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ISSUE 93
JULY 2001

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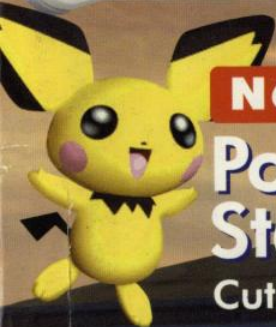
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Warcraft III

Meet the makers -
Blizzard talk war!



Reviews

- PC** Tribes 2
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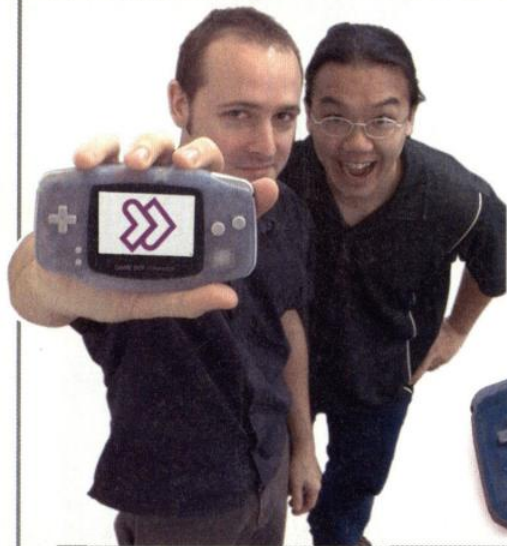


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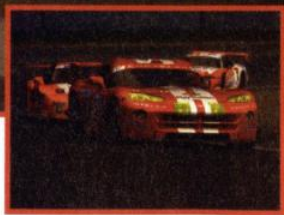
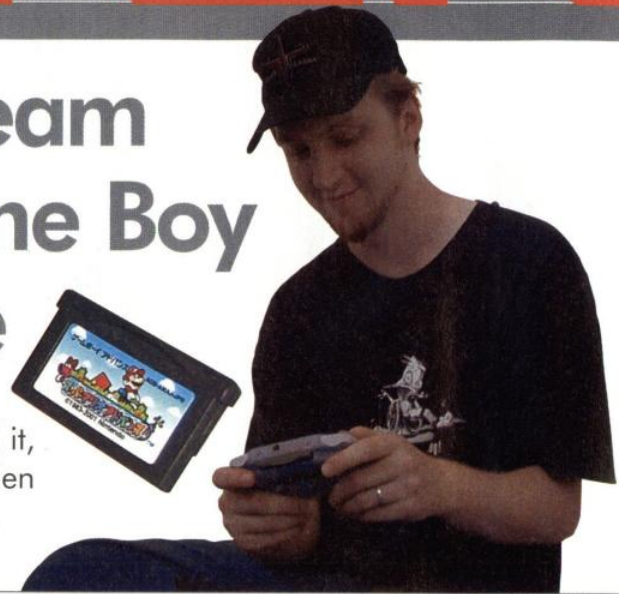
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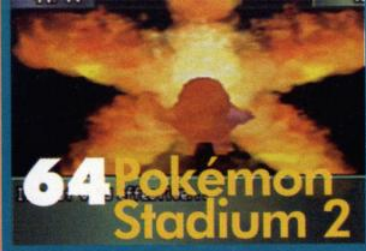
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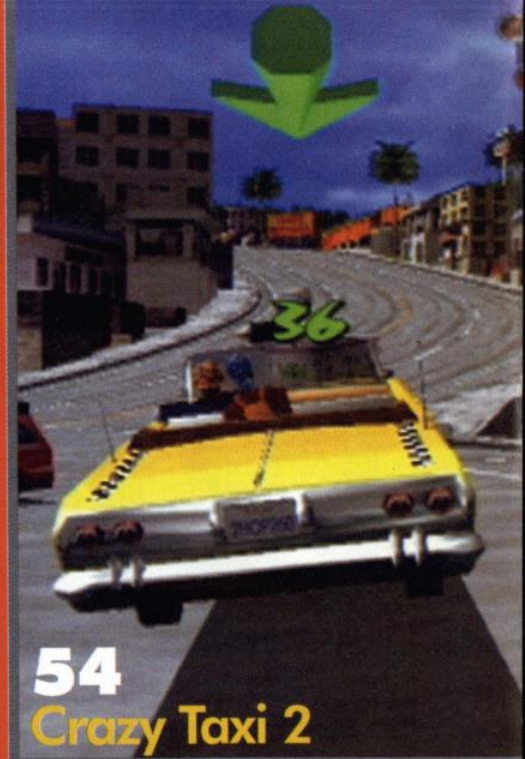
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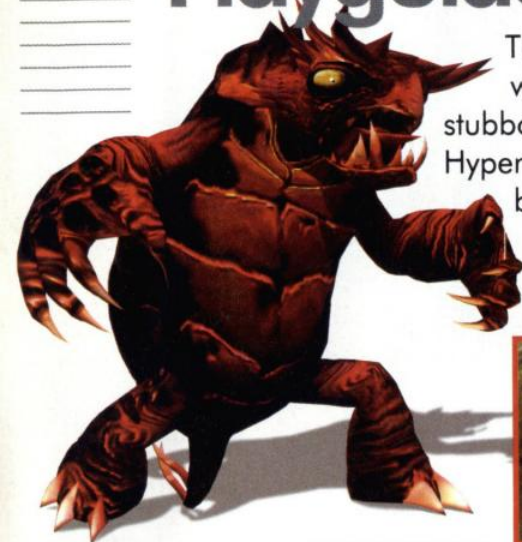
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88 WIN a DVD Player!

Movies rock. Red Faction rocks. To celebrate, we're giving away a DVD player and Red Faction pack.



HYPER»



ISSUE
93
JULY
2001

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Printed CTP by: **PMP Print**
Distribution by: **Gordon & Gotch**
Customer Service Ph: 1300 65 0666
Fax: 1300 65 0777

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Next Publishing Pty Ltd
ACN 002 647 645
ISSN 1320-7458

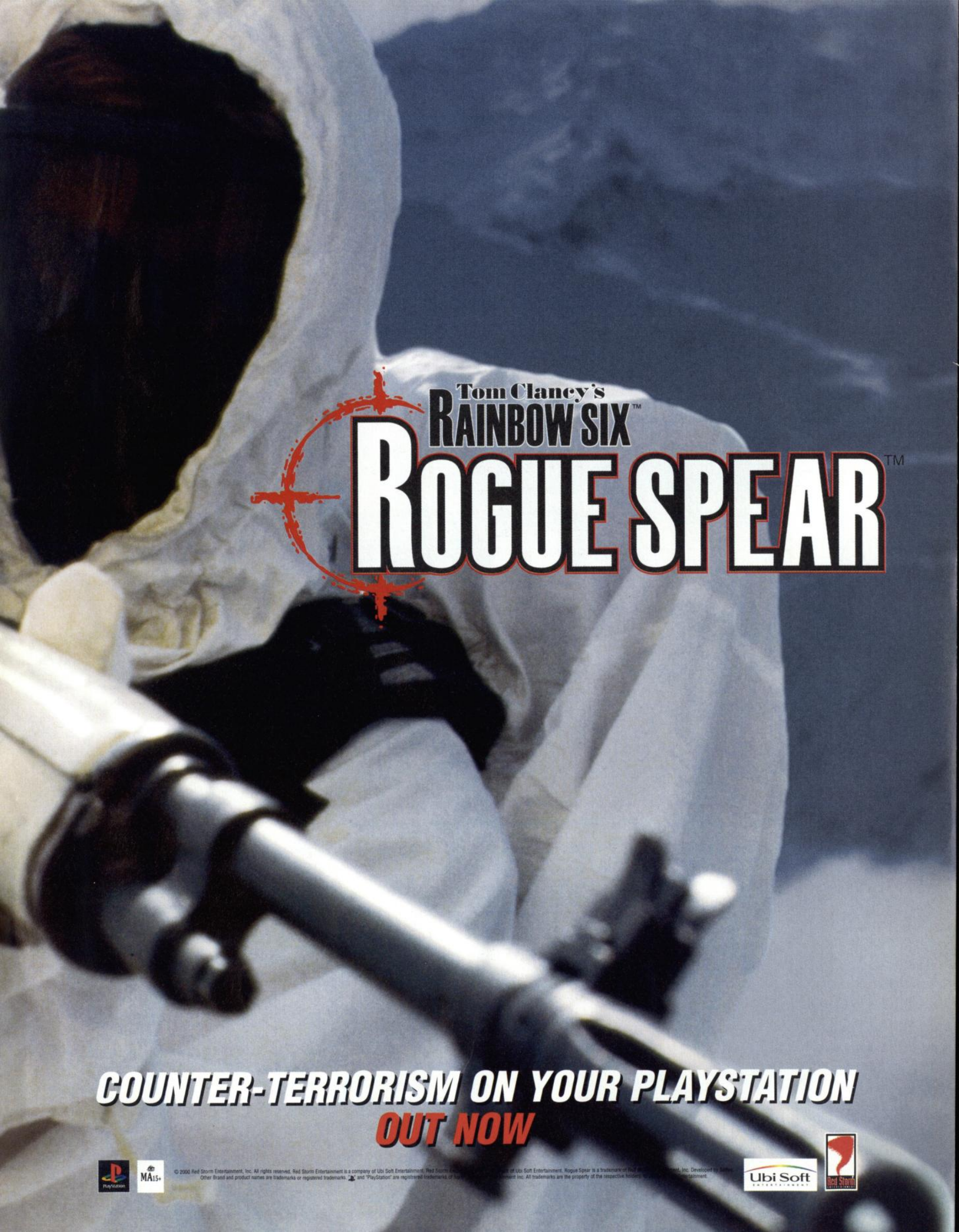
HYPE IT UP

>> As you're reading this, the dust is still settling from E3 2001 in Los Angeles. E3. That's EEE. It stands for Electronic Entertainment Expo, and it's the yearly event that pits the gaming giants against each other to battle for the attention of the world's gaming press. Nintendo, Sony, Microsoft and Sega pull out all the stops, along with some of the world's biggest games publishers, to wow and woo gamer journalists such as myself that they have the best [insert product here] on the planet. It's beautiful, funny and nasty all at the same time. Game developers jump up and down and employ sexy girls in PVC to lure you over to their dodgy platform games. Strange masked men parade the halls dressed as everything from Pacman to Duke Nukem... even if they weren't employed to. The hair is big, the burgers are big, the hangovers are big, the games are bigger than big and we'll bring you all the gossip next issue after we recover from our jet lag. Just wait until you see what we have in store for you... it's BIG.

For now, get your chops around the meaty goodness we have for you this issue. Win a DVD player, read our Warcraft III interview, see what we think of Nintendo's Game Boy Advance, discover the beauty of Gran Turismo 3 and learn how to stop your creature from misbehaving in our Black & White playguide. All because we love you.

Eliot Fish >> Editor





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NEWS

IN THE NEWS

- Xbox exclusive
- Linux based PS2
- GBA mini-stick
- Star Wars: Galactic Battlegrounds
- Castle Wolfenstein

Microsoft behind The Matrix

Xbox to have exclusivity
on *The Matrix* game



Sleek, black, sexy and stylish. And we're not talking about Carrie-Anne Moss' catsuit.

Microsoft delivered a sucker punch to Sony and Nintendo recently, securing a six month Xbox exclusivity period on Shiny's game based on *The Matrix*. Whilst there's nothing terribly out of the ordinary about that, everything else about the deal is very strange indeed. Microsoft agreed to "lend" publisher Interplay US\$5 million to help fund their operations – including developing games based on *The Matrix*. This money will be paid back in royalties from sales of *The Matrix* game, and four others. Interplay will still be publishing it, with Microsoft requiring a couple of minor trifles to set the Xbox version apart.

Not only will the Xbox version be first, but apparently it will be the **ONLY** online capable version of the game! The PS2 and Gamecube versions aren't allowed to have online play as an option! The Xbox version will have better weapons, effects, motion capture, extra characters, more music, bonus vehicles, added moves and FMV! In short, the other versions won't just be late, they'll be markedly inferior, which is often hard to do with games based on movie licenses. Microsoft have also stipulated that the game must be ready for release within three months of *The Matrix 2*'s cinema release



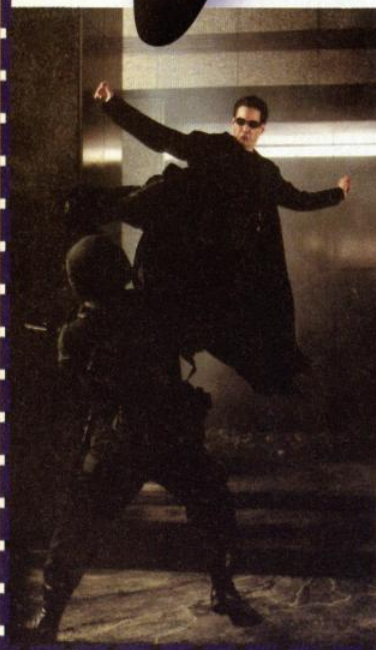
(late next year). We have great faith in Shiny as a development house, and think they could do something cool with this license, but with all the extra features they're now required to pack in, we wonder whether they'll have any time left to think about the game.

The other big news out of Redmond is Microsoft's purchase of Ensemble Studios, the development house best known for the *Age Of Empires* series. Microsoft and Ensemble have had a close

➤ The PS2 and NGC versions aren't allowed to have online play!

relationship for years, so this acquisition doesn't come as a surprise. Nor will it drastically change anything – Ensemble will stay in Dallas, retain creative control, and continue working on *Age Of Mythology* (which, by the way, is looking lovely). They may, however, be more inclined to think about Xbox ports... but we'll wait and see.

The significance of the Ensemble purchase, alongside the *Matrix* coup, is in the timing. It was a nice show of strength for Microsoft just prior to E3.





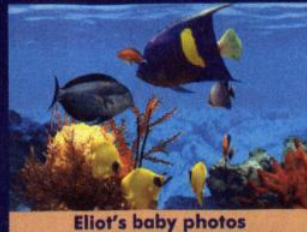
Sega works for Nintendo

Old rivals finally make friends

Sega have so many projects on the boil at the moment it's scary. Who knows how different the game scene (and indeed the world) might be today if they'd been let off the hardware leash any earlier. We might all be driving licensed Crazy Taxis to work, feeding our cats Chu Chu Chow, and tagging up cop cars in our spare time! In addition to their already announced GBA, Xbox and PS2 support, Sega have finally made the announcement we've all been waiting for – Gamecube support. Sega has pledged full support for Gamecube and put two of their highest profile teams – Amusement Vision and Sonic Team, on the case. These guys are responsible for such classics as Daytona 2001, Sonic Adventure and Phantasy Star Online, so get excited! More to the point... Sega games on a Nintendo console! Anyone who played games during the great console wars knows how absurd that sounds, but finally it is reality.

and something fishy...

Making a mere gazillion games isn't enough for the reborn Sega, mind you. A few side projects have also come to light. Sonic Team have ported Outrun for mobile phone technology (we believe Space Harrier and Samba De Amigo have already made the transition) in Japan, and Sega have solved office stress. No, it's not Hari Kiri, but you may consider that after seeing the price. For a mere AU\$8000 or thereabouts, you can purchase "Fish Life" – a digital aquarium. After unleashing Seaman on the world, it seems Sega thought they should put in for the forces of good. The sea creatures are rendered in real time CG and displayed on an LCD touchscreen, so you actually interact with the inhabitants, even drawing pictures on the digital glass. Better yet, Fish Life comes with a mic so you can call any one of the different varieties up from the depths, and get to know them (but not in a Troy McClure way). This is basically next generation Fin Fin (anyone remember that one?), cos as the web site says "it's super entertainment for everyone".



Eliot's baby photos

PS2 goes Linux?

Sony will be releasing a Linux-based version of the PlayStation 2 for the Japanese market mid April. The system will come with a version of Red Hat, a 40gig external hard drive, USB Mouse, Keyboard and VGA Adaptor. Cool! Where's ours? Coming out alongside the PS2 Linux box, is the new standard model PS2, the SCPH-30000, featuring a built in hard drive and 100Mbps Ethernet network adaptor.



GIVING THE GBA SOME STICK



SOne of Kevin and Cam's complaints in our Game Boy Advance hands-on, was that a game like Street Fighter would be difficult to play thanks to the controller layout. Well, this won't solve it, but it may make those hadokens a little easier. From third party peripheral maker Dragon Boy comes a GBA mini-stick to slot over the D-pad. The product even comes with three sizes. Available at import stores only.

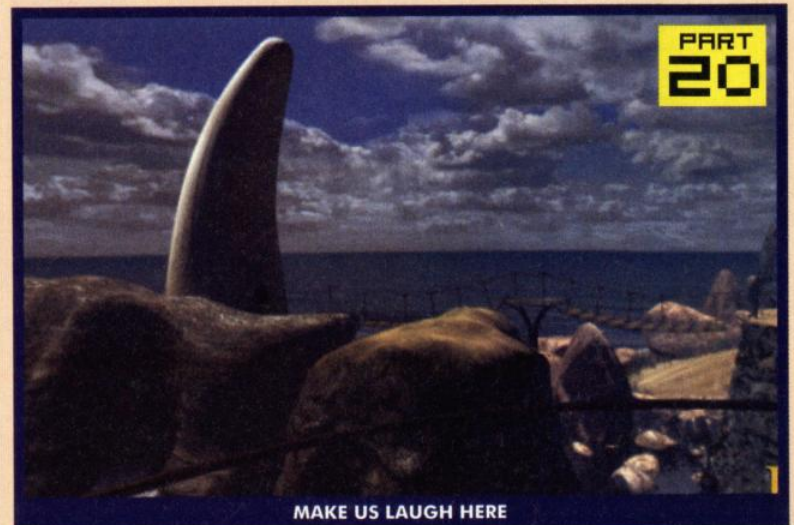


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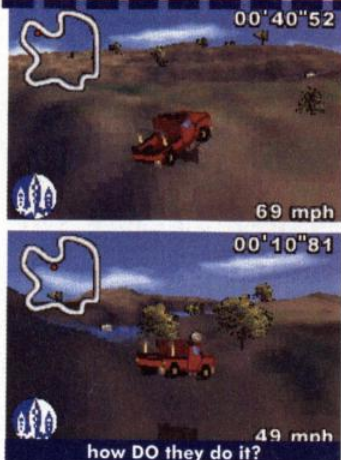
MAKE US LAUGH HERE



Dewbacks on Hoth...? hold on a second

Galactic Battlegrounds

✦ In co-development by LucasArts and Ensemble Studios, Star Wars Galactic Battlegrounds is the Star Wars RTS that we told you about a few issues ago. Now we can actually show you screenshots! Running on a modified Age Of Empires II engine, Galactic Battlegrounds will allow around 200 units to exchange poorly aimed laser fire. Naturally, you can choose to play as the Rebel Alliance or the Galactic Empire, but there will also be another four sides to choose from - the Trade Federation, Gungans, Royal Naboo or the Wookies. How they're going to combine all of these races coherently is anyone's guess, but it'll surely please fans of both the classic trilogy and the prequels. After disappointing the Star Wars fan community with the flawed 3D RTS Force Commander, it's good to see LucasArts are having another shot at a good RTS. Using a largely established game engine means that the team can spend more time on what matters - the gameplay.



GBA DOES 3D!

✦ Back before the GBA's Japanese launch, UK development house Crawfish gave us a decidedly cheeky taste of things to come on GBA with their FPS tech demo using a map from Doom. The demo was primitive, with no enemies or textures to speak of, but look at what they've done with it since! Unfortunately the Doom license wasn't available, so it looks like the game will be licensed from the new Chow Yun Fat and Antonio Banderas flick "Ecks Vs Sever" (no that doesn't make any sense to us either). Looking pretty good for a GBA eh? With at least three enemies on-screen at once, this could be hot.

We've been hyping up the GBA's retro factor, but one developer after another keeps reminding us that this baby can do much more. Mode 7 rocks, but why use it if you can do it in 3D? Development house Small Rockets wanted to make a rough'n'tumble racer over mountainous courses, so they've built polygonal terrain in their title 4X4 Racers. We haven't seen it in motion yet, but these early screens certainly look promising.

PS2 OUTRAGE

✦ Interplay and Outrage Entertainment have announced a new action adventure for the PS2 entitled Rubu Tribe. Hopefully due for release around Christmas time 2001, Rubu Tribe is being developed by the team responsible for the Descent series. The game will combine tactics, puzzle-solving, exploration and strategy in a fantasy world that exists on the back of a giant beast called an Uut. You initially control the tribe leader, but you will be responsible for the actions of your other tribe members also. The announcement of any original new game concept for a console is a welcome one. Check out these new screens!



WINNERS HYPER 91

- The Terminator**
James Varnie, WA
Peter Harrison, Qld
Donna Thorpe, Qld
J Kinsella, WA
Michael Klarin, NSW
- Vanishing Point**
Vady Vorn, NSW
Karl Anderson, WA
Mark Neill, NSW
Damien Millard, Vic
Ben Wynn, NSW



OVERFLOW

You can now boost your PS2's memory card by 32MB, thanks to third party peripheral maker EMS Productions. Just slot a standard 8MB card into it, then plug it into your machine for 40MB! While we're skeptical about this (having been burned by deluxe third party mem cards in the past), it's still worth a look if you're hungry for space.

Dream Factory's awesome new Xbox fighter, codenamed Project Kakuto-X, now has another reason to make it stand out from the crowd. Apparently an official Bruce Lee license has been secured and the title will now be known as "Bruce Lee: Quest For The Dragon".

The Xbox just keeps getting better. The latest addition to the system? The new Dolby Interactive Content Encoder, allowing multi channel audio to be encoded into Dolby Digital 5.1.

The irony can't have escaped them, but Fox Interactive are pushing on anyway. Yes, the Die Hard Trilogy is upon us, with a new Die Hard title announced. It's on its way to Gamecube courtesy of UK Developer Bits Corp, and will no doubt be set in an office block teetering on top of Niagra Falls. In space.

The PlayStation 2 will play host to the sequel to the fantastic Ape Escape. This time around, however, not only will there be a variety of different types of monkey, such as those that can swim, fly and moonwalk (Bubbles), but there will be a grand total of 2001 to collect! Named Ape Escape 2001 (in Japan), this has to be the first literal use of 2001 in a title so far!

The REAL Time Crisis II (arcade) is heading to PS2 courtesy of Namco, and will ship with a USB version of the Guncon. Should be hot.

One of the weirdest Dreamcast titles just got a little weirder. Sega Gaga, the Sega management sim, has caused a mini uproar in Japan thanks to a character called "Adult Children". Apparently, in Japan this means a child with parents who are alcoholics or drug abusers. Sega have withdrawn the game until the character can be renamed and the game re-released. Did anyone tell them what "Seaman" means over here?

Another cool GBA announcement is that the classic point and click adventure game "Broken Sword: Shadow Of The Templars" will be coming to GBA by the end of the year. We couldn't believe it either, but it's looking spot on. Obviously the interface will need to be tweaked, the graphics will be lower resolution and there will be less speech, but overall, this could be the first of many great old-style adventure games for the system.



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STARFIGHTER SPECIAL EDITION

The much lauded PS2 space combat sim, Star Wars: Starfighter, will be released on the Xbox as a Special Edition. The new version of the game will have better graphics, more missions and a new, improved and expanded two-player mode. If the Xbox version can do away with the slightly chuggy framerates of the PS2 version, then this is a game you should start saving for already.



NEW CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN SCREENS!

Check out the latest shots of Castle Wolfenstein for PC! Looking gritty.

SEQUELS AHOY!

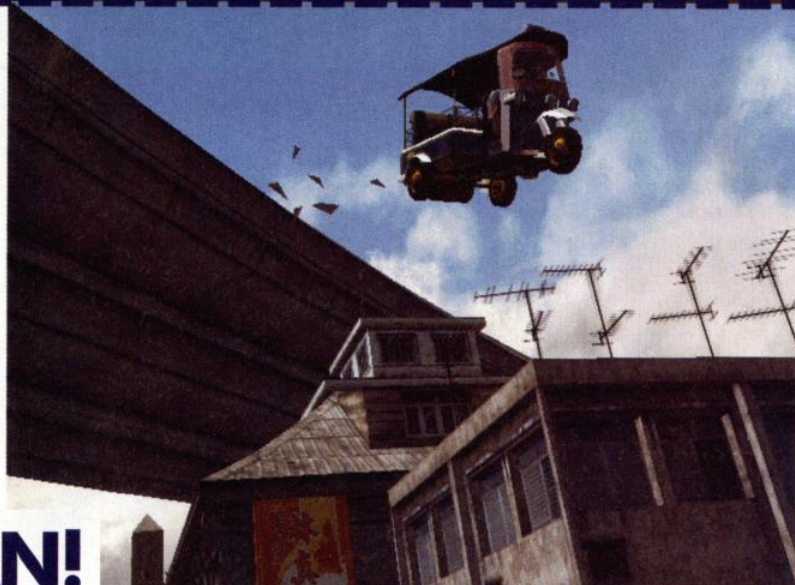
No One Lives Forever and Aliens VS Predator will both be receiving PC sequels thanks to a new initiative by Fox Interactive. Also announced was a version of No One Lives Forever for the PS2. No One Lives Forever was one of the best shooters last year, so this is certainly something to get wriggly about.

Sierra are also developing some new Lord of the Rings games to coincide with the new Peter Jackson Lord of the Rings movie trilogy coming soon to our cinema screens. The first game will be Fellowship of the Ring. "The world of Middle-Earth will come to life in Sierra's upcoming games," said Laurie Battle, Director of Licensing for Tolkien Enterprises. "This relationship will allow us to reach out to a new audience which may never have experienced the magical realm that J.R.R. Tolkien created in The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings. In addition, people who are already fans of the books will now have the opportunity to step into the shoes of their favourite characters and explore the lands that they have imagined."



BE A PS2 STUNTMAN!

Reflections, the developer behind the PlayStation hit, Driver, are working on a cool driving game for the PS2 called Stuntman. You guessed it... this game is all about stunt driving. From launching your car off the side of cliffs, to jumping over rooftops and getting your car to flip, roll and maybe even burn, Stuntman sounds like a lot of fun indeed. There will be a variety of very different vehicles to drive, and a "career mode" where you can work your way up in Hollywood as the craziest guy on four wheels. Meantime, work is still underway on Driver 3... makes us wonder if they'll take some of the best ideas from Stuntman and work them in.



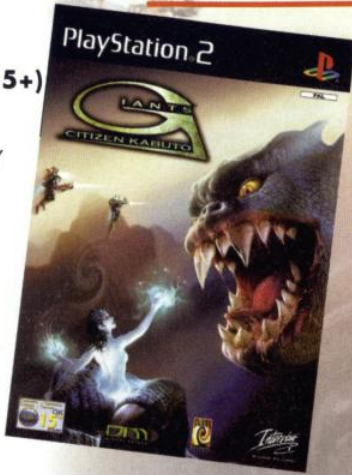
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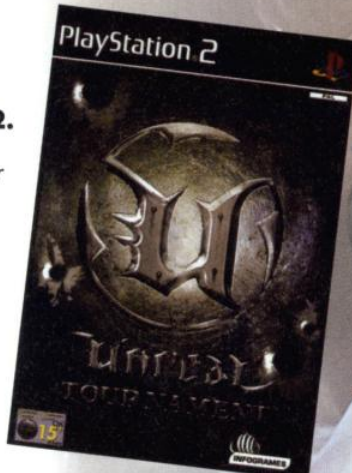
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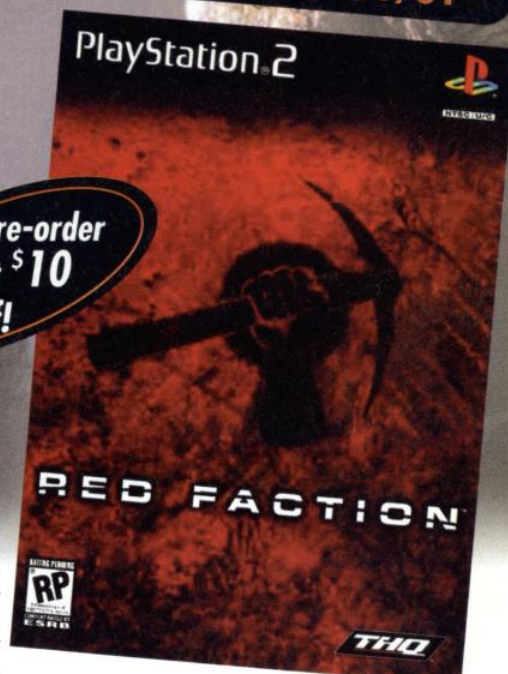
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Red Faction PS2. (M15+)

Red faction is the next must have title for serious gamers! Fire a rocket, leave not just a hole but a trench behind. Enemy gone behind the wall? No problem, blast through it! Red Faction's advanced graphics allow you to watch your bullets hit targets and bounce realistically. Red Faction has everything from kick ass weapons to land, sea and air vehicles to commandeer and control.

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Harvey Norman

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SOUTH OPEN 7 DAYS QUEENSLAND COUNTRY • AYR (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • DALBY (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • HERVEY BAY NOW OPEN • INNISFAIL (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • NOOSAVILLE OPEN 7 DAYS • KAWANA WATERS OPEN 7 DAYS • BUNDBERG • CAIRNS OPEN 7 DAYS • GLADSTONE OPEN 7 DAYS • MACKAY OPEN 7 DAYS • ROCKHAMPTON NORTH • TOOWOOMBA • TOWNSVILLE • WARWICK NOW OPEN MELBOURNE SUPERSTORES - OPEN 7 DAYS • CRANBOURNE NOW OPEN • DANDENONG • GREENSBOROUGH PLAZA (Computers/Electrical only) • KNOX TOWERPOINT NOW OPEN • MARIBYRNONG • MOORABBIN • NUNAWADING • PRESTON • SOUTHLAND (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN VICTORIA COUNTRY - OPEN 7 DAYS • ALBURY • BALLARAT • BENDIGO • GEELONG • HAMILTON (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • MILDURA • MOE (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • SALE NOW OPEN • SHEPPARTON • SWAN HILL (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • TRARALGON • WANGARATTA (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • WARRAGUL (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • WARRNAMBOOL • WONTHAGGI (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN ADELAIDE • METRO • ENFIELD OPEN 7 DAYS (Computers/Electrical Open Mon-Sat) • MARION OPEN 7 DAYS (Computers/Electrical Open Mon-Sat) SOUTH AUSTRALIA • COUNTRY • WHYALLA OPENS MARCH PERTH METRO • BELMONT (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • CANNINGTON • CITY WEST OPEN 7 DAYS • FREMANTLE (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • JOONDALUP • MADDINGTON (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • MANDURAH NOW OPEN • MIDLAND (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • MORLEY (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • O'CONNOR • OSBORNE PARK • PORT KENNEDY • WARWICK (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN WESTERN AUSTRALIA COUNTRY • ALBANY • BUNBURY • BUSSELTON OPEN 7 DAYS • GERALDTON • KALGOORLIE • KARRATHA • PORT HEDLAND (Computers/Electrical only) NORTHERN TERRITORY • DARWIN OPEN 7 DAYS HOBART METRO - OPEN 7 DAYS • HOBART CITY • GLENORCHY • ROSNY TASMANIA COUNTRY - OPEN 7 DAYS • LAUNCESTON • BURNIE • DEVONPORT • ULVERSTONE (Computers/Electrical only)

FLIGHT SIMULATOR 2002


» PC MICROSOFT

Continuing their incredibly successful Flight Simulator series, Microsoft have been busy polishing their 2002 incarnation until its hull has a very special sheen. Not only do these aircraft look stunning, but we'll get to fly all-new types, including the awesomely-sized 747 – probably the most wanted addition to the flyable line-up in the series. There will even be a brand new air traffic control feature that will inform you of all sorts of information when you're taking off, landing and even just getting clearance to land in the first place. A true sim, and coming very soon.



DUNGEON SIEGE

» PC MICROSOFT

 Dungeon Siege is one of those games that has been getting hyped up to be the Diablo II killer to end all Diablo II killers. There's good reason too. Not only do all the outdoor and indoor environments flow seamlessly with no loading points, but in fact, the entire game does. You could sit down and play through the entire game (hey, it might take you a whole week) in one sitting, with no breaks and no loading screens. Amazing. There are going to be plenty of cool items, weapons, monsters and funky environments and we bet that Dungeon Siege is going to be one of the most absorbing Action RPGs this year. Look out golems, here we come!





Nintendo Game Boy Advance –

ROADTESTED!

ACTUAL SIZE



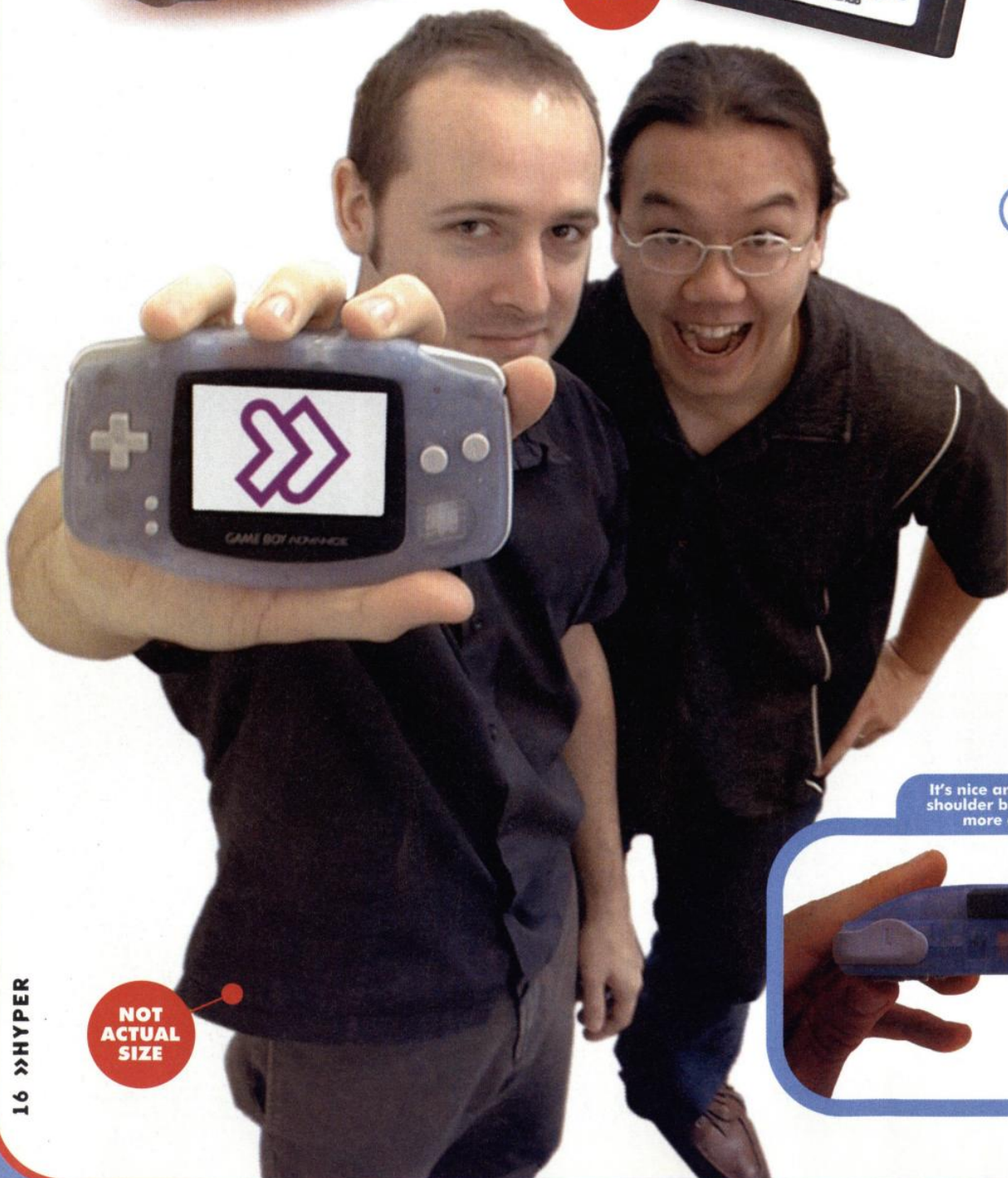
Are you envious? You should be! The Hyper office has been one big Game Boy Advance gaming-fest for a whole month already! Because we need to justify why we've been stealing our workmates' batteries and doing absolutely no work, we've decided to share our experiences. Sit down and have a read through the Hyper Crew's personal opinions on the pocket wonder that is the Game Boy Advance.

Eliot Fish, Editor

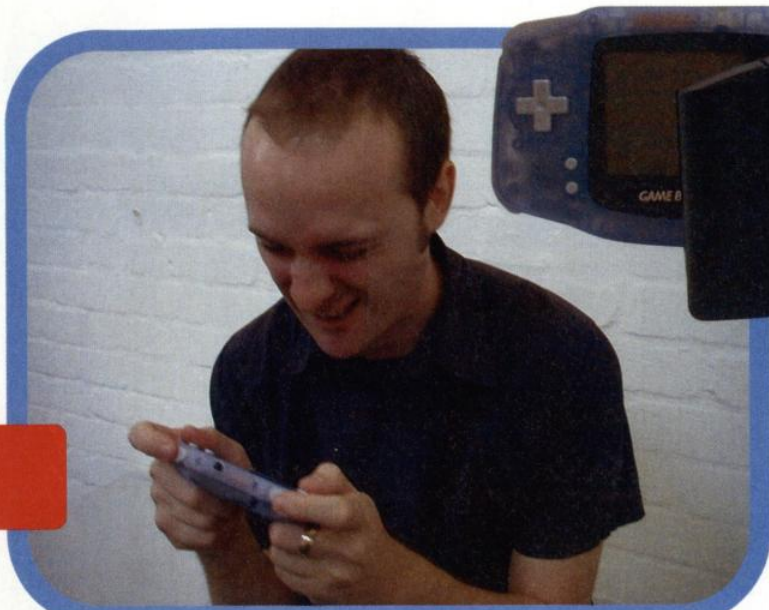
HOW IT FEELS: The GBA is initially more comfortable than the Game Boy Color, simply due to the fact that your hands are spaced apart and you don't feel like your fingers are cramped into a little area. However, after sitting and playing a game like F-Zero Advance that uses the shoulder buttons, I found the GBA became increasingly uncomfortable to hold. Instead of being snug, it's horizontal and angular, and you're gripping it around the edges. Your hands also have to cramp up a bit to use the L & R shoulder buttons, and I got tired of holding it after a while. Games that don't require the use of the shoulder buttons at the same time as the d-pad and A & B buttons will be less of a problem. In fact, playing a platformer like Mario, the GBA felt really comfortable. So it kind of depends on the game.

As for the feel of the buttons... the shoulder buttons don't have a lot of

It's nice and slim, but the shoulder buttons could be more ergonomic



NOT ACTUAL SIZE



Eliot - "the potential this handheld has is incredible"

movement in them, and personally, I think they feel a little spongy. I'd be slightly concerned as to how long they'll last in perfect working condition. All the other buttons on the GBA feel nice and solid. The GBA is lightweight, will still fit in your pocket (just), and comes in a variety of colours which is nice. Overall, I think it feels really good, but not perfect.

THE VISUALS: The Game Boy goes widescreen! Besides the fact that this is a nice wide screen, the colours are more vibrant and the images are more defined than on the GBC. Naturally! There is none of that annoying "movement blur" that you sometimes get in Game Boy Color games that try to move too fast for the handheld's display capabilities. The GBA has a nice solid picture. Whilst screenshots may lead you to believe that it's backlit, it's not - you'll still need to be under good lighting to see what's going on. However, once well lit, the richness and smoothness of the visuals is very reminiscent of the SNES. When you see some of the games running, you really appreciate the coolness of the parallax scrolling and other nifty graphical tricks that the GBC could never do. Impressive for a handheld!

THE SOUND: The sound really surprised me. The GBA can handle so much speech! It's quite clean and loud too. The music is much more complex than I expected and you'll be less inclined to play with the sound off



THE GAMES:

I only played Mario Advance, F-Zero and Konami Wai Wai Racing (to be called Konami Krazy Racers elsewhere). These games were a good example of how close to a portable SNES experience the GBA is going to be. Mario was just perfect and has all the wonderful colour and character of a 16-bit game. F-Zero and Konami Wai Wai Racing were both FAST. I was really impressed with how good these games felt to play, and how great they looked. I'm genuinely excited to see more, more, more.

