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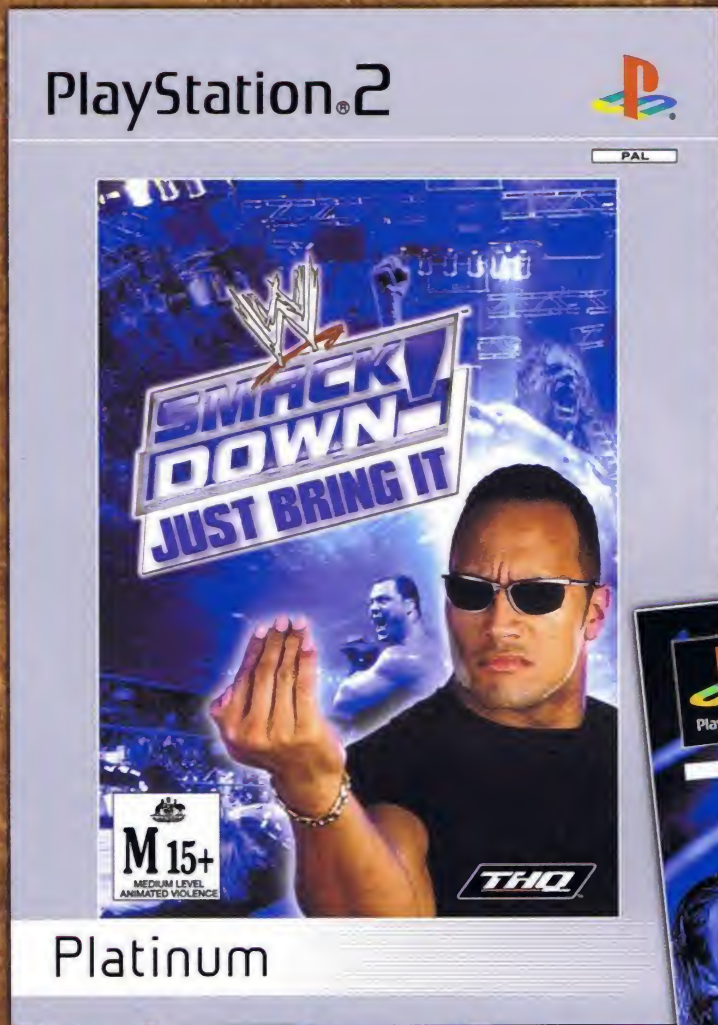


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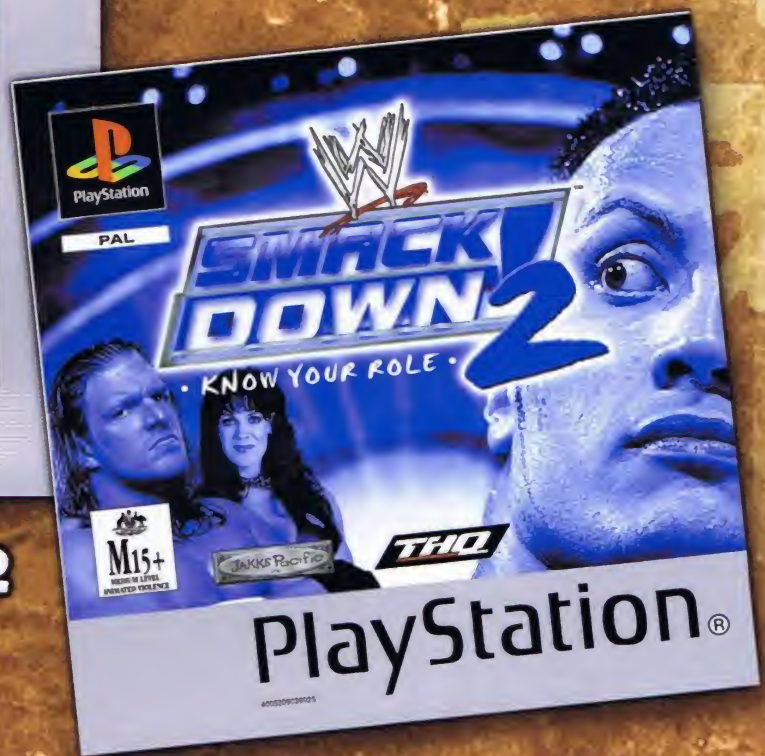
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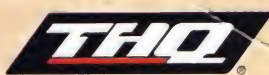


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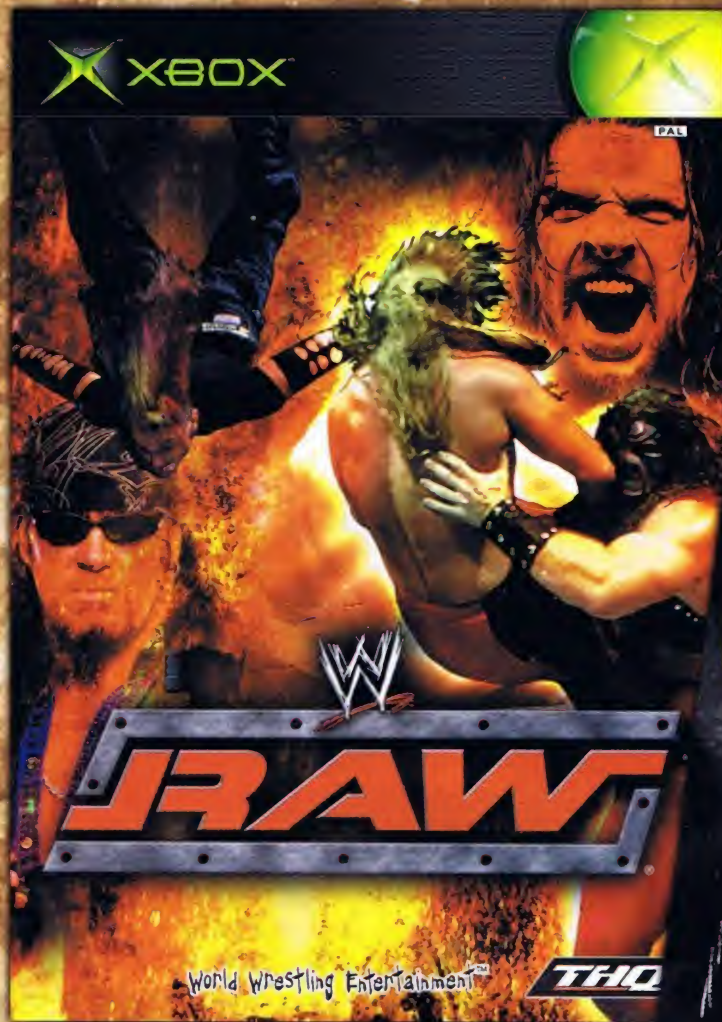


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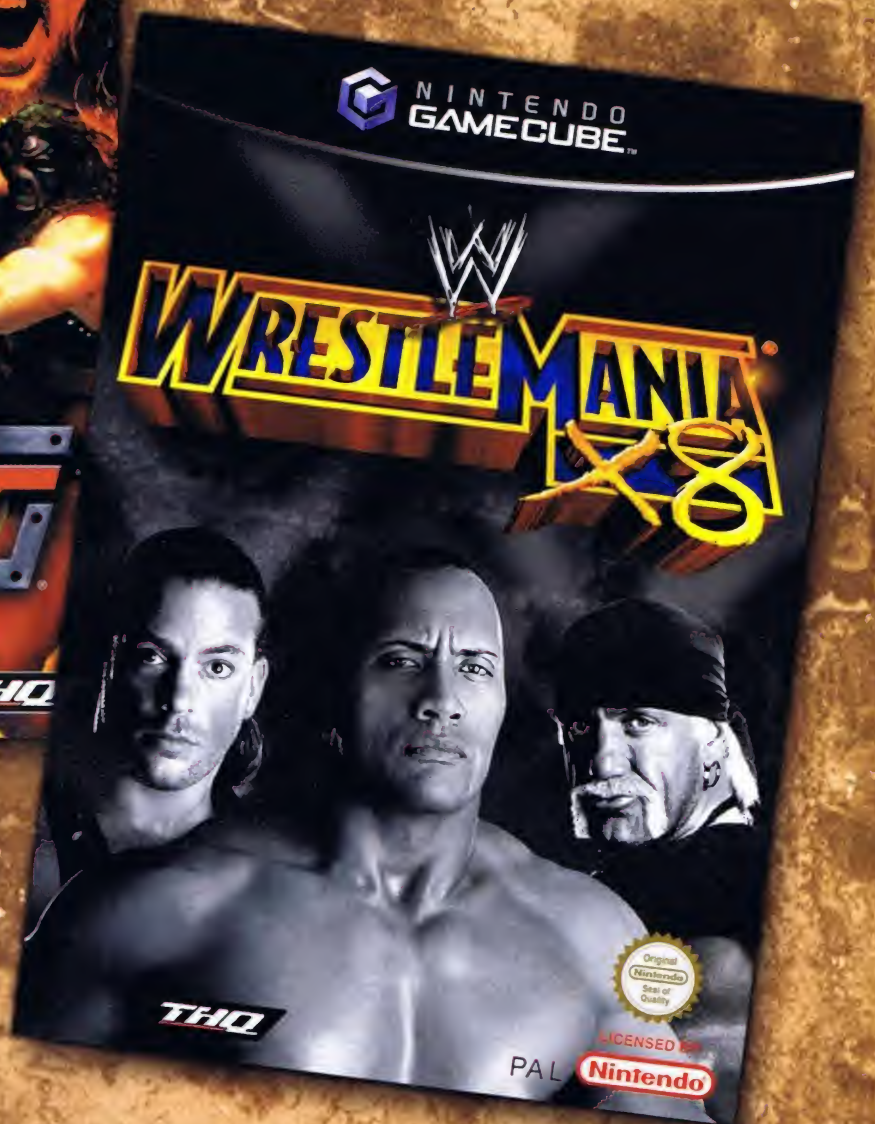
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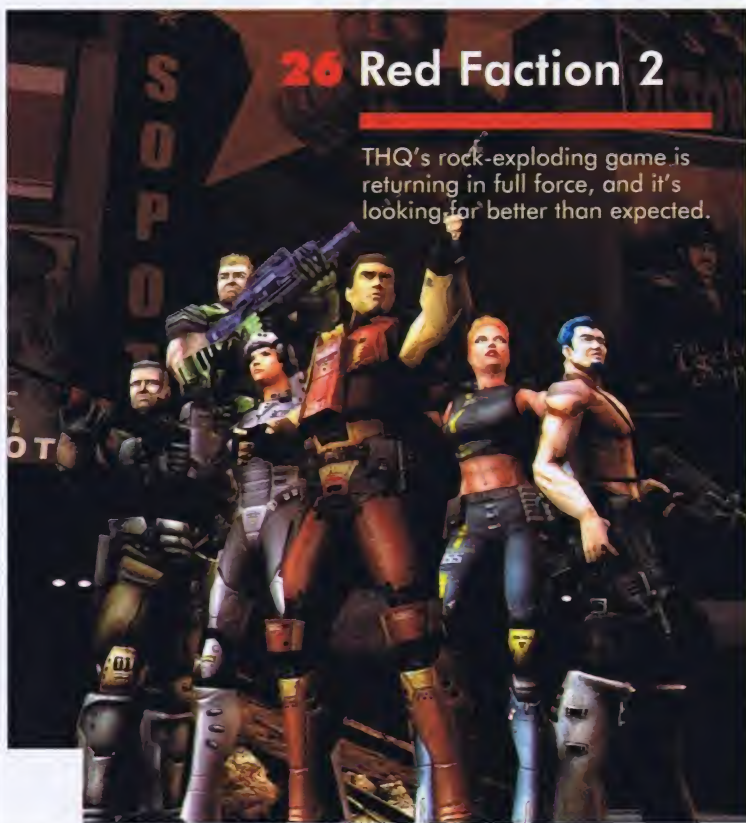


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We investigate the delights of this must-have GameCube game across eight delicious pages.

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THQ's rock-exploding game is returning in full force, and it's looking far better than expected.

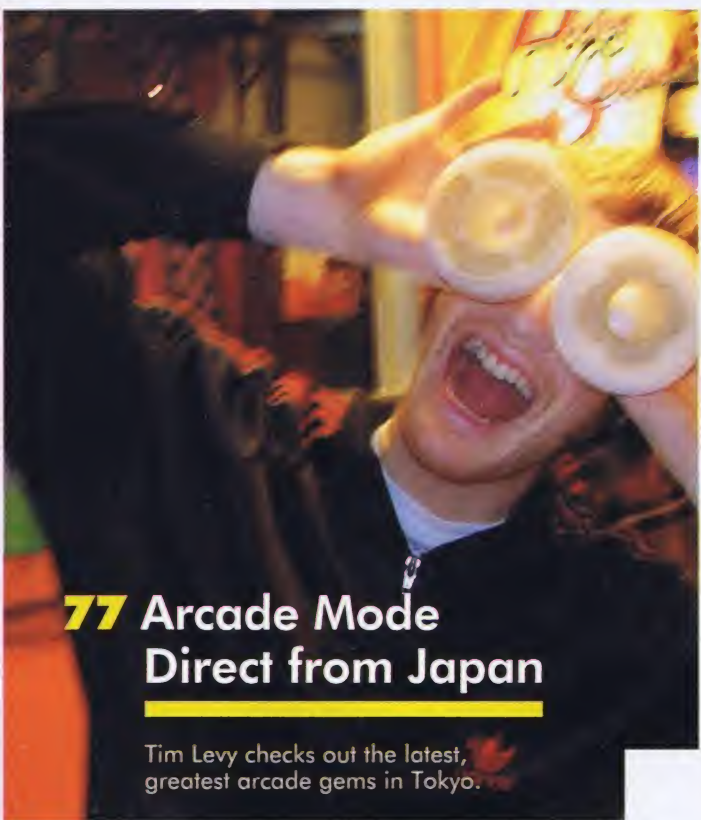


48 Game of the Month - Resident Evil GCN

You need to play this game again. Survival Horror on GameCube is frighteningly good.



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We just love giving away quality stuff!



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WRITE TO HYPER!

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EDITORIAL

»» Okay, so some of you might be asking, "Where in Hell's name is that Unreal Tournament 2003 review you promised last issue? Huh? Huh?!" Well, let us explain. You see, release dates for games are one of those great games industry mysteries. Almost every day, dates get swapped, brought forward, pushed back and generally shuffled around until various marketing types are happy (or until they change their minds the next day that is). There are occasions, however, when a game will actually slip because the developer has stumbled across a plethora of bugs in final testing and have begged their publisher for an extra week or two, or three, or four, to fix it. Either that or they've been lying about their milestone all along and the sound effects haven't even been recorded yet.

Take Duke Nukem Forever for instance. There's a game that has suffered so many slippages, the publisher will probably never release the game out of pure embarrassment for how dated it must now appear to anyone plonked in front of it. Don't worry, we're sure that won't happen with UT 2003. They're probably just tweaking it to perfection, so the Lord Seafoods of the world don't bitch and moan about the rocket jumping physics. So... in answer to your question regarding our Unreal Tournament 2003 review – well, full review next issue! (Crosses fingers)

Eliot Fish »» Editor



NEWS



IN THE NEWS: Halo 2 ■ Project Gotham Racing 2 ■ Doom II GBA ■ Dark Cloud 2 ■ High Score and more

HALO 2

Xbox fans dance in the streets

❖ In a recent announcement, Microsoft and Bungie Studios unveiled sequels to two of their biggest Xbox games — yep, Project Gotham Racing 2 and Halo 2 respectively, are coming your way.

Halo 2 continues the story of the Master Chief, who finds himself up against the Covenant once again. For the Covenant, the human victory at the ancient ring structure known as Halo was an unacceptable failure, and they're determined to not fail again. Bring it on, we say!

EVERY DROP OF POWER

"Halo 2 is a lot like Halo, only it's Halo on fire, going 130 miles per hour through a hospital zone, being chased by helicopters and ninjas," explained Jason Jones, the head of Bungie Studios, "and the ninjas are all on fire, too." Halo 2 will be powered by a brand new graphics engine that has been designed specifically for the Xbox hardware, "Our code squeezes every drop of power out of the Xbox," said Chris Butcher, one of Halo 2's engineering leads. "We're doing dynamic lighting and shadows, per-pixel everything, rendering gigantic, lush environments. The graphical features we're using are so advanced

we don't even have buzzwords for them yet." Expect to get to grips with some brand new weaponry and drive and fly some amazing new vehicles that will allow you to explore the huge new environments.

As usual, there will be a strong single-player campaign supported with split-screen multiplayer action, system link play and support for the Xbox Live online gaming service. In fact, the Xbox Live multiplayer feature could very well be the realisation of the initial Halo team-play concept from years ago when the first game was announced. "We still have the multiplayer game-types that people loved in Halo, but we're planning something special for multiplayer in Halo 2," hinted Jaime Griesemer, Halo 2's lead designer. "I don't want to ruin the surprise, but imagine the essential Halo single-player experience: pitched battles between the humans and the Covenant, massive vehicle and infantry engagements. Now imagine that every combatant is an actual person playing over Xbox Live!" We can imagine that indeed. In fact, we're ordering a full set of brand new brown undies in time for the game's 2003 release.



Yes, Halo can look better than it already does. Amazing!



❖ Halo 2 will be powered by a brand new graphics engine.

NUMBER TWOS

Holy Gotham 2, Batman!

❖ For fans of the kudos racing experience, Project Gotham Racing 2 is set to impress even more than the original did at the Xbox launch. Featuring 50 hot cars, including the new Enzo Ferrari, PGR2 will feature more international cities than in the original, as well as online play through the Xbox Live service. The environments look more photorealistic, and the cars are even



We'll forgive the yellow this time.

more sensational and subtle in their sleek racing beauty. All we need now, is confirmation on how the Xbox Live service will operate here in Australia so that we can continue to let our expectations get out of control. Now, back to dancing in the street.

CAPTION THIS!

Hey there faithful readers — think you have the wit to make the Hyper team chuckle? Then think of your best caption for this screenshot and email it to Captionthis@next.com.au with Caption This Part 35 in the Subject line.



The 3 members of the Hyper team. And their jockeys.

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DARK CHRONICLE

Dark Cloud 2 gets a title

☑ Sony is hard at work on the sequel to the world-building RPG, Dark Cloud. Now titled Dark Chronicle, the game sports a new cel-shaded style for the characters (done quite stylishly we might add – none of this “let’s chuck in cel-shading because it’s the hip new trend” stuff) and is set 100 years after the events in the first game. The main character’s name is Yuris, a boy genius who is playable along with another character, Monica, who appears to be a time-traveller who steps into Yuris’ life and gets the adventure rolling. There will also be a cast of about 8 supporting characters, every one of them voice-acted.



As far as the combat goes, Yuris is a master of handguns (gats) whilst Monica prefers attacks of a more magical nature, so we have both typical attack systems covered it seems. The main gameplay elements of Dark Cloud will return, so fans of the original can expect a more refined version of the tried and true world-building of the Georama system. A unique gaming experience to be sure.



You can tell a Wella woman by the way she cel-shades her hair.



LET'S FRAG AGAIN, LIKE WE DID LAST SUMMER...

Doom II goes handheld

☑ Activision have announced Doom II for the Game Boy Advance, featuring over 30 levels packed with 17 of the classic Doom enemies. All nine weapons will be available, just like in the PC original, including the legendary chainsaw, double barrel shotgun and BFG. Additionally, DOOM II supports co-operative play so gamers can team-up to rid the world of hellspawn, or go head-to-head with up to four other players in classic Deathmatch mode where you can pretend to be as good as Lord Seafood. Muahaha!

The game has been co-developed by id Software and Australia's own Torus Games, based down in Melbourne. So big ups to our Aussie developers. It won't be long now before we'll all be grappling with the demons in our pockets (if we're not already). Bring it on!

Doom. It's good for you.



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James Cox, Bannockburn, Vic

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Scott Stevenson, Winston Hills, NSW
Maurice Branscombe, Kieraville, NSW
Steve Milich, Oaklands Park, SA
Nathan Jolly, Bunbury, WA
James Dunn, Echuca, Vic

Hyper 105

HASBRO JORG SACUL FIGURE

Nick George, Collie, WA.

SPIDERMAN FOR PC

Shayne Spencer, Coomera, Qld
Tom Farnham, Belrose, NSW
J. Rymenas, Modbury Heights, SA
Sam Bennet, Woonona, NSW
David Ash, Daisy Hill, Qld

MYST TRILOGY FOR PC

Hilly, Mittagong, NSW
Michelle Burpee, Trott Park, SA
James Humphries, Narrogin, WA
Joanne Emery, Drycreek, SA
Paul Wilding, Engadin, NSW

OVERFLOW

Now that Neverwinter Nights is out the door, and development on Knights of the Old Republic is drawing to a close, Bioware Corp have begun work on two secret new titles. One is an original new RPG for the PC and the other is a new RPG for the Xbox based on yet another original Bioware concept.

We're hearing rumours that Nintendo will soon announce a price drop on the GameCube to coincide with the release of Super Mario Sunshine here. How does \$199 for GCN in October sound?

Enclave, the third-person action adventure from Starbreeze Studios, has gone from "Xbox exclusive" to being ported to every gaming system. Yep, you can now expect Enclave on Xbox, PS2, GameCube and PC. Expect Enclave in time for Christmas.

Hudsonsoft have announced that they will begin development on Bomberman games for all the major platforms – Xbox, PS2, GameCube, PC, GBA and even the PSone. The more Bomberman the better, we say.

Sony Japan is being sued for allegedly using images and properties of three Dutch soccer clubs without permission in This is Football 2002 for the PS2. Oops.

Squaresoft has announced a whole host of great games for the GBA! We can soon expect a game based on Chocobos, FF: Tactics and a Secret of Mana game. Even better is the announcement of Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicle for GameCube!

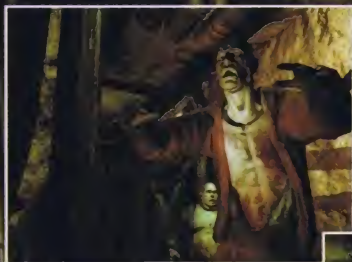


GAMECUBE SET TO ECLIPSE

Kojima gets cubed

❖ Hideo Kojima, creator of Metal Gear Solid, has announced his first Nintendo game since the NES days. In development by Konami, Hideo Kojima's GameCube game is a mysterious new title called Eclipse, about a boy who is struggling to "eclipse" his father's legacy. Almost nothing is known about the game at this stage, but it is indeed brilliant news for GameCube fans.

Meanwhile, Konami are to release The Document of Metal Gear Solid 2, an extensive behind-the-scenes look at MGS2. The DVD will also include VR Training missions to play.



HOT SCREENS!

DOOM III for PC!



GET A HIGH SCORE!

Game history tome
unleashed

❖ High Score: The Illustrated History of Electronic Games, has just been released by McGraw Hill/Osborne. The book clocks in at a whopping 328 pages and certainly grabbed our attention as soon as it landed on the Hyper HQ front desk. The book is simply packed with great photos and screenshots as well as some truly memorable videogame box art. Whilst we picked up on a few factual errors, the book is certainly worth taking a look at for the amazing collection of videogame art littered all throughout the book.

High Score is available from all good bookstores, Dymocks, Angus & Robertson, Borders etc. at the bargain price of RRP \$46.95.

But wait! Hyper has five copies of High Score to giveaway to you lot, so if you'd like to win, send us your name and address on the back of an envelope and tell us the company you released the arcade hit "Defender". Entries to High Score, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016. Good luck!



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PlayStation 2 XBOX



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HERE THEY

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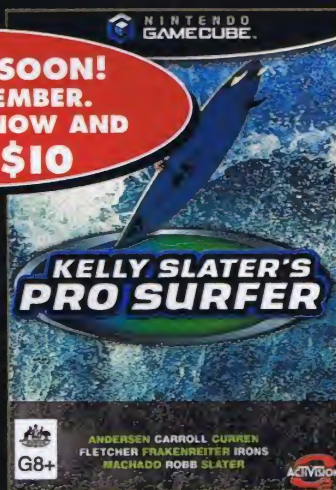
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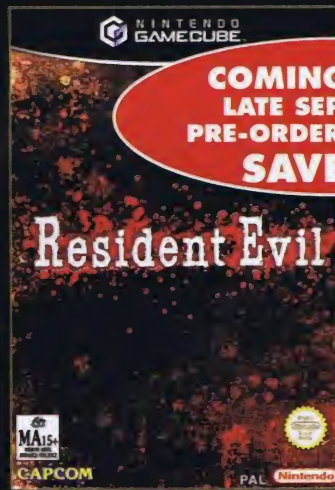
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RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC

» PS2 / GCN / XBOX UBI SOFT

When we recently dropped in at Ubi Soft to have a play of the upcoming Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc, we were blown away by just how lush and beautiful the game looks this time around. Those crazy French developers have imbued Rayman with fresh style all over again. From gorgeous lighting effects to a very nicely shaded 3D Rayman, this should have us swooning all over again for the little limbless freak.





RALLY FUSION: RACE OF CHAMPIONS

ACTIVISION

It's been a long time since we've experienced the seat-of-our-pants rally thrill of classics such as Sega Rally. As soon as we popped Rally Fusion into the Xbox, we could see the similarities to those adrenaline pumped days of old, sitting on our gaming arses in the arcade. Not only does this game look quite sensational visually, but it seems there's going to be plenty to get our teeth into when it comes to testing our driving skills.





SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE

INSIGHT

18 >> HYPER



CATEGORY: Platformer >> PLAYERS: 1 >>
PUBLISHER: Nintendo >> AVAILABLE: TBA >>

WOW-O-METER



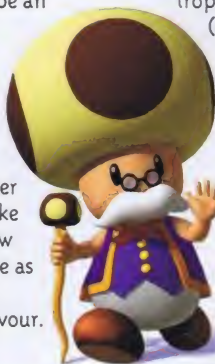
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Nintendo have done it again. It's that simple. After coming close to the perfect initial implementation of traditional platforming in a 3D world with Mario 64, Nintendo have followed it up with a game that may not be as revolutionary, but is easily as much fun to play. **CAM SHEA** takes us on a tour through Super Mario Sunshine!

Sust as Super Mario World expanded on the gameplay established in Super Mario Bros 3 through more free form mechanics and deft use of the new SNES hardware, so too is Super Mario Sunshine on GameCube an elegant expansion of Mario 64. Nintendo have clearly thought long and hard about the best way to take advantage of the extra processing power at their disposal to take the gameplay to a new level, at the same time as giving the game an identifiably Mario flavour. They've succeeded.

SLUDGE-OOZING
The basic storyline is that Mario, the sickeningly ditsy Peach and some old Toad guy, are taking a well-earned vacation after the events of Luigi's Mansion. They arrive at a tropical paradise named Isle Delfino (although it's also referred to as Dolphic Island), via a very Mardi Gras-esque pink plane. They're ready to unwind, but of course, some fiend has spoiled their plans. A watery Mario look-alike has been all over town, coating walls in graffiti and unleashing nasty sludge-oozing creatures. Worse still, he's stolen all the town's "Shines". The Shines usually reside around the town



INSIGHT
»HYPER 19



LET'S TAKE IT BACK TO THE OLD SCHOOL

»» Mario purists will love the bonus levels that are littered throughout Super Mario Sunshine. As you go through the portal, Evil Mario steals your backpack and dumps you at the start of some old school platform madness suspended in space. Generally these areas are composed of a selection of rotating platforms, dissipating blocks and just general old school trickiness. There's even the triumphant return of brick textured overhead blocks for Mario to smash – hurrah! It's during these testing sections that you'll realise just how reliant you've become on the backpack, and how naked Mario feels without it.

square, bathing the area in brilliant sunlight. Now that they're gone, Isle Delfino has been plunged into murky shadow. Mario is found guilty of the crime, due to his

»» Mario himself looks as adorable as ever. He's kitted out for vacation as well, in a short-sleeved shirt no less!

mysterious evil twin, and is ordered to clean the place up. As you may have guessed, the Shines basically replace the Stars from Mario 64. The system is very similar – there are ten or so Shines to get on each level, with most linked to a story. Unlike Mario 64, not all the Shines are available for you to go after at once – you must progress through the stories. Each level seems to have eight stories, and depending on which one you choose, the level layout often changes – there might be new tightropes, new items, new NPCs to talk to, and even new structures. The downside of this is that you're

locked into finding one specific Shine when you enter a level – unlike Mario 64 you can't go off and find another one, or decide to collect the red coins halfway

packed full of secrets, puzzles and unlockables, so not only is exploration fun but you're actively rewarded too.

BUT HOW DOES IT FEEL?

Remember how crisp and responsive Mario felt when you first took him for a test drive in Mario 64? Well, the same very much applies here, and many of Mario's moves will be familiar to Mario 64 veterans. His triple jump returns, as does his high jump – both on the A button. He can dive with the B button, and once sliding on his stomach you can get a most amusing breakdance style belly hop going. Diving from a great height into water also looks

through. The upside is that this system has allowed Nintendo to create more variety within each level through changing layouts. The main town on Isle Delfino acts much like Peach's castle in Mario 64 – a hub from which you can access all the levels. Fortunately, it's much more expansive than Peach's castle, consisting of a maze of houses and cobbled streets surrounded by beach, water and even islands. The town alone is jam-





awesome because Mario goes into a full dive.

The C-stick is once again used to rotate and zoom the camera, and you can auto switch to behind Mario

>> Mario can zoom along in water or on land with a huge spray arcing out behind him, and leap large distances.

using the L trigger, as well as go into a "look" mode using the Y button. Butt stomping is also back and assigned to the L trigger. About the only move missing from Mario 64 is the long jump. Perhaps Mario's coolest new move is the spinning jump which is executed by doing a full circle on the analogue stick and hitting the A button. Mario can also climb trees now (and stylishly slide back down them), as well as hang from and shimmy along ledges. Many areas in the game are littered with tightropes too, and yes, Mario can walk along them. He can even bounce on them, and by timing your button presses well you can get

insane air jumping from tightropes. The tightrope mechanics are very well implemented and very reliable, and it's very cool jumping from rope to rope. Oh, and we can't forget to

mention how brilliant wall jumping is in this game. It's much easier than it was in Mario 64 and integral to many of the level layouts.

