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July 2000 Issue 10

dreamcast

128-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMING

dreamcast MONTHLY Issue 10 July 2000

128-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMING

Are you scared yet?

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA

huge review

You will be...

CHU CHU ROCKET

Online gaming is here! Huge review inside...



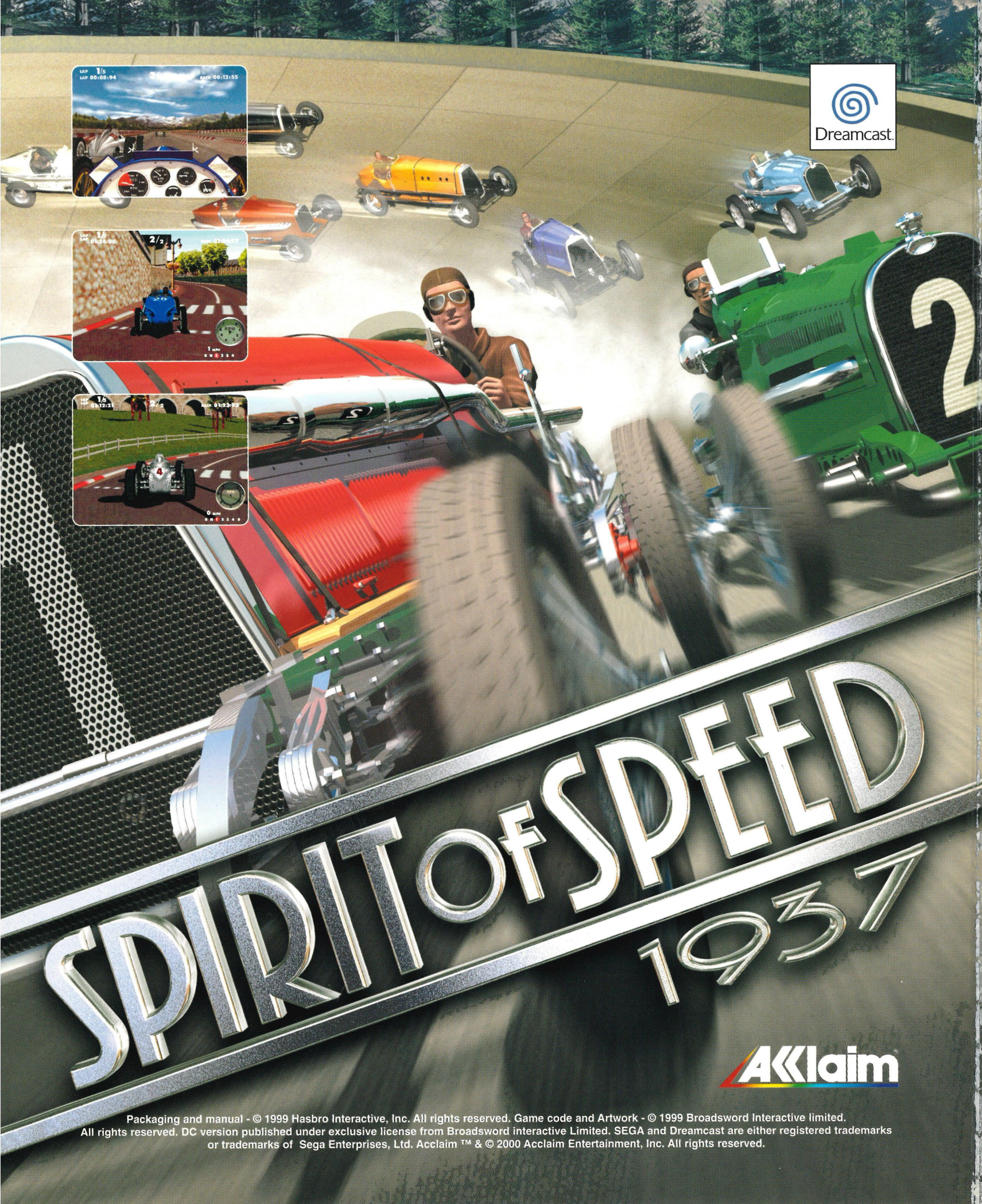
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EUROPE-WIDE FROM 16TH JUNE

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Dreamcast™

editorial

It's been non-stop gaming at DCM over this last month. This issue is crammed so tight with the latest games that there's a good chance it could explode at any minute, so read it at arms length for your own safety. We've got more reviews this issue than we've had for the last six, which is a clear sign that things are picking up tremendously in the Dreamcast camp, especially as PlayStation sales are down, right across the board. As I'm sure you could tell from this month's cover, Resident Evil Code: Veronica has arrived in fine style (Page 28). There are eight pages of pure, unadulterated review for you to sink your teeth into, so I'll understand if you're planning on going straight there. Go on, I don't mind, honestly...

For those of you still with me, we get to share a slice of history. It's been a long time coming, there's no denying it, but online gaming has finally arrived and the first game to support Sega's ambitious service is reviewed on Page 86. Chu Chu Rocket is Sonic Team's online puzzle sensation and believe it or not, Dreamarena users can pick up a copy completely free, gratis and void of any charge whatsoever.

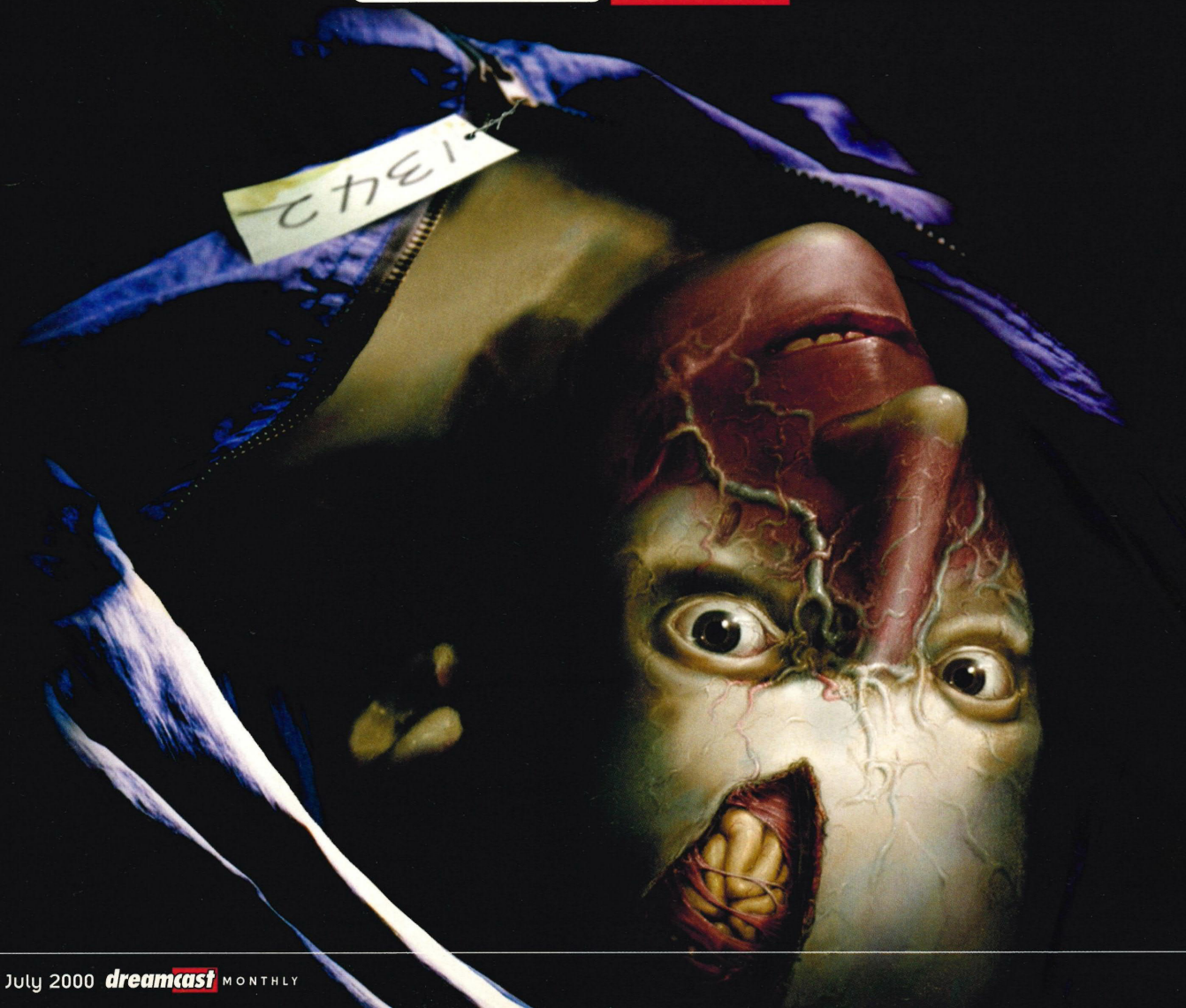
The world's biggest computer show is also out of the way for another year and we've brought back some huge games, along with the usual two week hangover, dodgy sunburn and a bag full of blagged swag. The E3 experience is over on Page 20, but expect to see much more of the show's spoils next month – Sega and their third party publishers had so much on offer, we couldn't possibly cram it all into one issue.

Take care,



Russell Barnes
Editor Dreamcast Monthly

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128-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMING



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Silicon Dreams

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[on the brink]



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Climax are one of Sega's best developers. Find out why...

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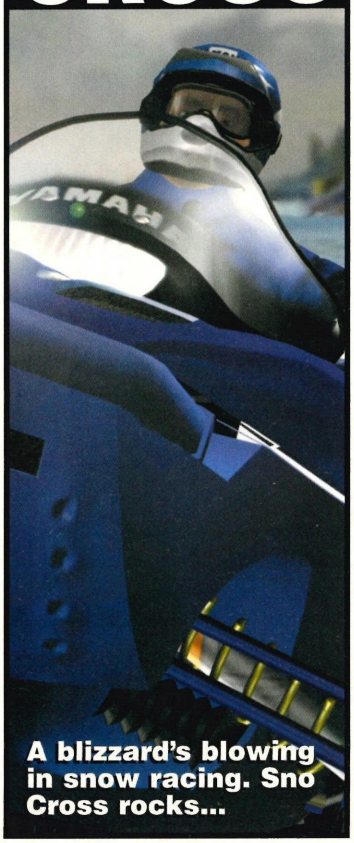
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SNO CROSS



A blizzard's blowing in snow racing. Sno Cross rocks...

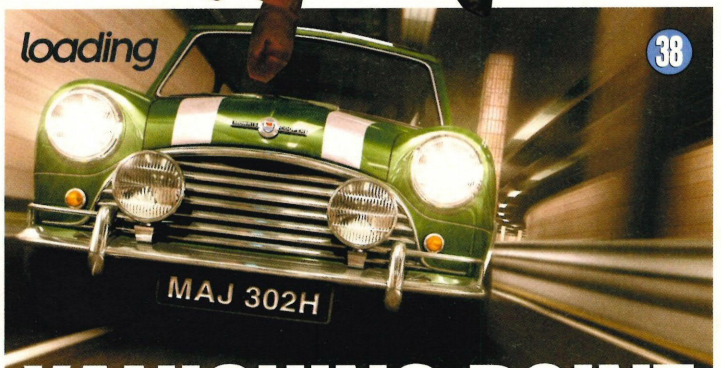
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Swords swinging, spell casting and gore galore.



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VANISHING POINT

Your thirst for speed is about to be quenched...



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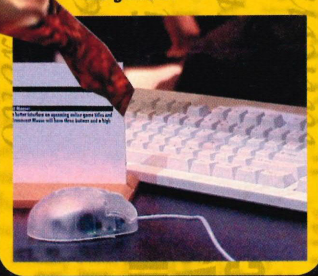
DCM LETTER OF THE MONTH

QUAKE III – WHAT'S THE POINT?

I'm worried. Not about Wimbledon losing out in the Premier League, or Jerry Springer starting a TV show in the UK, but more about Quake III: Arena being converted to the Dreamcast. Don't get me wrong, there's nothing wrong with Sega wanting to bring such a technically brilliant game to their system, but how can the incredible gameplay of the PC original be faithfully ported to a joypad that's incapable of allowing you to circle, strafe your opponents or free-look with any degree of ease? I'd like to think that Sega would be smart enough to consider the control system could be taken care of by keyboard and mouse means, but I really don't think Sega would be ready to go to that sort of trouble for real hard-core fans of the game and the genre.

Brook, e-mail

DCM: Actually, Brook, you're in for a bit of a surprise. Quake III: Arena was in full effect at E3 this year, working with the Dreamcast keyboard and mouse! The game was also being played over the American machine's 56k modem without any lag, though the early code did have a frame rate that dipped from 40 frames to 10, on occasions. The brilliant news that Quake will support keyboard and mouse control will surely gob-smack real fans of the genre that have been playing via this system for years. Who says Sega doesn't care about the gamers?

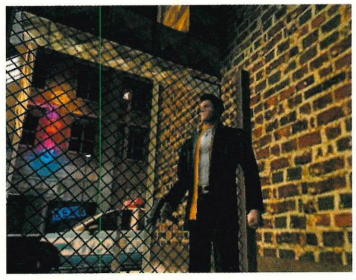


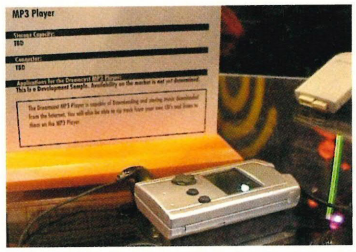
GIVE ME PAYNE!

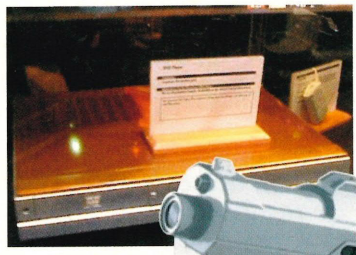
Going back a couple of months to issue 6, you did a preview on a game called Max Payne. The whole concept and idea of the game looks fantastic and it's definitely the kind of game I'd really be into. Since the small preview in issue 6, however, I haven't seen anything on it in any of the other magazines, or in yours. Does this mean that the game has been cancelled or simply that it's not coming out for a while? If you have any more information on it, like for example the UK release date, can you please print it for me, along with a date for Resident Evil Code: Veronica and Shenmue...

Tom, Swindon

DCM: Don't panic Tom, Max Payne hasn't been canned, it's just going to be a little longer coming than we last expected. There is no scheduled UK release date for it as yet, but we can tell you that Resident Evil Code: Veronica (showcased on Page 28) was available on the 2nd June (just in case you're not already aware). Shenmue is a slightly trickier one, however, but we're confident you'll be engrossed in the remarkable adventure before Christmas comes around.







ADD-ON PROS AND CONS

I am writing to say that I strongly disagree with Dhameer's comments in Dreamcast Monthly issue 8. I personally think that add-ons for the Dreamcast are ultimately a good thing, as it helps to show the machine's full potential. Dhameer had some good points to his argument, but what he fails to realise is that some people (myself included) can't wait for accessories that can help to unleash the console's true power. They may well be marginally expensive, but many people are willing to pay out good money. So, in the future, Dhameer, think of people like myself who are going to fork out a nice couple of quid and not just of yourself.

Joshua, Wales

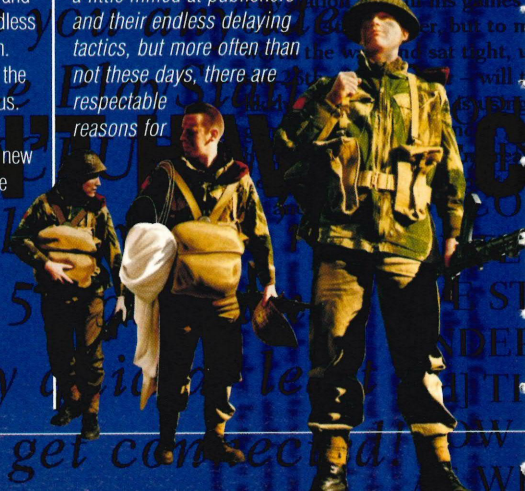
WHY ME?

Why is it that as soon as I get my hopes up about a game soon to be released on the Dreamcast, it's delayed and delayed until I just don't want it anymore? I like reading Dreamcast Monthly because it gives up and coming games the best coverage, regardless of the amount of hype surrounding them. Stunt GP is one, as is Deep Fighter and the incredible looking Hidden and Dangerous. They might not be the biggest games around, but they've each got something new and interesting to offer and they're all the kind of games I could really get into – it's not fair! They've all been delayed so much that I'm just getting fed up with the wait. Am I just the unluckiest gamer in the world, or am I not the only one who's fed up with publishers' and developers' broken promises?

Karen, e-mail

DCM: We at DCM could write a book about what it feels like to get your hopes up about a game, only to have them dashed by slipping release dates and 'minor gameplay tweaks'. You're definitely not alone as far as being a little miffed at publishers and their endless delaying tactics, but more often than not these days, there are respectable reasons for





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DCM: It's not a case of Dhameer simply thinking of himself; there are thousands of people out there with the same worries. When Sega decided it was a good idea to release the Mega CD followed by the 32X, the rest of the world decided they were completely mad and gamers that bought the fated add-ons lost out big time. Those gamers who might have forgiven Sega for their past mistakes probably still haven't forgotten what happened before, so it's fair to expect some adverse reactions. Saying that, however, Sega's DVD drive does look like a pretty sharp piece of kit. The PS2 may have one built in, but the Dreamcast has Internet capabilities, when it has not – swings and roundabouts.

LAST DITCH ATTEMPT?

In response to word on the Internet and a letter from Owen in last issue's Dreamcast Monthly, regarding Sega of Japan and America's free Dreamcast deal, there are a few things I'd like to say. I may not know an awful lot about the battle between Sega and Sony or the 'console wars' as a whole, but it looks clear to me that Sega are using their free console offer as a last ditch attempt to get people playing the Dreamcast before the PlayStation 2 comes out and buries it alive. It makes Sega look really desperate when they have to give consoles away to generate any kind of interest in their console. Am I anywhere near the truth, or are you all too biased towards Sega to admit it?

Mike, e-mail

DCM: Ouch. That's rich from someone whose allegiances are clearly based in the Sony camp. We're certainly not biased when we say that there's nothing wrong with Sega's strategy in America. It's only a shame we're unlikely to see anything quite like that here. However, watch out for an incredible free game offer from Sega. Taking a trip to Dreamarena will soon show you that signing up to the games portal will earn you a free copy of Chu Chu Rocket (reviewed Page 82). It's not exactly a $200 cheque, but it's way better than a kick in the teeth as far as we're concerned...



delays. Your three chosen games are indeed classic examples of top games still yet to reach the shops, but we'll have a bash at projecting their ETAs... Hidden and Dangerous should be with us next issue, Deep Fighter might well turn out the issue after and Stunt GP might well be the same. You'll know more just a little after we do...

VMU BATTERIES

What a pain in the arse! Sega's VMUs are great, but when it comes to battery life on their screens they're a nightmare. When the Dreamcast was first launched I really enjoyed playing with the Chao's in Sonic Adventure and training them up on the VMU. But the screen only lasted a month or so, and I had to spend quite a lot of money on watch batteries to keep me going for a while. It's a bit of a rip off when you think about it. Maybe Sega should release a power pack that plugs into the mains so you can recharge batteries while you're not using it – what do you think?

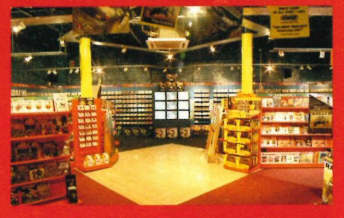
Graeme, Scotland

DCM: Damn right. We've spent a fortune on watch batteries through the year we've been putting this magazine together. Let's hope Sega can launch a next generation VMU that has a longer battery life. There's no talk of any powerpacks or anything like that, but it's not a bad little idea you've got there. Perhaps a few phone calls to Sega might get the ball rolling, but for now, you're just gonna have to keep dishing out cash by the bucketload for those bloody watch batteries.



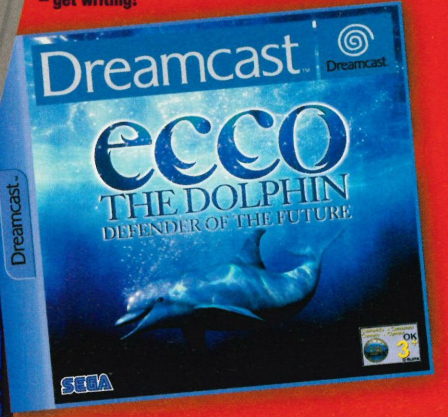
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Make sure you include your full name and address and the name of the game you would like to win, or you'll be kicking yourself for a week when you don't win. Don't just sit there – get writing!



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NewsCAST

bringing you the latest news and views from around the world







SEGA STORM E3!

Dreamcast doubters should be put in their place very soon...



Okay, we're aware that elsewhere in the magazine there's a weightier insight into the huge gaming show that was the Electronics Entertainment Expo – E3 to its mates. And whilst the doors have long since shut on this year's huge, Los Angeles based extravaganza, we're left mulling over just how good it is to be a Dreamcast owner.

Aside from the big news, which you can read about elsewhere, such as the return of Sonic the Hedgehog, the arrival of Spawn and a release date in sight for Shenmue, the show demonstrated that the Dreamcast has plenty of second tier titles on the way as well that may not hog the headlines in the same immediate way as some of the bigger guns, but are generally regarded as where consoles get their depth.

Among the titles to make an appearance were ports of Railroad Tycoon 2 and Rainbow Six, updated showings of the likes of Power Stone 2, Street Fighter 3 Double Impact, Metropolis Street Racer, Sega GT, Olympics 2000, The Mummy, Prince of Persia, NFL Blitz 2001, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Army Men: Sarge's

Headlines

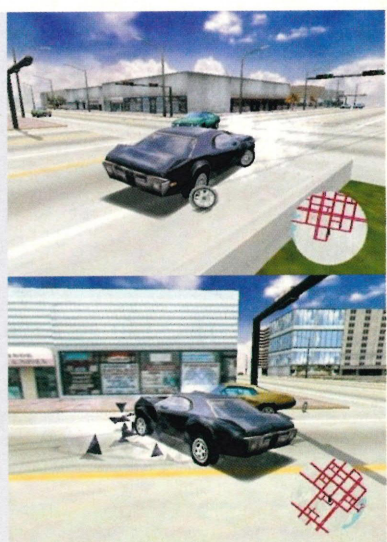
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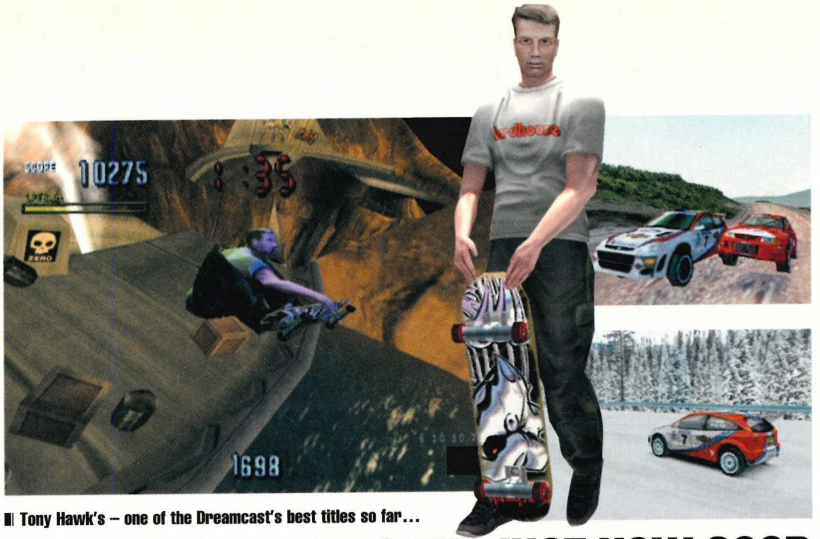
WILL WE GET DRIVER 2?

Here's hoping!

At first, when Infogrames announced their takeover of GT Interactive last year, we weren't quite sure how it was going to pan out. At the time, Infogrames had a couple of Dreamcast titles either just releasedor about to be, and rumours of a couple of more into the future. However, we were a little in the dark about how that would affect key GT titles such as Unreal Tournament and Driver.

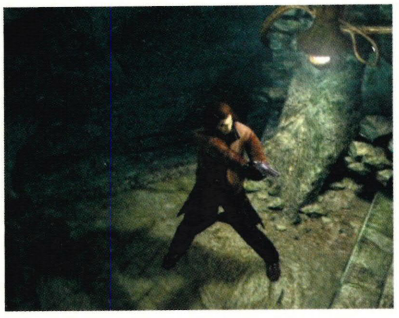
Now, several months on, the rumour mill is in overdrive, with the news that Infogrames may decide to publish Driver 2 on the Dreamcast as well as the PlayStation and PC. At this stage, we can only hope that this one comes true, as Driver was one of the most enjoyable games on any format to appear last year, and certainly brightened up many people's summer. Release is quite a way off anyway, especially for any DC version, so we advise you to check back regularly with Dreamcast Monthly to find out further developments, as and when they happen...

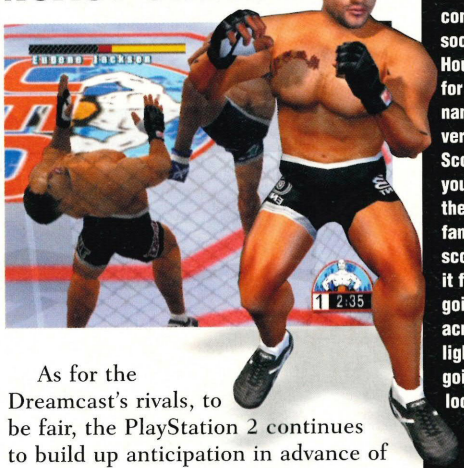




Tony Hawk's – one of the Dreamcast's best titles so far...

WE'RE MULLING OVER JUST HOW GOOD IT IS TO BE A DREAMCAST OWNER!





Heroes, Phantasy Star Online, Silver and Virtua Tennis, all of which were attracting attention.

New announcements? Several actually, although we'd be lying if we said all of them set our pulses racing, but there are some cracking looking games in here. Anyway, expect the likes of Aerowings 2, Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing, World's Scariest Police Chases, Sonic Shuffle, Ferrari F355 Challenge, Soul Reaver 2, WWF Royal Rumble and Colin McRae Rally 2.0. You can read about the majority of these across both our special feature on E3 and our regular Newscast pages.

As for the Dreamcast's rivals, to be fair, the PlayStation 2 continues to build up anticipation in advance of its official launch, now confirmed as October 26th both in the States and the UK (and it'll be launching with anywhere up to fifty titles – yikes!). However, the big head to head for next year, The Nintendo Dolphin versus the Microsoft X-Box, still isn't really taking shape and E3 did nothing to clear up which would be the winner. Time will tell, we guess. Anyway, for more goodies on E3, check out the feature!

SILENT BUT DEADLY

Popular arcade blaster coming our way...

SILENT SCOPE



Konami are working on an arcade conversion that could soon be challenging House of the Dead 2 for our lightguns, namely the Dreamcast version of Silent Scope. Now firstly, if you've never played the arcade version of the game, you really should because it's fantastic. And it also comes equipped with a scope device that has a little screen inside it for extra effect. Unfortunately, that's going to be something that ain't coming across to the DC, and we're guessing that a lightgun or controller is about as good as it's going to get. Nonetheless, the game itself looks to be shaping up nicely, although it's still many months away from seeing the inside of Electronics Boutique.

CONTROLLING QUAKE III

Could we get what we want?

When we did our preview of Quake III Arena recently – which is still our most eagerly awaited Dreamcast game of the year – our main concern was the control method, and whether there would be any way to utilise the mouse and keyboard together in the way that's so comfortable for playing the game on the PC. Anyway, when the game was on display at E3, a keyboard and mouse were precisely what were being used to play the game. Whether this was just a demo set up that'd been cobbled together, or something that could actually be happening, we wait excitedly to see.





STOP PRESS

ARCADE ONLINE

Fans of Sega arcade games – and we reckon that accounts for the vast majority of you (and if not, go and buy Crazy Taxi urgently) – will be enthralled to hear that our beloved Sega have spruced up a web site dedicated to their coin-operated dealings. You'll find it at www.segaarcade.com. So enjoy it.

SHADOWMAN RETURNS

Latest rumour out of Acclaim is that they're revisiting their 9/10 scoring Shadowman, and bringing the adventures of the famous characters into yet another Dreamcast game. Nothing concrete other than that is known at this stage, although there is the film in the works if you need your fix...

SECRETS

Sega Europe's quietly developing a new title that they kept under wraps at E3. Word has it though that it has Res Evil-style movement controls (oh, oh) and offers at least one segment that allows the player to ride on a motorcycle. It's called Headhunter – but shhh, don't tell anyone!

METAL GEAR

It's only a rumour at the moment, but apparently Konami may just port Metal Gear Solid 2 to the Dreamcast. We say, why the hell not – we could do with some sneaky Solid Snake action on the DC. More news as we hear it, folks.

SURROUND SOUND

Sega of America have announced that their new version of the Dreamcast operating system, to be released in June, will offer Dolby Surround sound to make gaming ultra realistic. Can the PlayStation 2 compete with that we ask? Doubt it. Whether that means we'll soon be surrounded is another question altogether.

STOP PRESS

IN FOR A SHOCK?

Vatical could spring some surprises...



In this country the name Vatical Entertainment ain't exactly one to set the pulses racing. In the States, too, they're hardly Electronic Arts, and their DC CV to date boasts just one title, Elemental Gimmick Gear, which has yet to see the light of day back here in Blighty. However, after the recent E3 show on the other side of the Atlantic, news has seeped through that they could have got their paws on a title we'd rather like to see on the DC format – System Shock 2, to be frank.

The game was a popular hit on the PC last year, mixing adventure and action with bags of atmosphere, and thus winning itself glowing references from both the critics and consumers. It seems that Vatical have done a deal with the creators of the game to allow them to do a version of it for the Sega, although original publishers Electronic Arts are unlikely to get involved if everything goes ahead as planned.

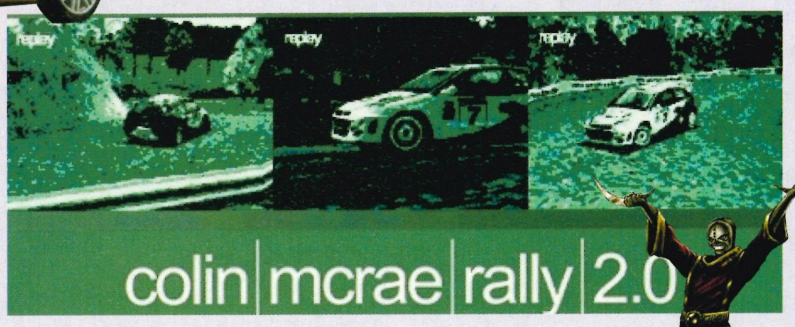
Other titles on the roster for the company are The Next Tetris and a racing game called Sea-Doo HydroCross. Unfortunately, as we went to press, no UK publisher had been announced for any of the four titles that Vatical have their paws in, although we'll be sure to let you know when that changes.

COME ON COLIN!

Codies jump on the Dreamcast ship

And so another one has been unable to resist temptation, with top British publishers Codemasters signing up for a slice of the Dreamcast pie. Their offering? None other than what's probably their biggest title of the year, Colin McRae Rally 2. For those unaware of the qualities of Mr McRae, the original game was widely regarded as a rallying classic, winning us over both for the ferocity of the challenge, and the completely fair learning curve.

The new version firstly looks a lot better – and it certainly kicks arse out of the PlayStation version – although we should point out that the Dreamcast version is running a fair way behind the PC and PlayStation release, to the point where we're not expecting to see anything this year. In some ways though, this is a good thing, as we ain't getting another of those straight ports, which were nice novelties to start with, but soon started to grate. Expect more substantial news on Mr McRae in a future issue, but in the meantime, you'll have to content yourself with the loveliness of V Rally 2, which is on shop shelves now...





GOLD AT THE END OF THE RAINBOW?

Finally – Rainbow Six makes it onto DC

The oft delayed (and realistically not the most anticipated) Dreamcast release, Rainbow Six, is apparently now finished, and should be heading to the Sega over the course of the next few weeks. However, far more interesting is the fact that the more accomplished sequel, Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear, has also been earmarked for Dreamcast release. Rogue Spear is a far tidier and much more enjoyable title, although the developers aren't yet willing to commit to a release date. Given the delays suffered by the original though, that's probably a good thing.

SOUL REAVER 2

Confirmed, and due before the end of the year

Hats off to Eidos, who continue to put many of their rivals to shame with yet more news on another Dreamcast title. As well as bringing the next Lara Croft game to the DC – although it's not certain now whether that'll arrive before the end of the year, or alongside the film next summer – they've also confirmed the sequel to Soul Reaver.

The original, as we're certain you'll no doubt remember, scored a mighty nine out of ten in our hallowed pages, and continues to impress us to this day. The sequel? Find out more in our E3 feature a few pages on – this title looks set to be an epic!





WANT A GO ON MATT'S BMX?

Tony Hawk, watch yer back

Hoping to do for BMXing what Tony Hawk's has done for skateboarding, Activision have revealed that they are working on Matt Hoffman's Pro BMX, which is currently scheduled for release just before the end of the year. We've said it once and we say it again, and that's that Activision are yet to release a bog-rocking Dreamcast game (save for the good but not groundbreaking Tony Hawk's), although with the likes of Quake III Arena and Tony Hawk's 2 on their DC roster, our hopes are high. More on Mr Hoffman in a future issue.



FEEL THE FORCE OF THIS

More Star Wars on the DC





We'll start off with the good news. Following the arrival of Star Wars: Racer on the Dreamcast, LucasArts are to bring another of their Star Wars titles across to the Dreamcast. Now before you start thinking of the likes of X-Wing Alliance, you need to put your enthusiasm in check for a minute, as we reveal that the new title on offer is the tepid Jedi Power Battles, an unspectacular tie-in to the Phantom Menace movie.

But then let's look at this logically. LucasArts have now released their first Dreamcast game, and have definitely got two more on the way. They also have a rather tasty looking Obi Wan game that ties into the Star Wars franchise, and chances are that if they're selling us two Star Wars games, it follows that there's more than likely going to be a third. And who knows, the Dreamcast Jedi Power Battles could actually be good. Ahem...

SEGA VS EIDOS

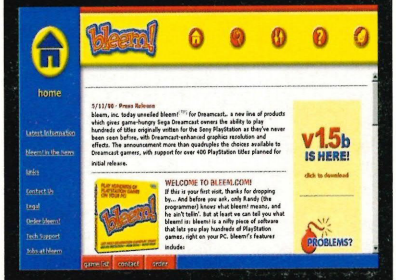
Will they go head to head for Olympic crown?

Sydney 2000

If rumours from the inner workings of Sega are correct, the company are putting the finishing touches to Virtua Athlete (title not confirmed), which would go head to head with Eidos' forthcoming game based on the Sydney 2000 Olympics. Currently scheduled for August, the Eidos release is the only one that's completely definite at this stage though, although with Virtua Tennis also due out in the summer, this is one rumour we ain't betting against.

PLAYSTATION ON THE DREAMCAST

Will Sony not like this...



Check 'em out at www.bleem.com

The much heralded PlayStation emulator Bleem, famed most for putting Sony through numerous unsuccessful courtroom scuffles in an attempt to get it stopped, could be about to unleash further humiliation on the parents of the PlayStation. They're planning to release a version of the emulator for the Dreamcast, which would effectively mean that you can play PSX games on a Dreamcast.

Details are scarce at present, but as a word of note for those getting particularly excited about this, Bleem may be good at what it does, but it doesn't run everything and it doesn't run it perfectly. And with PlayStations likely to be ducking below fifty notes in the run up to Christmas, the retail price for Bleem will also be crucial. Of course, Sony could take the whole thing back to court and delay things further...

Check out the Bleem website if you're interested, over at www.bleem.com

SEGA GETS HARD

At last – some decent hardware to superpower our consoles

After some late dithering over whether Sega would in fact commit themselves to a DVD player for the Dreamcast, they've surpassed our expectations and unveiled a new portfolio of add-ons that certainly give us hope in the upcoming battle with PlayStation 2.

The DVD player is still one of the centrepieces of course, and it's now well on the way, although early reports suggest it looks more like a stand-alone unit then a plug in for the console. Furthermore, Sega have also taken the wraps off a Dreamcast MP3 player, which should tie perfectly into the console's Internet capabilities. For those not in the know on MP3, it's a highly compressed audio format that allows CD quality tracks to be easily passed over the Internet – only don't use it illegally.

Finally, and a round of applause for finally getting off their arse and putting this on the shop shelves, Sega have confirmed that they will be releasing a mouse for the DC. With upcoming titles such as Quake 3, Railroad Tycoon 2 and, of course, the Internet side of things, we can't help feeling that it's almost a year too late for something so simple, but we'll let them off the hook, so long as we see it in our local Woolies for Christmas.



PROSPECTS

DEMOLITION RACER: NE

Demolition Racer: No Exit is a demolition derby style title on the way to the DC later this summer. Take part in two events: Racing and Arena, set cars on fire, knock opponents out of the race or land on top of them. Sounds like fun. Look out for more info soon.

STRIKER PRO 2000

This title's supposed to be one of the most detailed and visually impressive soccer games to date (now where have we heard that before?). We can apparently say cheerio to those control-ridden lag times found in so many other sports titles for starters. We'll go on in a preview soon.

RONIN

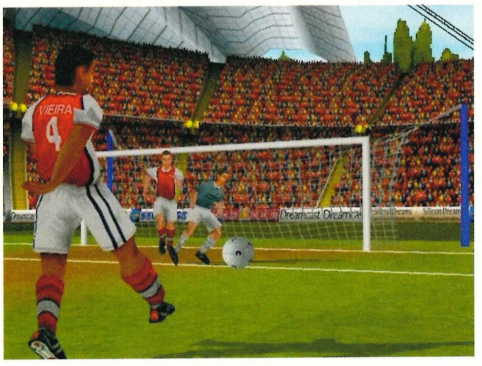
Hoorah, another role playing game! Only this time, this title will encompass both action and adventure to boot. Sounds a bit like what Silver's supposed to do to us, though... There are a whopping 60 levels to explore, so don't expect completion in one sitting.

ANACHRONOX

Anachronox is the name of a ghost town, which serves as the starting point of this game. You control a character called Sly Boots, a trenchcoat wearing anti-hero, whose mission it is to unravel the mysteries of this bizarre world. You'll encounter loads of characters throughout the adventure, keeping the story moving along nicely. Maybe by the end of the year we'll be able to tell you more.

FOOTBALL CRAZY

More football games – but they're more of the same



The quest for a top quality Dreamcast football game continues unabated, with the impressive Sega Worldwide Soccer Euro 2000 the current leader, but still offering room for improvement. However, it's now been revealed that there will be at least another two footie games before the end of the year (and make that three if ISS Evolution makes its much rumoured appearance), although both of them are extensions to what has gone before. On paper, UEFA Striker 2001 sounds the most intriguing, thanks to the extra levels of detail that programmers Rage are putting into it. For instance, should your player be injured at the start of the game, they may hobble round with a limp for a bit, but if you don't take them off, the injury will get gradually worse as things continue.

The other main contender will be the third Dreamcast coming of the Worldwide Soccer series, predictably titled Sega Worldwide Soccer 2001 (as ever, subject to change). Little is known about this one at the moment, other than the fact that it has appeared on Sega release lists and looks set to further improve on the SWS model. And if it's anything like its two predecessors, it'll look stunning.

MORE PINBALL?

American release lists hint at something new incoming...

Thus far, the pinball scene on the DC has been restricted to Empire Interactive's upcoming Pro Pinball release, which promises to unite all the tables from the hit PC series. However, taking a look at American release lists, we discovered that over the next few weeks they are due to be receiving a title by the name of Worms Pinball. Experienced gamers are already well ahead, and will have deduced that this mixes both the popular Worms franchise with, er, pinball. Furthermore, you'll also know that the game was released on the PlayStation recently to, ahem, lukewarm reviews. As ever though, we live in hope of a pleasant surprise, and shall update you fully on the Worms situation in a future issue.





SONIC'S BACK!

A second adventure is on the way

As predicted in these very pages only an issue or two ago, Sega have confirmed that their mascot of old, Mr S Hedgehog himself, will be returning to the Dreamcast for a new adventure. With Sonic Adventure being a launch title for the console, and both a commercially and critically successful one at that, it didn't take us an enormous amount of genius to predict the return of the blue one.

So Sonic Adventure 2 is a goer then, and whilst we won't be seeing his friendly face until well into 2001, it's a meeting we'll be pencilling in our diaries.





NOTHING LEFT TO TEST

A drive we'll miss out on

Fans of the Test Drive series (given the quality of releases under the name over the past five years we'd be surprised if there were many about) will no doubt be left in floods of tears and uncontrollable hysterics, given the news from the States that work has been stopped on Test Drive Off Road 3 for the Dreamcast. We're sorry if we're the ones to break this tragedy to you, but since its just yet another update of yet another middle of the road PlayStation title, we somehow think you're going to be able to overcome your trauma.

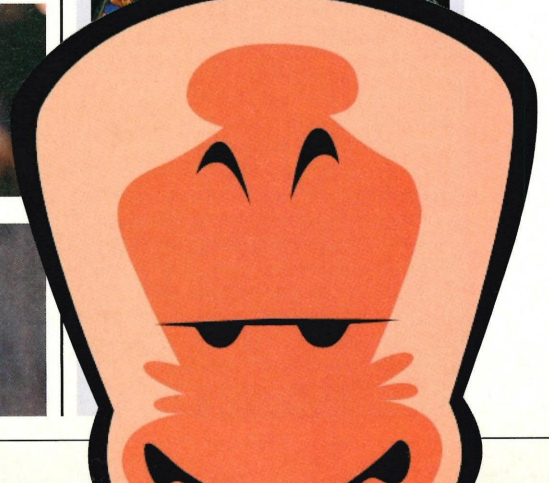
THE BITCH IS BACK

Sigourney will be on the Sega

Fox Interactive, they who are published by the notoriously Dreamcast-shy (despite announcing a Nintendo 64 game for Christmas) Electronic Arts in the UK, will be turning to one of their parent company's most famous franchises for one of their early DC efforts. The title in question? None other than Alien Resurrection, not the most staggering of the four films, but certainly juicy enough to warrant a fun packed game. The plot will centre around you trying to prevent a shipload of the little bastards getting to Earth and causing all kinds of havoc, and if it can capture even half of the mood and atmosphere of the PC game Alien vs Predator, then we'll be most happy, thank you very much.







AND THE WAIT GOES ON

More Namco release news – but not what we want



See! Even the N64 got this one first!

Namco have been teasing and tantalising with their entry into Dreamcastland. On the one hand, they make an enormous splash with probably the best game of last year on any format, Soul Calibur. Then, whilst we wait with baited breath for a formal announcement of a sequel, we're told to expect a puzzler by the name of Mr Driller instead. Great.

However, never let it be said we are a miserable lot, so we had no trouble raising our enthusiasm over news of the release of Namco Museum, a title that's already on, for instance, the Nintendo 64. For those not familiar with these museum pieces, it's just an excuse to bundle a load of old back catalogue titles in one package, and then slap a thirty to forty quid price tag on it. The games in this particular treasure trove? Pacman, Ms Pacman, Dig Dug, Pole Position, Galaga and Galaxian. We can't wait.

CHART WATCH

Want to know what the biggest sellers are on the Dreamcast? Want to know if anyone other than you bought a copy of Chef's Luv Shack? Well have a browse through the following to see what's been moving up and down the chart – courtesy of those fine folks at Chartrack.

1	SEGA BASS FISHING	Sega
2	CRAZY TAXI	Sega
3	TOMB RAIDER: TLR	Eidos
4	RESIDENT EVIL 2	Virgin
5	LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER	Eidos
6	MONACO GRAND PRIX	Ubi Soft
7	RAYMAN 2	Ubi Soft
8	SOUL CALIBUR	Namco
9	SONIC ADVENTURE	Sega
10	NBA 2000	Sega
11	HOUSE OF THE DEAD	Sega
12	WWF ATTITUDE	Acclaim
13	RED DOG	Sega
14	SEGA RALLY 2	Sega
15	TEE OFF	Acclaim
16	DEADLY SKIES	Konami
17	POWER STONE	Eidos
18	SLAVE ZERO	Infogrames
19	JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL	Virgin
20	SPEED DEVILS	Ubi Soft

Chart compiled by Chartrack. © ELSPA

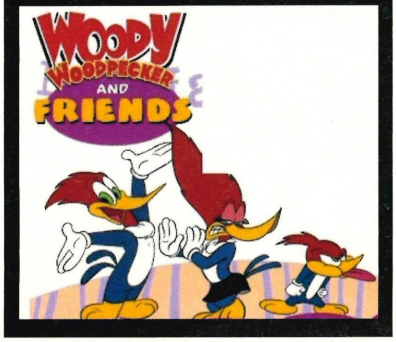
No change at the top then? And Tomb Raider and Crazy Taxi have swapped back again to their positions last month. We reviewed Sega Bass Fishing way back in Issue 3, surely that proves just how on the ball we are here at DCM? It's a great game and we wouldn't be surprised to see it there again next month!

WOODEN CARTS

Another cartoon character. Another carting game

On the PlayStation, they've just been treated to Muppet Race Mania. On the Dreamcast, we're shortly to get South Park Rally and Austin Powers 2. The connection? They're all licences bought in by the big companies, attached to cart games. It used to be a big licence meant a standard platformer or something like that, but now developers just seem keen to plonk any age-old cretin into a supersonic cart and send it spinning around a track.

Okay, you can come back, we've had our rant. The point of the story is the news that Konami have secured the licence to the Woody Woodpecker cartoon, following the likes of Scooby Doo and Wacky Races on its way to the DC. And yes, it'll be a carting game, we gather. As the game is still a long way off completion, we'll be coming back to it in more detail at another time.



TO INFINITY... AT LAST

Are Buzz and Woody ready yet?



Arriving on shop shelves well after the film has made its mark on the box office, the game of Toy Story 2 is finally nearing completion and should be on sale either when you read this, or not long after. First impressions are that this is a standard, middle of the road, Disney style platform offering, with nice touches but nothing to set the world on fire with – although we're willing to be surprised.

Anyway, still on the Toy Story theme, there is also said to be a game in the works based on the forthcoming cartoon series, Buzz Lightyear Star Commander. Expect to see the series hitting TV screens at some point this year, with the game also putting in an appearance.

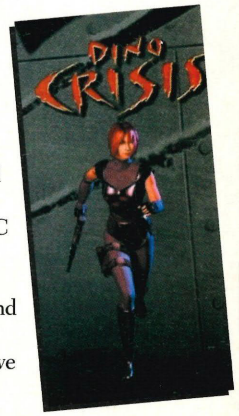


WILL CAPCOM DO THE DINOSAUR?

Whatever, they've plenty of titles on the way

On launch day, Capcom were the company who gave us Power Stone, which (for this writer at least) is the most sorely underappreciated game to hit the Dreamcast so far. Thus rather damp dreams are currently being had as we get closer and closer to the summer release of the sequel, which will boast that four player mode that we're simply dying to get our hands on.

Anyway, that's not why we're here. Instead, we're talking about two titles that Capcom are taking over to the PC, and now the whisper is they'll make the natural step over to the Dreamcast as well. First up is Dino Crisis, to which a sequel has just been announced (although we've no word on whether we'll see that on the DC yet), the popular dino-action title that's hardly the jewel in the Capcom crown, but still certainly worth a few hours of your time. Second is Resident Evil 3, the full-blown sequel that appeared on the PlayStation. Once we get confirmation for definite, we'll bring you the news right here.



THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN!

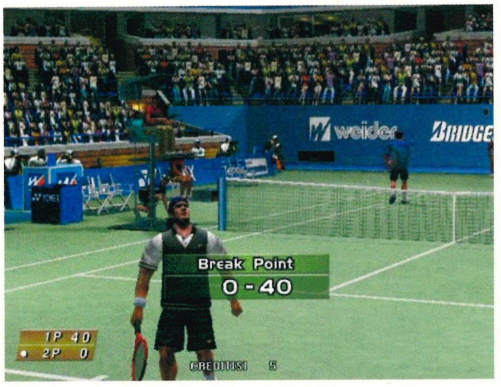
Another console set to get the short end of EA's stick

In a recent interview in trade paper MCV, Electronic Arts once again stuck to their commitment not to get off their backsides where the Dreamcast is concerned, but further hinted that this isn't the only console that they're going to be cold-shouldering. Apparently, the company are deciding whether to back the Nintendo Dolphin or the Microsoft X-Box, both of which are supposed to arrive next year. The lucky winner will have full support from the company, including launch day product, whilst the loser will get next to sod all.

Now you could argue, if you'd taken a gander at the Electronic Arts release roster of late, that's it's no great shakes either way, as the company seem to have forgotten how to produce good, innovative games that don't have a year in the title – aside from Medal of Honor on PlayStation, which we must confess to enjoying. Nonetheless, it's another example of a great big company waving their stick around again, and in our humble opinion, the only loser in this kind of thing is the consumer at the end of it all. Address your opinions on the matter to our Forum section...

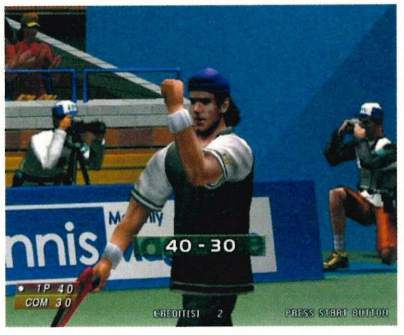
SEGA SPORTS HIT THE COURTS

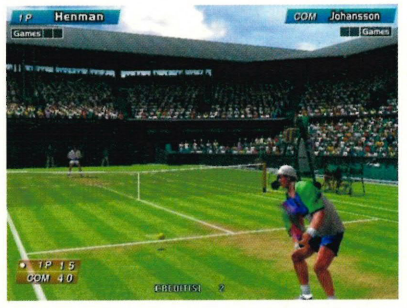
Is this the game of the summer?

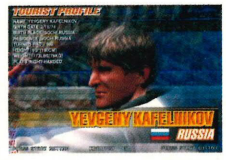


Last summer it was PlayStation owners who got the treat that was Anna Kournikova's Smash Court Tennis, easily the most playable version of the sport in recent times – until Sega Sports got involved in the tennis scene.

Following on from the successful coin-op, which you have to blink at the first time you see it to check it ain't a real match you're watching, Virtua Tennis is shaping up quite nicely on its way to the Dreamcast, in the form of an ultra photo-realistic yet very playable tennis game. Whilst the release schedules hint that it won't hit the shelves in time for Wimbledon (the tennis tournament, not the footie team, who finally got what was coming to them), our hopes are high for what should be one of the jewels in the Sega Sports crown.







