



ISSUE 91
MAY 2001

HYPER



PS2 A STAR FIGHTER

Star Wars shoots onto the PS2
Full review inside!

HANDHELDS GAME BOY ADVANCE

First look at Nintendo's must-have launch games

REVIEWS

- DC Phantasy Star Online
- PS2 Onimusha
- N64 Indiana Jones
- PC Settlers IV
- DC Grandia II
- N64 Mickey's Speedway

HOT SEQUEL

FEAR EFFECT 2

The PlayStation goes out with a bang



FIRST LOOK!

- Unreal 2
- Doom 3
- Virtua-Fighter 4

PLAYGUIDE

COUNTER-STRIKE

The most popular online game mastered!



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THREE HEROES ONE ENEMY ALL ACTION

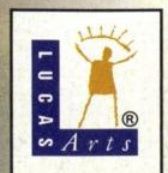
Inspired by LucasArts' rich Star Wars flight-game legacy, STAR WARS STARFIGHTER combines intense air and space combat in a fast-paced action-adventure. Live the lives of three fighter pilots in a series of harrowing missions to save the galaxy from the evil Trade Federation. Pilot extraordinary 3D vehicles—including the Naboo N-1 plus a variety of never-before-seen craft—through stunningly real worlds in 14-plus air and space missions.

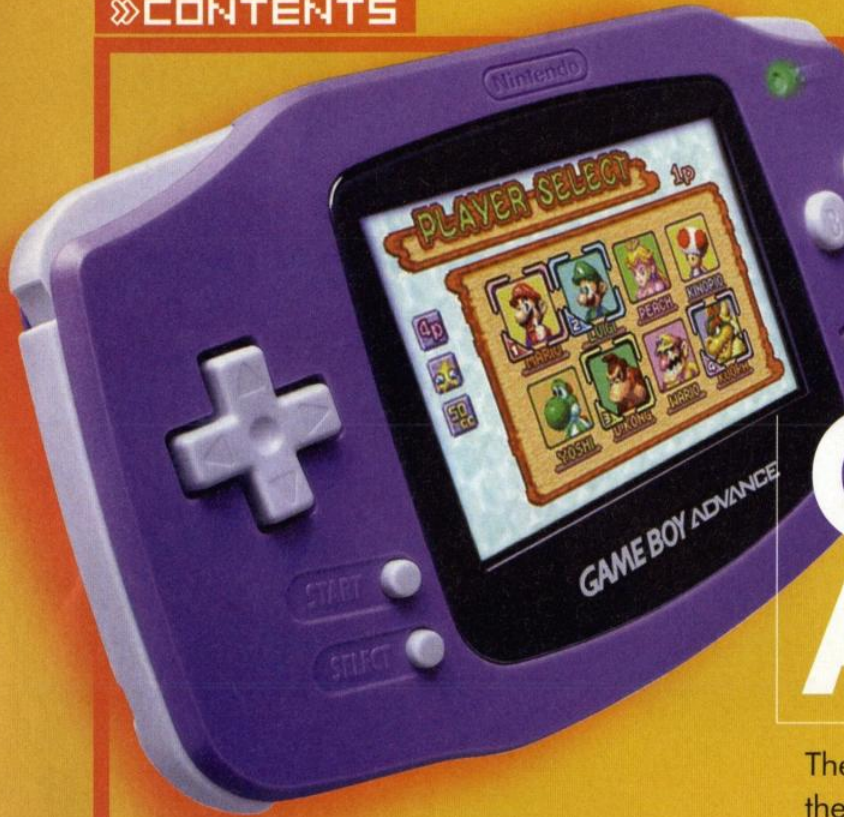
STAR WARS STARFIGHTER™

PlayStation®2



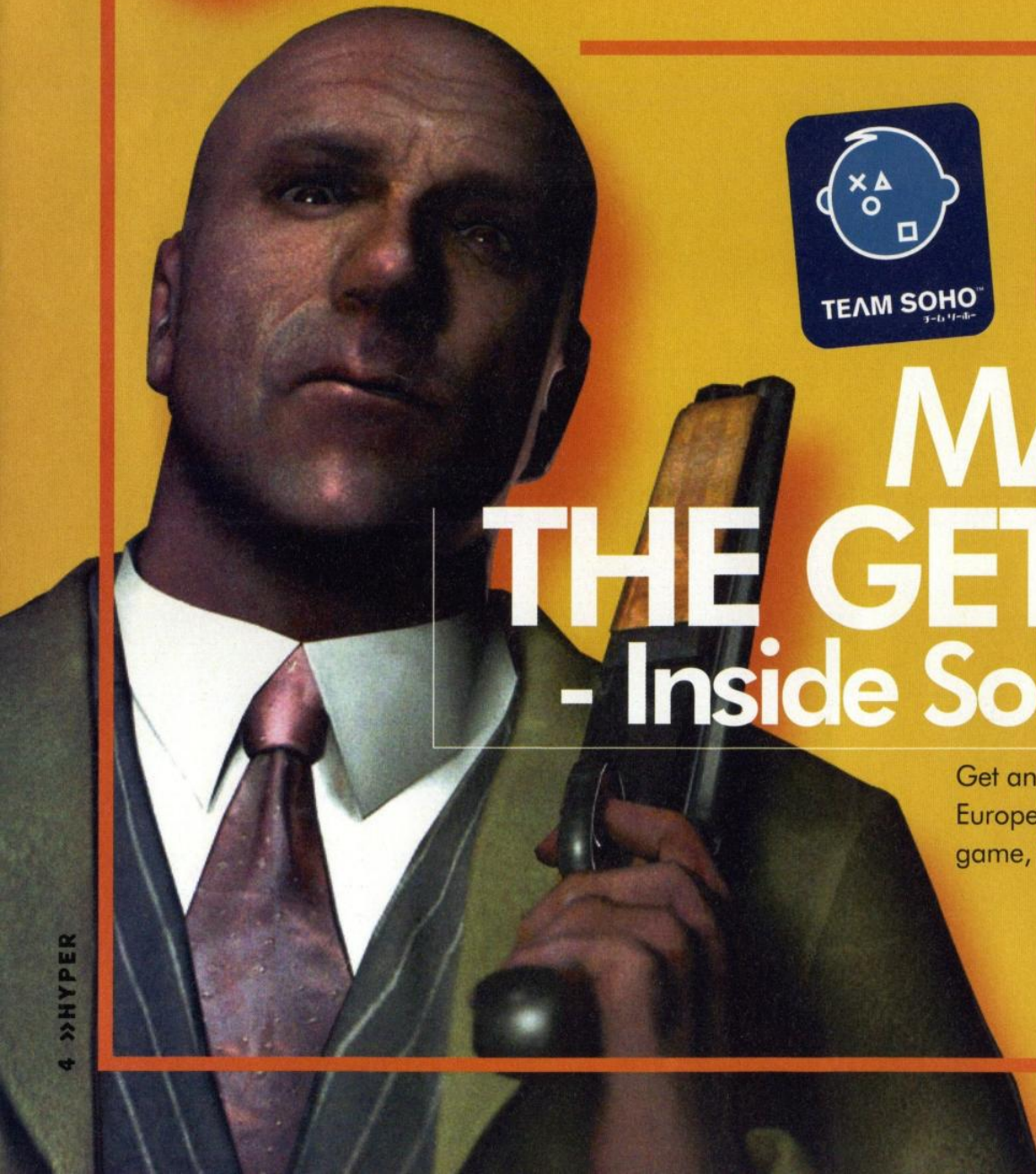
starfighter.lucasarts.com
starwars.com





GAME BOY ADVANCE!

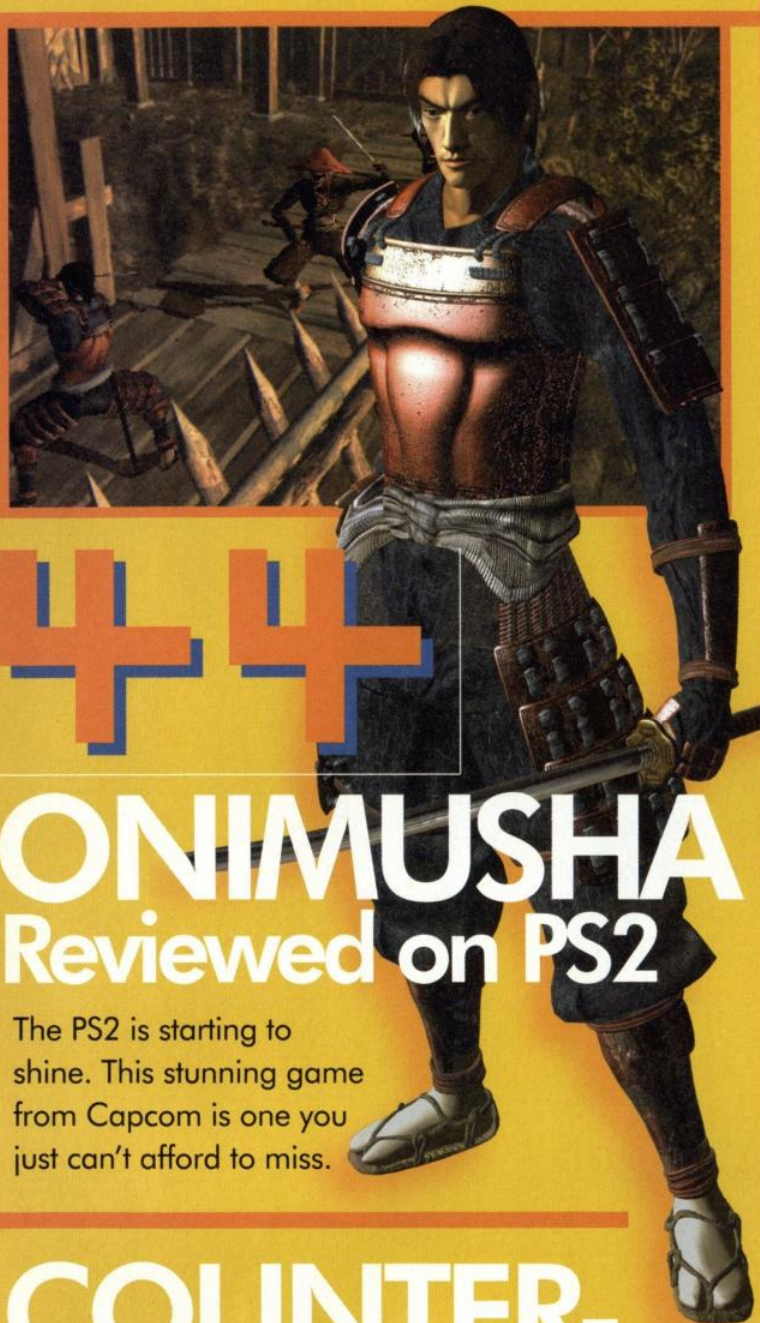
These first-taste previews confirm that the GBA is going to rock our world.



THE GETAWAY - Inside Sony Europe

Get an insider's look at how Sony Europe put together the upcoming PS2 game, The Getaway.





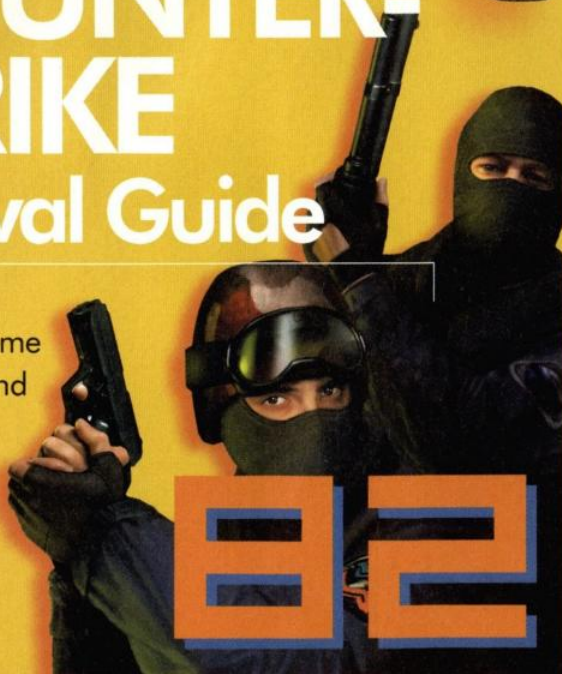
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ONIMUSHA Reviewed on PS2

The PS2 is starting to shine. This stunning game from Capcom is one you just can't afford to miss.

COUNTER- STRIKE Survival Guide

Improve your skills, learn some combat tips and examine each weapon in our massive playguide for this online masterpiece.



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HYPER»



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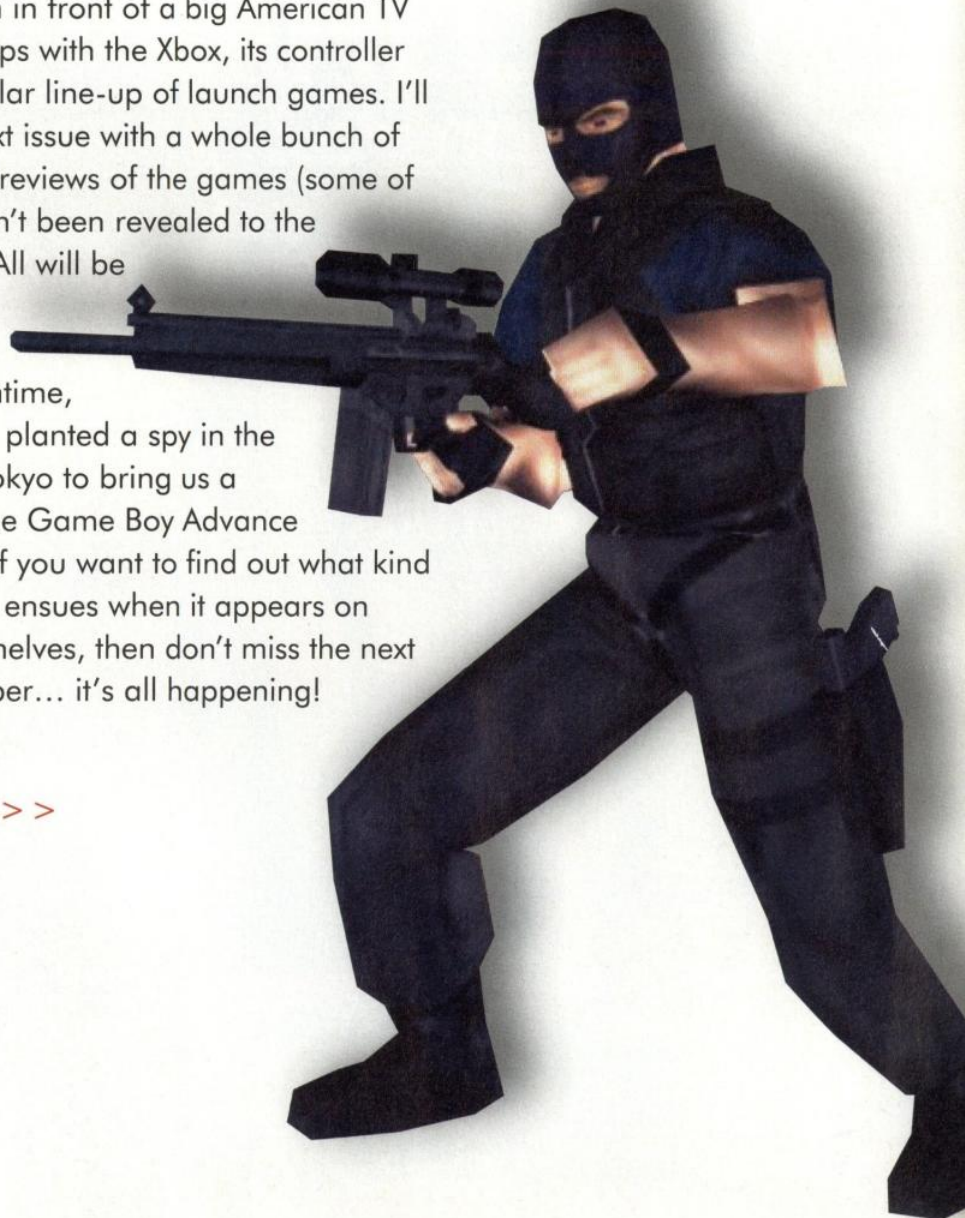
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HYPE IT UP

EDITORIAL >> Well, I've just finished packing my bags for Seattle and I'm hauling my arse off to the airport, so I'll see you lovely people next issue. I've got an important date with a large black console that goes by the name of the Xbox. As long as there are no more Northwest earthquakes I'll be planting my arse back down again in front of a big American TV to get to grips with the Xbox, its controller and the stellar line-up of launch games. I'll be back next issue with a whole bunch of hands-on previews of the games (some of which haven't been revealed to the world yet). All will be revealed next issue!

In the meantime, Hyper have planted a spy in the depths of Tokyo to bring us a report on the Game Boy Advance launch, so if you want to find out what kind of mayhem ensues when it appears on Japanese shelves, then don't miss the next issue of Hyper... it's all happening!

Eliot Fish >>
Editor



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BATTLE for NABOO™



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NEWS

IN THE NEWS

- Doom 3
- Unreal 2
- Virtua Fighter 4
- Zelda on Game Boy Colour
- Star Wars RTS

GeFORCE 3



These graphics are real-time, in-game graphics running on a GeForce 3



all these pics are of games in development

Doom 3 & GeForce 3 Unveiled

id Software finally give us a peek at their next big First Person Shooter

At a recent Macworld, John Carmack unveiled his before-unseen id Software in-development game engine. The same engine that will eventually be released as Doom 3 sometime in 2002. Running through a new GeForce 3 video card on a Mac running OS X, Carmack wowed the crowd with a first look at what is shaping up to be one of the most anticipated PC game sequels ever. Some PC gamers out there might be scratching their heads thinking "why was it on a Mac?" and the answer to that question is simply that Steve Jobs, the main honcho behind the Apple Mac, has a knack for pulling together industry heavyweights for Macworld. It's all about helping to draw attention to the robust and user-friendly Mac platform. It was no different in 1999, when Macworld hosted the first look at id Software's Quake 3 Arena. The fact of the matter, is that it was our first look at Doom 3 game characters and environments, whether or not we play the game on the PC, the Mac, or the Xbox.

The most important thing is that Doom 3, or at least the 3D engine that is behind it, looks like no other PC game yet. The environments and characters look almost fully pre-rendered, like something out of a game FMV rather than an in-game 3D engine. This is the first 3D game in a long while that significantly raises the bar in terms of in-game graphics. We all want Doom 3 to be a scary game,

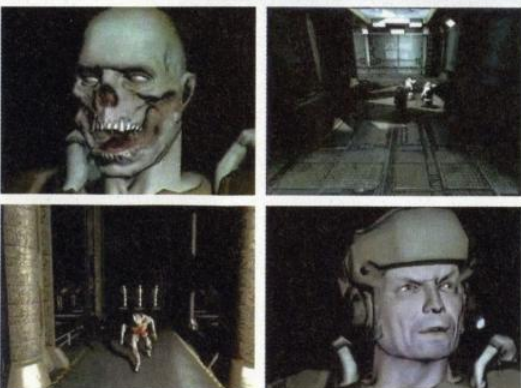
and judging by the incredibly realistic lighting effects, this game is going to have you leaping out of your chair in terror. As Carmack himself gibbered on "...every light has its own highlight and every surface casts a shadow, like in the real world. Everything can behave the same now and we can apply effects for every pixel." What he meant was, "it looks gooooooood".

NVIDIA GeForce 3 in the Xbox

To paraphrase John Carmack, "the GeForce 3 is the first 3D card since the Voodoo2 that is a significant leap forward from the previous generation of cards". The GeForce 3 will introduce features such as HRAA (High Resolution Anti-Aliasing), a Vertex and Pixel Shader (which alter surface and lighting effects to create more organic realistic surfaces), Lightspeed Memory Architecture (making this the fastest video card ever designed), full DVD and HDTV support and the powerful nfiniteFX engine that promises to deliver a virtually infinite number of effects. NVIDIA have stated that "this groundbreaking GPU includes the same core technology as NVIDIA's highly anticipated Xbox GPU (XGPU) for the Xbox".



DOOM 3



Everything you see here is not pre-rendered. This is an example of what Doom 3 will look like in-game. Astounding.

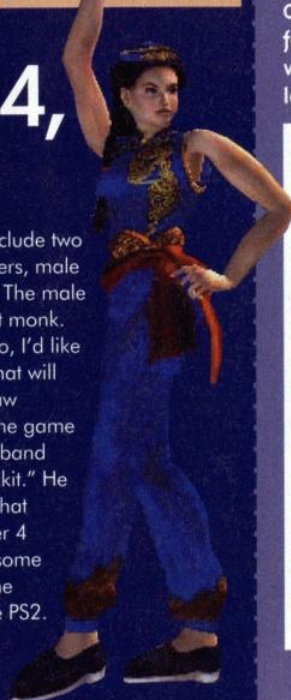


Who would ever have thought that this Sega arcade game would be on PS2?

Virtua Fighter 4, Looking Hot!

At AOU in Tokyo, Japan, Virtua Fighter 4 was unveiled by Sega for the first time. Running on the Naomi 2 hardware, this was a display of the arcade incarnation, however it's a pretty good indication of what the game will look like when it's released for the PlayStation2. If only we could show you the game in motion... it looks simply gorgeous. The character animation is the best yet, character models are bigger and the environments will give you wood. Yu Suzuki, VF and Shenmue creator recently commented, "The

game will include two new characters, male and female. The male is a Buddhist monk. For the audio, I'd like something that will match the raw intensity of the game - perhaps a band like Limp Bizkit." He also hinted that Virtua Fighter 4 could have some kind of online play with the PS2.



Unreal 2 revealed A first peek at the Epic sequel

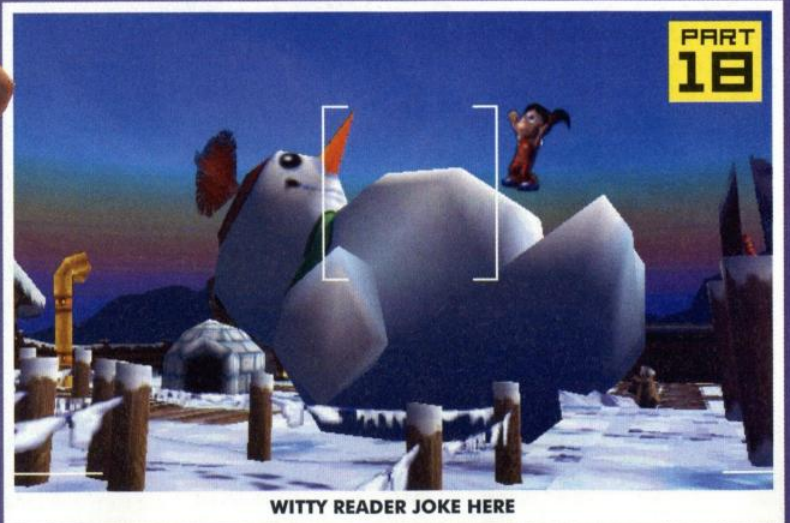
We've seen the pics from the Unreal 2 engine technology demo, but here for the first time are some screenshots of the actual game, Unreal 2. Running on a Geforce 3 and the new engine, Legend Entertainment have been brewing a true beast of a game. Yep, Legend Entertainment who brought us Wheel Of Time, are the folks developing

Unreal 2 for Epic Games. The Skaarj will be back, but the rest of your cannon fodder will be all new beasts, as Unreal 2 is set on a whole new planet. We'll be getting hands on with Unreal 2 at this year's E3, so expect a more in-depth look at this game in a future issue of Hyper.



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 freakscene@next.com.au with Caption This 18 in the subject line... or whack it on the back of an envelope and post it to Caption This 18, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.



WITTY READER JOKE HERE

Careful... Barbie's packing heat

The release of the Tomb Raider movie is almost upon us, but the merchandising is only just gearing up. Take a look at this freaky, Barbie-like Angelina Jolie/Lara Croft action figure! Since when did Lara Croft have that air-headed smile, those goofy innocent eyes...? Well, at least these are poseable figures, unlike the previous Lara Croft "action" figures. Tomb Raider isn't

the only franchise getting whipped up into plastic people though, for here is our beloved Solid Snake looking more chiselled than ever. Weird.



Zelda hits Boy

We may all have our eyes turned towards the Game Boy Advance and the goodness that it will hopefully bring, but let's not forget that the Game Boy is still about to receive two more great Zelda games — Legend Of Zelda: Oracle of Ages & Oracle of Seasons.

Gameplay is going to be the tried and true "top down" Zelda gameplay of old, with plenty of two-button brilliance, a great story and lots of original puzzles.

The previous Zelda Game Boy title, Link's Awakening, was just as much fun as the full-blown console Zelda game at the time, A Link To The Past on the SNES. We expect just as much goodness, and more so, on the Game Boy Color. The release date for these games is still "TBC", and with the Game Boy Advance launching in July, we're not sure when Nintendo will want to launch these new GBC games. Because Zelda: Oracle will play on the Game Boy Advance (the GBA is backward compatible, you knew that right?), we can expect some funky treats when playing Oracle on the new handheld. Enhanced graphics? We'll have to wait and see.



more fun than a hairy wombat in your trousers



AGE OF THE EMPIRE!

In the wake of announcements with BioWare (for a single-player Star Wars RPG from the makers of Baldur's Gate) and Verant Interactive (for a Star Wars MMORPG from the makers of EverQuest), LucasArts have come up with yet another blindingly good decision. They've farmed out a new Star Wars RTS game for PC to Ensemble Studios, the makers of the incredible Age Of Empires!

"All of us at Ensemble are huge Star Wars fans and we're very pleased to be partners with LucasArts in creation of Star Wars Battleground," says Ensemble Studios CEO Tony Goodman. This RTS will be the strategy game that Star Wars fans always wanted in the first place — a top down, 2D RTS in the style of AOE. LucasArts and Ensemble will co-develop the title, for a release later this year. The game will span across both the prequel and classic eras of Star Wars, much like Age Of Empires spans across human history. Dreams do come true!



OVERFLOW

Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance has been announced for the PlayStation2 by BioWare. This will be an all new RPG exclusively for the PS2 that uses the Baldur's Gate II engine. To go with that announcement, BioWare have also revealed the PC add-on for Baldur's Gate II — Throne Of Bhaal. New characters, new locations, new spells...

Microsoft have revealed that a sequel to their popular Asheron's Call online RPG is in development, and has been since the first game launched!

Sony, Sega and Namco have teamed up to deliver online games and movies. They plan to set up kiosks in Japan in arcades and software stores, so gamers can check out game demos, advertisements and movies of gameplay. This is apparently the first stages of e-distribution by Sony of PS2 games and images directly into PS2 consoles.

When Sega recently dropped the price of the Dreamcast in Europe, the user base for the console over there DOUBLED. If only they had done this a little earlier, the console's future may not be looking so grim. For instance, Sega have discontinued the Official Dreamcast Magazine in North America.

Jedi Knight II for PC was spotted on a European Activision release schedule by an eagle-eyed Star Wars spy. Activision have picked up distribution rights for LucasArts in Europe, but Jedi Knight II has not been confirmed. Please, God.

Is it true that Dinosaur Planet from Rare will now be a Gamecube launch title, and not a "last days" release for the Nintendo 64?

Namco have announced financial losses and blame it on the poor sales of their PS2 product. As a result, they have pledged full support of the Nintendo Gamecube and plan to possibly bring Tekken and Ridge Racer to the new Nintendo console. There was no mention of the Xbox in their statement.

The PAL local release of Unreal Tournament for the PS2 will have NO online play function. The game will consist of purely single player and split-screen deathmatch and team play. There is NO i-Link compatibility in the PAL version for hooking up PS2s for multiplayer either. When the PAL code is finished we'll bring you a complete review. You heard it here.

Metal Gear Solid 2 for PlayStation2 will not be released until early 2002 according to our contact at Konami. Konami are now hoping for a world-wide simultaneous release.

In a coming issue of Hyper: an exclusive look at the Harry Potter game in development. Will it live up to the fantastic world of JK Rowling's books? Here's hoping so. In the mean time, get reading!

WINNERS HYPER 89

LEGEND OF DRAGOON

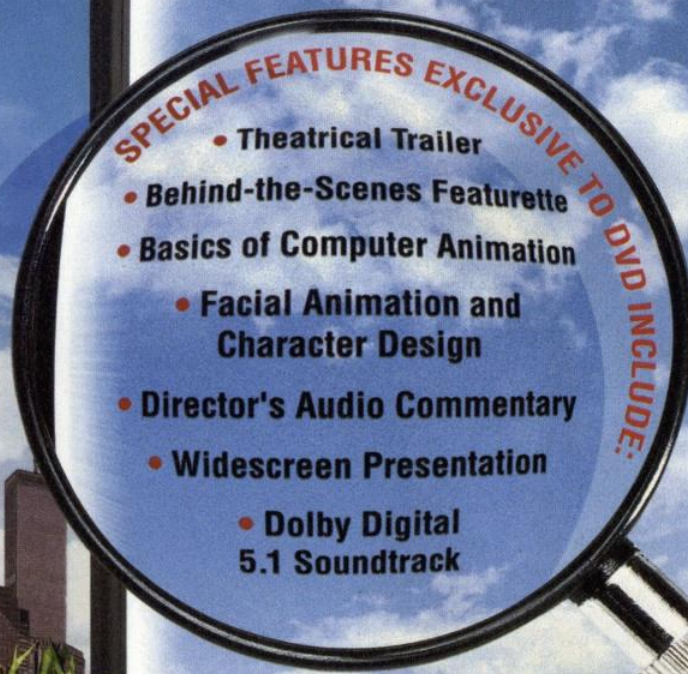
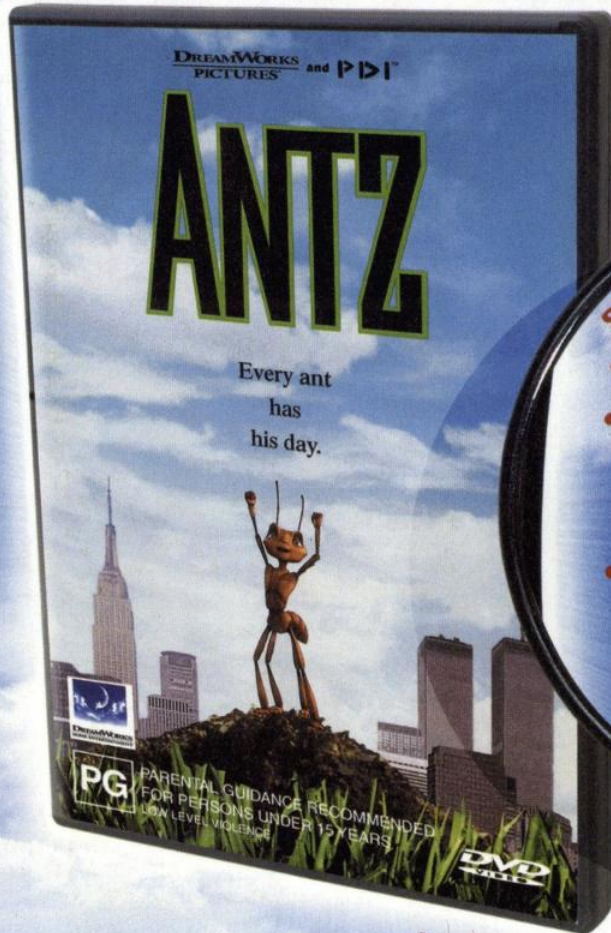
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STOP PRESS!

Just as we were finishing up this issue, Paramount released the official teaser poster for *Tomb Raider*. The movie will be out in July, and after seeing the trailer, we can't wait!



Serving it up on a digital platter

For many people, purchasing online is the only way to go. Why? There's no trudging around from store to store, you don't have to put up with shop assistants who don't even know what you're talking about, and you don't have to worry about the shop being out of stock. You even get what you've ordered delivered direct to your door. For gamers, there are currently a number of online solutions, but if your interests lie directly with the PlayStation, then there's an Aussie site right under your nose that has everything you could want. It's called PlayStation.com.

What's interesting about this official site, is that whilst it currently offers a whole range of product for you to purchase online, they offer far more than just Sony products. You can also buy all third-party PS2 and PSone software, DVD movies and music CDs from a variety of distributors. They even set you up with a PlayStation.com email address for free when you register.

We spoke to **Nino Kalogeropoulos** from PlayStation.com about the future of the PS2 online...

HYPER: When do you think PS2 users will be online with their consoles?

P.COM: No official word for Australia and the rest of Europe... but seeing

that Japan are getting the modem / hard drive bundle in July, hopefully that means we can't be too far behind.

HYPER: Will PlayStation.com be a portal for those users?

P.COM: Again, no official word, but it seems like a very sensible possibility to me!

HYPER: Sony seem to be getting into a lot of online gaming overseas (station.sony.com) - what plans are there here for Australia?

P.COM: No plans at this early stage, but globally SCE will be inevitably getting very heavily into this area, particularly with games like the next Gran Turismo game for PS2 (the one after GT3 A Spec) which is rumoured to be an online version.

HYPER: What kind of stuff do you give away free when someone orders?

P.COM: Lots of goodies. Usually things like huge posters or limited edition t-shirts. Sometimes we even give away peripherals such as memory cards. There are always some special giveaways happening at PlayStation.com.

HYPER: Can we pre-order GT3 on PlayStation.com?

P.COM: You can pre-order games

like GT3 up to 6 weeks in advance of the actual release date, and it will be delivered straight to your door on the day of release.

HYPER: Why is ordering online safer or more secure than getting out there to retail?

P.COM: I don't think anyone can say it's safer or more secure. It just has its advantages, particularly with regards to convenience! I think "E-Distribution" and "Digital Downloading" will be the real catalyst that triggers the true online shopping revolution... as far as digital entertainment goes anyway.

HYPER: Didn't you used to write for Hyper?

P.COM: Yes! Thank you so much for remembering me guys! I used to love writing for Hyper. I must say it was very ironic that I wrote the first Nintendo 64 game review for you guys back in 1995 or something, Mario64! I probably sold thousands of consoles for Nintendo from that review alone! I think I gave it 96% or something with a big rubber stamp of approval.

HYPER: Thanks Nino, see you online.

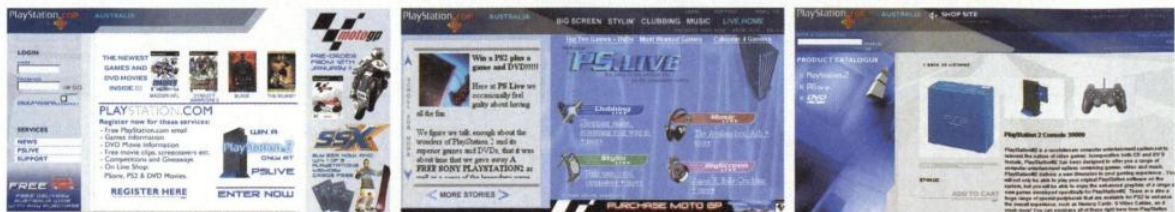
URL: AU.PLAYSTATION.COM



GATEWAY NATIONAL GAMING TOURNAMENT

Gateway Computers are bringing an open gaming tournament to Gateway stores nationwide in April, where you could win all sorts of cool prizes. The tournament is open to three different age groups (6-11/12-17/18+), allowing entry from gamers of all ages and skill level. To play, you'll have to register at <http://gateway.ausgamer.com/> and then follow the online details to be eligible for the Tournament start on April the 21st. At the time of going to print, the games that will be played had not been fully decided upon, but you can bet it's going to be a helluva lot of fun. There will be in-store referees from MPU and AusGamers, so you know that your round will be judged fairly and by skilled gamers. So get in there and show them what you've got!

For more information, go to: www.gateway.com.au



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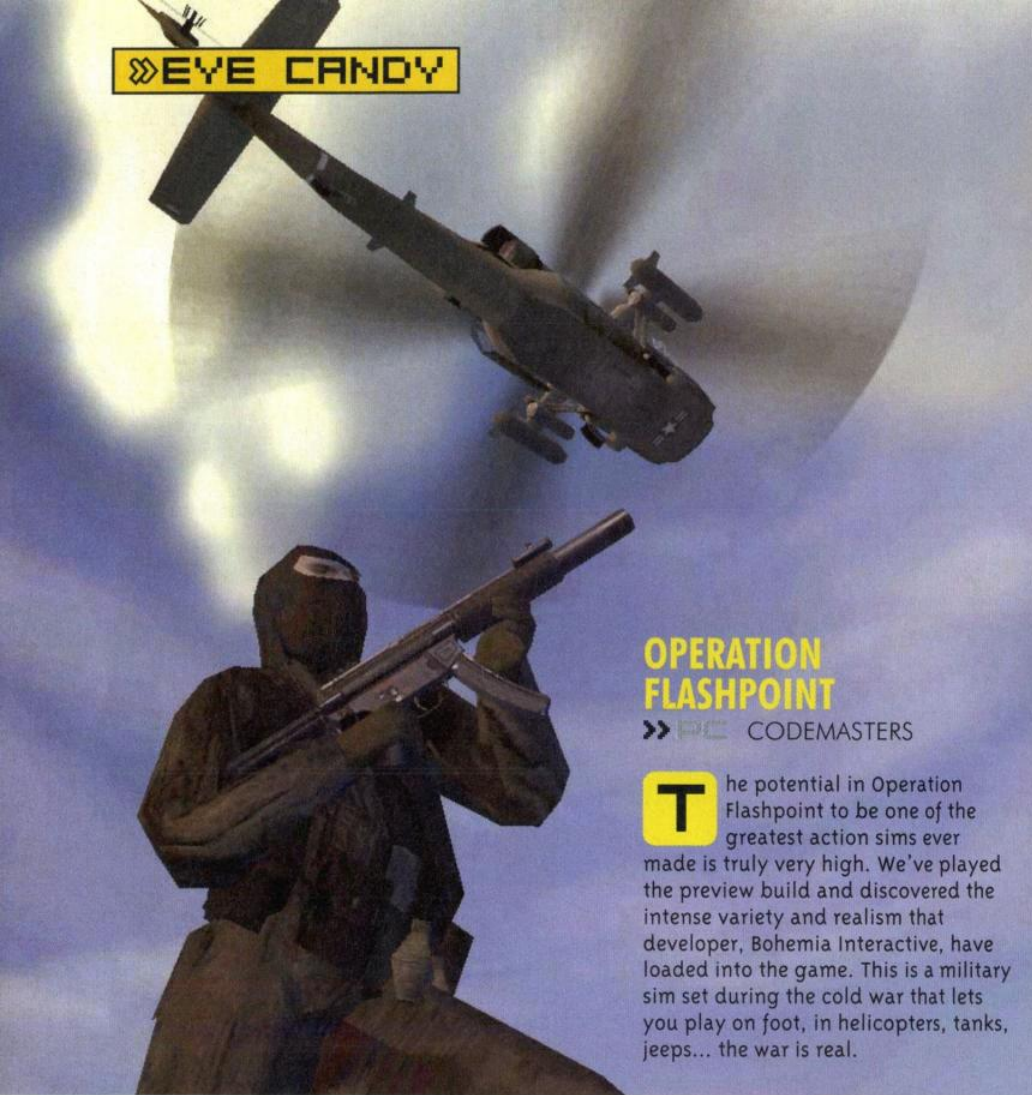
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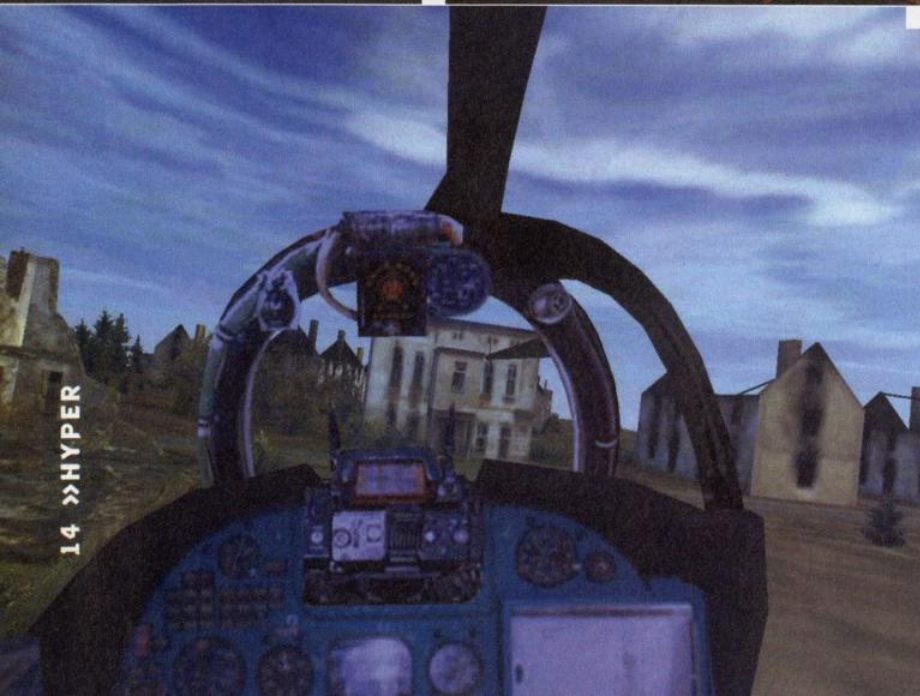
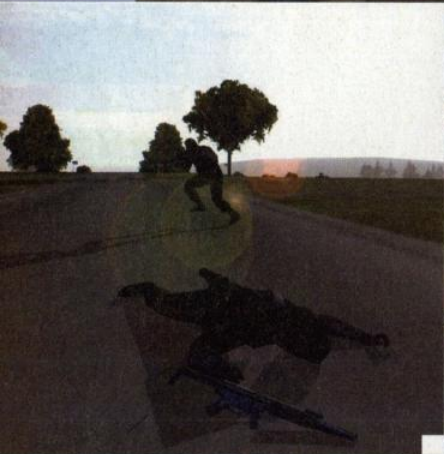




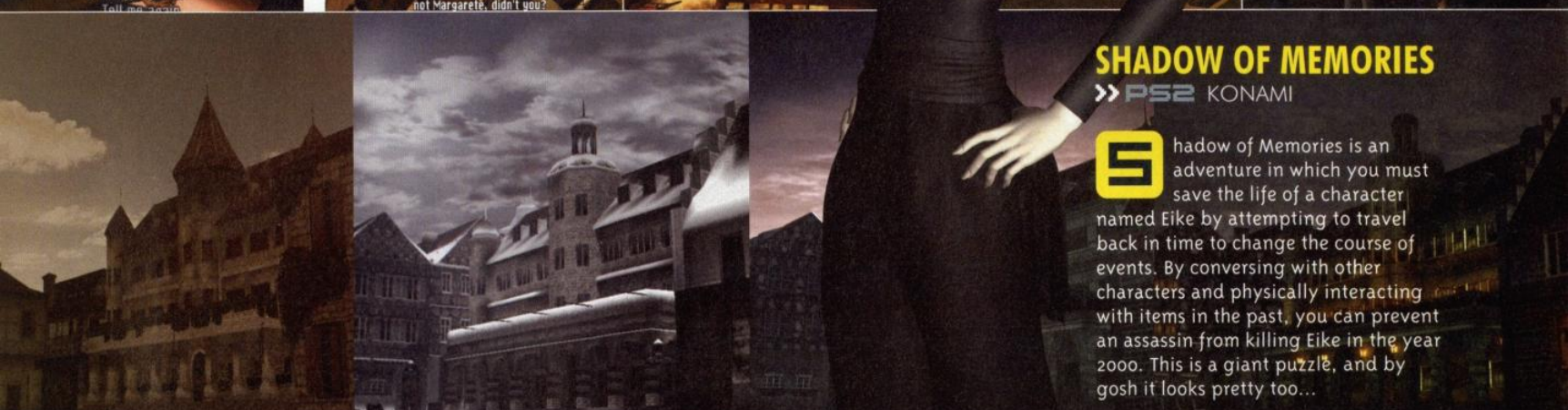
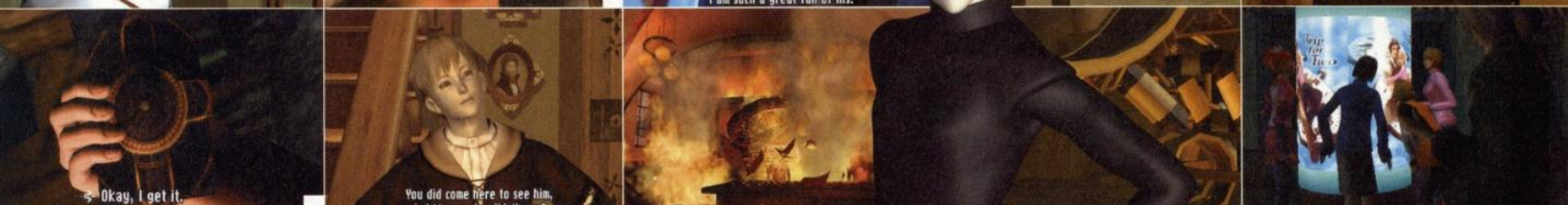
OPERATION FLASHPOINT

» PC CODEMASTERS

The potential in Operation Flashpoint to be one of the greatest action sims ever made is truly very high. We've played the preview build and discovered the intense variety and realism that developer, Bohemia Interactive, have loaded into the game. This is a military sim set during the cold war that lets you play on foot, in helicopters, tanks, jeeps... the war is real.



