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DRIVE ON THE PAVEMENT

SYPHON FILTER
METAL GEAR SOLID BEATER?

FULL UK REVIEW!

R-TYPE DELTA
IREM'S CLASSIC BLASTER COMES OF AGE



REVIEWED
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R-TYPE DELTA
RIDGE RACER TYPE 4
YOYO'S PUZZLE PARK
WING OVER 2
ACTUA ICE HOCKEY 2
GUARDIAN'S CRUSADE
SPORTS CAR GT
HARD EDGE
BIG AIR
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3
ASTERIX
DARKSTALKERS 3
BLOODLINES
MONACO GP RACING SIMULATION
NEED FOR SPEED: ROAD CHALLENGE
MARVEL SUPERHEROES VS STREET FIGHTER

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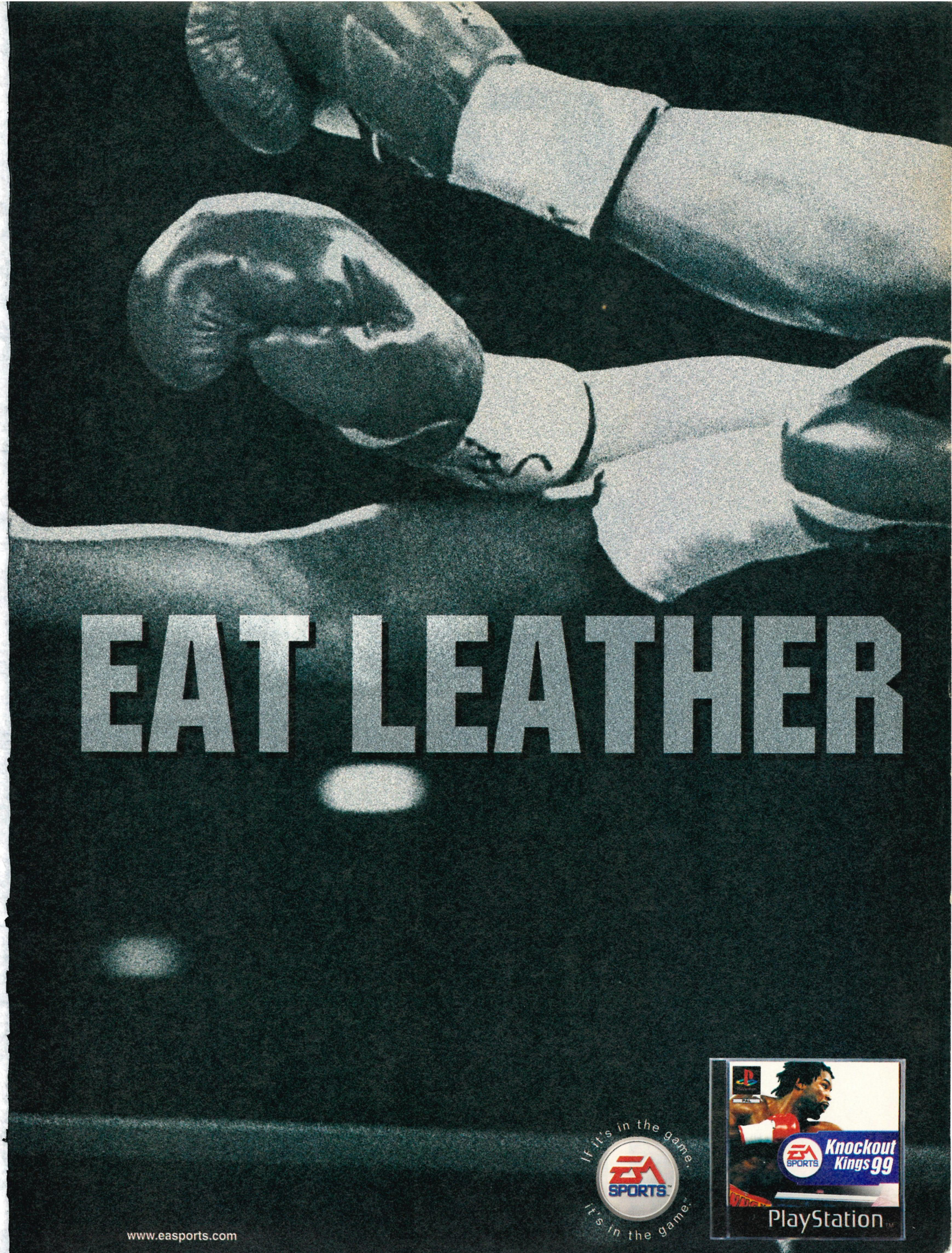
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RIDGE RACER TYPE 4: HI-OCTANE RACER REVIEWED



PlayStation

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cont



CARMAGEDDON

Editorial

It's been a slow Summer for the PlayStation. Few really great games are released during the sunny season, and there aren't many in the pipeline, but what few there are look like being real corkers. Check out Carmageddon and Le Mans, which are shaping up to be two of the hottest drivers since Gran Turismo.

Although the world is waiting for PlayStation 2, the machine's backwards compatibility means developers will carry on developing for the good old PSX for years to come. There's no cause for concern; most Summers are slow. The future for our favourite console still looks very rosy indeed.

Ian Osborne
EPM Editor

REGULARS

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Tokyo Game Show action

Expected 14
The latest racer from Eutechnyx...

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The only reviews you can trust

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The only import reviews you can trust

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Sub-twenty quid corkers

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Come on, get 'em while they're hot

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A big long list of games and scores

Next Issue 98
You know you want it

How we rate the games...

90-100%
A near-perfect classic; outstanding example of its genre.

80-89%
Not quite top-of-the-league, but great fun nonetheless.

70-79%
Still not a bad game, but considerable room for improvement.

60-69%
Significant flaws creeping in - think carefully before buying.

50-59%
Decidedly average - nothing to write home about.

30-49%
Hardly any fun to be had here. Definitely not worth buying.

0-29%
Disastrous - you won't want to play it twice.

EPM gets an exclusive first look at the latest build of this Death Race 2000-influenced driving bloodbath. Find the hit-and-run action on Page 16



ents

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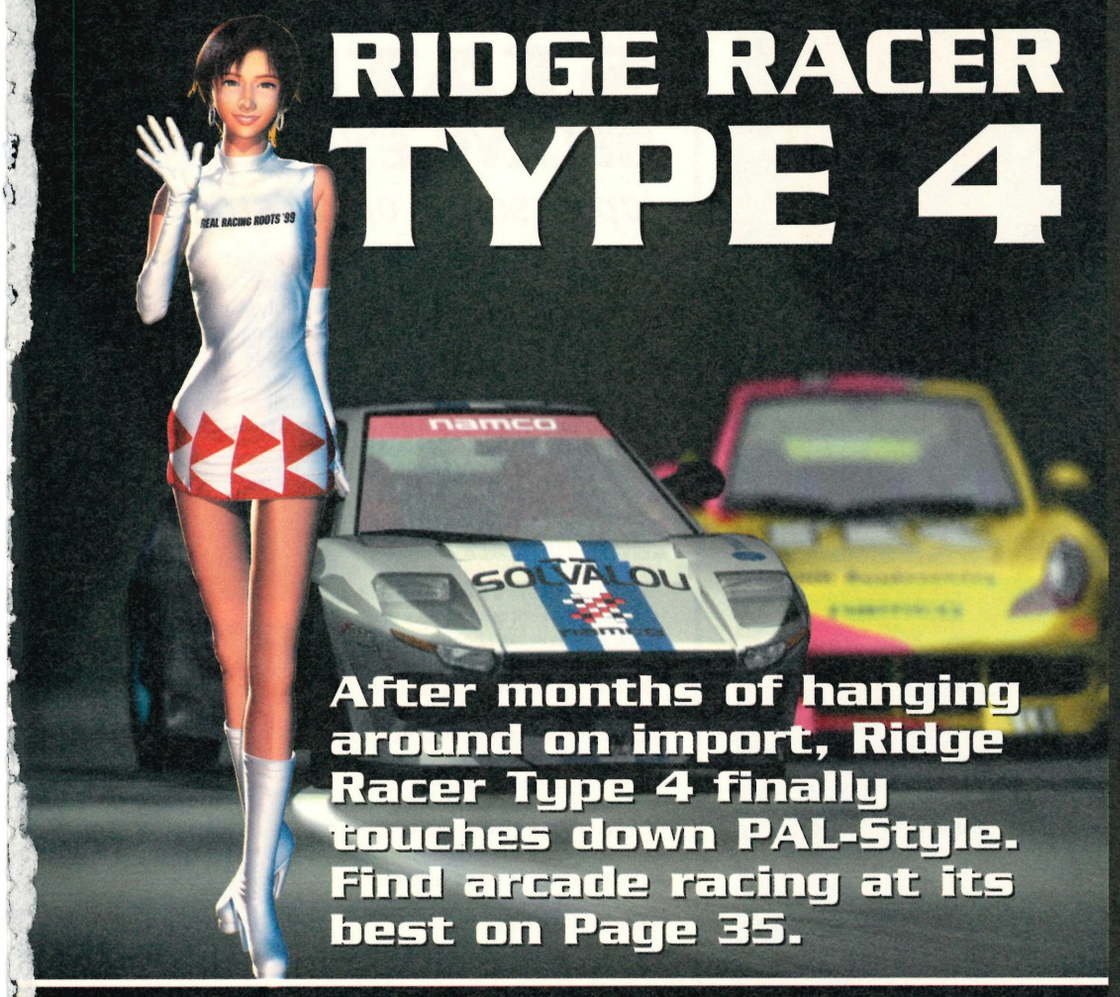
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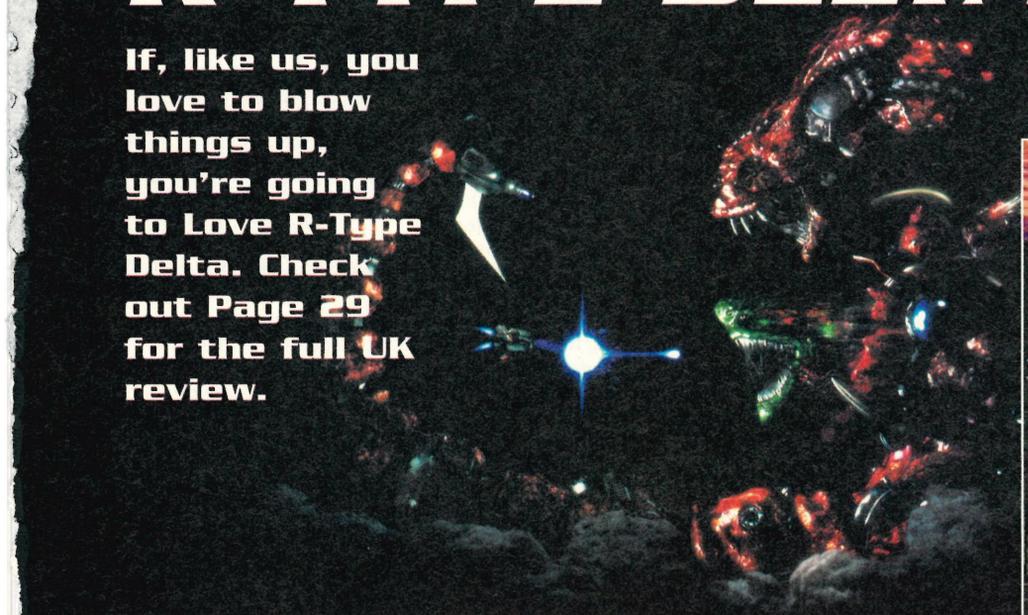
RIDGE RACER TYPE 4



After months of hanging around on import, Ridge Racer Type 4 finally touches down PAL-Style. Find arcade racing at its best on Page 35.

R-TYPE DELTA

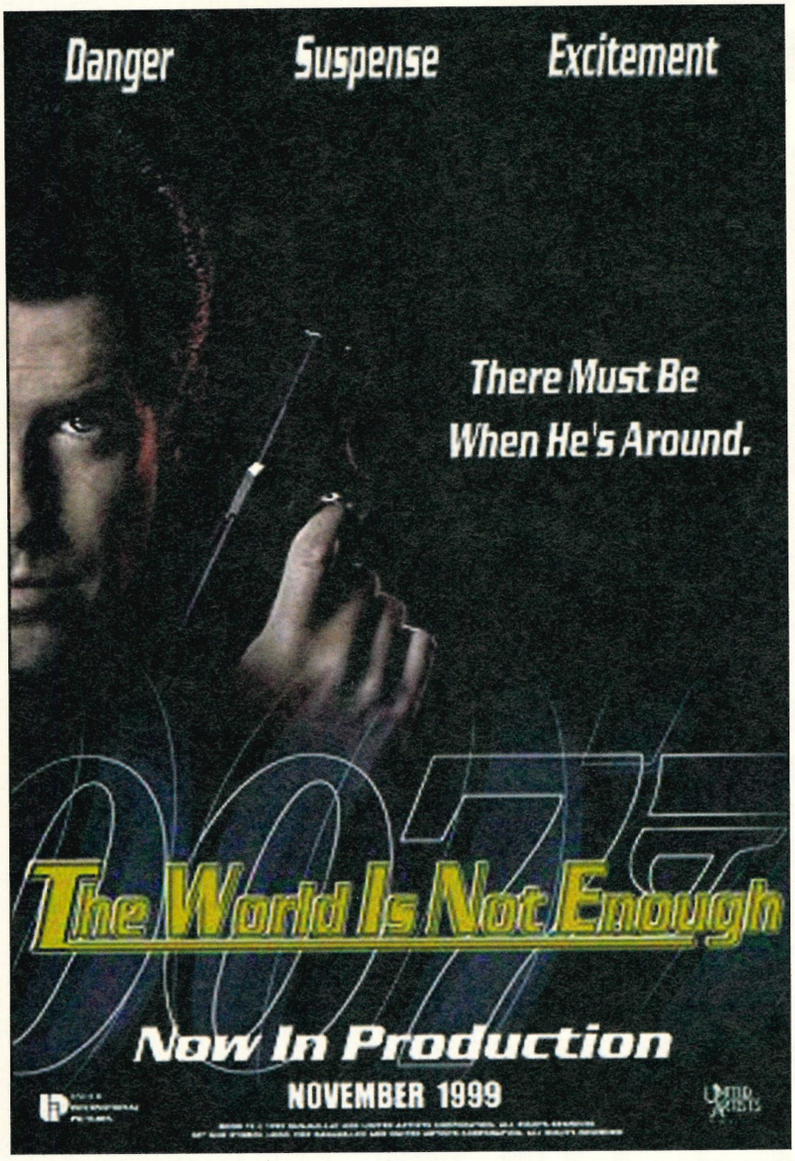
If, like us, you love to blow things up, you're going to Love R-Type Delta. Check out Page 29 for the full UK review.





signals

All the news and more...



THE NAME'S BOND...

Another 007 game comes to the PSX

Electronic Arts are to release a second James Bond title licensed from MGM Studios. The game, based on the forthcoming film The World Is Not Enough, will follow Tomorrow Never Dies, due for release this Summer.

The World Is Not Enough is to be a 3D first-person offering - the PC game uses the Quake 3 engine - and will feature several action sequences taken from the film, including a boat chase and a battle around an MI5 building.



The movie, starring Pierce Brosnan as 007, opens in November. No release date has yet been set for the film.

POCKET STATION DELAYS EXPECTED

Japan snaps up all stock

The UK release of Sony's forthcoming PocketStation, released on 23rd January in Japan, seems set to be delayed. Although expected around July/August, higher-than-expected levels of demand in Japan has caused stock shortages, pushing back its European launch.

The PocketStation fits into the PSX memory cart port, and acts as a pocket games console as well as a standard memory card. It can also download games from standard PlayStation CDs; for example, Street Fighter Alpha 3, reviewed this issue, allows you to download and train your favourite character, teaching him new moves and also to fight an opponent's PocketStation SFA3 fighter via the machine's infra-red link-up mode. Final Fantasy VIII lets you grow and develop chocobos, and with Ridge Racer Type 4 you can use the PocketStation to upgrade your cars and then reload them into the game. Stand-alone games, working independently of the CD's main game, will also be catered for.



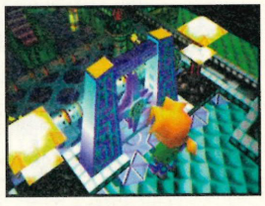




As stated in earlier issues, the PocketStation also contains a stopwatch, diary and personal organiser and can be used as a remote control unit for several standard electrical devices.

SONY BLOW A FUSE

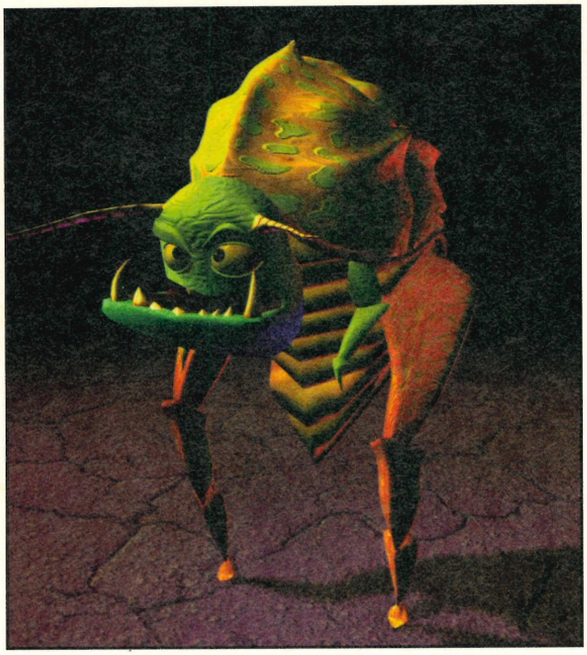
Short Fuse about to blow



In 2032 the evil Zoltan Fleet, led by E'Be, invade Earth and you must travel time to stop them...

So starts the forthcoming Short Fuses, an action adventure developed by Eighth Wonder and published by Sony. To succeed you must find eight Earth Globes scattered through time, solving the usual arcade adventure puzzles on the way.

The developers offer an example of the puzzles involved. You're surrounded by baddies which you can temporarily freeze, but your only escape route is a blocked door opened by a pressure switch. Stand on it, and the door opens. Step off it and it closes again before you can use it. How do you escape? Anyone who's played an RPG before knows you must freeze a baddie and place it on the pressure switch - this puzzle is only slightly less cliched than bridging a hole with a plank or using a torch in a dark room, but if the general level of puzzles is better, this could still be a winner.



THE BUGS ARE BACK...

Centipede gets 90s makeover

Building on the current craze for all things retro, Hasbro Interactive are working on a 90s update of that old Atari classic Centipede. The 90s version features 3D gameplay, classic and real-time options and 30 levels set across six different worlds. Up to four players can compete using a Multi Tap.

As the star of the show, you must defend your village against an onslaught of centipedes and other creatures, such as scorpions, ants and even fleas. Using your custom-built anti-centipede fighter, you must fight your way to the centipede temple, saving stranded villagers along the way. Finally, you must take on the Queen Centipede and put a stop to her bug-inspired badness for once and for all.



No in-game screenshots are available yet, but judging by the artwork here, it's certainly going to be colourful.

wipEout

MAKIN' MUSIC AGAIN

Top artists signed for game

The third offering in Psygnosis' critically-acclaimed WipEout series, always famed for its cool dance music backing tracks, will again feature top bands and artists. Most are yet to be confirmed, but a deal with top DJ and producer Sasha has already been struck.

"WipEout was the first great racer on the PlayStation and helped cement the marriage of club culture and videogames", says Psygnosis' Glen O'Connell. "The deal with Sasha will see him producing exclusive tracks for WipEout 3 as well as working with several international guest acts for the project".

Psygnosis are also planning a European club tour with Sasha and other leading artists. expect further information soon.

POCKET MANAGEMENT

Codemasters are to release a football management game licensed from the League Managers' Association. The game has yet to be named, but features an intuitive icon-based interface.

While most features are under wraps, the title is certain to make use of the forthcoming PocketStation add-on, downloading team data to the unit and competing with other PocketStation-based players via its infra-red capacity. Team data is then updated, and can be reloaded into the original game. No release date has been set, but it's expected towards the end of the year.

SUPERMAN SENSATION

Titus Software are working on The Animated Adventures of Superman. The game will offer 3D exploration action using a third-person perspective, much like Tomb Raider, and contain around 16 levels. It's penciled in for a June release, but this seems likely to slip.

RAYMAN 3 FOR PSX 2

Ubi Soft have confirmed that after their forthcoming Rayman 2 title on the PSX, the inevitable Rayman 3 will be produced for the PlayStation 2. According to Yves Guillemot, Ubi Soft's President, "Ubi Soft is planning a third title in the Rayman series, targeted to launch at the same time as the cartoon [the Rayman TV series covered last issue] at the end of the year 2000. The game will appear on several formats, including PlayStation 2" He went on to say the Sony PSX successor may also be targeted at the family market. "We'll probably do kids' titles for PlayStation 2, because we think [the PSX 2] will be for all the family".

PRINCE NASEEM DELAYED

The release of Codemasters' Prince Naseem Boxing has been put back for three months to allow additional development time. This will be used to enhance the controls, making them much more intuitive, extend the range of moves and make the animations more realistic. This, they argue, will add depth to the gameplay, allowing more subtle strategies to be pursued.

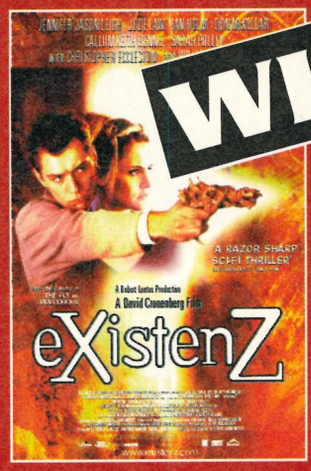
"Realism is what we're striving for", said Richard Darling, Codemasters' Director of Games Design. "Although it's more impressive than any previous boxing game, we found the actions somewhat limiting. We believe the PlayStation can handle a more refined approach".

Prince Naseem Boxing will now appear in the Autumn.

MUCHO MALADY

Mucho, the forthcoming 3D puzzler from Titus announced last issue, is currently on hold. The NTSC version of the game is complete and goes on sale in Japan soon, but Titus have yet to decide whether to convert it to UK PAL format.

COMPETITION



WIN!

eXistenZ - the daring new organic game system which, when downloaded into humans, accesses their central nervous systems transporting them into an alternate reality. These are the videogames of the future, games which adapt themselves according to how they're played. You have to play the game to find out why you're playing the game...

The latest film from director David Cronenberg (Videodrome, The Thing, Crash), eXistenZ is set in a near-future society where videogames designers are worshipped like rock stars. One such developer is Allegra Geller (Jennifer Jason Leigh) whose games tap so deeply into the subconscious the fine line between reality and escapism is blurred. Not everyone appreciates her efforts - an antieXistenZialist (!) protester wielding a weapon that uses human teeth as ammo attacks, damaging the game-pod. Along with security guard Ted Pikul (Jude Law), Allegra flees through the world she has invented, where nothing is as it seems and the game's villains become real...

eXistenZ premieres at the Berlin Film Festival, after which it gets a worldwide cinema release. Knowing David Cronenberg, it will probably be 18-rated.

to celebrate the film's release, we have five prize packs, each containing a T-shirt, CD soundtrack, official poster, an eXistenZ novel and some stickers. To be in with a chance of winning, just answer this simple question:

• Who directed eXistenZ?

Answers on a postcard to:
Warped eXistenZ Competition,
extreme PlayStation,
22 Strand Street,
Poole, Dorset BH15 1SB.

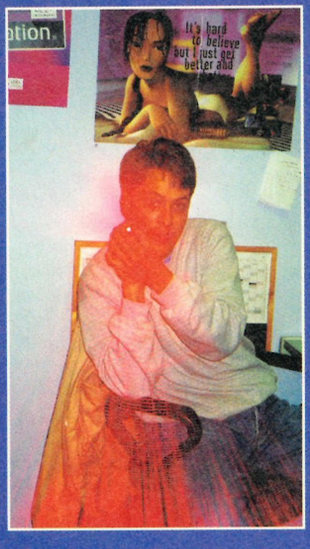
Entries arriving after 20th May will enter an alternate reality...

MEET THE TEAM

More madcap goings-on in the EPM offices. What have the team been up to this month, apart from playing games, arriving late and moaning?



Ian's personal habits are disgusting. If he isn't farting, he's picking his nose. Soon after this was taken, our photographer had to duck as an enormous bogey came flying his way...



Ever camera-shy, Russell tried to get out of having his picture taken by shining a laser pointer at the lens. As you can see, it didn't work - it just made him look a bigger berk than usual...



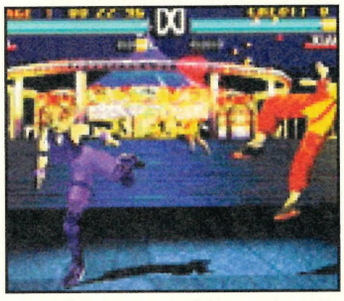
And Claire? She spent the entire month on the phone, as per usual. Funny thing is, she never seems to say very much on it - she just listens. Perhaps she's ringing kinky 0898 numbers...

SONY STUNG BY ASA

Sony have come under fire from the Advertising Standards Authority. The 'test results' mail-out sent to those on the PlayStation mailing list was designed to look like a hospital report, provoking furious reactions from recipients who were expecting for genuine medical information. The ASA labelled the campaign one of the ten most offensive of last year.
Gremlin also came in for criticism over its Actua Soccer 3 blooded fists ad, and Interplay's Wild 9 promotion, featuring severed thumbs, was also condemned.

DINO CRISIS READY TO ROAR

Capcom are working on a new game called Dino Crisis, an arcade adventure featuring Resident Evil-style gameplay.
Featuring an 'unrivalled level of detail', every room is intricately designed. Capcom have also refined Resident Evil's camera system, offering a film-like experience. The player must tackle evil creatures and object-based puzzles as he penetrates a top-secret research base believed (wrongly) to be deserted and hunts an evil scientist once believed killed.
Dino Crisis hits the streets this winter - be prepared.



NAMCO PLAN A FOURTH TEKKEN GAME FOR PSX

Namco are currently developing a fourth title in the Tekken series - not Tekken 4, but Tekken Tag. The new game features enhanced graphics, and is rumoured to include Tekken 2 characters who didn't make the third tournament. Tekken Tag will appear in the arcades first, taking advantage of Namco's System 15 motherboard. The coin-op is scheduled for a Summer release in Japan, with a PlayStation conversion to follow. A PlayStation 2 version also seems likely, hopefully featuring graphics like those seen in the PSX 2 promotional video.

SNOW JOKE...

Yet another snowboarding game is to be released on the PlayStation, this time from Capcom. Trick 'N' Snow Boarder features four modes of play, one- and two-player options, an editor and hidden characters. For such a minority sport, snowboarding gets incredible coverage on the PSX. When will it all end?

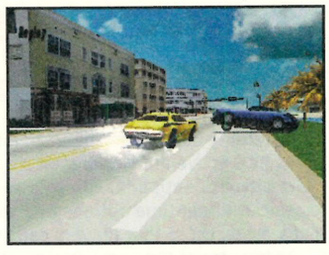


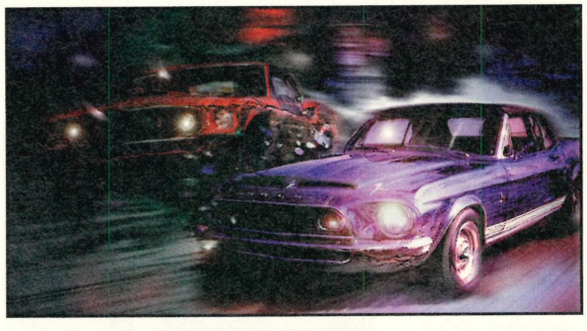
BAD DRIVERS

GT seek terrible roadhogs

Are you sick of the way people drive? Ever wondered how some idiots manage to pass their test? Now's the chance to get your own back with GT Interactive's Driver Hotline.

GT's forthcoming PlayStation game Driver lets you drive like a maniac without endangering life and limb, but in an effort to stamp out such practices in the real world, they're launching a national competition to find the worst drivers in the country. If you see a spectacularly bad piece of driving, call their Driver Hotline on 0181 948 0626 and report it, leaving your name and number. How they're going to judge the competition is anyone's guess, but the winner gets a PlayStation and a copy of Driver...



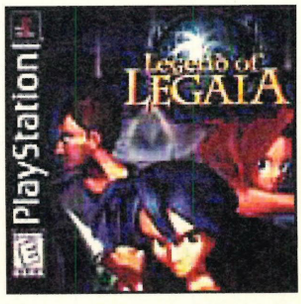


THE LEGEND CONTINUES...

RPG from Wild Arms team

Contrail, developers of Wild Arms, are working on another RPG, again to be published by Sony. Legend of Legaia received good reviews in America, and is set to hit these shores some time in the summer.

Beginning with the creation of the world, the gods allowed humans to better themselves by giving them Seru, creatures which combined with Homo Sapiens to enhance their natural abilities and give them special powers. Alas, the Mist arrived. No one knows from where it came, but it turns Seru into bloodthirsty monsters. Using a special sort of Seru called the Ra-Seru, which are apparently immune to the Mist, you must restore the balance of nature and allow human and Seru to co-exist once more.

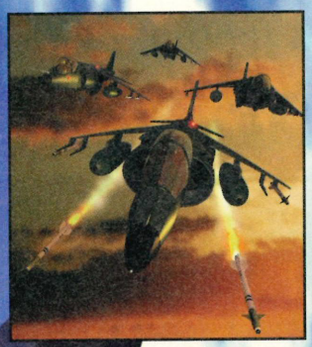


HIGH FLIER TARGETS PLAYSTATION

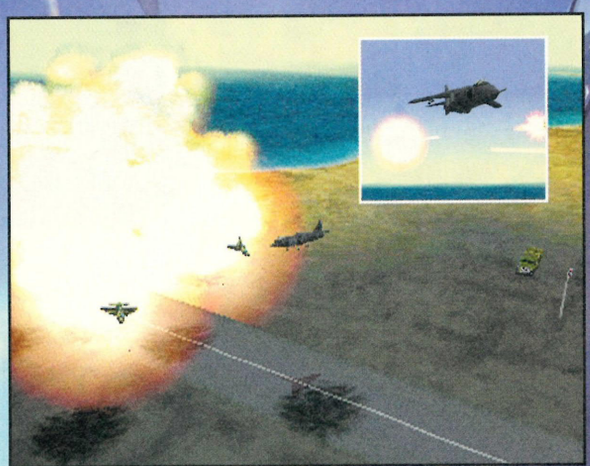
Infogrames' Harrier sim takes to the skies

We've more information on Infogrames' forthcoming Eagle One Harrier Attack, an airborne arcade action thriller in which you, as a US Marine pilot, must recapture five Hawaiian islands taken by terrorists.

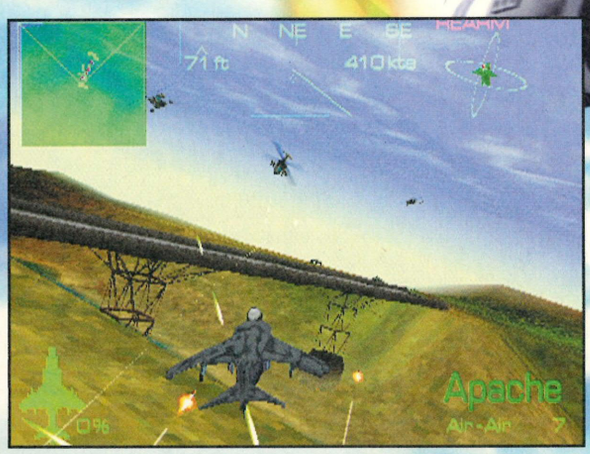
The game is mission-based, with tasks including mid-air rescues, liberating towns, flying through active volcanoes and stealing then flying top secret 'Black Project' superplanes and helicopters. Although the game is basically a flight sim, its intuitive controls make it accessible even to newcomers. There are three differing flight models, ranging from Easy to Expert, ensuring everyone is catered for. As well as the expected single-player game, there's a two-player dogfighting mode and even a two-player co-operative option. Eagle One Harrier Attack hits the shelves in September - watch the skies.











GADGETS

Summer playthings don't get much simpler than this. Bandai's Stomp Rockets are fired into the sky using air power, not by pumping up an air tank and pressing a button or via some costly device involving compressed air canisters, but simply by jumping on a bulb.