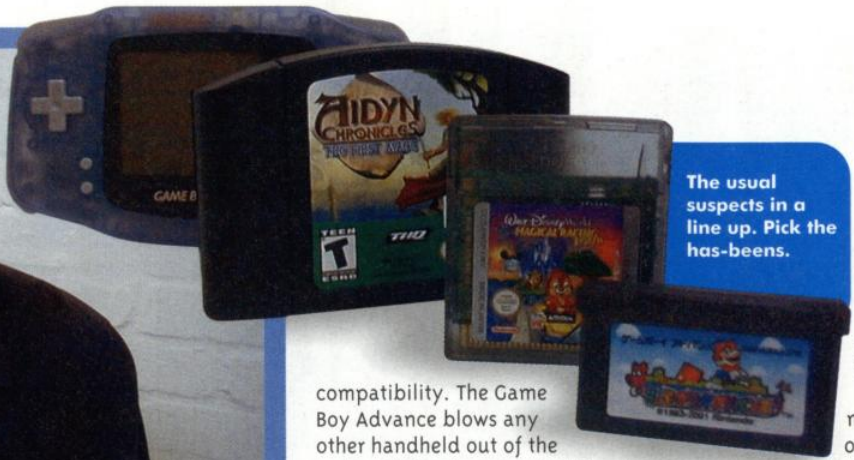
THE FUTURE: Without a doubt I'll be shelling out for a Game Boy Advance as soon as it's released here. The potential this handheld has is incredible and we'll see some excellent games coming out this year. Not just old SNES ports, but new, interesting games that take advantage of the GBA's link cable and Gamecube

Cam Shea, Deputy Editor

HOW IT FEELS: It takes a while for the GBA to feel truly comfortable to use. It's kinda small, and the positions of the shoulder buttons in relation to the D-pad and A/B buttons are a little awkward. Very much made for Japanese hands. The more I play, however, the more natural it feels. It's not as nice as the old SNES controller, but hey, it's a whole lot better than Game Boy. As for looks, I'm not that taken with the overall design. Nintendo could



Cam - "GBA is going to take over the world and enslave us all"



The usual suspects in a line up. Pick the has-beens.

compatibility. The Game Boy Advance blows any other handheld out of the water. Nintendo prove that they have the handheld market in their top pocket!

MOST WANTED GAME: A new Zelda game specifically for Game Boy Advance.

have curved the unit a bit more for a slicker look. As it is, it's a little boxy. Even so, for such a small system it's great to see the screen dominating so much of the space.

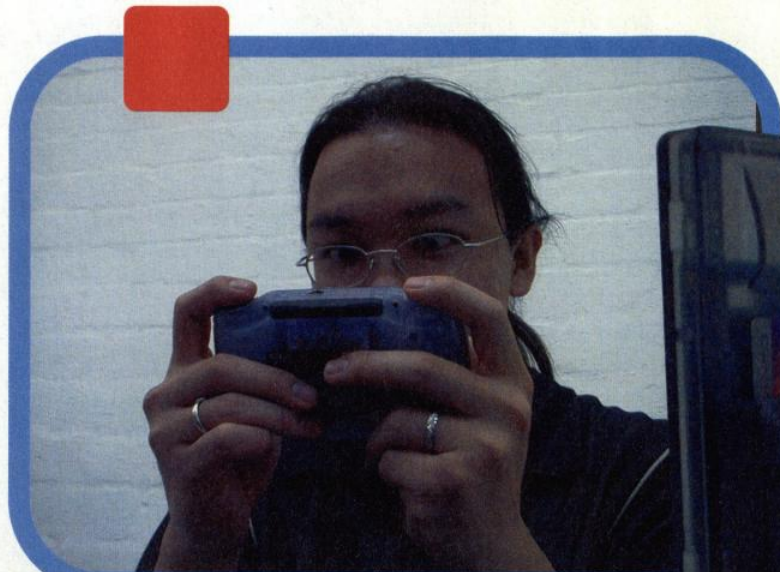
I think Nintendo made a mistake in opting for only two buttons on the face.

Considering how many SNES ports are on the way, it's a shame Nintendo didn't just copy the SNES pad layout. Also of concern is the size and feel of the shoulder buttons. They're smaller



than they could be, and have a "hinge" that forces you to press on the outside. This is not particularly natural or intuitive. The actual feel of pressing the shoulder buttons, however, is very nice indeed.

The D-pad and buttons are responsive and tough - Nintendo's trademark quality really. Once again, they're surprisingly small, but this shouldn't pose too much of a problem, although Street Fighter could be a little tricky.



Your old Game Boy Colour carts will still work on the GBA, they just look a bit funny sticking out the back.

THE VISUALS:

The display is reasonable. It's still a real pain positioning yourself to catch the light in a room, but we can understand why Nintendo wouldn't go with a backlit screen. Besides, it won't be long until you'll be able to get a light for your GBA anyway. Once in position, the screen looks great. Perhaps not as sharp as we imagined,

Kevin - "Castlevania is pure side-scrolling parallax bliss"

to satisfy most gaming requirements.

Super Mario Advance is a good showcase for the sound. The cheesy tunes are easy to hear and the constant character remarks come through well. The only downside is that it's quite easy to sit your right thumb over the built in speaker.

THE GAMES: The Japanese launch titles really weren't anything special. That is, in GAMEPLAY terms they weren't anything special. TECHNICALLY, they were fantastic, confirming that the GBA really is the handheld we've been waiting for, and yes, it really can do a host of nifty tricks like flawless Mode 7. So while I've found that titles like F Zero, Mario and Konami Wai Wai Racing wear thin fast, that's beside the point because they demonstrate the awesome potential of the system. By the time the GBA hits Australia, there will be a wealth of games worthy of your money.

THE FUTURE: There's no doubt about it, Game Boy Advance is going to take over the world and enslave us all. The convergence of

A mere 2 AA batteries will get you around 18 hours of GBA playtime.



but the graphics are clean, easy to see and colours are represented well. Besides that, the size of the screen is impressive, and it really is miraculous seeing SNES quality graphics on a handheld.

THE SOUND: It's a little dinky, but what do you expect? It's a huge step up from Game Boy, and the sound chip is definitely good enough



new(ish) technology with old school gaming will make the GBA a force to be reckoned with. And let's not forget the connectivity with Gamecube - you can be guaranteed that Nintendo will use that feature wisely. The games aren't quite there yet, but they're definitely on the way. We currently know of well over 100 GBA games in development, plus god knows how many that haven't been announced! The sheer number of releases means that not only will there be something for everyone, but that it will be impossible to avoid or dismiss the heir to the GBC throne.

MOST WANTED GAME: Mario Kart Advance

Kevin Cheung, contributing writer

HOW IT FEELS: The Game Boy Advance is compact, solid, and weighty, yet the buttons are delicate to the touch. It also takes a while to get used to the size - it's virtually identical to the GBC; barely larger than an N64 cartridge. The contoured plastic casing has a smooth, brushed surface that's very comfortable to hold. The cartridges are so small you can swallow them.

Overall, the controls are tiny, delicate, and not for the fat-fingered. There isn't much space to move for the thumbs, which are pushed outwards. The same applies to the shoulder buttons. It's especially awkward if you're trying to rest the full weight of the unit against your palms, with your hands cramped back in a V shape. It's not hard to get used to it, but I fail to see how a game like Street Fighter 2 Advance will be at all playable.

THE VISUALS: In a word, huge. It's disappointing there's no back-lighting, so you still have to shine a big bright light against the screen to get the most out of the colours. But oh, what colours there are! And what resolution! The colour and depth are so rich with variation that you won't EVER go back to the Game Boy Color. The

GBA graphics are essentially SNES standard at the moment, except they look slightly better because of the compact size (compared to a TV, that is). I simply can't wait till developers start using transparency effects, which the SNES didn't do.

THE SOUND: Brilliant, at least when compared to the Game Boy Color; and almost up to the standard of the SNES. Best results come from wearing the headphones, which produce plentiful channels of stereo sound with a very decent frequency range. What's most surprising, though, is the use of speech. Every game I've played is absolutely loaded with the stuff - especially Super Mario Advance and Konami Wai Wai Racing.



THE GAMES: For the moment, the Game Boy Advance is more of a kick-arse retro gaming device which, if you lived through the 8-bit and 16-bit console eras, is possibly the most exciting thing you'll encounter all year. Unfortunately, nostalgia can only last for so long before it becomes mere novelty. Games like Super Mario 2 (the Allstars version) and F-Zero are games I've finished a few dozen times, and I don't think adding an extra dozen to that tally is going to change my love for them - nor my interest. On the other hand, Castlevania: Circle of the Moon is pure side-scrolling parallax bliss, and gets my vote as one of the best games of the year.

THE FUTURE/MOST WANTED: Coming soon are Metroid 2D, Super Mario Kart, and Final Fight. As said before, the GBA is retro gaming heaven. I'd like to add to my wishlist the following: Chrono Trigger, the Seiken Densetsu series (also known as Secret of Mana - Ed.), Streets Of Rage 2, and Starfox. Oh, and a few original titles so that it's not all old material. <<<

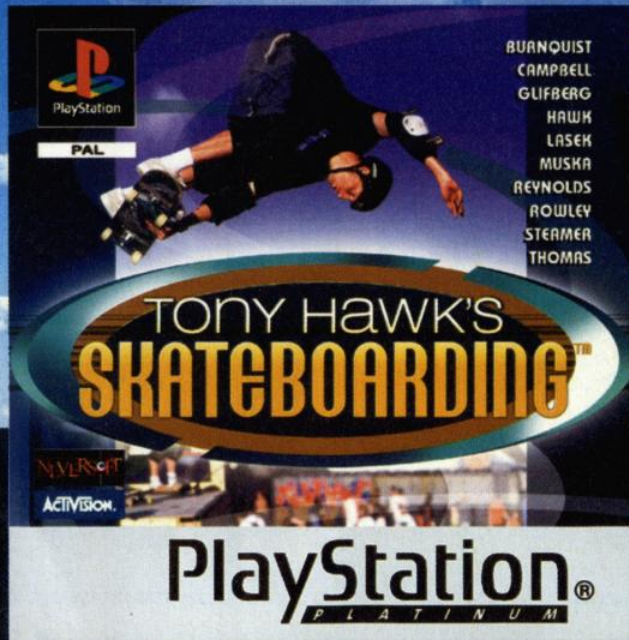


RAD WHEELS, DUDE!

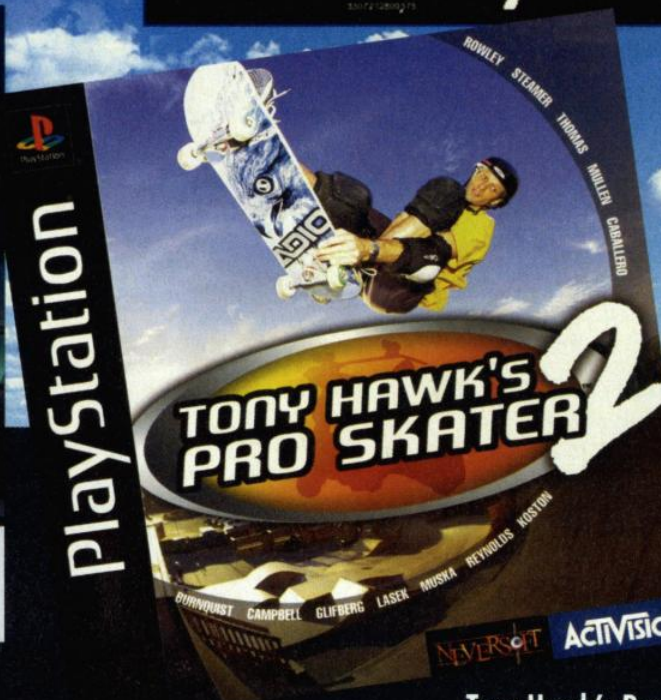
\$54⁹⁵

Freestyle Scooter (G) PSX.

Hey dudes, this is your chance to ride the first ever scooter game! There's nine cool riders and over 45 tricks to perform. Norton, a giant robot, has kidnapped most of the Freestyle Scooter-riding crew. It's up to you to free them. This won't be easy: to free them you'll have to complete challenges over nine exciting levels. Test out your scooter skills as you try and conquer three hyper-realistic **phat** levels full of pipes, jumps and rails. Along the way you'll tackle score challenges, a grind distance challenge and race against the clock with a bonus time challenge! Freestyle Scooter meets the maximum excitement challenge with trick animations and falls. 28228478



BURNQUIST
CAMPBELL
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ROWLEY
STEAMER
THOMAS



\$29⁹⁵ Tony Hawk's Skateboarding Platinum PSX (G8+). 22347

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 PSX (G8+). 22338
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 PC. . \$79.95 22327

Harvey Norman

THE COMPUTER SPECIALISTS

• PARKES • PORT MACQUARIE • TAMWORTH • TAREE • WAGGA WAGGA • WARRAWONG • YOUNG ACT • FYSHWICK • WODEN PLAZA **BRISBANE METRO** • ASPLEY OPEN 7 DAYS • QUEEN STREET MALL, CITY (Computers/Electrical only) OPEN 7 DAYS NOW OPEN • BROWNS PLAINS NOW OPEN • CARINDALE • EVERTON PARK OPEN 7 DAYS • INDOOROOPILLY (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • MORAYFIELD NOW OPEN • MT GRAVATT OPEN 7 DAYS (Computers Open Mon-Sat) • OXLEY OPEN 7 DAYS • GOLD COAST OPEN 7 DAYS • TWEED HEADS SOUTH OPEN 7 DAYS **QUEENSLAND COUNTRY** • AYR (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • DALBY (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • HERVEY BAY NOW OPEN • INNISFAIL (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • NOOSAVILLE OPEN 7 DAYS • KAWANA WATERS OPEN 7 DAYS • BUNDEBERG • CAIRNS OPEN 7 DAYS • GLADSTONE OPEN 7 DAYS • MACKAY OPEN 7 DAYS • ROCKHAMPTON NORTH • TOOWOOMBA • TOWNSVILLE • WARWICK NOW OPEN **MELBOURNE SUPERSTORES - OPEN 7 DAYS** • CRANBOURNE NOW OPEN • DANDENONG • GREENSBOROUGH PLAZA (Computers/Electrical only) • KNOX TOWERPOINT NOW OPEN • MARIBYRNONG • MOORABBIN • NUNAWADING • PRESTON • SOUTHLAND (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN **VICTORIA COUNTRY - OPEN 7 DAYS** • ALBURY • BALLARAT • BENDIGO • GEELONG • HAMILTON (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • MILDURA • MOE (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • SALE NOW OPEN • SHEPPARTON • SWAN HILL (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • TRARALGON • WANGARATTA (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • WARRAGUL (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • WARRNAMBOOL • WONTHAGGI (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN **ADELAIDE - METRO** • ENFIELD OPEN 7 DAYS (Computers/Electrical Open Mon-Sat) • MARION OPEN 7 DAYS (Computers/Electrical Open Mon-Sat) **SOUTH AUSTRALIA - COUNTRY** • WHYALLA OPENS MARCH **PERTH METRO** • BELMONT (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • CANNINGTON • CITY WEST OPEN 7 DAYS • FREMANTLE (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • JOONDALUP • MADDINGTON (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • MANDURAH NOW OPEN • MIDLAND (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • MORLEY (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN • O'CONNOR • OSBORNE PARK • PORT KENNEDY • WARWICK (Computers/Electrical only) NOW OPEN **WESTERN AUSTRALIA COUNTRY** • ALBANY • BUNBURY • BUSSELTON OPEN 7 DAYS • GERALDTON • KALGOORLIE • KARRATHA • PORT HEDLAND (Computers/Electrical only) **NORTHERN TERRITORY** • DARWIN OPEN 7 DAYS **HOBART METRO - OPEN 7 DAYS** • HOBART CITY • GLENORCHY • ROSNY **TASMANIA COUNTRY - OPEN 7 DAYS** • LAUNCESTON • BURNIE • DEVONPORT • ULVERSTONE (Computers/Electrical only) www.harveynorman.com.au (Computers only)

HYPER



The screen's still monochrome, but the rest is cutting edge

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 wireless technology, the latest Nokia mobile and Sony's official DVD remote.

NOKIA 6310

Nokia Available: Late 2001 **Price:** \$TBA

>> Nokia are cranking up their new phones with a variety of features that will be indispensable over the next few years. The 6310 is perhaps the most impressive of the bunch, coming with GPRS, Bluetooth, HSCSD, WAP (with support for WAP release 1.2.1), SyncML, voice recorder, voice commands and voice dialing. What the hell does all that mean? Here's a brief rundown:

GPRS - General Packet Radio Service. Once configured, this gives your phone a permanent wireless net connection, which means no more costly call charges (although you will definitely be charged for data sent and received).

HSCSD - High Speed Circuit Switched Data. Using WAP over GPRS will be considerably faster thanks to HSCSD, and when GSM (Global System For Mobile Communications) enhanced can reach 57.6kbps data rates.

Bluetooth - This is the future of local wireless networking, and a technology that will be ubiquitous within a couple of years. Bluetooth eliminates the need for cables and wires connecting your devices, so among other things, your PC will send documents to the printer wirelessly, and your Palm will talk to your Laptop without a docking station. See boxout for further details.

SyncML - The first Universal synchronisation protocol. The idea is to keep all your information on various devices up to date. If you're running SyncML compatible software on them, you'll be able to keep your data synchronised across

your phone, Palm, PC, laptop and any other funky gadgets you own. Using a combination of Bluetooth and GPRS wireless networking, it promises to be fast and simple.

WAP - Wireless Application Protocol. A global communications protocol designed to allow mobile devices to access information and services. WML - Wireless Markup Language, an XML application based on HTML, was developed so that this content could be streamlined for portable devices. Using WAP enabled phones has been slow in the past because of the underlying network technology, not because of the standard itself. With faster, persistent connections and bigger screens WAP may redeem itself.

WAP Release 1.2.1 - An update to the original WAP protocol, allowing your phone to store cookies; make calls from a WAP site (so you don't have to terminate a WAP session to use the phone); save contact information from a WAP site to the phone's memory; and receive updates with hyperlinks to WAP sites (for instance for a stock alert).

Voice Stuff - Voice activated dialing is nothing new, neither are using voice commands as navigation tools. Even so, they're a pretty sweet way to cap off the phone's abilities. Even sweeter though, you can use the voice recorder function, so if you think of a fantastic argument for our forum topic, or a dope freestyle spontaneously forms, you can capture it all on the spot.

ARE

SONY PS2 DVD REMOTE



Sony Available: July **Price:** \$TBA

>> There are a plethora of PS2 DVD remotes on the market already, but the mother of them all will undoubtedly be Sony's own remote. Due to be released in July, there's no question that this remote will be the best solution for PS2 owners wanting to get a little more from their machine.

Although opting for the decidedly old school infrared technology, where you actually have to point the remote at the player ("sigh"), this is still one slick looking remote. After all, there can't be many companies that have more experience in crafting remotes than Sony. You'll be able to do everything you need with this puppy, whether it be slow motion viewing of "special interest" DVDs or just listening to CDs. More specifically, the remote's features are:



It's a struggle playing Tekken, but great for pr0n

- 3 speeds reverse and fast forward.
- Opposite direction slow motion play
- Repeat, program, shuffle, A-B repeat
- Playing time/ remaining time display
- Time Search
- Parental Control
- Subtitle and audio options
- Viewing angle selection
- 8MB memory card required

So it's basically everything you need in a remote wrapped up in a stylish and user-friendly package. If you hate blundering about the options with your dual shock like we do, then salvation is soon at hand.

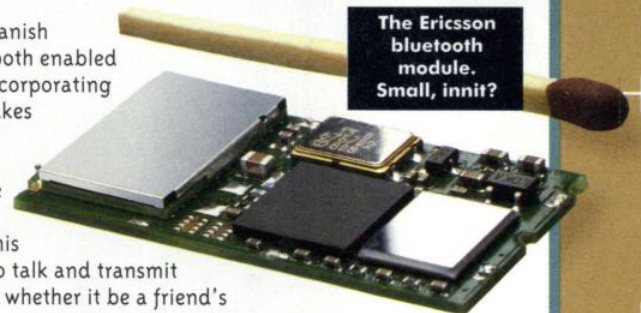


BLUETOOTH GETTIN' BUSY

>> Named after the 10th century Danish Viking king Harold Bluetooth, Bluetooth enabled devices have a built-in microchip incorporating a radio transceiver that instantly makes connections with any other devices within range. The range is like a "wireless bubble" around the device - typically 10 metres but it can be extended up to 100 metres. Within this area, Bluetooth allows your device to talk and transmit data to any other Bluetooth devices, whether it be a friend's

mobile, your PC, your DVD player or even your fridge (trust us, it's not far off). Unlike infrared, there need be no line of sight, so in the context of the 6310, if you had a headset, you'd be able to answer your phone from across the office. You could also use your phone as a GSM modem for your laptop if there's nowhere convenient to plug in your internal modem. A bit further on, your home Bluetooth control center will register with your personal Bluetooth receiver as you approach your house, unlocking the door, turning on the lights and booting up your PC. Scary, but cool.

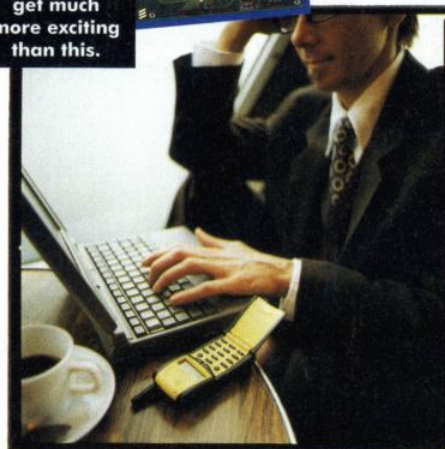
Bluetooth uses the same frequency globally, so any device worldwide will talk to any other device worldwide. And of course, passers-by won't be able to poach your data, thanks to encryption and authentication routines to ensure privacy, as well as advanced error correction to keep data intact. Bluetooth devices have been around for well over a year now, but it's only now that they're really beginning to make an impact. <<<



The Ericsson bluetooth module. Small, innit?



Bluetooth dev kit. Doesn't get much more exciting than this.



» INSIGHT

WARCRAFT





WARCRAFT III

PC

CATEGORY: Role-Playing Strategy >>
PLAYERS: 1-4 >>
PUBLISHER: Blizzard >>
AVAILABLE: December >>



In the beginning there was Warcraft: Orcs & Humans, which in turn was followed by Warcraft II: Tides of Darkness. Now, a third instalment is being fathered in the guise of Warcraft III (note the deliberate lack of suffix in the title). Want to know more? Then read on and see what **BILL ROPER**, producer at Blizzard Entertainment, had to say when he meet up with our roving reporter, **DEREK DELA FUENTE**.

I believe Blizzard has introduced a new genre in gaming: the Role-Playing Strategy (RPS) game." Brave words. Bill Roper, Warcraft III producer, seems to be pretty confident that the third game in the Warcraft series is not only going to offer RTS lovers something new, but in fact, re-invent the genre. "A strategy game set heavily within a role-playing environment, RPS takes the individual combat and an interactive environment found in role-playing games and combines them within a competitive strategic environment. Warcraft III puts players in command of smaller, potent parties of heroes and troops. They adventure and do battle in a dynamic world of living towns, wandering monsters, characters and quests, while simultaneously devising strategies to defeat their enemies."

WOODCHOPPERS UNITE

But what about all the reasons why we loved the Warcraft games in the first

place? Have they been abandoned? Blizzard are intent on re-inventing the series, that much is certain, but at least they seem to still have a grasp on what makes good RTS games tick. The main focus with Warcraft III is to have a blend of new concepts and ideas with some old, familiar ones. "Gold is the major resource here but we wanted to simplify this aspect of resource management in the new game." Gone is the large portion of time spent resourcing and building up your town: this time around that time will be spent in building your units, taking them out exploring, and on combat. "There will be two resources: the gold and something tentatively labelled Mana Stones.

Whatever it ends up being called, there will be a secondary resource which is gained in a very different manner to what we're used to."





there goes the neighbourhood - the Carnies are in town

Mana Stones are acquired through combat. When you fight NPCs and monsters you're rewarded with a Mana Stone when (or if) they die. These stones are a very important resource because they have three distinctly different uses: to research sections of the technology tree; to buy hero units; to purchase some, but not all, items from merchants. "Mana Stones are much more important in the early and mid stages of the game simply because you should have built up your forces and your big Hero units by the time you reach the end." It's a concept tied in with exploring and interacting with the environment as opposed to just another thing that needs to be harvested.

Not a resource in the traditional sense but something of equal importance is the humble tree. Although a part of previous Warcraft games, the tree has been given an active status within the environment with the player being able to either create or destroy wooded areas. Any tree destroyed by whatever means leaves a tree stump telling opponents that someone is up to something. Night Elves units are also able to use these stumps as a resource by re-growing trees - a very useful strategy it seems. "We have seen players carve a path through a forest into an enemy town, bring in hordes of units and then re-grow the trees stopping similar tactics from others."

HERO FOR HIRE

Warcraft III is a strategy game at its core but Blizzard wanted to make sure that those familiar with the brand (and Starcraft) wouldn't be

getting something foreign to them. "At the same time there's so many things that RPGs do that are great for developing storylines and worlds, we wanted to integrate those aspects." One of the big ideas for Warcraft III and big differences between Starcraft and this game is the focus on specific units. Starcraft was a war of attrition in terms of trying to 'out resource' the others,



WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

A more innovative leap than we've seen in previous Blizzard sequels

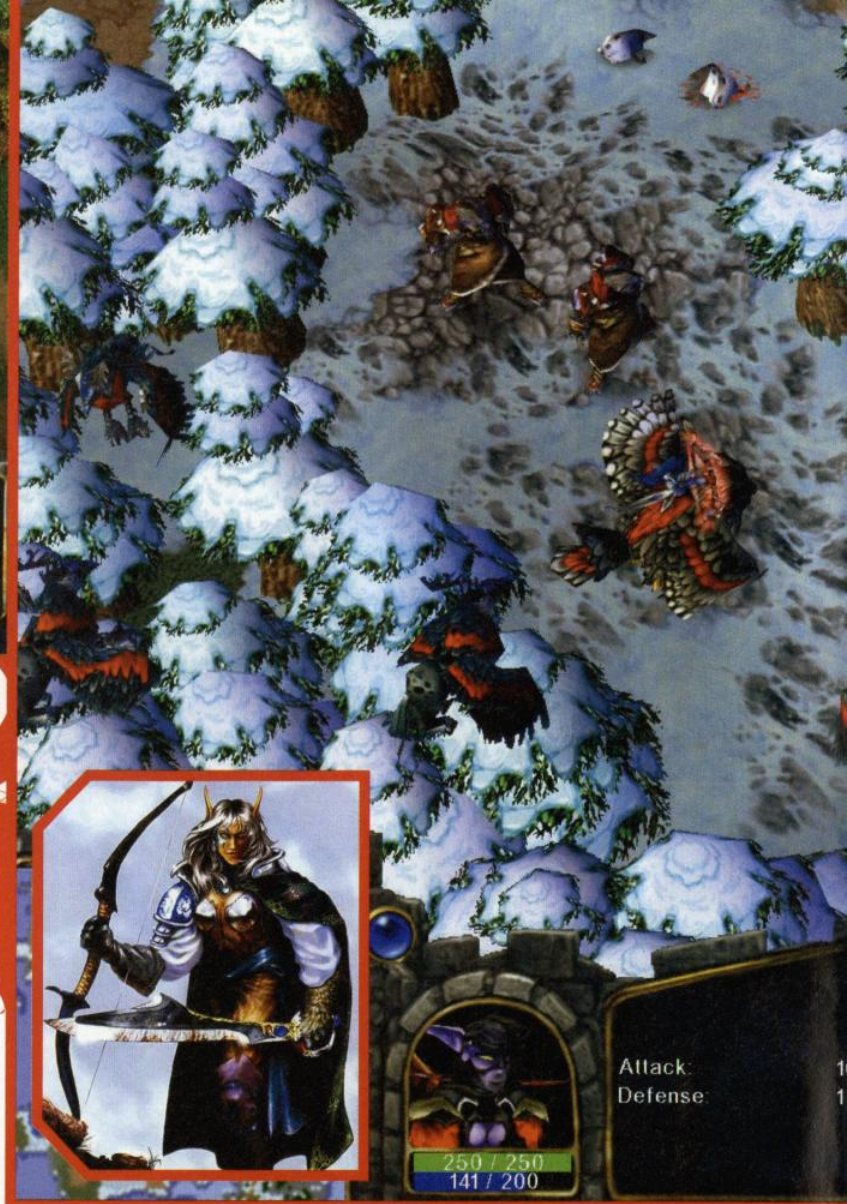
but what we have here is an emphasis on refined strategy and tactics to defeat the enemy. Much of this tactical and strategic awareness comes into play with the changes in Hero units.

Whenever a new unit is created, a name is randomly assigned from a vast database; a female Paladin Sage truth Bearer going by the name of Cynthia Huxford II is an example. Not the sort of name I would choose, but there you are. "One of the reasons for giving Hero units individual names is because they can, for a price, be revived if they die. We wanted to encourage players to use their Hero units. Players built up their Hero units only to hide them while completing the rest of the mission with regular units. Your campaign won't end if you lose your Hero unit, although there is a penalty to pay to get them back, because we're placing a lot of emphasis on the way these Hero units interact with the environment."

Unlike regular units, Hero units have extra attributes attached to them. Attack and defence are the two common ones whilst strength, agility and intelligence are particular to the Heroes. Strength affects the amount of damage they inflict and their own hit points; agility affects how fast they move; intelligence is connected to the speed of stealth point increases. As



NIGHT ELF PALADIN



your units move up in level ability, so the attributes increase at different rates. "One of the things we've seen in early multiplayer testing is that by focusing on fewer Hero units has paid off by having units of a far higher level. Every time a unit moves up a level, you gain a single point to put into any skills they may have."

MEDIAeval HOOKUPS

An integral part of the game is the Merchant. These little chaps are the suppliers of your items but his inventory will only show when there's a Hero in the vicinity. One item he has for purchase is the all-new Day Stone. This is useful for counteracting an Ultimate Spell used by Night Elves. Ultimate Spells come on stream when a unit reaches level six and Night Elves possess the ability to turn the world dark (useful for when they hide in the shadows): Day Stones negate this. Blizzard has ensured that items and spells are not only offensive and defensive, but act as counter actions.

"There's a new type of terrain in Warcraft III: Mountainous Terrain. Basically, past the last plateau type of landscape is this craggy, snow covered, mist shrouded mountaintop which nothing can pass. To get around

this we have put caves into the mountain where you can move your units. The mountaintop will then dissolve and you can carry on within these cave systems and exit the other side. It's a way for us to be able to open up and close off areas to make different maps." As for the areas to be fought over, the plan isn't to have a map for each mission. There will be a number of different quests, each of which forms part of the overall campaign. "This way we can make the maps extremely large. The biggest thing will be how many multiplayer maps we can ship with the game. The problem is how many players we can have in multiplayer mode. It will be more than eight but less than 32. There has to be a compromise somewhere because too many players means slowdown whereas too few means you won't see anyone else."

One question often asked regarding Warcraft III is what type of camera control there will be: the answer is, essentially, none. Unlike a game such as Homeworld where camera control is vital, because the game always takes place on a flat plain, control over viewing aspects isn't necessary. "We also found that camera control was confusing. Players would go into a



Assassin

14



they may not be that civilised, but they can build a good outhouse

town, spin the camera around and then get a message to say someone was being attacked in the north, so they would run to the top of the screen. Unfortunately, because they had altered the camera view, they were going in the wrong direction." The only compromise will be a three-stage zoom function. The in-game editor, however, will allow complete control over the camera.

YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU...?

The original plan for Warcraft III was to have five playable races, the fifth being Demons – a terrifying race of domination and destruction. This particular idea was dropped when Blizzard realised that the dark, sinister aspect would be lost if the Demons had to mine for gold. In short, you don't imagine a force from the underworld having to gather resources – trampling everything underfoot, maybe, but carrying money... Hence there are now only four races: but that's still one more than Starcraft. In fact, the fifth race idea went as far as to have code written before it was dropped but it did allow the designers to take ideas from the lower levels of the unused Demons and employ them elsewhere. By the way, the four races still in the game are Orcs; Humans; Night Elves (a race briefly touched upon in Warcraft II); and Undead. "This last race is causing us a problem: it hasn't been decided yet whether they will use gold and if they do, for what purpose?" An interesting concept certain to be included is their use of dead bodies: the Undead can regenerate corpses or make new units out of them. They also make for a different style of gameplay: don't leave a battlefield at the end of a fight because you're leaving behind a resource either for yourself or the vanquished. All these units and races are all an important part of the storyline to the game: something that Blizzard has agonised over. Normally in strategy based games you build units and throw them into the game, you don't care about them. "Having all the great graphics and expensive, humorous

speech counts for nothing if you don't get excited when your Hero unit reaches level five.

RPS OR MMORPG?

Not due for at least another nine or ten months, that's the basics of Warcraft III, but how does Blizzard tempt an audience to buy into this new genre they claim to have created? "Obviously, the people who like Warcraft and Starcraft will hopefully want this game too, but there are a lot of players who were turned off by Starcraft because it seemed too much about who could resource the quickest. By driving the gameplay more towards tactical combat and small team strategies, we hope to attract that particular group. Warcraft III is deliberately slower because we want people to use their different unit and their abilities." One of the goals, or at least the concept, of Blizzard (and every other developer) is to develop the definitive MMORPG. "The Holy Grail of game design is one of keeping people entertained in the same world for a very long time." <<



Stonehenge... tis a magic place, where the moon doth rise



the way you love me is frightening



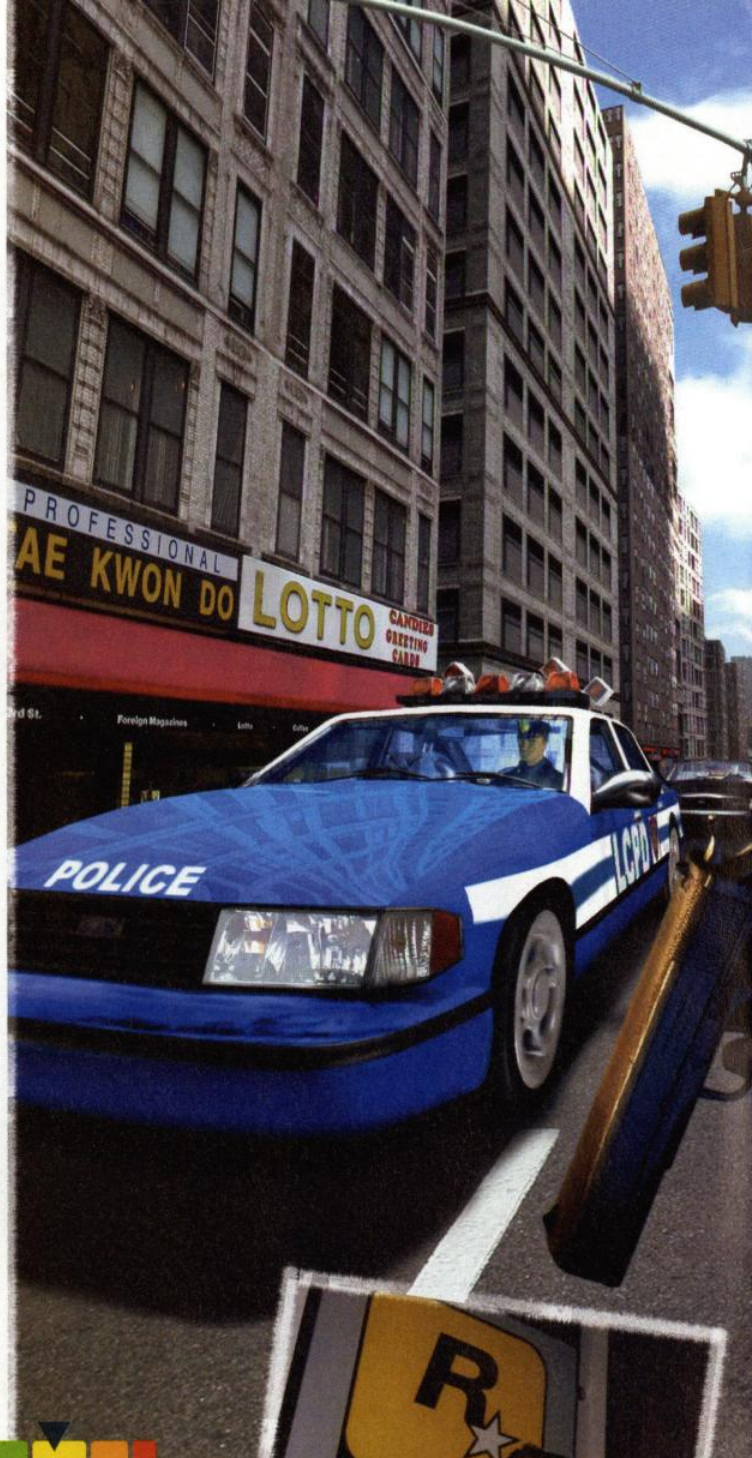
Byron Bay in the off-season

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY
 >> What do you mean you've never played Warcraft II? This was the game that set the Real Time Strategy genre afire. Orcs and Humans, battling for resources and beating each other to a pulp – this was one of the most popular PC games ever! The Warcraft series has sold over four million copies worldwide.





GRAND THEFT AUTO 3



PS2

CATEGORY: Car Jacking >> PLAYERS: 1 >>
PUBLISHER: Take 2 >> AVAILABLE: August >>

WOW-O-METER



You have just robbed a bank with your girlfriend whom, being the nasty cow she is, takes the money and runs off with another man, leaving you to take the rap. In transport to the local jail, the van is hijacked allowing you and another prisoner, Eightball, to escape. This larger than life villain becomes

your friend, taking you to meet the Mafia of Liberty City, New York. Mafia boss, Luigi, tests you by giving you a simple task that leads to more missions for the Mafia. Eventually you find yourself double-crossing the Mafia — alongside two other gangs in the city, Triads and Hoods — in your ultimate quest of revenge. Whether you believe the background story is important or not, this is Grand Theft Auto 3, and it's pulling no punches. Derek dela Fuente reports in from the studios of GTA3 developer, DMA.

FROM 2D TO 3D

Les Benzie of DMA tells it like it is: "We went as far as we could with the familiar top-down view of GTA, although you will still be

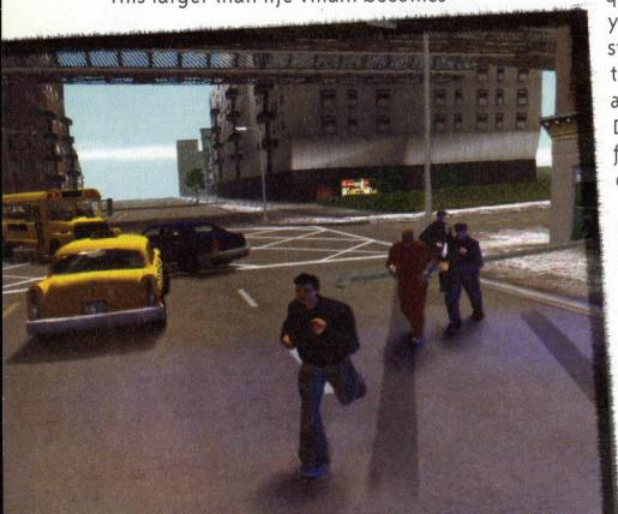
able to play this new game in that mode, so a 3D environment was the next logical step. The idea of only having cars to travel in was also getting stale which is why we have included a few different modes of transport this time around. GTA3 will have both helicopters and boats that you need for certain missions."

The 3D view makes it necessary to employ a number of changes in all areas of the game: there is a new targeting system in place which will lock-on to the most dangerous person within 180; there will be three levels of camera zoom, including a first person view; and your character will be given the ability to look left, right and behind. The game, however, still has the essential look and feel of the Grand Theft Auto series, including the humour.



Les Benzie looks to the stars

The Liberty City setting (this fictional place and New York are both islands connected by a series of bridges and tunnels) is split into three distinct regions: industrial, commercial and residential. Once missions have been completed in the first region (industrial) it opens up the second, commercial, area. When all three regions are open, you'll be able to travel anywhere you want. Sounding as if the game doesn't have much substance with only these three regions, it's worth mentioning that there will be at least 50 separate missions, along with a similar number



"so that's how Mechs relieve themselves..."