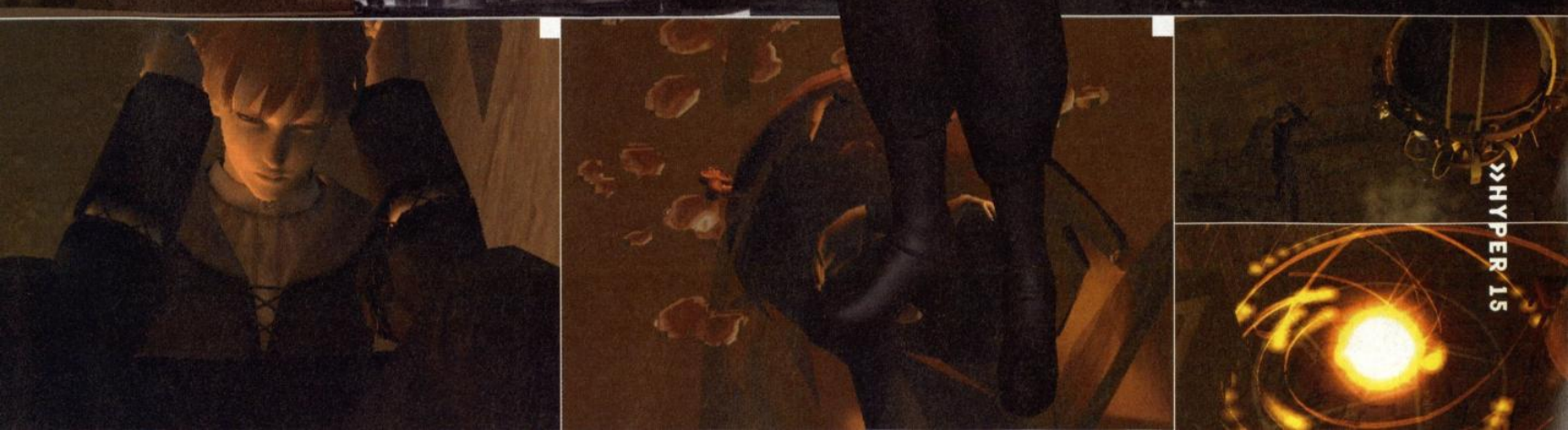
» EYE CANDY



SHADOW OF MEMORIES

» PS2 KONAMI

Shadow of Memories is an adventure in which you must save the life of a character named Eike by attempting to travel back in time to change the course of events. By conversing with other characters and physically interacting with items in the past, you can prevent an assassin from killing Eike in the year 2000. This is a giant puzzle, and by gosh it looks pretty too...



» HYPER 15



MARIO ADVANCE

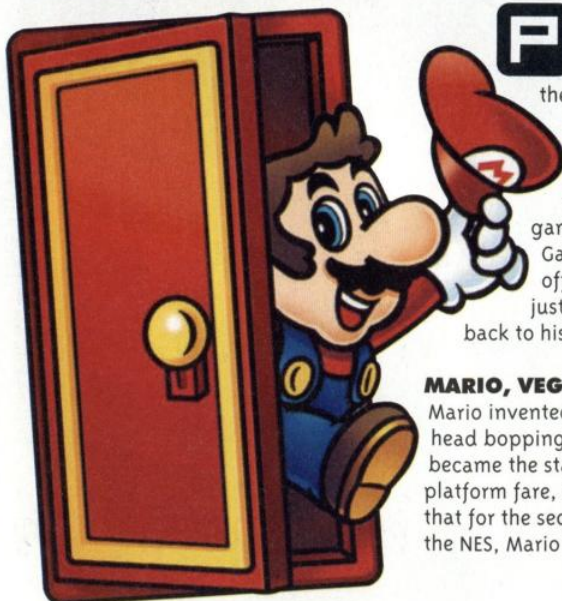


WOW-O-METER



GBA

CATEGORY: Platformer >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: Nintendo >> AVAILABLE: June/July



Pokémon may be the icing on Nintendo's cake right now, but the oh-so-rich and creamy center will always be Mario. With the Game Boy Advance so close that we can smell the gameplay, what will the Game Boy Advance have to offer Mario-wise? Let's just say that Mario is going back to his "roots"... literally.

MARIO, VEGETARIAN

Mario invented the coin collecting, head bopping antics that rapidly became the standard for future platform fare, but it's easy to forget that for the second Mario outing on the NES, Mario ditched that lifestyle

altogether in favour of plucking vegetables from the ground. Oddly enough it didn't catch on in the greater gaming world.

Yes, in Super Mario Bros 2, Mario and pals could be found uprooting turnips and other such things from the ground and using them as weapons to throw at enemies, as opposed to simply bopping them on the head with a well aimed jump. Even enemies themselves could be picked up and thrown. Indeed, Super Mario Bros 2 was quite a different style of platformer to the other titles in the series. This was due, in no small part, to the origins of the game itself. SMB 2 started out as Dream Factory: Doki

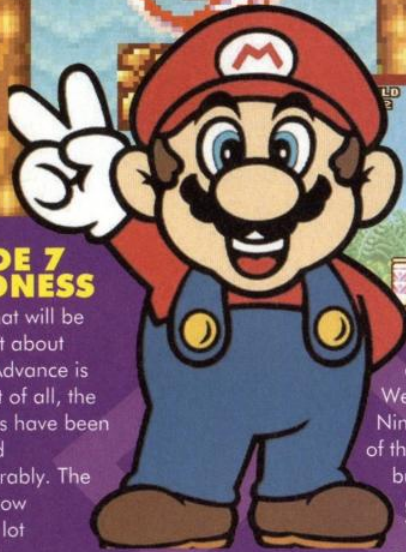
Doki Panic with a different set of protagonists, and only later became a Mario game.

So what does this have to do with Game Boy Advance? Well, Mario Advance is actually going to be a remake of that classic NES title. It will

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:
It would be nice if Nintendo go the extra yards and throw in some special features that no one is expecting. Not all these games should be TOO retro.

share many similarities, such as the general art style and gameplay, including the ability to choose between four different players (Mario, Luigi, Peach and Toad), each with their own distinct abilities. For instance

Mario, as always, is the all-rounder, whereas Peach can use her billowing skirt to glide along after a jump. The different abilities mean, of course, that you won't be able to reach



MODE 7 MADNESS

>> What will be different about Mario Advance is that first of all, the graphics have been retooled considerably. The game now looks a lot sharper – perhaps even slightly better than the version in Super Mario Allstars on SNES. Secondly, we've been told that it's not just a straight port. Whether this means the entire game has been reworked, or simply that it will have

extra levels, is unclear. We do know, however, that Nintendo are putting some of the Game Boy Advance's built in graphical trickery to good use. This may mean Yoshi's Island style scaling effects, or perhaps some Mode 7 madness. Regardless of the changes, we're sure that Nintendo will be using their extensive platform game wisdom to ensure that Mario Advance will set the standard for all GBA platform games to come.

every area with just the one character, and will have to play through a few times if you want to discover everything the game has to offer.

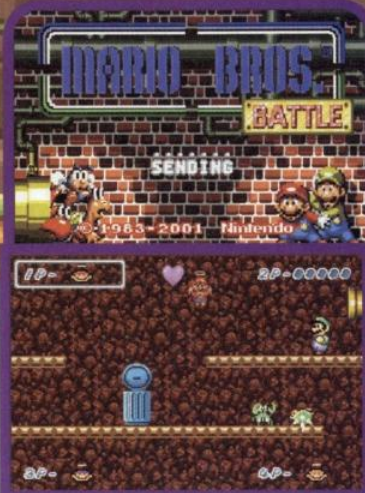
VEGETABLES FOR THOUGHT

It should be noted that Mario Advance is still only a tentative title. The other important thing to keep in mind is that (as of our deadline) Mario Advance hasn't officially been announced for the Western launch yet. Although a Mario platformer will undoubtedly make it out here for launch, there's a possibility that it may be in a different form.

As anyone who read our history of Nintendo a couple of issues back would know, the Japanese SMB 2 was a different game to the Western SMB 2. Western gamers got the turnip

throwing sim, whereas Japanese gamers got what was essentially an ultra hard edition of the original SMB. What we're thinking is that it makes sense for Nintendo to remake the Western SMB 2 for the Japanese GBA launch, as that market never actually got the chance to play it. Whether Nintendo would be content to then release the game in the West as well is a different story. Either it will be different enough from the NES original to keep us happy, or Nintendo may secretly be working on a different Mario game. Pure speculation certainly, but food for thought.

The funniest (and most unlikely) scenario sees the Western SMB 2 released for GBA in Japan, and the Japanese SMB 2 released for GBA in the West. Heh heh, kooky. <<<



The return of the arcade king

>> What Game Boy Advance game would be complete without a multiplayer component? Fortunately Mario Advance has got you covered. Remember the Mario Bros arcade title? It was the first time Mario left Donkey King behind and took to the arcades on his own, and it was also the first title to feature Mario's brother Luigi. This game was all about bopping koopas in a multi-levelled arena, and using the shells to score points against your opponent in the two-player mode. Mario Advance will have a special version of this arcade classic, with four-player support no less! This is the original old school Battle Mode and should prove a worthy distraction. And of course, you and your friends will only need one cartridge to play with four players.



INSIGHT



Mario discovers the magic mushroom



as the Beatles said, "she's so heavy"



loading in the sky with diamonds



"It's a me... Mario!"



Mario slams the freak from Scream



Look! PLATFORMS!



Mario rides the giant magic lemon

GAME BOY ADVANCE MINI PREVIEWS



It's out in Japan, and the comparisons between the power of the Game Boy Advance (GBA) and the SNES are proving to be very apt indeed. Having a machine that is capable of spitting out games equal to, or better than the best that the 16-bit world had to offer means nothing less than a return to the golden age of 16-bit gaming in a big, portable way. So, strap yourselves in, because it's looking like every classic game and franchise from those hallowed days will be making an appearance on the GBA in one form or another. But is this a good thing? Just because they were classics then doesn't mean they'll be as playable now, right?

EVERY "BIT" AS GOOD?

Well, although there are some good reasons for scepticism, we're inclined to see this re-emergence of old games as a very positive thing that will be good for the industry and gamers in general. For instance, those gamers who are newer to the scene will get a chance to play some of the games that we're always

raving about in a silly nostalgic way – so it's educational! We'll also be able to take some of our most prized games out on the road with us, so there's no need to dust off that SNES anymore.

Okay, so maybe developers ARE copping out a little regurgitating old games, but we don't mind because this means there'll be plenty of GREAT games very early on in the system's life, and hopefully developers will go the extra mile – boosting graphics, adding levels and including multiplayer. Plus, as developers become more accustomed to the system, true innovation will eventually prevail.

The biggest danger with this trend is of course that titles like Rise Of The Robots, Bubsy and Home Alone 2 might, in some deluded delirious publisher's mind be deemed "classics". There's the chance that a swarm of these games could ruin the utopia of GBA in much the same way that they soured the original era. Well, the solution is simple – we just won't buy them! Meanwhile here are some games to get VERY excited about.



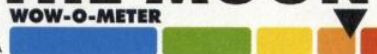
have at you, pixelised thing!



whipping up some gameplay

CASTLEVANIA: CIRCLE OF THE MOON

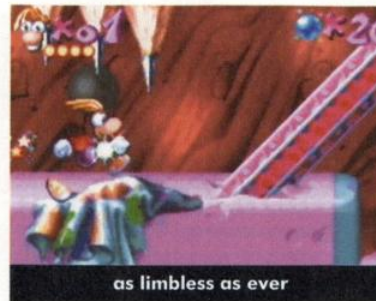
CATEGORY: Adventure >> **PLAYERS:** 1
PUBLISHER: Konami >> **AVAILABLE:** TBA



Mua ha ha! I'm going to suck... your blood! This is the REAL next generation Castlevania that we've been waiting for, as opposed to the forgettable 3D version that was released for N64 a while back. Castlevania is at its best in two dimensions, and this title looks to have it all – the creepy environments, the lush animations, the crowd pleasing candle whipping antics, two classic Belmont-style characters to choose from, and enough parallax scrolling to keep any parallaxian happy.



The Castlevania games represent the pinnacle of 2D side scrolling action/adventuring. Set in the mysterious and gothic world of Nosferatu, Circle Of The Moon probably has more in common with the PlayStation's Symphony Of The Night than with the SNES games. From what we've seen, there seem to be many areas straight from the PlayStation title, although there also seem to be less RPG elements. It looks like Drac is back to suck our bloooooooooooooooooooooooood.



as limbless as ever



rayman the happy flower child

RAYMAN

CATEGORY: Platformer >> **PLAYERS:** 1-2
PUBLISHER: Ubisoft >> **AVAILABLE:** TBA



Check out the selection of screens that we've snatched for Rayman's first adventure on Game Boy Advance. Damn it's looking nice! Unsurprisingly, Rayman for GBA is based on the original Rayman – the only 2D game in the franchise... and also the only Rayman game to come out on the Atari Jaguar! It also shipped for PlayStation and Saturn mind you, so there's no need for alarm.

The storyline follows your standard platform game guidebook. Evil dude (Mr Dark) kidnaps happy inhabitants of land (the Toons), so hero (Rayman) sets out on an adventure to rescue them (they're his source of power) and restore order to the land. You'll start the game with only Rayman's more "no frills" moves and learn the rest as



france is almost as freaky as japan

you progress. By the end of the game you'll be helicoptering and throwing your fists around like there's no tomorrow. There should be around 60 levels of French platforming madness when the game is finished (hopefully in time for launch here), and thanks to Rayman's inventive approach to the platform genre, it will make an excellent companion to Mario Advance.

Rayman will also come with a two-player link cable mode, although what form this will take we're not sure. A co-operative mode would be very cool.

F ZERO ADVANCE

CATEGORY: Racing >> **PLAYERS:** 1-4
PUBLISHER: Nintendo >> **AVAILABLE:** July



No introductions necessary here. F Zero Advance returns to a time in the series when the crazy-ass loop the loops and insane drops of the N64 version were just a gleam in Miyamoto's eye. This is

flat out anti-gravity racing in its purest form, and since the SNES games (the sequel was Japan only) were perhaps the fastest racing games of their day, we can expect a serious burst of speed for the GBA.

As you can see from the screens, this title is most definitely staying true to its roots, right down to the circuitry-style textures outside the courses. The game features all the pilots and vehicles from the original, plus a whole host of hidden goodies. It's not a straight port either, being set 25 years after the original and featuring all new courses. This title is simply going to scream in four-player mode.



i feel the need, the need for... beer



mode 7 going off



the F stands for freaky. maybe.



man, this looks amazing



this is a handheld??

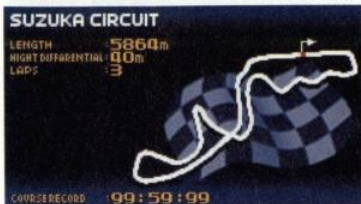
ALL JAPAN GT CHAMPIONSHIP

CATEGORY: Racing >> PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: Kemco >> AVAILABLE: TBA

WOW-O-METER



Well, well, well! We always knew that the GBA would be capable of some great racing games, but for some reason we kind of assumed that they'd mostly be of the more surreal, karty type. Well, All Japan GT Championship has blown that assumption out of the water once and for all. Coming from Kemco, this is a racer very much in the Gran Turismo mold, where realism and fine detail matter a great deal.



Kemco have not only secured official cars and licenses, they've also thrown in a level of car customisation that hasn't been seen on a handheld thus far. In addition to the preset tracks, a course editor is also shipping with the game, which will no doubt extend its life – especially in four player mode. And did we mention this game is fast as f**k?



don't chew my rocket, baby



it'll be online before the DC version

CHU CHU ROCKET

CATEGORY: Puzzle >> PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: Sega >> AVAILABLE: July

WOW-O-METER



What came first, the mouse or the cat? This question has plagued philosophy 101 students for centuries. Fortunately, it can now be laid to rest. You see, Sonic Team came first, and the mouse and the cat both followed. The mouse spewed forth in great numbers, and ran in only one direction until an arrow on the ground or a wall caused them to turn 90 degrees and then run in a new direction. The cats were more solitary than the mice, preferring to lumber around, hoping that the flow of mice would come their way before they made it to their rocket ship and jetted off to the moon (it's made of cheese you know).

And so, a great philosophical question was solved. That was last year, when Sonic Team's frenetic DC puzzler Chu Chu Rocket appeared. In



time for the GBA's launch here in Australia, Chu Chu Rocket will be reborn in pocket form. It's looking sleek too, with all the speed and freakyness of the original. The graphics are all sprite based rather than polygonal now, but the change makes no difference.

Chu Chu Rocket was also a fantastic multiplayer game, and the GBA version will be shipping with, yep you guessed it, a four player link-up mode.



koopas shell craziness



mario hits the redfern circuit

MARIO KART ADVANCE

CATEGORY: Best Game Ever >>
PLAYERS: 1-4 >>
PUBLISHER: Nintendo >>
AVAILABLE: July

What can we say about the game that pioneered the entire kart racing genre? A game that has only had one sequel, but inspired a deluge of lame wannabe clones?

Mario Kart Advance is going to wail on the original for so many reasons. For starters, you now have the entire screen at your disposal. The original was splitscreen regardless of whether you were playing single or multiplayer – now it's all yours. Better yet, you'll be able to play four-player multiplayer, and again – the screen is all yours! Goodbye splitscreen!

Mario Kart Advance is very similar to the SNES classic. It uses the same Mode-7 scrolling to give the illusion of 3D. This time around it's much smoother, faster and the environments are more detailed. The scaling effects on your opponents (so that they get smaller as they zoom past you and into the distance)



select your deformed head of choice

are also much smoother. Of course, it's not just a straight port and will include many of the enhancements that made the N64 version so great. For instance, the selection of powerups includes many of the N64 staples such as three red shells and the spikey blue shell bad bwoy.

We'll be getting our GBAs only a few days after finishing this issue up, and have a sneaking suspicion that not only will MKA be the title we'll be playing over and over, but also that this is going to be the definitive version of Mario Kart.

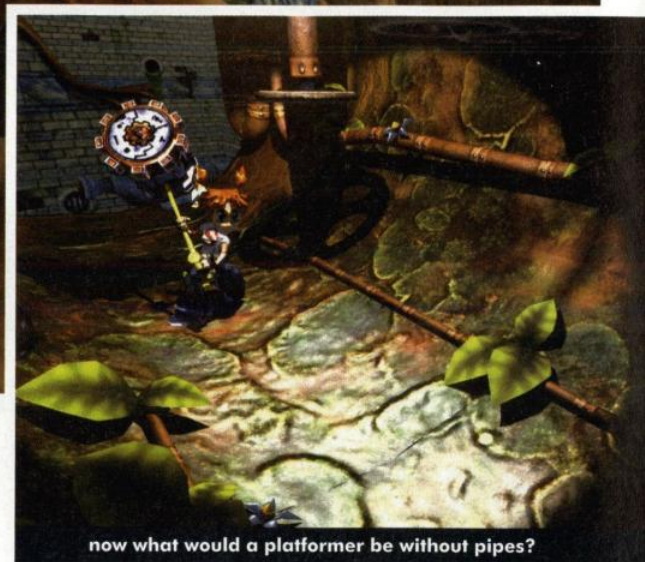
WOW-O-METER



INSIGHT



are you my mother?



now what would a platformer be without pipes?

MALICE

WOW-O-METER



CATEGORY: Platformer >> PLAYERS: 1 >>

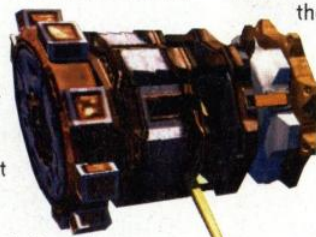
PUBLISHER: Argonaut >> AVAILABLE: September (USA) / Early 2002 (AUS)

Amongst the hotly anticipated Xbox launch titles such as Halo, Munch's Oddysee, Metal Gear Solid X and others, one particular game has popped up here and there trying desperately to be noticed. That game is Malice from Argonaut Games, the developers behind the PlayStation platformer, Croc. Well, if you were at the CES in January when Microsoft unveiled the Xbox design, then you would have seen Malice in action, and you would have walked away very impressed...

MALICE IN WONDERLAND

You play the role of an unusual red-haired girl who has mistakenly unleashed an insane Fire God into the world, and is now determined to

repair the damage this has done to her strange alternate world. To stop the God and return him to where he came from, you'll have to collect a diverse array of weapons as well as evolve yourself into an eventual Goddess and then literally kick his arse. It won't be easy though, as you'll come across some bizarre puzzles and a cast of warped and freakish creatures who are there to both help and hinder your progress across 25 big levels.



WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

We hope that Argonaut do some character art tweaking and go for something a little more original. At the moment, she looks a little too cliched, with her hip pants and funky hairdo. Yuk.

The gameplay is reported to be a cross between platforming action and puzzle-solving adventuring, including interaction with non-player characters and a set of battle against a number of crazy sub-bosses. There's no doubt that the success of Malice

as a platformer is something that the Xbox needs to solidify its standing as a console, and convince people that the Xbox isn't just a box for portable PC gaming.

Malice has been built with the "ShadowCaster" 3D engine, allowing for some impressive, detailed environments that create a truly dark and mysterious play world from haunted forests to grand castles, dank sewers and perplexing mazes. The engine allows for real-time lighting from multiple coloured light sources, texture-mapping, bump mapping and fully detailed real-time shadows. Basically, it looks almost pre-rendered, yet real time.

HAMMER TIME

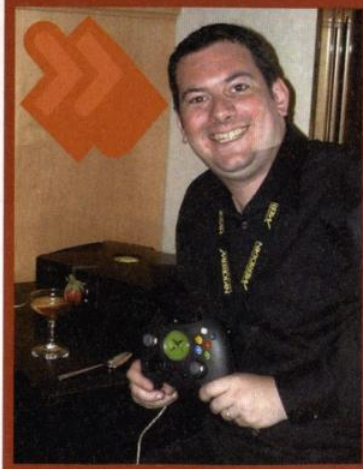
Your character will have to learn a diverse set of elemental magic to combat her foes, as well as wield the Clockwork Hammer (which can be programmed with new moves), the Quantum Tuning Fork and the Mace of Clubs. As your character develops her magic skills, she will actually grow older and more powerful — and you'll see that power shift visually too. She'll start out cute and innocent and finish the game

older, wiser and pretty darn deadly.

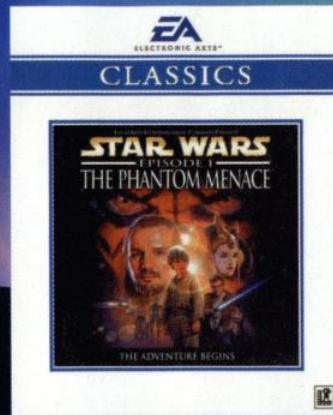
Whilst the game is certainly dark, Argonaut tease that there is quite a lot of comic value in the game also. Malice promises to be a terrific slice of platforming fun. <<<

JEZ IN THE BOX

>> Jez San of Argonaut Games with the Xbox controller at CES 2001 back in January.



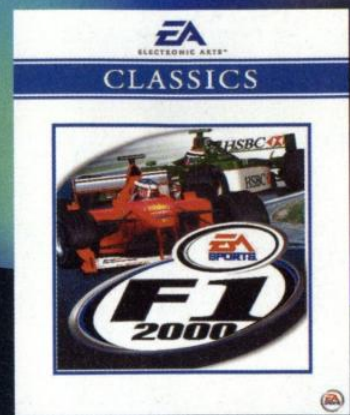
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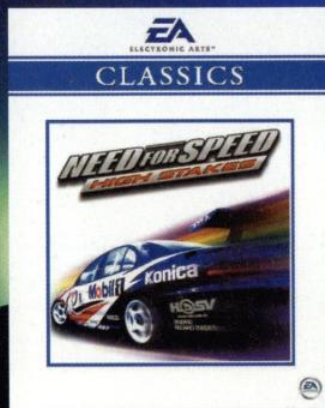
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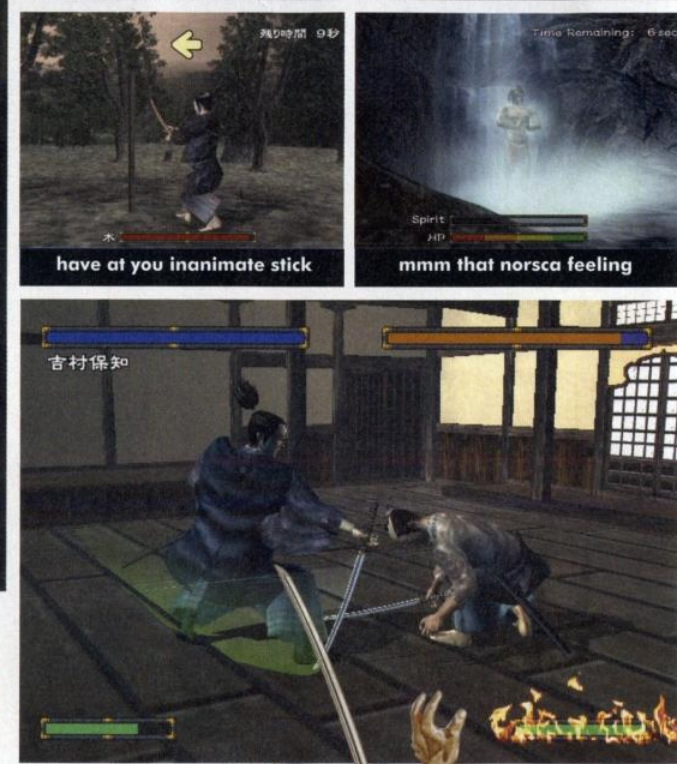
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Harvey Norman
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KENGO



PS2 CATEGORY: Fighting Sim >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Crave >> AVAILABLE: April

The fighting game freaks out there have probably been waiting for another Bushido Blade sequel since Bushido Blade 2 had its final spin in the PlayStation. Since the release of the PS2, the wait has probably been a lot shorter than most people expected. Kengo: Master of Bushido isn't a true Bushido Blade sequel, but it has been developed by the same team behind the PlayStation originals, and that's all you could

hope for. It's also ready for release within the next month! This is weapons-based fighting in the Samurai tradition, and it takes itself pretty seriously. Luckily, as a sim, this is intensely fun stuff.

TAKE A COLD SHOWER

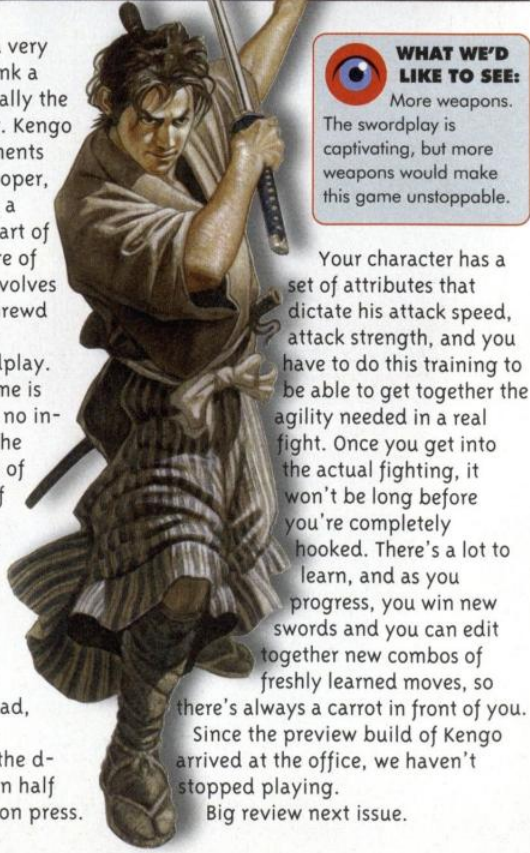
During your training to become Kengo, Sword Master, you'll have to endure everything from a stamina test under an ice-cold waterfall, to zen-like concentration tests, wasabi eating and even a bamboo forest speed and accuracy test. Okay, we lied about the wasabi eating, but we think it would be a fair enough test of someone's constitution, don't you?

Your path will be a long and arduous one, so don't go expecting any Soul Calibur style button-mashing exercises. Kengo offers a range of play modes, from training to street battle, imperial tournament, survival battle and the excellent head-to-head mode. There are some real guts to this game, and a lot of work has gone into replicating some truly tactical fighting mechanics.

As you hold the Dual Shock

controller, you'll notice a very slight throbbing... no think a little higher — that's actually the heartbeat of your warrior. Kengo is full of subtle enhancements like this. Genki, the developer, have chosen to deliver us a faithful recreation of the art of fighting. The whole nature of the fighting technique involves patient tactics and the shrewd use of very different, yet deceptively similar swordplay. Even the sound in the game is used very seriously, with no in-game music at all. Only the chirping of birds, cooing of pigeons and the sound of the wind in the trees is there to accompany your fighting. Everything in Kengo requires concise precision. Even the training requires you to show co-ordination and timing with the control pad, whether it be meditation (balancing a meter with the d-pad) or slicing a helmet in half with one well-timed button press.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:
More weapons. The swordplay is captivating, but more weapons would make this game unstoppable.



Your character has a set of attributes that dictate his attack speed, attack strength, and you have to do this training to be able to get together the agility needed in a real fight. Once you get into the actual fighting, it won't be long before you're completely hooked. There's a lot to learn, and as you progress, you win new swords and you can edit together new combos of freshly learned moves, so there's always a carrot in front of you. Since the preview build of Kengo arrived at the office, we haven't stopped playing. Big review next issue.

THE BUSHIDO BUNCH

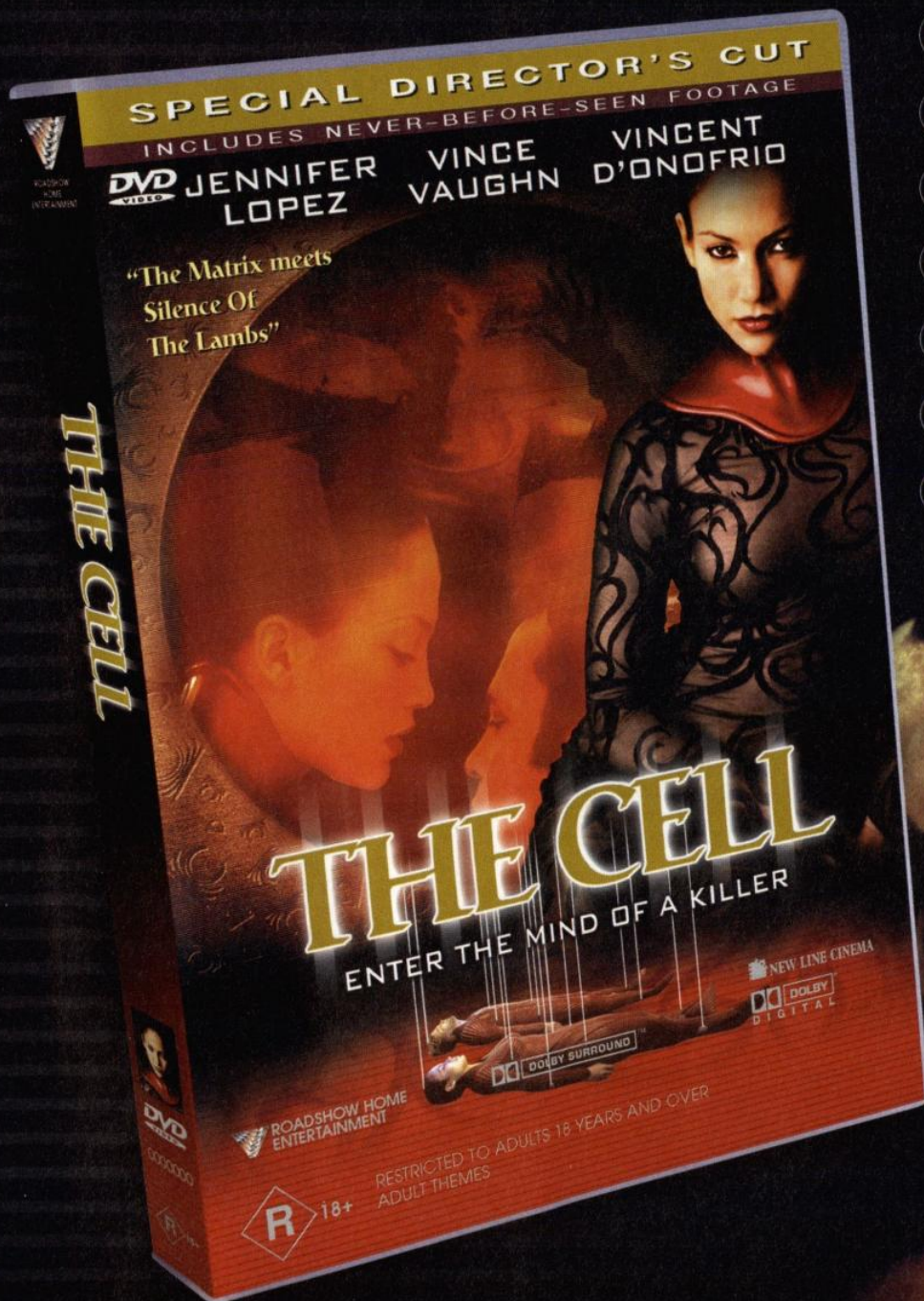
>> The more fights you win, the more deadly masters you unlock to play with in the brutal Versus Mode.



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goodness gracious, great balls of fire!



er... anybody home? *gulp*



let's party

DIABLO II: LORD OF DESTRUCTION



CATEGORY: Action/RPG >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: Blizzard >> AVAILABLE: June

WOW-O-METER



Is your point and click finger still eager for some more frantic mouse action? Yes, Diablo II has an expansion pack coming later in the year entitled: Lord of Destruction, so it's time to limber up that index finger for another deadly click-fest to victory. Can Blizzard really offer enough variety in this add-on to make us want to play through Diablo II all over again?

PLEASED TO MEET YOU...

Two new character classes will be introduced in Lord of Destruction – the Assassin and the Druid – featuring 30 new skills and spells. Firstly, the Assassin is a sleek, black leather-clad female who has the ability to lay traps and engage in hand-to-hand martial arts combat. The Druid is a shape-shifter who can take on the form of a Dire

Wolf and Mammoth Bear, as well as cast elemental magic and summon creatures. Whilst the Necromancer in Diablo II could also summon creatures, the Druid calls upon animals in the wild, not requiring corpses to re-animate. The Druid will also have better abilities in melee combat.

Lord of Destruction takes place as Act V in Diablo II. Upon installing the add-on, you can tackle this new chapter straight away with your existing character (if you have finished the original four acts). If you'd like to play with the new character class though, it seems that you will have to start to game anew and then experience the new adventure upon killing Diablo at the end of Act IV. If you're a

Diablo freak, playing through the game again won't be too bad, because you'll have the alluring chance of discovering a whole slew of brand new items and weapons whilst you play. In fact, there is now a new Elite class of weapons and armour that can be found when playing on Hell difficulty. Add to that Ethereal items (translucent to the eye), that deal out great damage but cannot be repaired as well as new Jewels and Runes that can be socketed to beef up your weapons and Orbs for the Sorceress to enhance her magic with. Naturally, Blizzard has increased the size of the player's "stash" or inventory, to deal with these new items.

...HOPE YOU GUESSED MY NAME

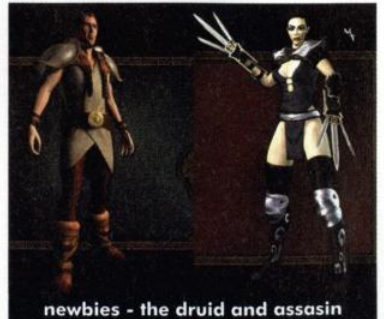
One of the intriguing new elements in Lord of Destruction will be the inclusion of interactive environments, like siege towers, fortified battlements and town walls. Blizzard also promise new boss monsters, and seeing as there is only one new chapter, we hope to see lots of them in there. Considering that to play Act V, your character will have to have finished the first four Acts, you can imagine the

type of brutal fiends you will be up against in the new installment.

Whilst there are many additions to the actual gameplay, Blizzard have not improved the resolution of the game, amongst other gripes we had with the original. Also keep in mind that the new expansion set will permanently convert your character so that you will only be able to multiplay with other Lord of Destruction players. Still, the thought of slinking around as the new Assassin, facing off against Baal and his minions, has got that darn index finger twitching for more action. Diablo II... it's an addiction of the geekiest kind. <<<



WHAT YOU'LL LIKE TO SEE:
We're hoping that Act V will provide some substantial gameplay time, and it won't all be over in a few nights play.



newbies - the druid and assassin



they almost blew you

TWISTED METAL BLACK

CATEGORY: Car Combat >> PLAYERS: 1-4
 PUBLISHER: Sony >> AVAILABLE: 2001

PS2



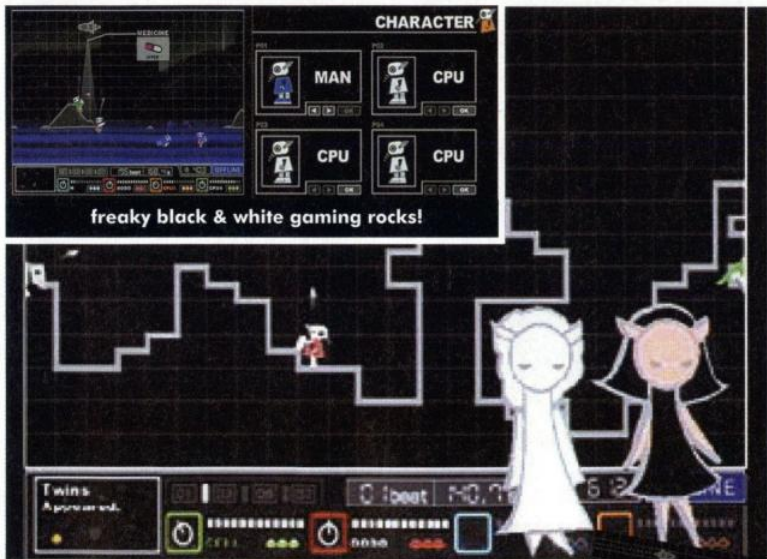
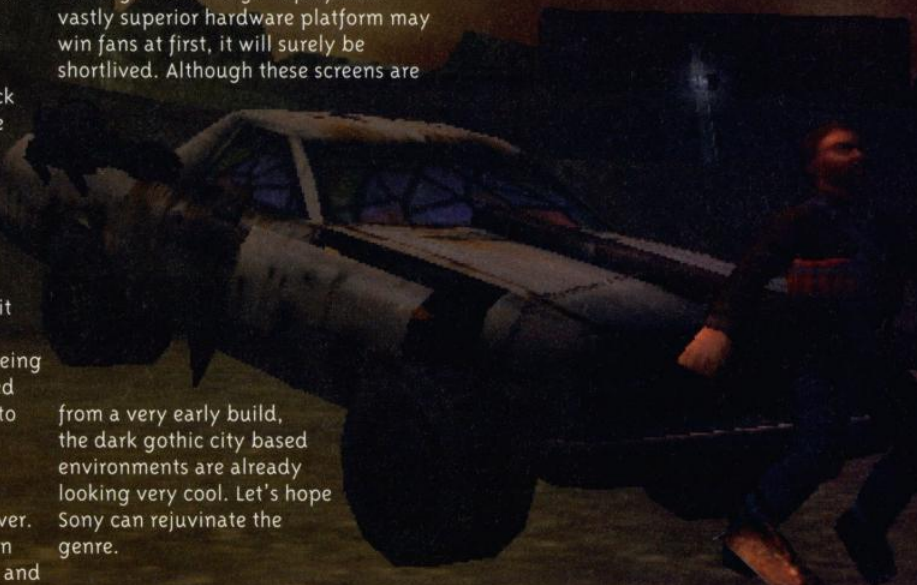
Perhaps named in reference to AC/DC's Back in Black (the comeback album after lead singer Bon Scott choked on his own vomit and died), Twisted Metal Black is certainly an appropriate title. The series badly needs to be reinvented, after metaphorically choking on its own vomit (or perhaps excrement) with the third and fourth games.

This is just what Sony are attempting to do, and it looks like it may be time to come out of mourning. Twisted Metal Black is being developed by the team from Twisted Metal 2 (which connoisseurs deem to be the peak of the series) so it's in good hands.

There's much to be done for the game to be a critical success, however. The car combat genre has been worn into the ground in its current form, and

although the same gameplay on a vastly superior hardware platform may win fans at first, it will surely be shortlived. Although these screens are

from a very early build, the dark gothic city based environments are already looking very cool. Let's hope Sony can rejuvenate the genre.



freaky black & white gaming rocks!

DEE DEE PLANET

CATEGORY: Strategy >> PLAYERS: 1-4
 PUBLISHER: Sega >> AVAILABLE: TBA

DC

What would you get if you combined Team 17's masterful Worms with Sony's utterly bizarre Vib Ribbon? Probably something like Dee Dee Planet - an adventurous journey into surreal warfare. Games take place in a side on 2D battlefield that in truth owes more in looks to the oldest ballistics based games like Scorched Earth.

The majority of the game is in black and white, and the characters are funky old school robots. The battlefield is utterly unique in style. Set to a gridmap background, terrain is denoted by simple straight white

lines (looking more like a marketing report than a battlefield), and teams of three robots must destroy the other teams to win.

Weapons look to be similar to the Worms series, with a range of projectile based artillery as well as more sci-fi themed objects.

Obviously, Sega have designed this one with multiplayer in mind. Both online and offline will be supported, and at a low price, Dee Dee Planet will be a must-buy title.



DRAGONRIDERS: CHRONICLES OF PERN

CATEGORY: RPG/Adventure >> PLAYERS: 1
 PUBLISHER: Ubisoft >> AVAILABLE: TBA

PC/DC

Dragonriders is based on Anne McCaffrey's Chronicles Of Pern series of fantasy books. Pern sounds like quite an awesome gameworld. It's a place where Dragons, Dragonriders and humans (including Healers, Mastersmiths, Hold Lords, Harpers and Drudges) co-exist, and struggle to grow the civilisation together.

The setting of the game is just after the seventh passing of the Red Star, where thanks to the Dragons and Dragonriders the civilisation survived the deadly threat of "the thread". Now a new evil is emerging.

The player assumes the role of a young Dragonrider named D'Kor, and his 20 foot behemoth Smanth. The relationship between Dragons and

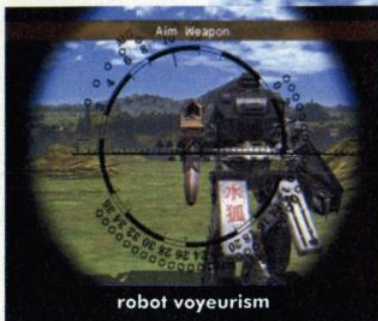
Dragonriders is perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the game. In a hatching ceremony, the baby dragon selects its own rider and they psychically bond. From that point on, the Rider and Dragon can communicate telepathically (sharing thoughts and feelings), and even teleport across great distances and through time.

The goal of the game is, of course, to uncover the new threat to the world. The gameplay will feature intense action sequences, plenty of adventuring, puzzles, 200 unique characters and a decent RPG bent. Looks hot.



Smanth behind you!

INSIGHT



robot voyeurism



RING OF RED

PS2

CATEGORY: Strategy >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Konami >> AVAILABLE: March



With Ring Of Red, Konami look to have struck strategy gaming gold. Bearing many similarities to Square's Front Mission series, Ring Of Red is set during a classic war between superpowers in a fictional past.

The story takes place in 1964. WW2 still continues, but the sides are America/Japan/Germany against Russia. What happened to the British is anyone's guess. In any case, Russia occupy the North of Japan and its up to the A/J/G team to wrestle it from their slimy commie grip.

The action is all mech based. Known

as AWFs, these are more primitive versions of the mechs we know and love today. The action is mostly turn based, with limited real time action thrown in. First of all, you must plan your strategy and assign units, move them into position on the isometric battlefield view, then watch it all go down in real time. The real time sequences are short, and you have limited control. You can tell other members of the group what to do, set your AWF moving and fire at the enemy. Of course, you only have a limited number of actions available. Looking good.



excuse me, but... GIVE ME YOUR CAR MOTHERF**CKER!

GRAND THEFT AUTO 3

CATEGORY: Crim Sim >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Rockstar >> AVAILABLE: Late 2001 PS2/PC

Information on this much-anticipated title is finally beginning to filter through from Rockstar Games. Most significantly, the game has gone entirely 3D and dropped down to a third person street level perspective, as can be seen from the only screenshots released thus far.

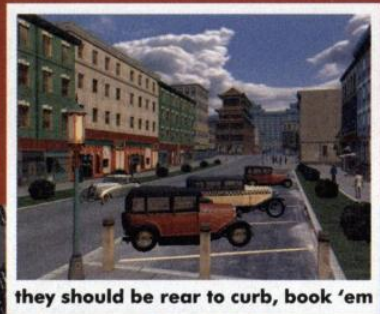
Although the game is only in the early stages of development, it looks as though it has a long way to go graphically. Compare the lack of detail in this screenshot to the superbly detailed Mafia screens and you'll see what we mean. Indeed,

with titles like Mafia so close to release, Rockstar will have to do something major with the gameplay to entice gamers back to GTA. After all, a 30s mobster setting has a lot of romantic appeal.

We're anxiously awaiting more information from Rockstar. We have our fingers crossed that GTA3 will have all the mayhem and violence we loved in the first two games, wrapped up inside a more compelling gameworld.



just need... a... nap... ugh



they should be rear to curb, book 'em

MAFIA: THE CITY OF LOST HEAVEN

CATEGORY: 3rd Person Action >> PLAYERS: 1 PUBLISHER: Take 2 >> AVAILABLE: TBA PC/DC



From Illusion Softworks, developers of Hidden and Dangerous, comes what looks like one of the coolest games this year.

Set in the underworld of the 1930s in a fictional American city, Mafia sees the player entering the mob family of Don Salieri in a quest to become a "made man". Played from a third person perspective, Mafia is a brutal tale of power, respect and coercion. To impress Don Salieri and rise through the ranks of the criminal underworld, you'll be taking on a wide range of responsibilities from bootlegging and bank robberies through to assassinations and acting as getaway driver.

Illusion Softworks have modelled 12 square miles of city for your "family" to try and dominate. There will be 60 vehicles to jack and more than 20 missions. What has us really impressed is the attention to detail in the environments and in the time period - we're talking big bands, zoot suits and model Ts... the whole works. So, is it any good? Well to use some typical Italian mobster slang "eh, forget about it". In other words, you bet!

