

PS2 - PLAYSTATION - DREAMCAST - PC - N64 - XBOX - GAMEBOY

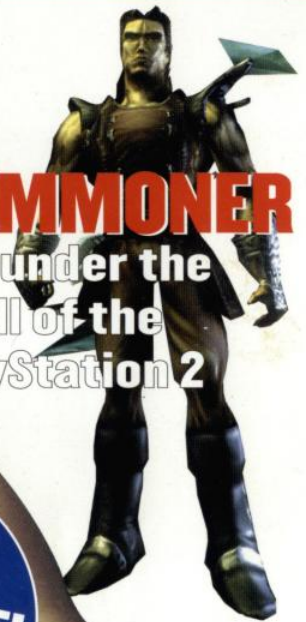
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THE WORST GAME EVER? TURN TO PAGE 82 TO FIND OUT!



SUPERMAN 64

Utterly forgettable!

25 TRULY AWFUL GAMES REVIEWED

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Console or doorstep?

MORTAL KOMBAT MYTHOLOGIES



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+ more

56..... **FINAL FANTASY IX**

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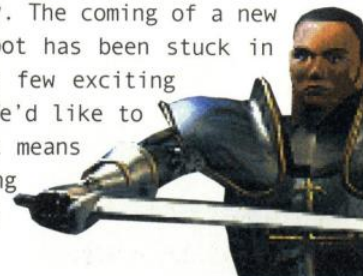
88..... **DIABLO II STRATEGY GUIDE**

LEARN HOW TO MASTER THE CHARACTER CLASSES AND GAIN SOME VALUABLE PLAYING TIPS THANKS TO OUR EXPERT, DAN TOOSE.



editorial

Sniff. Can you smell that? There's a can of paint sitting here and we're ready to take to the pages of Hyper with some freaky new ideas. We can feel the PlayStation 2 approaching, and we're more than ready. The coming of a new age of consoles has prompted us to stop and take a look at Hyper and notice that one foot has been stuck in those fuzzy gaming days of old. The result is that we're going to evolve over the next few exciting issues, with Hyper growing up a bit and stuffing our pages with more coolness than ever. We'd like to think that we'll be re-establishing ourselves as the Australian gaming bible, and if that means we lose some of our younger, mainstream readers - so be it. We're serious about our gaming and we want to tell it like it is. Our Arty homeboy, David, is leaving us this issue, so we want to thank him for all his hard work with that paintbrush. Good luck David!



ELIOT FISH >> EDITOR

issue

84

OCTOBER 2000

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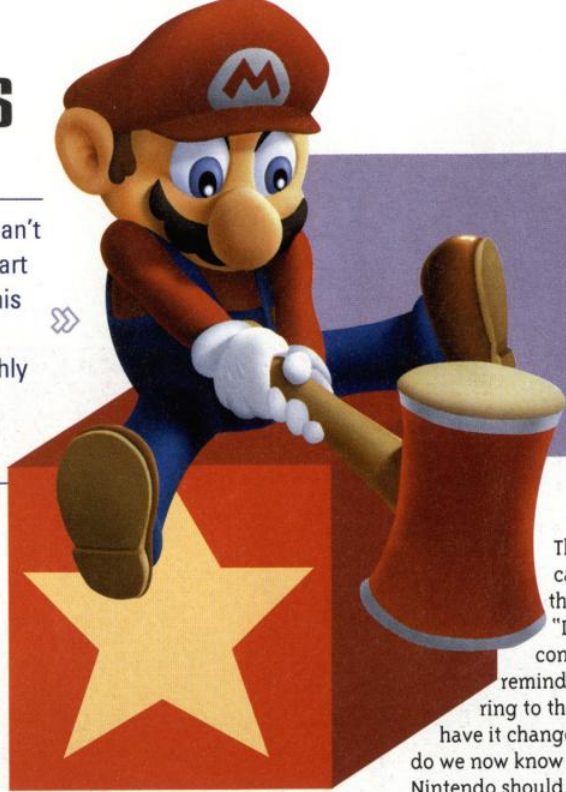
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Mario's can't wait to start bashing his head on some highly textured polygons



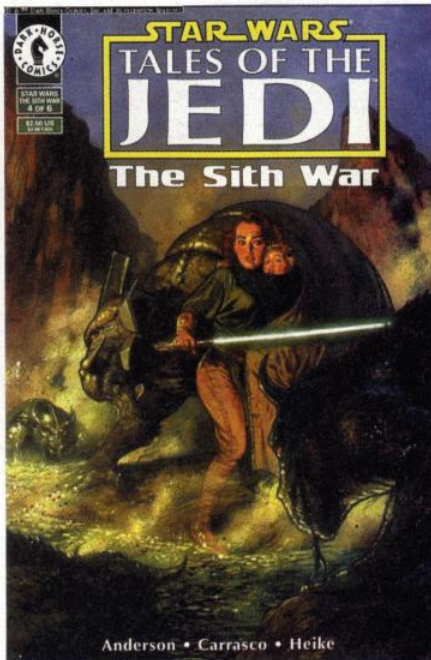
MEET THE NINTENDO STARCUBE!

Send that Dolphin to the tuna factory. The next Nintendo console will be called Starcube. It was always known that Nintendo was only using "Dolphin" as a code name for their next console, but is Starcube any better? This reminds us of the time when Sega was referring to their console as the "Katana" only to have it changed to Dreamcast for launch. So what do we now know about the Nintendo Starcube? Nintendo should be revealing a whole lot of new information on the console at this month's Spaceworld expo, so we should have a complete run down for you next issue. We do know that Star Road is the name of the way the Starcube will connect to the internet... Star Road being the warp point in Super Mario World. Cool. We have heard that developers have had development kits for a while now, and many companies are

already hard at work on titles for the console's launch in 2001. Strangely, the dev kits seem to be quite similar to a Mac OS, and Apple are soon releasing the G4 Power Cube — there's that cube word again. In terms of hardware, Nintendo seem to have chosen a proprietary DVD format that should help fight piracy, with the DVD discs being smaller in size than standard DVDs — roughly the same size as a mini disc! This would rule out the possibility of the Starcube supporting DVD movie playback out of the box — an add-on would be required for this. We are also hearing that the Starcube should be able to push 150,000 polygons at 60 frames per second with all effects turned on (that's about nine million raw polys a second). However, this is just speculation until Nintendo reveal the true specs — which they should do this month, after we have gone to print unfortunately. Do they have an alliance with Apple? Check back next issue for a complete report!

STAR WARS – THE FIRST RPG!

Finally, LucasArts have decided to bring gamers a Star Wars RPG — something which has never been done before. We're not talking Star Wars Online either... this is going to be the first single-player RPG for PC from LucasArts which is based in the Star Wars universe. The best thing about this news, is that developer BioWare are going to be making the game. Yep, that's the same BioWare who have brought us some of the best RPGs we've played in years, such as Baldur's Gate! The Star Wars RPG will be set thousands of years before Episode One, in an ancient era which saw the Sith and Jedi struggle for power. For release sometime in 2002, co-inciding with the release of Episode Two, the Star Wars RPG — as yet untitled — will also be developed for one of the super consoles. We're putting our money on the Xbox for this one...



PS2 GOES VR

And we thought it was dead. Virtual Reality that. InterTrax 2 is a motion-tracking Virtual Reality headset designed for the PlayStation 2 by InterSense, a company who obviously believe there's still life in the concept yet. Because the PS2 supports USB



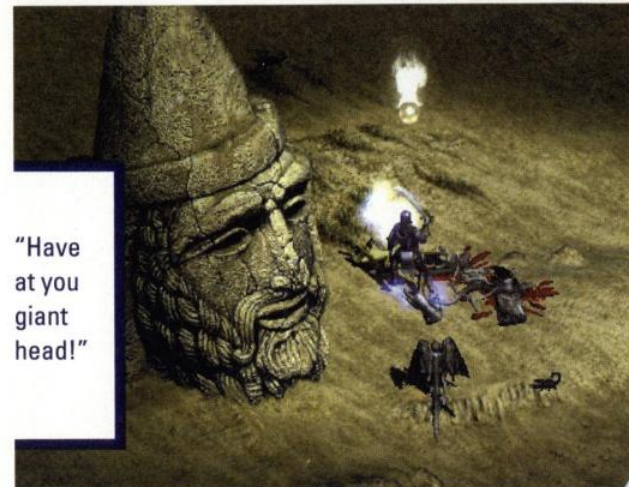
peripherals, InterSense re-designed their InterTrax headset for use with the Sony console and have supplied developers with the tools they need to support the device.



DIABLO II COMES TO THE CONSOLE

If you've been drooling over that damn fine Diablo II box at the game shops, but don't own a PC, then you may still be in luck. Blizzard are currently working on Diablo 2 for the PlayStation 2 and Microsoft X-Box. Though nothing is official yet, it seems the preliminary work is underway to bring a console version of the

action/RPG to the market. Seeing as Diablo II sold over a million units in its first fortnight at retail, you can bet that Blizzard are sizing up the console market pretty seriously. The possibilities for co-operative multiplayer games, thanks to multiple controller ports and the fact that the new consoles with be internet ready, make Diablo II on console



"Have at you giant head!"

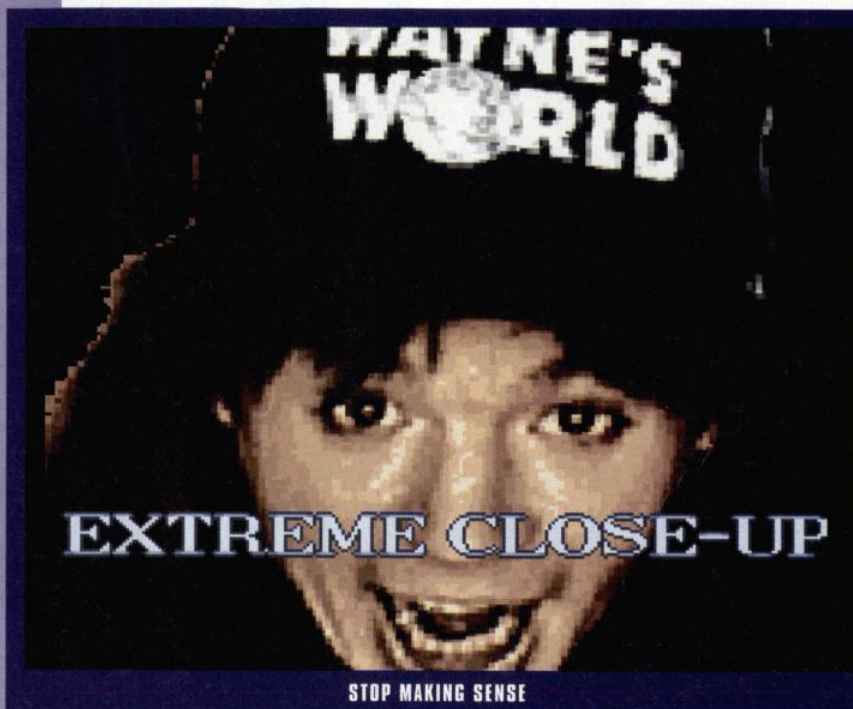


a damn fine idea. Don't expect a straight port though — chances are that Blizzard will ensure the console version offers something different to the PC experience...



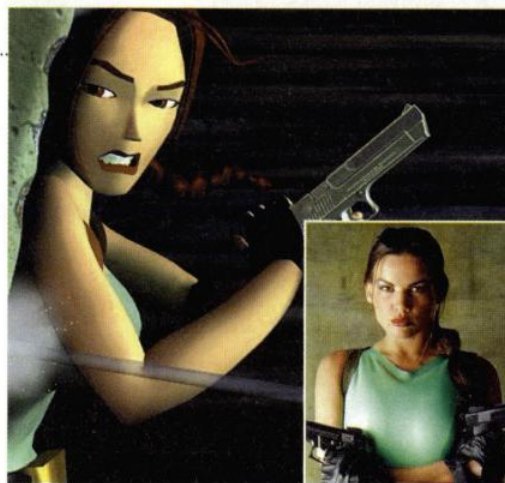
CAPTION THIS! PART 11

We're back again for more reader hilarity. What's wrong with us?! Send your captions to Caption This! Part 11 at freakscene@next.com.au. Good luck!



LARA LOVES PS2

We knew that when Eidos said "Tomb Raider 4: The Last Revelation", that they didn't really mean the last Tomb Raider game. Unfortunately. It looks like Lara Croft is making her way to the PlayStation 2 in a whole new adventure for the end of 2001. Sounds like Eidos are timing this to release around the time of the Tomb Raider movie, starring Angelina Jolie as Lara Croft. Fair enough. Hopefully the PS2 will allow for some leaps in gameplay over previous titles in the series, and that we're not looking down the barrel of another uninspired sequel. In the meantime, we can all gear up for a Tomb Raider 5 this Christmas on the old PlayStation, Dreamcast and PC. We can see it now... "Tomb Raider 5: Lara Won't Die", actually it's called Tomb Raider Chronicles.

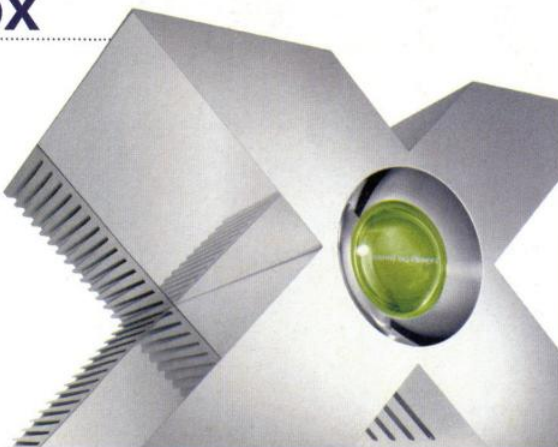


QUAKE 3 CREATOR ADVISES MICROSOFT ON XBOX

John Carmack, the legendary game designer behind most of id Software's games, has found himself on the advisory board for the Microsoft Xbox. Basically, this role allows Carmack to help guide Microsoft into making the right decisions about the hardware and development tools that go with it and advise on issues such as OpenGL support.

Carmack himself says "I'm all for the Xbox as a console platform. The graphics hardware is a lot cooler than PS2, and there are a lot of other things going for it. I am still uneasy about all the market protection issues that go with consoles, but I tend to think that Microsoft is a more open company than many of the traditional console companies."

The Xbox gets more frightening every day...



OVERFLOW

Operation Winback (which scored 92% in Hyper many issues ago) has finally hit our shores. This is just a reminder that if you own a Nintendo 64, you must certainly run off and buy this game immediately!

David Hayter, the voice of Solid Snake in MGS, wrote the X-Men movie (his first screenplay!) and also played a museum security guard in X-Men! Multi-talented, eh? How's that for a piece of astounding trivia?

Tekken the Movie is an actuality. Even though both Street Fighter and Mortal Kombat sucked immensely, someone still thinks the Tekken movie would be a good idea. Corey Yuen, the fight choreographer for X-Men, will direct the film which may also star Stephen Fung and Kristy Yeung. Samo Hung may even be Heihachi!

Will the GST and Australia's limping dollar mean the PlayStation 2 will be a tad more expensive than we were predicting? Would you pay \$699 for a new games console? We'll keep our ear to the ground.

We love Wave Race 64, just read about it in our Top 50 games feature. We're literally feeling goosebumps at the mention of a new Wave Race title being developed by Nintendo in time for the Starcube launch.

Unreal Tournament has been confirmed for the Dreamcast! After gamers fought over the controls at E3 for UT on the PS2 and likewise Quake 3 on the Dreamcast, it seems the Dreamcast will win out by having BOTH games on the system! Oh and Half Life also...

Here's one for the tech heads. Blue and red LEDs will revolutionise how data is stored on CDs and DVDs, it is said in Scientific American magazine. Blue LEDs will allow four times the information to be stored on the medium, which is nothing to sniff at. Check out www.sciam.com for more.

Nintendo's new Zelda trilogy on the Color Game Boy has been slashed from three to just two games. Reasons given were that programming for data-trading between the three games was proving far too difficult, thus the teams have decided to concentrate on just two games. Looks like the TriForce series will need a new name.

SEGA CRACKDOWN

It seems that nothing can stop the pirate scene online. The PlayStation 2 has already been cracked, allowing games released on both CD and DVD to be downloaded and burnt to a standard CD-R. The movie industry is still in shock since the copyright protection on DVDs was broken and techniques developed to "rip" DVDs to DivX format on your hard drive at one tenth the size.

The Dreamcast, however, has been a different story entirely. It was beginning to look like the system was invulnerable, and that Sega had made a very smart move in going with the proprietary GD-ROM format. Almost two years after its Japanese launch, however, the Dreamcast has finally fallen victim to piracy. Over 100 games have now been released in the online blackmarket.

Sega, however, aren't taking all this lying down. They've shut down over 60 sites offering Dreamcast games for download, and will continue to prosecute those dealing in their property. More importantly, however, Sega have already implemented more advanced copy protection in their latest games in an effort to halt the flood once and for all.



BLEEMCAST

Bleem! was the groundbreaking PlayStation emulator that allowed you to play PSX games in extremely high resolutions on your PC. Those of you who tried the program will no doubt agree that it had its fair share of problems. Chief among these was the fact that Bleem! had to cater for every possible PC hardware configuration under the sun, and as a result only a percentage of games worked reliably with the emulator. Even so, Bleem! has sold around 250,000 copies to date, so there's certainly an audience eager to play "upgraded" PlayStation games.

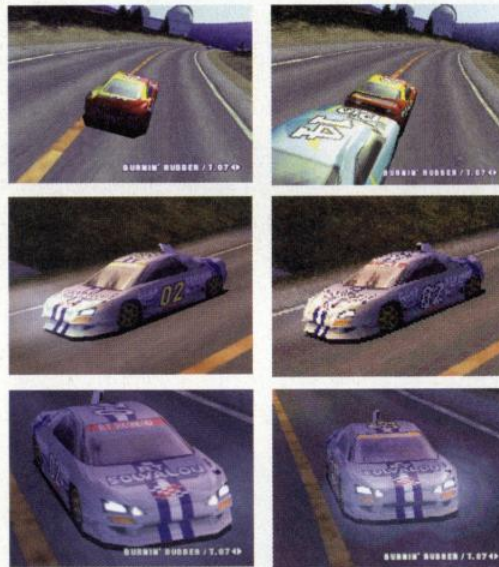
Bleem! is now coming to Dreamcast, and will take the PlayStation's standard 320x240 resolution and use the Dreamcast's extra grunt to run the games in 640x480. Other graphical enhancements include full screen anti-aliasing and bi-linear filtering. Bleem! for Dreamcast is shaping up to offer superior enhancements to playing PSX games on the backwards compatible PlayStation 2, and the games on display at E3 certainly looked awesome.

Bleemcast! will be sold for US \$20 per pack – each pack offering full support for 100 games across all genres. It will be sold like this to ensure that all 100 games are optimised to the full extent possible. There will be four packs available within a couple of months of the software's release, meaning that you'll be able to play 400 PlayStation games on your Dreamcast. Bleem! are even going to sell dual shock style controllers – Bleempods, so there's no need to remap your Dreamcast controller.

Bleem! for Dreamcast has got to be a major concern for Sony, and they filed a lawsuit against Bleem! on the second day of E3. We'll let you know when – and if – a local release date is set.

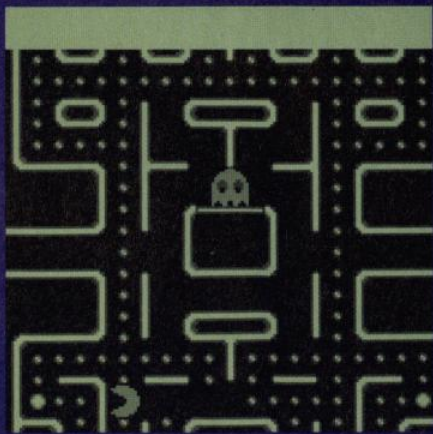


A comparison of RR4 running on Bleemcast and PlayStation (Bleemcast on the left)

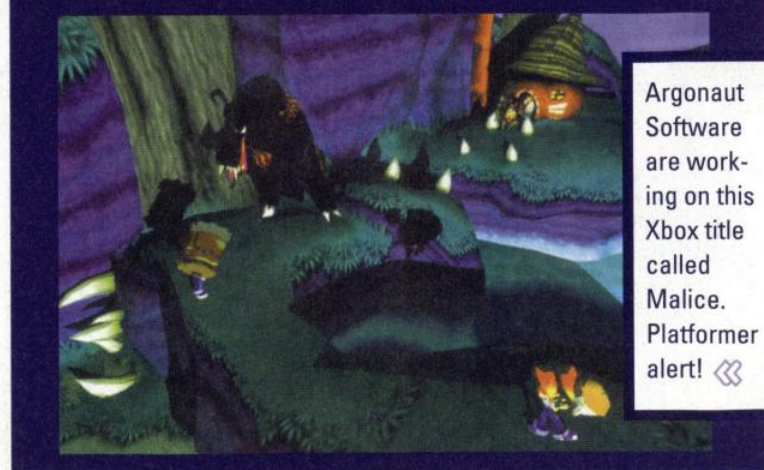



THE GAME BOY GAMBIT

Palm Pilots are one of the funkier handheld organiser devices around at the moment, and they've just become a little bit funkier. Gambit Studios have created "Liberty" – a Game Boy emulator for your Palm. We've tested the device with some demo roms – and have to say that it's very good fun indeed. There's no sound, and you may have to use the overclocking utility available on their site to get decent speed, but with support for a large number of games, this is a great way for business types to wile away those boring management meetings. Check out what the fuss is about at <http://www.gambit-studios.com/>, and perhaps download the free shareware version.



SCREENSHOT OF THE MONTH



Argonaut Software are working on this Xbox title called Malice. Platformer alert! 

WINNERS

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Jason Williamson, SA
Angus Seekamp, NSW
P.Marciano, WA
Brodie Williamson, Vic
Rod Ghissard, Qld

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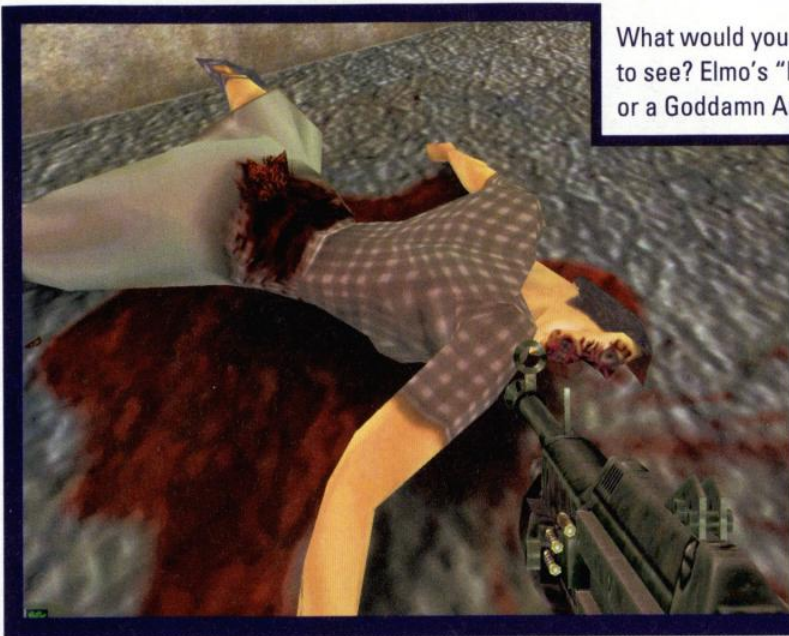
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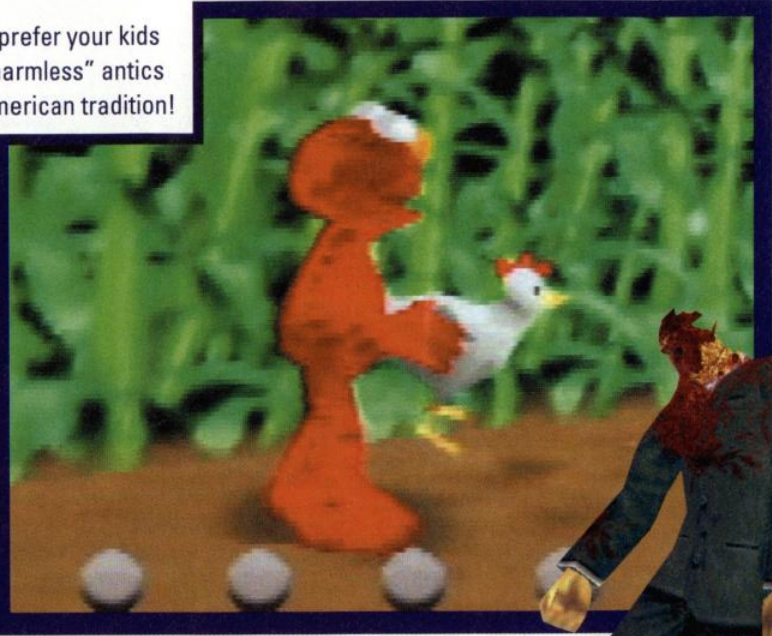
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What would you prefer your kids to see? Elmo's "harmless" antics or a Goddamn American tradition!



VIDEOGAME VIOLENCE PART XVIII

Videogames have once again become the scapegoat for wider social problems in the United States. By the time you read this, a new law will be in effect in Indianapolis banning children under the age of 18 from playing graphically violent videogames unless a parent is present. Two national videogame associations in Chicago have already protested the decision and a lawsuit is likely.

Elsewhere in the states, Illinois Attorney General Jim Ryan has been lobbying for retailers to stop selling M rated games to minors under the age of 17. Two retail chains have already pulled such games off their shelves nationwide.

We love the way that Americans are constantly leaping from scapegoat to scapegoat (Marilyn Manson to Doom) without actually taking a look around at the

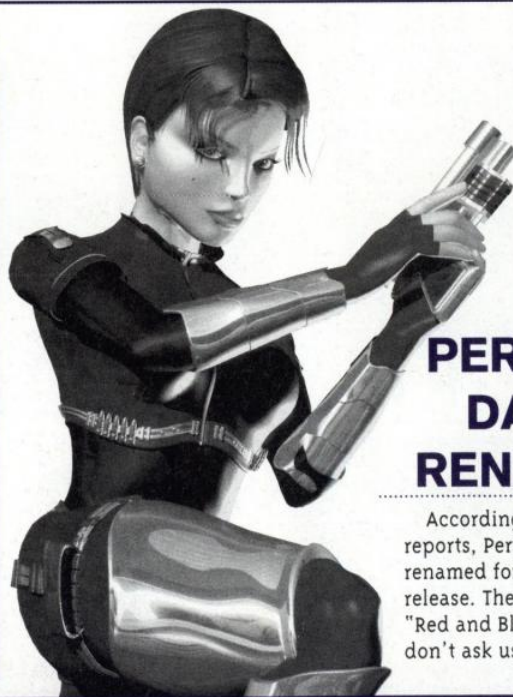
gun-toting culture their children are growing up in. Unfortunately, it's far easier for those in power to simply blame videogames or death metal than to try and reform gun laws, and battle the powerful gun lobbies. At least videogames haven't been blamed for world hunger... yet.

X-RAY SPECS

Hardware gurus ASUS have announced a new technology called 3D SeeThrough that will be incorporated into driver upgrades for their AGP-V7100 and AGP-V7700 video cards. Initially they planned to implement three graphics "cheats" into the release - Transparent View, Wireframe View and Extra Light. The first two would give gamers advantages like being able to see through walls, and could have potentially disastrous ramifications for online gaming. In fact, within hours of the initial press release, negative posts online convinced ASUS to only incorporate the third feature into the release - Extra Light - which boosts the colour definition in games and allows you to define a portion of the screen as a spotlight. They'll take a wait and see approach to the other two.

BITING THE HEADS OFF CHICKENS - IN 3D

Who ever said that Dinosaurs were extinct? In the realm of videogames, it seems that dinosaurs... or more specifically "rock dinosaurs" are alive and flourishing. First a KISS game, then the announcement of Motley Crue's involvement with Tribes 2, and now this... an Ozzy Osbourne game. It's a first person shooter (sigh) called Savage Skies, being developed by start-up developer iROCK and will feature a full soundtrack by Ozzy. No real details are known at the moment aside from the usual vague claims of "next-gen graphics engine" and an "absorbing plot". He may be the iron man, but Ozzy Osbourne's reputation is hardly invulnerable. Let's hope he doesn't ruin it...



PERFECT DARK RENAMED

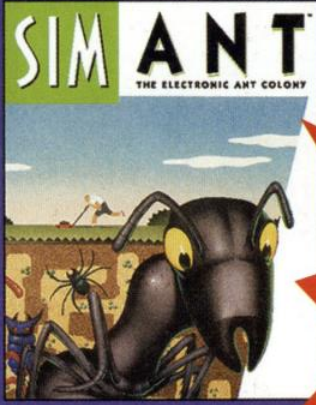
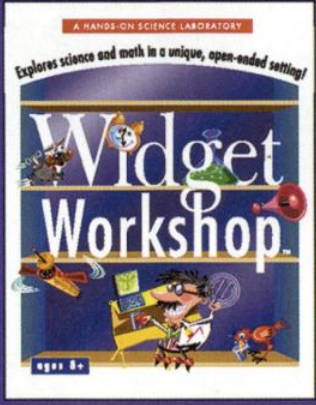
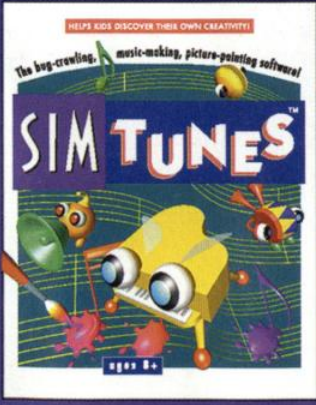
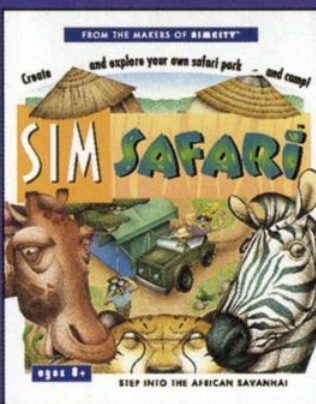
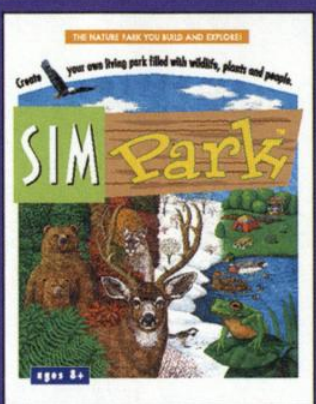
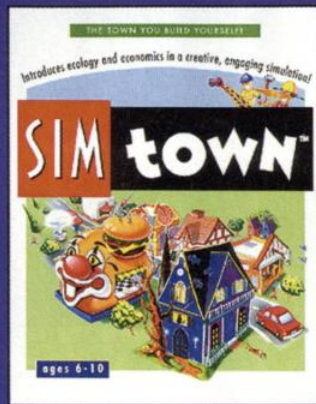
According to a number of reports, Perfect Dark will be renamed for its Japanese release. The new name? "Red and Black"... but don't ask us why.



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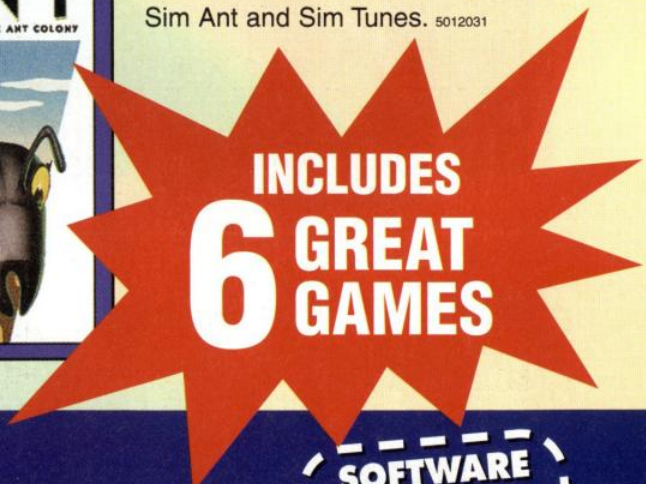
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THE COMPUTER SPECIALISTS

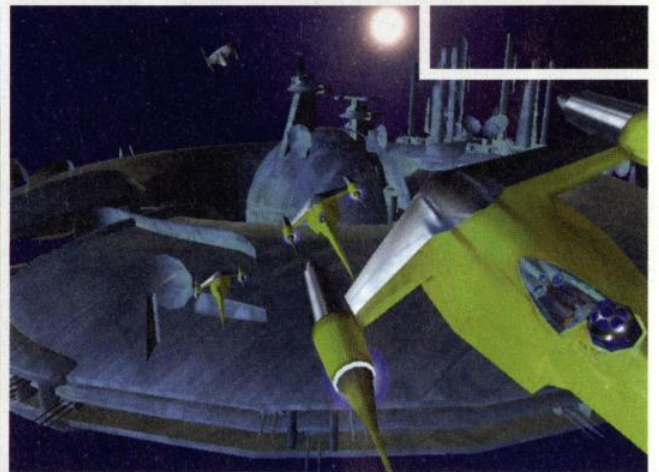
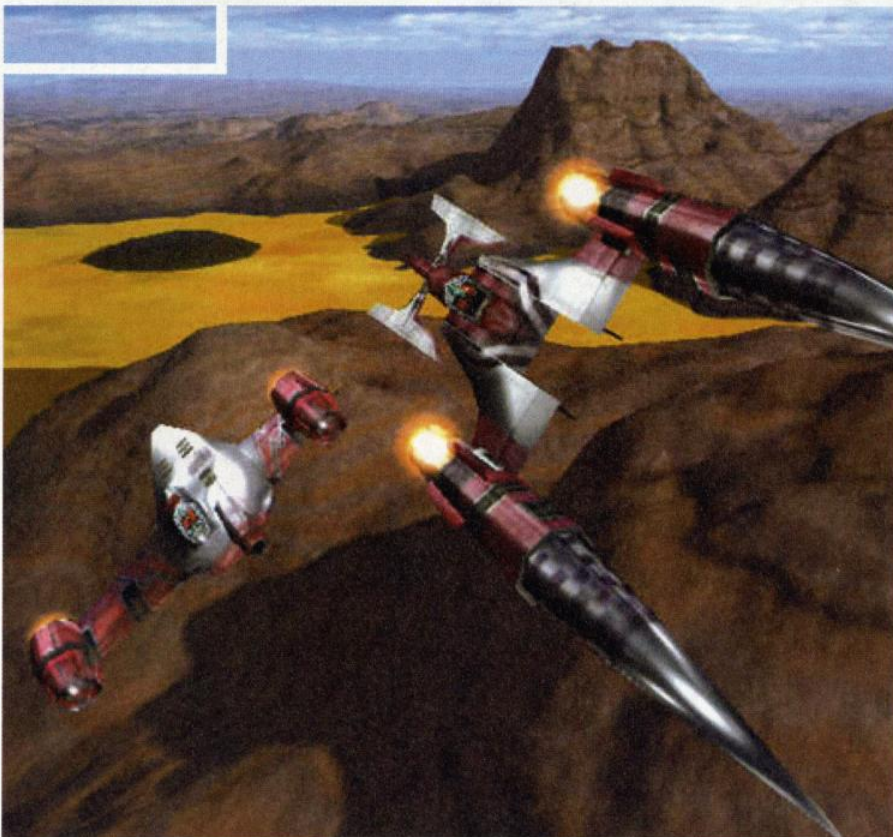
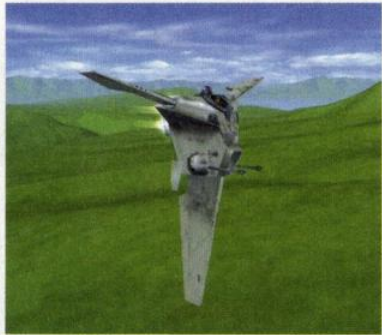
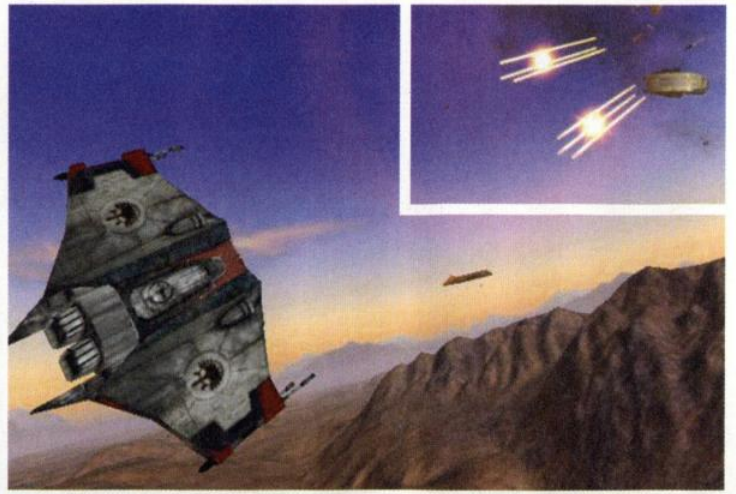
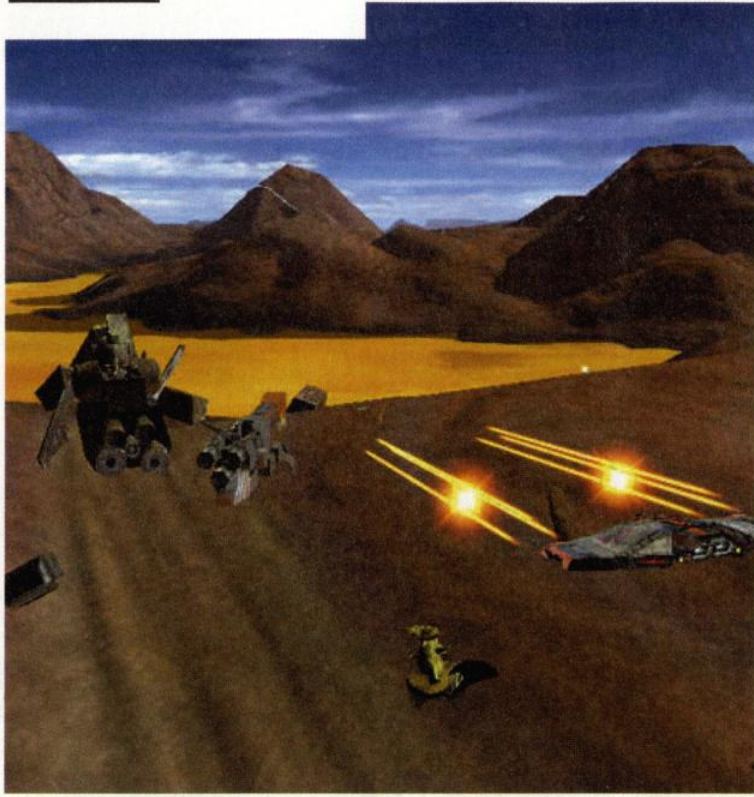
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eye candy



Star Wars: StarFighter

LUCASARTS

PS2

We gave you a peek at this new "Rogue Squadron" style title from LucasArts in our E3 feature, but now we've nabbed a whole bunch of new screens. Take a look at how good these ships look — nice and metallic. Regardless of the console you own, LucasArts have a Star Wars title for everyone, although StarFighter was looking like one of the better ones...