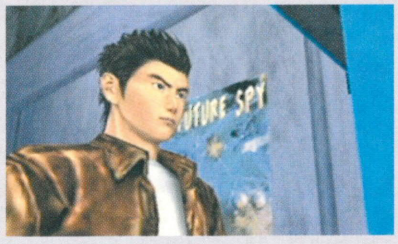


Highly realistic graphics and great gameplay too.

global news

YANKS GET THE PRICE CHOPPED

US Dreamcasts now a bargain

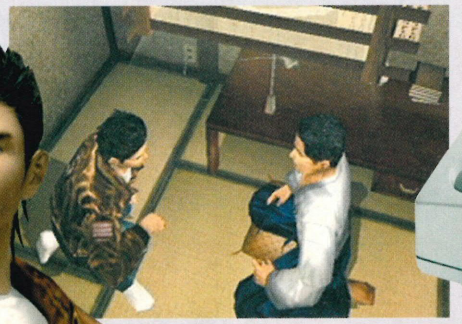


Stateside Sega fans have had 25% sliced off the price of Dreamcast, as Sega get aggressive in the forthcoming showdown with the Sony PlayStation 2. Anyone purchasing a DC before August 31st over in Yankland will now be entitled to a $50 rebate, which knocks the price of the console down to $150, or around a hundred notes in our money. They'll also get a month's free access to the SegaNet service (remember that they get free local phone calls, and predominantly still have to pay a service charge to their Internet Service Provider). The Dreamcast is thus positioned in the US market at half the price of the PlayStation2, when they finally go head to head, although we've no news on when a price cut will be introduced to the UK market. Humbug.

SHENMUE SET FOR STATES

A release date's been announced at last

Now this is good news, even if it means a bit of a wait still. The long awaited Shenmue, which is surely one of the favourites at this stage for Game of the Year (unless Black and White has anything to do with it), has finally been given a US release date, which confirms that the translation work is nearing completion and that a UK release is still possible before the end of the year. Unfortunately, that date isn't until 14th November, but believe us when we say that we've played the import version, and this is something special that really is worth waiting for.





CHRIS TARRANT ON THE DREAMCAST

And he's bringing his money with him

Over in the States last Christmas, there was only one game that was cleaning up left, right and centre: a PC version of the US take on the Who Wants To Be A Millionaire game show. It was published by Disney Interactive, so they were favourites to land the UK licence too, but in a turn of events that's clearly beneficial to the Dreamcast, Eidos have gone and won.

They'll be offering the fruits of their labours to the buying public when the game hits the streets in the Autumn. We're guessing it'll form the cornerstone of a Christmas schedule which, for the first time in four years, won't be graced by the delectable Ms Croft. Some would say that's a good thing.

Anyway, let's put you out of your misery. There's going to be a Dreamcast version, and we've got it in black and white in front of us. Usually, that's where something goes wrong, knowing our luck, but on this occasion you're safe to go off and do a bit of swotting in preparation for the game's release.

GET YOUR ROD OUT!

We smell something fishy...

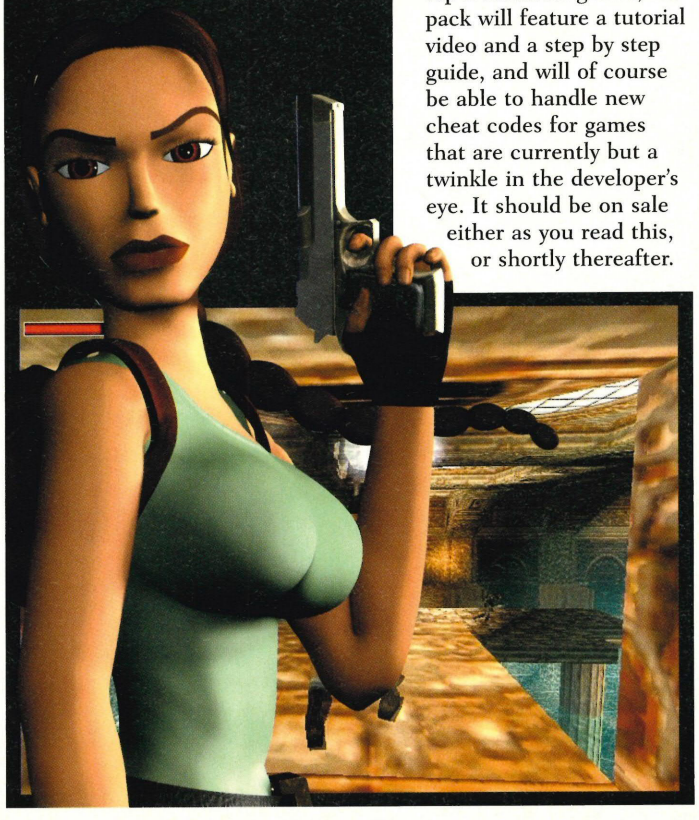
You can, quite rightly, point out at this stage that it took Sega so long to get Sega Bass Fishing on sale that you'll take any more fishing news with a big pinch of salt. Fair enough, but as we're merely the messengers, we feel it our duty to inform you that they're looking at bringing another fishing fiesta to your front room, this time in the shape of Marine Fishing. Predictably, don't get too excited yet, as they've not even finished the damn thing yet. However, we'd be surprised if you didn't find another use for your rod before the end of the year.



HEY, BIG SPENDER

Out comes the lolly to plug the big games

According to trade reports, Sega spent big to push the Dreamcast version of the Tomb Raider game, but was still outspent by its competitors. Nearly £350,000 was spent on the Tomb Raider campaign, with the next biggest spend being the Virtua Striker launch, which clocked in just above £75,000. Meanwhile, it seems the prize for the biggest amount spent on a single game goes to 3DO with their decision, for some reason, to push over half a million notes behind the new Army Men game. That did buy them a trailer before Toy Story 2 at your local fleapit, but it still seems a lot of lolly for a not very good game to us. Anyway, that's it. The statistics lesson is over for now...



REPLAY THE ACTION

Top peripheral arrives on the Dreamcast...

The world's most famous and best selling cheat cartridge add-on has finally been made available for the Dreamcast, as Datel unveil the Action Replay CDX. Arriving preloaded with plenty of cheats for top Dreamcast games, the pack will feature a tutorial video and a step by step guide, and will of course be able to handle new cheat codes for games that are currently but a twinkle in the developer's eye. It should be on sale either as you read this, or shortly thereafter.

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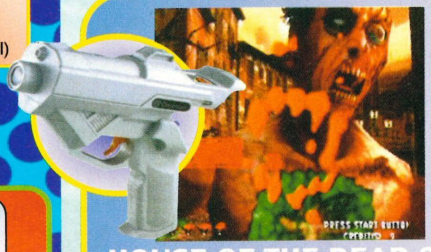
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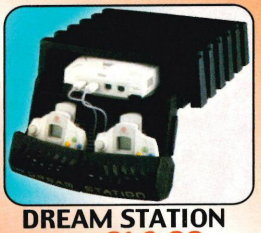


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Alone in the Dark 4

Silent Scope

Sonic Adventure 2

Soul Reaver 2

Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2

Prince of Persia 3D

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

Buffy the Vampire Slayer

Power Stone 2

Jet Set Radio

Planet of the Apes

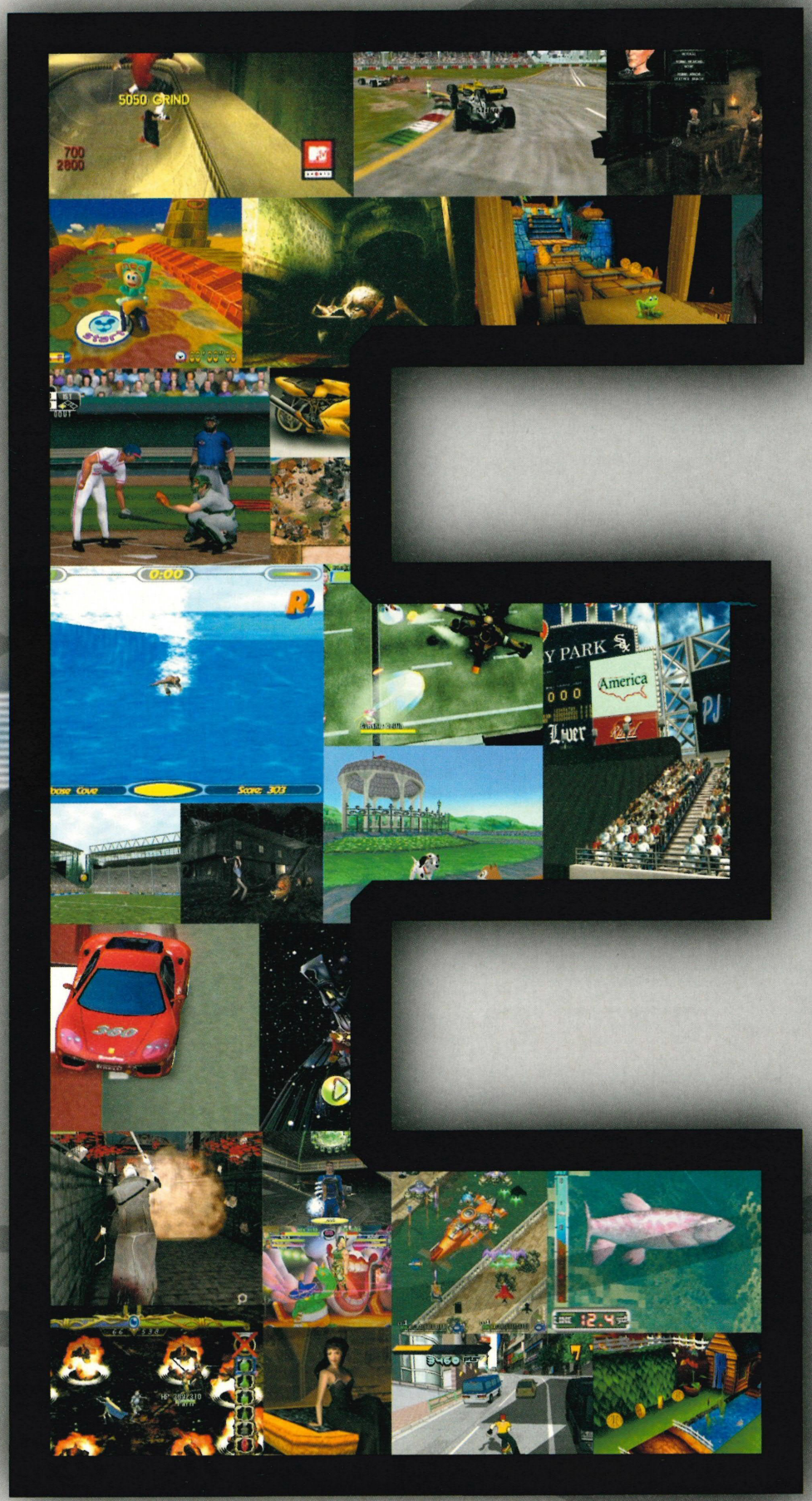
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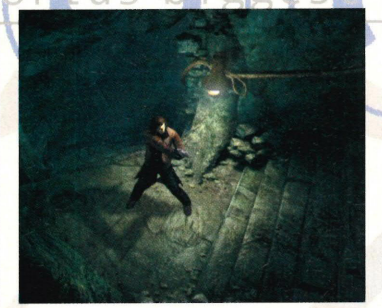
The LA Convention Centre played host this year to The Electronic Entertainment Expo. Publishers and developers from all four corners of the earth got together to show their market-leading wares, but Dreamcast stole the show with a line-up of games to die for...



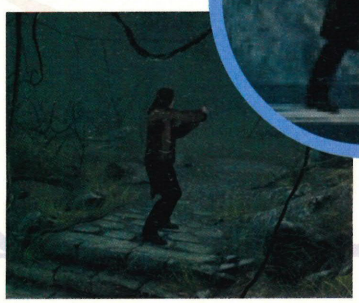
Alone in the Dark 4

Don't even think it – this isn't 'another survival horror game' by any means. AITD gave birth to the genre many years ago and has since been through two sequels, but none quite as exciting as this. Comparisons to Resident Evil are pointless – AITD 4 is a whole different kettle of fish, and the few screenshots accompanying this piece should tell you exactly why.

Incorporating state of the art animation and mind-boggling graphical detail, AITD 4 is set to unleash a dark tale, so terrifying, so full of twists and shocks you'll never look at the genre in the same light again. Enter, Edward Carnaby, daredevil detective, drawn to the mysterious Shadow Island in search of his partner's killer. The haunted house scenario soon pops up, but don't expect too many clichés to rear their ugly heads, as Infogrames promise a genre-remoulding experience, and who are we to argue? Sit tight till next month, when we'll bring you much more...

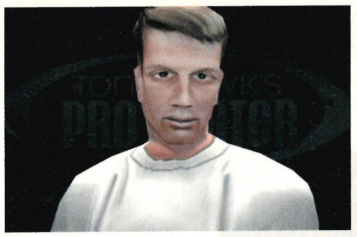












Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

Before the first Tony Hawk's game has even hit the streets, a sequel is already in development. Tony's second outing will see him joined by 12 world-famous skaters (including three new ones) in a game which is already being hailed as the most authentic and cutting-edge skating experience ever. There are a large number of real-world locations for you to skate in, including Skate Street Ventura and the Love Park in Philadelphia. To compliment this remarkable level of realism there will also be an intuitive skate park editor, which will allow you to create your very own park in real-time 3D, store it to your VMU and swap it with friends. Other additions include new and improved game modes, including HORSE and tag, and a new in-depth career mode that allows you to replay your latest event's highlights.

We've been reliably informed that Tony Hawk's 2 should be with us by autumn, but at least we've got his first outing to tide us over until then...

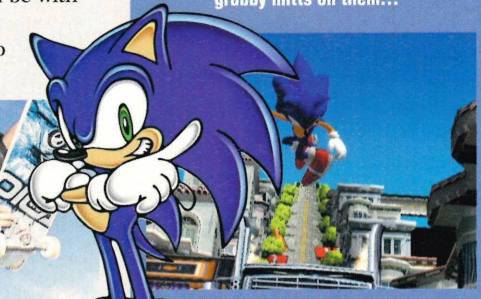


Sonic Adventure 2

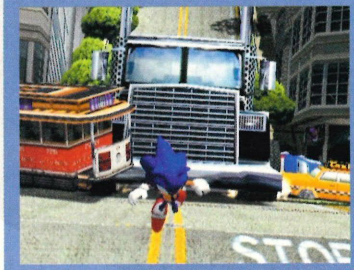


That's right folks, Sonic Adventure 2 (working title) is coming – though don't expect to see it until well into 2001 around these parts. There was only a video of Sonic and friends' new exploits at the show, but what was seen was certainly jaw-dropping. Footage included Sonic being chased down a long San Francisco style street by a huge killer juggernaut, which bashed everything out of its path as it tried to mow Sonic down.

In their official press release Sega were quite sketchy with details about the game, but it seems Dr. Robotnik (or Dr. Eggman in Japan) is back to his old tricks. Sonic will be joined by new friends as well as old, whilst possibly the most exciting thing of all is the power behind the improved graphics engine at Sega's disposal. Though the graphical style is very similar to the original, background graphics and animation seem to have taken a massive leap forward, while the speed the game moves at has gone right up through the gears. For now all we have are a small selection of hi-res images, but we'll bring you more as soon as we get our grubby mitts on them...







Silent Scope



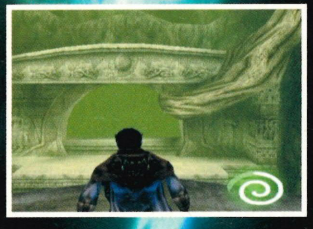
The incredible arcade hit for Konami was reported by their own PR people as only being ported to the PlayStation. It was shown to a select few behind closed doors, though only the Dreamcast version was available for demonstration (d'oh!). Though graphically identical to the cabinet version, gameplay was shaky, thanks to a lack of any peripheral support. You've got to wonder how a game completely reliant on a sniper rifle with a tiny TV monitor in the scope can be ported without the huge expense of a lightgun offering the same technical features. Konami say they're increasing difficulty levels and adding sub-games for longevity, but we're gonna reserve judgement until the game is nearer completion, towards the end of the year.

Soul Reaver Returns



With the title scheduled for a fourth quarter 2000 release, Crystal Dynamics are working hard to top the success the original achieved for Eidos in the UK and States. Like all truly epic tales, Soul Reaver 2 continues on from the cliffhanger left at the close of the first adventure (no, we won't spoil it for those of you still playing). Raziel travels back through the currents of time in pursuit of his creator and nemesis, Kain, to uncover the mysteries surrounding Nosgoth's past and the extinction of the vampire clans. As with the original, Raziel will be able to travel back and forth between the spectral and material planes, with the help of real-time morphing between the two. Expect to see absolutely no loading at any point through the game either. Continuous data streaming is employed to create a seamless game environment that's only ever broken by in-game cinematic events and voice acting, supplied by all the original players. Raziel will, of course, have new spells and weaponry at his disposal to fend off new enemies, including vampire hunters, humans, spectral spirits and even demons from a parallel dimension.









DEAD OR ALIVE 2

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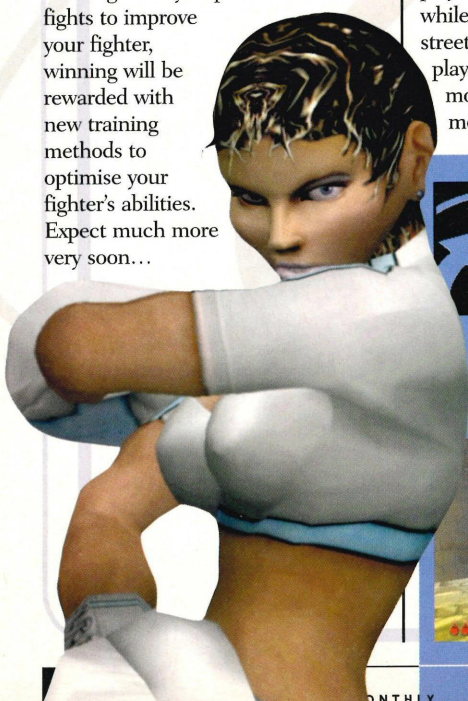
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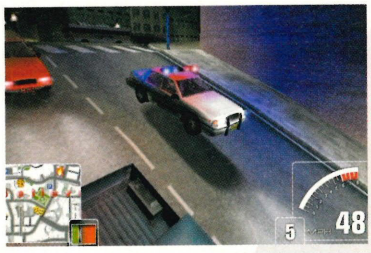
Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2

Midway's surprise hit from the launch of Dreamcast has spawned a sequel and you can bet it's going to knock you sideways come Christmas. As well as huge overhauls of the graphics engine, which will include dramatic lighting effects, particle smoke effects and background detail, the emphasis in the sequel is on gameplay and longevity. It seems that Midway are determined to knock fans for six with additional moves, specials and modes, which should also KO critics at the same time.

Expect to see eleven of the game's original characters appearing, along with seven all-new fighters, including Michael Jackson (yes, Whacko Jacko) making a surprise entrance as a not-so-secret character. Criticism of R2R's Championship Mode has been answered with an all-new Championship Mode, restructured to be a longer and tougher challenge. Instead of winning money in prize fights to improve your fighter, winning will be rewarded with new training methods to optimise your fighter's abilities. Expect much more very soon…



World's Scariest Police Chases



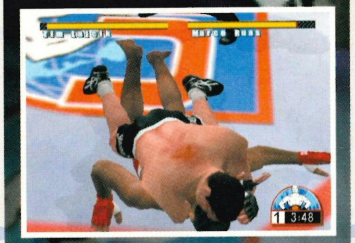
Set for a Christmas release, Fox's wild racing game was one of the most original driving games to appear at this year's E3. Its no-holds-barred approach is sure to kick up a little controversy, but its ties with the American Fox TV show of the same name should also guarantee success.

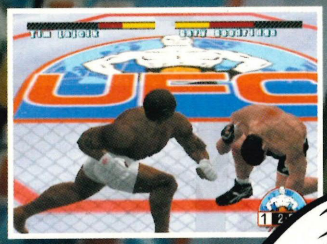
Playing in the largest metropolis ever to feature in a video game, you can take control of criminals or the pursuing police cars, as you take part in one of five modes of play, including multiplayer (hopefully!) which will feature six game types of its own. The game itself is presented as a special edition broadcast of the hit TV show and uses commentary by its host, Sheriff John Bunnell, plus commonly featured camera angles. You'll find over 50 story-based missions to keep single players busy, as well as co-operative play, so one player can be the shooter while the other drives through the streets. We'll be getting hold of some playable code over the next couple of months, so be sure we'll have much more for you soon…

Ultimate Fighting Championship

Ultimate Fighting Championship is the no-holds-barred fighting sensation that's currently sweeping the nation. Fed up with naff WWF and ECW wrestling games? Bored with the same old moves and crappy taunts? Bin the lot and save your pennies for UFC.

Twenty-two of the world's roughest and toughest REAL fighters are at your disposal, with a mind boggling 3000 moves and 1200 combos to use, crossing a spectrum of 30 martial arts styles. Each fighter utilises dynamic facial meshing technology to bring them to life, showing expressions, lumps, bumps and bruises. Modes include Create a Fighter, Versus, UFC Mode and Tournament Mode, which allows 16 fighters to scrap it out until there's only one man standing… All the excitement of the UFC TV presentation is intact, including pre-match interviews and TV-style camera work and replays. Roll on autumn…







102 Dalmatians

P-p-puppy power! Yes, it's a cute (oh so cute) 3D platformer in the form of 102 Dalmatians. It's your task to save your lovable brothers and sisters from the evil clutches of Cruella De Vil (boo, hiss) and her army of nasty pet-napping toys. Including 20 huge levels and eight fantastic mini-games, the game immerses you in the world of Disney family fun and humour, as well as offering tricky puzzles to solve as you go. Scenery includes Big Ben, Piccadilly Circus, The Ice Festival and Cruella's own home, De Vil Manor. Characters from the film include the hilarious Horace and Jasper and it's your job to try and lure them into hidden tricks and booby-traps, in true Home Alone style! Currently, it looks like 102 Dalmatians should be with us by Christmas on Dreamcast, PC and PlayStation.

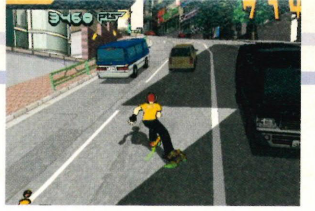


Prince of Persia 3D

Raziel, Lara and Mike LeRoi have some pretty stiff competition coming to join the 3D action/adventure party, in the shape of everybody's favourite 12th century Persian Prince. Ported from the highly successful PC version – co-authored by the series' creator, Jordan Mechner – Prince of Persia 3D will include all the elements that made the original 2D versions among the best games in the world. Incredible player animation will feature heavily, as well as an unequalled control system that lets you run, jump, parry and lunge with the greatest of ease. New advances in 'intelligent camera' techniques mean the camera will go where the Prince is looking and not focus on the Prince himself when he's in a tight spot. It's about time someone did something about those stupid cameras in action/adventure games, and it's fitting in a way that it comes courtesy of a game that's been begging for a 3D facelift for ages. Prince of Persia 3D should be with us come November this year – expect adventure gaming at its best.



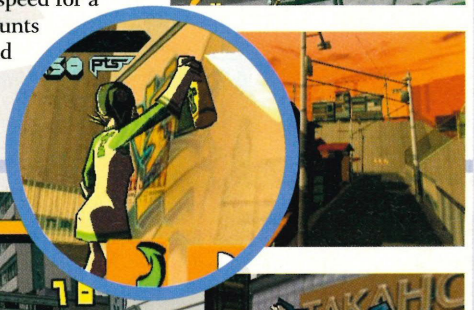
Jet Set Radio

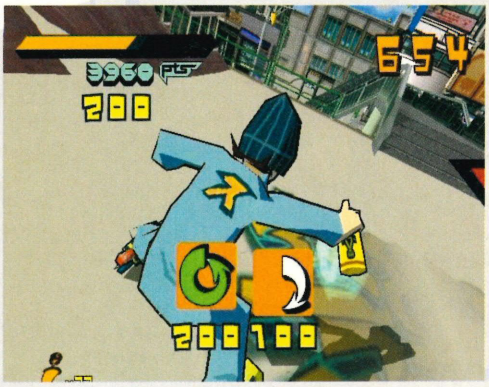




Here's the drill: deface private property, skate like a loon and steer clear of the cops. Yes, Jet Set Radio sees you in control of an in-line skating graffiti artist, hell-bent on cool tricks, illegal artwork and some wicked hip-hop music. Best described as a mix between Crazy Taxi and Tony Hawk's, Jet Set Radio is one of the best looking games to come from Sega's camp for quite a while, if a slightly controversial one. Your task is to compete against a gang of graffiti artists, to paint the town red before someone else does. It's possible to hitch lifts off passing traffic to boost your speed for a particularly tricky jump, and perform death-defying stunts in your bid to keep clear of the pursuing police. A solid release date is a little while away but we expect to see this original title on the streets come August. Stay tuned over the next couple of issues for more…





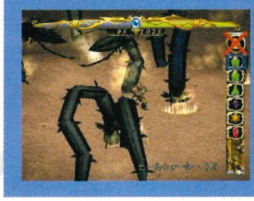




Lodoss



Building on the successful record of the Lodoss War animated series, Lodoss' roots are firmly set in the fantasy RPG realm. It will feature massive 3D environments containing huge monsters, swamps, deserts, forests, dungeons and towns, as well as stunning cut sequences depicting the story. There will be hundreds of spells at your disposal as well as weapons, armour and magical artefacts. As is always the case with fantasy style RPGs, the storyline has to really grab the player by the balls and not let go. From what we saw of the game, it looked like it was capable of doing just that. A release date has yet to be set, but we'll keep you posted as it happens.





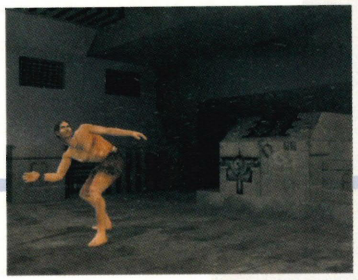


THE E3 EXPERIENCE

the e3 experience

Planet of the Apes





Fans of the Planet of the Apes universe are in for a real treat in the third quarter of this year, thanks to Fox Interactive and their latest action/adventure escapade. Though not strictly faithful to the original film, the game features many of its characters, such as the loveable Dr. Zauis, Zira, Cornelius and General Urses, as well as a plot which loosely follows the film – which was of course itself adapted from a novel by Pierre Boulle.

Players assume the role of Ulysses, the only human survivor of a spaceship that has crash-landed on an uncharted planet, 1,000 years in the future. Players discover that evolution has taken a cruel twist; in this world, apes rule and humans are the lowest order of living being. In a struggle for survival, players must avoid being captured and lobotomised or killed, as they unravel the mystery of the Planet of the Apes by exploring environments like ruined cities, research labs, old mine shafts and military bases, and use weapons ranging from rifles and laser guns to their bare fists. There will be three modes of play to switch between as you undertake your adventure: Stealth, Normal and Athletic. Used to best effect in Little Big Adventure 1 and 2, these modes of play open up many new avenues for puzzles and action sequences alike.

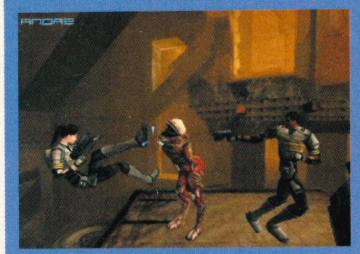
Power Stone 2

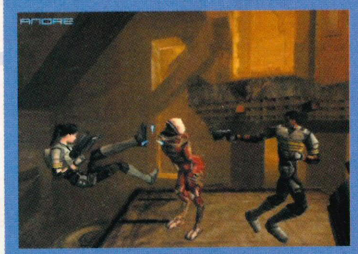
A follow up to the smash hit success Capcom had with the original Power Stone was a forgone conclusion, but who would've thought they'd do it with such style? Power Stone 2 is already one of the hottest games slated for an early 2001 release (if not Christmas this year). There is an amazing number of improvements already in place in the early code Capcom are working on, the most notable of which is the fantastic four player action. Not only can four people scrap it out, but players can also team up for bigger attacks on bosses or particularly cool customers.

The background detail that wowed gamers in the original has had numerous improvements, including a staggering 120 interactive objects and 65 usable weapons! Characters can now run up walls defensively and offensively, as well as use tanks, forts and aeroplanes for more powerful attacks. There will be four new characters making an appearance, plus two bosses and all the members of the original cast, but until real preview code is available, we're just going to have to pump more shots in your general direction...



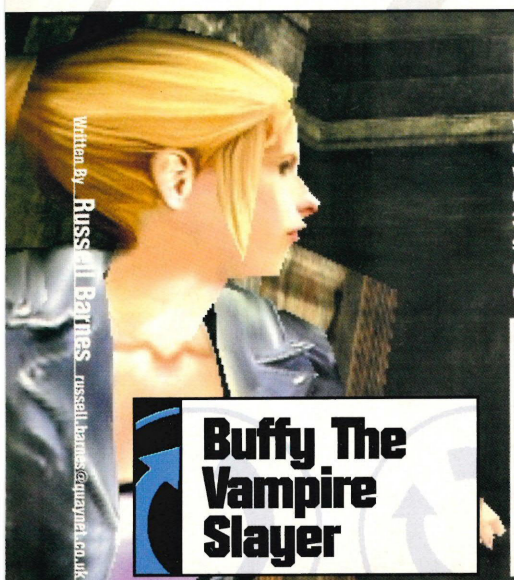
Project Eden





One of the more exciting action/adventure games to premier at E3 – thanks to the game's designers, Core Design – was Project Eden. Yes, the team that brought you the very first Tomb Raider are back, with the latest technology and design techniques and a bucket load of new ideas. Project Eden features interchangeable third- and first-person gameplay, with a viewpoint that allows the character to see their torso and feet, as well as real-time shadow effects.

Available in autumn 2000, the game follows a sinister and dingy view of the future, where you control a team of four members (with four player network play and the ability to switch between characters in single player) of the UPA (Urban Protection Agency) agents. Due to severe overpopulation, the Earth's diameter is increasing with the growth of towering mega-cities, each containing millions of inhabitants. It's within such a city that your team is employed to deal with serious disturbances. Your first port of call is a "Real Meat' factory, where the staff have mysteriously disappeared and the machinery has gone haywire...

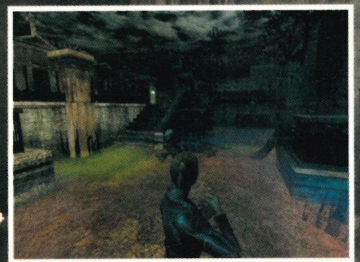


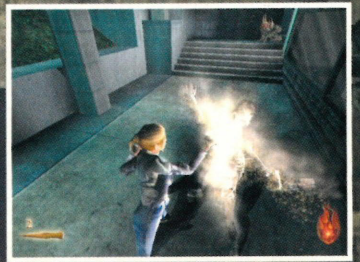
Buffy The Vampire Slayer

Written By Russell Barnes russell.barnes@quayzone.co.uk

Oh my word! That beautiful babe, Buffy Summers, is on the way to a Dreamcast near you, although a release date is yet to be set for the wondrous event. Though only a short PC-based demo was available to view at the show, it seems Buffy caused quite a stir in the Dreamcast camp. Set in a 3D third-person perspective, action/adventure style, you play the role of Buffy, the delightful but deadly high school student come vampire slayer. Graphically, these screenshots should do all the talking; the detail is fantastic and animation is said to be a perfect match to the lady herself. Most of the show's cast appear in the game, as do many of the locations. Sunnydale, Buffy's house, the cemetery (of course), the library and the Hellmouth Portal are all in, and the level of interactivity is looking fantastic. It's even possible to pick up a shard of glass from a broken window and use it as a weapon – ouch.









READ THIS NOW OR DIE.

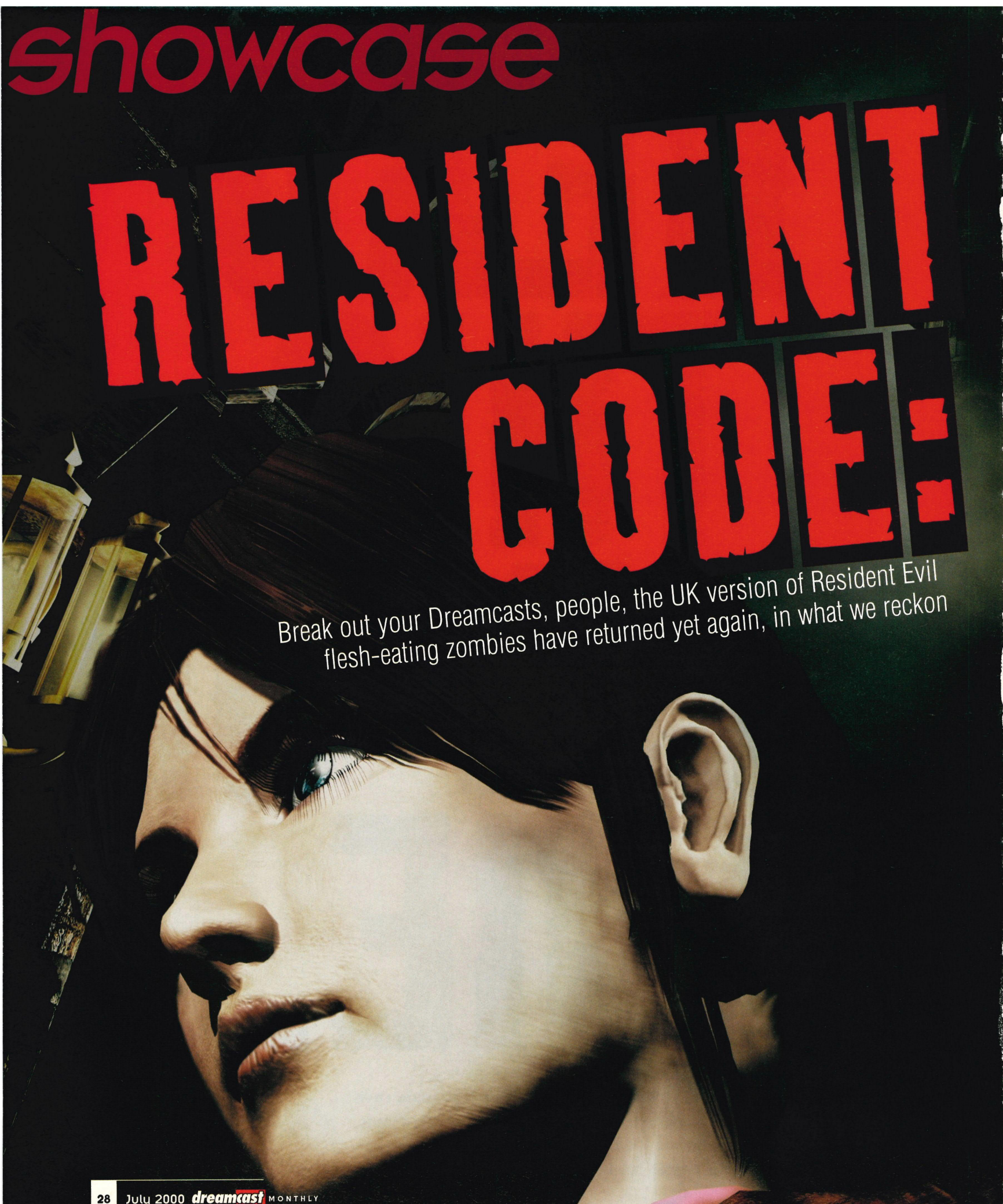
DreamcastAddict.com is a free, weekly e-mail magazine that could save your life. With all the latest Dreamcast news, reviews, previews and cheats, it'll make sure you get them before they get you. To register simply go to www.DreamcastAddict.com or e-mail subscribe@www.dreamcastaddict.com



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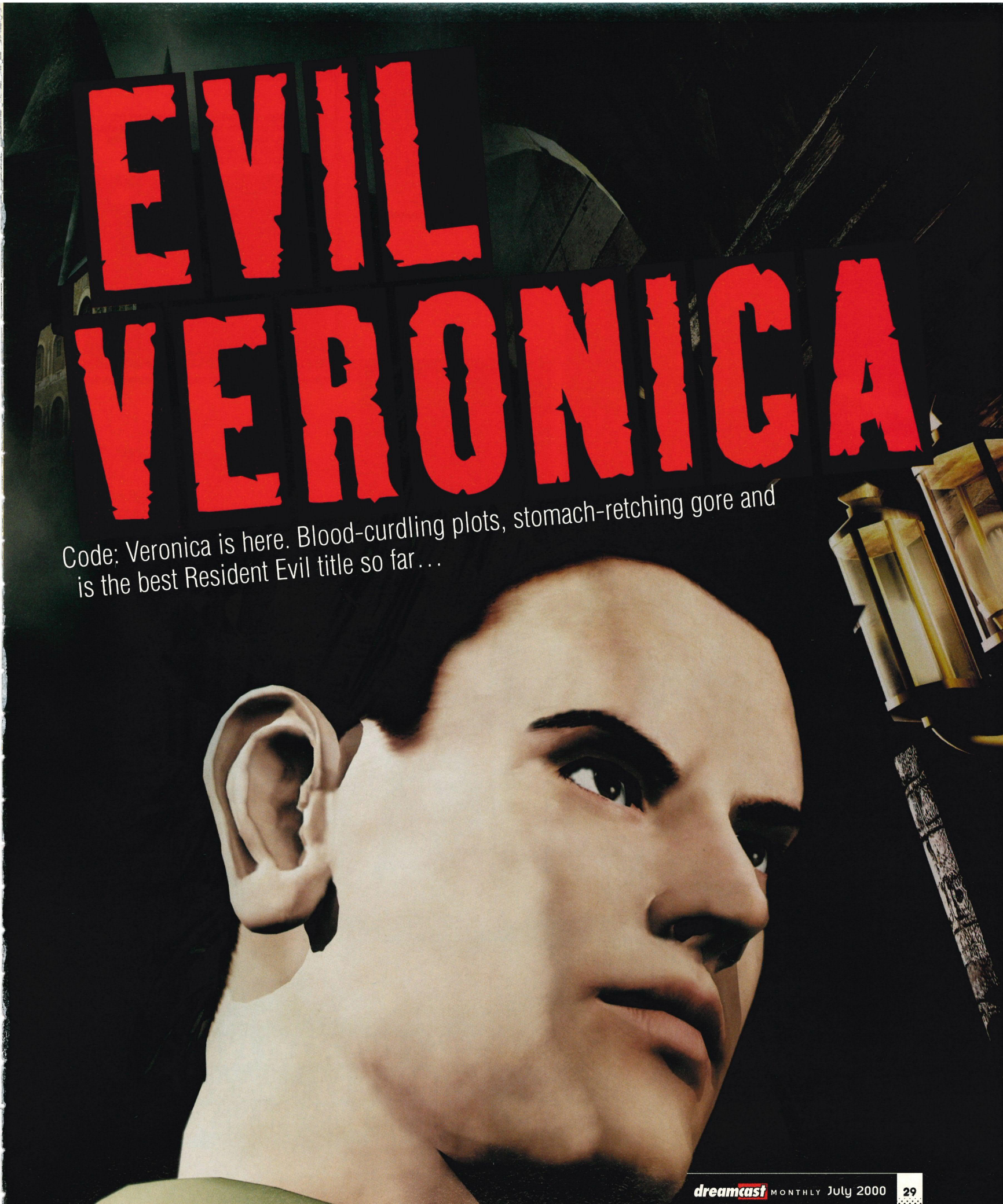
RESIDENT CODE:

Break out your Dreamcasts, people, the UK version of Resident Evil flesh-eating zombies have returned yet again, in what we reckon



EVIL VERONICA

Code: Veronica is here. Blood-curdling plots, stomach-retching gore and is the best Resident Evil title so far...



showcase

Publisher	Eidos Interactive	**Developer**	Capcom	**Origin**	UK	**Genre**	Horror Adventure
Available	2nd June 2000	**Players**	1	**Price**	£39.99	**Contact**	0181 636 3001

AS IN ALL THE OTHER GAMES OF THE SERIES, YOU HAVE TO FIND BOTH A TYPEWRITER AND AN INK RIBBON TO SAVE YOUR PROGRESS. TRY TO SAVE AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE AS YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN SOMETHING MIGHT GO WRONG.

INITIALLY...

YOU'LL DEFINITELY FIND YOURSELF HOOKED AS SOON AS THE INTRO SEQUENCE STARTS. AS YOU TAKE CONTROL OF CLAIRE REDFIELD, THE ACTION KICKS OFF STRAIGHT AWAY, WITH PLENTY OF HUNGRY ZOMBIES COMING AT YOU RIGHT, LEFT AND CENTRE – THERE'S NO TIME TO HESITATE!

Peripherals

IF YOU'VE PLAYED RESIDENT EVIL GAMES BEFORE, YOU'LL BE FAMILIAR WITH THE CONTROL SYSTEM. IF YOU HAVEN'T, IT COULD TAKE SOME GETTING USED TO.

COMING SOON...

Dino Crisis

FROM THE SAME CREATORS AS THE FIRST RESIDENT EVIL TITLE COMES DINO CRISIS. LOVERS OF JURASSIC PARK WILL NO DOUBT BE PLEASED, THOUGH SOME WILL MOAN AT THE SIGN OF ANOTHER PSX CONVERSION. WHATEVER YOU RECKON, THIS'LL BE ONE TO LOOK OUT FOR.

Code: Veronica needs no introduction, I'm sure. We've been harping on about it for months now and we've already reviewed it on import, where it received a deserving nine out of ten. But now you'll be able to play it for yourselves, that's as long as you're 15 or over – says the certificate on the box.

And it comes as no surprise that the 15 rating's been stamped on, what with all the usual Resident Evil conventions. Yes, there's blood (plenty of it), hideous cadavers, surprises that'll make you leap out of your comfy seat and, courtesy of a second disc, an even longer adventure to get your teeth into.

Nail Biting

As soon as you begin the game, the action kicks off with a visually stunning introduction sequence. Claire Redfield is still on her mission to find her brother Chris and it's bought her to the Paris Lab Facility. She's being chased by soldiers through the lab's dimly lit corridors and she finally manages to outrun them. But just as she thinks she's safe, a helicopter begins firing at her through the windows and the chase starts again. She manages to escape into a seemingly empty room but as she looks up in front of her, she finds she's not alone – 20 or so soldiers are pointing their weapons straight at her.

So as you watch on, gripped to your seat, you're wondering how she's going to get out of this one. There's a rather handy stack of barrels containing flammable liquid piled behind the guards and as she drops her gun to the floor she quickly dives to the ground, grabs her pistol and fires at the barrels. The soldiers are sent flying and just as you breathe a sigh of relief, Claire turns around, only to see there's another gun barrel staring her in the face.

The screen then dramatically fades to black and Claire wakes up in a dark cell. This is where you take control of the heroine. Luckily the guard lets you out, after deciding there's little point in keeping you locked up; after all, you're about to be devoured by zombies anyway.

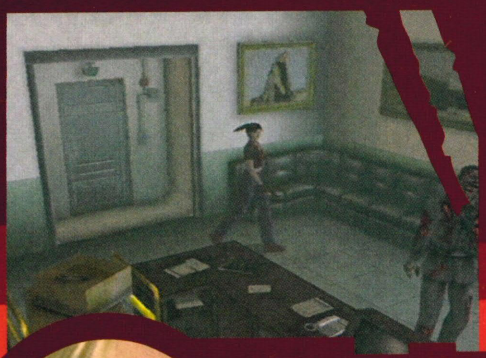
Better Than The Rest

It seems like this series has been going on for years now, and in fact it has. The whole story was spawned on the PlayStation and has since unfolded, game after game.

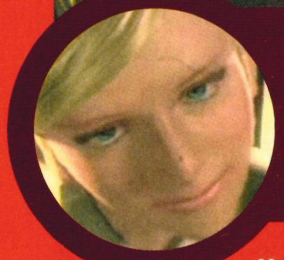
A few things have altered for the Dreamcast episode and it's recently been announced that the PlayStation 2 is also having a version of Code: Veronica – a good reason to frown as we thought it was going to be unique to the DC.



EVERYTHING'S SMOOTH AND AMAZINGLY – ATMOSPHERIC – WHICH MAKES THIS INSTALMENT THE MOST FRIGHTENING YET







EVERYWHERE YOU GO THERE ARE MUTILATED CORPSES AND BODY PARTS STREWN HAPHAZARDLY ON THE GROUND

However, some things haven't changed – I don't suppose this would be a classic Resident Evil title if it didn't contain these long standing conventions. For starters, the controls are the same as they always were. You can use either the analogue stick or the directional pad to control Claire. Personally, I decided to opt for the d-pad as although it's a bit tricky at first, it doesn't take too long to master.

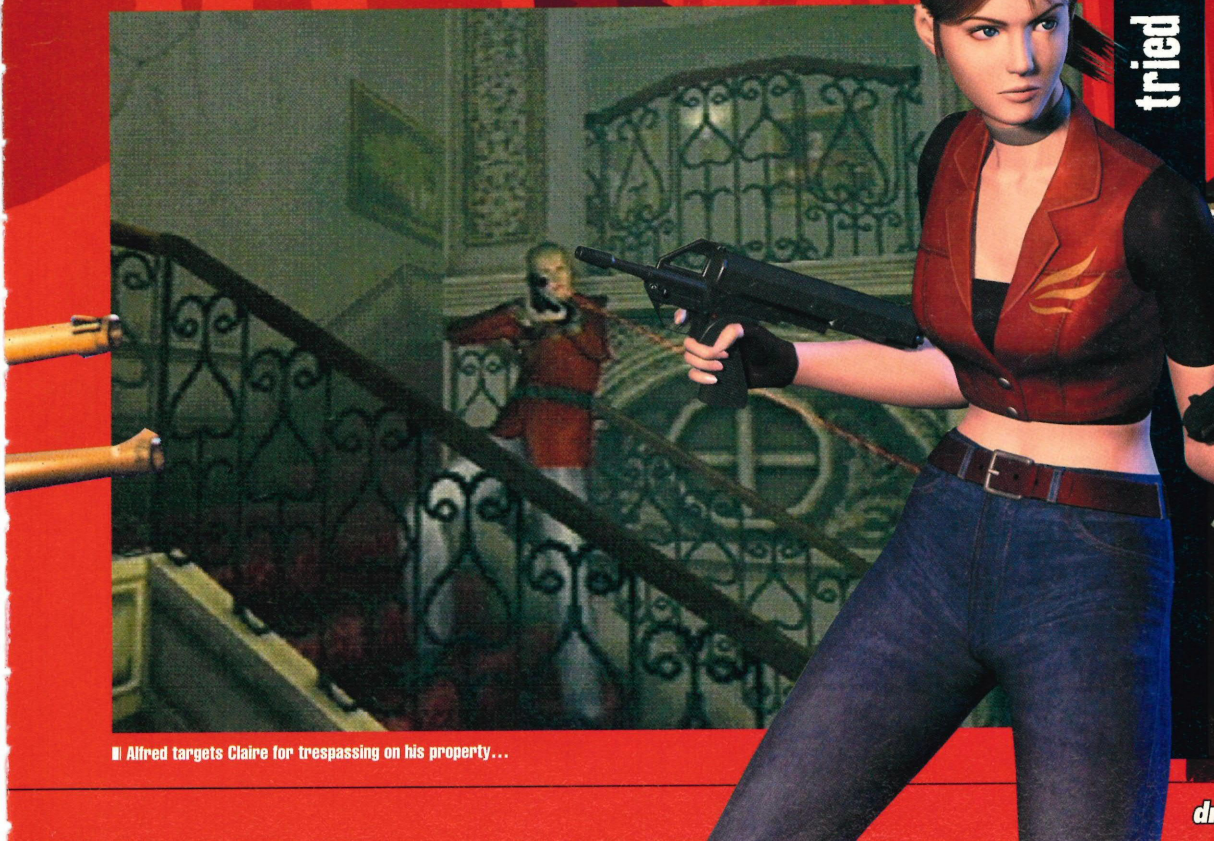
The A button is used for firing, along with the right trigger button. The X button calls up your inventory, B makes Claire break into a run and Y just calls up the map screen. A new addition Capcom has made to the controls is the ability to turn 180 degrees. This apparently makes it easier to avoid enemy attacks, but I found it made it easier for them, not me – running away is the best means of avoidance.

And it's not just the awkward controls Capcom have left in. There are the famous creaking doors, the eerie footsteps going up the stairs and the pounding heartbeat as Claire's just about to enter a room filled with blood-crazed beasts.

But the most striking difference lies, as you would guess, in the graphical changes. The power of the Dreamcast means that you explore a fully 3D world. There are no stunted seconds of loading, and everything's smooth and amazingly atmospheric – which makes this instalment the most frightening yet.

Setting The Scene

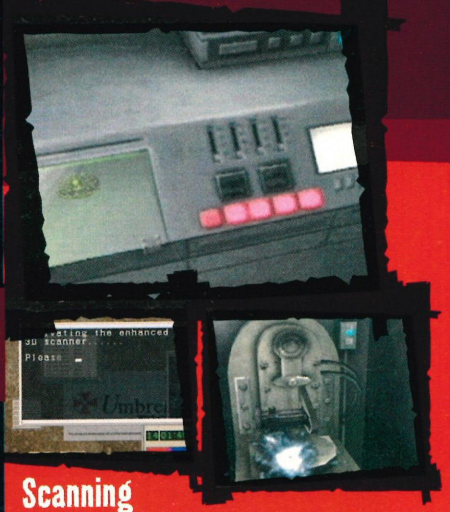
The sound and lighting effects are what have made this title deserve a 15 certificate. It's one of those games where you must sit in front of your TV with all the lights off, and just a few candles brightening the room for that kind of eerie effect, if you know what I mean. The music is only heard to either build suspense, when a Mini Tyrant or other enemy appears, or to suit the area you're in. Otherwise, all is quiet, except for the



Alfred targets Claire for trespassing on his property...

tried and tested

There are loads of puzzles for you to solve during your nightmare, some harder than others. Here are a couple of hints to get you started:



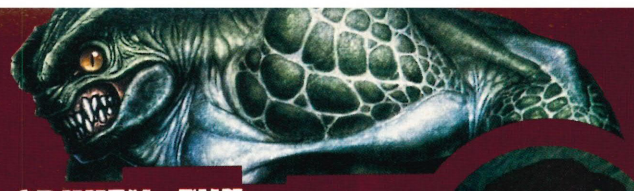
Scanning

To move on to the next area at the start of the game you need a crest to place into a door. The only thing is, the crest in question is in an area where you're not allowed to take in, or take out, any metallic objects. If you've collected the briefcase after putting out the fire in the graveyard you'll find you have a type of material that's been specially formulated not to be detected by a metal detector – ain't that lucky. So using this material you have to go to the 3D scanner, place the crest inside and the material on the machine next to it and then watch it magically transform into an exact replica of the crest – easy!

