction
510 Max Force
511 Max Power Racing
512 MDK
513 Medievil
514 Megaman Legends
515 Mervel S.Horo's V's St. Fight
516 Metal Gear Solid
517 Metal Slug
518 Micro Machines V3
519 Milla
520 Monster Trucks
521 Moto Racer
522 Moto Racer 2
523 Motorhead
524 Mission Impossible
525 N20 - Nitrous oxide
526 Nascar 98
527 Nascar 2000
528 NBA Live 98
529 NBA Live 99
530 NBA Shoot Out 98
531 Need for Speed 2
532 Need for Speed 3
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534 NFL Blitz
535 NFL Gameday 99
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546 One
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569 Rival Schools
570 River: Sequel to Myst
571 Road Rash 3D
572 Road Rash 3D
573 Rouge Trip: 2012
574 Rugsrats: Search Reptar
575 Running wild
576 Ranni's
577 Shadow Master
578 Shane Warne 99
579 Side Pocket 3
580 Silent Hill
581 Sim City 2000
582 Skull Monkeys
583 Small Soldiers
584 Smash Court 2
585 Soul Blade
586 Soviet Strike
587 Spice World
588 Spyro the Dragon
589 Star Wars: Masters Of Ter.
590 Steel Rain
591 Street Fighter Alpha 3
592 Street Fighter Coll 2
593 Street Fighter X-Alpha

594 Street Racer
595 Street Sk8er
596 Syphon Filter
597 Tarzan
598 Tekken 2
599 Tekken 3
600 Ten Pin Alley
601 Tenchu
602 Test Drive 4
603 Test Drive 5
604 Test Drive Off Road
605 Test Drive Off Road 2
606 Tetris Plus
607 The Fifth Element
608 The Lost World
609 The Unholy War
610 Theme Hospital
611 Theme Park
612 Thrill Kill
613 Thunder Force 5
614 Tiger Woods 99
615 Time Crisis
616 Tobal 2
617 Toca Touring Car
618 Toca Touring Car 2
619 Tokyo Highway Battle
620 Tomb Raider
621 Tomb Raider 2
622 Tomb Raider 3
623 Tombat
624 Turok
625 Turok 2
626 Turok 3
627 Turok Rage Wars
628 Turok 4
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NG4

675 AllStar Baseball 99
676 Area Fighter Assault
677 Automobile Lamborghini
678 BattleTanz
679 Bio Freaks
680 Body Harvest
681 Bomberman 64
682 Bomberman Hero
683 Bust-a-move 2
684 Castlevania
685 Chameleon Twist
686 Chopper Attack
687 Clay Fighter 63 1/3
688 Infisherman - BH 64
689 Dark Rift
690 Diddy Kong racing
691 Doom 64
692 Duke Nuke: Zero Hour
693 All Star Baseball '99
694 Extreme G 2
695 F-Zero X
696 F1 Pole Position
697 F1 World Grand Prix
698 Mario Golf
699 Fighters Destruction
700 Forsaken
701 Goulet Legends
702 Glover
703 Golden Eye
704 Hexen
705 Air Force Delta (new)
706 A-Life
707 Blue Stinger
708 Buggy Heat (new)
709 Daytona USA 2
710 Evolution
711 Got Bass
712 Godzilla Generation
713 House of the Dead 2
714 King Of Fighters Dream Match '99
715 Marvel Vs. Capcom
716 Pen Pen Tri-Action
717 Monster Truck Madness
718 Nagano Win Olympics
719 Nascar 99
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994 NHL 99
995 NHL Breakaway 98
996 NHL Breakaway 99
997 Nightmare Creatures
998 Offroad Challenge
999 Quake 64
1000 Quake 2
1001 Road Rash 64
1002 Rainbow 6
1003 Robotron X
1004 Rush 2: Extreme Racing USA
1005 S.C.A.R.S.
1006 Star Wars: EP 1 Racer
1007 Fighting Force 64
1008 WWF Attitude
1009 Super
1010 Star Wars: EP 1 Racer
1011 Star Wars: Rogue Squadron
1012 Star Wars: Shadows
1013 Super Smash Brothers
1014 Supercross 2000
1015 Top Gear Overdrive
1016 Top Gear Rally
1017 Turok
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HYPER LETTERS

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Glen Murphy sent us this concept for a Hyper Fan magazine. Holy Hell!

