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ISSUE 90
APRIL 2001

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HYPER

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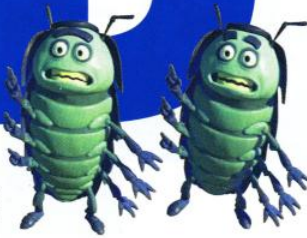
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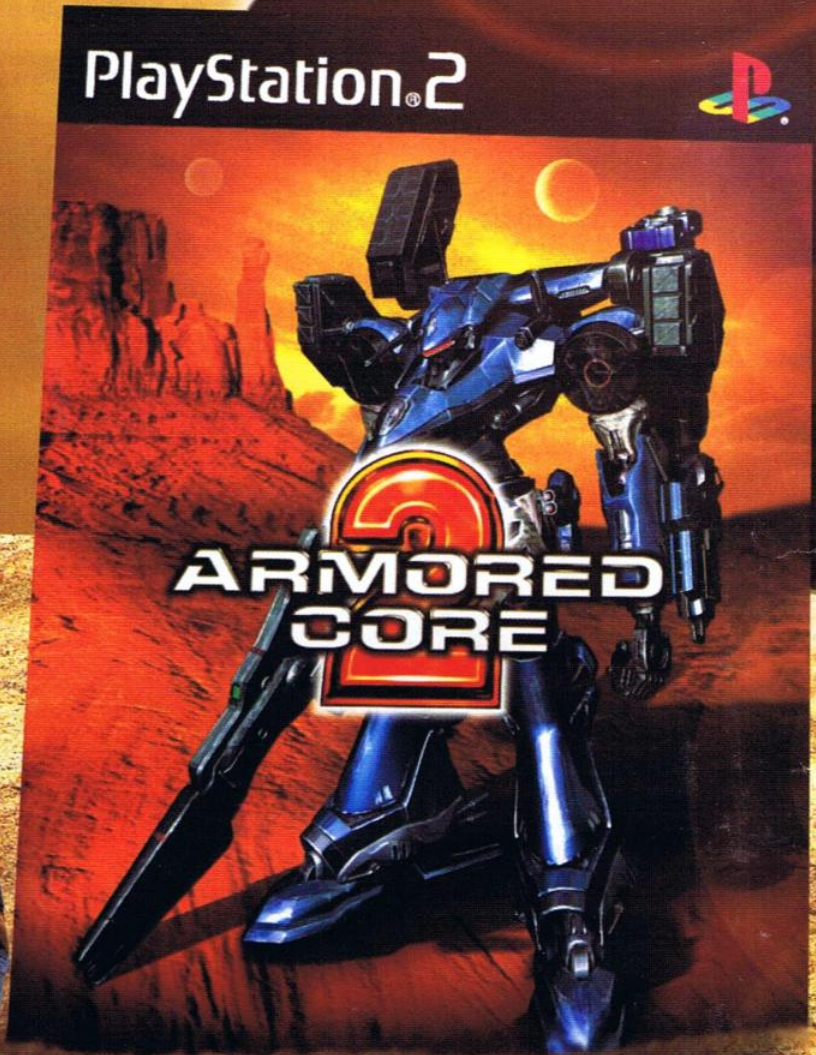
Reviewed:

- PS2 Eternal Ring
- PS2 Armored Core 2
- PC Quake 3 Team Arena
- DC Daytona USA 2001



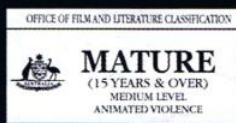
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2001



MONOLITHS THREE OF THE BIGG

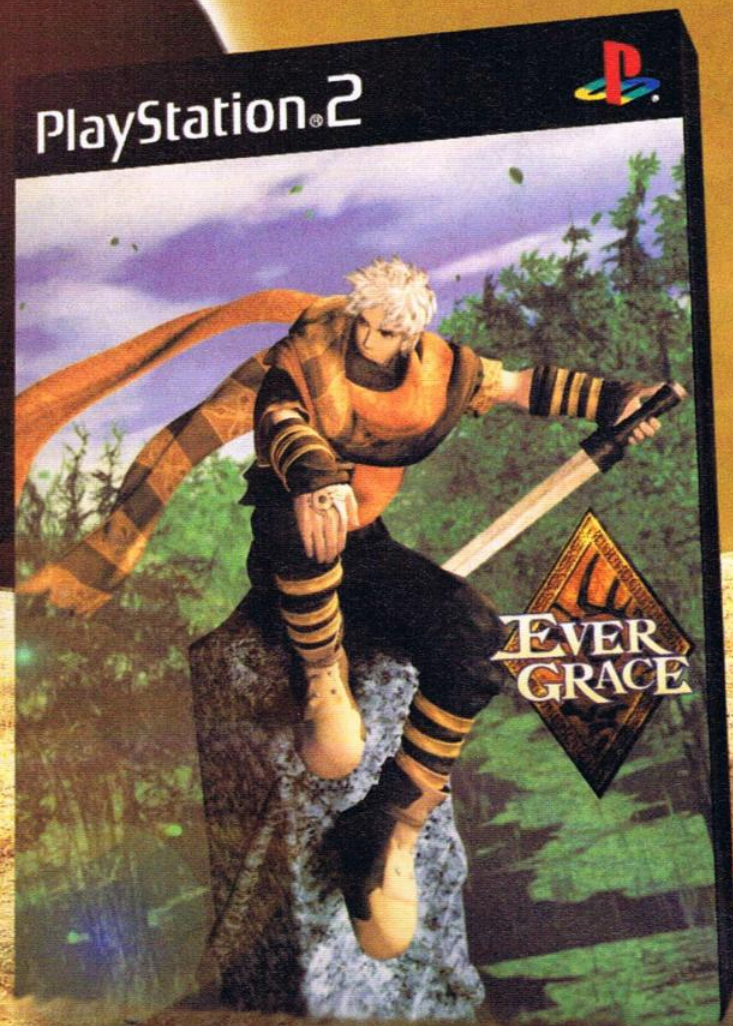
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MATURE
(15 YEARS & OVER)
MEDIUM LEVEL
ANIMATED VIOLENCE

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ARMORED CORE 2

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It is you who will take on the challenge of dominating Mars, immersing yourself in visually stunning A.C. battles using a nearly endless combination of parts and weapons.

'Armored Core 2 is gorgeous, challenging and thorough - and that's just the sort of title we like to see at a system launch'
- DAILY RADAR HIT

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Facing evil reborn, two spellbinding fantasy adventures await Darius and Sharline as well as fascinating characters and unforgiving monsters.

'Evergrace is both a solid and completely enjoyable role-playing game experience'
- IGN.COM

ETERNAL RING

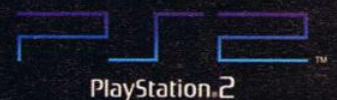
Cain, a young magician, is sent by his King to investigate mysterious happenings on the 'Island of No Return'. Legend has it that magical powers lie dormant at the heart of the island, protected by enormous dragons. Armed with only his sword and natural talent as a sorcerer, Cain attempts to be the first person to return from the island alive.

As Cain, you must venture forth through challenging scenarios whilst defeating any foe that stands in the way of you and your search for the ultimate Magic Ring.

'Eternal Ring for the PS2 will satisfy your hunger for a bigger, better, first person RPG'
- GAMEPRO.COM 4.5/5.0

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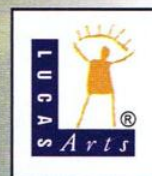
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HALO ON XBOX



Bungie's team-based shooter, Halo, is coming to the Xbox as an exclusive launch title in the USA later this year. Is this the game that will get the Xbox selling like hotcakes?

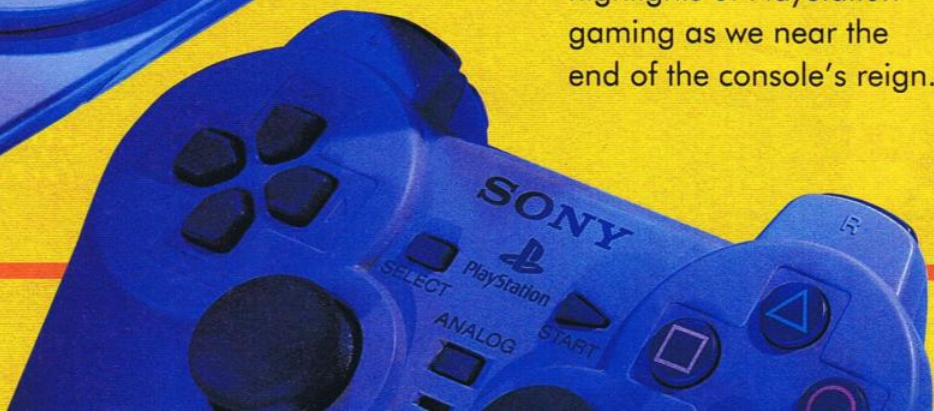


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R.I.P. PLAYSTATION

The best of 1995-2001

Take a trip through the highlights of PlayStation gaming as we near the end of the console's reign.





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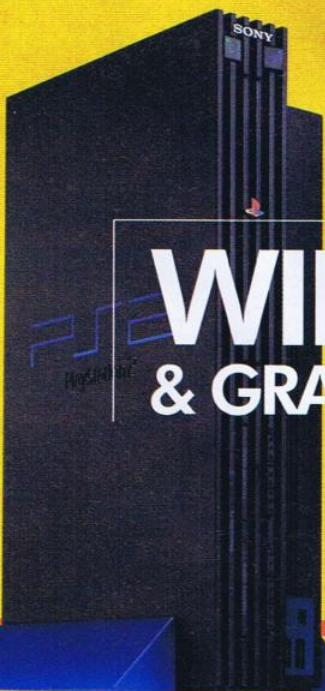
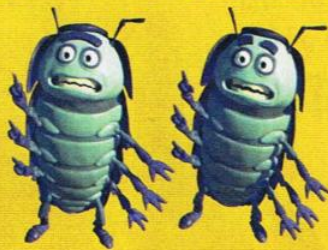
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Star Wars: Battle For Naboo



THE TECH GUIDE TO DVD ON PS2

If you've succumbed to the attraction of home theatre entertainment on your new PS2, then you're going to need this essential guide to squeezing the best quality out of your DVDs.



WIN A PS2 & GRAN TURISMO 3!

We have an amazing prize this issue – the long awaited GT3 with a PS2 to play it on. Turn to page 88 now!

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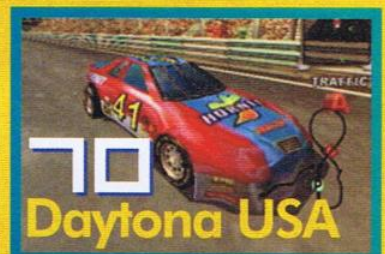
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HYPER >>



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WRITE TO HYPER!

78 Renwick St,
Redfern NSW 2016
Australia
Ph: (02) 9699 0333
Fax: (02) 9310 1315
E-mail: freakscene@next.com.au

EDITORIAL

Editor: **Eliot Fish**
Deputy Editor: **Cam Shea**
Art Director: **Malcolm Campbell**
Publisher: **Jim Flynn**

ADVERTISING

Group Advertising Manager: **Simon White**
E-mail: simon@next.com.au
Ph: (02) 9699 0346
Production Co-ordinator: **Dylan Fryer**
E-mail: dylan@next.com.au
Ph: (02) 9699 0300
Fax: (02) 9310 2012

SUBSCRIPTIONS

For all enquiries phone: 1300 36 11 46
E-mail: subs@next.com.au
Fax: (02) 9699 0334

MANAGEMENT

Chief Executive: **Phillip Keir**
Finance Director: **Theo Fatseas**
Operations Manager: **Melissa Doyle**
Circulation Executive: **Karen Day**
General Manager Online: **Michael Darragh**

CONTRIBUTORS

Kevin Cheung, Dan Toose, Adam Duncan,
Tim Levy, Gareth Jones, James Cottee, Jackson
Gothe-Snape, Martin English, Frank Dry,
Victoria Flanagan, Big Heavy Stuff, the Two
Sisters and the Size of the Ocean.

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HYPE IT UP

EDITORIAL >> Welcome to our new look for 2001 and beyond. Ignite the fireworks! Strike up the band! Fire midgets from cannons! Go crazy kids!

We've got some great stuff coming up for you in the next few issues, from our exploration of Sony's European studio next issue to Microsoft's unveiling of their first party Xbox games in Seattle in a few issues time. Yes, I'm afraid I'll have to fly to Seattle and get hands on with the Xbox itself, so that Hyper readers everywhere can get an inside look at how it plays. I'll also pop in on Bungie, the guys and gals behind Halo (previewed this issue on page 24) and get them to run me through the game, then bring back the goodies for you guys. Tough job, but, y'know someone has to do it. Sob.

Not only that, but Hyper will be there when the Game Boy Advance is launched in Japan at the end of March and you can trust that we'll play the thing to death and give you a verdict before it launches here in Australia in June. Never before has a simple handheld had us so excited. There's so much to look forward to this year, it kind of makes you feel giddy with geeky gaming goodness.

Now sit back, relax, and absorb all the awesome new stuff we have for you this issue...
Best. Issue. Ever.

Eliot Fish >>
Editor



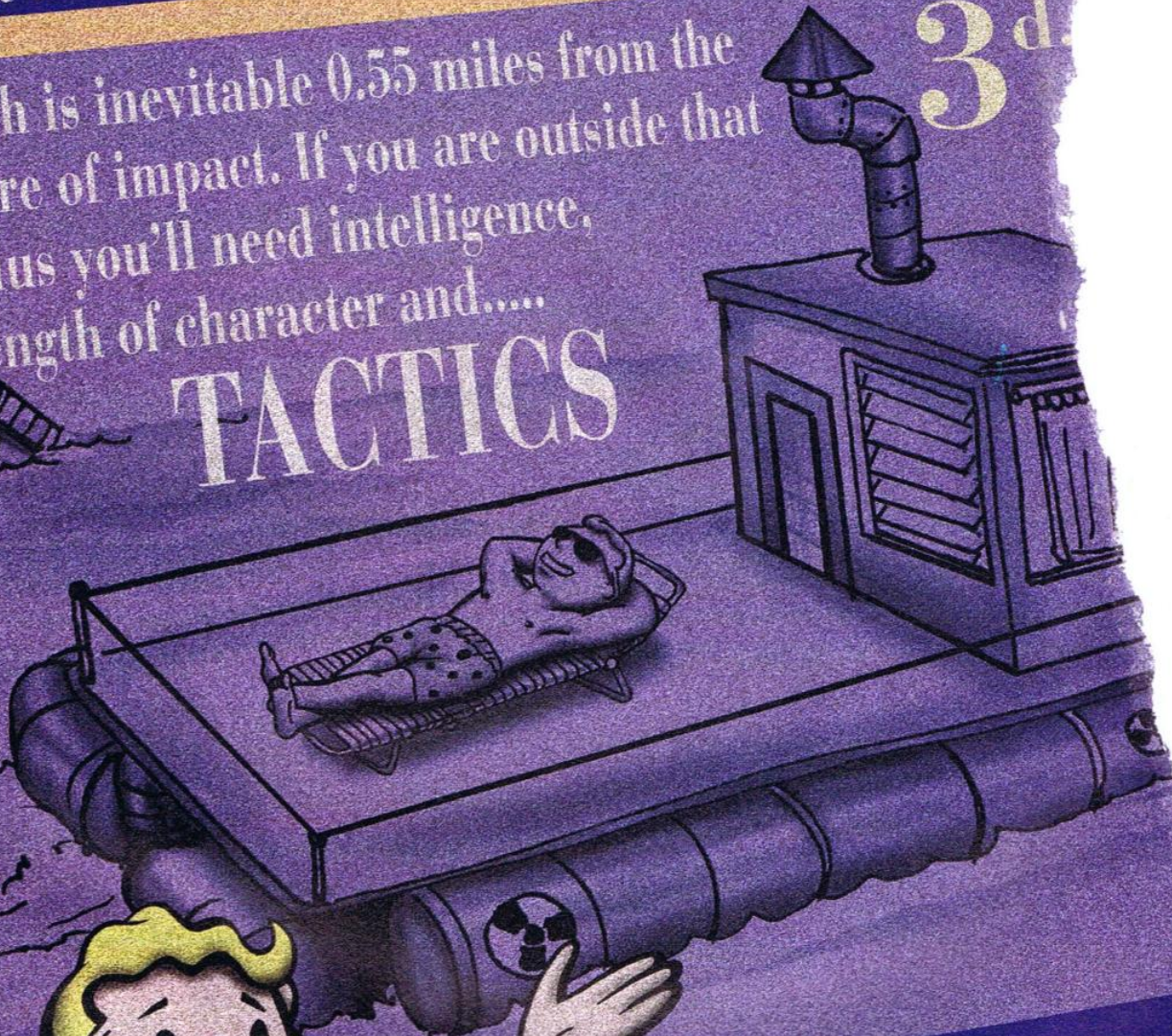
NUCLEAR WEEKLY

YOUR PREPARATION GUIDE FOR NUCLEAR WAR

Death is inevitable 0.55 miles from the centre of impact. If you are outside that radius you'll need intelligence, strength of character and.....

TACTICS

3^d



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NEWS



SEGA come clean: DC out, software in

Production of Dreamcast console in its current form to be phased out

Dep, it's been a wild ride, but it's over. Sega will be discontinuing production of Dreamcast consoles at the end of March this year. While they will be continuing to support the system into the foreseeable future, they'll also be developing games for pretty much every other platform.

Insiders have been predicting the shift to a software only model for some time now, and finally they've been proven right. Buck up Sega freaks,

because it's not all bad. In fact, for Sega it's a very smart move. For starters, Sega haven't been profitable for many years now. This is mostly due to the cost of supporting a hardware platform. As Peter Moore, CEO of Sega America, commented in a teleconference after the announcement, hardware is sold at a big loss, with money (hopefully) recuperated through software sales. With such massive development budgets these days, a

company needs a lot of money to be successful, and Sega simply doesn't have that kind of money. The bottomline with this decision is that shedding the hardware side of things will allow Sega to get focused and back on track quickly, which means a longer life for Sega and more games for us. The other factor to consider is that the industry is unlikely to be able to support four major hardware platforms (DC, PS2, Xbox and

Gamecube). Despite the Dreamcast's success in America, coming into 2001, Sega were definitely the underdog and probably would have had to bow out sooner rather than later.

GOING OUT WITH A BANG

All is not lost however, as Sega will continue to support the Dreamcast for another 12-18 months. To keep the hardcore Sega otaku happy, Sega are planning on releasing around 30

Sega set the pace

Set-top box already in the works

Sega aren't giving up the hardware game altogether of course. Indeed, they're looking into a myriad of ways that the DC architecture can be reborn, the most significant of which being within set top boxes. Sega have been refining the Dreamcast hardware design to fit it all onto one chip, making the technology much more cost effective and attractive for other parties to license. To that end, Sega have already announced a deal with Pace Micro Technology (PMT) to license the DC hardware.

box) to incorporate powerful video game capabilities". The device will feature a 40gig hard drive, and the possibilities are quite extensive. The device will feature digital video recorder capabilities, allowing the user to pause a live broadcast and resume watching later, or to record multiple channels simultaneously. More relevant to Sega, however, games can be downloaded directly to the device through a broadband connection. The range of games on offer could potentially be massive – including the entire Dreamcast catalogue as well as classic Sega titles and even arcade games, on either a "pay per play" basis or a rental scheme.



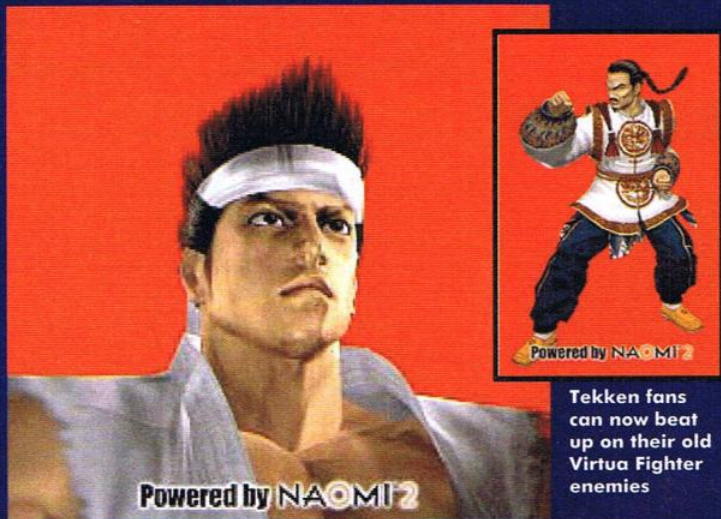
Finally, PMT actually means something fun

The partnership with Pace Micro Technology is to develop "the world's first digital TV home gateway (set-top

The Dreamcast's Dignified Demise

Here are some of the games that you can expect to hit Dreamcast before it's all over:

- Jet Set Radio 2
- Shenmue 2
- Crazy Taxi 2
- House Of the Dead 3
- Toe Jam and Earl 3
- Confidential Mission
- Ooga Booga
- Outtrigger
- Beach Spikers
- World Series Baseball 2K2
- Bomberman Online
- NBA 2K2
- NFL 2K2
- Virtua Tennis 2K2
- NHL 2K2
- Sonic Adventure 2
- K Project
- Propeller Head Online Fighting
- Sega Bass Fishing 2
- Daytona 3
- Space Channel 5 2
- Far Nation



Tekken fans can now beat up on their old Virtua Fighter enemies

VF4 = PS2 and more weirdness

In the space of a single Virtua Fighter sequel, the gaming landscape has changed beyond recognition for Sega. Believe it or not, but Virtua Fighter 4 is to be a PlayStation 2 exclusive. Not only that, but the game is being built from the ground up for PS2, and Sega have had development kits for several months now, so the game is well underway. Let's take a moment to stop and think about this... Tekken and Virtua Fighter

PS2 later this year, and in a deal with Acclaim, Crazy Taxi, 18 Wheeler and Zombie Revenge are also on their way. Head swelling... brain exploding...

Adding more chaos to the swirling Sega maelstrom, and answering our prayers from last issue's Overflow, a Sonic The Hedgehog game has also been confirmed for Game Boy Advance, not to mention Chu Chu Rocket and Puyo Puyo. In fact, Sega plan to have Chu Chu Rocket ready for launch in Japan, and the new Sonic title should be ready for the GBA's Western launch.

Sega are currently in negotiations to bring software to both the Gamecube and Xbox platforms, and have even announced that they'll be making games for the Palm Pilot series of PDAs. This is indeed a disturbing Universe.



on the same platform?! CAN THE WORLD POSSIBLY GET MORE TOPSY TURVY THAN THIS? Umm... yes, actually. Space Channel 5 will be making its way to

games in the West this year, and there are some absolute killer titles and big surprises in there that will ensure that the system goes out with a bang.

How does Jet Set Radio 2 sound? Thought so – bring it on baby! How about Shenmue 2? Yep, it's still making its way to Dreamcast. We'll even be playing Crazy Taxi 2 before the console carks it. And don't think of throwing that light gun away just yet, because House Of The Dead 3 will be here for your head popping pleasure later this year. Amazingly, we'll even see a new Toe Jam and Earl game before the DC is dearly departed. There'll be another instalment to pretty much every sports title Sega currently make, which is good to see, and of course we can't forget sequels to Sonic Adventure and Space Channel 5! Seems the Dreamcast has a little life left in it yet, eh what?



Online play out the window?

Let's forget for a moment that Australian Dreamcast owners have been shafted as far as network gaming goes, and talk about the future of the online networks that Sega have set up. Network services are actually going to be the other major wing of Sega's post hardware operations. SegaNet will now support multiple platforms – and we're not just talking about game consoles either - Sega are looking to get their technology into a variety of internet devices as well. There's no concrete information about specific networked Sega titles on other platforms yet, but we do know that negotiations with Sony regarding online gaming networks is well underway, so these announcements can't be far off.

CAPTION THIS!

Get your witty thinking caps on and get scribbling away on a funny caption for this month's screenshot. Send your captions to breakscene@next.com.au with Caption This 17 in the subject line... or whack it on the back of an envelope and post it to Caption This 17, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.



INSERT READER HILARITY HERE

Big up to the GBA Massive

For real. For real.

The Game Boy Advance launch hype is picking up steam at an astonishing rate. Developers and games are springing up out of nowhere on an almost daily basis, and from all angles it's looking like the GBA could be the success story of 2001. In Japan alone, the system has almost 3 million pre-orders as of our deadline.

We've also been able to confirm that not only will both Mario Kart Advance and F-Zero Advance utilise the four player connection, but that you'll only need ONE cart between all four players! Go Nintendo.

If you weren't sure exactly what Game Boy Advance games will look like, then check out these shots of Magical Vacation, Mario Kart Advance and F-Zero Advance. Looks great doesn't it? The team behind Magical Vacation come from the Legend Of Mana series, so we're practically guaranteed that it will rock hard. And did we mention that the latest rumour has it that an all-new Metroid game is being developed for the system? Woo hoo! GBA launches here on June 1st.



OVERFLOW

The news we've all been waiting for – PaRappa The Rapper is coming to PS2!! The third game in the series was announced at a conference in Tokyo held to promote the upcoming PaRappa anime (hell yeah!). It's looking like the game will star PaRappa, but it could well be based around Lammy or an all-new character. Just the thought of another Masaya Matsuura game and the return of the hip hop hero has us singing "M-I-X the flour into the bowl" all around the office. The game will be out later this year in Japan.

Legendary pen and paper game development house, FASA Corporation, are closing shop after 20 years in the business. Best known for creating the Battletech, Mechwarrior and Shadowrun properties, it's a shame to see them go. A damn shame in fact. However, Jordan Weisman's (one of the founders of FASA who is now an in-house producer for Microsoft) Wizkids is buying the Battletech and Shadowrun properties, so they'll be in good hands... hint hint another Shadowrun game please!

So you've heard about Everquest players auctioning their characters and items on eBay? Well things are getting even weirder. Recently Sony and Verant have been attempting to put a stop to such sales, as they claim that it is a breach of the EULA (end user license agreement) which gives them the rights to all intellectual property in the game. Verant have received consistent complaints from players who object to such sales, saying that it gives people an unfair advantage. A backlash has sprung up, however, from players who feel that it's their right to sell the product of their many hours spent within the game. A class action lawsuit may be brewing. Freaky eh?

You've read our review of Armored Core 2 (page 66), but how about playing it online? Well, From Software are planning to release a broadband network compatible version of the game entitled Armored Core 2: Another Age this year in Japan. If and when it comes to the West hasn't been announced.

If you heard the word "McMagination" what would you think? McDonald's Family Restaurants evidently thought "it's a winner"! This will be the name of their new interactive gaming kiosks. In a partnership with Compaq, the kiosks will be shaped like Ronald McDonald and other Maccas characters, and house a choice of twelve games. Although the whole plan reeks a little of Chuck E Cheese, personally we can't wait to get down to McDonalds to fondle Ronald's joystick and press his buttons.

Nintendo made almost a billion dollars last year. Nintendo's nearest competitor in the industry was EA who made only half that amount. Sega and Sony barely registered on the radar. Game Boy Color accounted for 23% of all industry revenues, and 47% of all hardware sales. There are now 110 million Game Boys out there... scary.



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WINNERS HYPER» 88

Alice

S. Hawkins, QLD
A. Kauschke, SA
E. Vale, NSW

Dynasty Warriors 2

Major prize winner:

A. Lyons, WA
Runners up:
T. Donnelly, NSW
B. Randell, SA
J. Sandell, NSW
A. Ruhland, QLD
P. Wighton, NSW



Final Fantasy – The Saga Continues

Finally it's out, 6 months after our NTSC review...

» After several delays coming to our beloved territory, Final Fantasy IX has finally arrived. Hooray – nips of Sherry all round Mrs Miggins! As you may remember from our review back in Hyper 84, we gave it a brain-burstingly high 95%. Despite the delays, the good news is that in the interrum we've had time to play it through several times and we still think it thoroughly deserves such a high score.

For those of you who didn't catch the review first time around (shame on you by the way!), here's a recap of why Final Fantasy IX rocks the (proverbial) house, and why you should leave your (literal) house and run down to the games store to pick this sucker up...



million dollar Square production.

The battle system has changed somewhat. The draw system has been ditched and replaced by a more logical system of recharging your HP and MP with elixirs and potions. While each character class has certain innate abilities, all others must be learned through the Job system, where gemstones are equipped for unique abilities. The character then gains experience in this ability until it maxes out, and the gem can be given to someone else. The upshot of this system is that everyone in your party will have their own abilities, making battles more interesting and strategic. That said, the battle system does seem a little old school when compared to Vagrant Story's combination of real time and turn based.

NOTHING IS EVER FINAL...

As our resident RPG freak-boy Kevin Cheung said in his original review: "With such an accessible and enticing story structured around the long-established FF brand of gameplay, it's obvious that Square didn't set out to break new ground. Rather, it just wants to tell you a good story. To that end, Square gets both thumbs up. Final Fantasy IX will be remembered as one of the PlayStation's finest hours."

OVERALL: 95%

FINAL FANTASY IX – THE RECAP!

Final Fantasy IX sees a return to the more quaint pre-technology fantasy settings of the first six games, where swords, sorcery, dragons and princesses were the order of the day. The characters are once again super deformed, the world is comprised of castles, airships and forests (not post-apocalyptic civilisations), and populated by magicians, knights and yokels.

We won't recap the story, as it should be experienced first hand, but we will say that once again Square have managed to create a charming world, a great range of characters and an epic tale. FMVs are more seamlessly incorporated in with the gameplay, the graphics are rock solid, the music brilliant and the atmosphere perfect. Indeed, every location is packed with the life, colour and detail you'd expect from a multi-



FINAL FANTASY X

» Information on the much anticipated FFX is gradually filtering through from Square, and we'll bring you a big preview soon, but just to whet your appetite, check out this character render!



INSIDE THE SQUARE

» As if attempting to prove that the "final" in Final Fantasy is the ultimate practical joke, Square have recently announced that they have nine million Final Fantasy games in development. In truth, there are only three new titles on the way – FFX, FFXI and FFXII, but in a move that's sure to excite even the most hardened of gamers, every other Final Fantasy game will be making a comeback in one form or another. Square are "remaking" FFVII, FFXIII and FFXIV for PlayStation 2, and are planning on porting FF IV, V and VI to Game Boy Advance! And yep, FF, FFII and FFIII are heading to Wonderswan Colour.

This dream lineup has hit a stumbling block, however. Just when we thought that Nintendo had changed, it seems as if Hiroshi Yamauchi is determined to let past bad blood get in the way of business (and videogaming bliss). After Square announced their intentions of bringing classic Final Fantasy games to the Game Boy Advance, Yamauchi came out and said that Nintendo have no contract with Square, and that it's unlikely that they ever will. Noooo! Kiss and make up guys!



Zidane in the membrane

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IMPACT

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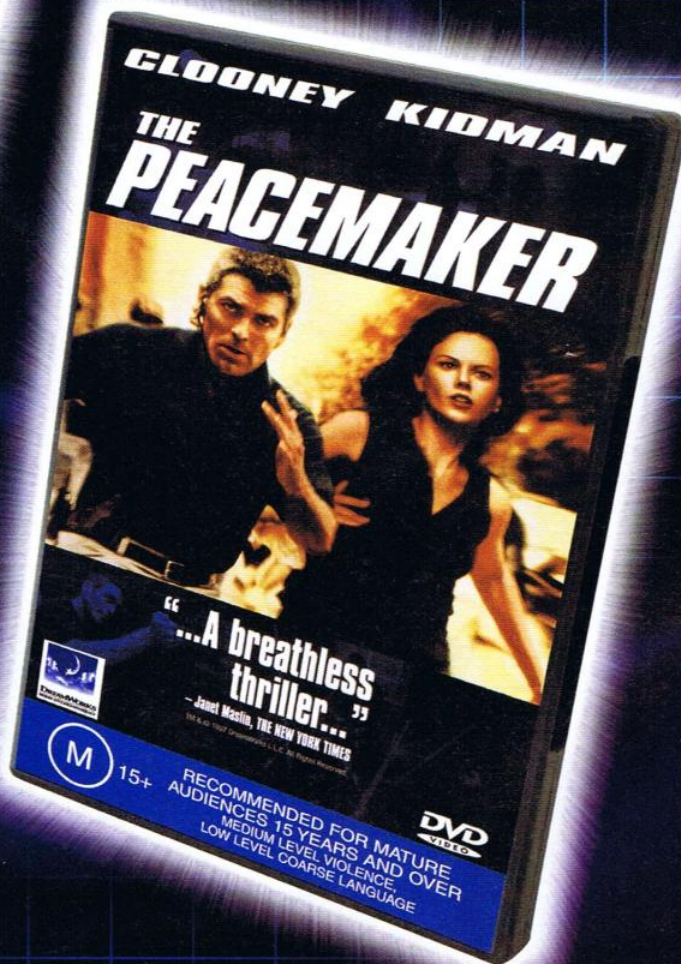
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HOPE SURVIVES.

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MEDIUM LEVEL VIOLENCE

Planned
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January 24th

Planned
release
January 24th



essential
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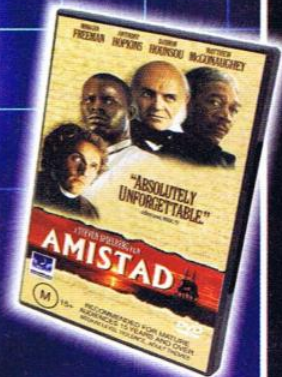
Planned
release
February 7th



Planned
release
January 24th



Planned
release
January 24th



Planned
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January 24th



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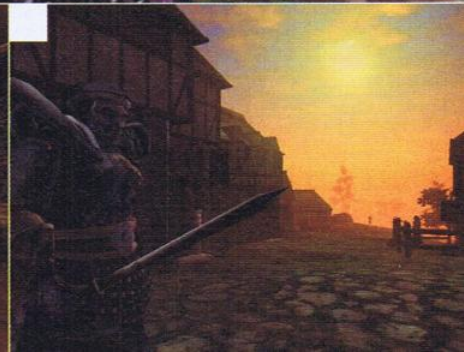
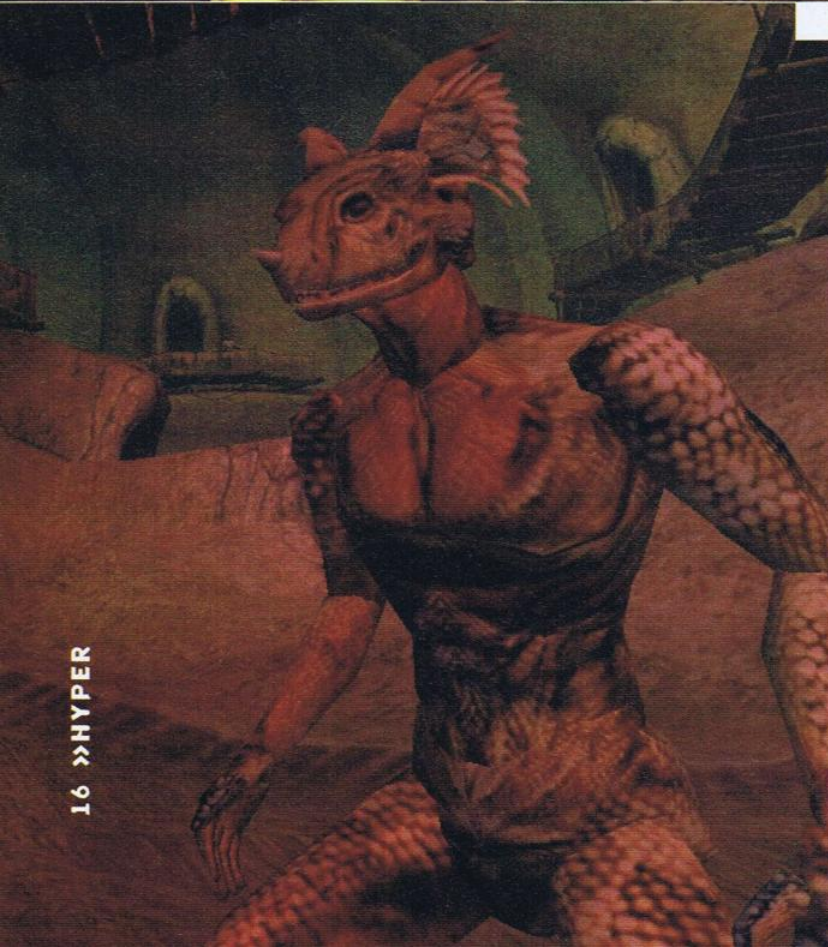
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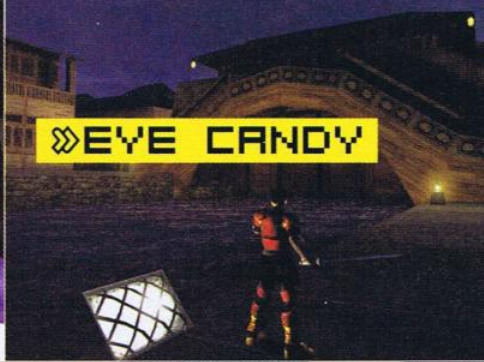
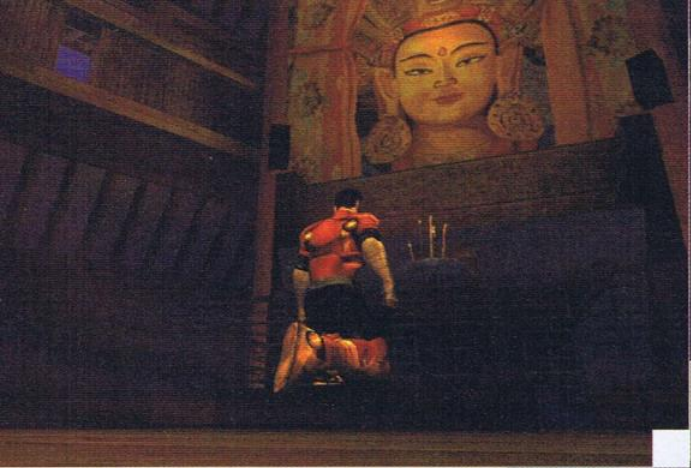


THE ELDER SCROLLS III: MORROWIND

» PC BETHESDA SOFTWARE

FAccording to Bethesda, Morrowind will be the game that their previous RPG epic, Daggerfall, should have been. That will come as a surprise to those of us who played Daggerfall and thought it was sensational... it was a huge, sprawling, fully 3D land to roam around and role-play in. If they think Morrowind will be even more immersive, then they've won our hearts already. In amongst all the MMORPGs, Morrowind will stand out as being a wholly single-player experience with just as much life and spectacle. Due late 2001.





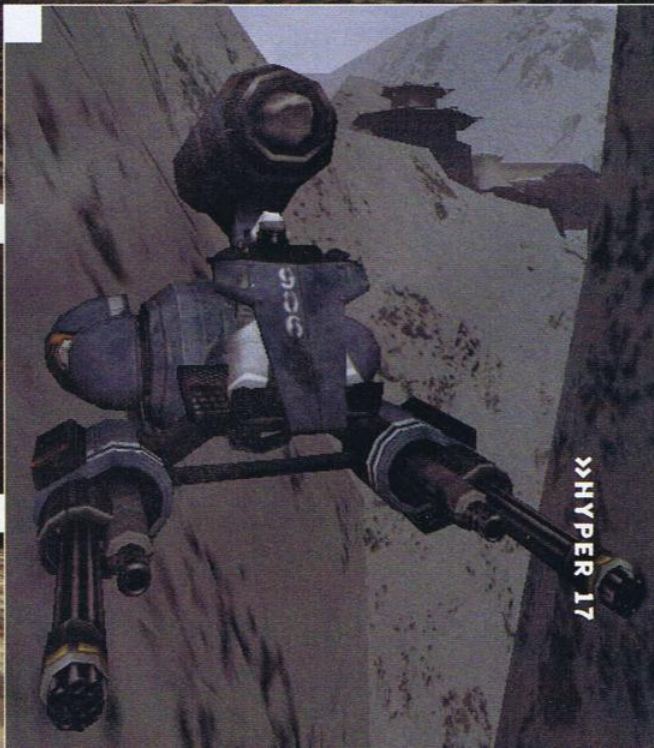
» EYE CANDY



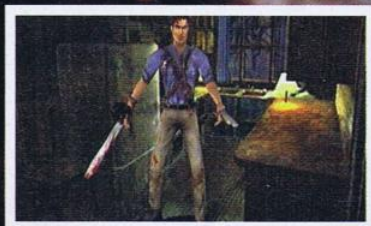
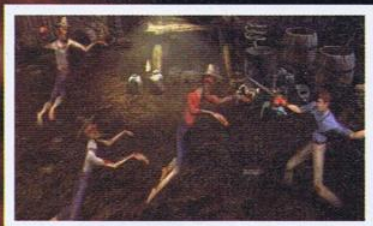
NEW LEGENDS

» XBOX THQ

Iustin Chin, the game designer behind Jedi Knight on the PC, left Lucasarts many moons ago and started up his own company, Infinite Machine. The first game from that company will be New Legends. Originally being developed for PC and now Xbox exclusive, New Legends is a third-person action game (mainly due to the amount of melee weapon combat involved) that is set in an alternate futuristic China. Your character is restricted to carrying four out of 18 weapons, so you'll have to specialise in your choice of destructive tool. Look out for an ultra-cool mixture of high-tech and low-tech gadgetry in the game, as well as some fantastic character design. New Legends is very much wanted here at Hyper HQ...



» HYPER 17



HAIL TO THE

Evil Dead's **BRUCE CAMPBELL** talks to HYPER!



Bruce is a true freak and we love him



EVIL KING

"Groovy!" – Evil Dead II



Come get some!" No, it wasn't Duke Nukem who immortalised those words; it was Ash, the character played by Bruce Campbell in the *Evil Dead* movies. Way back in 1982, *Evil Dead* – written and directed by Sam Raimi – made such an impact that even horror writer Stephen King declared it "the most ferociously original horror movie I have ever seen". Naturally, it's been a cult hit ever since, along with a bunch of sequels, the most recent being *Army Of Darkness* in 1993.

Now, here we are in 2001, and games publisher THQ is unleashing the *Evil Dead: Hail To The King* game on PlayStation, Dreamcast and PC. Hyper was lucky enough to catch a few minutes with Ash himself, Bruce Campbell, for a quick chat about his input in the game.

HYPER: So, first up... is Bruce Campbell a gamer? What experience have you had with consoles, games etc? Got any favourite games?
BRUCE CAMPBELL (BC): Sorry, I'm not a gamer. My son Andy can kick some major butt though. He's my "tester." My favourite games are the ones I did the voice for because those are the only games I know! =>
(Bruce has provided voices in Pitfall 3D and Tachyon: The Fringe. – Ed.)
HYPER: What convinced you to get involved in the games industry?