Deactivating

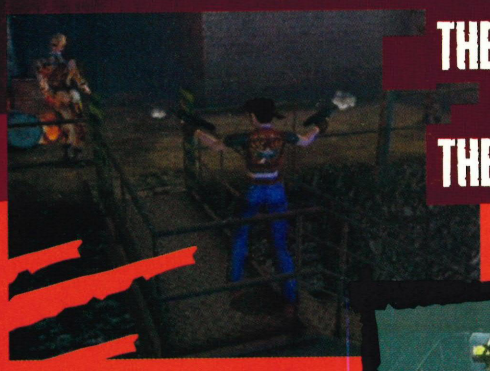
When you're exploring the palace, you'll come to a point when you won't have anywhere left to investigate. Some doors are locked and to open them you have to deactivate the security system using the computer in the front lobby. To solve the puzzle you have to enter a password, which, if you're clever, you'll know from earlier. If you enter it correctly then you'll hear a door unlock behind you. Mind you, look at these screenshots and you'll already know what to type – doh!

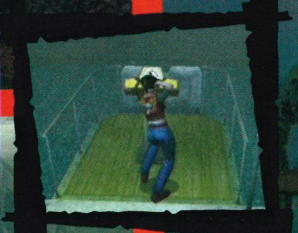




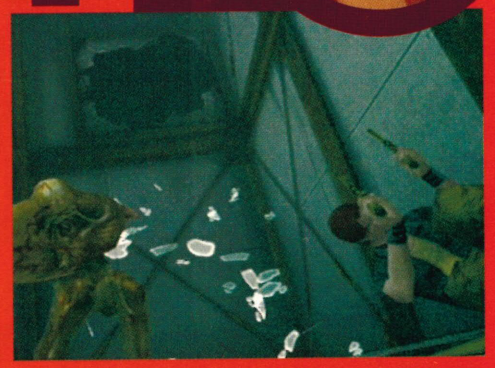
THE MUSIC'S A LITTLE CREEPY, THE SOUND EFFECTS A BIT GRUESOME AND THE DEAD BODIES, ERM, PLENTIFUL

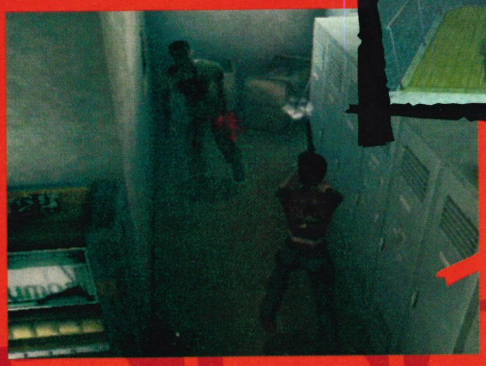












pattering of rain, the thunder in the distance or a bloody corpse squelching under Claire's sneakers. The thing is, you never quite know what's going to leap out at you next.

The plot takes a few twists and turns, too. Not only is there a love story vaguely going on between our heroine and a guy called Steve Burnside, who she finds early on, but the main bad guy also has a few hidden secrets as well. You'll start to find more of those out, the closer you get to the end of disc one.

Eerie Environments

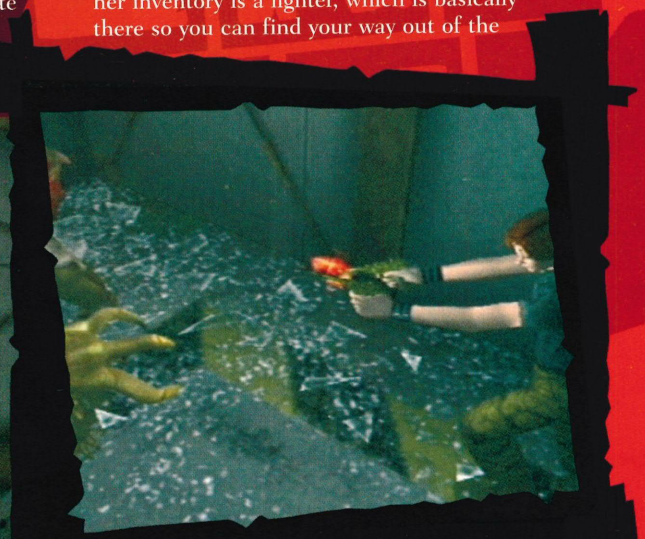
This is the biggest title of the series to date and as you control Claire you'll explore some massive areas, such as graveyards (a breeding ground for zombies) and the Military Training Facility, guarded by mutant dogs and a massive underground worm (which looks like something out of Tremors). Then there's the Palace, with its grand corridors, bats, tyrants and mental 'Lord of the Manor'. Everywhere you go there are mutilated corpses and body parts strewn haphazardly on the ground. Watch out though, as although they look dead, there were a few times when my foot was grabbed and bitten by a half-dead zombie.

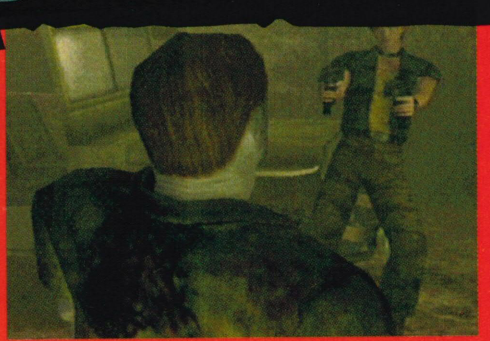
Adventure Essentials

At the start of the adventure all Claire has in her inventory is a lighter, which is basically there so you can find your way out of the





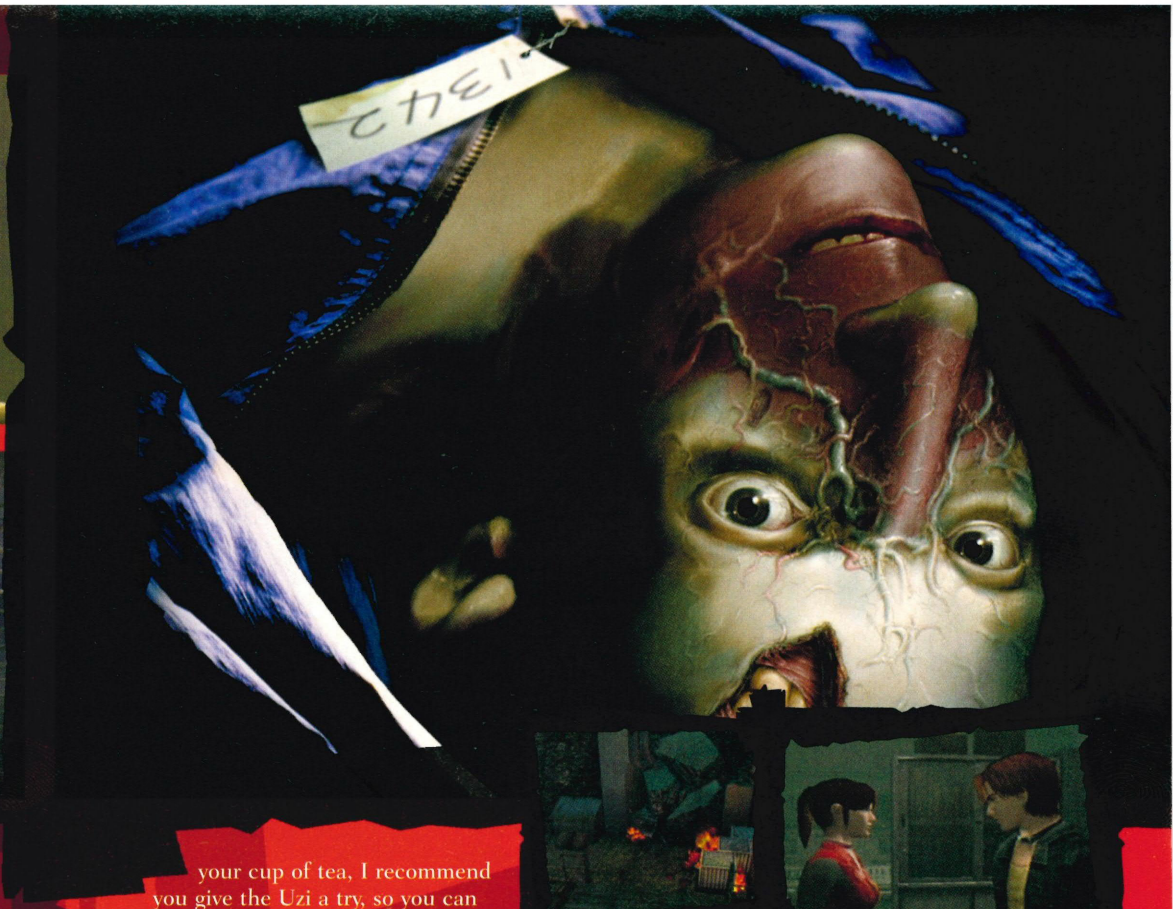


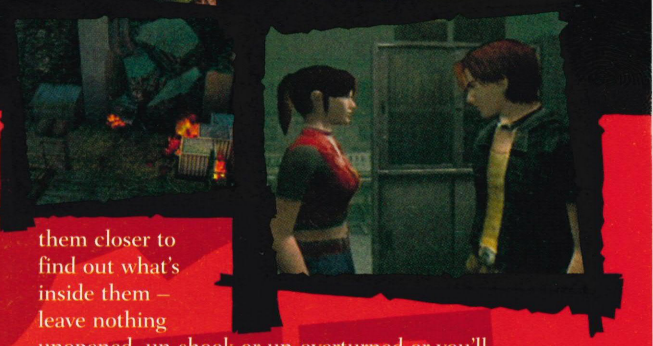


A Mini Tyrant grabs Claire around the neck...









Play as Steve to help him impress the heroine...

prison. Before you know it though, you'll soon be collecting any old thing that's lying around on the blood-stained ground. Your initial weapon is a knife, which isn't very effective, since as soon as you venture outside for the first time, you find yourself in a graveyard with about six zombies, all intent on devouring your flesh. The best thing to do is run through them and hope that they won't make a grab for you.

But you can soon discard the knife and replace it with the compulsory Resident Evil handgun – a lot more effective for stopping encroaching nasties. Or if that's not quite your cup of tea, I recommend you give the Uzi a try, so you can kill more than one zombie at a time.

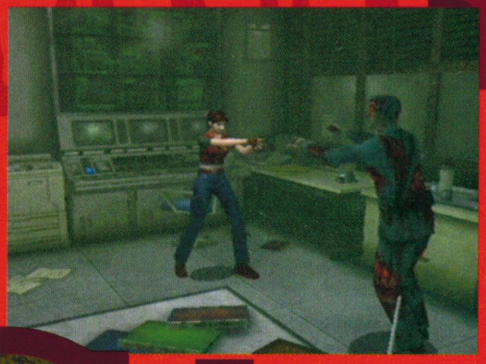
To save Claire from imminent death from injury there are green and red herbs to pick up along the way. Mix them together and they make a concoction that'll completely heal you, even if you're at danger level. There are also health sprays that do the same job. Most other items you collect are crucial to solving puzzles. You'll need a wheel to summon a submarine, a crest to leave the first area and a fire extinguisher to put out a fire – and that's just a few of the items. If your backpack becomes full you'll either have to combine some items, like herbs, or find an item box to store things in. There aren't many of these boxes so you have to be choosy about what you leave behind.

On occasions you'll pick up things such as vases or briefcases and you'll have to inspect them closer to find out what's inside them – leave nothing unopened, un-shook or un-overturned or you'll no doubt miss something.

Horrific

All right, so the music's a little creepy, the sound effects a bit gruesome and the dead bodies, erm, plentiful. But what makes Resident Evil titles so scary are the enemies. I've already talked about the dogs, Mini Tyrants and zombies, but nothing about the boss right at the end of the first disc. Whatever you do, make sure you've collected enough





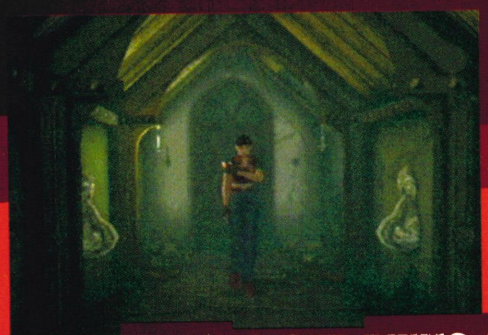


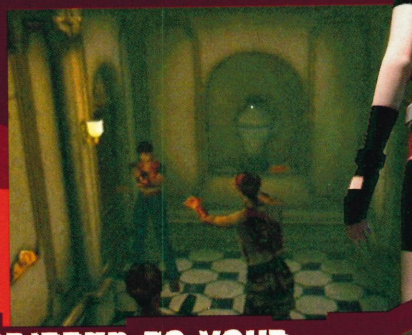




ALL IS QUIET EXCEPT FOR THE PATTERING OF RAIN, THE THUNDER IN THE DISTANCE OR A BLOODY CORPSE SQUELCHING UNDER CLAIRE'S SNEAKERS

Use the Uzis to eliminate multiple enemies...







IF YOU LOVE BEING GRIPPED TO YOUR SEAT ALMOST AS MUCH AS YOU LIKE JUMPING OUT OF IT WITH FRIGHT THEN CODE: VERONICA WILL KEEP YOU HOOKED





grenades for your launcher, as when you and Steve board the getaway plane you're faced with the T-079, the most powerful of the Umbrella Corporation's mutant creations. But perhaps the most evil of all the enemies in Code: Veronica is the owner of the corporation himself (and he's human). Alfred likes to show his face on regular occasions throughout the adventure but you don't get the opportunity to have a shot at him until the very end. He's got his own well-hidden secrets to expose as well, but I'll save those for you to find out.

Out Of Character

Throughout Code: Veronica you'll also play the parts of both Steve Burnside and Chris Redfield himself. You'll only control Steve for a short time, as he attempts to impress Claire with his manliness. Guide him through a couple of rooms and kill a few zombies with his new semi-automatic weapon as a toy and it's all over.

Chris' part of the adventure is a little more substantial. You'll have to run over some old ground until he catches a plane to the Antarctic (where Claire ends up at the start of the second disc). Sooner or later they're both reunited and you go back to controlling Claire again.

Changing characters adds a welcome slice of variety to the gameplay, although the controls are exactly the same, whichever character you're using.

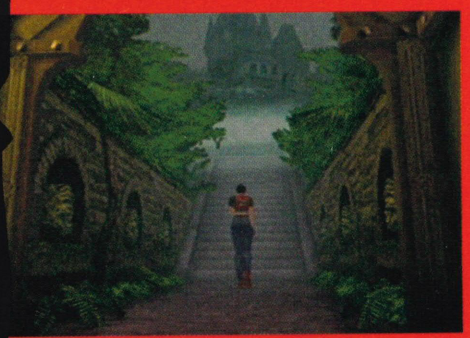
Painstaking Puzzles

But as you know, Resident Evil titles aren't merely shoot-'em-ups, battering the odd zombie and opening a few doors, oh no. The series is renowned for its brain teasers, and there's no shortage of them in Code: Veronica.

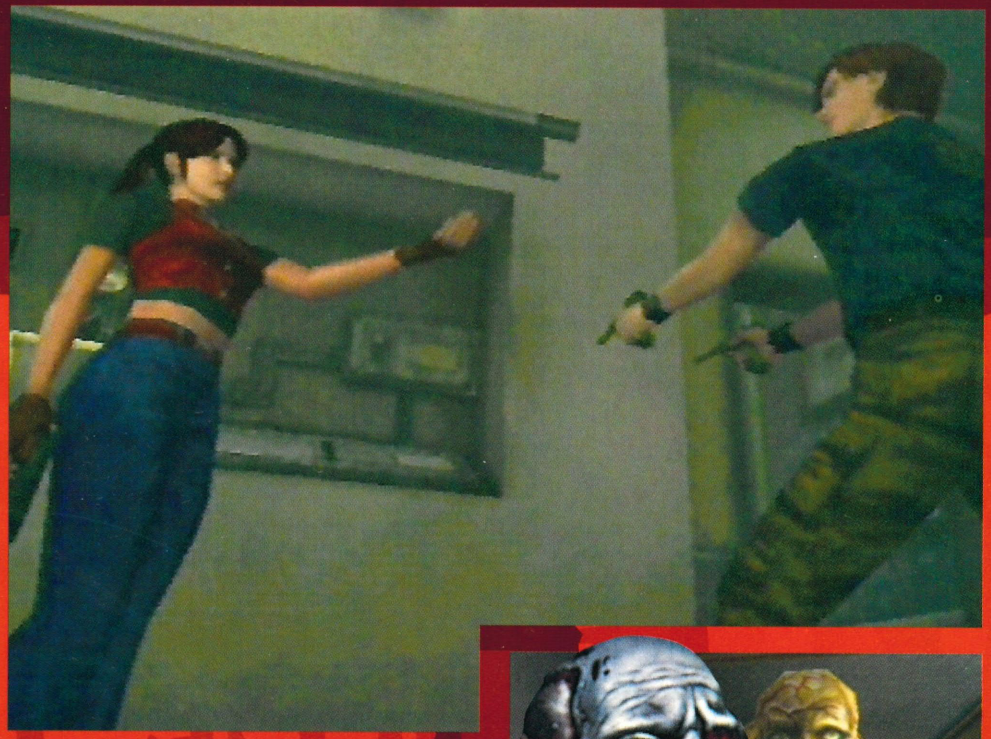
Some involve finding particular items to access new areas, some just entail you entering specific codes so you can deactivate security systems and others simply involve you frantically running everywhere, trying to find a switch that unlocks a door miles away from you. So some of them are pretty easy, but then others are a little more difficult. However,we probably wouldn't have it any other way, now would we?







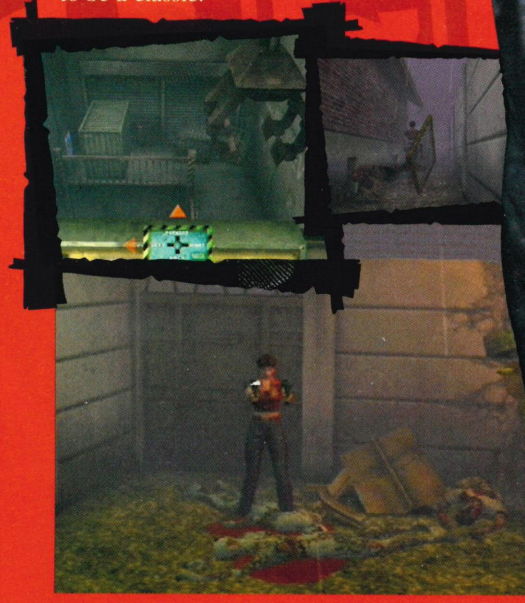
I feel something very scary coming on...



Room For Improvement

So, I can't think of anything Eidos or Capcom could've done to improve on Code: Veronica. It's a massive improvement from those lowly PSX games – and we were impressed with them, both graphically and in playability terms (though not so impressed with the way Res Evil 2 was released on the DC). The only things wrong with them were the controls, which could've done with some fine-tuning. Of course, there's been a rumour that there will be a movie, you know, and we wouldn't be surprised – though there's nothing quite like interacting with the action yourself, is there?

If you love being gripped to your seat almost as much as you like jumping out of it with fright, then Code: Veronica will keep you hooked. I was glad the adventure carried on to a second disc, as I never wanted it to end – it's going to be a classic.



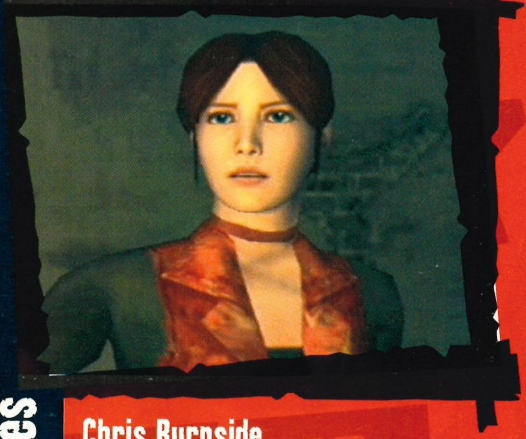


Character profiles

Claire Redfield

Claire's inquisitive nature means she's more than just an ordinary college student who has a passion for motorcycles. A while ago now she went to Raccoon City in search of her brother Chris, who was missing under suspicious circumstances. However, she immediately became involved in a series of strange incidents engineered by the corrupt Umbrella Corporation.

She teamed up with a rookie cop called Leon S. Kennedy and together they managed to escape the zombie-infested city. Now, three months later, she's headed for Europe, following clues to the whereabouts of Chris. However, she's soon found by the corporation and is transferred to a prison on a seemingly deserted island.



Chris Burnside

Some have compared his looks to Leonardo De Caprio, but we'd say he doesn't look much like him, well, not at all really. This young chappie has a very reckless nature but is generally good-hearted. He and his father were captured and held in the Umbrella prison. He has bad feelings towards his family, although why is a mystery (until about the middle of disc one). During a raid on the prison, he manages to escape during all the chaos. He meets up with Claire a short way into the game and... is it my imagination, or is there some kind of love story going on?



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VERDICT

This is a title not to be missed. If you love the idea of jumping out of your seat with fright, coupled with immersive and action-packed gameplay then you can't go far wrong with Code: Veronica. This is easily the best Resident Evil title yet, anyone for another?

9

Written By Claire Webster claire.webster@quaynet.co.uk

BE A EUR WITH A F COPY OF CHUCHU

Now, for the first time ever, you can take on the rest of Europe, head to head and in real time, through your Dreamcast console. What's more you can do it for free with ChuChu Rocket!, Europe's first ever online console game. We're giving it away to anyone who buys a new Dreamcast, and to all existing Dreamcast owners who go on line through their consoles to Dreamarena, Dreamcast's exclusive website. And, once you've got your free ChuChu Rocket!, from June 9th you can enter the European ChuChu Challenge by visiting Dreamarena. Don't miss out, it's your chance to be the star of Europe.

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Vanishing Point

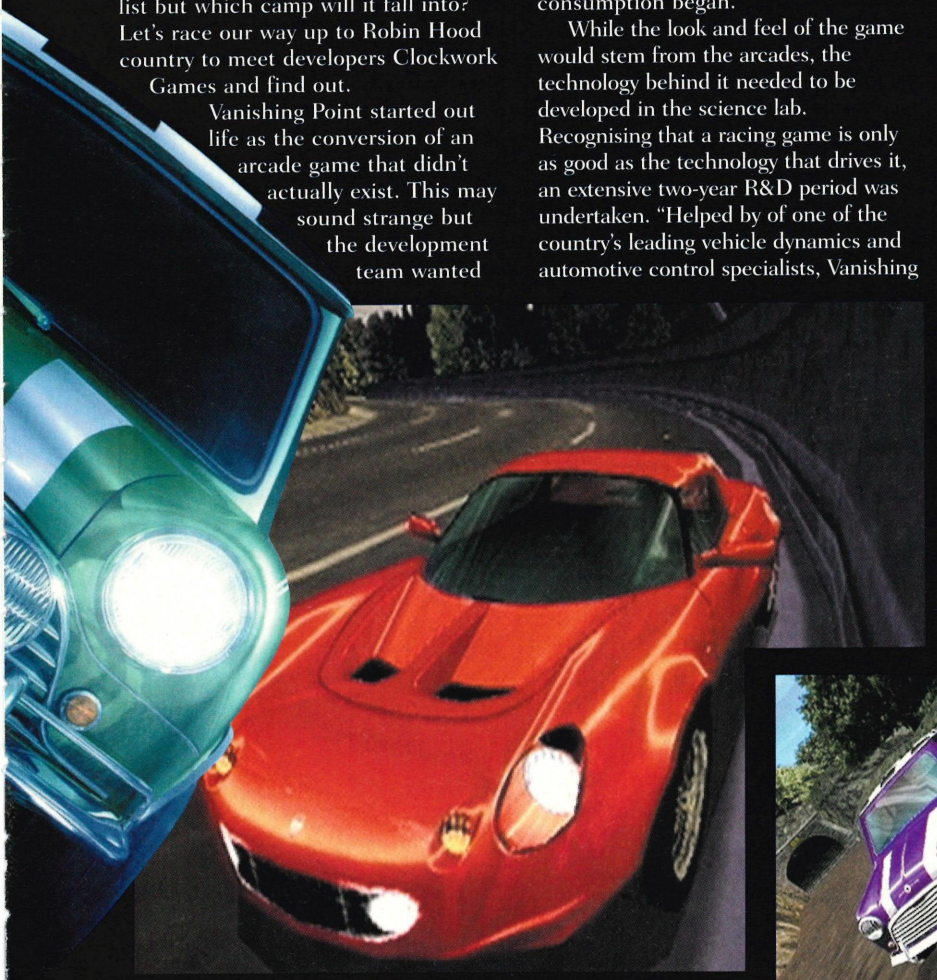
Yet another arcade racer is on its way to the Dreamcast but with all the top notch titles out there already, how's it going to stand up against the competition? Derek dela Fuente finds out...

Publisher	Acclaim	**Developer**	Clockwork Games
Released	August 2000	**Genre**	Racing









How many racing games are available for Dreamcast? A fair few. Some are poor, some are good and one or two are excellent. Vanishing Point (a wholly self-funded project) is another to add to that ever-increasing list but which camp will it fall into? Let's race our way up to Robin Hood country to meet developers Clockwork Games and find out.

Vanishing Point started out life as the conversion of an arcade game that didn't actually exist. This may sound strange but the development team wanted the game to look like an arcade game, rather than just another 'for the home' racing title. So, taking Sega's own arcade racing titles as inspiration, the task of making a true arcade game for home consumption began.

While the look and feel of the game would stem from the arcades, the technology behind it needed to be developed in the science lab. Recognising that a racing game is only as good as the technology that drives it, an extensive two-year R&D period was undertaken. "Helped by of one of the country's leading vehicle dynamics and automotive control specialists, Vanishing Point boasts the most advanced vehicle dynamics and artificial intelligence yet seen," boasts Neil Casini, Director of Clockwork Games. With this area taken care of, the team could concentrate on gaming issues like gameplay and new rendering methods.

Developed In The UK

In order to stand out from the crowd, Vanishing Point will have to be very special. To achieve this, the development team decided that three core elements were the key to making a successful racing game. First, vehicle dynamics define playability. If the vehicles in the game don't feel or act like they should do, then the illusion of driving a car is destroyed. Next, artificial intelligence

those 32 cars in full:



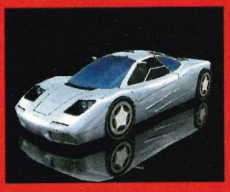


Alfa Romeo GTV 3.0 V6 24V
Alfa Romeo GTV 3.0 V6 24V 6 Speed
Aston Martin DB7 Vantage
Aston Martin V8 Vantage 600
Aston Martin V8 Vantage Le Mans
Audi TT Cabriolet
Audi TT Quattro
Austin Mini Cooper S
BMW 325i
Chrysler Viper RT10
Chrysler Viper GTS
Ford Explorer XLT
Ford Focus Cosworth
Ford Mustang Cobra SVT
Ford Mustang Cobra R SVT
Ford Ranger XLT
Ford Taurus
Ford Thunderbird 64
Ford Windstar
Jaguar XKR
Lincoln Town Car
Lotus Elise
Lotus Elise 111S
Lotus Esprit
Mercury Sable
Wagon
Shelby Cobra 427 SC
Toyota Supra
TVR Cerebra 4.5
TVR Griffith 500
Volkswagen Beetle
Volkswagen Camper
Volkswagen Golf













IN A NUTSHELL, VANISHING POINT IS STATE OF THE ART TECHNOLOGY WRAPPED UP IN ARCADE EYE CANDY



Gorgeous detail, excellent lighting and sexy curves – what more do you want?

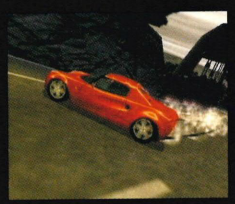


VANISHING POINT

what's best?

Neil Casini's thoughts on Dreamcast: "It's is a very nice piece of hardware and I've seen very little that suggests that it is already out of date when compared to PS2. Personally, from what I am hearing, the Dreamcast vs PS2 debate sounds like a role reversal of what was witnessed with the Saturn and PS1. It looks as if the Sega machine is the easiest to develop for, while the PS2 is going to keep programmer's scratching their heads for a while. This, for the short term, will keep DC and PS2 on a level plane. We'll have to see."















■ The scenery detail is second to none, even at this stage.

UNLOCKING CARS IS ONE OF MANY REWARDS THAT WE GIVE THE PLAYER FOR PROGRESSING THROUGH THE GAME



gives the racing experience. If the computer-controlled cars are only following a pre-determined racing line, then they're not racing against the player. Lastly, rendering and frame rate are the bits that gives the player the adrenaline rush and excitement of the race.

Vanishing Point boasts big scenery, a huge draw distance, no fogging or pop-up and all at 60fps on Dreamcast. Casini admits that: "There's nothing particularly original with Vanishing Point; all it does is try to raise the bar of the perceived limits of current racing game technology. In a nutshell, Vanishing Point is state of the art technology wrapped up in arcade eye candy."

The cars in the Dreamcast version are more than twice as detailed as the PlayStation cars. The DC cars have modelled wheels that allow you to look between the spokes and see the brake discs and callipers. The windows represent transparent glass that allows you to see the driver, and texture detail is four times higher on DC. Having said this though, the PlayStation cars don't look too bad either.

Baby, You Can Drive My Car

This technology is all very well, but most potential players want to know what cars they can drive, what tracks there are and what's the plot synopsis? (Yes, even racing games tend to have a story attached to them, no matter how superfluous.)

Vanishing Point is all about racing on civilian roads. As well as competing with your opponents, you also have a never-ending stream of unsuspecting civilian drivers to negotiate. "This is about real, hardcore racing" enthuses Casini. "However, as your main competitor is the clock, the aim is to be the fastest driver on the road. As such, all of the competitors don't have to begin together on a starting grid. Your attempt will begin by placing you on a rolling start, so as soon as you cross the Start/Finish line, you're racing."

As you race around the track, you will recognise your opponents by their aggressive and irresponsible driving style. Unlike other games, if you overtake an opponent or, indeed, get overtaken yourself, you won't necessarily move up or down a place



in the rankings. Remember that the drivers start their attempt at a different time, as you did yourself, and are probably on a different lap. Like yourself, they too are just trying to get around the track as fast as they can. As you negotiate the track, split times will pop up in the bottom left corner of the screen to inform you of your progress. When you complete a stage, your finishing time is graded and if you gain enough points to qualify for the next stage, you move on. Your performance on each individual stage contributes to where you lie in the overall Top 40 standings. Your global objective is to finish each heat in first place.

Branded

Although the team are still waiting for some licensing confirmations, Vanishing Point will have 32 cars to race, each one set-up from the actual vehicle specifications. Each car will have more than 150 separate variables that define its characteristics. This, alongside what looks like equally impressive crash dynamics, is a combination that the team hope will give the best vehicle-driving model on any platform. Everything is physically and mathematically correct. Having said that, remember that VP is a game, so the engineers are on board to make the cars fun to drive while keeping them within realistic limits. The maximum number of cars driving around the track is 80. Up to 40 of these actually take part in the race.

As the cars have different characteristics, what's to stop a player choosing the fastest car and winning each time? Neil Casini answered: "This will never happen as the player has to unlock better cars by playing the various game modes that are available. This keeps the player coming back for more. Unlocking cars is one of many rewards that we give the player for progressing through the game."

Of the aforementioned 150 variables, ten will be available in the tune-up shop for modification by way of a user-friendly sliding bar. Created by industry experts, a player would need to understand vehicle dynamics to know what these variables are, never mind knowing how they interrelated with each other. That's why those that can be changed have been limited to the ones that should be easily identifiable. It obviously follows that they're also the ones that make a distinct difference to vehicle handling.

Making Tracks

The tracks in Vanishing Point are all exaggerated versions of reality. Most real locations tend to consist of flat, boring roads, and Clockwork obviously wanted to spice things up a bit so to show off the vehicle dynamics. The tracks were created with jumps, bumps, negative cambers, etc. These dynamics are so flexible that a car losing a wheel will behave accordingly. Unfortunately, due to time constraints, this feature may not be implemented to its full potential. "Having said that, Vanishing Point would only be half the game it is now if we were forced to develop under a publisher's time scale" adds Neil Casini. One feature Neil wouldn't be drawn on is whether the game will take advantage of the Dreamcast's online capabilities. He did offer a helpful 'yes' when questioned but I guess we'll have to wait and see. What is certain is the ability to build up a car and play against a friend via the handy VMU device.

Some of you may remember a film from way back called Vanishing Point, which was one man's race across America. This game has nothing to do with that, save sharing the same title. It's called Vanishing Point because the rendering engine can draw all the way to the horizon or the 'vanishing point'.

Hopefully this title will roll up to the starting line some time in August.







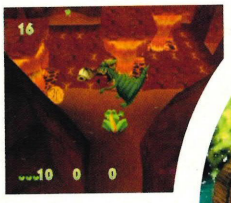
VANISHING POINT BOASTS BIG SCENERY, A HUGE DRAW DISTANCE AND NO FOGGING OR POP-UP, AND ALL AT 60FPS ON DREAMCAST

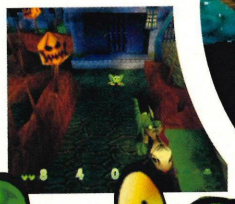
Fun, realism and the possibility of online play make VP one to watch very closely...

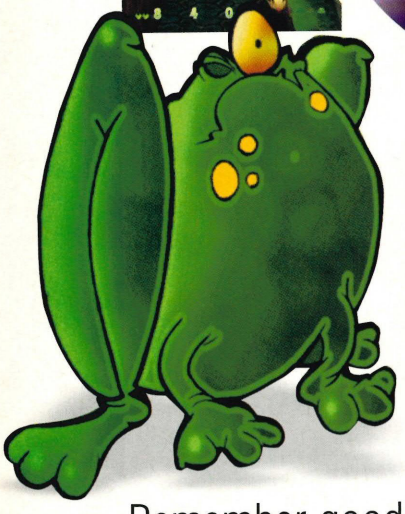
Publisher	Hasbro	**Developer**	Blitz Games
Released	September	**Genre**	'Avoid-'em'













Frogger 2

Remember good 'ol Frogger? Well he's back again on the Dreamcast and the traffic's looking heavy…





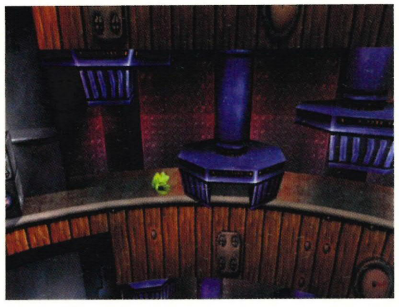


Frogger's never looked so good. Who would ever have expected to see him in space?!

Frogger 2, with its amazing graphics and cutesy look, could well be targeted at the kids market, but here we have a game that is totally addictive, uses some really cool, cutting-edge technology, and above all is fun to play, and so will appeal to all arcade gamers. The one question you may ask is, what new ideas can a Frogger sequel offer, apart from quality visuals? And the answer is – plenty!

It's best described as an 'avoid-'em-up'. You have to guide your frog around locations full of dangers and moving obstacles. The objective is to collect five baby frogs from each of the levels and in the process stay alive, watch the clock and make it to the end of that world. Now apart from devious traps, tricks and enemies, and a 3D environment, this hand to eye coordination-testing offering has all the qualities you could wish for from a game: it's fun, addictive and above all, has solid gameplay.





PUZZLES, INVENTIVE IDEAS AND QUICK-REACTION BASED GAMEPLAY MAKE THIS A REAL CHALLENGE

Game On

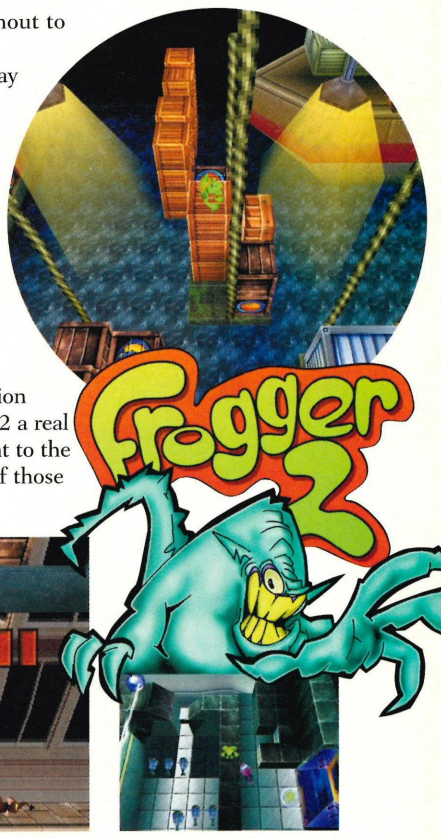
Frogger 2 comes with a new character called Lillie, the girlfriend of Frogger, who lives happily in Frog World with their large family of babies. Sneaky Swampy, a crocodile, has stolen some of the babies and the objective is to control one of the characters, go and find them and ensure their safety. There are 21 levels to move through, with plenty of different graphical sets for each of the worlds – which include Garden, City, Lab, Space, Ancient, Super-retro and Subterranean and Halloween worlds – and each has a range of unique villains.

Each of the worlds will have up to four sections. Each level has primary goals which have to be completed before you can move on to the next level, along with secondary goals, there for added playability. The completists among you can even choose to go back and try to conquer every challenge within each level.

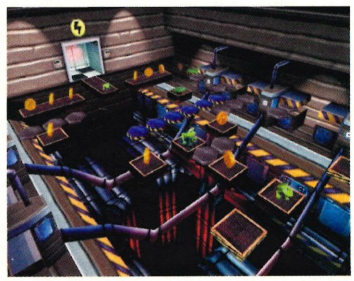
The controls seem spot-on, with cool touches like the ability to change camera views, and a key press that will produce a croak so you can hear where the babies are hiding. One action uses Frogger's tongue (a great weapon), and there's also a double hop move and great distance jumping, plus your customary directional movement.

Frogger 2 offers plenty of game modes, including multiplayer. In Story Mode you must stop the villain of the game, Swampy, whilst rescuing your babies. Arcade Mode is where you can play the levels already completed in Story Mode, but try to do it in a faster time. Cut scenes are used to great effect, being displayed throughout to aid the player.

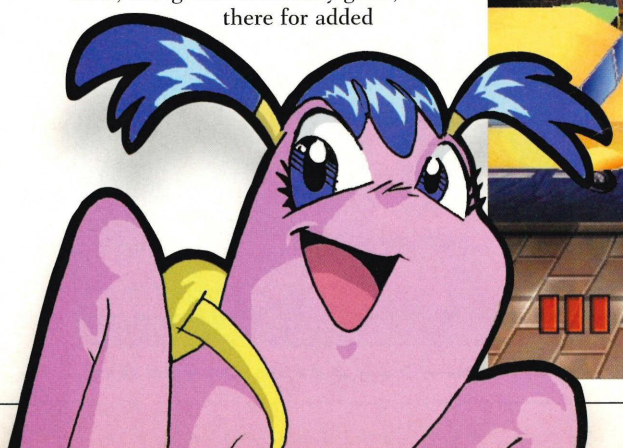
The essence of Frogger 2 may seem simplistic but it's realised in a fully immersive 3D world, where you must interact with other characters, find clues, pick up power-ups, and go into sub-levels to defeat big baddies. Although the game is linearly structured, barriers are placed in the form of puzzles, which you must solve to proceed. The mix of puzzles, inventive ideas and quick-reaction based gameplay makes Frogger 2 a real challenge. This title cuts straight to the chase and looks set to be one of those games in everyone's collection!



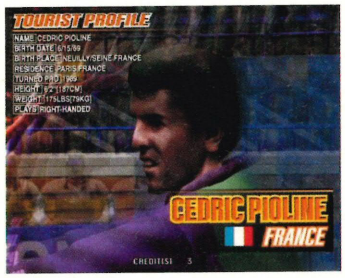




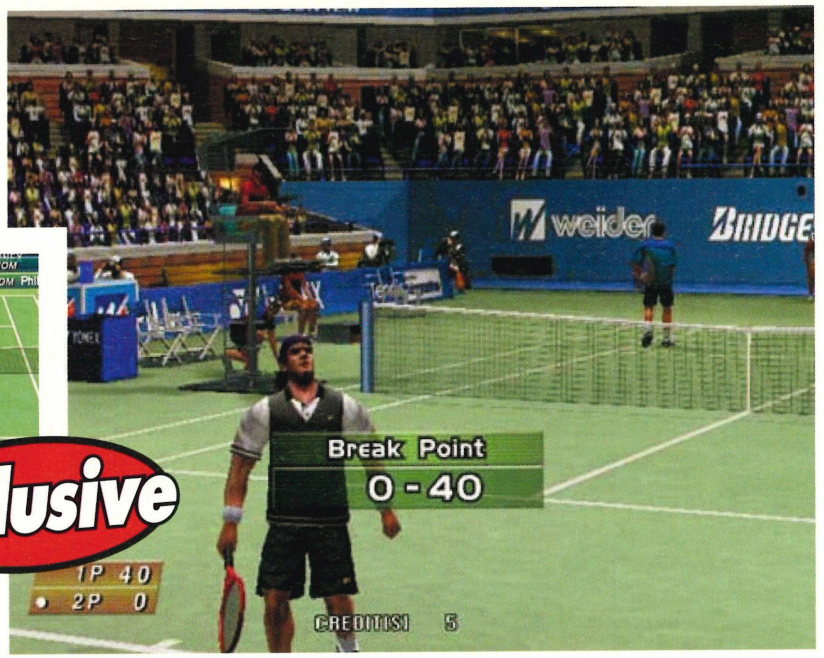
This level left us hopping mad (oh dear – Ed).



Publisher	Sega	**Developer**	Sega
Released	Summer 2000	**Genre**	Tennis







exclusive

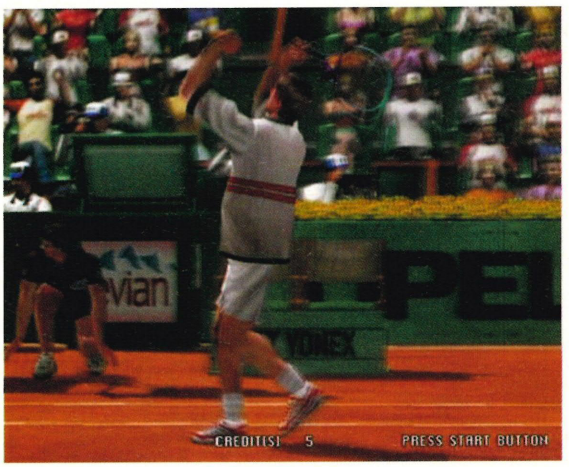
Virtua Tennis

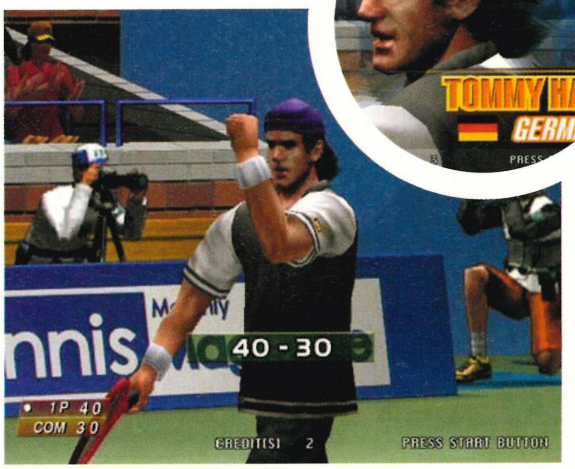
Move over Miss Kournikova with your PlayStation, Sega's just about to serve up something tastier than strawberries and cream...

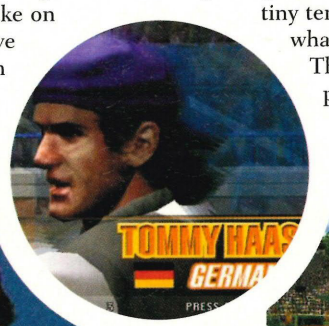
There have been many good and many not so good tennis titles in the past. Perhaps the most popular and playable of all of them was the PlayStation's Smash Court Tennis, which was kinda like a tennis equivalent of Everybody's Golf. It had cute-looking players smashing their way through the rankings, plus loads of different game modes, including perhaps the most addictive one yet – yes, you know what we're going on about, Bomb Tennis. It was more of a fun approach to the sport, and one that's yet to be beaten on any format.

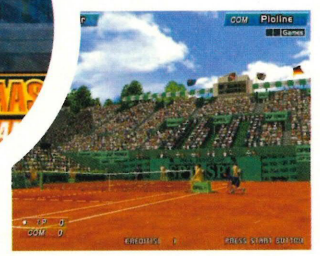
And now Virtua Tennis has come on to court with many strings added to its racket to take on the might of Anna. We've played a preview version of Sega's arcade conversion and it's equally as easy to pick up and play as Smash Court. But the one thing you'll fall off your chair about is the quality of the graphics. Yes, we were impressed with Mr S. Hedgehog, Soul Calibur, Ecco and all the rest of the titles that we've harped on about over the past nine issues. But now Virtua Tennis has real, and more to the point, recognisable players from the tennis scene.

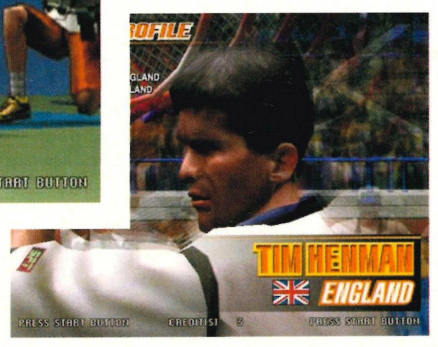
You can choose to play as Mr Henman himself, or perhaps Jim Courier. Funnily enough, though, there's no sign of any female players – this title's strictly sexist. So sorry to disappoint you boys, but there'll be no perving over ladies' unbelievably tiny tennis skirts – or rather what's underneath them. There are eight male professional players to choose from and





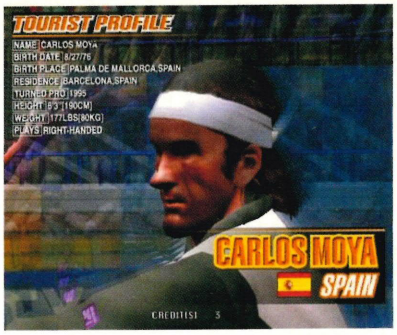






THIS IS NOTHING BUT A PLEASURE TO BOTH LOOK AT AND PLAY, THE CONTROLS ARE USER FRIENDLY AND THE ACTION FULLY PACKED

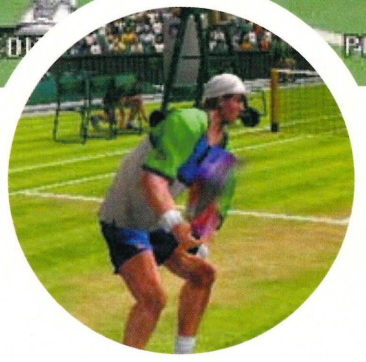
■ Good old Tim – you can guarantee a win playing as this guy.



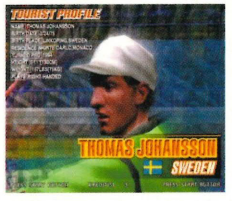


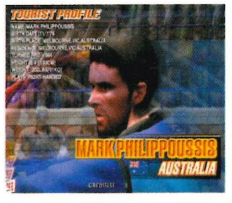
Keep your cool under pressure...

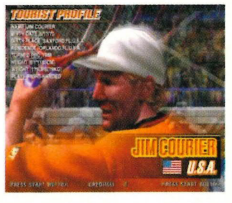




VIRTUA TENNIS HAS COME ON TO COURT WITH MANY STRINGS ADDED TO ITS RACKET TO TAKE ON THE MIGHT OF ANNA







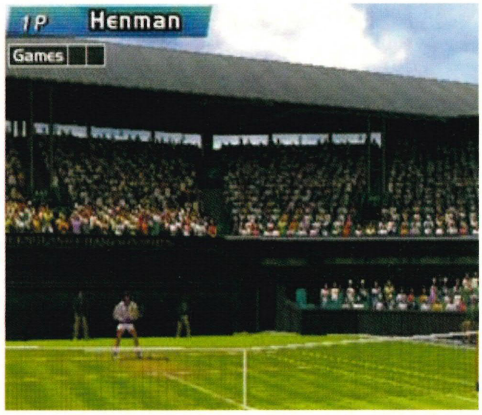
movements and facial expressions are top-notch. After you've taken a shot, depending on whether it was good or bad, your player will react accordingly by maybe punching the air or kicking the grass. If you're playing a doubles match then your team will have a short conference, illustrated by a quick cut-away – it's a simple touch but it really contributes something to the realism.

Sega's Ace

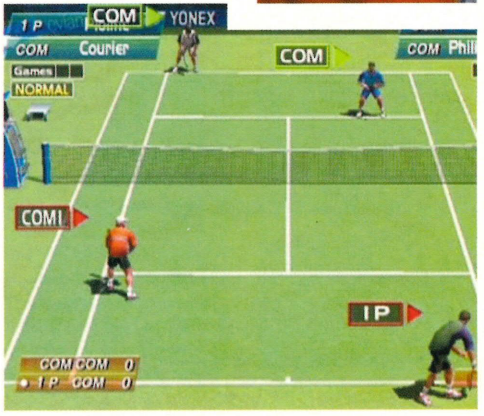
And how realistic the settings are, too. The courts come in clay, grass and so on, and as your player energetically races around the court he leaves scuff marks behind. The crowd looks believable too, with all of them making the appropriate noises at the right moment. It's all very televisual in both its appearance and the sound effects.

Once you've selected your pro, you're given the option of leading your player through singles or doubles matches, which come complete with support for up to four players simultaneously (now that's where the fun really begins). Take a shot at arcade mode or try an exhibition match, or if you fancy touring round a few places, have a few games in the world circuit mode. All of this has been added to make the title different to what you'd find in your local Sega World.

This is nothing but a pleasure to both look at and play, the controls are user-friendly and the action is fully packed. If we're lucky, we'll have the review for you next issue, but in the meantime, get down the arcade and serve a few aces.



