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ISSUE 100
FEBRUARY 2002

HYPER

SPECIAL EDITION



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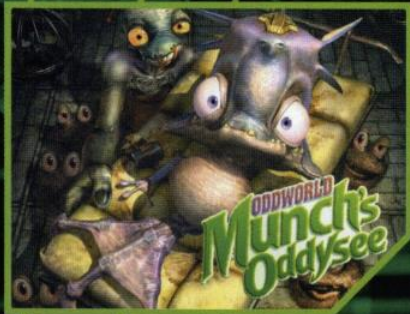
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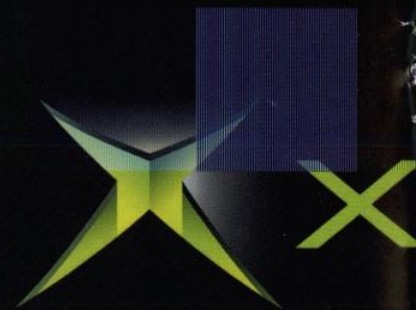
- Wipeout Fusion
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- Castle Wolfenstein
- Pro Evolution Soccer
- The Sims: Hot Date
- Cricket 2002 • Rez
- Smuggler's Run 2
- 007 Agent Under Fire
- Jak & Daxter • Wizardry 8

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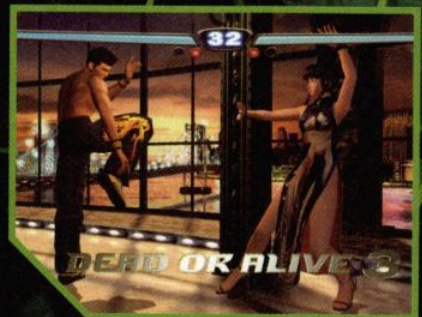
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AHEAD OF

COOPY GOTH



XBOX™

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CONTENTS

16 Hyper Origins

Just who the hell are we anyway?



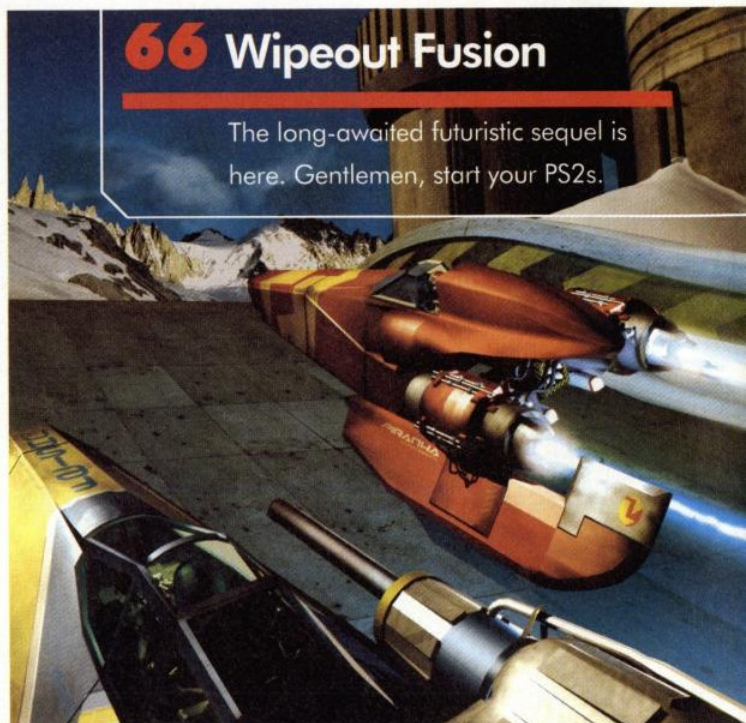
46 The Ultimate Top 100

The best games on all platforms, plus a few other 100th issue musings.

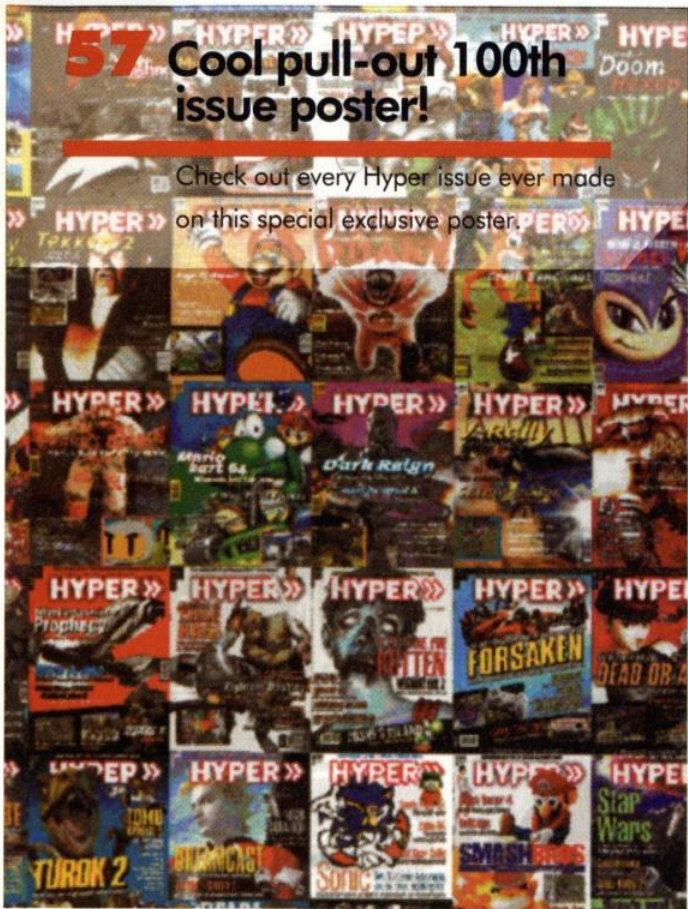
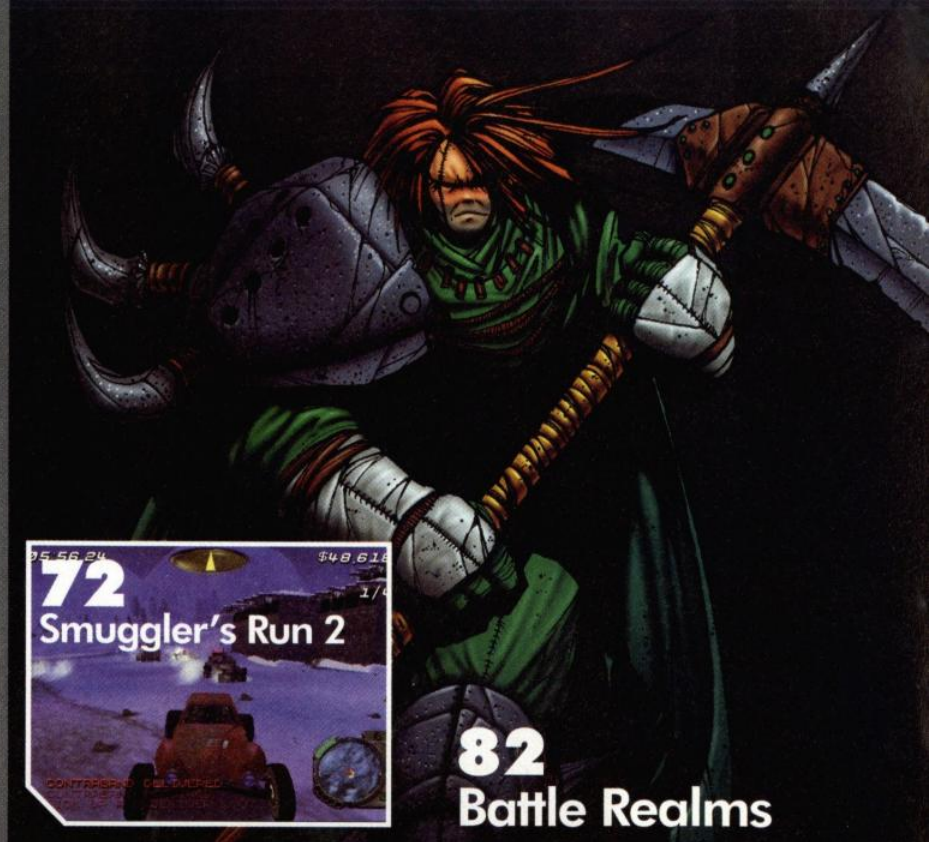


66 Wipeout Fusion

The long-awaited futuristic sequel is here. Gentlemen, start your PS2s.

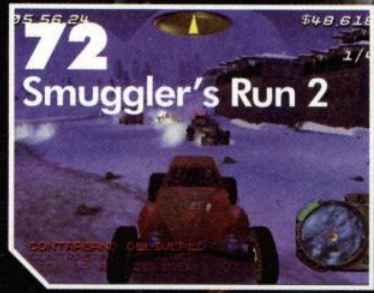


ITS



57 Cool pull-out 100th issue poster!

Check out every Hyper issue ever made on this special exclusive poster.



72 Smuggler's Run 2

82 Battle Realms

42 100th issue prize pack



Win a wobbly mountain of games, the most we've ever given away... ever!

2. It's a good excuse to ignore homework.

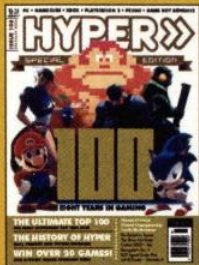
- 08 EDITORIAL
- 10 NEWS
- 16 EYE CANDY
Gorgeousness from Ico and Jedi Outcast.
- 16 HYPER ORIGINS
Past, present and future...
- 28 IN SIGHT
Maximo, Unreal Championship, Master of Orion 3, plus plenty more
- 38 NET TRAWLIN'
Magic the Gathering Online
- 42 WIN WIN WIN
- 46 ULTIMATE TOP 100
More top tens than you can point a joystick at.
- 57 POSTER
- 62 REVIEWS
- 91 ARCADE MODE
- 80 GAME BOY ADVANCE
- 94 REVERSE ENGINEERING
A history of early PC gaming.
- 98 HYPERVISION
- 102 MUSIC
- 104 SUBSCRIPTIONS
- 106 HYPER FORUM
- 108 MAIL
- 113 CHARTS
- 114 NEXT ISSUE

REVIEW INDEX

- PS2**
- 64 Jak & Daxter
- 66 Wipeout Fusion
- 68 Pro Evolution Soccer
- 70 007 Agent Under Fire
- 72 Smuggler's Run 2
- 73 Dropship
- 74 World Rally Championship
- 75 Rez
- 90 Cricket 2002
- PC**
- 76 Return to Castle Wolfenstein
- 78 Aliens Vs Predator 2
- 80 Wizardry 8
- 82 Battle Realms
- 84 Stronghold
- 85 The Sims: Hot Date
- 86 World War III
- 87 Myth III
- 90 Championship Manager 01/02
- 90 Zoo Tycoon
- PSONE**
- 88 Worms: World Party
- GAME BOY ADVANCE**
- 92 Golden Sun
- 93 Jackie Chan Adventures
- 93 Matt Hoffman's Pro BMX



93 Jackie Chan Adventures



ISSUE
100
FEBRUARY
2002

3. You get to vent your anger on helpless virtual bad guys.

WRITE TO HYPER!

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EDITORIAL

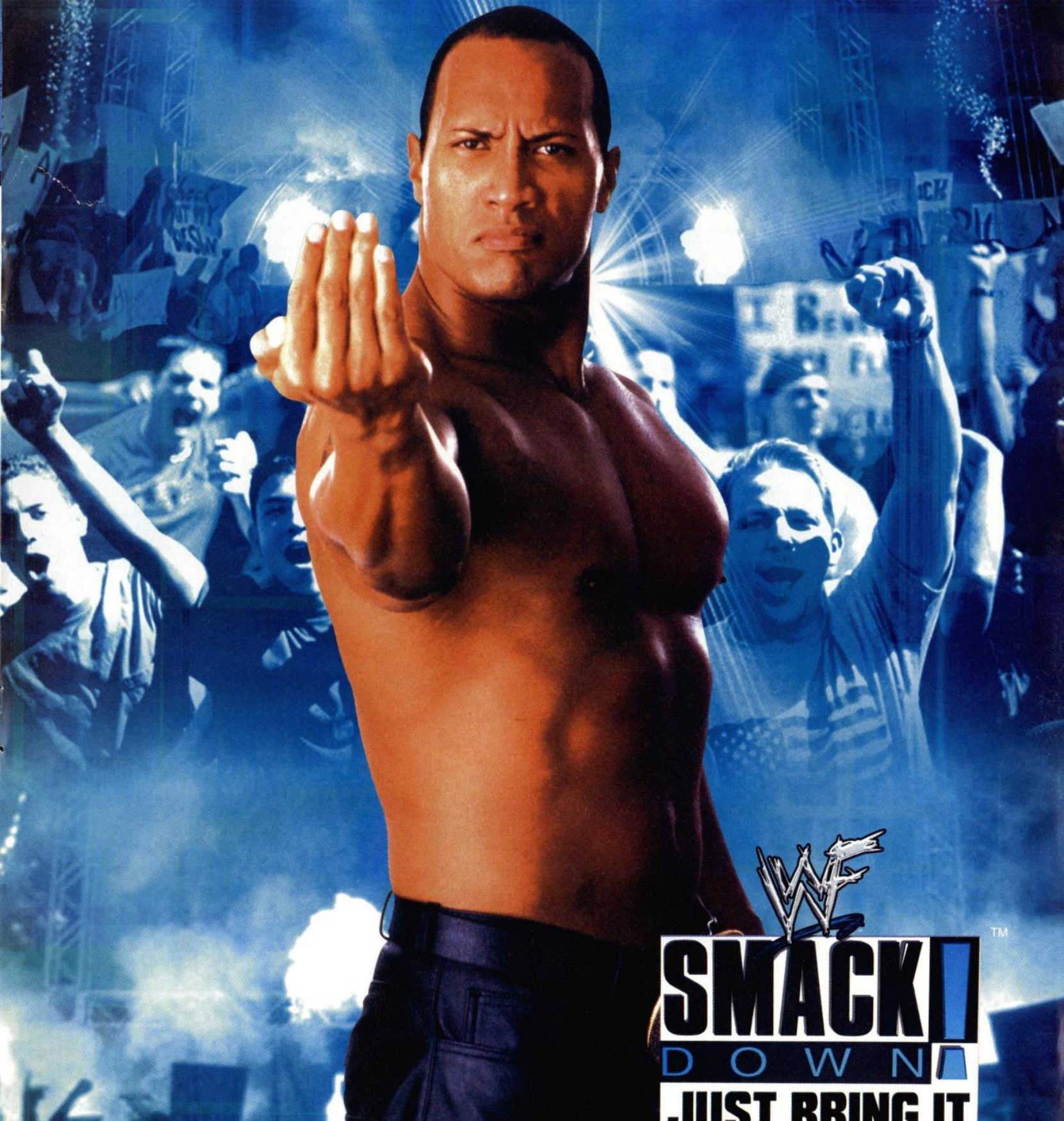
»» And you thought last issue was good! Let's just start off with some of the reviews we have this month: Wipeout Fusion, Return to Castle Wolfenstein, Jak & Daxter, Pro Evolution Soccer, Myth III, Wizardry 8, Aliens vs. Predator 2... this issue is special enough without even having to touch upon the fact that we've hit a staggering 100 issues... Wow. We made it. One hundred goddamn issues!

From humble beginnings all the way back in 1993, to this glistening age of next-gen consoles, Hyper has remained intact. We've stayed true to our duty of informing the Australian gaming public on the real deal. If something stinks, we'll say so. We've done our best to entertain, delight and make our readers laugh – we've even made captioning screenshots an art form. Collectively, we have years upon years of experience, stretching from the early Atari days to the current crop of cutting edge PC titles. Basically, we're a bunch of gaming freaks and we're proud of it! "By gamers for gamers", as the old saying goes.

Personally, I'd like to thank Stuart Clarke for creating this beast, Dan Toose for showing me the ropes and Cam and Malcolm who currently help make Hyper the special gem in the gaming landscape that it is.

Yay for us!

Eliot Fish »» Editor



WWE
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Listen up. You may think you KNOW attitude, you may think you GOT attitude but if you ain't got a PlayStation 2 then you better think again. **WWE SmackDown! Just Bring It** is available ONLY on the PlayStation 2 because nothing else can hold the sheer power of the World Wrestling Federation as up to 9 Superstars fight at once in 78 match types with the all-new commentary system hyping the crowd. Understand? Good. Then get a PlayStation 2 and **WWE SmackDown! Just Bring It** or we'll be the ones delivering attitude to your candy ass.



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Available at these and all good game retailers



4. It improves hand/eye co-ordination.

NEWS



IN THE NEWS: Aussie Xbox date and price ■ Infogrames invest locally ■ Xbox Game Art project ■ FFXI Online



Munch on Xbox: March 14



Smash Bros on GCN: April??

X marks the Box, March 14

Throw another console on the barbie! The war heats up

Microsoft recently announced the long awaited details on their Australian launch for Xbox. March 14 is the big day, and \$649 is the very surprising and fairly pleasing launch price. Many pundits expected a far higher price point considering the Xbox sports an internal hard disk and internal ethernet card, both which are pricey add-on extras for the PS2 and possibly GameCube. When you look back at the PS2 launch in Australia one year ago, the console shipped at \$799. The Xbox pricing is proof that Microsoft are going to play hard ball to obtain market share any way they can. At \$649, the Xbox is probably an acceptable price for the early adopters out there.

We've been playing Halo in the office for a good month now, and we'll bring you our big Xbox launch feature in an upcoming issue. This is one game you're going to want to have.

NINTENDO ON THE GO?

So when is the Nintendo GameCube

Both the Xbox and GameCube have been selling extremely well in the USA

launching? At the time of going to print, Nintendo Australia still couldn't give us any details. A little industry birdy tweeted in our ear and suggested it would be shortly following or preceding the Xbox launch (by 2 weeks?), but we have no solid information as of yet, despite constant pleading to Nintendo. A launch price is also a much sought after nugget of info, but at this stage, we're still guessing. \$399? \$499? If you're lucky, you guys and gals out there might find out whilst this issue is still on sale, so keep an eye and ear out for the word on Nintendo's Aussie Cube. Considering Microsoft's hardcore marketing, you'd think Nintendo would be keen to let the Australian people know that their console existed. We'll bring you all the info on dates, pricing and

launch games as soon as it's known to us. Meanwhile, we'll just play Super Smash Bros. — BLAU! Both the Xbox and GameCube have been getting flogged here in Hyper HQ.

SELLING LIKE HOT CAKES (WHATEVER THEY ARE)

Both the Xbox and GameCube have been selling extremely well in the USA, regardless of the supposed recession over there. Within the first week, both consoles sold well over 500,000 units each, with Luigi's Mansion being the highest selling software title on any platform. In total, over 810,000 games sold through for the GameCube and 1.32 million for the Xbox (as there were a larger launch line-up available for the Xbox). The software tie-in ratio (number of games sold with each single system)

for the GameCube was 1.7 (almost two games per customer) and with the Xbox it stood at 2.4 (almost three games per Xbox purchaser — the highest software tie-in ratio in the history of console games). All up, it was an extremely close race, and it seems there are enough people out there to make both consoles a success.

Within the same period, Sony PS2 sales rose 83% and the handheld market also had a big boost with the GBA seeing a 157% increase in sales, proving that those systems are also doing well thanks to a large selection of good games. They don't call this the silly season for nothing.



Halo in a Half-shell!



Stuart's concept drawings. Nice work Stu!



XBOX GAME ART PROJECT

Ten finalists in the Xbox Game Art Project crammed into a small gallery in Surry Hills in Sydney on December 10th and had their artwork strung up for appreciation from a small industry crowd. After judging over a hundred entries, these were the top ten artists vying for the big, grand prize of \$10,000!

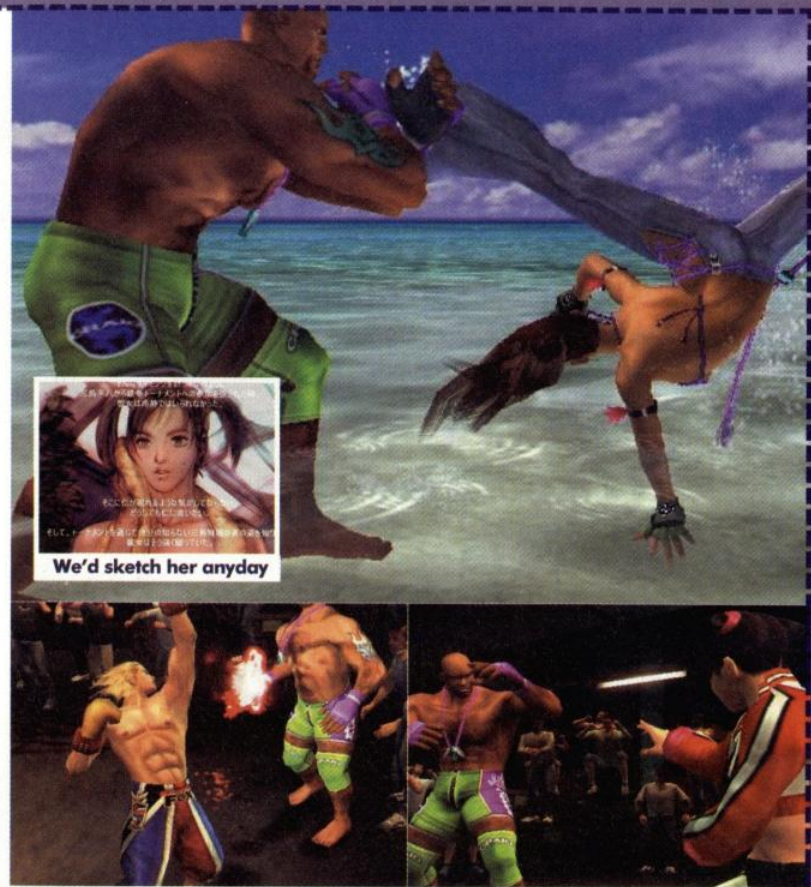
The thrilled winner was Stuart Gollan for his ECO: Recycled Robot, constructed from old soft drink caps, toys, and other bits of plastic junk. You can find out more information at www.xbox.com.au.

All the finalists received an Xbox much to their delight. Well done Stuart!



Stuart Gollan and his robot.

It justifies all the money you've spent on the hardware.



TEKKEN 4 TO BE PERFECT?

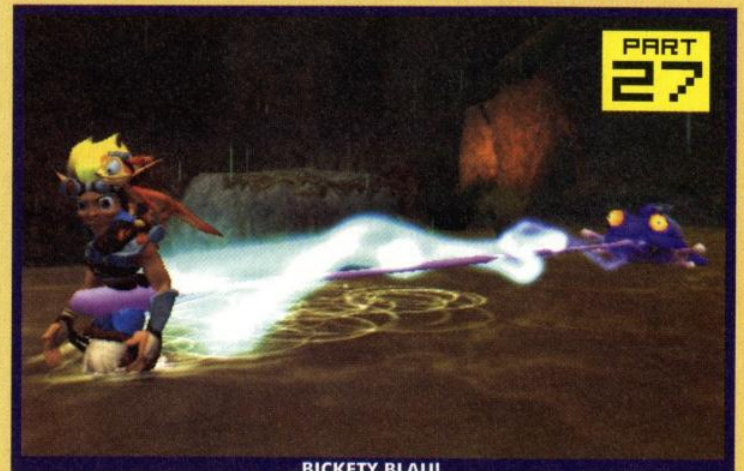
Namco have leaked a tad more information on their PS2 port of the arcade beast, Tekken 4. The game is currently about 60% complete, with the Namco technicians aiming for an arcade perfect translation.

The home conversion will have the team battle, training, and survival modes, as well as a mini-game

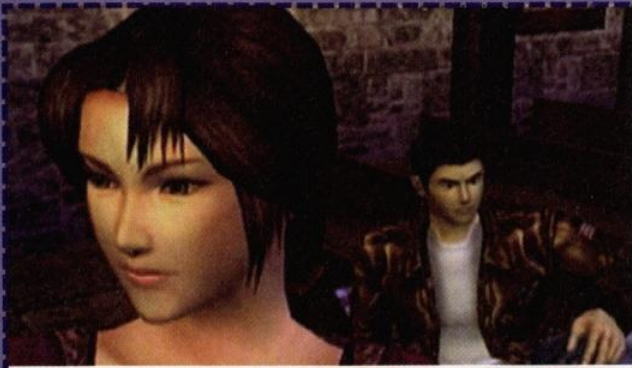
similar to Tekken Bowl (which was featured in Tekken Tag Tournament). Each character will also have a unique new introductory scene, presented in coloured pencil-sketched stills! Although, computer-generated movies will still be used for the ending sequences. The game is set for a March release in Japan.

CAPTION THIS!

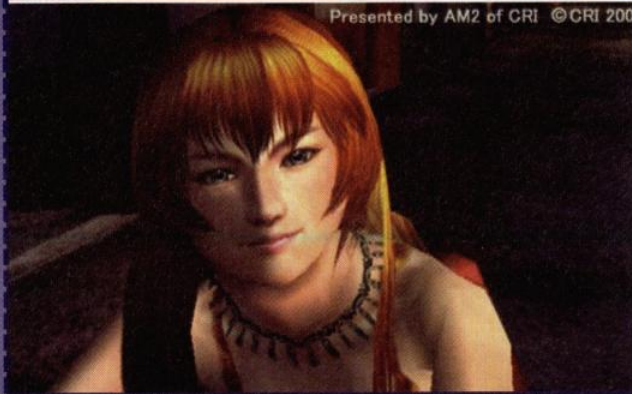
Now that Christmas is past, we're a little mopey around the old Hyper HQ. Why not brighten up our lives and entertain other readers in the process by sending in your funny screen caption? Send entries to captionthis@next.com.au, with caption this part 27 in the subject line.



BICKETY BLAU!



Presented by AM2 of CRI ©CRI 200



The Dreamcast lives on. No, really. Well, kinda.

SHENMUE II NO LONGER A DREAM

Shipping in limited numbers around the country is Shenmue II for the Dreamcast. Whilst narrowly missing our deadline this issue, we'll bring you a full review next issue. It seems that we won't need to play it on the Xbox here in Australia after all, so Dreamcast gamers rejoice for your good fortune. For a while there it was looking like we were going to be shafted once more.

MAJOR BOOST FOR LOCAL GAMES INDUSTRY

At the recent Australian Game Developer's Conference, French company and major industry player,



Infogrames, made an announcement which will have a positive impact on the local games development community. Infogrames' Chairman and CEO, Bruno Bonnell, announced that a whopping fifty million dollars was to be invested in Australasian games development. This investment is the largest by any company in the Australian development community. Infogrames have been an active player in the local development scene ever since the company acquired long standing and successful Melbourne based developer, Beam Software, renaming the company Infogrames Melbourne House.

The money will be used to fund games which will be developed in our region by companies other than Melbourne House. The funding could see the production of as many as twenty new games and will see the local industry go through a much needed growth period. This will begin during the 2002 fiscal year.

"This commitment is probably as much as is being spent on game development currently in Australia", said Adam Lancman, the CEO and Managing Director of Infogrames Melbourne House. Lancman added, "As the President of the Game Developers Association of Australia, I can say that the continued support of Government and the financial commitment of Infogrames to product development here will transform our Australian industry".

As the name implies, Infogrames Melbourne House are based in Melbourne and currently employ over ninety people. www.infogrames.com.au/imh.htm.

WINNERS HYPER» 98



THQ XBOX GIVEAWAY

Congratulations to **Maurice Branscombe of Goulburn, NSW** — you're the winner of our first Xbox! You'll be receiving an Xbox console as soon as they become available in Australia. However, honourable mentions must go out to **Shane Suleman of Victoria, Rodney Willox of Tasmania and Gael Little of South Australia** — you all sent us great entries and made it very hard to choose.



RED FACTION

Kathryn Herde, SA
Mitchel Brown, VIC
Oliver Summarsell, SA
Kris Harringer, WA
Luke McBean, NSW

KEMCO CARRYCASE

Daniel Thomas, QLD
Temo Archila, QLD
Jason Lauria, VIC
R. Bateur, NSW
Kyme Moore, NSW

MINISTRY OF SOUND PACKS

Steve Getley, NSW
M. Brady, QLD
Brett Laws, NSW
Matthew Darrie, SA
Anne Humphries, WA

DEVIL MAY CRY

Brigette Randell, SA
P. Mares, NSW
Tim Scott, SA
Paula Rapley, NSW
Cassie Rogers, QLD

OVERFLOW

OziSoft has been advised by Konami that the bonus DVD disc that comes with Silent Hill 2, called "The Making of Silent Hill 2", has been encoded with the Region 2 copy-protection code and not the Region 4 DVD code that is the standard for Australia and New Zealand. This will cause the bonus disc not to function on Region 4 only DVD players (including the PlayStation 2). However, the disc will function correctly when played on multi-region DVD players.

Customers who wish to receive a replacement Region 4 DVD disc can contact the "Making of Silent Hill 2" DVD hotline on 1800 833 311. This error does not effect the game disc.

A fishing boat deckhand playing a computer game was electrocuted when a huge wave smashed through the window of the trawler's wheelhouse off the southern Queensland coast, according to police.

Richard Wells, 19, of Innisfail, in north Queensland, was playing a Sony Playstation and sitting at a metal table when the wave smashed through the cabin glass of the trawler Arrow Sea near Fraser Island.

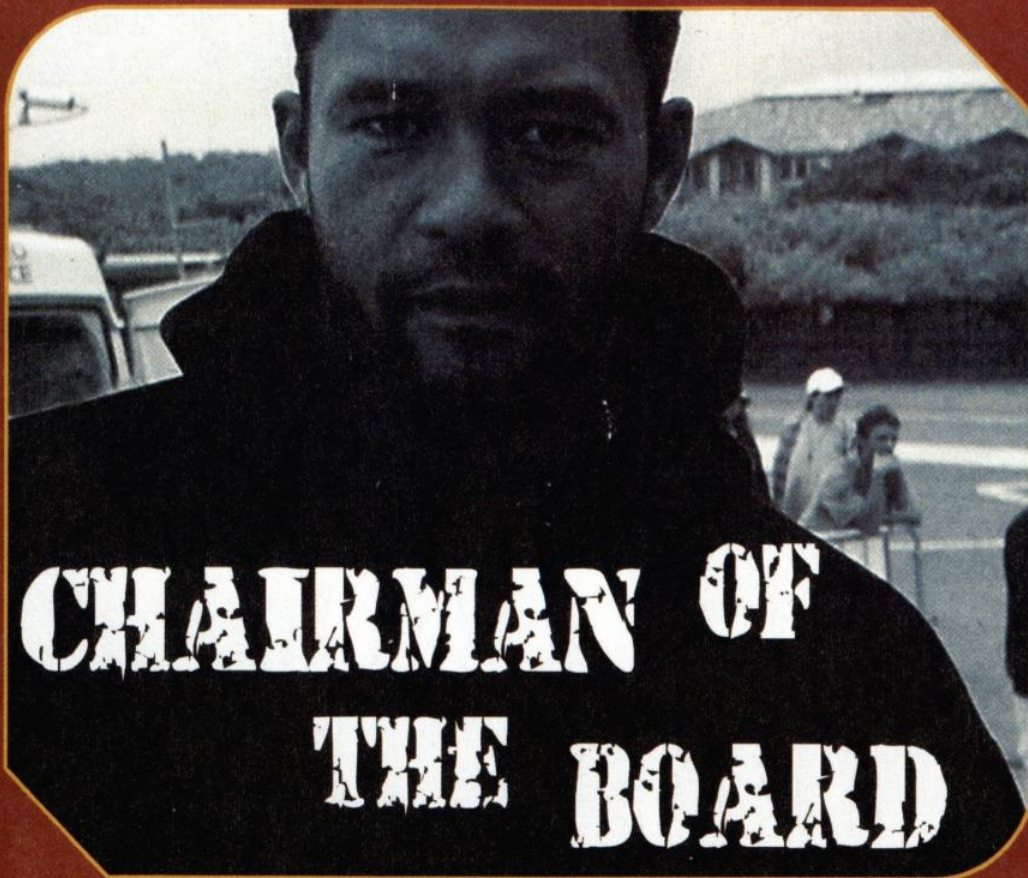
A police spokesman said a post mortem examination had determined the man had died of asphyxiation caused by electrocution.

The Monopoly Tycoon Championships, which were held in Harvey Norman stores in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth attracted some pretty enthusiastic competitors. The national Monopoly Tycoon Championship title was claimed by Western Australia's Timothy Stigwood, who won the first prize of \$3,000

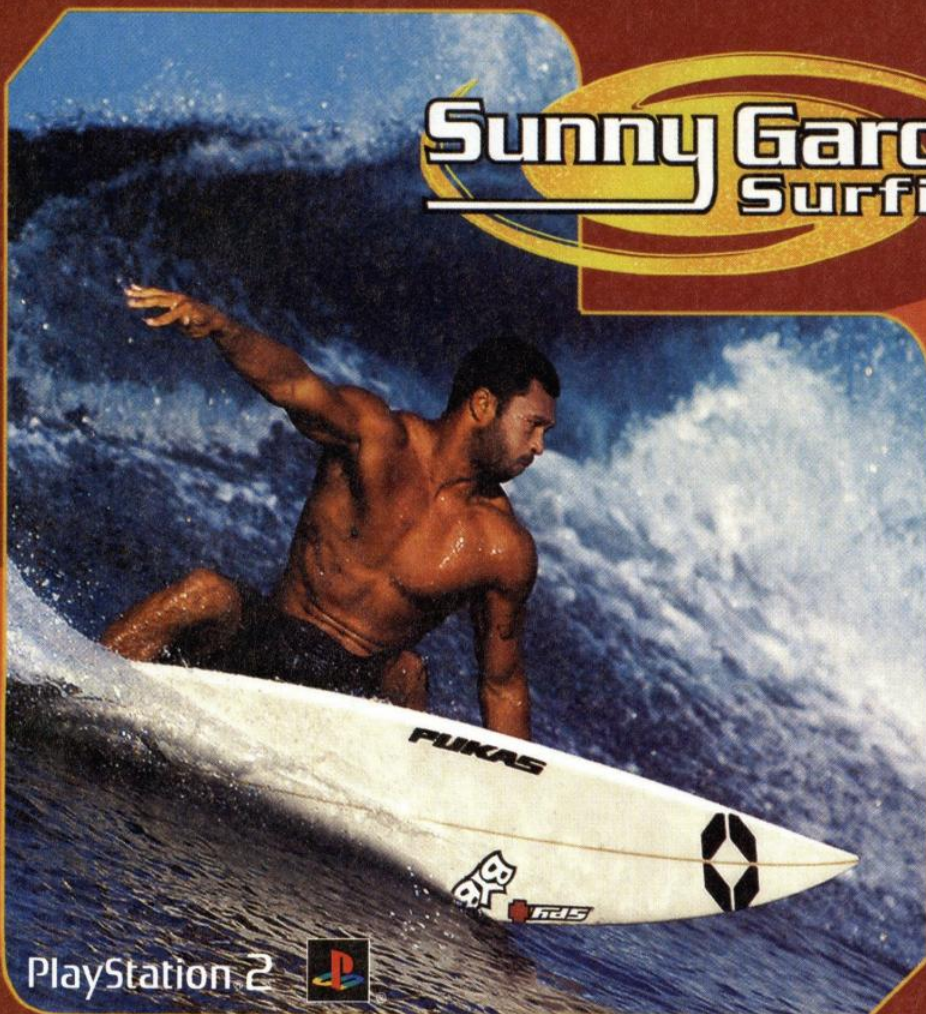
The amazing Grand Theft Auto 3 was recently refused classification here in Australia, in case you were wondering why you couldn't seem to find it in any games stores anywhere. At the time of going to print, Take 2 were appealing the decision and were confident they could get the game back on shelves. I guess, the whole virtual crime sim concept was a little too much for the censors (which seems strange after the first two games).

Return to Castle Wolfenstein has been doctored to please German censors. Activision and Grey Matter have replaced the Nazis in the game with a cult called "The Wolves" and renamed Heinrich Himmler to Heinrich Höller. Fair enough, although we doubt any gamer over there is dumb enough to not know what game he is actually playing. We've also noticed that dead bodies in the game are either giving you the finger, or showing you the devil's salute...

George Broussard of 3D Realms, recently confirmed that Duke Nukem Forever (remember that game?) will ship with bots for multiplayer. Broussard stated, "Bots were a major concern of ours because a lot of FPS games have been shipping without them (even Unreal engine based games), and we see bots as significant for the future of multiplayer gaming. We are firmly committed to delivering both a strong multiplayer experience, as well as single player. Full bot support is a step in that direction." Cool. Now just release the damn game.

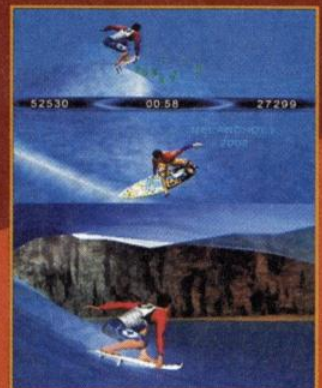
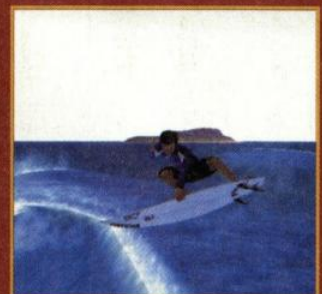
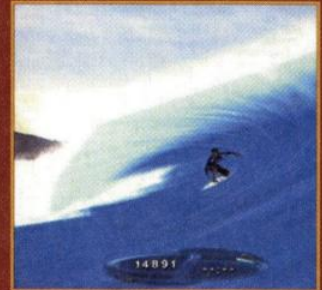


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FUNKY FUSION

Because music has been such an important component to the Wipeout series, the Hyper crew hooked up with Plump DJs and Luke Slater to find out how they feel about getting their music onto the pumping Wipeout Fusion soundtrack...

PLUMP DJs

Track: **Big Groovy Funker**
HYPER: Are you guys fans of the Wipeout games?

PLUMP: Yes, it's a game "classic" and the choice of music used to enhance Wipeout has always reflected the energy of the game itself.

HYPER: What do you think of Wipeout Fusion?

PLUMP: Just as thrilling as ever, better sound options, better graphics, and better gameplay!

HYPER: Is "Big Groovy Funker" an all new tune for the game?

PLUMP: It's new for us (made this year) and not formally released, but not made purposely.

HYPER: Did you play much of the game to get a feel for it before writing the track and doing the remixes? Or was the creative process entirely independent of the game itself?

PLUMP: It was independent of the game.

HYPER: How would you characterise the Plump DJs style?

PLUMP: Chunky electronic dance music.

HYPER: Do you see dance music and dance culture merging even more with videogames over the next few years?

PLUMP: Not sure, clubbing is about goin' out, and gaming is about staying in! Though, the rhythms in dance music, especially break beat, compliment fast moving video games exceptionally well. Plus video games are very popular "after club/before club" entertainment. Dance music is the sound track to many peoples' lives. I live in hope!

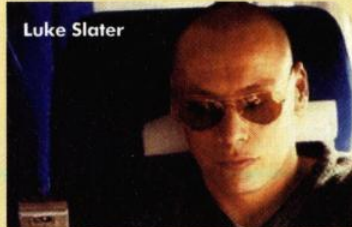
HYPER: What other games do you guys play? Have you played many other music-based games on PlayStation or PS2? Bust A Groove? PaRappa the Rapper? Rez?

PLUMP: At the moment we're bonkers for the Grand Theft Auto 3 on PlayStation2! We haven't played any of those games.

HYPER: Who's your favourite international DJ?



Plump DJs



Luke Slater

PLUMP: ADAM FREELAND

HYPER: What's your favourite label? (aside from Fingerlickin' of course!)

PLUMP: MOB RECORDS

HYPER: Where do you see Plump DJs and the Fingerlickin' stable in ten years time?

PLUMP: On the Moon!

HYPER: Where do you see dance music in ten years time?

PLUMP: From the Moon.

HYPER: Where do you see videogames in ten years time?

PLUMP: From the front room in a house on the moon!



LUKE SLATER

Track: **Bolt Up**

HYPER: The track "Bolt Up" from your "Wireless" album is featured on the Wipeout Fusion soundtrack. Tell us about it.

Luke Slater: Well, it's probably the hardest track on the Wireless album, and I'm really glad they picked that one because for me it's got that kind of sound that goes well with the game. Y'know, it's got a bit of attitude and a lot of energy. It's quite industrial really - very full on. I've never really liked games with trancey music on them, I never thought it worked very well.

HYPER: Do you play videogames much?

Luke Slater: I used to play a lot of games, but these days I don't really get enough time to get into them. At the moment I just play games on my laptop on the plane. That's about as good as it gets at the moment

HYPER: So what game are you playing at the moment?

Luke Slater: I'm playing "Alice" on the Mac. I like that. I like a bit of "magical-ness" in the games.



FINAL FANTASY XI: ONLINE

Square and Sony Online are finally being a little more forthcoming about the next Final Fantasy instalment, FF XI: Online. Set to launch in Japan around March (roughly the same time us Aussies get our hands on Final Fantasy X), FF XI is shaping up to be an impressive foray into online console gaming. The game will be played over Sony's Play Online network, an online infrastructure that is not yet available in Australia.

The three main playable races are the humans (good all-round characters), Tarutaru (those cute little brown-nosed guys, the magic users) and Elves (the best fighters), although we suspect there will be a few more options for some freakier races once the game launches. It seems that the combat system is quite similar to the other Final Fantasy games, with the inclusion of the job system and a very similar on-screen menu layout. Of course,

with so many players, the screen does tend to fill up pretty quickly with all sorts of info.

If you don't want to adventure on your lonesome (you are playing a MMORPG after all), you can set your character to display an "I want to join a party" icon next to his or herself. As you wander about the land, other players can then invite you to join up. With a party of six characters in total, you can also group together with other packs of adventurers for massive 18 player battles against all the big, ugly beasties out there wanting to suck away your life force.

Communication between players takes place with a keyword system, so you can swiftly discuss relevant aspects of the game with simple control pad commands. Where this leaves more involved "chat" style interaction, we're not quite sure, so it's possible that FF XI will be fairly limited in that respect, sadly removing a lot of the potential to truly bond with your fellow players.

Will Australians need a local Play Online service to be able to participate in Final Fantasy XI? Can Australia's poor excuses for broadband service allow it? We hope to answer all those questions for you in an upcoming issue of Hyper.



7. Forgetting to use the shower saves money on the water bill.



STAR WARS GALACTIC BATTLEGROUNDS

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Official Star Wars™ Web Site www.starwars.com

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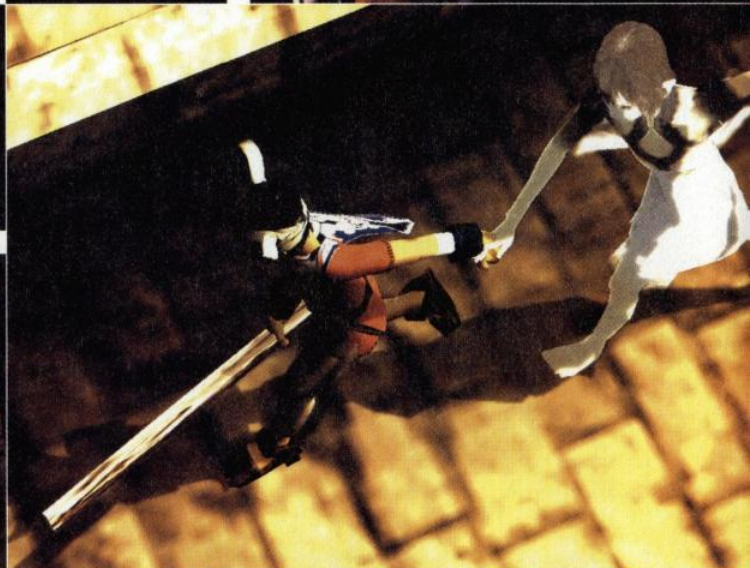
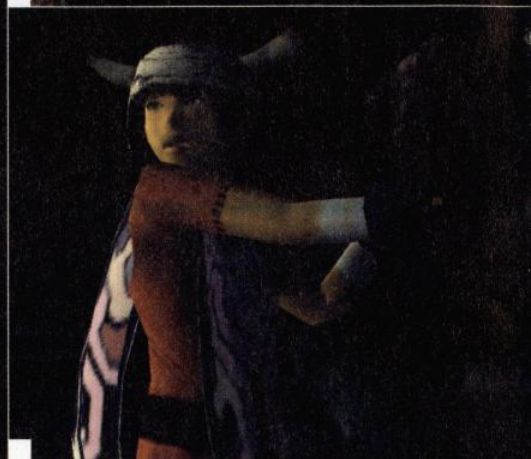


Button pressing skills will come in handy in the near cyber-future.

ICO

» PS2 SONY


Many have hailed Ico as "art", and whilst we'd sure like to sit down and play through the game to be able to confirm or deny such a claim, we sure won't debate the merit of the game's visuals. Ico is a stunningly original mixture of visual styles, and there's no question that it qualifies as serious Eye Candy in this special 100th issue of Hyper.



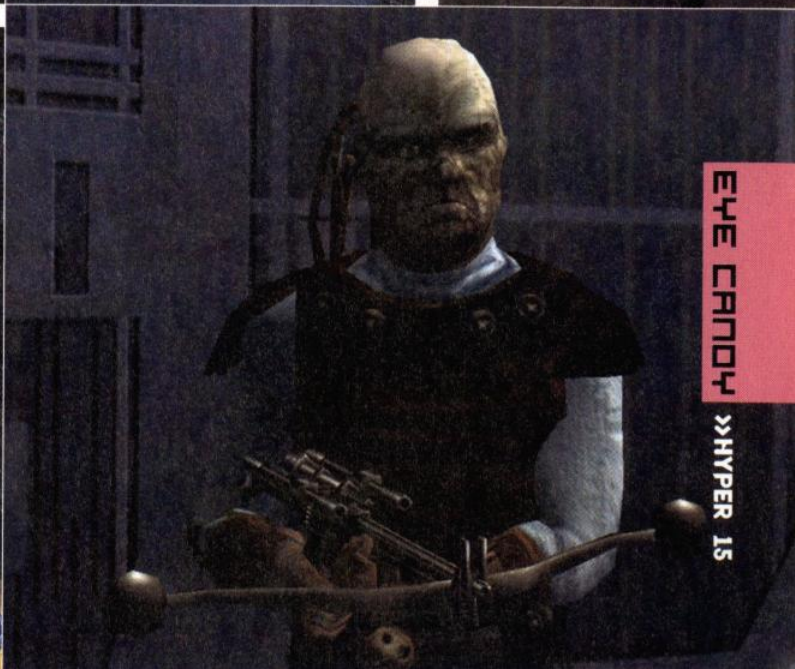
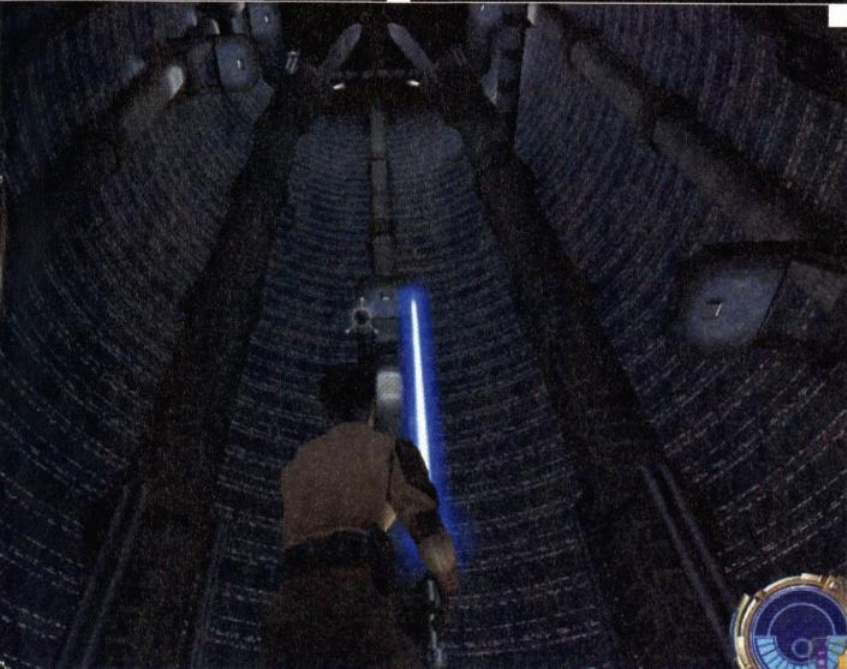
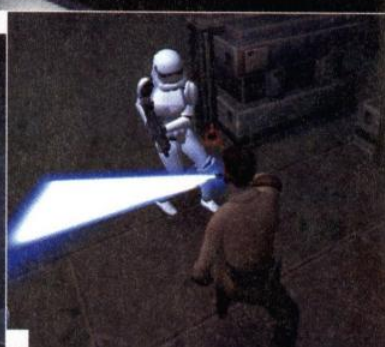
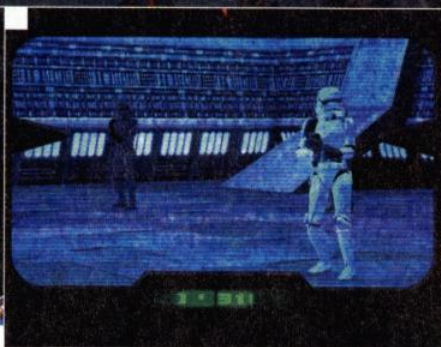
9. The pretty colours make us happy.