PS2 PRICE?

To Hyper, Thanks for the excellent mag, I don't know where I would be without it. The reviews that you have are excellent. Now I was wondering, when is the PlayStation 2 coming out in Australia, and about how much will it cost? Also, are there any plans to bring C&C: Tiberian Sun on the PlayStation 2 and will you be able to save the game in the middle of the mission? Because, in the current C&C games on the PlayStation, you cannot save the game during a mission. Keep making this mag as it is brilliant!

Impressed fan,
CHRIS KING, VIC

Hi Chris, Thanks for the kind words. The PlayStation 2 should be out locally in November at the retail price of \$599, but we haven't had confirmation of this yet. We haven't heard any news of Tiberian Sun on PS2 yet, so we'll wait and see...

SHUT THE GATES

Hyperinos, I read in the newspaper today that Microsoft has revealed its X-box console. A 600Mhz 'demon' that will be over 3 times more powerful than Sony's PlayStation 2. I know most people would think that's pretty cool, but I'm sick of people obsessing over numbers and I'm bloody sick of Microsoft. They already have enough money to buy a large third world country plus Bill Gates looks like a mongol. The scary thing is they have the money and technology to get a majority of the video games industry. I personally am not going to touch the machine with a 10-foot pole. We all know that you can't judge a machine by its specs but by the games and support. Let's hope that the X-box meets the same fate as the Atari Jaguar (only joking, I don't wish that upon anyone) and gets no support because Microsoft suck arse. I'd much prefer to see Dick Smith put out a Console, his face would look much better on a console than that vile Stephen Hawkings look-alike. Go Dick!!!

FROM FLOYD

Dear Floyd, Hey, woah there my friend. Let's not be so harsh on Microsoft. The X-Box console looks very nice indeed, but it's going to be a hard task for Microsoft to dominate the console market. Why? Because they're based in the USA and not Japan. Nintendo, Sony and Sega all originate from Japan and the asian developers include Konami, Capcom, Namco, Square... do you see what I'm saying? Microsoft aren't as well respected in Japan as these other companies are, so it's going to be tough for Microsoft to break it in that market, which is the most important one of all when it comes to video games and hardware. However, they obviously will do well in the USA, and they're going to win over many PC users who are sick of the upgrade cycle. The X-Box specs are also seemingly a bit "optimistic" at this point in time, so we'll see if they really can deliver a machine as powerful as they predict. It's confusing for the consumer, but the more consoles and the more competition in the market place, the more ambitious the companies becomes and the better quantity and quality of games we will have to choose from in the end...

ALL MIXED UP

Dear Hyper, I have been reading your mag for about 3 years and have always loved the fact that you review all current gaming machines and consoles with absolutely no bias at all. However in the last 2 or 3 issues I have noticed that your reviews are all mixed together. Why is this? When I get my latest copy of Hyper all I want to do is read the latest DC and N64 reviews and now it takes me ages of wading through PC and PSX reviews to find what I am interested in. I do read other reviews to keep myself up to date in the gaming world just not right away. Does anyone else feel the same way? Anyway apart from that your mag is great, keep it up! P.S. What DC games (available now or later) support multiplayer online gaming?

AZY

Hi AZY, Is there an L missing from the front of your name? We have a review contents which lists all the games in order of platform, with the relevant page number for each review, especially so you can just skip to what you want to read. We mix the reviews up because we'd rather have all the really exciting games up the front (not to say one page reviews are only of bad games), and we think it makes for a more diverse and thus interesting read. In a way, we're forcing you to see what other games are out there, rather than just have

you read the N64 reviews only, for instance. Maybe it's personal preference, but we like it this way. As far as DC games which support online gaming... well this function is still being set up by Ozisoft with Telstra so we're not sure yet. Chu Chu Rocket will be the first online DC playable game, and we hear that Quake 3 will be online too, but more details are yet to come.

GET A LIFE

Hiya Hyper guys, you're doing a great job with the mag, looking forward to issue #100, you guys better make sure it's something special! Anyway, I wrote in because I've made an important observation about the recent lineup of games. Usually, developers make games based on things that most people can't do, will never experience or aren't real. For e.g. not everyone is going to play soccer for Australia in the World cup, or go around blowing up aliens with huge guns, or even go on an epic journey trying to save the world. That's why developers create games like FIFA 2000, Halflife and Zelda 64, and I'm sure we all agree.