So those are the basic moves. But what about this new fangled device on Mario's back? Let us introduce you to Flood (or Flash Liquidiser Overdousing Device for short... so yes, it should be FLOOD), Mario's hydro-powered water pump, and the device that completely changes the nature of Super Mario Sunshine's gameplay. According to the game, Flood was designed by Gadd

Science Inc (presumably Professor E. Gadd, also the creator of Luigi's ghost-busting kit in Luigi's Mansion) and is actually imbued with an AI personality so it can talk to Mario and offer him tips. Unfortunately, it's pretty meek and nerdy, which is a shame because we were hoping for some attitude and wisecracks ala Kazooie. Fortunately, Flood's abilities make up for its lack of a sass mouth.

DRIVE-BY SPRAYINGS

For the first third of the game or so, Mario has two different spray modes for Flood, and you can use them with the R trigger



IT'S A-ME... YOSHI!

>> Nintendo have finally brought Yoshi into 3D, and as you'd expect he's still crazy about fruit, and even has a juice meter that gradually empties, requiring regular fruit injections to top it up. Yoshi also changes colour depending on which fruit he eats. Now that you've got Yoshi in 3D, his tongue is even cooler than before, darting all over the place in search of stuff to eat. Yoshi comes equipped with his ability to jump then run in the air to gain extra height – just like in Yoshi's Island. And Mario's spin jump is hyper charged when you're on Yoshi.



SETTING THE VIBE PERFECTLY

>> The music in the game is exactly as you'd expect – classic Mario tunes all rendered in delightfully primitive sounding MIDI arrangements. There are old-school Mario samples littered throughout the game, as well as remixes of tunes from the previous games. Many of the new songs are great too, including a very Klonoa-esque arrangement in Mare Bay, and some funky finger clicking and a capella during bonus levels. And of course, an extra percussive/bongo layer comes in whenever you're riding Yoshi. Brilliant.

and swap between them with the X button. The default mode is what we refer to as the "bird drinking the water" mode. This fires a single stream of water over Mario's head. This is the primary mode you'll be using to dispose of graffiti, sludge and for precision aiming tasks. The analogue is used well in this mode – if you click the trigger all the way in Mario will stay on the spot, allowing you to use the analogue stick to aim the stream. If you press it halfway in you'll be able to run and spray at the same time. With this mode equipped you're also able to strafe (hold down L), backflip (loose a quick burst of water at the same time as hitting jump and back on the analogue stick), and spray water in all directions by holding down R and doing a spin jump.

The other mode Mario has available from the start has twin water jets pointing at the ground,

allowing him to hover. This is definitely the "money shot" mode, as the ability to hover around radically transforms the gameplay and looks hella cool to boot. There are two other modes that Mario can unlock further into the game. You can only have two equipped at once, so switching to either of these drops the hover ability. One gives Mario an explosive rocket jump, and is very handy for reaching otherwise inaccessible heights. The other turns Flood into a Jet Ski. Mario can zoom along in water or on land with a huge spray arcing out behind him, and leap large distances thanks to the speed of this part.

It's the hover mode that you'll be using for most of the game however; with the other extra modes feeling more like novelties that you'll use occasionally for specific goals. The hoverpack, however, really helps make Mario Sunshine much more free form than Mario 64 – we're completely in love with the damn thing! Of course, you can't hover forever – you can only spray for a few seconds before losing pressure. Similarly, Flood has a finite, but generous store of water, and can be recharged by pressing R when you're in any kind of contact with water – not hard in a game set on an island chain... although you sometimes have to be careful to conserve water when exploring high up in levels.

Mario nuts should bear in mind, however, that the introduction of the water pack is at the expense of bonuses like the caps from previous Mario games. It would have





Waves lapping at the shore look unbelievable, polluted water has a rainbow coloured oil film on the surface, and the list goes on.

been easy for Nintendo to stick to the old tried and true system, but we're really glad they didn't.

MARIO LOVES TO SPRAY PEACH...

The water-spraying theme really opens up some cool new gameplay variations in Super Mario Sunshine. Hop on a lily or a boat, for instance, and use the spray to push your craft through the water. Hang from a tightrope and use the pressure from the spray to swing Mario around and around the rope until flinging him off up into the air. Water plants on the beach for explosive growth. Water windows in the village for coins. Water Peach's dress for a bit of wet princess action. You get the idea — water is the life force of this game. Indeed, one of our concerns leading up to this game's release

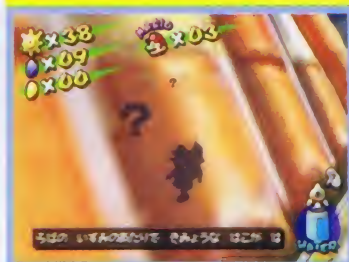
was that it seemed as though a lot of the gameplay revolved around cleaning up graffiti. Fortunately, this is not the case. The graffiti is mostly there as a bonus item system — a way to get various coins and an incentive to explore levels fully. There's also the sludge factor, but again, this is more of a pretty distraction than anything else. More often than not you don't have to clean it up, merely stop the source. What we're trying to say here is that Nintendo have implemented this interesting shift in Mario gameplay beautifully. The water theme and the

various spray modes have simply been used as tools to make the gameplay more free form and the challenges more varied. There's still the rock solid Mario 64 gameplay as a foundation, but with a whole host of new levels on top.

Another hugely impressive element in Super Mario Sunshine are the boss battles — this is definitely a return to old-school form, with a large number of creative, challenging and engaging bosses to take on. Just wait until you see the manta ray shadow boss that divides and divides into more and more manta rays — all leaving behind trippy coloured sludge trails. Mmm... sweet.

THE SUN SHINES OUT OF THIS GAME'S...

Backing up the gameplay mechanics and variety in challenges is some very solid level design. Perhaps the most significant thing about the selection of levels is that they are a bit of a departure



MECHANICS ANNOY THE PLUMBER

The camera mechanics are the most frustrating problem in Super Mario Sunshine. It's somewhat ironic that the sequel to the game that defined how a camera system should work for a 3D game has such issues, but we suppose it's inevitable given the huge levels. You can zoom the camera much further out than in Mario 64 which is pretty cool, but the bottomline here is that you will be nursing the perspective constantly with the C stick and L trigger.



Super Mario Sunshine truly takes the franchise to new heights, delivering gameplay that is familiar but at the same time so much more expansive.

SLOWDOWN GET

Levels range from stunning to above-average in terms of looks.

Geometrically the levels are quite simple, and some of the texture work is quite low res. That said, the game is going for a paintbrush design aesthetic and in this sense largely succeeds. Some characters even look a little cel-shaded, but it all fits the tropical theme. Draw distance is also outstanding, as are the heat haze effects.

However, unlike Mario 64, it's obvious that Nintendo didn't have the time to polish this game to the fine sheen that many of us expected. The

biggest problem is probably the semi-regular slowdown in some levels. It rarely affects the gameplay,

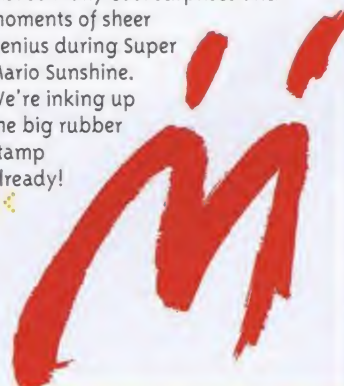
but is very surprising coming from Nintendo, who have always been the masters of their own hardware. There are other little issues too, such as glitches — like the one we found on one of the pirate ships where you can fall right through solid wood. The swimming mechanics are also rather poor — and completely different from Mario 64. The implementation feels clumsy and it's odd that Nintendo changed the mechanics, as they were spot on in the last game.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:
A more consistent frame rate.



Nintendo definitely could have done with a few more months to polish this masterpiece, but realistically, they needed to get this game out on the market sooner rather than later. Since its release in Japan, I guess we can hope that a few of the small niggling problems are looked at before the PAL release.

Despite these small issues, Super Mario Sunshine truly takes the franchise to new heights, delivering gameplay that is familiar but at the same time so much more expansive and free form than before. There are just so many cool surprises and moments of sheer genius during Super Mario Sunshine. We're inking up the big rubber stamp already!



ENGLISH TRANSLATION GET!

>> "Shine Get!" will be modified for Western release to simply "Shine!". D'oh... that sucks. References to Dolphic Island have also been removed, replaced by Isle Delfino.



RED FACTION 2

PS2

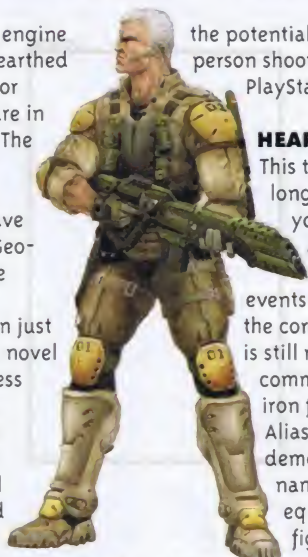
CATEGORY: First Person Shooter >> **PLAYERS:** 1-4 >> **PUBLISHER:** THQ >> **AVAILABLE:** November >>

WOW-O-METER



Did you "dig" the last game too?

The Geo-Mod engine has been unearthed once again for another wild adventure in de-formable terrain. The difference this time around, is that developer Volition have made the use of the Geo-Mod technology more purposeful in the sequel to Red Faction feels more thoughtful this time around, and at this stage, it has



the potential to claim the first person shooter crown on the PlayStation 2.

HEARTY-LOOKING

This time around, we're no longer on Mars — in fact, you're a new character altogether. Five years have passed since the events in Red Faction, but the corrupt dictator, Sopot, is still ruling the commonwealth with an iron fist. Your name is Alias, and you are a demolitions expert and nano-technology equipped soldier, fighting to defend your

country. In fact, you won't be able to rest until you overthrow Sopot and free the planet from oppression. Along with five teammates, it'll be wall-exploding, sniper-shooting, grenade-lobbing, double-pistol poppin' action all the way.

It appears that much of the development time on Red Faction 2 has been spent playing the cream of the crop in the FPS genre. There are shades of Metal Gear Solid 2, Timesplitters, Halo and Deus Ex in this hearty-looking sequel. Every aspect of the game seems to have gone under the microscope and been tweaked to transform the Red Faction universe into a far more gritty, believable and interactive world. Environments now appear to be far more functional, with apparent real-world logic to the design and layout of the virtual man-made architecture. There is

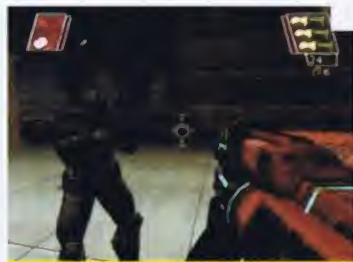
also far more natural atmosphere, with ferocious weather and environmental effects to set the mood and suck you into the story.

Many players of Red Faction complained that too much of the action took place in drab rocky tunnels and dark caverns, and they'd be right. Thankfully, Volition have realised that variety is the key, and it seems that more of your adventure this time around will take you through interesting locations full of imaginative architecture designed to make the game not only more fun to play, but more fun to explore and experiment with. Shooting a railing with your rocket launcher could result in a walkway collapsing, allowing you to now use the collapsed section as a ramp up to a previously inaccessible area. Likewise, if you fire your weapons near some heavily powered machinery, it's more likely to explode and take out half the room rather than simply get a few burn marks.



INSIGHT

26 >> HYPER



Let's tunnel to China.



Your shoelaces are loose, I promise.



Get out of my way, moron!



Blau factor indeed.



This pistol ain't no good for diggin'!



That's computer rage for ya.

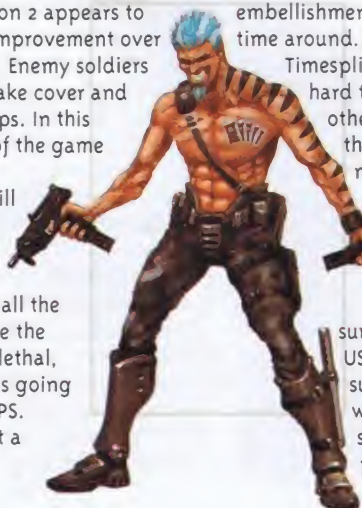


Man, check out my new boombox.

TAKE COVER AND ATTACK

Some of the high-tech weaponry includes pistols and uzis (which you can wield in both hands, John Woo style), the nanotech grenade launcher, high powered machine guns including the CAR-72 Military Assault Rifle, a rocket launcher, the traditional shotgun and more. You can also fling grenades with the simple click of the left analogue stick, and lay traps for the unsuspecting enemy AI. In fact the AI in Red Faction 2 appears to be a marked improvement over the first game. Enemy soldiers strategically take cover and attack in groups. In this early version of the game we previewed from, the AI still needed some work, but if they manage to smooth out all the bugs and make the enemies truly lethal, Red Faction 2 is going to be a killer FPS.

If taking out a plethora of



Shooting a railing with your rocket launcher could result in a walkway collapsing, allowing you to now use the collapsed section as a ramp.

mindless drones doesn't interest you, then jumping in for some four-player splitscreen multiplayer might just get your attention. Four-player play in Red Faction 2 is surprisingly smooth, considering the embellishments to the engine this time around. As long as

Timesplitters 2 doesn't rock so hard that we forget any other PS2 games exist, then Red Faction 2 just might become a bit of a deathmatch favourite for the console. Red Faction 2 will also,

surprisingly, come with USB keyboard and mouse support for those of you who still hate playing shooters with a control pad. Nice to see that

Volition want to cater for players of all styles. At this stage of the game, we're hoping that some of the smaller AI bugs get ironed out, and that the story turns out to be a compelling one, and then Red Faction 2 will be right up there as a must-buy title for the PlayStation 2. Everyone cross their fingers. <<

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

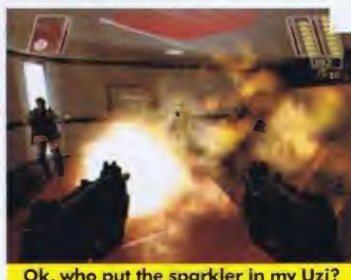
Imaginative boss fights will hopefully separate Red Faction 2 from the other multitude of competent first person shooters on the PS2 console.



Dance for me... or die!



My Digger 2000 has overheated!



Ok, who put the sparkler in my Uzi?



Impossible to caption, more like...

IMPOSSIBLE CREATURES



CATEGORY: RTS >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >>
 PUBLISHER: Microsoft >> AVAILABLE: Late 2002 >>

WOW-O-METER



Impossible Creatures is set in 1937 on a chain of small islands in the South Pacific, in a very pulp science context. An enigmatic scientist named Dr Eric Chanikov has spent the last 30 years working on new technology that can splice two animals together to take the best elements of both and create an all new creature. Chanikov is actually an altruistic scientist, his final goal for the emerging technology is the betterment of mankind – curing the ravages of age and disease. However, his benefactor for all this research is a wealthy American industrialist by the name of H.E. Pennypacker... err, sorry, Upton Julius. As the potential of the new technology is realised,

Julius's motivations become more and more sinister. Enter Rex Chance, down on his luck adventurer and long lost son of Chanikov. He arrives on the island to catch up with his dear old dad, and discovers some rather freaky stuff going on.

HE'S BEEN LIVING IN AN UPTON WORLD...

Coming from Alex Garden and Relic (the team behind seminal classic Homeworld), Impossible Creatures is an interesting and fun take on the real-time strategy genre.

The single player game is very story driven and stylised in nature. You'll be working your way through different terrain and facing off against a number of Upton's wacky

henchmen, including thug whaler Whitey Hooten, weird-ass ornithologist Velika La Pette, and twisted vet Dr. Otis Ganglion. Like any RTS, collecting resources – coal and electricity, is an important building block in Impossible Creatures' gameplay. It allows you to build structures, then create hybrid units. There are five tech levels to climb through, allowing you to augment your creatures' abilities. Of course, you have to capture each creature in the wild to have access to its DNA. Thus, the road to really powerful creatures will be a long one, with plenty of collecting along the way.

The game will ship with 50 base

animals, including: zebra, duck, lemming, ant, scorpion, gorilla, great white shark, hammerhead shark, hyena, armadillo, killer whale, piranha, eagle, komodo dragon, lobster, lion, tiger, vulture, hippo, chameleon, beaver, giraffe, rhinoceros, baboon and praying mantis. In other words, a hugely varied range of DNA! Plus, Relic will be releasing one new creature a month for

download on the net after the game ships. Each animal is rated in several categories, including health, endurance, damage and speed, and will often have a unique special ability. The skunk, for instance, has a stink cloud attack.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:
 How about we just go back to calling it Sigma?!

IF I COULD TALK TO THE ANIMALS...

It's in the army builder that you actually get the chance to try combining all your available animals. This is completely surreal fun. Animals are broken up into six sections – front legs, hind legs, torso, tail, wings and head. You can combine any of these elements from

INSIGHT

28 >> HYPER



Soon I'll have my army of seafood!



I think the Gorillobster blew up.



For I am the lord of all crustaceans!



A display of animal magnetism.



Kill them, my Spidillerwhale!



"Like a tiiger!"

➤➤ You can come up with a creature that can dig through the ground and launch surprise attacks on the enemy.

one animal with the complementary elements of any other. The possible combinations from mixing animals are absolutely huge, and can lead to completely different attributes. For instance, the lemming is a very weak animal, but through strategic combination with a more powerful animal, you can come up with a creature that can dig through the ground and launch surprise attacks on the enemy.

Once you've got the basics down, Impossible Creatures will be a multiplayer title through and through. Imagine how varied each and every battle will be when each side can custom design their own units and armies, from literally tens of thousands of possible permutations, each with their own advantages, disadvantages and build requirements. A multiplayer game of Impossible Creatures has been designed to take much less time

to complete than a normal RTS. In the space of a normal game of AOEs, for instance, you could play several games of Impossible Creatures, honing your army and units after each round (you'll get a detailed breakdown on how each creature performed). You can only use nine different units to constitute your army, so choosing carefully will be very important. The battle really will be to see who can adapt to changing strategies and tactics fastest. It's going to be a wild ride! <<<



Onward my Elephanurtle!



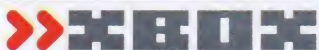
POSSIBLE PERMUTATIONS

➤➤ For a game with so many possible creature permutations, it's amazing how slick they all look. This is thanks to the custom combiner engine developed by Relic specifically for the task. Let's say you decide to combine a gorilla with a scorpion. The combiner's job is to take these two very different animals, along with your parameters (e.g. if you want the head and tail of the scorpion on the body of the gorilla) and create a new, unique animal. The combiner treats the process as combining a set of limbs from one input with another. Each animal comes with information about each individual limb, and what geometry, textures and skeletal system it is made up of. The process is broken up into a number of stages. First a new skeleton using the input parts is

created, then the geometry for the new creature is determined and placed over the skeleton. After this the surface textures are blended and applied to the new form. Of course, making a freakish new hybrid creature look plausible and making it move appropriately are two different things. For new animations, the individual animations for each creature are blended on a limb by limb basis to create new movements. Also playing a role is the custom inverse kinetics program that Relic designed. This adjusts leg lengths and the like to give the new creature the correct look of walking on even ground. The results are amazing, and you'll probably spend a lot of time in the army builder mucking around and cracking up at some of the crazy results you can get.



PANZER DRAGOON ORTA



CATEGORY: Shooter >> PLAYERS: 1 >>
 PUBLISHER: Sega >> AVAILABLE: November

WOW-O-METER



I kay, so "Panzer" means a kind of tank or armoured vehicle and "Dragoon" is a word sometimes used to mean dragon, but what the hell is an "Orta"? We did some research, and the best we could come up with is that it's an acronym for the Ohio Retired Teachers Association, but that can't be right... or could it? "Look out! You've got an algebra coach on your tail! He's getting out his protractor! Oh no, you're done for!!" Those crazy guys at Sega might be onto something. Whatever "Orta" means, it at least represents that this is a sequel to the old Panzer Dragoon Saturn titles (which you can learn more about on page 82), so maybe that's all you need to know...

STOP DRAGOON MY HEART AROUND

Dressed up to look like a fantasy adventure, Panzer Dragoon Orta is very much an old-school style shooter. Your dragon is on rails (call the RSPCA!) speeding you through canyons and ancient ruins, with the bulk of the gameplay simply requiring you to pass your crosshair over the countless enemies and blast them to pieces. If you've never played the original, then think of recent games such as Rez on the PlayStation 2, and you might get an idea of the style of shooter we're dealing with.

You have a small degree of control over your dragon in the environment

— you can speed it up or slow it down, and move around a bit to avoid oncoming obstacles or position yourself for an attack. The triggers on the control pad allow you to aim off to either side, and even directly behind you where you'll often find a squadron of enemies zeroing in for the kill. The gameplay is, as a result, utterly hectic most of the time, as you can lock on to multiple targets at once before you fire off your weapon. You also have a classic blitz bomb attack that will obliterate everything on the screen when you find yourself in a real pickle.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:
 A much lengthier game than its "gone in 60 seconds" predecessors.

YOU REALLY ORTA TRY IT

This is deceptively simple shoot 'em up action. At first you might think there's not much to it, but soon the game becomes an addiction and you're having "just one more go". Bosses are relentless and require not only a fair bit of co-ordination and some hot reflexes, but a good dose of strategic thinking, as you can sometimes attack from a variety of



"Fly my pretties!"



Help, they're bombing Hyper HQ!

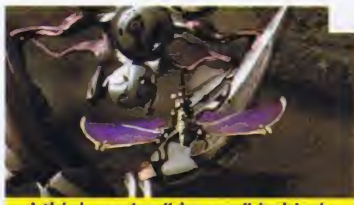


Oh I thought this was Panzer Front.

angles and there's the good old "weak spot" to hunt for.

The Sega development team have managed to squeeze quite an audio/visual feast out of the Xbox for this one. The soundtrack is particularly odd, sounding more like new age ambience or a melancholy RPG rather than the adrenaline pumped shooter that it is, which gives the game its own unique feel. The atmosphere also translates over into the visuals with a series of incredible looking levels featuring all manner of gorgeous graphical effects and surreal environments.

It could be said that Panzer Dragoon Orta is a bit of an acquired taste. But once you're hooked, you're hooked. <<<



I think you're "dragon" behind.



Hey, are you an Orta?



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BLADE II

WOW-O-METER



XBOX PS2 CATEGORY: Action >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Activision >> AVAILABLE: Late September

In the wake of all the vampire slaying that's been going on in Hyper headquarters (Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Hunter: The Reckoning), Blade II seemed to slot right in to our limb-hacking, head-lobbing, undead-whacking frame of mind. If you haven't seen the film, then let us put it this way — Blade is a character (based on the Marvel comic) known as a Daywalker — he's half-vampire, but more like the Terminator, Buffy and Bruce Lee all rolled into one (with a bit of a black leather fetish).

VIOLENT, RELENTLESS

Whilst his original job was dispatching vampires, there is now an even more dangerous threat — Reapers. As a result, Blade has had to ally with the Vampires to rid the place of the deadly Reapers who are out to suck everyone dry. Perfect videogame

material, really. Surprisingly though, this game is set after the events of the movie, and now Blade's big problem is a "Super" Reaper. Hmmm.

Blade II is primarily a third-person beat 'em up. But unlike Buffy the Vampire Slayer on Xbox where you tend to face off against vamps one-on-one, Blade II is more a chaotic action-fest, with Blade needing to carve through hordes of bad guys and bad girls at once. As a result, there's a larger selection of weaponry, and a few more scripted sequences that set up some nice set-piece battles. The developer of Blade II is Mucky Foot, the same folks who brought us Urban Chaos.

When you begin a mission, you're taken to the weapon select screen, allowing you to choose your tools of torture. There are only a

certain number of slots, so you have to make a choice between filling them up with a large weapon like the shotgun, or taking some smaller useful items.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE: More movie stars donate their time to putting their voices into games based on their films.

SASHIMI CHEF

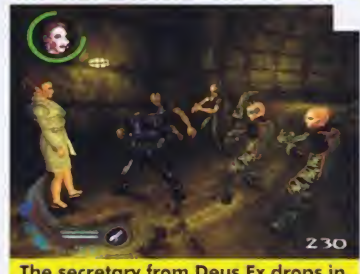
As you fight, you slowly build up your bloodlust. When you reach a certain point, Blade can whip out his sword and go on a bit of a sashimi chef rampage. Because Blade is such a multi-skilled chap, you can wield a gun in one hand, and still send a karate kick to your opponent's head in the opposite direction, thanks to the unique control system. You can move in one direction and attack in any other direction with the buttons on the pad. Learning how to combine your skills and juggle between weapons and attacks is a necessary part of dealing with so many opponents at once. As you'd expect, Blade II has a whole bunch of gruesome finishing moves for Blade to perform with each of his different weapons, so you could say



Anyone for California rolls?



Hobbit vampires, I hate those guys.

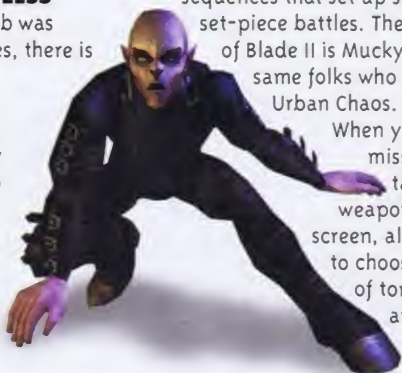


The secretary from Deus Ex drops in.

it captures the spirit of the film.

Mucky Foot have done a great job with the visuals too. All the characters models look very good, there is some fine texturing across the environments, and the animation is smooth and flowing, with the fights playing out quite dynamically.

All up, you could say Blade II is bloody, violent, relentless and quite a bit of fun. ☺☺



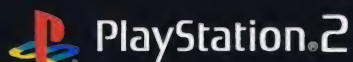


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Who cares about jagged anymore?! Woot!



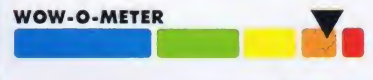
BURNOUT 2

CATEGORY: Arcade racing >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Acclaim >> AVAILABLE: October



Burnout rocked. It redefined arcade racing for this generation of machines with a winning combination of visual muscle and good design. Burnout 2 is on its way and we recently had a chance to play an alpha build, which consisted of three courses, a few modes and a whole host of cars. Perhaps the most interesting new mode is Pursuit, where you take control of a cop car and must chase down other racers.

This is a blast in split-screen. As impressive as the original game looked, Burnout 2 is even better. The damage modeling in particular is nothing short of amazing, and leaves the crashes in the original looking positively primitive. The new high poly car models crumple like you wouldn't believe and after a nasty head-on, you'll often see both your front wheels wobbling off down the road. Handling seems even more arcadey this time around, and powersliding feels much tighter. The Burnout meter has also been tweaked and can be used more strategically now. We're hoping that Criterion will also ditch the traffic scripting and make the competitor AI a little more believable this time around. Going to be huge!



INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB

CATEGORY: Action/adventure >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: LucasArts >> AVAILABLE: Early 2003



WOW-O-METER

It's about time we had an Indy adventure to sink our teeth into, and given that The Emperor's Tomb is being developed in conjunction with The Collective (makers of the damn fine Buffy game on Xbox), this game holds great promise. In fact, LucasArts are licensing The Collective's proprietary 3D engine, which seems like an ideal fit for the license. What else The Collective are bringing to the table we're not sure, but the idea of an Indy game with the kind of freeform fighting mechanics that Buffy had makes us very excited indeed. It's looking likely too, with Indy packing versatile hand to hand

abilities, not to mention an assortment of weapons to pick up. And let's not forget his trusty whip, the ideal device for swinging across chasms or disarming foes. The Emperor's Tomb is set in 1935, prior to WWII and before *Indiana Jones and the Temple Of Doom*. This time Indy is going up against the Black Dragon Triad and the nazis in a race to retrieve the keys to open the crypt of China's first emperor, where it's rumoured a black pearl that gives its owner the power to mold minds lies. If LucasArts can nail the balance between adventuring, fisticuffs and humour, Lara Croft is a goner.



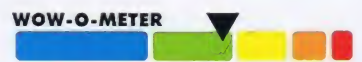
That would explain the chest pain I'm having.

PILLAGE

CATEGORY: Action/strategy >> PLAYERS: TBA >> PUBLISHER: TBA >> AVAILABLE: 2003

Wetrix was quite an innovative and well designed puzzle game, so it's no wonder that Zed Two's next project, Pillage, is looking very cool indeed. The game is set in a world where a race of despotic creatures have ruled over the indigenous people for years, reducing them to simpleton slaves. Enter Low and his sister Pepper, who recruit a band of hardened warriors with a view to reclaiming the land and freedom that was once theirs. This translates to a third person action strategy game with a twist - turn based gameplay. Each side has a team

made up of uniquely skilled members and must take it in turns to navigate the landscape, pick up weapons and attempt to do as much damage as possible. The environments are fully destructible and quite open, plus enemies have unique line of sight AI so hopefully they won't cheat too much. All up, this sounds very much like Hogs Of War, a game that tried to take the Worms concept into 3D but didn't quite get there. If Zed Two can pull it off, Pillage could beat Worms 3D to the punch.



"Eidos Interactive, I hate those guys..."

INSIGHT

34 >> HYPER



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HAAROWA

"Kill the DJ, kill the DJ, kill the DJ..."

Technics
Technics



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» The M3D uses the same inner workings as the MK2, but it's been further re-engineered for smoother, non-stop performance.

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- Unwavering quartz DD accuracy: wow & flutter 0.01% WRMS, rumble -78dB (DIN B)
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- Precision molded aluminum diecast cabinet and heavy rubber base material helps absorb unwanted vibration
- Highly sensitive low-mass tonearm with gimbal suspension
- Helicoid tonearm height adjustment
- Pop-up stylus illumination
- Technics slip mat is included with the SL-1200M3D

WARRAZ



TECHNICS SL-1200 M3D TURNTABLE QUARTZ SYNTHESIZER DIRECT DRIVE TURNTABLE

Panasonic/Technics

Price: \$1199 each • **Available:** Now

» Here at Hyper, we have a serious soft spot for vinyl and spinning records. So what better way to celebrate than to get our hands on the latest model Technics 1200s and give them a spin. As far as we're concerned, DJing has a lot in common with gaming. Both pastimes revolve around strategic and aesthetic interaction with a virtual environment, whether it be visual or aural. Both pastimes also demand practice, dexterity, style and skill in order to be world class. And most importantly, both pastimes are a whole lot of fun.