JEDI OUTCAST

» PC LUCASARTS

 Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast (you could even call it Dark Forces 3) is being developed by Raven Software, the folk behind Voyager: Elite Force and the upcoming Quake IV. We can safely assume that this critically acclaimed LucasArts series is in safe hands. More Force powers, better saber combat and richer worlds mean we're in for a real treat.

41



EYE CRAWDY » HYPER JS

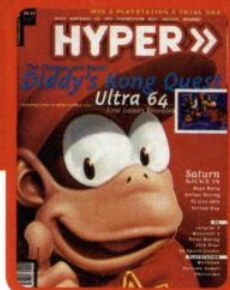
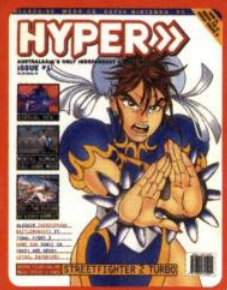
HYPERTYPING



ER INS



11. When you've finished the game, the disc make handy drink coasters.



1993-1996 THE EARLY YEARS BY STUART CLARKE

OK kids, gather round, because here's a story often asked but seldom told - how Hyper magazine came to be. Because, believe it or not, there was a time when Hyper didn't exist and there was no independent multi-format games magazine in Australia.

WHY HYPER?

In the days Before Hyper, I edited a games magazine called Megazone, which was supposedly multi-format and independent but as Sega Ozisoft (at the time, by far Australia's largest games distributor) published it, it really wasn't. It was almost entirely previews and reviews of Sega games and Ozisoft PC titles, but as the Mega Drive was the current hot console and Ozisoft had most of the good PC games, it did well anyway.

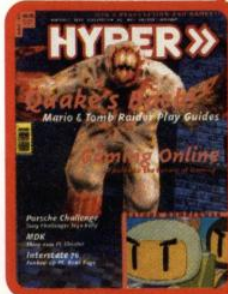
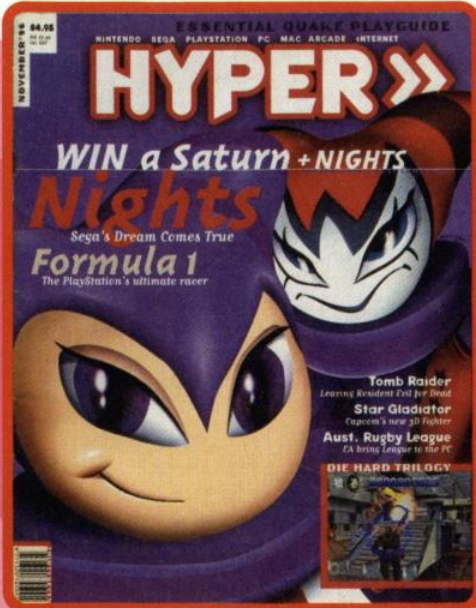
It fact, it did so well that Ozisoft sold it off to a professional magazine publisher. I didn't like the look of the future there, so I went on what I thought would be a long holiday. Just as I was starting to relax, Phil Keir, owner of Next Media and publisher of Rolling Stone, rang

me at home one night to ask a few questions.

Before I knew it he had asked me to set up a brand new games magazine - one that I created and controlled completely (bwahahahaha)! So after a few nano-seconds of thought I said, "Um, okay then". One of the first decisions was to make it a true multi-format title, covering the best games on all platforms.

Then there was the matter of the title. Why Hyper? Good question, I'm glad you asked. Well, after going through all the titles with the word 'game' in them, there was a pretty crappy list. Hyper was one of several 'left-field' suggestions, and there was a tiny (incorrect) rumour flying around that Sega was going to call its new console the Hyperdrive (it became the Saturn). Plus, Phil Keir thought that five letters was a good length for a title, and we had no more time to faff about. So Hyper it was, and is.

The first art director, Aaron Rogers, designed the kick-arse masthead which remains to this day.



“Although the Nintendo 64 was a financial success for Nintendo, it was overshadowed by the PlayStation, and the Dreamcast is pushing up daisies already...”



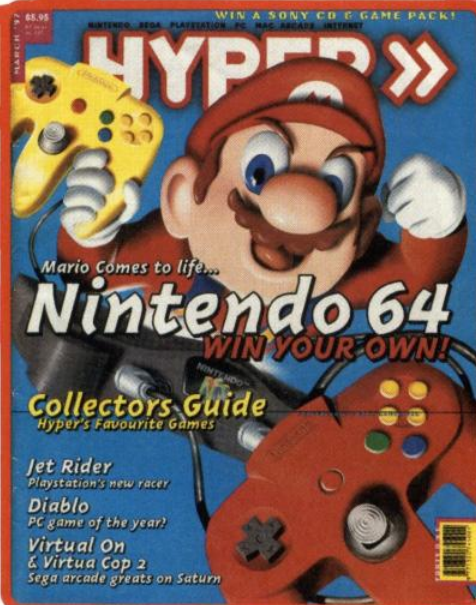
1997-1999 HYPER GROWS UP A BIT BY DAN TOOSE

MY “Hyper Years” saw about many things, but most significantly was the rise and rise of PlayStation. I don’t mean in a sense that PlayStation was personally my big thing, but rather that the PlayStation seriously changed console gaming into a far more mainstream form of entertainment. The system was still in its infancy when I came on board, and it didn’t really kick forward into huge financial success till the price point became a bit more reasonable to the average punter. With Sony’s marketing machine in action, the mainstream DID catch on that gaming was really lots of fun (Well duh! Don’t say we geeks didn’t tell you so). It’s raised a real question mark for many, as to whether or not gaming has suffered from becoming more financially driven or not. The answer is yes for some of those who followed gaming from its infancy, and no for some who never saw any appeal in it till 3D visuals were taking over.

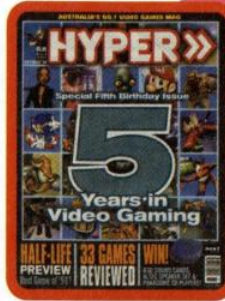
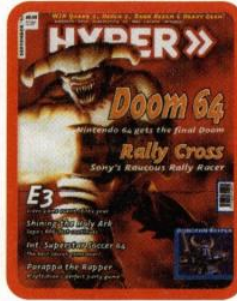
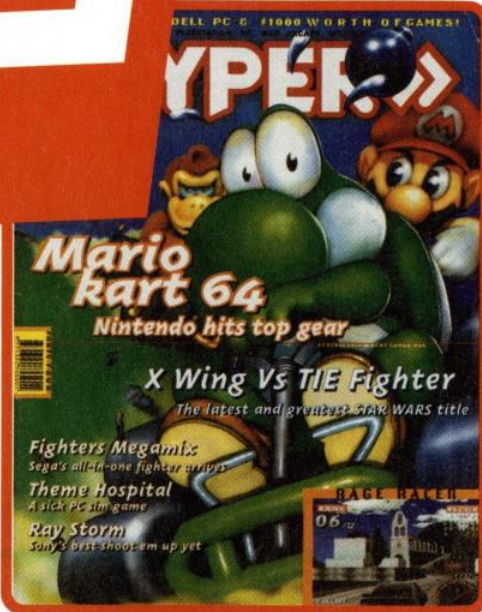
WATCHING THE WHEELS GO ROUND...
Watching the PC gaming world change was another thing

altogether. People talk about the life of a console in years, but we saw the PC change far more rapidly as a gaming machine, as people started to take them more seriously for such a purpose. 3D accelerators became the real driving force behind PC gaming, and when we first saw GL Quake, and even just the first simple demos of 3DFX Voodoo graphics, we were all blown away by the jump in frame rate, and what we at first thought of as “smooth graphics”. Of course, frame rates were set to go much higher, and the blurry low-quality textures would soon become high-detail textures. To give us an idea of how stupidly far CPUs have come since I started on Hyper, I had a 486-DX4 100MHz at the time, and now Intel and AMD are starting to throw 2GHz processors at us... Twenty times the basic speed.

Online gaming over the Internet was another thing to rise to popularity while I was at Hyper, from the RTS games such as Warcraft, RPG classics of Diablo I, through to the first person shooters that owned PC gaming such as Quake. This was possibly a deciding factor in keeping many gamers in front of their PC rather than vanishing into the new legions of



14. You get to give yourself cool nicknames, like "Lord Seafood".



folks switching on their consoles. While things may be set to change now with the Xbox and other next-gen systems, online multiplayer gaming was definitely one of the most important new areas of gaming to develop towards the end of the millennium.

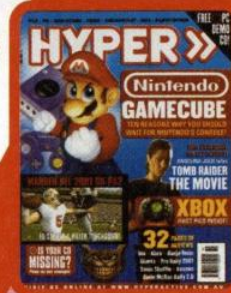
Although the Nintendo 64 was a financial success for Nintendo, it was overshadowed by the PlayStation, and the Dreamcast is pushing up daisies already, so the other two gaming systems that were launched in my Hyper days didn't really rock the pages of gaming history in the grand scheme of things.

SIDE EFFECTS OF THE JOB

As for how Hyper affected me during my years as editor, perhaps the clearest sign that I was genuinely "Living the Lifestyle" while I was at Hyper, was just how far I got into Quake. The same flatmate who had owned an ISP, also hosted Quakezone, one of the first major Australian Quake servers, and I was an immediate addict. My

interest in first person shooters didn't wane, and when Quake 2 hit, I formed a clan called "Malevolence" with Eliot, and eventual contributors Jackson Gothe-Snape, and Adam Duncan. We wound up making it through to the final of a couple of the first MPU Clan Wars, and the ACL, which was a nice way of assuring myself that our staff was made of gamers who could mix it up a bit. The clan still lives on (sans all the aforementioned members), which is a miracle in the cutthroat world of clan gaming we've come to know.

Besides the many fine moments in gaming I was fortunate enough to experience and report on, I always look back on my times with Stuart, Eliot, Steve, Mark, George, Brooke, Malcolm (he was always a Hyper adoptee!), and the rest of the gang with a grin. After all, how many places can you work where you need to go spend most of the day down at the arcade to test out the first Virtua Fighter 3 machine to appear in Australia?



the current who's who of Hyper



WHO would have thought so many of Hyper's early writing team would still be devoted to the magazine one hundred issues down the track? Esteemed names (I've included Microsoft Word's spellchecker "suggested corrections" for their surnames where possible) like David "wildness" Wildgoose, George "sourpuss" Soropos and Steve "polka" Polak, have been stamped on reviews going all the way back to the early days of the Super Nintendo and Megadrive. Yet those same gaming gurus are with us today discussing Xbox, GameCube and PlayStation 2. We also have the new guard consisting of Jackson Gothe-Snape, Daniel Staines and Agata Budinska, amongst others. And of course, all of

our current long-time regulars such as Kevin "chewing" Cheung, James "cooties" Cottee, Tim "Levis" Levy and ex-Hyper Editor Dan "toes" Toose. All whom continue to dedicate themselves to the Hyper cause.

There's a reason why Hyper is Australia's best gaming magazine, and that's because we have a diverse walking knowledge database. These guys and gals are the best in the business, they know their stuff, and they choose Hyper as the vehicle for their views on the wonderful world of gaming. That... and we give them free beer on Friday afternoons.

So, if you've been curious to find out a bit more about the rather large Hyper family, here are some "staff" profiles, written by the scaliwags themselves.

THE ROCK STEADY HYPER CREW 1999-?



Name: Eliot Fish
Position: Editor/Slave Driver/Captioner
Age: 30
First started working for Hyper: In the womb, I believe.

Favourite game of all time: Why did I ask myself such a tough question? Well, it could be The Secret of Monkey Island 2: Le Chuck's Revenge, or possibly Zelda on the SNES. Then again, Deus Ex changed my life.

Favourite gaming platform: In the olden days, it was probably the SNES. But now I'm such a mature adult (ahem)... the PC seems to hold me captive.

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): I'd say the little ship in Asteroids — always spinning in circles, trying to fight off relentless oncoming problems. But everyone else would say Guybrush Threepwood.

What I love the most about Hyper: The way Malk and Cam always let me beat them at Quake III. Because I'm really good at it, right? Right?

What I'm playing at the moment: Wizardry 8.

Game I'm most looking forward to: Star Wars: Galaxies.

Other interests/hobbies: Playing bass in Big Heavy Stuff. Tending my Bonsai.

How I got started in the games industry: I was working as Editorial Assistant on Rolling Stone magazine when Stuart Clarke moved into the cubicle next door. As soon as I found out he had started a games magazine, I started hanging around the door to his office until he was sick of telling me to go away. I also cut my teeth on Smash Hits (yikes) magazine when I left school. But look where it got me!



Name: Cam Shea
Position: Deputy Editor/Fast Bowler/Office DJ
Age: 24
First started writing for Hyper: Issue 57,

July '98

Favourite game of all time: Doom II... maybe.

Favourite gaming platform: My coffee table.

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): PaRappa the Rapper.

What I love the most about Hyper: It's the funkier games mag. Mad vibe and gaming culture at the office. Oh, and Eliot and Malky!

What I'm playing at the moment: Halo, Super Smash Bros Melee and MGS 2.

Game I'm most looking forward to: Mario Sunshine.

Other interests/hobbies: House music (and electronic music in general), leeching, PCs, opulence.

Start in the games industry: I spent entirely too much time playing games during school and University, and thought I could do something constructive with all that nerd-knowledge. I'd read Hyper for years so I got in contact with Dan Toose, he liked my stuff and the rest is history.



Name: Malcolm Campbell
Position: Art Director/Voice of reason/Design Yoda
Age: 29
First started working

for Hyper: Art: January 2001.

Favourite game of all time: Super Quake Fighter Fantasy 2097.

Favourite gaming platform: I've played my PlayStation more than anything, but my old Jap Megadrive still holds a place in my heart.

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Ermm... I once had hair as blue as Sonic's...

What I love the most about Hyper: The humour. Being able to play games and call it work. Cam & Eliot.

What I'm playing at the moment: Final Fantasy X, Smash Bros Melee.

Game I'm most looking forward to: Mario Sunshine, Jet Set Radio Future.

Other interests/hobbies: My wife and baby daughter.

How did you get started in the games industry?: Being a Hyper fan since issue 1, I wrote to Stuart Clarke asking if there was any design employment openings at Next. Lucky for me PC PowerPlay needed an art person, and Dan needed someone new to beat at VF2, so I was in.

THE WRITERS



Name: Dan Toose
Age: 27
First started writing for Hyper: Issue #31, May 1996.
Favourite game of all time: Quake 2

Favourite gaming platform: PC (although some genres such as fighting games are always better on console).

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Till the recent hair chop, I was Lara Croft's back-up stunt double.

What I love the most about Hyper: The crew, it's like I've known them for years... Oh, hang on...

What I'm playing at the moment: Aliens vs. Predator 2

Game I'm most looking forward to: Jet Set Radio Future (Xbox) or Wipeout Fusion (PS2).

Other interests/hobbies: DJ-ing, music, sashimi.

How I got started in the games industry:

I distinctly remember thinking that I was making a very big, and incredibly stupid mistake in deciding to chip in with my flatmates for a PlayStation. It wasn't just the \$700 or so price tag, but rather, the idea of buying a piece of technology four ways in a shared accommodation situation that scared the crud out of me. In fact, when the bloody thing arrived, it represented a household chore of sorts, because my flatmate who owned an ISP declared that I should do video game reviews for his company's news site in exchange for my phat Internet connection.

Then, after I'd done about five reviews, my other flatmate, who'd done some freelance work at Next, came and told me I should go for a position going at Hyper. I fired an email off to Stu, who called and told me to come in. I did so, and then next thing I know, I'm Deputy Editor.

All I thought I was doing was throwing in for a PlayStation, but no, it was all an evil conspiracy by my flatmates to hurl me into a life of video-game journalism...



Name: George Soropos
Age: Stone
First started writing for Hyper: somewhere around issue 18-20 '95
Favourite game of all

time: Too hard!

Favourite gaming platform: PC

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Yuri

What I love the most about Hyper: The bright colours.

What I'm playing at the moment:

Stronghold, GTA3, Il2

Game I'm most looking forward to:

Aquanox

Other interests/hobbies: Writing music.

How I got started in the games industry:

My band at the time was interviewed by a writer from Hyper!



Name: David Wildgoose
Age: 27
First started writing for Hyper: When I was but a wee lad I reviewed some dodgy 16-bit

platformer in Hyper#1. They were all dodgy 16-bit platformers back then.

Favourite game of all time: I couldn't choose between Thief: The Dark Project and Super Mario Kart, as there's simply no basis upon which to compare them.

Favourite gaming platform: Of all time? The SNES - and, with it, my initial lesson in the Nintendo difference. Now? I play more PC games. The future? I'm leaning towards Xbox...

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Vhailor from Planescape Torment. His unbending mission of justice reflects my own attitude toward reviewing games.

What I love the most about Hyper: Office cricket, the Hyper couch, durry breaks, and that after 100 issues they still insist on giving me work!

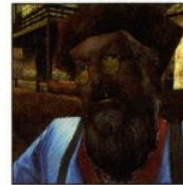
What I'm playing at the moment: The missions I'm making with the Deus Ex SDK.

Game I'm most looking forward to: Halo, Republic: The Revolution, Galleon, Deus Ex 2 and Thief 3.

Other interests/hobbies: Writing essays/fiction/tracts/diatribes, supporting West Ham Utd, and collecting obscure, arty music.

How I got started in the games industry:

By writing to Stuart Clarke, then editor of the now-defunct Megazone, and convincing him of my journalistic worth. It worked. He called the next day and offered me work. This was either late 1992 or early 1993. I'd ask Stuart, but I suspect he'd have even less chance of remembering.



Name: James Cottee
Age: 26
First started writing for Hyper: Issue 72, Oct '99
Favourite game of all time: Space War

Favourite gaming platform: PC

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Orz from Star Control 2

What I love the most about Hyper: It gets better every month.

What I'm playing at the moment: Civ III

Game I'm most looking forward to:

Elite 4

Other interests/hobbies: Anime, comics, Dr. Who

How I got started in the games industry:

My career in games journalism began late last century at a little magazine called Australian PlayStation. 'Twas there I learnt the black arts of copywriting, screen capture, and plagiarism, and quickly rose to the rank of editor. Shortly after I took the reigns the magazine imploded, and I was cast out on my arse. Fortunately, Hyper magazine was there to help me pick up the pieces. I now freelance for a number of publications, including the one in your hot little hands.



Name: Agata Budinska
Age: 23
First started writing for Hyper: Issue 98!
Favourite game of all time: Does Neopets

count? No? Okay, Yoshi's Island (SNES) and Mario Kart (SNES and N64).

Favourite gaming platform: Nintendo me baby...

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): P - probably Lara, M - probably Yoshi

What I love the most about Hyper: The games!

What I'm playing at the moment:

Neopets and Grand Theft Auto 3.

Game I'm most looking forward to:

Anything on GameCube, Munch's Oddysee on Xbox.

Other interests/hobbies: Trivia, Swimming, reading, music, herb gardening (I'm growing chillies!) drinking, films...

How I got started in the games industry:

PC PowerPlay gave me a chance way back in issue 6 or 8 (see - Master of Dimensions).



Name: Kevin Cheung
Age: 26
First started writing for Hyper: Issue 53, March 1998
Favourite game of all time: Castlevania: Symphony of the Night

Favourite gaming platform: They all get equal time. Honest!

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Mr. Driller.

What I love the most about Hyper: Our common love for games. And Cam's pants.

What I'm playing at the moment: Return to Castle Wolfenstein, Pikmin, Ace Combat 4, Burnout.

Game I'm most looking forward to: Metal Gear Solid 2, Halo.

Other interests/hobbies: Tennis, NFL, anime, DVDs.

How I got started in the games industry: Started writing recreationally for a fansite called Anime PlayStation. Eventually got offered money to write, which is a nice bonus.



Name: Tim Levy
Age: Silicon
First started writing for Hyper (issue number or date): Photography: Issue #2 Jan '94 / Writing

Arcade mode #32 June '96.

Favourite game of all time: GoldenEye - Gave 1st person shooter genre brains. Also, nothing is as funny as multi-player Bondian grenade warfare in the comfort of your own lounge room.

Favourite gaming platform: Nintendo for quality games and their ergonomic controllers.

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Physically - Moonraker Elite. Mentally - Pacman (I can't stop eating pills).

What I love the most about Hyper: Evolvability, humour, journalistic integrity.

What I'm playing at the moment: The game of life.

Game I'm most looking forward to: Operation Flashpoint Gold - A2DaMuthaf#kingK

Other interests/hobbies: Photography, soccer, music, people, air-hockey, history, film & TV.

How I got started in the games industry: When I was 13-14, I was playing Atari 2600 early one morning, my dad came in to the room and said "stop playing games - they'll never get you anywhere in life. Get back to your bedroom and start studying." So with a tear in my eye, I said (to myself) "I'll show you... I'll show you". Later in life, whilst being a bum in Japan, I submitted a review to Hyper of the ridiculous Virtua Bass Fishing game. When I returned to Sydney, Stuart Clarke offered me a job reviewing arcade. I don't do the job for money or enjoyment - I just do it to prove a point to my dad.



Name: Steve Polak
Age: 33
First started writing for Hyper: Issue 2
Favourite game of all time: Starcraft / Master of Orion II (Moo2)

Favourite gaming platform: PC

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Wario

What I love the most about Hyper: Its openness and the fact we are prepared to be honest about a game when it is a pile o' bollocks. Other mags don't always do this.

What I'm playing at the moment: Stronghold

Game I'm most looking forward to: Metal Gear Solid 2, MOO3

Other interests/hobbies: Rallying / Djing / Waterskiing and seeing how many different types of pilsner there are.

How I got started in the games industry: Called up the Green Guide in the Age Newspaper in Melbourne (before Hyper was around) and somehow bullshitted my way into it (the paper didn't do reviews back then).



Name: Timothy C. Best
Age: 25
First started writing for Hyper: Issue 92
Favourite game of all time: Soul Calibur

Favourite gaming platform: PC

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Taurus (Interstate '76)

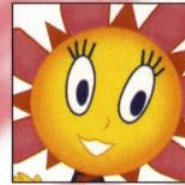
What I love the most about Hyper: Much more exciting than "Hypo".

What I'm playing at the moment: Smackdown! Just Bring it!

Game I'm most looking forward to: Master of Orion 3

Other interests/hobbies: Anime, Comics, Reading, Pen and Paper RPGs, concealing rampant geekiness in public under the guise of being a flaky writer/artist. Dance, graphic design, wisecracks, coining new and redundant words, chicanery.

How I got started in the games industry: Applied for a writing job at a suitably dodgy sounding publishing company: Conspiracy. "Do you have any experience with computer games?" "Pause" "I might have played one or two..."



Name: Kelly Starr
Age: 21
First started writing for Hyper: Issue 93, July 2001
Favourite game of all time: Final Fantasy VII

Favourite gaming platform: PlayStation

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Kidd from Chrono Cross, mentally. When my hair was shorter I had an Aya from Parasite Eve II thing happening.

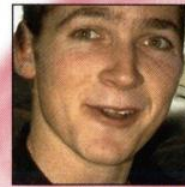
What I love the most about Hyper: The fact that it's a multi-platform magazine.

What I'm playing at the moment: Grand Theft Auto 3, Dark Cloud, Silent Hill, Pokémon Crystal, Paper Mario.

Game I'm most looking forward to: Silent Hill 2, Devil May Cry, Metal Gear Solid 2.

Other interests/hobbies: Anime, manga, punk music, seeing bands.

How I got started in the games industry: A bit of luck, a bit of talent, and a lot of good timing!



Name: Jackson Gothe-Snape
Age: 19
First started writing for Hyper: Mid 1998
Favourite game of all time: Quake 2

Favourite gaming platform: SNES

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Fox McCloud

What I love the most about Hyper: How you can never tell if one of the writers is joking. The captions.

What I'm playing at the moment: Pro Evolution Soccer (PS2), Championship Manager 01/02 (PC), GTA3 (PS2)

Game I'm most looking forward to: Super Smash Brothers: Melee (GCN)

Other interests/hobbies: Writing pop songs, trading Magic Cards, making bonfires and playing soccer.

How I got started in the games industry: Got the gig through former editor Dan Toose, who I knew through my Quake 2 clan.



Name: Hillous
(Quakename: Hilly the Nice) Lesslie
Age: 24
First started writing for Hyper: Can't recall - late 98, say October...

Favourite game of all time: WipEout 2097

Favourite gaming platform: Dreamcast (it's small and inexpensive, has four ports, Soul Calibur, Jet Set Radio and Grandia II)

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Physically: Hwoarang. Mentally: Tombi or Vibri.

What I love the most about Hyper: Lack of bias, broad perspective.

What I'm playing at the moment: Grandia II (DC), AoE II (PC), WO 2097 (PS), Super Streetfighter II: The New Challengers (SNES).

Game I'm most looking forward to: WipEout Fusion, Tenchu on PS2, Mouse House.

Other interests/hobbies: Videogames, computer games, making games, playing games, designing games, reviewing games, marveling at the increasingly astonishing mountains of data behind games. Oh, you mean other than games?! Cycling, frisbees, board game design, welding, cooking, capoeira, yo-yos are cool.

How I got started in the games

industry: Back when the Official Australian PlayStation Magazine was made by the same publishing house as Hyper, I entered a Wipeout 2097 competition in OAPSM's second issue. I won a t-shirt and though I cherished it intimately, I wrote back, dissatisfied at not having been offered a job. I reviewed my beloved WipEout 2097 to prove my worth and the editor started to throw games my way.

My previously sunny disposition became almost blinding. After eighteen months of popping into the office for odd contribution work, a full-time job came up as Deputy Editor. I got it thanks to my irresistible charisma and was as happy as a gamer who gets paid to play games. I never even achieved an HSC.



Name: Daniel
'Squared' Staines
Age: Old enough to buy the mags I like legally.
First started writing for Hyper: Issue 98
Favourite game of all

time: Deus Ex

Favourite gaming platform: Tie between PC and SNES

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Physically?

Aramant from FF 9. Mentally? Kefka from FF6. Mwe he he he!

What I love the most about Hyper: The ability of its editorial staff to look beyond the crimes of my past and see the real me, the inner me that's full of gravy and love. But mostly gravy.

What I'm playing at the moment: Thief
Game I'm most looking forward to: Deus Ex 2, obviously. Who isn't?

Other interests/hobbies: None that can really be printed here or that can be referred to without pictorial aids.

How I got started in the games

industry: By taking pictures of a certain editor of a certain mag doing certain things and threatening to show them to a certain person unless I was given a job.



Name: Derek dela
Fuente
Age: Wrong side of 40
First started writing for Hyper: Around 2 years ago? It could be more!

Favourite game of all time: Elite - Commodore 64 version. Favourite gaming platform: Amiga.

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Leisure Suit Larry

What I love the most about Hyper: The sharp Aussie wit and calling a spade a spade. Throughout the world most gaming mags are all too sycophantic!

What I'm playing at the moment: Nothing!

Game I'm most looking forward to: Nothing whatsoever! It's all good stuff out there but nothing really innovative.

Other interests/hobbies: Watching Cricket, Rugby, Footy, Athletics, and Boxing - in that order!

How I got started in the games

industry: On an illegal conference call about 18 years ago with computer hackers, a journo in Germany invited me to write an article for the mag he worked on. It went from that to working on the mag as their UK Correspondent for the next 6 years.

THE HYPER DESIGN MASSACRE

Aaron Rogers

Art Director 1993-1994

The genius man responsible for the infamous Hyper masthead! Aaron was last seen making short films, designing museum space and writing a script.



Mark Gowing

Art Director 1994-1997

If there was a cutting edge to Hyper's design, Mark found the really sharp bit and turned into a psychopathic slasher. Mark went on to start Empire, a skateboard design company, and is now residing in his own new design studio here in Redfern.

Steve Scott

Art Director 1997-1999

Steve was so talented he had to leave Hyper and get a job at Animal Logic, the same company behind the effects in The Matrix. We also recently saw his funky artwork used on the cover of Desktop magazine.

Brooke-Star Elliott

Art Director 1998-1999

We'll always miss Brooke. But she ended up getting lost in a jungle somewhere in South America, poor dear. Write, Brooke.

David Harvey

Art Director 1999-2000

The most chilled designer we ever had, David has ended up living one great road trip and writing a book.

Sarah Bryant

Art Director 2000-2001

Sarah was the guardian angel who rescued us, waved her magical design wand and then vanished in a puff of mysterious smoke. We know she still looks over us. :)

GHOSTS OF HYPER PAST



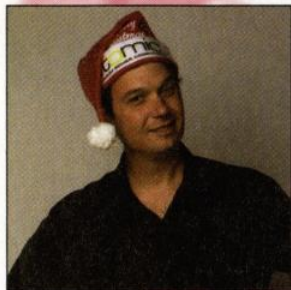
Andrew Humphreys

Hyper Deputy Editor 1993-95

What he's doing now: I'm more of a zombie than a ghost, I guess. I started as the deputy editor on the very first issue of Hyper and, though I left the magazine a year or so later, I never really went away. I'm still in the same building (or set of buildings) and, for this issue at least, I'm Hyper's publisher. I've stayed at Next Media all this time, working on Rolling Stone as music editor and editor and as publisher of a whole range of mags, including Soap World (don't miss that one, kids!), Blunt, and The Official Wiggles Magazine (I get to wake Jeff up in any manner I deem appropriate).

In between I wrote a novel called *The Weight of the Sun*, published by Allen and Unwin and available at all good and possibly mediocre book stores everywhere, of which one critic may have written, "The finest Australian fiction debut of the century. Should be purchased and read by anyone who's ever read or even seen a copy of Hyper magazine. Run, don't walk - he needs the money." I still write for magazines occasionally, but I'm trying to concentrate on fiction right now. I'm working on a collection of short stories and a new novel that may or may not have been inspired by Donkey Kong.

If anyone wants to give me a GameCube in remembrance of past services to the games industry, just send it care of Hyper.



Ben Mansill

Hyper Deputy Editor 1995-96

What he's doing now: Editor of Atomic.

When Stuart launched Hyper in 1993, Aussie gaming was a pack of teenkids fighting a war of parochialism between the SNES and Megadrive. Aussie gamers had just graduated from 2600/Amiga gaming and had only UK mags for news and info. There was no Internet, there was darkness, and there was a void. Then there was Hyper.

Despite our collective affection for import mags like Zzap! Stuart and the Hyper founding fathers forged a new mould. Hyper was unmistakably Aussie. Cheeky humor and no crap, unless it was appropriate crap. Somehow we found that crap was appropriate in large quantities. Good crap though. Hyper crap. The kind of crap that glows in the dark and makes you LOL. Crap like the greatest gaming mag pic and caption of all time - we had a limited edition 'white' Sega Saturn, Andy put the CD for *Nights in it* and took a photo, then ran the pic with the caption "Nights in White Saturn". Pure magic.

Everyone involved with Hyper was, and still is, marginally insane. That's part of the secret, kids. Like the original Art Director; Aaron, who decided that for our NBA Jam cover we should photograph a basketball. On fire. Or his successor Mark, who managed to change Hyper's style radically - not merely from issue to issue, but from page to page.

Working at Hyper is mad fun. It wasn't like a job - it was like a party. Like going to the same party day after day, but that sense of fun came through in the mag and made Hyper what it is.

Eliot, Cam and Malcolm are your perfect custodians of the Hyper ideal. I congratulate them. Madness prevails. To everyone ever involved with Hyper, to the trillions of readers, to future generations of Hyper believers: feel the lub and pretend it's a game.

THE HYPERACTIVE GUY



Name: Bryce McDonough

Age: 23

First started writing for Hyper: January 2001

Favourite game of all time: Tekken Tag Tournament (NTSC or arcade)

Favourite gaming platform: Sega Megadrive

Videogame character I most resemble (physically or mentally): Klonoa

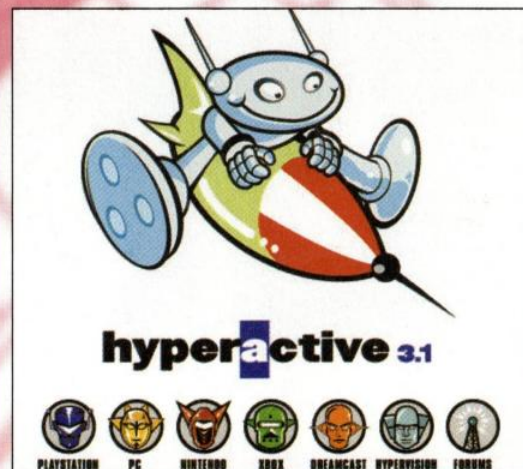
What I love the most about Hyper: The multi-platform format. It covers everything, so you get a more balanced and open view about all systems.

What I'm playing at the moment: Capcom vs SNK 2

Game I'm most looking forward to: Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty

Other interests/hobbies: Movies, hanging out with friends, and trying any cocktail I can get my hands on.

How I got started in the games industry: Pure unadulterated luck. Next needed someone to help build cover CDs for another magazine, and I came in for an interview. After learning a bit more about me, they decided I was much better suited to the games stuff, and threw me on the website.



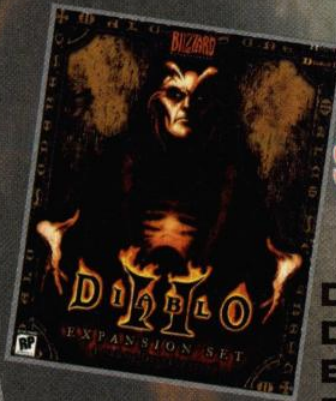
About Hyperactive

www.hyperactive.com.au is Australia's longest running videogames website. Born back in the early days of consumer internet, the original site kicked off in 1995, and quickly became the central point for Australian gamers wanting local news and the local angle on international news.

Being the online little brother of Australia's best games mag gave us a headstart in an industry where getting your name known is hard enough, and for a while we even had an American component to the site.

In the early days, the site was mostly run by George Soropos and Ed Dawson, but when things got too much, Next Online grew up and brought on board more staff, including Soumali Chitdamrong. Hyperactive is also supposedly the first Australian website to ever carry a banner ad. Currently at version 3.1, we still strive to bring you the freshest gaming goodness each and every day!

For These Games Strategy, Courage



\$41.70

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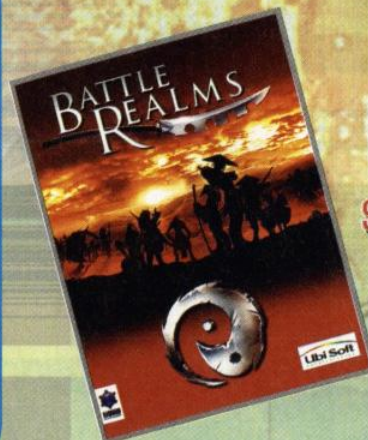
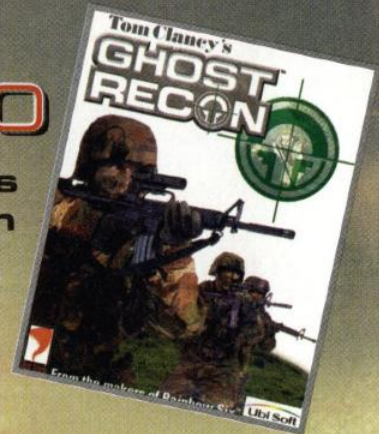


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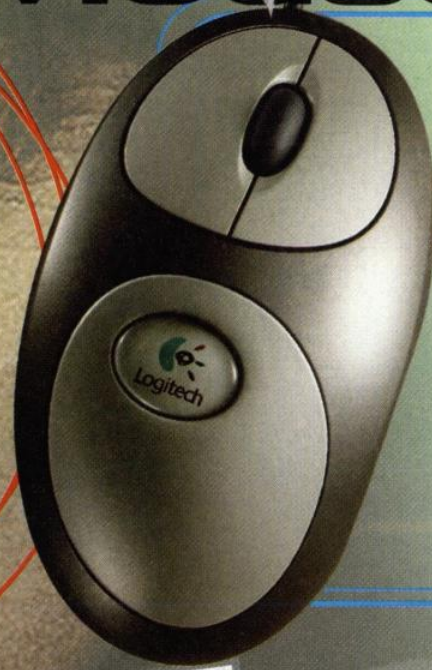
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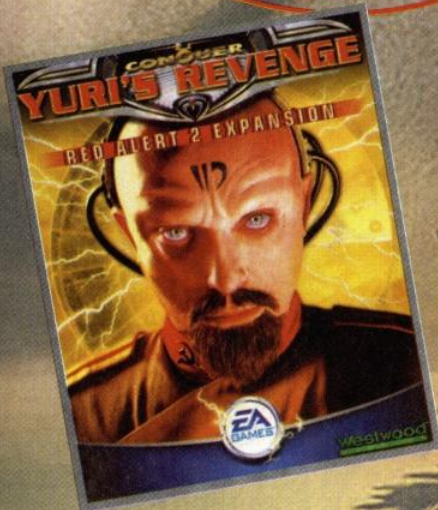
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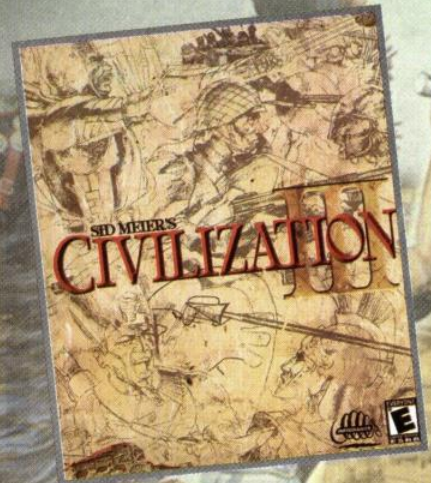
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MAXIMO: Ghosts to Glory

PS2

CATEGORY: 3D Platformer >> **PLAYERS:** 1 >>
PUBLISHER: Capcom >> **AVAILABLE:** First Quarter 2002

WOW-O-METER



Not many of the new generation of gamers will remember the "hack 'n' slash" Capcom arcade games Ghosts 'n' Goblins and Ghouls 'n' Ghosts. Pumped into arcades the world over way back in the early 1980s, they featured some of the most fiendish and fun side-scrolling action in a uniquely creepy yet cartoon-like setting. Now, almost twenty years on, inspired by their very own classics, Capcom bring forth Maximo: Ghosts to Glory, a new 3D-action adventure for the PS2.

SPOTTY UNDERWEAR

Gamers take control of the young hero Maximo, who returns home to



Bickety-Bam, Maximo is the man!

find his kingdom in shambles. Not only is the countryside filled with hordes of the roaming undead thanks to his once trusted advisor Achille, but the scoundrel has imprisoned four beautiful sorceresses and forced Maximo's beloved Sophia to marry him. Maximo must rescue the four sorceresses, restore good to the kingdom, kick Achille's butt and get back his girl! He must even confront the Grim Reaper himself, as Achille's actions have created havoc throughout the underworld (he uses a giant drill to release the dead from their graves), and the big bad guy himself is none too impressed.

The original Ghosts 'n' Goblins is very much part of Capcom's heritage, and although Maximo is being developed by Capcom Digital Studios in the United States, the team took advice from their colleagues in Japan when deciding which of the classic elements would work well in Maximo. Thankfully, one of the coolest ideas from the original has been kept — Maximo's health will be visualised by the

GOODIE GOODIE YUM YUM

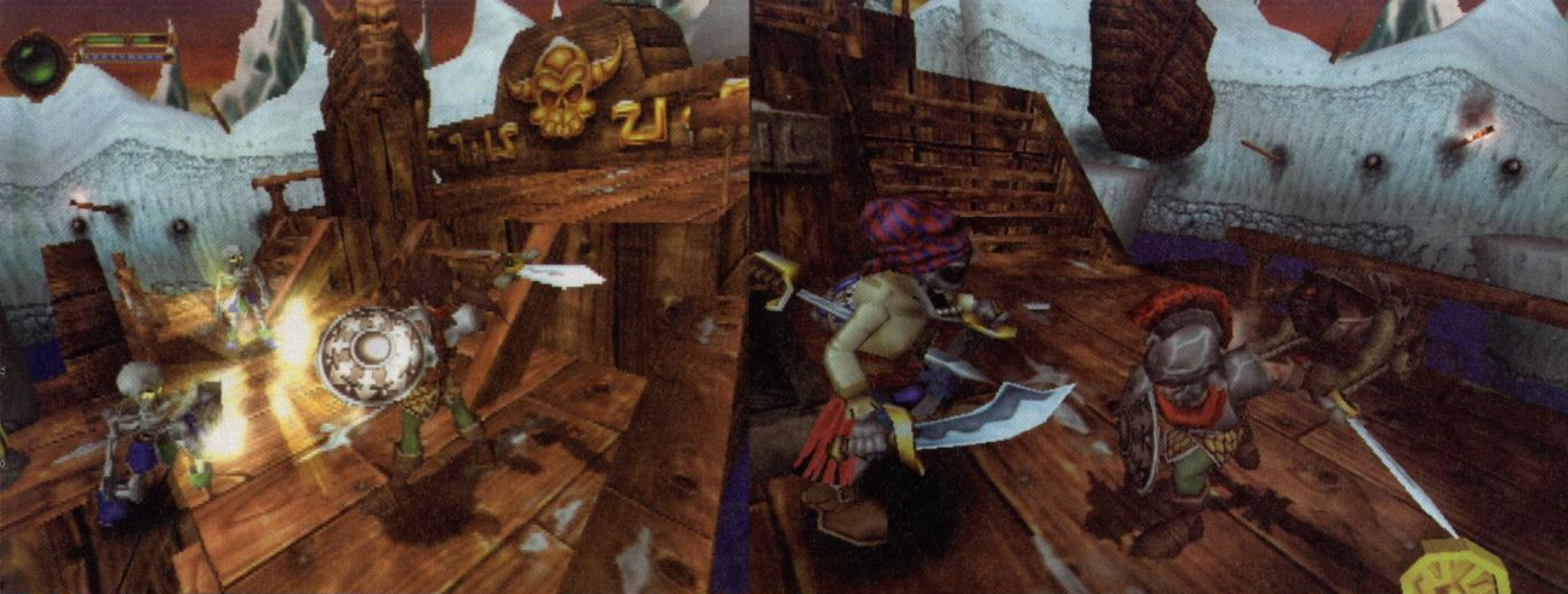
Goodies come in a number of forms. Treasure chests are dotted around the play area. They can be kicked open to reveal smaller goodies such as clusters of coins or they may even contain something evil, like sprouting teeth or a magician who turns Maximo into a baby, much like he was turned into a frog in the old arcade game. The other chests are locked and require Maximo to find the keys needed to open them.



items he is wearing. Starting out in a suit of bright, shiny armour, damage inflicted upon him will result in pieces of his armoured suit dropping off. If his health falls to a really low level he'll be left running around in just his spotty underwear!

With his trusty sword for offence and shield for defence, Maximo

begins his assault with only a couple of basic moves — starting with his signature downward strike. However, thanks to the game's character customisation system, it isn't long before Maximo has many more attacking moves with which to defeat the undead hordes. Each time he defeats a set number of



But, I can't see anything with the blast shield down.



Go run home to mummy. You wimp!



Maximo lunges onto a couple of boners.



enemies, Maximo receives a new attribute for either his sword or shield. These include transforming his sword into a flaming blade, calling down a meteor storm, the ability to throw his shield as an offensive weapon and even creating tornadoes. Overall, there are more

than 40 special abilities, moves and power-ups for Maximo to discover and master.

PAYING OFF THE REAPER

Maximo: Ghosts to Glory consists of five worlds with typically witty titles, such as Bad to the Bone, Watery Grave, Grave Danger etc. All the stages can be accessed by a central hub, although the huge guard that lurks within will try to hamper your progression into the tower. Initially, the guard is impossible to defeat, thus forcing the player to stock up on weapons during the periphery stages. In addition, rewards are given to players for fully exploring the game's less accessible areas. Plenty of hidden items and shortcuts can be found, whilst the ability to select an area from the tower region ensures that the player is given a varied task, with more levels opening up as you progress. Interestingly, unlike



WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE: Some of the original music from the old arcade game, re-worked with a full orchestral score.

most action games where you can save the game at any point, Maximo introduces a new continue system. Players must collect spirits to earn 'death coins' that can be used to pay off the Grim Reaper and gain Continues.

The environments have managed to retain that original Ghosts 'n' Goblins feel, however with the power of the PS2, there are a lot of nice new graphical features and lighting effects to impress. The attention to detail is quite impressive, with leading Japanese artist Susumu Matsushita, designing all of the game characters.

It seems that Maximo is a return to a classic style of gameplay, inspired by its old arcade heritage. The devious level design and strong AI of the many adversaries may be hallmark Ghosts 'n' Goblins qualities, but it still looks like there will be plenty of new surprises to frighten the armoured pants off us when Maximo returns from the gaming grave. <<<



UNDEAD GAMING!

>>> The old 1985 original has made an appearance on various systems throughout the years, from the Commodore 64 to the Game Boy, but what on Earth could possibly beat memories of the old arcade cabinet with its ball-top joystick and flat arcade buttons, the smell of ice-cream and dirty coins and that desperate need to continue...?



This game looks hot. Ho ho.



Say hello to my hunk of hot steel.



UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP



CATEGORY: FPS >> **PLAYERS:** 1-multi >>
PUBLISHER: Infogrames >> **AVAILABLE:** Mid 2002

WOW-O-METER



Unreal Championship has to be one of our most anticipated Xbox titles. Development duties are being handled by Canadian development house Digital Extremes — co-developers of Unreal and Unreal Tournament with Epic. Epic are providing the base technology for the game — the Unreal Warfare engine, with Digital Extremes looking after everything else. Unreal Championship is being designed primarily to take full advantage of the Xbox's online play, but it's also going to be a compelling single player experience.

DARK INDUSTRIAL

To say this game looks stunning would be an understatement. Titles like this are what the next generation of machines are all about. The engine is absolutely cutting edge, and the character design in particular is very cool. Digital Extremes have added some important elements of their own to the engine, the most notable of which are the dynamic particle system and projective texturing. The

dynamic particle system makes particle-based effects like smoke, fog, steam and dust behave in a realistic nature, so they're affected by objects and wind moving through them. Projective textures are, unsurprisingly, textures projected from a light source. It's the projective texture system that is responsible for creating real-time soft-edged shadows on all surfaces and particles. To illustrate the two, one scene that the press were shown was in a dank industrial room with a huge fan rotating on one side and steam rising up out of two giant vents in the center. The light shining through the mesh blades of the fan is illuminated in the steam as well as casting incredible looking shadows on the floor of the room and on the players as it rotates. Even cooler, if you fire a rocket through the room, the steam dissipates and swirls realistically in the rocket's wake. Awesome stuff.