But lately, the games that people want most are actually based on our lives. Look at the Sims on PC, Shenmue and RoomMania on the DC. Gamers would rather play a game based on life because it's so complex and the lastability is unlimited (well almost). It's quite ironic really, in order to escape real life, people play games based on real life. It's probably because WE get to control the fate of a 'real' person's life in a 'real life' game environment. This is not a bad thing because they've created a new genre in games, Yu Suzuki said that his game, Shenmue, was described as F.R.E.E (Full Reactive Eyes Entertainment). So, what will future games be like, and what new genres will be created? Who knows, but I wouldn't be surprised if we saw 'The Sims go to school', where you can choose to take the life as a teacher and let your anger out by giving your students shitloads of homework! Or become the student, where you would wag school everyday and get in school brawls, finally getting expelled, your parents kick you out of the house, and you end up homeless.

BOB 'NAGISA' MANHANONG

Dear Bob, Game developers are running out of ideas, so they're resorting to real life for inspiration... let's hope we don't see the Maxis Dentist sim or Microsoft Road Worker 2000.

STAR WARS FANTASY

G'day everyone at Hyper. Have you guys noticed that the guys at

Caption This Part 5 winner!

Our Everquest snap inspired some pretty queasy captions. However, we like this one from Brandon Thurgar which he sent via email.



"DOG? UUMM... AHhh, CAN'T SAY I'VE SEEN ONE AROUND."



Square are probably all Star Wars fans themselves? I'm not exactly qualified to say this, but in the two Final Fantasy games I've played (7 and 8) they have two of everyone's favourite x-wing pilots of all time. Wedge and Biggs have made an appearance in these two games, and I'm told they have been in most of the others as well. Being a fan of both Star Wars and Square, the prospect of these two great ideas, melded into one excites me to no end. I also have a few questions: 1) I have a crap computer, but I have recently discovered Q2 multiplayer. I'm currently playing on the Zone, but I was wondering if Microsoft were thinking of making an Australasian version? 2) Will the PS2's multiplayer capabilities (internet) be comparable to the PCs? That's all, great mag, and thanks for Quake 2 and Vigilante 8 for N64, back in August.

TIMITYYO

*Yo TimityYO,
The Square Star Wars RPG rumour has been around for a while, but it seems to be unfounded. The coolest news we've heard, is of the online Star Wars RPG being developed by Verant Interactive who made*

Everquest. It's true though that characters in the FF games were named after Star Wars characters.

*1. You shouldn't be playing Quake 2 on the Zone. Try connecting to local servers instead, you'll find the performance so much better. Microsoft currently have no plans to set up a local Zone server for Aussies, which is disappointing considering we all want to play Asheron's Call.
2. Comparable, yes, but doubtfully better. Whilst the PS2 will have the benefit of cable speed access, unless a keyboard and mouse is released, there will be so much more variety available for the PC online.*

SIMPLE PLEASURES

Dear Hyper,
Here, for your reading pleasure (or otherwise) are my thoughts on the Dreamcast.
Well, I like it. There, that's it. Why should I say any more? Soul Calibur is a great game and there are other quite good ones out there. I'm not going to get uptight because the PS2 will be more powerful, I'm not going to have a heart attack arguing the pros and cons of Dreamcasts, PS2s, X-Boxes, Dolphins, Whales, Pink Furry Walruses, whatever. I'm just

going to enjoy the bloody console. Technology is not worth getting worked up about, it changes too fast. Mellow, people.

ADAM STROVER

*Hi Adam,
Word! The videogame market is being flooded with new hardware, and no one console is going to be best, so we really have to start thinking about which console offers us the games we want to play. Currently, the Dreamcast has some truly awesome games.*

QUESTION FEST

Dear Hyper,
Your mag kicks ass real hard! But that's not why I am e-mailing you. I have some questions that have been puzzling me:

1. Do you know when The Matrix game is coming out on PS2?
2. What the hell is Frame Rate and how does it effect the game if the frame rate is bad?
3. When is the Dolphin coming out?
4. Will the Dolphin have 2 or 4 controller ports?

5. Why don't you change the Letter of the Month prize? In case you forgot, not all of us own a PlayStation.

6. On your Perfect Dark preview, you said you can use the Game Boy and the Game Boy Camera to put your face on the characters by using some transfer pack. Will the Transfer Pack come free with the Perfect Dark Game?