HIGHLY TUNED

The Technics sl-1200 M3D is the perfect example of a highly tuned piece of electronic gadgetry that doesn't have to be re-invented to feel cutting edge. While samplers, effects boxes and digital mixing tools have earned their place in the DJ booth nothing brings a sense of awe and wonder to the eyes more than 2 spinning wheels of steel. Incredibly enough something that looks as it did almost 30 years ago doesn't seem dated whatsoever in 2002. After all, it's the instant pickup and utter reliability and durability that has always been the 1200's strength — features that Technics nailed with the first model in the early 70s.

When the engineers at Technics decided to add improvements to the design of the sl-1200 MK2 we're sure they asked DJs worldwide what they wanted.

While Vestax were pushing the envelope with a digital display, joystick pitch bending and reverse capabilities, what could Technics do to keep their dominant position? Tweak what they already had. And that's what they did. There's

nothing that will blow you away about the sl-1200 M3D — on the surface it's pretty much the same. The most notable changes would be the new continuous pitch control — no more quartz click at 0, and the recessed power control — no more accidental spin downs. Very simple tweaks but relevant to DJs worldwide. Something else DJs will see the value in is the inclusion of a 5 gram weight which screws directly into the headshell of the cartridge. So we can finally say goodbye to blue tack and pennies to keep that needle locked in the groove — thanks Technics.

So is this a great product? Does it deserve a 10/10? 5 Stars? A thumbs up? Simple answers: Yes, 10, 5 stars, and thumbs up.

FINAL SCRATCH

Stanton Magnetics

Price: RRP US\$799

» A few issues ago we mentioned Final Scratch in our links section. In case you don't remember, Final Scratch is a revolutionary software/hardware solution that enables you to mix digital music (mp3s etc) on standard turntables. It's an amazing concept and represents a huge revolution in the world of DJing. What's so appealing is that Final Scratch brings all the advantages of digital technology, while still keeping the analogue sensibilities and aesthetics that are so integral to DJing as an artform.

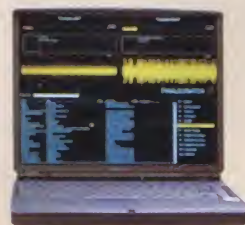


ENORMOUS ARCHIVE

Now that Final Scratch is out at retailers around the world, feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The beauty of Final Scratch is that the feel of mixing doesn't change — hip hop DJs can still scratch and cut with the same precision as before, but suddenly you have amazing versatility with what you play. With enough storage space you can have an enormous archive of music at your fingertips. And forget about pressing promo tracks to acetate — just save it to your hard drive!

So what do you get in the Final Scratch package? Well, it comes with three special time-coded vinyl records, the ScratchAmp which connects to your turntable/mixer setup and the software for your laptop/PC. The Final Scratch team decided long ago that a completely stable OS would be needed to run the software properly, so Windows is not supported. Heheh. Instead, the software CD will guide you through creating a Linux partition, and you can just boot into that when you want to use Final Scratch. There will also be an OS X version of the software for Mac users out towards the end of the year.

We'll try and do a full review of Final Scratch in a couple of issues time — it's just too huge not to! If you're interested in picking up a kit, the Australian distributor is Jands out at Mascot in NSW, so give them a call on (02) 9582 0909. Or check out www.finalscratch.com.



Hey hold on, who's the honky...?!



HARDWARE

360 MODENA FORCE GT RACING WHEEL

Thrustmaster

For: PS2 • Price: \$149 • Available: September 2002

Well, a 180 wheel would be pretty useless!

❖ The 360 Modena Force GT is the latest wheel out of the Thrustmaster stables. What's different about it? Well most importantly it's the only wheel on the market that is 100% compatible with all racing games on PS2 and PSone. It's also quite good value for money considering you get full force feedback. The wheel comes with all the features you'd expect — decent

feeling pedals, D-pad and standard buttons on the face of the wheel, four levers underneath the wheel for changing gears and progressive accelerating/braking, and a dial to switch between the three degrees of force feedback — No Vibration, Vibration and Force Effects. It largely comes down to individual preference whether these modes will actually contribute to the experience or not, and we should warn you, this wheel is rather loud. The Modena also comes with handy leg grips, so using the wheel while sitting on the couch is finally viable. Definitely worth a look for PS2 racing fans. We really wish that Namco would bring back the original Negcon one of these days though...



THRUSTMASTER 5.4 INCH LCD MONITOR

Thrustmaster

Price: \$299 • Available: Now

❖ LCD console add-ons seem to be all the rage these days, and the latest one to hit the streets is a 5.4-inch model for the GameCube from Thrustmaster. In terms of aesthetics, Thrustmaster's screen looks quite good, and is resplendent in GameCube purple. So watch out if you've bought a black machine! The screen slots neatly into the handle at the back of your GameCube, which is somewhat ironic, because it makes your GCN simultaneously more portable and less portable (you can't carry it any more!). Much like Sony's PSone screen it also folds down onto the console for maximum safety and portability. The unit and screen itself are both slightly larger than Sony's PSone model, but the difference is mostly negligible. Where the Thrustmaster screen does come out in front though, is in features. In addition to two headphone jacks, adjustable volume and brightness, an included car power adapter, and auto PAL/NTSC, is the extra AV input. This allows you to connect other sources, such as a VCR



or PS2 to the screen. Unfortunately, however, Thrustmaster's LCD screen loses out to Sony's PSone LCD in terms of image clarity, with games looking a little grainy. It's also very expensive, clocking in at about \$300. But hey, this is the only way you're going to be able to play Mario Sunshine in the car on that long road trip.



Just strap it to your face for full immersion.

SEGA

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Hitmaker

XBOX

Be the king of the road, footpaths, escalators, malls, city parks...



You're the wildest, craziest cabbie that's ever hit the road. Go downtown to the glamorous Glitter Oasis and race down frantic Las Vegas styled streets, lined with the craziest passengers you've ever met. Drive by day and all through the night, on road, off road, any crazy place to get that dude there on time!



Why stick to the road?

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G 8+
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Animated
Violence

WIN WIN WIN

ENTRIES CLOSE OCTOBER 19TH

WIN A BLADE II PACK!

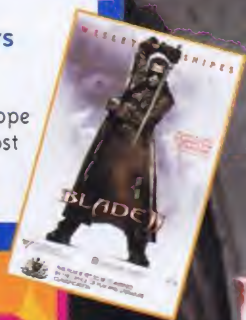
■ Activision and Hyper would like to offer three readers the chance to win Blade II for PS2, Blade II on DVD and a special vampire symbol necklace! Before you know it, you'll be a vampire slaying expert with the best of 'em. Naturally, you'll have to go buy the tight black leather undies yourself.

To win a Blade II pack, then simply answer the following question:

FOR PS2

➤➤➤ Name the actor who plays Blade.

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



WIN SEGA SOCCER SLAM

■ Game Nation and Hyper have five sizzling hot copies of Sega Soccer Slam to boot in your direction. This is your chance to snaffle one of the coolest GameCube games this side of the Mushroom kingdom, so don't dilly-dally.

To win Sega Soccer Slam, just answer the following question:

FOR GCN

➤➤➤ Which country won the 2002 World Cup?

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

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American Conquest

www.americanconquest.com

If Warcraft III has re-ignited your interest in online real-time strategy gaming, then start setting your sights on American Conquest. Developed by CDV and GSC Game World (the noggins behind the underrated strategy-fest, Cossacks) American Conquest is an epic RTS that spans the period of American history between 1492 and 1813. So why should you be interested in this piece of Yank adventuring? Well... Ever wanted to fight a battle with up to 16,000 infantry, cavalry and artillery units? We thought so.

CANNONBALLS

There are 12 different "nations" in American Conquest fighting for power and separated into two different groups. There are the European powers, including England, France, Spain and the American European colonists, and then there are the natives — the Mayans, Incas, Aztecs, Sioux, Delaware, Pueblos, Iroquoian Confederacy and Huron. Don't worry,

you don't need a history degree to enjoy the game, there are four different campaigns designed for maximum entertainment value whilst still being based on actual events (such as the war of independence). Naturally, you can alter the events of history depending upon which side you've decided to play as.

It's not all warfare though, you'll need to sharpen your diplomacy skills and even learn to trade resources in order to evolve your technologies. Mining resources, researching new tools and learning the lay of the land will play a big part in how successful your conquests are. However, when it does come to warfare, you're in for a treat. The battles in American Conquest promise to redefine the word "epic". This game goes way beyond simple cowboys and indians.

As you progress through the campaign, units will gain experience from battle and learn new abilities, such as new weapon skills. Cavalry units, for instance, can use both

ranged and melee attacks — pistols from long range and sabers for fighting opponents up close. Amongst other tools of death and mayhem of the time, you will also get to grips with cannons, pushing them into strategic positions and then watching the cannonballs decimate anything in their path. Whilst the Europeans might have the advantage with fierce technology such as this, the native sides will have the sheer numbers to swamp their enemy, surround them or trap them.

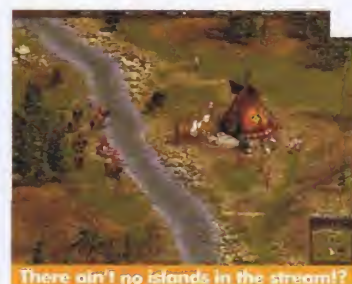
The maps will be huge, at a scale of 30X20 screens (at 1024X768 resolution), with a mixture of 3D terrain flowing with life and 2D structures that you can enter,

command and destroy, the game will look rich, colourful and alive. There will even be caves full of treasure for the more adventurous amongst you. The maps in the game are also scalable so you can zoom in or out of the action to keep track of the thousands of units and yet still appreciate their individual animations.

American Conquest uses much of the RTS technology from the original Cossacks and its expansion packs, but at least half of the game has been developed from scratch, so this is anything but an extension of the Cossacks strategy experience. An Australian release can be expected sometime in 2003.



Kill any Indian with the name Turok.



There ain't no islands in the stream!



AGATA
BUDINSKA

>> I'll be the first to admit it. I'm using this column to vent

my frustrations. Anyone not interested in improving the general quality of workspam please stop reading this now. For everyone else, please continue...

I got to work today, open my email, and found 160 spam emails from my co-workers. No, I am not over exaggerating. (Go Monkeys, Go!) To top it off, someone sent around the teaser trailer for *The Two Towers* that managed to close not only my email, but that of 12 of my co-workers (apparently our inboxes can't handle that amount of spam as well as a 32mb file – go figure).

Of the 160 odd spams, at least 140 of them were flames to a message sent that contained either a link, a quote or humorous anecdote/picture involving midgets.

Don't get me wrong – I enjoy getting and reading these emails – hell, I even respond to some of them, it's like our own very private chat room via email. It's just that I came to the realisation that many moons ago, when email was this whack new way of contacting my friends, I'd forward absolutely anything that was sent to me in spam. No matter how unfunny, politically incorrect, graphic, misspelt, broken, lewd, offensive, dull, stupid or boring it was. I guess at some stage I decided that any spam that had my name attached to it has to be instantly recognisable as Quality, with a capital Q.

Many people around me do not think this a noble enough cause to adopt for themselves. For this reason, as well as the fact I'm on 3 different mailing lists, I seem to be getting the same shite over and over in my inbox – sometimes from two different people on the same mailing list.

So I am calling upon you out there to take up the cause – stop useless spam now. Start by not auto-forwarding – Learn to Discern. Progress to smacking down any noob who sends you 'User Friendly' or 'The Parking Lot Is Full' cartoons. Finish by setting up mail rules that instantly delete emails from repeat offenders. If enough of us take up the cause, maybe we can make my inbox a better place...

happymealwithoj@hotmail.com



ULTIMA ONLINE: Age of Shadows

www.uo.com

The ongoing saga that is Ultima Online continues to grow and develop in the face of the new generation of 3D MMORPG. As this issue of Hyper hits the stands, Ultima Online is in fact five years-old – quite an impressive feat for an online game, especially one which originated with a 2D engine. In an effort to keep their virtual world alive, Origin Systems recently announced the development of a brand new expansion, Ultima Online: Age of Shadows, the most ambitious add-on pack for the game yet. It looks like the Ultima Online faithful are still being rewarded for their loyalty to the game, this time with a host of gameplay-altering features that are set to breath new life into the land of Britannia.

TOOLING AROUND

What is probably the most desired feature in any massively multiplayer game, is the ability to create your own custom living space. Not since

text-based MOOs have players really been able to create their own elaborate environments. Age of Shadows is set to deliver this power into the hands of Ultima Online players with the "House Design Tool". Whilst it's possible to currently own a house in Ultima Online, players have had to choose from a selection of prefab designs. To introduce true personality into each virtual home, the House Design Tool will allow players to build new houses from scratch or completely customise their current abode. Customising your current house will allow the use of new textures, structures and spatial elements, but it's the ability to design and build a new home completely from scratch that will really re-ignite many players' interest in tooling around with their avatar.

If home building wasn't enough, Age of Shadows is also set to introduce two new character professions: the Necromancer and Paladin. As

you can imagine, this will also involve revamping the spell system and in fact, introducing 15 new spells purely for the Necromancer alone. Whilst we may be waiting for a while for more information on the skills and nitty gritty details on these new professions, we do know that all of this will take place on a brand new land mass. Called Malas, this new area will be big enough to contain around 30,000 custom built homes, as well as be home to a host of new beasties and quests. Malas will slowly be introduced over the next 18 months in an evolving storyline to explain its appearance.



I smite you with my Circle of Cuddly spell!



MUDDY GAMING

www.skotos.net

Do you long for a return to the good old days of text-based MUDs? The games coming out from the small development team known as Skotos may be right up your alley. They already have a number of games running, and for a small monthly fee you can participate. The games are based around social interaction and co-operation between users, and play like a cross between a chat room and a traditional MUD. It's very niche but if you're a jaded old-school gamer, it might be just what you're looking for.



JAPANESE ENGLISH

www.english.com

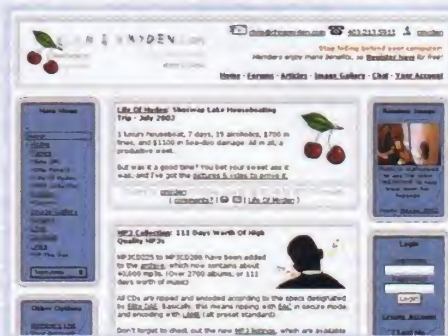
Over in Japan, the English language is commonly used and misused in a variety of contexts. From poorly constructed movie posters to the labelling on a food product, there are many hilarious mistakes and unfortunate interpretations that make for endlessly hilarious web browsing. From the chocolate biscuit that urges you to "Relieve the relief and listen to the angel's whisper" to an "Eric Cration" CD, you have to see some of these beauties for yourself. And remember, "For Restrooms, Go Back Toward Your Behind". Oooookay.



EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

www.technologyreview.com

If you pride yourself on staying tech-literate and cutting edge, then you'd better hurry up and bookmark this one if you haven't done so already. Technology Review is an MIT enterprise keeping track of emerging technologies and their impact. Get an overview of Nanotechnology, find out the latest advances in biotech, or amuse yourself with articles on why video games need the protection of the first amendment. Even discover all about 3D television!



CHRIS MYDEN

www.chrismyden.com

Those of you into the idea of ripping your own CDs to mp3 at the highest possible quality should definitely check out this site. Chris has a couple of excellent guides to ripping your own mp3s that take the pain out of the process. He'll take you through the best settings for both Exact Audio Copy (www.exactaudiocopy.de) and for Lame. While you're at it, take a look at www.r3mix.com. Just beware of the deadly popup ads.



MONKEY'S AUDIO

www.monkeysaudio.com

No matter what bit-rate you encode at, by its very nature, mp3 is a lossy format - space is saved by discarding parts of the music that the human ear won't miss. However, if you're an audiophile with a little more hard drive space to play with, Monkey's Audio might be the technology for you. This is truly "loss-less" compression... but bear in mind you'll only be able to compress CDs down to about half their original size.

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The biggest wargame ever!

ONLINE GAMING
Is Australia ready to join the rest of the world?

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Conspiring to change the face of PC gaming

MASSIVE PREVIEW!

SIMCITY 4

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PC PowerPlay

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ON SALE NOW!

REVIEWS

»GCN

GAME OF THE MONTH

Resident Evil

Capcom have rebuilt one of their greatest games and it's magic all over again.

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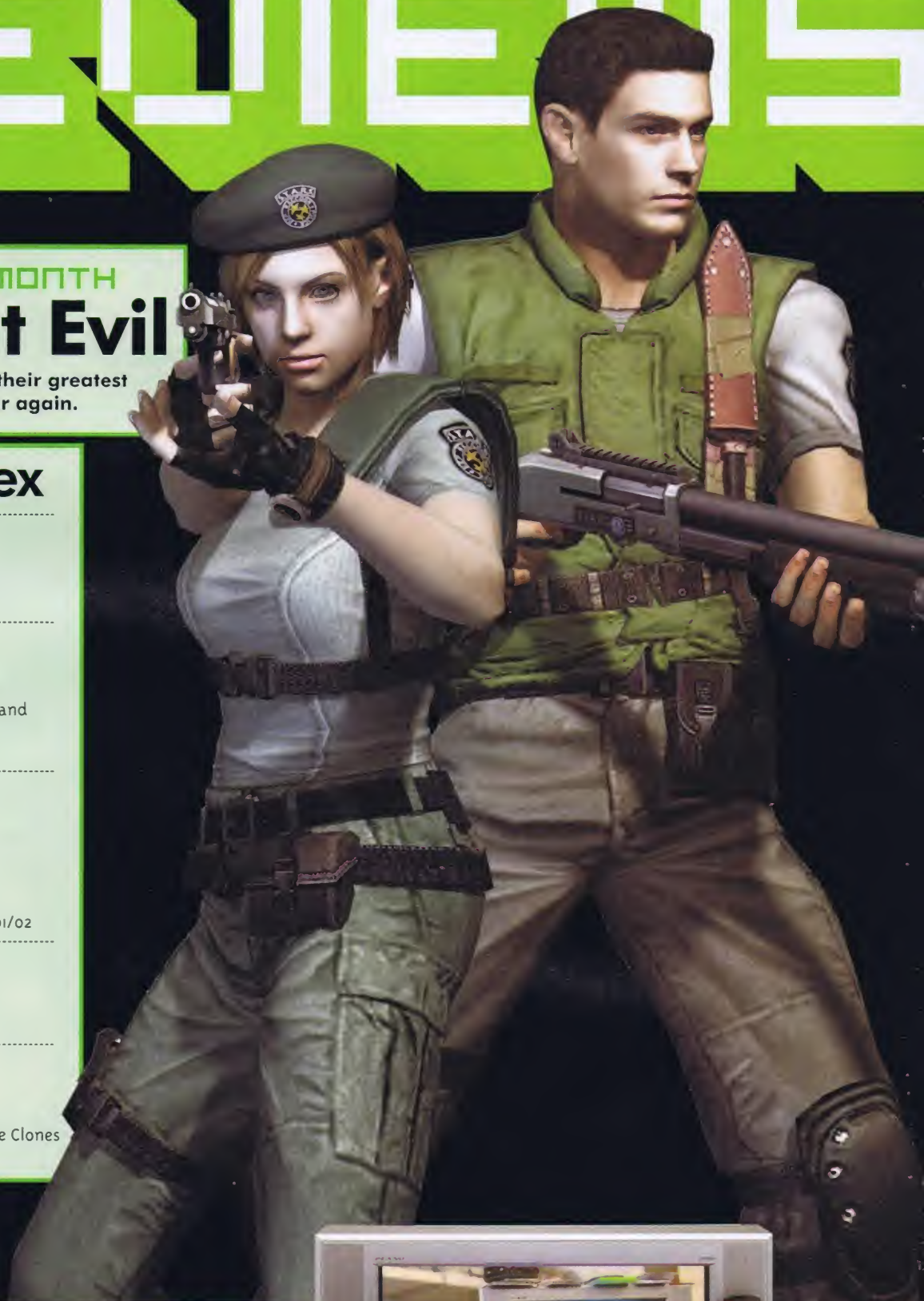
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HYPERR»

All console games are tested on the Samsung Plano CS29A200 TV.

SAMSUNG

ELECTRONICS



GAME THEORY

DANIEL STAINES



>> What should come first in game development – technology or design?

On the one hand, video game design means nothing if there isn't some kind of underlying technology to make it a tangible reality. On the other is the fact that all the vertex shading and bump mapping in the world can't make a poorly contrived game fun to play. A good title will generally sport the best of both worlds, but which is ultimately more important?

Over the next three installments of Game Theory, I will examine this debate by presenting the case for both sides as well as a conclusive synopsis of the fundamental issues raised. Let's begin by looking at the techno-centric approach.

There are very good reasons for studios to emphasise the role of technology in their development strategies. As the perpetual joke of Duke Nukem Forever clearly demonstrates, trying to shoehorn ambitious design plans into an engine incapable of realising them inevitably leads to serious practical problems. At best, progress will slow somewhat as the development team makes a few square pegs fit into some round holes. At worst, an overhaul of an entire game-in-progress may be necessary.

Building a proprietary engine from the ground up almost completely eliminates the risk of coming up against problems such as these. A brief look at the history of id Software, for example, shows a company free of major hiccups and costly, Romero style mistakes. While John Carmack and co. certainly can't be accused of recklessly trailblazing the frontiers of innovative gameplay, one can't help but admire the consistently solid quality of their work.

However, one does not always want 'solid quality'. While Quake III and its ilk are great fun for a while, they almost necessarily lack the gameplay innovation required to keep the industry moving forward at a steady pace. Where does one turn to get that? Well, come back next issue and you'll find out...

game_theory@whentitsdone.com



54



60



62



72



80

THE HYPER CREW'S TOP 5

Eliot Fish – Editor

1. Super Mario Sunshine – GCN
2. Onimusha 2 – PS2
3. Burnout 2 – PS2
4. Icewind Dale II – PC
5. Soccer Slam – GCN

Cam Shea – Deputy Editor

1. Super Mario Sunshine – GCN
2. Burnout 2 – PS2
3. Timesplitters 2 – PS2
4. Soccer Slam – GCN
5. Onimusha 2 – PS2

Malcolm Campbell – Art guy

1. Super Mario Sunshine – GCN
2. Final Fantasy X – PS2
3. Soccer Slam – GCN
4. Onimusha 2 – PS2
5. Burnout 2 – PS2

Jackson Gothe-Snape – Hyperactive Producer

1. Pro Evolution Soccer – PS2
2. Championship Manager 01/02 – PC
3. Hunter: The Reckoning – Xbox
4. Super Mario Sunshine – GCN
5. Stuntman – PS2

THE HYPER SCORING SYSTEM

The Overall Score – what's it all about?

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



GCN

Resident Evil



CATEGORY: Survival Horror >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Capcom >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: September 20 >>

Be very quiet, **STEPHEN FARRELLY** is hunting zombies.

This is the big one for GameCube, especially in Australia. At the moment GameCube's sales are diminishing while PS2, GBA and even the Xbox are racking up steady figures.

Nintendo's machine is an incredible piece of hardware, but lately the releases for it have been too few and far between. Sure we have Mario, Star Fox, Eternal Darkness, Metroid and Zelda coming between now and early next year, but if the install base doesn't rise, the Cube could be in serious trouble. Enter Resident Evil.

Capcom's remake of its ambient original zombie-killing masterpiece is poised to give not only Nintendo lovers what they want, but stave the thirst of any gamer looking to get down and meaty with some mature gaming. If you've ever played the

original, be prepared for something new; and if you've never played a Resident Evil game before, you're in for the experience of your life.

RESIDENT 90210

For those that have played before, let's talk about what's new. The game's story has been given a major overhaul, with a number of new twists and hints at things to come. Changes have been done to make the story flow better - especially since the whole series is starting again on GameCube - so you can expect to be surprised at numerous cut-scenes and what they mean for your character now and in the future (or past). Equally, the ending (or endings as it were) have been given lengthy narrative and depending on certain decisions you make

throughout, will change accordingly, rewarding the hardcore and thorough gamers over those that simply skim the surface. This obviously racks up some replay value as both Jill and Chris (the two characters you can choose) have varying stories with NPCs adding to their respective plots in different ways. This means that there are a number of different endings and plot twists that can be triggered based on how you play the game - a definite bonus for fans and newcomers to the series.

On top of major story changes, the game has had at least 70% of overall gameplay changed, with new puzzles and areas to explore as well as an abundance of new

enemies and weapons to look forward to. And if none of that tickles your fancy, the visuals have been given an upgrade worthy of the moniker "Best. Graphics. Ever".
Capcom has done





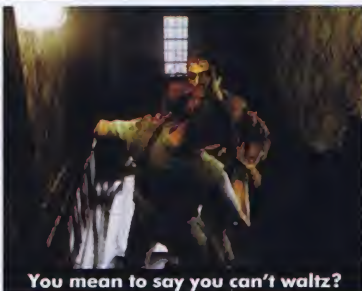
Did you bring the marshmallows?



"At least there are no spiders, right Barry?"



Dad, stop dropping in like this.



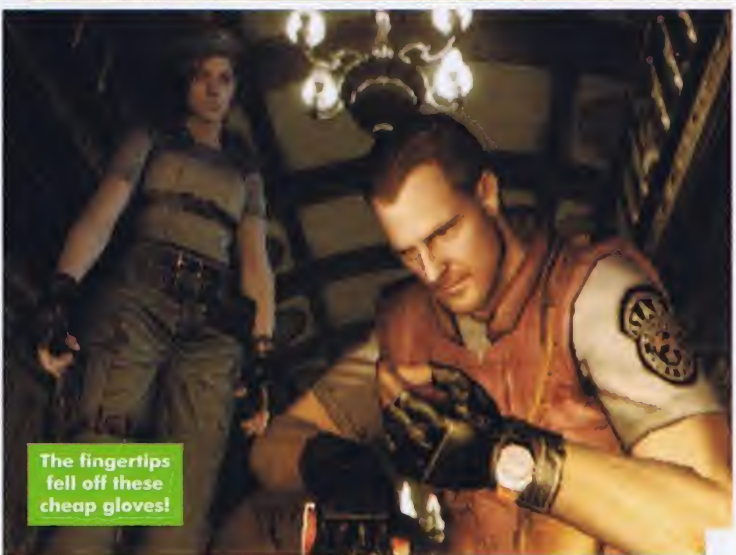
You mean to say you can't waltz?



Just give him some Shmacks.



The Hyper bathroom needs a clean.



The fingertips fell off these cheap gloves!

a remarkable job of making sure you feel like you're playing the game for the first time again, and if you thought the original was scary, you ain't seen nothin' yet.

IS THAT A DAGGER IN YOUR POCKET?

Of the new changes, there are a number of brilliant additions. Defense items is a new element that sees your character collecting either a dagger or a character-specific weapon to fend off the more amorous zombies found within the game. The defense items can be set to auto or manual use, and are brought into play when Chris or Jill is about to be mauled by a zombie. The dagger is used to great effect as no one likes a knife in the head, not even the undead. The other items include a stunner used by Jill and a flash grenade for Chris, each delivering an incredible display of visual effects, be it pieces of zombie head flying about thanks to the flash grenade or the amazing light show had with Jill's stunner. Your characters can also use a number of

standard and special weapons, ranging from handguns and shotguns, to a grenade launcher and a flame-thrower (complete with volumetric flame no less). All of which will be found through solving puzzles or exploring levels and areas extensively. This can be a bad thing at times, however, as exploration usually means running into zombies, and the more you play this game, the more you don't want to run into zombies.

Shinji Mikami, the director of the original game is back at the helm of the remake and has injected new life into his original masterpiece thanks in part to the power of GameCube. Now new areas have been added to the game, with an all-new residential level and a much more detailed and expansive outdoor area; complete with an underground shark tank that harbours some gorgeous water effects. These new areas are incredibly intricate, with amazing animations given to blades of grass and tree branches swaying in the wind, or the minor details like water

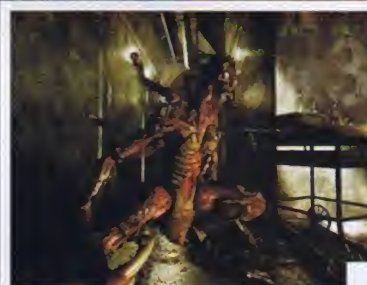
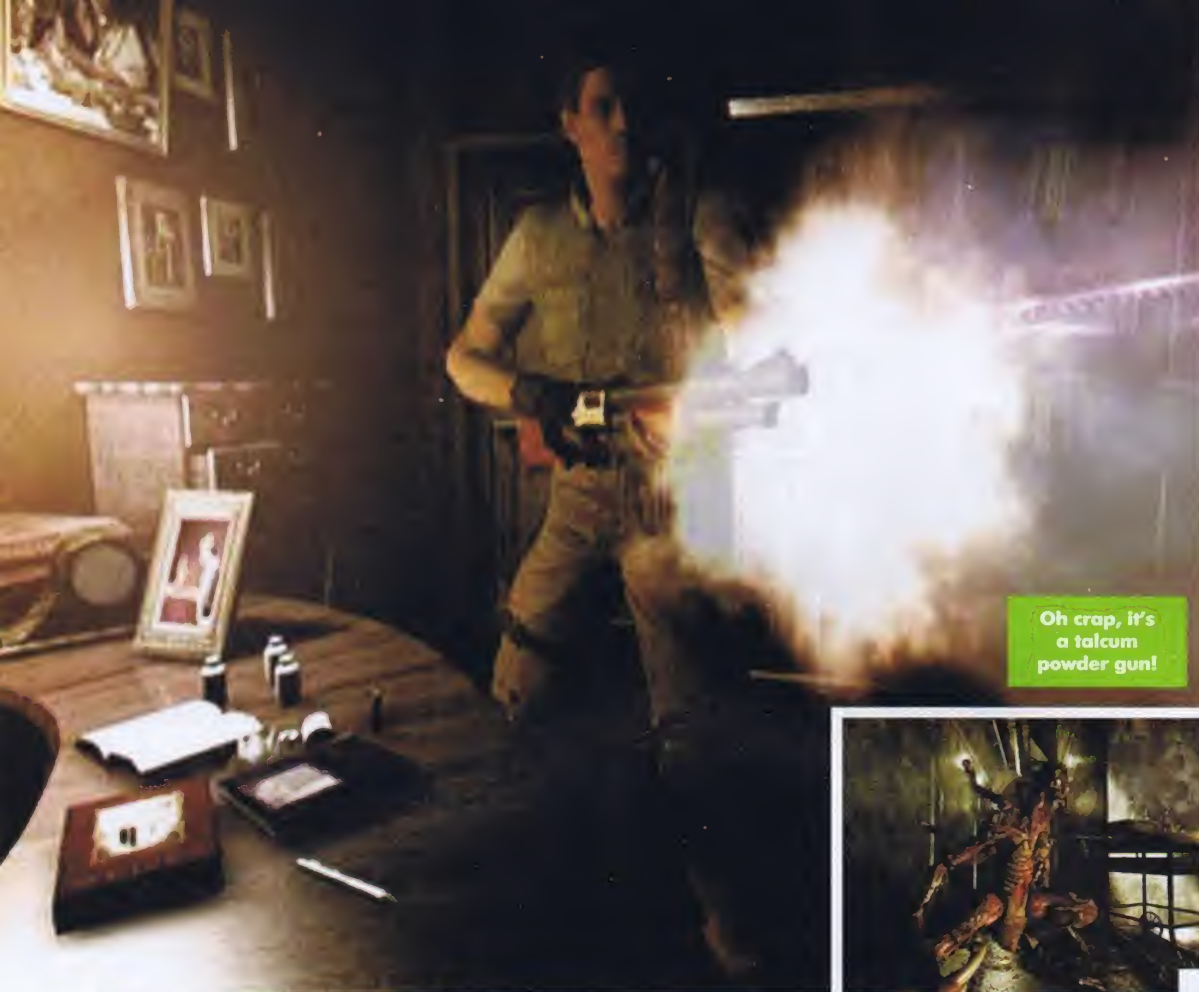
There are a number of **different endings and plot twists** that can be triggered based on how you play

splashing up around character's feet when they step in a puddle, or the dust particles rising at every step made on a dusty floorboard. It truly is remarkable.