The bulb is attached to a long, thin tube, on which sits the rocket. jumping on it forces air through the tube and sends the rocket hurtling towards the clouds. If you think this sounds ridiculously underpowered and weak, think again - Stomp Rockets can fly up to 400 feet. Try spraying WD 40 on the tube for even more impressive results.

Each Stomp Rocket set comes with three rockets, which can be upgraded with parachutes, sold separately. You can also buy extra rockets, just in case you lose one over your neighbour's hedge.

The Stomp Rocket costs a mere £11.99, and should be in your shops now.

COMPETITION

Thanks to those awfully-nice Bandai bods, we've got five Stomp Rockets to give away. To stand a chance of winning, just answer this simple question:

• What was the name of the rocket which took Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin to the moon?

Answers on a postcard to:
Rocket Power Competition,
extreme PlayStation,
22 Strand Street,
Poole, Dorset BH15 1SB

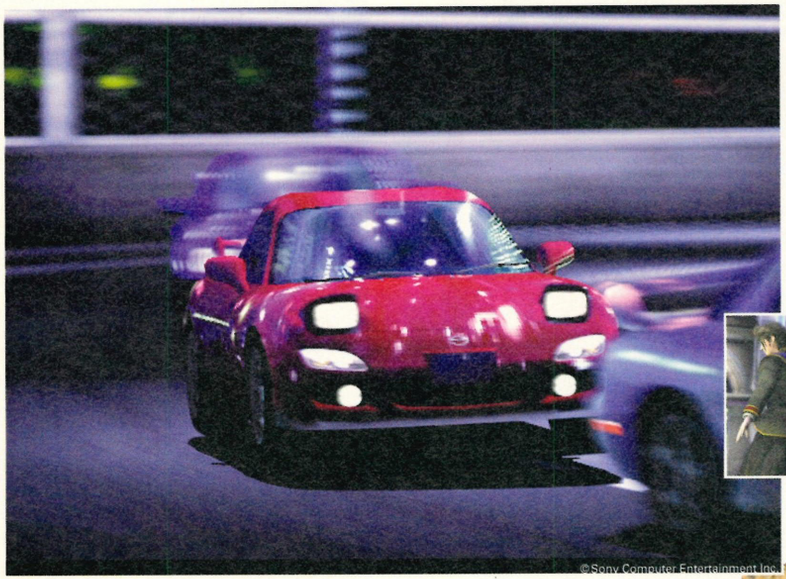
Entries which arrive after 20th May will be blasted into outer space.





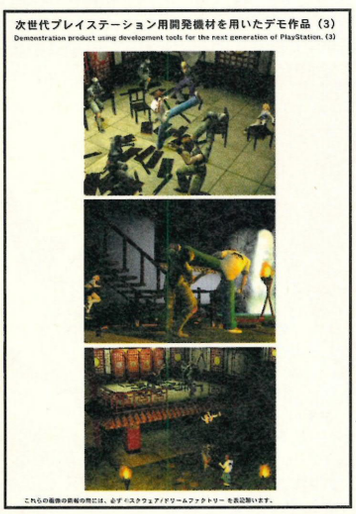
PLAYSTATION 2
IT'S LOOKING GOOD...

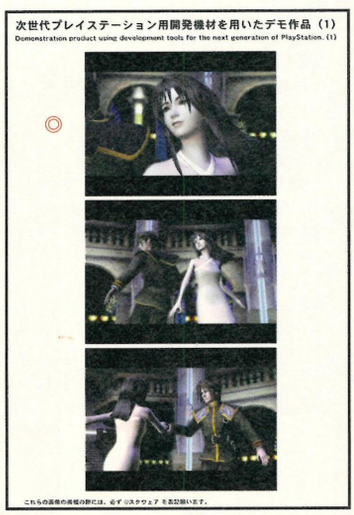
Following last month's feature on the PlayStation 2, Sony have released more detailed images showing what their forthcoming machine can do. Nice, aren't they?

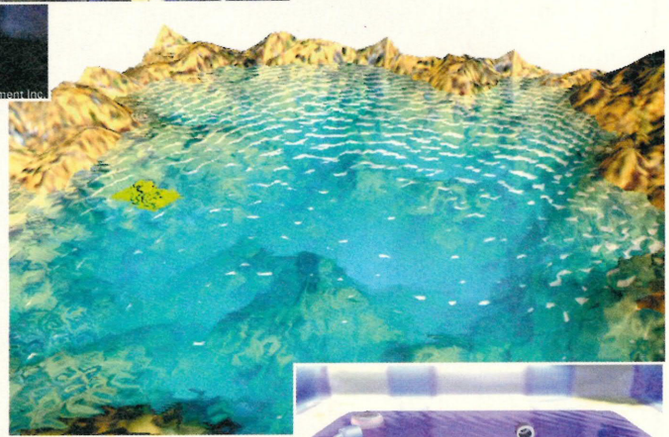
















MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU (AGAIN)
New PSX Star Wars games licensed from the forthcoming movie...

Unless you live on a desert island with no contact with the rest of humanity (in which case, how did you get hold of this copy of EPM?), you know there's a new Star Wars film in the pipeline. Unsurprisingly, there are also to be PlayStation games based on the film. Activision have two in preparation; Star Wars: Episode 1, The Phantom Menace, and Star Wars: Episode 1, Racer.

The Phantom Menace follows closely the plot of the film, though various sub-plots take you beyond its narrative. Beginning as two heroic Jedi Knights board a Trade Federation Ship orbiting the planet Naboo, you explore territories in the Star Wars universe such as Tatooine and Galactic capital Coruscant. Playing as Obi-Wan Kenobi (much younger than we remember him from the earlier Star Wars films), you battle your way through the game using mind force, a blaster and (of course) the ubiquitous lightsaber. You also get to play Kenobi's mentor Qui-Gon Jinn and Queen Amidala.

There are hundreds of characters to meet, including Anakin Skywalker, Luke's father who eventually becomes Darth Vader. Some will be familiar to fans of the films, others are completely new.

Racer is a futuristic driving game based on the podrace from the new film. Controlling one of 20 characters, you race at speeds of up to 600 mph through eight spectacular worlds. Watch out for methane lakes, Tusken Raider assaults, anti-gravity tunnels and more.

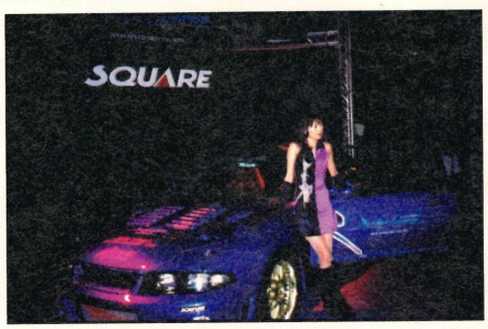
Star Wars: Episode 1, Racer features over 20 tracks, 3D environments and sound effects and soundtracks taken directly from the film. It's expected this Autumn.

MADE IN JAPAN

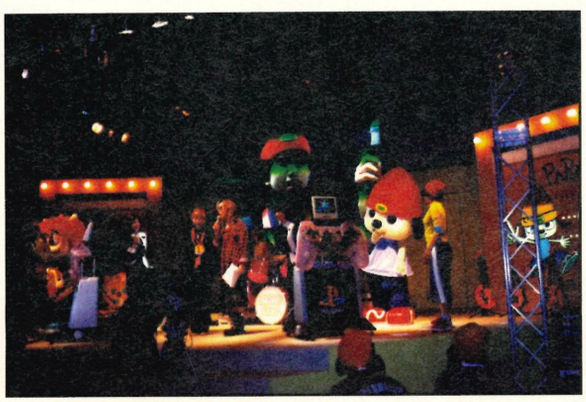
There's some great games in the pipeline from Japan, and they were all showcased at the recent Tokyo Games Show. JVC's Aidan Minter was there, and he sent us a full report...

With the recent announcement of PlayStation 2 still ringing in everybody's ears, it was disappointing that the machine and any of the superb demos displaying the console's power were absent from the recent Tokyo Games Show, with Sony choosing to demo to executives by strict appointment only. Sony's stand was unusual in that it showcased only a handful of PlayStation products as well as the PocketStation peripheral. Two of Sony's new games, Parappa the Rappa 2 and Omega Boost, generated the most interest. Developed by Polyphony Digital Inc, developers of Gran Turismo, Omega Boost is a blend of Jaleco's old shooter Brahma Force released by JVC last year and Armoured Core, although comparing it like this does it no justice at all; some of the 3D elements within Omega Boost are simply outstanding, pushing the machine's 32-bit capacity to the max.

Huge crowds gathered for the Parappa the Rappa 2 music show, featuring the band Milk Can, while inside the Sony stand gamers were trying out the sequel which had a waiting time of about half an hour before any of the 25 machines were free. Namco was at the show in force with a huge stand displaying a multitude of games, including Soul Calibur and Ace Combat 3 Electrosphere, which had in excess of 40 screens showing gameplay and intro footage. Namco has chosen to use a story-based slant to the title, with a Manga-inspired intro to match. Although visually stunning to look at, it suffers the same from basic gameplay of the first two games - I found it fairly easy to complete the demo mission without a losing a life or suffering damage. Arguably the best feature of the game is the missile effects as they streak from your plane to their target. The other new feature is being able to choose from three different companies to fly for, much like the facility incorporated in R4 where you choose racing teams. The updated radar and head-up display and its very playable nature make for a very solid game. Rumour has it the top coin-op Crazy Taxi will make an appearance on PlayStation 2. The game's free-roaming environment and choice of four different drivers with varying skills sees you in command of a taxi getting passengers to destinations in the quickest possible time. Needless to say, lane discipline goes out the window as your taxi cab rams its way through the city.







Top of the Pops?

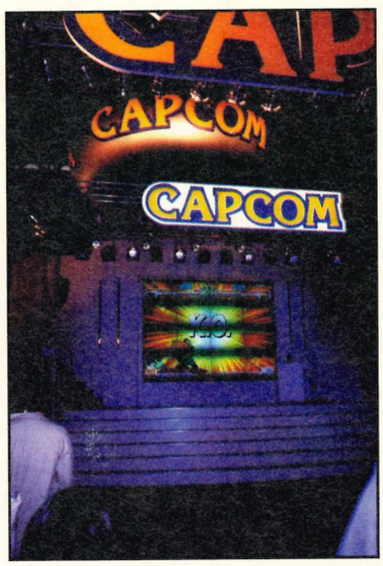
Taito has recently signed a deal with JVC, and the Covent Garden-based publisher is due to release Pop 'n' Pop in the Summer, a puzzle variant similar to the Bust-A-Move series from Acclaim.

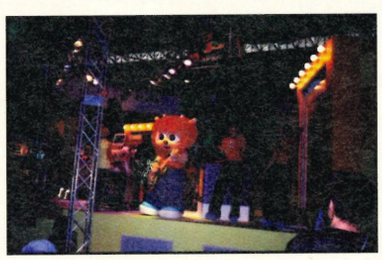
Capcom held many people captivated with the forthcoming Dino Crisis, developed by the Resident Evil team. It takes the movie-inspired format further by including a range of vicious dinosaurs such as the raptor and T-Rex. It's bound to be a sure-fire hit in Europe for Virgin Interactive, who have signed the title. Capcom kept beat-'em-up fans happy with Street Fighter Zero 3, which had some cool new moves and combination attacks, not to mention a host of new characters! Marvel Vs Capcom had a tournament event played on a 25ft screen, again displaying some powerhouse moves.

Konami had the busiest stand at the show with its range of rhythm-based 'Benami ' product such as Dance Dance Revolution and Drum Mania, and also Guitar Freaks, which saw people putting their air guitar skills and Richie Sambora impersonations into tragic effect. Silent Hill backed up the PlayStation product line-up as did add-on discs for Beatmania.

Bandai had fishing fans catered for with its PlayStation title Bass Rise, developed by Megabass General Baits Inc. It uses the new reel and spool peripheral with on-screen indicators for line tension and length. Fishing games are currently an untested genre for PlayStation owners, but JVC also have an angling title on the way. Fish Eyes gives the player a unique view from the fishes' perspective.

Electronic Arts had a small stand at the show, with a ban on photography of Over Drivin' 4 (Need for Speed 4). The title boasts some impressive new cars such as Porsche 911, BMW M5 series and the Mercedes SLK. Tracks are longer and the AI of other road traffic is better. The pursuit element is still included and this time sees Porsche 911 cop cars in order to keep pace with the likes of the top marque cars.





WHAT ARE JVC UP TO?

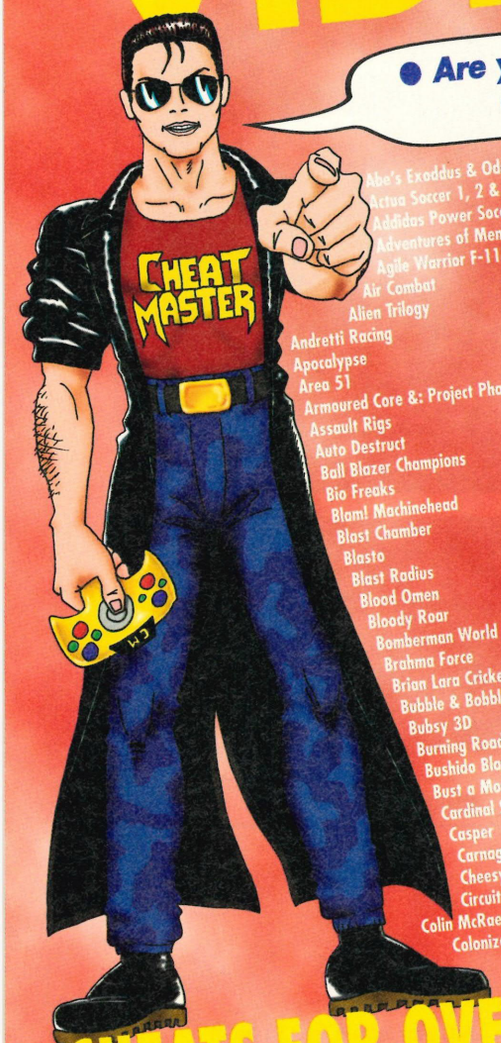
JVC

JVC has some key titles in the pipeline for the PlayStation, two of which are developed in house, with negotiations currently under way with Japanese developers on other titles. 'With the European market getting so competitive, it's important we continue to establish JVC with a series of publishing and development deals that increases our output into 1999 and beyond', says Product Manager Aidan Minter. 'We are currently taking the first few steps into PlayStation 2 development with Wing Over 3, working closely with our developer Pack in Video, and hope to have one of the best flight sims for that format for the Millennium'.

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In a future world decimated by global warming, what do the remnants of mankind do for kicks? Cryo think they have the answer...

PUBLISHER Cryo UK

DEVELOPER Smart Dog

RELEASED 26th June '99

360: Three Sixty

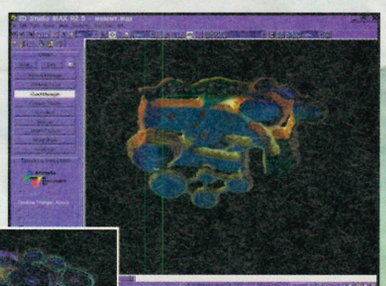
























Regular readers know the titanic storyline behind this one. Due to centuries of neglect and abuse, our little planet underwent cataclysmic climactic changes. The poles melted, causing floods in low-lying areas; rivers are burst their banks, oceans breached coastal defences and new lakes consumed entire cities. The inevitable tidal waves, caused by the break-up of polar glaciers, wreaked havoc all over the globe. Civilisation as we know it is not destroyed, but is severely threatened.

It took centuries, but eventually the waters began to subside. Land reclaimed itself from the seas, and because of the devastating changes that had befell the planet, entire oceans dried up, leaving crusty sea beds strewn with decaying aquatic creatures. For the scattered remnants of civilisation, the struggle for life continued. A new world, new society and violent new motor racing sports...

360: Three Sixty is basically a futuristic driving game, but with an added combative element. As you drive one of the eight vehicles on offer (look out for the two hidden ones too) across 12 tracks spread over four worlds, you pick up weapons to hinder your opponents' progress. Needless to say, they can do the same to you too. After each worlds' three tracks there's a deathmatch arena where you battle it out with your foes, your weaponry depending on how you did in the races, and there's a hidden jungle arena won by completing the game. But how does it all hang together? Let's ask developers Smart Dog...

Caring for the Environment...

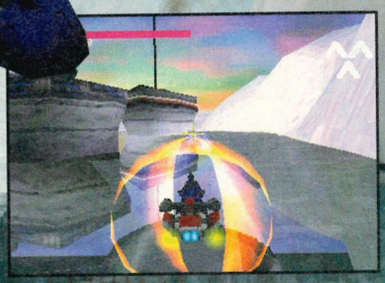
"The publisher gave us a rough idea of what they wanted", says Development Manager John Turpin. "Natural environments and unusual vehicles, not just a standard hi-tech world. The main plan was to reflect a world in decay, but with some evidence of civilisation remaining - we had to keep the buildings to a minimum. The battle arenas were added to give the game a mix of racing and combat styles".

The vehicles, designed by Mike Woods, certainly are unusual. As well as handling differently, they're also vastly different in appearance. For once, their variations aren't limited to liveries and a few minor features. The terrains make a vast difference to the way they handle too. The cars aren't like modern hovercraft - their hover system has more in common with Harrier Jump Jets, but cannot be directly compared to anything we have in the 20th Century. According to Chief Artist Ashley Routledge, "Going over different terrains











affects the handling of your machine. For example, water moves to reflect the air flow of the thrusters but dry land doesn't, so propulsion is lost". Obviously, the harder the ground, the greater this effect. One things the craft do have in common with hovercraft is their cornering. It's possible to turn them through 360° (hence the title) without changing their direction. Thus you can rotate as you approach a turn and power out with the thrusters when you reach it - a whole new approach to driving is needed.

As well as your standard cannon, there are 13 different weapons to be collected by driving over the necessary icons. These range from missiles and cluster bombs to shields and the inevitable mines. All are designed for close-quarter combat - why should someone from the back of the pack take out a racer half a lap in front of him or even the leader just because he won the correct weapon? Also, while they hamper a player by slowing him down, they're never disastrous, ruining his race.



Ice, Ice Baby...

Tom Dicken is responsible for designing the Ice World. "The best thing about its arena", he said, "is that it's dark. It offers a lot of hiding places". The tracks themselves took around a month each. All are completely different - none share sections of track.

Joel Rowney's Water and Sea Bed worlds were originally proposed by Cryo. The ideas expanded as the game developed. There are around 15,000 polygons per track, and 3,000 per frame. "The climate has changed dramatically", he offers, "leading to flooding in some areas and the oceans drying in others". Indeed, as you race along the dried-up sea bed, you pass a decomposing whale's carcass at one point. You can almost smell it.

Ashley Routledge did the hidden Jungle Arena. Here you fight it out with all your regular foes plus a new, improved vehicle which you win if you conquer the arena - this is one of the hidden craft. "The Jungle Arena is quite open", he said, "but there are corridors too". The team play a lot of multiplayer deathmatch-type games during their lunch breaks, so they've a clear idea of what works and what doesn't, and incorporated this into the arenas. A basic radar is catered for, helping you to find your foes, but nothing that gets in your way. Look out for a hidden corridor jump leading to a power-up too.

Kam Chana dealt with the Lava World. Lots of little touches are to be added here. For example, the lava flows down the rockfaces into the water on which you race. This is achieved by animating the textures. As it flows into the water, steam rises. "The hardest part", said Kam, "was finding source material on which to base the lava. It has to look realistic". Drive your craft over the lava and you play a price, in terms of speed and damage.

Of course, the artwork and environments aren't much use without gameplay, and that's where programmers John Coelho and Ian Tomkins come in. They've spent a lot of time optimising the game and getting it up to speed. The opponents' AI avoids the pre-determined track approach, where enemies cling to the racing like as if they were on a Scalextric track. Instead they look ahead at where they can move, and then decide where they want to go - just like a human player. The game also features 'grudge AI', where focusing your attacks on one opponent makes him more aggressive towards you.

360: Three Sixty hits the shelves at the end of June. With so many racers on the market it's great to see someone doing something different with the genre, and EPM certainly look forward to seeing the finished game.



MAKIN' MUSIC...

Gerard Gourley's the man responsible for the in-game music, which Cryo are considering marketing as an audio CD. "I wanted to make it very organic", he offered. "Lots of weird sounds and very heavy on the bass". Each track is tailor-made for the world it accompanies too. For example, the Jungle Arena is backed by a suitably jungle track. There are nine in-game audio tracks in all, and another for the front end.

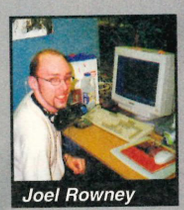




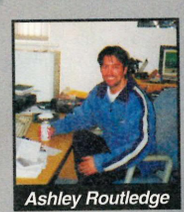
IN THE MOOD...

Jessica Williams produced the front-end graphics for the game. "I wanted to make them atmospheric", she said. "All menus have a moving stripe across the middle to give a feeling of speed". As well as the front ends, Jessica also put together a series of 'mood boards', collages of images similar to those used for the game worlds. When an artist was in need of inspiration, they could use the boards to give them fresh ideas.





Joel Rowney



Ashley Routledge



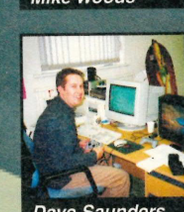
John Coelho & Ian Tomkins



Cam Chana



Mike Woods



Dave Saunders



Tom Dicken



Carmageddon is one of the most eagerly-awaited PSX game this Summer, and we're the first to play it! How has it changed since Issue 15's interview with the developers? Check out our exclusive preview...

Carmageddon

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASED
SCi	SCi	June '99

Carmageddon has come a long way since Ian went along to the SCi studios for a sneak preview a few months back. It's still got a long way to go, but from our exclusive look at the first fully-playable version of Carmageddon we can already testify that this Death Race 2000-influenced motor mash really is shaping up to be a hit.

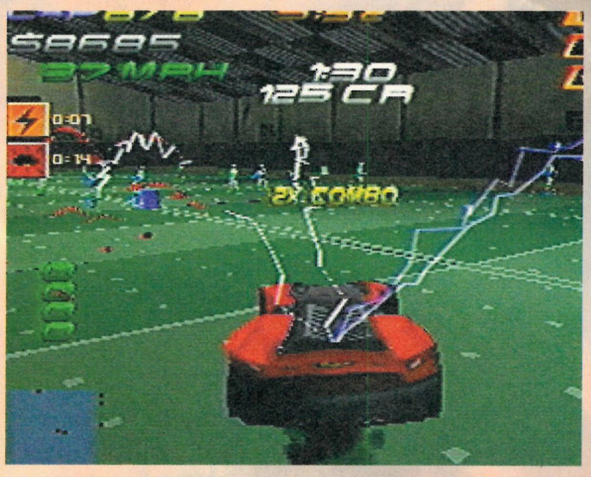
Instead of using the best levels from the smash-hit PC Carmageddon games, SCi have now decided the PlayStation version will have use the best elements overall. This means PSX Carmageddon is going to be a whole new game, and not simply a pic-'n'-mix port. SCI have created a stunning 30 brand-new tracks spread out over ten different environments. We use the term 'tracks' loosely, though, as unlike many other racing games, you're not confined to the limits of a narrow road. You can go anywhere within a level, even on to rooftops. You're not going to find many zombies on the actual track either, so you have to explore the whole of a level if you want to commit as much hit-and-run action as possible. One new feature we're glad to see is the zombies now have red blood instead of green. Of course this still doesn't make it as fun as mowing down OAPs and twenty-somethings, but the tabloid-reading moral majority (surely 'vocal minority' - Ed) fear that this will turn us all into speed-crazed, road-raged maniacs. Well, there were no other stories that week.

Ian Impressed!?

Although Ian was impressed with what he saw when he bunked off for the day and went up for tea, biscuits and lots of crazy bonkers fun at the SCi offices, this latest version has taken Carmageddon a stage further by improving everything from the tracks and handling to the characters and visuals. The game now looks and feels much more solid and the car handling has been greatly improved. There's still room for improvement, though (especially the turning circle, lads), but SCi have got it in hand so by the time the finished version hits the shelves the spectacular exaggerated realism (?) of the driving engine should be firmly in place. It's running at a good 30 frames a second, though, so no improvements needed here.

The cars themselves are looking more polished too, and we got to see some highly amusing new cars that were not in the code last time we looked. The most outlandish has to be the car based on the Citroen 2CV with a lawnmower attached to the front. Watching this classic piece of automobile history mowing down hundreds of zombie fodder is one of the most surreal sights in the game.









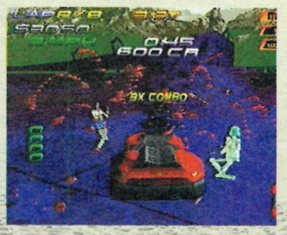


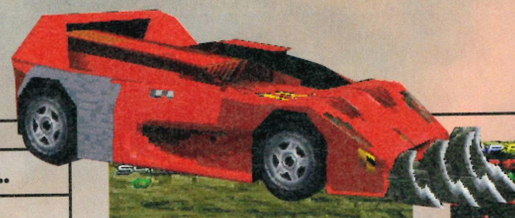










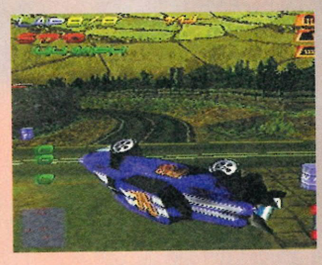












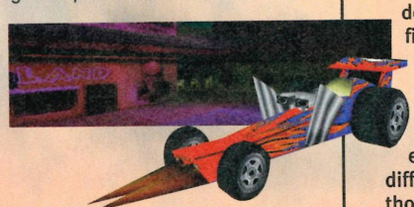
CARMAGEDDON WORLD...

There will be ten different environments with three tracks each in the PSX version of Carmageddon as well as several bonus levels. Here's a quick run down of those ten main areas..



JUNGLE/AZTEC
Speaks for itself really, but watch out for the special underground area.

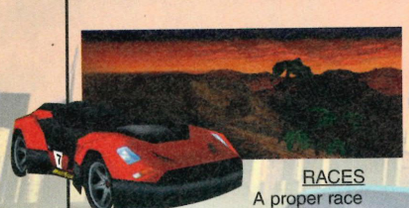
SKI RESORT
Mountain Roads, bobsleigh runs, icy lake and even a ski jump. You get the picture.



TWIN SHRIEKS
Um, a quiet Canadian town. Hmm.

MANGA
A futuristic night-time city brimming with technology and plenty of neon illumination.

RALLY
A quaint English countryside scene. Filled with zombies and automobile-related death. Lovely.

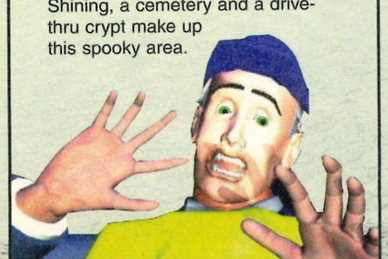


RACES
A proper race track with crossovers and pedestrian bridges. Zombie spectators won't know what's hit them.

THEME PARK
Oh if only it wasn't zombies. Then we could all run over day-tripping families in the medieval castle, maze and stunt track.

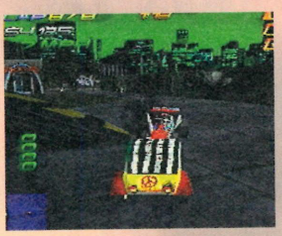
DESERT
An arid desert landscape with all the trappings of a sun drenched Arizona wasteland.

GRAVEYARD
A house influenced by the film The Shining, a cemetery and a drive-thru crypt make up this spooky area.



The single-player modes of Carmageddon are nearly in place, and although we haven't seen the multiplayer modes yet, they promise to be something special. What could be more fun than mowing down zombies in a high speed carnage-filled race? Mowing down zombies in a high-speed carnage-filled race with a mate. That's what.

It's not simply a case of a straightforward single-player and multiplayer game, though. There are various different racing options that should keep those with or without game-playing friends happy. The Checkpoint Stampede Mode takes the game down to bare bones racing. Well sort off. The last car through each checkpoint gets taken out of the equation. It couldn't just be friendly, could it? The Car Crusher Mode is more of a deathmatch where you have to get five kills on each of your opponents. Fox 'N' Hounds is a game of tag. Luckily, though, not the naked off-ground tag favoured by certain members of the Extreme team. The Driven To Destruction Mode simply asks you to destroy all your opponents by crashing straight into them in a 'chicken'-style race. Carnage Accumulator sets you a target amount of zombies to kill. Sudden Death is basically the same as Checkpoint Stampede and Terminal Tag is Fox 'N' Hounds with more serious consequences. That little lot should be enough to keep even the most demanding gamer happy.



















Believe The Hype

Although Carmageddon wouldn't be Carmageddon if it had real weapons, SCI have ensured there are plenty of pick-ups to help out in your search for the ultimate zombie death. Anything from a basic Turbo and Zombie Glue to a devastating (and satisfying) Electro Ray and Invulnerability can be collected. The odds aren't all in your favour though - the other cars have access to all these pick-ups too.

Besides the obvious thrill of mowing down hundreds of zombies, Carmageddon is also shaping up to be an exciting and involving driving game. It's certainly improved since the last time anyone at extreme laid eyes on it, and if SCi can keep it up, Carmageddon could easily be a hit on merit and not purely on the hype that surrounds it. Let's hope so.

PUBLISHER
Infogrames

DEVELOPER
Eutechnyx

RELEASED
11th June '99

Le Mans 24 Hours

Could you race for 24 hours, non-stop, in the ultimate test of endurance? Let's look at four teams who think they are...

The time is near. On 12th and 13th of June the best drivers in the world take to the track once more for the Le Mans 24 Hours endurance race, the toughest motoring event on the world. Thanks to Eutechnyx, we can race it too - Le Mans 24 Hours hits the shelves just before the big race, and gives you the chance to take on one of 48 cars covering 23 teams. They're looking good too - check out these pics of the real Le Mans cars and compare them to the in-game graphics and hi-res renders in this outline of four of the finest Le Mans teams to come out of the UK...

CHAMBERLAIN ENGINEERING...

Driving Vipers bought from the Oreca team, the Chamberlain Engineering squad came 5th and 7th in the GT2 category (19th and 21st overall) in last year's race. Led by ex-policeman Hugh Chamberlain, the team have been racing at Le Mans since 1982, using Spices, Lotuses and Jaguars before moving on to Vipers in 1997.



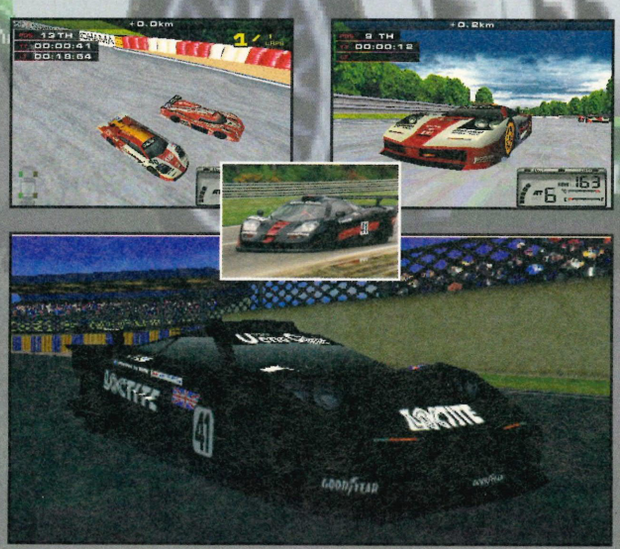
LISTER...

The Lister team were surprisingly absent from last year's Le Mans. Organisers ACO refused the team entry to the track during pre-qualifying, arguing alterations made to the Lister Storm GTL 1B made it a completely different car to the road version, which made it illegal in the GT1 and GT2 categories. They also argued passing the exhausts through the cockpit broke the rules. Lister boss Laurence Pearce disagreed, and a compromise could not be reached. They're back this year, though, with one of the most recognisable liveries in motorsport.



GTC COMPETITION...

The GT Competition team are fast. They should be - they use McLaren F1s. Winners in the GT1 category in 1997, they thus automatically qualified last year. Although less successful in 1998, they leading car (numbered 40, the red and white one) managed a highly respectable fourth, though the second failed to finish. They're sure to be back with a vengeance this year, though.