**THINK YOU'RE
ALONE? THINK AGAIN**



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Hyper's monthly peek at games in development.

PC



Wizardry 8



Shadowbane



Duke Nukem Forever

PS2



Super Car Street Challenge



Project Eden



Monster Rancher 3

DREAMCAST



Crazy Taxi 2



Half-Life



Evil Twin

NINTENDO 64



Paper Mario



Dr Mario 64



Sin and Punishment

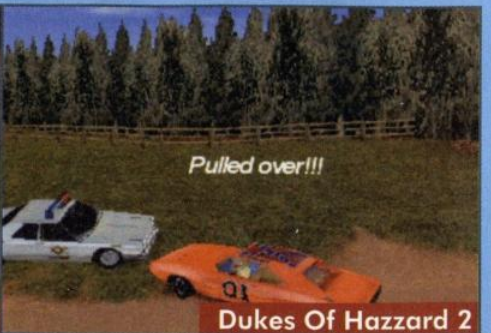
PSONE



Darkstone



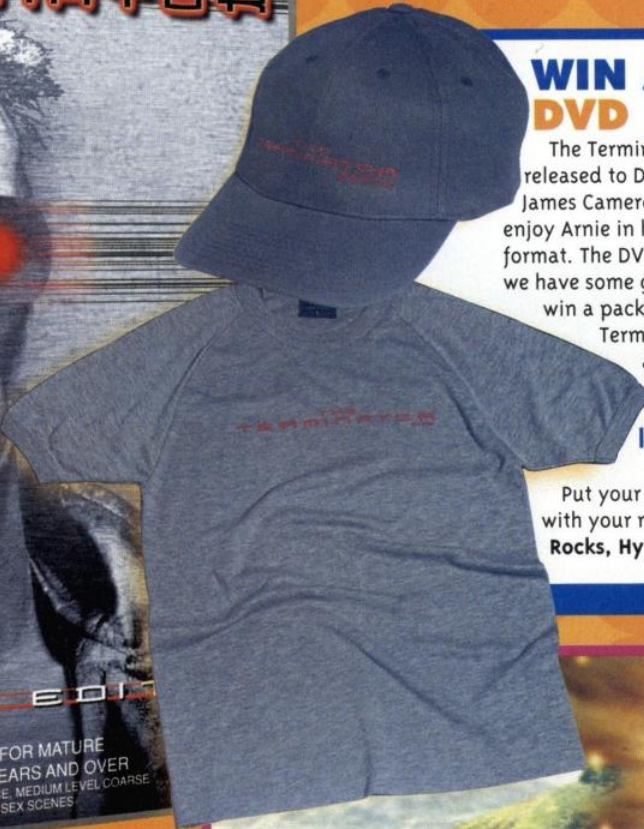
Toy Story Racing



Dukes Of Hazard 2

WIN WIN WIN WIN

ENTRIES CLOSE APRIL 20



WIN A TERMINATOR DVD PACK!

The Terminator is the latest, greatest classic film to get released to DVD. Fox Home Entertainment are unleashing James Cameron's classic upon the public so we can all enjoy Arnie in his arse-kicking best, in the glory of a digital format. The DVD is one you shouldn't miss. Thanks to Fox, we have some great packs to give away. FIVE readers could win a pack containing the Terminator DVD, plus a Terminator t-shirt and baseball cap! To win one, answer the following question:

What is Arnie's famous line from The Terminator?

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

WIN VANISHING POINT!

High speed racing action is here in the form of Vanishing Point on the PlayStation. Including licensed vehicles from Lotus, Ford, BMW, Audi and more, Vanishing Point puts your driving skills to the test in a true 3D driving simulation. With some great environments, a variety of cars and some fast-paced action, you should definitely check this one out. Acclaim have given us FIVE copies of Vanishing Point for PSone to giveaway, so get your entries in.

To win one, simply answer this question:

Name another Acclaim racing game.



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

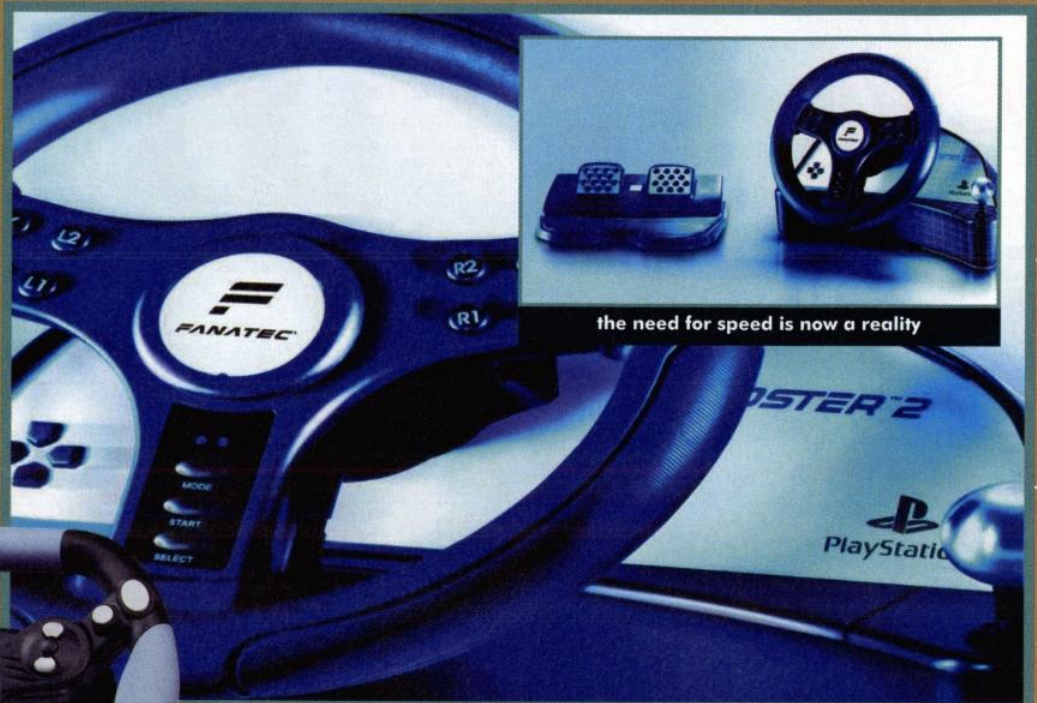
FOR PSone



HYPER

Each month in Hyper we will be bringing you information on the latest gaming peripherals for all the systems, as well as funky gadgets, new technology and other items of electronic coolness. This issue we've investigated four wheel peripherals, three of which are available for PS2 and one for the PC.

Win one of these in our letters section



the need for speed is now a reality

PS2/PSONE DUAL FORCE 2

Gamester Available: Now Price: \$129.95

>> The Gamester Dual Force 2 is a wheel that is fully Dual Shock compatible, allowing you to use it with any PS2 or PSone game. Apparently, Gamester won a Sony license in the USA for this to be an official wheel there, so that's a pretty good endorsement. This was the first PlayStation wheel with analogue pedals, allowing for smooth acceleration and braking, unlike the digital-style on/off pedals that come with most wheels.

The wheel features two "ear flap" shift paddles, a d-pad on the face of the wheel, plus three different ways of clamping the Dual Force 2 to a level surface or coffee table. The Dual Force 2 also supports Negcon and digital modes and comes with a 12-month warranty. Whilst the smooth movement of the wheel is nice, the wheel is not full-sized, and some of the buttons feel a little loose, with the d-pad feeling especially sloppy. Luckily, you won't really need to use the d-pad for anything other than menus. The wheel is rubber-coated though, so your hands won't be sliding around the place.

The Dual Force 2 has some pretty serious competition in the GT Force and the Speedster 2, but it will probably remain to be on the more affordable end of the scale, which will certainly be a big factor in how well it competes.

SPEEDSTER 2 PS2/PSONE

Fanatec Available: April Price: \$TBA

>> Sony Computer Entertainment introduces the official steering wheel for PlayStation2 and PSone – the Fanatec Speedster 2. The essential accessory for all racing enthusiasts. A combination of steering wheel and foot pedals designed and developed in Germany, the Speedster 2 is compatible with the ever-increasing list of PlayStation2 and current PSone driving games.

It features vibration technology through dual motors; analogue, digital and Negcon modes; all standard PlayStation buttons and pedals for true driving realism. If you want a wheel that will support both your PSone and PS2 games, why not stick with a product that will be officially supported by Sony?

KEY FEATURES

- The official steering wheel for PlayStation2 and PSone.
- Designed and developed in Germany.
- Analog, digital and Negcon modes.
- High resistance for increased realism.
- Ultra-sensitive digital mode emulates a Digital Controller's directional buttons.
- High quality, stylish design with brushed aluminium front panel and gear stick.
- Rubber coated wheel for a sure grip.
- Adjustable steering angle restriction to adjust the steering wheel to individual's driving style.
- Tracking Control System to allow you to master bends safely.
- Steel axle and springs ensure superior control and reliability.
- Licensed and distributed by Sony to guarantee a robust and durable peripheral.

FREE

GT FORCE

PS2

Logitech Available: June Price: \$TBA

>> This wheel will come bundled with Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec when the game is finally released around June. Naturally you'll be able to buy the game and wheel separately if you desire, but the bundled pack is there for the hardcore, and will probably cost around \$249. The wheel is simply amazing, and the force feedback that it kicks out is sensational. This will be the first Force Feedback peripheral to connect to the PlayStation 2 through one of the USB ports.

Polyphony Digital, the developer behind GT 3, seem to be truly pleased with the GT Force. As Kazunori Yamauchi, president of Polyphony Digital says, "The Force Feedback steering wheel allows the player to physically feel the car's handling and the road surface while driving. This brings GT3 much closer to being the ideal driving simulator we have dreamed of since the very first GT game".

It's no wonder that Sony are jumping on this for Gran Turismo 3, because it really will be the best way to play the game. The only drawback will be that the wheel will only support Gran Turismo 3 to begin with (the game has to be coded to take advantage of the force feedback function). However, we will see more killer games for the GT Force down the track, so it may be a good investment. Certainly, for the moment, it'll be the only way to play GT 3.



Feel the power of the Force

FORCE FEEDBACK

FORMULA PRO DIGITAL

PC

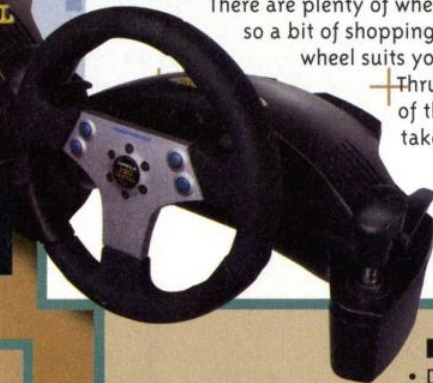
Thrustmaster Available: Now Price: \$149

>> The Formula Pro Digital is a full size padded wheel for PC racing enthusiasts. There are four easily accessible buttons on the face of the wheel, a solid clamp and some pretty sturdy pedals that'll take a bit of a kicking. Coming from "trusty Thrusty", it's no surprise that this Thrustmaster wheel is of a certain standard, regardless of price. There are plenty of wheels to choose from in the Thrustmaster range, however, so a bit of shopping around will probably be needed to figure out which wheel suits your needs most.

Thrustmaster have also held the Ferrari license with some of their other wheels, so you can be assured that they take their wheels pretty darn seriously. The actual wheel is full-sized, which is always a plus, and they feel nice and solid. The wheel movement is smooth, precise, and you'll want a really decent game to get full enjoyment out of the wheel, instead of the other way around!



Thrusty stick to the formula



TRY BEFORE YOU BUY!

It's quite essential when buying any peripheral that you have a go at trying it out in the store that you're purchasing from. If they don't have a display model, just ask to try out the product first. If the store won't allow you to try it, don't buy it from them. There are plenty of games stores that have peripherals on show for customers to feel and use to see if it suits their needs, both mechanically and aesthetically.

KEY FEATURES

- Dual position gearshift levers to the right of the wheel for the choice between Rally-style gearshifting (thanks to the lever) or Formula 1-style gearshifting (using the two levers located behind the wheel).
- Wide, padded racing wheel for perfect control and heightened realism. Excellent ergonomics!
- The lateral clamp system means the Formula Pro Digital USB Racing Wheel can be clamped solidly, quickly and effortlessly to all desks and tables.
- Exemplary manufacturing quality.
- Heavy pedal assembly for better stability.
- Resistance specifically designed for hard gamers (bungee cord).
- Digital output for ultra precise lap times.
- Steel wheel shaft.

TARAWL

» CAM SHEA



Red Moon

Status Character Item

WWW.REDMOON-ONLINE.COM

If you're sick of adventuring through worlds made up of the same old fantasy freakshow, and want a little more cyberpunk in your online diet, then keep an eye out for RedMoon, the latest Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game (MMORPG) to cause a stir. Although there are several futuretech-ish games on the horizon,

RedMoon may be the first to arrive. It's actually been out in Korea for well over a year now, and is enjoying great popularity, with nearly a million subscribers. Based on a popular anime, the game has inherited a deep and complex storyline, and in keeping with its roots, all the graphics are in nicely stylised and detailed 2D.

CAP-BUSTING WEAPONS

As one of the nine main character types, you're thrown into a richly textured gameworld with a real history, and real problems. Part cyber-future and part fantasyland, RedMoon presents a wholly different set of challenges to the MMORPG fare that most gamers are used to. No more elves,

forests and wizards. In their place are Cyborgs, guns and urban environments. Fortunately, this change isn't difficult to adapt to, as the character attribute and battle systems are quite basic.

Combat is basically a frantic click affair, and of course experience points are gained from slaying foes. The experience system is quite insane, allowing players to exceed level 900. In other words, there's a bugger-load of playtime in RedMoon if you want to get anywhere near maxing out your

character. Each time you level up you're given two skill points to distribute amongst your attributes, and occasionally a new skill.

Better yet, the artillery available in-game ranges from more traditional swords and spears through to cap-busting weapons like semi-automatics and Sniper Rifles. As you can imagine, what may start out as small skirmishes can escalate rapidly in the world of RedMoon. Aside from the standard parties, you can also form armies and indulge in some large-scale rumbles.



ahh exploding pigeon shit



where's the nearest goth club?

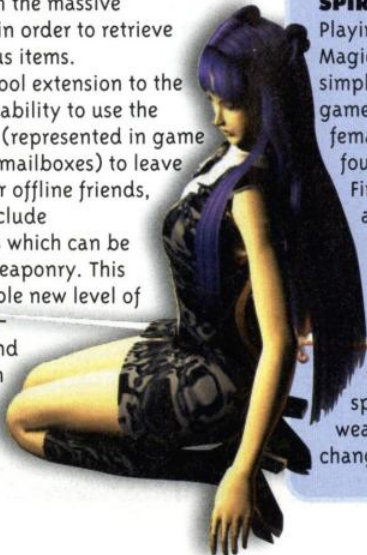


come up and i'll show you my coffins



One of the aspects we really like in RedMoon is that when your player is killed, the body is rejuvenated in a local hospital, with all items intact. However, as a penalty, many experience points are docked. What this means is that unlike other MMORPGs you no longer have to locate your body in the massive gameworld in order to retrieve your precious items.

Another cool extension to the genre is the ability to use the mail system (represented in game by physical mailboxes) to leave messages for offline friends, and even include attachments which can be items and weaponry. This brings a whole new level of potential co-operation and organisation within the gameworld.



Elemental Saga

WWW.US.ESAGA.COM

From Korean-American online-only developers Nexon, Elemental Saga is another tale of a post apocalyptic fantasy world. In an unlikely scenario, humans have poisoned the planet to such an extent during the 21st century, so the Earth spirit "Gaia" opens two gates from between her metaphorical legs - the Spirit Gate and the Demon Gate, in an attempt to purify the planet. From the Spirit Gate flows magic and the Elemental Spirit Magicians, and from the Demon Gate spews umm... demonically inclined beings, whose aim is to destroy all human life.

GETTING STUCK INTO THE SPIRITS

Playing as an Elemental Spirit Magician, players are offered some simple choices at the start of the game - you can be a male or a female, and specialise in one of the four elements: Earth, Water, Air or Fire. All your powers and attributes flow forth from this seemingly elementary decision. For instance, in the game, all weapons and armour are created by performing "spirit covenant" rituals. This transforms the player, and spirits literally become his weaponry and armour, completely changing his attributes.



Diablo-esque action



...but way more freaky

Nexon have been developing this game since the beginning of 1999, and work on the server technology has been ongoing since 1994. Indeed, Nexon have already launched six successful online games in Korea, including Elemental Saga, which is already doing well. Their server technology has been tested extensively and has held over 16,000 people simultaneously on a single server.

Elemental Saga looks to take a great many visual and gameplay clues from Diablo, so its no surprise that it's an easy game to get into. It's very much an action RPG, so there are no complicated systems to adjust to when starting out. Also, you don't come into the world as a new born babe - you come in as an Elemental Spirit Magician. In other words, you're already a powerful

hero who can whup some demon ass.

There are a huge number of quests and sub-quests available to players, and this is how they gain their fame. Other players can check out the quest journal of any other player to see what avenues they took. All character abilities are earned through completing quests, and item collection is much less prevalent than in other MMORPGs.

According to Nexon, players can potentially even take the guild concept further and create other social structures through their game society scripting language. On Nexon's side, the game server has been built to allow AI scripting so they can change creature behaviour, as well as script new quests as play progresses. Looking good.

Napster is DEAD

Has the Napster cat gone to the dogs?

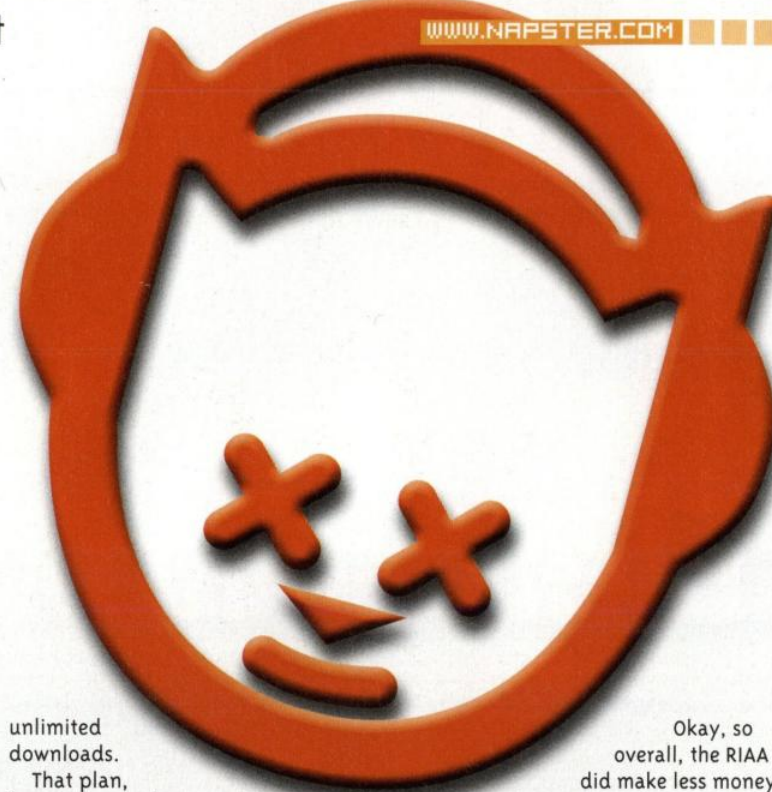
Napster's future is looking more uncertain than ever after some wild wheeling and dealing over the last couple of months. In a recent court ruling, a panel of three judges found that the RIAA have presented a good case for copyright infringement, and reversed the stay on an injunction issued last July, meaning that Napster must bar unauthorised songs passing through its systems, ultimately meaning it could be shut down.

PICKING OFF LEECHES

In a press release responding to the decision, Napster's CEO Hank Berry stated: "We have again and again stated that we intend to make payments to artists, songwriters and other rightsholders. Yet the largest and most successful media companies in the world have taken aim at our more than 50 million users, and today they have landed a blow. We will respond and deal with this situation in the courts.

"In the meantime, we intend to continue our discussions with the record companies. We have been saying all along that we seek an industry-supported solution that makes payments to artists, songwriters and other rights-holders while preserving the Napster file sharing community experience. On October 31, we announced an alliance with Bertelsmann around a business model for a membership-based service that does just that."

The subscription service that Berry refers to was to be implemented soon — possibly by July this year. The basic idea would be to offer two levels of subscription (please note following figures are only estimates). For \$5 a month, users would be able to download a set amount of music. For \$10 a month, users would have



unlimited downloads.

That plan, however, may have reached an insurmountable stumbling block. Not only have Napster received a critical blow in court, but in an attempt to broker a deal and get on with business, Napster offered the RIAA a settlement package. The terms of the deal offered would be that the five major record companies would each receive an average of \$150 million a year for the next five years to compensate their artists and for lost sales. Smaller publishers would split \$50 million a year. Unsurprisingly, the RIAA refused the offer.

RIAA - THE REAL DEAL

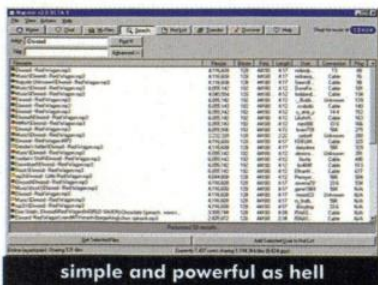
The RIAA may be fearful of the Napster phenomenon, but they're not doing too badly. Despite their best efforts to paint themselves as the helpless victims of an internet crimewave, that simply isn't the case. All you have to do is to take a closer look at the figures. Full length CD sales are up from last year (they sold around 3.6 million more than the year before), which were up from the year before. In fact, the only areas that the RIAA lost out last year were in CD singles (which account for less than 1% of their business) and cassette singles which are, quite frankly, too outdated to be on sale anymore anyway.

Okay, so overall, the RIAA did make less money

this year than last year. But let's take a look at the numbers. Last year the RIAA made OVER \$14.5 billion. This year they ONLY made over \$14.3 billion! The majority of this loss, it must also be mentioned, can be attributable to analogue formats which are (by their very nature) unrelated to Napster.

Despite the RIAA twisting the facts, it looks like the Napster party may soon be over anyway. Even if the company does convince the RIAA that it has a sound and legal business model, the restrictions imposed on users may cause a grass roots backlash. Aside from paying for the service, users would also be facing a cap on sound quality where the bitrate of songs on the network would be limited to 128Kbps (slightly below CD quality), an alternate compression format would be used (NOT mp3s), and an extra charge to burn to CD or export to a portable. In other words, Napster would no longer be Napster.

Get online and head over to www.napster.com and join the Napster Action Network if you feel passionately about Napster's cause. Even Eliot shares the odd bit of Big Heavy Stuff! So until the original service goes down — we recommend you leech like you've never leached before!



LINKS



Aint It Cool

Harry Knowles knows!

>> There are very few websites that get you refreshing their main page on a daily basis, but one particular movie rumours site, Aint It Cool News, will get you doing just that.

This place has been going strong for years now, revealing the hottest movie secrets way before they reach the normal media channels.

Want to know the title to Star Wars: Episode 2? Want to know which characters will be in X-Men 2? Go to Aint It Cool News and it's likely that Harry Knowles will have the info you're after. It's not the prettiest website out there, but it's the content that matters, right?

<http://www.aintitcool.com>

NET NEWS

ONI WAP

>> Believe it or not, but a prequel to Oni is already out! Before you get too excited, however, this version of Oni is for the most primitive of handheld gaming platforms — WAP enabled mobile phones. Developed by the WAP-experienced Quantum Sheep, the game chronicles Konoko's training against simulated enemies. While it doesn't exactly compete with the real Oni, Oni WAP keeps the anime styling of the game intact and is a good way to while-away those long trips to the dole office.

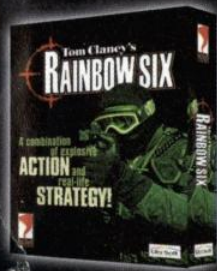
Point your phone's browser at <http://wap.oni-game.com>



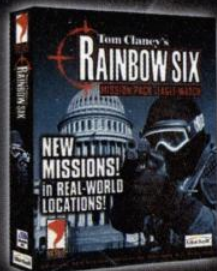
TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX SERIES...

BACK IN FULL FORCE

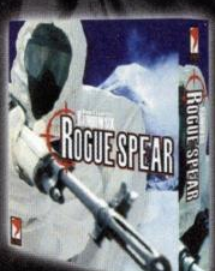
Tom Clancy's RAINBOW SIX™



Rainbow Six
– The original and highly acclaimed Rainbow Six game inspired from the novels of best selling author Tom Clancy.
Best Multi-player game & Best Action game - PC Gamer 1999.



Rainbow Six: Eagle Watch
– New levels include: Taj Mahal, Big Ben, Houses of Parliament, The Forbidden City The Senate Wing, US Capital Building Plus 2 new training levels: double kill house and large city street!



Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear
– The sequel to the original Rainbow Six PC game; New game features include weapons and special items, mission editor, advanced AI; Game of distinction – PC Gamer 1999.



Rogue Spear: Urban Operations
– Requires original Rogue Spear game; 5 famous cities and real-world locations with 4 game types for each; PC Strategy Games – 8/10 "An essential purchase for Rogue Spear Devotees."



Rainbow Six: Covert Ops Essentials
– A stand-a-lone game; 2 CD set: multi-media encyclopedia; nine new specially created single and multi-player game missions.



Rainbow Six (PlayStation)
– Part of the Ubi Soft budget range this was the first conversion of a Rainbow Six game for console.



Rainbow Six (Game Boy Color)
– Ability to zoom in and out of the gameplay screen; 14 real world missions; 2 game modes: top down and first person.

Also available, **RAINBOW SIX: GOLD PACK** (includes original Rainbow Six & Eagle Watch) and **ROGUE SPEAR PLATINUM PACK** (includes Rogue Spear PC & Urban Ops)
RAINBOW SIX: ROGUE SPEAR for PlayStation available soon

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Making The Getaway

So... who are the geeks who make the games we play? And how do they do it?

Kevin Cheung investigates Team Soho.



Look to any list of the most highly anticipated games on PlayStation 2, and you'll likely recognise names like Metal Gear Solid 2, Gran Turismo 3, and Final Fantasy X. Onimusha? The Getaway? Red Faction? Sure, they're in there. But somehow they're lost behind the hype and expectation that's surrounding the existing franchises. So unless you're a die-hard net trawler with a thirst for knowledge of all things PS2, or an extremely open-minded gamer who remembers every sliver of news they read, original titles (as opposed to sequels) will be at a slight disadvantage in terms of commanding your immediate attention.

That's why Sony's Team SoHo, the makers of *The Getaway*, has started now. Not due for release till the end of 2001, *The Getaway* bears the weight of

being one of the most highly anticipated original Triple A titles for the PS2. It's also doubly important for Sony in building its credibility as a software developer, especially since its traditional strategy of wooing third

party developers has been weakened by the rejuvenated presence of Nintendo and Microsoft.



JUMP IN MY CAR

Inspired directly from Guy Ritchie films like *Lock Stock & Two Smoking Barrels* and *Snatch*, *The Getaway* promises to be a riveting interactive experience that

weaves cinematic storytelling with high-speed car chases and restaurant shoot-outs. Set in the city of London, players will be put in control of Mark Hammond, a former member of the Soho-based Collins Crew. He is blackmailed into becoming a getaway driver for notorious East End crime boss Charlie Jolson after his son Alex is

The Getaway was originally planned for release on the PSone...

kidnapped. Bear in mind, though, he's probably planning his revenge since Charlie had his wife killed as well.

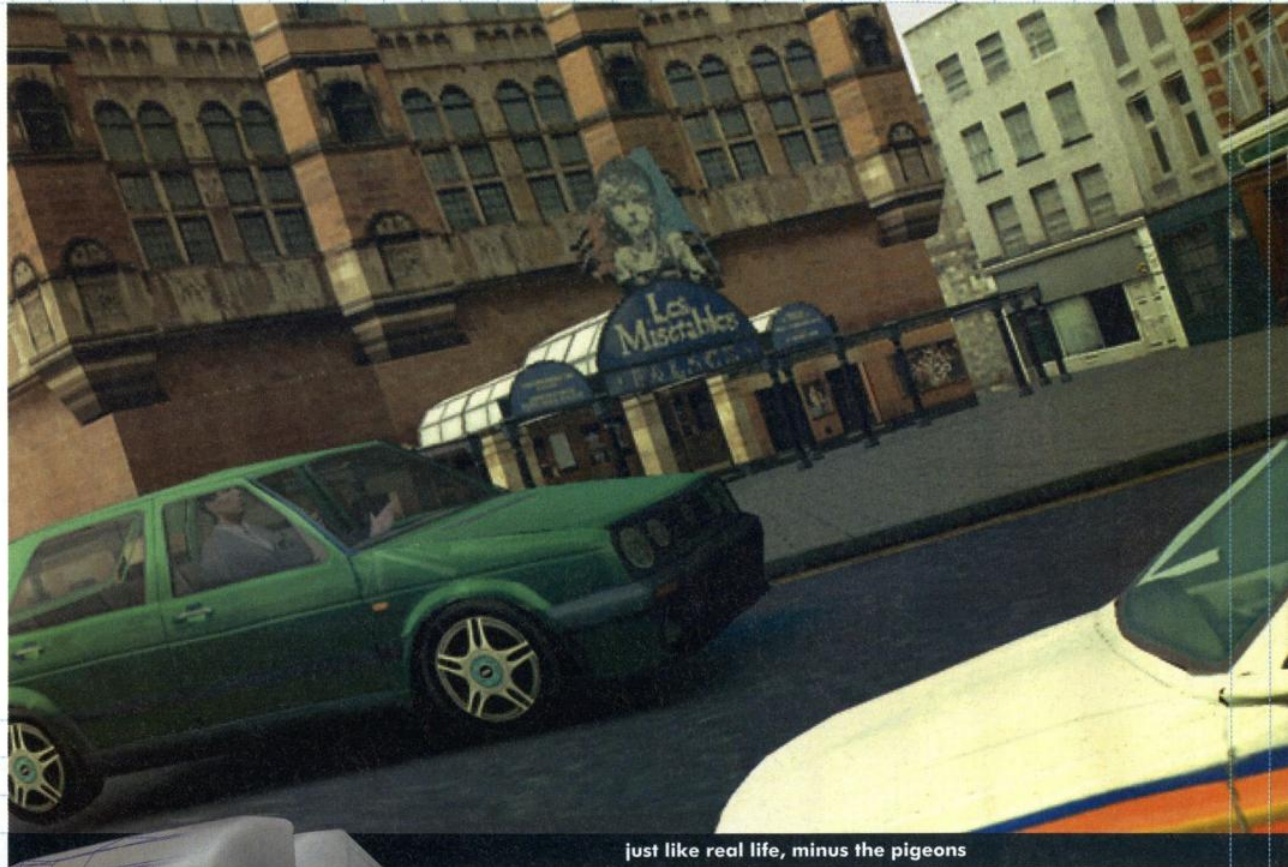
On the other side of the story is Frank Carter, an ex-cop turned vigilante who's hell bent on taking Charlie Jolson and his Bethnal Green Mob down. Frank's story runs in parallel with Mark's, but is only revealed after Mark's story is complete. Much like in Resident Evil 2, we'll be able to see how their paths cross from time to time and broaden our knowledge of the complicated mob politics.

What can we expect of the gameplay? Expect it to be plot-driven. The Getaway will offer portions of the storyline through cut-scenes, which are linked together by a series of interactive action scenes. The freedom with which the player can drive around London or shoot the gangsters while on foot largely negates any fears we had of the massive gameplay-to-cutscene imbalance that was prevalent in Square's high-profile fizzer, The Bouncer.

ORRIGHT GUVNAH!

As mentioned earlier, this game is based entirely in London. The settings are very specific, and everything from the dialogue and the costumes to the streets and set designs are all localised. Funnily enough, The Getaway was originally planned for release on the PSone, but those plans were scrapped after it was decided there wouldn't be enough to distinguish it from Driver 2, which at the time was about to be released.

That's when Team SoHo expanded their ambitions, set their sights on the PlayStation 2, and grew to a frighteningly huge size. Lead by Australian-born Brendan McNamara, Team SoHo recruited as many as four times the number of artists, designers, and coders than is usually needed for creating a videogame. And it's not



just like real life, minus the pigeons



there's guaranteed to be a location you recognise on sight like Trafalgar Square. But this isn't something that just applies to popular tourist locations – it applies to the whole damned map, including the seedy lanes along Brewer Street and Chinatown. The scope and realism of the London map is so impressive that Sony's Japanese office is even requesting a Tourist Mode be included.

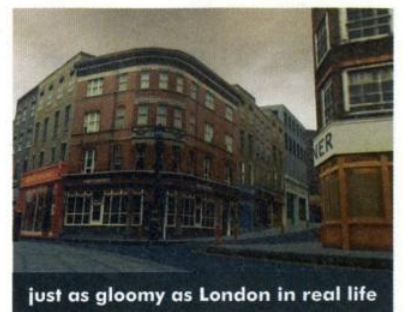
So what exactly is this game going to amount to? Revolutionary new gaming? A perfect fusion of realism and escapism? One of those rare cross-genre games that work? Maybe. But as far as Brendan McNamara is concerned, The Getaway is not designed to rewrite the books on anything, but rather push the modern standards of game design as far as it can go.

With a few months to go before any chance of it seeing the light of day on retail shelves, The Getaway is far from finished. For the moment, however, the staff at Team SoHo was happy to show off what they've developed so far. Portions of the game were playable on the PS2 development kits, but only barely. The rest of it is still being put together on the workstations. Much as we're impressed by the high production standards and visual beauty, it'll be interesting to see how well all the components come together in the final product.

surprising that so many people should be involved: all those extra millions of polygons in these next generation machines have to be textured by someone.

The goal now is to create the most lifelike portrayal of London – much less any other city – the world has ever seen. The plan is to pack 50 square kilometres of London into the game (that's about a quarter of the city), allowing you to drive on practically every street from Soho to Southwark. There'll be pedestrians and traffic on every street. You'll be able to get out of your car and walk around, terrorise people by brandishing your gun, and even steal cars.

The singular most amazing aspect of this game, though, is how nearly photo-realistic every single street location looks. Whether you've lived in London or just visited as a tourist,



just as gloomy as London in real life



will it be in the game? let's hope so! (sarcasm intended)

Ways to fit London on a DVD

» Ladies and Gentlemen, this is London, 50 square kilometres of which is wholly contained in the game that will be called *The Getaway*. In real life, London is a city in perpetual darkness and wetness, where rain is guaranteed at least once in the day. The phrase "sunny blue skies" is rarely applied – a blanket of thick cloud is more appropriate, with whatever sunlight that breaks through coming at around 9am and going dark by about three in the afternoon.

Despite the dreary weather, it's a fascinatingly cosmopolitan city to walk through. End to end it takes just under three hours to stroll through the busy streets, from the claustrophobic lanes of Soho to the bustling commercial areas around Leicester Square and Tottenham Court Road.

With a ready-made city to model its game on, *The Getaway* has the potential to be thought of as Shenmue

on wheels. Unlike *Driver* or even *Metropolis Street Racer*, this game promises a free-roaming driving adventure where players can learn the city by sight alone. Anyone who's lived in London or at least has a fair knowledge of the city streets has a distinct advantage.

From a production point of view, perhaps the most daunting procedure to undertake is the texturing of every building of every street in the game. Team SoHo lead numerous expeditions on to the streets with their video cameras, taking pictures of every location. There were added difficulties to obtaining this footage – they had to wait for the right weather and lighting otherwise it would've affected their own in game lighting effects. They also had to be very patient with the pedestrians who were oblivious to the fact that they were walking in the way.



come on coppers, i'll take ya!



Brendan McNamara

POSITION: Game Director

ON LONDON: "I know you guys are going to point out the bad pop-up and some aliasing in the background. We should have that all fixed for the final product. Pop-up should be eliminated and we should get a fairly decent draw distance of around two kilometres. Don't forget we're also planning on having around 15 fully modelled and animated pedestrians on every street."

ON CARS: "We've factored crumple zones into the construction of these cars, so they actually crash, dent, and collide convincingly in real-time. This is as opposed to the old method of just replacing a section of the car with a different panel."

Map Head

» The walls of several key designers are covered with what's being shown here: a map of London. Team SoHo had to concede that it can't possibly model and texture each and every road for the game, so they're settling for getting most of them in there. In this picture, the main roads are highlighted in yellow.

These maps are scanned straight into the computer, and the buildings are then built from the ground up, and then textured according to photographs and film footage of the locations.

Chun Wah Kong

POSITION: Lead Designer

ON MAP DESIGN: "What you see highlighted on the map of London here is what will be in the game. The map measures about 50 square kilometres. We've picked various sections of the map to have key areas where the story unfolds. You might ask why we didn't choose a smaller area of London to build every road in that area. We chose the balance of showing off the diversity of London, but at not too great a cost to our goal of having all the roads in the city. We've managed to fit in all the different community areas like Chinatown, places with posh and expensive cars; we wanted to capture the whole flavour of London. Sure the game's got a gangster flavour, but we didn't want that to dominate or compromise the continuity of our story. Also by being selective about the roads, we can afford to have big long straights in less important areas as well as the intricate winding roads of Soho."



of course they just stuck this up when they saw us coming





Phil Harrison

THE HEAD OF SONY EUROPE TALKS PS2...

Phil Harrison, formerly the towering front man of Sony Computer Entertainment America, is now the towering front man of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Phil took the time to answer a few questions about the PlayStation 2 during Team SoHo's demonstration.

ON THE LACK OF IMPRESSIVE GAMES AT LAUNCH:

"I can understand some of the frustration, but you have to be buying into a system for its lifetime. You don't just buy it for the games that are available at day one - you buy it for the promise that will be delivered by the system. Just from the list of games that will be available in the immediate future, like *The Getaway*, *Final Fantasy*, *Onimusha*, and so on, there is incredible promise on PlayStation 2 software, and the quality is there. Perhaps you'd also want to go back and look at the launch titles for the PSone. It's a real eye-opener to see those 9 games that came out September 29, 1995, and compare them with the sheer number of games over the last few years.

ON THE PS2 BROADBAND

ADAPTER: "It should be available worldwide this year. The function is two-fold. Obviously, firstly there's the 100Mb Ethernet connectivity to broadband. More crucially is a very large double-digit gigabyte hard disk drive, I can't say any more than that."

ON 60HZ OPTION FOR PS2 GAMES:

"The technology is certainly there to do it, and we do encourage game developers to implement it, but we don't really have control over whether or not they do."

ON FAULTY PS2 DVDS:

"DVD is an open format. It isn't a standard we control - there are 20,000 DVD movies out there and growing every day. Not all of them work on every player, and this is an unfortunate reality of an open standard where you don't have a QA process. What we're doing to address this is working with all the major studios and authoring houses to make sure the PlayStation 2 is part of their testing regime. As far as the PlayStation 2 itself is concerned, though, we've made it all according to the standards required by the DVD forum."



Ravinder Singh

POSITION: Lead Artist

ON PREVIOUS GAMES: "I worked on the Spice Girls video game. I was under orders."

ON WORKING THE STREETS OF LONDON:

"The only thing that's tough about this process is that it takes a lot of time. We're all working by deadlines, and a lot of times it becomes a real labour of love. One of the guys on our team was given a few days to texture the Chinatown area - he ended up spending a few weeks on it working through the night, but it's probably only because his uncle runs one of the restaurants."



» There's been a lot of talk about how difficult the PlayStation 2 is to program for, particularly from PC-based developers; but there was one especially nasty rumour being circulated that Sony didn't even provide basic instructions on how to use the development tools. Well, this happy snap we took of someone's desk should dispel that little myth. There are several volumes to this slab of paper, too.

William Burdon

POSITION: Lead Programmer

ON WORKING THE STREETS OF LONDON:

"The main task we're working on at the moment is getting the traffic systems right. The cars have to flow in the right direction and be distributed evenly. If there's an accident or a smash, it has to keep flowing and not clog up the system. We have to factor in the police as well. Let's say if Mark drives too dangerously or does any harm to the pedestrians, we have to have police cars ready to intercept or pursue him."



» "The PS2 isn't that hard to work with. I think people only criticise it because of its flexibility as a game console and its lack of known limits compared to PC-based hardware."

- William Burdon



gee... bursting with life

Plot Matters

» There's more to *The Getaway* than simply driving through the streets of London. The game is scripted so that Mark and Frank have to enter certain buildings like warehouses and restaurants to interact with other members of the mob world. Unfortunately this process is selective, and it won't be possible to enter every building in the city. The telltale sign of whether a building can be entered is to check whether there are people walking in and out of them.

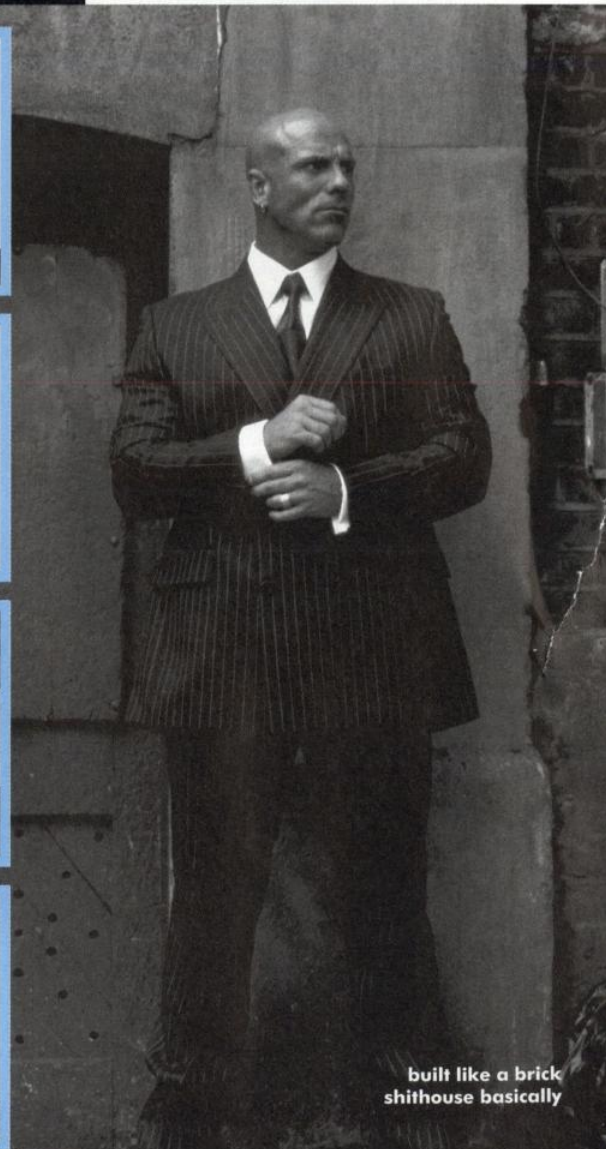
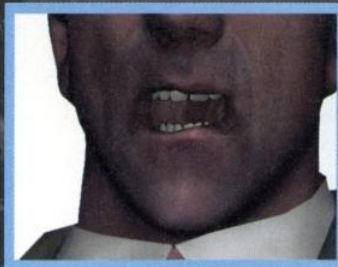
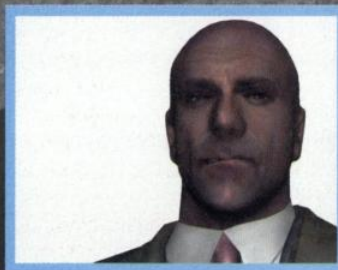
The level of detail and design that's gone into these interior sets is every bit as impressive as the outdoors. Chairs, desks, windows, peeling wallpaper, broken floorboards... there is a vast inventory of items designed specifically for each location. While the backgrounds in the screenshots we've shown have the kind of sharp clarity that's seen in *Code Veronica* and *Onimusha*, one must bear in mind that they are still shots, and that everything is in fact rendered in three dimensions. When put in motion and experienced in real-time, the net effect should be an immersive 3D world more life-like than we have ever seen.

Stop Making Sense

» Mark, Frank, Charlie, and the rest of the cast of *The Getaway* follow in one of the latest trends of videogames of using live actors as the model for their characters. That's not to say the people themselves have been digitised ala *Mortal Kombat*. Instead, they've been motion captured, built into polygonal characters, had the faces scanned and then mapped as a texture on top of the construct. This is similar to the technique used by Capcom to transform Takeshi Kaneshiro into Akechi Samunusuke in *Onimusha*. In this case, we're looking at strikingly lifelike renditions of Don Kembry, Anna Edwards, Ricky Hards, and Michael Preston.

Aside from traditional motion capture for body movements, these characters are brought to life through Team SoHo's homegrown Talking Heads system. While it will ultimately mean precious little to the consumers who play the game, the Talking Heads system is a coup for developers wanting user-friendly voice-acted cut scenes. First, there's a facial skeletal structure for every character with connections to all the major joints and muscles. Through an interface, programmers can select from around 20 different facial expressions like happy, worried, surprised, upset, concerned, and so on — all to varying degrees. These setting can also be combined to create complex expressions like a worried smile.