Timesplitters

EIDOS INTERACTIVE

PS2

Looks like the super consoles will have their fair share of First Person Shooters, despite the old control pad dilemma. Timesplitters is an original title for the PlayStation 2 being developed by a team made up of ex-Goldeneye and Perfect Dark programmers! The game will have a four-player split-screen mode and some quick, fast shooter action! Sounding tasty...



THE TOP

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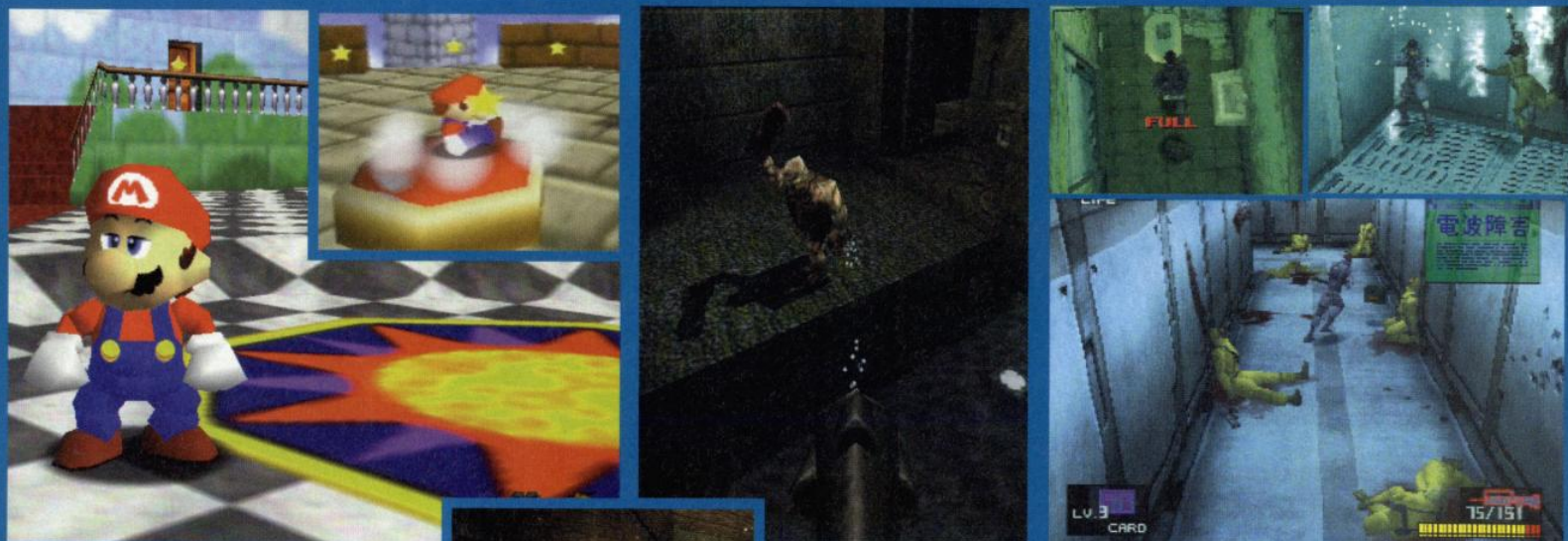
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GAMES OF ALL TIME



Tetris may be a classic, but is it a better gaming experience than Metal Gear Solid? It's time to draw the line between what was influential design and what is a great gaming experience. Our Top 50 is a list that includes all the great games we've played since the introduction of the Saturn and the so-called "next-generation" of consoles along with the birth of 3D accelerators for the PC. We thought it was time that a Top 50 list actually listed the best ever games you could still buy and play. This is a Top 50 for this generation – the "next generation" as it was dubbed when the 32-bit era was born. We've also decided that listing a game "series" rather than a particular title is a bit of a cop out, so you'll no longer see a "series" getting ranked, but rather, a specific title in the series that we've decided best represents the whole.

The golden age of gaming (the 16-bit era of the SNES and Megadrive) is still important enough to have its own Top 25, so we've included that too. Whilst those games were hugely influential, we wanted to give you a new Top 50 that reflected where we are now – not where we've been. Are we breaking the rules? **Well, it's about time!**



1. SUPER MARIO 64 – NINTENDO 64

"It's-a me, Mario!" Incredibly, the first Nintendo 64 title to be released is the game that tops our mammoth list! Shigeru Miyamoto (the game designer behind Mario and Zelda) boldly attempted the world's first truly 3D platformer and he triumphed where so many others have failed. The colourful 3D land is still loaded with innovative puzzles and great action, despite the transition from 2D side-scroller to 3D third-person. Life, character, interaction – it's all there. Since it debuted in 1996, we've been left wondering why so few Nintendo 64 games even came close to the quality of this great launch title. The degree of originality and imagination in Super Mario 64 is what puts it at the top of our "next generation" best ever list.

2. (GL) QUAKE – PC/MAC

The GL stands for OpenGL, which was the 3D accelerated version of Quake. Whilst the original Quake was released as "software" only, it was still 3D – and downloading the GL patch and playing with one of the new 3D cards became commonplace. Gibbers everywhere oohed and ahhed at how amazing this game suddenly looked. It was probably the sole reason why thousands of gamers rushed out and got a 3D card. When you add to that the phenomenon that this game created, you have our number two game. We can't deny that Quake is to blame for many late issues of Hyper.

MEMORABLE

One late night at the Hyper headquarters, I remember sitting down in front of Quake for the first time and innocently entering the name "Lord Seafood" for the first time. It haunts me to this day. – ELIOT

After beating Mario 64, we started spending hour upon hour simply skating on the Koopa shell on the first level! – CAM

MOMENTS

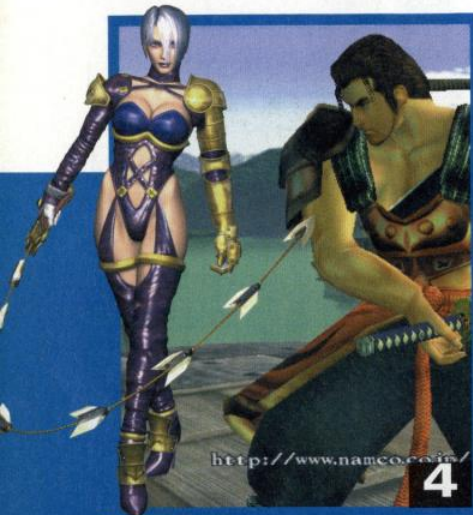
3. METAL GEAR SOLID – PLAYSTATION

Hideo Kojima's masterpiece, Metal Gear Solid, broke ground across the board. It was a whole new gaming experience, and the first to do the concept of an "interactive movie" justice. MGS won gamers over with its immersive and adult orientated storyline, slick graphics and character design, great mix of action and stealth, superb score, and stunning production values. In what other console game are the issues of politics, psychology, philosophy and love so integral and handled so well? Very few. And it's still the only game to this date where you can place a block of C4 on an enemy soldier's back as he's taking a whizz, and blow him up at the urinal. Now that's good gaming!

feature

4. SOUL CALIBUR – DREAMCAST

Soul Calibur came out on the Dreamcast two years ago and it still looks better than most games we've seen to date. Namco brought this arcade game to the home with more bells and whistles than should be legal. The incredible fighting dynamics, the gorgeous graphics, the full-blown storymode and all the unlockable treats made Soul Calibur one of the most addictive and satisfying 3D fighting games ever made. If you own a Dreamcast and you don't own Soul Calibur, you're simply nuts.



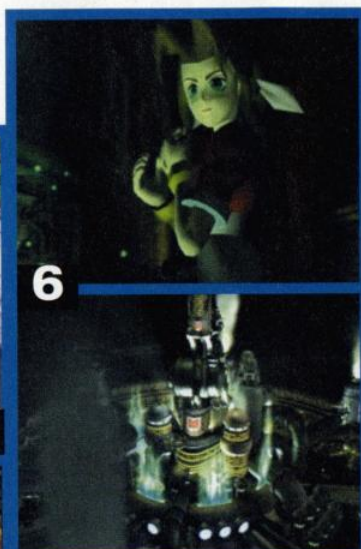
5. WIPEOUT – PLAYSTATION

WipeOut was the game that defined the PlayStation as cool. When WipeOut hit the scene, it was plain for all to see that consoles were no longer the domain of kids. WipeOut had hip youth culture written all over it, targeting teenagers and beyond with a barrage of fast paced racing, funky design and compelling dance music. We've seen other developers try the same formula time and time again, but Wipeout got it right the first time... and how! The latter games in the series have improved upon the gameplay, but nothing compares to the vibe we got playing this game for the first time back when the PlayStation was brand spanking new. Oh, and in our opinion, the original soundtrack is still the best of the series.



6. FINAL FANTASY VII – PLAYSTATION

If there was one PlayStation game that changed the way gamers perceived RPGs, it was Final Fantasy VII. Hugely popular, it has been one of the most successful PlayStation games of all time – and for good reason! Square designed Final Fantasy VII with so much heart and soul, and also made the game so epic in size and structure that it's a pretty difficult title to resist. We'll never forget Cloud Strife and his quirky friends. Final Fantasy VIII didn't quite have the same charm, but take a look at our Final Fantasy IX review this issue to get excited about the series all over again.



7. GOLDENEYE 007 – NINTENDO 64

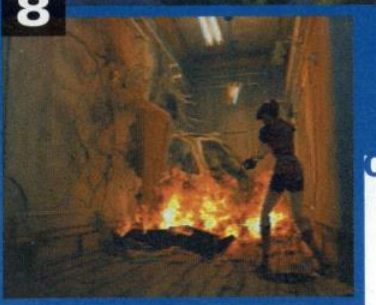
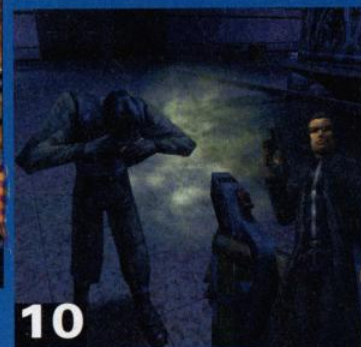
GoldenEye has almost single-handedly kept the Nintendo 64 alive for the last few years. This is the game that made Rare a household name amongst gamers, as GoldenEye offered a robust and entertaining single-player game coupled with the best four-player console deathmatch around. Until Rare released Perfect Dark, GoldenEye was untouchable. We still rank it higher than Perfect Dark though, because if it wasn't for the success of GoldenEye 007, Joanna wouldn't exist.



MEMORABLE

Wipeout is so hypnotising, that I remember zoning out whilst holding first place, oblivious to the fact that the phone was ringing. – ELIOT

MOMENTS



8. RESIDENT EVIL 2 – PLAYSTATION/NINTENDO 64

The second instalment of the Resident Evil saga, and still the best version on PlayStation (Code Veronica came perilously close to pipping RE2 on the list). Resident Evil 2 took the original game, strapped a double shottie to both arms, swapped the legs with tank treads, added a rocket launcher to both shoulders and then blew it's head off. One mean mother of a game, and still a great chunk-blower today.

9. ABE'S ODDYSEE – PLAYSTATION/PC

All hail Lord Lanning... errr... sorry, Lorne Lanning! Abe's Oddysee reinvented the dying 2D platform genre. Indeed, with the exception of Klonoa, the Abe games represent the only great 2D platformers for this generation. Abe's Oddysee had so much personality and inventiveness that it was almost impossible not to love it. The puzzles made sense, the gameworld was holistic, the design was unique, and the overall production standards unmatched. We simply cannot wait to play Munch's Oddysee.

10. DEUS EX – PC

Deus Ex is the most recently released game to make it into our top 50 – and at number 10! We regard Deus Ex as a bit of a pinnacle in First Person Shooters. You won't find a game with more depth and addictive realism. It may not be as graphically realistic as some other titles on the market, but the gameplay is where this game stuns you. Play as a gun-toting hero, a dweeby hacker, a resourceful thief or a combination... it's up to you to develop your own style as you play. Not only that, but the world and its inhabitants react differently depending upon your actions. Coolness.

11. MARIO KART 64 – NINTENDO 64

To some extent, Mario Kart 64 was a letdown after the pure gameplay of Super Mario Kart. It didn't seem quite fast enough, the track design was uneven and the battle mode sucked. That said, Mario Kart 64 was mad fun in four player mode, the driving physics had been tweaked beautifully and the Mario Circuit tracks were still powersliding heaven. The best four player racer on the N64.

12. ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME – NINTENDO 64

The Legend Of Zelda by Shigeru Miyamoto on the NES started it all, Zelda on the SNES was amazing and Zelda on Game Boy was brilliant too, but when it comes to the current consoles, this is the only game to represent the series (besides the upcoming Majora's Mask). Again, Nintendo managed to overcome 3D third-person control dilemmas with some nifty ideas and Miyamoto ensured that the classic Zelda action and puzzle solving was in full force. Wonderful escapism.



12

13. COLIN MCRAE RALLY – PLAYSTATION/PC

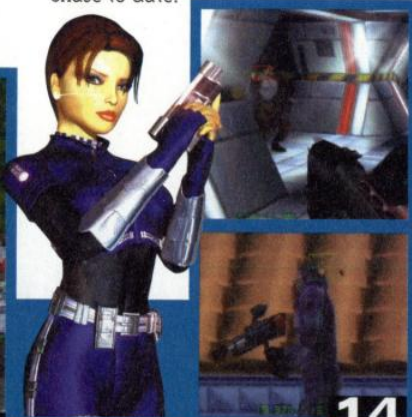
Codemasters stunned gamers everywhere with this superb rally driving simulation that has set the benchmark for all other racing games on the PlayStation. Never has such a realistic racing title been so playable and fun. The wonderful engine sounds, smooth environments and excellent handling made Colin McRae Rally a driving game even non-car freaks could get addicted to.



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14. PERFECT DARK – NINTENDO 64

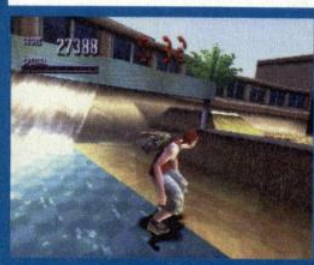
After GoldenEye, the pressure was on for Rare to deliver something better. Incredibly, they seem to have done just that with Perfect Dark. We'll see in the long term if the multiplayer stands up as well as GoldenEye, but certainly Perfect Dark is worth buying for the plethora of options and amazing single player game alone. The best N64 purchase to date.



14

15. TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING – PLAYSTATION/DREAMCAST/NINTENDO 64

Tony Hawk and Neversoft combined to craft one of the most playable games on the PlayStation – or any other platform for that matter. Elegantly capturing the freeform nature of today's skateboarding, Tony Hawk was a godsend. The possibilities that the physics, tricks and environments allow is stunning. You can simply skate around for hours testing out different lines. Tony Hawk also holds the record for "most played demo ever".



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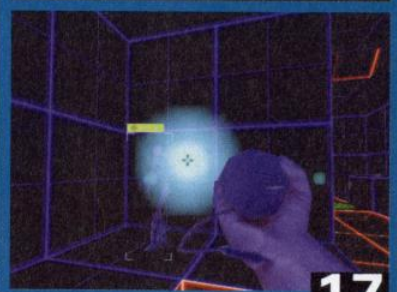


19



16. HALF LIFE – PC

After the fairly shallow single-player experiences in Quake 2 and Unreal, Valve Software blew the lid off the FPS community with their living and breathing world in Half Life. The amazing 3D sound and clever scripted events brought this game to life in a big way. The game lives on with amazing mods like Counter Strike.



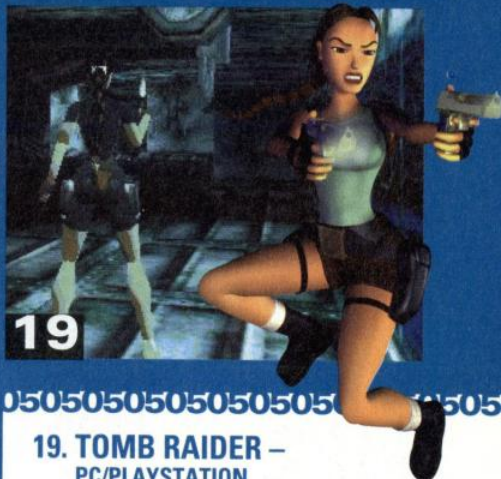
17. SYSTEM SHOCK 2 – PC

Blending role-playing, action and intriguing story-telling, System Shock 2 returned us to the chilling future of the original System Shock, yet with the gloss and immersive atmosphere of a post-Half Life product. If you didn't get a chance to lose yourself in this cyberpunk world, then keep your eye on the upcoming Dreamcast version.



18. GRAN TURISMO – PLAYSTATION

There's no denying that Sony hit gold with GT. This was a ridiculously comprehensive driving game that captivated a mainstream audience despite its hardcore approach. Of course, it was the brilliant replay system that initially grabbed our attention, and then we discovered it was a great racing game too!



19. TOMB RAIDER – PC/PLAYSTATION

As much as the whole gaming world moans and groans as another four thousand Tomb Raider (TR) games are popped out of Eidos' rear end, the fact remains – the first was an innovative and damn enjoyable game. One of the first games to do 3D action/adventure properly, TR and Lara Croft hit the nail on the head with an equal measure of action, exploration and puzzle solving. The Indiana Jones influence was undeniable, but worked very much in the game's favour. As did Lara's... assets. We honestly couldn't care less if we never see another TR game ever, but back then, it was fresh and exciting.

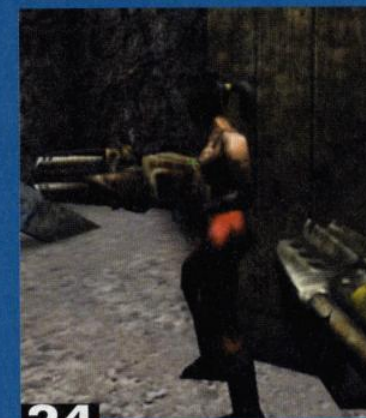
feature

20. THIEF – PC

Looking Glass Studios won the hearts of gamers everywhere who were sick of the rut that First Person Shooters were stuck in. Finally a FPS that let us use our heads as well as our trigger finger. Another marvellous production that emphasised atmosphere and realism over alien technology or big hunking weapons.



20



24



24. UNREAL TOURNAMENT – PC/MAC

Whilst Unreal was a visually a technical marvel – and lots of fun – the gameplay wasn't terribly innovative. Unreal Tournament on the other hand, pipped id Software at the post with its team-based multiplayer gameplay. Credit goes to Epic for putting together a great game with excellent AI, plenty of options and gameplay variations.

21. WAVE RACE 64 – NINTENDO 64

Several years on and we still get this one out and try to shave a few micro-seconds off our favourite courses (props to Twilight City). Wave Race's longevity is mostly due to Nintendo's dedication to pure gameplay, and the fact that it still has the best wave physics of any game to date. If you haven't yet tasted the fruits of Nintendo's best racing pie, go grab a slice.



21

MEMORABLE

You would not believe the feud that raged in the office over Unreal Tournament versus Quake 3 Arena. Voices were raised, fists flew, system files were deleted... thank God we are over all that now. We have to accept that both games are mad... but UT sucks. – CAM

MOMENTS



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25. QUAKE 3 ARENA – PC/MAC

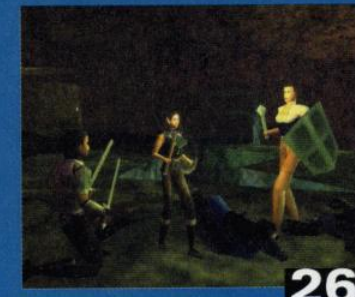
The other multiplayer-only FPS title on the scene, Quake 3, had some unrealistically huge expectations on it. In reality, it's just a super solid deathmatch experience that excels in design and visuals, with incredible player physics. It's also still being modded to prolong the Quake experience into the future.

22. RIDGE RACER – PLAYSTATION

It was simple, sure. And it only had one track also, but damn was it ever fun. Ridge Racer was the first "arcade perfect" port for PlayStation, and it came packing a sublimely playable course, perfectly formed arcade physics and speed like you wouldn't believe. It still plays well today, and all we can say is mmm... powerslides.



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26. EVERQUEST – PC

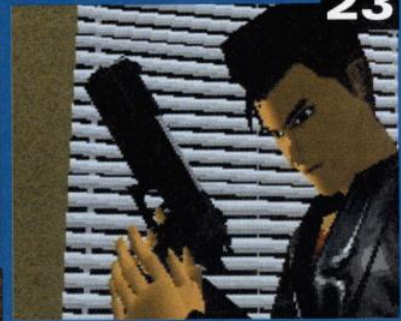
The only online-only title in our list, Everquest has proved to be the best Online RPG in the gaming scene. No other product of this nature has the ability to totally ruin your daily routine like Everquest does. People call in sick, don't sleep, don't eat and never leave their PCs for inhumanly long stints of questing.

23. TIME CRISIS – PLAYSTATION/ARCADE

Time Crisis at the arcades was memorable for its introduction of the "ducking/reload" pedal which sucked us that much further into the action. With the Namco GunCon, the PlayStation version was just as cool, and you won't find a better light gun game on the PlayStation.



23



27



27. MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2 – DREAMCAST

Currently the best 2D fighter out on the market, this title has great characters and brilliant dynamics. The sheer lunacy of having four characters on screen at once creating so much action that you can hardly tell what's going on is all part of the attraction. Featuring 3D backgrounds with the comic-style 2D fighting actually works extremely well. We love this game.

28. CASTLEVANIA: SYMPHONY OF THE NIGHT – PLAYSTATION

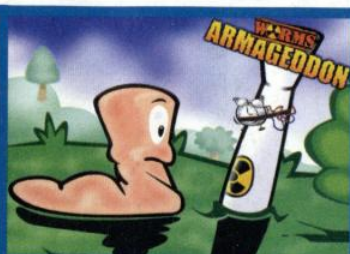
Who would have thought that an "old school" SNES-style 2D scrolling platformer would turn out to be such a brilliant PlayStation title? Castlevania: Symphony Of The Night is full of secrets, challenging platforming and loads of style. Some people may not get it, but they're missing out on some real gaming goodness.



28

29. WORMS ARMAGEDDON – NINTENDO 64

Grab some friends, some grogs and a big ol' TV and settle in for a long night, cos there's no way to have a quick game of Worms. One of our favourite multiplayer games ever, Worms is as much a social event as it is a game session. Indeed, we haven't come across another game that brings out so much trash talking, backstabbing and intense rivalries. Great Stuff.



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30. STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3 – PLAYSTATION

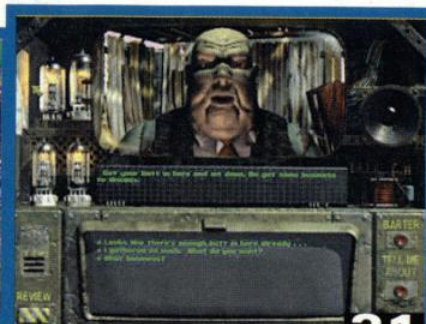
The definitive Street Fighter conversion for the 32bit consoles. Capcom not only pulled off an almost arcade perfect port of this title, but they threw in 34 characters from all the SF eras, drastically reduced loading times, several different super configurations and a number of gameplay modes, including the excellent World Tour mode.



30

31. FALLOUT – PC

A tasty mixture of RPG questing, character development and wacky humour made Fallout a favourite with the Hyper and PC Powerplay crew. Fallout 2 was just as good, if not better in some ways, however this is where it all began – and boy was it addictive!



31

MEMORABLE

When Worms Armageddon came out, the Hyper crew and the guys from N64 Gamer developed a nasty addiction. Playing day in and day out, staying at the office until 2AM. Eventually, we realised that trying to work was futile, so we would buy a case of beer instead and give in to the lure of those worms. – CAM

MOMENTS



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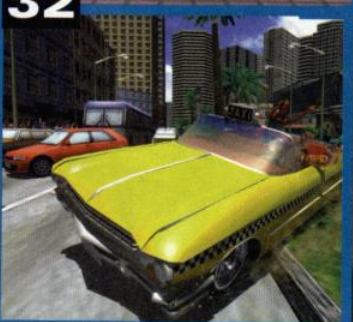
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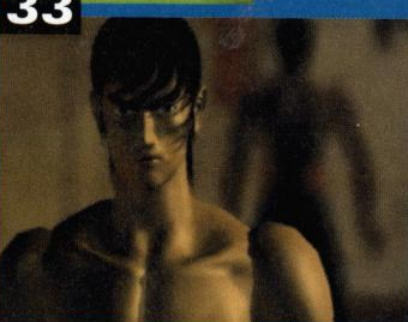
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32. CRAZY TAXI – DREAMCAST/ARCADE

What can we say? Crazy Taxi is a complete riot from start to finish. The goal is to pick up passengers and get them to their destination as fast as possible, any way you can. Hooning through crowded city streets, launching off rooftops, powersliding around corners, knocking over phone booths... this game is pure arcade racing action. Oh, and it looks phenomenal to boot.

33. TEKKEN 2 – PLAYSTATION

Button mashing paradise. But if you look a little closer, you'll find that Tekken's gameplay runs very deep indeed. A vast improvement on the original, with heaps of characters, and an absolute wealth of new moves and combos, Tekken 2 made the list because of the ludicrous number of hours the Hyper staff has logged on this game. Oh, and because it had Wang!

34. MICRO MACHINES V3 – PLAYSTATION

Multiplayer mayhem. Up to eight players all on the same screen. This 32bit update got it all right - simple, but catchy graphics (who could resist the way the cars bounced with joy at the end of each race), a good variety of vehicles and terrain, plenty of courses and some of the finest multiplayer racing around.

35. FIGHTERS MEGAMIX – SATURN

Take characters from Fighting Vipers and Virtua Fighter 2, but throw in some Virtua Fighter 3 moves and some crazy characters like the Daytona USA car and the Virtua Kids and you have the best fighting game the Saturn ever came up with. An early classic.

feature

36. JUMPING FLASH – PLAYSTATION

Trippy, trippy, trippy... Muu Muu! The first 3D platformer for the PlayStation is still one of the most original. From a first person perspective, you played Robbit the robotic rabbit, and your mission was to use your insane jumping skills to traverse the great heights of each level. No other platform game, other than Jumping Flash 2, has had such great scale, or as bizarrely tripped out graphics.



37. HOMEWORLD – PC

No one thought that a 3D space strategy game could work – but boy, were we proved wrong! Sierra released Homeworld to a 3D hungry market and their brilliant engine made for a unique and creative new approach to the strategy genre. The interface was truly intuitive and innovative.



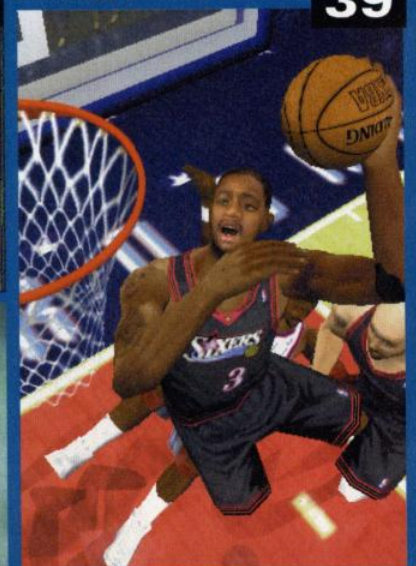
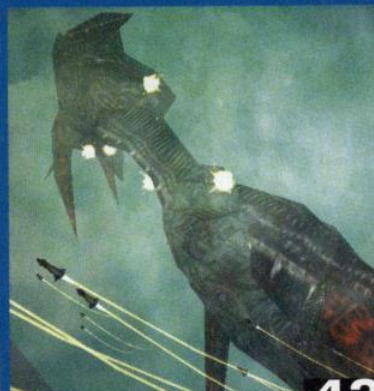
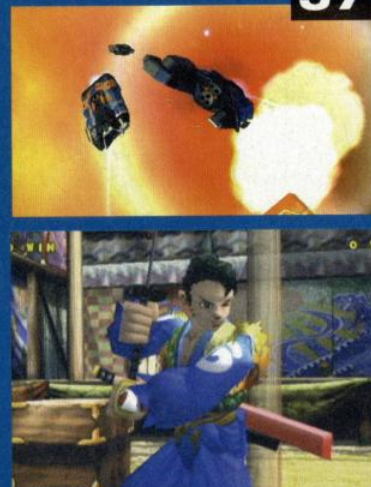
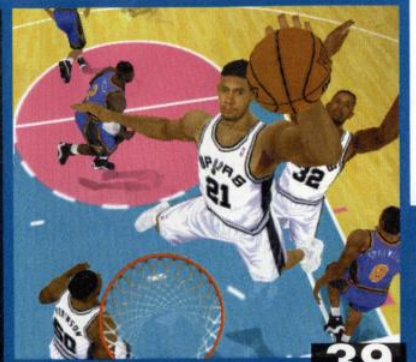
38. BALDUR'S GATE – PC

Bringing the world of Advanced Dungeons and Dragons alive in a grand new way was this complex RPG from Interplay. Baldur's Gate revived our interest in this type of RPG all over again, and it was soon followed up with the brilliant Planescape Torment which also deserves a mention.



39. NBA 2K – DREAMCAST

Probably the best basketball game available – NBA 2K has incredibly authentic graphics and plays like a dream. NBA Live 2000 is a noteworthy contender, but for our money, you can't go past the four-player action in NBA 2k. That's until NBA2k1 gets released of course...



40. DIABLO II – PC/MAC

We were going to put the original Diablo here, but Diablo II does everything so much better! Blizzard influenced a huge number of developers out there with Diablo I, and now Diablo II reminds us why we enjoyed the first one so much. Not everyone's cup of tea, but somehow incredibly appealing to anyone into fantasy role playing.

41. POWER STONE – DREAMCAST

Power Stone took the concept of true 3D movement in a fighting game in all the right directions, with multi-tiered levels, plenty of interactivity with the environments, simplistic combos, decent character design, impressive powerups and great multiplayer action. If only there were more levels and a better final boss, Power Stone would have made the top twenty.

42. FREESPACE 2 – PC

With the advent of 3D cards, Freespace 2 blew us all away with its lush atmospheric depiction of Space Combat. The recent Starlancer from Microsoft was great, but it didn't have the same addictive qualities of Freespace 2. Gripping.

43. AGE OF EMPIRES 2 – PC

Bruce Shelley refined Age Of Empires into the gloriously satisfying sequel that was AOE2, addressing all the complaints gamers had with the first title, and offering us some meaty gaming. This game is so comprehensive, put aside a few months of your life to play it.

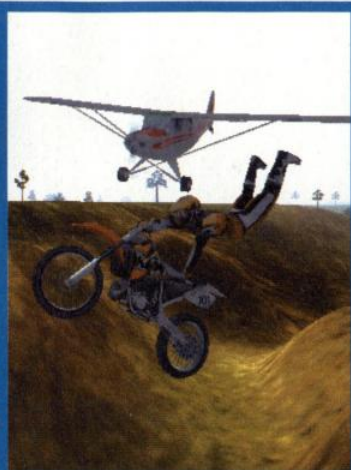
44. LET'S SMASH TENNIS (NTSC JAP) – NINTENDO 64

This one was released in the US (and probably Australia), as "Championship Court Tennis" or something. We're not sure because the Japanese version was so much better. For starters it had a button to make your character do a silly dance – always a crowd pleaser. More seriously, beneath its simplistic cartoony graphics, Let's Smash had charm and playability by the bucket-load. Aside from Goldeneye, this is the game that we've logged the most four-player N64 action on. True!



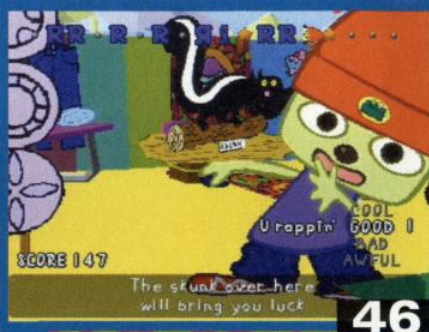
45. MOTOCROSS MADNESS 2 – PC

It was tempting to include the first Motocross Madness, as that was quite an amazing piece of software at the time, but really, Motocross Madness 2 just does it all so much better. So many different racing styles, bigger and more detailed terrain, great physics and unlimited playability. Testament to this title's playability is the fact that you can spend weeks simply caning across the countryside busting huge air and dare devil runs for no reason other than that it feels so damn good!



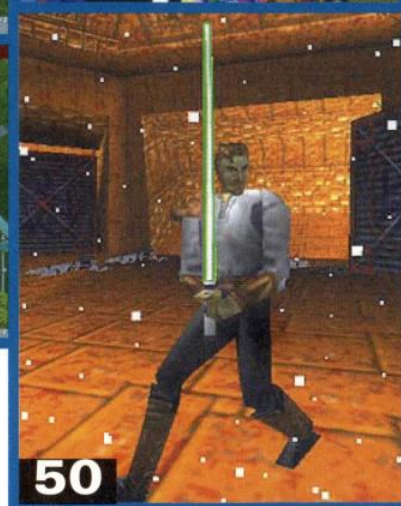
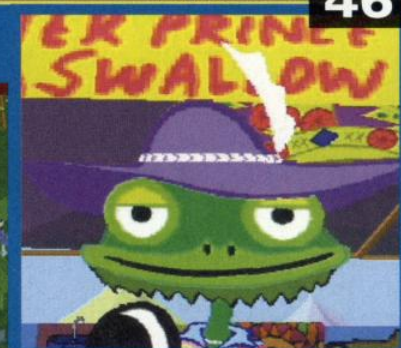
46. PARAPPA THE RAPPER – PLAYSTATION

"The skunk over here will bring you luck"... one of the great truths of both rastafarianism and Parappa The Rapper. Parappa won our hearts with its originality, sense of style and bizarrely inane lyrics. It starred a rapping dog trying to woo the girl (who happened to be a flower) of his dreams. The game was like Simon Says, with the 2D paper cutout characters rapping back and forth backed up by deftly crafted hip hop loops that shifted elements in and out depending on how well you were rapping. If Parappa had been a bit longer, it'd be right up near the top of the list.



47. BUST A GROOVE (NTSC JAP) – PLAYSTATION

The PAL/US-NTSC releases of this game were quite good, but frankly, the Japanese release (called "Bust A Move") rocked that much harder. For starters, those of us in the know were playing this game a good year and a half before it came out in Australia. What was really galling though, was that for the Western release, all the song lyrics were converted into English and lost much of their original vibe and catchiness. Even so, all versions of Bust A Groove are worth checking out for the funky characters, mad dance moves and catchy Jap-pop tunes.



48. SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER 2 TURBO – PLAYSTATION/ARCADE

Our favourite multiplayer puzzle title of all time. Compulsively addictive is the best way to describe this bizarre Street Fighter/Tetris hybrid. With the screen split into two, each player had to arrange their falling blocks into coloured sections, then use the crystals to pop each section, which then sent those blocks to the opponent's screen. Combos increased the number of blocks rained down on your opponent, and a game between two good players could swing back and forth for ages. An arcade hit, followed by a great PlayStation port that we still play today.

49. ROLLERCOASTER TYCOON – PC

C'mon, who hasn't dreamed of creating your own theme park, and in particular, designing your own dope-ass rollercoasters? You know, the ones that tower miles into the air, with so many loops and corkscrews that thrillseekers are more likely to snap their necks or be eviscerated than be ill. Well, Rollercoaster Tycoon allowed you to do just that, and had anal attention to detail that no other amusement park simulation has since equalled. If you've never played this cult classic, give it a spin – you won't be disappointed.

50. JEDI KNIGHT: DARK FORCES 2 – PC

After Quake, the thought of LucasArts taking the Dark Forces series 3D had us worried they would ruin a good brand. But Jedi Knight turned out to be an absolute cracker that perfectly captured the Star Wars "feel" and delivered a fascinating FPS romp! Will Obi-Wan continue this tradition?

MEMORABLE

In the first level of Jedi Knight, there is a classic moment where you stumble out of a doorway onto a thin walkway over a precariously awesome drop, only to have a Tie Bomber go roaring over your head off into space. It was at that moment I completely forgot I was sitting in my bedroom at a computer. I was there. – ELIOT

MOMENTS

TOP 25 golden age GAMES



The "golden age" of gaming was undoubtedly the 16-bit era of the SNES and Megadrive. It was also during this period that the PC continued to astound with some truly unique titles. This was when home console gaming really began to hit the mainstream.



1. SUPER MARIO WORLD – SNES

Super Mario World (SMW) set the standard in gameplay for years to come in the games industry, and simply has no equal in this era. Elegant game design has always been one of Shigeru Miyamoto's greatest strengths, and SMW stands as one of his greatest works. It used simple graphics and a tight set of abilities to magical effect, creating an endearing and diverse world, with seemingly unlimited secrets to discover.

To a large extent SMW was a refinement of the previous games, but along with all the elements that made the first three games so great, it brought some fantastic new additions to the gameplay, and huge replayability. The learning curve was as smooth as silk, and the sheer number of levels (somewhere in the vicinity of 96 exits) was staggering. SMW remains our favourite mushroom eating sim ever. The legacy of Mario lives on.