With the new areas comes a slew of new challenging puzzles, no help is given in the way of solving them though, as Capcom has never been one to hold a player's hand in games. As you traverse you'll come across varying items that will need to be used to solve puzzles and

access new areas or kill anything and everything you see. To help with the amount of stuff you'll find, Capcom has retained the 'magic' item crates from the original game. You can put any items in these crates and find them in another crate in a different location... don't ask. It's a shame that they haven't gone with dropping items on the run, but some of the original game needed to be retained to retain gameplay consistency. And this is





STEPPING UP

❖ In an interview with Nintendo Gamer, Hiroyuki Kobayashi, the producer of the Resident Evil series suggested that while in preliminary development with Resident Evil 4 on PS2 the team discovered that the machine simply couldn't meet their needs, thus they began exploring another console. When it was discovered that GameCube was exactly what they were looking for, and because RE 0 was already in development for the console, Capcom talked to Nintendo about making RE 4 for GameCube. An exclusive deal was worked out where Nintendo owners everywhere could play the whole series on one console and RE 4 was put back to work. We're told, however, that RE 4 will be a complete redesign to what we've seen of both RE 0 and the remake, and we're told "RE 4 will be a complete change, and will amaze you when it comes out".

one of them. Another aspect that has remained from the original PSone game is the control scheme, a somewhat controversial decision on Capcom's part. No analogue control to be found — it's all digital — with only a few degrees of movement for both characters. It works once you get into the game, and if you're used to it from the other games in the series then it should be second nature. It seems that the pre-rendered backgrounds and quick camera changes won't work with an analogue control scheme, it would be good to have them both included, however, to let players decide for themselves.

EERIE REALISM

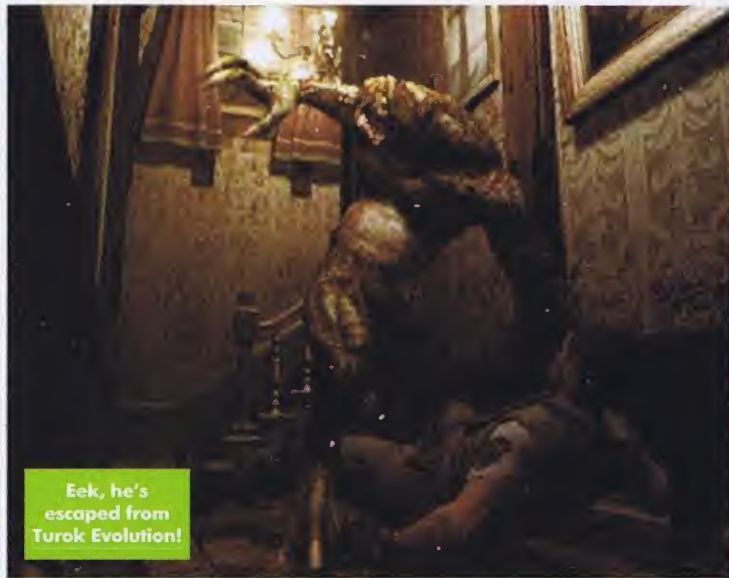
The major difference with this game over its predecessor is the ambience Capcom have created. The visuals go a long way to enforcing a sense of hyper-reality, as the in-game character models are as detailed as the FMV, and the mansion's inners are created to jaw-dropping effect with incredible textures, lighting and shadows. Walking past windows

with an outside-looking-in camera view is frightening, and taking a moment to observe the scene will reveal not only a branch moving gently in the breeze, but its transparent shadow reflected on the composed window doing the same. Absolutely brilliant. Equally, the eerie realism is further iterated through the sparing use of music and sound-effects. This is done to impede any sense of safety, and in fact, the only time you'll feel 100% safe in the game is in a save room.

One of the reasons Capcom has managed to create this level of fright is thanks to the high poly models of enemies. Zombies are constructed with insane details, including fully bump-mapped clothes and

rotting facial features. They're all animated with deranged 'undead'-like movements, and at times you actually feel sorry for them because of their awkward slow 'undeadness'. But watching their heads go splat or blowing off a leg is simply too much fun to want to sympathise with them for too long. Early in the game it's relatively easy to avoid them, however, getting deeper into the mansion will reveal a new breed of





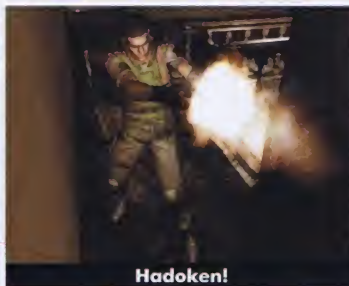
EEK, he's escaped from Turok Evolution!



Put a jumper on dear, you'll catch a cold.



Where's Lord Seafood when you need him?



Hadoken!



The only solution for game addiction.



Even the wallpaper is evil!



She must be from the new TAR team.

undead, one not seen in a Resident Evil game before — the Crimson Head zombie. Crimson Head zombies are exactly the zombies you wish Capcom had decided against introducing into the game. These guys move quicker than you and — thanks to their crazy sharp-arse claws — will finish you quicker than you can draw your weapon. It's best to take them out from a distance, or better yet, stay away from them altogether. On your adventure, you'll also come across enemies like man-eating sharks, killer wasps, poisonous snakes, ridiculously large spiders and many more, we don't want to spoil the scare for you, but... good luck, you're gonna need it (especially when you meet bosses!).

Getting deeper into the mansion will reveal a **new breed of undead**, one not seen in a Resident Evil game before...

RESIDENTIAL HORROR

I'm guessing the question on a lot of lips though, is why shell out a hundred bucks for an old game? Well the truth is that there's so much new here that it becomes less a case of same game and more a case of new experience. A Resident Evil remake isn't about recreating a game on another console because owners of that console have never played it, it's all about recreating and delivering a brand new experience that you never thought would be like this. If you remember how scary some of the FMV was in the original game, then consider that this game looks better than that FMV did with its in-game graphics, and it might

give you an idea of what to expect. Capcom has injected just the right amount of what was needed to make this one of the most chilling gaming experiences ever. There's plenty of replay value, enough to surprise hardcore fans, and it's a big-up to Nintendo from Capcom for helping to shake that Nintendo kiddy image. Plus, if you're a Resident Evil whore, you'll need to play this game to understand the all-new story lines for Resident Evil 0 and 4 when they arrive. Resident Evil is an amazing experience that will have even the toughest person wetting their pants, and it's got visuals like no other up the wazoo. Too good to miss. ❖❖

!!! Here's hoping they change enough of the gameplay mechanics in REO to separate it from this remake.



PLUS: Great new additions to the original game and expanded story.

MINUS: No Dolby Pro Logic II support. Must use the d-pad.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

95 89 87

OVERALL

92

Mature gaming on a Nintendo system! Who'd a thunk it?





Sega Soccer Slam

CATEGORY: Arcade soccer >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: Sega >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Late October >>

FRANK DRY almost boycotted Sega products after Virtua Soccer...

In a genre packed with humourless simulations, Sega Soccer Slam comes as a welcome change of pace. It will also help redeem Sega in the eyes of those who played the appalling Virtua Soccer 2002 - which was a disgrace to the name of arcade sports games. That wasn't arcade soccer... this is baby! Sega Soccer Slam has been co-developed by Black Box (known for its NHL Hitz games) and Visual Concepts, and represents soccer as party game, soccer as melee warfare, and soccer as mash-fest.

THE USUAL QUEST QUESTIONS...

Soccer Slam really bears about as much in common with professional soccer as our games of office soccer do. Or more appropriately, as much

as NBA Jam did to NBA basketball. Indeed, Soccer Slam is very much the spiritual successor to Midway's arcade basketball series, which should get quite a few of you excited right off the bat. And rightly so, because Soccer Slam is great fun. Black Box have taken a large number of liberties with the sport. For a start, the field is tiny, teams are made up of three players and a goalie, and almost all the rules are out the window. It's a frenzied free-for-all, as the ball can't go out of play and dirty tricks are practically encouraged.

Soccer Slam has all the usual play modes - Quickstart, Exhibition, Tourney, Quest and Practice. Quest Mode is similar to the main mode from Virtua Tennis. In addition to simply playing through league

games, you'll be faced with a number of challenges in between matches. Wins in the matches and scoring in the challenges reward you with cash that can be used to buy special Quest items for the players on your team to boost their abilities. You can also unlock secret stadiums, buy artwork and uncover cheat codes.

There are six distinctive teams, each with their own mystique, which relates to their special abilities on the field. Each team is made up of unique characters that will definitely amuse. For instance, there's Arsenalaut the snooty Frenchman; Boomer, an outback orphan who grew up surrounded by kangaroos; and Half-Pint, a British soccer hooligan punk who gained special powers when he was accidentally locked in a walk-in

pub freezer. You get the idea. Although some character designs are weaker than others, as an ensemble line-up they're strong enough to carry the game.

Controls are simple and arcadey, with all the moves you'll need easy to find. On offense, you can deke (jump over a defender as he slide tackles you), execute spin moves, turbo boost, pass, lob pass and shoot. Not to mention a variety of coordinated moves, such as give and gos and one-timer shots. You can also charge up your shot on goal by holding down the shoot button and building your power meter up. And when you don't have the ball, you can either try to steal the ball or simply deck the opposing team members with the ever-handy punch button.



The odd alien abduction...



Which balls should I kick?



KAHUNA GOOFED!

Better give him a drug test.



You could say they're a hot team.



Get up you diving bastard!



Watch SBS for the Premiership!



Cop a quick feel, why don't ya?!

OUR PAL...

» You'll be pleased to hear that Soccer Slam has been glammed up for its PAL release, with many minor improvements and fixes over the NTSC version. Sega have even taken the time to include 3 secret new teams and two more mini-games. Thanks guys!

Much like NBA Jam, each player has a limited turbo bar that regenerates when not being used. Your team also has a Power Point meter, which builds up with every pass, steal, deke, hit, shot and move combo you execute. You can use up your Power Point meter by hitting the L trigger to temporarily go into an all-powerful state with an instant full power shot. When the Power Point meter is full you can also execute a Killer Kick, where you lob the ball high into the air for a teammate to take a spectacular shot from. You'll also see a spotlight wandering across the pitch at times, and shooting from within these

Teams are made up of three players and a goalie, and almost all the rules are out the window

triggers yet another spectacular slo-mo attempt on goal.

FLAMBOYANT, LIKE "GREENFINGERS" CAMPBELL

As you can tell, the gameplay is fast and frenetic, and filled with over the top shots on goal. In fact, there's usually a shot every ten or twenty seconds. This game drips with flamboyant moves like diving headers, turn around kicks, flip kicks etc. Although some of the movement animations aren't the best, the specialty animations always look fantastic. In fact, the game as a whole holds up well graphically — player models are nicely detailed and there are plenty of little individual touches to enjoy. In terms of strategy, Soccer Slam

!!! Sega Soccer Slam is also coming to Xbox and PS2.

has quite a bit of scope — especially in multiplayer contests. Some players make attempt to outwit their opponents through dekes, one-twos and trickery, whereas others find brute force works the best. Indeed, one of our winning strategies in three player games was to assign our brawniest character to go and hassle the opposing goalie. Just as the goalie was decking our player we'd shoot. This strategy worked a treat until we came up against a team that did a similar thing back to us. And this is the beauty of Soccer Slam - each individual and team has their own strengths and weaknesses, and there are plenty of strategies that can be employed. Needless to say, multiplayer is a complete blast. Well worth playing. ❖❖



PLUS: Frenetic gameplay. Awesome party game.

MINUS: Soccer purists may not like it.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

84 83 85

OVERALL

85

Deliriously good arcade soccer!



Freekstyle

CATEGORY: Racing >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: EA >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

CAM SHEA gives no big ups to EA Big...

Freekstyle is the latest game out of the EA Big stable, and it follows their mantra of making games that are more "extreme" and "adrenaline charged" than other games on the market. This time around, the sport in question is motocross, and at first glance Freestyle looks like a fun arcadey take on the sport.

FLAT ON ITS FACE...

The sensation of speed is the first thing that will jump out at you — this game feels fast. It also handles okay, with a good sensation of losing traction around the corners. Courses are circuit-based against five opponents, and consist of large banked corners, ramps galore, jumps through flaming rings and multiple paths. There's a wide

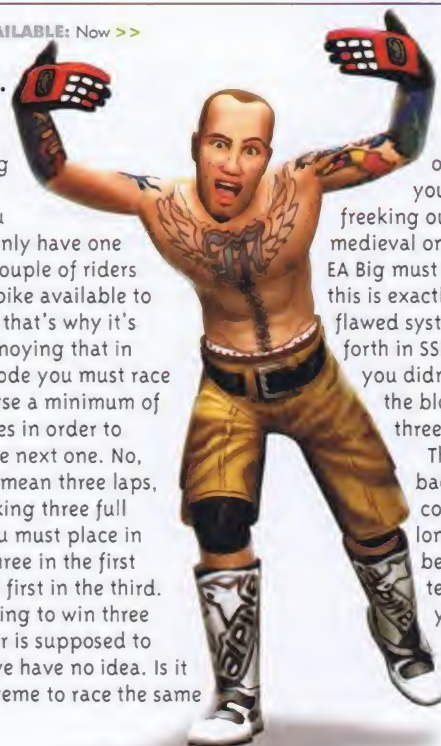
variety of tricks available via the shoulder buttons, and they're fairly integral to the action. Landing tricks builds up your Boost meter, and you'll need to be able to boost for extra speed heading into jumps and to get past opponents on the line. You also have a Freekout meter, which when filled causes your rider to "freak out", sending you into a hepped-up-on-goofballs mode where you're faster, can boost for longer, and the world is motion blur city. You can extend the freak out by landing high scoring tricks, and it's only when in this mode that your "Super Sick Trick" is available.

So far so good? Unfortunately it doesn't take long for Freestyle to start choking and spluttering. The main tournament mode where you can unlock extra content is called

Circuit, and going into this mode you literally only have one track, a couple of riders and one bike available to you. And that's why it's rather annoying that in Circuit mode you must race each course a minimum of three times in order to unlock the next one. No, we don't mean three laps, we're talking three full races. You must place in the top three in the first two, then first in the third. What having to win three times over is supposed to achieve we have no idea. Is it more extreme to race the same

circuit over and over again until you're close to freaking out and going medieval on your GameCube? EA Big must think so because this is exactly the same as the flawed system they belched forth in SSX. At least in SSX you didn't have to go down the bloody mountain three times per race.

This might not be so bad except that these courses are really long. Each race takes between seven and ten minutes, so you're looking at a minimum of 20 minutes of racing before you even





I call this the "stupid git" trick.



And this is the "lame loser".



And now for the "retarded moron".



So extreme, even the road has tatts.



Ahhhh, the handlebar is up my nose!



What a camera whore.



Don't you know how to ride a bike? Geez.

FREESTYLE

» In addition to the six racing courses, there are also three Freestyle tracks (although you have to unlock two of them of course). These are large arenas built entirely for roaming around busting tricks. At first, each arena looks like it will be a blast, packed with winding ramps, halfpipes and huge air, but the reality is that the game mechanics don't lend themselves to a freeform trick experience.

The further into the game you go, the more **unnecessary clutter** is introduced into and around the course



get a chance to try another course. And it's so much fun when you get pipped at the post by the AI and get to do it all again.

Thus, hopping into the game isn't much fun. You only have one course available and must endure a veritable trial by fire bike boredom in order to see another one. Not a good system for an arcade game at all. We suspect that the main reason the game is structured like this is to hide the fact that there are only six courses. They may be long, but that's really not good enough. We'd have preferred twice as many courses that were half as long, and half as boring.

The course design is a real mixed bag, littered with poor design decisions. For instance, surely it would make sense in a game with such an emphasis on big jumps that

the air above the track be free of obstacles? Apparently not. In Freestyle you'll regularly soar off a ramp only to run straight into a girder or other structure in your way.

EXTREMELY AVERAGE DESIGN

EA Big also seem to be under the misapprehension that making courses more difficult for the later stages of the game can be accomplished by simply making them more unplayable. The further into the game you go, the more unnecessary clutter is introduced into and around the course design, and more to the point, the more random stuff starts getting thrown at you. Trees start falling onto the track, boulders start rolling along it, and so on.

!!! One of the riders in Freestyle is called Mad Mike. We wonder if there are some Underground Resistance fans on the EA Big team...

This inability to increase course difficulty without resorting to cheap tactics is really just indicative of the style of game that has been built here. The handling is not about finesse or skill, it's about raw grunt factor. Hence the emphasis on tricks over course design. This is a shame because ultimately you end up with a hollow experience — especially with a trick system as simplistic and shallow as this. The best arcade games are all about the handling and the course design. They're still accessible, but the depth is in learning the nuances of the handling and nailing the perfect racing line on the courses. Freestyle has none of this. A depressingly shallow game. <<<

PLUS: Reasonable sense of speed.

MINUS: All style, no substance.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

79 79 71

OVERALL

72

Attitude doesn't equal gameplay, EA Big.

REVIEW

>>> HYPER 55



Stuntman

CATEGORY: Driving/Action >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Atari >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: G8+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

JACKSON GOTHE-SNAPE is the office stunt reviewer.

Reflections, the team behind the Driver and Destruction Derby series, have always had a knack for developing truly novel games. Destruction Derby arguably revolutionised damage in driving games, while Driver was a videogame style pioneer. Stuntman, their most recent project, is once again based around a tremendous concept, and, for the most part, manages to deliver plenty of fun and excitement. There are definitely going to be times where you will abuse your unsuspecting PS2, but depending on your tastes, Stuntman could well be the game for you.

POO WHOOPIN'

Now, let's be honest. Who hasn't dreamed just for a second about being a stuntman? It's such a clichéd

boyhood dream — up there with the secret agent and football star — that it's surprising that it has taken this long for a stunt-themed game to come out (excluding Stunt Race FX).

Stuntman offers a few modes, such as precision driving and a stunt constructor, but its main feature is the career. This is split into six movies, each containing several driving scenarios or "scenes". After completing each film, you are rewarded with the movie trailer, made up of a handful of your driving exploits and some CG scenes. Although a nice idea, you can be left a little bit disappointed with a few of them, mainly because they don't contain very much of your actual driving.

On the whole, Stuntman features some rather average graphics. Colours are an afterthought, the framerate can

drop, and the grainy, aliased image doesn't do the relatively detailed environments and objects justice. There are some great moments, such as when boxes scatter during a dockside chase, that are superbly accentuated in replays thanks to some well-selected cinematic camera placement, but they are few and far between. A particular stage in the Dukes of Hazzard-style film, "A Whoopin' and a Hollerin'", is simply ugly, covered in poor poo-brown textures.

Sound, meanwhile, is satisfactory, with some fitting, if generic, music accompanying each film. A director will shout directions as you make your way through each stunt, but he directs every picture. We want the John Woo-soundalike in the Hong



Kong action film "Blood Oath". There are also all the fairly standard booms and crashes you might expect in a stunt driving game. The aural highlight would have to be the narrator for the trailer, who is spot on with all those lame film promo catchphrases.



Failure often comes with the slightest mistake, like clipping a seemingly destructible stop sign

DANGER: WIDE LOADING

Stuntman lets you take the wheel of a great variety of vehicles, with almost every stunt introducing you to a shiny new beast. There's the token generic 70s muscle car, a Tuk Tuk, a police car, and a Skyline GT-R rip-off, all of which handle very differently. All look decent and feature competent damage modelling, despite damage being an accumulated meter that, if filled, can lead to the failure of a stunt.

You might think failing a stunt isn't so bad, but then again, you've never played Stuntman. There's no quick restart here — no sir. You'll have to wait a good 30 seconds before you can have another crack. The loading time is truly quite painful, and in many cases, undeserved. Failure often comes

with the slightest mistake, like clipping a seemingly destructible stop sign, or flipping the car after not spotting the slight dip in the ground ahead. And no, it's not just the game trying to offer the authentic perfectionist stunt experience, because you can sometimes get away with screwing up or even bypassing some aspects of the stunt. All this inconsistency and unjust loading punishment can lead to some major controller abuse.

The structure of the game also manages to make little sense. Unlike in real-life, where stunts must be meticulously planned, Stuntman just chucks you in the car and tells you to drive. The director, like an inconsiderate navigator in the

passenger seat, offers some late directions, many of which are impossible to carry out on your first run. Sure, you understand what you must do in time, but these films must have massive budgets to afford all the cars you will wreck.

Having bagged out Stuntman's visuals and questioned some key gameplay elements, you might be thinking the game is a real stinker. For many, it will prove to be. However, depending on your tastes, the game might just be up your alley.

Stripping the style and frills away from the game, you are left with a type of gameplay that closely resembles Gran Turismo's license tests, or Project Gotham's Kudos-based driving — if you got a kick out of these, give it a try. Practice is sought, and perfection emphasised. The cars handle relatively predictably, although they have a tendency to flip or get caught on walls. It's the concept, and some truly excellent replays, that lifts this package out of the ashes. <<<

!!! We had to attempt some stunts about 30 odd times...



PLUS: The concept. Intricate stages. Replays.

MINUS: Load times. Visuals. Frustrating, illogical moments.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

70 79 80

OVERALL

79

A flawed, but stylish road romp.

REVIEW

>>> HYPER 57



Turok Evolution

CATEGORY: First Person Shooter >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: Acclaim >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

ELIOT FISH is the lizard king.

The Turok series has turned up on the doorstep of the next-generation consoles, bringing with it a slice of action for each of the gaming platforms. Our week of Turok-ing here at Hyper HQ was spent evaluating both the Xbox and PS2 versions of the game, and discovering that besides some graphical improvements on the Xbox, everyone out there will be getting pretty much the same game.

Funnily enough, you don't play Turok at all, but a character named Tal-Set — another beefy American Indian warrior out to seek vengeance and cleanse the earth of evil lizard-men and grumpy dinosaurs...

BLOODY DECAPITATIONS
The first thing we noticed about Turok: Evolution is that the game should

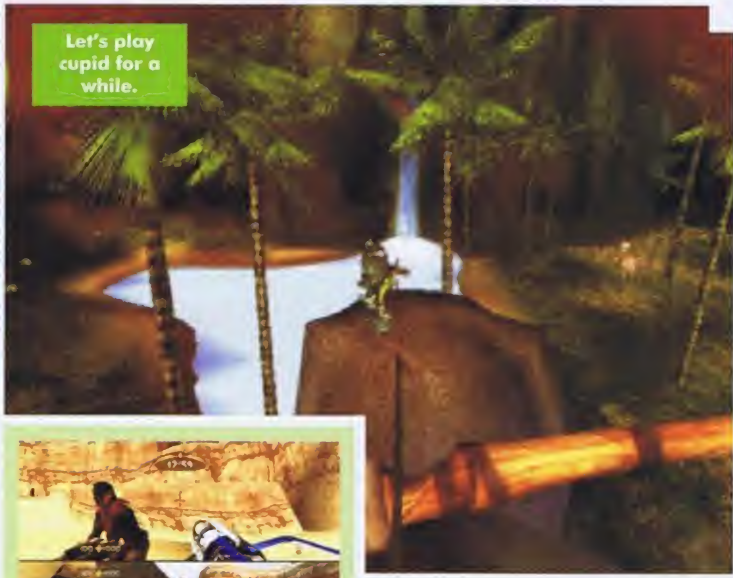
probably be called Turok: Eco Terrorist instead. You seem to spend a lot of your time killing all the local wildlife, cutting down trees with your tomahawk and generally shaming your native American Indian background with displays of contempt for any other living creature. I guess if you were warped through time, or into another dimension, you'd be pretty pissed off too, so we'll cut Tal-Set some slack here. Still, there seems to be an attempt at providing some shock value with Turok Evolution — head shots result in bloody decapitations, arms get blown off with full arterial sprays, poisoned enemies collapse and spew their guts out... just don't eat lunch before sitting down for a Turok session. Sadly, if as much time went into refining the Artificial Intelligence as went into coding gory

animations, the game would have been better off for it. We get the feeling that someone on the Turok development team played Halo and decided a few changes needed to be made to Evolution's gameplay. From the Halo-esque locations, to the "sticky" grenades, blurry zoom scope and other obvious nods to the current best console shooter, Turok: Evolution seems more preoccupied with trying to emulate other good shooters rather than carving out its own unique path. There's nothing here you



really need to learn or adapt to if you've played other console shooters — Turok really is an evolution rather than a revolution. In fact, it probably doesn't quite qualify as an evolution either... more of a safe emulation. In terms of gameplay balance, something is not quite right with Turok: Evolution. Regularly throughout missions you'll be sprung with a scripted event that either kills you (like being crushed by a landslide of boulders), or you're faced with one horrifically difficult set-piece battle after the other. It has all the

Let's play cupid for a while.

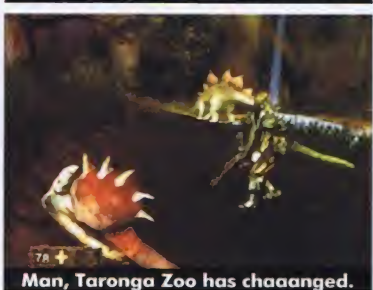


MULTIPLAYER MOHAWKS

Two to four player split-screen multiplayer games in Turok are competent enough and should provide some entertaining gaming sessions. The large variety of weapons and levels help to deliver the kind of variety that's needed for a deathmatching party or seven, but there's nothing here that's terribly remarkable or noteworthy. The framerate also suffers in splitscreen, which leaves Turok feeling a little bit behind the times.



Oh no, September 11 flashback!

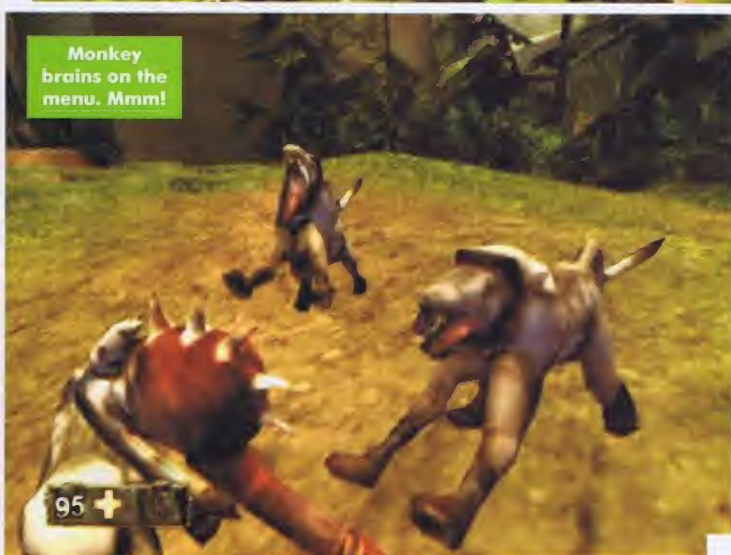


Man, Taronga Zoo has chaanged.



46 66

Monkey brains on the menu. Mmm!



95 +

hallmarks of a classic "quick save, quick reload" shooter. However, the irony is that there is no quick save feature, so death requires you to begin a level back at the start and do it all over again. If the levels weren't be so epic and demanding it wouldn't be so bad, but unfortunately you'll be more frustrated than entertained. Twenty minutes into a slow, carefully played level, you're likely to fall off a ledge in a "jumpy" section and have to start the whole thing over.

JUST ENOUGH MEAT

The frustration is compounded by the fact that some of the levels feature some ludicrous design decisions, such as deadly ledges hidden behind shrubs so you can't even see them, to enemy snipers who can injure you fatally before you can even see where they are shooting from. Later in the game, you just get hammered by relentless hordes of enemies, with Save points seemingly impossible to find. Some enemies even generate depending on your position, so lobbing grenades forward to take out Slegs you know are there from

Twenty minutes into a slow, carefully played level, you're likely to fall off a ledge...

playing the level earlier won't have any effect, as the bad guys haven't spawned yet. Sigh.