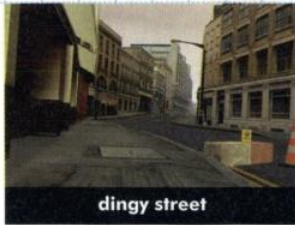
The second main component of the Talking Heads system is speech. All a programmer has to do is insert a text file, and the system will automatically animate and vocalise the speech in perfect synchronicity. This eliminates the usually tedious process of going through individual lines of code all day. Of course, there'll still be a need for some tweaking to smooth out any unusual head movements and so on, but the hard work is essentially done and the programmers can focus on polishing it into a convincing scene. At this stage Talking Heads is only used for the cut scenes in *The Getaway*. In-game use of the function (like talking to random pedestrians) is certainly a tantalising prospect, and may be considered in future.



built like a brick shithouse basically



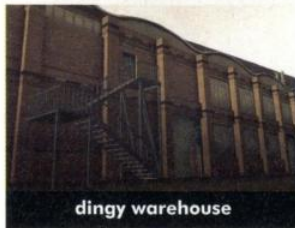
"You should also check out the **sounds of the interiors.** When you walk across the floors, you'll **hear the floorboards creak.**"



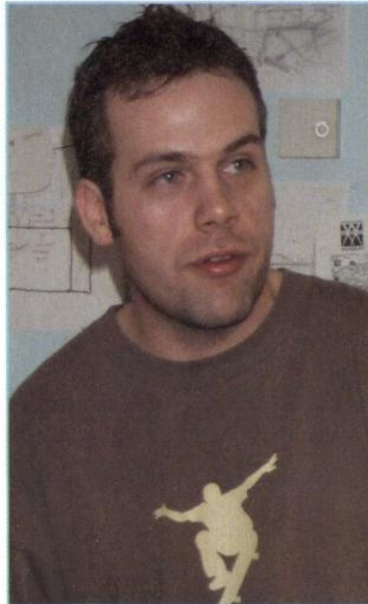
dingy street



dingy market



dingy warehouse



Simon Woody

POSITION: Production Designer

ON CASTING: "Basically I'm responsible for character development and interiors and casting of violent looking men – former lunatics who are born again Christians, and it's good fun because we have the opportunity to make 50 square kilometres of London. My poor feet walked up that route so we could decide what areas we could show off – so we have sleazy filthy East End, then the posh section of Mayfair, so we get to show all the major cultural zones in London."

You mainly play Mark. Here we needed someone 6'3", solid build 18 stone... We have some guys like

bodyguards, bodybuilders and whatnot who bring their own character to us – we can write the storyline and the dialogue, but they add their personality to give life to the story.

"When we motion capture and model them, you can see their mannerisms and nuances in the way they move. Once they go through the script, we have something that's quite realistic. There are 102 pages to this one script alone, no less than the film scripts I'm used to – I'm very fortunate, I've worked with the *Phantom Menace*, the Bond films, and TV commercials."

ON SET DESIGNS: "We had to go out and find some real life locations.

Ridley Scott wanted forests, and that's what we found for him in *Gladiator*. We wanted some gangland locations, so we asked for help from the local police station and the makers of *The Bill* (popular Brit TV series), and we found some places that we could turn into fictional gangster locations. My guys take pictures of every square inch of those interiors and turn them into textures – and mind you, I require these textures to be bloody realistic. When you have characters looking that good, you don't want them to walk around in an airbrushed environment. You should also check out the sounds of the interiors. When you walk across the floors, you'll hear the floorboards creak."



Gavin Moore

POSITION: Scanning/ Motion Capture

ON TALKING HEADS: "We developed our own in-house animation system, basically because we have about 60 cut-scenes to do with 20 principle characters. We only have five animators here, because we're in the middle of Soho, and there are 60 to 100 production houses within a square mile. There could be a major film being produced downstairs or down the road – Ridley Scott just finished *Gladiator* and he's making his next his next film – and some people just might say 'oh, I don't want to work on games, I want to work on a Ridley Scott film'. Animators come and go, that's why we needed to make a system that does the donkeywork for us."

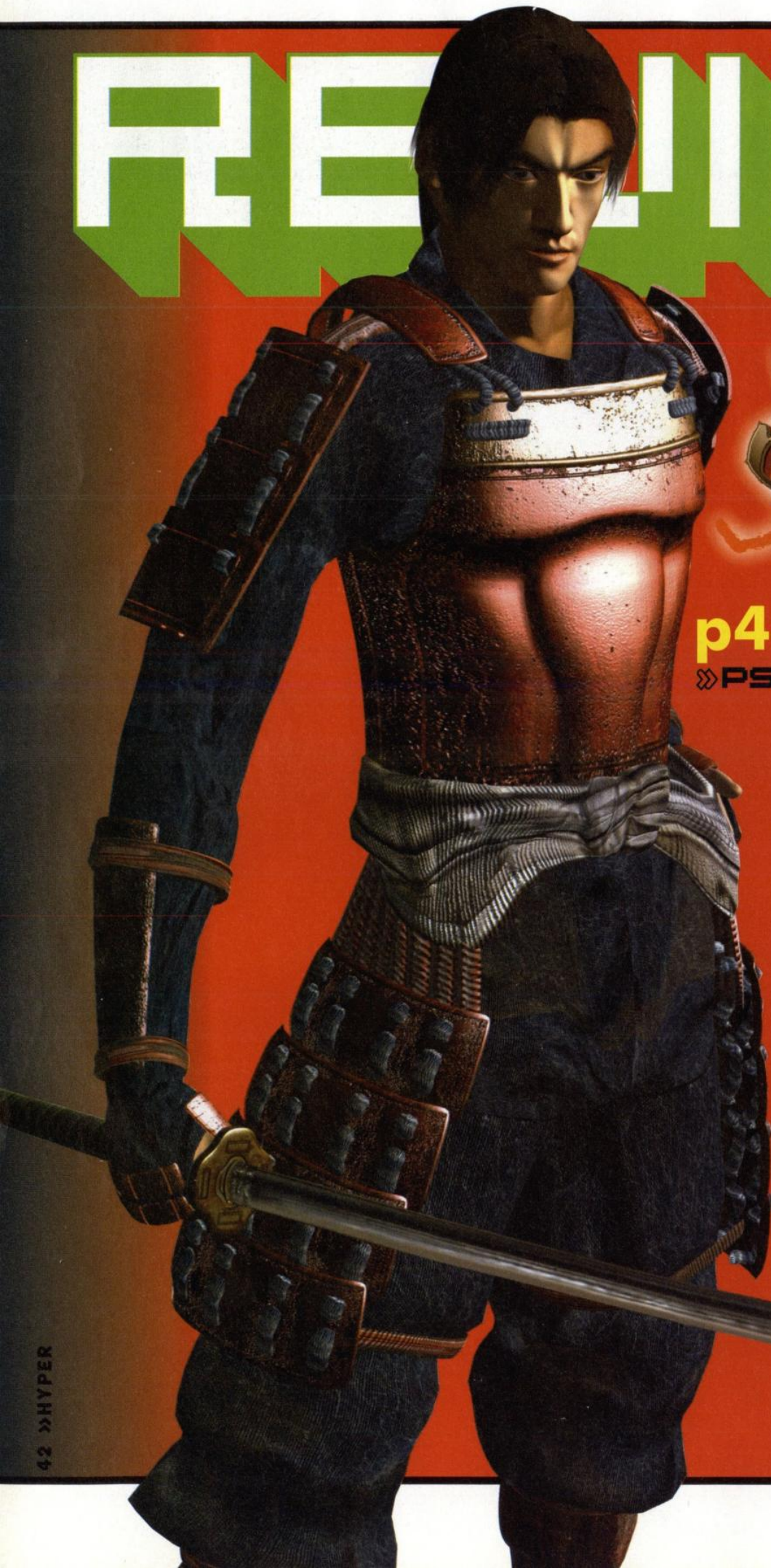
The Road Ahead

»» There's talk that Team SoHo may create mission packs for *The Getaway*, but online and multiplayer modes of play are pretty much out of the question. What's more interesting, however, is the possibilities that have been born from the production of the game. Never mind the demands for a tourist mode – there's talk of giving London cabbies a run for their money on this game (they have to go through stringent testing to show they know the roads of the city, unlike the slack arses in Australia). Of course, this is all dependent on how well Team SoHo pulls off the final product, and how well consumers warm to it. <<



how green is my valley? or rather, how green is my four door sedan?

REVIEWS



ONIMUSHA Warlords

p44 ONIMUSHA

» PS2 Capcom have continued their Survival Horror formula to achieve excellence with this must-have PS2 title.



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THE HYPER CREW'S TOP 5

Eliot Fish - Editor

1. Star Wars: Starfighter - PS2
"The most I've played the PS2 since it launched."
2. Counter-Strike - PC
3. Kengo - PS2
4. Mario Tennis - Game Boy Color
5. Final Fantasy IX - PSone

Cam Shea - Deputy Editor

1. Serious Sam - PC
"Croatian programming finally comes of age!"
2. F-Zero - SNES
3. Castlevania: SotN - PSone
4. Mario Kart 64 - Nintendo 64
5. Planescape Torment - PC

Malcolm Campbell - Art guy

1. Final Fantasy IX - PSone
"Great story. But Zidane IS David Spade."
2. Kengo - PS2
3. Zelda 3 - SNES
4. Sonic II - Megadrive
5. Starfighter - PS2

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





HYPER
GAME OF
THE MONTH

Onimusha

»» PS2

CATEGORY: Survival Horror >>> PLAYERS: 1-2 >>> PUBLISHER: Capcom >>> PRICE: \$TBA >>> RATING: TBA >>> AVAILABLE: TBA >>>

KEVIN CHEUNG discovers the first must-have PS2 game...

Hention the words "Triple A title" and "PlayStation 2" in the same sentence, and you're more than likely to get a few funny looks from the Hyper crew. It's true, though. Every title that was lauded as being 'the one' to win the PlayStation 2 from the software doldrums has either been delayed or has fallen short of expectation. The Bouncer from SquareSoft, for one, is a ghastly experience. That's not to take anything from games like Electronic Arts' SSX or Madden 2001 — what we're seeking is that instant classic from Japan, one with tight controls that's free of the tired criticisms like flickering or aliasing, and one that makes some effort to take production values to the next level.

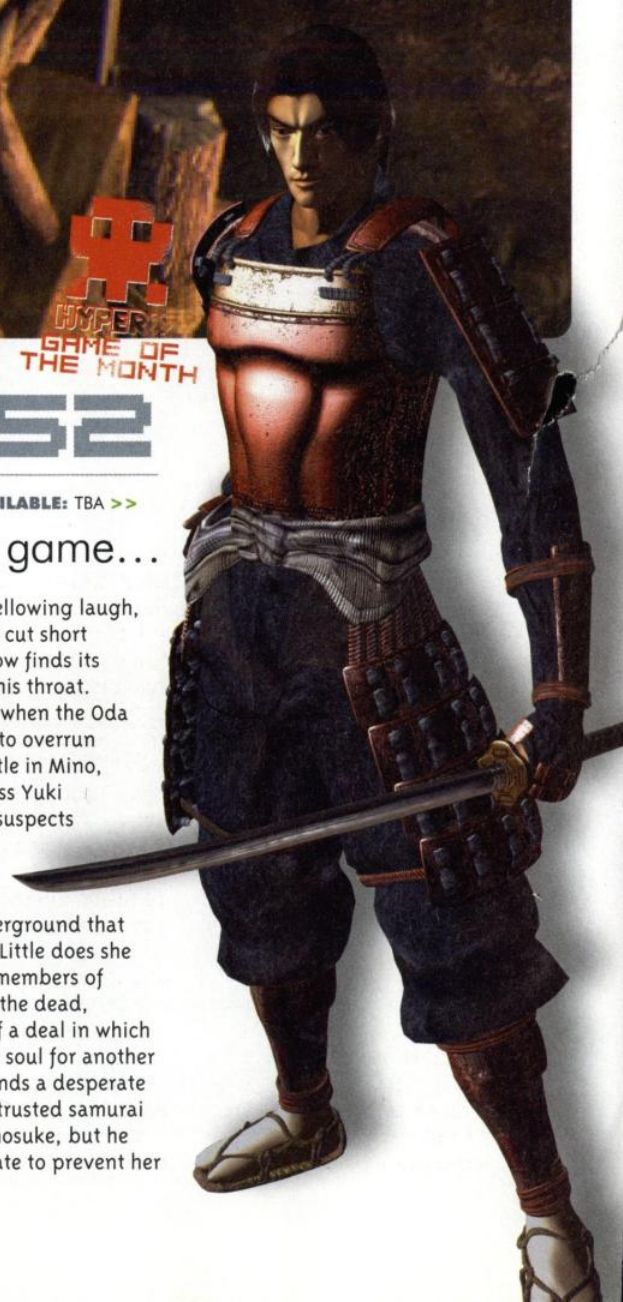
SURVIVING ANOTHER SURVIVAL HORROR

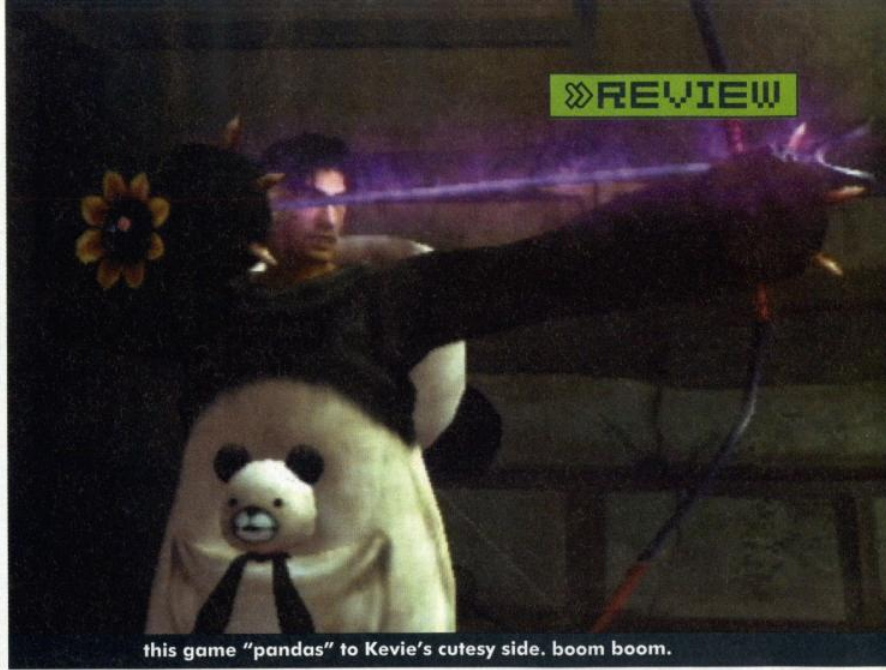
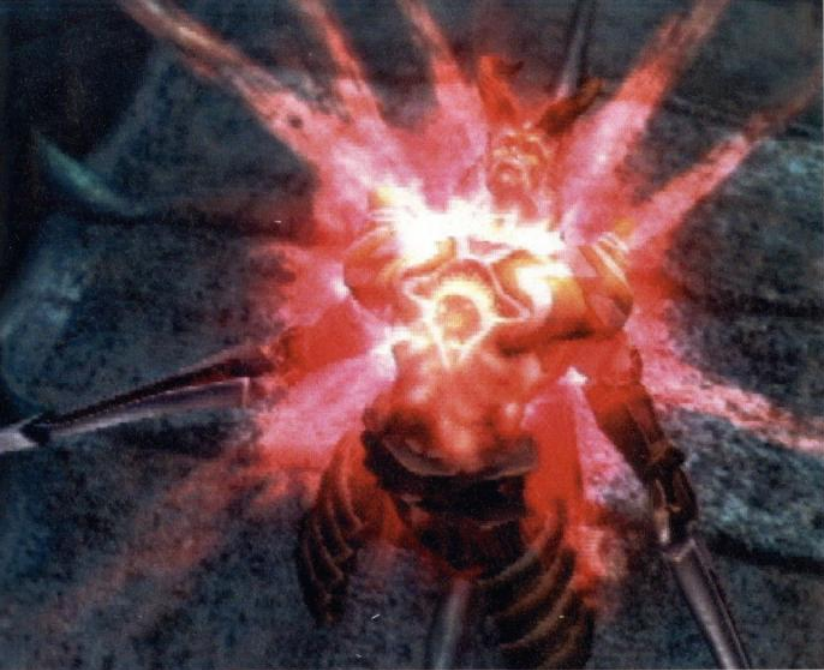
Onimusha doesn't immediately sound like that title. We've heard all the rumours, we know it's about zombies in feudal Japan — we could all be forgiven for rolling our eyes and wondering, "hasn't Capcom milked the Resident Evil formula enough?" Well, not quite. Onimusha is a surprisingly fun game to play, so much so that I ended up playing it over and over for two solid weeks. That's a rarity for any PlayStation 2 game.

The setting of Onimusha is 16th Century Japan. Players are thrown into the thick of battle as Nobunaga Oda leads his troops in an offensive against Yoshimoto Imagawa. The fight is bloody, but Nobunaga's side prevails. Upon receiving the news that victory is imminent, Nobunaga rises from his

seat and lets out a bellowing laugh, but his celebration is cut short when a wayward arrow finds its mark, right through his throat.

The story picks up when the Oda Clan makes its move to overrun Yoshiatsu Saito's castle in Mino, close to where Princess Yuki resides. Yuki herself suspects something foul underfoot, as she has heard rumours of demons from underground that devour her servants. Little does she realise that they are members of Nobunaga's army of the dead, resurrected as part of a deal in which Nobunaga traded his soul for another chance at life. She sends a desperate letter for help to her trusted samurai friend, Akechi Samunosuke, but he arrives seconds too late to prevent her





this game "pandas" to Kevie's cutesy side. boom boom.



Hey, won't you go to the Bent Realm?
not if i turn out like you, buddy!



tie me up, tie me down



here's an arrow in your backside for ya trouble

▶▶ The sudden death spasm that ensues as he **twists the blade into its spinal cord** is the only indicator that the demon is well and truly dead.

kidnapping by Nobunaga's minions.

Aided by his ninja companion, Kaede, Samunosuke takes it upon himself to rescue the princess. The trail takes him to the Saito compound, but along the way he encounters several soldiers of the dead, one of whom knocks him unconscious. He's clearly outmatched. It's in this transient state that Samunosuke is visited by the Clan of Ogres, who equip him with a means of defeating the demons: a gauntlet attached to his arm. He can use it to absorb the souls of the demons he kills.

SUCKING UP SOULS

Thus the adventure begins in earnest. With his trusty sword, Samunosuke hacks and slashes his way through the dark passages of the Saito compound, searching for clues that will ultimately lead him to Princess Yuki. In the initial stages, Samunosuke will collect three

orbs representing lightning, fire and wind. These orbs are given physical form as enchanted weapons — namely a lightning-powered katana, a fire-fused broadsword, and a wind-charged spear.

The key to completing the game is to power-up the orbs and weapons, which in turn can only be accomplished by absorbing souls with the gauntlet. As the soul meter builds up, Samunosuke can go to a mirror shrine and exchange the souls for increased orb and weapon power. The energy can also be used to upgrade arrows and health items. These upgrades are not only crucial in terms of increasing Samunosuke's offensive power, but also to gain access through doors that have been magically sealed.

Therein lays the first major distinction between Onimusha and the

Resident Evil series. Instead of unlocking doors by searching for improbably placed keys, Onimusha puts players through the more entertaining process of killing more zombies, sucking up their souls, then waiting for more to respawn, so that you can get that energy top-up.

Thankfully, the killing action isn't anywhere near as dull as the Resident Evil games. It's more akin to the quick-paced Dino Crisis 2, where the bad guys come running at you thick and fast. Only this time, you're not blasting them with a shotgun from a distance — Samunosuke darts quickly around the screen, gets up close and personal with the demons, and cuts them down with a swift 5-slash combo. But that's not all. These zombies will usually get right back up, so he has to sink his sword deep into the demon's

!!! Onimusha was to be released around about now, but its distribution has run into a small delay.



Two Warriors for the Price of One!

>> Although Samunosuke gets the starring role of Onimusha, players will be required to take control of his partner, Kaede, at certain points in the game. She's armed with a wakizashi and throwing darts, but without a gauntlet her fighting power is rather limited. However, as a ninja, she has the ability to pick locks and gain access to areas that Samunosuke wouldn't be able to reach.



ahh it's the evil interior decorator demon! Look what he's done!



dark, miserable and somehow fun!



back. The sudden death spasm that ensues as he twists the blade into its spinal cord is the only indicator that the demon is well and truly dead. Not to mention, of course, the floating energy balls that rise from its body.

GENUINE SURPRISES

If you've played any of the Resident Evil games, you'll be familiar with the usage of pre-rendered backgrounds. Usually this is a cause for concern due to the implications of dull, static environments. Even Dino Crisis 2 and Resident Evil: Code Veronica employed 3D backgrounds.

Onimusha is different, though. First of all, the backgrounds are in high resolution. Secondly, Capcom has added simple animated touches to the backgrounds to give the environments a sense of vibrancy and life. Fires will flicker and cast life-like shadows against the background; ponds have fish swimming inside them, and they'll be frightened away by the rippling waves that are created as you run through it.

There are also 3D objects placed in the foreground and background. Sometimes a careless slash will chop down a bamboo tree. Another section in an open field has large wooden shields that can be used as cover from arrows, but they can also be cut down. While indoors, it's possible to use Samunosuke's sword to cut through the paper walls. These objects are

blended so well into the background that certain scripted events — like a zombie leaping through the wall at you — are a genuine surprise.

What we have, then, is an immersive and believable virtual environment. The rich colours and clear picture quality really bring out the beauty of the feudal setting. Every minute detail, from the trees and temples to the wooden floorboards and gold sculptures, forms a very acceptable alternative to having everything fully rendered in 3D. The backgrounds aren't all perfect though. The sore spots crop up when running through cluttered areas like through a bush, with the way through being not apparent owing to a lack of depth in the image.

The main characters, too, are worthy of praise. Samunosuke is the virtual embodiment of Japanese heart-throb, Takeshi Kaneshiro, who provided the framework for every facial animation. He even provided

Samunosuke's voice in the Japanese language audio track. Up close, the facial textures are stunningly real, with details like wrinkles, facial hair and dimples all so smoothly animated that it almost looks real.

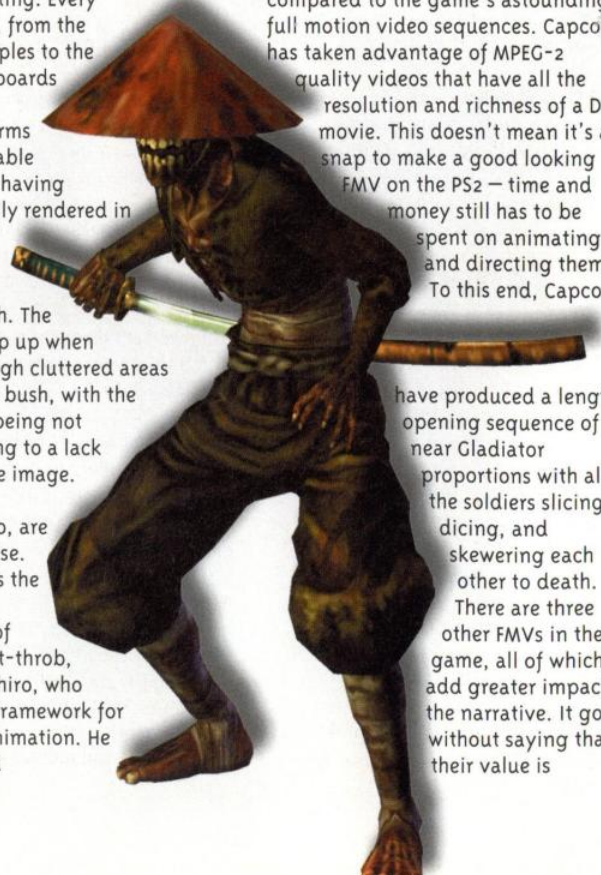
Bear in mind, though, I say "almost" only because it doesn't look real compared to the game's astounding full motion video sequences. Capcom has taken advantage of MPEG-2 quality videos that have all the resolution and richness of a DVD movie. This doesn't mean it's a snap to make a good looking FMV on the PS2 — time and money still has to be spent on animating and directing them. To this end, Capcom

have produced a lengthy opening sequence of near Gladiator proportions with all the soldiers slicing, dicing, and skewering each other to death. There are three other FMVs in the game, all of which add greater impact to the narrative. It goes without saying that their value is



Unlockable Bonuses Ahoy!

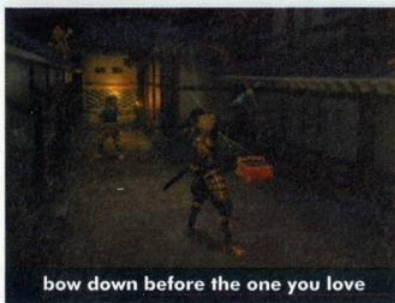
>> Onimusha comes packed with a number of bonuses that become available upon completion of the game. There is an Easy Mode, a Samunosuke Extra Mode (where you play the game through in a panda suit), and a preview movie of Onimusha 2. As you progress through the game you'll also pick up items called 'Fluorites'. Pick up 20 of them and not only will you unlock a series of mini-games, you'll be able to use the super arse-kicking Bishamon Sword through the whole game





By The Power of Bishamon!

>>Samunosuke will receive an invitation to enter the Dark Realm midway through the game. If you're feeling up to a test of endurance, accept the invitation. You'll be transported down to the demon world where you have to fight through 20 levels of zombies, crustaceans, orcs, blobs, and tentacle creatures. It's crucial to reach the bottom, where you'll find the Bishamon Ocarina. Blow this Ocarina at a special door, and it will reveal the all-powerful Bishamon Sword that combines the power of all three orbs.



bow down before the one you love



you're no match for my big panda head

There are also 3D objects placed in the foreground and background. Sometimes a careless slash will **chop down a bamboo tree.**

completely aesthetic, but it would be ludicrous to prefer real-time animations such as those of Tekken Tag Tournament to these.

MEATY CHUNKS

"Stupid controls" is another phrase associated with Resident Evil, which Onimusha rectifies to a certain extent. There are no strict analogue controls in this game — it works best on the D-pad. Samunosuke runs around fast. Tap forward and he'll dash forward. Tap back and he'll dash back. He'll only slow down if the button press is prolonged, which makes it easy to dash back and forth for clutch-style attacks. There's an instant 180-degree turn with the R2 button, making it easy to face off against multiple enemies on different sections of the screen.

The most important addition is the ability to lock on to an enemy and strafe around it. This makes it possible to completely dodge the blade of your enemy and close in rapidly for the kill. If you time the counter-attack well enough, it's possible to execute an instant-kill counter-attack.

When it comes to fighting the zombies, however, it isn't all just about slashing wildly. Certain enemies should be fought from a distance with a bow and arrow. Others carry shields that have to be chipped away slowly — but using the fire sword can burn them away much faster. When going in for the fatal stab, you'll be vulnerable to attacks from other zombies. Sometimes it just pays to kick them over quickly so it doesn't get too crowded.

Similar strategies can be employed with the weapons. The lightning sword, for instance, is fast-cutting and its special attack devastating against any single opponent. The fire sword is slower but takes meaty chunks out of the enemy, and its flaming special attack works best on zombies huddled into a group. The wind spear is best used when surrounded by opponents. Its twin-edged blades guarantee multiple hits, and its whirlwind special attack will clear everything around you.

The only thing seriously wrong with Onimusha is the menu system.

Inventory and maps can only be accessed by pressing the Start button and scrolling through a long list of options. Using these menus in the heat of battle can be a very unwelcome break in the flow. At the very least, simple commands like health or weapon-switching should have been bound to one of the action keys.

A final word must go to Onimusha's musical score. It is fully orchestrated with traditional Japanese instruments, some parts ambient, others with a coherent melody. The overall effect, however, is a lasting sensation of cinematic brilliance.

Onimusha is must-have material. It's not revolutionary, but at least

it's an original concept (as opposed to being a sequel) and it takes various formulas in the gaming process a few steps forward. However, being essentially a derivative of two older games, its long-term appeal may be limited. But to be honest, the academics of its game design are moot. When a game is this fun and looks, sounds, and plays so well, it's difficult to resist. <<<

!!! There are rumblings already that Onimusha is being ported to the Xbox, although it's hard to confirm.



PLUS: Intelligent and fast-paced. Jaw-dropping visual quality.
MINUS: Slow left and right rotations. Not difficult to finish.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92	92	85
OVERALL		
90		

The best fun the PS2 has offered in ages. And it's about time too.

»» REVIEW

Droid Starfighter



Star Wars: Starfighter

»» PS2

CATEGORY: Space Combat >>> PLAYERS: 1-2 >>> PUBLISHER: LucasArts >>> PRICE: \$89.95 >>> RATING: M >>> AVAILABLE: Now >>>

ELIOT FISH thinks everyone should go watch *The Last Starfighter*.

Fhew. We'd only just finished thrashing the last few droid fighters in *Battle For Naboo* on the Nintendo 64, when *Star Wars: Starfighter* for the PS2 gets dumped on our desks! Created by a separate development team to *Battle For Naboo* on N64, *Starfighter* is an interesting mixture of surface and space combat that borrows from *Rogue Squadron*, *X-Wing Alliance* and even *Colony Wars*. In light of their recent troubles, and the downward spiral in the quality of their games, can LucasArts really have released something this good with so little fanfare? It seems the answer is a very big "yes".

48 »» HYPER



POWER OF THE DARK SIDE

LucasArts have done a great job with their first PS2 title. For starters, this is one of few games we've seen recently that actually seems to be harnessing the console's graphical power. There are some truly impressive visuals thrown about in this game. The surface missions will impress you with their size, detail and sheer number of units that get drawn into battle, whilst the space combat will thrill you with 60-frames per second dazzling dogfighting that is as visually impressive as anything seen recently on the PC. The ship models are detailed, the weapon effects stunning and the environments are believably real.

Thanks to the fact that the game is designed to be played from the first person perspective, you'll truly be living out your Star Wars fantasies in this one. As you cruise towards a convoy of frigates, the sight of about 20 droid fighters zooming towards you in formation will have you both exhilarated and frightened. The craft of Episode One, and the feeling of really being there amongst them, have been captured so well in *Starfighter* that it more than makes up for the fact that most of the game will be spent flying unfamiliar newly designed craft. Ironically, this Episode One game actually feels like classic Star Wars, which is something that the *Phantom Menace* movie failed to capture.

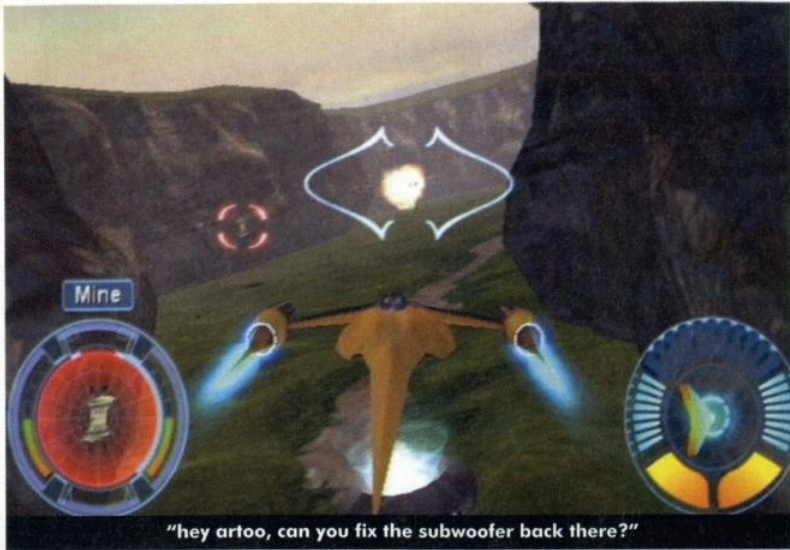
LucasArts have also implemented a brilliant zoom function, necessary simply because of the huge distances

from your target that you can achieve in some missions. You can literally fly off in one direction for ages, then turn your craft around and marvel at how far away you are from the action. Whether this be in space or when you're flying above the surface of Naboo, the handy zoom will let you focus in on inbound fighters and other craft for a pre-emptive strike. Tasty.

Not only is the zoom functional in terms of gameplay, but it will give you some stunning close-ups of some of the action in the game, like when you bomb a fleet of Trade Federation battle tanks. Zooming in to see them get destroyed in a ball of plasma fire will have you grinning back at the TV set.

STAY ON TARGET

There is a similar approach to the mission structure in *Starfighter* as *Battle*



Ironically, this Episode One game actually feels like **classic Star Wars**, which is something that the Phantom Menace movie failed to capture.

For Naboo, in the sense that LucasArts have retained the "medal system". Whilst the missions are tough, it isn't hard to finish the game after a few days of play, which is why the medal system is crucial to the longterm appeal of this title. The more medals you receive throughout the game, the more you will "unlock". There are about 8 bonus missions on top of the game's main story, as well as a two-player mode that features a canyon run and duel and a bout of capture the flag. If you are really good and win a gold medal in every mission, you'll even unlock the deadly Sith Interceptor (the craft that Darth Maul flew in Episode One).

The controls and craft response is excellent, and it's never too hard to pull out of a dangerous manoeuvre,

regardless of the ship you are flying. When piloting the bomber, you can take huge strafing runs over the masses of Trade Federation craft rolling out over the landscape (sometimes up to 50 Battle tanks), whilst in the N1 Starfighter you'll mostly be dogfighting the droid craft. In the Final Battle mission, you even get to approach the Droid Control ship, fight off your opponents and then fly inside it. The whole final mission sequence is tense and difficult, but most of all fun. In fact, a LucasArts game hasn't had this kind of fun factor

since X-Wing Alliance on the PC. To pick some faults in the game, first we'd look to the sound. The music is wonderful, and mostly the sound effects are good, but there are a lot of holes. Some of the enemy craft don't have any



sound effects — it just doesn't sound as dynamic as we had hoped. However the radio chatter during missions helps keep up the atmosphere as well as provide clues as to what to do next. Visually, there is slowdown, but not enough to affect gameplay. There are a couple of missions that suffer from that "boxed in" feeling, where you fly into invisible walls and ceilings in the environment, but they are in the minority.

Overall, Starfighter is amazingly fun gaming, so all gripes aside we would recommend it to any Star Wars fan and anyone looking for a fun sci-fi space combat game. Let's hope that LucasArts "stay on target..."! <<<

!!! What else for the PS2 in regards to Star Wars? Try Super Bombad Racing. Review coming to you soon.



PLUS: Star Wars to the max, but with gameplay!

MINUS: A little short, and the story doesn't really wash.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

93 86 89

OVERALL

90

A Star Wars game that you must have? Amazing.



Settlers 4

» PC

CATEGORY: Resource Sim >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: BlueByte >> PRICE: \$79.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now

GARETH JONES finally settles down...

Ah, those wacky Germans with their penchant for orderly, straightforward dispassionate logic! The German game development community might not be known for their amazing cutting edge first person shooters, or off-the-wall adventure games and so on, but they can sure churn out a decent resource management sim or five – the Settlers series being the most established of the genre. Now in the fourth iteration, the Settlers series has provided many challenging and rewarding hours of play for avid anal-retentive strategists. Within the Settlers fan community there was a mini uproar over the previous incarnation, Settlers 3, because it shifted the focus of the game far too much onto combat and war production rather than efficient resource production and economic dominance.

Settlers 4 (S4) is a step back for developers BlueByte, with civilisation resource production and structure being of paramount importance.

GETTING WOOD

The storyline runs that a dark angel, Morbus, has pissed off the gods and been banished to the earth. Being rather pissed off now, Morbus has decided to dedicate his life to eradicating beauty and order on earth. On the other side of the earth, however, three races have emerged – the Romans, the Vikings, and the Mayans – who will have to battle each other to achieve dominance, and then proceed to take on Morbus.

Each civilisation has three (very long) missions to complete, fighting for dominance with the other two, as well as a final 12 mission scenario

against Morbus and his dark tribe. The three 'normal' civilisations are pretty much the same with only cosmetic differences, though the Mayans use more stone in their buildings whereas the Romans and Vikings use more wood, and so the strategies required for each civ are the same – build up an infrastructure, expand and develop a resource tree that can sustain the development of the civilisation and thence overwhelm your adversaries.

It's in the nitty gritty of developing your sims that's the meat and potatoes of the game, the micro management of developing your civ and expanding the territory you own without stretching your resources too thinly in the process. Sounds pretty easy, doesn't it? The most common way to expand your territory is to build up defensive towers



around your borders, which when filled with soldiers gives you more territory to use. However, first you have to develop the necessary resources for soldiers (you'll generally have a few spare military units at the beginning of a scenario but they won't last long). So you'll need a weaponsmith to build the weapons that are then used by normal citizens to become soldiers.

Before you can do that, however, you first need to mine the raw materials by building a coal mine and iron ore mine. Before you can build the mines, you'll need to ensure that there's enough food in the colony to



protect this outdoor toilet with your lives



ahh my little settlers, suffer, starve and kill each other for food!



the cocaine shipment got dumped

There are more **bells and whistles** and the graphics have been much improved **but it's still the same game.**

feed the miners, otherwise they won't have the energy to work. So you'll need a grain farm to grow and harvest grain, not to mention a sheep or pig farm for meat, plus a slaughterhouse as well. Then there's a mill to mill the grain, a water well to ensure a supply of water, and a baker to make bread from grain and water. Phew!

LET'S SETTLE THIS NOW

To actually build the necessary buildings you'll have to ensure that there's enough building material in your colony, so first you'll need to build a woodworkers hut to chop down some wood. But raw wood isn't good enough to build with, so you'll need a sawmill to process the wood into building material, and don't forget a forester to plant more trees and create sustainable logging for your environment! Believe it or not, that's just one 'resource tree' — there's a heap

more, and all are interlinked with each other. We haven't even touched on increasing the number of citizens, storage areas, materials to sacrifice to the gods, fishing, exploring new territory, ships, donkeys, and more.

The new units and buildings add some new variety to the series, and the return to an economic focus is a welcome one — though combat still plays a large part in the game the balance is much better than with S3. The interface has also been changed fairly significantly, with materials stacked outside of buildings rather than inside. Previously, you had to click on, say, a mine to see how much food they had and how much minerals were being extracted, but with S4 all this is laid outside the buildings so with a glance at the main map a player can see what is going on and is better able to

figure out where production bottlenecks or blockages are occurring. All this makes for a better and smoother game, but it would have been nice to see a bit more innovation at the root of the game.

S4 is much the same as the original Settlers — there are more bells and whistles and the graphics have been much improved but it's still the same game, and if you've played through one or all three previous games I'm not sure that there's enough that's new to really warrant purchase. I'm a huge Settlers fan, and have played all the preceding games (as well as others in the genre), but I just couldn't get all that enthused about doing essentially the same thing over again with only minor improvements and changes. <<<

!!! Settlers 4 reminds us that the next big God game — Black & White — should be here for a review next issue!

REQUIRED: P200 MMX, 64MB RAM



PLUS: Improved graphics, a few new features.

MINUS: Too similar to the past three games.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80	45	70
OVERALL		
73		

If you're a fan then it's worth a look, but don't expect a classic.



Clive Barker's Undying

» PC

CATEGORY: First Person Shooter >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: EA >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Esteemed para-psychologist **JAMES COTTEE** investigates a sinister new FPS...

There has been many a horrifying first person shooter over the years, but usually for all the wrong reasons. Perhaps it's been unplayable out of the box, or assailed the player with irritating flying bugs. Many are but pungent vapourware, haunting release schedules whilst remaining as silent as *The Ghost of Christmas Future*. Now the esteemed horror hack Clive Barker intends to raise hell by means of grafting his name onto an edgy new FPS. *Undying* could be the shocker we've all been waiting for.

BLACK... BLACK LIKE MY SOUL

Playing a freebooting Irish ghostbuster in the early 20th century, your task is to respond to the belated request of an old friend and investigate the mysterious goings-on at the Covenant family estate. A sprawling mansion on

the west coast of the emerald isle, it's shrouded in the viscous presence of lingering death. With but one of the five in the current generation left alive, and in his death bed when you meet him, things are looking grim. And that's before you start getting molested by ghosts and monsters.

It seems that Jeremiah and his four siblings, rather than playing with matches or sniffing glue like normal children, decided one day to perform a satanic ritual at a cluster of mysterious ancient standing stones. From that day forth a curse had befallen them, the kind which might one day lead to them becoming end-of-level bosses designed to torment some dreadlocked adventurer with more loyalty than sense. Seeing as your player-character fits this description, you can expect some violent conflict resolution within.

First of all, this is not a game you can play in a crowded office with one finger hovering over the boss key. Like any other horror product, one will get the most value out of Clive Barker's *Undying* by playing out of direct sunlight, in a cool dry place. All prospective players are also advised to have respectable system specs so that as many creepy effects as possible can be turned on at once.

As Patrick Galloway you'll encounter a linear FPS implemented with plenty of pre-determined cut scenes, not unlike other excellent works like *No One Lives Forever*. With everything rendered in a derivative of the Unreal Tournament engine, one's physical interaction with the environment is limited, instead placing the onus on the player to get emotionally involved

with the situation. This is encouraged by the excellent building of dramatic tension, with fleeting images of the unpleasant progressing into flurried gunplay with hellspawn.

A two handed combat system is used, with a single weapon and spell armed at any given time. That's right, magic spells; your in-game character has an innate talent for seeing beyond and channeling the mystical energies of the universe to his own ends. At a given moment one may have the choice between say hurling Molotov cocktails or shooting barrages of glowing, exploding skulls. Which is not to say the weapons are your tired old nail guns; you get to use, eventually, exotic devices like the Tibetan War Cannon, which hurls icy

!!! This may be a little off-topic, but only 8 months to go until Lord Of The Rings! Whoo-hooooo!



he's been drinking the kahlua



100 100



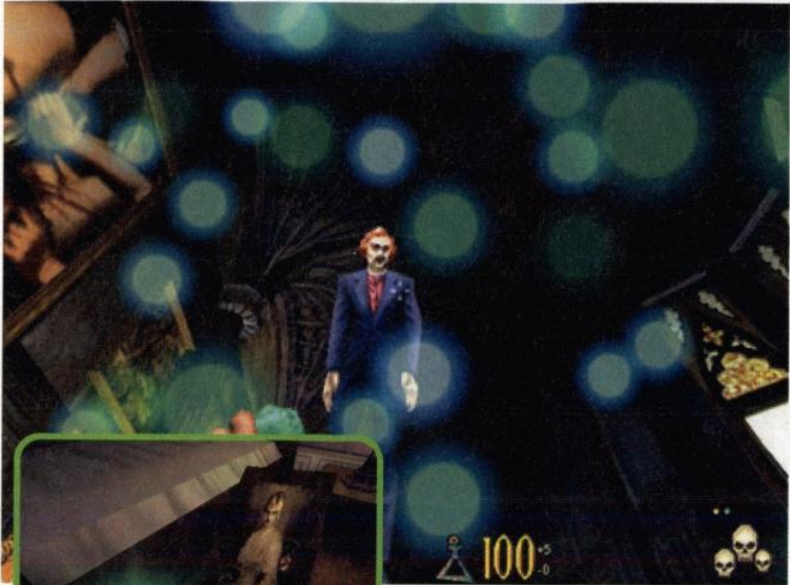
100 54



dad i told you not to visit me at work



100 100



100



skull skull skull... no, I meant the beer



Scrye hard

>> Thanks to Scrye, the first spell you get, Clive Barker's Undying is really two games in one. While there is the mundane physical world around you, there is also the sinister world of auras and astral nastiness that can tell you what kind of evil has been in the area in the recent past. Simply make sure your magical green rock is in your hand, and when it glows you'll know for certain that the spirit world is ready to show you its etchings.

Fleeting images of the unpleasant progressing into flurried gunplay with hellspawn

balls. Then there are silver bullets, phosphorus shells, even dynamite.

G- G- G- GLITCHES!

A number of different techniques are employed to build tension aside from the usual haunted house and dark shadows. Starting with your basic foreshadowing, we move up to obtuse characters, floating, riddle-spouting ghosts and enemies that go to the trouble of attacking you from all sides with pointy teeth. Ultimately players will find themselves crossing over into stylised parallel universes far more edgy than our own.

The production values make for a very good game experience, but it's hardly seamless. Clipping often gives a luminous delineation to where dark polygons meet, and when performance is an issue the textures can have a little trouble sticking to the game

characters. While some puzzles involve finding things and solving mysteries, a great many others are tests of your agility in leaping from something onto something else.

Then there're the load times. Such things were excusable on the PSX versions of Resident Evil and Dino Crisis, and at least you got a slowly opening door to look at while you were waiting. This custom game engine almost seems to tease the player at every egress, for doors open almost completely before the move to load the next micro level is made.

Nevertheless, Clive Barker's Undying is a victory for game design over mindless graphical improvement. The interface may be old, but its familiarity lends itself to a more transparent experience, and thus more fun. <<

REQUIRED: PII 500, 64MB RAM, 3D card



PLUS: Atmospheric, varied combat, nice story.

MINUS: Resource hungry, clipping, fairly short.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

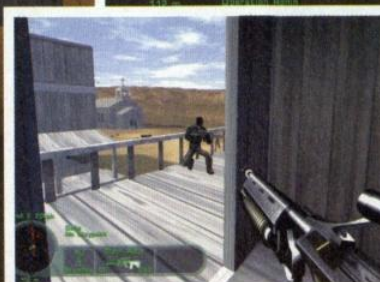
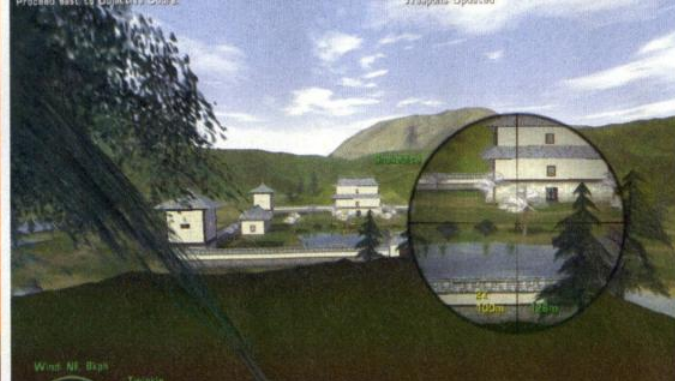
91 88 84

OVERALL

86

Even scarier than late night television.

REVIEW



tank you, have a nice day

Delta Force: Land Warrior



CATEGORY: Military Sim >> PLAYERS: 1-Multi >> PUBLISHER: Novalogic >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

HUGH NORTON-SMITH gets amongst the voxels...