BC: I didn't want to be left out of the technology curve, mainly. It's a fun and different form of entertainment and for a voice actor like myself, it's a very clean and neat affair.

HYPER: Do you think games can offer an immersive experience equal to film?

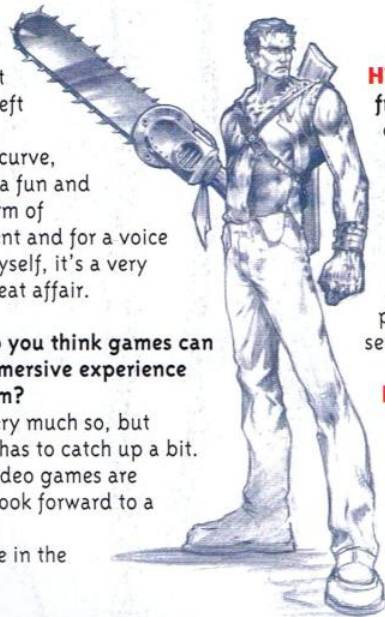
BC: Yes, very much so, but technology has to catch up a bit. Films and video games are merging. I look forward to a harmonious convergence in the near future.

HYPER: The *Evil Dead* films are super violent, does it worry you that kids are now going to be doing those things in a game?

BC: I only worry when kids don't know the difference between reality and fantasy. I have taken great pains to show my kids how fake entertainment is.

HYPER: Which is your favourite *Evil Dead* film? Your favourite on-screen moment?

BC: I like the "plate breaking scene" in *Evil Dead II*. I think that film hits a good level of "splatstick" – half horror, half comedy.



HYPER: Was there anything from the films they left out of the game that you think is missed?

BC: Nope. I think the new *Evil Dead* game caught a great tone and feel of the overall series. It should definitely help take the pains of no more film sequels away.

HYPER: How much dialogue did you record for the games? How long did it take?

BC: I recorded about an inch and a half of dialogue (as in paper thickness) – that took about 2 main sessions and several follow up ones. You

always have to go back in later to make changes to address stuff that's changed in the game as they make it.

HYPER: Out of all the dialogue, What's your favourite one-liner from the game?

BC: I don't have one – there are simply too many. Folks will have fun spouting all the zingers.

HYPER: What do you think of the "virtual" Ash? How weird is it being in a videogame? Do you... ahem... enjoy playing with yourself?

BC: I think it's all part of the big make-believe thing. It's a detached

kind of thing. I'm getting very used to seeing alternate versions of myself, whether it's in heavy make-up, as an action figure or as a digital man. Overall, it's simply amusing.

! Evil Dead was made by filmmaker **Sam Raimi** who is currently working on the upcoming **Spiderman** feature film starring **Toby MacGuire**, **Willem Dafoe** and yep, **Bruce Campbell**.

HYPER: So you've got a book coming out – "Confessions of a B Movie Actor". What's that all about?

BC: It's about working class Hollywood – the forgotten middle class. It's told from my perspective inside the film business. It's due in the Spring from St. Martin's press. Stay tuned here for details about release dates and book tour info: www.bruce-campbell.com

HYPER: So which console is going to win the Console War? PS2? Xbox? Gamecube? Or doesn't Bruce Campbell really care?

BC: It's not that I don't care. I want them all to succeed. I also don't know that much about the different systems, so I tend to leave that side of things to the marketing gurus.

HYPER: Why the Hell should we buy the *Evil Dead* videogame?

BC: Because it's so true to the flicks and folks most likely won't get another chance to see the *Evil Dead* sensibility anywhere else. Play like the wind!

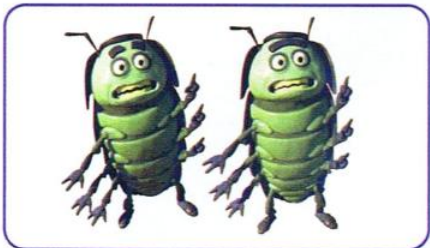
ONE LINERS FROM HELL! Are you wondering what other brilliant one-liners were made legendary by the *Evil Dead*'s Ash?

"Come to papa!" • "Hail to the king, baby." • "Come get some."

– Army Of Darkness

– Army Of Darkness

– Army Of Darkness



The Tech Guide to DVD on PlayStation2

Warped picture? Fuzzy sound? **Kevin Cheung** explains how to transform your PS2 from a humble console to a home cinema experience.

Q: Do video signals come out through the Digital Optical output?

A: No. Audio only.

So you're one of those lucky sods with a PlayStation 2. As an early adopter, you're probably beaming with pride knowing that you're staying ahead of the curve for the latest in gaming technology. But however knowledgeable you may be as a connoisseur in all things interactive, deep down inside you're more excited about finally being able to watch DVDs at home, except with the slight problem that you understand next to nothing about them. Sit back as

Hyper walks you through the basics of how to understand 'PlayStation 2, the DVD Player'.

GETTING THE BEST PICTURE

The PlayStation 2 comes packed with a standard composite a/v cable. For improved picture quality, this is not the cable you want to be using. An s-video a/v cable can be purchased for the PlayStation 2, which improves colour definition. The level of improvement will differ between televisions depending on the quality of the television itself.

For optimum DVD performance the PlayStation 2 should be hooked up with a component video cable that separates the signal into red, green and black. Component video is the native picture format of DVD, so it stands to reason that such a set-up will provide movie watchers with a picture quality that's as close as possible to what the filmmakers intended.

Unfortunately as of this writing there aren't any component video cables available for the PlayStation 2, but there's still a fairly even chance

of seeing them in the near future. Part of the reason for this is the custom a/v jack that's required for the PlayStation 2, so you can't exactly waltz into your local hi-fi dealer and buy yourself a universally compatible one.

Currently, the only component video cable available for the PlayStation 2 is available through Sony itself. Monster Cable, whose high-end, high-performance home theatre cables are synonymous with high-price, has a range of cables being made available through its new Monster Game label; and they should be releasing their component video cables soon. Unlike the bog-standard copper wire with rubber shielding, these toys bring 24k gold plugs and nitrogen-injected dielectric insulators to the table, which crystallises the picture quality for any TV that's 68cm and above.

Before you do anything, though, check that your television and/or amplifier supports the input. You don't want to come home after spending your hard-earned bucks on a shiny set of new cables only to find that it doesn't plug into anything.

Q: The DVD image on my TV looks stretched, and other times it doesn't. Is my TV screwed or is it my PlayStation 2 that's the problem?

A: Neither. The reason for the stretching is most likely because the movie is being presented in widescreen format, just like at the movies, but is being stretched to fill your square-shaped TV. The way to fix it is to stop the movie, bring up the menu by pressing select, then highlight and select the briefcase icon called 'Setup'. Go to 'Screen Setup', and change your 'TV Type' to '4:3 Pan Scan'. When you go back to the movie, you'll see black bars running along the top and bottom of your screen to emulate the 16:9 aspect ratio used for widescreen.



multi-coloured outputs. brain hurts!

Gimme Surround Sound!

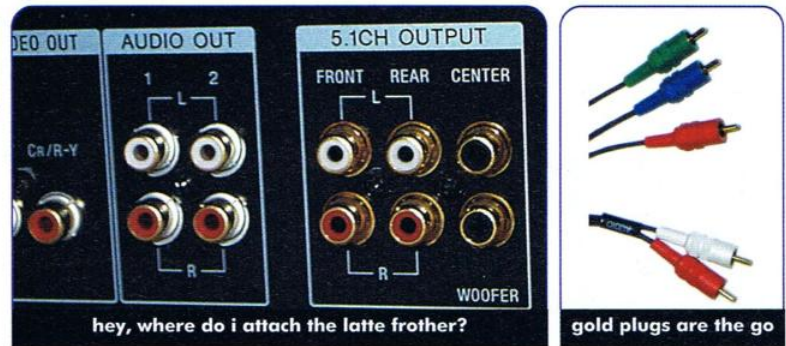
Ey now you should've noticed a jack labelled "Digital Out (Optical)" at the back of your PS2. This is where you get Dolby Digital and DTS 5.1 channel surround sound. DTS is the native surround sound format used in most feature films, separating sound into left, right, centre, surround left, and surround right. A subwoofer makes up the final ".1" channel. Dolby Digital is a comparable derivative of DTS, using higher rates of compression, but at not too great a cost to performance as to make a huge difference. While DTS is technically superior, it is a format rarely used in Australia's Region 4 DVDs – the most

recent being *Gladiator*. Most DVDs use Dolby Digital to get the job done.

DIGITAL JACKING

The PS2 doesn't have a built-in decoder as some DVD players do, so to take advantage of your Dolby Digital or DTS-encoded DVDs, you're going to need an amplifier that has a digital optical input and a Dolby Digital and DTS decoder. Basic integrated amplifiers cost from around \$600 and up. \$1000 and beyond is where you're becoming part of a more serious home theatre market.

All you need to do is connect a digital optical cable between your PS2 and your amplifier, and you're ready



to roll. Just go into the PS2's default configuration menu and switch the optical output on.

Remember that just because you have a digital connection doesn't mean everything coming from your PS2 is in surround sound. The cable simply carries the sound signal in digital form instead of standard analogue – the fibre optic connection

minimising analogue distortion. Pretty much every game you play is encoded in stereo, with rare exceptions like *The Bouncer*, which has some FMVs encoded in Dolby Digital. Dolby Digital and DTS will only kick in with DVDs if the box indicates that sound format is supported (many pre-1990 films are in stereo or mono).

Q: If I've connected my PS2 to an amplifier via a digital optical cable, do I still need to connect the audio leads on the a/v cable?

A: Nope. As long as you've got the Digital Out switched on in the system configuration, all sound will go through the optical cable.

Q: I'm not getting any sound through my optical connection. What gives?

A: First, check that you have the Digital Out switched on in the System Configuration. If you're still not getting anything, next, check that your amplifier supports the sound format on the DVD (Dolby Digital, DTS, etc). If that's all fine and you're still not getting anything, go to the DVD 'Setup' menu, then go to 'Audio Setup' and make sure Dolby Digital, DTS and MPEG are all switched on.

Q: Are the gold plated cables really necessary?

A: Bottom line, expensive little features like this do make a difference to the sound and video quality. Of course, the size of this difference depends on the TV and amp you're using, and even then it's never ever a gigantic one. It's a question of whether you're willing to pay a premium for that improvement.

Ten DVDs You Must Own:

1. ELADERUNNER

Distributor: Warner Bros.



2. FIGHT CLUB

Distributor: 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment

3. THE MATRIX

Distributor: Roadshow



4. JAWS

Distributor: Columbia TriStar

5. A BUGS LIFE

Distributor: Warner Bros.



6. BRAVEHEART

Distributor: 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment

7. FIFTH ELEMENT

Distributor: Columbia TriStar

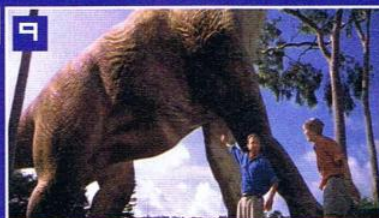


8. GLADIATOR

Distributor: Columbia TriStar

9. JURASSIC PARK

Distributor: Columbia TriStar



10. ALIENS

Distributor: 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment

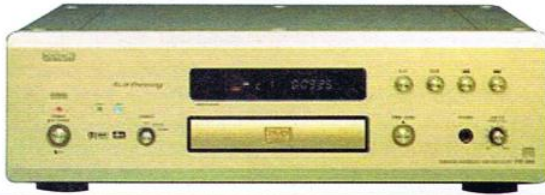
How Does the PlayStation2 Compare?



Marantz DV-18



Pioneer DV-717



Denon DVD-5000

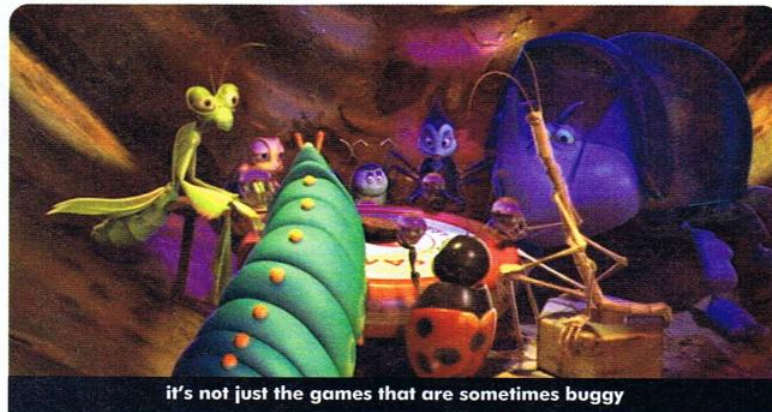


Sony DVP-S735

With PS2 in hand, you're not just part of the broader DVD community, but the elite technophile culture of home theatre entertainment. Now before you start singing and dancing, it's all about examining exactly what kind of company you've fallen in with. Hyper compared the PS2 as a DVD player against four other popular, high-performance models – the Denon DVD-5000, Sony's DVP-S735, Pioneer's DV-717, and the Marantz DV-18. The movies we tested were chosen for their range and depth of colour – *Gladiator*, *The Matrix*, *The Fifth Element*, *Jurassic Park*, and *A Bug's Life*.

As a matter of design and construction, the PS2 rates quite poorly. The dimensions are certainly more compact than your average DVD player, but one look at the front and back makes it painfully obvious just how much is being missed out on. On the front face, all DVD players have a basic control panel for functions like chapter search, scanning, play, pause, and even menu functions. The PS2 doesn't have more than an eject and power button, meaning control of the player is solely reliant on the Dual Shock 2 pad. This has been the source of a lot of negative consumer feedback.

Alternatively, one could go to the added expense of purchasing a remote control created from Sony's stable or



it's not just the games that are sometimes buggy

any one of the numerous third parties trying to jump on the wagon. Whilst most PS2 remotes look a tad button-heavy, they fared a lot better than the other test machines for their quick response times, which shouldn't be taken for granted. The Marantz DV-18 remote takes an agonising 3-5 seconds for a response from the player.

The rear of the PS2 is where the console loses out. The test DVD players all have outputs for composite video, s-video, component video, digital optical and digital coaxial sound. Other players even have built-in Dolby Digital and DTS decoders. This provides owners with maximum flexibility to configure the player to their home theatre system.

The PS2, however, has only the one custom a/v output that must be specially

designed for. You can't just purchase any cable from a hi-fi store – you have to make a specific purchase from a specialist store (typically a videogame shop in this case). If you want to upgrade by moving up from, say, s-video to component video, you'll have to purchase another cable package. Audio is also a problem – there's only one digital optical output (no coax), which can potentially be restrictive.

Contrary to popular belief, whilst the test DVD players are much more expensive than your run-of-the-mill models, the extra cost doesn't go into extra buttons, features and so on. Rather, it's spent on better quality Digital-to-Analogue Converters (DACs) that bring colours to their rich, natural form, anchored by deep, opulent black definition. The better the DACs, the better the visual appearance. This is where the PS2 redeems itself somewhat. The picture quality is comparable to the Sony DVP-S735 and the Pioneer DV-717, with some minor discrepancies in the contrast and graininess in the black regions of the screen. The colours weren't as naturally toned as the Denon or Marantz, but they still did the job.

Q: Sometimes I get blocky pixels appearing on the screen during a movie, and they sometimes even cause the whole movie to freeze up. What can I do?

A: Get a refund on the disc and get a new one. These problems are usually caused by data corruption, which is the fault of dodgy DVD production – not a dodgy PS2.

Q: How come the audio falls out of synch sometimes? Is this something I can fix?

A: Only in the short term. Just stop the movie, then resume. The sound will go back to normal. The problem is with the player itself. Hopefully it'll be corrected for future versions of the PS2 DVD player, but it's present to varying degrees in all DVD players.

On the upside, things could improve for the PlayStation 2. Sony plans to release future upgrades to the DVD player software, which could improve the picture slightly and eliminate audio synching problems. ❖❖



a rarely spotted horizontal PS2 in the wild



2001 re-release

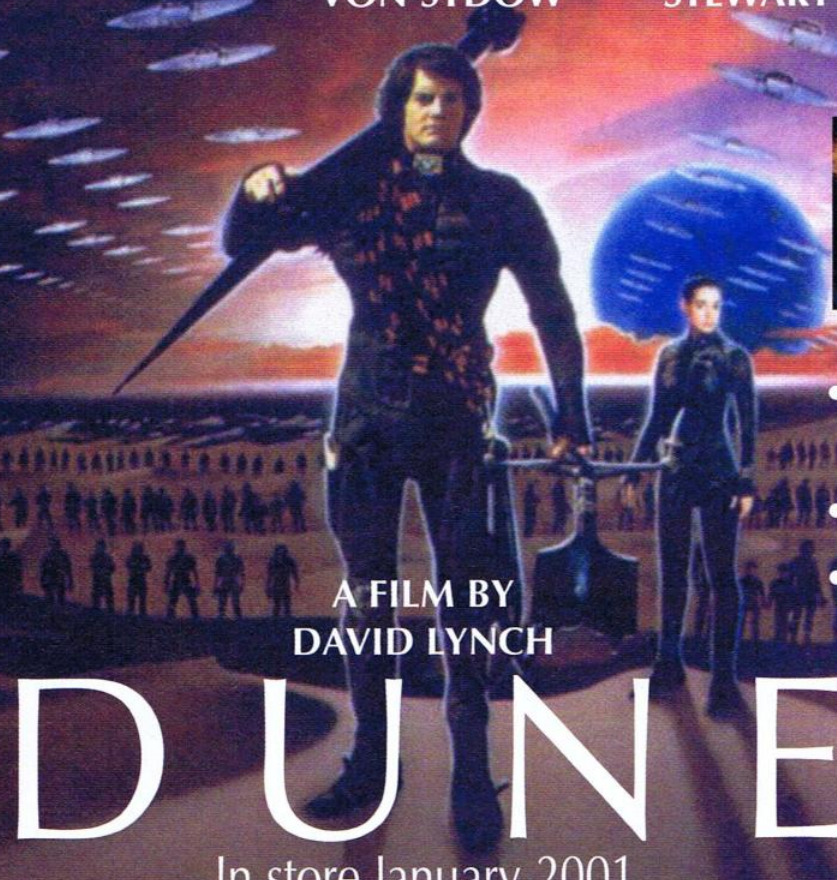
KYLE MacLACHLAN

STING

MAX VON SYDOW

PATRICK STEWART

LINDA HUNT



- Digitally Remastered
- Widescreen
- Original Trailer

A FILM BY DAVID LYNCH

DUNE

In store January 2001

Distributed by **OziSoft** Pty Limited



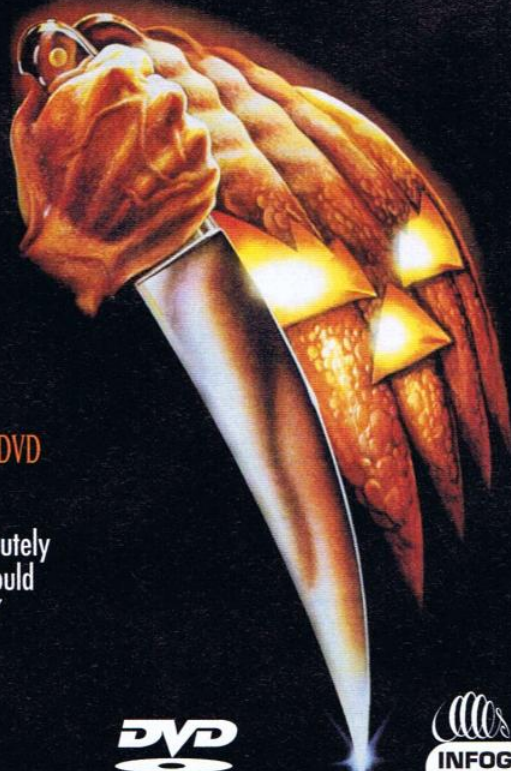
JOHN CARPENTER'S HALLOWEEN

JAMIE LEE CURTIS



Halloween Special Features:

- Widescreen
- Digitally Remastered
- Animated Menu
- Theatrical Trailer
- TV & Radio Spots
- 25 Minute "Making of" documentary
- Trivia
- Cast & Crew Biographies
- Photogallery



The most successful independent motion picture of all time.

HALLOWEEN

In store January 2001



First time ever on DVD



"Halloween is an absolutely merciless thriller...I would compare it to *Psycho*."

-Roger Ebert

Also available HALLOWEEN 2 & 3

Distributed by **OziSoft** Pty Limited





HALO

XBOX

CATEGORY: Team-based shooter >> **PLAYERS:** 1-Multi >>
PUBLISHER: Microsoft >> **AVAILABLE:** Late 2001 (US) Early 2002 (Aus)

WOW-O-METER



Everyone agrees that if there is one thing that the Xbox is lacking, it's a killer must-have game that every man, woman and monkey is going to want to play. It's clear that Microsoft need a game that has the irresistible pull of a Mario or Zelda, Wipeout or Gran Turismo. Of course, that was never going to be easy, considering that Microsoft have no game franchises that are as steeped in gaming history as their competitors' titles.

The news that Oddworld Inhabitants were shifting their allegiance to Microsoft's Xbox with the brilliant Munch's Oddysee, was certainly a move that put many minds at rest. But was it enough? Munch's Oddysee certainly looks wonderful, but it doesn't inspire the crazed fervour that seems to be reserved for games like Metal Gear Solid 2 or anticipated PC games such as, well, Halo actually. If there was one PC game at E3 in 2000 that had everyone shivering with as much excitement as they had for Metal Gear Solid 2, it was a new game from Bungie, the makers of Myth and Marathon. Bungie screened a 10-minute trailer for the game at the show, and it left most people stunned... and wanting more. Microsoft have cleverly hijacked not only a great game for their Xbox, but all the hype and anticipation that was surrounding the game also. Halo, and its hype, could be just what Microsoft need to ensure that the Xbox launches with a bang.

RING OF CONFIDENCE

Whilst the PC and Mac versions have not been abandoned, Halo will launch first as an Xbox title with the other versions following some 3-4 months later. If you've been dreaming sweet dreams of playing Halo before any other sucker in gaming land, then you'll have to accept that buying an Xbox will be the only way to fulfil that dream when the game is done. So, how can one game create so much hype? The story goes something like this...

Halo is set hundreds of years into the future, and the human race has ventured out and populated many

regions of the galaxy. Everything seems hunky dory until a strange collection of aliens appear at a particular human outpost and completely obliterate it. These aliens call themselves the Covenant, and they are comprised of a number of different types of aliens who all share the same fanatical religious beliefs. One of those beliefs seems to be that all humans must die. Aliens always want to wipe out the human race... what's up with that? Is it because of Adam Sandler getting picked up on remote alien frequencies? Do we smell? Whatever the reason, the Covenant won't stop until there isn't a single human left in existence. Thus, when a transport ship realises that the Covenant and their entire battle fleet is following them back to the planet Earth, they punch in a random destination in their navigation computer and attempt to lure the Aliens away from our home

WILL I NEED A BEAST OF A PC?

>> Halo is on the Xbox, silly! That's what so cool about consoles – the game will be optimised to play smoothly, and the experience will be the same for everybody. Okay, so there will be a PC and Mac version later, but the specs for those won't be known until Halo is near completion. Bungie said they were originally shooting for a PIII 450 with a 3D card, but we're further down the track now and the required spec could be up to around a PIII 600 with a high-end 3D card. We imagine you'll need the latest greatest equipment for this game to play how you WANT it to play. That's why getting the Xbox version could be so much more appealing.



Halo's incredible engine will allow for everything to take place at once – mid-air dogfights, ground skirmishes, jeep races...



come taste my hot burning stick of love... probably



tanks for nothing



tanks for the memories



tank you and good night



Aliens always want to wipe out the human race... what's up with that?

planet to a distant point in the galaxy. Brave move. When they pop up at their new location, the human-filled transport discovers a remarkable object that is floating between a moon and a giant gas planet. It's a huge ring structure, or halo, which is ten thousand miles in diameter. It has its own atmosphere, terrain, and even native life. Now, before the humans can scratch their heads in wonder, the aliens arrive and totally cripple their ship, forcing the transport to jettison all supplies and all humans, down onto the surface of the ring. Of course, the aliens continue their pursuit, and before you know it, an all-out war is raging on the surface of this unique structure. What is even more bizarre, is upon arrival on the surface of the "halo", abandoned alien structures and technology are discovered, and now it seems the Covenant are hell-bent on controlling the entire ring. Of course, this is where you step in.

RING, RING, WHY DON'T YOU GIVE ME A CALL?

What you're probably thinking at this stage of the preview is, "Story? I don't need no stinkin' story! Halo is a hell-bent-kill-or-be-killed team

game!" And you'd be partly correct. Certainly, what has had the gaming world hooked on Halo, is the impressive display of team warfare in the preview footage that has been shown. The game looks like Tribes on steroids. But what many people seem to forget, is that Bungie have always put a big emphasis on an absorbing single-player experience, and this story has to be interesting enough to satisfy those gamers who want to experience the world of Halo on their lonesome. If you consider that Halo will now release on the Xbox first, it makes sense that there has to be a successful single-player campaign. Whilst the Xbox has the ability for online broadband gaming, and the multiplayer side to Halo will no doubt be a big success on the console, most people will want to be able to play it as soon as they rip it out of the box. And that means that the single player game will have to kick arse for the game to be a

success, at least initially. Most console gamers have been weaned on an instant experience, and may not be willing to

put the effort into getting the most out of the multiplayer game online.

There's now more pressure on Bungie than ever to develop a completely satisfying single player title, because whilst the team-based footage we've seen is amazing, console gamers will need that solitary gaming experience.

Bungie promise some unique design with the single player game. For starters, they are hoping to implement a "continuous" gaming experience.

That is, no loading times or apparent breaks in gameplay. It could be that the game will continue to stream off the disc as the player progresses, although details on this are unclear. Bungie have also dropped hints at something so revolutionary that they refuse to even hint at what it could be. Sneaky.

THAT'S THE SECOND BIGGEST RING I'VE EVER SEEN

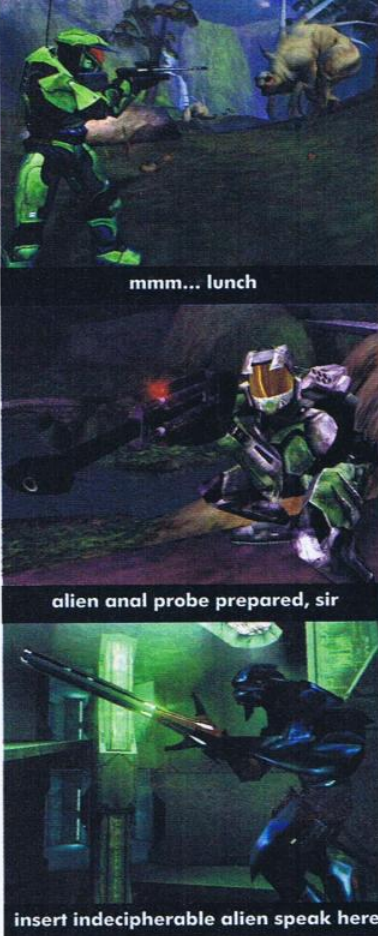
Once you're in the shoes of a marine (or alien), the action will play out

primarily from a first person perspective, which should quell any fears that have been bulging in the heads of the PC shooter set. The third person perspective will need to be used however, when your character controls a vehicle of some description. Halo's incredible engine will allow for everything to take place at once — mid-air dogfights, ground skirmishes, jeep races... whatever the players can think of, they can most probably achieve with the tools on hand. So really, you will need to see what your character is doing a lot of the time.

Bungie stress that Halo's third-person perspective is imperative to the game playing successfully, so gamers should relax and accept that if Bungie say they will make it work, they will.

The physics engine is something that the Halo team are most proud of. Bungie programming wonderboy, Chucky Gough, has managed to implement real-world physics into Halo, including some fancy inverse kinematics (a branch of mathematics applied to complex motion). If a marine is driving a jeep (with four-wheel suspension no less) too fast and then stops suddenly, the momentum of his own body will throw him forward





extremely large firepower in Bill's box... who would have thought?

and then slam him back into his seat, just like in real life. It's the same with taking a corner too



Whilst the team-based footage we've seen is amazing, console gamers need that **solitary gaming experience.**

fast in the same vehicle – the passenger will find themselves being thrown out the side of the Jeep if they're not wearing a seat belt. This kind of awesome realism will be underlying the entire game, providing the gamer with a true sense of "being there" without even being that conscious of why it feels so right.

A lot of fuss has been made of THQ's Red Faction Geomod engine, and the way players can deform the environments with their weapons, but it's little known that Halo will have the same feature, although it will be implemented differently. Halo will feature deformable terrain in the form of a terrain mesh. If a large missile hits the side of a hill, it will leave a nasty gash in the ground, or if an explosion is big enough, it will leave a crater large enough to ditch into with your jeep.

NO DAMN ALIEN IS TOUCHING MY RING

So what kinds of weapons would be capable of this kind of damage? We bet you can't wait to use them... the humans and the aliens have distinctly different technologies. The marines have a machine gun with a secondary grenade launcher, a pistol with a laser-

designator (so that you can target an object and call in an air-strike), a shotgun with a flashlight, anti-armour rocket launcher, a very cool sniper rifle, a flamethrower (the aliens hate this as much as those Xenomorphs in Aliens), a harpoon for water fights and lots more... The Covenant on the other hand, have energy-based weapons. There's the energy sword that can kill with one slice, the energy propellant gun (rocket launcher), and a very cool energy rifle that literally glistens. Naturally there are more funky items of mass-destruction that Bungie have kept quiet on, so we'll have to employ some patience and discover those delightful secrets later.

Bungie wants Halo to encourage players to specialise in certain skills, so it won't be possible to be completely proficient at everything that it's possible to do in the game. Whether we select character classes from a menu or simply evolve into scouts, heavy-weapon guys and good pilots is something that Bungie have been guarded about revealing. No doubt, Bungie would be looking to their rivals

to see how they implement this kind of variety in their own team games and possibly keep an eye on what DOESN'T work. Team Fortress 2 and Tribes 2 are but two of the games that Halo will be up against for the large number of team-game loving PC freaks out there. On the Xbox, it's looking like Halo will have no other console game to compare with.

Likely multiplayer modes include a capture the flag style game, team deathmatch, capture and hold and a unique mode called "Ogre". In Ogre mode, one player becomes a huge biomechanical "ogre" with numerous nasty weapons. All the other players in the game simply have to team together to survive and kill the "ogre". Bungie are also going to come up with some original modes that gamers aren't currently familiar with.

We imagine they could do some amazing things with the breathtaking environments, seamless transitions between indoor and outdoor locations and the large array of vehicles and weapons.

Halo. We want it. <<<

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:
Microsoft had better release a mouse or alternative to the Xbox control pad if we're playing lots of Halo in the first person...



HALO - IS IT REALLY MARATHON 4?



Marathon - spooky-ass floating aliens

>>> Bungie admit that there are recurring themes in the games that they develop. In Minotaur, there was a mythical sword called Durandal, and most Marathon fans will remember that Durandal is the name of the crazy AI in the Marathon games. Bungie have also been coy about whether Halo takes place in the same universe as the Marathon games, but have certainly dropped hints. It seems that there will be some connections, but we won't know until we get to play the game. Of course, keen eyes will have noticed the Marathon logo within the Halo logo. Cool.

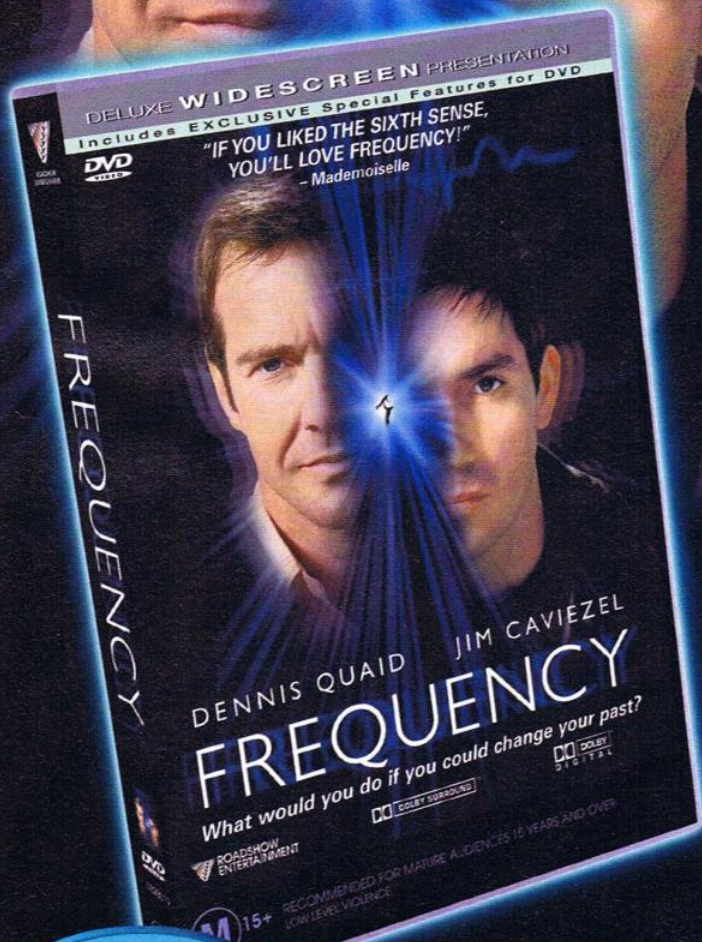


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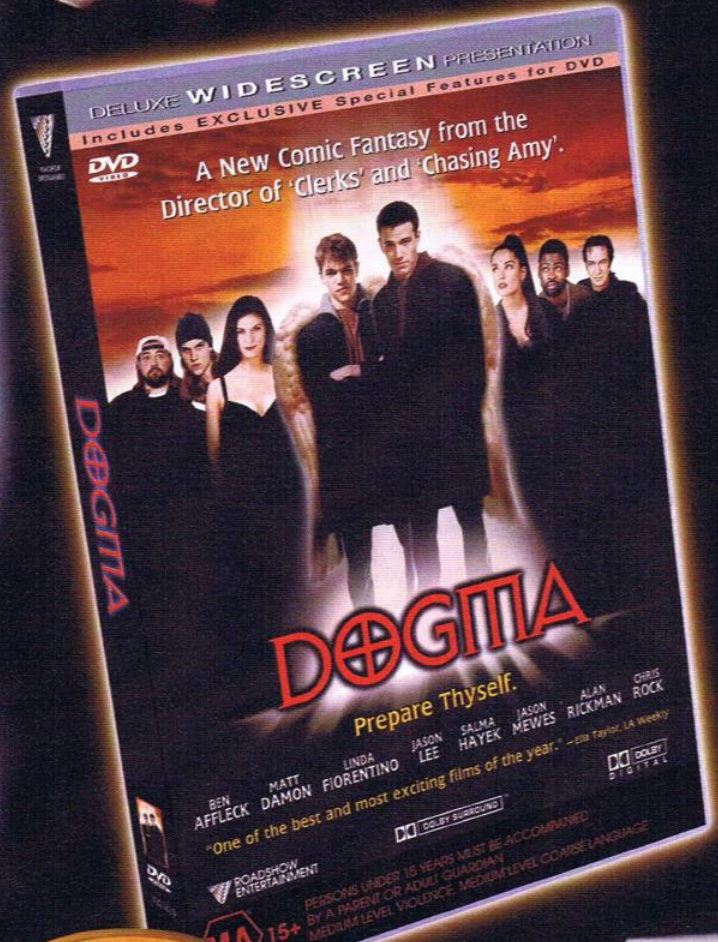
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PLANNED RELEASE:
28th March

DOGMA

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- Trailer
- English Subtitles



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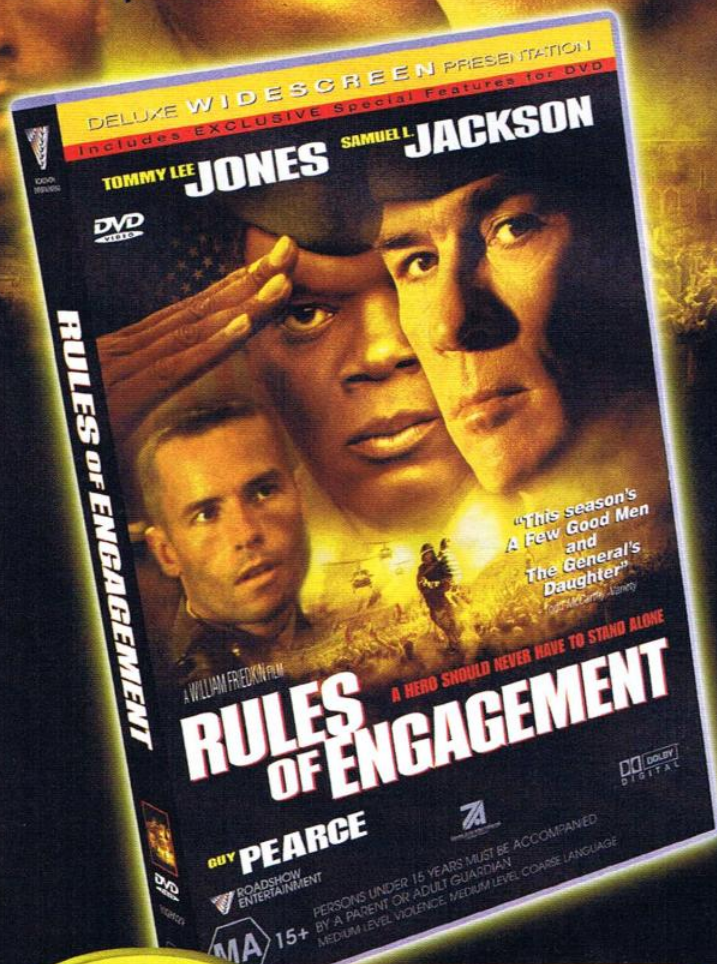


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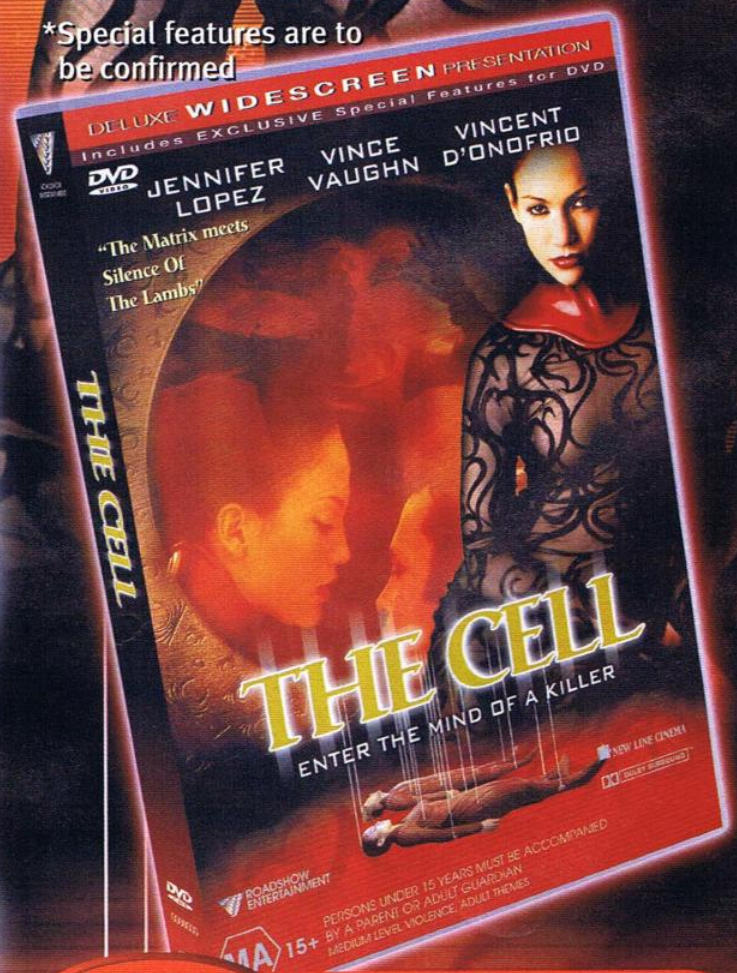


THE CELL

SPECIAL FEATURES*

- Directors Commentary
- Isolated Score
- Deleted Scenes
- Behind the Scenes
- Filmographies
- Interactivities
- Theatrical Trailer

*Special features are to be confirmed



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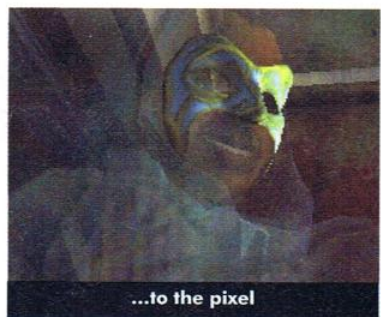
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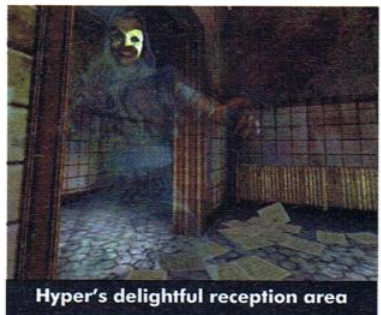
PLANNED RELEASE:
28th March



From the pen...



...to the pixel



Hyper's delightful reception area

THE LOST

PS2/PC

CATEGORY: Survival Horror >> PLAYERS: 1 >> WOW-O-METER

PUBLISHER: Crave >> AVAILABLE: Late 2001



Irrational Games is a software house built on the ruins of Looking Glass Studios, and many of their number worked on such PC classics as System Shock 2, Thief, and even the Ultima Underworld franchise. This noble line has now been set the task of composing a survival horror game for the PlayStation 2, and considering that they'll be going up against polished versions of Silent Hill and Resident Evil, one wonders what chance they have of harnessing the soul of this new machine.

Considering the pedigree of the Boston studio of Irrational, better than average. And the game engine they're using makes things look better still. The LithTech engine has never been applied to the PS2 before, but even in this first generation manifestation it's shaping up to be something special. Traditionally game

engines have been specialised for displaying either indoor or outdoor environments, but LithTech handles both at the same time. Each of the game characters will be made up 10,000 polygons, which astute readers will recall is the same number in the models in Tekken Tag. Every fold of clothing, every facial nuance, every pectoral bulge shall be revealed.

The interface is third person, and different parts of the characters bodies will be able to operate independently of each other. The game atmosphere will be aiming to relay a sense of wrongness rather than an overbearing barrage of horror cliches. The interface will be nothing out of the ordinary for console veterans, but Irrational hope to impart

something of the same degree of operational flexibility from their previous productions upon it, the kind of micro-management that PC gamers take for granted.