According to Digital Extremes, Unreal Championship's graphics will be close to 100 times as detailed as Unreal Tournament — presumably a

cumulative figure based on the number of polygons in the environments as well as increased detail on the textures. Regardless of how they got that figure, however, there's no doubt that the game looks incredible. The levels are massive too. One that we were shown transitioned seamlessly from indoor rooms and foggy cave areas to a massive tropical outdoor environment. All this and Digital Extremes are aiming for 60fps!

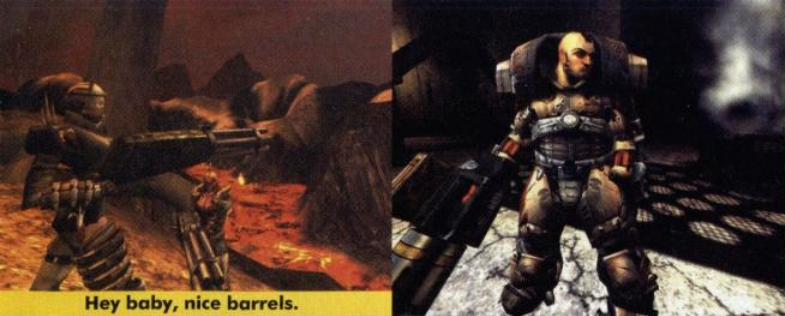
SENSE OF PROGRESSION

Unreal Championship will have five styles of game to choose from — Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch, CTF, Domination 2 and Bombing Run. Domination 2 is a simplified

version of Unreal Tournament's Domination, and Bombing Run is a variation of CTF where your team has to take a bomb from the middle of the playfield over to the enemy's base and detonate it. The beauty of Bombing Run is that you can pass the bomb between team members, which should make for some very cool teamplay as you're trying to get the bomb towards the enemy base as quickly as possible, as well as playing piggy in the middle with the



Awwwww, shoot.



Hey baby, nice barrels.



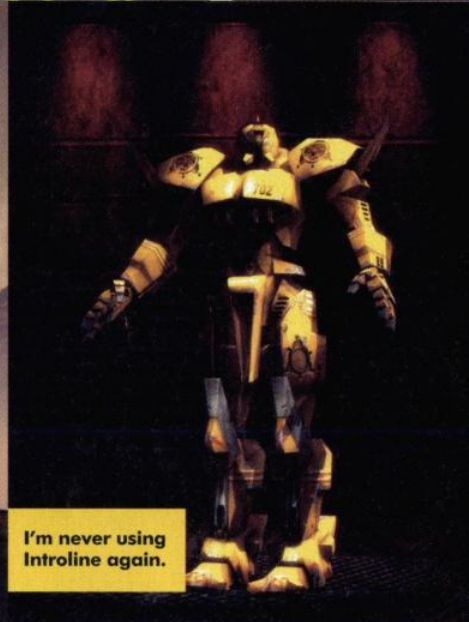
That gun is actually bigger than he is!



Blau! Rockets for breakfast.



Shhh... we're hunting wabbits!



I'm never using Introline again.

23. All your base are belong to us.

enemy team. Indeed, team-oriented gameplay is definitely the focus for this title.

Digital Extremes are building UC from the ground up to work on console. This doesn't mean they're dumbing the genre down, however. Rather, they're acknowledging that

porting the UT concept across wholesale won't result in the best gameplay possible. Thus, Digital Extremes are implementing a host of new features (mostly good) to maximise the gameplay, and to give the game a better sense of progression and achievement than the Q3A's and UT's of the world.

standards we won't have many complaints. Plus, since you'll be leading a team of AI controlled bots a lot of the time (as opposed to playing on a team with other humans), Digital Extremes are mapping a whole host of commands that you'll be able to give your team in the game.

Other more console-oriented changes include the introduction of special dodge moves and a combo system in battle. We don't have much in the way of details on the combos yet, but we do know that you'll have a meter that builds up with each combo, resulting in a quad damage style rampage mode when it's full. You'll also have a double jump — an odd decision, but one that kinda makes sense. After all, you want to be able to reach high ledges but having all that height in a single jump would look goofy. UC is primarily being developed for online multiplayer, with the team aiming for 16 to 32 player games online, but it will also have split-screen play. At this stage two player split-screen will definitely be included, but they're unsure about four player. Regardless, Unreal Championship is going to be hot! <<>>



It'll be a snowy day in Hell...



Cool futuristic cappuccino makers.

TOO UGLY TO LIVE

>>Unreal Championship's cast is split up into six main races and 24 unique character models, plus several unlockables.

Each race/character will actually have its own strengths and weaknesses too, most probably in the areas you'd expect — speed, power, defense etc. Having so much variety should work to the game's advantage, however, bringing a more strategic edge to the gameplay. We're really looking forward to custom building different sets of teams for the different styles of game.



For instance, experience points will now play a role. The more victories you have, the more experience points you (and your team) earn and the better your stats will become. Although there will be a wide variety of game setups, it's the team angle that will be the big drawcard for the game. We haven't seen the bot AI in action yet, but judging from Unreal Tournament's



MASTER OF ORION 3

PC CATEGORY: Strategy >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: Infogrames >> AVAILABLE: First Quarter 2002



Five years after the release of MOO2, the darned thing still turns up in Top 100 lists and strategy halls of fame. When Star Wars: Rebellion, Star Trek: Birth of the Federation or Pax Imperia sent people star-bound with an empire laid at their fingertips, you could almost be guaranteed to find a phrase along these lines: "well, it ain't no Master of Orion."

Well, it looks like Quicksilver's take on the SimTex series is going to entrench itself in the reviewer's toolbox of benchmarking clichés as well. The new team includes many die-hard fans, including one Alan Emrich. Emrich wrote the epic strategy guide for the original

game and couldn't help but be constantly on the phone (back in 1993, during its development) with MOO's lead designer Steve Barcia and just generally meddling. Basically, these punks know their stuff... which becomes readily apparent when you realise what they are trying to do.

WEB OF LIFE

Quicksilver is trying to kick your generic space empire into living colour. One of the most impressive aspects of this is the basic connection between all elements of a civilisation. If you tug at a loose string over here it is felt on the other side of the tapestry.

The tech tree (more like: "tech web") gives a good example of how this all works. Every tech advancement has multiple prerequisites drawn from across several research disciplines and which vary depending on the

cultural leaning of your chosen race (which is the result of one of seven central belief systems and a combination of a couple of secondary cultural biases chosen out of a list of about 15), as well some random shuffling to keep things interesting.

Now, say you get attacked by a fleet and your weapons just bounce off like so many pea-shooters because their shields are too mighty-mighty. The next turn it's likely that your propellerheads will rush you with some much-needed proposals for new projects.

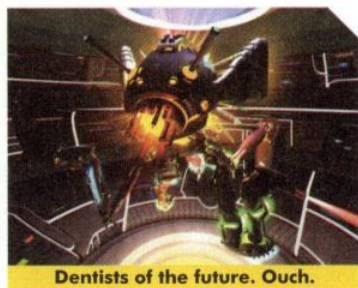
Some will be within reach like the next level of missiles, which might overcome the shields through slightly increased damage, others might be highly theoretical, like new shield-piercing phasors. It'll be your choice which to fund, or whether to keep your current projects juiced up. If you're busy managing construction or fleet combat, perhaps a militant-



Wow, his favourite hobby is knitting.

technophile leader will start to funnel funds into the project without your say-so.

Quicksilver have done their best to make leaders and the empire building really live and breathe. Each major racial group has its own feel, language and look (including ship and building design). Each also has leaders that will do their own thing. MOO 3 tries address the issues of pacing and micromanagement by having empires run by the player making high-level policy decisions and having them carried out by fairly independent colony leaders. This makes running your space empire a breeze, as long as you can root out corruption, but will hardly keep hands-on players happy. This is where Imperial Focus Points come in.



Dentists of the future. Ouch.



RUNNING AN EMPIRE

There's only so much an emperor can do. This is represented in the form of Imperial Focus. If you want to take command of a battle, adjust every tension screw on a new design, force a technology through the red tape, build colonies just so or begin a masterful espionage campaign, you can. You just have to spend focus points. The thinking is that players should be able to play, in minute detail, the parts of the game they really love while everything else ticks along... time waits for no one.

This keeps the game moving for multiplayer, allows beginners to get into it right away, lets racial flavour shine through, removes the masochistic temptation to simultaneously micromanage 40 systems, and adds a new political management angle to the game. The depth of all this is set to "amazing". Broad strokes might be the crux of control, but details power it all. So many interlocking stats provide the depth and variation.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:
 Each copy of MOO3 should come with Space Food Sticks so we don't starve.

Remember: Space Empire Game. Okay, ground combat troops alone have stats for accuracy, evasion, armour, attack strength, initiative, number of attacks per round, morale, target priority as well as some hidden ones.

All of these can be modified by tech, circumstances, race, beliefs... it really is mind-boggling and all part of an organic whole.

The transparent operation of all of these should be the real beauty of MOO3.

Quicksilver do have a few hurdles to overcome like seeing the game's real-time ship combat; convincing people that the Mrshah, Alkari, Elarian, Bulrathi, Darloks, and Gnolems races were highly overrated and needed to be replaced; as well as reassuring people of the abilities of the colony leaders (the woeful auto-build scarred MOO2 addicts

who found randomly selecting things often a better option than giving the colony leader control).

Ultimately, the success of MOO3 will come down to whether Quicksilver's team of AI specialists can produce something vaguely in the right ballpark to handle it all, because everything else points to this game writing a bold new chapter – or two – in the wonderful book of "Just One More Turn ... Oh Crap, it's Dawn".



Weren't you in Return of the Jedi?



Those Freemasons, I tell ya...



Proctologists of the future... ahhh!

25. A console is all I'm allowed in my cell.

26. Soldier Of Fortune makes American troops the professionals they are today.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

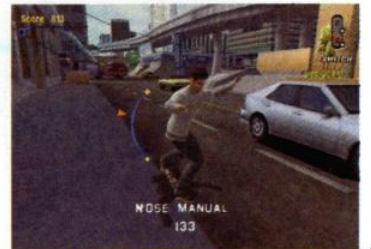
GCN CATEGORY: Skate sim >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Activision >> AVAILABLE: Early 2002

As you're no doubt aware, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 was a launch title for the GameCube in the USA. Rest assured we'll also be seeing the title at the GameCube's Australian launch. So what are the differences between the PS2 and the GCN versions? We've been playing the US game and the news is both good and bad. On the plus side, the GameCube version has richer colours, marginally better looking skater models and slightly smoother animations. On the negative side, the short development time has left its mark in the form of a seriously inconsistent frame rate. We have our fingers crossed that this problem will be rectified before the game comes to PAL territories, but we're

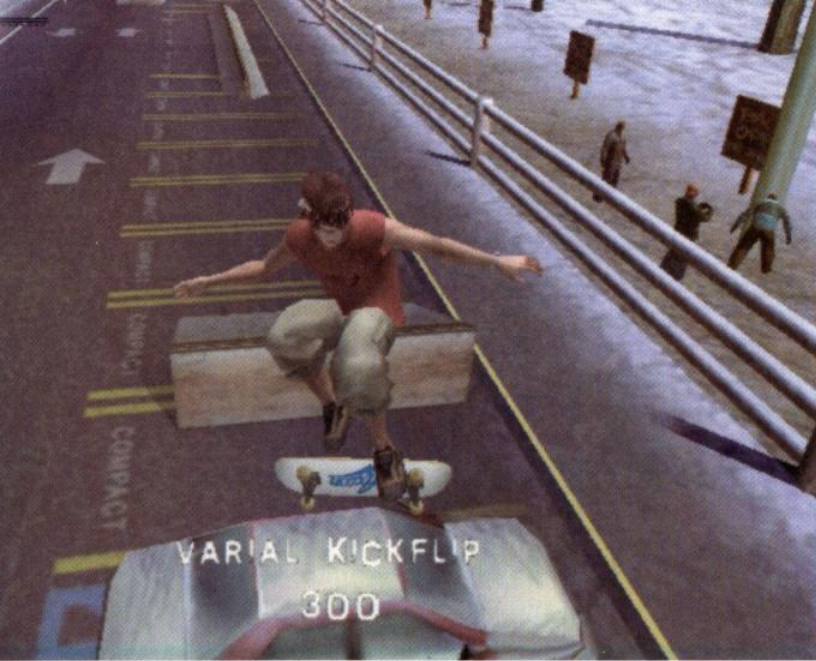
WOW-O-METER



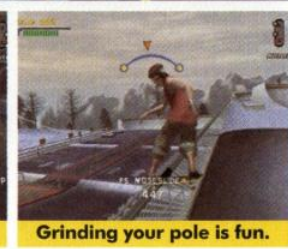
not holding our breath. Another thing to mention is that although the PS2 controller is perfect for TH3, the GameCube controller also works well, and it doesn't take long to get used to. All up, Nintendo fans should be happy with this one.



His nose is manual? Wha...?



It's a bird, it's a plane...



Grinding your pole is fun.

DRAKAN: THE ANCIENT'S GATES

PS2 CATEGORY: Action/Adventure >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Sony >> AVAILABLE: Early 2002

Remember Drakan? It scored a big 89% way back in Hyper 74, and now the sequel is coming to PS2 and looking mighty juicy too. The player once again assumes the role of sexy medieval heroine Rynn, and her dragon Arokh. The even-better news for the sequel is that the game is over three times the size of the original, the graphics are much more detailed, there are around 80 hand-to-hand weapons, an expanded range of magic at your disposal and even dragon weapons...

whatever those might be (in addition to breathing fire). The five environments that the game takes place in are impressive in their scope, but somewhat clichéd as far as the fantasy genre and gaming goes. Even so, huge worlds, a good mixture of hand-to-hand and air combat, and plenty of personality (but not in the Lara sense of the word). Magic Carpet meets Tomb Raider?

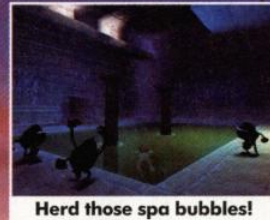
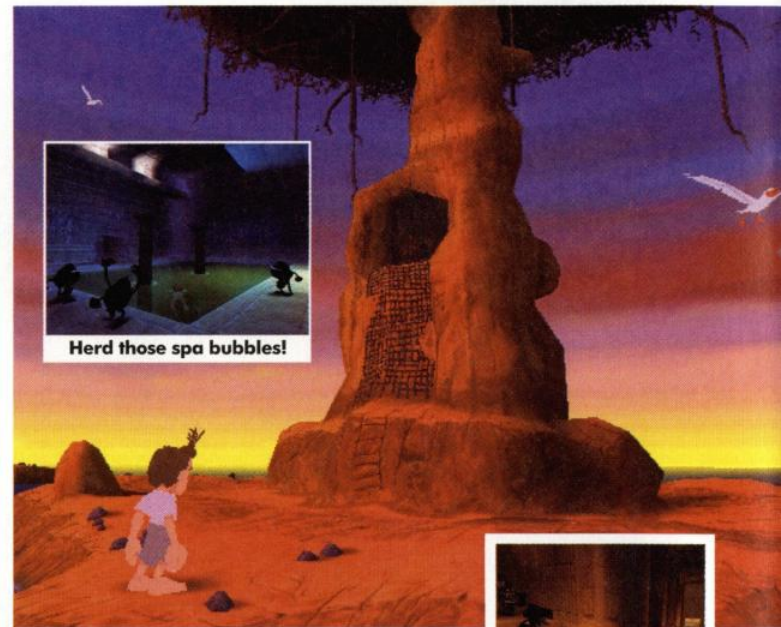
WOW-O-METER



Are you my mother?



Pensacola: Wings of Gold. Not.



Herd those spa bubbles!



HERDY GERDY

PS2 CATEGORY: Platformer >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Eidos >> AVAILABLE: Early 2002

Herdy Gerdy promises to be a game quite unlike any other. We got our hands on a preview build of this herding sim recently, and it's coming along very nicely. What's that? No, that was no typo, this actually is a herding sim. The story in a nutshell involves your character's (Gerdy) quest to overthrow the evil herding overlord Zadorf. Due to some foul play, Gerdy's father can't compete in the annual herding tournament, so it's up to the young country bumpkin to save the day. You'll start out with relatively easy training tasks and

progress through to much more difficult puzzle-intensive herding and finally to the showdown to wrest control from Zadorf. It remains to be seen how compelling the gameplay will be, but Herdy Gerdy certainly has a very unique and interesting graphical style. Using a subtle cel-shading technique and earthy-coloured texture palette, the gameworld looks like a Warner Bros cartoon, and is very much in keeping with the rural herding theme. One to keep an eye on.

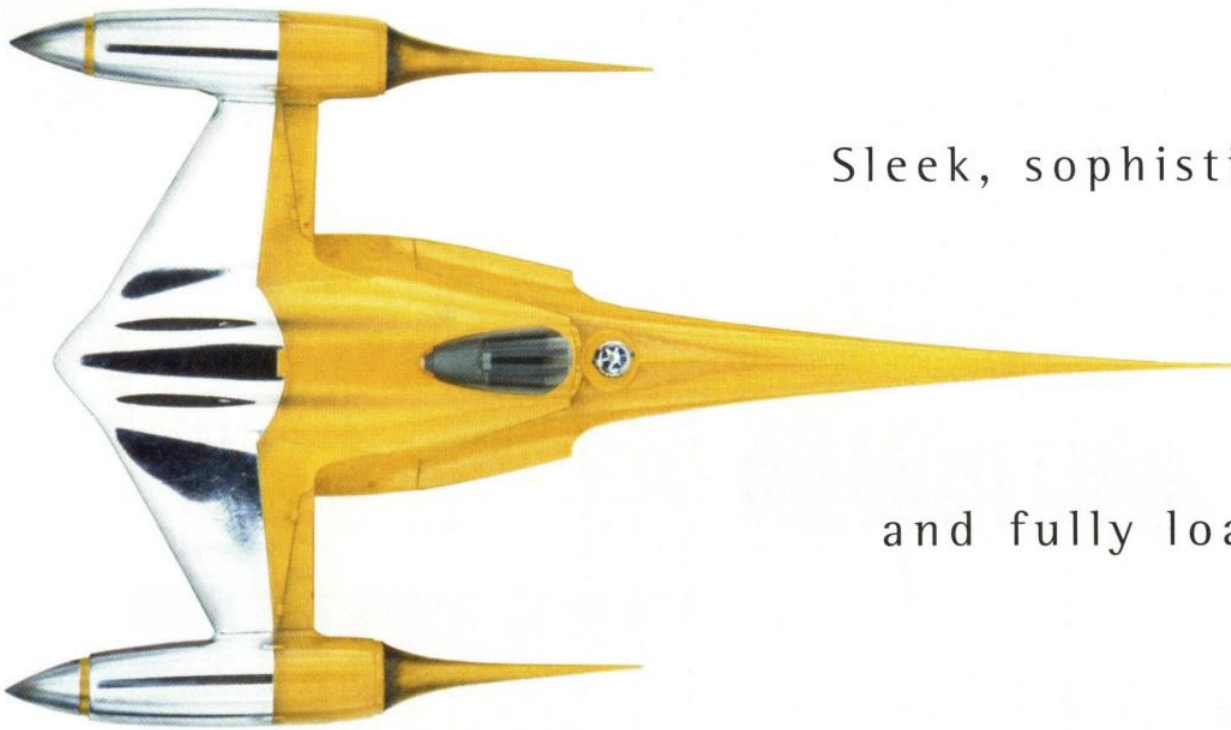
WOW-O-METER





Sleek, sophisticated,

and fully loaded.

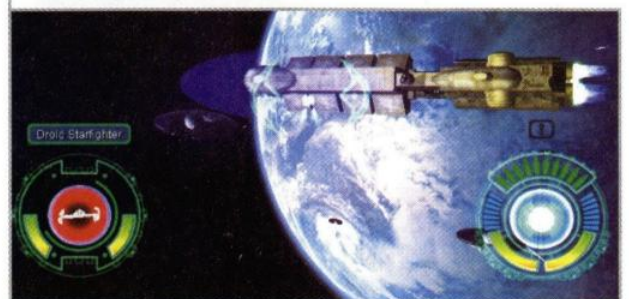
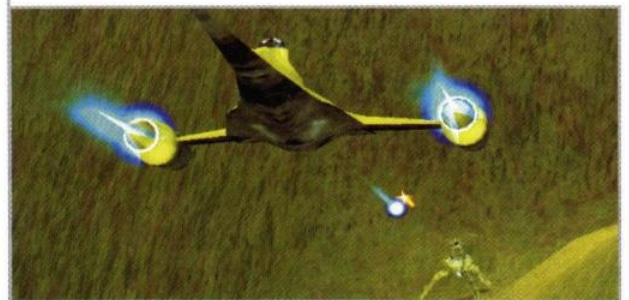


STAR WARS[®] STARFIGHTER[™]

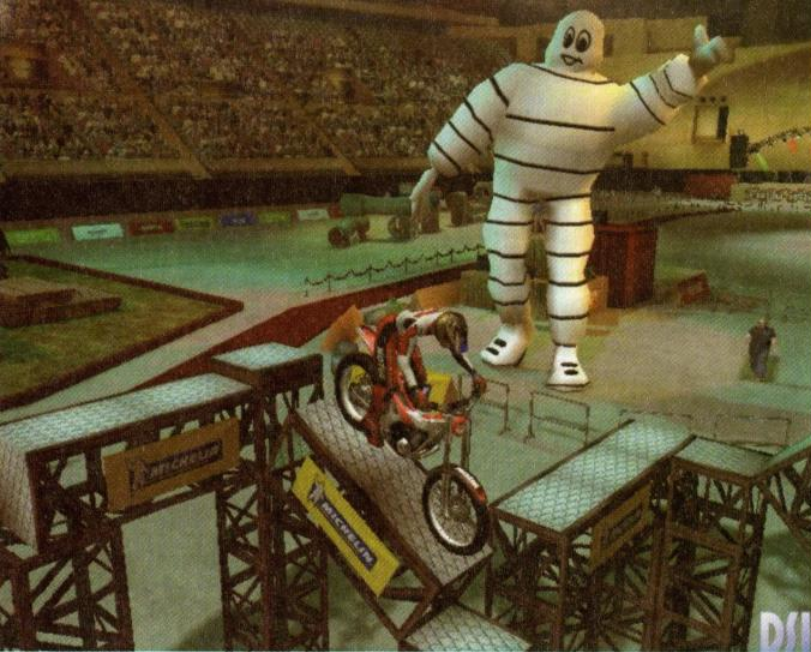
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Power between your legs.

Spotlights may cause injury.

MOTO RACER 3

PC CATEGORY: Racing >> PLAYERS: 1-Multi >> PUBLISHER: Infogrames >> AVAILABLE: Early 2002

The first two Moto Racer games are among the most entertaining and adrenaline soaked arcade racers ever released on PC. Back when 3Dfx was redefining PC gaming, Moto Racer was one of the first games to take advantage of the newfound power with a slick, fast engine and a compelling combination of both street and motocross racing styles. With almost three years since Moto Racer 2, developers Delphine are back, and the series is looking stronger than ever.

Moto Racer 3 will have six distinct types of race, divided evenly between motocross and street events. Particularly appealing is the new traffic mode, where you take a

WOW-O-METER



superbike out onto the streets of Paris and compete in races with full traffic.

For better or for worse, Delphine are introducing more sim elements for MR3. Bikes are now modelled based on stats and telemetric data from the actual manufacturers, so they'll behave far more realistically. To complement the more realistic physics, Moto



On yer bike!

Racer 3 is going to be perhaps the prettiest PC racer yet, bringing gaming one step closer to photo realistic graphics. Full review soon!

THE THING

WOW-O-METER



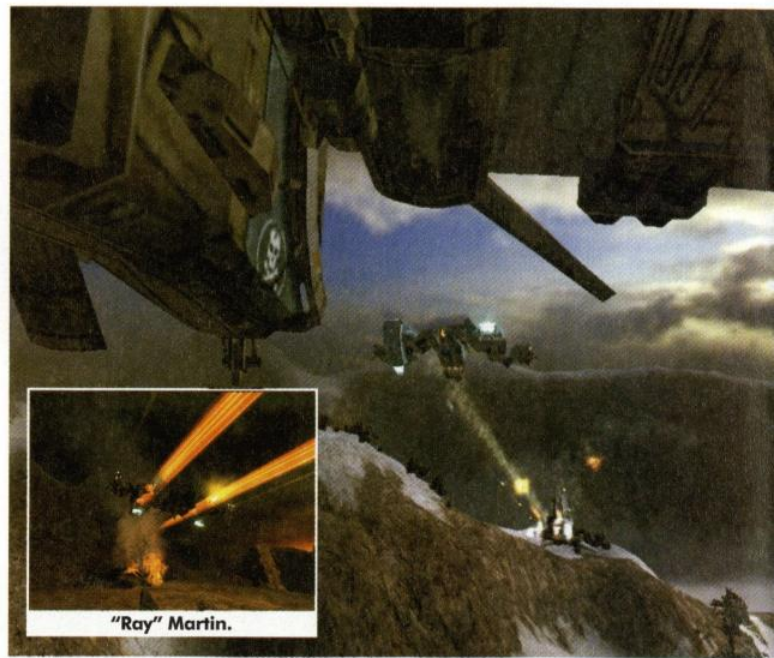
XBOX CATEGORY: Survival Horror >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Konami >> AVAILABLE: Mid 2002

Eack in 1982, John Carpenter made the seminal sci-fi horror film *The Thing*. Set on a research base in Antarctica, it was a claustrophobic and terrifying film... and a survival horror game waiting to happen. The game will pick up where the film left off with a new research party heading to the base to unravel the mystery behind the previous crew's deaths. Unfortunately for them, the alien is still lurking in the base, and since it can take the form of any animal, you're soon unsure who can be trusted and who should be toasted. What will hopefully elevate *The Thing* above other titles in

the genre will be the squad-based nature of the gameplay. Every member of your crew is a specialist in one of three areas — engineer, soldier or medic, so you'll need to switch between party members and use their unique abilities to progress. Better still, to keep the team cohesive, you'll have to keep their fear levels down and their trust levels high... all while working out which, if any, of your team mates have been infected. The visuals are coming along nicely, with the enemies in particular looking stunning, thanks to the organic art technology developers Computer Artworks have implemented.



Gee, can't get a date?



"Ray" Martin.

YAGER

XBOX CATEGORY: Aerial combat >> PLAYERS: 1-4 PUBLISHER: THQ >> AVAILABLE: TBA

Hidden amidst all the high profile titles and booths at last year's E3 were a myriad of smaller developers, many with impressive but relatively unknown titles. One such game was Yager, a title in development by a small German team of experienced game designers. It wowed us then and it's looking better than ever now. Set in a gritty militarised future, Yager is an aerial combat game with an emphasis on storyline, interesting objectives and tight technology. The action in Yager stays close to the

ground, allowing the team to keep the gameplay varied, and the eye candy intense. Whether it will all come together remains to be seen, but the development team have built very solid foundations to work from — the game engine in particular is very impressive. The design work is also first rate, with the combat craft suitably sci-fi, yet original at the same time. Yager will have 20 or more single player missions and is definitely one to watch.

WOW-O-METER



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Magic: The Gathering Online

WWW.WIZARDS.COM/MAGIC

In years gone by, a couple of friends introduced me to Magic: The Gathering, a card game that blew me away, and had me quite hooked almost immediately. For those unfamiliar with the game, it's a trading card game that like most other games of its nature, encourages you to buy more cards in order to improve your chances of winning. I saw impending financial doom on the horizon if I allowed myself to really get stuck into the game, so I stopped, wishing it were a computer game instead.

Well, years pass, demand grows, and now Magic: The Gathering is about to become an online PC game. There's still that "pay for a better situation" lurking about, but there are a whole bunch of reasons as to why both newcomers and seasoned veterans of the world's most popular trading card game should be interested in this electronic, online incarnation of the game.

MAGIC 101

For those who haven't played the original card game, Magic is a one-on-one strategy game, where each player takes the role of a wizard, trying to take out their opponent through their spells and artefacts. The first element of strategy comes about from choosing your deck of 60 cards from whatever ones you happen to own. It's not as though there are a certain bunch of "the best" cards though, as there are five schools of magic, each leaning towards a basic focus, such as summoning, protection, enchantment, etc. Over specialising in one colour (school) will usually lead to being unable to deal with a wider variety of situations, and spreading yourself thin across the five will usually lead to not having enough mana (power) to activate the more powerful cards in your hand. There are so many cards available these days that you can spend an eternity going through what's available in your quest for



the perfect deck, or if you're competitively minded, the perfect deck for a certain opponent.

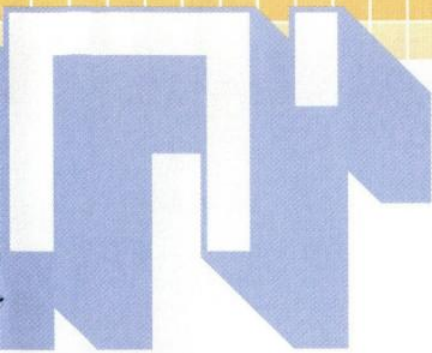
Ask any MTG player with a sizeable collection as to what cards they've got, and they'll probably shrug their shoulders as to what they own past their favourite deck, as cataloguing hundreds of cards in your head is nigh on impossible. Go on to ask that player if they've found it difficult to find a variety of suitable opponents, and they'll probably say yes. Query them as to whether or not they've had an argument over the rules on the legalities of a card or a certain move, and watch their fist clench in angry reminiscence. These headaches with the card-based version of the game



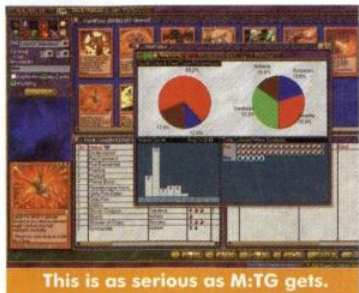
are what make Magic Online such an outstanding direction for the game to be taken in.

Wizards of the Coast, creators of the original card game have commissioned Leaping Lizard Software to create an online incarnation of the game, that basically lets you play the game in pretty much every way you could care to, without leaving your home.

When you purchase a copy of Magic Online, you'll log on, create your account, and be granted a certain number of points. You can use these points to purchase cards in an effort to construct a certain deck you want to play matches with. You can acquire more points either through winning matches, or by



29. 17'S \$0 ||@|V|V| £337!



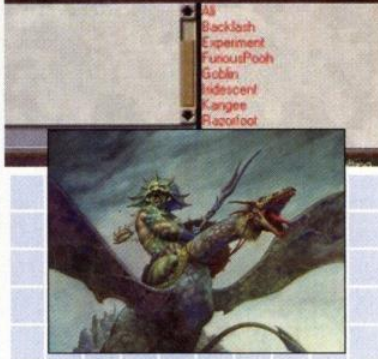
This is as serious as M:TG gets.



Nerds Anonymous!



It's great, but hey, you can't flick the cards around and chew them.



MAGIC GATHERING POINTS

Wizards of the Coast
Makers of Magic: The Gathering have a detailed FAQ that will answer most questions rabid fans will demand to know about the online incarnation.
<http://www.wizards.com/default.asp?x=magic/magiconline>

MTG Paradise
A MTG site with an Australia/NZ focus, covering everything from local tournaments to deck critiques.
<http://www.mtgparadise.com/>

MTG Planet
Forums, news, strategies, and all sorts of other guff about Magic: The Gathering.
<http://www.mtgplanet.com/>



shelling out to Wizards of the Coast. Those of you into the whole "mutually beneficial" thing can opt to trade cards with other players, which works well, since you'll end up with cards that you're probably not going to want.

MAGICAL PERSONAL ORGANISER

Other than buying folders to manually store and flick through your collection, those playing the card-based game will attest to how time consuming evaluating and choosing your deck can be. Besides the obvious "sort by" and "search by" functions you'd expect, Magic Online provides a treasure trove of statistics and probability, helping

you figure out how long till you're likely to be able to play a certain card from your deck, given its prerequisites to use. Essentially, this takes out the headache factor in determining whether that "unbeatable" combination of cards you want to use will take too long in putting together in practise.

Magic Online will feature all the current cards from 7th Edition, and from the expansions Invasion, Planeshift, Apocalypse, Odyssey, and the upcoming Torment. As new cards or expansions are released into the card game, Magic Online shall include these as free updates.

At launch, the Magic Online will allow for match formats including Duel, League, Draft, Sealed, and

Multiplayer (more than 2). Players will be able to participate in leagues, tournaments, and even create their own (although those won't affect rankings). This will save enthusiasts from having to travel to play in competitions, and with the ability to save games halfway through, make it far more convenient for those pressed for spare time to play. There are also many features to help point out to players what cards and actions are legal or illegal, for the different types of matches available.

What we're looking at is an online turn-based strategy game that offers something for those that like to be able to build themselves up, and compete on different levels. The lack of need for a speedy connection also makes this an excellent option for people with cruddy links. For the existing Magic junkies, this is a means to a fix of your chosen poison, without having to leave the home or meet up with scary, real-life types. <<





AGATA BUDINSKA

One of the most frustrating things for me at the moment is broadband Internet. I don't know about you, but there ain't much to do with a dial-up modem these days, except maybe look up movie sessions and do some shopping. Broadband is almost like a distant promise, as availability and choice in certain areas is slim to non-existent.

There are only two real players on the block, one that is only available in a handful of areas, whilst the other penalises you for downloading too much (the whole reason you go for broadband in the first place).

At the moment, with prices what they are, broadband is a commitment; like mobile companies, the connection comes with a contract (short to long term). Even dial up ISP's seem to be catching on to this as a way of getting customers to stay on with them.

But there may be a few new players sometime in the near future, with Telstra finally caving into pressure from the ACCC over the price of wholesale DSL (reported to have been as little as \$15 a month less than their retail offering). Although, of course, they are still in appeal over some claims of uncompetitive behaviour.

When wholesale prices drop, the basic equation should be: wholesale cheaper = more ISPs buying = more plans to choose from = more choice.

This will only happen if enough ISPs stick around for long enough to start offering broadband connections. Lately, quite a few ISPs have gone the way of the Dodo, either selling out to larger ISPs or disbanding altogether. At this rate, it may get to the point that there will only really be 3 or 4 ISPs to choose from in Australia that offer decent prices for service.

So, what do we do? Sit back and watch, basically...

Discourse, flames, opinions to: budinska@another.com

30. It's slowly becoming accepted as a valid art form.



FREE MUSIC

www.epitonic.com

One of the greatest sources for cutting edge fully legal music on the web. Epitonic serves up a wide variety of styles, from punk, hip hop and jazz through to techno, house and breakbeat – all with massive, fully searchable archives. Epitonic rises above other mp3 sites thanks to the quality of the music, and the obvious passion of the staff – every label and every artist has a write-up on where they came from and what they're all about. The only downside to the site is that all the mp3s are encoded at a 128-bit rate, so not exactly CD quality... but a fair enough trade off given the sheer volume of available music. Awesome.

HARDWARE WARS

www.anandtech.com

If you're into hardcore hardware analysis, then no doubt you may already heard of the wonderful Anandtech. Naturally, not everyone always agrees with webmaster Anand Lal Shimpi, but you can't dispute that he at least knows his technical stuff extremely well. Interestingly, he has started to pull apart the current crop of next-generation consoles to see how they tick, and to analyse just how good their hardware is. If you've always wanted to know the nitty, gritty details of how these babies work, and get his opinion on which console seems to have the best hardware components, then check this out! You can access it directly at: www.anandtech.com/showdoc.html?i=1561

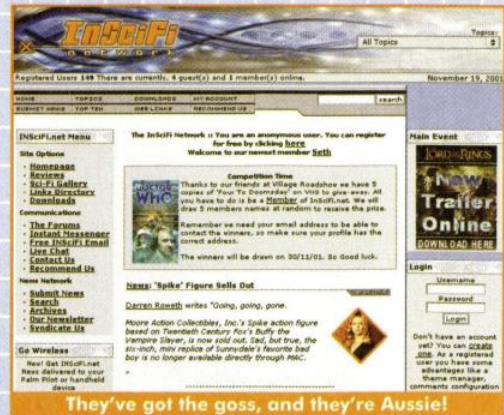


Lots of green coming your way. If only.

XBOX HITS OZ

www.xbox.com.au

The official Australian Xbox website is alive and kicking, providing interested gamers with news, competitions, previews and all sorts of other Xbox goodies. Visually identical to the American site, there's lots of Flash here, so make sure you have it. It's nice to see that Microsoft understand the importance of having local content, and what you'll see on this site will be tailored specifically for Aussie gamers. Yay!



THE LATEST IN SCI-FI

www.inscifi.net

What happens when a bunch of Hyper readers go and make a really good sci-fi website? They get put on show in Net Trawlin', that's what! In Sci-Fi takes care of all your sci-fi (and not so strictly sci-fi) desires, for the latest news on Star Trek, Star Wars, Doctor Who, Buffy, Lord of the Rings (the list goes on), to competitions, downloads, links and even the option of buying from a huge selection of cool posters. Check them out today, and tell them Hyper sent ya.



NEVERMORE NEVERMORE

www.ravensoft.com

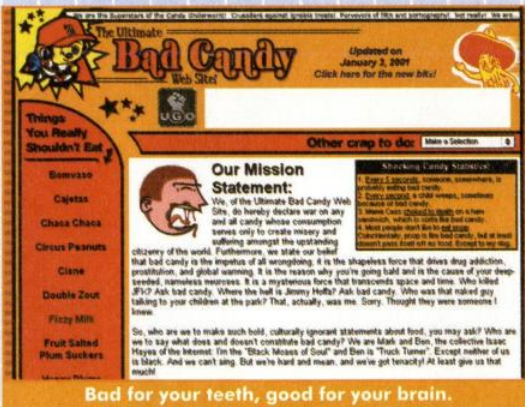
Raven Software are slowly becoming one of the most respected First Person Shooter developers. Since Voyager: Elite Force and Soldier of Fortune, and then id software's decision to entrust them with the development of Quake IV, it's obvious that they're a talented bunch. Here on their official site, you can get all the information you need on their upcoming games (like Jedi Outcast for LucasArts), read chat transcripts and hang out with other fans of their games on the Raven message forums.



TEAM XBOX

www.teamxbox.com


❖❖ If you've decided the Xbox is your thing, then get along to the independent Xbox website, Team Xbox, for some news and reviews of the US Xbox scene. These guys update every single day with the latest happenings on Xbox, including links to Xbox related stories around the internet, interviews with some of the games developers and some busy message boards where Xbox gamers can trade stories, cheats and opinions on the current software line-up.



FILTHY CANDY

www.bad-candy.com

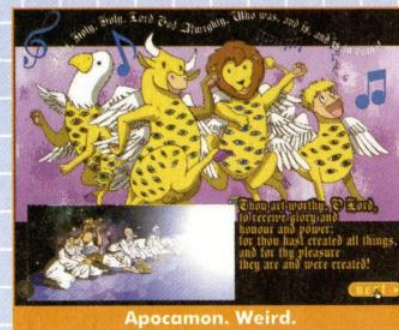
❖❖ A piss-funny site that concerns itself with warning the public about candy products that are on the market and really, really, bad. It's not updated often, but for first timers Bad Candy offers a veritable treasure trove of silly and disturbing candy-related articles, often featuring digi pics and movies!



FINAL SCRATCH

www.finalscratch.com

❖❖ Anyone who's into DJing mp3's beats should keep their eyes on this site and on this technology, because Final Scratch (by N2IT Development based in Amsterdam) is destined to take spinning into the digital dimension, without losing the aesthetics of analogue. Essentially, Final Scratch is a hardware and software solution that will allow you to cue music from your PC onto "fake" vinyl that will spin on your turntables and feel and respond as per normal. All the beauty of traditional mixing with the extra functionality of the digital medium. Incredible – we simply cannot wait!



THERE IS NO GOD

www.e-sheep.com

❖❖ Not since Jack Handey exploded onto the Christian comics scene (see www.x-entertainment.com) have we seen anything as bizarre... or sad as this. Electronic Sheep parcels Christian teachings into a hip format for the modern wired child through a combination of flash animations, anime style graphics and predictable topicality. Worth checking out purely for the trippyness of it all. Pokémon fans should check out the "Apocamon: The Final Judgement" comic. So very, very sad.



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WIN

ENTRIES CLOSE FEBRUARY 1ST

WIN THE CRAZY SILENT HILL 2 PRIZE PACK! WIN A TV!

FOR
PS2

To celebrate the release of Konami's Silent Hill 2 on PS2, Hyper and Ozisoft have put together this awesome PS2 prize pack. One grand winner will take home their very own Sharp 34cm TV, Silent Hill 2 for PS2, a special Silent Hill 2 statue, a Silent Hill 2 coffee mug, and a Silent Hill 2 t-shirt! We'll also have a copy of the game and a t-shirt for four runners-up. To enter, just answer the following question:

Who is the hero of the story in Silent Hill 2?

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

32. Books are like, so 18th century dude.

HERE'S WHAT YOU WIN!

FIRST PRIZE

- 1 X 34cm Sharp TV
- 1 X Silent Hill 2 game
- 1 X Silent Hill 2 coffee mug
- 1 X Silent Hill 2 t-shirt
- 1 X Silent Hill 2 statue

RUNNERS-UP

- 1 X Silent Hill 2 game
- 1 X Silent Hill 2 t-shirts





WIN THE CRAZY 100TH ISSUE PRIZE PACK!

The Biggest pile of games ever!


Here at the Hyper office we get sent many games to review, and many times we get asked, "so what do you guys do with all those games you get sent to review?" The answer to that question is right here. Over the course of this year, we've hoarded quite a few games that have been sent to the magazine. Some of them we have reviewed, others have sat in a pile on our desk waiting patiently in line for an empty page in the magazine. In our crazy, beautiful way of doing things, we decided that it would be cool for one very special Hyper reader to win the "Hyper pile o' games". What's in the pile? A huge swag of stuff... Games, t-shirts, and... stuff. Some games that might take your interest include PC, PlayStation, Game Boy, GBA and PS2 games such as:

FOR
PS2, PC,
GBC, GBA,
PSONE

Solder of Fortune Collector's Edition, SSX Tricky, Spiderman 2, WWF: Smackdown - Just Bring It!, Red Faction, Railroad Tycoon II Platinum, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, Shogun: Total War, Red Alert 2: Yuri's Revenge, Throne of Darkness, Pokémon Crystal, Tomb Raider: Curse of the Sword, GT Advance, X-Men: Mutant Academy 2, I-War 2: Edge of Chaos, Matt Hoffman's Pro BMX, and much, much more!

IS THIS COOL OR WHAT?

To enter this competition, we want you to answer the following question:

 Why is Hyper called Hyper?
(The answer is somewhere in this issue)

Put your answer, along with your name and address, on the back of an envelope and send it to: **Crazy 100th issue Prize Pack!, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.** Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity to win the biggest mystery pack of games ever known to mankind!

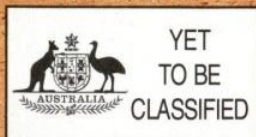


33. TV really sucks.

If it looks this



Rage
www.rage.com



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22138GTCA HM

good on the outside...

GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE

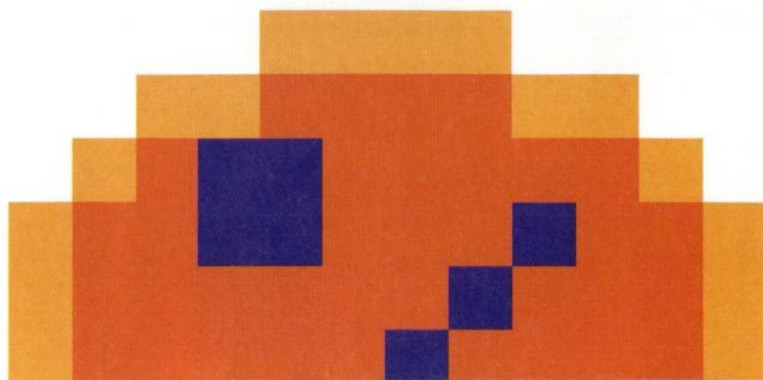
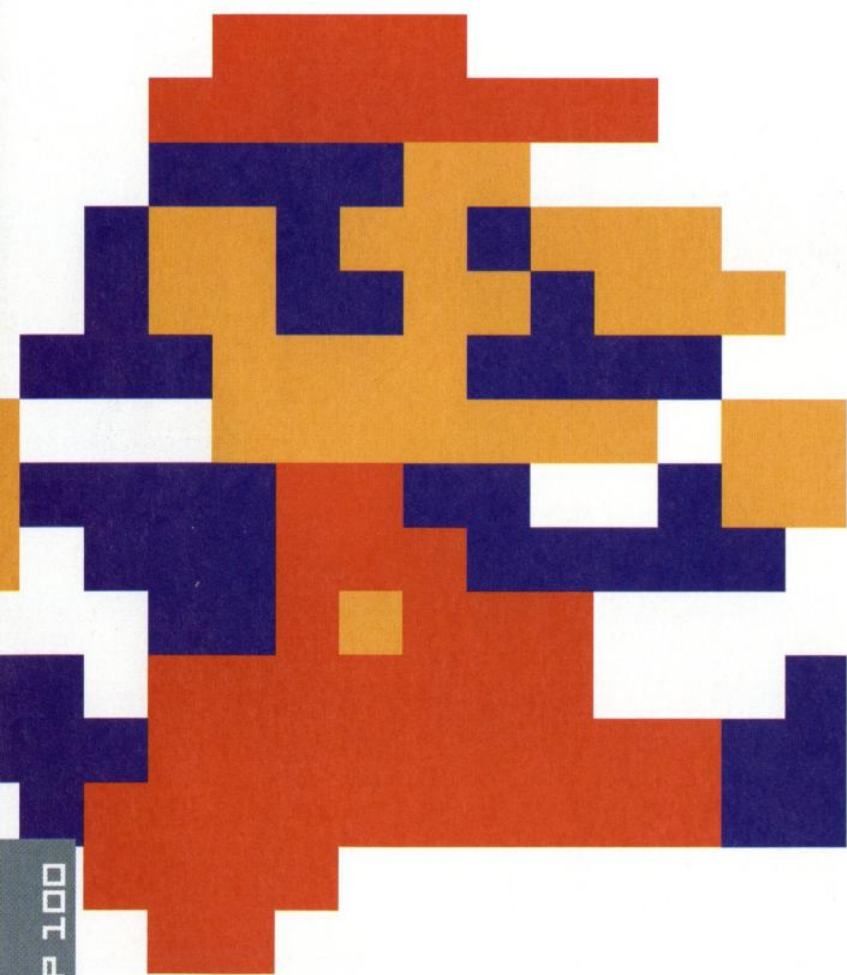
GTA
AFRICA

PlayStation®2

THE ULTIMATE TOP 100

THIS YEAR WE'VE DECIDED TO BREAK DOWN OUR TOP 100 INTO TEN TOP TENS, PRIMARILY SO WE COULD SEPARATE ALL THE BEST GAMES INTO PLATFORM SPECIFIC LISTS. WHY HAVE WE DONE THIS? WELL, THERE ARE SIMPLY TOO MANY GAMING PLATFORMS THESE DAYS TO PROVIDE A FAIR COMPARISON – YOU JUST CAN'T JUDGE PC GAMES AGAINST PSONE GAMES, OR NINTENDO 64 GAMES TO PLAYSTATION 2 GAMES.

THE RESULT IS SOMETHING AKIN TO A BUYER'S GUIDE OR "BEST OF" FOR EACH GAMING PLATFORM – WHICH IS ALWAYS HANDY! WE'VE ALSO DECIDED TO NAIL A LIST OF WHO WE REGARD AS THE BEST GAMES DEVELOPERS IN THE WORLD, AS WELL AS GIVE YOU A FEW LISTS OF OUR MOST WANTED GAMES. WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? WE BRING YOU OUR 10 ULTIMATE TOP TENS...