The Delta Force games have been one of the most popular and successful franchises on the PC — The original game came out at the same time as Quake 2, introducing impressive outdoor environments and an exciting emphasis on strategic play. The sequel was little more than an extended mission pack, but was another huge hit. Since then, the team at Novalogic have been busy modifying the game for use as a combat simulator in the US military.

Delta Force: Land Warrior is the third game in the ultra-popular series. Sadly, it seems that success has stifled creativity in Camp Novalogic — the gameplay is dangerously similar to the last two games and, despite the addition of higher playable resolutions, the game looks uncannily reminiscent to its three year old ancestor.

GETTING TOO OLD FOR THIS

The game engine is really beginning to show its age. Rather than using an exclusively polygon-based engine, Delta Force: Land Warrior uses a hybrid voxel/polygon system. Not only are the Delta Force games notoriously slow and buggy-looking, but other titles, such as

Giants and Project IGI, have proven that a purely polygon engine can, using clever programming techniques, render large outdoor areas much more proficiently. Land Warrior is, in addition, enormously processor intensive, as voxels cannot be offloaded to a video accelerator. It's not surprising that a powerful 600Mhz+ CPU is important for decent frame rates.

Despite this, Land Warrior introduces some improvements to the venerable series. Team Fortress aficionados should note the new character class system — soldiers are now available as either a Grenadier, Gunner, Medic, Close Quarters and the ever-popular Sniper. For instance, the Medic is able to heal other players, while the Gunner is subject to lower recoil when using heavy weapons. Other new features include an updated weapon arsenal, AI companions, the ability to use fixed gun emplacements and a brand-new level editor.

MOUSTACHIOED?

For us, the single player game still feels too arcade-like and, ultimately, unsatisfying. Missions play like a

shooting gallery, as your gung-ho Land Warrior wipes out hordes of clueless, moustachioed terrorists. There is no element of stealth, and enemy AI is virtually non-existent, making the single player experience rather pointless. To add to this, the level design and mission objectives verge on the banal. Accordingly, multiplayer

provides the most gameplay 'meat'. With up to 32 players on each map, the multiplayer experience is a riot, especially if you favour open-air battles over cramped indoor firefights (a la Counter-Strike). Games can be set up using either the NovaWorld server or over a LAN. Although NovaWorld is based in the US, decent ping rates are easy to find, even on a modest 56k connection. LAN play is still the best option, particularly if you plan to use the integrated VIP (Voice over IP) functionality.

In summary, Delta Force: Land Warrior falls into the same traps that hindered its predecessors: failing to address important issues like enemy AI and a convincing single player experience. <<<

!!! Looking for more multiplayer mayhem? How does Tribes 2 appeal to you? Review next issue we pray.



PLUS: Great multiplayer gaming, especially over LAN.

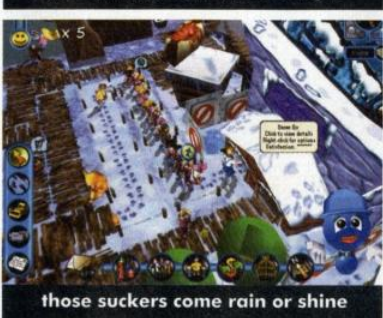
MINUS: Very poor enemy AI and a shallow single-player game.

VISUALS 86 SOUND 82 GAMEPLAY 69

OVERALL 74

It's third time unlucky for Novalogic.

REQUIRED: PII 400, 64Mb RAM, 3D card



Sim Coaster



CATEGORY: Theme Park Sim >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: EA >> PRICE: \$79.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

CAM SHEA's only in it for the simolians...

EA's latest foray into the world of amusement park management is more of a tweak from Sim Theme Park (STP) than a fully blown sequel. The cutesy vibe is definitely intact, so if you were hoping for a more serious take on the rollercoaster building genre, you'll be disappointed. On the other hand, no other game offers such a fun romp through the world of amusement parks, where you can build and even ride your own death-defying rollercoasters with ease.

HOLD ON TO YOUR LUNCH

At its core, Sim Coaster is built for mainstream appeal. There's nothing hardcore about this title. No particularly anally retentive stats to pay attention to, and no laws of physics to bother you. It's more about hopping into the game and having fun. That said, this version of the game is much more purposeful than the last. There are now only three zones. Instead of building your park in one zone to its logical end, then starting afresh in the next zone (something that was quite disheartening, because the differences between rides,

attractions and goals in different zones were mostly cosmetic), Sim Coaster intertwines the zones, encouraging you to jump between them. This is a fantastic change, and means you can grow all your parks at once, and have a wide variety of challenges on offer at any one time.

Various actions are now much more user friendly, with context sensitive options popping up all over the place. See a kid vandalising the park? You can now click on

him/her and select the option to call a security guard over. Previously, you would have to search the park for your security then convince them to head over there. Likewise, you can now click on vomit, click on rides etc and get them cleaned/fixed/upgraded easily. Even so, it's still a little fiddly adding new structures/employees to the park — a hotkey system would have been appreciated.

RIDE THE LEARNING CURVE

Your staff play a more central role in the game now. They can be trained in specific skills, and these skills come into play with many of the challenges.

After you've created your crazy rides, Sim Coaster actually lets you ride them in 3D!

For instance, to unlock a new section of the park you may need three golden tickets, as well as a gardener trained in landscaping and a gardener trained in landfill. This system is certainly more rewarding than before. Even so, to novices things may become more confusing than they need to be, as keeping track of all the activities,

challenges and staff aren't explained as well as they could be.

Sim Coaster's visuals are very much in the same style as Sim Theme Park, and chances are you'll either love them or hate them. Importantly, the graphics engine has been tightened considerably. You can now zoom a much greater distance out, which is a godsend as far as streamlining your park on the large scale goes.

Sim Coaster addresses many of the complaints from the last title. While there still isn't a huge amount of depth, the gameplay is definitely more compelling, and there are more options on offer. Sim Coaster is a solid title if you're after a fun game with a good learning curve, but Rollercoaster Tycoon still reigns supreme! <<<



PLUS: All the rides and challenges will keep you occupied.
MINUS: For casual gamers. Too similar to Theme Park.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
84	85	80
OVERALL		
78		

Wading through vomit and fairy floss has never been so much fun!



Phantasy Star Online



CATEGORY: RPG >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: Sega >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Are we gaming online yet? **DAN TOOSE** phantasises.

Online RPGs have been a huge success on PC, with games such as *Diablo*, *Ultima Online* and *Everquest* proving to be extremely popular with the gaming populace. Some would say it's the character building that is the big attraction, but all RPGs have that element to them, so it's clear that the real draw card for these games is the ability to play with others online. This of course has been a no-go zone for console gamers, but now with the Dreamcast's Internet connectivity, Sonic Team have taken the opportunity to take one of the most famous Sega RPG licenses and take it online, with *Phantasy Star Online*.

TOE TO TOE WITH THE ENEMY

Phantasy Star Online bears many similarities to the PC hit *Diablo*, with the option to play online or offline,

multiplayer or solo. The similarities become few and far between, but the basic options in terms of what characters you can play as, and the sense of progression is much like the original *Diablo*.

The story starts with the tried and trusted scenario of being in a strange place where you don't know quite what's caused a recent disaster, but you're about to find out. In a sci-fi/fantasy universe, a planet is dying, and its inhabitants believe they have found a new world to colonise, called Ragol. The first of two colony ships, *Pioneer 1*, lands on Ragol and sets up a base of operations. When *Pioneer 2* arrives seven years later, a massive explosion erupts on the surface of Ragol when the two colony ships go to make contact. You are a "Hunter" on board *Pioneer 2*, which is orbiting

Ragol, and it's up to you, and others like you, to go and find out what happened to *Pioneer 1* so your people can finally settle into their new home.

Like pretty much every RPG ever made (with odd exceptions like *Ultima IX*), *Phantasy Star Online* starts with character creation, and this is where we see the first real similarity to *Diablo* kicks in. While *Phantasy Star Online* has nine different character types to choose from, they are essentially broken up into three classes and races, and the three classes are

Hunter, Ranger, and Force. The Hunter is an expert with melee weapons, and is the kind of character that would be standing toe to toe with the enemy. Rangers are experts with ranged





what we call "having a slash"



someone call the RSPCA



Gigoboona
Attribute:Native



Hildebear
Attribute:Native



Gigoboona
Attribute:Native



Dragon
Attribute:Native



Dragon
Attribute:Native

hey, can we like, talk this over?

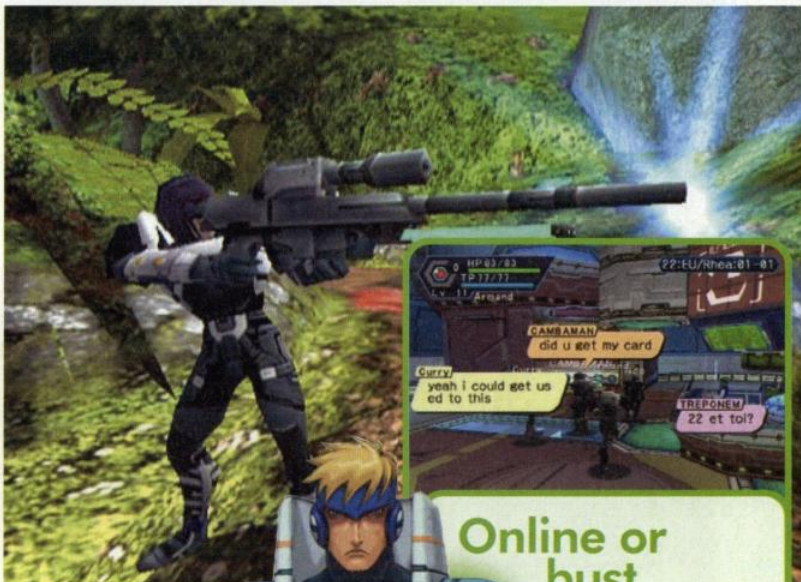


Grass Assassin
Attribute:A.Beast

make sure you probe every hole



"hey, reckon we can make a quiche out of that thing?"



Online or bust

>> The bottom line about online is that although Ozisoft aren't formally supporting online play here, you can still connect to servers overseas, and amazingly, the lag is not problematic. In fact, the only time you get any real lag is when new players join the game, which causes everything to pause for about half a minute. You can set up games to be password protected, so you can play with trusted friends, and ensure there are no interruptions. Getting into an online game is not as intuitive or simple as in games such as Diablo, but only the illiterate will have problems as the manual explains all. Just remember that online play is not supported here, so if you have problems connecting, it's tough luck, which is sure to upset many.

You'll enjoy the somewhat slapstick missions... like finding a scientist disguised as an oversized canary

weapons, and while they can use melee weapons, they seek to take out enemies from a distance. Finally, the Force character class is your basic mage, with weak combat skills, but great capabilities with techniques (which translates to magic). How is this similar to Diablo? Well, the three classes from Diablo were the Warrior, Rogue and Sorcerer, which play the same basic roles as the Hunter, Ranger, and Force respectively.

SHOW ME THE MESETA

After creating your character, you start your adventure in Pioneer 2, which is essentially the home base for the entire game. This visually impressive "city in a spaceship" comes complete with a set of shops, a hospital, a bank, and most importantly a Hunter's Guild, which provides you with missions to take on, so you can earn yourself Meseta (money). If you're a fan of cute

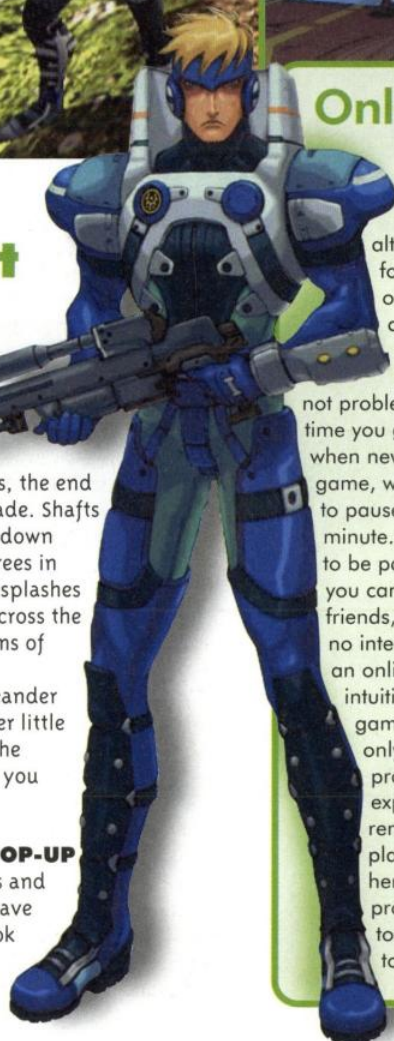
or slapstick, you'll enjoy the somewhat slapstick missions you will receive, like finding a scientist who has disguised himself as an oversized canary, or acquiring sweets from the caves beneath Pioneer 1 for some freak who can't handle their absence from his diet. Pioneer 1 also has a bridge, where the Principal (head honcho) resides. He gives you somewhat more open ended missions like "Find out what's going on down on the surface."

Whether it's just to start exploring, or to try a mission for the Hunter's Guild, you'll be taking a teleporter down to the surface of Ragol, and will promptly be blown away by the outstanding 3D environments. The first area of the game is set in the forests around Pioneer 1, and the trees, ground, streams and other things that make up your surroundings are all gorgeous. It's more a case of fantastic texturing than highly detailed models,

but regardless, the end result is A-grade. Shafts of light shine down through the trees in places, water splashes up when you cross the shallow streams of fresh water, butterflies meander past, and other little things make the world around you come to life.

MONSTER POP-UP

The characters and monsters all have that anime look about them, whether it be





"it's coming right for us!"



burn baby burn



what'd she do to him?!



Mr Potato Head RPG

>> In terms of physical appearance, PSO offers an unprecedented amount of personal taste compared to other RPGs. After choosing one of the nine character classes available, you can then worry about more important matters like, your character's hair style, and of course, what colour it is. The most impressive feature here in terms of adjusting your appearance is the ability to set your character's proportions. So you can make them solid, skinny, tall, short, or just big boned. In the game, your character will also be seen with whatever weapon you equip for them.



the cuddly cuteness of the yellow birds inhabiting the forests, or the sleek sharp features of the "grass assassins" of the caves, which look like a mutant preying mantis. Some attacks by various weapons or creatures leave transparent trails of coloured lighting, but don't expect much in terms of fast paced action. This brings us a real difference between Diablo and Phantasy Star Online, and that's the game speed. In Diablo creatures can swarm all over you in an instant, but Phantasy Star Online plays at a much crasier pace, where the only way you can get surrounded is if you are too dim witted to pay attention to the map/radar, or you get really unlucky and have all the monsters spawn around you.

It may be a bit of a sore spot for some, but monsters basically fall out of the sky, or pop up out of the ground, seemingly out of nowhere. In gameplay terms this is fine, but when the game is so visually spectacular, it could do without things like this to remind us that we're just playing a video game.

Monsters also can't leave the room/area they appear in, which does give you a means of retreating, but also seems a bit ridiculous, and takes a large element of risk from the game.

Something that is really important with any real time RPG or strategy game is the interface, and PSO is set up quite nicely. When you hit the start button to bring up your inventory screen, you can still move around with the analogue pad if you need to equip things on the run. Navigating the menus is done with the d-pad, and from here you can easily manage your inventory, equip items, and customise your controller so your favourite actions and techniques are at your disposal.

Of course, character development is the truly addictive quality for RPGs, and PSO allows you to develop your character by earning experience and thus gaining power through level advancement, by collecting more powerful items and equipment, and also by developing your "MAG". MAGs are little robotic critters that float along behind you, and can be

Big and Bossy

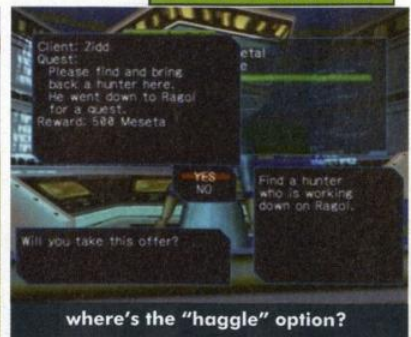
>> Phantasy Star Online is one of those RPGs that presents you with boss monsters that are physically imposing enough to make you feel you're really up against it. The first boss, a dragon, could squash you by treading on you (not that I let it have a go), and despite its great size, it is still fantastically detailed and well animated. It's a shame there are only four real bosses to carve up, because they're top notch. They use different forms and attacks, making them interesting, rather than just plain tough.



developed by feeding them items. Different items improve them in different ways, and since your MAG gives you stat bonuses, you basically choose to give it items that help your stats as you see fit.

THE REAL WEAKNESS

Thus far it all sounds very peachy doesn't it? Well, Phantasy Star Online definitely has some room for improvement. The music is quite well composed, but with huge amounts of time being spent in the same level, you'll be wishing that the score was a little more diverse, and that the moments where the music doesn't



where's the "haggle" option?



The Force is strong in this one



Once a monster dies, anyone can **claim the item it drops** which leads to people taking stuff they don't deserve

sound like generic video game MIDI music were more prolific. The sound effects are adequate, but in a game that looks so nice, it basically highlights that the sound is not up to the same standard. There's no speech, but the reasons for that are obvious, as the game encourages players to communicate via text, and even incorporates a translation feature of common phrases so gamers from different countries can work together. Headaches are liable to occur when it comes to trading items in a game with folks you don't fully trust, as there is no secure means of doing so. You simply drop stuff on the ground and hope the person you wanted to

give it to gets it. This also goes for finding items in gameplay, as once a monster dies, anyone can run up and claim the item it drops, which leads to people taking stuff they really don't deserve. One good thing is that higher level characters can help out low level characters by taking them along to fight tougher monsters, because any character that hits a monster will get experience for it.

!!! Don't blame Ozisoft for the lack of a local server. More support first needs to come from Sega of Japan.

The real weakness for Phantasy Star Online is the lack of an involving plot, which makes the single player experience quite lacklustre once you realise you're just going to be

ploughing through rooms of monsters on your own in the hope you find better items. This is much more fun when played with others, and as a result, if you're unable to connect to the Internet, you should seriously consider if it's really worth your while to splash out on a game that isn't really designed for you.

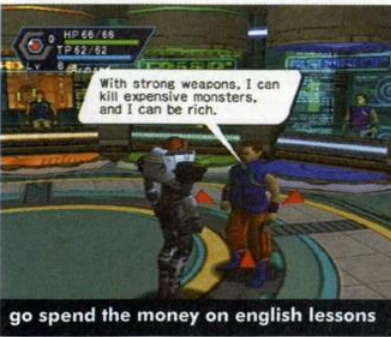
In the end, Phantasy Star Online has achieved a rather ambitious goal of bringing online RPGs to consoles, and has succeeded admirably. The lack of lag during play is an excellent achievement, although the lack of speed in gameplay, and the ease at which you can avoid danger will make the experience a little hollow for RPG experts. A more involving plot, with some serious puzzles, and level design that breaks away from the "rooms connected by corridors" feel would have added that little bit extra needed to make this a game a true classic. For raw character progression and replay value though, the online side of things ensures that Phantasy Star Online is still a very worthy addition to any Dreamcast library. <<<



PLUS: No obvious lag problems. Excellent visuals.
MINUS: Weak story. Boring for solo play.



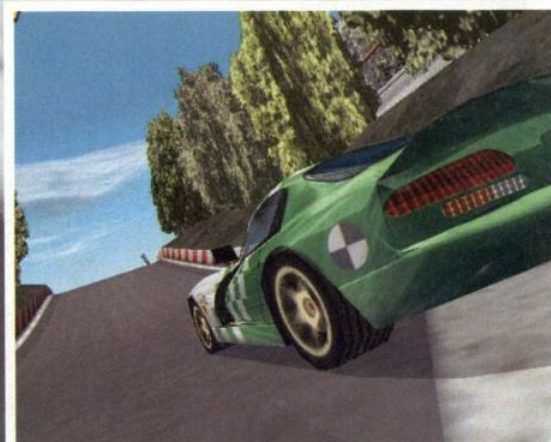
Addictive online play, but totally lacking in story or plot.



go spend the money on english lessons



you want to get close and feel this...?



Vanishing Point



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

FRANK DRY tries to get in as much Dreamcast as he can before it vanishes...

Facclaim have certainly been pumping out the racing games lately. Top Gear Daredevil on PS2, Ducati World on PSone and now Vanishing Point on PSone, but in this case on Dreamcast. Of course, we'll put any memories of the South Park rally game far, far behind us. Ugh.

The Dreamcast has its fair share of top-notch racing games at the moment too, so Vanishing Point immediately has quite a bit of competition in the form of F355 Ferrari Challenge, Daytona USA 2001, Sega GT and Le Mans 24 Hours. Certainly nothing to sniff at. So does Vanishing Point offer enough on its bones to make it a worthwhile purchase in comparison with all these other top notch racing games?

many more. MANY more. You can also unlock bonus tracks, bonus racing modes (like "aggressive traffic" mode) and a CWG Rally mode. You may have heard of the inclusion of a Stunt mode in Vanishing Point, and what is great about this, is that it's one of the things you don't have to unlock. You can start enjoying this from the very start.

maximum points possible. The higher your total points, the more trick stages you unlock, so you'll be spending a lot of time figuring out the best way to get maximum air, or how to get the fastest handbrake turn after a long jump, just so you can find out what crazy trick you'll be up against next.

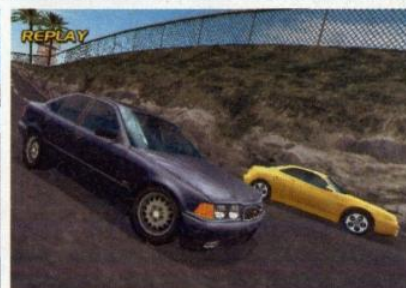
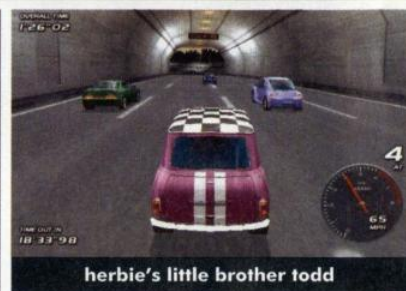
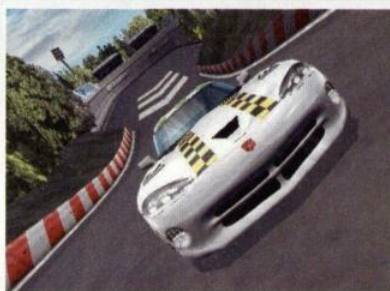
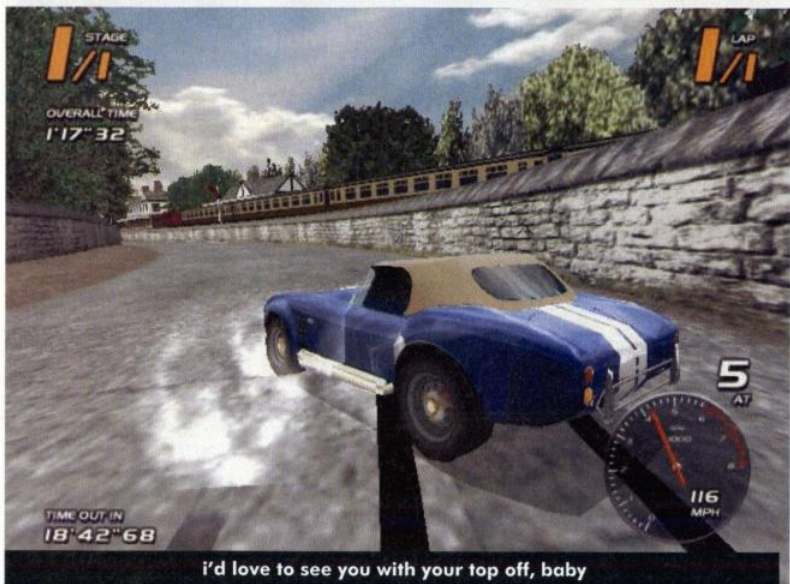
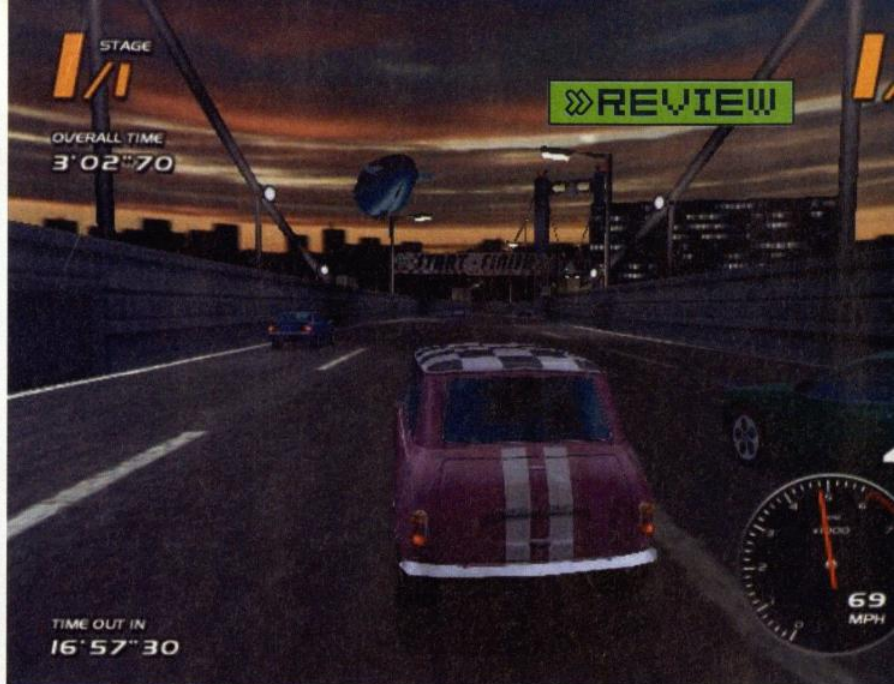
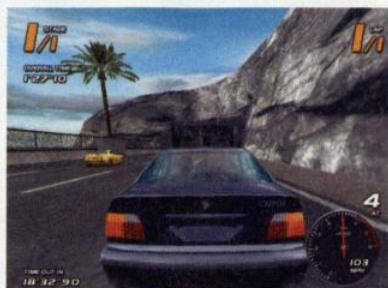
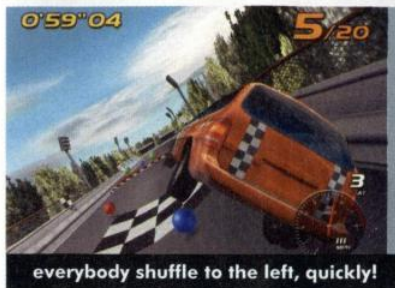
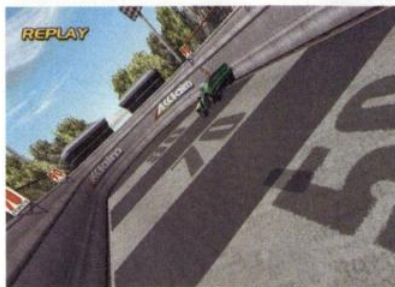
Playing the stunt mode requires you to perform some difficult jumps, slalom racing and more with some increasingly difficult challenges, like popping balloons as you fly over a jump. Most of us who've played through the standard tournament and time trial modes will no doubt head straight into stunt mode to experience something a little different to the standard racing fare. Whilst the requirements of each trick aren't exactly death-defying, it's still fun attempting to perfect each trick to earn the

In Tournament mode, it's fairly typical checkpoint racing, the most noticeable difference being that the other cars on the track are actually more like traffic than anything else. The aim is usually to beat the best time around certain tracks, so you're not exactly racing against the other cars on the track, as much as you are trying to better their lap times. There are certain cars that have a blinking marker above them, meaning that they are racing more competitively than the other cars, and will naturally be more aggressive towards you when you're

CHECKPOINT!

Vanishing Point almost edges into Gran Turismo territory here with a huge array of stuff you can unlock through persistence. There are heaps of licensed vehicles to drive around in from Ford to BMW, Alfa Romeo, Aston Martin and





Vanishing Point almost edges into Gran Turismo territory here with a **huge array of stuff** you can unlock through persistence.

jostling for a good position. The AI of the other cars is generally pretty good, and it won't be all that rare to see two cars up ahead have a bit of a push and shove that might result in one car hurtling into a wall. Nice.

ONLINE, SET, GO

Coming first in the Tournament rounds is what will unlock you more tracks (unlike other racing games, you can't select all the tracks in the game when you try out time trial mode — only the tracks you've "won" will appear in the menu). So Vanishing Point really makes you work for your play. Which is a good thing, because the racing in the game never really leaves you breathless... it's more of a mildly entertaining racing game, and if there weren't plenty of incentives (which there are) it could tire fairly quickly.

There is also an internet option in Vanishing Point that allows you to

upload your times and a personal profile to a master server. From there you can also download other people's times and try to beat them, as well as leaving your email address so you can taunt each other with challenges. Acclaim even hint at tournaments which will take place which could win you real life prizes, so keep an eye on this one. What is cool is that you will get ranked amongst all the other players, so you can see just how good you are.

Once you're sick of racing on your own, there's also a two-player split screen which is pretty good fun. There's even a few variations on the stunt mode here for the two of you to hurl around in, including a chicken mode that forces you to race each other head on.

The game runs at a really consistent frame-rate, and it's smooth all the way. The cars look pretty good and the

environments are detailed, but they're nothing on Le Mans or F355 Ferrari Challenge. The car handling is also pretty standard stuff... you'll never be throwing your controller in frustration which is certainly a plus, but then, you'll never really enter the zone and feel at one with your racing experience either. You can tune your cars, but it's not exactly in-depth, and the game never really attempts to be much more than an arcade-like racing experience. Still, it's good enough to want to use a wheel with.

Vanishing Point is a tough pickle. It doesn't offer enough thrills to best some of the other racing games for Dreamcast, but it's certainly not a bad or flawed game. You will have lots of fun with this title, so if Ferrari is too serious and Le Mans too hardcore, then Vanishing Point just might be your cup of tea. <<<

!!! You can win a copy of Vanishing Point for PSone this issue. Just turn to page 29.



PLUS: Varied gameplay, lots to unlock.

MINUS: It never really gets your blood pumping.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

85 84 79

OVERALL

79

Don't leave me Mr. Dreamcast! *sob*



Fear Effect 2: Retro Helix

CATEGORY: Sexy Girls in Catsuits >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Eidos >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

GEORGE SOROPOS sometimes wishes he was a woman...

Unlike films, game sequels really have to be better than their predecessors as their chances of ruining their developer's reputation is much higher. People soon forget seeing a bad movie, they mostly don't even know or care who the director was anyway. But a disappointing game will leave a bad smell hanging around for quite some time. Thankfully, Fear Effect 2 is much better than the original and could actually be one of the last great games released for the little ol' PSX.

SKINNY DIPPING IN THE GENE POOL

Fear Effect 2 is a "prequel" to Fear Effect, but thankfully there are no Gungans or midichlorians, just one little surprise. This time Eidos decided that two babes would be better than one and Hana is joined by her gal pal,

Rain, in the greatest team up since the Mormon Tabernacle Choir combined with Hi-5 to win the WWF tag team championship three years ago.

This new partnership is more than it first seems however. The girls look great in their sexy skin-tight catsuits but what they really like to wear most of all is each other. Come again? Let's just say the Hana and Rain spend a lot of time hanging out with Batman and Robin in a certain part of town known for its broadminded attitudes and brisk sales in lubricants. Is this a cynical marketing ploy or a plea to the world for tolerance and equality? Well, let's think for a moment. Do boys like to watch sexy girls doing it? Do boys have a great understanding and sensitivity to the problems inherent in living a lesbian lifestyle? I guess that answers our question.

Fear 2 takes us back into the lives of our favourite mercenaries Hana, Royce and Jakob some time before the events of the first game. The plot is sensationally original, involving some scientists mucking about with human genes to produce super powerful mutations, one of which could be very closely related to one of our heroines. I bet you didn't know this but the games industry is actually rationed to one new idea every twelve months. Every year at E3, the games industry gets together and auctions off the rights to that year's new idea. One lucky company gets to take it home, the rest have to make do with crazy scientists and their genetic Meccano sets. But we digress.

Fear 2's design is much more flowing and involving than the original game,

which placed the player in some annoying situations that the game's interface just wasn't good at coping with. FE2 has the same Resident Evil style controls as before but the design of the levels and placement of enemies have been thought out more carefully.

Gameplay still revolves around the expected treasure hunt format: There's a locked door, where's the key? Oh there's the key! Now where's the security pass? Oh there's the security pass! Now where's the... etc.

SLIDING WALLS OF DEATH

Being mercenaries our two babes are not averse to a good firefight and the game provides them with plenty of firepower to sate their appetites. Right from the beginning of the story, Rain

!!! Eidos have an awesome PS2 title on the way called Project Eden. Not one to miss. Full review real soon!



gee, won't that tomato sauce wash off?



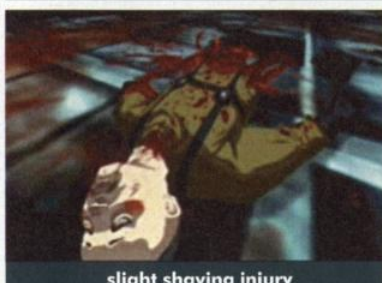
yellow, not the greatest camouflage



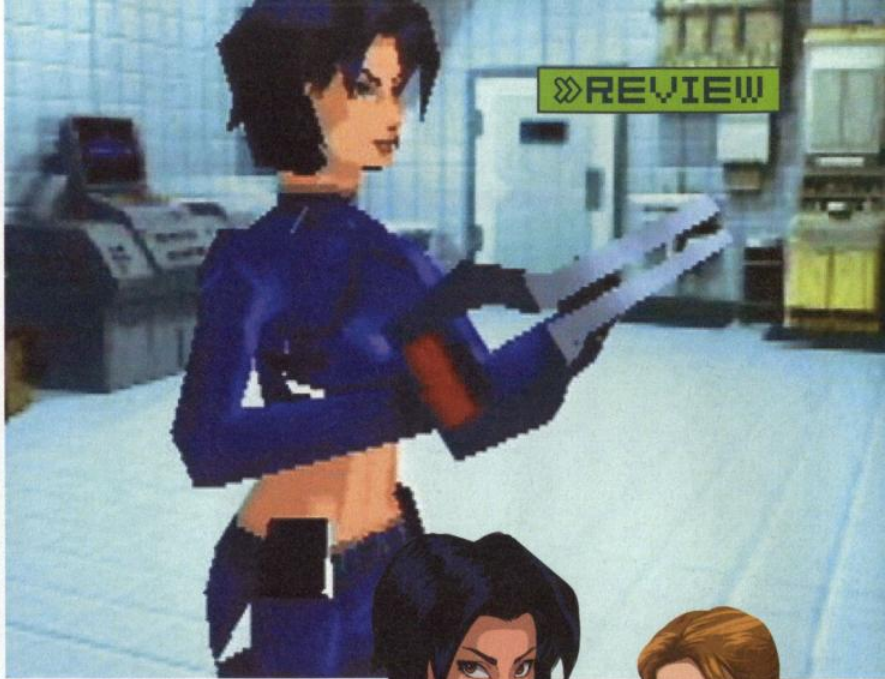
here comes the rain again



i'm not your type!



slight shaving injury



if i said you had a nice body...



The girls look great in their sexy skin-tight catsuits but **what they really like to wear is each other.**

and Hana are equipped with dual pistols, a shotgun and an assault rifle, though where they keep them under their skintight armoured leotards is anyone's guess.

Ammo for the shotgun is pretty hard to find but dead enemies provide plenty for the other weapons. Speaking of enemies, there are quite a few! They range from simple automated guard robots to highly skilled fellow mercenaries and of course the occasional genetic monstrosity. They usually have to be faced down in very cramped locations where movement is limited, except for the big boss dudes, and the option to run away isn't found as often as you'd like!

Puzzles are also an integral part of this genre and FE 2 has more than its fair share. Unlike some other titles in the genre though, the brainteasers in FE2 are

logical and tricky while not being annoying. It's a fine line between the two and our two girlies manage to walk it quite well.

You'll be amazed at the bizarre architectural features of some of these places. Can you imagine the conversations these villain types must have when they get together for coffee? "Yes, we're very pleased with what we've done with the living room. We put the sliding walls of death over next to the fireplace, very handy for the winter months. The squirting acid jet ensemble from IKEA works well with the colour of the carpet but we just don't know where to put it yet, perhaps at the end of the hallway?"



The backgrounds are not simply static pictures but contain animated elements like water, smoke and ceiling fans that help to give a more atmospheric touch to the game. Like the original title all the cutscenes and story elements are portrayed within the game engine rather than with CGI, which helps to draw the player into the story, and the atmospheric audio creates the right mood. Fear Effect 2 is one of those games to play at night with all the lights out!

If you're one of the many Aussie gamers out there bucking the world trend to update your PSone, Fear Effect 2 will make you feel as though you made the right decision. <<<

PLUS: Well paced gameplay, and well integrated story.

MINUS: All the usual clichés in the design.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

93 85 90

OVERALL

90

It's great fun, and a good challenge.



Duke Nukem: Land of the Babes

»PSone

CATEGORY: Action >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Take 2 >> PRICE: \$69.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Join **JAMES COTTEE** in a disturbing look at the future...

Duke's back. Champion of America's strip clubs, xenocidal butcher of countless alien species, and the sole force behind the resurgence of pink muscle shirts. Duke, the great white hope, who can consume his entire body weight in horse testosterone every day, still leaving enough appetite for carnage and chicks. Land of the Babes, originally announced as Time to Kill 2: Planet of the Babes, sees Duke return to his time travelling ways. Having shot and rooted everything in the past, he now casts his Ray Bans to the distant future.

It seems that a few centuries down the track aliens have exterminated the entire male population of the planet. Only women remain, and natural selection has pared their number down to an elite babe fighting force, the United Babe Resistance. Despite their

plucky attitude, they realise that mere women can't save the world on their own. It's a man's job, so they set their dizzy little heads to building a time machine to extract the Earth's greatest hero from the past: Duke.

SEX MISSION

Why does Duke help in their plight? He's got plenty of hookers and hardcore pron in his own time zone. Well, aside from appealing to his paternal instincts, they make him an offer he can't refuse. If he kills off all the xenomorphs, he gets to re-populate the Earth. One million babes, and only one Duke. What would you do?

Like Time to Kill, Land of the Babes fits into the 3rd person action-adventure mold. Duke is visible when interacting with his environment at all times, a necessity considering the

amount of ladders and overhead bars and other things Duke must use with precision. It's a bit like Tomb Raider, especially in regards to the grotesquely proportioned lead character.

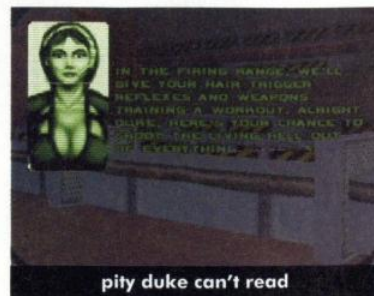
Duke has a decent spread of weapons, from his dainty gold-plated Desert Eagle to lasers and freeze rays and BFGs, but he doesn't get much of a chance to use them. Granted, there are rooms full of enemies, but they alternate with rooms full of puzzles. Rooms where you push crates, flip switches, pull crates, solve obtuse puzzles, climb crates, and bang your crew cut against the wall.

120 DAYS OF NUKEM

You'll notice that there isn't even a single button to press to change weapons, instead you have to press Select and go through a couple of

menus. Your electronic communication with the resistance looks a little bit like the Codec in MGS, though the height of the viewscreen has been extended so that any given resistance member's face and breasts are visible simultaneously.

The graphics engine is solid, if ugly. It's lucky that Duke is a square jawed hero who presumably eats three square





Duke does it from behind

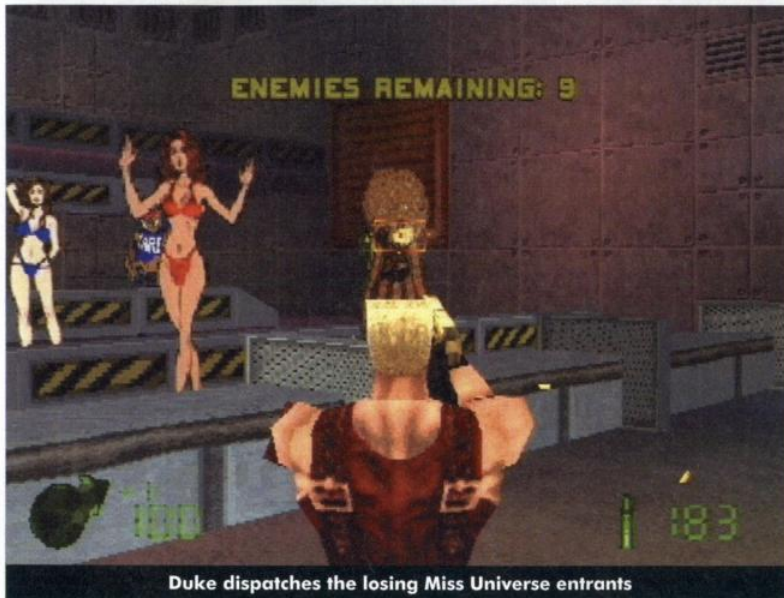


"excuse me, which way is Oxford Street?"

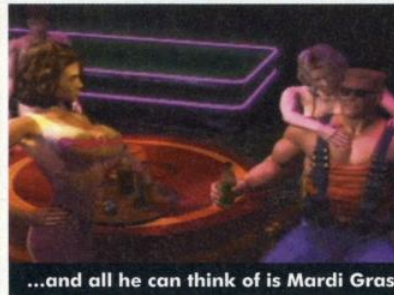


One Duke is Enough

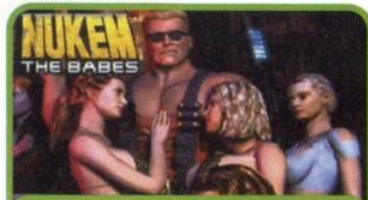
>> The Dukematch option returns, assuming two players wish to "duke it out" simultaneously. This is a very sorry subroutine, not a patch on the head-to-head modes in Medal of Honor or Syphon Filter 2. The two players only get a quarter of the screen each, with the rest of the space consumed with stats. If the objective of this was to free up processing power and make the mode look decent, then they failed; Dukematch is like a firefight in a mud-filled telephone booth.



Duke dispatches the losing Miss Universe entrants



...and all he can think of is Mardi Gras



Phone Sex

>> Duke Nukem is now famous for his Bruce Campbell-esque one-liners, and Land of the Babes continues this fine tradition. Telephones scattered throughout the game even grant him some dialogue. His trans-Atlantic relationship continues, "Not now Lara, I'm kinda busy. You'll have to use your own fingers" and he even has his own take on the "Wassup" phenomenon: "Just kickin' some ass, drinkin' a brew." Of course, this also shows how horribly delayed the game is. To be truly contemporary he should have a line that says "How are you gentlemen!! All your base are belong to us!!"

» If he kills off all the xenomorphs, **he gets to re-populate the Earth.** One million babes, and only one Duke. What would you do?

meals a day, for whenever he's squaring off against his foes, or just facing a mental block (or crate), there's a certain chunkiness to his in-game avatar. Bridging scenes are visualised in the regular game engine, and while it's nothing to write home about, at least there doesn't seem to be any slowdown.

Real problems begin to emerge when Duke goes swimming. Most of the time this is in a vast tub of molasses, or at least maple syrup, in a darkened room no bigger than a water closet. As always you have to navigate an underwater obstacle course, the challenge being to work out where you are going and what you are doing. After punishing yourself for an

extended period, the relief of beating such a stage is palpable.

Despite the lack of originality and the often ham-fisted controls, perhaps the most offensive thing about Land of the Babes is the sexism. Not to sound all Politically Correct, but from their jigging, double G cups backwards Duke's commando concubines don't offer very positive role models to the ever-growing female gaming demographic. And then there's the question of how Duke is to score with them at all—considering the amount of steroids he injects, his prong must surely have shriveled to the size of a worm. Now what the hell has happened to Duke Nukem Forever on the PC? <<



PLUS: Babes, crates, and Duke cracking wise.

MINUS: Shaky graphics & presentation, 2 player is a joke.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

70 84 60

OVERALL

67

Mediocre action fare. A disgrace to the Dukem name.



Bart's "special" move



Krusty plays real rusty



Homer takes it like a man



don't push me, cos I'm close to the edge. I'm trying not to lose my head, a huh huh huh ha

Simpsons Wrestling

CATEGORY: Fighting >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: EA >> PRICE: \$59.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

CAM SHEA gets medieval on this game's ass...



Evil manifests itself in many forms. Sometimes it's a tall dude living in a castle with a pointy moustache and sweeping black cloak. At other times it's two clueless gits from Utah knocking on your door. This time, however, evil has arrived in a much more sinister guise. Unlike the first example, it comes without the dapper dress sense (in fact you might say it's devoid of any sense in any sense), and unlike the second example it can't be punched in the face. This is an evil known as The Simpsons Wrestling, and no sir, we won't stand for it.

THE MOTHER OF ALL CASH-INS
Despite the hallowed Simpsons name gracing the title, it would largely be a mistake to believe that this "game" and the finest program ever to grace the idiot box are somehow related. Nope, this product is entirely about pimping The Simpsons for cash, with no regard to its deserved status as cultural icon.

You're probably wondering why a wrestling game? Well it's not hard to unravel the thought processes behind the decision. Simply ask yourself what genre of game is phenomenally popular these days? That's right - wrestling.

Somehow this fact overshadowed any concern regarding the compatibility of the license in question.

Not only is The Simpsons Wrestling an incredibly bad game, but there is no explanation given whatsoever. Not even a "Springfield Amateur Wrestling Tournament" or something similarly lame - it's just straight into the action. The game doesn't even have an intro! Surely, one of the advantages of a licensed product would be access to a host of cool art and FMV? Would it be that hard to give us some full screen Simpsons cut scenes? Or even the intro to the show as the intro to the game? Apparently it would. The Simpsons Wrestling has no storyline, no explanation of controls, no intro, no cool artwork, nothing. Even the loading screen is a poor animation of Itchy and Scratchy that would be at home as an animated gif on a fan site.