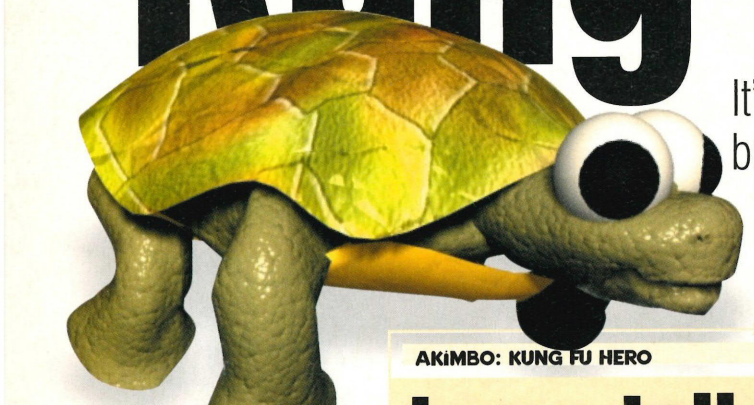




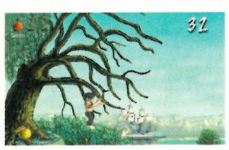
Publisher	TBA	**Developer**	Chaos Works
Released	Q4 2000	**Genre**	Action

exclusive

Akimbo: Kung Fu Hero











A bare-chested Tarzan, no less.

It's back down to basics with this martial arts helping, but haven't we seen it all before? Maybe not...

On first inspection, Aimbo: Kung Fu Hero (AKFH) comes over as an extremely stylised game, which leans towards a Donkey Kong format. With large characters and loads of interaction with both cast and scenery, this game has a no nonsense approach and an endearing main character, named Akimbo. It's been planned meticulously and a lot of time and plenty of thought have gone into tailoring the game to the arcade player.

Bjorn Larsson at Iridon, who can loosely be described as one of the managers of the product, gave a little background history of the game, as well as detailing the game's objectives, to fill us in (see the boxout on the left). The development team's aim has been to ensure that Akimbo has the right balance of gameplay, mixed with a captivating look and the right learning curve. It can best be described as an arcade platform game with a traditional feel, which some might say is sadly lacking in a number of similar games. AKFH delves back to basic gameplay without being retro, whilst adding the right mix of technology to appeal to a wide range of gamers.

MEET FUNNY CREATURES AND TAKE COMMAND OF FANTASTIC ANIMALS



In the Mood

Akimbo, a renowned kung fu hero of the seven seas, is always on the lookout for adventure. A gentle lad who's always willing to lend a hand (or roundhouse kick) to help a person in need, he often finds himself caught up in the strangest situations. One day our hero discovers a note in a bottle that was washed up on the beach near his dojo. According to the message, an evil dragon named Fang has

AKIMBO: KUNG FU HERO

team talk

"Akimbo: Kung Fu Hero is a 2D side-on rendered presentation but one where you can move into the screen at certain pre-defined points. All the cast are fully detectable, and the game will also offer some really cool sub-games, along with neat intros into each section, which we are working on at present – we have around 4 months before completion.

Play through more than 40 levels of non-stop action, while stumbling upon loads of secret areas, all taking place in six uniquely crafted environments. Collect and make use of power-ups, items, and treasures such as double jumps, fly, swords, bombs, shurikens, teleports, gold doubloons, chests, cannons, and more. Meet funny creatures and take command of fantastic animals, such as the giant turtle and lots, lots more."





Careful, or you could end up on a bed of spikes...



ANY PLATFORM ACTION GAME DEPENDS ON THE SLICKNESS OF THE MOVES AND THIS GAME IS NOT LACKING IN THAT AREA

enslaved the peaceful and quiet Turtle Island. Using black magic, the beast has turned the natives into willing servants who obey his every command. The only inhabitants unaffected by the dragon's spells are the twenty shamen who used to rule the island with the blessing of the people. However, their power is fading fast, and if the shamen fail, all hope is lost. Our hero must set out on the journey of his lifetime to save the people of Turtle Island from the evil dragon.

The Goal

Players must guide Akimbo across Turtle Island, collecting and assembling fragments of a magical spell to beat the evil dragon, Fang. Players will traverse six unique worlds, each with its own theme. Levels are filled with lots of monsters, levers, weapons, fruits and other collectable items. Many levels have simple puzzles players must solve before they can continue their journey.

Floats Like A Butterfly

With any PC or DC game, one of the basic requirements for the discerning player is that a game has some unique quality. Any platform action game depends on the slickness of the moves and this game is not lacking in that area; he's not Akimbo: Kung-Fu Hero for nothing. To name just a few of his moves, he's got double jumps, punches, sidekicks, back flips, round kicks, low kicks, spin downs, and jumping round kick combos. You can also take command of wondrous animals, such as the giant turtle.

There's a wealth of ideas here, each pertinent to the graphics and theme of the level. You'll have to pick and place gears in order to make platforms move, pull levers, find the right animal and ride it to cross dangerous ground (spikes, swamp). In terms of enemies, you will be battling skeleton knights, ghosts, tarantulas, living trees, rhinos, seagulls and jumping clams. There are also friendly creatures such as dolphins and turtles.

Game Plan

The levels in AKFH are non-linear and are set in six different worlds, with themes such as Caribbean Capers, Spooky Caverns, The Living Forest, The Lost Ruins and Nightmare Scare. The game offers some intriguing and solid interaction with the scenery, like being able to drop drawbridges, move around up in the trees, climb burning ropes and unlock mystical doors.

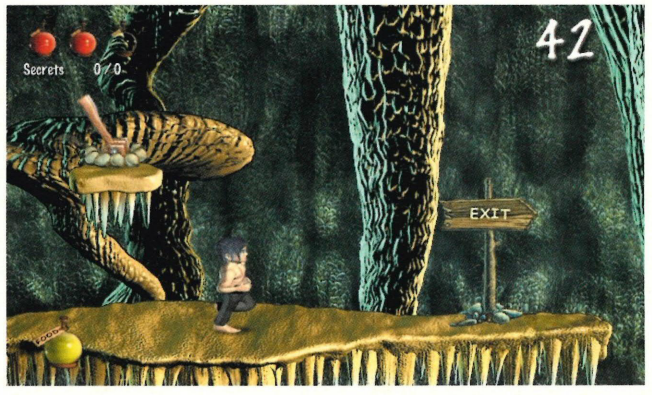
With the wealth of baddies plotting against you, it's nice to know you can run past them, although in later levels some of them will chase you if you jump onto a platform. The confrontations are kept simple and effective, just like in Donkey Kong or Crash Bandicoot, where speed, dexterity and forward thinking are the order of the day.





Collect the fruit to sustain your health...





Publisher	Crave Entertainment	**Developer**	VCC Entertainment
Released	TBA	**Genre**	Racing









exclusive

Mag Force Racing

A WipEout for the Dreamcast, and why not?





WipEout was a hit on the old PlayStation, but up until now the Dreamcast had no futuristic racer equivalent. However, this is not truly original as the PSX had its own version, aptly titled Killer Loop.

So, let's give a welcome 'hello' to Crave's MagForce Racing, which comes with blindingly fast action and fierce competition. You'll be racing around some futuristic cities such as Moscow, Hawaii, Mars and Needle Rock, flying through vertical tunnels, underwater tubes and artificial gravity.

To begin with you'll only be able to choose from four of the strange looking tripod craft but of course, as you progress and conquer more levels, you'll soon be able to unlock all 22 of them.

There are four skill classes and three different race modes to tackle, including Championship, Time Trial and Split Classic, the latter offering a race with up to four players.

As you race around the graphically stunning tracks, you'll need to hover over green and yellow magnetic power-ups which increase your speed, giving you a chance to overtake the opposition. But if that doesn't work, there are plenty of weapons to collect which should allow you to blow away the competition. These come in the form of bright pink balls which you fly through, which then give you anything from heat-seeking missiles to tractor beams that you can use to pull you up to the position of the tripod that's closest to you.



STRAP YOURSELVES IN AND WAIT TO BE MAGNETISED BY MAGFORCE

Action gets quicker as you win race after race, and your rivals become as highly skilled as you. So, strap yourselves in and wait to be magnetised by MagForce. You never know, we may even review it for you next issue.



Pull yourself into pole position with a laser beam...

Publisher	Simon & Schuster	**Developer**	TBA
Released	November 2000	**Genre**	Adventure

Deer Avenger 3D

If you go down to the woods today, you'll sure get a smelly surprise...

The story picks up from Deer Avenger 2, where Bambo fell in love with Jane Doe. One night, when Bambo is about to have his wicked way with his girlfriend, there's a frantic knock at the door. Bambo opens it and sees the little animals of the forest gathered, telling him that the hunters have returned and pleading for Bambo to return and protect them. Interrupted in the middle of things, he'd rather finish the job in time tested farts to smoke 'em out of the deepest of woods. The Generic Fart (always good in a pinch), Homing Fart (seeks out the nearest hunter), Atomic Fart (after eating chilli dogs), and the Old SBD (Silent But Deadly) Fart are those available for your use. Due to the enhanced game engine, Bambo's farts will be in living 3D. Watch as hunters flee in horror as this stag's orifice lights up the screen with his pungent green gas!

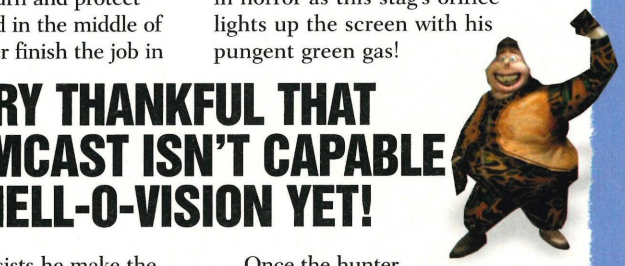
BE VERY THANKFUL THAT DREAMCAST ISN'T CAPABLE OF SMELL-O-VISION YET!

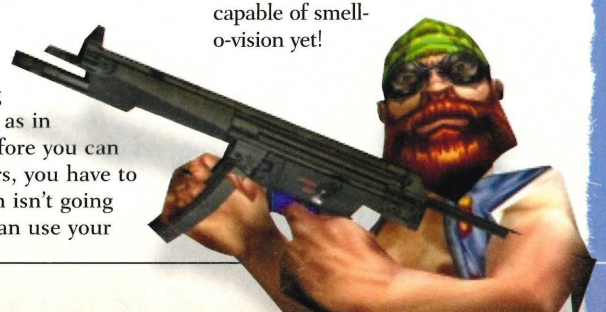
hand but Jane insists he make the forest safe for all creatures before she'll entertain him.

Bambo heads to the forest in search of the hunters, who are better armed, more dangerous and a tad more intelligent than in past Deer Avenger titles. While searching for these gun-toting bullies, animal rights activists, tree huggers and bird watchers (to name a few) will get in your way.

The game's played in both third and first person (shooting sections) as well as in sniper mode. Before you can shoot the hunters, you have to find them, which isn't going to be easy. You can use your

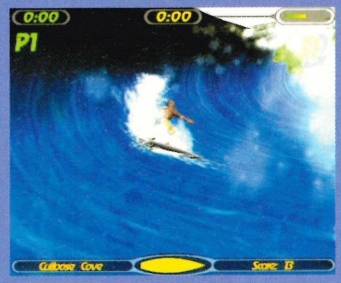
Once the hunter comes out, you can blow 'em away using a crossbow, shotgun, rifle, rocket launcher, submachine gun, grenades, M-16, and more. The choice is yours. The more hunters you 'bag', the more weapons you collect. But be careful, the hunters shoot back and this time they left the booze at home. One good shot and boom – game over for Bambo. Be thankful that Dreamcast isn't capable of smell-o-vision yet!





Publisher	Mattel	**Developer**	TBA
Released	Q3 2000	**Genre**	Surfing



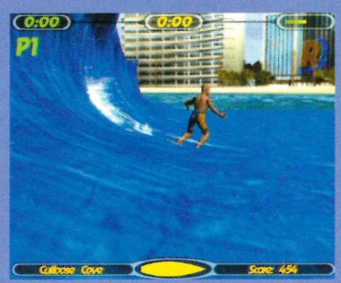


Billabong Pro Surfer

Hmmm, a strange name. Sounds like Rolf Harris is involved...







Mattel's first DC title looks interesting, if not one of the slickest games around. But as with any 'extreme' title, it could well turn a few heads and get a good deal of the 'laddish' element interested. To be fair, it's early days yet in the development of the game and it does offer some interesting game specs, which include the chance to play the game as a real surf sim or just for fun with lots of tricks. It also comes endorsed by one of Australia's leading surfers, Richo.

You can surf off of a large tropical island with ten beaches and wave breaks, or try out the surfing styles of the ten selectable surfers. You can surf on any of the six custom boards, designed to suit differing surfing styles, and experience realistic wave simulation. Get ready to test your skills in single and multiplayer competitions, as you avoid treacherous obstacles like sharks, reefs, jet skiers, buoys, jetties and other surfers, and then watch your performance with an instant replay.

preview

Publisher	Video Systems	**Developer**	Video Systems
Released	September 2000	**Genre**	Racing

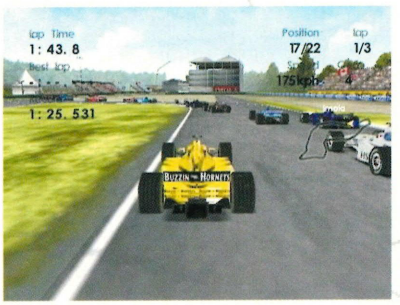
F1 World Grand Prix II

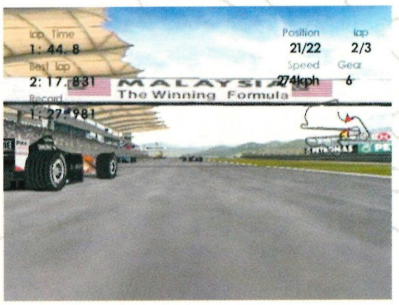
More F1 racing action, this time from Video Systems. Derek dela Fuente reports...









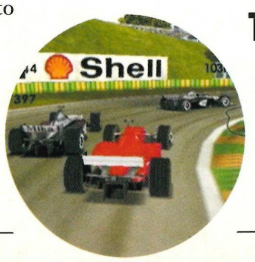


The original F1 World Grand Prix from this company was one of the first GP racing games on the Dreamcast. It was released by Eidos but developed in France by Lankhor. Video Systems, a US company, is now working on the sequel, which this time they'll publish themselves. I met up with fellow Brit, Michael Lancaster, who is based in the UK, to find out more about what is coming up to excite all speed fans.

New And Much Improved

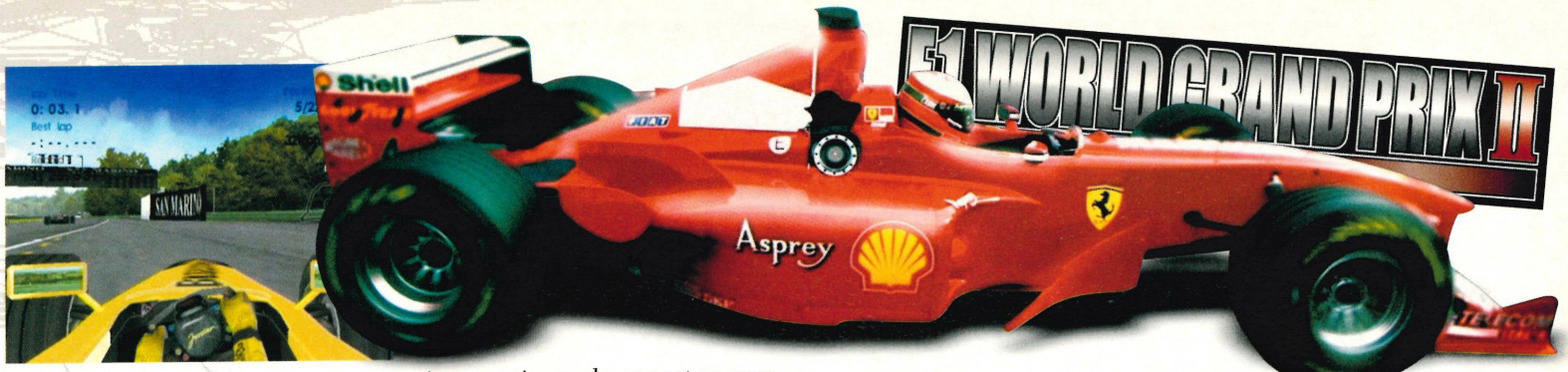
"With any sequel we would try to improve on as many technical areas as possible. Since doing one of the first DC titles, our expertise has grown and we now have a better understanding of the machine. We're also working on developing this on the PS2, so we hope to really push both machines", says Michael. To the average player the first noticeable difference will be the fact that the game's based around a new F1 season, so the tracks, stats and drivers will be updated. "We've broken the game down into sections so we would expect better AI, which will result in better driving performance, a smoother screen update and a touch more realism and so, in effect, a much improved game."

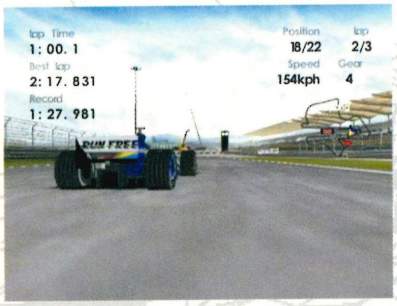
EVEN THE SOUNDS ARE IMPRESSIVE – YOUR ADRENALINE WILL BE FLOWING AS YOU HEAR THE RUSH OF THE ENGINES



The Official Brand

The focus will be on the 1999 season; if they had tried to go for the present season of 2000, it would have meant a rushed job. The game comes with all the events from '99, so crashes and any major





incidents can all be added to the game (along with stats and so on), to ensure that it has the true ambience of the whole season. It does appear that all racing games have some sort of endorsement but this one has the official FOA branding. The company has very strong links with the FOA, and are being supplied with all the information needed to produce a simulation that is worthy of its name.

into practice mode: you set up your car, generally change things to your liking and save them out. Saving out onto the VMU allows you to take it to your friend's house and you have all your car settings ready to race. Hopefully, when Sega get their act together, you'll be able to email all your best laps, etc and find out who can race a track the quickest. This will be like sending a ghost car to your friend; they will insert your stats and try to beat them. This is a major difference between the sim and arcade modes, the former needing a lot more skill and refinement of the car to get things perfect! We're trying to ensure that the game has 'lasting ability', thus we've tried to make the setting up of the cars really impressive, with as many variables as possible. Once you add all the track conditions, weather and so on, you have a lot to delve into."

Setting It Up

The game offers the chance to fine tune your vehicle to your own exacting needs, using your test driving sessions in conjunction with the telemetry data that's produced in these sessions. However, all variable car parts can be automatically set to the most appropriate choices for the course by using the Auto Setting option, which is handy for beginners and those people who have little knowledge of car mechanics.







YOU CAN WATCH AND DIRECT A RACE WITH AI CARS, USING A MULTITUDE OF TV-STYLE CAMERAS

We asked Michael why the company has focused so much on F1. "We're all into F1 and this is an area where we've built up our expertise. We've been around a long time and have worked with the FOA for over eight years."

Deep

F1WGP II comes with all the standard modes, such as Arcade mode, where it's simply pick up play racing, and full-blown sim racing, where you move through a whole season, competing to be the champ at the end. Michael explained, "In the champ mode you go through what it would be like to go



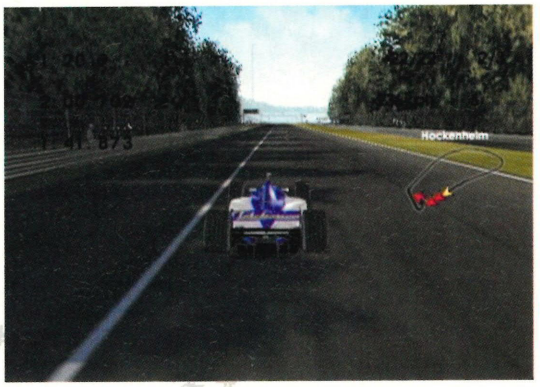
■ Detailed cockpits are just one of the many improvements.



preview







THE RACE SCHEDULE IS THE SAME AS THE ACTUAL F1 RACE SEASON AND INCLUDES ALL PRACTICE AND QUALIFYING SESSIONS





In The Mode

In the Single race you can select any course, any car and your favourite team, and then pit your wits against a grid of computer-controlled drivers. It's ideal for practising your race techniques on your favourite courses. In Championship you can compete as if you were in the real Grand Prix. After choosing your favourite team to support you, you pay them back by taking them all the way to the top. The race schedule is the same as the actual F1 race season and includes all practice and qualifying sessions. F1 rules, such as warning flags, jump-start penalties and black flags are supported, and can be toggled on or off to support your playing ability. Next up, Time Attack is your opportunity to tailor your car to your own exacting needs. Here you can shave valuable seconds off your lap times by driving a track repeatedly, using a ghost car to verify your previous time.

Tutorial Mode allows you to hop on-board an F1 car to be given a guided tour of the course. All of the useful information is displayed in the relevant places, such as corner names, braking distances and racing lines. In Broadcast Mode you assume and play the role of a TV director. You can watch and direct a race with AI cars, using a multitude of TV style cameras, which you can select on the fly. Finally, Gallery Mode allows you to check out the superior game models and obtain information about the teams and circuits.







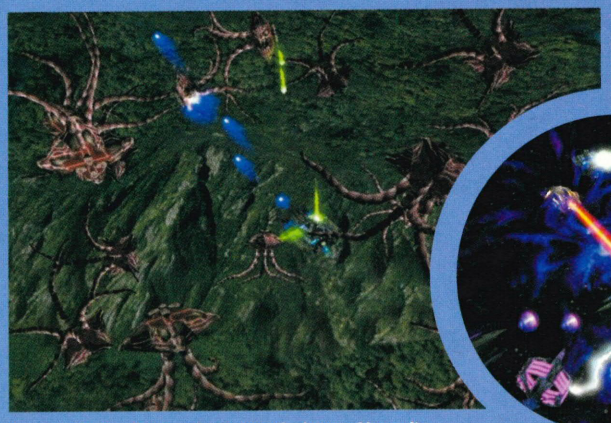


Taking pole position in a Championship takes practice.

The Bottom Line

F1WGP II offers loads more, such as the impressive replays where it's possible to watch the race you've just completed from start to finish, with full control of all cameras. This will mean you no longer have to endure boring replays – as you switch between views from on the car (front and rear), to curb cameras and up to crane-mounted views. It's never been more fun to make your opponents watch your grand victory! Even the sounds are impressive – your adrenaline will be flowing as you hear the rush of the engines. Most importantly, the in-game cars have been recreated with incredible accuracy and are built to the exacting standards of the actual F1 teams – something which indicates the game is really worthy of the F1 name.

Publisher	Metro 3D	**Developer**	TBA
Released	Q3 2000	**Genre**	RPG







Target the invading enemies to save the future of humanity...

Armada 2: Exodus

Get your guns at the ready, it's time to go to war...







Armada 2: Exodus comes as both a stand-alone and on-line game on the DC, where up to four players will be able to play on one machine or by logging on to their own server – hopefully for free. At present the title is on two formats, PSX2 and DC, the latter being the lead machine. The different merits of each machine will only be utilised at the end of the coding.

You could describe Armada 2 as a shooter, where you control direction, throttle and the firing of your main and special weapons, on board your own craft in space. However, once you see all the variants within the gameplay, you will see this is truly an all encompassing game.

The story behind Armada 2 is that you and your people are trying to protect civilisation from the Armada, a group of biochemical aliens who live in space, who are trying to keep you oppressed. Players assume the role of the Governor of their frontier outpost, their goal being to develop safe-havens throughout the region in the hope that some of humanity will survive the second alien onslaught.

Commanding a powerful ship, players take on the incoming Armada to gain experience points and money, so that they can upgrade their ship, and participate in missions to improve their civilisation. At the beginning of the game, players must fly around space to find a place to settle, guiding a number of spacecraft and protecting a colony and battleships. When you find a suitable planet, your colony ship will land and start to build. The player then mainly focuses on controlling his ship, and growing and adding to resources.

THIS IS TRULY AN ALL ENCOMPASSING GAME



This is a true role playing game, one which does not feel scripted but is open to the player's decisions. The better you do, the more experience you gain to grow and become stronger!



Publisher	Take 2 Interactive	**Developer**	Third Law
Released	Q3 2000	**Genre**	Shoot-'em-up

KISS: Psycho Circus – The Nightmare Child

exclusive

It's hardly a winning formula for a videogame – stars have come and gone on various consoles, never to return. Now it seems it's the Dreamcast's turn, care of old rock band KISS...

KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS

kiss fact



At the height of their fame the guys in KISS were so heavily made-up that no one knew who they were. Interest was so high that the band focused on this and avoided being seen. As a massive publicity campaign, the band ran a competition where the winner would see the band unmask (wipe their make-up off) and have a picture taken. The eventual winner did have his picture taken with the band, in secret, and took away the photo to show the world but within an hour the photo had gone black – it was printed on light sensitive paper.

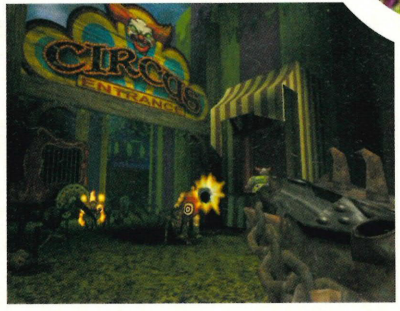


Many younger games players will not have heard of KISS, the Glam rock band of the 1970s, who disbanded, reformed, disbanded, reformed...and it goes on. Thirty years after their first appearance, the group, who caused a storm with their outrageous stage outfits and painted faces, were back – a lot older and a lot fatter around the waist – touring on what was called the Psycho Circus tour. The music the band played was your standard American soft rock, only played louder. In musical terms they were nothing special, but their stage act still made them a live group not to be missed.

With this release, the golden rule of game design – never base a game around a rock band or pop personality – has once again been broken, but could it be that this title breaks the mould? We've had David Bowie, Queen and Run DMC titles, and even a game based on Give My Regards to Broadway by Paul McCartney, but these and numerous other titles have appeared only to disappear without trace.

DON'T BE PUT OFF BY THE GROUP'S TRACK RECORD – IT'S A CASE OF GAME FIRST, BAND ETHOS SECOND







Putting Things Right

Now the game itself is not about a rock concert or a musical interactive experience; it's actually a 3D first-person shooter with shades of exploration and challenges. It can be likened to Ed Hunter, a game that revolved around the rock band Iron Maiden's strong imagery.

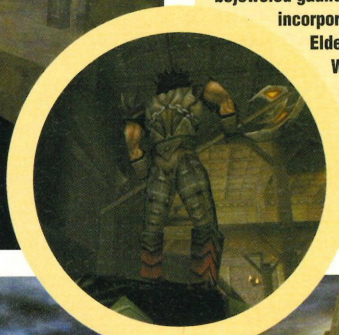
From early inspection of this title, it has a lot more going for it, with a strong storyline, many unique locations and a strong visual look that'll ensure it gets plenty of coverage. Kiss were known as a freakish band and that same outlandishness has been created in the game. Psycho Circus utilises the LithTech 3D engine, which will ensure the game's code and look is technology-led. So, in effect, the team can concentrate on the game's design, as opposed to worrying about writing fancy routines. There's been great attention paid to the game's physics, with new lighting features and some startling particle effects.

The Concept

The game's not about KISS, but is a horror game in the mould of Evil





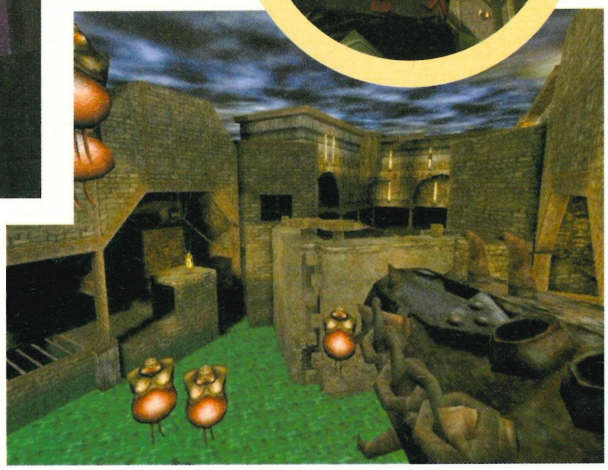


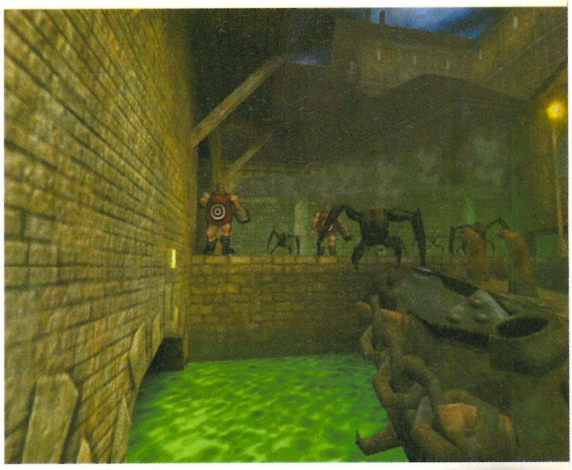
the power

There are six individual Elder Armour power ups, transforming the original human player into an immortal Elder being. Each corresponds to an item of outrageous KISS costume:
Gloves – Wickedly studded and bejeweled gauntlets, which incorporate the Elder's melee.
Weapon Boots - Huge platform boots, which increase speed and look unbelievably sexy too.



Belt – Intricately ornamented belt, which allows the Elder to leap mighty distances and lofty peaks.
Torso – A colossal chest-piece which will protect the Elder from damage and improve muscle tone.
Plate Armour – Protection for the Elder's shoulders, chest and back. Creates a butch, manly shape.
Mask - The final item, which completes the Elder's armour.





Dead/H.P Lovecraft. Assuming the guise of The Elder, the player will, as the game progresses, transform from a mere mortal into a creature with God-like powers.

As the player, you're convinced by the matriarch of the circus in question to take on a quest, which will see you moving through five dimensions to restore the Elder to power so that the new god can be born. Basically, what you must do is collect pieces of KISS costume for each KISS character. Each character represents a different style of game experience, with unique game locations, challenges, weapons and powers. The KISS costumes (or 'Elder Armour' as they are called) come in six pieces, which must be assembled by the player. Each piece boasts a certain power and equips the Elder with special abilities to fight against the growing menace of the Nightmare Child.

The levels the characters traverse reflect four elements. The Celestial's (Ace Frehley) episode is in the realm of air, with altered laws of physics and a sci-fi flavour. The Starbearer's (Paul Stanley) level reflects his character, as well as the water element, putting the player in a moist, fog-laden aristocratic environment. The Demon (Gene Simmons) travels the post-apocalyptic fire realm, where fire and destruction reign. The earth realm, the world of the Beast King (Peter Criss), is a land full of caves, canyons and forests, where any civilised structures are abandoned and overgrown. After playing through the characters' quests, players must then face the final challenge of the Nightmare Realm.

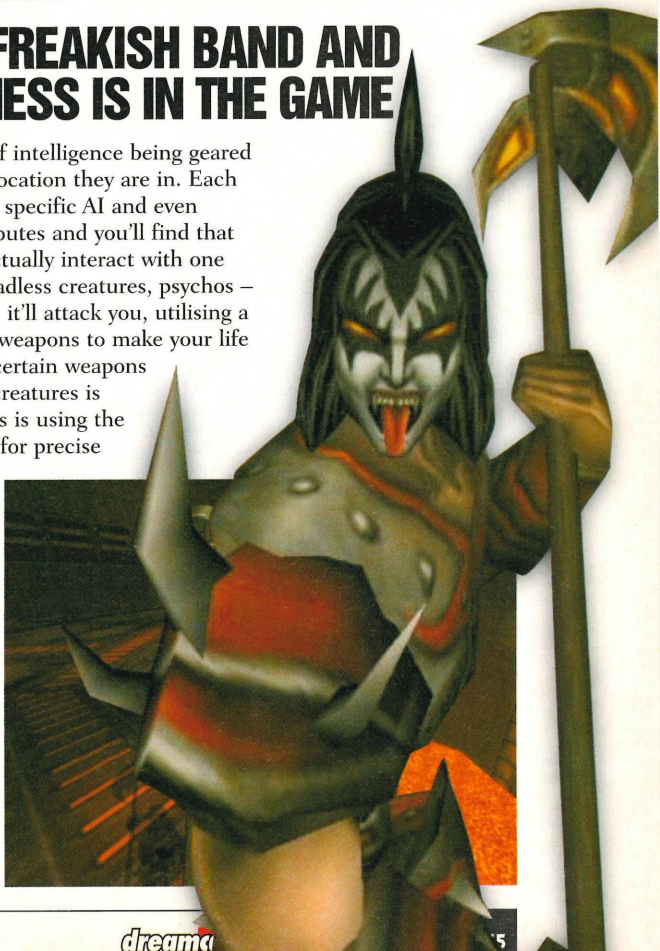
KISS WAS KNOWN AS A FREAKISH BAND AND THAT SAME OUTLANDISHNESS IS IN THE GAME

Creatures Nightmare

You must beware, for there are demonic forms out there just waiting to ruin your plans. These mutants come in all shapes and forms and some of them were once circus actors. There will be lots of monsters moving around, all with tapered AI – some smart, some stupid and some with high intelligence, the degree of intelligence being geared toward the location they are in. Each monster has specific AI and even unique attributes and you'll find that many can actually interact with one another. Headless creatures, psychos – you name it, it'll attack you, utilising a selection of weapons to make your life hell. Using certain weapons on specific creatures is important, as is using the sight cursor for precise



Looks like you've no choice but to go psycho taking on these guys...



KiSS: PSYCHO CiRCUS

influences



– At the height of the band's popularity merchandising items, like dolls and costumes, were eagerly bought.
– Todd McFarlane, a comic book writer, has scripted some of the game from his past work to make Psycho Circus a rich and rewarding experience.
– Gene Simmons, who was the band's spokesman and most outrageous member, has seen the game as it was being developed, adding input as it was evolving.







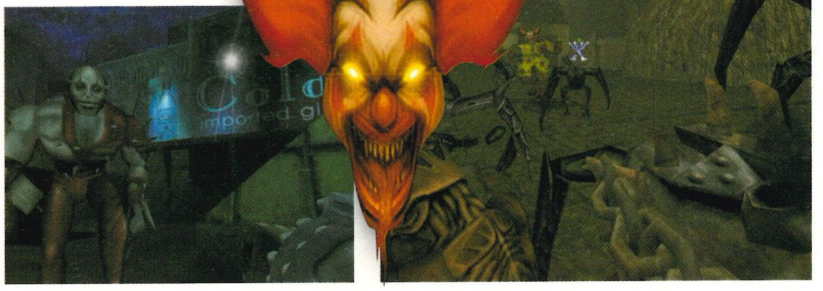


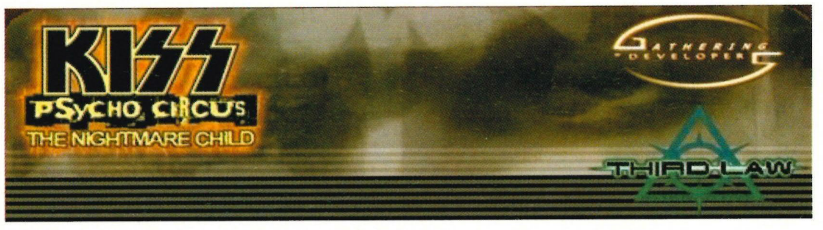


Psycho Circus features legions of bad guys for you to blast into oblivion.

THE GAME'S NOT A ROCK CONCERT OR A MUSICAL INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCE, IT'S A FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER











targeting accuracy. As they say, 'be prepared' and expect the unexpected – some of it's not very nice, but then Third Law wants the player to feel bombarded and overpowered.

However, no matter how cryptic or immersive the storyline is, this is still basically a shooter, where you must avoid being killed whilst also being slick with your weapon. In addition you will have to escape certain locations, and there is even a small segment where you become a character in the circus level, becoming part of a game within a sub-game.

Interactive

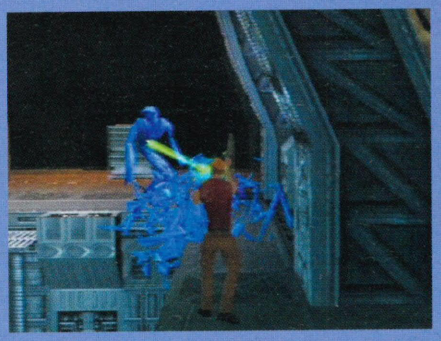
KISS: Psycho Circus has a strong leaning toward in-game cinematics, which not only gives the player a stronger feel of the storyline but also facilitates the introduction of some of the baddies into the game. Other touches, like the fine balance of animation, music and scripting, along with some neat camera views, all contribute to the game's polish.

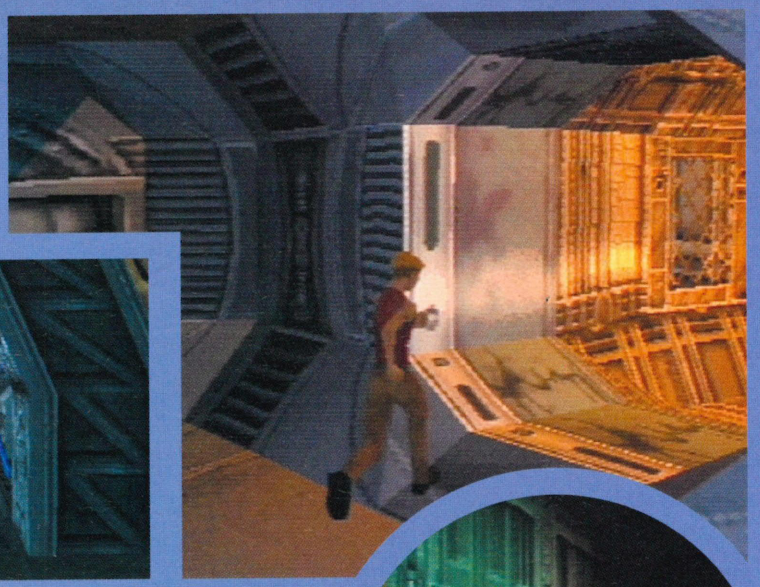
It's still early days, with Psycho Circus' deadline moving constantly, as the developers strive for perfection. At present it looks like Doom and a myriad of other shooters, but with more personality and interest. With lots of weapons, loads of baddies and a great affinity with the cast, this title could be a headbanger's game to end all games. But don't be put off by the group's track record – Psycho Circus is definitely a case of game first, band ethos second.


FUR

Publisher	Fox Interactive	**Developer**	Blitz Games
Released	November 2000	**Genre**	Action Adventure

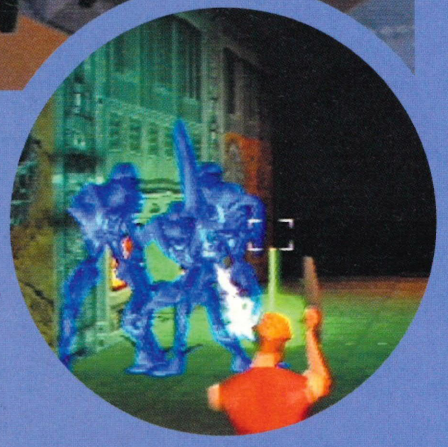




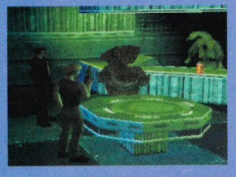


Film fans will get a real kick from blasting these baddies.

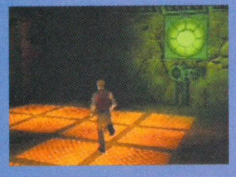
Titan After Earth



Bizarre games have created this Dreamcast game, based on a film, and it ain't 'arf looking good...







Titan After Earth is an action-adventure orientated title, where you must fight your way through a number of levels. You assume the role of one of two human heroes, Cale or Akima. It soon becomes apparent that humans are regarded as the scum of the universe and are treated like slaves, their planet long since destroyed by a race called the Drej. It transpires that Cale holds the secret for a new future for the humans – to find the lost spaceship Titan. It really is the classic tale – you must save the human race against a marauding bunch of adversaries.

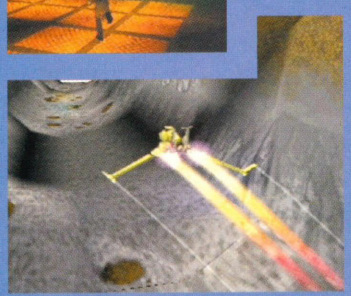
You must explore, fight and solve puzzles as you roam around the massive landscapes in compelling settings, as well as piloting your spacecraft in some action-packed, fraught scenes. The two styles of gameplay, exploration or flying, are seamlessly blended. Sub games are also on offer so the feel good/surprise factors are always apparent.

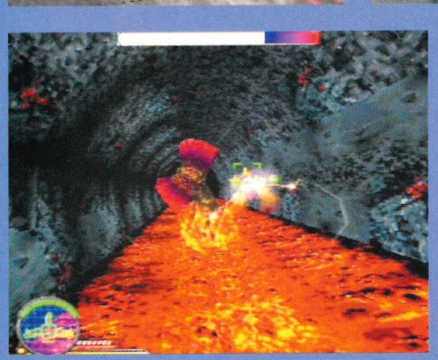
Shape Shifting

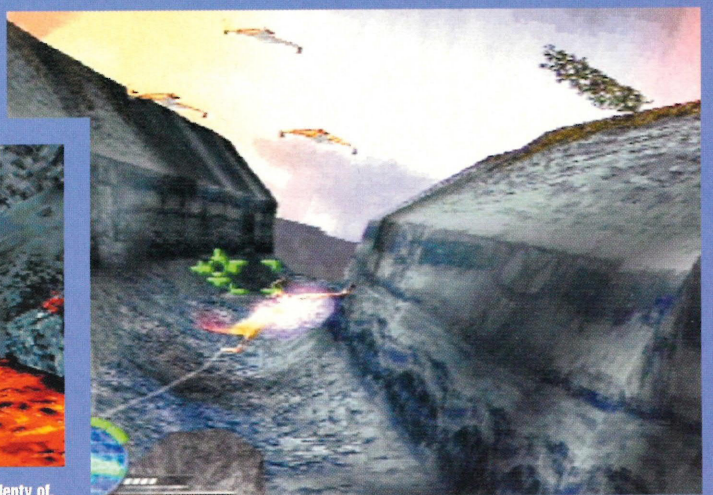
As you explore you'll face the enemy and will fight or shoot them with a number of weapons, or be presented with puzzles to solve before you reach the end of the level and move on to the next. The enemies come in many shapes and forms and although as a 'cartoon game' many may feel it could lack grit, its attention to detail and its ambience will pull players straight into the game. As for piloting the spacecraft, these fast and slick sections, à la Star Wars, will have you on the edge of your seat.

Expect cutting edge technology, along with some of the best animation seen, stunning shading and special effects. In addition, key sections of the movie are spliced into the game already. Although Titan After Earth is still in early development, it's already looking interesting and we shall certainly be back to give you an update on it very shortly.

EXPLORE, FIGHT AND SOLVE PUZZLES AS YOU ROAM AROUND THE MASSIVE LANDSCAPES

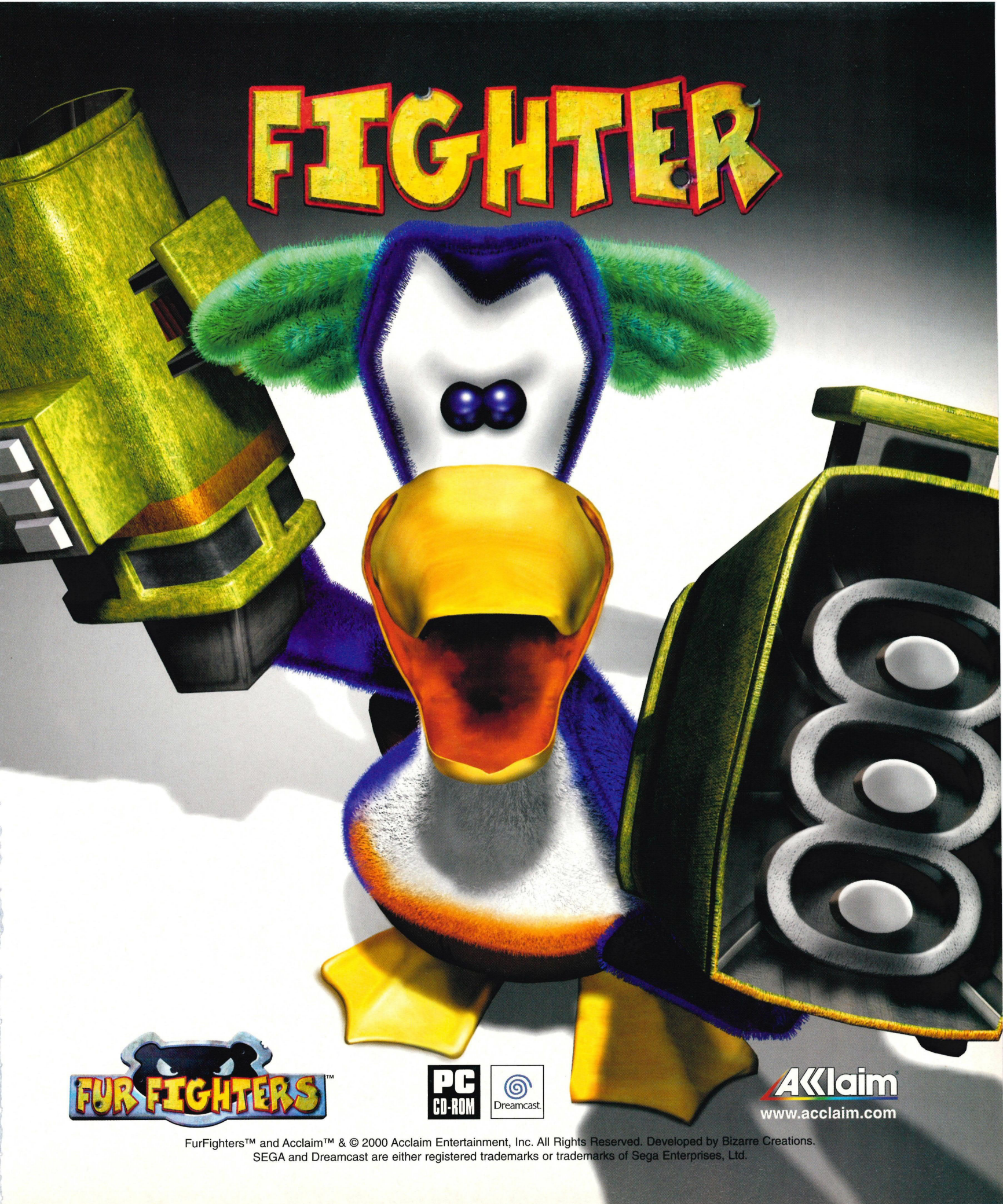








Varied gameplay is something Titan AE will have plenty of.



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Sno-Cross Championship Racing



It's a brand new twist on playing in the snow – you won't be taking part in any snowball fights. Sno-Cross is a blizzard of frantic racing action, so we sent Derek dela Fuente to Sweden to find out more about the Dreamcast version...









Publisher	Crave Entertainment	**Developer**	UDS
Released	August/September	**Genre**	Racing

Sno-Cross Championship Racing is being coded on DC, PC and PSX by a core team of eight, with input from the rest of the UDS staff, as and when it's needed. It has many things going for it (not least the highly detailed look and polished graphics) but the most important is the team's desire to create the kind of title that cannot be dismissed lightly when judged against other games and one that users will find addictive.

Trend Setting

With a glut of games in the snow racing/extreme sports mould, I must confess that I wondered where the market for Sno-Cross Championship Racing would be, even though it's a fine looking game with nigh on perfect graphics, speed and realism. Oskar Burman, the team leader, took up the gauntlet to answer this: "Well, there was a game released last year and there have been many more, but in our opinion most of them are rubbish. I think you can do a great racing experience, it all comes down to good gameplay, correct physics and the handling of the snowmobile. We've reached a high level of gameplay. Racing games, especially ones based around snow riding, are certainly a cultural thing, but you come to think of snow as a phenomenon, and try to make games using it."

Research

To get a solid feel of what it's like to ride a snowmobile, so that in the midst of the action no aspect of the gameplay would be overlooked, the whole team spent three days in the most northern part of Sweden. There they met professional racers and they tried it themselves. Not only did they experience the adrenaline rush of riding, but time was also spent on taking endless photographs, as well as getting a full library of sampled sound. Oskar added: "I don't believe enough background information has been implemented in some of the snow games you may have seen, especially on the console format.

A SNOW RACING GAME THAT HAS BOTH THE BALANCE OF REALISM AND A GOOD MIX OF FUN AND PLAYABILITY



Pulling a tight right turn on the apex could rocket your racer into the lead.

Arcade games tend to lack real substance but we believe we're going to produce a snow racing game that has both the balance of realism and a good mix of fun and playability."

Equal Billing

With a large audience looking to this as a console game, Oskar quickly put the record straight: "The PC, PSX and DC are equal. Using the best of the machines, we offer no compromise for any formats. The PC version has networking; you can play with up to six players on the same circuit – that basically is the only difference. We're using the Enforce engine for the PC version and we have the equivalent of that impressive engine for the PSX and DC versions to secure the best possible graphics. There's also the possibility to download new snowmobiles on the PC and maybe the DC version, but they all have track editors to change and make

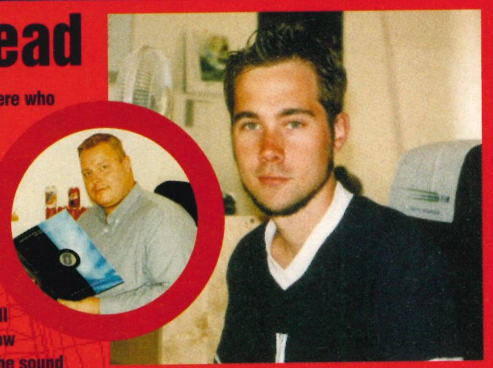
SNO-CROSS CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

UDS Bio

UDS stands for Unique Development Studios and the company, which is a primary developer, was formed officially in July 1994. UDS was started with a bunch of friends, Michael Brunnstrom, Kalle Lundquist and Peter Zetterburg, with Thomas Löfblad as the MD. They've already had success with No Fear DownHill Racing for Codemasters. Sno-Cross Championship Racing has been in production for over 18 months and will also be released on the PC and PlayStation.