2. DOOM II – PC

If there's one game that got people talking, it was Doom and Doom II thanks to the satanic imagery and gory fire fights. Doom II was the pick of the two titles and is the game that we can thank for the popularity of the First Person Shooter genre. Who can forget the power of the Super Shotgun, the chainsaw, the grunting imps, the staggering number of chilling surprises and the absurd death count. This game was freaky, even scary. Somewhere down the track, we'll be playing Doom III... we hope it captures the same terrifying atmosphere.



7. CIVILIZATION – PC

Sid Meier's Civilization is another title that has inspired more than its fair share of clones. This sim title mixed strategy, diplomacy, resource management and economic management to produce a hugely fun game as opposed to a dry series of statistics.

8. ULTIMA VII – PC

Ultima IV is regarded as a classic, but Ultima VII was the pinnacle of the series. The Avatar's adventures have kicked on now into Ultima IX: Ascension, but Ultima VII will remain a golden gaming memory with anyone who has played through the series. An RPG classic.

3. STREET FIGHTER II TURBO – SNES

Street Fighter 2 Turbo took everything that was cool about Street Fighter 2 and cranked it up a notch. The game speed in particular made playing the previous version seem like sloooow motion, and there was even a code to unlock the awesome ten star speed mode (Down, R, Up, L, Y, B on the second controller... we still remember it!). Gameplay-wise, all four bosses were now playable, making for a choice of 12 characters. Another essential change (to all the Ken fanboys like us at least) was that Ken's dragon punch now had a far greater range than before. We've specified the SNES version over the Megadrive one simply because the SNES pad was so much better for this game. Six buttons and just the right amount of play in the D-pad. What a game!

WEIRD FACTS

The Japanese names for the boss characters were swapped around for Western release. In Japan, M. Bison is the boxer (our Balrog), Vega is the final boss (our M. Bison), Balrog is the puncy masked fighter (our Vega) and Sagat remained unchanged. Whether Capcom were afraid of getting sued (M. Bison the boxer was a play on M. Tyson – Mike Tyson) or there was another reason to change the names around, we're not sure.



9. SONIC THE HEDGEHOG – MEGADRIVE

Sonic has had more spin-off games than maybe even Mario. You see, Sonic is really good at spinning. Ahem. This game was incredibly influential and a reason why the 16-bit era was such an exciting one for gamers. New ideas, game concepts, characters – and with unique style.

10. MONKEY ISLAND 2 – PC

LucasArts developed some of the best "point and click" adventures of all time. The level of humour and ingenious puzzles in Day Of The Tentacle and Sam & Max was amazing, but the Monkey Island series is unbeatable. Monkey Island 2 must simply be one of the funniest and most well-planned adventures we've ever played.

4. ZELDA: LINK TO THE PAST – SNES

The success of this Zelda title – in terms of both game design and sales – influenced a spate of RPGs that virtually copied this winning formula. However, very few of them came anywhere near the endearing atmosphere and fiendish gameplay that Miyamoto achieved with his land of Hyrule. Top down action/Rpging has rarely been as good as it was in Link To The Past. The only weird thing, was turning into a pink rabbit.

5. WARCRAFT II – PC

This cool strategy title from Blizzard began a whole new age in RTS games. The simplicity and humour made Warcraft II easy to get into, yet there was enough clever design here to give the game serious "legs" – especially in multiplayer games. Of course, Starcraft continued the brilliance, simply transporting the whole concept into the future.



11. SUPER BOMBERMAN 2 – SNES

Aah Bomberman. The cart that forced me to make a multitap and to buy friends (was that the right way around?). From a top down perspective, you and three friends would run around a simplistic grid-based map placing bombs and trying to outsmart one another. There were numerous powerups to collect, which would do things like increase your bomb's blast radius, or allow you to throw bombs instead of just placing them, as well as other abilities. Great playbalancing makes Super Bomberman 2's four player bomb battle royal one of all the time great multiplayer-fests.

12. ALONE IN THE DARK – PC

This is the game that INVENTED Survival Horror (i.e. Resident Evil and

6. SUPER MARIO KART – SNES

Mario Kart was infectious good fun and spawned an addiction we still haven't managed to shake. It single handedly created the go kart genre, where the emphasis was as much on tactics and nailing each and every corner than on out and out speed. Another product of Mr Miyamoto's genius for game design, Super Mario Kart excelled in all areas – cute graphics, a great driving model (with just the right emphasis on powerslides), cool track design, a good selection of powerups and as always, catchy music. Sure, the AI cheated its ass off, but for some reason that made it all the more compelling. Super Mario Kart simply couldn't be beaten for two player hijinks, and its Battle mode was a riot.

CAM'S MEMORABLE MOMENT:

My friends and I never owned a copy of this game at the time. We used to have to hire Mario Kart or NBA Jam nearly every weekend.



its clones), yet has somehow been left without much acknowledgment. This was third-person, action/adventuring through a creepy mansion at its best. Alone In The Dark 4 later this year will no doubt cop accusations of copying Resident Evil... sigh.

13. SUPER METROID – SNES

A futuristic platformer with some serious gameplay depth. Your character, Samus, goes exploring caverns only to find weird aliens, secret passageways and some amazingly creative powerups. Supposedly if you finished the game under a certain time limit, you could see Samus with her entire suit of armour removed at the end. We can thank Miyamoto for Metroid.

14. X-WING – PC

X-Wing was long regarded as the best Space Combat game you could buy. Not only did it cross the Star Wars universe with incredible gameplay, but it inspired a whole new age of Space Combat games. The sequel, TIE Fighter was just as good, if not harder in many ways and the subsequent sequels have all been great.

15. STAR FOX – SNES

Slippy the Frog. Who could forget? We all wanted Slippy to die in some horrible burning wreckage after being shot from the sky. Ahh, we loved this game. Again, Miyamoto came through with some ingeniously fun game design. Lylat Wars on the Nintendo 64 carried on the tradition remarkably well, but the original Star Fox stunned us with its 3D action.



14



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21. NBA JAM TOURNAMENT EDITION – SNES/MEGADRIIVE

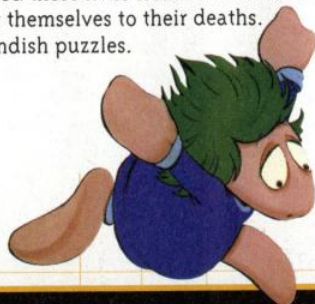
The peak of the Jam series, and the two-on-two basketball genre. NBA Jam TE was fast paced and entirely unrealistic – and we loved it! You could play as dirty as you liked, which was of course, half the fun. The other half being the crazily over the top moves. The extensive cheats were also a highlight – everything from big head mode to being able to play as the Beastie Boys was included.

CAM'S MEMORABLE MOMENT:

In the original NBA Jam, you could smash the backboard. It only happened once an hour or so, and when it did a stunned silence would fall on the room, before the dunker erupted with something silly like "BOOYAH!". Or maybe that was just my circle of friends...

16. LEMMINGS – PC

Lemmings is such a creative and hilarious concept, and it has that addictive power that is present in titles such as the legendary Tetris. Using a variety of different Lemmings skills and powers, you had to ensure you saved these little freaks from launching themselves to their deaths. Fiendish puzzles.



15



22



23

22. TOE JAM & EARL – MEGADRIIVE

C'mon... as if this game wasn't the coolest! Featuring two funky out aliens and a funky out plot, Toe Jam and Earl brought funky gaming to the masses with creative game design and tight gameplay. This title is also notable for rocking the hardest in two player cooperative mode. Indeed, it was designed with two player cooperative in mind, rather than single player.

23. EARTHWORM JIM – SNES/MEGADRIIVE

Dave Perry created this quirky worm in a space suit, and in doing so, also created one of the most fun platformers the 16-bit consoles ever saw. Unique character design, bizarre humour and lots of variety saw Jim claiming "classic" status.

17. F-ZERO – SNES

The original anti-gravity racing game. F Zero was cool for its high tech stylings, and mad track design. It didn't have any of the awesome loop the loops and huge drops of the 64bit sequel, but it did have some mad air and shortcuts, as well as a good sense of speed. Released in 1991, F Zero led the racing field on the SNES with its use of Mode 7 scrolling and is still more than playable today.

18. FLASHBACK – SNES/MEGADRIIVE

The big words at the time were "rotoscoped animation". It was the closest thing these early consoles had to motion capture. The smooth, realistic movement of your character in Flashback – a 2D side-scrolling action adventure – was the visual key to getting people addicted to what was in fact a fantastic adventure.



17



18

24. SYNDICATE – PC/MAC

Use your cybernetically-enhanced agents to wipe out all opposition in this classic isometric action/strategy title from Bullfrog. It was a brilliant glimpse of our potentially bleak future. Being able to send an agent with a flamethrower through a crowd of onlookers at a political rally was both hilarious and devious.

ELIOT'S MEMORABLE MOMENT

The first time I played Syndicate, it was on a Macintosh – before I had even discovered PC gaming. When my agents whipped out their Gauss guns and riddled a bunch of pedestrians with bullets, "ahem" accidentally "cough", during a firefight, I knew I'd stumbled across one cool game. I was hooked.

19. SHADOWRUN – SNES

Developed by Beam Software in Melbourne, Shadowrun was one of the coolest games ever to grace the SNES. It was cyberpunk, it was dark, it was role playing and action rolled into one and it rocked so incredibly hard. Brilliant game design!

20. REVENGE OF SHINOBI – MEGADRIIVE

The coolest videogame Ninja ever. This is a perfect example of what challenging platforming games were all about and it was the best of its kind on the Megadrive. Surely everyone remembers Shinobi at the arcades. Classic stuff.



19



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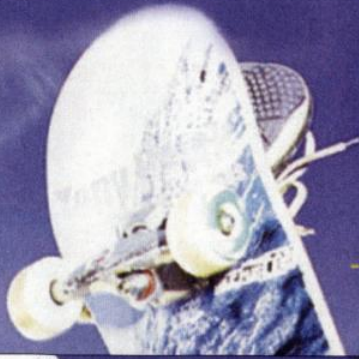


25

25. SIM CITY 2000 – PC/MAC

Who can resist the lure of controlling your own megalopolis? Sim City was the sim title that was the hardest to stop fiddling with and we salute Maxis for making something that sounds dull on paper work so entertainingly well on the PC. An undeniable classic and a fitting way to end our Top 25.

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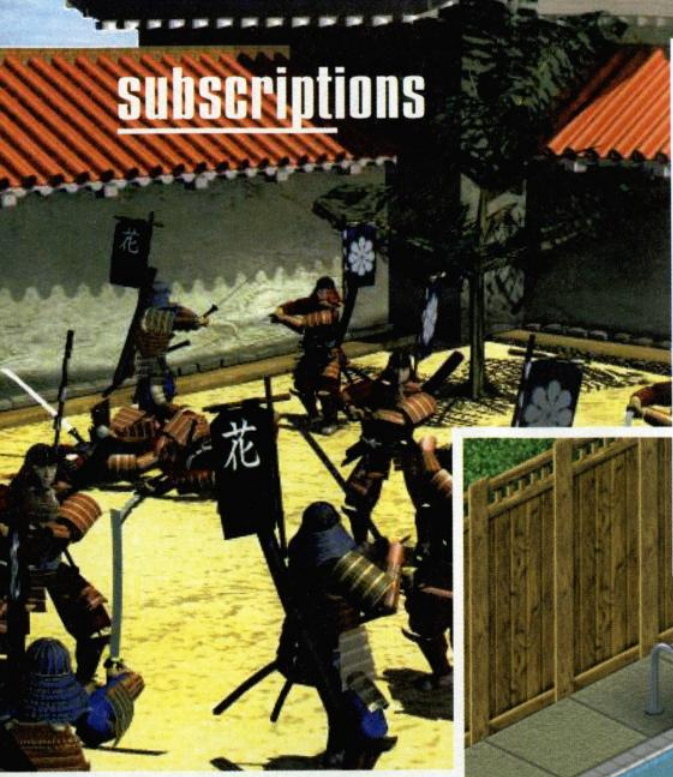
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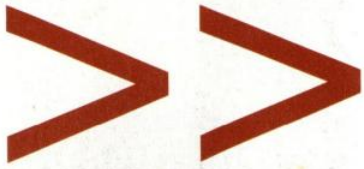
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[jet set radio]

PLATFORM: Dreamcast
AVAILABLE: TBA
CATEGORY: Action
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Sega

WOW-O-METER
 Who would be ambitious enough to create a game that takes the visual style of Fear Effect into a fast paced gameworld, mixing gang warfare, rollerblading, hip hop, spray painting, Tony Hawk and Crazy Taxi into the one irresistible brew? Sega of course, and we should bow down before them for such innovation.

Set smack bang in the middle of a Tokyo-esque city, Jet Set Radio is a tale of middle-class rebellion. We're talk-

ing rebellion in schmick co-ordinated outfits, we're talking gang warfare with no bloodshed, and we're talking about rollerblades not switchblades. The characters in Jet Set Radio get their ya-yas by tagging up the neighbourhood with a few deft strokes from a spraycan. As part of one of these gangs – the GGs (snigger) – you'll be struggling to secure territory in a war where a picture says a thousand words.

IT'S A YUPPIE GANGBANG!

The meat of Jet Set Radio is freeform rollerblading around a complex metropolis, trying to out-spray rival gangs and out-run the cops. As bizarre as this sounds, the sheer flair with which it's executed amounts to some mighty fine gameplay. The city

itself is amazing, and you're afforded a huge amount of interaction and freedom. From busting down doors and leaping through windows, to hitching a ride behind a car, skillfully pulling an extended grind along a sequence of stair railings, and bazzing along rooftops pulling off dope mid air flips, funky is the word. Almost any surface you see can be used to bust a trick off, and you can even be tagging a wall at the same time as grinding a rail. The cops are an ever present menace - arriving in swarms by car, helicopter and parachute to catch your preppie punk ass. And once they do, expect a sound Rodney King style beating.

The action is propelled along nicely by the phat beats pumping out of the local radio station, courtesy of its rasta





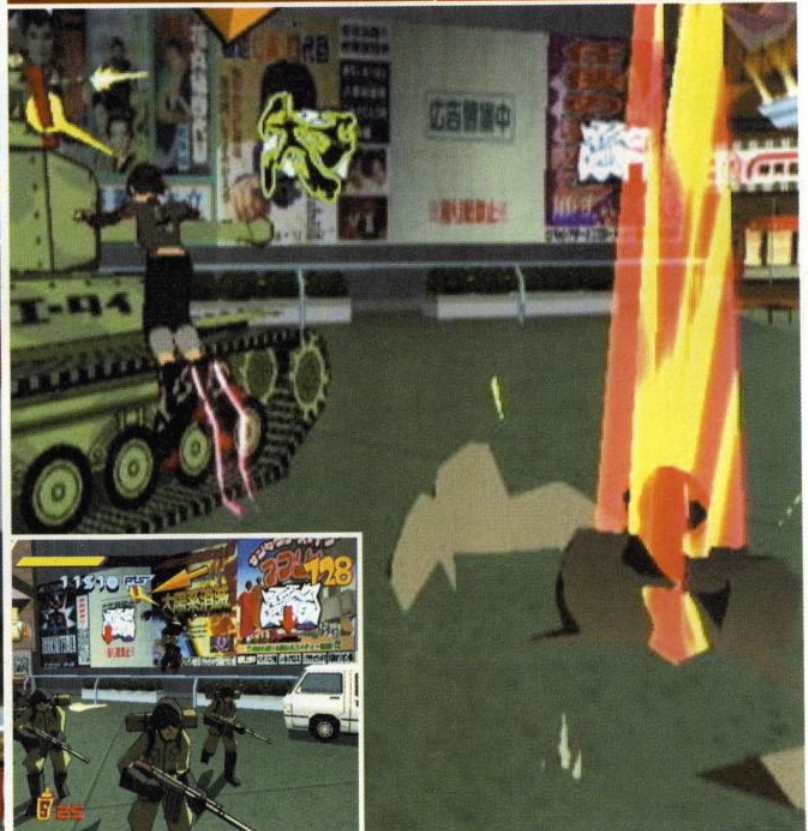
PHAT SHADY

When we first saw Jet Set Radio in action many months ago, we were blown away by the unique look in the game. As outlined in the main text, the technique used is called cel shading. Since Jet Set burst onto the scene, Cel Shading has become the flavour of the month, with a number of other games in development using it, including TVDJ (PS2), Sonic Shuffle (DC) and Wacky Racers (DC).



GRAFITTOTAGGING

All you budding graf artists out there will dig the artwork mode, where you can unlock graffiti pieces in the game by collecting certain icons. You can then morph and adjust these pieces, or even create your own from scratch. Better yet, you can hop online and save any jpg to your VMU, then import it into the game and use this as the basis for a new piece of graffiti to spray in the game.



DJ — Professor K — who bears more than a passing resemblance to Busta Rhymes. Indeed, the visuals have to be seen to be believed. Sega have created an amazingly fresh look for this game. The characters seem like hand drawn 2D illustrations, when in fact they're polygonal models. This is achieved by combining the use of flat shaded polygons with a technique called cel shading, that draws a thick black outline around polygonal objects. The result is incredibly fresh. The design complements this style of

graphics perfectly, and is nothing short of first class, and certainly on par with Space Channel 5.

WATCH WHERE YOU'RE SPRAYING THAT THING!

So how does Jet Set Radio handle the actual mechanics of spraypainting? For starters you must have enough sprays to do the job. These are distributed throughout the levels, as are the locations to leave your mark. There are a few different size pieces

[jet set radio]



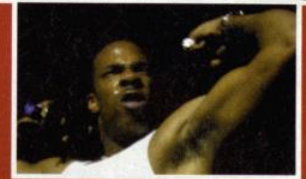
LOTS A FUNKY DUDES

Jet Set Radio has plenty of other bladers to unlock as you progress through the game, each with their own unique strengths and weaknesses. You may be challenged by a rival gang member to perform a sequence of stunts or compete in a race. Win, and that member will join your team and become playable in the single player game.



FLIPMODE SQUAD

We told you that Professor K is gaming's own Busta Rhymes. Mind you, he also looks a bit like Loc Dog from Don't Be A Menace...



CRIPS VS BLOODS VS CRIPS

When gang warfare really started blowing up in South Central LA back in the early '80s, gangs indicated which city blocks they owned by spraypainting their tags on the buildings on that block. Like animals marking territory with their scent, there were no excuses for stumbling onto a rival gang's turf. Jet Set Radio has a similar gang/turf theme to it. Unlike South Central LA, however, you won't get bucked down by rival gangs high on PCP for territorial infractions, or even come to fisticuffs – it's all about the real estate.

If you want to know more about war in the ghettos of LA, read "Monster: Autobiography of an LA Gang Member" by Sanyika Shakur... it's a damn fine read, and chilling to the bone.



you can spray. Some only require you to hit the L trigger button when you're close enough – these are the small "tags", and are the pieces you'll be doing on the sides of cars and when grinding rails. Other walls are begging for larger pieces, in which case you hit the L trigger button to start the sequence and must then follow the onscreen analogue movements to spray each component. These range from quarter circles to full circles, which are echoed by the way your

blader moves his/her arms when spraying. The mechanics are actually quite good and are probably as close as you can get to spraypainting in a game barring a spraycan controller add-on. Mmm... that'd be nice. All up, Jet Set Radio has style, style and more style. Oh, and it's got its fair share of gameplay too. The PlayStation 2 may have the power, but at this stage it looks like Dreamcast has the funk. We'll keep you posted on a local release date.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

A few more courses to explore, and as always, tighter camera mechanics.





[dino crisis 2]



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



Hyper's fictional inside source at Capcom recently revealed to us some details of *Dino Crisis 2*'s rather abstract storyline. Having successfully captured madman Dr Kirk and put an end to his experiments at the conclusion of the first game, strange things are once again afoot at the Circle K. A year later, Kirk has been released from gaol and given the title of Captain. Despite the catastrophic events of the previous game (and the fact that he can't act to save his life), Captain Kirk is put in charge of a five year mission into space. Suspicious of Kirk's motives, Regina, the hero of the first game, and her buddy Dylan, ever the enterprising vigilantes, stow away on Kirk's ship with a view to ensuring he doesn't violate the prime directive...

or anything else for that matter. What they discover, however, is much more sinister. Captain Kirk has been hired to conduct genetic dinosaur experiments by an underworld mega-corporation. The ship is stocked with cloning laboratories and cybernetic enhancement technology being used to create the ultimate warrior race of dinosaurs en route. They're heading to a tropical planet in a nearby star system, where they'll house the dinosaurs until such a time that they're needed back on Earth. After discovering all this, Regina and Dylan attempt to destroy the ship, but are caught in the act. Imprisoned for the rest of the journey, they are set free on Eden only a few hours ahead of the dinosaurs. The hunt is on...

MULVA? DELORIS? NO DAMN YOU, MY NAME'S REGINA...
Impressing all comers at this year's E3, *Dino Crisis 2* is shaping up to be a more than worthy sequel. In a nice change of pace, the setting will be almost exclusively outdoors. Gone are

the cold clinical laboratories, and in their place are tropical rainforests, docks and underwater sequences. You're outnumbered and in the dinosaurs' natural habitat, with only quick reflexes and instincts to rely on. If you don't count the massive guns that is.

As you can imagine, the outdoor setting will give Capcom plenty of scope for scaring the crap out of the player. No longer will you be able to run from a Dinosaur and leave it locked behind a door. Instead you'll be struggling to survive in surroundings where dinosaurs could be lurking all around.

Addressing one of the primary complaints from the original, *Dino Crisis 2* will have ten ferocious breeds (the original had two), with much improved AI and far fewer one-on-

one encounters. Fortunately, you can use height to your advantage, so perching on a ledge above a bunch of dinosaurs and firing down on them could be a valuable strategy. Be warned, however, that if the dinosaurs can find a way to get up there and take you on — they will — so don't leave any pogo sticks lying around.

TED NUGENT WOULD GET HIS REDNECK ASS KICKED...

Regina will be able to use two different weapons at once, and will start the game with a tazer and pistol. As mentioned in our somewhat "out there" story synopsis, Regina will have a tough-ass sidekick named Dylan. It's not known whether players simply switch over to Dylan at a pre-determined point in the game (a la *Resident Evil 3*), or whether you'll be able to interchange characters on the fly. We're certainly hoping it will be the latter.

Due out later this year, *Dino Crisis 2* is looking to be a must-play title, and far more involving than the original. Looked great at E3. Bring it on Capcom.

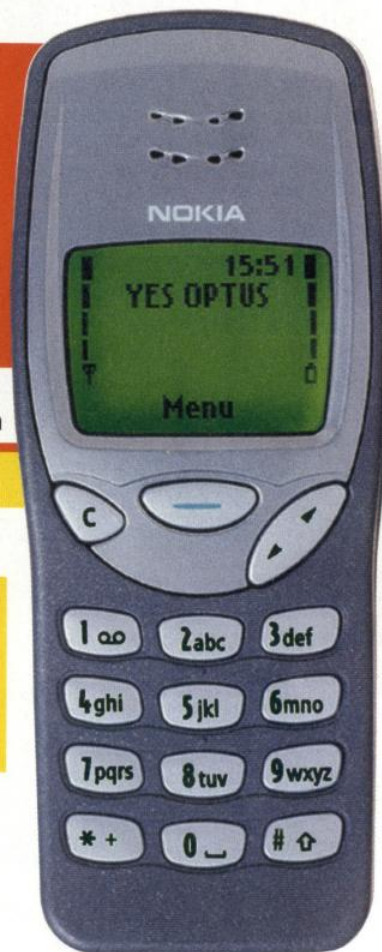
WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:
An overhaul of the control system. And lots of girl on girl tazar action!

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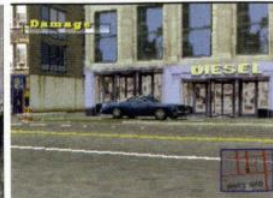
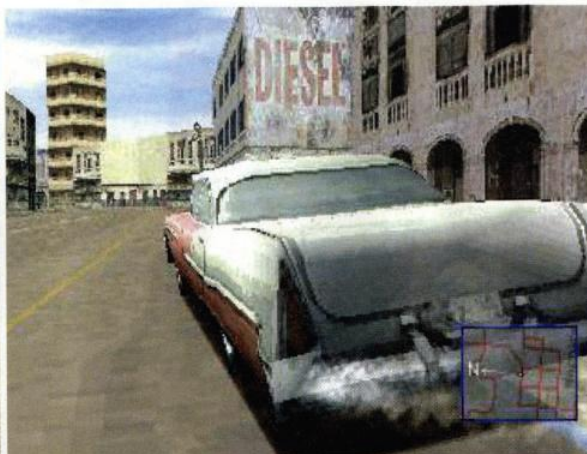
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[driver 2]



PLATFORM: PlayStation
AVAILABLE: Christmas 2000
CATEGORY: Racing
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: Sony

WOW-O-METER



Who else out there is sick of being the good guy? Why should we always be forced to follow the rules, rescue the hostages and save the world? What if we want to raise some hell dammit? Games like Syndicate and Grand Theft Auto struck a chord with gamers because for once we could be the bad guy, and get shit done however the hell we wanted.

Even though you were actually playing as an undercover cop, last year's Driver had a similar vibe... i.e. a complete disregard for the public's safety. Driver put you in the shoes of a free-lance getaway driver. You'd choose to

accept various missions, with tasks like picking up a bunch of crims after a robbery and getting them to a safe-house without getting nicked by the fuzz. It was the re-embodiment of every cool car chase you'd ever seen in a '70s action film.

Bogged down in a quagmire of mediocre racers, Driver was a refreshing change of pace for PlayStation owners. It had a polished driving engine, as well as fully realised cities complete with heaps of random traffic and aggressive law enforcement officials. There was no greater satisfaction in that game than cunningly masking an oncoming car from your pursuers, then swerving to avoid it and switching to rear vision to see the cops get cleaned up. Oh yeah.

JACKIN' FOR THE FUN OF IT...

Driver 2 will have all this and more. Aside from the requisite tweaks to the game engine, there are also substantial

upgrades in the gameplay department. In a massive departure from the original, Tanner will now be able to explore the city on foot. Many of the missions will involve entering buildings to recover items, and you may even need to pursue people on foot. You'll also be able to jack ordinary citizens and take their vehicles out for a joyride, making for some crazy police chases.

The retooled game engine also supports greater complexity in the environments. The cities will no longer be largely composed of criss-crossing right angled streets, featuring a far more realistic blend of chaotically urban design. You'll even be able to take freeways out of the city and into the countryside. Better yet, two of the settings are Rio and Havana, which will have radically different architectures and vibes from the US locations. Speaking of which, the other two cities in the game are Las Vegas and Chicago, so we're looking forward to

some Blues Brothers style cop car antics. There'll be around 40 missions all up, hopefully tied together by a more compelling narrative than the original.

One feature that was sorely missing in Driver was a two player mode with one player as the driver and the other as law enforcement. Well it looks like this cops and robbers playmode will be making its appearance in the sequel, in addition to a co-operative mode. Reason enough to buy the game already as far as we're concerned.

If Driver 2 can retain the essence of the original, while taking the gameplay in new directions, Reflections will have another hit on their hands. The '70s are back... again.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

How about some better cut-scenes this time around.

[aidyn chronicles]



[aidyn chronicles: the first offering]



PLATFORM: Nintendo 64
AVAILABLE: October
CATEGORY: RPG
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: THQ

WOW-O-METER
 What fun would it be if the main character in an RPG lived a sedate middle class life, comfortable in the knowledge that his parents were indeed his real parents, and that he'd probably grow up to be an accountant?

None whatsoever, of course. In the great tradition of storylines that portend some kind of epic adventure, the main character in the Aidyn Chronicles, Alaron, was orphaned as a child and raised in a castle by the kindly king of Iden. Although it wasn't a bouncing castle (this isn't Mad King Ludwig of Bavaria after all), Alaron had life pretty sweet.

On a routine patrol, however, Alaron is attacked and left for dead. Conveniently enough, he's found by a wise old woman and nursed back to

health. Unfortunately for Alaron though, it seems that he has been poisoned by goblins, and there may be no cure. Personally, we suspect that the old woman probably grew tired of the insolent young squire bragging about how many foxes he's killed and how obscenely rich his family is, and poisoned the brat herself. We also suspect (for no apparent reason mind you) that he showed no gratitude to the woman and probably called her a "low-life peasant commoner" a lot. Maybe.

HANGING OUT ON THE EAST SAIIDE WIT MAH HOMIES...

In any case, Alaron's only hope lies in the legendary healing abilities of an ancient race named the Mirari. A party is soon arranged by the King to accompany Alaron on his quest to Erromon the land of the Mirari, and beyond. Of course, the cure for his illness is only the beginning, as Alaron seems to be the focus of an unknown evil force. Delving deep into the truth about Alaron's past and the strange events taking place, Alaron's epic quest will

see him travel from Iden to Erromon, as well as the coastal town of Port Saiid, the major centre of business and culture that is Terminor, the home of the school for Wizards - Talewok, and the mysterious city of the Jundar, Ugarit.

THQ are aiming for Aidyn Chronicles to be as non-linear as possible whilst not compromising the storyline. Thus, the story and dialogue will change depending on certain decisions you make, like which characters should join you party - without radically altering the quest. Potentially, you'll be able to play through the game several times and get something new each time. There are ten playable characters all up, and you'll have the ability to control up to four of them at once.

The Aidyn Chronicles is hoping to fill a massive gap in the N64's software lineup - that of the "real" RPG. With the possible exception of Quest 64, there really aren't any true RPGs on the system. In our mind, Zelda falls more into the "adventure game" category. Aidyn Chronicles, on the other hand, has all the stat building and character

development that RPG-heads crave.

You'll also be glad to hear that the combat system is largely turn-based. To elaborate, it's similar to Parasite Eve in that you take turns, but are given some freedom to move in the combat zone at the same time. Thus, if you're a big powerful character you can wander into the fray head on, but if you're a smaller faster character, you might want to try and get around behind the enemy to get a better hit in. Not only that, but other tactics like hiding behind objects in the terrain, and even gaining an advantage by holding higher ground can be employed.

We're quite impressed by what we've seen so far of Aidyn Chronicles and we'll be sure to give it a thorough work-out ASAP.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

The title of the game should be shortened to simply "Da Chronic". Maybe.

[summoner]



[summoner]



PLATFORM:	PS2/PC/Mac
AVAILABLE:	Early November
CATEGORY:	3rd person RPG
PLAYERS:	1 for PS2, Multi for PC & Mac
PUBLISHER:	THQ



Since delivering the critically acclaimed PC titles *Freespace* and *Freespace 2*, US development house Volition have been keeping busy. They're currently deep into production of a fantasy RPG for PS2 (with PC and Mac versions to follow early next year) that's rapidly becoming a must-have launch title. That game is *Summoner*.

The name is drawn from an elite group that have the power to summon elemental forces and demonic creatures to do their bidding. Identified by a mark on one hand, the gift of being born a Summoner is both a blessing and a curse. The main character in the game, Joseph, is a reluctant summoner. As a young boy he tried to use his power to save his village from marauders, but could only look on in horror as the demon he summoned proceeded to

kill all living creatures in his village.

Since then, Joseph has feared, more than anything else, this incredible power bestowed upon him by birthright. Wracked with guilt, he wants no part in its unstable, dualistic nature. Exiled for his part in this horrific event of his childhood, Joseph has grown and gained wisdom through the tutelage of Yago. As the unimaginably evil armies of Orenia sweep across the Medevan Plain, the enigmatic Yago urges Joseph to find the ancient Summoners' rings, and to fulfill his prophecy. Joseph reluctantly accepts the quest.

THE UNKNOWN POWER OF MY RING...

During his journey, Joseph will be joined by fellow adventurers Flece, Jekhar, and Rosalind. Their pasts are as checkered as Joseph's and open the game up to all sorts of possibilities and story twists. Rosalind, for instance, yearns to become a mage priest, and is Yago's daughter. She is jealous of the amount of time her father has devoted to summoners, and in particular, Joseph. It's with these sorts of tensions that Joseph's happy little party will

journey across the continents of Medeva and Orenia, both of which have entirely unique cultures and inhabitants. Medeva is reminiscent of medieval Europe, whereas Orenia is strongly influenced by Asian architecture and traditions.

Combat in *Summoner* takes place in real-time. You can't be in direct control of more than one character at a time during combat, but the game can be paused at any moment to issue orders to your party and you can switch between characters to utilise their skills. Each character has four special attacks that can be chained with normal attacks.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of this title, however, is in the summoning itself. An ability unique to Joseph, it's performed by utilising the power of various ancient rings that are discovered as the quest unfolds. Each ring possesses its own unique properties, and can be used on its own or in combination with other rings to summon an unknown number of magical creatures. One of *Summoner*'s great strengths will be in experimenting with

the powers of the rings, and discovering the creatures called forth by the limitless combinations. Some of the creatures Joseph will be able to summon include Black Imps, Brass Golems and Red Minotaurs.

Joseph pays a price each time he summons a creature. While that creature exists in the gameworld, Joseph's maximum hitpoints will be reduced to compensate for the extra power of the creature, and each time he summons he'll use up ability points. Best of all, if Joseph is killed or knocked unconscious, he will lose any tie to the summoned creature, which will then go on a blind rampage until it is killed. Other characters can use their ability points for other skills such as spellcasting, picking locks, assessing items, or sneaking.

Summoner runs in the PS2's high-resolution mode, and is looking stunning. Look for this at launch!

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

The menacing Brass Golem in action.

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- Moto Racer
- Muppet Monster Adventure
- Pool Palace Academy
- Rayman Kids
- Spiderman
- The Grinch Who Stole Christmas
- UEFA Manager 2001

NINTENDO 64



- Duck Dodgers

GAME BOY

- Aladdin
- Carl Lewis Athletics 2000
- F1 Racing Championship

- Madden NFL 2001
- Road Rash



RED ALERT 2



DVD VIDEO



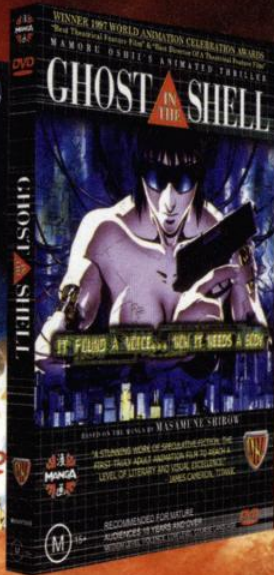
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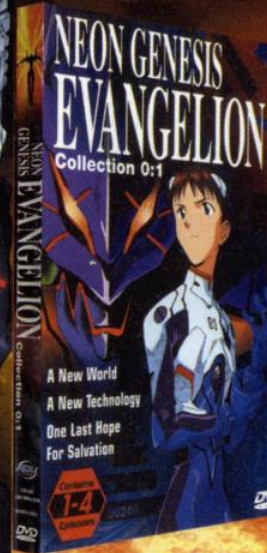
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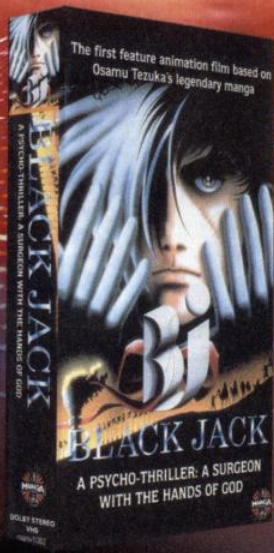
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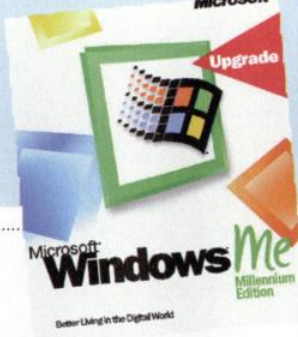
WINDOWS MILLENNIUM EDITION

PLATFORM: PC
PRICE: \$349 (\$189 UPGRADE ONLY)
DISTRIBUTOR: MICROSOFT

After previewing the "release candidate 1" of Millennium Edition in our last issue, we were surprised that the final release code for Windows ME turned up so soon. Currently shipping on PCs worldwide, the latest Win 9x operating system is loaded with tasty extras, but is still frustratingly expensive. What is essentially Windows 98 version 3, Windows ME carries DirectX 7.1, Media Player 7, Internet Explorer 5.5 and a stripped down Windows OS that should be more stable and less problematic than ever. Lovely new safety features like System Restore, where you can restore your system to a previous

"state" if things start to go weird after installing a product or drivers, are a nice addition for those of you who regularly get confused by the mention of files tagged ".inf" or ".vxd". This is much more newbie friendly, and should result in far less user-created problems. If you trash essential system files by accident, Windows ME will just replace them for you and slap you on the wrist. Of course, the crucial files will now be hidden anyhow. If you're an advanced user, then don't fret, because you can disable a lot of the preventative measures if you feel confident messing around with your system.

ME also comes with Microsoft Movie Maker, where you can edit your home videos, add sound and then save them in satisfyingly small file sizes that you could even email to your friends. Advanced plug and play also means we can plug in external devices whilst the PC is on, and have them detected immediately. ME is certainly an improvement, but if you're an early adopter there may still be a few bugs in the system. Otherwise, look forward to the latest version of Windows for the home user and avid gamer. If it were just waaaaay cheaper...



UPGRADERS BEWARE!

We installed Windows ME on 2 PCs — our office Gateway which had no problems and Eliot's personal PC which had some serious issues with the OS. After a whole week liaising with Microsoft technical support (they even took Eliot's PC to their labs), they couldn't get Windows ME functioning without some pretty nasty errors and blue screen crashes. The problem seems to lie with an incompatibility with the Tyan Trinity 400 motherboard which uses the VIA Apollo Pro 133 chipset, coupled with a Creative GeForce Pro 2D/3D card in the AGP slot. If you have this set-up, check www.viatech.com or www.microsoft.com to see if the issue has been resolved. VIA chipsets have had problems with Windows in the past... In the meantime, stick to Win 98. Funky weirdness! Thanks though to Microsoft for their excellent technical support in trying to resolve the issue.