ONE BIG MASH FEST

Once you get into the game itself, you'll discover that its gameplay hasn't been planned, and skill is practically forbidden. There's no accuracy in attacks, and the game quickly degrades to a button mashing

fest. There really is no substance here, and Simpsons fans will positively cringe when it comes to the "zany" special attacks. Worse yet, it's quite disturbing seeing Homer beating up Marge. It just wouldn't happen! There are allegedly 22 characters in the game altogether. We honestly wouldn't know, as our television took its own life an hour into the game.

The Simpsons Wrestling looks and plays like a bad SNES game. Since it's around nine years too late, we'll pay tribute to the bad licensed games from the 16 bit era and give this game what it deserves - 16%. To the developers, Big Ape Productions, if you're going to make games like this, for God's sake change your name! The pickings are just a little too easy - YA BIG APES!

The Simpsons Wrestling is nothing more than a knee jerk reaction to wrestling's current popularity, executed in the most uninspired and lacklustre fashion. Fox have dumbed down the cleverest show on television yet again. To use Homer parlance: "Yeah, Eliot, that game sure did suck last night. It just plain sucked! I've seen games suck before, but that was the suckiest bunch of suck that ever sucked." <<<



PLUS: There is no plus.

MINUS: As Simpsons fans we feel violated.

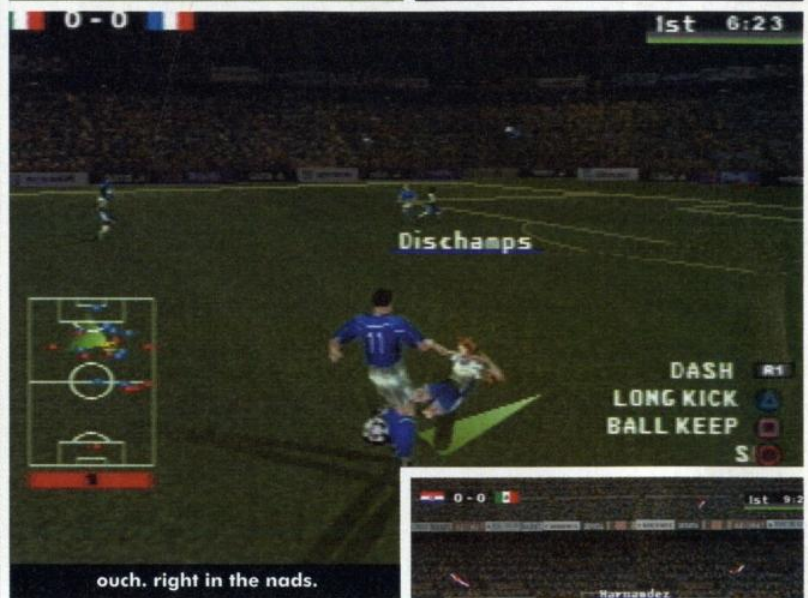
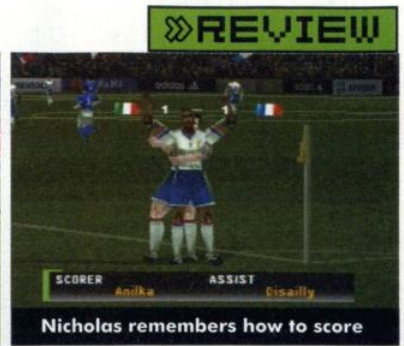
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

40 60 10

OVERALL

16

As Comic Book Guy would say: "Worst game ever".



Liberogrande 2

CATEGORY: Soccer Simulator >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Sony >> PRICE: \$69.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

GEORGE SOROPOS chooses the head over the foot.



For the last four years or so me-too Soccer games have been swarming out of European production houses faster than Terry Venables can pack his bags. They turn up everywhere from PR shots with music celebrities to coasters in pubs. We've gotten so many of the damn things over the years we've been able to build a life sized replica of the Palace of Versailles in the office toilet out of them, complete with French Maids in skimpy outfits. So we weren't really prepared for a Soccer game like this, one that actually does something different.

HOT SNAGS

Liberogrande is French for "My sausages are on fire". An obvious allusion to the subtle nuances of the modern game. And nuances this game has aplenty. The key difference between Liberogrande and other soccer titles is the simple fact that it simulates the experience of actually playing the game rather than just being a game based on the rules of Soccer. It's the first such game we've ever played that reminded us of playing the sport for real, those of us that have played the sport for real anyway.

So what's the big deal? Rather than play as the entire team, swapping over to whomever is closest to the ball, Liberogrande puts you in the shoes of just one player, in whatever position you desire, and makes the team play around you just as in real life!

It might sound dull, but it's not. If you like, you can set your teammates to a semi-auto mode of control and be able to tell them when to pass it to you, when to take a shot and when to go in for a tackle. That way you still have some degree of control over the game as well as enjoying it all from the one perspective. It's a very different experience hanging out in the forward position while your opponent has the ball near your goal. You can't just switch to a defender as you would in any other Soccer title you have to patiently wait in position, jostling any markers out of your way until the ball comes forward again, magic!

Libero gives the player a choice of three different championships and the usual exhibition match, with sadly no exhibitionists. Two of the championships put your team of choice against 32 opponents while the local league has you competing against

eight. You can also create your own player character, a good thing seeing as how you're stuck with him for a while.

RUNNING SIDWAYS

With all these positive comments you're probably wondering why Libero didn't score more highly. It's simply because the game lacks polish. The graphics aren't up to the standards that gamers expect these days though they're adequate for the job, the overall presentation is rather amateurish in fact, with ugly menus making things worse. Control of your player is also a bit weird at times with the game getting confused as to whether you're running sideways or forwards, but only in terms of the animations it shows not the actual movement of the player character.

Personally we find the simulation aspects of the game engrossing enough to be able to overlook these flaws though. If you've ever played Soccer in the real world then we think you'll get a kick out of this. And we'd also like to thank Dr. Sporon's guide to Renaissance era puns for that joke. <<<

SUPPORTS: Dual Shock (vibration only), Memory Card, Extra Large Cup Holder



PLUS: The world's only unique Soccer game!

MINUS: Visually, the game is pretty ugly on the whole.

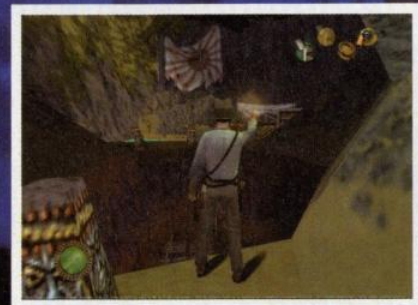
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

70 75 80

OVERALL

75

Get past the flaws and Liberogrande 2 is a brand new experience.



Indiana Jones & the Infernal Machine

» N64

CATEGORY: Action >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: LucasArts >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >> SUPPORTS: Expansion Pak >>

ELIOT FISH just wishes they would hurry up with Indy 4...

The Infernal Machine made a rather shaky appearance on the PC last year, and as we "Jonesed" our way through the game, it was mentioned a few times that it appeared to be much more a console game than a game for the PC. Now, finally, the same game has made its console debut on the N64, and in a strange way, found its way home. Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine is an action adventure that successfully stands tall amongst the N64 games library.

WHIP IT, WHIP IT GOOD

Indy, the \$50 million dollar per-movie earning archaeologist, has been drawn into a suitably mystical plot involving temples in the snow, dark caves full of snakes and all that other great stuff that was so identifiably Indy before it

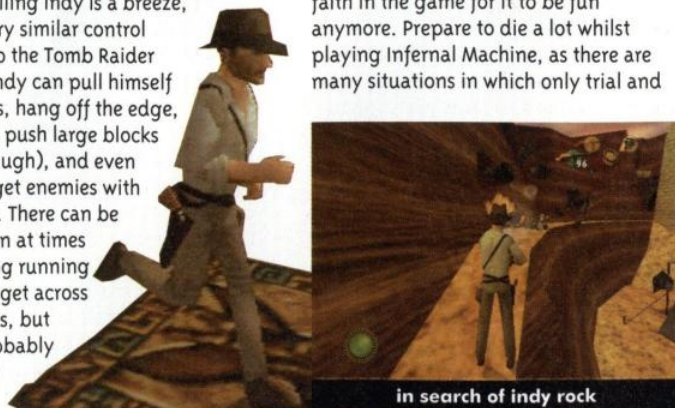
was plundered by Lara Croft and her pair of... uzis. The action takes place in the third-person, and there's plenty of opportunities to whip, shoot, leap, paddle, drive and even zippo your way to victory. Yes, Indiana can use his pocket zippo lighter to illuminate dark passageways, although we never see him get out the packet of Marlboros he so obviously has tucked away in his utility belt.

Utilising the memory expansion pak, Infernal Machine looks fabulously crisp, with huge environments and some nice character animation. Visually, this is top stuff for the Nintendo 64 and not too far removed from its PC ancestor. The N64 version even has the same speech, music and cutscenes making it an impressive port. The voice of Indiana Jones, whilst not Harrison Ford (goddamnit), is

supplied by the same actor who was Indy's voice in the CD-Rom release of Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis, the old LucasArts point and click adventure game. So at least there's some kind of consistency there.

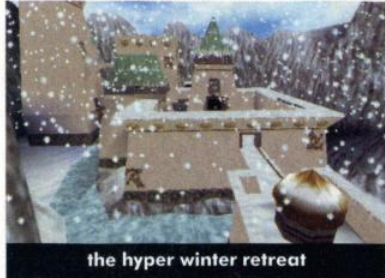
Controlling Indy is a breeze, with a very similar control scheme to the Tomb Raider games. Indy can pull himself up ledges, hang off the edge, drag and push large blocks of stone (ugh), and even auto-target enemies with his pistol. There can be frustration at times with doing running jumps to get across wide gaps, but that's probably got more to do

with the level design than the actual controls. Sometimes there just isn't quite enough room to get a comfortable view of where the edge of the ledge is that you have to jump from. There are also simply far too many of these leaps of faith in the game for it to be fun anymore. Prepare to die a lot whilst playing Infernal Machine, as there are many situations in which only trial and





indie does the two-step



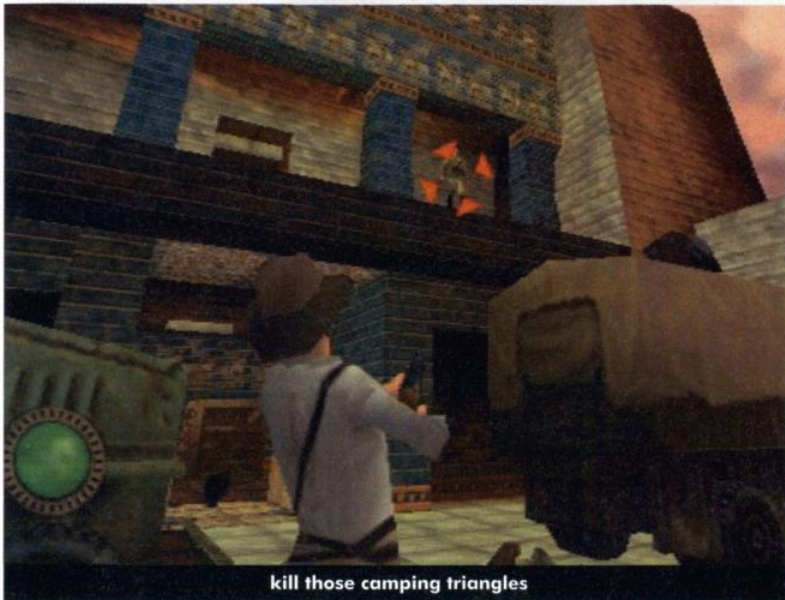
the hyper winter retreat



Harrison in the Ford



stop staring at my polygons, jones



kill those camping triangles



indie goes hunting for dinner



whip it, whip it good

There just isn't any time to get bored in this game. **Frustrated, yes, but bored, no.**

error will help you solve your dilemma. The save function allows you to save anywhere you are, although restarting that saved game will spawn you at the beginning of the area – not the actual spot you were standing in when you saved, which is another annoying fault.

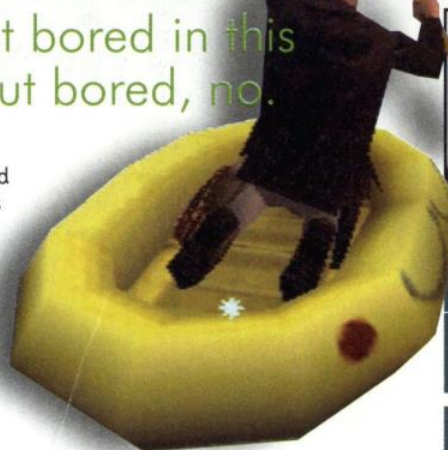
GHOST IN THE MACHINE

The kind of gameplay in *Infernal Machine* is not all that taxing. There are plenty of puzzles, but a lot of the time it's simply a case of collecting an item and then taking that item to a specific location and using it. The firefights you get into can be quite entertaining, and Indiana can pick up and carry a plethora of weapons (even a bazooka!), so it can actually get fairly action-packed at times. The enemy AI is fairly non-existent, but that won't trouble you too much as you can get shot to pieces fairly quickly. They won't move

!!! Indiana Jones 4 is still on the cards, with M. Night Shyamalan being one of the rumoured script writers.

much, but you'll need to take cover and dispatch the various evil Soviet soldiers in the game with a fair degree of accuracy and care. Once dispatched, you can wander over and rob them of their weapons and ammo too.

What's great about *Infernal Machine* is the variety of stuff you actually get to do – one section requires you to paddle down an icy river in a raft that keeps popping a leak. There's also a section that involves mine-cart riding, in that true tradition of Nintendo games! There just isn't any time to get bored in this game. Frustrated, yes, but bored, no. There is also a sense of adventure here, probably magnified by the presence of Indy himself and the familiar theme tune, even though there isn't any great need for an adventurer's intuition or brain-power. What we have here is the perfect



PLUS: Looks great, but it sounds even better.

MINUS: A mixed bag in terms of gameplay. Annoying bits.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

89 88 79

OVERALL

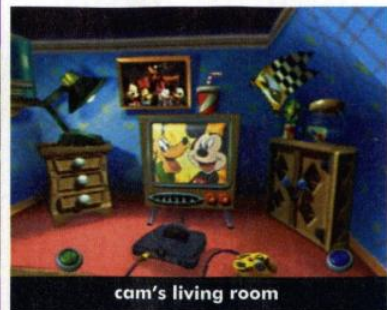
84

Tomb Raider substitute for the N64. In fact, *Tomb Raider* probably wouldn't have been this interesting. Factor 5 have done a fabulous job with correcting many of the PC version's faults, and they've certainly ironed out many of the glitches and bugs that resulted in many a slammed keyboard. Whilst *Infernal Machine* isn't the greatest third-person action adventure, it's certainly a nice one to add to your N64 collection. If you can brave a lot of the flaws, there's a satisfying experience to be had with Dr. Jones. <<

Definitely an adventure to own. Indy is still cool.



"hey, is it true that Minnie is f**king goofy?"



cam's living room



mickey gets tricky



Mickey's Speedway USA



CATEGORY: Kart Racing >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: Nintendo >> PRICE: \$TBA >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

CAM SHEA thinks Disney is evil, so this game was terrifying



It's hard to try and be upset about Mickey's Speedway USA. It's not a bad game by any means, it's just that we've come to expect so much more from Rare. What we've been presented with here is a competent, often fun game that simply doesn't do anything new, has no real bells and whistles, and doesn't really step outside the bounds of license game protocol. But let's go through the motions anyway.

USA USA USA!

Mickey's Speedway USA has the usual array of options — a number of championships of steadily increasing difficulty, a range of power-ups ripped straight from Mario Kart 64, decent powersliding mechanics, and a solid game engine with a fantastic sense of speed. The storyline, incidentally, sees Goofy's diamond necklace getting stolen. This explains why Mickey and friends then proceed to drive around and around in circles. Because driving in circles is the best way to chase thieves.

You can choose to race as either Dongie Duck, Lackadaisical Duck, Goofball, Rickey Rouse, Muttie Mouse,

or Pete the Pimp (note: names changed to protect identity), each with their own range of abilities. The courses in Mickey's Speedway are mostly pretty cool, with the usual assortment of Jungle, Castle, Dockyards, Ice and Desert environments. Mickey's Speedway is certainly one of the fastest and smoothest racing games on the N64 — the frame rate is high and the impression of speed impressive. This speed comes at a price, however. In order to achieve it, courses have been designed around hiding the track ahead. Thus, a fair portion of the time, you're rocketing through sections of track comprised of constant turns. This in itself isn't too much of a problem, but the camera mechanics hang back a bit too much, delaying vision by a small but significant amount of time.

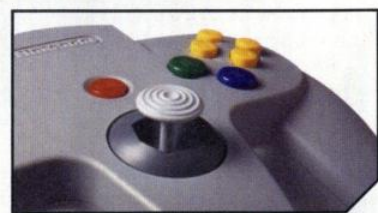
The course design takes a decided turn for the worse later on in the game, however, as undesirable elements creep into the game. You know the score — obstacles littering the track for no reason, or a winding platform over water. These do little but decrease the player's satisfaction with the game, especially since they prove to be no

challenge to your AI opponents. We'd expect more from Rare than to stoop to such cheap and artificial methods to increase the "difficulty".

TAKING THE MICKEY

Mickey's multiplayer mode was almost the game's saving grace, and indeed there's some solid four player gaming to be had. Unfortunately, the lacklustre powerups sour the fun factor significantly — especially damaging the Battle Mode rip-off. Even so, this is the fastest and smoothest four-player splitscreen racing on the system.

Mickey's Speedway USA is undoubtedly aimed at a young audience, but even for kids we see no real reason to recommend it over Diddy Kong Racing or Mario Kart 64. It doesn't have the style or charm of either, nor is it as well rounded a product. Where are the added touches like hovercrafts or planes? It can't even really be recommended on the strength of the license, because we're willing to bet that your average kid probably knows Donkey Kong or Mario better than they know Donald and chum(p)s. Three years on from Diddy Kong, and Rare have learnt diddly squat. <<<



PLUS: Plenty of unlockables. Good sense of speed.

MINUS: Run into randomly placed objects for fun! Nothing original.

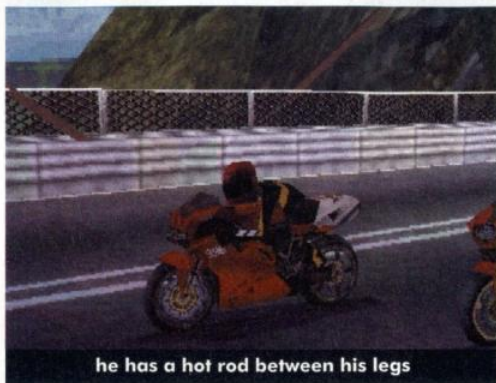
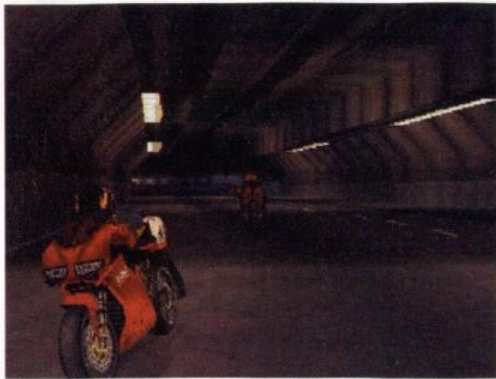
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

79 74 79

OVERALL

77

A good game on its own, but a poor followup to DK Racing



he has a hot rod between his legs

Ducati World

CATEGORY: Motorcycle Racer >> **PLAYERS:** 1-2 >>
PUBLISHER: Acclaim >> **PRICE:** \$79.95 >>
RATING: G >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >>
SUPPORTS: Dual Shock, Memory Card, Knee Pads

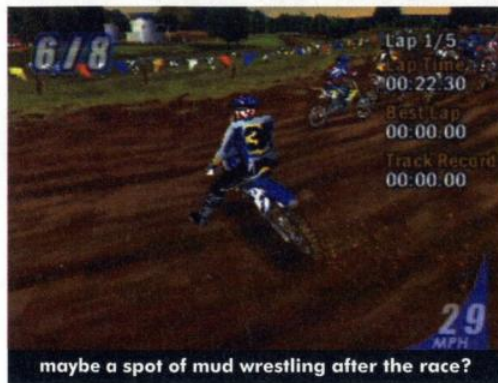
So, what is Ducati world? It's Gran Turismo for Ducatis, or at least it tries to be. If you've seen GT then you'll recognise many of the menu options and features in DW. There are licenses to earn, classified advertisements to browse (equivalent of the second hand car section in GT) performance parts to tweak and all sorts of race types and heaps of bikes, all Ducatis of course. Even the arcade mode, or quick race as it's called here, has the same sort of unlockable bits and bikes.

The main problem is the physics of the game, the main reason why GT is so popular. The handling of the bikes seems way too simplistic, I'll be the first to admit I'm not a regular bike rider, though I have ridden a few. But those who are regular bikers would probably find DW even less enjoyable than I did.

The AI also leaves a bit to be desired, either that or Ducati World is actually meant to be a sequel to Road Rash! Some of your opponents seem to line you up before bends and slam you off the road, while they continue merrily along without even losing any speed. This is the most galling aspect of the game. The most boring aspect of the game is the audio. Unfortunately the Ducatis sound more like Singers, with maybe a few Jenomes thrown in for good measure. If they'd chucked an overlocker into the equation it might have improved things.

George Soropos

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
60	55	65	60



maybe a spot of mud wrestling after the race?

Supercross

CATEGORY: Racing >> **PLAYERS:** 1-2 >>
PUBLISHER: EA Sports >> **PRICE:** \$59.95 >>
RATING: G >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >>

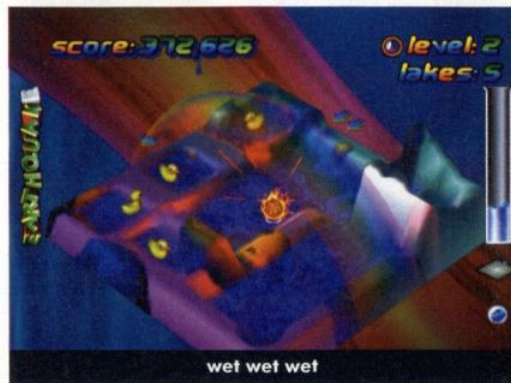
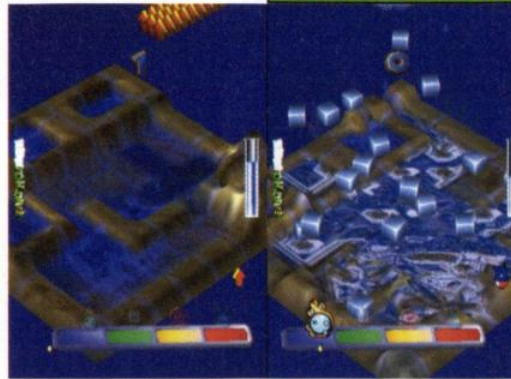
Well I never! What do we have here? A supercross title for POne that is still somehow fun despite the obvious technical limitations of the system? Yep, and we found ourselves curiously immersed in Supercross's muddy little world. The first thing that impressed us was the fact that Supercross is nothing like last year's bomb of a game (this year's edition isn't even called Supercross 2001 - EA really seem to want to distance themselves from 2000). No sir, EA have gone back to the drawing board and sketched a much more arcadey picture. This is a good thing. As Confucious once said: "It's hard enough to make a fun supercross simulation on a powerful system, but it's almost impossible on an elderly, arthritic old geezer of a console. Biatch."

So EA made a very wise decision and arcaded this sucker up (some would say "to the max" but we'll refrain). They've added in L1 as the "power clutch" button. This is a speed boost that you must time correctly to get maximum boost. You can use it pretty much constantly, but it's dangerous on the curves... so use it wisely my son. R1 is now used for powerslides. The combination of boosting along the straights and powersliding around the turns really adds a much-needed layer of fun to the game. Although the AI isn't overly smart, the other riders are weighted well to give you a good level of competition.

The downside is that your first impression of the game will be the sketchy low detail graphics and the 15fps motion that makes precision something of a chore. Even so, if PlayStation is your only means of gaming sustenance, Supercross is a lot of fun once you give it a chance.

Cam Shea

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
74	78	80	79



wet wet wet

Wetrix +

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

Given its name, you could be forgiven for assuming that Wetrix+ is another mindless Tetris clone. Well rest assured; it turns out to be one of the most creative and enjoyable takes on the falling block theme ever.

Wetrix+ is played on an isometric 3D square. Falling from the sky are various objects such as blocks, water drops and fireballs. The basic idea is to build 3D lakes from the blocks and then use them to catch as much of the water as possible. You then boil your lakes dry with fireballs in order to earn points and prevent overflows.

The game prevents the obvious and tempting "one big lake" approach by rewarding skilful and creative lake building with rainbows and rubber duckies. These bonuses multiply any scores earned and can be combined to achieve massive totals. Believe me, boiling a huge lake with a rainbow and eight duckies really is satisfying. Making life harder are the bombs, ice cubes and floating mines that fall relentlessly, not to mention the earthquakes that wreak havoc should you overbuild. If not handled carefully these nasties can quickly cut short an otherwise flawless game. It may sound complex but Wetrix+ manages to integrate it nicely into a satisfying puzzle experience. It's just a shame the multiplayer mode is a tad lacklustre.

Multiplayer quibbles aside, Wetrix+ splices block building with enough new concepts to make it both challenging and fun. If you enjoy puzzle games with a bit of 'depth', I recommend jumping straight in.

Tom Holloway

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
84	73	86	84

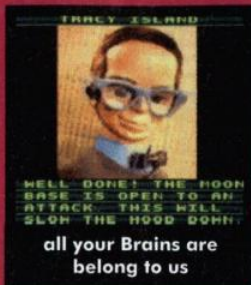
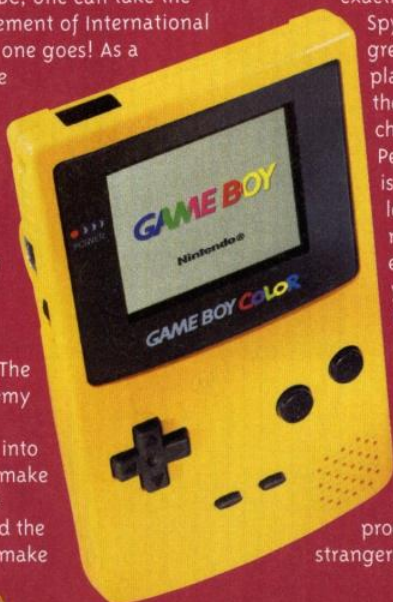
Thunderbirds

CATEGORY: Retro >> **PLAYERS:** 1 >>
PUBLISHER: SCI >> **PRICE:** \$49.95 >>
RATING: G >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >>
SUPPORTS: GBC only >>

Hello my little Thunderbirds puppets! Thunderbirds are go, yes? Now that everybody's favourite 60s supermarionation show is available on GBC, one can take the action and excitement of International Rescue wherever one goes! As a new recruit to the clandestine group, you'll get to control all the mighty Thunderbirds rocket ships in a quest to save the wonders of the world from the sinister machinations of The Hood, public enemy number one!

Play is divided into mini-games that make use of each of the Thunderbirds, and the game mechanics make

this resemble a retro collection. For instance, Thunderbird 1 behaves a lot like the helicopter in Choplifter, and Lady Penelope's pink roller handles exactly the same as the car in Spy Hunter. There is a great deal of variety in play styles, and some of the Thunderbirds are quite challenging to control. Perhaps the weakest link is the Thunderbird 2 levels, unconvincing missions that are essentially mazes. Also, you don't get to see that much of Tin Tin, but the detail manifest elsewhere was well worth the sacrifice. The graphics are implemented with enough flair to suggest that the programmers are no strangers to assembler, and the



music is a catchy rendition of the classic Thunderbirds score. This is a worthy piece of Thunderbirds merchandise, and testimony to the dream that all of mankind's problems can be solved with rockets and ray guns. F.A.B!

James Cottee

8/10



Walt Disney Magical Racing Tour

CATEGORY: Racing >> **PLAYERS:** 1
PUBLISHER: Activision >> **PRICE:** \$49.95 >>
RATING: G >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >>
SUPPORTS: GBC only

Karting games have been spewing forth into the marketplace ever since Mario Kart blew everyone away with its simple, magic gameplay. Sadly, not many of these clones have been able to capture the same kind of winning gameplay. Rare's Diddy Kong Racing was a strong contender, Crash Team Racing was admirable, and there are still more on the horizon, like Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing. Disney Interactive have attempted something a little different here, by taking the Karting formula and transforming it into a side-scrolling racing game. The good thing about this, is that racing games on the Game Boy have always suffered when you're racing "into" the screen. The Game Boy Advance may change all that, but for now, racing sideways is a better alternative. In a way, the game is slightly "top down" like Micro Machines, so the designers have managed to implement some cool thrills into the racing as there is a

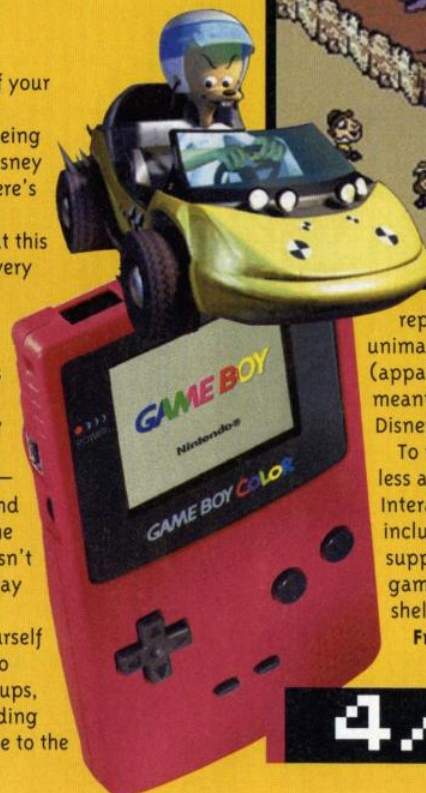
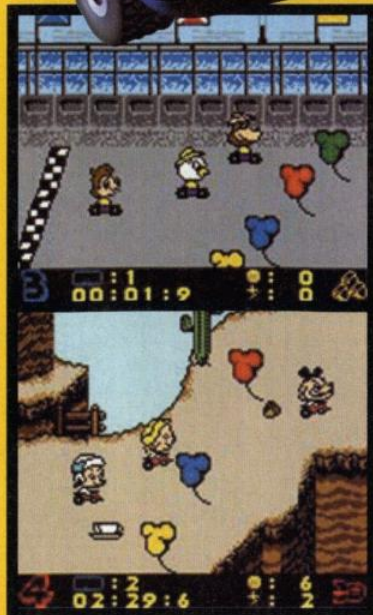
better sense of your environment.

Of course, being based upon Disney characters, there's nothing at all hardcore about this game. This is very much a light-hearted and non-taxing racer that tries to offer some kind of variety with different environments — water, snow and land. Sadly, the game just doesn't function the way it should, and you'll find yourself missing easy to pick up powerups, or simply nodding off to sleep due to the

repetitive and unimaginative track design (apparently they are meant to be based on Disneyland rides).

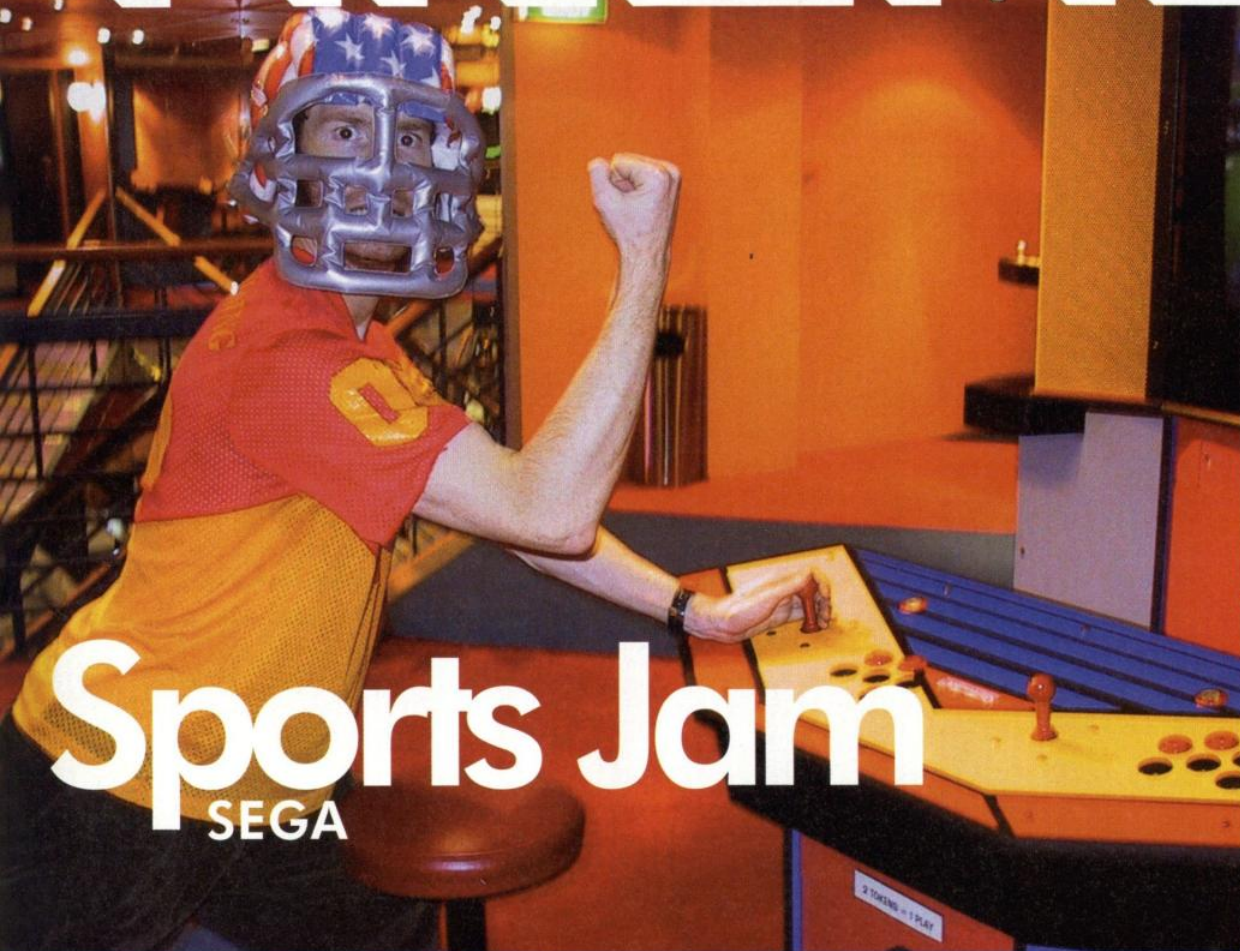
To make the game even less appealing, Disney Interactive chose to not include any link cable support for two player games. Best left on the shelf.

Frank Dry



4/10

ARCADE



Sports Jam SEGA

Many, many moons ago (1984), there was an innovative sports video game that caused quite a commotion down at the local arcades. Hyper (no relation) Olympics was the first 2D sports orientated game with multi-mini-games to introduce extreme button mashing and 'duration of button depression'. Whilst button mashing plays only a minor part in Sega's latest sports game, the sports mini-game has been reborn in all its modern 3D glory.

COME ON DOWN!

Sports Jam has packaged 8 sports into 12 different challenges. Don't expect to see any full versions of Virtua Tennis or Soccer, but more like a quick spot of training for specific skills needed to excel in each sport.

The whole game is packaged like a TV game show (including over-the-top game host), where you are rewarded with money depending on how you perform in each category / mini-game. You are able to select any one of 9

games to begin with and if you successfully acquire a set number of points, you go on to be able to make another selection till you reach the finals in the 4th stage.

The mini-games include:

Soccer: Long Shoot - try to curve the ball past a wall of defenders in a penalty type set up. You get bonus points for shooting the ball successfully into the goal and through rings.

Soccer: Direct Ace - you play the role of a striker awaiting the ball from a corner kick. You must kick the ball on the volley and shoot past a goalie to hit changing point awards.

Cycling: Fastest Sprinter - Set in a velodrome, you must pace yourself whilst blocking your opponent and then sprint for the finish in this 2 lap race.

Grid Iron: Touchdown Derby - Attempt to bash your way past crash dummies and sprint for the finish line (touchdown) in the allotted time.

Grid Iron: The Kicker - Use split timing for your run up and position your foot correctly to kick a field goal.

Basketball: Three point shooting - try to score as many points as possible from 5 different points on the court.

Golf: Near Pin Contest - Control timing, spin and power to hit golf balls near a target.

Golf: Putter Match - Putt the ball into the hole.

Ice Hockey: Hardest Save - You take on the role of goalie and attempt to make as many saves as possible.

Ice Hockey: Puck Rally - Set up in a narrow field, try to shoot the puck past your opponent.

Tennis: Computer Receive - Hit changing targets with the ball on the other side of the court.

Baseball: The Great Slugger - Hit home runs into the stands.

All of the games can be played in one or two player modes, with players either playing along side



play sport and stay unfit! hoorah!

each other or directly competing against one another.

Sports Jam is yet another game that is by far more suited to the arcades than the home console market as most of the mini games have no long-term replay-ability. Nonetheless, apart from being a graphically superior, first-class skill tester, Sports Jam is a worthy way to give an insight into what is required to excel in several of the world's most highly paid professions. <<

8.5/10

All games in Arcade Mode can be found at Galaxy World arcades.

GAME & WATCH

Forget the Game Boy Advance. As far as **James Cottee** is concerned, the ultimate handheld games came out 20 years ago...

It's difficult to describe the value they had, the sway they held upon the world. Nintendo's Game & Watch units first appeared in 1980, when the first video game boom was in full swing. Thousands of Pac-Man arcade machines were rolling off the line every day, and it seemed that every new game that came out was a new genre unto itself. The nation's youth would pour every 20 cent piece it could find into greedy arcade units, and home consoles like the Atari, even though they wielded a fraction of power of their arcade counterparts, commanded unassailable respect from

all who owned them. The Game & Watch continued this trend to its ultimate conclusion. Each unit held a single game, no more, and consisted of the simplest gameplay imaginable. But they were tiny; you could hold one in the palm of your hand. And in the filthy playgrounds of the early eighties, to own a Game & Watch was to be a living god. An interactive video game, the ultimate evolution of all human technology, was at your command.

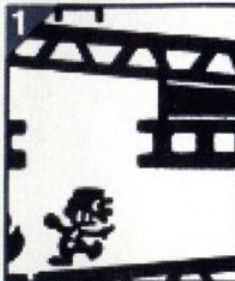
LIQUID GOLD
The creation of Gunpei Yokoi (1941-1997), the 60 odd official Game & Watch units and their countless imitations, sold in the tens of millions worldwide. The units utilised a "liquid crystal" display, like those used in your average digital watch. Each and every game element, little men, little enemies, drops of oil, or licking flames, had a clearly stenciled place on the game screen. Unlike the multi-role pixels in CRT based video games, LCD based characters couldn't overlap or move in any way. They were stuck in the same patterns forever, like the slanted figure-eights that make up the digits on your clock radio.

This didn't stop the game designers being inventive, nor the eager consumers lapping up their

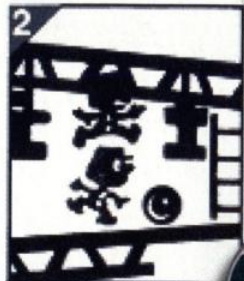


◀ LEFT

BACK THE LADY.



Mario, Go !



Jump over the barrels.

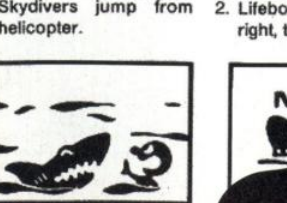
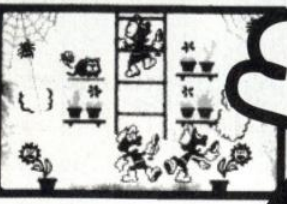
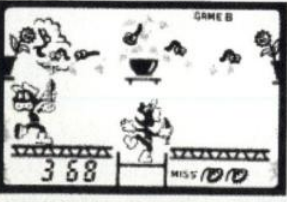


Climb the ladder, and grab the hook.



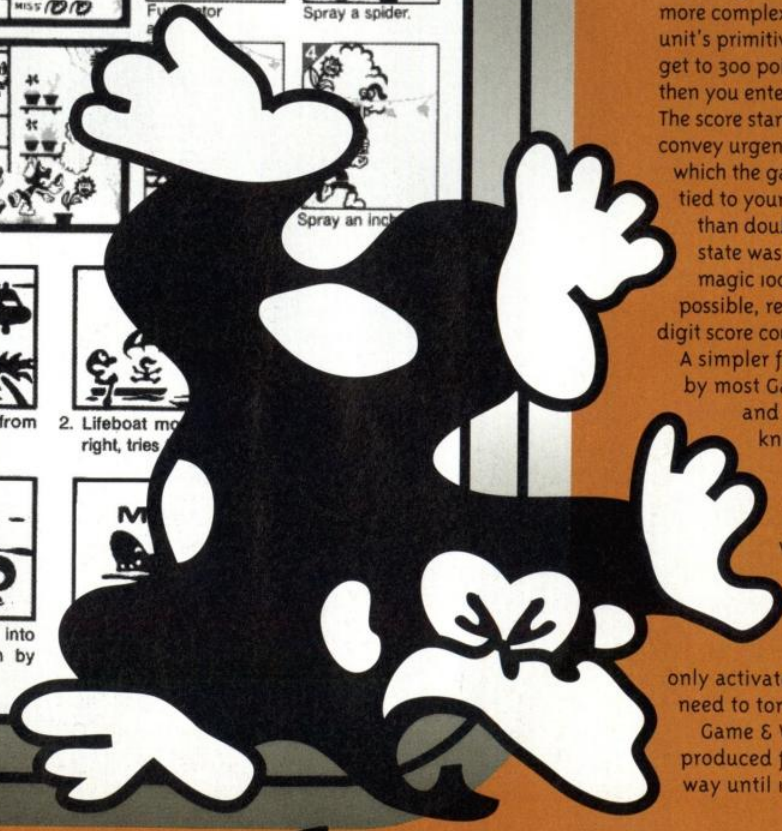
When the wires are all unhooked.

GREEN HOUSE™ PROTECT THE FLOW



If skydiver falls into ocean, he is eaten by shark.

2. Lifeboat moving right, tries to avoid shark.



creations. Game designs were of a few basic types, the simplest being one where you moved a little man left and right. Like in the game Parachute, where you had to move your rowboat through four static positions in order to save endlessly cascading parachutists from shark-infested waters. Or Fire, where you had to move two men and a stretcher through a paltry three static points to bounce desperate residents from a burning tenement to the safety of a waiting ambulance.

The beauty of these games was that even in such a simple setting there was infinite complexity. In Fire, the arcs taken by the falling men were shorter after each bounce. Combined with the increasing rate they spewed forth and the ever increasing pace of the game, a simple task would soon become impossible.

The other main game "genre" was the mini quest, where you had to move your little dude through a set path of obstacles, either back and forth, or from one end of the screen to the other. The most popular of these was Donkey Kong, a folding double screen model cast in iconic orange plastic. A very loose take on the arcade version, the player controlled Mario as he scaled a skyscraper dominated by the ever-belligerent Kong. Each trip to the top would remove a hook supporting Kong's barrel-hurling platform. Four trips would send it and Kong plummeting, and elicit some soaring love-hearts from the captive maiden.

THE NEED FOR SPEED

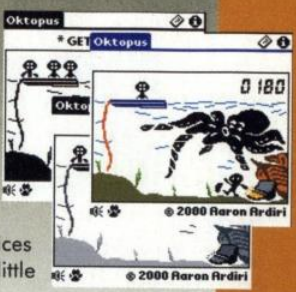
While the gameplay involved in defeating Donkey Kong was varied, even more complexity was crammed into the unit's primitive electronics. If you could get to 300 points without losing a life, then you entered double point mode. The score started flashing on and off to convey urgency, and since the rate at which the game speed increased was tied to your score, the tension more than doubled when this volatile state was entered. From there the magic 1000 points seemed possible, resetting the three digit score counter to zero.

A simpler feature sported by most Game & Watches, and most of the knock offs, was "Game A" and "Game B." Game B was significantly harder than the standard A mode, typically only activated when you felt a need to torture yourself.

Game & Watch units were produced from 1980 all the way until 1992. The advent of

G&W on Palm

Say you're keen on getting into the Game & Watch scene, but you can't find any for sale at St Vinnies. Or perhaps the prices on eBay are a little steep, or you actually own one but it's long since been eaten by battery acid.



