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REVIEWED!

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Bomberman 64 II
Vagrant Story
Grind Session
Wipeout 3: SE
Daikatana
AND MORE!

ECCO THE DOLPHIN

Sega's friendly flipper returns on Dreamcast

next gaming



83

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SEPTEMBER 2000

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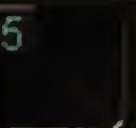
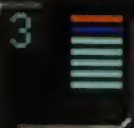
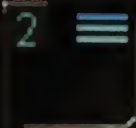
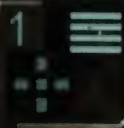
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GAMESPOT

DARK REIGN 2

THE BATTLEFIELD OF THE FUTURE

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OF NEW CLIMAX GAMES GET THE HYPER
ONCE OVER.



18.....THE FUTURE OF GAMING PART 2

TOP CONSOLE AND PC GAMES DEVELOPERS WERE ONCE AGAIN PINNED DOWN BY THE HYPER CREW AND FORCED TO CONFESS THEIR FEELINGS FOR THE SUPER CONSOLES AND THE FUTURE OF GAMING...



58..... GAME OF THE MONTH! VAGRANT STORY ON PLAYSTATION

SQUARESOFT HAVE CREAMED THE OPPOSITION WITH VAGRANT STORY! IT COULD BE THAT THIS RPG IS BETTER THAN THE HYPED FINAL FANTASY IX...



editorial

Another gaming icon from the "golden era" has made a return. Ecco the Dolphin dives into our Dreamcast this month for a brand new adventure, but this time with some seriously gorgeous graphics to make it all the more believable. Meanwhile on the PC, Daikatana finally reared its exceptionally ugly head. The less said about that game the better. Ion Storm have the remarkable Deus Ex coming out this month, so we can't be too upset with them. In fact, go to page 14 for an interview with the inspiring Warren Spector, the man behind Deus Ex and a host of classic PC games. Hear what he has to say about immersive gameplay, developing for consoles and why he dreams about 2D sprites. The man is a legend. Of course, if you don't play PC games, you'll have to be content with our massive Future Of Gaming Part 2 feature. Read some real opinions on the consoles...

issue

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SEPTEMBER 2000

Editor: Eliot Fish

Art Director: David Harvey

Deputy Editor: Cam Shea

Publisher: Jim Flynn

ADVERTISING

Advertising Manager: Gill Oliver

National Sales Director: Victoria Meades

Advertising Production Co-ordinator: Dylan Fryer

Ph: 02 9699 0333

Fax: 02 9310 2012

Production Manager: Melissa Doyle

Circulation Director: Karen Day

Finance Director: Theo Fatseas

Managing Director: Phillip Keir

Subscriptions Enquiries

ph: 1300 3611 46

Fax: 02 9699 0334

email: subs@next.com.au

CONTRIBUTORS:

Dan Toose, Kevin Cheung, Tim Levy, Adam Duncan, DMC, Nick O'Shea, James Ellis, Derek dela Fuente, Frank Dry, the gasping ghost and Kilik.

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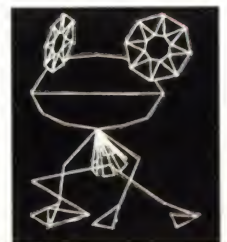
78 Renwick St,

Redfern, NSW 2016

Fax: (02) 9281 6188

E-mail: freakscene@next.com.au

Hypermart: hypermart@next.com.au



ELIOT FISH >> EDITOR



THE NEW PORTABLE PLAYSTATION

Sony Japan recently announced a brand new portable PlayStation called the PS One. As you might have guessed, it's the same PlayStation that we've playing over the years, just modified and re-designed to be sold as a "portable" device. Whilst it's not exactly a PlayStation handheld, it's very small and has been introduced to offer PlayStation gaming at a more affordable price and in an easier to store package. Never owned a PlayStation? Can't afford a PlayStation 2? Then the PS One is probably marketed towards you. The PS One is only a third of the size of the original PlayStation, making it far more compact, even though it still comes with a full sized Dual Shock controller. There will be some pretty funky accessories to expand upon the original PlayStation concept — most notably a connector for mobile phones, allowing the PS One to be online capable. Also sold separately will be a LCD screen, which connects to the rear of the PS One. Whether all these devices will be available outside of Japan is still yet to be revealed. The PS One will be able to play any normal PlayStation game, as it is essentially the same machine.

...PLUS A PS2 HARD DISK IN JAPAN!

When it came to the PlayStation 2 (PS2), Sony Japan revealed an external hard disk with an ethernet socket. It must be noted though, that the US PS2 will feature a hard disk and ethernet card that can slot into a modified bay at the back of the console, as opposed to having it externally like the Japanese model. Here in Australia, we will most probably be sold the US "version" of the system with the hard drive bay, which as far as we're concerned is the far superior option. Just look at the pic! Who wants to have a bulky device like that kicking around?



NINTENDO'S NEW N64

In a move to help buoy Nintendo 64 sales, Nintendo have repackaged the system in Japan with a Pokémon flavour. Sporting a whopping great big Pikachu down the side, the new N64 design is a purely aesthetic one, with no new actual features. Unless of course you count the Pikachu foot reset button as a feature. Definitely something for the Pokémon obsessed. We may see this at Christmas... meanwhile, we can hold onto our hats for some big announcements at the upcoming Spaceworld expo in Japan, which starts on August 25th. Nintendo have stated that they will unveil some upcoming hardware and software at the show, which can only mean Game Boy Advance and Dolphin stuff. Shigeru Miyamoto has also been quoted as saying that he'd "love" to reveal his upcoming Dolphin games at the Spaceworld show! Oh wow, now that's something to look forward to!



DOOM III IS COMING!

Yes, the bombshell hit sometime in early June, when John Carmack announced that id Software had indeed begun early development on another game in the Doom series! It looks like the days of Quake are over, but who could shed a tear when the replacement is the grandfather or freaky First Person Shooters, Doom? Carmack confirmed that the focus of the game will be on providing a rich single-player experience (although you can bet the source code will allow for all sorts of multiplayer mods). Todd Hollenshead explained, "We expect to once again dramatically advance first-person gaming both technically and artistically with this title." You the man, Todd.

Carmack is hard at work on the new 3D engine and story concepts, whilst in another part of the building, Paul Steed (character modeller and animator for Quake 3) is packing his belongings into a cardboard box. Steed was fired by Adrian Carmack and Kevin Cloud for unknown reasons, although we assume it had nothing to do with the quality of his work and everything to do with his "attitude". Some rumoured that it had something to do with the fact that Cloud and Carmack didn't want to pursue another Doom title, and Steed was one of the staff members that virtually instigated a coup against management to push for work to begin on a new Doom title rather than the "new" game that they had begun preliminary work on. Well, the facts will probably stay locked away in the id Software vaults, along with the design plans for Doom III... until a later date! Stay tuned.





CAPTION THIS! PART 10

Want your name in Hyper magazine? Want a chance to prove that you can caption screenshots with the same idiotic wit as the Hyper captioning monkey? Then what are you waiting for? Here's a prime screenshot just waiting for your wicked pen. Get your captions on the back of an envelope with your name and address and send it to: Caption This! Part 10, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Either that, or e-mail it to us (with Caption This Part 10 in the subject line) to freakscene@next.com.au. Good luck!



CAPTION AT YOU

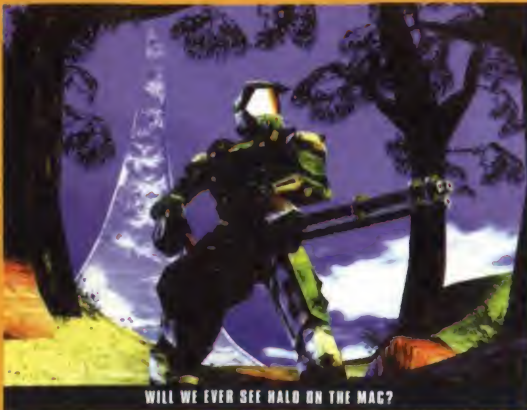
SONIC TEAM SPLIT FROM SEGA

The famous Sonic Team, responsible for the marvellous Sonic The Hedgehog titles (which have always traditionally been exclusive to Sega hardware), have become an independent games developer! Dreamcast users needn't fear though, because they still plan to develop for the Dreamcast. Yuji Naka from Sonic Team has been quoted as saying, "My main focus is Dreamcast," and also "I don't think very highly of the PlayStation 2, there have been many problems with it." He went on to say that Sonic Team would look at developing titles for the Xbox and Nintendo Dolphin! Rejoice and be happy. The Sonic Team split was part of a restructuring within Sega, and in fact, many arms of Sega were 'detached'.



MICROSOFT BUNGIE JUMP

Microsoft has taken over Bungie, the developer behind past Macintosh classics Myth and Marathon and the upcoming multiplayer masterpiece, Halo. Bungie will now become an independent studio within Microsoft Games. What does this mean for the Xbox specifically? Well, nothing has been confirmed, but you can bet your bottom dollar that we'll see Halo on the Xbox now... although, Bungie have been told they can continue to develop for the PC and the Macintosh. But Bungie co-founder Jason Jones, has stated that he thinks the Xbox is the "best upcoming console", so naturally we can expect lots of things from Bungie heading straight to the new Microsoft console. Also in on the deal was Take 2 Interactive who will now own the rights to Myth and Oni, plus have the rights to develop two titles using the Halo engine.



WILL WE EVER SEE HALO ON THE MAC?



OVERFLOW

Electronic Arts are looking to purchase the rights for games based on the upcoming Lord Of The Rings trilogy, recently filmed in New Zealand. There have been Lord Of The Rings games in the past, but they have all been based on the books. EA would be purchasing rights to make games based on only the new movie by New Line Cinema.

Matt Stone and Trey Parker were recently interviewed in Playboy magazine in the USA, wherein they dissed the videogames based on their South Park series. Apparently, because Comedy Central "own" South Park, Parker and Trey have had no choice in authorising licensed product like the Acclaim videogames. The two were quoted as saying "they've made all this shit, and these videogames which we f***ing hate!"

Marvel Comics boss and comics legend, Stan Lee, will actually lend his voice to the Spiderman PlayStation game from Activision. Stan will provide the voice of the narrator, so it seems fitting that the character's creator will introduce him in the game!

Shigeru Miyamoto recently let slip that Nintendo are working on some online games for their upcoming Dolphin and maybe even Game Boy Advance. He wouldn't go into specifics, but we should know more after the Spaceworld show on August 25th.

Duke Nukem Forever might be hidden by 3D Realms in its final stages of development, but the developer was recently quoted as saying they have started work on an Xbox port for the next Duke outing. Well that's one console down... is PS2 next?

Looks like we could be seeing Wipeout on the Game Boy Color, according to some rumours leaking out of Psygnosis over in Europe. Now that is pretty darn cool...



CHICKEN RUN – THE MOVIE, THE GAME

Nick Park, the genius behind Wallace and Gromit, is about to release his new movie entitled Chicken Run. Well, we're sure the movie is going to be amazing, and we can only hope the game to go with it is just as good... Activision have the rights to a PC game based on the bizarre animated film that should please fans of Park and his quirky style. The Chicken Run Fun Pack contains minigames, screen-savers, clips from the movie and all sorts of other surprises – and we want it! It's our only way of enjoying Chicken Run's bizarre freakiness before the movie hits our screens in December!



IF YOU DON'T GO SEE THIS MOVIE, THEN YOU'RE A BLOODY IDIOT

UNREAL TOURNAMENT – THE TV SHOW

Over in the UK, an Unreal Tournament TV show is being developed for BBC2. Footage will be taken of players fighting it out in a series of deathmatches and team games from inside the game engine through carefully placed cameras and "observer" cams. The contestants' faces will actually be scanned for use on the player models, but the producers have been careful to restrict the weapons used in the tournament to the more "fantastical" ones. Gone is the sniper rifle, and the other guns which are vaguely realistic, as it could "disturb" some viewers. Maps will be designed especially for the show, and will be bigger and brighter than those currently in the game online. Obviously, it will make better TV if it isn't too confusing as to what is taking place. Will we see Unreal Tournament TV here in Australia? Well, it all depends on the ratings I guess...



POOD RATINGS? BLAM!

WINNERS:

Resident Evil 2
Dreamcast

- Z. Erdos, SA
- S. Liu, NSW
- E. Stathos, NSW
- J. Emery, SA
- M. DeMontfort, NSW

Need For Speed:
Porsche 2000

- A. Wakefield, NSW
- T. Goodie, VIC
- C. Seeto, NSW
- J. Freling, NSW
- M. Brunato, NSW



DOWNLOAD VMU FILES FOR YOUR DREAMCAST

The Official Australian Dreamcast Site is now offering VMU save files for download. Just by visiting the site with your Dreamcast, you can link through to the Cheats and download a variety of VMU files which will be updated regularly. Can't be bothered unlocking all the characters in Soul Calibur? Want all the tracks unlocked in Sega Rally? Those files and more are available now at www.dreamcast.com.au! The files get downloaded directly into your VMU.



HYPER NEEDS YOU!

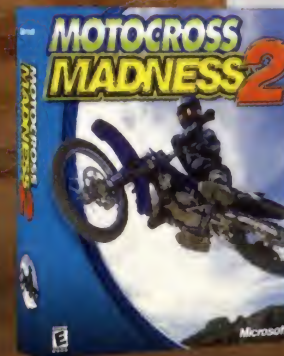
Think you have what it takes to write about games for a living? Enthusiastic? Dedicated? Knowledgeable? Then send us an example of your writing (a 500 word review of a game of your choice), with a resume and some contact details. Post your submission to Staff writer position, Eliot Fish, Hyper Magazine, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Good luck.



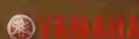
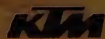
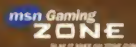
Racing is in your blood



Along with small pieces of
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Satisfy your craving for dirt-bike action, head-numbing crashes and outrageous stunts on over 40 tracks in 6 events including Stunt Quarry, Nationals, Baja, Enduro, Supercross and Multi-player Tag, and get that blood of yours pumping. Download the free trial version of Motocross Madness 2 at www.microsoft.com/games/motocross2



Microsoft



ACTION JACKSON

The world's most powerful software company, Microsoft, may soon give birth to two baby companies if Judge Jackson's ruling in the Microsoft anti-trust trial goes ahead. On June 7, Judge Jackson delivered the final verdict, and as expected, approved the US Justice Department's breakup plan, which orders Microsoft to be split into two, with a host of restrictions on how they can trade and develop programs. One company would look after the Windows operating systems, while the other would be in control of internet operations and other software applications.

The measures aim to "terminate the unlawful conduct, to prevent its repetition in the future, and to revive competition in the relevant markets". Perhaps the most surprising thing about the decision was Judge Jackson's reluctance to grant Microsoft any more time to prepare the case for their defence. In such a historic case, with huge ramifications for the computer industry, it seems strange that the verdict was delivered so quickly. In any case, Microsoft have since appealed the decision, and a stay has been placed on all "remedies" until the appeal process is complete. The appeal could go straight to the Supreme Court, or through the usual appeals process.

Bill Neukom, Microsoft's Executive Vice President for Law and Corporate Affairs said that "The court imposed the government's radical breakup and regulatory plan without a single day of testimony. We asked for a fair and reasonable opportunity to respond to the government's unprecedented proposal but we were denied that fundamental right", and that "We expect at the conclusion of the appellate review that Microsoft's position will be vindicated as having been pro-competitive: better technology quicker at lower prices for consumers."

Judge Joe Brown and Judge Judy were unavailable for comment.



SONY PRO ANTI-ALIASING

Word from a couple of software companies developing for PlayStation 2 is that lack of anti-aliasing will not be a problem for long. Apparently, implementing full scene anti-aliasing and/or edge based anti-aliasing is a simple process, will have little or no hit on performance and can be taken care of by the display hardware. This is the best news we've heard about the PS2 for a long while, and even opens up the possibility of Japanese launch titles like Ridge Racer 5 supporting anti-aliasing for their Western debut!

SEALAND



As governments struggle to regulate and control the internet, online surveillance is becoming more and more of a reality (check our article on page 44). Ironically enough, it may just be the world's smallest country - Sealand - that will come to the rescue of free speech.

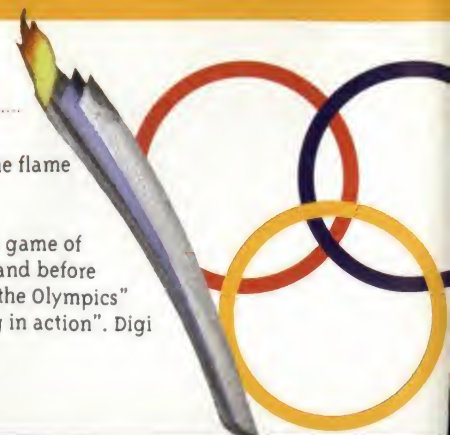
Never heard of Sealand? That's not surprising considering it's a country 10km off the coast of Britain and about the size of a basketball court! This hunk of metal was built during WW2 for defence against German bombers crossing the North Sea. It was declared a sovereign state by retired British Army Major Roy Bates in 1975, with its own royalty, currency and flag.

Thanks to funding from a consortium of American entrepreneurs, Sealand is now being established as a "data haven". A technologically advanced computer nation where individuals and companies can hire space on the servers, and remain outside the watchful eye of governments. With the British Government building a system capable of monitoring all the country's internet traffic just 10km away, the irony couldn't be more delicious. As Nelson is wont to say "HA HA".

"OH MY GOD WHAT HAVE WE DONE"

Eliot and I were recently given the dubious honour of taking the Olympic torch through Redfern. The flame was to do a lap of the Hyper offices before moving on to some similarly pointless location.

Eliot and I quickly tired of the flame (and Arthur lighting farts with it) and decided to have a quick game of Quake 3 before passing it on. As is often the way, we got a little too absorbed in our deathmatching, and before long it was 4am and the flame had gone out. Screaming "Oh my god we've sullied the good name of the Olympics" we quickly dismembered the torch and flushed it down the toilet. The flame is now officially "missing in action". Digi pics next issue.



Conspiracy Theory



Coming Soon!


Deus Ex (MA15+).

Enter a futuristic world amidst terrorist and government conspiracies, armed with an arsenal of nanotechnology that enhances your skills and abilities. Using cutting-edge AI which learns as you play, the game lets you choose the pace it takes; more cognitive players are able to specialize in knowledge-based skills, while combat-oriented gamers will master a host of weapon-skills. F0EUD0000W

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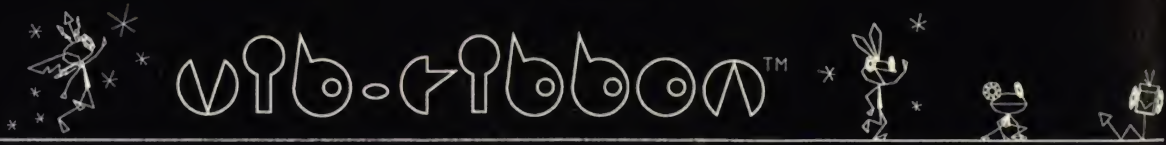
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VIB RIBBON

SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT
PLAYSTATION

Trust the Japanese to pump out the freakiest game we've played all year... Vib Ribbon puts you in control of a bizarre rabbit made up of a simple outline. You pop in your favourite music CD, and the beats generate obstacles in the path before you, giving you stuff to avoid as best you can with your "rabbit". Of course... it totally ROCKS!



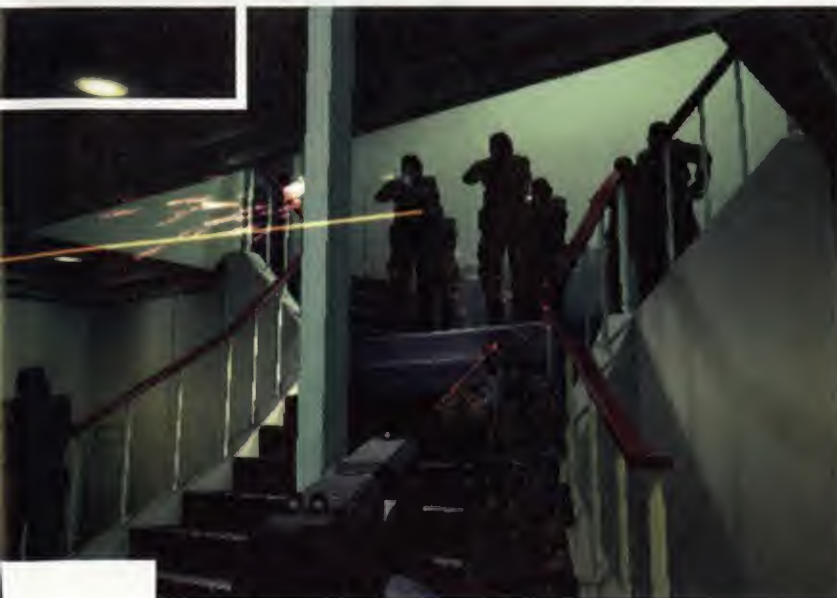


METAL GEAR SOLID 2

KONAMI

PLAYSTATION 2

This is the game that will probably sell the PlayStation 2 more than any other title... well, except for maybe Final Fantasy X and XI. We're headed towards some truly cinematic, movie-style action, with all the depth of gameplay we've previously only dreamt about.



INSIDE THE MIND OF WARREN SPECTOR!

The genius game designer behind Deus Ex, System Shock and Ultima Underworld!

Deus Ex from Ion Storm is such an engrossing gaming experience that **ELIOT FISH** just had to corner its creator, Warren Spector, in a small dark room at E3 and get him to spill his guts on game design. The result is this fascinating peek into the mind of a gaming genius...





What was the most significant design challenge in putting a game like this together, seeing as it has similarities to your past work?

The game is similar to Underworld, System Shock and Thief, and I take that as a compliment. All I want people to say is, "hey, that's the next logical step in the progression which started back in 1991." As far as the hardest thing, it really has been in balancing the game. It's awe-inspiring when you walk into the office every day, and go talk to the testers and look over someone's shoulders and realise "Wow, that guy is in a part of the New York city map that I never even bothered going to." And he's having a great time! He's getting skill points, he's accomplishing secondary goals. He's talking to people that I don't bother going talking to, and having a great time. That tells me that one of the elements that I really wanted in the game, was the feeling that you're really exploring the world, the way you want to explore it. That's working. Then I go talk to someone else and they say "Y'know, this is completely unbalanced! The resource allocation is just all wrong. I don't have enough tomm ammo!" and I bring them over to my machine, sit them down and say "I'm at the same point in the game you are and look at my inventory." And it's just the opposite. And then I get a call from one of the testers in San Francisco and he'll say "this game is totally unbalanced! The stealth pistol is a completely worthless weapon! Why don't you fix it?!" and I'll say, "because I used the stealth pistol from the first mission to the last! And I love it, it's my favourite. So there." And it's also like, "you have too many lockpicks at the end of mission 12 and not enough Multitools!" and I go "I

have 15 Multitools in my inventory right now and NO lockpicks! What are you talking about?" So... balancing the game, it fills me with dread. And yet, I'm totally encouraged, because I think it means we've done the job right - that we really have made a game where the resources you have, at any given point in time, are entirely dependent on your playing style. Which means that the choices you make about your play style really have significance - which is exactly what I wanted to do! So so many things which are a simple balancing issue in a shooter... like... Unreal, a great game, say this area is too hard just pull a monster out and hey it's easier now. In Deus Ex it's not that simple! We have to support the guy who goes around and kills everything, we have to support the guy who sneaks around and picks locks, and we have to support the person who takes the Swimming Skill, the Medical Skill and the Environmental Training Skill! That person has to have as much fun as the person who takes Heavy Weapons, Demolitions and Rifle.

Can you play through without using the lockpick for instance?

Yeah! I was stunned. I mean it was never my intention to say "you will never use a lockpick in the course of this game" or "you will never pick up a gun"! It was my intention that you would shift your strategy based on your personal preference, the specific situation you're dealing with, uh whether you have enough ammo to pull off a plan that you wanna execute. But some of the testers are pretty radical! There was one guy who just went through and said "I'm not gonna use a lockpick, damnit." And it worked! It's pretty cool!

Funny story... I very reluctantly gave my code for a five level demo out to some American press guys and I got a call from one of them saying "I hate you! I've spent ten hours on mission one!" and I'm thinking "OH no, we're doomed. We're doomed!" and he said "no, no, I'm LOVING IT! I've played through the first mission for ten hours because I want to see EVERY way to get into the Statue Of Liberty!"

Do you think you could balance a game so much that you could get through it without firing a gun?

Yeah, that's certainly the goal. I've had players get through mission one and mission two without killing a single person. But it's a little tough, you're going to have to do SOME getting people out of your way. I don't think games cause anything in terms of violence, I just think it's silly. Some games are going to cause some people to behave somewhat violently in some ways in some circumstances, that's about all you can say, but that's true of anything. Personally, I'm getting a little tired of it. We make the games we do because at some level it's easy. We can simulate the pulling of a trigger fairly well. It's easy and it's a crutch. To be honest, I'm personally a little tired of it, so I would very much like to make a game where you don't ever have to deal with people in that way. It's hard to do that commercially now, it's hard to do that because our simulation tools are pathetic, we can't do the thing where people smile and cry and all that. As soon as we can I think we're gonna see a lot of people making games that are a lot different. I hope I'm right in there with them.

What's the most important aspect of creating an immersive first-person

game?

The most important aspect of creating an immersive sim is removing barriers to belief. You have to have an interface that becomes transparent very quickly, the world has to respond in logical and predictable ways. The first time you fire a shot at a wall, and there's no bullet hole... guess what - immersion's gone. The first time you hack a computer on the desk of an NPC, while they're sitting there and they don't respond in any way, y'know immersion's gone! I've resigned myself, and I'm not happy about it, to the fact that we're going to disappoint players every once in a while, and all we're trying to do is minimise those occasions. I wanted to do a real world game. Back when I started thinking about it in 1994, I called it the real-world role-playing game, and if I ever say those words again, kick me very, very hard in a very tender part of my anatomy. Ok? The real world stuff is really cool, and I'm so glad I did it. But it raises expectations in players' minds that are so incredible. It's like, every time they walk into a room and see a telephone, and they can't use it the way they know a telephone should work, it's like I've lost them. But we've got plans for

"I WANT TO... Y'KNOW, KILL A KID'S DOG... Y'KNOW AND HAVE HIM CRY. WOW, THAT'S GONNA LOOK GREAT IN PRINT ISN'T IT."



that involving the speech... Anyway, every time an NPC doesn't respond exactly the way you expect him to, because you interact with people all the time in the real world, you know I lose that player just a little bit and that's really annoying. It just makes me want to look fondly back on the days when I could say "what do you mean an Orc wouldn't behave like that?! When was the last time you saw an Orc?!" I can't do that now. We're trying to make the world feel as real as it needs to, which is not to say it needs to be real. But it needs to be as real as we can make it.

What is the next essential breakthrough for games of this type?
Wow. I'm not sure there's just one! It's really hard to make people care about characters that are made up of only 700 polygons...y'know I hate our figure technology, I want to tell a virtual joke and have a virtual character virtual smile and like me or respond appropriately. I want to be able to threaten a character and have them cower believably, and respond. I want to y'know... kill a kid's dog, y'know and have him cry. Wow, that's gonna look great in print isn't it. Anyway, that's the thing, and it's a design thing more than a technology thing. We have to get smarter about design. There's a technology component to it. We're getting to the point where all of a sudden the technology limitations are going to go away, and then the designer is going to have to step up and start creating characters people care about. One of the things I'm most happy about, is that this is one of the few times I've actually had a writing team that managed to make the characters feel alive. There are moments when they're

completely goofy in the way that people are really goofy. And there are times when they're really threatening... I'm so happy with the writing on this project it's scary. The characters really do come alive.

Yeah, well... Warren, I had a dream I was playing Deus Ex...
Oh yeah. Oh YEAH! It's funny because I start dreaming in the perspective and in the world of the game on every project and that's how I know I'm getting to the end. It's not so bad on a game like Underworld, or System Shock or Deus Ex, but when you're making a game like Serpent Isle or one of the top-down Ultimas, you start dreaming in that perspective - it gets pretty freaky! I worried a lot about that! I'm glad I'm making first person games exclusively now.

What thought have you given to developing for the console market, seeing as it's growing larger every day?
I don't think much about "markets", I think about players. The goal of Deus Ex was to create a game that gamers of all sorts could find a way to enjoy. As much as I would love to make a game that sells a million copies, or ten million copies, y'know I just want to sell one more copy than I need to for a publisher to give me the money to make another one, and that's really all I have to do! As long as the games that I like to be involved with accomplish that goal, that's the kind of game I'm going to make. Having said that, I'm totally into the idea of making a console game. I love console games! I don't believe the old industry adage that there are two different audiences. Everybody that I know plays computer games and the next day will turn

around and play a console game. It's the same market! I don't care what the numbers show, y'know? I look around and I see one audience. I would love to make a console game because it would be nice to have a stable platform, I'll know exactly what I'm designing to, I don't have to worry about "gee what if someone only has 32MB of RAM, what if they don't have a Voodoo 5..." So it'd be nice to have a stable platform for a change. The consoles are becoming powerful enough now that I can keep making the kind of games that I want to make. I'd be lying if I said I didn't give some thought to making games more accessible. Though, I think Deus Ex, for all it's sophistication and complication, has a mass-market approach. Because, if you can't solve a puzzle, or if you're not twitchy enough to get past a monster in Quake or something, what are you gonna do? You're gonna stop playing. In my game, you're going to go find the other route, or you're going to stop being clever and take a brute force approach. I think that's a mass market design approach. We'll find out. But definitely, getting on a console, I'm there, I'm all over it. It's just a question of having no experience, so every time I go to a publisher and say "give me money to make a console game and compete with Square!" they go, "Are you insane?! No! Just go do another one of your little role playing games, okay?" The funny thing is, I've always wanted to do a western. No-one's stupid enough to give me the money to do it! It would be a total disaster! It's just a wild thing I want to do.

Have you thought about a Deus Ex 2?
I'd like to do an add-on, with maybe 8-10 missions, like 20 hours of gameplay, and take the time to do

multiplayer right, I really want to do that. But it usually makes more sense to just start right on a Deus Ex 2, and do that one right with co-operative play, multiplayer... I've got pages of notes for what I want multiplayer to be beyond just deathmatch or Thiefmatch or whatever you want to call it. But I'd love to do a sequel, I really would, and that surprised me, because I HATE sequels. Again, you gotta take what I say with a grain of salt, because I've got a product to sell, right? (smiles) I really mean it when I say that I like these characters in this world enough that I want to go back there. We have multiple end games based on how you interact with people and how you want the world to look at the end of the game, and I would love to take the end game... anyway, I want to do a sequel to find out what happens to those characters later on, and what happens to the world. On the other hand, I really want to do a fantasy game again... I don't know why, I'm just getting this itch. I've been re-reading The Lord Of The Rings and I've got a fantasy world... my wife Caroline is a writer, and she's written a bunch of fantasy books, and stuff, and we've done games together, and we've created a world that we pitched to a comic company many years ago and it didn't happen, so it's just been in the file drawer for a while. I love this world, and I want to do a game set there, it involves dragons and factions that are fighting for control of limited magical resources, and anyway... I want to do a console game, so maybe there's a second team out there who are into doing a fantasy role-playing game for PlayStation 2 or Xbox or Dreamcast or who-knows-what. That's my dream... to have those two projects.

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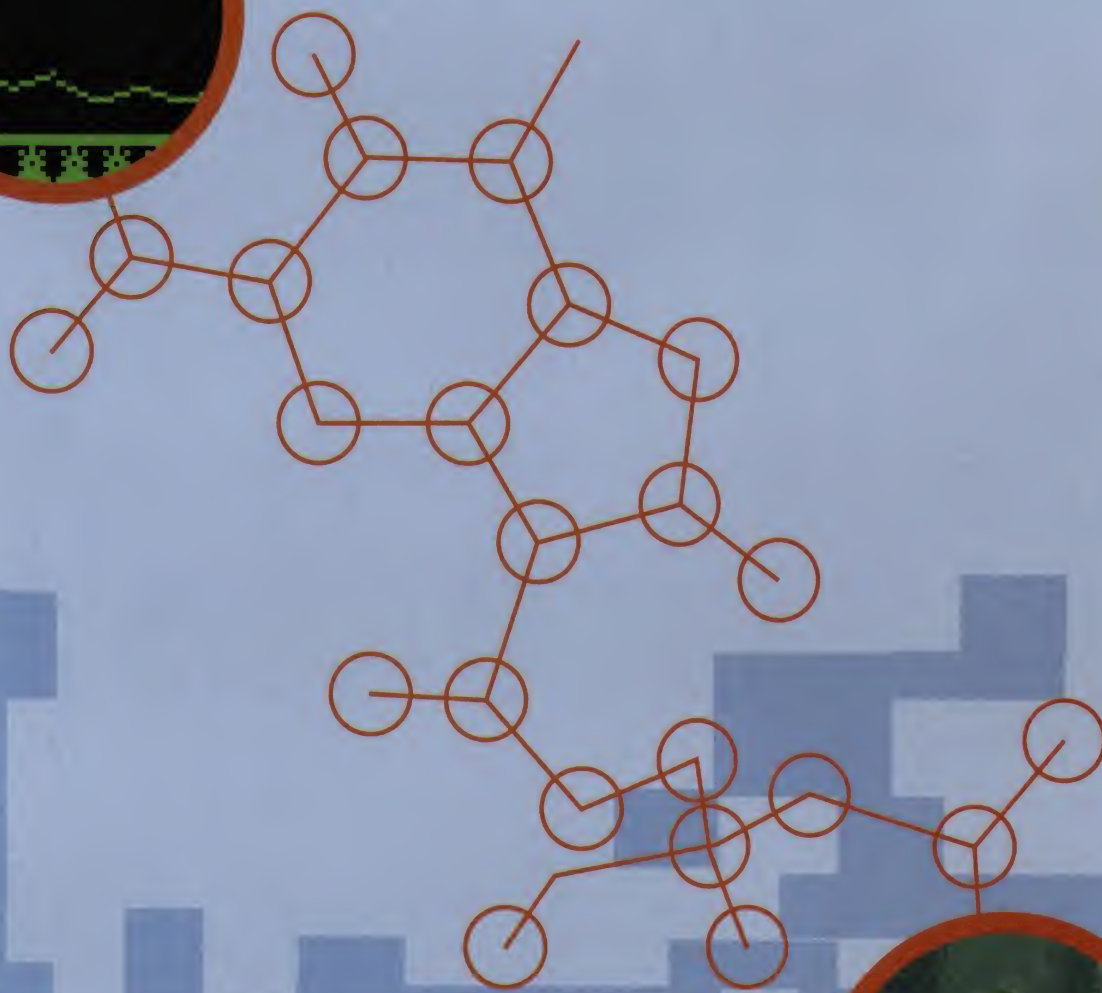
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HERE'S WHAT WE ASKED THEM!