"are you talkin' to me? are YOU talkin' to me?"

missing the point of the drive-by entirely

STAYIN' ALIVE, STAYIN' ALIVE

of sub-missions in GTA3. Missions are non-linear but the first one could be looked upon as a training one. This inaugural mission involves Luigi, pimp and owner of a seedy strip club called Sex Club Heaven, getting you to pick up two 'ladies of the night', one from a shop and the other from a clinic (it isn't made clear why she's there but you can take a guess). Because the task is

to carry two people, a four-door car is needed. Pick up the girls and return them to Luigi who rewards you handsomely. Simple maybe, but this mission is for you to familiarise yourself with game controls and city layout. And things do get progressively harder. "You certainly won't have to complete all the missions to finish the game, though," explains Les.

"GTA3 is set in a living, breathing world: everyone is doing something. The seedier parts of the city will have rival gang members fighting each other - you can join in if you want, but you can expect trouble if you return during the same mission because these guys don't forget that easily - whilst suburbia is resplendent with neatly mown gardens fronting equally tidy houses: until you get there, that is."

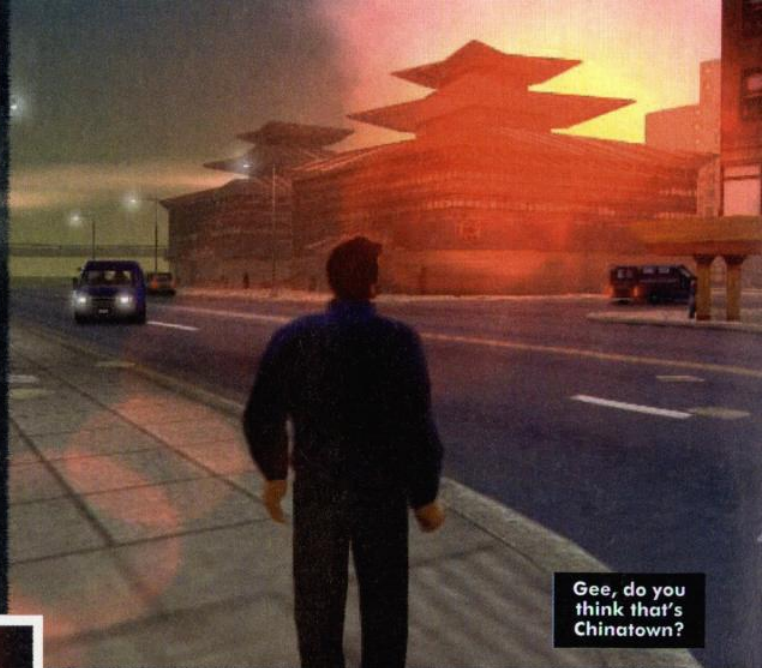
Reflecting realism - even a game has to have something players can relate to - is the day/night cycles and weather. A 24 hour period is equivalent to about 30 minutes game time, and as darkness falls, the number of people and vehicles around is visibly less: unfortunately, it's also

the time when the nutters come out to play! There is a reason behind this, however: it would be silly to attempt a bank robbery during rush hour (and it's always rush hour in Liberty City in daylight) because there's too many people around and it's harder to escape the police. Equally, hanging around a bank at night draws attention to yourself from law enforcement officers. Furthermore, the random weather affects the handling of your stolen vehicle - not just cars because there are more than 50, including ice-cream vans, lorries, buses, etc. to steal - being harder to control in the rain. "Weather conditions will be set on certain missions simply because it would make them too difficult otherwise."

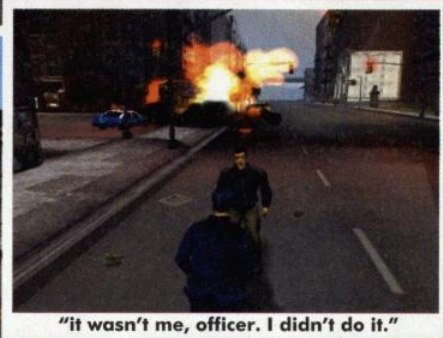
As you move through the game, you're awarded 'badges'. These rewards reflect how high up the



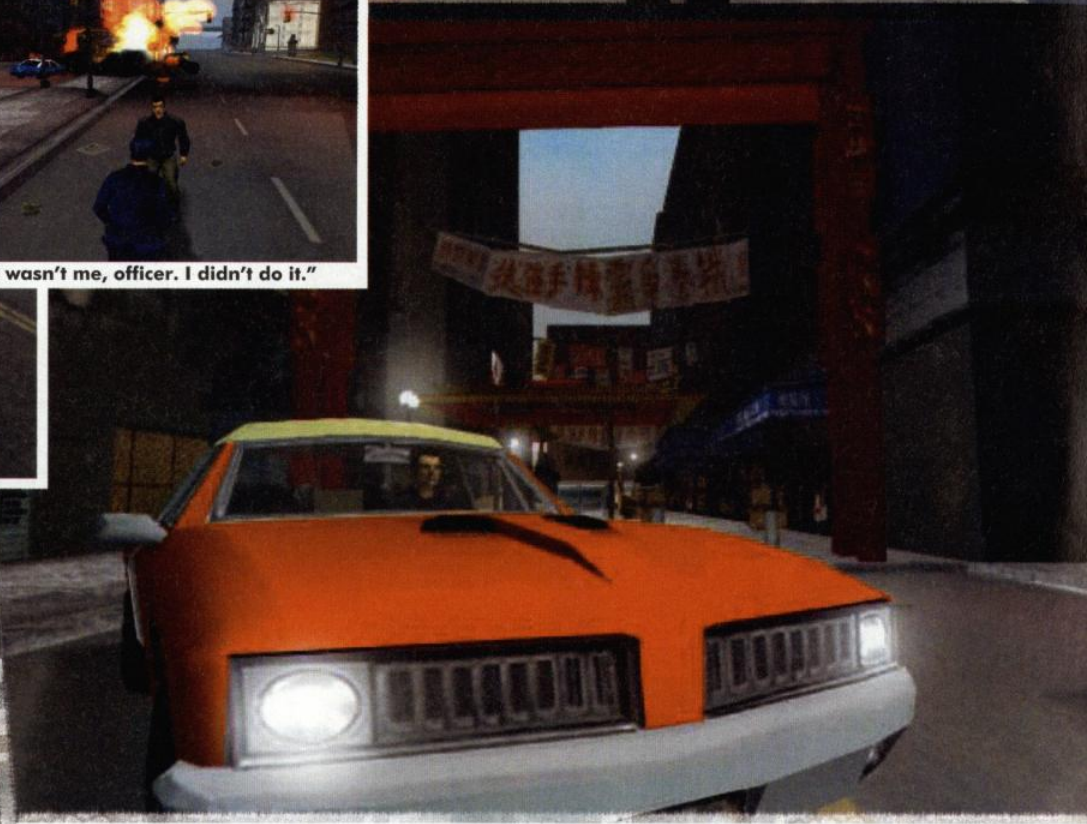
one donut joke too many



Gee, do you think that's Chinatown?



"it wasn't me, officer. I didn't do it."



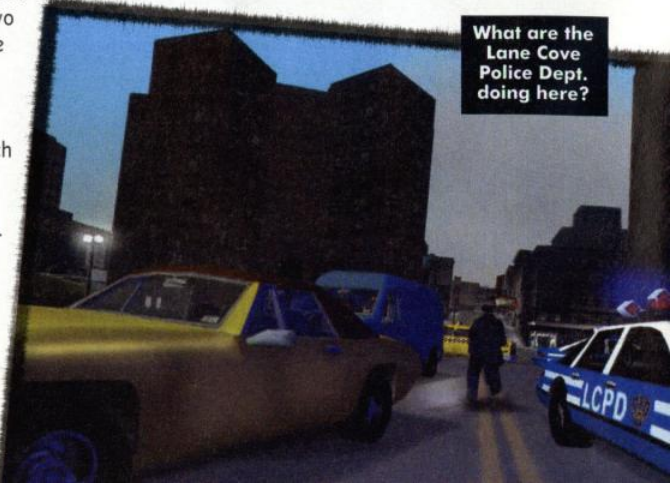
criminal ladder you're climbing and result in your pursuers changing. Going up to level six, the first two see you running from the cops; level three is the police plus helicopters; the fourth level means SWAT arrive; the FBI chase you on level five; if you attain level six, the army are out to apprehend you. The difficulty mode in GTA3 isn't one of easy, medium or hard: it's based on your pursuers and how difficult you make it for yourself. Stealing an 18-wheeler in the rain during rush hour is going to make it hard to escape after a bank job. In games such as this, one of the

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:
Gratuitous use of the expression "ehh, ferget-about-it"

vehicle damage. Does GTA3 have any? Yes. "Each vehicle has 18 separate panels that either damage, fall off, or, in some instances, both. Eventually, your car will become so damaged that the radiator will begin steaming and eventually blow-up. You have ten seconds to get out before you're toast." The other perennial query with action games concerns weapons. What are they like? How many are there? How are they gained? The answers in order: different, 16, by completing missions. An explanation is needed. You begin with no more than your own talents of hand-to-hand fighting (with a nose breaking headbutt to

compliment punching and kicking – no scratching eyes out though), and to improve on these 'weapons' you either get rewarded by finishing your task or use earned credits to buy them. The next basic weapon is the humble baseball bat, followed by a handgun. The ever popular Uzi is useful in drive-by shootings whilst the pump action shotgun is for close range killing. Two familiar guns are next: the AK47 and the M16 preceding the sniper rifle, which is great for targeting individual limbs. A rocket launcher that can only be used whilst

stationary, Molotov cocktails, and grenades complete the armoury line-up. There is one further method of destruction: the car bomb. If you find the supplier, he can fit your vehicle with three increasingly destructive varieties if you have the finances. Park your car, get out and ten seconds later... boom! <<<



What are the Lane Cove Police Dept. doing here?

PlayStation®2

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Babe 3: Pig up shit creek

ZOO TYCOON

PC

CATEGORY: Sim >> PLAYERS: 1 >>

PUBLISHER: Microsoft >> AVAILABLE: TBA

WOW-O-METER



I love the idea of games that have broad appeal. Games that appeal to the 8 to 80 year old." This is Microsoft's Zoo Tycoon and whilst that initial comment may turn you off, the fact of that matter is that games with broad appeal can sometimes work magic. Look at Tetris! Tycoon style games are probably on the more hardcore side of "broad appeal" — they are sim games after all — but that's not to say they can't be accessible and very easy to pick up and play. As developer, Blue Fang, explained to us, "...when you talk about making games more accessible, it means that you have to have a really intuitive user interface. One of the things we've spent an

unbelievable amount of time researching and making sure of in this game is that it is brain dead easy to get in and build the habitats and change the landscape and do everything you want. It's a totally fun tycoon game where you get to build and manage your own ultimate zoo. Hardcore gamers love these kinds of games — they go in and build extraordinarily elaborate habitats. The subject matter is a big part of this appeal, I mean, who hasn't had fun at zoos?"

He's so right, goddamnit. Who doesn't want to build a penguin enclosure and then throw a few lions in there to see what happens, huh? That's broad appeal!

FEEDING TIME

Building your own zoo in Zoo Tycoon is very similar to constructing your own fun park in Theme Park World. The game is tile-based, so you can create an enclosure of a certain size and then place rocks, trees, playthings, sleeping pens and all sorts of other zoo stuff in there to build your own fantasy enclosure. The thing is, you have to make sure that the plants you use are compatible with the animals that you'll keep in there. You also have to be aware of whether they will be healthy in a pen full of dirt, or a cement pit and other environmental factors that can have an impact on how happy your animals are. If you don't get it right, they won't breed, or they'll get sick and die. But there's still lots of room for experimentation. There's also the area throughout the zoo where your visitors will be roaming, and you'll also have to cater for them, with food outlets and the trusty old public toilet.

The game will be structured with scenarios that challenge you to meet

certain objectives, although Blue Fang hope to offer some variations for gamers who just want to muck around. "This game has a freestyle mode, so if you don't want to play one of the fifteen scenarios where you have to achieve certain goals, you can just freestyle and create your own crazy habitats. We've come up with 40 different animals, 60 different objects

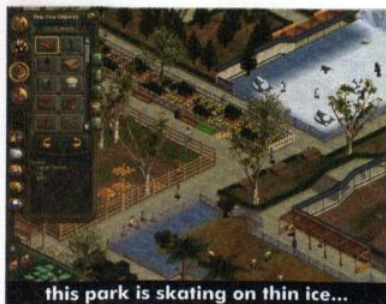
WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

We're hoping Blue Fang injects lots of quirky personality into the animals so that players can get really attached to their pets.

that you can build, 40 different environments that you can create for the animals. All of a sudden you've got unlimited abilities to create this wild ultimate zoo. Ultimately, you can be mischievous and see what happens.

There is predator and prey behaviour here." Like we said about the penguins and the lions... have you also ever wondered what would happen if the lions got out of their cage and were loose in the zoo? Muahahaha.

We saw Zoo Tycoon at Microsoft's Gamestock back in March, and we have to say that it looks like a hell of a lot of fun. Zoo Tycoon should be out later this year. <<<



this park is skating on thin ice...



the rare Indian day-glo raver giraffe

WIGGLES

PC/XBOX

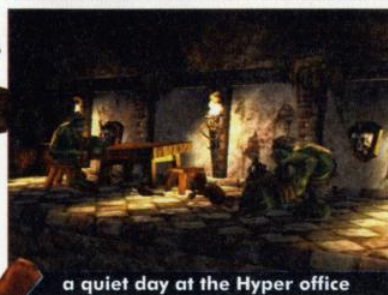
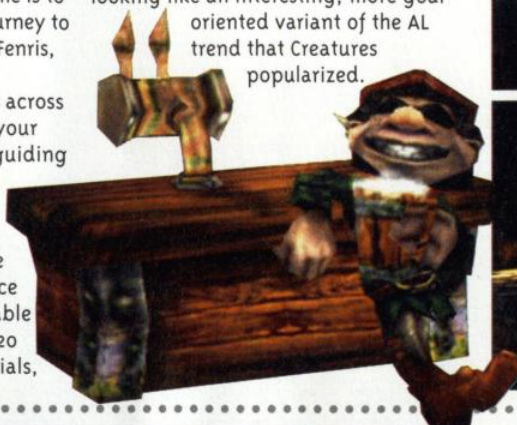
CATEGORY: Artificial Life/Strategy >> PLAYERS: 1
PUBLISHER: TBA >> AVAILABLE: TBA

WOW-O-METER

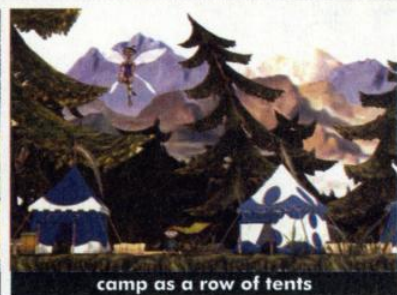
In relation to the second most rockin' band in Australia (Big Heavy Stuff being the first), Wiggles is an interesting looking strategy game from German development house Innonics. The setting of the game is a 3D subterranean fantasy world, where you act as tamagotchi master to one of five dwarf clans. The overall goal of the game is to take your dwarves on an epic journey to the center of the Earth to defeat Fenris, the former watchdog of Odin.

As it will take over 100 quests across many generations of dwarves, your immediate concerns will be in guiding the daily life of your clansmen, keeping them happy, solving puzzles, fending off rival clans or trolls, and ensuring you have the right technology and balance of skills. To this end, you'll be able to invent 10 weapons, produce 20 tools, mine for seven raw materials,

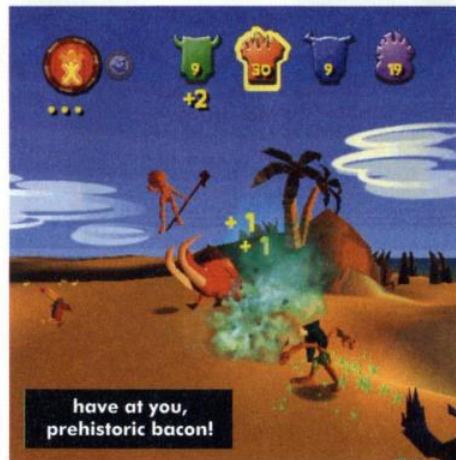
create 30 production facilities, choose from 100 work and leisure activities, and even teach four martial arts disciplines. We can't wait to see how Innonics animate kung fu dwarves! It'll have to be drunken style. You also have to ensure the survival of your people, so breeding is another important aspect. All up, Wiggles is looking like an interesting, more goal-oriented variant of the AL trend that Creatures popularized.



a quiet day at the Hyper office



camp as a row of tents



have at you, prehistoric bacon!



OOGA BOOGA

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

DC

Sega are saving some of their weirdest and wildest titles to help farewell the Dreamcast platform. Case in point — Ooga Booga. The title may be silly (or other less friendly words starting with "s"), but this is very much a reflection of the playful nature of the game itself. Although looking a lot like a Crash Bandicoot clone thanks to the mask wearing shamans and rampaging wild boars, not to mention the eerily similar visual style, colour scheme and texture mapping, Ooga Booga is very much its own game.

As one of four different tribesmen, each with their own ability set, Ooga Booga could best be described as a comical wargame, with players running around flinging fireballs, brandishing

shrunk heads and planting mines in one of the five play modes. These include straight deathmatch style play, a variant of capture the flag, and a couple of games revolving around riding wild boars. Trust us, it's cooler than it sounds.

Ooga Booga is designed with multiplayer in mind, and should be a riot, either through split screen or online play (everywhere but here we're guessing). Fortunately, there also looks to be plenty to do in the single player mode while you're waiting for your friends to rock up (not literally), with a comprehensive mission based campaign.

WOW-O-METER

CRAZY TAXI 2

DC

CATEGORY: Arcade racing >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Sega >> AVAILABLE: TBA

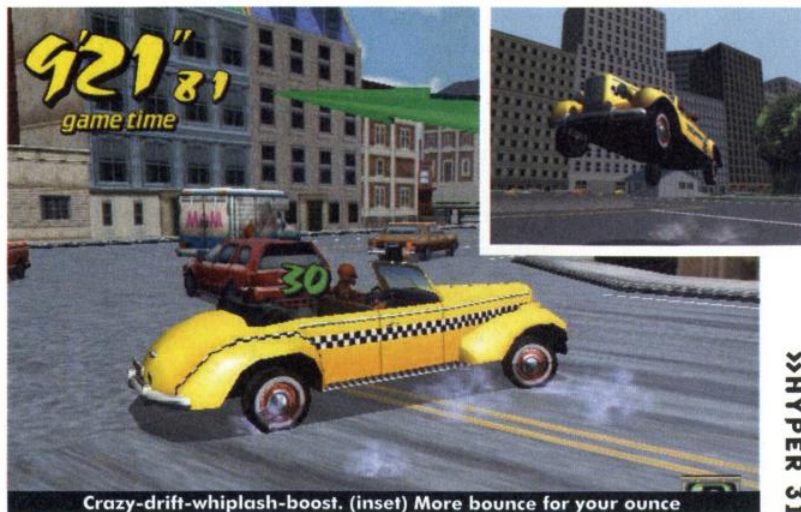
Crazy Taxi rocked the house very hard indeed. Even though it was a straight arcade game, the combination of expansive city environments, weaving through traffic at high speeds with the clock ticking, and the superbly crafted boost and drift mechanics gave the game considerable replayability. Well, before the DC bids us adieu, Sega's Hitmaker are putting the finishing touches on a corker of a sequel.

No need for a sequel you say? Well think again, because Crazy Taxi 2 introduces a very cool twist on the original gameplay formula. Sega have taken the drift-boost-hop technique, and shall we say, spiced it

up a bit. Say hello to "crazy hop", a technique that allows you to hop the car several metres into the air, easily clearing cars, buses and if your timing is right, jumping into or over buildings.

This new move changes the feel of the game considerably, and definitely reduces frustration levels, as you have so much more scope for attacking difficult sections. Rest assured that Sega will make the crazy hop an integral part of the course design, especially since the game is set in New York and you'll be picking up as many as four passengers at once!

WOW-O-METER



Crazy-drift-whiplash-boost. (inset) More bounce for your ounce

LOOMING

Hyper's monthly peek at games that are in development and set for a release later this year.

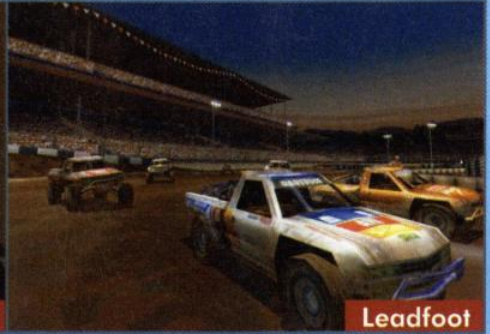
PC



Real War



Soldier Of Fortune 2



Leadfoot

PS2



Fur Fighters

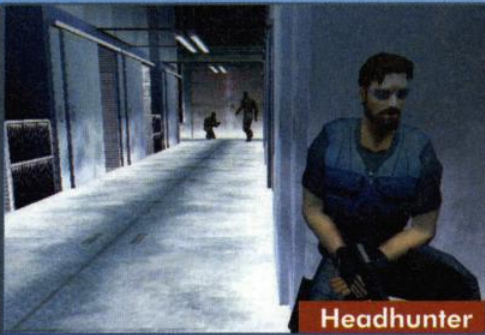


Run Like Hell

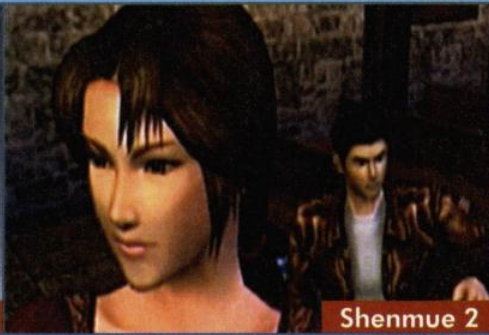


007: Agent Under Fire

DREAMCAST



Headhunter

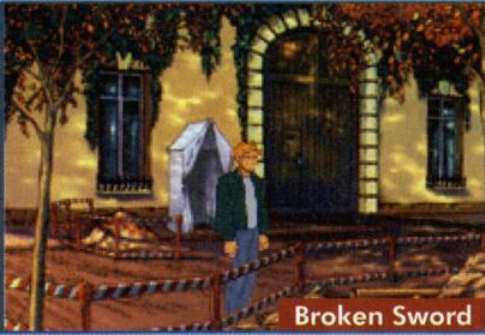


Shenmue 2



Commandos 2

GAME BOY ADVANCE



Broken Sword



Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

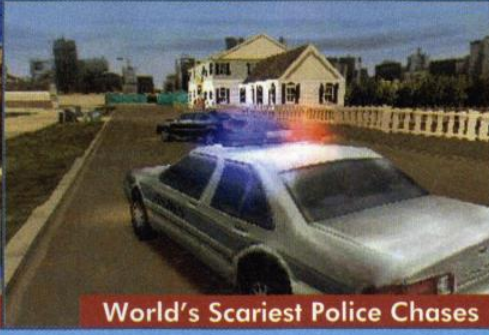


Army Men Advance

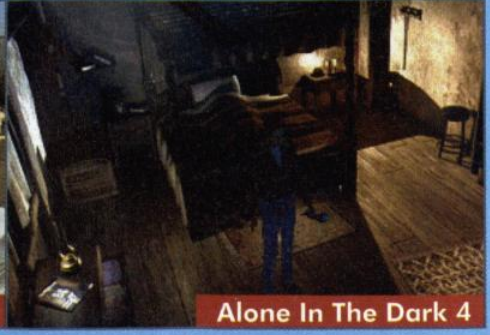
PSONE



Dragon Warrior VII



World's Scariest Police Chases



Alone In The Dark 4

BRUCE WILLIS SAMUEL L. JACKSON

FROM M. NIGHT SHYAMALAN, WRITER/DIRECTOR OF
"THE SIXTH SENSE"

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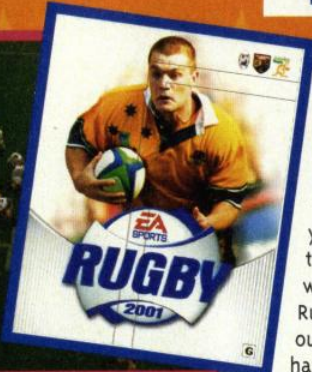


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WIN EA RUGBY!

FOR PS2

EA Sports have taped their ears down and tackled the PS2 to the ground with their new Rugby game, out on June 8th. If you can't wait to read our review next issue, then here's your chance to win one of five copies we have for PlayStation 2. It's rare that we see good Rugby games on our consoles or PC, so don't miss out on your scrum-slammng, boot-wearing, ball-handling, finger-probing Rugby action now! To win a copy, answer the following question:

»» Is EA Rugby for PS2 based on Rugby Union or Rugby League?

Send your answer along with your name and address on the back of an envelope to: **RUGBY RULES, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**



WIN QUAKE III REVOLUTION!

FOR PS2

Fragaholics, queue here. Now you can get gibby with the best of them on your PS2, with Quake III Revolution. Shoot, rail, nail and spam your way to victory – even with a control pad! We were really impressed with how well Quake III has made its console debut, so if you'd like to win one of five copies, answer the following question:

»» What are the computer controlled opponents commonly known as?


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...and big tools.



36 » HYPER

Later this year, Mythic Entertainment will be giving gamers the chance to journey in one of the Western world's most enduring mythological settings — the world of King Arthur. Well, not really the world of King Arthur — more the mess left behind after his death. In *Dark Age Of Camelot* (DAOC), players will be living and surviving in this archetypal fantasy world, complete with mythological beasts, magic and beliefs.

After Arthur's death, the land of Albion has fallen into chaos and the Britons are locked in conflict with the

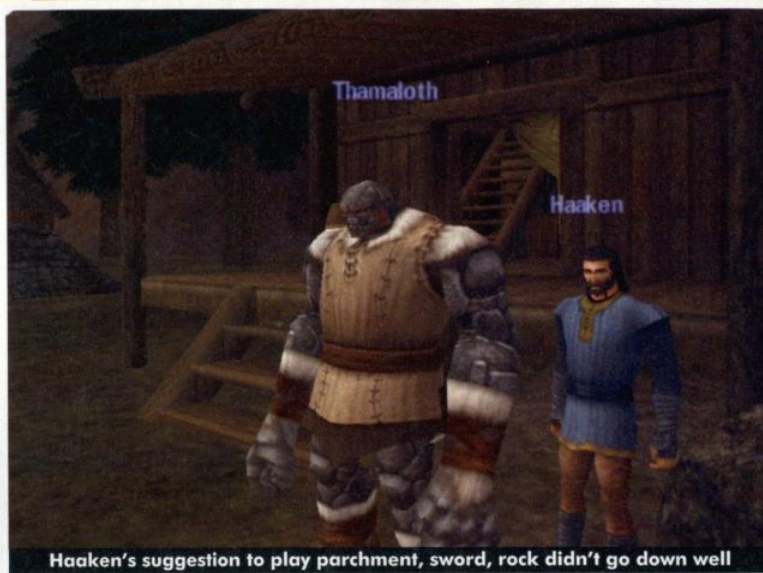
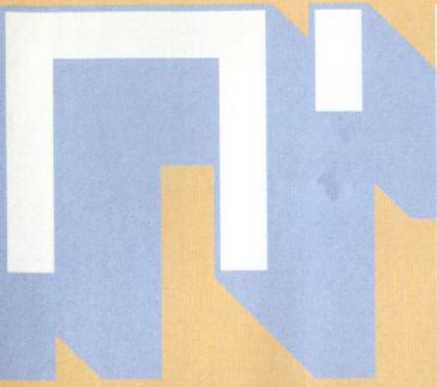
Celts of Hibernia to the West and the Norse barbarians of Midgard to the North. Each Realm has radically different geography, as well as customs, fighting styles and magical abilities. Players assume the role of a member of one of these three regions in an epic battle to defend their turf from invaders from the two other regions.

AN END TO PLAYER KILLING?

The rules of combat look to eliminate many of the common problems players have experienced with online RPGs in the past. While there will be a considerable number of NPC monsters to kill, player versus player combat will be restricted to inter Realm

fighting. That is, players from the same Realm will not be able to do battle. In this respect, Camelot really is taking a mythical good versus evil approach — just as it should. There is only black and white in this game, so if you're a Briton, the Celts and Norsemen are evil and must be destroyed. You won't even be able to communicate with them. After all, there's no reason (other than cheating) to speak to such heathens.

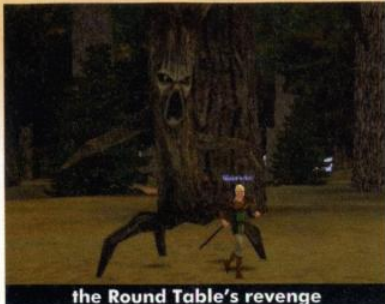
Hopefully this system will put an end to player killing and other forms of harassment. The other advantage is that Mythic are setting up a situation with a fair amount of scope for team based strategies, where mid sized



Haaken's suggestion to play parchment, sword, rock didn't go down well



skeletal centurion



the Round Table's revenge

armies of players will be making runs into enemy strongholds and attempting to destroy the inhabitants, and steal their relics. What are the relics? They're ancient magical artifacts that give bonuses to all members of a Realm. Relics are kept in shrines, and as long as they're kept secure, that Realm's inhabitants get the relic's advantages. You can imagine then, how important it is for each Realm to defend their relics, as well as for the other races to attempt to capture them. Every Realm has several of these relics, which will no doubt become flash points throughout the game.

We're not sure if Mythic are planning for all relics to have homogenous advantages, or if specific relics will give the Realm unique abilities (such as the "Relic Of Armour"). We'd like to see specific attributes being employed, to give a more tactical flavour.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Players begin the game as one member of a generic class: Fighter, Elementalist, Mage, Rogue or Acolyte. Once you reach the fifth experience level, you choose a guild to join, which then determines your specific career path and skill set. Some guilds will allow more than one base class to join, others won't.

Developing your character will be just as important in DAOC as in other MMORPGs. Fortunately, you'll be able to grow your character to a moderate level within the safety of your own domain. Each Realm is divided into a home area

and a frontier area. Questing within the home area allows players to get some experience without having to face enemy players unexpectedly. The frontier area, on the other hand, has high level quests and a very good possibility of running into enemy players. Once you've surpassed a certain experience stage, your time has come to show loyalty to your Realm by participating in raids on enemy territories, or defending your relics. Warfare against the other Realms won't actually be that important in character development. In fact, all experience points will come from killing NPC monsters, not other players. However, defending your Realm from other players or actively going out in search of enemy players will earn you Realm points, which could mean a new title (the only way to earn the title of

"Knight" is through Realm points) or bonuses to your abilities. In short, it's a sure-fire way to look like a hero and pick up wenchies.

Of course, cutting off the heads of your foes is only one part of the game. The rest of your time will be occupied with more traditional questing. There will be numerous quests for players to attempt at any one time, and Mythic will be keeping players on their toes with their questing engine. This will offer features like randomly generating the steps needed to succeed in a quest. Sick of standard quests? Guilds also offer a limited number of specialisation tracks for higher end characters. This allows players specialising in one skill to undertake special quests to attain rare items and skills.

While DAOC may not be looking revolutionary, we think that there's a lot of appeal in the game's classic fantasy setting, and the balance in the combat system is looking great. <<

NET NEWS



Netcomm's ADSL modem

ADSL UPDATE

>> There's little doubt that Australia is a technological backwater. How long did we have to wait for DVD? How long did we have to wait for pay TV? How much does John Howard have in common with George W. Bush? And how long are we going to have to wait for decent DSL services?

Back in Hyper 87 we thought the floodgates were finally opening when Australia's copper-loop access was liberalised. How wrong we were. Telstra are proving to be very stubborn in allowing other providers onto their turf. Through general sluggishness and high pricing, Telstra are doing a good job keeping the status quo. If Telstra were at least offering a good DSL service things wouldn't be so bad. Unfortunately, the service they currently offer is expensive and often unreliable.

In the United States, DSL technology is rapidly becoming the defacto high speed service, with huge numbers signing on. This is thanks to the decentralised system where lots of small service providers compete, keeping prices low and customer service high. It may be a long wait for DSL like this in Australia. Telstra have too much to lose by allowing other providers in. Not only will they lose their lucrative ISDN users, but other providers would be able to offer voice as well as data services. Which is doubly bad news for Telstra.

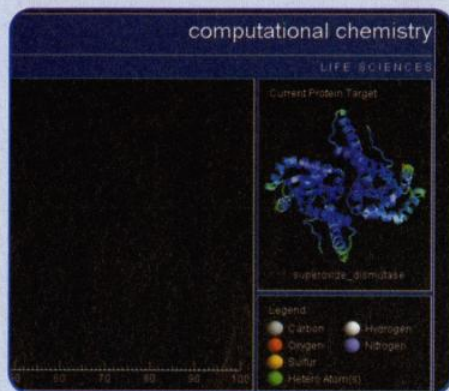
Looks like we may have to wait for the electricity grid to be opened up for data transfer after all.

LINKS

CHRONIC FOR QUAKE 3 ARENA

<http://interscope.farmclub.com/quake/>

>> This map shouldn't be taken seriously one little bit, but for hip hop fans this is a classic. Bust caps in the mean streets of NYC, with Dre and Eminem loops fading in and out depending on where you are on the map. The pack also comes with Dre and Eminem skins. Wacky.



HELP FIND DRUGS!

www.intel.com/cure

>> Remember SETI? The Search For Extraterrestrial Intelligence (<http://setiathome.berkeley.edu/>)? It caused a bit of a stir a few years ago when it allowed internet enabled computers to help trawl through the voluminous amounts of data associated with the search for life elsewhere in the Universe. All you had to do was download a screensaver-like program that would put your PC to work when you weren't using it. By decentralising the data crunching and using a huge web of computers worldwide, it's like creating a virtual super computer, and data can be examined exponentially faster than previously possible.

Now there's a drug optimisation program that gives more pragmatic PC users a chance to help make a contribution to the search for improved treatments and possibly cures for a range of life threatening diseases. It's hoped that at its height, this virtual super computer will be able to operate at 50 teraflops - that's ten times more powerful than the largest supercomputer!

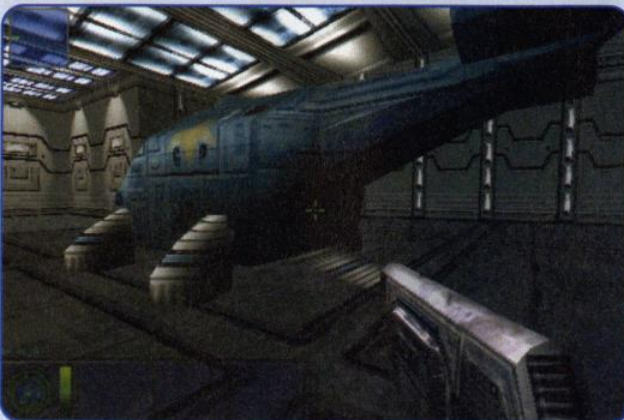
The first download available is a program targeting leukemia. This search alone will require a minimum of 24 million computing hours, because there are literally hundreds of millions of molecules that could potentially fight cancer. If your computer is idle for any length of time each day, then get philanthropic with it!



ALIEN X

www.shockwave.com

>> It's a little primitive, but all told this is quite a competent freeware first person shooter and a cool use of web technology. You can find it in the games section at www.shockwave.com. Naturally, you need shockwave installed on your PC or Mac.



3D GROOVE

www.3dgroove.com

>> The makers of Alien X, 3D Groove, have their own website that hosts a whole bunch of other cool browser-based games. They have a gunslinger game coming soon called Showdown that looks pretty nifty.





Baldur's Gate II

Throne of Bhaal



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BALDUR'S GATE II: SHADOWS OF AMN REQUIRED

ANTICIPATED RATING:
M15+ MEDIUM LEVEL ANIMATED VIOLENCE

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GRAN TURISMO 3: A SPEC

THE PS2 SHIFTS INTO GEAR

CATEGORY: Racing Simulation >> **PLAYERS:** 1-2 >> **PUBLISHER:** Polyphony Digital >> **AVAILABLE:** June/July >>



WOW-O-METER



Some things can only be truly understood through experience — like the immense surge of power one feels when roaring from 0-100km/h in the blink of an eye. The tingle of raw energy one feels upon the realisation that it's not just about speed, but how manoeuvrable an object is at that speed, is unlike any other. You begin to appreciate the craftsmanship of the cars you'll never be able to afford. You get a cheap thrill out of apexing a turn on an empty street in your bomb. Heck, you'll even understand why some people love a movie like *Gone In 60 Seconds*.

The closest people usually ever come to this is on the television — watching motorsports on weekends and burning the midnight oil just to see the latest Grand Prix. Some even become low-level car freaks, buying parts and modifying their own cars. But one thing that's becoming more and more universal amongst all of them is an acceptance that *Gran Turismo* is the game for them.

MAKING JAWS DROP

Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec is going to be THE big one of the year for console titles. From a consumer perspective, it's the latest chapter in the most popular racing simulation game in the world,

playable only on what is currently the most powerful and graphically advanced games console available. From a commercial perspective, it's the game that will give people who haven't already got a PlayStation 2 a reason to get one. It's the game that's going to really let the system break out into the mainstream.

And from a critic's perspective such as our own? We're positively bursting at the seams with anticipation. Apart from *Metal Gear Solid 2*, *Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec* is the game everyone is expecting to legitimise the PlayStation 2's place as a true next-generation machine. This is a game we expect to be so good that, once played, all will be forgiven. The lack of killer titles, the programming quibbles, the delays, the DVD problems — all of that will be forgiven if Sony and Polyphony Digital makes good on its promise to deliver the best racing game ever.

Over the past several months, Sony has provided us with beta code of *Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec*, and we've watched it grow from a mildly flawed, jittery update with slowdown and aliasing problems into such a beautifully refined and polished product that the latest code literally made our jaws drop.

Gran Turismo 3 isn't just about producing great graphics. Any console can produce ultra-



fully sick twin exhausts maaate. Wanna drag?



crisp textures and flawlessly overlapping transparencies. Gran Turismo 3 goes that step further to create a near living experience, immersing players in the scent and sight of a high-speed motor super car tearing across the tarmac. There's realistic heat-haze, dirt gets kicked up in loose-traction areas, and the glorious sunlight that drapes along the horizon reflects accurately on the surface of the cars. Objects in the background are obviously of a slightly lower resolution, possibly on purpose, to create a sense of focus and depth as you train your eyes on the traffic and the road ahead.



The cars you drive are also breathtaking. Every panel is modelled and textured with a fine eye for detail. Remember how the low-resolution textures were so easy to

pick out on the cars in Ridge Racer V? You'll get none of that here. These cars look amazingly real from every angle, right down to the three-dimensional hubcaps. Sure, the boxy sedans and pocket rockets you and I are accustomed to mightn't be much to look at in fine detail, but a shiny royal blue Dodge Viper? You too will become a believer.

Sound is equally important in creating this atmosphere. Like the original games, Polyphony Digital has sampled the engine sounds of every car available in the game for the sake of authenticity. What you may not have realised, however, is that you could only hear a maximum of one or two cars as they approached from behind you. This time around, you'll be able to hear every car in front and behind you.

Music-wise, it's known that American rocker Lenny Kravitz will be providing two tracks of music for the game. Apparently he was a huge fan of the games. Polyphony Digital will remix the tracks for gaming purposes.

WHAT'S WITH 'A-SPEC'?

>> Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec has actually gone through a number of name changes. In late 1999 it was casually referred to as GT3 for simplicity's sake because, well, it was going to be the third GT game. By the time the PlayStation 2 was released, rather than following the wave of games ending in '2K' it became known as GT2000 because the game was anticipated to be released in the year 2000. That never happened. When it became obvious GT2000 wasn't going to make it for 2000, the name was changed yet again, this time into two forms for the different world territories: GT3 A-Spec and Gran Turismo 3. We ended up with the long-winded version – Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec.

UP THERE WITH THE BEST

What holds these components together is the motion, and in that regard, Gran Turismo 3 is mesmerising. Every race is chug-free 60fps bliss – more than twice as smooth an experience than the previous two games. This isn't just for eye-candy purposes, though. It means that while driving, there's greater scope for error. The extra frames of animation allow you to be more precise in approaching turns and sticking to the optimum path.