ESCAPE FROM NEW JERSEY

The object of The Lost is to guide your protagonist straight into the depths of hell with a one-way ticket to Satan's strip mall. The themes being explored are more disturbing than the visceral hell-on-Earth scenario in Resident Evil, and more substantial than the Hell-comes-to-Frogstown antics in Silent Hill. This is Dante's Inferno in modern terms, a sort of interactive Apocalypse Now if you will.

The player will take control of one Amanda Wright, distraught mother of a recently deceased little girl, who takes up an offer from the horned one to rescue her spawn, if she has the guts. Hence the Orpheus factor is invoked, and thankfully Neil Gaiman is nowhere in sight. The standard paradigm of increasing one's skills and arsenal throughout the game is no great innovation, but some of the





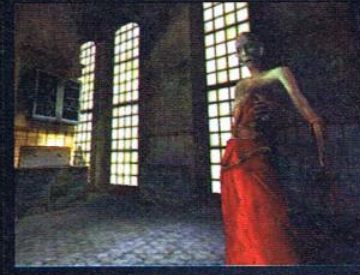
Cooking with Nosferatu in 3 easy steps



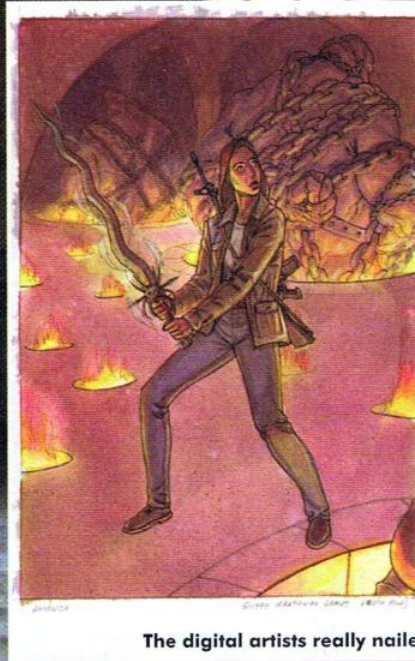
1: Stand menacingly by sink



2: Look menacingly for eggs



3: Menacingly eat eggs, shell and all



The digital artists really nailed her... oh, bad choice of words



Every fold of clothing, every facial nuance, every **pectoral bulge** shall be revealed.

skills that can be acquired as you tool around Hades will force you to look at the game from a different perspective.

For along the way the player will meet up with three different spirit entities: Light, Shadow and Corruption. Once these folks are on board, Amanda can transform into any of them to take better advantage of her surroundings. These three personalities grant the abilities of a healer, a ninja and a mage respectively, and are sufficiently different from each other as to make any one level four distinct places. Apparently, this feature was inspired by the distinctive simians in Donkey Kong 64.

Another welcome change is hell itself; thankfully it's not just another endless sewer filled with lava pits. The nine concentric rings of damnation each have a contemporary theme, such as a Las Vegas level to gaol the

greedy, and a World War I zone to make the violent think long and hard about what they've done.

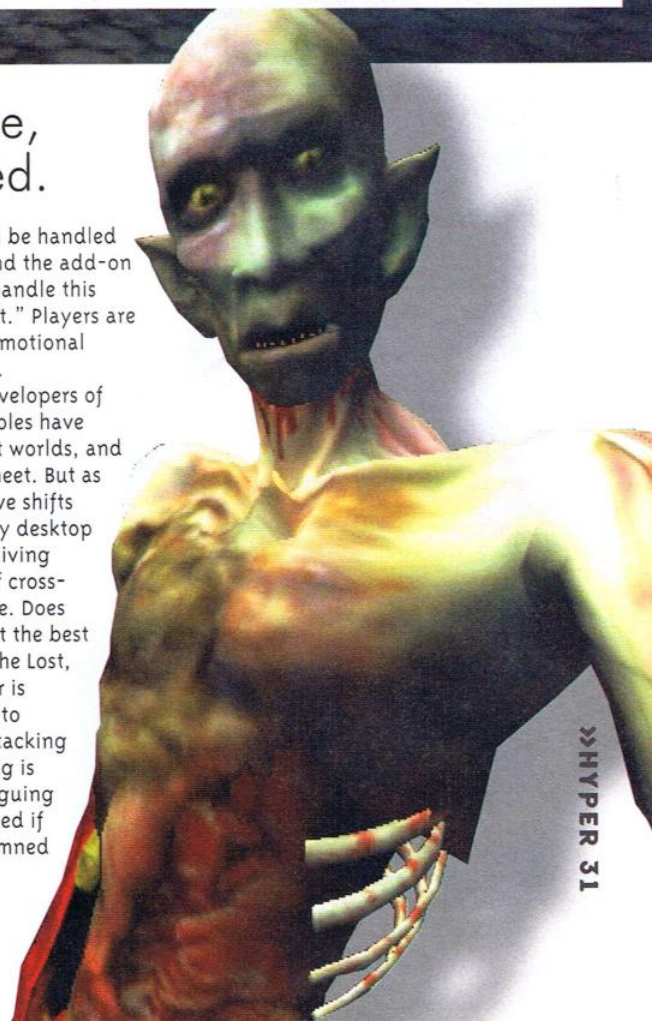
HELL IS OTHER PEOPLE

As for the plot, what starts out as a simple not-without-my-daughter affair quickly escalates into a quandary of great cosmic importance. It seems that there are many souls milling about in hell that don't deserve to be there, they are the eponymous Lost, and along the way Amanda decides that it's her duty to save them. This may prove something of a challenge when hell's Byzantine politics and unhealthy environment are factored in to her struggle, not to mention Irrational's penchant for plot twists at every turn.

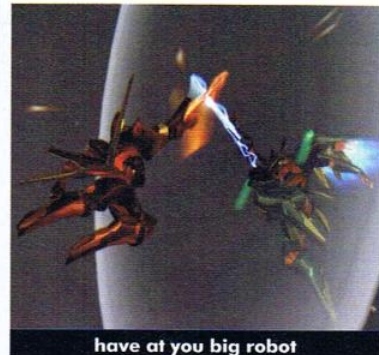
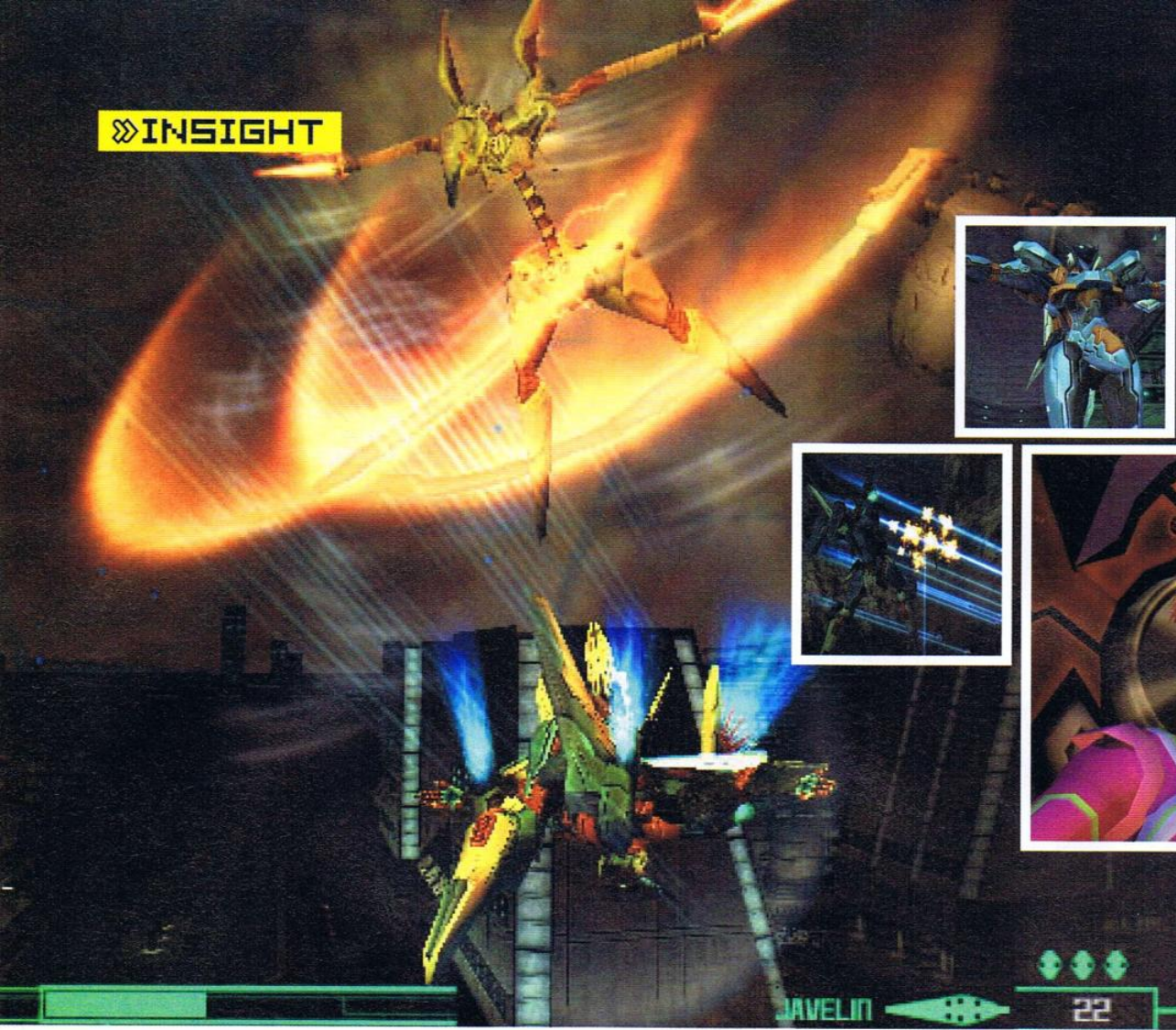
If this wasn't enough of an existential roller coaster, every time a soul is saved players will be rewarded with a soul's-eye-view of the moments leading up to their death.

Cut scenes like this will be handled in the game engine, and the add-on they've developed to handle this effect is called "Backlot." Players are promised drama and emotional involvement in spades.

Up until now, the developers of games for PC and consoles have inhabited two different worlds, and never the twain shall meet. But as the economic imperative shifts from the pirate-friendly desktop to the copy-retardant living room, a certain level of cross-pollination is inevitable. Does this mean that we'll get the best of both worlds out of The Lost, and its descendants, or is console gaming about to descend into a crate-stacking nether world? One thing is certain about this intriguing new title: You're damned if you do, and you're damned if you don't. <<



»»INSIGHT



have at you big robot



aren't those laser pointers illegal?

ZONE OF ENDERS

»»PS2

CATEGORY: Mech fighting >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Konami >> AVAILABLE: April

WOW-O-METER



Mechs are awfully hardcore tools of destruction, and yet if anime is to be believed, they can be piloted by small children with relative ease. The trick, it seems, is that there's usually some variety of neural link between aforementioned child and big hulking metal beast, making the piloting experience a reasonably intuitive one. No such luck in the world of videogames thus far, however.

PUNY THUMBS

Not only have the majority of mech-on-mech games been supremely average, but the control schematics were either overly simplified or horribly complex. And it still felt nothing like being there. Gamers kept asking themselves when they'd be able to emulate the sublime aerial dogfights of their favourite anime. Why wasn't there a game where you had full control, nimble movement, ranged as well as melee attacks, defensive manoeuvres that were intuitive

to utilise, and most importantly, the ability to actually follow your opponent's movements at the same time as doing all of the above?

Okay, so maybe that's being a bit optimistic given our current lame-ass 2D viewing technology and simplistic gaming interfaces. Although resigned to waiting for true virtual reality before the experience reaches such levels,



Zone Of Enders (ZOE) is an excellent example of what is still capable with our feeble hardware and our puny thumbs. It's no wonder really, as the development team was headed up by Hideo Kojima (of Metal Gear Solid fame) and Noriaki Okamura (the Tokimeki Memorial series of girlfriend sims anyone? Kevvie?) and it shows. This

game is pure class.

We've tasted the Japanese release, and ZOE is looking very much like the console mech game that will set the standard for some time to come, as it

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:
We'd like to find out that Zone Of Enders is worth buying for more than just the Metal Gear Solid 2 demo disc.

really does have the whole package. Not only packing intuitive controls and city-levelling action, ZOE (in this post Neon Genesis world of ours), also has the whole distopian tech-future psychological anguish

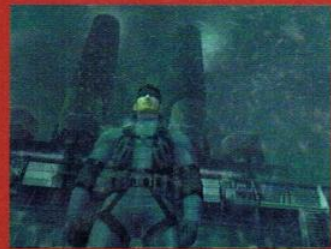
thing happening too. The scenario is pretty cool, and in the grand tradition of almost every robot anime ever made, features a fourteen year old boy at the helm of the most powerful mech known to man.

Now, what's next? Ah yes, it's time to start raving about the graphics... or maybe not. You can see for yourselves how lush this game looks (it moves at a lightning pace too, with some battles taking place in fully destructible city environments), so instead, we're quickly going to mention the awesome camera mechanics, cos they stand out almost

as much as the graphics. Konami spent around a year tweaking it, and in contrast to every other third person action title, it is close to flawless. There's no motion sickness here, just smooth tracking of the action showing what you need to see. Suffice it to say the gameplay shines even more brightly with such a solid foundation. This is going to be special... <<<

MGS2 DEMO!

>> The Japanese version of Z.O.E. comes with a spleen-burstingly good playable demo of Metal Gear Solid 2. We're pleased to announce that the local version will also feature the demo, so start drooling!



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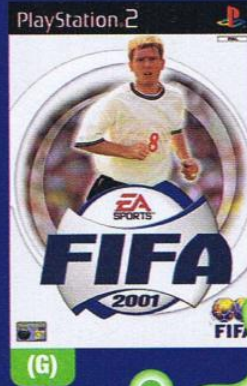
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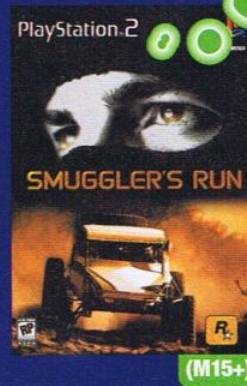
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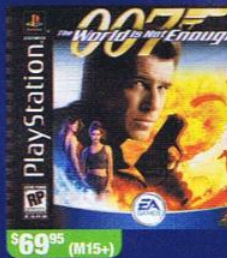
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in space, no one can hear you. really, they can't.

INDEPENDENCE WAR 2

»» PC

CATEGORY: Space combat sim >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >>
PUBLISHER: Infogrames >> AVAILABLE: April

WOW-O-METER



Almost a year ago now, we were being bombarded by strobe lights and thumping music that is the pseudo disco environment of the E3 showroom floor, munching on a piece of finger food and standing transfixed in front of a super-sized monitor. We were frozen in delight at the demo that was rolling of the upcoming I-War sequel, Independence War 2, subtitled the Edge of Chaos. The sleek, stylish and superb looking space craft and the dark gritty nature of the I-War universe are what engrossing PC games are all about – true and utter escapism. You really want to get away from it all? Go to outer space.

A WANTED MAN

I-War 2 is set one hundred years after the first I-War. You play the part of Caleb Johnston, a prison escapee who has turned to space piracy with a bunch of pals who helped you escape the penal complex you were serving time in. Of course, you were only convicted in the first place for attempting to avenge your father's murder, so you can't be all that bad...

can you? Well, your actions may have just started a rebellion, but in the eyes of some, that's not bad at all.

You start out in the Badlands Cluster, but I-War 2 will have sixteen different star systems spread over 2 star clusters to explore, all fully complete with independent space traffic. The non-linear nature of the mission set-up allows you to do a bit of roaming, so you can live out your fantasies as a full-on space pirate, hi-jacking ships and causing general unrest. Your character will have a base of operations from which you can launch different ships, and even customise your crafts and weapons.

Whilst I-War 2 is a space combat game, it has a fair share of resource management and adventuring too... call it a Space Role Playing game if you will. There are a whole range of new spacecraft you can take for a boogie, from the Storm Petrel (a small one-man fighter), to light and heavy corvettes. The ships are even created using textures and details from their

CGI movie counterparts for even greater continuity between in-game play and the incredible FMVs.

Although the 3D Flux engine is a completely new one, the developer, Particle Systems, have retained the awesome Newtonian physics engine that attracted so much attention in the first I-War. Basically, momentum affects your movement in space (just like in the old classic, Asteroids), so that once you thrust in one direction, you will continue to drift after you cut the engines. This approach to space flight gives I-War

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:
A persistent online I-War universe. People could log on and fly, trade and combat in a particular star system 24 hours a day!

a unique and realistic feeling of control that is not found in any other space combat game on the market. The only problem with this in the original I-War is that it was an initially daunting prospect to learn how to control the

ships properly. Thankfully, the interface has been simplified somewhat in I-War 2 to make it easier to jump in and play without dumbing down the mechanics.

What is also new to I-War 2 will be the inclusion of online multiplayer action. From deathmatches to team-based games, I-War 2 will support some great online scenarios – even with bot-controlled spacecraft.



You took
their flag.

Now they're
coming to
bury you
with it.

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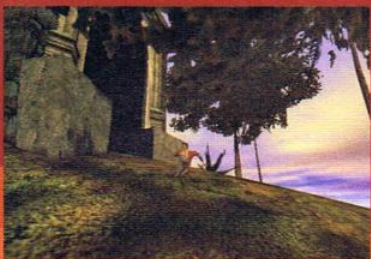
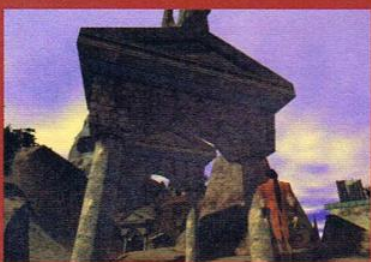


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INSIGHT



Hyper's inner-courtyard where many a coffee break ensues



GALLEON

CATEGORY: Adventure >> **PLAYERS:** TBA
PUBLISHER: Interplay >> **AVAILABLE:** October

WOW-O-METER



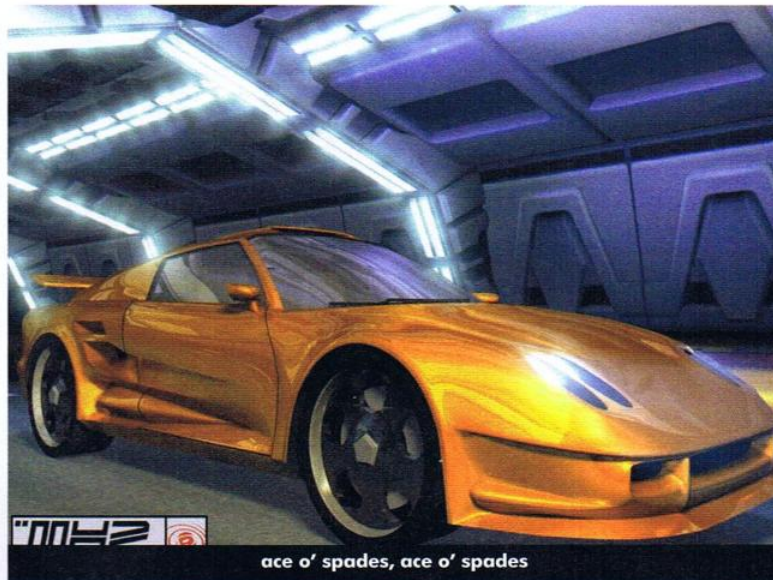
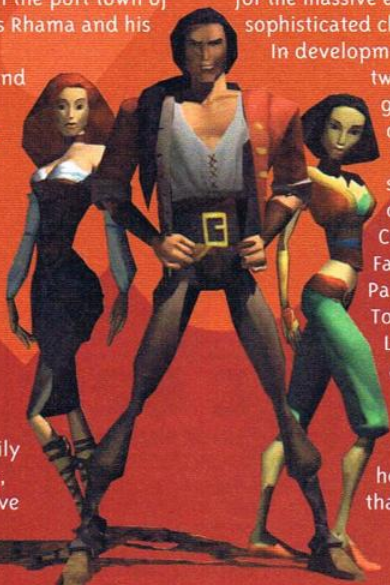
PC

Galleon puts you in the pointy boots of Captain Rhama Sabrier - adventurer, mariner and salty sea braggart, on a quest to discover the origin and secrets behind the discovery of a mysterious ship. Starting out in the port town of Akbah, Galleon sees Rhama and his two "lady friend" companions Faith and Mihoko exploring the islands and the surrounding lands to unravel the mystery.

The world that Confounding Factor have created for this title is steeped in fantasy and mythology, and looks to be quite compelling. Primarily an adventure game, Galleon will also have

strong swashbuckling swordfighting action elements. From what we've seen, Confounding Factor have a nice touch when it comes to character and world design, and this is backed up by a solid graphics engine that allows for the massive environments and sophisticated character builds.

In development for well over two years now, the game's profile has deliberately been kept low. This is surprising, considering that Confounding Factor's founders - Paul Douglas and Toby Gird - created Lara Croft for Core, a character not known for shying away from the spotlight. Let's hope they still have that innovative touch.



"MOTORHEAD 2"

ace o' spades, ace o' spades

MOTORHEAD 2

PS2

CATEGORY: Arcade Racing >> **PLAYERS:** 1-Multi >>
PUBLISHER: Digital Illusions >> **AVAILABLE:** Late 2002

Motorhead 2 may remember Motorhead as one of the more underrated racers on PC and PlayStation a couple of years back. Playing like a mix between Ridge Racer and WipEout, Motorhead served up polished powerslide racing physics, tasty graphics and fantastic speed, combined with semi-futuristic design. Now it's time to do it all over again on PlayStation 2.

Still in the very early stages of production, Motorhead 2 seems to be on the right track. Developers Digital Illusions certainly think so. Senior Artist, Marcus Nystrom, even went so far as to say that "One of our major objectives is to be pioneers who create new trends in the industry, which is what we are doing



by developing this new game". Whether this is possible within the racing genre, and within the confines of a sequel no less, remains to be seen. We sure enjoyed the first one though.

WOW-O-METER



UNDYING

PS2/PC

CATEGORY: FPS >> **PLAYERS:** 1
PUBLISHER: EA >> **AVAILABLE:** June

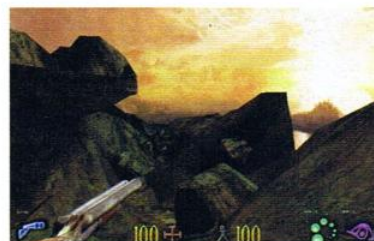
Based on Clive Barker's book of the same name, Undying looks set to be one freaky FPS. In development by Dreamworks Interactive, and utilising the Unreal engine, Undying unsurprisingly, deals with the undead.

Set in Ireland in the 1920s, the storyline concerns a chap named Jeremiah. It seems that his family has been suffering the "curse of the undead king", and only the deaths of all the members of the family can stop it. Thus, his four dead siblings have re-animated themselves and are coming for his blood... The player's task is to save Jeremiah and work out what's going on!

In order to differentiate itself from the countless other horror/shooter titles out there, we're hoping that the Barker license is used properly, to create a compelling, story-driven game.



pull my finger



WOW-O-METER



EMPEROR: BATTLE FOR DUNE

CATEGORY: 3D Real Time Strategy >> PLAYERS: 1-Multi
 PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts >> AVAILABLE: October



Most PC gamers will fondly remember Dune II as a landmark Westwood RTS title that predates their success with Command & Conquer. Dune II's stunning strategy game design won Westwood a legion of fans the world over and it's hard to contain the excitement that a sequel to Dune II naturally generates.

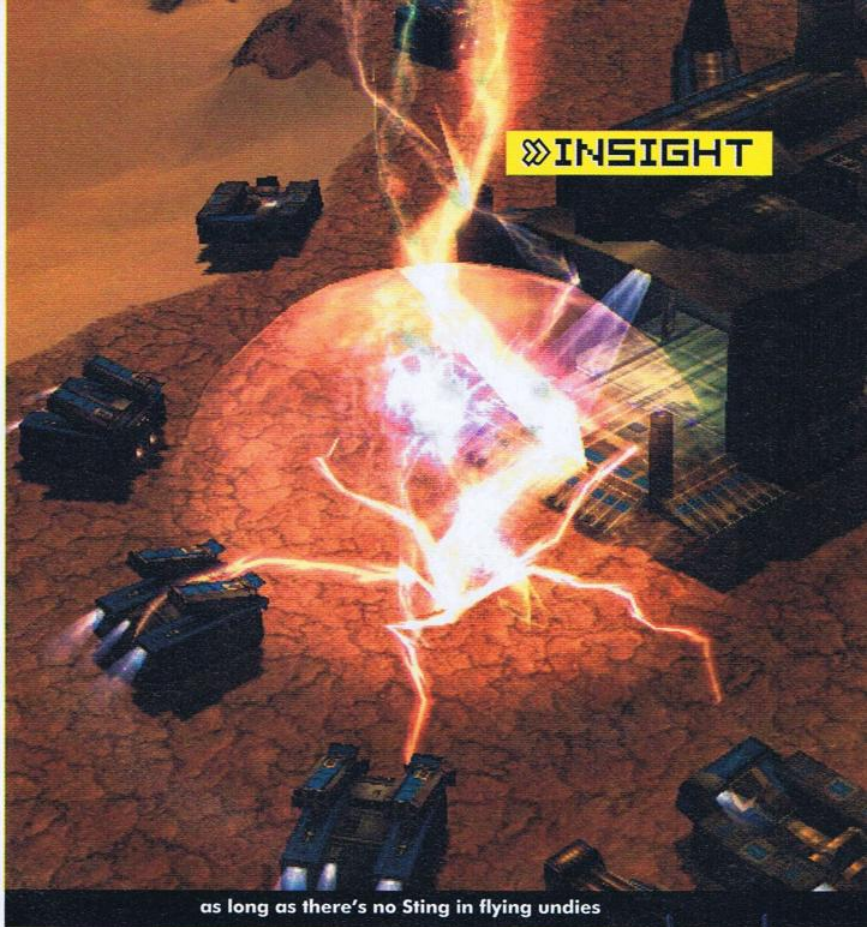
Well, the spice, the sandworms and the struggle for power is set to return in this new 3D Dune title, Emperor: Battle For Dune. The game is already looking superior to any 3D RTS game before it, with smooth and complex animated units, and a wealth of detail for fans of Frank Herbert's Dune universe. Select to play as the Atreides, the Harkonnen or the Ordos and then ally with up to five sub groups to access new technologies and resources



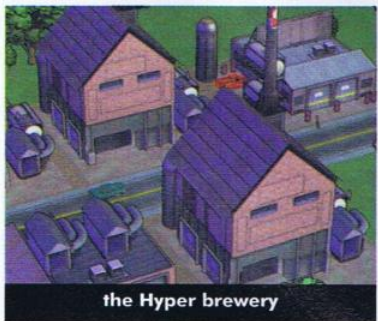
in your fight for the throne. It's interesting to note that battle and unit movement across sand can attract the deadly sandworms, so the terrain in the game can have a massive impact upon the gameplay. Hopefully, Emperor will bring a whole new meaning to the words "spice world".



INSIGHT



as long as there's no Sting in flying undies



SIMSVILLE

CATEGORY: Sim >> PLAYERS: 1-Multi
 PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts >> AVAILABLE: May



Ever experience the addiction of Sim City? How about the voyeuristic classic, The Sims? Then consider what they would be like combined into one game. Simsville is essentially that game. First, you build your village, then you move the inhabitants in (even importing your sims from The Sims). From that point on, your sims will begin to interact, whilst you maintain the entire village and attempt to sustain a harmonious atmosphere. Of course, expect lots to

go wrong. Graffiti will ruin houses, pets might dig up the neighbour's garden, thieves will run rampant, you'll be stuck with poor sectors that could turn into ghettos and so on... basically, there's lots to look forward to! You may not get to interact with your sims on a close, personal level like you can in The Sims, but believe us, you'll be kept busy with much larger dilemmas.

The potential in Simsville is phenomenal, so more on this one soon.

18 WHEELER: AMERICAN PRO TRUCKER

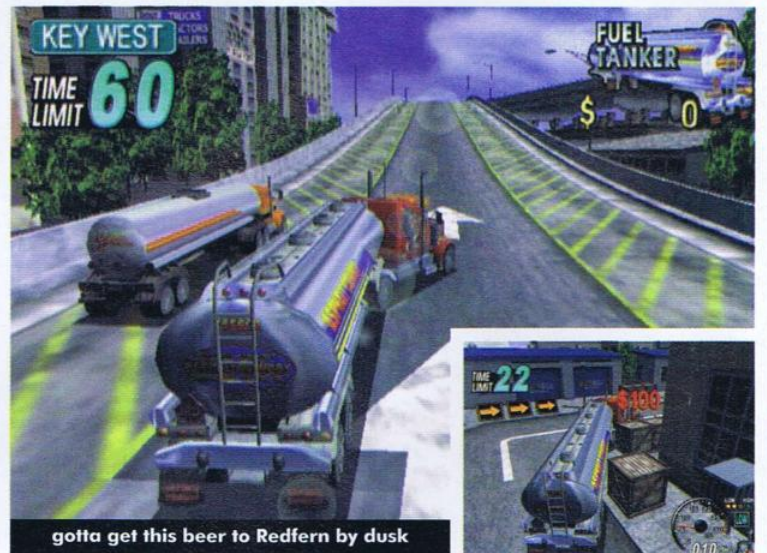
CATEGORY: Racing >> PLAYERS: 1-2
 PUBLISHER: Sega >> AVAILABLE: TBA



You couldn't miss this one at the arcades... The huge cabinet lured anyone with a few spare coins simply because of its size and garishness. The great thing is that the game was a corker and it's been in development for the Dreamcast for a while now.

Hop into a massive 18 wheeler, choose your cargo and then haul that load of whatever half-way across the USA. Picking up speed in some a heavy vehicle allows you to simply

smash your way through barriers, houses and of course, other cars and trucks. It's a race to the checkpoint, but you also have a rival driver to worry about. Sega are implementing a head-to-head mode for online play, plus there is split-screen for those who can't play online (like us Aussies). Don't worry about trying to wrestle with the turning circle of a massive truck, because this is an arcade game all the way. Big, loud and coming our way soon. Honk!

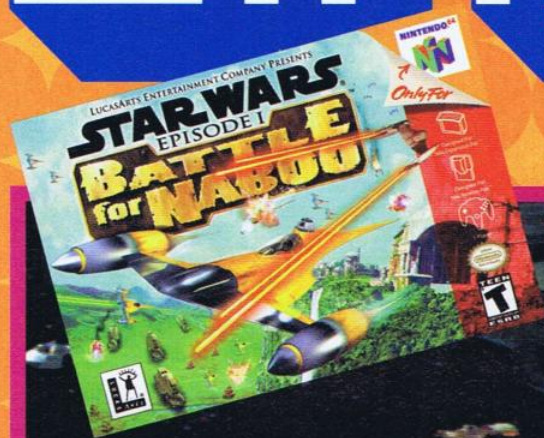


gotta get this beer to Redfern by dusk

Hyper's monthly look at games in development.



WIN WIN WIN WIN



ENTRIES CLOSE MARCH 21

WIN BATTLE FOR NABOO AND A SPECIAL EDITION BOBA FETT FIGURE!

FOR N64

Continuing on in the fine tradition of Rogue Squadron, Star Wars: Battle For Naboo is one Nintendo 64 game you can't live without. Take on the Trade Federation in this epic quest to free the city of Theed, and the whole planet of Naboo from evil forces. Not only do we have FIVE copies of this great game to giveaway thanks to THQ, but as an added bonus, Hasbro have been kind enough to make this even more special. Each winner will also receive a brand new Hasbro Star Wars action figure – the Special Edition Boba Fett 300th figure! This is too good to be true, but it is! The detail in this figure is amazing, and it's truly a collectable. To win one of these amazing prize packs, thanks to THQ and Hasbro, answer the following question:

Who really is the phantom menace?

Put your answer on the back of an envelope along with your name and address, and send it to: **Battle For Freebies, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**

WIN EVERQUEST: DELUXE EDITION!

FOR PC

EverQuest is undoubtedly the most popular online RPG ever made. You need only investigate why you haven't seen half your friends in the last year, and you'll discover that they're still logged onto their EverQuest account, racking up an obscene bill with their ISP. With the recent releases of the two expansion packs, Ruins of Kunark and the Scars of Velious, you're no doubt wondering how you can possibly get yourself equipped to enter the fray. Simple. Thanks to Ubi Soft, we have FIVE copies of the awesome EverQuest Deluxe Edition which includes EverQuest, both expansion packs, a strategy guide, a figurine, a poster and a map of the whole world of EverQuest.

To win one, simply answer this question:

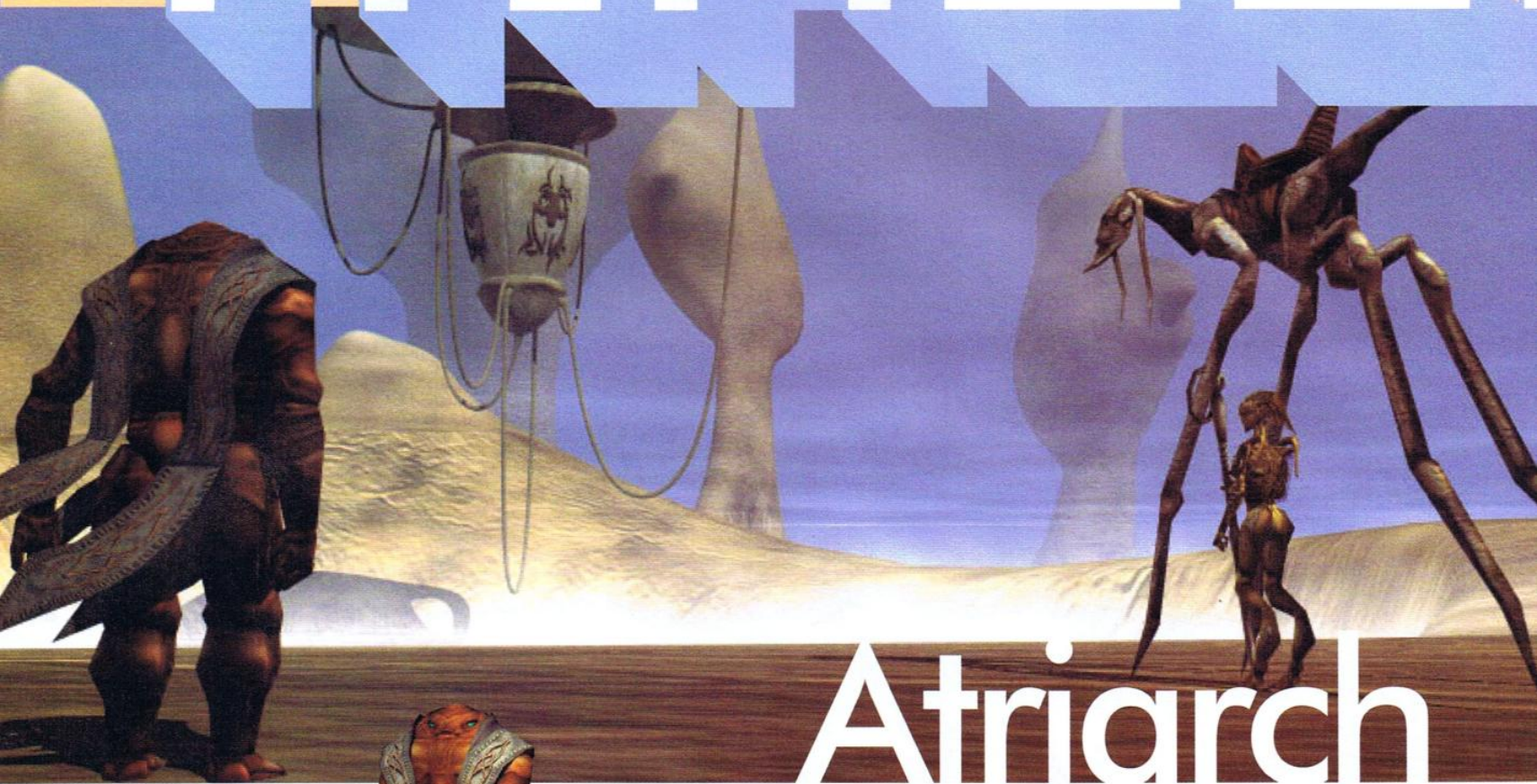
Name the game developer responsible for EverQuest.

Put your name and address on the back of an envelope, along with your answer, and post it to: **EverCrack, Hyper, 78 Renwick Street, Redfern, NSW 2016.**



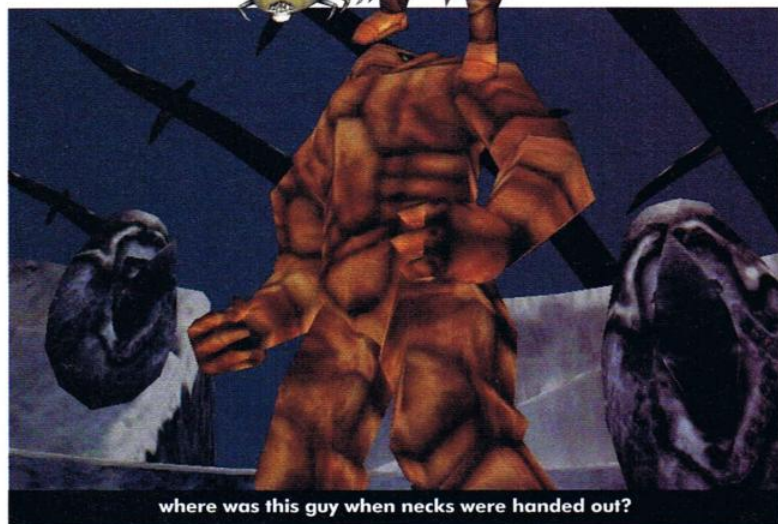
TRAWL

ADAM DUNCAN



Atriarch

WWW.ATRIARCH.COM



where was this guy when necks were handed out?

Atriarch is World Fusion's fresh yet undeniably strange foray into the massively multiplayer market. Distancing itself from most forms of swords, sorcery or cyber-tech, Atriarch sets its players on the very alien world of Atriana. A planet thriving with all manner of alien life. A planet where materials that we humans take for granted — such as metals — are rare, and as a result, Atriana's intelligent species have evolved a diverse range of intriguing natural attributes to ensure survival. Gamers will get to experience Atriarch through the eyes of any of Atriana's five dominant species: The Cavolon, Eshlar, Lokai, Tyrusin, and the Unarra.

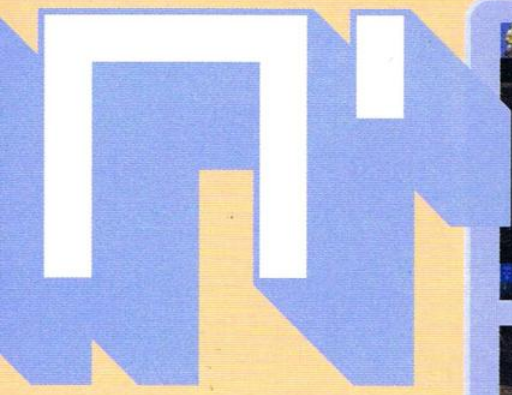
WHAT LIES BENEATH

Hiding beneath its exotic exterior, similarities in the game's underlying principles remain evident. For example, characters can better

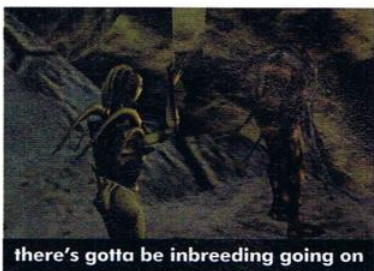
themselves by fighting some of the lesser species of Atriana, can form guilds, build alienesque castles, improve their skills and so on. The whole process just sounds so much more colourful when all of this is done playing as aliens, all of which have their own distinct look and style of play. For example, the plant-like Cavolon move through their forest homes with great ease, using a tentacle-tongue to swing from branch to branch! Equally unique is the ability of the Eshlar to create many of the planets most artistic structures. Travelers, architects and storytellers at heart, the races of Atriana appears to lead relatively



peaceful lives. If trouble should arise however — and no doubt it will, none of the alien species are strangers to battle. Fights will be handled by a complex



ugly is an understatement



there's gotta be inbreeding going on



now if only they can get the AC/DC song as the menu music

UT Jailbreak

Team Reaction, founders of Jailbreak for Quake, actually canned their plans to bring a version of the much-loved mod to UT. Fortunately a strapping young lad named Daikiki took it upon himself to put a port together. Jailbreak is a team-based game where the goal is to send all your opponents to jail by fragging them. The premise is similar to Rocket Arena except that it's possible for prisoners to be rescued by fellow teammates. A wonderful version of the mod recently came out for Q3. Daikiki's UT version is fun yet still needs some work in the map department. Frankly there aren't many maps to choose from. The UTJB team seems to realise this however, and are busily working on more. You can check out UT Jailbreak at <http://www.daikiki.com/>

UT Bonus Pack 4

As a nice little Christmas present for fans, Epic were recently nice enough to release their 4th bonus pack for Unreal Tournament. The pack provides some fresh Deathmatch, Domination and Capture the Flag maps. Epic have pleasingly also put together a couple of Q3-style tournament maps to up the game's 1-on-1 ante. The most notable addition however would have to be the swanky looking new models. Although we've noticed that recording demos or connecting to LAN games can prove problematic with these new models, as strange as that might sound.

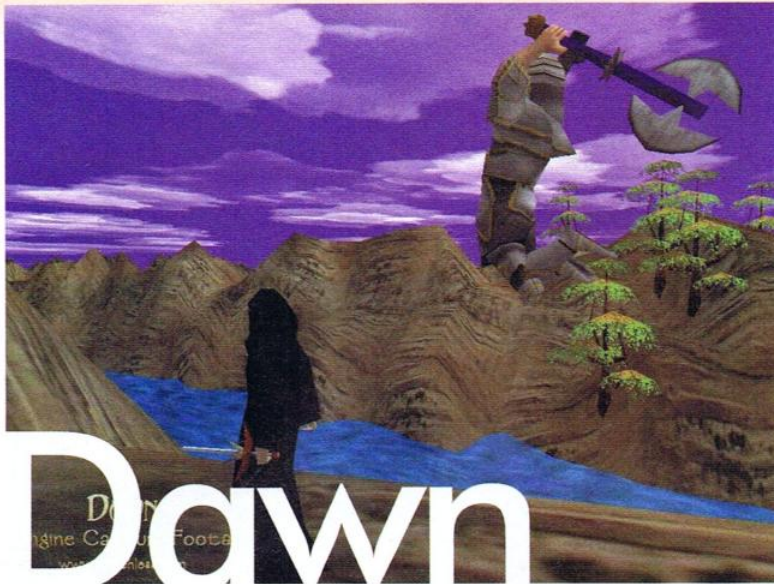
<http://www.unrealtournament.com>



combat system, allowing large-scale alien wars where you can even enlist the help of the subordinate native NPC races, strategically sending them into battle as fodder.

