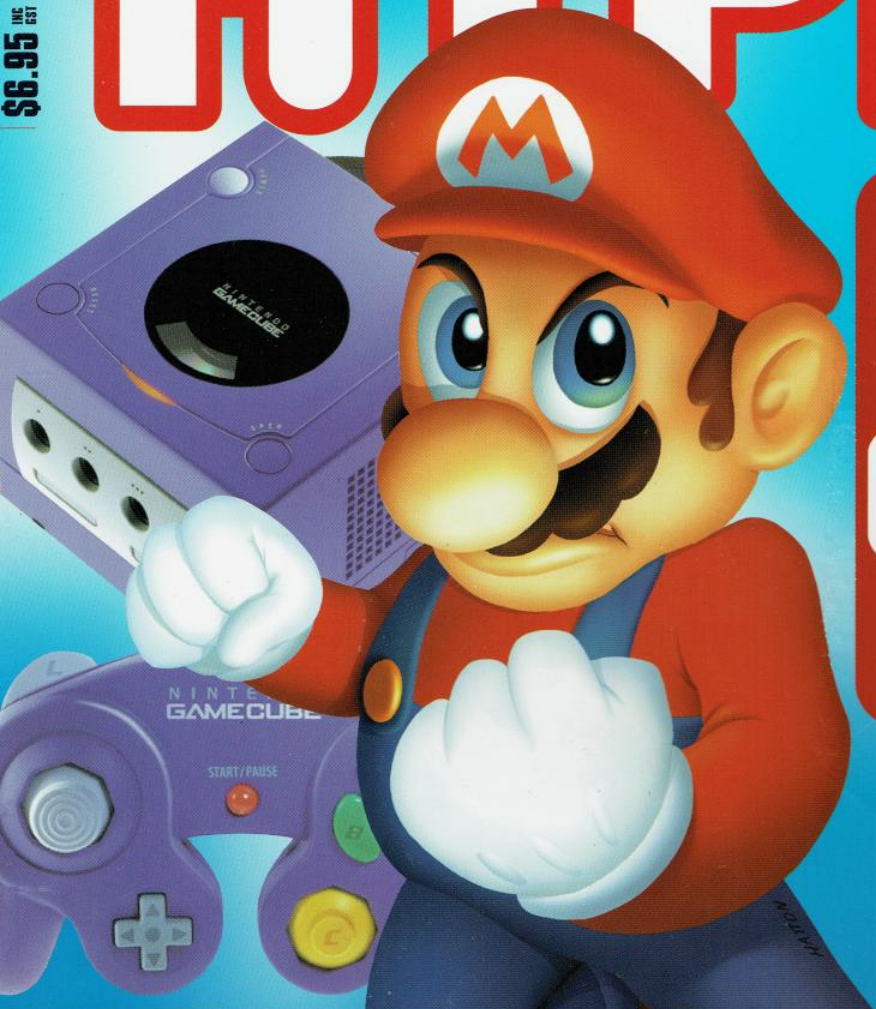


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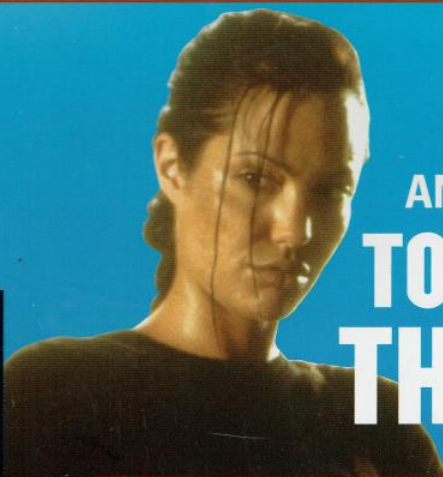
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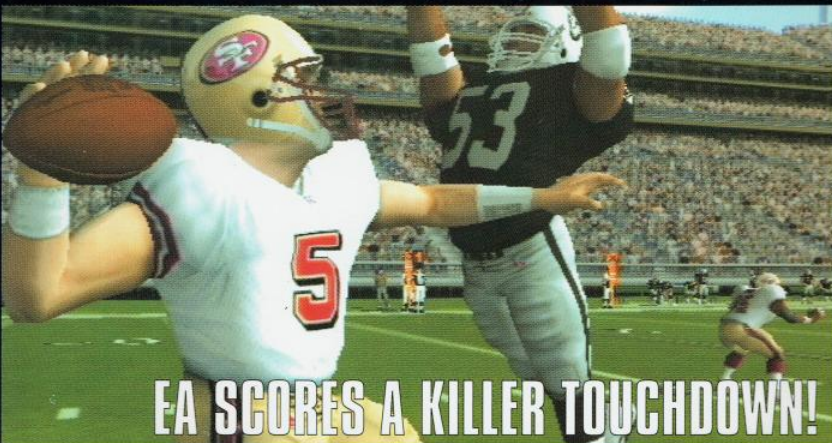


**Nintendo**  
**GAMECUBE**  
TEN REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD  
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OUR EXCLUSIVE  
ON SET REPORT!  
ANGELINA JOLIE talks  
**TOMB RAIDER  
THE MOVIE**

## MADDEN NFL 2001 ON PS2



EA SCORES A KILLER TOUCHDOWN!



**XBOX**  
FIRST PICS INSIDE!

Turn to page 8!

**32** PAGES OF  
REVIEWS

- Oni » Alice » Banjo-Tooie
- Giants » Pro Rally 2001
- Sonic Shuffle » Kessen
- Colin McRae Rally 2.0

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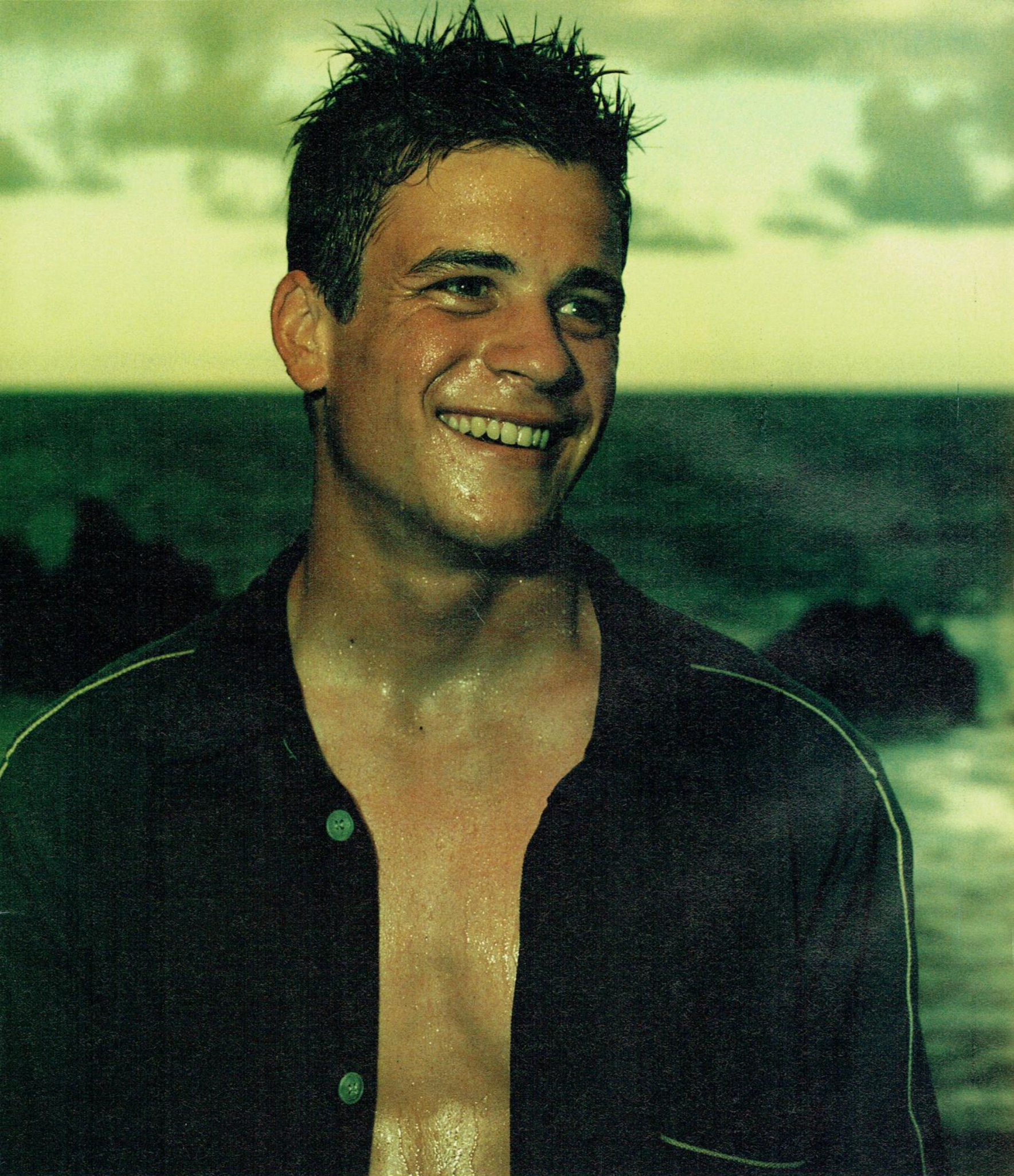


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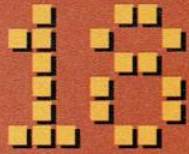




Brendan Hearne. Surfer. Nike Fly Front Pique Shirt.  
NIKE 0150

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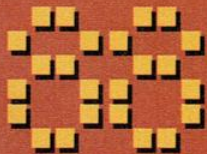


# ON THE SET OF TOMB RAIDER THE MOVIE

James Cottee travels to Cambodia for a date with Angelina Jolie!



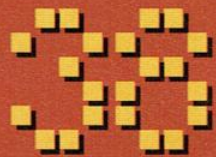
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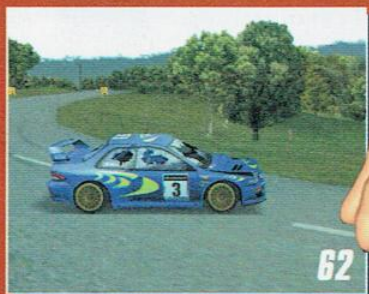
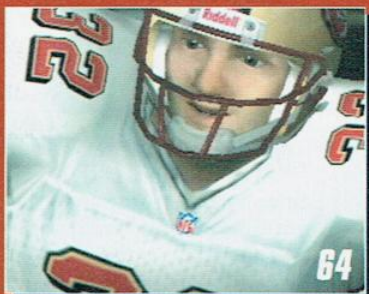
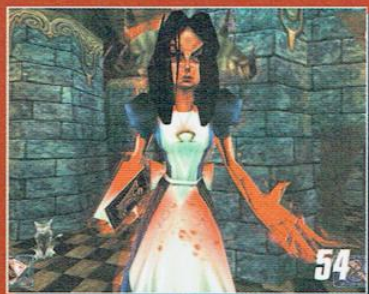
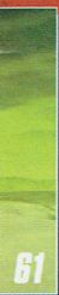
We list the big reasons why you're going to want this console!



## THE LATEST ON PS2



Electronic Arts show us why they are masters of electronic sports...



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**MARCH 2001**

**WRITE TO HYPER!**

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# HYPE IT UP

They say it's my birthday. And it is. I've been asked on more than one occasion what I could possibly want, being the editor of a gaming publication that's showered with morsels of gaming goodness on a daily basis. My answer? Games. Just give me games, games and more games. Am I mad? Possibly. But in actual fact I believe I'm suffering from video game addiction - a serious illness that's sweeping the world.



Gamers everywhere are neglecting personal hygiene, important bills, homework, family members and even proposals of getting jiggy just so that they can spend more time with their computers and/or consoles. Could this really be the case? Are fellow human beings sacrificing social skills for a few extra frags? Well... this is why we have the Hyper Forum (page 92) where readers of this fine publication can knock their ideas around and get to the bottom of these pressing issues. Now, hand me that control pad my good Cam.

**ELIOT FISH >> EDITOR**

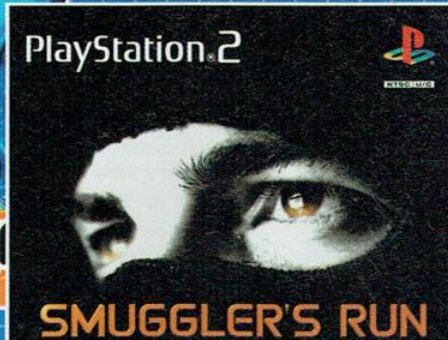
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# XBOX REVEALED!



Most bizarre, however, is the large green ball motif in the center of the pad. Whether this has any actual practical purpose is still up for debate. Some have speculated it's an LCD screen, but hey, we're hoping it's some variety of pop-o-matic bubble! Unlikely, certainly, but it would put a new spin on dice rolling in RPGs, heh heh. To be truthful, it looks like it's just a logo, and a pretty big one. At least it might light up when the console is powered on!



Microsoft recently unveiled their Xbox console at the Winter Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas. It was an interesting unveiling, with Microsoft showcasing the power and features of the console in a decidedly light-hearted demonstration.

### THE BOX...

The X-specs themselves are sturdy, but now that we know what the console and controller look like, what's the prognosis on the design? Well, let's just say that you can tell at a glance that the Xbox has been designed by an American company.

The console itself is quite large - certainly a fair amount larger than your standard VCR. The overall design of the machine isn't overly exciting, but it does strike a nice chord between the look of a game console and a dedicated piece of audio/visual kit. Although bulky, the design is actually quite sleek. Viewed from top down, the large "X" rising from the surface of the system and the hypnotic green centerpiece are undeniably funky.

### THE CONTROLLER...

The Xbox controller is an interesting amalgamation of a Dreamcast pad, the Gamecube controller and a Sidewinder pad. Like the console itself, it looks a little chunky, but we won't really know until we have the finished item in our hands.

On a technical level, we're hoping that Microsoft have put some serious R&D into the design and feel of this controller, because in the past we've been less than impressed with many aspects of their Sidewinder pad range - particularly the feel (or lack thereof) of the D-pads. If Microsoft know games as they claim to, then they'll have made some major changes to the D-pad and other facets of the feel for the Xbox pad.

As you can see from the pics, Microsoft have come up with a very similar analogue/d-pad layout to Nintendo's Gamecube controller. Overall, it looks like Microsoft have put together a pad to tackle almost every style of gaming.

### TO DVD OR NOT TO DVD... THAT IS THE QUESTION!

The Xbox will not have DVD movie playback out of the box. To enable movie playback, gamers will be able to buy an "add-on pack" that comes with a remote and the software to unlock the extra functionality. Quite a smooth move from Microsoft actually - this way consumers aren't hit with the \$20 DVD Forum fee (see Gamecube feature page 42 for details) up front, and those interested in movie playback will have a remote to make life easier...

### BUT HOW MUCH?

Pricing has yet to be discussed specifically by Microsoft, although it seems likely that the Xbox's final price will be comparable with PlayStation 2 (at least the PS2's price in the US), with Microsoft's argument being that it has a broadband adaptor and hard drive built in, so it's better value for money. We can see their point, but it will be interesting to see how a high price will affect Xbox's sales if it launches alongside Nintendo's Gamecube, and its (presumably) aggressive price point.

### WHY THE XBOX IS GOING TO "ROCK" IN THE WORST POSSIBLE WAY...

Well, it's settled - the Xbox cannot possibly fail. Not now that Microsoft have prominent wrestling puppet beefcake "The Rock" on their side. Sure, Nintendo have Shigeru Miyamoto but what can he do to help their cause? Create the best games in the world? Bah - "The Rock" can rip telephone books apart with his bare hands (probably). "The Rock" can say stuff like "I pity the foo' who don't like the box" (sorry, that's more a Mr T comment). So what can "The Rock" actually do? Err... extol the virtues of a console he's being paid to endorse? Tell us that we must "know our role" and "smell what the Rock is cooking?". To be honest, the exchange between "The Rock" and Bill Gates at CES for the Xbox unveiling was actually quite amusing, but surely Microsoft shouldn't have to resort to such tactics to lend credibility to their cause...





**OVERFLOW**

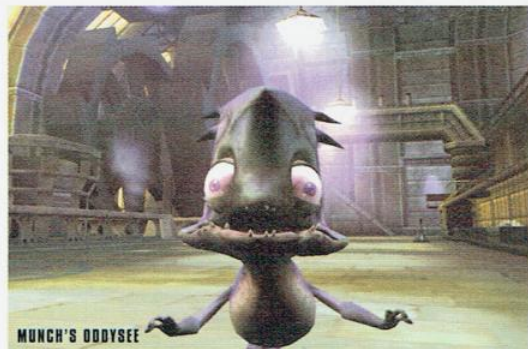
**THE GAME DEMOS!**

Microsoft showed off two game demos alongside their reveal of the Xbox design.

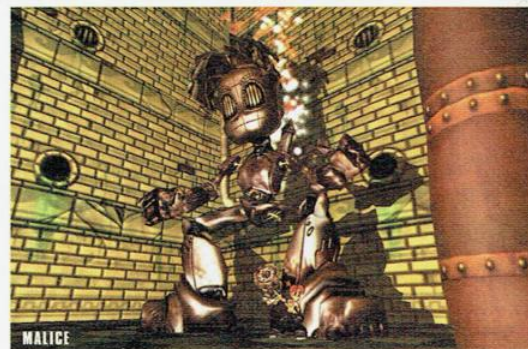
The first was Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee, now an exclusive Xbox title. This game just looks better and better every time we see it. Wow.

Number two was a platformer called Malice. Whilst the character design leaves a bit to be

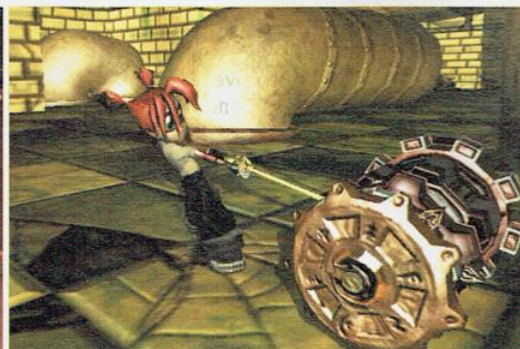
desired, there was no doubting that the 3D engine was very impressive. Both these demos really rubbed it in that these Xbox games look far more next generation than anything we've seen on Dreamcast or the PlayStation 2.



MUNCH'S ODDYSEE

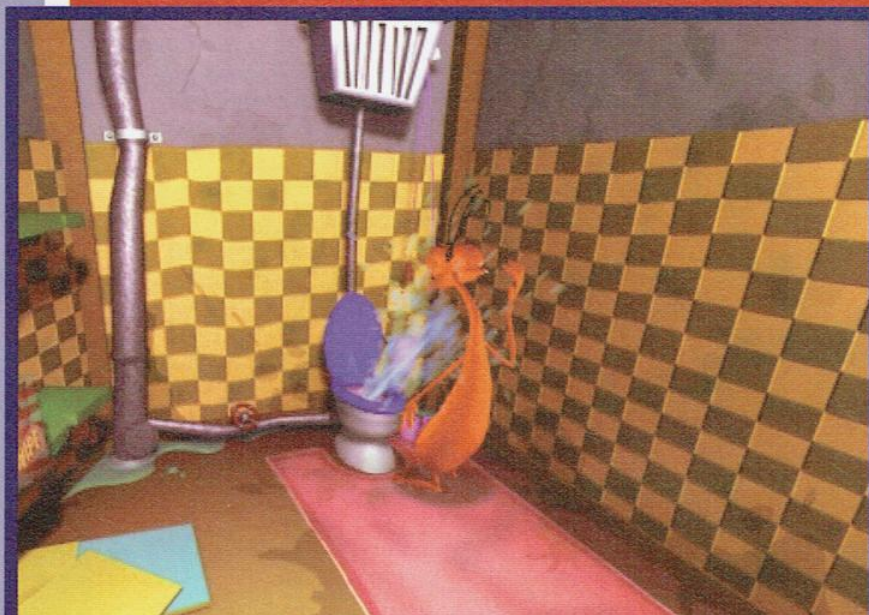


MALICE



**CAPTION THIS! PART 16**

Get your witty thinking caps on and get scribbling away on a funny caption for this month's screenshot. Send your captions to [freakscene@next.com.au](mailto:freakscene@next.com.au) with Caption This 16 in the subject line... or whack it on the back of an envelope and post it to Caption This 16, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.



NUTTY...?

Rumour has it that Sega are developing a Sonic The Hedgehog game for Game Boy Colour. It's not as strange as it sounds, as Sega aren't competing with Nintendo in the handheld market, so why forfeit potential profits?

If the rumour is true... great. But what we REALLY want announced is a Sonic game for GBA!

While we're on the subject of Sonic, other (unsubstantiated mind you) rumours have it that a veritable Sonic-fest is on its way to Dreamcast early next year. Just in time for Sonic's tenth birthday, the DC title would feature all Sonic's appearances on both Genesis and Saturn. Mmmm... imagine having every 16 and 32bit Sonic game in the one package - hopefully enhanced using Dreamcast's hardware too. Sega have yet to confirm or deny the compilation's existence. We wait with baited breath.

Soldier of Fortune will definitely be coming to PlayStation 2 courtesy of Pipe Dream Interactive. It will most likely feature a four player splitscreen mode. Expect to see it late 2001.

Another title to put on the list of games that we'll never see out here is Masaya Matsuura's new rhythm game for Wonderswan Colour. Entitled Lime Rider Kerorikan, players must dance their way to defeating invading aliens. We only mention it out of fondness for Matsuura's past games - PaRappa the Rapper and Um Jammer Lammy.

And the first game to utilize the PlayStation 2 hard drive? Bah, just Artdink's latest railway building sim A-Train 2001.

Activision's popular Spiderman game is coming to the Dreamcast. The game spans 34 levels and features Doctor Octopus and Mysterio. Marvelous indeed.

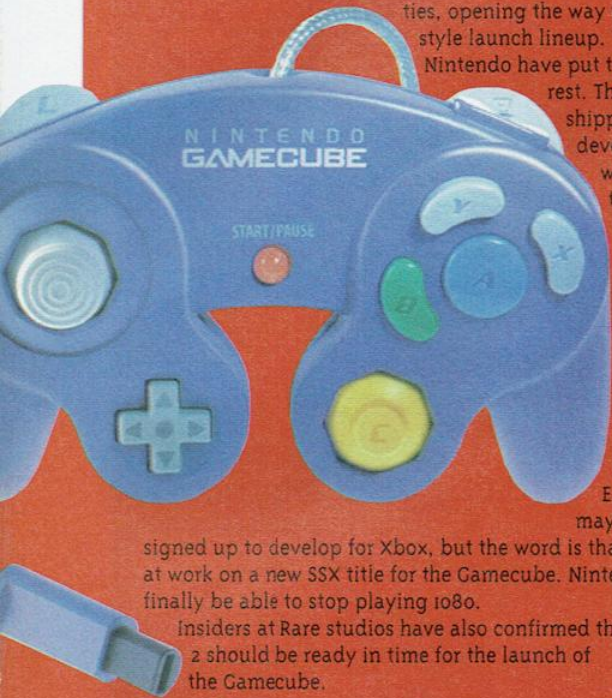
House of the Dead 2 is being ported to the PC and will ship with a USB light gun peripheral. It will also support some kind of online component. Due out in Japan almost as soon as you read this, there is not yet word on a local release.



## LATEST ON GAME BOY ADVANCE & GAMECUBE

Nintendo have their sites set high for Game Boy Advance. They're expecting to ship 24 million units in its first year on the market. One million GBAs will be available at the Japanese launch on March 21 (and you can bet that Hyper will be snapping up at least one of these), and Nintendo's production plant shouldn't have too much trouble pumping out enough units for the Australian launch in July. God we can't wait! We're also getting more and more excited about the Gamecube. We were concerned for a while that Nintendo were going to be too slow off the mark getting development kits out to third parties, opening the way for another N64 style launch lineup. Thankfully, Nintendo have put those fears to rest. They have now shipped over 500 development kits, with more on the way for smaller development houses. Best of all, these are fully feature complete kits, so developers will be able to get stuck in straight away. EA, for instance, may have just signed up to develop for Xbox, but the word is that they are hard at work on a new SSX title for the Gamecube. Nintendo fans will finally be able to stop playing 1080.

Insiders at Rare studios have also confirmed that Perfect Dark 2 should be ready in time for the launch of the Gamecube.



## NINTENDO BUYING SEGA?

For a mere \$2 billion dollars, you could own the Sega empire! But before you rush to the bank to get a cheque drawn up, we have the news that Nintendo just might make the purchase before you do. We're not kidding.

Prominent American newspaper, the New York Times, reported that Nintendo is indeed negotiating to purchase rival Sega after speaking to some executives behind closed doors. Sega has been performing poorly financially for a few years now in both software and hardware sales, and although the Dreamcast has done quite well in the USA, it has been a difficult console to sell in all other territories. Apparently, Sega have been looking to sell for quite some time now, even approaching Microsoft at one point, according to the New York Times.

So what exactly would Nintendo do with one of their long-time rivals after the cheque has been cashed? For starters, they'd probably put Sega's hot game development studios hard to work on some cracking good Gamecube games. Virtua Fighter 4 on the Gamecube? Hell yeah! What the acquisition would mean for the Dreamcast is not really known until the full details of the purchase are made public... if it happens. Certainly, it will be a strange day indeed if we see these two companies become one. At the time of Hyper going to print, Sega and Nintendo both strongly deny the report and there was no further information available.



## GRAND THEFT AUTO 3

Apparently, this is our first look at GTA3 from Rockstar Games. As soon as this shot appeared online it didn't take long for it to circulate the world in the blink of an eye. Looks like the series is finally going fully 3D.



## GAME BOY ADVANCE - MORE GAMES!

Mario Advance. The plumber will have a brand new game on the upcoming Game Boy Advance handheld! Say it again - MARIO ADVANCE! Weeeeeee! Well, despite the fact that the mention of this game alone for Nintendo's new handheld is enough to have us setting up camp outside our nearest game store, take a look at what else is on the way... Wario Land 4, F-Zero Advance and Castlevania: Circle in the Moon! Of course, amongst these exciting sounding games are a bunch of suitably weird Japanese titles that won't get released here... I'm An Air Traffic Controller, Monster Gate Apricot and Cute In Mail.



## WINNERS HYPER #87

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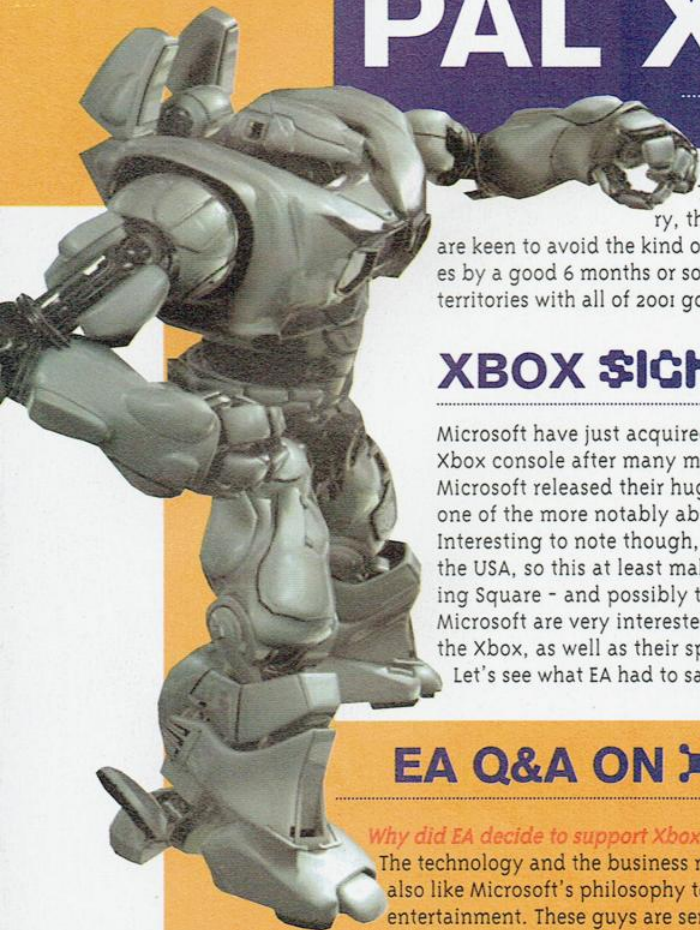


**MATURE**  
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MEDIUM LEVEL  
ANIMATED VIOLENCE



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# PAL XBOX DELAYED



The Xbox has had its European release officially delayed until early 2002. As Europe is a PAL territory, this means that the Australian release would also be affected by this delay. It seems that Microsoft are keen to avoid the kind of unit shortages that have affected the recent PS2 launch, by splitting the US and European launches by a good 6 months or so. Xbox is still slated for a September release in the USA. Will this give Sony an advantage in the PAL territories with all of 2001 going unchallenged?

## XBOX SIGNS UP EA

Microsoft have just acquired EA as a developer for their upcoming Xbox console after many months of speculation and rumour. After Microsoft released their huge 150-strong list of developers, EA were one of the more notably absent companies, along with SquareSoft. Interesting to note though, that EA have partnered with SquareSoft in the USA, so this at least makes the Xbox that one step closer to gaining Square - and possibly their Final Fantasy games. Apparently, Microsoft are very interested in seeing a version of EA's The Sims on the Xbox, as well as their sports franchises, naturally. Let's see what EA had to say about their Xbox strategy...



## EA Q&A ON XBOX

### Why did EA decide to support Xbox?

The technology and the business model are solid. But we also like Microsoft's philosophy toward interactive entertainment. These guys are serious. We see a solid understanding of the business and a long-term commitment to growing this industry.

### Is EA making a serious commitment?

Absolutely. We've ordered more than 500 Xbox development kits and we're already working on 6-10 EA titles that will be ready around the time that Xbox debuts. Some of our best developers are working on this system and there is a lot of excitement in our studios.

### Was your decision based on Sony's disappointing launch of PS2?

No. We've been talking to MSFT for more than a year and negotiating for about four months. We're still developing for PS2 and continue to see Sony's delay as a short-term issue.

### What were the key points in your negotiation?

First, we wanted a licensing agreement that allowed for a multi-year commitment to this console. Second, we wanted flexibility to determine what content would be most appropriate for the Xbox console. Third, we wanted to cooperate with Microsoft to deliver on the promise of online console gaming offered by the Xbox console.

### How many games will you develop for Xbox? What are they?

We haven't committed to a number but you'll see games from all the EA studios including EA SPORTS hits like Madden football and FIFA Soccer. You also will see EA Games franchises such as Bond and Harry Potter.

### Is Xbox a better than PS2?

Our job is to make fun games that look good on any platform. The consumer decides which one they prefer.

### Is Xbox easier to develop for than PS2?

We don't anticipate any problems developing for either system. Companies that take the time to learn the system don't have problems. The one's who try and cut corners do.

### Is Xbox simply a port strategy from your PC games?

No.

### Who will win the console war?

The big winners will be consumers and game developers. Consumers are going to get a fast, fun console for an affordable price. Developers like EA are going to providing a lot of games for the next generation of systems.

### Who will make the dominant console?

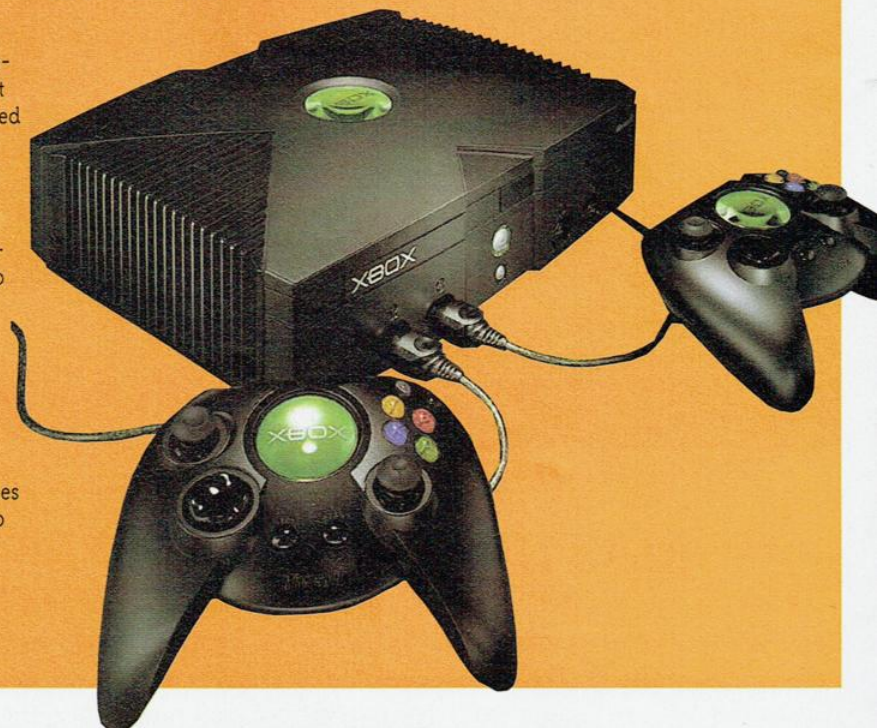
We predict there will be three winners. Microsoft and Sony will slug it out for the number one position - Nintendo will continue to hold a profitable niche in children's games. All three are going to see sustained profitability.

### What about Sega?

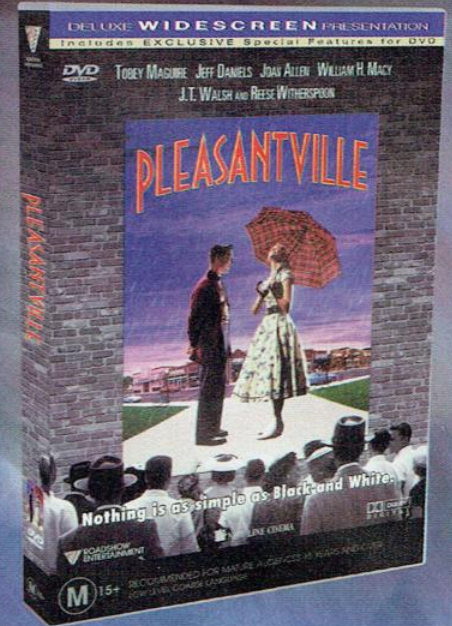
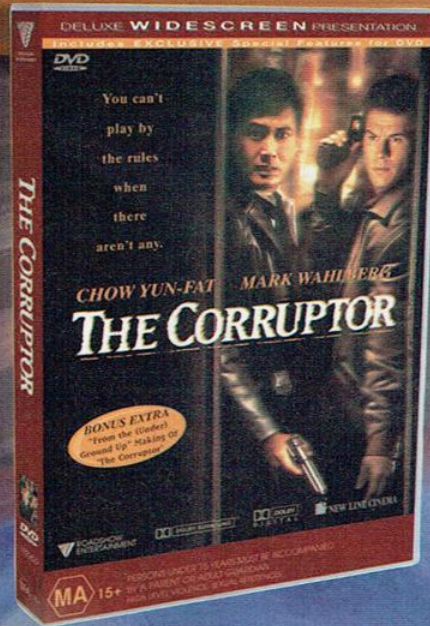
We think there will be three winners.

### Why don't you make games for Dreamcast?

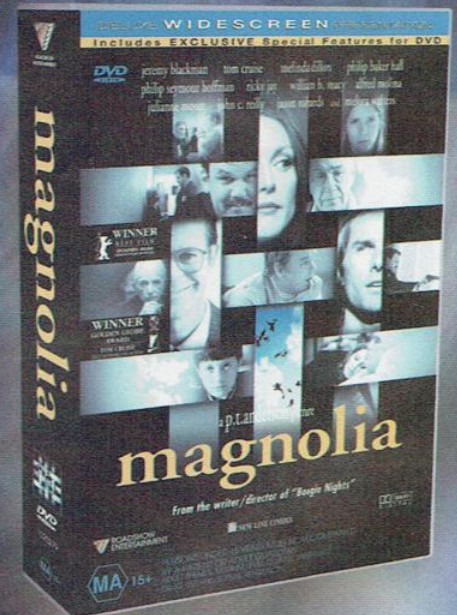
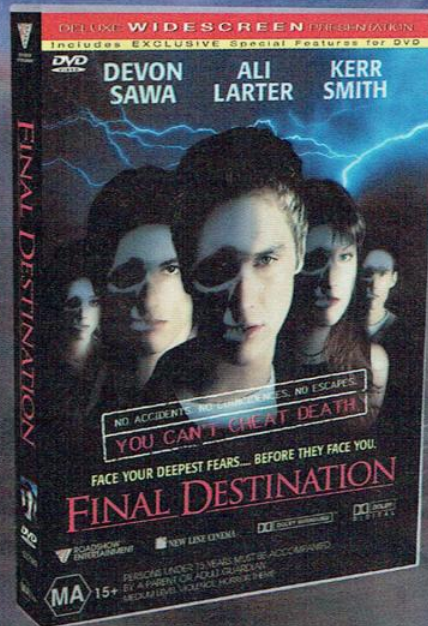
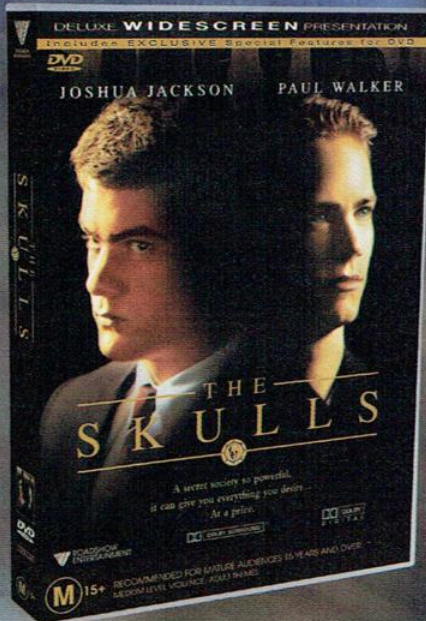
We like Sega and think they've got great game franchises. However, we have chosen to focus our studios on those platforms that are going to show sustained market leadership.



# OWN IT ON



# DVD VIDEO



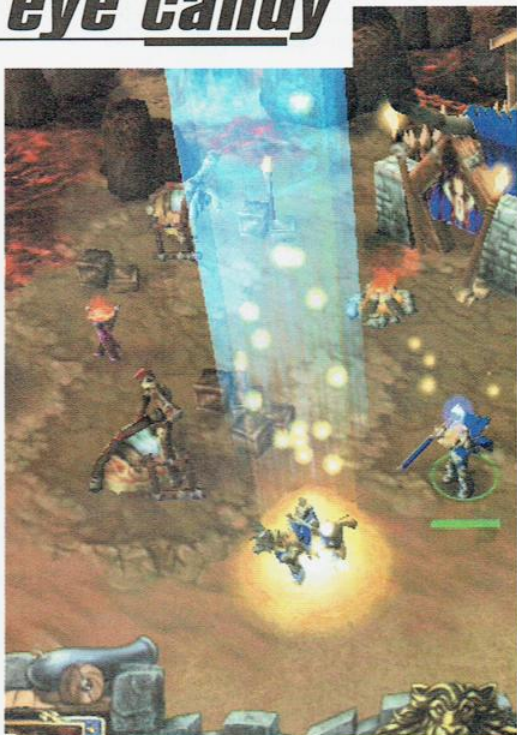
Available at



DAVID JONES

Harvey Norman



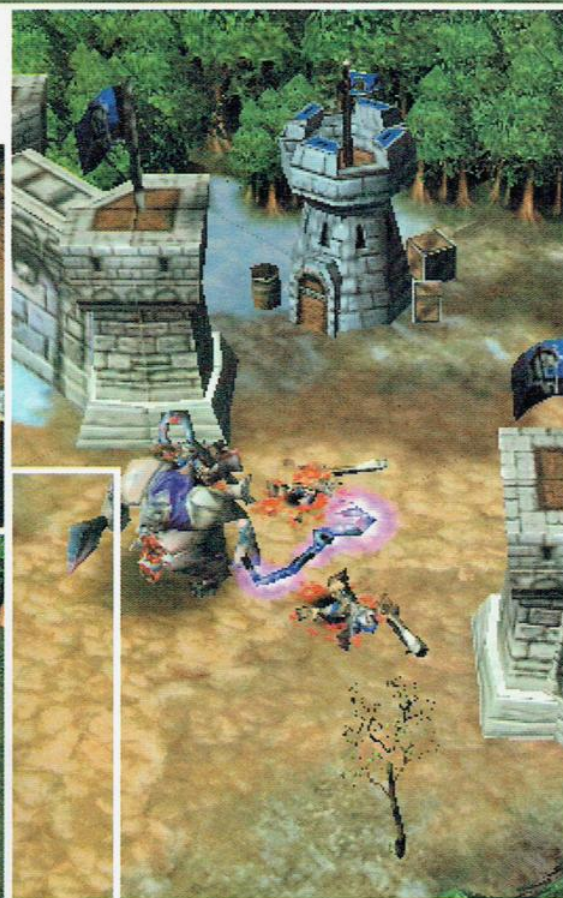


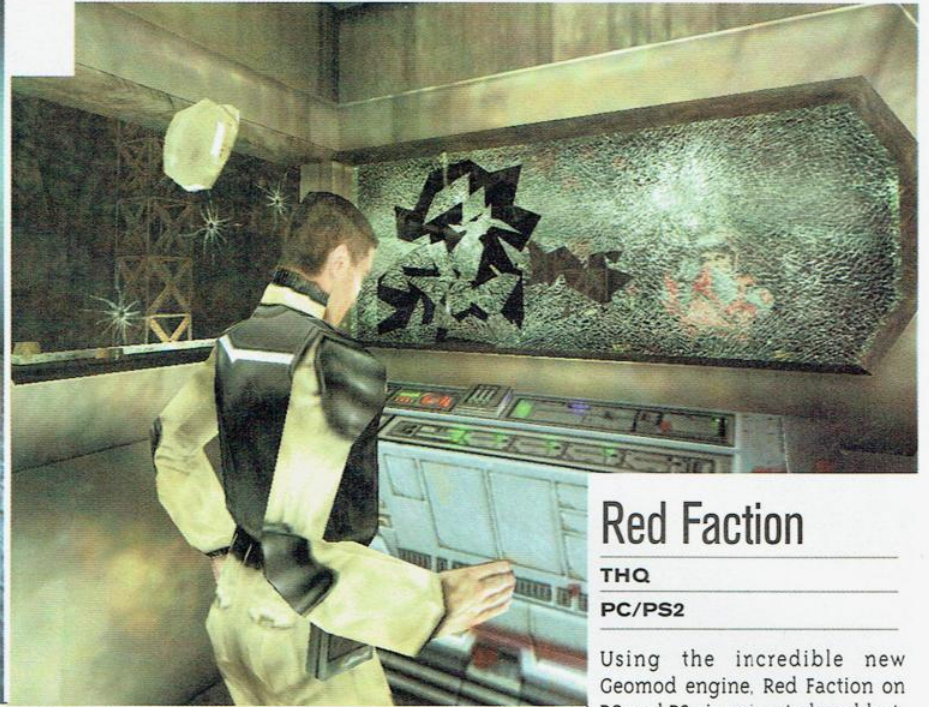
## Warcraft III

BLIZZARD

PC

Warcraft 3, although seemingly stuck in development Hell, is still looking marvellous in 3D. The game is sticking to its roots and promises to offer more of that classic Blizzard RTS gameplay, after dropping the ambitious change in direction and new RPG elements.

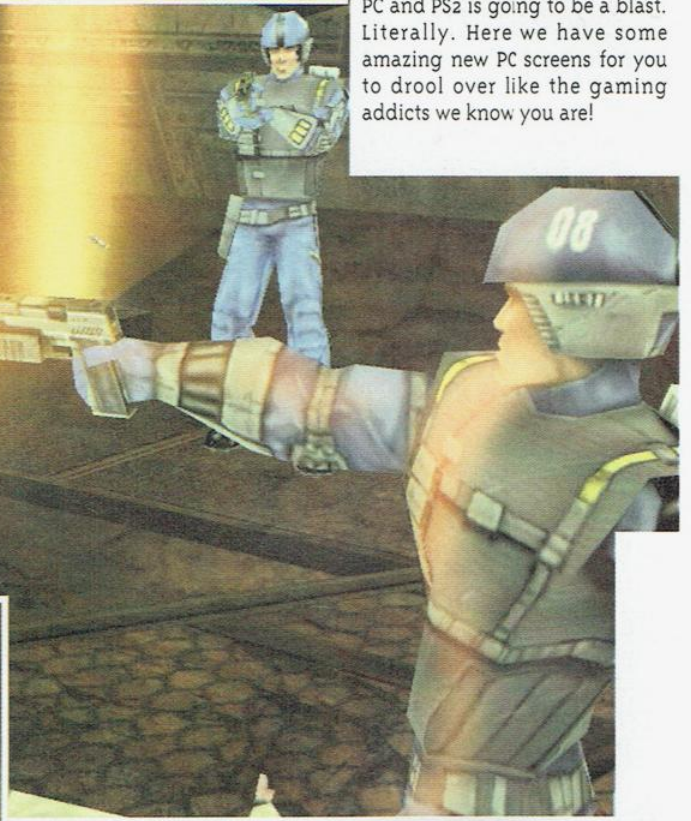
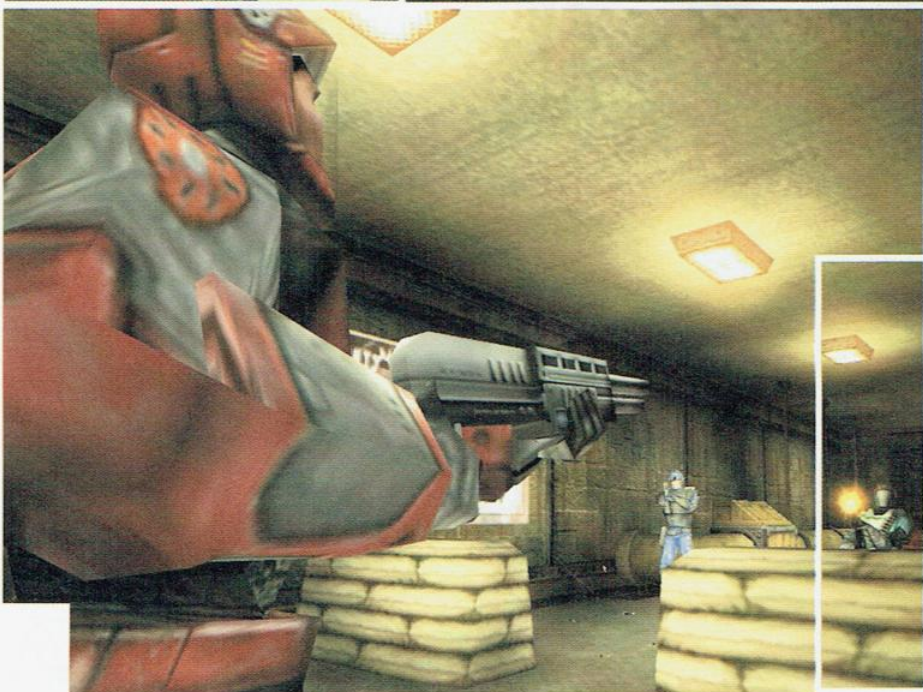




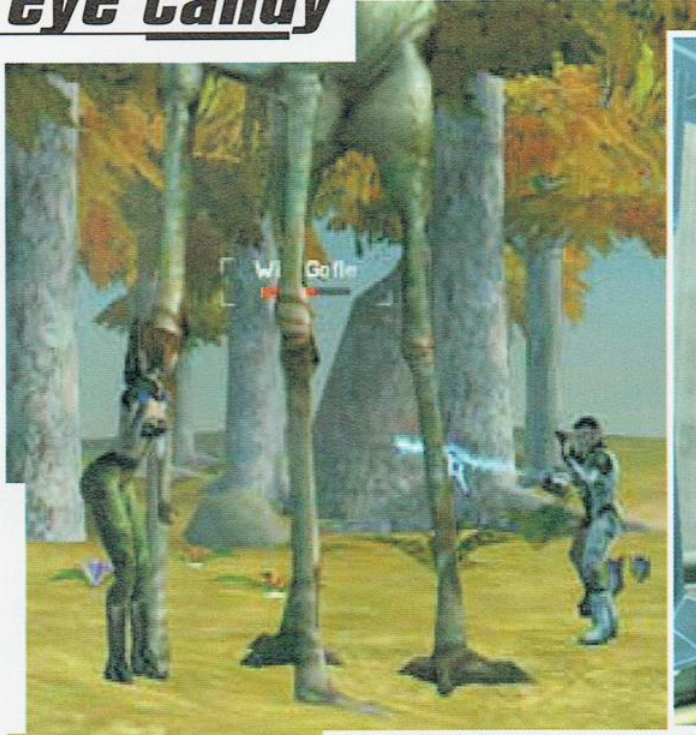
## Red Faction

THQ  
PC/PS2

Using the incredible new Geomod engine, Red Faction on PC and PS2 is going to be a blast. Literally. Here we have some amazing new PC screens for you to drool over like the gaming addicts we know you are!