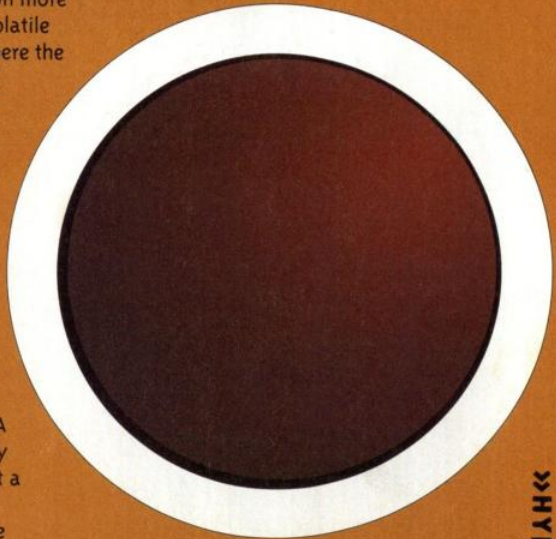
Why not play them on your Palm? It's the perfect platform for their enjoyment when you consider that several different games can be held in the one unit, eliminating the need to carry around the genuine articles, which are bulky by comparison and, of course, irreplaceable.

www.ardiri.com

If you don't own a Palm, then hunt down the **Nintendo Mini-Classics** that are available - Game and Watch classics with a key ring!



the Game Boy made them obsolete, but that hasn't stopped two G&W collections from appearing for the newer machine. The upcoming Game Boy Advance will rival the power of the SNES, but even this exponential rise in power can't rival the shock one had on seeing a G&W for the first time. It's one thing to improve on an idea, but each new upgrade has less social impact than the last. The Game & Watch got there first, and for those who owned them, their Promethean thrill can never be replicated. <<

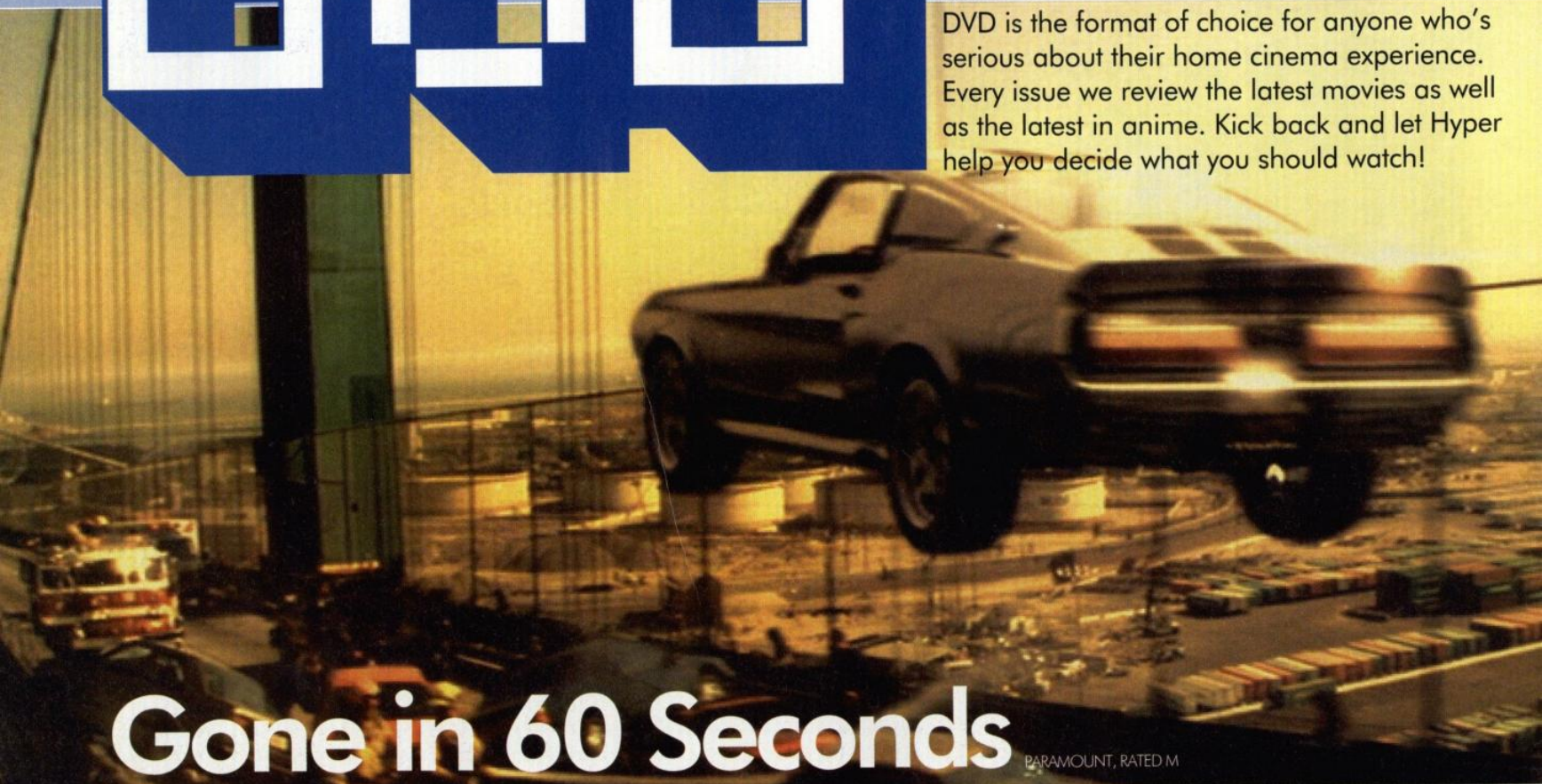


RIGHT ▶

DVD

» 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!



Gone in 60 Seconds

PARAMOUNT, RATED M



nicolas practices his pucker...



...but we prefer Angelina's. Rowr!

Inspired from a television show in the late 1960s that showed just how easy it is to steal a car, *Gone In 60 Seconds* has been turned into a feature film that teams up Nicholas Cage with producer Jerry Bruckheimer once more. This time around, Cage plays a retired master car thief who's forced back into active duty to save the life of his low-lifer of a brother, Giovanni Ribisi.

Gone In 60 Seconds follows the tendency of most Bruckheimer films to make a very big deal out of something people usually wouldn't care about. After all, we are talking about car thieves here. There's nothing noble about it, no matter how much of a hero they make of Cage. One even wonders why such a big deal was made out of Angelina Jolie's bit part. Still, it's the cars and the chases that make the film.

The standards of this DVD are generally very high, with great sound and plentiful extras to thumb through. It's especially satisfying if you know how to appreciate the final chase sequence with the Ford Mustang Shelby '67 GT.

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



Predator

20TH CENTURY FOX, RATED R



"Dis is my moofie, punk!"

If it bleeds, we can kill it". This and several other priceless Schwarzenegger lines are to be found in this modern day sci-fi classic. This movie was made in the time where virtually anything big Arnie touched turned to gold. This particular one put Commando Arnie up against the Predator alien, who came to earth for a holiday hunt.

For a 1987 film, the picture and sound quality is surprisingly good —

the sound even being remastered into Dolby Digital 5.1 surround. The special effects still rate with modern films. Be sure to watch out for Hollywood has-beens like Carl Weathers and pro-wrestler turned politician Jesse "The Body" Ventura. Unfortunately this DVD comes with sweet bugga-all features wise, but anyone who buys it should want it for the film and the film alone.

MOVIE: 7/10 **EXTRAS:** 1/10



Dogma

VILLAGE ROADSHOW, RATED MA15+

If you'll pardon the pun, this is the fourth movie in Kevin Smith's legendary New Jersey Trilogy — the first three being Clerks, Mallrats and Chasing Amy. The subject matter being tackled this time is theology, religion, and their related belief structures.

Ben Affleck and Matt Damon play angels that have been cast from Heaven for defying God's will. However, they find a loophole in Catholic dogma that will forgive their sins and give them free passage home, as long as they pass through the archway of a church in New Jersey. The catch is, if they succeed they'll prove God is not infallible, and thus negate all existence. That's why the Last Psion, played by Linda



Solo and the Wookiee

Fiorentino, is sent to stop them.

Kevin Smith's trademark rapid-fire dialogue takes the living piss out of all religious belief structures, which is made sweeter by the more prominent roles being played by Jay and Silent Bob. Unfortunately this DVD is the no-frills version, meaning it doesn't have any of the great extras that made Mallrats and Clerks such great collectibles. The dual layer cross-over is also horrendously placed.

MOVIE: 8/10 **EXTRAS:** 3/10

Scary Movie

20TH CENTURY FOX, RATED MA15+

This movie from the Wayans brothers is really funny shit, but only on the proviso you've seen a few of the really popular teen movies of the last three years. Why? Scary Movie is a send-up of Scream, I Know What Your Breasts Did Last Summer, Blair Witch, The Matrix, The Sixth Sense, and the "WAZZUP" advertisement that hijacked every net-equipped office in the English-speaking world.

The mundane slasher plot plays second fiddle to some hilarious and often barf-worthy moments. Just be sure not to be consuming any food when the she-male gym teacher's scrotum flops into view. Unfortunately, like Leslie Nielsen comedies, Scary Movie isn't the kind of film you're going to watch more than once, at least not in the short term. Deleted scenes aren't as funny as hoped.

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



gratuitous nude scene alert



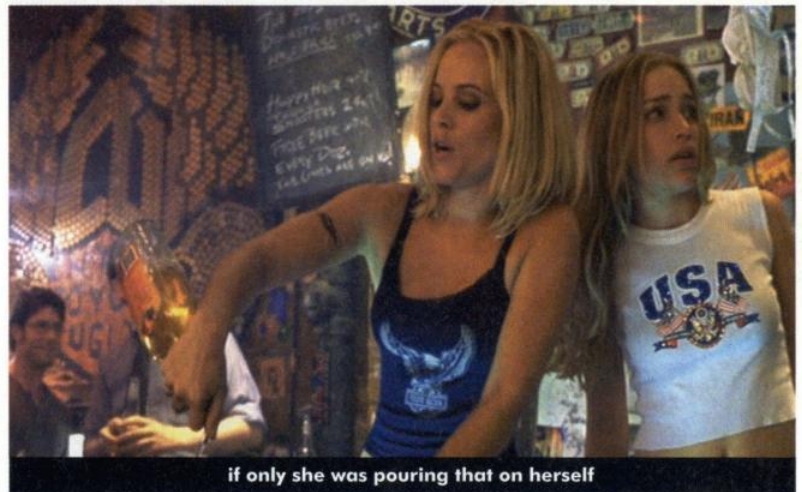
mesa acting like Jar Jar Binks



group hug



Whassssssuuuuuu... BLAM



if only she was pouring that on herself

Coyote Ugly

TOUCHSTONE, RATED M

Fiper Perabo plays a songwriting hopeful who moves into the Big Apple to make her fortunes. She's met with one rejection after another, so she pays the rent by working at a bar called Coyote Ugly. There's no surprise as to why this movie got any attention: hot chicks in sexy skin-tight outfits, soaked to the skin in beer, bumping and grinding their hips atop the bar table.

The DVD is filled with extras like

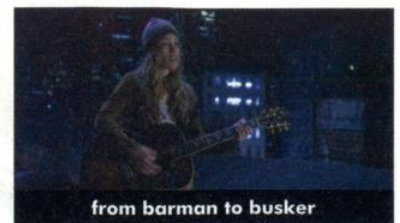
behind-the-scenes, music videos and making of featurettes. The problem is with the film itself. Sorry guys, this is 100% softcore. Which is why this movie eventually boils down to being a very bad Melrosed update of Flashdance. Now hang on a second — didn't Jerry Bruckheimer produce that as well?



MOVIE: 5/10 **EXTRAS:** 6/10



let's play spin the bottle, baby



from barman to busker

Clerks Uncensored

MIRAMAX



no magic trick is going to save this DVD



Anyone who's seen Chasing Amy will understand the irony of this six-episode cartoon series, based on the characters created by Kevin Smith. However, Clerks Uncensored is everything but uncensored. As a result of the possibility of children watching this cartoon, there isn't a single utterance of the word "f**k" from Fat Buds Jay.

This series is basically a collection of snapshots of the lives of Dante and Randal from the original Clerks. The dialogue is really contrived — Smith basically goes nowhere with it. Later you'll realise the animation and direction are practically ripped straight from The Simpsons and Ren & Stimpy. It's not surprising, then, that the series was canned after only two episodes went to air.

If anything, this two-disc set is a major indulgence for the fans. There are two featurettes, animatics, and commentary from the cast and crew. It'd be mildly entertaining if you're at all interested in watching Kevin Smith sell his arse for all it's worth.

MOVIE: 2/10 **EXTRAS:** 7/10



will someone let Picard through?

Dune

PG

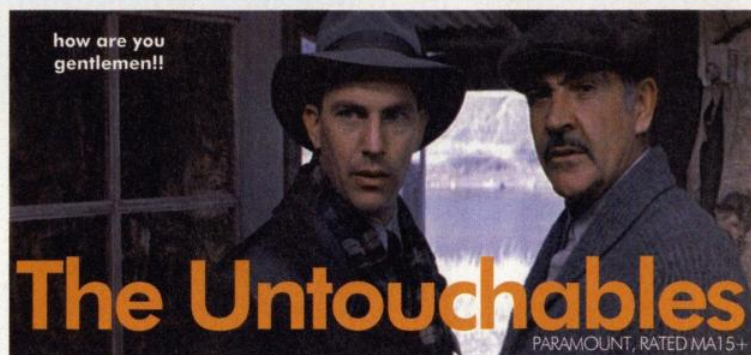
avid Lynch's adaptation of Frank Herbert's original novel was doomed to never being able to please everyone. At the time (1984), two and a half hours was too much for most audiences to sit through; yet for the legions of fans of the book, it was not nearly enough to capture the breadth of the story. And so Dune remains a cultural oddity.

Dune chronicles the rise of Paul Atriedes, heir to the House of Atriedes. The House of Atriedes has fought bitterly over the years with its neighbour, House Harkonnen, for control of the desert planet known as Dune. Dune is the only known source of the Spice, considered priceless for its mind-altering and space-folding

abilities. This movie stars some Hollywood icons, including Max Von Sydow, Francesca Annis, and a somewhat younger-looking Patrick Stewart. And there's Kyle MacLachlan.

Marking Infogrames' entry into the DVD market, this re-release of Dune is the collector's item of choice. The picture quality, whilst not flawless, is much cleaner than the first version. Sound also includes a DTS audio track, locally encoded through a software solution, making it the second of its kind after Gladiator. However, considering DTS didn't exist in 1984, the jury's still out on whether it's any good.

MOVIE: 7/10 **EXTRAS:** 2/10



how are you gentlemen!!

The Untouchables

PARAMOUNT, RATED MA15+

This period tale about the fall of Al Capone during Chicago's Prohibition era is still a classic. The impressive cast features Robert De Niro as the gangland kingpin, while Sean Connery, Andy Garcia and Kevin Costner (before his Dances With Wolves days) make up the federal agents who bring him down.

In this film, Kevin Costner's Elliot Ness leads a wayward crusade against Capone, but only finds success after Sean Connery reveals the depth of the corruption they're facing. The story is

brilliantly told, capturing the complex interplay between justice and the law, the unfairness of the prohibition laws, and the divisions it created in the socio-political ranks.

The picture quality is quite reasonable for this 14-year-old film, with audio remastered into 5.1 Dolby Digital. Not surprisingly, though, with the careers of the cast having gone in such different directions, there aren't any interviews or extra features worth writing home about.

MOVIE: 7/10 **EXTRAS:** 1/10



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Vampire Hunter D: SPECIAL EDITION

ACTION, DRAMA
PRODUCTION COMPANY: MOVIC

Vampire Hunter D was an A-class production when it was released back in 1984. Look at it now, and my how things have changed. This movie is set in a medieval world of demons and monsters, where society is ruled by the class structure of serfs and aristocrats. Except in this fictitious world, the aristocrats literally are bloodsuckers, and they prey on the lives of the mortal.

D is a vampire hunter in this land, whose gifted killing abilities can be attributed to the fact that he is a dampiel — half vampire, half human. His services are retained by another

hunter, who was recently given a rather nasty love-bite from the most powerful vampire in the land, Dracula.

DRAC IS BACK

In this Special Edition DVD re-release, the animation is very obviously dated. Surprisingly, however, in certain scenes the dark colours all seem to wash out and blend into each other, which means something went wrong in the encoding process. This takes little from the strength of the plot, though, which effortlessly conveys the complex social interplay as both the villagers and the aristocrats persecute D. It's also

difficult not to fall in love with Yoshitaka Amano's character designs, which seem to transcend age and always look appropriate to the story.

Unfortunately the big highlight of this DVD isn't even the film, but rather the drop-dead gorgeous trailer for the re-make of Vampire Hunter D, shown at last year's Japanime festival. The team producing it was responsible for Ninja Scroll (read awesome combat scenes), and at the time of viewing, the Japanese dialogue wasn't complete so there was only English dialogue. We can only hope this new version comes out soon!

ANIMATION: 5/10 PLOT: 7/10 JAPAN-NESS: High OVERALL: 6.5/10

Sakura Diaries

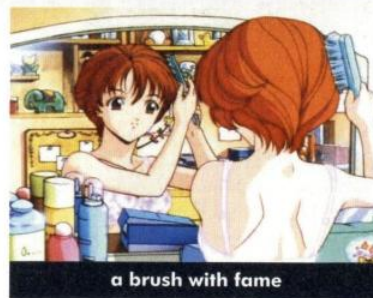
DRAMA, PRODUCTION COMPANY: YUJIN/VICTOR ENTERTAINMENT

There is something seriously wrong with Sakura Diaries. Touma is in love with Mieko, but she'll only date students at the Keio College. Unfortunately, Touma failed the entrance exam, so he has to lie to her about getting in just so she'll take a second look at him. Meanwhile,

Touma is oblivious to the affections of Urara, a high school call girl who just turns out to be his cousin. She knows it, he doesn't remember.

AIRBRUSH THE PANTIES

The methods this series employs to avoid becoming full-on hentai is partly its own undoing, relying on extremely stock tricks like panning the camera around a still image multiple times, or zooming in. So without taking the 'action' to its full potential, you'd think the plot might be better. It's not. It's an extremely formulaised romantic drama drummed up to have



a brush with fame



touma laments his lack of nosebridge

steamy sex in it.

It's not the fault of the original production company, though. Blame it on ADV Films, the American company that slaps "In this school, every class is sex education!" on the front of the box. This is the same company that confused the hell out of everyone by calling Ninja

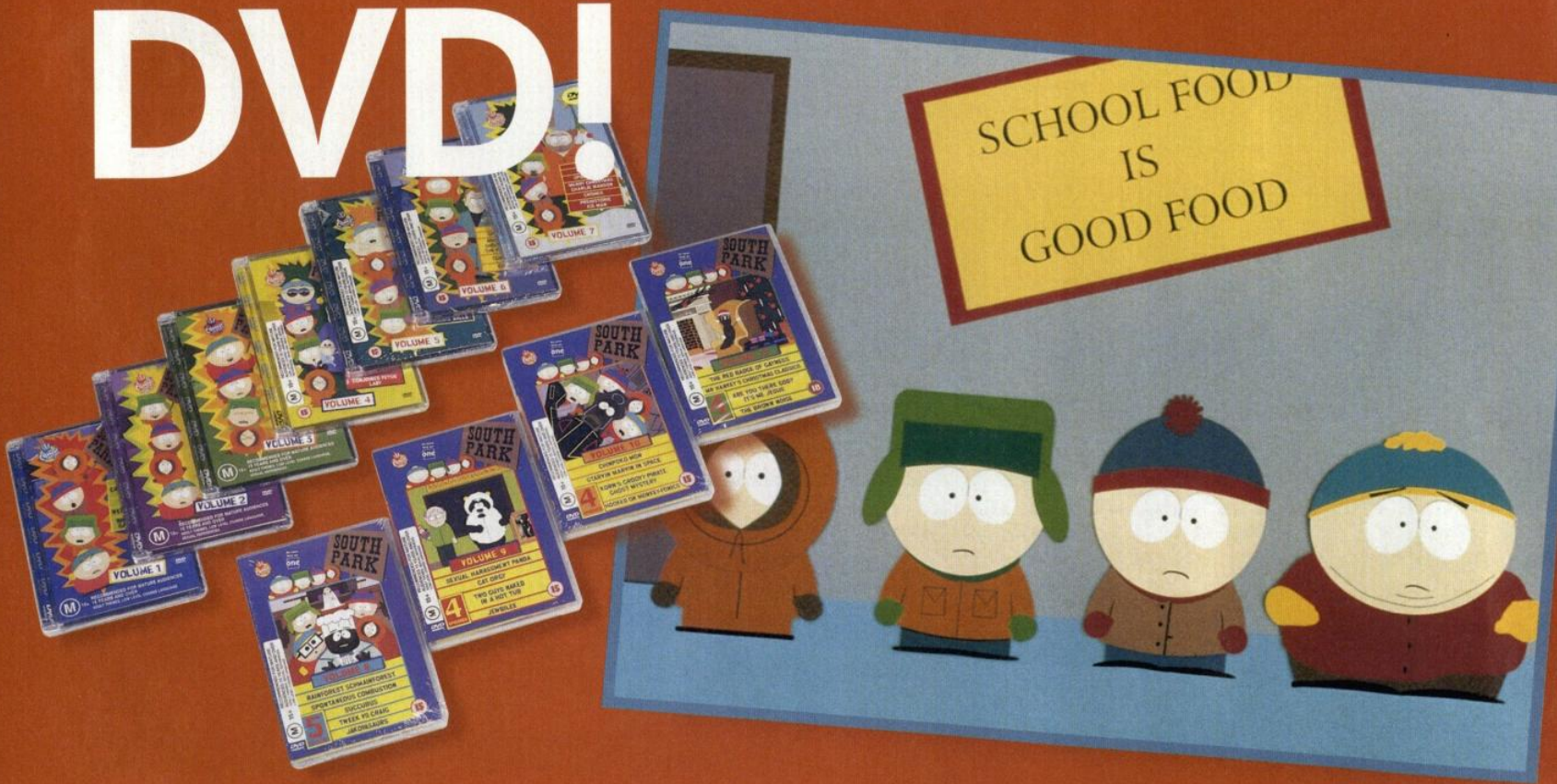
Resurrection the follow-up to Ninja Scroll. What's worse is the English translation. Words have been deliberately changed to make the dialogue a little raunchier. If that's their attitude, they might as well just airbrush the panties off as well. Bad form, ADV!



"sakura sakura, ten dollar"

ANIMATION: 4/10 PLOT: 3/10 JAPAN-NESS: Med OVERALL: 3.5/10

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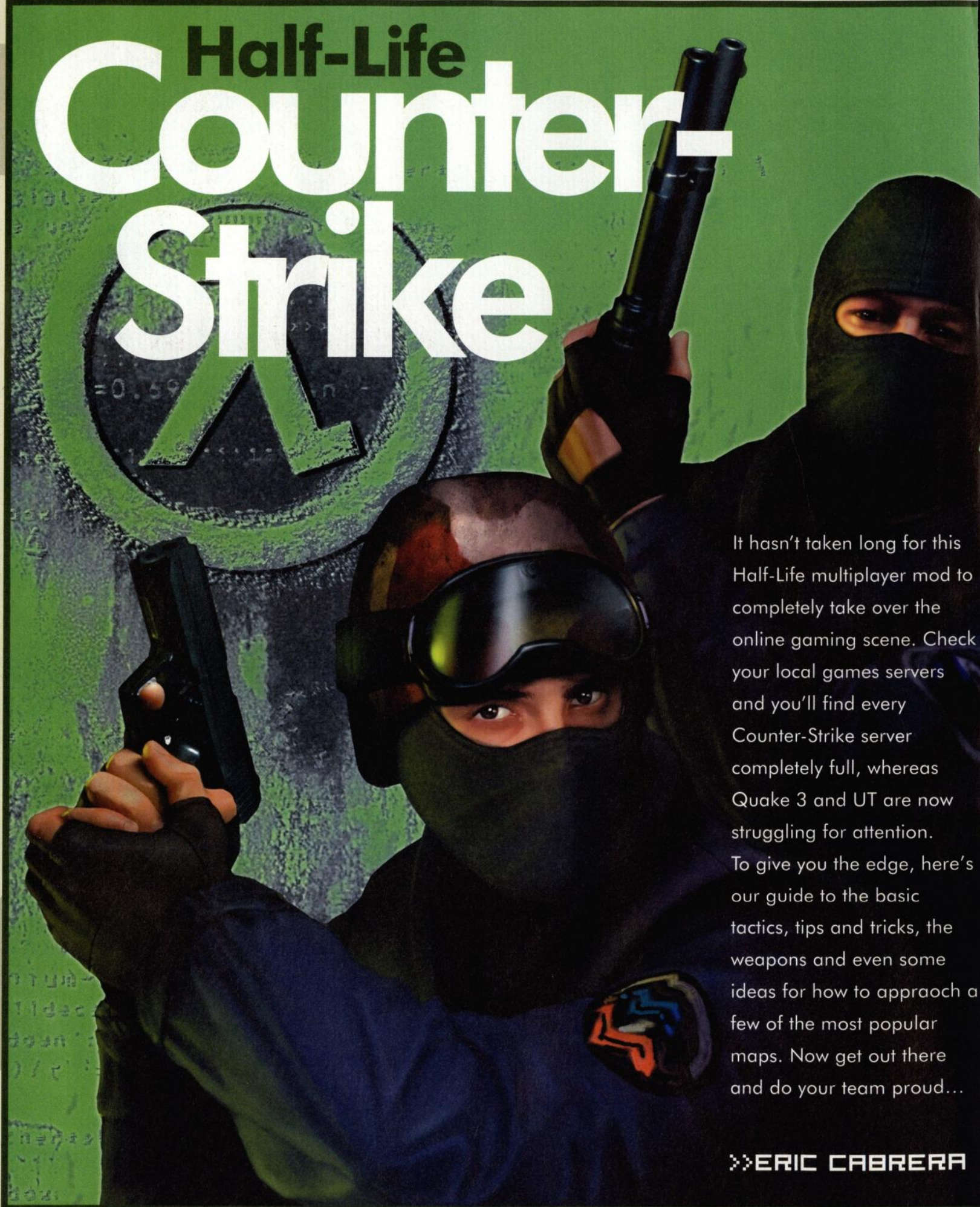
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Half-Life Counter-Strike



It hasn't taken long for this Half-Life multiplayer mod to completely take over the online gaming scene. Check your local games servers and you'll find every Counter-Strike server completely full, whereas Quake 3 and UT are now struggling for attention. To give you the edge, here's our guide to the basic tactics, tips and tricks, the weapons and even some ideas for how to approach a few of the most popular maps. Now get out there and do your team proud...

»»ERIC CABRERA

So you've been sucked into the most popular first-person shooter game on the market. You hop on your favourite server and start playing. Soon you find that you've been killed numerous times when there seemingly wasn't an enemy in sight AND when you've been hiding behind a wall. People that seem to bitch and whine more than they are actually playing call you all sorts of names that associate you with their distaste of your tactic to wait for an enemy to pop out from their hiding spot rather than suicidally charging in. Frustration sets in as you try to retreat from a room full of enemies only to find your overly-eager team mate blocking your escape route. It's too late and by the time you get around him, you've both been drilled by numerous AK47s. You aren't quite at the top of the scoreboard since you die early in the round and are left spectating your teammates longer than you are in the action yourself. Welcome to life in Counter-Strike (CS). While starting out, you will encounter some, if not all, of the situations above, but Hyper comes to the rescue with tips and strategies to elevate you and your team to the top. This guide will include tactics for individuals on fighting and surviving, as well as a detailed weapon guide on which guns to use and what to avoid, then rounding off with team tactics on the most popular maps. It's sure to have you improving in no time!



GETTING STARTED

The first thing you'll need to do is to set your keys. This can be done through the options menu and it is essential that you are comfortable with your settings before you start playing. Everyone has different ways of playing, some like the conventional W, A, S, D method and some others like to use the arrows or even the keypad. It is totally your decision and you should do what you feel most comfortable with rather than the "Oh Mr. X plays using these keys and he's really good. I should use the same ones so that I can be as good as him," way of thinking. If you have played other first person-shooters it's probably a good idea to use basically the same keys so that you don't get too confused when playing.

Do you feel the need for speed? Well, many of the players with the lower end machines would probably like to squeeze as much fps out of their computers as possible. For the higher end users, your CS should already be running fine and smooth so you might want to skip this unless you really want the extra boost.

These are console commands that you put into your config file to boost up your

potential framerate. If you intend to use some of these, please back up your existing config just in case you don't end up liking the new way your CS looks.

Here are some commands that you can insert into your config.cfg file or modify if they're already there.

cl_gibcount "0" - turns gibbs off. This can give a big boost if your computer chugs while you see the blood and guts fly from someone getting shot.

cl_giblife "0" - sets the time that the gibbs appear
fastsprites "1" - draws sprites (2d objects) quicker
fps_max "100" - gives a limit to your framerate. May help stabilise your movement

gl_texturemode - "gl_nearest_mipmap_nearest" - bilinear filter
r_decals "0" - stops any custom decals from displaying

r_drawviewmodel "0" - takes the weapon model out. Not recommended for people starting out in the game
r_mirroralpha "0" - removes mirrored textures

gl_picmip "x" - Replace 'x' with a number. 0 is the highest quality where something like 5 makes the quality less detailed, but this gives an enormous frame rate boost.

gl_keeptjunctions "0" - it will display image tearing where textures merge. Can give a big fps boost



For all of the console commands available in the game, you can go to <http://www.planethalflife.com/commands/commands/index.shtml> if you want to find some other nifty stuff to play around with. Be warned, it's a pretty long list, so it may take a while to load.

Lastly, to help out your gaming, you should go to the Video Options menu, and move the gamma slider to as far right as it can go. This will brighten your screen up so that you will be able to see those nasty hidden enemies a lot easier than normal. It's quite useful if you seem to always die without knowing where you are being shot from.

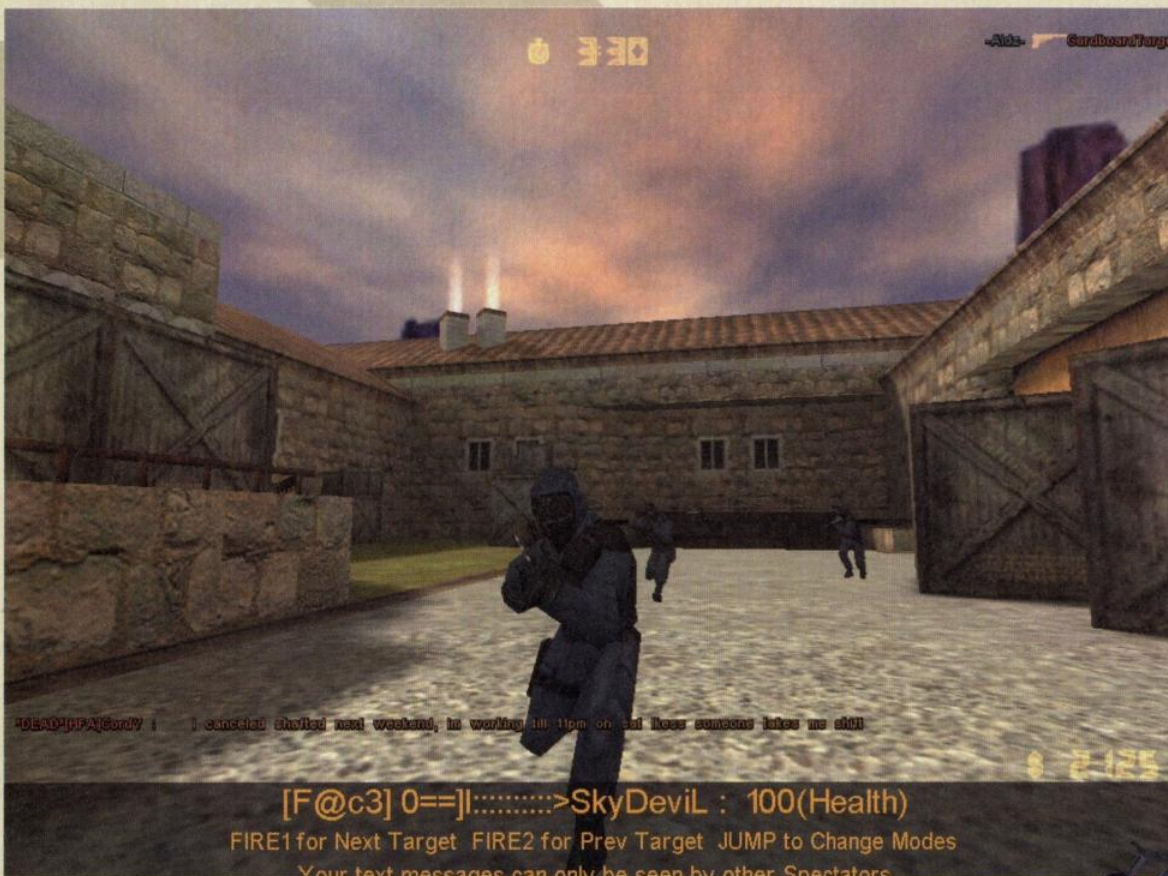
MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

Unlike other first-person shooter games, in CS money makes the world go around. You will need to buy your weapons and equipment at the beginning of the round so it is important to earn that money. Adding to that, usually the best weapons are expensive so the team that dominates the game will be rewarded with a plethora of weapons to choose from. Earning the money can be difficult and losing money can be very easy. Below is a table showing how you can earn or lose money.

You can buy weapons and items only when you are in the "buy zone". You'll know this if the shopping trolley icon is displayed on the left. Also, on most servers, buying is disabled after a certain period of time in the round.

The maximum amount of money you can earn is \$16000 so if you are hovering around that area, buy some good weapons! Money management is just as important in the game as it is in real life. Manage your funds perfectly and you'll find that you have the right gun at the right time. Is it worth buying the really good gun early on in the game? Should I buy this crappy weapon, or should I save up my money for a really good one? The answers to these questions are something you'll need to experiment with, as different people prefer different things in different situations. With a bit of





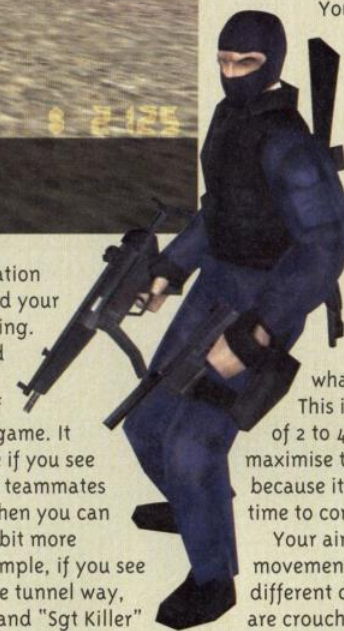
Another good feature of the HUD is the radar on the top left hand corner. This shows where your teammates are situated if they are close enough. It's extremely useful when you want to roam around in groups. Also, the HUD includes a health/armour monitor, the amount of time left in the round, and the amount of cash you have left.

Now you are ready to fight. The first thing that you will need to master is your aim. In this game, aim is important because the spray of your bullets is dependent upon many factors. Firstly, the gun that you are carrying will affect the accuracy of your shots. You should read the weapons section on which ones are best in terms of accuracy and range of fire but, in essence, you should know the degree of inaccuracy on the weapon you are holding so that you can adjust accordingly.

You will also notice that if you are using an automatic weapon (one where you can hold down your fire button and multiple bullets are shot) the crosshair gets bigger the longer you hold the trigger down. This means the degree of accuracy from your weapon deteriorates as it goes on. With this in mind, its best to use what's known as burst fire.

This is when you shoot in blocks of 2 to 4 bullets at a time to maximise the accuracy of the weapon because it gives the crosshair some time to compact again.

Your aim will also depend on your movement. Your accuracy will be different depending on whether you are crouching, standing up or jumping around. So take care in how you shoot off all that ammo, soldier!



experience, you'll start to figure out when to go for the good weapon and when to save up.

BASIC TACTICS

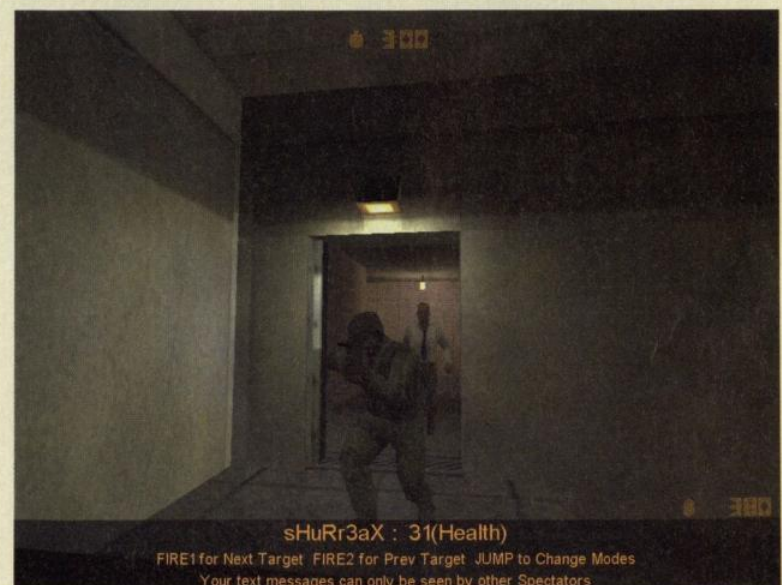
Here you will find tactics on how to

improve your killing skills and how to stay alive longer which are both fundamentally important before you can become really good at the game.

When starting out in the game, you must remember to pay attention to your HUD (Head Up Display) for

important information about how you and your teammates are going. The top right hand corner shows the deaths and kills of the people in the game. It helps you because if you see that many of your teammates are being killed, then you can start to become a bit more defensive. For example, if you see "Bob" go down the tunnel way, along with "Tim" and "Sgt Killer" and you see that they all get killed... well, it wouldn't be the time to take a trip to the tunnel, would it?

ACTION	PAYOFF/FINE
Rescuing a Hostage	\$1000 for individual, \$150 for team mates (awarded at end of round)
Kill a Hostage	-\$1500 for individual
'Use' a Hostage	\$150 for individual, \$100 for team mates
Kill Opponent	\$300 for individual
Kill Team Mate	-\$3300 for individual
Terrorists Win by Bombing Target	\$2750 for team members
Win by Elimination Hostage map	\$2000 for team members
Win by Elimination Bomb map	\$2500 for team members
CTs Defuse Bomb	\$2750 for team members
CTs Win by Rescuing Hostages	\$2000 for team members + Hostage bonuses
Surviving Hostage Bonus	\$150 per hostage for team members
Hostages Rescued Bonus	\$250 per hostage for CT team members
Either Team Loses Round	\$1400 for team members
Either Team Loses over 2 Consecutive Rounds	\$1400 + \$500 per round over 2 (to maximum \$2900) for team members





CROUCHING The accuracy of the gun will be at its best when you are crouching. It is useful if you are shooting from quite a distance where precision aiming is crucial, or if you are shooting at an enemy who isn't shooting back (whether it be because he is reloading or if you are staging an ambush). The reason we say this is because there is a downside to crouching while firing – it is easier to hit a stationary target than a moving one. When you are in the crouching position you move left and right so unbelievably slowly that it's not worth it. With this said if you are engaged in a straight out fight with someone and

both are spraying bullets everywhere, get up and move around! The slight inaccuracies of your gun will more than make up for the fact that you will live longer.

STANDING While standing your gun isn't quite as accurate as if you are crouched but as said before, you will be somewhat getting the best of both worlds as you will be more

accurate than if you were jumping but hard to hit at the same time.

JUMPING AROUND

Only use jump if you need to get onto or off a ladder or other such situations. Don't jump as an attempt to move faster because within the time you take to jump you are only virtually taking half a step. Also, at no time should you jump while shooting because your accuracy would be even less than if you were just standing.

As well as this, the damage you inflict on the enemy depends on where you hit them. Headshots are a sure-fire way to kill an enemy quickly as these undoubtedly inflict the most damage. Hitting the enemy in the torso won't do nearly as much damage so it's important to aim near the head almost all the time to get the upper hand in a combat situation. We find that due to the recoil of most guns that aiming for the neck region is best since the recoil will bring it upwards and in line with the head.

You must also remember that you can pick up weapons that other people drop. You'll see weapons on the ground because of one of two things:

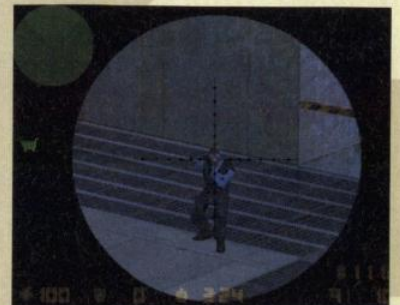
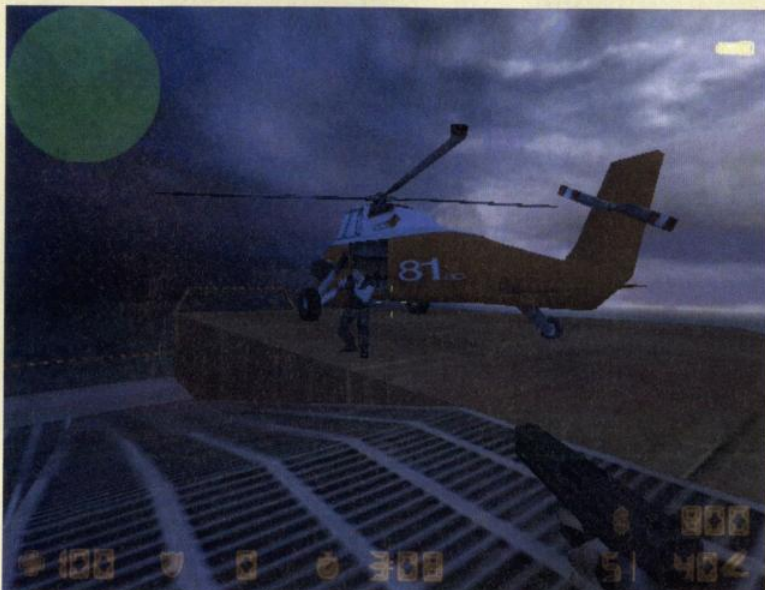
- Someone died. Their weapon is automatically dropped next to their corpse.

- Someone saw a gun on the floor and dropped their own one. Keep in mind that you can't have more than one primary weapon in your inventory, so if you see a totally kick ass gun on the floor, you'll need to drop your one first. By default this is set to the "g" button, but you should check your controls to see which key you have "drop weapon" bound to. Knowing this, you'll need to get used to what each gun looks like when they're on the floor. As soon as you see something better than the one you have then by all means drop your weapon and get the better one. Although, when you do pick up a weapon, look at how much ammo is left because a lot of the time it is on the ground because the previous owner threw it away because it doesn't have a lot of ammo left.

BIG BADA-BOOM

Another skill you will need to develop is using grenades effectively. Grenades are a good way to force the enemy to retreat, thereby giving you more time to plan your next move as well as the odd chance to kill. There are three different grenades in CS and there are different uses for each one of them, which adds variety.

You have your traditional HE grenade, a smoke grenade and a flashbang grenade. The HE grenade is your typical "let's blow them up" grenade. It's mainly used to force the enemy back but also to inflict damage at the same time. You'll get many kills with this if you lob it next to a bunch of enemies. Next you have the smoke grenade, which isn't used all that often as both teams see the thick smoke, meaning neither side is heavily favoured. It is mainly thrown at a place where the enemy are sure to come through. The thick smoke emitting from the grenade blinds the enemy and when they come out of the smoke, they won't know where you are, leaving you with the advantage. Lastly, there is the highly used flashbang grenade. Everyone looking at the direction of the explosion will have their screen flash white for a



while, therefore blinding you momentarily. Make sure you warn your teammates before throwing this one. After you throw, charge in with your teammates to clean up on the blinded enemy for easy frags.

AH, AH, AH, AH, STAYIN' ALIVE, STAYIN' ALIVE

Attacking is all well and good, but you won't be able to use your tactics if you are in spectator mode after dying. That is why survival is crucial. Simply put – don't die.

The most obvious way is to be unpredictable. If you go one way every round and continue to die, go somewhere else. Ideally, get around the enemy and come from behind. Go the least protected way, fight through a couple of enemies and if you've done it right, you could pop up behind a few unsuspecting enemies. You'll have the upper hand since you can have the first shots. Adding to that, stay away from the open where you are susceptible to attack from

virtually anywhere. You should stay where it is hard to be seen or hit, meaning you should stay in the shadows and next to the walls while making your way from A to B. Lastly, a cheeky way to avoid fire is to use hostages as human shields. Due to the cash penalties involved for killing hostages, many people are reluctant to shoot anywhere near them. Be careful, however, because once in a while you'll come across someone who won't care about a few dollars and will just do anything for the kill.

"STICK TOGETHER TEAM!"

Being a great individual player will definitely not mean your team will succeed in CS. Great teamwork is needed to excel in the game.

Sticking together is essential in this game because if you go off wandering by yourself and you come up against a group of enemies you are sure to die. With this said, you should turn the tables and go off in at least groups of 2. In these groups,

backing up your fellow teammates is essential. When one goes through a doorway, follow him in and keep an eye out for any attacks from behind or from the sides. If someone hears fire, everyone should turn to where it's coming from and fight as a team. This backup will help you all survive longer, and you're all well on your way to beating the other team. Remember, you can either eliminate the whole team or complete/prevent completion of the task at hand. So if you have more people alive on your team compared to the other, it will make it a heck of a lot easier to complete the task or eliminate the ones left.

CONCLUSION

These are just guidelines, but there are a few tactics that are common in

most situations. Never, and we mean never, do the exact same thing again and again. If the opposing team is half smart they'll pick up on it and will surely counter it. Mix it up, and outsmart them. If you spot them going one way, go the other way and take them off-guard. The element of surprise is quite useful in a game like this, where it doesn't take all that much to kill someone.

It takes a while to become a really good player, so don't give up if you don't get the hang of it straight away. Keep working at it and you will get there. With a good team you will no doubt improve your individual skills and also your team awareness.

So that ends the tactics guide, we hope you have found it useful in your endeavours to become a CS champion. Now you're going to want to learn about all those lovely weapons... read on to educate yourself in your tools of fragging. <<



WEAPONS

There are so many weapons in this game, and each has its advantages in certain areas and situations. None of them are utterly useless because what's the point of developing a game and putting in crappy weapons that no one would use?

Bear in mind, the accuracy of your first shot with any weapon will be dead-on accurate. The bullet will go where your crosshair is aimed at. From then on, you cannot predict where the rest of the bullets will go. The more accurate the gun, the better the chances of the bullets going close to your first one.