Often the result of a gruesome battle, character death is handled in a typically strange manner. Each player can spawn clones of itself through asexual reproduction. When you die you immediately begin play as your offspring, who consequently inherits his parent's skills and gear. On top of this, friends can also choose to play as your offspring and thus broaden your family name.

World Fusion hopes to unleash their creation into the world around the middle of this year. So if your mind is open for something way out there, Atriarch should be number one on your list of titles to check out.



Dawn

WWW.GLITCHLESS.COM

Ey creating "a reality in which players will have true freedom", Glitchless, in developing their up-and-coming title Dawn, hope to produce the ultimate fantasy MMORPG. A mighty big claim, but one that could be realised depending on just how 'hardcore' players like their gaming...

DEAD DEAD DEAD

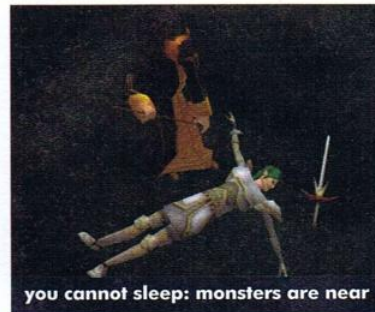
With this "true freedom", players can basically do whatever they like, good or bad. Cooperate and grow with other players or simply walk up and kill them. Build your own empires or ransack the towns of others. Dawn is a game that allows both order and chaos. Yet know this, characters only get one life. Any silly mistakes and you'll have to start from scratch! Scary huh? The blatantly obvious question regarding this defining feature is, will people be willing to play a game where their character, possibly after hundreds of hours of development, can be irrevocably annihilated at any given moment? Glitchless believe so. Gamers will simply learn to adjust their playing styles. Casual fights will have to be dealt with a lot more carefully by Dawns inhabitants.

To ensure everyone lives through a hunting trip, for example, larger parties will assemble to fight a weaker foe. Aiding the situation will be the ability for each character to feign death in times of trouble. This stunt might save your life against some of the world's fauna, but is unlikely to fool another player. And while there is nothing stopping player killers from trying to do away with you, the very idea that failure means complete death may be deterrent enough. On top of this, the possible neglect of a con system - a way to tell how powerful other players are - may also stave off would-be assassins who are after an easy kill. Suddenly PvP scenarios are starting to sound way too scary to comprehend. Be that as it may, Glitchless are actually boasting and encouraging the possibility of epic Braveheart-like battles. The developers point out that history shows how often people have risked their real lives in these sort of clashes, so there's just as good a chance of players merely risking their character if it perhaps meant saving their virtual town. Fair enough...

There's no denying that a battle this size would seriously get the adrenaline pumping at least.

TALK ABOUT WEIRD

Dawns character creation system would have to be the strangest to date. Players are



you cannot sleep: monsters are near

literally born into the world and reared by in-game - NPC or human controlled - parents! Just how this works is anyone's guess at the moment. Similar rules apply to the creatures of the land. 'Spawning' is a thing of the past, instead the population grows 'birds and the bees' style. Apparently you won't actually see any hanky-panky, which is probably for the best, really.

Similar to Artifact Entertainment's promising title, Horizons, Dawn will offer a variety of races to choose from while leaving out an official class system. Players are free to develop skills in any area and, with the right knowledge and material, characters will be able to throw together their own houses, castles and even build boats or war machines.

The game world promises to be one giant, spherical area - a planet in other words - as opposed to a collection of maps or zones, like in Everquest. Because of this, Glitchless has been able to put together a realistic three-dimensional sky, with stars that players can actually use to navigate from. Mind boggling stuff! A lot of the planet's terrain will be computer generated. Because of this, the developers have been able to offer us the largest game world ever created - over 30 times the size of Dereth in Asheron's Call!

Dawn's aesthetics, comparative to the competition, aren't much to look at right now. Perhaps things will shape up somewhat before release; besides, it's the gameplay that matters, right? This is certainly one of the most ambitious games we've ever heard about.

Glitchless plan to have a public beta ready later this year. Hopefully by then we can all decide whether the whole 'permanent death' deal proves to add to the thrill of the game, or simply makes Dawn an ordeal to play.

LINKS



Oz Network

Cyber Forces Gaming Nation CFGN are a fast-growing Aussie gaming network who host a whole heap of kick-arse sites that focus purely on the community supporting your favourite games. Their home base can be found here: www.cfgn.net

At the moment they cover:

Unreal Tournament

www.ozunreal.com

Counterstrike

www.ozcstrike.com

Rune

www.ozrune.com

Soon you can expect to see affiliates covering

Quake 1, 2 and 3

www.ozquaker.com

Halflife

www.ozhalflife.com

Voyager: Elite Force

www.ozeliteforce.com

Tribes

www.oztribes.com



PATCHES

Kingdom Under Fire

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

Jagged Alliance 2: Unfinished Business

<http://www.sir-tech.com/>

Carmageddon: TDR 2000

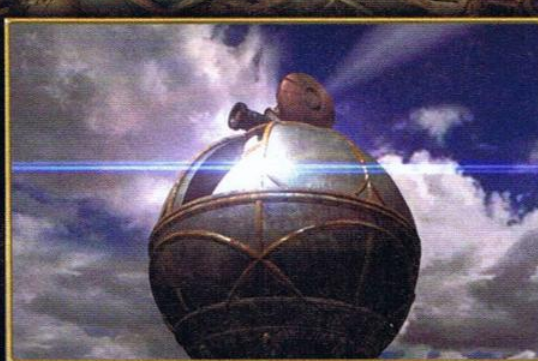
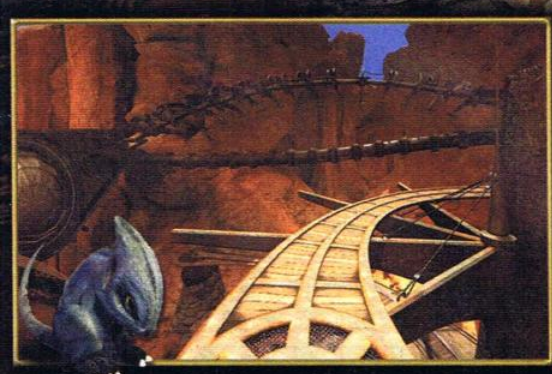
<http://www.sci.co.uk/>

Treadmarks

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

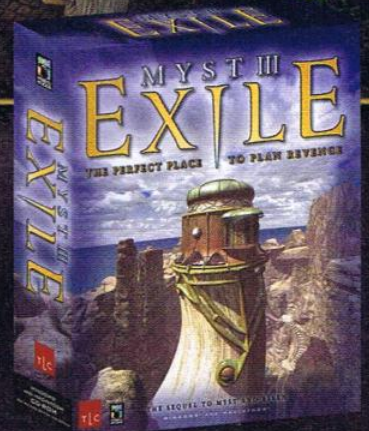
MYST III EXILE

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Yet to be
classified



FEATURE

SONY

R.I.P PlayStation

The best of 1995-2001



After six long years of market dominance, the reign of the PlayStation is finally coming to an end. Join **James Coffee & Cam Shea** as we take a look at the machine that changed the way we look at wasting time!

With about 80 million units shipped around the world, the PlayStation is the most popular home video game system ever. Its success has revitalised the gaming world, bringing a mature, cashed-up audience into a past-time

normally associated with anti-social children. All ages and all demographics now have their every need catered for, and things have gotten so good so fast that the world before Sony entered the gaming business is just a hazy blur.

But there's no doubt to be had, things have changed during the PlayStation's time on this Earth. For instance, the rise of the Internet has opened up unlimited possibilities in multiplayer gaming, and all the next

generation consoles will take advantage of this in some way. Even the humble PSONe will have some limited wireless capabilities, but whether this service ever makes its way out of Japan is another thing altogether.

If the PlayStation itself has changed anything, it's the paradigm expected of video game software. When the SNES and the Megadrive were frolicking in retail outlets everywhere, game players were quite happy for every game they played to consist of 2D graphics. But the PlayStation showed us a world beyond spites dancing on parallax, a world where every aspect of a game was in 3D, whether it needed to be or not.

New genres evolved out of this novelty. They multiplied, evolved, then stagnated. Such is the way of games. Today we shall examine some of the games that defined the PlayStation experience. Of the thousands of games written for the PSX, these are the ones that touched us the most...

1995

THE FIRST GENERATION

As the first wave of games hit stores all over the world, a revolution was born.



Toshinden

Battle Arena Toshinden

HYPER 18 92%

For fighting game fans tired of the same stale old 2D play mechanics, Toshinden offered something new; movement in three dimensions! In addition to the various attacks and blocks and so forth, players could also dodge to the side in an effort to outflank one's foes. Toshinden played quite differently to Virtua Fighter, retaining long range fireball style attacks, and boasting some tasty eye candy too.

Tekken

HYPER 21 84%

Another fighting game to rise out of the primordial swamp of mindless combo-memorising. Tekken came hot on the heels of the first polygonal



Tekken

innovator - Virtua Fighter. Both games focused more on realistic combat than the 2D fighters that had come before, although the Tekken series was regarded by many fighting game fanboys as inferior. Even so, there was a huge amount of gameplay locked away in this (and successive) title(s) thanks to the massive movelists and combos, not to mention some bizarre characters. The Tekken series also introduced some of the PSX's more memorable gaming babes, and a whopping three game characters called Jack. The potential for double entendres became limitless!

Jumping Flash

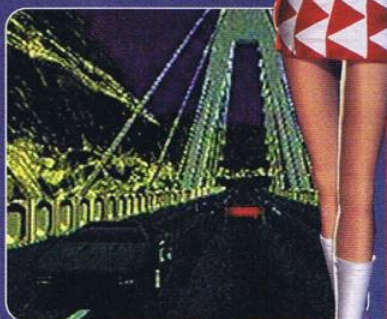
HYPER 23 83%

Genre hopping is taken to a whole new level with Jumping Flash, a first person platform game of sorts. In a world of

Ridge Racer

HYPER 18 92%

An arcade perfect (or near enough) translation that blew away all who saw it. Legend has it that Namco had a six month deadline for the game, so they set four teams to work on the project, and systematically culled the weaker teams until one remained. Ridge Racer was to become one of the big franchises on the PlayStation, changing the way we think about powersliding. Polygons were still a fresh and exciting thing, and a public weary of the tired old re-treads of Pole Position and Outrun took to this one like a crack baby to crack. Most important of all, it featured Reiko, the Ridge Racer girl, the single most important personality of the 20th century.

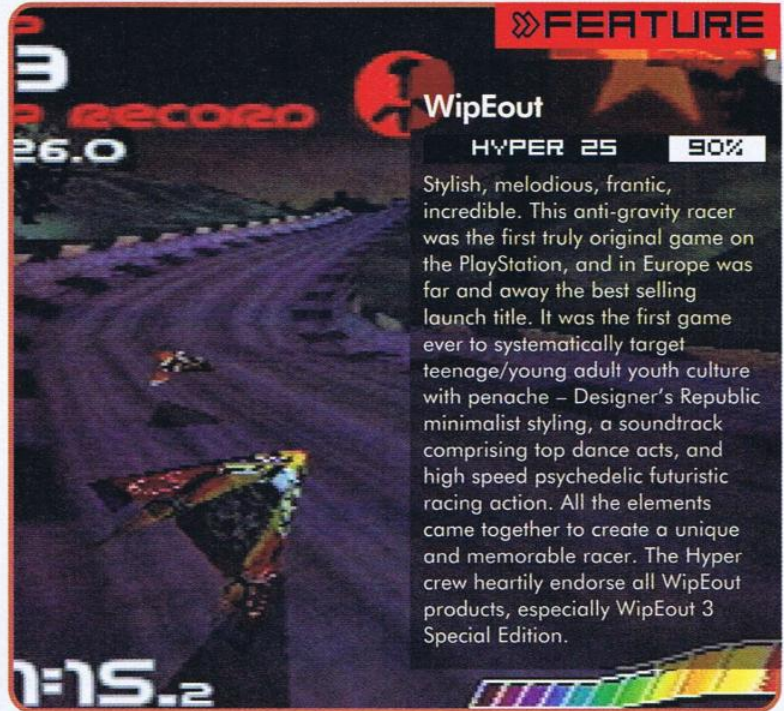


FEATURE

WipEout

HYPER 25 90%

Stylish, melodious, frantic, incredible. This anti-gravity racer was the first truly original game on the PlayStation, and in Europe was far and away the best selling launch title. It was the first game ever to systematically target teenage/young adult youth culture with penache - Designer's Republic minimalist styling, a soundtrack comprising top dance acts, and high speed psychedelic futuristic racing action. All the elements came together to create a unique and memorable racer. The Hyper crew heartily endorse all WipEout products, especially WipEout 3 Special Edition.



Destruction Derby

sound effects were of a higher quality, the game included Doom, Doom 2 and Ultimate Doom, and hey, playing Doom on a big TV was awesome. Today's Counterstrike-spoiled youth may have little time for such a dinosaur, but they walk in its footprints everyday.

Rayman

HYPER 28 75%

This was the odd man out in the first year of the PSX's life, being a strictly 2D platform affair with rather standard gameplay, and entrant into a genre that had long since become a cliché. Rayman stood out from the crowd by offering the peak of platform game evolution, being beautifully rendered and strangely addictive. Not to mention so damn French! The freaky thing is that after five years this game is still on the charts, and in Europe is the single best selling 3rd party title to date for the PlayStation.

Destruction Derby

HYPER 24 92%

Not particularly deep, this one, but fondly remembered by some, and hey, it looked good at the time. It's not the only PlayStation game to get worse with successive installments, but the latest incarnation is distinctive in that the computer graphics employed look exactly like used carbon paper. Despite negligible replay value, Destruction Derby is still one of the games that heralded the arrival of the 32bit.

Doom

HYPER 29 96%

Not everyone played this on PC. To console gamers unfamiliar with the first person shooter genre, Doom was a liberating experience. The PlayStation version was brilliant - the Sony pad fitted the control schematics perfectly,

\$699

THE PRICE IS WRONG

Sure, the early adopters loved it. Sony were wise enough to plant PlayStations in nightclubs so that the trend-setting sliver of the population could receive maximum exposure to it. But it cost a bomb. In real terms, about as much as the PS2 does now. It wasn't until the price dropped to \$299 that serious mass-market interest was generated. There may be hysterical demand for the PS2 overseas, but they're forking out far less for it. Those mounds of blue boxes at Harvey Norman are going to stay right where they are until the Australasian public is convinced it's getting value for money.

1996

HINTS OF GREATNESS

In its second year, the PlayStation really started to get into a gaming groove.



Fifa 96

Fifa 96

HYPER 29 96%

The last great sprite based soccer game on PlayStation from EA. Fifa 96 was fast, looked good and was a very nice step into the 32bit world for the series. With a multitap this sucker was near unbeatable.

Twisted Metal

HYPER 29 88%

Graphically Twisted Metal was a complete mess, but the foundations of the game were solid – blow stuff up



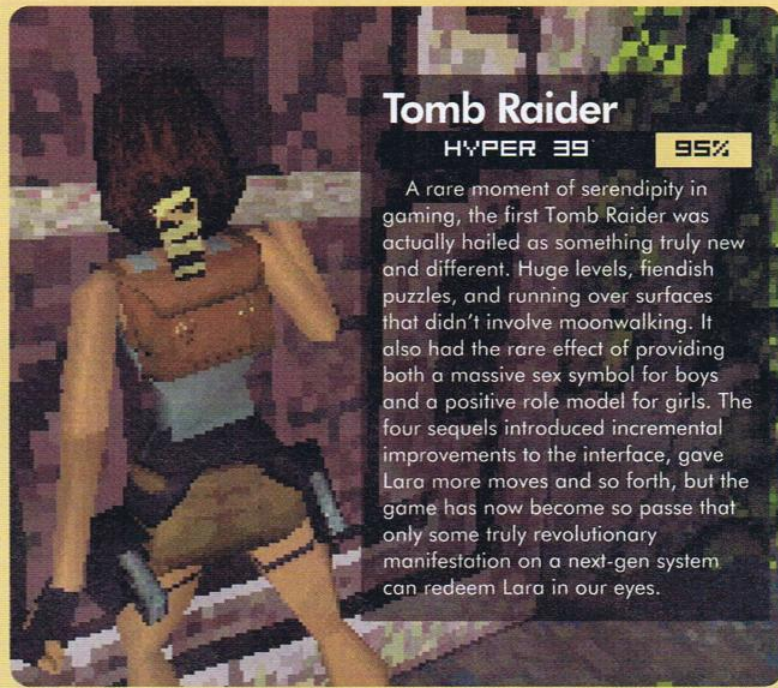
Die Hard Trilogy

(friends included) in a variety of kookily themed armoured vehicles. Widely credited with creating the car combat genre, Twisted Metal died from "crap sequel-itis" but the original was a breath of fresh air early in the PlayStation's life.

Worms

HYPER 31 88%

Although Worms Armaggedon is currently the king, this is where it all started on PlayStation. Insanely addictive strategic turn based combat with a comic bent. The graphics may



Tomb Raider

HYPER 39 95%

A rare moment of serendipity in gaming, the first Tomb Raider was actually hailed as something truly new and different. Huge levels, fiendish puzzles, and running over surfaces that didn't involve moonwalking. It also had the rare effect of providing both a massive sex symbol for boys and a positive role model for girls. The four sequels introduced incremental improvements to the interface, gave Lara more moves and so forth, but the game has now become so passe that only some truly revolutionary manifestation on a next-gen system can redeem Lara in our eyes.

be 2D, the combatants a centimetre tall, and the arena a virtual ant farm, but this is one of the best party games on the system. Harking back to the old ballistics games like Scorched Earth, players took turns setting trajectories and firing off all manner of exotic shells. Near-infinite variety and unpredictable gameplay is always a good combination, and Worms transfixed Hyper staffers during many an extended lunch break.

Resident Evil

HYPER 33 90%

Resident Evil introduced the "survival horror" genre to the PlayStation, although it didn't really invent it (thank you Alone In The Dark). Although the series was very much in its formative stages, this title still managed to scare the crap out of all and sundry. The most recent versions on PSX and DC have come a long way (although as far as controls go, not far enough), but the first used super-deformed characters in the generated cut scenes, and dodgy B grade actors in the FMV.

Resident Evil was very much inspired by the zombie movies of George Romero, but with a wacky conspiracy theory pseudo science take on the genre. Original, compelling and scary.



Resident Evil

Crash Bandicoot

HYPER 36 90%

This series from Naughty Dog took standard 2D platform game mechanics and implemented them in a pseudo-3D world. Although technically excellent with a smooth learning curve, the gameplay wore thin quickly. Even so, with such a refreshing bent, and a bent protagonist, sequels were inevitably just around the corner. The series peaked with No.3, which added vehicle-based levels.

Motor Toon Grand Prix 2

HYPER 36 92%

What Jumping Flash is to platformers, Motor Toon Grand Prix 2 is to racing games. In other words - trippy and very playable to boot. At first it was disconcerting the way the cars leered drunkenly around corners, not to mention the wild colours and surreal landscapes, but behind its hallucinogenic façade was a rock solid racing game. There hasn't been anything like this since.

Die Hard Trilogy

HYPER 37 95%

A movie-to-game adaptation that's actually worth playing. With third person action, light gun shooting and crazy taxi driving being the three different modes of play, it spread its bet across three different movies as well as genres. And cleaned up as a result. Memorable for its insane level of violence – fragging civilians into a fine red mist wasn't frowned upon, it was practically encouraged. Of course, later on came the tame sequel. Who knows, maybe one day there'll be a Die Hard Trilogy trilogy.

DIY GAMING

Net Yaroze

The PlayStation wasn't just a cut-and-dried consumer product, Sony wanted a development community to spring up around it, where any ambitious young programmer could dream of growing up to write Crash Bandicoot 7. To achieve this end, Sony produced the Net Yaroze, a special development kit designed for the home user. It consisted of a special black PlayStation, interface cables to plug into a PC or Mac, some chunky manuals, and extensive programming libraries so that anyone with a handle on the C programming language could have a crack at writing their own PlayStation games.

While only 10,000 Net Yarozes were ever made, quite a few games were successfully created on them, and they often appeared on demo discs. While most of these efforts



Devil Dice

were decidedly amateur, one actually went on to become a commercial release. Devil Dice started off as a homebrew project, but went on to become a best seller, and a defining pillar of the puzzle genre.

It's unlikely that there'll be a Net Yaroze equivalent for the PS2. Sony are not falling over themselves to give programming libraries to real game developers, let alone the public. By the same token, PS2 development kits are horribly expensive. And even if such a kit were in the hands of a bedroom banger, they would have to be autistic to take full advantage of the PS2's power. No, it looks like the age of the lone games programmer are gone forever, at least on consoles.

1997

THE FIRST CLASSICS

This year will be fondly remembered by millions for the re-birth of a certain RPG series...



Soul Blade

HYPER 42 90%

Precursor to the orgasmic Soul Calibur on Dreamcast, this sword fighting game was a rather nifty piece of warez. Featuring lightning fast weapon based combat, there were so many disciplines to learn and flashy combos to execute. Technically Soul Blade was brilliant, featuring fully animated 3D backgrounds, and gloriously detailed, smoothly animated characters. Soul Blade also introduced a damage bar for your weapon as well as your character. Aggression was encouraged, as too much blocking would break your sword! An RPG mode provided a solid extension to the lifespan of the single player experience, and we were all hooked.

Micro Machines V3

HYPER 45 91%

The Micro Machines series was already a cult classic on the 8/16bit machines before it even came near the PlayStation, but this new version was special indeed. Essentially identical gameplay, but in a fully polygonal world. The plain texture mapping looked cool and allowed the gamespeed to stay high. Plus, there were heaps of courses and vehicles, and for those with multitaps,



MMV3 was responsible for many sleepless multiplayer gaming nights. Codemasters didn't mess with the formula, just updated it. For once this was all we wanted.

Abe's Oddysee

HYPER 48 92%

Oddworld Inhabitants improved on the standard 2D platforming formula no end by creating a compellingly dark gameworld that thrived on black humour. The gameplay was mostly puzzle based, and introduced the concept of language to the game characters. With a simple set of communication commands,



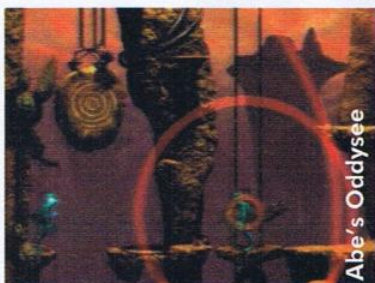
(including farting), a whole new dimension was opened up. The ability to possess other game characters and get them to do your dirty work was a compelling step forward.

Beautiful design, unique gameplay and incredible production values.

Time Crisis

HYPER 48 91%

Time Crisis rejuvenated light gun shooters in the arcades with the introduction of a foot pedal for ducking. This added an element of strategy sorely



FEATURE

Final Fantasy VII

HYPER 49 95%

The first blockbuster RPG on the PlayStation, FF7 transcended all rules of demographic logic by appealing to boy and girl, young and old alike. Despite the fact that the game characters were just little SD figures on screen, Square's post apocalyptic vision of an alternate world was masterfully realised, with an epic story, fantastic FMVs and bitmap backgrounds, and compelling quests. To many diehard RPG fans, this really rubbed in the fact that Square had neglected the N64 in favour of the PSX.



needed. Namco nailed the PlayStation port, adding in a whole new mission and crafting an excellent light gun. We just feel sorry for all the suckers out there who bought the local release and its (snigger) grey gun. We've got the black Jap gun and damn it looks good!

a retro experience, owing all its look and feel to its 16 bit predecessors. But by pursuing the 2D platform game ideal of lush animations and design, with the power of a 32 bit console, it gave the player vaster levels, more weapons and abilities, and more secrets than any to go before it. Most of all, the atmosphere and gameplay were incredible, making subtle use of the available horsepower to make for a Konami classic creepier and more expansive than ever before.

Castlevania: Symphony of the Night

HYPER 51 82%

Arguably the finest 2D platform game on the PSX, Castlevania is something of

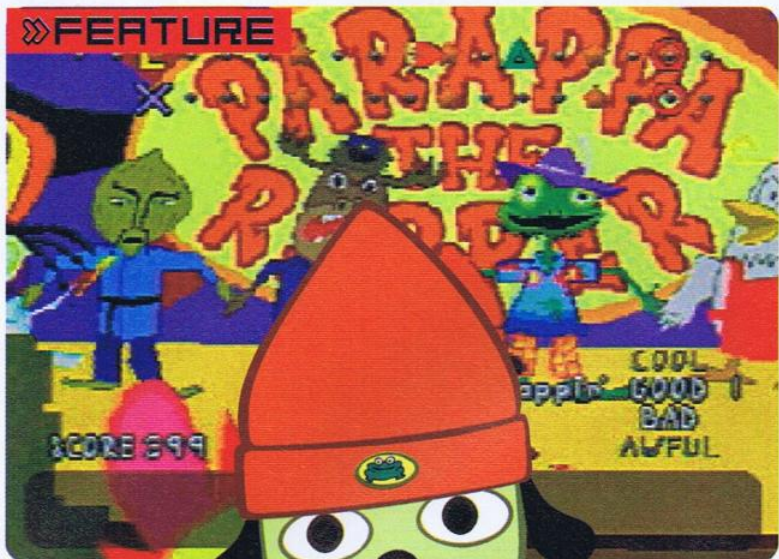
Coolboarders 2

HYPER 53 70%

The high watermark of the Coolboarders series, in turn the most popular snowboarding game on the PlayStation. This is a genre that didn't really exist until the PSX came along, and it has truly become a stoner's best friend. We've included the sequel simply because it shat on the original



»HYPER 47



so hard. Although the graphics were grainy and the "attitude" annoyed the more cynical gamers (ourselves included), the sequel really played to the strengths of both the console and the thrills of the sport. Courses were narrow and windy, requiring complete carving mastery, and at the same time generating an unprecedented feeling of speed. Combine these thrilling downhill runs with expansive trick mechanics that allowed for ludicrous chains, and you'll see why the third game looked so tame.

Parappa the Rapper

HYPER 47 72%

This may have just been a six level game where you pressed buttons in time to the music, but was so overwhelming to the senses that one couldn't help but think the game designer was on powerful mind-bending drugs. This is because he was, and Masaya Matsuura went on to create a sequel, Um Jammer Lammy, not to mention Vib Ribbon, which plunged our senses straight into the abyss. Parappa is Japanese for paper thin, and so is our hero, a rapping, kung-fu fighting mutt in baggy pants. Funky hip hop loops and samples, memorable characters, silly rhymes and limited (but fun) freestyling potential. Breakthrough game design. Bring on the PS2 sequel!



Bushido Blade

HYPER 52 84%

A fighting game noteworthy for several reasons. First, it was a finely balanced and immensely enjoyable gaming experience. Second, it was a sword fighting game where you chose not only a game character, but the weapon they used, introducing near-limitless variety. Third, it had a realistic damage modeling system. There were no energy bars; players could lose by taking a single well aimed strike. This created an immense amount of tension in each confrontation, as every action could be your last. A superb product that has yet to be matched, and the most meditative fighting game ever. Shame about the sequel. Hopefully the latest version on PS2 will fulfill the potential of the idea.

Grand Theft Auto

HYPER N/A N/A

Yet another genre-buster, GTA broke all the rules about developing a game for a relatively new machine. It looked like a SNES game, but had the sensibilities of a PC title. The world of GTA is a huge urban environment, and while the city's buildings open up like a mango before the player's eyes, the environment is essentially two-dimensional. Not that players noticed, as they were too busy stealing cars, mowing down pedestrians, and avoiding the cops to care. One of the best games celebrating the thug life.



1998

MASS APPEAL

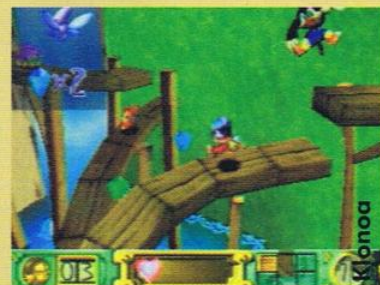
It was at this point that everyone secretly knew that the PlayStation had won the 32-bit war



Gran Turismo

HYPER 56 92%

The racing game market on PlayStation was saturated with arcade racers before Gran Turismo came along, so this highly polished product was lapped up by gamers. And for good reason, as a console simply hadn't seen a racer as realistic as this before. Gran Turismo quickly became the defacto racer for serious car nuts thanks to its realistic look, sound and feel. The depth was unprecedented too, with so many cars and options to tweak. As in real life, it took hardcore dedication and countless hours (or months) of practice to master this racer. In every department, Gran Turismo came up trumps. GT3: A-Spec will be out soon for the PS2.



followed, but this was the shiznit.

We'll be bringing you info on the PS2 sequel very soon.

Ghost In the Shell

HYPER 58 88%

Ghost In the Shell is a 3D action game which owes more to the comic book than the movie, and with good reason. For in the comic, Motoko and all her cohorts at Section 9 were fitted out with groovy spider-like cyber tanks. Of course, in the comic they could turn invisible, but I guess you can't have everything. The levels were lightweight but action packed, and the animation in the cut scenes was lavish. Perhaps over all too soon, and frustrating due to the amount of unexplored potential in the game design, this was a coherent product nonetheless. Also

Klonoa

HYPER 57 91%

noteable for its minimalist techno 2.5D platforming simply doesn't get any better than this Namco classic. Following a 2D path set on a 3D background, Klonoa was an enchanting title. The kooky fantasy world was playful, the mechanics were solid and the use of the 3D illusion used to good effect. Lame ripoffs like Pandemonium soon



\$199

THE PRICE IS RIGHT!

When the price of the PSX dropped to \$199, sales of the unit exploded, and what can be considered the golden age of the PlayStation began. Sales of games like Syphon Filter and Gran Turismo went through the roof, and everyone thought the whole happy exercise could go on forever.

soundtrack featuring such legendary artists as Derrick May, The Advent, Joey Beltram, Takkyu Ishino and Dave Angel. Well bangin'.

Colin McRae Rally

HYPER 58 90%

From little cars hooning through big environments to big cars hooning through even bigger environments, Codemasters captured and bottled the essence of rally driving with this title. Straight out of left field, this was the racing game that everyone suddenly realised they'd been craving. A huge track count, a solid graphics engine and the best rally handling mechanics ever.

Bust A Groove

HYPER 61 91%

A terminally hip fusion of the dancing and fighting genres, Bust A Groove was the ideal party game, the kind where two would play and a dozen would watch. The soundtrack was firmly rooted in J-Pop but covered most dance genres and was disturbingly addictive. The characters ranged from an industrial breaker to the ultimate disco narcissist. Graphically BAG looked astounding, due in no small part to the incredible dance animations, and the smoothness with which dancers moved from one to the next. With the depth of a fighting game, but the purpose being simply to come up with the freakiest dance routine, BAG proved quite the diversion.

Tenchu

HYPER 61 91%

A unique and ambitious take on the ninja genre. Tenchu was a 3rd person action game, but the emphasis was on avoiding the enemy by darting over



Bust A Groove



Tenchu

Metal Gear Solid

HYPER 65 93%

Probably the single best game on the PlayStation. Four years in the making, MGS took yet another crack at the elusive "interactive movie" mantle, and amazingly almost got there. Although the storyline was essentially linear, it was very strong, and the game drew you in further with great cutscenes, characters, and voice acting. Equal parts stealth and combat, the gameplay found a magnificent balance, and the entire game was executed with a mature, cinematic flair that had you gripped to the very end. Metal Gear Solid 2 looks set to continue in the same vein, and is the most eagerly awaited game for PS2, even though it won't be out until Christmas.



CARO

roof-tops, and using your superior ninja skills to sneak up and kill your targets without making a sound. The combat system was simplistic, and there were some camera control issues, but there is no doubt that Tenchu was innovative and addictive in equal parts. Unfortunately, Tenchu 2 created as many problems as it fixed. A third game is planned for PS2. Imagine the possibilities!

Spyro the Dragon

HYPER 61 85%

A deceptively engaging platform game, Spyro employed huge environments and a progression system that rewarded the young as well as the old. While completing the game was relatively easy, extracting every last secret was somewhat more challenging. Spyro also demonstrated Sony's grip on the PSX hardware, looking comparable to some of Nintendo's 64 bit offerings. Spyro 2 and 3 each built solidly on the games that went before it, adding new features and modes and generally adding value. For some reason there is no word yet on whether Spyro is coming to the PS2.

Street Fighter Alpha 3

HYPER 66 90%

32-bit Street Fighter at its best. Capcom actually bothered putting some work into this port, and it showed - Alpha 3 was close to arcade perfect. In fact, it was more than arcade perfect thanks to all the extra options and playmodes Capcom packed in. For the first time ever on PlayStation, the loading times were minimal, and with over 30 characters from all SF eras to choose from, this was the 2D fighting god incarnate. On the odd rainy day you can hear the Hadokens.

Ape Escape

HYPER 70 92%

Ape Escape is still the only PSX game to date to take full advantage of the Dual Shock controller. A unique 3D platformer starring some kid trying to rescue a bunch of escaped monkeys, Ape Escape cleverly used the analogue sticks for such varied abilities as rowing, rotating the blades of a hand held helicopter, and controlling a remote control car. The puzzles and challenges utilised all these abilities to create a varied and fresh game, steeped in character and humour.

NTSC

Games you'll never play

Unlike more versatile mediums, like audio CDs, not all PlayStation games are playable on all PSXs. The world of gaming is divided by language and video standards that were set in place long before video games were even invented, and as a result it's an uphill battle for any game from America or Japan to be released in Australia.

Japan is by far the trickiest country to get games out of, for not only does the game code itself have to be converted from NTSC to PAL, but because we share the same video standard as Europe a game has to be translated into all the major Euro-languages as well as English. This is all well and good for a million plus selling blockbuster like Final Fantasy,



Tobal 2

but all too often games are passed over because it's deemed to be not worth the effort.

Games like Tobal No. 2, Xenogears, Legend of Mana and Chrono Cross were all released in the US, but due to budget limitations suffered by European distributors, they'll never see the light of day in Australia. The determined can play imported copies of these games on imported or mod-chipped PSXs, but they pay a premium to do so. The general public is still left high and dry.

1999

A WARM FUZZY GLOW

Publishers were making money, consumers were happy and the games were rockin'



Syphon Filter

HYPER 68 92%

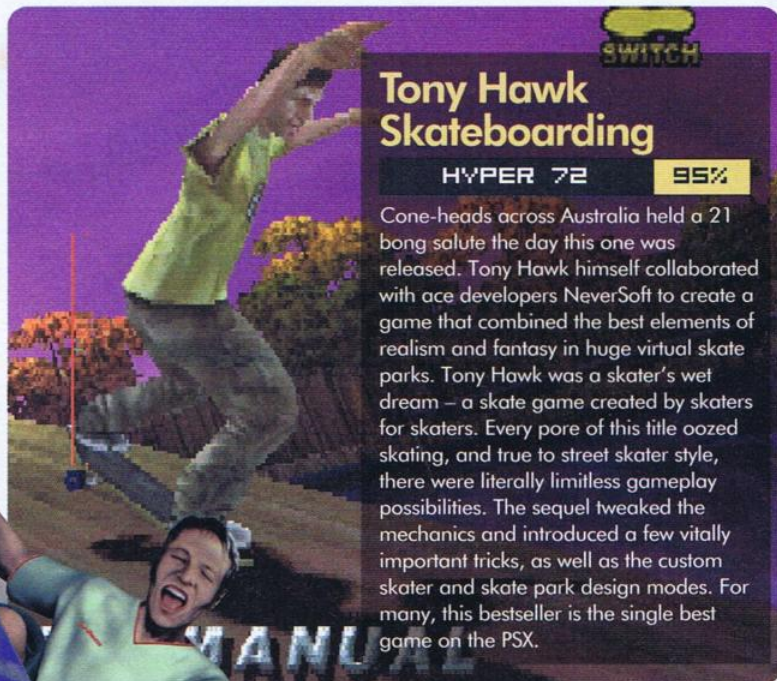
Yet another linear 3rd person action blaster, but not a bad effort. Perhaps less cerebral than Metal Gear Solid, but more accessible. The player controlled CIA operative Gabriel Logan on a series of daring terrorist-killing missions. The sequel was essentially more of the same, but the Australian public loved it like a horribly spoilt son, and bought it in droves. For gamers with an appetite for destruction and a military bent, Syphon Filter was the game of choice.



Silent Hill

HYPER 70 90%

A survival horror game with unique graphics and a genuinely spooky-arsed setting. Rather than just fighting waves of zombies, you found yourself in a small American town infested with demons. The emphasis was less on straight horror, and more on messing with your mind through the grotesque and warped. The story was weak, but the atmosphere has yet to be matched. Silent Hill involved combat, surprise plot twists, multiple endings, and we eagerly await the sequel coming to PS2. When it comes to horror on the PlayStation, Silent Hill is the one.



Tony Hawk Skateboarding

HYPER 72 95%

Cone-heads across Australia held a 21 bong salute the day this one was released. Tony Hawk himself collaborated with ace developers NeverSoft to create a game that combined the best elements of realism and fantasy in huge virtual skate parks. Tony Hawk was a skater's wet dream – a skate game created by skaters for skaters. Every pore of this title oozed skating, and true to street skater style, there were literally limitless gameplay possibilities. The sequel tweaked the mechanics and introduced a few vitally important tricks, as well as the custom skater and skate park design modes. For many, this bestseller is the single best game on the PSX.



Driver

HYPER 70 89%

A simple concept, but a very satisfying one. Driver recreated the look and feel of 70s movie car chases, with mammoth cars travelling at cinematic speeds through accurately modeled US city streets. The sequel added a two player mode for cops and robbers antics, and also featured cut scenes better than any to go before them. The gameplay is just getting from A to B, but it had never been this visceral. By which we mean fun.

powerslide mechanics where you could chain powerslides together for mega-powerslides. A decent four player title as well.

Medal Of Honor

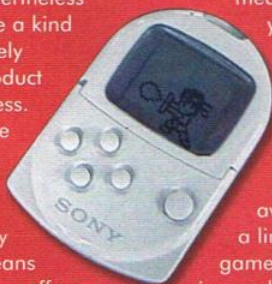
HYPER 77 81%

The PlayStation had great difficulty recreating the thrills of FPSs, thanks to limited hardware and the lack of a mouse or keyboard (Doom worked so well because the graphics were sprite based, and you couldn't look up or down so the controller mapped perfectly). Alien Trilog, Powerslave and Quake 2 were all okay, but Medal Of Honor is really the only FPS we'd play on the system. Medal Of Honor had shortcomings, but in the quest to defeat the Nazi hordes, these were soon forgotten. The sequel, Medal Of Honor: Underground, has turned out similarly well.

POA

The PocketStation fiasco

Perhaps the biggest anticlimax in the whole PlayStation experience, the PocketStation nevertheless managed to generate a kind of hysteria that is rarely associated with a product so small and so useless. Roughly the same size and shape as the VMU on the Dreamcast, it promised to be a fully functional PDA, a means of downloading games off your PSX and playing them anywhere, anytime. Reality fell a little short of these expectations. For starters, the thing was tiny, no bigger than a regular memory card. Although it had six little buttons on it for playing games with, they were so tiny and close together that this was



an exercise doomed to failure. The screen was miniscule, a mere 36 by 36 pixels. And perhaps worst of all was the fact that it had the same memory size (1 Meg) as a regular memory card, and when you downloaded programs into it, this meant there was less room for your normal game saves.

While some games did make imaginative use of the device, such as Street Fighter Zero 3, which allowed the player to train their fighters while away from the PSX (albeit in a limited capacity), most games following its introduction ignored it completely. So perhaps it's for the best that this glorified Tamagotchi was never sold outside of Japan. The few Australians who managed to get their hands on them perpetually testify as to their uselessness.

A rare dud for Sony, and proof that they're not infallible.

Crash Team Racing

HYPER 75 90%

The PlayStation software shelves may be clogged with crappy kart racing games, but this is the cream of the crop. CTR has all the magic karting ingredients: little people with big heads, lots of powersliding and shortcuts, and rock solid gameplay. Naughty Dog's last game in the Crash Bandicoot franchise, and arguably the best to date. Indeed, the highest tribute we can pay this game is that it feels like a Nintendo game. Where Naughty Dog truly eclipsed Mario Kart was with the addition of brilliant



2000

As the PSX began to show its age, the market became restless and attentions turned to the PS2



Vagrant Story

Vagrant Story

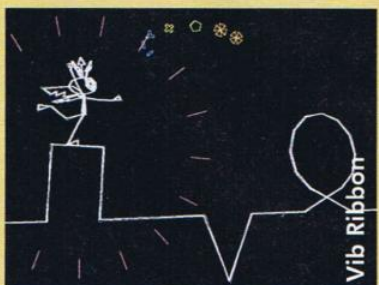
HYPER B3 95%

A fantasy RPG with a staggeringly complex, yet profoundly satisfying combat system. Real time and turn-based combat elements meet head on, and battle is resolved in a realistic fashion, with location-based damage and a combo system that rewards careful timing. And the stats are so rigorous they keep track of what kind of shoes you're wearing. The storyline is also quite compelling, and the atmosphere makes for a splendid excursion into gothic architecture. Vagrant Story is like a super evolved Final Fantasy.

Vib Ribbon

HYPER B4 83%

Yet another game where you must press combinations of buttons in time to the music. However, this is the first ever game where you play a stick figure rabbit in a universe of



Vib Ribbon



monochrome wire-frame graphics. It looks like something from 20 years ago, but feels like an ultimate form of leisure from the distant future. Proof if any were needed that graphics aren't everything. Plus, it's all generated on the fly, so you can make little Vibri dance to any CD in your collection.

Hogs Of War

HYPER B4 83%

Hogs Of War is an outstanding turn-based 3D battle game for two reasons. Firstly, it takes the Worms formula and successfully translates it into three dimensions.

Secondly, most of the voice acting is done by Rik Mayall, who played Rick on The Young Ones and Richie on Bottom. It's truly a rare treat to hear his voice in any new product, and he takes to the task of voicing war-hungry swine with gusto. Yet another game that steps outside existing genres, and benefits us all as a result. Somewhat hampered by technical problems, we'd really like to see a sequel on a new platform.

Team Buddies

HYPER B5 85%

It took five years for someone to do it, but Psygnosis took the initiative and finally made a game for the PlayStation involving simple top-



Team Buddies

TIME TO MOVE ON?