But why stop at visuals for realism? Gran Turismo 3 will be compatible with a specially created steering wheel called the GT Force Wheel, made by Logitech. The wheel features true force feedback – as opposed to vibration feedback – where the wheel jerks around and fights against the movement of your hands in accordance with



the crowd's rather flat today





stay off the grass. Speed is more fun.



dude! sweet! dude! sweet!



the position and motion of your car's wheels.

On the city tracks, the GT Force wheel is fairly predictable in its portrayal of oversteering and loss of traction. In the rally mode, however, which has been expanded from Gran Turismo 2, the force feedback really shines through. You can feel every slope, every rock, and every uneven surface, which makes it even more fun to negotiate through. The physics are so well done, in fact, that you can apply real-world driving mechanics to what you see and feel and come out tops.

The irony is that this rally mode plays so well that it's up there with the best of them, and could even prove to be a dampener on Sony's officially licensed World Rally Championship 2001, due out towards the end of the year. The rally mode isn't the main focus, though, so there's little chance of Sony upstaging itself. There's more food for thought when you consider Polyphony Digital didn't complete a drag-racing mode in time for Gran Turismo 2. No mention has been made of this at all in regards to Gran Turismo 3, but together with the rally mode, it certainly indicates that Polyphony Digital has some broad aspirations.

For the moment, however, the GT Force wheel isn't what we'd describe as the ideal product. The current model being shown around is based



EVERY RACE IS CHUG-FREE BOFPS BLISS. THE EXTRA FRAMES ALLOW YOU TO BE MORE PRECISE

on Logitech's current line of PC steering wheels. Unfortunately, the plastic finish on the outer housing looks and feels cheap, and the design is not suited for play on a console. There are a pair of rather large clamps on either end — perfect for a table in front of a monitor, but extremely uncomfortable to rest on one's lap. Sony maintains that the wheel will be redesigned for the launch of Gran Turismo 3, currently slotted in for a July release.

ENHANCING THE EXPERIENCE

The code we've been able to play isn't that dissimilar from the previous Gran Turismo games. You start out with a bog-standard vehicle, earn some money through a few basic tournaments, and use that money to upgrade your car and acquire other vehicles. Whilst most of us are content with settling for an Audi TT Quattro and a Honda NSX in the garage, the true Gran Turismo fans will be gunning for owning every single one of them.

There will be 19 tracks available to race on. Some of them will be familiar, such as Trial Mountain and Laguna Seca, except with major graphical overhauls. Driving through them at a higher resolution and framerate makes it almost a new experience. Other courses are designed to show off the versatility of Gran Turismo 3's graphics engine, with sprawling European backgrounds in the Rome Circuit and picturesque scenery from the Swiss Alps. The Tahiti Maze rally course is particularly lush.

In Gran Turismo 3, there are just fewer than 150 cars you can own, with a garage size limit of over 200. This is actually less than the number of





is this guy Denso what? Can you tell we're having trouble captioning here?

cars featured in Gran Turismo 2, but it's not necessarily a bad thing. Before, it was a case of having a large stash of low-poly cars. The balance has basically shifted in favour of having a smaller collection of ultra high-poly cars with improved physics and handling. Now ask yourself something: are you in it to collect a bunch of meaningless Hotwheels cars with different coloured texture maps? If you are, then go play Vanishing Point or one of the other clones. Gran Turismo 3 has side-stepped the lazy approach and chosen to enhance the virtual experience of driving a real car.

The selection of cars originates mostly from Europe, Japan and the United States. They include the elegant models from Peugeot and Jaguar, muscle cars from Lotus and Chevrolet, and no-nonsense workhorses from Subaru and Mitsubishi. And yes, there's Volkswagen's New Beetle in there somewhere too.

A minor miracle has also been performed for the Australian version of Gran Turismo 3. Not only is the game optimised for PAL (full screen, full speed), it will also include the Australian Ford Tickford Racing Team Falcon. Yep, Polyphony Digital have put aside some time to include cars specifically for the Australian version of Gran Turismo 3. Hats off.

Of course, those damned license tests are back. They're hard, as usual, but rewarding in that you can earn better money with it. They also force you to learn and understand the subtle handling differences between the cars. If you don't learn the differences between mid-engine and front engine cars, and how weight distribution can affect the level of under or over-steer required, then you'll be doomed to playing the Quick Race arcade mode.

There'll be a couple of minor structural changes. When out buying for cars, the dealers won't be separated into different city locations, as was the case in GT2. Instead, dealers will be classified by country of origin, which will bring a sense of purity and heritage to the cars being portrayed.

New and used cars won't be kept in separate listings anymore, either. This will make it easier

IT WILL ALSO INCLUDE THE AUSTRALIAN FORD RACING TEAM FALCON

for players to purchase cars according to reputation and branding, as opposed to trying to guess how much the previous owner thrashed the engine.

The old auto shop where you washed your car has had a couple of minor changes too. Here, you can also change your oil and put on new tires, which will be of minor improvement to your car's performance.

The two-player split screen mode has been changed to include both horizontal and vertical splits. The horizontal split is what we're all more familiar with. The vertical split, however, will letterbox the TV screen and split the remaining area into equal squares.

Alternatively, friends can play in a link-up mode via the i-Link port. For this mode of play, you'll need two PlayStation 2s, two televisions, and two sets of control pads. Think of it as being just like the link-up mode on the PSone, or at least a simplified LAN. No word yet on an i-Link adaptor for the PlayStation 2.

In spite of all the excitement for Gran Turismo 3, one grave reservation still hangs in the back of our minds: that it could end up being too much like the previous games. For certain, this is what ultimately killed a lot of interest in games like Tekken Tag Tournament — it wasn't attempting to simulate a new experience. As gamers, we usually need something 'new' to interact with — new hierarchies, new structures to overcome. Could Gran Turismo 3 win on 'the experience' alone?

Perhaps it won't have to. As of this writing, Polyphony Digital has got Gran Turismo 3 'in the can', so to speak, and various sources indicate that there are many new and unexpected features to be found in the game. We can only wait with fingers crossed. <<<



split-screen mode for the i-link-cable challenged



"hi Homer, it's KITT from TV's Knight Rider here..."





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REVIEWS



p48 Red Faction

"Oppressed gamers of the world unite! After all the hype, Red Faction and its much coveted GeoMod engine have arrived to deliver some first class gaming to the masses."

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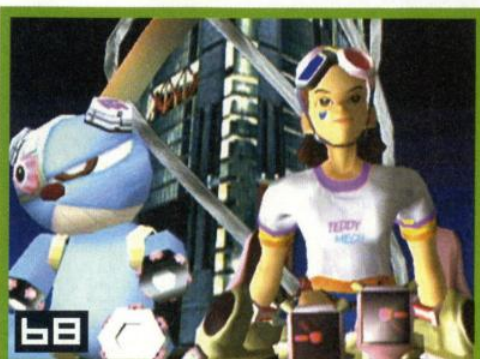
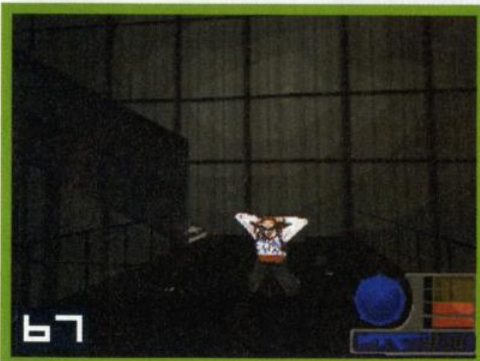
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THE HYPER CREW'S TOP 5

Eliot Fish - Editor

1. Alone In The Dark 4 - PSone
"Oooh I'm scared. No, really, I am!"
2. Rayman Advance - Game Boy Advance
3. Red Faction - PS2
4. Counter-Strike - PC
5. Kengo - PS2

Cam Shea - Deputy Editor

1. Devil May Cry demo - PS2
"This may as well be Castlevania in 3D. We like, we like, we like a lot!"
2. Unirally - SNES
3. Worms World Party - PC
4. Quake 3 Revolution - PS2
5. Crazy Taxi - PS2

Malcolm Campbell - Art guy

1. Devil May Cry demo - PS2
"Screw MGS2 - I'll buy a PS2 for this!"
2. Chrono Trigger - SNES
3. Gyruss - arcade
4. Guilty Gear X - DC
5. Tony Hawk 2 - DC

Kevin Cheung - Contributor

1. Gran Turismo 3 - PS2
"My God, I've never seen anything more beautiful!"
2. Tribes 2 - PC
3. Devil May Cry demo - PS2
4. Serious Sam - PC
5. Konami Wai Wai Racing - GBA

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!



»» PS2



Red Faction

CATEGORY: First Person Shooter >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: THQ >> PRICE: STBA >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: June >>

ELIOT FISH locks and loads. The revolution is here...

Wou are insignificant. One of hundreds of miners working on Mars for the Ultor corporation. You trudge into the mines every day under the watchful eye of a militaristic security force, suffering under horrendously inadequate working conditions. Hey, sounds like a day at the Hyper office. Except, today is different. One small argument between a tired worker and an arrogant security guard and suddenly your life has taken a dramatic left turn. Now you have a pistol in your hand and you're rebelling against the faceless corporation that put you here in the first place. Whilst it feels good to strike back, what you really want to do is get to the bottom of a mystery surrounding a deadly plague that has been killing off your co-miners. You'll just have to kill anyone who gets in your way.

PLUNDERING THE BACK CATALOGUE
 Hmm... nanotechnology? A plague designed in secret by a corporation? Yep, Red Faction happily takes most of its ideas from other popular PC First Person Shooters. From Half-Life, System Shock 2 and Deus Ex you could derive most of Red Faction's story and mission objectives. Now, this being the PlayStation 2 version of the game, there's a difference. We haven't played Deus Ex, Half-Life and System Shock 2 on a console yet, so the majority of gamers who might be buying Red Faction will be fresh to a lot of the ideas and design elements in this game. In that context, Red Faction stands out from the pack as one of the first really PC-like shooters on a console. GoldenEye and Perfect Dark on the N64 were both great console

shooters, but they failed to stand up next to PC shooters in many technical areas. Red Faction on PS2 actually compares pretty favourably to some PC games on the market. If you're a console gamer bred on console shooters only, then Red Faction is going to impress you mightily. Of course, if you're a PC gaming veteran then you'll want to take the following criticisms a little more to heart.
 Red Faction is just another shooter. We know the GeoMod engine is impressive and lots of fun, but it hasn't changed the way we play. Deforming the terrain is cool, blowing holes through rock and climbing through to the other side is revolutionary even, but it never really gets utilised in any genre-busting way. We're still running down corridors, shooting at guards,



The Need for Speed

>>> There's been much hype about the vehicles in Red Faction, and the reality is that they don't play much of a part in the game. The Jeep is super cool, allowing you to run down your enemies, then hop out and man the gun mounted on the back for some super firepower, but it is only featured once in the game. The rock digger was also great fun, but again, sorely underused. Unfortunately the sub and the fighter were both a little too similar, as well as slow and tricky to use. With both of these you're better off just trying to find the exit as fast as you can.



don' mess wit de 9 millimetre



can we have our ball back please?



Eliot... phone home

Just in case you forgot, blowing holes through walls with explosives is endless fun.

avoiding security cameras and sabotaging reactor cores. We're even still battling evil corporations, exploring medical wings and scientific labs full of human experiments. We're still running from self-destruct countdowns, climbing up and down elevator shafts and picking health packs off dead bodies. We're also still waking up halfway through the game in a cell, stripped of our weapons. So am I telling you that Red Faction is incredibly derivative? Yep. Actually, it plunders the First Person Shooter catalogue for all its worth. Aside from the impressive GeoMod engine, Red Faction doesn't really have an original polygon in its whole body. I guess the big question is whether it's worth experiencing all these tired shooter clichés over again on the PS2.

Red Faction is great fun, don't get me wrong, and you'll be compelled to get to the very end. But if you already have a few shooters under your belt,

you're probably going to struggle a bit to keep your enthusiasm going. As you play through the game, there's just enough incentive to keep you striving to finish the particularly tough areas, even re-loading your game countless times just to figure out how to get past certain bits. But it was sad to see that there was nothing here we haven't seen countless times before.

NOW LOADING ON A CONSOLE NEAR YOU

It was also frustrating to see the game suffering from some pretty glaring design errors, such as being able to run through a room full of guards (all of them shooting at you) only to find you can trigger the cutscene with another character in the same room — as if you had walked in unnoticed. Small things like that simply spoil the whole experience, and it's strange that flaws like this get overlooked. There are other examples

of these design flaws throughout Red Faction that prevent it from standing tall next to the games it happily attempts to emulate. But let's be positive for a moment... when it comes to shooting at stuff, Red Faction does an amazingly good job, and that's what we buy shooters for, right? Red Faction is an impressive game, and we haven't seen anything as accomplished as this on a console yet. GoldenEye and Perfect Dark were great games, but they didn't quite offer the complexity of Red Faction. You could say that Red Faction is the best console shooter yet, and you would probably be right. It's a serious shooter. This is nothing like Timesplitters, Quake III or Unreal Tournament. This is a story driven, mission-based shooter and it's good enough to warrant your attention. But that nagging feeling returns... the

!!! Don't take our word for it - check the demo disc for the amazing Red Faction gameplay trailer.

game should have been so much better.

There are many reasons to get excited about joining the resistance. The collection of weapons we have here are brilliant. The enemy AI is quite impressive. And just in case you forgot, blowing holes through walls with explosives is endless fun.

Probably because of the geometry involved with the GeoMod engine, it seems that Volition have had to design Red Faction in such a way that small areas have to frequently load one after the other. Gameplay is continually interrupted as you pass through doorways or around corners, sometimes after even a few small rooms and at times it gets a little tiring. When the atmosphere is interrupted, especially for a loading screen, it's simply a bummer for the gamer. But we can accept that as part



of the fact that there is so much you can do with the environment. There's a trade off here, and for the ability to destroy your surroundings, it's probably worth it!

YOUR MISSION, SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TO ACCEPT IT...

On the normal difficulty setting, Red Faction becomes punishingly hard. I actually think this is a bit of a problem, only for the fact that it requires you to constantly re-load your game over and over, and no-one



Friendly Fire

>> Red Faction multiplayer is pretty good fun, as the variety of weapons helps to keep things pretty spicy. Two-player splitscreen is excellent in terms of the trade-off between frame-rate and graphical detail and you can throw bots in there too. The potential for some incredible user-made mods in the PC version of Red Faction is mind-boggling. That's when we'll really see the power of the GeoMod engine.

wants to sit through that. One of the reasons it becomes super difficult, is a result of one of the coolest weapons in the game — the Rail Driver. This weapon has a heat sensor that lets you see enemies through walls, and then shoot them through the wall. The problem is that enemies have these guns too, and sometimes you'll get shot out of nowhere, not even realising there's an enemy in an adjoining room. Now that's just silly. It's like a random death. That kind of power should only be in the player's hands, because we all know that AI can't be trusted. It doesn't happen too often, and only towards the end of the game, but... there's that loading screen again. Sometimes it can result in the player having to reload a section over 20 times, just to pick the enemy off before they take you down. You see, the Rail Driver cuts through 100% health and armour with one shot. Ouch.

However, the fire fights in the game are stunningly good most of the time. The variety and sheer number of weapons you can get your hands on is excellent and they all look, sound and play brilliantly. The Assault Rifle is punchy and accurate, the Precision Rifle is fast and deadly, and the

flamethrower is just flat-out entertaining. When you set one guard alight, if he happens to run back at his own comrades, he just might set them on fire too.

When the bullets are flying, the sound is exquisite, with ricochets, explosions and the chunky click-clack of clips being reloaded, all truly satisfying. Shooting at glass windows is especially cool, with the slow crack and shatter the best yet seen in any shooter. The glass even crunches under foot. Oh, and is that door locked? Just set a few charges on the wall and blow yourself a crawl space around the side of the entire door!

The controls are also excellent. The two analogue sticks are there for your movement and "looking", plus there's an "aiming" button on the up button on the D-pad, so you can stand in one spot and move your aim around the screen, Time Crisis style. Little additions such as that make Red Faction all the more successful as a configurable and enjoyable shooter. It's just a shame that the story, and the banality of the missions let the game down. It won't please everyone, and it's got its problems, but Red Faction is just a bit too hard to resist. <<



your sandbags won't save you, fool!



hey! this is just like Perfect Dark!



PLUS: Fantastic weapons. Long game. Challenging.

MINUS: Derivative. Glitchy. Unconvincing story.


VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

92 93 86

OVERALL

91

Red Faction is the most impressive console shooter yet.



CRAZY TAXI™



SEGA®

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PlayStation®2



Now all we need is a deck of cards



Klesk auditions for Dragonball Z



ahhh, me so horny

Quake III Revolution

PS2

CATEGORY: FPS >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: EA >> PRICE: \$99.99 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

CAM SHEA gets gibby with it.

It's hardly a revolution, but this is a very solid console representation of id's masterpiece. Developers Bullfrog have fused Quake III Arena and Team Arena together, then tweaked the maps, physics and game structure for the console experience. So while feeling familiar, Quake III Revolution (Q3R) is a whole new kettle of gibbs.

LOADING TIMES OF DOOM

It may be different, but it's equally valid. The groundwork is very impressive. Even coming from top end PCs, we were impressed at how great Q3R looks on PS2. Almost all the architectural feats of the PC version have made it across, from the curved surfaces and real-time lighting to the detailed textures. Better still, aliasing isn't an issue, nor is pop-up. And the frame rate is blistering — always above 30 and usually sitting on 60. Quite a feat.

The tier system is still used as the basis of the single player experience, but fortunately Bullfrog have made it more compelling by varying the

challenges on offer. While some maps are still a straightforward deathmatch, others modes like Elimination and Possession also come into play.

Single player has never been what Quake's about though, so how does Q3R hold up in the multiplayer stakes? Better than expected for a game with no online support. Yes, that's right, this is a splitscreen only experience. And it's playable too. The frame rate is reasonable even in four player mode, partly due to the field of view being increased to create a greater sensation of speed. Timesplitters still has the edge in four player fun though, as the simple graphical style lends itself better to such a small area of screen. Q3R's splitscreen isn't really a game in itself, more a nice

complement to the single player game. Multiplayer modes encompass everything from the standard deathmatch and team deathmatch, to capture the flag and single weapon deathmatch. The only major downside is that you can't add in bots when playing in "quad screen".

!!! Q3R is an action title, pure and simple. For a more story-driven FPS, check out Red Faction.

STAPLES, NOT ROCKETS

By now all the PC Quakers out there are chuckling to themselves, thinking that the Q3A they know can't possibly work on a console. They'd be right, but this is a hybrid version of Quake, where the play balance has been dramatically altered. The old Quake staple - rocket launchers, are much less dominant, simply because it's that much harder to aim at an opponent's feet with the dual shock. Oh, didn't we mention that mouse and keyboard support hasn't been included? Yep, it's dual shock or die.

A bizarre omission, but it doesn't necessarily detract (much) from the experience. Bullfrog have included enough control options and tweakage to ensure you'll be able to find a comfortable setup. PC Quakers have no reason to bother mind you, but for the console-only crowd, this is great stuff.

Eliot, Malcolm and I were quite surprised how much we liked this game, being the snobby elitist Q3A PC/Mac freaks that we are. For PS2 owners with a multitap and friends, this is a fragging good purchase. <<

PLUS: Sweet visuals and game speed.

MINUS: The Longest Yard is dead on console. Absurd load times.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

89 80 86

OVERALL
87

A very tasty console adaptation of Q3A that will silence the cynics.



Unreal Tournament



CATEGORY: FPS >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: Infogrames >> PRICE: \$99.99 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

CAM SHEA is left to mop up the gibbs...

!!! We received Quake 3 Revolution and Unreal Tournament within a few days of each other here at Hyper, so we've been able to sit down and play both games side by side. Which game came out on top? Read on to find out... or just compare the scores. Heh heh.

KING OF THE HILL?

Let's get this out of the way first up. Q3R is easily the prettier of the two games, and considerably faster too. In single player mode, UT's frame rate isn't really a problem, sitting around 30fps, but it isn't smooth enough in the crunch moments to guarantee accuracy. Most of the maps from the PC version have made it across and are looking okay. The texture detail has been reduced a lot, leaving most of the maps looking quite drab, although the lighting is reasonable and the head popping gibbs are as glorious as ever. One of the biggest disappointments map-wise however, is that some of the larger levels are so much for the hardware to handle that

you're restricted to playing against just one or two bots. Doesn't this defeat the purpose of them being the larger levels?

In splitscreen games, there are more problems than just the low frame rate. None of the PC levels we know and love are available — only new ones put together for the PS2 version and these are, on the whole, too small and lacking in style. Like the PS2 version of Quake 3, when you're playing four way splitscreen don't expect to be able to introduce bots, because you can't. And don't expect to be able to play Domination or Assault, because you can't — not that they'd be any fun for teams of two anyway.

UT's controls have been adapted for dual shock as well as could be expected.

!!! PC owners with UT and a Logitech iFeel mouse can download an update for tactile weapon and explosion feedback from www.unrealtournament.com.

Unlike Q3R, UT also has USB keyboard and mouse support, so the future looks bright control-wise. Unfortunately, a degree of auto aim seems to be native to the control

scheme, which really takes some skill out of the players' hands - not that you'll mind when playing against the higher difficulty bots.

FUTURE PROOF. PRESENTLY BROKEN.

UT also supports future online play, which Q3R does not. This actually counts in Q3's favour though, because UT's splitscreen experience is nowhere near as compelling... leaving you wanting online play. And realistically, PS2 owners might be waiting for some time before the online angle actually happens.

While Unreal Tournament on PC didn't have the brilliant physics of Q3A, many preferred it over id's offering. Let's face it, UT was superior in many ways. More playmodes, some great new weapons (Flak Cannon I could kiss you!), and a better single player game in general. In the move to PS2, many of UT's base advantages have been lost thanks to Q3R's new weapons and playmodes. On a relatively level gameplay-field, Q3R is simply far more technically proficient than UT. Don't get us wrong, this is still a damn playable game, but a few more months in development would have done wonders. <<



PLUS: Great weapons and variety. USB keyboard/mouse support.

MINUS: Average frame rates. Lacks polish.

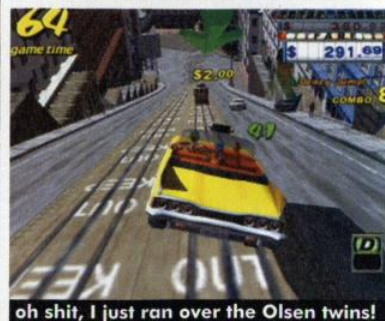
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

82 84 85

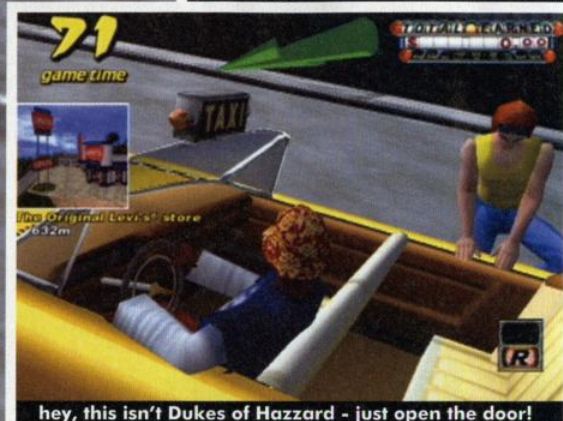
OVERALL

83

UT is a fine game, but can't compete with Q3R technically.



oh shit, I just ran over the Olsen twins!



hey, this isn't Dukes of Hazzard - just open the door!

Crazy Taxi

PS2

CATEGORY: Arcade Racing >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Acclaim >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

CAM SHEA chooses the low rider...

For the uninitiated, Crazy Taxi is at its core a straightforward game. Simply pick up passengers and drop them off within the time limit. Of course, things get a little trickier when you see the size of the city environments you're navigating within. These courses are huge, and they're packed with people, cars, trucks, shortcuts, buildings, parks, fountains, bridges, phone booths and more. The PlayStation faithful have had a long wait, but finally AM3's masterpiece of motoring madness has come to PlayStation 2. Crazy Taxi for PS2 may be a no-frills port, but it's very solid nonetheless.

weaving flawlessly through traffic. Once you've got all that down, it's time to learn how to crazy stop next to passengers, where all the drop off points in the city are, and how the passenger colour coding system works.

If you think you've got it all down because you were good at the game in the arcades, then think again. This console version has an all-new city that is bigger and a whole lot more challenging than the original. It has large maze-like city areas with freeways sweeping over the top, not to mention some of the steepest hills you've ever seen in a racing game. Even more testing, however, is the

!!! The sequel takes Crazy Stunts to a whole new level. Tall buildings in a single bound...?

Crazy Box mode. This consists of an escalating series of challenges designed to test your skills in every area of the game, culminating in a race against the clock to take a passenger all the way from one side of the map to the other.

It's adrenaline pumping gaming that's for sure, and you'll be playing over and over again trying to improve your position in the rankings or to hit a seemingly impossible shortcut.

SLIP, SLOP, SLAP

Acclaim deserve a pat on the back for a spot-on port, but should they have done more? Most purists would probably be content that at least the game is of equal brilliance to the original. On the other hand, the sequel is very close. Shouldn't PlayStation 2 owners expect a little more this far down the track? At the very least, a splitscreen mode could have been implemented, opening up a host of awesome multiplayer modes.

On a technical level, the PS2 doesn't really show its extra grunt. The polygon counts are very similar and there's about the same amount of pop up as in the Dreamcast version. One area where the PS2 version is superior is in maintaining the frame rate in the original mode. The DC version had a tendency to slow down regularly, whereas this port is silky smooth. We also found that the Dual Shock was much better suited to the racing mechanics, so there's a little more accuracy in terms of control.

Crazy Taxi is seriously addictive gaming, so if you've never played the DC version, this is a must buy. <<



PLUS: Almost flawless port of the arcade game.

MINUS: Dreamcast owners will be playing the sequel.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

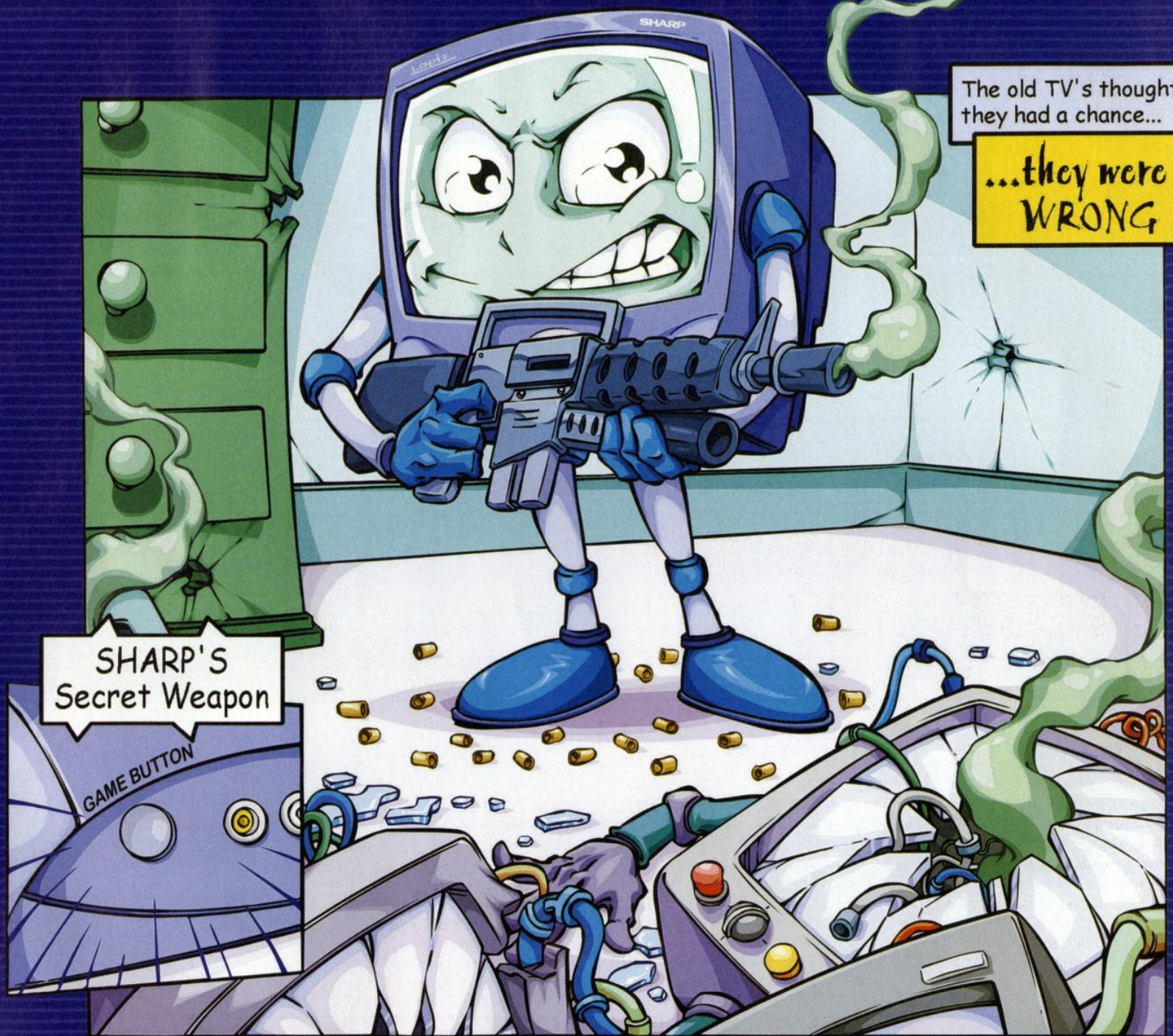
86 80 91

OVERALL

86

Acclaim stand to make some crazy money from this port.

it's GAME OVER for your OLD TV



Sharp's New Personal TV with
GAME MODE
Button plus matching
remote control



POP ORANGE



JAZZY BLUE



TECHNO SILVER



FUSION PINK



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SHARP
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igen puts a little spin into PsyMatrix.
 Vrox feels the burn from =M = CareFactor0's spike
 ret.
 W) {S

» **REVIEW**



Tribes 2

» **PC**

CATEGORY: MMOFPS >> **PLAYERS:** 1-64 >> **PUBLISHER:** Sierra >> **PRICE:** \$99.95 >> **RATING:** MA15+ >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >>
REQUIRED: PIII 400, 64MB RAM, Beefy 3D card >>

ASHTON MILLS steps into the frontline. Look out, mama.

Tribes 2 is one of the most lusted after releases of the year. It's not only sent Tribes fans into uncontrollable fits of drooling, but since MMOG's (Massively Multiplayer Online Games) have taken off between now and when Tribes 1 first hit the scene years ago (not the least helped by games such as EverQuest) there's also a much larger market waiting patiently to get their paws on Tribes 2. More than this, it's also being released for Linux at the same time as Windows. Go Dynamix! So is it worth the wait? Ha! You think we'd give that away before you've read the entire review? Have patience, soldier!

WHEN 2 TRIBES GO TO WAR
 In terms of gameplay, yes it's just like Tribes 1. In fact, bar the fancier

graphics, Tribes 2 plays just like its predecessor. Tribes 2 is just more of Tribes in every sense - more weapons, more packs, more maps, more gameplay styles, more vehicles, more tribes, more graphics, more nifty features, more players, and more scantily clad women. Oh hang on, wrong game (this isn't an RPG)!
 You'll also need more PC to play it - the default graphics settings are very conservative, lending the graphics to seem a little washed out. This provides a fast frame rate inside a building, leading you to think you can pump up the options to enjoy a prettier blast-fest - until you step outside. It's then you realise why the defaults are so conservative. Even on (what is now) an acceptable machine (PIII 550MHz, 128MB, TNT2 Ultra overclocked) the

game chugs right down in the vast open vistas. If you want pretty modern team based warfare, lock and load with the fastest gear you can buy.
 That said, one area in which Dynamix has realised the value of MMOGs, and which doesn't require tons of silicon beef, is the concept of community. Online games are all about community (albeit violent ones) - Everquest, Quake, and Half-Life clans have demonstrated this - so in Tribes 2 they give you every aspect of online communities right in the game itself: search facilities for Tribes and players, newsgroups and forums (just like Usenet), chat (running IRC, in fact) and even - yes - in game Tribes email. Very nice.
 Even better, there's plenty of Australian servers. Back when Tribes 1





Brrmmm brrrrmm!

>> There are a wide variety of vehicles in Tribes 2, from fast grav bikes and heavy bombers through to beefy tanks and mobile bases. There's nothing quite like riding down an incline as the gunner of a tank, taking pot shots at enemy installations with your handy and rather destructive mortars!

If you can afford to pump up the graphics options, Tribes 2 makes **massive online warfare** look beautiful.

was released, nearly all the servers were US based, leading to high pings for Aussie players. Despite this, Tribes coped quite well with some excellent net code. Tribes 2 is a little more demanding, especially because games can be as large as 60 odd players, and if you have any intentions of being able to hit an opponent with your sniper rifle over a 56k modem, you'll need to find games with less than 20 players - thankfully easy to do with the inbuilt server browser.

Any hardcore Tribes head will tell you that Tribes, and many other online FPS games, benefit greatly from voice setups provided by software such as Game Commander (www.game-commander.com). Tribes 2, however, handles this for you. If you have a headset and mic, you can communicate to similarly equipped players. The importance in teamplay of being able

communicate quickly while moving and firing is huge. Props to Dynamix for voice support out of the box.

ARMED TO THE TEETH

There are 20 pre-defined classes in the game, ranging from 'Scout Assassin' (a fast, cloakable, light class) to 'Juggernaut Defense' (a slow, armed to the teeth heavy class), each specifying a ready-to-wear set of equipment. You select these classes before approaching an inventory station, allowing a large team of players to simply run in and out of inventory stations quickly and orderly. It's quite a sight seeing a team equipping for war. Speaking of which, all the old favourites are back - the spinfuser, mortars, grenade launchers, blasters and more. There's

!!! Tribes 1 was one of the most pirated games of all time, so make sure you BUY this one, okay?

also a few new toys such as homing rockets, whiteout grenades, and the Shocklance.

So is it worth the wait? Yeaahhh. If you can afford to pump up the graphics options, Tribes 2 makes massive online warfare look beautiful. Large and colourful explosions, engine exhaust from aircraft, and ruby red sniper rifle beams populate heavy battle scenes, and create a fantastic atmosphere.

If you've moved on from the Tribes style gameplay (onto more refined games like Counter Strike or Front Line Force - both Half-Life mods), then you might not think it's worth the dosh. If you thought Tribes was the nearest thing to ultimate multiplayer FPS pleasure, welcome to your utopia. <<<



PLUS: The biggest and sexiest MMOFPS out there.

MINUS: You'll want a ninja PC and cable/DSL access.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

90 85 85

OVERALL

87

Tribes is back, this time in style.



» REVIEW

Desperados

» PC

CATEGORY: Real Time Strategy >> **PLAYERS:** 1 >> **PUBLISHER:** Infogrames >> **PRICE:** \$89.95 >> **RATING:** M >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >>
REQUIRED: PII 233, 64MB RAM >>

JAMES COTTEE is a fan of both rootin' and tootin'

Whether it's Cowboys and Indians, Cops and Robbers or SWAT Teams and Zombies, conflict in the media is almost universally portrayed from an American cultural perspective. If the discerning Australian game player wants interactive entertainment that resembles anything from the antipodes, then they're right out of luck. A crying shame, considering our rich history of bloodshed from the arrival of the nasty white man all the way through to the gang wars of Mt. Druiitt.

No, Desperados is yet another foray into the wild, wild American west. Perhaps that it was coded by a German developer for the benefit of a French conglomerate is less bitter irony, and more an indication of the genres transcendence to a universally

applicable metaphor for the human spirit of adventure. Besides, the frogs always had a soft spot for Lucky Luke, and so do we.

MR. KISS KISS, BANG BANG

The action begins in the late 19th century in the American southwest. Nasty, nasty banditos brandishing greasy moustaches and ridiculous floppy hats are striking at everything Americans hold near and dear, and the authorities are powerless to stop them!

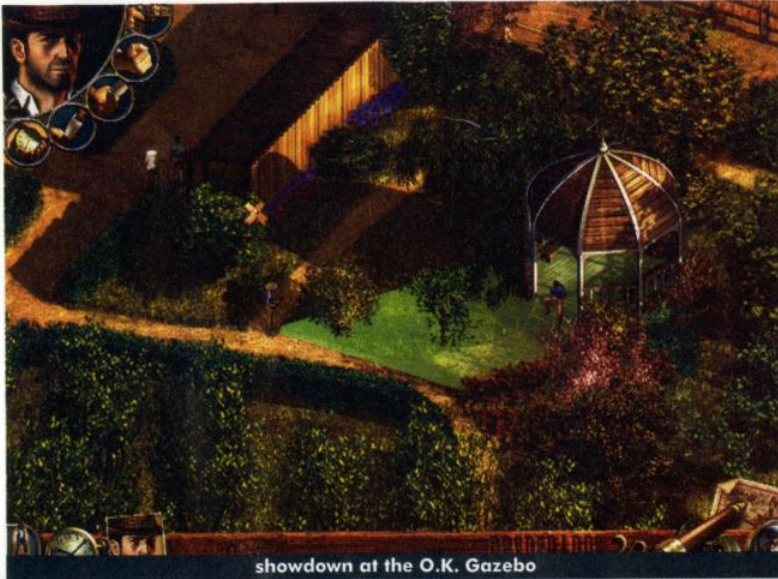
Enter John Cooper (you). Drifter, sharp shooter, lady-killer, and most of all, bounty hunter, with his eye on the \$15,000 reward.

Desperados is a top-down tactical strategy game, consisting of 25 large, widely varied levels. The story is highly linear, with rather nice CG cut-scenes

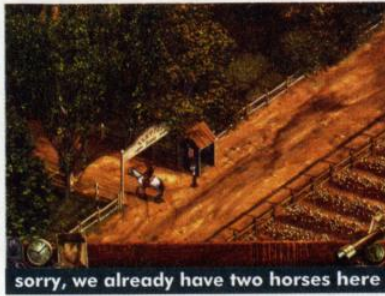
as end-of-level rewards. The levels themselves are quite demanding, with a very slight margin of error standing between safety and death at any given time, and the casual-looking map layouts typically belie the convoluted path you need to take to victory.

Therein, of course, lies the game. Your primary combatant, John Cooper, has a number of conventional and unconventional means of progressing through outlaw infested levels. Aside from his Colt six shooter, there's his knife, which can be thrust or thrown, and his mighty fist. Any of these can down a foe or neutral interloper with a





showdown at the O.K. Gazebo



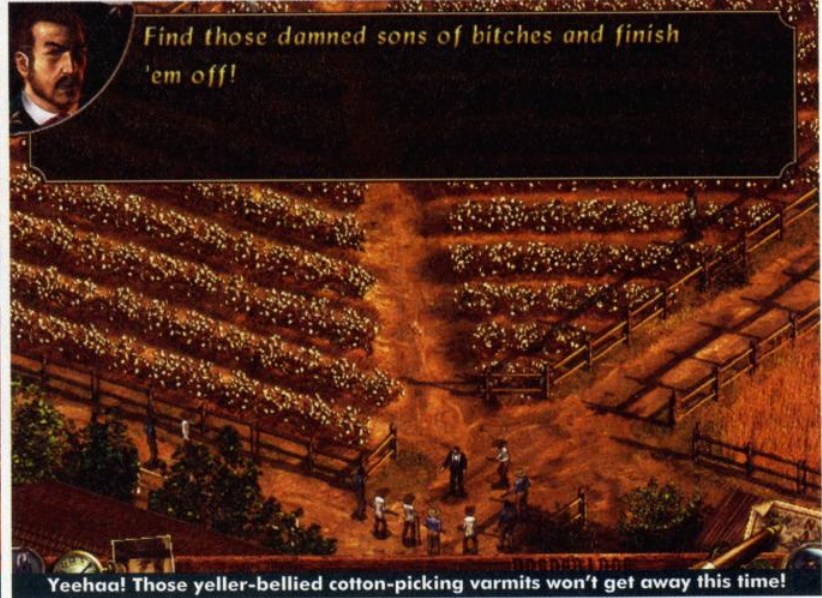
sorry, we already have two horses here



dum dada dum dada dum Bonanza



tis a fine barn, but tis no pool, English



Find those damned sons of bitches and finish 'em off!

Yeehaa! Those yeller-bellied cotton-picking varmints won't get away this time!