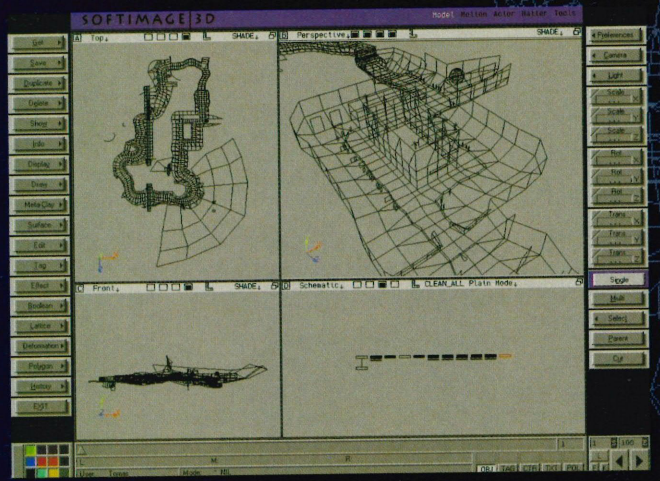


the way ahead

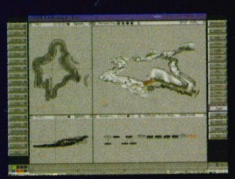


UDS is comprised of people working there who know other people in the gaming industry. It isn't that easy to recruit staff and they are also kind of picky – you have to be talented to work at UDS but you also have to fit in. The qualities that UDS and the team have were expressed by Thomas Löfblad, "I believe we share the same visions as Codemasters: that it all comes down to gameplay, no matter how beautiful the graphics and how great the sound you have. Also we haven't been afraid of doing new things, our products aren't always mainstream – the mountain biking game is a niche product. Right now we are targeting on the DC, PC and PlayStation, but we are also licensed to develop for Nintendo! As far as technology goes, the company has been using its own internal developments, and also the editors for the games, which we believe are as good as those created by any other development team.

Okay, we are in Sweden, it is a long way from the US and England – are there any drawbacks to this? Actually, I think it works in our favour. For people like you, journalists, it makes it a bit more fun than coming to a suburb of London, and for us it is less competition for talent when it comes to programmers and artists than it would be in England. We can offer our employees lower living costs, lower rents, nicer offices."



The team have worked hard perfecting the game's physics to ensure a realistic experience.



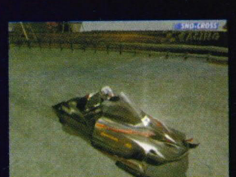
THE TRACKS HAVE BEEN CLEVERLY DEVISED TO NOT ONLY LOOK INTERESTING BUT ALSO TO WORK PERFECTLY WITH THE SNOWMOBILES













Tracks are based in several locations, with extra courses to unlock as you progress.

new tracks. They both also have a garage where you can buy and sell snowmobiles, repair them and so on."

Speed

Lots of snow racing games concentrate purely on speed, without that much real one to one racing. Sno-Cross Championship Racing offers three different leagues. You start with your light snowmobile and progress on to the heavy ones that are really powerful machines. The fact is, you can't just keep pressing the accelerate buttons; you need to take the corners correctly, otherwise you crash into the walls. The tracks have been cleverly devised to not only look interesting but also to work perfectly with the snowmobiles. Oskar added: "It can be viewed as a very hectic game. You're racing against four other competitors and you're constantly bumping into each other. It's a very narrow track, so it's very frantic and fast but at the same time you need to use the brakes at the right point – as was done brilliantly in both Colin McRae and Sega Rally."

The Real Mechanics

Any decent racing game must have a solid 3D engine, along with real physics and a mathematician in the team to ensure that everything works in real time, with inertia that's nigh on perfect. You know in advance that this is an area that UDS are experts in: "First of all, the snowmobile consists of two skis at the front and then you have this caterpillar underneath that drives it. There are two skis and sometimes if you are too back heavy, the skis can drive the snowmobile and steer it, so it's a combination of changing the weight on the snowmobile, depending on the curve or the slope. We put a lot of effort into making it realistic, but also walking that thin line between frustration and enthusiasm to make it great to play. Although you crash sometimes, you understand why because you did the wrong thing and you get up again and continue to race" said Oskar.

Sno-Cross Championship Racing offers a lot. As you win races you









can stop off at the garage between each race. You can use the money you earn – money won from each championship – to buy, sell or repair your snowmobile and so progress. This nice mix of upgrading adds a pleasing touch to the game. Another interesting focus that gave the game's development added impetus is that the team were able to use Yamaha snowmobiles. By working with Yamaha, they were given the freedom to use their snowmobiles and get all the information needed, as well as support.

The settings look very real and are apparently based on actual locations, although the tracks themselves don't exist. For the avid gamester, there are eight different locations, three difficulty levels, plus the chance to open up closed circuits for harder levels later on.

Oskar also explained that the character movements are executed using advanced animation and a new skeletal programming system rather than motion capturing, which they found too time consuming and also too difficult to work with to make the characters' movements look realistic.

The range of views and vantage points is another area that the game excels in. There are four different camera views when you're riding, then there's the replay mode, where you can change the camera angles to see how you went. There are also weather conditions, like fog and snow, and a system where if you jump hard on the ground, the snow gets deformed and the track changes.

Sound Bites

The sound engineer added input pertaining to this most important area: "I think it's all about creating a stressful environment where you make the player aggressive and focused. In this case we're going to use music from a very well known techno band, so it's not only the vehicles that are branded but also the musicians. It's been written especially for this game, they'll have the song on their album and they're making a video, which will be in accord with the game."

The final comment, a collective one that sums up the team, seems a good point to end the round up of this game with: "When making a game like this, it is definitely the physics which makes it feel real. You want people to say 'Wow, this is exactly how it would feel'".



WHEN MAKING A GAME LIKE THIS, IT IS DEFINITELY THE PHYSICS WHICH MAKES IT FEEL REAL. YOU WANT PEOPLE TO SAY 'WOW, THIS IS EXACTLY HOW IT WOULD FEEL'



Though remarkably realistic, Sno-Cross keeps the emphasis on fun racing.

SNO-CROSS CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

the team

UDS started small but grew rapidly, with a present day team of nearly 33 people, including the three heads, who are non-producers. It's a nice mix of 17 programmers and 13 artists, with an average age of 22. UDS have a good track record of impressive titles. A new release, Air Fix Dogfighter, based on the famous model kits, is due soon.





review contents











DRAGON'S BLOOD 74
Hack and slash action with subtle RPG overtones.

MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2 82
It's time for hard-core fighting fans to get ready to rumble.

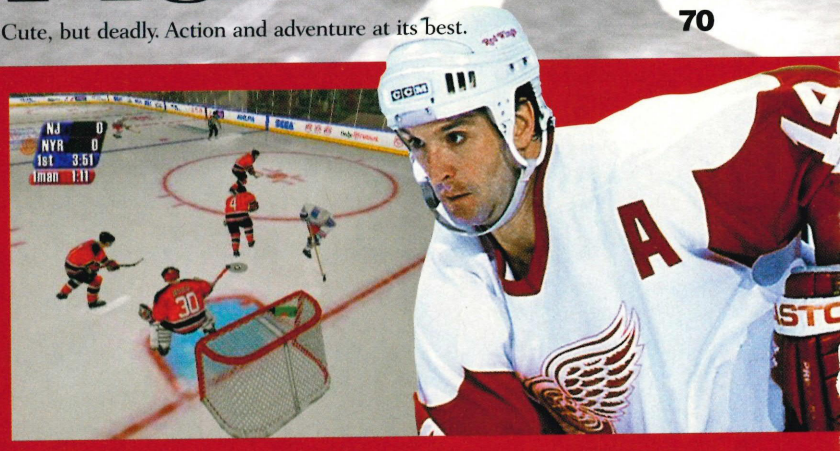
SILVER 90
Infogrames' RPG is put rigorously through its paces.

WACKY RACES 66
Classic cartoon capers – true gaming genius!



FUR FIGHTERS

Cute, but deadly. Action and adventure at its best. 70



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Sega Sports bring ice hockey into the Millennium... 78





CHU CHU ROCKET

Puzzle game from Sonic Team – and it's online-ready! 86

SCREW YOU GUYS, I'M DRIVIN' HOME!

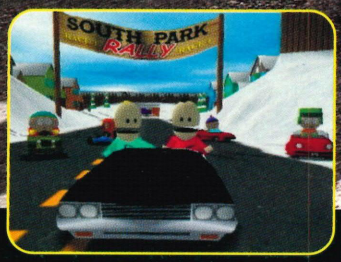
SOUTH PARK™ RALLY

HELLA-COOL RACING ACTION!

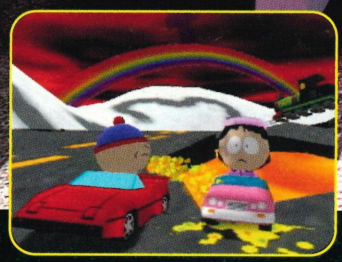
FACE OFF AGAINST CARTMAN, GRANDPA, SCUZZLEBUTT, STARVIN' MARVIN AND THE REST OF SOUTH PARK IN THE WILDEST, RAUNCHIEST ROAD RACE EVER. WE'RE TALKIN' DOZENS OF INSANE VEHICLES AND SWEET CUSTOM SOUND-BITES!

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Break like the wind with Terrance and Phillip!



Honk if you're packin' projectile vomit, explosive diarrhea, and more sweet pick ups!



It's super racing fun! Thanks for asking!



Make the competition respect your authori-tah with dozens of outrageous vehicles!

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Peripherals

LUCKILY THE CONTROLS AREN'T AS WACKY AS THE GAME ITSELF. IN FACT, THEY'RE ABOUT AS SIMPLE AS YOU CAN GET – YOU WON'T EXPERIENCE ANY PROBLEMS.

WHEN YOU'RE CHOOSING WHICH VEHICLE TO OPT FOR, THE DRIVERS POP UP ON THE VMU AND ONCE YOU MAKE YOUR CHOICE, THEY WILL STAY THERE THROUGHOUT THE RACE. YOUR RESULTS WILL ALSO BE RECORDED.

COMING SOON...

South Park Rally

FOR THOSE WHO ARE TOO YOUNG TO REMEMBER PENELOPE PITSTOP AND HER CRAZY FRIENDS, ACCLAIM ARE ABOUT TO UNLEASH SOUTH PARK RALLY, WHERE YOU CAN TAKE ON THE PERSONA OF SHY, UNASSUMING STAN OR LOUD-MOUTHED CARTMAN. IN FACT, AS ALL THE CHARACTERS FROM THE HIT SHOW ARE INCLUDED, THIS IS SURELY THE ONLY GAME IN THE WORLD WHERE YOU CAN PLAY AS JESUS. SWEEEEEET!

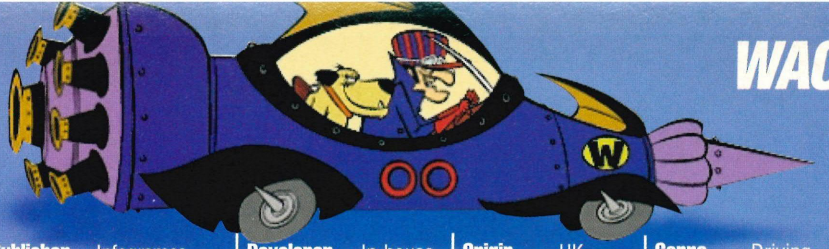
INITIALLY...

THE FIRST THING YOU NOTICE IS HOW MUCH TIME HAS BEEN TAKEN TO MAKE IT AS AUTHENTIC AS POSSIBLE TO THE ORIGINAL CARTOON. THE NICELY ANIMATED INTRODUCTION SETS THE SCENE AND AS SOON AS YOU HEAR MUTTLEY LAUGH, YOU'LL WANT TO GRAB THE JOYPAD AND JOIN THE RACE!

WACKY RACES

When it comes to being wacky, surely Kendall is in pole position. This makes him the perfect man to dissect Infogrames' crazy racer. Start those engines!

WACKY RACES

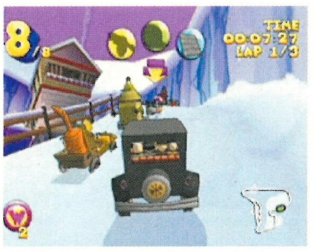


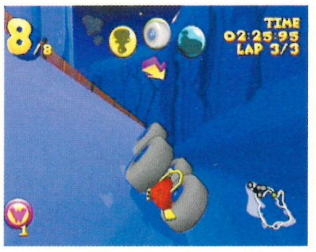
Publisher	Infogrames	**Developer**	In-house	**Origin**	UK	**Genre**	Driving
Available	Out Now	**Players**	1-4	**Price**	£39.99	**Contact**	N/A

choose me

Here are all the racers who are available at the start of the game. As you can see, they don't follow a conventional numerical sequence – this is because there are others to be unlocked as you proceed.









Firstly, my friends, let me give you a history lesson. When questioned about Wacky Races, most people will remember it from their childhood and think that it was a classic slice of eighties morning television. In fact, what we were watching were repeats of a show that only ran for two years, between 1968 and 1970. Yes, the show was cancelled three years before I was born, yet Muttley and The Slag Brothers are as iconic to my generation as The Simpsons and South Park are today. So, the question is, will Wacky Races find favour in the new Millennium, on a year 2000 console? I'm glad to report that the answer is an emphatic YES, and even those who have never heard of Wacky Races will soon be dragged in by its technicolour fun.

Opting Out?

The problem that has hampered a great deal of recent karting games is that the producers often become slack and think that just because they have a decent licence and a recognisable face on the cover, gamers will shell out for an inferior product. Luckily this is not the case here and you can tell that a long time was spent on not only producing an exciting and fun game, but also on keeping the spirit of the cartoon intact.

The Dreamcast is often home to games which are directly ported from other machines and so the power of the Sega console is often not used to its full potential. Not so here: although Wacky Races will also be on the PlayStation, it will be a different game.

A lot of karting titles are squarely aimed at a younger audience and so the skill levels and challenges are low for the older player, who may find themselves cruising through the screens very quickly indeed. Don't expect this to happen with Wacky Races. The races increase in difficulty and should provide some tough action for gamers of all ages. Also, Wacky Races doesn't remain tied down to the standard 'first past the post' karting mode. There are other screens where you must battle against other cars, or you may be required to collect certain objects strewn around the environment. This means that the game doesn't get monotonous. In addition, there's no set order in which you must proceed. As long as you have the necessary number of gold stars you can decide where to go next. When the game begins you're in the centre of the arena so you can drive to

WACKY RACES MANAGES TO SUCCEED IN BEING BOTH A LOT OF FUN AND A GREAT CHALLENGE





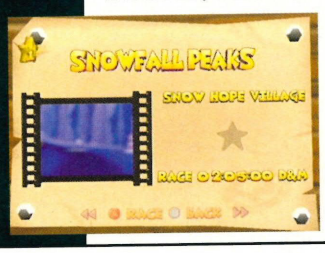




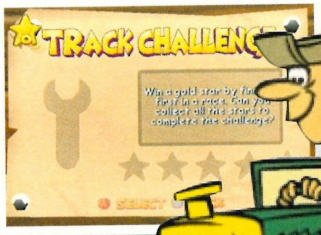
Look out everybody – cavemen coming through!

Where Next?

Each area that you drive to has a map screen that shows you all of the screens that await you. Some will be open immediately, whereas others will tell you how many stars are needed to unlock them. Win the first screens, collect the stars and much harder challenges will await you.







THIS TITLE WILL HERALD A NEW GENERATION OF KARTING GAMES



Now's the time to decide whether to sink or swim, folks...









a brief history

The television show Wacky Races featured a group of crazy competitors speeding across America in such episodes as 'Idaho a go go' and 'The Mish Mash Missouri Dash'. An interesting piece of urban mythology surrounds the show. Apparently, if you add up the points that each competitor gained throughout the series, at the end there's no outright winner.

The success of the show meant that it spawned two spin-offs, namely 'Dastardly and Muttley' and 'The Perils Of Penelope Pitstop'. Fans of eighties cartoon shows may remember a very similar formula being used for the show 'Yogi's Space Race', featuring everyone's favourite bear and his buddies. Now there's an idea for a game.

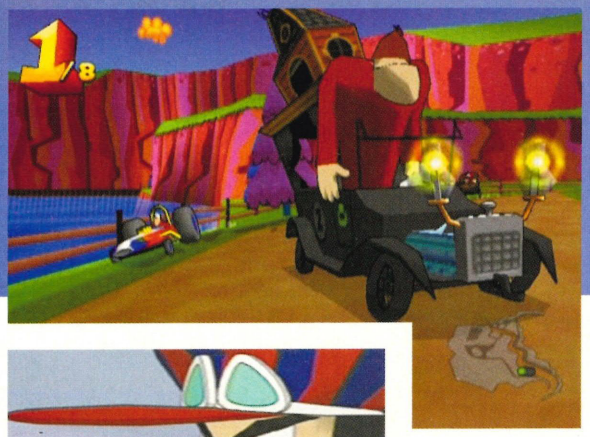
whichever area you wish. This freedom of movement means you can actually get used to how the car handles before you enter any competitions. Very handy.

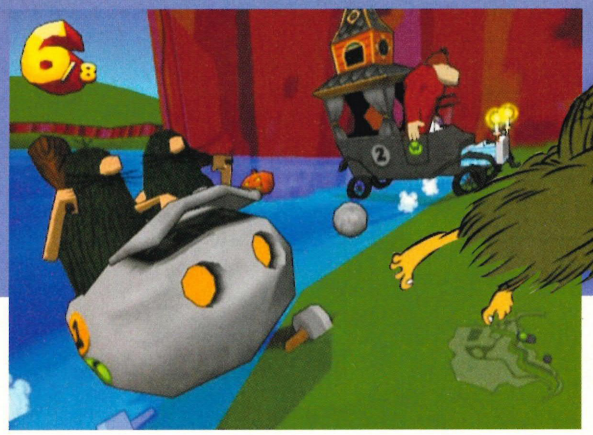
The handling of the karts is very responsive and anyone who has ever played a game of this type before should have no trouble picking this one up. Having said that, Wacky Races gives you the chance to make things harder for yourself by changing the way in which the kart handles. Two modes are available: Kart is your usual arcade style, whereas Advanced makes things slightly more tricky. I would advise sticking with Kart until you have the confidence (or arrogance) needed to move on.

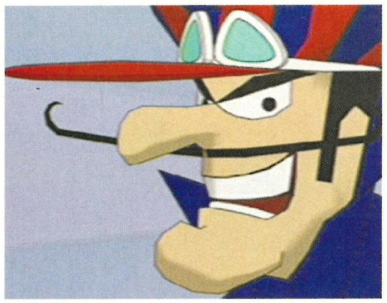
Crazy Courses

The environments in Wacky Races are also different to other games. Instead of there being one way in which to gain victory, the game rewards players who are willing to take a chance and explore the areas around the tracks. You may find that there's a space between objects that you could not see when you were just following others, and this may lead you to a short-cut which will put you into first position. The best example of this is when you're going in a circle around a stretch of water. Instead of using the road, why not try driving straight into the blue and, although your car may significantly slow down, you could find yourself leading the pack.

One of the main differences between more serious racing games and the karting experience is the range of crazy gadgets that can be









WACKY RACES CERTAINLY HAS ITS FAIR SHARE OF CRAZY TOOLS

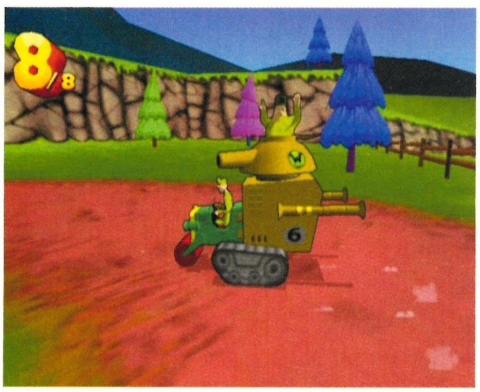




Uh, I lost! I'm totally gutted!

acquired and used on your unsuspecting opponents. Wacky Races certainly has its fair share of crazy tools, and they really are completely different for each character and also correspond to that kart's persona. For example, The Gruesome Twosome seem to have been pulled straight out of the vaults of Hammer Horror and therefore their weapons reflect this. If they throw an object out of their kart to stop the other drivers in their tracks, it takes the form of a pumpkin, whilst instead of having a shield, they use a raincloud. Small points like these are what make Wacky Races so appealing, and they also make the replay value much higher, as once you've completed a circuit you will want to return in a different vehicle to see what other abilities can be used.

Whilst you will no doubt, over time, build up quite an impressive arsenal of these weapons, you will not be able to unleash all of them in a single race. You can only carry three at a time, with each button on your joypad corresponding to a different item, which means that you must work out your tactics before you start. These items are the cause of much merriment during the game, especially the more imaginative ones, such as the giant hairdryer that speeds Penelope Pitstop along.



Catch The Pigeon

The commentary and music within the game are excellent. Sometimes commentary just consists of the same phrases repeated over and over again, ad nauseum, but here it enhances the gaming experience and ensures you will constantly have a smirk on your face. All of the characters talk throughout the race and when you're passing another car, the drivers will interact, with Peter Perfect often exclaiming how sorry he is, or The Slag Brothers grunting incomprehensibly as they speed past.

You may be wondering how I've gone this far without disclosing what weapons and special abilities the classic double act of Dastardly and Muttley have. Well, one of the greatest incentives to continue playing and master Wacky Races is that these two must be unlocked late in the game, so only the most proficient of drivers will get to use them.

Overall, Wacky Races is a great karting game, which is full to the brim with invention and humour. With its decent gameplay and excellent graphics, let us hope that Wacky Races will herald a new generation of original karting games. Heyyylp! END

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VERDICT

Wacky Races manages to succeed in being both a lot of fun and a great challenge. With so many modes to conquer and bonuses to unlock, this should keep you karting for a long time.

8

Written By Kendall Lacey kendall.lacey@quaynet.co.uk

Peripherals



THE CONTROLS ARE PRETTY SIMPLE IN FUR FIGHTERS AND THE DREAMCAST PAD PULLS THEM OFF PERFECTLY.



COMING SOON...

Frogger 2

TAKE A LOOK AT OUR PREVIEW ON PAGE 42 TO FIND OUT MORE.

YOUR PROGRESS THROUGH THE GAME WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY SAVED AT THE END OF EACH COMPLETED LEVEL.

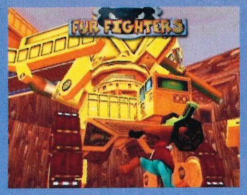
INITIALLY...

ACCLAIM HAVE COME UP WITH A GAME CONCEPT THAT'S TRULY UNIQUE. YOU CAN TELL YOU'RE IN FOR A TREAT AS SOON AS YOU BEGIN. IT DID LOOK A BIT KIDDY-ORIENTATED AT FIRST GLANCE, BUT OUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS CHANGED AS WE STARTED TO PLAY...

FUR FIGHTERS

Take six fluffy characters and an evil white bear who's kidnapped some furry babies – it's time to get mean and kick some fluffy behinds...







FUR FIGHTERS

Publisher	Acclaim	**Developer**	Bizarre Creations	**Origin**	UK	**Genre**	Action/Adventure
Available	2nd July 2000	**Players**	1-4	**Price**	£39.99	**Contact**	0181 9449000



It looks as though we're going to be getting a steady stream of platform adventure games over the coming months. With Sonic, Rayman 2 and Lara already on DC, plus Super Magnetic Neo from Crave and Frogger 2 on the way, the list goes on. The ones we've already got are cool games, but none of them break any kind of conventions – unlike Fur Fighters, one of the most anticipated platform adventure titles yet to be released for the Dreamcast.

One thing that's not so original is the pretty weak storyline. Many years ago the evil General Viggo, a huge white bear, invaded the quaint and peaceful Fur Fighter Village. All the noble animals fought in the great war, and the General was defeated – and was last seen speeding off on a jet ski (surreal). Everything returned to normal and the Fur Fighters lived happily ever after with their families and extensive gun collections... Until one fateful day when, returning from a night out on the town, six Fur Fighters found that their families had all been kidnapped. Now it's up to six furry soldiers – Roofus, Juliette, Bungalow, Rico, Chang and Tweek – to rescue their relatives from the nasty General Viggo.

The Undermill

Obviously, with six characters to get to grips with you're going to have to undergo some vigorous training. In fact, you have no choice, as you can't venture on to the first lesson until all of the training's completed. The Undermill introduces you to the major principles in the game. To change into the appropriate character for a particular job you have to make use of the teleporter – it's easy to spot, being just a fluorescent green blob with another character's face inside. The





Poor old Tweek has to come face to face with his mother.

the balls of fluff

All of the six crazy characters you control through the game have their own special talents, which you have to get to grips with if you're intent on getting anywhere. Feel free to familiarise yourselves...

Roofus

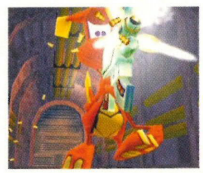
Species . . . . . Dog
Age . . . . . 12 years
Born . . . . . Scotland

Roofus the dog is the oldest of the Fur Fighters and he's got dependability stamped all over him. His special skill enables him to dig in soft earth – useful when the only way of getting over an obstacle is to burrow underneath it.





Tweek



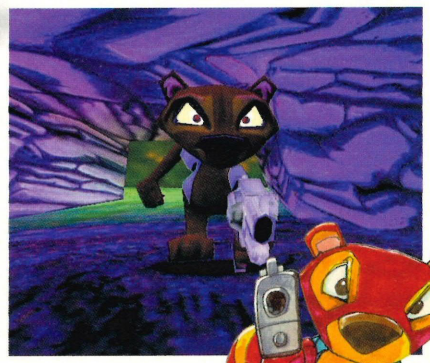
Species . . . . . Dragon
Age . . . . . 0.001 years
Born . . . . . Wales

Tweek is less than a day old, but he's already eager to exact revenge upon General Viggo for stealing his siblings. The first character I thought of when I played as him was our friend Spyro, as although he doesn't exactly breathe fire, he can glide off high platforms.

Bungalow

Species . . . . . Kangaroo
Age . . . . . 7 years
Born . . . . . Australia

Bungalow's a fully-grown male kangaroo who's happiest when taking orders from others – usually Roofus or his domineering wife. His special talent is being able to jump high and long – an invaluable asset for reaching some hardcore weapons.





Chang

Species . . Fire Fox (red panda)
Age . . . . . 7 years
Born . . . . . China

Chang has encyclopaedic knowledge of science and strategy, which makes him one of the Fur Fighters' best weapons. Because he's so freakishly short, his special skill is getting into small holes.

Juliette

Species . . . . . Cat
Age . . . . . 5 years
Born . . . . . France

Not only is this feline character beautiful (well, if you say so) and athletic, she's also a supreme warrior. She does show concern for the size of her head when she needs to fit through narrow places, but then apparently her hips make up for it. Her special skill is the ability to climb walls. Basically, wherever you find a wall with paw marks all over it, she's the only Fur Fighter for the job.

Rico



Species . . . . . Penguin
Age . . . . . 5 years
Born . . . . . Argentina

Rico was raised among the huge penguin communities of southern Argentina. He isn't quite the hero he thinks he is. However, with his special talent for swimming underwater, there's no one more skilled.



IT'S ONE OF THE MOST ANTICIPATED PLATFORM ADVENTURE TITLES TO BE RELEASED FOR THE DREAMCAST

teleporters do, however, have to be sustained by collecting gold tokens, but more about those later. During your training you'll meet General Bristol and Sergeant Sternhauser, who'll help you on your way and will be with you on your adventures to provide clues and sarcastic comments.

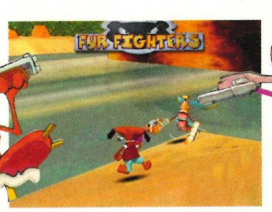
The main aim of the game is to rescue between seven and ten babies from each of the massive levels. Part of your training involves you working out which baby has to be rescued by which particular character. They're supposed to bear (no pun intended) a resemblance to their fellow Fur Fighter family members but that's only relevant to a few of them – Tweek's siblings look nothing like him. But that's neither here nor there, so let's get down to the nitty gritty, shall we?

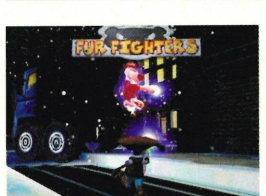
Bearing All

You start your adventure in New Quack City, where you test your newly found skills in battle against General Viggo's minions. Of course, as you progress through the levels the enemies become harder to kill and more diverse. At the beginning of the game there are just bloodthirsty bears, wearing such fashionable items as baseball caps and armed with average weaponry. In later levels though, you'll come across crocodiles whose only form of attack is to snap you with their rather vicious teeth. And let's not forget the bosses to be found as you finish a level. Surprisingly, each of the bosses is in fact one of the Fur Fighters' mums, only with a hell of a lot of armour on. Oh, and they're about ten times bigger than you – twenty times, if you're playing as Chang.

To beat all these enemies the Fur Fighters are going to need to have a plan, or rather you are. You only have a limited amount of health to sustain you, though there are top-ups in the form of tinned food, which you'll find as pick ups throughout the levels. There are bad guys a plenty who'll gang up on you four







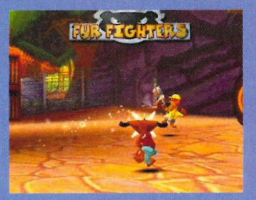


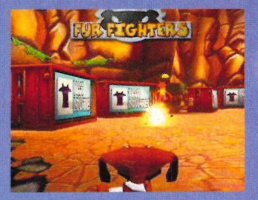
Take the written warning and don't fire your weapons, otherwise you'll fluff it.



Attention Furball! Release your aggression on these harmless flourbags to praactice your taarketing skills







IF YOU FANCY A WELCOME DIVERSION FROM THE MAIN ADVENTURE, YOU CAN GRAB UP TO FOUR FRIENDS FOR A FLUFF MATCH

at a time, if they get the chance, so the best idea is to either leg it or find some heavy artillery to defend yourself with.

Weapons can be found around the levels and you can sometimes get extra ammo once you've annihilated a foe. There are plenty to arm yourself with, like pistols, a grenade launcher, rocket launcher, plasma gun, freeze gun and a smart gun. One thing the game manages to do well is to mix cute characters with extreme violence.

Clawing The Walls

There are approximately 16 or so levels in Fur Fighters and you can expect to visit some pretty bizarre environments. Possibly the best of all of them is when you visit Meer. It's purely for comedy value really, as suddenly Bungalow isn't necessarily needed for his high hops, as you float around the space station. You're also forced to cope with an asteroid shower. It's all hands on deck as gameplay switches to a first-person perspective and you take control of one of the onboard guns to shoot down the hot rocks before they smash into Meer. Sounds easy, doesn't it? It takes a few attempts, however, as the supposedly simple task becomes frightfully irritating.

Another sub-game involves you trying to land a plane safely, so you can rescue the baby that is strapped firmly inside. This ain't easy either, as the plane's turning circle isn't very tight – I lost count of the times I went plummeting.

Play can also become a little confusing, as half the time you don't know where to go or which character you should teleport as next – and all your efforts will be wasted if you don't collect the gold tokens. If you don't have enough of them, the chances are you'll be unable to enter the next area and you'll then end up running back around the level, scavenging for them so you can move on.

Furry Finale

There are hours of gameplay to be had from Fur Fighters and a large proportion of that time can be spent in hunting around for your babies, then wondering where you last saw the teleport with the appropriate character inside for the baby you accidentally discovered about half an hour ago. But that's this title's only fault, to be honest. The controls are intuitive, but the weapons are about standard and could probably have been a little more adventurous. Still, when push comes to shove, all we want from a game is a few fun hours of entertainment and that's definitely what you'll get from this offering. END



Roofus has to tease a tank into chasing him round the city streets...

fluffed it

If you fancy a welcome diversion from the main adventure, you can grab up to four friends for a Fluff Match. This is basically a Quake style mode, where you all run around manically, picking up weapons and hunting each other down to score some fluffs. There are various levels to tackle and it adds a little something extra to the game.





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128-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMING
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VERDICT

If you like the sound of killing off endangered species and rescuing babies, coupled with some fun puzzles and crazy characters then you'll have no problem getting down to business with this title. Have fun.

8

Written By Claire Webster claire.webster@quaynet.co.uk

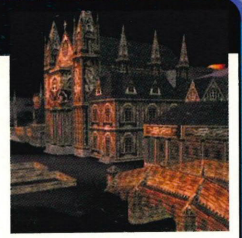
Peripherals

NO FANCY PERIPHERALS ARE REQUIRED FOR DRAGON'S BLOOD, BUT A VMU IS ESSENTIAL, HOWEVER, AS THE GAME IS WAY TOO BIG TO TACKLE IN A SINGLE SITTING. PROGRESS CAN BE RECORDED MID-LEVEL BUT NOT ON THE VMU – WHICH IS A BIT OF A PAIN DURING LENGTHY MISSIONS.

COMING SOON...

Dark Angel: Vampire Apocalypse

TAKING THE MORE FASHIONABLE "SURVIVAL HORROR" ROUTE INTO ADVENTURE-LAND, THIS STUNNING-LOOKING TITLE HAS YOU BATTLING THE UNDEAD RATHER THAN TROLLS AND KRUJEN. SWORDPLAY REMAINS THANKFULLY INTACT AND THE HEROINE, ANNA, SEEMS SIGNIFICANTLY MORE FEMININE THAN AEOWYN – JUST FOR THOSE OF YOU TO WHOM IT MATTERS.





INITIALLY... ONLY THE MOST PATIENT PUNTER WILL SIT THROUGH THE ENTIRE SCENE-SETTING INTRO – THANKFULLY THE ACTION ARRIVES AFTER A FEW JABS OF THE START BUTTON. SWORDPLAY FEELS CLUNKY AT FIRST AND DEALING WITH TWO FOES IMMEDIATELY IS PLAIN NASTY, BUT PRACTICE WILL REFINE YOUR SKILL.

THE VMU CAN BE USED TO SAVE YOUR POSITION, BUT ONLY AT THE END OF EACH LEVEL... YOU'RE FORCED TO MAKE USE OF A TEMPORARY RESTART MARKER WITHIN EACH SECTION OF THE GAME.

DRAGON'S BLOOD

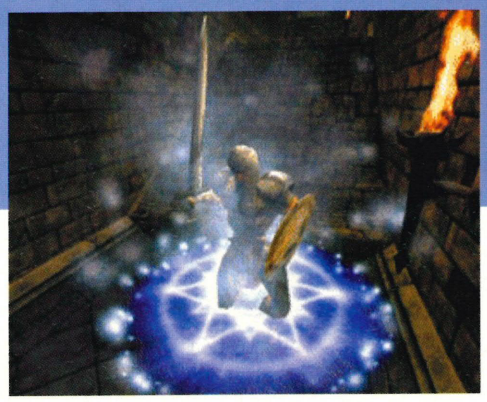
exclusive

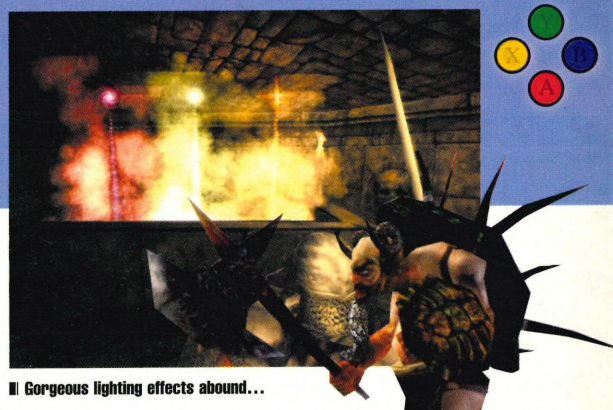
Bona fide swords 'n' sorcery has long been overdue for a return to favour. Is Dragon's Blood the chosen one or are its developers, Treyarch, false prophets?

DRAGON'S BLOOD

plot-stop

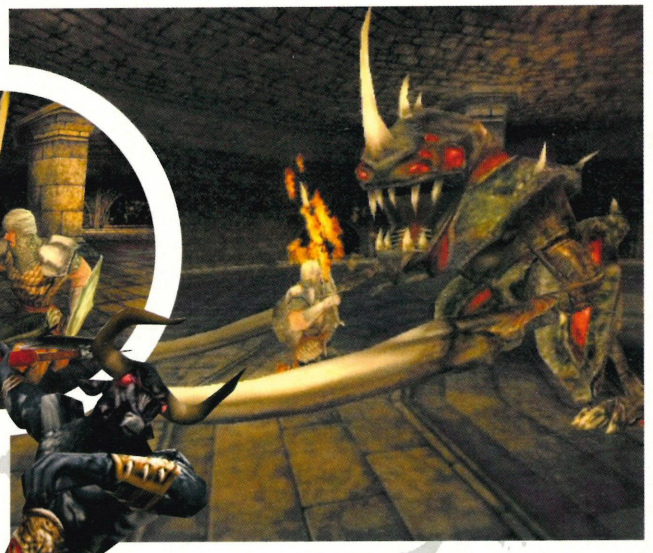
Sitting comfortably? Strapped in nice n' tight? Here we go then. You play the Dragonsbane, fifth child of a fifth child, and despite your title being honorary (there are no dragons left to banish, right?), there's still plenty to keep you busy! You must start by preventing the giant Rakka from using an elven floating castle (don't ask!) to reign terror across the land, but this is only the beginning, as you soon begin to unravel a plot involving a certain band of scaly foes...





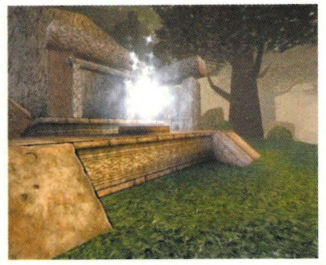
Gorgeous lighting effects abound...











THOSE WHO PERSEVERE WILL DISCOVER A TIDY, ATMOSPHERIC GAME WHICH SPORTS SOME BEAUTIFUL TOUCHES

The desire to appear increasingly sophisticated within the videogame forum has subjected certain genres to unfair treatment by the press over the years. It's become the accepted orthodoxy that scrolling beat-'em-ups are moronic, shoot-'em-ups are old hat and any game which features warriors, magik (note the "k"!) and at least one troll should be considered grossly derivative by default, and thus hardly worthy of a second glance. I mean, it's just sooo 1980s darlings!

Yet here stands Dragon's Blood, which is so entrenched in stereotypical Dungeons and Dragons lore that its American title (Draconus: Cult Of The Wyrm) even sports the obligatory RPG-colon, along with oldee wurld Englishe. Is it suicidal? Perhaps, but the fact that no contemporary adventure/RPG classic has dared utilise the seen-it-all-before-in-Dungeon-Master scenario actually works in its favour. Simply put, donning a horned helmet, picking up a broadsword and proceeding to slice 'n' dice a few goblins is something which we just don't get to do that often these days, not without a lunking great PC anyway! Hence the subject matter at hand seems remarkably fresh, whilst remaining suitably authentic – the result of absence really making the heart grow fonder, along with some sterling design work.

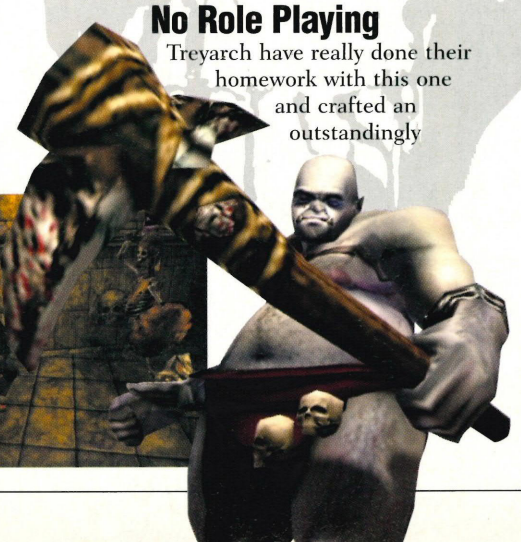
No Role Playing

Treyarch have really done their homework with this one and crafted an outstandingly cohesive set of environments to work through in order to save the day. Notice that I said "set of environments" rather than "world" though, because although the title's backdrops ape the archetypal fantasy realm to a tee, their quality only serves to highlight the limitations imposed by the game-engine itself. Despite the developer's massive tip of their pointy-hat towards TSR, Dragon's Blood isn't actually an RPG in the classic sense of the word: a single adventurer takes centre-stage rather than a party, there are almost no statistics in sight and the game-engine places its emphasis firmly upon manual dexterity as opposed to beard-stroking strategy. Indeed, even the press teasers invite you to "hack and slash" your way to victory – think along the lines of PSX Deathtrap Dungeon with some wide open spaces thrown in for good measure and you'll be on the right track.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not criticising the game for putting players into a third-person position of power and sticking a big sword in their avatar's hand, no, no – bring it on! It's simply that Dragon's Blood draws so much from classical role-playing mythology that the disparity in scope between this game and the source of all its inspiration is instantly

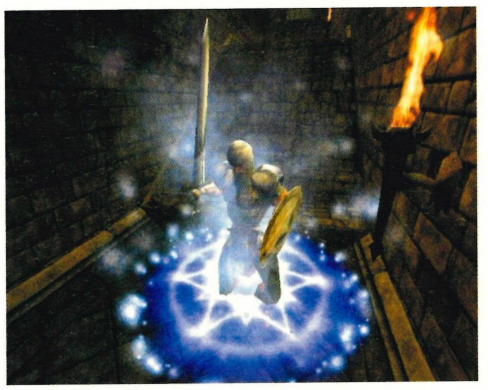










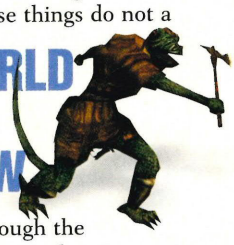


Graphically, Dragon's Blood is very impressive.





COMPARED TO THE DEPTH OF THE WORLD IN WHICH IT IS SET, THE GAMEPLAY COMES ACROSS AS A LITTLE SHALLOW



apparent. I've already mentioned that there isn't a world to work through, instead there are a bunch of sequential levels which can, sometimes, be tackled in order of preference. Treyarch have been promoting this as a "hub" system and, granted, the various territories are fairly big with buildings and underground systems included... but these things do not a hub make and progress through the game is actually far more linear than in, say, Hexen or Shadowman for example.

Such linearity can be considered an acceptable trade-off for DB's compulsive storyline, however. The way that plot devices are woven into the level design is really most impressive and goes a long way to disguising the fact that there's rarely more to do than find item x (usually a key!) and take it to point y (quite often a door!). The plot, fortunately, isn't quite murdered by voice-acting which owes more to Labyrinth than Lord Of The Rings, with undertones of the now predominant "shya, whadever!" form of American free speech breaking through. It's the aural equivalent of the Japanese naming characters "Kevin" or "Rita" in a misguided attempt to lend a title Western appeal and, needless to say, this sub-Xena delivery fails to hit the intended mark.

A shame, but we've heard worse.

DRAGON'S BLOOD

+ they've got designs on you!

Treyarch have gone to great lengths to put a new sheen upon what are, for many of us, familiar faces by redesigning the staple RPG inhabitants (y'know, elves, goblins and trolls etc...) until their faces look as fresh as newly-formed concepts. Or at least that's the idea – one mashed-up troll looks pretty much the same as another if you ask us! No, what really stands out in Dragon's Blood is the sheer magnificence of the architecture on show; wandering through buildings ranging from decrepit keeps to great hallways, you are constantly kept in awe of your surroundings. In places the design is reminiscent, strangely, of the military facilities of Quake and certain pipe-lined areas even hark back to Final Doom. The important thing is that everything gels together nicely, with none of the creatures looking out of place in this carefully crafted world – it's all very immersive!

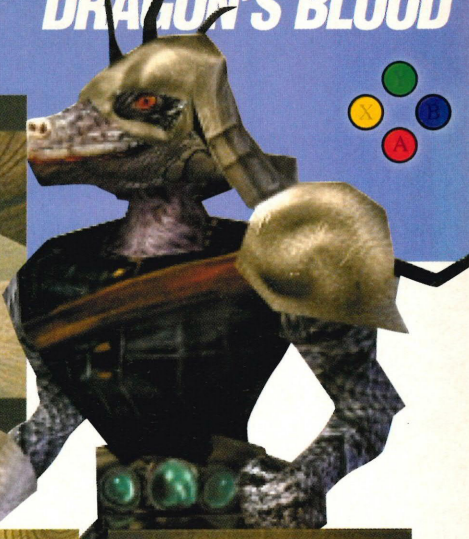






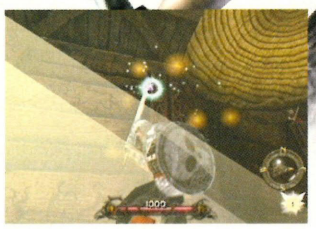


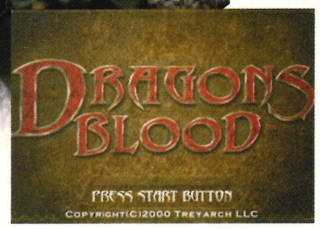




The cut scenes aren't too intrusive.







THE MIST WHICH ENSHROUDS THE COMBAT SYSTEM NEVER QUITE LIFTS

Twin Heroes

What is unforgivable, however, is that both Cynric and Aeowyn (the game's two protagonists) read from the same script and, worse still, the game plays almost identically with each hero, seriously denting its replay value. Considering that they belong to different character classes (warrior and sorceress respectively) you'd be forgiven for expecting a distinctive playing experience to be delivered by each. Dragon's Blood does not make this happen because, quite simply, it cannot – its engine is so heavily geared towards hack 'n' slash tomfoolery that Aeowyn's magic remains secondary to her swordplay throughout. The fact that spells can't even be cast in real-time (instead the action pauses FF-style whilst the magic flies) should give you some idea as to how well integrated the dark arts are with the action (i.e. not very!).

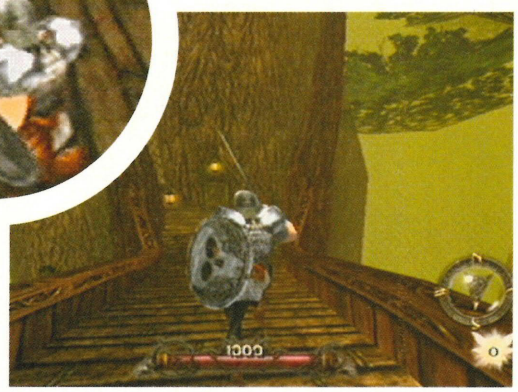
Such a focus upon swordplay would be tolerable but for the title's major fault: the update becomes so choppy at times that combat descends into a bout of random button bashing. It's possible to adopt tactics which reduce the chances of taking damage but the scope for clinically avoiding and countering every single attack just isn't there. To some extent this is sensible – you can't expect one fighter to hold off three others without taking a scratch (especially when one's a minotaur!) – but some will find the combat on offer a little too scrappy, repetitious and unrewarding.

Those who persevere will discover a tidy, atmospheric game which sports some beautiful touches, hiding behind a fairly thin veil of unfriendliness. The mist which enshrouds the combat system never quite lifts however – even when proficiency and familiarity develop – and this, coupled with play-mechanics which fall short of current benchmarks, serves to bar Dragon's Blood from the hall of true classics. However, if you've finished Shadowman recently and fancy something similar but less complex then look no further, you've found your next quest. END











dreamcast MONTHLY
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100% UNOFFICIAL 100% UNBIASED 100% DREAMCAST

VERDICT

Compared to the depth of the world in which it is set, the gameplay comes across as a little shallow. It's not quite the epic it wants to be, yet even the choppy update can't disguise the worth of what is on offer.

7

Written By... Mark Crawley mark.crawley@quaynet.co.uk

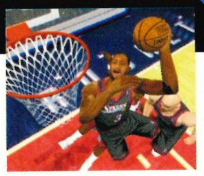
Peripherals

THE ANALOGUE CONTROL PAD IS ALL THAT'S REQUIRED TO GET GOING WITH NHL 2K, THOUGH A VMU WILL BE NEEDED IF YOU WANT TO SAVE YOUR TEAM'S EFFORTS. STEAR CLEAR OF THE ARCADE STICK HERE THOUGH, THE ANALOGUE RESPONSE HELPS WHEN MOVING DOWN COURT...





ALTERNATIVELY...



NBA 2K

POSSIBLY THE BEST AND MOST REALISTIC BASKETBALL GAME YOU CAN BUY, NBA 2K IS AVAILABLE IN THE SHOPS NOW. IT'S ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE AMERICAN SPORTS THAT DOESN'T HAVE AS MANY FOLLOWERS OVER HERE, BUT YOU CERTAINLY DON'T HAVE TO BE A DIE-HARD FAN OF THE SPORT TO GET INTO THIS ONE. TOP STUFF BY ANYONE'S STANDARDS...

INITIALLY...

AS SOON AS THE IMPRESSIVE INTRO APPEARS, FEATURING VIDEO FOOTAGE OF NHL ACTION, THIS GAME LOOKS EXCITING. YOU'RE STRAIGHT IN AND INSTANTLY PULLING OFF SOME GREAT MOVES IN SECONDS. THE GRAPHICS ARE STUNNING AND NHL2K SEEMS FAST ENOUGH TO KEEP YOUR ADRENALINE PUMPING.