# eye candy



## Anarchy Online

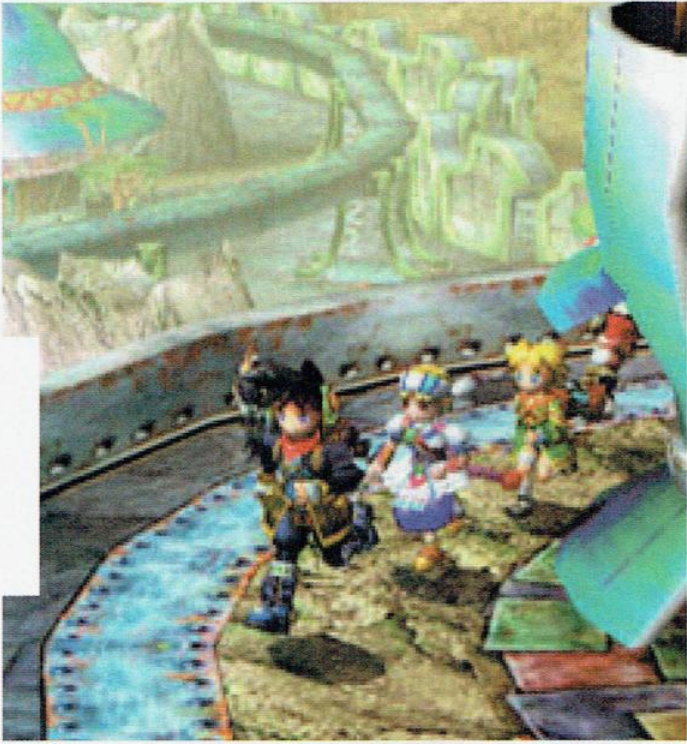
PC

FUNCOM

We took a look at this massively multiplayer RPG/Action game a few issues ago, but here are some new screenshots to drool over. Set in an alternate future, the land of Rubi-Ka is bristling with action, and you are in the thick of it. The game is in beta-testing at the moment but should be in our laps pretty soon.





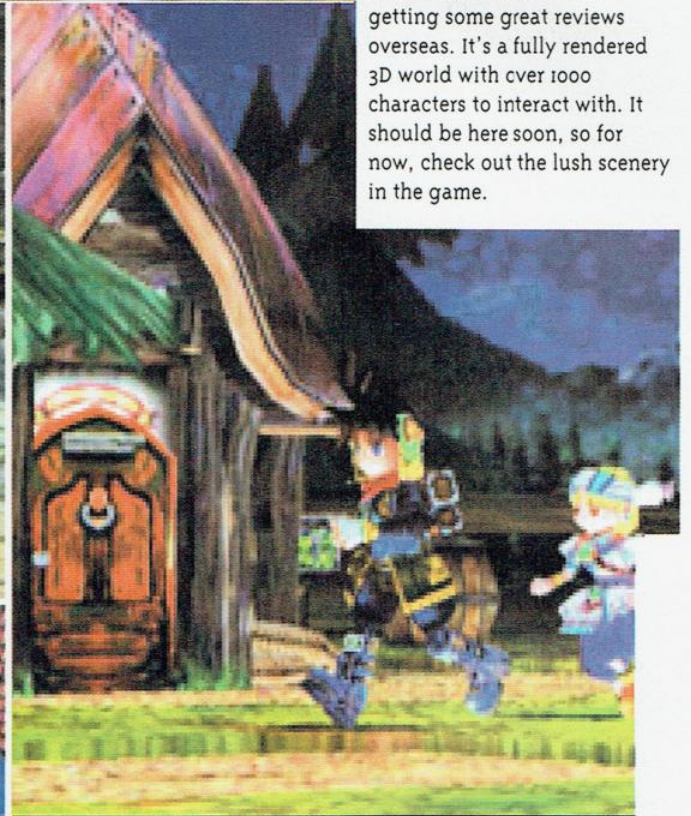


## Grandia 2

DREAMCAST

UBISOFT

Grandia 2 is a highly anticipated RPG for the Dreamcast that has been getting some great reviews overseas. It's a fully rendered 3D world with over 1000 characters to interact with. It should be here soon, so for now, check out the lush scenery in the game.



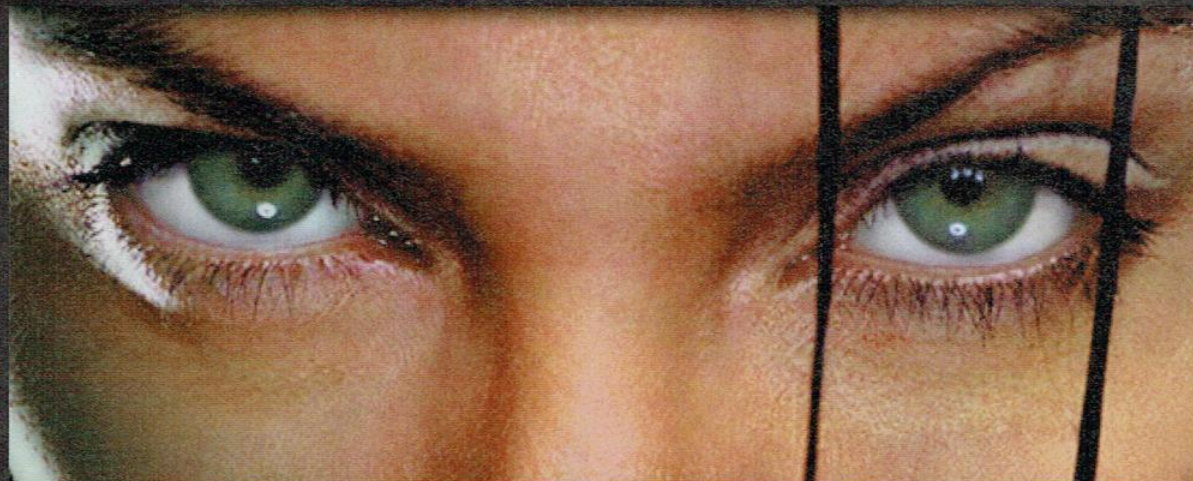
The long-awaited Tomb Raider movie is now in the final stages of production. Hyper's roving reporter **James Cotte** was recently airlifted to the stinking jungles of Indo-China to report on the making of this cinematic landmark. It made quite an impression on him; he claims he can "still hear the choppers..."



# TOMB RAIDER

## THE MOVIE

*An exclusive on the set report!*



Cross-pollination of different media types is nothing new. In the past century we've seen movies based on books, comics based on TV series, every possible permutation of entertainment spawning and swarming to max out every last merchandising buck. But one kind of spin-off that has never quite sat right is movies based on video games.

For over a decade we have been subjected to abortive attempts to turn the interactive narrative of the video game into a passable cinematic experience. Many have tried and failed. Among the ranks of the surreally bad are *Wing Commander*, *Street Fighter*, *Mortal Kombat* and *Super Mario Bros.* These and others have failed to capture the imagination of the gaming public for two main reasons.

Firstly, they have not successfully translated the ambience of the game setting. Ignoring continuity, making arbitrary changes and so forth can

only serve to aggravate the hard-core fan base that goes to see these films based on previous experience with the game. Secondly, they fall foul to crappy production values in the rush to make a quick buck. Ephemeral subject matter and disposable movies hardly make for high art.

Hence the ambivalence that has surrounded anticipation of the *Tomb Raider* movie. For a flash in the pan video game character, Lara Croft has had quite a long day in the sun. With a whopping five near-identical games on the PlayStation, she's now on the cusp of bridging the gap between generations of game consoles, becoming a more timeless character like *Mario* or *Sonic*.

Paramount, not wanting a *Double Dragon* on their hands, have made every effort to make *Tomb Raider* a first class production, a blockbuster worthy of the mainstream appeal and media

obsession the game series has enjoyed. Just as the programmers at Core Design originally started with the bust and sort of filled in the details later, key production positions have been filled out with talent that stand out in their respective fields.

The director and producer chairs have been filled with blockbuster veterans of films like *Con Air*, *Predator* and *Jurassic Park*. The world's largest film studio has been employed, the colossal Pinewood Studios in England. This vast structure has been known to foster its own weather system, and has been used to create the huge indoor environments in the *Star Wars* and *James Bond* movies.

The surface of the planet has been scoured for the most cliched environments imaginable. The frigid wastes of Iceland have been host to Lara's meandering, and some of the most prestigious historical structures in Britain have opened their doors to Ms Croft's treasuring.

### CAST & CREW

Standing out like colonial masters in the jungle, stalwart, bedraggled, yet obviously not of this continent, the imported cast and crew were all too happy to talk to *Hyper*. Paramount were able to round up a stable of impressive talent from many disciplines, including the inimitable Ms Jolie herself. Weariness and wariness both worked against the ideals of journalism, but they were as accommodating as time and energy permitted. Even if they did sound a bit like their own press releases.

**Actor:** Iain Glenn

**Plays:** Manfred Powell

Top flight actor and Scotsman, Glenn has forged his reputation with excellent performances on both the stage and screen, and played opposite Nicole Kidman in the controversial *The Blue Room*. Playing the villain was hardly a stretch for his talents; while his acting school chums were dancing and prancing their way through their electives, Iain studied fencing, a skill that would serve him well in roles such as this. His character, Manfred Powell, likes his foes to die by the sword, and is more than willing to help them to this end.

**HYPHER:** What kind of villain are you pitching at?

**IAIN:** Ummm...What kind of villain...

**HYPHER:** Moustache twirling? Cat stroking?

**IAIN:** No, I think Simon [West] wanted to create something very real. Adapting a computer game may suggest there's a cartoon-esque quality to it, but he's created detailed characters and complex situations, and it's not drawn into the action milieu that's gone before. It's a very intelligent story.

**HYPHER:** Do you aspire to your character's lifestyle? Being rich and evil?

**IAIN:** Well, I am rich and evil. (Nervous laughter from all present) So there's not much envy there!

## ACTOR: ANGELINA JOLIE PLAYS: LARA CROFT

She trained for months to take on the role of Lara Croft, studying martial arts, firearms, and some of the more exotic equipment used in the film, such as the "bungee ballet" apparatus ("I've never been so fit in my life"). Quite striking, even in her plain jungle catsuit, her Billy Bob tattoo only partly hidden by makeup, she was very much composed and ready to talk at length about her personal development over the course of the film ("everything about the film has been better than I expected"), being reunited with her estranged father Jon Voight (who plays Lara's father, natch), and her enthusiasm for doing her own stunts. Huddled mere feet away, the assembled press looked on in awe as she demonstrated how her ample bosom made lining up the sights on a pistol awkward when using both hands (if you catch our drift). "The first time I fired an automatic weapon - I'm left handed, so the shells come down this way" (She gestures to the gap between her shirt and her chest). Unfortunately, there wasn't much chance to discuss her opinion of the convergence of disparate forms of entertainment technology (astute readers will recall she played the sumptuous Acid Burn in *Hackers*), but I did get to ask her if she'd actually played the game...

**HYPER:** *Have you actually played the game?*

**ANGELINA JOLIE:** I'm terrible at games. I like to make her die.

**HYPER:** *How are you enjoying the filming?*

**AJ:** I've never been so fit in my life! We're going to all these amazing places and learning about people, that's the really exciting thing about this film, it's got a great... it inspires me and I think it will inspire everybody else. To think about other cultures and other people and have an adventure... and to be someone very spirited makes me feel alive.

**HYPER:** *So have you "become" Lara Croft?*

**AJ:** I feel like somehow along the way, we became one person. Someone came up to me at the pool today and said "Tomb Raider?" He was basically asking if that was my job description...

**HYPER:** *When did you decide you wanted to be Lara Croft?*

**AJ:** At first I didn't want to, I thought it was a very bad idea. I thought that everything that people thought this movie was going to be was what it would be. I met Simon West and he talked to me about how he saw her, about what he didn't want to do, how he saw her as a warrior and a fighter and being really tough and going to other countries. Being here and being the first film crew here, I realised that selfishly it would be a growing experience. That it would enhance my life. And it was a character that I did feel would be a really positive role model, in all the best ways. Not just in a moral way, but also in a great... I think there's not enough fire in people these days. Not enough, uh, just everything. She has a kind of "don't touch me" thing going, but she's very, uh, she's very, very, very alive. Everything in this film has been better than I expected. It's bigger than I could possibly imagine. Every gadget she has, and the way it works, and having all the other actors, are amazing. They're not like just people thrown into a room. They're great actors and great characters. The wardrobe's good, so I just feel really fortunate to have been cast as her.

**HYPER:** *So you'd do another Tomb Raider movie?*

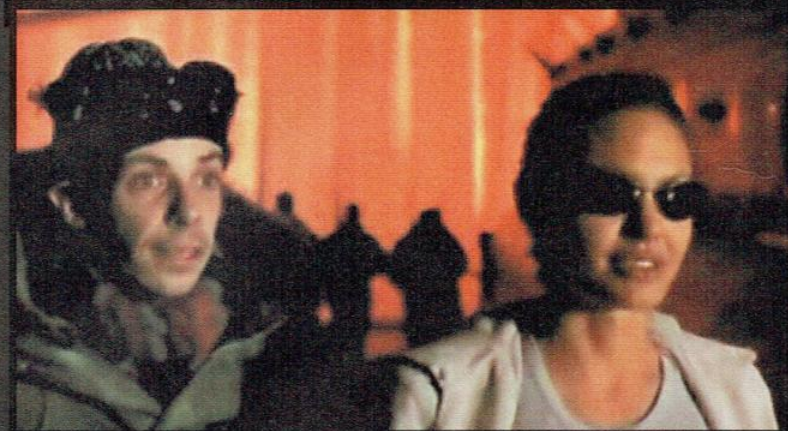
**AJ:** I can't wait to do the sequel. I wanna do it in Australia! Absolutely!

**HYPER:** *How hard is it doing Lara's stunts?*

**AJ:** The first time I hit a bulls eye with a gun, or the first time I did the bungee ballet and did the routine perfectly... it's been a test of all these things and I'm really happy that I was able to pull quite a lot of it off. Nothing's been hard, because it's all been practiced... Running on the walls was very hard, though. I was red, black and blue here for like weeks, I thought I had new stomach muscles, I looked in the mirror, and then I realised it was a big bruise.

**HYPER:** *Doesn't the ponytail get in the way?*

**AJ:** The first time I did gymnastics, I did a flip and the braid went "Whick!" and whacked me in the eye, and I had to see an eye doctor. Then suddenly after a few weeks into the filming, suddenly I was able to spin the guns, shoot them, jump off something, figure out how to get the braid in the right place, you know, yeah, all these different things you don't think about.



### HOLIDAY IN CAMBODIA

But perhaps the most striking setting chosen has been the ancient temples buried in the heart of Cambodia. The thousand year old structures at Angkor Wat are distinctive, unique, and huge. The trademark triple towers of the Angkor temple complex have weathered the elements for centuries, and more recently the spectre of colonialism and the horrors of the Khmer Rouge.

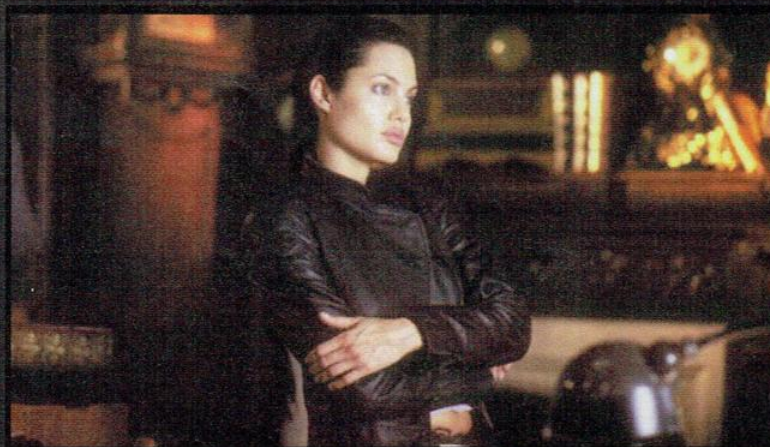
The murderous followers of Pol Pot, whilst never adequately punished for their heinous crimes, have at least been removed from power, and Cambodia is now striving forward into a brighter future. A member of ASEAN, a fledgling democracy and market economy, the local authorities have been keen to promote Cambodia as a tourist destination, and for the first time in decades foreigners can safely

explore some of the planet's unspoiled antiquities.

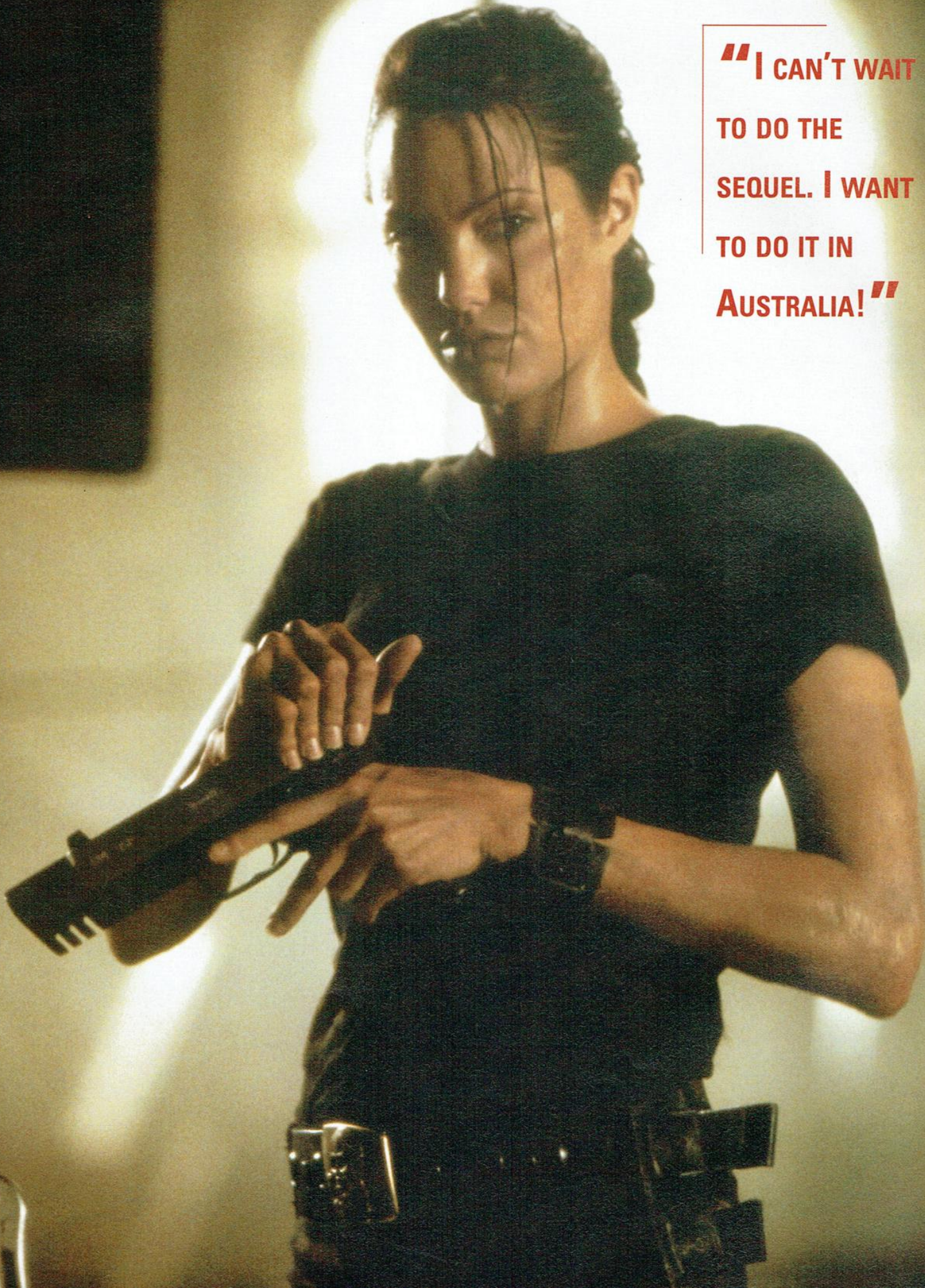
The effect of foreign capital on Cambodia's second city, Siem Reap, is remarkable. In a few short years huge hotels have sprung up around Angkor, catering to the hundreds of Americans, Japanese and French tourists now flooding through. Cheap, but not yet passe, and the backpacker's destination of choice, every social barometer points in the direction of rebirth. Even the film industry is finally rising from its slumber, a true sign of rejoining the modern age.

### LATERAL THINKING

The primary Tomb Raider set in Cambodia is the Ghost Gate just off Angkor Wat. Augmented with Styrofoam to look even more authentic than it did in its natural state, it sees the hired minions of the villain



**“ I CAN'T WAIT  
TO DO THE  
SEQUEL. I WANT  
TO DO IT IN  
AUSTRALIA! ”**



## DIRECTOR: SIMON WEST

The director was able to talk about his distinct vision for Tomb Raider.

**SIMON WEST:** It should be an unusual film, a crossover between science, mysticism, and plain old magic. Underground, all sorts of weird stuff happens, and it gets totally surreal.

**HYPHER:** *Is it a gradual descent, or is it like flipping a switch?*

**SIMON:** It is like flipping a switch. It depends. Lara tends to crash into the tombs, while people like Julian tend to meander down really slowly. Whatever she does, it tends to be more punchy. Other people cruise along in their cars or planes or helicopters, and she tends to crash through walls, and burst through windows, and dive into tombs, so she's more extreme. A very ballsy woman. She's smart, sexy, and takes no prisoners. The men in the film are really cannon fodder, and get in the way. She steams through everybody on a direct path. The only man who gets any consideration in the film is her father. Everyone else is either a rival or a victim.

**HYPHER:** *Would you say it's a believable story with likable characters?*

**SIMON:** Yeah. The game is pretty two dimensional, and when people play it they project onto the character what they think she's like. My job was to take my interpretation of Lara, and show it on the screen. I think people will like her.

I didn't want the audience to feel like they were sitting watching someone playing the game, that would be boring. She figures these things out really quickly. When you're in a theatre for an hour and a half, you don't want to think about maths and geometry; you want to have fun.

I put things in for the gamers. You can see clues and things in the background, if you want to you pick those up and work out what they all mean, but you don't have to. It works on two levels.

**HYPHER:** *It sounds like you're making a work of art.*

**SIMON:** We're trying to elevate it above the normal blockbuster in the summer vein. We want to give all the fun, but with some intelligence.

## LARA STUNT DOUBLE: NIKKI BERWICK

One of the stunt doubles for Ms Jolie, of identical height and build, and actually English to boot, Nikki was hanging around on set, waiting to be hurled out of a "Russian Swing," a giant sling-shot specially built to hurl stuntmen into the air at high speeds. They claimed that the Russian Swing originated in the Russian circus, but it resembles a spin-off of the Soviet space program.

**NIKKI BERWICK:** It's going to launch me about 35 feet.

This wasn't her first film based on a video game, though.

**NIKKI:** In *Mortal Kombat 2* I doubled Sonja Blade.

Uh-oh.

## VARIOUS HENCHMAN

There were numerous sinister looking henchmen brooding around the shoot. Hyper caught up with one...

**HYPHER:** *Does your henchman have a name?*

**HENCHMAN:** No

**HYPHER:** *Do you get killed?*

**HENCHMAN:** I don't know yet.

**HYPHER:** *What kind of gun is that supposed to be?*

**HENCHMAN:** A plastic one.

## NICK RAY, CONSULTANT

Who better to act as a consultant than a hip and groovy backpacker? The author of tourist and cycling guides that encompass the Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, Nick Ray helped select the Ghost Gate at Angkor Wat as the site for the "tomb."

**HYPHER:** *So it's the most authentic looking of the authentic gates?*

**NICK:** It's certainly more authentic looking than it was before.

The fact is this is something of a re-awakening for Cambodia. It used to be a dirty word, but now it's the hip place to be.





## LLOYD LEVIN, PRODUCER

The producer of *Boogie Nights*, *Event Horizon* and *Mystery Men* was on set. Quiet, calculating, very much in control, he had a few insightful words for us.

**LLOYD LEVIN:** It's coming together really nicely. When something starts as an idea, "I wonder if we could shoot at Angkor Wat?" and then we can actually do it, it's great.

**HYPER:** *Is there any CGI? Any monsters?*

**LLOYD:** Hmm... yeah. There's a fantasy element. Above ground is a very realistic world. The tone of the movie is reality based; it's not campy, it's real. As you move underground, into the tombs, things become more and more surreal, and hallucinogenic.

**HYPER:** *Do you think it would be a good stoner's movie then?*

**LLOYD:** I think it would be a great stoner's movie.

**HYPER:** *You say it's not campy, but there are elements of humour.*

**LLOYD:** There's a line between humour and camp. We wanted to keep the tone hard edged and real, to support the reality of the character. So you believe that she does the things she does, so it's not a fantasy. We tried to create a real emotional core for her.

**HYPER:** *Traditionally films based on video games have been... vile. Are you confident that this will be the first "proper" one?*

**LLOYD:** It had better be (laughs). There haven't been all that many movies based on video game. There have been some movies that have been based on books that have been vile also, but no one says, "book adaptations don't work."

**HYPER:** *You'd be breaking ground if you made the first.*

**LLOYD:** The temptation is there that when you base a movie on a popular game, to assume that the audience that played the game will come and see the movie and be cynical, but we're trying to create a movie-movie. A real movie. A movie that if you're a fan of the game you'll enjoy, and even if you don't know the game you'll enjoy.

**HYPER:** *Are there sequels in the works?*

**LLOYD:** If this works, they're being contemplated. There's a specific drama that's central to this movie. Angelina is 25 in this movie, and I think it would be really interesting to follow her as she gets older, as her character matures. Keeping it real. So it wouldn't be like the Bond movies, where he's always exactly the same.

The Bond movies are an obvious influence, but we wanted to do something a little different. Something more... real.



Manfred Powell (Iain Glenn) engaged in a labourious decoding of an ancient puzzle. They have deduced that the most efficient way to pry open the tomb door is to hire hundreds of natives to pull on ropes affixed to the surface of the monument. We were assured that every effort was being taken to keep the ancient structure pristine, and that the blocks to be removed were artificial to start with.

Fanning out from the focus of the filming was a battalion of crew and their equipment. Dozens of huge film trucks, booms, supplies, furniture, specialised widgets, and vast quantities of bottled water were grafted to the scene, along with a private army to

make it all work. As much as possible locals were hired for the crew, but without an indigenous film industry Cambodia could not supply everything needed for the filming.

All the vehicles on set had to be hired and moved into place from Thailand, and massive floods and poor roads necessitated the involvement of the army in getting them all there in one piece.

Security was tight; no photography on set, and certainly no rubber necked tourists were permitted near the action.

### BONZED BODIES, SILVER SPOONS

There was of course nothing beneath the authentic landmark being filmed

other than the typical material one associates with the Earth's crust. The death-trap laden catacombs are all sophisticated sets back at Pinewood. The end result of two intensive weeks of shooting in dense tropical rainforest will doubtless amount to a handful of moments of the final cuts running time, but this attention to detail is the hallmark of all movies that strive to exceed the quality of Wayne & Garth blue-screen shenanigans.

The art and science in movie making on this scale are dwarfed by the industry involved; number of staff, tonnage of equipment. Glossier than carnies, rivaling a military task force in scale, this invasion into the heart of

Cambodia ended as quickly as it began. Scrutiny of the operation was impossible; we didn't get to see the fake village they'd constructed in action, or Lara's airlifted Land Rover plummet into the foliage. Only apparent was the impression of scale. Shipping out 16 soused hacks from the regional press could only be wise when you have money to burn.

### DOUBLE OR NOTHING

The recurring subtext of the whole production of the Tomb Raider movie is duality. The main character is the opposite of her nemesis, applying cunning instead of brute force, and enthusiasm in the face of plodding monoto-

## ACTOR: JULIAN RHIND-TUTT PLAYS: PIMMS

Every mastermind needs an off-sider to expound his plans and any situational developments too, so who better than Iceland's favourite Englander, Julian Rhind-Tutt? This is something of a break from his more serious roles in *The Madness of King George* and *Notting Hill*. He explained his role on the set beneath the shadow of the Cambodian "tomb."

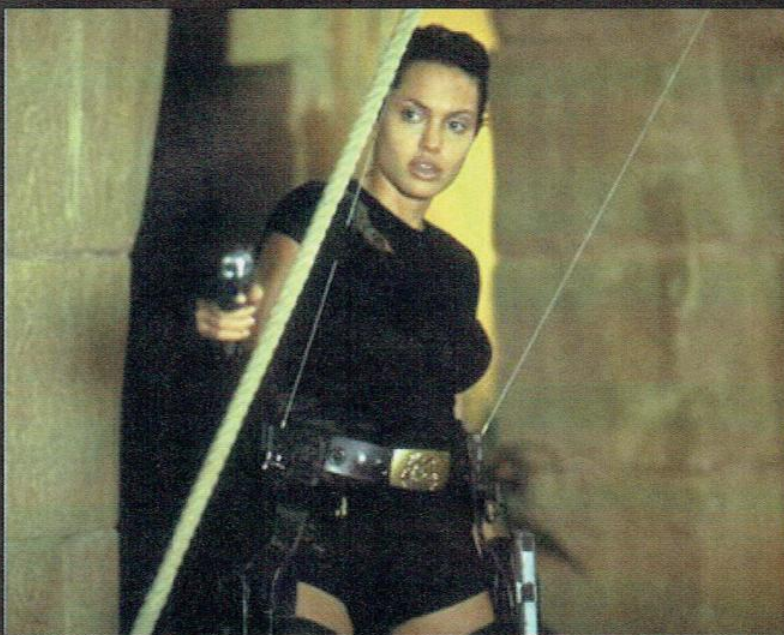
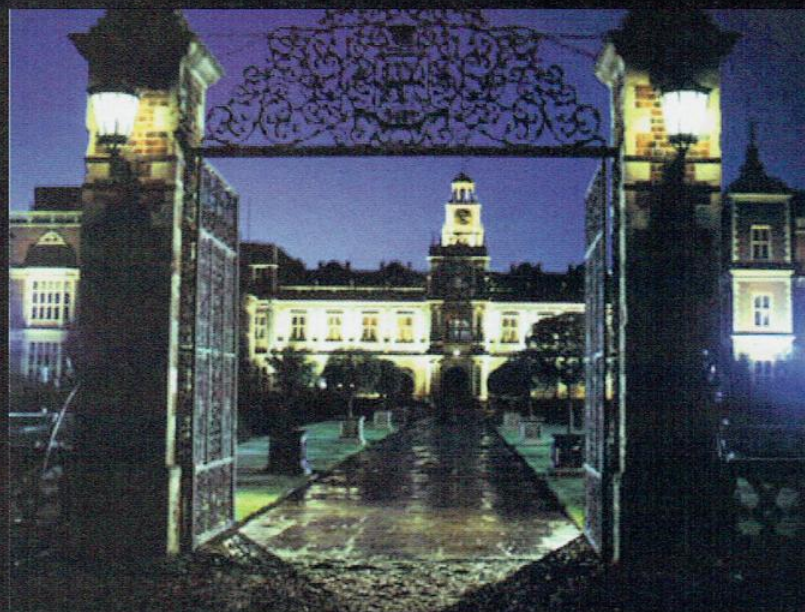
**JULIAN RHIND-TUTT:** I'm supposed to be telling the workers to hurry up, but I read my phrasebook wrong. When you see the subtitle on the screen it will say "Hurry up, the train is leaving [insert your platform number here]." So there's a little humour... I'm very famous in Iceland, but I haven't quite cracked Southeast Asia yet. I'm working on it.

**HYPER:** *Would you classify your character as a lackey or a flunky?*

**JULIAN:** Hmm... Somewhere between the two. He is actually a character in his own right. Something of a naïve apprentice to the villain, he realises too late the extent of the evil he's a part of. I'm a little bit like the audience's eyes in the film.

**HYPER:** *So you go- "hey, why are we doing this?" You're a storytelling device.*

**JULIAN:** Yeah, any of those lines, look to me. "What happens now? Where are we? Why are we doing this?"



## ACTOR: DANIEL CRAIG PLAYS: RIVAL TOMB RAIDER

A quasi love interest, more of a sidekick for Lara, Daniel plays a rival raider.

**HYPER:** *Is he a secondary character? Does he get to kick arse?*

**DANIEL:** He does, he gets his hands dirty. He's a tomb raider wanna-be. He is a tomb raider, but he's not Lara Croft. But he thinks he's better than Lara Croft, and obviously he is (laughter). He's basically a good guy, he just gets it wrong.

**HYPER:** *Does your character have a signature weapon?*

**DANIEL:** Uh, no. I think his idea is that if you carry a gun, you'll get shot at. So if you don't carry a gun, you won't get shot at. He picks one up occasionally. He has a Bowie Knife.

**HYPER:** *Named after David Bowie?*

ny. Everybody's favourite Yin-Yang, the battle of the sexes, is also being waged on screen. The environments above and below ground are starkly different, each plundered tomb offering a bridge into the world of the supernatural.

Stark differences in class, climate, courage, and competence are all on display, along with the obvious differentiation between the synthetic Lara and the real (we think) Angelina. In terms of the films success, the biggest

distinction is going to be between good and bad. The money is on the table, and all the pieces are in place. Now it's up to fate to decide whether Tomb Raider the movie will stink or swim.

From the narrow, sanitised perspective of a brief press junket it's difficult to get a grip on how this will all pan out, but the odds at stake are obvious. If the movie as a whole rocks as hard as the trailer, then this could finally represent the acceptance of the video game into the media mainstream. The blame



## KIRK PETRUCELLI, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Mastermind behind the entire visual look of the film, Kirk Petrucci oversaw production of the gigantic indoor sets back at Pinewood studios. To get an idea of his talents, this is the same guy who designed the incredible sets for *Mystery Men*. Kirk was out on the set to ensure that the visual continuity between the real life jungle and the sets he'd created was seamless. This of course meant putting on a few finishing touches, improving on nature.

**HYPER:** *So your job is making the jungle look more like a proper jungle than the jungle actually looks?*

**KIRK:** Yeah. This jungle doesn't have much tropical foliage, we had to manipulate it slightly.

**HYPER:** *What sort of tone are you aiming for with the film as a whole? Serious action, or more wacky & zany?*

**KIRK:** Kind of Remains of the Day with a mad motorcycle ripping right through it. We're starting with very classic structures, and adding super modern elements. We're aiming for a collision between real modern stuff and real antiquities. So what you have is somewhat timeless.

**HYPER:** *So you're trying to make a film that won't date.*

**KIRK:** That's correct.

for crime and mental illness may finally be placed on a different scapegoat, freeing up a powerful medium to fulfil its true potential in our culture.

But if Tomb Raider bombs, then it could be another decade before the game-based movie rises from the swamp of ignominy. Hyper readers are urged to see this upcoming motion picture at the movies, as every dollar that ploughs its way back into the games industry helps raise the overall quality of the games we play every day. In theory.

If in doubt, slap on a pith helmet and a handlebar moustache, get your manservant to mix a Singapore Sling, and catch the first sedan chair to your local movie house. Ask yourself how a movie that takes the Indiana Jones formula and adds a hot chick can possibly fail. Remember, it's not a chore, it's entertainment. And if worst comes to worst, sit back and think of England.

**TOMB RAIDER: THE MOVIE HITS THEATRES ON JUNE 21.**



# PC PowerPlay

# 2001

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**PENTIUM 4**  
It's here - but is it worth the upgrade?

THE BEST REVIEW!  
**COLIN McRAE RALLY 2**  
The rally king takes the chequered flag

PLAYTESTED!  
**QUAKE 3 TEAM ARENA**  
Is it too little too late for id Software's teamplay add-on?

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STUPID INVADERS  
MECHWARRIOR 4  
FIFA 2001 • B-17 2

NO CD's?  
Please ask your newsagent

The image shows the cover of the PC PowerPlay magazine for the year 2001. The cover is filled with various game-related headlines and images, including a soldier with a rifle, a rally car, and a futuristic robot. The magazine is tilted slightly to the right.

PC GAMES & TECHNOLOGY 100% AUSTRALIAN

# onimusha

"World settings, gameplay, visuals and music are all unique and have never been seen before. You won't be disappointed."



WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT, BUDDY? SOME PEOPLE!

**O**NIMUSHA, WHICH HAS HAD A NUMBER OF delays, is finally coming together and should be ready for release around March. Zombies and feudal war in Japan are two of the ingredients on offer here, in what is described as a Samurai adventure set in the 16th century. The fact that this is one of the most expensive games Capcom has ever funded shows how serious they are about making Onimusha an epic experience. One of Japan's leading screen actors, Takeshi Kaneshiro, will be the voice and face of the main character, and a full orchestra was hired to record the soundtrack. Set in the Sengoku period of Japanese history, Onimusha requires the player to battle his way into an enemy castle to rescue his kidnapped cousin. Keiji Inafune, creator of Onimusha, chatted with Hyper correspondent Derek dela Fuente to give us an insight into Onimusha.

## THE CREATOR SPEAKS!

**HYPER:** Onimusha has been described as a Resident Evil game, why this comparison?

**KEIJI INAFUNE:** Keiji Inafune: It is because Onimusha somewhat succeeds the game sys-

tem and the controls from Resident Evil. However, its gameplay, although having lots of action and story line, is totally different from that of Resident Evil.

**HYPER:** Onimusha combines action with adventure, how have you balanced the two elements?

**KI:** Onimusha is considered to be an adventure game because it involves lots of interactive elements: talking, searching, exploring, etc. Finding a balance has been difficult but I believe we have achieved our goal.

**HYPER:** You are the creator of Mega Man. To create Onimusha, did you work to some specs given to you or did you create the game idea and present it to Capcom?

**KI:** No, I wasn't given any specific instructions. I proposed the concept to the company and it was accepted. I have put in a lot of time and effort since inception to make Onimusha successful.

**HYPER:** Please give the readers a bit of back-



KEIJI INAFUNE, CAPCOM'S ONIMUSHA CREATOR



**PLATFORM:**  
PS2

**AVAILABLE:**  
March

**CATEGORY:**  
Action/Adventure

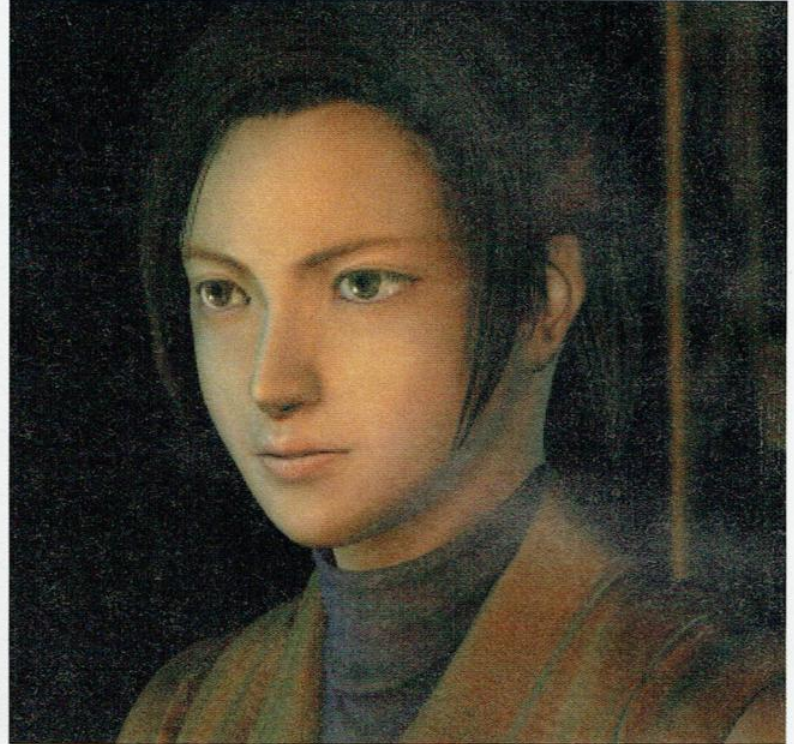
**PLAYERS:**  
1

**PUBLISHER:**  
Capcom





I TOLD YOU THE UPSTAIRS FLOORBOARDS NEEDED WORK



ground into the storyline and the overall objectives?

**KI:** This story is set in feudal Japan in the 16th century. An army lead by a Shogun 'Nobunaga Oda', who is possessed by an evil power, has kidnapped a beautiful princess. Nobunaga has just defeated Yoshimoto Imagawa, another famous warlord, in a surprise attack and now sets out to attack Yoshitatsu Saito's famous castle in the Mino Prefecture. You take on the guise of Samanosuke, a talented samurai warrior, and players must battle through various detailed environments and confront powerful creatures to rescue the princess. Samanosuke does not initially realise that a legion of demon warriors stands between him and the princess. Onimusha is based on actual Japanese history, which has been blended into fictional storylines.

**HYPER:** Being one of the first games on the PS2, how important is it to utilise the power of the machine so it cannot be viewed merely as a nicer looking game than one on the PSX?

**KI:** We tried to utilise as much of the PS2's capabilities as we can so this title is not viewed merely as a nice looking game. It offers a lot of technical innovations and we have adopted some interesting background Animation Technology along with special effects. The player will be able to view not only weather effects like wind and storms in more detail, and highly detailed lighting effects, which throw off shadows, but also a very high degree of realism which will add to the game experience. The camera views, with detailed rendering, are a few of the nice features that will push the PS2.

**HYPER:** As the game will offer lots of action,

movement and fighting does the PS2 offer more extensive and detailed animation and movements?

**KI:** I believe so. We are still in the machine's early days but we are not only going for a strong game of action and adventure but one that conveys emotions and via its look, movements and sound - which need a powerful machine - we believe that the PS2 is a superb platform.

**HYPER:** Where do the gameplay vs. technology issues balance themselves out?

**KI:** As a video game, gameplay should always be prioritised over anything. We utilised advanced technologies to achieve better gameplay.

**HYPER:** Is the game scripted in English like Resident Evil? Why is this? (Not many people will know that Resident Evil, although developed in Japan, was scripted in English first.)

**KI:** Both English and Japanese voices are included on the same disc. You can switch between them as you wish.

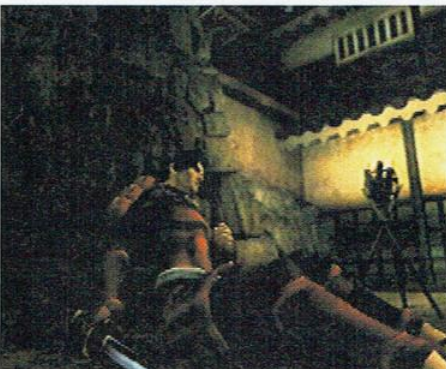
**HYPER:** The game is going to offer 'major motion film values', does this mean merely more FMV and visuals?

**KI:** No. Visual impact does add a lot to the gameplay experience. In this game, FMV/great visuals and the gameplay are not two separate things but are blended closely together. You'll see what I'm talking about when you play the game. It is finding the right balance.

**HYPER:** We are told a 200-piece orchestra will be used. Does such grand expenditure and



EVIL GUYS ARE ALWAYS HORNY



# onimusha [cont.]



input make for a better game?

**KI:** I am sure it will, otherwise it would not be incorporated. I believe there's no one who would not appreciate listening to a great piece of music.

**HYPER:** Emotions are also a facet of the game that is being worked on - how do you convey emotions on screen in a game?

**KI:** We have utilised lots of face motion capturing/animation technology throughout the game. The beautifully orchestrated and properly timed music will add to the overall feeling of the game. Also, getting the right angle shot of a face is important so it is a combination of many variables that can give you emotion. Lighting is also important to create an ambience.

**HYPER:** Tell us what you believe are the unique and/or selling points of the game?

**KI:** World settings, gameplay, visuals, music are all unique and have never been seen before. You won't be disappointed.

**WE'D LIKE TO SEE:**

A hyped up PS2 game that turns out to be good.

**HYPER:** What weapons are on view and what makes them special?

**KI:** Lots, including swords and bows. The

player will find the weapons system very different. As you go through the game you will be able to obtain three different gems that will fit into Samanosuke's gauntlet. There are three types of gems: fire, wind and thunder. These will have elemental effects on the player's weapon. The player can use these various effects to inflict intensifying damage on an opponent or to solve an action based puzzle. Players will be required to use strategy when it comes to

choosing the appropriate gemstone and some areas in the game are unobtainable unless the player uses the right gem at the correct location. The gems will also add visually stunning special effects to each of Samanosuke's weapons.

**HYPER:** Does 'Onimusha' mean anything?

**KI:** 'Oni' means an ogre and 'Musha' means a Samurai warrior. ■





for gamers who have learnt  
to play nicely together

**PC** PowerPlay

AUSTRALIA'S PC GAMES AND TECHNOLOGY MAGAZINE

# tribes 2

"The environments are utterly cool ... this is one huge playground."



"UHR... HI! LET ME GUESS, THIS ISN'T THE SCRABBLE CLUB?"

**PLATFORM:**  
PC

**AVAILABLE:**  
February

**CATEGORY:**  
Team-based FPS

**PLAYERS:**  
1-64

**PUBLISHER:**  
Sierra

**I**F YOU'RE LUCKY, AND ALL THINGS HAVE gone smoothly over at Sierra, you just might be able to pick up Tribes 2 before this issue of Hyper vanishes from the newsagents. However, we can't bottle up our excitement over this massive sequel, so we're going to take a closer look at it, regardless if it's finished and released by the time you read this. The office is abuzz with a playable version of the game, and it's bickety-bam from here to eternity. The original Tribes surprised us all with its solid team-based gameplay, and the promise that this sequel holds now that we're entering the age of high-speed internet connections is huge. Get your clan together and read on...