1. What are your impressions of the Dreamcast, PlayStation 2 and (from what you know) the X-Box and the Nintendo Dolphin?
2. Where does the PC fit into this new oncoming console era?
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4. Will all this new hardware result in only a visual improvement to games or will we see gameplay evolve too?
5. Tell us about a game (or a game concept) you're working on now for one of the new systems.
6. In a nutshell, what do you think the future of Gaming looks like? (VR headsets? Neural implants?) Discuss!

FREDERICK JONES
Senior Marketing Manager
(Gathering Of Developers, USA)

1: Well, I just got back from the Sega Summit in Vegas where they announced Sega.com and the new Sega.net venture. It is extremely impressive where they are planning to take the online gaming for console. At the end of the day the Dreamcast is a very revolutionary system. On the other hand, PlayStation2 is an incredible machine with the graphics power to do nearly anything. You just can't count out Sony's brilliant marketing staff either. They will make sure that the system has a HUGE launch in the Fall. As for Nintendo and Microsoft... they are both major corporations with fantastic licenses and financial backing respectively. I seriously doubt that either of their systems will be easily silenced by the competition. Don't forget Nintendo's true ace in the hole either: the Game Boy Advance is as much a system to seriously crush competition as any of the above-named systems as well. Having said that, we are committed to developing for all viable systems.

2: Where it always has. The PC actually has a dual purpose in households and corporations as both a productivity tool and as an advanced gaming machine. I know that the Gathering is planning on building support for the PC as some of our biggest titles in Rune and Max Payne are going to be debuting on the platform. Don't expect PC gaming to go anywhere except evolve to match the capabilities of all the new hardware advancements.

3: The next step is truly photo-realistic graphics and immersion techniques that trick your sense of touch and smell. I believe that we will see that in our immediate lifetime. Several companies are working to achieve that right now. At the recent GDC show in San Jose, there were companies doing smell peripherals and advanced motion capture work. The Gathering's developers are always at the forefront of identifying and using new technology for our games.

4: Well, every generation of hardware produces new trends... the 32 bit PlayStation was significant as it unleashed horror and music genres and brought about subtle effects with the Dual Shock Analog controller (who can forget experiencing the heart-attack of the Donald Anderson character in Metal Gear Solid). Dreamcast will unleash internet gaming advances for console. So, it's not just about the graphics. Gameplay will inevitably evolve for the 128-bit generation as well.

5: Sorry. We have a ton of unique titles in development right now and none of them can be discussed. Please be on the lookout though for our 1st console titles Railroad Tycoon II, Kiss Psycho Circus and 4x4 Evolution on the Dreamcast this summer. They are all very different and very innovative titles for console that will use the modem in the Dreamcast in new ways.

6: Haha. Well, neural implants would probably hurt so I'm going to hope not!! But, VR reality would be really neat. Just imagine a game where I sit on a beach being fanned and sipping a fresh glass of water... now that'd be a cool game!



JOHN De MARGHERITI
Microforte
(The Australian PC developer working on Bigworld and Fallout Tactics)

1: I think the mass appeal that the Broadband/Internet connectivity these machines will have will be the single biggest impact to the mass market since the 3D chip.

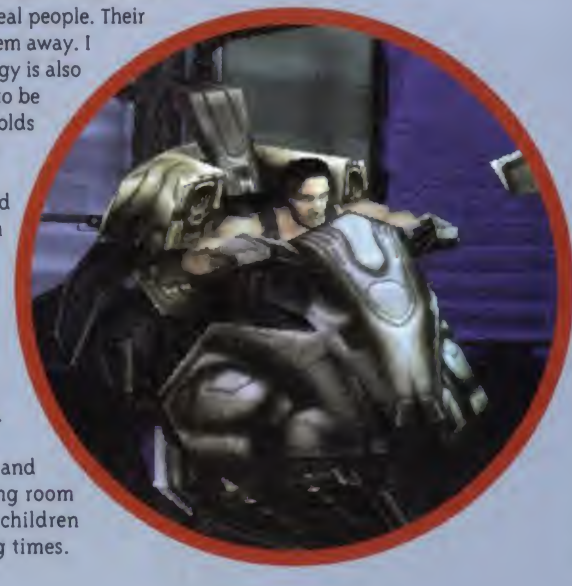
2: The PC will remain a games machine for quite sometime yet. There are so many of them out there!. The PC might not be the development platforms of choice for most development houses, with most developing for the X-Box and PS2. The PC will continue to play a part as a games platform, but you will find that games that were particularly only for the PC moving over to the consoles. This does not mean the PC is dead. It will enjoy continued games support especially since development for the X-Box is very similar to development to the PC. If anything, the X-box will help retain the PC as a games platform.

3: The coming storm that is Broadband is coming. The Internet will chance everything. Already games like Half-life and their variants like Counter-Strike are very popular on the Net. This points to one thing. People want to play against people. Look at the successes of EverQuest, Ultima Online. There is a big swing towards these type of games. The advent of faster Internet connectivity will mean we will create games that allow you to role-play and immerse yourself into richer worlds. Its funny, but only 4 years ago leading Producers at various publishers looked as having multiplayer as an extra tick on the game box. Necessary to sell games but not something to be taken seriously. They missed an opportunity that could have helped their careers and helped save their now defunct employees.

4: The basic fundamentals of gameplay have not really changed. Technology will not change this too much. Gameplay improvements are very gradual things. The biggest opportunity is connectivity provided by the Net and Broadband. This has offered the largest opportunity for game designs. Loads of interaction possibilities. Mixed in with the visual improvements, you have a very powerful combination.

5: Well, our Persistent Online game, "Big World" is looking like a console game. Although we have not formally committed to a specific console, we will be making some major decisions here in the next few months. Big World is a massively multiplayer online game which will break a number of barriers both from a design point of view and a technical point of view. We hope to get rid of the shards and allow everyone to be able to meet with anyone else. Also gone will be the character 'popping' that occurs if too many people meet in close proximity. We will allow mega rock concerts and events like that. Thousands of people will be able to gather and see 'events' and socialise - just like in our real world. Big World is a mega concept and game. It will break down some many barriers and we keep the actual design content close to our chest at the moment. We know from talks with industry leaders that the technology we have is possibly in pole position.

6: I hope to be alive and kicking to see some of the these predictions. My thought is that it's going to take a lot longer to see things like neural implants etc in place any-time soon. More likely you will see an increased improvement to the visual and sensory qualities. Digital actors will be almost unrecognisable from real people. Their perfection will give them away. I think that VR technology is also some time away for it to be widely adopted, but holds great promise. I would like to see cubicles where a VR headset and treadmill device with sensation creating technology that enables you to step into a virtual world with all-senses feedback. I think this may happen in my lifetime. Game consoles will become GameStations and form part of your living room furniture. I think our children will live in interesting times.



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make newer ideas harder to surface. Therefore don't expect much evolution! Do expect higher production values - because the mass market, higher budget industry we are now in encourages them.

4. See previous

5. To many under NDA!

6. WAP and then G3 phones - handhelds! VERY high (Hollywood) production values

Much more multiplayer. More Mass market higher budgets - which will bring loads more girls in. Episodic games - timed released. More on-line delivery & pay per play.

ANDREW PARSONS

European Development Director for Hasbro gives the views of the company Hasbro Interactive.

1: Dreamcast is a great machine that deserves a lot more support than it has had from publishers and developers, whether it's take-up in Japan as a set-top box will improve its viability both there and in the West remains to be seen. The games I've played on it so far have felt like much enhanced versions of well tried play-mechanics - the quality's great, but there's not been anything that breaks significant new ground so far.

PlayStation2 - no question - this is one hell of a machine - P2 has thrown down the gauntlet for development teams - it's pretty clear that we won't start to see what this box really can do until we're through the first cycle of products. At the moment there's a slightly smug air about Sony - almost a suggestion that they think they've made it more powerful than we can possibly rise to - well it won't be that long before the code's busting out of the seams.

X-Box felt real for the first time when Mr Gates stood up at GDC and said his piece.

PHILLIP OLIVER

One half of the Oliver Twins, who run their own development company, called Interactive Studios.



1: DC - good machine - but the publishers and retailers are strangling it. PS2 - Hype machine has seduced everyone! But where are the games? X-Box - yippee the Western World fights back against the Japanese strangle hold. Damn good Spec - let's hope they can deliver - they should be able to - they are Microsoft!

2. In my mind - it doesn't! It'll become a hobby PC not a gaming platform worth considering.

3. Games Evolve. Revolution is VERY rare and comes from the least expected place, and is therefore unpredictable. Unfortunately, bigger budgets, fewer games, concept approvals will drive down creativity and



This will be massively supported, and I'm sure that Sony's and Microsoft's campaigns as they slug it out will make curriculum content of every business course for decades. Again, it sets the hardware well ahead of development's current constraints - will it take market share from Sony? Will it expand the console market? (are the limits of this market already beginning to be defined?), is the earth flat?

Dolphin's success lies in the access that Nintendo provides to the development community - nobody has doubts about the quality of the games that will be available, but will the volume be adequate to rival the other players.

2: There is an argument that the coming consoles (and X-Box in particular) could sound the end of the PC as a valid gaming format. However the very nature of the hardcore gamer makes a closed box format somewhat unattractive and I can't see the chip and card manufacturers ceasing their activity, so the PC will still be a major contender.

3: I don't expect 'revolutions in game design', but when real online bandwidth finally becomes publicly (and cheaply) available then the focus on massive multiplayer gaming, and persistent worlds, will start to introduce some very different play systems. I also delight in the ability of the really talented people in this industry to constantly innovate - from Audiorom to Lionhead - that's what makes it so exciting.

4: Gameplay doesn't need new hardware - I'd cite Pokémon as a clear example - the opportunity is now here for evolution in gameplay but I suspect we'll see most of the initial focus on visual content - it'll take a couple of cycles before we start to really think beyond this.

5: I'm lucky to be involved in Geoff Crammond's GP (Grand Prix 3 out soon) series and we are taking this forward onto the new platforms - it's great to be working with Geoff and is inspirational to our own teams.

6: Massive cross-platform multiplayer, content download on demand into established standard gaming engines with the ability to play within live events, spoken interaction with live and CPU players also utilising voice recognition. AI gains emotion and true behavioural patterns, physics and AI systems become indistinguishable from the real world, one major hardware player has dropped out, a proposed cross-platform Game-OS becomes credible, developers and publishers are surprised by a sudden rise in demand for simple, cheap, accessible games that are fun to play with the kids on wet Saturday afternoons.

MATTHEW STIBBE HEAD

MD at Intelligent games, which has written over 20 titles from U.S.S Ticonderogo to PGA Tour Golf for EA.

1: I think that PlayStation 2, X-Box and Dolphin are very exciting. They have the power to move gaming on to the next level. Dreamcast is interesting and has done a little better than I expected but none of our clients have any future development plans for it, which I think, is very telling. I think Microsoft have an opportunity to change the business model on consoles, if they choose to do so, and make it more open and accessible. This will allow for more innovation and choice in the long run and, I hope, a better deal for developers.

2. Right now next gen consoles and PCs have approximately the same power and that makes it easier for developers. Within a couple of years, PC will be way ahead again in terms of raw power. It's good to see the new consoles promise so much in



Future of gaming *feature*

terms of multi-player connectivity because this also bridges the gap between PC and consoles.

3. We're already in the middle of it and it's not very glamorous but extremely important - branding. External brands holders like Disney, LEGO and Mattel are making strong plays in the industry while old hands like EA are focusing almost exclusively on gaming franchises and brands. I think it is a sign of the maturity of the industry and probably helps us reach a wider audience. It is a game design challenge because strong brands always need to be matched to superior gameplay and execution to succeed in the market so gameplay will always be vital.

4. I wonder whether gameplay has evolved at all in the last five years. There have been a number of new genres - real time strategy for example - but not many and gameplay breakthroughs don't usually tie in with hardware improvements. Visual quality will continue to improve. I suspect / hope that at some point we will pass a boundary with 3D rendering that it will not be limiting. In other words, if you can imagine it you can render it. This could take the technological element out of game development and focus us all on imagination, gameplay and content. We're not there yet but we're getting close.

5. We're doing some things that will entertain and thrill gamers for Westwood, LEGO, EA Sports and Hasbro but that's about all I can say.

6. I don't think I'd let Microsoft implant anything in my neurones! I'd like to see hardware performance get to the point where we can support LCD shutter glasses and achieve real 3D in our games. A game that makes me feel real emotion would be cool. I haven't really had an emotional engagement with a game since the days of text only adventure games. In the future, games will compete with soap operas for audience ratings.

JASON AND CHRIS KINGSLEY

are brothers at Rebellion, which has released blockbusters such as Alien Vs Predator and a number of titles for Red Storm.

1. Dreamcast is a very good machine, it's easy to program for, and the results are visually pleasing. Development kits aren't too expensive either so that works well for independent developers like Rebellion. PS2 looks fantastic too, but it appears that it might be more of a challenge to get the best out of the machine - it will need some good assembly programmers from the 'old school' days. This is perfect for us, but harder for some of the technical people who are new to 'writing to the metal'. Well, from what we know about the X-Box that's going to be great too, if it's properly supported and pushed by Microsoft, which looks likely, then it will be a great machine to make games on. Dolphin I don't know much about yet but I thoroughly respect Nintendo, so I'm sure that it will be a contender too. So we're in heaven really - lots of great machines for us to make great games for.

2. It'll still be one of our main focus machines and a great and expanding platform to drive technology forwards. We all have PCs at work, obviously, so PC games will still be important to us. The target PC will be more fluid than the target for a next generation 'console', which makes for more development fun.

3. Right here, right now - the gloves are off, so what you can do comes down more to a creative choice than a technical limitation, though there will always be technical limitations. Budgets are going up though as teams get bigger so publishers might be less willing to take risks. We can tough and hope to show what we can do with our next title that we have developed independently called GUNLOK®!

4. Visual improvements will come out too, as will

gameplay innovations. I'm really looking forward to the next few years just to see what some of our fellow developers come up with.

5. That would have to remain a secret for now, but we're looking at putting GUNLOK® on the next generation machines, so watch this space.

6. Probably a lot of stuff that we can't imagine yet. A more fully immersive experience would be great however it's delivered, really being there is what it's all about in some games, but not all, so there will still be room for puzzle games, and more abstract ones too.

BRAIN WOODHOUSE,

producer at Bizarre Creations, which is working on Metropolis Street Racer for Dreamcast and Fur Fighters DC and PC.

1. Dreamcast is a fantastic machine - our programmers are thoroughly enjoying coding for it. PlayStation 2 seems a little more difficult to code for, although it is an exceptionally powerful machine, and could prove to be another jewel in Sony's crown.

X-Box looks like a really strong bet, in that it can draw at an unheard of rate, and seems to be relatively simple to code for.

At present we know very little about Dolphin - however it'll have to out-spec X-Box to grab the market's attention, which will be no mean feat. But only time will tell. My view on this is that there are at least three very powerful and different machines in the market. I do believe that with the market's current rate of expansion there is room for three - and the marketing, pricing and software will determine who gets what share of the market!

2. There'll always be a place for PC gaming, it's almost a genre within a genre - how many times do you look at a game and says, "that's a PC game"! PC gamers are different to console gamers and will have different expectations - therefore there'll always be a place for games on the PC. How significant this place will be seems to be in some doubt, as I think X-Box may provide that crossover.

3. Do you really think that if I had a revolutionary idea I'd publish it in a magazine?! Seriously, though, it's difficult to predict. I think there'll continue to be crossover in genres, and perhaps a new genre will evolve from this. Of course, online gaming is certainly an exciting prospect - it's just a little hesitant to expand here in Europe because of phone call costs. But this must be the next stage in a macro sense, as games are all about competition. You don't beat a time or gain a hi-score to switch off and go to bed - you want to call your friends and boast! How much more fun could there be in beating an Aussie at cricket in real time? It's the only way we could win!

4. Certainly the visual improvement will make a difference - but this will have a knock-on effect. The player will feel more interaction via the improved visual aspects, and it's the game designer's job to pull the player as close as possible. The better the graphics, the more opportunity there is to draw the player in. I think overall that this is something we have to work on as an industry - many games look great but don't play well. It's now unacceptable to release a game just because it looks good; it's essential that it plays well too. Gamers have seen loads of 'eye-candy' already - now they need good games that are well designed and thought out. Games should be designed by gamers.

5. We're currently working on Fur Fighters (Publisher: Acclaim) and Metropolis Street Racer otherwise known as MSR (Publisher: Sega) Fur Fighters is a 3D platform, action game, taking gameplay features from shoot-'em-up, puzzle and adventure genres. We've had loads of fun doing it and it's the game we all wanted to play.



Metropolis Street Racer is a city-based driving game set in London, San Francisco and Tokyo. We have accurately modelled over 20 square miles in the three cities – and have scars from blisters on blisters to prove it! There are over 200 routes and 30+ convertible and sports cars – and a game design with a twist. It's quite scary working on the two – but I'm still looking forward to playing final versions of both games after working on them!

6. I think Bill Gates owns the whole game – its called God and he controls us all! Seriously, I think VR is only a question of time – and it won't just be games – I think you'll be able to run with leopards and swim with sharks. In games we are essentially trying to create excitement and tension and competition – all of which goes on in the real world. I think games will still be games but the whole future will be more "experience" based.

Peter Moreland,

ex-Microprose producer but now MD at Hothouse Creations, partly owned by Eidos. Their games have included Abomination and Gangsters, with Gangsters 2 due to follow on a number of formats.

1. I think the Dreamcast is a lot of fun. The quality of software so far leaves a little to be desired but some titles rock: Crazy Taxi, Soul Calibur and Sonic are all excellent.

Pundits are of course predicting Dreamcast will die as soon as PS2 arrives in Europe and the US. If enough people say this it will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Many years ago the Atari ST died in exactly the same way, at the hands of the games industry not the gamers! So, if enough of the industry want it to survive and stop talking it down it may have a longer life than predicted.

PS2 is just around the corner for most territories. It is generally perceived it will be the market leader. There are oodles of games in development, so lots of choice for the consumer. It's hard to imagine the future world of consoles without Sony at the forefront or at least a major player.

X-Box has to be taken very seriously. Microsoft has the clout to give Sony a good run for their money. It is a contender for the number one slot in the US. I doubt it will make a dent in the Japanese market!

Dolphin will live or die by it's marketing and Nintendo didn't get this right with the 64 and it cost them dearly. They also need a wider software base than they achieved for the 64. I understand their philosophy of quality over quantity but to pull back against Sony they need both!

2. The PC/Console cycle is making another turn. Successful PC games will take advantage of PC hardware and the profile of the PC user. Higher resolution games with a bigger memory footprint, serious HD storage, advanced connectivity. Products that appeal to a slightly older age group than consoles. I suppose you could say it will become a (large) niche market for a while.

3. I hope it will be developers and publishers realising there could be more to console life than another Beat 'Em Up, Racer or First Person Shooter.

4. More storage, more processing power, more memory. Every new cycle of hardware brings new possibilities. Even hardened retro gamers will tell you that gameplay has advanced immeasurably over the last few years. Graphics are great but without gameplay it's 'watchware'.

5. Sorry, but I can't talk about that for now.

6. Personally I don't subscribe to the VR headset, neural implant vision of future gaming. I like to think that even when playing on-line people will still have local social interaction. Yes I'm talking about group/family entertainment here folks! A bunch of friends playing around a



3D/Holographic television display sounds cool to me! Console controllers haven't changed that much since the birth of the games machine. It's about time the hardware boys developed some new mass-market controllers. That just might do more to advance gaming than some other advances. Geeky goggles... No thanks!

Lost Toys

is headed by two ex-Bullfrog personnel. Glenn Corpes, who some say (including Peter Molyneux) was the inspiration behind three of the biggest sellers whilst at Bullfrog, including Magic Carpet, gives his thoughts. Lost Toys are currently working on Moho.



1. The Dreamcast is a very cool machine, as powerful as 'last week's' fastest PC; it's a great shame that a lot of important developers are ignoring it.

PlayStation 2, awesomely powerful but not as far ahead of the PC as the original PlayStation was in it's day, it's going to take a lot to get the most out of it's complex hardware. It's funny to think that five years ago the Saturn was the complex multi-processing monster and the PlayStation the simpler, easier fit to how people then were doing 3D.

Xbox is going to be more powerful than a PS2 with loads of lovely texture memory that the artists are going to love. The problem is that in the end it's all going to be a marketing fight between Microsoft and Sony, who knows which way that will go? Dolphin: I know very little about this but Nintendo have a lot of catching up to do. Whatever happens I suspect a lot of us will buy it just to play what the next Mario games.

2. It's going to be a while until any of the consoles can really compete for online games, that will be the PCs domain for a good few years. The PC will always be several steps ahead in graphic power. The PC will not be banished from the home by a console until there is an alternative for e-mail, browsing and word processing.

3. What was the last one? I don't remember any 'revolutions' since Space Invaders. My hope is that the bulk of the industry will continue to be so focused on exploiting increasingly powerful graphic hardware that it doesn't occur to them that their 'game' could be anything other than just another FPS/Driving/RTS/Fighting game. This should make life slightly easier for companies like Lost Toys who are dedicated to doing something a bit different.

4. See above.

5. I'm currently playing with a game design that needs an outdoor landscape engine. We can't talk about the design yet as it's too early and too subject to change. I can say that it's nice to be working on a landscape again, it's something I haven't done since Magic Carpet and a little lateral thinking combined with hardware that can draw many tens of thousands of polygons per frame throws up a lot of opportunities to do cool stuff. Think true geological modelling.

6. I was working with VR Headsets six years ago, they made you want to throw up and many people couldn't even see the effect. Now it is possible to play almost any Direct 3D game on a decent monitor in Stereo and people still aren't interested. People don't want to be locked more into their computers, they want more freedom. I think maybe that in a few years time PDAs won't be things that geeks like me carry, they will be built into every phone and games to play on them will be big business.



Smoking Gun

has been around now for 2 years and is working on a number of sports titles. Collectively the team has worked on over 40 titles such as *Jaws*, *Swiv*, *Lord Of Magic*, *LawnMower Man*, *Star Control*, *Indy Heat*, right up to *Carmageddon* and the add-on *Splat pack!*

1. Smoking Gun is actively supporting the Dreamcast. One of our titles, *Giant Killers*, will be the first football management game available on the platform. In the future we will obviously make full use of the Internet connectivity. PlayStation 2 is going to be HUGE - No question! We're in discussion with a major publisher right now about developing for this platform. X-Box is an interesting one. We have good relations with the UK based games evangelists and we're talking to them about getting a devkit when it becomes available. Don't know much about the Dolphin at present.

2. I think the PC is going to be around in the "home office" environment for a very long time. And people are always going to want to play games on these PCs. Smoking Gun is looking to the Internet more and more as the likely source of these games.

3. Massively multi-player games, which are actually FUN! There's only so much wood chopping a person can do before it becomes a bit tedious! But we're all social animals and so multi-player games, which are actually fun to play, will have a huge appeal to the mass-market audience.

4. I think we'll see online, massively multi-player games evolve into a much more fun experience. But I'm not convinced that *Quake 4* or *5* will be a hugely different gaming experience to *Quake 3*.

5. We're in discussions with a major fantasy writer about developing next gen projects based on her characters and worlds. It will be a *Final Fantasy* style RPG, with a very strong story element. We're also looking at a massively multi-player version of this writer's world.

6. Hmm... I'm not sure about any of that. But I think the next stage will be fun multi-player gaming for the mass market where people can play the game at their own level. Consider a gangster-themed multi-player game, where a player can rise to become the head of one of the major gangs within the world. And when he needs to see one of his key rivals taken out, then with enough money, he can hire Thresh who logs into the game via *Quake 5* to do the hit!

Charles Cecil,

MD and head of *Revolution*, the developers of *In Cold Blood* on PlayStation.

1 & 2 & 3. It is wholly obvious, but often the point is missed, that the hardware is judged by the software that runs on it rather than in its own right. The technology is not the main issue - what is more important is how developers utilise the system and how well the hardware sells. On balance, my money would ride on PlayStation 2 to dominate the next-next generation of consoles.

Dreamcast has a head start but has failed to use the time to get far enough ahead of PlayStation 2. Sales are poor in Japan and mediocre in Europe and the US. Sony announced PlayStation 2 specifically to spoil Dreamcast sales - and succeeded. Dreamcast used *Sonic* as their figurehead who sent out a message that the system was for a younger audience - but the younger audience was not wooed by the software available. Sony built their brand with a dual attack. They leveraged the Sony brand name to make the brand cool by promoting it in the clubs and targeting opinion leaders. To be able to do this, however, they had already got wide support from developers. A year before the launch of PlayStation 1, they approached chosen developers, including *Revolution*, and invited them to work with them. For a



Japanese console manufacturer to approach developers rather than vice versa was unheard of at that time. Now PlayStation has considerable developer support and an excellent brand. Short of a disaster, this should make them unassailable.

X-Box will ship later than PlayStation 2 so should have more advanced technology. Microsoft have lots of money - but money alone may not be enough. I think that Sony are too far ahead.

Dolphin will have some excellent games - Nintendo have excellent designers. Again, they are too far behind Sony now and will launch a year later than PlayStation 2. The fierce competition between the hardware manufacturers will marginalise the PC. Each console will have on-line capability, will be considerably cheaper than a PC, and won't be plagued by the install and technical problems inherent with the PC. The PC will decline as a games format but will, of course, thrive in the workplace.

5. The revolution in game design has already started, although the results so far have been far from impressive. We were promised so much from the next-next generation of consoles and to date the games have just been visual improvements on what went before. Worse, there is a hint of a return to the unfortunate concept of the 'interactive movie' with long sequences being played by the game engine outside player control. This is partly due to a lack of creativity relating to advances in gameplay.

As we have done with *'In Cold Blood'* we are questioning what makes a great game, and how we can harness technology to implement new ideas rather than simply visually improving what has gone before. I believe that we can learn a lot from the film industry. As films become more like computer games, and games look more like films, we enter an exciting time for both entertainment mediums. To compete with film we need to create games that are exciting and have feeling - which has emotion. Like most developers, we are exploring the potential of the PlayStation 2. We were actually signed up by Sony to create a PlayStation 2 game at the end of last year - we believe that we were the first European third party developer to sign such an agreement. Our objective is to move towards creating a game which delivers the stated aim of Sony, the creation of emotion in PlayStation 2 games, through the skilful moulding of gameplay and narrative. We believe that the key to achieving this objective is through the control and delivery of content made possible by the advanced technology rather than by relying on technology alone.

6. Five years ago I visited a VR research facility and was told that within a few years we would be able to send electro magnetic pulses directly to the brain by interacting with the nerves in the spine. This was nonsense then, and is today. I still hold faith with the concept of VR, which was considerably underpowered when it first appeared. I suspect that peripheral manufacturers will shortly create VR units for the next-next generation of consoles, which overcome the lag problems and are cheap enough to appeal to the mass market.



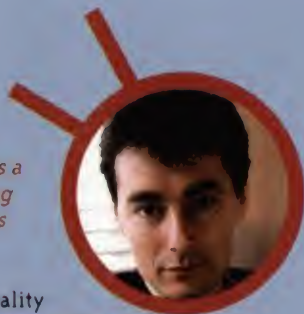
HERE'S WHAT WE ASKED THEM!

1. What are your impressions of the Dreamcast, PlayStation 2 and (from what you know) the X-Box and the Nintendo Dolphin?
2. Where does the PC fit into this new oncoming console era?
3. When and what do you think will be the next revolution in game design?
4. Will all this new hardware result in only a visual improvement to games or will we see gameplay evolve too?
5. Tell us about a game (or a game concept) you're working on now for one of the new systems.
6. In a nutshell, what do you think the future of Gaming looks like? (VR headsets? Neural implants?) Discuss!



Chris Gibbs,

the Managing Director of Attention To Detail, takes a shot at the questions. From Roll Cage 1 & 2, to being the first on nearly every format, if any team breaks new ground then ATD does!



1. Dreamcast: Good value for money. Software quality very mixed, but the best stuff is worth buying the machine for. Easy technology to develop for - good support from Sega. Promise of Internet play has been slow in coming forward but what's there is quite fun and certainly a glimpse of the future of gaming.

PS2: Excellent hardware specs - very powerful - a real order of magnitude above anything seen before. Complex beast to develop on but loads of scope for cool stuff. Tons of games in development. This is the next big thing.

X-Box: Awesome tech.

specs on paper. Absolutely awesome - stronger in some respects than PS2. But will it have the games support...?

Answer: probably yes but can Microsoft make it a sexy desirable object in the way that Sony have done with PS2? Dolphin - Ask Rare!



2. Quite nicely - it continues to be given ever more powerful 3D

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accelerators and core processors. The Internet game opportunities are increasing as the cost of surfing goes down. But PC gamers seem to want a different type of game experience to Console gamers. More depth, strategy, tactics - more games for the mind (Sims, constructors, god-games) etc.

3. The revolution will be 'Episodic Games', and games with optional downloads where you only pay for what you want to play. All new platforms can link to the Internet and this will drive the revolution. Also, a new user interface is the only thing now that can prompt a genuine revolution in gameplay.

4. Mainly visual improvements.

5. One of the new systems. Sorry - no can do - but I can confirm we are working on 2 branded titles for PS2 and a totally new in-house concept which uses a game mechanic not seen before!

6. I think we headed for a retro-future where we play 'Pong' and 'Pacman' on mobile phones, Breakout on our set-top-boxes, and Who-Wants-To-Be-A-Millionaire over the net.

Dene Carter,

of Big Blue Box. Already they have a major publishing deal with Activision.



1. Over the last five years, the market for video games has changed significantly. Our players are no longer only teenagers and primary school students - they are now the same people who went to see The Matrix, The World is Not Enough and American Beauty. The modern game-player wants to play out his or her film fantasies.

The Dreamcast has made the first step toward this by getting that elusive 'arcade quality' into the home. Unfortunately, despite its ever-growing catalogue of quality games, the machine is already being technologically superseded. Additionally, its on-line potential seems to have been completely overlooked by both the public, and developers.

The PS2 looks like a dream come true for developers and game-players alike. Backward compatibility has the potential to tap into the already massive PSX user-base. Additionally, all the current 'hot' developers are on board for the new machine - players will get their GTs, Resident Evils, and Metal Gears with more knobs on than ever before. However, the machine has been a challenge to develop for from the beginning, and the current selection of upcoming titles seem little different in graphical quality from their Dreamcast counterparts.

The X-Box is an intriguing piece of hardware. It's extremely powerful. Developers can use the same industry standard development tools they've been using for years. Microsoft have the marketing muscle to back the machine, and the financial resources to push it out at a very competitive price. This machine's biggest challenges will be getting past the PS2's loyal user-base, and the fact that it's nearest rival will have had a year to build up its software base. We've not actually heard much about the Dolphin, to be frank. What little we have heard seems to suggest it's not going to be as technologically advanced as some may have hoped. However, Nintendo has a history of producing some of the finest software ever created, and a console is only as good as its best games. We may well all be surprised.

2. The PC has, and will always have a number of advantages over consoles. It's hardware specifications are flexible - often irritatingly so! The idea of the PC being superseded is thus nonsense. The PC as standard comes with one of the best controllers on the planet - the mouse - and a keyboard, which effectively allows an infinitely flexible game-design ethic. Would Dungeon Keeper have worked on a console? Probably not without an extreme re-design. However, modern post-pub living-room culture is not kind to the PC. Who wants to come back after a night out and play Delta-Force? That's right. Both of you. The PC will always have a much less friendly visage, and as a result we're already seeing its best games out-sold by the most lacklustre PSX titles. The PC is still, however, the multi-player machine of choice. It is this factor which may change over the next few years and place the PC firmly in the 'household utilities' bracket.

3. The next revolution in game design is already taking place. Players are looking for far subtler rewards and feedback from their games. As characters become more graphically realistic, unrealistic responses are going to feel increasingly stilted and out of place. The multi-player revolution is just around the corner. Each of the next generation of consoles has the capacity for connection to the online community. Co-operative Metal-Gear Solid anyone?

4. In improving hardware performance in the handling of lighting, 3D-transformation etc, you free up processor resources. The CPUs are faster and memory larger than ever before. This combination means that developers can spend greater time and effort creating convincing and complex AI (how'd you like your enemies to sneak up on you, Mr Snake?), more convincing physical feedback (Look out! That huge Zombie thing is picking up cars and throwing them at me!), and a much greater pool of 'toys' to play with (what happens if I wire up this light-fitting to this pool of water on the ground? Fried dinosaur!).

The most interesting machine, from this point of view is the X-Box. Its hard-disk really does mean we can store a lot more information about what you have done in any game world, and leave the player feeling that one person really can make a difference!

5. Can't really say anything right now. A surprise announcement is imminent!

6. VR headsets are probably going to be available in the form of rather cool

of gaming

Matrix-Style shades within five years. But that's not really the problem. VR environments will always be let down by the input devices - it's no good being told YOU ARE BATMAN when you stumble and fall off a skyscraper because you wiggled a little stick the wrong way. The only way around this is to create 'motion sensitive spaces' where your every movement is interpreted in the virtual world. You'd also need a sliding floor-space and force feedback suit. Not exactly living room friendly.