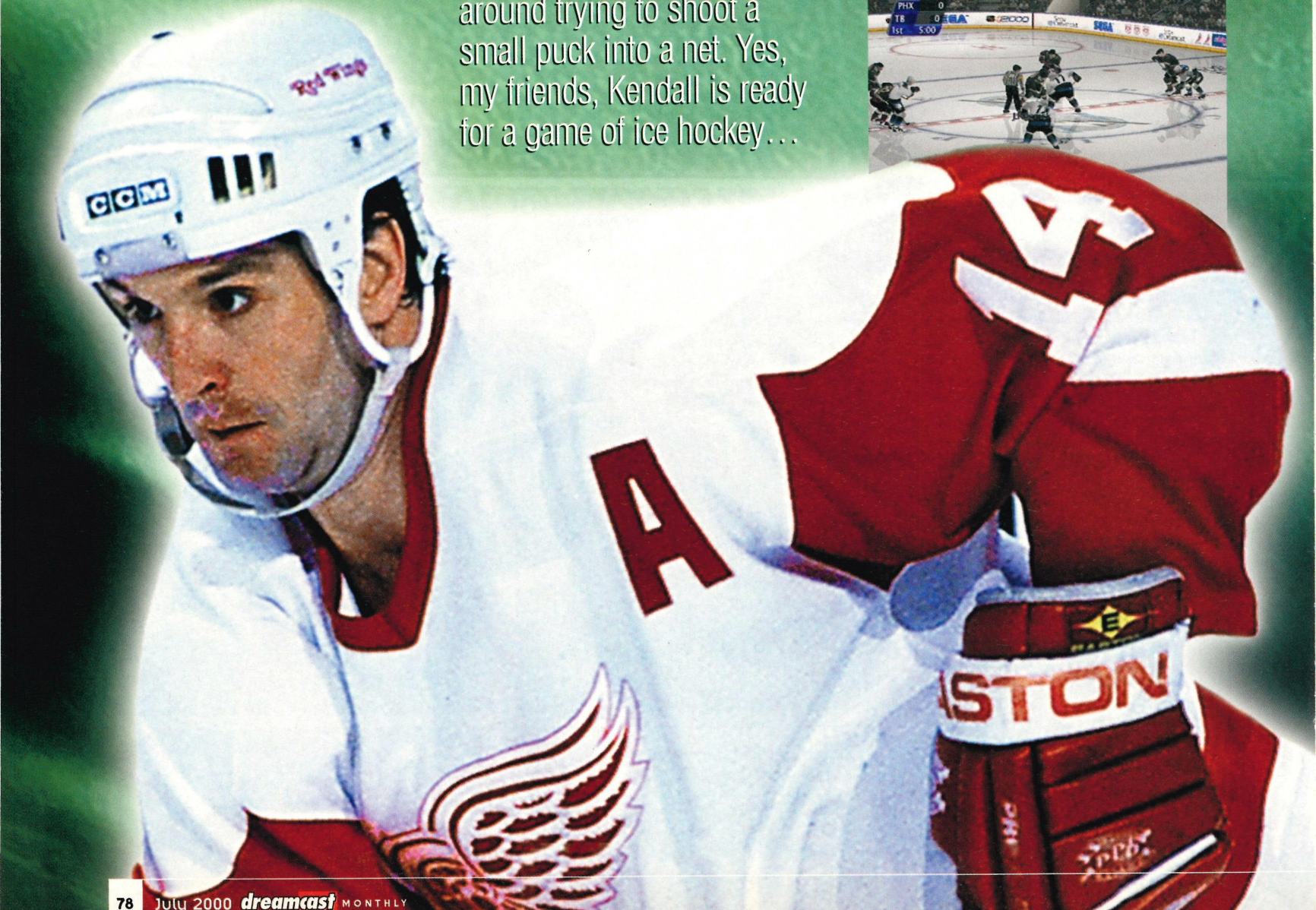
THE VMU IS UTILISED TO STORE ALL OF YOUR CUSTOMISED TEAMS AND KEEPS TRACK OF ALL YOUR STATISTICS.

NHL 2K

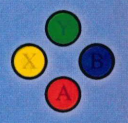




A world where men skate around trying to shoot a small puck into a net. Yes, my friends, Kendall is ready for a game of ice hockey...



NHL 2K



Publisher	Sega	Developer	Black Box	Origin	UK	Genre	Ice Hockey
Available	23rd June 2000	Players	1-2	Price	£39.99	Contact	0181 9953399

make it good

If you are not satisfied with just playing as one of the NHL star teams, then you can change every aspect of each player. You can give them a different name, change everything about their game style and even turn them into a five foot dynamo!



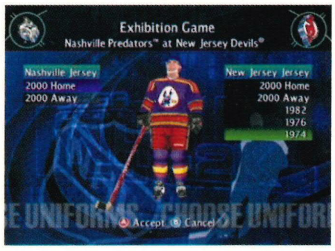




America. Land of the free and home of the brave. Think of classic icons of the country and you will instantly think of hot dogs, skyscrapers and taxis. Bringing this theory to the world of gaming, every time a console is launched you can be sure that pretty soon a virtual avalanche of sporting games will arrive, games which don't necessarily translate to other markets – meaning that whilst every bubblegum chewing American kid will be playing them long after dark, some kid of the same age in Stoke might wonder just what the appeal of this sort of title is.

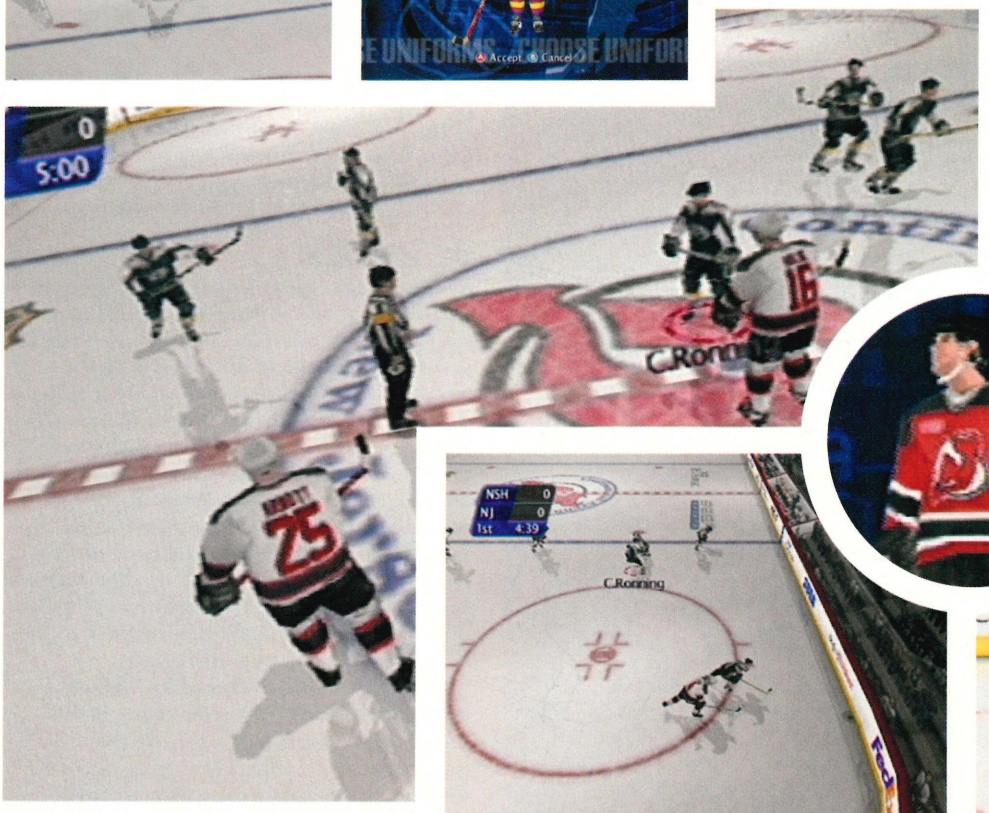
Personally, I've always been a great fan of baseball, basketball and ice hockey games and so I jumped at the chance to check out what you get when you take the glamour and glitz of the NHL and mix it with the power of the Dreamcast.

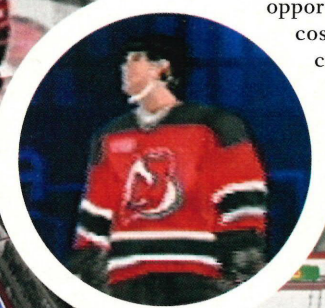




YOU WOULD BE FORGIVEN FOR THINKING THAT YOU HAVE TUNED THE TV IN TO THE SPORTS CHANNEL

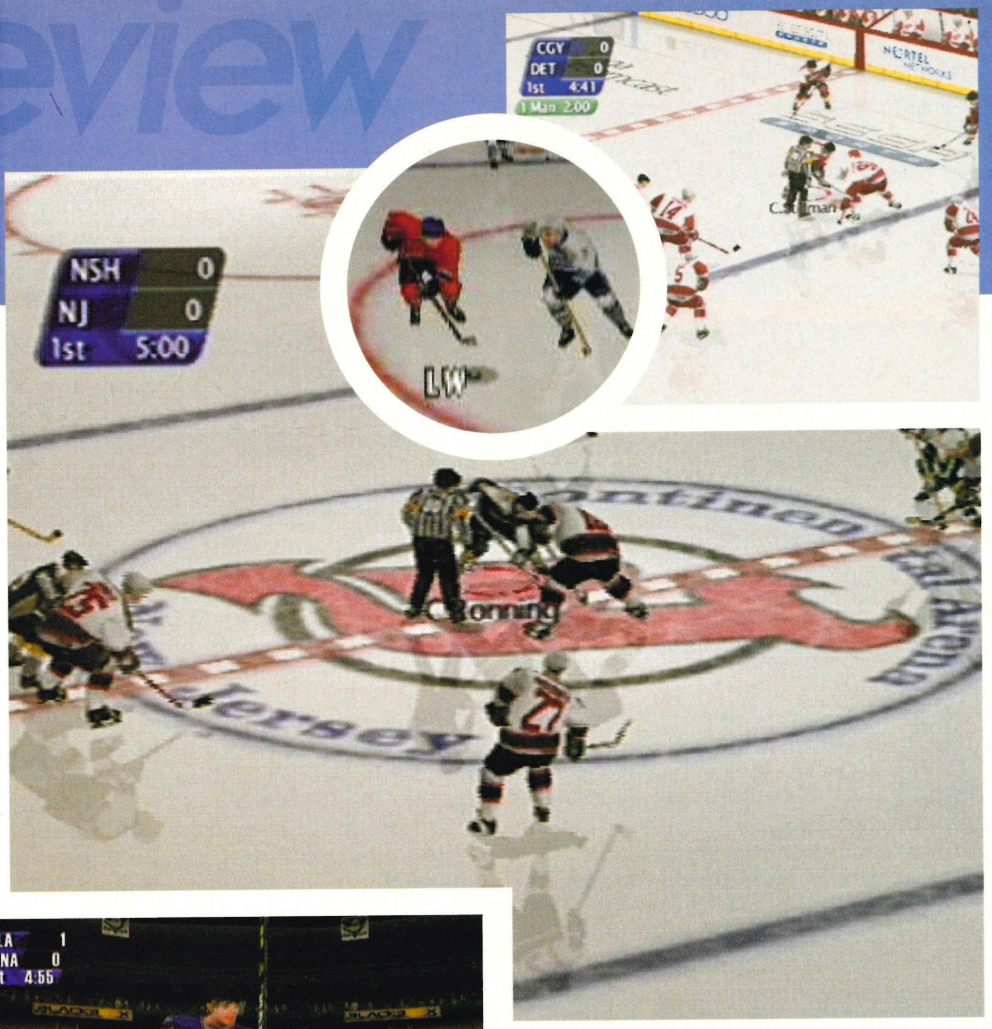
The game is brought to us by Sega Sports, who have already proved their worth with their NBA and NFL titles. The first thing that you notice about the game is how polished the presentation is that all through the game, everything looks damn impressive. All of the option screens are extremely user friendly, giving the rookie player the option to just go straight to a one off contest, whilst the more experienced player has a wealth of opportunities available, from the cosmetic, such as changing the colour of your jersey, to the managerial – changing every aspect of play, deciding what moves your players will use or





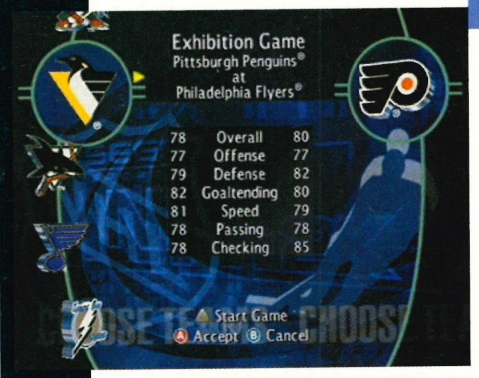


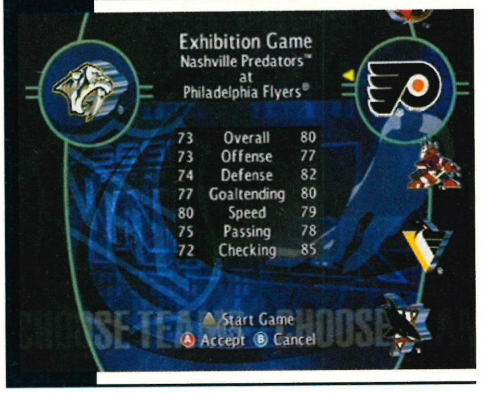
Absolutely fantastic ice effects...

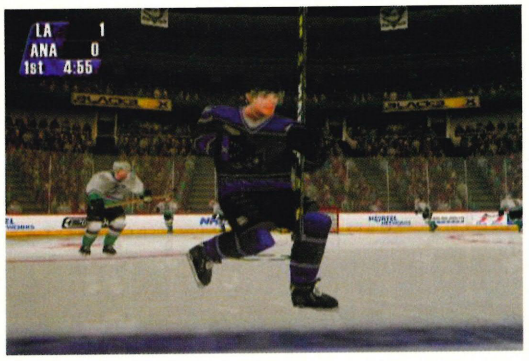


this team rules

When you are deciding which team to play as, you might decide to just look for one with a nice mascot, or you may wish to actually know everything about them. Full statistics are available, telling you just how speedy your players are and how accurate their passing skills are. Personally, I just go for the nice mascot.







Gee, he's obviously just triumphed...

NHL 2K IS AN IMPRESSIVE GAME WHICH SHOULD FIND FAVOUR WITH ENTHUSIASTS, AS WELL AS MORE ARCADE MINDED PLAYERS

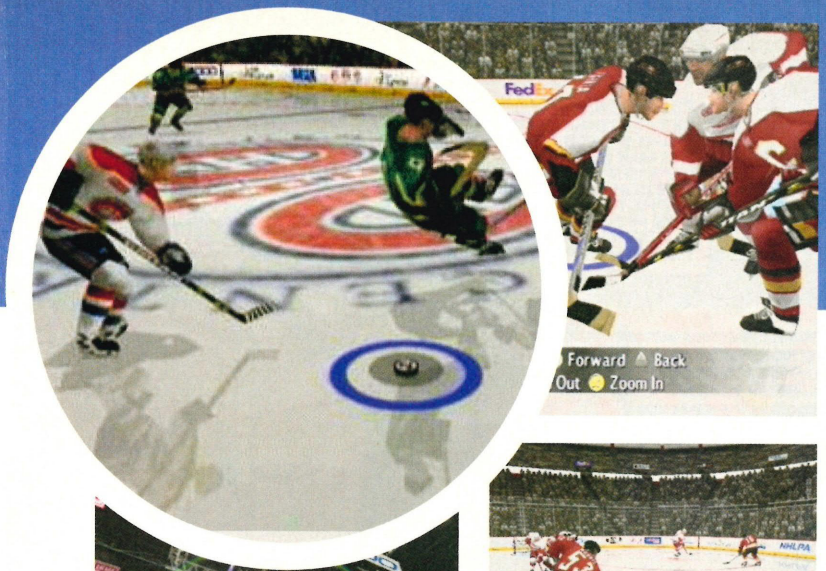


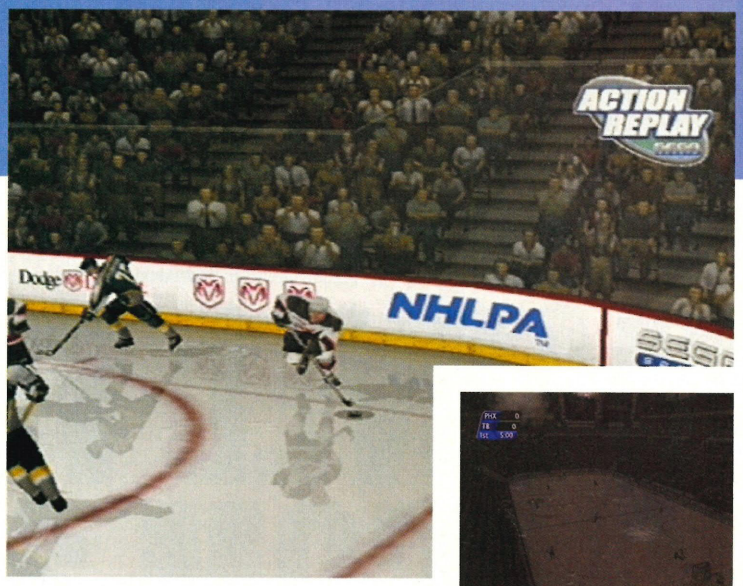
the formation of the team. Of course, if you spend an hour creating the perfect team, you know that you'll never hear the end of it when your mate chooses a squad and hits the ice, annihilating your superteam. This is another great part of American sports games.

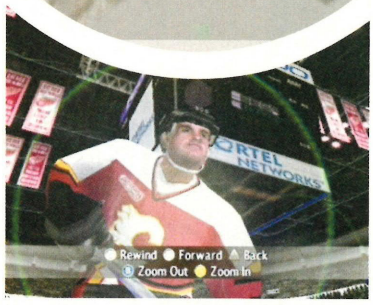
On The Box

So to the main game. You would be forgiven for thinking that you have accidently tuned the television in to the sports channel, as NHL 2K is surely the most authentic looking game of its type. Everything that you would see or hear in a televised game is here. The camera, whilst remaining unobtrusive, changes angles swiftly, providing close-ups of certain players or focusing on critical plays. When a face-off occurs, the camera will hang over the two players and then quickly switch to show the entire rink. Don't spend too long admiring the scenery though, as the action hurtles along at a fair pace and you might find yourself on the receiving end of an impressive goal.

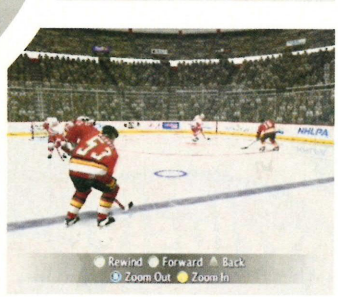
All of the official players of the NHL are featured here and unlike some games of this sort, they do all look completely different. You'll get proof of this if your player causes a penalty: the camera will go to a close-up of the offender as he enters the sin bin, as well as showing a







The replays are one of this game's best features.





Pre-show fireworks...

ALL THROUGH THE GAME EVERYTHING LOOKS DAMN IMPRESSIVE



photo and the stats of said competitor. Scenes such as this also prove amusing if you watch the audience, all of whom are nicely animated, with some waving their arms manically, whilst others hold on to their precious sodas.

Jolly Hockey Sticks

Sonically, the game features commentary throughout and this remains smooth and apt and never becomes annoying or tedious. These comments are nicely complemented by crowd effects and cheesy ice hockey music, just like the real thing.

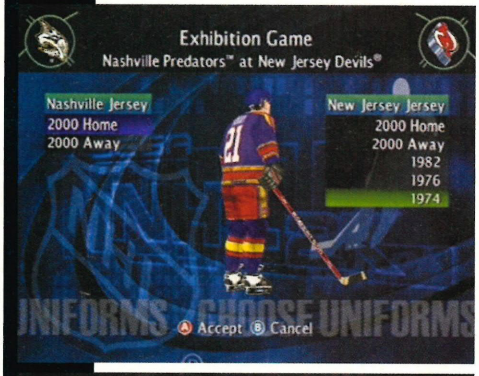
As well as the aforementioned exhibition mode, there's also a great tournament option or, if you're looking for a long-term challenge, a season mode where you will face all of the league's big guns.

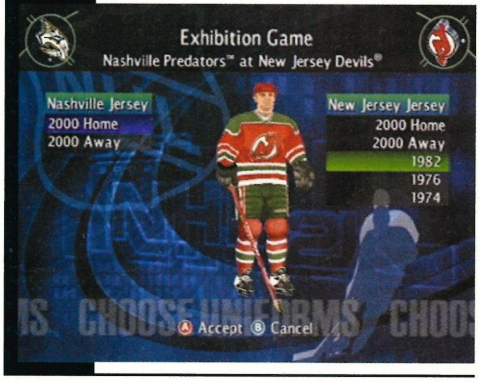
The game is quite difficult when you're on the defensive, as often the computerised opponent sails past your players and you have to hope that your goalie is up to the task. In offence, things are a lot easier; you will soon pick up some impressive skills and for quick in-game tactical changes, you can depress the left trigger button and an option menu will instantly appear. Very useful.

Overall, NHL 2K is an impressive hockey game which should find favour with enthusiasts as well as more arcade minded players. Whether you're looking for a five minute shoot-fest or are ready for a whole season of hockey fun, NHL 2K is recommended. N-ice. END

this is history

Many sports games these days give you the option to change the outfits of your players, but NHL 2K puts a more interesting slant on this, giving your team a wardrobe of original outfits from different years of their career. Dress in today's home and away outfits or timewarp back to the eighties!





dreamcast MONTHLY
128-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMING
100% UNOFFICIAL 100% UNBIASED 100% DREAMCAST

VERDICT

NHL 2K is a great looking game, which is also a lot of fun to play. It's easy to pick up but tough to master. It's good both in the single player tournament mode and also for a bout of multi-player fun! What more could you possibly want to know? If you like your ice, you'll love this!

7

Written By Kendall Lacey kendal.lacey@quaynet.co.uk

Peripherals

NOW THIS IS WHERE I EXPECTED TO LAMENT THE DREAMCAST'S RUBBISH-FOR-THIS-TYPE-OF-SHEBANG CONTROLLER AND MAKE A PLEA FOR SATURN-TO-DC PAD CONNECTORS. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS TIME, WE CAN'T BLAME SEGA FOR OUR POOR PERFORMANCE!

COMING SOON...



Power Stone 2

WITH THE ORIGINAL POWER STONE, CAPCOM REMINDED EVERYONE THAT THEY STILL KNEW WHAT THE WORD "INNOVATION" MEANT. AS A TWO-PLAYER GAME LITTLE ELSE COULD (OR STILL CAN) TOUCH IT. THE 3D ARENA-BASED BATTLER IS DUE AN IMPROVED SEQUEL, JUST CROSS YOUR FINGERS THAT, THIS TIME AROUND, THE SINGLE-PLAYER GAME DOESN'T SUCK!

PLAYING THE GAME EARNS YOU POINTS, WHICH CAN BE USED TO 'SHOP' FOR EXTRAS. WITHOUT A VMU YOU AREN'T GOING TO BE ABLE TO SAVE ANY DATA OF WHAT YOU'VE UNLOCKED.

INITIALLY... THIS GAME IS UTTERLY CONFUSING TO BEGIN WITH BUT THANKS TO THE NEW BUTTON-CONFIGURATION IT STARTS TO MAKE SENSE PRETTY QUICKLY – ESPECIALLY IF YOU'VE PLAYED PREVIOUS INSTALMENTS. THE AMAZING VISUALS WILL ENCHANT UNTIL THE GAMEPLAY BITES AND YOU'RE HOPELESSLY HOOKED.

MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2

exclusive

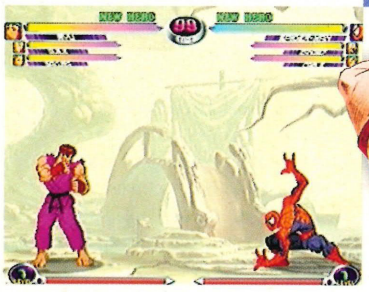
What? Another one? What are we going to do with this, the latest in a very long line of Capcom fighters? I mean, the office is crammed full of the blighters already! Oh, yes, of course. We're going to review it...

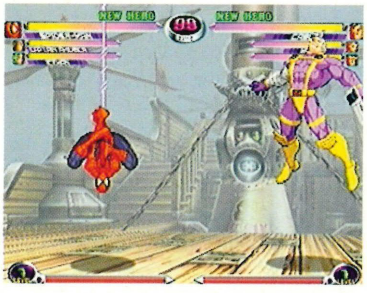
MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2

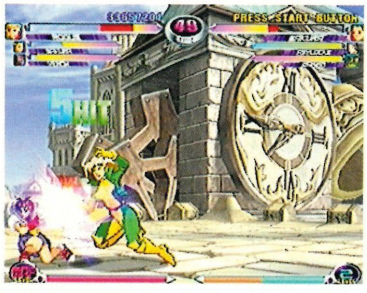
Publisher	Virgin Interactive	**Developer**	Capcom	**Origin**	UK	**Genre**	Beat-'em-up
Available	2nd July	**Players**	1-4	**Price**	£39.99	**Contact**	0171 5514222

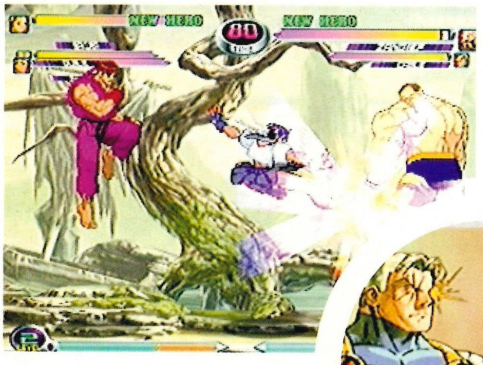
Whilst it remains firmly entrenched in 2D, the explosive fighting action takes place against some of the most gorgeous backdrops you'll ever have seen. It's really quite far in advance of anything yet boasted by PS2 and you've got to wonder if Sony's next-gen baby has the sheer memory needed to shift so many objects around. Anyone doubting the Dreamcast's potential should check this out.

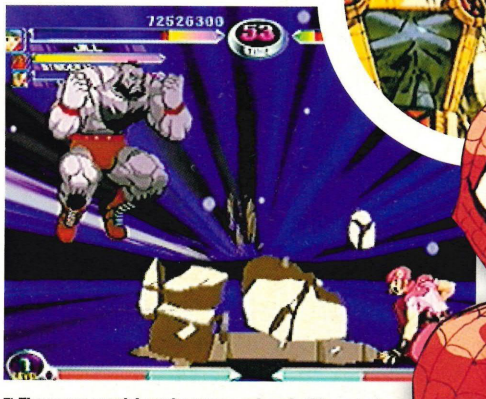
power under the hood











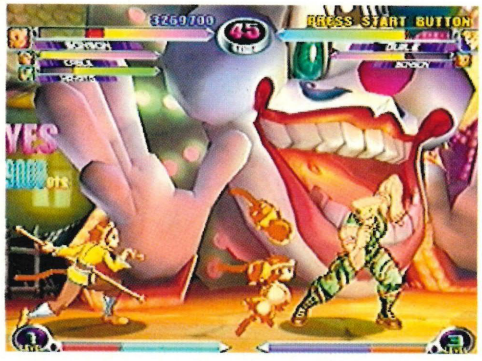
















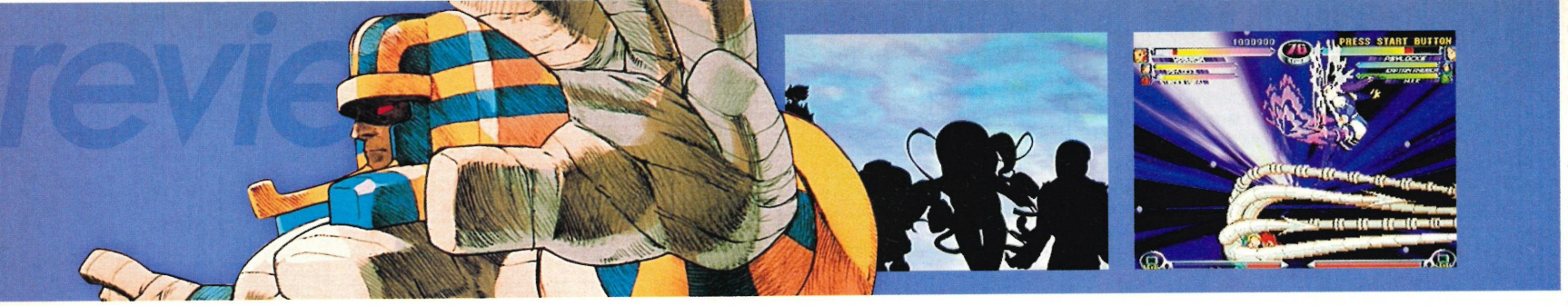
The prospect of reviewing a 2D fighting game from Capcom is enough to give any videogames journo nightmares. No, it's okay, I forgive you that cynical "oh come on, you guys have it easy!" glance, because you've most likely overlooked a few significant points...

Firstly there's the problem of keeping in tune with the hard-core fraternity (who expect an evolution of the genre) whilst recognising equally valid mainstream demands (which include instant gratification rather than hours of study before decent play can commence). Secondly comes the problem of the Dreamcast's pad, which is ill-suited to Capcom's standard control system. I mean what do we do – pretend that the non-existence of a suitable pad is irrelevant or, perhaps unfairly, award a harsher mark to reflect the restrictions upon gameplay which this situation brings? Gahhhh!

Okay (takes a deep breath), I'm calm, but by now you should've begun to appreciate the kind of dilemmas which certain Capcom titles present, and I haven't even mentioned the biggest worry of all yet – which is the Japanese giant's recent slide into apparent insanity. You see, Capcom's trend of late (which began respectfully enough with the Dark Stalkers series) has begun to include increasingly outlandish attacks in its 2D fighting engines. Marvel Super Heroes represents the point after which the company completely lost its marbles, with the "Vs" series indulging in, frankly, vulgar graphical displays at the expense of gameplay. When "light punch" comes to mean "light the screen with pyrotechnics" then you know that someone important has gone on holiday.

THE GLORY DAYS OF BALANCED 2D FIGHTERS SEEMED TO BE SLIPPING INTO THE PAST

There are special combo moves galore in this sequel...



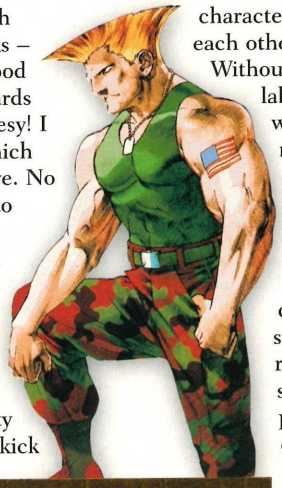


These are only three of the characters you can choose from.

It all came to a head with the excessively obtuse Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure, hence my reluctance to boot up the office review copy of MVC2 – the glory days of balanced 2D fighters seemed to be slipping into the past.

Keep The Faith

I should have had more faith though because, simply put, this game rocks – although it must be said that the good ship gameplay has been blown towards Paradise Island by the winds of heresy! I refer to the control system, with which Capcom have been remarkably brave. No longer are there six attack buttons to facilitate light, medium and fierce varieties of punch and kick; instead a Dreamcast-friendly four have been adopted, with medium-power attacks removed from the equation. Before you splutter that cup of tea all over our shiny mag in indignation, let's have a quick reality check and remember that medium-kick was only ever used to get Sakura to show her knickers! The triggers were always useless as attack buttons anyway and, trust us, they've been put to much better use in their new team-oriented roles. And with three combatants in each corner MVC2 is ALL about teamplay; swapping between characters and getting fighters to support each other are prerequisites for success. Without the old six-button system to labour under, the key-combinations which elicit such play are now more intuitive than the prequels could possibly allow.



Tag – You're It

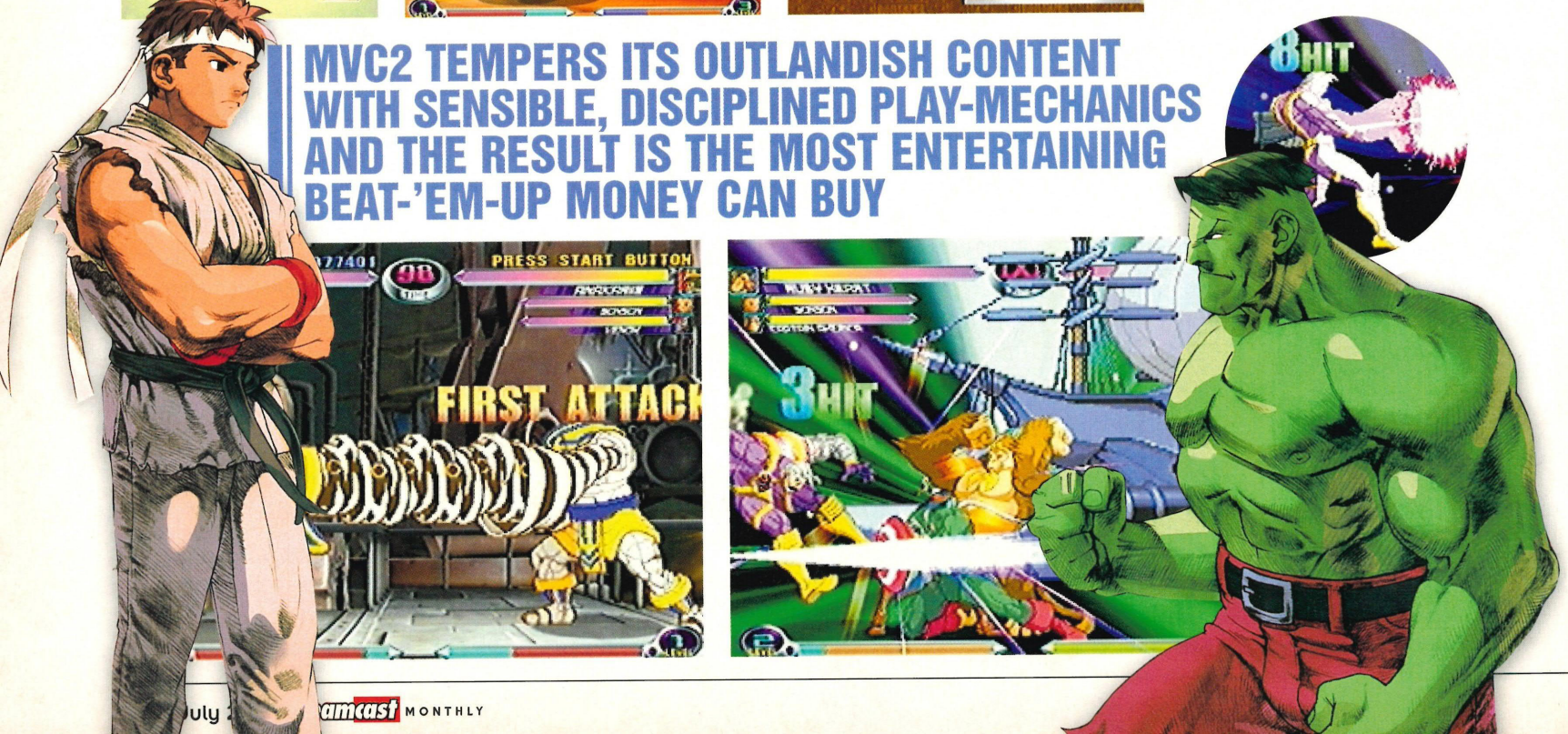
It's a further credit to Capcom's genius that, even with three characters on each team, they've still found the will and the way to refine MVC2's gameplay until it shines. For example, it was previously a perilous activity to tag-out whilst under pressure, because the move was predictable and left you unfairly open to a devastating attack. This is no longer the case as the tag has become far more aggressive, minimising the chance of getting caught mid-swap. Another smart addition is the ability to smack your current opponent so hard that they fly off the screen, forcing another member of the

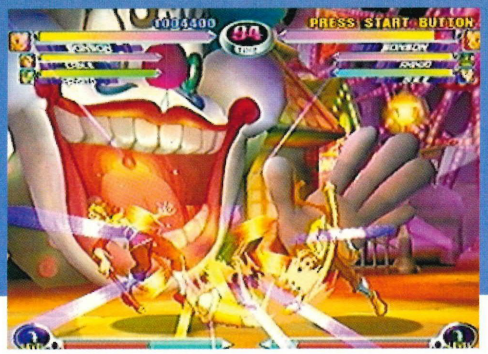


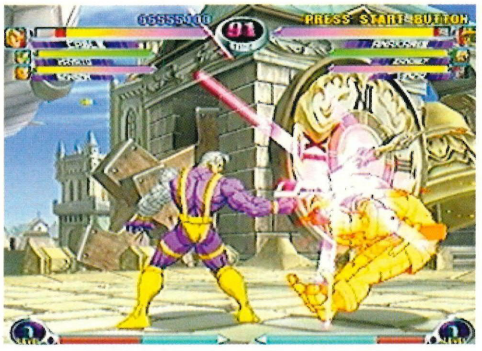




MVC2 TEMPERS ITS OUTLANDISH CONTENT WITH SENSIBLE, DISCIPLINED PLAY-MECHANICS AND THE RESULT IS THE MOST ENTERTAINING BEAT-'EM-UP MONEY CAN BUY



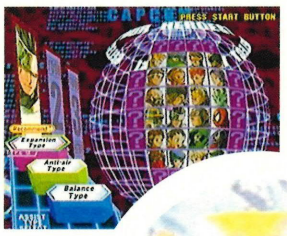




press for assistance

The original Marvel Vs Capcom offered fifteen characters (and woo, weren't we all weak at the knees at the chance to 'be' Megaman!) and twenty fairly lame 'helpers'; this sequel offers fifty fully playable characters (not even counting hidden folk) and you can call for help from either or both team members during the match by deft use of the trigger buttons...

For those of you who like a busy screen, pressing both triggers simultaneously will (hyper-bar permitting) cause every team member to launch their special attack at once – you'll awaken from your epileptic seizure with renewed awe for the Dreamcast's graphical prowess. Single trigger buttons invoke what's called a variable-assist attack from one other team member (exactly who helps you depends upon which trigger you press), so called because at the Character Select screen you have a choice between three support functions for each team member. As variable-assists perform so many functions (some being straightforward attacks, others air counters, whilst some even heal the current fighter) there's always something new to try out each time you switch on – if this game doesn't represent value for money then I'm not sure what does.











IF THIS GAME DOESN'T REPRESENT VALUE FOR MONEY THEN I'M NOT SURE WHAT DOES

opposing squad to tag-in. It's priceless if your current fighter isn't suited to a particular opponent, especially as you can decide which member of the opposing team will be drafted in – told you those triggers had been put to good use!

It's not perfect of course, the immense freedom you have in putting a team together has allowed the odd imbalance to creep in. This is understandable from the point of view of creating a decent team as working out which characters compliment each other is half the fun. It's damn annoying when the CPU hits upon an unstoppable cheese-routine though. Don't get me wrong, given the OTT nature of most attacks it's surprising how generally well the whole thing gels. It's just that the magnitude of each assault cannot help but accentuate otherwise minor niggles, causing the game to appear periodically unfair. Whilst I'm having a moan, you'd also expect the fifty-strong cast to prevent the need to have characters fighting themselves in one-player mode. Oh yeah, and it's in 2D.

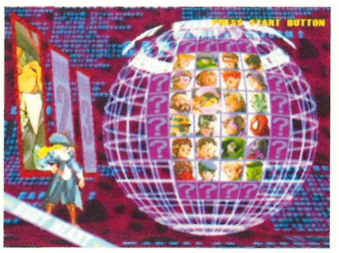
I know that many people moan about the constant stream of samey "old-school" fighters which stream from Capcom's stable, but when you witness such a finely honed example of the genre, you realise that it's all worthwhile. Unlike its predecessors, MVC2 tempers its outlandish content with sensible, disciplined play-mechanics and the result is the most entertaining beat-'em-up money can buy. END





This looks and plays like the best 2D fighter on any format...







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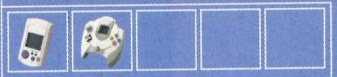
VERDICT

Overwhelming, due to the sheer amount of stuff crammed in rather than any Street Fighter style technicalities. MVC2 is (very well) organised chaos and getting into the swing of things is fun rather than a chore. Class.

8

Written By Mark Crawley mark.crawley@quaynet.co.uk

Peripherals



THE CONTROLS ARE SIMPLE, AFTER ALL IT IS A PUZZLE GAME. THERE'S NOT MUCH ELSE TO SAY, REALLY...

COMING SOON...

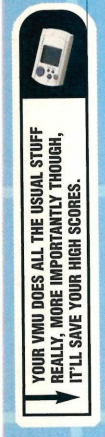
Fortris

BASED ON OR AROUND TETRIS, THIS LOOKS LIKE ANOTHER COOL PUZZLER. YOU BASICALLY HAVE TO BUILD A 'FORTRIS' OUT OF FALLING BLOCKS, USING DIFFERENT CHARACTERS WITH SPECIAL ABILITIES. IT LOOKS WACKY, BUT THEN THAT'S WHAT PUZZLE GAMES ARE ALL ABOUT, RIGHT?





INITIALLY... ALTHOUGH THE GRAPHICS LOOK FAR FROM GREAT, THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS THAT THIS GAME IS WICKEDLY ADDICTIVE FROM THE MOMENT YOU PICK UP THE PAD. SEGA HAVE PRODUCED SOMETHING THAT'S TRULY WORTHY OF THE DREAMCAST.



YOUR VMU DOES ALL THE USUAL STUFF REALLY, MORE IMPORTANTLY THOUGH, IT'LL SAVE YOUR HIGH SCORES.

CHU CHU ROCKET

Those all-powerful people at Sega's Sonic Team have finally delivered the Dreamcast's first online game. Let's just hope this is the start of something beautiful...

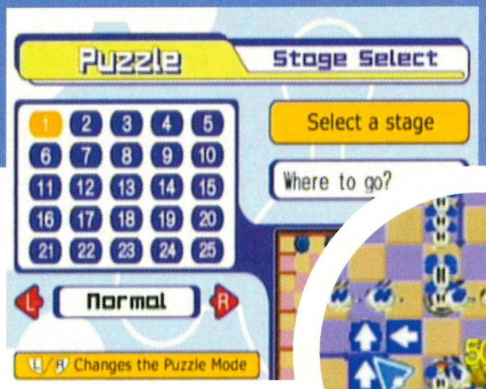






Publisher	Sega	Developer	Sega	Origin	UK	Genre	Online Puzzle
Available	Out Now	Players	1-4	Price	£29.99	Contact	0181 9953399

CHU CHU ROCKET







CHU CHU ROCKET

defend your rocket

If you start winning by a big margin, it will become more important to avoid cats than to collect mice. The best way to defend your rocket and hence your score is to place arrows on three adjacent squares to deflect cats away from your home. It means leaving one side open, so keep rotating the arrows. Attempt this during Mouse Mania though, and you'll end up losing.





This is a very Japanese game (which incidentally has one of the most obscure and, in its way, disturbing Japanese TV advertising spots ever – but don't let that put you off), put together by Yuji Naka and the rest of the team responsible for Sonic Adventure. Imagine the fun they had developing the only game that I, or anyone else, can think of that features vibrating mice. These rodents don't need batteries (or plugging into the mains, if you're that way inclined) to get them shaking. No, sir! That enjoyment is all yours. Read on.

CHU CHU ROCKET

stage challenge

This mode consists of 24 stages, plus a final 25th one that becomes accessible after you finish the first 24. One player can complete all of these stages, although it may be easier to work together with another player.



Chu Chu Rocket asks players to guide space mice (the 'Chu Chus' in the title) through a series of mazes, sending them back to their rocket in an effort to get them back to their home planet. As is the case in all games, there are a number of obstacles in the way – in this instance in the form of rather vicious cats. Going by the name of Cap Caps, these felines have razor-sharp teeth, come from the depths of space and are hungry for mice. Which is good news if you're one of those people (girls in particular) who find themselves on top of the furniture if a mouse is sighted, but bad news if you're playing this game.

Twice As Mice

The premise behind Chu Chu Rocket is to guide as many mice as possible into your

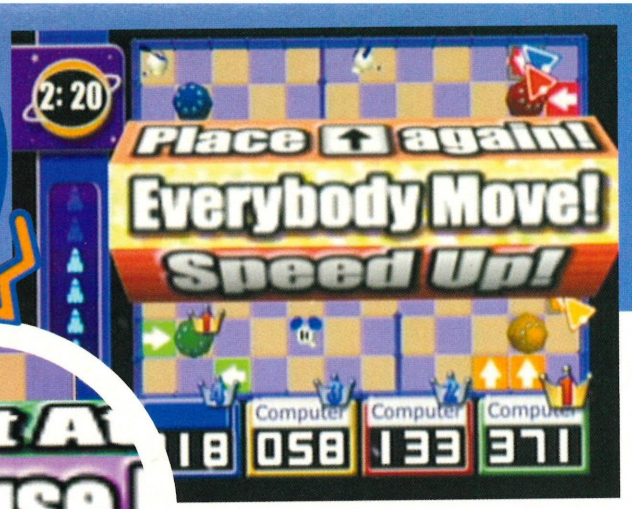
THE PLAYER WITH THE MOST MICE WINS THE ROUND AND GETS TO SEE THEIR ROCKET LIFT OFF



CHU CHU ROCKET

secrets +

Here's a list of all the different things you can unlock in the game. Remember that you can change the mice to the different characters that you have already unlocked from the 'options' menu.
Complete all normal puzzles to unlock hard puzzles.
Complete all hard puzzles to unlock special puzzles.
Complete all special puzzles to unlock mania puzzles.
Complete all mania puzzles to unlock Pian characters.
Complete stage challenge to unlock Chao characters.

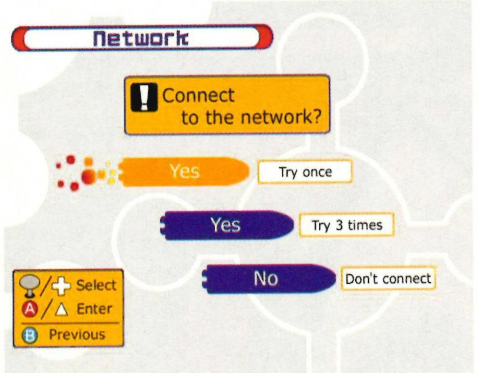


IMAGINE THE FUN THEY HAD DEVELOPING THE ONLY GAME TO FEATURE VIBRATING MICE









You don't have to be a genius to get online with Chu Chu Rocket.

rocket before the timer counts down to zero. The player with the most mice wins the round and sees their rocket lift off. The first to win two rounds is the overall winner.

The game allows one to four players to compete at one time and each person controls a floating cursor. This cursor can be used to drop directional arrows anywhere on the maze floor. Whenever a mouse or cat runs over these arrows it changes direction, hurtling off to that point of the compass and hopefully into your rocket. In Chu Chu Rocket, strategy is everything. During a round (and there can be a maximum of five per match), each player can only lay down three arrows at a time.

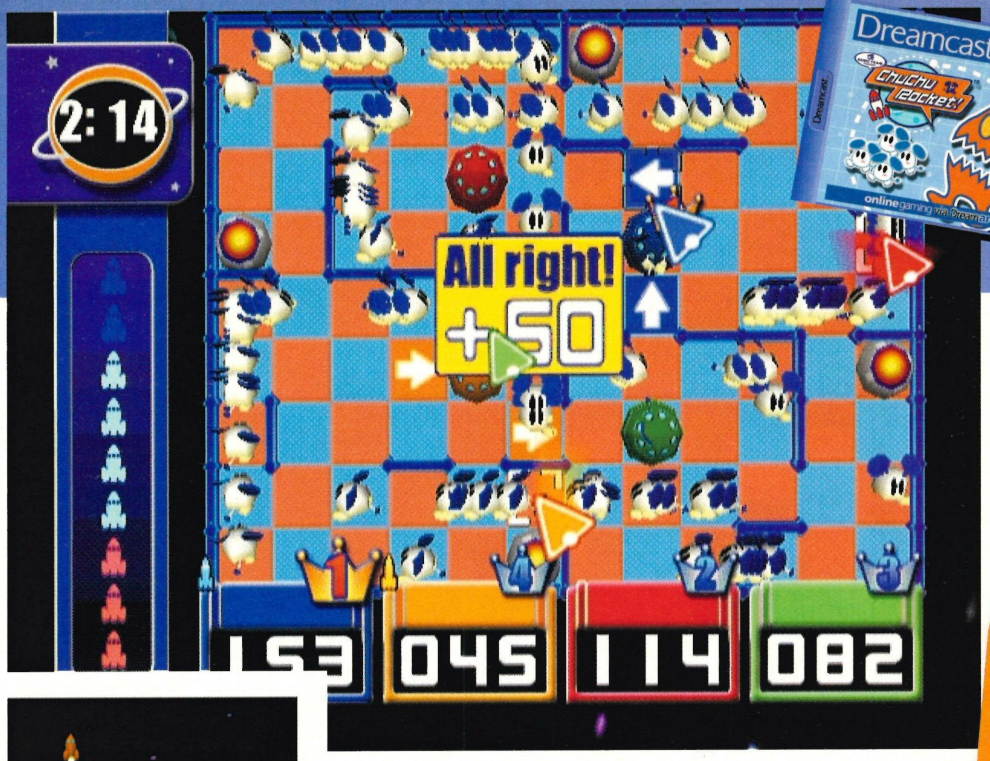
Whenever you put down a fourth, the first one disappears. On top of that, an arrow disappears after ten seconds.

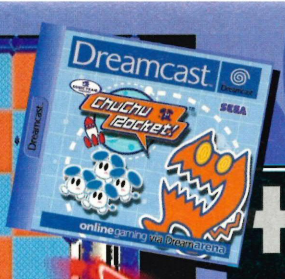
In practice, this is both much simpler than it sounds and much harder. There are 75 levels, with slightly different goals for different numbers of players. The single-player game is the easiest to grasp right away. The mice and cats begin by standing in predetermined spots on the screen, and you're given a limited number of predefined arrows to use. You lay these down where you think they'll work and start the critters moving. If you've set everything up right, the mice avoid the cats, and all of them wind up safely inside the rocket. If a cat eats a mouse or enters the rocket, you lose.



Three Blind Mice

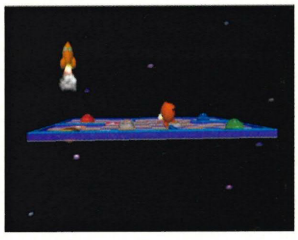
Much more interesting, however, are the multiplayer games. Get the mice into your rocket while preventing





eight sides of the dice

Speed Up turns everything super fast.
Slow Down is the obvious opposite.
Change Position swaps the places of each player.
Mouse Monopoly gives the player who collected the '?' all the mice for a short period.
Mouse Mania sends hundreds of mice onto the board, sending your score rocketing to stratospheric heights.
Clear Arrows does exactly what it says.
Cat Mania means the whole area is overrun with cats.
Cat Attack is similar, but with mice onscreen too.



CHU CHU ROCKET IS MAKING HISTORY – IT'S THE FIRST GAME TO USE THE MODEM

your opponent(s) from doing the same. This is why Chu Chu Rocket is making a bit of history. It's the first game from Sega to use the Dreamcast's modem play. Right out of the box, you can connect through your ISP to the Sega network and play a game against someone online.

All the time you're struggling to attract mice to your rocket, there are some tasty bonuses to look out for. Although each mouse is worth a single paltry point, some emerge from their futuristic mousehole with a 50+ above them. It's self-explanatory really, but for those who are unsure, it means you bag an extra 50 points if you manage to capture that one. Also running intermittently around the chessboard-style playing area are mice carrying a question mark. Nab one of these and an eight-faced spinning dice appears that is the path to either untold joy, in the form of mega points, or abject misery via losing much of what you've gained! Remember, points are gained for mice captured but the downside is that each cat unwittingly rounded up means a huge 33 per cent of your score is taken away.