Control tends to feel a bit sluggish, and you'll struggle to weapon switch quickly in a tight spot or when you're surrounded. As you discover better weapons, it does become less frustrating to work your way through some of the levels, as the variety in means of attack really opens up far more strategic options for you to work with. However, again the gameplay balance seems off. For example, there is never health when you need it, and too much of it when you don't. Sometimes a precarious jump will even mean you can't double back for power-ups you left safely for later use. I call it bad level design.

Graphically, there are some ugly, blurry textures and a few bland and featureless character models, but it's offset by some truly good-looking environments. Some of the dinos and other creatures are animated very nicely and some of the weapon effects (like the rocket launcher) look sweet. There are also a few creative weapon ideas.

All up, there's just enough meat on the Turok: Evolution bone to keep you playing. Levels are a real mixed bag though, from enjoyable and challenging to frustrating and annoying. Turok: Evolution is certainly worth a look if you're post-Halo, or post-Medal of Honor, but you'll probably need to take regular breaks from it to remind yourself of what you could be playing instead.

!!! Turok: Evolution is also out on Xbox, GBA and soon GameCube.



PLUS: Some nice weapons, lots of multiplayer modes.

MINUS: Poor gameplay balance, and frustrating levels.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

85 83 81

OVERALL

82

It's no evolution, but feels good to get your hands dirty.

REVIEW

» HYPER 59



Wizardry: TALES OF THE FORSAKEN LAND

CATEGORY: RPG >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Atlus/Ubi Soft >> PRICE: \$79.95 >> RATING: G8+ >> AVAILABLE: Late September >>

ELIOT FISH travels back in time, to an age long gone...

Wow, nostalgia attack. The very first review I wrote for Hyper magazine was a byte size on Wizardry for the Super Nintendo back in 1994. Now here I am loading up Wizardry for the PlayStation 2, marvelling at how much has changed in the last 8 years. Everything but Wizardry it seems. I've gone from naive contributor to battle-worn editor, and yet Wizardry seems to look and play almost the way it did all those years ago. It's almost like some bizarre Star Trek episode where I've fallen into a crack in the space/time continuum and everyone's wearing acid-wash jeans again. Or something. Whatever it is, Wizardry on PS2 is such an old-school dungeon romp, I could swear I heard my mother yelling at me to turn the console off and go do some homework.

BEEFY WARRIORS
As far as RPGs go, Wizardry is a strange hybrid of American and Japanese styles. The core of the game is very much a western D&D style system, with elves, hobbits, dwarves and the usual character classes such as thief, knight, sorcerer and so on. However, the combat system is very much in the vein of Final Fantasy and Suikoden. They even managed to write some combat music that Square could almost take them to court over, complete with the camera panning across the enemy as the data loads. The turn-based battles play out quite strategically, and there's even the twist of an allied-attack system where you can perform special moves in combat involving multiple party members. With up to six characters in

your party, you naturally place your beefy warriors in the front row to do most of the melee fighting and sit your magic users in the back row from where they can happily use ranged or spell attacks. The allied actions rely on the trust that has formed between your characters. Depending on your actions in the game, your party members will learn to trust you more which raises your party's rank, allowing you access to more and more complex allied actions in combat. For instance, you can perform a "back attack" where you use one member of your party as a decoy, and then have the others back stab the enemy when they attack. Or how about the "Restrict Shot" where you have your back row prevent the enemy from attacking with a combined projectile attack. But that's just the tip of a plethora of other

offensive and defensive tactics that really add much needed variety to the turn-based combat. It's this bit of variation that probably rescues Wizardry from coming off as somewhat generic in its RPG formula. There's also an interesting spell-making component for magic users, where you can combine various items found whilst questing to learn new spells or power up and master ones you already know.





Combine various items found whilst questing to learn new spells or **power up and master ones you already know.**

WACKY CHARACTERS

All NPC interactions are purely text-based with some rather lovely 2D illustrations, whilst the dungeon probing is done with a rather primitive 3D engine. Once in combat, the enemies look pretty good and are nicely animated, but unfortunately you never get to see your own character (nor your armour or weapons) as the game

plays out in first-person for its entirety. Basically, you need to have a pretty good imagination to get into the game. The music is somewhat forgettable, and there's very little eye candy to be had, so enjoyment is really derived from the RPG basics – which thankfully is executed quite well.

The main story and side-quests are fun, and you'll

bump into the same wacky characters on your adventure often enough to start enjoy their odd personalities, and as a result, become quite attached to the game. However, things do get off to a slow start – and trudging through the same dungeon over and over again to get back to where you were before you had to split back to town for healing, does start to become a little tedious. The ancient graveyard level is particularly tiresome.

However, if you're a patient gamer who enjoys the challenge of levelling up your party to progress and the exploration aspect that goes with it, there's enough of an RPG here to keep you hooked. If you've played and enjoyed RPGs of old, then the primitive nature of the game won't bother you a bit. If you're the kind of gamer brought up on RPGs from the PlayStation onwards, you might find it a bit too limited in its presentation and lack of true depth. ❖❖

!!! It's odd to hear the words "shii", "bitch" and "piss" so often in an otherwise cute RPG.



PLUS: Combat becomes more involving as the game wears on.

MINUS: Feels like it was made eight years ago.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
69	68	72
OVERALL		
73		
Not for casual gamers, but RPG freaks might get hooked.		



>> XBOX

Hunter: The Reckoning

CATEGORY: Action >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: Interplay >> PRICE: \$99 >> RATING: M15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

JACKSON GOTHE-SNAPE looks like the undead on Mondays...

Hunter: The Reckoning is a title that captures the gaming spirit of days gone by. Based on the White Wolf pen and paper RPG universe, the game manages to successfully implement a multiplayer focus, providing an addictive, rewarding, intense experience. Sure, the game offers only limited scope and flexibility, and its mechanics can frustrate, but High Voltage Software have created a game that is worth playing, especially with a few mates.

The premise for the game is pure cheese. Apparently, "from the throng of Humanity, individuals emerge who know the truth. They know monsters exist. Enough is enough. The forces of darkness must pay their due." Thankfully, it's all tongue-in-cheek, and tinged with plenty of dark

humour and twisted horror. There is a bit of a story lying around, but all you really need to know is that there are hordes of undead wandering the streets of Ashcroft.

LOOK SHARP

Hunter manages to bring the undead to life through beautifully crisp and detailed characters models. Pumping round after round into a wave of zombies brings the festival of the flying limb, as muzzle flares illuminate the fiends' bloody remains. It is a bit disappointing that there aren't more enemy models, but variety does arrive with the firearm-assisted amputation of different limbs, heads, and even torsos (leaving just a walking pair of legs!).

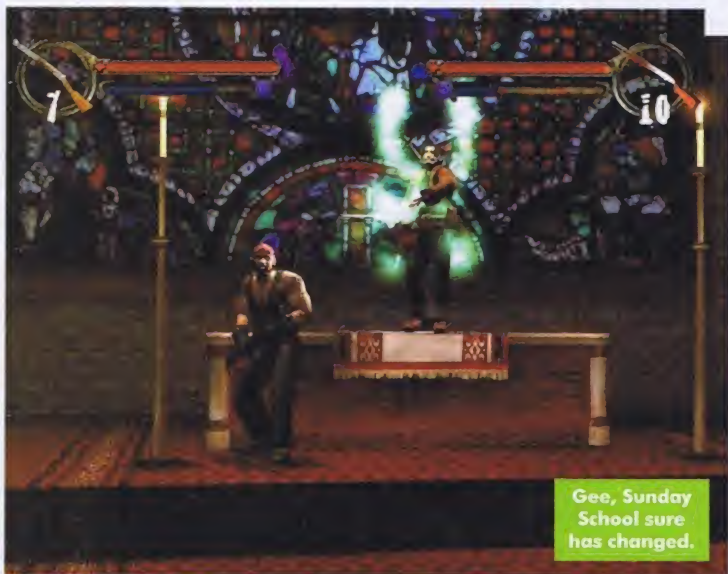
Everything looks very sharp, particularly the environments,

although the almost top-down camera makes most of the indoor environments feel a bit similar. There are some nice, although mostly pointless and fairly scripted, moments of environment interaction, such as tables smashing and cars blowing up, while the water rippling effect in the sewer level is very impressive. Bloodstained floors are another nice touch, as are the fantastic reflections off pools of water on the floor — although where are the footstep splashes?

The animation of the player characters, too, is generally impressive, but could definitely have

been improved. The upper body moves and rotates independently from the legs, creating a nice flexible effect, although changing directions can be a little disjointed. Watching your player actually reach around and grab the other weapon tied to his/her back is





Gee, Sunday School sure has changed.



Taking Bible-bashing to an all-new level!



Look out, that last step's a doozy!



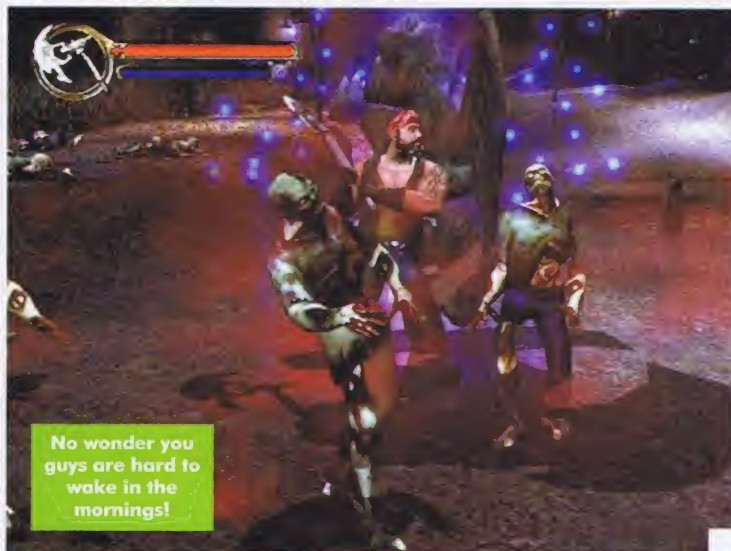
Now that's a cheap appendectomy.



The running of the bulls in 2086.



Someone's ketchup bottle is leaking.



No wonder you guys are hard to wake in the mornings!

Pumping round after round into a wave of zombies brings the festival of the flying limb...

quite glorious however.

The satisfaction of blowing packs of monsters away can be traced back to the sound, which features some splendid gunshots and grunts. Footsteps clang or tap on different surfaces, and there are some nice ambient sounds when the rather fitting soundtrack isn't playing. There's also effective contrast between the ruckus of the zombie slaying and the relative quiet of the calm before the storm. As enemies appear, the eruption of noise truly gets the blood racing, but it is never with surprise or shock as in survival horror titles — the sounds create an atmosphere of action-fed adrenalin.



When playing multiplayer, be aware that everyone plays on the same screen, so be co-operative!

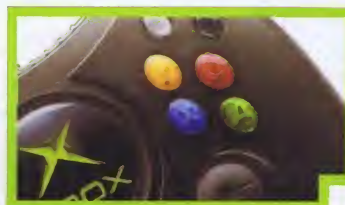
TWO'S COMPANY, FOUR'S A RIOT

The single player game, although entertaining, challenging and amusing, is not the game's strength. The monotony of the 'shoot/slash everything' style of gameplay is not suited to the lone warrior. For a one-player game, Hunter just doesn't offer the length or complexity of progression that gamers demand. The levels are all very linear, with the act of finding innocents (to save) and items, such as keys, involving little more than blowing everything away until a monster drops a key. Multiplayer on the other hand seems perfectly suited to this style of direct, all-action gameplay. It is unquestionable that blowing s**t up with your mates is,

quite literally, a riot, as your violence and destruction are somehow validated with a social primal display. As you can imagine, with four players Hunter is pure, delectable chaos.

Unfortunately, the game contains some definite faults. Most of the time, the unrefined chaotic battles allow the flaws to go unnoticed, but it is when taking on bosses and other singular, more difficult enemies that the aiming system and twitchy controls can cause bouts of controller hurling. The game would actually be more suited to the PS2 controller, which not only has more shoulder buttons, but would be more suited to the shoulder button mashing that Hunter demands.

Having said that, the control issues don't stop the game from being good old-fashioned fun. There is solid variety in the great array of special weapons and special powers — while the sheer artistry of shooting limbs off zombies is terribly addictive. In Hunter, the simple gaming pleasures are alive and well. Although decent if played alone, this dark horse demands the multiplayer treatment. <<<



PLUS: Crisp visuals, effective sound, multiplayer mayhem.

MINUS: Some control issues, single player simplicity.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

84 87 80

OVERALL

83

Dark, chaotic and fun: multiplayer joy.

REVIEW

>> HYPER 63



Chase

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

FRANK DRY careens into a row of hedges.

It's funny sometimes, when you least expect it, a game comes along and surprises the pants off you. And when you're playing a game without your pants on, well... let's just say that it's a thrilling new experience. Chase is just a small Acclaim title that will probably make it to the shelves with little fanfare, dismissed as a Stuntman clone pumped out to cash in on that game's profile and big marketing budget. The irony with Chase is that this is more the style of fun stunt driving that we had expected from Stuntman itself...

CHAOTIC DRIVING

Chase is the name of the stuntwoman that you play as, and unlike Stuntman, Chase knows how to drive more than just cars. She can also

handle motorbikes, huge semi-trailers, vans and more. Her career spans across a number of different movies, broken down into a selection of scenes that you can replay to your heart's content. Each scene is filled with a number of different objectives, such as, "drive through thirty bales of hay", "knock down twenty street lamps", "powerslide for at least 40 meters", "deliver the cocaine shipment to Val Kilmer's trailer" and so on (okay, so I made that last one up). However, unlike Stuntman, if you fail any objective, it doesn't matter — the scene continues and you can keep driving and try to achieve the other objectives.

Unlike the super-precision needed in Stuntman, Chase is more about chaotic driving and crazy stunts and you're not penalised for screwing

things up. Stuntman stops the game every time you miss an objective and puts you back at the start, whereas Chase allows you the freedom of tackling objectives in a non-linear fashion.

If you do get an objective successfully, you are awarded points at the end of the scene, and if you have enough points you can progress to the next scene. This system works well, because you can replay old stunts to clear objectives you

failed earlier in the game, just to earn the points you may need to keep progressing. Being able to go back and pick and choose which scenes and objectives to achieve makes the whole stunt driving experience far more enjoyable. The result is that you're never bored or frustrated trying to achieve the same stunt over and over, as the game allows and even encourages variety in your driving style and approach.

UNDERCOOKED

The range of different vehicles also helps to keep





Luckyyyyy, you're with AIMEE.



It's the psycho Laksa delivery man!



Red pickups = red necks.



Prohibition? We got a trunk fulla 40s!



Playing chicken with a tuk-tuk.



Let me guess... it's a chase.



Oh bother, old chap. We're screwed!

Unlike Stuntman, if you fail any objective, it doesn't matter - the scene continues...

the stunt driving entertaining. Once you think you've mastered powersliding in a car, along comes the motorbike to test just how carefully you can fly off ramps, or take sharp corners without throwing yourself off the bike. Then there's the slow lumbering truck that can tip over and ruin the scene if you ram it into other vehicles at the wrong angle or take a

corner too quickly. The vehicle handling isn't terribly realistic, and in some cases, a little too arcadey, so after extended play with the game, you start to hanker for better vehicles that would help you to exploit the driving skills that you've acquired.

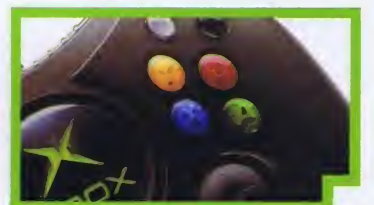
The unpolished nature of Chase starts to dull things a little after a while. You can tell the game hasn't

!!!
Bam! are responsible for Ecks vs Sever on GBA.



been in development for a very long time, or had the same kind of budget as Stuntman. An example of the undercooked nature of the game is the multiplayer mode. You can put up to four players in a stunt arena and play a game of tag or two other crazy games, but the size of the arena and placement of the loop-the-loops, ramps, half-pipes and other obstacles seems a little haphazard. A bit more time should have been spent on the design of these bonus games. It can even be difficult finding your opponents, especially if there's only two of you playing in the one huge arena. All the ideas are great, but someone really needed to sit down and refine and focus what's been thrown into the mix to really turn it into something truly special.

As it is, Chase just feels a little unfinished, with a huge amount of cool potential unrealised. What is there though is pretty decent fun, and with more spit and polish and some more in-depth stunts, this game could have truly put Stuntman to shame. <<<



PLUS: Fun crazy driving, good objective system.

MINUS: It all feels a little b-grade.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

79 72 74

OVERALL

72

The Stuntman team could learn a few things from this.

REVIEW

>>> HYPER 65



>>> XBOX

Conflict: Desert Storm

CATEGORY: Tactical Shooter >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: SCI >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: TBA >>

JACKSON GOTHE-SNAPE thanks the gaming gods for Private Foley.

There's something slightly unnerving about playing a videogame based on real-world events. It could be seen to dehumanise the parties involved, while also transforming one side of the struggle into a very two-dimensional representation of "evil". Recently we have encountered America's Army, the US Army's official game, and elsewhere in this issue Delta Force: Task Force Dagger, an assault on Afghanistan. There is a crucial difference between the two approaches offered by these games. While Delta Force tries to take advantage of popular opinion to sell more copies, America's Army is designed to boost the Army's appeal and convert, but most disturbingly, insert its perspective into the public subconscious — an

extremely concerning development. Now, Conflict: Desert Storm has arrived in our laps, and although it doesn't subvert people's beliefs, it still chucks you into the Gulf War, fighting for the rights of Kuwait's oil. Ah sayy, Horace, leit's urs shuit urs some Ragheads...

TRULY TORTUROUS TRAINING

The tutorial, although extremely painful, is a valuable feature that describes the complicated control system. Some exceedingly annoying superiors scream instructions at you for a good 10 minutes or more. By the final live ammo test, it's hard to resist grabbing your gun and hunting the Sargent down. Yet overall, it's an important part of the game that gives you a quick run down of the control scheme,

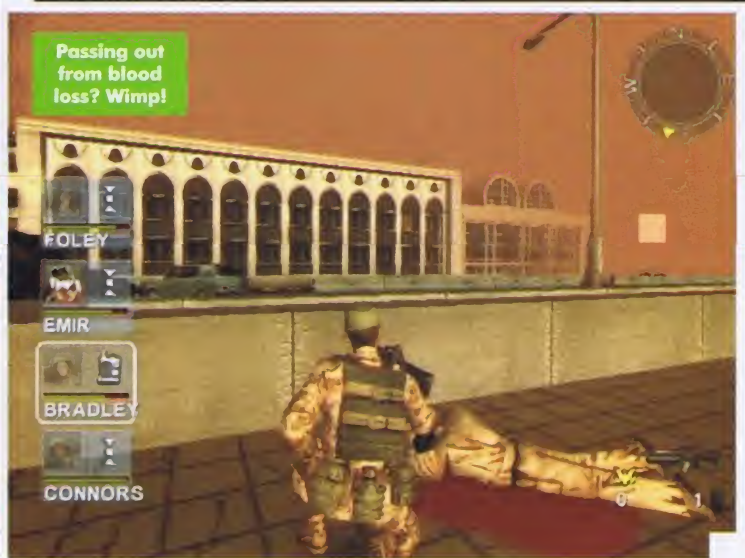
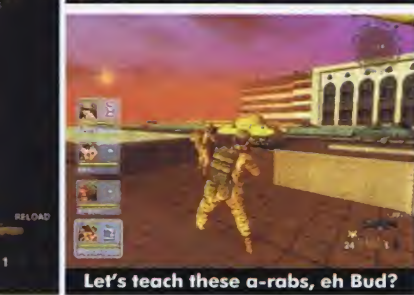
including squad orders. It could have been integrated into the game in a more streamlined fashion, but it satisfactorily completes its task.

The game's campaign runs through the Gulf War with fictitious missions approximately fitting the progression of the conflict. So, following the written mission brief, early on you'll be destroying SAM sites and bridges, whereas later you get to the more interesting missions, such as assassination attempts.

After starting the game with just a single soldier, over the course of the first few missions, you build up your squad into a crack four-man outfit, containing a leader, sniper, heavy weapons guy and infiltration/explosives expert. The game gives you the opportunity to change players at any time, and

requires it, as the lack of complex orders means you'll be doing most of the important tasks yourself, like blowing up SCUD launchers, blowing up tanks, blowing up power generators and blowing up radar arrays.

The game is mostly played out in third-person, with only a first person mode being used for accurate shooting. Strangely, the game provides an auto-aim function, meaning more or less as soon as you look near an enemy, the crosshair locks onto them. Overall the system makes for a less rewarding experience — with the aiming frustrations that plague console controllers, it's easier and more successful to just auto-aim, crouch, click first person mode, then shoot.



...the controls and AI don't quite offer the **accuracy or realism demanded** by a stealth-focused game.

SADDAM'S FOG OF WAR

Conflict: Desert Storm is a fairly pretty game, which offers some nice crisp visuals and some good effects. There is decent variety in the locations, with some great city-based missions providing a change of scene to the desert-canyon filled outings that make up much of the game. Each environment features a range of small details, such as mines, stones, footsteps and bushes, while there is great variety in elevation. Having said that, without all the frills, the landscape would look drab and repetitive.

Meanwhile, the levels all appear to be under a thick fog haze, which is even heavier in multiplayer. Sure, the odd sandstorm experience might be interesting, but when the

!!! Can we expect Invasion: Iraq in 2004? Yikes.

sniper rifle has a greater range than the extent of visibility in every level, you have reason to be disappointed. The soldiers are quite detailed, although move slightly clumsily at times, and the exaggerated death animations, although hilarious, have no place in the game.

Sound-wise the game is quite good, with some fitting enemy cries and informative squad-mate chatter. Although the ambient music hardly adds anything to the game, some sweet weapon sounds, such as bullets pinging the ground nearby or tank shells whizzing past your head keep you on your toes.

While the gameplay is solid, the controls and AI don't quite offer the accuracy or realism demanded by a

stealth-focused game. Squad-mates will shoot at the first site of an enemy, while the auto-aim and twitchy but slow strafing make close-quarter firefights chaos. There is just not enough scope with your squad-mate commands, while the levels aren't at all conducive to freedom in approaching the mission. The missions usually offer a couple of routes, but their flexibility can't compare to games like Operation Flashpoint.

The main problem with the game is that it is hard to play how it was designed, with stealth in mind. Illogical enemy awareness and immoral, inexplicable enemy spawning, not to mention the restrictions of the controls, make it much easier to approach the game as a shallower shooter. Higher difficulties only emphasise these frustrations. Having said all this, there's plenty of great Gulf War action to be enjoyed in this package. The game in general offers some elementary tactical principles, and is particularly agreeable in co-operative mode. ❄️



PLUS: Four-player co-operative campaign option.

MINUS: Some serious control flaws and a few AI niggles.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
81	84	80
OVERALL		
81		
The chance to go after Saddam, with Gulf War syndrome.		



XBOX

Deathrow

CATEGORY: Future Sports >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: Ubi Soft >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: September 26 >>

JACKSON GOTHE-SNAPE isn't opposed to beating in a few heads.

At the time of writing, the 2002 World Flying Disc Federation World Ultimate Club Championships are currently underway in Hawaii. Most of us will know Flying Disc as Ultimate Frisbee – the sport that has ensured the humble tank top will forever reside beyond the realms of fashion. Judging from the increasing number of thirty-something yuppies swarming local Australian parks and ovals, Ultimate Frisbee appears to be on the rise. If there was a touch more violence to attract the more primal supporter, in the future Ultimate Frisbee may just become synonymous with sport. Deathrow, developed by Swedish team Southend Interactive, depicts that very future.

DEATH AND DESTRUCTION Okay, so Deathrow doesn't exactly feature Ultimate Frisbee. Instead, the game depicts an "ultra-violent" future sport that uses a frisbee-like spinning disc as its 'ball'. Why do all future sports seem to be especially bloody? Current sports are widely considered to be suffering from an increasing degree of sterility that comes from professionalism and the threat of litigation – surely the trend will continue until the time when no physical contact sports remain. Perhaps these imaginary future sports represent a bloodless frustration, in response to the lack of carnage in the modern sporting era. But looking to the future just doesn't make sense. If you want

death and destruction, perhaps "Falstaff's Medieval Head-Kicking Football" would make more sense. Nonetheless, Deathrow still manages to entertain.

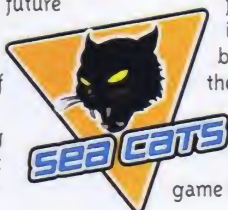
Deathrow is played by two teams of four players in a medium-sized arena. Each team has a small, elevated, round, vertical goal for which to aim. It's placed inside the field like an ice hockey goal, and you can sometimes (depending on the field) throw the disc through it either forwards or backwards to score. The aim of the game is to simply outscore the opposition... oh, and to kick the s*** out of them. In all but the strictest game type, any violence is



perfectly legal. Although the combat is very basic, it does provide one of the more satisfying aspects of the game. Acquiring too many injuries will see you knocked out, leaving your team a player down.

Thankfully, at the end of each quarter you can heal any injuries – for a price.

The main aim of the game is to rise through a series of divisions, acquiring money on the way through challenging and beating other teams. The money can then be used to buy gear, such as gene therapy, and players, for an assault on the higher divisions. Your players' stats, too, can be improved with an expensive training regime. Betting and other unscrupulous means of financial gain also feature.





Wait for their batteries to run out.



I learnt this one from Richard Simmons.



Jango Fett's day job.



It's dangerous on the dancefloor!



Goood, er... Hooooooop!



It's sushi not oranges at half-time.



Is the ref blind?! Oh... he's dead.

It's criminal to make a future sports game without a riotous multiplayer mode...

WHAT IS GOING ON?

Thanks to some nice effects, *Deathrow* looks fairly tasty. The textures have that Xbox bump-mapped industrial finish to them, which suits the setting well. Meanwhile, the disc creates stellar light trails, illuminating the blood splatters that build up on the ground. The players are well detailed, and have a solid range of moves, but move somewhat jerkily, and share a generic team-specific body model. Finally, the environments look decent, if a bit enclosed, but feature some dynamic crowds creating a fitting sense of occasion.

The visuals, although fair, are certainly overshadowed by the headline-grabbing sounds.

Expletives abound, as players taunt and tease each other at the touch of a button. It can get quite chaotic as the punches start getting thrown, the taunts come out and the crowd erupts. There's also the token

commentator booming one-liners like "deathrow!".

Depending on what mode you play — either Sports or Hardcore — the game varies quite significantly. While in Hardcore the camera is positioned over the shoulder, rotating with the player, Sports is viewed from almost a top down fixed-angle view, which makes it much easier to play. Even then however, it's fairly hard to follow the disc round, as every time you get punched or kicked, the screen turns a translucent red. When

!!! Look out for the upcoming Splinter Cell! Sexy.

there is a bunch of six players fighting for the disc, it is near impossible to work out what is going on, particularly in multiplayer.

Due to the nature of the game, *Deathrow* offers a split-screen multiplayer mode, where each screen follows the player around. Even in single player things can get rather frenetic, so multiplayer multiplies the bewilderment, at times to the point of frustration. It's criminal to make a future sports game without a riotous multiplayer mode, considering the genre is traditionally reliant on the 'having a bash with the mates' habit for success.

Nonetheless, *Deathrow* is a fair play. There's plenty to unlock — 32 arenas, 146 players, and 17 teams — and the game is deep enough to develop some rewarding strategies, particularly in multiplayer. What is perhaps its main strength is its attitude, ranging from the swearing and betting, to the fictional product placement and gene therapy. It's far from a classic, but I'd recommend *Deathrow* over *Ultimate Frisbee* any day. ❄️



PLUS: Attitude. Solid single player. Nice character designs.

MINUS: Confusing gameplay. Disappointing multiplayer.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

81 83 73

OVERALL

75

Bloody future sports.

REVIEW

»»» HYPER 69

Ess 0
Bris 0
Q1 19:19



AFL Live 2003

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

MICHAEL GRIESSER likes getting points for missing.

Fussie sports games are few and far between, so it's always intriguing when one pops in to Hyper HQ. Here we have AFL Live 2003, published by Acclaim who are naturally quite excited about it. With a decent budget, a national sport, a local developer (IR Gurus) and expert Kevin Sheedy helping with tactics, the ingredients are there for a championship winning game.

SHOW US YOUR SHORTS
Graphically, AFL Live 2003 is surprisingly good for a first effort. Just about everything in this game has been fully licensed by the AFL so you'll see the relevant stadiums, sponsors, logos, players, guemseys, flags and paraphernalia. You can see the roof at Colonial stadium, the Great Southern

Stand at the MCG and on the actual ground you can even see where the grass has been worn out. The player models are decent in terms of physique and size however, some of the facial mapping is not very detailed. Most of the time, though, the players are so far away you won't really notice.

The framerate runs smoothly most of the time and animations are very fluent with smooth hand passes, kicks and tackles. This has been done with the motion capture of Sydney Swans players Nick Daffy and Paul Williams. When a combination of handpasses and kicks are strung together it looks just like it is on TV. IR Gurus have done well here. The use of camera angles is excellent, with the default being used for most of the play but when a contested mark takes place, the camera zooms into the action



where you can get a better idea of when to jump. When you go for goal after a mark, the camera zooms in behind you giving you a feeling of tension. You may see the ball go soaring through the air for a goal, trickle weakly through for a behind or miss the posts altogether.
AFL Live 2003 contains some atmospheric sounds, yet it still needs some off-season hard yakka. The crowds are quite intelligent,



which is evident when the opposing team gets a free kick and the home crowd will boo and groan. When a mark is taken a slight cheer occurs yet the sound when scoring a goal is inconsistent. Sometimes when I scored a goal the crowd was quieter than a library. But the sound of the "thud" when you kick the ball is so real, you'll be thinking someone is kicking the Sherrin in the back yard. As Eilat said when the game started



It's a good mix of arcade and simulation and **there aren't a lot of unnecessary options...**

up "It's great to hear an Aussie commentator" instead of some yank raving on about the 10th average of the zillionth down for some wide receiver. Steven Quartermain and Garry Lyon commentate, and speak the player names seamlessly within phrases, keeping up with the play well. Maybe some player trash talking or chatter would have given the game some extra niggles. And we must say, a very nice touch is that your team's song plays after you win.