### ANYONE FOR A GAME OF FRISBEE?

The fact that Tribes 2 will support up to 64 players at any one time is a pretty exciting fact for hardcore multiplayer gamers. As we learned with Tribes, however, the larger the teams, the messier the game can get, and certainly the worse the connection becomes if you're playing online. For starters, let's hope the network code holds up and that enough

people have broadband connections now to make this 64 player dream a reality in Tribes 2. Certainly, the longevity with a game such as Tribes 2 is all in the teamplay that you'll experience with friends online or at a LAN. The variety of gameplay modes in Tribes 2 is excellent - for a full listing see the box-out we've included for your viewing pleasure. Basically, there's enough here to suit all types of gamers, from the all-out carnage of deathmatch to the complex communication needed in some of the teamplay modes. In fact, when it comes to in-game and out of game communication, Tribes 2 will probably be unequalled this year. For starters, when you log on, you'll have access to news, forums, chat, in-game e-mail and messaging, which should make organising clan wars, friendlies or even just hanging with your fellow Tribes 2 addicts a great deal of fun. The game menu really will be a robust communications hub, from where you'll be able to enjoy every aspect of the game. The three armour types on offer - Scout (light and fast), Assault (a medium balance) and Juggernauts (slow but solid as hell) can now

be changed mid-game on the fly depending on the situation you find yourself in. The type of armour you equip affects what kind of weapons you can carry too, with the Juggernaut obviously having access to some serious firepower. Of the eleven weapons in Tribes 2, new ones include a nasty melee weapon, the Shocklance; the Heavy armour only Missile Launcher; and the naughty but nice variations of new grenades. The Missile Launcher is one deadly gun, able to lock on to a "hot" target and home in. A hot target is basically any player or vehicle that is using a jet pack or engines. There is a manual dumbfire also, but the missile launches quite slowly so it's usually horribly inaccurate unless used in the proper fashion. If you're worried about getting slammed with a homing missile, you can simply drop some handy chaff and try to wiggle out of it. On the whole, all the weapons have been updated with new sounds and weapon effects to keep things feeling fresh, and the spectacular sight of a barrage of colourful explosions is all part of Tribes 2's incredibly nice new visuals.



## MODES COMING OUT OF YOUR EARS!

Fire up a game of Tribes 2, and you'll be presented with the following game options...

**DM (Deathmatch)** — No rules, just kill or be killed. Points are earned for a kill but you lose points when you get killed yourself.

**Capture the Flag** — Plain vanilla CTF, albeit with huge terrain to traverse.

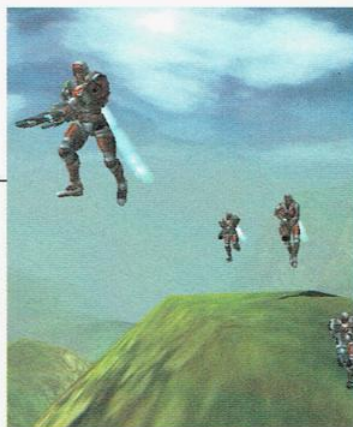
**Rabbit** — One flag exists and whoever gets it earns points whilst they evade the other players.

**Capture and Hold** — This is a team game, all about defending a certain location on the map.

**Siege** — One team is on the offensive, the other on the defensive. Roles reverse in the second round. Similar to UT's Assault mode.

**Bounty** — You must hunt down a certain player who is your bounty in a deathmatch environment, without killing players who are not your objective.

**Flag Hunters** — Like the old Quake 1 mod, Headhunters. Kill a player and take his flag back to the central nexus for points. The team with the most points wins.



AMY WAS BUMMED TO FIND OUT HER BLIND DATE WAS AN ION CANNON



## MAKE YOUR OWN MAPS

Tribes 2 will come packaged with a powerful terrain editor for players to create their own environments to battle in. Not only will you be able to specify the terrain, but also the weather and environmental effects on the vehicles.

## BABY YOU CAN DRIVE MY CAR

As you would expect from a sequel's graphics, be prepared to be blown away. The landscapes are more complex than ever, stretching on for what seems like miles, all with the bumpy, craggy realism of a real environment. The design of the architecture is fantastic, from lone looming towers to buildings dug out into the sides of mountains — the environments are utterly cool. This is one huge playground. One of the big features in Tribes and now Tribes 2 are the vehicles you can take control of to get around the maps a little quicker than simply hopping from point to point with your jet pack. The usual troop transports are there, as well as the one-man Shrike fighter that fires chainguns, the three-player Thundersword bomber and the cool ultra-fast Wildcat hoverbike — excellent for escaping from your sniping spot, heh heh. There are also assault vehicles and a mobile point base that allows you to re-equip yourself when you're nowhere near

home. Instead of being blasted away from the inventory unit when you're trying to equip, now you can set-up your request before you step onto the plate and get equipped instantly once you get there.

Stocking up your inventory is one of those things that confuses newbies to the game, as well as the potential chaos that can ensue when a team fails to communicate effectively in a game. Thankfully, Tribes 2 has made a lot of improvements in these areas, and for starters there is a complex set of training missions so that you can get up to speed with all facets of the game before you log onto a server and get your arse kicked for asking too many questions. There is also a botmatch available to help players hone their skills in all the different gameplay modes.

Tribes 2 is looking like the team-based shooter to beat this year. Unless Halo comes along and knocks our socks off, Tribes 2 is the game to get for some hardcore action. ■



## WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

Tribes 2 is a resource hog. Let's hope the final required specs aren't too scary.

## HERE'S OUR MONTHLY LOOK AT WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON

PC



MAX PAYNE



X-COM ALLIANCE



WARCRAFT III

P52



ESPN NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT



KENGO: MASTER OF BUSHIDO



DROPSHIP

DREAMCAST



SURF ROCKET RACER



CANNON SPIKE



PLANET OF THE APES

NINTENDO 64



HEY YOU PIKACHU!



STAR WARS: BATTLE FOR NABOO



ROSWELL CONSPIRACIES

PLAYSTATION



FINAL FANTASY IX



FEAR EFFECT 2: RETRO HELIX



DUKE NUKEM: LAND OF THE BABES



# WINWINWINWIN SUPER BUST A MOVE 2

Entries close February 26th



## FOR PS2

Bubbles, puzzles and restrictive muzzles. Okay, maybe not the restrictive muzzles. But there are certainly lots of puzzles and bubbles. If this is your thing, then you must be frothing at the mouth, bubbling even, to get your hands on a copy of Super Bust A Move for your new PlayStation2! Thanks to Acclaim, we have five copies of this addictive puzzle game to just give away to some lowly readers. But first, you must prove your worth by answering the following brain-teaser successfully...

➤ Name another PS2 Acclaim game.

Put your answer, along with your name and address, on the back of an envelope and send it to: Bust A Cap In Yo Bubbles, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Good luck!

# LEGEND OF DRAGOON

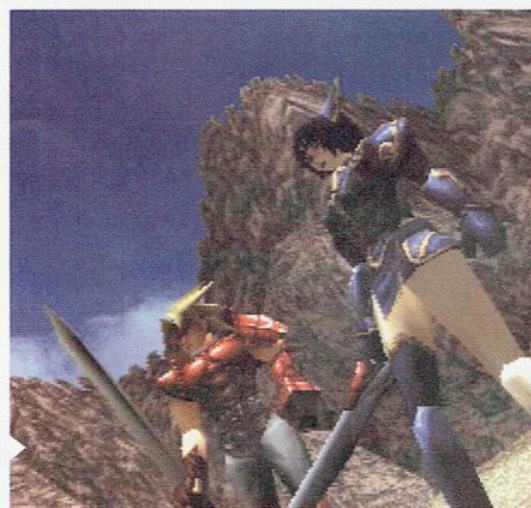
## FOR PSONE

Lead your character Dart on an impressive journey to rescue the young Shana who has been kidnapped. You'll have to face all kinds of horrible creations of evil, so build up your stats, improve your stash of weapons and get adventuring. Legend Of Dragoon is here for your PSone and it's sure to absorb you for hours on end. Thanks to Sony Computer Entertainment of Australia, we have five copies to give away to some lucky readers.

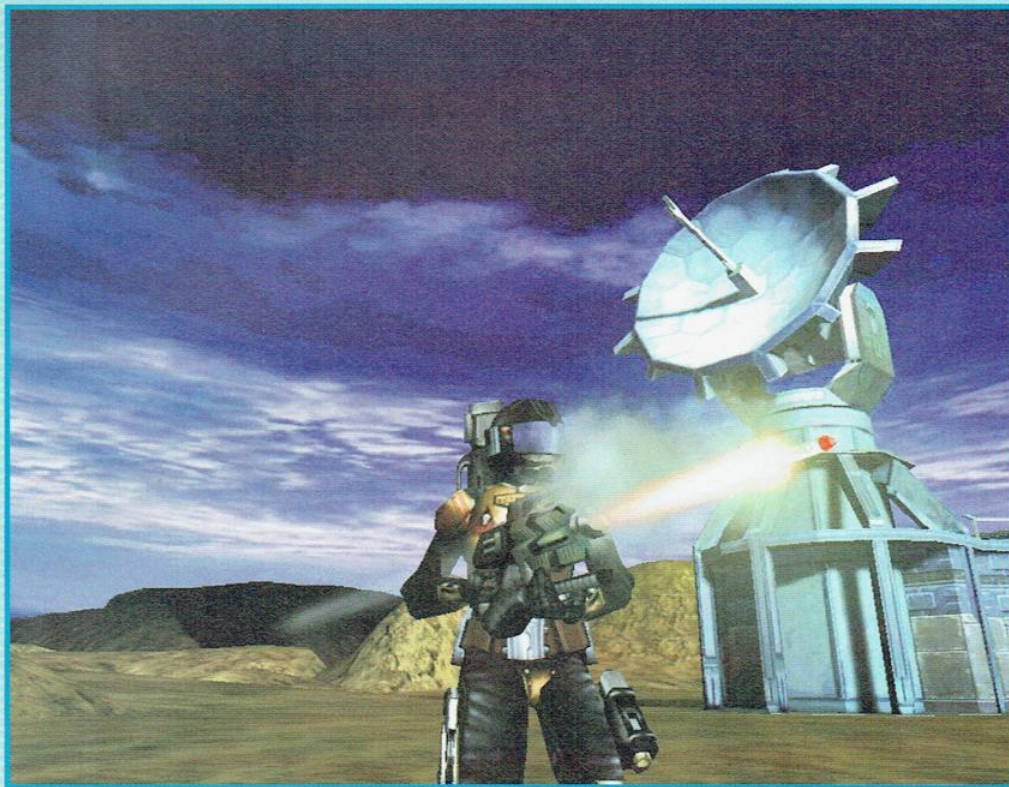
To win a copy, just answer this question...

➤ Name another game with "Dragon" in the title.

Stick your answer on the back of an envelope, along with your name and address and send it to: I Swoon For Dragoon, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.



» ADAM DUNCAN



# Planetside

**H**AVE YOU EVER HOPED THAT ONE-day someone would make a First Person Shooter which seamlessly mixed gameplay elements from Team Fortress, Tribes, Quake and the like? Better yet, how about being able to play that game online against thousands of other people? Sounds good? Well, in a bid to wrap even more of the

online gaming community around its finger, Verant Interactive has been hard at work on just such a title.

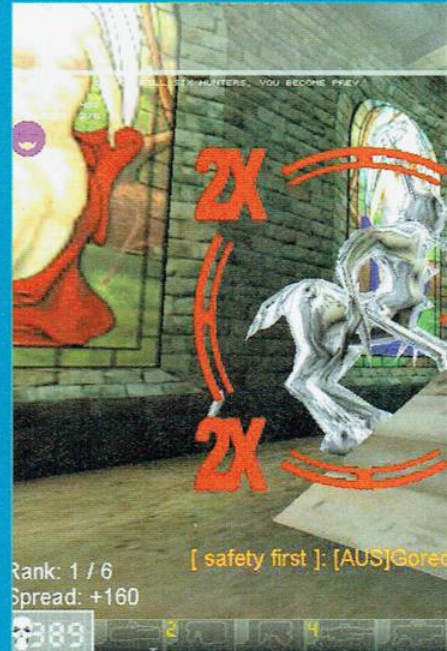
## MASSIVELY MULTIPLAYER GIBBING

Named Planetside, the idea is indeed to provide a persistent online environment for the hybrid FPS gameplay. With a large chunk of MMORPG

fans already subscribed to their flagship title, Everquest, it can only be considered a smart move for Verant to diversify and try to make a new home for all the FPS fans as well. Yet with the game world having to support so many people, Verant haven't totally strayed from their roots, as they plan to incorporate a few RPG elements for added interest.

Firstly, as opposed to just jumping straight into the carnage like in every other FPS, Planetside requires you to create a character, then pledge servitude to one of a number of opposing corporations. So right from the start you become part of a 'super-clan'. Playing the role of a mercenary, you'll be given missions to complete for your particular organization. And if the need should arise you can seek out the help of fellow mercenaries. In fact while you can run around and go fragging on your own, a majority of the missions will require teamwork.

Missions involve tasks such as over-



## MODS Unreal Tournament

### Tally Ho!

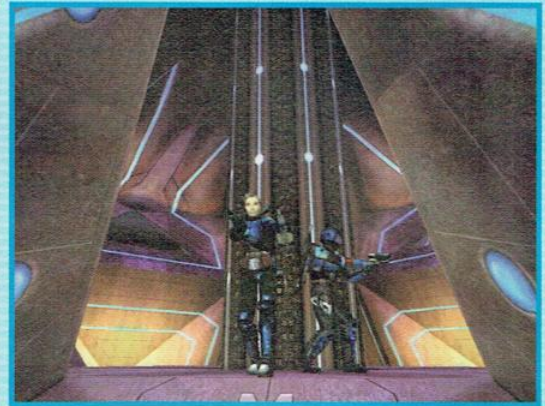
Tallyho! is an addictive little mutator for UT that turns conventional deathmatch into a chaotic arcade-like fragfest. Aside from just gunning down other players (or bots), the main goal is to actually hunt down a horde of the alien creatures from Unreal 1. The action is extremely fast paced with each creature having a very





distinct target around them to make things a bit easier. Point scoring is pretty crazy. Killing the right monsters at the right time can result in your 'frag count' going up by a couple of hundred in a matter of seconds! Simply damaging a creature scores you points. And interestingly, getting hit by an enemy or dying results in a drastic loss of those points.

As basic as it seems there are quite a lot of little rules to understand while playing. It can get a bit confusing at first. Once you've got it all worked out Tallyho! is quite fun. <http://naiweb.javanet.com/shank/offworld/tallyho/>



running enemy bases with each player assuming different tactical roles along the lines of infiltration/spying, offence, defense and even being able to drive vehicles (Jeeps, tanks gunships etc) ala Tribes or Counterstrike.

Upon successful completion of a mission your character may go up in rank and gain some hard-earned cash. Heading back to town, players can then use their newfound wealth to stock up on supplies, buy/sell weapons, heal themselves or repair vehicles.

Reiterating the small RPG influence in the title, players will also be given the option to upgrade their character through the purchase of a variety of implants. These implants are specifically designed to develop characters in a way that avoids ruining the balance of gameplay. Only non-action-based skills can be enhanced, such as the ability to steal other players' vehicles or to hack into computer terminals. This way Planetside newbies still have just as much chance as veterans to score a kill.



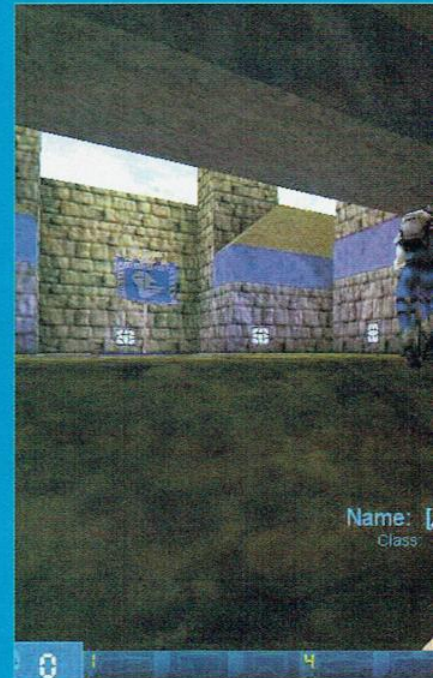
www

## Star Dudes

To help you get even more into the Star Wars spirit, Dude Studios present Star Dudes! Ever heard of 'Quake done quick'? Well this would officially have to be 'Star Wars done quick'. It's simply a very cool animated rundown of everything that happens in Episode IV, all zoomed through in just a few minutes. Totally hilarious!

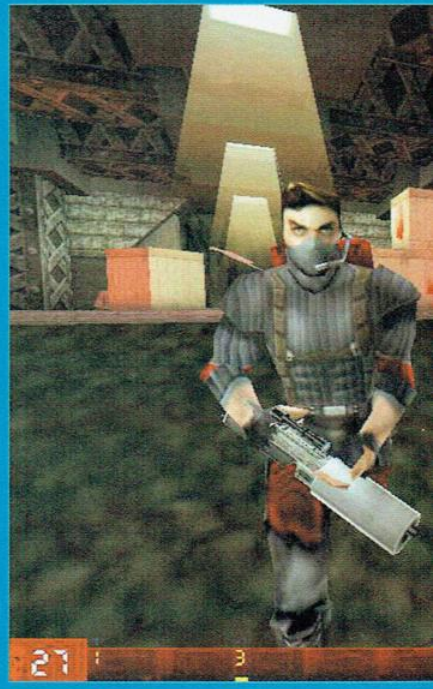
<http://www.dudestudios.com/>





## Unreal Fortress

While Team Fortress is only officially available for Quake or Half-life, that classic gameplay has always found itself on just about every other FPS under the sun. Unreal Tournament is the latest platform to be graced by its presence, under the name Unreal Fortress. For those 5 or so people out there unfamiliar with what the mod is all about, the premise is simple. Players choose from a range of diverse classes to play as, i.e.



www

## Star Wars Rap

What better way to tell the epic story that is Star Wars than through a dramatic Hip-Hop induced animation? Erm, yeah... "This ain't the east or the west side, it's the dark side!"

<http://www.allergictolife.com/starwarz.html>



www

## Wormtopia

Strictly a combantrim-free zone, Wormtopia is the ultimate source of news for fans of Team17's classic Worms series. Check it out at: [www.planetwcrms.com](http://www.planetwcrms.com)



## YOU'RE GOING TO DIE... A LOT

Once your character is all sorted out and ready to rock again the process goes full circle and it's time to see what other assignments are on offer. With your increase in rank a more diverse choice of jobs presents itself, making things more interesting as time goes on. Also of note is the fact that your character's appearance will even change to reflect that new rank. If in the end the player just wants a break from the chaos outside, they're free to head back to their own in-game apartment and relax.

Based on what we've learned so far it's easy to conclude that your character is going to die... a lot. The result of death is to drop your equipment,

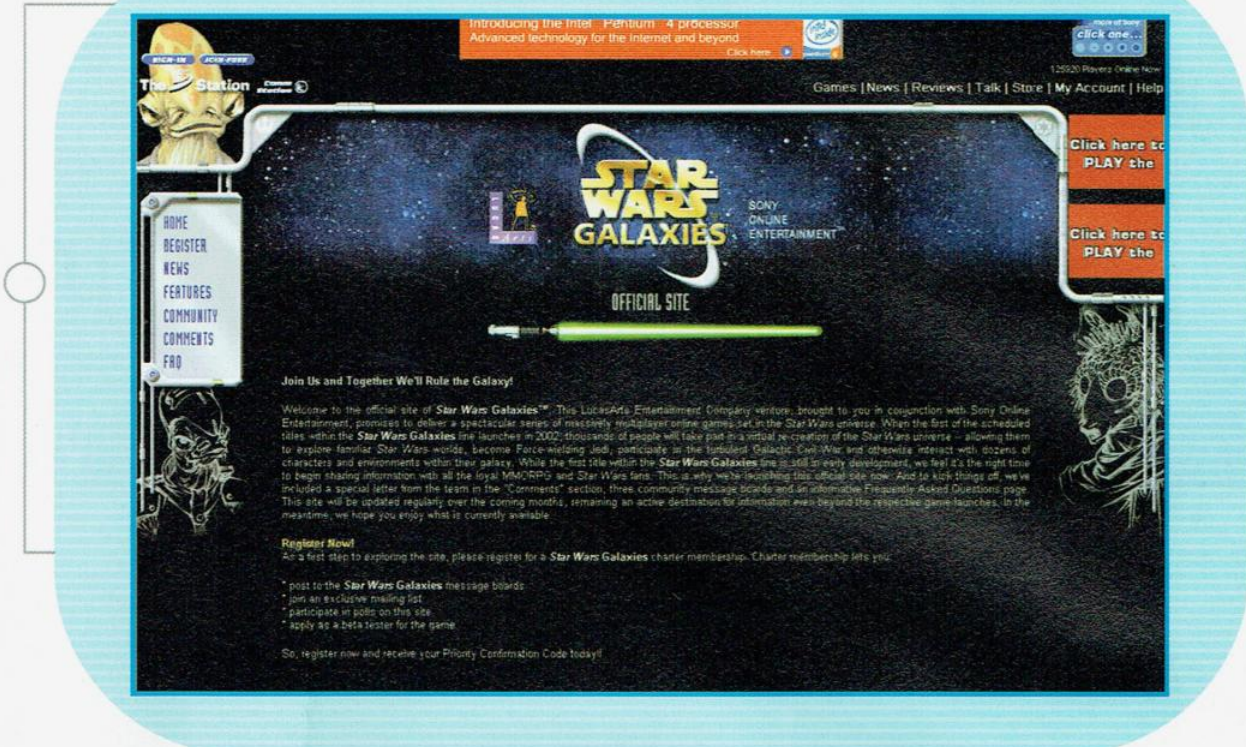
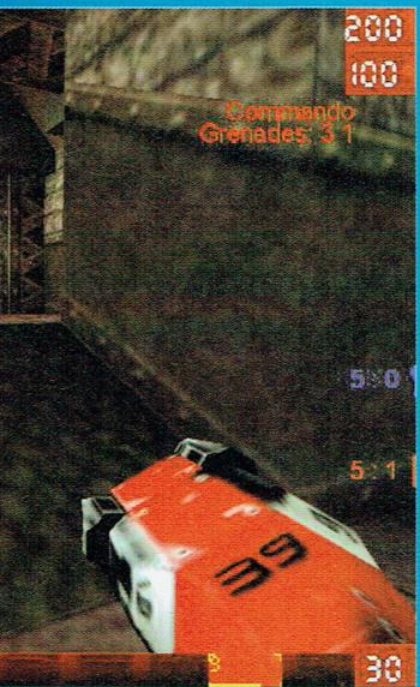
which you can expect to be eagerly looted by your killer, then respawn at the nearest safe area. Fortunately, Verant are trying to make sure players don't get overly stressed about losing their gear. Any weapons you might have carried shouldn't be too difficult to pick up elsewhere.

Planetsides' fast-paced action mixed with light RPG elements really sounds like a winning combination. Graphically the game is drool-worthy, actually looking somewhat reminiscent of Halo. It is however probably safe to assume that a pretty good connection to the game server would be required, and that may raise some concern for eager overseas gamers... Time will tell.



Heavy weapons guy, Medic, Spy, Scout etc. All of whom work together to capture the enemy flag. So, does this incarnation do the genre justice? Well it's actually still in beta, but so far things look to have come together nicely. The maps provided contain some familiar classics with plenty of cool new areas to master. However don't rely on the bots to provide a very fun offline game.

<http://www.unrealfortress.com>



# Star Wars Galaxies

WHILE JUST ABOUT EVERYONE has known about it for some time now it's only recently that Lucasarts and Verant officially announced production of their future cash-cow title, Star Wars: Galaxies. Coinciding with the announcement, a webpage was thrown up to tease eager gamers with morsels of info on what to expect in 2002. So what are some of the features mentioned?

## THE LAG OF THE DARKSIDE

First and foremost, the title 'Galaxies' refers to an actual series of

Star Wars games! That's great news right off the bat since we can all look forward to Star Wars goodness for years to come. As expected, gamers will be able to choose from a variety of familiar Star Wars species as their character, including Wookies! We can also look forward to wielding the force as a Jedi, (although the road to becoming a successful one is sure to be difficult). Bounty Hunters also get a mention. Even without referring to any other classes, it's easy to assume these two will surely be among the most popular. Hopefully there will be reason enough

to warrant playing something different. A server overrun with wannabe Jedi's could make for a pretty boring scenario. Actually the site does mention the developer's intention to provide for those whose taste in gameplay goes beyond combat and war. As the site states, gamers will be free to "take part in galactic politics, own a shop, or help build the community".

Apart from that, Verant are staying tight-lipped about Galaxies at this early stage in development. Check out the link below to keep up to date with any new info or jump into the discussion forums to throw some ideas at the developers and read the latest rumors. [www.starwarsgalaxies.com](http://www.starwarsgalaxies.com)

## STAR WARS COMBINE

While you're twiddling your thumbs in wait for Star Wars: Galaxies, you might want to give Star Wars: Combine a spin. Being put together by a bunch of diehard fans, Combine is a work in progress that will also finish up as an online Star Wars game. Given the term "Star Wars simulation" the game lets you create a character and interact with hundreds of other players in the Star Wars universe. The paths your character can take will be expansive. Play as a rebel, part of the empire or simply take up farming. Fight, fly starships... the very in-depth rule system covers just about everything. You can actually download the game application

now and check out some of the text/email based setup. Eventually the program will likely end up using a graphical interface similar to Warlords. Combine could well be worth checking out when it's done. <http://www.swcombine.com/>



## PATCHES

GROUND CONTROL  
<http://sierra.com/>

DEUS EX MULTIPLAYER PATCH  
<http://www.eidosinteractive.com/>

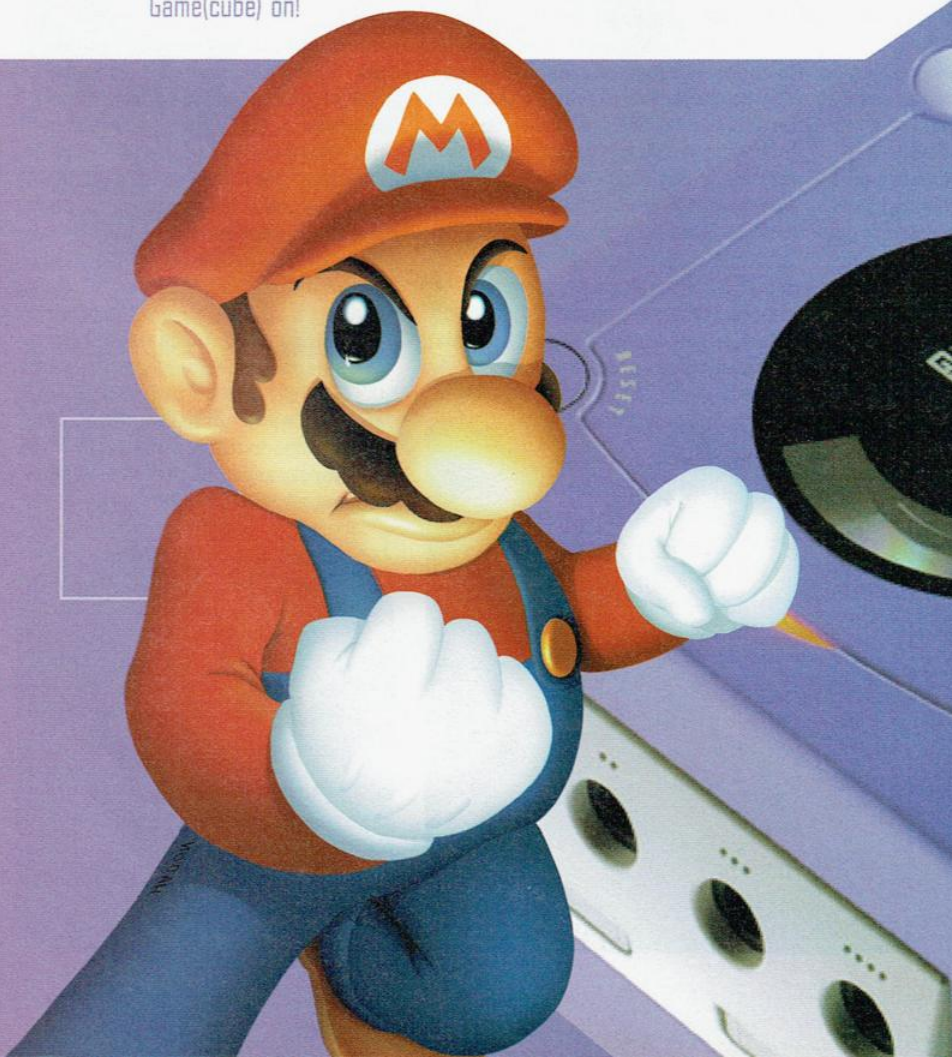
DEEP SPACE NINE: THE FALLEN  
<http://www.collectivestudios.com/>

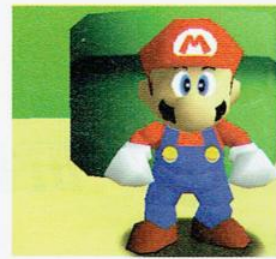
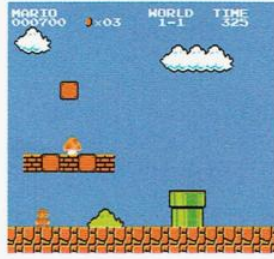
VOYAGER: ELITE FORCE  
<http://www.ravensoft.com/>

# the top ten reasons why **NINTENDO GAMECUBE** will rock!

Damn! It's hard to explain the feeling of anticipation we have here at Hyper about both the upcoming Nintendo systems. The Game Boy Advance (GBA) is going to rock because hey, it'll be like carrying around a SNES in your pocket, with four player capabilities no less. The GBA will be classic gaming at its best. What is really taking Nintendo into the future, however, is a little doobie called the Gamecube. We already know that Nintendo make some of the world's best games, and the more we find out about their new system, the more it seems that Nintendo are getting everything right this time around.

**GAM SHEA** has put together a list of our top ten reasons why the Gamecube is going to be a must-have gaming system. If you're not all that excited just yet, we hope you will be by the time you've read the pages to come. Game(cube) on!





# shigeru miyamoto and EAD

WHAT COULD POSSIBLY BE MORE exciting than the prospect of 128bit creations from Nintendo's number one development team and one of the world's greatest game designers? In our books - nothing.

Certainly Hiroshi Yamauchi's business acumen and intuitive abilities have got Nintendo far. So too, did Gunpei Yokoi's hardware wizardry. And let's not forget the dogged determination of Minoru Arakawa and Howard Lincoln to get Nintendo of America to where it is today. But really, where would Nintendo be without the games to back it all up?

Nintendo simply couldn't exist without Shigeru Miyamoto and their main R&D team EAD (Entertainment, Analysis and Development). Nintendo relies so heavily on the reputation of their games that the company's future is almost solely dependent on

them. Such is the talent of the staff at NCL, however, that for nearly 20 years now, they have consistently produced the most playable, inspired and charming games on the planet. They also, importantly, led the industry in the transition to 3D, reinventing many of their franchises brilliantly - Super Mario 64 being the most obvious example.

The most recognizable figure within Nintendo of Japan is, of course, Shigeru Miyamoto. In many ways, Miyamoto is the heart and soul of Nintendo. He's responsible for almost all Nintendo's most enduring characters including Donkey Kong, Link and of course, Mario.

Miyamoto's genius lies in his uncanny ability to redefine gaming. His games aren't there to be played but to be experienced. No matter what the hardware limitations, the core essence of Miyamoto's vision is

consistently conveyed. Gameplay is always the driving force, and Miyamoto has a knack for nailing it time and time again.

Of course, Miyamoto doesn't work in a vacuum. Along with Takashi Tezuka, they head up EAD, most definitely Nintendo's trump card in the next gen race. This "all-star" development team was formed early in the days of SNES development, combining Miyamoto's R&D4 with select members from the other R&D teams. The team's games for the SNES show just how dominant they were, and include Super Mario World, F-Zero, Sim City, Pilotwings, The Legend Of Zelda: A Link To The Past, Super Mario All-Stars, Super Punch-Out, Super Mario Kart, Star Fox, Yoshi's Island and Stunt Race FX. EAD also excelled in the tricky transition from 2D to 3D, creating some of the N64's best titles. Among others, they created the revolutionary Super Mario 64, Wave Race

64, Star Fox 64, Yoshi's Story, Mario Kart 64, 1080 Snowboarding, F-Zero X, Ocarina Of Time, and Majora's Mask.

Right now the team is rumoured to be in possession of over 125 development kits, and has been working on launch titles for around a year. Yamauchi's instructions to the group haven't changed since its inception. They're simply, to do what no one else is doing - lead, don't follow.

EAD also acts as a father figure to other in-house teams (such as HAL labs and Intelligent Systems) and second party developers, helping out and guiding whenever necessary. Shigeru Miyamoto and EAD are the reason that Nintendo have come this far, and with the most consistent track record of any development house ever, and fantastic hardware to back them up, we know that Miyamoto and Co are going to blow us away come Gamecube launch day.

## a brief history of nintendo

1889 Fusajiro Yamauchi founds "Nintendo Koppai" to manufacture and sell handmade "hanafuda" cards.

1902 Nintendo expand their range to become the first company in Japan to manufacture Western style playing cards.

1929 Nintendo's second president, Sakiryo Yamauchi takes control.

1949 21 year old Hiroshi Yamauchi becomes Nintendo's third president. Right from the start he shows the iron fisted management style he later becomes famous for, gradually firing all the old staff (including a relative) so nobody was in any doubt that he was in charge.

1951 Name change to "Nintendo Karuta" (Nintendo playing cards).

1953 Nintendo begins manufacturing plastic cards.

1959 Enters a deal with Disney to manufacture Disney character themed packs of cards.

1962 Listed on the second tier of the Osaka Stock Exchange and the Kyoto Stock Exchange.

1963 Drops Karuta to become NCL, with Yamauchi as chairman. Expanded product line. Over the next few years they explored such disparate areas as:  
- Instant rice  
- A Love Hotel (where rooms were rented by the hour and Yamauchi himself was rumoured to be one of its most frequent visitors)  
- A Taxi Company

1969 After the above ventures, Yamauchi decides to utilise the incredible distribution networks the company had forged throughout the country. Thus, Nintendo becomes a company exclusively devoted to entertainment products. Its first R&D department is formed, called simply "Games".

1970 Stock is changed to first listing on the Osaka Stock Exchange. Nintendo start selling the Beam Gun series, introducing electronics technology into the toy industry in Japan for the first time. Gunpei Yokoi comes up with the Ultra Hand, which sells 1.2 million.

1971 More toys in the Ultra line - The Ultra Machine (pitching aid) and the Ultra Scope (periscope).

# elegant design=brutal power

WE'VE PONDERED THE SPECS, WE'VE analysed the hardware configuration, and we've done a whole lot of research. The result? We're impressed, and you should be too. Nintendo have obviously thought long and hard about Gamecube, and have come up with a stunningly sweet console.

In fact, "elegant" is really the only word that does the Gamecube hardware specs justice. Sure, it's powerful, sexy, funky, aerodynamic, intelligent and da-bomb, but at its core, this is a purpose built gaming machine like no other. It seems that launching behind Sega and Sony has worked in Nintendo's favour, as they've been able to craft a console that has the potential to simply outclass the opposition.



At first glance, the specs aren't all that intimidating. But raw polygon pushing power isn't what Nintendo have gone for with the Gamecube, and they've said as much themselves. They've tried to create a machine that is powerful,

but doesn't suffer the bottlenecks that other consoles do. That is, it's optimised for sustainable real world performance - not imaginary figures on paper.

To achieve this goal, Nintendo have made some very smart partnerships and decisions in creating the Gamecube. To ensure blisteringly fast, consistent communication between the graphics chip and the Gekko MPU, the Gamecube has a massive 24MB of iT-SRAM courtesy of MoSys. This is perhaps the most revolutionary element, and an unprecedented amount of RAM for a console, standing in stark contrast to the PlayStation 2 and its much maligned 4MB of embedded VRAM. With such an ample amount of iT-SRAM, game code will not have to be optimised to the same degree, speeding up overall development times. Better yet, backing it up is another 16MB of NEC's 100MHz "A-Memory" DRAM, which can be used for less demanding routines such as audio and animation. Needless to say, in combination, the Gamecube's memory structure can handle anything that the chipsets throw at it.

Speaking of which, the Gamecube's main MPU (microprocessing unit) is a custom designed RISC based 405MHz demon from IBM codenamed "Gekko". 405MHz may not sound fast, especially compared to the Xbox's 733 CPU, but this baby has a few tricks up its sleeve.



First of all, it's manufactured using state of the art copper based circuitry and fabricated at 0.18 micron, meaning it's extra fast and loses less heat, increasing efficiency. Secondly, it includes an impressive 256KB of Level 2 cache memory. Thirdly, because it's a custom chipset, it's optimised specifically for its role in the Gamecube hardware, and connects to the Flipper LSI with a main memory bandwidth of 3.2 gigabytes p/s, and an external bus that reaches 1.6 gigabytes p/s.

The Gekko MPU really plays a supporting role to the Gamecube's graphics chip, the Flipper LSI. Designed by ArtX (a startup company consisting of ex-Silicon Graphics staff led by Wei Yen - formerly in charge of the team responsible for the N64's graphics architecture), the Gamecube's Flipper LSI GPU is also manufactured at 0.18 micron. With 3MB of embedded iT-SRAM that's used for texture and frame

buffering (1MB and 2MB respectively), the Flipper GPU and Gekko MPU have a combined floating point performance of 13 Gigaflops. Shigeru Miyamoto has gone so far as to say that it is the world's best graphics chip.

Nintendo have also incorporated S3's texture compression technology into the Gamecube's graphics chip. This is an unbelievably vital inclusion. Ever wondered how the top Dreamcast games seem to be more vibrant and graphically varied than some of the PS2 launch offerings? A large part of it is down to texture compression. With this technology, the Gamecube will be able to compress textures at a 6:1 ratio, meaning that 60MB of textures can be squeezed down to 10MB. Thus, games will incorporate unbelievable variety, clarity and intensity in textures - and all without any speed hit because it's wired into the Flipper LSI.

## a brief history of nintendo (cont)

1972 Perhaps Nintendo's greatest contribution to the world pre-games. This year Gunpei Yokoi created "The Love Tester" - a device with which I'm sure you're all familiar. Lovemantic Grampa in the Simpsons Spinoff Showcase anyone?

1973 Utilising disused bowling alleys across the country (Japan experienced a bowling fad during the 60s which then faded... wish the Americans would get over it too!), Nintendo comes up with the Laser Clay Bowling rangers. Kind of like electronic shooting rangers.

1974 Nintendo develops games utilising 16mm film projectors for interactive shooting experiences. The first such title was called Wild Gunman, which was also successful in America and Europe.

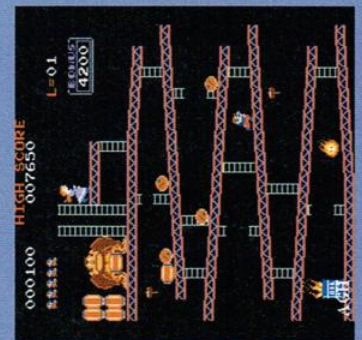
1977 Nintendo and Mitsubishi combine to create a video game machine for the home, introducing a microprocessor into the system. Called TV-Game 6, it featured six different variations of "tennis", known to the rest of the world as Pong.

1978 Creates and begins selling arcade games using microcomputers. The first title was Computer Othello, a game where each player had ten buttons! The TV-Game 15 system also came out this year. Guess how many games it had...

1979 NDL creates an arcade division.

1980 Wholly owned subsidiary Nintendo Of America is officially created, and run by Yamauchi's son in law, Minoru Arakawa. NDA was already selling arcade games and doing moderately well, but the company didn't really make an impact until it started selling Gunpei Yokoi's Game & Watch. Game & Watch becomes a worldwide phenomenon.

1981 Miyamoto works his magic for the first time and creates Donkey Kong. It came about because Nintendo needed a game to replace the arcade title Radarscope, which had bombed in the states (leaving NDA with a lot of useless inventory). No senior designers had time so Yamauchi took a chance and put the young staff artist Shigeru Miyamoto on the project. Donkey Kong became a huge hit.





*Japanese author Mishima once said, "there are two contradictory things in Japanese culture... Elegance and brutality".*

Like a current gaming PC, the processing load is split, with the graphics chip looking after 3D calculations and rendering, while the Gekko MPU calculates complex AI routines and game physics. Unlike most modern PCs, however, these two chips are designed to work in perfect harmony and have more than enough memory support to ensure that maximum performance is maintained.

As you may know, Nintendo used Factor 5's audio compression tools to great effect on the N64. Well, the partnership continues, and Factor 5 have designed the Gamecube's 16bit Digital Sound Processor (DSP) chip - also housed on the Flipper LSI. Running at 101MHz, the sound processor can access the 16MB of A-Memory, keeping the 1T-SRAM main memory free for other operations.

Nintendo have clearly put the developer's needs first with the hardware array, but we haven't even discussed the hardware supported effects that have been incorporated into the design. The information Nintendo has released so far is relatively non-specific, but we do know that the Gamecube supports bump mapping, fog, multi-texture mapping, x8 hardware lights and more (see specs to the right).



With the Gamecube, Nintendo look to have delivered a slap in the face to Sony's PlayStation 2 and arguably, Microsoft's Xbox. Gamecube is hardware designed for the developer, and ultimately the gamer. Best of all, this is all designed with affordability in mind. Technically, Gamecube is going to rock hard and still be priced aggressively to boot!



## GAMECUBE TECHSPECS

<b>MPU (Microprocessor Unit)</b>	IBM Power PC "Gekko"	<b>Other</b>	Real-time Decompression of Display List, HW Motion Compensation Capability
<b>Manufacturing Process</b>	0.18 microns Copper Wire Technology	<b>Sound Processor</b>	Special 16bit DSP (integrated into the System LSI)
<b>Clock Frequency</b>	405 MHz	<b>Instruction Memory</b>	8KB RAM + 8KB ROM
<b>CPU Capacity</b>	925 Dmips (Dhrystone 2.1)	<b>Data Memory</b>	8KB RAM + 4KB ROM
<b>Internal Data Precision</b>	32bit Integer & 64bit Floating-point	<b>Clock Frequency</b>	101.25 MHz
<b>External Bus Bandwidth</b>	1.6GB/second(Peak) (32bit address, 64bit data bus 202.5MHz)	<b>Maximum Number of Simultaneously Produced Sounds</b>	ADPCM: 64ch
<b>Internal Cache</b>	L1: Instruction 32KB, Data 32KB (8 way) L2: 256KB (2 way)	<b>Sampling Frequency</b>	48KHz
<b>System LSI</b>	"Flipper"	<b>System Floating-point Arithmetic Capability</b>	13.0GFLOPS (Peak) (MPU, Geometry Engine, HW Lighting Total)
<b>Manufacturing Process</b>	0.18 microns NEC Embedded DRAM Process	<b>System Main Memory</b>	24MB Sustainable latency 10ns or lower (1T-SRAM)
<b>Clock Frequency</b>	202.5MHz	<b>A-Memory</b>	16MB (100MHz DRAM)
<b>Embedded Frame Buffer</b>	Approx. 2MB Sustainable Latency 5ns (1T-SRAM)	<b>Disc Drive</b>	CAV (Constant Angular Velocity) System Average Access Time Data Transfer Speed 16Mbps to 25Mbps 128ms
<b>Embedded Texture Cache</b>	Approx. 1MB Sustainable Latency 5ns (1T-SRAM)	<b>Media</b>	8cm NINTENDO GAMECUBE Disc based on Matsushita's Optical Disc Technology Approx. 1.5GB Capacity
<b>Texture Read Bandwidth</b>	12.8GB/second (Peak)	<b>Input/Output</b>	Controller Port x4, Digicard Slot x2
<b>Main Memory Bandwidth</b>	3.2GB/second (Peak)	<b>Analog AV Output</b>	x1
<b>Color, Z Buffer</b>	24bit	<b>Digital AV Output</b>	x1
<b>Image Processing Function</b>	Fog, Subpixel Anti-aliasing, HW Light x8, Alpha Blending, Virtual Texture Design, Multi-texture Mapping/Bump/Environment Mapping, MIPMAP, Bilinear Filtering, Real-time Texture Decompression (S3TC), etc.	<b>High-Speed Serial Port</b>	x2
		<b>High-Speed Parallel Port</b>	x1
		<b>Main Unit Dimensions</b>	150mm(W) x 110mm(H) x 161mm(D)

1982 Donkey Kong Jr hits the arcades. Universal Studios sue Nintendo for infringing on the copyright of the 1929 film King Kong. Nintendo refuse to settle and Universal take the case to court. Nintendo win, and it turns out that Universal didn't even own the rights to King Kong, which had in fact passed into the public domain. Nintendo are awarded \$1.8 million, and prove themselves against the big boys.

1983 NCL start selling the Family Computer (Famicom) system in Japan. The hardware design was ingenious and low cost, and designed to easily outpace the competition.

Mario Bros (featuring Luigi for the first time) and Donkey Kong 3 hit the arcades. Incidentally, Mario was originally called Jumpman, but was renamed after NDA's landlord. He was also originally a carpenter, but soon switched professions.

Nintendo's stock is listed in the first section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

1984 Nintendo create two screen arcade game "VS System".



1985 Trial sales of the American version of Famicom - the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) in New York. Since retailers still felt burned by their experience with the Atari 2600 and videogames in general, Nintendo tried to differentiate its system as much as possible. Thus, ROB (Robotic Operating System) and a lightgun device were created. The system was packed with Super Mario Bros and Duck Hunt. The New York trials were successful, so the NES was sold America-wide. Super Mario Bros would go on to sell 40 million units worldwide.

1986 NCL start selling a Disk Drive Add-on for Famicom. Disk Writers were placed in stores to rewrite software on disks. Disks held more data than cartridges at the time and could be rewritten hundreds of times. Thus, once you had a disk you could get a new game on it for a tiny fraction of what a cartridge game cost. Unfortunately, the system confused consumers, took up too much space in stores and wasn't supported by developers. In Japan, Nintendo released Mario Bros 2, Metroid, Kid Icarus, Pro Wrestling and Zelda 2 exclusively on disk. The drive wasn't released in America and most of these games saw cartridge release there.

Game Counsellors employed on a massive scale for Nintendo hotlines where gamers could get advice and tips on games from experts.

1987 NCL has net sales of \$1 billion, and the NES is the no 1 selling toy in America. The Legend of Zelda sells over 1 million units (and went on to sell more than 6.5 million worldwide) and Metroid comes out.

# rare and second party developers

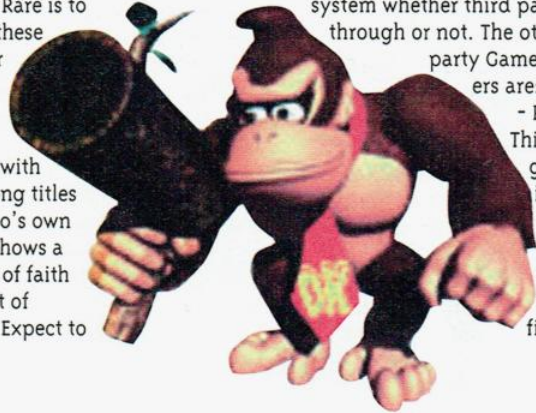
ALONGSIDE EAD, ONLY ONE OTHER developer proved it had the skills to consistently develop A grade N64 titles, and that was British development house Rare.

Starting out as "Ultimate Play The Game" back in 1982 and producing a string of hits for the Spectrum, the Stamper brothers formed Rare in 1985 aiming to explore the possibilities of the NES. They've never looked back, becoming one of the most consistent third party developers all the way through the NES and SNES days.

Rare became an official Nintendo second party developer just before the launch of the N64, and went on to create many of the seminal games on the system (Goldeneye and Banjo Kazooie to name a couple). Rare's partnership

with Nintendo is a match made in heaven. Their quality control is equally rigid - they'll cut titles that don't meet the grade even after close to a year of development. This is the sign of a company that cares deeply about its products and its reputation.

It's difficult to understate just how important Rare is to Nintendo these days. After all, trusting an external developer with Donkey Kong titles - Miyamoto's own creation, shows a great deal of faith on the part of Nintendo. Expect to



see some phenomenal Gamecube games from this company.