Neural implants are an interesting issue. People have a 'body integrity' taboo. Unless piercing culture becomes the norm, people are unlikely to want anyone messing about with the insides of their heads. Neural implants are not likely to be sought out by any but the most extreme game-player unless society goes through a massive change. However, non-invasive bio-electrical controllers have been invented for the disabled - it doesn't take a great leap of the imagination to assume we'll find some way of providing non-invasive input too!

Women game-players are also going to become an increasingly important and large sector of the market. We'll see more games designed to cater for 'people' rather than teenage boys.

Worlds beyond your TV screen are going to become more convincing than you ever dreamed.

You'll realise that the people within your game-world have complex emotional lives, and that your actions have an emotional impact on you too. Games are going to become more and more about the world and mythos the developers have created than about the individual play mechanic. As players' desires to fulfil their fantasies in various environments spiral upward, every game will become a role-playing game.

Fiona Sperry,

Head of Development at Criterion Studios, divulges the team's views. Games such as TrickStyle, Sub Culture, Redline Racer and Suzuki Alstare ExtremeRacing are but a few from this UK team! (Incidentally, Fiona is the only woman in direct control we could find.)



- 1. Sega have put together a capable machine with some excellent software titles. Certainly, we have been fans of the system since it launched, and there are still a lot of great games to come. I am particularly looking forward to Metropolis Street Racer (the version we played at Tokyo Game Show was incredible) Fur Fighters, Samba de Amigo and Jet Grind Radio.
- PS2 - A beautiful machine and one which will definitely take gaming into a new generation. Difficult to get to grips with, but what we have seen so far is only the tip of the iceberg.
- X-Box - We enjoyed Bill Gates presentation at GDC and the system is certainly a powerful one. But it's all down to titles and we have to wait and see as to what sort of games emerge. The R2R demo was cool.
- Nintendo Dolphin - We are all BIG Nintendo fans here at Criterion and we are certain Nintendo will innovate with incredible new forms of gameplay on their new system rather than just powerful technology. That's not to say Dolphin won't be incredibly powerful though (smiles).

2. Windows will always be a viable gaming platform offering different types of video gaming. You might have say, a PS2 for Ridge Racer and Final Fantasy, a Dolphin for Mario and Luigi, and your PC for Age of Empires.

3. The next revolution in game design will probably come from Mr. Miyamoto.

4. Gameplay is constantly evolving. We have come so far in only a short period of time. The games we have seen on PSX have been smash hit arcade games as well as deeper more involving titles such as Final Fantasy. Who could have imagined titles such as these back in 1984 when we were all playing



Attic Atac on the Spectrum, Revs on the BBC Model B, or Mercenary on the Commodore 64? The games of the next generation will be further evolved than what we have now, with online capabilities for example.

5. A new game concept - well, it's hard not to give away all our secrets (smiles). But we are working on something that most people would find thrilling and exciting.

6. Direct neural input? Well, some cognitive psychologists might see things a little differently. But imagine taking part in a huge game that feels like you are starring in your own movie. Now, wouldn't that be just awesome?

Ian Mathias,

Head of UbiSoft UK development team.



1. After playing the Dreamcast for a few hours it's tough to go back to older technology in the same way that watching old TV footage features men in baggy shorts. I have no doubt all 4 machines will be stonking, its more a case of when they arrive. Obviously Sega have a machine on the market worldwide, Sony are coming but X-Box and Dolphin still have some unknowns. I won't be holding out for any one machine and will doubtless buy all 4 over the next couple of years as I like playing games. Each console will undoubtedly have its 'must have' games as well as unique things the others don't do.

2. The PC will remain in the study where it has always been. It will continue to evolve and games will still form a part of it, remember the PC has a head start with its online capabilities. As far as mass-market gaming is concerned I'm sure it will have a tough time though.

3. Game design is becoming more and more involved. We have a relatively large design department to what we had a few years ago. With teams becoming bigger it's more important to get the design right first. It's costly to have a team of people designing as they go along, more mistakes are made and it takes time to go back and change things. Of course the design will evolve and be refined; things will be left on the cutting room floor.

4. The whole gaming experience will be improved, graphics, sounds, physics, AI, everything. I'm sure multiplayer and online gaming will change lots. The ability to earn goodies and extras from playing or trading on-line opens up massive potential and we are only beginning to explore these areas. The ability to customise characters easily and make them look realistic. A few years ago the words interactive movie and virtual reality were banded about and everyone got excited, the games couldn't compete with the overblown expectations. When you look at some games you see we already have seamless gameplay with movie sections. We are already beginning to see seamless games with movies style sections but they are no longer special renders, they are now in the game engine. Sports sims are getting ever closer to looking like real TV, at least from a distance.

5. We've been having a lot of fun with the DC's VMU unit and online capabilities but our game is nearing completion so we really haven't had the chance to push it as much as we would have liked.



6. The future of gaming is around the TV with as bigger bandwidth as possible playing real time sports sims with people from all around the globe. I don't think we are there yet but it's not far off. Personally I'm up for neural implants but I can't see it happening in my lifetime. VR headsets always gave me a screaming headache so it will be a while before anyone can tempt me to try another one on.

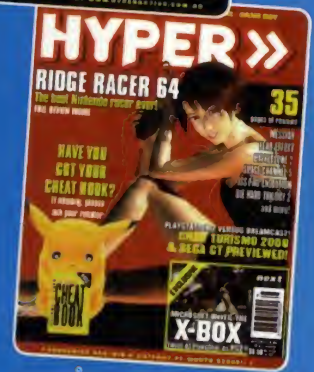
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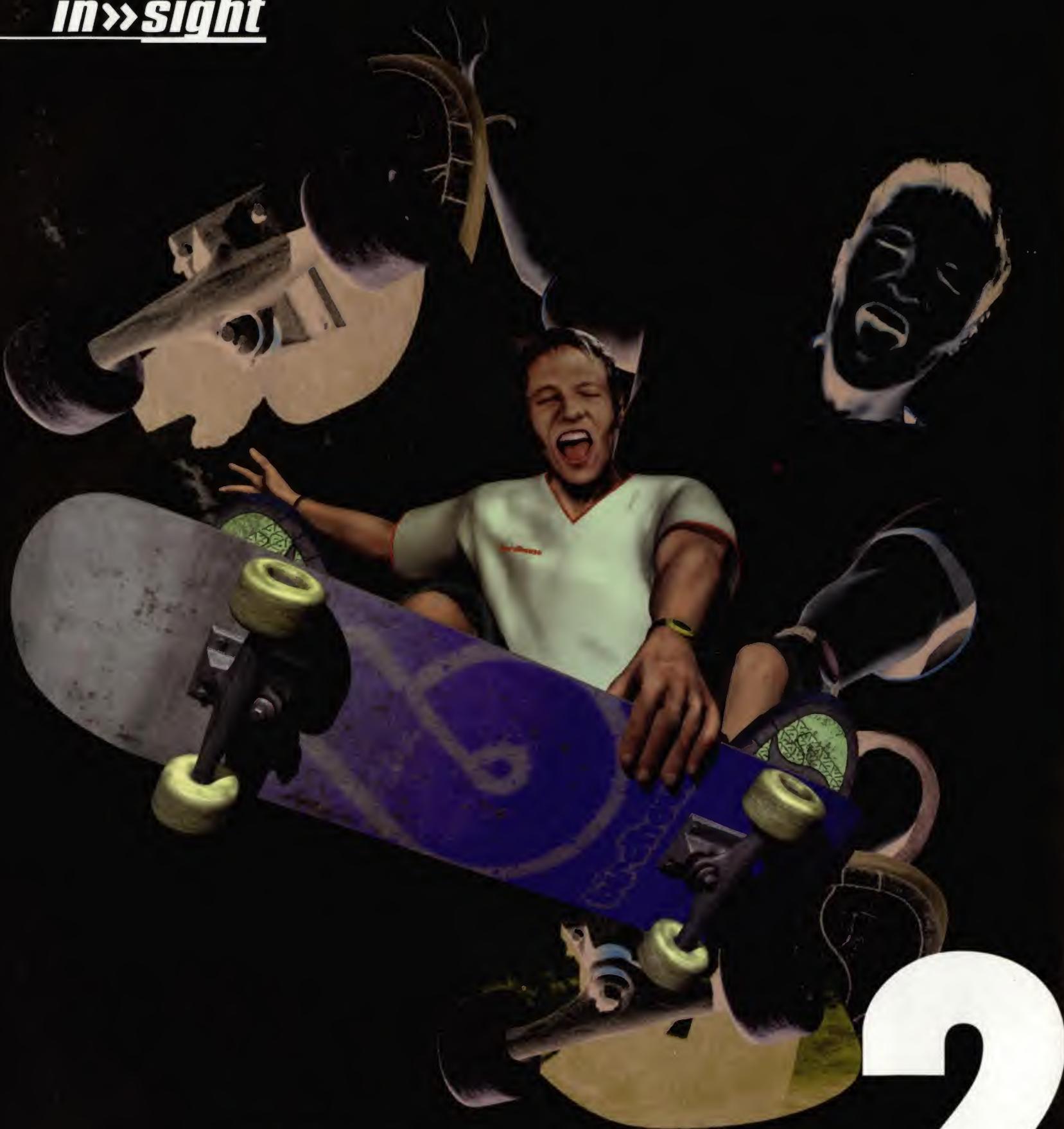
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TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING 2

i PLATFORM: PlayStation
 AVAILABLE: September
 CATEGORY: Skateboarding sim
 PLAYERS: 1-2
 PUBLISHER: Activision

WOW-O-METER

One of the most sublime games of last year and probably of the PlayStation's entire lifespan would have to be Tony Hawk's Skateboarding. Rejuvenating the sport's videogaming presence which had lain dormant for years, Tony Hawk was a game created by skaters for skaters, with top notch production values and incredible playability. The game's success has been felt widely throughout the videogaming industry, and there are already a number of other skateboarding games on the shelves or in development, but none thus far have even come close to the fluidity and grace in design of Tony Hawk's Skateboarding.

Tony Hawk 2 is, of course, on the way, and we're hanging out for the

finished game with a fervour normally reserved for British football fans. This is going to be one damn fine game people, so much so that we can't bring ourselves to go back to the original. How did Neversoft manage to improve on an almost perfect game, and what goodies can we expect from the final full version?

FEATURED TRICKMOLOGY

We'll start with the new tricks in the game, and the changes to the trick mechanics. The move list is more comprehensive now, bringing Tony Hawk that much closer to real life, and giving the player the freedom to do almost anything you can attempt in real life. Tricks like noseslides and bluntslides are an absolutely crucial new addition to the game, and many of us felt shortchanged that they weren't included to much of an extent in the original. The new moves don't just give the player more options, they're an aesthetic addition as well. Anyone who has skated or is into the sport will understand that it feels so

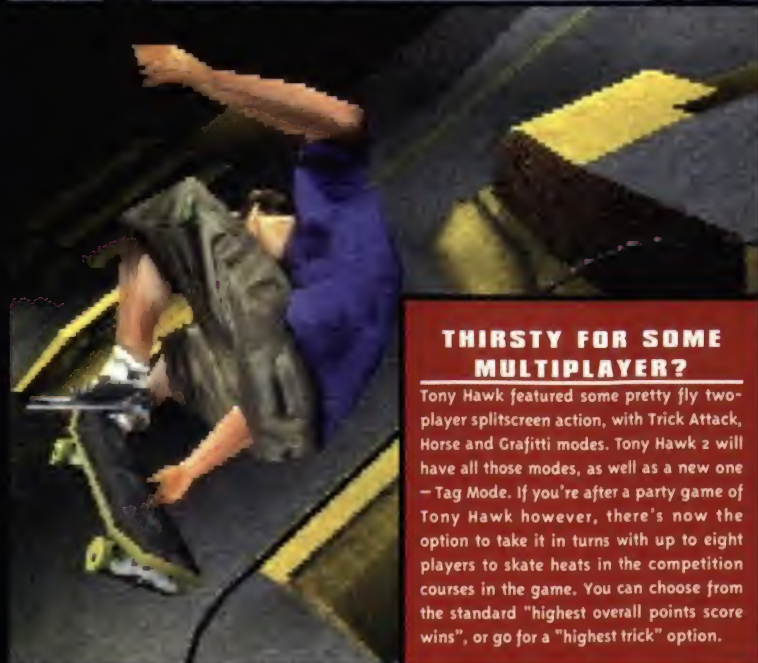
much more natural to do a noseslide if you're leaning into a surface than to do a grind. To illustrate, a similar principal applies to the kickflip and heelflip mechanics. In real life, to do a heelflip you'd ollie and kick your left foot (right for goofy) out to flip the board. Viewed from behind, you're kicking your foot out to the right, which is why it feels so implicitly good for the heelflip command to involve pushing right on the D pad. It's about making the controls feel as intuitive as possible, something that TH2 does even better than before.

A few of the new moves in Tony Hawk 2 are the manual, nose manual, boneless, mute, melon, indy cross-bone, judo, roast beef, stalefish, air-walk, indy stiffy, varial, pop shove it, varial lien heelflip, inward heelflip, varial heelflip, varial kickflip, ollie north, 360 shove it, sal flip, lipslide, tailslide, nose slide, overcreek, feeble, nosebluntslide, and bluntslide. This is by no means a complete list, and is in addition to most of the moves from the first game. Most of the signature moves

are still under wraps, but we do know that Tony Hawk can now do a "sack tap", which is err... nice for him. Chad Muska has the 540 flip, backflip and hurricane, but best of all are Rodney Mullen's signature moves, which include the awesome darkslide as well as triple heelflips!

The combo system is far more expansive, allowing for almost infinite combos through the use of manuals. For the uninitiated, manuals are when you're moving along balanced on either the front or back trucks of the skateboard. In Tony Hawk 2, you can use manuals to link two tricks together, and stay in the same combo sequence. The best players can use this technique until an entire run can essentially become one massive chained trick. Indeed, Activision have been running a demo competition on their website, where the top skaters have each scored well in excess of two million points in their two minute runs. And we thought we were kicking ass with only 300,000... god damn!

Each skater now has a switch stance



THIRSTY FOR SOME MULTIPLAYER?

Tony Hawk featured some pretty fly two-player splitscreen action, with Trick Attack, Horse and Graffiti modes. Tony Hawk 2 will have all those modes, as well as a new one - Tag Mode. If you're after a party game of Tony Hawk however, there's now the option to take it in turns with up to eight players to skate heats in the competition courses in the game. You can choose from the standard "highest overall points score wins", or go for a "highest trick" option.



MULLEN IT UP!

One of the big pluses in Tony Hawk 2 is the addition of Rodney Mullen to the lineup. Rodney Mullen is to street skating what Tony Hawk is to vert skating. Anyone who has seen "Public Domain", "Virtual Reality" or "Rodney Mullen Vs Daewon Song" will attest to that. He's a prodigy with an impossibly long career and list of tricks under his belt. After all, this is the guy that invented the kickflip, underflip, impossible, casper and darkslide among others. The darkslide, for those not in the know, is a form of board slide where you actually flip the board onto its back and slide along on the upside down tail with one foot on top of the underside of the tail and the other under the top truck. Damn cool. In addition to Mullen, TH2 also introduces Eric Koston and old school Bones Brigader Steve Caballero to the lineup.



WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

We'd really like the option to have other computer-controlled skaters working the levels at the same time you are.

rating, so some skaters will be better in switch than others. Switch and natural tricks are now scored individually, so you won't lose points for busting the same trick in both stances. Another new addition to the scoring mechanics is the grading system. Most tricks work as per normal, but if you land a trick particularly well or particularly poorly you'll be awarded a perfect or weak/sloppy rating respectively. This rating affects the move's multiplier, and hence your score for the trick. Thus, the incentive to skate even more seamlessly is now stronger than ever.

GONADS OF DEATH...

The visuals haven't improved a great deal over Tony Hawk, but no one's complaining because the original was one fine lookin' piece of digital booty! What has improved, however, is the variety and quality of the animations. Most importantly, there's now a stack animation for almost every situation, as opposed to the rather annoying loner in the original. Run out of steam on a grind and your skater will savagely nad himself and roll off the rail clutching his crotch. Also cool is the way your board flies out from under you if you land leaning too far back.

The animations for the new tricks are also spot on, showing off many of the small board and foot adjustments that skaters use. The skaters themselves have greater detail in their clothes and appearance, and there's certainly more variety in looks.

There will be more variety in music too, with a wider range of styles from punk to hip hop. From what we've heard so far, this is going to be one dope, phat, gnarly, bitchin', spanky fresh (and any other skater terminology you want to throw in) soundtrack. In fact, in the player creator, you can specify your custom skater's musical

tastes, which we presume will influence the tracks you hear in the game.

LET THE DROOLING COMMENCE...

Quite a few of the new levels in TH2 are based on real life skateparks, and are looking great. At this stage, we don't know that much about how the single player game will be structured. Let's hope that Neversoft can come up with a more compelling career mode than the "find the tapes" quest of the original. One thing's for sure though, Tony Hawk 2 is going to rock hard, and we can't wait to take a week or two off work to play it.



WHO DO YOU WANT TO CREATE TODAY?

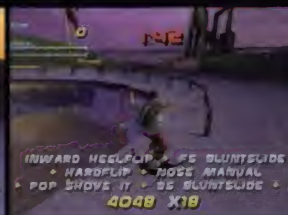
If playing as a skating legend doesn't pop your cherry, then TH2's create a skater mode probably will. The level of customisation is impressive. You can alter every aspect of their appearance even down to shoes and tattoos (I wanna create a skater Rollins!). You can choose whether you want to be a street or ramp specialist and set your stance (natural or goofy). Best of all, you can allocate every single move your character will have, as well as attribute points in the quest to craft your perfect skater. You start off with barely a single point to distribute across the categories - air, hangtime, ollie, speed, spin, landing, switch, rail balance, lip balance and manuals. The more cash you earn skating, the more points you earn to distribute and the better your skater will become.

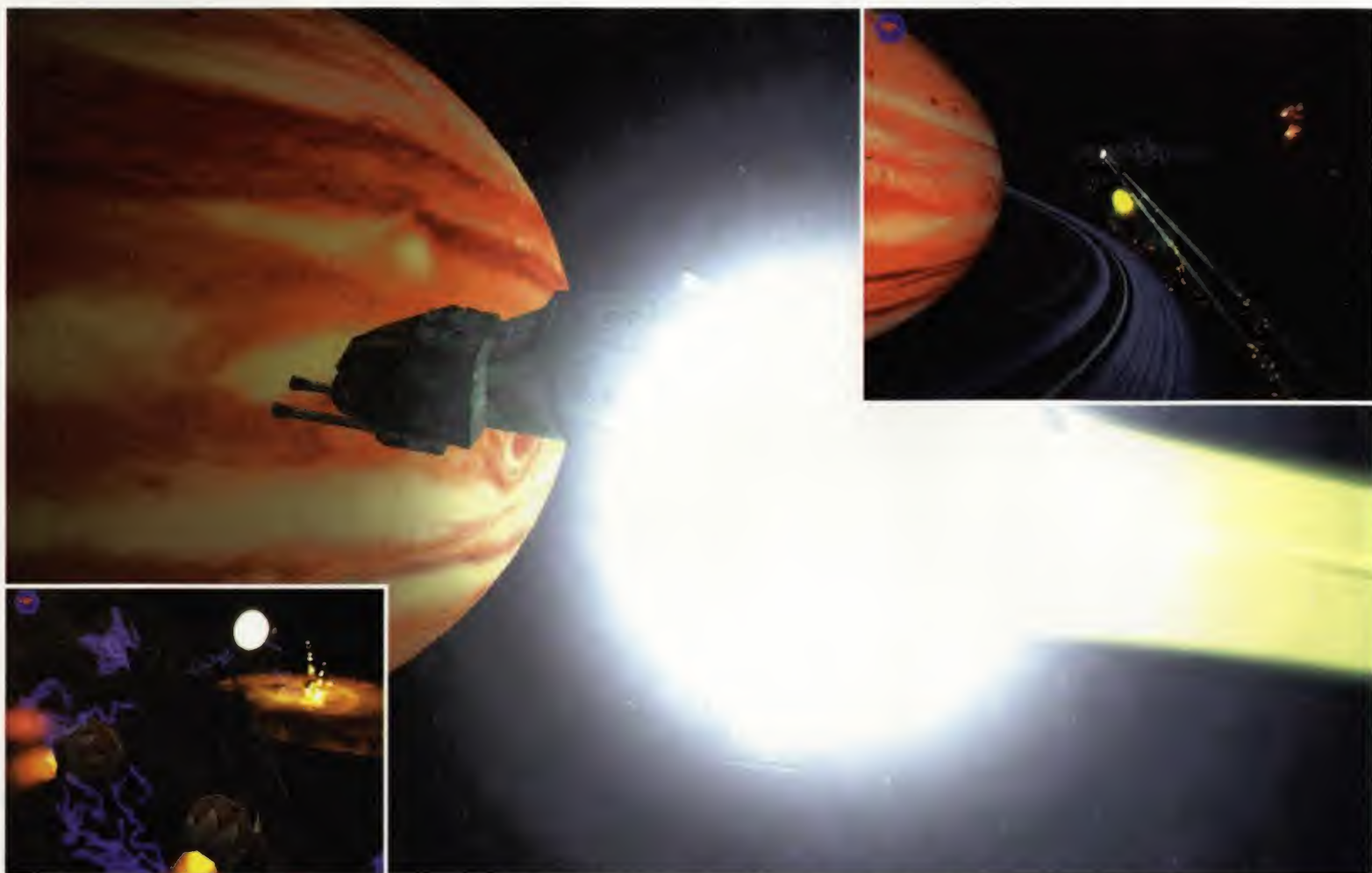
Visually, the skater creation mode adds a wealth of new and excellent skin and clothing textures to the game. The range is quite comprehensive, unless of course you want to create an albino sumo wrestler with two heads. For the rest of us non-freaks, there's a wide selection of skinny dudes to dress up - it's Barbie and Ken for skaters!



CREATE A SKATEPARK

Perhaps the coolest new addition in TH2 is the ability to layout your own custom warehouse setup. You're given over 150 ramps, rails, bowls, funboxes and other objects like trees and grabage bins to drop into the environment. As if there wasn't enough gameplay to be had already, now you can try to model your local skatepark or the ultimate combo layout. There'll be indoor and outdoor settings, and it all happens in real time 3D, so you can hop into your level at any time, and make adjustments on the fly.





FREELANCER

& A CHAT WITH CHRIS ROBERTS



PLATFORM: PC

AVAILABLE: Early 2001

CATEGORY: Space

PLAYERS: 1-100,000

PUBLISHER: Microsoft



If there was one game at E3 that had us grinning like idiots, it was Freelancer from Digital Anvil. Following on from the more traditional space combat title, Starlancer, Freelancer is a game in the tradition of

Privateer and Elite. It's a "go anywhere, do anything" game that could be the best of its kind. Cruise through space, make friends and influence people. Chris Roberts, the man behind the legendary Wing Commander series, Privateer and Starlancer, gave us a per-

sonal insight into the rewarding gaming experience which shall be Freelancer when we caught up with him in Los Angeles!

GOODBYE PERSONAL HYGIENE

In Freelancer, not just the world, but the Universe is your oyster! Chris explains, "We have two scripts. We have what we call a story script and we have a game script and they're about equal in size. The story script is the linear story that will weave through and have a big ending, and the game script is a lot of little vignettes, different scenarios and scenes that don't really relate to the story and we've littered those around the universe. So hopefully, you can adventure around and even when

you're not part of the story, you'll feel as though there's this really big universe which goes on without you. In Wing Commander it was much more contained. A good 50% of the game is not immediately apparent to people at all. You have to discover it. There's a whole bunch of content which is kind of 'optional' which is all part of the coolness of making it feel like a living breathing universe." We can imagine the sleepless nights glued to the PC monitor already!

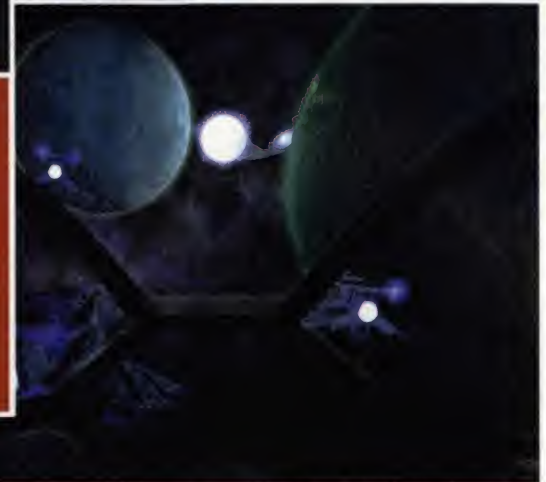
An interesting new twist on the Space Combat genre that Digital Anvil has introduced, is full mouse and keyboard control over the traditional joystick flight system. Chris was pretty excited about this, "We designed the interface from the beginning with

a different paradigm, just to use the mouse, so anyone could play it. It's actually fun. I like flying it better than I like flying the game with a joystick. It's more like playing Quake or any of the 3D First Person Shooters, it's much more 'you're shooting where you're looking'." The combat in Freelancer is going to be much more drawn-out and "realistic", as opposed to cutting through hordes of unintelligent alien ships. Instead of just wearing down an opponent's shields, the focus will be more on targeting specific components of your enemy's ship, such as their engines, or stabilisers. Mr. Roberts eagerly continues, "In Wing Commander Prophecy, in the first mission you have to blow 20 ships up... that's not



DIGITAL ANVIL ON XBOX

"We like the Xbox, and we're actually doing some work on the Xbox that's not announced yet... we think it's a pretty exciting system." — Chris Roberts, Digital Anvil



fun. The whole point of this was to go back to the model where you're fighting two ships or one ship — it's a challenge. There's a tactical element to the battle. Someone could have a better ship than you, but if you know the areas to target first, you could probably bring that fight to be equal or better for you."

LORD, THIS GAME WILL ROCKETH

Freelancer certainly follows in the steps of classics such as Elite or Chris Roberts' very own Privateer. As Chris explained to us, "There's definitely things in there that are kinda like Elite, or Privateer, but I never really felt like those games filled their potential. The universe wasn't detailed enough, it wasn't real, it wasn't living enough. It

was still always scripted around what you were doing. The goal of Freelancer was to really deliver on that gameplay mechanic. The gameplay mechanic is actually really compelling. You go out there, you make money, you buy a better ship, you buy better weapons... it works really well and it's a great player reward, because the things that you're achieving makes the gaming experience better for you. There's direct feedback. If you have ten thousand points or a million points when you're playing a game it's kind of irrelevant. The gameplay experience doesn't change. In something like Freelancer, the better you do, the easier the game gets on the basic levels and it's cool."

So how does one go about exploring this huge universe? Whilst there will be a story that you can pursue if you desire, there will be plenty of opportunity to play for days on end simply chasing your own desires. The countless sub-plots, and complex gameplay mechanics will reveal themselves to the player, the more you interact with the inhabitants of the Universe. Chris was interested in the learning curve being a steady one, rather than presenting the player with a daunting task of exploration, "We want to introduce the game to players through the characters. Like the first bar you go into, you'll click on the bartender and he'll be telling you to click on the mission computer over there and that's where you get your missions.

Click on the TV over here and that's how you're going to hear about what's happening in the Universe. We're going to try and bring you into the game via the game, like I think console games do a really good job of that. Zelda did a really good job of teaching you how to play the game as you're playing it, so did Metal Gear Solid. That's really part of the design goal in Freelancer."

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

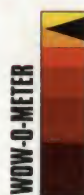
Digital Anvil are promising the multiplayer side of Freelancer to support up to 100,000 players online at any one time. We'd like to see that!



DINOSAUR PLANET



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



E3 has come and gone again, and we're still none the wiser as to Nintendo's next generation systems. The good news is that the N64 lineup that will take us through to these next-gen gems is awesome, and

Rare's action/adventure game *Dinosaur Planet* is leading the charge.

AS BIG AS A STEGOSAURUS

If there's one word to describe *Dinosaur Planet*, it's epic. Epic in the N64 sense of the word, of course, not in a PlayStation 2 - *Metal Gear Solid 2* kinda way. *Dinosaur Planet* smacks of Rare's trademark quality, with cinematic cut scenes, dynamic sound, memorable characters and high production values all round.

The look and storyline of *Dinosaur Planet* could best be described as *Zelda: Ocarina of Time* meets *Quark*. Or *Quelda* for short. The two foxy (literally) heroes, Sabre and Krystal, wear Link-like outfits, and much of the control scheme seems lifted straight from *Zelda* - including the lock-on mechanics for battle sequences. The *Quark* influence comes from some of the fantasy imagery, and the storyline, which involves the two characters being in parallel, but interconnected worlds.

Don't think that *Dinosaur Planet* is just a re-hash, however, as it does many things that N64 games have never featured before. The facial animations on the characters for one are awesome, and instead of the usual N64 text-based dialogue, *Dinosaur Planet* has countless hours of crystal clear speech, making for a much more emotive gaming experience. Sabre and Krystal are part of a cast of more than fifty, with some spleen-burstingly large bosses that will truly amaze

you. Sabre and Krystal also have dinosaur sidekicks - Tricky - a CloudRunner princess, and Kyte - an EarthWalker Prince. The best part is that these two have their own speciality moves, such as distracting enemies and retrieving objects, that add another layer to the gameplay. Word is, however, that they're pretty temperamental, and that if they don't get treated right... well, we'll have to wait and see what happens.

VERY IMPRESSIVE INDEED

The playable demo at E3 was very cool, allowing you to ride a pterodactyl in an attack on a massive airborne galleon. It fires molten rocks at you, illuminating your character with a reddish glow against the gloomy backdrop as they whizz past. Other non-playable footage included a bobbed ride down a snowy ravine, followed by one of the characters chasing little hopping mushrooms through the snow. Another showed off a creature that looked disturbingly like the rock

monster from the *Neverending Story* - even down to the half sad, half compassionate facial expression. Very impressive indeed. The game engine looks magnificent, allowing for a stunning viewing distance, and the game will feature real-time environments complete with night/day cycles and weather conditions. It seems the N64 has some life left in it yet.



WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

Another co-operative mode, like we have in *Perfect Dark!*

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
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PLATFORM: PC/Dreamcast/PlayStation 2/
Nintendo Dolphin
AVAILABLE: Early 2001
CATEGORY: Sneak-em-up
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Promethean Designs

WOW-O-METER



Picasso is a game that not only pushes technology but also delivers a strong storyline and powerful gameplay. Trying to achieve both is a tough task, but from what is already up and running,

Picasso looks like an intriguing title. There is a buzz going around the gaming community. Some have described the non-violent Picasso as Half-Life meets GoldenEye. Russell Richie, Managing Director at Promethean explains: "We were not the people who gave it that tag but I'm not going to disagree. Yes, there is violence but there is action. I would describe it as a 'sneak-em-up'. The game is designed to make the player feel scared and apprehensive when you are walking down a corridor — believe me it will happen. Picasso takes bits from many games, even Spy vs Spy [an ancient computer game], where they used to lay a trap and wait to get their prey."

SCENE SETTING

The story revolves around two business tycoons who are constantly boasting about their exquisite and outrageously valuable art collections. The men cannot agree who's is the most ostentatious so they vow to out-do each other in obtaining the world's greatest collection of art objects. The player



assumes the role of a contract Cat Burglar who is commissioned by one of the tycoons to outsmart his rival in obtaining 12 of the most expensive pieces of art in the world. As well as having a central plot, each individual mission - all in different locations or buildings - has a plot of its own. The plot and sub-plots are crucial to Picasso, enticing the player to strive for success.

Picasso combines a lot of game genres to create a unique presentation. The visuals quickly immerse you into the game, as not only is the character you assume one of the most fluidly animated forms you will have seen, but it is the detail to skin tone and facial expressions that give the game its believable ambience.

As you are striving to achieve the same objective as your rival, you are scored on the deployment of your



traps, how you deter, detract or attract people from or to specific areas right down to the 'sneakability' of your character. A newspaper section will also appear throughout the game, giving the user valuable information or telling the world about a painting that has been stolen.

STRAIGHT FROM THE SOURCE

Russell Richie explains, "It is about stealing paintings and out-foxing your rival. You will go into museums to set traps and also steal paintings so you

must constantly be aware you are being targeted as well. You will shoot at people but it is not an all out blaster. We don't want people to liken this to Tomb Raider. It's more like the game Thief. You have to climb walls, maybe swing on ropes and use grappling hooks. Don't think of this as an Indiana Jones game either.

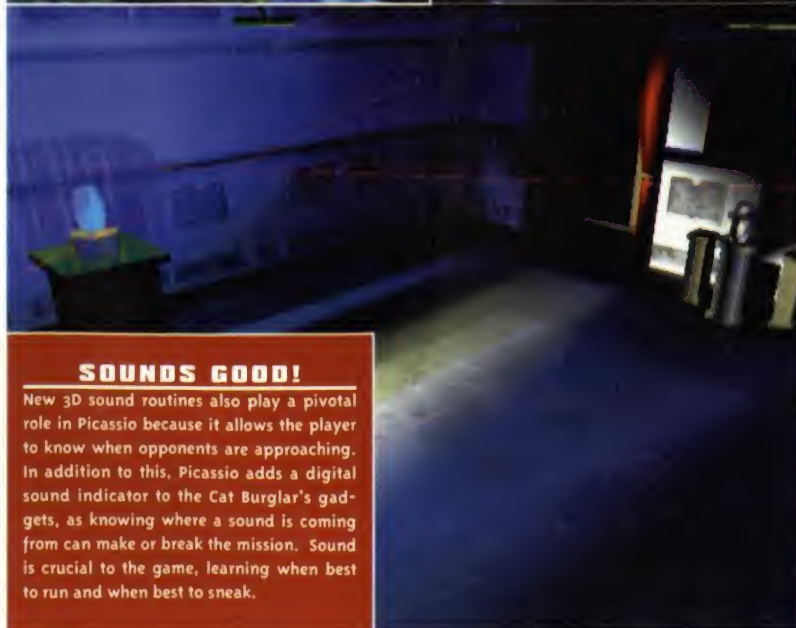
"The game is full of puzzles, an intriguing plot and lots of action and it is one that if I divulge too much of the scenario will spoil the game. I will say that there are lots of locations and there

are so many twists, turns and 'red herrings' that the player will constantly be kept on their toes. When you think the game is finished or a task completed you will find it has only just begun. The game is not linear and there are a few routes and ways to accomplish each task. We are trying to create a game that a large user base will enjoy on a number of formats and a 'cat burglar' game is one that many will accept. We know it is about a thief but people don't see James Bond as a bad guy. The puzzles will not be cryptic and outra-

geous but ones that the player will be able to understand. There will always be the dilemma that if you have to find a key how long do you search for it with the danger of your adversary getting it before you. Immobilising your opponents is essential in achieving each mission."