POWER MAC G4 CUBE

PLATFORM: MAC
PRICE: \$3495
DISTRIBUTOR: APPLE

The G4 Cube is a marvellous piece of design. At roughly eight inches per side, and a quarter the size of a regular PC tower, the cube sports a 450Mhz CPU, 64MB RAM (supports up to 1 Gig of

SDRAM), 20GB hard drive, DVD drive and an ATI Rage 128-bit 2D/3D card. The G4 processor has a built-in "velocity engine" which means it can reach speeds of billions of calculations per

second, which is a lot more than most Pentium III PCs. In fact, in tests published by Intel, the G4 500Mhz processor was proved to be twice as fast as a Pentium III 800! The G4 can process in

128-bit chunks as opposed to 32-bit or 64-bit chunks used in traditional PC processors. Another stunning fact, is that the G4 Cube can function without a cooling fan, meaning that when the Cube is switched on and functioning, it is virtually silent! The processor is suspended in the cube, so that it will never overheat — a stunning piece of computer design. The Cube also features a built-in 56k modem, and built-in Ethernet networking for future broadband access. Throw in two FireWire ports and two USB ports also! The audio that the Cube is capable of is no less stunning. Check out those





funky looking Apple-designed Harman/Kardon speakers for starters! The audio from the Cube to the speakers is completely digital — so no more speaker hiss. For both the monitor and speakers, the power cabling and audio and video lines are cleverly designed to fit one single cable. So you won't be hiding masses of leads either.

Use your G4 Cube with the Apple Cinema Display and you're laughing. The Cinema Display is "widescreen" so you can work with almost twice as much desktop as you're used to on a PC. Many users hated the

tiny circular iMac mouse, so Apple have designed the Apple Pro Mouse

which is more elongated like a standard mouse, but with all the funky design of the iMac peripheral, with an optical sensor instead of a track ball. If you're a Mac Gamer, then you'll be pleased enough that games like Diablo II, Deus Ex, Quake 3 and more, are available now for your Mac... but the G4 Cube just made your Mac gaming that much more impressive. Of course, if you only want to play games then it's still hard to recommend a Mac over a PC, but if you're a graphic designer who wants to play the latest games on the side, then we heartily advise you to go take a look at one of these cool new toys at your local Apple dealer. Drool!



! The G4 Cube just could use some of the same technology used in the Nintendo Starcube... more information on that as it comes to pass.



horizons



There are truckloads of Online Fantasy Games in development at the moment. In a year or so it's going to get to the point where gamers will have to be picky choosing which title(s) they are willing to spend their monthly fee on. Artifact Entertainment's 'Horizons', a game that's only recently starting to generate some hype, promises some especially appealing features.

MASSIVELY MASSIVE ONLINE RPG

Horizons will be set on the world of Istaria. As one would hope, the game world is going to be big, really big. The land surface area will be larger than the Asheron's Call world of Dereth, and that's saying a lot. On top of that the game will make full use of the oceans and will have an extensive underground network. To continue the comparisons, Istaria will be around a dozen times the size of EverQuest's Norrath! With a world this large it's a wonder the developers have enough ideas for interesting

landmarks to fill the map out with. Okay, so size isn't everything, what else can we expect?

The defining aspect that differentiates Horizons' gameplay from the competition, is that players will not only romp around as the hero 'out to cleanse the world of evil', they intriguingly also get to choose the role of some of Istaria's wandering denizens. To compliment this, Horizons will boast not just a few, but fifteen races to play from! First we have the traditional Humans, Elves and Dwarves - what would an RPG be without them? From then on the list of characters just gets more interesting:

Goblins and Orcs: Are sure to be a favorite race to play. It will be very interesting to see through the eyes of the very creatures we've been out to kill for so long! These races will rely on strength in numbers, so hopefully plenty of people will choose to play them. Orc shamans

can also dabble in primitive magic.

Giants: Towering over a party of fearful humans and then flattening them with a tree-stump club just sounds way too cool.

Sssilk: A highly advanced race of lizard-like men. These guys thrive in hot climates and become useless when it gets cold. They're also proficient warriors and magic users.

Saris: An evil race of Cat-people who specialize in psionic powers. Psionics being kind of like magic done with telekinesis, as opposed to using conventional spells.

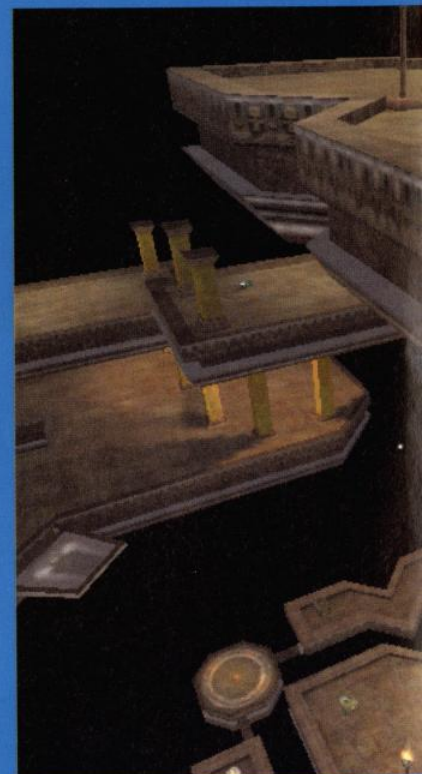
Lamurians: The Lamurians are the only water dwelling civilisation in Istaria, not to mention the very first underwater race to make it into an online RPG. They're powerful warriors and magic users who can come onto land for short periods only.

Optus DSL

Optus have recently announced their own plans to jump on the DSL bandwagon. Optus subsidiary XYZed has formed a partnership with Lucent Technologies to install DSL in more than 120 telephone exchanges around the country. Making use of Telstra's copper telephone lines, Optus will provide the high-speed data service to urban businesses around Australia. There's no word on plans for a residential service as of yet, however DSL will be available to businesses around September.

Samsung set to launch pro computer game team

Taking professional gaming that little bit further, Samsung Electronics Korea are the first conglomerate to launch a professional game team. Gaming is huge over there, as avid Starcraft Battle.net players may well know. The world can expect some extremely tough competition against "Kahn", the name of the company's new team. Predictably they will be concentrating on conquering the Starcraft world, and also aim to be a force in Quake 3 tournaments.



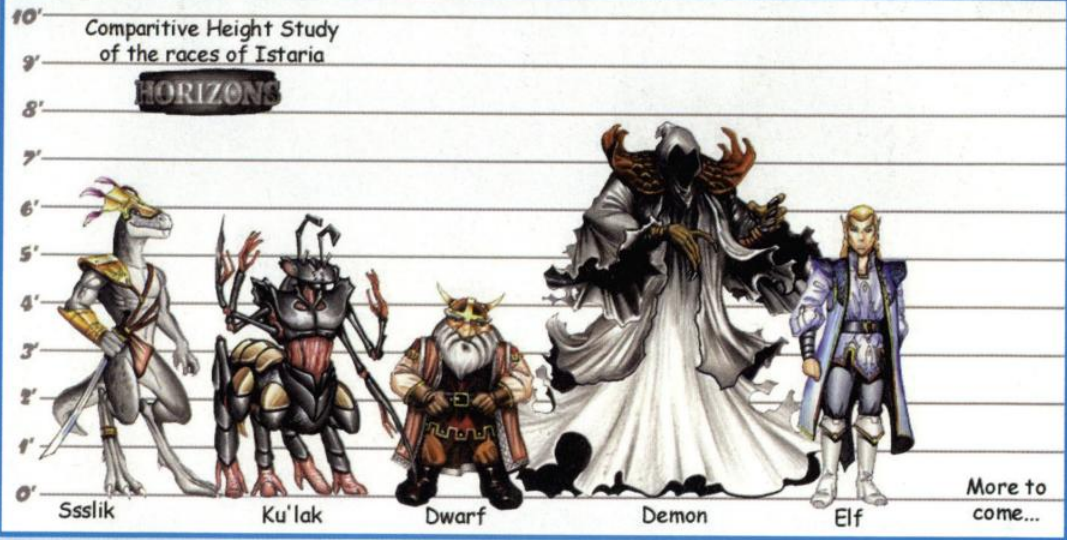
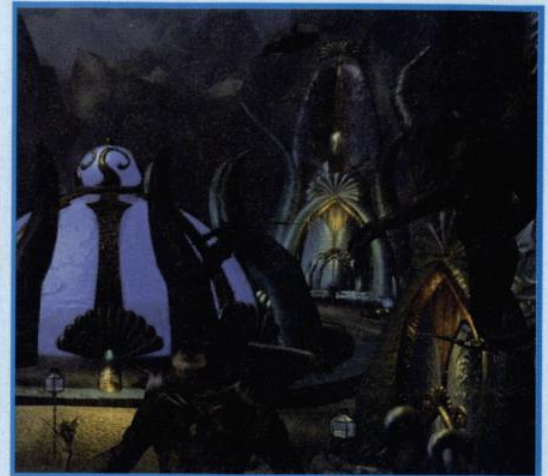
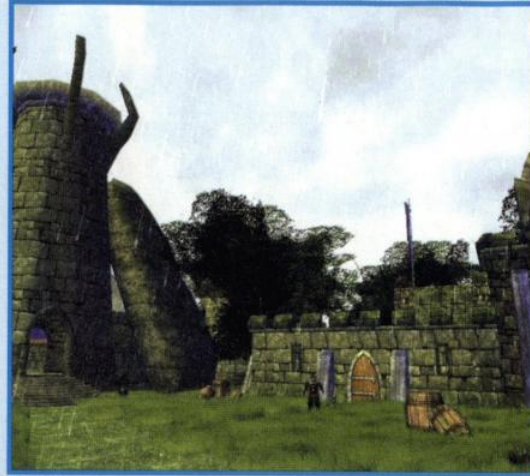
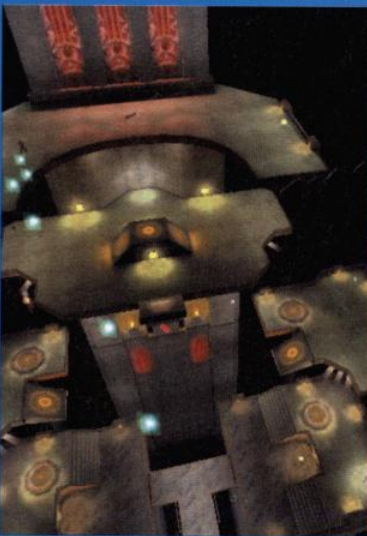
net.news

Quake 3 stuff

EA MAP PACK

The boys at Electronic Arts who are working on the Q3 engine based game 'The World Is Not Enough' have put together a collection of Quake3 maps in their spare time. There are thirteen to choose from, twelve deathmatch and one CTF map. Each level is made with a professional touch and play superbly. Awesome fun

http://3downloads.com/showfile.php3?file_id=88336



Dryads: Are fairly well known as being woodland creatures even more mystical than the Elves. These petite winged people are respected for their stalwart innate magical abilities.

Ku'lak: The Ku'lak are an insectoid race who are capable of using magic but are predominantly respected for

their amazing skills as warriors. Having four arms and legs has got to be a bonus when wielding weapons! Additionally they can spit acid, jump large distances and even fly a little. Want more? Well, how about the advantage of not feeling any pain when being hit? Not bad eh? The last point is fascinating, since it must

mean that other races will suffer fighting penalties when hurt. That will be interesting to see...

Dragon: Okay, we can hear you all say "I'm gunna go a Dragon!" And why not? Dragons will kick arse when they're fully-grown. To deter everyone from playing a dragon, Artifact plan to

UT stuff

Mods

BOOMDEATH

Here's an interesting concept: A deathmatch game in which the players are actually afraid to try and score a frag! This mod allows you to set a percentage chance of a BOOMdeath - an explosion the size of a redeemer blast - to occur whenever someone dies. This obviously makes things dangerous for attackers, doubly so since the players about to kick the bucket will surely charge their assailants in hope of taking them down as well!

SLAVEMASTER

If you are planning a LAN any time soon, get this mod! Deriving its ideas from Jailbreak and taking it much further, Slavemaster follows the principle that if you kill someone he/she becomes your ghostly slave. As a slave, players are given the contemptible task of collecting health, weapons, ammo and power-ups for their master in order to get enough points to earn their life back. Another way to earn points is to fire ethereal targets on your master's still living enemies. What this does is put a beacon on the enemy which can be seen through walls, allowing your master to tell where that person is at all times! When your master is appeased and you've earned enough life points, or your master has died, you can finally respawn and continue the gibbage. The goal is to reach the frag-limit or collect a specific amount of slaves. Slavemaster is possibly one of the best mods around thanks to it's very sweet, innovative gameplay.

Both of these mods can be found at www.planetunreal.com



make life rather difficult for young upstart Dragonkin. Knowing what the beasts will grow to be like, every other creature of Istaria will do anything to slay you before you get too big. Furthermore, Dragon body parts will be valued very highly for use as spell components, creating yet more incentive for parties to hunt you down. Becoming an ancient Wurm will surely take a great deal of patience and skill.

Demon: Predictably Demons are very powerful, physically and magically. Using psionics they even have the ability to possess other creatures. However due to the fact that almost all races loathe Demons, they'll find the going tough.

Vampire: Vampires are of the more traditional type... Their key to survival is not to terrorize the community, but rather to try its best to fit in with the Humans and take victims secretly. Feed too much and you risk being noticed, feed too little and you show visible signs of your bloodlust. It's a delicate balance.

Angel: Placed on Istaria by their god, Angels go around helping others in need. Should they come across a Demon though expect one helluva big battle!

How's that for an impressive list to pick from? As you can imagine, each race vastly differs to the next, so playing a new race will virtually be a whole new gaming experience. For instance, some races can see in the night, which has been done in EQ, however creatures like the Ku'lak will even see from a different perspective - field of view - to other races. Dragons will get to fly, and will dwell alone in the mountains; No cities or NPC's for them to deal with. Angels will be able to leave the world of Istaria and fade into the Astral Plane... We're not so sure what that means, but it sounds cool, heheh. The most interesting sounding aspect of

the races so far would have to be the Lamurian's life under the sea!

CHEW SOME PK

This mix of good and evil characters doesn't mean that Horizons will rely on a 'Player Killing' style of play. The world will of course be rife with NPC creatures to fight against, and indeed, the fighting of other players in the game will be controlled by some complex rules. For instance, each of the Good and Chaotic races have at least one race of opposite alignment set as their mortal enemy - Elves vs Goblins or Angels vs Devils etc. This leads to the interesting prospect of 'Blood Wars'. The idea behind a Blood War is that these feuding races basically get to go hammer and tongs on each other with no faction or experience penalty. In this case winning a battle against a hated enemy is sure to increase the standing with your god. On the other hand, it would not be prudent to run around killing just anybody since Artifact have also implemented a faction system, similar to what we see in Everquest. A character's actions will affect his/her level of respect - his faction - towards the races of the world. Kill one of your own kind and things suddenly get hard for you in your homeland. If you go out of your way to annoy others you might even invoke the wrath of the gods - or GMs - or perhaps get a bounty put on your head. This could not only make things interesting for people after the bounty,



Lvl

The best site out there if you're interested in collecting the cream of the crop in user-made Quake3 maps. The site's host, Tigger-on, gives detailed reviews of every map, and he has a good eye for quality.

www.planetquake.com/lvl



SONY PLAYSTATION

- 016 Asteroids
- 017 Auto Destruct
- 018 Azure Dreams
- 019 B Movie
- 020 Battle Arena Tosh 3
- 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
- 033 Bushido Blade 2
- 034 Bust-a-groove
- 035 Bust-a-move 2
- 036 G: Contra Adventure
- 037 Capcom Gen 2
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- 039 Cardinal Sin
- 040 Cart World Series
- 041 Circuit Breakers
- 042 Code Name Tenka
- 043 Colin McRae Rally
- 044 Colonisation
- 045 Colony Wars
- 046 Colony Wars: Vengeance
- 047 Command and Conquer
- 048 C&C Red Alert
- 049 Contra: Legacy of War
- 050 Cool Boarders 2
- 051 Cool Boarders 3
- 052 Courier Crisis
- 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
- 063 Descent
- 064 Defcon 5
- 065 Destruction Derby 2
- 066 Diable
- 068 Dragon Seeds
- 069 Duke Nukem: Time to Kill
- 070 Duke Nukem: Meltdown
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- 076 FIFA 99
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- 102 Judge Dredd
- 103 K-1 Arena Fighters
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- 105 Kona
- 106 Knockout Kings
- 107 Krazy Ivan
- 108 Kula World
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- 111 M.K. Mythologies
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- 114 Madden NFL 98
- 115 Mass Destruction
- 116 Max Force
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- 118 Medieval
- 119 Megaman Legends
- 120 Marvel Vs Street Fighter
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- 123 Micro Machines V3
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- 125 Moto Racer
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- 137 NFL Blitz
- 138 NFL Gameday
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- 141 NHL Face Off 98
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- 145 O.B.T.
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- 151 Parasite Eve
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- 153 Pit Fall 3d
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- 168 Resident Evil: DC
- 169 Ridge Racer Rev
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- 173 Rouge Trip: 2012
- 174 Running Wild
- 175 Scars
- 176 Shadow Master
- 177 Shane Warne Cricket
- 178 Side Pocket
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- 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
- 206 Theme Hospital
- 207 Theme Park
- 208 Thrill Kill
- 209 Thunder Force 5
- 210 Tiger Woods 99
- 211 Time Crisis
- 212 Tobal 2
- 213 Toca Touring Car
- 214 Toca Touring Car 2
- 215 Tokyo Highway Battle
- 216 Tomh Raider
- 217 Tomb Raider 2
- 218 Tomb Raider 3
- 219 Tomba
- 220 T.Makonnen World Rally
- 221 Treasures of the Deep
- 222 Triple Play 98
- 223 Triply Play 99
- 224 Twisted Metal 2
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- 226 V-Rally
- 227 V's
- 228 Vigilante 8
- 229 VMX Racing
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- 231 War Games: Delcom 1
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- 233 Warhammer
- 243 WCWNitro
- 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 Rollcage
- 326 Rampage 2: Universal
- 327 Contender
- 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 Reapair
- 336 Bloody Roar 2
- 337 Silent Hill
- 339 Street SkBer
- 340 Legend
- 341 Destrega
- 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
- 421 Mission Impossible
- 422 Nascar 2000
- 423 Ready to Rumble
- 424 Resident Evil
- 425 Army Men: Air Attack
- 426 Wu-Tang: Shaolin Style
- 427 Spyro2: Ripto's Rage
- 428 Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense
- 429 Tomorrow Never Dies
- 430 Supercross 2000
- 431 Medal of Honor
- 432 Jurassic Park: Warpath
- 433 Test Drive 6
- 450 Tom Raider: Last Rel
- 451 Street Fighter EX2 Plus
- 452 Logo Racer
- 453 40 Winks
- 454 Knockout Kings 2000
- 456 Fighting Force 2
- 458 NBA Live 2000
- 459 Sted Storm
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- 461 Cool Boarders 4

NINTENDO 64

- 245 Aeroguage
- 246 Allstar Baseball 99
- 247 Aero Fighter Assault
- 248 Automobili Lamborghini
- 249 Banjo Kazooie
- 250 Bio Freaks
- 251 Body Harvest
- 252 Bomberman 64
- 253 Bomberman Hero
- 254 Buckbumble
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- 256 Chamellon Twist
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- 258 Clay Fighter G3 1/3
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- 262 Doom 64
- 265 Extreme G2
- 266 F-Zero X
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- 268 F1 World Grand Prix
- 269 FIFA 98
- 270 Madden 64
- 271 Forsaken
- 273 Goldeneye
- 274 Hexen
- 275 I.S. Soccer 64
- 276 V-Rally
- 277 Iggi's Rockin Ball
- 278 Fighters Destruction
- 279 Madden 99
- 280 Mario Kart 64
- 282 M.K.4
- 283 M.K. Mythology's
- 284 M.K. Trilogiy
- 286 Nagano Win Olympics
- 287 Nascar 99
- 288 NBA Hangtime
- 289 NBA in the Zone
- 290 NFL Qback 99
- 291 NHL Breakaway 98
- 292 NHL Breakaway 99
- 293 NHL 99
- 294 Nightmare Creatures
- 295 Offroad Challenge
- 296 Quake 64
- 299 Robotron X
- 300 S.C.A.R.S.
- 306 Star Wars: Shadows
- 309 Top Gear Overdrive
- 310 Top Gear Rally
- 311 Turok
- 312 Turok 2
- 314 Wayne Gretski 3d 98
- 315 WCW/NWO Revenge
- 345 Mario Party
- 346 Vigilante 8
- 347 Glover
- 348 NBA Live 99
- 350 Rush 2: Extreme Racing USA
- 351 Castlemania
- 352 Battle tanx
- 373 Fighting Force 64
- 374 WWF: Attitude
- 376 Star wars: Rogue Squadron
- 377 World Driver Championship
- 378 Super Smash Brothers
- 379 Superman
- 380 Quake 2
- 391 Infisherman - BH 64
- 392 All Star Baseball 99
- 393 Mario Gold
- 394 Monster Truck Madness
- 408 Road Rash 64
- 407 Duke Nuke:Zero Hour
- 410 WCW Mayhem
- 411 Gauntlet Legends
- 434 Rainbow 6
- 435 Monopoly
- 436 Supercross 2000
- 437 Turok Rage Wars
- 442 Gex3 Deep Undercover
- 443 Resident Evil 2
- 444 Nascar 2000
- 445 Battletanx Global Assault
- 446 Hot Wheels: Turbo Racing
- 447 Knockout Kings 2000
- 377 World Driver Championship
- 378 Super Smash Brothers
- 379 Superman
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- 391 Infisherman - BH 64
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- 393 Mario Gold
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- 442 Gex3 Deep Undercover
- 443 Resident Evil 2
- 444 Nascar 2000
- 445 Battletanx Global Assault
- 446 Hot Wheels: Turbo Racing
- 447 Knockout Kings 2000

DREAMCAST

- 319 Godzilla Generation
- 320 Pen Pen Tri-iceton
- 321 7th Cross
- 322 Sonic Adventure
- 323 Virtua Fighter 3TB
- 353 A-Life
- 354 Aero Dancing
- 355 Blue Stinger
- 356 Daytona USA 2
- 357 Evolution
- 358 Got Bass
- 359 House of the Dead 2
- 360 Marvel U's Capcom
- 361 Physic Force 2012
- 362 Power Stone
- 363 Puyu Puyu 4
- 364 Sega Rally 2
- 365 Super speed Racer
- 387 Air Force Delta
- 388 Buggy Heat
- 389 Soul Calibur
- 390 King of Fighters Dream Match 99

NEW DREAMCAST

- 521 Expendable
- 522 Incoming
- 523 Jimmy White's 2: Cueball
- 524 Mortal Kombat Gold
- 525 NBA 2000
- 526 Rayman 2: The Great Escape
- 527 Ready 2 Rumble Boxing
- 528 Redline Racer
- 529 Soul Calibur
- 530 Speed Devils
- 531 Crazy Taxi
- 535 WWF: Attitude
- 533 Trick Style

NEW PLAYSTATION

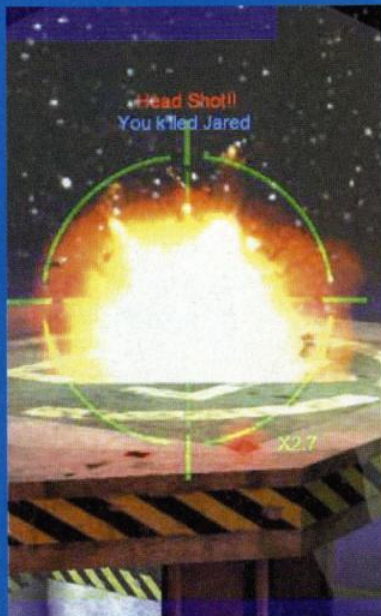
- 462 Rainbow 6
- 473 Thrasher: Skate & Dest.
- 474 Gran Turismo 2
- 475 Dukes of Hazzard
- 476 FIFA 2000
- 478 WWF Smackdown
- 479 Marvel VsCapcom: Clas
- 480 Killer Loop
- 489 KKKD Krossfire
- 491 Sout Park Rally
- 490 Worm Armgeddon
- 492 Die Hard Trilogy 2 Las Vegas
- 493 Fear Effect
- 494 Tiny Tank: Up You Arsenal
- 495 Army Men: Sarge's Heroe'
- 496 Syphon Filter 2
- 497 Medieval
- 498 Strett Sk8er 2
- 499 Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere
- 500 Gauntlet Legends

- 534 Legend Of Mana
- 501 Theme Park World
- 502 Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn
- 503 Colin 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 Creatures 2
- 509 Grand Session
- 510 Jackie Chan: Stuntmaster
- 535 Test Drive: LeMans
- 536 Road Rash: Jailbreak
- 537 Toy Story 2

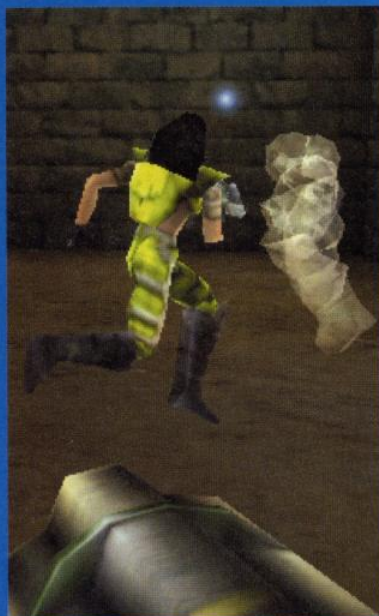
NEW NINTENDO 64

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- 514 JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERCROSS 2000
- 515 INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD 2000
- 538 RIDGE RACER 64
- 516 BOMBERMAN 64: THE SECOND ATTACK
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- 518 SUPERCROSS 2000
- 519 BATTLETANX: GLOBAL ASSAULT
- 520 EXCITEBIKE 64

Unreal Tournament Pics



BOOMDEATH



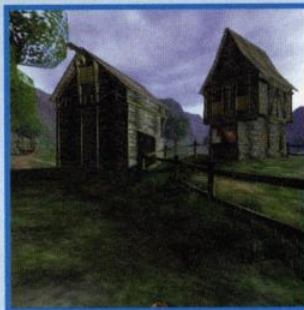
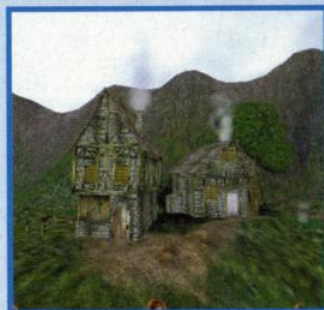
SLAVEMASTER

PATCHES

Counterstrike patch v6.6
& Half-Life: Opposing
Forces 1.1.0.0
www.sierra.com

Unreal Tournament
v4.20
www.planetunreal.com

Ground Control v1008
www.sierra.com



but playing as a fugitive could also be pretty exciting to an extent.

Regarding character classes, Artifact have decided to separate their game from the norm. There will be no distinct classes to choose from. Instead, like Ultima Online, characters will differentiate themselves based on the skills they decide to embrace. A fighter will obviously focus his/her points on weapon skills, a thief on stealth and picking pockets etc. However you will be free to some extent to create a 'jack of all trades' character.

We can also expect to see an extremely comprehensive trade skill system. Want to create weapons or armour? No

worries, just go mine the metal, buy a workshop and get started. Options even go so far as to let you use building trades in constructing your own house!

Don't hold your breath for this title however, as Horizons has been set for a 2002 release... and, according to some very recent news, Artifact announced they're having financial troubles. It's possible that this amazing project may be cancelled if they don't imminently find a publisher. Nooooo! What a tragic waste it would be for Horizons never to see the light of day. We'll be sure to keep you posted on how this situation pans out.

To catch up on the latest, check out <http://horizonsvault.ign.com/>



Retro Gaming Commercials

Gaming doesn't get more retro than this. Here you'll be treated to a host of ancient Atari and Intellivision commercials. It's sad we missed out on ads like this back in the 'old days', but now you can finally catch up by watching them through QuickTime. You may notice a few celebrities in there as well.

<http://www.myvideogames.com/html/retrocorner.asp>

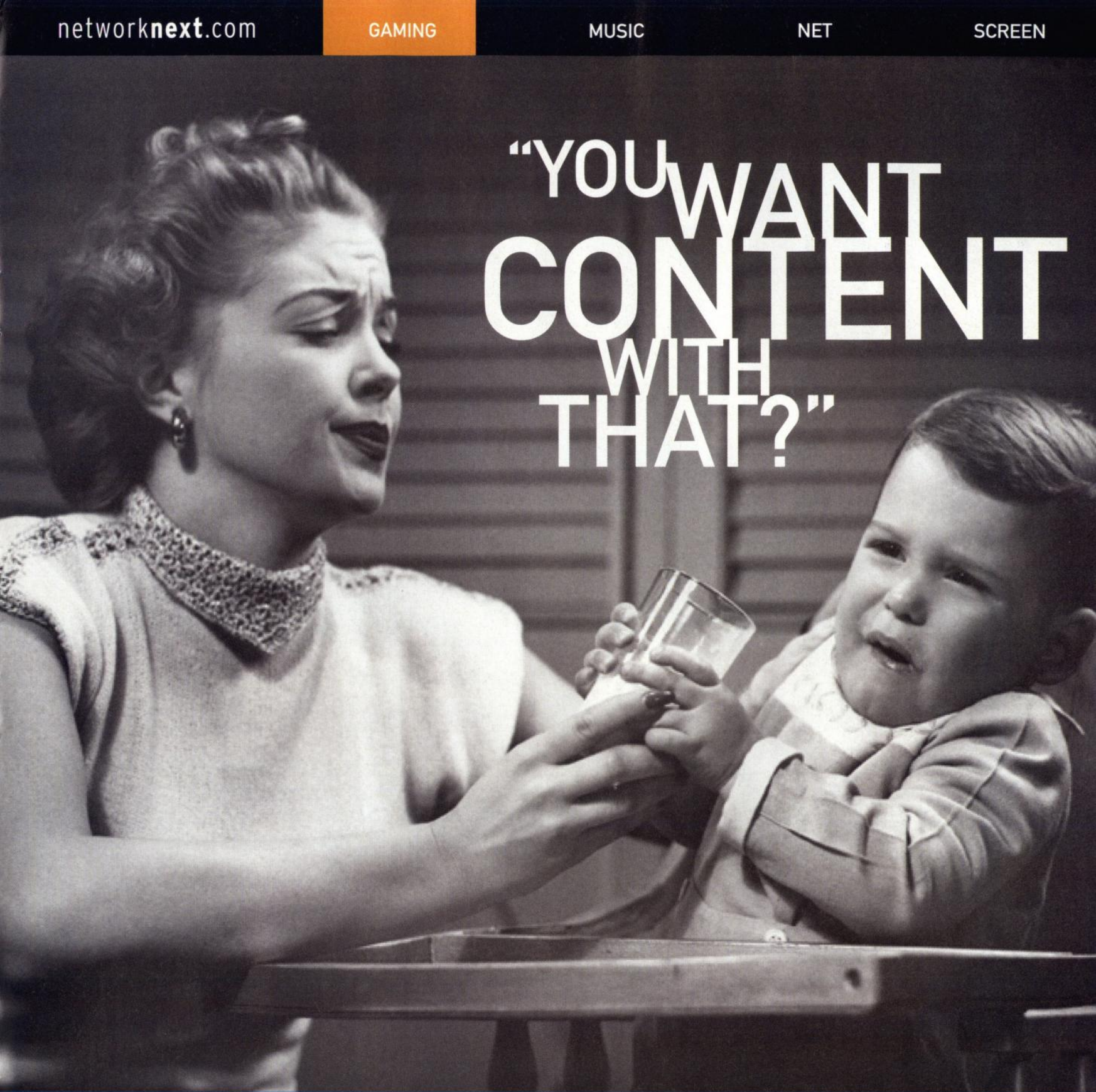


Sims Deathmatch

At this whacko site, visitors get to choose the fate of Bob the 'Sim' when he's thrown into the ring with the infamous Ash from Evil Dead. Will you let Ash kill Bob quickly or turn him into Sim soup? Ash kinda has the upper hand with his shottie and chainsaw however... not for the squeamish.

http://www.7deadlysims.com/deathmatch/match_001/start.asp





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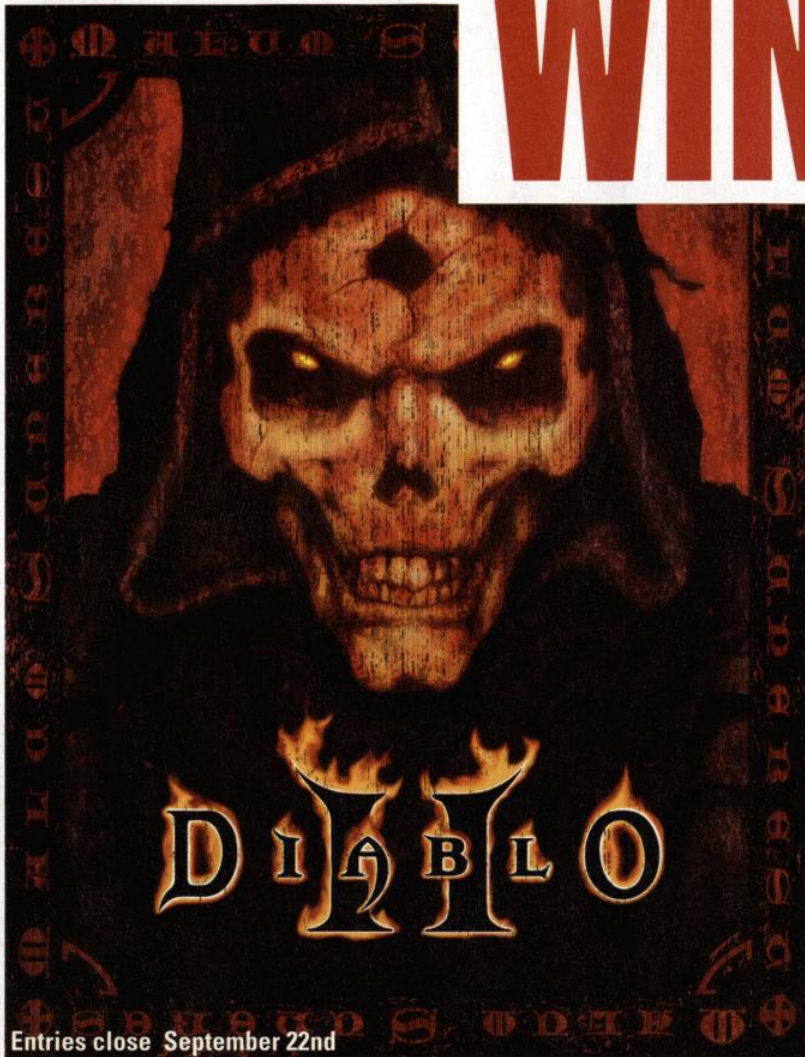
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WIN WIN WIN

DIABLO 2 for PC !



Entries close September 22nd

Can't get enough of this fantasy adventure romp? Well, seeing as we sympathise with the average gamer's plight, we have arranged for another FIVE copies of Diablo II for PC this month to just give-away! Thanks to Havas Interactive, some of you lucky folk will have a shiny package arriving in the mail with a bonus Diablo II t-shirt to boot! To enter the comp you need to answer one question...

What are the character classes you can play as in Diablo II?

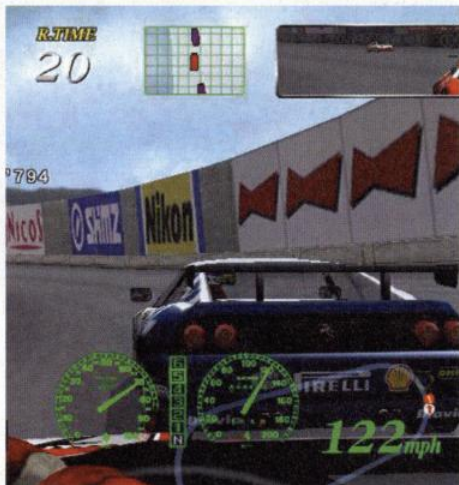
Put your answer along with your name and address on the back of an envelope and send it off to *Diablo Tu-tu, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.*

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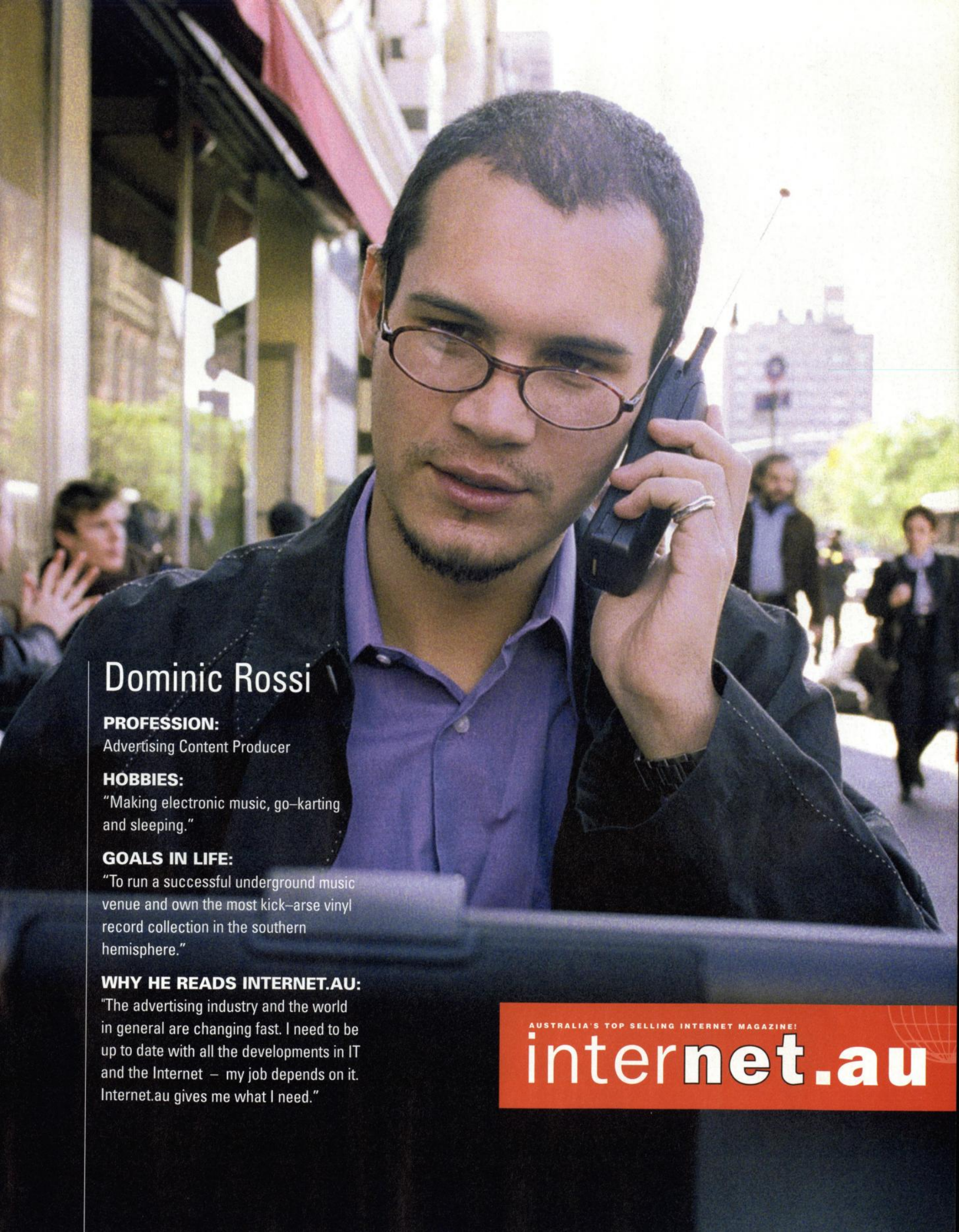
HYPERR *Summoner*





HYPERR» *TOCA World Touring Cars*



A man with short dark hair and glasses is talking on a black mobile phone. He is wearing a blue button-down shirt under a dark jacket. He has a goatee and a ring on his finger. The background is a busy city street with other people and buildings.