HELL - EAT YOUR SHORTS!

Thankfully, Live 2003 plays as good as it looks and sounds. It's a good mix of arcade and simulation and there aren't a lot of unnecessary options such as a hundred different defences

and countless jargon. A tutorial and rules mode like the one used in EA Sports Rugby would help novices master the fundamentals quicker, but I guess you can't have everything.

The pace of the game is fast enough so it's fun — but not too fast, allowing you to make crucial decisions. Kicking is gauged on a power meter, and holding down the kick button for longer makes a powerful punt or letting go of the button quickly results in a chip kick. A lot of research has gone into the players' abilities. Guys like Jason Akermanis are super fast and are great to make inroads through the midfield whilst Matthew Lloyd and Barry Hall are reliable goal kickers.

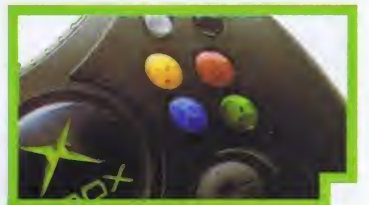
You can play a single match, season or just the finals which is standard for

a sports game. The controls are really quite solid. When on the offensive you can hand pass, side step, kick, and bounce the ball. In defense you can tackle or charge opposing players. A nice touch is how the controller rumbles after a kick or tackle. Maybe in next year's version some "special" moves may become apparent, such as a spin move or a power tackle.

There are a few minor quirks though, for when going for a close goal on the run, my player took too long to kick the ball and ran over the goal line which resulted in a behind. Maybe having a special move such as a quick grubber kick could help out here. As they say in sport, "there's always next year". The gameplay in Live 2003 is great but there's just a tad of gloss missing.

AFL Live 2003 is an enjoyable and engrossing game. You spend the money, you research the product and you get a good game — Acclaim have followed this theory well. Some minor tweaks and improvements would have boosted this game to a Rubber Stamp approval but for a first up effort, thumbs up lads, you've done well. <<<

Now all we need is that Rugby League game.



PLUS: Good animation, looks and feels authentic.

MINUS: Special moves needed, some minor control issues.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

84 80 84

OVERALL

85

Could this be the start of something beautiful?



PC

Icewind Dale II

CATEGORY: RPG >> PLAYERS: 1-6 >> PUBLISHER: Interplay >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: PII 350, 64MB RAM

ELIOT FISH says winter is his favourite season...

The Icewind Dale series (the original and the expansion pack, Heart of Winter) is a more linear and streamlined RPG experience over its Baldur's Gate siblings, and as a result, preferred by some. With an emphasis on tactical D&D combat and more focused questing (and with less of an overwhelming and convoluted story), it's hard to find a better RPG solution on the shelf. Now with the addition of the 3rd edition D&D rule set, Icewind Dale II looks like just the thing to keep us adventuring until the summer comes.

Goblins from the north. Targos is one of the ten towns of Icewind Dale, and from there your arduous journey across the spine of the world begins as you attempt to get to the bottom of the origin of the Goblinoid hordes.

As was the case with the original Icewind Dale, the gameplay in Icewind Dale II is quite delicately paced. Combat becomes progressively more challenging, allowing you to grow in experience along with your characters, although it's certainly more difficult this time around. You'll really need to understand your classes and their abilities in order to progress.

Because battles play out in real time, you'll notice the AI in your party has a hard time sometimes understanding the role they need to play in a fight. You'll be needing to pause the game and fiddle about to

improve your odds. As usual, magic users are the ones that you need to babysit the most, pausing the combat so as to select and target where you want your spells to go. There are AI scripts you can attach to each character (like giving your Cleric a 'guardian' setting so they heal injured characters), but for some reason they never really seem to be that useful and inevitably you need to pause and guide your characters' actions through most battles. Magic users in combat can be quite frustrating and clumsy to manage, as you have to select the spell you want to use every time you cast, and there's no quick spell to bind as a default. It can mean losing a few crucial seconds as you attempt to stop them stumbling into melee combat. Being able to set them to

hang back, or use a default spell would be really helpful.

The 3rd edition rule set has allowed for more classes (e.g. Sorcerer, Monk, Barbarian) and the delight of multiclassing. Each time you take a new level, you can

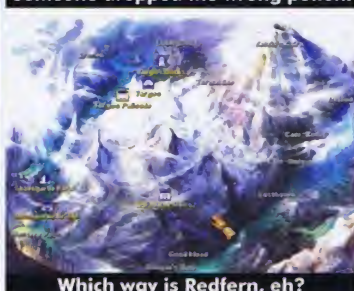


PAUSE AND GUIDE

Starting out in the town of Targos, you and your party of up to five other characters have decided to help investigate a sudden attack of



Zoe Nightkill- Attacks Highland Snake
 Highland Snake- Attacks Dey-inonn
 Highland Snake- Attacks Zoe Nightkill
 Highland Snake- Takes 7 piercing damage from Eementree
 Highland Snake- Takes 10 piercing damage from Northlander
 Highland Snake- Attacks Zoe Nightkill
 Highland Snake- Attacks Zoe Nightkill



Stat	Value	Modifier
Str	17	+3
Des	10	+0
Con	10	+0
Int	10	+0
Wis	16	+3
Cha	18	+4

Levels - Character Level 4
 Paladin of Helm: 4
 Effective Character Level: 5
 Favored Class: Paladin
 Experience
 Current: 11485
 Next Level: 15000
 Current Effects
 9 - Protection from Cold
 8 - Aura of Courage
 Race: Asstinar
 Alignment: Lawful Good
 Saving Throws
 Fortitude: +8

Information, Biography, Export, Customize

Level Up

All kneel to the one they call Lord Seafood!

Some Paladins won't even accept gold rewards, so be careful who you use to do your diplomacy.

branch some classes off – for instance, a Paladin of the Helm (yes there are sub classes, and even sub-races) can multiclass to a fighter and back again, or a Paladin of Ilmater can add Clerical abilities. This actually allows you to benefit from full cumulative bonuses from both classes. Nice. There is a level cap in the game, but the extra-difficult Heart of fury mode allows you to get to 30th level, so RPG veterans have something to sink their teeth into.

BLUFF AND INTIMIDATE

Black Isle's experience with these games really shines through in the dialogue, story and questing. Incidental dialogue from NPCs is sometimes truly hilarious, and at times characters will take the piss out of RPGs in general. A bunch of adventurers a

the Salty Dog inn complain about how they had to "clear out the rats from the warehouse" and how they're sick of "fetching" missions. You'll even get into some funny conversations by carrying around certain items (like a dead cat), and surprisingly there are also class-specific conversations. Some Paladins won't even accept gold rewards, so be careful who you use to do your diplomacy.

The interface has had a bit of a redesign this time around, and generally the changes are good. You can now have up to four different weapon sets configured for changing on the fly, like from ranged weapons to melee weapons and so forth. Our only gripe is that there are no viewable

!!! The voice-set "HOW_MALE_3" is none other than Mark Hamill!

stats on the inventory screen, so when switching armour or adding magical items to your gear, you need to bring up another window to see how beneficial it is for that character, rather than being able to do the old "equip/unequip" stat check.

There are a tonne of skills and feats for characters to learn, from learning the ability to wield two weapons at once, to alchemy, being able to fight blind, conversation skills such as bluff and intimidate, and a host of other cool abilities that help to differentiate the characters. Some fighters will turn out quick, nimble and precise, and others will turn into lumbering, bludgeoning tanks. Customising characters is a joy, and Icewind Dale II has it where it counts.

Visually, nothing much has changed. The game does support higher resolutions like 1024x768, but there is still no 3D acceleration and overall the Infinity Engine is starting to look a little dated. There's a certain charm to the 2D art, but a little more character detail would have been nice. Overall, this is quality RPGing. <<<



PLUS: Engrossing RPGing, great soundtrack, good story.

MINUS: No 3D acceleration. Interface could still be better.

VISUALS 84 SOUND 89 GAMEPLAY 89

OVERALL

89

Tactically challenging RPG combat. Addictive.

REVIEW

>>> HYPER 75



Now THAT is a shotgun!



Turn that zippo down, will ya?



The deadly passive smoking gun.

PC

Gore: Ultimate Soldier

CATEGORY: FPS >> PLAYERS: 1-16 >> PUBLISHER: Take 2 Interactive >> PRICE: \$69.95 >> RATING: M15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: PII-500, 128MB 3D card

JOHN DEWHURST pinky swore not to make any Cryo jokes.

Gore is a paint-by-numbers First Person Shooter with blood and guts aplenty, a super fast pace and all the blood curdling screams a man could ask for. The engine is lightning quick and solid but the environments are blocky and many feature the grey-on-black concrete nightmare of Deus Ex - only lacking everything that made that game a classic. In fact, the less said about the single player the better. Gore is one narrow corridor from beginning to end.

BUNNY HOPPING

This game really should have been a download for half the price. The snazzy big box is empty but for a DVD case, which holds a disc and a manual of five pages of useless information. Wait, ten pages, I can read French. Worst manual ever? Definitely.

The actual gameplay is fairly competent. It's original Quake-speed mania with hugely powerful weapons. Movement is quick and clean and secondary fire modes offer some variety in play. There are player classes, from light to heavy,

affecting how quickly the model moves and weapon capabilities. It's nothing we haven't seen before. Worse, there are no bots that can be added to multiplayer games.

The innovations brought to the First Person experience by GORE come down to Stamina and visible armour. Giving each player a level of stamina is an attempt at adding some realism to a multiplayer game, discouraging the excessive use of bunny hopping. If you jump around too much, the character's stamina decreases to a point where they start falling over and blacking out. It's an antidote to the jump happy but it certainly doesn't make a great game. For all the realism of stamina, water doesn't seem to affect a character's health. Try hiding in a pool - apparently in the future they breathe water.

VISIBLE ARMOUR

The visible armour means that armour pickups are visible on character models. This means you can target other parts of the body to

bring them down. Sounds like the developers put in some location damage. Head shots bring enemies down quicker but there's nothing too fancy going on here - I shot an enemy AI's foot until it died.

The AI of the enemies in the single player is some of the worst around. They'll follow you if you run away but don't retreat themselves. As soon as they jump out from behind a corner they stand fairly still to be filled with bullets - and a wad of bullets it takes to down enemies too. The difficulty of the game has been pumped up by the fact that each enemy is a veritable tank. This impacts on the amount of available ammunition. You're running permanently on empty, especially on useful weapons.

What we're left with is a below average action shooter that does everything it's supposed to but excite. It's funny, but violence only bothers me when there's nothing else of merit in a game: no story, no characters, no new ideas. It's fair to say that GORE worries me a lot. <<<

!!! There ain't a lot of gore to speak of in this game at all, in fact.



PLUS: If you must collect every FPS ever released, here's another.

MINUS: It's all a bit too predictable and tired.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

64 55 57

OVERALL

60

Not an heir to any FPS throne.



Stick up, this is a hands up! Er...



Snipe the rag off his head.



It's the US Army, everyone play dead.



PC

Delta Force: TASK FORCE DAGGER

CATEGORY: FPS >> PLAYERS: 1-multi >> PUBLISHER: EA >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: PII 400, 128MB RAM >>

JACKSON GOTHE-SNAPE goes for a head shot.

FAs the War on Terrorism has brought international relations into the mainstream, videogames are being swamped by pop politics like never before. Following the recent release by the US Army of a free downloadable first-person shooter, comes Delta Force: Task Force Dagger. Co-developed by Novalogic and Zombie Studios, DF:TFD gives you the chance to fight for the infamous infinite justice, in Afghanistan.

MISSING IN ACTION

It's been a couple of years since the last Delta Force release, Land Warriors, and to tell the truth, the series hasn't really been missed. Although the original DF game was a pioneer of the genre, Operation Flashpoint and the Rainbow Six series have since established a benchmark for tactical shooters, one that leaves Task Force Dagger missing in action.

The voxel-based terrain, although very expansive, shimmers quite severely as you wander around. The quality of the textures, too, is underwhelming, as is the intricacy of the architecture. Enemy models are

terribly simple, and desperately lack variety, both in appearance and animation. It's neat playing through missions that feature both indoor and outdoor combat, but the graphic engine's age continually frustrates as you stagger, wounded by performance inconsistencies, through sparse, ugly topography or eerily empty rooms.

The sound is only marginally better, with some solid weapon effects. Shouts of the enemy sound unrealistic, as the cries seem to travel bewildering distances. At least the musical soundtrack doesn't really make an impact.

Delta Force: Task Force Dagger offers some twenty-five missions, as well as multiplayer, but in the end you'll struggle to last the distance. Although there is some variety in the Afghan locations, the missions all retain a very basic, generic feel. It's merely a sniper's paradise, as you take down bunches of unsuspecting enemies, each struggling to express their true intellect. I'm not familiar with Al Qaeda protocol, but I'm fairly confident that if your comrade nearby takes a bullet,

you don't pretend nothing just happened. Land Warriors suffered from similar flaws when it was released — isn't it pleasant to reminisce...

ALPHA FARCE

There is a pile of around thirty weapons to use, as well as the choice to play as one of ten Special Forces soldiers, such as the Delta Force, Navy SEALs and British SAS. Yet the number of weapons means that you are swamped with choice,

blurring the distinction between the tactical merits of each. Similarly, the choice of unit hardly alters the game at all — this feature is merely an unnecessary frill.

Overall, the game's dated look and poor mission design and AI, destroys any sense of immersion. You should be, after all, shaking in your boots at the prospect of invading a mysterious, daunting land. Unfortunately, Delta Force: Task Force Dagger cannot obscure its true identity. It's clear that this product is an appalling attempt to cash in on the current political climate. <<

!!! Hopefully, the upcoming Black Hawk Down will improve things.



PLUS: Vast levels.

MINUS: Dated presentation. Sub-standard.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

66 72 58

OVERALL

62

Infinite injustice.

REVIEW

>> HYPER 75



XBOX

Championship Manager 01/02

CATEGORY: Football management >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Eidos >> PRICE: STBA >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

The Championship Manager series has been the undisputed king of management games... wait, no... video games for some time. Although a little daunting for the uninitiated, there is near-endless entertainment to be enjoyed by all, hiding beneath the spreadsheet-like interface. Until now, the series has only appeared on PC and Mac (and originally Amiga). But thanks to the Xbox hard-disk, Sports Interactive have been able to create the first CM version for a console.

Championship Manager Season 01/02 was released for PC close to a year ago now, so the game will begin at the start of the most recently completed season. Nonetheless, 01/02 is the latest CM version, as CM4 is set for the end of the year. The game plays almost identically to its PC brother, apart from in two crucial areas. While the PC version could fully run as many leagues as you believed your PC could handle simultaneously, the Xbox version can only run three. This is fine for most of us, as the game still contains all the world's teams no matter what leagues you run, however it does make it hard to monitor the lower Portuguese divisions for up-and-coming players — something the PC version has prided itself on for years.

The second flaw with the Xbox version is the control method. The game's interface was designed with a mouse in mind, and although the developers have altered it slightly for the Xbox version, keener players will be disappointed and frustrated with such a laboured scheme. Nonetheless, for new players to the series, CM01/02 for Xbox is a great place to start. - Jackson Gothe-Snape

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
70	70	92	91



PS2

Ninja Assault

CATEGORY: Light gun shooter >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Namco >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Ninja Assault is the latest light gun shooter from Namco, and to be honest, it's a real disappointment. Of course, it's not like Time Crisis 2 wasn't disappointing — it was, but this is disappointment on a whole new level. Namco really haven't put the effort into this one.

The premise is promising. Feudal Japan. Ninja hordes. Mythical beasts. Death to them all. And in some ways Namco have tried to make the most of the setting. Your player moves as a ninja moves — bounding from tree to tree, from rooftop to rooftop, as do many of the enemies. The enemy lineup is quite inventive and varied for a light gun shooter too. There's everything from ninjas, samurai and archers to mechanical tanks and bizarre wooden dolls armed with twin katanas. Despite all these interesting aspects, there's just nothing in here that really grabs your attention. There's no innovative duck/reload mechanism, just generic point and shoot action.

In addition to the main story modes, there are also a few mini games to hone your skills in. Our favourite was a game where a metal plate is thrown into the air in front of you and you have to see how long you can juggle it. If you're good you'll end up juggling three or so plates at once. But realistically, gameplay depth is very thin on the ground here. As is replayability.

The other big letdown with Ninja Assault is the embarrassingly dated visuals. This game just looks sooo old. Texture work is simple and ugly, character models are a joke, and the environments are really low poly. This is such a poor showcase for the PS2 — Namco you should be ashamed. - Cam Shea

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
65	71	70	70



PS2

Endgame

CATEGORY: Light gun shooter >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Empire >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Endgame is another new light gun shooter. The main storyline revolves around the protagonist — Jade Cornell, and her friend Tyler Jones. She's on the run and he's been kidnapped... and all because they know too much about a secret new VR technology made by a company called EuroDream. The game documents Jade's flight from EuroDream agents and the rescue of Tyler. Ho hum.

Endgame is a competent enough game, which "borrows" liberally from the foundations of Time Crisis, with a duck/reload system, colour coded enemies and even the familiar orange five second bonus guys. Unlike other recent light gun games, the developers have also worked hard to give the environments an interactive feel. After all, when you're having a huge gun battle you want your surroundings to get shot up accordingly. To this end, shelving units collapse, paintings fall off the walls, bullet holes are left in everything, vending machines explode when shot and so on.

Although options and playmodes are all a little too basic, Endgame does have a rather novel bonus game (accessible from the main menu). It's Jade's favourite VR game and it's called Mighty Joe Jupiter. A game within a game? How very post-modern! Mighty Joe is basically a Blast style super hero, so environments are flat shaded and the enemies are very 50s influenced aliens and robots. It's VERY primitive, but hey, it makes a nice less-violent game for your younger siblings.

Unfortunately, however, Endgame just can't offer up the polish of a game like Time Crisis 2. Both games are ultimately short-lived, but we know which one we'd prefer to play. - Cam Shea

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
70	70	71	70

ARCADE

DIRECT FROM TOKYO JAPAN



Yet again due to lack of population, Australia misses out. Many interesting arcade games never reach our shores due to the fact that we don't breed fast enough to sustain the numbers needed to support slightly more "risky" titles. So to see what we are missing out on, Hyper delved into its deep coffers and sent arcade game exponent **TIM LEVY** over to the epicentre of arcade gaming – Tokyo, Japan. There he discovered that having clean air and more room to move is no trade off for missing out on some of the following Sega arcade games. So much for the so-called "Lucky Country".

Walk the Dog (INU NO OSANPO)

Walk The Dog is Sega's latest attempt at proving that almost every facet of human activity can be simulated. We have already had a bus, train, 747 pilot, ambulance, fire fighter, police, fisherman, excavator sims... but all that stuff is pretty normal arcade fare. Now that all the conventional sim ideas have been totally milked, it has allowed Sega to pull out all the stops to allow less conventional "real life" situations. What next? Are there going to be a trend of other "real life" titles such as Have A Cigarette Break or perhaps File Your

Tax or even Go to the Toilet (can be played simultaneously with Read A Magazine)? It's all probably just around the corner.

CHOKER YOUR DOG

To the game: After choosing one of six dogs, ranging from Pug to Poodle to Labrador, you start your leisurely virtua walk in an upmarket suburb which is littered with dog injury inducing situations. The first little dilemma is that you may walk too fast or slow and choke your dog. This is bad. Choking dog = sad dog = a decrease in the 'dog happy-o-meter'.

To stop choking the dog you must parallel the dogs walking pace on a treadmill. As you continue your walk, you are able to control your dog's direction with a little tug on his leash. This way you can

steer clear of objects such as 9 week-old mouldy sandwiches which will make your dog sick, or you can escort your dog towards a fire hydrant or tree so he can relieve himself and mark out his territory.

At specific points in your stroll, cut-scenes occur where you will be faced with situations needing either: a) split-second timing (dodging a charging bull-dog); or b) a bit of common sense, e.g. "Q) Which side of an owner and his mean-arse dog do you pass on? A) His side". Pass these mini tests and the dog gains

>>> The first little dilemma is that you may walk too fast or slow and choke your dog.

happy points. Get hit by car, and the dog ain't going to be happy and will lose points.

JUST A MACHINE

The aim of the game is keep your dog happy enough to complete a full walk to the park and back without having to take him/her to the Virtua Vet/Virtua Pet Cemetery. The game is much harder than it sounds. And worse still, the game is strangely compelling enough for you to want to take the dog for a full walk, even though the "dog" is just a machine. It is plainly obvious that the "creative guys" down at Sega have read Do Androids Dream

of Electric Sheep (the inspiration to the film Blade Runner) and have tapped into the fact that properly fooled, humans will still want to nurture (or make happy) real or virtua pets in the same way. Just look how popular Tamagotchis were.

OVERALL

7/10

(10/10 for the novelty factor)



Tim plays from the poop-chute perspective.



Sega finally discover we like it doggy-style.



COIN-OP

>> HYPER 77

Hockey Stadium

Qreams DO come true. As an avid fan of air hockey, I find it hard to convey in words the joy of discovering a two-handed, multi-puck, over-sized air hockey table. So I will try to convey it in interpretive dance (see pic).

Hockey Stadiums table size is perfect for either doubles or two-handed singles games. I couldn't drum up any other arcade goers to challenge me and the photographer/interpreter (Mr Matto) for a game of doubles as my "happy puck" dance seemed to scare most of the clientele away. BUT as a singles game, with two paddles, it opens the game up to a whole host of new moves.

Defensively, as the goal mouth has been increased in proportion to table size, you will need to use both paddles to block shots on goal. Offensively, you will use your weaker arm to deflect or cue up

shots for your right (or good) arm. Through time you will find your skills improving on your weaker arm (assuming that you have 2 arms) which really speeds the game up. But what really speeds the game up is on every third goal, multi-puck occurs when 3 pucks are auto launched onto the table by a unique ramp-loading system.

Attempting to keep track of all three pucks at once, and using precise blocking and shooting is much akin to trying to cook 6 hamburgers whilst driving a Formula One racing car on an ice skating rink. To counter the puck overload, you can attempt to hoard the pucks down your end and release them at your leisure. Even though this tactic is kinda lame, at least you can defend easier and retain some sort of

Tim only has eyes for Air Hockey...

control over the game. The multi-puck lasts for about 20 seconds where after the pucks are captured again and normal "service" is resumed.

Whilst there are not any of these tables in Australia yet, Hyper is contacting the mainstream arcade owners in the hope that they will submit to some groveling and the threat of random deliveries of interpretive dance at their doorsteps to get some multi-puck action our way very soon.



OVERALL

10/10

World Club Serie-A 2001 Champion Football

Whilst collecting football trading cards has not exactly been an edgy pastime, Sega has come up with a card collecting soccer game that incorporates the pro level players cards from the 2001-2002 Italian Premier League Soccer Tournament (Serie A - pronounced Sear-ree-ahh).

The soccer game World Club Champion represents an evolution in the way you can utilise these trading cards as the cards can also interface with a computer game to create your own team on a 'virtual' pitch, thus combining both player and manager roles in the one game.

After purchasing a starter pack from a vendor, you can lay the cards down in formation on a very scaled-down soccer pitch and play a match with up to 8 other players.

As the cards are placed in the desired formation on the football field, the computer takes into account your players strengths and weakness and the game begins.

During the game, you can change game strategies, replace players and use the players on a fairly basic level. As you win matches, you win new cards to collect.

The whole game set up would represent a very large outlay for any arcade owner but there seemed to be no shortage of card collecting contenders.

Tim slips in soft drink product placement.



OVERALL

9.5/10

if you enjoy collecting Italian Serie A League Football trading cards,

7/10

if you don't.



Lupin The Shooting

Not many Australians would have heard of Lupin the Third unless you have been treated to the local release of the 1979 Japanese Anime title *Castle of Cagliostro*. But this film is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the scale of how big Lupin (pronounced Roo-Paarn) is in Japan. Starting off in 1967, the manga comic book series was quite perverse and was toned down heavily (no more cum-shots) for the TV series (1971 & 1977) and especially so for the movies.

The Shooting places you into the shoes of either Lupin III (a suave, slightly-imbicilic, international cat burglar) or Jigen (his jade chain-smoking sharp-shooting sidekick) and takes you around the world in a 13 stage game that will take you through a variety of shooting scenarios which are supposedly drawn from actual scenes from the TV series.

Although there are a few standard shooting stages against various generic bad guys and monsters, there are other stages where you must use the light gun to steer a car, suck up diamonds with a vacuum cleaner (without touching infra red beams) and aim rocket launchers against tanks.

What really makes the game is how the Anime is brought to life

through manga-esque links and drop down animations of the characters during gameplay. The great graphics linked with the immersive sound effects and authentic TV soundtrack is enough to delight any fan of Lupin the Third (a.k.a Monkey Punch).

To any non-fan of the series, the game is somewhere between House of the Dead (minus a few zombies) and Point Blank, but nonetheless a nice break from the standard shooter.



OVERALL

8.5/10



Tim considers ending his trip "Cobain-style".



COIN-OP

>>>HYPER 79

V-Rally 3

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

With the plethora of racing games on the GBA market, a game has to be either very good or utterly appalling to really stand out. Fortunately in V-Rally 3's case, it's the former. This is one of the best looking racing games on the system, and does a surprisingly good job of recreating the thrills of rally racing. The graphics engine is very tidy, with courses across a wide

variety of terrains that sport plenty of trackside trees and shrubbery, as well as polygonal buildings and bystanders. Also impressive are the many undulations in the road, which make a nice change from the mostly flat racing featured in many GBA titles.

The car models are very solid and boast clever texturing on the rear and side windows to give the



impression of space within the car. There's even an in-car view! The drawback is that draw distance is very tight, but that's to be expected, and doesn't take away from the racing too much. The handling is quite simplistic really, but the feel of sliding around corners and reeling the car in with dabs on the brake feel convincing enough. The sense of speed could certainly be better, but overall it's quite amazing how good this game looks and feels.

The main play mode is the standard one man versus the track, across a whole host of five stage rallies. There's also V-Rally Cross mode which is a series of circuit-based races against three other cars. These two modes will keep you occupied for a little while, but the game's biggest problem is probably longevity. Even so, V-Rally 3 is a fun arcade fix. - Cam Shea

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	80	82	82



The Powerpuff Girls: MOJO JOJO A-GO-GO

CATEGORY: Shooter >> PLAYERS: 1-3 >> PUBLISHER: Acclaim >>
 PRICE: \$69.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Most developers charged with turning a successful media property into a game don't have to make great intellectual leaps in order to decide on a game type. Men In Black 2? Shooter. The Importance Of Being Ernest? Girlfriend sim. However, when it comes to bizarre, highly stylised television like The Powerpuff Girls,

things can get a little more tricky. Just take a look at what happened when Ren and Stimpy became a platformer. Shudder.

Now that it's the Powerpuff Girls' turn, you can say goodbye to the inanity, and hello to a side scrolling shooter. Yes, Powerpuff Girls on GBA is basically R-Type with a kicky beret. Mojo Jojo has cooked up some

inconsequential plan, so it's up to the girls to fly along and take out his minions. The first thing you'll notice is that MJ's not very inventive. In fact, for the first long and very tedious level he's only concocted three different enemies, who appear over and over again, threatening to bore you to death. There are, however, some good ideas. Each girl has a life meter, and you control one at a time with two hanging back. You can swap between them at any time, which introduces a degree of strategy in monitoring their health. Pity there's no discernable difference between each girl - each has a melee punch and a laser eye attack, and as per convention you can boost your firepower along the way.

Unfortunately there's nothing terribly exciting about this game. Levels, enemies and weaponry are monotonous, and it can be difficult to see and avoid enemy fire. The biggest plus is probably the art in the cutscenes. But that's hardly enough to warrant a purchase. - Cam Shea



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
61	64	59	62



>>GBA

Star Wars Episode II: ATTACK OF THE CLONES

CATEGORY: Side scrolling action >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: THQ >>

PRICE: \$79.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Attack of the Clones (AOTC) is quite the ironic title for a licensed game such as this. After all, there's little to nothing in the way of original gameplay content on display here, with pretty much all the action "cloned" from the side scrolling action game archetype. Of course, with this style of movie-to-game title that's to be expected, and largely beside the

point. You see, what always gives *Star Wars* titles potential is the simple fact that it's *Star Wars*! Even the most run of the mill game can be entertaining for fans if the lightsaber action is sweet, and the game looks and sounds like it fits in the *Star Wars* universe. While AOTC on GBA nails the audio side of things with a nicely digitised rendition of the orchestral score during the opening crawl and

some reasonable lightsaber sounds, it struggles in the other departments.

The game follows the plot of the film, and consists of two entirely separate types of gameplay. Most of the time you're side scrolling it up as either Anakin or Obi-Wan, taking on hordes of enemy units. As you progress you can earn new force powers, such as super jump and force attacks which helps keep interest levels up somewhat. AOTC is a long way off competing with the SNES *Star Wars* titles, as it focuses more on combat and less on adventure, and levels often feel a little clumsy and aimless. The other gameplay type – the 3D chase sequences – however, are much worse. These sections are as confusing as they are pointless. Thoroughly average. - Frank Dry



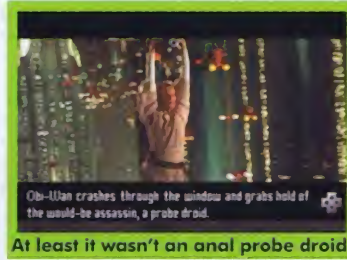
On the landing pad, an explosive device is intended to assassinate the Senator, but instead kills her decoy.

Blame Jar Jar.



Following the failed assassination attempt, Obi-Wan Kenobi and Anakin Skywalker are assigned to protect

"Another costume M'lady? Sheesh!"



Obi-Wan crashes through the window and grabs hold of the would-be assassin, a probe droid.