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

How about a cooperative mode that lets two people enter the museum from different starting points to race for the artifact?



SOUNDS GOOD!

New 3D sound routines also play a pivotal role in Picasso because it allows the player to know when opponents are approaching. In addition to this, Picasso adds a digital sound indicator to the Cat Burglar's gadgets, as knowing where a sound is coming from can make or break the mission. Sound is crucial to the game, learning when best to run and when best to sneak.





Climax may not be a name that many readers will know but take a look at a few games in your collection and chances are they have the Climax name on them. Although better known as a conversion company, a term they feel is misused as they take original PC games and expertly place them onto other formats in some cases adding to the original game, times are changing at the largest independent developer in Europe. With a host of original titles in creation (on all leading formats), all of which add some groundbreaking elements to the game genre, the name Climax is set to cause more than a rumble over the coming year. With the leading US publishers chasing their games this can only be good for all concerned, including you the game player.

With equal focus on all next generation machines, as well as breaking new ground on the PC, Dreamcast and Gameboy, here we have a massive developer whose low profile is about to change. **Derek dela Fuente** spoke with Chris Eden, Development Manager at Climax, about three of their upcoming titles. Although not due until the end of the year, Chris gave us one of the first sneak peeks...

CLIMAX

getting all excited!



CLIMAX TITLE DEFENSE



BOXING CLEVER

Chris Eden from Climax commented: "We have wanted to write a boxing game for a while and through our research work on defaultable meshes and soft body technology, we were able to produce all the right components to present a boxing game that has been so sadly lacking. Our decision to do a boxing title was mainly born out of frustration with the other games on the market. The lack of a realistic, gritty boxing game that captured the true feel of the sport was the motivating factor in our decision."

The game is fully hand animated at the moment although Climax did toy with the idea of using Motion Capture but the benefits of animation outweighed those of recording real people. The first thing you notice is the great look of the game, the boxers

PLATFORM: PC, PS2, Dreamcast
AVAILABLE: Late 2000
CATEGORY: Boxing
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: Climax

WOW-O-METER

Boxing games have traditionally had many flaws, uppermost of which are boxers that just don't look right or let loose the moves one would expect. So far it's been extremely difficult to replicate real skin tones, bruising or facial expressions. The advent of increasingly advanced technology now gives developers the tools to produce a boxing game that is a true simulation of the sport. From the initial shots of Title Defense you can see that Climax could be the first to come out with a boxing game that sets a new standard.



CLIMAX

Climax is the largest independent European developer, which was formed by Karl Jeffrey 12 years ago, and have now a collective force of over 150 staff with offices in two locations.

New and Original.

"It has been a conscious effort to now produce original titles of our own. We have previously been seen to be the company that has placed PC games such as Populous, Diablo and Theme Park onto console. We have the expertise to create some truly groundbreaking titles and this will cover all genres of games with an announcement soon for a massive RPG game. Our greatest strength is to produce games across genres." Karl Jeffrey.

Blue sky

Climax has their own special research team named Blue Sky, which are research programmers who look into technology issues to ensure the company stays ahead of the competition. One area worked on is a system that allows for infinite detail on objects.

The Future

"All formats - PC, next gen machines are creating more interest to a broader audience. People may think that the DC may lose out when other consoles come on the market but we are planning on making DC games for the foreseeable future. With its online feature it is a great machine and it is out there now!" Chris Eden.



look like boxers and they bruise like a boxer would. They're certainly not wooden, and the fabulous detail on the faces, which grimace in pain as they are hit, is particularly cool.

Chris expanded on a crucial area: "The movement system allows you to move the boxer's feet and body independently and as a punch comes in you will reel but you can actually move fast and get your body out of the way. Previously, boxers have been represented as a solid object and that is not true to life. The lower body, heads and limbs all work independently and we have implemented this."

TRUE POWER

Thankfully, this is a simulation representing boxing as it should be; no silly special moves or power ups and boxers can only get better by training and picking the right fights to gain experience and improve. "This is the first true boxing sim and no one has dared venture this route", explained Chris. "Here is a game that really looks toward technology to give the game the right physics and AI. As technology has moved on, you can now produce a boxing game that looks and feels right. The CPU can calculate the power of a punch, how the muscles will move, the force the opponent will

take and their positioning after the punch. Boxers get hurt realistically with black eyes, bruising, etc."

The objective of the game is simply to become the best but, as with the real world of numerous boxing federations, moving up the ladder to fight for a title is not easy. It's not just physical training that must be undertaken but it's also management decisions that will decide if you can reach the top. What Climax have done is to try and recreate all the complexities of the boxing world and incorporate them in a game. The player does not see some of the serious issues or politics, but if you are not up to fighting for a championship then you won't get to the highest rung. Also, the game will not include on screen damage metres and icons that detract from this serious sport. The game is about skill, strength, strategy and of course, some say, luck. Starting off as a nobody, trying to unify titles is the prime goal. The road is long but Title Defense offers more than any boxing game to date!

SPEC ATTACK

Six Game Modes: Sparring, Exhibition, Title Defense, Management, on-line, PrizeFight. The game offers an interactive Referee within an interactive ring with a unique Tournament Mode.



CLIMAX STUNT DRIVER

i PLATFORM: PC, PS2, Dreamcast
 AVAILABLE: Late 2000
 CATEGORY: Smash 'em racing
 PLAYERS: 1 - Multi
 PUBLISHER: Climax

WOW-O-METER



Stunt Driver is the brainchild of two guys who used to work for Probe. Having set themselves up in Brighton, they were approached by Climax who decided, having seen the game, that here was a potential winner and promptly

invested in that potential by buying the game, the team and everything that went with it.

When you hear the name Stunt Driver, those of us who remember think of Stunt Car Racer, the superb game from Geoff Crammond. Chris Eden of Climax expressed his thoughts: "Yes Stunt Car Racer was of course an influence. For as long as I can remember people have spoken about writing a game on similar lines. We are not try-

ing to recreate that game for we saw more in the original concept."

KEEPING TRACK

With a traditional original racing game the tracks are built on a Silicon Graphics machine or with some fancy program and made up of polygons. Stunt Driver holds the tracks differently and you have the ability to change the tracks to make up any weird and wonderful design you wish, something that can be done whilst you are playing the game. Stop, change the track design by pulling it in any direction (it is 3D) and continue racing where you left off: this is not your usual game editor!

As you would expect, the tracks are challenging and full of obstacles and hazards: twists, banks, humps, ramps, jumps, corkscrews, loop-the-loops, mechanical hazards and oil slicks from previous crashes all heighten the adrenaline factor. These tracks are set in a number of diverse locations, some





of which will be based on real courses but with a futuristic look to them.

If the tracks do not amaze you then the cars will, based as they are on real cars, having real physics and reacting like real cars, but only to a certain point. Climax has accentuated facets within the game to ensure that gameplay is paramount and being set slightly in the future, has also given the team more scope to work on ideas. The game can be played in either racing or stunt mode, with real car mechanics set in place to give a believability aspect. No guns, no special picks up, just racing as it should be. Having cars based on real models does have its drawbacks, not least the one all racing games suffer: that of getting manufacturers to agree to their cars getting damaged. The massive polygon count for each car means they are fully

destructible, meaning anything can drop off, something both Climax and the manufacturers are discussing.

Bonus race modes (team towrope racing, keep-above-50mph racing, super heavy vehicle racing, fuel-trailer-tow-rope racing (mind she doesn't blow up) and much more) will also add to the experience.

Essentially Climax are aiming for Stunt Racer to offer a huge number of gameplay facets, each of which can be played as a game in its own right. Stunt Racer has many variants that no other game can offer, defying both the "sim" and "arcade" racer categories. Chris summarised, "The game is about freeing the player to have an experience and not constraining them. The car will damage, it will

make driving harder, and there will be rewards if you do well. It offers all the views, controls and options that other games supply but we have focused more on each facet to ensure nothing is missing. Variety — lots of tracks, some wicked camera views for replay, lots of cars, stunts, weather conditions that make driving tougher — the total experience."



CLIMAX

ROSWELL CONSPIRACIES

aliens, myths & legends



PLATFORM: Nintendo 64, Dreamcast
 AVAILABLE: TBA
 CATEGORY: Action/Adventure
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: Climax

WOW-O-METER

Described as the 'X-Files for kids', this game will feature high-resolution cartoon-style graphics and a fully 3D, free-roaming gaming environment. Players will be able to take control of either Nick Logan or

Sh'laain Blaze, the heroes of an evolving interactive story which takes them from Roswell to New Orleans and beyond to Victorian London and popular vampire vacation spot, Transylvania.

When you think of Roswell you think of that alien on a slab but this title is completely different to what you would expect. Based on the animated cartoon series of the same name, Roswell Conspiracies: Aliens, Myths & Legends will feature a variety of different mis-

sions and settings. Blending exploration and puzzle solving with arcade-style action, players will have access to an arsenal of incredible sci-fi weaponry, not to mention a number of special vehicles allowing them to travel between locations.

TAKE ME TO YOUR LEAD TESTER

Jim McPhail, producer, explained about the game and the way it has been conceptualised: "We have been sent lots of TV programs and we had free license to write our own story but, of course, we have kept it close to the TV series. Graphically the game will have parts from the show because when we looked at them we saw some nice bits and have used them but we have recreated the look and feel ourselves."

"I would say the game is a cross between Zelda and Tomb Raider as far as the

action and puzzle structure goes but is slightly more action based. There is lots of dialogue and interaction. One of the drawbacks regarding Zelda is that it did not give the player clues on what to do next but we are using full motion cut scenes to give the player information throughout the game."

Puzzles come in both cryptic and straightforward forms. Moving objects; finding and interacting with items; gun stations where you go and have a blast; 3D spatial awareness puzzles and a lot lot more. Telling y'all too much would spoil the fun, so just get ready for a free moving, massive world with secrets and surprises galore.



GAMEPLAY

A single player 3rd person perspective action adventure. Player characters will include (but not limited to) Nick Logan and Sh'laain Blaze.
 At least six separate levels (chapters) containing a minimum of 30 separate levels.
 Minimum of five different weapons for the player to utilise.
 Minimum of six separate characters (enemies) taken from the Roswell Conspiracies cartoon.
 Two player and/or Internet game play.
 Additional, unique game levels.
 Full Motion Animations with voice samples and extra character gestures.
 VMU support.
 Intuitive and Intelligent NPC AI.
 Intuitive and Intelligent camera AI.
 Various weapon and special effects.



POWER STONE 2



PLATFORM: Dreamcast
 AVAILABLE: TBA
 CATEGORY: 3D Fighting
 PLAYERS: 1-4
 PUBLISHER: Capcom

WOW-O-METER

Capcom's Power Stone succeeded where Square's Ergheiz and Bushido Blade failed, seamlessly merging traditional fighting game mechanics with full 3D movement and interactive environments. Power Stone played at a frenetic pace and is still one of our favourite party games.

Just like its predecessor, Power Stone 2 goes to show that Capcom have more innovation than they are often credited with, and that they're not just 2D specialists. It also proves that not all their sequels (Street Fighter being the obvious example) are minor updates on the previous titles.

Power Stone 2 is a very different kettle of Siamese fighting fish than the first game. This title moves even further from a traditional fighting game, with multi-sectioned, multi-tiered are-

nas, and simultaneous four player action. It's hectic as all hell, and a bit deranged all at the same time — just the way we like it.

GO SWIMMING!

The Japanese version of Power Stone 2 has eight arenas and a couple of bonus stages. Each has several sections that the fight moves through. For instance, one starts out on a blimp which soon falls apart, leading to a freefall from the sky with each character frantically trying to control the one and only parachute. Even after hitting the ground the fight picks up again. Other arenas feature running sequences, climbing sequences, and even swimming. Very cool stuff.

Oh, and did we mention the 120 items (65 of which are weapons) in the game? Most of these have to be unlocked, but there are plentiful numbers of devious items right from the word go. These include skateboards, subwoofers, battle axes, bubble guns and invisibility potions. Better yet, some stages have gun turrets to man, tanks to drive around in, and planes to fly... heh heh.

EVERYBODY MUST GET STONED

The character count is a little disappointing, with only four new characters available, three of which are, well, kinda lame. The best of the bunch is a cowboy named Accel who, when stoned off three phat rocks, powers up into a cool mech outfit. We think he should have powered up into a hard rocker wearing bike shorts and a ban-

danna and singing "Welcome to the Jungle", but alas, it's not to be. Aside from Axl... sorry Accel, there's an annoying schoolboy who turns into a toy robot, a ditsy southern belle type who powers up into a weird-ass bird creature with wings, claws and what seems like a big rubber ducky around her waist, and a buck-toothed, rosy-cheeked chef who powers up into a dinosaur. Hmm... trippy Japanese character design to be sure.

The balance of the fights is much improved over the original, with the outcome of each round depending less on who gets to the stones first. When powered up, attacks do less damage, and because there are four people running around on screen, anything can happen. There are also six powerstones

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

A couple more stages for the local release, as the Japanese version simply isn't long enough.

per level now, so two people can be charged up at once, making for some seriously intense fights — without a hint of slowdown. Full review coming as soon as we get our hands on PAL code.



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

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VIRTUA TENNIS



STAR TREK: INVASION



ANIMORPHS



DUKE NUKEM LAND OF THE BABES

PLAYSTATION

September

Alien Resurrection
Animorphs
Duke Nukem Land Of The Babes
Flintstones Bowling
Frogger 2
Galaga
Inspector Gadget
Nascar 2001
Rayman 2
Simpsons Bowling
Spiderman
Star Trek: Invasion
Tenchu 2
Tony Hawk's Skateboarding 2
Wacky Races
World's Scariest Police

DREAMCAST

September

F1 Racing Championship
Marvel Vs Capcom 2
Metropolis Street Racer
Moho
Space Channel Five
Stunt GP
Virtua Tennis

PC

September

Dragon Riders: Chronicles of Pern
Flintstones Bowling
Frogger 2
Galaga
Heavy Metal FAKK 2
In Cold Blood
Infestation
Jetfighter 4
Moho
Motor City
NHL Hockey 2001
Oni
Road To Moscow
Simon The Sorcerer 3D
Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force
Stunt GP
The Sims Expansion
Tony Hawk's Skateboarding 2
Wacky Races
Wizards And Warriors
World's Scariest Police

GAME BOY

September

Animorph
Carl Lewis Athletics
Cyber Tiger
Inspector Gadget
Infestation
NBA In The Zone 2000
Road Rash
Spiderman

NINTENDO 64

September

ISS 2000

CHEATZONE



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144 Crash Bandicoot 3	192 Grand Tour Racing 98	239 Nascar 2000	287 Road Rash 3D	334 Theme Hospital	403 Armornes: Project SWARM	449 Mario Party 2	496 XENA: Talisman of Fire
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146 Croc: Legend	194 Heart of Darkness	241 NBA Live 2000	289 Rollcage	336 Thrasher: Search + Destroy		451 Mortal Kombat : Mythologies	
147 Crusader: No Remorse		242 NBA Live 98					

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it just keeps getting better...

Now that Net Trawlin' has expanded in size, we thought it might be a good idea to expand its scope as well. Thus, in addition to providing all the latest online gaming news and funky websites, we'll also be taking a look at broader internet related issues, whether they be political, technological or just plain bizarre. The idea being to keep you all informed as to some of the most exciting technology coming through, the big net trends, and the laws that will help determine what the future will look like online.

online content laws //

As of the first of January this year, Australia's new online content laws came into effect, giving the Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA) the power to force sites hosted on Australian servers to take down material that is deemed offensive. Rather than actively seeking out offensive sites, the system operates on complaints from the public. In the first three months that the system was in operation, only 124 complaints were received, resulting in 31 take down notices.

Whilst we agree in principle with this law — after all, it only targets extreme sites — was there any need for it in the first place, and will it achieve anything? First of all, it's not as easy as it's often made out to be to stumble across explicit content, and even if you do, surely you'll just move on to something else? Secondly, if a site is taken down, all it has to do is relocate to a server based overseas, and the ABA is powerless. Indeed, bastions of freedom

of information, Electronic Frontiers Australia believes Australia is now the "global village idiot and the laughing stock of the rest of the world".

WHAT'S AROUND THE CORNER?

Our online censorship laws, though, are nothing compared to what may be just around the corner for the digital age. A bill called the "Methamphetamine Anti-proliferation Act" is about to be voted on in the United States, and is aimed at restricting drug related information online. Posting or linking to information about illegal drugs would become a federal crime, and sites would be forced to remove the content within 48 hours — without a court order. A restriction of freedom of speech? A return to the Reagan era "war on drugs" hysteria? Or a valid way to "protect" the world's children? Opponents to the bill certainly think it's the former. In its present form, the bill would give the police the power to secretly conduct searches of a suspect's home without notifying them. It is also vague in determining exactly what content would be allowed and what would not.

Even more seriously, the Russian secret service agency revealed a couple of months ago that they had a system up and running that allowed them to monitor all Russian internet traffic. Perhaps more surprisingly though, was a recent admission from the British government. It confirmed that a similar system called the Government Technical Assistance Centre (GATC) was being built that would enable monitoring and interception of all British internet traffic by the British Secret Service. It is to be completed by the end of the year, and requires all ISPs to pay for dedicated lines connecting them to the system.

This is not necessarily a bad thing mind you, as the purpose of the system is to catch criminal activity online, whether it be paedophile rings or ter-

rorists. The British government claims that privacy would be maintained since the procedure would be no different from in the physical world, i.e. a warrant would still be needed to monitor suspicious activity. The bottom line though, is that no exchange of information or data would be 100% secure, giving untold power to anyone with the power to abuse the system. E-mail addresses, credit card numbers, confidential information... everyone from the individual to the largest multinationals would be at risk.

Other countries restrict internet access and monitor use on the basis of protecting such interests as morality, national security, cultural values, etc. In fact, 63% of countries already restrict print and electronic freedom of speech, so the internet must be seen as a massive threat. Will the coming years usher in a digital utopia or a fascist surveillance regime? A bit of both we suspect.



Oz Unreal

OzUnreal is THE site for pretty much everything Unreal related. It covers news on the Aussie Unreal Tournament scene, gameplay tips, map/mod reviews, level editing tutorials and more. <http://www.ozunreal.com/>



RTS Player

An Aussie gaming site that primarily focuses on, you guessed it, Real-time Strategy games. Hosted by some of Australia's best RTS players, the site covers all the latest news and rumors on any RTS game in development, as well as reviews and strategy guides. <http://www.rtsplayers.org>



ADSL Latest

Telstra have started work on getting the ADSL network throughout Australia. A lot of lucky gamers will be able to get their high-speed gaming fix around August this year. In fact there is now a page up at Telstra's site which tells you if your area will have ADSL by then. All you have to do is punch in your phone number and cross your fingers. Those that miss out (likely anyone not near a city) will have to wait from anything up to two years before they get looked after. <http://www.telstra.com.au/adsl/intro.cfm>

Q3 Stuff

mods

Pro-Mode

Before Quake 3's release, the Quaker community proposed to id the idea of including a 'professional mode' option for use in competitions. The idea being that certain gameplay aspects would be changed to up the pace of the game so that you'd see matches with similar ferocity to that of Quaker. Unfortunately this option was left out of the final version with id leaving it up to the mod making community to develop. So they did, and while it's only in its beta stage, pro-mode is looking and feeling quite impressive. There are dozens of tweaks to the games physics, however a few of the most noticeable changes would be the faster, more powerful rocket launcher, faster weapon switching times, greater air



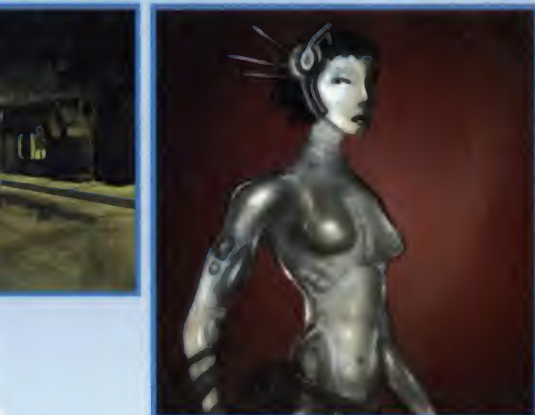
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movement, stronger lightning gun and even the good old backpack from Quake1 making a comeback. Added to this is an improved HUD and scoring interface and three 'pro-mode friendly' maps to slug it out on... two of which were made by Australia's very own Jude[FxR]. In fact one of Jude's maps, Q3jdm8a, has proven to be among the more popular duel maps out there right now. Pro-mode is more than just a cheap thrill for Quakeworld fans, it's a decent attempt at making Q3 even more fun than it is already. Check it out at <http://www.challenge-world.com/promode/download/>

Pakman

Thank goodness John Carmack spent hundreds of hours making the Quake3 engine. As a result we can finally realise our greatest gaming dream. Yes, we can play Pacman again!

Pakman, obviously spelt with a k to avoid legal problems, is only in it's early alpha stages and isn't much to look at yet, but it could turn out to be fun... Worth a look for the novelty. <http://www.planetquake.com/>



bigworld

Australian based gaming company Micro Forté have jumped on the MMORPG bandwagon with work on what could be the next big online game, BigWorld. BigWorld will differ from previous online games being based on a sci-fi setting, where you start out on the ex-prison planet, Neo-Eden. Specifics on the gameplay are sketchy, however the game world promises to be simply massive. Neo-Eden will be around the size of Everquest, and then there are three more totally different planets of equal size to explore! One thing's for

sure, with a \$10 million budget backing them, the developers will certainly have the resources to make something special. The budget is also a good indication of how determined Micro Forté is at grabbing their piece of the online gaming market. In fact the company's main focus is actually to create the most advanced online gaming platform available and then license it out to other companies, much like id does with the Quake engine. So far BigWorld's technological claim to fame is it's alleged ability to support up to 500,000 people

on the one server. That's pretty amazing when you compare it to games out there now which are lucky to cope with 2000 people at once. No longer would there be the need to create multiple servers or 'shards'. A claim like that will be hard to disprove, so far no game has been so popular as to attract half a million people to play it at once. The game is also designed to run on the PlayStation 2, allowing them to play in the same world as PC players. Keep an eye out for BigWorld around the end of the year.



[pakman](#)

UT stuff

Looking Glass Map conversions

With the recent and very sad demise of Looking Glass Studios, this site might be worth a visit. In tribute to their work someone has recreated some maps from System Shock, Thief, and Ultima Underworld using the Unreal Engine. Of course if you only have Unreal Tournament installed you can just as easily run the maps through that instead. A good nostalgia trip.

<http://www.ttlg.com/other/mirror/index.htm>



ultima worlds online: origin

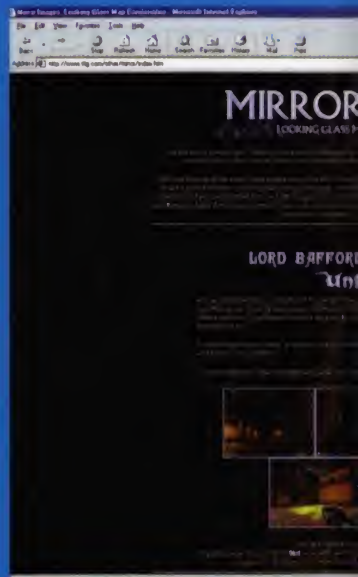
With E3 having been and gone, some interesting news has filtered through concerning Ultima Worlds Online: Origin (once named Ultima Online 2) and it's certainly starting to sound amazing. The game world itself is said to be at least three times the size of UO, and will consist of three

separate continents. The first is 'Virtue Land', which will be based on the parts of Ultima we're used to, like Britannia. The second land is a 'lost world' deal with all things Jurassic. The third continent will be based around a steam-punk/early industrial setting. Fans of Thief 2 will be able to

appreciate this type of theme, and it's here that one of the new races of Origin, the Juuka, resides. In fact, as opposed to there being only humans to choose from in Ultima Online, there will be three available races in UWO; the Juuka, Humans and another as yet undisclosed race.

ANIMATED ANCIENTS

Visually UWO is up there with anything you'd see in a single player game. The screenshots certainly look enticing, however it's not until you feast your eyes on the demo shown at E3 (which you can now download from the net) that you begin to appreciate how wonderful everything looks. UWO's animation really makes everything come alive. All the models have been animated using motion capture technology. This is certainly nothing new, plenty of games use it, but not many have used it quite to the extent that EA have with UWO... it must be all that experience with the FIFA series. Players can juggle, dance or do complex kung fu moves the likes of which you'll usually only find in games like



net.news

UT mods

CTF/e

CTF/e, which stands for Enhanced Capture the Flag, attempts to improve on UT's already brilliant CTF by adding a new interface, logon menus, console commands and advanced team balancing. The eyebrow raiser here is the advanced team balancing. When your team is running short of players, instead of getting trounced on by the opposition, a Titan (remember them big bastards from Unreal?) spawns and plays on your side! As you can imagine, he helps by ripping the enemy to shreds until more players join your team. Awesome!
<http://www.creativecarnage.com/unreal/>



Soul Calibur, which is especially fascinating for an RPG. There are nonetheless a few points that raise some concern.

Housing, Ships and Mounts not to be included with the game out of the box. Instead EA hope to implement them in a downloadable patch some time after release. Housing and riding mounts were two of UO's greatest draw-cards, and it certainly seems strange that they won't be available at release. It's understandable though that housing could pose a problem. As cool as it was in UO, it really made a mess of the place, there were houses littered everywhere! One thing gamers can rely on is that having learned from everything they did with the highly popular Ultima Online, the developers appar-

ently have a wad of MMORPG experience under their belt. From what we've seen so far UWO may well win back the crown of online gaming from Verant. Electronic Arts know full well this title's potential and we're sure they intend to do just that!
www.uo2.com

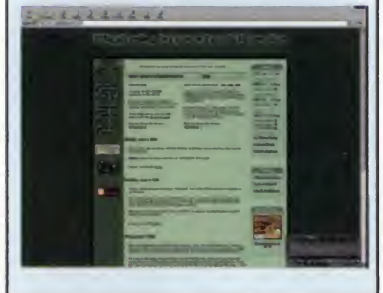


net trawlin'



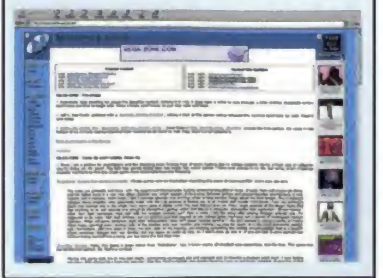
Digitally Imported

This awesome new site hosts all the latest Euro Techno and Trance via Shoutcast. Shoutcast is basically the net's answer to radio, which you can listen to using a recent version of Winamp (www.winamp.com). Simply click on the speed you are connected to the net and the appropriate quality music will stream down, non-stop. No need to go looking for MP3's now!
<http://www.digitallyimported.com/>



Something Awful

A gaming site with a difference, Something Awful not only covers the latest gaming news and reviews but it has some hilarious parricidal gaming write-ups and comics. People into Everquest will love the 'beginner's guide to EQ', and the comics, while not known for their artistic quality, are sure to bring a tear to your eye.
<http://www.somethingawful.com/>



WINWINWIN

DIABLO 2 for PC!



Diablo 2 from Blizzard is going to be one of the biggest PC hits this year. Adventure forth into cobwebbed caverns and dark forests full of undead, descend into ancient labyrinths and discover the true evil behind the monsters spewing across the land. New character classes, new weapons, new enemies and new multiplayer adventuring will make Diablo 2 a memorable gaming experience... so be one of the first to play it!

To celebrate the release of the most anticipated PC Action/RPG, Diablo 2, HAVAS Interactive have put aside FIVE copies of the game for some lucky Hyper readers. But wait, there's more! Each winner will also receive an awesome Diablo 2 action figure! This is one hot competition.

To be in with a chance to win, answer the following question...

Name another upcoming PC game from Blizzard.

Stick your answer on the back of an envelope with your name and address, and post it off to: DREAMING OF DIABLO 2, HYPER, 78 RENWICK ST, REDFERN, NSW 2016.

Good luck adventurers. Muhahaha!

Entries close August 22nd

VAGRANT STORY for Sony PlayStation

Square can't stop pumping out amazing RPGs. A few months down the track, and we'll be playing Final Fantasy IX, but meanwhile we have Vagrant Story to obsess over. It really is one of the best RPGs ever to have graced the PlayStation. So good, in fact, that we desperately want you to experience it. Sony have been kind enough to offer FIVE copies of Vagrant Story to give away to you guys, so to win a copy, just answer this question...

Name three Square games coming to the PlayStation 2.

Put your answer on the back of an envelope with your name and address and post it away to: HIP TO BE SQUARE, HYPER, 78 RENWICK ST, REDFERN, NSW, 2016.



Entries close August 22nd



HYPER 》

Kazuya: Tekken Tag Tournament

HYPER»

In Cold Blood



THE CLUB COOL DO





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*Cat. XC-1000



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*Cat. XC-1005

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MASSIVE SELLOUT

HYPER GETS HANDS ON WITH WINDOWS MILLENNIUM EDITION

RELEASE CANDIDATE 1

PLATFORM: PC

DISTRIBUTOR: MICROSOFT

AVAILABLE: SEPTEMBER 14TH

PRICE: \$349 (OR \$189 UPGRADE ONLY)

The first release candidate for Windows ME was released recently for testing, and Hyper were given a presentation of the operating system in our very own offices. We can tell you now that there's a whole bunch of very good reasons why Windows ME is set to be the gamer's operating system of choice. Although Windows ME is not going to be ready for retail until later this year, it's already looking like a really lean, mean and stable gaming environment for your PC. But is it just the Win9x architecture all over again with a fresh slap of paint?

SOCK IT TO "ME"!

Whilst Windows 2000 was aimed more at businesses, with robust networking and security code, Windows ME is aimed at the average Joe. What this means, is that ME not only has a plethora of new and complex help functions, it also has a more stripped back OS that chucks out a lot of the old system stuff that is no longer needed these days, like ISA support. This should make for a more stable working/playing environment. If you're a first time user, Windows ME is going to be a lot easier to understand than say, Windows 98. Even small aesthetic changes that have been made to ME, just make it that much easier to negotiate your desktop and get to the files you want with a minimum of fuss. ME also hides a lot of the more complex and unnecessary functions that only advanced users would bother with tweaking, thus making it a more foolproof environment for the "newbie". For example, ME includes System File Protection (which was introduced in Windows 2000) which prevents you from deleting important system files by accident. You can even go so far as to empty them from the trash, and Windows ME will replace the important files for you. You silly thing! Of course, advanced users can disable 'helpful' functions such as this. There is also a System Restore which allows you to take a 'snapshot' of your system (say, when everything is running beautifully), which you can then restore to if for some reason things start going wrong (like after installing a game or installing new drivers). Auto-Update will also now begin downloading system updates whenever your modem connection is idle, and then pause itself if you start to use your connection, continuing downloading when your modem again goes idle. Very cool.

In terms of multimedia, Windows ME includes the Windows Image Acquisition technology which makes it easier to import pictures from digital cameras and scanners, even thumbnailing the pics for you when you use Windows Explorer on the actual device. You don't even need to have copied a digital pic to your hard disk to import it into a word file, you just grab it straight from the external device.

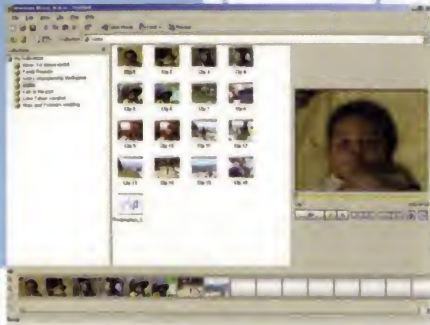


The new Windows Media Player 7 allows you to edit digital movies, copy music files from your favourite music CDs and all sorts of other cool new functions. Small details, like how it lets you know the time it would take to download the media file you just saved over different internet connections, makes it easier for less-experienced users to determine what the difference is between say, a 64-bit and a 128-bit WMF.



GET "ME" ONLINE!

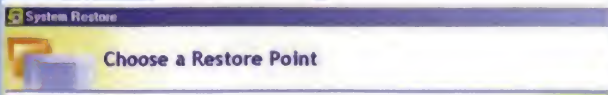
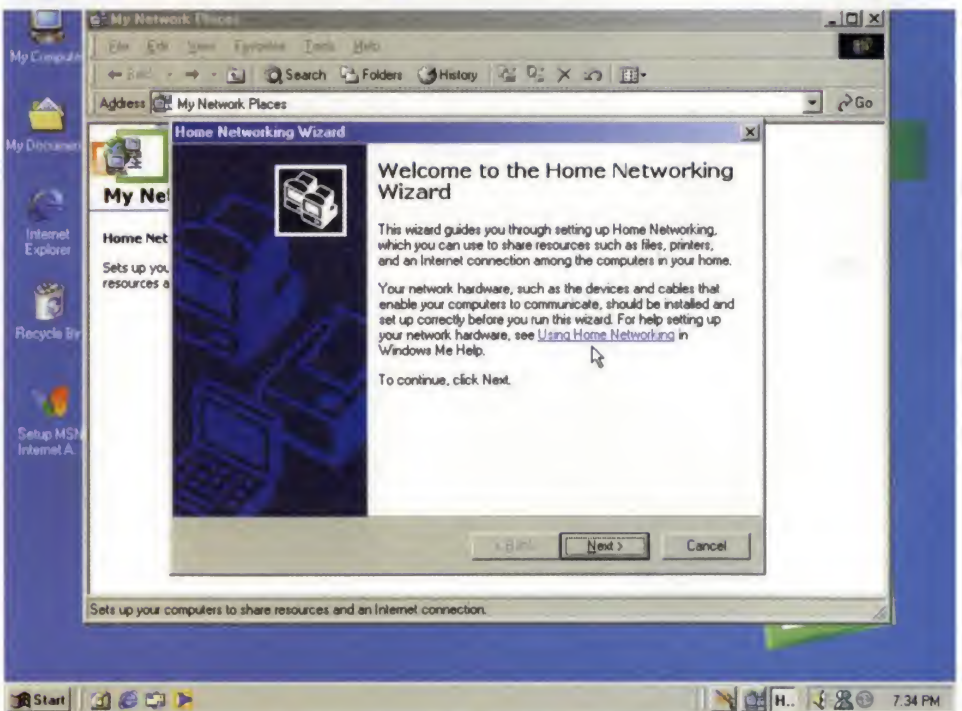
In terms of the internet, ME now integrates Microsoft Instant Messenger (Microsoft's version of ICQ) into Outlook Express, so that when you're composing e-mail, you can see which of your address book entries are "online", plus message or chat to those people straight away. Obviously, ME will also allow other more subtle performance enhancements. Home Networking will allow more



than one PC in a household to use the one internet connection simultaneously, plus the home networking wizard will even create a "set-up" disk which will configure the other PCs in the household to get them onto the network without any extra hassle. ME also supports Universal Plug and Play, so many kinds of intelligent devices can interact with each other automatically over a home network.