Teaming up with Rare was a smart move, and since then Nintendo have been expanding their second party portfolio to ensure that there will be a variety of high quality titles hitting the system whether third parties come through or not. The other second

party Gamecube developers are:

- Retro Studios: This talented group is working on at least five Gamecube titles. There's a soccer sim, a racing title, a first person

shooter, and the coup de grace... a new METROID game! Metroid will be tricky to execute, but this is a big game to have, as its appeal outside Japan is huge and it should attract older gamers.

- NSTC: NOA's own internal studios. They proved themselves with Ridge Racer 64 and are now working on a new Wave Race title.

- Left Field Productions: They brought Excitebike to the N64, and are now hard at work on a new installment to the Kobe Bryant basketball series.

- Silicon Knights: Responsible for Blood Omen: Legacy Of Kain, and currently developing Eternal Darkness for the N64. They're rumoured to be working on former PS2 project "Too Human" for Gamecube.

# pure gaming goodness

WHILE THE XBOX AND PS2 SEEM TO BE targeting the same market with their "set top box" approach, Nintendo haven't diluted theirs one iota. The Gamecube is a gaming machine pure and simple... and quite frankly, we couldn't be happier. Nintendo are taking an almost diametrically opposed approach to the competition and focusing exclusively on what they do best: - making great games. And why shouldn't they?

After all, Sony and Microsoft have the muscle and experience to explore these new territories, while Nintendo's trump card is, and always will be, its own games. Without concerns such as DVD movie playback and web browsing to distract them, Nintendo can be incredibly focused heading into this generation, and target a different audience to its competitors.

Every element of the Gamecube's design is geared around creating the ultimate gaming machine. Unless it's necessary for the pursuit of videogaming, you won't find it in the Gamecube. A great example is DVD movie playback. Including it would not only make piracy much easier (with the end result being higher software prices), but it would raise the console's overall price too. Sony, for instance, must pay US \$20 to the DVD Forum for every single console shipped. Nintendo would also be reducing their profit margins as consumers would be tempted to buy movies as well as, or instead of, games. The PlayStation 2's performance in Japan is the perfect example. Of the 3 million units that were sold in the first five months, an average of only two games were pur-



chased. Compare this to a ratio of 5:1 for the original PlayStation's launch. Plus, game companies traditionally make no money on the hardware. All the profits come from software sales. By teaming up with Matsushita, Nintendo can let them worry about all the movie issues. Core gamers can get the console cheap, and those that want DVD playback can get the more pricey one. Either way, Nintendo caters to everyone, and can get on with making the machine and its games a success.

Nintendo creates its hardware to run Nintendo games. It's the software that drives the hardware, and that's why their games are among the best ever. Fine by us.

## a brief history of nintendo (cont)

NCL has net sales of \$1.5 billion, and 65 NES titles are now available. First issue of Nintendo Power magazine goes on sale, wholly owned by Nintendo and used to great promotional effect. Hands free controller developed for disabled people.

Mike Tyson's Punch Out and Super Mario Bros 2 come out. Interestingly, the Japanese Super Mario Bros 2 never made it outside Japan. It was very similar to the original except fiendishly difficult. Super Mario Bros 2 outside Japan was actually based on a game called Dream Factory: Doki Doki Panic with the original characters replaced by Mario and the gang, and major tweaking made to the gameplay.



Game Boy goes on sale with Super Mario World in Japan, and the now legendary "Tetris" for its US debut. Sequel to Legend of Zelda, "Adventure of Link" goes on sale.

Nintendo rules the toy industry. Sales of Nintendo products accounted for 23% of the estimated \$11.4 billion spent on toys this year in America. Out of the top 30 selling toys, 25 were Nintendo products or Nintendo related.

Surveys reveal that Mario is more recognisable to American children than Mickey Mouse. (bit Super Famicom (SNES) is released in Japan, featuring a much more versatile hardware design than Sega's Genesis, and a far superior sound chip made by Sony. Super Mario Bros 3 comes out in the states to incredible demand, selling seven million copies by the end of 1990.



# game boy advance connectivity

**G**AMECUBE MAY NOT PROVIDE THE complete home theatre solution, but combined with the Game Boy Advance, Nintendo may well be offering the complete integrated gaming solution. We know where our priorities lie!

The GBA is going to rock on its own, but its going to rock even harder thanks to its connectivity with Gamecube. At a basic level you'll be able to transfer data between the machines. Thus, you might unlock a level in a Gamecube title by playing its GBA partner, or you might build a character from a Gamecube RPG on your GBA while away from home.

You can also use your GBA as a Gamecube controller, opening up a host of possibilities for the colour LCD

screen. It could display your character's health - freeing up unwanted clutter from the TV display, or you could plan your next play in an NFL game without your friends seeing. This adds a level of privacy to strategic multiplayer gaming that will surely be put to good use.

The potential for combining the GBA and Gamecube, however, starts to become frightening when you consider the logical extension of a) being able to connect four GBAs together via a hub for multiplayer, b) being able to connect the GBA to your Gamecube, and c) the broadband adaptor.

Imagine, if you will, a LAN style event. 16 gamers converge on a house. Rather than PC boxes tucked under their arms,

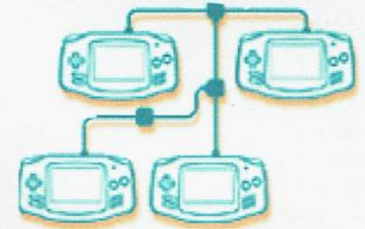
each player has a Game Boy Advance. Groups of four connect their GBAs together through a hub, which then plugs into a standard Gamecube controller port. Each group of four does this, so all sixteen gamers are connected.

Then let's imagine that everyone boots up (dare we say it) Perfect Dark Advance (although Mario Kart Advance would also do). Theoretically, the Gamecube could act as the central server, supporting a sixteen player deathmatch. The Gamecube would be in charge of telling all sixteen GBAs what's going on in the game.

Call us crazy, but let's take this concept one step further and introduce the Gamecube broadband adaptor to the mix. You see, it turns out these sixteen gamers are in a clan and are only

warming up. The REAL game begins when they dialup a server through the Gamecube for a pre-arranged deathmatch, and take on another clan somewhere else in the world. Clan deathmatches on a portable! Aargh!

This idea is, of course, only a pipe dream, but it's definitely possible... and we're willing to bet that Nintendo have thought of it. But would it be fun? Well, I guess that's up to Nintendo...



# the controller

**N**INTENDO DESIGN CONSOLES AND peripherals for Nintendo, and their controllers are a prime example. Rather than thinking about what developers might like, Nintendo design their controllers simultaneously with their launch software, with the result that they suit their own games perfectly. Since Nintendo drive the console industry in terms of game innovation, it comes as no surprise that their design technique results in innovative controllers as well. Indeed, Nintendo have made controller design an artform... but would you expect any less when the design of their controllers is always now guided by Shigeru Miyamoto? Their SNES pad was robust, responsive, ergonomic and incredibly practical - putting Sega's effort to shame. More recently, it was Nintendo who standardised the ana-

logue stick - an important step forward in the new 3D world of videogames.

They look to have done it again with Gamecube, although this time it's not so much an innovation as it is a refinement of all that Nintendo have learnt in the past. Best of all, though, is the "Wavebird" wireless controller that will work up to ten metres away. About time too!



Since they were enjoying such incredible success, Nintendo waited perhaps too long for the follow-up to the NES in America, allowing Sega to get the jump by 18 months with their 16bit Genesis system. Nonetheless, the Super NES and Super Mario World are finally released in time for Christmas 1991. NCL's net sales go over \$3.3 billion.

Also at this time, Nintendo was working behind closed doors with Philips to develop a CD-ROM add-on for the SNES. The proposed system would be compatible with Philips' CD-I format. Incredibly, Philips was even granted a license to develop games based around core Nintendo characters including Mario and Link.

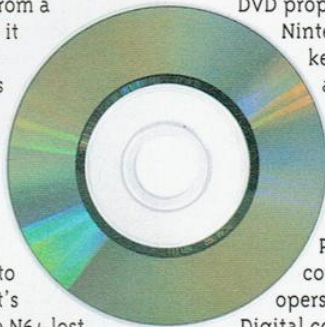
"The Legend Of Zelda: A Link To The Past" and Street Fighter 2 released for SNES. These two games help get Nintendo back on track with the more hardcore gamers that had defected to Sega. Street Fighter 2 was a SNES exclusive for a while. Super Scope and Mario Paint also released.

At the beginning of the financial year, Nintendo had sold 14.2 million hardware units worldwide - 64.2 million NES, 32.2 million Game Boys, and 17.8 million SNES... not to mention incredible software sales.

Nintendo was also working in secret with Sony. Speculation suggested that it could be a SNES CD add-on and/or a standalone CD based console utilising SNES technology, and that the system would be called "PlayStation". Ultimately, whether Nintendo was working with Philips or Sony, both projects were cancelled, helped along by the Sega CD's resounding failure. Nintendo may have done well to stick with Sony, however, as who could have guessed the events that transpired years later when the PlayStation re-emerged.

# DVD proprietary format

ALH, WELCOME NINTENDO. WE SEE you've discovered optical disc technology. Good for you... Yep, Nintendo have finally made the switch to high capacity discs. This in itself is cause for celebration! Nintendo really paid for their decision to stick with cartridges on the N64. Sure, the loading times were great, but from a developers perspective it was a much more risky proposition than CD, as cartridges were considerably more expensive to manufacture. Combine this with the difficulty of developing for the N64 and Nintendo's reluctance to share their skills, and it's not hard to see why the N64 lost



favour with developers quickly.

That was then, and this is now. Nintendo are back on a level playing field, but of course they've done it their own way. It's DVD, but not as we know it, Jim. Nintendo's Gamecube runs games on a very funky 8cm mini-DVD proprietary format. This way, Nintendo have been able to keep the console itself tiny, and they've guarded against piracy.

The only probable complaint is that the disc's 1.5gig capacity hardly compares to the PS2's 4.7gig, but we're convinced that smart developers will have ample room. Digital compression techniques

have come a long way in recent years. Awesome quality FMV need no longer hog huge amounts of space. The DivX ;) codec, for example, has taken the world by storm. Using MPEG-4 encoding, DVD quality video can be compressed to one-tenth the size with little loss in quality. This ratio is variable too, allowing you to use less compression to maintain quality. There are new standards emerging all the time. Within the next couple of years, audio and video compression will get more and more efficient and sacrifice less and less quality - making it perfect for consoles like Gamecube. Plus, the machine already has S3's texture compression built into the hardware.

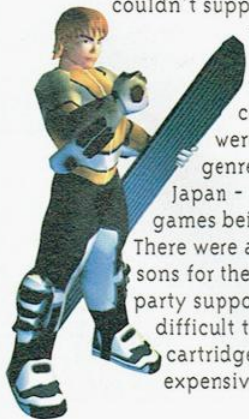
Moving to disc media means a lower barrier to entry for third party devel-



opers. Combine that with a license program comparable to PlayStation 2's, a powerful console with a friendly development environment and you've got a very attractive proposition.

# third party software outlook

ALTHOUGH IT PERFORMED WELL IN THE USA, the N64's reception was underwhelming in the motherland. The main reason? Poor third party support. Nintendo simply couldn't supply enough games



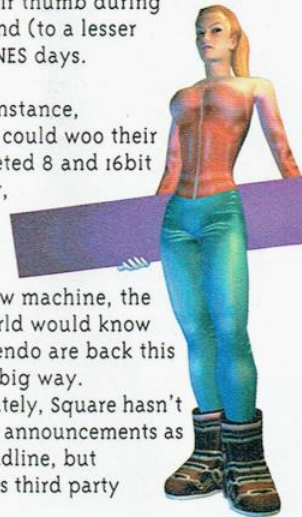
to keep the market satisfied, and for the majority of the console's life, there were gaping holes in genres that are huge in Japan - RPGs and fighting games being the biggest. There were a number of reasons for the appalling third party support - the N64 was difficult to program for, the cartridge format was expensive as were the

licensing agreements, and Nintendo themselves didn't exactly go out of their way to help third party developers (especially when compared to Sony and its tools and support for PlayStation).

This time around, Nintendo are starting from a much more secure position - great hardware, DVD discs and a more comprehensive lineup of second party developers. Indeed, Nintendo have almost all bases covered internally. Third party support, however, is still going to be a significant factor in the success of the console. Many of the big developers command serious prestige. Prestige that Nintendo would like back on their side - especially considering

they had every major developer under their thumb during the NES and (to a lesser extent) SNES days.

If, for instance, Nintendo could woo their most coveted 8 and 16bit developer, Square, back to develop for the new machine, the whole world would know that Nintendo are back this time in a big way. Unfortunately, Square hasn't made any announcements as of our deadline, but Nintendo's third party



Gamecube support is looking very healthy thank you very much.

While they're not pulling out all stops like a certain American company, they are certainly approaching third parties in a much more pro-active fashion. Confirmed third parties include: Electronic Arts, Konami, Activision, Capcom, 3DO, Take-Two Interactive, Acclaim, Factor 5, Infogrames, Paradigm Entertainment, Titus Software, THQ, Midway and Ubi Soft. As of mid-December, 500 development kits had been sent out. By the time you read this, another massive shipment will be in the hands of eager developers, large and small.

## a brief history of nintendo (cont)

Star Fox is released utilising Nintendo's new FX chip that enables polygonal graphics. Mortal Kombat released for the SNES with censored graphics. Unsurprisingly, Sega's gory version outsells it 2:1. Super Punch-Out and Super Mario All-Stars released.

Super Metroid and Stunt Race FX released. Super Game Boy accessory released that enables Game Boy games to be played through the SNES.

Rare's Donkey Kong Country comes out, blowing away gamers with its incredible graphics, created using Rare's Advanced Computer Modelling (ACM) technique. Nintendo announce that they are working on a new 64 bit system code named "Project Reality" in conjunction with Silicon Graphics. Nintendo go about collecting a "dream team" of developers for their new system claiming it will be ready for release in 1995.

Another Rare developed game featuring ACM, Killer Instinct, hits arcades. Noteable at the time as it was believed the game would also be an Ultra 64 launch title. Nintendo's strange monochrome system Virtual Boy hits retail and dies in both Japan and the USA. Super Mario World 2: Yoshi's Island released. One billionth Game Pak sold.

Nintendo announce that the "Ultra 64" is to be released as the Nintendo 64 (apparently a factor in the decision was that Konami held the trademark to "ultra" and wouldn't give it up). The new system's controller is revealed to have a revolutionary analogue stick, but developers are turned off the upcoming system thanks to the use of the cartridge medium, coupled with the difficulty of developing games. The ultimate insult came when Square defected with its Final Fantasy series to Sony. The system is delayed further.

1993

1994

1995

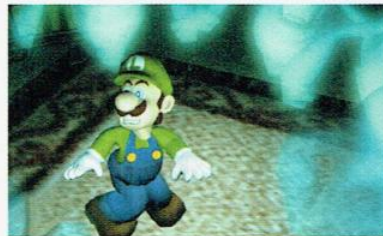
# the spaceworld demos

WELL WHAT CAN WE SAY? NINTENDO have the power. In a mere half an hour of footage (none of which featured actual confirmed games) at last year's pre-Spaceworld Gamecube unveiling, all the mistakes of the past melted away, and we walked out in a delirious daze, craving the Gamecube more than anything else.

Although the Nintendo 64 played host to many of the greatest games of the past five years, it was becoming increasingly easy to lose faith in Nintendo and sink into pessimism. Before Spaceworld it felt like the parade of delays and mistakes that haunted the launch of the 64 were going to happen all over again. We'd been playing Dreamcast for ages, PlayStation 2 for eight months and now

Microsoft were making their intentions known. The N64 was looking more and more dated by the day. What the hell were Nintendo doing? What would become of the once merciless rulers of the console scene? It was increasingly looking like the Sony and Microsoft juggernauts were unstoppable.

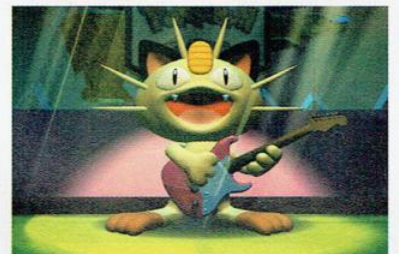
As Spaceworld approached, it felt increasingly like Nintendo would have to pull a Blue Whale out of their gaming butt to get back on track. We des-



perately wanted to believe that they had the balls and the know how to surprise everyone. And they did.

The ultra-realistic Rebirth demo, the exciting Link and Ganon duel, the return of Samus and Metroid, the gloriously alive Luigi and his haunted mansion, Meowth's Pokémon party, the jaw-dropping Wave Race teaser, the crazy thrill of the Rogue Squadron dogfights and the awesome Mario 128 tech demo had everyone literally cheering out loud.

The demos proved not only that the Gamecube is incredibly powerful, but also that Nintendo have the characters, the personality and the skills to once again change the face of gaming. Sony and Microsoft may have the marketing muscle, but Nintendo is the veteran - the gameplay specialist.



# a new nintendo

AS A COMPANY, NINTENDO'S decisions often seem quite mystifying. Sticking with cartridges for the N64, for example, was very odd. Holding off on the release of the SNES, likewise. Understanding the rationale behind decisions like these can only be fathomed, however, through familiarity with the way Nintendo does business and through an understanding of the company's history.

Nintendo, you see, will take profitability over market share any day. This has always been the way Hiroshi Yamauchi has run

the company, and probably always will be. Nintendo would prefer to be a lesser player with large profit margins than the leader relying on third party royalties to turn a profit. Nintendo prefer to release a select few, high quality titles each year that all sell well and have a huge profit margin than to let other companies flood the market.

As cynical as this may sound, it does make a lot of sense. The bottomline with this model is that as long as there's that core Nintendo fanbase, Nintendo will continue to make brilliant games.

A particularly significant product of this mentality is that Nintendo aren't hung up about getting back to industry leader with majority market share. Sure, that would be nice, but being the insular company it is, Nintendo are far

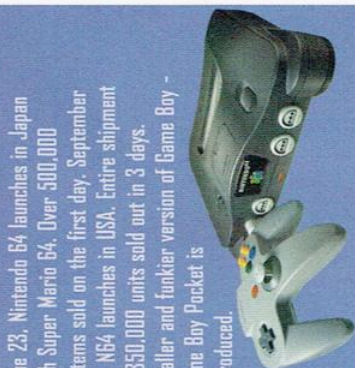
more likely to be concerned with Nintendo. Thus, they are free to concentrate on the task at hand without carrying around baggage.

Nintendo does need to re-evaluate many things about its business, however. If it hopes to be a serious contender in the next console war it must prove that it is capable of understanding the market as it is today - not as it was when it reigned supreme. It must make certain changes to survive.

Thankfully, Nintendo seem to be doing just that. They have analysed their experience with the N64 in depth, identifying mistakes and putting measures into place to avoid making those same mistakes twice. An example is Nintendo's acquisition of more second party devel-

opers and the creation of a much more open third party system. Another is the streamlining of the Gamecube hardware to allow developers to get fantastic results in a much shorter time frame.

So how do things look for Nintendo overall? Well, as Howard Lincoln once said "You have no idea what you have taken on: a tiger who will skin you piece by piece". Amen.



June 23, Nintendo 64 launches in Japan with Super Mario 64. Over 500,000 systems sold on the first day. September 29, N64 launches in USA. Entire shipment of 350,000 units sold out in 3 days. Smaller and funkier version of Game Boy - Game Boy Pocket is introduced.

Goldeneye 007, Star Fox 64 and Mario Kart 64 hit retail. With few titles, and no decent RPGs or fighting games, the N64 is performing poorly in Japan, but holding its own in the USA.

Game Boy Colour introduced, as well as Game Boy Camera and Printer. Nintendo create another massive potential franchise in the form of Pokémon. Pokémon Red and Blue are released for Game Boy in America and sales go berserk. Legend Of Zelda: Ocarina Of Time comes out and sells 2.3 million units between November 23 and the end of the year in America.

Nintendo announces plans for the "Dolphin", as well as the Game Boy Advance. The Pokémon craze keeps getting bigger. Pokémon Snap, Pokémon Yellow and Pokémon Pinball are released.

Perfect Dark is released and more rumours begin circulating regarding the "Dolphin" which is finally confirmed as the Nintendo Gamecube. Nintendo 64 game development shows signs of slowing to a crawl. Gamecube tech demos are shown at Spaceworld and Nintendo announces a 2001 launch for Japan. Game Boy Advance also revealed, proving that Nintendo are not willing to release their stranglehold on the handheld market. It all looks good.

Rumours circulate that Nintendo will acquire Sega. Everyone has their eyes on £3 in May for the first true Gamecube games...

1996

1997

1998

1999

2000

2001

NINTENDO 64

# BANJO-TOOIE

PAGE 48



**HYPER  
GAME  
OF THE  
MONTH**

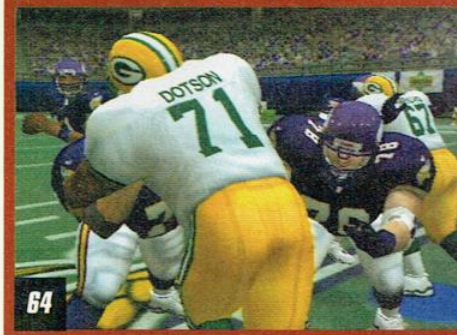
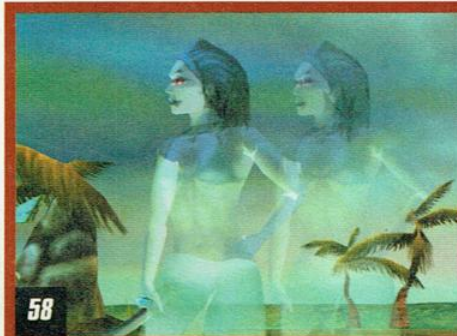
The bird and bear are back! Rare cement their place in the video game hall of fame.

## REVIEWS



**Green** for Dreamcast  
**Yellow** for PC  
**Red** for Nintendo 64  
**Dark Blue** for PlayStation  
**Light Blue** for PlayStation 2

..... <b>NINTENDO 64</b> .....	
48.....	BANJO-TOOIE
..... <b>PC</b> .....	
52.....	ONI
54.....	AMERICAN MCGEE'S ALICE
56.....	GUNMAN CHRONICLES
58.....	GIANTS
60.....	PRO RALLY 2001
61.....	STUPID INVADERS
62.....	COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2.0
79.....	CALL TO POWER 2
79.....	CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 00/01
..... <b>PS2</b> .....	
64.....	MADDEN NFL 2001
66.....	DANCE SUMMIT 2001
68.....	KESSEN
69.....	SUPER BUST A MOVE
..... <b>DREAMCAST</b> .....	
70.....	SONIC SHUFFLE
72.....	STARLANCER
73.....	QUAKE 3 ARENA
..... <b>PSONE</b> .....	
74.....	INCREDIBLE CRISIS
76.....	LEGEND OF DRAGOON
78.....	ALIEN RESURRECTION
79.....	SHEEP



## THE HYPER CREW'S TOP 5

### WHAT WE'RE PLAYING THIS MONTH

Eliot Fish – Editor

1. Half-Life: Counter-Strike – PC  
*"Ahhh... broadband. I'm back online to kick some arse!"*
2. Time Splitters – PS2
3. Colin McRae Rally 2.0 – PC
4. Tribes 2 – PC
5. Adventures of Lolo – NES

Cam Shea – Deputy Editor

1. Daytona USA – Dreamcast  
*"It's about bloody time... even if it is missing 'Dayytonaaa!'"*
2. Sonic Adventure 2 (demo) – Dreamcast
3. Rival Schools 2 – Dreamcast
4. Colin McRae Rally 2.0 – PC
5. Quake 3: Team Arena – PC

James Cottee – Contributing writer

1. Time Splitters – PS2  
*"The sexiest shooter since No One Lives Forever."*
2. Smuggler's Run – PS2
3. Team Buddies – PSone
4. Combat – Atari 2600
5. Call To Power 2 – PC

# HYPERR

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


[www.au.gateway.com](http://www.au.gateway.com)





**HYPHER  
GAME  
MONTH**  
OF THE

# BANJO-TOOIE

 The bird in **Cam Shea's** backpack has finally escaped...

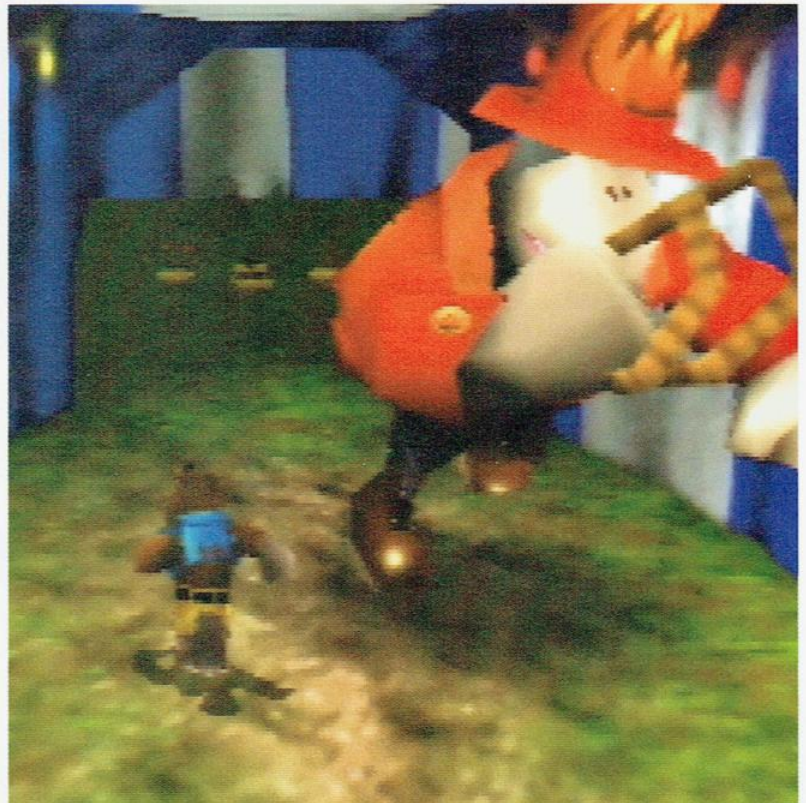
**AVAILABLE:** Now  
**CATEGORY:** 3D Platformer  
**PLAYERS:** 1-4  
**PUBLISHER:** Nintendo  
**PRICE:** \$99.95  
**RATING:** G8+  
**SUPPORTS:** Rumble Pak

**F**OR A GAME STARRING A BEAR wearing tiny yellow hotpants so tight they'd make Kylie Minogue blush, Banjo-Kazooie was remarkably good. Created by Rare (see page 42 for more), it has been the only game thus far to challenge Mario 64's throne in the realm of 3D platforming. Showcasing Rare's typically impressive polish and inventiveness, Banjo-Kazooie worked so well because of the ingenious combination of two characters. Each had its own abilities, and when combined afforded a wealth of gameplay potential that Rare managed to exploit with some clever levels and puzzles.

**THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET...**  
 After giving the bear and the bird a thorough spanking, we've had a long

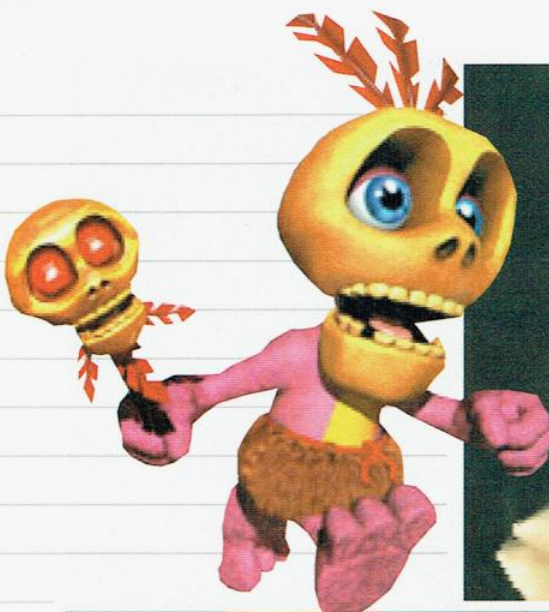
wait for Banjo-Tooie - especially after our appetite was whet by the alluring hints in the first game regarding areas that can only be unlocked by playing Banjo-Tooie (still unconfirmed). There was even a secret ending that had Mumbo giving the player a sneak peak of what to expect from the sequel.

The long wait has been more than worth it, mind you, and it's not hard to see why it took this long. Banjo-Tooie is a game that will charm the bright yellow pants off you, as Rare have most definitely addressed any complaints with the original. They've tweaked platform game mechanics to a whole new level here, as well as injecting a healthy dose of acerbic sass-mouth for good measure. In fact, it's the humour that more or less guarantees even the skeptics will have a good time with Banjo-Tooie. Rare have managed to craft perhaps the best 3D platformer ever at the same time as parodying so many of the institutions of the genre. It doesn't take itself at all seriously - King Jingaling greets you with a "Yo wassup", and there are constant references to the first game, not to mention



DON'T APE AROUND



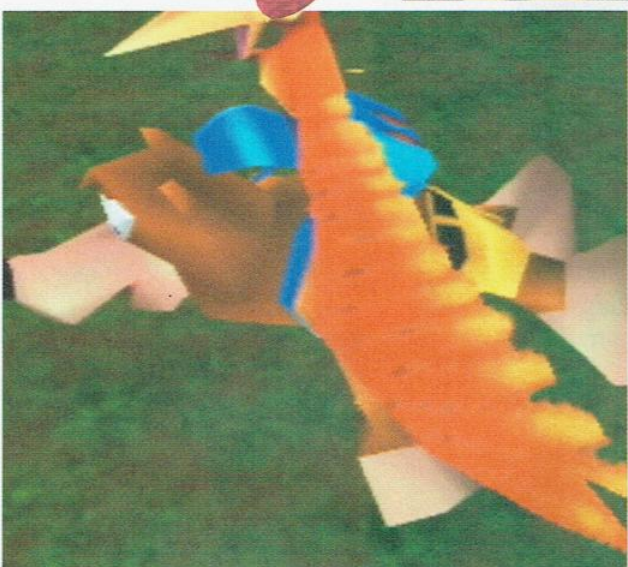


## MINI ME GAMES

Banjo-Tooie is simply brimming with mini-games and challenges. These include: the Mayan Kickball challenge, the Dodgem Car Challenge, the Balloon Burst Challenge, the mini-sub shootout, and the Tower of Tragedy Quiz. Many of these are playable in multiplayer games too - fourteen all up. While a fun diversion, there's nothing here to replace Mario Tennis, but hey thanks for including them Rare!

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO LITTLE OLD ME?

JUST LOOK IN A MIRROR



BANJO IS ALWAYS PICKING UP BIRDS



some surprisingly risqué content. When the "seaman" jokes and drag queen references start flying in the Jolly Roger Lagoon level you'll know what we mean, if you can stop laughing for long enough that is.

Backing up this award winning toilet humour, is some of the finest gameplay this side of Goldeneye. In addition to the tight set of abilities that made the original so solid, Banjo and Kazooie can now split up, opening up a whole host of individual moves for the player to learn. There are 40 new moves in all, including some very cool surprises such as the "Breegull Blaster", where the game switches to a first person shooter and Banjo totes Kazooie like a cat. Among many others, you can learn to grab onto ledges and shimmy along, Kazooie gets fired like a torpedo, Banjo learns to wield his backpack as a deadly weapon, and Kazooie learns to fire eggs while flying as well as swimming. Another cool new feature in Banjo-Tooie is the range of eggs you can now pick up and maim things with. Forget the old garden variety egg, there are now grenade

eggs, fire eggs, ice eggs, and clock-work Kazooie eggs.

## GETTING' WIGGY IN THE WIGWAM

In the quest to keep the puzzles ever more interesting and challenging, Banjo-Tooie comes with more sub-quests, mini games and extra playable characters than anybody expected. You can visit Humba Wumba's wigwam (chortle) and Mumbo Jumbo's skull to transform into bizarre new creatures - each with their own abilities. From Mumbo himself (nobody seems to like him either, if you try talking to other characters chances are they'll tell you where to go), to a Detonator (a strange dynamite detonation box that hops around - you can use it to blow up giant boulders to reveal a new path), a panel van, a submarine, a baby T-Rex, a daddy T-Rex, a washing machine, a snowball, and a bee. Phew!

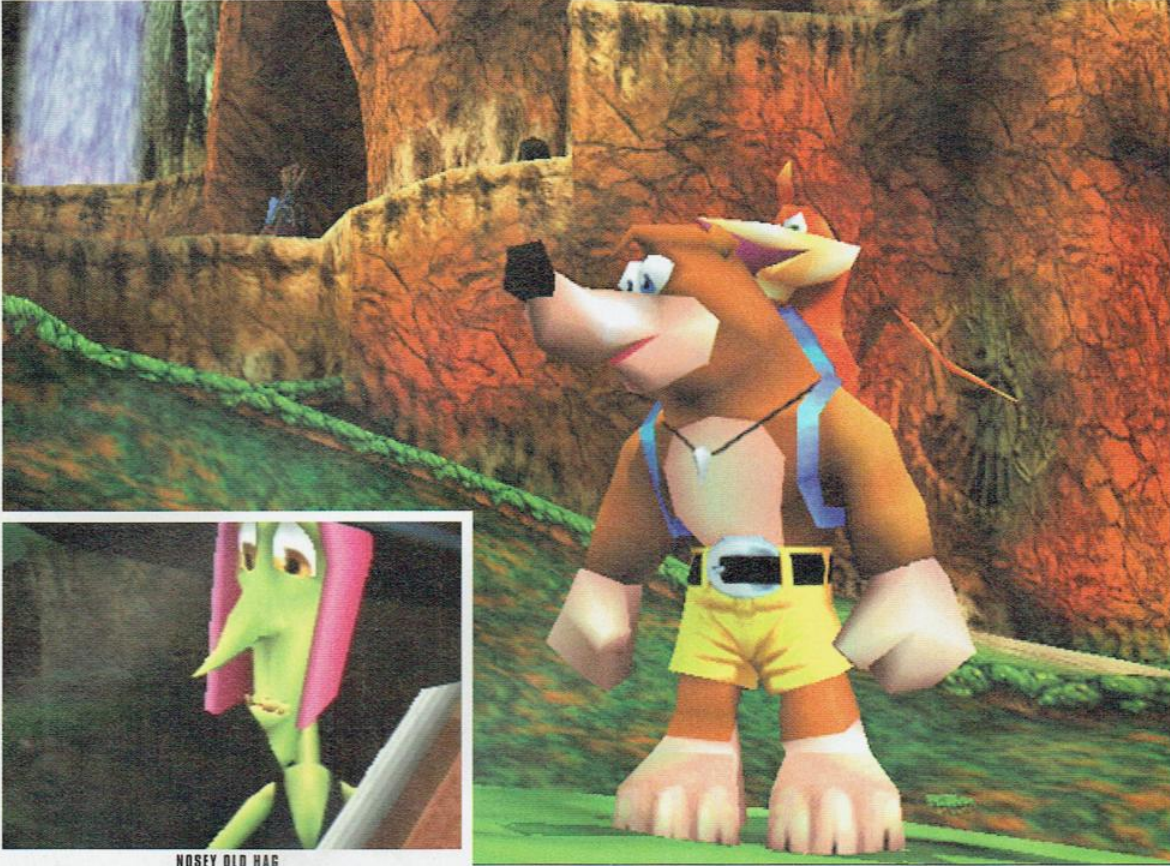
Technically, not a whole lot has changed. We won't patronise you by pretending that the graphics are "pretty" - many of the environments are over filtered and relatively aver-

age looking, but as far as the N64 goes, Rare have done an absolutely wonderful job. The variety and size of the environments still impress, and the textures are perfectly suited to the gameworlds. The characters also look excellent - all this without utilising the RAM pack. And let's not forget the particle effects from splashing around in the water (coupled with the bubbles under the surface) - two years on from Banjo-Kazooie and they still haven't been equaled on a console.

Sound is mostly the same as it was in Banjo-Kazooie, which is to say very good. The music is context sensitive, so moving from the land into the water will slow its pace right down and distort it somewhat, and moving from a safe area into a dangerous one manically increases the pace. While good, the music is just a little too familiar, and after going a straight 14 hour stretch of the game

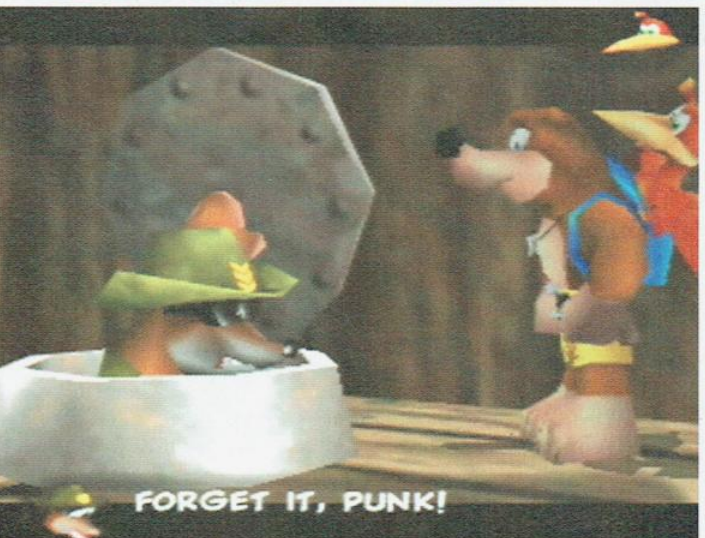
near the end of my playguide for the original, I sincerely hoped that I'd never have to hear that same theme loop again. Such is life. The voices still





NOSEY OLD HAG

ONE OF THE MANY MINI-GAMES! GAMBLING!



FORGET IT, PUNK!

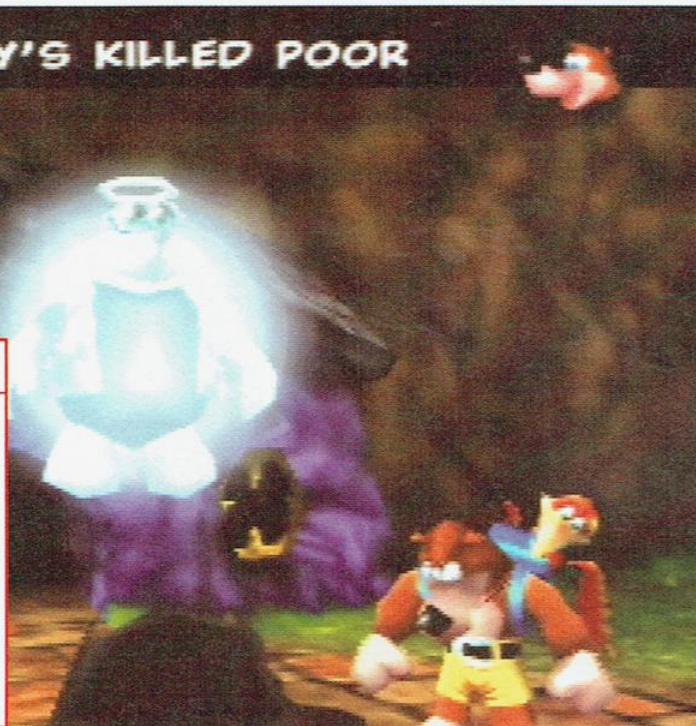
BANJO TRIES TO LOOK IN JAMJAR'S HOLE

BANJO AND KAZOOIE WAIT FOR THE STUNT MATRESS

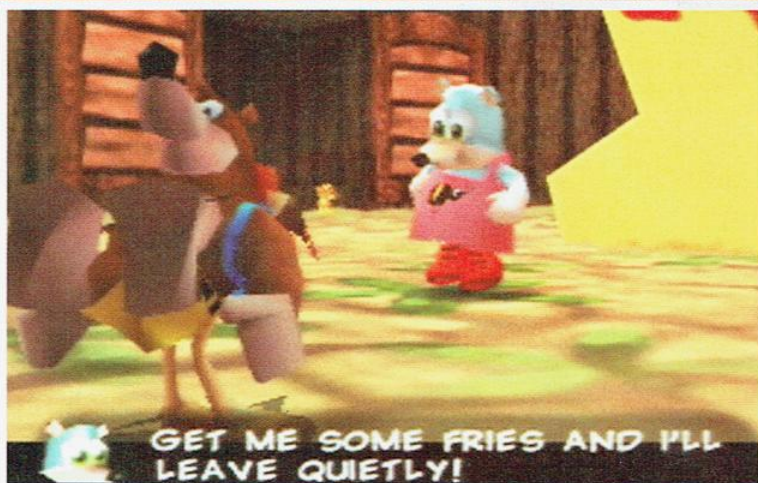
...GRUNTY'S KILLED POOR BOTTLES

## STORY SCHMORY

Banjo-Tooie opens with Gruntilda's sisters Mingella and Blobbelda arriving to free her from the boulder she's been trapped under since the end of the original. The skeletal Gruntilda is freed and attempts to fry Banjo, Kazooie, Mumbo and Bottles with a nasty spell. Only Bottles gets hit, and er, killed. Hooray! As Kazooie comments, he was one of the least popular characters from the original anyway. Heh heh.

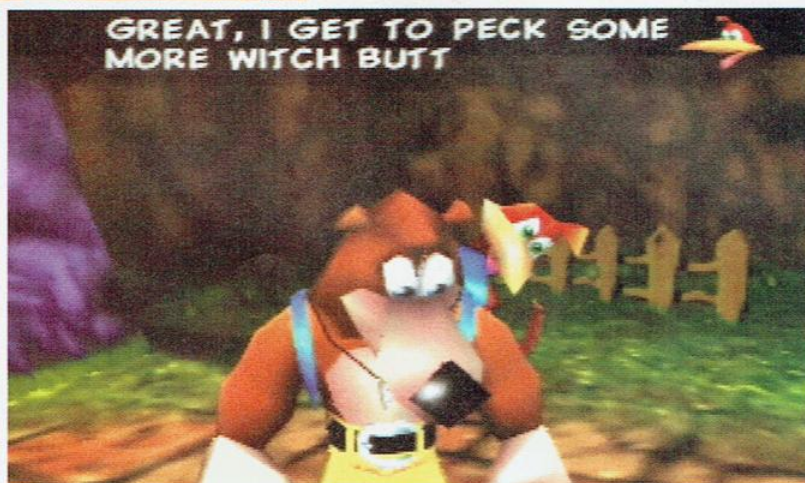


THERE'RE SOME BIG BEAR BREASTS



GET ME SOME FRIES AND I'LL LEAVE QUIETLY!

QUE THE FASTFOOD PRODUCT PLACEMENT



GREAT, I GET TO PECK SOME MORE WITCH BUTT

WITH YOUR PECKER NO DOUBT

consist of endearing gobble-de-gook, with each character having very distinct sound parameters and appropriate intonation. Jamjars, your military instructor, for instance, has a very militant "hut hut hut" way of talking. Besides, with the amount of dialogue in this game, it just wouldn't be feasible to sample voices.

## LEARN HOW TO PLAY THE BANJO

There's a near incalculable amount of gameplay locked away in Banjo-Tooie, and once again, the adventure is hardly what you'd call linear. Every area seems to have a whole host of puzzles there for the solving, but chances are that many of these won't be solvable until later in the game when you learn a particular ability. As you progress through the game you're constantly learning new skills, and there's quite a bit of backtracking required. Lacking the skills to beat certain puzzles early on in the game may frustrate some, but personally, we found it enjoyable that if

you couldn't solve one puzzle there always seemed to be plenty more to try out instead.

The worlds are absolutely massive, almost dauntingly so, but unlike Donkey Kong 64 they don't seem huge for the sake of being huge, and are rarely confusing. Rare have cleverly made separate areas within worlds instantly recognisable, as well as utilising a variety of warp points throughout the worlds for easy travel. For instance, if only Mumbo can beat a certain puzzle, you can simply use the nearest pad to warp to the pad outside Mumbo's skull-house, change characters, then warp back again.

Across the worlds - Mayahem Temple, Glitter Gulch Mine, Witchyworld, Jolly Roger Lagoon and Terrydactyland, Banjo-Tooie keeps the challenge and entertainment levels high. It will take some perseverance to beat, so if you're looking for something to tide you over until Gamecube, Banjo-Tooie will hit the spot. ■

As a New Years card, Nintendo sent out a picture of Conker from Conker's Bad Fur Day spewing into an open toilet. Nice. [www.conker.com](http://www.conker.com)



## PLUS

A great sequel that's constantly poking fun at itself and everything else.

## MINUS

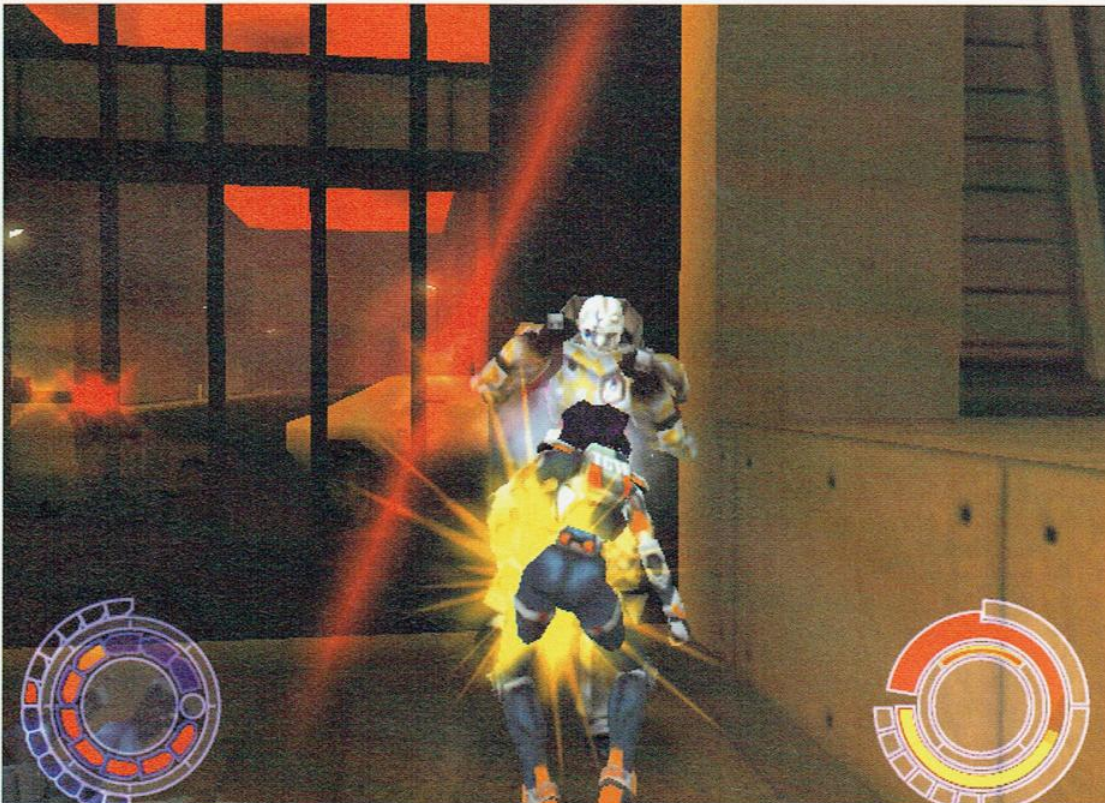
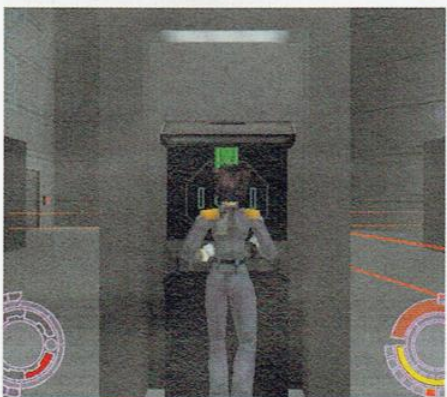
Framerate does tend to drop at times.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90	90	93

## OVERALL

# 92

Banjo-Tooie is a fantastic swan-song for the N64.