As your quest to rid north America of spiky facial hair progresses, you'll recruit a gaggle of sidekicks

single hit. From there, it's a simple matter of dragging them to an unoccupied building and dumping them, after a quick check to the keyhole, of course.

LIVING IN THE WILD WILD WEST

As your quest to rid north America of spiky facial hair progresses, you'll recruit a gaggle of sidekicks, each with their own unique abilities to help you clear out the slack-jawed yokels. One such stereotype is "Doc," the hard drinking, one-eyed sniper and first aid specialist. His skills vary from the useful, such as picking locks, to the ridiculous, such as his ability to construct a scarecrow in his likeness to fool dim-witted enemies. I kid you not.

Most provocative of all is Kate O'Hara, female analogue of Cooper. She goes for the more sultry approach, flashing her garter and shapely legs to mesmerise would-be attackers. Once

the besotted sap is within range, she can kick him in the head; sweet dreams are made of this.

Rounding out the troupe is a trio of racial stereotypes: A Negro demolitions specialist, a Chinese girl, pet monkey included, and a very large Mexican. Eventually you'll have all six dudes in your party, and each has six different abilities: a projectile weapon, an unarmed attack, a diversion creating implement, and so on, making for some highly varied puzzle solving.

The gameplay style is most reminiscent of Commandos. You can't just go in guns blazing; each level must be approached meticulously. Not all the cards are stacked against you though, as each character can have actions buffered for quick action, so you don't have to fiddle around with icons while some git's blasting your britches off. For instance, you can

!!! There's just one thing missing from this review... wiggly wiggly Wild, wiggly Wild Wild West. That's better.

specify Cooper to shoot up to three targets in advance. One then merely

has to duck out from cover, hit the space bar, and he'll get them every time. This ability to store commands is new to this sort of strategy game, and a welcome addition.

Desperados may not have much in the way of obvious flaws, but it certainly has its limitations. The AI is predictable, following set routines. Environmental interaction varies. While many obstacles can be approached in different ways, just as many can't.

Desperados is a complex and rewarding game, probably the best one of its kind to come out in the past year. Vastly superior to pretenders like Star Trek: Away Team, it presents a solid dose of tactics wrapped up in a tortilla of varied and unconventional combat. And if it helps, you can pretend you're Ned Kelly. <<<



PLUS: Involving strategy, varied tactics, nice look and feel.

MINUS: Dated graphics, anal puzzles, not for the mellow.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

80 90 88

OVERALL

87

A must-have for strategy fans & Commandos veterans.



Three Kingdoms: Fate of The Dragon

PC

CATEGORY: RTS / RPG >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: Eidos >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

STEVE POLAK straps himself to a ballista, just for kicks...

If Age of Empires wasn't deep enough for you, then step right up and get ready to head back into the first millennium with Three Kingdoms: Fate of the Dragon, the sequel to the first Three Kingdoms RTS. In this game you represent one of the three factions fighting for dominance in China. Fate of the Dragon is very much a real time strategy effort with you managing the tactical combat, while the overall strategic direction of the game is determined by the pre-scripted missions on offer.

ARE YOU EXPERIENCED?

Getting the ball rolling in this game is a tad arduous as the training mission is long and involved. That said, those of you who have only really played 'strategy lite' games like Red Alert will appreciate the tutorial. Once you have finished or bypassed the training mission you will discover that you are only just beginning to appreciate the deep and involving gameplay on offer.

Fate of the Dragon features a huge array of buildings, units, and most interestingly, siege machines. The game also has an RPG element as you

can recruit unique characters from Chinese folklore. These guys accumulate experience, become better at their jobs, and can even cast spells.

The Chinese were certainly very inventive when it came to mechanical equipment. Even though almost all of your siege weapons are wooden, there are some pretty cool toys. There are ballistas, wall scaling portable ladders, and most interestingly of all, these weird kite things you can use to fly a small number of men into an enemy encampment.

Naturally the cooler technologies have to be developed during the game.

SMACKED DOWN

The interface will be immediately recognizable to anyone who has played this sort of game before. Don't think the old tactics will work though! You'll get seriously smacked down if you simply grind out a massive army and march en masse in the direction of the enemy fortress. This is because Fate of the Dragon forces you to think about supplying your warriors as well as simply moving

them in the direction of the enemy. You will have to keep your men well fed by making sure your army is well supported by supply wagons and a constantly moving force of runners who are bringing up additional supplies from your main base.

This takes some getting used to, and certainly it makes mounting an effective offensive really difficult at times. Also further adding to the difficulty are some of the fortifications you'll be attacking. Huge impenetrable stone walls which are heavily garrisoned

by enemy missile troops will regularly reduce your forces to a disorganized rabble as they are shredded before they can retaliate. Attacking isn't impossible, you just have to toss out the tank rush mentality. Instead, use the game's pause facility regularly to stop the action while you issue orders. In this sense the game bridges the gap between real-time and turn-based strategy, giving you the best of both worlds. The enemy AI is also sharper than many similar games.

Fate of the Dragon offers some meaty strategy gaming. For the hardcore only. <<<

!!! Fate of the Dragon follows actual historical events from 2nd Century China. It's educational.



PLUS: Serious play depth, RPG elements.

MINUS: You might think you have bitten off more than you can chew.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

77 70 85

OVERALL

83

You'll need more patience than Confucius, but this game is worth it.

REVIEW



Gargamel finally finds Smurf Village



L33t hax0rs I killz joo



the good ship Bustacap



Worms World Party



CATEGORY: Strategy >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: ?? >> PRICE: ?? >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

CAM SHEA explains why it's good to have Worms...

Lightsiders might say it's the holy hand grenade, while darksiders would probably opt for the blowtorch, but for my money, the ninja rope is without doubt the most useful item in Worms. It's a damn tough choice though, because every one of the many items and weapons is indispensable in one way or another, for one person's tactics or another. This is the beauty of Worms. It may be 2D and turn based, with obvious roots in some of the oldest tank ballistic games, but there are so many devious tactics to employ and tricks to learn that it has developed a cult following.

!!! Wormy composer extraordinaire, Bjorn Lynne, is a freak. Check out his site www.lynnemusic.com/worms

REVERSE ENGINEERED WORMS
One reason for its popularity lies in the Worms multiplayer game, where the open game mechanics give rise to systems of etiquette, ethics and politics. For instance, some see barricading your last Worm into an impenetrable fortress as the lowest act imaginable, others regard it as a viable tactic. Some will desperately broker deals with other players when in a tough spot, only to

betray them at the most convenient opportunity. In the Worms world, this is all part of the fun, and one of the reasons we love the game.

The Worms games have been around for some time. Nothing much has really changed with each new Worms release — a new weapon here, high resolution backgrounds there. Indeed, you could probably get Worms World Party confused with Worms 2 if it wasn't clearly labelled. That fact, however, doesn't diminish the fun factor. In fact, keeping the essence of the game the same is probably the most sensible move for Team 17. Often games like this are so much fun because of their simplicity, not despite it. Changing the game too much may well kill it. I guess the test will be when Worms goes 3D.

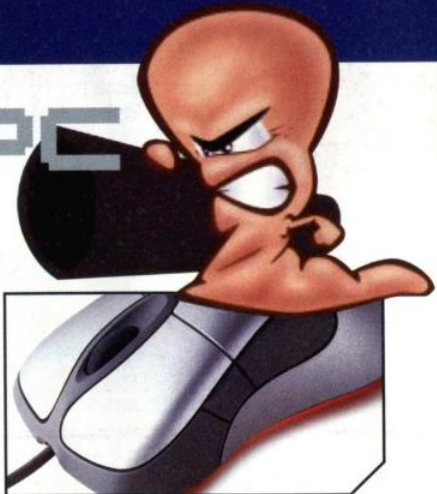
EATING THE WORM
This version is so samey because it was originally being developed for Dreamcast as an online-ready follow-up to Armageddon. Obviously at some stage in the development process Team 17 saw that the Dreamcast was

heading down the toilet and decided to make it for PC as well.

So what has changed in this latest iteration? One solid new addition is the "Wormpot" option which allows you to randomly (or not) bring up three different gameplay settings to be applied to the game. For example, you may have super ninja ropes, high damage animals and specialist worms. It's a good way to spice up games between players of equal skill, to see who can utilise the new settings best.

Also new are the 20 multiplayer missions, which vary from cleverly arranged co-operative goals, to out and out tactical warfare. To help newbies get into the game, Team 17 have also added the Wormopedia which explains each weapon and item in the game, as well as giving you some very useful tips about how best to use them.

Ultimately though, WWP just isn't hardcore enough in options and play configurations. There's plenty of maniacal fun to be had, but ultimately I'd still take the added sociability of sitting with a group of friends playing Worms Armageddon on the N64, over this offering. <<<



PLUS: Great mechanics, wide variety of sounds and settings.
MINUS: Too similar to the last incarnation.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
87	88	92
OVERALL		
80		

If you've never played Worms, add 10% to the overall score.



in the future, the decor will suck



choose from nerds of all species



set phasers to "Eat shit & die!"

Star Trek Away Team

PC

CATEGORY: Tactical Squad Based Strategy >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: Activision >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

"This is the captain. **STEVE POLAK** to the bridge..."

Star Trek: Away Team sees you commanding a squad of crack Trek troops into combat in a number of hot and spicy hostile locations. Yes, unlike the 'peace love and happiness' ethos of the TV series this videogame lets you seek out new life forms... and kill them. And with Bret Spiner reprising his role as Data, aren't we happy to get the opportunity?

BEAT ME UP, SCOTTY

Away Team lets you control a motley crew of Trek travelers in stealth and combat missions which will keep you very challenged indeed. The action is played from an overhead isometric perspective and those of you familiar with the likes of Commandos or Jagged Alliance will feel right at home here.

The gameplay isn't revolutionary, it is all simple point and click stuff. You manage your team of individually qualified experts as they scour the levels for hostages to rescue, enemies to fight (or avoid) and objects to grab. Because this is Star Trek there are some pretty daggy and obscure gadgets

you have to track down and you wouldn't be surprised if you were suddenly asked to find a special cybernetically enhanced wad of Klingon armpit hair. Luckily the game doesn't quite get that silly.

There is a lot of combat too and some of the encounters will test your strategic skills. However you might be surprised the first time you see your team come under fire. Like fetishists who live for the feel of phaser burns

!!! Do you ignore the Prime Directive?
 ●●● Are you wearing a poncho? This isn't your game. See p58

your team will simply stand rooted to the spot and cop enemy fire until you do something about it. Either that or they stupidly

stumble into trouble until you learn to micromanage their movements.

ILLOGICAL, CAPTAIN

Even worse the mission victory conditions usually involve your crew not taking ANY casualties so you really have to make sure all of your guys watch their step. You'll often find the one crew member that you have just lost is the only person capable of performing a specific task needed to get through a mission.

This is probably the most significant problem with the game and it isn't that much of an issue once you learn to anticipate the dodgy pathing and nursemaid your crew as they traverse the levels.

On the positive side, the levels are quite varied and you'll enjoy the combat as well as the stealth-oriented challenges. Away Team uses field of vision 'awareness cones' which help you avoid large numbers of hostile guards. You can also turn on an option which lets you see how much noise you are making, as the sound waves become visible. This is very useful in certain circumstances and the game cleverly lets you walk, run, or sneak about the place. As you'd expect sneaking is quieter, but you are a potential target for longer if an enemy looks in your direction, so some choices need to be made.

Away Team is a competent addition to a genre which has enjoyed a renaissance in recent times and even though it has a few foibles it is still going to tempt Trekkies and any of you who like squad-based strategy games. <<<



PLUS: Mission variety, good audio.

MINUS: At times dodgy AI.

VISUALS 83 SOUND 86 GAMEPLAY 84

OVERALL
82

Been there done that, but happy to do it again in the Trek world.

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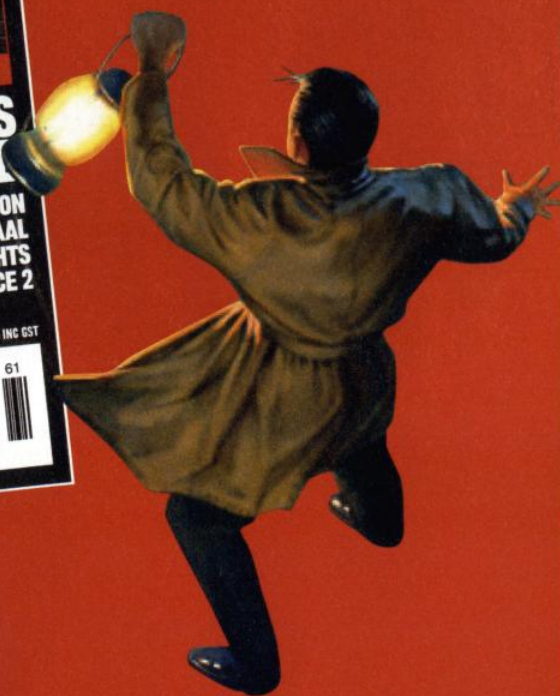
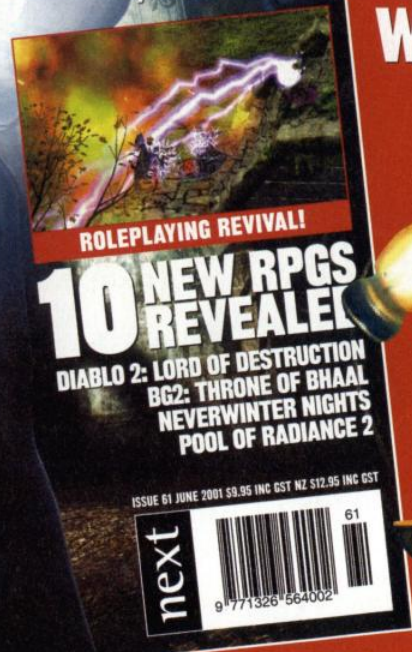
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Pokémon Stadium 2

» N64

CATEGORY: Pokemon >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: Nintendo >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >> DESIRED: Pokemon GB game, transfer pak >>

CAM SHEA makes up as many words beginning with poke- as possible...

This year will mark the fifth anniversary of the Pokemon franchise for Japanese gamers. How poke-time flies eh? Yep, Nintendo have taken Pokemon from strength to strength for THAT long! We're well beyond being able to refer to it as a "fad" now, and the word "phenomenon" is wearing thin, too. Realistically, Pokemon is into Pac-Man and Mario territory now.

How did this happen? Well, first of all, Nintendo know how to make great games. They've certainly tapped into the digital serotonin centre of the world's kids (and many an adult too). Secondly, Nintendo have a knack for creating and cleverly maintaining properties like this, adding to the mythology and allure in measured, cunningly prescribed doses — although it sure hasn't felt like it at times.

GET YOUR POKE-POSSE TOGETHER...

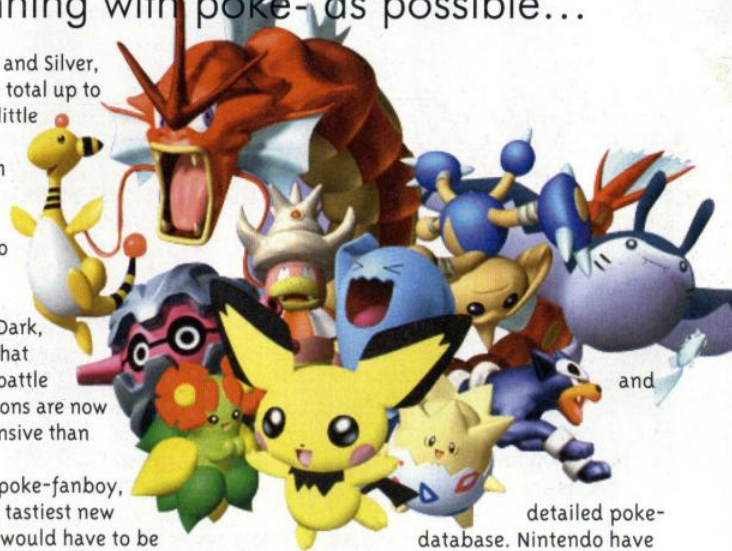
So you're a hardcore poke-fan. You have a GBC, one or more of the GB games, and a troupe of highly trained Pokemon. You have an N64, a transfer pak and preferably some Pokemon crazed friends. Should you buy this game? Hell yes! For poke-freaks this is like mainlining poke-smack straight to your poke-veins.

On the face of it, Pokemon Stadium 2 isn't a huge step up from the original. Visually, enhancements are minor, and the basic structure of the game is the same. That's beside the point, of course, as Nintendo have designed this one to tickle and tease your poke-bone, not to instantly blow your poke-mind.

What enhancements are there? For starters, it's got all the new Pokemon

from Gold and Silver, taking the total up to 251 of the little buggers. Along with the new Pokemon are the two new elements, Steel and Dark, ensuring that potential battle combinations are now more extensive than ever.

For the poke-fanboy, one of the tastiest new additions would have to be the Pokemon Academy. It's broken up into two areas — library and classroom. The library is an extensive

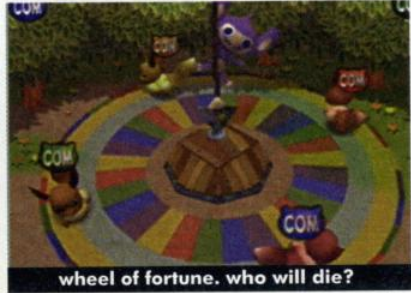


detailed poke-database. Nintendo have definitely put some work into this section, and you can learn everything you'll ever need to know about items



Poke-Sustenance

>> The Pokémon Stadium games are interesting from the standpoint of how they fit into the poke-scheme of things, and as an indication of how hooked Nintendo have the poke-legions. What we have here are 64-bit games, ostensibly designed for the sole purpose of extending the life of a series of 8-bit games! It's a very clever strategy to lure poke-crack babies into buying a new console, game and transfer pak. Not that there's really anything wrong with that mind you. And don't forget – this marketing/game design experiment means that Nintendo have had plenty of practice in crafting compelling interaction between a handheld and console going into their next generation of machines. Machines that are designed from the ground up to do just that.



the top cup will definitely sort the poke-players from the poke-pretenders

and Pokémon, from egg groups and a breeding guide, to the finer aspects of tactics and moves, all the way to favourite breakfast cereals and poke-stool consistencies. The classroom is a more structured environment to learn the ins and outs of poke-ownership. There are several classes to graduate, each starting out with a lecture, followed by an exam, then trial battles to prove you can bust that wisdom on the poke-streets.

As in the first Pokémon Stadium, White City is where you'll spend most of your poke-time, and there are four new cup challenges to battle through. This is where all that hard poke-work pays off, and you can use the transfer pak to upload your OG Pokémon to teach those rival trainers and their frontin' fake-Timbaland wearin' Pokémon a lesson or two. Old school! There's definitely a perverse poke-pleasure to be gained from seeing the Pokémon that you worked so hard to collect and train on

Game Boy busting poke-nuts in full 3D. White City's cup challenges require some intense skill and persistence to get through, and the top cup will definitely sort the poke-players from the poke-pretenders.

RELAXIN' IN THE POKE-TOWER...

When you need a break from all that battling, there are plenty of other things to do. You could head over to Game Boy Tower and play your GBC game on your TV. You could go to "Your Room" and decorate it with items earned in Gold or Silver (sounds lame but this is a nice personalising touch). Or you could visit Professor Oak (or P-Oak for short) at Pokémon Lab, and organise your items, trade Pokémon and view your Pokedex. The Pokedex in particular is very cool – with all sorts of useful information, pictures, sounds (you can listen to each Pokémon's battlecry) and a map

!!! Win both rounds in the Rival Cup to unlock two ultra-rare Pokémon

showing where you can catch the various breeds. Of course, Nintendo know that poke-buffs want to show off their skills, so they haven't skimped on the multiplayer component. For poke-purists, first stop is the Free Battle area, where you can go head to head with two players, or tag team with four. After that, it's off to play some of the mini games. There are 12 in all, and they're a whole lot more enjoyable this time around. Anyone up for a game of Furret Frolics? And while you've got your friends over, you might as well have a red hot poke-go in the Pokémon Trivia Quiz.

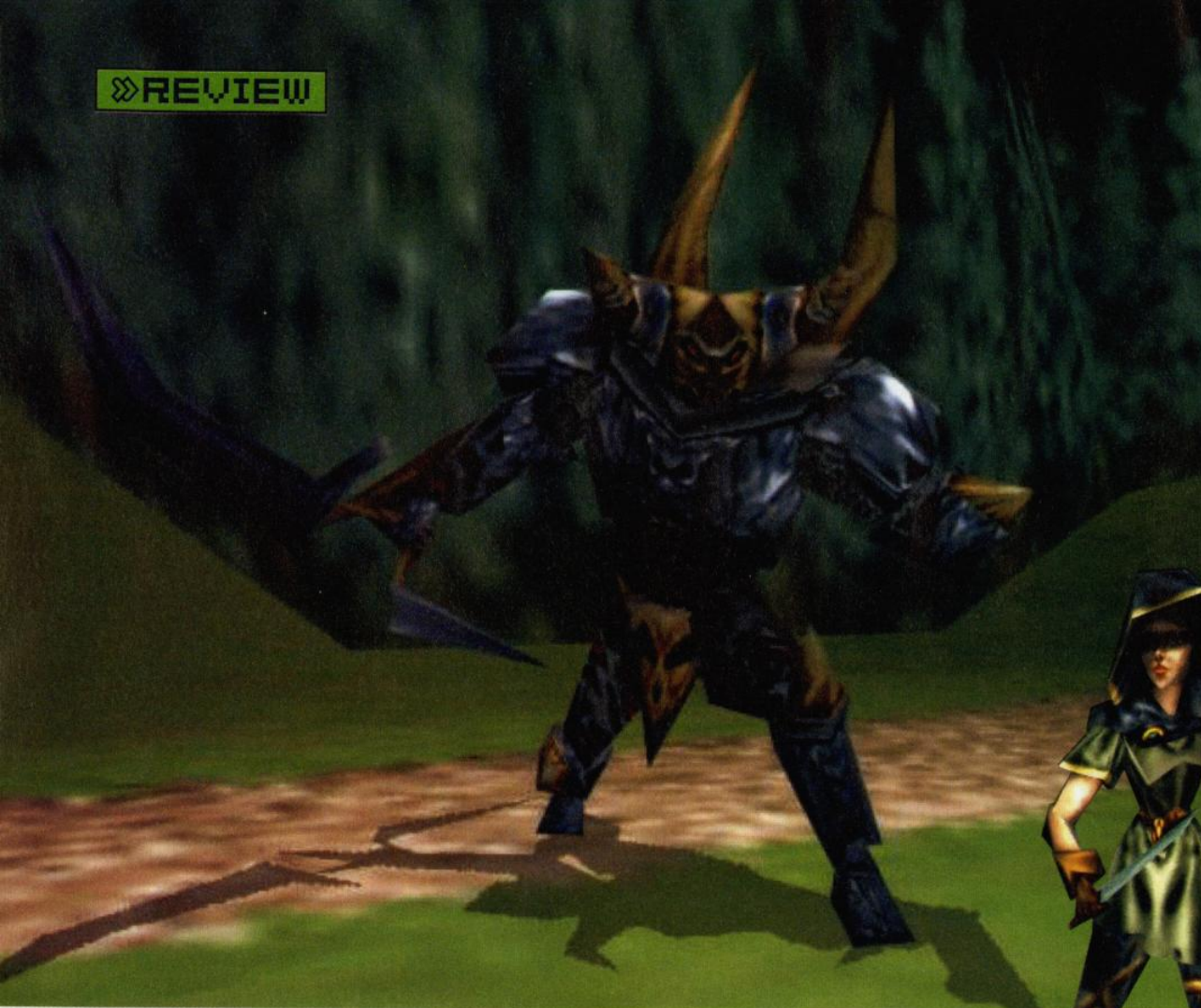
What else is there to say? It's clear that this is a niche release that poke-hoes will lap up, and with good cause. The rest of the gaming world? Let's hope that Pikachu makes a return appearance in Super Smash Bros 2 on Gamecube. He may be king of the poke-hill, but Samus can still kick his butt any day of the poke-week.. <<<



PLUS: More compelling mini games, tough single player game.
MINUS: For poke-addicts only. A quest mode would have been nice.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80	74	82
OVERALL		
80		

Poke-crazed gamers – get it. Everyone else – ignore it!



ski resorts - medieval style



party over here, party over there



The King and all his knights are searching the castle for you.

arrgh! freaky dwarf! run away!

Aidyn Chronicles

CATEGORY: RPG >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: THQ >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: G8 >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

KELLY STARR chooses her own adventure...

The release of Aidyn Chronicles: The First Mage has been eagerly awaited by Nintendo 64 RPG fans, due to the noticeably large lack of RPG games available for the 64. Deterred by the restrictions placed on developers by the cartridge-based format, few have attempted to create a true RPG for this machine, until development team H2o decided to attempt a gaming experience unlike any seen on the system before.

A LONG TIME AGO...

The story is of a young squire named Alaron, who finds himself poisoned by Goblins after a walk in the woods. Having no cure available to him, he must select three other people to join him in a journey across the land, searching for a cure to his illness. As you travel through the game you will usually have a party of four, selected from a total of 13 playable characters that you will meet along the way. The different characters include knights, mages and thieves, each with their own story and abilities. However, the game begins at a very slow and

confusing pace. Much patience is needed to bear with the slow introduction and learn the controls as you try to figure out where you are and what the hell is going on.

Aidyn Chronicles takes place in a medieval/fantasy setting, where there is an abundance of castles, knights and mythical creatures. The 3D world is large and varied, although sometimes lacking in detail. The things that let the game down greatly are the



Developer H2O's last game was the challenging and addictive puzzler, Tetrisphere

blocky characters, each with only one or two different poses, and the texture of the backgrounds, sometimes

looking like a wall with trees painted on. A good point is the weather effects; sporadic rainfalls and snow add a realistic touch to the game. When travelling you will encounter various enemies, causing you to be transported you to a separate battle area. A nice feature is that there are no random battles, you can see your enemies coming and in theory, avoid them by sneaking past. However in reality, avoiding an enemy is difficult and running away from a battle is

near impossible. By combining a turn based fighting system with real time elements, the possibilities of this unique idea were encouraging. However, the reality of the situation is that the battles are painstakingly slow, while you are trying to get close enough to the enemy to swing your sword it is very easy to get bored.

IN A DEVELOPMENT STUDIO FAR, FAR AWAY

As many scenes have no background music, the sound in Aidyn Chronicles is noticeably lacking. The sound effects that you do hear, mostly footsteps and howling wolves, do help to create a creepy atmosphere.

In theory, Aidyn Chronicles had the ideas and potential to revolutionise RPGing on the N64. However, turning idealism into reality has proved to be too great of a challenge, with the game falling short of expectations in almost every area. Keen RPG fans will probably enjoy taking the time to explore the world and story, although the average gamer looking for something new will probably lack the patience. <<



PLUS: Ambitious and engaging battle elements. Huge environments.

MINUS: Too long to get into the story. Awkward camera control.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

52 50 62

OVERALL

60

Aidyn attempts way too much and falls way too short.



Virgin's stewards are getting tougher



count the polygons on one hand



it's no MGS2, that's for sure

Rogue Spear » PSone

CATEGORY: Action/Strategy >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Ubi Soft >> PRICE: \$79.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

ELIOT FISH wears fatigues for fun. Go figure.

Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six series has been training young Australian gamers to be ruthlessly efficient killing machines for a few years now. And just when you thought the army would step in and conscript everyone for national service, the training schedule has been extended, possibly to make sure everyone is savvy with the latest automatic rifle. *Rogue Spear* for PSone has just hit our shores, so slam in a fresh clip and follow me in...

BANG BANG, YOU'RE DEAD

After playing lots of Counter-Strike, a game like *Rogue Spear* no longer seems like such a niche concept. Tactics, stealth and keeping your ears and eyes open for a dangerous situation are now enjoyed by the masses. However, having a natural aversion to any game that seems to take itself so seriously, I was worried that *Rogue Spear* would fall into the trap of trying to be too realistic at the sake of some entertaining fire-fights. What we've got here is a game that plays a bit like Counter-Strike in slow motion, and

that's really where the comparisons end.

For starters, the terrorists generally stand in one spot for the entire mission, and there's a lot of getting used to the poor framerate and low-res everything that the PSone pumps out. You also have to pre-plan your tactics for the mission and ensure that not one hostage gets killed in the process.

You start out with a team of CTs, each equipped with the usual array of flashbangs, rifles, infra-red goggles and other cool soldier stuff. You then carefully infiltrate a variety of locations to snuff out the evil (usually foreign) terrorists. If you get shot and die, you simply get transferred to the body of another CT who's still on his feet. There are no long drawn out shootouts here — it's first to pull the trigger kind of stuff. You'll spend half your time sneaking around very slowly with the heat-sensor goggles equipped.

TANGO DOWN!

The main problems with *Rogue Spear* are in the limited capabilities of the PSone for this style of game. Considering it's so

slow paced, you would hope that the environments were a lot more detailed and interactive. Of course, what we have here are some pretty ugly, low-res textured boxes with ugly splitting seams. And the framerate? Ugh. Turning around to see who's behind you takes so long you could boil an egg.

On the positive side, you can really get sucked into the whole elite-CT atmosphere of the game. There are quite a few options to fiddle around with if you're brave enough, and though it's not a patch on the complex set-up in the PC version, you can get a little more in-depth with the tactics if you'd like. The rest of us will probably stick with the default plan for each mission, and just enjoy trying to snipe Terrorists before they even know you've arrived. Mooahaha.

Whilst playing *Rogue Spear* can lead to a lot of frustration (mainly due to the slow and clumsy controls), it may provide just enough tension for some thrilling hostage rescues. Whilst you're cursing its flaws, you could find you're still sitting in front of your PSone until the early hours of the morning trying to flush out that final terrorist. <<



PLUS: Engrossing and challenging at times.

MINUS: Bad graphics, slow controls.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

60 62 70

OVERALL

69

Absorbing, but ugly in more ways than one.

Emi

RAXEL



Fighting Vipers 2



CATEGORY: Fighting >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Sega >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

BRYCE MCDONOUGH mashes his controller...

If you're a fighting game fan, the Dreamcast is definitely the console to own. Virtua Fighter 3 TB, Soul Calibur, Capcom vs SNK, Street Fighter 3, MvC2, KOF, Powerstone, Fighting Vipers 2, ...huh?!

GLAM FIGHTER 2

FV2 made its rather unremarkable appearance in the arcades a few years back, and you could be forgiven for missing it. For the uninformed, Fighting Vipers is an AM2 game from back in the day, and was at the time hailed for its dynamic fighting engine, funky graphics and... erm... 'interesting' character design.

Looking more like a flashback to the glam era of the eighties than a fighting game, it features characters such as Raxel (armed with a guitar) and Picky (the 14 year old who beats you up with

his skateboard), with the pick of the new bunch being Emi, a 12 year old girl with a rocket-powered teddy bear. All 'Vipers' wear body armour and beat each other up in caged battles. It gets better... all under legal drinking age, this is apparently what the children in the city of Armstrong do for fun, and so the local mayor decided to sponsor a tournament as a premise for the original. The story for FV2 is a little more obtuse. Something to do with helicopters and the final boss B.M. is about all you can gather from watching the intro movie, with no further effort being made to tell the story through the game.

The graphics in FV2 are mostly nice, with large, brightly coloured player models taking up the majority of the screen. Little texturing has been added, however the anime vibe of the

characters means the garish colours suit it well, and animation is smoother than Cam on a Saturday night. The real let-down is in the backgrounds, with 2-D sprites which look like rejected art from the Point Blank series. The aural experience is neither painful nor delightful. Music is better than your average Japanese driving game, but nowhere near the orchestrated beauty of Soul Calibur, whilst the sound effects are eerily similar to the original on the Saturn.

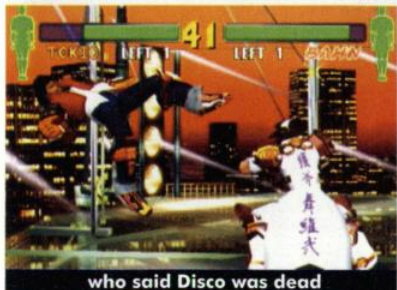
None of this is really important though, since the important part here is the tonking action, right?

THE TONKING ACTION

Like Virtua Fighter 1 and 2, FV2 uses a 3



button control system, with punch, kick and block. The precision required on button input is also very reminiscent of VF, along with the canned combos and strings most of the characters have. This aside, mashing won't really get you very far, as each character possesses a wealth of moves with a wide array of varying properties. From the 3 standard ranges



who said Disco was dead

ultra-threatening new girl, Emi

and stretch, 2, 3, 4, and flex, 2, 3, 4...

truckman gets a truck to the kneecap

fixing a puncture the hard way

opponents are propelled straight through the cage wall into the background.

(high, mid and low), to launchers, stuns, armour breaks and the often ridiculous 'super KO' specials. Next to each character life bar is an armour display, showing the state of your armour on upper and lower body. Once it is flashing, an armour break move to that part of the body will literally shatter your armour. These same power moves when used to KO the opponent make for awesome finishers, as they are propelled straight through the cage wall into the background. A little blasé when standing next to DOA2, but rather innovative for its time.

The juggling system is unique in that every character has a mid-air recovery available to them by pressing all three buttons at once. This stops their freefall into another potential torrent of blows from the opponent, but in no way guarantees safety since there is no air-block.

Will there be a Fighting Vipers 3? Probably. And it will be for a non-Sega console!

What does this mean? Once floating, a guessing game opens up, since a well timed recovery will escape the brunt of the damage of a juggle but a poorly timed one will result in further punishment. The caged fighting area also plays a large role in this, since any move which knocks your opponent off their feet near a wall is pretty much a launcher, and also means your opponent has no real avenues of escape.

Speaking of escape, there is no sidestepping in FV2. This is without a doubt the worst oversight in the entire game, since the fighting arena is enclosed (and rather small at that) and therefore movement should play an integral part in the game. Considering the free range in Powerstone, the 8-way run in Soul Calibur, and the 'Korean step' in VF3TB, this makes the whole game feel decidedly 2-D. Sure there are a few

moves with incorporated sidesteps, but this is no substitute for true three dimensional movement.

PUSHING BOUNDARIES

A positive note is the parry block available by pressing all three buttons at once. This allows a player to maintain a certain amount of control even when their opponent is all over them - much like the parry blocks found in Soul Calibur, but without being as abusable as reversals in DOA2.

All these combine to create a limited fighting engine that, three or four years ago, was quite acceptable but certainly not pushing any boundaries. However, we are now well and truly into the 21st century. Tekken 4, Virtua Fighter 4, Soul Calibur 2 and Dead or Alive 3 are all just around the corner, and promise to deliver a better package than their respective previous incarnations... all of which are already superior to FV2. <<<



PLUS: Big, colourful and entertaining characters.

MINUS: Dodgy backgrounds. Outdated fighting engine.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

82 80 70

OVERALL

72

Everything this game does has been bettered in other titles.



Sliding into home and your pants are full of foam...

All Star Baseball 2002

CATEGORY: Sports >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >>
 PUBLISHER: Acclaim >> PRICE: \$99.95 >>
 RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>



Finally, a PAL release of a baseball game has made it here. After Triple Play 2001 and All Star Baseball 2001 weren't released in Oz, baseball fans can start chewing on their cornflower seeds again with ASB 2002.

The first thing you will probably notice are the gorgeous lighting effects. Players helmets actually shine, and animations are good with some fluid, crisp movements evident in the batter and pitcher. Unfortunately some of the fielding is more jerky than a mutant with Tourettes syndrome.

Atmosphere plays a big part in any baseball game and ASB 2002 does a sufficient job in creating this. Pipe organ music tunes and some crowd chants are some examples and the thwack of the ball being hit is realistic too. The commentary while not terribly enthusiastic is accurate and will even update you on how a batter performed on his last attempt. Their best line is "Adios senior polota!" when you hit a home run (Bye bye Mr ball!).

The game itself is a good mix of arcade/simulation unlike the arcadey Triple Play series. Some handy features involve using the right analog stick when batting which allows you to adjust the angle of the bat when hitting the ball (tilt it back to hit the ball in the air). Like the animations of the fielders, the controls could do with some work.

All Star Baseball 2002 is a solid game with some minor, yet annoying faults that will hopefully be rectified in next year's edition.

Michael Griesser

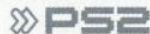
VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
89	84	81	84



have at you giant robot, part 231

Ring of Red

CATEGORY: Mech Strategy >> PLAYERS: 1 >>
 PUBLISHER: Konami >> PRICE: \$89.95 >>
 RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >>



As every self-respecting gamer knows, colossal robots bristling with energy weapons will one day serve as the mainstay of armed forces across the galaxy. Sadly, contemporary weapons contractors lack the foresight of visionaries like Jordan Weisman et al, preferring instead to waste billions of taxpayer dollars on more 'feasible' projects. But salvation may be at hand - should Ring of Red succeed in engendering a feeling of 'existence behind the technology curve' within the military R&D industry, mechs may yet fulfil their prophesied role as mankind's sexiest weapons of mass destruction.

Set in an alternate history in which Japan was divided into three politically divergent regions following the annihilation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Ring of Red chronicles a Cold War-esque battle between the communist North and the democratic South.

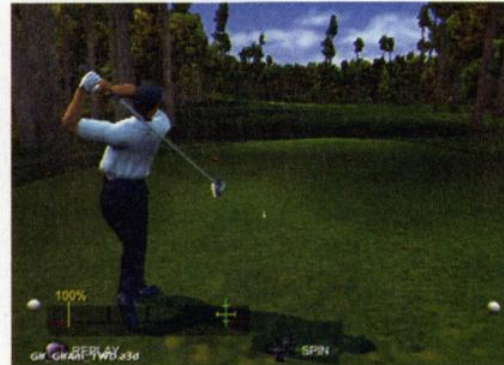
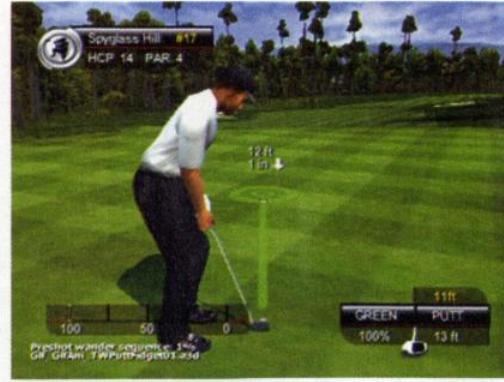
To players of Front Mission 3 and other similar titles, Ring of Red's basic gameplay mechanics will be comfortably familiar, as turn-based unit movements occur on a grid map, while battles between individual AFW's and their infantry escorts take place in quasi real time.

Thanks to the game's branching campaign structure, and the fact that most missions take upwards of three hours to complete, even the most rabid players will be hard pressed to make it through to the closing cinematic in less than 60 hours - outstanding longterm value in anybody's book.

On the whole, Ring of Red is an exemplary title that puts paid to the widely accepted notion that the best strategy games are exclusive to the PC platform.

Brett Robinson

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
82	84	88	86



great shot kid, that was one in a million

Tiger Woods USA Tour 2001

CATEGORY: Sports >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >>
 PUBLISHER: EA Sports >> PRICE: \$99.95 >>
 RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>



It's tough being a superstar, lose a few matches and people start doubting you. That's what happened to Tiger Woods earlier this year and he responded as he usually does - by winning. EA still think highly of the Tiger, spitting out another game in the series, the first 'real' golf game on the PS2; Tiger Woods USA Tour 2001.