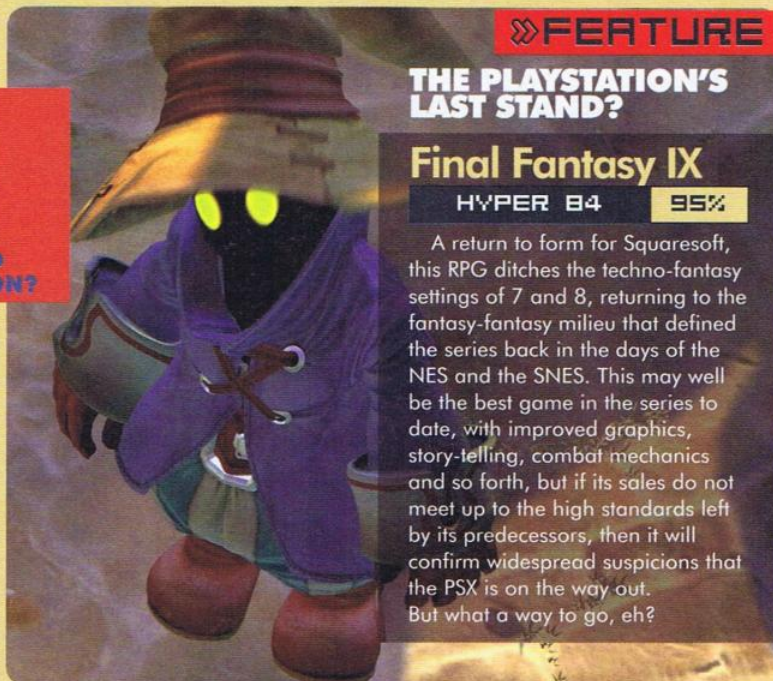
FEATURE

THE PLAYSTATION'S LAST STAND?

Final Fantasy IX

HYPER B4 95%

A return to form for Squaresoft, this RPG ditches the techno-fantasy settings of 7 and 8, returning to the fantasy-fantasy milieu that defined the series back in the days of the NES and the SNES. This may well be the best game in the series to date, with improved graphics, story-telling, combat mechanics and so forth, but if its sales do not meet up to the high standards left by its predecessors, then it will confirm widespread suspicions that the PSX is on the way out. But what a way to go, eh?



down combat involving little men and tanks and so forth. The mechanics are simple, but the gameplay is highly diverse, pairing complex task-driven missions with frantic four-player action. Most importantly, your little men look like pharmaceutical capsules. Once you get your head around the controls, this one's hard to put down.

Monster Rancher

HYPER N/A N/A

This came out in Japan years ago, and even the Yanks have had it for ages. It's

similar to the Pokémon concept, where you nurture, train and fight bizarre looking monsters, but differs in a few key areas. Most notably, you can insert any CD, and the game will analyse the data layout to randomly generate a freaky looking beast for you to tame (there's actually only a limited number of creatures, but the stats will differ, and it's kind of cool being able to say "my Big Heavy Stuff will wipe the floor with your Photoshop 6.0"). Between battles you can indulge in a convoluted eugenics regime with the aim of breeding the ultimate monster. Unique.

2001

THE FUTURE

The PSone and beyond...

In some ways, the PlayStation deal keeps getting better and better. The slick new PSone unit is cheaper than ever before, not to mention streamlined and stylish, with a futuristic finish just right for the space age of the 21st century. Sony even say that, if we're good, there will be a portable LCD screen to plug into it, and wireless network play over mobile phones!

Of course, it's not all roses for the PSX gamer of tomorrow. The PSone has dispensed with the link cable port at the back, so the tiny fraction of gamers who used it will feel a little disenfranchised. Also gone is the reset button, and Nintendo owners will doubtless take delight in pointing out it still only has two controller ports. Perhaps most disturbing of all is the



fact that it's now being viewed as a "kidz" machine. Of all the new games coming out, a disturbing number feature Loony Tunes, Smurfs, and all the Disney mainstays in all-singing, all-dancing, simplistic platform games.

There are few avenues left in terms of programming innovation, and with shrinking sales any other kind of innovation is too much of a risk.

The PSone is little more than a friendly ghost. Tomorrow belongs to new consoles that will do new things.




HYPER 51

REVIEWS

p54 **STAR WARS: BATTLE FOR NABOO**

» N64

The prequel to Rogue Squadron locks us in its tractor beam, uses its jedi mind trick and makes us its gold bikini clad slave...


**HYPER»
GAME OF
THE MONTH**

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THE HYPER CREW'S TOP 5

Eliot Fish - Editor

1. Counter-Strike - PC
"Best (Team) Game Ever."
2. Battle For Naboo - N64
3. Mario Tennis - Game Boy Color
4. Final Fantasy IX - PSone
5. Rune - PC

Cam Shea - Deputy Editor

1. Super Mario Kart - SNES
"Just getting some practise in ahead of the GBA release!"
2. Mario Tennis - N64
3. Pokémon Puzzle League - N64
4. Winback - N64
5. Roommania #203 - Dreamcast

Malcolm Campbell - Art guy

1. Project Justice - DC
"Capcom take the comedy angle. And win!"
2. Caesar III - Mac
3. Daytona USA 2001 - DC
4. Guilty Gear X - DC
5. Vagrant Story - PSone

THE HYPER SCORING SYSTEM

The Overall Score - what's it all about?

- 90+** Excellent and worthy of a Big Rubber Stamp. Buy it!
- 80-89** Very good. This is a quality game, but not perfect.
- 70-79** Good, verging on average. Try before you buy.
- 60-69** Average, verging on bad. This game is badly flawed.
- 50-59** Bad game design and possibly not even worth renting.
- 0-49** These games simply suck. A total waste of money!

HYPER

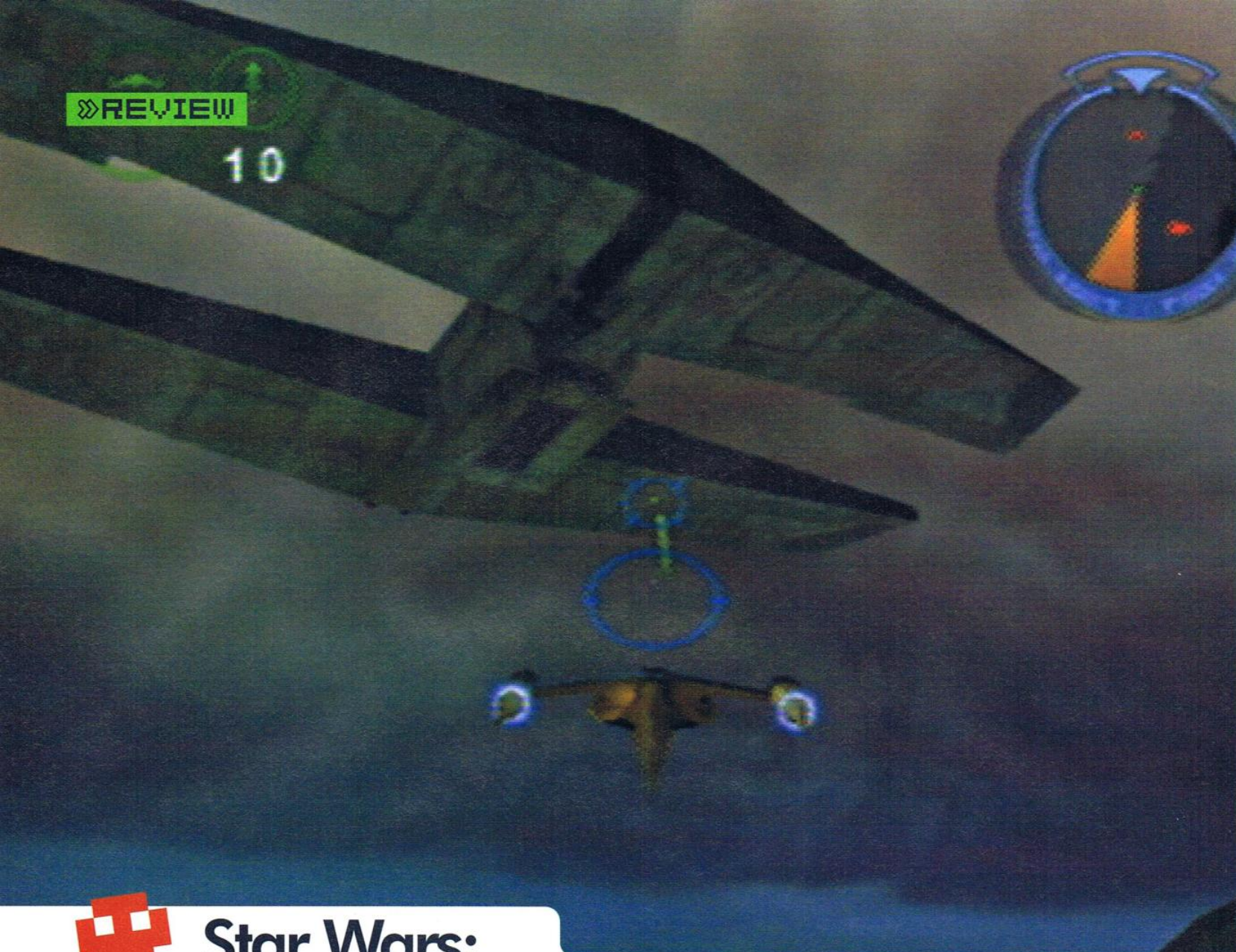
All in-house PC previews and reviews are done on Gateway computers.

www.au.gateway.com



REVIEW

10



HYPER
GAME OF THE MONTH

Star Wars: Battle For Naboo

» N64

CATEGORY: Space Combat >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: LucasArts >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Eliot Fish gets out his lightsaber to carve his name in the desk.

From the moment the giant Nintendo logo falls down and crushes Jar Jar Binks, you know this game is going to be good. Even though LucasArts haven't had a great track record lately, Factor 5 are the folks behind Battle For Naboo, which is almost a guarantee that this is going to be just as good as the wonderful Rogue Squadron.

But is shooting down Trade Federation droid fighters over the rolling hills of Naboo as much fun as stopping a TIE bomber strafing run on Corellia? Can a bunch of faceless Naboo pilots created for this game have the same charm as Luke, Han and Chewie? Well, almost.

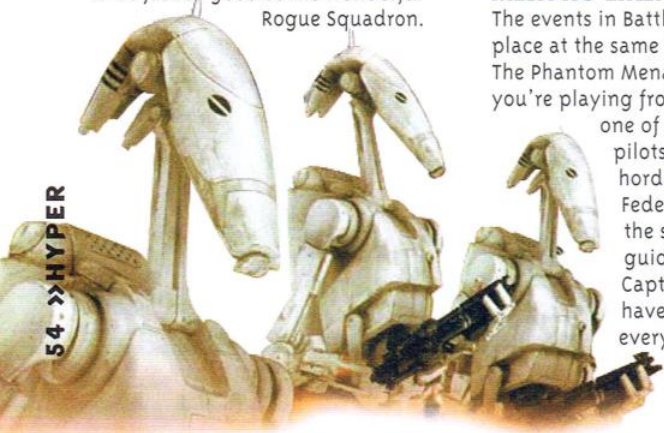
MESA NO LIKEN DEM OUTSIDERS

The events in Battle For Naboo take place at the same time as the movie The Phantom Menace, it's just that you're playing from the perspective of one of the poor Nabooian pilots who has to face the hordes of Trade Federation droids behind the scenes. Under the guidance of the hardy Captain Panaka, you have to take control of everything from an N1

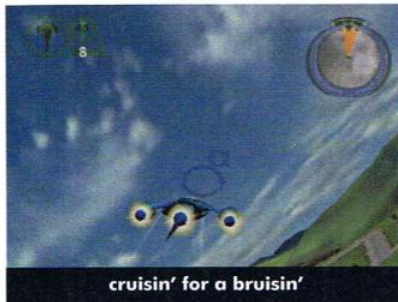
Starfighter to a heavy STAP, Federation gunboat, Naboo police cruiser and more. You're out to not only knock back the evil army of droids, but free enslaved Nabooians and buy some time until the Queen returns. The battle is raging in the air, on the land and in the water too. Variety in spades... but depth?

It seems that Factor 5 wanted to make it apparent from the get go that Battle For Naboo is a very different experience to Rogue Squadron, as in the very first mission you're at the controls of a Flash Speeder, shooting your way through the streets of Naboo to escape Theed and get to safety. As opposed to the focus on dogfighting in Rogue Squadron, fighting at ground level plays a massive part in this title, with most missions having a mid-way point where you enter a hangar and switch

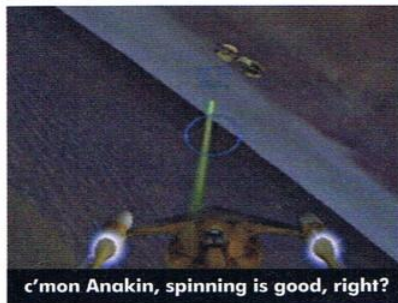
from a ground vehicle to a starfighter or vice versa. One particular mission in which you have to liberate prisoners, requires you start in an N1 Starfighter, switch to a heavy STAP and then finally to a Gian Speeder to finish things off. You'll literally be face to face with Battledroids on foot and on STAPs, as well as the awesome firepower of the Battletanks and Destroyer Droids. You



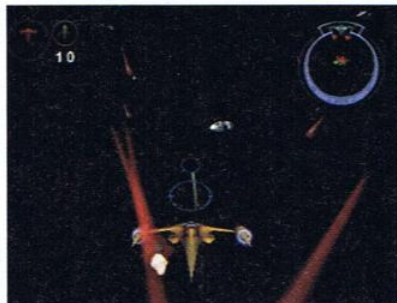
kiss your trade franchise goodbye



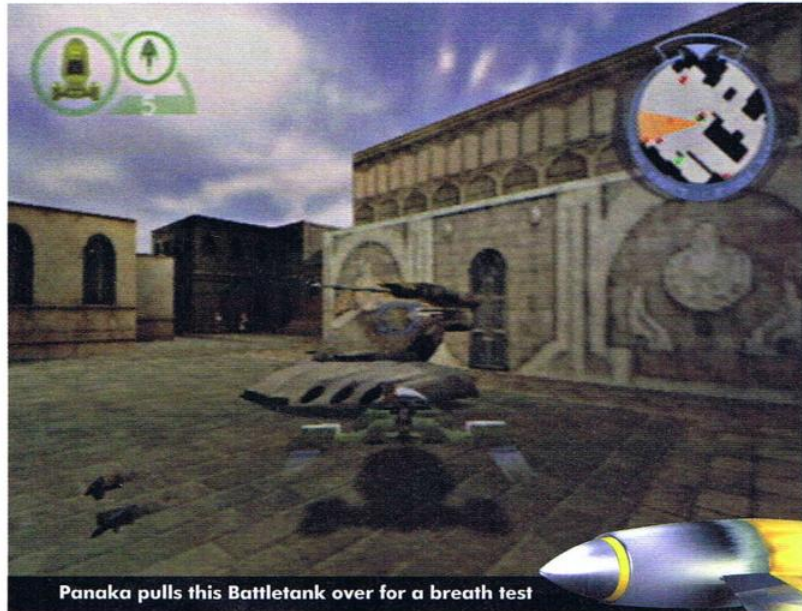
cruisin' for a bruisin'



c'mon Anakin, spinning is good, right?



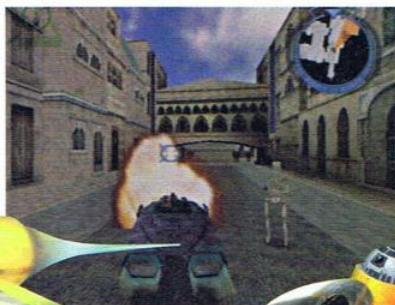
»REVIEW



Panaka pulls this Battletank over for a breath test



the gungans are cornered! ah well...



Battle For Naboo is, as Darth Vader would say, "most impressive"

can even run the droids down if you're in a hurry to get somewhere. At first it seems strange that you can't reverse your vehicle out of a tight spot, but the turning circle is good enough to put up with this slight oversight, because you can simply turn around back the way you want to go. The control of the speeders is great, and you'll certainly get a sense of speed as you zip along across the ground, smoke billowing up behind you. They're pretty weakly shielded though, so you'll never want to spend too long inside one, and frankly the space combat is what everyone has paid the admission to play. You won't be disappointed either.

Whilst there are only two missions in orbit around the planet, one of those missions, the final attack on the Trade Federation Droid Control ship is a brilliant final mission. Finally, some true free-flight Star Wars space combat is available on the N64. You'll be

dogfighting your heart out here against hordes of droid fighters, dodging, weaving, rolling — doing anything to stay alive. It ain't easy! The droid fighters are exceptionally nimble, and you'll find that it's far harder to stay on their tail than it was with the TIE fighters in Rogue Squadron. The difficulty has certainly been cranked up

this time around, and no mission is a complete cakewalk. With only three lives to play with, you can expect to be replaying certain sections over and

over until you figure out the safest way to approach it. This would be a problem if the game was frustrating or dull, but luckily, you'll be more than happy to replay these missions, as they really are quite entertaining:

NABOO HOO HOO

The actual spacecraft designs in The Phantom Menace create a bit of a problem in videogame form. All the

ships are sleek, slim-line craft that are really quite hard to discern from a distance. Sometimes you'll find yourself shooting at another N1 because you've mistaken it for a droid fighter. It's easy to do. There was no mistaking a TIE from an X-Wing in Rogue Squadron, simply because the designs were so radically different in shape. It's also a tough job getting a bead on a slim, bony Battledroid when you're zipping along the ground, and you'll find that they somehow manage to survive a barrage of shots from your diving starfighter at times, much to your frustration. This isn't really a problem with the game design, but more that the Episode One machinery doesn't translate as well to videogame as the classic Star Wars does. Well at least, not in this incarnation. A small picky point, but the proof is right there in your crosshair. Which leads us to another point.

Use the cheats, Luke

Here are some cool cheats to get the most out of your battle for Naboo.

Go to the options screen, select Passwords and then try these codes...

TALKTOME — After entering this code, any mission you play will be accompanied by DVD-style commentary from the developers. A first for a console game and simply amazing stuff.

LOVEHUTT — Enter this to check out a piccie of the development team. Aww how sweet.

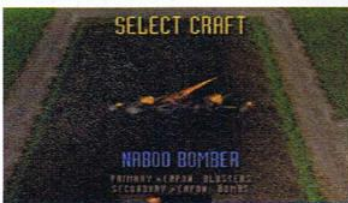
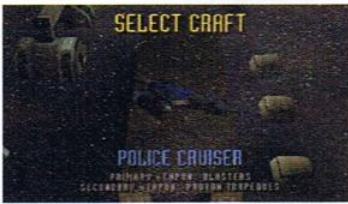
PATHETIC — Need some extra lives? This cheat gives you unlimited lives. Don't use it until you've finished the game though, you lame-o!

LEC&FIVE — Enter this to unlock the bonus Federation Secrets.

KOOLSTUF — This cheat will reveal the Showroom that you can select in the Options screen. Check out concept art and listen to all the music tracks.

!!! The LucasArts game Obi-Wan was cancelled for the PC. Will we see it on PS2, Xbox or Gamecube?

REVIEW



choose your craft of destruction and then wipe them out, all of them



STAR WARS

The Queue for Episode 2 starts here...

So are there any hints, clues or snippets of Episode 2 information hidden amongst the lines of code in Battle For Naboo? Well, unfortunately, not that we are aware of. If you remember, in Rogue Squadron, the N1 Starfighter was a hidden craft, which was before Episode One was released. If we're lucky, there could be something Episode 2 related hidden deep within the game, although maybe it's just wishful thinking. It is mentioned in the Trade Federation Secrets level of some advanced Battledroid technologies though and LucasFilm have registered SuperBattledroid.com...



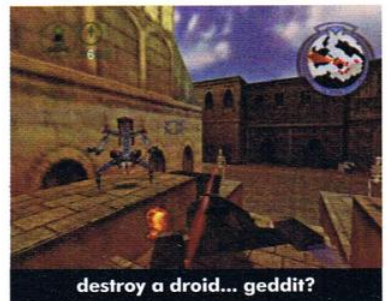
let's hope that Starfighter on the PS2 has half as much gameplay as Battle For Naboo

A bunch of new craft were designed for Battle Of Naboo, such as the Trade Federation Gunboat (fully equipped for battling it out in the swamps). Whilst the Gunboat is unique and adds a whole new dimension to the game, another new ship, the Naboo Police Cruiser seems almost irrelevant when you already have the N1 Starfighter which is simply a better version of the same craft. Possibly another more unique aircraft would have helped to give the mission objectives a twist. The Naboo Bomber is slow and only really useable in one mission, and even then, bombing targets isn't really necessary. All up, it seems that some of the craft are woefully underused. There is no doubt that more use could have been made of the different craft's unique abilities. In fact, we can think of many

cool scenarios that Factor 5 and LucasArts failed to include... how about a mission where you have to take out a huge Federation Lander before it can deploy troops? Or a bombing run on the Federation army as it rolls off to kill the Gungans? Instead, you'll find yourself mostly picking off gun turrets and dogfighting droid fighters.

Whilst there is quite a lot of variety throughout the game, some missions definitely could have done with a lot more depth or secondary objectives. Because a lot of the combat is played out on the ground, a lot of the thrill is lacking slightly. There's far more fun to be had with the whole cat and mouse of a dogfight, than there is accelerating in one direction and shooting in a straight line at a stationary target. In the way the

missions are presented though, you certainly won't get bored, but some more depth was probably needed here. As a whole, the game also felt a little short, as we happily completed it in about 7 hours of play time, although to be fair that is without enjoying all the extra stuff, like fighting for Gold and Silver medals or playing the extra secret levels...

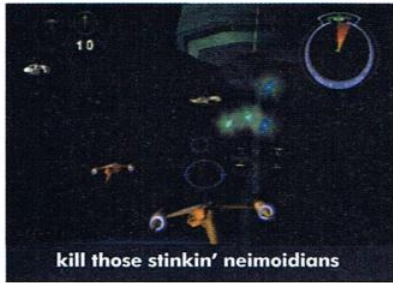


destroy a droid... geddit?

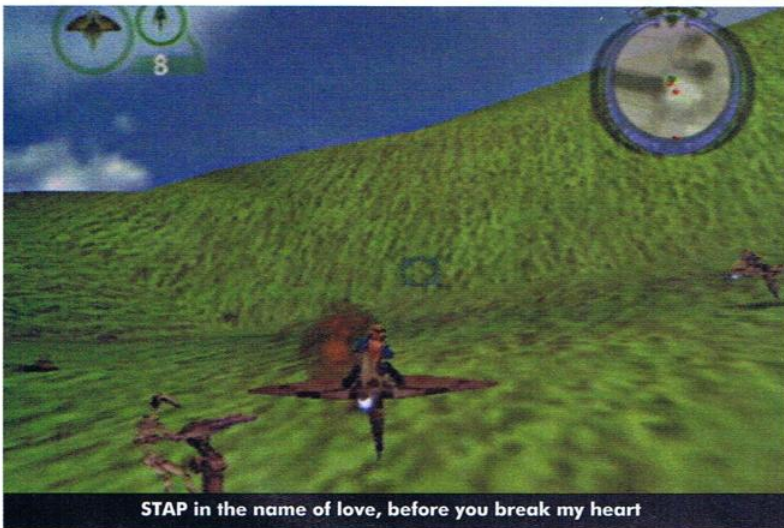


The Power of the PC

LucasArts have announced that Battle For Naboo will be released for PC, much like Rogue Squadron enjoyed both N64 and PC incarnations. What can we expect from the PC version? Well, if we use Rogue Squadron as an example, then we can expect far better visuals, improved sound, and that's about it. For some that will be enough, but just don't expect it to be up to the usual PC standards of staggering depth and beauty.



kill those stinkin' neimoidians



STAP in the name of love, before you break my heart

Why a multiplayer mode couldn't have been introduced we're not sure...

MAXI-BIG DA FORCE

It's amazing how much speech, great music and how many fantastic sound effects Factor 5 has managed to squish into a Nintendo 64 cartridge. Technically, Battle For Naboo is, as Darth Vader would say, "most impressive". The whining engines of the droid fighters, the buzz of the STAPs, the familiar laser gun noises and the radio chatter really bring this game to life. You'll feel totally absorbed in the Star Wars universe, which is a big plus for fans. Visually, the game uses the expansion pak to good effect, with crisp ship models, big environments (albeit sparsely populated) and some funky lighting.

The game never really slows down which is great, especially considering that many missions get extremely hectic. All up, the presentation is simply excellent, and once you unlock the showroom, you can even take a close look at heaps of concept artwork (Soul Calibur anyone?) and listen to all the music tracks in the "concert hall".

It seems that you'll have to work very hard to unlock everything there is to see in Battle For Naboo, as it is a task even just accomplishing the silver medals. Why a multiplayer mode couldn't have been introduced we're not sure, as there is plenty of opportunity here for a dogfighting arena or even capture the queen (flag)

REVIEW

WIN!

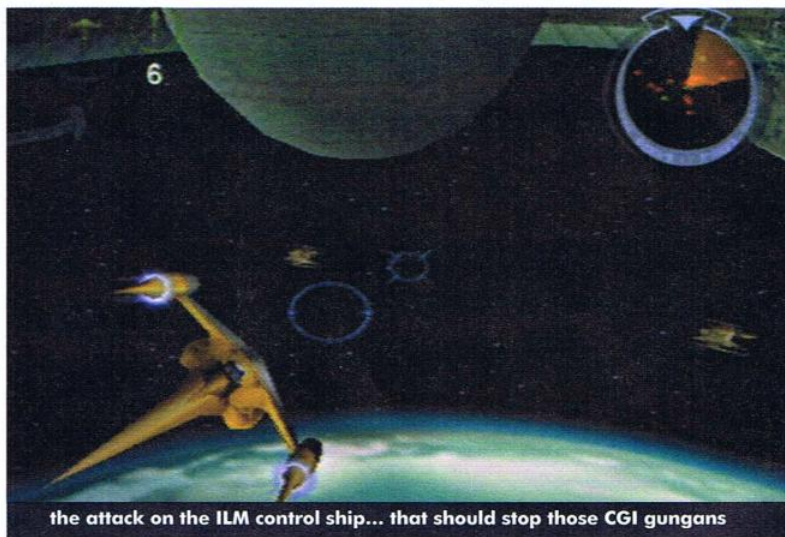
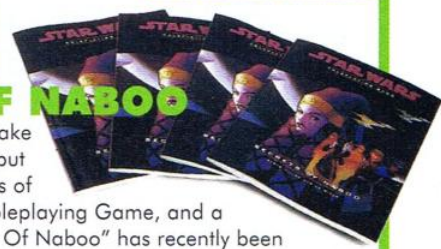
THE SECRETS OF NABOO

The battle for Naboo doesn't just take place on the big and little screen, but also in your imagination... Wizards of the Coast publish the Star Wars Roleplaying Game, and a brand new adventure "The Secrets Of Naboo" has recently been released. If you're interested in investigating what Star Wars RPGing is all about, then we heartily recommend you pop down to your local games shop and check it out. You can also find out more about these cool RPGs on the net, at www.wizards.com.

Meanwhile, Wizards of the Coast have generously offered us FIVE copies of "The Secrets Of Naboo" to giveaway!

To win, answer the following question: **Who built C3PO?**

Put your answer, along with your name and address on the back of an envelope and send it to: **Naboo to you too, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.** Get into it.



the attack on the ILM control ship... that should stop those CGI gungans



PLUS: Great atmosphere, challenging missions and lots of replayability.

MINUS: The mission structure isn't great, and there should be more.

VISUALS 88 SOUND 92 GAMEPLAY 88

OVERALL 89

SUPPORTS: Expansion Pak required, Rumble Pak

Spectacular dogfights and that inspiring Star Wars theme...

» REVIEW



frustrated? just go punch a few pokémon toys, it works a treat



don't lose your block



Pokémon Puzzle League » N64

CATEGORY: Puzzle >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Nintendo >> PRICE: \$79.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

It's an old-school block party... according to **Cam Shea**

Pokémon Puzzle League has sucked us right in... but strangely enough this has nothing to do with Pokémon. In fact, you could take everything to do with Pokémon out of this title, and nothing much would change. Pokémon Puzzle League is quite simply an excellent puzzle game, with the Pokémon license tacked on to make it more appealing to non puzzle heads.

To make things even more interesting, Pokémon Puzzle League's play mechanics are a reinvention of an old Nintendo title — Tetris Attack. While it would be easy to claim that Nintendo are blatantly recycling game ideas, this wouldn't be particularly fair. Tetris Attack was a great puzzler that didn't receive the attention it deserved, so Nintendo have every right to bring it back with a more mainstream appeal.

GIRLFRIEND, YOU NEED A POKÉ-MAKEOVER...

With that out of the way, let's talk play mechanics. The layout of the screen is divided in two, with one half being your playfield, and the other side your opponent's. Each player starts the game with their screen a few lines deep at the bottom in blocks. You have the ability

to swap two blocks horizontally, and the aim is to link together three or more blocks of the same colour either on the horizontal or vertical axis. When linked sequentially, these blocks disappear. Once you're setting up four or five block combos, the next step is to unleash chains, where one combo will set off another (and so on) as the blocks above fall into place. The bigger the chain, the more points you're awarded, and the greater the deluge on the other side of the screen.

Of course, while you're frantically trying to set up combos and chains, new rows of blocks are rising from beneath the screen and your opponent is dumping blocks on top of you, making the game quite a frantic race.

Puzzle League comes packing several modes, including Marathon — a never-ending, ever-faster one player mode, a decent training section, the standard championship with several difficulty levels, and a 3D mode. The 3D take on the game is quite cool, basically being an extended playfield wrapped around on itself to create a cylinder. In this mode, you have to stay aware of the level of blocks at the rear as well as the front, but if you can keep track of

everything there's fantastic potential to string combos together.

A LICENSING BONANZA? NOOO

For all the Pokémon fans out there, the Pokémon theme has been relatively well integrated into the game, but only at the level of garnish. For instance, throughout the championships, you're awarded a plethora of badges, but these have absolutely no functional value whatsoever. Likewise, at the start of each bout, you have the option to select one of three Pokémon. Your choice makes no difference to the gameplay whatsoever, the only discernible difference being in the sound effects and the appearance of your blocks. It might have been interesting for Nintendo to incorporate some differences. For example, Pikachu might be able to move the cursor around the screen faster than Bulbosaur, but switch blocks slower. Some kind of reward for battle experience might also have been cool, so that your general abilities became swifter, or you learnt unique special attacks.

Despite the licensing bonanza, we're not going to get all cynical on yo' ass, because the Pokémon shenanigans add a nice interface that most puzzle games lack. Good fun. <<<



PLUS: Great puzzle mechanics and plenty of options.

MINUS: The lack of a four-player mode is disappointing.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
78	78	90

OVERALL
88

Puzzle and Poké-freaks alike will love and revere Puzzle League.

Virtual 5.1 Sound. Just Unreal!



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Severance: Blade of Darkness

CATEGORY: Action >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: Codemasters >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Dan Toose loses his head over Rebel Act's impressive debut.

» PC

A It's not often that a new developer shows up and manages to blow some minds with a game engine that chuckles heartily at those before it, but Spanish game developers Rebel Act have "gone the extra step" in both realistic lighting and physics. This powerful game engine is powering a medieval fantasy action game, that takes a crack at the whole 3D melee combat adventure, much like Die by the Sword, although with its own distinct style and manner.

This is no Baldur's Gate II in terms of plot or intrigue. Blade of Darkness is an action title that focuses primarily on hand to hand combat, with a spattering of bow and arrow goodness, plus a bit of simplistic puzzle solving. The basic gist is that an evil that once threatened the land is coming back,

and only the fabled Sword of Darkness can defeat the evil ... if it's in the hands of a capable hero.

LIVE BY THE SWORD

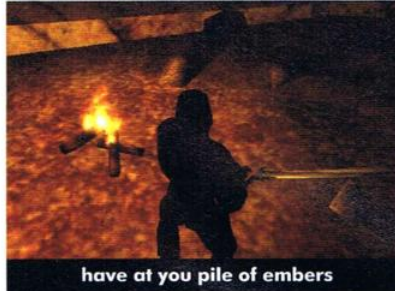
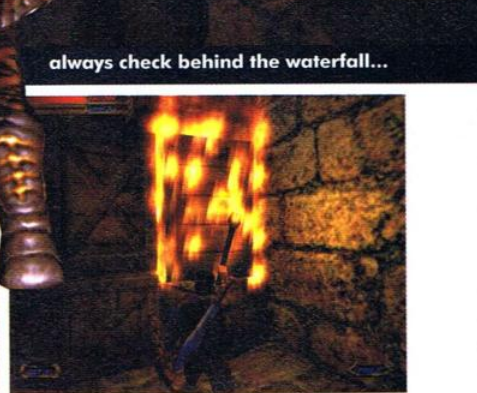
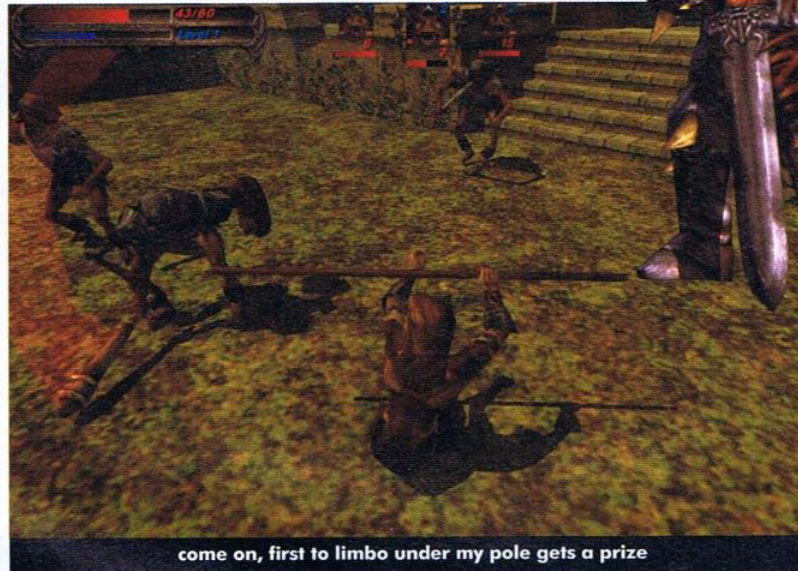
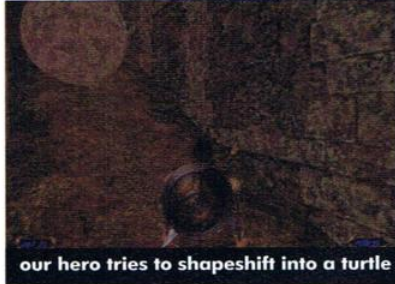
Enter our brave adventurer, who the player chooses from one of four character classes. The options include a knight, a barbarian, an Amazon, and a dwarf. Each character has a rating for defence and offence, and as you defeat enemies, you gain experience, which in turn helps you gain levels. Each character class has various special combos and attacks, which they can use once they reach the appropriate level. So basically, there are RPG elements to this action game, although the only real stat managing you can perform is to choose your weapon and shield.

Despite the use of 3D worlds, and a first/third person perspective, Rebel

Act rejected strafing and opted for the inclusion of a lock-on feature that makes you face your opponent, and from here your "turn" keys become "circle opponent" keys. The jump key becomes a dodge key in lock on mode, and of course there are buttons for attack and block.

Unlike Die by the Sword where you can create attack swings on the fly, you simply choose your attacks by pressing different movement keys along with the attack button. That may sound limited, but pressing buttons in certain sequences will result in combos and special attacks, as long as you're sufficient level to





less intelligent opponents **whip out the texta** to draw a dotted line on their neck

know the move.

The further into Severance you venture, the more diverse combat becomes, although it seems that once you've got your evasion and blocking skills down, how you choose to attack is somewhat unimportant... With a wonderful exception. There are times you'll be close to death, and your opponent will be quite healthy. In these situations you can land a powerful blow to a vulnerable limb... Or neck. The more time consuming swings tend to produce the most decapitations, but a smart opponent will hit you while you spend time attacking. Attacking relentlessly does not work, as you have an energy meter, and can tire yourself into defencelessness. This is also a means of deterring you from using the biggest weapon you can find, as they require more energy to use. Who cares if you have a 6' claymore if you can't swing the thing without falling over?

DIE BY THE SWORD

Which brings us to enemy AI, which is for the most part very impressive. Weaker, less intelligent opponents tend to lead with a simple attack and whip out the texta to draw a dotted line on their neck for you, while "bosses" will open with combos to give you less chance of countering, and will also use shields effectively. The AI even goes as far as pressing the attack if it feels you're cornered, and will go for a powerful blow to break your shield if you stand there holding it out as though that's meant to deter it. Enemies can navigate the terrain and objects in order to reach you, and they never stand facing the other way waiting to be hit.

Although done well, these combat features aren't breakthroughs. Severance does however break ground with some fantastic displays of an advanced physics engine. Not only are many objects in the game breakable (like barrels with food in them, etc),

but also when you break them, the pieces that shatter away all move in a realistic manner. The same goes for objects you throw, or even just bump into. If you knock a barrel over onto its side, it will roll accordingly, and throwing a torch highlights just how well Rebel Act have managed to simulate the movement of a relatively complex object like a cylinder in a 3D environment. Throwing a lit torch would bring us to the other amazing feature of Severance, and that's the lighting.

We've all thought of coloured dynamic lighting as a pretty thing, but shadow effects are rarely done in a lifelike manner, or only work off characters, but don't produce realistic dynamic shadows off the environment when it is under dynamic light. In Severance, light will cast realistic shadows off ANY object or structure. If you open a door into a well lit room, the light will come through the doorway and illuminate the area you »



Reach for the bone, it might save your life!

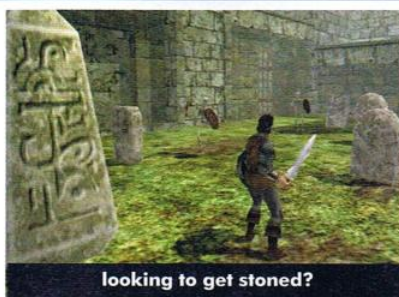
Something that all gamers who appreciate morbid slapstick gore have approved of is the concept of taking an opponent's limb and attacking them with it. Sometimes you'll cause limb loss when you finish an enemy, and when this happens, you are free to pick it up and use it as a bludgeoning weapon. You can also use most common objects lying around as desperation weapons, including stools, buckets, books, and of course old bones. These items can be thrown into traps to set them off, so they're practical as well as amusing.



well, you're just asking to get that butt kicked



never trust a dentist with an axe



looking to get stoned?



lonely? call me now



are in, not just in one sudden "pop" to cater for the open doorway, but moving the light along the ground, walls, and even moving creatures, as the edge of the door moves across to reveal more light. This may not sound like a REALLY big deal, but having life-like light compliments every other aspect of the visuals when it is done this well. In a game that sees you moving around so much, torch light, which also flickers realistically, the overall impression of Severance's visuals is breathtaking.

Other special effects have also been handled very well, like rippling reflections on water, thin mist and fog in certain places, right down to blood flowing from open wounds. The basic foundation of the game's looks have been handled nicely, with modelling, animation, and texturing all being quite classy, although it's the lighting that makes these elements look extraordinary. The only thing that Severance is guilty of is

having some obvious clipping issues, but the game holds up in combat, and that's where it matters most.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

The level design is nice, but while the themes and climates vary plenty, there's always that feeling of stumbling into a deserted place. Which brings us to the point that playing through Severance, while gorgeous and challenging, can feel like an endless series of battles through deserted ruins. There are some tricky traps and a few

!!! Severance bears more than a passing resemblance to another recent third-person action/adventure, Rune. Don't be fooled though, as Severance is clearly superior...

basic puzzles to figure out, but Severance is essentially an action game, with adventure elements. Make no mistake, the action is compelling enough to keep you going, but with so many elements of the game bordering being RPG in nature, it's hard not to feel like the game could use a healthy dose of character interaction and more regular plot updates. The visuals offer the atmosphere, but there's only a thin plot behind them.

It's a shame the plot is not touched upon more often, because the voice acting is A-grade, and

could tell a story very well. The good news is that the rest of the sound has been handled very nicely, with full 3D sound support, which works really nicely in the game, as sometimes the only warning you have of a nearby enemy is the sounds they make. The music is perfectly suited to the game,

because it's the kind of music you don't notice is there unless you think about it, meaning it's non-obtrusive and mixed in nicely.

With different missions for each class, there's plenty of bloody adventure for the solo gamer, and those that think they're untouchable at the game will appreciate the multiplayer arena. Severance is a very polished action game, with some very impressive technical features, which produce visuals that ooze atmosphere. The only real black spot for Severance is that seasoned PC gamers will master the combat system swiftly, and may find things a bit easy and repetitive once they do.

It looks as if the developer, Rebel Act, has proven that they're going to be a gaming force to be reckoned with, and it would come as no surprise if other companies with larger budgets look to license their portal engine to make games with the same incredible lighting and physics. A good one for graphics sluts, fantasy freaks, and those who like beating creatures to death with their own leg. <<<

REQUIRED: P2-350, 64MB RAM, 8MB 3D card



PLUS: Amazing lighting effects. Great AI. Limb removal a-go-go.

MINUS: The lack of character interaction makes it a lonely romp.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
95	89	90
OVERALL		
90		

Character interaction and more RPGing would have perfected.



you light up my life



hey, look at me when i'm fragging you

Quake 3: Team Arena



CATEGORY: First Person Shooter >> PLAYERS: 1-Multi >> PUBLISHER: Activision >> PRICE: \$29.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Lord Seafood obliterates all opponents on his way to the flag.

After the endless patches (they will run out of the alphabet soon), the humiliating fact that their main rival (Unreal Tournament) had far better out-of-the-box team play, and the fact that the gossip was overshadowing the game (bye bye Paul Steed), id Software had a real chance with Team Arena to re-establish themselves as king of the fragfest. What are they doing then, releasing this? Quake 3: Team Arena has been built up as the ultimate pack to provide everything for teampay that Quake 3 lacked. But is anyone going to stop playing Counter Strike to notice?

CAPTURE THE FRAG

Team Arena offers the following modes: Tournament, Capture The Flag, CTF One Flag, Harvester and Overload. The basic fact here is that none of these are anything remotely new, with Harvester even harking back to a Quake 1 mod, Headhunters. In fact, you could almost accuse id Software of stealing all of these ideas from its fans, the gamers out there who spend day and night creating cool mods to extend the life of id's bare bones shooter. What is even worse, is that id software have even failed to implement any of these team modes with any great

success. Of the many annoying flaws, Team Arena doesn't even come with an enhancement of the standard team-based deathmatch, instead opting for a 1-on-1 deathmatch or "duel". Team Arena with no vanilla team play. Great.

Take One Flag CTF and compare it to Harvester — in both games you're running to a central point in the map, picking something up and taking it to your enemy's base to make a score. What is the point in having two almost identical styles of team game? Upon logging onto some Quake 3: Team Arena servers, it was discovered that almost no one was playing these modes. The most played seem to be the classic CTF, Tournament and standard Q3 deathmatch. Yawn. Upon launching the game, you would also expect to be presented with a really healthy new selection of player models and skins. Nope. Team Arena has a pathetic selection of new models, all with messy, badly designed skins of the same bland colour. We're missing Paul Steed already.