MARCOS...

Marcos celebrate their 40th anniversary this year. The company, founded in 1959 by Jem Marsh and Frank Costin (the name Marcos is taken from the first syllables of their surnames), could take the GT2 category by storm in their famous Marcos Mantis cars.



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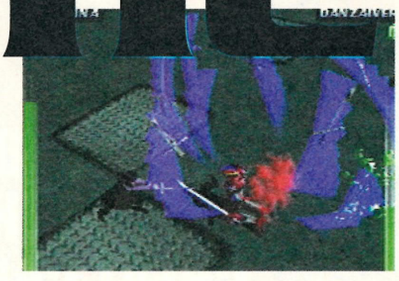
Fighting games are two-a-penny these days, so is there any room for Titus' first ever PlayStation game, Evil Zone?

Evil Zone

PUBLISHER Titus

DEVELOPER Future Media Creators Yukes

RELEASED June '99







Amazingly for a PlayStation beat-'em-up, Evil Zone features only one attack button. Before you turn the page in disgust, Evil Zone is actually shaping up to be a very playable and in-depth fighting experience. The fighting system is based on special moves activated by joypad movements in combination with the single attack button. The move that occurs depends on the distance from your opponent you're standing, so there's plenty of different attacks to pull off. Using just one attack and one defence button makes the gameplay simplistic at first, but a hidden layer of depth is promised that should keep you hooked for months. And from what we've played on the preview version, it looks as though Evil Zone could keep this promise.

The 3D action all looks extremely solid at this stage. The animation is fast and smooth and the action response time far out-does anything Tekken 3 can offer. This makes for some extremely fast and frantic combat action straight out of the Street Fighter book.

The characters and story are all Manga in style, so expect plenty of tough little Japanese girls to take on mystical Samurai and supernatural forces. The character line-up is one of the strongest we've seen on a beat-'em-up. Each player has several outfits and an array of basic and special moves that should put the latest Street Fighter games to shame. Evil Zone also has an energy charge system that can be used to gain even more potent special attacks. Holding the attack button charges up your health bar, and once at the top you gain a crystal. You can collect up to three crystals, which can then be used to blow your opponent away with some incredibly spectacular moves.

Evil Zone's a 3D beat-'em-up with lots in common with Street Fighter, nowhere near as anal as the Tekken series and a top set of characters to boot. The game to put Titus on the PlayStation map? Maybe, just maybe.









PUBLISHER Sony CEE

DEVELOPER Poliphony Digital Inc.

RELEASED Summer '99

The developers behind Gran Turismo turn their hand to a shoot-'em-up...

Omega Boost

With Gran Turismo firmly established as the PlayStation's leading racing game and a superb sounding sequel arriving shortly, Poliphony Digital Inc. are now trying to sew up the shoot-'em-up genre. There's some stiff competition out there, though, with R-Type Delta and the soon-to-be-converted Jap smash shoot-'em-up Einhander.



From what we've seen so far, Omega Boost looks as though it's in with a chance. The highly polished full-3D worlds don't keep your Mech-style warrior ship on rails like the aforementioned games, for a start. This means you have a full 3D arena in which the action takes place. In style, then, it's more Colony Wars than R-Type, but unlike Colony Wars, the action is fast-paced and frantic enough to make Omega Boost a shoot-'em-up and not a Space Opera-style game.

From the version we laid eyes on, the visuals are certainly up to those of the graphically-respected Colony Wars series. The enemy ships are imaginative and some of the massive space stations we witnessed are a sight to be seen, especially when they are in the early stages of being blown to pieces.

The shoot-'em-up genre has been largely overlooked of late, but Omega Boost looks set to put this straight. And with a company like Poliphony behind it, you know it's going to be something special.







Kagero Deception II

PUBLISHER Virgin

DEVELOPER Tecmo

RELEASED 7th May '99

Prepare yourself for some blood-curdling RPG action with this one, as it's not your usual pretty and colourful adventure where you play a little cartoon-like character who has to cast the odd spell and talk to as many people as you can.

The storyline is very dark. A long time ago, humans were uncivilised and lived in complete chaos, that is until the Timeoids arrived to restore order. Not long after they arrived the humans suddenly began to get greedy and revolted. They started to murder the Timeoids. So now it's your turn to get some revenge by killing some humans yourself.

You play the daughter of Yocal, who is a Timeoid. However, for some reason you're in fact a human girl. King Eclypse has ordered that you are the chosen one who must destroy the humans and, against your mother's better judgement, your slaying begins in a castle.

You kill the humans by setting traps in whichever particular room you're in. You can choose from a ceiling, floor or wall trap but you must entice the enemy into it. Some of the traps can be gases, others can be bombs or arrows that shoot out of the walls and to say the outcome is very gory is an understatement.

The storyline and the graphics in this game are rather dark, but quite impressive at this early stage. It's certainly an RPG with a difference; in fact it's quite scary the further you progress, by the looks of it. Find out more when we review it in an up-and-coming issue.









Um Jammer Lammy

PUBLISHER Sony CEE

DEVELOPER Sony Japan

RELEASED July '99

Dig those groovy tunes, man...



It's back, only it's minus PaRappa The Rappa this time. But hey, that's okay, because we have another paper-thin artist instead called Um Jammer Lammy - oh, and she plays the guitar.

A sequel to PaRappa the Rappa has been on the cards for quite a while now. In this latest helping we have a whole new cast; a fresh bunch of faces. However, some things remain the same, like the 2D characters and the bold, in-yer-face backgrounds. The new lead band member is Lammy herself, though, rather than that canine we saw last time around.

The principles of the game are generally the same as before; press the appropriate buttons at the right time as displayed conveniently on the screen and you're away. Your performance is graded as you play, and if you're worse than awful then you shy away with embarrassment and have to start all over again. An extra-new feature is two-player mode where you and a friend can have a strummingly good battle instead of the usual beating each other up you get in fighting games.

From the preview version it looks like we're in for a treat when Summer finally arrives, as Um Jammer Lammy doesn't stray from its original good points; instead it just has more. Hoorah!









No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking

Mountain biking has to be the hardest sport to turn into a videogame? If anybody can do it, Codemasters can...



PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	RELEASED
Codemasters	UDS	June '99

This game's for people who have ever spent a whole evening plucking thorns out of their hands and arms, or half a night down casualty after bailing out head first into a tree. This is mountain biking for those once bitten, twice shy. Mountain biking for cowards. Which is why I can't understand why it's called No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking. Surely it should be called Scared Shitless Armchair Mountain Biking?



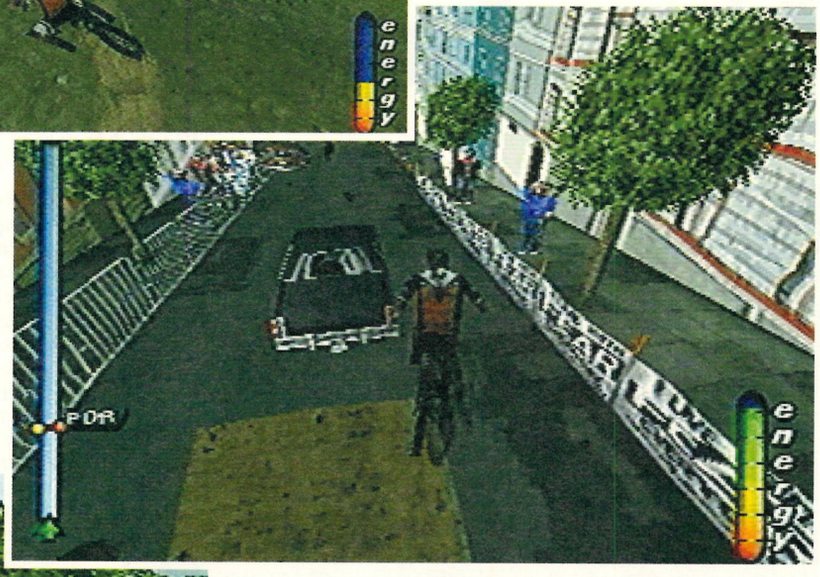


Although not an obvious choice of sport for conversion to the PlayStation, mountain biking is extremely popular. How the go-getters into it will receive a mountain bike game, though, is yet to be seen. The preview version we've tested clearly shows Codemasters have captured the spirit and feel of the sport, so hopefully the real mountain bikers will appreciate it.



The game is being programmed by Swedish developers UDS, and even though No Fear Mountain Biking isn't an in-house Codemasters production, the usual Codemasters racing traits are all very much in place. There's plenty of different racers, loads of bikes that can be fixed and upgraded and over 11 countries to ride around, usually down the sides of steep hills and mountains.

It also looks similar to other Codemasters games in the graphical department, with superb track textures and solid, well realised scenery. The riders themselves are animated with a high degree of fluidity and the game runs at a fair old pace.



On Yer Bike...

Without revving engines, high powered sports cars or spectacular pile-ups, you may think mountain biking is a little sedate. UDS have added their own brand of excitement by introducing some of the roughest terrain you're ever going to see on a racing game. And tearing over the ruts, bumps, valleys and jumps is made even more exciting by the inclusion of a trick mode. This is a little difficult to use at the moment, but it should be sorted for the finished game.

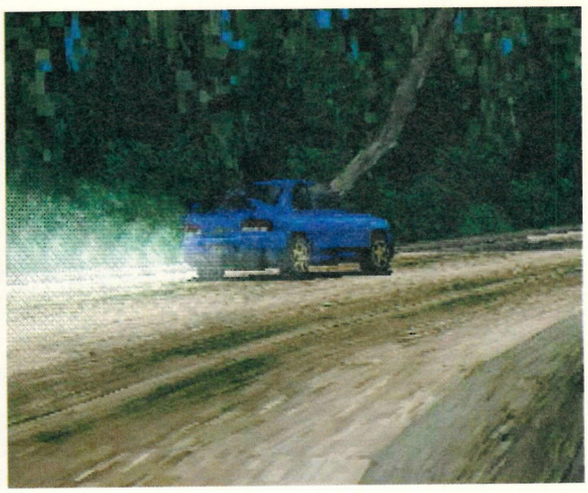


UDS have also addressed the fact that mountain bikes are pedal-powered. Instead of simply just holding a button to accelerate, you have to conserve your energy and only pedal when you need to. Gravity does the rest, which adds a whole new element to the racing theme.

Looks like there's a lot to look forward to, then. No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking promises to be a top, if a little different, racer. And, of course, with armchair cycling there's no risk of personal injury. Great.







Gran Turismo 2

GT managed to utilize 75% of the PlayStation's capability. Gran Turismo 2 looks set to top it...

PUBLISHER Sony

DEVELOPER Polyphony Digital Inc.

RELEASED September '99

It came, we played it, it conquered. Last year, Gran Turismo parked itself in the nation's collective PlayStation, outstayed its ticket and got clamped for months afterwards. It wasn't until TOCA 2 came that it finally got towed away, but once the fine was paid, Gran Turismo was back committing PlayStation parking offences all over the country. In fact it still is. Rather than let GT rust away, though, developers Polyphony Digital Inc. and publishers Sony have been hard at work on the sequel and it looks as though Gran Turismo 2 is going to demand a season ticket.

And we mean that literally. Gran Turismo may well have been parked in your PlayStation for three or four months after you bought it, but the people behind Gran Turismo 2 reckon that it takes most players over a year to complete. That's some boast for the average game, but with over 400 new cars to drive, powerslide, jump and write-off, nearly twice as many tracks as the original game and a whole new sound engine, it looks as though GT 2 really is all trousers and not just mouth.

Speed Freaks

As you can see from the all-new screenshots adorning this page, Gran Turismo 2 doesn't look like a massive leap over the original game. But considering Gran Turismo is still far more advanced graphically than any other racing game out there you can forgive the lack of visual improvement. It still looks great anyway.

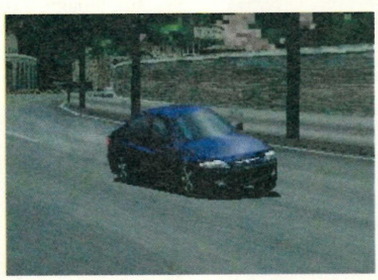
As for the cars themselves, you may have noticed a few surprises within these new shots. It seems as though Sony have had their licensing lawyers working overtime with new cars from Volkswagen (including the cool new beetle), Citroen and Peugeot. this is obviously a blatant attempt to please the European market, but seeing as though Europe was basically kept out of the car line-up last time, we think it's a commendable effort. Not all of the licences have been finalised yet and we've had no news of the actual finished line-up of cars, but expect all the cars on this page plus hundreds of other new additions and all the old Gran Turismo favourites. Don't worry either; the old favourites do include the rocket-like Honda NSX and the butch Nissan Skyline.

If ever a game was highly anticipated, Gran Turismo 2 is it. There's not much the developers can do wrong, but with all of the promised improvements, and such a dazzling array of cars, it really does look like Polyphony Digital Inc. will finally reach their goal of producing the best, most comprehensive driving game possible. Lets hope so.



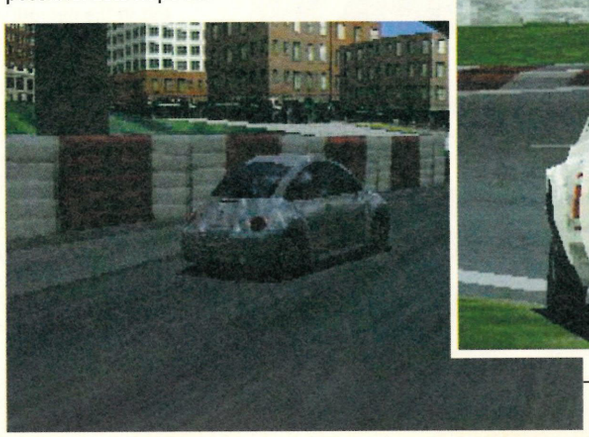
















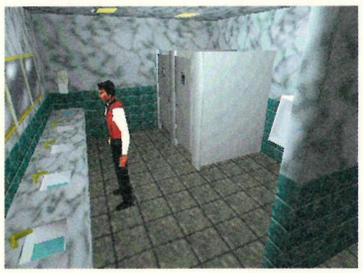
Mission Impossible

Your mission, if you choose to accept it... This tape will self destruct, etc...

The game that promised to kick James Bond into touch on the N64 is winging its way to the PlayStation. The problem is, Mission Impossible on the N64 promised much but delivered little.

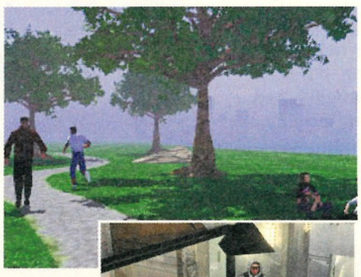
Infogrames have had time to correct all of the N64 game's shortcomings, though, so the PlayStation version could be the game that the N64 version promised to be. After all, Mission Impossible is a very cool licence and it would be a shame to waste the second opportunity to get it right, wouldn't it?

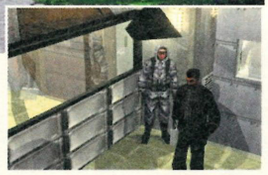
The PlayStation version of Mission Impossible is based on the N64 game, although there will be more missions and an extra level of depth to keep the player hooked. It's going to need it too, as the N64 version wasn't exactly addictive. How Infogrames hope to achieve this extra layer of depth hasn't been disclosed, but as soon as we get more information, you'll be the first to know.

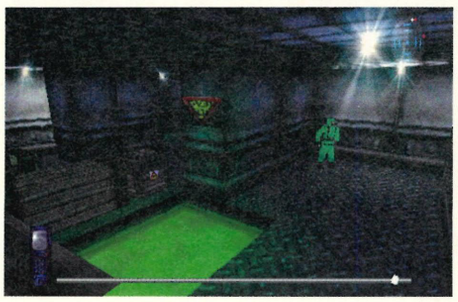


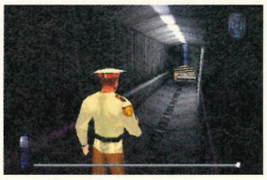
Visually, though, Mission Impossible is looking a bit of a treat. These new screenshots should wet your appetite, at least until we bring you a full expose very soon.











PUBLISHER GT Interactive

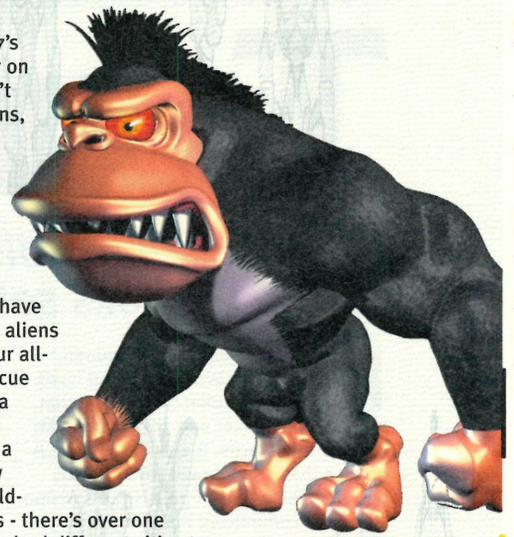
DEVELOPER Midway

RELEASED May '99

Rampage Universal Tour

Smashing up buildings; a recipe for success, we think...

Rampage first hit the arcades way back in the middle of the Eighties. The wanton destruction-based gameplay won over the majority of gameplayers, and Rampage soon established itself as one of the all-time arcade classics. 1997's Rampage World Tour on the PlayStation didn't live up to expectations, but Rampage 2: Universal Tour hopes to set things straight this time around.



Lizzie the Lizard, Ralph the Wolf Man and George the Ape have all been captured by aliens and it's the job of four all-new monsters to rescue them and smash up a few buildings on the way. Well, not really a few buildings - there's over one hundred different cities to bring to the ground, covering 20 different planets.



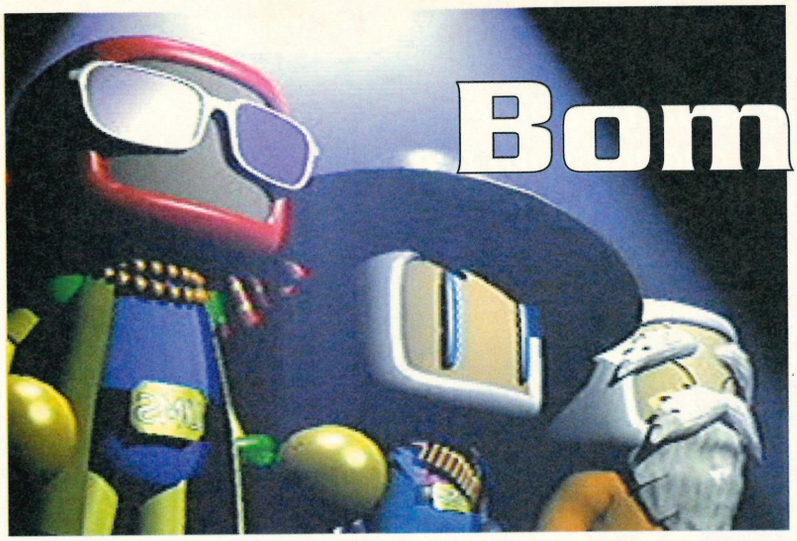
The new monsters include a rhino called Boris, a lobster called Ruby, a rat called Curtis (surely it should have been Roland) and an alien called Myucus. There are, however, four more monsters to unlock, although the identity of these still remains a secret.



The classic Rampage gameplay is set to stay in place, although all the new characters have special moves to help out in the demolition process. There's plenty of new modes of play too, including a three-player smash-'em-up.



There were no screen shots at the time of going to press, but we'll bring you a closer look at Rampage 2: Universal Tour next month.



Bomberman

PUBLISHER Virgin Interactive Entertainment

DEVELOPER Hudson

RELEASED May '99

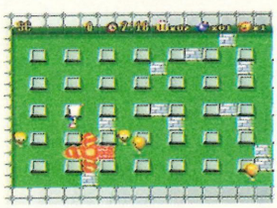
Perhaps the greatest multi player game is back. Extreme thanks you, Virgin...



It's not often a press release accompanying a game sums it a up so aptly, but saying 'Bomberman is the ultimate arcade and multiplayer experience' isn't that far from the truth. In fact, it's spot-on. The Bomberman series has always been close to many gamer's hearts, but Bomberman on the PlayStation manages to capture the series' spirit perfectly. This means a game packed full of manic and explosive action that anyone can pick up and play at any time.

The latest Bomberman includes both Arcade and Battle Modes. The Arcade Mode has you wandering through over 50 mazes, blowing up monsters and collecting hardware to boost up your explosive power. Although this is good fun, it's the multiplayer modes where the most explosive mayhem is to be had. And there are now 24 different battle arenas to take on your mates in. There's also new weapons and 12 new steeds to ride on, making your opponents and friends' job (or ex-friends', as they're soon to be) much harder.

We're really looking forward to the finished version of Bomberman. It doesn't matter what it looks like either. Just as long as that classic gameplay is still in place, Bomberman should clear up with ease.







Bomberman Fantasy Race

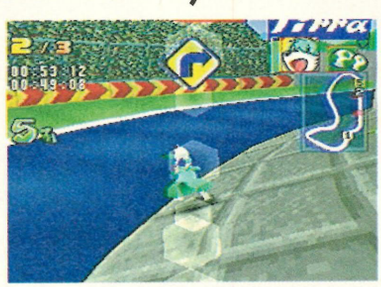
PUBLISHER Virgin Interactive Entertainment

DEVELOPER Hudson

RELEASED TBA

There are no mazes in this Bomberman outing; just a load of tracks and plenty of racing action...











It came as a bit of a surprise that Hudsonsoft have decided to throw Bomberman into a racing game, but on testing out the preview version, we can see the reasons behind it.

All of the tracks (of which there are only seven) are reminiscent of the previous Bomberman games, and a good selection of the characters and monsters from the maze games have made it into this cool Mario Kart-style racer with their cartoon stylings intact. So has the TNT slant, as before each race you have to pick a number of explosive devices to keep your opponents behind you. To get the best weapons, though, you need to win plenty of races to get your bank account bursting.

As the racing takes place on animals rather than in cars, the control system isn't a simple 'press the button to go job'. Instead you have to tap the button and bear in mind your animal's stamina, which adds a new angle to the age-old racing game theme.

This and the cute cartoon graphics makes Bomberman Fantasy Race a very interesting prospect, but probably not a Gran Turismo-beater.

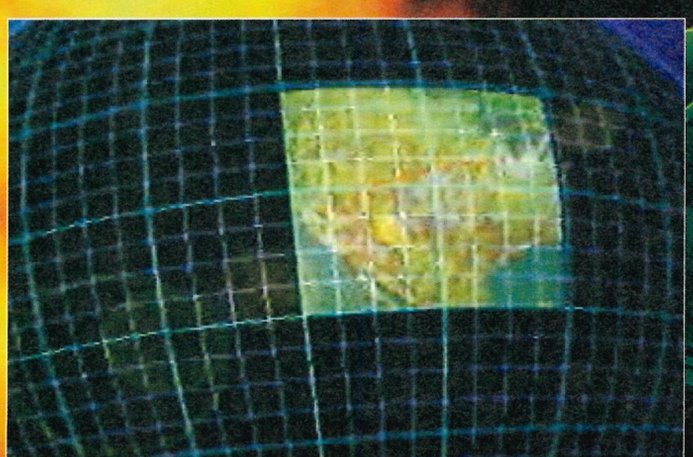
PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS	
Eidos	Pumpkin Studios	Strategy	30th April '99	UK	£39.99	1-2 (link-up)	Memory Card Analogue Pad	Dual Shock Link Cable

The lack of originality within the strategy game arena is something Eidos hope to change with the surprisingly original Warzone 2100, but can it win Command & Conquer fan Saul Trewern over?

Warzone 2100







Warzone uses that 'future computer screen' style to great effect in some of the cut scenes.



Some of the enemy bases are very well defended. Remember, they're researching new technologies at the same time as you.



You start the game with just a few units to build but it won't take long for this screen to fill up.



Air transporters are an integral part of the game as they are often used to get from mission to mission.


Buildings are built by special trucks that use a special ray to construct them. Hmm.


Here's a shot of the alternative control method. Notice no cursor present.

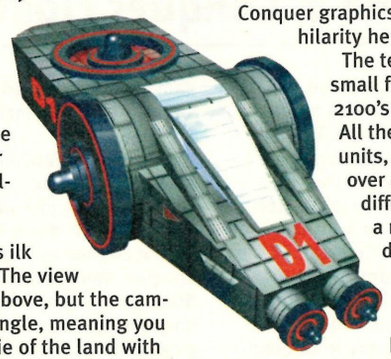
THE STORY SO FAR...

Following what seemed like an error in the world's satellite defence system a nuclear war kicked off across the globe. Mass destruction reigned in on all the major cities and no more than a million people worldwide survived the nuclear attacks and ensuing nuclear winter. Following this the survivors formed tribes that fought for what remained of the Earth and its technologies. You play the part of a member of one of these tribes and attempt to build a new world, but what you don't know is that the entity that caused the disaster in the first place is still out there, waiting. Well you know now, anyway.

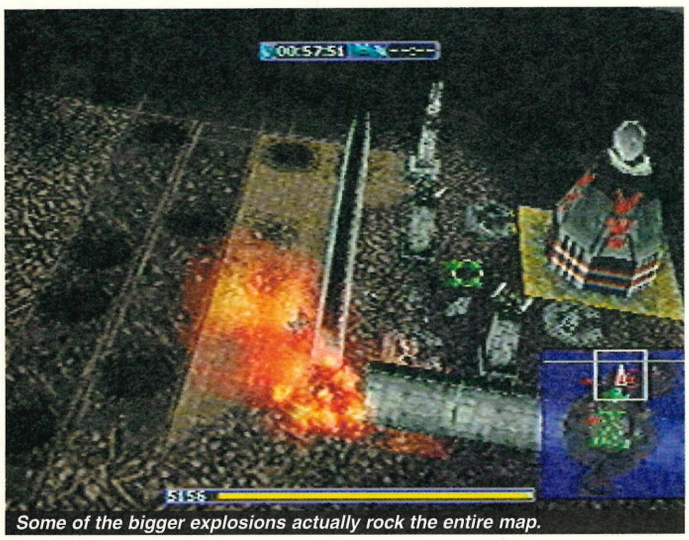
Originality is hard to come by at this late stage in the PlayStation's long life. All the best ideas have been squeezed dry, meaning PlayStation gamers are constantly bombarded with unimaginative sequels and sports game updates. It's not all doom and gloom though - some developers and publishers strive for originality. For example, Pumpkin Studios, the people behind Warzone 2100. Somehow they've managed to administer an injection of originality to a game that could so easily have been yet another Command & Conquer clone.

Warzone 2100 is not as good as Command & Conquer

What makes Warzone 2100 any different from the classic Westwood strategy games then? Well for a start, Pumpkin Studios have done away with the top-down view favoured by almost every strategy game from the year dot, and totally reinvented the way that games of this ilk should look. The view is still from above, but the camera is at an angle, meaning you can see the lie of the land with ease. All hills, mountains, peaks and troughs are visible, allowing you to plan your route through the various different terrains offer. This, however, is secondary to the fact that it simply looks superb. This is almost a first for a strategy game, isn't it? I've lost count of how many times people laughed at the state of the Command & Conquer graphics. There's no such hilarity here, though.



The terrain is but a small factor of Warzone 2100's visual flare too. All the vehicles and units, of which there are over a stunning 400 different designs and a monstrous 2000 different combinations, have been drawn and animated with a high degree of imagination. And unlike Command & Conquer, you don't need a magnifying glass to see them. The sheer variety of buildings and units and superlative graphical stylings makes Warzone 2100 the best-looking strategy game on the PlayStation so far. That may not be saying much, but it's certainly worth stating.


Some of the bigger explosions actually rock the entire map.

The missions are well designed though and the gameplay does serve to keep you playing

Basically C&C?

Warzone 2100 also differs greatly from Command & Conquer in the gameplay stakes. Okay, the basics are all here; build up your base, create an army then go and give the enemy a kicking. It's the execution of this basic gameplay that makes it different from other strategy games, though.

First up is the system used for building, researching and designing vehicles. Instead of coming as whole units, separate parts of the vehicles can actually be mixed and matched. For instance, you may have researched several different propulsion and gun turret systems. These in turn can be bolted on to different types of chassis in the vehicle design section, making wholly unique vehicles. You can then build different units according to the type of terrain or the force of the army they're about to go up against. Designing your own vehicles isn't just a bolted-on bonus, it's a welcome and integral part of the gameplay that serves to add a little



Some of the explosions in the game are quite spectacular with huge chunks of metal and balls of flame flying around all over the place.



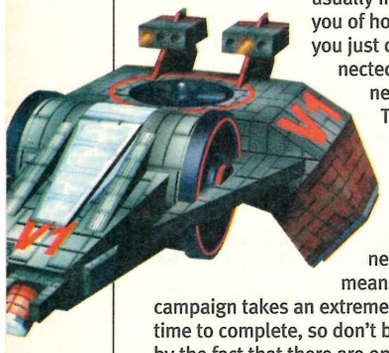
It's better to build more than one research plant so that you can research different technologies simultaneously.

originality, as well as interest to this area. It also means that there's a glut of different vehicles and combinations for you to find, which should keep you playing for ages.

Feels Different

Actually playing Warzone 2100 is much like playing Command & Conquer. However, the graphical style and the way the missions are laid out makes Warzone 2100 feel very different. Instead of starting the game with a map that you have to work your way across, you are presented with three different campaigns that each take place on different terrain.

Alongside the main campaign you have to tackle several sub-missions that form the overall campaign. This could be anything from exploring some ruins to stealing enemy technology that can be used in later parts of the mission. Each mission and sub-mission is separated by a nice-looking rendered cut scene which usually informs you of how what you just did is connected to your next task. The fact that the missions are interconnected means each campaign takes an extremely long time to complete, so don't be put off by the fact that there are only three campaigns altogether.



Actually getting around Warzone 2100 isn't I'm afraid, as easy as Command & Conquer. All the icons are well presented and labelled in a straightforward manner, so you're able to choose exactly what you want to do, when you want to do it. There are a few problems, though, which are mainly to do with the cursor movement. I know that it's quite tricky to control a cursor with a joypad anyway, but Warzone 2100 doesn't do anything to get over this. For a start, the screen only moves when the cursor hits one of the edges which can end up being annoying, especially when you only want to move the screen slightly. Also selecting separate units can be a real pain in the proverbial butt as the cursor just isn't accurate enough. Trying to select large numbers of vehicles at the same time could have also been made easier by allowing the screen to move when you click and drag. These complaints don't really detract from the gameplay, but they do make Warzone 2100 feel less polished than Command & Conquer. Which in turn gives Command & Conquer a slight edge.

Somehow they've managed to administer an injection of originality to a game that could so easily have been yet another Command & Conquer clone

This is also true in the gameplay stakes. Don't get me wrong, Warzone 2100 is a very rewarding and exciting game to play, but although I'm all for the new 3D feel and the different control and unit building systems, Command & Conquer does seem to win over with pure simplicity. All the missions are well designed though and the gameplay does serve to keep you playing. Which is what it's all about in the end.

Revolutionary Control

Those complaints with the cursor can however be remedied with the flick of one button. Pumpkin Studios have seen fit to add a whole new, rather revolutionary type of control to Warzone 2100, which to me is the biggest injection of originality so far. Instead of using the cursor to send your units to certain areas on the map you can actually take direct control of the units themselves. This is done in a behind-the-vehicle third-person perspective. This doesn't simply serve to get you from A to B either, as you can actually partake in a bit of fighting action in this view. You take control of the lead vehicle and whatever you do, the rest of the squadron follows. This adds a whole new element to the gameplay, making Warzone 2100 not just a strategy, but an action game too. Which is something that should help sell it many copies. And rightly so.

In fact, all of Warzone 2100's original features should make it a big seller. However, one point I'm obliged to make is that Warzone 2100 is simply not as good as Command & Conquer. Nonetheless, Pumpkin Studios have done a fine job in a producing a creative and original strategy game that's different enough from the Command & Conquer to sit alongside it nicely, and make it worth owning both games.

Saul Trewern





LINK ZONE 2100...