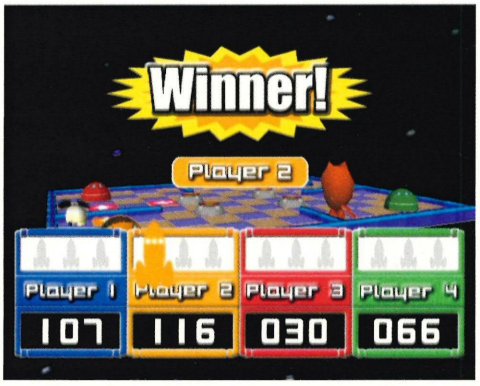
Cat And Mouse

I'm not going to dwell on the fact that Chu Chu Rocket looks awful. The levels are 2D and plain, the mice and cats lack decent animation and presentation all round is minimal. None of this matters one little bit, because the gameplay is tremendously addictive. Don't be drawn into the 'if the graphics aren't much cop then neither is the game' school of thought. The look helps but gameplay is everything, remember that. END

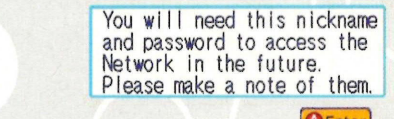








The winner's rocket takes off and the rest are doomed. Aahh...



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128-BIT TECHNOLOGY • ONLINE GAMING
100% UNOFFICIAL 100% UNBIASED 100% DREAMCAST

VERDICT

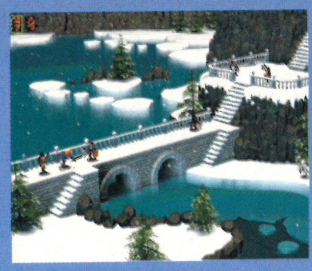
The server times the game to the player with the slowest connection (which is only fair) so the network can lag. Still, it's the first of its kind, so let's be prepared to give it a go. Approach Chu Chu Rocket as you would a girlfriend: not much to look at but great fun underneath.

8

Written By Derek Dela Fuente derek.delafuente@quaynet.co.uk

Peripherals

IT'S JUST AS YOU WOULD EXPECT, THE ANALOGUE PAD DOES A FINE JOB OF STEERING YOUR STURDY WARRIOR AROUND THE MYSTICAL LANDS. AND THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO SAY, REALLY.





COMING SOON...

Dragon's Blood

IT DOESN'T EXACTLY SCREAM OUT RPG TO YOU, BUT IT'S A MEDIEVAL SLASH-FEST THAT'LL LEAVE YOU HANKERING FOR MORE. FOR MORE INFO TURN TO PAGE 66.



INITIALLY...

YOU KNOW WHERE THE INFLUENCES FOR THIS ONE COME FROM – THE SPECTRAL VOICE-OVER FOR THE INTRO JUST SCREAMS BLOOD OMEN: LEGACY OF KAIN. THE IN-GAME GRAPHICS BOAST A LEVEL OF DETAIL AND ANIMATION THAT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE ON LESSER MACHINES. SO FAR, SO GOOD.

THE VMU STORES YOUR SAVE GAMES. TO SAVE A GAME, FIND A CHARACTER CALLED THE CHRONICLER AND TALK TO HIM AND HE GIVES YOU THE OPPORTUNITY.

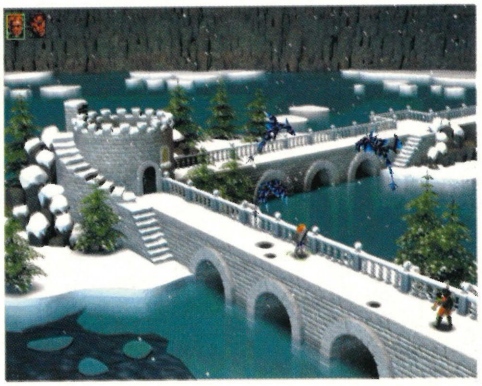
SILVER

An evil sorcerer, a damsel in distress, a brave young knight – perfect fodder for an action adventure? Time to sharpen that sword and find if all that glistens is indeed silver...

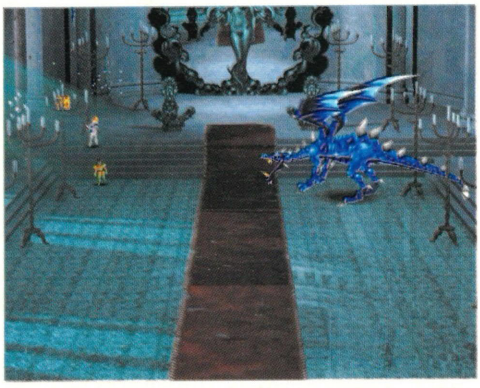
SILVER



Publisher	I-Motion	**Developer**	Infogrames
Available	June 2000	**Players**	1
Origin	UK	**Genre**	Action RPG
Price	£39.99	**Contact**	0161 827 8162





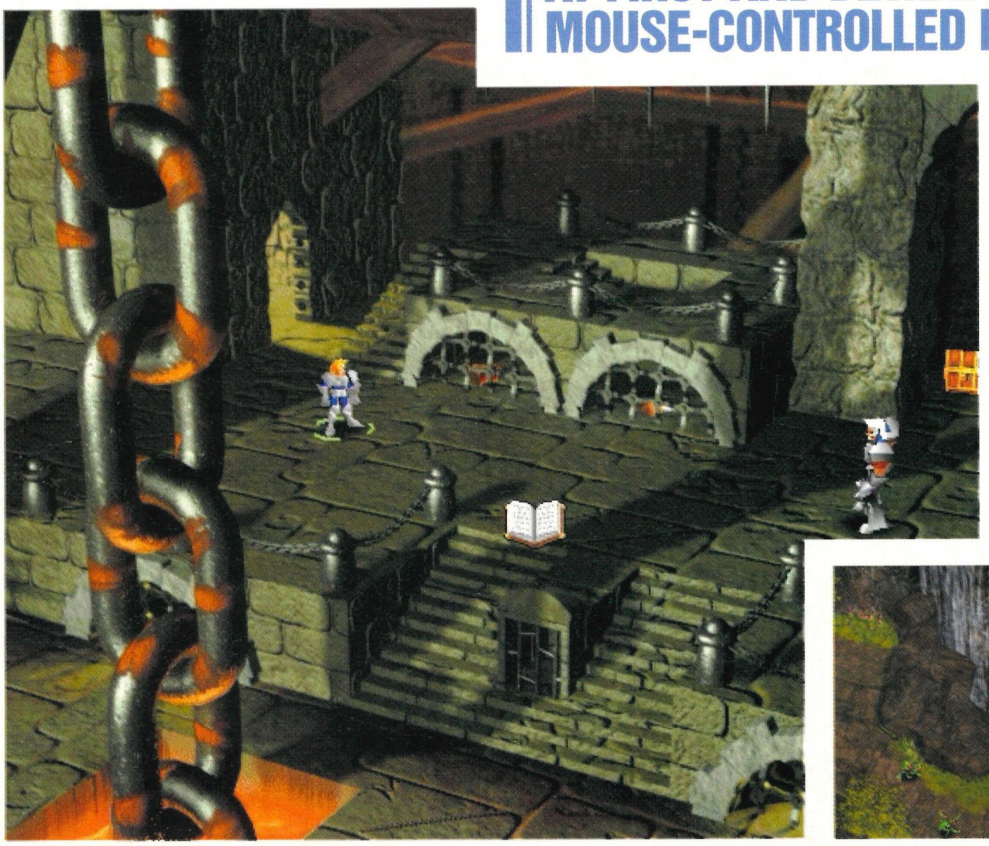


That blue dragon's a first for a videogame, you know...

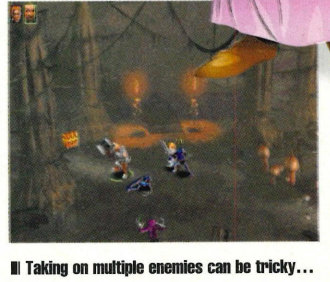
As action RPGs go, this one wins no prizes for plot originality. An evil sorcerer (the eponymous Silver) looking for a wife sends out his Baldrick to gather every woman of child-bearing age. A young knight's beloved is taken and...you know the score. With your grandfather in tow (well, at least that bit's original), you pursue her kidnappers to the docks, only to see her ship sailing into the distance. It'd be a short game if it hadn't. You soon join a liberation movement made up of similarly-cuckolded hubbies, and find Silver's real intention is to get his hands on eight magical orbs. If he succeeds; oh hang it, you know what to do.

THE PIE MENU IS NOT INSTINCTIVE AT FIRST AND BETRAYS THE GAME'S MOUSE-CONTROLLED ROOTS

For all its lack of originality, the plot is pretty gripping. It's presented through a series of exciting cameos and cut-scenes, all with chilling voice-overs instead of the usual subtitle box. In-game characters really speak too, giving the game that professional, polished sheen. Who cares if the storyline's been done before when it's presented this well?



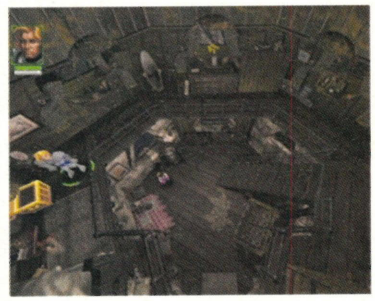




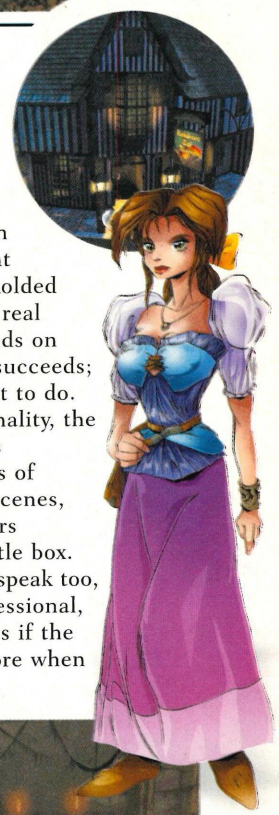
Taking on multiple enemies can be tricky...

going equipped

Before you start you have to go through training with your old grandpa. Before you do, though, you need your weapons. Go into this building and find the treasure chest on the balcony. There's a short sword and a wooden shield inside. Equip the sword with the pie menu. When it's equipped, your grandpa shows you how to use the game's combat moves.







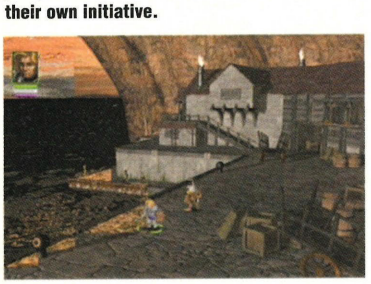


Who knows what lies ahead? Yet more baddies to take on, no doubt...

SILVER

following the leader

You only control your main character, the guy with the green circle around him. Other party member follow, attacking baddies on their own initiative.



Forces In Combat

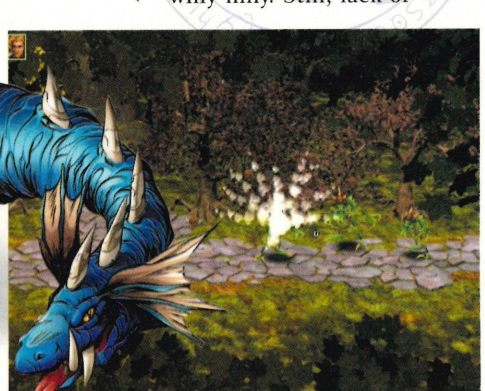
As you battle your way through the lands of Jarrah, your party grows. Up to three people can accompany you on your quests, with the rest remaining at the rebel camp until called upon. However, in a break with tradition, you don't have direct control over every party member during combat. Instead of the usual turn-based pick-an-option-then-press-'go' affairs, the skirmishes here are in real time. You control only your main character, fighting it out with the bad guys in an arcade beat-'em-up style. Holding the right trigger button switches from walking to combat mode, and with the trigger held, pressing 'A' along with a joystick move offers various sword swipes. Using the trigger and 'B' gives defensive moves. It's not immediately instinctive, but you soon get used to it. Unfortunately, it's not as deep as it pretends to be, especially when the battle takes place a long way into the isometric screen, making your (scaling) characters very tiny. You often end up rolling the joystick and slapping the combat button, willy-nilly. Still, lack of direct control over your enemies adds a tactical element, forcing you to keep your eye on them and make sure they don't get into too much trouble.

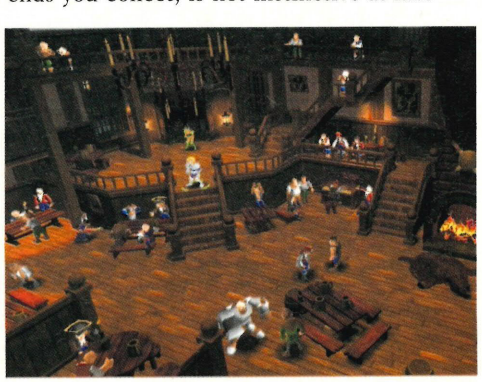


THIS ONE WINS NO PRIZES FOR PLOT ORIGINALITY

Needless to say, as you progress through the game, the available range of magic, weapons and equipment increases, as does your potential roster of allies, each of which has his or her own unique set of abilities – make notes, and utilise them well. The pie menu, used to access the various odds and ends you collect, is not instinctive at first

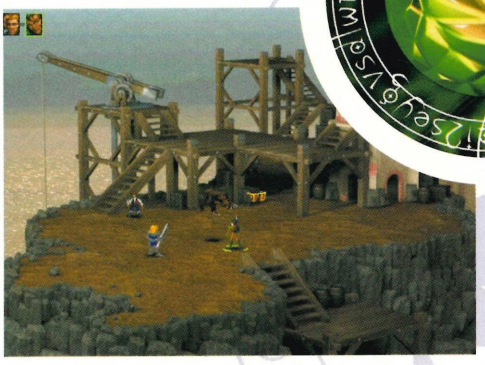






Time for a quick pint to recharge the batteries...







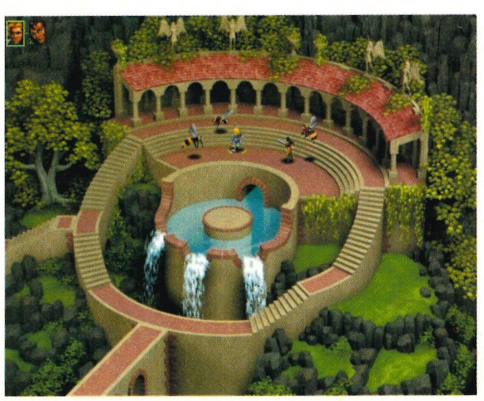
and betrays the game's mouse-controlled roots (it's a PC conversion). Again, though, you do get used to it.

Traveller's Tales

In common with many RPGs, your expanding equipment bag also includes a map. When found, this lets you zip to previously visited areas without walking through every screen between here and there. It's a real boon which cuts down on needless traipsing around and speeds up the game no end. You also come across a mysterious scribe called The Chronicler, who records your game position to the VMU. You can't save just anywhere, so keep your eyes peeled for him.

Silver is a good game, but by no means a blockbuster. All the ingredients are there, but the resulting meal is more Corner Cafe than The Ritz. The characters just aren't involving enough to make you care about them. The controls can be frustrating at times, especially when fighting multiple enemies (which is usually), a fault made worse by the weak AI of your fellow party members. They often get themselves into trouble for no good reason, and hold back far too much, even when attacked. Still, on the bright side, the overall game construction is good, the scenery beautifully rendered and the voice-overs brilliantly acted. As with last issue's Sword of the Berserk, a sequel to Silver should be a real smash. Unlike Berserk, it's the engine and concepts that need tweaking, not the game's content. END

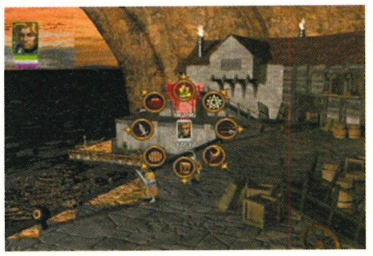
THERE'S A HUGE POTENTIAL FOR SILVER II



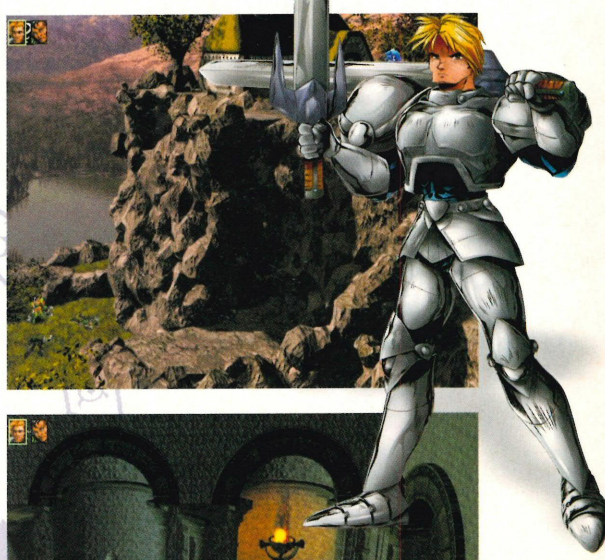
SILVER

+ who ate all the pies?

The equipment menus are fiddly at first, betraying their PC roots. Press 'B' to get the main menu, and hold the joystick in one of eight directions to highlight a sub-menu with a red conical thingy. Press 'A' while still holding the joystick to get the sub-menu in question, then select the required item with the joystick and 'A'. Clear as mud? It will be, but you do get used to it. Should've been redesigned for the Dreamcast version, though.









Sometimes the action takes place from on-high, which is dodgy...

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VERDICT

Silver is a competent game, but not a masterpiece. It's great to see developers using the Dreamcast's unique power to offer gamers something other than a tweaked PlayStation offering, but fiddly flaws and an overall lack of outstanding characterisation mean it falls short of greatness. There's a huge potential for Silver II, though.

7

Written By Ian Osborne ian.osborne@quaynet.co.uk

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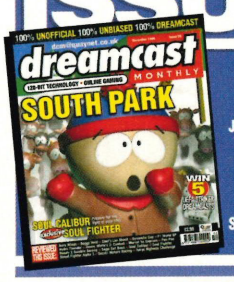
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ISSUE 2



Showcase: UEFA Striker
Reviewed: Blue Stinger, Cool Boarders Burrrn, Monaco GP, Speed Devils, Super Speed Racing, Toy Commander, Trick Style

ISSUE 3



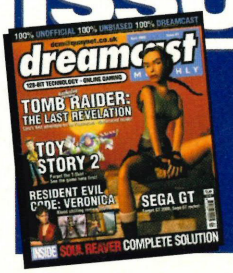
Showcase: South Park
Reviewed: F1 World GP, Hydro Thunder, Jimmy White's 2: Cueball, Marvel Vs Capcom, Pen Pen, Ready 2 Rumble, Street Fighter Alpha 3, Soul Calibur, Soul Fighter,

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Showcase: Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver
Includes: Crazy Taxi, Resident Evil 2, Hidden and Dangerous, Giant Killers, Ecco the Dolphin, Wild Metal

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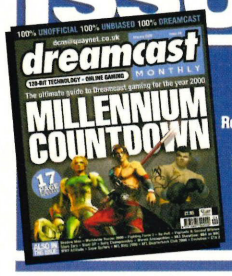


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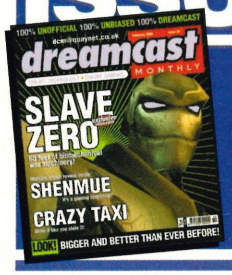
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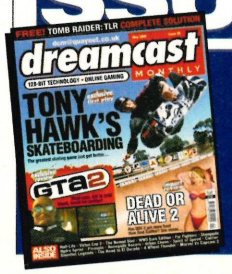
Showcase: Sega Worldwide Soccer 2000
Reviewed: Fighting Force 2, NBA Showtime, NFL Blitz 2000, Re-Volt, Shadow Man, Worms Armageddon, WWF Attitude

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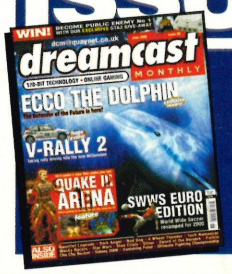
Showcase: Slave Zero
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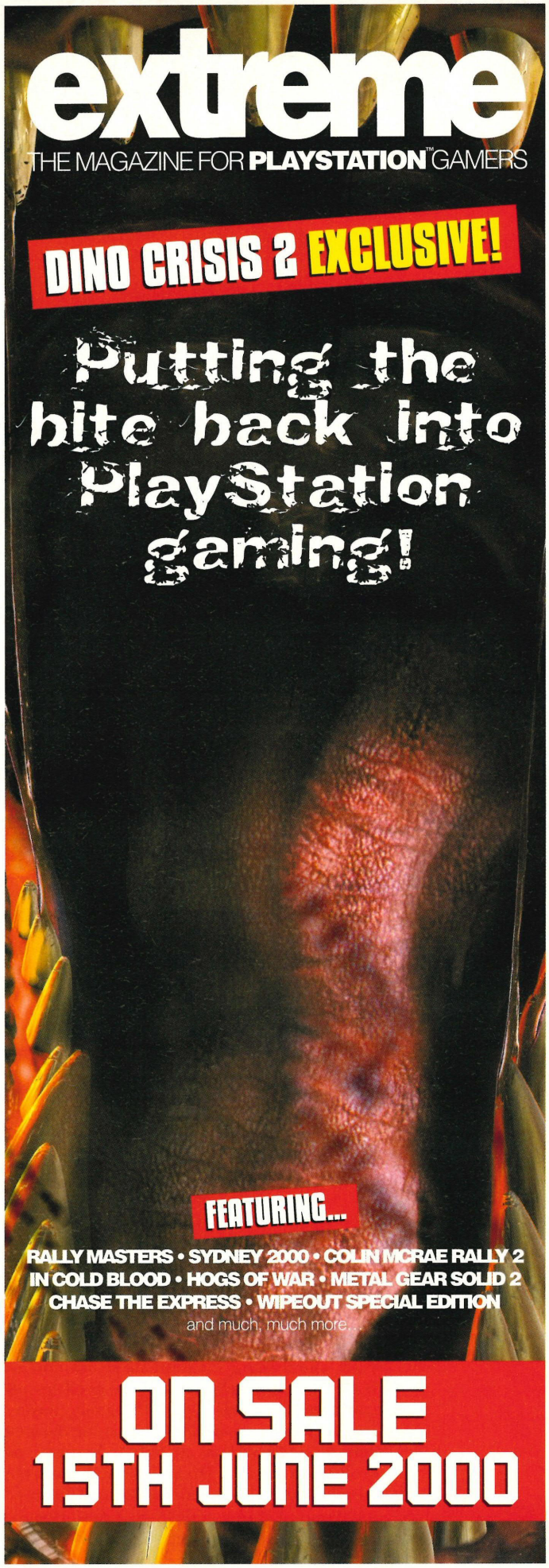


Showcase: GTA 2
Reviewed: Tony Hawk's Skateboarding, Dead or Alive 2, The Nomad Soul, Urban Chaos, Stampede, Sega Worldwide Soccer Euro 2000

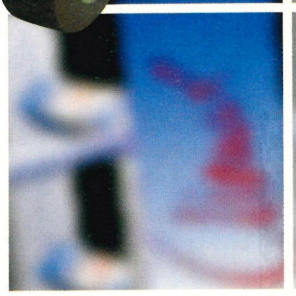
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Showcase: Ecco The Dolphin
Reviewed: 4 Wheel Thunder, Red Dog, Sword of the Berserk: Gut's Rage, Tech Romancer, V-Rally 2 Expert Edition, Sega Worldwide Soccer Euro Edition

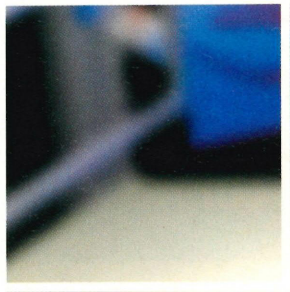






[on the brink]

Continuing our tradition of focusing on up-and-coming games from specific developers, we sent Derek dela Fuente to see what Climax has got in store for the Dreamcast...



[C]limax may not be a name that many readers will know but take a look at a few games in your collection, some of the bigger titles, and chances are they have the Climax name on them. Although best known for creating high-quality versions of games across a variety of platforms, in some cases adding to the original game, times are changing at the largest independent developer in Europe. With a host of original titles in creation (on all leading formats), all of which add some ground-breaking elements to the genre in question, the name Climax is set to cause more than a rumble over the coming year. The leading US publishers are now chasing their games, which can only be good for all concerned, including you, the game player.

As Climax put equal focus on all the next generation machines, as well as breaking new ground on the PC, Dreamcast and Gameboy, this massive developer's low profile is definitely about to change. I spoke with Chris Eden, Business Development Manager at Climax, about three of their next titles.

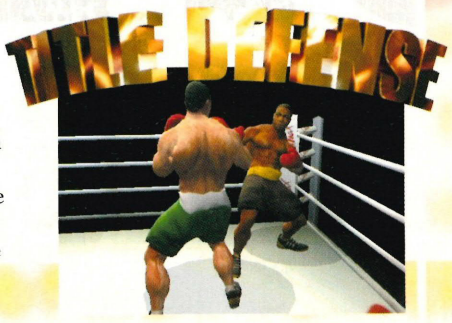
[Title Defense — Released 4th Quarter]

If you're a boxing fan who's still waiting for a game to mirror the true sport, it appears that the wait will soon be over.

Boxing games have had many flaws, the worst one probably being boxers that just don't look right or produce the moves one would expect. So far it's been extremely difficult to replicate real skin tones, bruising or facial expressions. Now the advent of more advanced technology gives developers the tools to produce a boxing game that's a true simulation of the sport. From the initial shots of Title Defense you can see that Climax could be the first to come out with a boxing game that sets a new standard.

Boxing Clever

Chris commented: "We've wanted to write a boxing game for a while and through our research work on defaultable meshes and soft body technology, we were able to produce all the right components to present a boxing game that's been so sadly lacking. Our decision to do a boxing title was mainly borne out of frustration with the other games on



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the market. The lack of a realistic, gritty boxing game that captured the true feel of the sport was the motivating factor in our decision."

Technology has helped Climax create a realistic boxing game. Many titles have failed to capture the ambience and atmosphere needed to create a realistic feel, and this is an area they're working on.

The game is fully hand-animated at the moment, although Climax did toy with the idea of using motion capture, but the benefits of animation outweighed those of videoing real people.

The first thing you notice is the great look of the game; the boxers look like boxers and they bruise like a boxer would. They're not wooden, and you keep looking at the fabulous detail on the faces, which grimace in pain as they are hit.

Chris expanded on a crucial area: "The movement system allows you to move the boxer's feet and body independently and as a punch comes in you'll reel, but you can actually move fast and get your body out of the way. Previously, boxers have been represented as a solid object and that's not true to life. The lower body, head and limbs all work independently and we've implemented this."

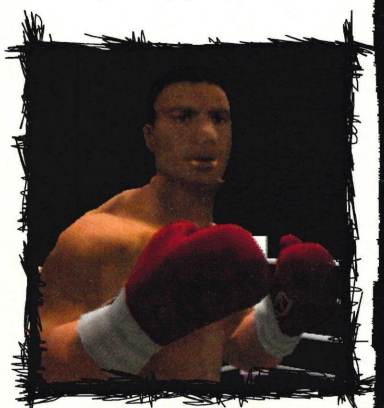
[Climax could be the first to come out with a boxing game that sets a new standard]

True Power

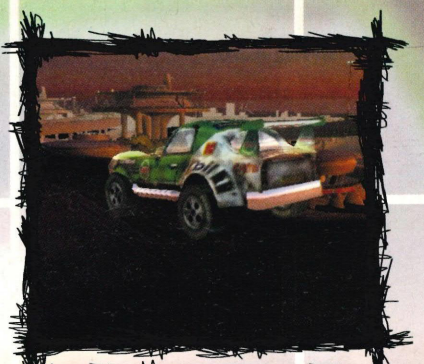
Thankfully, this is a simulation representing boxing as it should be: there are no silly special moves or power ups and boxers can only get better by training and picking the right fights to gain experience and improve. "This is the first true boxing sim and no one has dared venture this route", explained Chris. "Here's a game that really looks toward technology to give the game the right physics and AI. As technology has moved on, you can now produce a boxing game that looks and feels right. The CPU can calculate the power of a punch, how the muscles will move, the force the opponent will take and their positioning after the punch. Boxers get hurt realistically with black eyes, bruising, etc."

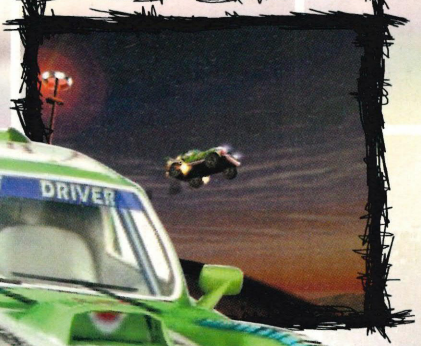
The objective of the game is simply to become the best but, as with the real world of numerous boxing federations, moving up the ladder to fight for a title is not easy. There's more to it than the physical training that must be undertaken, as management decisions will also decide if you can reach the top. What Climax has done is to create all the many facets of the boxing world and place them in a game. The player doesn't see some of the serious issues or politics, but if you're not up to fighting for a championship then you won't get to the highest rung. Also, the game will not include on screen damage meters and silly icons that detract from this serious sport.

The game is all about skill, strength, strategy and of course (some would say), luck. Starting off as a nobody, trying to unify titles is the prime goal. The road is long but Title Defense offers more than any boxing game to date.



[Stunt Driver — Released 4th Quarter]





Climax did what Victor Kiam did: they liked what they saw, so they bought the company with the game.

Stunt Driver is the brainchild of two guys who used to work for Probe. Having set themselves up in Brighton, they were approached by Climax who decided, having seen the game, that it was a potential winner and promptly invested in that potential by buying the game, the team and everything that went with it.

When you hear the name Stunt Driver, those of us who can remember it think of Stunt Car Racer, the superb game from Geoff Crammond. Chris expressed his thoughts: "Yes, Stunt Car Racer was of course an influence. For as long as I can remember, people have spoken about writing a game on similar lines. We're not trying to recreate that game, for we saw more in the original concept."



Keeping Track

With a traditional original racing game the tracks are built on a Silicon Graphics machine or with some fancy program, and are made up of polygons. Stunt Driver holds the tracks differently and you have the ability to change the tracks to make up any weird and wonderful design you wish, something that can be done whilst you're playing the game. You can stop, change the track design by pulling it in any direction (it's 3D) and continue racing where you left off – this is not your usual game editor.

As you would expect, the tracks are challenging and full of obstacles and hazards. Twists, banks, humps, ramps, jumps, corkscrews, loop-the-loops, mechanical hazards and oil slicks from previous crashes all heighten the adrenaline factor. These tracks are set in a number of diverse locations, some of which will be based on real courses, but with a futuristic look added to them.

[Climax has accentuated facets within the game to ensure that gameplay is paramount]



Cars

If the tracks don't amaze you then the cars will, based as they are on real cars, using real physics and reacting like real cars – but only to a certain point. Climax has accentuated facets within the game to ensure that gameplay is paramount. As it is set slightly in the future, this has given the team more scope to work on ideas. The game can be played in either racing or stunt mode, with real car mechanics set in place to give that 'believability' aspect. There are no guns, no special picks up; it's just racing as it should be. Having cars based on real models does have its drawbacks, not least the one all racing games suffer: that of getting manufacturers to agree to their cars getting damaged. The massive polygon count for each car means they're fully destructible, meaning anything can drop off – something that Climax and the manufacturers are discussing.

This game has many things going for it, and one Chris kept referring to was the ability to change the track, an ability that no other game has had. He believes the fact that people can create and swap tracks is a great selling point for the game, as well as the fact that the actual racing experience is better than any game to date.

on the brink



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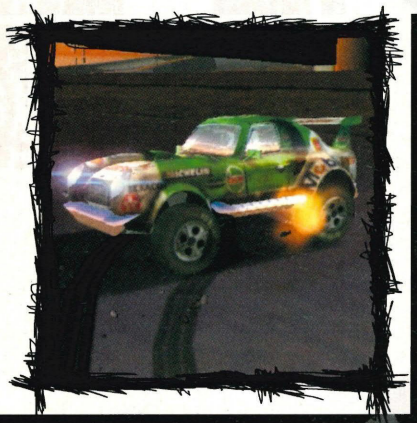
The Final Say

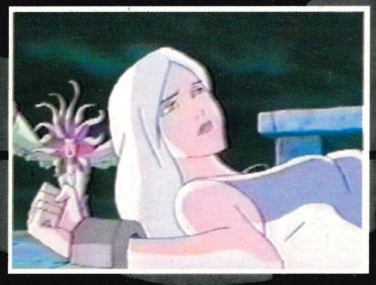
"Essentially the game is to be the best and fastest racer on the DC. Get the most points, do as many stunts as possible – each facet can be played as a game in its own right. It's neither a sim nor an arcade game, but a believable stunt racing game that has many variants that no other game can offer. It's about freeing the player to have an experience, not constraining them. The car will damage, it will make driving harder, and there will be rewards if you do well. It offers all the views, controls and options that other games supply but we have focused more on each facet to ensure nothing is missing. There's a lot of variety, lots of tracks, some wicked camera views for replays, lots of cars, stunts, weather conditions that make driving tougher – the total experience."

Features

Now, no matter how good a game is, it's the look that always grabs the attention of the player, and once again Climax has gone to town with the latest visual effects, including:

Time of day
Changing weather and sun
Light/sun reflection in puddles
Skid marks
Rain splashes on the player's windscreen
Picture-in-picture external camera views of dramatic jumps and crashes
Twilight and night time driving with headlights
Motion blur
Mud/dirt splatters on vehicles
Windscreen wiper animations
Sunlight dazzling your view
Volumetric fog – see bright headlights shine through the fog
Car damage – dented bodywork and ripped off panels
Heat haze

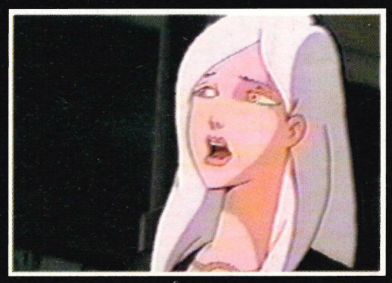


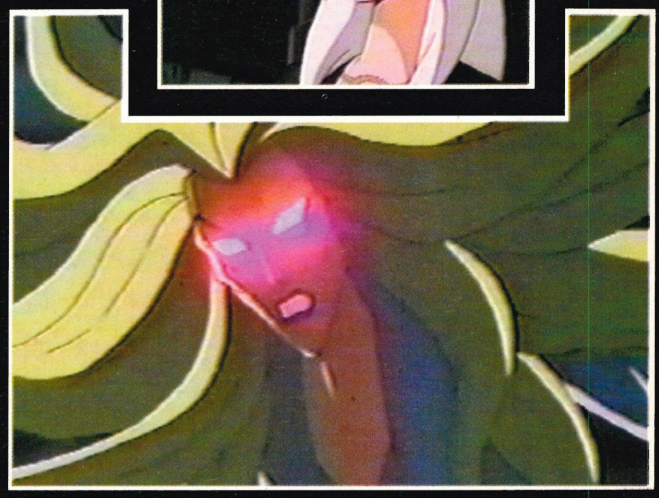


What's In Store

A single player, third-person perspective action adventure.
Player characters will include Nick Logan and Shl'ainn Blaze.
At least six separate levels (chapters) containing a minimum of 30 separate levels.
Minimum of five different weapons for the player to utilise.
Minimum of six separate characters (enemies) taken from the Roswell Conspiracies cartoon.
Two player and/or Internet gameplay.
Additional, unique game levels.
Full motion animations, with voice samples and extra character gestures.
VMU support.
Intuitive and intelligent NPC AI.
Intuitive and intelligent camera AI.
Various weapons and special effects.

[Roswell Conspiracies: Aliens, Myths & Legends – Released 4th Quarter]





Described as the 'X-Files for kids', this game will feature high resolution cartoon-style graphics and a fully 3D, free-roaming gaming environment.

Players will be able to take control of either Nick Logan or Sh'laain Blaze, the heroes of an evolving interactive story which takes them from Roswell to New Orleans, and beyond to Victorian London and the popular vampire vacation spot, Transylvania.

When you think of Roswell, you think of that alien on a slab, but this game is completely different from what you would expect. There's a cartoon series of the same name out in the USA and the game is based around that. Forty cartoon episodes have been produced and they're now being shown on satellite stations, whilst the BBC will be showing the series later in the year.

Roswell Conspiracies: Aliens, Myths & Legends will feature a variety of different missions and settings. Players will have access to an arsenal of incredible sci-fi weaponry, not to mention a number of special vehicles which allow them to travel between locations, as the game blends exploration and puzzle solving with arcade-style action.

Jim McPhail, producer, explained about the game and the way it's been conceptualised: "We've been sent lots of TV programs and we had free license to write our own story but, of course, we've kept it close to the TV series. Graphically the game will have parts from the show, because when we looked at them we saw some nice bits and have used them but we've recreated the look and feel ourselves."

Lost The Plot

Targeting the game to a younger market has shades of dumbing down, of making it very simple. Jim commented: "The TV series in the US has been amazing, so kids from around 8 to 17 must like the subject matter and this is a mass market which should be aimed at. Having a cartoon series gives the game familiarity. The game itself is based around the characters and the story is unique. The basic plot is about a bunch of aliens (there are more than one group) who are invading Earth and trying to collect a number of artefacts from mankind's history and cultures, which they believe are sacred. You'll see many different races but they're really aliens who are taking different forms and guarding different artefacts and it's your job to go after them and retrieve the artefacts they have. The game switches between the two main characters pertaining to the situation."

Puzzles come in both cryptic and straightforward forms, and involve tasks such as moving objects, finding and interacting with items, using gun stations where you go and have a blast, 3D special awareness puzzles and a lot, lot more. Telling you too much would spoil the fun, but you'll be in a free-moving, massive world with secret bits and surprises galore.



[Blending exploration and puzzle solving with arcade-style action]

Written By Derek Dela Fuente derek.hrew@quaynet.co.uk

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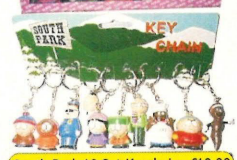


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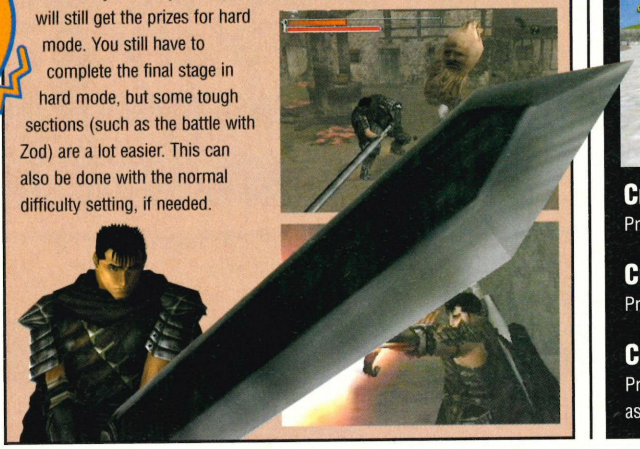
SWORD OF THE BERSERK: GUTS' RAGE

Easy Hard Mode Prizes
Use the following trick when obtaining the hard mode prizes. Set the difficulty to easy and proceed to the final stage save point (before fighting Balzac's first form). Quit and save the game. Set the difficulty back to hard and continue the game. Even though you completed most of the game on the easy difficulty setting, you will still get the prizes for hard mode. You still have to complete the final stage in hard mode, but some tough sections (such as the battle with Zod) are a lot easier. This can also be done with the normal difficulty setting, if needed.

Elf Mini-game
Successfully complete the game under the easy difficulty setting.

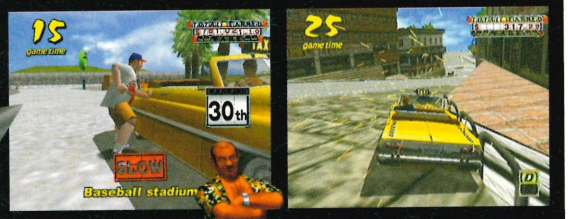
Battle Arena Mode
Successfully complete the game under the normal difficulty setting.

No Limit Mode
Successfully complete the game under the very hard difficulty setting.



CRAZY TAXI





Crazy Dash
Press Accelerate + Drive.

Crazy Stop
Press Brake + Reverse.

Crazy Drift
Press Left or Right while shifting as quickly as possible into Reverse then back into Drive, at a high speed.

Crazy Drift Stop
Execute a Crazy Drift, then immediately execute a Crazy Stop.

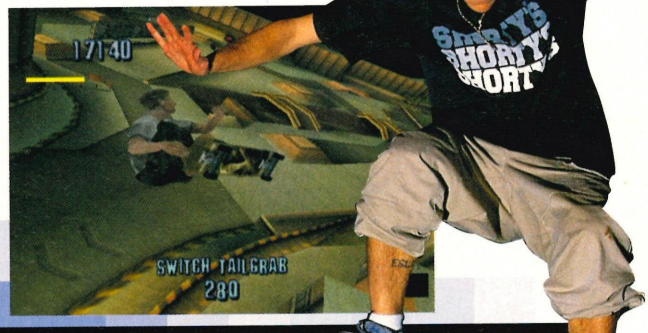
RAYMAN 2: THE GREAT ESCAPE

Golbox Village
To get to Golbox Village you need to first get the power up to swing from purple lums. Next go back to the first level and go to the part where you have to climb (the one with the two walls close together). When you get up, swing by the lum and you can get to the village. Here you place the crystals, which unlock stuff like a four player mini-game.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER

Play As Officer Dick:
Collect all thirty tapes with any character in career mode to unlock Officer Dick as a playable character.





TEST DRIVE 6

Enter the following as your name:

DFGY Enable all cars.

AKJGQ Get $6,000,000.

NOEMIT Enable checkpoints again.

OPIOP Enable all challenges.

ERDRTH Enable all tracks.

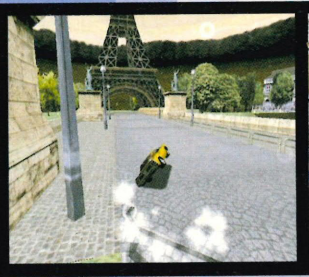
CVCVBM Enable all quick tracks.

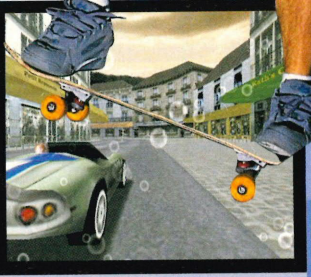
QTFHYF Enable shorter tracks.

OPOIOP Disable all challenges.

FFOEMIT Disable checkpoints.

RFGTR 'Stop the Bomber' mode.





BLUE STINGER

All Weapons
Successfully complete the game in less than five hours and save the game. Start a new game with the saved game file, to begin with all weapons with nine rounds of ammunition.

Bank Card Passwords
Enter one of the following passwords for the indicated bank card at the Bank Of Kimra (across the street from Rat's Place) to receive the corresponding funds.

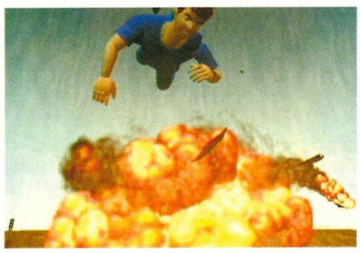
Card	Money	Password
Eliot	$20	3532
Kimra	$4000	1008
Yucatan	$5700	1861
Bermuda	$6000	1394

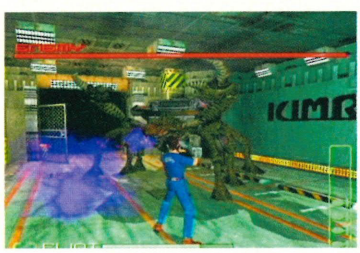
Big Eyes Mode
Successfully complete the game under the hard difficulty setting.

Heat-seeking Raygun
Successfully complete the game twice to receive a heat-seeking raygun, which is not available in any shop or vending-machine. It fires four heat-seeking lasers.

Hidden Artwork
Place the game disc in a PC compatible CD-ROM drive to find more .BMP images from the game in the "omake" directory. Note: two short voice samples in .WAV format are also in this directory.

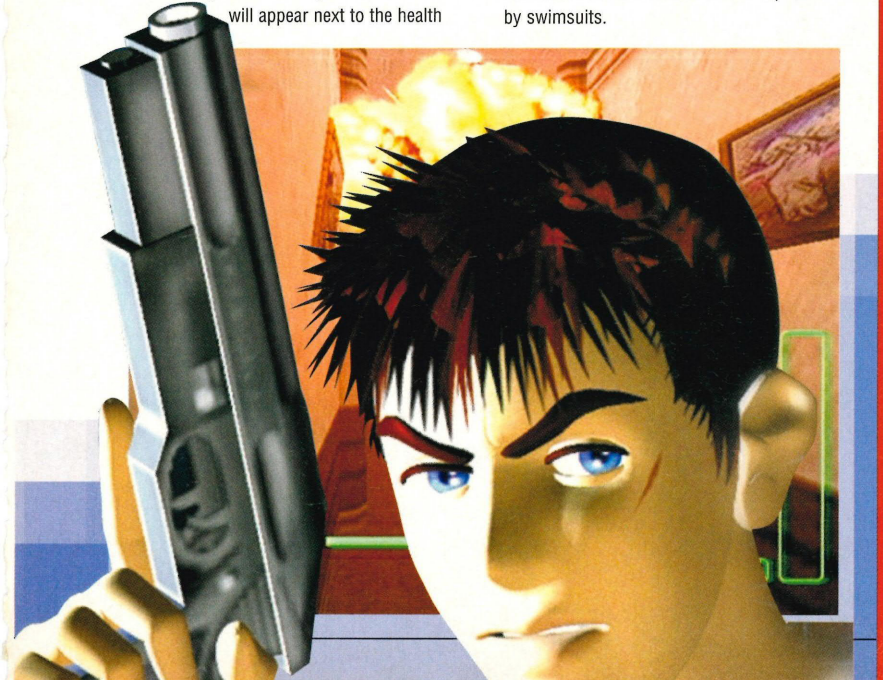
Mad Mode
Successfully complete the game three times and save the game. Start a new game with the saved game file. The phrase "Mad Mode" will appear next to the health bar. In this mode 200 Hassy Drinks, all weapons (including the raygun), and full ammunition will be available.





Near-invincibility
Successfully complete and save the game. Start a new game with the saved game file to have 200 Hassy Drinks (100 small and 100 large) in the inventory. This should allow the game to be played with near-invincibility, and the additional bonus of not having to buy any other health items. Additionally, any money left from the last game will also be available in the new game.

Swimmer Mode
Successfully complete the game twice and save the cleared game to a VMU. On the third time through the game, do not save the elevator worker or Devlin, do not win in the arcade, and do not talk to the doctor in the labs. Have Elliot drink at least five cups of the "free water" in the labs, then complete the game and save it. The character's normal clothes will be replaced by swimsuits.



NHL2K



Big Heads
Enter the "Options" screen and choose the "Codes" selection. Then, enter "BABY" as a cheat code. Note: the code is case-sensitive.

Wayne Gretzky Message
Create a player and enter "Wayne Gretzky" as a name to see the message "Thanks For The Memories" appear over the player picture section.

Dale Hunter Picture
Create a player and enter "Dale Hunter" as a name to see his picture in the "Edit Lines" menu.

Marty Reasoner Picture
Create a player and enter "Marty Reasoner" as a name to see his picture in the "Edit Lines" menu.

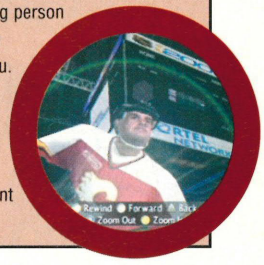
Ron Hextall Picture
Enter "Ron Hextall" as a player to see his picture in the "Edit Lines" menu.

Tony Twist Picture
Create a player and enter "Tony Twist" as a name to see his picture in the "Edit Lines" menu.

Other Players
Create a player and enter any person that retired during the 1998-1999 season to see his picture in the "Edit Lines" menu.

Programmer Pictures
Create a player and enter any of the names from the development team that are listed in the instruction manual. The picture of the corresponding person will appear in the "Edit Lines" menu.

Easy Goal
Go behind the net, then cut around to the front and shoot.



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Dynamite Deka
ECW Hardcore Revolution
Elemental Gimmick Gear
Evolution 1, 2
Expendable
Fighting Force 2
Flag To Flag
Giga Wing
Hardcore Heat
House Of The Dead 2
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Resident Evil 2, Code Veronica
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DCM directory

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AERO WINGS

Publisher: Crave Entertainment
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3
6

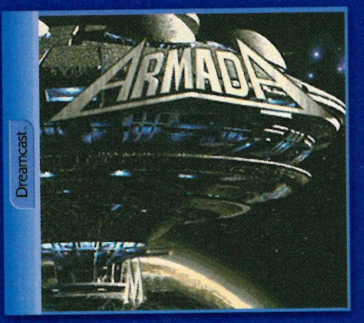
Being the first flight sim to grace the Dreamcast format, you'd expect its creator to go all out and try and set a standard high enough to make competitors quake in their collective boots. Alas, Crave opted for the 'bang it out in time for Chrimbo' approach, leaving quality as a mere afterthought. Basic graphics, bog standard gameplay and a bastard challenge await Red Arrow fans everywhere, so unless you go to Farnborough every year, steer well clear.



ARMADA

Publisher: Acclaim
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 5
7

Armada is a challenge and a half. You're thrown into the thick of the action from the start and it takes a while to get into the swing of things. Kill enemy ships to collect money to buy weapons, and become the best fighter pilot since Hans Solo graced the starry skies. Your eyes will have to be looked at after a few hours of play, as the graphics and principles behind the game could leave you seeing stars. This will be one of those misunderstood games that no one thinks about buying and all we can say is – pity.



BLUE STINGER

Publisher: Crave Entertainment
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3
8

In Sega's efforts to ensure all genres were covered on launch day, Blue Stinger was on call to cover the action/adventure end of the operation. It's no Resident Evil, of that there's no doubt, but what it offers is a strong, character driven game with all the elements to make it a strong back catalogue title. Forgive the slightly dodgy control system and you've got a game to keep you going while you're waiting for Res Evil Code: Veronica.