7. Which one do you think is better, consoles or PCs?

8. First the PlayStation uses CD-roms, then the Sega Dreamcast uses a modem to play games online, then the PS2 and the Dolphin use DVD disks. What do you think they will think of next?

9. Will we be able to watch DVD movies on the PS2 and the Dolphin?

10. Are there any plans for any other strategy games for the N64 like they did with Command and Conquer?

11. How long does it take you to print a letter?

I know this is a lot of questions but can you PLEASE answer them!

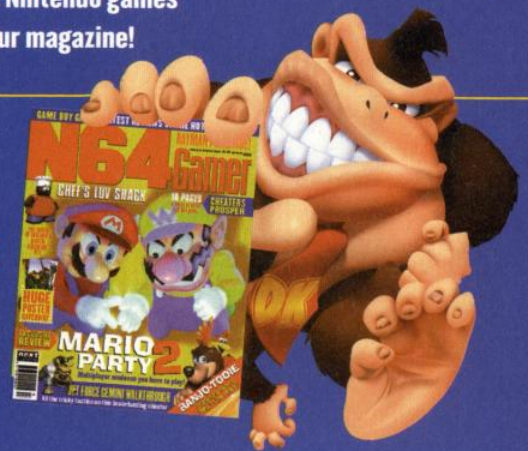
JOHN TRAN

Subscriber number 335



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!

Hi John,
Here goes...

1. A release date has not been set. After E3 this year (the electronic games expo in the USA) we should have more details on what it's like and how far down the development cycle they are with it.
2. Frame rate basically refers to how smooth (fast) a game looks in motion - like frames in a film for instance. A low frame-rate is what you see when a game has "slow-down", that is, the animation becomes jerky and slow.
3. Nintendo are hoping to release it by Christmas this year in Japan, but industry insiders are saying it won't see the light of day until mid 2001.
4. Nintendo would be insane to not include 4. You can be sure they will.
5. That's all we have to offer at the moment. If we had an endless supply of product for all platforms magically appear out of thin air, maybe it could change.
6. We actually said that the feature had been removed from the game. The Transfer Pak may still come free with the game though, because there will still be feature in the Perfect Dark Game Boy game which link to the N64 title in some way.
7. Tough choice. PC has more variety, more online options, more mature games... but consoles offer thrilling genres the PC doesn't - like 3D fighting games and very fast racing titles. Sorry, we're sitting on the fence!

8. We're guessing someone will move back towards virtual reality head-gear peripherals. Total immersion is something I'm sure we'd all like to see achieved properly one day.
9. Yes! You simply whack it in and watch away.
10. Yep. Starcraft 64 will soon be released...
11. Roughly a month after we receive it, you'll see it printed in the mag, due to production lead times. Oh no Question 12? Phew!

READER BRAINS

Dear Hyper,
After reading your new magazine, I thought of a great new section that you could include. Here goes: In your magazine, you print a topic of discussion. People then send you their personal opinions or thoughts about that topic. The best ones get printed in your magazine. It's sort of like a forum. Whaddaya think?
Yours sincerely,
EVAPILOT

*Evapilot,
That's a really cool idea. We like it!
(scribbles note to self on scrap of paper.)*

KEEP IT SHORT

Dear Hyper,
I know you like short letters so I'll be

straight to the point:

1. Where is your Unreal Tournament review? I realise you reviewed an unfinished version but surely the final product is worth another review?
2. Have you any news on the Neon Genesis Evangelion game on N64? Will it get released here?
3. It's a longshot, but are there any rumours on a Smash Brothers 2?
4. Will Japanese N64 peripherals work on our PAL systems? (I want a 64DD for the Zelda expansion).
5. Finally, I feel sorry for you for having to review the Deer Hunter games. Have your wounds healed yet? Also, whenever I need I laugh, I go and read the letters from the people whom criticise your "magazine" (more commonly referred to as the bible where I'm from) they dislike that much to actually be bothered to write in and give their unwanted opinion. Haha. Losers. So much for a short letter. Oh well.

EVIL FOETUS

P.S. Mishkin from Goldeneye should win your best game character because he is a pure legend.