One of Command & Conquer: Red Alert's best features was that you could play against a human opponent using a link-up cable. Granted, you'd need two PlayStations and two televisions, but the effort in getting all of this together was worth it with the rewards on offer. Many a working hour has been wasted in the office due to this and it looks as though the same thing is about to happen all over again as Warzone 2100 is link-up compatible. We've tried it and it's just as fun to play and rewarding as Command & Conquer: Red Alert in link-up, so if the next issue isn't on the shelves when it should be, you know why.

SECOND OPINION

A bit of Command & Conquer, a bit of WarGames; perfect recipe for a top PlayStation strategy blast. Well, maybe not perfect. The controls could be better implemented and not allowing you to scroll the screen while boxing units is ridiculous, but overall, it's fine.

Ian Osborne

THE SCORE

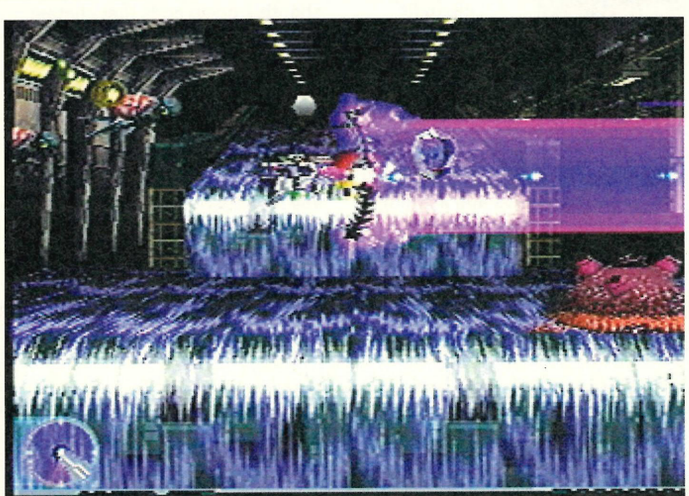
GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	8
LIFESPAN	9

88%

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS
Sony CEE	Irem	Shoot-'em-up	May '99	UK	£39.99	1-2	Memory Card, Dual Shock Analogue Pad

Last year Virgin gave us R-Types, two direct ports of the first R-Type arcade games. People were grateful for this, but Saul Trewern didn't want retro, he wanted an update. Well now he's got it, but is it any cop?

R-Type Delta



Most of the environments in the game are beautifully drawn. Checkout this waterfall for proof.





If, like me, you love the challenge of taking on multiple bogeys, dodging inordinate amounts of gunfire and generally causing destruction of an Armageddon level, it's a good bet that, like me, you're already a huge fan of the R-Type games.

Friday's first pint of Stella would be a huge understatement.

Thankfully, the finished product lives up to everything the teasing demo promised.

R-Type Delta offers far more than the rolling demo could even hint at. Okay, the visuals have been given an amazing PlayStation game lick of paint, but it's not until you pick up the controller that you realise the gameplay burns the seat of your pants and melts them into your chair. This is exciting, challenging and highly involving stuff.

Some of the scenery you come across is nearly as awe-inspiring as those bosses

Problem is, the granddaddy of the modern shoot-'em-up has been left out in the wilderness for far too long. Okay, last year's R-Types gave us the chance to go back to the original arcade games, but I'm afraid this wasn't enough for me. I've already spent a ridiculous amount of cash on completing the games in the arcade, and no matter how addictive R-Type games are, their replay value leaves a lot to be desired. R-Types did give us a chance to see a rolling demo of R-Type Delta, though, and to say that it whet my appetite more than

Thoughtful Chaos

A shoot-'em-up can't be involving, though, can it? Surely, isn't the idea simply to switch off your brain and hammer that fire button? Well on most shoot-'em-ups that the case may be. But not on R-Type Delta. The action is so red hot,



It's not simply enemy fire and ships you have to avoid. Falling bits of scenery can make life extremely difficult.



The R13 ship is the most cumbersome available, but it does have a very intelligent pod to help out.

demanding and downright difficult that all of your senses become trapped in a bullet-dodging cocoon from which only a power cut or a severe lack of hair to pull out can rescue you. Many other shoot-'em-ups claim to be hectic, but although it's a contradiction in terms, R-Type Delta adds a little thought to the chaos on screen.

'How?', may you ask. Well for a start, the learning, and progression curve allows you to learn the ropes (of which admittedly there are few) and progress through in a natural pace that doesn't rely on fluke or luck, just skill, judgement and reflexes. You need to work out how to tackle each section, and although it may sound like the gameplay is based on the 'try it, die, then see what you did wrong' ethos, it doesn't actually rely on this formula. Of course as you lose lives and use continues you do learn how you should have tackled a certain area, but the difficulty level isn't so unfairly stacked that you can't get through whole new areas if you have the reflexes and gameplay skills at hand.

This may sound a little pompous, but without wanting to put you off R-Type Delta is aimed squarely at the avid shoot-em-up fan and expert. To truly excel you really do need to have fighter pilot reactions and a shoot-'em-up experience that spans the last decade in the arcade. Still, if you're not a 'best of the best' Top Gun, R-Type Delta can still be an extremely enjoyable blasting bonanza. It's just that the untrained player may find themselves outpaced at first. And this, shoot-'em-up amateurs, becomes extremely frustrating.



R-Type Delta comes brimming with the best looking enemy vehicles I've seen

Picture the scene and you'll see what I mean; You're trying to fit your ship through a gap a fifth the size of the screen while being bombarded by 20 bullets, two squadrons of enemy craft, five gun towers and a falling piece of concrete. Juggling five chain-saws while blindfolded is easier than this, which is why it may be a pretentious thing to say, but this game can only be truly enjoyed by those with strong game-playing skills. If you're a part -timer, make sure you're ready for the challenge or you won't get the full satisfaction that R-Type Delta offers.

Armageddon is Here

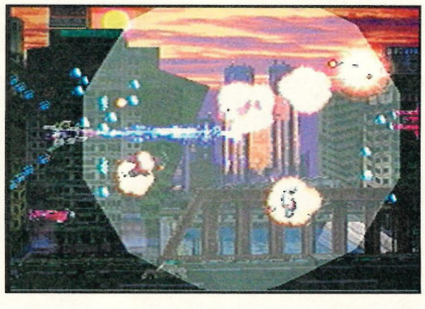
So what makes R-Type Delta any better, or even different from the originals? For a start, you now have the choice of three different ships to take on the enemy hoards. This may not sound like a great deal, but each ship is so different you have to play the game with a whole new set of strategies and rules; three is definitely enough. Each ship has a whole new set of weapons, all of which are spectacular in their own right. Anything from a huge double flamethrower to auto-aim lasers through to pulse cannons can be equipped to the different ships by shooting down pods that contain the power-ups. All of the extra weapons are colour-coded to allow you to decide when to collect an upgrade or change your weapon completely. Certain sections of the game are best dealt with using certain weapons, so it's imperative you're properly equipped before you tackle them. This can cause frustration because you often collect the wrong weapon by mistake.

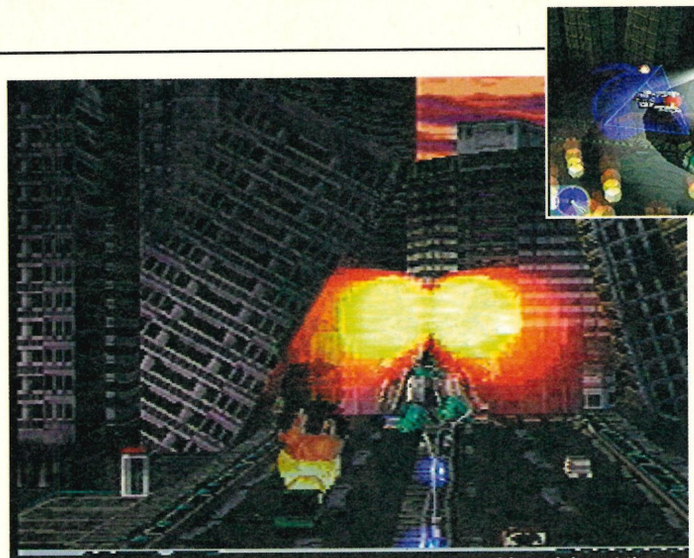
HEAVY HANDED...

As an extra bonus to the already ridiculous amount of firepower at your fingertips, each ship even has a mega destructive charge weapon. There are two levels of charge to use; the first green bar is mildly destructive but it's not until you reach the top of the red power that Armageddon levels are reached. You can't fire while charging, though, so you have to decide whether you have time to go for the full charge, which makes things extremely interesting.

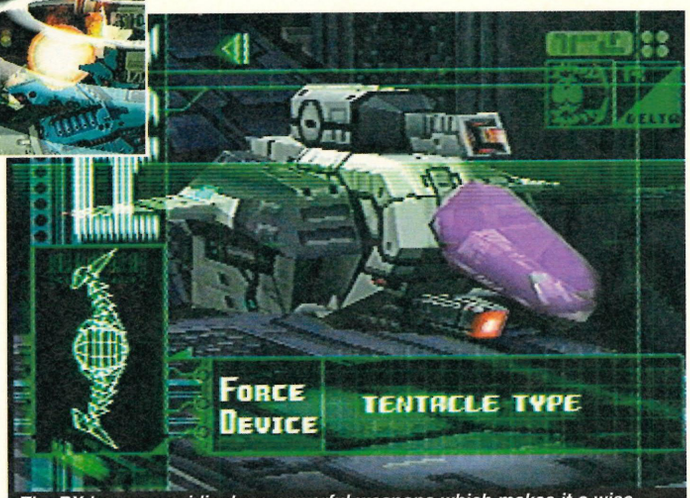








At the start of each mission a cut scene shows your ship arriving at the level in sometimes spectacular fashion.



The RX has some ridiculous powerful weapons which makes it a wise choice if you want to blow the hell out of things.

Each ship also has a different weapons pod which, as you probably already know, can be fired away to go and take out the enemy automatically. These pods all have different intelligence and firepower levels, although their attributes do balance out so it's down to personal preference as to which one is best for you.

Destruction Looks Great

As you can see, there's a lot of firepower to be tamed here. In fact R-Type Delta offers the most destructive and wide-ranging arsenal of death-bringing machinery I've ever come across in a shoot-'em-up, which in my books is a huge plus point.

With all of this firepower at your disposal it's inevitable the ensuing chaos is going to be a visual treat. You won't believe how good this game looks until you start playing and witness the speed and finesse of some of the best shoot-'em-up visuals ever. In fact, Squaresoft's Einhander is the only game that comes close to the explosion-riddled visuals R-Type Delta offers. And you can't buy that here, which I think is a travesty as Einhander too is a superb modern shoot-'em-up.

Anyway, back to R-Type. You may remember something that made the original R-Type so spectacular visually was the sheer quality and size of the enemy ships. Well, thankfully this trait has been developed and expanded upon and R-Type Delta comes brimming with the best looking enemy vehicles I've seen. They come in all shapes, sizes and colours. The variety is absolutely stunning and some of the bosses are truly a sight to behold. Even more thrilling to the eye is watching these bosses explode, but you're gonna have to play yourself to witness that.

The graphical variety throughout R-Type Delta's massive expanse isn't tied down to the enemy vehicles either. All the levels are sufficiently different from each other to keep you interested and some of the scenery you come across is nearly as awe-inspiring as those bosses. One minute find yourself screaming down a tower block-laden high street, the next you could be attacking giant shellfish under water. You never tire of the environments or the action.

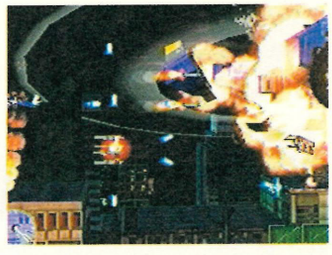
Positively Frustrating

Irem's task of taking R-Type into the late Nineties has been a huge success. It may be the toughest game I've encountered in a long, long time. It may also be one of the most frustrating games I've ever played, but this only serves to keep you coming back for more. Why? Because after dying several times on the same section, beating it becomes personal. I've been glued to R-Type Delta ever since it landed on my desk a couple of weeks ago, and I'm not even halfway through it. Okay, I may have turned it off in disgust and sheer frustration at times, but it's only five minutes before I'm back at my desk giving it large with the fire button.

R-Type Delta could easily have been a wasted opportunity but developers Irem have made sure that everything R-Type stood for has been kept in place. Back in R-Type's arcade days it was the best looking, most challenging and addictive shoot-'em-up available. Now in 1999 R-Type Delta can boast exactly the same. However, if you're not prepared to trash several joypads and end up with only a few tufts of hair left, I'm afraid you'd better sit this one out.

Saul Trewern





Irem's task of taking R-Type into the late Nineties has been a huge success.

SPEED TYPE...

All the ships are equipped with speed-up boosters as standard. To take your ship up a speed level, simply tap R1 and to slow it down hit R2. This sounds easy but choosing the right speed at the right time is harder than you think. Put too much speed on and you end up flying all over the screen out of control, but not enough speed means you may not be able to dodge the bullets and ships fast enough. You need to attain a fine balance so you should be working those right shoulder buttons constantly. Not something you really need when the odds are so stacked against you anyway.





Even early on in the game you come across some extremely worthy adversaries.



Watch out for surprise attacks at all times.

SECOND OPINION

This one takes R-Type's machinery and places it firmly into a modern game.
Overall it works, though it's only for experts. Unless you're a real whizz on the blasters, R-Type Delta is frustration city. Just like the original, in fact...

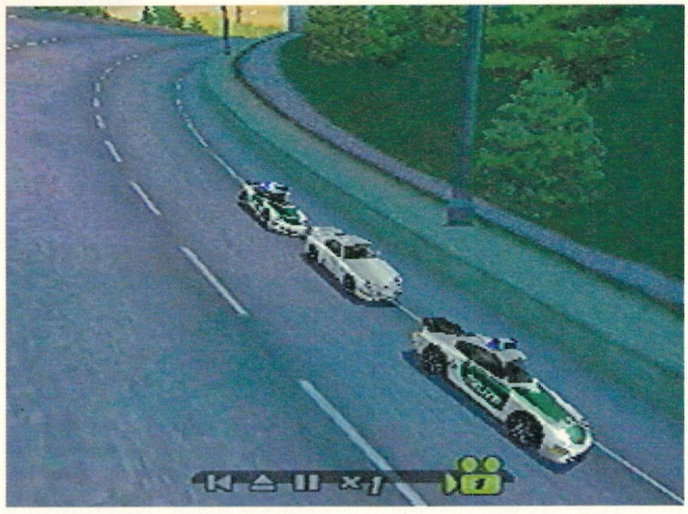
Ian Osborne

THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	9
LIFESPAN	9

92%





PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS	
Electronic Arts	Electronic Arts	Driving	Out Now	UK	£39.99	1-2	Memory Card Analogue Pad	Dual Shock Steering Wheel

With all new licenses there's no doubt that Need For Speed is attempting to get back into the hot seat of the driving genre, but what difference is a few more fancy motors going to make? Russell Barnes wishes he had the wit of Jeremy Clarkson about now...

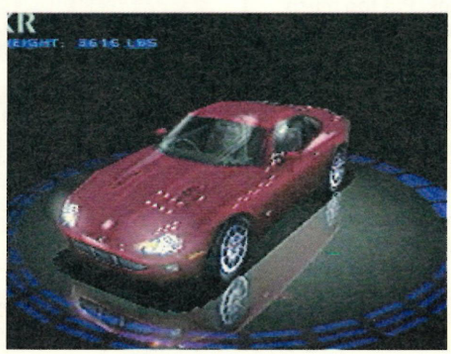
Need For Speed: Road Challenge



I've always had a soft spot for the Need For Speed series even before it was released on the PlayStation. The car physics have always been good, the graphics slick and fast and the gameplay has been reasonably exciting. Luckily (for EA at least), Road Challenge has captured all of these features and more to produce easily the best street racing game of this year so far.

There are many reasons for Road Challenge being the best in the NFS series. It has loads of excellent licences like Ferrari, BMW, Mercedes, McLaren, Jaguar, Aston Martin, Porsche and Pontiac as well as full damage effects for all vehicles. There are a number of new playing modes, including my favourite of all time, ever; Hot Pursuit. Here you can race while evading the ever-present police cars or even play the role of cops and robbers with a friend in two-player mode. The idea here (In case it wasn't obvious enough) is that one player is in a police car while the other is driving a particularly high performance getaway vehicle in a ridiculous fashion around a street-style circuit of your choice. If the copper manages to ram, drive or crash their opponent of the road they're fined and given a ticket. If it happen another couple of times they're arrested and the copper wins the game. Should the getaway driver stay clear ahead of the copper for a set amount of time, the cop is called back to the station making his opponent the winner. For me, Hot Pursuit is the best of all the playing modes; not there isn't a great challenge waiting for you else-

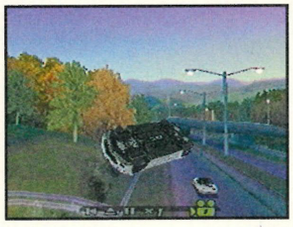






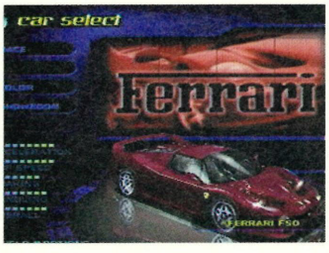
COPS AND ROBBERS...

The police cars patrolling each course in NFS: Road Challenge have an incredibly high level of artificial intelligence. They're more than capable of driving you off the road and they use every trick in the book (plus a few more) to make sure the speed laws are abided by. Should you find yourself driven off the road and down to a near-stop, you get a ticket; keep it up and you're hauled off to the station and the game is over. If you can do without the hassles of the law constantly on your back, there are plenty of other playing modes to keep you happy, but you've just got to love the buzz from a good chase!



















If you like your driving fast and furious, Need For Speed: RC has got everything you need

where in the game. There are Tournament modes in which you race a set number of courses on a league table and get rewarded prize money for wins. With this money you can buy new vehicles and upgrades allowing you to enter tougher Tournaments and Special Events in a similar way to GT. For the first time in a NFS title the realistic crash physics are excellently complemented with realistic car damage which can also affects you car's performance. While racing against a full grid of opponents it's vitally important there's as little contact as possible with other cars or the scenery as repairs don't come cheap, and it's easy to end up with your bank balance firmly in the red.

Car Wars

Graphically NFS: Road Challenge is splendid in many different areas. The background detail is fantastic, even topping Gran Turismo, and the resolution is truly crisp and sharp. Light sourcing is also top notch here, with the different weather conditions

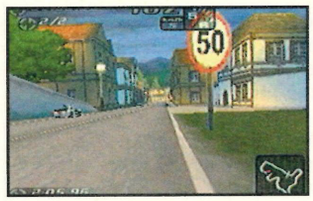


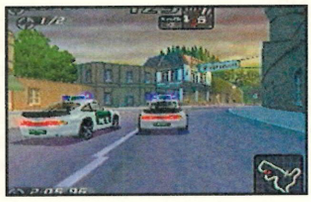




SCENIC ROUTE...

As you can see from the shots dotted around these pages, there are few driving games that can top the prowess of NFS: Road Challenge in the graphical stakes. The scenery, buildings and even the sky are beautifully detailed and realistic in almost every respect. Two-player mode suffers a little due to the high detail and resolution, but generally it's the frame rate that dips rather than out-and-out slowdown, so I suppose it's not all that much of a serious crime.



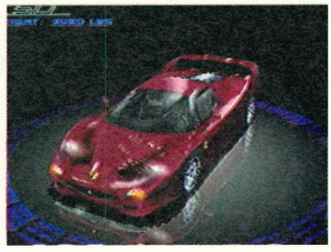


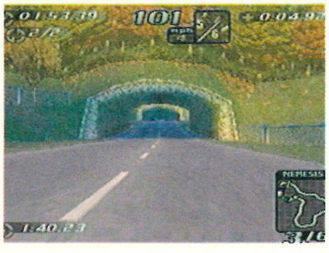


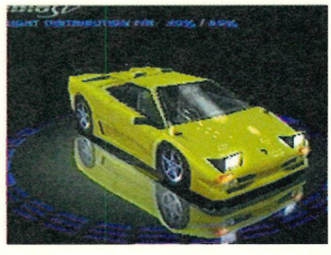












The courses at your disposal are all long and crammed full of sweeping bends and straights to die for

and time of day adding to the realism. Each car (a total of 16 altogether) is faithfully recreated for you to use, down to the badge on the bonnet of the Porsche and the scary acceleration of the McLaren F1.

No driving game would be complete without those lovely engine noises and pumping music. There's no shortage of either and they're certainly high quality, but that's not all you get here as there's an excellent commentary system which can make the difference between first place and being busted by the fuzz. At length the police cars communicate via a radio system you can access from your vehicle. They communicate to each other (sometimes you can have up to four cops on your tail), letting on as to which part of the course they've set up a road block or a tyre-flattening Stinger on. They also inadvertently let you know when they begin their chase and where they first made visual contact with your particular car. This makes for some really interesting racing and certainly deserves credit for originality.

The courses at your disposal are all long and crammed full of sweeping bends and straights to die for. There's plenty of undulation on the track so jumps are inevitable and it's entirely possible to jump clean over cars ahead of you. Each track takes a different theme from the country it represents, even to the extent of using sections of road near EA's office and using local police to do voice-overs. There isn't a huge array of different courses, but completing each one in first place (bearing in mind the different modes and difficulty settings) is a real task and is more than enough to keep you playing for a long time.

If you like your driving fast and furious, Need For Speed: Road Challenge has got everything you need. Great graphics, ingenious sound, smashing gameplay and fantastic two-player modes.

Russell Barnes

SECOND OPINION

With so many racing games on the market, Electronic Arts are wise to do something different with this one. As well as the expected road races and two-player chases, there's an excellent game of cops and robbers to test your skills. The best Need For Speed game yet.

Claire Webster

THE SCORE

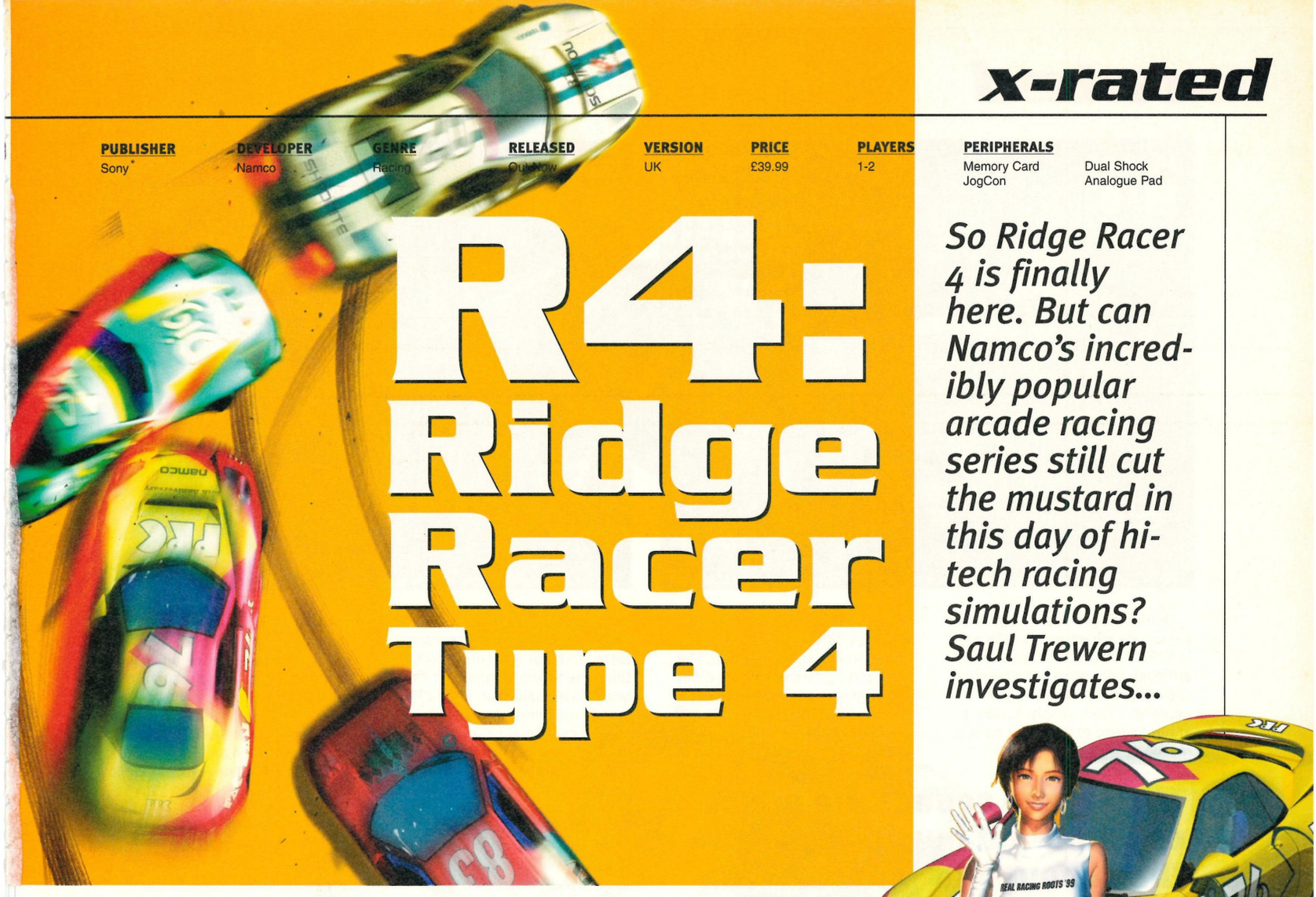
GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	9
GAMEPLAY	9
LIFESPAN	8

92%

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS
Sony	Namco	Racing	Out Now	UK	£39.99	1-2	Memory Card, Dual Shock, JogCon, Analogue Pad

R4: Ridge Racer Type 4

So Ridge Racer 4 is finally here. But can Namco's incredibly popular arcade racing series still cut the mustard in this day of hi-tech racing simulations? Saul Trewern investigates...

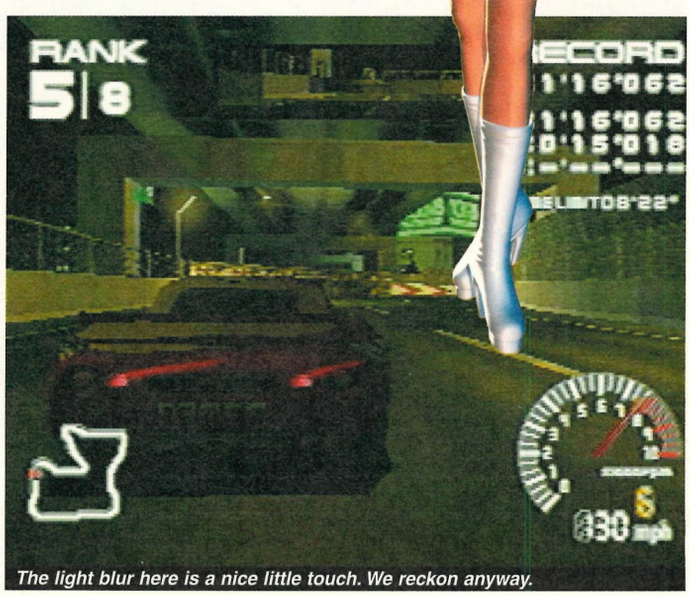


It's the best racing game the PlayStation has ever seen', said many people who wouldn't know their head from their ass, about the import version of Namco's Ridge Racer Type 4. A competent and playable racer R4 may well be, but competition for Gran Turismo and TOCA 2? I think not.

The Ridge Racer series certainly has heritage. The original game was one of the first PlayStation racers, and to say jaws dropped when it was first witnessed is an understatement. Jaws fell off. But that's just it, though. The original Ridge Racer was a massive leap over anything the 16-bit machines had on offer. The latest instalment is really nothing more than the same game with some admittedly-superb graphics and a slightly refined handling system. Which is not enough to warrant anybody saying that R4 is better than the established PlayStation racing kings. And if you've got a problem with that, come and see me.

R4's superb looks are actually very subtle

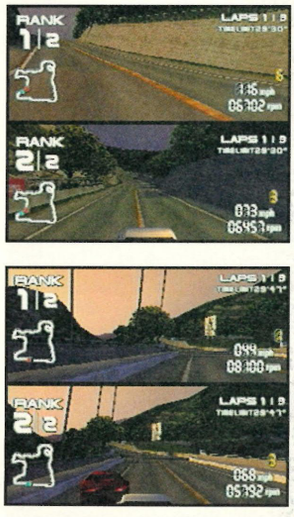
You may think pitting R4 against TOCA 2 and GT is a bit unfair. After all, the Ridge Racer games are arcade racers and not simulations. I have to say a resounding bollox to that, though. If a driving game doesn't have a hint of reality in it, then it's called an arcade racer. This is the worst excuse for an unrealistic driving engine I have ever heard. However, R4 has something that makes me forgive the driving engine for being unrealistic, and as much as it pains me to say, I have found myself getting into it.



The light blur here is a nice little touch. We reckon anyway.

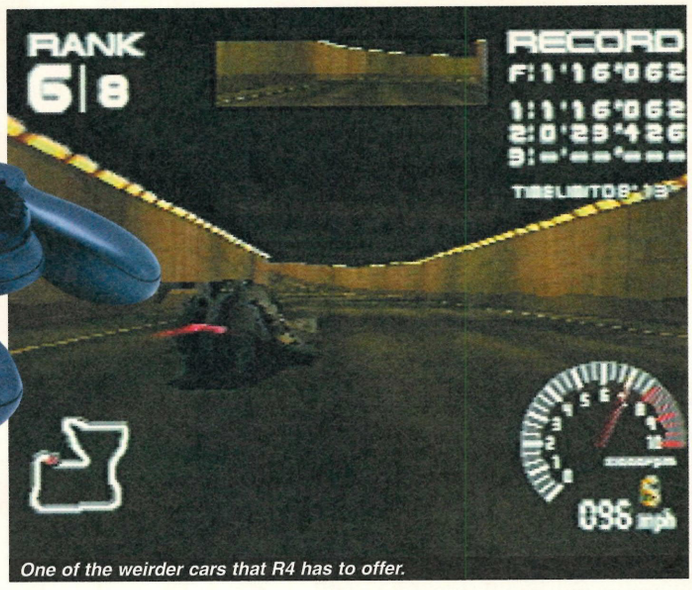
R4 TIMES TWO...

Playing split-screen R4 is basically the same as playing one-player. The game loses no speed or smoothness, which is no mean feat when you see how good it looks. The only real problem is for those who want to play in the behind-car view, as the game only allows you to see the roof, and not the whole car. Still, you find it much better to play in in-car view so this shouldn't cause too much of a problem





The outside view looks excellent but it's the in-car view that's easiest to use.



One of the weirder cars that R4 has to offer.

Unlike the previous Ridge Racer games, R4 allows you to take part in a real Grand Prix season, which although not entirely challenging, allows for a far more in-depth experience than simply bombing around a load of tracks for no real reason.

At the start of a season you, as a rookie driver, have to choose one of four teams to race for. Once you've joined up, you then have to choose a sponsor - this depicts the style of car you get to drive. The cars, of which there are supposedly around 340 all, drive differently (again supposedly). This, however, is not the case so don't believe all you've read elsewhere. There's really only about 45 different cars in the game, which isn't a bad sum. The plus-300 figure comes from different upgrades you fit to your car to make it faster and more agile, etc.

Although the cars do handle differently, R4 still uses the same old, albeit a little refined, powerslide cornering system. This to me is where the game loses all realism, and since the first game, I've always wondered why Namco actually made Ridge Racer like this. Some people find the fact that hitting the brakes almost immediately makes your back end fling out into a slide enjoyable. I, however, find it more annoying than enjoyable. I know this is down to my personal taste, and that most of you will think the driving engine is a decent one. Having said that, after a few laps I found myself whacking cars around corners at break-neck speed, allowing myself to be sucked in to the game. Which I just didn't think would happen.

The engine sounds are pretty cool but that music does more than enough to warrant wearing ear defenders

The Perfect Lap

There are several other modes of play besides the Grand Prix season, including a split-screen two-player option that loses very little from the one-player game. However, most Ridge Racer fans would tell you the real satisfaction when playing Ridge Racer comes from the time trial mode, and I have to agree. Simple really; pick a car, pick a track and keep going round and round in a bid to beat your own lap record. Doesn't sound like the sort of recipe to keep you going back to the restaurant does it?