The graphics are truly gorgeous. Lush fairways and greens, and surroundings - at Pebble beach you can even see the waves crashing into the sand. Tiger looks great and his animations are smoother than Hyper's pick up lines. EA have the minor details covered too - the tee flies away when you hit the ball, and a divot forms when it hits the green hard. I

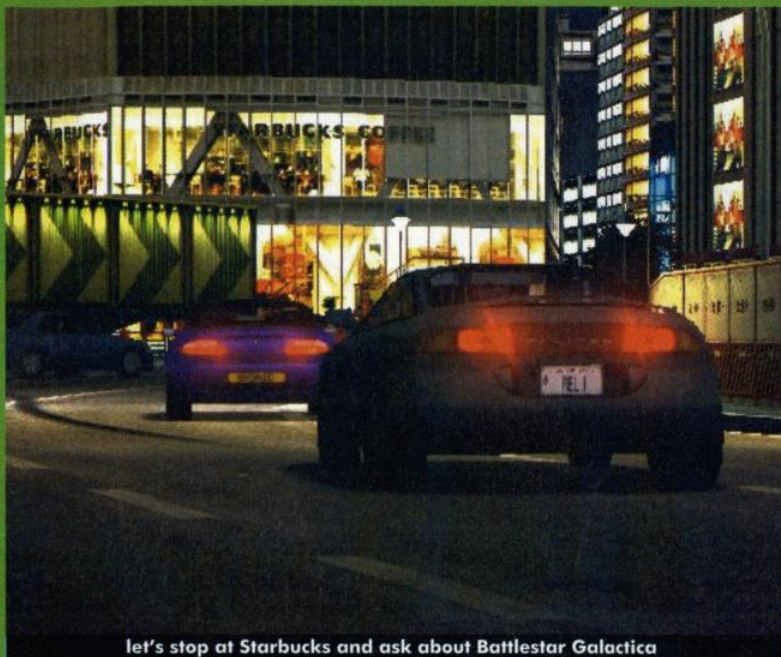
Sounds are subtle but extremely effective in Tiger Woods 2001. The sound of a wood being swung is spot on, golfers will definitely appreciate this. Tiger even reacts to his shots saying "Uuggly" or "Better get a shovel".

The analog swing method has been retained and controversially the 'traditional' button pressing method has been given the red card. It takes a few rounds to get used to but it feels more like you're actually 'swinging' the club. Unfortunately there are only 3 courses compared to 17 on PC. Skins, tour and stroke play(!) are available but more courses would have increased the longevity of this game.

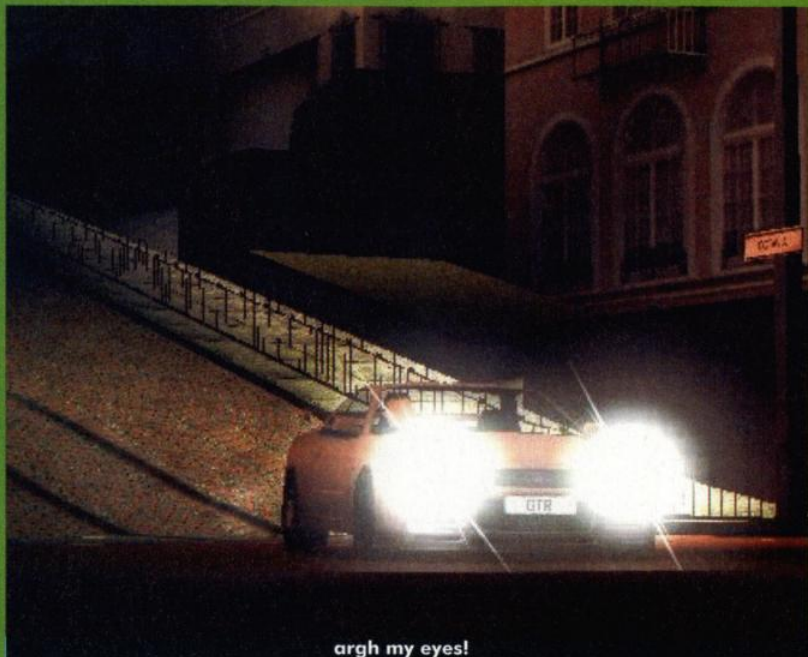
Tiger Woods USA Tour 2001 is the best golf game on PS2, but the lack of courses and the traditional swing method are some flaws that really hurt it overall.

Michael Griesser

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
90	81	80	82



let's stop at Starbucks and ask about Battlestar Galactica

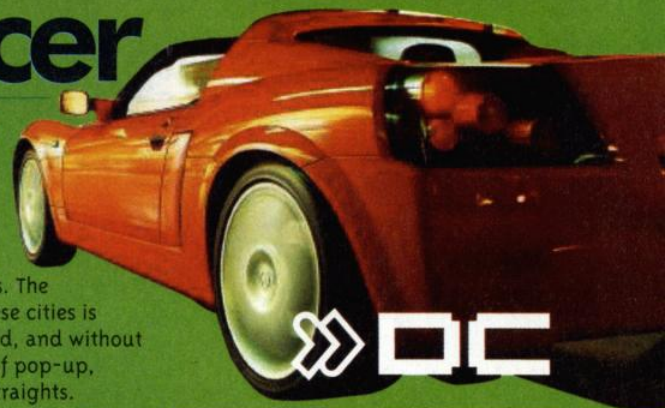


argh my eyes!

Metropolis Street Racer

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

MAURICE BRANSCOMBE takes control of the second Hyper Reader Review...



It's not how fast you drive... It's how you drive fast." That's the catch phrase of British developer Bizarre Creations latest outing, Metropolis Street Racer, and although it may just be marketing guff, it suits this game down to the ground. In the jam-packed grid full of Gran Turismo wannabes that is the "realistic" racing genre, Metropolis Street Racer (M-SR) has taken some initiative, outclassed its competition, and taken pole position with ease.

KUDOS WHERE DUE

It must be said that M-SR best fits into the "realistic" category, but before any of you arcade racing fans turn the page, I should tell you that unlike so many of the games it shares its genre with, M-SR is more than accessible to even the most ardent arcade gamer. There is no steep learning curve, instead M-SR offers a driving system that is easy for novices to learn, while still being deep enough for veteran racers. It's "the arcade fans realistic racer" if you will.

Gameplay-wise, M-SR takes a slightly different approach to what we have come to expect from a driving sim. It still has all of the traditional options (time attack, multi-player), but the "Street Racing" option is where it really starts to shake things up a bit. Instead of just a generic championship

mode, M-SR's single player game consists of 25 chapters, each having 10 unique challenges ranging from beating lap times, one on one races, full grid championships, as well as many individual "Special Races" that are exclusive to each chapter.

But that's not the only feature that sets M-SR's single-player game apart from the rest, the major innovation is the introduction of the "Kudos" system. You are awarded "Kudos" (respect) for driving well, not hitting obstacles and by doing crowd-pleasing powerslides. Earning as much Kudos as possible is essential to succeeding in M-SR, as new challenges, tracks and cars can only be obtained by breaking the Kudos targets for each chapter. If this wasn't already enough Bizarre creations have made all of the challenges completely customizable giving you the freedom to take it easy, or to make it really hard on yourself, beware though, easy challenges don't earn nearly as much as hard ones, so choose carefully.

SIGHT AND SOUND

Graphically M-SR takes realism up a notch. All of its 250 tracks, spread across three cities, Tokyo, London and San-Francisco have been modelled on

actual places and streets. The attention to detail in these cities is very impressive to behold, and without even so much as a hint of pop-up, even on the longest of straights. Effects like lighting and weather are particularly genuine.

All of the 50+ car models, including the games "cover-car" the Vauxhall VX220, are detailed, sleek and realistic, even going as far as to have the cars driver sitting up front, steering and changing gears when you do.

Aurally, M-SR doesn't exactly "rock". Within its selection of 27 tunes consisting of Rock, Dance, Jazz and "Driving" songs, there are some that are passable and some that are downright dismal. The car sounds however are very well represented, with each engine having a different pitch, even the sound of the horn is different from car to car.

As great as Metropolis Street Racer is though, there are some dents in its gleaming armour. Slamming into a wall at 200kmh produces the same bump as it does at 20kmh. It also would have been nice if the cars were slightly more customizable performance-wise, as most of the custom features are purely cosmetic ones. <<

!!! We look forward to reading more of what YOU think. Keep sending your reader reviews to freakscene@next.com.au with READER REVIEW in the subject line.



PLUS: Innovative, beautiful, varied and accessible.

MINUS: Some uninspiring music and unrealistic collisions.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

94 88 96

OVERALL

93

All-in-all, MSR is a brilliant, long-lasting racer.

The Simpsons: Night Of The Living Treehouse Of Horror

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

We've already had one abominable Simpsons licensed game in the last couple of months, but lo and behold here's another! Well, perhaps that's being a little unfair. Night Of The Living Treehouse Of Horror isn't a great game, but it's certainly a whole lot better than The Simpsons Wrestling.

Set in some classic Simpsons Halloween storylines, each mission sees you controlling a different family member in an effort to escape their nightmares. Bart has to rescue his dog, Maggie gets turned into a fly and has to find her other half,



Marge has to kick some zombie ass, Homer has to skewer vampire Mr Burns, Lisa has to save the other schoolkids from being eaten, and King Homer has to engage in some Rampage style city leveling.

Many of these missions boil down to your standard side scrolling action/adventure format, and are a little too "been there, done that" to keep our interest levels up.

Cam Shea

4/10

Aliens: Thanatos Encounter

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

From Crawfish Interactive (check out their GBA demos at www.crawfish.co.uk),

Thanatos Encounter is a solid action/adventure game. You take on the role of a group of marines responding to a distress signal from the freighter Thanatos. Your mission should be simple — save any survivors and kill off the aliens.

There are five marines to choose from, each differing in strength and speed. The top down perspective works well, and has allowed Crawfish to make levels large with plenty of exploratory elements. This helps convey the atmosphere of the film, as you have to creep along watching the



radar, looking for any movement and ready for confrontation.

Crawfish have made the process of fighting the speedy aliens a lot simpler than it could have been by offering three distinct modes of movement. The default is to move where you push on the D-pad, but you can also use strafe mode - where you're always facing the one direction, and circle mode, that allows you to err, circle a central point. Funny that.

Aliens: Thanatos Encounter is worth a look if you're after a challenge. Frank Dry

6/10



Mickey's Speedway USA

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

Following on from their excellent Mickey's Racing Adventure, Rare have proved once again that they know how to get the most out of a platform. MSUSA is an isometric racing game with 21 tracks and a decidedly karty/rally feel. Racing against three other Disney characters, Speedway is definitely one of the better racing games on Game Boy Color. It's a pity, however, that Rare dropped the boats from Mickey's last GBC outing, as they spilled up the game somewhat.

Funnily enough, Speedway on GBC



has many of the same pros and cons as the N64 version. The handling mechanics in both games are good, whereas the track design and powerups are patchy. It's worth a look, but how much longer are gamers really going to be interested in GBC? Rare are cooking up some amazing titles for Game Boy Advance as you read this, so unless you're desperate, we'd probably recommend waiting.

Cam Shea

7/10

Indiana Jones And the Infernal Machine

CATEGORY: Action/Adventure >> **PLAYERS:** 1 >> **PUBLISHER:** THQ >> **PRICE:** \$49.95 >> **RATING:** G >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >> **SUPPORTS:** GBC only >>

Following the N64 port of the PC original, Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine has done the gaming inevitable, and wound up on the Game Boy Color. LucasArts have stepped up to bat delivering a version of the game that for all intents and purposes is merely a copy of the Tomb Raider games for GBC (which in itself is an irony considering the fact that Tomb Raider is a carbon copy of the Indy license). You begin the game in the same fashion as its N64 and PC counterparts, atop a cliff face looking into an ominous canyon. Like Tomb Raider on GBC, your character



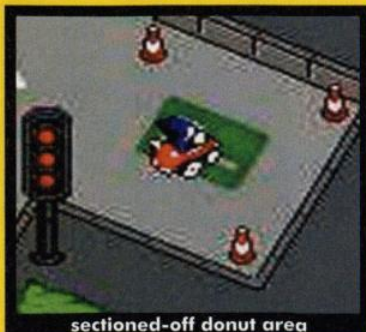
actually moves really smoothly and the scaling three quarter view gives a nice look at your playing field. Unfortunately there isn't enough that offers a new look to this tired old formula, and although Indy fans will rejoice at using "the man" on their GBC, people after something a little more exciting should look elsewhere. A nice endeavour that falls somewhat short of its desired goal.

Stephen Farrelly

5/10

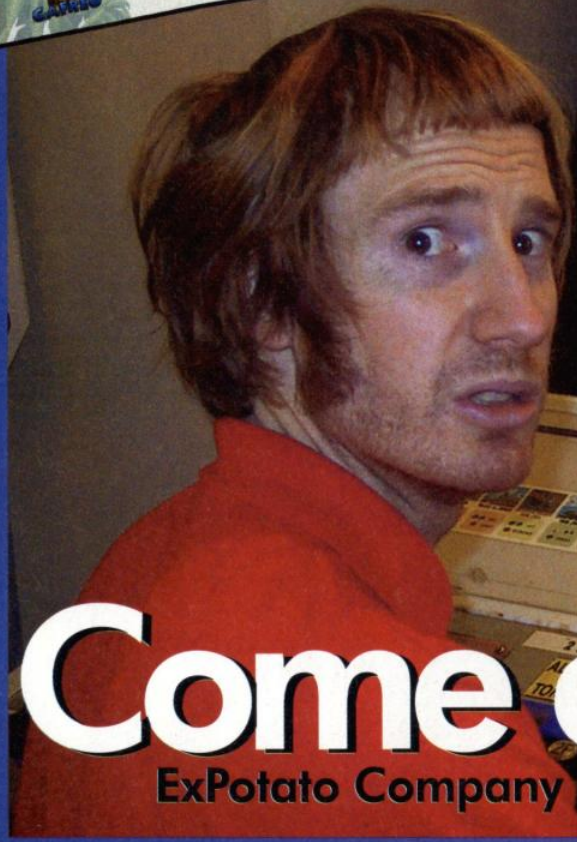


Indy after a night at the harem



sectioned-off donut area

ARCADE



Come on Baby

ExPotato Company



Just when you think all the angles for video games have been used up, along comes an obscure video game company with a game that combines the elements of a bizarre athletic competition with a sadistic Japanese TV game show. To add to the stupidity, all of the contestants are babies.

I LOVE YOU, BABY

On the surface, it is a good idea to use babies for their inherent cuteness instead of investing time and money

getting graphic artists to come up with some new cutesey Mario or Sonic type characters.

But beneath the surface, it is a good idea to use babies as it taps into the human maternal instincts which creates the natural impulse to save a baby from drowning, being electrocuted, or horrifically injured... which is basically what this game is about.

After choosing one of six babies, you are randomly given 1 of 11 different mini games which include: 'Escape from the Sea' - your baby jumps into the sea with a ball and chain attached to his leg and attempts to swim vertically out before he runs out of air. 'Let's Hop' - you and another baby skip an electrified rope which changes speed and rhythm. 'Dance Dance Dance' - a take off of the dance games. 'Slapping Hero' - a very basic fight game where you slap each other stupid until one baby is knocked out.

Other games include shooting, rafting, dodging and jumping as well

as running. Any of the games are no easy feat to complete as EXTREME timing and button mashing skills are required. To deal with the extreme button mashing, 3 extra large buttons have been employed to deal with the extra punishment.

DON'T BE CRUEL, BABY

The extreme button mashing is no better exemplified with the game titled 'Racing' in which you propel your baby down a 100 meter track. The race starts off in crawling position and then you must depress the A and B buttons fast enough to get the baby on his feet and running, and then you must maintain this exhausting 10,000 rpm pace for a good 10 - 12 seconds, because if you stop, even for just a fraction of a second, the baby will fall back to crawling position (arggggh!)



Playing against the computer is much harder than playing a human. So choose a human for your opponent even if it means getting some dude just loitering aimlessly in the street.

So after you've crawled down to the arcade and played this bizarre game and thanked the Game Gods for their diversity, you can look forward to the sequel. The sequel contains another 11 baby mini games that include the titles- 'Investigating House Hold Appliances' and 'Escape From Your Self-Centered Gambling-Addicted Parent's Car On A Hot Summer's Day Down At The Casino Carpark'.

6.5/10

P.S. Thanks Paloma - you da bomb girl!



the re-designed Gamecube controller

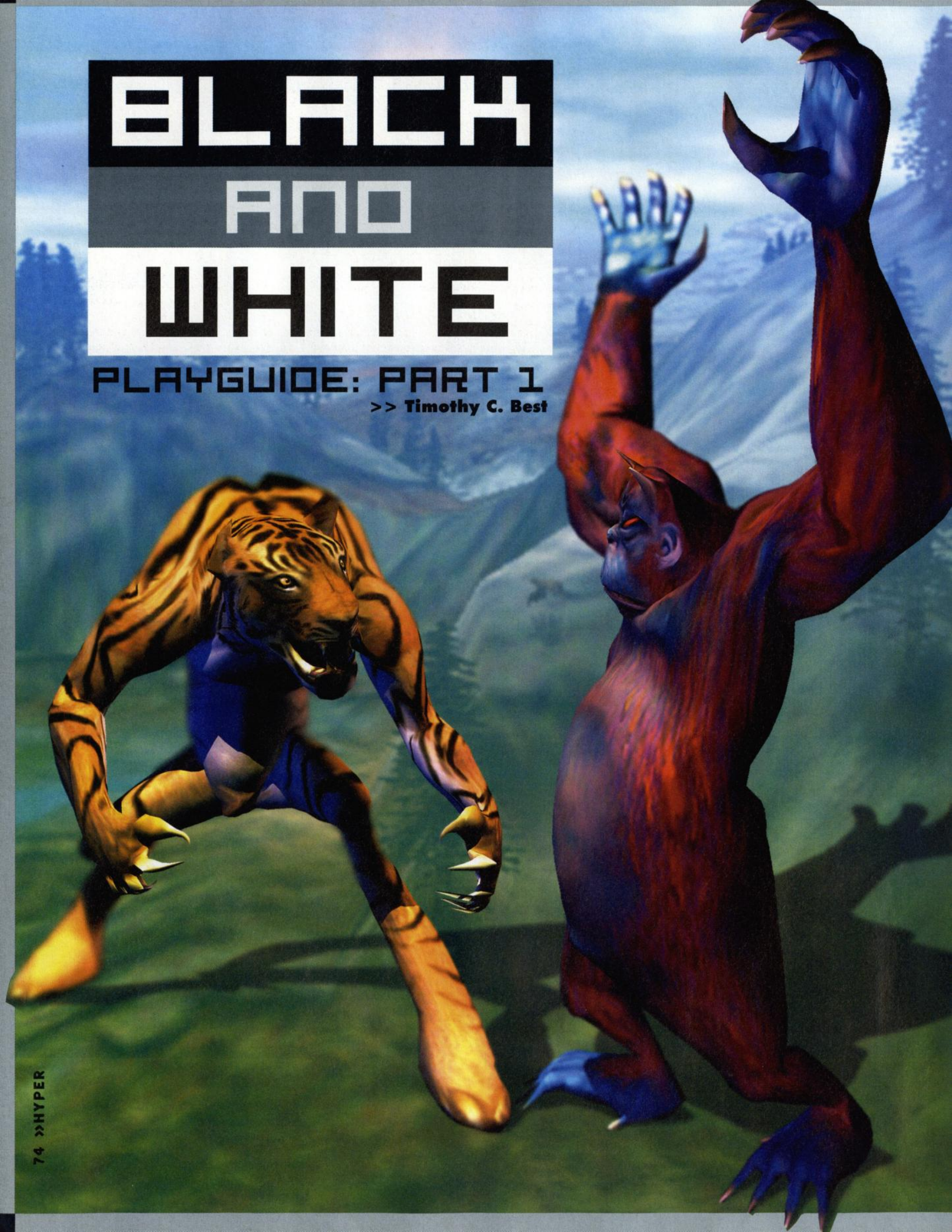
BLACK

AND

WHITE

PLAYGUIDE: PART 1

>> Timothy C. Best



Things are rarely black and white, even when you are playing a computer game, and especially when you are playing an indulgent labour of love from Peter Molyneux.

Just when you get a handle on how something works it turns out that you've only been seeing half of the picture ... let alone what is going on underneath the surface.

No matter how many strategy guides you read there will be always more to learn. Beyond that, beware the game guides that give you the one, "best", solution as they will blind you to the plethora of options available in this world which is anything but black and white. We'll help you get this baby started and into gear, after that the ride is all yours.

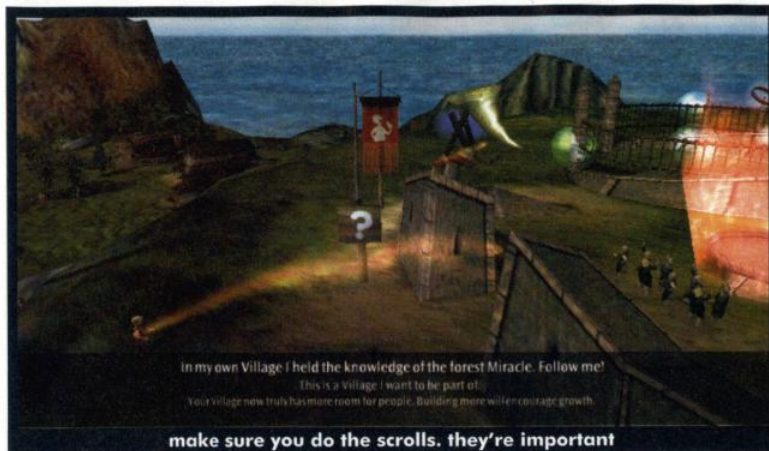
THE OBVIOUS

The game starts off with what is pretty much a two hour tutorial. You'll need it. Even once you are through it you still only know a fraction of what you'll have to do and not enough of how things work and why.

First big tip is: read the signs. Please.

Second big tip is: take your time on the first island. Learn how to get around and learn to teach your creature. This island is here so that you can get a handle on this complex game. TAKE YOUR TIME. Caution welcomes learner drivers.

Beyond that, use the bookmarks (CTRL and a number from 1 to 7 to set points you instantly can move to); they are your friend and make zipping between places so much easier. In fact, they're essential later in the game.



In my own Village I held the knowledge of the forest Miracle. Follow me!
This is a Village I want to be part of.
Your Village now truly has more room for people. Building more will encourage growth.
make sure you do the scrolls. they're important



artefact creation gets people dancing

CREATURE FEATURE

One of the coolest, most boat-floatingest, features of Black & White is your creature. This guy learns from you, fights for you, represents you at those dinner parties out side of your influence and can impress villagers just by putting in an appearance.

One of the key aspects of the game is juggling your responsibilities of running a world and giving time to your creature. Your creature grows faster, learns more and is happier if you are watching it. Of course, if you get lost in your creature's eyes you are likely to miss the wheels falling off your economy and the other gods creeping into your backyard.

The first thing you have to work out is which creature you want to choose. Your conscience tells you that they are different but doesn't give you a good idea just how different they are.

Cow — the big moo is a wise choice for "good" players. It is happy eating grain, is a people's person (creature) and wants to help your followers. The cow has reasonable intelligence, is a poor fighter and a slow healer but is loyal.

Ape — the orange one is the smartest of all the creatures. It can learn miracles in three castings while the Tiger needs 15 for the same effect. On the downside the Ape can be a little too playful and curious, to the point of doing it's own thing while you are trying to teach it something. In one of my first games I taught my ape to ignore me by accident, which made things tricky.

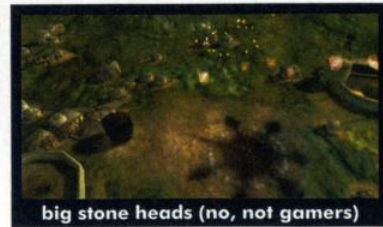
Tiger — the big cat is tough, strong and as dumb as frat-house drinking game. Being this dense does have an up side as Tigers rarely learn things you don't want them to and rarely run off to do their own thing. They do, however, seem awfully fond of eating villagers...

The other creatures in the game seem to fall into categories similar to the initial three creatures except for the Bear which is a pretty good all-rounder and the Sheep which is weak enough in all areas to be considered a "special project".

One of the cool things about creatures is that they keep their personalities and some of their traits when you swap their bodies. This means you can cover flaws by switching between bodies with complimentary abilities. It also should be noted that your creature loses some of its growth whenever you swap. Some players swap out of their tiger bodies and into a smarter animal just to learn miracles (download the other animals from good Black & White sites so you have some choice from land one).

TEACH YOUR CREATURE WELL

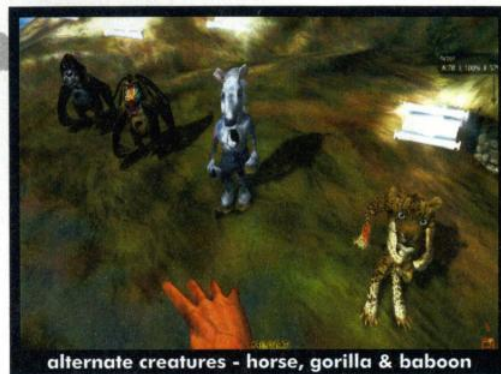
Teaching the creature to do something is easy. Put the leash of learning on and then do the actions you want your



big stone heads (no, not gamers)

creature to do. Things like picking up trees or grain and throwing them into the store, casting miracles and so on. The creature will point and let you know he or she is watching and when a light bulb appears it's starting to sink in. Stroke the creature when it's good and slap when it's bad. Make sure you do this right away as the creature's mind will jump around pretty quickly and you don't want to enforce the wrong behaviour.

Teaching your creature something is easy; teaching it the right thing is where it gets tricky. Say you decide to teach your creature not to eat villagers right off the bat. Maybe you give one to the critter and start slapping when the villager becomes a snack. Then you repeat the process, but slap to 40% when the villager is thrown over the shoulder. On the third time you get to praise when the creature gently puts the lucky soul back down. Hopefully, your creature will know not to eat villagers, but it might also have learnt



alternate creatures - horse, gorilla & baboon



choose your creature wisely - all three have different identities

SHORT CUTS

Here are some handy key-commands that didn't make it into the manual:

- Tab** — cycles through village centres
- M** — starts a miracle in the same way drawing a spiral does
- R** — is like a re-dial button, casting the previous miracle again, like the R-shaped gesture
- Alt and 2** — speeds up time
- Alt and 1** — slows time down
- P** — pauses the game

BLACK AND WHITE PLAYGUIDE



eventually your creature will be able to cast complex miracles

to put down anything you hand it.

The creature is complex; it makes several distinctions and can learn to only do things, or not do this to other people's villagers, the elderly, children, lazy workers and so on.

Start with the simple commands, with no exceptions, like it should eat grain when it's hungry (since it's always okay to eat grain) and then work outwards. Teach it to find its own food by using the focus leash on the food you want it to pick up and then praise when all goes to plan. Teach it to eat from your hand as well and then, once it has learnt that it is allowed to eat, start teaching what it can't eat or when it can eat certain things.

The same goes for teaching it to throw rocks, catch flying objects (like villagers), use lightning bolts and casting heal spells.

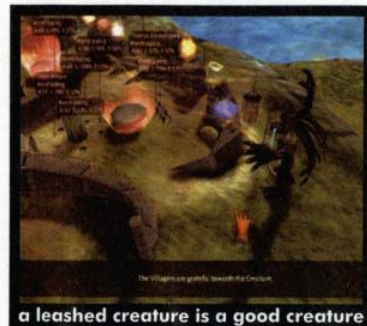
Don't be afraid to set your creature up for a fall by

making it do something and then punishing it, just don't do it all the time.

The big point here is to take baby steps ... don't try teaching it hard things first, it will pick up more complicated routines through watching you and from what evolves from all the simple rules you teach it and the punishment/praise it earns.

The first island is ideal for creature training. If you complete the quests, by the time you leave your creature should:

- sleep in its pen



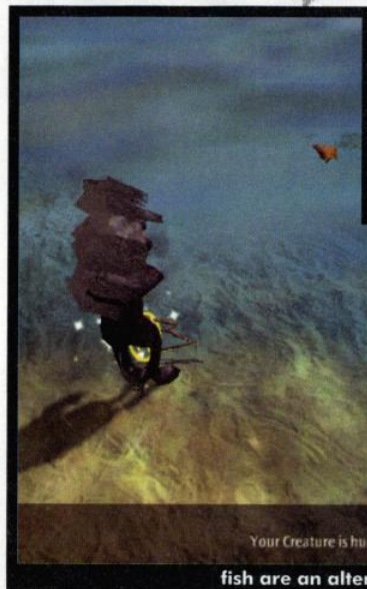
a leashed creature is a good creature



clash of the titans



creatures need sleep to heal



Your Creature is hungry. Find him something to eat.

fish are an alternate source of food

know what to eat and how much you want it to eat (letting the creature eat too often makes it greedy — which is an evil trait)

- be able to cast heal, water, food, and/or lightning at 100% (depending whether you want a good or evil creature and whether you have the patience to teach the Tiger to these percentages)
- should know how to use the village store (throw in wood, food but not rocks)

- be able to carry things for you between focus spots and put them down when they arrive
- sleep or heal itself when it is hurt
- poop in grain fields as it acts as a fertiliser. Admission: Neither horse, nor Mandrill ever really got the knack of this in my games

You teach your creatures the miracles from one-shot dispensers, so even if you can't cast those miracles at will your creature can. This is very handy on lands where you don't get a village that can supply you with something like the food miracle right away.

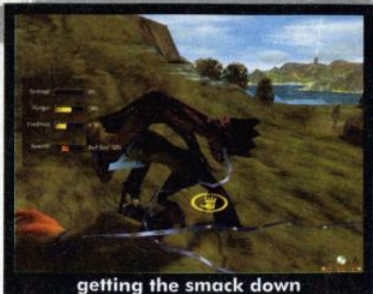
Don't bother trying to teach your creature miracles until the giant creature shows you how to cast using

the food miracles he creates. This is one of the scrolls near the second village activated after you talk to the humongus creature. Creatures don't seem able to learn miracles before this. Go talk to this guy as soon as you've taught your creature the very basics.

Completing the scroll quests as you are teaching your creature is pretty handy in general, and gives you access to the miracle dispensers. Just don't activate the final gold scroll when the giant creature tells you he has secret to tell you until you are ready to move on.

If you want to be really well prepared you can teach your creature other tricks and miracles by going into skirmish or online games. It will remember everything it learns for the single player game.

If you have an ally you can always leash your creature to his or her creature to learn its tricks.



getting the smack down



both these creatures are on the leash of aggression and will fight to the death. Or until they get bored anyway



PERSONAL GROWTH

People want huge creatures and they want them yesterday. The stats list creatures taking between 1200 minutes and 2000 minutes to reach full size, based on the creature type. This is under ideal conditions; so don't be surprised if it takes a lot longer than this. There are a few things to keep in mind.

Firstly, the creatures grow fastest if you are paying them attention. Many people have left the game on all night only to come back to see hardly any growth. If you leave the camera tracking the creature it will work a lot better.

Secondly, creatures grow faster in their pens ... hence the teaching to sleep in the pen. They also grow more

quickly when they rest, not just sleep but sit and rest. You can get a creature to chill out by leashing it to a rock too large for it to carry.

A creature's fat is also a factor, malnourished beasties just don't flourish like well fed ones — and they also seem to take more damage as they are less well padded, although big fat creatures tire more easily.

Getting slightly off topic, it's good to make your creature carry stones around when you are moving it long distances as this builds strength. If you don't do this for a long time you'll have a runt on your hands.

USING YOUR CREATURE

Creatures have a lot of great uses. The

obvious ones involve affecting areas outside of your influence and kicking



you can actually pre-generate all the miracles you'll need while making sure your worshippers are cared for and then lower the totem until you look like running out.

If you multi-click a fair whack of food into the temple and then set the totem to 100% it also lets you deck out a village without pesky villagers changing the requirements, so that when you have all the miracles you want, your villagers return to their

enemy beastie's shaggy butts.

One of the best uses for a creature is to keep worshippers alive while you tend to other aspects of the game. If you are casting a lot of miracles, leashing your creature with the food and heal miracle to their desire flags can give you all the room you need to churn out miracle wood for a wonder, launch a fireball offensive or work out musical puzzles. If you combine his tactic with a home-made miracle dispenser



if your creature carries rocks around he will get stronger. beefcake!

BLACK AND WHITE

P



villager stats may be confusing, but they keep you informed



you don't want this. Time to lob a fireball in there

fully balanced village.

Another great trick is to send your creature to a far-flung village carrying artefacts or villagers to become missionaries. If you are evil you can have them take poisoned food (to lob into their store), pick up enemy villagers for sacrifice (especially if you have a teleport placed at the edge of your range) or just do the obvious and trash wherever you go.

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT SKILLS

I read a great quote about Black & White which ran along the lines of, "my villagers seem to be the final destination for the world's league of village

idiots." Many a fair reviewer bemoaned the woeful stupidity of their little people and talked about the nightmare of having to micromanage every aspect of their little charge's lives from getting wood to feeding them and even tucking them in at night.

They weren't looking closely enough at what was going on. If you are a good god and do everything for them, they will learn that they don't have to do anything.

Do not get caught up in running their lives. Be a non-interventionist god if you can. Simply put, don't rain food down on them; build fields. Don't summon wood for them; make sure there are forests nearby. Let the villages work so that you don't develop the Lazy Peon Syndrome (LPS).

The villages work on a group AI which assigns tasks based on a priority system. What that means is that if they need something the village will look after it based on how badly it is needed, you just have to make sure the raw

materials are available.

They will even build buildings on their own if you have a disciple craftsman on duty. Talking about disciples, use them wisely and sparingly. It goes back to the hand holding thing. If you make a lot of dedicated builders or whatever then you'll always have to make sure they have work or keep checking the village needs so that you can swap what they are doing, otherwise they will stand around doing nothing. If the villager is not a disciple then

he or she will be assigned what needs to be done, assuming they haven't contracted LPS.

It's usually a good idea to have some disciple farmers, a craftsman and perhaps a female breeder or two, but beyond the essentials disciples should be used with great care.

There are two principles here: 1) give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day, teach a man to fish and he'll eat until they develop McDonalds and 2) people only use their brains as a last resort to save wear.

CHILDREN

The manual doesn't mention that your influence is only based on adults with homes. Children and homeless don't push out that red line.

Talking children, it also seems that they do not count the same way as adults when it comes to housing. The numbers above houses represent how many adults can stay there; you get free kid accommodation at something like two little'ns per three full-paying customers.

BREEDERS

Male breeders generally will produce too many offspring as they can sow their wild oats with as many women as they want. If you over populate one village you can simply transport villages to another, less populated,

centre or start sacrificing. It should be said, having a good breeding program should be of prime importance to evil gods as the little ones bring in such a chunk of prayer points and it means that even with high fatalities some villages make it.

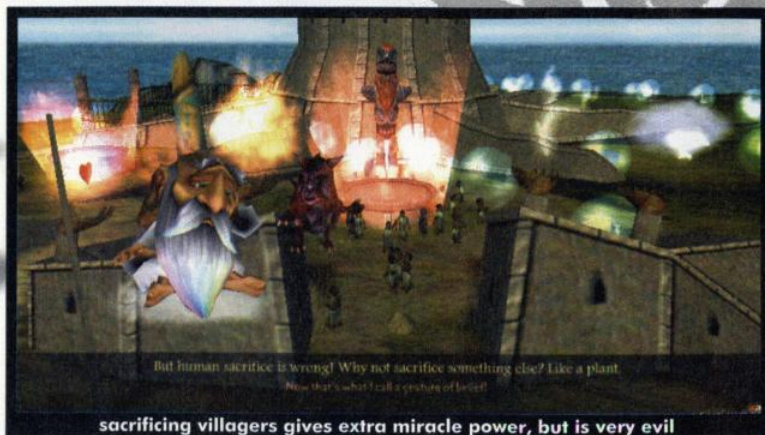
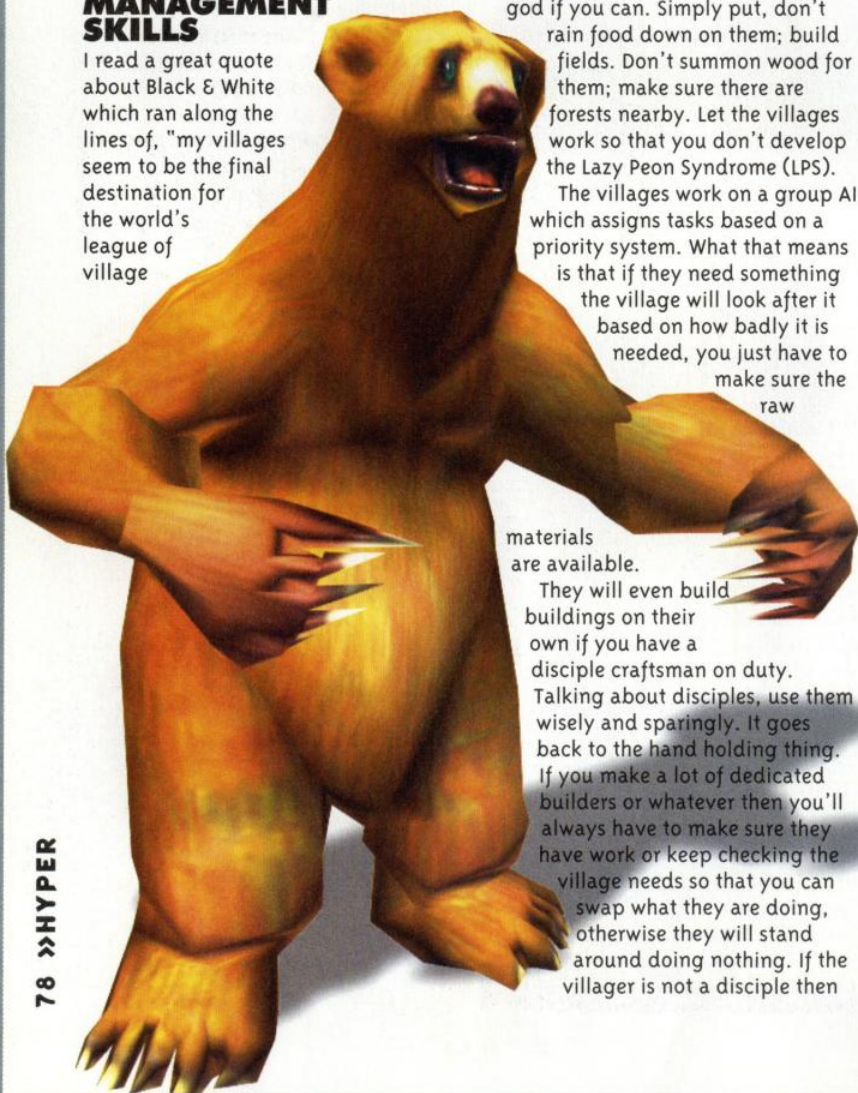
BUILDING REQUIREMENTS

if you can't build something make sure you don't already have one. Then try the move-it-all-around-game checking all available real estate. The only civic building that a village can double up on is the workshop.

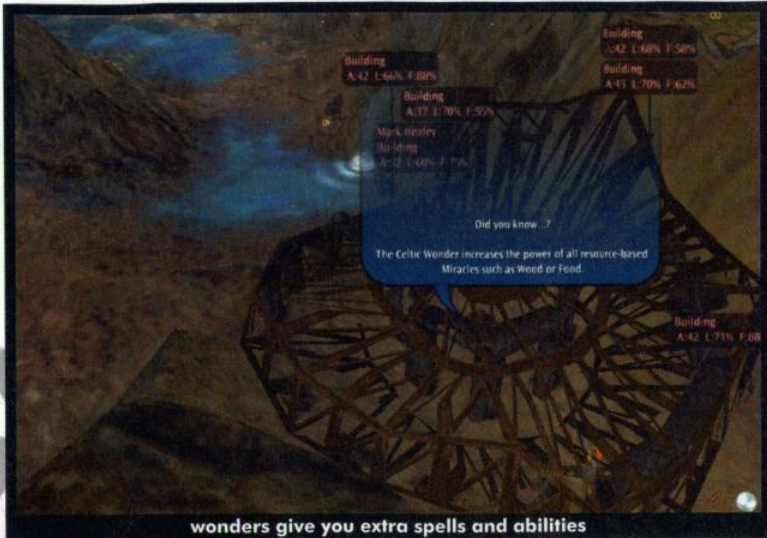
Something else to consider is that you don't seem to get the option to build miracle dispensers until you have all of the civic buildings, i.e. a crèche, village store, workshop and graveyard.

When placing large abodes (with two scaffolds) make sure that you produce the big version of the large abode since each race has two options.

Multi-clicking wood miracles seems to work particularly well on workshops. Once you have plenty of wood in one make sure you keep moving the scaffolds from their original positions. If you leave scaffolds where they appear they can hold up production.



sacrificing villagers gives extra miracle power, but is very evil



wonders give you extra spells and abilities



WONDERS

Try to build enough houses for all of your population ASAP (so you get full benefit of their influence) then seriously think of putting up wonders. Even though these babies are a serious resource drain they make managing your lands so much easier, especially in the case of the ones that boost resources or cut villager requirements like the Celtic, Japanese and the Norse wonders.