WHERE IS SHE STICKING THAT FLASHLIGHT?

# ONI



Oni oni oni, in a rich man's world.  
**Gareth Jones** jumps into action.



AVAILABLE:	February
CATEGORY:	Third Person Action
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	GOD Games
PRICE:	\$89.95
RATING:	MA15+
REQUIRE:	P11 300, 32MB RAM, 3D Card
DESIGNER:	P11/111 450, 128MB RAM, 32MB 3D Card

## PLOT PLOT PLOT

Set in 2032 you take on the role of Konoko, a police officer for the 'Tech Crimes Task Force' as she begins her training and then first assignment tracking down a nefarious group of technologically enhanced bad dudes. Heavily influenced by anime and 'tech-noir' films, the plot is very convoluted and labyrinthine. As the story emerges throughout the missions you begin to learn more about the dark past of Konoko and become forced to wonder just who, or what, she really is - as well as the motives and allegiances of your superiors and support team. It really is an excellently paced and involving plot that drives the story behind the game - this isn't 'just another action game' where the story-line is really only a frilly bit added on to make some sense of level after level of level of killing. But that's all you'll hear from this reviewer about Oni's plot; suffice to say that to clue you in anymore would ruin quite a bit of the enjoyment you'll get from playing.

It's not just the plot that will have you sitting up and taking notice though, as the gameplay is also excellent. Bungie have introduced a wide range of fighting moves along with the more standard 'point gun at target,

shoot' elements. Players use the standard FPS mouse and keyboard controls, with the addition of a punch and kick button. Used either just to punch and kick or in combination with other actions, Konoko can deliver an increasingly devastating series of blows and throws to her opponents. Bungie have done an excellent job of making the

hand-to-hand combat quite simple and intuitive, as well as intricate and varied enough to make you want to keep honing your skills and practicing new moves. During the heat of battle there is a real difference between a player who just mashes buttons (like I did at first) and one who times their attacks and makes use of often simple

**E**VER FACED AN OPPONENT ACROSS the room in Q3 or UT and wanted to leap into the air, spin into a somersault and then end up with a flying kick that expunges the bad guy's gizzards out through his back rather than just cowardly spam a few rockets at him and then run away?

No? Me neither. But Bungie have, and they've taken a gamble that this is the kind of thing you'll enjoy too. Enter Oni, a third person action game in the style of Tomb Raider that combines the button-mashing fun of fighting games like Tekken with a hefty dose of anime extravagance and a lovely tech-noir dystopic theme thrown in. Think of it as Lara getting jiggy with Tekken's Jin and the resultant offspring then being chosen to star in a film co-directed by John Woo and Ridley Scott.



KONOKO'S VALIUM KICKS IN AT A REALLY INAPPROPRIATE TIME



RAP DANCING BUSKERS, HOW SAD

combinations (such as dash forward + crouch, which makes Konoko slide underneath an attacker and hacks their ankles, or "punch punch punch" for a cool combo, and plenty more). As you progress through the missions, Konoko also gains new attack abilities and combinations as well as becoming more forceful with her blows, too.

It's not all just Martial Arts mayhem though, there's plenty of weaponry scattered about the place, and being a cop Konoko is proficient at using all the varieties on offer. From pistols to shotguns, energy weapons, and even a 'swarm' rocket launcher, there's plenty to keep the avid shooter happy in Oni. In a most excellent design decision, Bungie have severely limited the amount of weapons and ammo on offer. Guns don't grow on trees (and nor do they float in mid air or respawn ala Q3 etc), and to get hold of a weapon Konoko has to first dispatch an enemy and then steal his - hoping that there's some ammo left in there. Ammo is found in the same way, as are medikits (or in this case, 'hypos'), and both are in very short supply. The blend of shooting and fighting is just about perfect, as there's always a few weapons that can be picked up but you'll also be forced

to go hand-to-hand often during each mission as well.

### THE GREAT BUGBEAR

Bungie, ever the masters of professionalism, called in two actual architects to design the levels and 'world' of Oni with AutoCAD, and the results are just great. There are hallways aplenty, but the at times massive levels allow for plenty of room for walkways, breakable glass windows, machinery and plenty of general eye candy. Though there's usually a fairly linear mini-goal for Konoko, players are free to roam about as much as they like - often rewarded with caches of weapons, health or ammo if they look hard enough.

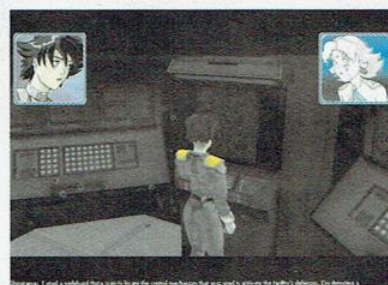
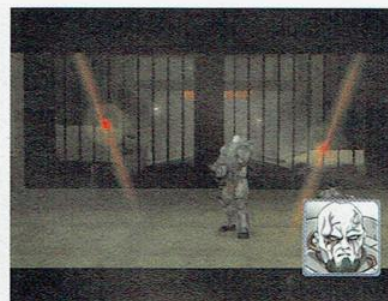
The great bugbear of third person action games has been the control method and the almost inevitable problems that arise from the camera becoming obscured by objects within the level. With Oni, however, Bungie just make the offending wall (or whatever it is) disappear. Hey presto - no problem. It does give players a bit of an opportunity to cheat a little and peek through walls that they shouldn't be able to see through, but nothing's perfect.

And though Oni is great and comes highly recommended, it certainly isn't perfect. Even on medium difficulty

level at times Oni can be very, very hard. Each mission has three or four save points, but particularly as Konoko progresses the gap between save points becomes larger - and of course the game becomes harder too. Expect to have to replay certain sections quite a few times before you figure out the best way to progress through.

Also, the absolute bane of third person games - the 'look behind' action isn't an option. Movement and control is fluid, but there is no way to look behind you without turning around, and the AI will sneak up on you quite often too. With the inclusion of 'mouselook' to aid turning Konoko does have a small turning circle, but still it would have been nice for a 'behind you!' button to be included as it will frustrate you at times.

Oni is still without a doubt a fantastic game. It's the first instance where hand-to-hand combat has been successfully melded with third person action-adventure, and the professionalism and quality in all other aspects are top notch. Whether you prefer Lara-style action/adventure, button-mashing fighting games, or even your standard FPSes like Q3 and UT, Oni has quality, class and is extremely deserving of your attention. ■



### PLUS

Fighting game moves blended with action and adventure, excellent storyline and setting.

### MINUS

Quite difficult, very few save points.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90	85	92

### OVERALL

# 90

Action game or fighting game?  
It's both and it rocks!



THIS SIMPLE GAME CAN TURN DISTINCTLY NASTY.  
DON'T EVER PLAY ALONE.

CAM AND ELIOT THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

# AMERICAN MCGEE'S ALICE

“Curiouser and curiouser” said **Cam Shea** as the mushroom did its thing...



AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Action
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	EA
PRICE:	\$89.95
RATING:	MA15+
REQUIRED:	PII 400, 64MB RAM, 16MB Open GL capable video card
DESIRED:	PIII 500, 128MB RAM, GeForce 2

LEWIS CARROLL'S ALICE IN Wonderland holds an esteemed place in our literary heritage. It stands alongside other great works like "The Smugglers Of Pirate Cove" and "Stiff Upper Lip, Jeeves", as a piece of writing that has weathered the test of time. It may have been penned 135 years ago, but characters like the Cheshire Cat, the Mad Hatter and the Queen of Hearts are still part of the collective subconscious today.

Alice's endurance is in large part due to its enticing combination of a bizarre world, unique characters and artful storytelling. Another factor in its continued presence is the number of times the story has been reinvented or retold, keeping it fresh in each generation's mind. Ex-id software producer American McGee has taken the chal-

lenge of reinventing Alice for the beginning of the 21st century, and has (mostly) come up trumps. After all, Alice's surreal world and the book's dark subtext are perfect videogame fodder.

So what lies in store for modern day Alice? Well, since this is the age of computer simulated graphic violence, it's time to dive back through the looking glass, butcher's knife in hand.

## ALICE DOES WONDERLAND...

American McGee's Alice (AMGA) takes place several years after Lewis Carroll's tale. Since her first visit, Wonderland has lost its whimsical edge and somehow contorted into a nightmare realm. Tormented by insidious visions, Alice has lost her marbles and spent the intervening years in a mental institution. Thus, the only way to regain sanity is for Alice to return to Wonderland and kick some Queen of Hearts booty. Talk about existential gaming!

Right from the word go, AMGA's depiction of a darker Wonderland feels spot on. American McGee and his team have reworked many of the original characters and locations to great effect. The Cheshire Cat is every bit as crafty as he should be, and the Card

Guards every bit as flat. Level design is slick and surreal, artfully balancing fairy tale elements with dark lunacy to create an enticing, and constantly surprising gameworld. Plus, running on the Quake 3 engine, AMGA looks amazing.

If you were hoping for a complex storyline and cerebral gameplay then you're going to be disappointed. AMGA is very much a graphics driven game, relying a little too heavily on the weird and the wonderful to keep your interest levels up. Gameplay stays strictly within the straight-up third-person action-game mould. Levels are mostly linear, puzzles are simple and infrequent, and the storyline struggles to rise above mere garnish. Oh, there's a little too much jumpy jumpy platforming action for our liking too.

With such a cool gothic concept to explore, it's a shame that more effort wasn't put into the storyline and character development. After all, the basic premise of the game is Alice's inner turmoil.

## ALICE'S NICE ARSENAL...

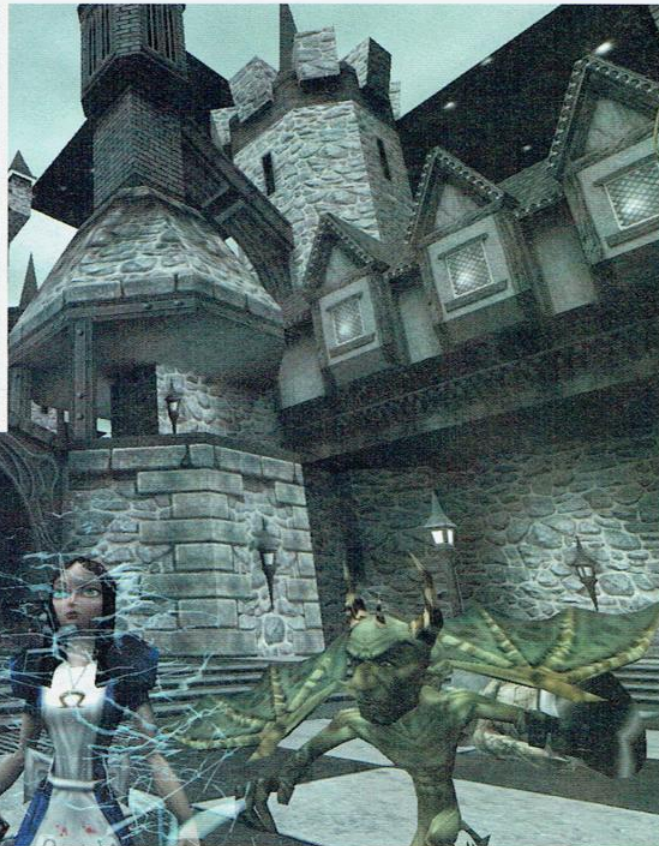
Even so, you could do a lot worse than whiling away the wee gaming hours in AMGA's immersive world. It really is a visual feast. The design work

is sumptuous, from the stylish menu screens and artwork, through to the consistently impressive level design, creative architecture and detailed textures. Alice is animated well, controls accurately, and has a nice arsenal with which to blow away the truly freaky creatures you'll come up against. The music and sound effects also add greatly to the experience, thanks to former Nine Inch Nail Chris Vrenna.

Despite its problems, Alice is an undeniably alluring game. Gorgeous graphics, great design and an excellent premise make Alice's journey through the surreal next-gen Wonderland an experience worth checking out. Oh, and the f\*\*k me boots? Niiice... ■

## GAMING CAN BE A LONELY PLACE...

Alas fair readers, for Alice lacks a multiplayer option. This is probably fair enough, as the emphasis is very much on the solitary freak-out Wonderland experience, and reworking the game would have taken a lot of effort. Even so, a co-operative mode would have been cool, as would team based multiplayer action.



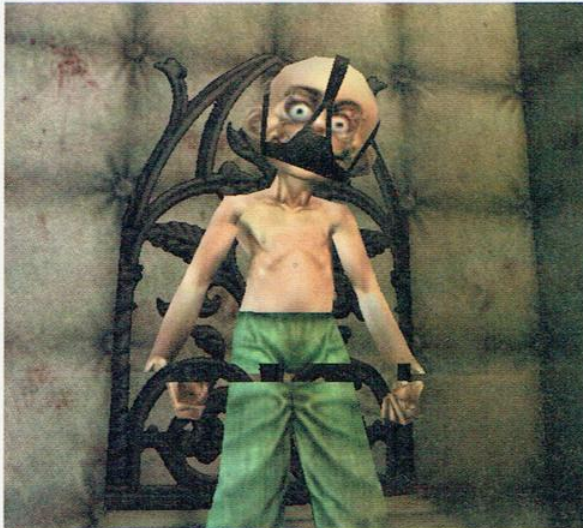
ALICE FALLS FOR THE "LOOK IT'S THE GOODYEAR BLIMPI!" ROUTINE. AGAIN.



HAVE AT YOU, YOU, YOU... AND YOU!



ANOTHER UNLIKELY DRUNKEN WEDDING IN VEGAS



...AND TOM WAS READY TO GO CLUBBING!

**WHO IS AMERICAN MCGEE, AND WHY'S HIS NAME ON THE BOX?**

Judging by the name alone, you'd think that American McGee's probably a close personal friend of Ted Nugent, or perhaps Charlton Heston. Fortunately, this isn't the case, and despite the practical joke of a name, American McGee has some serious pedigree. He was an integral cog at id software for some time, and has brought that experience to bear in Alice. Even so...

We're used to seeing directors parading their name alongside a film's title. Is this a trend that should follow through into the world of gaming? Although most game producers aren't known by name, there are enough high profile industry vets to get the ball rolling. "Shigeru Miyamoto's Mario 128"? Can't see that happening. More like "Yamauchi's Worker Bees Present Nintendo Game 134". Then again..."John Romero's Daikatana"? Damn, too late!

If we take this idea through to its logical conclusion, where every game is titled in this way, then we're in for some amusing titles from startups... "Frank Grime's Post Office Sim 4000"? And how about the teams who would prefer to stay anonymous? We'd be seeing games like "Some Dude's Crappy Film Port". Best of all, we'd eventually get to a Futurama-like scenario, with games titles like "Wrestling Game Design Unit 21's Grapple-O-Matic".



**PLUS**

Mesmerising levels and graphics.

**MINUS**

Simplistic and linear gameplay. Load times are a killer.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91	90	79

**OVERALL**

**84**

Alice is on a mission to tonk... and tonk she does!



WALKER TEXAS RANGER:2001, THE REALLY UNPOPULAR THIRD SERIES

# GUNMAN CHRONICLES



**Gareth Jones** has the fastest pun in the west, apparently...



AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	FPS
PLAYERS:	1-32
PUBLISHER:	Sierra
PRICE:	\$65
RATING:	MA15+
REQUIRED:	P233, 32MB RAM, 2xCD
DESIRE:	P266, 64MB RAM, 3D card (open GL or Direct 3D)

**T**HERE WAS A TIME WHEN THOSE who laboured in their spare time slaving away over acres of code, miles of level design, minutiae of character models, reams of scripting and endless tweaking to release their mods were only in it for the love of it. It was enough to have their peers recognize their efforts and applaud them.

That was then, this is now. Mods these days can be huge business, and more and more mod developers are setting their sights on making money from their efforts - nothing wrong with that in itself, but not all mods are worth paying money for. In fact, there are very few that are actually worth paying money for - Counter Strike and Team Fortress are pretty much the only two that come to mind.

## SCI-FI SHERIFF

So, if you haven't guessed already, Gunman Chronicles is a mod (well, actually a Total Conversion or TC) of Half-Life developed by Rewolf Studios and distributed by Sierra. In true mod developer style, many of the members of Rewolf have never actually met in real life, but they've still managed to put together a creditable offering, even if it is just 'average'.

The story is that you're a Gunman, something like a wild western Sheriff in the future, on patrol in 'Banzur Prime' when a hefty bunch of Xenomes attacked your group, killing most of your fellow Gunmen and dragging your General away to presumably snack on later. Being a sensible fellow, you run away as fast as you can, jump in your spaceship and get the f\*ck outa there.

A while later, your new team is called to respond to a distress signal back on Banzur Prime - and it turns out that the General survived the Xenomes and has in fact mastered them. And he's not particularly happy with you either. Because you left him for dead, he's lured you into a trap, set the Xenomes to attack you and run away - your task being to fight your way

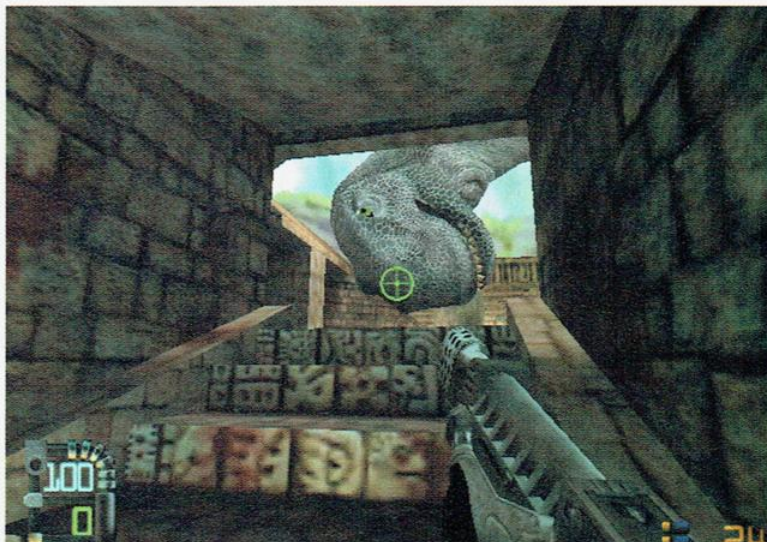
through them and get to the now completely insane General and stop him.

A decent premise for the game, and it's pushed along very well by the high number of scripted sequences that occur throughout the game - probably the highpoint of GC is the plot and script. However, the level design is annoyingly linear, the puzzles are quite ordinary (and at times frustrating), the AI is nothing to write home

about, and because there's only four or five different types of adversaries it gets rather staid rather quickly.

## RIDE OFF INTO THE SUN

Now, as far as the weaponry at your disposal goes, the back of the box loudly and proudly proclaims that there's 32 variations of weapons on offer. And it's right, but this isn't a good thing. Most of the weapons are standard FPS issue -



CURIOSITY KILLED THE CAT





A CHALLENGE IS MADE: BURP THE ALPHABET OR ELSE!



AIM A LITTLE TO THE LEFT



a handgun, shotgun, rapid fire rifle, sniper rifle, grenade, rocket launcher, and energy gun. What Rewolf have tried to do to make things a little bit different is to make the weapons customisable. With the shotgun, for example, you select how many shells to fire each shot, and what 'mode' the weapon should be in; Riot gun for spreadfire, Shotgun for close-up work, or Rifle mode for accuracy with range. Each weapon is customisable in this manner

and while it is a rather cool idea and is at first plenty of fun to muck about with, there is a major flaw. During the heat of battle it's just not possible to change modes on the fly, so you either have to retreat and change or just stick with what you've got.

For a TC, this is one of the best that ever was. But for a full priced retail game it isn't anywhere near long enough, doesn't feature nearly enough innovation, depth, or interesting level

design, doesn't have the polish of a professional game, and it just doesn't compare to other modern offerings in the FPS genre. Now, if it was being sold for \$20 or thereabouts, it would be a decent purchase to both support the developers who have put in a hell of a lot of time and effort and done a great job as well as just to enjoy the game. But this is not anything out of the ordinary, and after reading this you'll probably never hear of it again. ■

! Yep, Gunman Chronicles has an obligatory multiplayer mode. Up to 32 players via LAN or the internet.



## PLUS

Excellent story and scripted sequences.

## MINUS

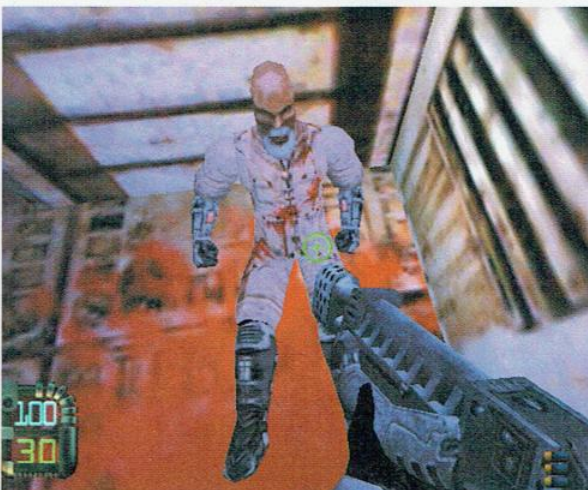
Banal levels, adversaries, and suffers from a terminal lack of depth.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
74	75	64

## OVERALL

# 57

If it was a free download, it'd be the best thing ever. It's not, and it's not.





GO CRYING TO MUMMY YOU BIG BABY!



# GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO

Rolland Flanagan's days of being a BFG are over. Bring on the Big F'ing Angry Giant!

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Action/RTS hybrid
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Interplay
PRICE:	\$89.95
RATING:	M17+

general mischief, and finally, the giant Kabuto who's err... bloody huge. Nuff said.

Many people judge a game only on its graphics, and by this simple-minded criterion Giants delivers. It WILL woo you with its immaculate graphics (Geforce 2 anyone?), from the surreal and enticing tropical colours on dis-

play through to the attention to detail and funky design, it's certainly captivating. The water flows freely against the shore, trees splinter into millions of pieces when shot, Kabuto leaves huge paw prints wherever he lumbers... its all done to an impressive level. Fortunately, Giants has the sound and addictive gameplay to match.

**PARTY ON WAYNE. PARTY ON GARTH.**

The intro to the first level provides a glimpse of the sheer scale of the intricate world of Giants Citizen Kabuto. Our first batch of heroes, the Meccs, crash into the Island and lose a few ship members in the descent. Rough and tough, they must find each other, help the local

**G**IANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO IS FINALLY here, ahead of Peter Molyneux's forthcoming title Black and White. But have Planet Moon made the right decision in releasing this game before the Christmas rush in America and during the sales in Oz?

Well, the answer to that question is a straight out yes. Giants is one of the greatest hybrid games, if not the greatest 3rd Person Action game released on PC to date. It takes place on an island in the middle of nowhere. It's a vibrant and colourful world, rich with beasties and flora, textures and polygons. On this island live some very interesting life forms. Aside from the assorted bad asses scattered around the island for firing practice, there are the Smarties - relatives of Elvis from Perfect Dark and the Meccayns - beefcakes from the Planet Flanagan. There are also Sea Reapers - hot, large breasted babes who are into serious sunbaking and



"YOU GOT ANY VISENE SHORTY?"



A FLASH OF THIGH AND IT WAS ALL OVER FOR THE ENEMY

populace by saving falling Smarties, and hopefully get back to interstellar travel. About a third of the way into the game, however, the action switches to Delphi, daughter of the Sea Reaper Queen. She doesn't quite like the current cruelty and wicked actions of her family, who brutally murder the Smarties. Thus, she must help the Meccs save the Smarties and bring the Sea Reapers back to the peace loving sunbaking babes they used to be. Another set of abilities, challenges and terrain to cover in this portion. Finally, the conclusion of our game brings us the life of the

giant himself - Kabuto. Not too hard to fathom really... Eggs = offspring = Lots of Giants. Sounds good. Lay lots of eggs and help raise them and conquer the island all in time for dinner. There are many levels for each inhabitant, all with wonderful mission objectives showing off the time that Planet Moon have put into this game. They range from saving falling Smarties, to races, to simple search and destroy missions, each involving new weapons and environments which will have you coming back for more.

The game includes multiplayer capabilities, but at the time of writing, no

Australian servers were available. However, we can tell you that the main ideas for multiplayer include Capture the Smartie, a variation of the traditional CTF that promises to see many players repulsed. Thankfully, the inclusion of multiplayer capabilities have taken nothing away from the single player game.

Giants is pretty much everything it was hyped up to be (could be a first!). Christmas might have come and gone, but birthdays will not be without gaming goodness with titles like this around.

To all those at Planet Moon, congrats on a first class game for your first release. May the force be with you. ■

## BY THE SONS OF KALARI, GRUNTS AHOY!

The quality in the sound department rocks hard! Combining realistic sound effects for the environment, such as a dull thud when you shoot a tree, to a sharp ping when you shoot brick houses to smithereens, you'll become so immersed in the in-game music that you might let your pizza go cold. Don't be surprised if you start whistling the tunes around the house. There is no shame in this. But the sound really excels in the character voices. No points for guessing that Kabuto sounds like Big Merv getting out of bed, while the Sea Reapers' voices mimic a Playboy Playmate/Mrs Crabtree from Southpark. Fans of Pinky and the Brain will feel right at home, because Timmy (Southpark anyone?) the Smartie sounds exactly like Pinky. The Meccs, especially Baz, sound like Ricky Ponting after his night at the Bourbon and Beefsteak. Try acting out this awesome scene using those voices:

Baz (Mecc): What the %\$& is that?  
 Timmy (Smartie): Wax models of Smarties. The Sea Reapers are trying to frighten us off our island...  
 Baz: Akmed!!! The Smarties! They're real!  
 Timmy (faints and then regains conscious): Please, save them! Oh God, and to think yesterday I was throwing stones at them.  
 Baz: Yeah, they do look a little beat up.

Giants is packed to the gills with humour at every turn, with the cutscenes in particular being a riot. It's worth playing just for the fun of laughing at the expense of the losers on screen.



**PLUS**  
 Gorgeous graphics, intuitive controls and style to boot.

**MINUS**  
 Too hard for inexperienced gamers, no game save.

VISUALS **93** SOUND **89** GAMEPLAY **91**

OVERALL

**92**

A kick-arse game that provides everything it promised.



SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN REALLY UGLY DWARFS



"YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT BOB, BUT THERE ARE TWO GIANT ARROWS FALLING OUT OF THE SKY."



HE MUST HAVE INSTALLED THE "STRAFINING" PEDAL



# PRO RALLY 2001

 We like to keep **George Soropos** off the streets. It's safer that way.

for all intents and purposes their first game. Sadly it shows and one has to question the wisdom in giving such a big job to such an inexperienced crew.

### THE USUAL GAMUT

Pro Rally offers all the usual features that we've come to expect from Rally titles: Time Trial, Championship and single races, plus unlockable tracks and cars and the odd special stage here and there. The one newish element to the gameplay has actually been stolen from Sony's PlayStation title Gran Turismo. Before you can race in the championship you have to qualify by passing a series of tests to prove your driving skills.

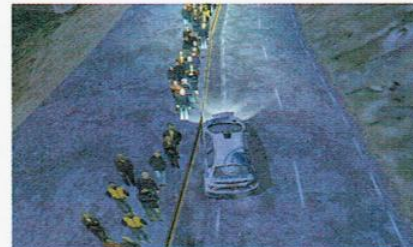
The terrain and environments offered span the usual gamut of possibility with red dirt in Australia, snow in Sweden and mud in the UK. Sadly, you can't pop a wheelie over Olympus Mons on Mars but perhaps one day... The disappointing thing about these environments though is that they are all rather dull. Sure, when you're racing you don't have time to appreciate the scenery but the circuits could have used a bit more drama or detail to set them apart from each other.

The real problems with the game

though start and finish with the cars. Head designer for the title, David Darnes, stated in an online interview that the game has been built as a compromise between arcade style handling and simulation style realism and therefore should have the effect of pleasing both camps. As we of course know this sort of thing usually has the effect of pleasing no camps, in fact in situations like this, camps are generally so unimpressed they pack up their tents immediately and book a room at a Hotel.

The worst thing about the car handling is the part where you try and slow the thing down. The most bizarre aspect of the whole game in fact is the way in which your cars completely fail to lose power when you take your foot off the juice. In many instances, shallow bends for example, a driver would usually slow down a bit by simply decelerating. Not an option in Pro Rally.

The bottom line is that Pro Rally 2001 has nothing to recommend it over Colin McRae Rally which was released on the PC two or three years ago. Ubisoft probably would have been better served if they had allowed this fledgling group of developers to have a dress rehearsal with a simpler project before letting them loose on a commercial one. ■



<b>AVAILABLE:</b> Now
<b>CATEGORY:</b> Rally Racer
<b>PLAYERS:</b> 1-8 (LAN)
<b>PUBLISHER:</b> Ubisoft
<b>PRICE:</b> \$69.95
<b>RATING:</b> G
<b>REQUIRED:</b> PII 300, 32MB RAM
<b>DESIRED:</b> PIII 600, 64MB RAM, 3D card, Wheel

EUROPE IS PROBABLY RALLY RACING'S biggest market, so it comes as no surprise that most of the world's Rally games are developed there. Due to poor planning and a general distaste for efficiency (mainly because it's such a German trait) many parts of Europe are inaccessible to conventional modes of transport and the only way to get around is in a Rally car. Governments over there figure that they can save billions by not repairing their roads with the bonus of training, at no extra expense, millions of potential Rally drivers to bring fame and glory to their crumbling, shabby little countries.

One such place is Spain, the home of the development team that put together Pro Rally 2001. Most of the members of this team had never been involved in the games industry before this project, which began in 1998, and this was

**PLUS**  
It comes in a really nice box.

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**MINUS**  
Dull circuits, poor car handling.

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<b>VISUALS</b> <b>80</b>	<b>SOUND</b> <b>70</b>	<b>GAMEPLAY</b> <b>65</b>
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**OVERALL**  
**70**

An average rally title in every respect.



THE PUZZLES ARE PURE TORTURE. BOOM-TISH.



HE SHOULD LAY OFF THE MARS BARS



DRY HUMOUR

# STUPID INVADERS

▶▶▶ We thought **Kevin Cheung** needed a break from his consoles....



**PLUS**  
Crisp, clean, animated style.  
Simple but functional control system.

**MINUS**  
Bizarre style will be too childish for some.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
85	82	81

OVERALL  
**82**

Don't let appearances (or the really simple interface) fool you - Stupid Invaders is a worthy addition to the adventure genre.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Adventure
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Ubisoft
PRICE:	\$79.95
RATING:	G
REQUIRED:	PII 300, 64Mb RAM
DESIRED:	PII 300+, 64Mb RAM

**A** LIEN SQUIDGETS HAVE CRASH-landed on Earth and taken refuge in a rustic house on the outskirts of town. While the aliens attempt to fix their tiny ship to get off this rock, the dastardly Dr. Sakarine covets whatever secrets their technology and anatomy possess. He hires all-round bad guy, Bolok, to capture our unsuspecting protagonists.

From the onset, Bolok nabs four out of the five aliens with his ray gun. The one who escapes is the character you control, with the aim of avoiding any direct confrontation with Bolok, freeing your buddies, and getting to safety.

## FROM SPACE TO STUPID

Stupid Invaders takes the form of a point-and-click adventure and tries very hard to live up to its name. The bizarre choice of style has resulted in a

cross between the artistic direction of Pinky and the Brain and the bizarre characterisation of Ren and Stimpy. Visually it's remarkably crisp - simple polygonal characters against 2D backdrops - it's just a question of being able to identify the items and exit points on the screen.

On the surface, Stupid Invaders seems aimed for a relatively low age bracket. If not for the cartoon presentation, the game starts out with some stupidly easy puzzles. Once substantial progress has been made, though, and the game will grow in difficulty, offering a few real mindbenders for good measure. Each successfully completed section rewards you with an animated cut-scene, the sum of which there is around an hour's worth.

The control system is nice and simple. When you highlight an object on the screen, you'll be offered an option of look at it, take it, use it, or speak to it. Inventory is toggled by the Space Bar. To use an item, just click on it, and then click what you want to use it on. It's also possible to combine items - click on an item, then click on the other item you want to combine it with.

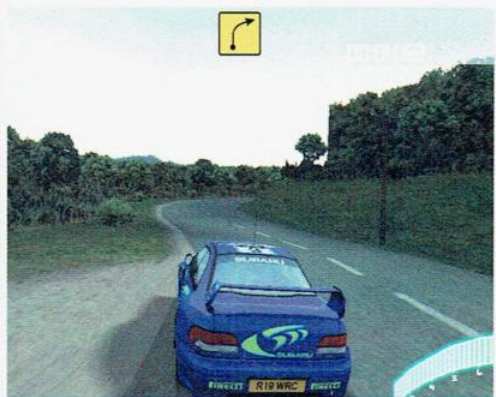
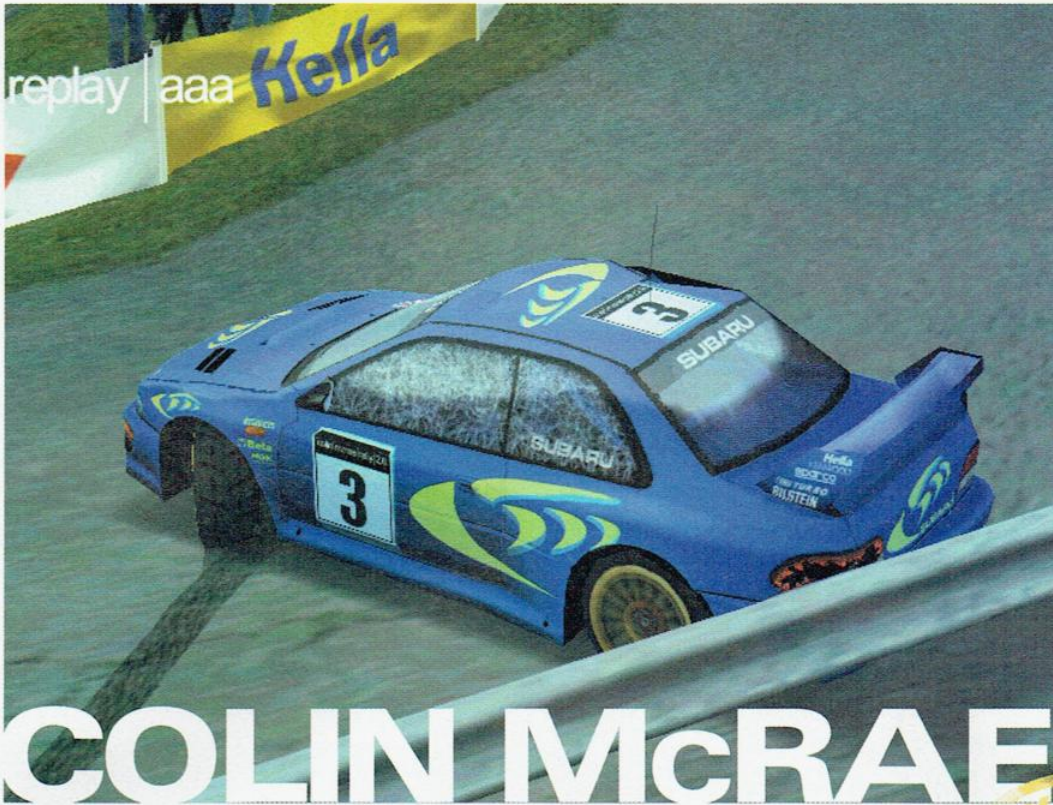
While the production values are rea-

sonably high, there are numerous holes in the continuity. For instance, early in the game, you have to escape from the cellar locked from the inside by a padlock. Now, unless the dead guy in the nearby coffin locked himself in before dying, there's just no way for that to be possible.

## A GAME OF SCRUPLES?

Beyond these minor scruples, one's enjoyment of Stupid Invaders will largely be a question of taste. If you were like me, you'd have been playing Escape From Monkey Island for the last few weeks. In this respect Stupid Invaders lacks subtlety. There's nothing elegant about the way it presents its in-your-face gags and grossness, or the loudmouth goggle-eyed idiocy of its characters. On the other hand, Ren & Stimpy was priceless. Much like a Nickleodeon cartoon, you either love it or hate it.

Stupid Invaders is cute and a tad gimmicky. There's a definite mismatch of age in the target audience by developer Xilam. But beneath the bizarre colours and quirky storyline is a very challenging adventure game with hundreds of puzzles to sort through. Worth checking out. ■



# COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2.0



Make sure you hop along to [www.codemasters.co.uk](http://www.codemasters.co.uk) for your CMR2 patches!

Life is like a series of speed bumps, according to **Eliot Fish...**

<b>AVAILABLE:</b> Now
<b>CATEGORY:</b> Rally Racing
<b>PLAYERS:</b> 1-8
<b>PUBLISHER:</b> Codemasters
<b>PRICE:</b> \$89.95
<b>RATING:</b> G
<b>REQUIRED:</b> PIII 300, 32Mb RAM, 3D Card
<b>DESIRED:</b> PIII 500+, 128Mb RAM, 32Mb 3D Card

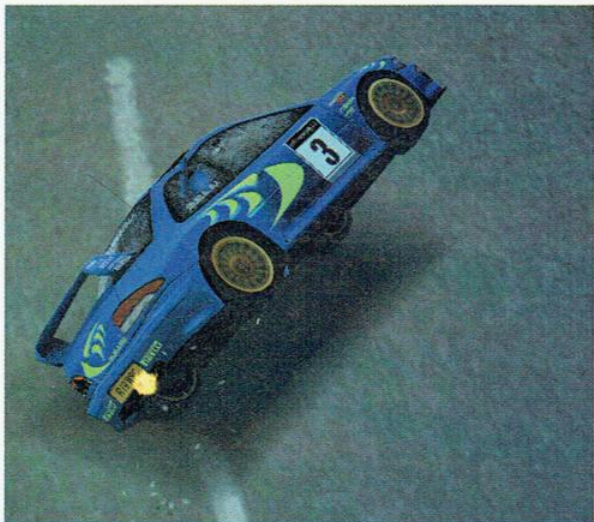
screen rolls across your monitor in true minimalist style, original Colin fans might be disappointed to see that the driving school has been dropped this time around. Another strange oversight is the lack of a bristling track editor, which has recently become standard for any racing game on the PC. If V-Rally, the handmaiden of rally games can let you edit the tracks and as a result, extend the gameplay life, why not the king of rally games? CMR2 seems to do away with fancy features and dump you straight in the middle

of a tough rally. Luckily the rally is damn good. The options on hand include rally championship, time trial, single race, single rally, challenge, arcade championship and even a split-screen rally option for two players. Split-screen? Whilst I can't imagine any PC gamers wanting or even being able to comfortably have a game of split-screen CMR2 on their PC, I guess it's nice to know it's there. Is this a shadow of the PlayStation version peeping through? At least you can still play CMR2 on a

LAN or the internet and enjoy some eight player racing. The new arcade mode is a welcome addition, allowing gamers to enjoy the crazy thrill of burning it to the finish line alongside a whole pack of other cars. But the true beauty of this game lies in the rally, with a wheel and a manual gearbox. Mmm... There are something like eight countries featured in CMR2 for a total of about 90 different tracks to race, so there's plenty ahead for the serious rally fan to tackle. If you're persistent

Like bobbing for a peeled mango in a bucket of baby oil, Colin McRae Rally 2.0 is smooth, fast and tricky to handle. Codemasters have followed up the massively successful original with an addictive and rewarding sequel, albeit with a few strange oversights. We've been playing the great PlayStation version for a few months now, so how does the PC version differ?

**GOURMET GAMING**  
If Colin McRae Rally 2.0 (CMR2) wasn't the most awaited PC driving game of the last 12 months, then I don't know what was. Codemasters - obviously extremely aware of the anticipation behind the sequel - have decided to stick to the formula and enhance rather than revolutionise. CMR2 brings us some stunning new visuals, an all-new physics and damage model and an arcade mode for some bumper to bumper action. But when the menu



CUNNING STUNTS!



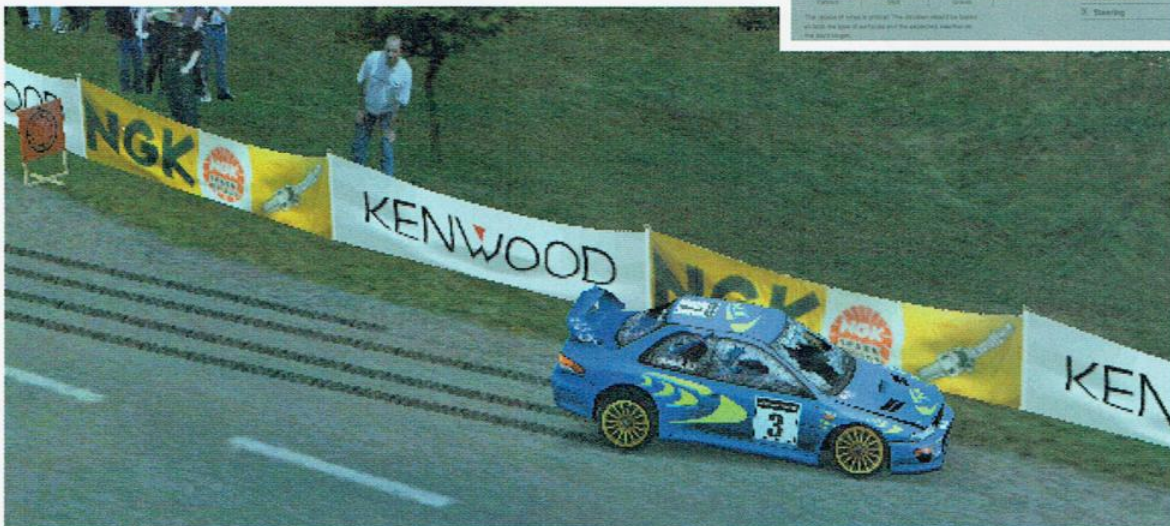
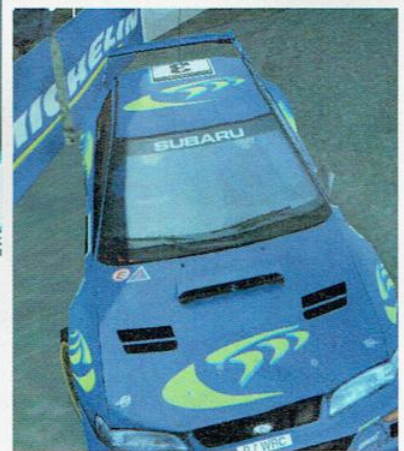
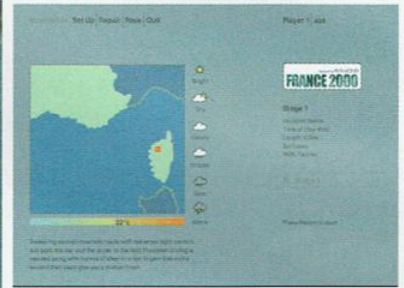
CARS LIGHT THEIR OWN EXHAUST FOR LAUGHS, Y'KNOW

you can also unlock cars and open up new challenge mode features - typical incentive driven racing. Of course, CMR2 offers such a great drive that you'll enjoy every second of it. The cars feel incredibly good, and not only do the car models look almost true to life, but the damage model is such that if you drive badly and stuff up your car, it will have an impact on your car's performance. A busted bumper bar will even drag in the dirt and slow you down!

Newbies to the PC rally scene may find CMR2 a little daunting, as this is defi-

nately for gamers who played the original game. The learning curve is quite steep, but the nail-biting challenge mode (where you race a special man-made course against one other car) will have hardcore gamers perfecting their driving skills to within hundredths of a second. Certainly, CMR2 is a brilliantly made game that you won't be able to stop playing, although in the longterm the charm does start to wear a little thin. But with a good wheel, it'd be hard to find another rally game with as much perfection in the presentation and car

handling to draw you away from CMR2. The track designs are excellent, progression through the game is paced exceptionally well and it looks just marvelous. CMR2 gets you in "the zone". ■



THE AVERAGE NEW YEAR'S EVE DRIVER



**PLUS**  
Lots of camera perspectives,  
awesome gameplay.

**MINUS**  
More cardboard trees, and no track editor.


VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92	94	90

**OVERALL**  
**91**

Once you pop you can't stop... or something. Great stuff.



# MADDEN NFL 2001

 **Justy Tylor** was willing to tackle anyone to get his hands on this baby...



AVAILABLE:	Nov
CATEGORY:	Sport
PLAYERS:	1-8
PUBLISHER:	Electronic Arts
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	G

**M**ADDEN NFL 2001 ANSWERS THE prayers of NFL fans across the board for a truly hardcore next-generation gridiron game. That's not to discount the contribution of Visual Concepts' NFL2k to the genre. However, Madden is an institution that carries a weight of respect amongst enthusiasts by virtue of the many years of excellent gridiron simulations - much like how Super Mario is cause for excitement for every new console he should appear on.

## CREATE-A-PLAYERHATER

However, unlike the successive generations of Super Mario, this latest member of the Madden family isn't likely to change the rules of football very much. Kick off the ball and it's still the same 11 guys on one side trying

to kill the 11 guys on the other side for a sliver of pigskin. Players are presented with the same kind of game options as before, allowing you to play in exhibition matches, season games, and practice rounds. There's also a Create A Franchise mode where you hand pick players and coaches; and a Create A Player mode that can be used in conjunction with roster management, trading and free agency.

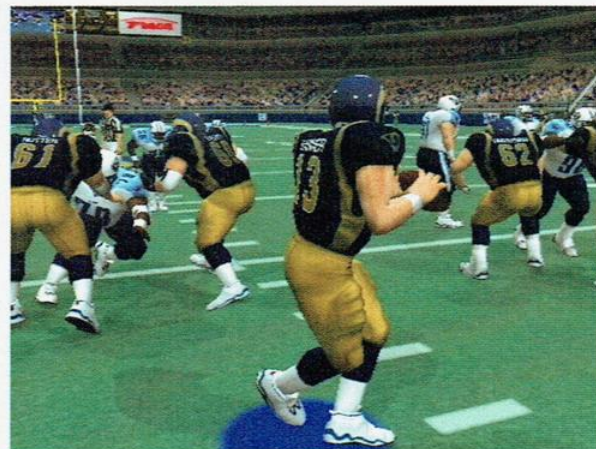
The level of visual detail that's gone into this game is apparent from the word go. The higher resolution and consistent 60fps animation is a major departure from the depressing blockiness of last year's PS One outing. Cameras pan around smoothly; multiple players run, juke, and dive into each other on screen without a single performance hit; and numerous environmental effects like rain, stadium lighting, and the reflective surface of the helmets are all so effortlessly included for that extra bit of realism. Up close, you can even make out the fabric of their jerseys.

There are a surprising number of basic graphical flaws and glitches,

though. You'd have thought we'd seen the end of clipping, but watch out for those victory animations after a touchdown: some players actually walk right through each other! To a more technical level, the use of anti-aliasing in this game has produced some very fine looking visuals, especially the players. However, everything that's in the distance has a tendency to flicker, much like the backgrounds in Ridge Racer V. This is especially apparent on the kick-off when you can see the length of the field.