Shaving milliseconds off lap times, though, becomes an obsession and you really won't give up until you get that perfect lap. And although I'm not a huge fan of the driving engine (which you should have guessed by now), I have constantly found myself glued to the screen in Time Trial mode just trying to beat my own times.



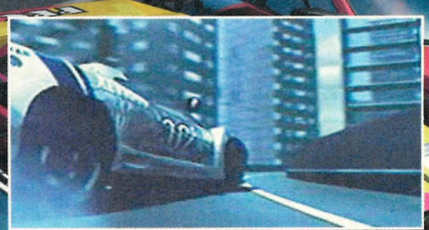
Best Looking Racer

Another reason I found myself glued to the screen is simply the way that R4 looks. Okay, so it doesn't have that jaw drop effect of the first game, but as I've already said, that's down to the fact that in those days the closest thing to the PlayStation was the 16-bit machines. R4's superb looks are actually very subtle. It's in the lighting and solidity of the track environments, and particular-

HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO R4...

The intro sequence, although rather pointless to the game, is pretty amusing. It starts with a pretty (although not real, people) Japanese girl going out onto the street. You then get some cool action shots of the Ridge Racer cars racing. The winner of this race drives past the girl hitchhiking and picks her up. What they do after they've driven off into the sunset is anybody's guess.







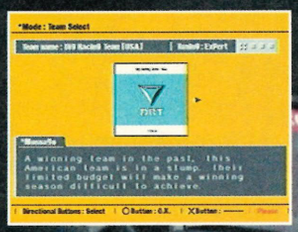


THE TEAMS...

Here's a quick run-down of the four teams on offer in the Grand Prix mode...

DRT RACING
Once a very successful team, they're now in a slump and they're looking for somebody to take them out of it. They haven't got much in the way of cash, though, so winning a season is going to be hard work.

MICRO MOUSE MAPPY
Stupid name maybe but this team is pretty decent. It's renowned for using cars that handle really well so might be an idea for the rookie. MMM also has a new owner this season so you have to impress him.

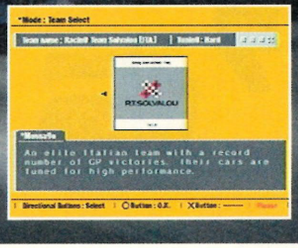


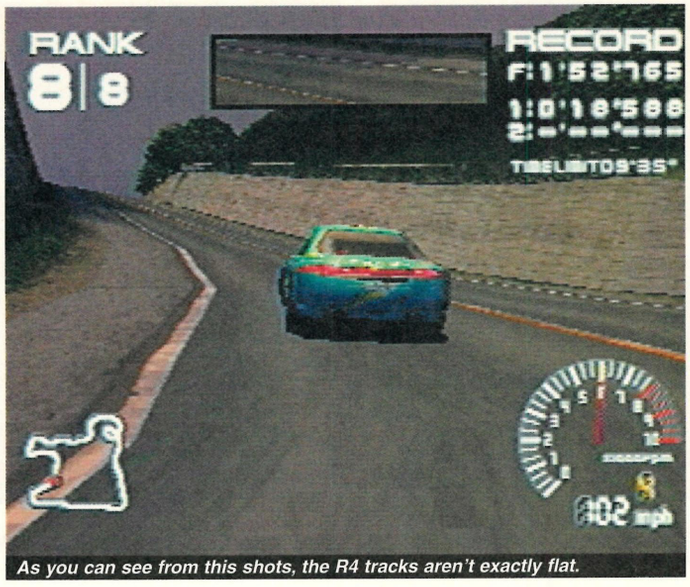


PAC RACING CLUB
The PAC Racing Club is a brand-new Japanese team so they're looking for someone to throw them into the limelight. There cars are very well balanced so again, a good team for the rookie.

RACING TEAM SOLVALOU
A team from Italy so you know they mean business. Solvalou have a record number of wins under their belt, so you have to be special to impress them, but their high performance cars should help out a little.







As you can see from this shots, the R4 tracks aren't exactly flat.

souped-up top-of-the-range sports cars to some of the weirdest-looking vehicles you've ever come across, R4 has a car for everyone. Just don't fall for the old 'over 300 cars in the game' line, 'cos it ain't true.

In keeping with the Ridge Racer tradition, R4 is also brimming with plenty of neat little graphical touches that only serve to heighten your visual pleasure further. Anything from jet planes and helicopters in the sky to team promotional girls and light trails from the car's brake lights add to an overall graphical feel of lushness and polish. And how it manages to runs so fast and smooth with all of this going on is beyond me.

The sound, though, doesn't live up to the graphical splendour. The music, a mixture of bland Japanese pop and cheesy techno, does no more than grate. The engine sounds are pretty cool but that music does more than enough to warrant wearing ear defenders or at least whacking your own stereo on.



There isn't a smidgen of realism present and the whole driving engine really riles me at times

It's The Fundamentals

Fundamentally, R4 is all wrong. I shouldn't like it, and at times I really don't like it. There isn't a smidgen of realism present and the whole driving engine really riles me at times.

However, there was a time I wondered why Namco didn't go for a bit more realism in the Ridge Racer series. The answer to that, though, is that Ridge Racer is a winning formula. Chunky, far-out cars with a ridiculous and exaggerated handling system do make a very enjoyable racer. Now R4 adds even more breathtaking graphical beauty to the equation. In fact R4 is the best looking racing game the PlayStation has. However, it's simply not as good as GT or TOCA 2. Arcade (or should I say unrealistic) racing fans are bound to love it, though. As for fans of the more realistic driving game? Well, if you can forgive the power-slide-based driving engine, then like me, I think you just might like it.

Saul Trewern

ly the cars that the real graphical flare shows. In fact I'd go as far to say that R4 is better looking than Gran Turismo and TOCA 2.

The tracks, of which there are around eight, are stunning. There's no glitching or pop-up to note, but it's simply the quality of the design and realisation that's gone into making the sweeping corners, tight city roads and vista-like country drives so pleasing to the eye that's most worthy of praise. Eight tracks may not be a lot compared to some of today's driving games, but their sheer size and the amount of different scenery and styles on offer make up for this no end.

R4 also contains some of the best looking and most imaginative cars I've seen in a racing game. From small, slow family saloons to

SECOND OPINION

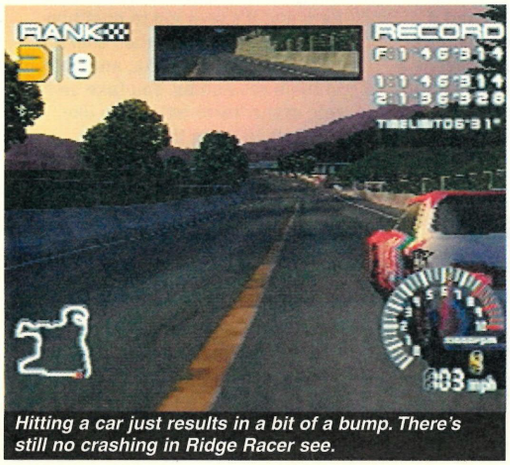
This is a good game, but not the all-time classic it's made out to be. Claiming over 300 cars is just plain ridiculous, and the driving model leaves a lot to be desired. Fair enough, it's not meant to be realistic, but the cars just don't feel right as they corner.

Ian Osborne

THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	8
LIFESPAN	8

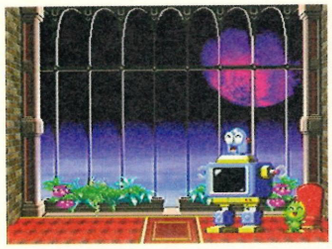
88%



Hitting a car just results in a bit of a bump. There's still no crashing in Ridge Racer see.



Whenever your team replaces or upgrades your car, it's delivered back to you in a lorry. Great.







Hoola-Hooping bad guys. Doesn't make them look very menacing does it?





PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS	
JVC	Irem	Puzzle	TBA	UK	£29.99	1-2	Memory Card Analogue Pad	Dual Shock

Addictive, fun, playable and cheap. That's all we really want from a game, of whatever genre. Yoyo's Puzzle Park seems to have all of them, but can looks be deceiving? Claire Webster endeavours to find out...

Yoyo's Puzzle Park



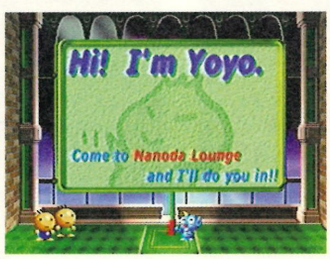
No, we haven't taken the screen-shot upside down - you really do have to play the game like this in some later levels.



The purple duck in the top right corner gives you the ability to fly.



It looks strangely bizarre, but in a unique kind of way. A screen-full of bombs and bald-headed characters mooching around a stage doing weird and wonderful things is bound to make anyone a tad curious. In last month's issue I previewed the game myself if you remember. I wasn't really too impressed, but I now realise it's more fun than I first thought.



There's no real storyline, other than an evil dude called Yoyo (of all things) has taken over the Puzzle Park and it's your job to oust him outa there! The two main characters are Chibi and Deka, and both of them are bombs. You take on the role of the 'terrorist', if you like, who has to move the bombs around by kicking them and then causing them to explode, thus blowing up the bad guys - simple!

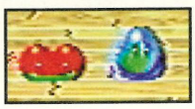
Walkin' the Dog

Actually, it's not all that simple, though it has to start off that way at first to get you into the swing of things. There's a massive 126 levels to this game, and three difficulty levels to have a go at. It obviously has a very long lifespan going on the amount of time it takes to com-

BOMBING THE ENEMY...

There are literally hundreds of baddies to explode in Yoyo's Puzzle Park, yet none of them have been christened with names. Therefore I've decided to do the job myself, and here they are with a brief description of what to expect from just some of them...

SQUIDGY BALLS
These guys aren't very light on their feet, so it's quite easy to dispose of them quickly. On the first stage you only come face to face with two of them, but in the later stages they can also be found in big groups, along with more of Yoyo's fighters.



GREEN PIMPERNELS
They've been given that name because they wear highway man masks. But they're more dangerous than they look as they fire a deadly pulse beam when they spot you.



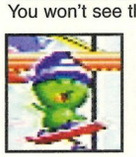


OCTOPUSES
Only found in the water levels, these fish are quite deadly if you unfortunately swim into them. You've been warned.



TRIBAL BIRDS
You can't actually tell that these are birds until they sneakily remove their masks. Strangely, though, they don't use their wings to fly; they use propellers instead, which make them move very quickly around the stage.

SNOWBOARDERS
You won't see these baddies till later in the game, and they literally do snowboard. If you manage to get a good shot, you can make them fly off which makes them more susceptible to attack.





The bigger the bombs, the bigger the explosion...





plete. Level One starts off with you only having two bombs to use for destroying Yoyo's troops, which aren't very abundant from the start anyway. The enemy comes in many different shapes and forms. From blobs of squidgy-looking balls, to little blue horny creatures which charge at you when you're in view. One thing you must not do is run into any of the bad guys as you lose one of your five lives. Don't get yourself caught in an explosion either, or you get fried!

As you would expect, the levels become progressively harder. You negotiate your way around the different areas of the Park including Nanoda Jungle, Nanoda World and Nanoda Musical, and each of them has ten stages. They don't look all that different from one another - they're all in 2D and every now and again they rotate, just to throw your concentration off balance.

Mean Flying Machines

To make things a little more interesting, there are the odd one or two flying machines to use, which not only offers some extra defence but some actually have weapons. These don't kill your opponents, but they stun them for longer than your standard gun. So you've got longer to position a bomb next to them and ignite it by either kicking it again, or jumping on it, but don't forget not to get caught in the blast. When you arrive at the later levels, the number of baddies increases, and luckily so do the number of bombs at your disposal. But of course, there isn't so much room to move and on the odd occasion it's hard to see where your character is on the screen. The next thing you know, you're floating off upwards with one less life.

In two-player mode you go against each other and basically attempt to score up to five points by blowing each other up. Which, you might say, sounds a bit of a larf on the face of it, but it really isn't that much of a challenge. There are loads of bombs scattered all over the stage, so you wouldn't think there would be much of a problem in scoring at least one point. The problem is, your opponent can just run away from the bombs, and even though you both have weapons, firing them only moves the other player, it doesn't stun them like it does in one-player mode. It's just too easy to escape. Perhaps if Irem had used the same principles for both modes it would have worked better.

I've never been one to consider the graphics in a puzzle game as an important factor. Look at Devil



Dice for instance; it was simple to look at (though not simple to play), but what the game looked like graphically had no effect on the playability of the game in the slightest. So I'll apply the same principle here. The stages are very colourful, if not too much so; not one corner of the screen is left bare. The point is it's extremely addictive and it's good that you can save your progress at any point, as it would get tedious if you had to start from the beginning each time you wanted to play the game. The only thing it falls down on is the two-player mode which can be a little annoying after a while, but in no way spoils the greatness of the game. And that's what it is; great!

Claire Webster

It looks strangely bizarre, but in a unique kind of way...

SECOND OPINION

JVC are wise to release this one at £30. There isn't enough here to justify spending the full 40 quid, but what's here's undoubtedly good. This is a platform pounder in the Bubble Bobble/Rainbow Islands mould, and none the worse for it too.

Russell Barnes





THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	5
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	8
LIFESPAN	8

82%





PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS	
JVC	JVC	Flight Sim	Out Now	UK	£39.99	1	Memory Card Analogue Pad	Dual Shock

It's not often a flight simulator wings its way onto the PlayStation, but Wing Over 2 is here on a mission to change all that. Russell Barnes straps on his goggles and slips into his leather jacket (with comedy fly-away scarf flapping) and takes to the skies...

Wing Over 2



No screaming missiles and raging dogfights here...









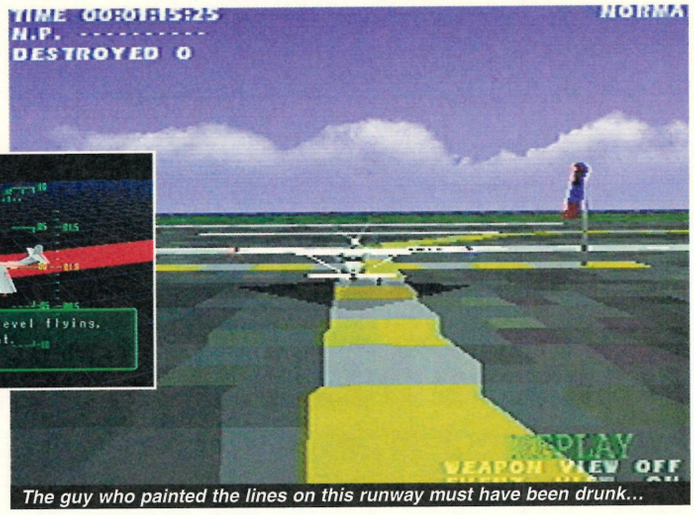
Flying planes has fascinated me since my childhood. Roaming freely through the clouds, flying as free as a bird. Performing daredevil manoeuvres that set the world in a spin and racing through a valley on a wing and a prayer; what more could a budding pilot want? Well; this is what JVC is offering in the form of Wing Over 2, but first there's a hard slog through a virtual flight academy, where your main objective is to gain your wings so you can live the dream.



In actual fact there are two main objectives here. First you must earn money to have all the tuition you're going to need to pass four difficult exam stages (each requiring three or four tough lessons). To earn the money for your lessons, simply take a trip to the office where you can run errands and complete tasks to earn varying amounts. There are 20 jobs in all that become available the further through your training you go. To start there are tasks like flying lunch over to a ranch or taking a replacement bulb to the lighthouse. Each of these missions take anything from five to ten minutes and becomes more complex as you progress, until you're bombing targets in the middle of a conflict. Once you've completed the first of the missions, make your way to the reception area where you can pay the fee for your first lesson in the air. From there you are directed to the briefing room where you run through your task with your instructor. Once you've had your briefing it's straight to the plane. Don't panic, you don't have to memorise the entire briefing as far as your set speed and height are concerned, as you're given vocal instructions while in the air. Stick to the planned lesson, though, or your instructor eventually takes control

Your main objective is to gain your wings and live the dream...





The guy who painted the lines on this runway must have been drunk...

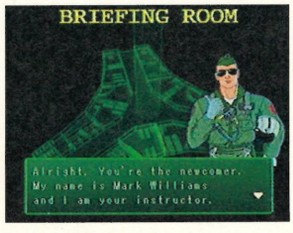
THIS IS YOUR CAPTAIN SPEAKING...

Wing Over 2 offers an interesting structure of gameplay which offers realism and logic that the game itself tries to accomplish. Before you can gain your wings you have to learn to fly, obviously. Before you can learn to fly you have to earn the money for the lessons, of course. There are four sections of the virtual flight school you must visit to undertake all of these functions. First is the Reception Area. Come here to save your progress and pay for your forthcoming tuition. Once you have done this, go immediately to the Briefing Room to receive your instructions. Once your lesson is complete, it's probably wise to visit the Staff Room so you can see your results and replay if you wish (you can also save them to your memory card). There's also a help area too in which you can get a full rundown on the HUDs and other cockpit functions, just in case you're unsure.

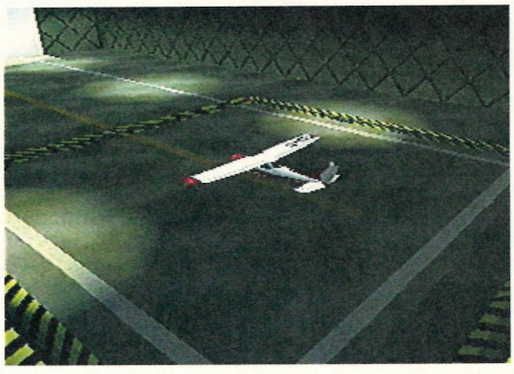








The engine sounds are incredibly intrusive...



of the craft and returns you to the academy and you've failed terribly. As soon as the planned lesson has been completed (or you've crashed or something) you're rated on your performance and scored in different areas. You can visit the Staff Room later on to view your progress through the lessons and see if you're ready for the final exam.

Well Structured

As I'm sure you can tell, Wing Over 2 is a very well structured game that obviously offers extensive gameplay and control in true-to-life flight situations. Graphically, though, it's a slightly different matter. It's important that it's easy for you to read your HUD and dials as you fly, but the 26 aircraft eventually available aren't all graphically of the same standard and it can be hard to see where you are in the sky (which is pretty important really!). That aside, it's obvious to see that the PlayStation isn't really all that clever when it comes to huge flight sims where, of course, the obscenely-powerful PCs excel. The horizon pops up through a mist of polygons not all that far in front, so sometimes using your map display is the best way to see any undulations in the landscape ahead. While you're on the ground, the textures of the surfaces are brash and fuzzy and the polygons flick and jump, but to be fair, when you're 1000 feet above it looking down it looks okay. Sound is another area which is a little duff. The engine sounds are incredibly intrusive and some of the vocal talent is somewhat lacking. The music is quite subtle, which is a blessing considering its quality, but you can't have everything, I suppose.

Wing Over 2 offers a great challenge once you can bypass the graphical glitches and dodgy sound, but it really helps if you've got a genuine interest in aviation. A bit of a cop-out I know, but that's just the way it is.

Russell Barnes

SECOND OPINION

Wing Over 2 is a welcome change from the usual flight sim, where you just bomb and blast your way through various historical scenarios. Unfortunately the aesthetics aren't exactly top-drawer, but they're far from terrible. Overall, Russ is right - good for fans of the genre.

Ian Osborne

THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	8
LIFESPAN	7

79%

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS
Ubi Soft	Ubi Soft	Racing Sim	April '99	UK	£39.99	1-4	Memory Card, Analogue Pad, Dual Shock

We've yet to see THE definitive F1 game on the PSX, but can Monaco Grand Prix take pole position? Claire Webster finds out...

Racing Simulation: Monaco Grand Prix



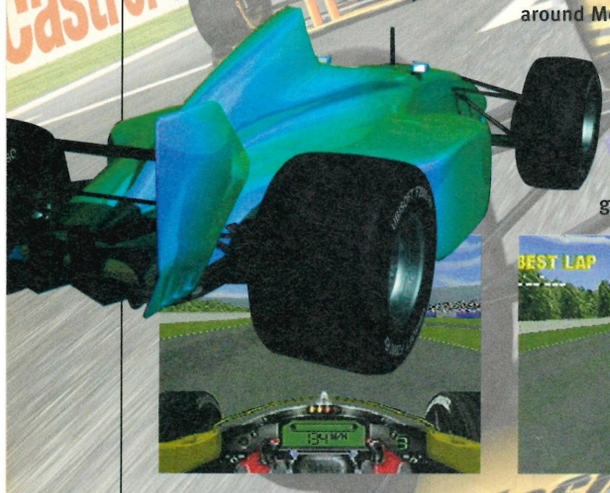
In Time Attack mode you can choose to activate a ghost to chase around the track.



The in-car view makes driving easier, but it means your hands look like cardboard cut-outs...

Now it's Ubi Soft's turn to attempt to produce an outstanding racing sim. There aren't any exclusive licences to be seen here, and that's not necessarily a bad thing - sometimes publishers spend so much money on the licences that the game itself suffers the consequences.

Racing Simulation: Monaco Grand Prix gets the thumbs up straight away, just because it has a massive amount of circuits to race on. I was easily impressed at this because there are only six measly tracks in Sports Car GT, and they all look the same. This time I can take the beach road around Monaco and see the beautiful English countryside instead of the same old grey tarmac and stands full of cardboard cut-out people. I've been blessed with the advantage of having seen this game both on the PC and the Dreamcast too. Of course, the PC graphics were particularly outstanding, as were the Dreamcast's, but I found the PlayStation's controls and general feel of the game are almost the same as the Dreamcast's.





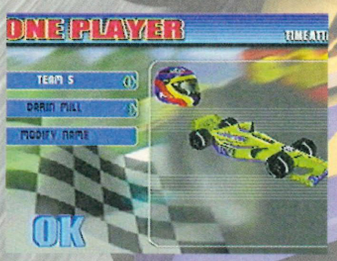
Real Racing

There are a few notable decorative features in this game. The sky and the light sourcing are rather nice. When the sunlight hits your car, your shadow is cast in exactly the right spot, instead of being the same whichever way the sun is shining. The controls are pretty much the same as those in Sports Car GT, the secret being to turn and brake early.

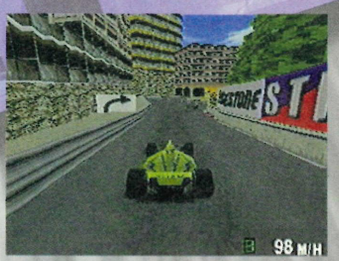
There are four different game modes to play; Arcade, Single Race, Championship and Time Attack. In the last three modes you can carry out some 'tinkling under the bonnet', so to speak, where you alter anything from the brake balance to the amount of petrol you want. However, I did a spot of tinkering myself and none of it seemed to make a lot of difference to my car's performance. You can also choose from 11 teams, with two drivers on each. On the odd occasion you can tell the different



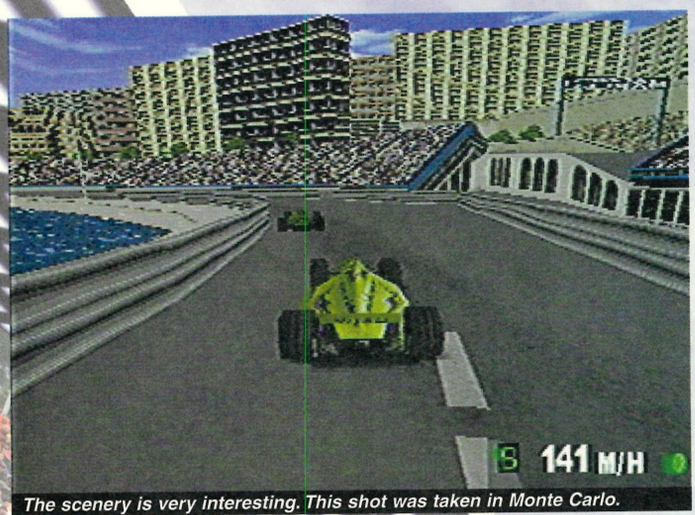
If you like Grand Prix racing, you won't be disappointed











The scenery is very interesting. This shot was taken in Monte Carlo.



Avoid driving 'off road' as you slow right down and the car becomes difficult to control.

between each car, but they're basically all similar to drive.

Whichever race you're taking part in, it seems extremely difficult to climb into the top ten of the 22 racers. But in Arcade Mode you tend to be more worried about whether you can reach a checkpoint in time rather than your overall position. You're also only able to pick from three tracks at first, until you start winning some races. What did make a difference was changing the view to looking out of the car rather than above it. It moves a lot faster (or it looks like it) and the car seems to have more control as well.

Time Attack is where you can have the most fun, because if you're ever going to beat somebody, you're more likely to be able to win against yourself. In the Time Attack options menu you can turn on the ghost, so once you've done your first lap, a ghost appears for you to try and beat so you can better your last time. You can do a limitless number of laps, which serves as invaluable practice for when you enter the championships.

Don't expect anything that hasn't been done before





Two-player is very impressive as well. The graphics are surprisingly unaffected by the split screen, so you can have a fully simulated race. And I suppose that's where it succeeds in surpassing the likes of Sports Car GT. It simulates the movement of the car well and when you're in the in-car view you get the feeling that you really are braking too sharply and skidding into the barrier.

If you like Grand Prix racing, you won't be disappointed. However, don't expect anything that hasn't been done before. This game's appeal is in its graphics and realism, which is exactly what you want from a simulation. So whether you're serious about Grand Prix or not, it could be worth a look.

Claire Webster

TOP TRACKS...

There are 16 circuits to choose from in Monaco GP and few of them are simple. Here are just five of require some skilful driving:



MONACO
3367m
This urban circuit is the most famous of all. Driving around Monte Carlo's city streets is very demanding, both mechanically and for the driver's concentration.

GERMANY
6823m
This course has 3 chicanes, two slow and one fast. The rest is a succession of straight stretches with a very impressive looking entrance into the stadium.

JAPAN
5864m
Japan's circuit consists of a very fast section in which the strongest lateral pressures must be endured. The second part if this circuit is a lot tighter.

FRANCE
4250m
There are 5 straight stretches on this circuit, which means that the emphasis is on top speed, rather than trying to gain 1/10 second in the bends.

AUSTRIA
4319m
This track has recently been modified, so don't expect it to look familiar. It's quite short, but challenging at the same time with long straights and wide corners.

SECOND OPINION

I know it's the gameplay that matters, but without the top names and genuine teams, this just doesn't excite as much as it would with a licence. As a sports racer - ahem - 'inspired' by Formula 1 racing, it acquits itself pretty well, especially in the handling of the cars.

Ian Osborne

THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	7
LIFESPAN	7

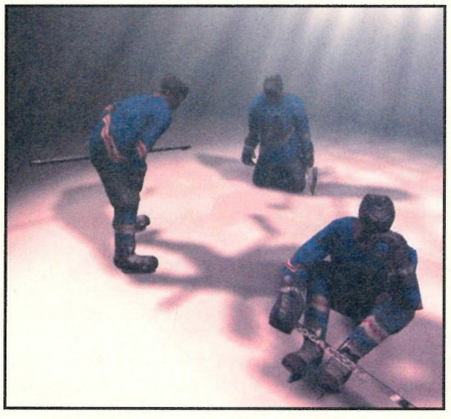
78%

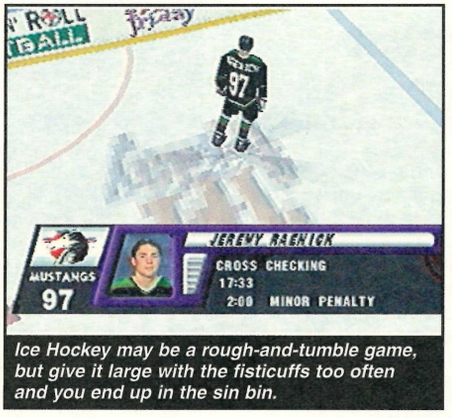
PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS
Gremlin Interactive	Gremlin Interactive	Sports Sim	Out Now	UK	£39.99	1-2

PERIPHERALS
Memory Card Dual Shock
Analogue Pad

Actua Ice Hockey 2

Saul Trewern takes on the sequel to Gremlin's incredibly bugged Actua Ice Hockey, but can he get through a two page review without using a rhyming 'puck' pun?

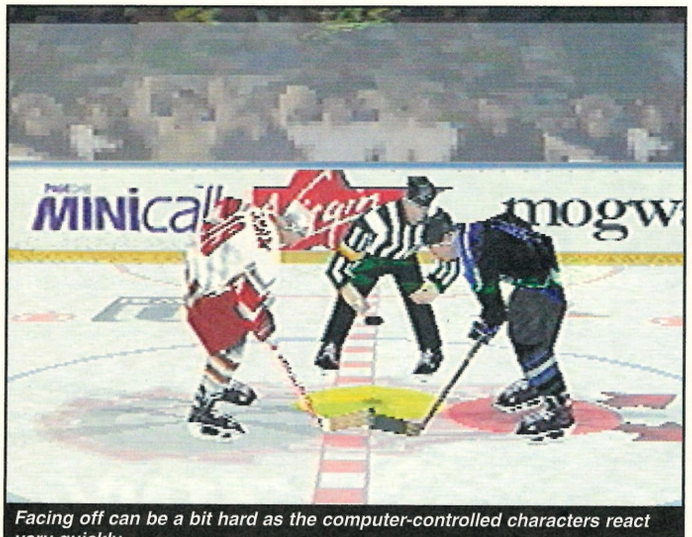




Ice Hockey may be a rough-and-tumble game, but give it large with the fisticuffs too often and you end up in the sin bin.



The Actua team have done a decent job in making the game that the original Actua Ice Hockey should have been



Facing off can be a bit hard as the computer-controlled characters react very quickly.

Pucking hell, pucking fantastic, why don't you puck off! Right, now those side-splitting puns are out of my system, I can get on with the review. It's time to get my skates on then. Doh!

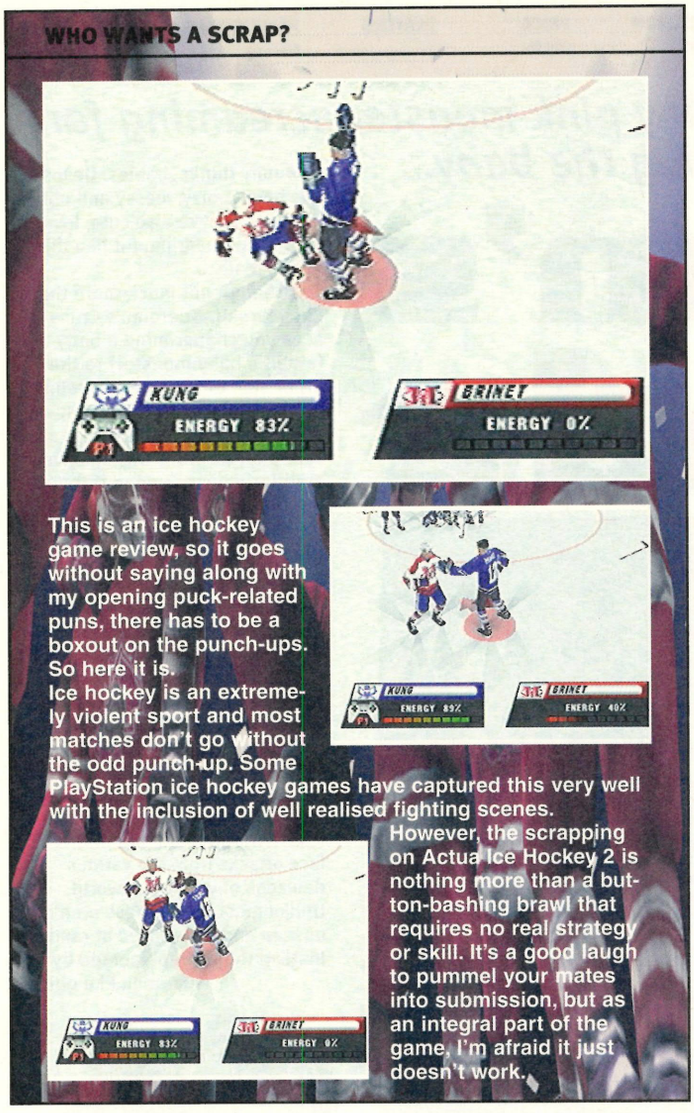
Last year's Actua Ice Hockey from Gremlin was a tad disappointing. Not because it didn't deliver a fast-paced and action-packed game of ice hockey, though. It was simply that the whole game was so bugged that it didn't feel finished. This, from the usual high-quality Actua team, just wasn't good enough. They've sorted their act out this time, though, as Actua Ice Hockey 2 feels highly polished and is gladly lacking any of the glitches or bugs that marred their last effort. But this is how the first game should have been anyway.