Dear Evil Foetus,

1. We reviewed Unreal Tournament twice! The unfinished version got reviewed by accident because we were told it was final code, way back in early 1999. Dan scored it 89% then. Then we were sent final code towards the end of last year, and ran

another 4 page review where it scored a mighty 95%.

2. *It'll never be released here, because none of the distributors know what it is unfortunately.*
3. *Yes! Smash Brothers 2 is being worked on now.*
4. *Generally, the peripherals will, but not the 64DD as it requires a power source.*
5. *Our wounds are healed, but it looks like the Deer Hunter series wasn't quite wounded enough...*

GIB GIB!

Hello mr letter reader,
Good mag. I like it and as everybody knows, if you want to make it in this world you have to be on my good side. Aaaanyway, in issue 78 on the Versus Mode page I counted 18 uses of the word 'Gib'. Since I read through the whole thing I now have a severe word recognition syndrome. Everytime someone says something remotely close to 'Gib', like maybe bib, lip or... fib if you will, I look up and take notice. So recently in English we were reading Shakespeare's Hamlet. Nearing the end of Act 3, scene 4, Hamlet is talking to his mother the queen. And what does he do? He uses the word gib. Yes that's right, gib. His words are "'Twere good you let him know, for who but a queen, fair, sober, wise, would from a pad-dok, from a bat, a gib... blah blah,

letter of the month

BE THANKFUL

Dear Hyper
Just a short note to thank u for your great mag. I had it sent to me whilst on service in East Timor. Aussies just don't know how lucky they are to be able to go home and plug in the PlayStation and play away to your heart's content. So stop your bitchin' all u readers and be grateful for what we have.
Regards,
SPR DONOVAN MILLER

*Dear Donovan,
Have a wheel for defending our country.*



**Gamester PSX
Dual Force Wheel.**

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



blah" 'Gib' mean-
ing Tom cat.
hmmm...
ummm... where
was I? Umm...yes
Playstation 2 will
be good. Now
where did I leave
my pills?... No!
No! Not the
straightjacket!
Anything
but.....

Cripes.

PERFECT ART

Hi,
I love your maga-
zine, I'm a sub-
scriber and it's
worth every
penny. I've locked
my self in my bed-
room with a pen-
cil, paper and my
PC with paintbrush
pro for a day and
come up with this
reader art. It's of
Joanna Dark of the
game Perfect Dark
for N64. It's just
her reloading her
gun which IS an
actual gun from
the game with the
laser sight, scope
and all. They are
not just acces-
sories that I made
up. I hope you like
it, and I hope it's
good enough to
get into your
mag... some-
where.
Thanks,
**JASON
PAMMENT.**

*Jason,
Indeed it is! Great
work.*



next issue

HYPER

**VIOLENCE IN GAMES.
IS IT OUT OF
CONTROL? IS IT GOING
TO MAKE SMALL
CHILDREN GO DOWN
TO THEIR LOCAL
SUPERMARKET WITH A
ROCKETLAUNCHER
AND BLOW UP THE
FRESH PRODUCE
DEPARTMENT? WE
REVIEW THE LATEST
CONTROVERSIAL PC
TITLE, SOLDIER OF
FORTUNE, AND
INVESTIGATE
WHETHER THE GIBS
ARE GRATUITOUS
GORE OR GOOD FOR
GAMEPLAY...**

No Dribble, No Huge Ads

Just the facts and heaps of FUN!!!

CONSOLEHAVEN

Playstation 2 - Dreamcast - Nintendo .com

Gaming news, reviews, previews, cheats for:



FOR SALE

PlayStation games: Tony Hawk Skateboarding - \$35, Crash Bandicoot - \$10, and Die Hard Trilogy - \$15 or the lot for \$50. Call **6278 8741** and ask for Jackson. Tas only.

N64 games: Turok Rage Wars - \$40, Armories - \$45, Donkey Kong 64 - \$50, Mystical Ninja - Star Goemon - \$25, Tonic Trouble - \$30. Phone Jamie on **(02) 6568 3695**.

N64 games: Donkey Kong 64/Expansion pack - \$80, Duke Nukem: Zero Hour - \$60, Rainbow Six - \$70, Goldeneye - \$30, Mario Kart - \$30, Banjo Kazooie - \$35. E-mail Jak at resurrectazoo0@yahoo.com

Sega Dreamcast with controller, RF switch, VMU with a massive 800 blocks, Soul Calibur, demo disk, Sonic and Toy Commander. Bought for \$875, will sell for \$689 ono. Ring Trent on **(03) 5839 4220**. McBain Rd, RMB 1525, Kyabram.