They also push out your area of influence like a son of a gun.

Basically, they kick arse, but be careful they are quite vulnerable while they are being built. The manual says that they have more power when they are built on a hill but it doesn't mention how much bigger they are if you build them next to one of your village's artefacts. Do this. You won't be disappointed.

IMPRESSING VILLAGERS

Variety is the spice of life. Each time you do the same trick it gets less impressive and then "recharges" over time. If you are good, satisfying the most urgent desire flag works well as does flocks of birds, missionaries, artefacts and dancing creatures. In fact, using the creature in combination with any of these is better than you just doing it. Tag team tactics are better still.

Good cop, bad cop is especially effective. You can trash a village and then put out fires with miracle water, heal the injured, cast a shield once the protection flag is at its peak, provide

wood for repairs and so on, generating all manner of belief. It also lets you use the variety of good and evil miracles (although good gods won't be able to look themselves in the mirror, unless they are Old Testament).

Epic creature battles in the middle of villages, crashing through house and so on, are also pretty impressive.

GOOD AND EVIL

Sometimes it's hard to tell what is considered good and evil. The game is very complex but there are some strange things that seem to affect your alignment. Obviously sacrificing children is evil but so is having your creature eat fish from the sea for some reason. If you hand it fish, or any food (except villagers) for that matter, it is fine, but fishing or hunting most any livestock is often considered evil, with fish being the worst offenders.

Taking grain from one village and giving it to another is also evil (more naughty than evil, really). Having your creature being a glutton affects its



teleports help your villagers collect wood and food faster



playing good cop / bad cop is always sure to impress

alignment — greed is bad.

Aggressive acts like throwing stones (or fireballs) will also drop you from that perfect 1.00, that's without even causing harm. On the other hand healing, donating food, watering fields and so on are all good.

High children desire, wood desire or expansion desire is okay for good gods, as it won't cause your alignment to slide. On the flipside, ignore food, mercy or protection flags and you'll start to see the effects pretty quickly. To avoid LPS you'll have to let the villagers suffer sometimes ... it's tough love.

Alignment also seems to be based on how many of your people see you do good or bad things ... if a tree falls in a forest it still makes a sound but not as much.

TELEPORT MIRACLES

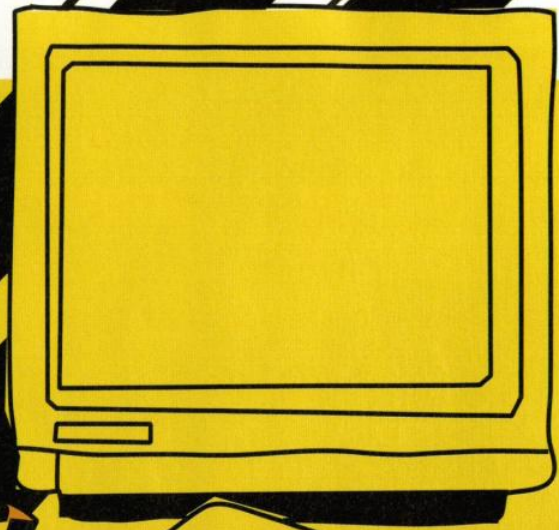
These are very handy, even though they are a constant prayer point drain. They don't cost that much to maintain and they allow travel between any open teleports. One near your temple and in each of your village centres means that your creature can respond to attacks at a moments notice and that you don't have villagers having to make a pilgrimage every time they come to worship or have to go home.

The teleport at the village centre also lets you put one near fish and wood speeding up resource gathering greatly.

You can also use them to quickly get villagers into the vortex by placing one near the mouth of the vortex and closing the one at the temple. Raising the totem to 100% causes them all to take the short cut if it is closer to the temple than the city's centre. If not, you might have to create a forest on the edge of vortex (if the village is wood starved) or a new building site (if villagers have the expansion flag up) ... and then just watch them pile into the vortex to serve you in the next world. <<>

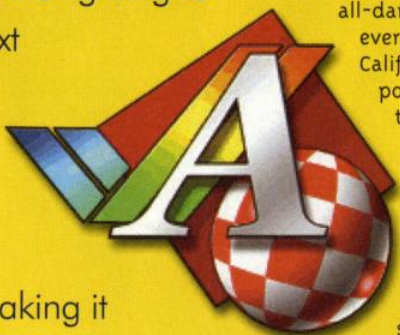
PART 2 of our Black & White Playguide will continue next issue!





THE AMIGA

Elegantly designed, technically impressive, and years ahead of its time, the Amiga was one of the most successful home computers ever built. And against all odds, it's fighting to dominate the next generation of PC technology. Visionary developers and rabid fans are making it happen, and **James Cottee** has the scoop...



In the early 80s home computers were clumsy, unreliable things. Even the most successful were severely flawed: the Macintosh was overpriced, the PC's architecture was a pig's breakfast, and everything else was little more than a toy. But with the new generation of 16 bit processors came the dream of all-singing, all-dancing computers in every home, and a trio of Californian programmers pooled their resources to make it reality.

The result was the Amiga, but it only saw the light of day after a long and rocky development road. One of their money-making sidelines in the early days was an unrelated joystick business, and one of its products was the "Joyboard." A commercial failure, it did provide

solace in the form of a stress reduction game for the Amiga staff. They wrote a game where you had to sit on the skateboard like device whilst moving it as little as possible. This "Guru Mediation" is where the infamous red Amiga crash screen got its name.

ROBO-BABES

Amiga is Spanish for girlfriend. So as not to arouse suspicion amongst their Silicon Valley contemporaries, the project was code-named "Lorraine." Thus they could talk freely about the project over the phone and in seedy bars "Oh yeah, Lorraine was a real slut today, couldn't turn her on once." Similarly, the custom chips at the core of the Amiga all had code names. It's ironic that for its typical owner, the Amiga was the only girlfriend they had...

Eventually the Amiga found a backer in Commodore Business Machines, and in 1985 the Amiga 1000 was released on an

unsuspecting public. While many balked at its high price, long booting times and limited memory, many more recognised its potential. In 1987 it was followed by the games oriented A500 and the business friendly A2000, in the late 80s they started to pick up steam. By the turn of the decade more game software was being released for the Amiga than any other format, and it eventually won its war with its bitter rival and inferior clone, the Atari ST.

THE CUTTING EDGE

The 68000 processor was not unique to the Amiga, but its three custom chips were. Each was powerful, and capable of accessing the memory without bothering the CPU. Agnus was also known as the block image transfer, or "Blitter" chip, and was responsible for the Amiga's graphics, and also for its advanced disc-loading capabilities. Denise controlled the major functions of

BOING!!!

>> During the first golden age of the Amiga, its corporate logo of choice was the italic capital A and the rainbow double tick. But the pre-Commodore logo for the Amiga was the "Boing Ball," a rotating sphere checkered with red and white squares. This same symbol was a recurring theme in Amiga demos, and now that CBM is out of the picture it's the Amiga's official mascot once more. Like the Linux penguin, the Boing Ball is a rallying point for computer fanatics everywhere, promising a high performance, open source future for all.



the screen display, including hardware sprites such as the mouse pointer, and the Amiga's signature Hold And Modify (HAM) graphics mode, which used built-in memory compression to get all 4096 available colours on screen at once. Paula was the sound chip, controlling the Amiga's amazing ability to store entire waveforms in memory. Last was Gary, the humble I/O chip.

The abilities unique to the Amiga were many and varied. It employed true multitasking, and its rock-solid memory management prevented programs from messing with each other, even if they'd been designed to work in isolation. Multiple graphical resolutions were supported on screen simultaneously, a feat yet to be achieved on any subsequent system. The fact it was designed from the word go to output to a normal TV meant two things: new Amiga owners didn't have to splash out on a dedicated monitor, and it was a snap to create video editing software for the machine.

But wait, there's more. The Amiga supported long file names, up to 127 characters long, back when DOS users were content with the 8.3 format. Asynchronous disc drive control meant that all drives could operate independently of each other. "Auto detect," like "plug & play" from a decade hence, made expanding the Amiga a snap. Why, you could even add a "bridge board" for full IBM compatibility if you felt the need. Whether the application was games, music, graphics, or even business, it seemed there was nothing that the Amiga couldn't do. So what went wrong?

DEATH AND REBIRTH

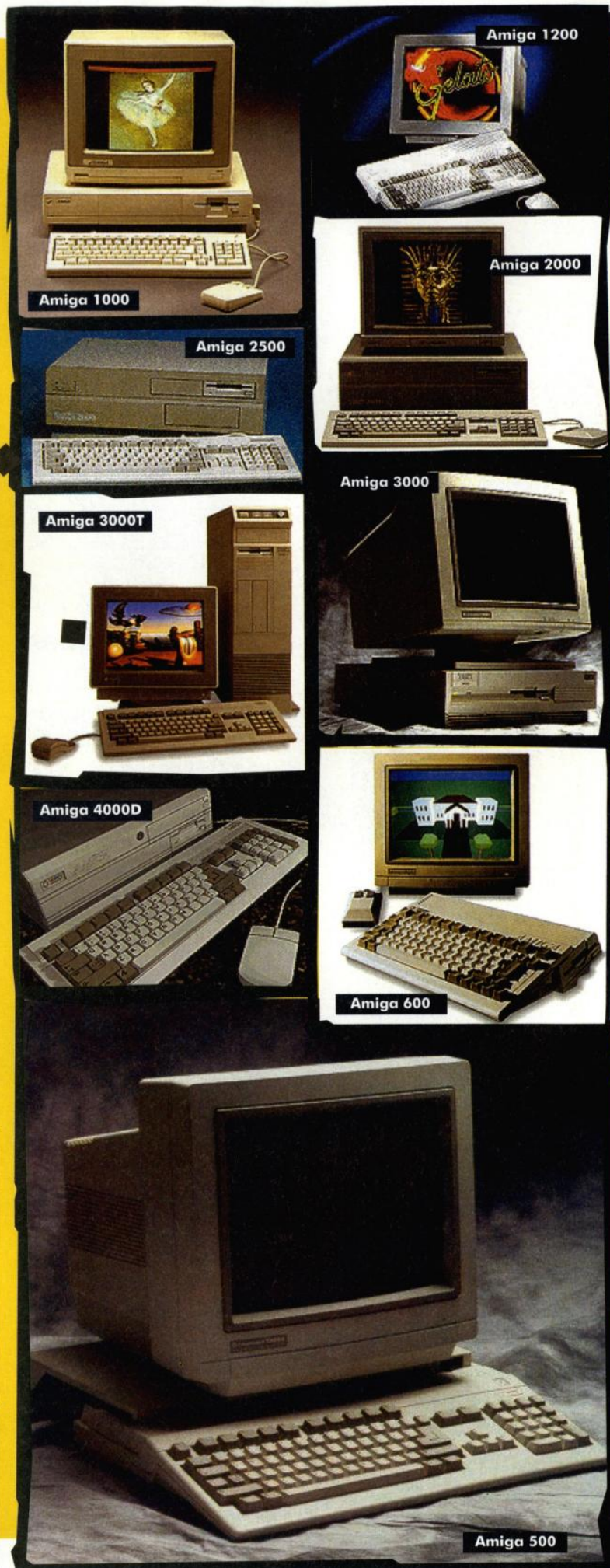
It's widely believed that rampant piracy discouraged developers from investing time and money in the Amiga, but the same could be said of the PC clones, and they have become the de-facto PC standard. No, the real

reason was that Amiga's parent company Commodore simply didn't put enough resources into R&D, and squandered what money it had on flops like the CD-TV, the CD-32, and the abortive Commodore 65. Commodore Business Machines collapsed in 1994, and since then the Amiga property has been a hot potato, passing hands between companies unwilling or unable to profit from one of the most elegant operating systems ever devised.

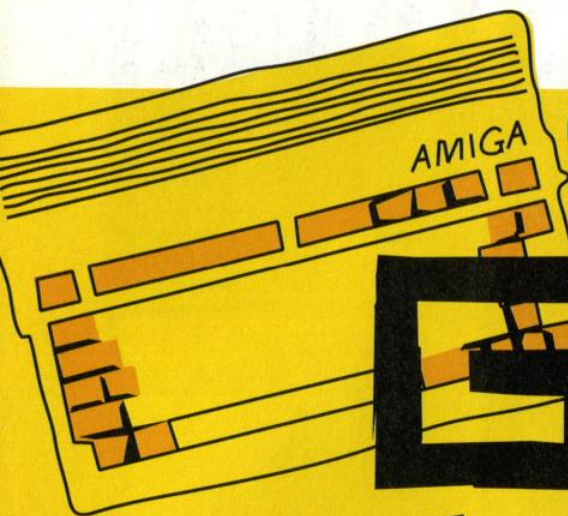
Hope springs eternal, though, and now after years in the wilderness the Amiga community is convinced salvation is just around the corner. Strategic deals with big names like Redhat Linux and Sun Microsystems are transforming Amiga OS into a multi-platform, object oriented, omnipotent force for change. While other rebel systems like BE OS fall by the wayside, and Linux still intimidates many, the Amiga may yet be the David to bring down the tyrannical Goliath that is Microsoft. At the very least it will send demo coders everywhere into a swoon of self-congratulation.

AMIGA.ORG

>> Whether you want breaking Amiga news, the latest Amiga software downloads or simply some spiffy Amiga merchandise, www.Amiga.org is your one stop shop on the web. Developers, emulation, fan sites and more are all indexed in the most comprehensive Amiga resource anywhere.



THE GAMES



CINEMAWARE

A developer that reached its peak on the Amiga, proving that mini-games don't always mean poor design.



DEFENDER OF THE CROWN

Fighting for either the Normans or the Saxons, your objective was to raise mighty armies, ravish buxom damsels and unite all of England under your rightful rule. Great sub-quests, including jousting, catapult control, and calling on Sherwood Forest to enlist the aid of Robin Hood himself!

IT CAME FROM THE DESERT

A homage to the atomic sci-fi shockers of the 50s, it's set in a sleepy mid-western town being overrun by giant, menacing ants! The sequel, subtitled "Ant Heads," featured hideous mutants that were part man, part ant!



PSYGNOSIS

Before the Sony buyout in '94, Psygnosis were the powerhouse of the Amiga scene, producing dozens of hit games.

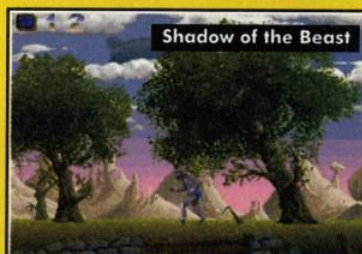
LEMMINGS

This puzzle game had a simple premise: Save a brainless herd of green-haired rodents from their own suicidal stupidity. In order to guide the group to safety you could order individual lemmings to build bridges, dig holes, or even self-destruct. Incredibly addictive, terminally cute, Lemmings became a worldwide smash, and spawned several sequels.



SHADOW OF THE BEAST

In terms of gameplay this was little more than a side-scrolling beat-em-up a-la-Rygar, but the graphics were revolutionary. Something like 17 layers of parallax made this a feast for the eyes, and it was such a hit that it spawned two sequels. Even the box art was awesome, rendered by fantasy art legend Roger Dean.



THE KILLING GAME SHOW

At the time this devilishly difficult platform game had three things going for it: The most elaborate opening sequence ever seen on the Amiga, drop dead gorgeous graphics, and a really cool name. You controlled an ED-209 like cyborg, and a rising tide of poisonous liquid encouraged you to exit each level quick smart.

THE BITMAP BROTHERS

While infamous nowadays for the seriously flawed Z, The Bitmaps had a string of hits, way back when.

SPEEDBALL 2: BRUTAL DELUXE

A decade on Speedball 2 is still the definitive future sports game. Inspired by the movie Rollerball, it pitted teams of heavily padded malcontents against each other in a steel-lined arena infested with powerups. Fast, satisfying gameplay, the epitome of mayhem. Too bad the remake, Speedball 2000, sucked arse.

XENON 2: MEGABLAST

This was a video gaming first, as the music was provided by a big-name musical group, Bomb the Bass. While the game was just another vertically scrolling shoot-em-up, the graphics were lush. One amusing powerup

CARRIER COMMAND

>> In this 3D strategy game the objective was to conquer a volcanic archipelago with an automated aircraft carrier and a fleet of tanks and fighters. While the enemy carrier was far more powerful than yours, aggressive colonisation of the islands would yield enough firepower to smash your terrorist foes. Smooth graphics, an elegant interface and intelligent gameplay combined to make this a strategy classic.



MERCENARY

>> One of the first and best games to let the player loose in a huge 3D environment with absolute freedom to meet their objectives. A vast wireframe cityscape beckoned, with two eternally warring factions able to help the player towards his million credit ticket off the planet.





The Chaos Engine

consisted of sunglasses; the only effect was to darken everything on the screen!

THE CHAOS ENGINE

When an experimental device ruptures the fabric of space and time, somehow violent action always ensues. Top down squad based combat, but too stylish by half. The stark graphics were reminiscent of the underground comic books of the period, and the gameplay was addictive, enough to warrant a sequel.

TEAM 17

Bucking the conventional wisdom of game software development, Team 17 created products for the Amiga long after it ceased to be sold in stores.

ALIEN BREED

Yet another top-down blast 'em up, in the vein of Cyberdogs, or Gauntlet. A popular franchise none the less, prompting several sequels.

WORMS

Like many artillery games before it, like the ever-popular Scorched Earth, Worms forced players to consider wind conditions and trajectories in order to triumph. It also had some very strange weapons, amusing animations, and a great sense of humour. Team 17's last game for the Amiga, and its best.



SENSIBLE SOFTWARE

The company behind Parallax and Wizball became one of the finest Amiga developers of its day.

CANNON FODDER

A top down game of real-time, squad-based combat, Cannon Fodder was astoundingly violent. Even though they were only a few pixels high, the little men employed in this



Cannon Fodder

frag-fest would spew out huge volumes of bloody gibs, and their corpses would dance in front of your machine guns for as long as you held down the trigger.

SENSIBLE SOCCER

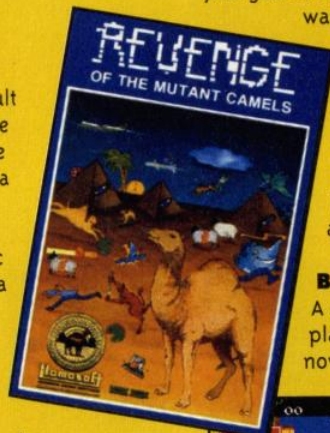
In an age when soccer games had long been using polygons to portray the players on screen, Sensible Soccer made a huge splash using sprites no bigger than those in Cannon Fodder. The secret to its success lay in its frantic gameplay, but sadly was the last ever blockbuster from a company that dated back to the days of the C64.

JEFF MINTER

The man was and is a froot loop, but sure knows how to make shoot-em-ups.

REVENGE OF THE MUTANT CAMELS

Inspired by the assault on Hoth in The Empire Strikes Back, this side scrolling shooter pit a giant laser spitting camel (you) against waves of psychedelic oddities. This was a 16-bit update of the C64 original, which cleaned up on the shareware culture that briefly flourished in the late 80s.



LLAMATRON 2112

Inspired by the arcade classic Robotron, this overwhelming blaster spewed forth enemies not normally

associated with video games, like telephone booths, toilets, and pot plants. With flashing graphics that sapped every ounce of the Amiga's power, Llamatron was also one of the first games to carry an epilepsy warning.

TAITO

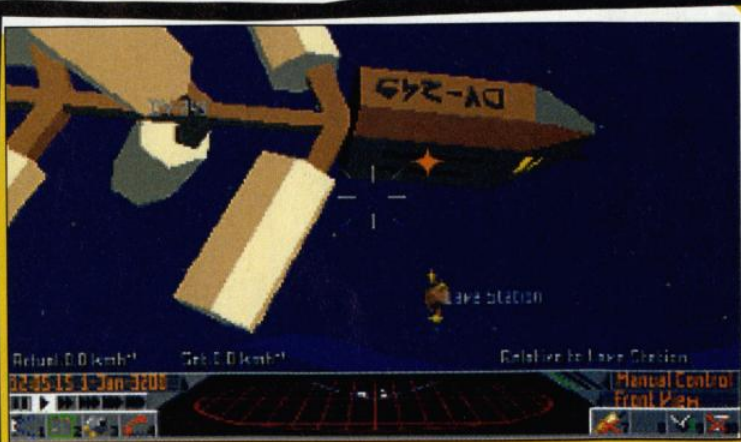
Several arcade ports of this Japanese giant made it to the Amiga, all were addictive.

BUBBLE BOBBLE

A simple static-screen platform game that got its novelty and complexity from



Rainbow Islands



FRONTIER

>> A sequel, of sorts, to Elite, this space combat game gave absolute freedom to its players. Trade, mining, covert ops for warring empires and of course piracy were all viable career options, and you had an entire galaxy to stretch your legs in. David Braben made only one fatal flaw with this one; the space combat itself was as boring as batshit.



Impossible Mission

the fact Bub and Bob, the dinosaur protagonists, could spew forth enemy-trapping bubbles.

RAINBOW ISLANDS

A sequel of sorts to Bubble Bobble, innovative in that it was a vertically scrolling platformer. The player would shoot out small rainbows that could be scaled to escape the rising water levels. Bright, colourful, fruity.

NEW ZEALAND STORY.

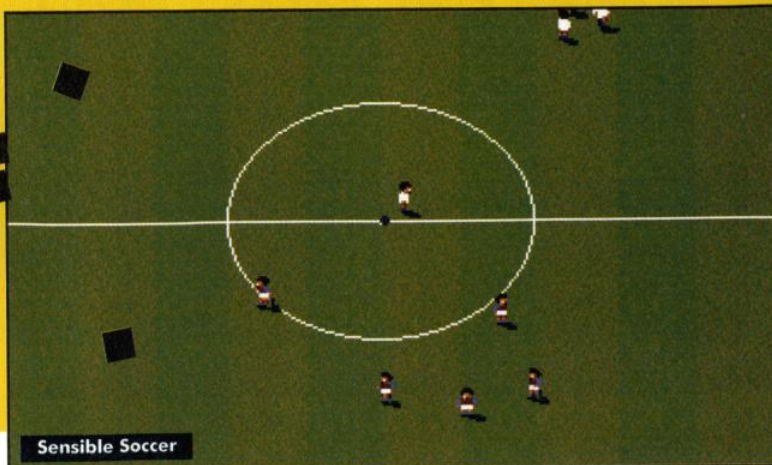
Another surreal platform game, this time you had to free imprisoned kiwis from cuddly yet deadly captors. <<



Dune 2

PC PORTS

>> Many games that we associate with PC gaming in the early 90s were ported to the Amiga. Hits like Dune 2, Sid Meier's Civilization and F-19 Stealth Fighter were a part of the Amiga experience, right up until the mid 90s when it left the mainstream in favour of the fanatical cult status it enjoys today.

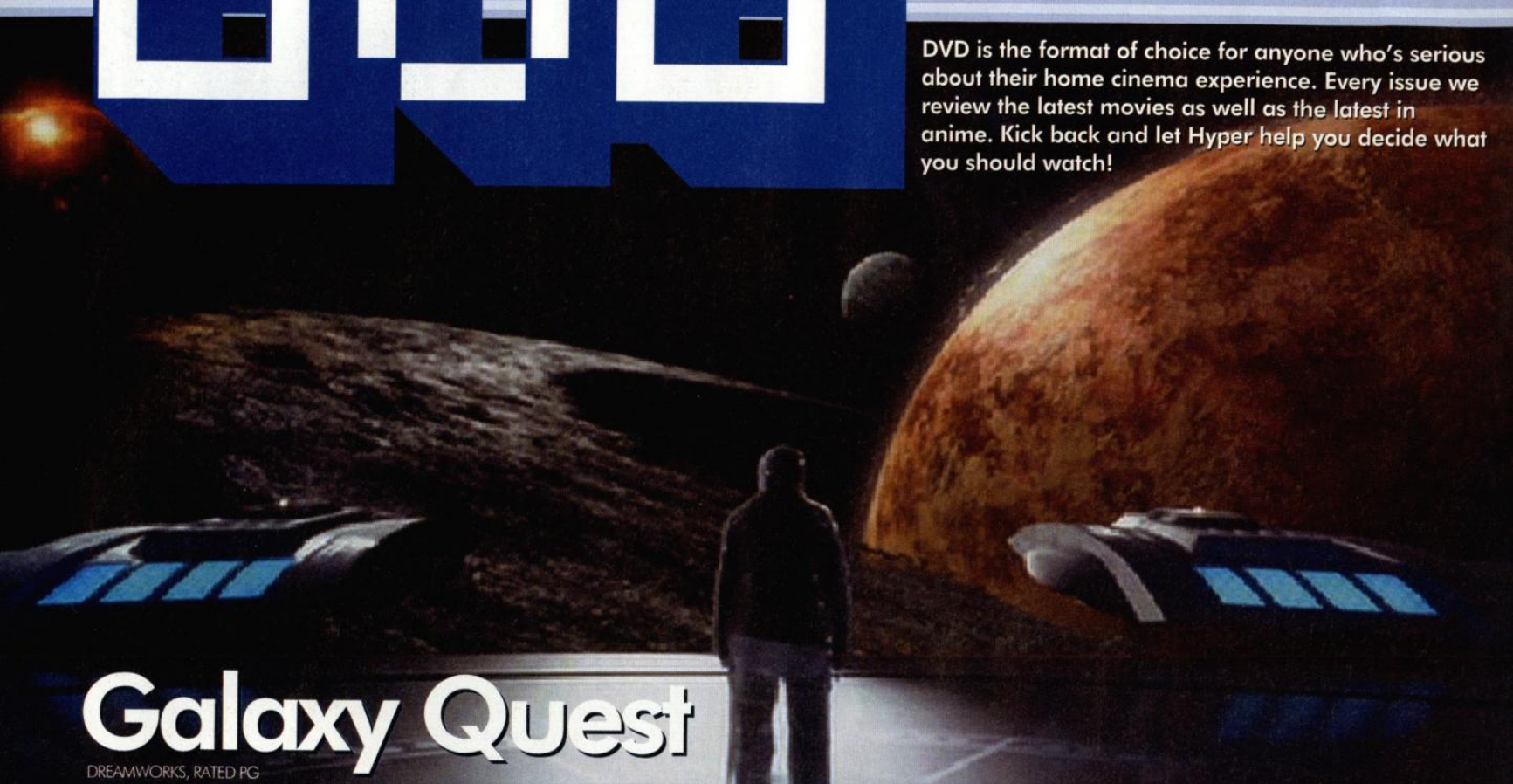


Sensible Soccer

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!



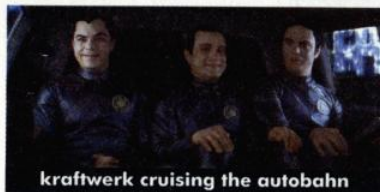
Galaxy Quest

DREAMWORKS, RATED PG

In a film that both satirises and celebrates the geekiness of Star Trek, Tim Allen, Alan Rickman and Sigourney Weaver play the has-been stars of a 70s sci-fi show who somehow make ends meet by making guest appearances at sci-fi conventions. Their lives are completely turned around when a band of aliens, who are convinced the show is real and have based their entire civilisation on it, come to them for help.

There are moments of true comic genius. As the cast decides to ditch their dreary, earthly lives in favour of intergalactic battle, there's the constant reminder that they are, well, actors. Alan Rickman is especially good as the Shakespearean actor who constantly whinges about playing the token alien with the headpiece. There's also Enrico Colantoni (Elliot from Just Shoot Me), who puts on a hilarious performance as an alien trying to behave human.

The disc is disappointing for extra features (not even a director's commentary), but the film carries itself just fine, especially for anyone who remotely understands (but sees the folly in) why certain Trek fans dress up as Klingons.



kraftwerk cruising the autobahn



looking out onto a sea of nerds

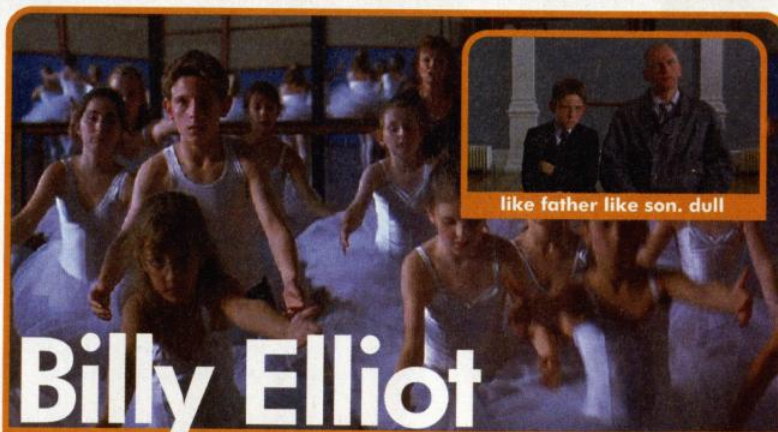


the Hyper entertainment centre



jackpot! 2 million ET carts

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



like father like son. dull

Billy Elliot

UNIVERSAL, RATED M15+

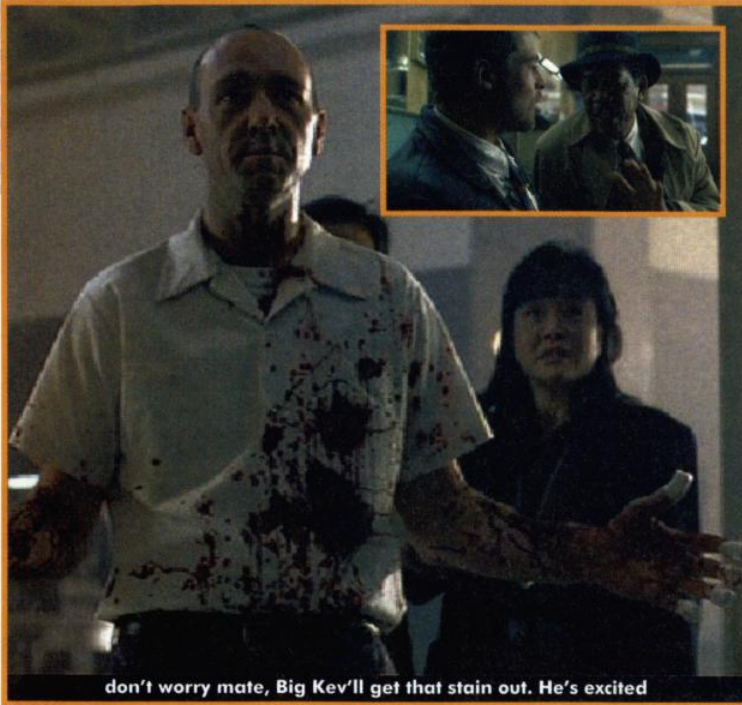
Elly Elliot is an uplifting, heartwarming tale of an English boy who discovers his love for dance. His efforts are set against his blue-collar dad, who believes he's better off boxing, as well as the union strikes that crippled the mining industry during the Thatcher administration.

Although it's a period drama, the struggle is character-driven and universally human, with excellent performances from the entire cast. As Billy's dancing lessons are taken in secret, his friends and family serve as

foils to each other, preaching the virtues of sacrifice, tolerance and acceptance, making the humorous touches all the more poignant.

For a film that's garnered so much international recognition, the DVD sports surprisingly few extra features. There are a couple of featurettes that contain interviews with the actors, but there aren't any specific sections dedicated to the music or the art forms that inspired the story behind the film.

MOVIE: **9/10** EXTRAS: **4/10**



don't worry mate, Big Kev'll get that stain out. He's excited



Seven: SPECIAL EDITION

VILLAGE, RATED MA15+

Fight Club director and all-round crowd favourite David Fincher is the visionary behind Seven, a sordid crime thriller about a serial killer obsessed with the seven deadly sins. The film stars Brad Pitt and Morgan Freeman; and in a stroke of genius, Kevin Spacey isn't credited to add shock value to his role as the villain. There's also Gwyneth Paltrow in her pre-superstar days, who (spoiler alert!) is rather gratifyingly beheaded at the end of the film.

The extra features are worth every penny paid. There's four tracks of commentary that include David, Brad and Morgan, deleted scenes and extended takes, alternate endings and animated storyboards, and animated



Morgan chills. Gwyneth loses her head



the new Pokémon trading cards

galleries of production designs. Alongside Fight Club, this DVD set could just be looked upon as a case of Fincher wanting to be taken seriously as an elite filmmaking artist. Either way, the fans have plenty to be pleased about.

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



Frankie Bones @ Sonic Groove Records



this is what drugs do to you

Better Living Through Circuitry

AV CHANNEL, RATED M15+

Better Living Through Circuitry is a very confused documentary about dance music. It purports to give the viewer an inside look at the "underground" electronic dance movement, but by and large is a shallow, misguided journey into the current post-post-rave kiddie-core scene.

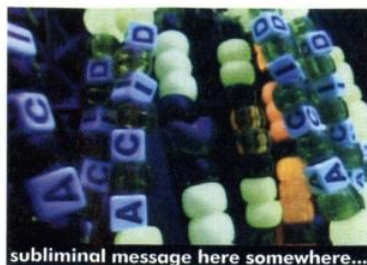
The lack of any real thread throughout this documentary is its biggest flaw, obscuring some good moments. A narrator or even information popping up on screen would have helped considerably. Interviews with Frankie Bones, Carl Cox, Wolfgang Flur (Kraftwerk), DJ Spooky and Roni Size are all great

inclusions, but with no background information or reason, what's the point? And when a documentary moves from a bunch of cranked up happy hardcore kids to a Roni Size party for no apparent reason something is obviously wrong.

What's missing is any appreciation or understanding of dance music as a movement and artform. The director even admits in the commentary track that he went in with no knowledge, and it's plainly obvious that he didn't learn much along the way. Sure, if it's all new to you, kids dancing around with dummies in their mouths and waving glowsticks may be interesting, but for those of us who've seen the dance music scene evolve over the last decade or two, presenting these lamers as significant is nothing short of insulting.

With so much focus on the "rave" scene, it's a shame that this documentary is almost a decade too late. Indeed, the great irony here is an interview with a promoter who complains that the media hysteria over raves and drugs only served to bring a new, young generation who have destroyed the scene. True. Pity that these are the people that Better Living Through Circuitry primarily focuses on. - Cam Shea

MOVIE: 2/10 **EXTRAS:** 4/10



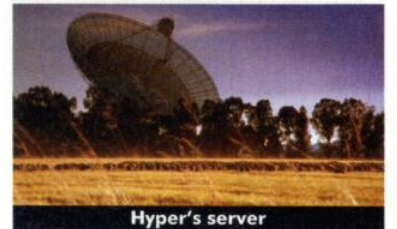
subliminal message here somewhere...

The Dish

ROADSHOW, RATED M15+

When Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first men to walk on the moon in July 1969, their historic achievement was broadcast to a television audience of six hundred million via a satellite dish situated in Parkes, Australia. The Dish tells the story of the men who made this possible — and doesn't really go into much else. Only three things actually happen in this film: 1. The Australians lose, then find, satellite contact with Apollo 11. 2. It gets very windy. 3. The dish works.

The Dish is a slow-paced and subtle film, and therefore quite different from the last Working Dog production, The Castle. It seems an almost natural



Hyper's server

progression in the careers of the team who made it. Santo Cilauro, Tom Gleisner, Jane Kennedy and Rob Sitch began their careers doing cutting-edge comedy, but over the years have become much more conservative in their once-radical politics. Their latest creation is a middle-aged film with a middle-aged nostalgia for times gone past. The Dish is well-crafted and well-acted, but it isn't particularly exciting. Kind of like middle-age, I guess.

Extras: Two commentary tracks, storyboards, NASA archival footage, Apollo 11 Diary, Cast and Creative Team biographies, Theatrical trailer. - Victoria Flanagan

MOVIE: 6/10 **EXTRAS:** 7/10



Putty rocks. Yeah, that's right.



Ground Control to Major Tom. Would you like fries with that?



The Replacements

WARNER BROS., RATED PG

After *The Matrix*, you'd think Keanu Reeves would land a few better roles. No siree, Keanu's still in *Bill & Ted* mode, this time starring as a washed-up college footballer called back into active duty because of a strike in the NFL. The rest of the team, called in by coach Gene Hackman, is composed of gangsters, a

sumo wrestler, a few psychos who didn't quite make it into the league, and that nutter from *Notting Hill* who posed in his Y-fronts.

The comedy is stop-and-go, playing on the quirks of each character and how they apply to football. The ex-stripper cheerleaders are the best show-stealers. It's ultimately satisfying if you enjoy watching the NFL (look out for Summerall and Madden). What's even more ironic is that the brand of football played by these replacements is similar to the sad and pathetic XFL. At least *The Replacements* makes it funny.



groin-grabbingly good

MOVIE: **6/10** EXTRAS: **3/10**



I'm off me tits, I'm 'avin it!



Young Talent Time, German style

Eraserhead

AV CHANNEL, RATED M15+

Eraserhead (1977) was David Lynch's first foray into filmmaking and is considered by many to be a seminal masterpiece. Eraserhead is an experimental film, which delves into the subconscious mind of its protagonist. It's not exactly easy to comprehend, as the distinction between reality and the fantasy world of the mind is blurred and overlapping. Sound is integral to the film's progression (Lynch is supposed to have spent an entire year on the soundtrack alone), and is perhaps one of the best aspects of this DVD release — it's truly disturbing. The biggest disappointment in this release, however, is the fact that the extras are practically non-existent.

Having been a Lynch fan for quite a while, I'm aware that the man is notoriously secretive about his work — but since Eraserhead is 24 years old, and Lynch has followed it with an impressive list of other titles, I assume that it wouldn't have been difficult to find something compelling to include. Oh well. All I can say is... bring on Twin Peaks DVD baby! - Victoria Flanagan



I feel like chicken tonight

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

The Sound Of Music

20TH CENTURY FOX, RATED G

The Sound of Music is much more than just a film — it is a cultural phenomenon in its own right, and this double DVD special release comes with more culture than a bottle of Yakult. Don't buy this DVD if you're looking for cinematic brilliance, breathtaking performances or impressive song-writing.

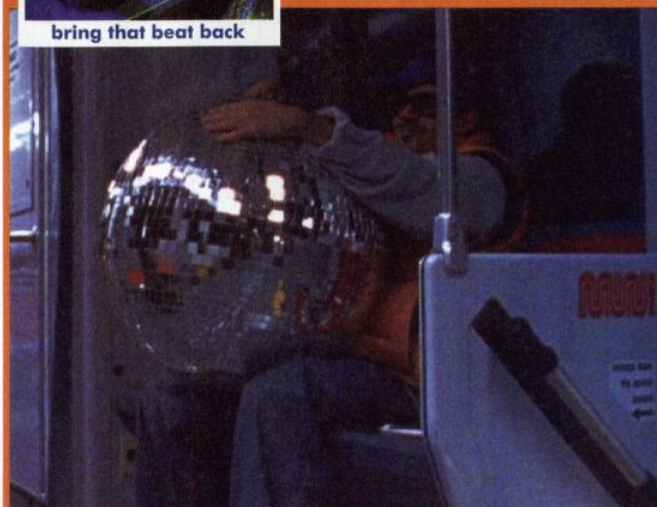
Buy it purely so that you can join in with drunken renditions of "These are a few of my favourite things", or for the ability to knowingly laugh when someone mentions making clothes out of disgustingly-patterned curtains. Or buy it just because you're sick of people gawping at you in amazement when you confess that you haven't seen it. You'll only regret it a little... - Victoria Flanagan



bring that beat back

Groove

COLUMBIA TRISTAR, RATED MA15+



We seem to have been inundated of late with films that profess to capture the spirit of the electronic music scene. First there was the appalling *Go*. (Although it did star Katie Holmes, so we were adequately warned from the start.) Then there was *Human Traffic*, which wasn't too bad, except for the fact that it was maybe a little too enthusiastic in reproducing the feel-good powers of MDMA. *Groove* cuts a happy medium. It's a pretty accurate portrayal of warehouse parties, has a funky soundtrack (and an appearance by John Digweed), and does the drug thing nicely — there's the obligatory character who overdoes it, but overall its representation of dancing the night away on E is engaging and realistic. In terms of extras, this DVD is great value. Not only do you get audio commentary from the director/writer and producer, a behind-the-scenes featurette and deleted footage, but also casting auditions with commentary. - Victoria Flanagan

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

ANIME



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Rurouni Kenshin: WANDERING SAMURAI

COMEDY, DRAMA • PRODUCTION COMPANY: SHUEISHA, FUJITV

After watching the awesomely animated tragedy of Himura Kenshin's background in the Samurai X OAV, this newly released DVD set of the Rurouni Kenshin TV series comes across as, well, crap. Set in the period immediately after the uprising against the Tokugawa shogunate, Kenshin wanders across Japan as both a respected and feared legend. Some know him as the swordsman who helped make the revolution possible; others call him 'Battousai the Manslayer'.