Actua Ice Hockey 2 uses a game engine that was co-developed with the Actua Soccer 3 engine. This means we get the most advanced engine Actua have at their disposal and although not wholly dynamic, it's able to produce a very solid and fast-paced game of ice hockey. At times, though, it's almost too fast and losing track of the play is a common occurrence, especially when you first start out on the ice.

It doesn't take that long to get the hang of things as the control system is relatively simple. To pass, simply check the arrows on the floor below your skater for the direction of your team-mates then simply choose a direction and hit 'X'. Shooting is just as simple. Just hit and hold 'square' for more power, then let go to take the shot. The basic controls don't make Actua Ice Hockey 2 any less challenging, though. You're up against some tough American opposition (31 teams in all, 770 players) in either Exhibition, Cup or Championship Modes.

Steelers In The House

The American connection hasn't been kept for the development of the game, though. The movements for the sizeable, motion-captured players were provided by members of one of Britain's most famous ice hockey teams, the Sheffield Steelers. The Steelers also helped out with certain aspects of the AI which adds a nice touch of realism to the computer-controlled players' actions. In fact all of the players, on your side and the opposition, are extremely intelligent. Your team-mates always try to find

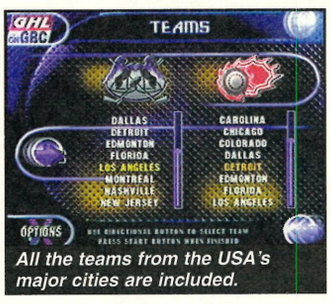




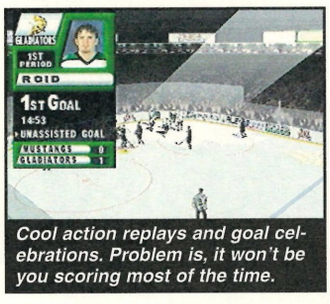
As you can see from this close-up, the players are pretty big and very solid.



Most goals I got were as much luck as they were judgement



All the teams from the USA's major cities are included.



Cool action replays and goal celebrations. Problem is, it won't be you scoring most of the time.

space and good positioning whilst the better opposition have some superb attacking and defending strategies. It's the multi-player game where the most fun is to be had though. But then that can be said for any sports sim.

Actua Ice Hockey 2 caters for all player types, whether fans of Ice Hockey or not, by allowing you the choice of playing in either Arcade or Simulation Mode. It's the arcade game where most multiplayer matches are bound to take place as the action is much faster paced, and the ice rink is smaller (the simulation rinks are massive).

The Arcade Mode also has fewer rules, but this isn't a problem in Simulation Mode, as thankfully you can cater the rules to suit your own tastes. This is actually a God-send as playing the game with full rules feels very disjointed. If you leave all the rules on, the game stops and starts way too much, which may be fine for ice hockey fans but it only serves to annoy the casual gamer.

Confusion In Crowds

As far as ice hockey games go, Actua Ice Hockey 2 is pleasantly appealing to the eye. The players all move smoothly and at a good frame rate. The team kits are all realistic and the colour clash that you get on many ice hockey games when too many players get close to each other is non-existent. As I've said, though, it's possible to get a little confused at times but this is down to the speed of the game and not the actual visuals. There's plenty of camera angles so you should be able to find one that makes this situation a bit easier to cope with.

Sounds like a very competent ice Hockey game really doesn't it? And it is, but there are a few minor niggles. The first being that it's so hard to score. I found most goals I got were as much luck as they were judgement. This, of course, is because ice hockey goals are very small, meaning it's much harder to aim in the first place. But the computer controlled goalies are just too good, making it more 'hit and hope' than 'aim and shoot'. Also, although the action is very fast-paced and frantic, it doesn't have any real spark. It doesn't ignite any passions. Play a full-time match and you're falling asleep by the last period. It is possible to get sucked in, but Actua Ice Hockey 2 just doesn't have the same addictiveness as some of the football games out there. I know it's a bit unfair to compare it to soccer games, but if a sports game doesn't keep you playing till the end of a match, there's definitely something missing.

Still the Actua team have done a decent job in making the game that the original Actua Ice Hockey should have been. The new polished feel gives Actua Ice Hockey 2 an edge from the start and on playing, most of you won't be disappointed. At least if you're not expecting a classic game. It's a shame that it lacks the spark to make it more addictive, and a little less nondescript, but this doesn't always mean 'bad'. Actua Ice Hockey 2 does what it says on the box. But not a lot besides.

Saul Trewern

SECOND OPINION

Actua Ice Hockey 2 certainly improves over that dodgy original, but it's still not the best ice hockey game I've played. It does, however, offer a playable and exciting game of ice hockey that dedicated fans of the oft-violent sport are bound to enjoy.

Russell Barnes

THE SCORE

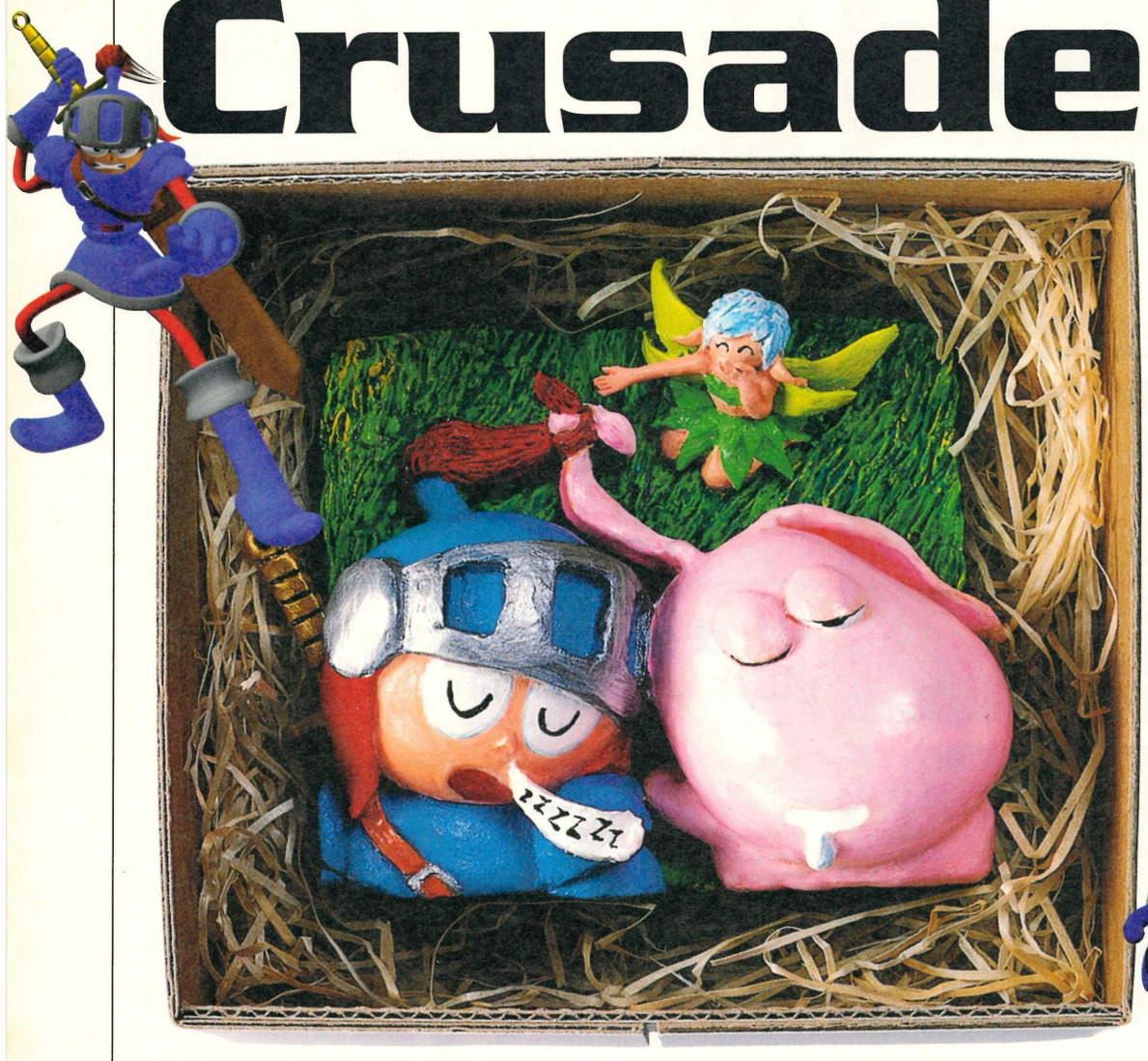
GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	7
LIFESPAN	8

79%

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS
Activision	Tamsoft	RPG	Out Now	UK	£29.99	1	Memory Card

What do you do when you find a tiny pink monster screaming for his mum? Ian Osborne is left holding the baby...

Guardian's Crusade

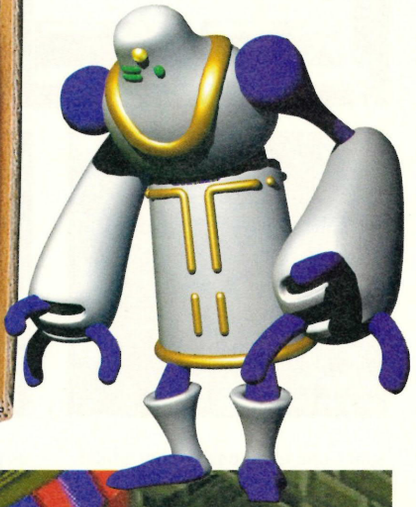


Funny things, babies. Despite being noisy, messy and obtrusive, they're also cute, loveable and endearing. Bit like this game, really...

Although not much more than a kid yourself, Guardian's Crusade sees you chaperoning a baby (albeit a baby monster) to the other side of the world to reunite him with his mother. At least we think it's a 'he' - this baby is a cute pink creature with magical abilities which develop throughout the game.

Guardian's Crusade is full of fresh ideas that really shine next to other RPGs. Take the environment. It can be rotated through 360° at any time, giving far more freedom of movement than a standard fixed camera approach. Doorways are always made clear, though, so you're not constantly moving the perspective to find exits that are under your nose, though the device is used to hide things, as would be expected.

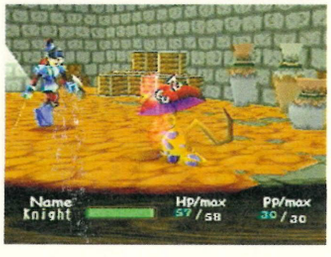
When wandering around, you face attacks from the various denizens of your homeworld. Unlike most RPGs, these aren't unseen and announced at random. Instead they're represented by what look like ghostly















Talk about stating the obvious...



As the baby grows, he develops powerful new abilities.


The 'tadpoles' represent wandering baddies.









tadpoles that give chase as you travel. If you want a fight to build your power and money, head for them. If not, run away. As you grow in strength, the tadpoles representing weaker monsters are less inclined to strike, leaving you free from pointless easy battles (unless of course you want to fight). this is a spectacular innovation of which other RPGs should take note.

The baby is pretty innovative too. Fighting alongside you, as he grows he develops according to how you treat him. He can mature into 14 different characters, each with unique fighting abilities. It's a little like nurturing a Tamagotchi. Nehani the fairy also accompanies you. If you lose the plot, ask her advice - she reminds you of the task in hand, but doesn't give you the game on a plate. You can also use living toys found throughout the game, though these are really just spells by another name.

Stating the Obvious...

Alas, if Guardian's Crusade takes the genre further in many ways, it's cursed by serious flaws which would shame any RPG. The already slightly bland game world isn't helped by the pointless responses offered when you search objects that are just part of the scenery. Look at a bed. 'A bed'. Look at a bookshelf. 'You should read more'. Searching an empty container offers two responses when a simple bleep would tell you there's nothing interesting about it.

The learning curve could do with a little polish too. The game's battles are ridiculously hard at the start, forcing you to power up by picking fights almost immediately. A more gentle start would let the player get into the storyline far easier. The battles themselves are standard turn-based fare - nothing out of the ordinary, but well laid out and fun. The enemy graphics are pretty poor, though, and by the time you met your first monster you'll have long since turned off the sound.

Perhaps the game's biggest flaw is the intrusive way it holds you up while you find the action that triggers the next event. Now, this is fairly standard for RPGs. For example, repairs to a bridge might not be completed until you're told to leave town via that very route. This is fair enough - it allows the game world to expand throughout the game, facilitating a huge environment without letting it become unmanageable. However, the joins should be seamless - you should always feel in control. In Guardian's Crusade you sometimes find yourself wandering aimlessly, desperately trying to trigger an event you already know is going to happen anyway and the trigger often has little logic. For example, in Isten you take part in a gladiator fight. even when you know what's coming, you must talk to a certain character and then sleep before it occurs. Later you're sent on a quest, but can't reach your intended destination until you've met someone else in the town. If talking to these people is so essential to the plot, why not make them come to you?

The learning curve could do with a little polish

The Curate's Egg...

Don't get me wrong - Guardian's Crusade isn't a bad game. It has huge strengths from which other RPGs would do well to learn, but if only it had learned from past RPGs in other areas and been playtested a little more thoroughly, it would be a real barnstormer. Activision are wise to put it out at a tenner cheaper than usual. If you're after a role-player, at this price it's worth putting on your wish list. Just not very near the top.

Ian Osborne



SECOND OPINION

This one's a little hit and miss, but the baby's so cute I just have to carry on and see what becomes of him. The game engine's outstanding, even if the aesthetics leave a lot to be desired, but there are a few gameplay flaws. I bet Tamsoft's next RPG will really burn.

Claire Webster

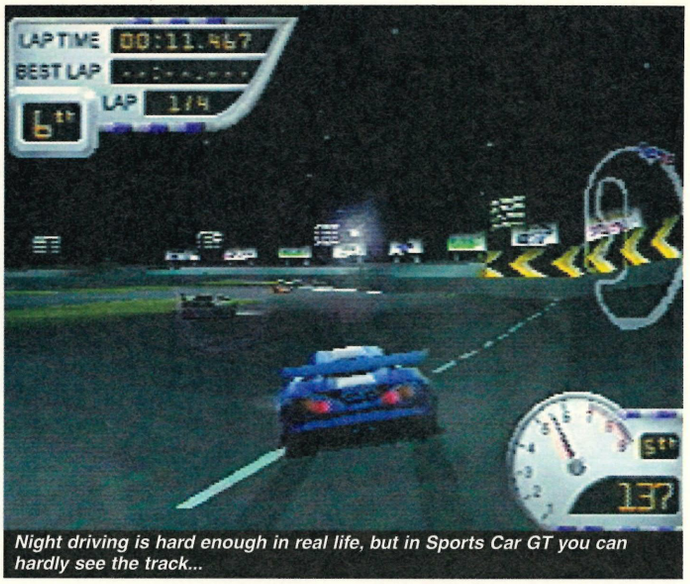
THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	5
SOUND	3
GAMEPLAY	7
LIFESPAN	7

63%



The replays are graphically a lot nicer to watch than those in the game.



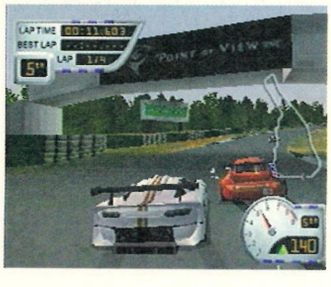
Night driving is hard enough in real life, but in Sports Car GT you can hardly see the track...

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS	
Electronic Arts	EA Sports	Racing Simulation	Spring '99	UK	£39.99	1-2	Memory Card Analogue Pad	Dual Shock

There's an abundance of great racing sims at the moment, and the pressure is mounting to keep up with the likes of Max Power Racing and Gran Turismo. The question is, has Sports Car GT got what it takes? Claire Webster has taken it upon herself to find out....

Sports Car GT







Imagine how chuffed I was when Ian passed me over a review copy of Sports Car GT. Another of my favourite genre to review and, of course, play for hours on end. So off I went to put it in my PlayStation, then got myself comfortable, pad in hand, thinking 'goodness, this is going to be good'. Yes you're right, I'm being all dramatic for a reason, and it's because the only way I can make this review exciting is to not talk about this diabolical game!

The only way I can make this review exciting is to not talk about this diabolical game!

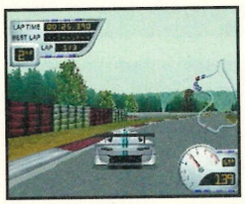
Normally I would slap my own wrist and accuse myself of being too harsh, but not this time. EA have said we'll experience GT racing 'in the fastest incarnations of the hottest cars on the road'. But what they failed to point out was that there are only ten of them on offer, including the BMW M3, Lister Storm, Panoz GTR and the Saleen SR, and to make it seem as though there are a few more they included more of the same, but in a variety of different colours. Now you can't say that that isn't cheating just a little bit.

Benefit of the Doubt...

So I thought, 'well I suppose I'll let them off because they're bound to have plenty of tracks to choose from'. Again, I was sorely disap-

TALKIN' TRACKS...

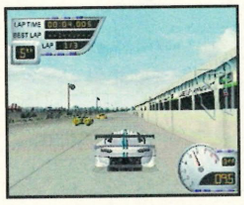
Whether you are in Arcade or Season mode, you only have five tracks to race on, although you can alter the number of laps you do ranging from one to 30. Below is some information on what to expect from each...



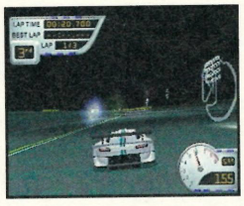
MOSPORT PARK
Length: 2.469 miles
Laps: 3
Conditions: Dry
Very similar to Road Atlanta, this track has the same scenery and an almost identical shape. The only difference I found was the colour of the barriers.



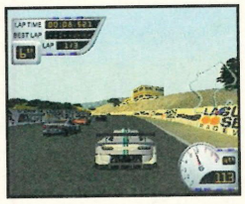
ROAD ATLANTA
Length: 2.62 miles
Laps: 3
Conditions: Dry
This track is only a little longer than Mosport Park, although it does have a few more tight bends to test out your brakes on.



SEBRING INT. RACEWAY
Length: 3.5 miles
Laps: 3
Conditions: Dry
The longest of the five tracks, this one has rather wide roads and very nasty tight turns.



DESERT SPEEDWAY
Length: 1.8 miles
Laps: 3
Conditions: Nightime-dry
The hardest of the tracks as you have no idea where you are going. Barriers appear from nowhere, as do tight turns and fast approaching opponents.



LAGUNA SECA SPEEDWAY
Length: 2.238 miles
Laps: 3
Conditions: Dry and sunny
There are quite a few steep hills on this track, but it is one of the straightest, so make sure you choose one of the faster cars.

You will feel short-changed if you part with your forty quid



For a game that boasts about its car physics this car seems pretty flat.

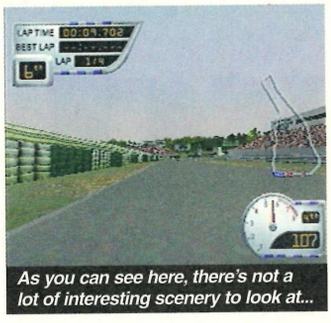
pointed when I found there were only five. No, that isn't a misprint, I really did say five (not including the extra three you earn if you complete the Season races). And what have they attempted to do to compensate? They've given us the option of doing up to 30 laps. I can't think of anything worse than repeatedly going round and round any of the tracks they've included. Which brings me swiftly to the point where I tell you how bad the graphics are.

Even though most of the cars don't travel at anything less than 150 miles per hour, it feels like you're doing about 30, whether you're in one- or two-player. The scenery is also very uninteresting, with no crowds of people and no mountainous backdrops to warrant you taking your eyes off the road. EA have attempted to do the car damage thing, but not very successfully. When an opponent smashes into the side of you there's a few sparks and shards of glass, but your car looks exactly the same, like it's repaired itself.

Earn Your Keep...

In one-player, you have three game modes to choose from. The usual Arcade Mode, Time Trial and Season. I was mistaken in thinking there may be some more tracks in Season Mode, but it was just a case of racing on the same five. You must come at least third to earn your winnings, otherwise you won't even get past the qualifying rounds. Winning is no mean feat either. None of the cars have particularly outstanding acceleration, so from the start you are at the back of the pack, playing catch-up to 5th position for three quarters of the entire race. None of the vehicles have very good brakes either. You have to press the appropriate button miles before a tight corner before you reach the right speed, and there's no handbrake to use as a back-up braking plan.

One of the main features that we all look forward to in a racing game is the two-player game. Nothing beats racing against a friend and becoming all competitive. But Russell and I got bored after the first race, perhaps because the cars handled and braked so badly that it wasn't much like a simulation at all? In two-player you've also got three game modes to choose from. The first is Head-to-Head where you just race against one another. Then there's Pace Car, where you both play catch up to a CPU racer, and finally there's Pink Slip, which involves you trying to win the race so you can win ownership of your opponent's car.



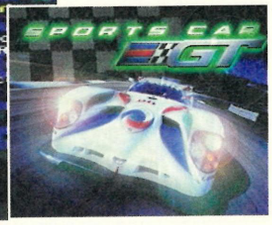
As you can see here, there's not a lot of interesting scenery to look at...

So it was with no remorse at all that I finally had to pull the power lead out of the back of my console so I could start writing this for you. I can't believe EA really think this game is going to overtake the likes of Max Power, for instance. It lacks the element that gives you the adrenaline rush of real racing. Be under no illusion - you will feel short-changed if you part with your forty quid.

Claire Webster







SECOND OPINION

Claire is being a little harsh here as I think Sports Car GT is actually pretty playable, if a little short-lived. Okay, so it's not Gran Tursimo, but it's not trying to be either. The tracks are a little boring but on the whole, I had a good afternoon's-worth of fun with it.

Saul Trewern

THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	3
SOUND	4
GAMEPLAY	4
LIFESPAN	4

35%







PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS
Sunsoft	Sunsoft	Action / Adventure	May '99	UK	£39.99	1

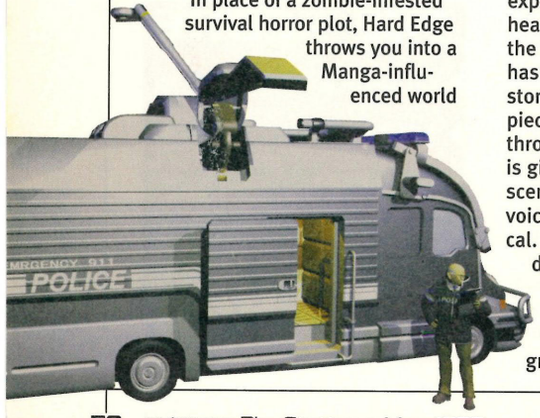
PERIPHERALS

Memory Card
Analogue Pad
Dual Shock

The first real contender to Resident Evil's crown is Sunsoft's Hard Edge. This game may look and play like Resident Evil, but will it leave Saul Trewern with stains in his pants? Or were they already there anyway?

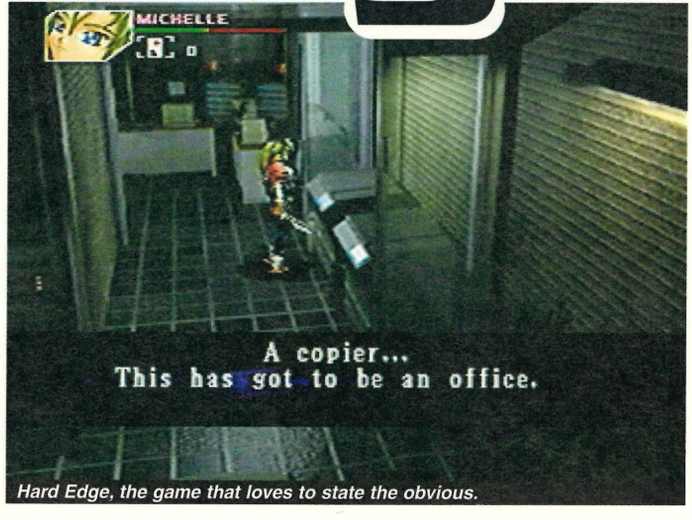
Hard Edge

Hard Edge looks like Resident Evil, plays like Resident Evil, and is equally as challenging as Resident Evil. However, it's not and never will be as good as Resident Evil. Not for want of trying, though. Publishers Sunsoft and their in-house development team have created what is basically Resident Evil in a different setting, but (and it's a big 'but') without any of the edge-of-seat tension or blood-curdling gore that Capcom captured in their Evil Dead-style masterpieces. Hard Edge may be directly influenced by Resident Evil, but Survival Horror it most definitely isn't. One of Resident Evil's biggest draws was this horror aspect, so without it, I'm afraid to say Hard Edge doesn't have a chance from the outset. Don't give up on it yet though...



In place of a zombie-infested survival horror plot, Hard Edge throws you into a Manga-influenced world of high technology and the usual evil terrorists. The setting for the game is a huge office block (exciting huh?) which you'd think immediately negates any real opportunity for the set designers to go to town. You'd be wrong, though. Guiding your two heroes through this hi-rise building gives you the opportunity to witness some stunning pre-rendered rooms and areas that equal, and at times surpass, anything the Resident Evil games have to offer.

An extremely good-looking, quietly playable and very involving action adventure romp



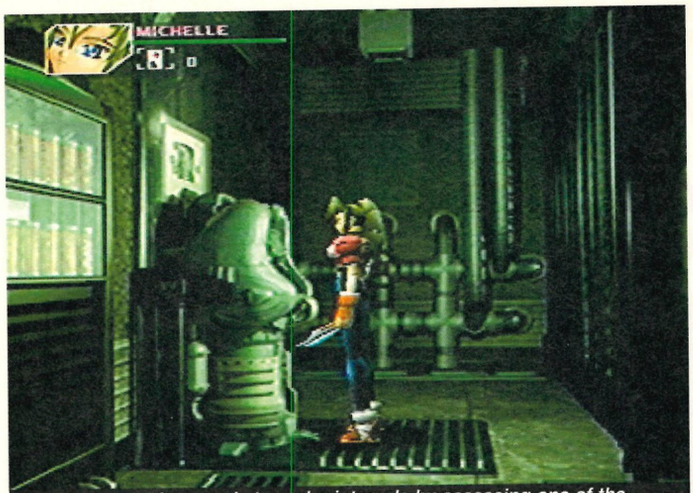
Hard Edge, the game that loves to state the obvious.

The action kicks off in the basement after a lengthy and fantastic looking CG intro that gives you the story so far. You play the part of two surviving special forces agents after an attack on the Machinery Gear Inc. offices by an ex-employee with a grudge. It's your job to seek out the terrorists and their boss by exploring the Machinery Gear headquarters. This is just the tip of the iceberg, though, as Hard Edge has a very complex and interwoven storyline you can chip away at piece by piece as you progress through the game. Much of the plot is given away during the many cut scenes and like Resident Evil, the voice acting is absolutely diabolical. In fact, the Hard Edge acting doesn't even match that of Resident Evil, which is saying something. It's cornier than a pack of Kellogg's finest in a grain silo, and more over-acted than Gwyneth Paltrow's Oscar acceptance speech. In fact it's laughable, which is even more reason to witness it.

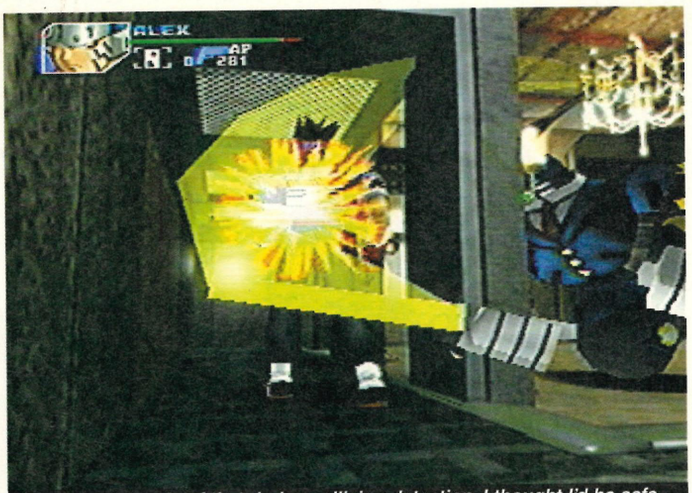
Office Exploration

Hard Edge isn't just about exploring either. There's an inordinate amount of puzzles to solve, although like the Resident Evil games, they're not exactly brain-melting; just time consuming. In fact the Hard Edge puzzles are so similar to those found in Resident Evil that it seems like Sunsoft haven't even bothered to add their own slant. The first puzzle I came across was one where I had to move a statue to find a keycard. Hmm... Moving statues, now that's original. Subsequent puzzles didn't just remind me of Resident Evil, they were almost exactly the same. Sadly though, the execution in this area isn't as polished and involving as the puzzles in Resident Evil.

Neither is the combat. This is partly due to the fact that the Manga-style robotic and mutant enemies just aren't as interesting or scary as the Romero-influenced zombies and mutants from Resident Evil. However, the reason for the combat losing marks is mainly down to the control system and the camerawork. You often find you're being attacked by an enemy just off-screen, or you get attacked the second you walk on. If this is an attempt at adding a little survival horror shock factor, then it failed completely. More likely, though, is that it's just poor programming and game design. When you're actually able to target your foe the fighting simply becomes boring, as it's just a case of letting go a set amount of rounds or hammering the fire button to slice away at them with a knife. Both of your characters have a few special



Your game can be saved at regular intervals by accessing one of the many Save Computers found in the building.



Here's an example of that dodgy collision detection. I thought I'd be safe behind the wall, but somehow this sword can go straight through it.









moves to pull off, but this doesn't help things. Hardware fans are catered for, though, as there are plenty of tasty weapons to get your hands on.

Not In Control

The control system throughout the game doesn't really deliver the intuitive and reactive action that's needed to make this type of game a mesmerising experience. It's possible to get used to them and after a while you should be settled into the routine, but never at any time does the movement of your characters look or feel as smooth as Claire and Leon's from the last Resident Evil outing.

The problem doesn't really come from the way the controls are laid out. More in the way that your characters react to the scenery. For a start, some of the collision detection is absolutely shameful - it often takes countless button presses and tiny movements to position yourself correctly for a door and you're always, infuriatingly, getting stopped by invisible walls.

Hard Edge may be flawed and may not be as instantly playable and enjoyable as the Resident Evil games, but despite this, I actually found myself getting into it and enjoying the exploration-based gameplay. 'What?', I hear you say. Well think about it; if you take Resident Evil out of the equation, Hard Edge starts to sound like a good game. If you don't compare it to its obvious influence (and source of plagiarism) you have an extremely good-looking, quietly playable and very involving action adventure romp. Okay, so the style and panache aren't here. Neither is the finish, polish or instant playability. But this really is forgivable.

Get over Resident Evil, accept Hard Edge's flaws and somehow it proves to be a long stayer. If you're waiting for something to fill the hole in your life after Resident Evil 2, Hard Edge should do the job nicely. Just don't expect the best, 'cause it ain't.

Saul Trewern

Get over Resident Evil, accept Hard Edge's flaws and somehow it proves to be a long stayer



SECOND OPINION

I'm a huge fan of Resident Evil so I find it hard to praise Hard Edge, especially when it has so many flaws. However, I did find myself enjoying the game. The graphics are superb and the storyline involving. If only there was a little more originality here.

Claire Webster

THE SCORE

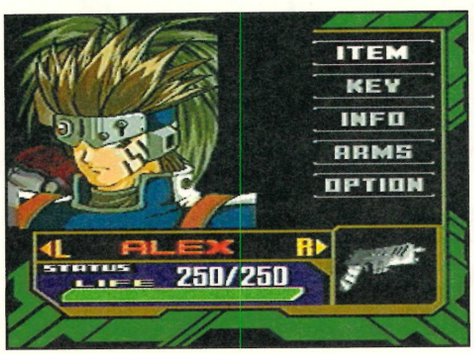
GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	8
LIFESPAN	8

82%

DOUBLE WHAMMY...