Probably one of the best new features of ME, is that fact that it can "hibernate". That means, if the power goes off whilst you're working, the computer can quickly return to the exact state it was in when it is powered up again. Boot times will also be down to around the 20 second mark, putting it in the same league as a console in terms of boot-up sequence time. For some, that could be the best reason alone to upgrade!

Overall, ME is kind of like a "dumbed down" Windows 98SE to make it easy on the first-time user. There are some tasty new features to entice current Windows users, and certainly the promise of a stable new system with the latest Direct X at its core is enough for gamers to want to upgrade, however we'll have to wait to see the final product to know if it's really worth upgrading for the more advanced user. Considering a lot of the important new features could be available in separate downloads (i.e. Media Player 7, Direct X8 etc.), it could be hard to justify forking out the money for what are some relatively minor improvements – some purely aesthetic – over the OS we're all now using, especially considering those changes have been made to help the "newbie".



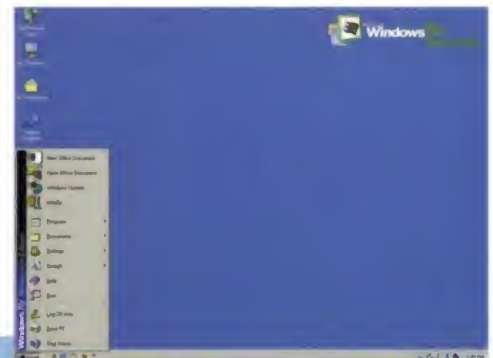
The following calendar displays in bold all of the dates that have restore points available. The list displays the restore points that are available for the selected date.

Possible types of restore points are: system checkpoints (scheduled restore points created by your computer), manual restore points (restore points created by you), and installation restore points (automatic restore points created when certain programs are installed.)

Select a bold date on the calendar, and then select one of the available restore points from the list.

February, 2000							Friday, February 25, 2000
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	2:00 AM System Checkpoint
30	31	1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
27	28	29	1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	

Back Next Cancel







Noriyoshi Fujiwara. Futsal Player. Nike Holland Game Jersey.
NIKE0139

PLAYSTATION

PAGE 60

VAGRANT STORY



58 » HYPER

Square outdo themselves with Vagrant Story, the best RPG to come from them since Final Fantasy VII changed RPG gaming and pretty much the world...



REVIEWS



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

DREAMCAST

- 62.....MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2
- 68.....ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE
- 72.....MAKEN X
- 76.....V-RALLY 2: EXPERT EDITION

PC

- 66.....VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE REDEMPTION
- 70.....DAIKATANA
- 78.....MUSIC 2000
- 78.....WARLORDS: BATTLECRY

NINTENDO 64

- 74.....BOMBERMAN 64: THE SECOND ATTACK

PLAYSTATION

- 60.....VAGRANT STORY
- 64.....IN COLD BLOOD
- 73.....GRIND SESSION
- 75.....DESTRUCTION DERBY RAW
- 77.....BISHI BASHI SPECIAL
- 78.....WIPEOUT SPECIAL EDITION

GAMEBOY

- 83.....CATZ
- 83.....DINOSAUR
- 83.....MARIO GOLF
- 83.....SPAWN



68



66



74



64

THE HYPER CREW'S TOP 5

WHAT WE'RE PLAYING THIS MONTH

Eliot Fish – Editor

1. Ultima IX: Ascension – PC
"Totally underrated, this is a fantastic romp."
2. Soul Calibur – Dreamcast
3. V-Rally 2: Expert Edition – Dreamcast
4. Deus Ex – PC
5. Vib Ribbon – PlayStation

Cam Shea – Deputy Editor

1. Vib Ribbon – PlayStation
"Without a doubt the most surreal, metaphorical and philosophical game I've ever played. Cute too."
2. Ecco The Dolphin – Dreamcast
3. Jet Grind Radio – Dreamcast
4. Tony Hawk's Skateboarding 2 – PlayStation
5. Virtua Tennis – Dreamcast

Kevin Cheung – Reviewer

1. Vagrant Story – PlayStation
"Hands down, it's the best RPG I have ever played."
2. Samba de Amigo – Dreamcast
3. Perfect Dark – Nintendo 64
4. Vampire: The Masquerade Redemption – PC
5. Gradius III & IV – PlayStation 2

HYPERR

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

www.au.gateway.com





HYPER
GAME
MONTH
OF THE

THAT'S A NICE POOT YOU'VE GOT GOING THERE KID...

VAGRANT STORY

Hyper's RPG expert, **Kevin Cheung**, discovers an astounding treasure...



AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	RPG
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Square
PRICE:	\$79.95
RATING:	M
SUPPORTS:	Dual Shock, Memory Card

❧ If you don't already respect Square it for its RPG traditions dating as far back as Chrono Trigger, you would at least know its reputation by virtue of Final Fantasy's mainstream success. Truthfully, the House of Square has been floundering with a series of increasingly formulaic role-playing games. Brave Fencer Musashi and Parasite Eve never truly broke new ground; and understandably, without the benefit of Enix releasing Dragon Quest VII locally, the RPG scene is starting to look a little bleak.

AND THE WINNER IS.... SYDNEY!

Enter Vagrant Story, a no-nonsense RPG that does for the art of videogames what Metal Gear Solid did two years ago: it took the story seriously and didn't succumb to commercial guff like full motion video. Vagrant Story is a tale of socio-political intrigue. Set in a medieval fantasy world, a fanatical religious sect has occupied the house of the Duke Bardoba. Their leader, Sydney Losstarot, is a man many believe to be a true Prophet — his uncanny ability to look deep into people's hearts and foresee the future have made him a powerful icon of pop culture. Too powerful, in

fact, for the ruling parties in Valendia, who are concerned that the religious arm of government have already dispatched their Blades enforcement team to handle the situation. Ashley Riot, a Riskbreaker with the Valendia Knights of Peace (VKP), is called upon to act on the executive arm's behalf to investigate the situation. That's where you take over as Ashley.

What follows is an amazing story where antiquated ideals like honour, nobility, and justice take precedence over the usual juvenile quandary of

love and revenge. Our three protagonists, Ashley Riot from the VKP, Guildenstern from the Blades, and Sydney Losstarot of the Mullenkamp sect, are all headed towards the centre of a conflict of religious and supernatural idealism. It's a race against time as Sydney comes closer to rationalising the link between body and soul, and discovering the secret of immortality.

Vagrant Story will impress with its incredible eye for detail. On one hand, the impeccable map and dungeon designs will have you completely

flooded; and the magic spells are all stylishly presented, without leaving you waiting a good 20 seconds between animations as certain other games do. Special mention should also be made of the ambient sound effects, where you can hear numerous atmospheric sounds blended flawlessly into each other.

Special mention should also be made of the story's cinematic presentation. While it fits on only one disc, it's every bit as huge as a Final Fantasy game, whose four discs of space are wasted on FMV. Vagrant Story takes a



COULD HE STAND ANY MORE HEROICALLY?

FINAL FANTASY IX REVIEWED NEXT ISSUE! CAN IT BEAT VAGRANT STORY...? FIND OUT IN THE NEXT INSTALLMENT OF THE HYPER SAGA!



AN EYE FOR DETAIL

Aesthetic detail is only half of the deal. Vagrant Story is the kind of fantasy RPG that knows the distinction between a Dragon (stands on four legs) and a Wyvern (stands on two legs); and even goes so far as to have dialogue that's translated perfectly, complete with medieval phrases and nuances. There are even different classes of weapons for each situation. Piercing weapons, for instance, are useless against skeletons, but blunt instruments like clubs and hammers will do the trick.



page from Metal Gear Solid by presenting the story with in-game graphics and smart cinematography and direction. The end result is a seamlessly scripted and coherent story line that doesn't leave you feeling as though its elements are disjointed.

THE METAL GEAR SOLID OF RPGS?

Devoted fans of RPGs might find some humour in how mainstream critics have called Vagrant Story "the Metal Gear Solid of RPGs". The first person perspective might have something

to do with that. Nothing could be further from the truth, as Vagrant Story's presentation and mechanics are more correctly looked upon as a breakthrough in the evolution of the turn-based/realtime hybrid RPGs.

Those of you who are familiar with the Wheel System of Seiken Densetsu (Secret of Mana to us Western folk) or the Attack Sphere of Parasite Eve will recognise many aspects of this system. Vagrant Story seems to have solved this problem. Pressing the L2 button will stop time and bring up your options,

where each button on the D-pad and the opposite four action buttons are toggled to configure your items, equipment, spells, defence counters, chain attacks, and so on.

When you attack, you can strike one blow at a time. You also have the option of chaining special moves together at each impact to produce multi-hit combos, most of which can be toggled to drain energy, cast spells, and so on. The drawback is that counters and chains will increase the risk you're facing, which increases the damage you can receive and likewise reduces the amount of damage and percentage chance you have in hitting a certain body part. Body part? Yes, that's right. Hit them in the legs and they run slower. Hit them in the arms and their attacking power goes down. Hit them where they're heavily guarded, and you'll be blocked.

The previous works of director Matsuno Yasumi and artist Yoshida Akihiko include Tactics Ogre and Final Fantasy Tactics. Whether it's the cool character design or the breathtaking musical score, their amazing style runs thick as blood through Vagrant Story. Just wait till you try the Weapon Construction features, which makes the Job Mode in FFT look like a cake-walk. It seems barely adequate to have to fit the majesty and brilliance of Vagrant Story into two pages, but for what it's worth, Matsuno (who unfortunately doesn't work for Square anymore) and Yoshida have created the best RPG on any console, period. ■



ORIGINALITY-O-METER



PLUS

Intuitive combat system. Rivetting art direction and dialogue.

MINUS

Weapon Construction mode will weird many people out.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
93	90	95

OVERALL

95

Forget Final Fantasy. Forget Zelda. Vagrant Story is the finest the genre has had to offer in years.



MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2 THE NEW AGE OF HEROES

James Ellis wears spandex all the time, so understandably he felt at home with this game.

AVAILABLE: September
 CATEGORY: 2D Fighting
 PLAYERS: 1-2
 PUBLISHER: Capcom
 PRICE: \$89.95
 RATING: M
 SUPPORTS: VMU, Arcade stick

At the time of writing this review, I'm living in a lice-infested hovel in some undisclosed outer suburb of Sydney, fearing for my life. Why? Because I wrestled this review from the shadowy fanatical fan boy, Kevin "Capcom" Cheung, and I fear retribution. Yet my current state really sums up the feeling towards 2D fighters in this, an epoch when 3D fighters are basically the norm, and where gamers are either huge fan boys of Capcom's 2D fighters (and others) willing to shed blood to get their mitts on them, or see them as a *passé* subgenre not utilizing current hardware. If you are of the former however, let me just state that you NEED this game.

SUPERHERO SUPERS

Marvel vs Capcom 2 is definitely more than a worthy sequel to the original, and indeed to all the preceding "versus" games, as it features all their characters plus all the characters from Capcom's older COTA and Marvel Super Heroes. The total number of playable characters is a staggering 56, and can be accessed after they've been bought

with points earned through the games various game modes. Apart from this huge increase of playable characters, MVC2 pushes the game's innovative tag team battle mode further along its logical progression with a new 3-on-3 tag team battle rather than 2-on-2. This allows great customization as you can now have that extra depth of character selection, for instance mixing up a good close fighter like Psylocke with a projectile firing opponent like Cable, and then backed up by the menacingly huge Russian machine, Zangief. Or how about creating personal favourite teams based on the characters fiction, with teams of Ryu, Ken and Akuma or even an Avengers or Super villain team; the characters are all there. And they are fairly differentiated, with characters coming from different games that had a different emphasis on different elements.

The other major difference that this game has over its predecessors is that the medium attack buttons have been omitted, with two assist buttons corresponding to each partner put in as replacement. When I initially heard about this feature my conservative suburban streak grew anxious, as I thought about how this could detract from gameplay. The medium attacks themselves haven't been omitted totally

from the game, but are now accessed by, basically, hitting the light attack buttons twice. This may sound dodgy but after playing the game extensively, I must admit that Capcom have made the right decision here, as the lack of a medium button accentuates the combo system that the mastery of the game demands by making it more accessible without dumbing it down too much. Oh, and don't listen to those "other" reviewers claiming that the combos are just a product of button pulping, as these people probably think that "pho-

netics" is the ability to fart silently. No, the combos still require some crack-shot timing and co-ordination to be truly effective.

A HUGE 3D CLOWN EFFIGY

The improvements aren't just to do with gameplay innovation or improvement, as Capcom have also introduced a graphical first into their two dimensional fighters in the form of 640x480 3D rendered backgrounds. The levels aren't consistently jaw dropping, as some levels are on the whole still basi-





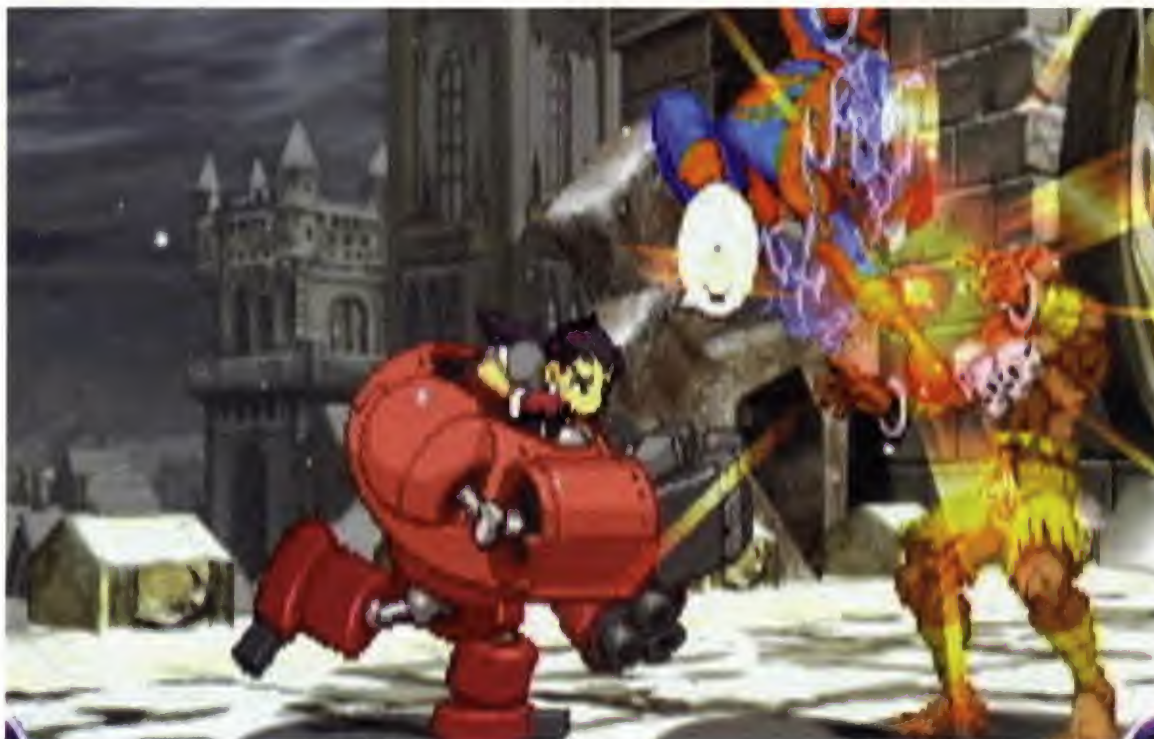
cally composed of a few layers of sprite based backings, but then you'll freak out when you see the amusement stage with its marvelous huge 3D clown effigy. The only let down is that the characters themselves are still rendered in the standard resolution, so if you plan on exploiting the VGA box compatibility be warned that the characters will look quite blocky, otherwise rest assured that they look the same as past Capcom 2D fighters.

The presentation of the game is top notch in itself. One effect that I particularly liked was the pre-battle screens when the match up portraits scream through a weaving light hive, and the players prepare for the ensuing insane action. And insane it is. The graphics and animation look damn sexy, as they shoot around on screen erupting in the huge over the top Super moves that can be used and commanded like never before. For

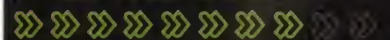
instance you can delay your Hyper combos, meaning that players can jump out and perform a super in connection with the character before hand. As with the past games in the series, the super moves are really what separates this game from the rest of the pack. Indeed, you'll sometimes just sit back and be aghast at the enormous cornucopia that detonates on your screen when all three of your heroes jump in and unleash their

attacks. Sometimes it only takes one character's attack to amaze. For instance, a point blank run in with Magneto's Magnetic Tempest will see a flurry of psychedelic explosions on your opponent, and Ruby Hearts Pirate ship assault will bombard the screen with canon ball fire - all innocent fun not intended to induce shooting sprees.

The only negatives are fairly minor. The Dreamcast control pad still isn't the most desired peripheral for this game, the end boss Abyss sux hard, and for the hardcore - the game is not nearly as tough as it could be. Still, it doesn't stop me racking up the hits. ■



TIGHTPANTS-O-METER



PLUS

Huge number of incredibly playable characters. Benchmark for future 2D fighters.

MINUS

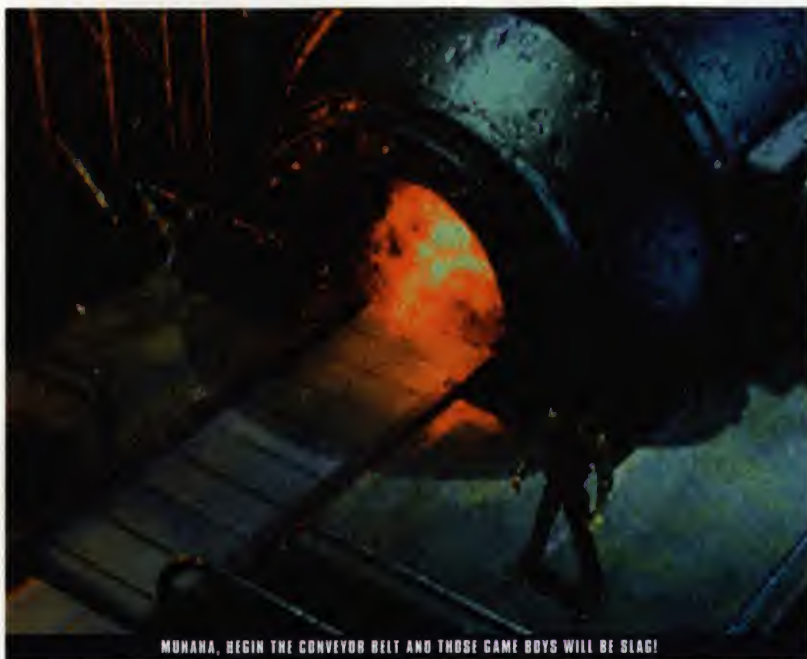
Won't convert strict 3D fighting fans. Crappy boss.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
84	80	89

OVERALL

91

Skydivers have parachutes, guerilla militants have weapons and 2D fighting fans have Marvel vs Capcom. Nuff said.



MUNANA, BEGIN THE CONVEYOR BELT AND THOSE GAME BOYS WILL BE SLAG!



IN COLD BLOOD

DMC, world renowned cad and bouncer, was the only man for the job.



AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: Action/Adventure
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: Sony
 PRICE: \$69.95
 RATING: M

⌘ The third person adventure genre has had a rash of quality titles recently, including Fear Effect and Resident Evil: Nemesis. Following in these footsteps is Sony's much hyped attempt at the genre, In Cold Blood, which leans towards the stealthy spy side of things. In fact, the game has an almost Bondesque vibe, what with all the plummy British accents and Russian bad guys. While Revolution have aimed for a cinematic feel, unfortunately there is little of the style or fun of a Bond film to be found here.

I SAY, TALLY HO CHAPS!

The game begins with a gorgeous pre-rendered movie, centering around mysterious events that have precipitated a conflict between China and the US. In a commendable storytelling twist (not something game developers often pay attention to), you begin the game at the end. Our plummy British superspy, John Cord, is strapped to a chair, blood dripping from his wounds, as he is interrogated. The gameplay is John's recollections of sneaking around a uranium mine in the Russian splinter state of Volgia. This is all in aid of rescuing fellow secret agent Kiefer and finding the secrets he was searching

for, which are somehow related to the aforementioned geopolitical stoush.

Like Fear Effect and Final Fantasy, the game uses polygonal characters moving within pre-rendered environments. These environments look good, with many sweeping cinematic shots, but are rarely exceptional.

Unfortunately, there is a fundamental flaw to the graphical presentation: much of the time, you can barely see the characters! In an attempt to create a 'cinematic' feel, the camera is often placed so far back that your character

and others become indistinct blurs. This makes precision control somewhat difficult, a big problem for a game based on stealth. A wrong step leaves you in a heap on the ground riddled with holes, kindly administered by Russian guards. This is made worse by frequent and disorienting cuts between scenes, confusing you as to Gabe's position. The lag time between cuts is also frustrating, making gameplay stilted.

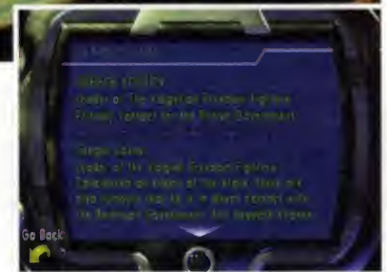
When the camera is close enough to your character to see him, the situa-

tion doesn't get much better. Control is clunky, and inaccurate. Again, this raises problems in a game that demands accuracy, whether it be in pressing a button to open a door, shooting or hitting a guard, or attempting to sneak past them. While the game is Dual Shock compatible, the analogue control is cumbersome. The control setup is standard for this kind of game, featuring crouch, run, attack, etc. Also featured is the Remora, a gizmo that allows you to hack into computers, communicate



IN AN EFFORT TO COMPENSATE FOR HIS PRE-ADOLESCENT BUM FLOFF, BOY BOUGHT HIMSELF THE BIGGEST GUN TOYS-R-US HAD.

Read the next issue of Hyper for a full review of Sony's next action/adventure — Chase The Express. Also coming to PlayStation 2!



with other agents, and access the information you've collected. The movement of the characters looks realistic, but is very stilted and choppy. What's more, John walks like a complete gimp. Someone really should remove the pencil from his arse.

SPIFFY, WHAT WHAT?

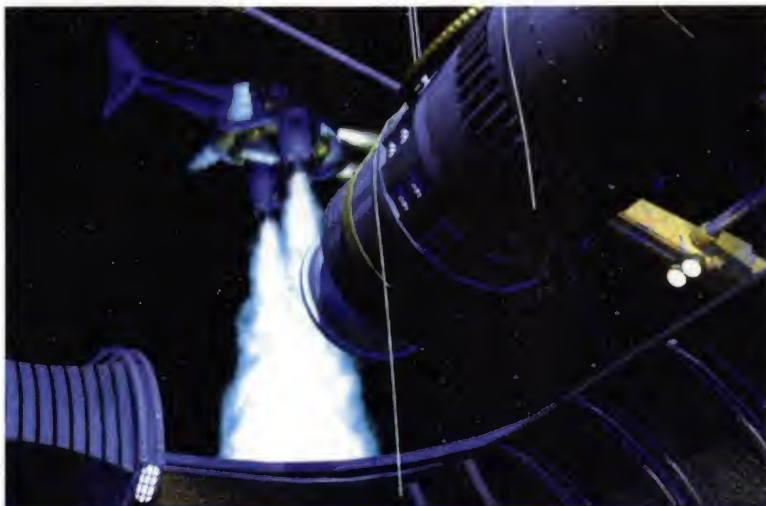
The focus of *In Cold Blood* is revealing the mystery, rather than action. Interacting with other characters is far more important than in other games of this genre, which tend to focus more

on plugging bad guys full of holes than asking them questions. The game starts off very slowly, especially in the face of gameplay flaws which take some getting used to. Once you adjust though, there is some interesting adventuring to be had.

The puzzle-solving has entertaining moments, ranging from disarming guns, stopping robots and rescuing people, to plain old sneakin' about and exploring. However it is let down by two major flaws. Firstly, you have to find everything first time around. If

you miss something early in the game, this can mean big problems later on. Secondly, the poor control often lets you down when attempting puzzles that require accuracy or timing. The game also features plenty of aimless wandering about where nothing much happens.

Plagued by fundamental design faults — from poor graphics, to confusing camera work and messy control — the game is playable, but disappointing. Beset by problems, *In Cold Blood* falls dramatically short of the hype. ■



In Cold Blood was intended to be a cinematic production. While visually this has caused some major problems, it does have one up side: excellent sound. Whilst the voice acting is hammy, the atmospheric, and occasional music are superb. Play it with headphones, close your eyes, and lose yourself in the aural bliss of the industrial drones, hums, and clanks of a power station.



BLOOD-O-METER



PLUS

Interesting story, some good puzzles.

MINUS

Poor control, choppy graphics.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
70	87	68

OVERALL

70

After all the anticipation, *In Cold Blood* just leaves us cold.



VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE REDEMPTION

Our vampiric ex-editor **Dan Toose** spots a few things that make Vampire a pain in the neck...



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Action/Adventure
PLAYERS: 1-Multi
PUBLISHER: Activision
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: M
REQUIRED: P266, 64MB RAM, 3D Card
DESIRED: PII 350, 128MB RAM, 16MB 3D Card
SUPPORTS: Garlic, Holy Water, Crucifixes

For those of you not up on the world of pen and paper role-playing games, Vampire The Masquerade has been one of the most popular RPGs worldwide with a stronger focus on genuine role playing, than rolling dice. With much of the game centering on the dealings and struggles between various vampire clans, Nihilistic software have done a great

job at staying faithful to the ethos of the game with their PC title, Vampire: The Masquerade - Redemption.

You start the game as Christof Romuald, a French born crusader, who suffers a "Band Aid won't cut it" injury, and is left in Prague by his sword brethren to regain his health. A slinky young nun attends to Christof, and whilst defending Prague against the creatures of the night, he falls for the nun, he is embraced (turned into a vampire) by the sire of the Brujah clan in Prague. Despite his despair at going from crusader to creature, he swiftly learns the merits of the kindred (vampires), and starts performing quests for his clan. The game starts in medieval Prague, but also takes the player through medieval Vienna, and modern day London and New York.

NONE PRETTIER...

A good way to describe the basic gameplay mechanics of Redemption would be to call it Diablo with a true 3D engine, and what a true 3D engine it is. Nihilistic software can take a bow so deep their foreheads hit the deck for their outstanding efforts in Redemption's visuals. Quite frankly, this game rolls up any other RPG you've ever seen, and smokes it, at least when it comes to the graphics. Supporting ultra-high resolutions, Redemption delivers some of the most stunning environments not only in an RPG, but in any game at all. The engine is quite customizable, down to how many shadows an object can have cast off it. The various characters and creatures aren't quite as amazing, but they're still A-grade, and anyone

with gripes over the visuals with this game has issues.

With a rich storyline, Redemption features a healthy dose of voice acting, and it's all good. So too are all the sound effects, although those with 3D sound may find the effect a little confusing, since sounds seem to come from a position relative to the way your character is facing, rather than which area of the screen, which would be far more intuitive.

Now while Vampire has a strong storyline, which is going to be enough to pull most people the whole way through the game, the gameplay mechanics themselves leave a fair bit to be desired. For starters, combat feels way too random in terms of results. Click all you want on that enemy, but there seems to be a star-





DAN'S LAST GIRLFRIEND DROPS IN UNEXPECTEDLY



Teammate AI hassles and an annoying Save game function makes Vampire sound very much like the troubled Daikatana this issue. But be assured that Vampire is the better game by a long shot...



WIN VAMPIRE PRIZES!

Activision have some spiffy vampire packs to give away! To win yourself one of three special silver ankh Vampire pendants and a copy of the Vampire soundtrack on CD, answer the following question: Who wrote about the Vampire Lestat? Stick your answer with your name and address on the back of an envelope and send it to: Fangs For The Freebies, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.

ting lack of consistency as to whether or not you land blows, and thus in some situations, whether or not you lose a fight or not. One of the first boss encounters with a vampire named Mercurio is virtually impossible unless you exploit the ability to move to a different area, heal up, and come back, or catch him stuck on a corner and use the AI glitch to kill him. How about gearing the game so you can win if you stock yourself up and cast the right spells? More importantly, your friendly AI could really use some tweaking. You only control one character at a time, and it's always real time, so while you're trying to dispatch an enemy, your buddy might run off and get themselves into deep trouble. You can adjust friendly AI settings, as to what

you will and won't let them do, but once combat breaks out, you really have to watch everyone, regardless how you have them set to act.

Character development is quite detailed, and RPG fans that like playing with stats will love this aspect of the game. Being able to spend your experience on your stats whenever you visit your safe haven is handy, as you can improve particular stats you need to use items as soon as you want to. The only part of developing your character that is a pain is equipment. You keep facing off against creatures using weapons, but very rarely can you take these once they're dead, which is really frustrating since you end up having to buy most gear, and the buy/sell rates rip you off badly.

SAVE ME!

Argh! It's unfathomable how a developer could make this mistake, but Nihilistic have. Redemption doesn't allow you the option to save your progress where you choose, but rather auto-saves when you go from one area (location) to another. So if you've made your way through a dungeon level, get right to the end, and cop it, then you have to do the whole level again. As a means of saving, you can run to a point where you go to another area/level, go through and then come back, but if you don't know when to anticipate a difficult encounter, then this method is useless.

A patch has been promised, and by the time you're reading this, it should be out, but patches should be to improve network code security, or optimise for new hardware, not provide a basic gameplay function that always should have been there.

If you're a fan of the original pen and paper RPG, then the storyline and faithful reproduction of the Vampire game ethos will probably keep you happy. Those of you who bought the game immediately will have suffered through the save game issue, but by now it should no longer be a problem. But the AI frustration, and the fact the game ends up being little more than a long dungeon crawl, make it a good game that could have been great. Multiplayer is an area that may develop into something that will make it a memorable game, if enough people create interesting scenarios for play online. Something to keep an eye out for. ■



GIB-O-METER



PLUS
Unbelievable visuals. Great storyline. Nice character development.

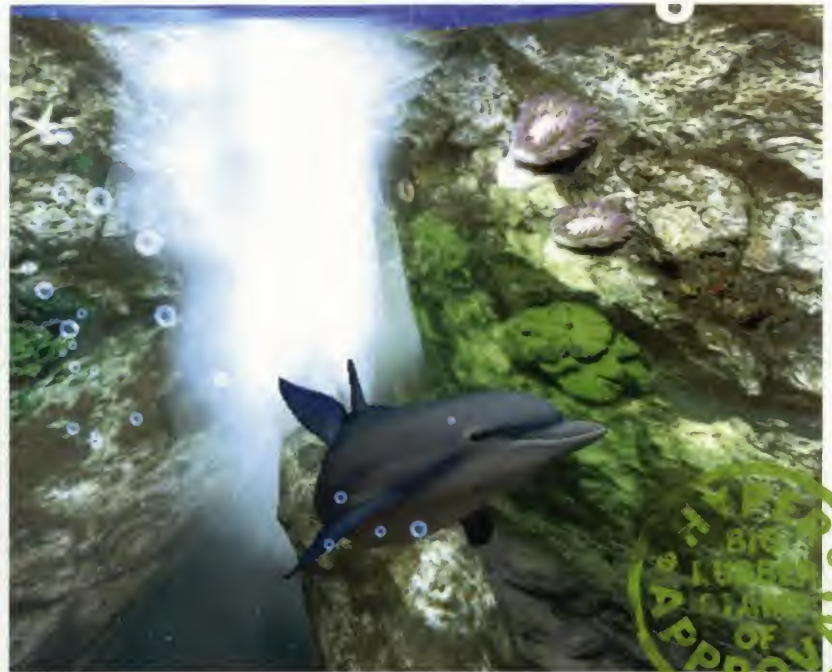
MINUS
No save feature. AI problems. Linear game progression.

VISUALS **96** SOUND **88** GAMEPLAY **73**

OVERALL
79

A good game that would have been great except for a few very avoidable problems.





ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE

"Well," said Eliot, "the one thing that everyone I spoke to agrees on, apart from the fact that they all thought he was barking mad, is that **Cam Shea** does know more than any living man about dolphins."



AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Dolphin Adventure
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Sega
PRICE:	\$89.95
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	VGA compatible, VMU

Our more astute trainspotting readers will pick the above paraphrase from Douglas Adams' "So Long and Thanks For All the Fish", a fine novel from which to learn about dolphins and their true place in the grand scheme of things. According to Adams, mice are the most intelligent species, followed by dolphins then humans. Ecco: Defender of the Future reinforces this. At some point in the future, you see, dolphins and humans team up to form a mega-civilisation, giving birth to a utopian future for Earth. It's a shame then, that an evil force is determined to ruin this humammalian society. Known only as "The Foe", this organisation travels back in time in an effort to prevent the dolphin/human symbiosis from ever forming.