At least it wasn't an anal probe droid.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
62	80	65	63

>>GBA

Desert Strike Advance

CATEGORY: Isometric shooter >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: EA >>

PRICE: \$79.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: TBC >>

Ah, the Strike games... now that's a trip down memory lane. Back in the day, EA had the admittedly niche "isometric helicopter combat" genre sewn up with this series. It all started on Megadrive in 1994 with *Desert Strike*, so it's not surprising that this is where EA are kicking off their revival

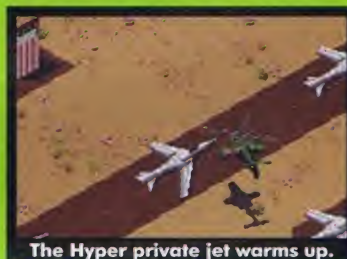
of the series on GBA. *Desert Strike Advance* is close to a pixel perfect port of the original game, with EA even refusing to implement cartridge save. Stingy buggers. Viewed from an isometric perspective, you control a lone Apache helicopter going into enemy territory. There are 27 missions to



That's the worst camouflage ever.

complete across four unique terrains, and believe us, they're no cakewalk. The Strike games were renowned for their difficulty and this is no exception. The odds are severely stacked against you, so you'll need to learn the best way to approach each combat situation, not to mention keeping an eye on your fuel, armour and ammo levels, and re-supplying when necessary.

Your skills need to be exacting, as there tends to be an awful lot of enemy fire buzzing about. Fortunately, the control is one of the highlights of this game. Swinging your helicopter around and making swooping runs soon feels second nature, and it doesn't take long to get used to the limited vision and necessary reliance on the radar.



The Hyper private jet warms up.



It's an American flag! Burn it!

This is old school gameplay just like mum (or EA in this case) used to make. *Desert Strike* will test your skill and your patience, and is worth a look for nostalgia value alone. It feels like a bit of a rip-off paying full price for what is essentially a Megadrive game, but hey, that's the GBA scene these days. - Cam Shea

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
74	75	80	80



FRONTHELD

>>HYPER 81



My dragon's always a bit horny.

Panzer Dragoon Series

»» DANIEL STAINES

There's no better indicator of a hardcore Segaphile than a passion for Panzer Dragoon. Debuting on Sega's abortive Saturn console back in 1995, the series still inspires fans with an almost frightening fanatical zeal. It's a bit like a cult really, with devotees prowling internet forums for heathens who would dare defile the Dragoon name with petty complaints and ridiculous gripes. If you think I'm joking, then just go to a Sega forum and start a subject with the header 'Panzer Dragoon is not the best game ever'. The result, I assure you, will not be pretty.

STYLISH FUN

But what is it about this apparently innocuous little shooter that imbues fans with such fanaticism? If we had to put it down to a single reason, we'd say it has something to do with that unique and utterly captivating combination of charm and action one can only find in the very best Sega titles. Sure the game was essentially a 3D version of Space Harrier with dragons instead of jet-packs, but who cares? That lack of originality was more than made up for with some serious servings of stylish fun.

Basically, the central goal of Panzer Dragoon was shooting things. You, as the eponymous dragon rider, would

hop atop your mighty beast and fly around a 3D playing field blasting seven shades of Sean Connery out of anything that got in your way. What really made Panzer Dragoon different from anything that preceded it, however, was the fact that it let players rotate and fire their guns in any direction at any time. 360 degree 3D shooters were completely unheard of up till this point, so you might say that Sega created an entirely new genre with this game. A limited genre, granted – but a genre!

Of course, being able to turn around whenever you wanted wasn't the only thing Panzer Dragoon had going for it. Bolstered by some awesome concept art courtesy of legendary French painter, Moebius, Sega also created one of the most engaging fantasy worlds we've yet seen in a video game. From the claustrophobic cavern mazes and vast sprawling plains to the majestic splendour of the dragons themselves, everything in Panzer Dragoon looked good and still does even by today's stratospheric standards. Not 'good' in the sense of high-resolutions and snazzy 3D effects, mind, but 'good' in the sense of real artistic flare. Sega were obviously very proud of what they were doing with Panzer Dragoon because it shows in almost every facet of the game itself. The secret ingredient, as they say, is love.





Dragon Riders of Porn... er Pern.



Beware the falling mangos!



Those sweet sludgy Saturn days.



That's right, pelt it with Avocados!

Following the success of Panzer Dragoon, two sequels were quickly made — Panzer Dragoon Zwei and Panzer Dragoon Saga. Released in 1996, Zwei was ultimately a bit of a disappointment and failed to command the same level of respect its predecessor had a year previously. The biggest complaint, from both press and general public, was that the game simply didn't bring enough new features to the table. Aside from the inclusion of new environments and dragons that evolved into other 'forms' as the game progressed, there was very little to differentiate Zwei from its older brother. If Sega wanted to keep the series afloat, they had to convince fans that they were going to do more than just spurt out cookie-cutter cash-ins once a year. A drastic change of direction was needed for Panzer Dragoon.

BREATHTAKING BEAUTY
Enter Panzer Dragoon Saga. One of

the finest RPGs to grace any Sega system ever, this was the shot-in-the-arm the series was looking for and came as a complete surprise to fans everywhere. How does an on-rails action shooter evolve into a fully featured RPG masterpiece? Via an incredibly engaging plot and innovative real-time combat system, that's how. Panzer Dragoon Saga was one of those rare RPGs where the action actually complements the story instead of being diversion from it. Every battle, every quest, every little conversation felt like it was part of some greater scheme of things, resulting in a world as captivating as it was vibrant. Panzer Dragoon Saga stayed in your head a lot longer than the 15 hours necessary to complete it.

In the here and now, Panzer Dragoon is looking as good as it ever did. After an extended leave of absence and the failure of two Sega

consoles, the series is set to return on the Xbox later this year. Some fans expressed trepidation at the idea of a Sega classic appearing on Microsoft's machine, but there's little need to worry — Panzer Dragoon Orta, as you've probably already seen in our preview on page 30, looks absolutely stunning. Returning to the roots of the franchise, Sega looks set to recapture everything that made Panzer Dragoon a series worth continuing in the first place: action, fun, excitement and, most importantly, breathtaking beauty. Is it any wonder the fans are as fanatical as they are? <<

ONE STARS

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DVD

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!

All scores out of 10

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: The Fellowship of the Ring

ROADSHOW HOME VIDEO, M15

The word "epic" has been thrown around freely when describing *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, with the expectation that the following two thirds of the adventure will be brought to life with the same kind of exuberance. Director Peter Jackson took on the task of re-creating the world of J.R.R. Tolkien's book with all the

enthusiasm of a devoted fan. In his own 2-year adventure, he pieced together the modern myth with an emphasis on detail. With a basic premise of good versus evil, Tolkien's world has been brought to the screen with such care and planning, it's little surprise that the film has gone on to gross almost \$900 million worldwide. In building Hobbiton, Jackson even made sure

vegetable gardens were planted and landscaping was completed a year before filming commenced in order to provide a realistic lived-in look. Tolkien purists may take aim at the liberties taken with the story, but with a running time of 3 hours and 28 minutes, even they would have to admit that something had to go.

It's only through advancement in film technology and CGI wizardry that battle scenes of such grand and spectacular scale as seen in this film would be possible. Whilst there's still a bit of blurring, fuzz and the occasional frame drop out, it doesn't distract from the glorious cinematography and the visually stunning backdrop that is the natural landscape of New Zealand. The casting was also inspired, with Christopher Lee and Sir Ian McKellan stealing the show as the duelling wizards.

A self-proclaimed fan of the special edition DVD, Peter Jackson is releasing two DVD versions of *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*. The August 6th release contains a second disc with 3 documentaries, 14



"Argh, which trilogy am I in again?"



Gandalf has a bit of a midget fetish.

featurettes and a brief look at *The Two Towers*. For the true fan, a Special Edition box set is coming out in November that will contain four discs and an extra 30 minutes of cut footage edited into the film.

MOVIE: 8 EXTRAS: 6



"It's just that everyone wants to put their finger in my ring!"

The Prisoner 5 DVD BOX SET

AV CHANNEL, G

The basic premise of *The Prisoner* is that a high ranking government official (who's real name we never discover) resigns from his position. Next thing he knows he's been drugged and abducted, and wakes up on a mysterious island community. Trapped on an isolated resort where people are known only by number, "Number 6" must cleverly ascertain what his captors want from him and who's side they are on. Not to mention work out who is Number 1 and find a way to escape (which is rather tricky thanks to pervasive surveillance and a giant white orb guard known as "Rover").

This is the 35th anniversary of *The Prisoner*, and although it only ran for 17 episodes it has proven to be a very influential series, and has a fanatical cult following. It's not hard to see why. This is left-of-center and



"Yes, One is the loneliest number."

interesting viewing, and in the end raises more questions than it answers. Always a good sign. The picture quality has been well restored, and this 5 DVD box set features a host of extra features that will definitely appeal to fans. Oh, and if it's good enough for *The Simpsons* to parody ("The Computer Wore Menace Shoes"), then it should be good enough for you too. - Cam Shea

MOVIE: 7 EXTRAS: 3



The engineer told him to put on "the cans".



MJ tries to slip his ball back in.

Ultimate Jordan

IMPORT, G

This review could be one line and it would make basketball fans around the world run out to grab this DVD. That line just has to read: "Every Michael Jordan video in a two-disc DVD set". Simple.

That's right, every MJ video from *Come Fly With Me* (the original and

best) through to *His Airness* is here, plus a stack of other MJ features. There's a swag of MJ's Top 10s, featuring his best dunks, moves, shots and assists, plus slam dunk footage, and other NBA stars going on about how Jordan is the man. The extras could actually make up a separate video on their own. There's not much to say about the actual videos, except that the first two, *Come Fly With Me* and *Air Time* really show their age - not in the video quality, but in the fashion and hairstyles on display in the NBA footage. Go the tight shorts and gummy haircuts! - Tony Montana

MOVIE: 9 EXTRAS: 7



His baldness.

Welcome to Death Row

STOMP, M15+



No, this isn't the sequel to *The Green Mile* or *Monster's Ball*. *Welcome To Death Row* is the true story of how Death Row Records got off the ground, with the help of some major muscle (in the form of CEO Marion "Suge" Knight) and quite a bit of cash, mainly from a shadowy character who goes by the name of Harry O.

If it was just a simple case of starting up a record label, then this documentary would be quite boring.

But the behind-the-scenes look at Knight's strong-arm tactics to get Dr Dre out of his contract with Eazy-E's Ruthless Records, the strong gang ties, and the fact that Harry O's money came from selling crack, makes it compelling viewing.

There is also the must-see interview with Vanilla Ice, where he tries to explain how Knight hung him over a high-rise balcony in order to get him to sign over the publishing rights to Ice Ice Baby. Hilarious stuff. - Tony Montana

MOVIE: 7 EXTRAS: 1



SNOOP DOGG
Former Death Row Artist



ROB VAN WINKLE
aka VANILLA ICE
Rap Artist

Vanilla Ice "Rap Artist"? Hold on a second... did I miss something?



Simpsons SEASON 2 BOX SET

FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT, PG

Where the Season 1 boxset was good for a chuckle and to remind us where it all started, The Simpsons really started heating up during the seminal second season (1990-1991). The writers were rapidly realising that Homer was by far the funniest character, and began writing more storylines around him, and the animation was coming along in leaps and bounds.

Season 2 played host to some classic episodes, and the birth of some of the most memorable on-going characters. Doctor Hibbert ("Bart The Daredevil"), Lionel Hutz ("Bart Gets Hit By a Car"), McBain ("The Way We Was") and Kang and Kodos ("Treehouse of Horror") were all introduced. Season 2 also saw The Simpsons attracting huge stars to voice guest characters. In this season, we heard Harvey Fierstein as Homer's secretary Karl in "Simpson and Delilah", James Earl Jones in "Treehouse Of Horror", Tom Poston as the Capital City Goofball and Tony Bennett singing about Capital City in "Dancin' Homer", George Takei and Larry King in "One Fish, Two Fish, Blow Fish, Blue Fish", Tracey Ullman returning in "Bart's Dog Gets An F", Danny DeVito as Homer's long lost brother in "Oh Brother, Where Art Thou?", Ringo Starr in "Brush With Greatness" and Dustin Hoffman in "Lisa's Substitute".

Season 2 is also notable for being a time when characters were still developing. Many of the secondary

voices were still being fleshed out, and sound very funny compared to later seasons. Just take a listen to Comic Book Guy and Martin, and you'll see what we mean. Also amusing are a number of small slip-ups, such as Karl having the voice of Lenny in "Brush With Greatness". Fans may also notice bits and pieces that were censored or cut in order to make the episodes fit into prime time. Although it's frustrating to think that we haven't been seeing the full episodes, it's also cool to see new stuff amongst material that we've all seen hundreds of times.

Technically, picture quality on the Season 2 episodes is definitely better than they were in the Season 1 DVDs, although the quality is obviously still limited by the source material. The menu system across these DVDs, however, is really irritating, with three clicks necessary to simply get to the main menu. The extras are also mostly disappointing, and really just reflect the extent to which Fox were selling out the show at this stage. There are two music videos, including the pathetic "Do The Bartman", some Butterfingers commercials and an utterly cringe-worthy snippet of Bart's appearance (via some dude dressed up in a Bart costume) on the American Movie Awards. Honestly, that kind of "special feature" we can do without. There is also a featurette on the making of an episode, and an interview with Matt Groening - both archival footage from the period.

Making up for the somewhat patchy list of extras, however, is audio commentary for every episode. Matt Groening is featured on every one, along with a rotating list of other important people from season 2 including producer James L. Brooks, directors David Silverman, David Issacs, Rich Moore, Mike Reiss and Steve Pepoon, and writers Al Jean, Jeff Martin, Jon Vitti, Jay Kogen, Wallace Wolodarsky and George Meyer. Truly sterling stuff, although it wouldn't have hurt to have had some of the voice actors taking part in the audio commentary too.

Regardless, with 22 classic episodes, Simpsons aficionados will lap this one up. Now, bring on the awesome Season 3! - Cam Shea



Waiter, there's a fly in my crack rock.



KARL

CONS: TOO ATTRACTIVE.



Homer teaches Bart and Lisa how to do a body shave.



I thought there was a bit of a pong around here.



Ah, the sound of one hand clapping



Look out Matt, the real Bart is loose!

MOVIE: 9 **EXTRAS:** 6

ANIME

Excel Saga

CATEGORY: COMEDY • PRODUCTION COMPANY: VICTOR ENTERTAINMENT

Faptly subtitled "Quack Experimental Anime", *Excel Saga* is possibly the funniest anime you will ever see, not only taking the piss out of the traditions built from the anime industry over the last 20 years, but adding the kind of cynical, biting comic genius found only in *The Simpsons*.

FREAKISHLY HILARIOUS

The pitch? *Excel Saga* is about a young girl named Excel, one of two members of ACROSS, a secret idealistic organisation whose goal is to cleanse the world of corruption, starting with the conquest of F City in F Prefecture. The plot's not entirely important, though, as it's purely a vehicle for delivering one hilarious comic skit after another. Whether it's sending up their own exposition, making fun of the series creator, or the freakishly hilarious moments like Excel's obsession with eating a cute

little puppy, there is real potential of hurting one's self while viewing *Excel Saga* from laughing very hard.

It's better to watch in Japanese, too. The actress who voices Excel talks at a zillion miles an hour, the mere sound of which brings new meaning to the phrase 'machine-gun dialogue'. If you pay close attention to what she says, though (and this takes several viewings), you'll realise she's constantly throwing in as much English as she can (like singing a song and incorporating je-noh-sah-ii-do for 'genocide'), which is quite amusing. Dedicated fans will also be tickled to know that Excel is voiced by Kotono Mitsuishi, the woman who brought Misato Katsuragi to life in *Neon Genesis Evangelion*. Knowing that, and given the strong impression Excel makes as a nutcase, you will never be able to look at *Evangelion* in the same way again.

ANIMATION 10 PLOT: 9 OVERALL: 10



Look, she's eating pussy!



So that's what big brother looks like.

Escaflowne

CATEGORY: FANTASY/SCI-FI • PRODUCTION COMPANY: SUNRISE

The series known as *The Vision of Escaflowne* – arguably the best post-*Evangelion* mecha series ever made – has finally been turned into a feature length film, but it's nothing that the fans will be expecting. Rather than depict a concise version of the events that took place in the epic 26-episode series, creator Shoji Kawamori has all but completely changed the story, retaining the key elements like the characters, technology, and the fight against a common enemy.



BLOOD AND MACHINE

Hitomi Kanzaki holds the fate of the world of Gaea in her hands. Summoned to this world where Earth is one of its moons, she is seen by the local inhabitants as the Wing Goddess who'll bring deliverance from the marauding Black Dragon Clan. That deliverance will come through the holy armour known as the Escaflowne, a giant mecha worn by Van Fanel.

Characters like Hitomi, Van Fanel, Merle and Dilandau are mostly unchanged, whereas others like Folken look drastically different. *Escaflowne* the movie is much darker than its episodic counterpart, where the merging of flesh, blood and machine conveys even deeper biblical themes. Packed into 90 minutes, the film foregoes the slow journey of Van and Hitomi's self-discovery from the



series and throws viewers directly into the war. It's daunting for anyone who's never seen the series, but those who have will understand it immediately by context.

Presented in widescreen format, this DVD is also an audio delight with DTS Japanese audio and an isolated Dolby Digital isolated score track, as well as a real-time storyboard. *Escaflowne* fans can't afford to miss this.



Arrrooo!! Grrroww!! *cough* *hack*



Stop horsing around, you two!

ANIMATION 9 PLOT: 7 OVERALL: 8

MUSIC

MUSIC REVIEWS
SPONSORED BY
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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.



CULTURE OF KINGS II

PULLING STRINGS

» Culture Of Kings II had the potential to be a complete disaster. A bloated double CD containing a high proportion of untested acts; surely most of it would be filler? Wrong, wrong, wrong. I'm not going to claim that every track on Culture II is a stone cold classic, but unlike most compilations there are no stinkers either. Representing Australian Hip-Hop, Culture II offers a solid mix of acts. The experienced, the prolific and the up and coming, they're all here.

The surprise track of the package is Hunter's Jam Roll, a hilarious take on being on the dole. Not sure if I approve of welfare fraud, but with beats and rhymes this good, I'm willing to turn a blind eye. **MH**



NOEL NANTON Fu.cha.Cul.cha

INERTIA

» Chances are you've already been introduced to Noel Nanton, most likely on the dancefloor. Nanton has a great sound — brass and bass heavy, with hypnotic chants and organic percussion that results in warm sensuous house.

Fu.cha.Cul.cha features a host of new grooves, as well as several previously released tracks (on labels like Nick Holder's DNH Records and Canada's Jinxx Records), the standout being the single "El Ray (The King)" which layers a sexy Spanish voiceover and sassy sax line over a shuffling latin groove. It's not all A grade (that guitar loop on Booty Beats just doesn't work for me), but overall this is the perfect soundscape to lead into the warmer part of the year. **- CS**



ILS Soul Trader

INERTIA

» After starting out in the realm of drum'n'bass with some classic cuts on LTJ Bukem's Good Looking label, ILS has gone from strength to strength. His debut album ("Idiots Behind The Wheel") on Tipper's Fuel Recording imprint may have suffered from poor distribution, but its slower breakier sound was critically acclaimed. Since then, he's signed to Adam Freeland's Marine Parade, and has been hard at work concocting Soul Trader, an album that shows just why ILS is renowned as the "producer's producer". Quite simply, Soul Trader is masterful, featuring 12 ripe to bursting breaks tracks that run the gamut from soulful and female vocal driven, to rolling dancefloor stompers. **- FD**

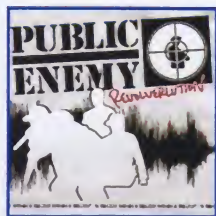


ONYX Bacdafucup Part II

SHOCK

» Part II of anything, barring The Godfather of course, is more often than not an attempt to reclaim past glories. After a string of failed solo albums, Onyx are out to recapture the reputation they gained with the thug classic Bacdafucup. And here's where the problem lies.

Bacdafucup was a classic because it represented a brand new style. However in the decade following its release, Onyx have done nothing new. They're still preaching thug life with the same gravel throated rhymes that were so unique in 1991, but now just sound outdated. On the production tip things are a little more positive, hard beats and phat basslines provide a satisfying sonic fix. It's just a shame Onyx can't produce innovative rhymes to match. **- MH**



PUBLIC ENEMY Revolverlution

SHOCK/KOCH

» Revolverlution is not a new album in the traditional sense. Instead, it mixes three elements - live offerings, new tracks and remixed PE classics. According to Chuck this is a more viable alternative to releasing all new material for any veteran crew trying to compete in an overcrowded marketplace.

Fortunately, the 'compressed trilogy' idea worked quite well. The live cuts are intense and the new material proves that PE remains as relevant and thought provoking as ever. Check out the stridently political Son of a Bush and you'll see what I mean. In fact the only thing letting Revolverlution down are the god-awful remixes: what have they done to Shut Em Down? Sacrilege. Still, the rest of the package will please the PE faithful. **- MH**



DJ C1 Shifting Gears

INERTIA

» Shifting Gears is the first CD release for Intec (International Techno), a label that was launched back in 1999 by Carl Cox and DJ C1. For those of you unfamiliar with his work, C1 is rapidly stamping his name on the tech-house scene, thanks to his raw and crunchy club sets that refuse to be shoeboxed. Shifting Gears is a great example, laid down in one take and packed to the gills with quality tracks. From techno classics like Jeff Mills' "Step To Enchantment" and Red Planet/Underground Resistance's "Stardancer" through to a dark and pumping E-Dancer remix of Dirty's "Dirty" and the soon to be classic "D-Clash" by Bryan Zentz, this is a great showcase of the breadth of techno. **- CS**



FRANK ORY



Question: Why do Telstra offer broadband services with volume charges when very few other telcos in the world do? Answer: It's because they have a very clever and sneaky plan. You see, even though Telstra owns something like 95% of Australia's telco and internet infrastructure, they're no longer content to simply be a provider of the data pipes and basic ISP services such as email (not that they do a very good job with this anyway). They want to provide the content too.

The way that they're going about this is by offering a whole host of services and Telstra-sponsored sites that are immune to the download caps. While we often bitch and moan about the measly 3gig per month on ADSL, it should be remembered that a large number of users are in fact on the cheaper plan which only comes with 300MB of downloads with ridiculous per MB charges thereafter. These are the people that Telstra will be trying to attract. These are the people who will breath a sigh of relief and utilise the content that doesn't result in extra charges.

Some of the services that are available exclusively to Telstra broadband subscribers are Endeavour.tv, Crunch.tv and RedKarpel.tv, which concern themselves with science/technology, sports and arts/entertainment respectively. Telstra have been making some smart moves too. For only \$30 million, Telstra have gained the online AFL rights for five years (cable and free to air broadcast rights are worth \$500 million). This means AFL fans now have the ability to watch single quarters or entire games online, and can even watch press conferences and classic matches. They also offer similar content for NRL fans. It's a smart move, and a worrying one. Telstra are trying to wrangle the future of broadband in this country so it takes place in their little playground. Shame on you Telstra.

This will obviously make life even more difficult for smaller ISPs, as they struggle to offer up competitive pricing and deals. Could becoming a broadband content provider give Telstra an unfair advantage over smaller ISPs and be viewed as anti-competitive behaviour? Some would say yes, as there have even been calls for an ACCC enquiry into the matter, from the Labour Party. A Telstra communications monopoly AND content monopoly? *Shudder*

Junk mail (but no junk mail) to freakscene@next.com.au



3RD STRIKE Lost Angel

HOLLYWOOD RECORDS

Singer Jim Korthe had a dream to "incorporate heavy guitars with rap and melody" resulting in, unsurprisingly, a straightforward Nu-Metal record but the guitars aren't as adventurous as they should be and the formulaic rap/melody approach causes a blurring of songs. Still, there is some variety in Korthe's voice which at times echoes Ozzy Osbourne and at others, Tony Kiedis. Speaking of Ozzy, there's an ambitious cover of "Paranoid" featuring Cypress Hill's DJ Muggs but the rapped middle section seems unnecessary and the timing is clumsy. "Hang On" follows with Korthe confronting his gangsta past in a slow piece of funk-hop to close the record with refreshing contrast. - KM



TISM Best Off

FMR

TISM are hideous and tragic figures in the already sordid Australian rock universe. Their out-of-date musical ideas always sounded better live than on record, but their unwillingness to show their faces in public meant that they never quite got the amount of chicks they deserved. In addition to that, their humour, once inspired and vital, had sadly depreciated over time to where it seemed like their motto had become: 'Offend everyone, and remember that celebrities make the easiest targets.' Now, without enough new songs to accompany Machine Gun Fellatio's new remix of their 80's anthem Defecate on my Face, they are forced to come out with this sorry collection before hanging up the masks forever. Poor TISM. - MFR



FOZZY Happenstance

SHOCK

Fozzy is either a pisstake of, or is paying homage to, old skool metal, and is the bizarre project of WWE wrestling superstar Chris Jericho (aka Moongoose McQueen) and Rich Ward (aka Duke LaRue) from Atlanta's Stuck Mojo. Happenstance is their second album and consists mainly of covers by 80's hair bands such as W.A.S.P, Judas Priest, Iron Maiden and Dio era Sabbath. Jericho gives a fair account of himself in the vocal department and the band are solid, but in this day and age you have to ask yourself, why bother? Surely wrestling fans won't pay money for what essentially amounts to redundant metal karaoke? Who am I kidding? - MFR



DANZIG 7:77 I Luciferi

SPITFIRE

While I was a fan of Glenn Danzig's work in the Misfits, and to lesser extent Samhain after that, he lost me after his first few solo efforts because he had slowly become a victim of his own well-crafted image. Not only had he metamorphosed into an overstated caricature of his already cartoonishly evil self, but the unsuccessful forays into electronic terrain on Blackacidevil and 6:66 Satan's Child seemed to signal that he was out of the necessary ideas to ever interest me again. But surprisingly, he's back with a new band and returning to his dark rock roots to produce a fairly decent album, though nothing to rival the glory years. - MFR



BIOHAZARD Uncivilization

SPV

One of the pioneers of the whole hardcore/rap/metal crossover thing, Biohazard return to the frontline armed with their sixth studio release and the follow-up to 1999's New World Disorder. A fine collection of songs that was produced by the band themselves in their hometown of Brooklyn, Uncivilization features a variety of hand-picked guests from bands such as Slipknot, Hatebreed, Pantera, Type O Negative, Cypress Hill and Agnostic Front! But despite the extensive collaboration they retain the familiar Biohazard sound and attitude to lay down one of their greatest achievements yet. Uncivilization kicks some severe rectum. - MFR



NOOGIE Remote Controller

TRAUMA/UNIVERSAL

The melancholic rock of Noogie's debut is deftly delivered and finely produced but the lyrics are often hard to swallow, sometimes packed with a cynicism which verges on the simplistic. "E Commerce" defends "the kids" rights to take drugs, namely ketamine, in a safe and legal environment without governments resorting to propaganda, but surely winners don't use horse tranqs. The tracks dealing with relationship pain, like "Meantime" and "Summer Falling", come across as angry and self-pitying but they're delivered with such sensitivity you could be forgiven for not noticing how venomous they are. - KM

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FORUM

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

Q. WHAT GAMING PERIPHERAL WOULD YOU WANT TO SEE AND WHY?

Until the day arrives when we can experience a videogame simply through the use of neurotransmitters, I'm afraid we're stuck to using clumsy potato-like controllers and plastic steering wheels. However, this month we've been enlightened with some creative peripheral ideas from our dear readers. Some of you are exceptionally imaginative, and some of you are just sick, but we're sure that it won't be long until most of these ideas are ripped off by the manufacturers who read Hyper. So, er...



What will they think of next?

HYPER FORUM

We all have a different opinion and the Hyper Forum is where you can get your thoughts out of your head and onto the page for all to see. Don't forget that we have a new topic every issue! The next topic of discussion...

“The greatest arcade game I ever played was...”

Responses will be printed in Hyper 110.

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.

WHEELY GOOD IDEA

How about a controller that is easy to use (GameCube) and then make it so that you can put it up on this stand that's like a steering wheel without the actual wheel. Then you could clip it on and use it as a steering wheel, but if you stop playing Need For Speed and switched on Zelda you could just as easily remove the beautifully designed controller and use it as normal. C'mon, even if this doesn't get printed, I know that this will be made in the near future. What do you guys think?

Tibor

LIGHT UP MY LIFE

I would really like to see a keyboard that has back-lit keys as I find myself regularly sitting in front of the screen at 2pm in the morning trying to find a quick weapon key in the dark. Strategy games would benefit no end from this and finally playing Aliens Versus Predator in the dark for atmosphere wouldn't mean a trade off in coordination.

Ardwin
fuyu@bigpond.com.au

SEX SELLS

To the hype,
Seeing as though the gaming

industry is mostly male dominated, why not make a gaming peripheral that would interest the most males?

A blow up doll peripheral. That's right. A blow up doll. It has special sensors in the nether regions and the aim of the game is to see how high you can get your love making score (please excuse the pun). This peripheral also comes in special celebrity variants. You can have your Holly Vallance style, Jennifer Lopez or Sandra Sully (admit it she's hot!!!)

Seeing as though most games have a Game Boy Advance port, there would also be a peripheral for the GBA. It would be a handheld woman's chacha.

This is so if you can't get enough of your love making peripheral, you could now practice in the back seat of your car while on the way to school... If you can get away with it, why not do it at school?

From Dan
joyousawkwardsilence@hotmail.com

NOTHIN' BUT NET

Sup Hyper,
The first thing that came to my mind is the pod racing thing that you see in the arcades. You know, like at Intensity they have the two

handles and you have to push them to accelerate, and when you want to turn left you pull the left one back and the same for the right. These take a while to get used to but would be great for a console. Just make an Anakin helmet and be a pod racing dude (but your mates would pay you out forever!)

I also thought about the Crazy Taxi accelerator and brake thing with the clutch that would be hella sweet.

One more, as bizarre as it may seem, a basketball ring! If you wanna look like a 36's reject in your room, there would be a plug in your console attached to the ring which would go on your wardrobe or something.

I'll probably think of heaps better ones after this e-mail.

JayJay
wogcube69@hotmail.com



We couldn't get to grips with this one.



Fly the Starship Enterprise!