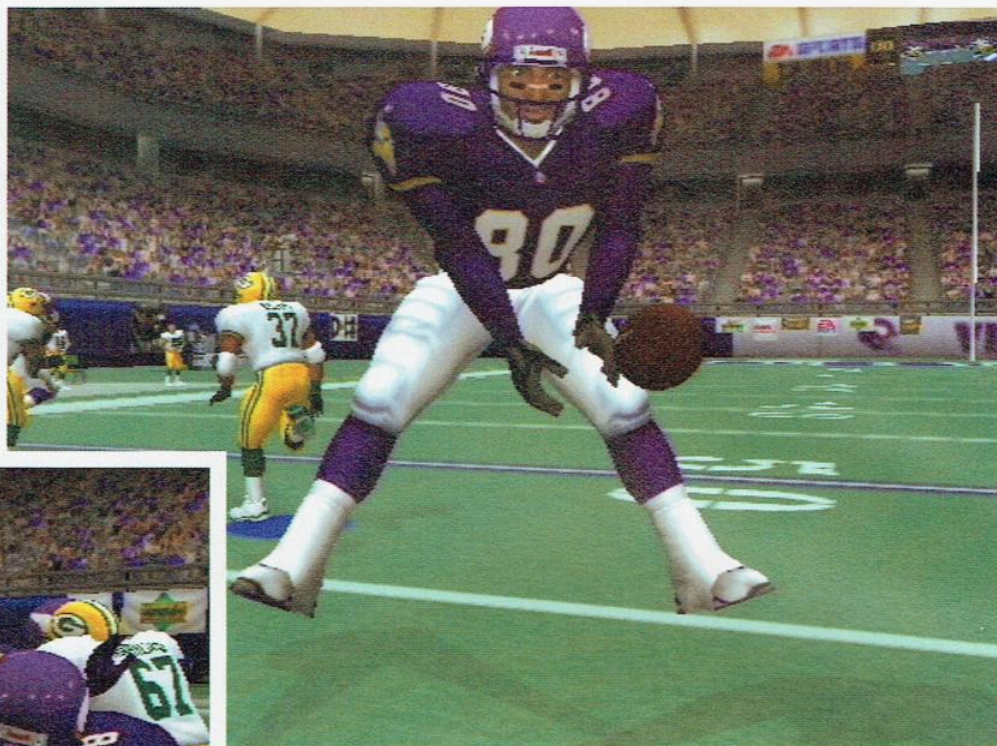
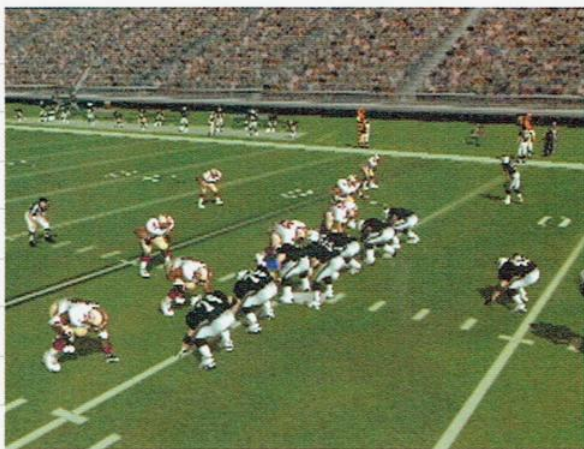
Tackles, collisions, and stadium sounds are excellent, taking great advantage of the PlayStation 2's additional sound channels. However, in-game commentary is slightly disappointing. For starters, the voices of John Madden

and Pat Summerall don't seem to have been sampled at a high quality. Through the optical and RCA audio connections on the PS2, their voices sound just a tad scratchy. This is a very minor problem, though, especially since you'll be concentrating on every other sound effect in the game as well. The commentary is mostly let down by far too much stating of the obvious. Either that or you can see the sound byte kick in at every close up of Jerry Rice to say "Jerry Rice is

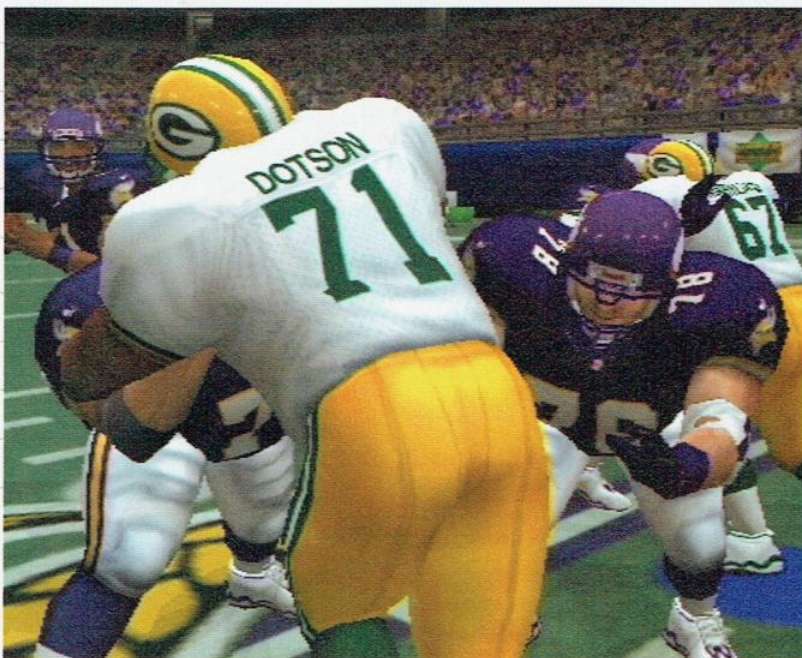


I LOVE THE SMELL OF PIGSKIN IN THE MORNING

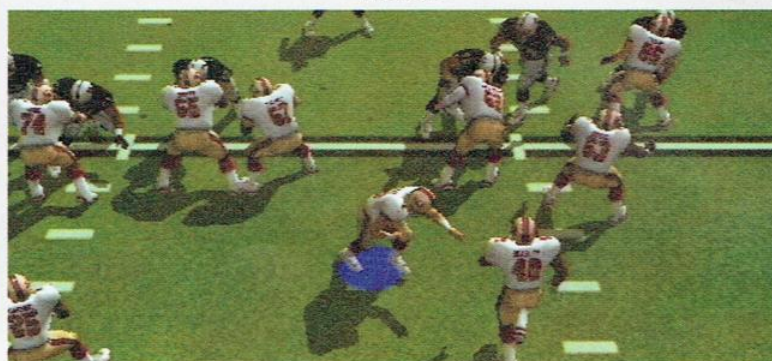




ALLEY OOP!



WHAT'S THE BET HIS FAVOURITE LINE IS "CONNECT THE DOTSON THIS PUNK"



the greatest receiver in NFL history". Duh. This is as distinct from NFL2k1, which actually makes some comment on the strategy of some plays. Too bad NFL2k1 isn't likely to see the light of day in Australia...

### SPINS AND JUKES

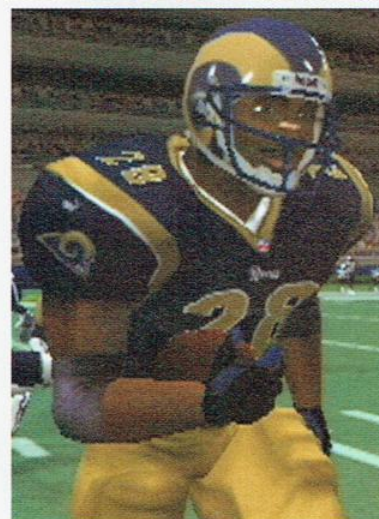
However, Madden NFL 2001's single most important credit is the complex physics engine at play. In a word, eye-opening. There's no possible way to explain through screenshots the realism of seeing how tackles are momentum-based, and that a ball carrier can be hit several times by sloppy defenders and still break away for good yardage. You can roll under a defensive back who's dived too high, a stiff-arm can count as a partial roll if you didn't get your arm out early enough; you can also vary the depth of your spins and jukes by pressing harder on the analogue buttons of the Dual Shock 2.

The finer mechanics of pass plays are also affected. Receivers can get jammed at the line, then run perfect slants and hooks as you try to find a hole in the coverage. The picture is so crisp and the motion so smooth that you'll know when not to thread the

needle between three defensive backs; and when you do it's not as frustrating when you throw an incompleteness since you can see the arm come up and deflect or knock the ball away.

On defence there are even more realistic touches. Pressing the dive button, for instance, won't cause a player to leap forward to magically close a three-yard gap, especially not when he's running full stride. In real life, the player is more likely to fall forward with the full speed that he's running at, and that's exactly what happens in the game. Linemen can be shoved from side to side with the shoulder buttons, after which you can roll around them or try your luck at slapping them aside. The level of control you have over the characters in this realistic physical environment actually makes it worthwhile to play as a weaker team, outfoxing your opponents with clever moves instead of brute strength.

The PlayStation 2 edition of Madden NFL 2001 is must-have gaming for all serious NFL enthusiasts. Of course, if you're the kind of person who doesn't know the difference between a lineman and a linebacker, then you'd be wasting your time. ■



### PLUS

The physics engine is bloody realistic. Excellent player animations.

### MINUS

Basic graphical glitches not cleaned up. Predictably dry commentary.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92	82	91

OVERALL  
**91**

The first genuinely groundbreaking NFL game in ages, its excellence dulled by a few basic problems that'll no doubt be fixed for 2002.



GET INTO THE GROOVE



HEAT FROM BUST-A-GROOVE REINCARNATED COMPLETE WITH EYELINER AND LIPSTICK

# DANCE SUMMIT 2001

**Kevin Cheung** has already recorded the soundtrack to his minidisc player...

AVAILABLE: On Import
CATEGORY: Action
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: Enix
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G

**U**SUALLY THE BEST WAY TO GAUGE how excited the Hyper Crew is about a particular game is measured by the score it is awarded. But sometimes, the fact that something does so little as to just make it into the magazine can be, in spite of the score, a sign of our utmost love for a game. This is one such occasion.

Dance Summit 2001 isn't likely to hit Australian shelves any time soon. It's the latest installment to the rhythm and groove dancing game Bust A Move, better known as Bust A Groove in the West. And considering the years that went by before Bust A Groove came to the Australian market - and the fact that its sequel, Dance Heaven Mix, was never released here - we're not holding our breath for it.

## WHERE THE %&S@ IS KITTY N??

Bust A Groove was, without a doubt, the funkier game on the PSone. Think of it as PaRappa the Rapper, but aimed at a slightly higher age bracket. Players could choose from a cast of memorable dance fiends, from the break-dancing Gas-O and the hip-hopping homeboy Heat to the Capoeira aliens and the delectable Kitty-N. The music was professionally mixed through one of Japan's biggest record labels, Avex Trax, and the quality of this investment really showed through in the different styles employed.

Dance Summit 2001 takes everything to the next level. Instead of two characters dancing against each other, there are now four. Instead of there being only 11 characters there are now 32, except these ones are completely new. Gone are Kitty-N and the crew, and in their place is a younger troupe of funkmeisters, all separated into teams of four, each team with their own dancing style. Some of these teams dance to a familiar beat - such as the High School Buddies who dance just

like Shorty, or the Data Bebops who are obvious substitutes for Heat. Then there are the truly weird ones like the Pro Wrestlers.

Graphically no one ever expected anything groundbreaking. That's not what this game's about. Instead what we get looks remarkably similar to the previous Bust A Groove outings, with brightly coloured costumes, strobe lights, mirror balls, and backgrounds that pulsate in time with the beat. The difference is that unlike the PS One, the PlayStation 2 can do all this with its eyes closed, as well as additional video effects like motion blur, wide-angle and kaleidoscope vision.

So what exactly does one do in this game? Well, you dance. Every song is in common time (that's four beats to a bar). For the first bar, the CPU will generate a series of buttons that run in time with the music, for instance, 'Up, up, left, Circle, down, down, right, Square'. It's your job to repeat these buttons in perfect time with the music during the next bar. If done correctly, your character will keep grooving

along to the music. Screw up, and he or she will fall out of step and perhaps lose a placing. The better you dance the more points you score.

Extra points are awarded if you can co-operate with the other three dancers for duo, trio or quartet combos, which produce the best moves in the game. This is accomplished by using the Free button opportunities, where every dancer on the screen can press any button they want for that one instant. Players who can co-ordinate which buttons they press often come out on top. Unlike the previous games, the four of you are actually dancing as a team, so there's no option to attack each other.

## AND WE LOVE THIS BECAUSE...

Okay. So it's basically a glorified Simon Says. But the secret behind this game's addictiveness is in the music. We've got dance, disco, gangsta hip-hop, j-pop, weird electronica... every track is bound to get someone toe-tapping and hip-grinding. Amazingly, every one of these tracks has a remix



GROIN-GRABBINGLY GOOD!



AEROBIGS OZ STYLE GO HEAD TO HEAD WITH HI-5



PAIR COMBO INDEED!



SO TOUGH HE EVEN GOES THE "HARDBOILED" TOOTHPICK IN THE MOUTH!

version that can be unlocked by finishing the game with certain characters. Most of these remixes are completely different from the original article, offering differing pace and styles like techno and trance.

As someone playing the game, it's easy to bury oneself in the music. Some of the button presses are so complex that all you can concentrate on is the music anyway. With the difficulty settings put all the way up, you'll even be required to press multiple buttons at the same time - the instructions streaming by so quickly that it's like sight-reading from a manuscript.

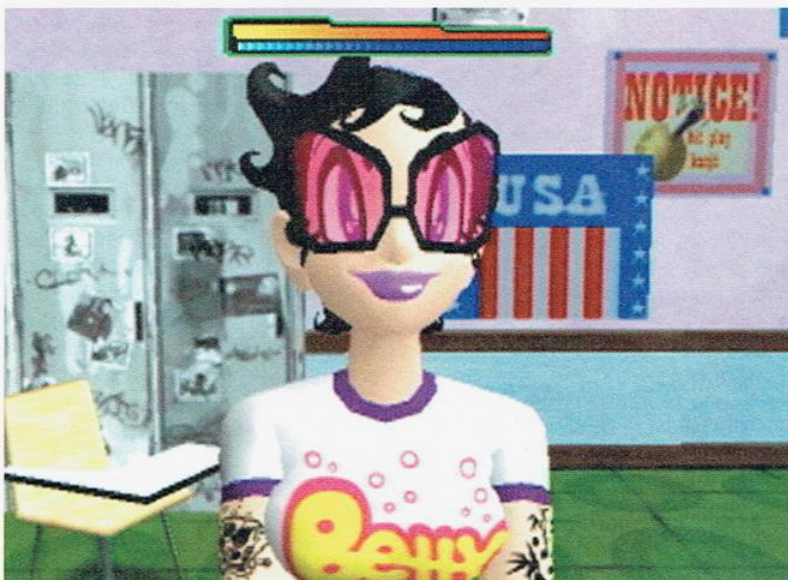
As a spectator, there's also what amounts to a great music video being performed by the player. As an extension of Bust A Groove's Watch Mode, though, this game also has an awesome video editor that lets you choreograph an entire music video, with complete camera and special effects controls, all of which can be saved to the memory card and watched without any of the button icons in the way.

Dance Summit 2001 is a totally niche

article, especially as a videogame. It's a game that requires strict concentration, but at the same time its appeal is totally non-game related. The music is fantastic and it's an extremely social game to play - it's the coolest game one

could possibly own on the PlayStation 2 so far. If you're truly hardcore, you may even want to fork out the cash for the special two-sided clapping gloves that were released for the game. ■

JAPANESE NTSC VERSION USED FOR THIS REVIEW



TOO YOUNG TO HAVE TATS THAT BIG, SURELY!



## PLUS

Loads and loads of music. It's an interactive music video!

## MINUS

Where's Kitty N?? Needs more rap/hip-hop.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80	90	84

OVERALL  
**85**

Oozing style and funk. Dance Summit 2001 is Hyper's top party game at the moment.



BUDGET APPENDECTOMY



# KESSEN

From Mechs to Feudal Japan, **Justy Tylor** continues to kill stuff.

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Strategy
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Electronic Arts
PRICE:	\$99.95
RATING:	G

**W**HILE THE MAJORITY OF EARLY PS2 adopters will flock to Tekken Tag Tournament, SSX, Smuggler's Run, and the like, there will always be games like Kessen to collect disillusioned alternative seekers. Not an action, racing, or sporting title, Kessen is a strategy game that offers a mix of laid-back pawn-pushing and a few history lessons to give some meaning to it all.

## A GOD-LIKE POSITION

Players are thrown into the middle of Japan's tumultuous 1600s, when a great deal of civil unrest was kicked up due to the feud between Toyotomi and Tokugawa. There are actually many generals who play a role in the ancient Japanese historical texts, each with their own allegiances, and their gigantic armies constantly moving to outfox the opposition.

Playing from a God-like position, it's your job to move your armies to different locations, to intercept the enemy at

their weakest anticipated position, and to send a battalion that's sufficiently equipped to both defend itself and to slaughter the enemy.

Each army has several types of units. There are the bog-standard foot soldiers, armed with katanas; further up the chain of general usefulness are the spearmen; then the archers and riflemen. Spearmen are a great defence, especially for skewering charging soldiers. Archers and riflemen can be used to attack from a distance during a battle, but can also be used to take potshots at wayward enemies that have taken one step too close to their position. Obviously archers and riflemen differ slightly in their fatality rates.

But that's not all. There are also mounted soldiers armed with spears and swords, as well as mounted archers and riflemen. Theoretically an entire battle line that's horse-powered should be able to mow down general infantry, but that's not always the case. Finally, there are the cannons - slow-moving, long range, awesome destructive power, and a rather savage slap on the wrist for careless strategy.

## LETHARGIC AND WOODEN

The game is divided into a series of battles, the aim of which is usually to

drive away the opposing armies or kill the commanding general on the other side. Often the battle will see the meeting of other lesser generals, in which case a real-time cut-scene kicks in to show off their duel. The result of this duel is often determined by the morale of your troops.

Oddly enough, practically every event in this game is supplemented by an animated cut-scene. When cannons go off, when horses charge in, when rifles are fired... the only time you don't see these movies is when you're moving the little blocks around on the map from a bird's eye view, or when you're zooming down to witness the battles up close in real time.

It's here that the cracks begin to reveal themselves. On one hand, the beautifully animated cut-scenes will become repetitive. On the other hand, the battles simply aren't that interesting to watch in real-time. The characters all move in a very lethargic, wooden fashion; and you'd be hard pressed to see anyone actually getting killed.

As a strategy game, Kessen has simple, effective mechanics, but none that go very deep. The pretty cut-scenes and roving cameras may create the illusion of something more elaborate, but at its core is a period game that's easy to get into - and out of. ■



### PLUS

Nice period graphics, and cool (but repetitive) cut-scenes.

### MINUS

Not very interactive and needs loads more options.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
81	78	75

### OVERALL

# 76

The options are simple but very functional; but Kessen is just begging for something deeper. Kessen 2 may have the answer for that.



BIG BUBBLES? NO TROUBLES.

# SUPER BUST A MOVE

 **Kevin Cheung** bursts our PS2 bubble

**AVAILABLE:** Now  
**CATEGORY:** Action/Puzzle  
**PLAYERS:** 1-2  
**PUBLISHER:** Acclaim  
**PRICE:** \$99.95  
**RATING:** G

**T**AITO'S BUST A MOVE SERIES HAS seemingly been around since the dawn of time, starting out originally as a simple off-shoot of the 80s classic Bubble Bobble. Now considered an institution, Bust A Move has appeared on every major gaming platform from the Game Boy Color to the Sega Dreamcast, and now of course the PlayStation 2.

## THE SQUARE ROOT

If you fit in with the core gaming demographic that typifies the Hyper readership, (a) Bust A Move is nothing new to you, (b) you already have at least one version of the game, and (c) you know that Bust A Move sequels usually feature the square root of sweet bugger-all's worth of improvements.

If you're one of the precious few who've yet to go through this gaming rite of passage, then it pleases me to introduce you to one of the essentials of a gamer's lifestyle. Super Bust A Move is a puzzle game that's part cerebral, part social. You start with a cluster of coloured bubbles attached

to the top of the screen. As time passes, the ceiling starts caving in, and it's your job to burst all of the bubbles before they come crashing to the bottom where the cute little character you're playing happens to be sitting.

To burst these bubbles, you fire your own set of bubbles from the bottom of the screen which attach to the existing bubbles. Connect three or more like-coloured bubbles, and they'll burst. These simple mechanics are the building blocks for one of the best puzzle games around, mixing a little tactical forethought in choosing which bubbles to burst with the on-the-fly skills required for lining up a shot.

Over the years, Taito added several excellent features, the most important being the two-player versus mode where bubbles can be sent to your opponent. Some of the other features include multiple characters, bowling balls that destroy all bubbles in its path, balancing pulleys, and magical star bubbles that act like a smart bomb.


## GIANT BUBBLES

This new PlayStation 2 version has a few new features to offer. In the gameplay stakes there are tiny bubbles that can fit through tight spaces, tractors that affect the trajectory of bounced bubbles, and giant bubbles that turn all other bubbles into the

same colour. The most notable change, however, is the switch to cel-shaded 3D graphics. That is, the same style used in Jet Set Radio that put thick black outlines around the outer edges of polygons and gave everything a pseudo-cartoon look. The final result is gorgeous - the cute characters looking more fluid than they ever could be in 2D sprite form.

Unfortunately there are some basic elements of design that don't appear well thought out. In some puzzles, the bubbles are so impossibly blocked off (for instance, being located in a narrow corridor a bubble wide) that you have to brute-force your way through the level by discarding every other bubble. Other obstacles can only be overcome at the last minute when they fall over the edge, which costs you bonus points. The most frustrating glitch occurs when you have one green ball to go, and the CPU hands you 5 consecutive red bubbles to shoot.

If compared to the previous version, these improvements are not enough to warrant a sequel. If the last version you played was Bust A Move 3 or earlier, you may want to give this a try. PS2 owners may want this for the simple convenience of not having to switch to another machine. Apart from that, serious gamers should just take note of the graphics and move on. ■

 Hopefully Sony will bring us some great new puzzle titles, as the PSX had some crackers: Devil Dice, IQ...



## PLUS

The fluid cel-shading makes us wonder if we need sprite-based 2D games anymore.

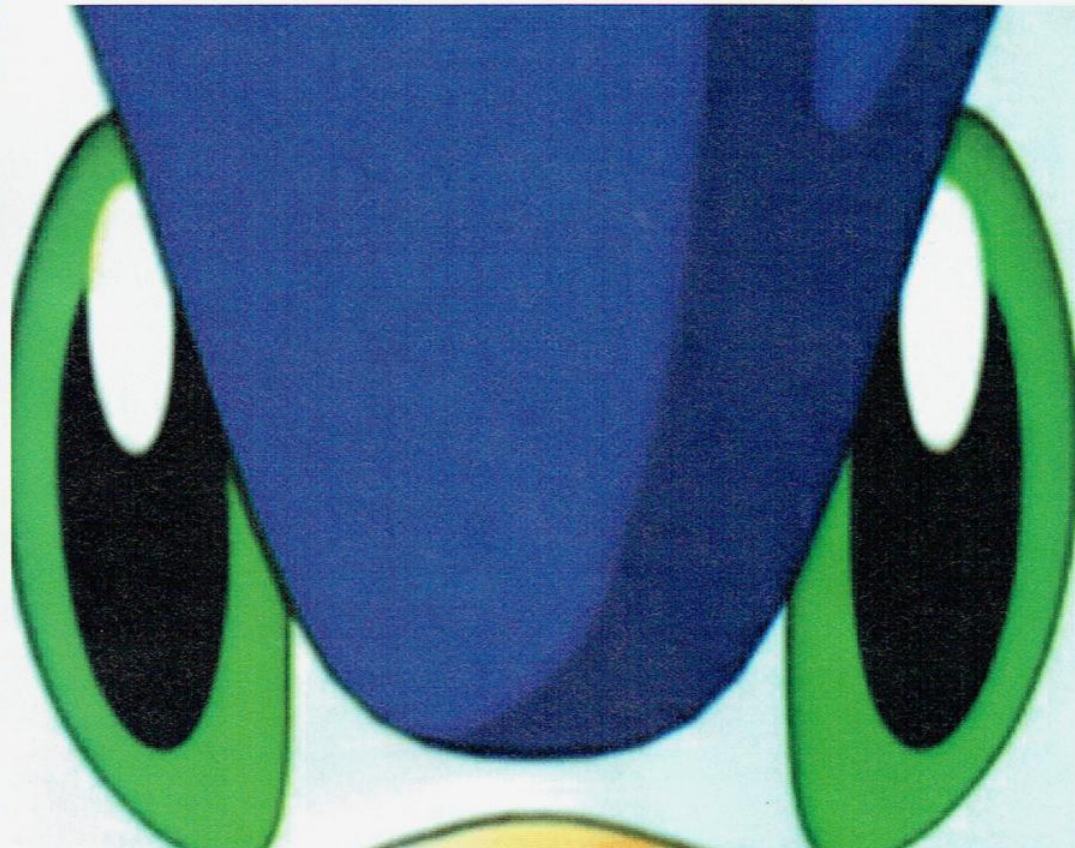
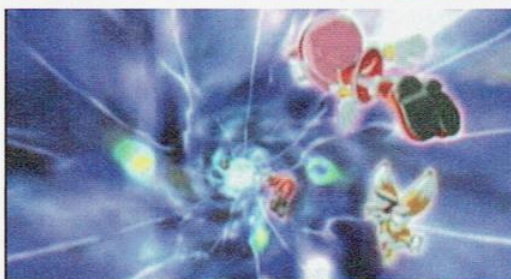
## MINUS

Basic oversights in design that take the fun out of the game. Surprisingly long load times.

**VISUALS** 82    **SOUND** 76    **GAMEPLAY** 75

**OVERALL**  
**70**

Some interesting new features, but some of the basics that made it such a great game have been neglected.



# SONIC SHUFFLE

Hyper's trainer-wearing speed-loving mascot, **Cam Shea**, takes on Sega's...



AVAILABLE:	Mid 2001
CATEGORY:	Board game
PLAYERS:	1-4
PUBLISHER:	Sega
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	G

**W**HAT MADE SEGA COOL IN THE first place? Well, they had a 16-bit system out on the American market a good 18 months before Nintendo did. That's one reason. They've always had excellent arcade ports, so that's another. But

there's a far more important one — Sega had Sonic the Hedgehog. Sonic elevated Sega from Nintendo wannabe to real contender. Sonic was everything Nintendo's portly plumber wasn't — he was fast, funky and had attitude.

Sonic Shuffle is an ironic title then,

given that it borrows liberally from Nintendo's Mario Party, negating the very attributes that made Sonic cool in the first place. No matter, because Sonic Shuffle is not a game made for the hardcore gamers. Like Nintendo's MP offerings, this is mascot-driven,



-3 COOL POINTS FOR SEGA WE RECKON



KNUCKLES IS BUT A GEL-SHADE OF HIS FORMER SELF



"Forget about Sonic, just look at my clothes" - Amy is dead weight Sega. Give her a personality for god's sake!



BOARD GAME = BORED GAMER



videogaming fluff. It even has a Crash Bandicoot inspired soundtrack.

### RAINY DAY GAMING...

Sonic Shuffle is set in "Maginaryworld" — a land created by the dreams of those in other dimensions (we suspect that the Monopoly man may be one of those doing the dreaming). The concentrated essence of these dreams materialises in the form of a crystal called the "precious-stone". Unsurprisingly, a nasty toxic green dude called "Void" has stolen the stone and is wreaking havoc. Contrary to all videogaming precedents, he's smashed it, sending shards all over the land. Who would have thought, eh?

This is all revealed to you in the intro by a fairy called "Lumina Flowlight"... whose name seems more suited to a career in porn than gaming. In any case, you must retrieve the stones from a number of theme worlds including the now compulsory Emerald Coast, and the slightly confusing Fourth

Dimension Space.

In each stage the aim is to nab more emblems than your fellow contestants. I've no idea where these "emblems" came from, what with the world crumbling around you being the result of the preciousstones. No matter. Emblems can be earned by getting to the preciousstones first, collecting the most rings, completing a hidden quest, or by winning the mini game at the end of a stage.

Sonic Shuffle attempts to do things a little differently from Mario Party. Movement around the board for one is less random, in that you don't rely solely on dice throws to determine how far you move. Each player is equipped with a deck of cards drawn from eight cards — numbers 1-6, special cards and Eggman cards. You can choose one of your cards or steal a random card from an opponent to determine how far you move.

Sonic Shuffle is also less focused on mini games than Mario Party was, which is a shame. The mini games that

Sonic Shuffle does offer are a mixed bag, often straying from simplicity a little too much. To compensate, there are many monsters and other surprises lurking about on the board. Winning a monster battle is simply a case of drawing a higher card. If you win, you'll be rewarded with one of the many force jewels that unlock special abilities like allowing you to use two cards in one turn.

### SONIC ENTERTAINS THE BLUE RINSE SET...

The graphics are quite lush, but we're not convinced that the move to cel shading really worked for Sonic. It's disappointing to see such nice work on the characters and most of the environments marred by bad sprite animations in the background — just check out the mists in the Fourth Dimension Space stage, and you'll see what we mean.

Sonic Shuffle is a reasonable clone of Mario Party, with a few features that take the genre in new directions.

Ultimately, however, it's less fun for two reasons. Firstly, the Mario characters and Nintendo style of design is more suited to a game like this. Secondly, there's just so much waiting around while the game loads. Every time anything of any consequence happens, you're greeted with a (relatively) lengthy load time. Nonetheless, Sonic Shuffle is quite a reasonable party game. Fun for younger gamers thanks to the hours and hours of playtime on offer, and fun for the older gamers because of the various drinking games that can be played in tandem. This is Sonic like you've never seen him... stationary. ■

US NTSC VERSION USED FOR THIS REVIEW



### PLUS

The only board game on the DC.

### MINUS

Loading times are a real downer for this style of game.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
84	78	60

### OVERALL

# 72

With four players you're sure to get some mileage out of Sonic Shuffle, but beware the load times.



SONIC STICKS HIS NECK OUT WITH THIS ONE



IN SPACE, NO ONE CAN HEAR YOU CRYING FOR AN AUSSIE SERVER TO PLAY ON

# STARLANCER



Since when do space combat games port well from PC to console? **Dan Toose** finds out.



AVAILABLE:	TBA
CATEGORY:	Space Combat Sim
PLAYERS:	1 (1-6)
PUBLISHER:	Crave
PRICE:	TEA
RATING:	TEA

**T**HERE ARE SOME GENRES OF VIDEO gaming that have historically belonged to either the PC or the console. Fighting games for example, have always been at home on consoles, but never on PC. One genre that has almost exclusively been a PC gamer's delight is the space combat simulation. Sure, the Colony Wars series on PSX was quite good, but those that crave real space dog-fighting will swear by games like X-Wing Alliance, Descent Freespace 2, and StarLancer as the must have games. The question is, has the PC dominated this genre because of the games, or the control methods?

## GOOD GUYS VERSUS BAD GUYS

For those who didn't quite catch StarLancer on PC, the game offers a sort of 22nd century version of a world war set in space. The major powers of Earth are split into the Alliance (good guys) and the Coalition (bad guys). You play the part of an Alliance pilot, who bat-

tlies their way through 24 missions, in an effort to regain control of the solar system for the Alliance. The game was originally developed by the Roberts brothers, who were behind the famous Wing Commander series that was considered a pioneering collection of games for this genre.

Obviously, someone at Warthog had a good think about how this game could be played with a Dreamcast controller successfully, because you can do pretty much every main function on the control pad, without making any adjustments. The triggers are used to control your speed, including after-burners and matching speeds; the analogue pad acts as a yoke, one button fires main guns, another missiles, and the two other make the d-pad and other buttons perform alternate menu functions. It really only takes a few minutes of experimentation to learn how to do everything you'd need to in a mission. So put simply, the controls are not just adequate, they're actually intuitive, and that was always going to be the big hurdle for this port.

Visually, StarLancer looks very much like the PC version, although those not playing the game with a VGA box may find it a little dark. The clarity of a VGA box makes a real difference here. Even

though the Dreamcast can't push out the same resolutions, it all looks quite crisp, and runs very smoothly, which is the real issue in any game featuring dog-fighting. There are odd occasions where the frame rate plummets though, although these are fairly rare occurrences.

In flight radio chatter spares you the need to pay too much attention to the briefings, and you can concentrate on the action at hand. One downer is that much of the action is hunting down torpedos a lot more than you'd care to. Defensive missions are good to have in there, but torp-hunting is a goal that is one of the least exciting.

In a genre that is almost never ported from PC to console, we see a game that is not only ported, but ported well. The line-up of missions will keep any gamer busy for some time, and the skirmish

mode will give the aces something to use as a measuring stick. Any Dreamcast owner looking for some sci-fi dog-fighting goodness need look no further. ■



**PLUS**  
Surprisingly intuitive controls.

**MINUS**  
Lack of local multiplayer.  
Too many defensive missions.

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

OVERALL

**82**

Perhaps the best PC to console port to date, but a shame about multiplayer.

## MISSING MULTIPLAYER


At the time of our review, it looked like there were no immediate plans for a local server for online multiplayer gaming with StarLancer. This may change, but whether or not you should hold your breath is debatable. The single player game alone is worth having, but those after multiplayer space combat should be aware of the deal.





EXCUSE ME, WHICH WAY TO THE GENTS?

# QUAKE 3 ARENA

 **Dirk Diggler** whips out his boomstick and goes fragging...



AVAILABLE:	Who Knows?
CATEGORY:	FPS
PLAYERS:	1-4
PUBLISHER:	Sega
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	TBA
SUPPORTS:	DC Keyboard and mouse

**F**IRST PERSON SHOOTERS TRADITIONALLY haven't impressed on consoles... or at least PC ports of first person shooters. The best have all been titles developed specifically for console - Medal Of Honour and Goldeneye being two prime examples. Now that consoles are becoming increasingly powerful and the spirit of "convergence" (combining consoles with traditional PC devices such as internet access and keyboards/mouses) is upon us, a slew of PC shooters are being ported to console. The first of the bunch is perhaps the king of PC FPSs, Quake 3 Arena. How does it stand up against its PC brethren?

### GET UP, GET GET GET DOWN.

On a technical level very well indeed. Gameplay frags along at a solid 30 frames per second, and the action is as fast and visceral as ever. It may be a while, however, before Australian gamers can get their hands

on this landmark title. Our American gaming brothers and sisters have been gibbing away happily for months now, and everyone we've spoken to has raved about the speed of their network. But what about our network? Well that's another story.

We have no network and we'll have no Quake until it's in place. Fair enough really, because although we at Hyper have been playing the US version for a while, it really is pointless on your own. More to the point, however, is the question of why we should be waiting for local Quake servers in the first place. It's not like the development of Q3A for DC was a secret - we've been waiting for ages. Time that could better have been spent getting servers up and running. How long are Australian gamers going to be forced to wait for games like Chu Chu Rocket, Q3A, Phantasy Star Online and all the others on the way?

Enough ranting. We'll do a followup review looking at the online component as soon as we can, but for now we know that you all want to know what it's like, so we present Hyper's Q3A DC review part one.

Before we go any further, let's get this out of the way once and for all... you must have a mouse and keyboard to get the most out of this game. While

we're sure - with practice - one could attain a reasonable skill level using the standard controller... good luck online. You'll get slaughtered. A standard controller will never have the snap, crackle and pop that comes from the keyboard/mouse combo.

Although there's no online network just yet, Q3A DC does have a splitscreen option for up to four people. Surprisingly, this works well, although some graphical detail, aiming accuracy and even a whole bunch of maps haven't made the transition. In single player mode, the game is quite faithful to its PC pimp daddy. You can play through the single player tournament against progressively more difficult bots, hop into a quick deathmatch, or practice your teamplay skills. The map selection is quite familiar, although some of the PC maps didn't make it, others have been optimised for better performance on the Dreamcast hardware and some are all new. The result is a gib-worthy selection of maps that run like a treat.

There is one major problem as far as gameplay is concerned, however. There's a strict limit to the number of players in any one arena... er, four. CTF with four players total? Pointless. Even deathmatch, where four is generally quite a good number, would definitely benefit with even the option to include

a couple more. Surely the performance hit wouldn't be that great? In any case, once you've made the adjustment, you'll be flinging more woo than Mr and Mrs Erotic American. And that ain't not bad dagnabbit. ■

US NTSC VERSION USED FOR THIS REVIEW



### PLUS

Looks good, plays fine...

### MINUS

Four player limit, and not having a mouse will suck.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
87	86	89

### OVERALL

# 86

Great game, pity we can't play it yet.



GRANDMAS IN THE HOUSE, YO.

# INCREDIBLE CRISIS

» Cam Shea discovers that normalcy is the weirdest trip of all...

AVAILABLE:	Now
CATEGORY:	Mini games
PLAYERS:	1
PUBLISHER:	Titus
PRICE:	TBA
RATING:	G

**J**APANESE CULTURE IS VERY DIFFICULT to categorise. Generally portrayed as very conformist and insular, in truth it is much more than this - a myriad of contradictions. This is a world where tradition is very important, yet American culture is deified. This is a world where unassuming businessmen read hardcore hentai on the train to work. This is also a world with a wildly creative and eclectic underground.

It's no wonder that Japan produces so many innovative and just plain odd games. *Incredible Crisis* has some fun with the contradictory nature of Japanese culture, playfully showing the player the insanity that often lurks behind the seemingly mundane. It chronicles a day in the life of a very ordinary looking Japanese family, and the extraordinary adventures each family member has on that day.

## MONKEYS MIGHT FLY OUT OF MY...

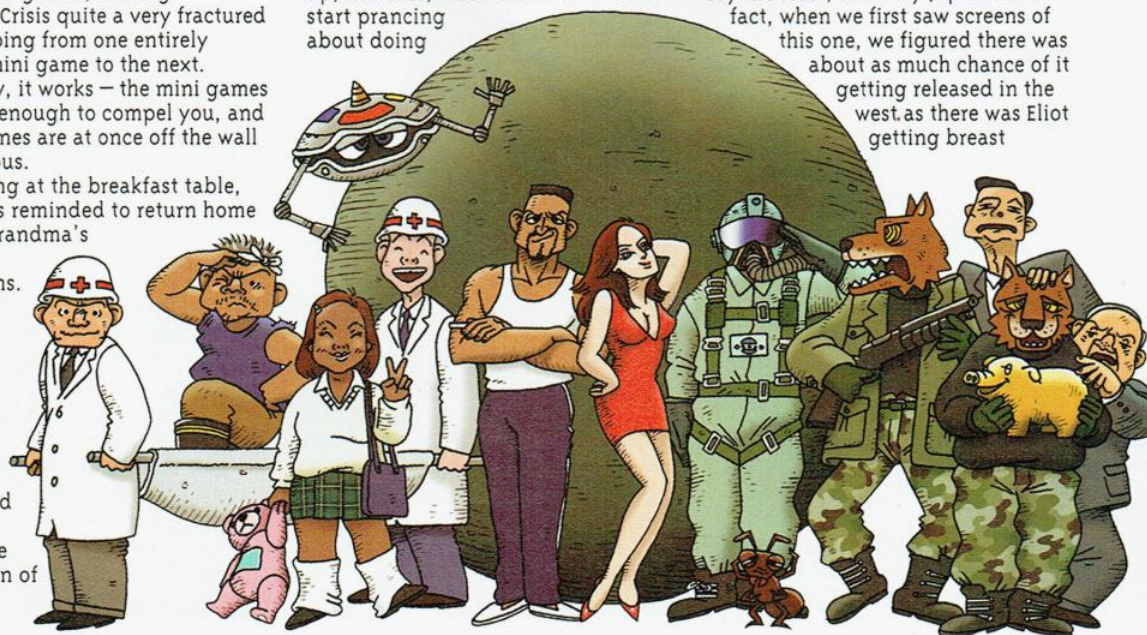
The story is told one family member at a time through FMV sequences that link up the actual gameplay sequences. Gameplay comes in the form of mini games, making *Incredible Crisis* quite a very fractured game, leaping from one entirely different mini game to the next. Fortunately, it works - the mini games are varied enough to compel you, and the cut scenes are at once off the wall and hilarious.

Beginning at the breakfast table, everyone is reminded to return home early for Grandma's birthday celebrations. So far, so dull. It's when the family members leave the house that the game begins, and wackiness ensues. The first portion of the game

follows the father's day. Arriving at work, employees are instructed to prepare for morning exercise (as is standard at big Japanese corporations). You know something's up, however, when Taneo's co-workers start prancing about doing

something like jazz ballet. Following the on-screen instructions Bust A Groove style, you'll soon be prancing along with them.

*Incredible Crisis* is an odd game to say the least, and very Japanese. In fact, when we first saw screens of this one, we figured there was about as much chance of it getting released in the west as there was Eliot getting breast

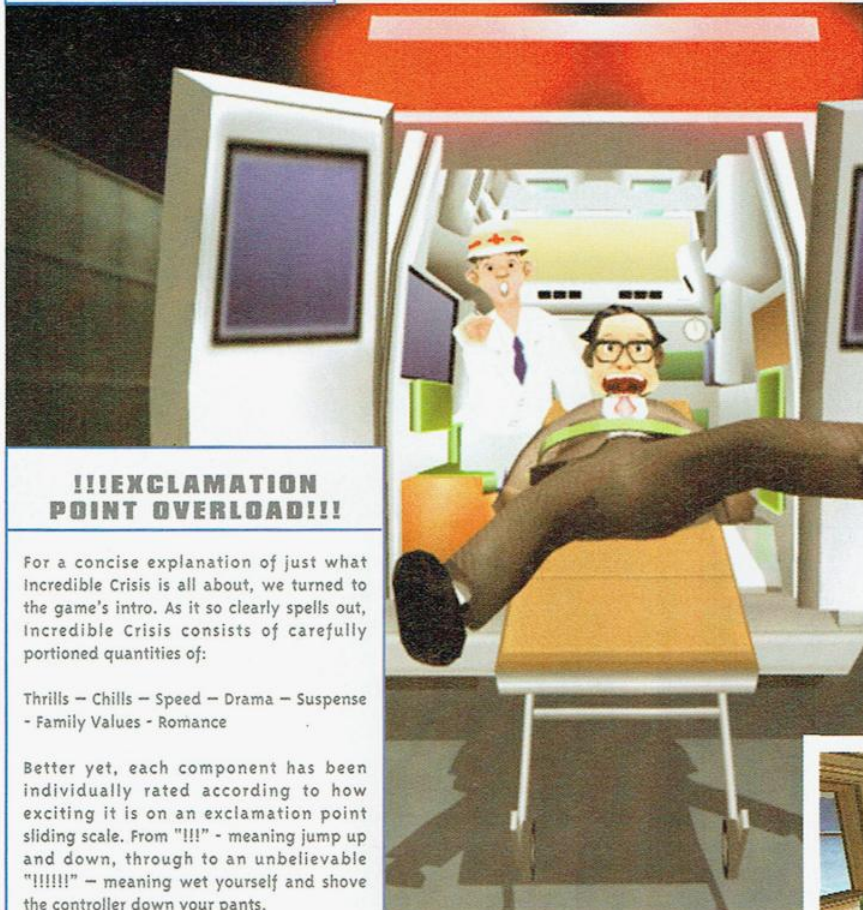


## OH YEAH, RIGHT THERE BABY!

One of IC's strangest mini games involves the father, Taneo, giving a woman a massage on a ferris wheel. The entire scene is played out with the player only seeing the ferris wheel as a whole. The woman tells you where to rub ("a little lower... a little more to the right") and you must blindly find her sweet spots. And once you hit one you have to hammer the X button as fast as possible, resulting in squeals of porn-style orgasmic bliss. Very very odd. And not as much fun as it sounds.



"HELLO LITTLE BOY... MUHAHAHA!"



## !!!EXCLAMATION POINT OVERLOAD!!!

For a concise explanation of just what Incredible Crisis is all about, we turned to the game's intro. As it so clearly spells out, Incredible Crisis consists of carefully portioned quantities of:

Thrills - Chills - Speed - Drama - Suspense - Family Values - Romance

Better yet, each component has been individually rated according to how exciting it is on an exclamation point sliding scale. From "!!!" - meaning jump up and down, through to an unbelievable "!!!!!!!" - meaning wet yourself and shove the controller down your pants.

AND OPENS THE DOOR... HELLO BOYS!

implants. The initial screens we saw all involved the father Taneo (the most dull looking business man you could imagine) with a look of sheer terror on his face, being blown up, chased and squashed. Funnily enough, this was a good indication of Taneo's day in the game - repeatedly getting blown up and run over by stuff. It's even funnier than we imagined, as Taneo has a hilarious "aii-yaaa" scream to go along with every disaster. And best of all, the entire game rides on top of a ska soundtrack! In any other context, ska is about as memorable as a frontal lobotomy and about as musically exciting as a Jason Donovan record, but combined with this manic brand of gaming insanity it works a treat.

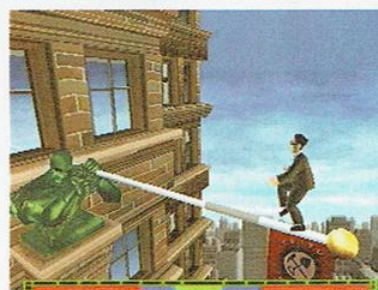
## WITHIN CHAOS LIES ORDER

Utterly bizarre is the best way to describe many of the mini games in

Incredible Crisis. Despite the variety, they're all very simple, ranging from bizarre quizzes and puzzles, through to racing games and mad button mashing contests. Incredible Crisis certainly runs the gamut, with around 30 mini games all up, each seemingly more out of left field than the last. For all its uniqueness, however, there's very little meat to this gaming stew. Some of the games are downright irritating - compounded by the strictly linear sequence of play.

There's no longterm value on offer here either. You'll piss yourself the first time through the game, but there's little if any reason to play it again. A two player game - even if it were just a few mini games would have been appreciated. Even so, Incredible Crisis is worth a look. The more kooky Japanese games that make it out here the better. ■

US NTSC VERSION USED FOR THIS REVIEW



WARNING: ACTUAL SCREENSHOT



"THEY'RE COMING TO TAKE ME AWAY, HA HA!"



## PLUS

Original and off the wall. Ska soundtrack fits well.

## MINUS

No longterm value. Some of the mini games are tedious at best.

VISUALS

70

SOUND

79

GAMEPLAY

58

OVERALL

66

It's weird, kooky and very Japanese, but the fun is shortlived.



# LEGEND OF DRAGOON

**James Cottee** takes us away on another crazy adventure...

<b>AVAILABLE:</b> January
<b>CATEGORY:</b> RPG
<b>PLAYERS:</b> 1
<b>PUBLISHER:</b> Sony
<b>PRICE:</b> \$79.95
<b>RATING:</b> GG+

**W**HEN SONY DECLARED THAT THEY were developing a role-playing game to rival the best of Squaresoft, the PlayStation world rejoiced. Most notably the PAL territories (Europe, Aus & NZ) who have been starved of some of the finest RPGs made for the PSX; fine titles like Xenogears, Final Fantasy Tactics and Chrono Cross have been denied us, seemingly forever. Sony would certainly go the extra distance to convert their game to run on PAL machines, so the more the merrier. Surely you remember the ticker tape parades in every major city, the commemorative coins, the euphoria: Legend of Dragoon was coming. Soon.

## A CONFUSED MARKET

Three years have passed, and it's

finally here. It enters a confused market, one saturated in the past year with RPGs of varying quality, and stained by the anticlimax that was Final Fantasy 8. There may be no Christmas dollars left to buy it, but there are certainly RPG fans, starved for their next FF hit, staring over the New Releases rack for anything with a "9" in it.

Sony's reasoning behind this project must have been along the lines of: "If Square can make role playing games that sell a million copies on the first day, then we can too." The instructions given to their game design team must have sounded a little like: "Make a game like Final Fantasy, only better." Hence we are given a product that looks and feels a whole lot like Final Fantasy, and is indeed in some ways slightly better.