STUPID BUG! YOU GO SQUISH NOW!

Fortunately for Earth, Ecco is accidentally swept up in this time travelling caper and finds himself with the formidable task of saving all life on the planet. Ecco's Dreamcast quest takes on a much more surreal quality than previous installments, travelling back-

wards in time, then visiting the different versions of the future that result. Ahh, the fun that can be had fiddling with temporal causality!

The storyline is conveyed through slick cut scenes, but these pale in comparison with the in-game graphics. The underwater world of this title will quite simply take your breath away. From the clear blue water, sparkling white-sand sea floor, ancient underwater structures, glorious waterfalls and richly textured coral of the first chapter, through to the increasingly strange techno-industrial settings of later levels, Defender of the Future's environments are surreal and fascinating.

Ecco is undoubtedly the highlight of the visuals, perhaps being the most convincingly lifelike game character ever created. The model is completely seamless, and moves with a grace and suppleness befitting the species. He's got personality too, in that infectiously happy way that only a dolphin can. Appaloosa have clearly done their dolphin homework.

They've also given the gameplay some thought, giving Ecco versatile, practical controls and a good range of abilities. As in his previous games, Ecco has a speed boost that can be used to avoid and attack predators, and eat fish. The use of sonar is also back, allowing Ecco to talk to other dolphins, whales and glyphs. You'll learn game objectives, new moves, secrets and dolphin songs through sonar. The dolphin songs are particu-

larly cool, giving Ecco mastery over many creatures. Using it you'll be able to do things like command a school of glowing fish to follow you through a dark cave for illumination.

OH I WISH I WISH I HADN'T KILLED THAT FISH

Other moves in Ecco's arsenal are quick stops, swimming backwards, 180 degree turns, barrel rolls, loop the loops and tail walks on the surface. There are also certain glyphs that temporarily affect Ecco, giving him cloaking ability, increased power, or hyper-charged sonar that can blast away obstructions or attack other creatures. Very cool, and very useful.

Being a mammal, Ecco needs to return to the surface regularly for oxygen. Simply poking your bottlenose above the water will do the trick, but

better yet you can use the speed boost to leap out of the water to literally "get air" in a spectacular fashion. As well as monitoring Ecco's oxygen levels, he also has a health bar which is replenished by catching most types of fish. The onscreen display is appropriately minimalist, but it's disappointing that there's no mapping or radar function. Ecco has sonar built in, so it's a little contradictory that there's no map showing nearby creatures and structures. This would certainly have made navigation simpler.

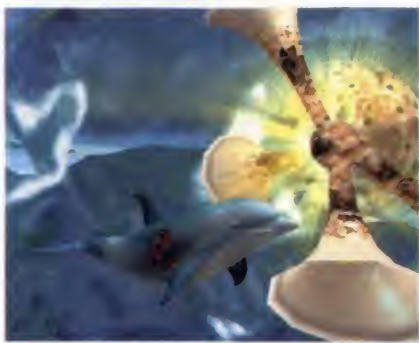
THIS IS INDEED A DISTURBING UNIVERSE...

Ecco's underwater setting has allowed Appaloosa to get away from the traditional "find the key" affairs that tend to haunt adventure games, introducing mostly non-linear game-



ECCO MAKES FRIENDS WITH SOME NUCLEAR FALLOUT

! For those of you who've never heard of Ecco — he made his first appearance in *Ecco The Dolphin and Ecco: The Tides Of Time* on the Sega Mega CD and also *Ecco Jr.* on the MegaDrive.



ECCO AND HIS INTER-RACIAL MARRIAGE WAS NEVER ACCEPTED BY THE OTHER SEALIFE

play in the form of a wide variety of tasks and challenges. As the environments progress from naturalistic worlds to more technologically advanced ones, so too do the puzzles. Early on you may have to rescue a turtle cowering in fear of a few sharks, whereas later you may be manipulating arcane looking levers. Ecco's style of gameplay won't be to everyone's tastes, and can be frustrating at times. Even so, Ecco's maneuverability and

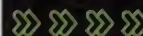
wealth of abilities combined with the variety of environments, sea creatures, puzzles and interactivity really come together into a cohesive whole. *Defender of the Future* is the sort of game where you can lose yourself for hours simply swimming around, admiring the visuals, teasing the turtles and attempting daring aerial maneuvers over and over again. And that's what being a dolphin is all about, right? ■

FREE WILLY?

Ecco encounters a wide variety of other sealife in his quest and they are all, without fail, animated beautifully and convincingly. The selection includes whales, turtles, moray eels, manta rays, stingrays, octopus and more. Knowing them all is important. Some creatures, like sharks, are obviously enemies, whereas others are not so clear cut. Most types of fish, for instance, are edible or useful in some way. One species, however, is poisonous if eaten, and the only way to cure this is to eat a poisonous species of jellyfish!



JOHNWEST-O-METER



PLUS

Amazing visuals and great sound too! 60Hz option, full screen PAL.

MINUS

Might be too aimless for some. Motion sickness is also a possibility.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
94	90	89

OVERALL

90

Defender of the Future represents a genre all to itself. Ecco may not be for everyone, but is a rare catch.

69 » HYPER



ECCO - SO HARD HE GOT A TATTOO



DAIKATANA

It's been three years in the making, and now it's here. **Eliot Fish** steps on a frog...



AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: First Person Shooter
 PLAYERS: 1-Multi
 PUBLISHER: Eidos Interactive
 PRICE: \$89.95
 RATING: M
 REQUIRED: P233, 32MB RAM, 3D Card
 DESIRED: P11 400+, 64MB RAM
 SUPPORTS: OpenGL, Direct3D

Over three years ago, John Romero left id Software to start Ion Storm. At the time, everyone still thought of the man as a gaming God, having worked on some of id Software's biggest hits — Wolfenstein 3D, Doom 1 & 2, and Quake. The thought that he would be able to concentrate on developing his own First Person baby without the other egos at

id Software fighting with him for cranium space was an exciting one. The man was considered a genius. Well, his long-laboured, much-troubled, very expensive game is finally here. Daikatana. Now, surely, we should all be jumping up and down, ripping the shrink-wrap off the box with our teeth, right? Dancing naked with the instruction manual and licking the CD tray... right? Uhhh... well actually, playing Daikatana makes you wonder if John Romero ever really had any talent at all. Where exactly did that reported \$30 million go to? It certainly didn't seem to find its way into feeding the development of this game. Are there a bunch of programmers sitting back on some beach in the Bahamas somewhere as we watch this crappy opening FMV?

SHOW ME THE MONEY

Daikatana began development when the Quake engine was the hottest thing out there. However, they had to switch over to the Quake 2 engine as they were still working on the game a year or more later, and the transition seems to have been a problematic one. It may now be running on the Quake 2 engine, but it still feels like Quake 1. Actually, it even still looks like Quake 1. The gibs certainly do. Player movement has the same Quake feel — fast and erratic — plus the Quake 1 physics seem to be in place. I guess that's the result of beginning development of a game and shipping it over three years later. It's not that the Quake 1 engine is bad, it's just that it doesn't date very well. We have other 3D engines out there

now that can do sooo much more, that with Daikatana, you can't help but feel as if you're playing an old game.

The first episode in Daikatana is probably the worst set of levels in the whole game, so it makes you wonder why Ion Storm were happy to have the game begin in such a horridly unimpressive way. For starters, a) the first enemies are tiny frogs and thin mosquitoes that are very hard to see, b) the environment is way too dark even with the gamma adjusted, c) your weapon makes so many flashy effects it obscures where you're shooting and d) the level design is atrocious. This is more frustrating than fun and it's an example of the plethora of design issues that plague this game. Take ladders for instance. Why is it so

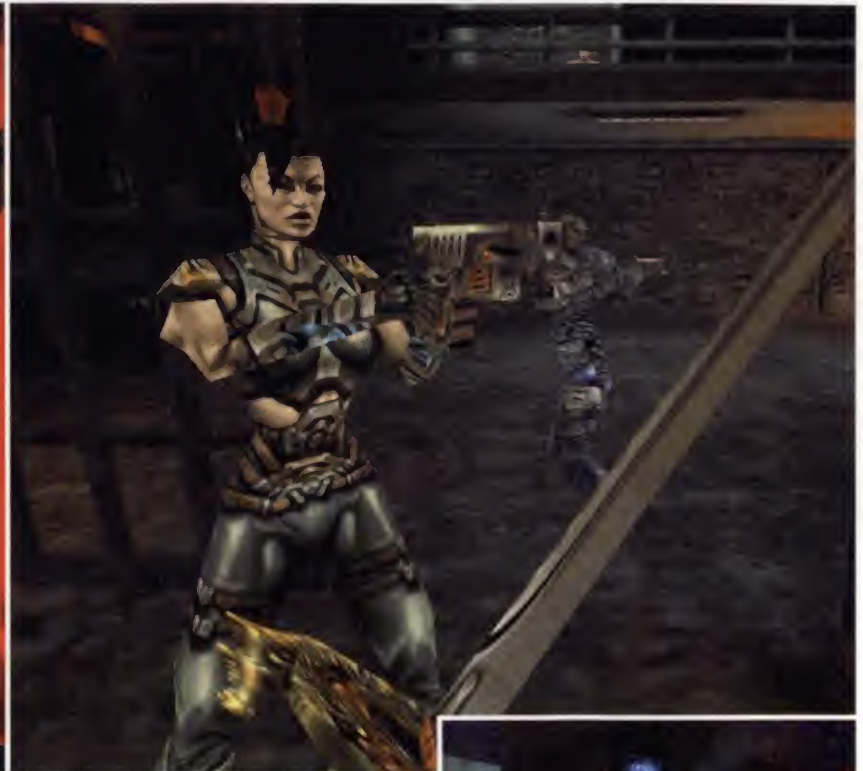




John Romero's girlfriend, "Killcreek" (a former female Quake player) recently posed naked in US Playboy magazine. Computer geeks all over the States probably self-combusted when they found out about that one...



ROMERO, I HAVE COME TO CLAIM YOUR SOUL FOR CRIMES AGAINST GAMEPLAY



hard to go down a simple ladder? Why do we have to put up with falling to our death, because the programmers couldn't get it right? We all know what it's like to die unfairly in a game — when you're shot by enemies that are placed out of view or when you fall and die because they didn't get the clipping right on a polygon — it has nothing to do with the skill of the player, and as a result, it just makes you angry at the game. Well now in Daikatana, a game that is swamped with these problems, it just got even worse. To be able to save your game, you have to find Save Gems that are scattered throughout the levels. The Gems are never in logical places (like coughed up by a boss after you kill it), but seemingly randomly placed in the

map. This means that you have to replay huge sections because you didn't quite make it to the next gem. If the game was fun, maybe we wouldn't mind, but when it's an exercise in frustration then you wonder why you're bothering with a game that makes you want to take to your monitor with a hammer.

AI — ANNOYING INTELLIGENCE

If you didn't think it could get any worse that the abhorrent Save Gem concept, then think again. The Artificial Intelligence of your teammates in Daikatana only results in more deaths — either to you or their own stupid skins. The main problems are that you need your teammates with you to exit a level and if they die at any point in time it's Game Over.

Now considering their AI is so bad that they'll run in front of you when you're trying to shoot, or wander off in a level and die, or that sometimes they decide they can't jump the simplest incline or that a doorway is too challenging to pass through... argh, it's painful to even relive the monotony of baby sitting those idiots here in print. Maybe we could also lay some blame on the poor level design. In short, some of these levels are terrible, difficult to negotiate and the ugly textures and lighting make them hard to even see. It may sound like I'm angry... and I am! Daikatana just makes you feel that way.

To put it simply, Daikatana fails in nearly every respect. It's more annoying than fun to play, and that's a sin. Suck it down, John. ■



GIB-D-METER



PLUS

Co-op mode is cool fun as it removes the annoying AI sidekicks.

MINUS

You'll feel ripped off countless times due to poor game design.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
70	62	59

OVERALL

60

A regrettable experience. They should have just canned it.

71 »HYPER





MAKEN X

Because Kevin Cheung knows symbiotic weaponry so well, we gave him this game...

If you're a Dreamcast owning First Person Shooter fan, then get happy, because soon we'll have the mouse and keyboard and games like System Shock 2 and Half Life...



AVAILABLE: Now
 CATEGORY: Action
 PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: Atlus
 PRICE: \$89.95
 RATING: M
 SUPPORTS: VMU, Vibration Pack

As a general rule, first person shooters and consoles don't mix. There are the odd exceptions, though. Goldeneye and Perfect Dark, while grotesque and incomprehensible to most mouse-oriented PC gamers, work quite well on a control pad. But a first person sword-swinging game? Well, Atlus should at least get some credit for trying.

Maken X is the central figure in a grossly misguided sci-fi story. It plays on the psychological "definition of self" fad that Evangelion fans will be familiar with, where the Maken X is an artificial being that can only live when psychologically bound to another living person. It's symbiotic. And it can leap from person to person, "brain jacking" as it's called, taking on the knowledge and physical traits of its hosts.

The irony is that while the Maken X represents the forefront of psychological research, its true purpose is to be used as a secret weapon against a powerful psion intent on ruling the world. As such, the Maken X manifests its physical appearance in the form of a sword held by the host.

MAKING BUTTERFLIES WITH YOUR HANDS

The game is presented in first person perspective. The analogue thumb pad moves you forwards and back, and turns left and right. The left trigger lets you look around freely, but it disables your ability to move whilst attacking. The right trigger enables strafe, the Y button locks on to a target, the A button jumps, and the X button is the all-important attack button where you use the Maken X to hack baddies into little pieces.

With such an arrangement, Maken X is an exercise in pure tedium. There isn't even an option to change the button configuration. All fans of first person shooters — even Goldeneye and Perfect Dark fans — will be grappling at their control pads with contorted, mangled fingers before chucking the pad in disgust. You cannot do more than three things at once without suffering some kind of cramp. Want to jump in the air, lock on to an enemy and slash him without falling over the edge? Good luck. Maken X is simply not user friendly.

If you can persevere through the first couple of levels and attain some measure of mastery over the controls, Maken X is actually quite a good adventure game. Each stage offers an even mix of simple puzzles, Mario-style platform jumping, and straight-out bad-guy butchery with your demon sword. Progress even further, and you'll find more depth being offered in the way of new special

attacks, counter-attacks, and other cool manoeuvres for close combat. Some levels also can only be conquered by brain-jacking the right characters. Some of them can perform martial arts moves like leaping over an enemy and attacking them from behind; whilst others can throw projectile weapons and charge up for extra power.

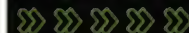
That being the case, Maken X is the kind of game that can grow on you with some serious time and effort. However, we're talking about some major patience and someone who can accept using a sword in a genre that's dominated by ass-kicking guns with barrels you could fit your fist inside. We're also talking about someone who can stomach long spiels of lacklustre voice acting for a hole-ridden sci-fi script that you can't even skip through.

By themselves, none of the faults in Maken X are that horrible. There are plenty of great games with suspect plot lines, and there are just as many with inappropriate control interfaces. Add them together along with the rest of the problems in Maken X, however, and it can potentially destroy whatever enjoyment there is to be had. What's particularly pertinent here is Maken X would've been much more enjoyable if it were controlled through a mouse. With the Dreamcast's marketing focus shifting to big-name first person titles like Quake 3 Arena and Outriggers, Sega and its customers had better hope the upcoming mouse peripheral is launched without a

hitch. Either that or they'd better have a serious rethink about how the DC control pad is implemented, because in its present form, it just doesn't work. Maken X is a rental candidate, and maybe a 'try before you buy'.



LIVINGSWORD-O-METER



PLUS

Solid, seamless graphics.

MINUS

Retarded voice acting. Impossible control interface.

VISUALS 87 SOUND 80 GAMEPLAY 77

OVERALL

75

A competent first person adventure game, let down quite badly by the convoluted control system.



GRIND SESSION

DMC goes the burl on a gnarly one...

AVAILABLE: August

CATEGORY: Skateboard sim

PLAYERS: 1-2

PUBLISHER: Sony

PRICE: \$69.95

RATING: G

SUPPORTS: Dual Shock

Having suffered from a plague of mediocre snowboarding games for years, it seems the PlayStation is about to experience a similar phenomenon vis-à-vis skateboarding. There is one, and only one reason for this: the phenomenal success of Tony Hawk's Skateboarding. A totally ignored avenue of game development until Tony appeared on the scene, skateboarding is now getting some attention, because Tony has demonstrated there's big bucks to be had in it.

WON'T SOMEBODY PLEASE THINK OF THE CHILDREN?

All skateboard games will live or die by comparison with Tony Hawk (and the soon to be released sequel). Thrasher: Skate and Destroy took a completely different tack, by focusing on the technical side of skateboarding. It was frustrating, but at least it was different. By contrast, Grind Session so closely follows the format of Tony that it plays like some kind of unofficial sequel.

Grind Session gives you a variety of play options, but the main game is the one player tournament. Progressing through the levels is done on the basis of 'respect points'. Respect is earned in a variety of ways. Busting tricks earns you points, and in a move sure to corrupt the kiddies, so does vandalism (skating into bins etc). An interesting addition are the 'technical lines'. By pressing L2, your skater surveys the area with his 'skaters eye', indicating the lines to carve for extra points. This

give you incentive to learn the areas well, and work out how to link up and master these difficult lines.

The levels themselves are quite nicely designed, with large skate-able areas, and plenty of ramps, jumps, and bowls. However they are let down by poor graphics, which sometimes make the surfaces seem muddy and indistinct, making it difficult to know whether you're about to skate up a ramp, or hit a wall.

HEY CUTE STUFF, HAVEN'T I SEEN YOU SOMEWHERE BEFORE?

Now, here's the rub: the trick system is identical to that of Tony Hawk. Board Flips are executed with square, grinds with triangle, spins with shoulder buttons etc. This makes it easy to get into, and the layout is intuitively simple. But it begs the question 'what's the point?' By utilising the same system, Grind Session is attempting to compete on the same ground as a game that is already massively successful. While there are a few extra moves, like the ability to backflip, or do boardslides, in essence Grind Session has ripped the core out of Tony Hawk, and slapped it in a new graphical shell.

The game is also let down by a lack of 'realism'. Graphically, the courses have a cartoony feel to them, and the physics engine really isn't up to the same standard. There are many occasions where you're going to land a trick, and you end up in a chronic bail, or vice versa. Grind Sessions simply doesn't convey the feel of skating as well as the game it's trying to imitate.

There's nothing particularly wrong with this game. It plays intuitively, there are plenty of tricks, and well designed courses. However, it loses respect big time for being such a thorough rip off. There are more moves



MASH-O-METER



PLUS

Playable, intuitive control, lots of levels.

MINUS

Totally derivative.

VISUALS

78

SOUND

74

GAMEPLAY

70

OVERALL

70

While technically a good game, Grind Session is close to plagiarism.

than Tony, to be sure, but Tony Hawk 2 is imminent, and the demos demonstrate far more depth and variety than Grind Session has to offer. If you need to skate, pick up Tony Hawk from a bargain bin, or wait until the sequel hits the shelves. ■



AND CUTE JAPANESE CHARACTER IS COMING TO KILL US



PINK DOESN'T EXACTLY SAY "TOUGH" NOW DOES IT

BOMBERMAN 64: THE SECOND ATTACK

Da bomb or a bomb? **Nick O'Shea** rigs his car with C4 and drives in to the Hyper offices to find out.

AVAILABLE: TDC
CATEGORY: 3D Puzzle/Platformer
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: Hudson Soft
PRICE: \$99.95
RATING: G
SUPPORTS: Rumble Pak

I remember, back when I was a kid, playing Super Bomberman on the SNES that I had purchased with the money I earned toiling long hours on a Woolworths checkout. The absolute riots that myself and three friends would have chained together with a multitap... unbelievable. The wee hours of the morn would be whiled away hurling highly explosive devices at each other and rolling around in hysterics. That was later followed up with the Saturn version of Bomberman. Holy of holies, this allowed you to have TEN players simultaneously trying to reduce each other to ash. JOY! A small fortune on controllers later, you were in 32-bit multiplayer gaming heaven... And then came the 64-bit translation, Bomberman Hero. Once known for its classic puzzle-filled gameplay and multiplayer madness, it seemed that Bomberman was never intended to live in a three-dimensional universe.

HANDS OFF MY DETONATOR

The visuals that greet (assail?) your eyes when you turn on your N64 are probably some of the worst you will have seen in several years. This might be excusable if Second Attack was a

launch title for the system, but it is just plain unacceptable at this stage of the console's life. Everything looks smudged and blurry, the framerate is appalling and the polygon counts of the characters are nearly laughable. One of the bosses has a torso that is nothing more than a cube.

The single player game sees Bomberman making his way through seven (not particularly) different worlds. Each world consists of a number of interconnected rooms. You enter a room, bomb the crap out of the contents and then you are allowed to progress. The enemies seem to wander about aimlessly, taking little notice of you and making no effort to attack, which lets you breeze through the levels. Any puzzles are a simple matter of 'hit that switch' or 'push that block', and would hardly challenge a two year-old. The bosses on the other hand are rather tough (and very similar), and with the loose controls, you often find yourself having to continue and take them on more than once - a second encounter involving sitting through boring dialogue that you can't skip. Your compatriot Pommy opens the opportunity for two player co-operative mode, but sadly, Pommy's capabilities are such that it probably wouldn't keep anyone interested for long.

BOMBERMAN DEFUSED

While the multiplayer aspect is easily the strongest part of the Second Attack package, it still falls flat much like the multiplay of Bomberman Hero.

The playfields of the old 16 and 32-bit days had a claustrophobic feel, and you really had to be on your toes - otherwise you'd get boxed in between a bomb and a hard place. The immense joy from delivering such a fate onto an unwilling victim is nearly indescribable. Ever since the change to 3D, the playfields have been much more open, and evading explosions has become more a simple matter of sidestepping. The offensive element of gameplay has been downgraded to the degree where you practically have to throw a bomb onto your opponent's head to knock them out cold before you have much hope of getting them with the blast - this makes for pretty yawn-inducing play, indeed.

I'd like to see a 2D Bomberman revival, perhaps moreso in a 2.5D sense a la Kirby 64. Keep the classic 2D environments and use the excess grunt to power 3D characters and jazzy graphical effects. Maybe it's just a dream, but a dream that could possibly revive the long lost Bomberman legacy. Now it's your turn Hudson Soft!



The Scourge of the Spaceways Lilith

Where are all the other Nintendo 64 reviews this issue? It seems that due to the arrival of Perfect Dark (reviewed last issue), it's pretty quiet out there in Nintendo land...

FIZZ-O-METER



PLUS

Bomberman returns...

MINUS

Probably worse than the last Bomberman 3D effort.

VISUALS 42 **SOUND** 75 **GAMEPLAY** 60

OVERALL

55

Classic frantic gameplay, wherefore art thou, classic frantic gameplay.



V-RALLY 2 EXPERT EDITION



Kevin Cheung somehow powerslides even when he's not driving! It's kinda weird...



AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Driving
PLAYERS:	1-4
PUBLISHER:	Infogrames
PRICE:	\$89.95
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	Steering Wheel, VMU, Vibration Pack

While the V Rally franchise enjoys a healthy rivalry with Colin McRae on other systems, it has an open field on the Dreamcast. Sure, Sega Rally 2 already exists, but its arcade-style racing doesn't qualify for providing the brand of rally simulation that V Rally or Colin McRae strive for. V Rally 2 EE follows hot on the heels of its PlayStation counterpart with a swag of new features that only the Dreamcast can provide.

IS IT RALLY GOOD?

V Rally 2 EE is an example of what the genre looks like when it's at its best. The cars are immaculately detailed, displaying all of the labels, lettering and paid adverts with such a crisp clarity that you could almost touch it. Even from the in-car view, you can see the car's interiors as well as your own hands in fine form. During the races, the car can sustain visible damage in the form of cracked windows, broken lights, and some pretty serious denting on the body of the car. That's not even mentioning all the dust, dirt, and mud that'll get caked all over it.

The tracks are just as pretty. The texture detail on surfaces like the roads and cliff faces is incredibly realistic. Combined with the surrounding greenery, weather effects and real-time lighting (particularly the night tracks), V Rally 2 EE is virtually perfect in execution, especially given the fact that the game runs at 60fps more reliably than Sega Rally 2. As a matter of technicality, there is frequent pop-up in the distance, but it's only noticeable because the rest of the game is so faultlessly executed.

V Rally 2 EE's relative graphical perfection reveals that the genre still has far to go. Some tracks look positively vibrant as onlookers clamber out of your way, while other tracks just look static and dull. Crowds are inanimate 2D cutouts, as are the surrounding trees and shrubbery. Much of it is savagely overfiltered to create the effect of a 3D environment, but more so to hide these flat surfaces placed randomly throughout the track. The problem is that as soon as you drive straight through them, you can't help but feel cheated — and if you'll indulge this stretched analogy, it's like driving through the entrance of the Bat Cave: you know it's not there. At least there's a leaf-bristling sound effect when you do hit the odd shrub.

BUMPER CARS

The only serious complaint to be had of V Rally 2 EE is in the driving mechanics. Basically, it's no Colin McRae. It still has many arcade quali-

ties that sim fans will dislike. For starters, the game is way too fast, and it's implausible for any car to be flipped so easily. Steering is also a bit of a problem, as the analogue thumb pad does no justice to the finer curves of each track; and the brakes are too subtle to be effectively used. As a result, power-slides lose a lot of strategic value and wind up becoming more of a visual novelty. It's nearly impossible to avoid playing bumper-cars at night thanks to the woefully timed advice from your co-pilot. Less experienced players will no doubt appreciate this phenomenon by day.

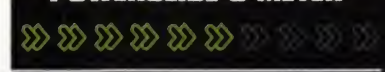
In spite of these faults, most people will enjoy V Rally 2 EE, especially for its track editor and 4-player mode. The questionable physics thankfully aren't too punishing — only the serious racing and rally fans need worry about them. In that regard, however, it's a little disappointing that Infogrames didn't do more to improve on them. On the whole though, this is a hair-raising Rally experience that'll have you completely addicted to your Dreamcast for ages.



It's going to be a tough battle, with Colin McRae Rally 2 headed to the Dreamcast in the near future!



POWERSLIDE-O-METER



PLUS

A novel track editor. 4-player mode.

MINUS

Floaty driving mechanics. Car flips too easily.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92	86	89

OVERALL

91

V Rally 2 EE gets top marks for presentation and execution. Now they just need to tweak those physics...

Beware of hand injuries whilst playing Bishi Bashi Special. We're not kidding! Mario Party on the N64, resulted in Nintendo developing special gloves to be used with the game to prevent any potential lawsuits!



BISHI BASHI SPECIAL

Nick O'Shea tries desperately to write an amusing intro. Maybe some day...

AVAILABLE: Now

CATEGORY: Party Game/Button Mash

PLAYERS: 1-8

PUBLISHER: Konami

PRICE: \$79.95

RATING: G

SUPPORTS: Memory Card, Dual Shock

I think Konami have some kind of secret agenda. Behind the scenes, the big K has been implementing an insidious plan under our very noses. Gradually, through their series of arcade hits, they are trying to eradicate all those that lack physical co-ordination. It started with Beatmania, with numerous follow-up rhythm games, mostly musical. The latest weapon of 'dexterity cleansing' has landed on the PlayStation - Bishi Bashi Special.

MISHI MASHI

Bishi Bashi is probably best described as Mario Party without the board, while Bishi Bashi Special is a compilation of the two instalments of the series, Super Bishi Bashi and Hyper Bishi Bashi. The game is essentially a series of mini-games bundled together to test your reactions and co-ordination. Some of the levels even borrow from some of Konami's better-known rhythm games such as Guitar Freaks

and Dance Dance Revolution. One unusual spin of the title is the way that a lot of the mini-games are subtle variations on everyday life, such as walking down the street, cooking food, eating a meal, or turning a trip to the lavatory into a race (which it can be sometimes, when you don't have the rubber pants on). I was walking to the Hyper offices just the other day dodging rolling logs and missiles thinking what a good idea for a game it would be, as a matter of fact. With a name like Bishi Bashi, the game could have only been the brainchild of the Japanese - and so it is (as chance would have it). Bishi Bashi is full of the trademark Japanese irreverent style of humour. While this can be somewhat disorientating, it's also bizarrely amusing. The graphics are quite simple, cartoony in an anime style and functional, with sound to match. The music maintains a frantic sense of urgency while the wacky sound effects and voice samples maintain a comedic atmosphere. The zany way the announcer shouts 'WiiNAH - PlayAH WON!' in that thick Japanese accent really adds to the cheese factor.

BISH BASH I WAS TAKIN' A BATH

Every stage is preceded by a loud 'ATTENTION', and a brief description

of the controls used. There seem to be pretty slick loading times for a PlayStation title, but they may just have trickily concealed the loading behind the two menu screens that lead both in and out of the stage. The simple three button controls don't really translate faithfully onto the fifteen button, two stick Dual Shock pads though. Stages that involve button mashing have become ridiculously easy, and the levels that encompass colour recognition aren't as intuitive as they could have been. This doesn't affect the gameplay heaps, but enough to require a token whinge. Perhaps a custom Bishi Bashi controller could be released for those with money burning holes in their pockets - that would solve this minor interface hassle.

The game is obviously intended for party play, but due to the design, only allows two players simultaneously. This makes for a bit of controller passing, but does prove to be rather good fun. The single player game is good for learning the controls, but probably won't capture your attention for more than a few times through. Bishi Bashi Special should prove riotous fun for a weekend rental with some friends, but probably doesn't warrant a purchase off the cuff. ■

MASH-O-METER



PLUS

Tests your recognition and reactions to the max.

MINUS

Best as a party game - pretty ordinary otherwise.

VISUALS

55

SOUND

84

GAMEPLAY

85

OVERALL

69

Fun for a while, but may not go the distance.



WIP3OUT: SPECIAL EDITION

PLAYSTATION

We're all wetting ourselves in anticipation of Wipeout Fusion on PlayStation 2, but until that arrives, Psygnosis have bestowed upon the gaming community Wip3out Special Edition. This tasty morsel comes packing not only Wip3out, but a selection of eight courses from the first two games, with Wip3out graphics, speed, powerups, ships and multiplayer options. In many



ways this is the definitive 32bit Wipeout game.

The only downside is that the courses from the earlier games are in the same minimal graphics style as Wip3out, so they've lost some of their lush original vibe. That said, this game still looks fantastic, and the frame rate and general speed that the game now runs at far surpasses the original experience, so the tradeoff is more than worth it. You'll blow your mind hooning around Altima VII for the first time in phantom class. Better yet, all the speed classes are available from the word go, catering to all skill levels.

It would have been nice if this game had included a "best of" Wipeout's music as well, as I yearn

for the original soundtrack when playing the original courses. Another point of dispute is the selection of tracks included from the first two games, as there are seven courses missing — we would have loved to have seen Karbonis V or Spilskinanke in this game.

The Wipeout devoted might feel a little shortchanged by this title, since you're not really getting anything new, but as a compilation, Wipeout Special Edition is awesome value, and a must buy for anyone who hasn't played the series yet.

CAM SHEA

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
90	89	91	90

i	AVAILABLE: Now
	CATEGORY: Anti-grav racing
	PLAYERS: 1-2
	PUBLISHER: Sony
	PRICE: \$49.95
	RATING: G
	SUPPORTS: Dual Shock, Mem card.

MUSIC 2000

PC

The Music releases on PlayStation were quite revolutionary, placing powerful music making at practically anyone's fingertips. Music 2000 has now been ported to PC — a much trickier market for this kind of software. There's already a

massive range of music making software, from the cheaper entry level packages like EJay and Rebirth through to professional software like Cubase.

Music 2000 comes with a massive library of riffs to play with, covering most electronic music genres. These are largely a disappointment however, with a lot of cheese to trawl through in search of the worthwhile samples. The options for creating, editing and reworking riffs mean that you'll be able to come up with some unique sounds and beats, but these tools are harder to use than they should be, reducing their effectiveness.

Using a mouse makes zipping around the options a lot easier, but the inter-

face is a little too fiddly. Many of the buttons are annoyingly small and utilising many of the tools seems counter-intuitive. The manual is comprehensive, but the game's help menus are a joke — so keep the manual close at hand.

The biggest changes over the PlayStation version are the ability to jam with up to three other people on the internet or over a network, and funkier sampling options. Midi compatibility is also a big plus, but chances are that if you've paid for midi outputs on your PC you've already got some decent software and external hardware that will do the job better than this.

The bottomline with Music 2000 is that Codemasters really needed

to take the product way beyond what the PlayStation version offered. While Music 2000 is still a useful piece of software, Codemasters simply haven't reworked it enough for the PC market.

CAM SHEA



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
70	80	87	83

WARLORDS: BATTLECRY

PC

Warlords is a trusty strategy series that has never failed to deliver solid and reliable strategy gaming with a fantasy feel. It's a winning formula of turn-based troop management and map exploration that hooks you in the same way Heroes Of Might And Magic does. In an attempt to do something

new with the series, SSC have decided to take the Warlords series Real Time. Whilst this is new for Warlords, it's not exactly a new concept for strategy gamers, and in fact, Warlords Battlecry feels like a bit of a rehash of classics like Warcraft — maybe throw some Age Of Empires in for good measure. Battlecry is based around the "hero" concept, allowing you to nurture yourself to become a powerful hero, depending on how you distribute your experience points during your career. You can also pick up other powerful characters along the way, to help bolster your standard troop types that are generated in the usual RTS method, and armies carry over into subsequent

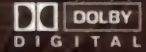
missions. However, some of the gameplay is typical fare — go mine for resources and spend them on buildings, troops and upgrades — nothing too revolutionary. There's an epic campaign here that actually allows you to choose to be good or evil after a number of missions, which is a nice touch, and certainly this is a tough game, but it feels a little too familiar to truly excite. All up, Battlecry is a decent romp, has a scenario editor and good multiplayer options, but it doesn't do anything terribly fascinating with the RTS genre.