Dominic Rossi

PROFESSION:

Advertising Content Producer

HOBBIES:

"Making electronic music, go-karting and sleeping."

GOALS IN LIFE:

"To run a successful underground music venue and own the most kick-arse vinyl record collection in the southern hemisphere."

WHY HE READS INTERNET.AU:

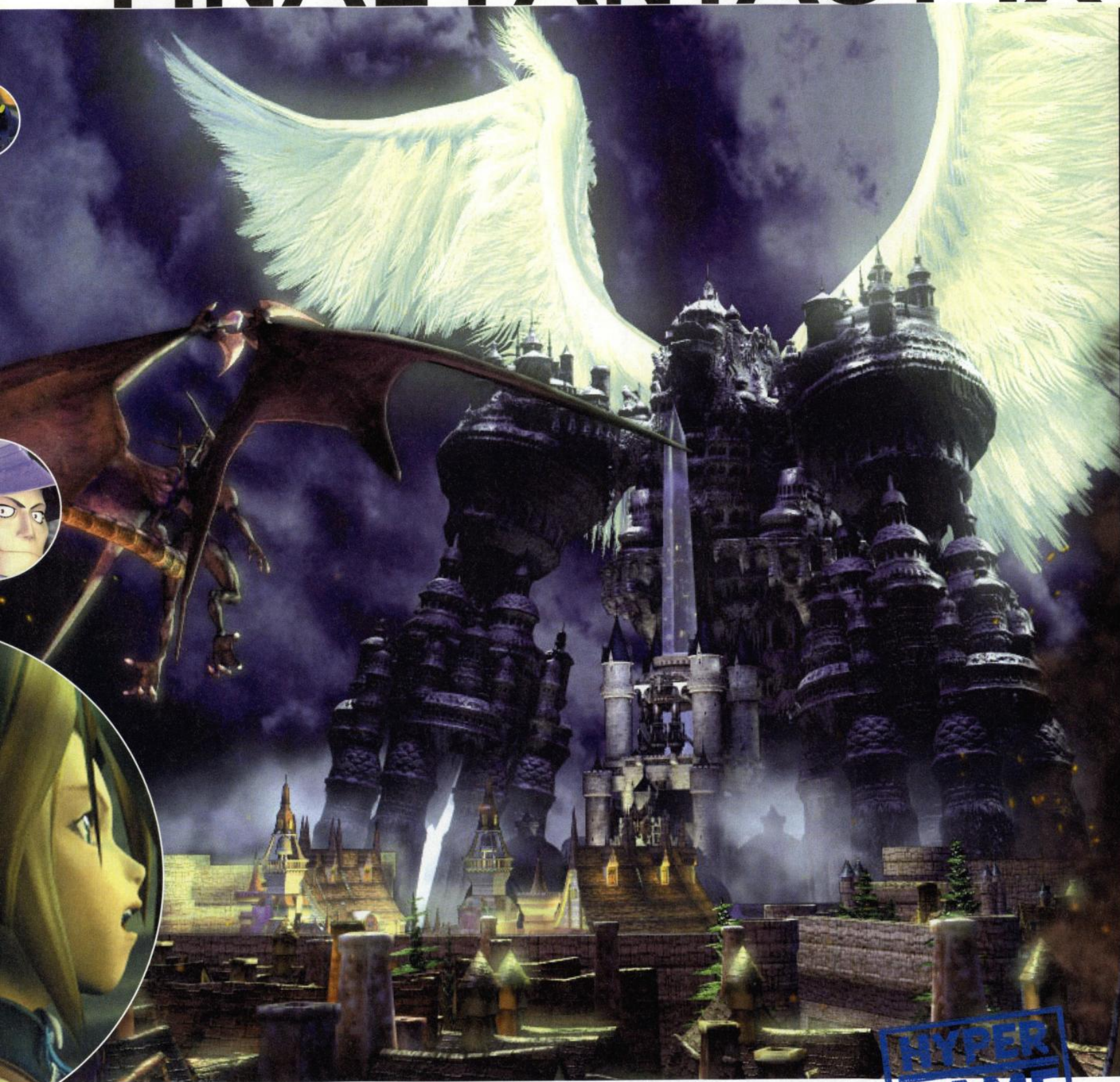
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PLAYSTATION

FINAL FANTASY IX



54 » HYPER

Square deliver an enchanting adventure that re-establishes the Final Fantasy series as one of true creative vision...



REVIEWS

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- 78.....HOGS OF WAR
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- 81.....TOCA
- 81.....AUSTIN POWERS: WELCOME TO MY UNDERGROUND LAIR
- 81.....POKÉMON: TRADING CARD GAME



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



THE HYPER CREW'S TOP 5

WHAT WE'RE PLAYING THIS MONTH

Eliot Fish – Editor

1. Deus Ex – PC
 "I can't help but start all over again. So much experimentation..."
2. Diablo II – PC
3. Virtua Tennis – Dreamcast
4. Vib Ribbon – PlayStation
5. Outrigger – Dreamcast

Cam Shea – Deputy Editor

1. Jet Set Radio – Dreamcast
 "Funky fresh. This game is da bomb."
2. Mario Tennis – Nintendo 64
3. Street Fighter 3: Third Strike – Dreamcast
4. Tony Hawk's Skateboarding 2 – PlayStation
5. Quake 3 Arena – PC

Dan Toose – Reviewer

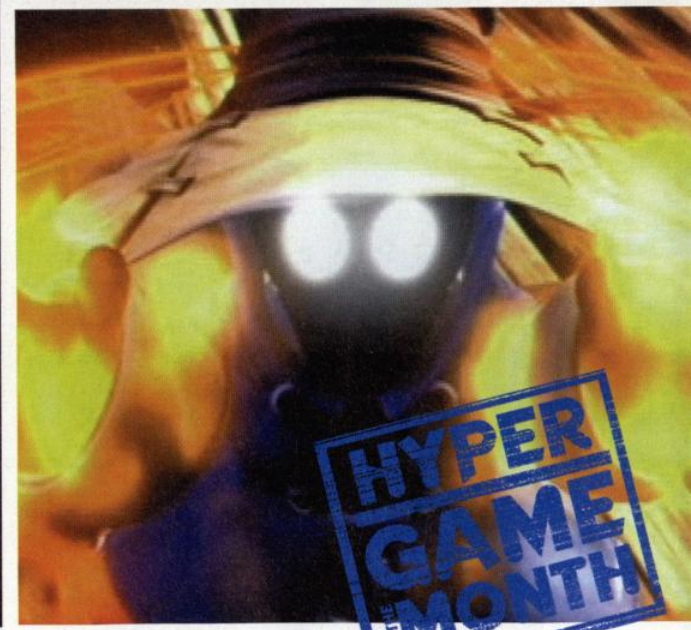
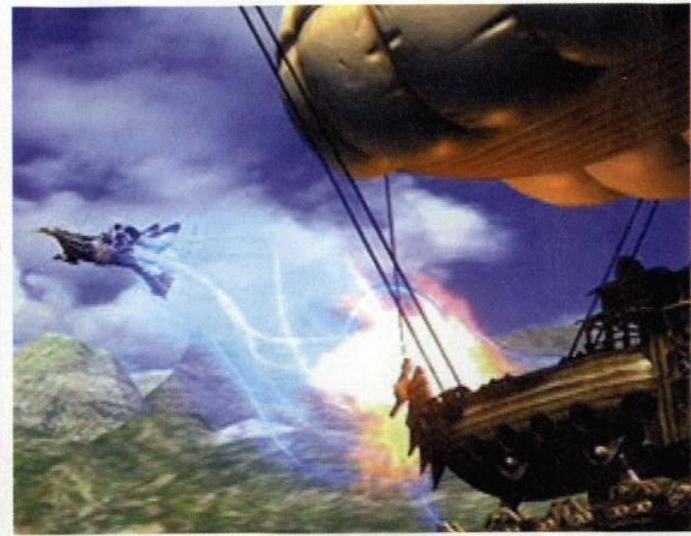
1. Diablo II – PC
 "Addictive as the first game. How dare Blizzard make a decent sequel!"
2. Icewind Dale – PC
3. Marvel Vs Capcom 2 – Dreamcast
4. Tech Romancer – Dreamcast
5. Dark Reign 2 – PC

HYPER

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

www.au.gateway.com





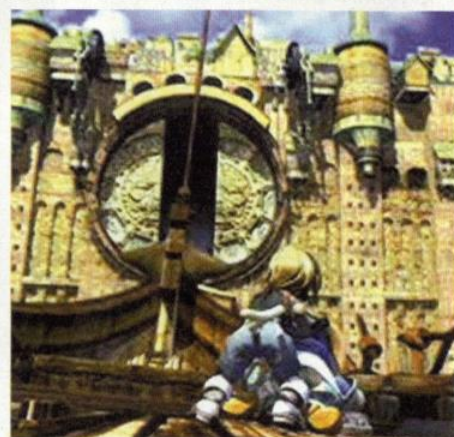
FINAL FANTASY IX



The wait is over. **Kevin Cheung** takes us inside the next Final Fantasy adventure...



ZIDANE REALISES HE LEFT HIS STUDIO LINE GEL AT HOME



AVAILABLE:	November
CATEGORY:	RPG
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Square
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	TBA
SUPPORTS:	Dual Shock, Memory Card

>> When Square revealed that they would be taking Final Fantasy IX back to its roots you probably would've been able to count with one hand the number of mainstream Western gamers who understood its meaning. Since Final Fantasy never actually saw the light of day in Australia until the seventh instalment, there's a fair bit of explaining to do.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF FINAL FANTASY

The Final Fantasy series originated on the NES. For its first five instalments, the Final Fantasy series was always about travelling through enchanting fantasy

lands of swords, sorcery, and nobility. You served kings, saved princesses, slew dragons, and yes – even back then you could ride Chocobos.

Final Fantasy VI saw a slight change in focus as 'technology' was introduced, and the world of magic became a forgotten culture through generations of non-use; and it was for you to discover and exploit the magic. The step from Final Fantasy VI to VII therefore wasn't just another one of those standard 2D-to-3D transitions: FFXIII completely transformed the FF world as we knew it into a convoluted post-industrial sprawl. This is the FF world most Western gamers will be familiar with, which evolved even further with FFXIII in terms of technology.

So when Square says Final Fantasy has gone back to its roots, it means that the futuristic technology is gone. The Kings and Queens of rival realms are back, magicians and sorcerers are

commonplace, lush waterfalls and plentiful forestry recline over the countryside – and yes, even the characters have reverted back to their old super-deformed anime designs.

MYSTERY OF THE CRAZED QUEEN

Set in a medieval world called Gaia, Final Fantasy IX begins by introducing you to a young thief named Zidane Tribal. He is a member of the group Tantalus, hired by the Regent of Lindblum to kidnap Princess Garnet from the neighbouring kingdom Alexandria. The Regent's intent is not malicious. Queen Blahne, Garnet's mother, has been attacking other neighbouring kingdoms in the region, and the Regent suspects it's because she's been possessed. He needs to ask Garnet a few questions to be sure.

Their plan is simple: fly into Alexandria's capital using their theatre airship, the Prima Vista as cover. While

Tantalus performs for Blahne, Zidane will break away, find Garnet, and get her back to the ship. The plan works out better than expected, as Garnet goes willingly with Zidane. She too feels that something is different about her mother, and she welcomes the chance to speak with the Regent to determine the source of the problem.

At the same time, the story allows us to control the other main character, Vivi, who desperately wants to see the show being put on by the Prima Vista. When he discovers that his ticket is a counterfeit, he is forced to sneak into the audience with a little help from other kids in the town.

The story begins in earnest when Zidane and Garnet try to make it back to the Prima Vista. Pursued by Steiner, Garnet's personal bodyguard, the two wind up smack bang in the middle of the stage in full view of Queen Blahne. At the same instant, Vivi gets chased

THE CAST

Zidane Tribal

"You don't need a reason to help people."
He's young, righteous, and a little reckless. He has some cheeky moves like "Look out behind you!", where he literally does just that to fake out the enemy. He spends much time trying to get into Garnet's pants, but he matures as he discovers his forgotten past.



Garnet Til Alexandros the 17th

"Someday I will be Queen, but I will always be myself."
Being cooped up in a castle all her life has made her a tad socially inadequate, which is why she spends a lot of time with Zidane learning how to converse with the locals. Her White Magic (healing powers) and summon spells are invaluable.



Adelbert Steiner

"Having sworn fealty, must I spend my life in servitude?"
Built like an ox, strong as an ox, and probably as dumb. This dunderhead is blindly loyal to Brahne in spite of the most obvious indicators, and behaves like a Bavarian Momma's Boy if he doesn't get his way. Great comic relief at times.



Vivi Ornitier

"How do you prove that you exist? Maybe we don't exist..."
This child is ridiculed in town, yet his ultimate station in life as a Black Mage strikes fear and respect into the heart of everyone. Vivi must overcome his own demons as he finds a way of rationalising "I think, therefore I am".



"MUHANA! I CURSE YOU WITH... BIG HEADS!"



on to the stage by some royal guards who spot him.

With their cover blown, the Prima Vista makes a hasty retreat, but not before Blahne can send a barrage of gigantic torpedoes at them. Tantalus, Zidane, Garnet, with Steiner and Vivi in tow, make it out with their left propeller ripped out, and they are forced to crash land in the Evil Forest. Brahne sends out her minions, Thorn and Zorn, to capture them.

SOMETHING OLD IN SOMETHING NEW

In this first chapter alone, there is so much to absorb. On one level, the traditional fantasy-oriented world is both alien and familiar, and ultimately mesmerising as you take the time to wander into each and every single building and room. This time around, it's not just for the chance of finding money or bonus items – it's the chance to see and absorb more quaint little details of this charming alternate reality. You

could sit on the world map for ages just watching the airship traffic.

From another level, it's amazing to see all of the old Final Fantasy devices being implemented. FMVs are no longer separate slabs of eye-candy – they are now seamlessly incorporated into the gameplay so that there's as little break in the narrative as possible. The Chocobos play a more prominent role, as do the Moogles (the cute cat-like animals), who've been missing in action for a while. Fans will also get a kick out of realising that the Regent of Lindblum is actually Cid, who's been turned into a little blob-like insect by a vengeful woman.

Either way, Final Fantasy IX is a very different game in terms of taste and atmosphere. One needs only listen to the pair of tin whistles in the title screen, whose unassuming tune tells a tale of its own. This is an epic adventure in a land of plenty – not an elaborate political conspiracy that could destroy the fabric of time.

This choice of atmosphere really comes through in the artistic design and cinematic direction. Every location from the cities, towns, to the wilderness are packed with life, colour and detail. The gorgeous pre-rendered backgrounds always feature some kind of motion, supplemented by an astoundingly huge cast of NPCs, making whatever's on screen very alive. Hardcore fans will even pick up the subtle camera movements as the background becomes an FMV, panning down, say, from a bird's eye view to the ground to watch a character run off into the horizon.

This is also helped enormously by Nobuo Uematsu's musical score, where the style is distinctly more similar to Final Fantasy VI. The music is more atmospheric and oriented towards matching the surrounding environment. This is as opposed to the previous two games where the music was the prime vehicle for conveying the emotion of each scene.

BACK TO BASICS WITH CONTROLS

Veterans of the previous Final Fantasy games will be quite familiar with the control system, and only a couple of changes need be explained. Final Fantasy IX uses a Job System identical to FFVI. That is, each character can be equipped with gemstones that grant unique abilities. The character will gain experience in those abilities until they have mastered it, after which the gem can be removed and given to someone else.

Some of these abilities will be innate to certain character classes. Black Mages will, for instance, always be able to cast attacking spells. Other classes like Dragoons or Ninjas have to equip gems and learn those moves. This makes for better character development and greater strategy during the battles. It's a lot more interesting to have only one or two people in your party who can cast Summon spells than having every single summon spell equipped to

THE CAST

Freija Crescent

"To be forgotten is worse than death."

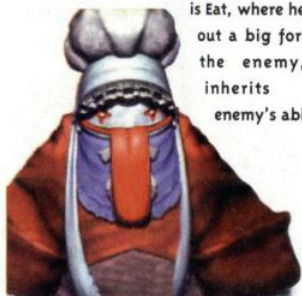
An old friend of Zidane's and a member of the majestic Dragoon class of warrior. Freija is searching for her lost lover, and accompanies Zidane on his journey, using her incredible dragon-lancing abilities in battle.



Quina Quen

"I do what I want! You have a problem?"

An androgynous Blue Mage who aspires to be a master chef. Quina's speciality is casting status-changing spells like Plague and Death. His coolest move is Eat, where he whips out a big fork, eats the enemy, and inherits that enemy's abilities.



Eiko Carol

"I don't wanna be alone anymore."

Another wielder of White Magic who is found stranded in a Moogle Village. She has an obsession with always being around people, and invariably falls in love with Zidane. She obviously doesn't like Garnet.



Salamander Coral

"The only dependable thing about the future is uncertainty."

A Ninja class character who has an ability to throw things. Dislikes Zidane because of a childhood tiff. He starts out as one of Brahne's minions, but later joins your troupe. He's easily the largest character of the bunch.



STEINER TRIES TO CONVINCE THE OTHERS TO COME SEE SOME GERMAN DEATH METAL



SUMMON-O-METER



PLUS

Enchanting artistic direction; beautiful set designs. Simplified but improved battle system.

MINUS

Battle system should be much more evolved by now. Long waits through summon spell animations can't be skipped.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
94	90	95

OVERALL
95

Square has taken their eight Final Fantasy's worth of experience and composed a masterful final instalment for the PlayStation. Will definitely go down as one of the best of the series.

every character. The terrible Draw System of FFXVII has also been removed in favour of the simpler and more logical method of recharging your HP and MP with elixirs and potions.

While these simple changes certainly add to the strategy and depth of each encounter, it's hard not to notice how unevolved and slow the battles are compared to Vagrant Story. Perhaps Square should consider changing the foundations of their battle system a little more.

Also worth mentioning is the Active Time Event, which gives you the option of seeing what other characters are doing at the same time. This gives valuable insight into the other characters, and adds an extra dimension to the game's story telling technique.

WITH STORIES THIS GOOD, WHO NEEDS BOOKS?

So was this move to a 'traditional' Final Fantasy a good one? The answer

is a big yes. The presentation and story structure are the main changes, and they are what the fans will really appreciate. The story, in particular, is less intense but doubly as fulfilling. Instead of having a long and confusing narrative, Square have chosen to play on the marquee roles of heroes and villains, without any Disney fluffery. Zidane represents the player's conscience, learning about the big world at the same time as the player. Vivi represents the player's innocence and naivety; Steiner the conservatism; and Garnet the sense of justice. With most of the characters being children, it's a little easier to understand their naivety and anguish. For instance, the horror of Vivi's discovery of Black Mages being mass-produced by Brahne (no, that wasn't a spoiler) is a great tie-in to Square's themes of life and existence.

With such an accessible and enticing story structured around the long-

established FF brand of gameplay, it's obvious that Square didn't set out to break new ground. Rather, it just wants to tell you a good story. To that end, Square gets both thumbs up. Final Fantasy IX will be remembered as one of the PlayStation's finest hours. ■

TAUTOLOGY EXPLAINED

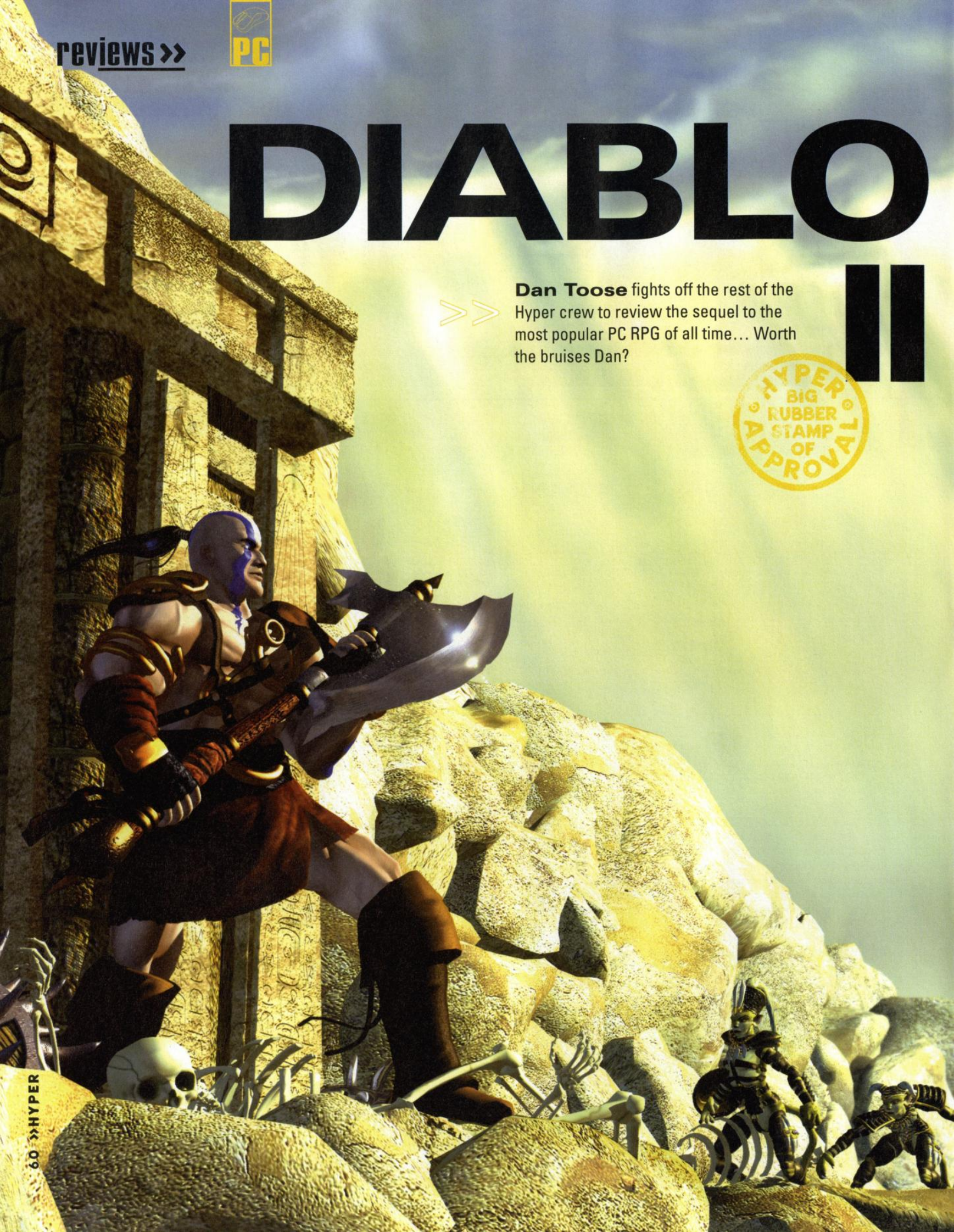
The original Final Fantasy was given its name because at the time, Square was on the brink of bankruptcy. It was literally going to be Square's last game. It would also have been Hironobu Sakaguchi's last project with Square, where at that point he'd previously worked on iconic titles like Rad Racer. As it turns out, Final Fantasy ended up saving Square's financial neck. So as a matter of respect to the moment and to Mr. Sakaguchi, Square has allowed the title to thrive as one of its core franchises.

DIABLO



Dan Toose fights off the rest of the Hyper crew to review the sequel to the most popular PC RPG of all time... Worth the bruises Dan?

II





THE PALADIN GETS A BIG HEAD



AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	RPG
PLAYERS:	1-8
PUBLISHER:	Blizzard
PRICE:	\$89.95
RATING:	M15+
REQUIRED:	P-233, 64MB RAM
DESIRED:	PII-350+, 128MB RAM, 3D accelerator

question, "Has it been worth the wait?," can only be answered by your expectations... I'll explain why.

THE LORD OF TERROR

For those unfamiliar with Diablo, it can simply be described as a real time RPG, with a very simple point and click interface through an isometric style viewpoint. In the original, your quest was to vanquish Diablo, Lord of Terror, from the dungeons beneath the two-horse town of Tristram. Unfortunately, our hero wasn't made of the right stuff, and ended up being corrupted by Diablo, who possessed their body and set off to find his demonic siblings, Baal and Mephisto. Thus the story is set for Diablo II... A new hero emerges to try and stop Diablo from causing great nastiness.

Blizzard has done very little with the visuals, and this is probably the biggest disappointment with Diablo II

on a technical level. The lighting has improved quite considerably, and the way darkness streams from behind obstacles in relation to your character looks great, although someone should remind the art department that a thin pole with a torch on the end doesn't cast a shadow on the ground, especially the flame. The real killer is the lack of an ability to change the resolution, which is set at 640 x 480. Not that bad if you have a 15" monitor, but it looks quite disappointing on a big screen.

In Blizzard's defence, they have included some nice weather effects, with rain on water looking particularly nice. There is also a perspective setting, which creates a greater sense of depth, although the effect is marginal. Also to Blizzard's credit is the fact that the game does, as a whole look very pretty. All the monsters, creatures, and locations are really nicely drawn, and little touches like the way your charac-

ter looks like they're wearing/holding the same gear you can see in their inventory screen (even down to the right colour), is really quite cool.

It must be said that the sound in the original Diablo was fantastic. It must also be said that it is almost exactly the same in Diablo II, both in terms of music and sound effects. Not altogether bad considering how good the first game sounded, but no points for originality. Although there is more diversity in the dialogue, thanks to a greater range of quests, and characters that give them to you. The voice acting for these sequences is great, and doesn't mess with Blizzard's fine tradition of making a game with tons of character.

There are options for 3D sound and environmental effects, although even with a 4-speaker system, it's hard to get much of a 3D effect happening, but the environmental effects are easily discernable.

>>> Anyone who was even vaguely into PC gaming back in '97 will recall just how hard Diablo rocked the online gaming world. In fact, Diablo has been so successful that getting a game on Blizzard's online gaming service, Battle.net has been easy ever since (although getting a game free of cheaters is another matter). So high was the anticipation for Diablo II that 2 million copies were shipped to retail at launch in the US alone, and it's gone extremely well here too. The burning



THE PALADIN WHIPS OUT THE ROCKET LAUNCHER FOR THIS ONE

IT'S A PARTY GAME

No, not like Mario Kart. Try and make a party pump with Diablo II and you'll be throwing a real non-event, but Diablo II is a fantastic multiplayer game. Blizzard have given you several ways to play the game multiplayer, and should be praised for it. You can simply host a TCP/IP game, or play an open game on Battle.net. This allows you to use your single player characters, but of course, also allows for the possibility of coming across cheaters. Standard Battle.net characters are kept on Blizzard's servers, so no one can tamper with them, meaning you can play cheat free (shame you can't kill the lag too). There's also a hardcore mode for those that want to play with a true sense of consequence. If you die... that's it, end of character.

It should be pointed out that many character skills affect other party members, so the game is really geared towards multiplayer. Combine a necromancer, who will be leading an army of summoned creatures, with a paladin, who radiates an aura that benefits allied creatures within a certain radius, and the two characters end up complimenting each other perfectly. Each character introduced into a game increases the difficulty, which helps ensure things aren't too easy as you add more players.



DAMN. WHEN THEY TOLD ME SHE WAS HORNY...

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

In terms of interface, the changes are minor, which is a good thing, because Diablo's interface was brilliant. However, there are improvements that deserve a mention. No longer are you restricted to movement in 8 directions, you simply click where you want to walk, and your character walks there in a straight line (or the shortest path). There is also the addition of a run key, which not only cuts down travel time, but makes escaping ugly situations a lot easier, although some monsters can put on the pace too.

The real improvements come in character development. There are now five character classes to choose from: Paladin, Barbarian, Amazon, Sorceress and Necromancer. Each class has their own set of three different skill trees.

Every time you gain a level, you earn a skill point, which you can spend on a skill, as long as you have the required level, and any pre-requisite skills. Some skills are passive, meaning they simply take effect all the time, while others require you to assign them to a mouse button. The beauty here is that you don't have to have your left mouse button assigned to a standard attack, but can assign a spell, or combat skill to it. This is particularly useful for a class such as the sorceress, who is more likely to want to have two spells readied, rather than a melee attack and one spell.

WELCOME TO MY NIGHTMARE

No longer are you stuck in one town, with just one dungeon to conquer. In fact, the game takes place in four vastly

Check out our strategy guide on page 88, and win yourself a copy of Diablo II on page 48, so what are you waiting for??



FRANK REALISES HIS MAGICAL +7 POOL CUE ISN'T GOING TO DO THE TRICK



different areas, each with their own town, wilderness and dungeons. Each area (with the exception of the fourth) is quite huge, and Blizzard have added a series of magical waypoints which you can use to skip from area to area as long as you have found the specific waypoint you're trying to travel to. This is particularly essential for getting to your corpse, which would truly suck otherwise.

Diablo II has a ton of replay value for several reasons. Firstly, with five character classes, you can develop a pack of characters, each with their own style of play. More impressive is that simply by focusing on different areas in your skill tree, you can have two characters of the same class, who actually play quite differently.

But what about when you finish the game? Simple, just start again in

'Nightmare' mode, where everything looks much the same, but is a lot tougher, and also a lot more rewarding. You can go a step further again with 'Hell' mode if you really want to keep pushing that character to the limit... which doesn't stop at level 50 like in the first game.

So has Diablo II been worth the wait? Well, if you're after something mind blowingly different and innovative, then no, but considering how addictive and playable Diablo was, why mess with it too much? A little more ambition with the graphics wouldn't have gone astray, but that's really just one gripe in an otherwise thoroughly entertaining experience. A good way to describe Diablo II would be to call it Diablo 1.99, because it's basically a much-improved version of the original game. ■



DIY MAGIC ITEM A-GO-GO

During your quest to carve Diablo a second backside, you will come across an item known as the Horadric Cube. This device allows you to throw several items in, hit ye mystic button, and end up with an altogether new item. Sometimes this is basic no brainer stuff that you're required to do in your quests, but you can also turn not so special items, into much better ones by using the cube.

There's also a far more straightforward way, and that's to find items with sockets in them. These socketed items can accept gemstones, which imbue the item with magical properties. Different quality stones provide different levels of power, and different types of stones offer different types of powers. You can use the Horadric Cube to turn a group of low quality gems into one gem that is of a higher quality, so collecting gems of all types is more than worthwhile.

Sure, you can't just whip up whatever you want, but at least you can go about creating an item for yourself by your own initiative.



ADDICT-O-METER



PLUS

Awesome multiplayer. Lots of replay value.

MINUS

640x480 debacle. Overly similar to Diablo I.

VISUALS

85

SOUND

90

GAMEPLAY

90

OVERALL

90

More a case of being a perfect version of Diablo than a new game, but tons of fun anyhow.



JUST PRETEND TO BE A WALL FIXTURE AND THE GUARDS HAVE NO IDEA!



CHASE THE EXPRESS

>> Tony Montana enjoys a bit of trainspotting...

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Action/Adventure
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Sony
PRICE:	\$59.95
RATING:	M
SUPPORTS:	Memory Card, Dual Shock

>> An All-American hero, who takes on the world single-handedly against the odds. Check. A ruthless villain with a bad German accent and a blonde ponytail. Check. A tough, yet vulnerable female sidekick? She's here. A wise-cracking black guy? Done and done. A political figure with a family to protect? They're all here as well.

Yes, Chase the Express is chock-full of clichés. But it's also got a generous helping of addictive fun, some very nice action sequences and a couple of

brain-taxing puzzles to solve. In fact, Chase the Express is almost like a mixture of every good action / adventure game and movie to be released in the last 10 years. Which is kinda cool, in a "hey that was just like that part in Die Hard!" way.

RESIDENT GEAR SOLID

CTE sees you controlling a Mel Gibson/George Clooney/Cam Shea-type character called Jack Morton. He's part of a NATO security team whose job was to protect the train they were travelling on. Except they got train-jacked (Ice Cube style) by some bad-asses who busted caps in just about everyone — except for Jack. Now it's Jack Morton's job to single-handedly stop World War III, defuse some nuclear warheads, rescue the French Ambassador and his family, and also do some cool commando rolls.

Taking a leaf out of Resident Evil and Metal Gear Solid's book, CTE tries hard to present you with a very cinematic game. It actually succeeds in doing this, which is both good and bad. The positives are that you are immersed in a very real world, and the atmosphere is laid on quite thick as well. But the main drawback is that because the game is so much like a movie, you begin to look for plot holes like you would in a movie script. And there are many plot holes, which does take away from how much you can immerse yourself in the CTE world, because most of the scenarios are far-fetched, which is fine in a fantasy-world game, but a bit dubious in a game trying to keep it real (boyyyy).

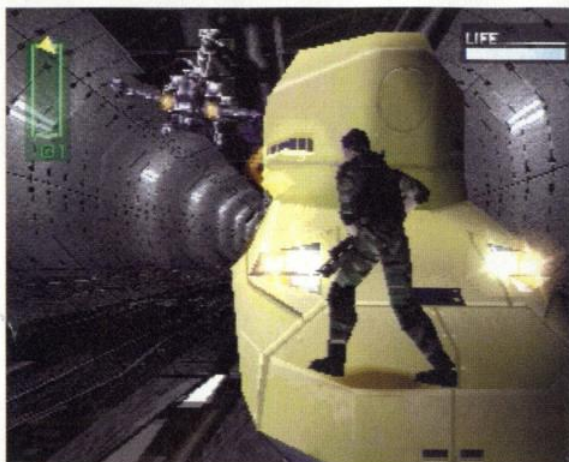
If you've played Resident Evil and you like the way the control system works, then you're already an expert at

CTE. The characters are controlled in an identical fashion to RE, but there are a few extra features, such as commando rolling from side to side (which is very helpful). The inventory system is also exactly the same as RE, including the "magic box" method of storing items.

One part of CTE that isn't taken from RE and really should have been is the combat system. It's probably the biggest flaw in the game. Unlike games like MGS and RE where you point your gun at an enemy and the bullet will hit them if you're close enough with your aim, in CTE you need to point, wait for a target to appear, then shoot. This takes a while and is rather clumsy. And also...

The camera angles while in combat can be a joke. In trying to make the game cinematic, there will be times where someone is shooting at you, but

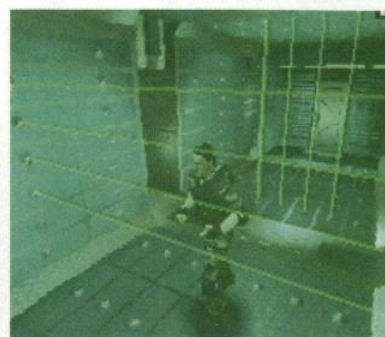




"SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR LITTLE FRIEND!"



MAN'S BEST FRIEND CREWS MAN'S BEST LEG OFF



TRAIN OF THOUGHT

A list of every game that Chase the Express has (ahem) borrowed ideas from:
RESIDENT EVIL (pre-rendered backgrounds, control system, inventory)
METAL GEAR SOLID (aspect of stealth, one military man against the world)
SYPHON FILTER (cut-scenes, use of radio)
 And the movies:
UNDER SIEGE 2 (set on a train)
BROKEN ARROW (nuclear weapon has been stolen)
ANY JOHN WOO MOVIE (twin handguns)
DIE HARD (European terrorists)
THE PEACEMAKER (train-jacking to steal a bomb)
THROW MOMMA FROM THE TRAIN

you can't see them. All you can do is try to guess where they're standing, blindly shoot and hope for the best. This usually results in a lot of ammo and health wasted.

And for the most frustrating part of the combat... if you run out of bullets in your gun, you can't fight hand-to-hand! This almost ruins the game, as if you know that you're going to run out of ammo you need to go and deposit your gun and then run around with no weapons equipped, which is the only way to use your fists. Then if you pick up some more ammo, you need to run back to one of the "magic boxes" and get your gun again. Otherwise when you run into your next enemy you'll be totally helpless. You'd think that a NATO soldier would know to throw his gun down once it's out of ammo.

A LITTLE BLOCKY

While controlling the action can be a chore, some of the action sequences are quite fun. When you can see your enemies and if you have ammo, of course. While there aren't that many weapons, they all can be modified, and if you're lucky enough to find another handgun, then it's John Woo time with twin handgun action!

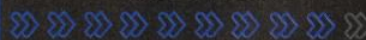
The puzzles vary from the standard find-a-key stuff to some more adventurous mini-games. The best one involves having to connect the power to a big f*#k-off anti-aircraft gun that is connected to the train, then use it to say "F*#k off!" to enemy helicopters hovering outside. Cutting the wires to the nuclear warheads is also a nice little challenge, and you'll feel just like Mel Gibson in Lethal Weapon 2.

If you've played Dino Crisis, then you know what CTE looks like. The backgrounds are a little blocky, but they're quite solid. The characters look great, especially the blood that flows from their wounds when you bust a cap. The only real gripe with the characters is that the enemies all look quite similar, even the bosses — they're all just the same body with different clothing.