Original **Sony dual shock controllers (brand new)** - \$34, original Sony memory card - \$14, Sony controller - \$15, Call **9893 1880**.

P/C CD's, GG2 + bonus CD's, Hexen + bonus CD, add on's for Doom 1 & 2, Game Head, Conquered Kingdoms, Arsenal, Shakii The Wolf, 3 demo CD's, Violence in 3D add on's for great 3D/Action games plus many more discs for sale. Name your price. Phone Lindsay on **(03) 5450 3026** or e-mail roso2@kerangths.uic.edu.au

Banjo Kazooie - \$35 ono, Gex - \$30 ono, Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire - \$30 ono or will swap all three for Rainbow Six (N64). Phone **(03) 5472 4602** and ask for Lachlan.

Panasonic 3Do, Hard Metal Case, 2 controllers, 11 games, everything in original packaging and immaculate condition. This over-ambitious and futuristic 32bit machine for sale to games historians/collectors. Will consider all reasonable offers. Call Myles on **(03) 9827 4195** after 7pm or e-mail mlucien@hotmail.com

Dreamcast for sale with 5 games, Power Stone, Sonic

Adventure, Sega Rally, Tokyo Highway Challenge, Soul Calibur + VMU & Arcade Stick. All for \$600 ono. Phone Michael on **0414 604 367** (after 6pm) or e-mail: chlomix@bigpond.com.au

Ready 2 Rumble Boxing or Sonic Adventure (on Dreamcast) - \$70 each, both for \$120. Ring Mitchell on **4397 3034**.

Nintendo 64, with special edition purple controller, controller pack, 3 games (Goldeneye 007, Ken Griffey Jr Baseball and Fr Pole Position), all in EXCELLENT CONDITION, fully boxed with all instructions. URGENT SALE, \$190 for the lot. Call Peter after 4:30pm weekdays on **(02) 9872 5159**.

SEGA SATURN with two controllers, light gun including Virtua Cop I. Eleven games including: Command and Conquer, Tomb Raider, Doom one & two, Alien trilogy and many more. All boxed in excellent condition with instructions. \$175 ono. E-Mail me at rhughes@powerup.com.au or call **(07) 3800 2208** after 3:30pm, ask for Gillan. Must be in Brisbane-Logan City area.

PC - one copy of Hidden and Dangerous with box, manual, instructions. \$60 ono. N64 - Mission Impossible, Glover and Zelda - \$25 each. Banjo Kazooie, Mario64 - \$20 each. If interested e-mail me at: tane_14@hotmail.com

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 perfect condition with boxes and manuals. All for \$200 ono. (Sydney only). Call me on **0403 009 078**.

Sega Saturn 18 games, 2 demos, 3 controllers, 6 player adapter and a gun - all in good condition \$300. Call **9822 1439** after 4pm weekdays.

Nintendo 64 with 2 controllers, memory pak, rumble pak, 4MB expansion pak and 4 games - Turok 2, Forsaken, Lylat Wars & Goldeneye. All in good condition, \$425 for the lot! Call Connor outside school hours on **(02) 6629 8419**.

N64 Good condition, 2 controllers (Grey, Black), Rumble Pak, Controller pak, AV and RF cables, 5 games (Mario kart, Goldeneye, ISS'98, Zelda and Donkey Kong - includes Expansion pak.) Will sell for \$320 ono. Contact Nathan on **(08) 9447 6156**. WA only.

I will sell my **Sega Mega Drive, Sega Master System2** converter, 2 cordless controllers, 1 normal controller, 1 six button controller, 1 joystick and 27 games including Street fighter 2 turbo, Quackshot, Streets of Rage and Boogerman. All games in boxes except for 2 Games, All in perfect working order will sell all for \$120 ono (Desperate Sale!!!!!!) or will swap for a Dreamcast game and controller! If interested ring **9558 3720** Monday to Friday 4-8pm and ask for Chris or you can e-mail me at chris_lois22@hotmail.com

F-Zero, Mission Impossible and Turok 2 - \$40 each ono. Hexen (no manual) - \$15 ono. Will swap any for Shadowman or Wave Race 64, or any 2 games for Donkey Kong 64 or Castlevania 2. All offers and swaps considered. Phone Jason on **(02) 6278 5122** or e-mail jasonpicker@hotmail.com

SWAPS

I will swap my **Ready to Rumble on Dreamcast for Toy Commander**. Other offers considered. Phone Adam on **(07) 3269 2787** or e-mail phcox@telstra.easymail.com.au Brisbane Area only.