One feature that doesn't stink of Resident Evil in Hard Edge is that you have two characters to as. No hold on; that's still Resident Evil isn't? What I mean is you get to switch between your characters at will. At the start of the game they both go off in different directions, but to complete it you have to get both of them through the building. Being able to switch to completely different areas with a different character and new puzzles to solve and baddies to beat means when you get stuck in one section, you can take a break and play with the other character for a while. When you come back you find that the section that was causing you bother isn't as bothersome at all.



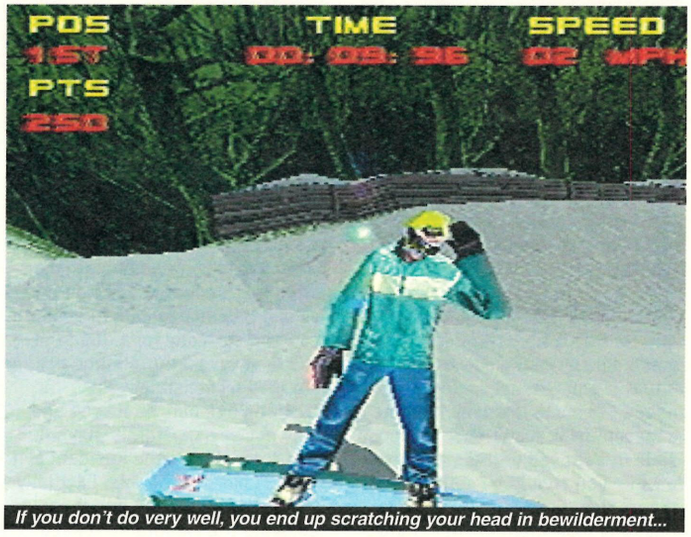


PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS	
Electronic Arts	Pitbull Syndicate	Sports Sim	May '99	UK	£39.99	1-2	Memory Card	Analogue Pad

Big or Phat? Will anyone be able to tell the difference? Phat Air wasn't as 'extreme' as it made out to be, and we wonder how well this one rates against the mighty Cool Boarders 3. Claire Webster decided there's only one way to find out...

Big Air





If you don't do very well, you end up scratching your head in bewilderment...

Maybe it's a case of going overboard with the snowboard over the past few months. In Issue 13 alone, we reviewed three, X Games Pro Boarder (75%), Phat Air (31%) and Cool Boarders 3 (a whopping 92%). At the bottom of the pile was Phat Air, which had dodgy controls, poor graphics and an embarrassingly short lifespan. It's obviously not going to be much of a challenge for Big Air to beat that!

On first impressions, Big Air has got that 'fashionable' look, as it features licensed snowboards from Palmer, Ride, Morrow, Joyride and Arbor as well as licensed clothing from WaveRave and Westbeach. I apologise for my ignorance, but almost none of those labels ring any bells with me.

Mingling with the Masters

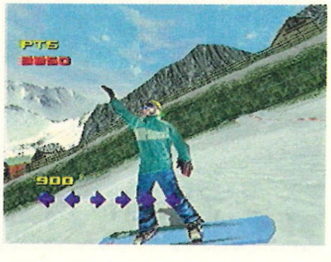
So now we've decided it's at least going to be a game for those real-life snowboarding boffins, who no doubt recognise some of the best riders from around the world who are featured. There are six of them in total, namely Jacqueline-De Morlay, Natalie-Iarz, Yoshiko-Asahi, Euen Glendower, Ulrick-Weishaupt and Noah Cameron.

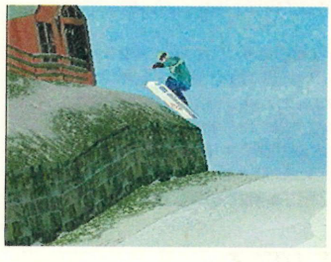
And of course, change of clothes options comes as standard, as with every other snowboarding sim we've seen so far.

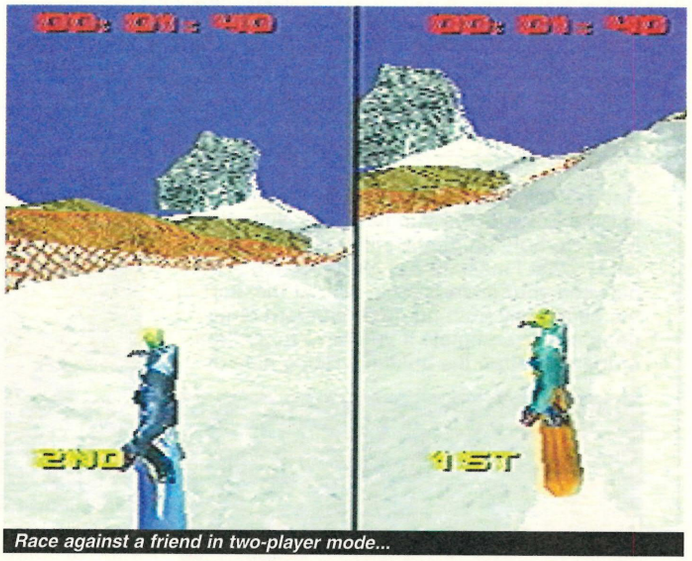
EA and Pitbull said their main aim with Big Air was to create more realism and simulation, rather than instant-fix arcade thrills (which doesn't make this game any easier for snowboarding virgins such as myself). However, they also claim it's accessible for non-snowboarders, so who better to test that statement than I?

The developers used a modified version of their Test Drive 5 engine, and they've also made use of soft skin technology to make a move away from polygon-built characters to ones that are created by animating all vertices separately, to give that realistic look. And even if it looks as though they are, none of the characters are motion-captured, but instead are built from live key frames (highly technical stuff).

Big Air offers six different game types; Free Ride: Race, Free Ride: Trick, Half Pipe, Big Air, Boardercross and World Tour. But to start off with it's probably a good idea to do some training (whether you are a pro at snowboarding or not). The Training







Race against a friend in two-player mode...

It definitely has a little something for the genuine snowboarding fan

BIG NAMES...

For those of you who aren't familiar with all those famous snowboarders, here they are with their stats...



NOAH CAMERON
Height: 6'
Weight: 160 lbs
Age: 21
Hometown: San Francisco
Occupation: Marketing
Stance: Goofy



NATALIE HARZ
Height: 5'9"
Weight: 110 lbs
Age: 22
Hometown: Berlin, Germany
Occupation: Fashion Model
Stance: Goofy



JACQUELINE-DE MORLAY
Height: 6'
Weight: 125 lbs
Age: 21
Hometown: Paris, France
Occupation: Videographer
Stance: Regular



EUEN GLENDOWER
Height: 5'9"
Weight: 180 lbs
Age: 23
Hometown: Newtonmore, Scotland
Occupation: Garage Mechanic
Stance: Goofy



ULRICH-WEISHAUPT
Height: 6'
Weight: 165 lbs
Age: 23
Hometown: Zermatt, Switzerland
Stance: Regular



YOSHIKO-ASAHI
Height: 5'1"
Weight: 105 lbs
Age: 17
Hometown: Tokyo, Japan
Occupation: Student
Stance: Goofy



In the Half Pipe event you must score at least 1000 points to win first place.

Mode is where you learn how to do tricks, ranging from your basic tail grab and front side air, to the more complicated stunts such as the 360- and 640-degree turns.

Tricky Tricks

This is where the controls for the game start to get a little more complicated. For example, to carry out a 900-degree turn, you have to press left two times, right three times and then left just once, and if you haven't got the speed or time in the air to do it, don't expect to gain many points. The degree of difficulty doesn't end there. Some tricks incorporate using the D-Pad as well as every other button on the controller - it really does get pretty ridiculous. If you bear in mind the key to making incredible tricks is to buy yourself plenty of air time to achieve them, you soon get the hang of it.

All the game modes are slightly different; in some you just have to race against either one other or three CPU opponents and hope you don't wipe out - oh, sorry, that's windsurfing isn't it? And others involve you just performing as many complicated tricks as you can so you can enter your name on the high score table. All the different game modes are set across 30 courses in six different countries. The more competitions you win, the more opportunities you have to travel (in other words, more tracks are successively unlocked).

Two-player Mode is also quite intense, and it's available either in horizontal or vertical split-screen. Using the analogue is not advisable as it's hard enough to steer your board as it is, and you find at first your pad is trembling with all the banging into trees you do. I would say that Big Air is more on a par with the likes of X Games Pro Boarder in both the graphics and playability stakes, and it definitely has a little something for the genuine snowboarding fan, with a dose of fun for those non-snowboarders thrown in for good measure. But, surprise, surprise, don't expect it to be quite like the Cool Boarders 3 experience, or you may be a little disappointed.

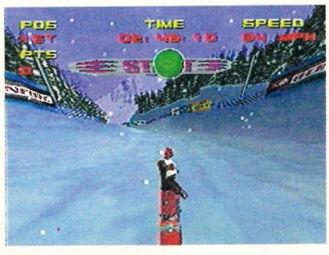
Claire Webster



Look carefully and you'll see snow trails kick up behind boarders.









Don't expect it to be quite like the Cool Boarders 3 experience



SECOND OPINION

Big Air offers no kind of competition for Cool Boarders 3 as the tricks are almost impossible to do and the graphics aren't too hot either. It simply doesn't have the gameplay. Claire's been a bit generous I'd say, but hey; she played it for longer!

Saul Trewern

THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	7
LIFESPAN	7

73%



There's a massive 34 characters to choose from both new and old...



SF Alpha 3 has an all-new World Tour mode.

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS	
Virgin Interactive Entertainment	Capcom	Beat-'em-up	Out Now	UK	£39.99	1-2	Memory Card Analogue Pad	PocketStation

Capcom really are dishing out some great beat-'em-ups, with Darkstalkers 3 and now Street Fighter Alpha 3. But will this one be the best in the series yet? Claire Webster gets her fists flying...

Street Fighter Alpha 3







The Street Fighter series offer the most classic beat-'em-up games ever to grace the arcades and the PlayStation. Those of you who couldn't hang around for the UK version more than likely did a quick sprint down to your local games stockist to purchase it on import after reading our import review back in Issue 14, and those who waited patiently; well done for being able to restrain yourselves.



So you've got your Turbos, Alphas, 2s, Ex's, Movies and Collections, and just when you thought there was no more room for another helping, along came this baby. But is it just another rehash of the same thing? I don't think so, and I reckon you'll think the same.

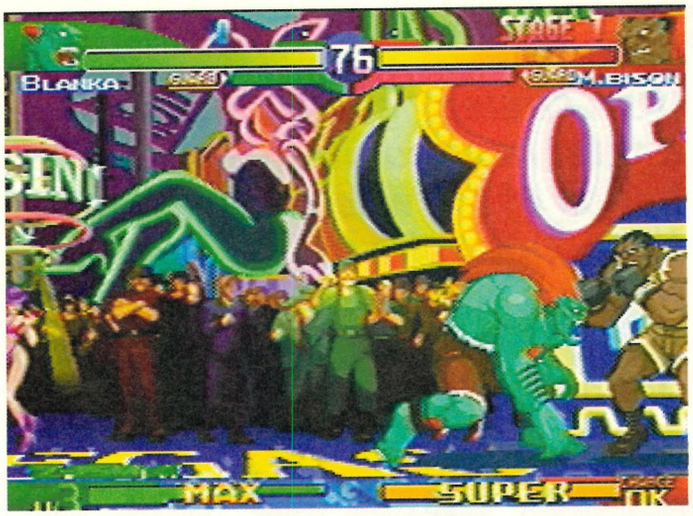
In some ways it's very similar to all of its predecessors. For starters it has the usual Arcade Mode where you can choose to play any of the 34 different characters. Of course, as you would expect, there are some familiar faces in the character selection menu, such as Ryu, Ken and Blanka, but there are also four newcomers. You also won't be surprised to see Versus Mode either.

Street Fighter fans will be overjoyed with Alpha 3, as were we

Many of you still remember all of the different button sequences for each character's moves and you probably won't be disappointed to find if you give them a try, the appropriate character obliges. But we just don't want more of same, so there are new moves and other such subtleties to grasp as well. You could probably learn most of a character's moves in just a day, but to become a full-on expert, it could take months.

Multiple Modes

There are two new modes of play. First, there's World Tour Mode where you must win fights to gain experience points that in turn increases your power-ups. There's



The 2D graphics are as gorgeous as we've come to expect from Street Fighter

IT'S ALL IN THE TRAINING...

There are both old and new moves in Street Fighter Alpha 3, and of course there's always room for a bit of practice. Whether you want to remind yourself of all the old button sequences or get used to the brand-new spanking ones, here's the place to do it...











That's what you get for cowering away in the corner, you coward...

Basically, if your tactic involves you running off to go and hide in the corner of the screen and hope your opponent won't see you (how ridiculous), and just keep blocking his attacks, the all-new Guard Power Gauge quickly empties and you're left feeling very vulnerable. The Guard Power Gauge varies in length depending on which of the 'isms' you chose before the fight and your character's overall power. Once the gauge has been drained, it takes a little time for it to refill, so if you're thinking of running away, this is a good time.



Packing New Punches

There are also fresh new moves to get used to in Street Fighter Alpha 3, including aerial attacks, taunts, crossovers, recoveries and Alpha and counter attacks for huge great multi-hit combinations (sounds good just saying it). The offensive moves are also new this time round; you've got two-in-ones which link combos through super moves. Pop-up throws mean you can do a multi-hit assault. If you're knocked over by an aerial attack or thrown you can now make use of roll, tech and air recoveries, and the list goes on...

The 2D graphics are as gorgeous as we've come to expect from Street Fighter, probably because they've used the same graphics engine and mechanics as in previous games. The loading times are also almost non-existent, which means there's no more eager tapping of fingers while you wait for your next fight to start. All these plus new background music and revamped options menus makes this game a little treasure.

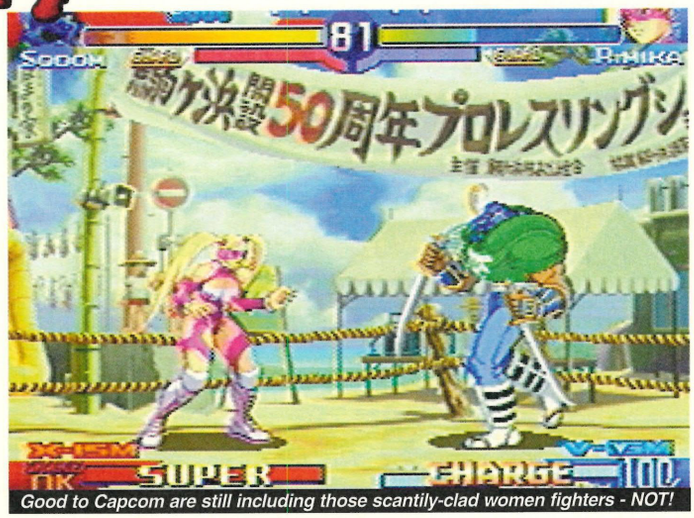
But surely there must be some bad points somewhere? One might be that Capcom could have spent a little more time working on the game itself rather than concentrating mainly on all the new game modes, and although I said that the graphics were stunning, maybe they could have worked on one or two things as sometimes the animation seems to miss the odd one or two frames. To be honest, it's hard to find a lot to have a moan about. Nothing has ever, and maybe won't ever come close to the legendary Tekken 3, though this 2D game has a good go. Street Fighter fans will be overjoyed with Alpha 3, as were we.

Claire Webster



also Dramatic Mode which teams two of the characters against the computer. A superb feature in this mode involves you choosing your fighting style before you begin your first fight. X-ism is aggressive, A-ism is defensive and V-ism is a compromise. Extra new bits and bobs include Team Battle, Final Battle, Survival Modes and even the ability to avoid air-attacks and throwing.





Good to Capcom are still including those scantily-clad women fighters - NOT!





SECOND OPINION

Big, bright, bold and full of solid beat-'em-up business. Isn't the Street Fighter series a little long in the tooth now, though? Surely Capcom could come up with a new brand after so many years. Still, there's no denying this Street Fighter outing is pretty cool.

Saul Trewern

THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	9
LIFESPAN	8

92%



PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED
Infogrames	Infogrames	Strategy / Platform	May '99

VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS
UK	£39.99	1	Memory Card

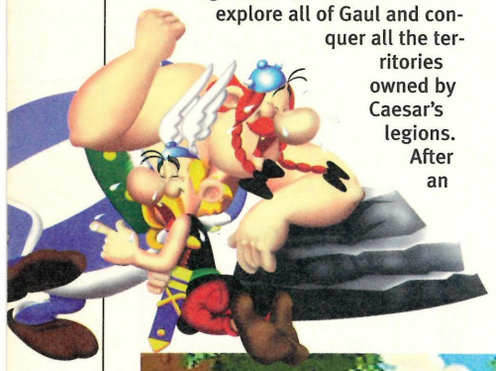
It's a strategy game for the lighter hearted. There's no domination of the whole globe, just the opportunity to throw a few Romans and take rightful ownership of Gaul. Claire Webster takes on the challenge...

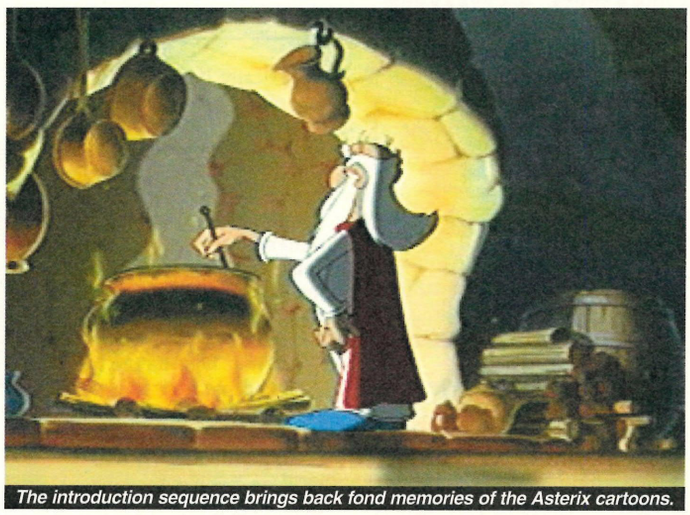
Asterix

It's 50 BC and Gaul is entirely occupied by the Romans, with the exception of one small village which has managed to defend themselves up to now. Their secret weapon is a magic potion concocted by the village's much-respected old druid, Getafix. However, he is running short of the vital ingredients needed for his next batch. So guess what? You have to help Asterix and Obelix on their expedition to search for these ingredients, which are scattered throughout the four corners of Gaul. There is only one way to find all the ingredients, and that's to explore all of Gaul and conquer all the territories owned by Caesar's legions. After an entire day playing this game I came to the conclusion it has similarities to a game of chess. Okay, so you haven't exactly got chess pieces to move around the board, but it does involve thinking tactically about your move and trying to predict what the opposition is planning to do on their next go.

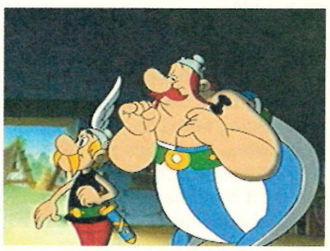
The story aside, the principle of this game is simple. At the beginning of your move you are given ten helpings of magic potion to distribute between the provinces that you own, which is only the village at this point. Once you have deployed your ten rations, you can begin your attack, though it has to be against an area next door to you. So you extract potion from the village and send it over to a Roman-owned territory hoping that the battle ends with you victorious. But be warned; the more troops Caesar has on each territory, the more potion you must send over to win.

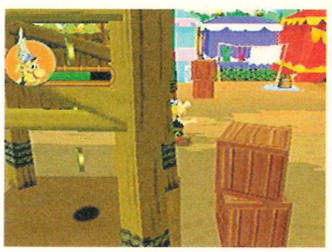
Once you've gained ownership of a Province, it's crucial you give it enough potion to withstand an enemy attack, as Caesar's legions try and take them back.

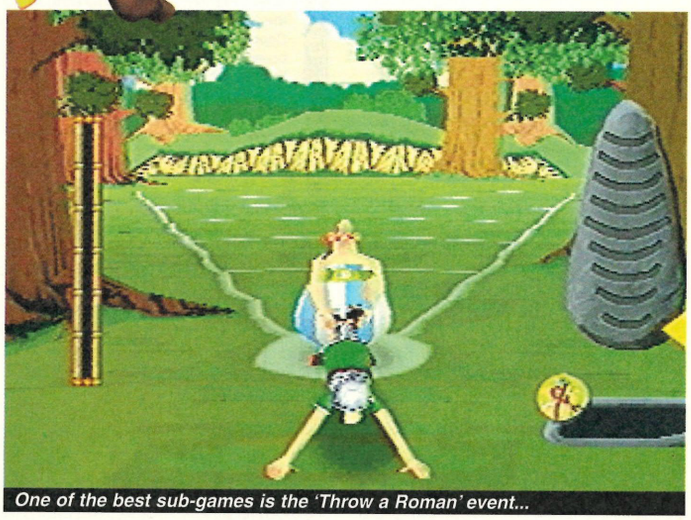




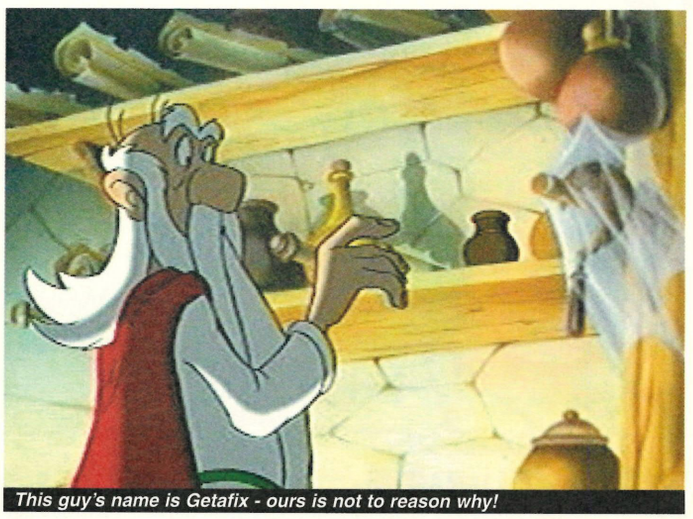
The introduction sequence brings back fond memories of the Asterix cartoons.







One of the best sub-games is the 'Throw a Roman' event...



This guy's name is Getafix - ours is not to reason why!

IT GIVES YOU WINGS...

While playing the platform levels there are, predictably, many things to pick up that help you. Below are what each of them are and a description of what they do.



ENERGY BAR
The energy level you have at the beginning of the game varies according to the amount of magic potions you use to attack that key territory. Your energy increases if you collect the bonuses. When Asterix and Obelix have no energy left, your attack fails and you return to the strategy game.



BONUS
If you hit one of these boxes you find bonus coins

WINGS
Find some of these and you can make Asterix fly through the air with the aid of his winged helmet. But be careful, as you have a limited amount of time.



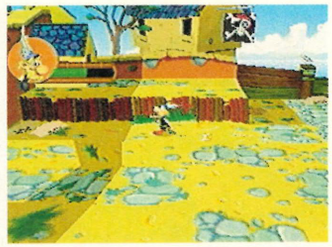


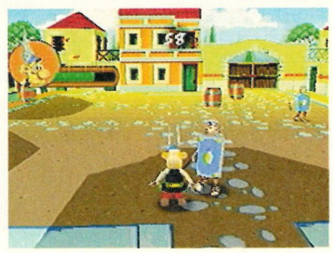
COINS
If you collect these coins you gain extra potion units for the strategy.

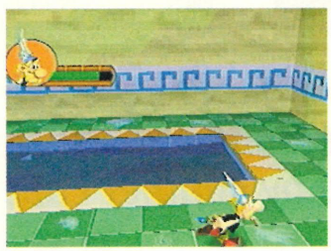
CAULDRONS
The cauldrons you collect increase Obelix's energy level.

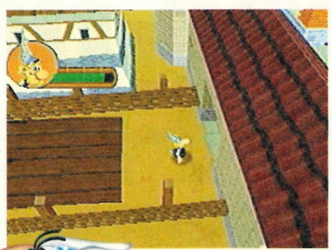


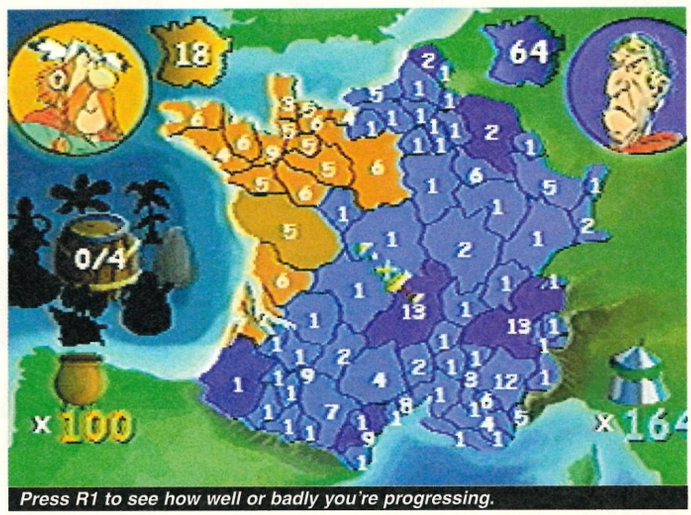




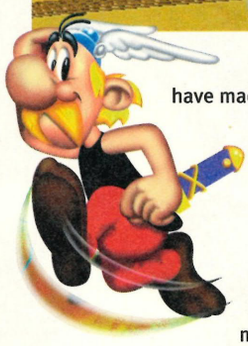








Press R1 to see how well or badly you're progressing.



After you have made all your attacking moves, you can adjust the amount of potion each of your areas have, by moving an amount from one to the other. It seems from the beginning that it isn't going to be a very fair match, as Caesar has far more territories and he also seems to make more moves than you can. But as you progress you find it doesn't take as much work as first thought, as he doesn't have many troops on the land he does own.

Two for the Price of One

But this game isn't just about pouring potion from one pot to the next; there's also some platform adventures and sub-games added as an extra ingredient. When Asterix goes to attack a 'key' territory, the only way you can gain control is by finding the hidden ingredient. There are seven key territories in all, including The Forest, Narboa, Carnac and Aquae Calidae. Once you have conquered all seven, an eighth is revealed. Some of the platforming levels are harder than others, and the graphics really aren't too impressive; Asterix and Obelix are able to walk through walls and trees for some reason, but I must say it's a great improvement on the preview version I played.

One thing I was very grateful about is the ability to save the game at any point as the battle can turn around quite suddenly if you make a silly mistake. It's advisable to save once you have collected one of the key ingredients as it is possible for Caesar to gain back the territory if you don't guard it with enough magic potion. It also takes an extremely long time to finish the game. By the end of the working day I owned around 50% of Gaul, and that was on the easy difficulty level!

Asterix does have a lot going for it. It's not exactly one for the hardcore strategist, but it is very addictive and the platform levels break the monotony when there is any. The only thing it could improve upon is the graphics, but for a strategy game I wouldn't necessarily think it was too important, so for that it can be forgiven. Normally I wouldn't be too chuffed to play a game such as this, but on this occasion I'll make an exception and say I'm darn impressed!

Claire Webster

Not exactly for the hardcore strategist but very addictive

SECOND OPINION

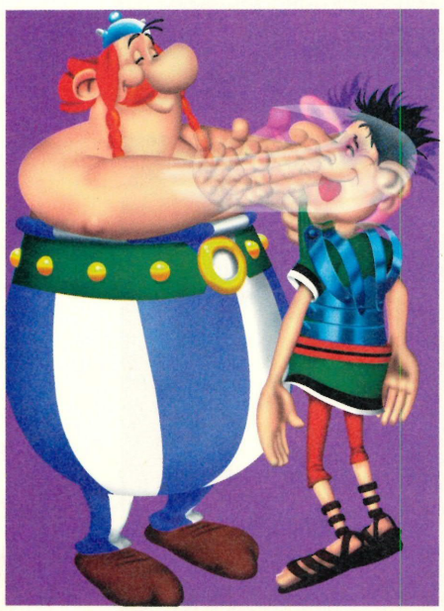
This has come as a bit of a shock to me. On being handed an Asterix game I'd normally expect a platform malarkey, but what I got was a strategy game. And not a bad one either. But if I have to play a strategy game, I'm afraid it would have to be C&C, and not this.

Russell Barnes

THE SCORE

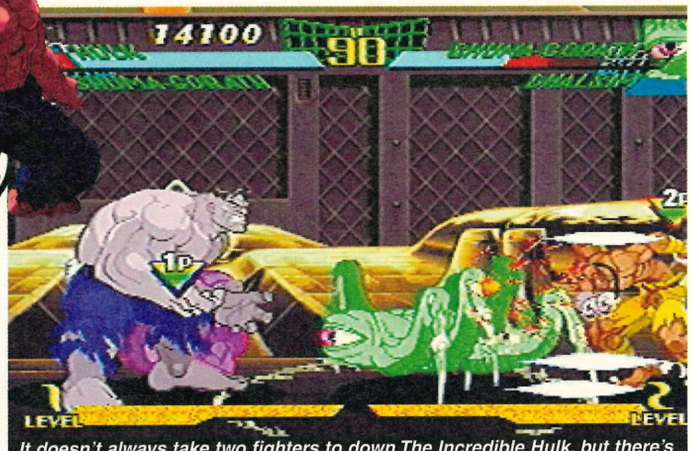
GRAPHICS	6
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	8
LIFESPAN	8

78%





Check out the quality of the artwork. And this is just a static loading screen too.



It doesn't always take two fighters to down The Incredible Hulk, but there's nothing wrong in making sure the odds are in your favour.

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS	
Virgin Interactive	Capcom	Beat-'em-up	June '99	UK	£39.99	1-2	Memory Card	Dual Shock

Last month's Street Fighter Collection 2 didn't do much to impress. Maybe Marvel Super Heroes Vs Street Fighter can score higher with Saul Trewern, or is he about to be trampled by another Capcom cash cow?

Marvel Super Heroes Vs Street Fighter

Marvel Super Heroes Vs Street Fighter may well be a cash-in on an exhausted licence, but this latest Capcom cash cow offers something that Street Fighter Collection 2 sorely lacked. Class. That's right, Marvel Super Heroes Vs Street Fighter is a classy cash cow. In fact the fluid, solid, fast-paced and exciting gameplay does enough to even forgive the fact that the Street Fighter licence has been milked more than Farmer Palmer's herd of prize Fresians; enjoy this for the top slice of 2D beat-'em-up action that it is.



Between both the Marvel posse and the Street Fighter brigade you get 17 characters to pummel away at each other. All the favourite Street Fighter characters make an appearance, including Ryu, Chun Li and Akuma, while on the Marvel side of the fence you get to play Wolverine, Spiderman or Captain America amongst other less well known faces. Well to me anyway, 'cos I'm not a fan of the comic books, but even so, it's fun to play as the all-conquering superheroes that have graced the world's comic book stands for decades.

The screams, shouts and roars are as good as anything from Tekken

All of the characters have a devastating array moves with which to batter opponents, and in the usual Street Fighter fashion, these can all be strung together to form combos for maximum devastation. Also in Street Fighter fashion, there are a number of extra-special moves that each character can pull off. Succeed in hitting the right combination and you're rewarded by a huge, very stylish picture of your character, a multitude of multi-colour flashes and then the animation for the move. This could be anything from a physics-defying flying kick to an extra-strong fireball. All have many times the power of normal hits which is why you have to build your power meter before you're able to unleash them.

Class Act

This is all well and good. Most 2D beat-'em-ups have more than enough moves, special moves, combos and animations. So what makes



M Bison and Dan get the double team tactics going in full force.



The training mode is very welcome as some of the special moves can be extremely tricky to pull off.



Ryu launching a devastating special attack that finishes most opponents off if they have less than half their energy left.



Blackheart, one of the Marvel heroes, calls on his little animal friends to help maul opponents.





Special bosses and sub-bosses take some beating. Check out this beast for proof.

this so special? Well, as I said, the action on Marvel Super Heroes Vs Street Fighter oozes class. Maybe it's the fact that Capcom have had a lot of practice by producing so many Street Fighters. No matter how they got here, though, there's no denying that the nail has firmly been hit on the head this time.

All this talk of class, however, isn't exactly why Marvel Super Heroes Vs Street Fighter is different from the rest of the 2D beat-'em-ups. That's really down to something called Cross Over Mode. Instead of choosing one character at the start you have to choose a back-up fighter who can help you out when called upon in a fight. This opens the doors for all sorts of cross move, and team gameplay. It's only in the Cross Over battle that this theme really shows its true spirit. Instead of your back-up player simply coming in for a few seconds to help you out of a tight spot (as in the arcade modes), you actually get to play tag-team beat-'em-up. You have to work out whole new strategies like when to rest and use your fighters and a bout can go on for an absolute age if you play your cards right.