Chase the Express isn't Resident Evil, but it's a pretty good alternative. If you're a big fan of action games and you can put up with the fact that the game borrows heavily from already established games, then this one is for you. It's also fun to play "Spot the Cliché" and guess what movies the developers were watching when they were creating this title. ■



CLICHÉ-O-METER



PLUS

A cross between Resident Evil and MGS? Yummy!

MINUS

The attack system can be quite bothersome. Actually it's plain crap.

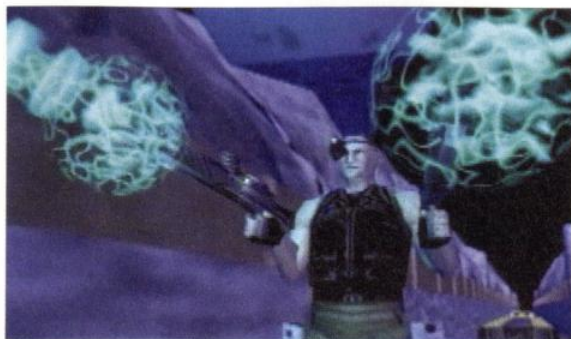
VISUALS 83 **SOUND** 81 **GAMEPLAY** 85

OVERALL

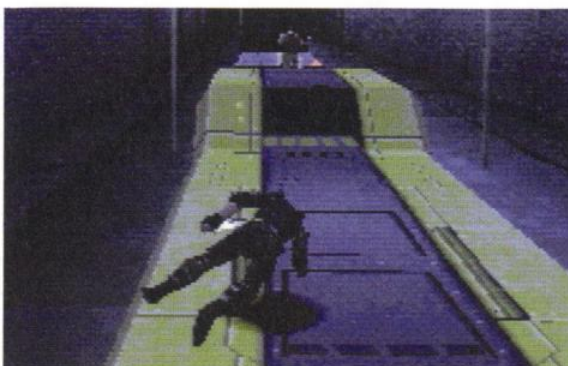
84

Quite entertaining and cinematic. Having the whole game located on the train gets a little "samey" though.

65 »HYPER



"HEY! WHO SHOVED BUBBLEGUM IN MY GUN BARRELS?"





EVERYTHING'S GRAND IN TESTICLE LAND

! Nintendo just love Mr. Pink - his Kirby-ness - and he's always popping up. We wouldn't be at all surprised to see Kirby in his own Nintendo Starcube title...



KIRBY 64: THE CRYSTAL SHARDS

>> Half-man, half-beanbag, **Nick O'Shea** settles down onto himself to give Kirby the third degree.



AVAILABLE:	TBC
CATEGORY:	2.50 Platformer
PLAYERS:	1-4
PUBLISHER:	Nintendo
PRICE:	\$99.95
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	Rumble Pak

>> There's been a Kirby game in the pipeline for the N64 ever since the console was a twinkle in Yamauchi's eye. Avid gamers will recall how the title flitted among the upcoming releases for years, and it seemed as though it would never see the light of day. The truth is, the original conception of Kirby's Air Ride was canned, and it seemed as though our rotund little pal wasn't going to get any action any time soon.

After showing that he could bust atomic piledrivers all over the entire Nintendo cast in his cameo in Smash Brothers, the pink one went in search of greater adventures. HAL Laboratories have suited up the Kirbster for a journey that will have you reminiscing over fond memories of golden 2D platforming - an outing that has seen the Kirby name at the top of the Japanese sales charts for months. Why is it that powerhouses like the PS2 and the Dreamcast have been humbled at the feet of a tiny pink puffball? Bloody good question, that.

MIGHTY MORPHIN'...UM...THINGIE

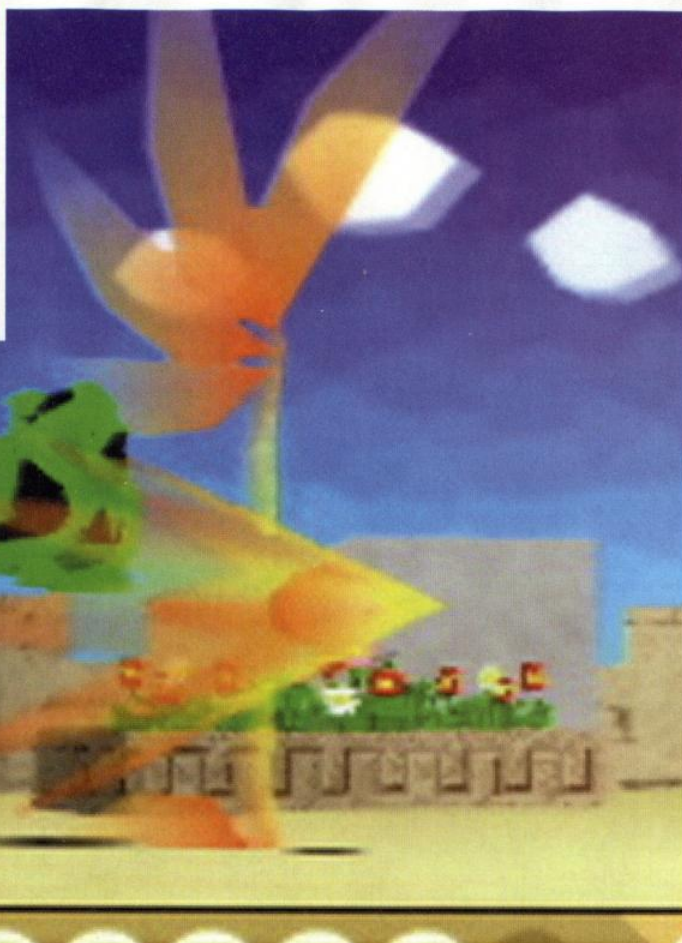
While the N64 does hurl around the polygons with gay abandon, and the camera angle skews occasionally, the gameplay is essentially that of a 2D

platformer. What sets it apart from the pack is Kirby's unique ability to ingest all manner of foreign objects. Certain foes when swallowed imbue Kirby with one of seven elemental powers, and the K Man can absorb two doses of said power-ups. The art then stems from combining these elements with various hilarious results as Kirby shows off his shape-changing abilities. The forms Kirby takes are usually more useful in certain situations, so you'll often find yourself switching between morphing modes to better suit the level. Some powers are awesome, and others laughable, but the experimental aspect of comboing different powers will have you compelled to discover all the variations.

After all the 'on-again, off-again' shenanigans from the lads at HAL, it's

hard to tell exactly how long they were cooking away at Kirby 64. What is quite apparent, though, is that they have done a damn fine job. The presentation of this title is mind-blowing. The levels initially are pretty simple, splashed with pastel shades that give the appearance of a picture book. As the game progresses, Kirby ventures among lush jungles, under the sea and through lava-filled caverns. The level design gradually begins to incorporate spiral levels and various graphical techniques like transparencies and lighting effects that add to the eye candy factor. The design of the characters also deserve special note. Whether you're talking about Kirby and his veritable truckload of animations, his friends like the pudgy Waddle Dee





WE CAN'T TELL WHAT THIS IS EITHER

that help out along the journey or the scores of foes that try to block the way, each is imbued with their own little personality, no matter how simple. Gotta love the little maracca dude on the beach levels.

SHARD AND SHARD ALIKE

In a seemingly last minute effort to extend the playing life of the game, HAL included three paltry mini-games to add a multiplayer aspect. The first game is a hopscotch race where you have to hop over obstacles to cross the line first, the second a competition to catch falling fruit with baskets, and the third a cross between checkers and Cycles of Tron. The mini-games lack the level of refinement of the single-player game and blemish the product for

only a slight increase in longevity. With only three mini-games, the multiplayer modes probably won't even hold the attention of the kiddies for terribly long.

The Crystal Shards is, in essence, an incredibly well executed 2D platformer - a genre that hasn't really been explored in a while. It's a walk down memory lane with an accompaniment of innovation to make the stroll all the more enjoyable. The main issue, however, is that most will find Kirby a bit easy, and after the fun of the elemental system has been had and the game clocked, there's not a lot to draw you back for another go. Kirby would make a great choice for the younger gamer, but for others, a rental could possibly be the solution. ■



RETURN OF THE PINKEYE

Could it be that Kirby has ventured to Dagobah to train under Master Yoda? More likely just playing too much Jedi Power Battles. Whatever the case, the flame sword (read as: lightsabre) from Smash Bros makes a return in a couple of different incarnations as some of the better abilities that Kirby can take on. Turn to the Pink Side of the N64, orcel



CAREFUL NOT TO PUNCTURE YOURSELF KIRBS



MORPH-O-METER



PLUS

Sweet graphics, classic gameplay, elemental combo system.

MINUS

Lackluster multiplayer aspect, may be too easy and/or too cutesy for some.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
89	81	90

OVERALL
85

A great victory for his royal Pinkness, but it's all over a bit too soon.



GOOD TO SEE HE WEARS MULLET PROTECTION

VIRTUA TENNIS

>> Kevin Cheung threatened to "smack some balls", so we gave him this review...



AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Sports
PLAYERS:	1-4
PUBLISHER:	Sega Sports Arcade
PRICE:	\$89.95
RATING:	G
SUPPORTS:	VMU, Vibration Pack

>> When it comes to tennis, the Hyper crew are a hard bunch to please. You can count with one hand the number of titles we actually respect: Super Tennis, Smash Court Tennis, and Let's Smash. We'd like to think it's not because we're overly fussy, but rather that developers can rarely find the balance between realistic characters and believable ball movement. Two new titles have been anticipated to take a place on our list of elite tennis titles: Sega's Virtua Tennis and the N64's Mario Tennis.

With the former, our hunch has thus far proven half-correct.

FURRY BALLS

Developed by Sega Sports Arcade, Virtua Tennis is by far the most impressive tennis title on any system. On an aesthetic level, the players are realistically modeled against the real-life professional players. Unfortunately, you won't get any superstars like Agassi, Rafter or Sampras, but it's still something of a thrill to watch still-respectable players like Pioline, Philippoussis or Kafelnikov strut their stuff on the courts.

The attention to detail is incredible. Players will skip between their left and right feet between points, they'll flip their racquets around as they crouch over in readiness for the serve... you'll even see flashes of brilliance as they hit

a shot between the legs or around the back, which will send the crowd into a roar of applause. Screw up, and you'll actually get booed.

Obviously, all of this window-dressing would be worthless without some decent gameplay; and it's this aspect of Virtua Tennis that truly impresses. Using a simple 2-button interface (one for stroke, one for lob), the in-game action is structured around preparation and positioning. The strength and direction of each shot will depend on where you're standing, and how much time you had to wind up for the shot. Ideally, you would run to the right position with plenty of time to smack the ball down the line with the sweet spot on your racquet strings. On the other extreme, if you're too late to hit the ball, you'll end up making a lot of embarrassing air-swings. In other

words, Virtua Tennis rewards you for anticipation. This is something tennis players will especially appreciate.

The real fun is watching what happens in between those two extremes. If you're standing just a little too far out, you'll end up scooping the ball or hitting the frame. A little further out and your player might try to dive for the ball. If you press the button too late, you may not have enough time to level you racquet, resulting in reduced accuracy.

With its lightning-quick responsiveness, this kind of variety makes Virtua Tennis look and feel just like the real thing, right down to the motion-blurred television replays. The only thing letting this showcase down is the dreadful music, which can thankfully be turned right down. Even then, while all the subtle foot-shuffles and sneak-



Virtua Tennis had better look out. Mario Tennis on the Nintendo 64 is an absolute cracker. Check it out next issue...



KAFELNIKOV? HE'S 'ARMLSS



BIG-BALLED ADVENTURE

The World Circuit Mode is Virtua Tennis' RPG mode. Here, you play all manner of matches and Mario Party-style bonus games to earn cash, which in turn can be used to purchase new players, costumes, and tennis courts — all of which can then be accessed in the Arcade and Exhibition modes. The sad part is that all of the bonus players are completely fictitious. So are all the tennis venues. That's what happens when you don't have an official endorsement.



er-squeaks against the floor surfaces sound great, there are only three distinctive sounds for the ball hitting the racquet. This is an unfortunate but forgivable oversight.

THE STRENGTH OF YOUR STROKES

Some other oversights are not as forgivable, though. As a single player game, Virtua Tennis is decidedly lacking in depth. The AI of the CPU players is woefully inconsistent. On one hand they'll play a mean cross-court game, yet at the same time they can be easily committed to a rally and be completely oblivious to the open court.

Longer-term play will reveal deeper flaws in the design. There's no way anyone can cover that much court. And with no way of varying the strength of your strokes (there are no topspins or slices), there's actually

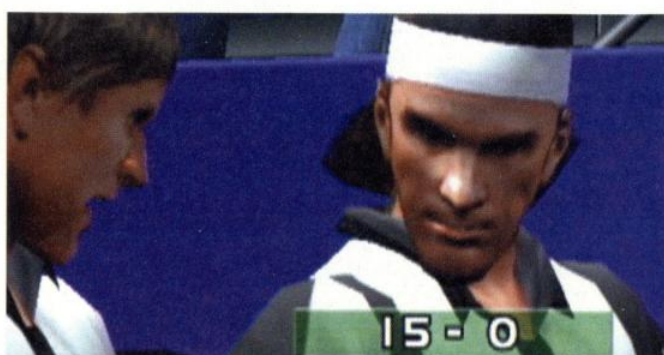
zero variation to the pace of each game. If they were any longer than the 'best of three' afforded in the Arcade Mode, they'd actually be monotonous and boring.

The World Circuit mode also has a number of glaring faults, as the basic tenets of tennis are thrown out the window in favour of blindly pursuing the fad of RPG-based extra modes. The majority of the matches, for instance, are basic "first to # points" games. Without any tiebreaks or 'win by two' rule, the player who serves first has a bloody unfair advantage; and is guaranteed a win if everyone just holds serve.

What saves Virtua Tennis from being dubbed outright a glamourised new version of Pong is the insanely addictive 4-player Doubles mode. This reviewer played the game with

friends until 4am on three consecutive nights. Since the players are all human, they at least don't have any of the AI inconsistencies and can produce enough strategy to change the pace a little.

Readers should also remember not to take criticism of this game too harshly. No matter how you slice it, Virtua Tennis is a can of amazingly good fun. As a multiplayer game, it's easily up there with Worms Armageddon and Perfect Dark. However, there are countless niggling faults that hardcore tennis fans will have problems with — a distinct lack of female players being one... the fact that balls travel right through you is another. If we didn't point out these faults, we wouldn't be doing our jobs. No corny "Ace" jokes here — Sega have put in a fine effort. ■



THE PLAYERS CHECK OUT THEIR SCORE. EERIE!



POO-O-METER



PLUS

Excellent ball motion and responsive controls. Great visuals.

MINUS

Monotonous in the long term for single players. Whoever composed the music needs a bullet.

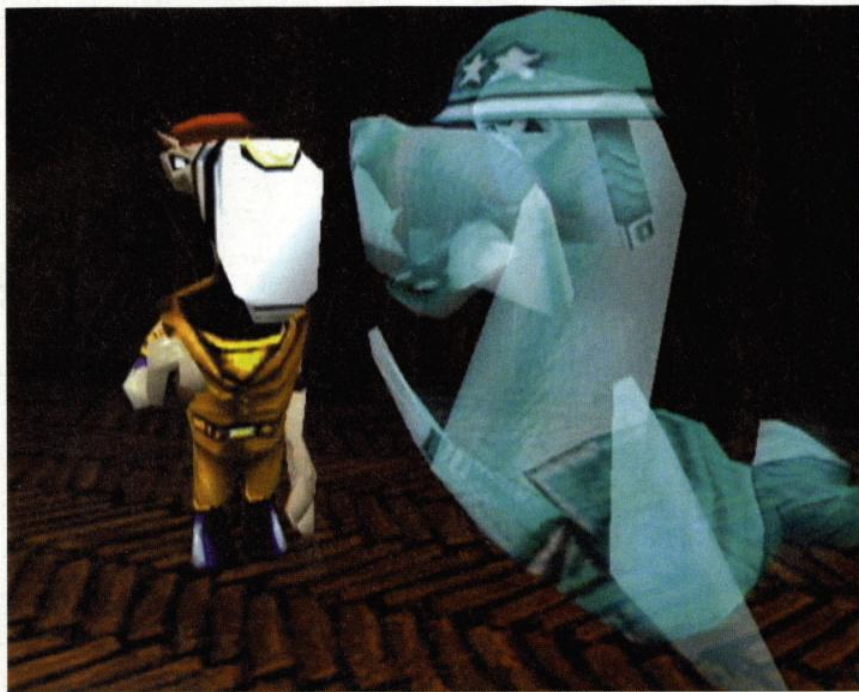
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

92 91 88

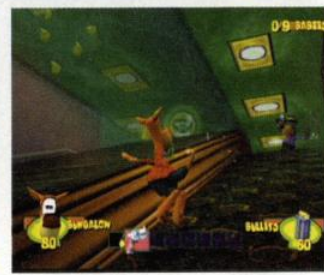
OVERALL

90

Sega had better do great things with this excellent new sports franchise. All they need to do is clean up the little mistakes.



FUR FIGHTERS BOOT CAMP. WHERE STUFFED TOYS LEARN TO KILL



FUR FIGHTERS

>> Appearances can be deceiving, as **Bom** discovers with this one from Acclaim...



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: 3rd Person Carnage
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: Acclaim
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: M
SUPPORTS: Vibration, VMU

blasty weapons and handing other furry toys their poorly stitched asses.

I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW, MY HEAD IS GONE

Fur Fighters is, for the most part, a well executed piece of stuff. It's obvious right from the start that the focus here is all on the characters — the models are well built and fit nicely into the super-deformed cutesy category, while the heavily cartoony animations that get them about the place are absolutely spanky, filling them with all the personality and silliness you'd look for in kiddy-centric, psychotic fluffy toys. As a result, the environments of the game can tend to suck a bit, with some low poly counts and disturbingly drab texture work, but it all gets the job done quite nicely, and combined with the interesting twist of constantly switching characters, can provide for some interesting puzzling fun.

Which brings me to the acid-induced semi-transparent walrus guy. I probably don't need to tell you this, but you really should avoid these types. The walrus tends to be a little overly helpful, and will basically reveal to any unwary player the solution to each and every one of the more interesting puzzles in the game. This guy may be a nice addition for the players out there who like a little help when it comes to recognising their full name, but I wouldn't have

mind an option to turn his game-spoiling ass off completely.

TELL US ABOUT THE ASS KICKING ALREADY

Making furry toys into furry bits is a noble practice indeed, and this is where the game outdoes itself. Sure it's a bit easy, what with having an auto-aim that seems to cap enemies a good thirty degrees outside your current line-of-fire, but given the number of retarded teddy bears throwing themselves on your lead mercy, you'll find yourself more than amply distracted. This doesn't work out so nicely in the multi-player fluff match, but I'm sure you can find it within yourself to be reasonably well entertained by this game mode. You'll likely gain an inordinate amount of pleasure from watching the various enemies explode in balls of vital flufforgans, and if not you can always just pick the cat and jump repeatedly down the many-story elevator shaft. Nice.

This title isn't about to kick Rayman 2 off its pretty perch, or MDK2 off its involving-as-hell-made-by-the-gods couch, but it's definitely got the good crazy fun angle covered, and Bizarre have managed to pack a good 15-20 hours gameplay onto the GDRom. Do yourself a favour — play it, have some fun, kill some teddybears and teddydogs, and sample some humour from game developers who don't get out all that often. ■

>> Alright, let's get this straight from the start. This really is a game for the younger players. If you're the type to be thoroughly enjoying the dark, bizarre world of MDK2, well, truth be told you'll be playing that instead — on the other hand, if you're looking for something a little lighter and wackier, mixed with some straight-out death dealing, then Fur Fighters is the most definitely the thang for you.

Once you've gotten yourself past the ubiquitous lengthy training sequence, FF lands you safely in the body of a small, stuffed toy, in a conveniently located central hub town from which you will of course attempt to save the world — and your freshly stolen children. To do this you're going to have to magically slip into the skins of your various furry cohorts, all with their own special, and of course occasionally frightfully handy abilities, and get about the world solving puzzles for a good cause. Oh yes, you'll spend the other seventy percent of this third-person-style romp weilding many large



PUNCTURED LUNG-O-METER



PLUS

Great soul-destroying fun for kids, and runs smooth as a baby's skull.

MINUS

Don't look to be overly challenged or suprised here.

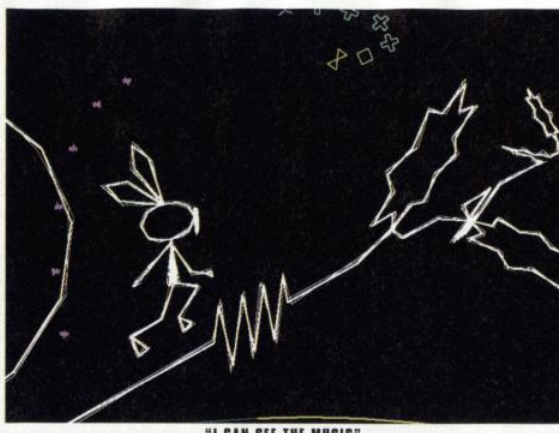
VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80	86	87

OVERALL

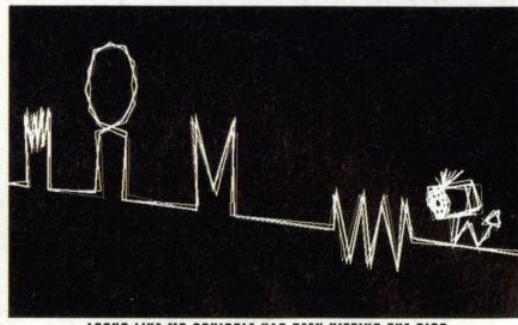
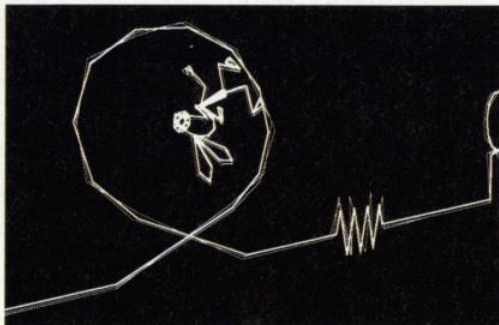
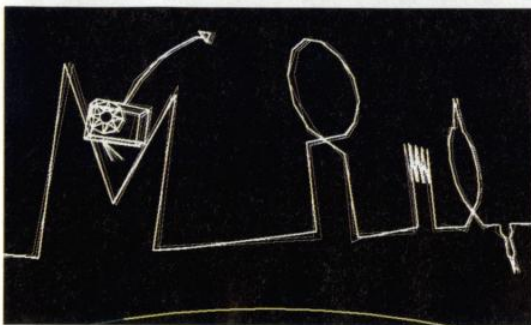
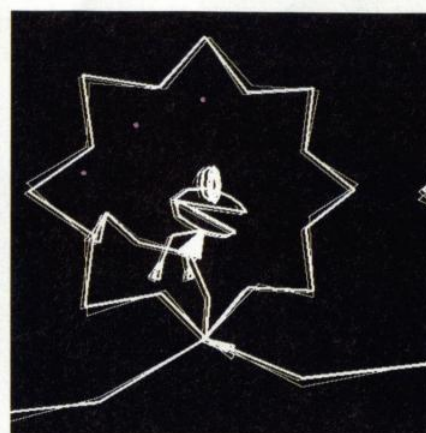
85

Skip the cutscenes, shotgun the bunnies.

From our extensive playtesting, we've found that anything by the Aphex Twin ("Classics" in particular) works a treat with Vib Ribbon. Aphex's haunting and warped soundscapes seem to fit this title perfectly... strange that.



"I CAN SEE THE MUSIC"



LOOKS LIKE MR. SQUIGGLE HAS BEEN HITTING THE PISS

VIB RIBBON

>> Cam Shea tells us why Vib Ribbon is better than crack...

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Acid Flashback
PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: Sony
PRICE: \$39.95
RATING: G

>> From the twisted mind of Masaya Matsuura, Vib Ribbon shares a few similarities with his other works of gaming art — Parappa The Rapper and Um Jammer Lammy. All these titles exist in both two and three dimensions at once. They all revolve around interaction with music to drive the gameplay. They all have absolutely dope soundtracks. And they're all brimming with playability, and will undoubtedly charm the pants off you.

PLAYING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Vib Ribbon plays like a 2D platformer gone wrong. Your character is "Vibri", a funky bright eyed little stick-drawn rabbit dude. You stroll along a solitary line set to a black backdrop, and must navigate shapes on the line as you come across them. There are four basics shapes correlating to four buttons. Any two of these shapes, however, can combine to form

hybrids, requiring you to press both the relevant buttons at once to successfully pass. Depending on the music, things get more confusing as the line starts to vibrate furiously, and the shapes even start to rotate around the line's axis as they approach. Often there'll be several shapes coming toward you at different speeds, and you must quickly judge which shape will reach you first and press the appropriate buttons.

The aim (if you can call it that) of Vib Ribbon is to evolve Vibri into a higher form. This is accomplished by successfully passing 18 obstacles in a row. Miss a few and you'll take a step down the evolutionary ladder. Vibri devolves from a rabbit to a frog to what can only be described as a sperm with a TV for a head before succumbing to his inevitable demise.

At this stage you're probably thinking that Vib Ribbon doesn't sound like much fun right? Well, you'd be wrong. Vib Ribbon is entirely engrossing, thanks to the creative gameplay, cute animations, catchy Jap pop music and its incredible uniqueness. Its lifetime is also extended greatly by the fact that you can use your own audio CDs to generate the path ahead.

PHILOSOPHICAL SYMBOLISM?

What we really like about Vib Ribbon though, is the philosophical symbolism embedded in its gameplay. The message in Vib Ribbon is simple — survival of the fittest (and luckiest). In this world, evolution is a constant struggle, demanding every last bit of your attention. Make a few small mistakes and you'll slip down the evolutionary ladder. To evolve, however, you must perform flawlessly, constantly struggling with the hurdles placed in your path. To take this concept one step further, Vib Ribbon is a life affirming game. It visibly demonstrates how unlikely it is for evolution to reach the point where consciousness forms, and as you ascend into the angel-like Vibri it seems to be encouraging the player to appreciate the unlikely of life itself. Quite a message to get out of a monochrome game featuring a stick figure on a line isn't it?

If for no other reason, Vib Ribbon must be played to appreciate the guts it must take for a game designer (and publisher) to release a game that looks like it could run on a Commodore 64. In this age where games are constantly trying to outdo each other with the hottest graphics engine and the prettiest graphics, Vib Ribbon is a refreshing change of pace. ■



GOOFBALLS-O-METER



PLUS

One of the most original games you'll ever play, and great fun.

MINUS

Certainly not for everyone.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80	90	80

OVERALL

83

Vib Ribbon is a bizarrely addictive game, and well worth a purchase for the price.





URIEN STARTS HIS LONG JUMP TRAINING FOR THE OLYMPICS



STREET FIGHTER 3: DOUBLE IMPACT

>> **Bom** beckons you to kneel before the mighty Street Fighter...



AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	2D Fighting
PLAYERS:	1-2
PUBLISHER:	Capcom
PRICE:	\$89.95
RATING:	M
SUPPORTS:	VMU

>> Welcome to the third, and no doubt FAR from final installment of Street Fighter. Well, installments really, because there're two games on this CD, but we'll get to that. Admittedly, there have been one bazillion SF revisions and releases over the years, but this is officially number three. Street fighter III makes for a brilliant summary of the series' purest fighting essence (phwoar, sounds all mystical, dunnit?), and does so with some of the most beautiful 2D animation ever to grace the office's 10 foot projector. Which is kinda nice.

WHAT ABOUT THE EXPLOSIONS AND THE FLYING AND THE SUPER TRIPLE HOVERCRAFT LIGHTNING COMBOS AND THE...

You're looking in the wrong place, son. We're not talking about the next step in Marvel VS Capcom Alpha EX3 psychotic airborne action here. In this game, Capcom are taking 2D fighting back to the purest level. SF3 features

fighting mechanics similar to a juiced up SF2 Turbo actually, with a few sprinklings of Zero's X-ism play for that extra bit of hardcore comeback power. Super Arts, of which you can only choose one now at the beginning of your voyage, parries which are risky to pull off but frightfully effective once sussed, super cancels which let you bust Supers straight out of specials, and EX powered specials add just enough new gameplay to create a fresh gaming experience while maintaining excellent character and special move balance.

This means time to thrown down with the mad skillz — if you're the type to have been frustrated by the tendency of button-bashers to occasionally rip your ass off in Zero or MvC2 even after you'd been playing the thing for a month, you'll be glad to know that you're going to be just as stupidly unbeatable as in the SFII CE days. Air block is gone too, so... you're going to have to learn how to play, el-basho!

I HEAR IT'S ALL SLICK LOOKIN'

For a start, pretty much the entire crew are missing, leaving us with Ken, Ryu, Akuma (who's "hidden") and a clan of fresh young upstarts, robotic freak types and crusty old folk vying for the title, which is for whatever reason available again. This means an almost entirely new roster of players to

experiment with in both straight SF3 and Second Impact (the sequel — both are on the GD), and with the addition of Urien and Hugo in SI, things are likely to get spicy. Some of the fighters will still give you flashbacks to characters of the old days, but now you'll find those traits wrapped in an effective fighting package. Necro, for example, has the stretchy bashy Dhalsim thing going, but he's actually really useful.

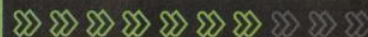
In every way bar the resolution, the characters in SF3 are very much the superior descendants of anything you'll see in any other Capcom fighter. The characters are flawlessly rendered and manage to suffer from a lot less of the ugly pixellation of their predecessors, and animate in a way that can only be described as runny-egg smooth. There are areas, however, that let the game down. The title screens and option screens are just straight ugly and plain, the backgrounds are okay for static 2D backgrounds, and the music totally fails to get you into the spirit of the game. Fortunately, the game's got plenty of spirit to spare.

If you're not a fan of earlier Street Fighter releases, you probably won't find much in here, but anyone who's a SF fan or just a straight fighter fan should be shot if they don't have this. C'mon, Cam, let's go play. ■

! We love the fact that Capcom have somehow managed to get the loading times down to "virtually non-existent". Awesome.



CRUSHEDTESTICLE-O-METER



PLUS

It's Street Fighter at its purest and sexiest.

MINUS

If you're into six-figure explodey-knuckle combos you'll be left wanting.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
89	87	92

OVERALL

91

It's pretty much the opposite of Marvel vs Capcom 2. In a good way.



I TOLD YOU WE SHOULD HAVE STAYED BACK AT THE WARTY TART INN



ICEWIND DALE

>> Dan Toose pulls on a beanie and checks out the coolest RPG around.



AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	RPG
PLAYERS:	1-6
PUBLISHER:	Interplay
PRICE:	\$89.95
RATING:	M
REQUIRES:	P233, 32MB RAM
RECOMMENDED:	P300, 64MB RAM

>> Seemingly eons ago, the first true Advanced Dungeons & Dragons computer role-playing game was released. That game was Pool of Radiance, and had every fan of the pen and paper game absolutely hooked. SSI, creators of the game, went on to use the same game engine to produce many more AD&D games. Are we now seeing the same phenomenon all over again? This time with BioWare's Infinity engine, which was used to create the critically acclaimed Baldur's Gate and Planescape Torment... And now the latest game from Black Isle, Icewind Dale.

DICKY VOICES

Unlike Baldur's Gate, Icewind Dale sees you in control of a complete party of adventurers right from the outset, in a harsh arctic wilderness, with a spattering of towns, and of course, a collection of dungeons to make your way through. If you're a fan of the Icewind Dale novels by R.A.Salvatore, be aware that this game is set long before Drizzt

and friends were romping around through the snow.

Expect to be thrown into the deep end straight away when it comes to combat. Your first skirmish against a bunch of goblins is a snap, but from there on, every fight from there requires you to be reasonably careful, or you'll be dragging corpses off to the local temple for some resurrecting. This results in a lot of saving and loading, which quite frankly can get a bit tedious. Compared to the first two games using the Infinity engine, Icewind Dale is packed full of monsters to fight, providing a far more combat orientated experience than ever before.

If you love character development, then the ultra-high XP cap which allows you to develop characters from first level, all the way up to the mid to late teens will no doubt please you.

If the pathing AI bothered you in Baldur's Gate, then prepare for more of the same. You can increase the pathing nodes, but this will cause performance hits for many of you who don't have a beast of a PC. The game also was released with a fair few bugs, so you'll be heading to the Interplay site to get the patches straight away.

FROM HERE TO INFINITY

Icewind Dale on the whole is a pretty game, because for the most part, the environments are what hold your

attention. These beautifully drawn bitmap backgrounds look a bit more detailed than what we saw in Baldur's Gate. In particular, the water effects look quite impressive. Something else that has improved visually is the sense of scale. Now, giants look... well, giant!

However, it must be said that the character animation leaves much to be desired. Like the other RPG of the moment, Icewind Dale runs at a paltry 640x480, which results in some of the smaller creatures lacking detail, but that's an inevitable problem with using an existing game engine.

There's very little to complain about when it comes to the sound in Icewind Dale, as the music is outstanding, and the dialogue for the NPCs (non player characters) is brought to life with fantastic voice acting. The only real shame is that the voices for your characters are quite dicky for the most part, with only a few of the choices having the sort of voice you'd want your heroes to have.

All up, we see another quality AD&D RPG from Black Isle, that while being quite linear and difficult, has enough nail-biting encounters and interesting villains to do battle with that will satisfy any old school RPG fan. It's not as immediately playable or fast as Diablo II, but it was never meant to be. ■

Don't forget that Baldur's Gate II is on the way from BioWare, again using a tweaked Infinity Engine — the same engine that is used here in Icewind Dale.



STAT-O-METER



PLUS

Excellent interface. Huge character development.

MINUS

Lots of saving and loading due to constant combat.

VISUALS

82

SOUND

93

GAMEPLAY

86

OVERALL

87

A challenging RPG that old school fantasy fans will love to bits.

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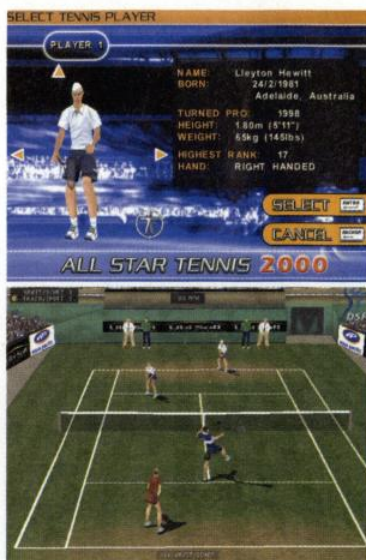
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ALL STAR TENNIS 2000

PLAYSTATION

Sporting our own Leyton Hewitt, All Star Tennis 2000 from Ubi Soft had the opportunity to bring an exciting new tennis game to post-Wimbledon tennis fans eager for more action. Unfortunately, there isn't a lot that can be said in favour of this title. Probably the biggest complaint would be with the limited controls. For starters, serving requires you to push a button with nothing to affect the power of your shot, then once you

start rallying, you'll notice that the court feels rather easy to cover and your computer opponent will have not much trouble returning your shots. This is made worse by the fact that you have very limited control over shot placement. You can swing the ball a little with the shoulder buttons, but pushing the d-pad hardy pitches the ball into the section of court you're trying to hit to. Hitting across court is impossible even if you're pressing hard on the d-pad. The only way to get your opponent to really stretch to return a ball, is by coupling the d-pad with a shoulder button to get as much movement on the ball as possible and get more angle. Unfortunately, this is pretty



unreliable, and awkward to execute when you're also trying to move your player. The camera angles are abysmal, with no way of staying on the bottom half of the screen for the whole match — as playing from the top court is horrid.

The players also look rather bland, and you'll only know you were playing as Hewitt because he has a backwards baseball cap on his head. Other than that his face is made up of about three polygons. All Star Tennis 2000 is just loaded with way too many problems to be a sensible purchase.

FRANK DRY

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
70	62	65	68

i	AVAILABLE: Now
	CATEGORY: Sport
	PLAYERS: 1-4
	PUBLISHER: Ubi Soft
	PRICE: \$79.95
	RATING: G

VANDAL HEARTS II

PLAYSTATION

Role Playing Games like this command moderate respect from the cynical gamer for their ability to generate a group of swollen-eyed cartoon youngsters and insert them neatly into a land where mass slaughter is a common way of life. Virtually every problem you'll encounter in Vandal Hearts II can be solved by slicing open a living creature. Glorious. I love a world where

people can actually say "!" and "?" to one another, and your principal interest is to get as much "booty" as possible — just like real life, eh kids?

Those fresh from the fiery battles of the original Vandal Hearts should be grinning with glee at the chance to secure some more carnage. So what's the difference? You still wield a sword the size of a telegraph pole and lay to waste such enemies as the pesky Gigslug. But alas, this time there's more story. VH II introduces itself well with a nice and graphically-disturbing battle scene, but soon dumps you into some twee butterfly-catching scenario that drags like a sausage dog's haemorrhoids and leaves a sim-

ilar taste in your mouth. Luckily you can murder most of the annoying characters in this game.

MARTIN ENGLISH



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
62	50	76	69

i	AVAILABLE: Now
	CATEGORY: RPG
	PLAYERS: 1
	PUBLISHER: Konami
	PRICE: \$59.95
	RATING: G

HOGS OF WAR

PLAYSTATION

Buck up chaps. The final assault is afoot (or a trotter as the case may be). Soon we'll have recovered the mud pen, grilled our enemies into bacon, and have sexy sows by the troughload just begging for a good porking.

Meet Worms in 3D folks. Hogs of War has the same turn-based gameplay, irreverent humour, sketchy AI and good

ole fashioned addictiveness as Team 17's classic, only in 3D. It's not a huge creative leap from worms to pigs in my book, but Infogrames have done a good job translating a tricky concept into 3D. Not a great job, but a good one.

Worms fans will know the score — take turns roasting each other until one team is worm food. It's a simple concept, but there's plenty of strategy and it's damn good fun to boot. Hogs Of War has 25 increasingly difficult single player missions to work through, and with each mission completed, your squad is rewarded with a star or two. These can be used to promote and specialise your forces in the areas of heavy weaponry, espionage, medic, and

engineering. With each promotion, your pigs gain new abilities.