PlayStation games: I will swap either Street Fighter Alpha 2 or Tekken 2 for WWF Wrestlemania. Please call Simon on: **(03) 5881 3611**.

Willing to swap **rusty bed mattress** (fair condition) for a **Dreamcast** with at least 1 good game and 1 control pad. Call **(07) 55123456** after 6pm if interested.

WANTED

I am desperately searching for any of the following Sega Saturn

games: Last Bronx, Street Fighter Collection, Virtua Cop and Virtua Cop 2. All must be in good condition, boxed with instructions. Please Call Adam on **(02) 47571125** or e-mail me at pheonixx@one.net.au

Wanted for Sega Saturn (PAL). Dragon Force and any King of Fighters/Fatal Fury. Must be boxed with manual and in good condition. Also looking for a copy of King of Fighters 95 for Sony PlayStation. Contact Carlo **(07) 3899 9857** or e-mail yoshimyu@ozemail.com.au

Wanted: **Discworld Players Guide for Sony PlayStation**. Will pay COD. Phone Jason on **(08) 9721 1154**.

Looking for a copy of **Broken Sword 2: The Smoking Mirror**. Will pay \$30 - \$40. Ring **(02) 6568 2533** and ask for Stephen.

Saturn games - Arms Race, Wing Arms or Wing War, Warcraft II, Formula Karts, Wipeout 2097, Dead or Alive. Phone Paul after 6pm. **(08) 8296 8184**. Mob - **0413 038 305**.

Nintendo Game & Watch, Mini Tabletops and Pan & Scan handheld games. Oil Panic, Donkey Kong, Octopus, Mario Cement Factory etc. Any title considered if in good condition - phone Brad **(08) 9593 3653**.

Desperately seeking the **original Pilot Wings for the SNES** (Not the N64 version). Box and instructions must be in very good condition. Will pick up anywhere in Australia via Post Office COD (game to be packed in a video cassette parcel at Post Office). Will pay top dollar for this game. Ring Rod after 6pm on **(02) 4392 8498**.

Looking for **Vectrex** game system and games. Also Sega Master System 3D glasses and games. Contact Damian on dijitel@mywebos.com or **0414 543 644**.

Worms Armageddon for PC or Dreamcast. Phone Adam **(07) 3269 2787** or e-mail phcox@telstra.easymail.com.au Brisbane Areas Only.

Sega Saturn in new condition, will pay up to \$70, more if peripherals/games included.

E-mail: mbrunato@hotmail.com or phone **(02) 6683 2347**.

A **Sega Saturn** with controller(s), memory card and any good games, everything must be in top condition. Will pay no more than \$50 for the Saturn and \$10 per game. If interested e-mail me at: tane_14@hotmail.com

I need **The Legend of ZELDA: A Link to the Past** (SNES). Must be in good condition with instructions. I will pay \$15+. Call **(08) 97521937**, or e-mail me at rbelford@highway1.com.au

PENPALS

Hello. My name is **Steven** and I'm looking for a pen-pal aged between 13-17 who likes Nintendo. E-mail me at: pyro_vesten_yarn@yahoo.com

Hi, my names **Daniel**, I like N64, Final Fantasy and PlayStation, hate Dreamcast and like grunge music like Korn and Limp Bizkit. If you like any of the stuff that I like, please e-mail me at pepperoni@bboy.com, all e-mails will be answered.