ELIOT FISH



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
75	80	79	79

i	AVAILABLE: Now
	CATEGORY: RTS
	PLAYERS: 1-4
	PUBLISHER: Red Orb
	PRICE: \$89.95
	RATING: M
	REQUIRED: P200, 64MB RAM
	DESIRED: PII 266+



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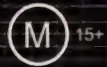


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CATZ

DINOSAUR

MARIO GOLF

SPAWN

i AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Pet Sim
PRICE: \$49.95
PUBLISHER: Mindscape
FORMAT: Game Boy Color only

i AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Adventure
PRICE: \$49.95
PUBLISHER: Ubisoft
FORMAT: Game Boy Color only

i AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Golf
PRICE: \$49.95
PUBLISHER: Nintendo
FORMAT: Game Boy Color only

i AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Platformer
PRICE: \$49.95
PUBLISHER: Konami
FORMAT: Game Boy Color only

» Catz is an interesting addition to the "virtual pet" genre. It's also one of a pair of games, Dogz being the other game also available (to those of you who dislike felines I guess). If you're sick of fantasy creatures, like Pokémon, then Catz is also a nice return to something a bit more familiar, and for this reason alone the game is quite endearing.



First you choose the type of cat you'd like to take care of — Persian, Calico or Siamese. You name your furry friend, choose their colour and depending on how you treat them, develop their personality. Although Catz comes down to mindless "babysitting" at times, with no true reward in terms of blossoming personality, the game is still addictive and you'll still care that your cat is well-groomed, or affectionate or just simply happy with it's lot. What's cool is that the game supports the infrared link so you can trade with other Catz users and even Dogz users. The supply shelf, accessed by hitting Select, allows you to grab a milk bottle to feed your cat, as well as a brush to groom it, a ball of string for it to play with and other devices to ensure a happy healthy cat. A simple title, which doesn't have huge lasting value, but it certainly cute enough to fiddle with for a while.

FRANK DRY



» The movie-to-game conversion curse returns. Whilst Dinosaur from Disney may be a fascinating CG film, as a Game Boy game it bites the spicy Kranksy. This is a horrid cash-in that doesn't even try to provide the gamer with anything remotely resembling entertainment. Disney Interactive have attempted to make an adventure game (you know, go collect these items etc) but the game is so slow and awkward you're guaranteed to switch it off within minutes of playing. Three dinosaurs and three lemurs make up the controllable characters, and you'll be switching between them to solve a variety of puzzles. Whilst this is a concept which has worked well in other games, in



Dinosaur it becomes rather dull and tedious. Visually, the game is also a let down. Sure, the Game Boy Color doesn't have a hope in hell of providing anything as startling as the movie, but this cart is quite lacklustre compared to in-house Nintendo games for instance. All up, Dinosaur stinks of a rushed movie cash-in which is only going to disappoint fans who are looking to continue the experience on their Game Boy.

FRANK DRY



» Mario Golf is one of those endearing little titles that totally disrupts your sleeping pattern! You'll literally be up until dawn having "just another go". The gameplay is simple, but so well exe-



cuted that you won't be able to put the darn thing down! With four complete 18 hole courses, an "adventure" mode, and the chance to show Mario how to get a grip on his club properly, Mario Golf is a charmer. You can create your own golfer, and then start entering yourself into tournaments, hanging out with the other golfers in the lounge, and try to win your way to success. Each of the four clubs are run by a different personality, and that is reflected in the courses and environments.

If you have Mario Golf on the Nintendo 64, you can even use the Transfer Pak to upload your custom golfer from your Game Boy Color into your Nintendo 64 game. Whilst the gameplay consists of just hitting the button at the right time, just like most Golf games we've played (even on the PC), there are a whole stack of different gameplay modes including some devious minigames which help break the frustration of a painful tournament. Utterly addictive stuff, Mario Golf is one of those must-have Game Boy Color games, even if you don't like the sport!

FRANK DRY

» Spawn is a great comic book, but as a video game, all incarnations have sucked. Spawn on the Game Boy is another embarrassing attempt at gameplay. For starters, it's a side-scrolling beat 'em up with absolutely no depth of gameplay.



You literally walk Mr. Spawn along and jump up and down ledges, dispatching enemies as they walk into your path. This really is the bottom of the barrel when it comes to interactivity. There is very limited appeal here even if you are a massive fan of Spawn and the Spawn film.



Visually, the game is also quite average. Whilst everything is quite clear and smooth, the animation is pretty poor and sometimes you find yourself even laughing at how dorky Spawn actually looks. For some reason, the way they've drawn him, it looks like he's running around in a corset and bra. Well, I guess it wouldn't be funny if you'd just paid \$49.95 for the cartridge.

Konami tried to vary the gameplay with a motorbike racing section and some variations on the side-scrolling theme, but all up, Spawn is a yawn.

FRANK DRY

6/10

4/10

8/10

4/10



WHAT THE HELL'S A LASER DISC?

Well, its about the size of a 12 inch record, but where the analogue format of vinyl (with its warm sound, and oh so deep bass) was soon to meet its untimely demise in the mainstream market, laser disc was a new digital technology, like an oversized CD. It has been hugely popular in Asia for films and karaoke, and only with the advent of DVD has laser disc been usurped as the best home cinema solution.



We'll let the game's own intro fill you in on the oh so compelling story:

"Dragon's Lair - a fantasy adventure where you become a valiant knight on a quest to rescue the fair princess from the clutches of an evil dragon. You control the actions of a daring adventurer finding his way through the castle of a dark wizard who has enchanted it with treacherous monsters and obstacles. In the mysterious caverns below the castle, your odyssey continues against the awesome forces that oppose your efforts to reach the dragon's lair. Lead on adventurer, your quest awaits."

HOT AND BUTTERY

Imagine you're back in 1983. It's scary I know, but for the sake of the next couple of paragraphs, somewhat necessary. Ignore the tight denim jacket and thick Mr T gold chains you're wearing, avoid mirrors for fear of being blinded by your glam rock mullet, and for God's sake don't turn on the stereo or you might catch Michael Jackson singing "I'm a lover not a fighter" alongside Paul "Punce of The Beatles" McCartney. Instead, let's think about gaming in the year 1983. As you may recall, the Commodore

64 was serving up hot buttery gaming goodness at home, with the Atari 2600 fading on the horizon.

The arcade, however, was still the place to play the hottest

and most advanced new games. Advanced in the sense, that is, that the graphics were largely comprised of little pixel things interacting with other little pixel things. Not that there's anything wrong with that mind you. Space Invaders, Pac Man and Asteroids may have looked simple, but in the quest for the ultimate high score they sure were addictive. Imagine, if you will, that in this climate of hugely playable, but somewhat graphically abstract games, that a cabinet appeared in your local arcade that looked like nothing you'd ever seen before. Like a Saturday morning cartoon at your fingertips, but better. Way better.

This was Dragon's Lair. Featuring a goofy hero, an unrealistically proportioned princess, an evil wizard, a huge dragon and countless other nasties, Dragon's Lair looked about a million times better than any other game in the arcade. Using the new laser disc technology, Dragon's Lair had high resolution animated cartoon graphics, and caused a huge fuss when it was released. Crowds formed around the machine at every arcade, and even the steep price to play didn't deter gamers eager to soak up this new experience.

Several years in the making, Dragon's Lair was created by animation legend Don Bluth (involved in many classic Disney films, and well known for NIMH) and Rick Dyer. The animation itself cost over \$1.3 million US, and amounted to around 22 minutes of footage all up. It certainly looked great, but how did this game manage to look so much better than anything else at the time?

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

By streaming the animation like a movie off the laser disc. Gameplay consisted of watching video sequences, then hitting the correct buttons at the right time to get through to the next sequence. Enter the wrong ones and you'd see a short death sequence, and be faced with paying to play on. It was essentially a videogame "Choose your own adventure", and the promised "You control the actions of a daring adventurer" in the intro sequence was more than a tad misleading. The controls were as basic as they come, consisting of "left, right, up, down and slash", and for all its graphical virtues, Dragon's Lair was a very shallow game, with little interactivity.

So where should Dragon's Lair sit in our chronology of gaming? Should it be remembered fondly for bringing an interesting new idea into the arcades - despite the skeletal gameplay? Or should it be scorned for putting aesthetics before playability, and for the way that any redeeming features were raped from the game with the glut of merchandising, sequels and console conversions (3Do, Jaguar, Sega CD and SNES among others) designed to cash in on the game's initial success?

In any case, Dragon's Lair was immensely successful, and anyone who's curious can buy the DVD re-release, or probably find the game to download on the net. Be warned, however, that you won't be downloading a "game" per se... more a collection of avi files...

DRAGON'S LAIR 3D - COMING SOON!

Blue Byte software are bringing PC gamers an all-new Dragon's Lair 3D in the very near future. Sporting a fully 3D engine, you will have full control of Dirk as he explores the environment over 20 levels.





PHOTON: THE IDIOT MENACE



i CATEGORY: Sci-fi, Action, Comedy
 PRODUCTION COMPANY: Photon Project/AIC
 ANIMATION: 9
 PLOT: 8
 JAPAN-BESS: Medium
 OVERALL: 10

The opening is pure gold. A renegade space pilot is running for dear life from the imperial fleet. The problem is, she's not getting far because a homing device is sewn into her panties, allowing the imperial commander to chase her directly with his astral projection. The first three minutes see her running frantically through her ship shedding one item of clothing after another as a ghost, laughing like a madman, follows close behind. Eventually, the mayhem causes her ship to crash on the isolated Sandy Planet. A felt-tipped pen falls from the ship during its entry into the

an even more bizarre love triangle that's the product of hilarious cross-cultural differences. High-tech space conquerors meet low-tech country hicks with insane super powers. Priceless moments that border on hentai, but remain tastefully done. Appropriate usage of super deformed characters.

Ridiculous rapid-fire dialogues that only a true fan would appreciate. You cannot ask for more than this.

Photon is basically a kid

with super strength. He has the IQ of a soiled head of lettuce. However, his loyalty and devotion to those he's sworn to protect are what drive him from one heroic act to another — even if it means

being married to a complete stranger by virtue of having "baka" written on his forehead.

Outside of www.baiting.org, I haven't laughed so hard at anything in ages. In fact, Photon is one of

the only series where I rewound the tape immediately after finishing it and watched it all over again. This series should not be missed by any anime fan. Guaranteed laughs all round.



JUNGLE DE IKOU!

i CATEGORY: Adventure, Comedy
 PRODUCTION COMPANY: Chaos Project/King Records
 ANIMATION: 7
 PLOT: 7
 JAPAN-BESS: Medium
 OVERALL: 7.5

Strength is determined by the size of a woman's breasts. At least that's the message of Jungle de Ikou, meaning 'let's go to the jungle'. Basically, the story is about a 10 year-old schoolgirl named Natsumi who has the ability to transform into the New Guinean Goddess of Fertility, Mii. Mii is possessed of magical abilities from the forest as well as the largest, bounciest pair of tits since Miko Mido. Mai Shiranui doesn't even compare.

Natsumi's powers are made possible by a trinket brought back from an archaeological dig by her father.

Unfortunately, the trinket also brings a prophecy of global destruction at the hands of Ongo, the God of Destruction, which she is meant to prevent. Her adventure leads her to meet other large-breasted spirits of the forest, gaining fame in the local newspaper and becoming a town's favourite pinup girl, and ultimately being the source of all manner of panty, bouncy breast and nose-bleed gags.

And worst of all, if Natsumi wants to transform into Mii, she has to perform a sacred dance which looks uncannily like a woman groping and fondling herself to orgasm. The funny thing is that the sequence is repeated every episode, just like the routines you see in

Voltron and Sailor Moon. Hmm... we've definitely come a long way since "By the Power of Grayskull".

Jungle de Ikou is utterly shameless, but nevertheless funny. The only reason you'll have for watching the entire series (which conveniently fits on one tape) is to see what manner of sight gag is going to come up next. By the end, oddities like Demon Beast Invasion 2 and Angel of Darkness seem less difficult to comprehend.



▶▶TIM LEVY

NAMCO

MR DRILLER



Who the %#! is Mr Driller? Mr Driller is a guy who knows how to get down — waaaaay down. In fact he knows how to get down to depths of up to 1000 meters by using his trusty 2 handed drill. With these killer driller skills, he has become the Ichiban (number one) driller of the world. Thus, when a small town has been experiencing a little problem in the form of giant multicoloured blocks pouring out of the ground from a depth of 1000 meters, it would only be natural to enlist the services of Susumu (a.k.a Mr Driller) to help solve the mystery.



decreasing the amount of blocks that can fall on to you.

KING OF THE DRILL

Ever since the ultimate video game puzzler Tetris took the video game world by storm in 1987, and made Nintendo millions of \$\$\$, everyone else has been attempting to repeat the success in one form or another with countless phoney cloneys. Although Mr Driller does borrow its multicoloured blockiness from Tetris, it also lends from another classic game of the eighties - Dig Dug. The combo of these two games does work well, and the goal of reaching the 1000 meter mark and discovering the source of the blocks is no mean feat. So, to find the answer to this little mystery, be prepared to use some major mind calculations in the game's later stages.

8.5/10



LICENSE TO DRILL

Mr Driller's objective is to make it 1000 meters (see depth-o-meter) vertically down without running out of air (see air-o-meter) or by being crushed by falling blocks. Sounds easy right? But no. If you were to drill straight down, you would rapidly run out of air. To obtain those vital air capsules, which give you an extra 20 points of air, you've got to do some horizontal drilling. This is where the puzzler action begins.

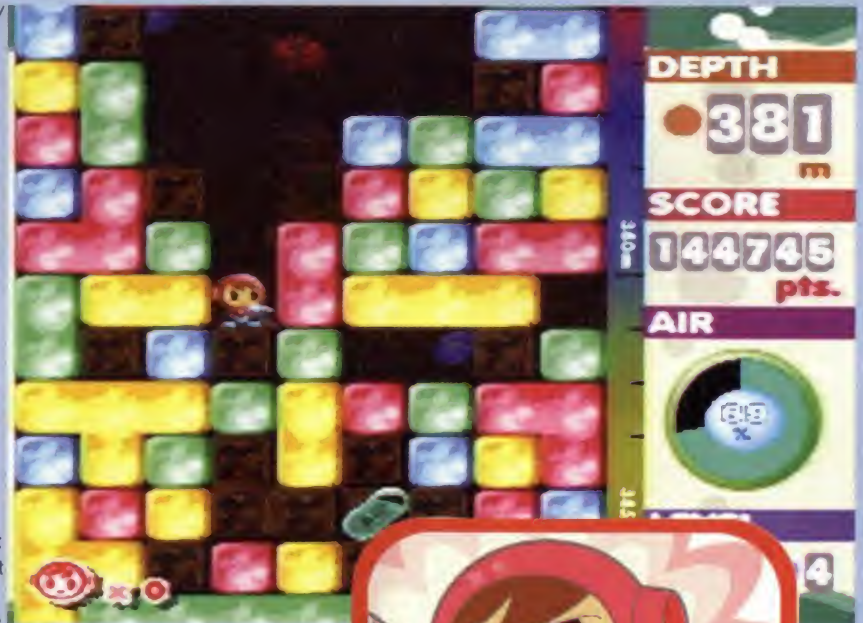
For some reason the blocks of similar colour will stick together if they fall and land next to another OR they will totally disappear if one

of the similar-coloured blocks in the link is drilled. If they fall on to similar blocks and total 4 or more in number, they will disappear as well, causing a chain reaction. Getting used to how to create safe "caves" and predicting how the blocks will fall and on to what is the key to this game.

The blocks also do not fall straight away. They will shake for about a second before they drop. This is where you must use rush tactics to get from cave to air to cave again. To add to the crushing equation, there are dreaded brown blocks which are strategically placed to get in your way. Make sure you don't get stuck between 2 brown blocks and remember you can only jump up one block height. If you drill into one of these brown blocks, you will lose 20 points of air.

The one kilometer descent is broken into 100 meter sections, each becoming progressively harder. In the deeper sections, instead of the traditional blue, green, pink and yellow blocks, there may be only green and yellow, which means big chain reactions and lots of quick reflex action.

If starting a new section, it is advised to not just go the straight vert, but to do a bit of horizontal digging, therefore



■ All games reviewed in Arcade Mode can be played at Galaxy World.

cheat mode



ULTIMATE GAMES HOTLINE

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1902 555 444

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CHU CHU ROCKET

DREAMCAST

Sonic Adventure Chaos

Successfully complete each of the twenty-five challenge mode levels to transform the mice into Chaos from Sonic Adventure.

NIGHTS angels

Successfully complete each of the twenty-five mania mode levels to transform the mice into angels from NIGHTS.

Hard mode puzzles

Successfully complete all puzzles in normal mode.

Special mode puzzles

Successfully complete all puzzles in hard mode.

Mania mode puzzles

Successfully complete all puzzles in special mode.

Full pause screen

Pause the game and press X + Y.

Save pictures from the web

You can save pictures onto your VMU while using Chu Chu Rocket's Dreamkey web browser. Place the cursor over the desired picture and press X + A on the controller.

Dreamkey web browser

This trick requires a Dreamcast keyboard, and can be used as a replacement for the standard Planetweb browser. Go to the Homepage in the main menu. Once the Chu Chu Rocket title appears, press [Ctrl] + O on the keyboard. The URL bar will appear, which allows you to type in any Internet address.

EVOLUTION: THE WORLD OF SACRED DEVICE

DREAMCAST

Bypass dialogue

Before a move is made during a battle, press B.

Infinite Naolin Gold

On the carrier where you fight Eugene is a room with a soldier lying on the bed. The window on the door has a red cross on it. Approach the shelf towards the back of the room and you will get a Naolin Gold each time that you talk to it.

Double attack

Attack a monster from behind to give your characters two attacks in a row.

Extra money

Successfully complete the game and

save it. Then, load the saved game to start with more money.

Save money

To save money when you have another character and you get to the final floor, switch to Gre and defeat the Boss. Additionally, Gre has the power to make the Boss wait longer.

Hammer Attack Sort

The Heaven Runs is the only place you can get the Hammer Attack Sort. Go there first.

Alternate costumes (Japanese version)

At the character selection screen, press X.

DEAD OR ALIVE 2

DREAMCAST

Original opening

Use the following steps to unlock the original opening sequence for the game, which features a nude clone of Kasumi. Set your age to "21" in the game options. Then, make a ranking in survival mode in any position and enter "REALDEMO" as a name. Once you have saved the game with the new ranking, you can set the age to any desired value.

Control victory pose view

When your character is doing their victory pose, hold X and press the D-pad or Analog-stick to move the camera. Hold B to zoom in at your character,

then press the D-pad or Analog-stick to move the camera.

3D character preview

Enter the vs. mode option screen and disable the "Quick Selector" selection. This will allow you to preview the fighters in 3D at the character selection screen and see their costumes.

Increased jiggling

Enter the options menu, and choose the game setting that allows you to set your age between 13 and 99. Increase your age to see more jiggling.

Kasumi's extra costume

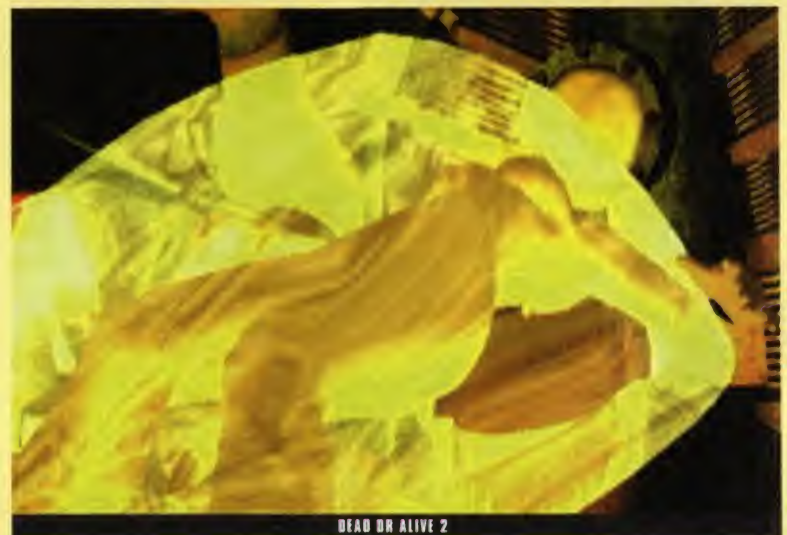
Choose story mode and select Kasumi's third (pink) costume. Play through the game until you fight against yourself. The normally pink costume that CPU player appears in will now be black. Note: You can not play in the black costume, as it is only available for the CPU Kasumi.

Fight in the nighttime Aerial Garden

Enable level select for versus mode. Then at the level selection screen, highlight Aerial Garden and press Y or R.

Hidden Ayane FMV sequence

Select Ayane and play through story mode until you fight Kasumi in the White Storm level. Knock her off the ledge into the ice cave. When you are in the cave, finish the fight. When you KO her you have to knock her at least ten feet away. The FMV sequence shows you shooting a blue smoke



DEAD OR ALIVE 2

object at her instead of the normal sequence of you saying, "You Runaway Shiobi." Note: Some practice may be required to get the correct ending to the fight.

Full pause screen

Pause the game and press R, or Y + B, or X + Y.

Taunt opponent

Use the following combos to taunt your opponent:

Press Left, Right, Left, R Press Right, Left, Right, R Press Down(2), R Press Back(2), R

Note: You can also substitute A + X + Y in place of R in the taunts.

Hidden artwork

Place the game disc in a PC compatible CD-ROM drive to find several images of the girls from the game in bikinis in the "Bonus" directory

INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD: SUMMER GAMES

NINTENDO 64

Unlock Pole Vault

To unlock the Pole Vault event, enter your name as L.A. in the championship mode.

HOT WHEELS TURBO RACING

NINTENDO 64

All Cars and Tracks

When you start the game go down to "sign in" then move over to "password". Then for all cars and tracks put in 1 of these 3 passwords:

_WYVW2LVDW VTXWVWWWF

OR,

_WYVVZCVDV VTXVVVVVN

OR

_WYZKZiVDD OTXiTRGHSV

Drive Tow Jam Car

Highlight Options at the main menu and press up-C, down-C, Z, R, left-C, right-C, up-C, down-C.

Mirror Mode

Highlight Options at the main menu, then press Z, R, Z, Z, R, Z, Z, Z.

Mystery Cars

On the "Test Track" when you get in the room with the three or four columns after the first one, there is a panel on the right wall, that is discoloured. Ram through it and inside the tunnel, is a box shaped liked a car, that has ???'s all over it. Hit the box head on, and you'll receive a new car.

Race at Night

Highlight Options at the main menu, then press up-C, up-C, down-C, down-C, left-C, right-C, left-C, right-C.

Secret Places in Snake River Mine

1. At the beginning of Snake River Mine (after the first loop-the-loop) you will take a jump. You will notice a pathway on the right side. Get on to the pathway and you will have your first secret place.

2. Near the middle of the lap you will notice a side place with about two trees and some boulders. Smash into the boulders to break them and you will have your second secret place.

3. After the green and red loop-the-loop you will take a small jump. Get onto the raised place on your right side and smash anything that gets in your way and you will have the third secret place.

Stealth Mode

Highlight Options at the main menu, then press left-C, Z, Z, up-C, left-C, R, down-C, up-C.

Unlimited Turbo

Highlight Options at the main menu, then press right-C, Z, up-C, down-C, R, left-C, Z, right-C.

Wireframe Mode

Highlight Options at the main menu, then press up-C, Z, down-C, left-C, up-C, Z, down-C, left-C.

DOGS OF WAR

PC

Turn off Sprite Detection

Enter TIMBO when playing and then hit F5.

THIEF 2 : THE METAL AGE

PC

Extra Starting Money

You can modify the "dark.cfg" file by adding the line "cash_bonus n" where "n" is how much money you want to have.

Level Skip

Press Ctrl+Alt+Shift+End during gameplay.

ULTIMA IX : ASCENSION

PC

Cheat Codes

In the Ultima 9 directory there is a file called default.kmp. When opened in a standard wordpad or other text editor you will find the following text line:

[Cheat Commands]

" Simply add the following codes

underneath it:

alt+shift+l = toggle_avatar_fly

alt+shift+i = toggle_avatar_invulnerable

During game play the corresponding keys Alt-Shift-I and Alt-Shift-L will activate the cheat functions.

MOTOCROSS MADNESS 2

PC

Big Head Mode

For the bikers to have larger heads, simply type "big heads" at the main menu.

DAIKATANA

PC

First, you must put the game into console mode by opening your .cfg file (located in your Daikatana folders):

At the end of the long list, add: set console "1"

Then, when in the game, press "~~"

cheats on: Activates cheats

god: god mode

noclip: no clipping mode

give_all_weapons: Give all weapons

giveall: Same as above

weapon_give_#: gives a specific

weapon, where # is the weapon name

notarget: enemies do not attack you

boost all: boosts your attributes



MOTOCROSS MADNESS 2

cheat mode

COLONY WARS 3: RED SUN

PLAYSTATION

Cheat code option

Go to the "Home Station" and press R2(2), L2(2), R1(2), Select(2).

All weapons

Enter "Armoury" as a code.

GEKIDO: URBAN FIGHTERS

PLAYSTATION

Play as Akujin

Successfully complete Urban Fighters mode with any character on the hard difficulty setting to unlock Akujin in all modes.

Play as Gorilla

Successfully complete Urban Fighters mode with Travis and Michelle to unlock Gorilla in all modes.

Play as Kobuchi

Successfully complete Urban Fighters mode with Tetsuo and Ushi to unlock Kobuchi in all modes.

LEMANS 24 HOURS

PLAYSTATION

Swimsuit girl on loading screen

Enter "JACKPOT" as a name.

Automatically win race

Enter "FIRSTON" as a name.

Space Race track

Enter "NAIMAR" as a name.

Eight beach buggies

Enter "BIGGY1-8" as a name.

All cars and tracks

Enter "TATOO" as a name to unlock all cars and tracks in quick race mode.

1999 Audi Prototype

Enter "MAYOU" as a name. A race will immediately begin. Complete that race and the car can be driven on other tracks.

1999 BMW Prototype

Enter "POHLIN" as a name. A race will immediately begin. Complete that race and the car can be driven on other tracks.

1999 Toyota GTi

Enter "PINOU" as a name. A race will immediately begin. Complete that race and the car can be driven on other tracks.

Hot Dog car

Enter "HOTDOG" as a name. A race will immediately begin. Complete that race and the car can be driven on other tracks.

Cheese car

Enter "FROMAGE" as a name. A race will immediately begin. Complete that race and the car can be driven on other tracks.

Pie car

Enter "PIE" as a name. A race will immediately begin. Complete that race and the car can be driven on other tracks.

diately begin. Complete that race and the car can be driven on other tracks.

Pizza car

Enter "PIZZA" as a name. A race will immediately begin. Complete that race and the car can be driven on other tracks.

Spaceship

Enter "MM1" as a name. A race will immediately begin on the Moto Mash Cartoon track.

Jet

Enter "MM2" as a name. A race will immediately begin on the Moto Mash Cartoon track.

Mad car

Enter "MM3" as a name. A race will immediately begin on the Moto Mash Cartoon track.

Taxi

Enter "MM4" as a name. A race will immediately begin on the Moto Mash Cartoon track.

60's bus

Enter "MM5" as a name. A race will immediately begin on the Moto Mash Cartoon track.

Ice Cream truck

Enter "MM6" as a name. A race will immediately begin on the Moto Mash Cartoon track.

Submarine

Enter "MM7" as a name. A race will immediately begin on the Moto Mash Cartoon track.

do not change any other setting

Super defenseman

Enter the create-a-player screen and enter "Sandis Ozolinsh" as a name. Answer "Yes" to use his ratings, then adjust them as needed. Return to the previous screen and change his name to your choice, but do not change any other setting.

Super goalie

Enter the create-a-player screen and enter "Patrick Roy" as a name. Answer "Yes" to use his ratings, then adjust them as needed. Return to the previous screen and change his name to your choice, but do not change any other setting.

Three minute power-play

First, get into a fight, but do not punch the other player at all. Just stand there and let the other player punch your player. To force the other player to fight back, pause the game and switch controllers to the other team. If your player loses the fight, he will get a two minute minor for roughing and the other player will get a five minute major for fighting. After your player serves his two minutes in the penalty box, you will have a three minute power-play. If your team scores on that power-play, the player will still stay in the penalty box because he is serving a major.

Circle(2), Right. For the PAL version of the game, hold L2 and press Left, Up, Square, Triangle, Right, Circle, Up, Square while playing a game. Then, pause the game and repeatedly press Down to access a cheat option with infinite health, all weapons, level skip and infinite money selections.

ARMY MEN: WORLD WAR

PLAYSTATION

Level select

At the main menu, press R1 + R2, L1 + L2, Circle, Square.



MEDIEVIL 2

PLAYSTATION

Cheat mode

Pause the game, then hold L2 and press Triangle, Circle, Triangle, Circle(2), Triangle, Left, Circle, Up, Down, Right, Circle, Left(2), Triangle, Right, Circle, Left(2), Triangle, Circle, Down.

NHL 2000

PLAYSTATION

Infinite timeouts

Press Start after a whistle, then enter the strategies screen and select "Timeout". Immediately press Triangle, enter the screen again, and immediately press X. This can be repeated until your line is full.

The Dude player

Enter the create-a-player screen and enter "Bruce Willis" as a name. The announcers will refer to the character as "The Dude" during the game.

The Hammer player

Enter the create-a-player screen and enter "Hammer" as his first name. The announcers will refer to the character as "The Hammer" during the game.

Jersey number 99

Enter the create-a-player screen and enter "Wayne Gretzky" as a name. Then the game will automatically assign him jersey number 99.

Super players

Enter the create-a-player screen and enter "Peter Forsberg" or "Joe Sakic" as a name. Answer "Yes" to use his ratings, then adjust them as needed. Return to the previous screen and change his name to your choice, but



SONY PLAYSTATION

- 016 Asteroids
- 017 Auto Destruct
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- 021 Battle Arena Tosh 2
- 022 Beast Wars
- 023 Bio Freaks
- 024 Blast Clamber
- 025 Blast Radius
- 026 Blastro
- 027 Blood Omen
- 028 Bloody Roar
- 029 Bomberman World
- 030 Brain Dead 13
- 031 Brigadine
- 032 Bubsy 3D
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- 034 Bust-a-groove
- 035 Bust-a-move 2
- 036 G. Contra Adventure
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- 038 Capcom Gen 3
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- 044 Colonisation
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- 048 C&G Red Alert
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- 051 Cool Boarders 3
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- 053 Crash Bandicoot
- 054 Crash Bandicoot 2
- 055 Crash Bandicoot 3
- 057 Croc Legend
- 058 Crusader No Remorse
- 059 Cybersled
- 060 Dark Forces
- 061 Dead or Alive
- 062 Death Trap Dungeon
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- 066 Diable
- 068 Dragon Seeds
- 069 Duke Nukem: Time to Kill
- 070 Duke Nukem: Meltdown
- 071 Dynamic Boxing
- 072 Elemental Gearbox
- 073 ESPN Extreme Games
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- 075 FIFA 98
- 076 FIFA 99
- 077 Fighting Force
- 078 Fighting Illusion: K1-Rev
- 079 Final Doom
- 080 Final Fantasy 7
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- 082 Formula 1 98
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- 089 Gex: Enter the Gecko
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- 097 I.S. Soccer Pro 98
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- 100 J.McGrath Super x 98
- 102 Judge Dredd
- 103 K-1 Arena Fighters
- 104 Karero Deception
- 105 Kiona
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- 107 Krazy Ivan
- 108 Kula World
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- 127 Moterhead
- 129 N2O - Nitrous Oxide
- 130 Nascar 98
- 132 NBA Live 98
- 133 NBS Live 99
- 134 NBA Shoot Out 98
- 135 Need for Speed 2
- 136 Need for Speed 3
- 137 NFL Blitz
- 138 NFL Gameday
- 139 NHL 98
- 140 NHL 99
- 141 NHL Face Off 98
- 142 NHL Powerplay
- 143 Ninja: Shadows
- 144 Nuclear Strike
- 145 O.D.T.
- 146 Oddworld: Abe's Exodus
- 147 Oddworld: Abe's Odd
- 148 One
- 149 Pandemonium
- 150 Pandemonium 2
- 151 Parasite Eve
- 152 Parappa the Rapper
- 153 Pit Fall 3d
- 154 Pocket Fighter
- 155 Porche Challenge
- 156 Poy Poy
- 157 Psybadeck
- 159 R-Types
- 160 Rally Cross
- 161 Rally Cross 2
- 166 Reloaded
- 168 Resident Evil: DC
- 169 Ridge Racer Rev
- 170 Rival Schools
- 171 Riven: Sequel to Myst
- 172 Road Rash 3d
- 173 Rouge Trip: 2012
- 174 Running Wild
- 175 Scars
- 176 Shadow Master
- 177 Shane Warne Cricket
- 178 Side Pocket
- 179 Sim City 2000
- 180 Skuli Monkeys
- 181 Small Soldiers
- 182 Smash Court 2
- 183 Soul Blade
- 184 Soviet Strike
- 185 Spice World
- 186 Spyro the Dragon
- 187 Star Wars: Master of Ter.
- 188 Steel Rain
- 189 Street Fighter Alpha 3
- 190 Street Fighter Coll 2
- 191 Street Fighter X+Alpha
- 192 Street Racer
- 194 Tekken 2
- 195 Tekken 3
- 196 Ten Pin Alley
- 197 Technu
- 198 Test Drive 4
- 199 Test Drive 5
- 200 Test Drive Off Road
- 201 Test Drive Off Road 2
- 202 Tetris Plus

- 203 The Fifth Element
- 204 The Lost World
- 205 The Unholy War
- 208 Theme Hospital
- 207 Theme Park
- 208 Thrill Kill
- 209 Thunder Force 5
- 210 Tiger Woods 99
- 211 Time Crisis
- 212 Tobal 2
- 213 Toca Touring Car
- 214 Toca Touring Car 2
- 215 Tokyo Highway Battle
- 216 Tomb Raider
- 217 Tomb Raider 2
- 218 Tomb Raider 3
- 219 Tomba
- 220 T.Makinen World Rally
- 221 Treasures of the Deep
- 222 Triple Play 98
- 223 Triply Play 99
- 224 Twisted Metal 2
- 225 Twisted Metal 3
- 226 V-Rally
- 227 V's
- 228 Vigilante 8
- 229 VMX Racing
- 230 VR Powerboat Racing
- 231 War Games: Defcom 1
- 232 Warcraft 2
- 233 Warhammer
- 243 WCW Nitro
- 235 WCW/NWO Thunder
- 236 WCW V's The World G
- 238 Wild Arms
- 239 Wipeout 2097
- 240 WWF in you House
- 241 WWF War Zone
- 242 Xena: Warrior Princess
- 324 Need for Speed: High Stakes
- 325 Roilcage
- 326 Rampage 2, Universal
- 327 Conlender
- 328 Gex3: Deep cover
- 329 Max Power Racing
- 331 Chocobo Racing
- 332 Dead in the Water
- 333 Fisherman's Bait
- 334 Syphon Filter
- 335 Rugrats: Search Repair
- 336 Bloody Roar 2
- 337 Silent Hill
- 339 Street Sk8er
- 340 Legend
- 341 Destregra
- 343 Military Madness
- 344 Eliminator
- 400 Wipeout 3
- 402 Dino Crisis
- 406 Tarzan
- 416 Jet Moto 3
- 418 Grand Theft Auto
- 419 Quake 2
- 420 Crash Team Racing
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- 350 Rush 2: Extreme Racing USA
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- 352 Battle tanx
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- 376 Star Wars: Rogue Squadron
- 377 World Driver Championship
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- 379 Superman
- 380 Quake 2
- 391 Intfisherman - BH 64
- 392 All Star Baseball 99
- 393 Mario Gold
- 394 Monster Truck Madness
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- 407 Duke Nuke:Zero Hour
- 410 WCW Mayhem
- 411 Gauntlet Legends
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- 365 Super speed Racer
- 387 Air Force Delta
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- 491 Sout Park Rally
- 490 Worm Armgeddon
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- 495 Army Men: Sarge's Heroes'
- 496 Syphon filter 2
- 497 Medieval
- 498 Street Sk8er 2
- 499 Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere
- 500 Gauntlet Legends

- 534 Legend Of Mana
- 501 Theme Park World
- 502 Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn
- 503 Colln McRae Rally 2.0
- 504 Colony Wars 3: Red Sun
- 505 Crusaders Of Night And Magic
- 506 Populous: The Beginning
- 507 Eagle One: Harrier Attack
- 508 Nightmare Creatores 2
- 509 Grind Session
- 510 Jackie Chan: Stuntmaster
- 535 Test Drive: LeMans
- 536 Road Rash: Jailbreak
- 537 Toy Story 2

NEW NINTENDO 64

- 513 PERFECT DARK
- 514 JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERCROSS 2000
- 515 INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD 2000
- 538 RIDGE RACER 64
- 516 BOMBERMAN 64: THE SECOND ATTACK
- 517 TOP GEAR RALLY 2
- 518 SUPERCROSS 2000
- 519 BATTLEANX: GLOBAL ASSAULT
- 520 EXCITEBIKE 64



A DAY IN THE LIFE

This month at Hyper HQ, the crew was typically smothered in administrative paperwork, general drudgery and games, games, games! Do you realise how hard it is to play Tekken Tag Tournament on the PlayStation 2 and not get to have lunch? Okay, well maybe that doesn't sound so bad. Well, how about having to be tied to the PC all day getting through an infernal dungeon in Diablo 2... and not having lunch. It's a tough job! Here are some snapshots of what we got up to this month...