Harnessing the various special skills keeps Hogs Of War nice and challenging. You'll need to learn how best to use each new ability, as well as its comparative strengths and weaknesses in order to tailor the squad for each mission. The weapon physics are very well implemented with just the right unpredictable factor. Mastering the weapons is half the fun, especially with grenades, mortars, shotguns, rifles, bazookas, cluster grenades, flame throwers and even tanks to play with.

Just like its predecessors, Hogs of War relies heavily on comedy — more specifically World War I era

propoganda style humour. It works well, with excellent voicework from an all time great - Rik Mayall.

Hogs of War is a very solid title — particularly in four player mode, but ultimately Worms Armaggedon is still the king.

CAM SHEA



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
79	87	83	83

i	AVAILABLE: Now
	CATEGORY: 3D strategy
	PLAYERS: 1-4
	PUBLISHER: Infogrames
	PRICE: \$79.95
	RATING: G
	SUPPORTS: MultiTap

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WE TELL IT LIKE IT IS

TOMB RAIDER

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

» Tomb Raider on the Game Boy? Eidos have done a remarkable job in bringing the charm of Lara Croft to the Game Boy despite the limitations of the handheld's hardware. This title has some of the best animation we've ever seen on the Game Boy, with all of Lara Croft's moves intact, from her backward somersault jump to her crawl and barrel rolls — Lara can even swim and not look stupid on the Game Boy! The speed and quality of the animation allow for some interesting platforming, and whilst this has been exploited to a certain extent, Eidos could have done a lot more with the level design. As it is, Tomb Raider's levels can get a little dull with lots of backtracking and moving about fairly unchallenging areas. Controlling Lara is quite similar to the PlayStation, with a lot of her special moves being executed by holding buttons down with different d-pad movements. Like the PlayStation game, Lara can horde medikits and weaponry to fight off the deadly creatures in the game, and there are even crystal save points scattered about so you can save your progress during a level. "Cutscenes" have also been used, although they are just stills which you cycle through by pressing the buttons — simple yet actually quite effective in setting up the story. There is real attention to detail in this port, and Tomb Raider fans will love this CBC outing.

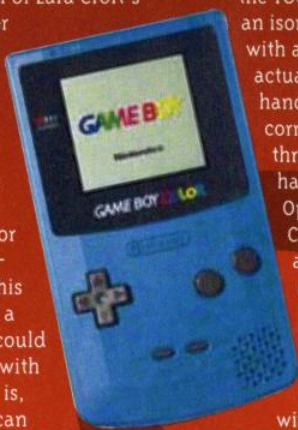


FRANK DRY

TOCA TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

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

» Codemasters never fail to bring us a marvellous racing game — whether it's on the PlayStation, PC or Game Boy! TOCA on Game Boy is a treat, as Codemasters have blended a Micromachines style engine with the more serious edge of the TOCA brand. What we have, is an isometric racing experience with a wonderful feel. You can actually get a sense of your car's handling as you fang it around corners, powersliding your way through the piles of witch's hats at the side of the track. Options include Single Race, Championship, Time Trial and Party Play (where you can link up two Game Boys for some brilliant two player games). Choose from eight cars, and select to race on over eight tracks with up to eight cars on screen at any one time. The fun factor here is high, as learning the tracks becomes a nice challenge. They are all real life tracks so that if you've played them on PlayStation or PC you'll know where the corners are. Gee, there are even different driving conditions, and you can do doughnuts on the grass...



When Codemasters declare "Pure gameplay" in the startup screens, they're right!

ELIOT FISH



AUSTIN POWERS: WELCOME TO MY UNDERGROUND LAIR

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Entertainment
PRICE: \$49.95
PUBLISHER: Rockstar
FORMAT: Game Boy Color only

» Austin Powers — Welcome To My Underground Lair is the dark side of two releases — the other being Austin Powers: Oh Behave. Rockstar have come up with a hilarious piece of entertainment which takes the piss out of PCs. Using the Austin Powers license as their vehicle, they have come up with a virtual "desktop" full of mini-games, a calculator, screensaver, desktop patterns and more. You can even "boot" to DOS and sniff around the directories for a bit of a laugh to see what's there. You even have to type in all the correct DOS commands! If you turn your Game Boy off without shutting down, you get a warning message next time you switch it on and the system scans for errors — just like a PC.



Once booted up, you're presented with a Mr. Bigglesworth desktop and a variety of folders which you can double click to access games such as "He's 'Kin Evil" a strange little "excitebike" style mini-game where you have to collect coins and navigate hilarious jumps, complete with Mini-Me in the bike basket. Other programs let you connect to the internet (it's only pretend) or even create documents to send to friends via the Game Boy's infrared port. There's even an AVI of Dr. Evil in action! This is pretty cool for fans of the Austin Powers movies, although the novelty could wear off fairly quickly.

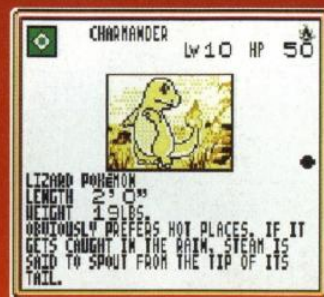
FRANK DRY



POKEMON TRADING CARD GAME

AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Strategy
PRICE: \$49.95
PUBLISHER: Nintendo
FORMAT: Game Boy/Game Boy Color

» This is essentially the Wizards of the Coast card game packed nicely onto a single cartridge. That's a 200 card trading game without the hassle of having your Pokémon cards lost, stolen or sabotaged by jealous friends. With the Link Cable, playing off your Pokémon against a friend is excellent fun and you can't beat the satisfaction of annihilating your opponent with some well thought out Pokémon strategy. The secret to success is by combining item and creature cards so that the Pokémon you choose to attack with has what is required to take down your opponent. Choose between the Fire Deck, Water Deck and Grass Deck for access to different Pokémon to start with and then later you'll be able to combine your cards for up to four different decks at any one time. Putting your combinations together will take hours of deliberating as you try to second guess your next opponent. There is a "quest" to follow if you play through first on your own (which you'll need to do), pitting you against a variety of Pokémon trainers and their savage decks which seem destined to be better than yours at every step. Thus, there is a real sense of achievement when you successfully play a winning combination of cards. Prepare to get addicted all over again!



ANNA KYN

8/10

9/10

6/10

8/10

Top 25

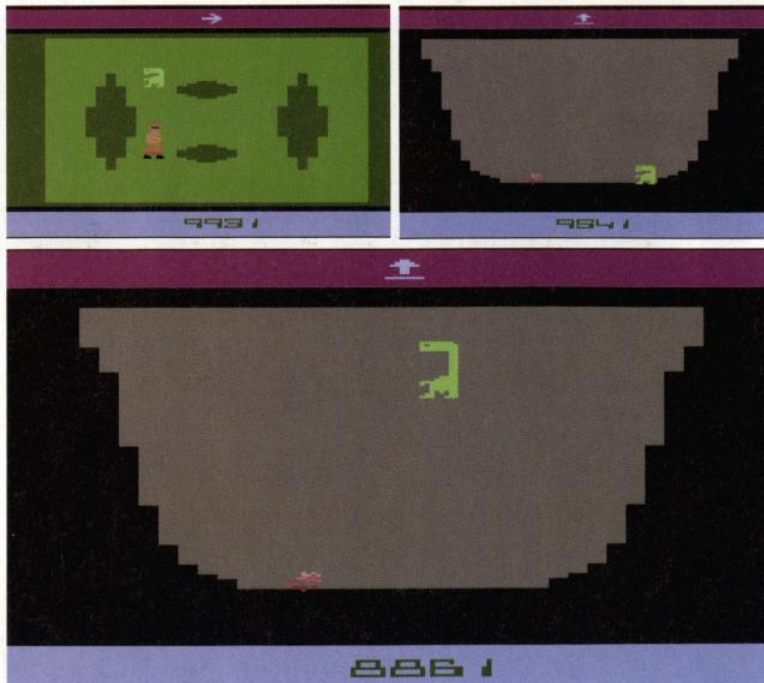


It only seems fair that after announcing the Top 50 Games of all time we should announce a Top 25 Worst Games! If you've always wondered which games truly stunk, to the point where they weren't even good for comedy value, then read the Hyper list of everything horrid and bad about gaming. Enjoy... muhaha!

t w e n t y f i v e

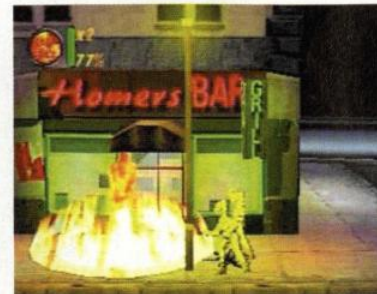
1. E.T. The Extra Terrestrial - Atari 2600

As if Atari hadn't made a big enough faux pas with Pac-Man (a terrible 2600 home conversion from the year before), they proved once again how to turn a potential goldmine into disaster. After paying \$25 million for the E.T. license, Atari decided to push the game out before the 1982 Christmas buying period (nothing much has changed!). The result was a game cobbled together in a few weeks by a single programmer. Indeed, Atari only allocated six weeks to produce, manufacture, package and market the game. Atari manufactured 6 million cartridges of which only a million were sold (most at huge discounts), and around five million ended up being buried in the New Mexico desert! Here's a tip Atari — a game where you almost immediately fall in a hole and get stuck is NOT a good game!



2. Fantastic Four - PlayStation

How could one of the best superhero teams ever be shamed so disgracefully? When you get the janitor to code the game on his coffee break. Literally, like one coffee break. Well, that's the impression we got after playing this woeful scrolling beat 'em up passing itself off as a PlayStation "game". This didn't even need a bad movie for inspiration.



reverse engineering

7. South Park - Nintendo 64

Oh my god, why? Why did this game ever see the light of day? And who decided to revolutionise the development process by not bothering with such frivolous activities as level design, enemy design, weapon design, and playtesting? They're part of the process for a reason damn you! South Park 64 is surely one of the darkest days for licensed games thus far... and that speaks volumes for how ridiculously unplayable this game was.



8. Last Action Hero - SNES

Movie-to-game conversions are notoriously lame and Last Action Hero was an exceptionally awful scrolling beat 'em up. We hope the programmers never found work in the industry again.



9. Deer Hunter - PC

Placing personal problems with shooting cute animals aside, Deer Hunter proved itself to be one of the worst games of all time on many levels. Technically it was an abomination, returning videogames to a bygone era where everything was pixelated and there was no freedom of movement. The gameplay was non-existent. Wait in one spot. Try and attract badly animated deer. Try and shoot deer. Put dead deer in trophy. Congratulations - you're a redneck! The phenomenal sales of this title in the US weren't an indication of its quality, moreso confirmation that most Americans really are stupid!



10. Rise Of The Robots - PC/SNES/ Megadrive etc.

One of the most hyped games of all time, Rise of the Robots was a 2D fighting game said to challenge the gameplay of Street Fighter 2, and to feature the most advanced 3D rendered graphics and animations yet seen. It failed to redefine anything other than the word "crappy". Sporting non-existent gameplay, very few frames of animation and zero AI, the only system it actually looked okay on was the PC... pity about the 12 other platforms it was ported to!



11. Dual Heroes - Nintendo 64

If you've never broken a control pad, go get yourself a copy of Dual Heroes. It won't take long.



12. Spawn - PlayStation

Todd McFarlane must be pretty cut up about this. Take one cool, exciting character and put him in a slow, dodgy third-person game which is completely lacking in any thrill whatsoever. Who are the evil programmers out there relying so heavily on the brand to sell the game for them?



13. Power Rangers - Megadrive

Well the show was cheap and tacky, so it's no surprise this sucked too. If you assume that the people who watched this show were morons, then they targeted the game at the right demographic.



14. Wayne's World - SNES

Much like "Clerks: The Animated Series", this project was simply never going to work. Even with a team of talented and dedicated game designers, a large budget and plenty of time, Wayne's World was never going to make a good game. Unfortunately the development team had none of these things. Thus, Wayne's World became (shock horror) a platform game! Notable only for the ironic screenshots obtainable from its piss poor static digitised scenes from the film.



15. Panty Raider - PC

You wouldn't think that something like this would actually surface in the year 2000. More like a private joke that accidentally got released. Unfortunately, Panty Raider has generated a lot of interest due to the plethora of scantily clad polygons trotting about in it. Gee, who got hit with the ugly stick...



16. The entire Wisdom Tree catalogue - NES

We tried and tried... but it was just too hard to pick a single game from this developer's outstanding archive of crap-tastic titles, so we thought we'd look at them all!

After a failed attempt at NES development under the name Color Dreams, this development house came back with a new name, and a fresh new angle - Christian gaming. It's a pity that they didn't try and come back with some fresh new content instead. Rather, many of their "new" releases were nothing more than their four-year old NES games renamed with religious characters and any violence "exorcised". We particularly like how they spiced many of their games up with deep character interaction, otherwise known as multiple choice bible questions. Excitement!

Without exception, each Wisdom Tree game can be labelled excremental, and includes such titles as "Bible Buffet", "King of Kings", "Exodus", "Spiritual Warfare", "Joshua", "Wizkid Bible Painter", "Bible Wonders", and "Higher Ground". Our particular favourites, however, include "Sunday Funday" - a race to get your character to Sunday School on time, and "Super Noah's Arc 3D" - a SNES game that took Wolfenstein 3D's game engine and levels, but replaced the Nazis with cute barnyard animals, and the weapons with an inventive selection that included the "Slingshot", "Double Slingshot" and "Quadruple Slingshot". What really earns Wisdom Tree a place in our top 25 worst games of all time list, however, is the fact that they're still peddling these ancient NES games today, and at a price comparable to PlayStation games too!



17. Independence Day - PlayStation

Another game that treats the gaming public like monkeys. The dollar signs in their eyes must have prevented them from actually seeing the game they were working on. Did Wil Smith do some crap piece of rap for this too? We've tried to block it from memory.



18. Cruisin' USA - Nintendo 64

Imagine steering a brick with a dog leash. This poor excuse for a driving game was surprisingly popular at the arcades, but we liken the experience more to a painful enema. Now if that doesn't stop you seeking this game out - nothing will!



19. Resident Evil: Survivor - PlayStation

Smack me in the nads with a spiked bat or force me to watch re-runs of Hey Dad (the little fat kid era)... just don't make me play this game again! That dross like this should ever reach the market, let alone under the good name of the Resident Evil franchise is scary. Perhaps this game slipped into our Universe from a parallel bizarre-o-world where Resident Evil games suck... or perhaps Capcom wanted to make a little more dosh out of the license. The RE name has been swallowed.

20. Plumbers Don't Wear Ties - PC/3DO

An "interactive adventure" of still pictures and snippets of FMV that played like a porn film without any sex or nudity. Supposedly it was rated "R"... maybe for "Rank", "Rip off" or "Rubbish". After selecting seven outcomes, the game would be finished. We could print the whole walkthrough for the game in this blurb, but frankly, it's not worth it.



21. Microcosm - Mega CD/PC

Microcosm was one of the new breed of games attempting to utilise the extra storage space of the brand new CD-ROM format. Unfortunately, what this resulted in was a lot of video footage but no gameplay. Microcosm was a bland shoot em up in a tube... nuff said!



22. Streets Of Sim City - PC

Part cool idea, part stretching the Sim City franchise too far, Streets of Sim City was a shocker. It worked by recreating one of your Sim City 2000 levels in 3D. You then err... hop in a combat vehicle and drive around completing samey missions and shooting anything in your way... and that's about it. Ugly graphics, steep system requirements, and novelty value that wore off very fast doomed this game from the start.



23. Toilet Kids - NES

Nice to see a game that takes being crap literally! Toilet Kids, as the name suggests, deals with the ongoing battle between man and his own bodily waste. The game actually opens with a kid going to the bathroom at night and promptly being sucked into the toilet. From that moment on the game's sophistication level rises rapidly, as this Xevious clone spews wave after wave of poo related projectiles at you. There are enemies like flying penises, bad guys who moon you then shoot crap at you, spiders with massive asses, toilets that spew turds and... I think you get the idea! Unsurprisingly, Toilet Kids was never released outside Japan. Phew!



24. C&C: Sole Survivor - PC

Here's a title that manages to muddy the name of a good gaming series. This was a multiplayer game for up to 50 masochists who had to race around a map collecting crates. The crates would endow your craft with a powerup or knock you out with a booby trap. Sounds captivating... and it wasn't.



25. Daikatana - PC

Just to remind you...



RANMA 1/2 OAV BOX SET



CATEGORY: Comedy, Action, Romance

PRODUCTION COMPANY: Shogakukan

ANIMATION: 8

PLOT: 8

JAPAN-NESS: Medium

OVERALL: 9.5

The manga is over 12 years old, but Ranma 1/2 remains one of the best yarns ever created. With its contemporary setting, Rumiko Takahashi's creations are more an expression of universal humour, as opposed to a race to see who has the latest greatest technological ideas.

Ranma Saotome is the heir apparent to the Anything Goes form of martial arts. In his journey from China to Japan, Ranma and Dad accidentally fall into a magical pond, the result being that Ranma will turn into a young girl (and Dad into a panda) when doused with cold

water. Hot water will bring them back to their natural state. There are several other characters with a similar affliction –

Shampoo turns into a cat, Mousse into a duck, and Ryoga a pig.

As if that's not comedy enough, Ranma has been unwittingly betrothed to several women, all of whom are madly in love with him except Akane Tendo, the youngest daughter of the Tendo residence. Ranma and Akane are just a little too proud to admit they like each other. The story is rich with character interplay (and the odd fight scene), making way for more than just your average romantic comedy. Take the love-stricken Shampoo and Ukyou, for instance. They

don't have a problem that Ranma is sometimes a girl. Ranma, on the other hand, is terrified of cats.

In DVD form, the complete OAV (Original Animated Video) set is stunning with twice the resolution; and for fans it will be like seeing the series for the first time once more with new eyes. With so many of the finest moments in anime history packed into this 3 DVD set, this is a must-have collector's item for all fans. Bring on the TV series!



GUNDAM WING



CATEGORY: Action, Mecha

PRODUCTION COMPANY: Sunrise/Bandai

ANIMATION: 8

PLOT: 6.5

JAPAN-NESS: Low

OVERALL: 7.5

The recent syndrome of future-shock epics like Evangelion, Cowboy Bebop, Outlaw Star, or Silent Moebius must surely be boring the pants off some fans. So much time and effort is often put into comprehending the inner workings of an original design or concept that sometimes you just want to throw your hands up in the air and ask "why is Shinji such a ponce?" Sometimes you just want an animation studio to design some kick-arse mecha and let them go nuts. That's exactly the medicine Gundam Wing provides.

Five kids. Fifteen years of age. Smart. No bizarre psychological conditions.

Unrivalled piloting skills. A planet Earth to reclaim and an evil militaristic empire to decimate. What does this mean? Pure, unbridled kick-arse mecha action – unbeatable new Gundams ripping the shreds out of lesser mobile suits – and

none of that "I will not run away, I will not run away" malarkey.

This does come at something of a price, though, as the Gundam saga is been typified by less-than-plausible story telling. Gundam Wing is no different. While much of the military posturing looks very cool for the one-liners and choreogra-

phy, some of the main heroes are just a little too hardcore to be likeable – the supposed villains even looking a little more compassionate and human. With revenge as the obvious theme and a curious sub-plot of political subterfuge, the plot has barely enough to hold water – or at least to string all the cool action scenes together.



CAPCOM

MARS MATRIX



Some of the most classic arcade games ever created are 2D 'space' shooters. Galaga, Galaxians and of course Space Invaders, have left a

legacy that is still with us in the arcades today with the Raiden and 1941 series. Mars Matrix has some big shoes to fill if it is going to reach clas-

sic status, though time will tell if this is the case, but so far it looks like it has all the coin-gobbling abilities of its forefathers.

NO... NOT THAT MATRIX

The year is 2909 A.D and you pilot the mental energy reactive space fighter- the Mosquito I and II. The Mosquito's state of the art fire button has numerous functions. It can be used for either

- a) rapid fire (tap the button rapidly)
- b) piercing cannon (release the button for a while and then push)
- c) bullet capture / shield (hold the button to absorb enemy shots and then repel them back)
- d) the devastating Gravity Hole Bomb (keep holding the button down).

Instead of collecting new armaments ala Raiden, each enemy destroyed turns into power cubes which must be collected to power up both your GHB energy meter and your rapid fire weapon (power 1-8). This collecting of cubes adds a twist to the game in that whilst you are maniacally

dodging the incoming missiles, you are also attempting to capture as many cubes as possible. However, DO NOT be overly tempted by the cubes as they will lead to your demise.

The enemy you have to fight are laid thicker on that screen than a can of baked beans on a small cracker. Do your utmost to dodge incoming fire (as opposed to specific targeting), and try to look at the whole screen to work out the trajectories of the bullets. If death is imminent and you are trapped in a corner, don't sweat it, just activate the shield. Don't forget that this costs you GHB power AND it takes a second to activate. Mastering the use of the shield is very important for the later stages and especially the boss stages.

I haven't seen anyone make it to the 'end' of the game, but if you were thinking of taking this game into the higher stages, then I advise a large supply of coins and a friend to assist in 2 player mode. However, nothing is more rewarding than constantly 'just making it' through the barrage of bullets.

9/10



IGS

PHOTO Y2K



'Spot the difference between the two pictures' have usually been the realm of the Sunday papers, fast food outlet place-mats and books that your parents give you on long air-conditionless car hauls to holiday destinations. So when this type of game found its way into the arcades, it was met with a little reminiscence and bewilderment.

FRUIT BOWLS

The game runs like this. Two pictures are produced, each one

fiendishly different to the other. The differences may be as bleedingly obvious as a person with a different hat or as subtle as an extra gleam of light on the edge of a fruit bowl.

You have to pick all 5 differences within about 30 seconds to move on to the next picture, but if you are lost for time, you can hit button B to receive an extra 15 seconds (works once per game) or hit the C button for auto search. You have 4 'lives' per game and you lose one for every missed 'difference'.

The thing that keeps you playing however is the innate desire to see the next picture, which range from food set ups, to touristy shots, to family portraits to neo-classical paintings.

But that's it. So if you are sick of the killing, crashing, bashing, roasting and toasting of all the other high impact arcade games, then this game is an island of tranquillity in a sea of destruction.

6/10

DIABLO

STRATEGY GUIDE

>> DAN TOOSE

With an RPG like Diablo II, the object of the game is really to develop your character rather than to simply complete the quest of finishing off the Lord of Terror. Pretty much every quest in the game involves exploring the area you are told something is in, until you find it. We could list these things, but since the areas are randomly created, we'd really just be elaborating on your quest log. Instead, we'll focus on what you should be looking for in your equipment, your stats, and what are the best skills for your character class to work on. Using these tips and strategies, you'll be more powerful than you could ever imagine...

CHARACTER STATISTICS

You might think that the stats you require for each different class would vary greatly, and of course, to some extent, this is very true. However, unlike the first Diablo, there are no class restrictions on items, only whether or not the item in question will give you a special effect (skill bonus). For this reason, stats work very much the same way for each character class.

All characters require the same strength to wear a suit of full plate armour, and they all need mana to use their various skills/spells.

STRENGTH: If you thought that being a sorceress meant you wouldn't need to spend points on strength, think again. In fact, to get the basic armour and weapons you should be using, you're probably going to need to spend just as much on strength as you are on energy early on in your career. Until you have a strength of at least 80, you should keep pumping points into this skill. At LEAST 2 per level for all fighter types, because you will keep finding new items that require more and more strength as you play into Nightmare and Hell difficulty.

DEXTERITY: This stat is not a make or break stat like strength is, unless you're an Amazon, or you intend to use a ranged weapon (in which case you should be playing an Amazon anyway). It does directly affect your defence and attack ratings, but there is no need to go nuts with this stat, as

you'll be finding items that improve these areas for you anyway.

VITALITY: Here's a stat that every class needs to invest in to some extent, but not too heavily. Your vitality has a direct effect on your Life (hit points), and stamina. You should invest one point per level, regardless which class you are, unless you feel you're seriously deficient in some other area at a vital stage in the game (like being unable to wear armour due to lack of strength, etc). It's better to try and gear your character to work in such a way that they don't have to rely upon a high life rating, but as you progress through the game, you will be hit for more and more damage, and you need to be able to take the occasional big hit. A belt full of super healing potions don't mean squat when you go down in one hit.

ENERGY: It would be called intelligence, except that Blizzard have geared the game to require everyone to need mana for their skills. This one varies a little more heavily from class to class as to just how important it is for you. Paladins and barbarians need the least, as they tend to rely on belting things to death for the most part, but the other three classes can easily pump out enough mana draining moves in a hurry.

SPENDING SKILL POINTS

With the exception of a couple of quest rewards, you get one skill point

per level you attain, and that adds up to "never enough". For this reason, you should plan out your character at the beginning of the game, and work them into the mould you have created. Do not let items dictate how you spend your skill points, because you will always find better items anyway.

It is generally a good idea to specialise in certain skills, rather than spread yourself thin. The reason for this is, you can only have two skills ready and active at one moment (with the exception of quickly casting a variety of spells), and in practise, you'll tend to use two skills over and over, rather than switch all the time. Each class tends to have a few skills that are absolute must haves, and should be developed to a high level of mastery, while you'll also have some other must have skills, that really only need to be acquired, and that is enough.

While we'll offer you a sample for each class you should keep the following in mind — Pick skills that suit the way you play. There is no point in playing the game the way that someone else would, when your natural game is totally different to theirs. So be prepared to experiment a little.

EARNING XP FAST

A trick to getting better experience is to join a game with many players, but to play solo, rather than as a team. Experience earned is greater, because the monsters are made tougher.

While you don't want to waste skill points, spending the odd one here or there on something you just want to check out will not kill you.

RETRIEVING YOUR CORPSE

If you die, and the manner in which you went down was so sudden that you doubt you can retrieve your corpse, and you haven't tried to retrieve it yet, then you can save and exit the game. Start again with that character, and your corpse will now be in town. It doesn't solve the problem of getting past the monster/encounter, but at least you can try and tackle it again with all your equipment.

EQUIPMENT



ARMOUR

Regardless what class you are, you want the best armour you can get. Forget whatever preconceptions you have about what a Necromancer should be wearing, the answer is — the strongest you can find. Of course, you need a certain strength to wear such armour, and it's up to you to develop this stat accordingly, but getting decent armour is important for all classes. Of course, the Paladin,





Barbarian and Amazon (particularly if you plan on focusing on javelins and spears) classes expect to see FAR more melee action than the rest, so they should make this an early priority. If you don't get hit, you don't die, and you can take your time in combat.

So what should you look for in your armour? You need to think of your WHOLE set of armour, and what powers it conveys for you. Consult the 'Item traits' list to understand what you need to be considering with your armour.



WEAPONS & SHIELDS

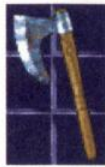
A little more specific than armour, you obviously only have two hands at your disposal, and your class may steer you towards one weapon more than another. Obviously the main function of a weapon is to cause damage, so that's what you will usually use to measure the worth of a weapon, and remember to consider both the minimum and maximum values for damage. A weapon that does 40-50 damage is a better option than one that causes 1-60.

Attack speed is important, especially for Paladins and Barbarians. You may have a big powerful weapon to take down the baddies with, but if you get surrounded, you will probably take several hits while you slowly take each swing.

So should you use a two-handed weapon, a weapon and shield, or in the barbarian's case, two weapons? There is no definitive answer to the question really, which is reason to consider collecting multiple weapons.

Early in your character's career you will find getting by without a shield is fine, but the merits of a good shield with a high blocking rating are invaluable once you start facing a lot of ranged attacks at the higher levels.

Necromancers and sorceresses should definitely



look to use a shield, purely to have another item to offer them extra defence and resistances, unless they find a staff that offers them particularly handy skill bonuses.

Against the tougher unique monsters, or those that are lightning enchanted using a powerful two-handed weapon is often the best strategy, as you want to do the highest possible damage with each hit.

Amazons should naturally use the weapons they specialise in, as should barbarians (in relation to their weapon mastery).

RINGS & AMULETS

These items are the ones you choose based entirely on their enchantments. Because they only take up one inventory slot, it can be worthwhile to hang onto some extra rings and amulets that will give you extra resistances or powers when you need them. For example, you may find a ring that halves the amount of time you are affected by freezing, which may not come into play much at all, but prove invaluable against some unique monster you're having a hard time with.

It may be worth your while to look into using the Horadric Cube to create some rings and amulets to cover resistances you are a bit lacking in.

POTIONS

Obviously, potions are there to replenish your vital stats, and thus keep you from dying, or running out of mana (which may lead to dying anyway).

For the most part potions are a true no-brainer, but there are some things to keep in mind:

* Healing and mana potions do not work instantaneously. Drink them as soon as they'll have maximum effect, rather than when you might go down.

* Rejuvenation potions DO work instantaneously, and for this reason, are far more valuable in your "front line" in your belt. These are what you use to save yourself from instant death.

* Poison wears off soon enough, and you get your breath back just by standing still. As a result, antidote and stamina potions are really quite indulgent.

Only keep these handy if you feel your character has a real weakness in these areas, as they take up valuable inventory space.

* Potions as thrown weapons can be handy, but are more of a gimmick or a one off strategy than a way to play the game. Too fiddly to use in a real fight.

ITEM TRAITS

It's important to know what you're looking for in your magic items. Here's a breakdown of the typical effects/bonuses you will come across with magic items.

DEFENSE RATING: Hit locations do not come into it. Your magical armour with a 250 defence rating will allow you to have some other items that focus purely on resistances and other areas. You will find upgrades for these over time, so as long as you have one bit of really high defensive armour, you're okay.

HIT RECOVERY: If you plan on going toe to toe with large numbers of creatures, it's good to have some hit recovery bonus, as it prevents you from getting totally swamped once you take a few hits.

MAGIC RESISTANCES: This is EXTREMELY important. You really want to get your hands on items that give you resistance to all magical effects if possible, but take what you can get as you progress obviously. In Nightmare and Hell difficulty, you suffer an automatic penalty to these ratings, and as such must develop them in force to hope to survive magic attacks.

FREEZE DURATION: Not a big issue, but you might come across a few encounters where you get slowed to a crawl, and subsequently get your arse kicked. It's handy to keep a ring that halves your freeze duration, but some rare armour items do this for you too.

RUN/WALK SPEED: This is more important than you may first realise. Not only will this get you everywhere faster, but also it is extremely handy for when you need to turn tail and run (running beats dying).

STAT BONUSES: Consider these a bonus and nothing more. Relying upon items to equip other items is like devoting an extra equipment slot to a single item. Don't bother with objects that lower the stats required to use other items, concentrate on getting items that actively improve you instead.

LIFE STEAL: Very handy for obvious reasons, but not essential. If you're playing a fighter type, then you obviously want to heal all those nicks and cuts as you get them, but you can always use potions when things look grim.

MANA STEAL: EXTREMELY important to get happening as early as you can. It's quite possible to have a character geared up in such a way that they can keep pumping out their go-to skill/spell, and not end up losing mana. This enables you to fight at your best in the thick of things, without having to worry about drying up at the wrong moment.

ADDS X TO Y ELEMENTAL DAMAGE: In addition to the standard damage your weapon does, it will also add extra damage in the form of poison, cold, fire, or lighting. Cold is extremely handy because you can freeze opponents, leaving them open for further attack.

ATTACKER TAKES DAMAGE OF X: This works much like the paladin skill of thorns, although the damage is only minor, rather than a percentage of the damage caused. Basically, creatures that hit you, take damage. Not important or effective enough to warrant using over an item that will give you more practical bonuses.

ATTACK BONUSES: A simple bonus to hit. This is most useful when using "multi-attack" skills than just for one off attacks, as it helps you land multiple hits.

TREASURE MODIFIERS: Some items will either give you a bonus percentage on gold found on monsters, or a higher chance to receive a magical item of a fallen opponent. This is particularly handy when you're building your character up, but becomes less valuable once you're decked out, and have as much gold as you can store anyway.

REGENERATION: Some items will give you an accelerated life point bonus. This is quite handy, although it's more a case of having minor scratches clear themselves up, rather than something that will actually help in combat.

INCREASE SKILL LEVELS: Some items will give you a level bonus to certain skills, or possibly all skills for a given class. Since skill points come from making levels, this is the equivalent of gaining the benefits of earning lots of experience, and thus very handy.

GEMS & SOCKETED ITEMS

After you play through Diablo II a bit, you'll realise that gems don't pop up that often. Don't make the mistake then of believing you should make do with the gems you have, because once you get the Horadric Cube, you'll have the means to turn low quality gems into better ones, that will actually contribute towards making a decent socketed item. Gem quality in order of worst to best goes: Cracked, Flawed, (no prefix), Flawless and Perfect. Save the weaker ones till you have three, then create a better one. It takes time, but eventually you'll end up with perfect gems to make high quality items with.

THE SECRET COW LEVEL

By placing Wirt's Leg (found in Tristram), and a Tome of Town Portal into the Horadric Cube, transmuting them AFTER you've completed the game on Normal difficulty, while standing in the Rogue Encampment. The portal you open goes to a level with hordes of Hell Bovines. They are very powerful, so attempt this at your own risk. You may only attempt this once per difficulty level, so make sure you're good and ready.

USING THE HORADRIC CUBE

You will find the Horadric Cube in Act II, and once you do, you have an item that will let you take a little more

control of what's in your inventory, although some of its effects are slightly random, so be very careful what you're transmuting within it.



RECIPES

3 Rings = 1 Random Amulet

3 Amulets = 1 Random Ring

3 Health Potions + 3 Mana Potions = 1 Rejuvenation Potion

3 Health Potions + 3 Mana Potions + 1 Gem (Any Grade) = 1 Full Rejuvenation Potion

3 Gems of the Same Type and Grade (Lower than Perfect) = 1 Higher Grade Gem of the Same Type

6 Gems (Any Grade) and 1 Sword = 1 Socketed Long Sword

2 Quivers of Bolts = 1 Quiver of Arrows

2 Quivers of Arrows = 1 Quiver of Bolts

1 Spear + 1 Quiver of Arrows = 1 Stack of Javelins

1 Axe + 2 Daggers = Throwing Axe

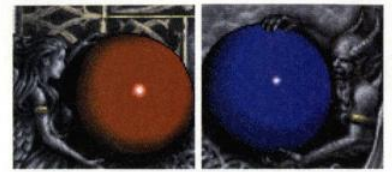
1 Ring + 1 Emerald + 4 Antidote Potions = 1 Viridian Ring
The Viridian Ring has a random percentage of Poison Resistance

1 Ring + 1 Ruby + 4 Exploding Potions = 1 Garnet Ring
The Garnet Ring has a random percentage of Fire Resistance

1 Ring + 1 Sapphire + 4 Thawing Potions = 1 Cobalt Ring
The Cobalt Ring has a random percentage of Cold Resistance

3 Perfect Gems (of any type) + 1 Magic Item = 1 New Random Magic Item of the Same Type

Use this formula to get specific statistics on a magic item, especially Exceptional Items.



MASTERING YOUR CHARACTER CLASS

PALADIN

As a single player character, the Paladin is excellent at dealing with any foe in a melee combat situation, although you may find that you're subject to taking a beating when facing multiple ranged weapon opponents in the last two acts of the game. Try and find a mana stealing ring or amulet so you can keep using your attack skills without worrying about having to replenish your mana.

While you don't have the raw destructive power of a high level barbarian, you are far more useful to other players in a direct sense because of your auras. For this reason, when playing multi-player, you may want to consider using auras that may not be the most efficient for you personally, but end up making the party more efficient as a whole.

Suggested Skills

COMBAT SKILLS:

Zeal: (4-5 points recommended): One of your most vital skills, as it basically makes you attack extremely fast, and works on attacking multiple enemies faster than you could by clicking on each one manually. Note that it

does leave you open to missile attacks if you're standing there swinging and missing, so don't spend too many points on it.

Charge: This skill is very handy for dealing with creatures that are lightning enchanted, as you land a hit, knock the enemy back, and THEN the lightning comes at you. The knock-back gives you the chance to run away and avoid all that lightning damage.

Vengeance: The perfect skill for putting extra power into your attacks. Good against boss/unique monsters.

Blessed Hammer: Something to develop after the more useful skills are all set, this skill can be useful if you use it and run around a group of monsters that are too hard to take on toe to toe.

Conversion: A low priority skill to develop. While the merits are obvious, but in practice, it's slow and inefficient compared to using more direct attack skills.

OFFENSIVE AURAS

Thorns: Good in principle, but it's more efficient to go about killing the enemy without having them hit you first. Handy in multiplayer, especially against player killers who use melee attacks.

Blessed Aim: Handy when combined with zeal, as it helps ensure more of your swings find their target.

Concentration: Increases damage caused significantly, thus handy in situations where you need to take something big down.

Holy Freeze: Slows enemies down to a point where you often can kill them before they can even attack you. Excellent both single and multiplayer.

Conviction: This helps soften up an enemy's defences, allowing you and your allies to hit hard with weapons or spells.

DEFENSIVE AURAS

Meditation: Fantastic when you're teamed up with a spell-caster, as you keep their mana up for them. Also handy if you are using a combat skill that drains mana heavily.

Salvation: Wait for this instead of spending points on the individual elemental resistances. This can totally take the sting out of magical attacks, which would normally require very rare and valuable magic items.

SKILL TIPS:

Zeal & Blessed Aim: Great for clearing away waves of monsters, as the two combine to produce fast attacks that



can hit multiple opponents, with a high rate of success.

Zeal & Holy Freeze: With the enemy slowed down, and your attacks coming very fast, this is a great default attack mode.

Vengeance & Concentration: Both of these skills increase damage caused, thus creating a very potent attack. Handy against bosses.

Conversion & Thorns: As you convert enemies, they then not only attack other enemies, but also damage them as they get hit.

BARBARIAN

Your way of dealing with things is to take them down by physical force, and you're better at doing it than any other class in the game. While for the most part your skill choice and character development is very straightforward, there is one area you sort of need to make a decision on, and that's weapon mastery. Basically, it's far more efficient to concentrate on mastering one weapon type, rather than try and be decent with a few types. In a way this does limit you to looking for a certain type of weapon, since you'll want to stick with those that you have a massive damage and attack bonus with.

Using both warcries and combat skills frequently will drain your mana a bit, but don't invest your stats too heavily in energy. Instead, try finding a mana-stealing item to ensure you never have to think about it anymore.