Okay, with all those initial frustrated gripes out of the way, you should know that playing Team Arena certainly has its moments. One of the redeeming features of

this package is the excellent map design. Some of the sprawling Capture the Flag maps are on first inspection almost too large to even attempt to play. In the end though, with enough

people playing in the match (and we're talking real people here, not bots), a game of CTF in these new maps is hellishly good. The new powerups such as

"scout" give you the speed to traverse the large distances with ease, and even escape your attackers. Playing with bots though is laughable. They simply do not know how to play, let alone work as a team with you. Using bots in a team game is pointless, their only real use being as frag bait in deathmatch.

The new weapons are fun to experiment with, and should prove solid in the longterm. The Nailgun feels very different from the other guns, maybe even a little like the Flakgun from Unreal Tournament. Then there's the proximity grenade launcher, which is always a laugh, and the lovely Chaingun which is so satisfying to use. Definitely the combination of new weapons, great new maps and new powerups makes Team Arena a worthy exploration. However, the pathetic selection of game modes is the game's greatest and deadliest flaw. You'll still go back to Rocket Arena 3 or some other cooler mod in the end. <<

!!! id Software are currently working on Doom 3. A brave/inspired/stupid move? We may know more at E3.

REQUIRED: Quake 3 Arena must be installed.



PLUS: Well, we gotta say that's a very good price.

MINUS: Few player models and really undercooked options.

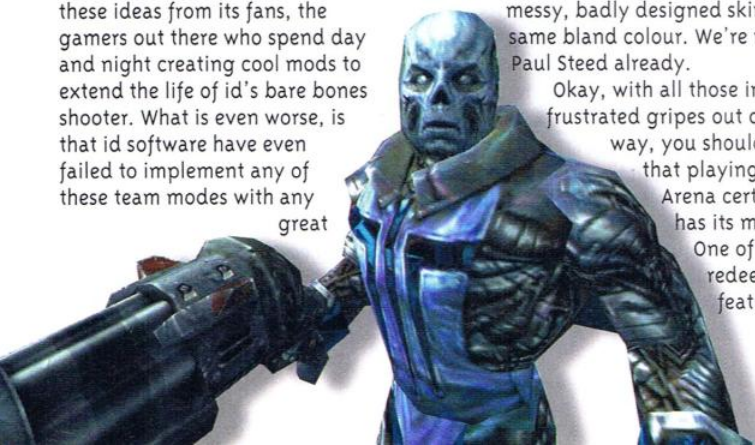
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

93 90 72

OVERALL

70

Nowhere near what it should or could have been.





Driving Emotion Type-S

CATEGORY: Driving Sim >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Remember, don't cry and drive. **Gareth Jones** gets emotional...

Squaresoft's Driving Emotion Type-S (DETS) was originally released to not much 'critical acclaim' at all. In fact, it was universally panned by critics and gamers alike for the absolutely horrible driving model that sucked all the fun out of the game.

The problem was that Square had set their sights on making a racing sim that could compete with the Gran Turismo and Ridge Racer series. They set out to make a driving sim that allegedly takes into account gravity, wind resistance, torsion, and, well, just about everything else that affects driving in real life to create a very realistic experience.

HUBCAPS AND ALL

An admirable aim, but they seemed to have forgotten to include the 'fun' bits of a racing sim along with all this

realism. Sure it might, in real life, be extremely hard to control a pretty much stock standard car honing about a tight race track at 200km an hour, and the slightest bit of over- or under-steer will send you hurtling into the barricades ending your race – but that doesn't mean that it needs to be replicated faithfully in a game.

So when it was time to release DETS to Europe, America and Australia, Squaresoft went back and had a bit of a tinker with the game, and particularly the driving model for the game. The result is that it's now easier to play, more forgiving, and quite a bit better as an overall game.

There is a decent raft of race options to choose from, including a pretty nifty practice mode which paints the driving line around a track for you to follow and learn upon as well as a

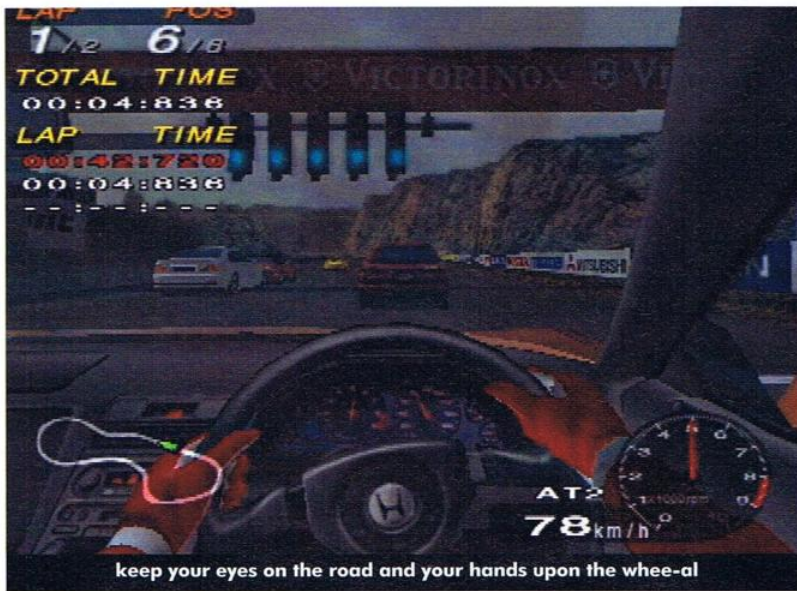
fairly well done 2 player splitscreen mode. However, the real meat of the game is in the Arcade Type-S challenge, where you start off with some pretty average cars in the lower divisions of races and attempt to unlock the better cars and more difficult courses by winning your way through. There are around 40 cars to eventually unlock, including BMWs, Hondas, Mitsubishis, Alfa Romeos, TVRs, Toyotas, all with accurate stats and different handling abilities.

As with most modern day racing sims, customising your cars hubcaps and colour through to the suspension, gearing ratio, and brakes are all part of the experience. Handily, there are default settings for gearing (optimised for acceleration, top speed, or a mixture of both) to help out the less-mechanically inclined. Somewhat

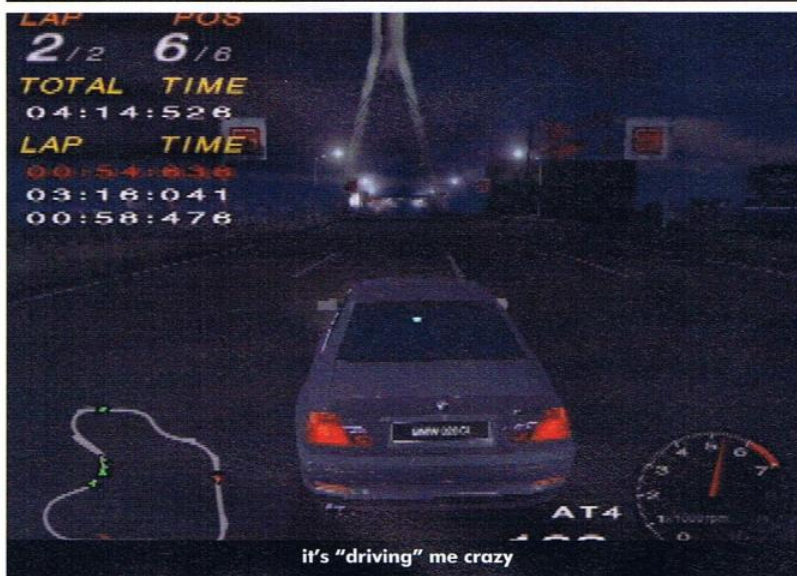
strangely, though, there's no way to upgrade your cars, which is a bit disappointing, as sticking a new engine or upgrading the shocks in your customised beast was a great way to prolong the driving enjoyment as well as 'bond' with your car.

SWEARING, WHINGING, THROWING

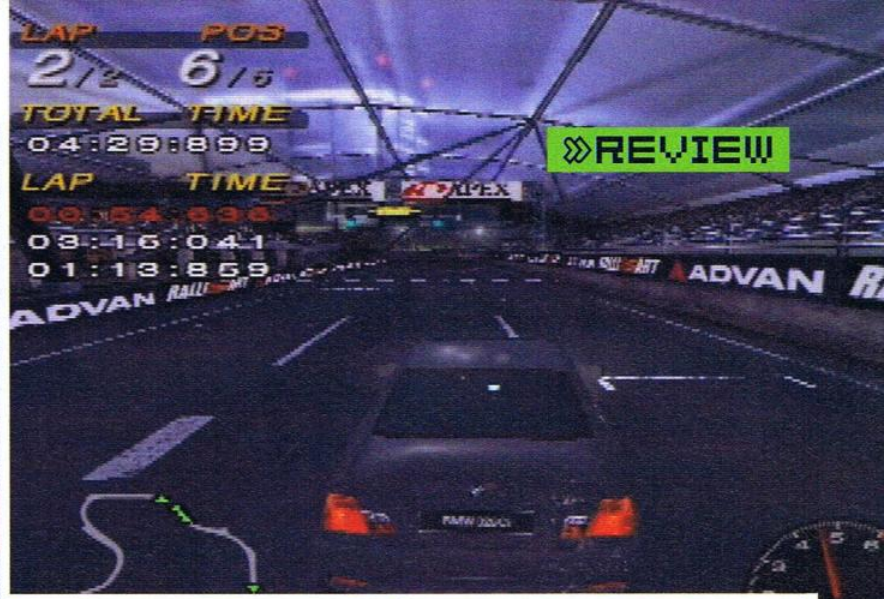
So the ingredients are there – a nice array of options for racing, decent 'tweaking' is available for your cars, and there's plenty of cool types of cars to unlock and drive. But DETS is still decidedly average, and though there are a number of facets that let the game down it really just all comes down to one thing – the driving model. Firstly, the learning curve for becoming competent at holding your car on the road is very steep. Expect to spend a



keep your eyes on the road and your hands upon the wheel



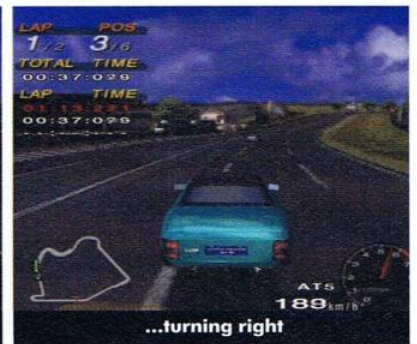
it's "driving" me crazy



» REVIEW



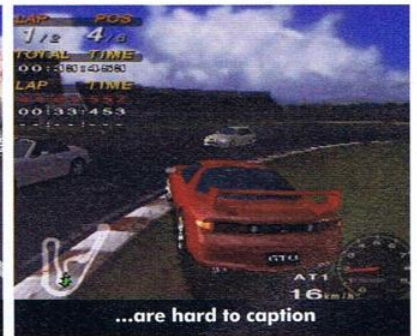
turning left...



...turning right



can you guess that driving games...



...are hard to caption

You've mastered the driving model, now you have to deal with the **sensation of speed, or lack thereof.**

hell or a lot of the first couple of hours swearing, whinging, throwing the control pad at the wall in frustration, hitting start and retry over and over again. Even with the improvements that Square have made for the non-Japan release of DETS, the driving model still isn't very playable at all.

Not only is the turning mechanism sluggish, but it works exponentially. Tap the left turn button and for a second nothing will seem to happen, then gradually the car will begin to gravitate to the left. Of course, when you first tap the turn button nothing seems to happen, so you keep holding it down. End result: right angled turn into wall. Race over. With (a lot of) practice however, this can be mastered so that it is possible to take a few laps around a track. The game never progresses to the stage where you feel like you're racing a

car around a race track at really fast speeds, though, instead it always feels like you're mastering the crappy control mechanism for a racing sim.

If, for arguments sake, you can get past this fatal flaw, there's still more woes to come. So you've mastered the driving model, now you have to deal with the sensation of speed, or lack thereof. Hooning around a track at zook plus is great, but only if it feels like zook, and with DETS it just doesn't — there's just really no sensation of speed. Next, you'll need to prepare to deal with inordinately long load times just to compound your woes. Then there's the graphics — now this is a PS2



!!! Square have released The Bouncer in Japan and have had some lukewarm reviews. Have they lost their touch?

game so I am going to have to be harsh here, because though the replays and backgrounds are beautiful the actual cars are less so. They just look very blocky and seem to carry roughly the same amount of detail as the cars in Gran Turismo 2 on PSX — not very impressive at all.

From a development company with the pedigree and experience of Squaresoft, you would really expect more from a game such as this. Many of the elements for a good game are there, but the average graphics, lack of options, long load times, and fatally flawed driving model make this one to avoid. <<



PLUS: The tracks look nice, and the sound is quite darn good.

MINUS: Terrible driving model, no car upgrades and long load times.

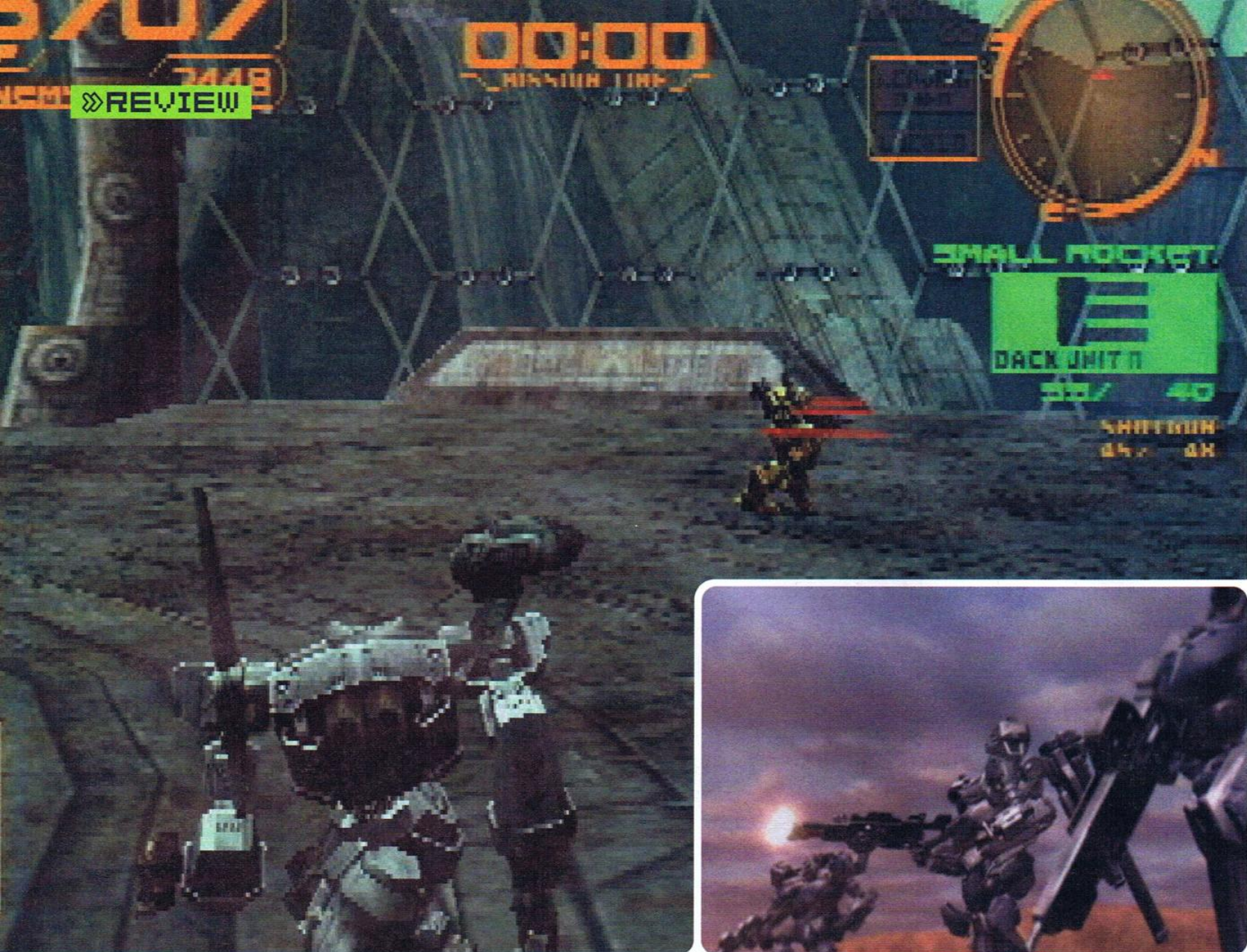
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

64 74 61

OVERALL

63

More annoying than fun. Close but no cigar.



Armored Core 2

» PS2

CATEGORY: Mech Sim >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: From Software >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Kevin Cheung climbs inside his big giant robot...

Armored Core 2 follows in a long line of mech-based action games by From Software, all of which have either not performed well or have simply not been released in the Australian market. Using mech designs from anime god Shouji Kawamori (of Macross Plus and Escaflowne fame), From Software has predictably found favour with its target Japanese audience, as well as the pockets of mech fans in the West who immediately recognised how much better they were than the usual Gundam bunk from Bandai. After the Project Phantasma add-ons and the medieval-styled Frame Gride for Dreamcast, Armored Core 2 on PS2 is the first true sequel to the original concept.



THROUGH THE BARREL OF A GUN

As a series, though, Armored Core has never been about the story. Players assume the role of a non-descript pilot in Raven's Nest, an elite squad of mercenaries who lend their talents to those who can best afford them. Their clientele comprises government officials, rich financiers, crooks, people in business — all of whom want to make a simple point, whether political or fanciful, through the barrel of a gun.

The reward for these services is, of course, money, which is used to repair your mech after each sortie and the remainder to purchase newer arse-kicking weapons with which to make you a more attractive and effective gun-for-hire. When you're not out on a mission, the

Raven's Nest has its own little arena where its members can fight for a place on the ladder, and players can establish their rank as the top gun.

Like Mechwarrior 4 on PC, the meat of the gameplay is in the preparation. Unlike Western mechs, which typically have all the lasers and missiles mounted on specific sections of the chassis, the mechs in Armored Core 2 are more human. They fly around on jet packs, have shoulder-mounted rocket launchers and chain guns, and they carry shields and laser swords. The legs can be changed into various configurations like spider, tank and chicken, and the internal electrical systems, engines, and heat sinks can also be altered.

Given enough time, players should have amassed an impressive collection of body parts and armaments with



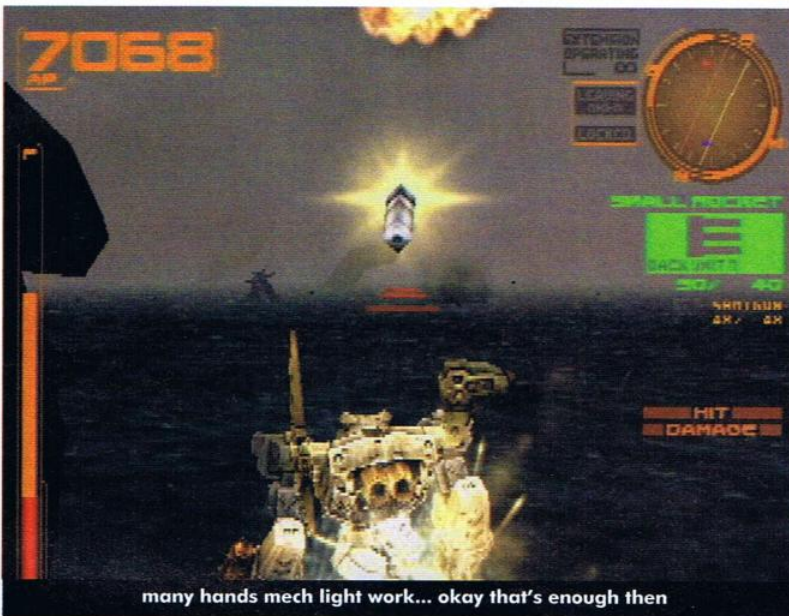
the mech jokes start here



don't mech me angry now



just meching a few adjustments



many hands mech light work... okay that's enough then



go ahead, mech my day



»» ...this game lacks the pace of **Virtual On 2** and the technical panache of **Mechwarrior 4**

which to construct the perfect combat mech for any occasion. The usual balancing factors come into play with this kind of customisation — weapons and body parts are limited by weight, weight and speed are limited by engine power, and engines and weapons are limited by energy consumption.

Once these options are finalised, you can accept a mission. You could be hired to infiltrate a military compound, to defend against invaders, to assassinate people in tiny vehicles at ground level, and so on. These missions are all land and air-based, so you can expect whatever you're facing to be land and air-based as well. They include gun turrets, planes, tanks, or perhaps even other mechs that have been hired by the other side.

WHAT DOES THIS BUTTON DO?

Unfortunately the control interface makes the game almost too tough. Identical in configuration to the original game, *Armored Core 2* makes

no use of the analogue buttons (save L4 for rocket boosting), which is disappointing considering how games like *Gun Griffon Blaze* and *Time Splitters* make excellent use of the analogue sticks for free-look. Instead, looking up and down is accomplished by pressing L2 and R2; strafing with L1 and R1, and running and twisting with the D-pad. It's just a tad too familiar and sluggish for the upgraded visuals.

Visually, *Armored Core 2* is a fantastic improvement over the original — yet on its merits, they aren't too crash hot by PS2 standards. The game comes with all the standard bells and whistles — 60 frames per second motion, improved lighting effects, more detailed 3D environments — but the game is let down somewhat by the texturing and other environmental effects. Rather than low-res textures, which is a complaint in many PS2 games,

Armored Core 2's textures are flawed by design. The etched mechanical surfaces combined with the dull brown/grey colour scheme are hardly

!!! From Software is the company who are also behind the PS2 RPG, *Eternal Ring*, reviewed on page 68.

inspiring. When combined with half-baked particle effects from boosting along the ground, it's difficult not

to say it looks like a straight port of the PSone original.

The idea that this is a PSone port is compounded further by the control interface, which is a major sticking point. Without something more user-friendly, this game lacks the pace of *Virtual On 2* and the technical panache of *Mechwarrior 4*. The end result is a game that remains restricted to a niche mech-loving audience who'll have to put in a little time and patience before their efforts are properly rewarded. To its credit, it's worth noting that the Japanese version of this game also features a link-up mode through the PS2's i-link port. Spiffy. <<



PLUS: Loads of weapons. Decent tactical combat for mech lovers.

MINUS: Nothing new from the original. Controls are still bad.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

83 81 80

OVERALL

79

Armored Core 2 has great detail, but is let down by the controls.



Eternal Ring

» PS2

CATEGORY: First Person RPG >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Crave >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Gareth Jones attempts to prevent anyone from grabbing at his ring.

Eternal Ring (ER), while not being the first RPG for the PS2 (that award has already gone to THQ's Summoner), is certainly one of the early ones, and it should come as small surprise to learn that while it is quite good at times it isn't even close to being great. In fact, compared to late PSX RPGs, ER struggles to compete, even with the power of the PS2's whizz-bangery to help.

PROTECTING YOUR RING

It is fairly interesting that Eternal Ring is more closely aligned to 'Western fantasy' like Tolkein and D&D than it is to the much more common Japanese mythology and sci-fi/fantasy settings and themes for console RPGs. Eternal Ring comes from From Software, and though they are Japanese in origin they have previously dabbled in the same

genre with their Kings Field series, so it's nothing all that new for them.

But even so, the plot and storyline are, well, not all that inspired. You are Cain, a young warrior/magician with a clouded past and lineage, who's sent to a mysterious island (named the "Island Of No Return") by your King to find the Eternal Ring and, you know, kill lots of stuff or something. Just what is Cain's past? Could it be that maybe, just maybe, he was found by loyal subjects of the King as a baby and is really a descendant of the people of the Island Of No Return and will eventually get the Eternal Ring for himself and regain his rightful place as leader of the island? *Cue X-Files theme.* Okay, so I may have given away a bit of the story, but you find out all this early on anyway — and this is not an RPG that seamlessly integrates the

storyline with the action of the game itself. The story is really only there to make sense of what happens and give you a reason for why you're bashing the crap out of the baddies.

Played in the first person, ER is a heavily combat-oriented game. You have mystical magic powers at your disposal via magic rings that you wear, so combat is a combination of sword thrusting and spell casting. You need to be careful just who (or what) it is you're bashing or blasting the crap out of though, because From Software have taken a rather annoying way of making the game linear whilst appearing open and free. In many cases, there are central areas with a few different paths to go down — the choice is all yours. However, the game is set out so that only one of those paths suits your present ability levels,

of three choices two will be full of a horde of monsters that can kill you with one blow. So, sure, you can go whatever way you want... but only one of the paths won't result in you dying almost immediately. Which path will you choose, intrepid adventurer?

STICK YOUR FINGER IN THE RING

First Person RPGs haven't really taken off on consoles mainly because of technical limitations, but also because of the necessarily complicated control mechanism and interface — with a PC there's bucketloads of keys to use for different actions, but only relatively few gamepad buttons to use. So, with buttons needed for melee attacks, magic attacks, strafing, selecting spells as well as selecting items (such as health boosters and so on) it does



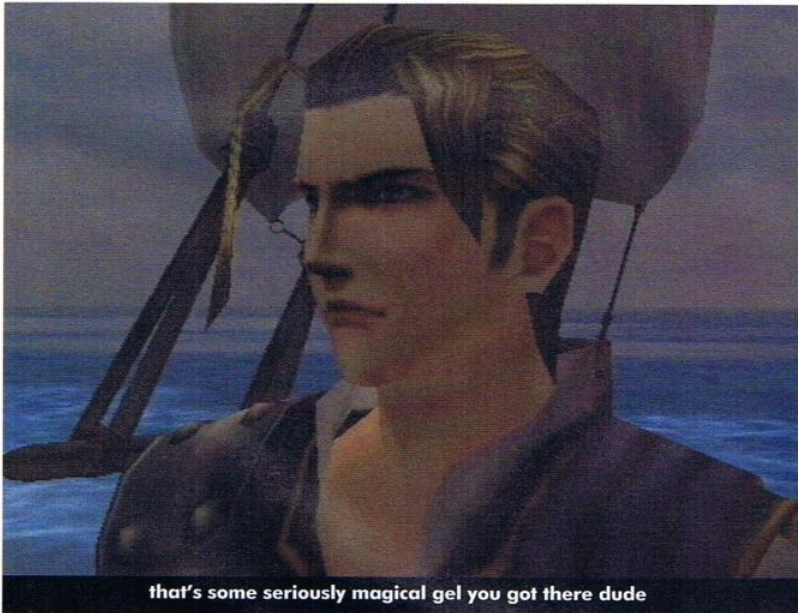
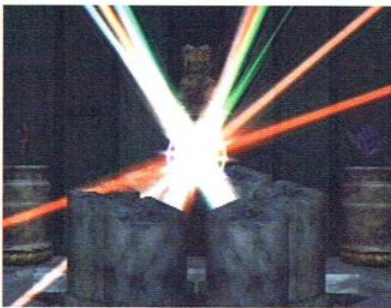
lizard men. cool.



"I'll let you touch my bone if i can touch your ring..."



weirdest eclipse i've ever seen



that's some seriously magical gel you got there dude



fancy PS2 effects going off... oooh spooky

The story is only **there to make sense** of what happens and give you a reason for why you're **bashing the crap** outta the baddies

take a while to get the hang of just controlling Cain. Once you do get the hang of how everything works the system is manageable, even though (as with most first person RPGs) it still takes an absolutely stupid amount of time to turn around. One of the cooler aspects of the game is that you get to make your own rings using various gems that you pick up from vanquished foes – the more powerful the enemy the better the gem that they'll drop. Once you've accumulated a few good gems (and a 'blank' magic ring) there's an ancient mystical dude who transforms the power of the gems into your ring at every save point. There are six types of gems in the game, and the resultant ring depends on how you combine the

powers (earth, wind, fire, water, light and dark), though there is an element of luck involved too. The inclusion of save points in ER is annoying (Why? It doesn't make the game any better), but when you're trying to combine gems to get a really powerful ring power it is nice that you've usually just saved your game, so you can go back and experiment a bit if you don't like the results. From Software seem to have put a great deal of effort into some aspects of the environment, particularly water and fire. Both are just marvelous to look at, with waterfalls cascading realistically, and fire wavering around just like real fire, and the effects are compounded by the excellent sound FX that accompany them. However, many of the other aspects of your

environment – walls, trees, grass, caves, the monsters and so on don't seem to have had nearly as much attention paid to them. The cave walls are uniformly drab and boring, and in outside areas you can't see more than 15-odd (virtual) metres in front of you thanks to the ubiquitous 'fog' that abounds. In general just navigating your way about can be a trying task because of the sameness of the scenery and walls. If you're absolutely gagging for some PS2 RPG action, Eternal Ring is just as good (or, more correctly, just as mediocre) as the others released so far. That it's a first person RPG and quite enjoyable at times means it's worth a look, and there is fun to be had here. Just not enough to really justify spending nearly a hundred hard earned bucks on it. <<<

!!! Ever wondered what happened to Evergrace? It's coming out locally through Ubisoft. Review real soon.



PLUS: RPG action that works reasonably well, with a long quest.

MINUS: Uninspiring storyline, mostly drab visuals, linear design.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

68 60 72

OVERALL

66

A decent effort, but RPG fans will expect better.



Daytona USA 2001



CATEGORY: Racing >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: Sega >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: March >>

Is this the arcade-perfect port we've been waiting for? **Dan Toose** thinks so.

Qaytonaaaaaaa!" If that doesn't ring a bell, then it's a pretty safe bet you've never spent any real time in a major arcade. Daytona USA arcade machines have been singing that song for years now, and enough gamers have shown their approval in the form of hard cash, because these machines have held their place in the arcades for such a long time.

To be frank, the Saturn version of Daytona may have had the gameplay elements, but it did the Model 2 arcade game absolutely no justice at all in terms of visuals. The Dreamcast is the first Sega console to truly deliver arcade perfect ports, and racing fans can rest assured that nothing has been botched in this brilliant transition to Sega's current "next-gen" console.

DRIVE LIKE AN IDIOT

If you were after proof that the Dreamcast is capable of throwing around serious geometry at sixty frames a second then Daytona USA 2001 is the game you've been wanting to see. The development team at Genki didn't take a single step backwards with this port, in fact some of their changes have been steps forward. For example, there is virtually no pop-up at all, and that includes in places where you can see to the other side of the circuit.

Normally this sort of feature is only at the cost of the number of cars on track, or some other basic geometry feature. Daytona USA 2001 proves that there's no area of compromise, with up to FORTY cars on track at once, which makes absolutely no dent on the constant 60FPS frame rate which helps

make the action all sweeter.

The cars in Daytona look just as they did in the arcade, with exactly the same viewpoints at your disposal. While the cars are hardly sporting a breakthrough number of polygons, they do feature dynamic changes due to accidents, something most driving games have simply not been able to do. They've pushed their system to the limit trying to produce a realistic looking race that doesn't consider a lack of safety precautions on the driver's part.

Fans of the "uber-lustre" will be pleased to see an eldritch shimmer on the panels of the cars, although don't expect anything that looks quite as realistic as in MSR or Le Mans 24 Hours. Quite frankly, the surreal shimmer is not a bother when the rest of the visuals are so spot on.

THE ARCADE FACTOR

This is really what will make or break Daytona USA 2001 for you, and that's the very arcade-like racing physics and handling. Basically, unless you like super touchy controls, you'll want to adjust the steering calibration, but even then, this is not a true racing simulator like F355 Challenge, but rather a straight arcade racer with its

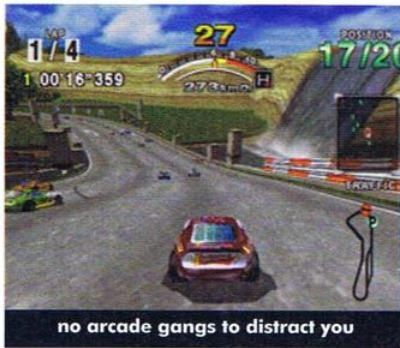


powerslide heaven



Network Racing

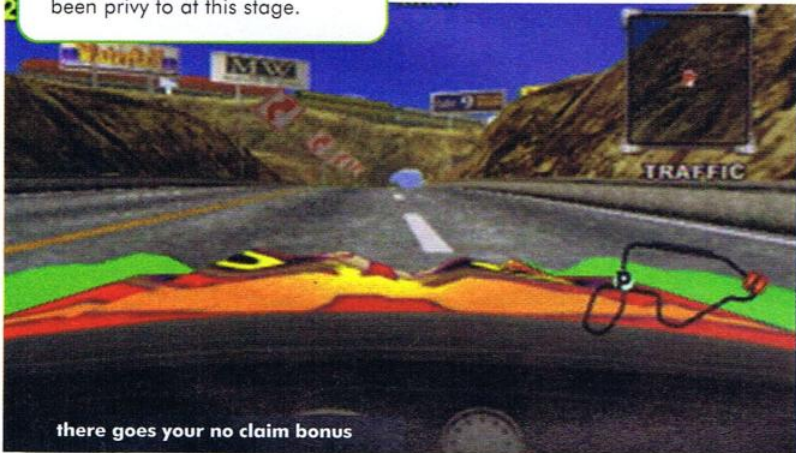
Something Dreamcast owners have been praying for is online network racing over the Internet, in real time. At the time of review, a local server had not been established, but we'll be sure to pass comment on whether or not online racing is available after the local release. If it does, you'll have some eight player racing mayhem to look forward to, which is something only PC network gamers have been privy to at this stage.



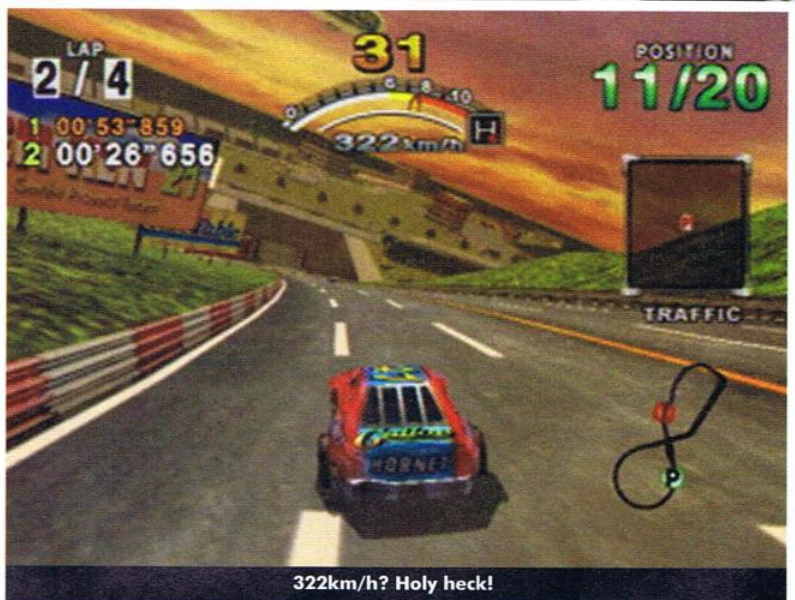
no arcade gangs to distract you



no need for \$2 dollar coins



there goes your no claim bonus



322km/h? Holy heck!

There is **virtually no pop-up at all**, and that includes in places where you can see to the other side of the circuit.

own take on reality. If you liked Daytona in the arcade and came to grips with it there, then you'll like this, but those who aren't Daytona fans should definitely see how they like this one before buying, because some people will have volatile reactions to the controls. It's all an issue of taste, but a rather decisive one.

Fans of the series will be very happy to see all the circuits from Daytona USA and Daytona USA CCE, plus a couple of original tracks specially made for this version. You can play each circuit in both reverse, and mirror modes, so that's essentially four courses for each circuit.

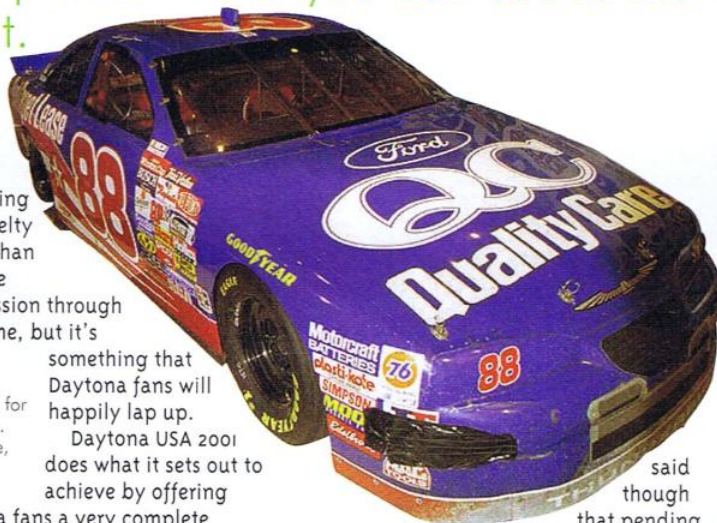
Performing well in the arcade and championship races will allow you to unlock special vehicles, which is more

something for novelty rather than genuine progression through the game, but it's

something that Daytona fans will happily lap up. Daytona USA 2001 does what it sets out to achieve by offering

Daytona fans a very complete experience all in one game. All the tracks that fans of the game could want are here, and the ability to go up against 39 other cars and have longer races will have those same fans facing the grittier challenge they've been looking for in this series. It must be

Daytona 3 has been confirmed for the DC by Sega. As soon as we know more, we'll bring you a preview.



PLUS: Super solid visuals. The complete Daytona experience.

MINUS: The controls and physics will not suit everyone.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

93 80 85

OVERALL

88

Perfect for any Daytona fan, but it's got a lot of competition

said though that pending the online racing situation, there are lots of other A-grade racing titles on Dreamcast these days that will be better suited to the average gamer. If you're in the market for a Dreamcast racing game, you'd better shop around. <<<



F355 Challenge



CATEGORY: Racing >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Acclaim >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Jackson Gothe-Snape takes control once more...

Arcade conversions are renowned to be short, shallow attempts by developers to cash in on players' positive yet brief arcade memories. It comes as something of a surprise then that one of the most rewarding racing titles of the past year has come straight from the arcades. F355 Challenge was that big three-screen mother of an arcade experience down in your local Timezone, and now it has finally arrived on our friendly blue-swirled box after some minor licensing complications. You should be thankful.

Thankful mainly to Yu Suzuki and his AM2 development team for such a nice piece of work. It is widely known that Mr. Suzuki himself drives an F355, and being the generous guy he is, he obviously thought he might let others take his car for a spin. The game is

totally dedicated to the one car, so don't expect to race, in or against, anything else.

MONZA IS BONZA

F355 Challenge: Passione Rossa offers the player a total of 11 tracks, 5 of which are hidden at the start, that can be played via timed Arcade play, untimed Single Play, Championship or split screen Versus mode. The tracks are all real world racing locations such as Monza, Atlanta and Laguna Seca. A great training mode is also available displaying the ideal driving line and break points for each track, as well as a friendly commentator.

After you've had enough training the lure of the race will no doubt be too much (if it hasn't been already). Racing places you at the back of an eight car grid, for a race between 2

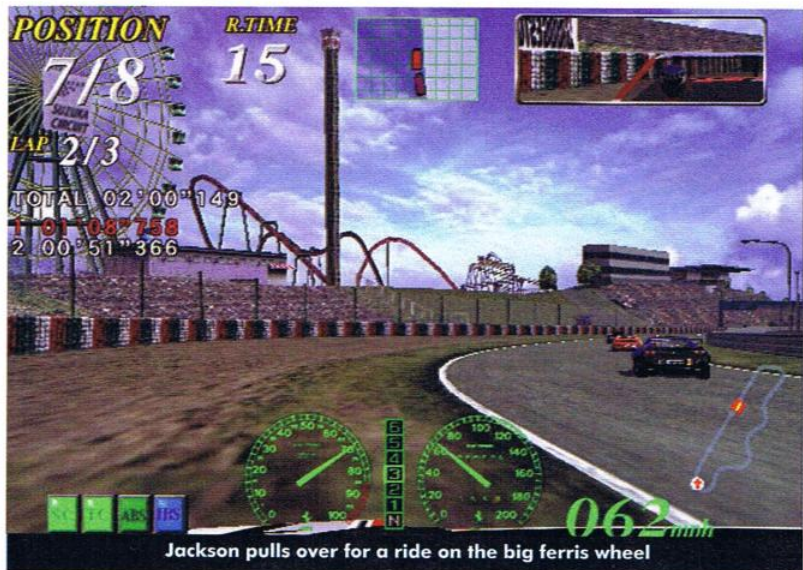


and 60 laps, depending on the course and the format of the race chosen via the options screen.

Hitting the circuit really is a treat for the senses with impressive texturing and clarity, and although it perhaps lacks some visual flair, the overall look is approximately on par with Le Mans, with (basic) reflections, smoke and detailed surrounds all present. The framerate is also stellar, even in split screen Versus mode. The engine noises sound great, particularly when there

are a few cars tussling for a position. The effects such as tyre screeching and the like are all there and although they don't really stand out, they won't make you cringe. The music however, will, in the traditional Jap video game rock kind of way. Thankyou, AM2, for the 'off' option.

The real strength of the title lies in the game's driving feel. There are a variety of aids to help the L-plater keep up, but the real action begins with all of these switched off. Without



In the PC market, such a game may not stand out as much, but F355 feels right at home on a console

these, you'll wrestle with your machine through every corner from the game's lone in-car viewpoint (it is a simulation). F355 rewards smooth driving, and although the gung-ho approach works with the aids, removing all help rightfully forces a greater degree of subtlety with the accelerator.

UNIQUE AND INTELLIGENT

The car's settings can be varied somewhat to improve performance but some options are visibly absent. Sure, no one wants to mess around with an F355 gearbox but altering some gear ratios would have been much appreciated. Still, the settings you can change are a blessing, particularly as some of the tracks are ovals. Yet the physics, and in particular the collisions are far from

top class. Merely touching a wall will mean an inexplicable loss of speed while car/car meetings usually result in a bewildered driver sitting in the gravel. These problems do take a fair amount of gloss off the racing experience, but they're not major gripes.

The AI cars each mostly behave uniquely and intelligently if somewhat predictably, yet for an expert player they provide little challenge. Combined with the lazy grid allocation, one can actually get rather frustrated with a short race where there is no time for patient overtaking. This lack of real customisation prevents the title from truly fulfilling its promise. It can't quite break the shackles of the arcade mentality.

!!! Don't despair, Dreamcast fans. There are plenty of good games on the way this year. Crazy Taxi 2? Whoool!