HYPER LETTERS

78 Renwick St.
Redfern, NSW 2016
Fax: (02) 9281 6188
E-mail: freakscene@next.com.au

LETTER OF THE MONTH... NOT

Hey Hyper,
What happened to your Letter of the Month classifications? It used to be that the best letters, the funniest e-mails and the most witty and/or intelligent readers would get the steering wheel, but recently you seem to be lowering your standards. What's up with that?

THE SCORP (AKA THE PERSON EVERY DC OWNER HATES)

Hello there Scorp, If you've noticed a lack of interesting letters one month, it's only because you guys and gals aren't sending us anything worth printing! Don't look at us!

PS2 = SATURN?

To Hyper,
The other day my friends asked what they could get me for my birthday. One of them joked that they would have got me a Dreamcast but they couldn't afford one, to which I replied - I already have

one! This girl was not a great computer game fan but replied "Ooooh! You lucky bastard!". My point is I'm glad that finally the Dreamcast is getting some mainstream acknowledgment. Ozisoft is kind of getting things right.

Last month in your Versus Mode, (you might not have known then) but Acclaim have delayed Dead Or Alive 2 to put in the added extras that are on the PS2 version. Just letting you know. Speaking of PS2, does anyone see a pattern in the gaming industry? I mean, Sony riding on the success of the PSX have brought out a good machine, but not a great one (just like the Sega Saturn). Also entering the console market is a familiar household name (Microsoft) to launch their super console and Nintendo once again are taking ages to release their console. It's scaring me. Funny how history repeats itself. Watch out PS2!

ROGER THE SHRUBBER

P.S. Do you guys ever go home and say "If I have to play one more game..."?

Hey Roger, What exactly is it that you shrub? Pray tell. You're right when you say that we went to print with that Versus Mode before Acclaim announced that they were delaying the release to add all

the extra stuff for the PAL release. Yet another great reason to buy a Dreamcast! Really! You have also pointed out a true pattern... Sony entered the market and the industry thought "they know nothing about console games, what a joke this will be..." and lo and behold the PlayStation blew everything away. Could Microsoft do the same?

LAYING CABLE

To People@Hyper...
First of all... Your mag is #1, but other than that, can you answer my questions...
1. Do you know when Munch's Oddysee is coming out in Oz? And what the requirements are?
2. What do you guys think of cable modems?
3. Do you know why Nintendo 64s don't have any REALLY violent games?
4. Have you got any info about the new Monkey Island Game?
Well thanks anyway...

PAUL FUARY

Hey Paul,
1. Munch's Oddysee is slated for an early 2001 release, so no specific month is known yet. The current requirements are a PlayStation 2, though the PC version may still happen...
2. Cable? It rocks! How can you beat a 24/7 connection to the internet at speeds anywhere between 5 to 80 times faster than the average modem?
3. Nintendo have always tried to maintain a "family" image. A few years ago, you wouldn't even see red blood in a Nintendo game! However, that's changing... Turok 2, Perfect Dark and soon... Conker's Bad Fur Day are proving that the N64 is for adults too.
4. Yes! Monkey Island 4 - Escape From Monkey Island - is coming to the PC very soon. Mike Stemmler, the project leader from the classic Sam & Max Hit The Road is in charge of Monkey 4's development, so it's in good hands.

HYPER TV

I've got a good idea, why don't you guys do a TV show? I'd watch it. Then I'd get to see Kevin Cheung complain about over-filtering on the N64 in person. No wait, that would be horrible.

FOXY007

Dear Foxy007,
We've actually discussed the concept of a Hyper TV show with a few companies over the years. Currently, we're negotiating again, so if anything happens, we'll certainly let you all know!

FACIAL HAIR

To the fine lads and lasses at Hyper, Firstly I would like to state that, as opposed to what poor uninformed Naky erroneously pointed out, sidies are

indeed quite cool, and such dedication to facial hair as demonstrated by Mr. Levy is admirable. My ambition and aspiration is to get intensive follicle surgery in an attempt to mimic Tim. What's the expression? Imitation is the flattest form of sincerity... or sumfin'. On a completely different topic... though I'm sure facial hair is not even nearly exhausted yet... it is clear to me, as I'm sure it will be to other devotees of this fine mag that the extra buck goes not towards more features, articles nor reviews but instead towards a greater goal. Yes take note Hyper fans, ever since Eliot took the helm, I've seen not a single typo or spelling error. So congrats Mr Ed. on a fine job at... um... editing stuff. The mag was a bit rocky under Eliot for the first few issues I felt, but I reckon you've got it sorted now. So enough verbal fellatio... ok... just a little more... keep up the fine work.

MULAV THE CONCUSSED

Dear Mr. Concussed,
Technically, they weren't really my first few issues, as I've worked on Hyper since 1993, so I've been responsible for many typos in the past! But I guess becoming Editor makes you squint harder...

GAME BOY SOLID

To Hyper,
In a recent issue, I read in your mag about Metal Gear Solid being converted to Game Boy. After seeing this review I rushed down to my local Games Wizards only to find out that it hasn't arrived yet. I have waited at least one and a half months and it still isn't out. So I was wondering if you could tell me when it's going to come out. Here's some questions:
1. How much do you think the Game Boy advance will cost when it first comes out?
2. Why didn't the Neo Geo Pocket ever come out in Australia?
3. Will there be a lot of RPGs on the Game Boy Advance?
4. If a tree falls in a forest and nobody is there to hear it, does it make a sound?
Thanks for your time,

FLAMEBOY

Dear Flameboy,
Metal Gear Solid for Game Boy should be at your shops now.
1. Well, Nintendo have revealed so little information on it, that guessing a price would be pointless. We imagine it will be less than \$200.
2. Probably because no one thought it was worth trying to fight the Game Boy here, seeing as our market is quite small.
3. I'd say so, yes. About as many as are on Game Boy.
4. Depends on your soundcard.

SEXY BEASTS!

To the sexy beasts at Hyper (if that didn't get your attention I don't know what will), Some people complain that

The controversial PlayStation 2 was certainly a popular screenshot to caption... we had so many funny entries it made it very difficult. However, we couldn't go past this one from Terry Devlin, via E-mail...



"MISSILE NOT INCLUDED"

Runners-Up

- "See? That's where the toast fits in." - Marco M, via E-mail*
- "The consequences of using a Dual Shock controller as a marital aid became all too apparent nine months later" - David Brachli, via E-mail*
- "No shit, babe. Right out of his bike basket!" - Glenn Tyler, via E-mail*

incoming mail

Hyper magazine caters too much for the 'kids'—good for them, but they do have a slight point. I don't mind the new reviews and I don't mind the new features; what I DO mind is the disappearance of the freaky readers' letters and artwork which helped make Hyper so amusing. Remember 'Star Farter', where a brilliant mind named Patrick gave his vivid opinions on the ending of Mario 64? Or that letter from the elephant-loving, whale-saving Ultima fan? Heck, I'm even beginning to miss the multiple incontinence references. Perhaps you don't print such letters any more because the age limit of your target audience has lowered somewhat, but still, one or two every now and then would be really nice...

I also would like to say that Squaresoft are smegging STUPID and I hope they suffer for not releasing Legend of Mana or Chrono Cross in Australia. Don't get me wrong, I still love them, but their European release schedules is, well, shithouse compared to the lucky sods in America. Oh well, perhaps they'll learn there's a market for Japanese RPGs here the hard way, when everyone buys pirated copies of Chrono Cross and Final Fantasy IX and deprives them of profit, heeheehee... But then

again, maybe they'll retaliate by not realising any of their games here at all, in which case I'd mailbomb them with yaoi doujinshi scans and buy Suikoden instead, so there.

:P

Keep the faith!

GEORGIA B.

*Dear Georgia,
Gee you sucked us in with the sexy beasts bit, and then went on to tell us that Hyper's target age group has lowered. UNTRUE! We don't know why you get that impression. Maybe because we re-designed the mag to be a bit more colourful and "packed". We put the magazine together how we would want to read it (Cam is 23 and I'm 29), so maybe we're just young at heart, but we think Hyper is intelligent and funny, which should hopefully appeal to everyone! I don't see how the reviews or features are in any way different to the ones Hyper was printing in it's first issue, other than on a design level. In terms of the lack of freaky readers, well, maybe in the last few years gaming has become a bit more mainstream and we're getting more mail from 'normal' people. But the freaky letters*

keep coming, and we'll print them when they're... well... printable. We encourage more reader art, but you guys and gals just aren't sending any to us! We'll print the good stuff when we get it - like the Yoda this issue! As far as Squaresoft go... they now have a European office, so we should start to see just about all the good games get released to PAL territories. Oh and you may not realise, but even gamers in the USA don't get all the good Japanese games... like the infamous Tobal 2 for instance.

TECHNOBABLE

Hi there Hyper People!

Just writing to give my two cents. Have you guys ever wondered what's going to happen to games as they become more realistic? Seems to me that the detail in games just keeps getting more amazing every year. However, aren't games developers going to reach a point where games are getting too detailed? Like in driving games, cars will eventually be exact replicas of their real-life counterparts, but imagine how much work would go into modelling such a vehicle. And then to have to make several

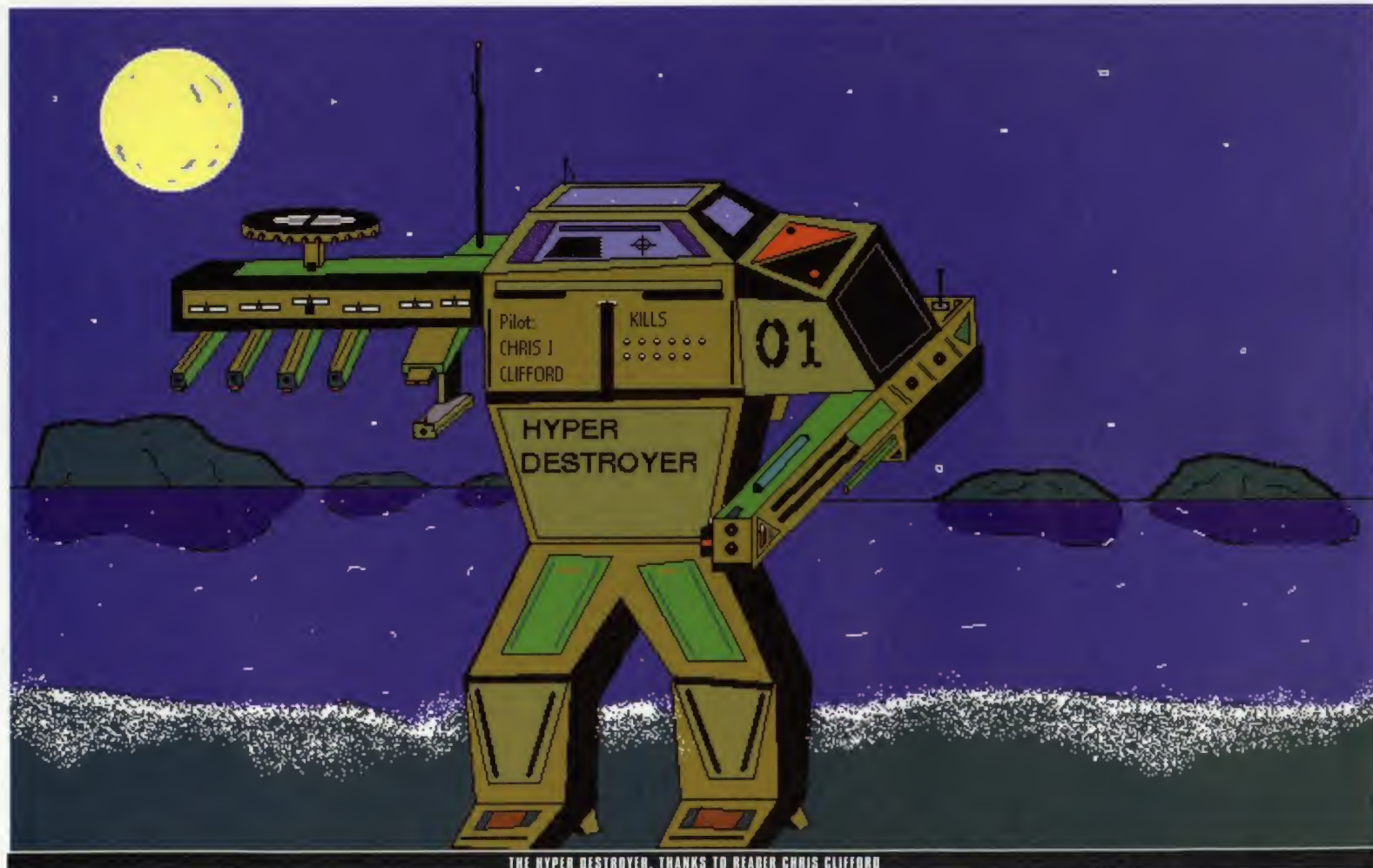
other vehicles and immersive track environments! To model such complex structures will be very time consuming. Already, it's taking Polyphony two weeks to model each car for Gran Turismo 2000, instead of the one day that it took for each car in Gran Turismo 2. A huge team is needed to make the game. And this applies to all the future games, because gamers demand more and more quality and realism. What're your thoughts? Now just a couple of Questions...

1. In all the screen shots of GT2000 I've seen, there are no race-modified cars. Will the finished game include all the upgrade options of GT, including race-car mods?

2. You wrote in issue 81, that the Dolphin has a 200Mhz processor, the PS2 a 400Mhz one and the Xbox a 600Mhz one. Aren't the true speeds 400Mhz, 300Mhz and 733Mhz respectively?

3. Why did Sony leave out anti-aliasing, texture compression and 3D audio?

Thanks for several years of gaming goodness, but stop bagging Lara Croft. Remember, she was a pioneer in the gaming industry. Also, I reckon Ozisoft needs to get its \$#!+ together,



THE HYPER DESTROYER, THANKS TO READER CHRIS CLIFFORD

as does Nintendo.
See ya,
W. BROOK

Dear W. Brook,
Yes, games are becoming more realistic and "complex", but so are the tools and hardware the developers get to work with, so it's not like it's getting remarkably harder or more time consuming.

1. You can expect Gran Turismo 2000 to be the most complex GT game from Sony yet.
2. Yes, the Xbox is now 733 (which changed after we went to print). We admit that our tech table got mixed up and we printed the processor speeds in the wrong columns.
3. They didn't really "leave them out". Anti-Aliasing is possible on the PS2 hardware, it's just very difficult to do as it's not supported in the PS2 dev kits, which is why most developers can't be bothered. It will become standard very soon though. 3D audio is pretty useless on just a 2 speaker set-up, unlike PCs where you can hook up a 4-speaker surround system. Texture compression... well... yeah, they stuffed up there.

SECRET OF HYPER

G'day,
I've been subscribed to you for about 5 or 6 years now. I used to own the game Secret of Mana from Squaresoft for the Super Nintendo. I know it's a hell old game, but I still reckon it's one of the best games ever made. Would you have any idea where I could get my hands on a copy of this? If so please tell me because I've looked a lot of places without much success.
Cheers

HAZARD

Dear Mr. HaZaRd,
Finding old SNES games is always hard. Try visiting www.games-direct.com.au for retro titles, as well as Cash Convertors, pawn shops, or your local trading post. Cam is playing though Secret Of Mana again at

the moment, but somehow I don't think he'd be willing to part with his cart. Sorry!

NUDE CODE PART XVIII

Dear Hyper,
Great mag. Don't know where I'd be without it. But there are a few things that keep bugging me. Please try to answer them.

1. There are so many consoles! PlayStation 2, Nintendo Dolphin, X-Box, Dreamcast etc. Which in your opinion is the best and why?
 2. When is the Australian release of Zelda: Majora's Mask?
 3. When is the Australian release of Nintendo Dolphin and how much would it cost?
 4. Are there any cheats for the game Delta Force 2?
 5. What is the nude code for Dead or Alive 2 on Dreamcast and on PlayStation 2?
- Keep up the great work on this mag!
From,

DARREN

Hi Darren,

1. My personal opinion changes almost daily, when I read about a cool game that's coming on one of the systems! I think the moral to that story, is that it's the games that matter, not the hardware. Currently, the Dreamcast is the best gaming console you can get. Maybe by early next year, the PlayStation 2 will be worth getting. Then of course, the Xbox and Dolphin will come out, and who knows... maybe one of them will have an incredible library of games. Always let the games make your buying decision, not brand name or company loyalty.
2. Nintendo will probably release it at Christmas.
3. It's not even known when it'll be out in Japan, let alone here. We could guess at saying early 2002 or christmas 2001 if we're lucky.
4. Yes! God mode: Press [-] during



game play and type "thetrooper" at the console window. Unlimited ammunition: Press [-] during game play and type "diewithyourbootson".
5. More cheats. Geez. To unlock the original arcade mode introduction sequence (the one with Kasumi naked), set the age option to anything higher than 20. Then gain a top score in the Survival Mode and enter your name as "REALDEMO". Save your game, and then restart to view the new improved intro!

POSTER MADNESS

Dear Hyper,
I have bought the June 2000 edition of Hyper, which is my first Hyper magazine, and I really have to compliment the staff and people who contributed to the magazine on what a good job they have done to make the magazine. And guess this: Why did I buy Hyper Magazine? Guess... Try to think... No idea?
Well, it started with one of my friends who let me see his June 2000 edition of Hyper magazine and then he showed me a poster, it was a poster of

one of those Dead Or Alive characters and I was amazed at it for a while... and then I read parts of the magazine and I liked the things the magazine talked about, especially the news section, the feature section, and the Ware section. And now, I am thinking of buying the magazine monthly or to subscribe to it.

Some questions:

1. Is it hard to talk about all the new consoles that have been coming out lately in your magazine, as some other gaming magazines focus on one type of console?
2. What's the favourite console among the staff of Hyper magazine?
3. When do Hyper poster magazines come out?
Oh well, that's all for now from one of your new Hyper magazine fans!!!
From Your New Hyper Magazine Fan,
JASON

Dear Jason,
Ahhh that brought a tear to my eye. The new Hyper Posterbook Volume 5, should be out now. Look for some great PlayStation 2 game posters.
1. Yes, it can become pretty difficult keeping up with everything, but we're

AUSTRALIA'S NEW GAMES SITE

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incoming mail

obsessed freaks!

2. Currently, the team is split between the Dreamcast and the PlayStation.
3. We release about 2 every year....

BUTT KICKING & THE GST

Just a few questions,

1. With cable becoming more popular, will the prices eventually go down? \$60 a month is a fair slug.
2. When will the Sega Dreamcast get cable?
3. How do you become a game designer? It would be good to be involved in the making of games, but I don't want to do programming.
4. Will the Xbox have the ability to play online games by cable immediately?
5. I am a little worried about the Dreamcast's future, do you think it can last the distance with the likes of PS2 and X Box? I have been really impressed with the Dreamcast so far, why aren't gamers buying this system? It rocks!
6. Are there any surfing games in the making? Surely someone can master a surfing game, it can't be that hard can it?

MATT COX

P.s. Your price still kicks butt over other magazines.

Thanks Matt!

Well, the GST has screwed things up slightly, pushing us to \$7.15, but we're hoping to bring the price back to \$6.50 in a few issues time if we figure out how to tighten the belt. We care about you guys! Although when you

look at the prices out there, Hyper is still one of the cheapest games mags available, and Hell, we're the best of the lot too.

1. Well... considering the performance gain over s6k, we think \$60 for unlimited cable is pretty good! Chances are prices will drop again by early next year. There's also ADSL...
2. Well, the LAN adapter could be available for Christmas, so...
3. You don't technically need to have programming skills to be a game designer, but it would be a mighty bonus as you would be liasing with programmers all the time. In terms of how you become one, well, try getting a job with a games developer in any way shape or form, or get yourself into a course. You could always just send game proposals out to aussie developers, and you may score yourself a job.
4. Most probably.
5. There are great games on the way - System Shock 2, Starlancer, F355... the list goes on. People were put off by Sega's track record which is a shame, because it's a great machine. We've given it more "Games of the Month" in the last 7 months than any other platform!
6. Yes, actually there is one in development for the PlayStation 2... but actually, making a surfing game would be incredibly difficult! Think about all the variables... swell, weather, sand bars - not to mention accurately modelling the waves.



THIS AWESOME YODA GAME IN A LITTLE TOO LATE TO WIN IN THE JEDI POWER BATTLES COMP...

HYPER GOES GERMAN DEATH METAL

Hi People,

Just thought you'd like to know that Hyper has successfully imbedded itself into my subconscious. Top work!

To explain: I was happily sleeping last night when I started dreaming. I was wandering around an airport when I went to a newsagent and found a brand new issue of Hyper on the shelf. Strange, I thought to myself, considering I'd just bought the recent issue this week (in real life that is). Still I didn't question this and picked it up and walked away (payment of course unnecessary in my aforementioned happy little dream world). I then sat down and got stuck into reading it. I noticed that this issue was a hell of a lot thicker than usual and instead of some game character on the cover it was some dirty looking leather clad guy with long curly hair. I considered this a little unusual but figured you guys were just diversifying to pad out this issue (that or he was a character in Kiss Psycho Circus). Good for you I thought at the time.

Anyway, after looking through the pages of my new Hyper magazine I was shocked to discover that there was only 5 pages or so of actual game news. The rest was dedicated, on the most part, to heavy metal musicians (though there was one article on Bjork for some bizarre reason - go figure). And we're not talking about lightweight heavy metal ala Limp Bizkit or current day Metallica, I'm talking about seriously hard core German death metal and the like. The afore mentioned guy on the cover turned out to be the drummer in one of these German death metal bands and was taken to self mutilation on stage (the new Hyper wasn't short on pictures). Each page I turned in my new found Hyper the more disappointed and dejected I got... Then I woke up and was comforted in the fact that it was all a dream...aaaah. The moral of the story? Don't go changing Hyper, it's bang up as it is (that and beware of drummers in German death metal bands).

That's all for now,

SCOTT

'Gulp'

Well, there goes that idea for next issue.



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.



FOR SALE

Unwanted new PlayStation game, Everybody's Golf 2 \$35 plus \$5 post. The game is in good condition. **Phone Rosemary on 0898328054.**

Dreamcast games: Sonic Adventure, Wild Metal, Toy Commander, Red Dog, Worms Armageddon — all \$50 each or will swap each for a game. **Phone Jamie on 02 65 683 695.**

Sega Saturn games — Crimewave, Sea Bass Fishing, Quake, Daytona USA, Tomb Raider, Theme Park and Sega Rally. Will swap as well. Also wanted Sega Touring Cars, Virtua Cop 2 and a light gun for Saturn, and a TV tuner for Sega Game Gear. **Phone Mark after 4:30pm on (07) 40962425.**

I am selling my Dreamcast (hardly used, boxed) with Powerstone (hardly used, boxed) and a VMU (boxed) all for \$470 or best offer. **Call (NSW only) (02) 98266504.**

Sega Dreamcast with 2 controllers, VMU, Dreamkey, Demo Disk and Soul Calibur. As new condition \$400 ono. **Phone Richard on (02) 65459641 after 4:30pm.**

PlayStation games for sale! Rosco McQueen \$25, Wing Commander \$30, Parappa the Rapper \$20, Tobal No 1 \$25. All games as new. **Call after 5pm any day on 02 44555127.**

Nintendo 64 for sale: N64 Console, 2 Controllers, 2 Memory Packs, 2 Rumble Packs, Transfer Pack, Memory Expansion Pack and the following games - Pokemon Stadium 64, Wrestlemania 2000, Donkey Kong 64, NBA Live 2000 and WCW/NWO Revenge all boxed with manuals. \$350. **Call Daniel, Perth Area only (08) 9354 9917.**

Sega Dreamcast Game: Sega Rally 2 in case with manual. \$40 **Call Daniel, Perth Area only (08) 9354 9917.**

ATTENTION! For Sale. **Sega Saturn,** still in box, very rarely used, good condition, plus 8 games including ManxTT Super Bike and Die Hard Arcade. \$200 o.n.o. Melbourne residents only. **E-mail bombjack76@yahoo.com.au or ph. 0410 691 976 BH.**

Nintendo 64, two controllers and six games - Mario Party, Gretzy Hockey, Superstar Soccer 64, FIFA 98, WWF WarZone, Madden99. Only \$150... **Ph: 9398 4785 -** Leave message on machine or ask for Nathan.

Neon Genesis Evangelion 0:13 (Final Genesis) VHS, \$10, if interested **phone 03 52 434837 or email at simonhi@one.net.au**

PlayStation (with mod installed) with 2 controllers, memory card, Madcatz steering wheel, 12 original games including Final Fantasy 7, Fear Effect, Dino Crisis and more **e-mail at: MRWISDOM_@HOTMAIL.COM**

Mad Bull 34 Part 1 (VHS) \$10, if interested **phone 52 434837 or e-mail at simonhi@one.net.au**

DREAMCAST game, CRAZY TAXI (PAL). In perfect cond. \$45 including COD or less if pick up in Sydney. **Phone Bill on (02) 97084575 or e-mail binhqt@hotmail.com.**

STREET FIGHTER II V video series, tapes 1-10. Hyper gave it 9/10, but see for yourself for \$100... **THAT'S HALF PRICE!!! Call Tom on (03)62286652.** Tas. preferred but not essential.

Dreamcast - Brand New copy of Slave Zero for Dreamcast. 3 days old,

played for only 1 hour. \$45 **O.N.O Contact Garrick on (02) 9973 2290 or E-Mail me at charter@acay.com.au 9917.**

Anyone want to buy the **books 1 - 23 + the Andalite Chronicles.** \$5 per book \$5 for the Andalite Chronicles. In excellent condition. If you want to buy only some of them that's o.k. **E-mail bonejam@wagaratta-high.vic.edu.au** if you have any questions. I am sorry but I can only deal in the N.E. of Victoria.

DREAMCAST - PAL console, internet ready, 2 controllers, 1 vmu, 5 of the best games on the system, HotD2 with light gun, Sonic Adventure, Soul Calibur, Powerstone, Crazy Taxi, Dream Key disc, demo disc and a cool Dreamcast carry bag. Excellent condition with all boxes, worth \$1080, sell for \$750 neg. Only a couple of months old. If you have the dosh and want some serious fun call **Matt Scherini on (03) 57217989,** Wangaratta Vic 3677, after school hours.

WANTED

WANTED: The following back issues of Hyper magazine; 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 22, 34, 53, 54, 67 and 69. Also wanted: Blackhawk (a.k.a. Blackthorne) for either SNES, 32X or PC. Will pay good money. Prefer A.C.T. area. **Contact Jason anytime on (02) 62915 293.**

I am desperately seeking **Pilotwings and F-Zero** for the SNES. Games must have boxes and instructions that are in VERY good condition. I will pick up from anywhere in Australia (C.O.D) Will pay top dollar for these games. **Call Rod after 6pm on (02) 43 928 498.**

Wanted to buy for PC, System Shock, the original version. **Call Chris on (03)**

9877-7235 or e-mail assfixiation@hotmail.com

WANTED Rock & roll Racing, Goof Troop, Zombies ate my neighbors and Addams family for Super Nintendo in boxes with instructions and in good condition. **Phone Brad (08) 95933653 or email btaylor@southwest.com.au**

SWAP

Hi fellow gamers, I would like to switch Banjo Kazooie and Gex, Enter The Gecko, for Harvest Moon 64 and Mario 64. If not those then best offer. Perth only. **E-mail australian_messiah@yahoo.com.au**

PENPALS

Hyper writer desperately seeks work but will settle for letters from readers if necessary. **E-mail Brett Robb at swivel@telstra.easymail.com.au** and stop bothering poor Eliot.

NEXT GENERATION CONSOLES ROCK. I am a male aged 16 looking for a female penpal who just about likes everything. I enjoy listening to music, sports and take a lot of interest in future gaming consoles. Write me at **Sandeep Goundar, p.o. Box 14, c/Rajeshwari, Nadi, Fiji.** e-mail: sandeepgoundar@hotmail.com

Looking for penpals both men and women, ages between 19 and 25, interested in most things. Write to learn more about me. **E-mail paul at dpagan@iprimus.com.au or write to me at this address: paul oakes, p.o box 423, Elizabeth, SA 5112**

Listen up readers of Hyper! I am starting an E-circle for all readers of Hyper. E-circles is basically a site where you can post announcements, have discussions, put up music and picture files, etc. Please send an **e-mail to redneck6000@hotmail.com** if you are interested. Reply to all.

Hi gamers out there, I'm a 13 yr old boy who enjoys any kind of console (as long as it's good) and games like 007 Goldeneye, Crash Bandicoot Warped and things like that. Interested in anyone who likes music, games, bikes, motor bikes, swimming and anything you're interested in. Any sex as long as you're in NSW or close to the border of Vic and around the age of 11-14. If ya wanna write to a really interesting person. Send letters to: **Adam Connally, PO Box 862, Deniliquin, NSW 2710.** Or send e-mails to adam_connally@hotmail.com. All letters will be replied.

Hi my names is Chari-Vincent, I am looking for a male or female pen-pal that is 10-15 years-old. Who also likes cool games such as FF7, Resident Evil 3, Evolution, Metal Gear Solid and also likes Chocobos, Body Boarding, Manga and Spiderbait. So if you're interested **e-mail me at chari-vincent@hotmail.com**

Hi, my name is Scott, I am 15/M and I'm looking for a guy or girl preferably in their 13-17s who is very interested in PCs or Dreamcast. I promise to send back a letter or e-mail to whoever replies to this message. My e-mail address is polly_dude@hotmail.com and my web site is www.geocities.com/hubress.

NEXT ISSUE

ON SALE AUGUST 23

FINAL FANTASY IX THE EXCLUSIVE FIRST REVIEW!

Later this year you'll be playing Square's next Final Fantasy instalment for PlayStation. Is it the last good game you'll play on Sony's first console? Hyper has the full game and the full review for you next issue. Get excited...

DIABLO 2 REVIEWED PLUS A HUGE STRATEGY GUIDE!

Diablo 2 hits the Hyper HQ and we flog the demons out of it. Read our review and then absorb our cool strategy guide so you can master the game as soon as you get your hands on it.




ALSO REVIEWED!

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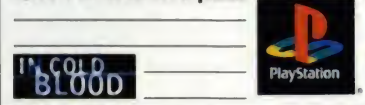
for over two months now. Intelligence suggests that he is being routinely tortured and may soon be executed. International cries for his release have fallen on deaf ears.

Now that politicians have refused to play the game, it's up to you to fight for his release. You have the power to stop Nagarov's blatant violation of human rights. You can set John free. But not

before you grab yourself a copy of PlayStation's 'In Cold Blood'. Get on your backside now and save John Cord.

FREE JOHN CORD

Yes! I want to end the suffering, after I've ordered a pizza.



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