10 BEST PS2 GAMES

The PS2 has really kicked into overdrive in the last few months – a fact reflected in our list, as the majority of titles are very new indeed.

10 Jak & Daxter
It's only just arrived, but we can't deny that this is the best 3D platformer on the PS2 and a shining example of how to make a mainstream game excellent fun for all.



9 Wipeout Fusion
Pure, unadulterated high-speed thrills. No other racing game on PS2 comes close to capturing the raw adrenaline rush of racing through these futuristic courses.



8 Onimusha Warlords
Capcom might like flogging dead horses, but occasionally they give the horse electro shock therapy too! Onimusha took the survival horror genre to new heights. And the feudal Japan setting rocked.



7 Star Wars: Starfighter
Starfighter was one of the first PS2 games to really show what the system could do... and in the Star Wars universe no less! Instant dogfighting fun.

6 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3
Fast, and with unlimited combo potential – this game makes you want to pick up a skateboard and head out onto the streets... but then you unlock the stacks videos!

5 Devil May Cry
The best survival horror game to date, and the first to introduce a proper combo system in combat. Style and substance in one... ya gotta love it!



4 Final Fantasy X
Final Fantasy X is a true next gen step for this most revered series. The gameplay doesn't stray too far from the previous games, but as an overall package, this is superb.



3 Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec
The most realistic and comprehensive racing game of all time. Long delayed, but well worth it, Gran Turismo 3 sports some of the most advanced graphics, and finely "tuned" gameplay on PS2.

2 Grand Theft Auto 3
GTA 3 is quite a cathartic gaming experience – it lets you live out all your crime spree fantasies within the safe confines of a videogame. It's also hugely impressive for its non-linear gameplay and huge environments.



1 Metal Gear Solid 2
Hideo Kojima has done it again. Just like MGS before it, Metal Gear Solid 2 has become one of the most intelligent, character filled, action packed, suspenseful and meaningful console games you can buy. Compelling and polished.

- HONORABLE MENTIONS:**
- Rez
 - Capcom Vs SNK 2
 - Pro Evolution Soccer
 - Klonoa 2
 - Ace Combat 4
 - NBA Street
 - Bust A Move 2001

10 BEST N64 GAMES

In hindsight the N64 had a strange life for a console. It excelled in some areas, yet failed in others. It's also the only console in our list with a launch title coming in at number one. As brilliant as Super Mario 64 was, it's still a little sad that a launch title will be forever remembered as the best game on the system. It may not have had volume, but it definitely had quality. Praise be to EAD and Rare!

5 Mario Tennis
The best tennis game of all time bar none. It may look cute, but the mechanics are deadly serious, with all the versatility a tennis fan could want.

9 Star Wars: Rogue Squadron
Developers Factor 5 really showed their potential with this great Star Wars N64 title. The dogfighting was spot on, the sound effects convincing and the difficulty level just right.

6 Mario Kart 64
Before the game of office cricket was even a gleam in Cam's eye, the Hyper crew played this game every lunchbreak for a stupidly long time. It wasn't perfect, but damn it came close.



4 Paper Mario
2D but not 2D. Turn-based, but not turn-based. Paper Mario is much more than it appears. A hugely engaging story, brilliant battle mechanics, plenty to collect and lashings of humour make Paper Mario a must-have game.

3 GoldenEye 007
The ultimate console first person shooter for many. A great story based single player game combined with superb deathmatching.



2 Zelda: Ocarina of Time/Majora's Mask
Both these games are incredible, and we just couldn't separate them! Another seamless series transition into 3D for Nintendo. Majora's Mask surprised everyone with its innovative storyline and mechanics. Superb game design.



10 Banjo Kazooie
It might not have been a Mario 64 killer, but Banjo Kazooie took the genre to new heights thanks to the interplay between Banjo and Kazooie, creative gameplay, huge levels and cheeky British humour.

- HONOURABLE MENTIONS:**
- 1080 Snowboarding
 - Worms Armageddon
 - Perfect Dark
 - Harvest Moon 64
 - Resident Evil 2
 - Pokémon Puzzle League
 - F-Zero X
 - Diddy Kong Racing

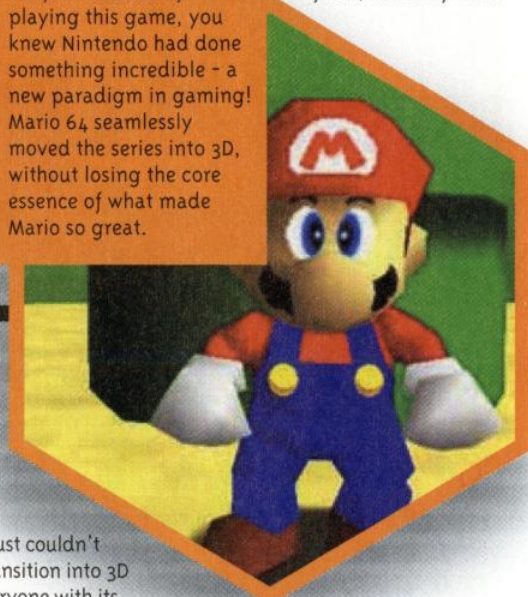


8 Wave Race 64
Wave Race was a truly next gen title with huge replayability thanks to the awesomely realistic-feeling wave physics.



7 Super Smash Bros.
Fighting... Nintendo style. More of a multiplayer game than a true fighter, Smash Bros is very different, very fresh, and very cool!

1 Super Mario 64
"It's a me, Mario!" From the first seconds of playing this game, you knew Nintendo had done something incredible - a new paradigm in gaming! Mario 64 seamlessly moved the series into 3D, without losing the core essence of what made Mario so great.



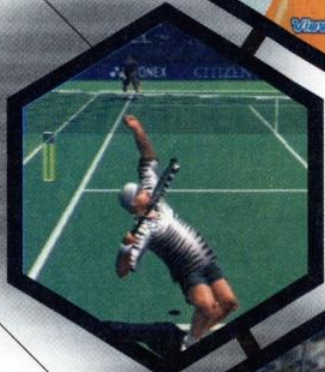
10 BEST DREAMCAST GAMES

R.I.P. Dreamcast. It was always going to be an uphill battle for Sega to go head to head with Sony and Nintendo. Sega did almost everything right – excellent hardware and fantastic games... it just wasn't to be.

10 Space Channel 5
So much style, so little substance, but we don't care! Space Channel 5 had one of the coolest characters in a game ever, a funky soundtrack and utterly stylish environments.



9 Virtua Tennis
The first next generation tennis game – smooth as silk graphics, actual pros and addictive gameplay. And who could resist the lure of The Pool!



8 Powerstone
Powerstone merged the 3D fighting game with the beat 'em up, giving players an arena to run around in, packed with powerups, weapons and objects to play with. The first truly 3D fighter that worked.



7 MSR
MSR introduced the concept of "kudos" to the racing genre. In other words, why just race when you can race with style? Huge replay value and stunning graphics.



6 Phantasy Star Online
For many this game should have been called Phantasy Star Offline, but regardless, Sega covered new ground once again with this immersive RPG.



3 Crazy Taxi
Huge city environments, insane speed, powerslides and advertising all rolled into one. An out and out arcade racer with depth to spare. Fingers crossed the movie never happens.

4 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
The DC version kept us going until Tony 3 hit the scene. Sure it was just a prettier version of Tony 2 on PSone, but the tight fast frame rate made all the difference to the gameplay.



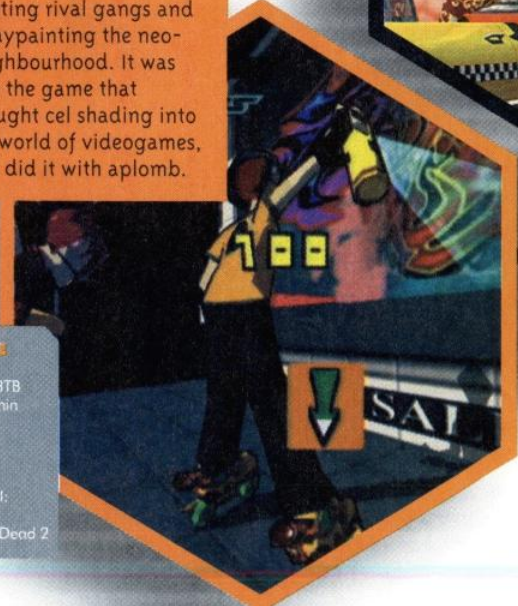
1 Jet Set Radio
Jet Set Radio had the funk, no doubt about it. A pioneer in many ways, Jet Set had the player racing from the cops, fighting rival gangs and spraypainting the neo-neighbourhood. It was also the game that brought cel shading into the world of videogames, and did it with aplomb.



5 Shenmue
Overhyped for some, stunningly immersive for others. Either way, Shenmue was an epic quest, and further proof of Yu Suzuki's talent. Let's hope we get number 3.

2 Soul Calibur
Soul Calibur demonstrated better than any other game just what could be done with the Dreamcast's hardware. It wasn't just spectacular to look at either, Soul Calibur played beautifully too.

- HONOURABLE MENTIONS:**
- Virtua Fighter 3TB
 - Ecco The Dolphin
 - MDK 2
 - Sega GT
 - NBA 2K
 - Grandia II
 - Street Fighter III: Third Strike
 - House Of The Dead 2



37. You never die.

10 BEST HANDHELD GAMES

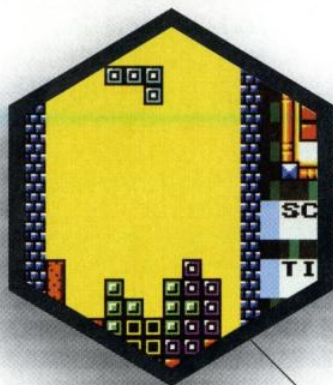
A little over ten years ago, Nintendo changed the face of gaming forever with a humble little machine called the Game Boy. Game Boy proved just how popular the concept of portable gaming could be, and GBA is taking the concept to even greater heights.

8 Mario Tennis (GBC)

Is it an RPG or is it a tennis game? There's no need to decide! Not only did Camelot capture the feel of tennis on GBC, but they let you improve your skills along the way.

7 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 (GBA)

An inspired translation of one of the greatest games of all time onto a handheld. Amazingly, almost all the gameplay remained intact in the transition.



10 Tetris DX (GBC)

A classic, and close to the perfect puzzle game. Nintendo sewed up the handheld market with the inspired decision to pack this game in with the Game Boy.

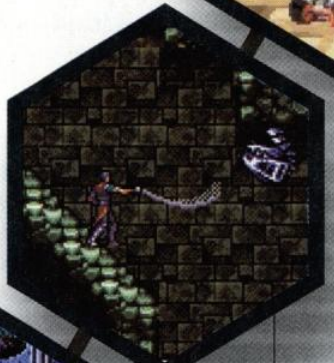
9 Mario Golf (GBC)

Starting to get the feeling that Camelot rule the handheld roost? Just wait for their GameCube RPG! Yes, this is another Camelot game and the best handheld golf title ever.



6 Advance Wars (GBA)

So much depth... on such a small screen. Who would have thought that turn-based strategy could work so well on a handheld? Nintendo of course!



5 Mario Kart Super Circuit (GBA)

A funky reinvention of the classic kart racer. Smooth graphics, perfectly tweaked mechanics, a huge track count and four-player action to boot.

5

4 Castlevania (GBA)

The best game in the Castlevania series? We think so. Non-linear castle roaming, a cool range of spells and attacks, and an absorbing atmosphere.

4

2 Golden Sun (GBA)

Camelot's classic 16-bit RPG with 32-bit graphics. Although conforming to many RPG cliches, Golden Sun is a hugely impressive handheld game and a must-have GBA title.

2

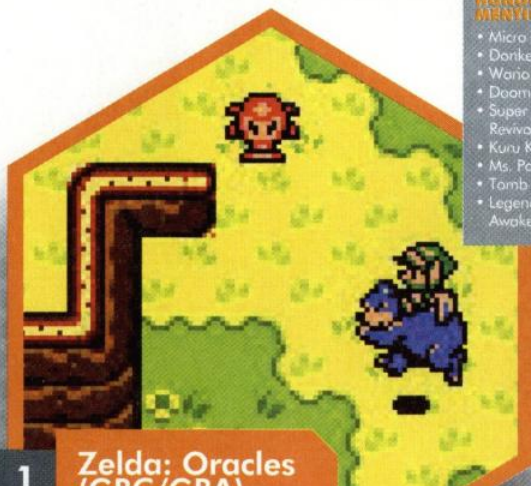
3

3 Pokémon (GBC)

What can we say about Pokémon? We might want to ring Pikachu's filthy yellow neck, but there's no denying that these are impeccably designed games that result in instant addiction.

HONOURABLE MENTIONS:

- Micro Machines V3 (GBC)
- Donkey Kong Country (GBC)
- Wario Land 2 DX (GBC)
- Doom (GBA)
- Super Street Fighter II X Revival (GBA)
- Kuru Kuru Kururin (GBA)
- Ms. Pac-Man (GBC)
- Tomb Raider (GB)
- Legend Of Zelda: Link's Awakening DX



1 Zelda: Oracles (GBC/GBA)

Zelda: Oracles stands above all the GBA games available at the moment. In gameplay and design it's a testament to what Nintendo can do with meager technical resources — it's all in the story and execution.

1

10 BEST PSone GAMES

Farewell PSone... you've served us well. The reign of the PlayStation has been long and fruitful for gaming as a whole. Narrowing the list down to a mere ten titles was very difficult, but we managed it in the end.

7 Castlevania: Symphony of the Night

I want to suck... your blood! What do you get if you combine the myth and rich imagery of the legend of Dracula, with lush 2D backdrops and animations, non-linear gaming and a whip bigger than Indy's? Castlevania of course. Another 2D triumph in a polygonal world.



8 Tomb Raider

The mere mention of her name might elicit a roll of the eyes on most cynical gamers' faces, but Tomb Raider was a ground-breaking and absorbing title. It showed the potential of 3D adventuring... and Lara was hella cool once upon a time.



9 Tekken 3 (NTSC)

Forget the oh-so-slow PAL conversion, and lets go straight to the NTSC. Tekken 3 was a triumph for the series — so many characters, so many moves, so much depth.

10 Colin McRae Rally

Colin McRae Rally was the first racing game to really treat rally racing with the respect it deserved. A huge number of courses and superb driving mechanics. Never has a racing game been so darn addictive.

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

- Vib Ribbon
- Super Puzzle Fighter 2 Turbo
- PaRappa The Rapper
- Vagrant Story
- Gran Turismo 2
- Bust A Groove
- Ape Escape
- Medal Of Honor



6 Abe's Oddysee

So much character, so much polish. Abe combined slick environments, a classic 2D perspective and challenging puzzles into the one atmospheric platform game. It also proved that there was still room for 2D games in a 3D world.



5 Resident Evil 2

An absolutely classic survival horror title. More terrifying than the original, and breaking more ground than RE3, RE2 was a tasty treat. I got the shotgun!



4 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

What more is there to say about this franchise? Every skater's wet dream... and most gamers' wet dream as well! The manual transformed the gameplay, and the tricks, levels and graphics were taken to a new level.

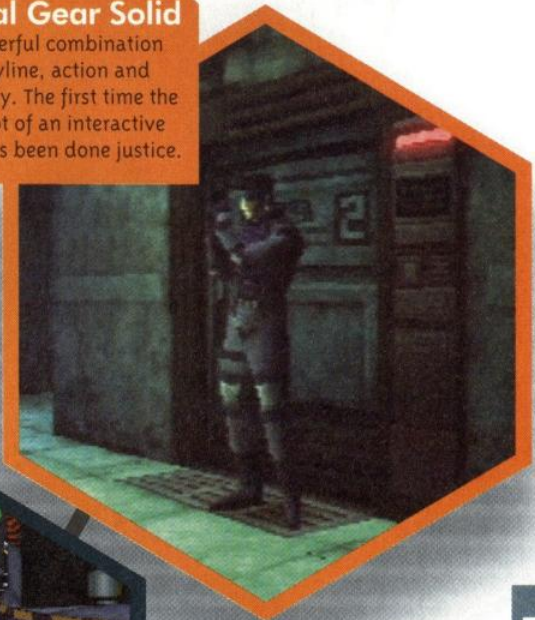


3 Final Fantasy VII

Square left behind the fantasy world of their previous FF RPGs and boldly stepped into a cyberpunk future, at the same time embracing the new 32-bit technology of the PlayStation.

1 Metal Gear Solid

A masterful combination of storyline, action and strategy. The first time the concept of an interactive film has been done justice.



2 Wipeout 2097

Psygnosis tapped into the collective unconscious of the world's youth and produced this — a cooler, faster and tighter sequel to the fantastic Wipeout. Great music, great design.



10 BEST PC GAMES

Wow! Now this list was hard to agree on. Sure, you may think that the PlayStation had a huge number of titles, but PC gaming covers a decade and a half, with so many genres created and matured within its grey boxy folds! Still, for some reason, we finally agreed that we can't ignore the following ten masterpieces in PC gaming.

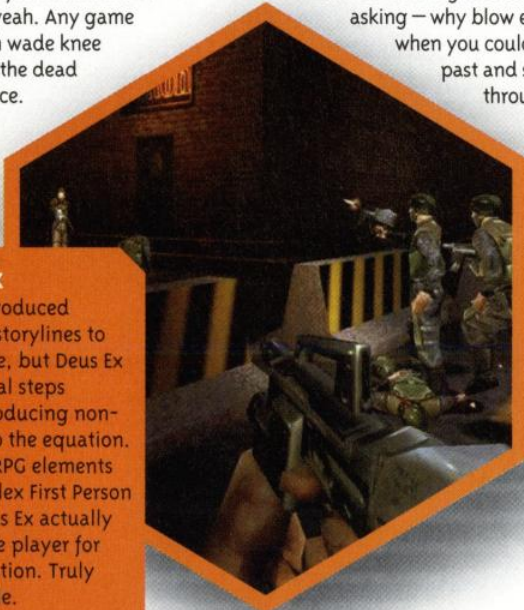
7 Baldur's Gate series

The Baldur's Gate games represented a rebirth for the traditional D&D RPG. Deep and compelling, we should all hope that the land of Baldur's Gate is around for a very long time.



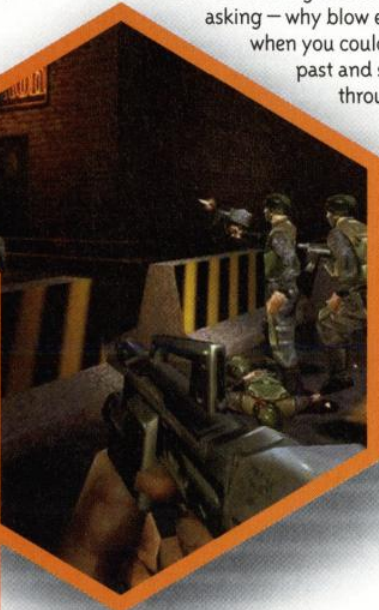
6 Doom 2

Mmm... double shottie. Mmm... hordes of demon spawn to slay with extreme prejudice. Mmm... satanic imagery. Mmm... brown undies. Err... yeah. Any game where you can wade knee deep through the dead deserves a place.



1 Deus Ex

Half-Life introduced compelling storylines to the FPS genre, but Deus Ex took it several steps further, introducing non-linearity into the equation. Combining RPG elements with a complex First Person Shooter, Deus Ex actually rewarded the player for experimentation. Truly unforgettable.



5 Thief

Looking Glass studios may be defunct now, but they've left behind quite a legacy in the form of Thief. The game turned the FPS genre on its head by asking — why blow everything up, when you could just sneak past and steal your way through?



10 Diablo series

Diablo took what was fun about Doom — killing vast armies of evil, and put it in an isometric perspective with RPG elements. Seriously addictive, and awesomely good multiplayer gaming. Diablo created a genre within itself.



9 Monkey Island series

The Monkey Island games are, in many ways, the result of Lucasarts at their very best. Hugely entertaining, completely illogical, and utterly endearing. These were, and still are, the pinnacle of point and click adventure games.



8 Age of Empires series

History comes alive with the Age of Empires games. Well, the violent parts of history at least... which is most of it. Take control of powerful ancient civilisations and smite your friends online. Real Time Strategy gaming in its most robust form.



4 Civilization series

Annual leave and Uni holidays are perfect for this series... just bear in mind you may never return to work, or your studies. The Civilization series, without a doubt, is the greatest strategy/sim series ever made. The goal is simple — rule the world.



3 Quake series

Each game in the Quake series has changed PC gaming in some fashion, whether it be breaking new 3D technology, pushing multiplayer gaming or simply propelling the first person shooter genre into the realms of the mainstream. Quake 1 changed our lives.



2 Half-Life (including Counter-Strike)

Although based on the Quake 2 engine, the Half-Life engine has gone on to change the face of gaming. So many mods, but none as amazing as Counter-Strike. Infinitely playable multiplayer gaming. Oh, and Half-Life was pretty good too.

HONOURABLE MENTIONS:

- Starcraft
- Rollercoaster Tycoon
- Homeworld
- Worms series
- The Last Express
- System Shock series
- Serious Sam
- Simcity series
- Everquest
- Unreal Tournament

HYPER'S 10 MOST WANTED CONSOLE GAMES



- 1 Zelda (GCN)
- 2 Mario Sunshine (GCN)
- 3 Jet Set Radio Future (Xbox)
- 4 Sam & Max 2 (Xbox)
- 5 Soul Calibur 2 (Xbox / GCN)
- 6 Virtua Fighter 4 (PS2)
- 7 Unreal Championship (Xbox)
- 8 Resident Evil 4 (GCN)
- 9 Metal Gear Solid X (Xbox)
- 10 Final Fantasy XI: Online (PS2)

HYPER'S 10 MOST WANTED PC GAMES



- 1 Doom 3
- 2 Deus Ex 2
- 3 Thief 3
- 4 Star Wars: Galaxies
- 5 Half-Life 2
- 6 Quake IV
- 7 World of Warcraft
- 8 Star Wars: Jedi Outcast
- 9 Unreal 2
- 10 Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind

41. Games based on movies are so authentic you don't even have to see the movie. A hem.

10 BEST DEVELOPERS

1 EAD

For 20 years, Nintendo's number one internal development team EAD has released a freakishly high percentage of A grade games. EAD was officially formed in the early days of SNES development — an amalgamation of Miyamoto's R&D 4 with select members of the other R&D groups. EAD is currently made up of six R&D sectors, and alongside Shigeru Miyamoto are experienced staff including Satoru Iwata, Genyo Takeda, Takehiro Izushi, Eiji Aonumu, Takao Shimizu, Hideki Konno, Tadashi Sugiyama and Takashi Tezuka.

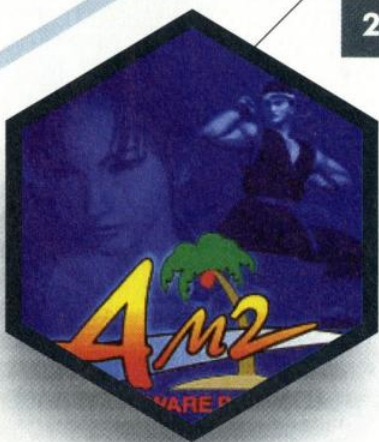
EAD have thrived thanks to talented and dedicated staff, a policy of innovation above all else, and strict quality control. It must also be said that EAD have had the edge on other developers thanks to their intimate knowledge of Nintendo's hardware — they don't just know their systems inside and out, they have a huge say in the creation of the hardware in the first place. Some of the classics EAD are responsible for include Super Mario 64 (1996), Zelda: A Link to the Past (1992), Super Punch-Out (1994) and Star Fox (1993) amongst many, many others. With EAD at the helm, Nintendo will always be a force to be reckoned with.



2 AM2

The name "Sega" is an abbreviation of "Service Games", a company formed in 1952 by, believe it or not, an American. Based in Japan, the early Sega dealt with coin operated entertainment, in the form of slot machines and jukeboxes. It soon moved into manufacturing and before long, videogames.

Sega's most important in-house development team, AM2, was founded in 1983, the same year that their most important designer - Yu Suzuki joined the company. Since its inception, AM2 has, to a large extent, defined the arcade experience. Sega's early arcade hits include classics like Hang On (1985), Space Harrier (1985), Out Run (1986) and Afterburner (1987). AM2 are also responsible for defining new genres and pushing cutting edge new technology. Indeed, AM2 single-handedly brought 3D gaming and brand new genres into the arcades with their model 1 arcade board and Virtua series of games. Since Virtua Racing (1992) and Virtua Fighter (1993) AM2 have continued to dominate, with games like Daytona USA (1994), Virtua Fighter 2 (1994), Virtua Cop (1994), Virtua Striker (1995), Fighting Vipers (1995), Virtua Fighter 3 (1996), F355 Challenge (1999) and Shenmue for Dreamcast in 2000.



BACK AT SEGA

Of course, AM2 and Yu Suzuki aren't the only internal team at Sega. Yuji Naka and Sonic Team in particular deserve a special mention with classics like Sonic the Hedgehog, NIGHTS, Burning Rangers, Samba De Amigo and Phantasy Star (Master System) in their list of achievements.

3 Capcom

Founded in 1979, Capcom started out slowly. During the mid to late eighties, however, the two game designers at the company — Yoshiki Okamoto and Tokuro Fujiwara, churned out a number of classic and ground breaking titles including 1942, 1943, Commando, Ghosts 'n' Goblins and Final Fight, establishing Capcom as a company with serious talent. It was the sequel to Street Fighter, however, that cemented Capcom's place among the elite game developers. Since then Capcom have stayed on the bleeding edge of game development. Aside from a seemingly endless stream of Street Fighter sequels, each more refined than the last, Capcom have done some great work both in arcades and on home systems with long

running series like Breath Of Fire and characters like Rockman (Mega Man in the west). Most notable recently, however, is the evolution of the "survival horror" genre, from Resident Evil through to Onimusha and Devil May Cry.



4 id Software

id Software was formed on the first of February 1991 and consisted of a small team — John Carmack, John Romero, Adrian Carmack and Tom Hall. Id's first hit was Wolfenstein 3D in 1992. It was a hugely innovative game, but just as significant was the grass roots way that id distributed it. Indeed, Wolfenstein and Doom gave the "shareware" concept a massive boost, allowing people to get the first chapter of the game (of three) practically for free, and generating a huge stir at the same time. It was Doom, of course, that made id. Doom didn't just define the First Person Shooter genre, but it also brought multiplayer gaming to PCs in a major way. Since then, id software have defined 3D gaming technology with

the Quake series of games, as well as playing a large role in the popularity of mods and multiplayer gaming.



5

Rare

Rare was founded by Joel Hochberg, Chris Stamper and Tim Stamper, and was originally called Ashby Computer Graphics. They started out making games for the Sinclair Spectrum during 83 and 84, but were soon drawn to the NES. They gained a license from Nintendo after Chris reverse engineered the system, and demonstrated his technical proficiency. Indeed, one of Rare's strengths has always been the balance in the team — Tim was the artist and Chris the technical wizard. Not only did Rare understand games, they also knew their hardware back to front — something many other developers didn't. In fact, it was Chris Stamper that discovered the NES could run games splitscreen!

Rare went on to design and port more than 50 games for the NES, becoming an important and prolific development house. They followed this up by redefining what many thought the SNES could do with the amazing technology behind DKC. Rare really came into their own in the 64 bit era however, with hit after hit. Aside from Nintendo themselves, no other developer made the N64 sing quite as sweetly as Rare, or as consistently. Technically proficient and meticulous in game design, the reclusive Rare have a very bright future.



7

Namco

Short for Nakamura Manufacturing Co., Namco was founded in 1955. Its first operation was installing two rocking horse rides on top of a Yokohama department store, and the company hasn't looked back! Namco established its credentials in the world of videogames early on, with a succession of classic and influential arcade titles including Galaxian in 1978, Pac-Man in 1980, Pole Position in 1982, and Xevious in 1983. Since then, Namco has kept at the forefront of gaming — going head to head with Sega in the arcades — with the Tekken series and Ridge Racer, and leading the way on home consoles. Namco are respected by all, and with good reason.

9

Sierra

On-line Systems (later to become Sierra) was founded by Ken and Roberta Williams in 1980. Inspired by "Adventure" Roberta mapped out a whole game on paper which, once translated onto the Apple in assembly language, became On-Line Systems' first game — Mystery House (also known as Hi-Res Adventure #1). It was also the first adventure game to feature graphics, albeit in black and white line drawings. This was followed by The Wizard and The Princess, the first adventure game with coloured graphics, and later on by King's Quest — the first game to feature your character walking on screen. Other Sierra classics include Time Zone, Dark Crystal, Police Quest, Space Quest, Leisure Suit Larry, Quest For Glory and Gabriel Knight.

6

SquareSoft

Back in 1987, a small company named SquareSoft was in dire financial trouble. A game designer named Hironobu Sakaguchi, inspired by Enix's Dragon Quest, had an idea for a game — radically different to those that the company had previously been making and truly epic in scope. It was an RPG, and the development process represented the last of the company's funds. Thinking it would be the last game the company made, Sakaguchi called it Final Fantasy.

Fortunately for SquareSoft, Final Fantasy was brilliant and a defining moment for the RPG genre. It came out in late 1987 in Japan and went on to sell a million copies — a huge success. From that moment on, the Final Fantasy series and Hironobu Sakaguchi have been at the core of Square's operations. Of course, SquareSoft have done a lot more than just the Final Fantasy

series, with an extensive and hugely consistent development

history. Some of the many highlights include Secret Of Mana, Chrono Trigger, Super Mario RPG, Bushido Blade, Tobal 2, Vagrant Story and Xenogears.

8

Blizzard

Blizzard was established in 1994, and originally created games for SNES, Genesis, PC and Mac. Remember Rock 'n' Roll Racing? The Lost Vikings? Blackthorne? All Blizzard games. It wasn't long, however, before Blizzard put their stamp on the PC gaming world, with a number of seminal titles, most notably Warcraft: Orcs and Humans, Warcraft II: Tides Of Darkness, Diablo, Starcraft and Diablo II. Huge mainstream hits, these games had great gameplay, but most importantly were phenomenal multiplayer titles. Blizzard may not be that prolific, but their policy of quality over quantity has given them a much deserved reputation as a first class development house.

10

Activision

Activision was formed in 1979 by a group of ex-Atari programmers disgruntled by Atari's policy of not crediting the creators of their games. The formation of Activision was important because up until that time all console games were developed in-house. Thus, Activision was the very first third party game developer. To celebrate their independence, the Activision programmers got straight to work, creating some seminal titles including Pitfall in 1980, Kaboom! in 1981 and River Raid in 1982.

It's the early Activision that we're celebrating here — the Activision that bucked the system and redefined the way the videogame industry operated.



43. "Step on the gas. Step, step on the broke."

10 MOST INFLUENTIAL GAMES EVER

In the history of videogames, there have been many pivotal innovations. Moments where inspiration, talent, technical expertise, hard work and luck have come together to change the face of gaming forever. We believe that these are the ten games that have had the greatest impact on the gaming landscape.

6 Ultima series

(RPGS)

Ultima hit the scene back in the days when a single person could create a game. In this case, that person was a 19 year-old named Richard Garriot (you may know him as Lord British). An Apple nut, Ultima was Garriot's 29th game. Of course, the first 27 were made for his own amusement. Once number 28, Akalabeth, was picked up by a publisher, Garriot saw a potential career path and set out to improve upon it with his next game — Ultima. Ultima established many of the classic RPG elements, remains a classic game series and is an inspiration for countless programmers and game designers.

SPACEWAR

Space Invaders only just edged Spacewar out of the most influential shooter category, on the basis that Spacewar was restricted to a comparatively small number of University students. However, Spacewar deserves special recognition especially since it was created close to two decades earlier. Whether Spacewar was the very first computer game or not is debatable, but it is notable for creating a multiplayer gaming culture way back in 1961, since it was a two player game only. It was also the first game to be distributed widely on the internet... or the forerunner to the internet (ARPANET), and played throughout Universities USA wide. Not only that, but Spacewar even had the first mod community, with programmers all over the place tweaking and changing the game.

TETRIS

Tetris didn't make it into the list because although the game is a milestone in design terms, it hasn't really changed the face of videogames or pioneered any substantial new gameplay innovations. It did put puzzle games on the map though.

PAC-MAN

Pac-Man only just missed out on the list because it didn't really influence many games, and certainly didn't start any new genres. However, Pac-Man deserves an honourable mention because he was the first videogame mascot, and this character-based approach combined with its absurd popularity brought gaming into the mainstream in a way even Space Invaders couldn't. The TV shows, the merchandise, the tournaments, the music... Pac-Man changed the way the rest of the world saw videogames.

Tenochtitlan

Iztapan

10 Tomb Raider

(3RD PERSON ACTION)

The simple way to describe Tomb Raider would be "Indy with breasts", but in reality, Tomb Raider was an innovative game that pioneered the 3rd person action/adventure genre. It brought together huge 3D levels and a healthy combination of shooting, puzzles and exploring. Released in Nov 1996, Tomb Raider instantly changed the way gamers saw games. The Lara Croft phenomenon was also an interesting milestone for gaming — Lara made the cover of non-gaming publications such as Rolling Stone, Time, Newsweek, FHM and The Face, not just because of the game's success, but because she was perceived as the first female gaming icon. Is Lara the first digital celebrity? Quite possibly.

9 Civilization

(STRATEGY/SIM)

The archetypal turn-based strategy game. Sid Meier's game let you rule an entire civilisation through a 6000 year period, from primitive times through to the entire civilisation's imminent departure into space! As time passes new technology trees opened up for the player to explore and capitalise on, so you could research such technologies as gunpowder, writing and medicine. Best of all, Civilisation offered amazing gameplay freedom for the player, with the choice between combat and trade. For the time, no other game offered as much depth as Civilisation — a complete classic that influenced the entire strategy genre.

8 Pole Position

(RACING)

Developed by Namco, Pole Position hit the streets in 1982 and innovated in a number of areas. First of all, up until that point, any other racers were played from a top down or first person perspective. Pole Position introduced the three-quarter behind car perspective, that would become the default for years to come. Pole Position also came with a sit down arcade cabinet that had gas/brake pedals, a wheel and a two speed gear shift — another first that immersed the player like no other. Pole Position also introduced checkpoint racing, and the need to race a qualifying lap. All up, the birth of the modern racing game.

7 Street Fighter II

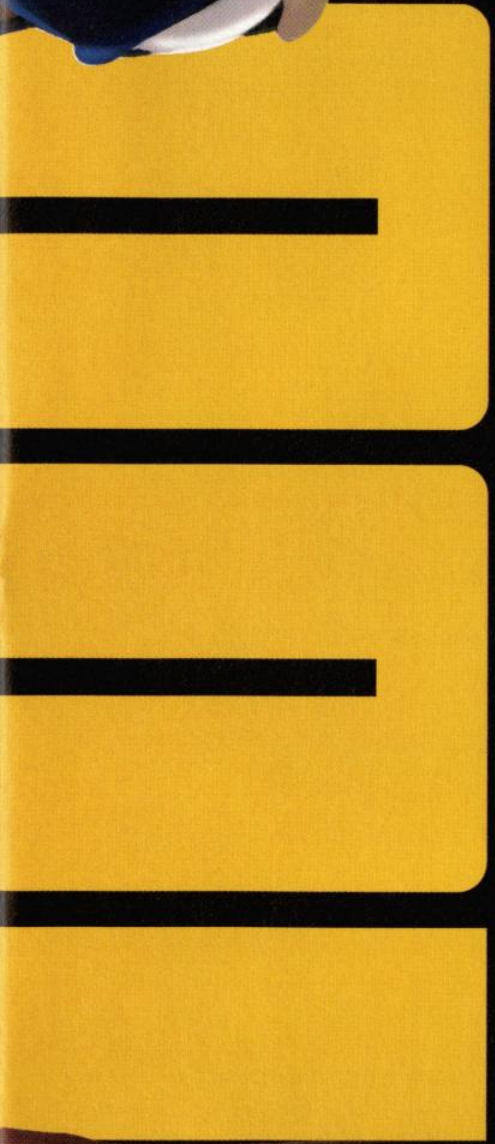
(FIGHTING)

In 1991, Street Fighter II hit arcades around the world, simultaneously rejuvenating the arcade industry and creating an all new genre. The influence Street Fighter II has had on gaming cannot be understated — it established a set of parameters that have been copied more times than perhaps any other game. The large detailed characters and animated backdrops, the range of eight different characters with different fighting styles to choose from, and the choice of ranged and hand-to-hand attacks. One of the technical revolutions in SFII was a new joystick and button scanning routine implemented to give the player much greater precision. This, combined with the poetic combination of special moves gave birth to Street Fighter's legendary playability.





HYPER»



HYPER

WHY LORD BRITISH?

Richard Garriot chose to be known as Lord British because he'd been teased at a computer camp by kids who said he sounded British. What if they said he sounded like a dickhead?

**5 Wolfenstein 3D****(FIRST PERSON SHOOTERS)**

Although Doom was far more popular, 1992's Wolfenstein 3D lay the groundwork for the first person shooter genre itself. Featuring a fast (for the time) engine, and an engaging scenario of Nazi slaughter, Wolfenstein opened up a whole new world of visceral delight to PC users. It also did away with the somewhat niche nature of PC gaming at the time — this was a game that anyone could get their hands on and get into, thanks to the shareware demo and the straightforward gameplay. Where would gaming be without id software and Wolfenstein? We shudder to think.

4 Adventure**(ADVENTURES)**

The original adventure game, "Adventure" was created sometime in the early 70s, pre-dating Zork by almost 10 years. A text-only adventure, the basics of the game were programmed by Will Crowther, but it was turned into a full game by Donald Woods at the Stanford AI lab (SAIL). The game was very much inspired by Tolkien's LOTR trilogy. You were given a description of where you were and had to explore your surroundings and progress using two word, verb-noun commands. Adventure marked the birth of a new genre, and within that, the birth of obscure adventure game logic and humour.

2 Space Invaders**(SHOOTERS)**

Space Invaders hit arcades in 1978. One of the first shooters, it left quite a legacy in the world of videogames, spawning games like Galaga and possibly inspiring the space shooter sim too. Space Invaders was such a hit in Japan that new arcades sprung up specifically for the game, and it even caused a coin shortage! Like many games of the time, it had no end. You moved your ship back and forth across the bottom of the screen as the wave of aliens grew ever closer. Space Invaders was the first really massive arcade game, and also the first game to feature a "high score" for the player to beat.

You are standing at the end of a r
Around you is a forest. A small s
down a gully. In the distance ther
>go south

You are in a valley in the forest
rocky bed.
>

3 Pong**(SPORTS)**

Pong wasn't just one of the very first games (1972), but it has left a lasting legacy in a few different ways. Firstly, Pong was responsible for bringing games into the home for the first time. There was a time when every videogame was essentially a Pong clone, and every machine was a dedicated Pong machine. So Pong spawned the idea of the home console — even if it was in a severely limited form. Pong also represents the birth of sports games, because realistically, it's just a game of table tennis!

GODDAMN FREAKS!

A freak by the name of Eric Furrer holds the world record for non-stop play on Space Invaders. Get this, he played for 38 hours and 37 minutes and totalled 1,114,000 points!

**WHY DONKEY KONG?**

In naming Donkey Kong, NCL figured that "kong" would imply that he was an ape, and looking up the word goaty in their Japanese/English dictionary, they came up with "donkey". Unsurprisingly, when NOA staff received the game they were dismayed with the name. Hiroshi Yamauchi refused to change it, stressing the game was excellent. NOA reluctantly agreed, and Donkey Kong went on to become a classic Nintendo character.

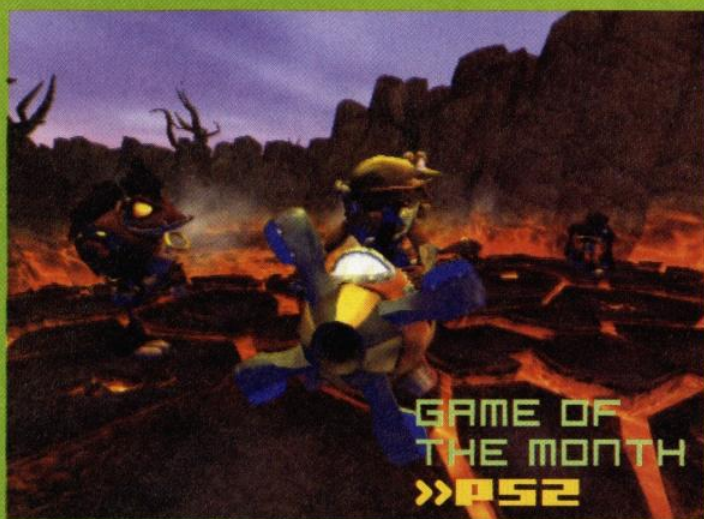
**1 Donkey Kong****(PLATFORMERS)**

The year was 1981. The new staff artist at Nintendo, Shigeru Miyamoto, was charged with coming up with a new game for the American arcade market after "Radarscope" failed miserably. Miyamoto loved games, but found most of the shooters and Pong style games boring. He created a classic scenario: Guy meets girl. Guy owns giant goofy ape. Guy treats ape poorly. Ape runs off with girl to get guy back. Guy must rescue girl and beat ape into submission. Miyamoto set the game at a construction site, with "Jumpman" (later to become Mario) jumping and climbing his way up to stop Donkey Kong at the top.

We regard Donkey Kong as the first true modern platform game, and in this sense its influence is all encompassing.

REVIEWS

46. It helps you forget about how horribly ugly you are.



HYPER 100 REVIEW INDEX

PS2

- 64 Jak & Daxter
- 66 Wipeout Fusion
- 68 007 Agent Under Fire
- 70 Pro Evolution Soccer
- 72 Smuggler's Run 2
- 73 Dropship
- 74 World Rally Championship
- 75 Rez
- 90 Cricket 2002

PC

- 76 Return to Castle Wolfenstein
- 78 Aliens vs. Predator 2
- 80 Wizardry 8
- 82 Battle Realms
- 84 Stronghold
- 85 The Sims: Hot Date
- 86 World War III
- 87 Myth III
- 90 Championship Manager 01/02
- 90 Zoo Tycoon

PSone

- 88 Worms: World Party

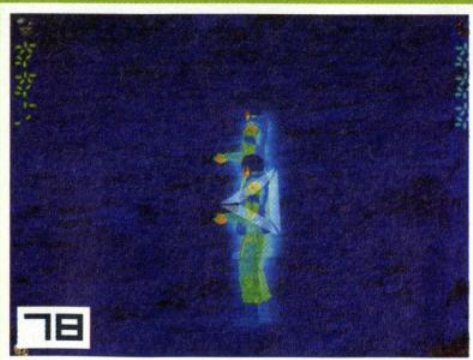
Game Boy Advance

- 92 Golden Sun
- 93 Jackie Chan Adventures
- 93 Matt Hoffman's Pro BMX

Jak & Daxter

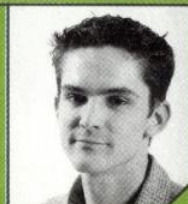
Naughty Dog follow-up their Crash Bandicoot phenomenon with an amazingly good 3D platformer.





GAME THEORY

DAVID WILGOOSE



Three PlayStation2 games have occupied most of my time this month. Although Grand Theft Auto 3, Silent Hill 2 and James Bond in Agent Under Fire are very different in many ways, what truly sets them apart is the way their gameplay objectives are structured.

Clear goals are an important part of solid game design. Typically they occupy the form of objectives or destinations that provide a structural framework within which the player operates. In the space between each goal, the player should feel in control of proceedings, where his actions and decisions feel as if they are of his own devising rather than precisely what the designer had in mind. This illusion of freedom – and it's inevitably an illusion – is the crux of good gameplay.

Many games fail to provide clear goals. Thus, the player feels confused or gets stuck, and is reduced to aimless wandering. Usually this is evidence of a deep flaw, yet Silent Hill 2 offers a neat twist. The confusion evoked by its exploratory play is quite deliberate; it adds to the mood.

However, the opposite extreme is equally flawed; goals can be too clear. In this case, where each objective is obviously signposted, the lack of control or influence severely dilutes the gameplay. Some occasional guidance is certainly welcome, but when you're told exactly what, when and how to do everything, the illusion of freedom is shattered beyond repair. Agent Under Fire dives headfirst into this trap and, in doing so, serves as a sterling example of how a so-called interactive experience can be extremely lacking in interaction.

By comparison, GTA3 is almost perfectly structured. Specific goals are given, yet the means of their accomplishment is up to the player's imagination, the tools at his disposal, and the possibilities inherent within the open play area. Once you understand the essential play mechanics, the illusion of freedom is barely broken throughout because its level of interaction is so deep. In this sense, GTA3 is close to the perfect game.

Questions and apples to:
hyper_game_theory@hotmail.com

THE HYPER CREW'S TOP 5

Eliot Fish – Editor

1. Wizardry 8 – PC
 2. Halo – Xbox
 3. Star Wars: Rogue Leader – GameCube
 4. Grand Theft Auto 3 – PS2
 5. Jak & Dexter – PS2
- "I'm thinking about this game day and night. One for classic RPG freaks."**

Cam Shea – Deputy Editor

1. Halo - Xbox
 2. Super Smash Bros Melee - GameCube
 3. Wipeout Fusion - PS2
 4. Grand Theft Auto 3 - PS2
 5. Wave Race: Blue Storm - GameCube
- "We're warming up our Big Rubber Stamp already. Halo rocks hard."**

Malcolm Campbell - Art guy

1. Super Smash Bros Melee - GameCube
 2. Rogue Leader - GameCube
 3. Championship Manager 01/02- Mac
 4. Grand Theft Auto 3 - PS2
 5. Cosmic Smash - DC
- "Jam-packed full of stuff. Kirby rocks."**

David Wildgoose - Contributing Writer

1. Grand Theft Auto 3 – PS2
 2. Silent Hill 2 – PS2
 3. Uplink – PC
 4. Pro Evolution Soccer – PS2
 5. Championship Manager 01/02 – PC
- "And I've still got 54 hidden packages to go..."**

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!

47. You never get pulled over for going too fast.



Jak & Daxter

»» PS2



CATEGORY: Platformer >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: SCEA/Naughty Dog >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

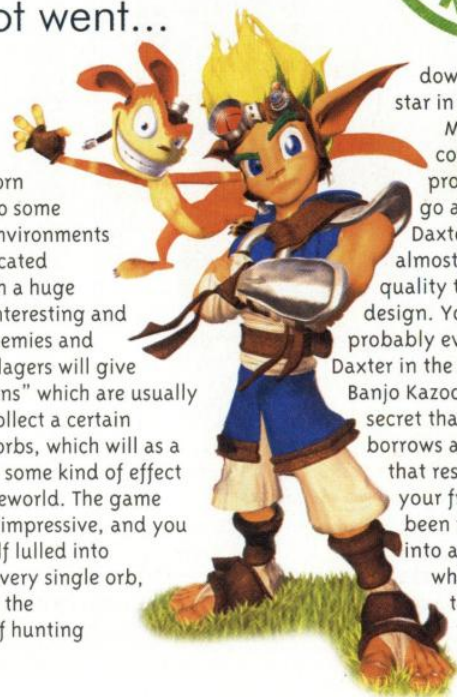
ELIOT FISH wonders where the bandicoot went...

When we think of great, colourful, lively, original platformers on the PlayStation 2, we think of... *Klonoa 2* and that's about it. Well, thankfully, that has now changed with the release of *Jak & Daxter*, the new platforming creation from Crash Bandicoot creators, Naughty Dog. Whilst Crash's outing on PS2 (developed by Traveller's Tales, not Naughty Dog) has revealed itself to be a dud, Naughty Dog have proved once again why the original Crash games were so loved — they know how to make a great game. What's even better news, is that *Jak & Daxter* surpasses anything the bandicoot ever did with its lush, expansive, original world that encourages true non-linear 3D platforming.