BUGGY HEAT

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3
5

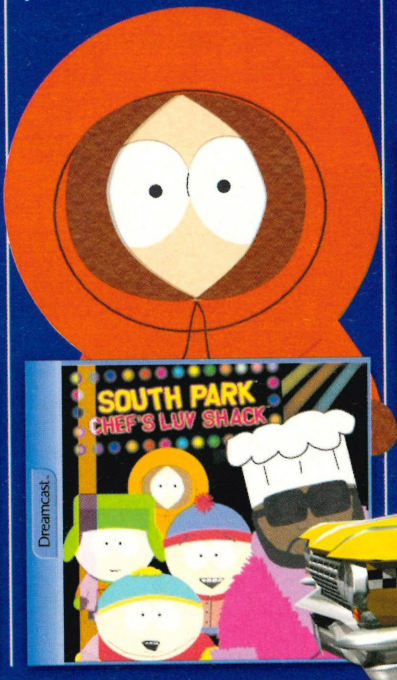
How could Sega do it? Surely they wouldn't rely on the new technology behind Dreamcast to sell a hunk of junk masquerading as a decent game? Well it looks like they did and Buggy Heat is that hunk of junk – graphically uninspired and fundamentally flawed in both control and challenge. We'd like to think that Sega look back on this and hang their heads in shame. 'Why did we put our name to this pile of poo?' they'll say.



CHEF'S LUV SHACK

Publisher: Acclaim
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 3
6

It contains all the voices of the crazy South Park crew, perfect cartoon animation and all the comedy touches that made the series the success it is. But... It's just a bloody quiz game with a few mildly amusing sub-games stuck on the side. In its defence, it's a great way to end an evening down the pub (as long as you're a fan) and it is available at a slightly knocked down price. But that's your lot.



CRAZY TAXI

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 6
9

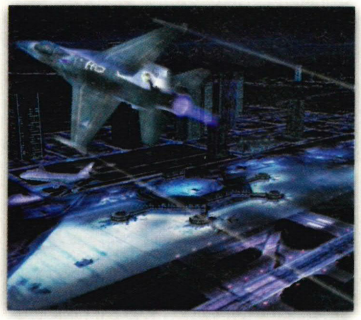
Possibly the best arcade conversion yet! Crazy Taxi doesn't just mirror the arcade version perfectly and have equally beautiful graphics, it also has added game modes for some extra longevity. Steer your cab round heavy traffic with haste and precision and your tips will come flying in. Deal with angry punters and deliver the vicar to the church on time and your name will be in the number one rankings spot before you know it. Pure unadulterated quality gaming, without question. Buy it or you won't be able to call yourself a Dreamcast gaming guru!



DEADLY SKIES

Publisher: Konami
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 6
5

Another flight sim is offered up and we're afraid to say it doesn't go anywhere no-one's been before. The graphics are dull (with the exception of the replays that is), the action takes place at almost a snail's pace and there are splendid features that were in the import version that have been carelessly taken out. The missions aren't exactly inspiring either. Maybe the aviation enthusiasts out there will be pleased with the wide range of jet fighters on offer but there's really nowt else to keep you occupied through the evenings. Stick with Incoming for now in the hope that some developer, somewhere, is working on a fast and furious sky battle which really gets the adrenaline pumping.



EVOLUTION

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 5
4

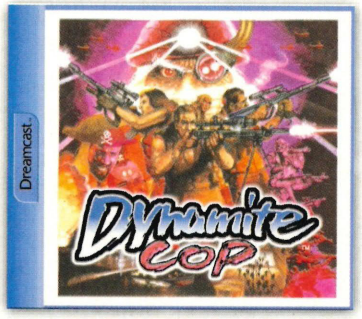
Hmmmm, a bit of a disappointment, then. It's frustrating to see old-style role playing games when the Dreamcast gives developers the opportunity to deliver games such as Shenmue. Cartoon-style characters, turn-based battle scenes, monsters, minions and spell casting – classic. As long as you like that kinda thing. So, it received the not-so-good score of four out of ten, a pity as some gamers like the traditional RPG formula, but the best is surely yet to come.



DYNAMITE COP

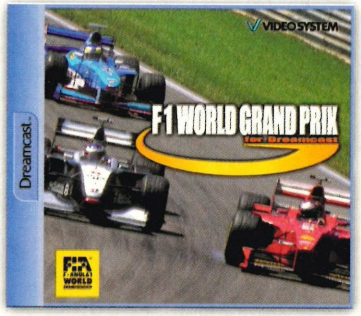
Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3
6

Another terrible embarrassment for Sega here, with not enough in its defence to save it from various EB bargain bins around the country. Though there's an abundance of different moves and combos on offer, there just aren't enough stages to keep any player entertained for more than a couple of hours. Multiplayer mode might warrant another bash, but half an hour later you're going to be done. Don't cause your wallet any unnecessary pain – it's just not worth it.



F1 WORLD GP

Publisher: Video Systems
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3
6



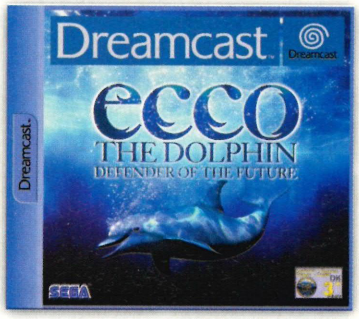


Video Systems have had several successes on the PSX and N64 but F1 World GP on the Dreamcast really isn't going to join those ranks. There are several reasons for this (including twitchy controls and bog standard graphics), but the biggest and most unforgivable is the slowdown that occurs with heavy traffic. Monaco GP doesn't have that problem, so why should this? The Dreamcast is capable of so much more.

ECCO THE DOLPHIN

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 9
9

Yet another little gem from Sega. Just when you thought that all the Dreamcast titles were either arcade, PC or PSX conversions, in comes a truly unique title. Controlling Ecco himself, you have to defend the future from an evil force that's trying to turn your tranquil oceanic world into chaos. Boasting some of the most stunning graphics we've yet seen from the Dreamcast, Ecco's gameplay will ensnare you for hours. Well worth buying.



ECW HARDCORE REVOLUTION

Publisher: Acclaim
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 7
7

It's good, but not great. Although it's streets ahead of the rushed-out PlayStation port WWF Attitude, it's still pretty obvious the game engine was written for a less powerful machine and tweaked. There are plenty of moves and weapons that cause serious physical pain, like cheese graters, shovels and ladders. You won't be disappointed if you buy it, but it won't be long before another Dreamcast grappler blows it out the ring.



FIGHTING FORCE 2

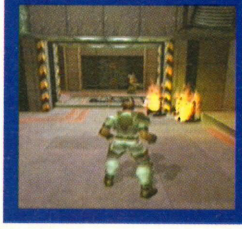
Publisher: Eidos
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 4
8

While not as easy on the eye as the luscious Lara Croft, Hawk Manson (star of Fighting Force 1 and 2) offers some sharp moves, a cool first-person mode and loads of macho attitude. Though at heart the game's a scrolling beat-'em-up, FF2 has some adventure elements to keep you on your toes. Graphically speaking it offers some excellent locations for fisticuffs but is let down at times by bland opponents. It's not gonna win any awards, but it's got more than enough to keep fans of the genre happy.





IT'S NOT GONNA WIN ANY AWARDS, BUT IT'S GOT MORE THAN ENOUGH TO KEEP FANS OF THE GENRE HAPPY





directory

4 WHEEL THUNDER

Publisher: Midway
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 9
8

This Midway title puts Sega's buggy effort to shame, letting you race with some funny looking vehicles around both indoor and outdoor courses. There are loads of game modes to choose from, as well as some multiplayer mayhem. You'll no doubt notice its similarity to Hydro Thunder, with the most obvious comparison being the four and nine second turbos you collect as you race. This is definitely a contender in the race for best DC driving title, but the thing is, we've got V-Rally 2 coming later, challenging Crazy Taxi for pole position.

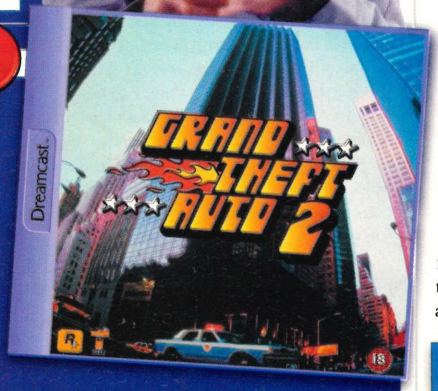


GTA 2



Publisher: Take 2 Interactive
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 9
9

Pure, unadulterated illegal driving. Run over pedestrians, drive on the wrong side of the road, steal a truck load of cars – the sky's the limit. This has to be one of the most controversial titles ever to come out on a console (along with Carmageddon), but it's always the games parents and MPs hate that make for good gaming. The humour's straight out of the gutter too, and the superb soundtrack adds extra appeal. Can we fault this title? Probably not. Simply put, this game offers the kind of uncomplicated and addictive gameplay that stops you from ever wanting to put down your controller, and that's what gaming's all about, right?



DRIVE ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE ROAD, STEAL A TRUCK LOAD OF CARS – THE SKY'S THE LIMIT



HYDRO THUNDER

Publisher: Midway
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3
7

With the Dreamcast already being over-run with various types of driving games, Midway had to come up with something different and there's no doubt they managed it with Hydro Thunder. Super speedboat racing, complimented with super cool graphics and sound FX, really gets things off on the right foot. But having only one game mode and frustrating gameplay kind of levels things out though. Moments of genius and hair tugging alike.



INCOMING

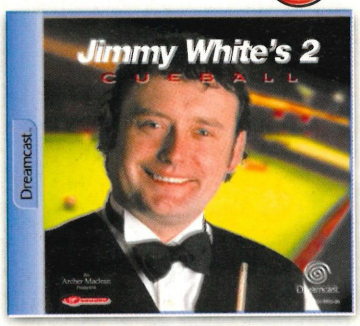
Publisher: Infogrames
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 1
8

Incoming represents the upside of direct PC ports. It's good looking, very playable and probably more suited to a console anyway. What it lacks in tactical depth it makes up for with arcade style action. Loners may find it a little repetitive, but split-screen mode works well and as a post-pub blast it's hard to beat. With stripped-back gameplay that's light on its feet and heavy on visual action, Incoming's a cheery bimbo who's so pretty you can't help but love her. A real must for flight sim fans.

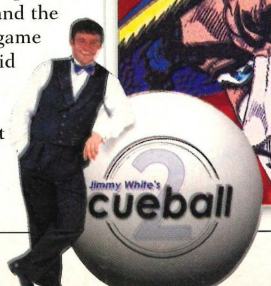


JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL

Publisher: Virgin Interactive
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3
8



Cueball's developers, Awesome, have almost lived up to their name with this splendid snooker simulation. Obviously it doesn't test the Dreamcast's powers, but the physics are spot on, and the graphics genre-leading. The game suffers a little without the aid of a mouse, but play still runs smoothly enough. As our only current sim, it's out on its own and endlessly entertaining, not unlike Jimmy himself.



JO JO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE

Publisher: Capcom
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 7
7

Whilst Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure is certainly based on the classic Street Fighter series in terms of both look and gameplay, it quickly veers off into new territory and becomes a genre-blurring adventure of epic proportions, where the fights actually have a purpose. You'll find yourself on an epic journey of discovery, during which a plethora of varied game styles are utilised. One minute you'll find yourself in a simple one-on-one bout against a human opponent and the next minute you'll be playing poker in a swanky casino. No, really.



LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER

Publisher: Eidos
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 6
9

Wow! Move over PlayStation version of this game and make way for the capabilities of the Dreamcast. Right from the intro sequence, you can see this title is going to offer something special. The graphics, chilling storyline and sound effects add to the gameplay and bring this title on a par with such DC titles as Shadow Man and Resident Evil – now that's what we're talkin' about. Expect loads of puzzles, some a little more challenging than others, and a constant plot movement that just pulls you in. Stop the praise now, it's sickening. If you've never encountered Soul Reaver, now is a good time to introduce yourself.





MARVEL VS CAPCOM

Publisher | Virgin Interactive
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3
7

On a console well known for its leading 3D fighters, 2D battles on. And with more shine and variety than Street Fighter Alpha 3, MVC is perhaps the best of the bunch. The 15 cartoon super heroes will take a splendidly long time to master and there's no shortage of big spangly moves. An all-new four-player tag-team option is also a great bonus. The controls can take some getting used to, but as 2Ds go, it's a bit of a Marvel (and a bit of a Capcom as well).



MDK 2

Publisher | Interplay
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 7
9

The first MDK title was good, but this one's better. Not only do you get to control the old hero Kurt, but also Max (remember him?) and the mad inventor Dr Hawkins. The graphics are (put simply) amazing and the environments you explore are massive. All the weapons from the original are still there, as well as some new ones to get to grips with. This'll keep you amused for weeks, and then some. Definitely one of the Dreamcast's best adventure games yet.

DEFINITELY ONE OF THE DREAMCAST'S BEST ADVENTURE GAMES YET



MILLENNIUM SOLDIER: EXPENDABLE

Publisher | Infogrames
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 1
8

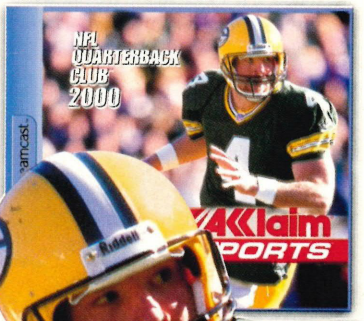
Expendable veers away from the current fashion for 3D shooters. Its developers, Rage, aimed to recreate the best elements of classic shooters like Ikari Warriors and Commando, and they've mainly succeeded. Deep it ain't, and it could have been prettier, but there's plenty of heavy blasting action to disperse life's little stresses. Get a mate to fight alongside you and you've got yourself a much better game.



NFL QUARTERBACK

Publisher | Acclaim
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 4
7

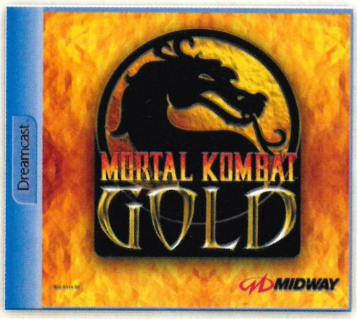
Where Blitz 2000 is a big dumb (but good) blocker, Quarterback is a more sophisticated, well, Quarterback. Exhibition, Playoff, Season, Historic Sim, Custom Sim and Practice modes allow you to recreate all the game's complexities to an impressive degree. So if you're looking for a hard-core sim, this one's for you. Otherwise look left a couple of inches, and save yourself a lot of hassle.



MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD

Publisher | Midway
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Now we have
4

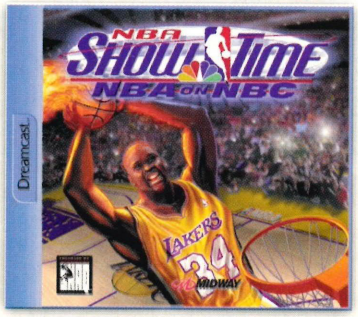
When DCM had to rank all the Dreamcast games of 1999, war broke out. With Soul Calibur at hand, the number one placing was easy, but the lowest position, number forty-one, was a different matter. How do you decide which is the worst of two games with no redeeming features? Well, somehow MKG managed to fend off Psychic Force 2012, but all this means is that it's less exceptional at being crap. Even worse than the film.



NBA SHOWTIME

Publisher | Midway
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 4
4

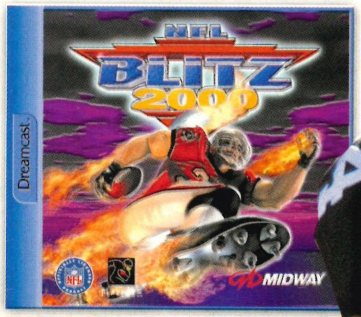
As a direct port from the classic NBA Jam arcade series, there's plenty of simple button bashing fun, and a top-notch multiplayer mode. Unfortunately the game hasn't been sufficiently tweaked to suit the needs of the more demanding console player, especially when that console is the Dreamcast. There's a distinct lack of options and the graphics are substandard. With four players the game really comes to life, otherwise there's just no pulse.



NFL BLITZ 2000

Publisher | Midway
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 4
8

A splendid arcade style title that does away with complicated plays and lets you straight into the action. And the control system mirrors this simplicity, using only three buttons for a wide variety of actions. Graphically it's less inspiring, but with such rich and smoothly flowing gameplay, who cares? As any toothless player will tell you, it's beauty on the inside that counts, and Blitz 2000's bursting with it.





directory

PEN PEN

Publisher | Infogrames
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 3
7



If mutated penguin racing is your game, this'll be right up your street. It's one of those weird concepts that just doesn't make sense outside of Japan. Anyway, just for the record there are seven Pen Pens, twelve tracks and a multiplayer mode for those willing to disclose their ownership to others. I don't know, maybe I just don't get it. Maybe there's a hidden message, like that song: Lucy in the Sky, with Diamonds...

RACING SIMULATION: MONACO GRAND PRIX

Publisher | Ubi Soft
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 1
7

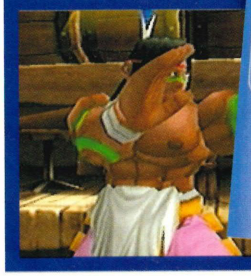
Isn't it frustrating how the Japanese get everything first? Well Monaco GP presents one of those rare occasions when we actually benefit from the delay. The once bland game received a vital face-lift before its UK launch, and now looks superb. The lack of a licence means true F1 fans might feel a little lost, but there are plenty of redeeming features. Simulation Mode is impressively realistic and Arcade Mode instantly playable. A pretty good start as the Dreamcast's premiere sim.

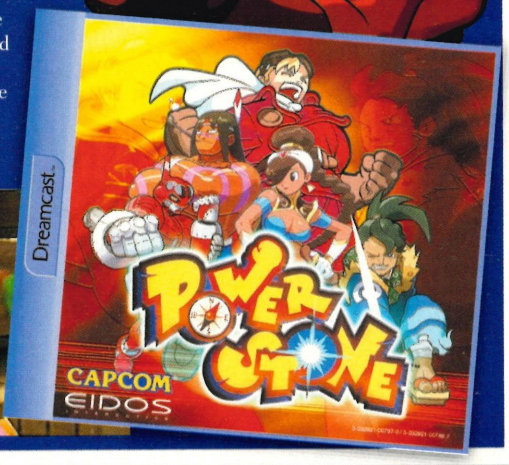


POWER STONE

Publisher | Eidos
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 1
8

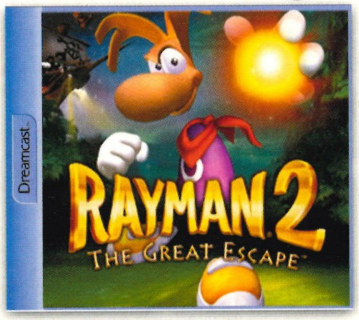
Power Stone is a must for all beat-'em-up fans. If you don't already know, it's a one on one fighter with a difference. A series of three different gems appear periodically around the screen. Grabbing them (or beating them out of your opponent) enables you to unleash a wider range of attacks. Backgrounds are also highly interactive and there's a large arsenal of weapons to be found. The only problem with this game is Soul Calibur, which is better.





RAYMAN 2

Publisher | Ubi Soft
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 6
9



This may be some people's idea of a cutesy platformer but we say otherwise. What Sonic Adventure was lacking (which wasn't a lot), Rayman 2 more than makes up for. Stunning cartoon graphics and a Spyro-inspired soundtrack blend easily with the constantly evolving gameplay seen throughout. The characters themselves are distinguished perfectly through their distinct personalities, and the puzzles, tasks, bosses and sheer variety will keep you amused for weeks, possibly days (depending on how immersed you are). Don't miss out on the next generation of the 3D platform genre.

RED DOG

Publisher | Sega
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 9
6



'Bang, bang, rat-a-tat-tat, you're dead.' That's about the size of most action shoot-'em-ups these days, and Red Dog is no exception. You won't find an introduction to the plot before the 'bang, bang, pow, cabang' comes into play. Instead Red Dog simply dumps you into a vague, future based fracas and leaves you to make your way through the game with the occasional mission objective and tank upgrade in your path.

It's kind of like dating the prettiest girl in school. She doesn't 'alf look nice, but when it comes down to the nitty gritty she just doesn't deliver. Shame really, but that's the way it goes.

PSYCHIC FORCE 2012

Publisher | Acclaim
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Not worth it
4

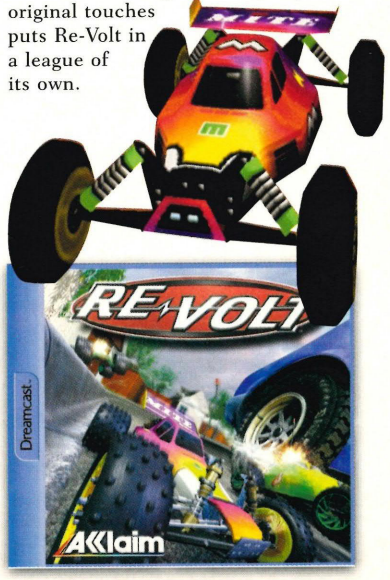
Oh dear, Potato seem to have had a fair few problems with their Dreamcast debut. It's awkward, ugly and quite frankly, crap. A benchmark in failure. As much fun as stepping in doggy doos, slipping up, and then falling in it. Am I getting through? Its main achievement was being voted the worst game on the Dreamcast in '99. Let's hope it retains that lowly title for many years to come.



RE-VOLT

Publisher | Acclaim
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 4
8

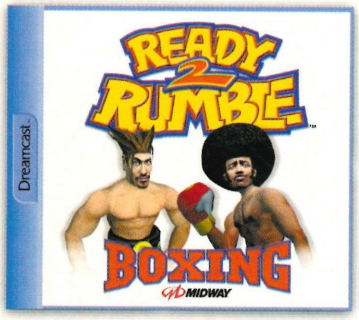
Twenty toy cars have Re-Volted against their captors and made for a pretty creative racing game. The PlayStation version was at best unremarkable but 96 extra bits have made all the difference. There are 20 cars altogether and a wealth of weapons including water bombs, fireworks, turbos, oil and electrical charges which drain your opponents' batteries. There are slight glitches with the handling, but a big bag of original touches puts Re-Volt in a league of its own.



READY 2 RUMBLE

Publisher Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3 9

The game that made the Dreamcast's launch rumble. This was the only title to really fight its corner in the all format charts, and for many good reasons. Each cartoon-like boxer is superbly animated and full of character, making competitive matches that little bit more personal. In Championship Mode you get a gym and three characters to train. But look, this game's just way too big to be summed up here, so go the distance down to the shops and you'll come back a winner.



RESIDENT EVIL 2

Publisher Virgin Interactive
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 5 7

It's had its day on the PlayStation and now, for some reason, Virgin have decided to keep the momentum going on the Dreamcast before we're treated to Code: Veronica. There's probably no need to tell you that it will always have a special place in all of our hearts, but there's just nowt new to get your teeth into. All the characters are still there, namely Claire Redfield, and the Umbrella Corporation is still up to its old tricks. Get yourselves a copy if you've never experienced what is 'Res Evil'.



SEGA BASS FISHING

Publisher Sega
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 3 9

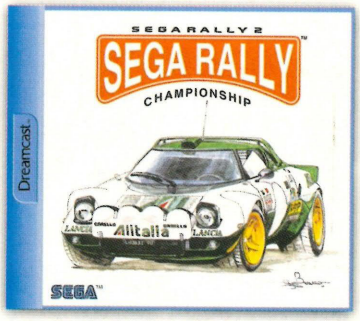
128 bit technology, online gaming and, er, fishing. But not just any old fishing. This is undoubtedly the most comprehensive, realistic and enjoyable fishing game ever. Arcade Mode involves catching as many bass as you can in one of three areas: Lodge, Cape and Inlet. Original Mode allows you to take part in the SBFA Amateur Tournament, including five stages set during morning, noon and evening. Leave your wellies in the loft and give Sega Bass a go – I guarantee it'll reel you in.



SEGA RALLY 2

Publisher Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 1 8

Sega's flagship racer is everything you'd expect, with heaps of cars and tracks and gloriously sharp graphics. There are loads of nice touches, including ostriches running across the tracks and onlookers playing chicken with your car. Slowdown, although rare, is evident and there could have been more of a challenge, but these factors barely detract from one of Sega's many leading arcade experiences. This will always remain a classic.



SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER 2000

Publisher Sega
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 4 8



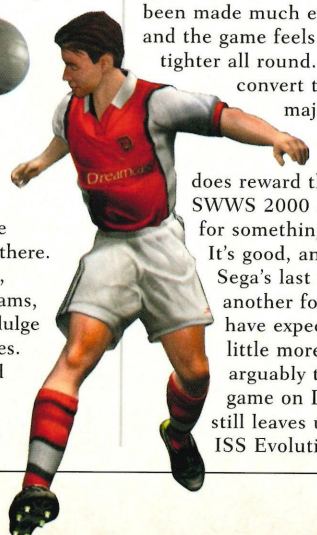
After UEFA Striker's delay, Sega Worldwide Soccer 2000 has come along and given it a kick in the shins. It's a cool marriage of the SWWS series' arcade style and Silicon Dreams' more sophisticated approach. While a quick start option allows you straight into the action, all the options are there. You can set up the camera, select the environment, teams, tournaments, and even indulge in customisation procedures. With intuitive controls and genre-leading graphics, SWWS is firmly the Dreamcast favourite.

SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER 2000 EURO

Publisher Sega
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 9 7



Since the last version, things have been made much easier to get into, and the game feels that little bit tighter all round. It's not going to convert those who had major problems with the previous version, but it does reward those who enjoyed SWWS 2000 and are looking for something a little more. It's good, and it's better than Sega's last attempt, but for another forty quid we'd have expected something a little more than this. It's arguably the best footie game on Dreamcast, but still leaves us yearning for ISS Evolution

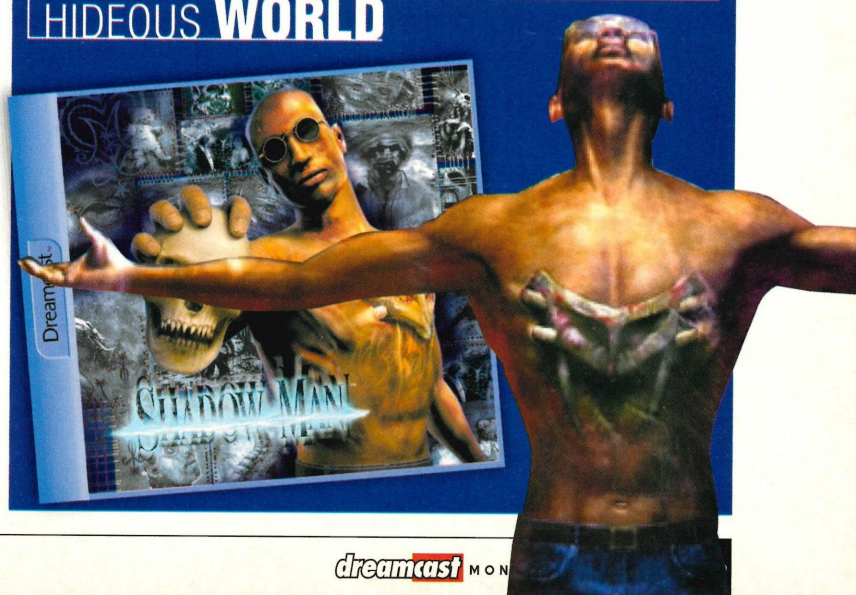


SHADOW MAN

Publisher Acclaim
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 4 9

You play the part of a student-turned-assassin who has been given the chance to atone for his sins by saving mankind from impending doom. Armed with various weapons and devices, you can blast and flame your enemies, and even look them up in secret FBI files. The character movement has been noticeably improved since earlier versions, with quicker responses and less slugging around. If you can handle an irritating camera and a big dose of trial and error, you'll quickly find yourself trapped in this wonderfully hideous world.

YOU'LL QUICKLY **FIND** YOURSELF **TRAPPED IN** THIS WONDERFULLY HIDEOUS **WORLD**



directory

SLAVE ZERO

Publisher Infogrames
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 5 8

Infogrames are just pulling out those decent games right left and centre at the moment. Showcased in issue 5, Slave Zero is a feast for your eyes. You take control of a 60-foot biomechanical war machine in order to put an end to an evil dictator's cunning mission to take over the city of S1-9. Loads of destructive weaponry, 13 levels and graphics to salivate over – what more could we possibly want? Online playability perhaps? Four players can have a bash at Deathmatch mode, which will suffice. A worthy score for such an action-packed game.

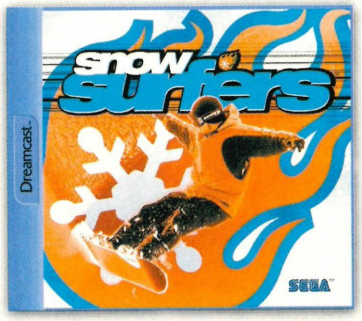




SNOW SURFERS

Publisher Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 2 6

Following the success of the PlayStation trilogy, the Dreamcast should have taken Cool Boarders to another level. Unfortunately something has gone very wrong, and the UK version has been renamed Snow Surfers. There are seven courses altogether – pretty meagre compared to Cool Boarders 3's 36. On top of this the game's music and image is generally more 'acceptable' than 'cool'. Graphically it's top drawer, but there just isn't enough depth or playability to warrant the asking price.



SONIC ADVENTURE

Publisher Sega
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 1 9

Sega's flagship 'hog returns in his first 3D adventure, with splendid success. Aside from Sonic there are five characters to control, each with their own tailored abilities. You can also control a robot called E102 GAMMA, along with his laser-guided weaponry. There are three massive adventure areas to explore: Station Square, Mystic Ruins and the Egg Carrier (Dr Robotnik's space ship). Despite unfortunate technical glitches, including an irritating camera, Sonic has firmly recaptured his post at the forefront of platform and adventure gaming.



SOUL CALIBUR

Publisher Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 1 9

Probably the best beat-'em-up in the World. No, just kidding, this IS the best beat-'em-up in the World, and by quite some distance. Having ruled the PlayStation with their Tekken and Ridge Racer series, Namco have already established themselves as masters of the next generation. Soul Calibur is simply the most playable, challenging and graphically awesome game ever. It laughs in the face of Virtua Fighter 3tb, allowing you to run in eight directions around the ring. If you haven't already got it, well, I don't know why we bother.





SOUL FIGHTER

Publisher Mindscape
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 3 8

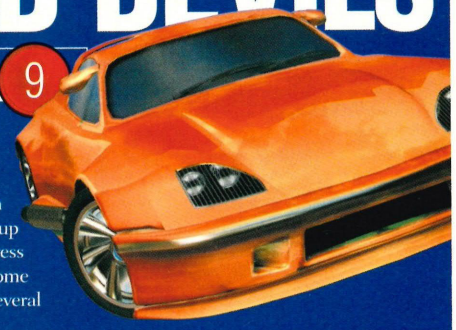
After the disappointment of Dynamite Cop, the Dreamcast was still in need of a decent scrolling beat-'em-up and Soul Fighter fits the part nicely. Choose either a warrior, a magician or a girlie, ignore the sketchy plot and kick some serious monster arse. The lack of a two-player mode is a real downer, but there's plenty of challenge, which goes some way to making up for it. A great example of old school action polished up by your Dreamcast.



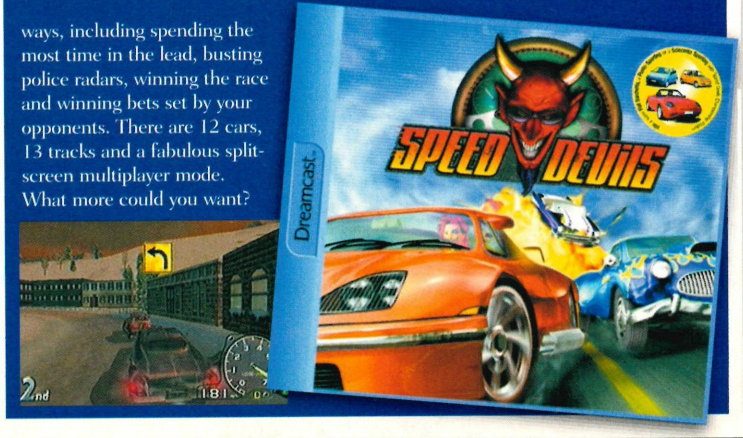
SPEED DEVILS

Publisher Ubi Soft
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 2 9

Speed Devils is an American muscle-car racer with a twist. Your base in Championship Mode is the garage, from which you can purchase and upgrade up to three cars at a time. To progress through the game you'll need some cash, which can be earned in several ways, including spending the most time in the lead, busting police radars, winning the race and winning bets set by your opponents. There are 12 cars, 13 tracks and a fabulous split-screen multiplayer mode. What more could you want?



SPEED **DEVILS IS** AN AMERICAN **MUSCLE**-CAR RACER **WITH A** TWIST



STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3

Publisher Virgin Interactive
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3 6

Street Fighter Alpha 3 is, well, Street Fighter Alpha 3. It holds very little over the PlayStation version, aside from small graphical tweaks and a bundle of extra game modes. On the plus side there are hundreds of moves, but some are a little awkward to pull off. If you're a big fan of the genre and 2D doesn't bother you this will certainly keep you happy. Otherwise, leave well alone.



STREET FIGHTER DOUBLE IMPACT

Publisher: Capcom
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 7
7

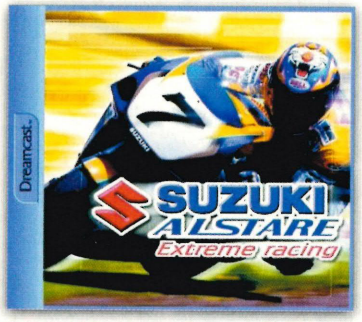
If 2D fighting is your bag, there's no doubt that Capcom's latest scrapper is the cream of the crop. The only original characters left are Ryu and Ken (and a secret appearance by Gouki – surprise, surprise!). The only truly weak point of Street Fighter III is the lack of a serious long term challenge. World Tour Mode is sorely missed here, leaving nothing much more than Arcade and Versus modes. Great for Street Fighter fanatics, but there's just not enough for more casual players.



SUZUKI ALSTARE

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3
8

Speed Demon developers Criterion had one main objective here: to make the fastest, smoothest racing game around. They've recreated the Suzuki Alstare team along with six GSXRs, from the standard 600 to the insane superbike 750. The game manages to blend top-drawer arcade action with a very realistic edge drawn from Suzuki's considerable input. The helmets and bikes are modelled from the real things, the tracks are entirely fanciful. Handling is over-simplified, but the speed is totally pure.

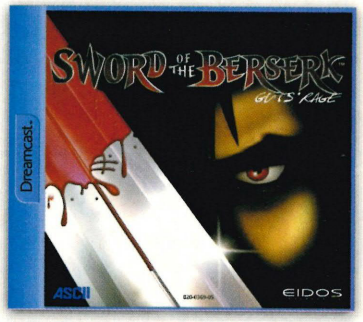


SWORD OF THE BERSERK

Publisher: Eidos
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 9
4

The action hots up right from the start, as you defend a young girl and her father from a gang of cut-throats. Enter some gory 3D sword-swinging action. It's not too tough (the first encounter is a trainer, after all), but the fight certainly whets your appetite for what's to come.

But what a let-down. Sword of the Berserk should've been a cool game, but it's so lazily designed you'll probably give up out of sheer boredom long before you complete it. There's a great game to come out of this engine, but Sword of the Berserk isn't it. It's too flat, too samey and too bloody boring. You can't fault it technically, but its level design doesn't match its programming standards. Best leave this one on the shelf.

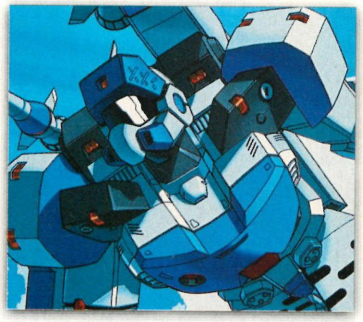


TECH ROMANCER

Publisher: Virgin
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 9
5

Tech Romancer is easy to pick up and play; nothing too complex here, just bash those buttons and get on with it. It looks like a traditional fighting game, with the same colourful graphics and special effects and good finishing moves too – shame you're the one being finished. The decent selection of combatants gives you the chance to be beaten in a number of various guises.

Tech Romancer certainly looks the business and will be instantly familiar to fans of the genre. Therein lies the problem: there is nothing here that you have not seen before, or seen better.



TEE OFF

Publisher: Acclaim
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 5
8

What a cool game. Whether you've just got back from the pub or you just want a quick round, this title is satisfyingly tasty enough for your gaming palette. It's very cartoon-style (not dissimilar to Everybody's Golf on the PlayStation) and the intro sequence screams Japanese from all crevices. It has loadsa game modes, nice-looking characters and if the backgrounds were a little less basic it would almost be worth a nine out of ten.

Four player is almost too competitive, so be careful not to lose your closest friends. Someone's going to have to go a long way to better this golf game.

THIS TITLE IS SATISFYINGLY TASTY ENOUGH FOR YOUR GAMING PALETTE



THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2

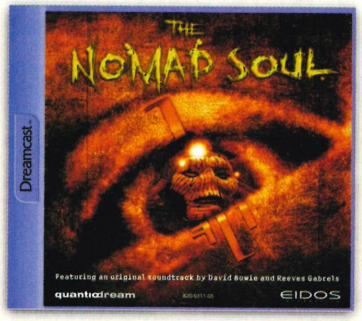
Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 1
8

Sega's classic arcade shooter has been brilliantly converted to the Dreamcast. There are no discernible graphical differences and all the gory violence remains. You must take out the monsters and look after the innocent people to find the quickest route to the evil inventor, Goldman. Enemies range from face-sucking frogs to axe wielding zombies. It's annoying that you have to start the game from the beginning every time you lose, but it's still the sharpest shooter around.

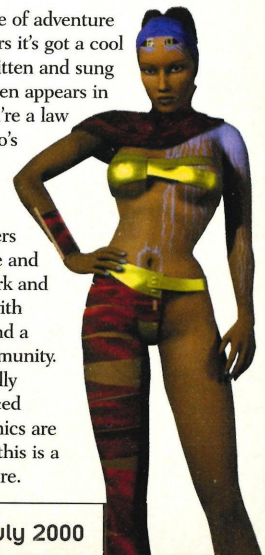


THE NOMAD SOUL

Publisher: Eidos Interactive
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 8
8



This is clearly the future of adventure gaming. Well, for starters it's got a cool soundtrack which is written and sung by David Bowie – he even appears in the game. Basically, you're a law enforcement officer who's had to possess another bloke's body so he can investigate his partner's death. Nomad Soul offers a well-defined challenge and a deep insight into a dark and futuristic world, filled with utilitarian technology and a functioning virtual community. The puzzles work logically through this well balanced adventure and the graphics are beautifully cinematic – this is a must for fans of the genre.



directory

TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE

Publisher	Crave Entertainment
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 3	6

Pick one of 24 cars and race along Tokyo's streets at night. Sounds great, and for a while it is, but as you make your way through 134 different opponents, the action all becomes a bit samey. The courses are well designed, but when compared to Speed Devils there just isn't as much variety. Winning and losing is determined by a time-lag system: fall too far behind and you've lost and vice-versa. Graphically flawless but lacking any real depth.



TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION

Publisher	Eidos Interactive
Players: 1 • Reviewed: Issue 7	10

The long and short of it is that Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation is a classic of our time and a game that is so involving that days can turn to nights and back again before you realise you've missed an entire night's kip. Tomb Raider: TLR offers Dreamcast fans the highest quality production values, the best presentation and greatest gameplay anyone could hope for. If you've ever had doubts in the Dreamcast's abilities, they sure as hell should be history by now!

TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION IS A CLASSIC OF OUR TIME

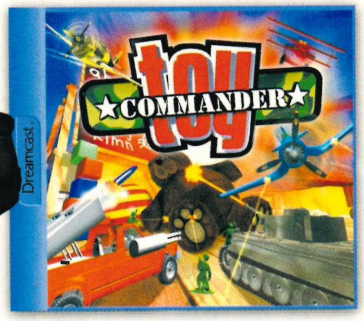


TOY COMMANDER

Publisher	Sega
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 2	9

Toy Commander surely rules the realm of original gaming concepts. You must lead your toys through increasingly tricky tasks to prove you're still the boss. And toys being toys, normal rules don't apply: you can survive massive falls and collisions and even drive up the walls. In gameplay terms there's a bit of everything, from frantic Mario Karting through to Tomb Raideresque progressive platforming and exploration. A splendid compound of everything you love about games.





TRICK STYLE

Publisher	Acclaim
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 2	9

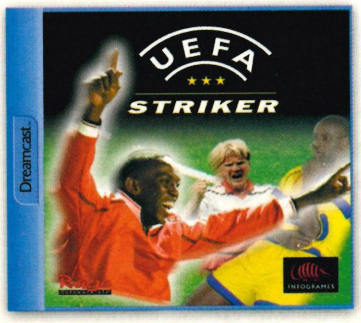
With their stunning Dreamcast debut, Criterion have lifted snowboarding to a new level. There are nine cyberpunks to control, each with their own stats on speed, strength, power, and skill. Five boards are available from the start and more can be earned by beating the bosses. There are loads of excellent courses spread over several different countries including the UK, USA and Japan. Graphically it's right up there with Sonic and a comprehensive two-player mode is the icing on the cake.



UEFA STRIKER

Publisher	Infogrames
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 2	8

With Expendable and Le Mans already under their belt, Infogrames have marched proudly (if a little late) onto the pitch. In pure gameplay terms it can't better ISS Pro, and you might find the controls slightly awkward at first, but given a chance, Striker does have its moments. Some areas of play such as shooting have been made easier and the game flows well. But let's not sell it short. It's a great looking game that offers a quite deep yet still highly enjoyable sporting experience.



VIGILANTE 8: SECOND OFFENSE

Publisher	Activision
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 5	6

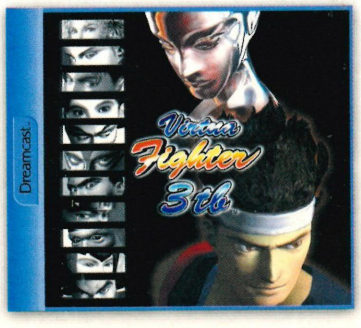
It's just a whole lotta gun blasting, truck chasing drivel. No, that's unfair, it's really not that bad but it doesn't come close to the original effort found on the PlayStation. The best feature by far is the multiplayer, where up to four of you can slog it out – it's stress relief if nothing else. However, as Simon so rightly said, 'It lacks soul'. Graphics are good, there are lots of characters to choose from and a whole host of weapons for the taking, but it just ain't got what it takes to make the Dreamcast grade – sorry!



VIRTUA FIGHTER 3TB

Publisher	Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 1	7

Perhaps the weakest of Sega's flagship games, Virtua Fighter 3tb seemed to suffer somewhat from hurried development and testing. All the usual fighters are present, along with a decent gathering of fresh characters, but graphically the title already looks dated. The lack of twin shoulder buttons on Sega's pad also causes problems. Even though it was a launch title, beat-'em-ups have since progressed leaps and bounds. Basically Virtua's generally a solid title, but it's dramatically dwarfed by the likes of Soul Calibur.



VIRTUA STRIKER 2: VERSION 2000.1

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 5
4

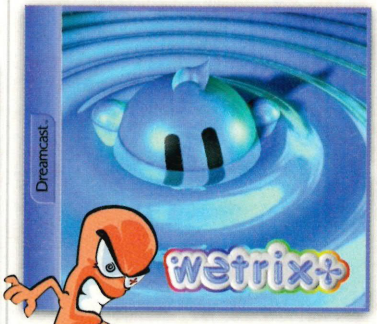
Virtua Striker has always been welcomed with open arms in the arcades and with the Dreamcast around it's an easy cash in to make by releasing this title. But give us UEFA Striker or Worldwide Soccer any day, we say, as although this is a big, flash example of what the DC can do there simply isn't a playable game attached. It hasn't got a very pick-up-and-play philosophy, you just take thrashing after thrashing – learning curve? What learning curve? Looks good. Plays bad.



WETRIX+

Publisher: Take 2 Interactive
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 7
7

This puzzling title could be described as an underwater Tetris. All you have to do is construct lakes on a platform to catch blobs of water, to prevent your flask from spilling over. There are obstacles to get over such as bombs and earthquakes, but for a true pro this shouldn't pose a problem. Have a bash at two player and you'll be entertained for hours. This is definitely the best puzzle game for the Dreamcast yet – other than Tetris 4D, that is.

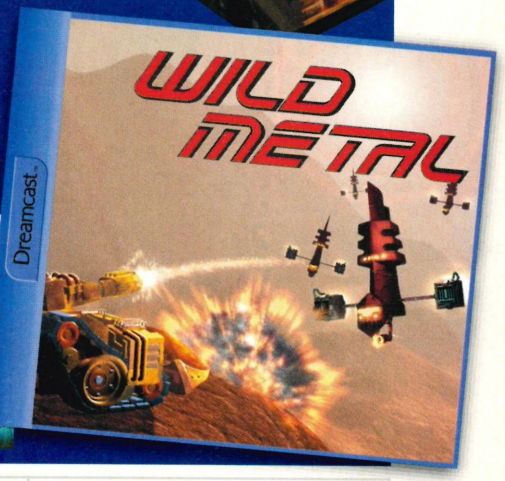


WILD METAL

Publisher: Take 2 Interactive
Players: 1-3 • Reviewed: Issue 6
8

Although not really challenging Sonic or Soul Calibur in the graphical stakes, Wild Metal's gameplay is right up there with the best. Combining the right amount of strategy with the perfect sprinkling of action, this game has a little of everything. Action takes place in very desolate environments and you choose from many uniquely designed battle tanks to take on the various enemies you encounter. The missions are challenging to say the least and after playing it for around...ooooh...ten minutes, you'll be hooked. It's the first real strategic title for the Dreamcast, and Take 2 Interactive sure have done themselves, and us, rather proud.



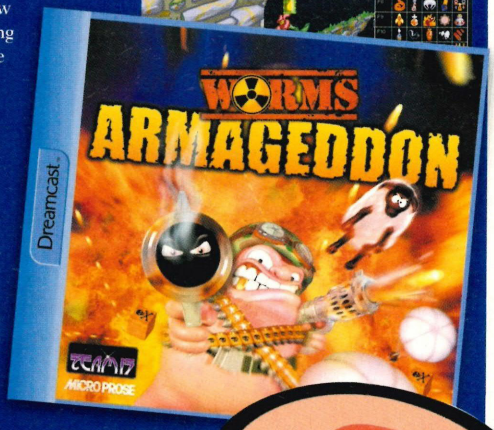


WORMS ARMAGEDDON

Publisher: Hasbro
Players: 1-4 • Reviewed: Issue 4
8

With more weapons, redesigned terrains and extra game modes, this classic title is best on the Dreamcast. There are now fifty five weapons, including new additions such as the skunk, which detonates with a potent pong that leaves your opponents spluttering for the rest of the game. All the usual options are there, allowing you to name your own worms (Jarvis, Joe Brand, @?@*?! etc.), set a time limit on the completion of each move and, of course, choose your team's special weapon. Splendid.



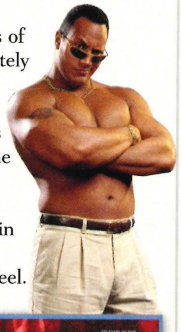


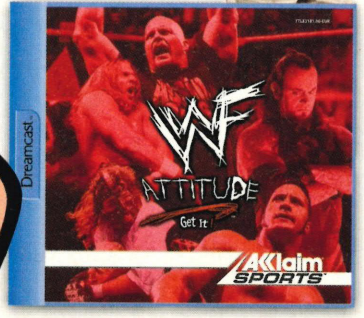
THIS CLASSIC TITLE IS BEST ON THE DREAMCAST

WWF ATTITUDE

Publisher: Acclaim
Players: 1-2 • Reviewed: Issue 4
6

This should have been a wrestling revolution, but sadly it's far from it. All the faves are there, including Stone Cold Steve Austin, Farooq, Al Snow, Val Venis, Goldust, The Rock, Triple H, Mankind Kane, The Undertaker and even the late Owen Hart. You can also recreate most of the specialist match types of the WWF. Unfortunately Acclaim's licensing deal had almost expired and there was no time to improve the game during its port from PlayStation to Dreamcast, resulting in substandard graphics and a general 32 bit feel.





ZOMBIE REVENGE

Publisher: Sega
Players: 1-3 • Reviewed: Issue 6
7

The House of the Dead 2 was no doubt one of the most popular DC launch titles and Zombie Revenge is definitely of the same ilk. 'So why did it only get a seven out of ten then?' we hear you ask. Well, it's not quite as fast and furious as THOTD 2 for starters and although there's plenty of cool weapons for your characters to get hold of (the flame thrower being our particular favourite) it's just not the same without being able to use the lightgun. The one thing that will put this at the bottom of your 'DC games to buy' list is undoubtedly the fact that the gameplay is very short lived – so why would you want to pick it up and play it again?



next month

Alone in the Dark 4

exclusive review Think Resident Evil Code: Veronica is as good as it gets? Think again – AITD 4 started the genre, now it's gonna blow it apart at the seams.

ISSUE 11 ON SALE JULY 6TH

TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING
The single greatest skating game is upon us. Don't miss our excellent review next issue.

huge review

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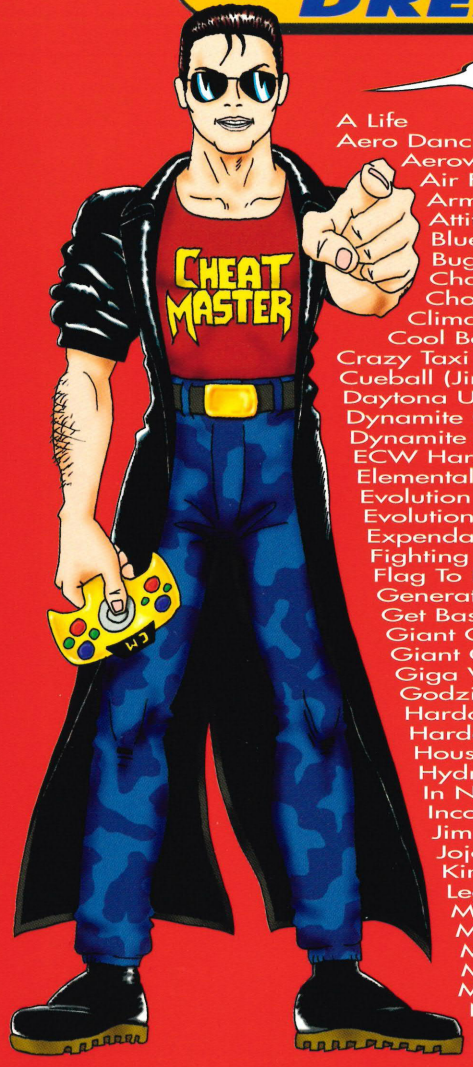
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Toukon Retsuden 4
Toy Commander
Trickstyle
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