More than any other factor, the big thing that Legend of Dragoon offers the potential player is graphics. An ephemeral factor to say the least, but a noble effort on the aging PlayStation. You play Dart, a strapping young lad with a mysterious des-

tiny. Your mission begins with the necessary rescue of one young damsel by the name of Shana, who also has a fate shrouded in antiquity, as evidenced by the ruling government's eagerness to kidnap her. Then of course there is the evil dark power that torch your village and murder your acquaintances, but may prove to be a danger to all and sundry in your peaceful storybook environment.

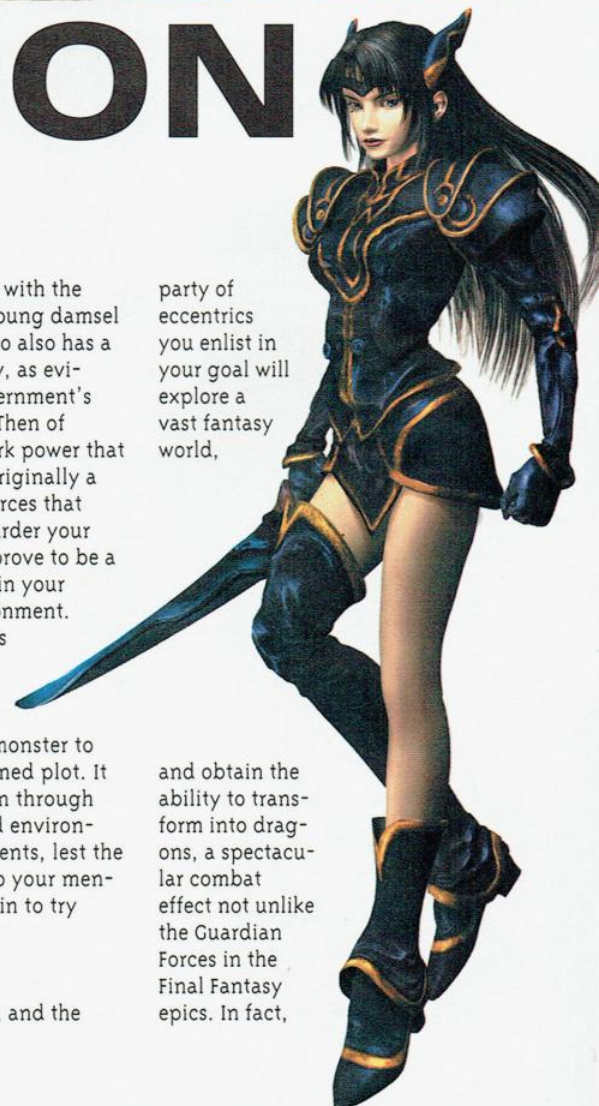
Make no mistake, this is another highly linear adventure, with only the odd randomly encountered wandering monster to break up the pre-determined plot. It is advised that players run through the lovingly pre-rendered environments that the game presents, lest the pests that seem to flock to your menacing looking troupe begin to try your patience.

## BLEEPLY CLASSICAL

Eventually, Dart, Shana, and the

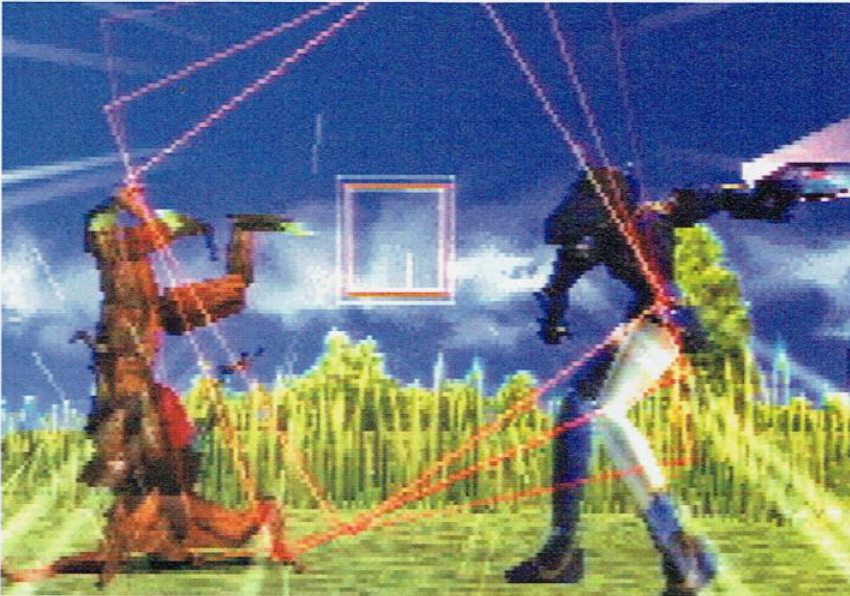
party of eccentrics you enlist in your goal will explore a vast fantasy world,

and obtain the ability to transform into dragons, a spectacular combat effect not unlike the Guardian Forces in the Final Fantasy epics. In fact,

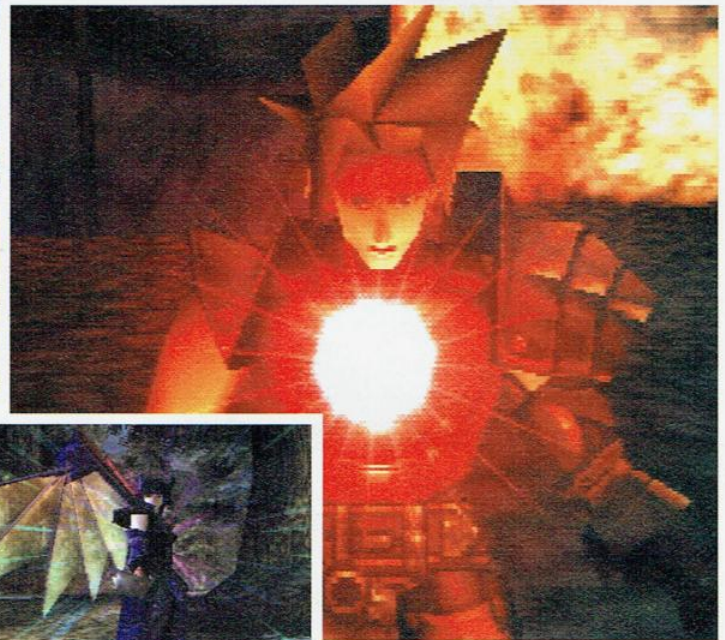




YOU DON'T WANT TO BE STUNG THERE MY FRIEND



SONY TRY TO CONVINCE US IT'S A SQUARE GAME



there is a great deal that LOD borrows from those that have gone before it. For starters, the music is the kind of bleepy classical one has come to expect from a PlayStation RPG.

The combat system implements timed attacks, now a standard in RPGs. After you select your opponent, and choose your attack, a spiraling blue square will shrink over the target. A little animated X button will be on the screen nearby; the instant it depresses itself is a good time for the player to do likewise, and double their damage. Similarly, when you cast a spell vigorous button mashing is encouraged to increase its destructive force.

More subtle abilities unfold for those willing to learn, such as combos and counters, but there is nothing here that has not been done before or better. The combo system in Legend of Legaia made much more sense, and was much more compelling to use. Likewise, Vagrant Story offered a combat system

with immense depth, and a compelling story to back it up. Even FF8 made use of combos, and arguably spread the tension better over its four discs.

Sony appears to have fallen into a trap that awaits any software project that runs so late; to become obsolete by the time it is released. Legend of Dragoon was a very exciting prospect when it was first announced, but that was over three years ago. The concept behind the game has been surpassed in that time, and the imminent release of FF9 can only cement its fate. It can only be recommended to those who are new to the whole RPG thing, and require a gentle leg-up, or slaving gameaholics who see the time between now and the next Squaresoft release as an agonising chasm of despair.

Legend of Dragoon is not a bad game, it's just not an original one. It will offer the mainstream little that it doesn't already have. ■



**PLUS**  
A good RPG fix for those in desperate need of FF9.

**MINUS**  
Not original in the slightest.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90	65	85

**OVERALL**  
**80**

Accessible RPG antics, but don't expect anything truly new.



THERE'S A GAME IN AMONGST THOSE PIXELS



MUST HAVE BEEN A BAD LUNCH



# ALIEN RESURRECTION



Be prepared for sheer terror. **George Soropos** is back!



<b>AVAILABLE:</b> Now
<b>CATEGORY:</b> First Person Shooter
<b>PLAYERS:</b> 1-2
<b>PUBLISHER:</b> EA
<b>PRICE:</b> TBA
<b>RATING:</b> M
<b>SUPPORTS:</b> Dual Shock, Memory Card, Mouse

## STAY AWAY FROM HER, YOU BIATCH!

The presentation of Alien Resurrection is first rate. The graphics are fantastic; giving you a genuine feeling of being trapped in a star ship ruined half way to hell. The hallways are dark, the lights flicker and go out, and blood drips deliciously from the ceilings. The polygon models are good as well, with nicely articulated Aliens and Marines out chasing your butt.

Creepy music, evil ambient sounds, and the occasional scream help to give this spookster one of the most atmospheric soundtracks around on the PSX. Hearing someone scream 'Help me! Aaagh!' as you walk past an air duct is wonderfully creepy, and when you hear an Alien banging a door down in front of you, you'll be reaching for the Huggies.

With these elements of the game so well done it's a great shame that the gameplay aspects of Alien Resurrection aren't on the same level. It's not that the game is incredibly challenging, even on the lowest difficulty setting, it's why it's challenging. When programming first person shooters for a system like the PSX the weaknesses of the controller and machine need to be taken into account. This does not seem to have happened in

the design process of Resurrection and the result is an annoying control system that is made worse by a 3D engine that seems to need a lot more polishing.

## LOOK OUT FOR THE ACIDIC LOOGIES

It's possible, for example, to stick the barrel of a gun right through an alien if he's too close and when you fire your bullets go harmlessly out the other side! The other problem is with the implementation of the Dual Shock control, which is awful. Your gun site, and point of view move faster the further you move the stick making it impossible to aim accurately. Why the developer did this is a mystery, the obvious answer would be to say that they're idiots, but that would be nasty.

Sadly, Alien Resurrection is one of those titles that had so much potential, gone unfulfilled because of a few mind-numbingly obvious problems. The Q&A and playtesting of this game must have been done by people with the patience, reflexes and stick skills of Godlike beings for the company not to notice something was seriously wrong, or did they just want to rush it out for Christmas? We see so much of that these days that you should avoid buying this as a protest. ■

**Y**ou thought you were dead. That it was all over. Then you wake up, alien blood is coursing through your veins, an inhuman strength rippling through your muscles, and Winona Ryder is whining at you, God someone make her shut up!

Alien Resurrection is the latest in a very long line of game titles. In fact the Alien films would come pretty close to the Star Wars series in terms of the number of game licenses sold over the years, and mostly they've been quite good games.

This latest effort from EA casts you in the role of heroine Ripley as she struggles to get out of the Alien research lab. In the process you will not only have to take on many, many aliens in their various forms and breeds, but soldiers sent to destroy the lab as well, just like Half-Life on the PC.



**PLUS**  
Good an' scary. play as Ripley.

**MINUS**  
Poor overall quality and annoying controls.

VISUALS **85**    SOUND **70**    GAMEPLAY **60**

**OVERALL**  
**65**

We've waited a long time for Alien Resurrection, and sadly, it wasn't worth it.

## CALL TO POWER 2

PC

**A**LMOST A DECADE AGO SID MEIER delivered a buggy, simplistic product that has outshone the influence of anything he's made before or since, inspiring spin-offs, sequels and clones. That game was Civilization, and its formula is a simple recipe for addictive strategy fun.

Players expand their empire across the globe whilst advancing in technology, marshalling huge armies and building the odd wonder of the world to boost morale.

There has of course been the requisite legal snafu surrounding who owns the rights to Civ. Activision did when they made Civilization: Call to Power, but have had to relinquish that word for the sequel. Sid's on the job making the official version of Civ 3 as we speak, so while CTP2 may be a welcome treat for fans of its predecessor, it'll offer less to veterans of Meier's reign.

For CTP2 the most frustrating bug from CTP has been removed: you no longer have to de-select military

units after using them. The importance of space combat and ultra-tech has been downplayed in the endgame. An elaborate diplomacy system has been implemented, but the added complexity throughout is more a weakness than a strength. This sequel is a baffling white elephant.

JAMES COTTEE



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
78	55	79	72



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Strategy
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: Activision
PRICE: \$99.95
RATING: G8+
REQUIRED: P166, 64Mb RAM
DESIRED: P266, 64Mb RAM

## CHAMPIONSHIP MANGER SEASON 00/01

PC

**S**PORTS INTERACTIVE ARE BACK again with the undoubted leader of the football management genre, Championship Manager. Although still based on the CM3 design, Season 2000/01 manages to add enough features and leagues to make it a worthwhile purchase. The title now offers 26 leagues, including

the Australian NSL. The database has also grown to around 50000 players. The most effective improvements how-

ever are your responses to the media, which can vastly affect the morale of the players, and the favour of the chairman.

football may find their interest wane before they can reach the game's highlights - whether it be a Champions League Semi-Final or a Second Division relegation battle.

The game remains true to its predecessors in that you have to be committed to get the most out of it. There are truly thousands of menacing statistics and numbers, that are only really relevant to someone who is at least partly clued up. As a result, those who are unacquainted with the world of

There is some hope for those who are not mad on soccer. Several friends of mine have enjoyed CM, without caring a pinch for The World Game. Everyone needs time-consuming hobbies like CM, and the way the game involves the player is rather scary. CM00/01 will satisfy everyone's desires until CM4 hits the shelves next year.

JACKSON GOTHE-SNAPE

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
70	70	95	92



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Soccer management
PLAYERS: 1-plenty
PUBLISHER: Eidos
PRICE: \$TBA
RATING: G
REQUIRED: Not much
DESIRED: Any PC will do



## SHEEP

PSONE

**I**N THE GRAND TRADITION OF GAMES like Lemmings comes the British-developed, Sheep, from Empire Interactive. You may recall a letter in Hyper enquiring whether Sheep was the greatest game ever made. Well, the answer to that is right here... no, it's

not. Are you nuts? It is however, an original and fun puzzle game that'll interest those amongst you who crave games that are a little left of centre.

You take on the role of a sheep herder (actually, you can choose the exact type of herder you want to be, e.g human or dog etc.) and then enter the rolling green hills to herd your mindless fluffy animals to safety. Yes, there are elements of Lemmings, but the game plays from an overhead perspective, and it's more about guiding your animals around obstacles than it is equipping them with strange skills. The sheep stick

together in a fairly loose pack, and you have a number of ways of getting them to trot in the direction you desire. You have to make sure they avoid everything from minefields to deadly shearing machines, electric fences, helicopters, sheep-eating crabs and more...

There are plenty of unique ideas in Sheep that will keep you fascinated with what you could possibly have to get your sheep through next, however it's not exactly nail-biting stuff. In the end it's all a bit repetitive, although certainly it has a honeymoon of greatness.

FRANK DRY



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
68	69	74	70



AVAILABLE: Now
CATEGORY: Puzzle/Action
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: Empire
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G

## prize redemption machines

Step right up, step right up and win a prize! Test your skills, impress your girlfriend, impress yourself, earn some tickets and you too can win a prize!



Whilest video arcade games reward you with the sense of satisfaction of defeating a human opponent, thereby heightening your own self worth, there is little material gain to show for your well won and deserved victory.... Unless of course, you are the Alternate Universe version of a 'Bad Loser' which is a 'Bad Winner', then you may be rewarded with, for example, a black eye. Whilest the memory of victory and black eyes may fade, the tickets accumulated from playing token game machines can reward you with long lasting prizes ranging from gammy gimmicks to handy home wares.

Whilest many Australian arcades do not cater for the prize redemption

machine junkie, the trend in Asia and especially Japan has been to have half of a video game arcade premises devoted to these games. And what fantastic games they are. There is a whole plethora of these insanely inane game machines that will test your luck, timing and at times, physical AND mental stamina.

Some of the games that Hyper have tested for our readers are:

### 'PENALTY SHOOT-OUT'

Kick the soccer ball skillfully past the mechanical goalie and into the elevated goal within 45 seconds. Every goal scored scores you 5 tickets. Patience and fancy legwork is required.

### 'SPYRO MANIA'

Shoot a stream of water from the water cannon to raise a little bumble bee vertically on a barber's pole. The higher the bee, the more tickets you win. Beware of the hypnotically spinning discs surrounding the target - they might trance you out a little.

### 'FRANTIC FRED'

Control Fred the dozy grizzly bear to aid him in eating falling apples whilst avoiding falling anvils thrown by pesky squirrels. If you are hit by an anvil, it takes a few seconds to recover, just like it would in real life. You get tickets for every apple eaten. If you are able to eat all the apples, you get a bonus game of an on-screen

spinning wheel and if you stop the spinner at the right position, it can win you up to 60 bonus tickets.

### 'VOLCANO' (THINK: ROULETTE)

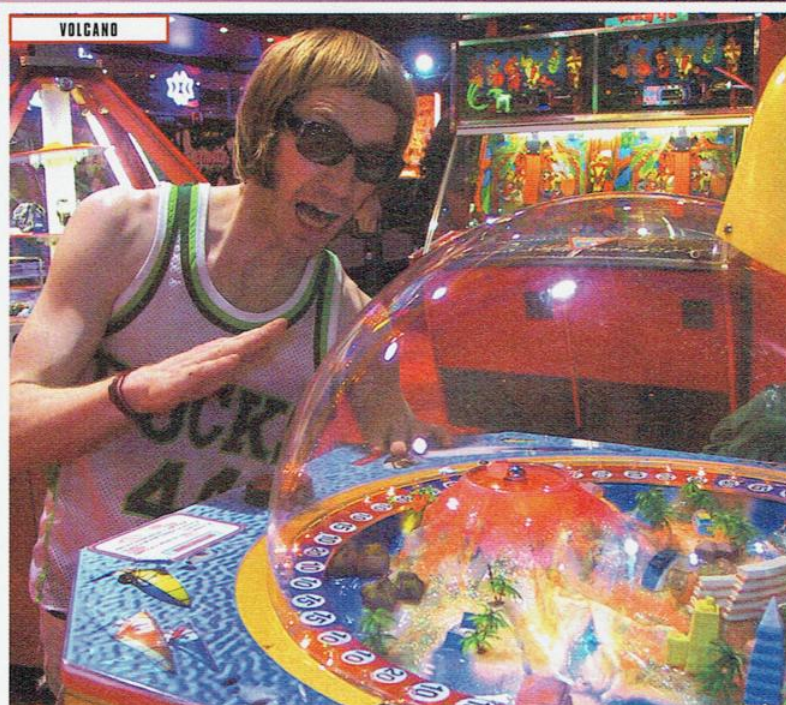
Help divert disaster for a small town by detouring the 'lava' represented by a ball-bearing. First you must insert your coin to stop 'volcano' lights (5 lights separated into 10 sections) from spinning. Then push the flashing red button to roll the ball to the highest award (ranging from 10 - 60 credits). Make sure you allow 4.3 seconds for time lag to allow for more accurate 'lava' control.

### 'CRACKY CRAB'

Minute itch inducing crabs emerge



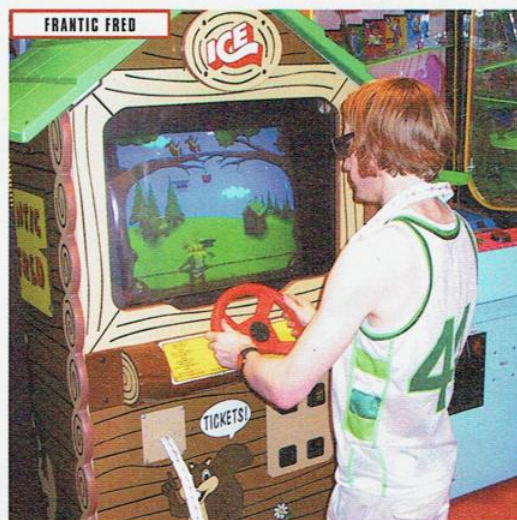




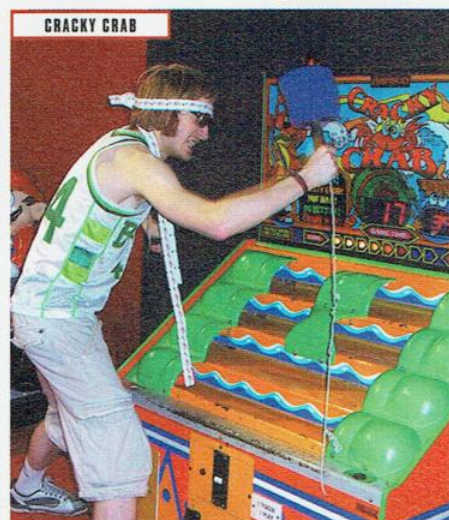
"NO WHAMMIES NO WHAMMIES!"



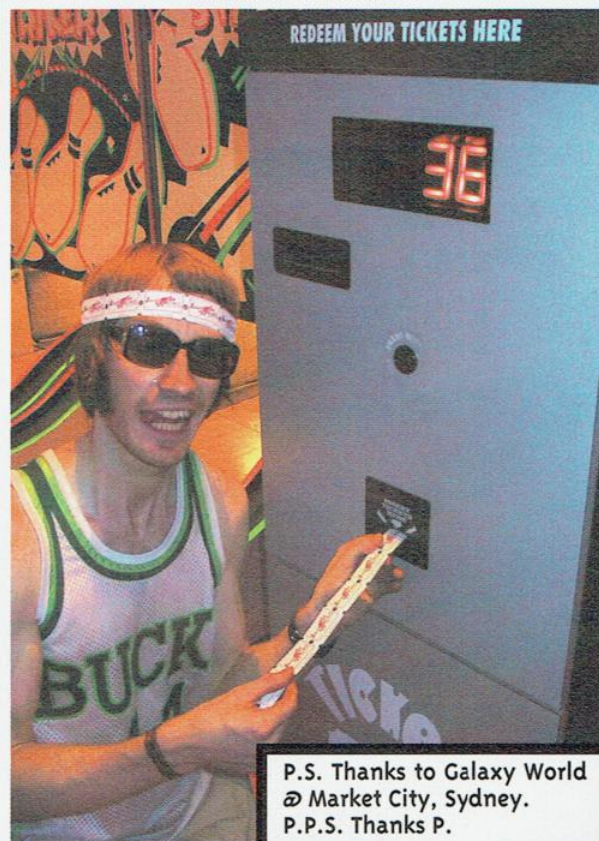
THIS GAME GETS TWO THUMBS UP



HOW DO YOU "DRIVE" A GRIZZLY BEAR EXACTLY?



A NORMAL DAY AT THE OFFICE FOR TIN



P.S. Thanks to Galaxy World @ Market City, Sydney.  
P.P.S. Thanks P.

from your undies and you must crush them with a large hammer. Only kidding kids! Crabs emerge from cracks and you must crush as many as possible in about 45 seconds with a large hammer. Remember you can only hit each crab once. If you crush more than 40 crabs then you earn some extra time.

Other games include: Basket ball games, mini ten pin bowling, 'spin to win prize wheel' and other games such as 'Screaming Slopes' and 'Big Haul' where you roll coins down ramps in the hope that you land them in a hole with a high amount of ticket return.

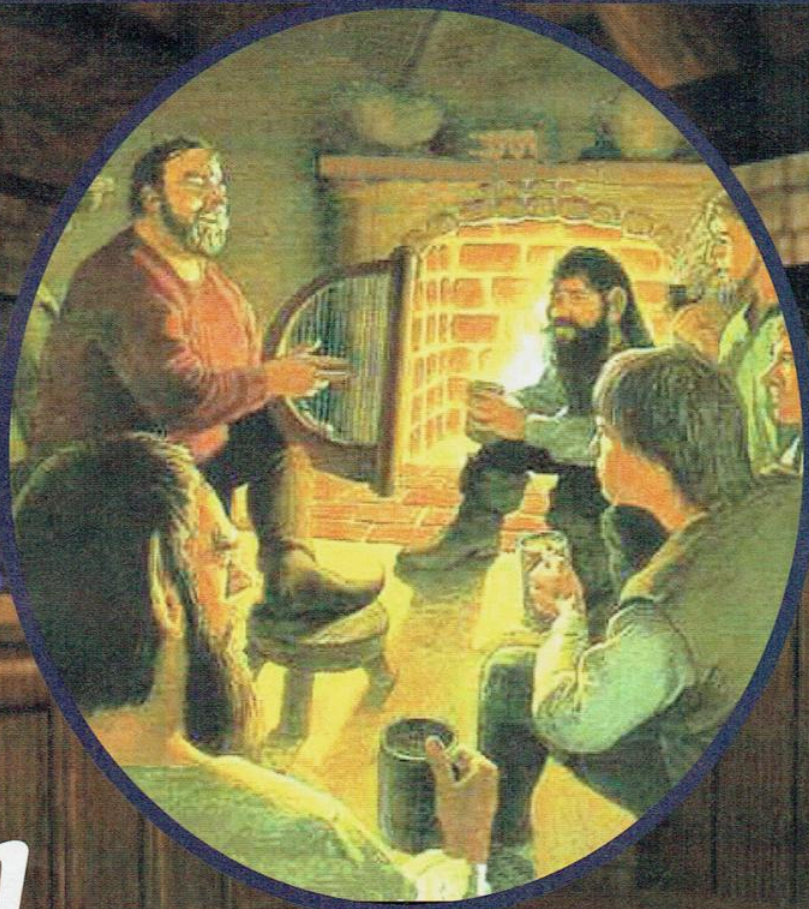
So now that you've won a small paper mill worth of tickets, what do you do? You insert them into the 'Ticket Eater Machine' which not only enables the tickets to be thoughtfully recycled, but saves the arcade attendants from mathematical overload.

Now you take the docket from the machine and you redeem the points for your PRIZE(S).

Surprisingly, the prizes that are able to be won were of fairly high standard, with many of them being adorned with Pop culture characters from our favourite TV shows etc.

Many of the prizes are actually useful, such as: Cups that can be used around the house or office and are far better than 'cupping your hands' for delivering that cool clear water or scolding hot coffee to your mouth; Yo-yos can be used for killing time at bus stops and for multi-directional self defense situations; Pens can be used for writing sentimental love letters or letters of resignation from a dead end job. Other prizes include: rings, rubber balls, toy planes, slinkies, key rings, nail polish, fake tattoos, stickers and plates and bowls.

So although you could just go and work a normal job and earn the cash to buy these prizes from a store, there is no way on earth that you could earn the satisfaction experienced when these machines spew forth over 60 tickets when you jackpot or kick 10 goals or save a small village from destruction by detouring some lava.



# the Bard's Tale

**T**HE RPG GENRE WAS EXTREMELY popular in years gone by, to an extent many of today's younger gamers would find almost disturbing. It makes a lot of sense though, because the graphics of yesteryear required a lot of imagination on the part of the gamer... Which translates to "They sucked". The computer role playing game has never been about visuals, it's always been about managing a group of adventurers, or a lone hero, through some long quest. When we think of pioneering RPGs, we often think of Wizardry, and Ultima, but one of the most popular series that didn't quite make it into the 90's was the Bard's Tale.

## THE BARD'S TALE

The original Bard's Tale game, The Bard's Tale - Tales of the Unknown, was released in 1985 through EA, with

development by Michael Cranford from Interplay Productions. The game saw a group of stereotypical medieval protagonists head out from the local adventurer's guild of Skara Brae, with no real grand goal or quest in mind other than the knowledge that Skara Brae is at the mercy of an evil wizard named Mangar. The interface for the Bard's Tale series was extremely simplistic, but it pretty much became a standard in RPGs for years to come. A small window gave you an idea as to what you could see up ahead, with a rather blocky sprite representing a 3D perspective view of the squares up ahead of you. Not only was your field of vision rather limited, but you also couldn't see monsters coming, you simply "ran into" them and had an encounter.

Yes, The Bard's Tale series was based entirely upon a tile grid system that

only allowed for movement in the four compass-point directions. With an extremely simplistic interface, puzzles were pretty much limited to maze puzzles, which had you trying to map out dungeons with darkness spells preventing you from seeing where you were going.

Like many modern day RPGs, combat was turn based, and you had to decide what each member of your party was going to do, then watch and see how the round turned out.

## WHAT DID BARD'S TALE DO FOR RPGS?

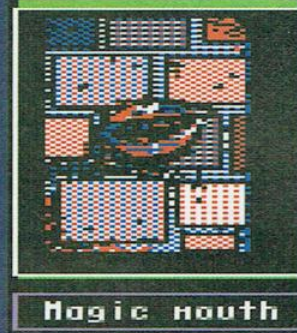
While the Wizardry series may have introduced crude 3D views back in 1981, and a very similar basic layout to the interface, the Bard's Tale was simply done better, and popularised this format of RPG. The square grid dungeons became the standard for years to come (until Ultima

Underworld), and were responsible for the use of much graph paper. Without drawing up your own maps, The Bard's Tale was practically impossible to complete, which in some ways was charming, in that you had to draw up maps just like the adventurers themselves would have had to. But when Bard's Tale III - The Thief of Fate introduced auto-mapping, it was very warmly received.

Because you had to declare all your actions at the beginning of the round, and had to live with whatever happened, this encouraged very careful decision-making and planning, which has really become the essence of turn-based RPGs.

## THE NATURAL PROGRESSION

The Bard's Tale was an immediate hit, and the sequel was inevitable. Bard's Tale 2 - The Destiny Knight. Having the



**Gwendolyn**

Gwendolyn is a Level 2 Female Elf Bard  
 St: 12 IQ: 14 Dx: 16  
 Cn: 12 Lk: 13  
 Spell Points: 0  
 Expr: 2407  
 Gold: 80

Pool gold  
 Trade gold  
 ESC to continue

CHARACTER	AC	HIT	PTS	SPL	PTS	CL
1 Ironpants	33	33	0	0	0	Pa
2 Greenbolt	41	41	0	0	0	Hu
3 Gwendolyn	44	44	0	0	0	Ba
4 Shadow	27	24	0	0	0	Ro
5 Morganna	32	32	21	21	0	Co
6 Runeflinger	30	30	26	26	0	Ma

Thou art in the Barracks

Add a member  
 Remove a member  
 Create a member  
 Delete a member  
 Save the party  
 Leave the game  
 Explore the town

**Ogre lord**

The denizens of this mystic place assault you without warning. You see 1 Ogre lord.

Will your stalwart band choose to Fight or Run?

**The Shoppe**

Welcome to Garth's Equipment Shoppe, oh wealthy travellers!

Which of you is interested in my fine wares?  
 #(1-6) or  
 (E)xit the shoppe

Character Name	AC	Hits	Cnd	SpPt	Cl
JONATHAN	10	18	10	0	Ha
BENJAMIN	9	18	10	17	Co
ALEXANDER	10	11	1	0	Ha
ELIZABETH	7	5	5	0	Ro
MELISSA	10	4	4	0	Hu

whole game take place in one city was obviously a stifling quality to the Bard's Tale. For those of you whose RPG exploits are slightly more contemporary, you could say there was the same need to add extra cities, dungeons and areas, just like there was from Diablo, to Diablo II. Only a year later, Michael Cranford had completed the sequel, and added a lot more animated sprites for the monsters, characters, and locations in the game. Something that really kept the fans of the first game happy was the ability to transfer your Bard's Tale I characters over, which is par for the course these days, but was a real feature back then. Combat was given an extra element of strategy with the

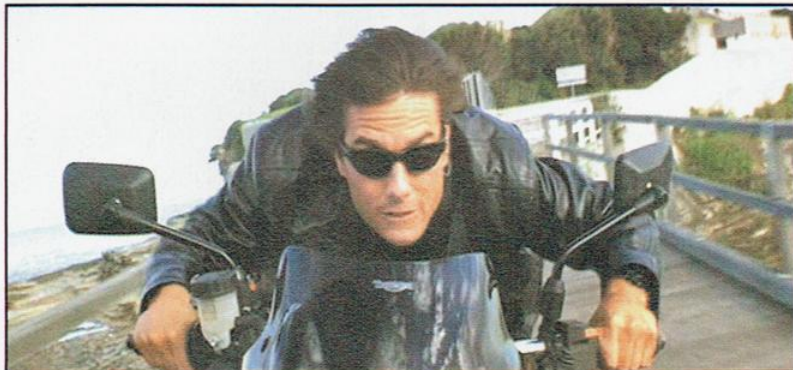
introduction of ranged weapons and distances. A more significant improvement in the visuals came with the third instalment, Bard's Tale III - The Thief of Fate, in '88. The mad god Tarjan, one of the first names you encountered in the original Bard's Tale, has laid waste to Skara Brae. The scope of the adventure was greater than ever, with seven dimensions to travel through, new character classes and abilities. The core gameplay was still the same, but the aforementioned auto-mapping, and the new ability to save your game wherever you wanted were major steps forward for the game. Around this time, RPGs were being dominated by the new SSI Dungeon &

Dragons games, and the Bard's Tale came to an end, so to speak. **DIY DUNGEONS** In '91, Interplay released the Bard's Tale Construction Set, which allowed the owner to create their own Bard's Tale adventures, detailing everything from the monsters and items, through to the map layouts and everything else included in a Bard's Tale game. This would have probably been the most amazingly popular application around had it have hit during the BT boom period, but this release hardly resurrected Michael Cranford's pioneering RPG series. After the Internet allowed old Bard's Tale enthusiasts to talk about the days

of old, inspiration for a new Bard's Tale game came about, and now Bard's Legacy - Dark Resurrection is in development, with a speculated release in August 2001. It's looking like a labour of love by enthusiasts, so it remains to see if this will be a great comeback, or a case of something being dug up, that should have been left to R.I.P. You can check out the progress at [www.bardslegacy.com](http://www.bardslegacy.com). Next time you're playing your gorgeous 3D RPG at 1024 x 768, spare a thought for pioneers like Michael Cranford, who made the blocky, low-res, turn-based games like this, and still managed to set the gaming world afire. ■



DVD is the format of choice for anyone who's serious about their home cinema experience. Once you enjoy the rich visual splendour of an all-digital picture, there's no turning back. This issue we have another pile of the latest reviews and some fantastic Anime. Find the couch, kick back and let Hyper help you decide what you should be watching...



WHAT'S THAT, TOM? THE NEED FOR WHAT?



SHE CAN ROB MY BATH-SAFE ANYTIME!

## Mission: Impossible 2

PARAMOUNT

M

The Tom Cruise/John Woo combination in MI:2 is awesome. There are great stunts, spell-binding choreography, and a leading lady whose sultry curves and willowy smile could make a grown man beg for buttermilk. Yet for all the special effects and booming sound, this is not Mission: Impossible, at least not in spirit. The Mission: Impossible TV show is grittier, the plots more complex, which is why the original film was great.

Mission: Impossible 2, however, is a pithy love story made even tackier by Woo's trademark devices like the white doves. They might've been cool in Face/Off, but they're unwelcome here. Worse still is the incredible stupidity of the villain and the WWF-like fight scene at the end.

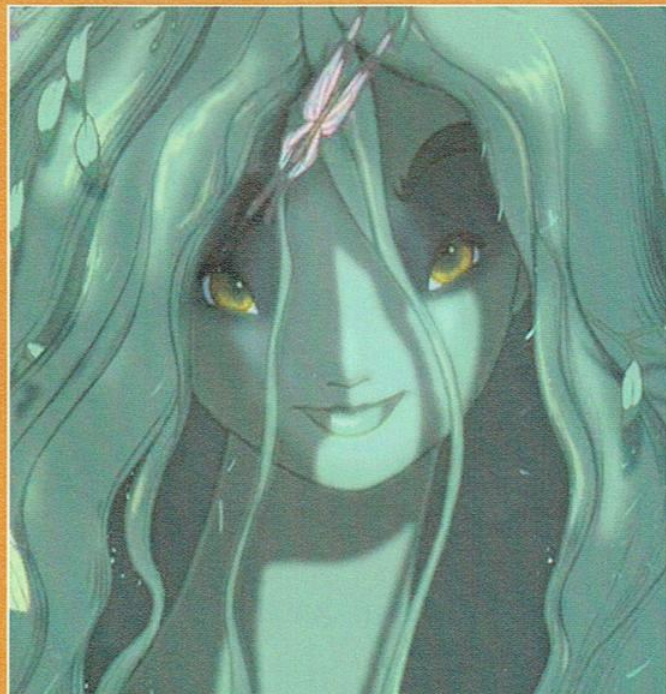
It's still good value if you don't know anything about Mission: Impossible. Just ignore the plot... or what little of it there is.

EXTRAS: **5**/10

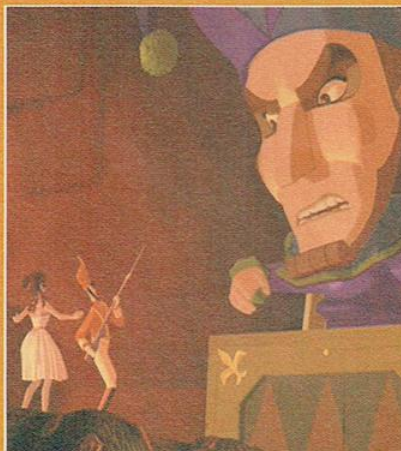
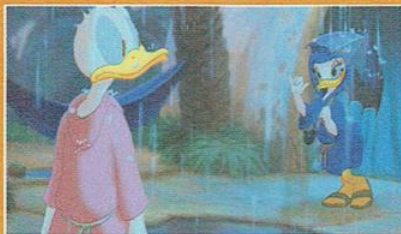
MOVIE: **5**/10



TOM EXACTS REVENGE ON A FILM CRITIC



SHE-HULK HAS A BRIEF APPEARANCE



"BACK IN YER BOX!"

## Fantasia 2000

DISNEY

G

From the film company that produces all things sugar and sweetness comes the 2000 edition of the musical that had everyone scratching their heads, Fantasia. Fantasia 2000 continues the concept of abstract visual interpretation of modern and classical music, where animators let the music carry their imagination to where ever they may fancy.

The animation ranges from weird to breathtaking, but no matter how the flying whales or Donald Duck's version of Noah's Ark appeals to you, it all comes down to the music. In that respect, Fantasia is choice listening, with pieces from Shostakovich and Gershwin (and other predictable but not undeserved ones from Beethoven). Unless you're a student of the classical arts, this one's probably best left as a great gift idea for mum.

EXTRAS: **8**/10

MOVIE: **6**/10

## Transformers The Movie

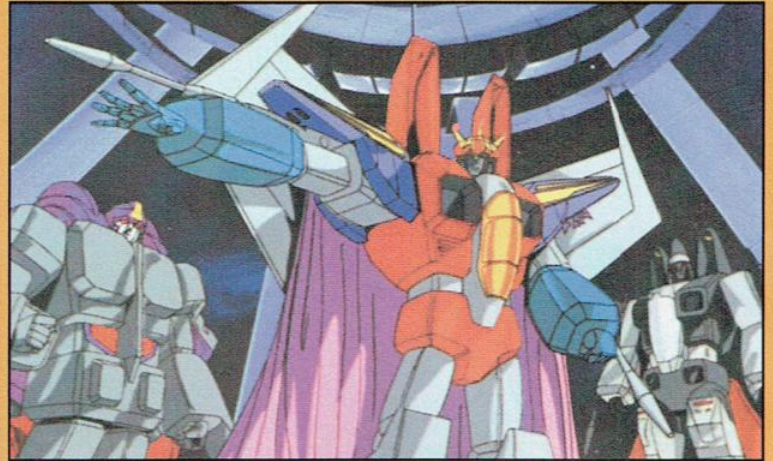
SUNBOW PRODUCTIONS

G

This 1987 classic has been digitally re-mastered with 5.1 channel sound. The near-reference picture quality is absolutely jaw-dropping — every frame is rich with the original colours, and so clean that it's smooth as the editor's bottom (hang on, that's not such a pretty thought). It also comes with the "Oh shit" scene deleted from the original release, as well as storyboards (albeit incomplete) that show incredible scenes that didn't make the cut.

This is a must-have for anyone who loved the original TV show (not that next-gen Beast Wars rubbish). The death of Optimus Prime, the birth of Galvatron and Rodimus Prime, the death of Starscream, and one big mother of a planet-eating Transformer... no amount of money can measure its worth as a collector's item.

EXTRAS: 8/10    MOVIE: 8/10



NO MACHINE IN THE WORLD IS BIG ENOUGH FOR THAT CAPE



CHRISTIAN GETS HIS FINGER CAUGHT IN THE PENCIL SHARPENER AGAIN



MUST HAVE BEEN A REALLY BAD HAND

## American Psycho

UNIVERSAL

MA 15+

Patrick Bateman, clever, handsome, rich, is a disturbing portrait of American yuppie-dom in the early 1980s. Based on the controversial novel by Bret Easton Ellis, this movie explores the sordid psyche of a man driven to extremes by the competitive environment he exists in; and the society that, by virtue of his slick appearance, refuses to acknowledge the monster that he is. Bateman's final realisation that "what's inside... doesn't matter" is unnerving to say the least.

While the film has been criticised for not having the gore of the novel, it is that audience that this DVD will best suit. Picture quality is passable and the extras are extremely basic — the only fireworks you'll find is in the dark, intelligent satire.

EXTRAS: 3/10    MOVIE: 8/10



AN UZI ON THE SIDE? UH... DUDE...

## The Corruptor

VILLAGE ROADSHOW

M

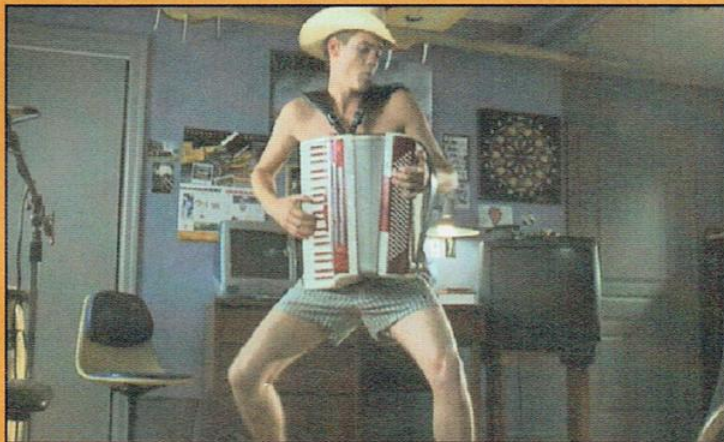
Donny Wahlberg and Chow Yun Fat, who from their cool cops 'n robbers movies would presumably make a great team-up, star in a hammy action flick that spends more time indulging director James Foley's fascination with the down-beaten Asian sub-culture in modern New York. Wahlberg is sent into Chinatown to investigate corruption — Chow Yun Fat from the NYPD's Asian squad is his ticket to the inside, but questions are inevitably raised as to who Chow is loyal to. The movie is very hit-and-miss as Chow's nicely performed action scenes play second fiddle to the clumsy cultural drama.

Production standards are generally high, though. Decent sound and picture quality, director's commentary, trailers — all that's missing is a blooper reel and a better plot.

EXTRAS: 6/10    MOVIE: 7/10



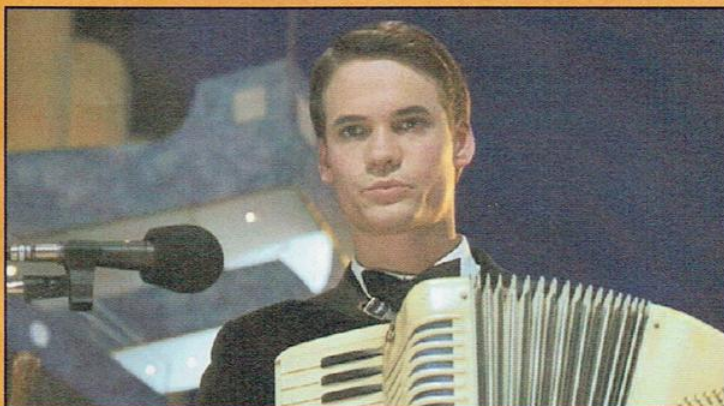
"WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MY COLLECTION OF HUMAN HEADS?"



FROM ONE ORGAN...



...TO ANOTHER



## Whatever It Takes

PG

COLUMBIA PICTURES

My advice to anyone who is considering watching this DVD is simple: do whatever it takes to avoid it. Although this may seem a trifle harsh, you can rest assured that the cast and crew have also done (quite admirably too) whatever it takes to make this film a forgettable piece of shite. Okay, okay... I'll admit that I did emit a few chuckles at the enlarged penis, puke and overflowing bedpan jokes, but it's difficult to get enthused about the rest. The story's a rip-off of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, with entire scenes lifted straight from *Roxanne*, and reeks of political incorrectness - two guys conspire with each other to get themselves the girls of their dreams; hearts get broken along the way; but of course the "right" guy and girl end up with each other. Clueless it ain't, and I'm happy to do whatever it takes to warn you off.

Extras included are audio commentary from director David Raynr and two of the stars, deleted scenes, isolated song track and score, behind-the-scenes featurette, movie trailer, talent (eh?) profiles.

VICTORIA FLANAGAN

EXTRAS: 4/10

MOVIE: 1/10

## Savage Garden: Live and On Tour In Australia

VILLAGE ROADSHOW

G

Shit sandwich.

It's not that this DVD is bad - the production values are excellent, and it includes an entire concert and "behind the scenes" documentary. It's just that, well, Savage Garden suck.

CAM SHEA

EXTRAS: 5/10

MOVIE: 1/10



THE BULLET PROOF VEST WILL MOST DEFINITELY BE NEEDED

## Underworld Live: Everything Everything

VILLAGE ROADSHOW

G

After an inauspicious start in the 80s with the embarrassingly bad "Underneath the Radar", Underworld found their feet, recruiting DJ Darren Emerson and releasing the seminal classics "dubnobasswithmyheadman", "Second Toughest In The Infants", and "Beaucoup Fish". *Everything Everything* is Underworld's fourth and weakest album. It's a collection of the group's "greatest hits" performed live in front of 40,000 fans. I guess the advantage of buying this over the CD is that for a small amount more, you get the visuals to accompany the sound... if you want to watch them prancing about on stage that is (although you also have the option of watching the entire album set to Tomato Video Art which is kinda cool). The reality is, however, that Underworld are a studio band, and it's hard to really enjoy the live experience unless you're there.

CAM SHEA

EXTRAS: 5/10

MOVIE: 5/10



ALL HE NEEDS IS SOMETHING STRAPPED TO HIS NOSE AND HE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO BREATHE

# ANIME

## Maze

CATEGORY: MEDIEVAL ACTION/COMEDY

PRODUCTION COMPANY: JVC

This one's going to require a little explanation. Maze is a young Japanese woman from whose house fell on a menacing ogre - Wizard of Oz style. The ogre was in fact chasing a princess who's on the run after her family was slain and her kingdom was usurped. Maze meets up with a bunch of other characters - thieves, warriors, fairies and so on - all of whom vow to help this princess reclaim the sovereignty of her land.

The catch is that ever since landing on this twisted realm, Maze can now wield awesome magical powers, summon and pilot a mystical mecha with even more destructive weapons, and - you'll love this - at night, she turns into a sex-crazed man who'll sink his love muscle into every woman within grabbing distance.

So basically, Maze is a cross between Slayers, Lodoss Wars, and Dragon Half - except with lots of nudity. Lots. Any excuse is used for showing off a nipple. And unlike other titles that would draw the line somewhere to retain some level of dignity, this OVA takes it all the way and lets the unlikeable male half of our hero get some undeserved action.

Maze provides comic brilliance throughout, but the utter shamelessness of it all makes it the kind of OVA you're less likely to automatically whip out and brag to your friends about. On the other hand it's not quite down there with Dragon Pink yet. The DVD of Maze also comes bundled with the first episode of the TV show. Pretty good value.

ANIMATION: 8 | PLOT: 7 | JAPAN-NESS: MEDIUM | OVERALL: 7



"DO YOU WANT TO SEE MY BONE? HAAAA!"