RARE-LIKE QUALITY? The game gets off to a bit of a weak start with a rather uninspired training level — dead easy and horribly linear. At first we were worried that the rest of the game would continue down a similar dull path, but to our surprise, *Jak & Daxter* becomes progressively more impressive, challenging and full of life the further you progress — just what you should expect from a good platformer. The more you play, the more you discover your character can do, and the more the game expects from you. Your primary task is collecting "precursor orbs" which are scattered around the island, and a smaller number of energy spheres. Whilst at first, it looks like your bog standard "run around collecting stuff"

platformer, Naughty Dog have integrated this well-worn concept into some gorgeous environments and complicated matters with a huge variety of interesting and different enemies and puzzles. Villagers will give you "missions" which are usually always to collect a certain number of orbs, which will as a result, have some kind of effect on the gameworld. The game structure is impressive, and you find yourself lulled into collecting every single orb, almost with the obsession of hunting

down every single star in *Super Mario 64*. More Nintendo comparisons probably wouldn't go astray with *Jak & Daxter*, with an almost Rare-like quality to the level design. You could probably even put *Jak & Daxter* in the same league as *Banjo Kazooie*, and it's no secret that the game borrows a few ideas in that respect. Daxter is your friend who's been transformed into a ferrit-creature, who then rides out your shoulder,





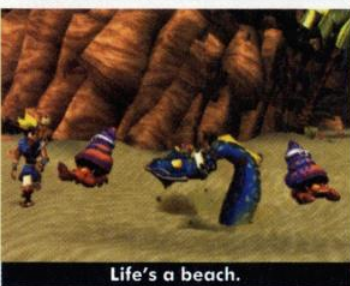
At least it's not Jerk & Dexter.



Holy Mackerel!



It started out as a neck pimple.



Life's a beach.



49. You gotta use your brain for "something".

Jak & Daxter becomes **progressively more impressive, challenging and full of life** the further you progress – just what you should expect from a good platformer.

almost like Kazooie living out his existence in Banjo's backpack. The banter from Daxter is pretty amusing, and the character animation is unparalleled. His attitude helps take the edge of the cute factor too. Some of the dialogue is genuinely funny, and at times, it's even like watching a high-budget cartoon show. Small details like hair flowing in the breeze, over-the-top facial expressions, super-fluid jumping movements and fighting moves, plus the plethora of bizarre personalities you encounter on your travels, really bring this game to life in the most extraordinary way. It all runs at 60 frames per second too, making it one of the prettiest PS2 games we've seen yet.



Don't let those silly TV commercials put you off. This game is worth picking up.

BACK-TRACKING

As tasks can be completed in any order you so desire, boredom or frustration rarely occurs. There is a fine balance in the gameplay that ranges from simplistic to challenging, although you could hardly class Jak & Daxter as a hardcore game. That isn't to say that hardcore gamers won't get something out of it. There is definitely a level of addiction that is sustained throughout, and so much of the world is so goddamn pretty, that exploring it is always a very compelling element to the game.

If we were to criticise anything about Jak & Daxter, it would be that the "elven" character designs are a tad bland or unoriginal, but that

would be really stretching it. Generally, there is such a great level of personality in the animation that the characters become pretty endearing over time, even if some of them tend to be a little gormless.

Jak & Daxter keeps track how complete the game is with a percentage rating, as well as letting you know which missions have and have not been completed in each area, so you'll continually find yourself back-tracking later in the game to finish off areas you found a little too hard to begin with.

Everything about the game has been so well thought out, that as a big 3D platforming romp, it's hard to fault. With original, entertaining level design its strongest card, Jak & Daxter from Naughty Dog comes highly recommended. <<<



PLUS: Gorgeous to look at, and lots of fun mini-games.

MINUS: Possibly a little on the easy side for some.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

92 89 89

OVERALL

92

The best PS2 platformer yet.

REVIEW
»»»HYPER 65



Wipeout Fusion

PS2

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

CAM SHEA is totally against gravity...

The future has arrived. The F9000 Anti-Gravity Racing League. Sure, it took its sweet time getting here, but space/time is relative so you can't always expect the future to arrive on time now can you? In any case, what's important is that it's here, and it rocks hard. Since the F3600 League hit our screens in Wipeout six years ago, the series has progressed in steps — each game more refined than the last. With Wipeout Fusion, Studio Liverpool have taken the series not just onto new technology, but to a new level of depth and playability. This is the biggest leap yet.

STREAMLINED

Wipeout Fusion represents a complete structural re-design. Instead of several distinct speed classes, races in

Fusion reward the player with credit that can be used to upgrade your craft. This has smoothed the learning curve considerably, as you no longer have to deal with sudden hikes in speed. Credits can be allocated across six attributes for your craft — top speed, thrust, brake force, lateral stability, weapon power and shield power. Each pilot has their own set of potential stats, so you can only upgrade so far. Cooler still, the craft model you start with is only the most basic. As you upgrade, the shell for your AG racer changes, becoming more hi-tech and streamlined.

This new, more natural progression system has a number of benefits. First of all, you earn credits whether you win the league or not, so now coming second — or worse — still feels productive. The days of being forced

to come first or get nothing are over. Of course, you still need to come first to unlock the next league, but every time you fail you can upgrade your craft in some way, so you'll be slightly more competitive the next time. The second benefit is that you no longer have to race through the same courses several times at different speeds. Instead, the League mode consists of a series of increasingly difficult leagues. The amount of work Studio Liverpool have put into this game is quite amazing — the league mode just keeps going and going. Best of all, no courses are repeated across different leagues. Indeed, there's well over 40 courses! Before you get too excited, however, there are only seven actual settings — each with three track variants that

can also be raced in reverse. Fortunately, the variants aren't minor, so you can almost think of each setting as having three unique courses.

Track design on the whole is brilliant, and a very nice evolution from the design style of Wipeout. As a whole, the paths are wider than before to accommodate the 16 racers and keep the racing flow. New design features include loop the loops, corkscrews, underwater sections, wide open sand/snow/water covered sections, switches that open up shortcuts, switches that flip your AG to the roof, and the list goes on. The track design is nicely varied, but not perfect. Some sections were a little clumsy,





Make it legible, dammit!

» Perhaps the biggest issue we have with Wipeout Fusion is the game's interface. Sure, Wipeout is meant to look sleek, minimalist and futuristic, but not at the expense of legibility. We get the feeling that Studio Liverpool only ever looked at the game on plasma screens, monitors and rear projectors, because if they'd tried to navigate through the options on a normal TV they would surely have realised just how unreadable the fonts are. We don't want to have to guess what words are, and we don't want to stumble on major game features by accident. It's unbelievable that a game this delayed, that's so packed with features and content could have such an unwieldy and illegible interface. Bring back Designer's Republic!



He's a firestarter...



Follow the light.



"Now THIS is pod racing!"

51. Unlike real life, boring conversations can be skipped at the press of a button.

» The amount of work Studio Liverpool have put into this game is quite amazing – the league mode **just keeps going and going.**

like the indoor ice cave, but given just how much track there is, Studio Liverpool have done a great job.

IN THE ZONE

In addition to the stunning AG League mode, Fusion also has a comprehensive Challenge mode, Arcade mode and Multiplayer mode. Better yet, as you play, you'll unlock extra modes, including Zone mode, Time Trial mode and Custom League mode. You'll also unlock extra racing teams, pilots and weapons as you progress. The weapon selection is huge, and well synced into the gameplay. In the AG League mode, for instance, you don't just earn points for your position, but also for any

eliminations, giving you extra incentive to engage in combat. Weapons are now no longer all one shots, as you now lay mines one at a time and items like the flamethrower have a certain amount of juice to go through. As usual, the auto-pilot is more annoying than anything else, and the Quake rocks hard – now you can feel it approaching from behind as the rumble grows and grows.

Needless to say, Wipeout Fusion gets fast... very fast. Unfortunately, however, slowdown is an issue occasionally. It usually

doesn't affect the racing, but once or twice things have slowed down to a crawl – not impressive. Much worse, however, are the glitches that

have made it into the final code. Occasionally you'll get bumped on a turn, sail clear through the wall on the side of the track and fall into nothingness. When this happens, or when you stuff up on a ramp, the game is quite fast at replacing you back on the track. Unfortunately, it's not very good at determining WHERE to put you back. Often it will be in the right place, other times a few hundred meters back down the track. It really is inconsistent and very annoying.

Despite the odd glitch or two, it's clear what Studio Liverpool have been busy doing this whole time. Wipeout Fusion is absolutely packed to the rafters with features, style and enough racing to tide you over until the next League comes along. Superb. <<<



PLUS: Rockin' soundtrack. Hey... it's Wipeout!

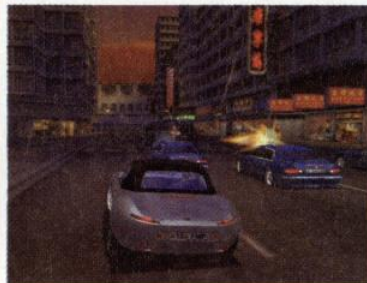
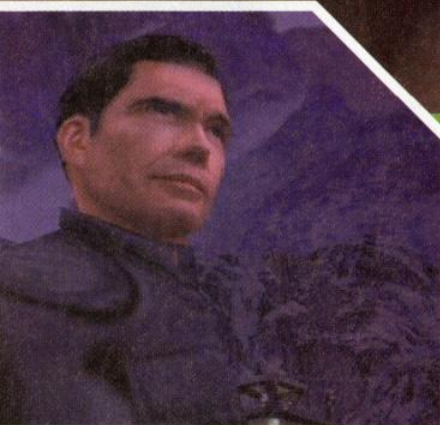
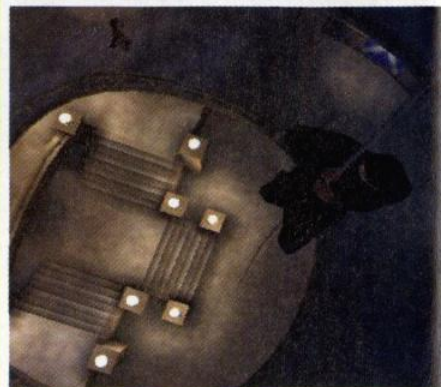
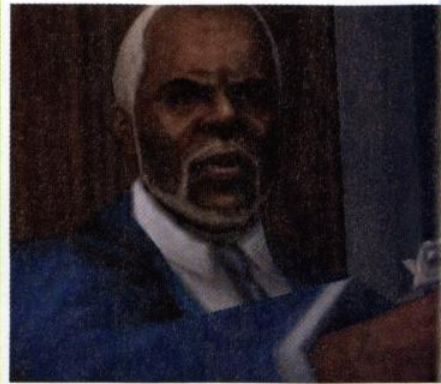
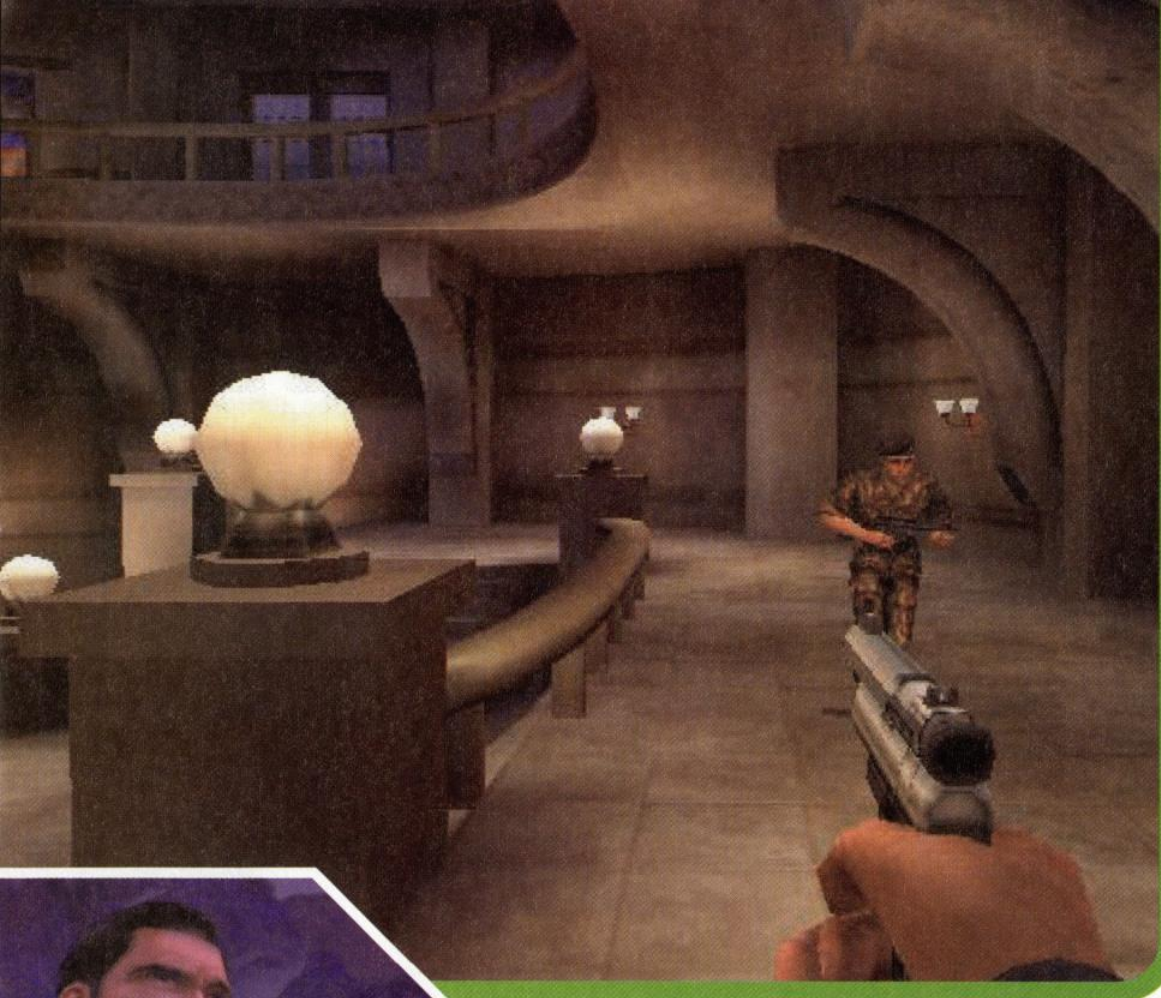
MINUS: Some slowdown, unreadable fonts.

VISUALS 91 SOUND 93 GAMEPLAY 93

OVERALL

93

Close to genius. Wipeout is reborn!



007: Agent Under Fire >> PS2

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

DAVID WILDGOOSE hires out a tux for this one.

52. It means you're a geek not a nerd.

Criticising a game for being too easy is problematic. For a start, by whose measure is it too easy? While veteran gamers will breeze through Agent Under Fire in rapid time (less than five hours, to be exact), there will inevitably be those for whom their lack of experience with similar games heightens the challenge to a significant degree. How fortunate for me that, although the minimal difficulty is perhaps the title's major flaw, it's also crippled by a host of other failings.

BARE BONES

This is EA's second attempt at a first person shooter based on the (s)exploits of the world's most shaken secret agent. Unlike last year's *The World Is Not Enough*, there's no celluloid version of Agent Under Fire

from which to plunder a readymade story. In able hands, liberated from concerns of fidelity to a film, the chance to work with an original script might have been to the game's advantage. Yet the tiresome drivel masquerading as a plot is just the first sign of a development team bereft of inspiration. Though if EA's writers weren't quite up to the task, at least Bond himself looks the part as an uncanny hybrid of Pierce Brosnan and Timothy Dalton.

Remove the thin veil of a plot involving biological weapons and human cloning and the bare bones are instantly recognisable. At heart, and through the majority of its twelve short levels, Agent Under Fire is a first person shooter. Now and again, the action is broken up by some high-speed car chases and a couple of

Time Crisis-style shooter sequences, but for the most part Bond is hotfooting it through enemy bases with his gun at the ready. Which is a shame, because these are without doubt some of the blandest, least memorable FPS locations ever committed to a data storage medium.

Screamingly dull objectives and a relentless linearity conspire to drain each level of whatever atmosphere its undeniable graphical prowess may have imbued. Further, in a feeble impersonation of AI, each enemy seems peculiarly disinclined to notice your presence, shoot straight or



attempt to avoid your return fire. But what finally ruins the whole game is just how easy it is. Worse, it's not just easy, but patronisingly so. On any difficulty level the game is virtually idiot-proof. The opening sections are frequently interrupted by cut-scenes and voice-overs (from Bond's superiors, Q & M) respectively highlighting and explaining key features of the environment. From something as simple (and utterly pointless) as roaming the camera ahead to show what's waiting around the next corner to more complex messages detailing the immediate use of one of Bond's array of gadgets, prompts arrive with incessant



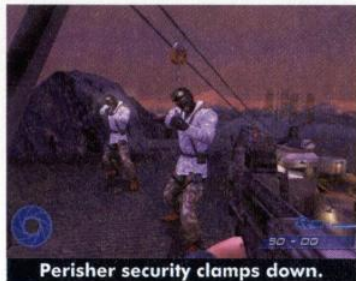
Hyper HQ's new renovations.



Shouldn't the bad guys wear black?



That's where JC's Multi-tool went...



Perisher security clamps down.



The action is broken up by some high-speed car chases and **a couple of Time Crisis-style shooter sequences**, but for the most part Bond is hotfooting it through enemy bases.

regularity throughout the first couple of missions.

HIGH-TECH TOYS

Initial concern over this rather heavy-handed tutorial approach soon grows into genuine alarm as these cut-scenes continue to shove the bleeding obvious down your throat well into the climactic finale. Three-quarters of the way into the game, for example, you encounter a pair of armoured tanks, essentially the equivalent of an end-of-level boss. Immediately a cut-scene kicks in, illustrating with no degree of subtlety the manner in which the tanks must be destroyed. When it has concluded, you simply complete the prescribed actions and are whisked to the next mission briefing.



with NBA Street. Can't wait to see the sequel.

There are countless identical situations throughout the entire game. Not only do they halt any accumulated momentum, they utterly remove the need for the player to think about what he's doing. Not once are you allowed the opportunity to express your own ingenuity. Conversely, you can do little but marvel at the "cleverness" of the designer. Where's the satisfaction in that?

The end result of these pre-emptive cut-scenes is a major part of the game's appeal — playing around with Bond's nifty high-tech toys — is rendered redundant, while the elements of surprise and tension are spoiled. All that really remains is a series of lacklustre corridor-based shoot-outs.

Against the odds, the driving missions are actually quite entertaining. One imagines that as an accompaniment to a more substantial main game they would prove an enjoyable diversion. As things stand, there are so few of them — and what is there is pretty lightweight anyway — that it's asking the impossible for them to carry the entire game. To buy this for the driving alone would be like picking up Ocarina of Time for its fishing mini-game.

Agent Under Fire is aimed squarely at the novice gamer. Viewed in this light, it succeeds as a kind of "My First Videogame". The massmarket purchaser will be comforted by the familiar licence and guided through any potential obstacle by the frequent prompting. Anyone else should give it a miss. <<



PLUS: Graphically accomplished.

MINUS: Patronising, breathtakingly easy and just plain dull.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

84 75 55

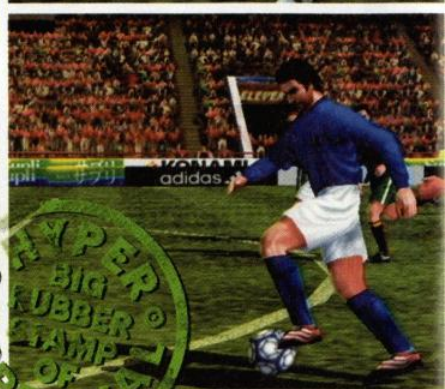
OVERALL

60

A pale imitation of 007's Goldeneye days.

54. It keeps you young at heart. Awww...

REVIEW >>> HYPER 69



Pro Evolution Soccer

>>PS2

CATEGORY: Soccer >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: Konami >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

JACKSON GOTHE-SNAPE replays the World Cup qualifier...

Pro Evolution Soccer (PES) is the first PS2 incarnation of the ISS Pro Evolution series. Unlike Konami Osaka's ISS that has been out for a year, PES comes from Konami's Tokyo studios who are generally known to produce the superior soccer games. This latest title is essentially Winning Eleven 5 (which wasn't released outside Japan) with an extra six months of development. It arrives at a time when the competition in the soccer market is tougher than it has ever been. This Is Soccer and FIFA 2002 are both solid games that will please almost all football fans — except those who have played PES.

Often one wonders if the universal gamers' code of "gameplay matters most" really exists. It seems all anyone talks about these days is

how many quintillion polygons are processed every second or if a title offers dynamically exfoliated hump mapping. It is titles like PES that offer gamers hope for a better world.

THE SUN IS SHINING

The intro is worthy of a mention simply for its hilarity, but like most of the game's presentation, isn't all that inspiring. The menu system and features, although functional, and familiar to ISS Pro Evolution players, are a long way short of being polished. So far, FIFA fans aren't likely to be impressed.

Nor will they be impressed by the mere 30 or so national teams, and 20 club sides, and the lack of any actual tournaments or leagues. What they probably won't be able to

stand is the lack of real team names, or about a third of all the players' real names, mainly South Americans. It's great scoring with Argentina's top striker, but something is missing when it's 'Butatista' on the score sheet.

Another hideous failing is the truly abysmal commentary. I used to laugh when people talked about turning sound or music off in a game, but this is one of those special cases. It's not so bad hearing Terry Butcher tell us about how the sun is shining every game, it's just that he tells us even in rainy, night-time matches.

Hardly sounds like the greatest football game ever made does it? But such is the power of gameplay. Of course, it helps that PES boasts excellent player animation, as well

as fantastic sound effects, including team-specific chants. The stadiums look great (apart from the three-frame crowd animation) while on the pitch all your favourite players look as they should — Zidane's bald spot included — except they all wear fairly inaccurate shirts.

BALL CONTROL

It is down here on the field where you'll fall in love with Pro Evolution Soccer. The first thing that will strike you is the great ball physics and realistic speed of play. In PES, ball control is heavily dictated by your touches on the ball. Although other games try to simulate the actual physical contact between boot and ball, as well as all the intricacies that go with it, this is the title that actually succeeds. This means that



Mr Sheen - buff up that bald spot



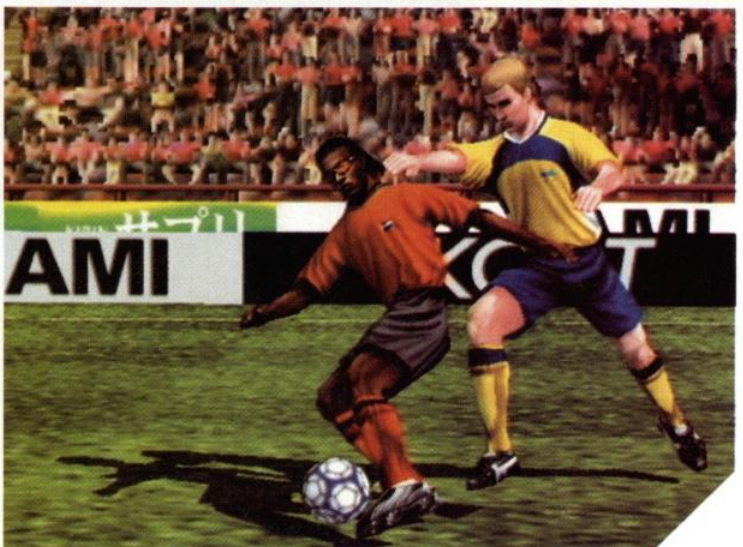
GOOOOAAAALLLLLLLLLLLLLLL kick.



Hey, is that Flat Stanley in the crowd?



Look out! Rocket launcher!



It's true, **one cannot master the game within a matter of minutes.** Just like with racing or flying games, a better simulation makes for a greater learning curve.

PES forces you to play real football, by using the wings, and keeping the ball moving. Although there are basic special moves like stepovers, they are much more difficult to perform and far less effective than in certain other titles that will remain unnamed.

Shooting is perhaps the sweetest aspect of the whole package. First off, you'll be skying shot after shot into the stands.

Slowly the subtle control and timing will come, and within a few matches you will actually be able to score. In another ten matches you might be able to score from the edge of the area, and after maybe six months, 30 yarders could well be a reality.

It's true, one cannot master the game within a matter of minutes.



So many great soccer games out on PS2 and we have them all! Muahahaha.

Just like with racing or flying games, a better simulation makes for a greater learning curve. Of course this doesn't suit everyone's tastes, but there is no denying that a titles such as PES can provide a deeper, more rewarding gaming experience. There are a few of the regular niggling problems like player switching and erratic keeping that most soccer games suffer from, but they hardly detract from the experience.

It's just a shame Konami couldn't put it all together for this one. Although there is a great (and much needed) practice mode, as well an addictive Master League that involves limited team management options, I want more! I want to

watch replays when I want, how I want. I want funky official team logos and competitions. I want all the leagues in Europe playable at once, with relegation and promotion, as well as cup competitions. I'd love to have the ability to make a home and away tournament with a knockout finals format using club sides. I want Gabriel Batistuta!!! Sure no title offers all these options, but PES could have given us a bit more.

In the end though, above everything else, I want sweet gameplay — and here PES is up to the task (unlike the Soccerroos). It's a pity the game's features and presentation just don't do the gameplay justice. <<<



PLUS: Realistic, great animation.

MINUS: A little light on the feature frills.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

87 72 93

OVERALL

91

The football tribe's choice.

REVIEW
» HYPER 71



Smuggler's Run 2: HOSTILE TERRITORY

CATEGORY: Racing >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Take 2 >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

CAM SHEA smuggled this one out of the office.

S muggler's Run 2 (SR2) is set in Russia and Vietnam, but the gameplay is very much the same as the original — run contraband from the pick-up to the drop, don't get busted by the cops and don't let rival gangs give you any shit. There are a few new mission styles to expand the gameplay, including chase-based missions where you have to pursue and destroy an enemy vehicle or hold a tail for a certain period, and "on-the-fly" missions where the drop is made wherever possible by helicopter amidst a heavy police presence. But does all this add up to a fresh new sequel?

EVERY BIT AS NASTY

The learning curve is a little less savage this time around, but SR2 can still be frustrating. You'll have to work the landscape and your vehicle to maximum effect, as well as devise the best strategies to thwart the police and rival smugglers. There are eight vehicles to unlock, and they're much more varied and useful this time around. Plus, you can even earn

countermeasure attacks such as oil slicks, smoke screens, bombs and nitro boosts to spice up the chase, and open up new strategies. The police in this game are every bit as nasty as they were in the original, and perhaps more so. Regardless, you're always drastically outnumbered and more often than not they're faster than you too. At least they can take damage now — nothing like losing your pursuit by destroying them all!

The environments are about the same size as in the original — that is, bloody huge — and they're more detailed too. The sparse, desolate terrain of the original has been replaced by more living environments with plenty of low lying vegetation, as well as trees, bridges, villages and civilian vehicles. The varied weather settings and night vision missions are also a nice touch. Best of all, missions can get seriously hectic with more vehicles on-screen than before, without compromising the fast frame rate.

LOOPING TECHNO?

The soundtrack also deserves special mention. For anyone into minimalist techno, this is heaven on a licensed stick. We're talking eleven tracks from London's forward-thinking producer James Ruskin, ten tracks from the 430 West label (including several from Octave One), and another ten tracks by Kevin Saunderson including several under his classic E-Dancer moniker. Game soundtracks don't get much better than this! And in case you're wondering just how well minimal looping techno would fit with this game — it works a treat, somehow syncing in perfectly with your single minded attention to the task at hand.

Smuggler's Run 2 is hardly a revolution, and it's a pity it took two games to get to this point, as the hard work was done by the dev team in building the engine and physics, so implementing a variety of game modes should have been the easy part. Even so, this is a polished and above all fun game that remains hard to resist. <<

!!! Techno lovers rejoice! This issue SR2, Rez and Wipeout Fusion all have AAA soundtracks.



PLUS: Polished and a whole lot of fun.
MINUS: A little too similar to the original.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
87	91	83
OVERALL		
84		

Smuggler's Run 2 is a polished and addictive semi-sequel.



A few ships about to drop.



A dropship gives birth. Awwww.



The adventurous channel 7 chopper.



57. Force feedback keeps your hands warm during winter.

Dropship

>> PS2

CATEGORY: Sim/Action >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: SCEE >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

ELIOT FISH drops in to cast his verdict on this one...

Considering Dropship has been in development for a few years now, you can't really accuse Sony Europe's Camden development studio of purposely trying to cash in on the current world climate. You see, the game is set out in the desert in the Middle East, and you're bravely fighting against a legion of dirty terrorists intent on bringing harm to the world. Pretty timely, huh? Oh, and if you don't like the colour brown, then Dropship is going to be your worst nightmare come to life.

PUNCH IT, CHEWIE

Kicking off with an FMV news report in the vein of Starship Troopers, you discover that the year is 2050 and you are a soldier/pilot with the UPF (United Peacekeeping Force). After progressing through some nifty training missions, you'll be brought up to speed with the controls of a high-tech Dropship and even a jeep for some eventual ground missions. Getting to grips with the controls of the Dropship at first is pretty daunting.



The Getaway.

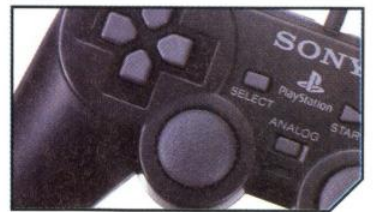
Now we just need to see Sony's

Just to lift off, pick up speed and move about uses almost every button on the controller – including simultaneous button presses. If you persevere, then across the course of the campaign you'll eventually be able to pull off some daring manoeuvres, but it certainly takes time and it never feels truly intuitive. There's a very definite technique when it comes to targeting and successfully destroying airborne or land based targets whilst keeping yourself moving so you're not just a hovering duck. Once you figure out how to ease on and off the throttle to give yourself ample manoeuvrability, you'll discover that your jet is actually a lot more lethal than it at first appears to be. It's all about understanding how the thing is meant to be flown, not the way you think you should approach the situation based on experience with arcade flight combat games. This is where the big simulation element to the game comes in, because not only does Dropship try to function in the same league as big

PC warfare sims, but it looks just about as good too.

ENDLESS BROWN

Gameplay in Dropship isn't just all about picking things up and dropping them off... You actually play a very multifaceted role within the UPF, and within the first couple of missions you're screaming through the desert in an APC, shooting down pursuing tanks and choppers with the machine-gun turret in the back. The action level is pretty high, and the adrenaline gets pumping pretty early on which is a bit of a surprise. The game is quite visually lush, despite the endless brown sand, as the terrain is quite complex and stretches out as far as the eye can see, with the only pop-up being in texture detail. On the whole, the game looks absolutely gorgeous. Dropship is pretty challenging, and you'll be pressing the "retry" button possibly more than you'd like. However, there's such polish to the game, that you'll keep on coming back for more. This is definitely worth including in your ever-growing PS2 library.



PLUS: Great sound, slick visuals. Very difficult.

MINUS: The controls can make it more difficult than it should be.

VISUALS 88 SOUND 86 GAMEPLAY 85

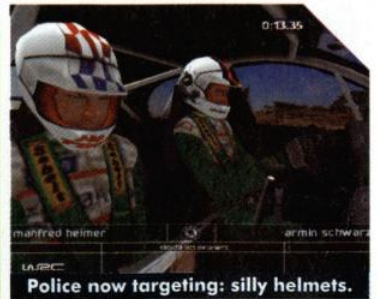
OVERALL

87

High-tech warfare with bells and whistles.

REVIEW

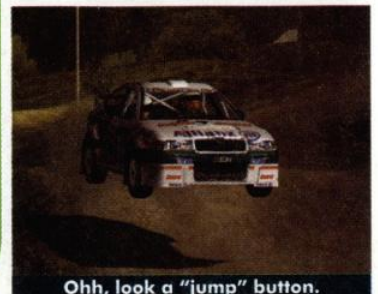
>>> HYPER 75



Police now targeting: silly helmets.



Does it rally feel like racing?



Ohh, look a "jump" button.

World Rally Championship

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

JACKSON GOTHE-SNAPE slides his back end out...

>> **PS2**

Rally will never be the most entertaining of sports. As sweet as watching cars fly round gravel corners is (and indeed it is oh-so-sweet), the sport is simply "man in car versus clock". Watching rally on television often descends into little more than waiting for the next bigger and more unbelievable crash.

Whether it be through a fiendishly difficult driving model or inventive, challenging circuits, or even simply terrifying speed, rally games must be more exciting than the real thing. As good as World Rally Championship is — overall it's just a little bland.

THE GLAMOROUS WORLD

WRC is, funnily enough, the official game of the World Rally Championship. The license is used very well, and together with the game's excellent presentation, makes things look very polished. Video is also used generously to introduce each rally as well as the championship, and really does make you feel a part of the WRC.

All fourteen real life rallies of the

world championship are here, although each round is cut back to just five stages. There are all the modes you expect such as championship, time-trial and two-player, as well as one that offers more interest. Formula 1 2001, the other racing game published by Sony this year, featured a system where players from around the world could compete in an online fast lap competition. WRC offers a similar mode, but with a bit more variety.

On either side of the road, the land stretches outwards for some way, giving a greater sense of real countryside than past rally games. The draw distance really is pretty good, however, there is a fair amount of pop-up and although playing the game you'll hardly notice, by this time the hardware at developers' disposal surely should eliminate problems like these.

HAIRPIN AFTER HAIRPIN

The driving model is definitely consistent, if somewhat twitchy, but it certainly falls in the arcade end of

the scale. Indeed, the experience is far superior to GT3's rally mode for example, but it doesn't seem like much of a step up from our Colin's last outing on the old PSone. Although the game is aided by convincing engine sounds, it just lacks excitement. You're never really exposed to the car's power — everything seems tame. It's great nailing hairpin after hairpin, but it all seems a little easy.

Rally fans love the WRC for all the quirky self-service jobs by the drivers, the unique format and the way the bizarre somehow becomes the norm. WRC the game is just a little too sedate, but does whet the appetite for Codemasters' next rally effort which promises to offer a more involving experience. In the introductory video to the championship mode, the game emphasises how the WRC is not simply about competing, but more surviving. It's just a pity the game doesn't replicate the real challenges of the WRC. <<<

!!! The cars all look quite nice - by far the game's graphical strength.



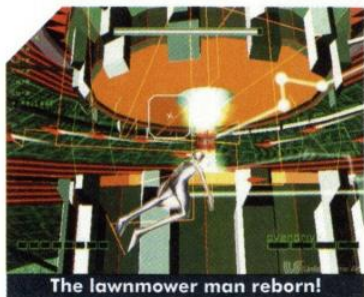
PLUS: The license, nice cars, and expansive terrain.

MINUS: Generally, there's just a real lack of thrills.

VISUALS 84 SOUND 85 GAMEPLAY 79

OVERALL
82

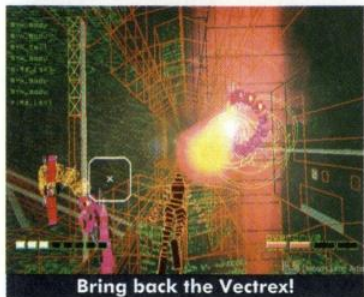
Solid, but comes across tired.



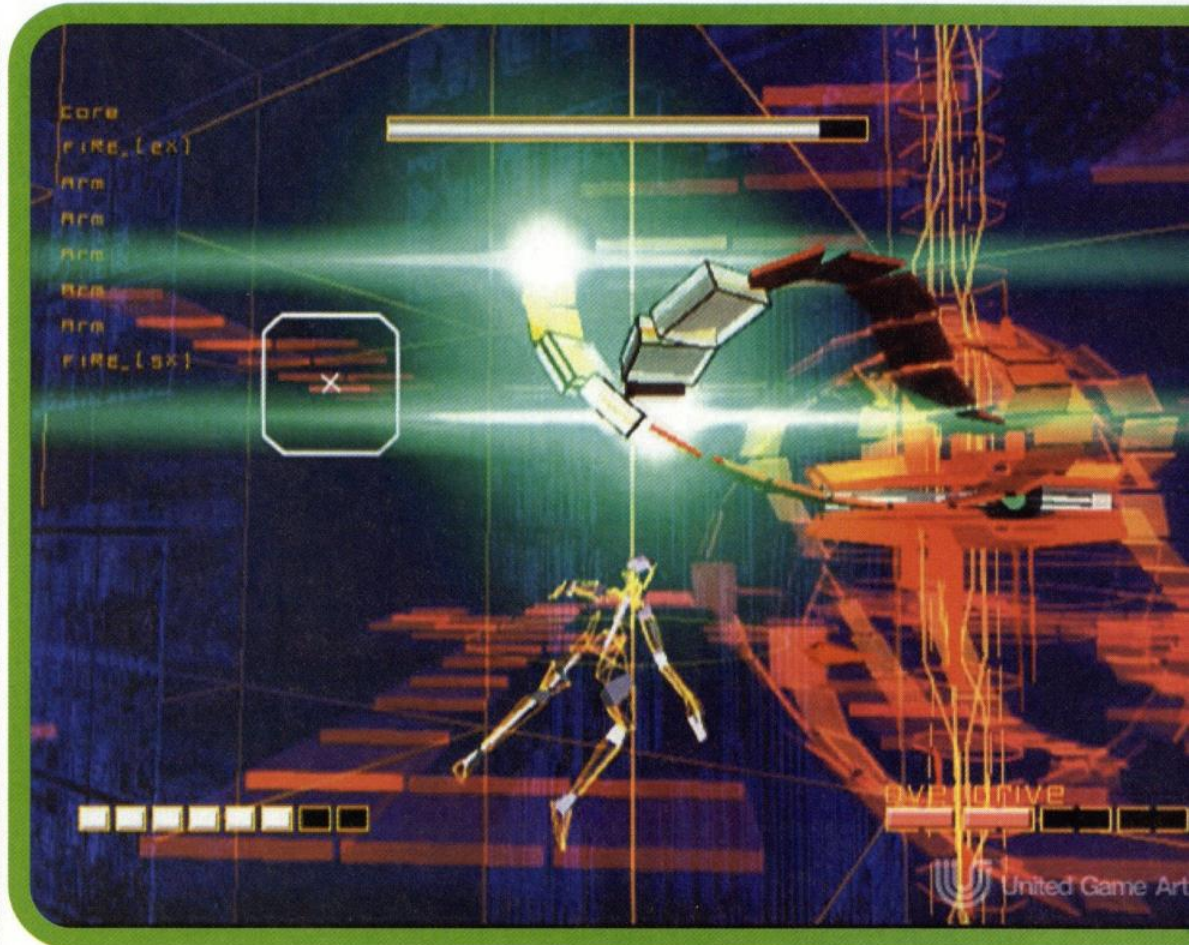
The lawnmower man reborn!



That wasn't an aspirin you gave me.



Bring back the Vectrex!



59. Arcade games give you a reason to get some fresh air.

Rez

» PS2

CATEGORY: Shooter >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Sega >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: PG >> AVAILABLE: Mid January >>

CAM SHEA thinks Rez should be called "Clubbing: The Game"...

In the all-encompassing broadband networks of the future, a wave of viruses has swept through the system, corrupting all the data in its path. What was once a flourishing virtual ecosystem is now a barren wireframe existence. The only way to restore order is to travel through the data pipes, routers and mainframes, and rescue "Eden", the Artificial Intelligence at the heart of the network.

VIB RIBBON GOES NEXT-GEN

This is the basic premise of Rez, the latest game from Sega's United Game Artists (UGA), led by Tetsuya "Space Channel 5" Mizuguchi. Mizuguchi's goal in creating Rez was to evoke synaesthesia in the player — an example being music triggering a visual response. In other words, he wanted to create an experience where sight, sound and touch (rumble) are interlinked and interact.

What this all boils down to, amazingly enough, is an old-school on-rails shooter. The basic gameplay consists of your wireframe

avatar flying along through tunnels and above landscapes, shooting wave upon wave of enemies with a single attack button and the odd smart bomb. Hmm...

So how is Mizuguchi's grand vision reconciled with this basic shooter? By not just setting it to music, but by making the aural landscape somewhat interactive. Each level starts out with only a very raw, simple beat. Each shot you fire is accompanied by a high hat sample, so depending on how you time your attacks you can actively add your own simple percussive elements to the music. Plus, the more things you shoot, the more elements are revealed in the music.

PHILOSOPHICAL GAMING

Although set in an ultra modern digital domain, the progression of levels take the avatar through the history of the great human civilisations. Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and China are all included, and realised through cool iconographic imagery. As you progress through the game restoring

the network, the environments start to change, becoming more solid as order is restored. We won't spoil it, but the final level and the climax of your quest is quite amazing, and packed with earnest philosophical commentary on humanity, evolution and technology.

So we've explained how Rez works and what it's all about, but words can only go so far. After all, this is a game based on the idea of a feedback loop between all the senses. To really appreciate how slick Rez is, it has to be seen in motion: the beauty of the raw wireframe geometry as it pulses to the thumping beats; the high hats riding over the kick drum as mech-like virtual entities explode in time into the digital abyss; the incredible end of level bosses — one a giant robot octopus pulsing through cyberspace, another comprised of hundreds of panels that swirl chaotically before forming a huge running figure that bounds down the path behind you. Rez may be short, and it may not fully deliver on its fantastic premise, but through sheer style it still manages to be a profound experience. <<



PLUS: Awesome techno soundtrack featuring Ken Ishii.

MINUS: Isn't as important as it would like to be.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

90 89 70

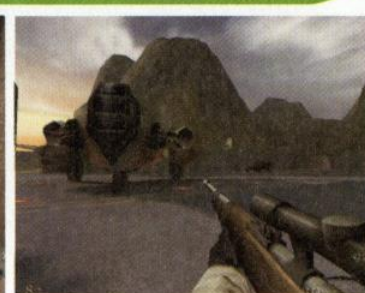
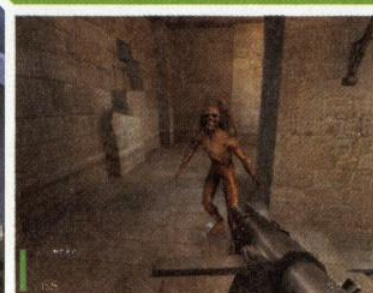
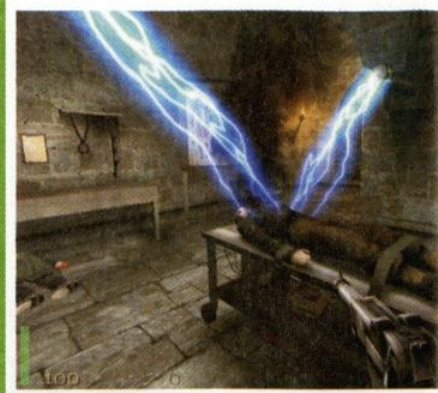
OVERALL

80

Pure eye candy set to funky beats.

REVIEW

>> HYPER 75



Return to Castle Wolfenstein

CATEGORY: FPS >> PLAYERS: 1-32 >> PUBLISHER: Activision >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: PII 500, 128MB RAM, 3D Card

ELIOT FISH goes looking for Nuhzi gawld...

>> **PC**

Eeing lumped with the responsibility of producing the sequel to such a classic PC game is no enviable task. The expectations based upon the resurrection of the Wolfenstein name alone would have been enough for the staff at Grey Matter to lose considerable sleep, suffer multiple nervous breakdowns, discard hundreds of good yet "un-wolfy" ideas and playtest the game into the ground. Wolfenstein 3D revolutionised the PC gaming scene and Grey Matter would have known that there is no way another shooter in this day and age could have that kind of impact again. So, rather than wow us with innovation, it seems that the aim here was to offer the gaming populace a solid and entertaining shooter in the spirit of

the original, rather than try to attain the lofty heights of a new classic.

THE SIMIAN SLASHER

Okay, let me get this out of the way – the funniest thing in Castle Wolfenstein is the knife attack. The rapid thrusting and "ooh ooh ooh" noise just makes us think of deadly ninja chimps from the pits of some US experimental facility. We had hours of fun running around and slashing nazi flags and other inanimate objects, just because the mental image based on the sound effect was so funny. But onto more important matters...

Your role in Castle Wolfenstein is to kill the Nazis, look for hidden treasure and complete a number of increasingly fun objectives for the US government. It's that simple. The twist

here is the blending of occult myth and the X-Files-esque motives behind the Third Reich and their thirst for world power. We're introduced to a variety of deadly Nazi experiments gone wrong, and a horde of restless undead, thanks to the Nazis meddling in the powers of darkness. This is almost good enough for an Indiana Jones movie, let alone a computer game. Grey Matter have tried to make the story important by leaving snippets of information lying

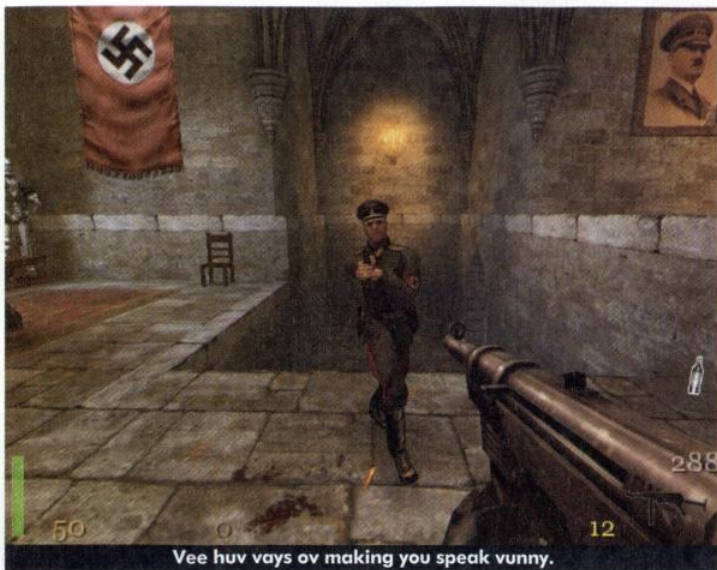


around for your character to read, but to be honest, how many of us are going to take that much notice of the story when we're presented with a machine gun and a room full of evil bad guys?

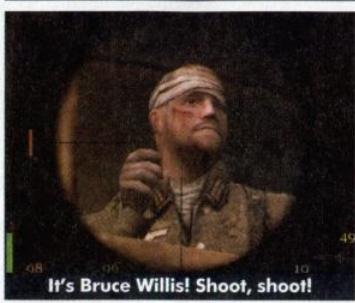
Anyhow... The new Wolfenstein world a very convincing one. There is plenty of creepy atmosphere, nice environmental detail and excellent architecture to make you really feel as though you're there in the thick of it. The variety of environments are truly interesting and fun to explore, with the

76 >> **HYPER REVIEW**

60. They're a permanent babysitter in the living room!



Vee huv vays ov making you speak vunny.



It's Bruce Willis! Shoot, shoot!



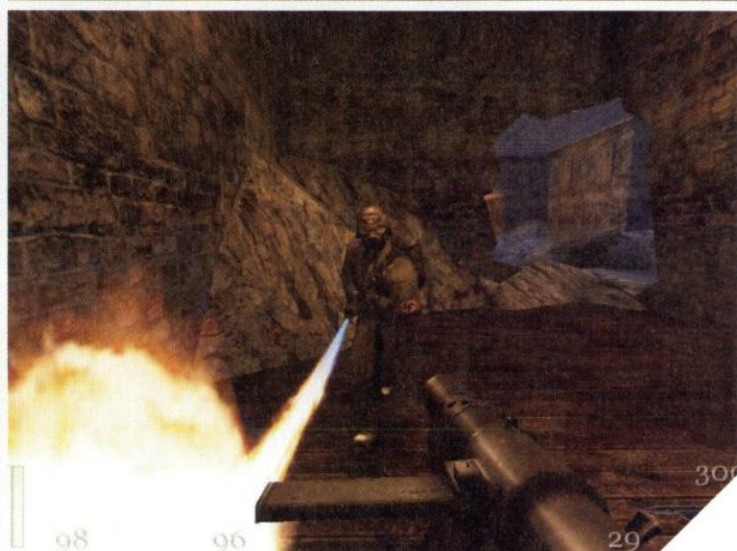
Have at you door ghost!