Suggested skills:

COMBAT SKILLS

Bash: This comes in handy when you need to knock back a monster (like a lightning enchanted creature).

Double Swing: If you plan on using

two weapons at any stage, this skill is a must. Using the skill allows your two swings to come out much faster than they otherwise would, making fighting groups much easier.

Leap Attack: An outstanding asset this one. Great for getting to a monster that you need to get to now, when you have something else in the way. Also quite possibly the best move in a player vs. player situation. Keep this skill in mind when you come to areas where you need to cross water or lava, and also keep in the mind the relatively high mana cost.

Frenzy: Very useful against boss/unique monsters that require a lot of beating.

Whirlwind: The ultimate move for a high level barbarian to perform. Wherever you click with this skill, you will move to while spinning around, dealing out the damage as you go. Click PAST groups of monsters to ensure you move through them all while landing the hits.

COMBAT MASTERIES

Sword Mastery: Swords are the most common sort of weapon in the game, and come in various one, and two-

handed styles. The mastery is no more effective than any other, but you have a better chance of getting yourself powerful swords, more so than any other weapon.

Increased Stamina: Even if you just spend a point here, the ability to run so much longer is extremely handy.

Iron Skin: Bolstering your defence rating is always extremely handy, and this passive skill helps you do this without needing to activate a hotkey, etc.

Natural Resistance: Another must have skill, this offers you a greater chance of resisting elemental attacks, and will be particularly vital when you play in hell and difficulties.

WARCRIES

Howl: This sends nearby creatures running, thus allowing you to escape if you wish. Also handy for corpse retrieval.

Battle Cry: Lowering the defence and damage rating of a group of enemies, this can really help when you're faced with something that's hard to hit, or is dishing out a dangerous amount of damage.

Battle Orders: Very handy in multi-player games. Greatly increases the max life and mana of your whole party



for a healthy duration.

Grim Ward: Has its merits in multi-player, as you can create a safe haven for spell-casters to stand in and let loose with magic, while no monsters can approach them.

Battle Command: Use this skill BEFORE others, and the skill level bonus it grants you will affect the other skills you use.

AMAZON

The Amazon is the master of ranged attacks. Like the Barbarian, the Amazon is a character class that needs to make a decision early on in the game, and that is to choose what skills she will end up specialising in. The choice is to concentrate on using either the spear/javelin skills, or the bow/cross-bow skills. While it's more than possible to create a successful spear/javelin specialist, if you want to use a melee weapon at all and you want to develop a powerful character... be a Barbarian. Collecting javelins can be a drag, but arrows show up everywhere. We strongly advise you specialise in bow.

All her special shots require mana, so a mana-stealing item is essential, and using a bow that is cold enchanted is another extremely good idea, as it will help slow monsters down, and keeps them at a distance, where you want them. Boots that increase your running speed are also handy so you can fall back quickly.

Suggested Skills

PASSIVE & MAGIC SKILLS

Critical Strike: A chance to cause double damage, with any weapon,

makes this valuable for any Amazon.

Dodge: If you don't have a shield in hand, this is an excellent alternative to avoid a melee attack.

Avoid: Works like dodge, except against ranged attacks. Being hit by ranged attacks is no less painful just because that's your area of specialty.

Penetrate: Makes all ranged attacks far more likely to hit, and is thus invaluable.

Decoy: A must have for any bow specialist. Creates the illusion of a 2nd Amazon for the monsters to be fooled attacking. This makes fighting powerful unique monsters a lot easier.

Valkyrie: Summons a powerful female warrior to fight along side you. Cast this in town, see the NPC that heals you free, and you don't ever have to worry about the high mana cost.

Pierce (SPECIAL): There is reason to NOT allocate any points to pierce, and that is because special abilities you've attached to the shot you just made may now end up passing through their target, rather than effecting it. Think carefully before choosing, because you can not turn this effect off.

JAVELIN & SPEAR SKILLS

Jab: Requires a little investment to

remove the attack penalties, but it does grant fast multiple attacks at a very low mana cost.

Plague Javelin: The expanding cloud of poison gas from the impact point makes this a very handy skill for working on groups.

Fend: A reliable, low mana cost skill that will hit all toe-to-toe opponents.

Lightning Strike: Blasts chain lightning out from a melee attack, thus damaging other targets besides the one you're fighting.

Lightning Fury: More powerful than Lightning Strike, this tacks the effect onto a thrown javelin instead. Worth developing to high levels.

BOW & CROSSBOW SKILLS

Cold Arrow: Not a powerhouse skill, but handy for slowing an enemy you need time to work on.

Multiple Shot: Obviously, you can work on many opponents at once this way. Take note that further away from yourself you click, the tighter the arrow grouping.

Strafe: Hits multiple targets, with a damage bonus, so potentially better to hold out for than multiple shot.

Immolation Arrow: A perfect way of creating deathtraps for monsters unable



to get out of the way with walls of fire.

Freezing Arrow: The damage caused is not phenomenal, but the freezing effect affects groups at a time, making it very powerful. Works well with a Valkyrie.

NECROMANCER

Why get your hands dirty when you can get someone else to do it for you? That's the philosophy behind the Necromancer, and you should adhere to it. You are not a great warrior, you are a sneaky lurker in the background who is behind all the destruction.

Your primary area of development should be summoning spells. You want to have minions to do the work for you, and the key to this is to invest enough skill points to ensure you have not only enough servants, but also to make them powerful through mastery.

Developing curses to a high degree is not really worth it, but coupling curses with your golems is extremely effective. Take note of the various combos below in the skill recommendations.

As for your poison and bone spells, there are really only a couple of them worth bothering with. Other than that, you should be letting your minions do the damage. You can use a bow to help out your team, but as with the sorceress, you'll need a shield eventually, and wands are one handed, so this will end up working out well for you. Keep your eye on how your minions are holding up, and how far you are from

the enemy, and you should generally be quite safe.

SUMMONING SPELLS

Raise Skeleton: You obviously need to be able to have a few of these guys around, but don't waste more than a few points here.

Skeleton Mastery: More important than Raise Skeleton, better to spend your points here, as it makes skeletons, skeleton mages, and revived creatures more powerful.

Clay Golem: A must have, but do not spend more than a point or two on him, as you won't use him past level 18.

Golem Mastery: Golems are always going to be with you from now on, so any points spent here are worthwhile.

Skeletal Mage: Your personal bodyguard of mages. They randomly have a sphere of magic that you can determine by their hands. They offer great backup to your golems, so having 3-4 of these around is handy.

Blood Golem: His health is linked to yours. As he kills things, you gain health... And as he gets beaten up, you suffer. Only invest a couple of skill points here.

Summon Resist: This will help stop your minions going down so fast in the areas where the enemy wields magic (particularly Act III & IV).

Iron Golem: Worth developing more than the previous two. Keep in mind the Iron Golem adapts the properties of the item you used to summon it.

Fire Golem: Your most powerful golem. Particularly useful against enemies that use fire (thus in Acts III & IV)

Revive: Develop this more than any other summoning skill once you can. Once the enemies go down, you bring them back to fight on your side, and with significantly more life points.

POISON AND BONE SPELLS

Corpse Explosion: With this you can basically cause massive chain reactions that can wipe out huge legions of powerful creatures. Only spend a few points here, but use it throughout your entire career. Cast it on two nearby corpses in the middle of a group, and you should kill all nearby monsters of the same type.

Bone Spear: Because it travels through multiple opponents, this is a great way to make a corpse or two



needed to cast Corpse Explosion and do the real damage.

CURSES

Amplify Damage: Makes it much easier for your minions to polish enemies off.

Iron Maiden: Works really well when combined with a Blood Golem, as it heals you as the golem is attacked.

Life Tap: Works well when combined with an Iron Golem, once again, to heal yourself as he tears the enemy apart.

Lower Resist: One to work on for multiplayer gaming at high difficulty levels.

SORCERESS

By all means, this is one of the more difficult classes to play well, so be prepared to work on this character as a long haul project, as you're not going to have much power for quite some time.

The sorceress has to keep something in mind, and that is that some monsters are resistant to certain types of magic. For this reason, you can't just specialise in one area of magic totally, as you could end up facing a horde that you simply can't dish it out to. The aim should be to vaguely specialise in one, then a secondary tree, and just work to get a couple of the better spells in the third.

At the very beginning of your career, it's viable to go hand to hand, since your magic powers will be a bit too weak to pull down monsters effectively. Once you get to level 12 though, you should consider a bow, as you really shouldn't be letting creatures go toe-to-toe with you, and eventually, ready a shield for when you go to Nightmare and Hell difficulties, as you need all the defence you can get, and by that stage, your spells should be your means of killing things.

Think of cold magic as the "stopping power" and low, yet constant damage, fire as the "heavy damage", and light-

ning as the "random damage" tree. Take note of the damage ranges to understand this. Develop the Mastery skill for each tree when able, as it makes you so much more efficient.

COLD SPELLS (recommended as your primary or secondary skill tree)

Frozen Armour: Don't overdevelop this, because the latter armour skills are the ones you'll be using long term.

Shiver Armour: A natural progression, this one can freeze those that melee attack you regardless if they hit or not, and is thus invaluable.

Glacial Spike: Effective constant damage with freezing effects, worth developing.

Blizzard: Extremely effective due to the area it covers, and can freeze large numbers of creatures, making it a great way to stop incoming hordes.

Chilling Armour: This is for use against ranged attacks, as it freezes those that fire things at you. Cannot be used in conjunction with Shiver Armour, so use one or the other at any given time.

Frozen Orb: The ultimate in stopping power. Use this when you really want to give yourself time, rather than a constant weapon, as the mana drain is high.

LIGHTNING SPELLS (recommended as your third skill tree)

Static Field: This takes a percentage of your enemy's health, and is thus very useful when fighting creatures that can take a lot of punishment. Use another spell to finish the job.

Chain Lightning: Strikes five enemies at a reasonable mana cost. Note that it can cause as little as 1 point of damage, so be prepared to throw a few at a time.

Teleport: An absolute MUST HAVE spell. You need to be able to escape combat quickly, and this spell will let you do just that. No need to develop far, as that only reduces mana cost.

Thunder Storm: A nice spell that you don't need to develop far to have as an effective "extra damage" spell to follow you around for a while.

FIRE SPELLS

Warmth: Every sorceress must develop this quite high (about 10 by 30th level), as you need mana all the time.

Blaze: Cast this, retreat, and let your enemies follow you to their doom. A little development makes this very effective.

Fire Wall: Like Blaze, but you can place it anywhere, and it does even more damage.



Meteor: Cast these on your own location in melee combat and watch the suckers drop.

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HYPER LETTERS

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AWESOME ASS

Hyper,
can you please answer these questions?
1) Why don't you give out PSX demos attached to your magazine?
2) Which of the next generation machines do you think will be the best?
3) I just read in issue 82, that someone asked how you review games and you answered that you had to take them home and play. I was wondering what happens to those games. If they just sit in the bottom of the cupboard I'll be glad to take them off your hands. How about it?
4) I reckon that your job would be pretty cool. What do you have to do to get that job?
5) How much dough will the Nintendo Dolphin cost? Can you show me a picture of the Xbox and the Dolphin in your next issue?
6) Don't you think that they should stop making pointless games? e.g. the Tomb Raider series, the Pokémon games and those stupid little Tetris type games. Over and out.

SEAN A.K.A AWESOME ASS

Dear Mr. Ass,

1) Mags with cover discs usually have to raise their cover price to

accommodate the cost in making these discs (most gaming mags with discs are over \$10). We are trying to keep Hyper as cheap as possible to buy, yet we have managed to give away a few free PC demo discs. Making a PSX disc would be more expensive for us to do, and we don't want to come across as too PlayStation biased. How would PC, Nintendo and Sega gamers feel if our cover price went up just to give the PSX owners some demos?
2) It's too early to have an opinion. The Xbox isn't out, the next Nintendo system isn't out and the PS2 isn't out. Once we've got them all and played the games, maybe we'll be able to let you know. At this point, they all sound great.
3) Lots of the games we review have to be returned to the distributors, although the ones we keep - we continue to play! We're not giving you our games!
4) You have to compete in the gaming industry Olympics. The Gold, Silver and Bronze medals give you positions here on Hyper magazine. I currently hold the Gold medal in Quake 3, which is why I am Editor.
5) It's too early to know a price

point for the next Nintendo console, but it will certainly be competitive. As a total guess, it'll probably be less than \$500 but more than \$300. No designs for either console have been released yet, although pictures of the Nintendo "Star Cube" could be online as you read this.
6) As long as something sells to the dumb masses, they'll keep churning them out. Just buy the good games, and they'll stop making the crap ones.

INQUISITIVE

Hey all at Hyper,
I think that your magazine is the best mag ever.
I'm sick of hearing about people complaining about stuff like "there is not enough posters" and crap like that. I'm sure that half the readers could not care less about a damn poster. As long as you have good reviews and previews I'll be happy. I have a few questions about different stuff:

- 1) Does the PSX have 32bit or 64bit? I keep telling my brother that it's 32 but he doesn't believe me.
- 2) What is the launch line up of games for the PS2 in Australia?
- 3) Is Gon going to be in Tekken Tag Tournament?
- 4) What's up with the Caption This? It's like you get the captions from one issue then publish it two issues later.
- 5) What are all the little inputs on the PS2? All the pictures that I have are too small to see what they are.
- 6) When will Tony Hawk 2 come out for the PSX?
- 7) On a picture of the PS2 that I have, it looks like the ON switch is also the RESET switch. What is up with that?
- 8) How come you don't have a release date on the next issue page? I'm confused because I have to go to the newsagent all the time to see if the next issue is out.
- 9) When will Final Fantasy IX be released here in Oz?
- 10) Is there a set date for the release of the Xbox?
- 11) Why is the Nintendo Dolphin so "hush hush"? My God, they don't even know how many controller ports it will have.

OK, keep up the cool mag.

JACK

Jack,
1) The PSX is a 32-bit machine.
2) There will be about 20 games all up, check with us next issue for the details!
3) We haven't heard any news on this yet, which leads us to believe "no".
4) Well, the winning caption arrives a

few issue later because we need a month to allow for people to send their captions in.
5) What you're seeing is probably just the many pin holes in the two controller slots.
6) September - so any day now!
7) There is a DVD drive open/close button and a Reset button on the front of the machine. The power switch is actually on the back of the unit - like an appliance.
8) We do now!
9) For Christmas it seems.
10) The Xbox is currently set for a release in the USA in mid-to-late 2001.
11) Nintendo have been holding off on releasing specs because they have probably been undecided exactly on what they would be. As of August 25th, we should know a lot more of the Nintendo "Dolphin" or "Star Cube" as it's now being called. You can be pretty sure it will have four controller ports.

NUDE PLEAD

Dear Hyper guys,
Blessed be your chronicle!
1) Have you heard anything about a Dreamcast game called Ferrari 355 Challenge?
2) Will the Dreamcast version of Jedi Power Battles have similar cheats to the PlayStation version?
3) Now that I have to wait until October for Dead or Alive 2, what's the nude cheat for the Dreamcast version? Pleaseeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!!
4) Virtual On 2, was that an arcade robot shooter?
5) Which game looks better - Sega GT or Metropolis Street Racer?
6) What's the best 3D card for between \$200 and \$400?
7) Will my girlfriend still have sex with me if I steal her N64, buy Perfect Dark and say 'see ya in a month'?

FUZZY

P.S. Can anyone beat these minesweeper times?
Beginner 4 sec, Intermediate 30 sec, Expert 108 sec

Hello Mr. Fuzzy,
1) Yes indeed! Actually we saw it at E3 this year - it looks like a pretty nice conversion of the arcade game - although nothing will beat that sit-in cabinet.
2) Most probably it will have the same cheats but with different codes - if you get our drift. They have also addressed some of the bugs that were in the PlayStation version.
3) We've already printed this once you heathen! There. A reason to subscribe. Then you'll never miss such

Caption This! Part 9 winner

We'd like to ask Caption This entrants to begin stating which consoles they have or whether they own a PC on their entries. In the meantime, Bobby Demetriou sent us the winning caption this month - well done lad!



THE MAKERS OF "VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE REDEMPTION" PLAN TO RELEASE THE MIRROR PATCH WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK

opportunities.

4) Er... yeah.

5) Well, the verdict after a quick poll is that *Sega GT* looks better, but damn it's close.

6) A 32MB TNT 2 Ultra should be pretty cheap, but if you can stretch your dollar a bit, try to get a nVIDIA GeForce.

7) Well she won't have sex with you during that month, because you'll be too busy playing with Joanna! Maybe you should get her to join you for a bit of "multiplayer"?

BONGIORNO

Hi,

A friend and I are having a dispute about whether you are Australian only. He seems to think that you are also in America and the UK. Please settle our dispute. Oh, and also state whether or not Id revolutionised the FPS world please? Thanks.

NIC CHANDLER

Nic,

Hyper is distributed in Australia, New Zealand and Italy only – although we take subscribers from anywhere. So why Italy? We send them *Hyper* and they send us all the pasta we can eat. Not a bad deal.

PC WOES

G'day Seafood,

Love yer mag. Your Perfect Dark review was spot on. Anyhow, I was just wondering, I have a computer with a Cyrix II-300 chip in it. I recently went to purchase a Voodoo 3 for it (so I can play *Unreal Tournament*) and the clerk said that the Voodoo cards are not compatible with Cyrix chips. Can you please tell me ANY 3D cards on the market (affordable!) that are compatible with my system? If you can, cheers!

-AGENT PANDA

P.S Today is the tomorrow that you worried about yesterday.

P.P.S Thanks again!

Hi Agent Panda,

www.tomshardware.com and www.anandtech.com are two good sites that should have all sorts of news on the latest hardware and what works. Maybe checking here would have stopped you from buying a Cyrix...

BUFFY ROCKS HARD

Dear Hyper people,

You had a shot in your E3 diary of the Master attacking someone. Was this advertising the upcoming Buffy game? If so, why didn't you mention

it anywhere? Also, the Fox Interactive web site says that they're making it for Dreamcast, but Fox distributes through EA, and EA is anti-Dreamcast. How is that going to work? And while you're at it, you might as well tell me how Buffy would work as a video game. I know there have been other games with

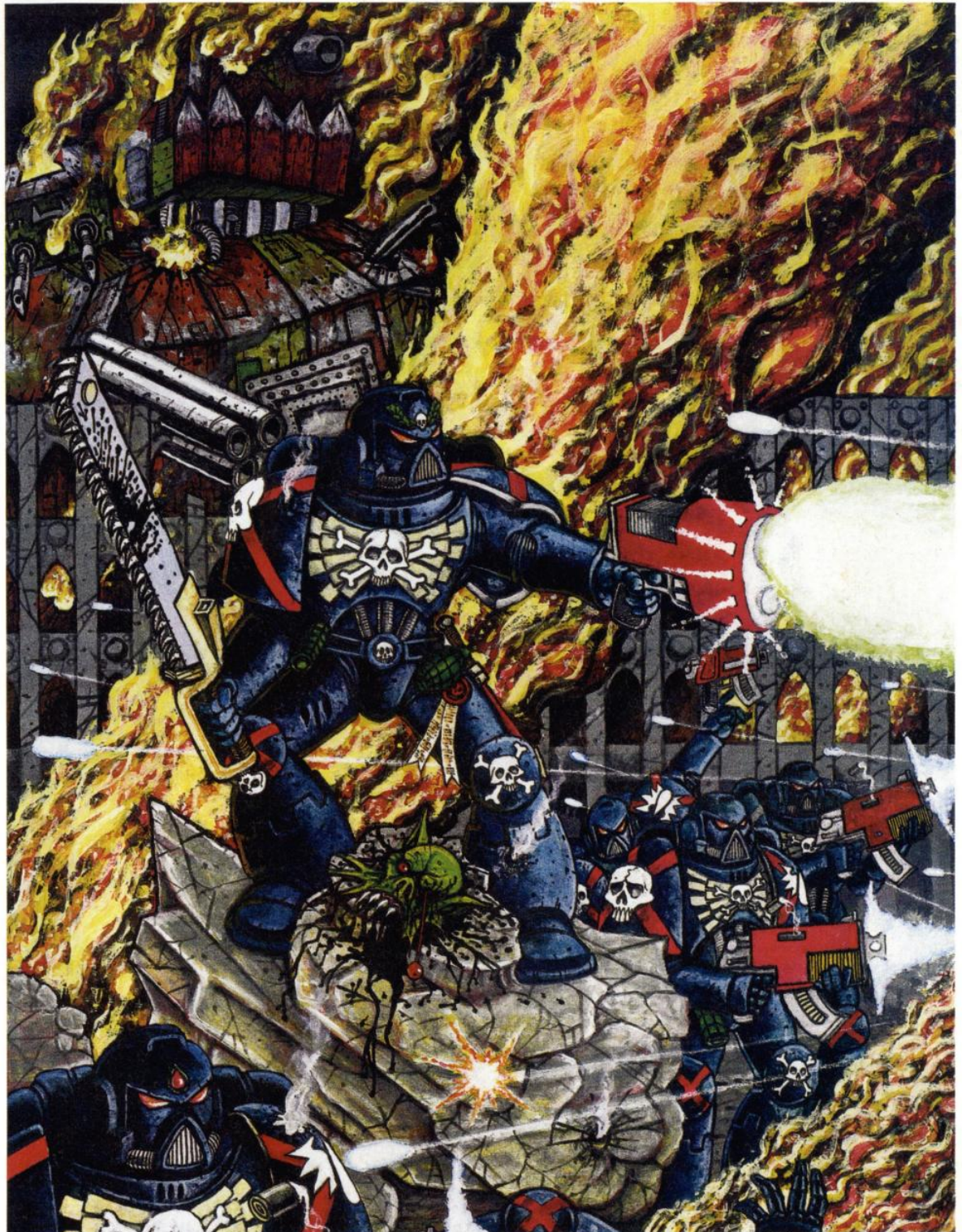
vampires but I haven't played any of them. I imagine it would be a challenge to make a game where it actually matters where in the body you stab someone.

JAMES MASON V, MELBOURNE

Dear James,

Yes – the Master was at E3 to promote

the Buffy videogame! Currently, we know it's a third-person action/adventure. EA are not anti-Dreamcast, they just choose to not develop games for that console. They'll still happily distribute Dreamcast games! Chances are that when it comes to slamming that wooden stake into those Vampires,



DAVID SULLIVAN SENT US THIS COOL BIT OF GARNAGE

incoming mail

all you'll have to do is press attack when you're standing in front of one, and Buffy will automatically stick the stake in the heart. Rest assured, as soon as we know more, Cam will be hassling me to devote countless pages to it.

GLEAMING THE CUBE

Dear Hyper,
Just read from Hyperactive, "The official name for the Dolphin is Starcube". Starcube? Is that to compete with Xbox? What's next? Sony will probably rename the PS2 'Light-Square' while the Dreamcast goes crazy in sales after being renamed 'Big-Block'.
I mean, what sort of a name is Starcube? No one's gonna buy that! It sounds like a breakfast cereal. I think that Nintendo has just gone silly with its naming, ever since they renamed the Ultra 64 to Nintendo 64 (Ultra seemed to come nicely after 'Super' Nintendo). I do hope they see sense and rename it, but I suppose in the end it all comes down to the games it has and not the name. But it still sounds stupid.
Anyway, that's my whinge. Coool mag, keep it up.
STEVE, S.A

Hi Steve,
Starcube doesn't bother us that much - in fact it seems to suit Nintendo quite well. Just look back to the design of Super Mario World -

bouncing stars, mushrooms, bricks, pipes... Starcube is kind of reminiscent of that early Mario style! Well...

GUN GO BANG

Heya Hyper,
I have a N64, and I find one category that is missing from the console that is desperately needed (for me). What I'm talking about is gun games. I have asked so many stores if there are any gun games or light guns that are coming out for the N64... Their basic answer was NO. This is why I'm willing to get a PlayStation and get old goodies like Time Crisis. Anyway, I have a good idea for the N64. Why don't they make a light gun add-on for the N64 controller???? You would simply slot it in where you put your memory paks and rumble paks. The z trigger could be the firing button while the a and b buttons could be the reload... so what do u think??? Time crisis 2 on the N64, I'd like to see that!
^DARK VIPER^

Dear Mr. Viper,
Possibly, Nintendo's old policy of keeping the Nintendo a happy-go-lucky family console is the reason why a light gun game was never approved. Shame.

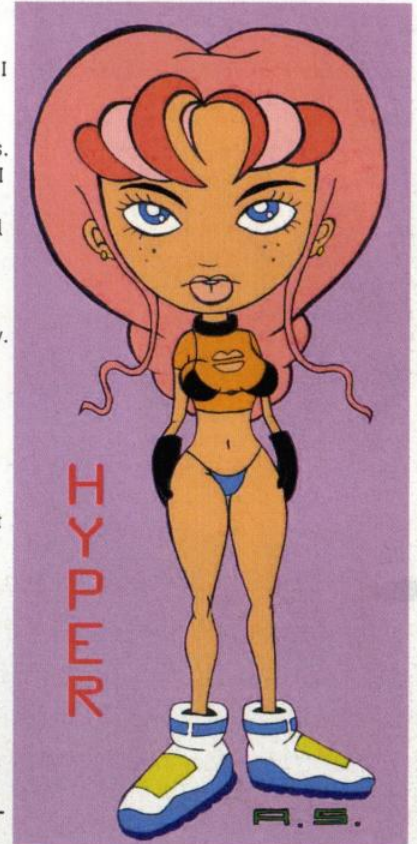
I DISCOVERED MANKIND

Dear Hyper,
I was recently browsing my local games store when a came across a

game for the PC titled Mankind. The back of the box outlined a game consisting of a completely online universe (everyone in Mankind plays in the same universe) running all the time in a RTS format. The screenshots showed quite reasonable graphics of both a Homeworld style and Landbased one. Being the cynic I am and because I had never heard of the game I didn't buy it there on the spot, my mistake. I went home and downloaded the shareware version allowing you to play with a restricted amount of units. After quickly reaching my maximum I had to wait an excruciating 24 hours before I could get the full version and get back into it.
My question is, Why the f**k haven't I heard about this game? It's been around for a least a year and a half now. Can you guys please do a review? I would love to hear your thoughts on the game.
If you have never heard of this game (which I doubt) you can find it at www.mankind.net. The best independent site I have found is www.mkit.net
Yours Sincerely,
LJ SQUARED

Dear LJ Squared,
What an admirable discovery! We checked out mankind.net and indeed, it does sound like a remarkable title. Unfortunately, with such little time to indulge, we'll have to take your word for it - that Mankind is a worthy gaming experience. It didn't get reviewed, as the

game is by a small French company with no local distributor that we could discern. Have any other readers discovered a wonderful game that somehow slipped by without any media attention? Let us know!



>>> ANDREW SINGHE IS THE MAN RESPONSIBLE

DEVELOPERS IN DEVELOPMENT

Hey,
I was wondering if you had any advice for a budding programmer who wants to join the games industry. I have knowledge of Visual Basic and C++ and am wondering what courses (uni, college) are expected for people who want to join the industry, especially programmers like myself.
This is one area I think you have missed in Hyper. Perhaps a special on how to join the industry would help where you could interview developers and list the courses usually expected for entry into the industry.
This would help me greatly as I will soon make my choices for VCE and knowing what courses are recommended would help.
Kickass mag too.

BALL

Hello there Ball,
QANTM and the Brisbane institute of TAFE have been running a diploma of IT (software development) games course in Queensland for a while now. We always mention it in Hyper when they have new positions, and in fact, they recently celebrated the graduation of their first 20 students. Visit www.quantm.com.au for more information on the only course of its kind in Australia. Good luck!



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.



The Official Australian Games Chart

Compiled by Inform in association with AVSDA

June 2000

Top 10 Best Selling PC Games

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↔ The Sims	Strategy
2	↔ Age Of Empires 2	Strategy
3	↔ Command & Conquer: Tiberian Sun	Strategy
4	⊕ Shogun: Total War	Strategy
5	↑ Sim Mania Pack	Bundle
6	↓ Soldier Of Fortune	Action
7	⊕ Need for Speed 3	Racing
8	⊕ Dark Reign Platinum	Strategy
9	⊕ Croc	Platform
10	↓ Imperium Galactica 2	Strategy

Top 10 Best Selling PlayStation Games

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	⊕ Colin McRea Rally 2	Racing
2	↔ Gran Turismo 2	Racing
3	↔ Syphon Filter 2	Adventure
4	↓ WWF Smackdown!	Sports
5	↑ Tony Hawk's Skateboarding	Sports
6	↓ Crash Bandicoot 3: Warped Ptm	Platform
7	↓ Medieval 2	Adventure
8	↓ Muppet Race Mania	Racing
9	⊕ Ayrton Senna Kart Duel	Racing
10	↓ Spyro Platinum	Platform

Top 10 Best Selling N64 Games

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	⊕ Perfect Dark	Action
2	↑ Zelda 64	RPG
3	↓ Pokemon Stadium	Platform
4	↑ Banjo Kazooie	Platform
5	⊕ Star Wars Rogue Squadron	Action
6	↓ Star Wars Episode I Racer	Racing
7	⊕ Tony Hawk's Skateboarding	Sports
8	↓ Goldeneye 007	Action
9	↓ Mario Kart 64	Racing
10	⊕ Mario Party 2	Family

Top 10 Best Selling Dreamcast Games

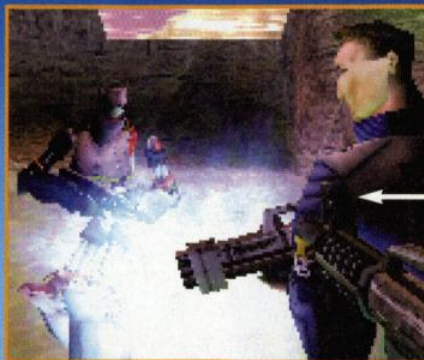
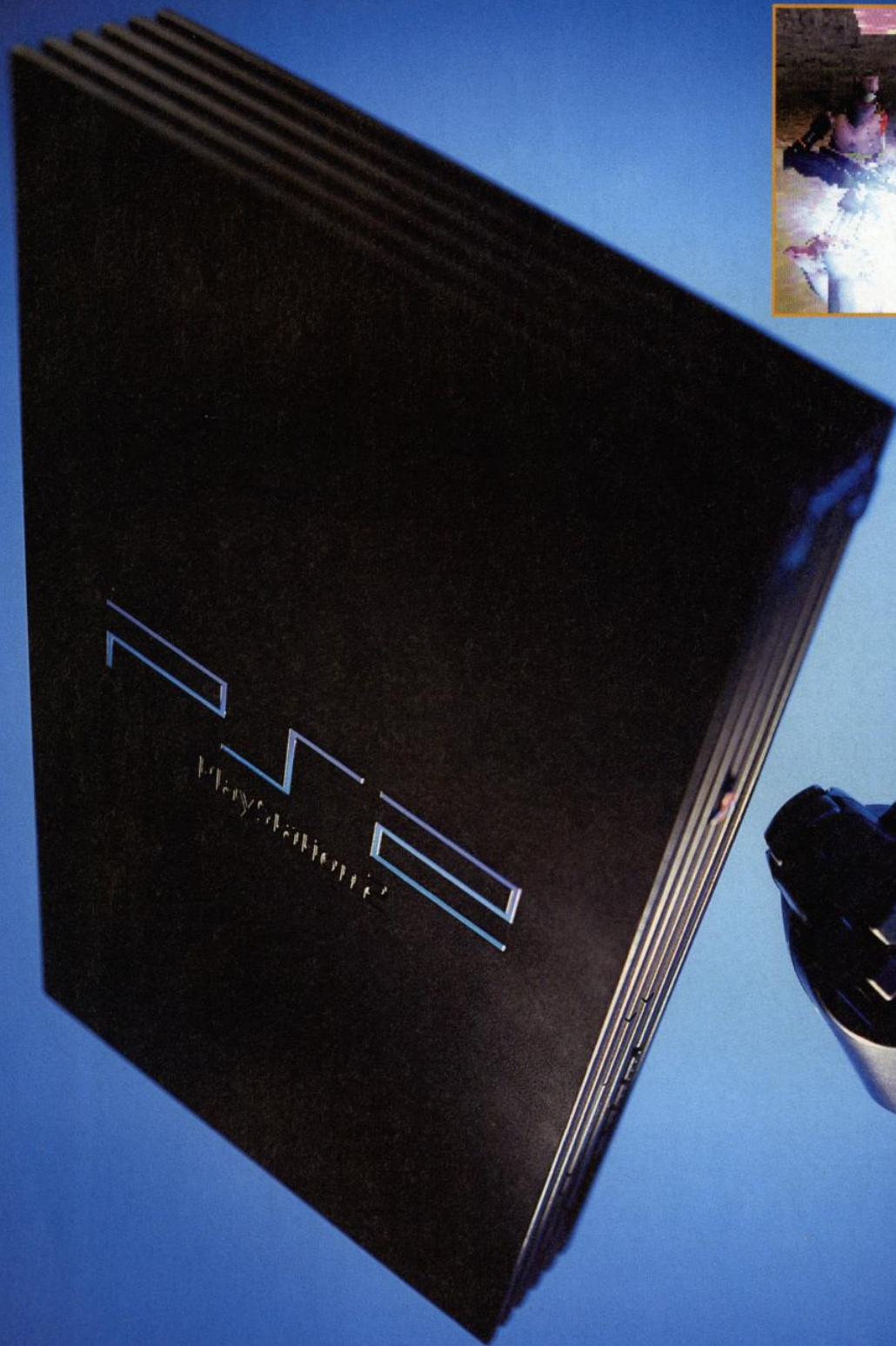
Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	⊕ Resident Evil - Code: Veronica	Adventure
2	⊕ V-Rally 2 Millenium Edition	Racing
3	⊕ Ecco The Dolphin	Adventure
4	↓ Crazy Taxi	Racing
5	⊕ MDK 2	Adventure
6	↔ House Of The Dead 2 + Gun	Action
7	↔ Sonic Adventures	Platform
8	↓ Tomb Raider 4 Last Revelation	Adventure
9	↓ NBA 2000	Sports
10	↓ Bass Fishing/Virtual Rod	Sports

Top 20 Best Selling Games - All Formats

Position	Game Title	Format	Position	Game Title	Format
1	⊕ Perfect Dark	N64	11	↓ Gran Turismo 2	PlayStation
2	↑ Zelda 64	N64	12	↓ Syphon Filter 2	PlayStation
3	↓ Pokemon Stadium	N64	13	↓ The Sims	PC
4	⊕ Banjo Kazooie	N64	14	↓ WWF Smackdown!	PlayStation
5	⊕ Star Wars Rogue Squadron	N64	15	↓ Tony Hawk's Skateboarding	PlayStation
6	↑ Star Wars Episode I Racer	N64	16	↓ Crash Bandicoot 3: Warped Platinum	PlayStation
7	↓ Pokemon Yellow	Gameboy	17	↑ Age Of Empires 2	PC
8	⊕ Colin McRea Rally 2	PlayStation	18	↓ Medieval 2	PlayStation
9	↓ Pokemon Red	Gameboy	19	⊕ Command & Conquer: Tiberian Sun	PC
10	↓ Pokemon Trading Card Game	Gameboy	20	⊕ Tony Hawk's Skateboarding	N64

NEXT ISSUE

ON SALE SEPTEMBER 27TH



BIG PREVIEW!

HITMAN

on PC

Get your hands dirty.

TIMESPLITTERS

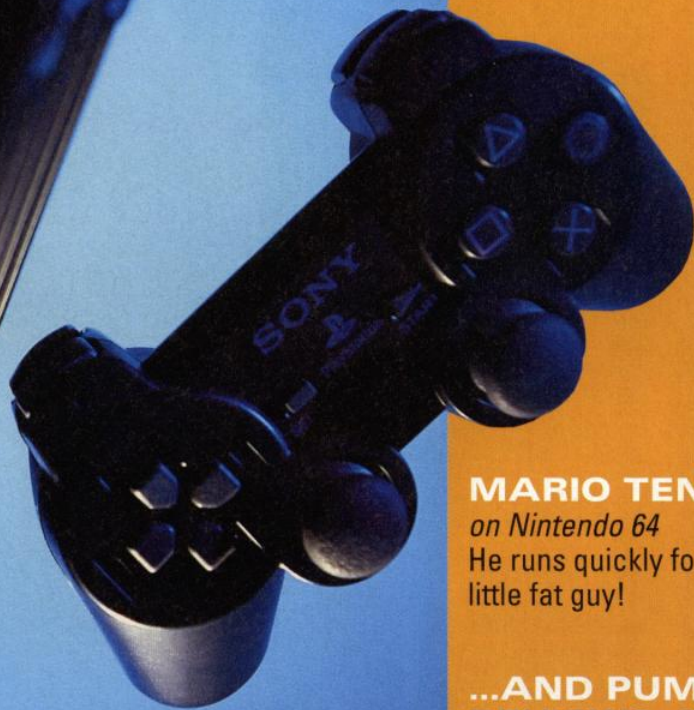
on PlayStation 2

The team behind GoldenEye do it again.

OUTTRIGGER

on Dreamcast

Deathmatchin' the night away.



MARIO TENNIS

on Nintendo 64

He runs quickly for a little fat guy!

...AND PUMPIN' REVIEWS, NEWS AND PRIZES

PLUS


WE GET STUCK INTO A BRAND NEW DVD SECTION!

THE SONY PLAYSTATION 2

OUR IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS: SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

IF GENERAL NAGAROV DOESN'T KILL HIM GENERAL APATHY WILL.



 Imagine waking up to a severe beating, being held underwater until you pass out. Living in a concrete cell so small that you have to sleep sitting up. Now imagine that the rest of the world doesn't want to know you exist. Imagine being John Cord.

FREE JOHN CORD

John Cord could be executed any day.

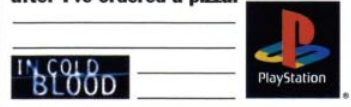
Despite that fact, politicians around the world have been unwilling to play the game. Now it's up to you. You have the power to stop Nagarov's blatant violation of human rights. You have the power to free John Cord.

It doesn't cost a lot to buy his freedom. So just get your hands on a copy of PlayStation's latest title 'In Cold Blood'. It won't be quick and it won't be easy,

but nothing worthwhile ever is. The time has come to get on your backside and help. John Cord's life is in your hands.

FREE JOHN CORD

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



www.freejohncord.com

Our thirst for conquest goes unquenched no longer.



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