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"HAVE AT YOU!" "NO, YOU!" "NO! YOU!" AND SO ON



HEY, ISN'T THAT THE GUY FROM DURAN DURAN?

## Escaflowne: Dragons & Destiny

CATEGORY: ACTION, DRAMA

PRODUCTION COMPANY: SUNRISE/BANDAI VISUAL

Despite the slightly modified title, this is simply the DVD re-release of what is still the best post-Evangelion anime money can buy: The Vision of Escaflowne. Hitomi Kanzaki is an average highschool student - she enjoys running on the track and she dabbles with tarot cards - but her life is completely changed one day when a boy in strange armour materialises in front of her and slays a fire-breathing dragon before her very eyes.

From there she is teleported to the world of Gaea, where Earth is known as the Mystic Moon, and where military might is measured through giant mechs called Guymelefs. She arrives in time to witness the beginnings of the Zaibach Empire's deadly campaign of world domination as it decimates the city of Fanelia, where as it turns out our armoured lad, Van Fanel, is heir to the throne. Worse still, Hitomi begins seeing visions of the future - of things happening mere seconds away, and others more distant. But above all else, she sees a final battle being fought by Escaflowne, a fabled Yspanos Guymelef that clouds the Zaibach's "Future Prognosticator".

This series boasts cutting-edge CG effects, mecha designs by Kawamori Shoji, and a rousing musical score by Yoko Kanno. The compelling 26-episode story is drawn out, but breath-taking in the same way that Gladiator left you speechless at the end. On DVD the improvement is surprisingly negligible, with the Dolby Digital sound being in two channels for both subbed and dubbed. Still, it's better than letting it degrade in VHS format.

ANIMATION: 9 | PLOT: 9 | JAPAN-NESS: LOW | OVERALL: 10





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The new year is well and truly in full effect. Those affected by memory issues obviously had a better New Year period than those who can recall everything, including the names of those people you snogged at midnight!

The New Year sees the official new millennium come into action and this millennium looks like being true "gaming heaven". Nintendo, translated into English - gaming heaven, are going next generation with its console and handheld devices. Hyperactive will keep you up to date daily, with the latest Gamecube and Game Boy Advance news, rumours, reviews and features.

## HOT! HOT! HOT!

With the summer heat comes multiple stresses:

### 1. Help! - I'm Melting!

Gamers are renowned for their indoor abilities (yes in all aspects!) and the punishing Aussie sun does not allow for melanin depleted skin due to copious amounts of indoor activities.

**Hyperactive Remedy:** Blatantly and most obviously do not go outside for any reason. The internet has brilliant capabilities for getting what you want when you want it without leaving your comfortable den.

### 2. My Hard Drive's Melting!

Not even the latest CPU cooler fan was designed for the unrelenting heat of the Australian summer. Super computer speeds lead to super temperatures of your CPU - which basically isn't any good!

**Hyperactive Remedy:** Crank up the air-conditioning to Eleven. The global warming caused by the extra electricity being used will only affect those who are outdoors and despite the ability to take your computer outdoors - just avoid it at all cost!

Stay Hyperactive

Zak Brandon  
Producer  
[www.hyperactive.com.au](http://www.hyperactive.com.au)



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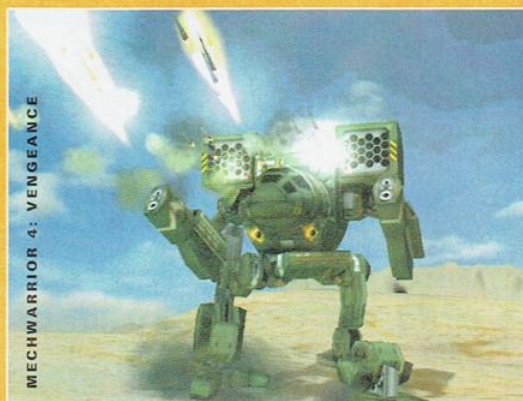
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# what's on the CD

Our bountiful cover disc is back this month with all new gameplay like to see on the Hyper cover disc? Just send us an email with you

## PC DEMOS



MECHWARRIOR 4: VENGEANCE

### ■ ONI

G.O.D GAMES

REQUIRED: PII 300, 32MB RAM  
Karate meets kamikaze sci-fi soldiers.

### ■ COLIN McRAE RALLY 2.0

CODEMASTERS

REQUIRED: P233, 32MB RAM  
Slam your pedal to the metal and live this game.

### ■ MECHWARRIOR 4: VENGEANCE

MICROSOFT

REQUIRED: PII-350, 64MB RAM  
The biggest baddest robots in town!

### ■ TOMB RAIDER CHRONICLES

EIDOS

REQUIRED: PII 233, 32MB RAM  
Accompany Lara in her last (ahem) adventure.

### ■ AMERICAN MCGEE'S ALICE

G.O.D GAMES

REQUIRED: PII-300, 64MB RAM  
Wonderland just got even weirder.

### ■ QUAKE 3: TEAM ARENA

ID SOFTWARE

REQUIRED: PII 233, 32MB RAM  
Finally, the Quake team play we always wanted.

### ■ KAO THE KANGAROO

TITUS

REQUIRED: PII 233, 32MB RAM  
Platforming returns to the PC in this crazy romp.

### ■ MOONSHINE RUNNERS

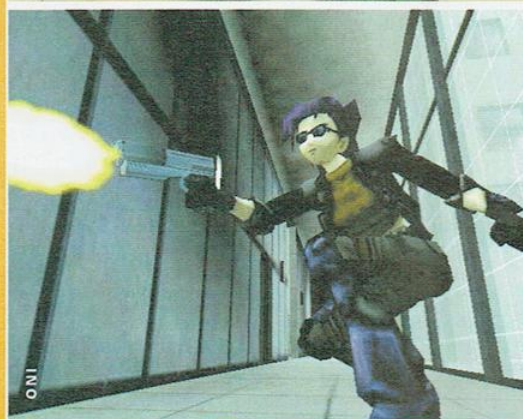
K-D LAB

REQUIRED: PII 233, 32MB RAM, 3D CARD  
Bizarre cars and incredible environments.

### ■ MIDTOWN MADNESS 2

MICROSOFT

REQUIRED: PII 233, 32MB RAM  
There are no rules. Just drive.



ONI



QUAKE 3 TEAM ARENA

## PROBLEMS WITH YOUR CD?



Every Hyper cover disc is fully tested and scanned for viruses. However, due to the incredible array of PC hardware out there, we can't guarantee every demo will run on your PC without problems. Please check the readme files with each demo if you are having problems with a demo. If you suspect the CD is faulty, you can e-mail [hypercd@next.com.au](mailto:hypercd@next.com.au) with your problems. If your CD is faulty, a new CD can be posted to you free of charge.



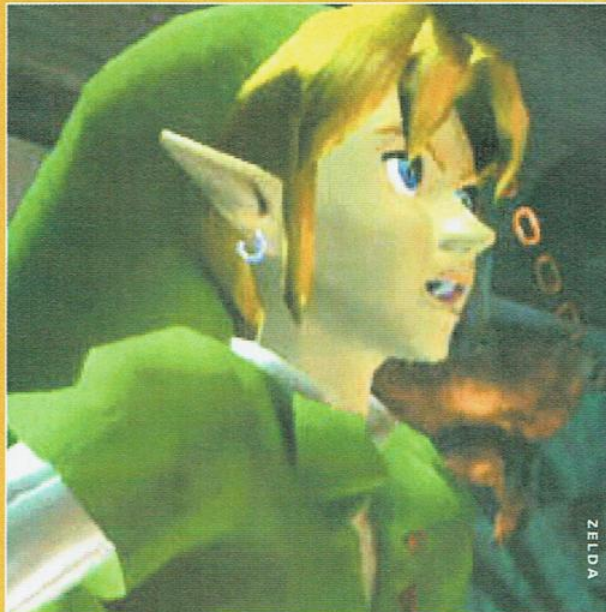
## THE HYPER COVER DISC

ies, some awesome demos and a few very handy patches. Is there anything you'd thoughts to freakscene@next.com.au.

### GAMEPLAY MOVIES

#### ■ NINTENDO GAMECUBE TECH DEMOS

Check out these sexy little movies. First we have the full Zelda tech demo which gives us an idea of what the next Zelda could be like on the Gamecube. Stunning. We've also included part one and two of the Rebirth tech demo which was designed by Mix-Core for Nintendo to show the power of their hardware. Most of the Rebirth demo is real-time running on the Gamecube, although mix-core admit that some of the demo is prerendered. Still, have you seen anything as good as this on the other consoles?



#### ■ DEVIL MAY CRY - PS2

This is the new survival horror title from Capcom on the PS2. We want this baby now!

#### ■ CODE VERONICA - PS2

Capcom's Resident Evil outing on PS2 is looking just a little step ahead of the Dreamcast.

#### ■ QUAKE 3 TEAM ARENA - PC

If you don't want to install the demo, check out this promo trailer. Gibs ahoy!

#### ■ LEGENDS: MIGHT & MAGIC - PC

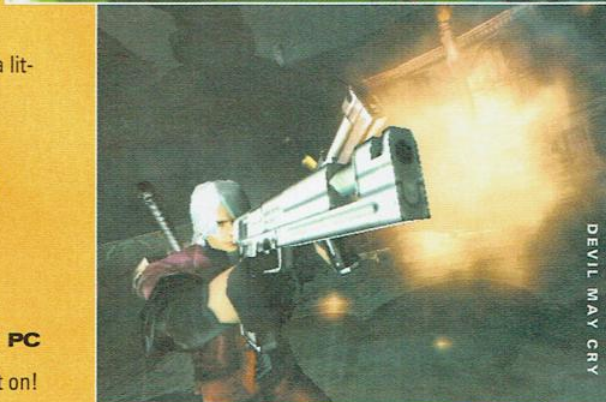
Yet another title in the Might & Magic series... bring it on!

#### ■ PHANTASY STAR ONLINE - Dreamcast

Check out this promo movie for the first ever online multi-player console RPG, Phantasy Star Online.

#### ■ EVIL DEAD TV AD

Weird, wacky and features Bruce Campbell!



### BUT WAIT... THERE'S MORE

If you use the "explore the CD" option in the menu, you'll discover the patches and utilities folders, as well as the movies folder. This month we've squeezed on...

### PATCHES

#### ■ DEUS EX MULTI-PLAYER PATCH

This is the one you've been waiting for! The best PC game ever just became life-threateningly addictive all over again.

Plus...

- QUAKE 3 ARENA
- HITMAN
- NO ONE LIVES FOREVER

### EXTRAS

- American McGee's ALICE screensavers



This month we address the topic posed in Hyper #87...

We would have read all your responses but we were too busy playing Banjo-Tooie. Hey, hold on a second...

## IS GAMING A DAMAGING ADDICTION?



## HYPER FORUM

Everyone has a different opinion and the Hyper Forum is where you can get your thoughts out of your head and onto the page for all to see. Don't forget that we have a new topic every issue! The next topic of discussion...



**"WHICH GAME SHOULD BE MADE INTO A FILM NEXT AND WHY?"**

Responses will be printed in Hyper #91.

E-mail: FREAKSCENE@NEXT.COM.AU with Hyper Forum in the subject line, and the topic of discussion at the top of your response. Please note that very long contributions may be edited.

### PILL POPPING GAMERS

Gaming could be a damaging addiction as proven by this statement I came across on a forum the other day.

"Computer games don't influence children: If we'd been influenced by Pac-Man as kids, we'd all be running around in darkened rooms munching pills and listening to repetitive music."

Lets hope that the Brian Harradine's of this world don't get hold of this and come up with the idea that the rave drug culture is caused by evil video games.

**RAT**

[fishdoit@bigpond.net.au](mailto:fishdoit@bigpond.net.au)

### ELECTRONIC HEROIN

Dear Hyper Crew,

Something about your forum question last month struck a cord with me, dispatched a small army of neurones reverberating down my spinal cord, where they now reside somewhere in my lower colon. Your question is the itch I cannot scratch, the worm of contemplation, the ... well you get the idea.

Is gaming a damaging addiction?

Well let's look at the facts here shall we? I implore you to look at exhibit 'A' (the question itself). It seems that the enlightened minds at "HUMPER" magazine have already resolved the life-long debate about whether gaming is an addiction worthy of note. Apparently, the Hyper gang have cracked the code and accepted that, yes, gaming is an addiction. Now you're merely concerned whether it's a damaging one. Who told you? When did this happen? I'll have to start reading the Australian I think. I thought there'd be at least another couple of kilometres worth of bickering left in the social fuel tank about whether gaming was an addiction at all. Ah well, I guess you guys really are 'in the know'.

Sorry, getting back to the point. Is it a 'damaging' addiction? I would say yes! Compared to the other forms of digital

stimuli out there, gaming's the heroin of the electronic world maaannn. Think about it for a moment will you? Total immersion, no responsibility, no consequences. What a hit! What a buzz! What a hangover... Picture this - It's 3 in the morning, you've finally built the weather machine that you've saved so damn hard for, prism tank force gathered nicely on the left flank, an army of Grizzlies poised for attack on the right. THEN BOOM! The reds drop a nuke on your arse and in 3 seconds it's all over. How many times have you just wanted to smash the nearest object (living or dead) with your bare fist when something like this happens. Sure, this isn't necessarily damaging to yourself, but it certainly is to any unfortunate bugger that happens to be within a 3 metre radius.

Gaming's a drug and by God it hurts. Sure you start off by having a dabble on the weekends. See it as more of a social lubricant then anything else. Invite a few mates over, pizza, beer, the fiery pits of Starbase 3. Life doesn't get much better. But before you know it you're playing on a work night, at three in the morning, alone, desperate. I've finalised many a game by lying naked in the fetal position. It's the only way to cope. I see a future of smacked out Pokémon addicts sprawled in the city gutters, still clutching desperately to their Game Boy Colors. One more hit, one more hit. I see a future of J C Denton lookalikes pushing Banjo Tooie on the streets, Sonicphiles jacked up on ringshots and jumping on people's heads, terrorising that DVD crowd to no end I bet (interactive menus... oooooohh ahhhhhh). Walls will crumble, tides will turn and we will all obey helplessly to the mighty word of the creator, "It's-a me, Mariooo!"

As Primal Scream once sang, "I got damage". Maybe they'd just picked up the latest instalment in the Mechwarrior saga?

Oh yeah, I've given up sex because I was bartering with an Elf-Lord in upper Ankh Morpork... now that's damaging!

**WILLIAM B**  
Brisbane, Qld



## GIRLFRIEND OR GAMEFRIEND?

In the clarity of hindsight, the single most determining factor as to whether or not I should break up with my (now-ex) girlfriend when I did, was the release of Perfect Dark for N64 in time for mid-year holidays. I had just bought an N64 (thanks Pius Jeon - and he's not even Greek) and was looking forward to getting into the Darkness after my uni exams were over.

My exams finished and then suddenly I had to face much conflict within - girlfriend or gamefriend? Inevitably my gaming sessions were cut short by girlfriend maintenance requirements as I yearned for gaming sessions that were unrestricted by time or any other earthly constraints. She was a nice girl but things were on the way down anyway so Joanna just pointed me in the right direction and I finished things with the girl.

So Is Gaming a Damaging Addiction? Well in this case gaming helped me to find the correct path earlier than I might have otherwise. So No.

But yeah gaming is dangerous, I once damaged my knee as a youngster playing Moonbuggy on the Apple-IIc (what a pocket-sized party starting machine). I was jumping over this weird crater that had an emu-like thing popping out of it and I used to get over excited and jerk my leg up when I did it (I was young and out of control). The computer desk got in the way one time and I smashed the shit out of my knee. But my joints are good now so maybe that just made me more powerful.

In the end the real damage of addiction to games is what you miss out on if you didn't play, in economics it's called opportunity cost, as in the opportunities you give up to play games. You might miss out on learning shit like how to surf or build a box-kite or a sea-faring vessel, maybe you could learn 11-dimensional string theory and understand the universe if you didn't play so much FIFA or Counterstrike. Yet you'd reckon there should be time for that one day and in the meantime you are having fun (at least when you're winning- and when you lose it's a learning experience) and since you only live once you might as well enjoy as much as you can.

But you know maybe in 20 years you'll wake up and say "I'm 24- isn't that cool" in which case you're too young to go to pubs (and school for that matter) so keep playing games. For the rest of you be careful in avoiding reality for too long.

**-JOBBA**  
via e-mail

## TAKE YOUR STRESS OUT

Dear Hyper,  
Hmmmmm. "Is Gaming A Damaging Addiction?" Well that can be true in a very small amount of cases, but no it is not damaging. When I mean in very small amount of cases is I mean, if you sit there day after day and never ever go out side. We all need to get some regular exercise, so if you do get regular exercise then it is not damaging to your health.

Also playing computer games improves your hand to eye co-ordination, so by playing games like Tekken, Power Stone or Quake you will actually improve your co-ordination.

Plus, computer games allow you to take your stress out on something. Ever had a hard day at school? The teachers will never get off your back and work you to the bone. Well it is nice to come home, turn on your computer or console and kill something to take your stress out of you. Like Quake. Blow up a few enemies or see other cars disappear far behind you into a cloud of dust in

Sega Rally. Ahh the life of a gamer is grand isn't it?  
"Gaming is grand and good for you".

**DARKEVA**  
darkeva@hotmail.com.au

## VOICES...

Hyper,

Now what would want to make you believe that gaming could even remotely be addictive? I should know from experience, just because I haven't left the house in 3 weeks, showered since the last time I left the house or have eaten properly since before I left home. I mean come on, I'm not addicted to games or my computer. I even ate last night, I think it was the day before pizza scrapings. Now I don't say all people could live like me but I think life is fine and I am definitely not addicted to games.

**FROM KENNY**

P.S. Does anyone know how to quiet the voices in my head? All I can hear is "strafe, jump, shoot".





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

## RPG RUMBLINGS

To the gunnish crew @ Hyper, I've got a couple of questions for you. I was just wondering whatever happened to...

1) Chrono Cross. Did the sequel to the classic ever get an Australian release or what? I haven't seen it anywhere.

2) What about Legend of Dragoon and Legend of Mana? These are the other two I've seen nothing of. I love my RPGs and these were all supposed to be top titles.

3) Finally I was wondering if Final Fantasy 9 had been released in Aus yet? I seriously can't wait for this game.

Thanks for your help

**BRODIE RYAN**

gunnish@joymail.com

Dear Brodie,

Well, aren't you a lucky duck? Legend Of Dragoon is reviewed this issue, although you've probably noticed that already.

1) Chrono Cross looks like it's going to be overlooked for Australia. What's so frustrating is that it's a brilliant RPG.

2) Legend of Mana is also never going to come out here, because Australia is such an unimportant backwater. The arse-end if you will. Apparently.

3) Final Fantasy IX will be out real soon! Rejoice!

## WHICH CONSOLE IS BEST PART MMLXCVII

Hyper,

In all honesty, if you guys could only buy one console, which would it be? The Dreamcast, with its amazing games lineup right now (but not too great a future)? The Gamecube, with the chance to play a really cool looking Mario and Zelda? (sidenote- I finally played Ocarina, not a bad game by far, but the most overrated in years. What story?! Look at Final Fantasy, Xenogears, MGS, Panzer Dragoon Saga!)

Next, the Xbox, with it's so-called super-duper graphics (not to mention probable super-duper price tag) and what looks like third-party support almost as good as Sony's? It will either

succeed really well, or fizzle faster than we can say 3DO. Or the PS2, with its revolutionary technology, amazing third-party support, GT3, and the best looking future? Or does the small VRAM and initial programming difficulties turn you off?

Please be honest I like to know.

**BRETT ELSE**

B\_else@yahoo.com

Dear Brett,

Easily answered! Clearly, without a doubt, the best console is obviously going to be [SNIP - Big Brother]. There you go. Case closed!

## HELLO FROM A KNOB

Okay,

Eliot or should I say the royal Mr Fish. I have two VERY important questions I need answered. I just bought a PS2 and DOA2: Hardcore and my two questions revolve around this. The first is this.

1) Is our Aussie version free of jaggies or rough edges? Cause it sure as hell looks like it.

2) Now Eliot, can I please have the cheat to make chicks naked on the PS2 version.

Thanks. Dont work too hard and have a nervy.

Thanks again, seeya Lord Of Seafood.

**KNOB**

Knob4ya@hotmail.com

PS Say hello to Cam for me, my name's Knob.

Dear... Knob, Ahem.

1) Is it really that important? There's a small amount of jaggy flickering, but the game looks awesome, so who cares? We win!

2) There's no cheat to actually make the in-game characters nekkid. This is the truth! In the DC version at least, you could unlock an alternate intro that showed one naked girl in a big yellow bubble of plasma. Overrated.

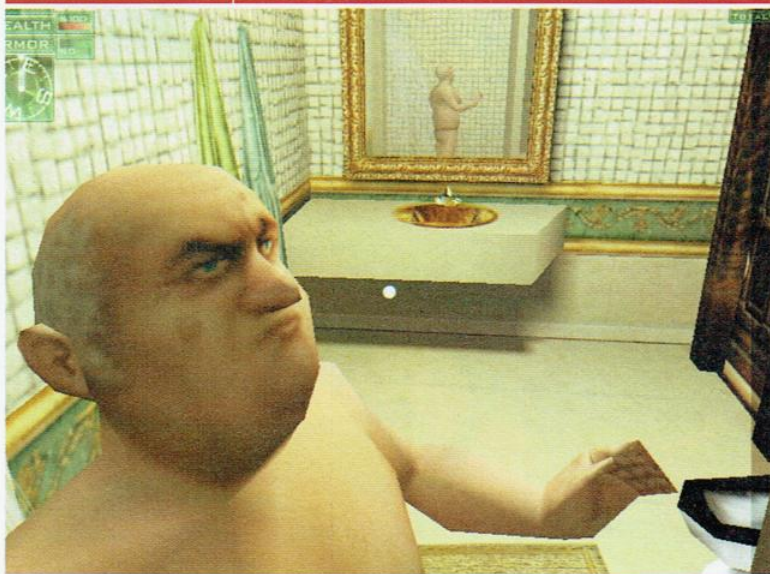
## BLIZZARD ARE PHONIES!

Good Evenings to all the Hyper Crew, With all the Hula-hoopla about

## CAPTION THIS!

### PART 14 WINNER

Our winning caption this month comes from Daniel Kinsman via e-mail. One of the only entries that didn't involve dick jokes.



**NORMAN REALISES HE DRILLED HIS PEEPHOLE INTO THE WRONG WALL!**

## Harvey Norman

**SAVE 15%\***  
**OFF ANY TOP 20 GAME!**

Harvey Norman would like to offer readers of Hyper an exclusive discount offer on the titles appearing on the Official Australian PC, Playstation or N64 Games Chart. Simply complete the coupon & take it into any Harvey Norman store to claim your discount.

**HYPER** **SAVE 15%\***  
**OFF ANY TOP 20 GAME!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Ph: \_\_\_\_\_

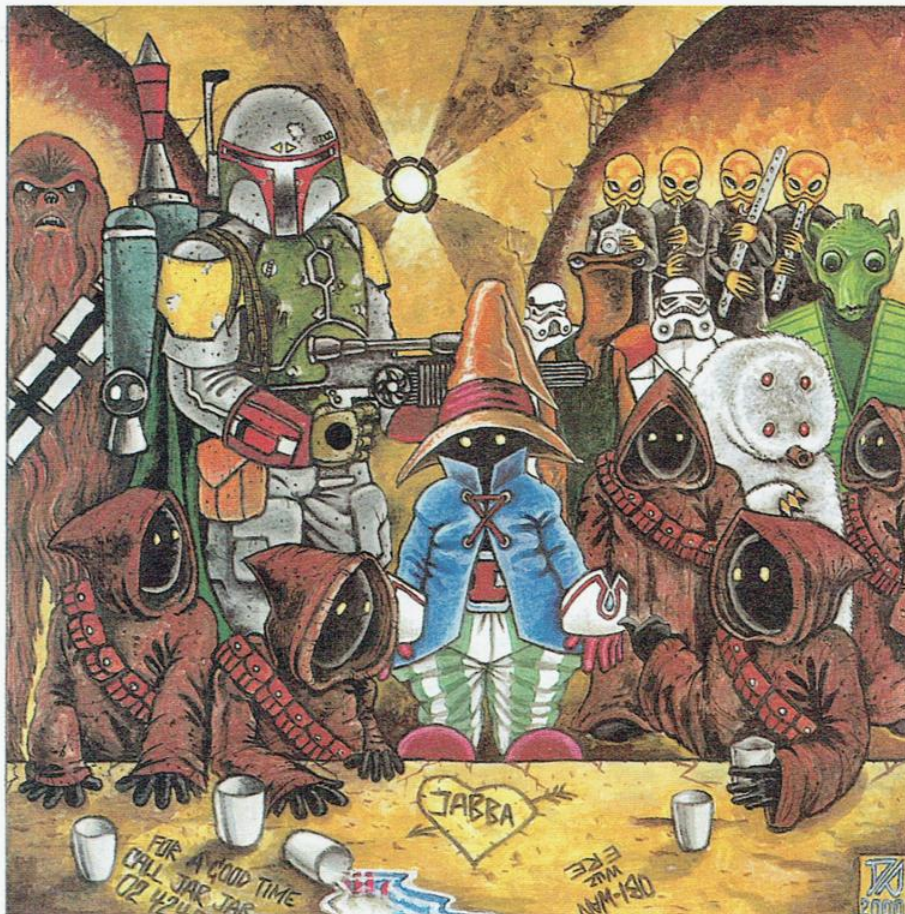
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Harvey Norman store: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive news & other special offers

\* Limit of one per person. Original voucher must be presented & completed to claim the discount. Discount applies to regular store pricing. Not redeemable or transferrable for cash. Offer ends 26th February. Customer details may be used for further promotional activities.

**HH5**



HYPHER PAL DAVID SULLIVAN SENDS US YET ANOTHER BRILLIANT PIECE OF WORK...

Diablo II lately, I've written to inform you about one of the most shocking discoveries I have ever come across in gaming. Blizzard's Diablo is nothing but a clone of a Sega Master System cart! How did I come about this conclusion? Well, let me tell you first about the 'original' A/RPG game Diablo is based on - Dragon Crystal.

In Dragon Crystal the hero has to traverse each short level fighting enemies and picking up items, but the main goal is to find the exit on each level to reach the final floor in which the dragon crystal is held. The hero also goes up in experience the more he descends and his designation changes several times from 'warrior' to 'paladin' before eventually becoming a 'demi-god'. The hero's appearance changes with better armour as he starts off in brown leather then moves on to chain mail and eventually full plate body armour. Very Diablo-ish in my opinion. Money is also scattered about the level diablo-style but is only used to buy 'continues' if you die (and you will). If the going gets too tough 'time rods' can be used to 'slip through time' and back a few levels if you missed some armour or weapons.

But here's the bombshell - Dragon Crystal has a random level generation feature where no gaming adventure is the same! Enemies, items, levels and colour designation are always different every time you play the game! For example in one play a red potion may be a 'minheal potion' (didn't I mention that the game also has min/mid/max-heal potions? Oops heh heh!) but in the next it could be a 'fog potion' (just like that fountain I'm always accidentally clicking on in Diablo). And just like in Diablo if you face a type of enemy at the start of the game that's green, much later it might be orange and cause permanent 'STR Down' effects. One adventure is never the same. Wasn't that the catch phrase of Diablo advertisements?

A massive coincidence or is Diablo just a rip-off clone? See for yourself! If you can't track down a Sega Master System (around \$2 at Cash Converters heheh) try the ROM off the 'net (but make sure you delete it afterwards). I recommend MEKA for Emulation because it has some wicked GUI options (try the 'girl power' setting and introduce you little sister to gaming... or something). Can Hyper get to

the bottom of this? Is Blizzard stealing ideas from lost games and making them a million and half times better? You be the judge!

**DIZQORD**  
Dizqord@hotmail.com

Dear Dizqord, the formula in Diablo 1 and 2 is reminiscent of many old-school RPGs, so Dragon Crystal wouldn't be the only game with a passing resemblance. Believe us, there were a few games with exactly the same style of gameplay many years ago, even in old ASCII games like Rogue on the PC.

## HYPHER TV OPINIONS START HERE

Dear HYPER"" crew, My name's David Clarke and I am a proud subscriber to HYPER"" and N64Gamer magazines. I also have Astar (Not Foxtel because I'm in Albury/Wodonga, not a captial!) But when I heard about HYPER TV, I was all excited and stuff, until I found it was on FOX Kids! That's only on Foxtel!

I think you should cram it up Fox Kids' arse, and put it on FOX 8, the entertainment channel.

Where have you been the last few years? Video Games are now no longer for just kids, they are now aimed more at the age 12+, so get HYPER TV OFF FOX KIDS and put it on FOX 8! That's why games cost so much, have better graphics and there are more and more M-MA-R rated games.

Back when the Atari was the dominant in-house console, that was for kids, because the games weren't as sophisticated, or violent. Now the games are more violent and more sophisticated. Take GoldenEye, Perfect Dark, Tomb Raider and Tony Hawk's Skateboarding for example! They are hard, more sophisticated, and most of them are violent!

So I hope you take up my suggestion, because more than 70% of gamers are aged 13 or older, NOT KIDS!

**DAVID J CLARKE**  
console-gaming@usa.net  
http://consolegaming.israd.com

Dear David, FOX Kids approached Hyper with the concept, so really, it's their call. If we were approached by channel 10 for a late night games show, then hell, it'd be full of gibbing gore. But we weren't and it's not. Fox Kids may be a kids channel, but personally, I think the outcome is a kick-arse gaming show that appeals to gamers of all ages. We're sorry if you can't see it, maybe if you did you wouldn't assume it was for toddlers. Full-screen Gamecube footage? Yeah baby! Hyper TV could go weekly this year, so look out.

## PS2 = WASTED MONEY?

To Hyper, I have recently bought a PS2 with TTT and I love it but I've been reading in magazines how the Xbox is going to be much better than the PS2. I feel that I have wasted a lot of money.

So I have a couple of questions.  
1) Should I sell my PS2 and wait for the X-box to be released?  
2) Keep my PS2 and wait for GT3 and MGS2 to come out?

**WASAISA**  
wasaisa@altavista.com

Dear Wasaisa, If you love it, then you haven't wasted a cent. When the Xbox releases, if you think you want it instead of your PS2, then you can make your decision to change then. At this point in time, we don't really know how good the Xbox games are going to be. Enjoy your PS2 until we know more. Fact is, PS2 will probably lead a healthy life regardless of the competition, so don't worry about having made the "wrong" decision. There's always a better console around the corner these days...

## SONY GETTING COCKY?

Hyper and the rest of the gaming community,

The PS2 is out. We've all read the hype, seen the eye-candy brought by Hyper (thanking you eternally for great work) and now it is upon us.

So watching TV the other day what do I see? Some guy walking in an abstract world with arms flying out his mouth and a duck in a suit (I think it's in a suit) saying "Welcome to the third level". Needless to say, I jumped out wanting to buy the console on such a display of the console's power (note sarcasm here).

What I really was thinking was, "What the F%#\$ are Sony playing at?" Do they think we are all black turtle-

neck-wearing, long black pants totting, amber glass wearing, latte-sipping, gay-arsed art-critics? What I want to see is Tekken Tag smashing and bashing about my screen, a few highlights of upcoming Gran Turismo 3, some nice scenes from Summoner (especially that Summoner/dungeons and dragons clip, I never laughed so hard). C'mon pleeeeeeasse.

I'm not even a Sony-hater but slowly I'm being pushed that way. This advertisement only backs up the smug-gittiness represented by the answers they gave you guys in your Console Wars feature. Everywhere I look in television media and in papers I see Sony with their pants down flaying their goods about. "We are so powerful", and that's all they rely upon. That and the PSX. The machine is pure buggery to program for, Oddworld hit eject and bailed out, and \$750 is a ridiculous, borderline scandalous amount for a system with no games.

I'm sorry, I can't help but feel we're being strung along. This, along with rumours from friends overseas telling me of Sony reps coming into their

stores and ordering down all the Xbox promotional hype. (I think IGN was my source for this one). I like Sony, I have a PlayStation, multiple games but...

I also have a PC and a N64, SNES and Game Boy. The Dreamcast may be dead in oz but elsewhere she's still going strong. So what it comes down to is the games! It's what the machines are built for! Not ducks in suits and twisting, contorting bodies of men spewing arms! Don't play us for something we are not, we want the games! That's what annoys me the most. I can block out potential rumours, high prices, delays for games but I don't like Sony giving advertisements that don't inform at all. (Hm... thinks back to the Mr. Plow advert in the Simpsons).

Anyhow what do you lads think of the advert? I kinda started raving. But, oh well, I'll buy it probably anyhow but... ugh when did it get so corporate?

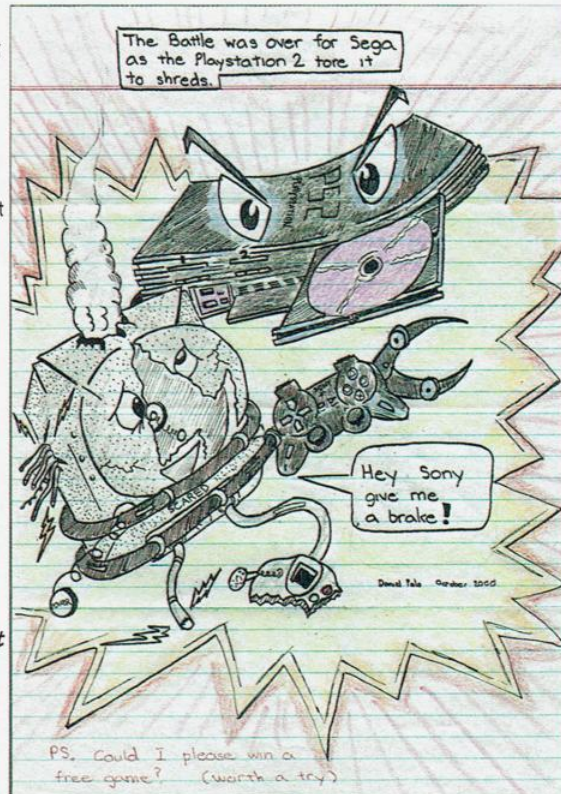
**KAJI**

Kaji@today.com.au

P.S. Good work Hyper u haven't failed me yet. Oh hang-on a sec the butt-kiss-

ing comes first doesn't it? \*sigh\* I want my SNES back (I broke both pads smashing them against the ground, gotta hate siblings beating you at street fighter). Memories... like the colour of my heart...

*Dear Kaji,  
Those ads were the brainchild of film director David Lynch (Twin Peaks), but we get your point. Sony could be accused of relying on "hip" & "cool" marketing to push the console, instead of making and pushing excellent games, but really, does it matter? Hardcore gamers have brains, and we'll judge it by the games. Right?*



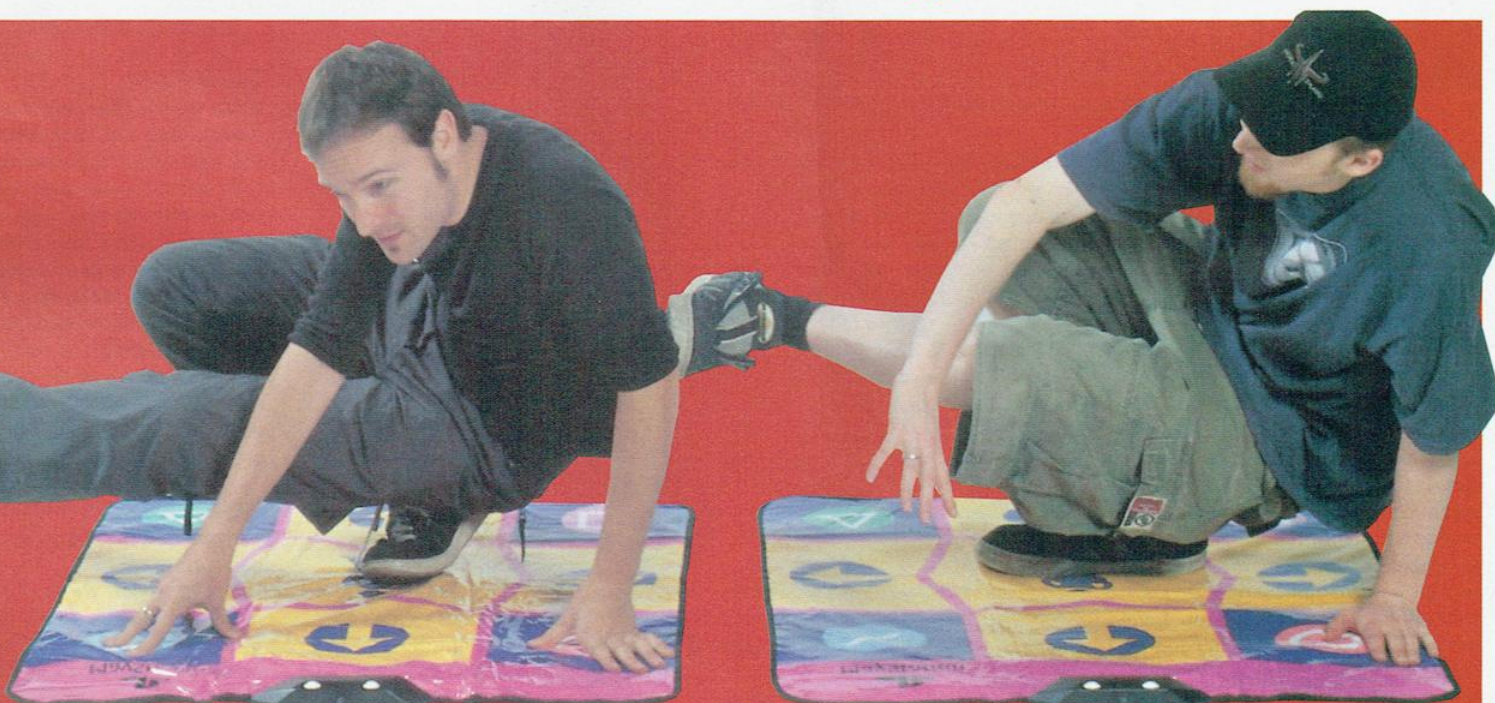
>>

FEARLESS READER ART! GOODNESS!

Dear Hyper,  
Last issue, Eliot, you challenged Cam to a "dance-off" in the letter section. I'd like to see that.

**BRAINIAC**  
Scoresby, Victoria

Dear Brainiac,  
Oh... alright.



**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 November 2000

### Top 10 Best Selling Full Price PC Games

(>\$29.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	⬆️ Cmmnd. & Cnqr. Red Alert 2	Strategy
2	⬆️ Cmmnd. & Cnqr. Red Alert 2 Ptm	Strategy
3	⬆️ Barbie Detective	Adventure
4	↔️ The Sims	Strategy
5	⬇️ Baldur's Gate 2	RPG
6	⬇️ Age Of Empires 2	Strategy
7	⬇️ Sim Mania Pack	Strategy
8	⬆️ Escape From Monkey Island 4	Adventure
9	⬇️ Diablo 2	RPG
10	⬆️ Flight Sim 2000	Simulation

### Top 10 Best Selling Full Price PlayStation Games

(>\$39.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↔️ Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Sports
2	⬆️ Driver 2	Racing
3	⬆️ Dave Mirra's BMX	Sports
4	⬆️ Spyro 3: Year Of The Dragon	Platform
5	⬇️ TOCA World Touring Cars	Racing
6	⬆️ FIFA 2001	Sports
7	⬆️ The World Is Not Enough	Action
8	⬇️ Sydney 2000	Sports
9	⬆️ Rayman 2	Platform
10	⬇️ Spiderman	Adventure

### Top 10 Best Selling Full Price N64 Games

(>\$39.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	⬆️ Zelda: Majora's Mask	RPG
2	⬇️ Perfect Dark	Action
3	⬇️ Pokemon Stadium	Action
4	⬆️ Donkey Kong 64	Platform
5	⬇️ Mario Tennis	Sports
6	⬆️ Mario Kart 64	Racing
7	⬇️ Goldeneye 007	Action
8	⬇️ Mario Party 2	Family
9	⬇️ Super Mario 64	Platform
10	↔️ Pokemon Snap	Family

### Top 10 Best Selling Full Price Dreamcast Games

(>\$49.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↔️ Virtua Tennis	Sports
2	⬆️ Le Mans	Sports
3	↔️ Sonic Adventures	Platform
4	⬆️ Street Fighter Alpha 3	Action
5	⬆️ Powerstone 2	Action
6	↔️ House Of The Dead 2	Action
7	⬇️ Resident Evil: Code Veronica	Adventure
8	⬇️ Hidden & Dangerous	Strategy
9	⬇️ Dead Or Alive 2	Action
10	⬆️ Soul Calibur	Action

### Top 10 Best Selling Full Price PS2 Games

(>\$49.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	⬆️ Tekken Tag Tournament	Action
2	⬆️ Ridge Racer 5	Racing
3	⬆️ SSX	Sports
4	⬆️ FIFA 2001	Sports
5	⬆️ Smuggler's Run	Racing
6	⬆️ Fantavision	Family
7	⬆️ NHL Hockey 2001	Sports
8	⬆️ Dynasty Warriors 2	Action
9	⬆️ Orphen	RPG
10	⬆️ Wild Wild Racing	Racing

### Top 10 Best Selling Full Price Games - All Formats

Position	Game Title	Format
1	↔️ Pokemon Gold	Gameboy
2	↔️ Pokemon Silver	Gameboy
3	⬆️ Zelda: Majora's Mask	N64
4	⬆️ Donkey Kong Country	Gameboy
5	⬇️ Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	PlayStation
6	⬆️ Driver 2	PlayStation
7	⬆️ Cmmnd. & Cnqr. Red Alert 2	PC
8	⬇️ Pokemon Yellow	Gameboy
9	⬇️ Perfect Dark	N64
10	⬇️ Pokemon Stadium	N64

# NEXT ISSUE

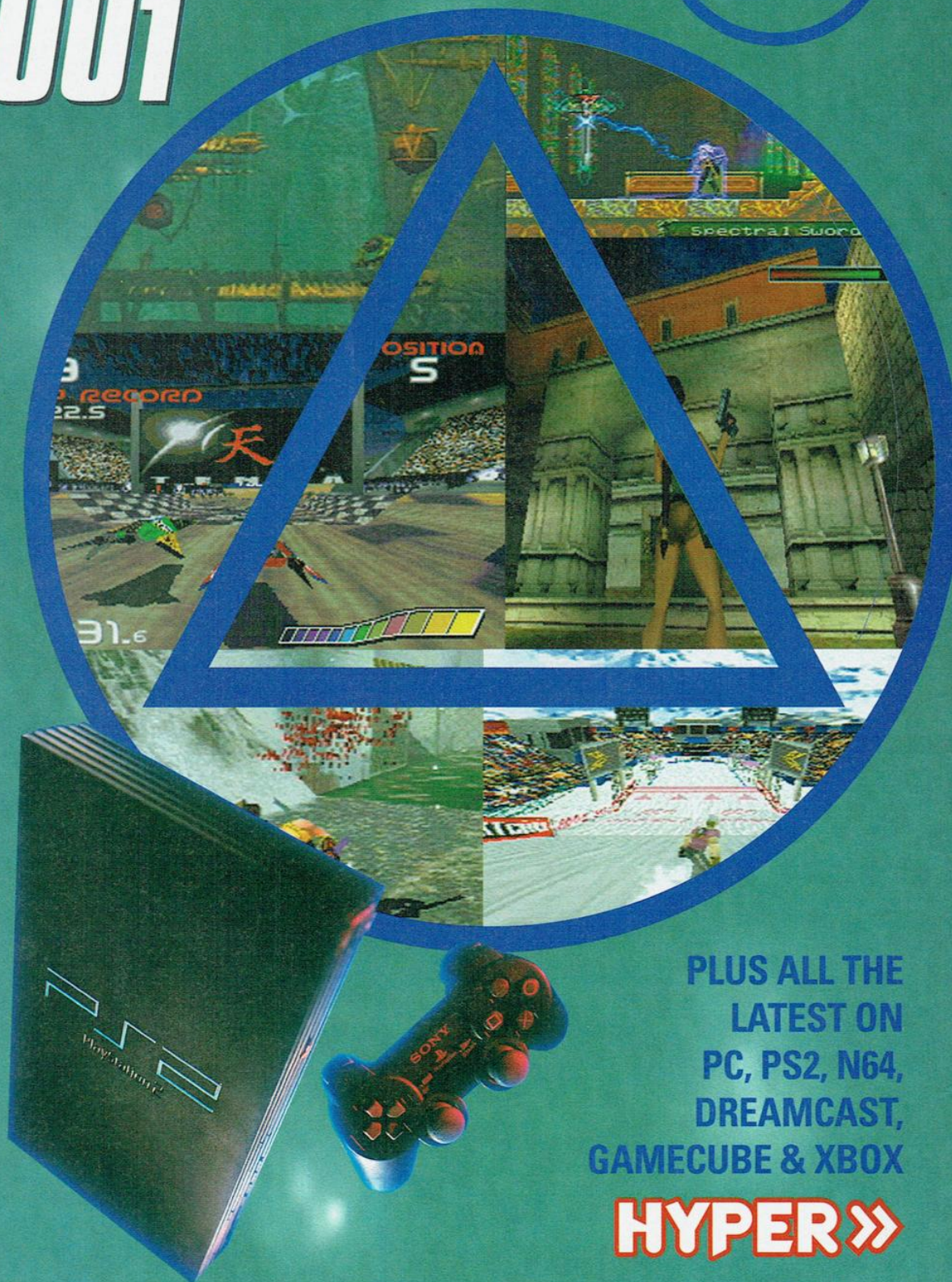
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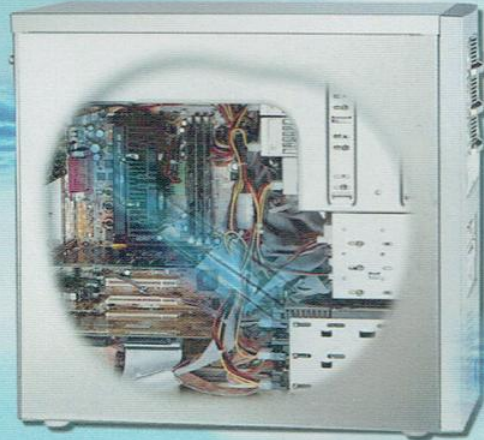
RH-29  
15000RPM



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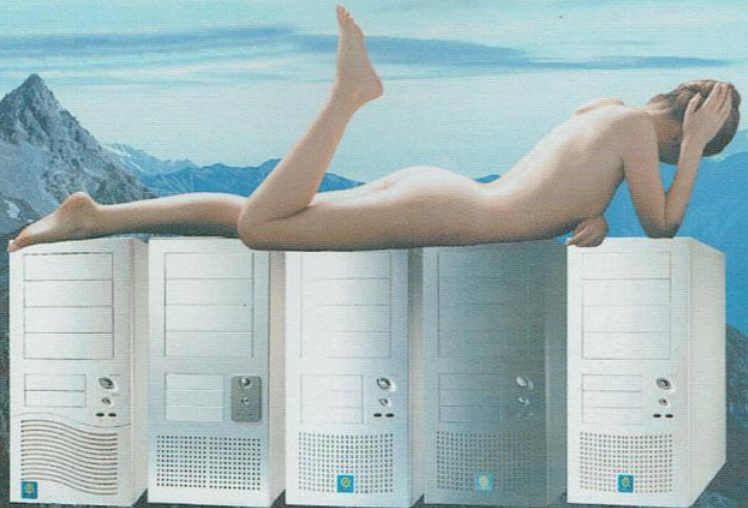
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