Bubbles spies another victim.



Look out, he's "armed"!



61. In games, it's always easy to "score".

The rapid thrusting and "ooh ooh ooh" noise just makes us think of **deadly ninja chimps** from the pits of some US experimental facility.

added incentive of finding the good old false wall and pile of treasure — just like the original Wolf 3D. The believability of the world is also helped by the quick-thinking AI of the enemy soldiers. Nazis will back off, take cover, snipe and generally make life a lot more difficult for you. It's always nice to play a shooter that forces you to be creative with your weapons and limited supply of ammo, and Wolfenstein does just that. What's even better is that you're killing dirty Nazis, and we all hate those guys. There's incentive enough.

CHEEKY DOOR GHOST

All the weapons on offer have chunky sound effects, look great and "feel" good to use, and there's no doubt that the flamethrower is probably the best we've ever seen in a game. Burn, Nazi

suckers! It also seems that a good balance has been struck between enemy placement and the number of ammo packs and health scattered about the levels. Missions have been set up so that they're "just right". The only big problem here is that the game feels incredibly linear — and as a result, there's no room for true experimentation with your approach.

Whilst the action on offer in Wolfenstein is tense and at times thrilling, the game also still suffers from what are almost age old design quirks in the genre. Upon opening a door, it will magically shut within seconds as if pushed by some cheeky door ghost. This kind of annoying event can actually seriously impede the gameplay. Sometimes doors will shut just when you need to back-pedal through them, or just as you're

hurling a grenade through the doorway. There are also some AI bugs, with guards sometimes running at walls or into each other.

The multiplayer aspect of Wolfenstein was designed independently by another developer, Nerve. As a result, the quality that has been achieved with this half of the game is stunning. The multiplayer modes boast player classes, fantastic map design and some truly gripping teamwork. Without a doubt, you'll find that forking over your cash for Wolfenstein is justly rewarded by the amount of play you will get from the multiplayer alone. We may just see Wolfenstein replacing now-ageing mods such as Counter-Strike, thanks to the class system and such strong emphasis on co-operation between teammates for true success. <<



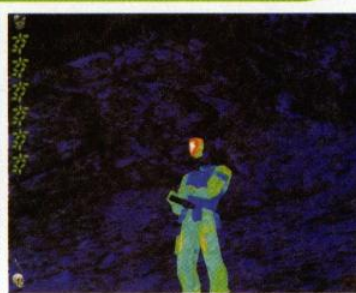
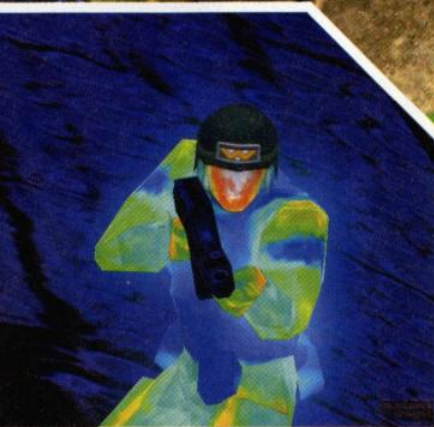
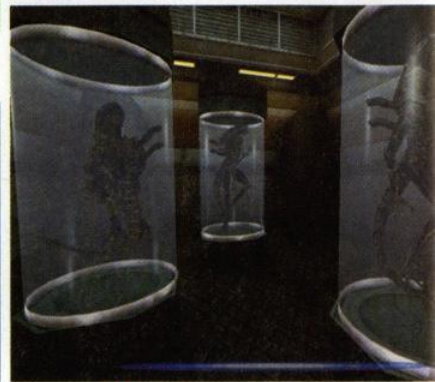
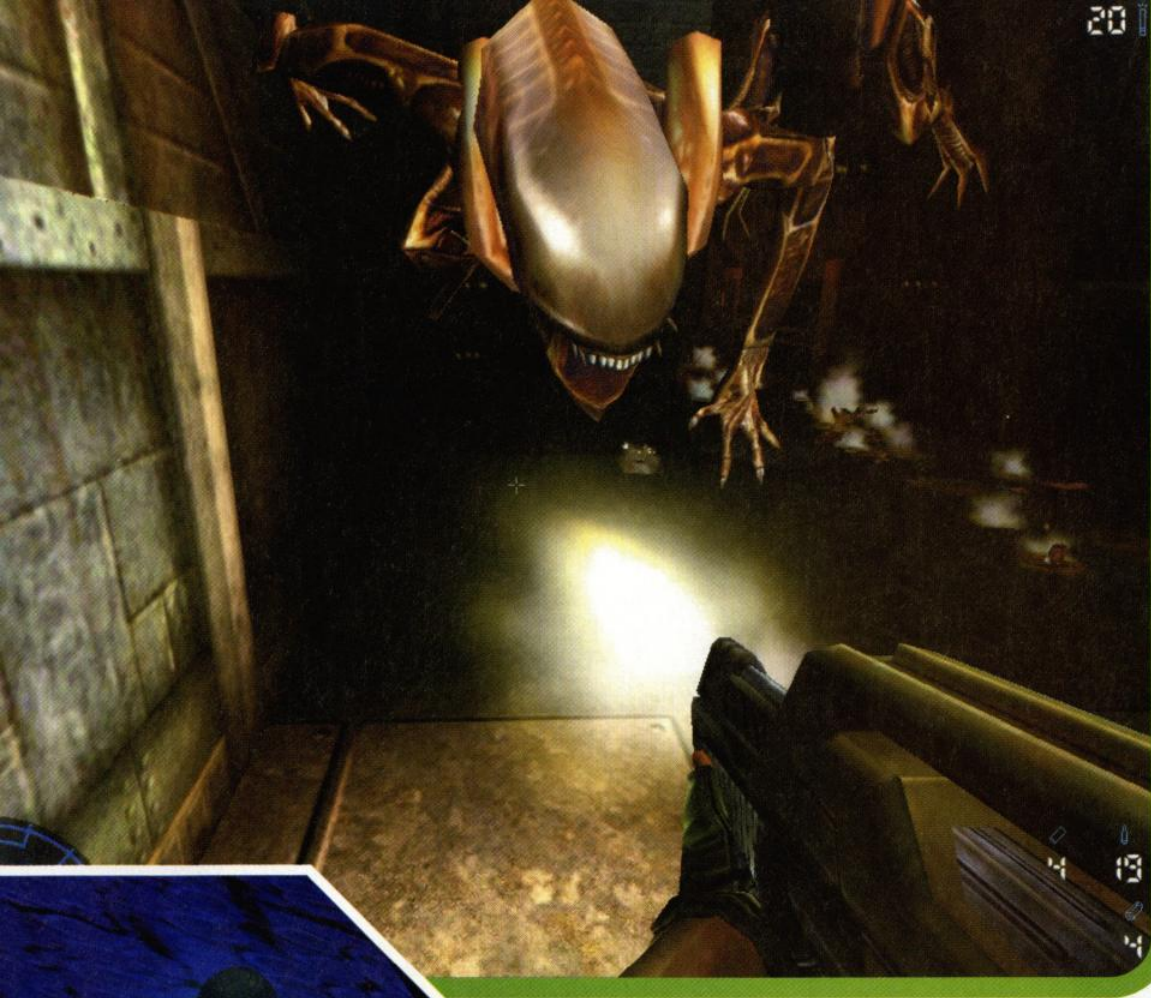
PLUS: Polished in every way, awesome multiplayer.

MINUS: Overall, fairly generic shooter gunplay.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY
90 91 86

OVERALL
86

A welcome return to Castle Wolfenstein and its denizens.



62. Jumping on people's heads is legal.

Aliens vs. Predator 2



CATEGORY: FPS >> PLAYERS: 1-16 >> PUBLISHER: Fox Interactive >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: PIII 450, 128MB RAM

DAN TOOSE impregnates a marine and enjoys it!?

Qebuting on the ill-fated, and often joked about Atari Jaguar, Aliens vs. Predator became a hit on PC once it was ported, with a first person shooter audience eager to lap up the atmospheric sci-fi action this title promised. Lack of a decent plot, and an unbalanced and unwieldy multiplayer system stopped this title from becoming the mammoth hit it may have been. Monolith have taken the reins and improved on things quite markedly with Aliens vs. Predator 2, but have they addressed every issue we had with the original?

conflict. AVP2 does the same, although this time around, the developers have created a plot that not only manages to make sense, but also remain very true to both movie licenses at once. Playing through the game with each species reveals a different side of the story. The three plotlines meet at various points, including situations where you can even see the character you use from the other two races, which makes for a really solid presentation.

While AVP2 doesn't do anything to take first person shooters to a new level, Monolith have done a fantastic job recreating the sorts of dark, chilling, environments that made the movies so compelling. Carefully modelled environments and decorations, topped off with outstanding lighting effects and

neatly scripted animations make AVP2 look just right, save for a few forgivably blocky trees and such.

What really throws you deep into sci-fi escapist bliss is the sound, sporting a classy ambient soundtrack, which suits the eerie tension of the game — it actually changes when something begins to go down. The real draw card though is the perfect array of sound



effects, which makes pretty much everything that happens remind you of the movies in some way or another. Even the dialogue and voice acting reek of quality, so hats off to the entire sound team for AVP2.

The atmospheric audio-visual splendour, combined with a set of game mechanics that allow for indulgence in the brutal ways of our favourite sci-fi nasties, make Aliens vs. Predator 2 an excellent single player experience... While it lasts. If you're good at these kinds of games, play through on one of the harder settings for your own sake.

REVIEW

78 >>HYPER

BLOCKY TREES

For those not familiar with the original, AVP brought the Marines, Aliens and Predators from the two movies together in a three-way



Multiplayer musings

Trying to maintain gameplay balance with not two, but three races in a sci-fi setting has to be a nightmare when you're trying to adhere to a couple of movie licenses as well. Offering six game types, ranging from basic deathmatch, through to more realistic scenarios of one team trying to flee from a group hunting them down, AVP2 has plenty to offer. However, ordinary network code, and questionable balancing of the three races don't make AVP2 a classic multiplayer title.



Take those polaroids off...



Sit on my face and tell me that you...



You start your mission as a **spider-like facehugger**... maintaining authenticity, and a really nice way of adding a need for stealth.

NEW GUNS AND GIZMOS

The marines make for a fairly traditional first person shooter experience, relying upon their impressive array of projectile weapons to get the job done. Of course they come with other trappings, such as the motion detector, and image intensifier goggles. The marine's only new goodies for AVP2 are a sniper rifle, a blowtorch for cutting locks, and a hacking device for opening doors, and operating certain things that are on the blink.

The Alien's story provides far greater variety from the original AVP game. You start your mission as a spider-like facehugger, instead of a fully grown drone. This is a really nice way of not only maintaining

authenticity for the fans, but also adding a need for stealth, which carries on into the next phase of your mission when you find a lone victim away from the group and impregnate them with a chestbuster.

The alien is easier to control on walls and ceilings than in the first AVP, but the most significant change is the devastating new pounce attack. Landing a successful pounce attack does huge amounts of damage, killing marines in one hit. Couple this with the jaw-dropping distances you can leap, and the alien can get in or out of a situation very quickly.

Those who crave authenticity might not like the changes to the Predator, not only because they

vary from the way things have been in the films, but also because they make what was arguably the most powerful species in the first game, even more powerful. The shoulder cannon now fires guided plasma at a fairly rapid rate, making what was the most effective weapon, even more deadly. Add to this a new energy-replenishing device, which thus removes the need for conserving power for your cloaking, weaponry and medical gear, and balancing issues in multiplayer become quite obvious.

With only a couple of niggling clipping bugs here and there, Aliens vs. Predator 2 is a highly enjoyable first person shooter that tells a tale any fan of the Alien or Predator films will get a kick out of and is a worthy action title to consider.



PLUS: Very true to the films. Tres atmospheric. You can eat people!

MINUS: Multiplayer balance is extremely iffy.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY
88 95 85

OVERALL

85

A short, yet highly enjoyable dose of sci-fi action goodness.

REVIEW

HYPER 79

2 Rattkin Breeders (2/1/2)
3 Rattkin Archers (3/0/1)



Wizardry 8

>> PC

CATEGORY: RPG >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Sir-tech >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: P233, 64MB RAM

ELIOT FISH sometimes forgets this is just a game.

Hands up class if you know what I mean by the term "old school". Yes, that's right Bobby, when a game is referred to as "old school" it means that it has a retro flavour or is designed in the style of an earlier generation of games. Sometimes, of course, a game isn't consciously designed that way, but the developers are more interested in perfecting tried and true formulas. Wizardry 8 is what we call an "old school" RPG. It's not trying to be all 3D and interactive, it's not trying to show off the latest GeForce 3 trickery, it's not trying to broaden the RPG genre... It's a traditional, party-based dungeon crawl, populated with entrepreneurial NPCs, a turn-based combat system and a good old paper doll inventory system. And it totally rocks.

THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD...

Few people know of the long and winding road it has been for Sir-tech in getting Wizardry 8 released to the public. The game was finished about a year before they finally hooked up a deal to get the game in stores. The upside is that the extended delay resulted in plenty of time for the dev team to tweak and perfect the game, add new features and eventually create one of the most interesting, complex and epic "old school" PC RPGs on the planet. If only all game developers had time to polish their games like this...

With a party consisting of six characters, the game picks up roughly where Wizardry 7: Crusaders of the Dark Savant left off. Wizardry 7 however, was released a long nine

years ago, so if you don't understand what the hell is going on, don't worry. Read the manual, and as you play the game, everything will be explained. In fact, the pacing of the story and the way everything is revealed to you is expertly done. At first you'll be confused (as you should be), but the more you converse with NPCs and discover things for yourself, the more you get a grasp on what it is you need to do.


You can create your party from a huge number of classes and races, from Hobbit Rogues to Mook (kind of like Wookiees) Rangers, Human Samurai and Elven Bards — just to name a few. Every combination will affect the character's starting

attributes, which you can then tweak, along with their starting skills and spells. The freedom to truly mould unique characters in Wizardry 8 is great, as over the course of the game, you can really hone particular skills and actually see how it affects your party in combat, or puzzle solving. One new class, the Gadgeteer, can combine pieces of junk to create useful items, plus get more to grips with things like guns and other modern weapons.

The role-playing is again enhanced by a party formation system, where






 Rather than “find the key” puzzles, you’re trying to **figure out how to get a computer to work** or how to make a rope bridge...

65. “Computer skills” are necessary in this day and age.

you can tweak where each character is standing, thus protecting weaker spell-casters with your big beefy warriors. It’s small details such as this where Wizardry 8 excels.

TRICKS AND TRAPS

Movement takes place in smooth, scrolling 3D, but all combat is turn-based, allowing you to plan your attacks. This is one of the most challenging aspects of the game. Most of the time it feels that your party is not quite up to the job, which really makes you work hard to get the best out of them. This requires you to really utilise each character in a role that they specialise in, thus covering the attack and defense from all angles. The combat can be quite drawn out,



Make sure you grab the latest patch from the website.

but it’s gritty and an amazing amount of control is placed in the player’s hands, making this a truly satisfying adventure.

The land of Dominus is also full of mysterious puzzles, more lateral than most other RPGs, which will keep you thinking for days – sometimes requiring specific objects you’ll have to quest for. It adds a nice extra layer of depth to the game, and rather than standard “find the key” puzzles, you’re trying to figure out how to get a computer to work at the spaceport or figuring out how to make a rope to fix a bridge you can’t cross. This is great design, and it keeps the adventuring non-linear, as there’s always something on the back burner.

Whilst the graphics look a tad

dated, the monster animations are great and some of the game actually looks very pretty. There’s a whole host of different voices to choose from for you characters, and you won’t be able to shut them up during the adventure – especially when you get NPCs to join your party. But this interaction helps to make it all seem more alive.

Wizardry 8 really does have everything an RPG lover could want. The sad fact is that this is Sir-tech’s last game. The amount of money the company lost in development will probably not be recouped even if Wizardry 8 sells remarkably well. What we’re playing here is the last – and ironically the best – RPG the company will ever make. Go buy it, and enjoy it while you can. <<<



PLUS: Great character and combat systems. Lots to think about.

MINUS: Sometimes combat will test your patience.

VISUALS 87 SOUND 89 GAMEPLAY 93

OVERALL

93

Kick the Dark Savant’s arse. Go on, do it for Sir-tech.

REVIEW

>>> HYPER 81



66. Why else were we given opposable thumbs?

Battle Realms

>> PC

CATEGORY: Strategy >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: Ubi Soft >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: PII 300, 64 MB RAM

JAMES COTTEE wore a conical hat before it became cool.

Now that 3D real time strategy games are the rule, not the exception, game developers are finally exploring some of the disciplines potential beyond making everything on screen look pretty. Hence Battle Realms, Liquid Entertainment's foray into this crowded genre. Created by some of the talent behind the original Command & Conquer, Battle Realms is a simple yet innovative title that breaks new ground.

TURNING JAPANESE

For a start, Battle Realms reigns in one of the needless complexities of many an RTS: camera control. There is no rotating of the map, and only a limited zoom function. With this clear perspective, the 3D models can and have been optimised to look

good at a pre-determined range. This transparent approach leads to better immersion, a quality that flies in the face of detail for its own sake.

The graphics are also a big step up from the first generation of 3D RTS, with a truly 3D terrain model, and buildings that can be rotated during placement for easy access. In addition to the now standard idle peasant button there are buttons to jump instantly to combat, or burning buildings. Structures no longer just take hits from their health bar, but can burn to the ground if ignored.

While each level is ultimately a glorified petri dish for synthetic life forms to fight it out in, there is a real sense of wilderness that must be tamed. An unexplored map will be scattered with wild horses going

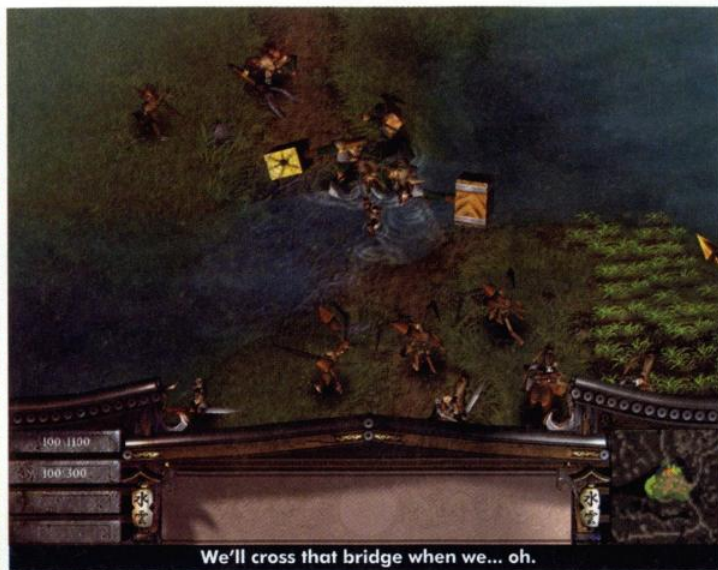
about their business. If you take the time to break some in and stock your stable, mounted units become available both for your war machine, and for agrarian economy. More rice means more troops.

Control is of the simple select and right click school of thought, with a few standard, if not amazing options. You can group units, but you can't assign them to formations. Tactics are more dependent on the lay of the land than the marching order of your squads, and you'll do well to follow some simple tactical precepts to victory. Higher



ground confers combat bonuses, and the higher the better. Whilst on cliff tops it's even possible to roll boulders onto troop columns passing below, squashing them Indiana Jones style.

All basic units are trained up from peasants, who must spend the better part of a minute on the firing range, say, before they qualify as an archer. Basic units have simple weaknesses, such as melee for archers, or ranged combat for spearmen. To help round out your army, it's possible to train units in multiple disciplines, to create super units. These



We'll cross that bridge when we... oh.



The minion massacre.



Ahh, the little people... muahaha.



Build me sushi, slaves.



Gather resources or I'll delete you.



67. If it weren't for games, the pizza industry would go out of business.

While each level is ultimately a glorified petri dish for synthetic life forms to fight it out in, there is a real sense of wilderness...

fearsome hybrids are fun to use, and also make for judicious use of your troop number cap.

Further variety emerges from the four different clans in the game, each with their own exotic specialties. The Dragon and Serpent clans use the more boring structure and purchase-based upgrade paths available to them, but the fruity Wolf and Lotus clans are skilled in the magical arts, used for feral and evil ends respectively.

HAIL TO THE KING

As the game begins you assume the role of Kenji, heir to the throne of the disreputable Serpent Clan. Through simple role-playing options you have the option of either fulfilling your politically suspect birthright, or siding with the Dragon Clan to bring order to the land.

Either way, you'll have to take over the continent one map segment at a time, and in this respect Battle Realms is reminiscent of the PC classic *Sword of the Samurai*.

In campaign play, the apex of your effort is to ensure the survival and betterment of your hero characters, or "Zen Masters." These units have specialised abilities as well as voice banks, and grow in power the more you look after them. While much of the game involves developing the infrastructure of your kingdom, there is also a lot of exploring and one-on-one vanquishing to do, and is such reminiscent of the underground levels in *Warcraft III*. In fact, if you can't wait for *Warcraft III*, then *Battle Realms* would serve as a perfectly good ersatz until *Blizzard's 3D RTS* debut finally lumbers onto store shelves.

It would be nice to say that *Battle Realms* is assured a steady upgrade path to refine what is already a solid game concept, but sadly this is not the case. *Liquid Entertainment* was dissolved shortly after completing *Battle Realms*, so it looks like the title could be a one off. There are certainly worse fates than having a franchise terminated, like having a sequel prepared by an inferior third party developer.

By building a graphical engine and game system from scratch, *Liquid* have managed to create a simple, balanced, and engaging RTS adventure. The 36 missions in the campaign mode are complemented by full skirmish and multi-player options for less sophisticated warmongering. Even the fake Asian accents aren't too annoying. One of the better RTS games of the year, and certainly the most refreshing. <<



PLUS: Cool unit upgrade system, RPG feel, pretty graphics.

MINUS: Some pathing and AI are suspect, a few bugs.

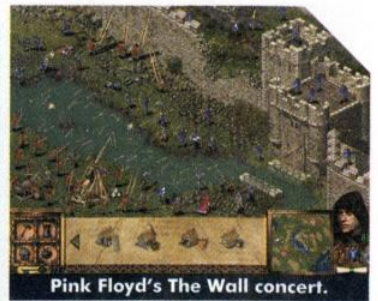
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

90 80 87

OVERALL

86

An above average breed of RPG and RTS. Nice!



Pink Floyd's The Wall concert.



Built like a brick shithouse.



Built like a wooden shithouse.

Stronghold



CATEGORY: RTS >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: Take 2 >> PRICE: \$79.95 >> RATING: M15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: PII 200, 64MB RAM

STEVE POLAK throws the little people in his newly built dungeon...

If you enjoyed the mighty Age of Kings, but want a game with even more substance, then sire, your software is ready. Stronghold is one of those rare games that comes along without any fanfare and ends up being really special even though nobody really expected much from it.

EXTRACTING COIN

This game has you ruling the land, running your own castle, developing your economy and of course, smiting anyone who dares threaten your dominance. In Stronghold you must manage your economic development as well as oversee your military machine. Indeed the latter is very dependant on all being well with the former and in this sense you will only win games if you have a sound sense of how to best manage a feudal economy. You will then be able to indulge in castle design and tactical combat.

The interface is deep and full of options, but it also delivers very concisely all of the information you need to successfully grow your

empire. This is a lot of information to be mastered too. To build a strong army you will have to manage resources like food, leather, stone, ale, wood, bread, and all sorts of weapons which you will have to have handmade by specialist craftsmen. Indeed it is your people who are your most important resource. These are recruited to help build your economy.

Peasants gather in front of your Lord's hut, the central structure of your castle. They stand around the campfire rubbing their hands, looking grubby and waiting for you to give them a job worthy of their skills. This is done by building a workplace for them. For example if you want more wood, build woodcutter's huts. If you need more bread you'll need to build bakeries (which cost wood). Your peasants will then wander over to these new buildings and start working for you.

This sounds simple enough, but your people must also be kept happy...

LET THEM EAT BREAD

If your people are starving, being taxed too high, or have another gripe, they will begin bugging off on you, and your economic system will eventually grind to a halt. Your people can be made happy with more food, gardens in your town and even taverns and churches help keep their spirits up. However all of these things cost a lot so you really need to juggle the competing demands the game

makes on your resources. This is the essence of the game's economic model, and this juggling act is also what makes the game so damn enjoyable too.

Combat is also fun, with Age of Kings style point and click stuff being mainly what is on the menu. There are many different units with siege equipment, archers, knights and man at arms. Building your castle's defenses efficiently is one of the key skills to learn.

Stronghold is a very deep and satisfying game which serves as the natural upgrade path for AOE fans who hunger for more. <<

!!! If only you could launch cows like Monty Python...



PLUS: Serious depth, great campaign, superb sound.

MINUS: Can be overwhelming if you aren't an RTS veteran.

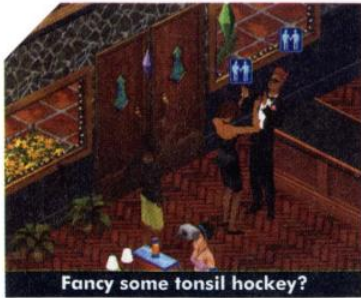
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

77 90 87

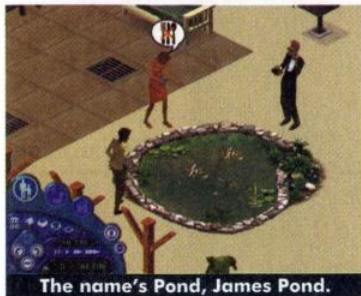
OVERALL

89

Deeper than Atlantis!



Fancy some tonsil hockey?



The name's Pond, James Pond.



You here for the orgy?



The Sims: Hot Date

>> PC

CATEGORY: Dating Sim >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: EA >> PRICE: \$59.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: The Sims

CAM SHEA only knows Roy and HG's definition of "date"...

Japanese gamers have been enjoying dating and marriage sims for years now. Why have we been denied? Are we not sad and desperate enough? Are we not alienated enough from traditional social interactions? It's a mystery, but fortunately this crazy divide between Eastern and Western gaming tastes has come to an end. The nerd's champion, Will Wright, has made the breakthrough in the form of the third expansion pack for The Sims.

A DEAL FOR ONE

This is the first Sims expansion pack to truly offer something more than just extra frills and gimmicks. Hot Date lets you go one on one with your Sims. You can forget about running a household — take your most eligible bachelor, call a cab and get a ride downtown. Yes, we're finally leaving the neighbourhood! The new downtown area is broken into lots, giving the player plenty of choice between restaurants, shopping centres, parks, coffee shops, nightclubs and even a beach.

You'll find all the Sims from your neighbourhood there, as well as NPCs like waiters, cooks and cleaners, and even new characters known as "townies" that hang downtown specifically for your wooing pleasure, such as the blonde bombshell, dreamboat, lounge lizard, jock and femme fatale.

The downtown area is strictly a one sim deal — you can only bring and control one Sim. It makes a nice change of pace to just focus on one aspect of a Sim's life without all the usual clutter, and Maxis have taken advantage of this by significantly broadening the way sims interact. Hot Date has over 40 new one on one social interactions, ranging from simply waving to a friend to a complete suite of flirtatious advances... including a sexy growl — that Will Wright is a wild child!

The Sims even have a whole new attribute class — interests — which influence how much your Sim has in common with other sims, so you can invest time in reading up on particular areas to ensure a good match.

!!! Don't forget about all the custom stuff available at thesims.com.

OBSESSIVE GAMING

Maxis have also updated the relationship meter. You now have a short-term rating as well as a long-term one so you can properly monitor the health of your relationship. Plus, to ensure you're not juggling this newfound dating life with all your other responsibilities, time in the neighbourhood essentially freezes when you go downtown, so you can take a stress free break from your career, housemates and chores.

To keep your Sim's dating escapades interesting, Maxis have packed the new downtown area with 125 new objects. These range from valuable utilities for constructing your own downtown attraction, to romantic items like picnic baskets and cuddle couches. Regardless of whether you're trying to progress your relationship at the perfect rate through judicious use of flirting, presents and alcohol, or building the ultimate rendezvous venue from scratch, chances are you'll be addicted all over again. <<<



PLUS: Get busy Sims style. Lots of laughs to be had.

MINUS: You have to be a believer.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

79 84 83

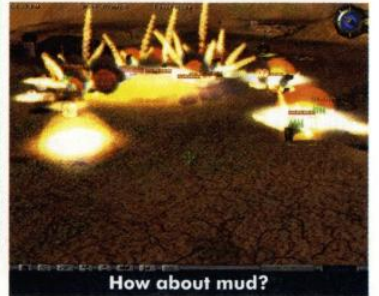
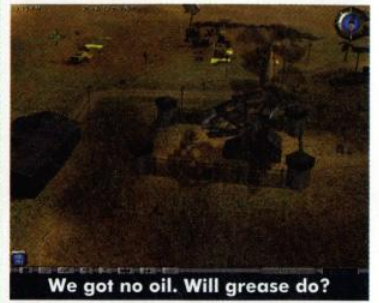
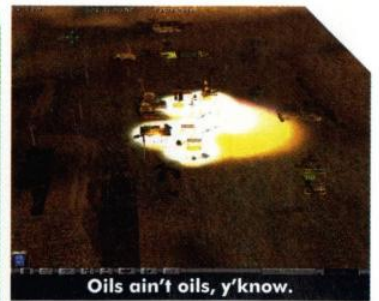
OVERALL

84

A worthy expansion pack, but where's Dexter?

REVIEW >>> HYPER 85

Wind: 12 m/s NW Pause mode



World War III: Black Gold

CATEGORY: RTS >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: JoWood >> PRICE: \$49.95 >> RATING: M15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: P 300, 32MB RAM

DAN TOOSE has a laugh at the impending doom of WWII. >> **PC**

Here's a laughable scenario for you. Iraq decides to stop the flow of oil from the middle-east to the rest of the world, which sees the Russians trying to step in to grab what they can for themselves and restore lost glory, with the US moving in to stop both parties, creating a three way battle. In fairness to developers Reality Pump, creating a three-way WWII scenario was always going to be a tough task, but they've thrown together a real time strategy game on this storyline and hoped for the best anyway. The end result is a title that shines on some fronts, and looks tarnished on some others. Here's why...

NO GRUNTING

WWIII is a 3D RTS game that sports a graphics engine with very few shortcomings. It allows rotating and zooming, can pump out a nice frame rate at a high resolution, and features a dynamic lighting system that even manages a realistic cycle of night and day, with a reflection of the moon shining off the surface of bodies of water. That's not quite half

as spectacular as watching a bunch of choppers let loose with guided missiles at night, watching them light up the scenery as they speed towards their hapless target, resulting in a neat explosion.

Adhering to real world military vehicles is realistic on one hand, but makes discerning unit types one step more laborious in some situations (like whenever you're not zoomed in). However, it has to be said, if you're going to adhere to real world factors, then having them perform realistically would have been a good idea. Units are essentially beefed up or toned down to suit game balance, and some have their basic roles changed! What's more glaringly absent however is infantry... The grunts stayed home it seems.

Resource management is simplified to drilling for oil, which you turn into cash... and then implements of nastiness. Also, bases can be constructed and pulled down quite rapidly, which is great when defending, but a pain for those trying to finish off an enemy.

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN... DAMMIT!

There's nothing worse than losing units because they couldn't figure out how to move through a narrow place when one of them decided it

was going to start squatting. Which is why WW3 might cause a modern-day RTS gamer to spit chips. Units blocking

the path for another unit will not move unless prompted by the player in some way. It's not uncommon for your units to actually move towards the enemy units you're trying to make them flee from, which isn't something we should have to deal with in this day and age. So put simply, the pathing in WWIII sucks.

World War III: Black Gold is in some ways a successful little real time strategy title, looking quite pretty, and having most of the functions fans of the genre have come to expect. Unfortunately, that's about the sum of it... There's no gripping plot, no serious innovations for the genre, and it's really lacking in charm. <<<

!!! For a while there it didn't look like this game would make it onto shelves.



PLUS: Spiffy 3D Engine. Decent skirmish AI.

MINUS: Poor pathing. Real world units without the realism.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

90 79 72

OVERALL

76

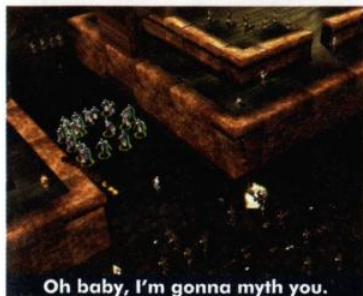
A neat little game that's just all a bit average.



Spinal Tap were right.



Evil hordes drop around for tea.



Oh baby, I'm gonna myth you.



Myth III - The Wolf Age >>PC

CATEGORY: RTS >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: Take 2 / Godgames >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: PII 400, 96MB RAM

DAN TOOSE explores the hit and myth world of RTS gaming.

Myth: The Fallen Lords was best known as being one of the few RTS (real time strategy) titles where resource management was not part of the game, and success boiled down to your field tactics rather than your ability to chum out cannon fodder to throw at the enemy. More than a few strategy gamers took a liking to the series, and were bitterly disappointed when Bungie was no longer going to be working to continue it, but Take 2 and Godgames have co-published another Myth instalment, Myth III: The Wolf Age.

POLYGONAL GLOBS

Myth III gets retrospective and looks at the exploits of Connacht the Wolf, the greatest hero of the ages who forged legends and inspired many a pub-tale, one thousand years before the Fallen Lords were stirring up trouble in Myth I. The story may be retrospective, but the visuals are quite progressive, with 3D models replacing the 2D sprites that made up the units in the first two games. Those with a GeForce 3 can experience super high quality models, but even those

without one will still get nicely animated 3D models anyway. Prepare to watch the meaty polygonal globs of ghoul-flesh fly, or more subtle treats such as trees swaying in the breeze... It's great.

If you haven't played a tactical squad-based RTS game like Myth before, consider that not having the ability to create new troops makes each unit valuable, and makes you care about each skirmish or encounter, because if you handle one poorly and lose some troops, you may not be able to deal with the remaining forces you need to face in the mission. This made veteran units valuable, as they fought better the more conflicts they saw, but Myth III doesn't seem to carry unit experience from one battle to another... An odd change in a well established series.

There are a couple of issues that should have been addressed before Myth III hit the shelves, such as the text within the game being blurry, regardless of what combination of display options you select. Add to this the lack of pooling blood (hey,

we were all looking forward to that one!), and far more importantly, the apparent lack of carrying over experienced units from one battle to the next, and Myth III looks like it's screaming for a patch. Don't let these scare you off though, as the patch will no doubt be out by the time you're reading this, and it's a brilliant game regardless.

!!! So what happened to Bungie? They made Halo for Xbox, that's what!

LITTLE HAS CHANGED

About the only other gripe to be had with Myth III is the lack of a single player skirmish option. Most RTS titles these days include one, and to be at the third instalment of a series and still not have one is a let down. The single player missions are good, but the nature of those missions is so different to a multiplayer battle that it doesn't really address the issue.

Mumbo Jumbo have done quite a nice job, although so little has changed in terms of basic gameplay to the point where it's fair to say that this excellent game may not do it for those who didn't like, or got over the first two. <<<



PLUS: Map Editor. Lovely 3D visuals. Superb plot and narration.

MINUS: Still no skirmish mode. Unit experience doesn't carry over.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

90 86 85

OVERALL

85

There is life after Bungie after all!



Hop online with froggy to-day.



Having worms ain't so bad!



Frosty hermaphrodites.

Worms World Party

>> PSone

CATEGORY: Artillery >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: Ubi Soft >> PRICE: \$49.95 >> RATING: PG >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

JAMES COTTEE has an incurable case of worms...

It's worth noting right off the bat that Worms is one of the best multi-player titles on any platform. It's a game of turn-based artillery combat, where comical worms do deadly battle with everything from shotguns to mad cows. Through customising rule sets, weapon loadouts, maps, AI, or by leaving everything to chance, there are billions of possible ways to blast through a lunch break, or an evening, or a weekend. The PlayStation versions, while not as fully featured as those on other systems, still have the unmistakable Worms magic.

PARTY HEARTY

Worms World Party, originally released for PC and Dreamcast only, was much the same as Worms Armageddon, but opened up the realm of online gaming. Since the PlayStation (and the PS2, for that matter) has no internet capability, one could be forgiven for asking what business WWP has on a console that's on it's last legs. The answer is, surprisingly, quite a lot.

There are new sound banks, the

sets of humorous one-liners that the little worms use to express themselves during the course of play. Then there's the new rule sets for multi-player, including an obvious omission from previous versions: one with everything. The "F is for Fun" rules grant players unlimited access to every weapon, from the puny handgun to the monstrous Concrete Donkey.

The rules can be customised further by the "Wormpot," a slot machine like interface that allows fine tuning of various Ps and Qs. Certain weapon classes can be made more destructive, surfaces can be made slippery or sticky, and there are a lot of options involving crates. Turn on "Crates, crates and even more crates," and battlefield will face a barrage of power-ups before, during and after every turn.

THE WORM HAS TURNED

But the biggest bonus Worms World Party brings to the PSone is the option for co-operative play. There are 20 specially designed multi-player

missions, variants of the missions used in the single player mode to unlock options. With their detailed backgrounds, and some highly imaginative use of the physics of the Worms universe, they open up fresh possibilities even for those who've been playing Worms Armageddon non-stop for the past two years.

WWP is not without its drawbacks on the PSone. With the core programming staff at Team 17

working on Worms Blast for every next-gen platform under the sun, it was left to a separate company, The Code Monkeys, to implement the port. Lucky for us, they managed to do so with a minimum of fuss, as WWP appears to be a carbon copy of the Armageddon code, with the extra options thrown in. There are one or two peculiarities in the menus, but the game is solid as a rock. It's all good.

Worms World Party is the best Worms game to date, and it's probably the best new game coming out for PSone this side of the silly season. <<<

!!! From the people who brought you "How to be a Complete Bastard - The Game." No kidding!



PLUS: Same Worms magic, with new options + missions.

MINUS: Incremental upgrade, still no flamethrowers.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

82 85 95

OVERALL

89

Begins Worms addiction anew. All hail the Worms!

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73. Without games there would be no Chuck E. Cheese.



Stat munching.



PC

Championship Manager 01/02

CATEGORY: Soccer management >> **PLAYERS:** 1-many (in turns) >> **PUBLISHER:** Eidos >> **PRICE:** \$59.95 >> **RATING:** G >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >> **REQUIRED:** P133, 32mb RAM >>

Few Australians would realise that Championship Manager Season 01/02 is actually Britain's fastest selling PC title ever. A surprising fact, seeing as the CM series at first glance appears to be little more than a glorified spreadsheet program.

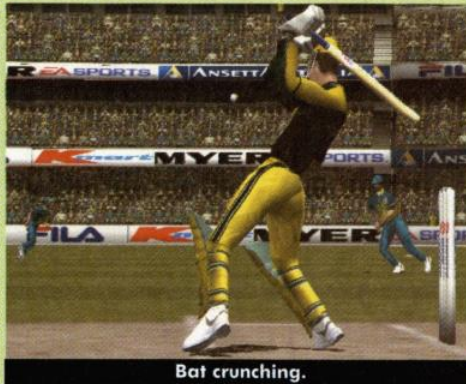
The new version is simply more of the same. Not much has really changed, apart from a few small features like board ultimatums, more complex scouting and comparing players. The media, and your responses to it, also has a much greater bearing on the happiness of your players, and therefore their (and your) performance. Then of course there is the customary update to the superb database, which features over 100 000 players.

Too many reviews of CM suggest that the title should probably only be purchased by footy-mad fans. It's true that these people will certainly get more immediate enjoyment. There is much more to the magic of CM though, and everyone (apart from those who dislike fun, happy times, etc.) will not only get a kick out of the game, but will probably develop some sort of interest in the soccer world because of it.

CM is almost unique in that it is comprehensive without being anally-retentive. It may not have kit designing facilities or groundskeeper employment options, but no other title can simulate the world of football (potentially featuring 26 playable leagues running concurrently) as believably.

The only major flaw is that it all feels just a little too familiar. - **Jackson Gothe-Snape**

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
60	60	91	91



Bat crunching.



PS2

Cricket 2002

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

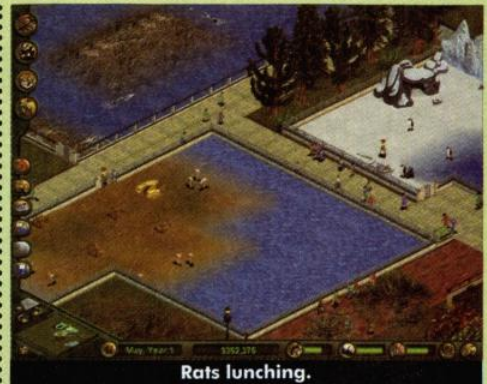
Last issue we lamented that EA Sports seem to spend the big bucks on their American sports sims — Madden NFL 2002 is one slick product — whilst the lesser known sports, such as Cricket, seem to be given the development budget resembling a very chewed shoe string of some kind. Cricket 2002 is an unfortunate example of this. You could almost fool yourself into believing that you were still playing Cricket 2000 on the PSone, if it weren't for the re-designed menus. Player models, animations and gameplay mechanics are virtually identical to the old PlayStation game, with the most basic of graphical improvements. For the PlayStation 2, this looks awful. There's no way around it.

Almost no improvements have been made to the gameplay, either. The game still features AI that will endlessly smash you for boundaries, and then bowl you out for 5. Fielders still score run-outs by smashing down the stumps from a throw all the way out at the boundary rope. A few of the animations are still slow and glitchy, and likenesses to real players is laughable. Why bother paying money to use all the real player names, if you're not going to spend any time making the player models actually look like those players?

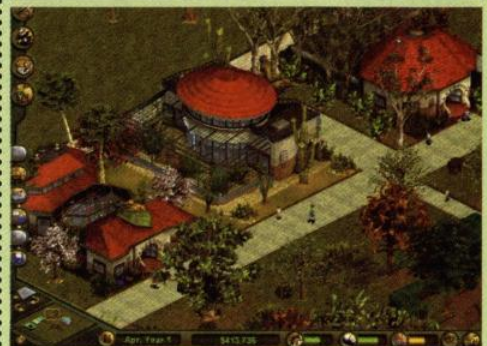
There's very limited gameplay value in Cricket 2002. You'd have to be a seriously hardcore cricket nut to want to persist with this game and try to get something out of it. At least Richie Benaud is in there with some commentary.

Come on EA, give the studio some money next time, and make a classy game that lives up to your once spotless reputation. - **Eliot Fish**

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
72	80	60	65



Rats lunching.



PC

Zoo Tycoon

CATEGORY: Sim >> **PLAYERS:** 1 >> **PUBLISHER:** Microsoft >> **PRICE:** \$89.95 >> **RATING:** G >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >> **REQUIRED:** P133, 32mb RAM >>

Many of you would have played or heard of the many 'tycoon' titles available today, from the addictive Rollercoaster Tycoon to the deceptively satisfying Railroad Tycoon. The success of these games attracted many smaller developers to produce many games with a 'tycoon' stuck at the end of its name to attract players. Mostly, these games proved to be a complete failure. So when Microsoft announced they would be publishing a tycoon game of their own, we felt a tad nervous. Would this be Spreadsheet Tycoon?

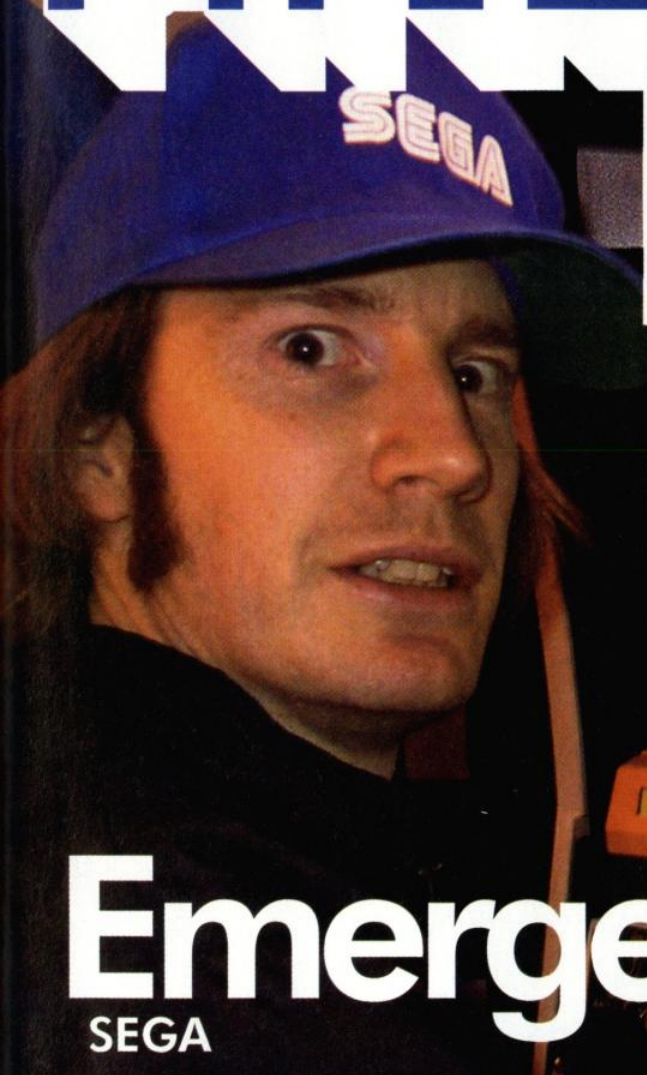
During the installation of the game, instead of flooding you with traditional screenshots, you are immediately thrown into a tutorial of the game. Your first task is to familiarise yourself with the user interface and let loose a horde of fierce lions on your unsuspecting guests (very fun indeed). The game is basically divided into two modes — free-form building or challenge scenarios. The free-form game allows you to choose a large open map with a desired amount of starting money to develop your dream zoo with no restrictions or objectives. The scenario games give you a certain amount of time and money to complete your set objectives, like building a zoo specialising in water animals or breeding baby pandas. However, you must also keep your animals happy and visitors satisfied in order to complete the challenge.

Zoo tycoon is a very entertaining and addictive game for all ages; it features a very low learning curve with easy scenarios gradually increasing in difficulty as you advance. Fun. - **Grizzly Adams**

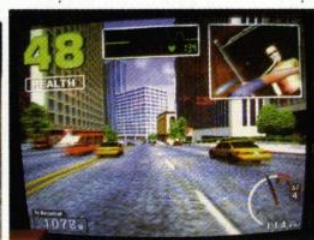
VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
79	82	86	85

74. It helps to make up for the fact we work in Redfern.

ARCADE



Hand me the morphine, sister.



No, it's not for the patient.

Emergency Call

SEGA

In Sega's attempt to help remove violence from our arcades and bring a little more sensitivity back to us desensitised kids, a range of 'Real Life Career' titles (e.g. Crazy Taxi, 18 Wheeler and Brave Fire Fighters) have been created to show us that you don't necessarily need violence to have action.

KISS YOUR PATIENT GOODBYE

After road rage inspired accidents (see 18 Wheeler), deadly police shoot outs (see Virtua Cop) and pyromaniac-lit hotel fires (see Brave Fire Fighters), the violently injured characters are not just left to hobble or claw their way to hospital. In Emergency Call Ambulance, you help fill in the blanks as to what REALLY happened to those forgettable background characters in other popular Sega arcade games - by driving them to hospital.

Just like any other driving game, you're racing against the clock, except the 'clock' is your patient's

life expectancy in seconds. In real life, if you were taking a patient to hospital and you hit a telegraph pole and did a head on into a truck, your patient would probably freak out and go into shock (Er... at least - Ed.). So to interpret this 'shock', every time you have an accident, the patient's heart rate climbs (see patient cam) and time is deducted in relation to the severity of the accident. You'll be lucky to make it to the hospital in time if you have a smallish accident, and if you have a large accident, you may as well kiss your patient good-bye.