Japan now subscribes to a pacifist legal system where swords may not be carried in public. Even martial arts schools preach the protection of

others, rather than their defeat. And Kenshin? He's turned into a pacifist nancy-boy as well, carrying an inverted blade and vowing never to kill again.

WIDDLY WIDDLY

The story picks up when Kaoru (a rip-off of Sakura Shinguji) offers sanctuary to Kenshin in her ailing Katshushin dojo. Kenshin helps bring new students into the school, whilst at the same time righting the wrongs of the new Meiji authorities. As time goes on, Kenshin is visited by the ghosts of his bloody past, and we find out about his involvement in the revolution by piecemeal.

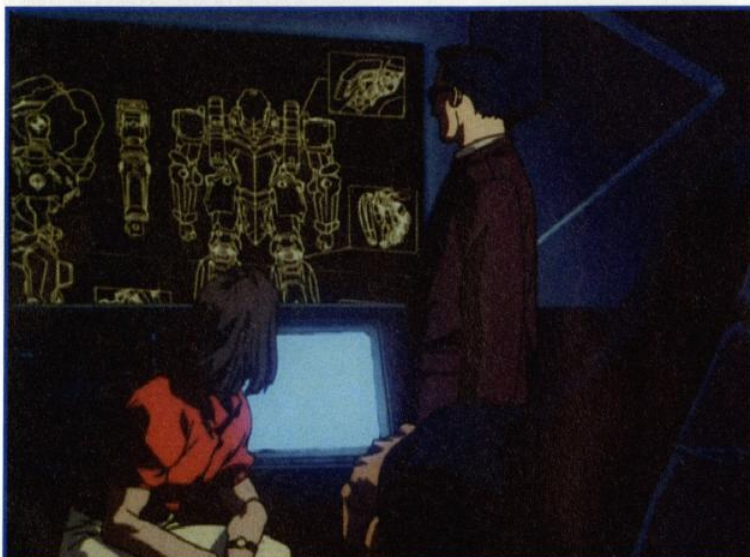
The animation is barely passable. Fight scenes are ridiculously low budget, using cheap pan-and-scan tricks to create a sense of motion. The problem is that the series is trying very hard to be funny. Kenshin behaves like he has a multiple personality disorder,

switching frequently between super seriousness and Ranma-style comic silliness. Music is also a big problem, especially when the treble-heavy Eighties guitars kick in for the fight scenes.



nothing up my sleeve... presto!

ANIMATION: 5/10 **PLOT:** 4/10 **JAPAN-NESS:** High **OVERALL:** 5/10



yes, I think we can rebuild him



ANIMATION: 8/10 **PLOT:** 5/10 **JAPAN-NESS:** High **OVERALL:** 8/10

Gasaraki

SCI-FI, DRAMA, MECH ACTION
 PRODUCTION COMPANY: BANDAI VISUAL

Gasaraki was overlooked by many not just because of how closely it was released to Evangelion, but how similar some of the story concepts were. Think Evangelion meets Patlabor. There's no magical AT field or alien phenomena to explain away the technological wonders — the mechs in this series, called TAs (Tactical Armour), are the result of a new engineering process that integrates the control interface of a bipedal vehicle with the transmission, effectively equipping them with a man-made nervous system.

TEARING THE SHREDS

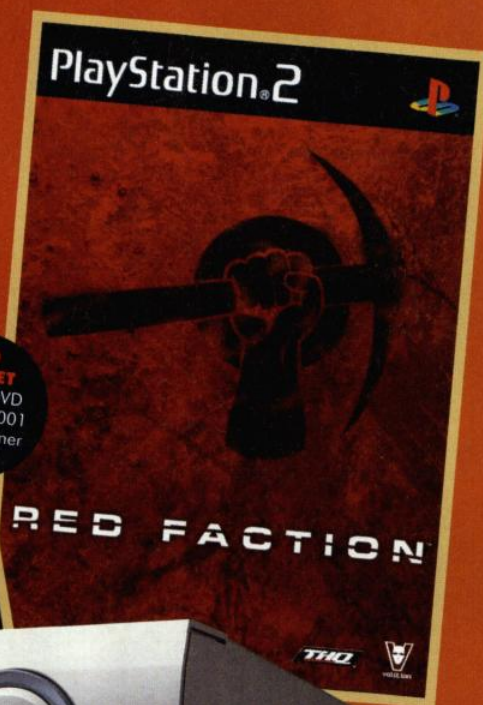
Getting the pilots to synchronise with these machines is only a tiny aspect of the story, though. Gasaraki is a politically charged story, where the development of the TAs has coincided with the onset of a NATO-sanctioned military campaign against the Middle Eastern nation of Belgistan. The US-led NATO forces end up getting creamed,

badly, and Japan sees this as its opportunity to showcase the TAs and become a new military force — only it turns out Belgistan is equipped with similar bipedal technology.

The pace of Gasaraki is slower than usual — more like Patlabor — but the time is spent building up all of the background information that's required to understand the implications of every action in the conflict. The preparation pays off beautifully in every action scene, as the TAs tear the shreds out of all comers and scares the living crap out of the US.

The supernatural angle is that the central pilot, Yushiro (the Shinji equivalent), may bring about a globally significant disaster if he allows himself to be used to full effect as a test subject. This is communicated to him by Miharu (the Rei equivalent) through the astral plane. It's an antithesis to the rationalities of the politics and technical lingo, which sometimes feels out of place.

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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

PS2 MOVIES

Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance - The biggest RPG series on PC is making its way to the PlayStation 2 in an all-new incarnation. Check out this awesome movie that features actual gameplay.

Twisted Metal Black - The Twisted Metal series is back! This PS2 instalment of the series features all new weapons, vehicles and some incredibly destructible environments. This movie shows off some furious action, as well as a transformer vehicle.

Soul Reaver 2 - Kain continues his legacy on the PS2. More gothic third person action adventuring than you can shake a dead ghoul at.

Red Faction - THQ and Volition are bringing the world this interesting new first-person shooter that features the unique Geomod engine. Check out the amazing scenes in this trailer for the PS2 version of Red Faction.

PC MOVIES

Arcanum - This mixes sword and sorcery style RPGing with modern weapons and technology for a bizarre brew of adventuring.

Half-Life: Blue Shift - It's due any day now, so take a look at why you'll want to play through the Half-Life world again... this time as a Security Guard!

GeForce 3 tech demo - Here's another short tech-demo that displays how well the GeForce 3 can render on the fly. And to think that the Xbox has this technology in its graphics chip. Yowza!

DREAMCAST MOVIE

Confidential Mission - This Mission Impossible style action game is just around the corner for the Dreamcast, and it looks like a hell of a lot of fun.

Utilities

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RED FACTION

TWISTED METAL BLACK

SOUL REAVER 2

HALF-LIFE: BLUE SHIFT

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hyperactive 3.1

EEEE3!

By the time you read this, the biggest E3 in years will have been and gone, Cam will be back in the office and there will be no shutting him up. Well, there is one way, but since that whole gaffer tape debacle last time, Eliot has banned any disciplinary use of office stationary. Oh well, it was good while it lasted... Since I had to write this before E3 had started, here is my premonition of things to come* -

NINTENDO - Nintendo announce their new 'pikachustation,' which will include a 75cm Super Holographic Inference Table for true 3-D graphics. The top of Pikachu's head lifts up for the insertion of the games, which have now reverted to the classic Commodore 64 tapes. The console is apparently switched on and off by kicking Pikachu in the balls.

MICROSOFT - The Xbox was remarkably nowhere to be seen at the show, Microsoft instead chose to focus on their new release of the top-secret update of Windows, titled 'Microsoft Windows X'. They also announced that they were currently in legal negotiations with Extreme sports around the world for their use of the letter 'X', which Microsoft now own eggslusive rights to.

SONY - Sony attracted the largest crowd, as instead of a true spokesperson, they had one of their 3rd-gen electronic pets making statements and taking questions. It was going wonderfully until one of the execs put Klonoa 2 on the display screen and 'Aibo-3' went rabid and had to be put down.

SEGA - Who?

*Any relation to actual events is entirely accidental. For the full rundown on E3 2001, bookmark www.hyperactive.com.au now! While you're there, join our new mailing list!!!

Bryce McDonough
Hyperactive Producer
brycem@next.com.au



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Game Demos

LEGENDS OF MIGHT AND MAGIC

3DO • Required: PII-300, 64MB, 3D Card
Legends of Might and Magic takes you on a dark journey of struggle and conquest. In order to succeed, you must team up with other adventurers to halt the advancement of the opposing legion and rewrite history.

CLIVE BARKER'S UNDYING

Electronic Arts • Required: PII-350, 64MB, 3D Card
Bringing his unique talent and vision to PC gaming, Clive Barker's Undying is a first person shooter that delivers an unparalleled tale of horror.

F/A-18 KOREA GOLD

Graphic Simulations • Required: PII-233, 64MB, 3D Card
Destroy enemy air defense, maintain air superiority, support ground units and destroy hostile aircraft. Take the challenge of this award-winning flight sim.

HOSTILE WATERS: ANTAEUS RISING

Interplay • Required: PII-233, 64MB, 3D Card
Players make decisions from within the carrier in the manner of a traditional real-time strategy game, then, enter their actual units for some third-person mayhem!

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND! COUNTER-STRIKE V1.1

The Counter-Strike mod is the most popular online game at the moment. We've included the full 1.1 download for you here, so you can jump right in and get stuck into the action. Play as either a terrorist or counter-terrorist on a series of awesome maps, and train yourself to be the ultimate soldier. Requires Half-Life. Visit www.counter-strike.net for further information.

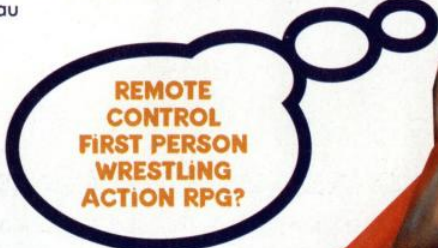
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FORUM

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

Q. ARE THERE ANY ORIGINAL GAMES IDEAS LEFT? GIVE US ONE!



With unimaginative sequels becoming the order of the day and game budgets rivalling movies, who will have the guts to innovate? We're glad to see our readers are capable of some intelligent, original 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...



"MY MOST MEMORABLE GAMING MOMENT WAS?"

Responses will be printed in Hyper 95.

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.

IT'S ALL ABOUT...

Of course there are original game ideas left. The question really is: are there any INNOVATIVE and ENJOYABLE game ideas left, and if so, are they viable for development?

Just because a game is unique and original, doesn't necessarily mean it's good at all. Strange concepts can often lead gamers to feel unsatisfied and perplexed by their gaming experience. I mean, does anyone WANT pay \$100 for a BOWLING game? I think not.

Gamers can be subconsciously wary of games that "push boundaries" or offer "unique gaming concepts". A game that is both original AND enjoyable can often be a financial failure.

Games like Jet Set Radio, which offers an addictive and ultimately satisfying experience, received rave reviews from the vast majority of the gaming press. Yet when it came to actual sales, it was a nightmare. It barely caused a ripple in Japan, and while it was fairly well received in the Western world, didn't sell like it SHOULD have. Sure, retail sales are a poor indicator of quality, but when it comes to the crunch, profit makes or breaks development houses.

These two factors mean that there will be less games that are truthfully

unique, as developers often shy away from risky ventures. But is this that much of a problem? In recent years, gaming has not evolved in leaps and bounds, but through the constant fine-tuning of traditional game concepts and ideas. Innovation and originality can be found WITHIN "tried-and-true" gaming genres, and don't necessarily have to come from totally unique gaming concepts.

Really, we shouldn't care if games are original or not. In the end, there is only one gaming concept that needs to be included in a game - FUN. And that's all that really matters, right?

Regards,
Evapilot
Evapilot2000@hotmail.com

PLATFORMING HELL

To answer your question simply, no there aren't. The main changes to these old style games is the technology! Have a look at the Mario games from beginning to now. It started off with Mario Bros - a platformer. Then Super Mario Bros 1 to 3 - platformer, Super Mario World 1 & 2 - platformer, Mario 64 - platformer, and with my powers to see



into the future, Mario Gamecube - let me see, YES IT WILL PROBABLY BE ANOTHER PLATFORMER! They might all be different, but they will always be PLATFORM games, not that there is anything wrong with them!

Terry Devlin
Zingbad@inet.net.au

GETTING A CLUE

Most games (no matter what technology or gimmick they use) will fall into a repetitive pattern not long after you start playing them, regardless of who or what you play as. Most single player games will eventually ask you to

perform certain tasks to open a series of doors so you can destroy something big.

Whereas the pattern most online games quickly adopt are frenzied free-for-alls, even when the developers try to inject a story into it.

This repetition makes people think there is a lack of ideas in games, but I don't think so. Instead, I think there are a lack of different genres to put



Jet Set Radio - an original concept, and fun to boot!



Homer and Apu getting it on. Would be funny if this game wasn't so rank

these ideas into. If you choose an unoriginal genre to begin with, you're going to get an unoriginal game. People who try to invent a new genre (like Peter Molyneux) are seen as visionaries only because so few developers are willing to risk something new.

I believe an entire reservoir of new game styles lies in online multi-path gaming. Take as a simple example: Online Cluedo. A whodunnit game where online players become the likes of Professor Plum and Colonel Mustard trying to unravel the mystery of who killed Miss Scarlet with the candelabra in the library. (Similar to what Bladerunner Online might be like). For online games to be story driven (not story optional) players would need to adopt stronger roles in the events being played out. In a sense, co-operative stories. A game developer would only need to create the template and the diversity of people's choices would take care of the rest.

Mat Brady
matbrady@powerup.com.au

FREAK

It is my privilege to report that there is at least one unique and innovative game idea left. This idea is of course mine, so I will not be a happy gamer if I come across it on next month's release schedule. Anyway, I now wish to introduce you to the epic masterpiece that is 'Aurora Guard'.

The game revolves around the story of Jian, a former guardian of the Outer Gate to the 7th celestial heaven. For an eternity, he was the guardian to the realm of the Creator of all life. This was until one horrifying moment when he was suddenly cast off as loyal sentry and fell to Earth as a mortal. Jian's mind overflowed with a thousand questions, but a deep sense of retribution burned inside of him. On that night, he looked up to the stars and swore that he would have revenge, even if it meant destroying the Creator himself.

To exact his vengeance, Jian must make his way to the 7th Heaven itself. Like an onion, many layers or realms surround the planet. The Earth is considered the 1st Heaven, as it belongs to the elemental Earth life forms (Mountains, rock etc.) who move far too slow for humans to notice. These Heavens or realms then follow the order of Wind, Water, Fire, Darkness (referred to as Hell), Divinity (Heaven) and finally, the realm of the Creator, to which no other has ever been. Each realm has its own guardians and is not easily traversed.

The problem Jian faces is that to reach the Heavens, he must be divine. To achieve this, he must literally conquer the world and declare himself Emperor of the Earth realm. Once this is done, he must then fight his way through the Heavens and confront the Creator himself. Ultimately, in this time of magic, Jian is the proverbial 'Bad Guy'.

With regard to the game, it shall be a genre all of its own. I will not settle for a stereotyped clone or fragmented mix of quality titles. As it is completely new, it cannot be described as a mix of Game A and Game B. Indeed, this original idea may well be the only one left, so don't let me find you cashing in on it.

Will Barnes
Auroraguard@hotmail.com

FREAK #2

Good day Hyper dudes,

After long thought, and many hours on the toilet, I have come up with the ONLY game that hasn't been made yet.

Ok, you are a clan of mushrooms that wear Viking helmets and you have fairy jars of pickles. But then one day the evil outer-space mushrooms, come to earth and

challenge you to a "BLOTZ" game. BLOTZ resembles soccer except there are 5 goals to hit on each side. There is an option to control 5 mushies at once but that will be for the pros. Now when your team scores a goal, a magical jar of pebbles appears in the middle of the field. Now you have to control a mushroom to grab those pebbles, and run out of the stadium and go to a grandmother shop over the other side of town. You have to control him as well as your team as they defend your goals. Once you reach the edge of town the grandmother gives you a magical jar of beans. You must rush back to the oval with them and when your mushroom gets there he must eat the beans.

So while you're running back you have to control your team as well making the game very exciting and tension filled. Once your little mushroom eats the beans he turns into a beanstalk. Now the next time you score a goal another mushroom has to do the same until all your little mushrooms turn into a stalk and that's when they can grab the winning trophy. The game will span over 5 different regions and the title will be "Magical

Viking Mushrooms in Battle Dome 3" What do you think? Any developers want this game they have to pay me. :)
Bakookie
Phlattum@hotmail.com

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE \$\$\$

If you'd like a game concept, then how about this... The game is called "Fate" and like Shenmue, it's like an adventure game set in the real world, except there is no objective other than to stay alive. Basically, you wake up in the morning, and little do you know but you could die any minute of the day, from a pot falling on your head in the street, to a car careening off the street and hitting you on the sidewalk, to a poisoned hamburger at the local shops. You walk your character around and do stuff, with the aim of going to work and getting home (kind of like The Sims, yet it looks like Shenmue and plays like Game and Watch), but you're constantly getting killed and "learning" what to do when to avoid "fate". If the action level is kept high (like jumping away from cars, avoiding sudden earthquakes) the game could be entertaining, and funny!

Big Bro
Big_slig_bro@hotmail.com



Black & White puts a new spin on an old concept

MAIL



HYPER LETTERS:

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

MAC DADDY

Dear Hyper,
Even though the title probably does anything but attract attention, there might be one or two people who own a Mac out there, so bear with me. I own a Mac, a 64 and a PC, (an iBook 4,66 and a Pentium something 600) and I use the Mac more. No, I'm not one of those biased people who thinks either Mac or PC are the only good formats, I like both. I use the Mac more because it's my computer of choice. And to all those people who think PCs rock and Macs suck, how can Macs suck if PC games are continually being ported for Mac? Though PCs are definitely more popular, and at least half of the people who read this if this gets printed at all will ask "What's a Macintosh?"

How come you guys don't review Mac games anymore? About two years ago, in 1999, Macs had NO decent new games coming out. It was the Mac gaming drought of 1999. Now there are more games than ever coming out for Mac. I have been driven to believe

after years of searching, that I am probably one of the only people who believe Macs are equal to PCs.

ZegranoZegis
james@home.lyppard.com.au

Dear ZegranoZegis (ahem), Hyper is made using Macs, so we certainly appreciate the magic of the Mac. As for reviewing Mac games, well, the games come out on PC first and we review them when they're first released. In the rare case that something debuts on Mac first, then we would review it on Mac first.

GAME GEAR

Dear Hyper Crew,
Lately, Hyper magazine has had a few articles about Game Boy Advance. The GBA is going to rock our world! The WOW-O-Meter is almost off the scale. Allow me to propose a reality check for you guys and may I suggest you get a techie-guy in to fix that so called wow-o-meter, because I strongly believe it's

either busted or it needs an upgrade! Now before you start wondering what this 27yr old gaming freak is on about, let me remind you we are living in the year 2001, the technology the GBA sports was available to us nearly two decades ago! Mind you, no thanks to the Pokémon merchants but good old Sega. Of course I'm referring to the Game Gear, which was just about equal to a Sega Megadrive, a TV and a powerpoint in your pocket. Fair enough, at the time all this was too expensive to make it into everyone's pockets, so it ended up a failure. Now, seeing GBA emerge - which in my opinion is nothing more but a reverse engineered Sega Game Gear sporting Super Nintendo games, minus a TV of course and without the sexy curves Game Gear had.

Okay, it has the favourite Super Nintendo games we all loved to play at the time but these days who would want to pay more than \$20 for the unit and more than \$5 per game. No doubt we the consumers will be expected to pay something like \$40 to \$50 per cartridge for this new gadget but let me say again - we live in the year 2001! Nintendo should be manufacturing mobile phones with their games incorporated into them, that way you wouldn't need to worry about link cables and such.

Now before I pop a vein in my forehead, you all have a nice day!

Tiborian
Tiborian@bigpond.com

Hey Tiborian, Our eyes got all watery and our bottom lip quivery when we saw you mention the Sega Game Gear. Memories! Although, I think your glasses are a little rose-coloured, my friend.

NUR NUR!

Let's skip the great magazine lark and get to the point. I am the proud owner of a Game-boy Advance. How very



You could play your Sega Master System games on the Game Gear using an adaptor. Funky.

convenient that only two days before I arrived in Japan, for a year-long exchange program, the GBA was released. How should I put this? IT'S BLOODY MARVOLOUS! Almost no movement blur, reasonable sound, enlarged screen, and best of all, when low on batteries, the "on" light changes from green to red! Yay! However I'm a little disappointed at Mario Advance, it's only a port of Mario 2 (NES) and the original Mario game (nostalgia-high, new game-not). Did you know the GBA games are half the size of normal GB ones? (how do the fit all that crap inside?). Chu Chu Rocket is a hit, especially with its multiplayer and create-a-stage menus... And I'm yet to see the Silent Hill cut scenes in motion (I've ran out of money, dam you Magical World! [name of shop] and your enormous selection of games, some I've never even heard of), but the adds look good. So please send all cash donations to the "so many games, so little money" fund for me to the following address...

Samuel
NEWSO@Bigpond.com.au

Hey Samuel, No begging for more games or money in the pages of Hyper. That's our job!

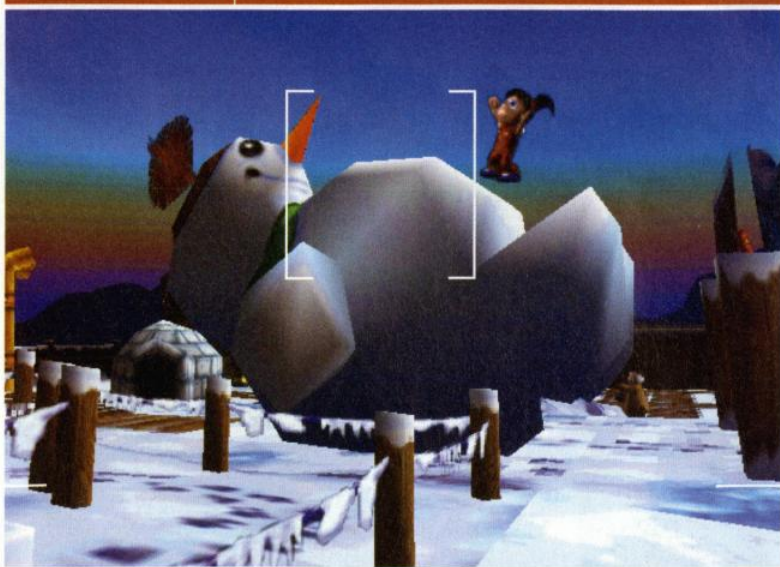
SOUNDS GOOD

Hello peoples at Hyper,
Until recently I haven't been interested in the Game Boy Advance at all. The thing that changed my interest

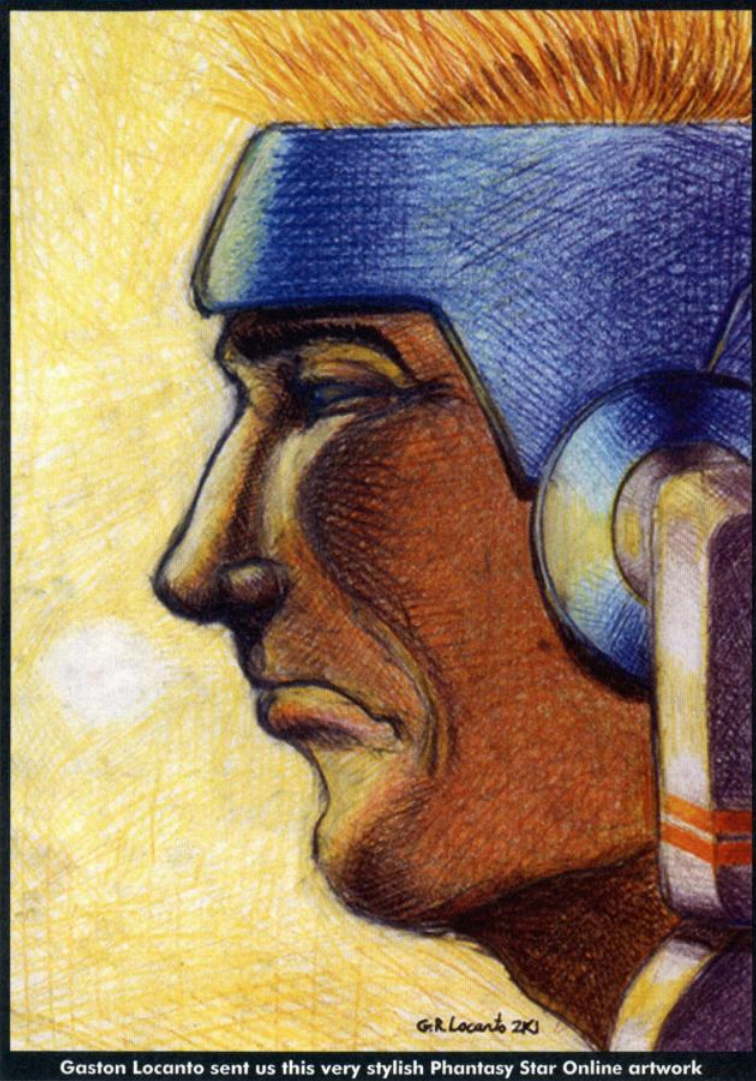
CAPTION THIS!

PART 18 WINNER

Hyper reader, Keith Stevens, from Runaway Bay in Queensland is our winner this month with his chucklesome entry.



"Going by the smile on FROSTY'S face, she's just found his south pole!"



Gaston Locanto sent us this very stylish Phantasy Star Online artwork

was the first pictures of Tony Hawk 2 on the system. I can't believe that something of that quality can be done on a handheld system. I was wondering if you have any information on the "sound" aspect of the system? I can't really imagine the GBA being able to deliver. And if it could, then the cartridge would have a lot of capacity. Do you have any info on the capacity of the cartridge? Any information would help as I haven't really found any comments on the quality of the sound.

Boyer
S_boyle_r@hotmail.com

*Mister Boyler,
The sound capabilities of the GBA far exceed that of the Game Boy Color, but they are not console quality. You could probably compare it to the Super Nintendo in the sound department, but just read our hands-on feature this issue (page 16). It's still very much blips and blops.*

KEEP UP THE...

To Hyper,
I've only just started getting Hyper and already I think it's a kick arse

mag!! I just wanted to ask a few questions:

1. What do I get out of subscribing?
2. Can you put a Warcraft III demo on one of the issues?
3. Out of interest, what do you do with the crap games that you get (for example, Simpsons Wrestling)? Or do you just hire them?

Keep up the good mag, it makes my boring life of playing crap games on the computer and reading hopeless magazines (my sister's TV Hits and my nan's Women's Weekly) much more interesting.

Charbel Arm
canlus@yahoo.com
p.s. Keep up the.

- Dear Charbel,
Don't we'll make sure we keep up the.*
1. *What do you get? Let me put it this way... if you buy 12 issues of Hyper at the shops over the course of one year, it costs you \$83.40. If you subscribe, you'll get the same 12 issues for \$50. Like we say - do the math! You may also win whatever the cool prize is the month you subscribe.*
 2. *When the Warcraft III demo is released, well give it to ya.*
 3. *We get sent lots of crap games, yeah.*

THE PLEASURE OF PS2

It is unfortunate that the nature of things is such that the complainers in life are more vocal than those that are content. It can give people a misleading impression when the majority of letters that I have seen in your magazine are from people complaining about the state of affairs with the PS2. So either no-one is happy with their PS2, you don't receive letters from the people that are happy with the PS2, or you just don't publish them.

The complaints include PS2 hardware problems, the quality of the current software, having to pay for a DVD when you already own one, and the lack of internet connectivity. I have owned a PS2 since the launch date and would like to give the other side of the coin.

As for hardware problems, like the bouncing effect and scratching of DVDs and CDs, I can say that I have had no problems with my PS2. Admittedly, I am only one user, but we shouldn't give potential owners the impression that all PS2 owners have had hardware problems.

Regarding software, I can certainly agree that the current software is a little disappointing. A lot of the disappointment is due to such a high expectation. High-end PC owners expected to see PC quality graphics and speed. Dreamcast owners expected better graphics than what they were seeing on their consoles. However, as you have commented in Hyper, the quality of the software is bound to improve. Software for EVERY console improves over time.

Regarding DVD, I for one would have been extremely disappointed had the PS2 not included a DVD drive. Not so much for the movie playback, which incidentally I am very happy with, but the fact that DVD has a much larger storage capacity. Being able to store over 8GB (about 12 standard CDs) on a single side of a DVD will mean that multi-disk games will be eliminated (for some time at least). It should also mean that games will be less linear (particularly when they used to be on 4 CDs).

Regarding the lack of internet connectivity, I certainly look forward to the ability to play PS2 games over the internet, but it takes time to set up the infrastructure for online play. I am glad that a 56K modem was not included with the PS2 at the expense of delaying the PS2 launch further. Internet connectivity was included with the Dreamcast (all-be-it poorly), and it did not help the Dreamcast here in Australia in the slightest. We are still a fair way off broadband availability and affordability here in Oz, so I believe a future add-on for the PS2 was the best way to go.

Anyway, that's just by 2 bob's worth.
Ahhhhh. I feel better now.
Michael.
Mjmorgan@tpgi.com.au

*Dear Michael,
I must say that the PS2s we have used have not had the problems that some readers have very aggressively complained about. Not to say that their problems don't exist, but it's easy to get carried away with negativity, especially when that's all people are hearing about. Maybe there was a bad batch of PS2s there somewhere. Fact is, we're also having lots of fun with our PS2 (Devil May Cry, Onimusha, Red Faction, Kengo, Starfighter...).*
Until next issue...



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

What do we do with them? Frisbee wars, coffee coasters, or give them to the needy. Which is not you guys, so don't ask.

HALO TO ALL

Hi all at Hyper

Sweet mag. I have attached a picture I like to call "explosive diarrhea" now on to the serious stuff. I proudly own a Dreamcast and recently read your article on how Sega is going to become a SOFTWARE only company in issue 90. I am a FPS fan as well, but the games line up you gave in the article about Dreamcast didn't feature any FPSs. So I flicked through some more pages and encountered your insight of HALO, drool, drool. This game looked and sounded so good I just had to have it, it was made by my favourite games designer "BUNGIE" (who have also made other sweet as games like marathon 1 & 2, Infinity and Damage Incorporated). So I started doing some serious thinking and I have some questions to ask:

1. Should I buy an Xbox and Halo,

and stick with my Dreamcast? Or buy it for my i-Mac 400mhz/128MB RAM/10GB/G3 computer?

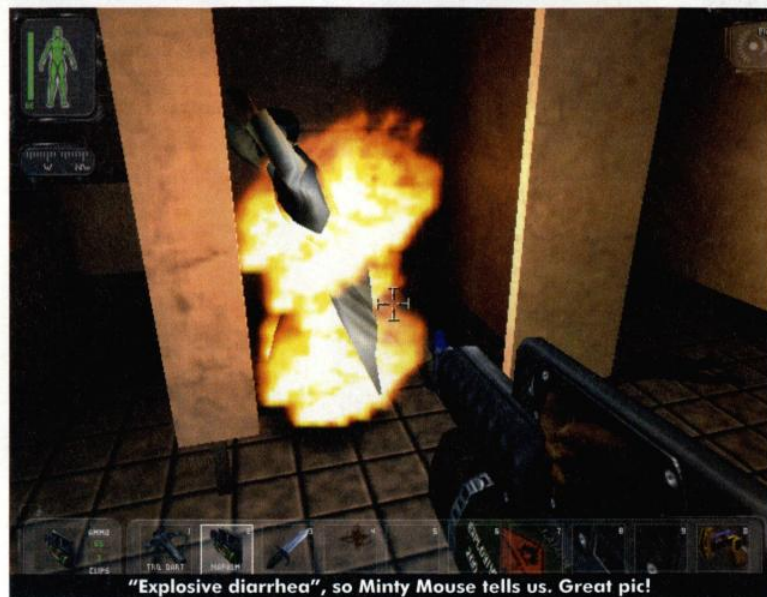
2. I'm going to stick with my Dreamcast till the time comes to decide and I'm going to buy Half-Life, so when will Half-Life be coming to the Dreamcast in Australia and New Zealand?

3. Can you make a really small portion of your Hyper CD contain some Mac demos as well as some PC demos, because I'm sick of all this PC crap.

Thanks
MINTY MOUSE

Dear Mr. Mouse,
Wow, one of many Mac users writing to us this issue. Egads!

1. If you think you can stick it out with Dreamcast until March 2002, then it's certainly an option. Halo on Xbox will rock, but we won't be able to buy it until then. Halo on Mac will be an even longer wait - possibly Christmas 2002 - and by then there is no way it would run on the iMac you have. If you badly want Halo, get an Xbox.



"Explosive diarrhea", so Minty Mouse tells us. Great pic!

2. Half-Life: Blue Shift for Dreamcast seems to have vanished from our schedules, which means it's possible that it won't get an Australian release thanks to the poor sales of the Dreamcast and the recent Sega announcement. It is still scheduled for PC in June. Argh!!!
3. Hmmm, maybe we'll have to reconsider this one...

SOMEONE WITH BRAINS

Hey Guys/Gals,

I'd like to raise a very interesting point on the present view towards future console gaming. Have you folks noticed how the focus (in the last 1-2 years) has changed from being which game is going to be the 'best', or 'the one to own', to being which console is 'best', or the 'one to own'?

Now this is somewhat of a double-edged sword here. On one side we have the positive and beneficial, competition side of things, where console developers are trying to out do each other in terms of putting out the best console and equipment for their console. However, the darkside of the double-edged sword is where consumers boycott buying certain consoles simply because they have been persuaded that, "it is the least new/powerful/flash/whatever console" hence, it is no good. Look at the Dreamcast and Sega for example, an unfortunate example, for as we all know, the Dreamcast is very powerful, capable of putting out exceptional graphics and extremely good games. But many a person did not buy it simply because they were persuaded that the Xbox/PS2/Gamecube(oblong) will be more powerful, and hence, better. Perhaps this is a bit narrow focussed,

but it is applicable to most cases.

My conclusion is that gamers need to stop saying "I'm not buying an Xbox, it's only a black PC-case laid on its side" or "the PS2 has crappy DVD that I didn't want to pay for" or even "the Gamecube looks like Barbie's lunchbox", and should perhaps be saying to each other "DAMN! Halo is gonna be good, on both Xbox and PC." And "Metal Gear Solid 2 WILL be the best game ever, how awesome does it look?" and "Hey, there's gonna be a Zelda on the Gamecube(oblong). Jeez, I'm gonna have to get my hands on that!!"

Fair enough, the people out there that can afford a PS2, Gamecube, Dreamcast AND Xbox are certainly a minority, and it is perhaps fair that most people will only buy 1, maybe 2 of the next/now generation consoles. But for the good of gaming's sake, don't buy a console based on its specs, or hype, or brand, or something else superficial like that, buy it based on the games it will have.

That's my opinion anyway. What do you folks at Hyper think?

Trevor Smith
Lightning Ridge, NSW

P.S. Have Sony slated a price drop for the PS2 any time soon?

Hey there Trevor,
What do we think? We think you're a wise, wise man. Listen to this guy, people. As for the PS2 price drop, well, you may have noticed there has been a "temporary" drop to \$699 in most stores. We may find that this "temporary" drop proves to be good for sales and that it quickly becomes the new permanent price point.

Harvey Norman

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HH4

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price PC Games

(>\$29.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↑ The Sims House Party	Strategy
2	↓ Black & White	Strategy
3	↑ The Sims Ltd Ed	Strategy
4	↓ The Sims	Strategy
5	↑ The Sims Livin' Large	Add On
6	↔ Quake 3 Arena	Action
7	↓ Sim City 3000 Unlimited	Strategy
8	↓ Sim Mania Pack	Strategy
9	⊛ Sim Mania For Kids	Strategy
10	⊛ Cmm'd & Cnqr Red Alert 2	Strategy

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price PlayStation Games

(>\$39.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↑ Time Crisis Project Titan	Action
2	⊛ Driver 2/Colin McRae 2	Racing
3	↓ Final Fantasy IX	RPG
4	↑ The Emperor's New Groove	Adventure
5	↑ Rugrats In Paris	Adventure
6	↓ Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Sports
7	↑ Crash Bash	Adventure
8	⊛ Buzz Lightyear Star Cmm'd	Platform
9	↓ Spyro 3 Year Of The Dragon	Platform
10	↓ Driver 2	Racing

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price N64 Games

(>\$39.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↑ Pokemon Stadium 2	Action
2	⊛ Winnie & Tigger Honey Hunt	Platform
3	↓ Pokemon Stadium	Action
4	↓ Bond: TWINE	Action
5	↓ Banjo Toobie	Platform
6	↓ Zelda: Majora's Mask	RPG
7	↓ Mario Tennis	Sports
8	↓ Star Wars Battle For Naboo	Action
9	↓ Mario Kart 64	Racing
10	↔ Super Mario 64	Platform

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price Dreamcast Games

(>\$49.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	⊛ House Of The Dead 2	Action
2	⊛ Zombie Revenge	Action
3	⊛ Casper Friends Around The World	Adventure
4	⊛ Soul Calibur	Action
5	⊛ Sega Rally 2	Racing
6	⊛ Virtua Fighter 3 Tb	Action
7	⊛ Metropolis Street Racer	Racing
8	↓ Virtua Tennis	Sports
9	⊛ NBA 2000	Sports
10	⊛ Le Mans	Racing

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price PS2 Games

(>\$49.95 inc. GST)

Position	Game Title	Game Type
1	↔ Star Wars Starfighter	Action
2	↑ Quake III	Action
3	↔ Moto GP	Sports
4	↓ SSX	Sports
5	↓ Tekken Tag Tournament	Action
6	↑ Z.O.E	Adventure
7	⊛ Dynasty Warriors 2	Action
8	⊛ FIFA 2001	Sports
9	↓ Ridge Racer V	Racing
10	↓ FI Championship Season	Racing

Top 10 Best Selling Full Price Games - All Formats

Position	Game Title	Format
1	⊛ Pokemon Stadium 2	N64
2	↓ Donkey Kong Country	Game Boy
3	⊛ The Sims House Party	PC/MAC
4	↓ Pokemon Gold	Game Boy
5	↓ Super Mario Brothers Dlx	Game Boy
6	↓ Pokemon Silver	Game Boy
7	⊛ Time Crisis Project Titan	PlayStation
8	↓ Warioland 3	Game Boy
9	↓ Black & White	PC/MAC
10	↓ Mario Tennis	Game Boy

NEXT ISSUE

Hyper 94 >>> On sale June 27

THE GAMES OF 2002!

Hyper takes a look into the future and reveals all the hot games you'll soon be playing on all the systems. Brand new games revealed! Don't miss this massive special!

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**ALONE IN
THE DARK 4:
THE NEW
NIGHTMARE**

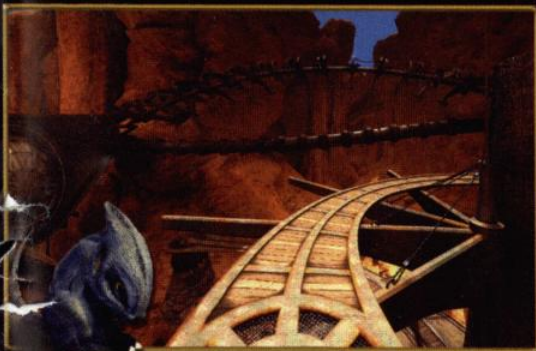
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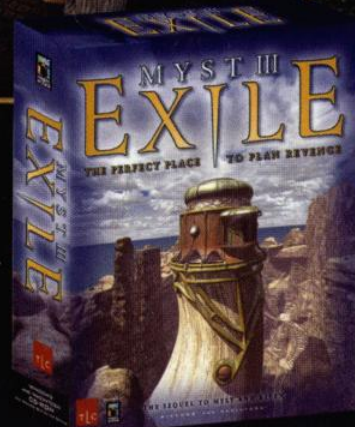
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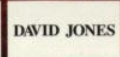
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