In the PC market, such a game may not stand out as much, but F355 feels right at home on a console. A great versus mode is included, that isn't as comprehensive as say, MSR's, but it is a blast. The game goes some of the way towards a simulation, with things like analysis of driving data, yet it doesn't quite get there, mainly because of the basic, limited front end. However, the complete package remains one of the top Dreamcast racers, even among the recent flood of quality titles. F355, through the flexibility and feel of the driving model, will appeal to a wide range of racing fans, and even beyond. However, its limited variety may damage the game's longevity for those players not satisfied with just a pure racing experience.

SUPPORTS: VMU, Vibration Pack, Wheel, PAL 60Hz option, online functions, VGA



PLUS: Great car handling and physics, plus it looks great.

MINUS: Collisions are poor, and there's a lack of variety.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

92 90 89

OVERALL

89

Passione Rossa: Italian for 'one sweet-bread racing sim'.



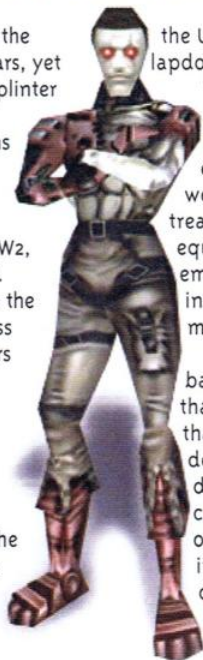
C-12 Final Resistance

» PS4

CATEGORY: Action >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Sony >> PRICE: \$69.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: April >>

James Cottee casts his emotionless laser eyes over yet another "game"...

Ahe British haven't ruled the world for a hundred years, yet there's still a tortured splinter of their national psyche that yearns to be the regal guardians of the entire planet. The last great conflict where Tommy was all that stood between civilisation and oblivion was WW2, specifically the Battle of Britain. While brave citizens cowered in the ruins of London from the endless rain of Vics, lion-hearted aviators soared in their Spitfires high above, giving Fritz what-for.



the UK being relegated to lapdog status and UN busywork.

The home front is more humiliating still, with the EU whittling away their economic sovereignty, and worse yet, forcing them to treat the frogs and the krauts as equals! Even their beloved empire is no more, imploding into a steady stream of migrants.

Still, there is one last bastion of British supremacy that remains unassailed, and that's game software development. Thanks to a demographic fluke the UK can inflict cockney accents on all PAL territory gamers, including us, without a hint of competition from the

continent. While ol' Blighty has given us many a fine piece of warez (Wipeout, Colin McRae, Elite etc), all too often their fevered coding gives us a disturbing look into their collective consciousness.

NEVER... IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN CONFLICT...

It's thus that we enter the blasted ruins of 21st century London. The burned out structures that line the suspiciously small play area are all backlit by raging firestorms, another throwback to the blitz. Weaving through the dignified rubble is some near-future variant of the Harrier, the pinnacle of British VTOL engineering. And as the pompous crackling starts over the radio it's obvious who's going to save the world, and it's not the Americans, or the EU, or the UN, or

anyone in the non-commissioned ranks. No, the stiff upper lip of the British officer class, victor over Zulus, Huns and Towel-heads will put these bally aliens in their place.

What ensues is your basic hybrid of War of the Worlds and Action Man. As Lieutenant Vaughan you clamber through the ruins of human arrogance, with alien war machines besieging you at every turn. Occasionally you'll come across some poor shell-shocked soldier who'll despondently tell you of the monstrous atrocities committed by these heinous space-Huns, strengthening your resolve you stop them at any cost. Who knows, if you navigate enough twisted wreckage then perhaps you'll come face to face with the hovering, sermonising head-alien himself.

GOOD SHOW EH WHAT?

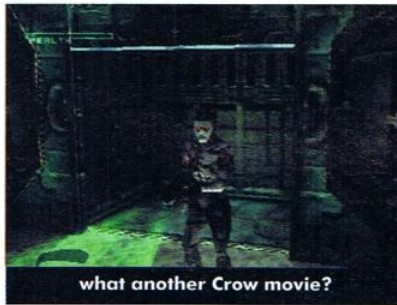
But all those classic Churchill sound bytes have long faded from the newsreels. Now it's the cursed, cultureless Yanks who fight all the big wars, with



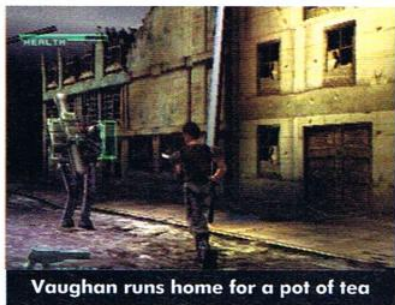
don't challenge him to an armwrestle



Vaughan runs home for a pot of tea



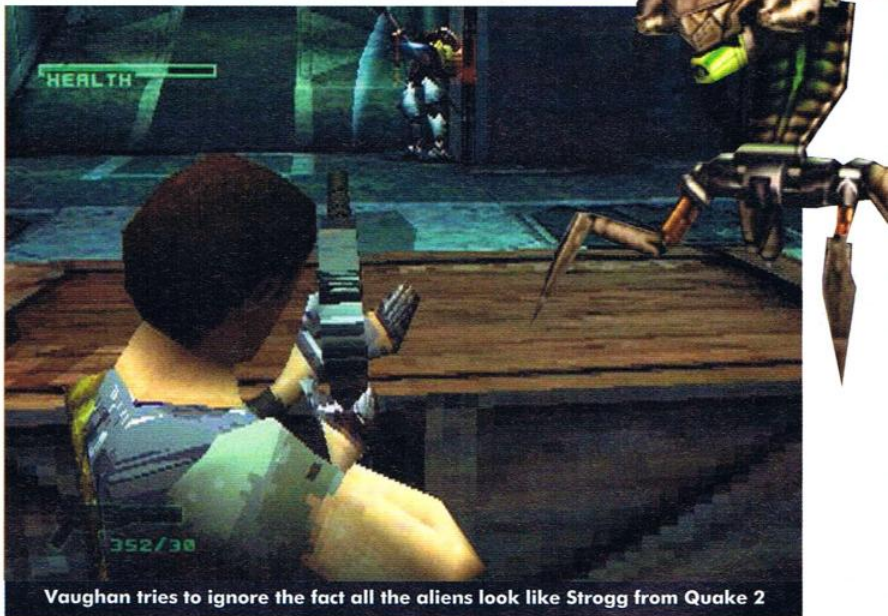
what another Crow movie?



Taking out his Cricket insecurities



»REVIEW



Vaughan tries to ignore the fact all the aliens look like Strogg from Quake 2

there's even a good couple of minutes of game time before you hit the first crate moving puzzle

THE ILLUSION OF NON-LINEARITY

As seamless an experience this all is, it is indeed possible to view C-12 from a technical standpoint. The mode of third person action-adventure used is your basic cross between Syphon Filter and Syphon Filter, with one or two arbitrary changes thrown into the mix. Vaughan, for instance, must not only have a stiff upper lip, but must also be partial to the odd stiff drink, as his movement through the game environment can only be described as... stiff. Being part machine this is excusable, and his garish laser eye reflecting off every surface is a nice distraction.

The limited auto-aim function works well, and the variety of human and alien weapons at your disposal is a decent

enough spread. The now standard cinematic segues let you know when you've triggered the right events, and there is enough random-looking action in your field of vision to provide the illusion of non-linearity. Why, there's even a good couple of minutes of game time before you hit the first crate-moving puzzle, which is an admirable effort in this day and age.

But the sad fact is that C-12 doesn't offer the discerning gamer anything new. There have been almost a thousand games released for the PlayStation in this fair land, and it seems that every inch of territory this aging console will ever cover has long

been conquered. With more levels and more options, Syphon Filter 2 would offer more poontang for your buck, and one yet to experience Metal Gear Solid shouldn't even think of touching this one.

Even now, new worlds of gaming are opening up all around us, with new genres and higher standards being forged on the Dreamcast, PS2 and PC. C-12 is more of the same, nothing more, and the PSone is going to need something with a little more kick if it wants to get by on anything more than its looks. This is a game best suited for action fans who are unwilling, or unable, to move on. <<<



PLUS: Decent firefights, easy puzzles, dark and spooky.

MINUS: Been there, done that.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

85 88 72

OVERALL

79

Not exactly a renaissance in action games.



LAP
1/3

careful or he'll give you the powder finger



go on! seat spank! seat spank!



TIME
0'04"14

POS
3



LAP
1/3



LAP
2/3

carving up some racing lines

Sno Cross Championship

» PSX

CATEGORY: Racing >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Crave >> PRICE: \$69.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Eliot Fish lets the powder fly on his race to the deadline...

Is snowmobile racing a real sport? Maybe I missed it along the way, but what the hell, it's probably the most fun you can have getting your butt soaked. Get ready to strap yourself onto a 700cc beast and shred your way to victory across some of the bumpiest courses you've ever had to encounter. Like a cross between rally racing and jetski riding, Sno Cross Championship attempts to offer us a slight twist on the over populated racing sim genre. Hop on.

CARVING IT UP

Crave have done a pretty good job here of providing a smooth and fast racing title on the aging PlayStation hardware. For starters, the game is fast, smooth and pumps along at a good framerate for most of the game, which you can't say for half the racing games out there. To achieve this, naturally, there's a fair bit of fogging on the track and a few instances when scenery pops up in front of you as if it's burst forth from the earth. Some of the tunnel tracks are simply awful, with corners popping out

of the fog so suddenly that you barely have time to take the corner properly. Thankfully, most of your time is spent outdoors, and Crave have managed to design the tracks in such a way that you're never really bothered by how little distance is actually drawn ahead of you. The tracks consists of big jumps, hairpins, underpasses, tunnels, mild corkscrews and a few split sections of track — certainly enough variation to keep you on your toes the whole race. Whilst some downhills would have been nice, there's some solid racing to be had on what's on offer here. Just don't expect any eye candy.

Playing through the Championship is flawed for one reason — there is no option to restart a race from the pause menu, nor can you restart a race after you finish it and fall in fourth place. You have to go back to the main meny and reload the Championship and start from the beginning again. This is really annoying, purely for the loading times that have to be suffered for the strange and annoying oversight of such a basic option. Anyhow, there are

three classes of snowmobile, 500, 600 and 700cc, plus you can actually customise your bike (adjust the treads etc.) before you race to squeeze out some extra performance if you so desire. Most of us will just prefer to hoon it though, I imagine. What is totally bizarre, is the inclusion of tricks that you can do when you're in the air, like the "seat slap". Whilst this earns you money, it's really silly to look at.

Sno Cross also offers an uphill challenge where you have to push your snowmobile to the limits to see who can get to the top of a really steep snowy hill, which is fun as a diversion from the racing.

The controls feel quite responsive, although you can imagine that trying to simulate a fast heavy vehicle on wet, slushy or icy snow is always going to result in all kinds of slippery handling. All up though, the game feels good to race and it's just a shame that the end result is all just a little too average to inspire any real toothy grins. Good, albeit simplistic track editor though. <<<



PLUS: Feels good, sounds great. Slippery craziness.

MINUS: Bad pop-up and just a little dull overall.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

70 80 72

OVERALL

70

An average snowy romp, that will leave some cold.

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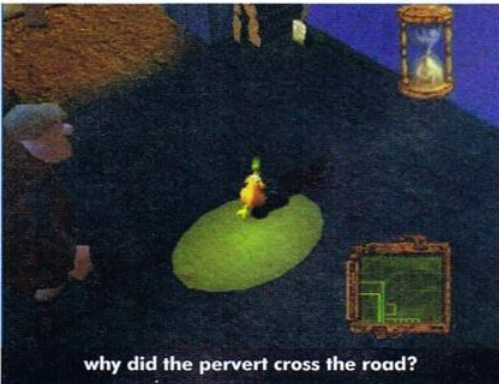
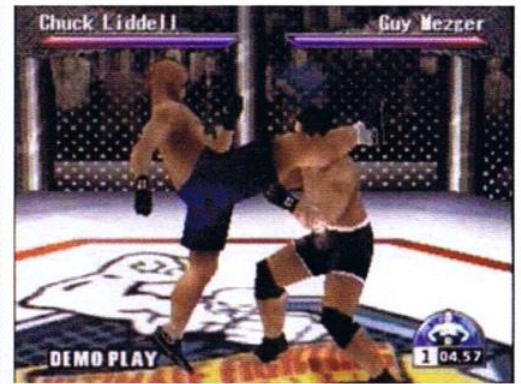


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REVIEW



why did the pervert cross the road?



Australia, your chicken is ready



grown men punching each other in the ring

Chicken Run

CATEGORY: Action >> **PLAYERS:** 1 >>
PUBLISHER: Eidos >> **PRICE:** \$69.95 >>
RATING: G >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >>

US
A
D

If Wallace and Gromit made you grimace and vomit, I'd chance you skipped out on watching the newest claymation classic, *Chicken Run* (CR) at the pictures. Regardless, anyone with a brain larger than a sprout will get off on this videogame. This is *Metal Gear Solid* with chooks, meaning it has something for kids, adults and yes, even the family dog. But not Mormons. As Ginger, you carry out a range of sneak and shoot missions, with a fine array of fun sub-games diced into the mix. The movie cast have injected CR's characters with gallons of charm, although Mel Gibson failed to reprise his role as the All-American cock (you'll just have to observe him in real life for that one). A handful of changes could perfect the final version, such as an option to view your surroundings in first-'poor-hen'-perspective — as the constant top-down view makes CR seem as if it were directed by a lazy God. But the graphics are so endearingly simple, crisp and fluid and the game's variety so beguiling, you'll forgive these technicalities immediately.

In writing this review there is, admittedly, an intense urge to pelt you, dear reader, with each 'corny' pun that registers. So let's get it over with: *Chicken Run* did not 'chicken out' with some 'feather-weight' approach when it came to gameplay, delivering far more than the 'turkey' we expected, helping to wipe away some of the 'egg on the faces' of film licencees everywhere. Plenty of assault and 'battery' offers you more 'cluck' for your 'buck' (why, it's better than getting 'laid' — Ed). 'Poach' a copy today. <<<

Martin English

Mort the Chicken

CATEGORY: Platform >> **PLAYERS:** 1 >>
PUBLISHER: Ubi Soft >> **PRICE:** STBA >>
RATING: G >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >>

US
A
D

After a dog's age there's finally a new entrant in the genre of novelty puzzle-based 3D platformers, and it's all about chasing after chicks. The birds in question have been drawn into an interdimensional conflict, and as the only member of your race cocky enough to dive after them, you (Mort) must explore large levels full of hostile hexahedra in search of your plucky wards.

The old-school mechanics of this game are only amplified by the game engine employed, with graphics as choppy as Bass Strait, doing nothing to conceal some rather sketchy control mechanics. The power-ups scattered throughout the levels require the player to be at a precise angle and distance to peck them open, and the general control and camera lethargy leave a lot to be desired.

Still, the cut scenes are excellent. Not a factor that can sell a game by itself these days, but none the less they are sufficiently hilarious to justify a rental. The depiction of Chicken Vs Cube civilisation in the mass media is nothing short of hilarious, and for the first few levels the comedic kick from these clips is motivation enough to complete the next stage. In short, check out the chicken. <<<

James Cottee

Ultimate Fighting Championship

CATEGORY: Fighting >> **PLAYERS:** 1-2 >>
PUBLISHER: Crave >> **PRICE:** \$69.95 >>
RATING: MA15+ >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >>

US
A
D

Eng on line with the ludicrous sport it represents, UFC is a gut-busting, laugh-'til-you-bleed kind of game.

Fighting solo grows dull swiftly as most of your initial fights will conclude after just one round when your arm is snapped like fresh celery. Button combos are also cumbersome and more repetitious than an entire season of *Inspector Gadget*. But, as always, the fun quintuples with the introduction of your brother, flatmate or dealer.

We had tremendous fun designing Mr Piddlesworth, an underweight, 5'10 Somali lad - age 16 - itching to get jiggy with the 6'2, 40-year-old, fatbodied Ms Hashman of my flatmate's creation. The enemy had chosen to be a "master of ground and pound". Luckily I'd opted for my boy to be a "good ring strategist" who knew how to perform "some submission" and was "used to bottom fighting". Quote, unquote.

UFC does however beg criticism on far too many counts. The worst being load times, which are numerous and lengthy, impeding much of the appeal spoken of earlier. You can only trade inciteful insults with your opponent-to-be for so long before the whole situation devolves into a sludgepile of misappropriated profanity and, ultimately, fistycuffs. This kind of behaviour is fine amongst siblings, but could likely spell a trip to see the 'nice man with the needle' for the only child. Anger management for those with strong patience and meagre minds. <<<

Martin English

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
88	85	89	87

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
60	70	73	69

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
79	64	65	71

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Mario Tennis

CATEGORY: Tennis >> **PLAYERS:** 1-2 >>
PUBLISHER: Nintendo >> **PRICE:** \$49.95 >>
RATING: G >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >>
SUPPORTS: Link Cable, Transfer Pak, GBC only >>

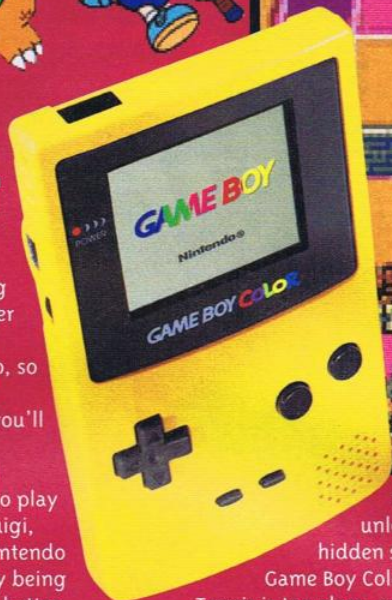
Nintendo constantly remind us that gameplay will always win out against graphics. Mario Tennis on the Game Boy Color is a glorious example of how such a simple concept can be made so staggeringly addictive and fun, simply through clever design and imagination.

Unlike Mario Tennis on the N64, you begin the game in the shoes of a junior tennis player who has just joined the Royal Tennis Academy. The academy can be fully explored and you can enjoy its many facilities, like tennis training machines, coaches in all aspects of tennis, and even hang out in the café with your roommate. Mario Tennis is almost like a Tennis RPG if there could ever be such a thing.

As you win practice matches, your character receives experience points that you can use to pump up your abilities — from your movement speed to lobbing abilities, placement, top spin and a host of other stats. You may start out wondering why your

character can't seem to get around the court with any kind of skill, and this is why — you have to learn and earn your tennis skill. This adds such wonderful depth to an already addictive game of bashing balls around. The computer controlled roommate can also have his stats built up, so you can't risk not sharing your experience points — you'll need him to be in your formidable doubles team!

If you want, you can also play Exhibition matches with Luigi, Donkey Kong and other Nintendo characters, Mario naturally being the best of the bunch. The better you do, the more you will unlock, as there are also a few mini games (such as Mario's Boo Blast, Yoshi's Fruit Fantasy and Bowser's Two-on-One), plus you can swap characters to the N64's Mario Tennis with the Transfer



Pak and then unlock more hidden stuff in the Game Boy Color title. Mario Tennis is top class, and we can't recommend it enough.
Eliot Fish

9/10



Pokémon Puzzle Challenge

CATEGORY: Puzzle >> **PLAYERS:** 1-2 >>
PUBLISHER: Nintendo >> **PRICE:** \$49.95 >>
RATING: G >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >>
SUPPORTS: Link Cable, GBC only

Pokémon Puzzle Challenge is another title that is just as successful on the Game Boy Color as it is on the N64. Smothered in Pokémon, Puzzle Challenge is still a fun and challenging puzzle game, so if you're not a fan of Tetris, Marill, Chikorita and the rest, don't be frightened off. In fact, it would be fair to say that the Pokémon element is pretty irrelevant to this title. You may choose a Pokémon, and you may battle Pokémon trainers, but essentially it comes down to the block-moving puzzle game and the puzzles involved.

Like other Tetris-style games, blocks begin filling up the

screen, and unless you can shift and match the colours in pairs of three or more, then you'll find yourself flooded with cubes and it's game over. You can only switch blocks horizontally though, so if there's a vertical match-up, you'll have to hope it drops down to where you want it. At times, you'll wish you could rotate your brackets vertically, as your eyes see another solution to the problem at hand, but being restricted

to horizontal play is actually where the challenge lies. This is maddeningly addictive gameplay, and it's easy to pick up and play off the bat too.

There are actually six different styles of play — Time Zone, Garbage, Challenge Mode, Marathon, Line Clear and Puzzle — plus you can get out your link cable and challenge a friend, so there's more variety here than you would even think was possible with such a simple concept.

If you're a fan of puzzle games, then you must not go past this one, as it's great design from Nintendo yet again. You won't be disappointed.

Frank Dry

8/10



ARCADE

Project Justice CAPCOM

So have the software houses exhausted every type of fighter imaginable in the realms of the arcade fighter genre? We have fanged it out with creatures of the night, relived our comic book super hero fantasies and have become mighty martial art warriors - but is there anyone new that we can 'be' or better still, actually relate to?

GETTING THOSE BULLIES BACK
Rival Schools by Capcom (Project Justices' predecessor) did not make much impact in the arcades in its initial release as it had strong competition in the form of Soul Calibur and Virtua Fighter 3. But now Rival Schools has been revamped and is set to truly challenge the other games of this ilk.
Project Justice sees you taking control of 3 different high school characters in an attempt to bash your way to glory in 2 different game modes. The first is in 'Story Mode' where you select one of 6 different schools (Taiyo, Gorin, Pacific, Gedo, Justice or Seijyun) - all of which have their own unique brand of tuff guys. The schools which are located in the 'less picturesque' areas of town have

punks in their gangs, the academically renowned school has nerdy gang members, whilst the sporty school has steroid abusing, jock types.
The 6 episode story mode does give the game a little more depth in that you do not always get the option of which character you can control and there is often 'in fighting' amongst your own gang members. The story is also linked by super stylish manga pictures which gives another reason to finish the game with each school.
The other mode is the Free Mode where you get to choose a main character, a partner and a third character to battle it out against the computer or human opponent. Even though you do have 3 characters on your team, there is (unfortunately) no tag outs. You only get to choose another team character after the first round. However, once you have accumulated enough power on your power-o-meter, you can use your team to give real meaning to the term 'gang bang'. These gang bashing are where the game takes a hard left on the road to reality, and will see your characters performing outlandish moves on your opponent.

RELATE TO THIS. BAM!
There are 22 characters to choose from, each with their own unique form of attacks. You can choose exponents from many different disciplines and fashions such as soccer, volley ball, punk, boxing, photography, baseball, rocker, kendo, swimming, sumo, the violin, gymnastics, tennis etc. Some of the characters attacks are very funny such as the photographer who takes bad pictures of her opponents or the swimmer who forces his opponent to join in on some waterless water ballet.
Whilst the PowerStone like cutesy nature of Project Justice may not appeal to the harder edged fight fans, the games longevity lies in the story mode and the desire to check out all the different charismatic characters and their wealth of gang bash moves. Otherwise, if you do relate to one of the character types, then maybe you've found your ultimate fighting character. <<



if only school really was this cool



B.S./10



Living in an era where the improvement of gaming visuals is perceived as the ultimate goal of all human endeavours, it's hard to imagine that video games existed before computer graphics were even possible. But exist they did, and these text adventure games, to the few that remember them, represent a golden age of interactivity that may be lost forever...

SYNTAX ERROR

There were many strange new innovations affecting the brave new world of the 1970s, but as far as nerds were concerned, the most significant were digital computers and Dungeons & Dragons. Computers promised a future of limitless processing power that would emancipate all mankind, and D&D was a pen and paper RPG that

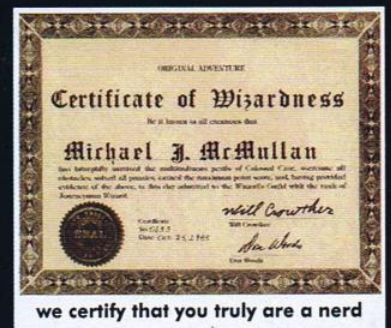
small groups of people could use to pretend they were epic heroes. While many a spotty geek was happy to keep these technologies separate, a visionary few saw how they could converge to form the ultimate in anti-social entertainment, a single-player RPG; an adventure game.

The interface of such games was a command prompt, no more glamorous than any command line based operating system. By entering simple commands, one could move around in the game environment, examine one's surroundings, pick up items, fight deadly monsters, and try to solve obtuse logic problems. The player's instructions, statements like "Go north" and "Look at mailbox" were interpreted by a routine called a parser. This kind of interface was notorious for its pickiness with syntax, and this

characteristic was often exploited by game designers to make their problems nigh on impossible to solve.

YOU ARE IN A TWISTY MAZE OF PASSAGEWAYS, ALL ALIKE

It's a sad historical fact, but the first such game was written by a scientist who after a nasty divorce wanted a way to feel closer to his children, now in the custody of his former wife. This defining element of tragedy inspired William Crowther to use his intimate caving knowledge, a detailed map of the mammoth cave system in Kentucky, and a mainframe to write the first ever adventure game: Adventure (AKA Colossal Cave). By peppering the real world setting with fantastical creatures and fiendish puzzles, he created an instant hit, and between 1972 and the late 80s



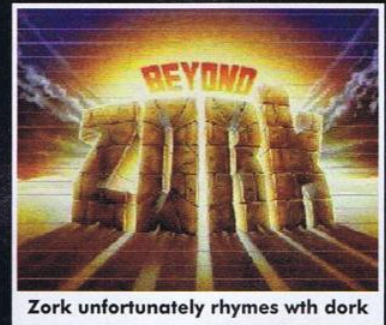
hundreds of similar titles would follow. By far the biggest publisher of text adventures was Infocom, which had the biggest adventure franchise of all: Zork. This obtuse little dungeon crawling game fostered a huge following worldwide, and numerous sequels. After Activision bought out Infocom, they released the odd revival



product, such as Return to Zork and Zork Grand Inquisitor, but these were CD-ROM extravaganzas, far removed from their cerebral beginnings. Also of note from Infocom is the text adventure version of The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy, co-written by Douglas Adams himself. Adams delighted in the inherent obfuscation of the medium, and those who have played the game, let alone finished it, have many a tale to tell. For instance, in order to get Arthur Dent out of bed at the very beginning, one has to endure a maddening set of trivial tasks, like putting on his dressing gown and standing up. They must be completed in a set order, and within a set number of moves, lest the bulldozers churning away outside demolish your house with you still in it. It only got harder from there, the

ultimate goal being to have your inventory list both "no tea" (you start with this) and "tea" simultaneously, thus creating a paradox and gaining ultimate power over all the universe. As they evolved, text adventures started to mix graphics with the interface, the latter typically being in a thin band at the bottom of the screen. Roberta Williams and her husband created the first such game along with their company, Sierra Online, in 1980, and by 1984 they had produced King's Quest I. Magnetic Scrolls was another player back in the day, renowned for its Amiga adventure games, which while only employing static screens impressed punters all the same with the amazing detail (up to 4096 colours!) possible on a machine far ahead of its time.

YOU CAN'T DO THAT HERE
 From there it's a hop, skip and jump to the early adventure games from LucasArts, which used words on screen that you clicked on to form simple sentences. There were a few gems from this period, like Maniac Mansion and Zac McKracken. Then it was a logical progression to leave the words out altogether, just using pointing and clicking on items. This is where the adventure game stands in the present day. Now that all the characters talk to you, you don't even really need to be able to read. It may seem fruity to lament the death of the text adventure game as a genre, but to many the advent of "immersive" graphics has been a loss as much as a gain. The best text adventure games are like the best novels, for while there are no pictures,



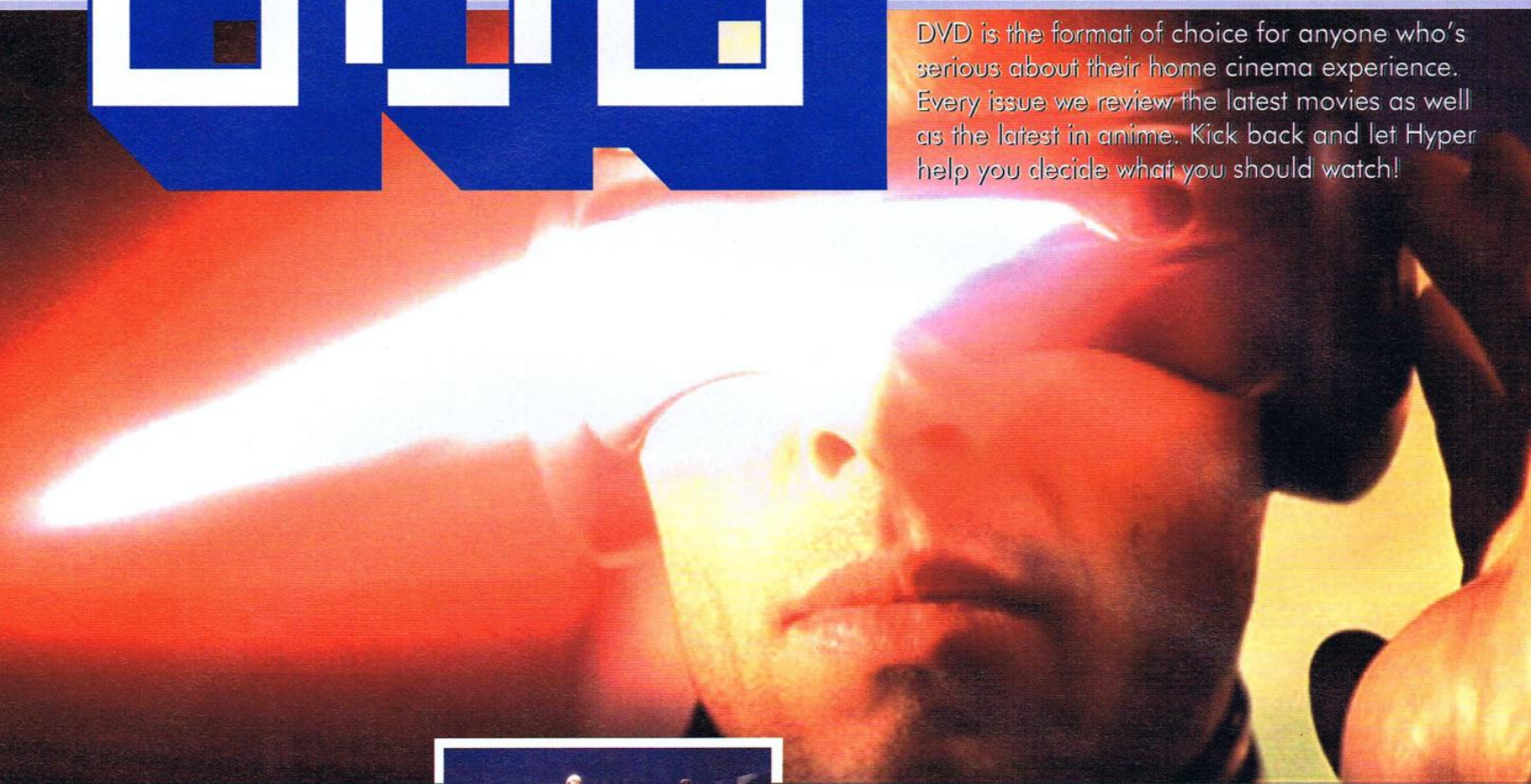
Zork unfortunately rhymes with dork

the imagery forms in your fertile brain. The game becomes a personal experience, unique to each person: involving, harrowing, breathtaking. Aside from the odd nature reserve in the most esoteric recesses of the Internet, the text adventure is gone for good. For many, this also means the death of imagination. <<



» KEVIN CHEUNG

DVD is the format of choice for anyone who's serious about their home cinema experience. Every issue we review the latest movies as well as the latest in anime. Kick back and let Hyper help you decide what you should watch!



X-Men

20TH CENTURY FOX, RATED M

Well here it is — the movie that everyone was expecting to suck that turned out to be the best comic book-to-film release since *Batman The Movie*. But let's face it — how could we not make fun of X-Men when the screenplay was written by David Hayter, the American voice of *Metal Gear Solid's* Solid Snake?

X-Men the movie is one of those rare gems that pleases both the existing fans of the comic book and the newly introduced. The story raises interesting questions: mutants with special powers, fighting to save a world that fears and hates them. Would real-life minority groups do the same? The rest



Logan gets his first hairdressing job

of us can only dream of having retractable adamantium claws in our wrists.

The special effects lose a little of their impact on the small screen, but it's doubtful there's a single X-Men fan who'll care, if just for being able to see Wolverine take the piss out of Cyclops over and over again. The DVD is light on the extra features, but they're far from run-of-the-mill. There are screen tests, raw CG, and deleted scenes that can be spliced (albeit poorly) into the movie.

MOVIE: 8/10 **EXTRAS:** 7/10



Logan's budget beard trimming



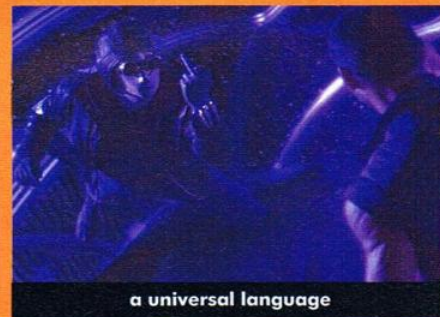
"Hey bub, short back and sides?"

Supernova

MGM, RATED MA15+

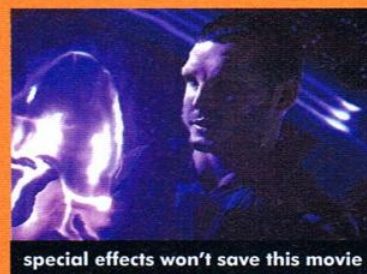
A deep space rescue team receives a distress signal from the furthest reaches of known space, but upon getting there they find only a fresh-faced scavenger and a very strange alien artifact. Suspicious things start happening and the medical officer (Angela Bassett) seems to have the best clue — but by the time everything is revealed, the wheels have already been set in motion for a terrible tragedy.

Don't expect a disturbing creep-



a universal language

fest like *Event Horizon* — the storyteller has a moral agenda here, which leaves too many issues unchallenged or unanswered. It's also unfortunate that James Spader's attempt at a badass ex-con comes across as completely deadpan. Deleted scenes provide an insight to the creator's overall vision, which seems a tad inflated as it is.



special effects won't save this movie

MOVIE: 5/10 **EXTRAS:** 5/10

Keeping The Faith

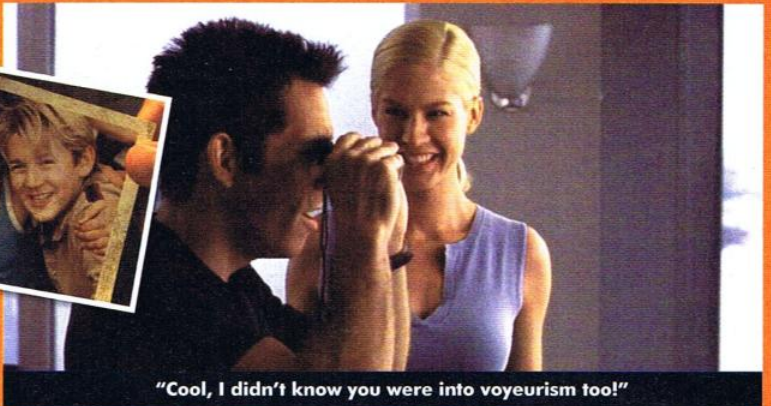
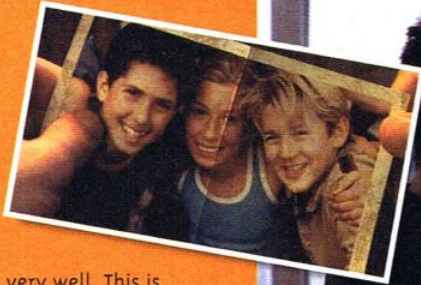
BUENA VISTA, RATED PG

Edward Norton (the priest) and Ben Stiller (the rabbi) grew up as best friends while trying to teach each other about their religions. In the middle was a cheeky little girl who moved away, but has now come back 15 years later as Jenna Elfman. The suppressed hormones in Norton and Stiller spring back to life, and voila — you have a romantic comedy.

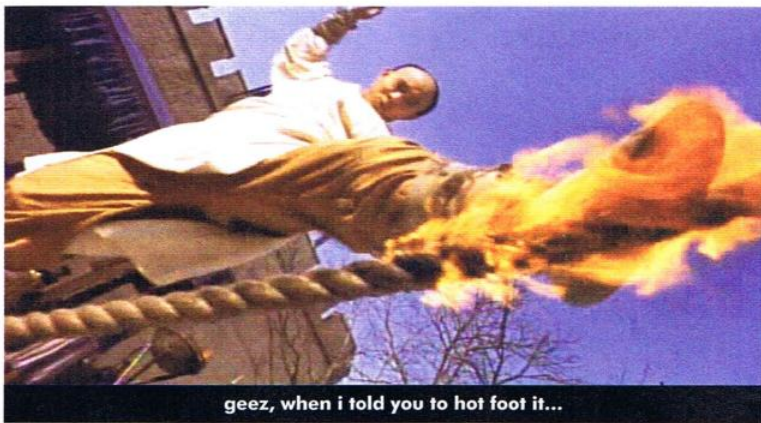
It starts out pretty funny, establishing the nostalgia and bond of

their friendship very well. This is probably why it can get away with turning into a full-blown drama towards the end. Worth watching if you're a Norton fan — he directed and produced it. Commentary from Norton, deleted scenes and a hilarious gag reel anchor the extras.

MOVIE: 7/10 **EXTRAS:** 7/10



"Cool, I didn't know you were into voyeurism too!"



geez, when i told you to hot foot it...

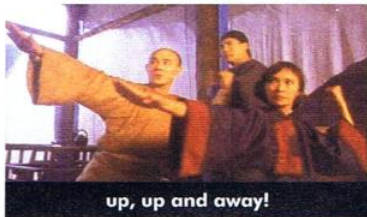
Fong Sai Yuk

UNIVERSAL LASER, RATED G

Retitled "The Legend" for some Western regions, Fong Sai Yuk is best considered a live-action take on the romantic comedy of Ranma 1/2, except it takes place in the 19th century, with a little more emphasis on the fighting. Jet Li stars as a cocky Hong Kong teenager who is unwittingly betrothed to a girl from northern China after his mum wins a martial arts contest. Unfortunately he's in love with another girl, and matters aren't helped by the discovery that his father is a key figure in an underground rebellion.

The fight scenes are amongst the best you'll ever see, and the comedy is extremely well placed. It's worth knowing that there's a superior sequel that continues many of the jokes and gags from this film. Jet Li fans will find this a very pleasant complement to the politically charged Once Upon A Time In China.

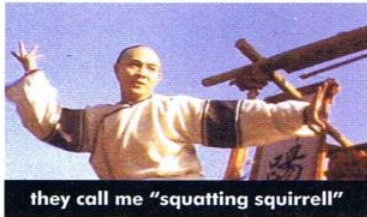
MOVIE: 7/10 **EXTRAS:** 3/10



up, up and away!



leg wrestling ain't easy



they call me "squatting squirrel"

Where The Heart Is

20TH CENTURY FOX, RATED M

Hatalie Portman and Ashley Judd are supported by Sally Field, Stockard Channing and Joan Cusack in this chick flick celebration of love and friendship. Based on a best-selling novel by Billie Letts, Portman plays a pregnant southern belle forced to live secretly in a department store and give birth to her baby after her husband abandons her. But that's okay, because Portman is helped back to her feet by complete strangers, and all things come full circle as the assholes in her life get their just deserts.

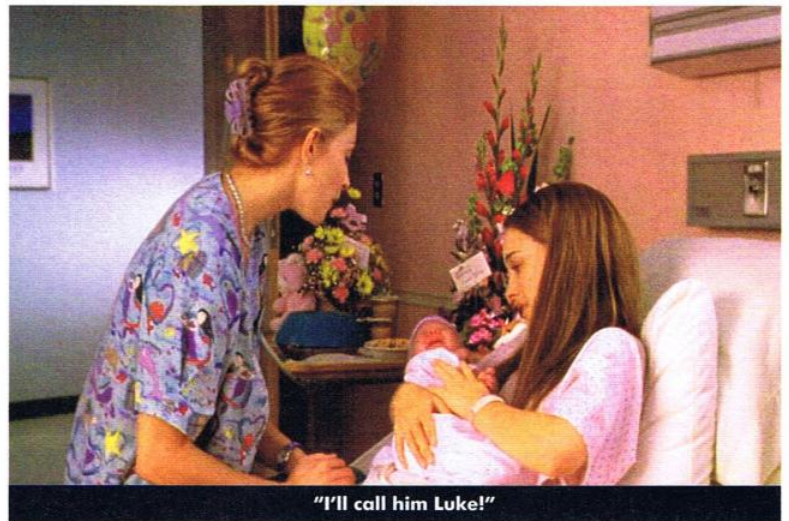
We'd like to think that so many nice people can live in the one convenient location, but the bottom line is that

MOVIE: 6/10 **EXTRAS:** 2/10



ailse 4: soup, pasta, premature birth

it's an implausibly convenient feel-good film. You'll get bonus sensitivity marks if you watch it with your girlfriend, though.



"I'll call him Luke!"



Batman tries out his new "Bat-Toothbrush"

Batman Beyond: Return of the Joker

WARNER BROS

Eatman Beyond: Return of the Joker is the first direct-to-DVD movie dedicated to Warner Bros' hip cyberpunk version of the Batman of the future. Terry McGinnis is the new Batman, fighting crime under the tutelage of a grey-haired Bruce Wayne who watches everything from the Batcave. The new batsuit is way cool — the whole piece qualifies as one big utility belt that enhances Terry's abilities with extra strength, flight, stealth, microphones built into the fingertips, and so on.

This film sees the impossible return of Batman's mortal enemy, The Joker, who by the series' continuity should be

well into his eighties. But he's back, voiced most appropriately by Mark Hamill, and an even deadlier threat than ever. The revelations of the events that lead to the Joker's return are spine chilling and unexpected. The quality of the plot is equalled only by the superlative animation direction, which from the credits is decidedly Japanese.

There is so much Batman heritage entrenched in this movie, especially for fans of The Dark Knight Returns and Kingdom Come. This is one of the better American cartoons released in a while.



MOVIE: 9/10 **EXTRAS:** 8/10



Practical Magic

ROADSHOW, RATED M

She's made a few poor career choices, but I've always been a big Nicole Kidman fan. The love affair started with *BMX Bandits*, although it struggled to stay alive during the pretty ordinary *Days of Thunder* and *Far and Away* period. The spark was definitively reignited, however, with *Eyes Wide Shut*, and looks sets to endure if the publicity shots of *Moulin Rouge* are anything to go by.