A WHEEL WORKOUT

All of the multi-stage action takes place in the City of Chicago. You are given 100 seconds to get to the hospital which is variably 2-2.4 kilometers away. Along the way, occurrences happen on cue, such as trucks overturning, traffic meandering or police cars chasing, which will give you quite a wheel workout as you skillfully wind

through traffic, barrel up gutters and cut between lamp posts. Invariably, there is only one way to get to the hospital, which is kindly sign-posted for you by your co-driver. There are supposedly some short cuts, though the time constraints are so tight that any searching or wrong detours could see your patient dying on you.

The game is strangely addictive, as learning the traffic patterns and how and where to cut corners is very rewarding. It's a very hard challenge to make it through the whole game, especially when you can't 'continue'.

No doubt, there are some other 'Real Life Career' games in the pipeline at the Sega R & D (Research and Development) labs. After phoning the lab in Japan, they pretended not to understand English, so it was difficult to ascertain what they were really working on. But some suggestions Hyper would like to see in future 'Real Life' games are: Sheep

Herder, Lift Attendant, Abattoir Worker and Toll Collector.

OVERALL

7.5 for the game and another point for the addictiveness =

8.5/10

TIPS!

- Always try to cut corners by mounting the sidewalk, don't worry about mowing down citizens, we've tried it, and they always manage to avoid the irony of being killed by an ambulance.
- Don't forget that this game is set in North America - which means that they drive on the right hand side of the road. So be careful in cutting across left hand corners as doing this may head you straight into oncoming traffic.
- Be cautious of other cars. The road is often filled with non-indicator using, crash-creating losers, who meander all over the road. Be especially wary when coming into some intersections or overtaking on the wrong side of the road.
- REMEMBER - DON'T CRASH!!!!!!!!!!!!

* SHOUT OUT TO PAULIE & NICK - THANKS FOR THE ASSISTANCE.

Golden Sun

GBA CATEGORY: RPG >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Nintendo >>
 PRICE: \$49.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

BRYCE MCDONOUGH believes that Golden Sun is the best GBA game thus far...

Epic. Grandiose. Expansive. Engrossing. Any one of these would be the ideal word to describe a good console RPG, and somehow, Golden Sun comes up trumps on every single one. In a country such as Japan where RPGs are as popular as schoolgirls in pink panties, anything that is half-decent gets incredible sales. However, we live in the RPG-starved western world, where RPGs are only just moving out from under their geeky rock and garnering mainstream appeal, and so it takes something truly spectacular to make everyone sit up and take note.

HERBS AND SPICES

Nintendo, with a fair bit of help from Camelot Software, have our undivided attention, delivering an amazing and definitive 2D RPG which is even more amazingly now resting in your back pocket.

Responsible for both Mario Golf and Mario Tennis on GBC, Camelot are no strangers to the portable market, and creating AAA titles. However, the team behind Golden Sun are even more experienced than you may have realized — these were the guys behind the super-popular Shining Force series on MegaDrive, and it shows. This is one of the slickest and most professional games released on the GBA so far.

Things start out innocently enough in your standard RPG cliché. In fact, the whole game is in essence very old-school, new ground isn't so much being broken, as old ground is being redefined. Small boy from a small town experiences drama at a young age... somehow gets thrust into the role of world saviour and embarks on a quest of honour, bravery, and 11 secret herbs and spices. To this end, it doesn't take you long to grow attached to your little guy, Isaac, and get drawn into the world portrayed on the 8 cm screen in front of you.

The magnetic appeal of the world could only do so much on the strength of the story alone. There is no denying that the leading element



in any RPG is its storyline, but this game is made oh so much sweeter by the beautiful graphics. Worlds are colourful and lively, animated and enticing. Characters somehow manage to

convey a rich array of emotion through classical Japanese anime and RPG style and, believe it or not, speech bubbles of facial expressions, dots, hearts, and assorted emoticons. The "speech" that accompanies each speech bubble can thankfully be switched off, letting the characters each come into a role of their own. Apart from the speech effect, the music and sound effects are without fault.

Perhaps the best (and one of the most important) features is the battle engine. Classic turn-based RPG battling is taken a step further using the Psynergy and Djinn (Pokémon-style creatures that are 'equipped' to characters), allowing for plenty of variety in battle, and some of the most beautiful battle scenes in any handheld RPG. The Mode-7 and magic effects in the fights literally had me searching for the next random battle — usually one of the downsides of RPGs.

This is one game you just have to own. With battery back-up and save anywhere feature, a truly epic story, gorgeous graphics, and even a two-player battle mode, this is one "killer-app" for the GBA.



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
95	91	92	93

Jackie Chan Adventures

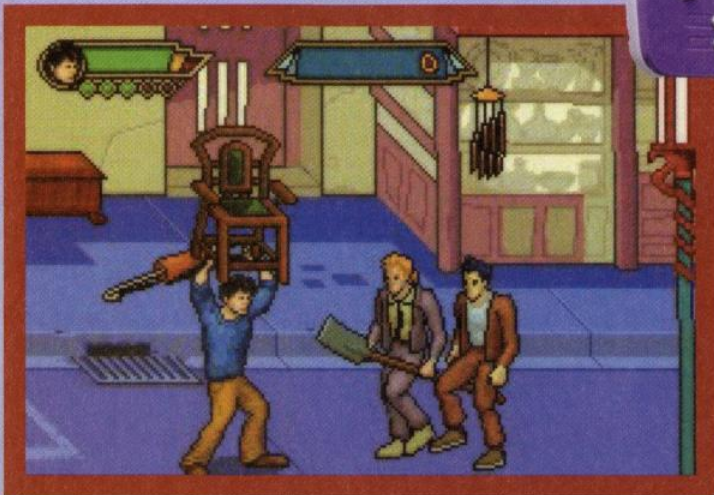
»» **GBA**

CATEGORY: Beat 'em up >> **PLAYERS:** 1 >> **PUBLISHER:** Activision
PRICE: \$49.95 >> **RATING:** M15+ >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >>

Jackie Chan's uncle would have to be the unluckiest person ever. In almost every Chan film, the villains go and bust up his supermarket/escort agency/dog grooming service, and the story behind the animated series (Jackie Chan Adventures) is no different. Fortunately however, this event leads Jackie on a worldwide search for stolen scrolls and a fight against the international crime

syndicate "Dark Hand". Jackie Chan Adventures is, by and large, a standard Final Fight style side-scrolling beat 'em up, but all the elements of a good game come together along with that infectious Jackie Chan vibe to make this a highly enjoyable romp. All the characters and environments have a clean flat shaded cartoony look to them that's very

appealing, and the size of the characters is impressive — they're all nice and chunky, again making the action clear and easy to see. Oh, and some of the later bosses are huge! Jackie has a great range of moves, with reasonable combo potential, as you can chain kick and punch moves together to produce a fluid strike. Better still, Jackie has evasive moves in four directions that double as attacks — nothing like a backflip into an enemy that flows into a nice combo. You can also block attacks, and true to the Jackie ethos the game also features plenty of other objects to pick up and swing/throw at opponents. There are some other trademark Jackie touches too, like the way he kicks objects like broomsticks up to his hands. It would have been nice if a two-player co-op mode had been included, but props to Australian developers Torus for doing the license justice. - **Cam Shea**



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	84	82	82

77. Attempting a grizzly sack tap in real life generally results in hospitalisation.

Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX

»» **GBA**

CATEGORY: Freestyle BMX >> **PLAYERS:** 1 >> **PUBLISHER:** Activision >>
PRICE: \$49.95 >> **RATING:** G >> **AVAILABLE:** Now >>



I thought I could smell curry.

The PlayStation game might have been a poor Tony Hawk wannabe, but the good news for GBA and BMX fans is that this version can stand on its own two wheels. Rather than take the isometric approach, developers HotGen Studios have opted for a side-on viewpoint where you ride back and forth across the screen. This limits the gameplay and

level design possibilities quite drastically — there can be no freewheeling in this game as you can't ride into or out of the screen, only left and right. Plus, you can only change your "line" by increments. Come down off a ramp and press up or down to move into or away from the screen. Like Tony on GBA you're also quite limited in terms of visibility, so you won't get the most out of the levels until you've learnt their layouts. That said, there's plenty to like about Mat Hoffman on GBA — a nice range of easy to execute tricks, authentic looking animations, decent speed, an excellent training mode and reasonable level variety.

The structure of the game is the same as the Tony Hawk games — you start with only one level open and must complete challenges (collect T-R-I-C-K, 20 combos without bailing, get a certain score etc) to unlock more. While these challenges don't



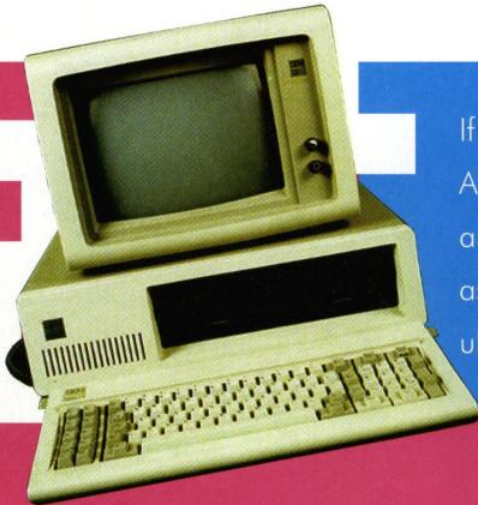
Ramping up the action.



ICE PICK GRIND 1200

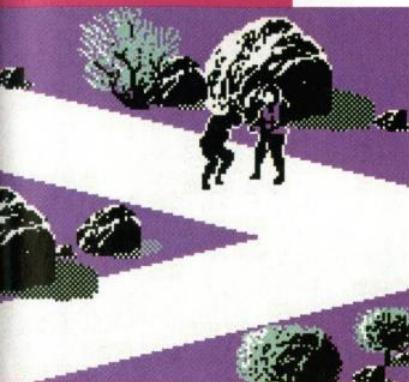
VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
82	84	80	80

the PC



If you want the newest games around, you want a PC. And if you want some of the coolest retro games around... you also want a PC. Join **JAMES COTTEE** as we look at the formative pre-history of the world's ultimate gaming machine.

79. Playing for long enough gives you square eyes... which are hello cool!



Last Ninja proves the pointlessness in a GeForce 3

In today's hectic gaming world, the PC is almost an invisible platform. It's the most widely used, the most flexible, with the most software and (arguably) the best games. For enough cash, you can buy graphical resolution and refresh rates that exceed what the human eye can detect, and better than CD quality sound. Consoles come and go, but the PC is eternal, and it just gets stronger every year.

It seems like it's been around forever. But for the first decade of its life, the PC was the ugly duckling of the gaming world. Without today's fancy graphics and sound cards, its memory and disk capacity meant little to the twitchy gamers of the 80s. But despite the availability of cheaper and better systems, the PC market share steadily grew, and by the dawn of the 90s it was clearly the future of gaming.

INTERNATIONAL BITCHIN' MACHINES

Why did it happen? How did the monolithic, heinously expensive PCs of yesterday morph into the cheap, sleek net portals of tomorrow? In one word: evolution. The story of the

components, modular and upgradable, it became a hit in the corporate world, selling by the thousand, then by the million.

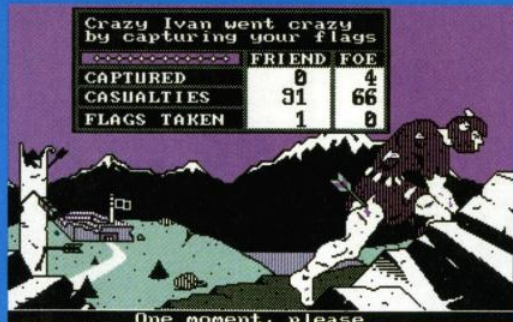
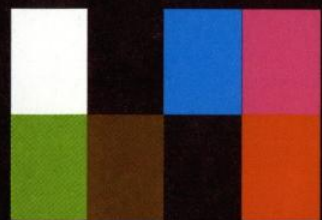
LOUNGE LIZARDS

Gamers, of course, wouldn't touch it with a stick. The basic standard of the IBM, and the reverse-engineered PC clones that would compete with it, didn't even have colour graphics as standard. Over-stimulated teenagers didn't mind loading games off cassette tapes if it meant parallax, explosions, and three-channel sound. No, for the embryonic phase of its history, PC games had to appeal to people who would actually use them: office workers.

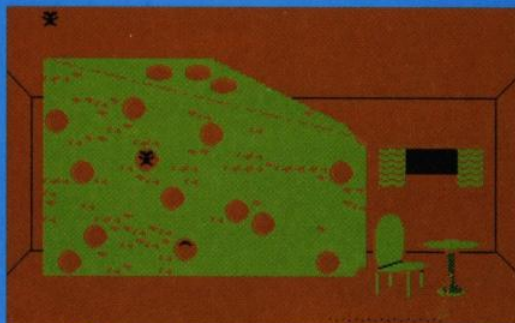
The thin end of the wedge was typically golf, perhaps with a tour of Augusta on Mean 18. Then there were flight simulators and war games for all the grown up nerds to savour. But what really got their mature juices flowing was the titillation of vulgar-ware like Leisure Suit Larry. At its core, Larry was just King's Quest set in the red-light district, but it convinced many of

CGA GRAPHICS

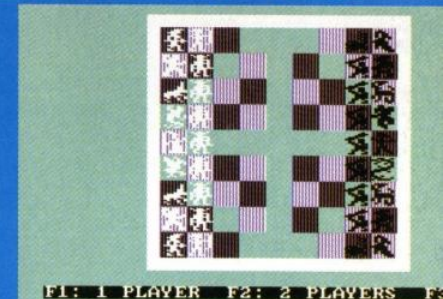
While many poor souls were stuck with monochrome Hercules graphics adapters, or worse yet, text only, the bee's knees of PC graphics in the beginning was CGA. The Color Graphics Adapter could pump a whopping four colours on screen at once, at a resolution of 200x160. Popular palettes included brown/green/red/black, and black/white/cyan/magenta. And for those high-end applications, there was a 640x200 two-colour mode. Just the thing for a round of Xenon 2!



One moment, please. And you'll go crazy playing it.



That's one cheesy game.



Squiggly goes first. Er...

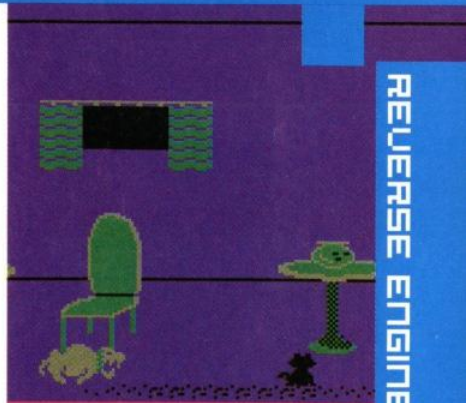
PC began over 20 years ago, in 1981. Big Blue, IBM, was the world's leading supplier of business computers, and had been for the whole century. Enjoying the kind of monopoly status Microsoft has today, it had bloated into a sprawling bureaucracy with thousands of middle managers, billions in turnover, and even a corporate anthem!

But IBM was a victim of its own success. As part of its highly regimented internal routine, all new computers were conceived, designed and brought to market on a three-year cycle. Unfortunately, the market was evolving so quickly that by the time they produced a computer it was already obsolete. A team of visionary engineers at IBM Florida decided to break this cycle, and came up with the first IBM PC in less than 18 months. Made inexpensively from off-the-shelf

the worth of the PC as a gaming platform. While the gaming elite may dismiss it out of hand, the sequels almost reached double digits, and you've got to admit there's something inherently amusing about a guy trying to lose his virginity before he turns 40.

YOU CAN'T DO THAT HERE

More conventional, and less stomach-churning genres, were slow to take form on the PC. Text adventures were with it from the start, with Zork and the rest of the Infocom heavy-hitters available. Since they relied less on graphical power, and more on the imagination of the player, RPGs had a strong presence from the beginning. ASCII games like Rogue, Nethack and ADOM garnered cult followings, with infinite depth of gameplay more than making up for fighting enemies represented by single



REVERSE ENGINEERING

>>HYPER 95

letters on screen. Ultima, The Bard's Tale, Might & Magic, and the rest would follow, each an industry unto themselves.

The memory and processing power of the PC also granted it an early lead in simulations. Microsoft Flight Simulator has been the market leader since the 1980s, and it certainly hasn't been without competition. Falcon 3.0 was for many an integral part of their intellectual development, with a gripping action and realistic depiction of ultra-modern, remote-controlled warfare. For those who played Falcon and Gunship, the bomb-cams of the Gulf War weren't a surprise; they were a vindication of a youth well spent.

The military simulations were many, varied, and for the most part excellent. Mi Tank Platoon, Red Storm Rising, and F-19 Stealth Fighter pit the ultra-tech of the US against the numerically superior commies, with almost arcade-like kill ratios. Chuck Yeager had his own line of flight sims, and there was even room for fantasy in the market, with what-if games like Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe.

COOL FOR CATS

This was all well and good if you

were a nerd, but games you could impress your friends with took a little longer to surface. In the beginning there were visionaries like Windmill Software, that created cunningly re-named arcade clones for the PC. Windmill's biggest hit was Digger, a CGA masterpiece that combined the best gameplay features of Mr. Do and Dig Dug. Windmill also produced a stunning version of Styx, one of those genre-busting games involving geometry and flashing colours.

No discussion of early PC gaming would be complete without a reference to Alley Cat, designed in 1984 by the legendary Bill Williams. Oft described as the Stanley Kubrick of game design, he wrote a string of hits including Pioneer Plague for the Amiga. As the eponymous Alley Cat, it was your goal in life to catch mice, avoid dogs, vandalise apartments, and ultimately mate with poncy house-cats to get more lives. It's one of the few games of the era that works on modern PCs, and is worth tracking down.

Other games were to take perverse satisfaction in four colour graphics, like the unkillable Sopwith. You assumed the role of a WWI fighter

EGA GRAPHICS

Softdisk knocked back Commander Keen because it wouldn't support CGA, and ran exclusively in this cutting-edge video format. Id Software can thank their starting impetus to this brain-blistering standard, which could effortlessly generate 16 colour graphics at a resolution of 640x350 picture elements. Boot up Autoduel or Wasteland, and the hours would seem like seconds with one of these cards under the hood. Also essential for playing Captain Comic, an underrated platform gem.



Autoduel in its EGA glory.



Space, where no one can hear you giggle.



E-trek may look like a tax management sim...



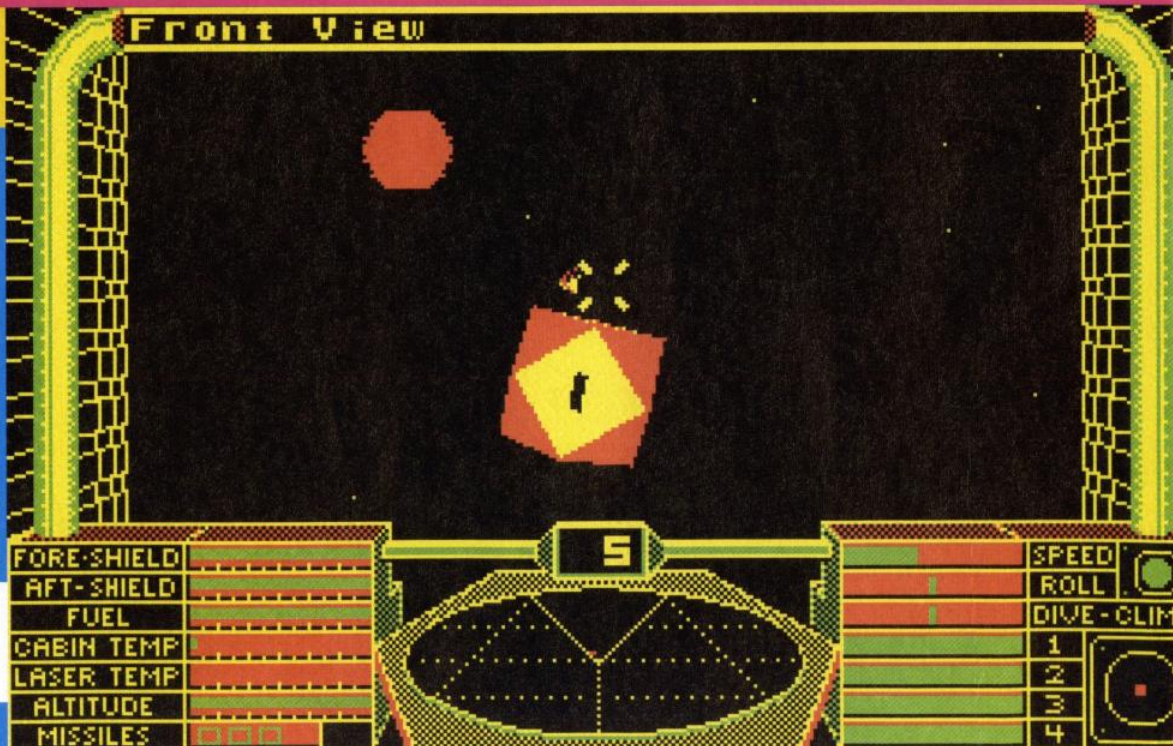
Taking cow tipping to new heights.



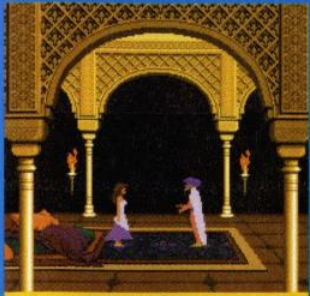
Elite is still astoundingly complex to play...



Llamas in games rule.



FORE SHIELD	SPEED
AFT SHIELD	ROLL
FUEL	DIVE CLIM
CABIN TEMP	1
LASER TEMP	2
ALTITUDE	3
MISSILES	4



Prince of Persia

ace, and playing either for the Cyan or Magenta team, your objective was to destroy the opponents' planes and facilities. There were many nice little touches, like the cow you'd crash into if you didn't take off in time, or the flocks of birds that would remain docile until you shot at them, at which point they'd scatter, creating a killer



Star Control spawned many fans.

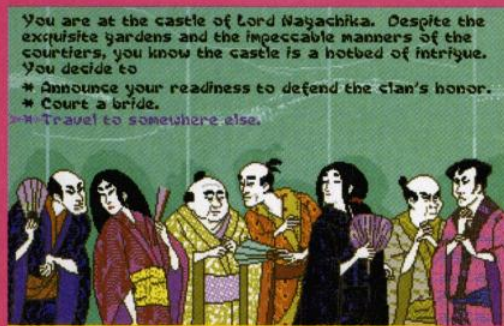
least passable graphics and sound. The rise of the VGA graphics card, and the Sound Blaster sound card, finally let the "wow factor" out of the bag. When people saw Wolfenstein 3D in action for the first time, it was not unusual for their jaws to drop. The PC came of age around 1990, when everybody suddenly wanted to have one. And everybody still does.

It would be nice to think that the emergence of the PC gaming platform was due solely to innovative game design, entertaining products and continuing technical innovation, but this isn't entirely true. Somewhere along the line the "IBM Compatible" became the "Wintel Box," a monument to the corporate bully-boy tactics of

51. You can fly a 747 and crash it, just to see what it's like.



Populous, the forerunner to Black & White.



So old, it's almost cutting edge.



Ahh Ultima... where would we be?

VGA GRAPHICS

Some might argue that it was the beginning of the end when PC graphics stopped looking like cat vomit. The Video Graphics Array largely eliminated eye-strain for PC gamers, with the option of 16 colours at 640x480, or a mind-melting 256 colours at 320x200. Subsequent additions to this standard have led to the "Super VGA" graphics we enjoy today, and the undisputed dominance of the PC gaming platform. All at the expense of other valid formats like MCGA and XGA, but then you can't make an omelet without breaking a few eggs.



Dig the letterbox.

navigation hazard. You had to keep an eye on your quantities of bombs, bullets and fuel, and the game would even run over a LAN!

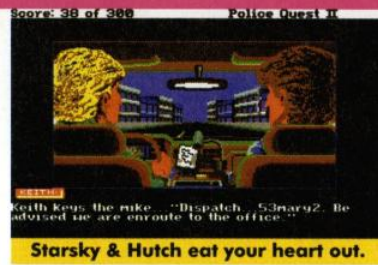
Aside from the odd unique production, most of the mainstream titles released through the 80s were straight ports. While some formulas, like Carmen Sandiego, were simple enough to work well, many were just too much for CGA graphics to handle. Games where graphics and sound were integral to the game experience were butchered in the process. The PC versions of Last Ninja and Wizball, for instance, were tragic.

PC UBER ALLES

By the time the machine was competing with the Amiga and the Atari ST for the home gamer's attention, things were on the right track. The IBM XT introduced an internal hard drive (typically 10 or 20 megabytes in size), and the AT brought the 286 and the 16-bit revolution

to the realm of the PC compatible. If you were lucky enough to have EGA graphics, then perfectly serviceable versions of Carrier Command, Star Flight, Populous, Sim City and Civilization were there for the taking.

While there had been games of superior design available from the beginning, the PC didn't rise to dominance until it had the best, or at



Starsky & Hutch eat your heart out.

Intel and Microsoft. In spite of their penchant for bloatware, the PC (and the internet it's attached to), have so far evolved faster than this dynamic duo can screw things up.

Ultimately, it's the modular nature of the PC that ensures its continued supremacy. The individual gamer is free to choose the fastest and most reliable equipment they can afford. The courageous can give wintel the flick completely, jumping ship to Linux, or Beos, or whatever OS takes their fancy. And let's not forget the countless emulators for PC that bring the consoles of the past back from the dead. If you've seen an old game or ancient system here in Reverse Engineering, chances are you can run it on your PC.

There's some irony in the fact that Microsoft's new Xbox could cynically be viewed as a PC wrapped in sexy black plastic. The desktop once blindly imitated the TV games, but now the worm has turned. For the past, present and future of gaming, look no further than the PC. There can be only one. <<



WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW MORE?

There are many on-line havens for classic PC gaming. One key-word to search for is "abandonware." Other resources include:
www.theunderdogs.org
www.digger.org
www.sopwith.org

Hyper

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!

Die Hard Trilogy ULTIMATE EDITION

FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT, M15+

How this is what DVDs were made for. Audio commentary from the director and production designers, more commentary from special effects supervisors, branching scenes, extended sequences, deleted lines, gag reels, full-length screenplays... these are the extras that fans have always craved.

The adventures of John McClane are now supplemented with so much material that viewers will gain such rare insight into the vision and creation of the films that they take on almost a new meaning. The commentary, in particular, is fascinating for its look into a bygone era of pre-CG film-making. Is it worth the purchase if you've already got it? This is what Cash Converters is for.

The Die Hard series marked Bruce Willis' place as a Hollywood action hero, taking on terrorists under impossible circumstances, and always somehow coming out on top. He's crude, very blue-collar, and ultimately likeable. The second film doesn't gel as well as the first, but the third has a great comic element thanks to the presence of Samuel L. Jackson.



He always answers the door like this.



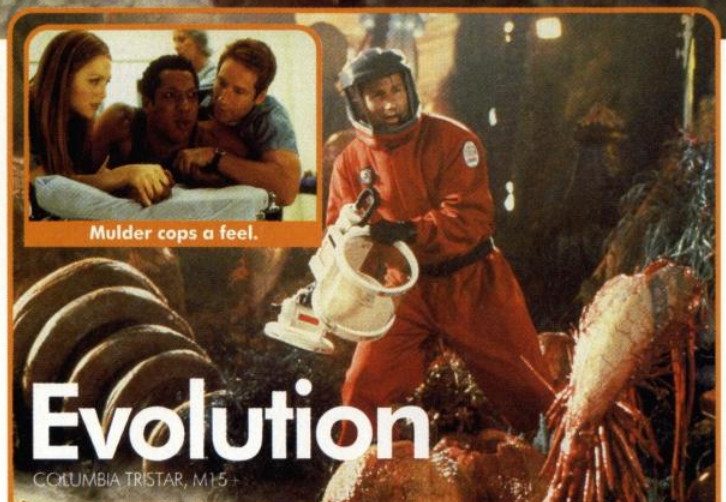
All the toilets were busted.



The typical european bad guys.



The typical square-jawed American.



Mulder cops a feel.

Evolution

COLUMBIA TRISTAR, M15+

Evolution followed in the footsteps of the sci-fi comedy classic, Ghostbusters, and there was every reason to believe it would be just as big a phenomenon. After all, they were both movies that made you laugh and scared you silly at the same time, and the three-eyed smiley face had just as much chance of being the next T-shirt sensation. Yet for some reason, it just didn't take off in as big a way.

Evolution provides great shock value on the first viewing, as spores from an alien meteorite spread and evolve with alarming

rapidity. David Duchovny and Orlando Jones are a pair of bumbling scientists who chance upon the crash site, and see it as an opening to win fame and fortune. Unfortunately, other government bodies get in on the act, and before anyone can properly contain the crash site, little alien critters begin terrorising the surrounding neighbourhood.

Extras are disappointing, with only a 15-minute 'making of' featurette on offer.

MOVIE: 8/10 **EXTRA:** 3/10

Tomb Raider

PARAMOUNT, M15+

It's amazing being in the videogames business, watching a game like Tomb Raider turn into a major motion picture. The film itself is an excellent representation of the thrills and gun fights of the videogame. It's just that when director, Simon West, tries to inject any original material or characters (like Lara's love interest), it goes absolutely nowhere and makes no rational sense whatsoever. Not only will you be asking why you wasted good money on this film, you'll be demanding for the return of the 2 hours of your life you invested in watching it.

What's really grating, however, is the additional footage of the self-congratulatory folks at Core Design,

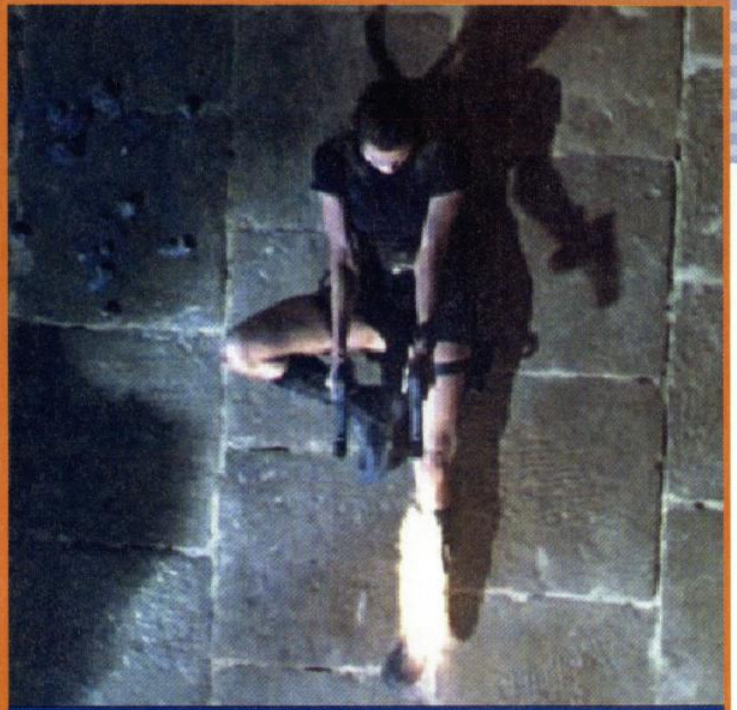


Lara's such a lovely girl.



utterly enamoured of their ingenuity in creating a female Indiana Jones, blissfully unaware that years of saturation marketing has made their flagship title one of the most universally disliked game franchises in its core gaming market.

MOVIE: 3/10 **EXTRA:** 6/10



Lara has a little lie down. Poor dear.



Graaaaaa!!

Mallrats

UNIVERSAL, PG

The second of Kevin Smith's New Jersey Chronicles is finally released, which is of little comfort to anyone still searching for a place to watch Jay & Silent Bob Strike Back. Still, Mallrats remains Smith's crowning achievement in funny rapid-fire dialogue, chronicling the exploits of a pair of friends in the mall as they try to get over being dumped by their respective girlfriends.

Along the way, they get beaten up by Ben Affleck, bump into their comic book industry hero, Stan Lee, fondle the breasts of a three-



nipped woman, and have sex with Shannen Doherty in a glass elevator. In the meantime, Jay & Silent Bob have their own problems with mall security as they attempt to sabotage a teen dating show being filmed on the lot.

This hilarity won't make any sense if followed as a conventionally plot-driven film. Rather, it's all a vehicle for Smith's wit and biting sarcasm, directed towards gender politics, commercialism and political correctness.

MOVIE: 9/10 **EXTRA:** 5/10



90210 after hours.



Geek versus Suit.

Swordfish

FOX, MA15+

There should be a law prohibiting Joel Silver from ever using that Bullet-time Matrix-cam effect again. He's used it so much now, that it's obvious the man has absolutely no new material to offer in the way of action special effects. The scene in question? A woman who blows up on the street, detonating C4 explosives and several canisters of ball bearings that rip dirty big holes through everything within 30 feet. The camera pirouettes around the scene in a smooth, single motion, with ballistic sound effects filling the entire soundscape amidst the thunderous growls of your subwoofer. It's guaranteed to get your neighbours banging at the walls. And you get to see it twice, too.

Beyond that, and the Hollywood gossip that Halle Berry was paid an extra million to flash her tits, Swordfish is a little political



Hugh discovers the main attraction.

conspiracy that mixes X-Files with The Net, complete with popular misconceptions and all. Hugh Jackman is supposed to be an online hacker who's been out of the loop for a year, on account of being in prison. But because he's 'the best' in the world, it's perfectly reasonable for gangster John Travolta to expect him to crack the CIA's latest 512-bit encryption codes. Absurd? Absolutely, because Jackman does eventually crack the code.

With every action cliché employed, only slick direction saves Swordfish from the ignominy Schwarzenegger's latest efforts have suffered.

MOVIE: 6/10 **EXTRA:** 5/10



Er, John, you missed a bit when you were shaving this morning...

Moulin Rouge

FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT, M15+

Get ready for a total auditory and visual overload, because... (drum roll)...

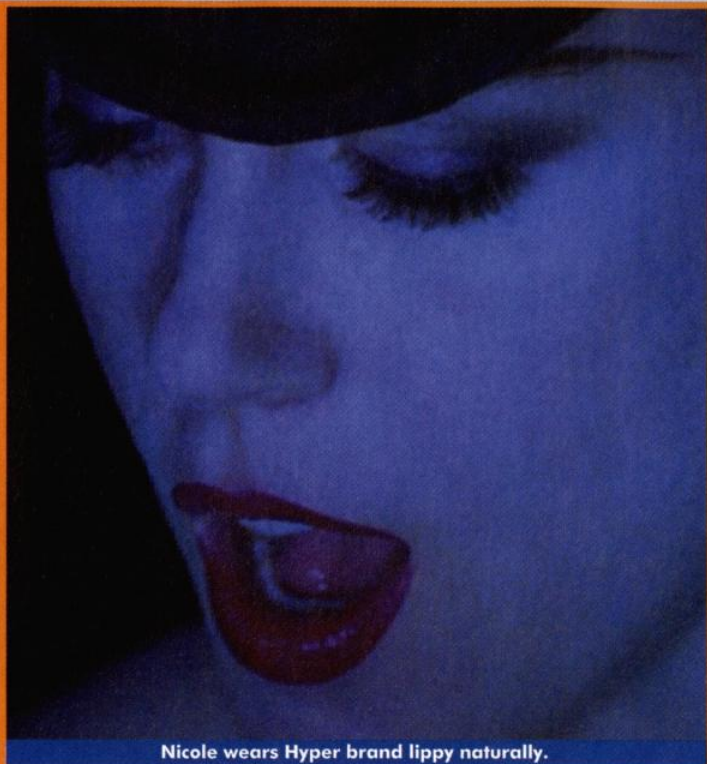
Moulin Rouge is here on DVD!! Frothy, frivolous, and most of all, fun, Moulin Rouge is the story of ill-fated lovers - Satine, a beautiful courtesan at the 19th Century Parisian club of the same name, and Christian, an idealistic poet. Director Baz Luhrman creates a whirling, twirling, quixotic extravaganza in Moulin Rouge, and although not to everyone's taste (it is a musical, after all), it's bound to delight at least some. The Moulin Rouge Special Edition DVD (2 discs) is a spectacular offering in terms of bonus features. It contains never-before-seen bonus footage, several documentaries, interviews with director Baz Luhrmann and others, two running



She was pretty lucky in the end!

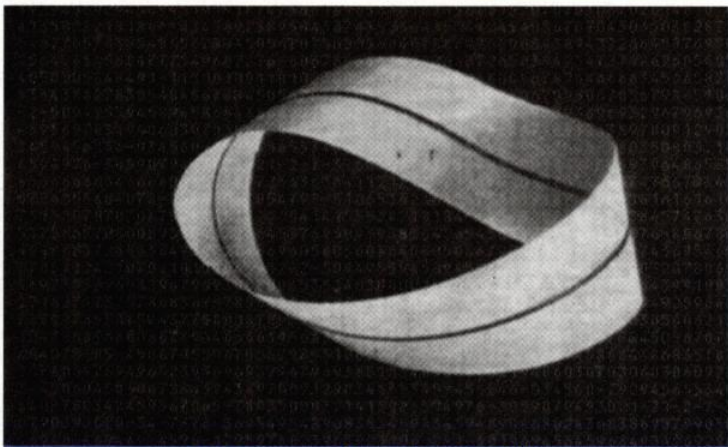
commentaries, a multi-angle feature that allows viewers to switch between different angles to observe the film's dance sequences, trailers, stills, as well as video clips for Lady Marmalade, Because We Can and Come What May. What else can we say but - wow! - **Victoria Flanagan**

MOVIE: 7.5/10 EXTRA: 10/10



Nicole wears Hyper brand lippy naturally.

84. You can replay the World Cup qualifiers.



MC Escher would have loved this film.

Pi - The Movie

MADMAN, M

Pi is the first feature film of director Darren Aronofsky, who shot to fame last year with his Oscar-nominated Requiem for a Dream - a film which scared the bejezus out of me and prompted all manner of admirable resolutions relating to the future consumption of chemical substances. Pi is similarly horrific in parts. Shot in grainy black and white and based on the idea that there is a mathematical theorem, somewhere, which is able to predict the stock market, Pi tells the story of the brilliant but slightly deranged mathematician Max Cohen. Pursued by an aggressive corporate firm and a zealous religious sect, Max's discovery soon proves to be an extremely dangerous one. Pi is a dark, disturbing and thought-provoking film - and although it



Your numbers up.

won't make you squirm as much as Requiem, the power-drill scene is almost as gross!

In terms of extras, Pi is pretty well-endowed. Separate commentaries from both Aronofsky and the lead actor Sean Gullette sit alongside deleted scenes, the obligatory trailer, music clips and cast bios. Definitely worth watching. - **Victoria Flanagan**

MOVIE: 7/10 EXTRA: 7/10

Amores Perros (LOVE'S A BITCH)

MADMAN, MA15+

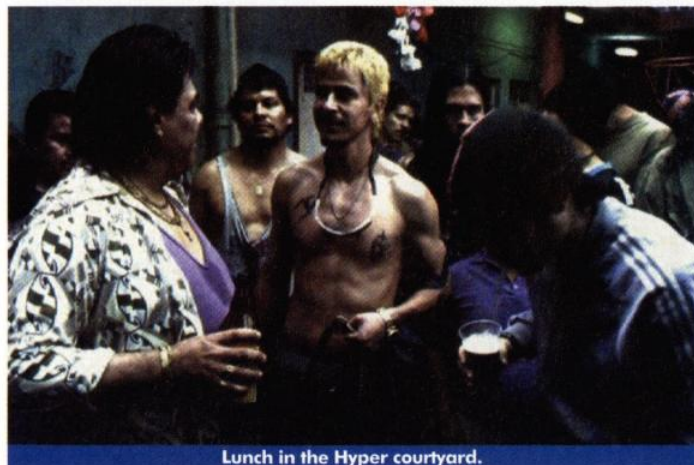
Set in Mexico and nominated for an Oscar for best foreign-language film (2000), Amores Perros tells three parallel stories. One is of the harsh reality of Mexican life, an existence revolving around crime, illegal and violent past-times such as dog-fighting, and the cruel repression of women. The second, in stark contrast, focuses on the artificial glamour of the media and entertainment industries. Interwoven between these two narrative strands is the story of El Chivo, a savage-looking homeless man who knows and moves between both these worlds - having renounced one for the other. Amores Perros is raw, confronting and violent, and if you can get past the gore of the dog-



"I kill you mr. hairdresser."

fighting scenes (which are truly horrendous in parts), an emotionally rich and powerful film. Included on the DVD are two documentaries (behind the scenes; making of), deleted scenes and the theatrical trailer - not exactly of Moulin Rouge calibre, but better than most. - **Victoria Flanagan**

MOVIE: 7/10 EXTRA: 6/10



Lunch in the Hyper courtyard.

ANIME

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Battle of the Planets

CATEGORY: ACTION • PRODUCTION COMPANY: TATSUNOKO PRODUCTIONS/SANDY FRANK A

If you've ever encountered one of those jokes that satirise anime superhero teams, chances are they're based on this. *Battle of the Planets*, aka *Eagle Riders* in some Western territories, aka *G-Force*, was a team of young heroes dressed in bird-like garb. There was a leader, his reckless mate, the sexy girlfriend, the annoying kid, and a dopey fat guy, who flew the mother ship. All of their vehicles could dock with the mother ship, whose secret weapon was to transform into a fiery phoenix that cut through the enemy like a hot knife through butter. In Japan, they were known as 'Kagatu Ninjatai', or 'Ninjas of Science'.

ANIME HISTORY

This DVD is a release of the original Westernised version of the cartoons from the early Eighties — brought to you by none other than Rhinomation, the same company that graced us all in early 2001 with its brilliantly

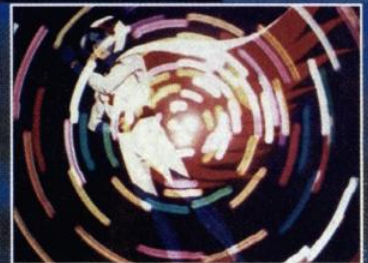
remastered version of *Transformers the Movie*. And just to show how much they understand their fans, they've been so kind as to bundle in two fully brushed up and subtitled episodes of the original Japanese series from 1972. They're using footage directly from the recently remastered Region 2 Japanese re-release of *Gatchaman* (as it's known in Japan), and the picture quality is actually miles clearer than the featured American stock.

Plot and animation are all predictably second-rate, and understandably so given the series' age. But this is a significant piece of anime history you're looking at here, one I personally always use to illustrate Western censorship of foreign cultures. Take note, in particular, that the American episodes cut so much 'violent' footage that they had to fill the time



by creating a fake narrator/host, an R2-D2 ripoff called 7-Zark-7.

If you're a real anime enthusiast, you'll buy this DVD just to absorb how much of an artistic influence it's had in the industry, as well as industry quirks like radio personality, Casey Kasem, voicing the main role.



Disco cartoons are the new thing.

ANIMATION: 6/10 PLOT: 5/10 POTENTIAL: 7/10 OVERALL: 10/10

Voogie's Angels

CATEGORY: SCI-FI, ACTION • PRODUCTION COMPANY: KSS

This OAV was made long before Drew Barrymore's modernised version of *Charlie's Angels* hit the silver screen, so it can't really be accused of cashing in on any commercial fad. But still, what the hell kind of a name is "Voogie"?

BOUNCING FLESH

Set in a not-too-distant future, humanity is fighting a losing war against aliens that have driven them underwater. Their last hopes of salvation rest on the shoulders of a band of five cybernetically enhanced women. There's the big-breasted leader-without-a-clue, the big-breasted weapons specialist, the big-breasted airhead, the big-breasted homewares and knitting

specialist, and of course the short, flat-chested runt who follows orders.

The premise of *Voogie's Angels* is actually very similar to *Blue Submarine No.6*, which was a bloody excellent series, but it's spoilt by its shameless use of every tired cliché in the book, from stupid comedy antics and gratuitous bouncing flesh to extreme psychological angst of the Ikari Shinji kind.

Now, that actually wasn't such a bad combination when it was used in *Nadesico*, but *Voogie's Angels* also suffers from very poor scripting. The first episode is a comedy, after which it turns into an action series, and by the final episode it's a ridiculously full-blown character drama. It's utterly impossible to follow, and ends much too abruptly.



Strawberry, now that's a colour.



ANIMATION: 6/10 PLOT: 2/10 POTENTIAL: NA/10 OVERALL: 2/10

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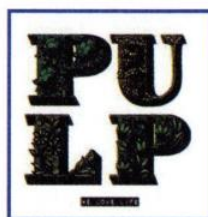
Whether it be on the soundtrack to the latest videogame, getting high rotation on the airwaves or tagged on the credits of the latest blockbuster movie, the latest music releases are everywhere. Want to know what's hot and what's not? Our **Hyper CD reviews** should keep you in the loop.



DE LA SOUL AOI:BIONX

FESTIVAL

Let the Reverend Dogood tell you why life is so good. Enter the smooth world of De La Soul's AOI:BIONX and find out how to kick back and enjoy life at a leisurely pace, with style, sophistication and a little sultry distraction. The patented razor edged rhymes are paired with some of the smoothest modern soul grooves you could hope to find, spunked up with lashings of gorgeous female vocals and finished in a treacle thick production. De La Soul kick back with their little lady, living the lessons of the afore mentioned Reverend Dogood, the inimitable spiritual leader of an awesome record, to the full.



PULP We Love Life

UNIVERSAL

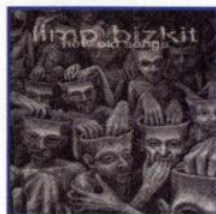
The dreamy, despondent British sound, angst ridden and self obsessed one minute, childish innocent and wide eyed the next, meandering meaninglessly through stylistic sub-genres and playing lip service to all the 'right' influences. As obnoxious as the name of this album (irony and all), Pulp's ambient blend of folkly alternative rock and eclectic programmed atmospheres has neither the wit nor the imagination to support the incoherent ramblings of vocalist Jarvis Cocker. There are moments of magic, but they are over come by the general mediocrity.



ANATHEMA A Fine Day To Exit

ZOMBA

Anathema's dark moody tunes strive gallantly to inhabit the same space as Nick Cave, Sparklehorse or PJ Harvey, but ironically the band end up somewhere a little different courtesy of an undeniable sense of melody. The black ambience is definitely there in the aching backgrounds of "Looking Outside Inside" and "Barriers", but even so Anathema are surprisingly unconfessional, letting the listener easily inside their morbid world. It is a disarming approach, fooling you into an intense emotional ride with a little sugar-coated magic.



LIMP BIZKIT New Old Songs

UNIVERSAL

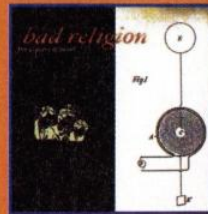
With the auspicious absence of Wes Borland making this the first page in a new Limp Bizkit chapter, there will be a lot of extra attention focused on New Old Songs. This collection of remixes (which appears suspiciously in time for Christmas) was finished before Borland split, but his take of "Break Stuff" has been omitted (the track instead gets a club friendly treatment from Lethal). Else where, Durst chips in with a surprisingly ego-free take of "Faith", Butch Vig proves why he is one of the world's top producers with a stunningly reworked "Nookie" and P-Diddy gets a little wack with a too-hip-hop-by-far version of "My Way".



IRRELEVANT Reflecting and Refracting

RESIST

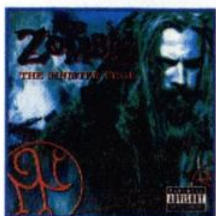
Irrelevant introduce a splendid squall — a solid combination of classic raw throated hardcore, the intense song style and dual vocal layers of At The Drive-In and the genuine Aussie punk spirit of Bodyjar. Reflecting and Refracting might lack a little on the production side of things, but more than compensates with the honesty, power and the passion of unashamedly Australian hardcore punk. Bellowed vocals are as dinky-di as Jack Thompson with a heroin habit, and the knife blade riffing is guaranteed to reinvigorate your patriotic spirit.