RATINGS:

- ★ Poor
- ★★ Okay
- ★★★ Good
- ★★★★ Very Good
- ★★★★★ Excellent



HAND GUNS

GLOCK 18 SELECT FIRE

PRICE \$400
POWER ★
RATE OF FIRE ★★
ACCURACY ★★★★★
RANGE CLOSE - MID



DESCRIPTION

The Terrorist starting weapon. You shouldn't use it as your primary weapon unless you have nothing else or if you want to finish an enemy off. You can also select between burst fire and semi-automatic.

SIG P228

PRICE \$600
POWER ★★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★★★★
ACCURACY ★★
RANGE CLOSE - MID



DESCRIPTION

Isn't quite as accurate, but the weapon can be useful at the beginning if you want the upper-hand on your enemy since this can certainly be quite powerful. But you'll need practice, as aiming is hard due to the amount of recoil.

DUAL BARRETTA ELITES

PRICE \$1000
POWER ★
RATE OF FIRE ★★★★★
ACCURACY ★★★
RANGE CLOSE - MID



DESCRIPTION

Use these if you want to go down, Matrix-style! Looks good, but very weak. Reloading seems to take an eternity, which means it isn't quite good for tight situations, but it does virtually no damage from afar. In short, only try it for novelty value.

HK USP .45

PRICE \$500
POWER ★★★★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★
ACCURACY ★★
RANGE CLOSE - MID



DESCRIPTION

The Counter-Terrorist starting weapon. You can choose to put a silencer on it but it will decrease your damage and accuracy. Does a lot of damage for a pistol. Use as backup for a major weapon.

HK USP .45

PRICE \$650
POWER ★★★★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★
ACCURACY ★★
RANGE CLOSE - MID



DESCRIPTION

Highly powerful, you can rip through your enemy in a couple of shots. You will need to conserve ammo, since this only holds 7 bullets at a time. Good for early rounds where people won't have much armour on.

FIVE SEVEN

PRICE \$750
POWER ★★★★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★
ACCURACY ★★★★★
RANGE CLOSE - MID



DESCRIPTION

The new gun that came out along with version 1.0 and it is quite a welcome addition. It is about as accurate as the Colt M4A1 Carbine from afar, which gives you an indication on how great this handgun is. Coupled with extreme power this is unmatched by any other handgun. If you are a CT and feel like kicking butt with a handgun then don't go past this.

RIFLES:

AK47

PRICE \$2500
POWER ★★★★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★★★★
ACCURACY ★★
RANGE CLOSE - MID



DESCRIPTION

A favourite for the terrorists, this weapon is very powerful and also cheap. The bullets are strong enough to rip through an enemy if enough bullets connect and also strong enough to shoot through boxes and thin walls. Coupled with burst fire this weapon can kick some serious ass. Use this if you can't quite afford some of the more expensive weapons.

SIG 552 COMMANDO

PRICE \$3500
POWER ★★★★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★★
ACCURACY ★★★
RANGE CLOSE - LONG



DESCRIPTION

Another great gun for the terrorist. It's definitely a very powerful gun and can also shoot through objects. There's a special feature, which gives you the option to use a single zoom so you can shoot from distances easier. Be sure to get this one if you can afford it.

COLT M4A1 CARBINE RIFLE

PRICE \$3100
POWER ★★★★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★★★★
ACCURACY ★★★★★
RANGE CLOSE - LONG



DESCRIPTION

My personal favourite, this beast of a gun is devastatingly powerful, with a fantastic rate of fire as well as being very accurate. Coupled with the optional silencer using this can be very deadly. A bit of a hefty price but it's worth every dollar. For close to mid range battles you cannot over look this baby.

STEYR AUG

PRICE \$3500
POWER ★★★★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★★
ACCURACY ★★★
RANGE CLOSE - LONG



DESCRIPTION

This gun is pretty much like the Sig 552 in almost every way, except for a different type of recoil. The Sig 552 is exclusive to Terrorists while the Steyr AUG is exclusive to the CTs. Like the Sig, this gun gets the thumbs up.

STEYR SCOUT

PRICE \$2750
POWER ★★★
RATE OF FIRE ★
ACCURACY ★★★★★
RANGE LONG

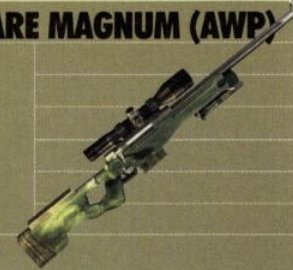


DESCRIPTION

We've seen the poor man's gun; well this is the poor man's sniper rifle. Works pretty much like the other sniper rifles, with a double zoom, but it's not quite as powerful as the AWP. If you really need a sniper rifle in a hurry then go for this one, but if not, wait out until you can afford the AWP.

ARCTIC WARFARE MAGNUM (AWP)

PRICE \$4750
POWER ★★★★★
RATE OF FIRE ★
ACCURACY ★★★★★
RANGE LONG



DESCRIPTION

This is the Steyr Scout on steroids. If you crouch the bullet will go where you point it and is so powerful that if you hit the enemy, no matter where you hit them, it will kill. It's only good for mid to long distances because at close range your reload time is so slow that you can get killed very easily. Other than that, this gun is almost faultless and in the hands of an accurate player it is deadly.

G3SG1 SNIPER RIFLE

PRICE \$5000
POWER ★★★★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★★
ACCURACY ★★★
RANGE CLOSE - LONG



DESCRIPTION

It has a pretty fast rate of fire for a sniper rifle meaning it can be used close up as a regular weapon. To accommodate for this, there are more bullets in the chamber before needing to reload, but the bullets that hit won't be as powerful. This is virtually the Ferrari of sniper rifles so if you can afford it, go and show it off to your friends.

SG550 SNIPER RIFLE

PRICE \$4200
POWER ★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★★
ACCURACY ★★★
RANGE CLOSE - LONG



DESCRIPTION

This gun acts a bit like the G3SG1, being less like a sniper rifle and more like a Colt M4A1 and such. The downside to this is if you get in a long-range fight against people with AWP's don't expect to win. Give it a shot to see if you like it, it's great for all ranges and also not as expensive as other sniper rifles.



SHOTGUNS

M3 SUPER 90 COMBAT SHOTGUN

PRICE \$1700
POWER ★ (at long range)
 ★★★★★ (at close range)
RATE OF FIRE ★
ACCURACY depends on range once again
RANGE CLOSE



DESCRIPTION

Only use this at close range. Great for battles in narrow areas, but if you miss your first shot, don't expect to be too healthy for your second one because its rate of fire is horribly slow.

XM1014 AUTOMATIC SHOTGUN

PRICE \$3000
POWER ★ (at long range)
 ★★★★★ (at close range)
RATE OF FIRE ★★★
ACCURACY depends on range once again
RANGE CLOSE



DESCRIPTION

If you want to go for a shotgun and have enough money, pick this ahead of the M3 Super90. It does a little less damage, but that is more than made up for with the faster rate of fire. Again, only use it at close range because it could barely hurt a fly from afar.

MACHINE GUNS

M249 PARA MACHINEGUN

PRICE \$5750
POWER ★★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★★★★
ACCURACY ★
RANGE CLOSE - MID



DESCRIPTION

Don't bother. This gun is unbelievably expensive and is not worth the money you spend on it. The clip is bigger than any other gun in the game, meaning you won't need to reload much, if at all. Another bad thing about this gun is when holding it your movement slows to a crawl. When met by the enemy, you can and will get run down easily. Again, give this a miss.

SUB-MACHINE GUNS

MP5 SUB-MACHINEGUN

PRICE \$1500
POWER ★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★
ACCURACY ★★★★★
RANGE CLOSE - MID



DESCRIPTION

The poor man's weapon. This gun is cheap and quite handy. It's one of the most commonly used weapons by the poor and the rich alike. Considering its cost, it is very efficient because you can still rack up the frags using this gun.

STEYR TMP SUB-MACHINEGUN

PRICE \$1250
POWER ★
RATE OF FIRE ★★★★★
ACCURACY ★★★★★
RANGE CLOSE



DESCRIPTION

This is pretty accurate and its rate of fire is amazing. It lacks the "oomph" from most other weapons and an armoured opponent can withstand many bullets from this gun. It can get the job done but it takes an awfully long time to take someone down with it. Use it only if you are trying to save money.

FN P90

PRICE \$2350
POWER ★★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★★★★
ACCURACY ★★★
RANGE CLOSE - MID



DESCRIPTION

This is quite an expensive gun, but if you can afford it then go for it! One major plus is that this gun holds 50 bullets per clip. The extra bullets mean that if you are in a fight against someone, you will last longer and have the chance to continue on while he reloads. It is slightly more inaccurate than other weapons but the ones that do hit will definitely make an impact.

MAC10 SUB-MACHINEGUN

PRICE \$1400
POWER ★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★
ACCURACY ★
RANGE CLOSE



DESCRIPTION

The only really good thing going for this gun is that it's cheap. Shooting from a distance becomes tough and it really isn't worth saving the extra money. Once again, we say stick to the MP5.

UMP45 SUB-MACHINEGUN

PRICE \$1700
POWER ★★
RATE OF FIRE ★★
ACCURACY ★★★
RANGE CLOSE - MID



DESCRIPTION

Accuracy is better than most other sub-machine guns but that is made up for with the slower firing rate. Its range is slightly better than the other ones in its class, which is an added bonus. Use it if you feel like a change from the MP5.



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?



Gameplay Movies

ALONE IN THE DARK - THE NEW NIGHTMARE

PC - Here's an extremely cinematic trailer for the new Alone In The Dark game coming to almost every platform this year.

GAME BOY ADVANCE TEASER

The Divx codec is required for this movie file that teases us with the sweetness that will be Game Boy Advance.

CONKER'S BAD FUR DAY

Nintendo 64 - Rare have got away with murder when it comes to the content in Conker's Bad Fur Day. Just take a look at these three clips for a few examples of the sleaziness!

THE MAKING OF STAR WARS - STARFIGHTER

PS2 - LucasArts let us in on the making of their best game in ages. If you're undecided on this one, watch this movie and you'll be getting your wallet out.

KENGO: MASTER OF BUSHIDO

PS2 - A stylish little promo clip of the upcoming PS2 game from the makers of the Bushido Blade series. Deadly.

CLIVE BARKER'S UNDYING

PC - Want to get scared? Just turn off all the lights and watch this intro to the characters in Undying. Gruesome gaming.

BLACK AND WHITE

PC - It's almost here! Here's the latest movie clip from the game showing us all sorts of wonderful crazy stuff.

Utilities

DIRECT X 8.0a

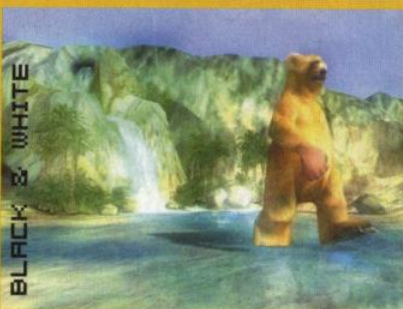
The latest version of Direct X is a must for your PC to run the latest games and game demos. Install this now.

Quicktime 4.0

You need Quicktime to view some of the movies on this disc.

Divx Codec Installer

This codec is needed to view some of the movies on this disc.





Game Demos

GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO

Interplay • Required: P350, 64Mb RAM, 3D card
Finally, Interplay has delivered a big fat demo of their huge hit, Giants. Jump into this spectacular 3D world and make friends with the Meccas, Reapers and Kabuto himself.

NBA LIVE 2001

EA Sports • Required: P200 MMX, 32Mb RAM, 3D card
EA have brought us the latest installment of what is probably regarded as the best basketball game on the market. Install this demo and find out why.

SERIOUS SAM

Croteam • Required: P350, 64Mb RAM, 3D card
This is a hilarious first-person shooter with all the thrills and spills of Doom. Whilst it may be pure fun, it sure ain't a cakewalk. The enemies are utterly relentless, and the weaponry is mad. Awesome fun!

SKI-DOO X-TEAM RACING

Daydream Software • Required: PII 400, 64Mb RAM, 3D card
Carve up some powder in this high-speed sled racing game. Just remember to wear something warm.

DUCATI WORLD RACING CHALLENGE

Acclaim • Required: PII 266, 32Mb RAM, 3D card
More high-speed racing action, only this time you're on tarmac. Throttle up and see what you think of Acclaim's latest motorbike sim.

Bonus!

Quake 3: Team Arena Map Pack!

Working together with id, some of the most talented mapmakers in the Quake community have created some great team-style maps that have been polished and balanced for the Team Arena game modes. We've got it all right here.



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 hyper-cd@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

THE WILTING LEAVES OF AUTUMN

Ahh, finally the oppressive heat of summer is behind us. We can once more venture out into the un-air-conditioned wilderness and partake in physical activities to our hearts content. But why would we want to?! With games like Conker, GT3 and Black & White on the gaming horizon, there is even more reason to ignore pleas from friends and family that you see a live tree, just once, this calendar year.

ADVANCED GAMING

Commuting has always been a problem for hardcore gamers. How exactly can one justify all the wasted time sitting on a bus or train going to school or work? That time could have been put to far better use in front of Vib Ribbon or Perfect Dark. Sure, the Gameboy is fine for kids, but how about some portable depth?

The answer to all our prayers is already in the hands of some very lucky Japanese people. The Gameboy Advance will be released the same day this issue hits the stands and we should have one very soon after. Want to know if Mario Kart Advance is really that good? Rest assured we will inform you. After we extensively test it through 4-player mode a few thousand times of course....

SITE UPDATE

Good news folks! Hyperactive now has a new 'Release Dates' section keeping you up to date on what to expect and when to expect it. Follow with intense excitement as big titles crawl slowly but surely down the list, never quite reaching release!

No American or Japanese release dates here, the only thing we care about is what date Australian shelves will see the title, and we keep you informed accordingly.

Even more reasons to visit Hyperactive!

Bryce McDonough
Hyperactive Producer
brycem@next.com.au



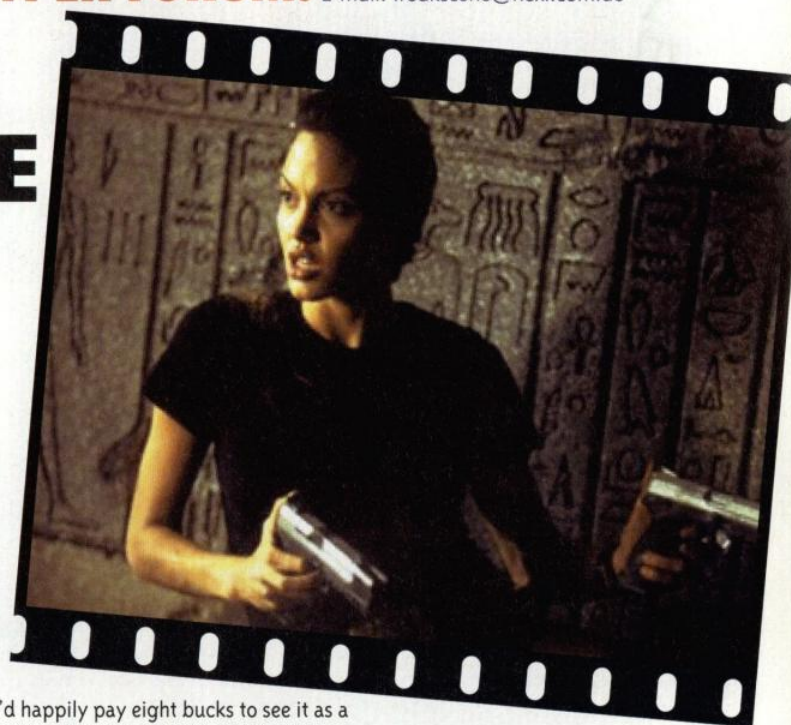
www.hyperactive.com.au

FORUM

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

Q. WHICH GAME SHOULD BE MADE INTO A FILM NEXT AND WHY?

This month we uncover your thoughts on games being made into movies (from the question posed in Hyper #89). Can it be done well, and what game should be next? Here are some of your crazy ideas...



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...

ARE THERE ANY ORIGINAL GAME IDEAS LEFT? GIVE US ONE!

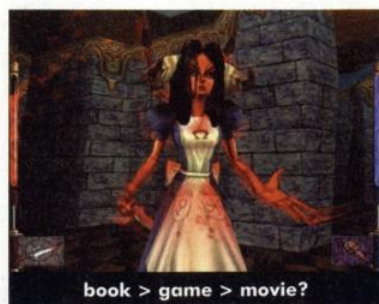
Responses will be printed in Hyper 93.

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.

ONCE UPON A TIME...

Game to movie? That's an easy one: American McGee's Alice, directed by Tim Burton (who else) and starring Rachel Leigh Cooke (from *She's All That*) as the twisted Alice.

The clever premise of American McGee's Alice and how it was translated into a surreal nightmare world was nothing short of visionary. Seeing Alice eating the local fauna to take on their forms (and abilities), the weapons of dice, cards and jack in the boxes, not to mention the sheer terrifying beauty of Alice's demented world/mind. In total, it all lends itself quite easily to become an intriguing and involving story, so why didn't the game developers capitalise on such an enormous opportunity? This, to my mind, is a disservice to the brilliant artists and designers that worked on it.



book > game > movie?

I'd happily pay eight bucks to see it as a movie, but I'm not paying eighty bucks to play it as a dull game - that just happens to look absolutely spectacular (something that movies can easily be accused of as well).

I can understand why games developers (and movie producers) don't like to take risks with innovative ideas in such a competitive market, but where is the risk of putting in a story? I mean, really?

Mat Brady
matbrady@powerup.com.au

STEALING A GOOD IDEA

The sad excuses for game/movie crossovers are, pretty much, a reflection of themselves. Characterless pieces of steaming dog turds. And that, I reckon, is the exact reason why the movies that have so fearlessly trailblazed like *Mortal Kombat* and *Street Fighter* have disgraced us gamers.

Character is the life force behind the concept of game-based movies. The previous games had about as much character and personality as a sloth. Yeah, everyone thinks that's cool, yet very quickly, the whole thing turns stale.

Does the word "Taffer" mean anything? "Oi'll find you... eventually!" ring a bell? Can you name the ultimate

game character? Begins with G, ends in ARRETT. Yes, our lovably light-fingered friend from Thief would make great movie material. I was recently playing Thief II. Have you actually listened to the guards having an argument? It is genuinely funny! The whole concept, too, would put you in Garrett's position. Maybe Looking Glass Studios would've been saved if "NYPD Garrett" came about. Sipowicz and Garrett. Wow. Oh yeah... First Person Shooters (with the exception of Thief, Deus Ex, System Shock II and Half-life) would make shithouse movies. Use your brains, people.

Mongoose.
Wade_veridian@lycos.com

BATTLEFIELD ZELDA

After thinking for damn near four seconds while on the toilet enjoying my favourite past-time (reading Hyper, not... ahem). The thought popped up that the obvious answer to this question would be The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time.

There are three main reasons for my feelings, the first being the nerves connecting my brain to the rest of my body, but more importantly, the second reason is that it is a kickass game designed by the world's best



where's David Hayter when you need him?



this Orc has Bruce Willis written all over him

and is freaking cinematic already.

The third, of course, is the series' glowing potential for exploitation, I mean, who can name one person that has ever bought a console that still doesn't know about the Legend of Zelda?

Speaking of changing the subject, tell me if this doesn't sound cool: Ganondorf could be played by John Travolta, in this way he could re-use the costume from *Battlefield Earth* that made him big, tall and scary (it also made him walk like a duck, but no matter). Link could be played by Leonardo Di Caprio, making use of his girlish features. The movie would proceed as normal until the final battle at the end where, by an astonishing twist, Ganondorf wins by shooting Link in the face with a fireball. Of course the fairy that he has trapped inside the little bottle will revive him, but his face will never be the same again...

Ian Patullo
ianpatian@hotmail.com

SOLID CELLULOID

Metal Gear Solid, with its intuitive storyline, array of characters and its excellent blend of action, adventure, mystery, unexpected plot twists and extreme tension, would make the best game-turned-film of all. When playing the game for the first time recently, I felt I was playing a movie where I was seamlessly able to interact with the virtual environments, the characters and solve a riddle that lies at the heart of the game. This compelling storytelling feels more like a film than that of a game.

If MGS was to be turned into a film, here's what I would do. Being a second year Film Student, my recommendation would be to ask the Wachowski Brothers (*The Matrix*) to possibly write, but definitely direct the film. Hideo Kojima, creator, writer and director of the game, would be my first choice to write the full length, motion picture script with the

end result of the film running at an epic 3 hours. I would ask that he write the script word-for-word, just like the game.

The bits where the gameplaying footage comes in, with no dialogue at all, would be filled in with certain small talk, new discoveries, tension and of course, action, whilst keeping the film on track. It's hard to describe what I've just said above, but I do have the very idea in my head.

Finally, the legendary fight coordinator, Yuen Wo Ping (*The Matrix*, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*) would guide the cast members through its many fight scenes and breathtaking stunts to make the film only more memorable.

Stephen Langton
langton_stephen@hotmail.com

RATED R FOR RUSSIAN

I propose a tragic story in which a man strikes a bargain with the devil and, in return for a single favour, becomes a homicidal and sexual maniac. He goes on a rampage of rape and destruction while his friends piece together his undoing. They figure it out just as he kills himself, taking an entire skyscraper with him and beginning an eternity in Hell listening to beeping Russian music. His favour? Four squares in a straight line to save him from annihilation. The name of the film? "Death And Tetris".

Alex D-T
alexdt@excite.com

IT'S ALL ABOUT WAR...

Gladiator, *The Patriot*, *Braveheart*, *Spartacus* to mention a few... All incredible blockbuster movies with one thing in common: warfare. Romans vs the Goths, The Yanks, the Brits, the Kilts, not to mention the revolting slaves... All pitted in bloody combat on the big screen making millions of people gape in awe at the destruction and brutality of war. Also one must not forget the placid scenes of romance and affection, such movies also have to offer to provide the other majority of the population something to appreciate.

We have all seen enough of Humans vs Humans. Time to take the next step, and dawn unto a new era on the big screen. Humans vs Orc!

Yes, the classic game *Warcraft*, the birth of all strategy games to date. Knights of Valour clashing against savage armies of blundering Orcs, t'would be a spectacle. With the 3D

art revolution exploding into cinematics one could create a very entertaining movie.

Stefan B
Perth W.A.

B-MOVIE MAYHEM

To think of which game I wanted a movie made out of, I was forced to go back through my huge collection of games. Actually, that was just a nice excuse to do such a thing. But I came up with a couple of things...

First I played through the classic game "Super Star Wars". This made me think (no small thing on its own) what a great movie they could make based on this game. But really, big hairy Wookies? Laser swords - or "light sabers"? A long time ago in a galaxy far away? Nobody would buy that stuff. It'd be small cult favourite at best.

So having realised that failure I went on... and came up with THE best gaming movie idea. It would be called *Gaming extreme to the max with the fresh dudes who are so bad that they rule the phat scene in a zany wiggity whack kinda way*.

The star would be Carrot Top. He'd be a whacky kid who has amazing video game skills. He is called on by the next generation *Police Academy* crew - because they need his gaming skills to crack a game that is actually an evil terrorist's nuclear bomb. Many crazy things go down as the academy (led by a character played by David Hasselhoff) tries to get Carrot Top to join.

After about 5 hours of this shit, Hillel comes along and kills all of them after screaming "Don't f**k with the games Hollywood! Don't f**k with the games!"

You gotta admit that'd be a hit.
Hillel
Hillelsam@netscape.net

Well, that was a revelation. - Ed.



what were they thinking??

MAIL



HYPER LETTERS:

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

HOT STUFF LOOMING

Dear Hyper,
There are some great games in production by many high profile developers but a few stand out as THE games to own this year.

First of all there is the next installment in the Thief series, Thief III: The Information Age. Garrett returns once again to sneak and steal, but now he's in the new millennium. Garrett must take on the mega-corporations and government installations in high risk hacking expeditions. Stealth is the order of the day, with Garrett employing the latest techniques in undetectability and infiltration.

In addition, another great sounding title is XCOM: Appliance. Who knows what fate lies in the humans' battle against the fearsome alien toasters. The devices with an unfathomable purpose created by beings with incomprehensible needs and desires. Yes, XCOM: Appliance will have it all.

Another title I'm sure has star potential is yet another sequel. It will be called,

Hitman: Codename 86. That bumbling detective, Maxwell Smart is at it again. Take amusement in guiding Max through an intriguing world of mayhem, where he takes the role of the greatest assassin that ever walked. He must utilise his wits, as well as his arsenal of weapons and disguises to tackle the drug cartels and terrorist organisations. Laugh as he attempts a hit on the drug baron, only to be discovered and when captured say "Would you believe... I'm your waiter?" or something like that.

This year will bring with it a number of great titles to choose from. These titles seem to be the hottest upcomers.

Anon

Via E-mail

*Dear anonymous reader,
You forgot a few games on the schedule... Command and Conker for N64 (a new strategy game from Nintendo's Rare studios); Phantasy Star Offline for Dreamcast (hey, this one's no joke); and Metal Mickey Solid for PS2 (an undercover robot kicks arse). We can't wait!*

GAMECUBE WHEN?

Hyper Crew (specifically Cam Shea), Thanks for the well-researched and written feature that was 'The top 10 reasons why Nintendo Gamecube will rock!' of issue #89. Being an in-the-know Nintendophile who continually scours the Net for all news Nintendo, it brought a tear to my eye to read your accurate and unbiased portrayal of the gaming beast that is the Cube. It seems most magazines and sites (as well as some development houses) ignorantly persist with the 'Kiddie Image Theory' and label it a two horse console race, despite PS2's problems and Microsoft's inexperience. It is heartening to see Nintendo's plans finally slot into place, and I eagerly await the gaming greatness that the NGC will bring. Which paves the way for my question: When do you presume an Australian release? Keep up the good work.

Tiddy
ttiddy@hotmail.com

*Hey Tiddy,
The Nintendo Gamecube will launch in Australia sometime in early 2002, maybe March. It depends on how well Nintendo keep their other launch deadlines in Japan and the USA this year.*

SHOW ME THE SHOW

Hey guys,
I'm just sitting back after a few bongos and I got to wondering. Wondering about how cool your mag is, and how groovy your new show on FoxKids is! Then that got me thinking to how often you guys make that show? I have only seen it once. Was that first hour-long episode (really cool btw) a pilot or something? I just think it would rock if it was on once a week? :) Anyway keep up the great work guys. Later.

TreeHouse
Via E-mail

*Dear TreeHouse,
The Hyper TV show was a Christmas special only, but you never know when the show might pop up again. We'll keep you informed.*

HIS EMINENCE

Note: Read this the same way that Eminem sings the song "Stan".

Dear Fish,
I wrote you but you still ain't answered. I left my name, ICQ number and e-mail at the bottom. I sent two

letters back in Autumn, you must not have got em, there probably was a problem in the Post Office or sumthin'. Sometimes I write addresses too messy when I dot em.

But anyhoo stuff it, how's Hype going? I've just been gamin' away, waitin' for the Gamecube's glorious launch day! I read about your birthday too man, I hope you got all the presents that you wanted from Cam. I know you probably hear this everyday, but I'm your biggest fan.

I've been getting this mag even before the good'ol day's of Cam. My room's full of your posters and your pictures man, I liked that feature Cam did on Gamecube man, that one was fat.

Anyway, I hope you get this man, hit me back, just to chat.

Your biggest fan, this is Dan.
P.S. I should win somethin'.

(Oh and my name isn't really Dan, I just wrote that cos I couldn't think of another name that rhymed).

Chris :)
chrisyg@hotmail.com

*Dear Chris,
Where was the Elton John bit?*

DIGGIN' THE DIGITAL

To the enslaved gaming monkeys that are Hyper,

With the coming era of digital TVs supposed to revolutionise the way we watch our idiot boxes, one question remains; how is this gonna effect our gaming consoles?

I've heard the Xbox will come included with HDTV support, is this gonna be a giant leap in image and/or sound quality from out old TVs? And what of the current consoles (Dreamcast, PS2) who DON'T support the new standards, will they be changed in any worthwhile way?

Cheers,
doyle.
Andrew333@bigpond.com

*Dear doyle,
HDTV rocks, as it will mean we can play our consoles at extremely high-resolutions, with a greater colour-depth and with higher refresh rates, if the feature is supported as it will be with the Xbox and Gamecube. You'll never be able to look at an old console on a standard TV again, which is displaying at a boggy 640x480 with a low 50 or 60 Hz refresh rate. Currently with the Dreamcast, you can actually use a VGA adapter to plug the*

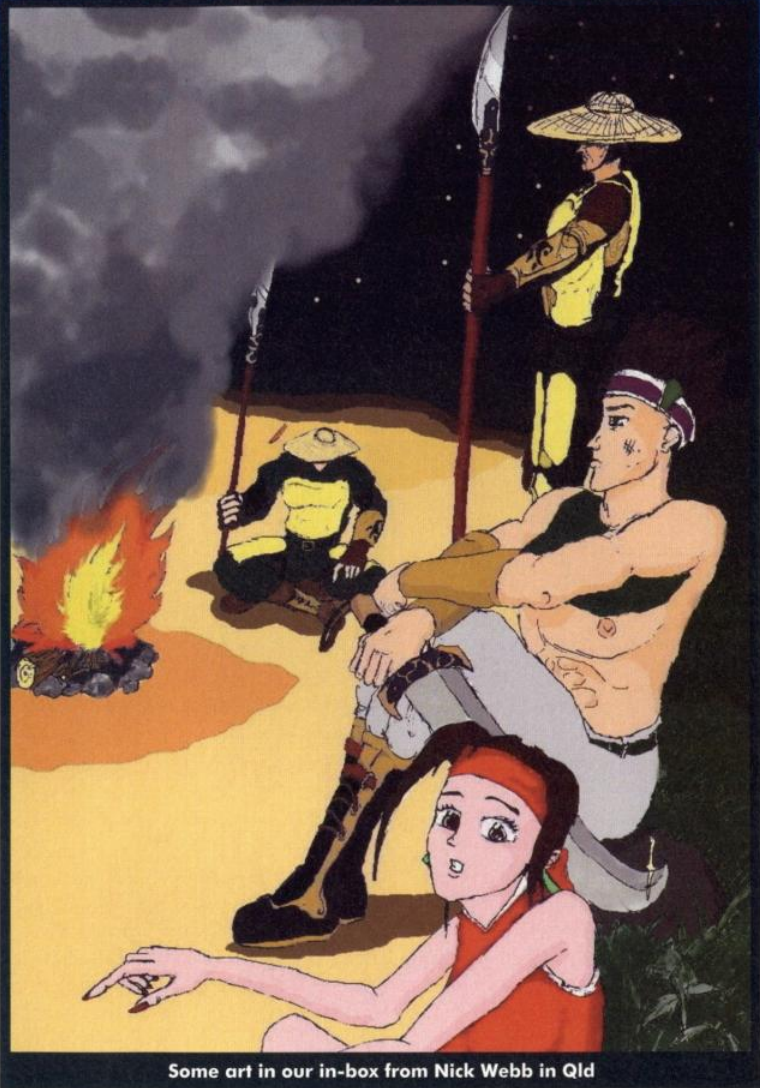
CAPTION THIS!

**PART 16
WINNER**

Our winning caption comes from **Liam Perrin** in the ACT. Funny, because it's true.



Even the toilet wouldn't accept his copy of Daikatana



Some art in our in-box from Nick Webb in Qld

BACK IN MY DAY...

Hyper,

I'm pushing 27 here, so I'm a codger to all you young gaming punks. So I'm going to talk whether you're listening or not.

Back in my day, Samus was controlled from a fixed "camera angle" that tracked her from the side. What made this great was that you, as the omnipotent gamer, could see things that Samus would never have been able to see. Samus could be in a cramped cavern, and you didn't have to worry about where to put the camera. You could spot that pair of hi-jump boots on the other side of a steel wall and know that you had to find a way through it to get to them. If the camera had been behind Samus' shoulder, she would never have seen the boots, and you wouldn't have either, unless another happy clipping error occurred.

Samus has never needed polygons, and she still doesn't. You little brats all think that absolutely everything must be 3D or it'll be "wasting the power of the Gamecube." Well, cinematic cutscenes and fancy rendering used to take a back seat to the part of the game that requires a controller. How many times will you watch the dazzling cutscene before you impatiently press a button to skip it? Some games transition fine to 3D, and even work better in that environment. But others, like Castlevania, Mega Man, and Metroid were designed to be fun without a cumbersome third dimension. Still, the screaming masses must be placated, so Metroid 3D is inevitable. When it turns out to somehow imperceptibly lack the feel of the originals, the kids will have their canned technical explanation: "Oh, it didn't have enough polygons. The frame rate wasn't high enough. The camera was a bit tricky. There was a bit too much draw-in. You couldn't skip the cutscenes. There was an Earthquake... a Terrible Flood... Locusts!!" The Universe has finally granted the human race the opportunity to make an even more lush, beautifully-animated 2D Metroid game, running at last in high resolution. But this power will never be realised. This is because Realism has replaced Artistic Merit. Retro should develop the next Metroid for Game Boy Advance, and spit in the face of the narrow-minded bastard children that Sony has raised.

"BOY WHO LOVE TRANSFORMERS"

b_else@yahoo.com

Dear BWLT,

Harsh words at the end there (we're not sure you can solely blame the PlayStation for the death of 2D gaming. I mean, you only had to see where PC games were headed after Quake and the like, to know that the dominance of 3D gaming was inevitable. And chin up, there's always the Game Boy Advance to re-ignite interest in 2D.), but we agree with your sadness at the news that Metroid on Gamecube will be in First Person. Hopefully, it can be done well, but a lush 2D scrolling Metroid would have been awesome. I guess you won't be wanting this PS2 wheel then. We can always donate it to another letter this issue?

console into a PC monitor for a nice high quality picture. It's still 640x480 (the TV standard), but it looks great! So the DC at least has an alternative to the standard TV already.

Of course, HDTV is way off for most consumers (it'll be very expensive for a long time), so it's really not worth worrying about for a few years!

THE TECHNOLOGY CURVE

This is the first time that I have emailed the Hyper crew about your Hyper magazine. I have recently become the proud owner of a Creative Labs 3D Blaster GeForce2 GTS 3D Accelerator (32MB AGP) for a cool \$500. This card performs exceptionally well with all my current and old games - it really kicks some serious butt. I previously owned a Banshee PCI video card. I tested this new card on the Alice PC Demo, and it ran perfectly, no slow down at all on an Intel Celeron 500 with 128MB RAM.

I am worried that a 32MB card will not be current for very long, and that I will have to pay for a 64MB card soon after. I had my Banshee for 3 years - I hope to get this amount of life out of my GeForce2 GTS!

Also, for your readers' information, despite the box to the GeForce2 GTS

indicating that it has a 3 year warranty, only a 12 month warranty is applicable for Australia (so much for the lucky country).

Keep up the great articles and the great mag.

Rodney Mayhew
netnerd@bigpond.com

Dear Rodney,

If you're feeling threatened by new, bigger and better cards being released, you'll never sleep well at night. Even if you buy one of the new GeForce 3 64Mb cards soon, you can be guaranteed that something better will be on the horizon later in the year. It's the same with any hardware these days.

Don't worry. You've bought a great card and it'll give you great gaming for a long, long time. There really is no need to have the latest, greatest unless you haven't upgraded in about 3-4 years.

HYPER GRIPE

What was with the letter of the month for issue 89? Some guy writes in asking to see some photos and for his effort he (assumedly) wins a steering wheel set. I can understand if you wanted an excuse to show the "dance-off" photos but surely letter of the month should go



Gamester PS2
Dual Force 2 Wheel.

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

to someone who has written the best letter (as bizarre as that may sound).

Just when it looks like Hyper is getting more professional and polished, silly little things like this pop up and make it look like it is being put together by people who don't really take their job seriously. Considering that most readers would regard Hyper as THE best games mag in the country, I think you've got a responsibility to ensure that everything in your publication, even the most minute of details, is of the highest standard.

Anyway, that's my two cents.

Giuseppe Marino

Room237@houseofhorrors.com

Dear Giuseppe,

Gee, who's lost their sense of humour?

PS2 POO POO

Hi Guys.

I've collected Hyper since day 1, great mag, congrats.

Anyway, I've just got to get off my chest how completely disappointed I am with Sony and the PS2. Right off the bat... let me tell you that I have

owned every game system ever since the SNES days, as well as PC. A true game enthusiast... not loyal to any company/brandname. I am loyal to great games!!

No matter which way you slice it... the PS2 is a major disappointment. To this day the only really decent games are SSX and DOA 2. The DVD component is average... terrible if you compare it to a good DVD player (which I have). I was also personally very peeved about having to shell out for a DVD player as part of the PS2 when I already own one.

Those punters who are claiming that the PS2 will be great "one day" when certain games arrive, and when the machine supposedly goes online. History shows us very clearly that if a new system does not have these things at launch... promises of updates and add ons etc almost never eventuate, and if they do, they are crap. Those expecting great online possibilities from the PS2 are likely to be VERY disappointed. The XBOX seems certain to be online from day one... but time will tell.

As for the Dreamcast... nothing will

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...

stop it dying now, that is a fact. This is a gaming tragedy, as the Dreamcast has 50 many amazing titles, both right now and coming out shortly. Those of you who have fooled yourselves thinking that the PS2 is a superior system, have either clearly not spent much time playing both systems (as I have), or you are complete gaming novices.

So, my advice to the gaming punter, if you care? Get a cheap Dreamcast, get a heap of the great games already available, play your heart out for 12 months, and wait and see if the Xbox delivers. Because if Sony don't drop the price of the PS2 to the sub \$500 region, and get some good games out VERY soon, the PS2 could be buried alongside the Dreamcast before too long. And I never thought that would have happened... but there you go.

Frag Hag, Sydney, NSW

Dear Mr. Hag, The Gamecube may be out at the same time as the Xbox here, so there are two new machines to keep your eye on as you play your Dreamcast. As far as the PS2 goes, you never know what kind of games will pop up later this year... the machine could blossom if developers start to get the hang of it... There's no doubt that the latest PSX games crap all over the early launch titles, so there's a fair bit of hope for the PS2 games library to improve significantly.

THE BOUNCER?

A certain problem I have noticed with the PS2, which has somehow slipped by the gaming public unnoticed, is this "bouncing effect" mentioned in a

tiny box on page no.5 of the PS2 manual. I have been into numerous specialty stores running PS2 machines on SONY 68CM flat-screen TV's that all experience this "bouncing effect", which Sony claims "technically lies within the television". Their own "state-of-the-art" televisions? I also called Sony's "Powerline", who, after not ringing back for four days, eventually suggested to me the machine was most likely faulty and to get an exchange. They obviously had no idea what I was talking about even though I've seen this problem on about 50 different televisions. Of course, the new PS2 that I received from the exchange did exactly the same thing. A store employee attempted to convince me it was a problem with aliasing in launch titles, which is curious considering the effect occurs in Tekken's movies - not just gameplay - as well as the demo CD that is packaged with the console, the browser and PSONE games.

Am I crazy? Are you Hyper guys running just about every title without a weird wave thing moving on the right side of the screen? Not to mention the excessive flickering in the display...

Futterman Via E-Mail

Dear Futterman, Whilst we personally have not had these problems with our two PS2s (one PAL, one NTSC), yours is not the only letter we've received regarding strange problems with their console. We've even heard of PS2s gouging lines into CDs and DVDs. Not a good sign. Can Sony, or anyone, offer us an explanation?

Harvey Norman

SAVE 15%* OFF ANY TOP 20 GAME!

Harvey Norman would like to offer readers of Hyper an exclusive discount offer on the titles appearing on the Official Australian PC, Playstation or N64 Games Chart. Simply complete the coupon & take it into any Harvey Norman store to claim your discount.

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I would like to receive news & other special offers

* Limit of one per person. Original voucher must be presented & completed to claim the discount. Discount applies to regular store pricing. Not redeemable or transferable for cash. Offer ends 21st April. Customer details may be used for further promotional activities.

HH4

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price PC Games

(>\$29.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↔ The Sims	Strategy
2	↔ The Sims Livin' Large	Add On
3	↔ Sim City 3000 Unlimited	Strategy
4	↑ Cmm'd & Cnqr Red Alert 2	Strategy
5	↑ Age of Empires Collector's Ed	Strategy
6	↑ Sim Mania For Kids	Strategy
7	↑ Age of Emp. 2: Conqueror's Exp	Add On
8	★ Diablo 2	RPG
9	↓ Sim Mania Pack	Strategy
10	↔ Age of Empires 2	Strategy

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price PlayStation Games

(>\$39.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↔ Driver 2	Racing
2	↑ Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Sports
3	↓ Crash Bash	Family
4	↓ Spyro 3 Year Of The Dragon	Platform
5	↔ WWF Smackdown! 2	Sports
6	↔ Medal Of Honor Underground	Action
7	↔ Tony Hawk's Skateboarding	Sports
8	↔ TOCA World Touring Cars	Racing
9	★ Dave Mirra's BMX	Sports
10	★ Tomb Raider: Chronicles	Adventure

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price N64 Games

(>\$39.95 inc. GST)

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

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price Dreamcast Games

(>\$49.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	★ Soul Calibur	Action
2	↓ Crazy Taxi	Racing
3	↓ House Of The Dead 2	Action
4	↔ Land Before Time Gt Valley	Adventure
5	↓ Virtua Fighter 3 Tb	Action
6	↔ Bass Fishing	Sports
7	★ NBA 2000	Sports
8	★ Silver	RPG
9	★ Shenmue	Adventure
10	↔ Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	Sports

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price PS2 Games

(>\$49.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↔ SSX	Sports
2	↔ Tekken Tag Tournament	Action
3	↑ Dead Or Alive 2	Action
4	↓ Summoner	RPG
5	↑ Madden NFL 2001	Sports
6	↔ Formula 1 Champ Season	Racing
7	↔ Ridge Racer V	Racing
8	↑ Time Splitters	Adventure
9	↓ FIFA 2001	Sports
10	★ Silent Scope	Action

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price Games - All Formats

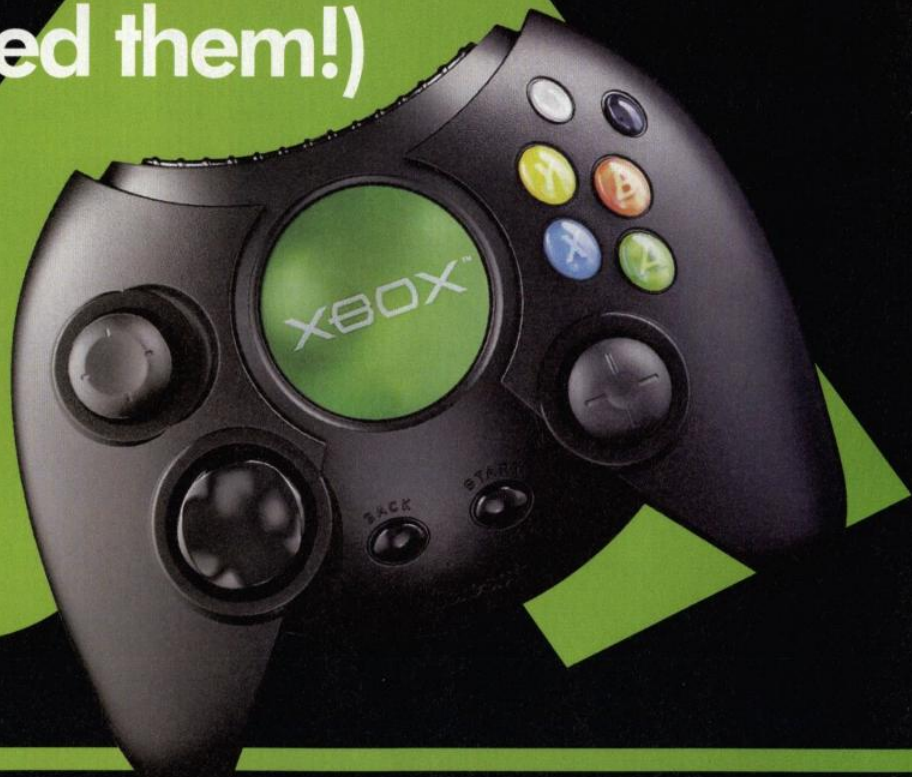
Position	Game Title	Format
1	↔ Pokemon Gold	Game Boy
2	↔ Pokemon Silver	Game Boy
3	↔ The Sims	PC/Mac
4	↔ Driver 2	PlayStation
5	↑ Banjo Tooie	N64
6	↓ Bond: TWINE	N64
7	↑ The Sims Livin' Large	PC/Mac
8	↓ Donkey Kong Country	Game Boy
9	★ Pokemon Yellow	Game Boy
10	★ SSX	PS2

NEXT ISSUE

Hyper 92 >> On sale April 25

NEW XBOX GAMES REVEALED (and we've played them!)

Hyper magazine's own Eliot Fish is over in the USA to play with the Xbox, play the games, and bring you the inside word direct from Microsoft headquarters. All will be revealed next issue, so don't miss this exclusive hands-on Xbox feature!



PLUS:

PC BLACK AND WHITE

N64 CONKER'S BAD FUR DAY

PSone TIME CRISIS: PROJECT TITAN

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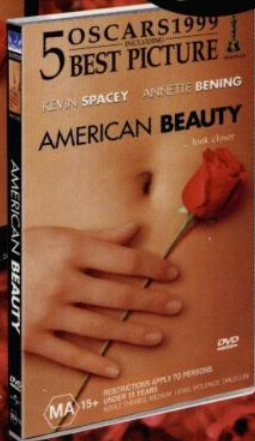
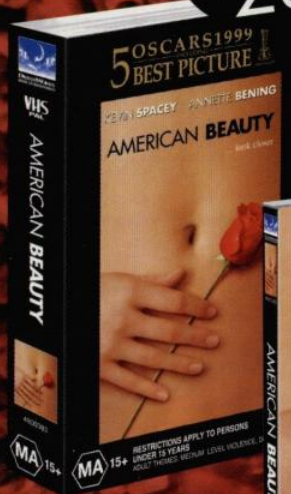


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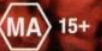


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