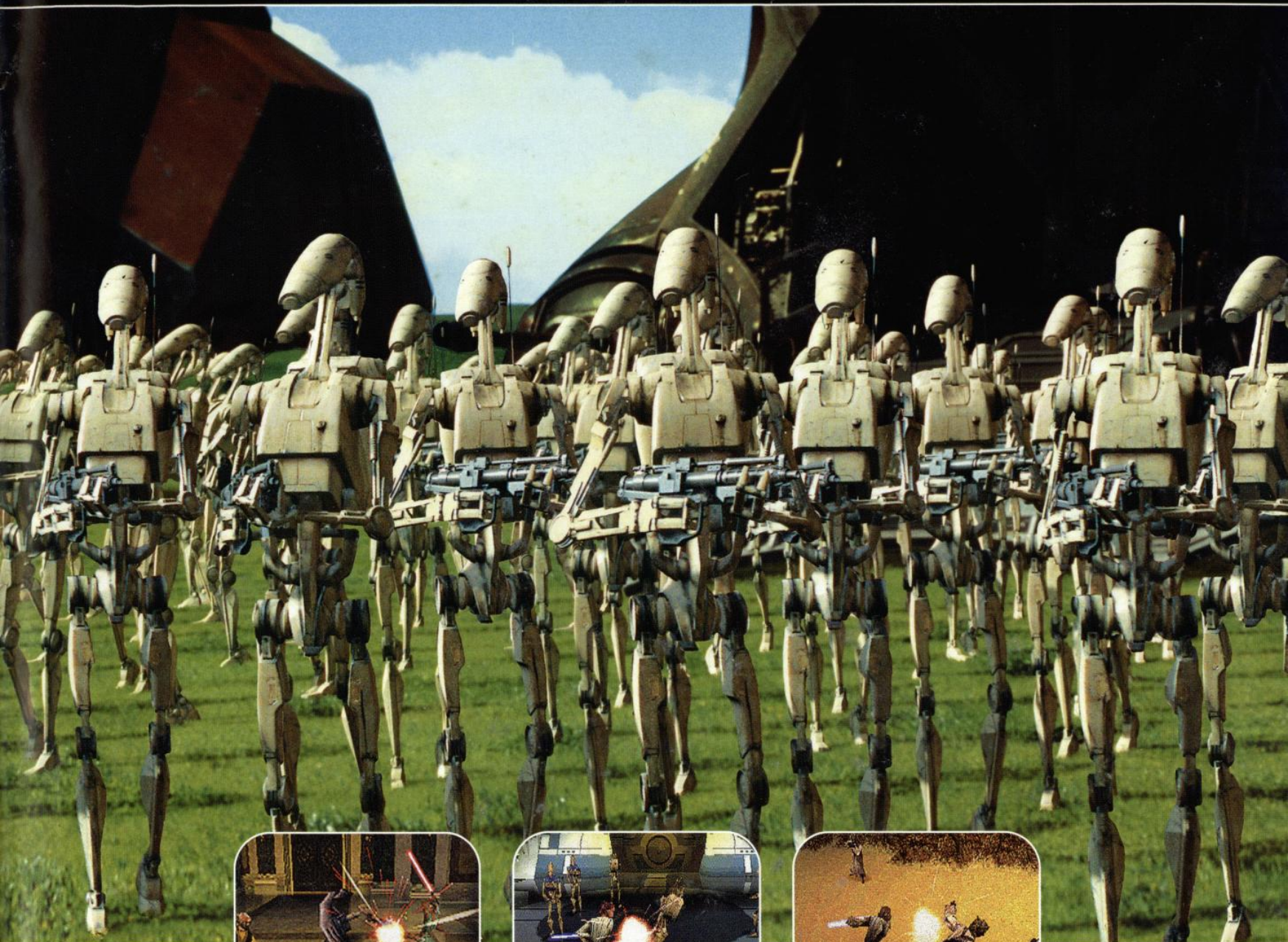
Hi, my name is **Shelley**, I am an 11 year old girl looking for a female pen-pal aged 10 to 13 (who doesn't just want to talk about games!). I like listening to music, reading and being with animals. Even if you like totally different stuff, please write! If I interest you, your letter will brighten up my day. Definitely will reply. Write to: **Shelley De Vos, Lot 6 Aitken St. King Lake VIC 3763**.

Hey guys, looking for pen pals like you. Doesn't matter what you write about although you gotta be 15 to 20, so do as you're told and write to: **Kechelle Bames, 5 Edward St. Manjimup WA 6258**.

Hey, My name's **Dave** and I'm 12 years old and looking for a female pen-pal aged 12-13. I like games, sport, music, TV, movies, bike-riding and skateboarding. If you're interested, write to: **David Ferguson, 18 Crown St, Woolloomooloo, Sydney NSW 2011**. Please try to send a picture of some sort. Reply guaranteed.



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