BAD RELIGION Process of Belief

SHOCK

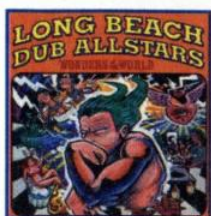
For the last five years or so, a new Bad Religion album has been something of sore point — since the departure of Brett Geurwitz following Stranger Than Fiction the band have floundered a little, to put it mildly. Well, now the man has returned, the guys are fired up, and Bad Religion have delivered one of the best punk albums of the year. Reinvigorated by surprises like the Police style intro to "Sorrow", the acoustic driven "Broken" and the self exploratory "Bored and Extremely Dangerous", this is classic BR. New drummer Brooks Wakeman is superb, and the return of Brett's perfectly lazy guitar brings back the real BR sound.



ROB ZOMBIE The Sinister Urge

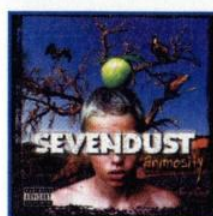
UNIVERSAL

As ugly as you like, Rob Zombie grows more and more cartoon like every album, which I'm sure is a point of pride for him. When a sample begs "why don't you ask me what it feels like to be a freak" at the beginning of opening track "Iron Head", you can be confident Zombie is begging you to do it. Featuring guest appearances from Kerry King, Tommy Lee and Ozzy Osbourne, *The Sinister Urge* is a reasonably solid record, but lacks the spunk and imagination that once made Zombie a credible contender for the Alice Cooper crown.



LONG BEACH DUB ALLSTARS Wonders of the World

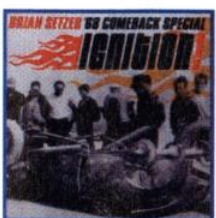
Dark dub-reggae combined with touches of the ironically up-beat style of the great Sublime, *Wonders of the World* is a summer party album for a jilted generation. Although there are few moments that wander dangerously close to middle of the road rock (the chorus of "Sunny Hours" for instance) these slight stumbles are quickly overcome by the over all vibe of the album. With variety like the lo-fi punk of "Life Goes On" and the funk-metal of "Lies", LBDA keep things moving, ensuring this a lot more than another retro-reggae pastiche.



SEVENDUST Animosity

FESTIVAL

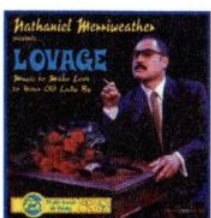
Sevendust didn't quite capture the imagination of Australian fans with their last self-titled effort, falling a little close to the hardcore end of nu-metal to ride the wave of Korn / Limp Bizkit fanaticism. *Animosity* certainly doesn't show the band changing tack, with Sevendust ripping through a collection of full throttle metal. However, the fact that this is combined with a more prominent role for the Faith No More style melodic vocal work of Lajon Witherspoon lends a touch of class to *Animosity*. While the band might still struggle to emerge from the nu-metal crowd, they can be proud of the attempt.



BRIAN SETZER Ignition!

FESTIVAL

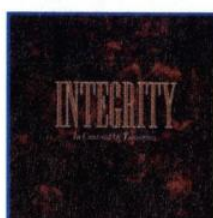
At long last rockabilly guitar legend Brian Setzer has returned to his roots, serving up a blistering collection of guitar fuelled mayhem in a stripped back three-piece format. Forsaking the over blown – but admittedly still pretty good fun – big band work he has indulged in recent times, Setzer has rediscovered the simple pleasure of rock & roll. Lightening hot licks remind you why Chris Cheney thinks so highly of this man, as Setzer leads his trio through a set of songs that embody the spirit of slick old cars, greasy hair and a big bottle of booze.



NATHANIEL MERRIWEATHER Lovage

SHOCK

He is the man who brought you the Gorillaz, and now Nathaniel Merriweather – aliases including Dan the Automator and Dr. Octogon – delivers you "music to make love to your old lady by". He brings an all star cast with him, including Mike Patton (yes, another project...), Jennifer Charles, Damon Albarn, Kid Koala, and Afrika Bambaataa. As tacky as it is sexy, you can take *Lovage* as a spoof, or you can genuinely get down and dirty to it all night long. Either way, Merriweather's trade mark grooves and atmosphere will win a place in your heart.



INTEGRITY In Contrast of Tomorrow

FESTIVAL

Hardcore enigmas, self proclaimed hell raisers, and above all, misunderstood (both intentionally and accidentally) for fifteen years Integrity attempted to live up to their own twisted conception of what their name meant. This is a collection of the band's finest moments, from the mindlessly raw early tracks like "Live It Down" and "Micha: Those Who Fear Tomorrow" to the more restrained but no less intense "Eighteen". *In Contrast of Tomorrow* is not for the faint hearted, but for fans of genuine hardcore it is a nice collection of some very difficult moments.

JUNK

JAMES
COTTEE



By the time you read this, *The Fellowship of the Ring* will finally be at the movies. Three whole generations of nerds will finally be able to see their favourite childhood heroes come to life on the silver screen. Millions will flock to see it, but many more will refuse to go. Why? Willful ignorance is our national pastime, especially when backed by dogmatic fervour. I can hear their bitching now: "It can't possibly be as good as the book."

People love to throw this line around. It saves you the effort of watching a film you haven't seen, and makes you sound like some kind of literary big-shot into the bargain. There's plenty of evidence to back up this reasoning. After all, "Logan's Run" wasn't as good as the book. "Johnny Mnemonic" wasn't as good as the book. And "Dune" certainly wasn't as good as the book.

It was better. For those of you who didn't manage to sit through the inch-thick book AND David Lynch's incomprehensible sci-fi epic, here's my explanation: books and movies are different things. Books can spend hundreds of pages building elaborate narrative contrivances to captivate the reader through the power of their own imagination. Movies use sound and vision to stimulate different parts of the brain, and must do so within a set time limit. A movie is never the same as the book, but that's not the point.

To wit: I've been dredging my way through *Fellowship* these past weeks so as to have it fresh in my mind for the cinema release. It's obvious that some license must be taken on director Peter Jackson's part, as the elaborate historical accounts, spontaneous singing, and in-depth itineraries of hobbit picnics won't make for cutting-edge film-making. That's what the world class actors and Linux-powered special effects are for.

So let the nay-sayers say "nay." This is the guy who made *Meet the Feebles*. As far as I'm concerned, he can do no wrong.



Discourse, flames, opinions to:
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FORUM

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Q. I'LL STICK WITH THE SONY PS2 IN 2002 BECAUSE... ?

It's easy to get all excited about consoles which have not yet launched, but what about the Sony PS2? We're a year in, and suddenly we've been swamped with incredible games. Is there any reason to invest in the two new upcoming consoles, or is Sony's PS2 the safest bet? It's time for you guys to have your say...



HYPER FORUM

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"Which section in Hyper do you dislike the most and why?"

Responses will be printed in Hyper 102.

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.

CURRENTLY THE CHAMPION

For starters PS2 is already a success, with over 20 million+ units sold worldwide and increasing. Sony is currently the champion, so to speak, and Nintendo & Microsoft have to win that title away from them, which will be difficult. Especially for the un-established Xbox, given that the PlayStation name is so well recognised with mere casual gamers, who are almost more interested in the DVD feature than the actual games.

On a personal note, I'll stick with the PS2 because it will have more than enough killer games for my liking (Final Fantasy X, Soul Reaver 2, Ace Combat 4, anybody).

I'd also like a GCN and will most likely get one, but, despite having an innovative controller, I think that it will again be suited more towards specialty games, unlike the PS2 controller, which suits most mainstream games.

Leni Erceg
goliath_noi@hotmail.com

FINAL FANTASY

Hello Hyper mag,

The reason I want to stick with the PS2 is because of the new games that are going to be released. Games like

Grandia 2, Capcom vs SNK 2, Metal Gear Solid 2 and the one and only Final Fantasy X [cheering]. I have already played FF VII, VIII and IX. Those games are the best games that I've ever played, especially FF VII.

I can still remember the first time I played FF VII, it was so good that I was hooked for days. After finishing the game 10 times I gave it to my friend.

Guess what? He was hooked also. Okay I think I am getting a bit overboard about FF VII. As I was saying, the FF series is enough for

me to stay with PS2 forever and also I am loyal to the Sony PlayStation.

TATA, keep up the good work.
Ut Lam
Triggerute@yahoo.com.au

OOH AHH, WIPEOUT

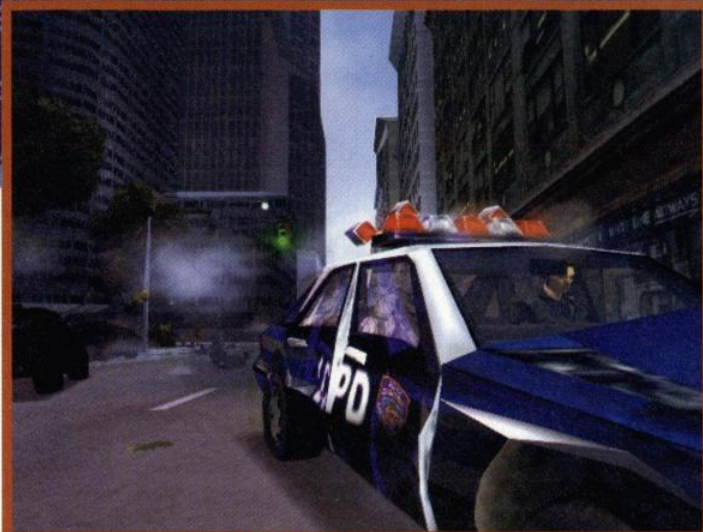
Why the hell wouldn't anyone want to have a PlayStation 2 at the moment? A new next-generation Wipeout is coming! How good can it get??

Dexterman
Dexterman@yahoo.com



A next-gen Wipeout isn't just coming... it's here!

90. Playing Wolfenstein teaches you to speak German. Maybe.



Grand Theft Auto 3 - best game ever?



The beauty of Final Fantasy X.



FFXI Online could be grand.



Devil May Cry rockin' hard.



Metal Gear Solid 2 - Solid indeed.

SONY ARE THE MASTERS

I will stick with PS2 in 2002 because Sony are the masters... For instance, Sony have the best games around and it's a more mature system (unlike Nintendo). PlayStation was the most popular system during 1996-2000.

Another reason I will stick with Sony is because they have the best range of games out there! I'm not saying Nintendo doesn't have any good games - don't get me wrong. Nintendo is an awesome company, but not as good as PlayStation!

I think really highly of Nintendo, but I don't think very much of Xbox, because they don't have any experience like Sony and Nintendo.

So they are my reasons why I will stick with PS2 in 2002.

Johnny

wwf_klown@hotmail.com

OUCH

I'm sticking with the PS2 in 2002 because:

1. Userbase (millions of inbred drones have one, and even if the competition proves far better, that fact will not persuade me one bit and I'm content to stick with this rustic technology).

2. Vast library (of flashy, rush-released, short-ish games, most lacking any next-gen AI or epic struggles, that of which can be found on a PC platform).

3. DVD sized data (I'm waiting for the day in 2002 that a game will come close to fulfilling the storage

capacities of the discs and I wanna be there to witness it... I think).

4. DVD playback (when there are no decent game titles out I can push aside my expensive stand-alone DVD player for this cheap set-top-box to do the noisy playback).

5. Glutton for pain (just for kicks, my momma ties me to a chair in front of the tv and forces me to view the inordinate loading times).

6. Emotionally attached (I have waited for so long to finally see the Emotionless-Engine pump some much needed raw AI out in a game.)

7. Versatility (if in 2002 my unit succumbs a hideous death, as apparently some PS2's have a short lifespan reminiscent of the replicant/clone plots in the movie *Blade Runner* or *The 6th Day*, then the console makes for a good full-metal-jacket body armour alternative. Just strap it to your chest and you will never feel pain again during paintball sessions).

8. Online feature (rumour is, apparently 'ping time' for playing pong is minimal on the PS2).

9. Advanced technology (apparently its mod chips are more advanced than the competitions).

So in closing, I'm sticking with the PS2 in 2002 cause I like poo.

nonjagged

jagged_lines@hotmail.com

SEQUEL SARCASM

I will stick with Sony in 2002 because of all the exciting sequels on the way like Final Fantasy X, Metal Gear

Solid 2, Crash Bandicoot 5, Norman Mailer's Pro Lawn Bowls 3, Dance Dance Re-Evolution 19, Madden 2002 (that's not the year that's the 2002nd Madden title), and so on. After all, why would I waste my money on GameCube when so few sequels are on the horizon, because of all the new franchises being developed? Why think outside the box when it makes such a nice comfort zone?

Joe McMahon

Rockman_exe@yahoo.com.au

Think outside the box.

Outside the box!

The box!!!!!!!

THE THIRD PLACE

I plan on buying a PS2 after Christmas and lining up early for Metal Gear Solid 2! The threat of other new consoles doesn't bother me. Why? From what I can see, all the games I'm interested in playing are coming out for the PS2. It's looking better and better every day, and the new consoles just look risky in my opinion. The Xbox could be the new Dreamcast and the GameCube might just end up being

as feeble as the Nintendo 64, so for me and my money, the safest bet is the PlayStation 2 and its millions-strong user base. As soon as Final Fantasy XI comes out, and I can play online with my PS2, I think I'll be in gaming geek heaven!

Strider

Striderstorm@hotmail.com

XBOX ANXIETY

I am writing to you to let you know that while Microsoft's Xbox has superior technology and far greater visuals, I will still be loyal to Sony and its ultimately legendary console, the PS2.

Although, I feel that while I'm staying 100% loyal to Sony, I am feeling a sense of anxiety as to whether I should purchase an Xbox.

But if it all comes down to all out war on consoles, the victor will undoubtedly be Sony as they have gaming experience unlike the computer based company Microsoft.

From your loyal fan and all-round gaming addict,

Troy

Email address withheld

MAIL



HYPER LETTERS:

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

MOTORHEAD

Dear Hyper,

Great magazine guys!! I'll get to the point. For those of you out there who say that video games don't improve real life skills, I disagree. After playing approximately 300 hours worth of GT3 on PS2, I went shopping and noticed an Audi S4 in the car park! Thanks to my game playing skills and new found automotive knowledge, it only took me 45 minutes to remove the turbo system!!

Now I'm having a bit of trouble fitting it into my Corolla, but I figure with a bit more practice I should be able to figure it out. I think my Corolla is sure to have approx. 350 BHP now!! Cool!

Now for a question, I can't seem to find an Escudo Pikes Peak out on the roads anywhere and I'm desperate to get my hands on that spoiler!! Can you point me in the right direction guys? Hey, there's some police knocking on my door. I wonder what they want? I'll just go check and be back in a second...

Owl

S329936@student.uq.edu.au

P.S. Can you guys bail me out

please? My girlfriend left me and took off with my Corolla.

Dear Owl,

Next you should buy yourself a copy of *Grand Theft Auto 3... that should be interesting.*

STICKY STICKERS

Dear Hyper,

I just got my latest copy of Hyper in the mail and as per usual it says, "PLEASE DO NOT BEND" on the front. "Oooh a CD?" I think to myself as I roll the mag up into a telescope to check for CD-ness but alas no CD and thus no goo :-)

But then as I proceed to do the first flick through Hyper, something falls out of it and onto my desk! Stickers! How cool is this: a new Hyper and my computer covered in Xbox stickers!

So the point is the stickers are cool and so is the goo, so the only logical next step is to always have stickers and they are stuck to Hyper with the GOO! Anyway think about it or come and do my exams (either is good).

tmyroadctfig

tmyroadctfig@yahoo.com

P.S. Is Tim still over in Japan?

Cause he's looking kinda hungry, maybe you guys should send him some food or at least pay someone over there to feed him...

Dear tmyroadctfig,

You'll be pleased to hear that Tim is back from Japan, and is in good health (most of the time). Sorry for the lack of Goo, but we thought it was best that readers went cold turkey.

QUIDDITCH!

G'day Hyper,

Your mag rulz! I have had a really cool game idea, following all this Harry Potter craze. Wouldn't it be awesome if EA (the king of sport games) made a Quidditch game? There could be tons of cups, like the Hogwarts cup where you compete for house points, while playing as characters like Harry Potter, Oliver Wood and Draco Malfoy. There could be weather effects like in Formula 1 2000, and each character would have stats like balance, catch and weight like in Mario Kart Advance, and you can choose what position to play in.

EA could take it one step further and put in the National Cup, with teams like the Chudley Cannons, and to take it further, the World cup! Tony Hawks Pro Skater style there would be a broom shop, where you can upgrade your old Shooting Star into a Nimbus 2001 and give it repairs. Wouldn't a game like that be awesome?

Dylan Mckay

dillsmckay@hotmail.com

Dear Dills,

I'm sure EA were well aware of the multiple ways they could exploit the license, so don't worry too much! Chances are it's being made.

MWA

Good day Hyper dudes.

First off I want to say, without a drop of insincerity, that the magazine is comin' along great. It has never been so sexy or valid, everything in it is necessary, oh and the music reviews, mwa, touch of brilliance. Dan Lander and I seem to

share a taste in music.

The features rock and I'm glad to see more of them. The little editorials and columns are great. The mag drips of class, that's what comes from eight years I guess.

I just got a DVD player so now every damn page is read over at least twice, now I get my money's worth and then some.

Well just droppin' a line to give you's alls a cheerio mate.

Keep up the good work.

Reggie

Steggs69@hotmail.com

Dear Reggie,

We love these 100th issue letters full of praise. And I don't mean mayonnaise.

GLEAMING THE CUBE

Dear Hyper,

You have an excellent magazine, which I read every month. I would like to compliment you on your great reviews. I am definitely going to get a GameCube but after these questions have been answered it should give me a better idea of the GameCube. Anyway here are my questions.

1. Would it be worth to get a U.S version of the Gamecube or stick with Australia's PAL version?
2. When is the Gamecube due to be released here in Australia and how much is it due to cost?
3. Will the Gamecube have some sort of expansion pak like the N64's to boost its already great graphics? That is all for now.

The Biggest GameCube Fan

Dear Biggest GameCube Fan,

1. For convenience, we really suggest you wait for the PAL machine. Everything will be financially more viable that way. The machines will be no different.
2. If only Nintendo would tell us. We've heard rumours of March, rumours of April and no evidence for either.
3. It's pretty unlikely.

NO FRICKIN' IDEA

Howdy Hyper,

I've been a Hyper reader for a while and I've been impressed what

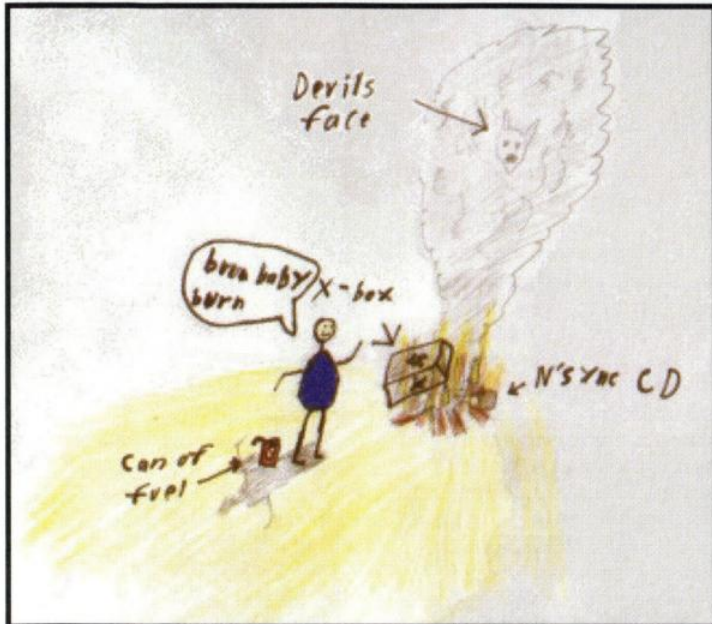
CAPTION THIS!

PART 25 WINNER

Our winning caption this month comes from Hyper reader, **CHRIS BAGULEY**. Well done! You made us spurt milk from our nose.



E.T.'S FACELIFT ONLY STUMPED THE TROOPERS FOR MOMENTS



Ryan Griffiths sent us the best reader art this year.

you guys have done with this magazine and it seems to impress me every issue. Also I have no frickin' idea of which console I should get PS2, Gamecube or Xbox.

HELP ME!!! Ok, I have some questions for you people and here they are.

1. When's Tekken 4 coming out to the PS2?
2. Do you still show any Dreamcast games or DC games coming up or have you folks just given up on the Dreamcast?
3. Why don't you have more DVD reviews?
4. Is Metal Gear Solid 2 coming out on any console apart from the PS2?
5. Are they going to stop making games for the PSone and N64 when the Gamecube and PS2 start coming of age?
6. Will the Gamecube be able to go onto the Internet automatically or do you have to wait?
7. What are the launch titles for the Xbox?
8. Finally are you going to put the CDs back on the magazine?

Thanks heaps,
Mark
 miniklown@yahoo.com

Dear Mark,

1. Mid-2002.
2. Basically, the games distributors don't bother sending us Dreamcast games anymore (the few that get released).
3. I think four pages of DVDs is enough!

4. Yes, the Xbox. Metal Gear Solid X, due next year sometime.

5. Most companies have already stopped making N64 games. PSone games are certainly slowing down now too, but there are just so many millions of PSone users out there and the PS2 is backwards compatible, that it's still profitable for them to pump them out.

6. Not automatically, no. They've hinted at a modem and/or broadband adapter down the track, and Miyamoto has apparently mentioned that Nintendo are working on some online GCN games. At this stage Nintendo have not made an official announcement regarding their online strategy, and we hope it wouldn't just apply to Japan when it happens - like with the N64 and the 64DD.

7. There will be between 12 and 20, but I'm not going to list them all here, we'll do that in the next few issues. It's a strong line up though.

8. Somewhere, over the rainbow...

OMNIPOTENT

Hey guys,

I'm a big fan of your magazine; I have been a subscriber for several years now. Anyway, I just have a couple of questions and since you are omnipotent gods you should have no trouble answering them.

1. Will Shenmue 2 be getting an Australian release on the Dreamcast? Cause I don't want to have to buy an Xbox or import to get it.
2. When is the Final Fantasy movie

WAR ON GAMES

In this day and age with all the years of women's lib behind us who would have thought that my life would become like those women in the 50's? I vacuum, I cook, I clean, I wash, & I hate it.

What happened to sharing the duties? Where did all the efforts of Germaine get us? To here? To me, being chained to the kitchen while my tunnel-visioned partner sits glued to the TV playing those games?

The arrival of each new console is the demise of another of his chores. I can almost hear him singing now "bring me my slippers sweetie", the last image to put me right smack bang in the era.

I can only thank the numerous consoles in our house for this change - Dreamcast, PlayStation, PlayStation 2 & the mighty Nintendo. I don't think of more games, more fun, more adventures, I think of... more dusting.

So what excuse did the men from long ago have? It certainly wasn't video games. I have come to the conclusion amongst my time of thinking while doing the mindless jobs that the age old saying of "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" has some truth behind it.

I throw off my apron (I wasn't really wearing one, it's all about effect), I turn off the iron & I scream at the top of my lungs, "Pass me the bloody controller and I will kick your bloody ass".

And you know what the real payoff of this is? In soccer (his fav next to THPS2), I WIN! Oh the look on his face - it's worth all the chores for the rest of my life.

Michelle Herbert
 spazbean@hotmail.com

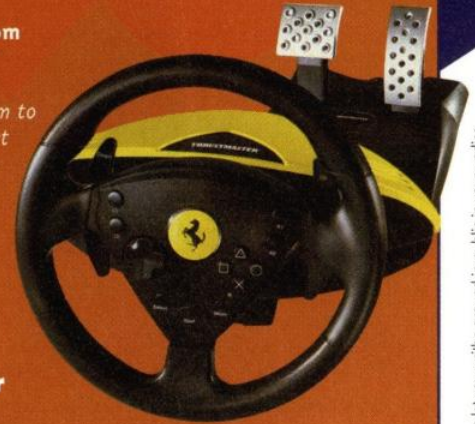
Dear Michelle,
 Next you can challenge him to racing games (after you get a few weeks practice with this brand new wheel we're giving you). The more girl gamers the better!

You've won an exclusive 360 Modena Wheel for PSX/PS2!

Don't forget to include your contact details in your letter.

THRUSTMASTER®

<http://au.thrustmaster.com>
 Wheel valued at \$99.95.



going to be released on DVD in Australia?

3. When will Capcom vs SNK 2 be released on the PlayStation 2? I'm really looking forward to that one.

Thanks a lot guys and once again, great magazine.

Chris
 issmith@powerup.com.au

1. At the time of going to print, Shenmue 2 was getting a limited Dreamcast release here in Australia.
2. It's out now!
3. It's out now!

BOOGIE MAN

Dear Hyper inmates,

This evening, while enjoying some quality time with my beloved copy of GT3, I noticed something a little strange. It was one of those enjoyable, lazy laps of the Apricot Hill raceway. Nothing too weird, just myself in a ridiculously overpowered RX-7 against some of Britain's finest race-bred vehicles,

when, unexpectedly, I had that sudden feeling that I was not alone. Having just traversed the small chicane, throttling up to power back onto the final straight, I looked up. And there it was - the Scary-Looking Tree Boogey Man Dude.

If you pause the game (or just stop on the track facing uphill after the chicane) and take a close look at the row of trees in the background, there he is. Am I just seeing things? Have I overexposed my eggshell mind to too many video games? Is he the spiritual forest guardian of the raceway? Was a hippie coding the backgrounds? Or is it only an optical illusion created by a pair of mirrored sprites? Hmm... I think it kinda looks like those floating brain-aliens from Duke 3D (but then I played far too much of that too!)

Has anyone else seen this kinda thing in other games? There must be lots of strange subliminal things that programmers put into their work for the enjoyment of freaks the

MAIL

95. You can learn the finer points of Copoliera from Eddy in Tekken 3.

world over. (Cue Ren Hoek's voice) "Perhaps...They're controlling... OUR MINDS!"

Pete Barker.
Pjbarker@ozemail.com.au

Dear Pete,
All we can suggest is that you stop sniffing the cover of our magazine before you play your games.

MOBILE GAMES

Firstly I'd like to congratulate you on your mag, it reeks of awesomeness, keep it up.

Now to business, due to the growing popularity of mobile phones and the huge variety out there, I think that you guys should do a special segment on mobile phone games, what do you guys think?

Yours sincerely,
Wogboy
jaic@westnet.com.au

Dear Wogboy,
Actually, it's something we've been planning on. We didn't steal your idea, we promise.

BETTER THAN SEX

Dear Hyper peoples,
Before I address a very serious issue I thought it only proper to give the obligatory introduction of – awesome mag!!!

But seriously folks, the magazine has never looked better since the day I purchased my first copy nearly a hundred issues ago (yes I am one of those sad old gamers that gets funny looks at the arcades).

Now straight to the serious matter at hand. Are videogames better than sex? Well it's perfectly obvious isn't it?! Depends on whom you're with!

I mean I would much rather spend the evening curled up with Dante, killing monster-thingies (yes I am quite comfortable with my own sexuality) than go out with my girlfriend (who could easily win a John Howard look-alike competition had she the inclination). I mean who hasn't from time to time spent the evening perfecting that 23 hit combo with your favourite Tekken character or crushing Man United by 14 goals with a team who's greatest triumph previously was getting all eleven (who says videogames don't teach you anything) players to turn up for a match, and come away

from it all feeling more invigorated than if you had wasted the evening with your partner?

Now in the past decade of gaming I have witnessed much in the evolution of gaming and while at times, I lament the innocence of Alex Kidd making way to Soldier of Fortune, I strongly believe that now is the greatest time to be alive in the history of gaming. In this present age being awesome at Wipeout Fusion is likely to do more than just impress spotty-faced little nerds (well that is what us gamers looked like in the early Nineties – own up guys!) but my fastest lap time will greatly increase my chances of scoring with chicks. So while videogames may not be as good as sex, (I am yet to be convinced) videogames may drastically increase your chances of meeting that special person. So give up that exercise stuff, all true gamers already have no doubt, and stay up all night playing with your joystick (shame on all you adolescents and Carry On fans).

Well that's the ramblings of a crazy old gamer. Thank you for your time.

Skitz
death_to_infidels@hotmail.com

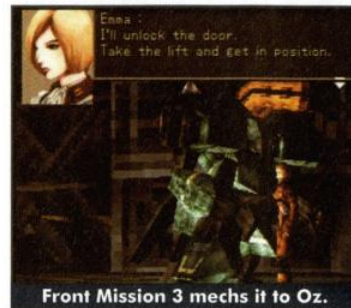
Dear Skitz,
We almost gave you the wheel until we realised just what you might do with it...

DECISIONS

G'day Hyper folk,
I have been collecting your mag on and off for years and in all seriousness believe that your mag is the best out there. Many mags try to revolutionise the industry by changing their mag format too often (especially PCPP). In my opinion, your magazine is the best that it has ever been. I beg you not to make the same mistake that many magazines have made, which is to drastically change their style all the time and fill the mag with non-GAMING junk. Because in all honesty we buy Hyper for games and of course a small section of music, anime and movies!

Lastly I'll just say that your mag lacks one major section which is a beautiful CD. Please, please bring back your cover CD even if it means a small price rise or more mag ads. Please?

See ya soon!
Luke Granleese
Pp79n@hotmail.com



Front Mission 3 mechs it to Oz.

P.S. GCN or XBOX? Decisions, decisions.

Luke... Luke...
You must go to the Dagobah system, where you'll... oh where was I?

INQUISITIVE PYROMANIAC

Dear to the ppl at Hyper,
Your magazine has acquired my 'Favourite magazine over PC PowerPlay, APC and Electronic Gaming Monthly' award. You should be proud because I spent 2 minutes of my life making that idea up (good thing).

I read a lot of different magazines to keep myself up-to-date and get different point of views of different things due to the stubbornness of magazine judgements. As you can see, I spend about \$40 every month just for magazines and it is a tough choice between saving up for a PS2 and buying magazines but I somehow managed to save up to \$430 after countless hours working at a Chinese restaurant. My dad won't let me subscribe to anything because he gets paranoid over credit card security. Why does he have one anyway?

I just love your magazine! After a year of questions building up in my head I've decided to lift my fingers and type you guys a letter.

Firstly, the missing demo CD. And secondly, the size of the magazine (horizontal length is approx. 1.6cm shorter now). I jumped to the conclusion that you guys spent the whole Hyper budget on the E3 trip and the GCN. Am I right or is there another reason?

I am shocked that hardly anyone noticed a game called Front Mission 3 was out. You guys should be happy that Squaresoft actually bothered releasing it in Australia after all that whining in the Lost Classics article in issue 98. I've been a huge fan of Front Mission since 1995 so you can see how I feel towards a game being ignored and

Harvey Norman

SAVE 15%*
OFF ANY TOP 20 GAME!

Harvey Norman would like to offer readers of Hyper an exclusive discount offer on the titles appearing on the Official Australian PC, PlayStation or N64 Games Chart. Simply complete the coupon & take it into any Harvey Norman store to claim your discount.

HYPER SAVE 15%*
OFF ANY TOP 20 GAME!

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I would like to receive news & other special offers

* Limit of one per person. Original voucher must be presented & completed to claim the discount. Discount applies to regular store pricing. Not redeemable or transferrable for cash. Offer ends 30th January. Customer details may be used for further promotional activities.

HH4

how the gameplay is similar to Advance Wars (Insert: "Eliot runs to the nearest EB" noise here).

I was so mad about issue 98; I had to burn 2 pages of the magazine. U know y? It was the pages which had the Xbox stickers between it "shudders". Don't ever do that again! I almost lit my little brother on fire during the process. Why would I want a console which is the size of a Yellow Pages directory and the controller the size of my maths text book?

Do you guys use SNES Emulators? I have already caught N64 Gamer magazine with the word 'Saved State' in a screen shot of which the words seemed like something out of ZSnes. I use emus because I stupidly sold my SNES and all my games, which included Chrono Trigger and Front Mission to name a few to a friend which disappeared 3 years ago. Please answer truthfully ok? Do you guys use it too?

How are we supposed to get Chrono Cross in PAL? Is there even the slightest chance of a release here? I am speaking for all Chrono fans out there!

Finally! This is the last question I have to ask. Isn't Sony releasing an external HDD too and not just an internal one?

Thousand thanks to you all!

Jacky Fan
Spdyduck007@yahoo.com

"The governments of the world turned a blind eye to our misery" - Sniper Wolf (From Metal Gear Solid)

Dear Jacky Fan,
Firstly, the slight change in width is something that was applied to all the gaming magazines here at Next Publishing so that we're all the same "format". It wasn't a Hyper specific change, and was out of our control, but it hasn't changed the amount of content AT ALL. The CD I've explained one too many times anyhow. It might be back in 2002. As for emulators, well, actually we have no need to use them. Most of us own all the old



systems. Unless of course you're talking about some really old obscure arcade game...

Chrono Cross won't be released here; it's too late for that unfortunately. As for the PS2 HDD - the external model is for Japan, as the Japanese PS2s had no internal drive bay. We'll get the internal hard drive here in Australia.

A FIGHTING FAN

I'm what you might call a dying breed, the last of the 2D fighting fans. Capcom have long fuelled my passion for 2D biff and in your last issue Bryce McDonough reviewed Capcom vs SNK 2 for PS2 and gave it 91%. This is possibly the greatest conception in 2D fighting game history! The best crossover ever! But when I went on a quest for this fabled piece of gaming gold, no one had any idea what I was talking about. Only one store knew the title and they said at best it wouldn't be out until early next year!! Is this some sort of joke!? Did you publish the review just to see how much fluid my pants could hold!?

Now obviously you couldn't have any idea how much a Street Fighter/Capcom fan I am, so could you please tell me for sure if it is available and where I can get me my copy from before I go mad?

On a different note, I'd just like to say sorry to Tim. I met you at Fuzzy Spring break. I have a habit of freaking people out with my Mr. Burns on pain-killers impression but thanks for the chat hey.

Louman Louman
Loumani1413@hotmail.com

Dear Louman,
Tim warned me about you. Capcom vs SNK 2 should be available now.

100 LAUNCH GAMES

Hello Hyper peoples,
Your mag's the best ever blah blah... I'll just get to the point. Yesterday I realised how little the mainstream actually knows about the gaming industry. For example most of the kids at school believe the new GameCube (oblong) has an in-built DVD player and cartridge slot at back for old N64 games. One kid even told me there's gonna be 100 games at launch. When I asked were did he get such stupid info from, he told an N64 magazine.

Anyway, I thought the PS2 ads were pathetic but the new Xbox ads



are even stupider. It has some lady saying "touch, smell, sight" etc. with a green X in the background, no gameplay shown, no movies shown, in one word - shit.

Now everyone's saying how dear PS2 games are, but looking in the new Electronic Boutique, Conker's Bad Fur day is selling for \$125. Yep that was no typo, \$124. Why so high? Nintendo can't blame piracy as it's hard to pirate them... so why so high?

Well I've blabbered on too long. Here are some questions to strain your brain (maybe)

1. Do think there should be a rugby league game?
2. Is there gonna be a Lord of the Rings game?
3. Don't you think it's a bit unfair that Nintendo snared the Res Evil license, thus not allowing other consoles to enjoy these great games?
4. What did you guys score FF VIII?
5. Have you guys heard about the new Simpsons game coming on PS2? Anyway great mag,

Troy Skrypa
Blinkingfish@bigpond.com

Troy,
Okay, firstly, your friends at school are on crack if they believe any of that stuff. Secondly, the Xbox ads you've seen on TV are teaser ads... they're meant to get you thinking about it, but they're not real ads. The machine doesn't launch until March 14, so you can expect proper game ads then. Nintendo 64 game prices were high because they were on cartridge, which required publishers to pay Nintendo a fee.



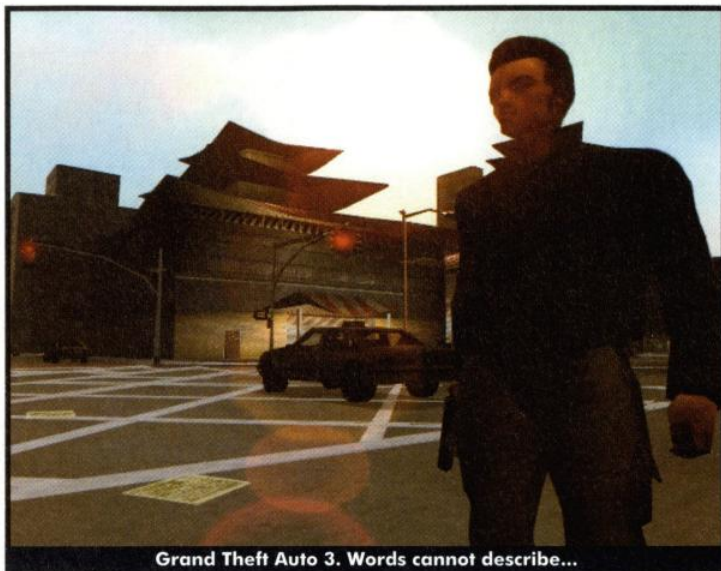
Now that the GameCube is disbanded, you should see Nintendo games remaining under the \$100 mark. We hope.

1. Yes, of course!
2. There will be more than you know what to do with probably.
3. Not really. Every console has its exclusive games. It's a big, dirty business these days!
4. FF VIII was scored 89%.
5. Are you referring to Simpsons Road Rage? It's just Crazy Taxi with the Simpsons, but not as good. We can also expect Simpsons Skateboarding this year.

SEGA SEGA SEGA, OI OI OI

Sup Hyper?
I'll just skip the obligatory butt-kissing paragraph and get straight to my questions. I've been a Sega (especially Sonic) fan for a while now, but I realise it would be somewhat foolish to buy a Dreamcast now, even if they are going cheap. Sega's move to software was also rather disappointing, and I just wanted to know what Sega and Sonic games are coming out on other platforms like Xbox or Gamecube, for example. I also like Japanese style

MAIL



Grand Theft Auto 3. Words cannot describe...

games, (anime, manga etc.) and was wondering if any are coming out on PC anytime soon, seeing as I don't yet own a console.

Well that's about it. Looking back on this email I see I've given you quite a few questions... well, it's what you're good at, right? Anyway, maybe I'll write again some other time. Keep up the good work and great magazine.

Sinistah

Stone_trainer@hotmail.com

P.S. What happened to people sending in art? That kicked ass. I might have to send some next time.

Dear Sinistah,
Sega have been pumping out games for the other systems like there's no tomorrow. Super Monkey Ball was a GameCube launch title, Jet Set Radio Future looks like one of the best Xbox games, Crazy Taxi and Ecco the Dolphin are on the PS2... the list goes on. Yes Sonic will be on GameCube and Game Boy Advance too.
As for anime styled PC games... I wouldn't hold your breath. The closest the PC can get to anime style at the moment would be something like Oni.
So, in the meantime, send us some artwork!

RETURN OF THE GOOPY STUFF

Heya Hyperions,

I have two main things to talk about here. Many others and I sadly miss the cover CD. The great movies, demos, utils, and the goopy stuff on the outside! The people who crave this, put your minds at rest! I have found the perfect replacement

(besides Eliot putting the CD back on "cough"). Simply go to your local supermarket and purchase a pack or two of juice poppers. These have the goopy stuff attaching the straw. Get it now and start flicking!

The second, more serious thing is to do with TV game ads. I have found an interesting theory on the 'net about game advertising. It states that there are three types of game ads. Type A ads mainly feature game footage and the basic premise of the game. Type B ads show a small amount of footage and a joke portion. Type C ads show absolutely no footage and work on the principle of making you want to find out more, by providing a web address at the end of the ad.

Type B ads are the most common, a good example being the Banjo-Tooie ads, and more recently, the MarioKart Super Circuit ads. Type A ads are quite rare, one example being the GT3 ad. The PS2 launch ads, and the price reduction ads are Type C ads. What's scary is that the Type B and Type C ads are much more popular than the Type A ads, which actually show a fair amount of gameplay. Think about it, talk about it, then get back to waiting for a local GCN release.

Kargath64
kargath64@yahoo.com

P.S. For 'Drunk Agent' setting on Goldeneye, stuff the goopy stuff down the control-stick cavity.

Dear Kargath,
You forgot about Type "D" ads... the ones with the subliminal mind controlling messages. Or didn't you know about those?

HOWDY PEOPLE AT HYPER,

The mag rocks! Keep up the excellent standard and shameless humour; it's what makes your publication unique.

Anyways I'll cut to the chase. The main reason I'm writing in is to express my views on the recently released Grand Theft Auto 3 for the PS2. Now before you write me off as a hack who has nothing better to do with their time than to set out on crusades claiming Harry Potter books incite unhealthy interests in witchcraft, I'd just like to say that I am one of the people who thinks GTA3 is moving the gaming industry in the right direction. But let me explain fully.

Being a big fan of the two predecessors that appeared on the original PlayStation, I waited with keen anticipation for the third instalment in the series knowing that it would push the boundaries of player interactivity and freedom of choice like no game before it. And let me just say I wasn't disappointed. GTA3 is one of those rare efforts that comes along every few years and has so many fresh ideas implemented with such admirable execution that it raises the expectations of the overall gaming public and sets a benchmark for all developers who dare to be original. Half-Life did it for FPS, Final Fantasy 7 did it for RPG's, Mario 64 achieved this status as well (just to name a few) and now GTA3 can proudly raise its hand and be credited for breaking down the linear perceptions we have about video games.

The spectrum for experimentation is a game within itself and probably why I've only finished 30% of the game after 30 hours of gameplay.

Anyway after all my rambling I hope the main point I've made is that whilst GTA3 can be controversial due to its adult content and gratuitous violence it's good to see games such as this released that aren't just a stepping stone for gaming but rather a significant leap in game design, and one which will undoubtedly change the way we play games forever more.

Paul Simao
p_simao@hotmail.com



Strider. No, not Aragorn.

Dear Paul,
We completely agree with your thoughts on Grand Theft Auto 3. It's awesome! As for your last comment, just remember that Sony didn't make Grand Theft Auto 3, it was Rockstar Games. It wasn't the PS2 that made the game what it is, but rather, Rockstar's genius game design.

STRIDER

Hello Hyper Heroes,

I need your help. I'm a 30 year-old gamer who grew up in the world of 2D gaming. Platformers and shoot 'em ups have been my staple for many years. Granted today's 3D games are impressive but as each new console is released, I am finding that I'm becoming less interested in a lot of the games on offer (hooray for the GBA). I only hope that the industry doesn't forget about games of old, and continues catering for us old types who are usually the first to adopt new consoles. Compiling classic games from 1985-1992 would be brilliant. Remember when Capcom released Generations? It was disappointing to see that Strider 2 for PSX was not getting a local release. At least we'll get Castlevania Chronicles, hopefully. Anyway, I must have Strider 2. I tried one of the companies that advertise in your magazine but was unsuccessful. Can you recommend anyone else in this country that can help me get hold of this must have title.

Jason
Email address withheld

Dear Jason,
Strider 2 was a victim of the problems surrounding Capcom's Australian PlayStation game distribution in early 2001, or lack thereof. Now that THQ handle PlayStation Capcom stuff in Australia, we can always pray that it will eventually be released before the PSone is completely phased out.



Ass Goblin sent us this great ad

The Official Australian Games Chart

Compiled by Inform in association with AVSDA

TOP 10

PlayStation 2 Games Over \$50

W/E 2 Dec 2001
RETAIL SALES

1	○	WWF Smackdown!	Sports
2	▼	Gran Turismo 3	Racing
3	▼	Grand Theft Auto 3	Adventure
4	○	World Rally Championship	Racing
5	○	Silent Hill 2	Adventure
6	▼	Time Crisis 2	Action
7	▼	FIFA 2002	Sports
8	○	Crash Bandicoot 5	Adventure
9	○	SSX Tricky	Sports
10	▼	Burnout	Racing

TOP 10

PlayStation Games Over \$40

W/E 2 Dec 2001
RETAIL SALES

1	◆	Harry Potter	Adventure
2	○	Tony Hawks Pro Skater 3	Sports
3	◆	FIFA 2002	Sports
4	○	Syphon Filter 3	Adventure
5	▲	NBA Live 2002 Gold	Sports
6	▼	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Sports
7	▼	The Italian Job	Adventure
8	◆	20 Games Pack	Compilation
9	▼	Digimon	RPG
10	▼	Spiderman Enter Electro	Adventure

TOP 10

Game Boy Games Over \$40

W/E 2 Dec 2001
RETAIL SALES

1	▲	Harry Potter	Adventure
2	▼	Pokemon Crystal	RPG
3	◆	Shrek FairyTale Freak Down	Action
4	▲	Pokemon Silver	RPG
5	▼	Pokemon Gold	RPG
6	▲	Donkey Kong Country	Adventure
7	▲	Super Mario Brothers Dlx	Action
8	▼	Zelda: Oracle Of Ages	RPG
9	○	Simpsons Tree House Horror	Adventure
10	▼	Zelda: Oracle Of Seasons	RPG

TOP 10

N64 Games Over \$40

W/E 2 Dec 2001
RETAIL SALES

1	◆	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Sports
2	▲	Donkey Kong 64	Adventure
3	▼	Conker's Bad Fur Day	Adventure
4	◆	Pokemon Stadium 2	Action
5	▲	Mario Tennis	Sports
6	◆	Mario Party 3	Family
7	▲	Banjo Toole	Adventure
8	▼	Mario Kart 64	Racing
9	○	Perfect Dark	Action
10	◆	Zelda: Majora's Mask	RPG

TOP 10

PC Games Over \$30

W/E 2 Dec 2001
RETAIL SALES

1	▲	Harry Potter	Adventure
2	○	Return To Castle Wolfenstein	Action
3	▼	The Sims Hot Date	Strategy
4	▼	Empire Earth	Strategy
5	▲	The Sims	Strategy
6	▼	Civilization 3	Strategy
7	▼	Star Wars Galactic Bttlegrnd	Action
8	○	Ghost Recon	Adventure
9	▲	The Sims Collectors Edition	Strategy
10	○	Pool Of Radiance	RPG

TOP 10

Game Boy Advance Games Over \$40

W/E 2 Dec 2001
RETAIL SALES

1	▲	Harry Potter	Adventure
2	▼	Mario Kart Super Circuit	Racing
3	◆	Super Mario Advance	Adventure
4	○	Golden Sun	RPG
5	▼	Wario Land 4	Action
6	▼	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Sports
7	▼	Rugrats Castle Capers	Adventure
8	○	WWF Road To WrestleMania	Sports
9	▼	Street Fighter 2	Action
10	○	Tetris Worlds	Action

TOP 10

All Full Priced Games

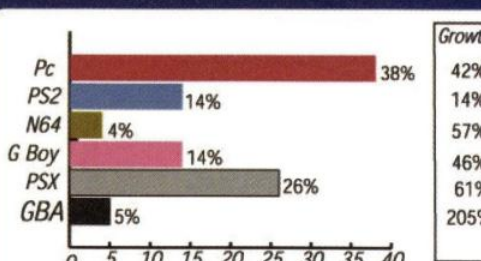
W/E 2 Dec 2001
RETAIL SALES

1	◆	Harry Potter	PlayStation
2	▲	Harry Potter	Game Boy
3	▲	Harry Potter	PC/MAC
4	▼	Pokemon Crystal	Game Boy
5	○	Return To Castle Wolfenstein	PC/MAC
6	○	WWF Smackdown!	PlayStation 2
7	▼	The Sims Hot Date	PC/MAC
8	○	Harry Potter	GB Advance
9	▼	Gran Turismo 3	PlayStation 2
10	▼	Grand Theft Auto 3	PlayStation 2

MARKET WATCH

All Games by Platform

Nov vs Oct 2001
RETAIL SALES



- New Entry
- ◆ Non Mover
- ▲ Up from last week
- ▼ Down from last week



Charts can be viewed at www.informbd.com.au as part of Inform's comprehensive database of online market intelligence, updated weekly



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