That said, maybe things between us might have soured irreparably, had I seen *Practical Magic* earlier. Nic probably wouldn't have stood a chance... dropping off my mental map faster than Corey Feldman did post-*Goonies*. Luckily for her, I only had the displeasure of watching

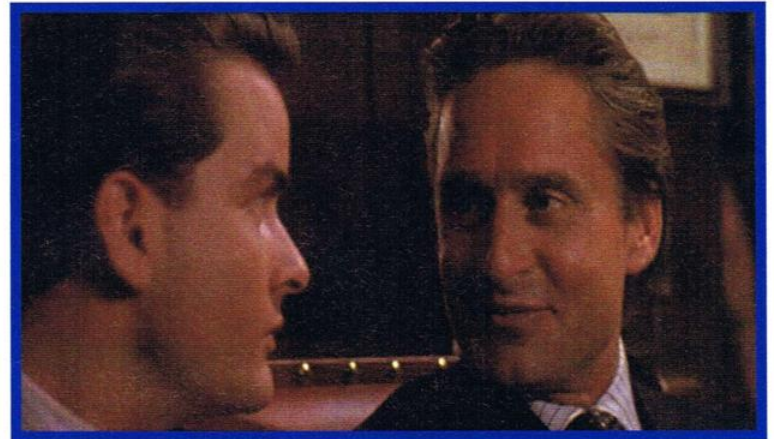
Practical Magic recently (the things we do for Hyper eh Kev?).

Nicole and Sandra Bullock play sisters born into a family of witches. Due to an old curse, any man the women from this family fall in love with is destined to die. The plot is sillier and more melodramatic than anything Barbara Taylor Bradford has ever penned, and is generally lacking in consistency and logic... often to a mystifyingly absurd level.

Practical Magic is simply excruciating viewing. Perhaps the most damning testimonial I can give is to say that this film has less redeeming features than the *Savage Garden* DVD. Oh god no!

Victoria Flanagan

MOVIE: 1/10 **EXTRAS:** 3/10



Wall Street

20TH CENTURY FOX, RATED R

Eefore he became known as "that lucky sod who snagged Catherine Zeta Jones", before his name was made synonymous with kinky sex, Michael Douglas was the face of Gordon Gekko, the man who legitimized the rise of 80s yuppidom with the famous "greed is good" speech. By today's standards, the business sharking that Douglas delivered in Oliver Stone's *Wall Street* is a tad period.

But it takes nothing from the art

that Stone has made of telling a story. This, at least, is apparent through Stone's commentary, as he provides insights into why the many films he's touched never seem to lose their appeal. It's funny how this movie was originally rated R — there's no gore, violence, or explicit sex; maybe the censors didn't want kids to be so money-hungry.

MOVIE: 8/10 **EXTRAS:** 5/10



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ANIME

Samurai X: Betrayal

ACTION/DRAMA, PRODUCTION COMPANY: SUNRISE/BANDAI VISUAL

The last two episodes of the Rurouni Kenshin OVA definitely loses something from the first two, probably because the focus has shifted from 'Kenshin the cold assassin' to 'Kenshin the man who finds meaning in life'. The directorial continuity of the romance that blossoms between Kenshin and Tomoe isn't very smooth, and is totally incongruous with the final confrontation. The conflict here is not with Kenshin, but rather with Tomoe and her family's allegiance to the Shogunate. As more details are revealed about her past and her dead fiancé, it becomes a question of whether her love for Kenshin is enough to overcome the seemingly inevitable revenge she must exact. One can't help but weep for the redemption of our hero's soul at the utterance of the words "Sayonara, Kenshin".

There's still great beauty to be found in the portrayal of feudal Japan, for the artistic direction and the little details that are flashed in the periphery. The pace of these final episodes is significantly slower than the rest of the series, yet there remain loose threads with certain characters that need closure. Given that much of this story is fictitious anyway, it wouldn't have killed them to improvise for dramatic value.

ANIMATION: 9/10

PLOT: 9/10

JAPAN-NESS: High

OVERALL: 8/10



those sideburns are outta control



unfortunate birthmarks

Princess Mononoke

ACTION/DRAMA, PRODUCTION COMPANY: STUDIO GHIBLI

Anime-loving Hyper readers shouldn't even need to read this review, as it's obvious what I'm going to say. Get it. Princess Mononoke is not only one of the best animated feature films ever, but also without question the best DVD release for anime. The reference picture quality displays all the rich, deep colours to their maximum effect with absolutely no unsightly artefacts; the sound is mastered in Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround, taking full advantage of every discrete channel (listen to all the ambient effects in the forest!) with pounding sub-woofer response where appropriate. My friends, you do not want to compromise the picture or sound of this masterpiece on a dodgy fansub or VCD. You want this on DVD, hooked up to a proper home theatre amplifier.

Ashitaka is a prince cursed to a horrible death after killing a rampaging demon. He travels west to



that's the wrong way to load an arrow



woah, the drugs are kicking in

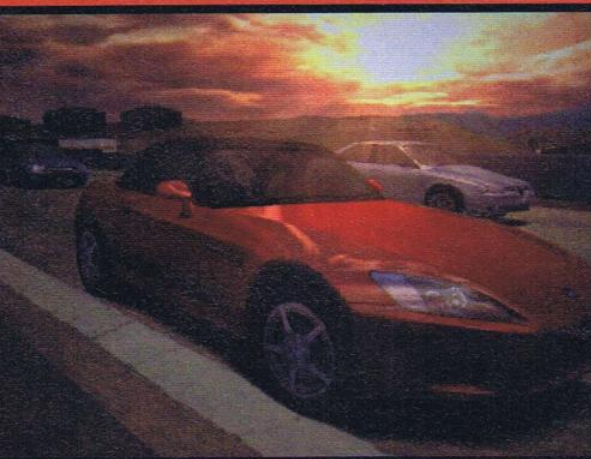
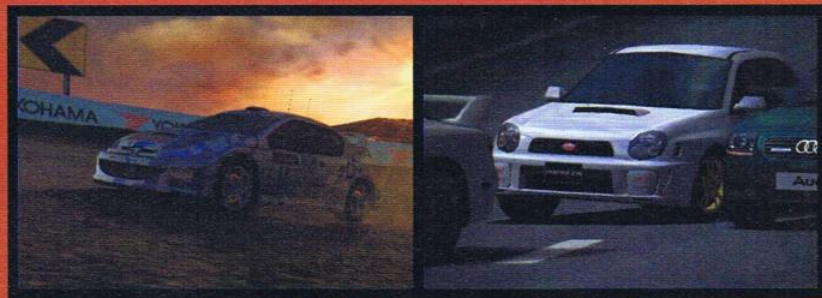
meet his fate, to see "with eyes unclouded by hate". There he discovers Iron Town, a prodigious industrial hub whose expansion threatens the surrounding environment. Outside the town he meets Princess Mononoke, a wolf-girl who fights a losing battle to save the forest spirits. The opposing factions soon rise to a confrontation where nature refuses to be usurped by humankind.

The whole movie oozes with the highest production values —

incredible CG scenes blended with breathtaking cel animation, superb 5.1 channel surround effects (in subbed and dubbed), and character interactions that are voluminously textured. The English dubbing is surprisingly well done. It features an all-star cast of Claire Danes, Minnie Driver, Billy Bob Thornton, Billy Crudup and Gillian Anderson (and a translated script from comic-book god Neil Gaiman), which I have to reluctantly admit to being better than the Japanese sub in some respects.

ANIMATION: 10/10 PLOT: 9/10 JAPAN-NESS: Med OVERALL: 10/10

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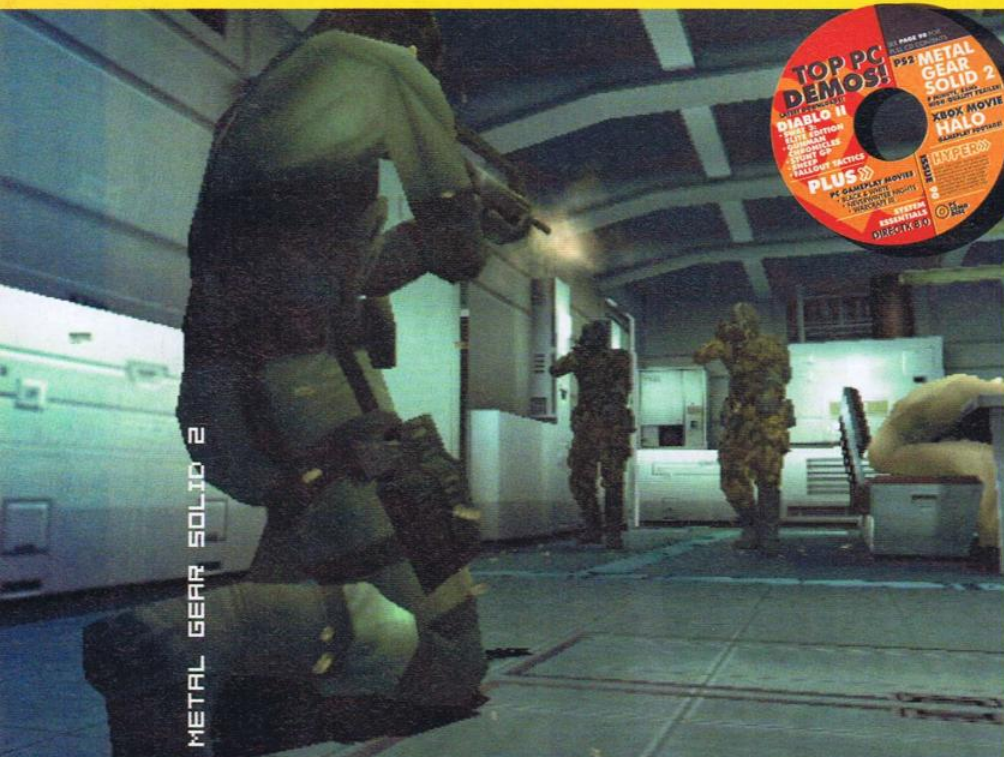


»HY0090

At time of payment your subscription coupon becomes a tax invoice. Please keep a copy of the coupon for tax invoice purposes.

WHAT'S ON THE CD

The Hyper cover disc has the latest game demos, the hottest PC and console games trailers, utilities for your computer and more! Everything you could possibly want is right here on one demo disc. Cool, eh?



METAL GEAR SOLID 2

Gameplay Movies

METAL GEAR SOLID 2

The full 9-minute trailer!

Later this year, the PS2 will be host to one of the most anticipated games of all time — Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty. Check out this amazing 9-minute trailer that would normally be a whopping 85Mb download! You won't believe the incredible scenes in this trailer that depict actual real-time gameplay. Truly jaw-dropping stuff. Get out those brown undies!

HALO

Xbox may have been delayed in PAL territories until 2002, but Halo will be launching in the USA this year. Just take a look at this great teaser for this amazing shooter that should boast some of the greatest team-based gaming ever. So beautiful you'll cry.

BLACK & WHITE

Peter Molyneux, genius game designer, unleashes a new Black and White movie on the public, and we have it for you here. It won't be long before this game will be available for the PC, so you can start stocking up the mini-fridge for those late nights of gaming bliss.

NEVERWINTER NIGHTS

Utilising actual D&D rules, Neverwinter Nights from Interplay and Bioware should set the RPG scene alight with this epic piece of adventuring. The 3D engine looks great and from what we can see in this trailer, you can expect some really savage battles with beasts of all sizes. Good luck, adventurers!

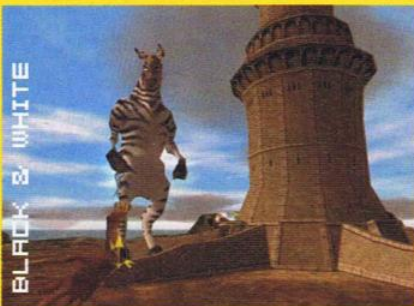
WARCRAFT III

When you're not playing Blizzard's Diablo II demo, have a taste of this sexy Warcraft III intro. The Warcraft games were truly ground-breaking PC titles, so we can't bridle our enthusiasm for number three. This stunning movie will play full-screen on your PC, so dig it.

Utilities

DIRECT X 8.0

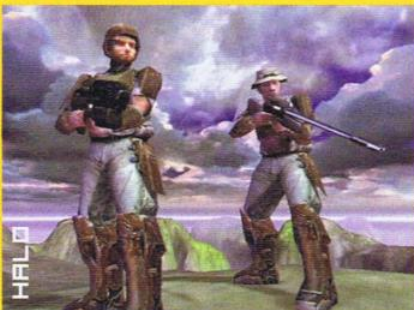
The latest version of Direct X is a must for your PC to run the latest games and game demos. Install this now.



BLACK & WHITE



NEVERWINTER NIGHTS



HALO



WARCRAFT III



DIABLO II

Game Demos

DIABLO II

Blizzard • Required: P233, 32Mb RAM

Finally it's here. The biggest game of 2000 now has a demo available. Click and kill your way across maps overflowing with demon spawn in your quest to simply get your character as buff as possible. Strangely addictive, Diablo II will keep you up at night until your eyes are ready to dry up and fall out of your head.

FALLOUT TACTICS

Interplay • Required: P266, 64Mb RAM

Fallout rocks. We just love this series. Fallout Tactics is almost upon us, taking the hilariously grim post-apocalyptic universe and throwing it head first into the realm of tactical strategy gaming. Join the Brotherhood of Steel and unleash utter chaos upon your foes.

SWAT 3: ELITE EDITION

Sierra • Required: P300, 64Mb RAM, 3D card

If you've been playing lots of Counter-Strike, then why not try something more realistic? SWAT 3 requires you to be as good as the counter-terrorists are in real life, with true hostage scenarios and more. Give your SWAT team orders, report back to HQ and see if you can be the best that there is. Challenging stuff.

STUNT GP

Team 17 • Required: P233, 64Mb RAM, 3D card

Stunt GP is a blindingly fast remote-controlled car racing game that allows you to pull off crazy tricks in single or multiplayer. Big jumps, corkscrews, loops and hair-raising hairpins will keep you on the edge of your seat.

GUNMAN CHRONICLES

Sierra • Required: P233, 32Mb RAM, 3D card

Half-Life meets John Wayne. Gunman Chronicles puts you in the dusty boots of a gun-toting hero hell-bent on wiping out any and all alien scum! The scripted events in this game make it a very entertaining romp, so limber up your itchy trigger finger and get going!

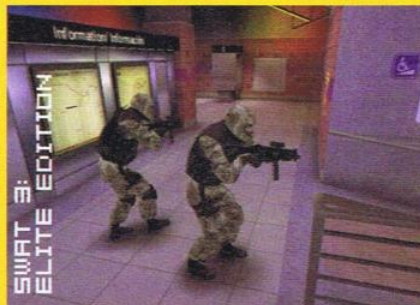
SHEEP

Empire Interactive • Required: P233, 32Mb RAM

If you're not careful, your sheep will be kidnapped by crazy aliens. To save them, you have to herd them through all sorts of crazy obstacles like shearing machines, jet fighters and more. A clever puzzle game in the tradition of Lemmings.



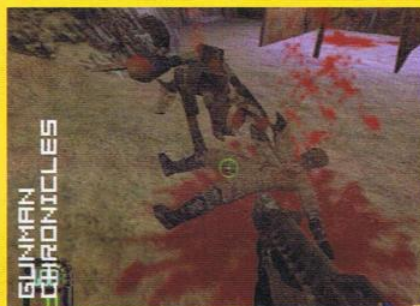
FALLOUT TACTICS



SWAT 3: ELITE EDITION



STUNT GP



GUNMAN CHRONICLES



SHEEP

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 with your problem. If your CD is faulty, a new CD can be posted to you free of charge.

hyperactive 3.1

ONE SMALL STEP FOR NINTENDO....

Hyperactive is buzzing, as the next step in portable gaming is virtually upon us. March 21st will see the release of the Game Boy Advance in Japan, and you can bet we will keep you up-to-date with how it goes, and give you a rundown as soon as we can get our grubby little hands on one.

ONE GIANT LEAP FOR GAMEKIND.

However, the GBA is only a small part of the evolution of the gaming industry right now. With a change-over to a new generation of hardware, more and more news on the Gamecube and Xbox is becoming available and the excitement is hard to hide.

The Dreamcast will be supported with more than 100 titles this year, and the PS2 has some of the most hyped titles in videogames history coming soon. Can Metal Gear Solid 2 and Gran Turismo 3 live up to it? If they do, gaming nirvana awaits.

"BUT I SUCK AT GAMES!"

Never fear! If you are too crap to finish your games (even though you own them, even though you can practise all day long...) then just hop on down to our cheat section and CHEAT! Or if you have a cheat you think others might find useful, then visit us and share the knowledge people!

JOYSTICK FEATURE COMING SOON..

Ever wanted to play your favourite fighting games the way they were meant to be played? Or see just how arcade-perfect that 'arcade-perfect translation' is? Hyperactive is going to show you how, with a pictorial guide on how to build your own arcade-perfect joystick and where to get the parts. A much needed alternative to buying any of the crap joysticks out there on the market.

Bryce McDonough
Hyperactive Producer
brycem@next.com.au



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FORUM

Q. CAN DREAMCAST SURVIVE THE CONSOLE WAR?

Here are some of the letters we received from the question we posed back in issue 88. It sounds like the Dreamcast is well loved, which is quite sad in the light of recent news. Sniff. Ah well, we can dream...



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

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...

"AND THE BEST 16-BIT GAME WAS...?"

Responses will be printed in Hyper 92.

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.

HIGHER SCORES...

Upon reading the reviews of the launch titles for the PlayStation 2, I went back to my stockpile of old Hyper mags to dig up the Dreamcast launch titles reviews.

For starters, the Dreamcast received much higher scores in the 'graphics' rating than the PlayStation2, and up to your Feb. issue still continues to do so.

The amount of original and fun games that have come out on Dreamcast put the PlayStation 2 to shame, because what good is a powerful console if there are no good games to play.

That's my opinion, like it or not.

Lloyds
Lloyds_oo@yahoo.com.au

THEN THERE WAS THE SATURN

I can't see into the future but I can remember the past (well most of it anyway). I do remember a few years ago when the Saturn came out, it was a good console with some decent titles but no one bought it. Why? Because Sega Ozisoft didn't seem to care what happened to it. There were 3 other consoles at the time, the Goldstar/3DO, PSX and later the N64. Only half of these consoles are still around. Why?

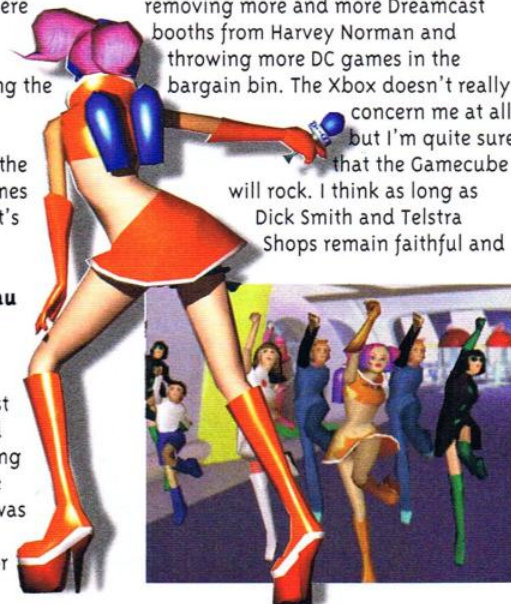
Because Nintendo and Sony know the power of advertising and are always pushing their products. There are posters, competitions, radio and most of all TV ads. Already the PS2 has started putting ads on the telly, but what about the DC? If it weren't for Hyper and a couple of small newspaper articles no one would even know the Dreamcast existed. Hardly any shops stock them and those that do keep them hidden in a corner where no one can see them. If Sega wake up to themselves and start pushing the DC I think it might survive. Otherwise the only place to find a Dreamcast will be at the Reject Shop for \$40 and games at Cash Converters for \$10. It's happened before.

Marcus
Spiderman@tpg.com.au

LIKE WOW, WIPEOUT

Seeing as I own a Dreamcast myself, I was really worried about the PS2 literally wiping out the Dreamcast, with me being left behind just as I was with my good ol' Saturn. Yet I'm amazed at how poor

the PS2 is actually turning out. I'm not saying it's a bad machine, but it doesn't look any better than my Dreamcast at all in my opinion. Along with SSX being nothing but Cool Boarders' long lost cousin and TTT being nothing but it's name (Tekken, with a tag tournament), I'm actually beginning to think Dreamcast will survive. Its only problem is marketing. Sega's poor marketing scheme is removing more and more Dreamcast booths from Harvey Norman and throwing more DC games in the bargain bin. The Xbox doesn't really concern me at all but I'm quite sure that the Gamecube will rock. I think as long as Dick Smith and Telstra Shops remain faithful and





Jet Set Radio: a classic!



Phantasy Star "Offline"

My feelings about the current
Dreamcast
situation
as expressed by my favourite
video game character...

one reader was compelled to visualise their grief!

f%ckin video shops start renting out games, it'll pull through fine.

Tronza3
Tronza3@hotmail.com

A BIG NEGATIVE

I hate to tell you but no. It has no developer support, it doesn't have online gaming, it wasn't advertised, no one likes it (except the few who bought one!). I'm sorry but it was promising but it will disappear like the Saturn did! I didn't even know the Saturn existed until I walked into my local video store and saw 3 games for hire. I didn't see any games for hire for Dreamcast. No one likes it and it was poorly advertised and no new customers are buying it. Sorry but it just can't win!

JOSH
Dyluck7@pdxextreme.com

IT'S ALL VERY SIMPLE

The simple answer to this question is no. Just like the Saturn before it, the Dreamcast has followed (and will follow) a marketing campaign and selling strategy in Australia that is marred by poor decisions, bad timing, and the dreaded "filter-down" effect that Australia always seems to suffer as far as consoles go.

The Dreamcast is a gaming machine every bit as worthy as the PS2 at the moment, (just look at Shenmue) and with many promising titles on the way. However, the majority of gamers in Australia today know about as much about gaming history as your 7 year-old brother/sister, (who probably think that the SNES was something to do with blowing your nose). The fact of the matter is, Sony already won the

war before the Dreamcast even came out, and they know it (maybe that has something to do with the \$750 price tag)!

The unfortunate consequence of this is that PAL Dreamcast releases will lag further behind JAP/US ones, less games will be ported to PAL, and as a result, many gamers dedicated enough to stick with their Dreamcast will probably just buy pirate import releases, further exaggerating the failure of Dreamcast in Australia. Maybe I'm just a pessimist, but I think I might just be right.

Seikeden
Cutzamash@hotmail.com

AN EXTREME OPTION

Sadly, I think the answer to this question is no. Not because it isn't an excellent machine. Not because it hasn't got some fantastic looking software available or in development. The Dreamcast will die because of one thing, and one thing only. Bigotry. It may be a strange thing to call it, but that is the treatment the Dreamcast, and we Dreamcast owners, are receiving. There are stores that stock everything you can possibly imagine for the other two, but nothing at all for Sega. And if you can find a store that carries anything, it's usually leftover launch titles, and these stores won't get in any new stock until they sell the old... and who of us wants old games that we've already bought or didn't want in the first place? Things are not quite as bleak in my neck of the woods as they are for poor Scott Marcus (Why Can't We All Just Get Along? Hyper #88), at least not at

the moment. I can still get new games, though only from one store. I fear that soon, I too will be forced to resort to the mail order option I had to rely on for my poor Saturn...

It's getting to the point that I'm considering giving up gaming altogether. It's very unlikely that either of the others will be able to woo me, not that I have anything against either one of them (I have a NES, SNES and have recently replaced my Game Boy, and I have a Sony TV, VCR and, when I can afford it, I will be buying a Sony DVD player),

I'm mostly a Sega gamer because my favourite video game character is a Sega character and so is extremely unlikely to show up on any other console. Also, I just seem to prefer their in-house games. Of the ten games I have for my Saturn,

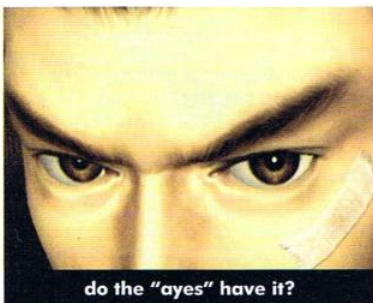
only one ISN'T a Sega game, and though I currently only have two games for my Dreamcast, they are both in-house productions, as are the majority of up-and-coming titles that I'm interested in.

So I call upon my fellow DC owners (there's got to be some of us out there), and any others out there who won't be dictated to: boycott these prejudiced stores entirely! Don't give them one damn cent of your hard-earned money! Let them know that we WON'T have our minds made up for! We'll buy the system we damn well want to, whether you stock it or not!

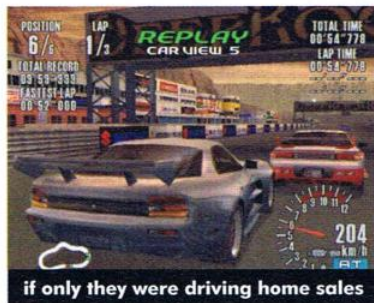
A disgruntled (former?) gamer
Brik@austarnetl.com.au

STOP PRESS!

In case you hadn't noticed. Bad news for the Dreamcast in News. Turn to page 10



do the "eyes" have it?



if only they were driving home sales

MAIL



HYPER LETTERS:

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Redfern, NSW 2016
Australia
E-mail: freakscene@next.com.au

ONE UNHAPPY CHAPPY

To Hyper and readers of the magazine, I thought I would send this email to Hyper magazine because I believe Hyper and it's readers buy this magazine for information on all consoles and the games. Well recently I have come across some news on the PS2 I believe everybody should know about.

I was one of the excited buyers of the console on November 30th, interested in getting my hands on the latest beast in town. Sure it throws graphics around like nothing I had ever seen but when I put in my first DVD, problems arose. The manual says some DVDs may not play correctly in "rare instances". I thought there could have been a scratch on it but 14 DVDs later and 8 of them have display problems. This is definitely not what I would call a "rare instance" (6 of them were box office hits!). Problems such as skipping and pausing through

certain scenes, audio sync problems like hearing the actors' lines before their mouths actually speak them, to no sound at all through the DVD. I won't mention names of these titles because they work perfectly on a standalone player but the reason why I'm mentioning Sony's name is because they told me it wasn't their problem when I rang their 'POWERLINE' service, and then went on to charge me \$16.55 for the phone call. I have 3 friends who all have PS2s and they all are experiencing the same problems with their own copies of the DVDs.

When you pay \$749 for a console you expect the customer service to match the high price but it definitely doesn't. I hope Sony read this and take responsibility.

Thank you,
Roach
Roach1976@hotmail.com

Dear Roach,
You don't seem to be having much luck



Quake 3 on Dreamcast. Sweet, eh?

with your PS2. We haven't heard of it being this unreliable before. Are other readers having as many problems as this? We'd like to know!

FREAK XXVII

To Hyper
Do you realise that if everyone suddenly became blind you guys would have no job? Just a thought.

Flameboy
Wet_willy_69_oops@hotmail.com

Dear Flameboy,
That's why we're working on the Hyper "Braille Edition". So there.

SONY 3:16

Ed,
FOR GOD LOVED THE WORLD SO MUCH THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN CONSOLE, THE PLAYSTATION2 IN ORDER THAT EVERYONE EXERCISING FAITH IN HIM MIGHT NOT BE DESTROYED BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE.

FOR GOD SENT FORTH HIS SONY PLAYSTATION INTO THE WORLD, NOT FOR HIM TO JUDGE THE WORLD (like N-64 gamers), BUT FOR THE WORLD TO BE SAVED BY IT.

HE THAT EXERCISES FAITH IN IT IS NOT TO BE JUDGED. HE THAT DOES NOT HAVE FAITH IN THE PLAYSTATION WILL BE JUDGED. THE LIGHT HAS COME INTO WORLD BUT MEN HAVE LOVED THE DARKNESS (N-64) FOR THEIR WORKS

WERE WICKED

FOR HE THAT TOUCHES A NINTENDO HATES THE LIGHT AND DOES NOT COME TO THE LIGHT, IN ORDER THAT HIS GAMING MAY BE REPROVED. BUT HE THAT DOES WHAT IS RIGHT AND COMES TO THE LIGHT IN ORDER THAT HIS GAMING MAY BE MADE MANIFEST AS HAVING BEEN WORKED IN HARMONY WITH GOD.

Apostle ANTHONY "John" PALMER
Apalmer@vanuatu.com.vu

Dear Anthony,
A PSX worshipper, eh? Better the devil you know, I guess.

DC ONLINE GAMING A NO GO?

Hello people at Hyper,
Well, I have some questions that I want answered, because I have been having a rather distressing time trying to find out about this.

1) What is happening with the Australian release of Quake 3 Arena for the DC?

2) Is the DC mouse available in Australia yet?

Bye,
Ian
ianpo@telstra.easymail.com.au

Dear Ian,
To answer both your questions, Quake 3 Arena is currently in limbo with a local release date. The reason is that Sega of

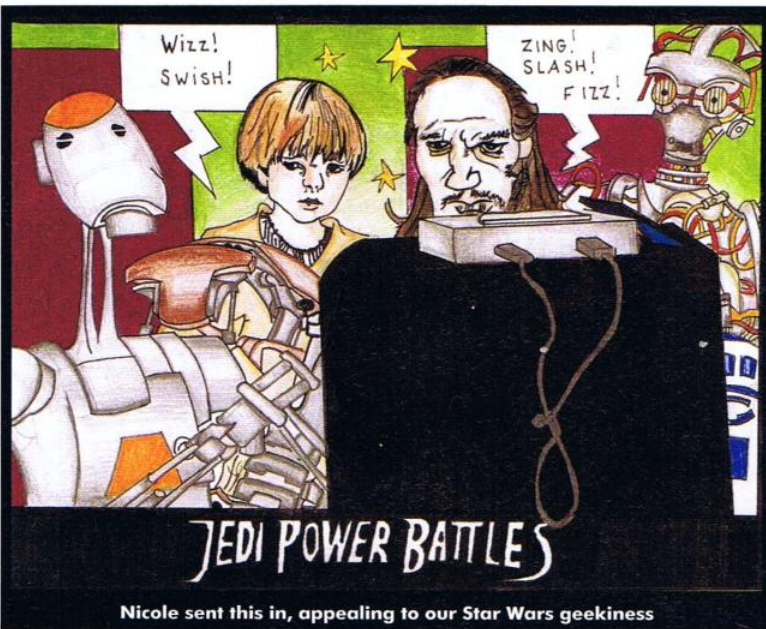
CAPTION THIS!

PART 15 WINNER

Our winning caption this month comes from Gamblor via e-mail. We gotta say, the rest of you guys out there are pretty sick, and we don't mean cool.



"IS THIS SOME KIND OF BUST?"



Nicole sent this in, appealing to our Star Wars geekiness

Japan have to provide Ozisoft with the tools to help them set up a local server to play the games online in our territory, and that as yet has not happened. The mouse will likely get released when Quake 3 Arena does. Hyper has called Ozisoft and asked them when servers will be running, but we were informed that there is still no official date yet, and thus no release date set for the game. This also applies to Chu Chu Rocket, Daytona USA and a bunch of other games with online components.

WHAT A SHAMBLES

Hyper,
I caught Hyper TV in December. It was okay, but there were a few things you should consider changing: Get rid of that stupid 'cheater' person, he's stupid! And no Kevin Cheung? You could have him on and even have a theme song: "Everybody have fun tonight! Everybody Kevin Cheung tonight!"
Thanks.
Timothy Chmielewski
Chuma@dcsi.net.au
P.S. When playing Quake 1, if you take out the game CD and put in "The Boatman's Call" by Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, there are sections of the game when you come across a shambler (the big monster that throws lightning), and the music that plays is "Into Your Arms". True!
Timothy,
We only printed your letter for the P.S.

VR R.I.P.

Dear Hyper,
Firstly I must say that your magazine is utterly fantastic. I would like to

know if any of the newer consoles – i.e. the PS2, Xbox or the Gamecube – are thinking of coming out with virtual reality add-ons? I've heard that Sega has some 3D glasses that they could easily adapt to VR and Nintendo experimented with the Virtual Boy.

Thanks,
Mike C.
Michaelcifra@hotmail.com

Dear Mike C,
Nintendo sure did "experiment" with the Virtual Boy, if that's what you want to call it. VR has never done anything but flop, although there will soon be PC "glasses" that you can wear which display a 1600x1200 image in the eye pieces simulating a full 3D view.

SHORT MEMORY, MUST HAVE A...

Dear Hyper,
A few years ago I was reading an issue of N64 Gamer at my friend's house, when I came across an article about a thing called the Dex drive. I will explain it to all of you who don't know what it is. Well it's a thing that can be hooked up to your PC, so when your memory card is in, you can log on to the internet and download or swap information on to your card. So the point is, is there one coming out for the PlayStation or any other console? If so, how much? Where can I get it? And when is it coming out?

Thanks,
Tom Farinacci
pasta64@hotmail.com

Dear Tom,
Unfortunately the Dex drive never really took off, and so will never get

NOSEY BASTARD

To Hyper,
First I want to say that I got my hands on a PS2 and SSX and I love them. One day, a friend and I sat there playing it for 6 hours straight without a break. I am also a hardcore fan of Final Fantasy, Resident Evil and also Metal Gear Solid, I have finished it heaps of times. I think it's awesome that you have a demo CD and the mag is still only \$6.95.
1. I have read a lot about FFX but when is it bloody coming out in Australia?
2. When is a new RE coming out for PS2?
3. When is FFX coming out? And what does online mean for it? That each player controls one person or something?
4. Can you do a quadruple rodeo on SSX?
5. Why does Sony let companies make shit games for their console?
6. Do you think N64's are shit? Because I do.
7. When is the Final Fantasy movie coming out in Australia?
8. Have you guys played MGS2? If you have, is it the best?
9. Is Summoner good? Because I'm thinking of buying it.
10. Can I come and work there?

Thanks,
Nigel.S
P.S. MGS2 looks awesome.
P.P.S. Your mag rules.

Dear Nigel,
1. Ozisoft now distribute Square games here in Australia. It should be out when you read this.
2. Capcom are working on Resident Evil: Code Veronica for PS2, but before then you'll be able to play Devil May Cry, a new survival horror game. They are also working on Resident Evil 4 according to some old rumours.
3. FFX (FFX) will not have online play. FFXI will be the online Final Fantasy game, allowing you to play online with other gamers in the Final Fantasy world.
4. No, but I can do really fast push-ups.
5. What are you saying exactly?
6. The N64 has some great games that you can't play on any other system. Remove your blinkers.
7. July!
8. Yeah, I have it at home, play it all the time... it rocks. Next question?
9. Really mixed opinions on this one. If you love RPGs, you'll no doubt get some enjoyment out of it, however it isn't a perfect game.
10. Uhh, no. I don't think so.



Gamester PS2 Dual Force 2 Wheel.
Don't forget to include your contact details in your letter.
You've won a Gamester Steering Wheel!

released here. You may be able to get one from an import store though. It was actually released for PSX first.

MORE INFORMATION THAN WE NEEDED

Hyper,
I was just on the toilet, when all of a sudden it hit me, I should e-mail Hyper. So here I am and I have a few questions.
1. What do you guys think of the design of the Xbox? In my opinion it looks like a car subwoofer with a rip off vision of the DC controller.
2. Are you guys going to be doing any more Hyper TV shows later? And if so can you get it to be on normal TV by any chance? Because I don't have Foxtel and my friend didn't tape it for me the little sh\$t so I missed it.
3. Now that it's been announced that Munch's Oddysee will be Xbox exclusive, does that exclude PC? Or will it still come to PC like the Abe games?
4. What sort of grades and courses do you need to do at school if you want to be a programmer or graphics designer or something like that for games?

Well I hope you can answer my questions.
Michael
Spy_death@hotmail.com
P.S. Love the demo and cheap price, keep it up.

Dear Michael,
1. It looks a little big, but we like the black X and glowing logo. The controller seems a tad unoriginal, but we'll wait until we actually get to hold it and play it (at Microsoft Gamestock in Seattle this month!)
2. Maybe, if you're a good little reader and subscribe.
3. Munch's Oddysee will be a console exclusive to Xbox, but will still appear on PC, yes.
4. You just need to get a high enough HSC score to get into the relevant course at University (programming/design whatever). Seek your school's careers adviser for more info.

LET'S LYNCH LYNCH

Dear Hyper,
Hey, I've got a question! Why are the ads for the next generation

REVIEW GAMES FOR HYPER!

» Next issue we'll be starting our brand new Reader Review page, where one talented Hyper reader can have their own game review printed in our hallowed pages, plus win a great prize for their effort! Choose a game, play it to death and write us a killer review then send it in to **Hyper Reader Review, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016**, or email it in to us at **freakscene@next.com.au** with "reader review" in the subject line. There are only a few basic rules:

1) the review must be of a fairly recent release; 2) the review must be roughly 600 words in total; and 3) You must provide us with the same kind of information you find in a normal Hyper review (e.g. scores for Visuals, Sound, Gameplay and Overall, Plus and Minus etc.)

Who will be our first lucky reader reviewer? Find out next issue! Who knows, you may end up writing for Hyper magazine on a regular basis...

consoles so damn strange? I remember seeing the ads for the Dreamcast around it's launch time and was disturbed by their weirdness, but the recent PS2 ads are even weirder. I think I speak for everyone in the universe when I say they are bloody confusing and haven't any evident relation to video games.

It's as if the ads were composed the morning after a trip to Nimbin. These days they should be making ads for consoles and games that appeal to people of all ages and creeds, not ads that alienate the majority of the population and only appeal to a few beatniks in East Germany.

It seems obvious that some game clips showcasing the machine's power would work much better than a talking bloody duck. When it comes to "making something look appealing" I suggest Nintendo and Microsoft take a crash course in advertising, so they don't make the same mistakes as Sega and Sony when unveiling their machines to the public over the television. To Sega and Sony, I pose the question - What the hell are you thinking? I'm sure there are some new age people who appreciate the 'art' behind these commercials, but if these companies want to appeal to the general public, they need to include things like explosions and boobies in their commercials. This fancy pants next generation advertising crap may work in Europe or Japan, but not in OZ my friend! That's my two cents. Keep making people happy.

Cheers.
Lox
Lox_@hotmail.com

Dear Lox,
Actually, I think the ad is cool. If you like David Lynch's style then you would. However, as a first wave of advertising for the console we think it's highly strange that they would be so obscure. Obviously, Sony believe that the PlayStation brand is so powerful that the PS2 ads don't need to be informative. We'll see.

A FEW QS

Hey Hyperactive dudes,
I have some questions that I hope you could answer, if you can't then I will jump off a bridge with a note saying "Eliot made me do it".

1. Why is Cam Shea such a homie?
2. What is the highest scoring game in the magazine's history?
3. In Net Trawlin could you advertise nintensity.com as an upcoming Gamecube site?

Thanks, for your time.
Luke Mumme-Corbin
Lukethefluke@ozemail.com.au

Dear Luke,
1. Cam says "Wassup biaaatch? Don't you be startin no shit wit' me or I upside your head wit' a quickness. BAM BAM BAM! And to all you playa hatin' bloods and pussy rollin' sixties out there, eight tray gangstas gonna rock yo' world fool!"
Well, that's what he said. And no, he's not a "homie".
2. System Shock 2 on PC scored 97% in Hyper November '99. Before that it was Half Life on PC with 97% in Hyper December '98.
3. Only if they pay for my Nintendo Gamecube and Game Boy Advance.

Harvey Norman

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HH4



The Official Australian Games Chart

Compiled by Inform in association with AVSDA W/E January 21 2001

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price PC Games

(>\$29.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	⬆️ The Sims	Strategy
2	⬇️ Barbie Detective	Adventure
3	⬆️ Sim City 3000 Unlimited	Strategy
4	⬇️ Age of Empires Collector's Ed	Strategy
5	⬇️ Command & Conquer Red Alert 2	Strategy
6	⬆️ Sim Mania Pack	Strategy
7	⬆️ Command & Conquer Tiberian Sun	Strategy
8	⬇️ Age of Empires 2	Strategy
9	⬆️ Sim Mania For Kids	Strategy
10	⬇️ Baldur's Gate 2	RPG

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price PlayStation Games

(>\$39.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↔️ Driver 2	Racing
2	⬆️ Crash Bash	Family
3	⬆️ WWF Smackdown! 2	Sports
4	⬇️ Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Sports
5	↔️ Spyro 3 Year Of The Dragon	Platform
6	⬆️ Tony Hawk's Skateboarding	Sports
7	↔️ Medal Of Honor Underground	Action
8	⬇️ TOCA World Touring Cars	Racing
9	⬆️ Bond 007 Racing	Racing
10	↔️ Chicken Run	Adventure

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price N64 Games

(>\$39.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↔️ Bond: TWINE	Action
2	↔️ Banjo Tooie	Platform
3	⬆️ Zelda: Majora's Mask	RPG
4	⬇️ Donkey Kong 64	Platform
5	↔️ Mario Kart 64	Racing
6	↔️ Goldeneye 007	Action
7	⬆️ Mario Tennis	Sports
8	⬇️ Super Mario 64	Platform
9	⬆️ Pokemon Stadium	Action
10	⬇️ Perfect Dark	Action

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price Dreamcast Games

(>\$49.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↔️ Crazy Taxi	Racing
2	↔️ House Of The Dead 2	Action
3	↔️ Sonic Adventures	Platform
4	⬆️ Land Before Time Gt Valley	Adventure
5	⬆️ Tomb Raider 4 Last Rev	Adventure
6	⬆️ NFL Blitz 2000	Sports
7	⬇️ Bass Fishing	Sports
8	↔️ Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Sports
9	⬆️ V-Rally 2 Millenium Ed	Racing
10	⬆️ Tokyo Highway Challenge	Racing

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price PS2 Games

(>\$49.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↔️ SSX	Sports
2	⬆️ Summoner	RPG
3	⬇️ Tekken Tag Tournament	Action
4	⬇️ Dead Or Alive 2	Action
5	↔️ Time Splitters	Adventure
6	⬇️ Formula 1 Champ Season	Racing
7	⬆️ Smuggler's Run	Racing
8	⬆️ Ridge Racer V	Racing
9	⬇️ Kessen	Strategy
10	⬆️ Madden NFL 2001	Sports

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price Games - All Formats

Position	Game Title	Format
1	↔️ Pokemon Gold	Game Boy
2	↔️ Pokemon Silver	Game Boy
3	↔️ Bond: TWINE	N64
4	⬆️ Banjo Tooie	N64
5	↔️ The Sims	PC/Mac
6	⬇️ Barbie Detective	PC/Mac
7	⬇️ SSX	PS2
8	↔️ Donkey Kong Country	Game Boy
9	⬇️ Driver 2	PlayStation
10	⬆️ Pokemon Red	Game Boy



- ★ -New entry
- ↔️ -Non mover
- ⬆️ -Up from last month
- ⬇️ -Down from last month

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NEXT ISSUE

Hyper 91 ❖ On sale March 21

UK GETAWAY!

Hyper fly to England and visit **SONY EUROPE** to get the low-down on **The Getaway** for PS2, plus other big upcoming Sony titles.



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