VR PR

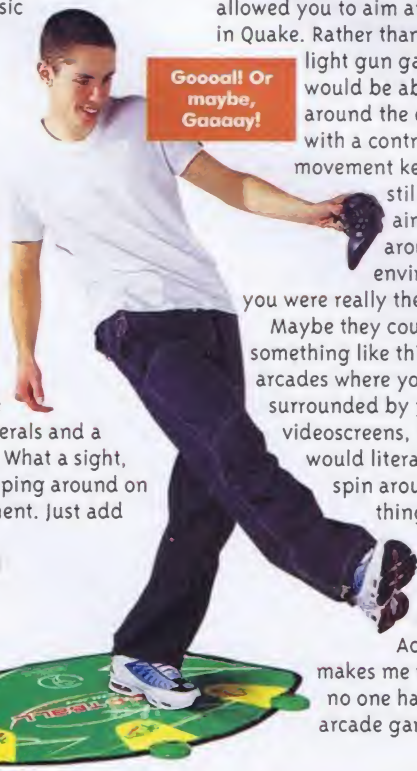
Virtual reality headsets damn it! We've been promised these things since way back when "Beyond 2000" was called "Towards 2000". That was when the 386 was the pinnacle of home PC processing power. Surely the technology has matured enough by now?

Peter Roehlen

ROCK ON

Why hasn't there yet been a multiplayer "rhythm" game that lets four players each play a different instrument and together be a virtual rock band? You could sell four separate peripherals — a small guitar, small drum pad, saxophone or other wind instrument and maybe a microphone or another guitar, like a bass, or maybe a keyboard synthesiser. Each player would need to follow the dots on the screen, and press the right buttons or hit their controller in time. If everyone plays well, the music sounds good, but when people miss the buttons or get the timing wrong, their individual instrument sounds band and spoils the sound. The band could even get rated by a virtual audience, so if you play well they cheer more. It would certainly be a fun set of peripherals and a great party game! What a sight, with everyone bopping around on their small instrument. Just add alcohol!

Sebastian Kohl



Goooo! Or maybe, Gaaaay!

YOU DUMMY

I'd like to see a life size stand-up dummy peripheral. The doll would have a large number of sensors throughout the model, and possibly detachable limbs (fingers in particular would be good). The software would present you with a choice of 3DO Army Men development team members. Once you've chosen one, a 3D model of the 3DO member in question would be displayed on-screen and as you wail on the dummy, kicking it in the groin and ripping off fingers while saying stuff like "and that's for Army Men Turf Wars", the model on-screen would be reacting to the blows with full damage modelling ala Ready 2 Rumble, and eventually gibbs ala Quake. The game ends when there's little more than a lump of meat on-screen. It may not be the most innovative or productive of peripherals, but it sure would be a cathartic way to get the anger that most gamers feel regarding the Army Men series out of our collective systems. Alternatively, there might be software so you can wail on Acclaim and Midway development staff. Or perhaps the guy that decided to bring back (and sell out) the Atari brand. The peripheral would also come in a more budget priced voodoo doll model.

Adam "Sarge Slayer" Cox

360 DEGREE BLAU

Dear Hyper,
A truly sick peripheral would be a special light-gun controller that allowed you to aim and shoot like in Quake. Rather than an on-rail light gun game, you would be able to run around the environment with a control stick or movement keys, and yet still move and aim the gun around the environment as if you were really there. Maybe they could introduce something like this in the arcades where you would be surrounded by 360 degree videoscreens, and you would literally have to spin around to shoot things creeping up on you or jumping at you from all angles. Actually, it makes me wonder why no one has made an arcade game like this

yet. It would be super scary and really get your adrenaline pumping.
Peace Hyper,
P. Diddy Kong

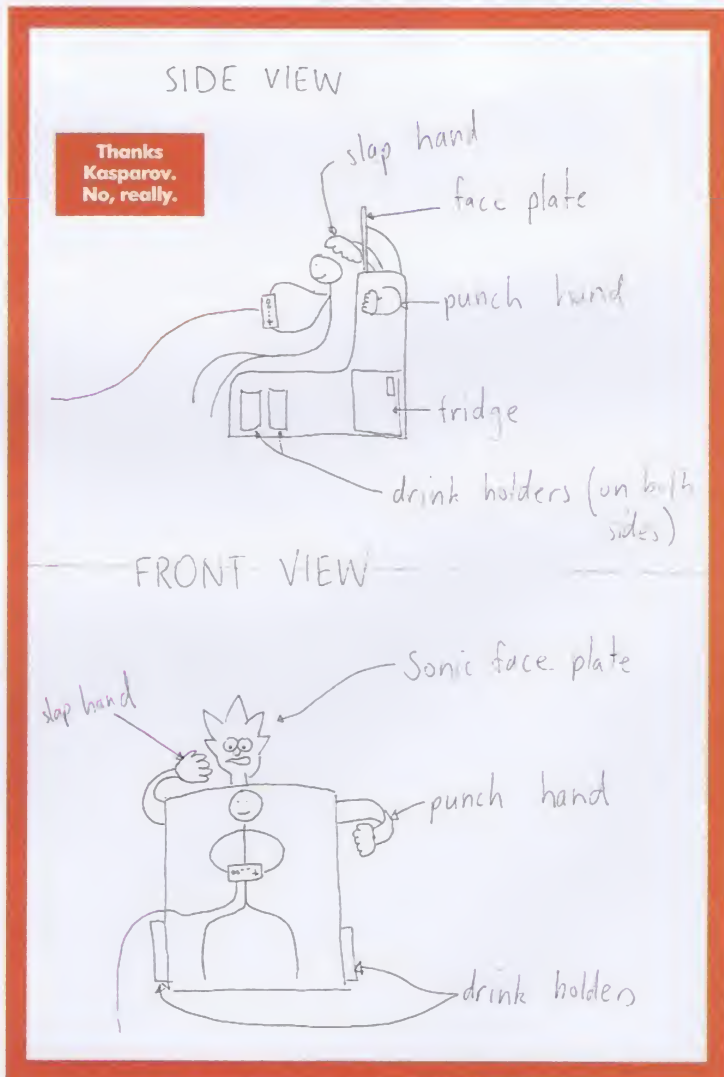
PUNCH OUT

Dear Hyper,
I would really like to see some sort of peripheral that punishes you for dying or losing life in a game. It couldn't do any permanent damage of course, but something comparable to the old slap over the back of the head, or a punch in the arm. In fact, the peripheral could actually take the form of a large robot, with a hand hovering over your head, and another clenched one, poised next to you. The robot could also have interchangeable snap-on face plates, depending on the game you were planning, like mobile phones. How great would it be to be battling Bowser in Mario, only to look up behind you and see Bowser's head towering over you!
The robot, let's call it the Big Brother 2000 Deluxe, could also double as a super-comfy lounge chair, and of course would include drink holders, or even a fridge round the back. You would only be able to open the fridge after finishing a level or winning a game etc. Also, it would have to include special lumber support and hydraulics, to aid the elderly gamer up out of the chair after an intense Super Smash Bros. Melee session. I've included a diagram for you.



Take that third-party controller!

Kasparov



Thanks Kasparov. No, really.

MAIL

✉ HYPER LETTERS:

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

GIANT STACKS

Hiya Hyper,

This is just a very short letter to make one request/suggest an idea.

I've been subscribing to Hyper since about issue 33, and as a result, have two giant stacks of Hyper mags lying on my shelves.

Now, the idea... firstly, you know how sometimes you spot that game a few years old lying on the shelf marked down to \$9.99 - oh, you don't? well, the poor mugs do. LOL. Anyway, when you buy a game that is 6 months old or older, I often want to find the Hyper review for it - so how about creating a list at hyperactive.com.au of the games that are reviewed in each mag? i.e. browse to M, find Monkey Island, reviewed in issue blah.

whattayasay?

DRDBEAR

*Dear DRDBEAR,
We do actually have a Hyper database of all our scores going back five years for our own reference, so we may just consider making such information "public", now you've brought the need to our attention.*

We could do so on Hyperactive.com.au, the only non-subscriber games site, it seems, left on the bloody planet.

HYPER HOLE

Hi,

My name is Buddy (weird, yes, I know) and am 14 years-old. I have been collecting your mag for a while now, and am not ashamed to say that it has become a part of my monthly "ritual". I love it sooo much that I am wondering if I had what it takes to join the Hyper crew (not now, later on, like when I'm in my early 20s after quitting my job at Electronics Boutique, god forbid your mag is shut down by then) and hence, my questions are on this topic.

1. Where is the Hyper HQ? (My guess is that it's somewhere in Sydney from the many references to Redfern).
2. What are the requirements? (Hopefully humour is one of them, cos' I ain't exactly the serious type and my guess is that most of you guys ain't either).

3. Is Hyper HQ really that bad? (You guys make it sound like a hole).
4. How's the salary? (The saddest question, but still an important one).
5. Is it really as fun as it seems? (It probably is, pretty stupid question, really).
6. How are you guys? (fine/ok/not-so-good?)

Anyway, I am eagerly awaiting next months issue, CYA!

Buddy Neliath

Dear Buddy (haha),

1. *Indeed we operate out of a hidden bunker in sunny Redfern, NSW.*
2. *There are a variety of requirements, such as the ability to make good coffee, how I want it, when I want it. YOU GOT THAT?*
3. *Well, for a rusty, smelly bunker, it's home.*
4. *I get paid in bananas and Cam works for the perks. Malcolm... well, we don't talk about how he's "paid".*
5. *It's as fun as we can make it. Naturally, there's a lot of hard work that goes into making a monthly magazine, but we do our best to obliterate the office furniture and frisbee the latest review code into the rubbish bin.*
6. *We're none-too-shabby (sorry if that was not one of the required answers).*

are apparently willing to give up all that which life has to offer for "just one more turn" of Civilization 3.

Ask yourself: Do you get that much out of game to warrant hours of near-wasted time? Would you prefer to kill another alien in Halo, or go outside and get some fresh air, or play with the dog? Is the feeling of getting thousands of points in Tony Hawk better than pulling off that one great kickflip down a set of real-life stairs? Is stealing some city-goers car and running over everyone in Grand Theft Auto better than taking that hard-earned car for it's first drive? Are video games worth the time and money?

I'm not going to tell you to pick up a Game Boy and get playing right away, and I'm not going to tell you to go out and get a life. All I'm going to say is think about it. Remember. You've only got one life, and then it's GAME OVER.

Adam

*Dear Adam,
Such wise words from such a young man. If we were giving out "Australian of the Year" awards, we'd give you one. Instead we order you back inside the house to play more games!*

GETTING INTO THE INDUSTRY

Hey guys, hope you can help me.

I'm a 20 year-old artist living in Perth, I've played games my whole life and I want to somehow get involved in the video games industry with my artwork (3D modelling or something). Could you tell me about any Institutions in Australia where I can seek out the appropriate training?

Thanks Heaps,

Ben Dryden
bendryden@hotmail.com

*Dear Ben,
There are a number of games industry related courses going in various states. There's QANTM in Queensland, who run animation and games programming courses. You can find more info out from them at www.qantm.com.au or email enquiries@qantm.com.au*

CAPTION THIS!

PART 33 WINNER

This month's caption comes to us from Peter Barker, a Hyper reader obsessed with nudity and plants with pointy bits.



"Having been beaten by monkeys, Cactus Joe's obligatory nudie run was to bring even more embarrassment."

GAME OVER

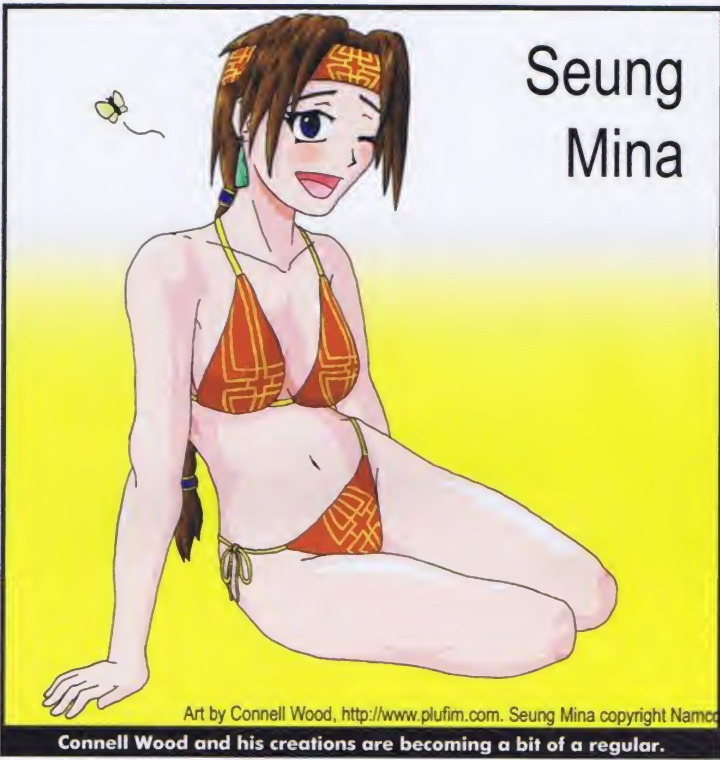
Hyper and its readers,

As long as this letter has been printed, it's safe to assume that you are interested in video games. Fair enough; they're great fun. There's nothing quite like a good game of Operation Flashpoint, Black & White or Morrowind after a hard day of work, but have you ever felt like you're missing out on something?

You see, games these days seem to be following a theme. The Sims is a life simulator. Morrowind lets you make a new life in another world. Shenmue creates a living, breathing city. Those games, along with many others, offer the player a virtual reality. Another world. The question is, what's wrong with this one? And do you get out there and see much of it?

Video Games have the ability to suck our lives away, and some of you

Seung Mina



Art by Connell Wood, <http://www.plufim.com>. Seung Mina copyright Namor
Connell Wood and his creations are becoming a bit of a regular.

HYPERMART & MUD

Dear Hyper,
I have not been reading your magazine for very long, but I like what I have seen so far and I think you are on to a good thing. Now, the reason I am writing to you is to let you know of a few ideas I think you may be able to use to make your magazine better (not that there is anything wrong with it).

1. How about including a Buy/Sell/Trade section at the back of the magazine, similar to what "Nintendo Magazine" did.
2. I think you could benefit from a section devoted to Multi User Dungeons (MUDs). There are a lot of quality games in this category and I think they are sometimes overlooked. Maybe a page or two reviewing several MUDs each month. I would certainly read it and go and have a look at these games.

I hope you will look at this and consider these ideas.
Thankyou,
Patrick Rennie

Dear Patrick,
1. When Hyper first started we had the Hypermart section on the back page. You could sell games, make penpals and all sorts of crazy stuff. Because of the way the internet took off, we felt that one page per month in Hyper simply wasn't as useful as simply hopping online to sell, buy and make friends. You can always

visit the Hyperactive forums (www.hyperactive.com.au) and see if anyone there wants to buy, trade or sell. Or be your friend, heh.

2. We do cover that sort of stuff and other online-related stuff in the Net Trawlin' section.

MEASLY 77%

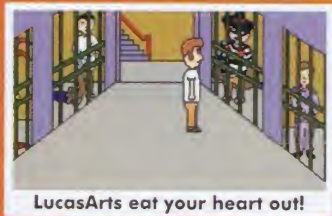
Hi everyone at Hyper,
First, congrats on a great mag. I have just finished playing Sonic Adventure 2 Battle on the GCN and I'll have to say it's one of the best games I've played since I sold my N64. You guys only gave it a measly 77 and I admit when I first got the game I had similar opinions but once you get into the game it truly rocks. For an action game it has a suprisingly deep storyline and although the treasure hunting stages and shooting stages are a little annoying they give the game character and variety. And not to mention the absolutely AWESOME soundtrack. No, Sega haven't paid me billions of dollars to plug the game it just is really good. Now this made me wonder whether or not you guys get the full game for the review and how long do you play the game before you review it? Thanks.

From,
Yoda_Rulz
P.S. Are you guys as excited about the Sonic Mega Collection as I am?

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

Dear Hyper,
Great work on the mag. It's the best one around that doesn't cost too much.

If you're like me, there are times when you look back at the old point and click adventure games with a tear in your eye, and ask yourself: "Have they really died out?"



LucasArts eat your heart out!

I grew up playing the Sierra Quest games, and always wanted to make one of my own. Well, after a bit of searching I found that I could. If you head over to adventuregamestudio.co.uk you will find a very cool engine that allows you to create these great games. With any style you want (Sierra, Lucasarts) and with easy to understand coding, it is quite easy to create your own games. There are heaps of games that have been made, and a few of commercial standard.

I just wanted to bring this to your attention because I think that point and click adventure games are still cool, and they should still deserve to be given recognition.

Thanks for your time,
Josh



Dear Josh,
Thanks for the link. That "has" brought a tear to my eye, as point and click adventures are one of my favourite gaming genres. So for the joy you bring, the joy you shall receive. Have a wheel. Sniff!

You've won an exclusive 360 Modena Racing Wheel for PC! Replica of the wheel in a Ferrari 360 Modena.

Don't forget to include your contact details in your letter.
<http://au.thrustmaster.com>
Wheel valued at \$99.95.

Dear Yoda_Rulz,
Cam played through the entire Sonic Adventure 2 about two times before writing his review. If only because the final level of the game was his favourite.

I'm glad you really love it, but we just didn't feel it was as consistently good as it should be. Every game we review is the full, final copy of the game direct from the games publishers, and we attempt to fully complete games before scoring them - which is why reviews are sometimes late! And yes, the Sonic Collection is going to rock.

CONCEPT SCHMONCEPT

Hey Hyper,
Allow me to get up on my soapbox. WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON? Now I hate game piracy and I'm generally glad to pay \$100 for a game because I really think the effort the developers put in is worth it, so you can imagine my disgust when I got home with my copy of GT Concept (what's the "concept"? How to rip people off?) and 10 hours later I ran out of game... Yes you heard me, 10 HOURS. Okay so the game only cost \$70, but for 10 hours of

play? I could have hired it out from the video shop for \$7.50. I trusted their reputation from previous efforts, since GT3 took me months I figured I'd get a least several weeks out of this one.

This is obviously a blatant attempt to capitalise on the popularity of GT3 and it worked, almost. You see Electronics Boutique, where I bought the game has a 7 day return policy no questions asked, so guess where I'm going tomorrow? With stiff competition just around the corner in the form of Codemasters, V8 Supercars/Toca race driver and the next Colin McRae instalment, developers need to offer something substantial if they want our hard-earned dollars.

My point is this, I buy 10-20 games a year, now you add that up at \$100 a pop and it's not cheap. I think if I'm prepared to do the right thing and not mod chip my consoles and pay full price for a game then I think I'm entitled to some quality and longevity in a game. Mario, Zelda, Halo, Project Gotham, Shenmue, GTA3, all great games that lasted MONTHS, not hours, and games I was happy to pay \$100 for. It's games like

MAIL

this (GT Concept) that create disgruntled gamers and make them go out and chip their consoles. Take note polyPHONY digital, not only am I taking this game back but I'll have serious hesitation buying your future products (once bitten...).

NOT... HAPPY... JAN!!!
LES

Dear Les,
That's why you should always wait for the Hyper review of a game before you rush out and buy it! We scored GT Concept a pitiful 64%.

GOLDEN SUN WOES

Hey Hyper,
I love your mag it's the best gaming mag out there, but



Braidy Newman sends us some sweet art again.

one thing is troubling me. The fact that you talked about Golden Sun in your Final Fantasy Tactics review, and you put a picture of it in your forum the other month but, you have not done a review of it in your mag or on your website. Do you people at Hyper hate it or something? Please tell me why the hell you won't review Golden Sun? Because I need a professional opinion before I buy the game. I've looked at reviews online and say it's great but I simply don't trust them. So please review Golden Sun.

From Blastaii

Dear Blastaii,
Who's been a naughty reader then? Not buying Hyper every month? We reviewed Golden Sun in issue 100 and it scored 93%. It was even a full-page review. Tsk tsk.

HARD-EARNED QUESTIONS

Dear Hyper,

Congratulations on writing a magazine which solely dominates my life! I have purchased approximately 83 of your wonderful issues, which in essence means I've given you guys about \$581 of my hard-earned cash.

In exchange I believe it is fair that you answer just a few of my questions.

1. Does it suck that you guys have to advertise crap games in your magazine? A particularly memorable moment was in



Microsoft Combat Flight Simulator 3 is going to be pretty special.

issue 99 where you placed a (game praising) advertisement for Crash Bandicoot back to back with a review that named the game a "soulless clone".

2. Just out of curiosity, why was there a pikmin on the cover of issue 100 (Feb) when the game wasn't released until July?
3. Do you guys plan to do a preview of Sudden Strike 2 any time soon?
4. When is Microsoft CFS 3 coming out?
5. Do you know how hard it is to play Micro Machines 64 when you are totally wasted? The tabletop is killer!!
6. Do you guys play any free (text based) online games? If anyone is interested try ArchMage at www.magewar.com/archmage/. It ROCKS.
7. Jordan Miller - Would you prefer these names? Participate Station,

Amusement Cube, X Container?

Thanks, I'm off to play Halo on my X Container.

Conker

Dear Conker,

1. Well, they "are" advertisements after all. We don't make the ads, the companies trying to sell the games send them to us. Just goes to prove that we don't sell out.
2. The game came out in Japan earlier than that, and we thought it deserved to be commemorated.
3. As soon as it comes in, we'll let you know about it.
4. Combat Flight Sim 3 isn't on our release schedule, but we think Novemberish.
5. Not as hard as trying to play the game after Jackson has left Peanut Butter all over the controllers.
6. Thanks for the tip.
7. We print them for his perusal.

LATE ADDITIONS

Considering the number of gaming systems out there, sometimes we never get to review everything that comes into the office, especially if it's a port or niche title.

Late Additions is your quick reference guide to whether these games are worth getting. This way you have an even more complete guide to what's getting released on all the platforms. Enjoy!

TITLE	PLATFORM	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER	PRICE	RATING
Dino Stalker	PS2	Light Gun	Capcom	\$89.95	BAD
Football Mania	PS2	Sport/Arcade	EA/Lego	\$89.95	OK
Mike Tyson Boxing	PS2	Sports	Codemasters	\$99.95	BAD
Ferarri F355 Challenge	PS2	Racing	Sega	\$99.95	OK
Aggressive Inline	Xbox	Action/Sport	Acclaim	\$99.95	GOOD
Taz Wanted	Xbox	Platformer	Infogrames	\$89.95	BAD
Bruce Lee	Xbox	Beat 'em up	Universal	\$99.95	BAD
Splashdown	Xbox	Racing	Infogrames	\$89.95	OK
Klonoa Beach Volleyball	PSone	Volleyball	Namco	\$69.95	OK
Stronghold Deluxe	PC	RTS	GOD	\$69.95	GOOD

The Official Australian Games Chart

Compiled by Inform in association with IEAA

TOP 10

PlayStation 2 Games Over \$50

W/E 4 August
2002 RETAIL SALES

- | | | | |
|----|---|-----------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | ◆ | Gran Turismo 2002 Concept | Racing |
| 2 | ▲ | Medal Of Honor: Frontline | Action |
| 3 | ▲ | Grand Theft Auto 3 | Adventure |
| 4 | ▲ | MX Rider+Test Drive Open Rd | Racing |
| 5 | ▲ | Spider-Man: The Movie | Adventure |
| 6 | ▲ | Vampire Night | Action |
| 7 | ▲ | Final Fantasy X | RPG |
| 8 | ⊕ | V-Rally 3 | Racing |
| 9 | ⊕ | Bond 007 Agent Under Fire | Action |
| 10 | ⊕ | Smash Court Pro Tournmn | Sports |

TOP 10

PlayStation Games Over \$40

W/E 4 August
2002 RETAIL SALES

- | | | | |
|----|---|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | ◆ | Digimon Rumble Arena | Action |
| 2 | ◆ | Harry Potter & Philosopher | Adventure |
| 3 | ▲ | Delta Force | Adventure |
| 4 | ▼ | Monsters Inc | Adventure |
| 5 | ▼ | Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 | Sports |
| 6 | ◆ | Final Fantasy Anthology | RPG |
| 7 | ▼ | Who Wants To Be A Millionre Family | |
| 8 | ▼ | FIFA 2002 World Cup | Sports |
| 9 | ◆ | Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 | Sports |
| 10 | ⊕ | Peter Pan | Adventure |

TOP 10

Game Cube Games Over \$40

W/E 4 August
2002 RETAIL SALES

- | | | | |
|----|---|----------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | ◆ | Super Smash Bros: Melee | Action |
| 2 | ◆ | Pikmin | Action |
| 3 | ◆ | Luigi's Mansion | Adventure |
| 4 | ▲ | Rogue Leader | Action |
| 5 | ▲ | Bond 007 Agent Under Fire | Action |
| 6 | ▲ | Sonic Adventures 2: Battle | Adventure |
| 7 | ▼ | Spider-Man: The Movie | Adventure |
| 8 | ▼ | Simpson's Road Rage | Racing |
| 9 | ◆ | Super Monkey Ball | Family |
| 10 | ⊕ | Lost Kingdoms | RPG |

TOP 10

Xbox Games Over \$40

W/E 4 August
2002 RETAIL SALES

- | | | | |
|----|---|---------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | ◆ | Halo - Combat Evolved | Action |
| 2 | ◆ | Hunter: The Reckoning | RPG |
| 3 | ◆ | Spider-Man: The Movie | Adventure |
| 4 | ◆ | Project Gotham Racing | Racing |
| 5 | ◆ | Bond 007 Agent Under Fire | Action |
| 6 | ◆ | RalliSport Challenge | Racing |
| 7 | ▲ | Crash Band: Wrath/Cortex | Adventure |
| 8 | ▼ | Dead or Alive 3 | Action |
| 9 | ▼ | Max Payne | Action |
| 10 | ▲ | Moto GP Ultimate Racing | Racing |

TOP 10

PC Games Over \$30

W/E 4 August
2002 RETAIL SALES

- | | | | |
|----|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | ◆ | WarCraft 3 | Strategy |
| 2 | ◆ | Neverwinter Nights | RPG |
| 3 | ◆ | Soldier Fortune 2: Double H | Action |
| 4 | ▲ | The Sims Vacation | Strategy |
| 5 | ▲ | The Sims | Strategy |
| 6 | ◆ | Return To Castle Wolfenstein | Action |
| 7 | ▲ | EA Sports V8 Challenge | Racing |
| 8 | ▼ | Op Flashpoint: Resistance | Strategy |
| 9 | ▲ | The Sims Hot Date | Strategy |
| 10 | ◆ | Grand Theft Auto 3 | Adventure |

TOP 10

Game Boy Advance Games Over \$40

W/E 4 August
2002 RETAIL SALES

- | | | | |
|----|---|----------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | ▲ | Dragonball Z: Legacy Goku | Action |
| 2 | ▲ | Super Mario World Adv 2 | Adventure |
| 3 | ⊕ | Rayman Advance | Adventure |
| 4 | ▼ | Monsters Inc | Adventure |
| 5 | ▲ | Mario Kart Super Circuit | Racing |
| 6 | ▲ | Super Mario Advance | Adventure |
| 7 | ⊕ | Scooby Doo The Movie | Action |
| 8 | ▼ | Spider-Man: The Movie | Adventure |
| 9 | ⊕ | Harry Potter & Philosopher | Adventure |
| 10 | ⊕ | Star Wars EP 2 | Adventure |

TOP 10

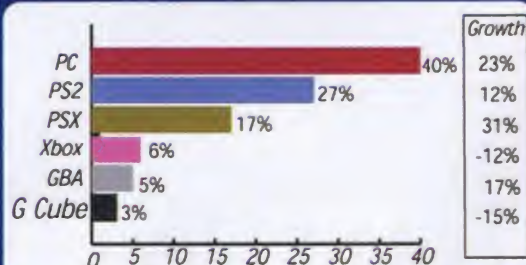
All Full Priced Games

W/E 4 August
2002 RETAIL SALES

- | | | | |
|----|---|-----------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | ◆ | Gran Turismo 2002 Concept | PlayStation 2 |
| 2 | ▲ | Medal Of Honor: Frontline | PlayStation 2 |
| 3 | ▲ | Grand Theft Auto 3 | PlayStation 2 |
| 4 | ◆ | WarCraft 3 | PC/MAC |
| 5 | ▲ | Halo - Combat Evolved | Xbox |
| 6 | ⊕ | Hunter: The Reckoning | Xbox |
| 7 | ◆ | MX Rider-Test Drive Open Rd | PlayStation 2 |
| 8 | ◆ | Spider-Man: The Movie | PlayStation 2 |
| 9 | ⊕ | Super Smash Bros: Melee | GameCube |
| 10 | ◆ | Neverwinter Nights | PC/MAC |

MARKET WATCH All Games by Platform

June vs July 2002
RETAIL SALES



- ★ New Entry
- ◆ Non Mover
- ▲ Up from last week
- ▼ Down from last week

inform

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Next Issue:

LORD OF THE RINGS: **THE TWO TOWERS**

It's time to return to Middle-Earth. Make sure to bring your PlayStation 2.

PLUS: VIDEOGAME ADDICTION - Is it really that serious?
REVIEWED: Timesplitters 2, Onimusha 2, Eternal
Darkness, Super Mario Sunshine and loads more.

Hyper 109 
On sale Oct 2

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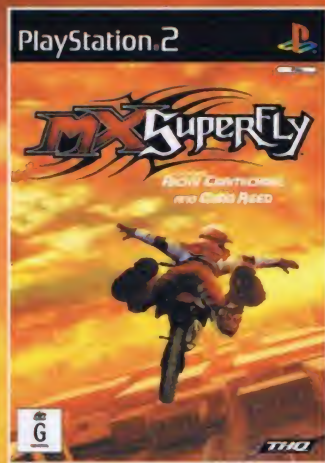


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The Ultimate combination of...



Motocross



Supercross



Freestyle



featuring **Ricky Carmichael** and **Australia's Chad Reed**

PlayStation 2



- Expanded freestyle modes • New Stunt Track Editor allows you to build your own ramps, jumps and obstacles • Twenty-two motocross, supercross, amateur and freestyle tracks • Five different multi-player modes both in racing and freestyle • 11 Mini Games

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