On top of the Cross Over battle, Capcom have had the forethought to include a Heroes battle where you can pit the Heroes against the Street Fighters. Alternately, if you want to mix and match, just go for arcade or the superb two-player battle. You can also choose whether to play any of the different battle modes on turbo or normal speed as well as changing the style and difficulty of control to suit your skill level.

Cartoon Violence Rules

What of the gameplay itself though? Well, although I'm an avid Tekken 3 fan, I must admit that I have been sufficiently drawn into this lightning fast 2D world of cartoon violence. The game really is about as fast as they come so it's lucky the response time of joypad input to on-screen action is fast enough to keep up. This means no mortifying delay between button press and move as seen on many 3D fighting games. This translates into a mega-hectic but controlled fight that almost looks impossible to anyone watching. When they pick up the pad they see that although what going on looks frantic, it really is easy to control your character's movements, making this one of the most playable fighters about.

The hectic on-screen action is backed up by some astoundingly high quality visuals and animations. The variety in characters and backgrounds and the explosion of colour on screen makes you feel almost as if you're watching some kind of Japanese cartoon, which is pretty cool really, when you can control the destiny of your characters. Marvel Super Heroes Vs Street Fighter looks so good, though, I'm sure there really is nowhere for the 2D beat-'em-up to go in terms of eye candy. Shame that.

Same goes for ear candy too. The screams, shouts and roars are as good as anything from Tekken, but it's the sound of punches and kicks landing that really make this an aural treat. These effects have been so well crafted that at times you can almost feel the blows rain down on the unlucky punch receptacle. This is helped a great deal if you have a Dual Shock pad as Capcom have kindly made the action vibration compatible. Cool.

Fundamentally, I'm against 2D beat-'em-ups. I think games this late in the PlayStation's life should be looking forward and not backward. However, Marvel Super Heroes Vs Street Fighter is a forward-looking 2D fighter. This has forced me to face up to my 2D beat-'em-up phobia. In doing this I've found a whole world of high-speed cartoon violence that I would otherwise have missed out on. Which is why I whole-heartedly recommend you give it a go too. It may not be 3D, but it's a bloody good scrap.

Saul Trewern

I whole-heartedly recommend you give it a go

THE GALLERY...

As an extra, Capcom have kindly included an artwork gallery for your perusal. Problem is, at the start you only get one (admittedly superb) picture to gaze at. To fill the rest of the gallery you have to complete the game several times over. This may take you some time, but that's not a problem when the 2D fighting action is so rewarding in itself. The picture just serves as a pretty bonus.



SECOND OPINION

Being a huge Marvel fan I knew I was going to love this game. It wasn't until I actually started playing, though, that I realised how good it really is. 2D cartoon beat-'em-up stuff at its best, and Saul should have scored it around the 90 mark.

Ian Osborne

THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	9
LIFESPAN	8

86%



Anakaris has some spectacular special moves, mostly involving mummifying.



In Original Mode you can edit your character.

PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS	
Virgin Interactive Entertainment	Capcom	Beat-'em-up	Out Now	UK	£39.99	1-2	Memory Card	Analogue Pad

It's another offering from Capcom; the second this Issue. But how does this new instalment of the series fare against its predecessors? Claire Webster has found out...

Darkstalkers 3

Although the Darkstalkers series comes from the same family as the Street Fighter offerings, it has never really been as popular, which probably has something to do with its scary comedy characters. It's certainly as colourful as Street Fighter II and its 2D graphics could also be mistaken for it, but there's no doubt in my eyes that there are some significant differences; and they're not all good.

In a funny sort of way, the first thing Darkstalkers 3 reminded me of was Bloody Roar, with its strange-acting characters. But what do I mean by that? For starters they're all very funny-looking, like they've all once been stars in some horror movie or other. Their moves, special or not, are unique to say the least. Huge great swords chop you into small pieces and Egyptian Pharaohs mummify you, to name only a mere two.

Freakshow

There are 18 of these weird and wonderful characters to fight with, and like in Bloody Roar, some of them are half animal, half human, like the lady cat and the male wolf. They don't, however, morph from one to the other, which on reflection doesn't do it any great injustice. All 18 characters have very different moves, and believe me when I tell you it takes you literally hours to work out the various combos for each. However, when you do find them, they're pretty spectacular.

It's no wonder that the inevitable Training Mode is there to help you along in trying to figure out your character's special moves, and it's good fun having an opponent who doesn't fight back for a while. Capcom have stuck with their usual features such as their Juggles and Super Meters, where powers are gradually built up and then released in Super Moves. You also have the ability to string all of the special moves together, which is an added advantage, as it seems to add something to the game; an extra ingredient, you could say.

All of the usual game modes you would find in a beat-'em-up are present, such as Arcade and Versus. If you opt for two-player, you're also able to choose which stage you would prefer and as with the char-

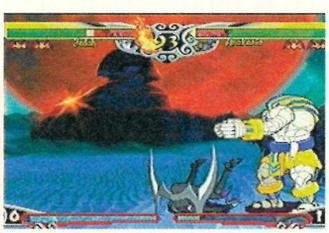
Darkstalkers 3 has plenty of both good and bad points

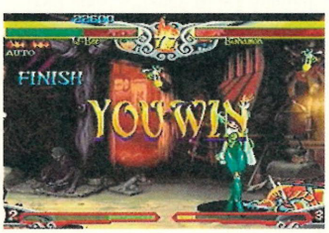


Ladies and gentlemen, I give you; Queen Bee!













FEARSOME FIGHTERS...

All of the characters in Darkstalkers 3 are quite weird-looking as you can see from this gallery of just five of them. They each have very individual moves. Here are some of them explained:



BABY BONNIE HOOD
This about the only non-scary character out of all of them. In fact she's quite the opposite. She bounces around the stage and her moves consist of kissing her opponent wildly after jumping on them from behind, swinging her pretty basket at them and in total contrast, she sometimes even pulls a gun out from under her cloak. They're all very interesting to watch though it's such disgraceful behaviour for a young lady.



ANAKARIS
The Egyptian Pharaoh. This character's legs and arms stretch a considerable distance to trip up the opponent, and he can send caskets to drop on your head to order. One very nice move is when he mummifies you.



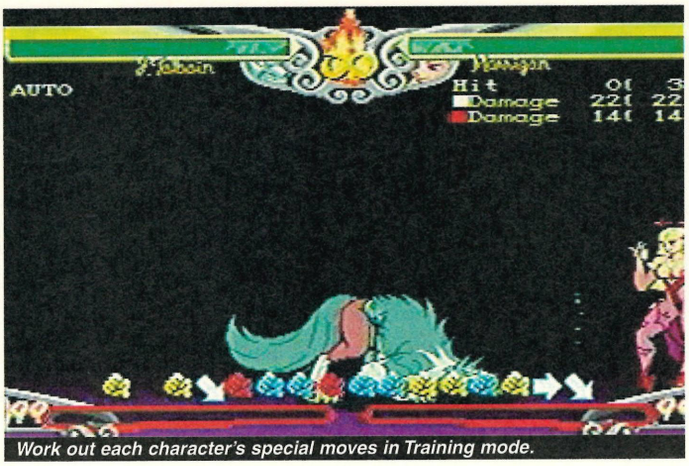
QUEEN BEE
Of course, this character uses her deadly sting to injure her opponents and she also has the ability to fly. A nice touch is when she produces a beehive from her hands and sends her troops to sting you to death.



LILITH
Her main weapon is her razor-sharp wings that she uses to jab her opponents painfully. One of her special moves involves her arms and legs turning into huge axes which can slash the other player in half.



JEDAH
This character is very prim. When he fights he keeps one hand religiously on his hip whilst slashing his opponent with his Freddie Kruger fingers which turn into blades. Like Queen Bee, he can also fly and attack from above.



Work out each character's special moves in Training mode.

acters, they're all rather strange, with equally strange names such as Concrete Cave, Vanity Paradise and Iron Horse, Iron Terror. My particular favourite is the one with the moving train - again, it adds a little something different from the usual static backgrounds.

Fast Moving

There's also the not-so-mainstream mode called 'Original Character', where you can edit your fighter. It's mainly just their clothes that you can change to different colours, as you do with the boxers in such terrible games as Knockout Kings. Apart from that there isn't any difference in the gameplay between this and Arcade Mode, where you just move from stage to stage facing a new opponent each time. Unlike other beat 'em ups there isn't a pause in the game following each round, and the energy bars don't get replenished at the beginning of each round either. In other words, it's just one, long continuous scrap until one fighter loses his energy bar twice.

The 2D graphics and animations are faultless, and each character seems to use literally hundreds of frames; the screen becomes full of fists and legs flying everywhere which sometimes looks a bit messy, but with such strange moves and combinations I suppose that's bound to happen.

All in all, Darkstalkers 3 has plenty of both good and bad points.

There aren't enough game modes to keep you happy for very long









The characters are original, as are their moves, but it's very hard to get a grasp of which character can do what. There really aren't enough game modes to keep you happy for very long; maybe a story mode or something similar would have been nice. Also it's living in the shadow of its relative Street Fighter Alpha 3, reviewed this very issue as it's less recognised and basically a less enjoyable beat-'em-up to play. Add it to your collection if you loved the first two games, but leave it alone if your after a more of an impulse buy.

Claire Webster





SECOND OPINION

It may be a case of far too many games by Capcom this month, and this one is the worst of the three. If you want to know about one of the best turn to Page 54; only then will you really find the truth about what a good beat-'em-up should be.

Russell Barnes

THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	5
GAMEPLAY	5
LIFESPAN	5

65%





On winning a round you always get some kind of cool and often cheeky animation.



PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS
Sony CEE	Melbourne House	Future Sports	Out Now	UK	£39.99	1-4	Memory Card, Analogue Pad, Dual Shock

Bloodlines throws you into a world of extreme violence and the game of tag. Would Saul Trewern rather be playing hopscotch, though?

Blood Lines

Future sports games are a bit hit and miss. In fact, the only decent one the PlayStation has seen is the ultra-violent Dead Ball Zone. Nothing has matched the speed, finesse and pure playability of the Bitmap Brothers' Atari ST and Amiga classic Speedball 2. And with a Bitmap Brothers-programmed version of said classic already announced for the PlayStation, Blood Lines is on a bit of a loser from the start.

It doesn't help that it's simply no fun to play. The premise itself was a bit of a gamble. Throw the kiddies' game of tag into a post-apocalyptic future sports game. Okay, some of the simplest ideas makes the best games, but tag?

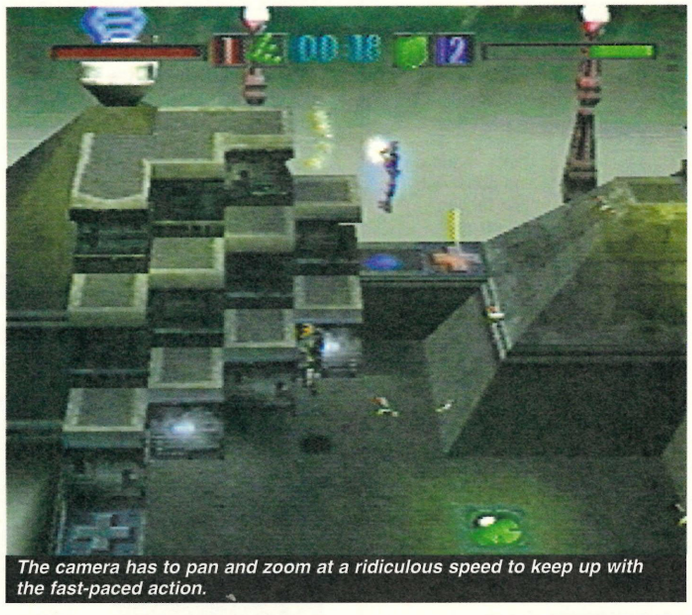
After choosing one of the Mad Max street cool-style characters, you and another CPU character or up to three other human players enter one of the many future apocalyptic arenas that make up the Blood Lines playing area. The style of these arenas is very similar to those found in the strategy/action game The Unholy War. In fact, the combat action is very similar to The Unholy War, only without the strategy element.

Anyway, once you get the green light it's a straight-out race to reach one of around five coloured vortexes within the arena. The first person to reach any vortex then becomes 'it'. The 'it' person then has control of the vortexes, making it their job to run through all of them to win the round. The other player's job is to catch the 'it' person and give them a pummelling and become 'it' themselves. And that's basically about it, besides a few weapons and power-ups to help you out.

Some of the best ideas are simple. Just not this one.

Future Faux Pas

The biggest faux pas on the development front is not making enough out of the hand-to-hand fighting aspect of the game. By adding a beat-'em-up feel, Blood Lines could have been made far more interesting and involving. Instead all you have to do when you catch an opponent is hammer the 'X' button to beat them. Why there couldn't be some proper one-on-one action I don't know. As it stands, though, the whole game becomes one huge button-bashing fest as you dart around the arenas in a bid to run through vortexes.


The camera has to pan and zoom at a ridiculous speed to keep up with the fast-paced action.

To the casual observer Blood Lines actually looks like a great game. The graphics and camera movement are spot-on and the sheer speed of the action on screen is a sight to be seen. On playing, though, the casual observer becomes the casually bored and frustrated.

And at the end of the day, some of the best ideas are simple. Just not this one.

Saul Trewern

SECOND OPINION

I saw this a few months back and thought that it looked interesting, but I can now safely say I was mistaken. Space-age 'tag' is not a good idea for a videogame, and it never will be. Sorry. Future hopscotch though - that's an entirely different matter...

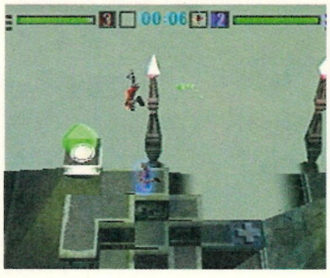
Claire Webster

THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
GAMEPLAY	4
LIFESPAN	3

45%







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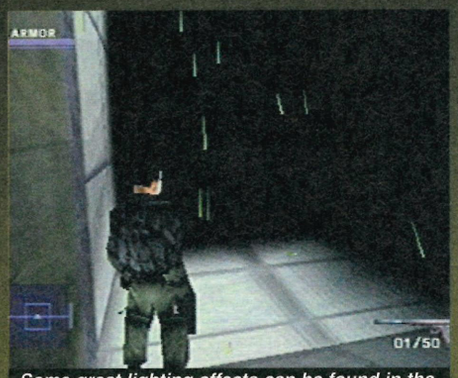
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PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS	
Sony CE America	989 Studios / Eidetic	Action / Adventure	Out Now (Import)	US	£60 (approx.)	1	Memory Card Analogue Pad	Dual Shock

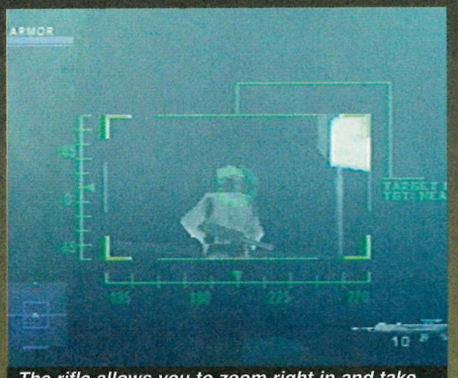
Saul Trewern thinks his luck's in with this oddly-named Tomb Raider/ Metal Gear Solid hybrid. But does he really think a filter is gonna make stealing his petrol to get to work any easier?

Syphon Filter

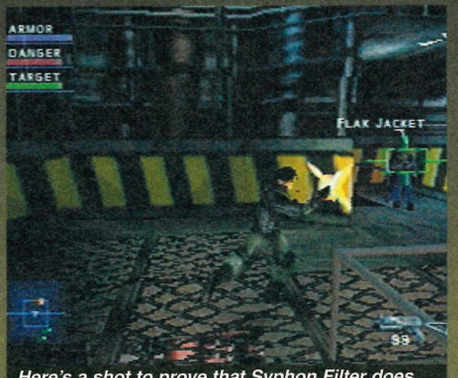




Some great lighting effects can be found in the subway on the first level.



The rifle allows you to zoom right in and take out your foe with ease.



Here's a shot to prove that Syphon Filter does contain full on, face-to-face shoot-'em-up action.

Exploring strange environments á là Tomb Raider and garrotting evil terrorist soldiers á là Metal Gear Solid are at opposite ends of the gameplay spectrum. A hard task it is, then, to create a playable hybrid that captures both elements of gameplay and throws in a tasty morsel of shoot-'em-up to boot. Well not as hard as you'd think when 989 Studios are on the case...

Syphon Filter throws you into the army-issue boots of ace espionage and combat hero Gabriel Logan. His mission, as is the norm in any action game, is to save the world. This time, though, the threat comes in the form of a deadly virus, code-named Syphon Filter; hence the games title.

The action takes place in third-person 3D with a camera angle much like that of the Tomb Raider games. This allows you to see all of Logan's actions (of which there are many) as well as just the right amount of playing area to see exactly what's going on but also to hide the many surprises that confront you as the game progresses. It's not until you really get into Syphon Filter that you realise just how well the game engine holds up against its peers, though. In fact I'd say it even outdoes Tomb Raider and Metal Gear Solid in some areas.

Syphon Filter Solid

Still, to come out tops against the above games Syphon Filter has to have the gameplay to back up its solid technical foundations. Which, I'm glad to report it does, and then some. The action is an almost-perfect balance between three key areas; full on action, exploration/puzzle solving and tactical espionage. 989 Studios have managed to seamlessly blend together all three aspects to make Syphon Filter one of the most involving, entertaining and challenging games I've had the pleasure to play in years.

The game starts with you dropped into the epicentre of a fierce fire-fight in the centre of a high-rise city. I have to confess I started out playing the game as a pure shoot-'em-up, but it wasn't until I started to use my grey matter that Syphon Filter really came to life. Instead of steaming in guns-a-blazing, I found that it's far more fun, and ultimately more satisfying to use a little stealth along with the manual aiming system - which can give some terrifically gruesome results. Holding L1 brings up a set of manual crosshairs which allows you (usually from cover) to take out an unwitting assailant from a safe distance. What makes this even more satisfying, though, is that you can choose exactly where you want to shoot them. If you want a quick, clean kill, simply go for the head shot which results in a lovely spurt of blood from the skull as your target slumps to the floor. If you're in a

A hybrid of many different gameplay styles that gel together better than any game that's attempted the same strategy



Here our hero pulls himself across a girder then drops through a huge glass dome into a room full of terrorists that need to be dealt with, quickly, and severely.

FLEMMING, EAT YOUR HEART OUT...

Holding the superb Syphon Filter gameplay together is almost a film's worth of highly polished CG storyline. The story intro kicks off in a dense jungle at the beginning of the game, but you get a fantastic-looking CG cut scene that progresses between each level. I don't want to give too much away on the storyline front, but I can tell you if you're a fan of James Bond-style movies, the Syphon Filter storyline has you hooked from beginning to end.







Every level starts off with you talking to your partners over the radio whilst the camera pans in to meet your position.



Action often unfolds at lightning speed. As you approach the door two enemies come bursting through guns-a-blazing. Pump action time methinks.

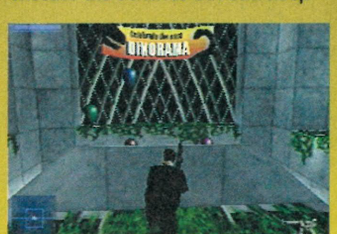


Watch out for the man on fire. Get too close and it's barbecued special agent for you.

hurry you could simply pull out your shotgun and bury a few pellets into the chest and watch the pure force lift your target off the floor and against a wall in true Hollywood action movie style. There's a wealth of weapons to use throughout the game which allows you to constantly find new ways to take out your often very intelligent opponents.

Most levels offer an entirely new mission style. This could be anything from fighting your way through a massive city park, diffusing bombs and rescuing hostages as you go, to sneaking through an enemy base, blowing it to pieces after assassinating an important target. The most involving missions are definitely the ones that demand a stealthy approach. This is most prominent in the Catacombs level where the only way to complete the mission is to follow a guard through the special palm print access doors. The level is teaming with sentries your guard walks past and often talks to. You have to be sure not to make anyone aware of your presence which means finding routes in the shadows where you can silently execute the sentries but still keep on the trail of your target. Of course there are some more straightforward missions, but even these offer new twists on old themes that help keep them fresh, and more importantly, keep you playing.

Hiding in shadows has never been so much fun







Top Tactical Espionage Action

The gameplay may be up to, and above the admittedly excellent and superb standards that Metal Gear Solid has set but I'm afraid the general visual quality doesn't quite match up to Konami's classic. The game engine is as solid as Solid, but in pure visual flare Syphon Filter has to bow down. The graphics aren't bad, however. All of the levels are solid and it's hard to believe this many different environments can fit onto one measly CD. The lighting is also of note. Hiding in shadows has never been so much fun, neither has shooting out searchlights to make your progress much easier. There's a wealth of special effects including explosions to die for, transparent clouds of gas, tracer bullets and enough splurting gore to keep the most ardent Resident Evil fan happy.

Syphon Filter has proved to be something that's very rare in the world of PlayStation gaming - a huge surprise. When I first started playing I thought I was in for an average shoot-'em-up romp, but what I got was a hybrid of many different gameplay styles that gel together better than any game that's attempted the same strategy before it. It's only available on import, but if there was ever a game that warranted a visit to the 'chip' shop, Syphon Filter is it. If you have your PlayStation's health at heart, though, the official UK version is on its way. You'll be waiting a while, but it's be worth it.

Saul Trewern

SECOND OPINION

This one offers some serious variety in terms of its missions. Some require stealth, others action, and there's an incredible range of tasks to pursue. Graphics are solid and fluid, and there's always something to do. This could be the game of the Summer.

Ian Osborne

THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	9
LIFESPAN	9

93%

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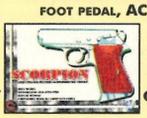
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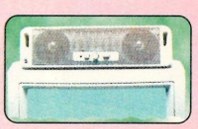
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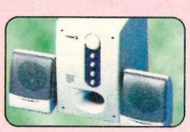
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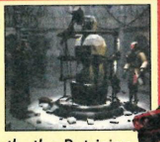
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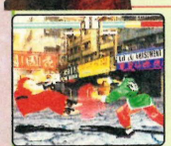
BEAT 'EM UP



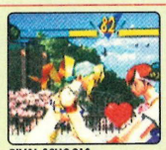
Kensai Sacred Fist *8 Characters plus 12 hidden fighters. "It certainly packs a wallop" - 9/10 Official Playstation Mag*



RRP £39.99 Our price £32.99



TEKKEN 3



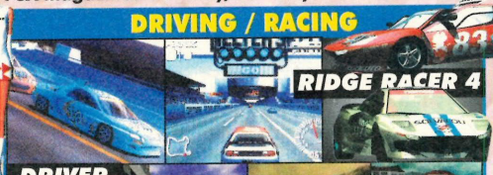
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COLIN McRAE RALLY



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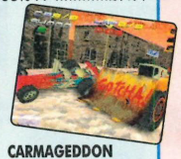
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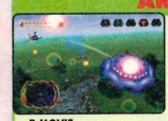


TENCHU

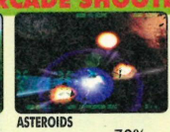


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ARCADE SHOOTERS



B MOVIE



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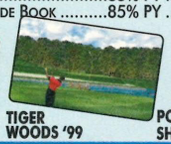

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More snowboarding action, only this time we have no reservations about how good it's going to be. It got a whopping 90% in Issue Two, but what will our verdict be this time around?

Cool Boarders 2

Be under no illusion about how many snowboarding games there are out there at the moment, though this doesn't seem to have had much of an impact on how well Cool Boarders 2 has done since it came out at the beginning of last year. Even though its successor has fixed all that was wrong with it when it first came out, some of those released this year haven't even come close.

There are four modes of play; Competition, Freestyle, Big Air and Half Pipe. Of course, you must realise what each one involves by now. In Competition you play in a mixture of events, some involving your performing tricks and others where you just have to race opponents down a slalom course doing a few tricks as you go. At the end of each event you see where you are placed on the leaderboard.

In Freestyle you choose from three courses and you're given a time limit in which to complete them. This can prove particularly difficult as there are many obstacles you have to steer around and sometimes the course becomes rather thin. Also there's the odd huge precipice on one side. However, the complicated twisting courses shouldn't be too much of a problem once you've mastered the controls in Board Park, which is basically a practice mode. Unfortunately it doesn't help you in the same way as Big Air does by giving you the button sequences for each trick, so you have to awkwardly read the manual at the same time as looking at the screen (how inconsiderate).

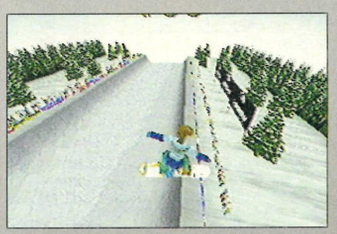






You get a real feeling of speed as you hurtle down the hills...





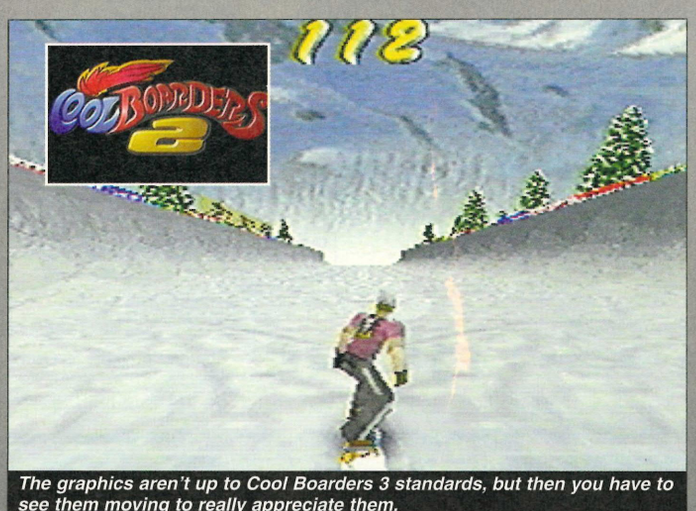
This is a marvellous snowboarding game, which at twenty quid is a bargain

Play it Cool...

But I'm going to let it off, as I'm such a forgiving person, mainly because the game makes up for it in so many different ways. For starters, even though there are only four boarders to choose from, they're all pretty cool (as you would expect), and you can change their 'gear' as well, which adds a little something. Unlike Big Air, Cool Boarders 2 has also included the boarders' weak and strong points, so if you're on a particularly difficult track you can choose a character who has good balance and technique, say.

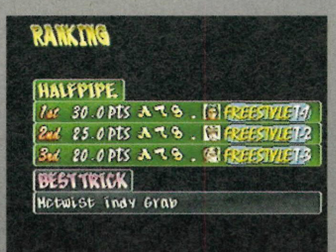
The graphics aren't as impressive as those we saw in Cool Boarders 3; at times you can see flickering lines where different parts of the scenery join together. There's also a lot of glitching where polygons just seem to disappear. But the music sounds cool, a bit of drum 'n' bass mixed in with a bit of hip hop-style pop. Overall, this is a marvellous snowboarding game, which at twenty quid is a bargain.

Claire Webster



The graphics aren't up to Cool Boarders 3 standards, but then you have to see them moving to really appreciate them.





SECOND OPINION

Not everyone is enthusiastic about the current snowboarding craze, but those who are merely mildly interested could do no worse than buy Cool Boarders 2 on Platinum. Okay, it's been surpassed by its sequel, but it's a great blast for the dosh - ideal for the non-fanatical.

Ian Osborne

THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	7
GAMEPLAY	9
LIFESPAN	8

90%



What an embarrassing weapon. Lucky he loses it at the start of the game...



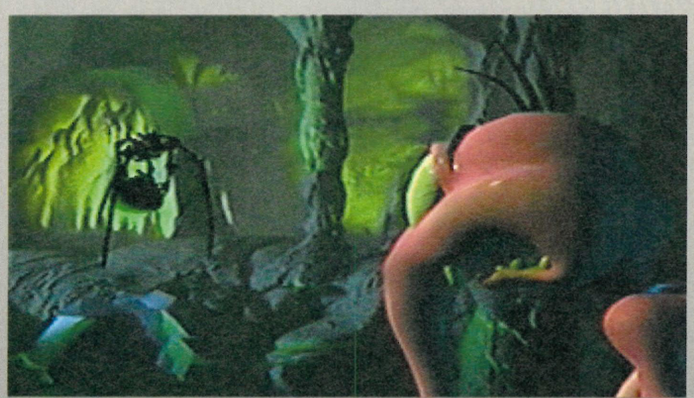
PUBLISHER	DEVELOPER	GENRE	RELEASED	VERSION	PRICE	PLAYERS	PERIPHERALS
Infogrames	Amazing Studio	Arcade Adventure	May '99	UK	£19.99	1	Memory Card

Is this a truly cinematic gaming experience or just another barely-interactive B-movie? Ian Osborne takes the game to heart...

Heart of Darkness

Heart of Darkness amazes and infuriates in equal measures. You can't fault its presentation; the aesthetics are incredible. The 2D graphics are beautifully animated and incredibly atmospheric - you really feel you're there. Each of its eight worlds are different enough to hold the player's interest but not so wildly disparate they lack continuity, and each is introduced with some of the best rendered cut scenes ever seen on the PlayStation. The sound effects are crisp and clear, offering functional warnings about what's to come as well as enhancing the already-brilliant atmospherics and the front end is polished and comprehensive. It even lets you replay already-completed sections or view between-world cameos. Unfortunately it's too bloody short and the gameplay suffers from niggling, if not disastrous, flaws.

Anyone who's played the 16-bit cart classics Another World or Flashback will find this one extremely familiar. It's a flip-screen cinematic offering with a mixture of platform pounding, baddie blasting and puzzle solving. There are no lives or energy bars - make a mistake and you suffer a suitably gruesome death, are put back a few screens and start again. Therein lies the first flaw - some of the deaths are ridiculously unfair. You often walk straight into trouble without being able to anticipate it. This is no disaster - just start again a couple of screens earlier and have another go. Second time around you CAN anticipate it because you know what's coming, but it isn't long before you run into another unseen hazard and are once more put back. Progress is often a matter of time rather than talent. This isn't as annoying as it might be - the worlds are divided into bite-sized sections so you're not replaying too many screens and you can save the game at any time, but it does leave the player frustrated and unsatisfied.



You persevere despite the gameplay rather than because of it

Not every puzzle relies on unseen deaths, though. The more laid back screens based around working out what to do instead of split-second timing are blinding; why can't they all be like that?

Arcade Action

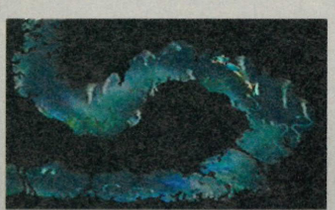
It's not all puzzle-based progress either. There's arcade action a-plenty, where you run, jump and blast your way through baddie-filled terrain. Herein lies the game's second problem. All that graphical excellence has taken its toll on the controls - they're just not responsive enough. There's a perceptible delay between hitting a button and making the move, and this often leads to your downfall. For example, there's one area where you must take out several flying monsters, ducking or jumping to avoid their own fire. Unfortunately what should be a straightforward test of reflexes becomes a trying test of patience. Your own shots take a second to charge, which is fair enough - this is a design fact rather than a design fault, and its up to the player to take account of the limitations of his weapon. However, it leaves very little time for the jumping and ducking, and there's an unacceptable delay before these inputs are recognised too. You often fall to shots you should've dodged with ease.

Finally, even though it comes on two disks, the game's just too short. After half a day's play I was halfway through World Five, and there are only eight in total. You should complete it inside a week, despite the ridiculous increase in difficulty halfway through World Seven.

Heart of Darkness is a good game, but not the classic it could easily have been. The spectacular visuals and outstanding atmosphere keep you playing if only to see what comes next, but at times you persevere despite the gameplay rather than because of it. Pity.

Ian Osborne







SECOND OPINION

Yes, the excellent presentation keeps you interested (you just HAVE to see what comes next), but in places the game seems to have been written around the graphics rather than the other way round. It's not bad, but hardly a classic. And too short to boot.

Russell Barnes

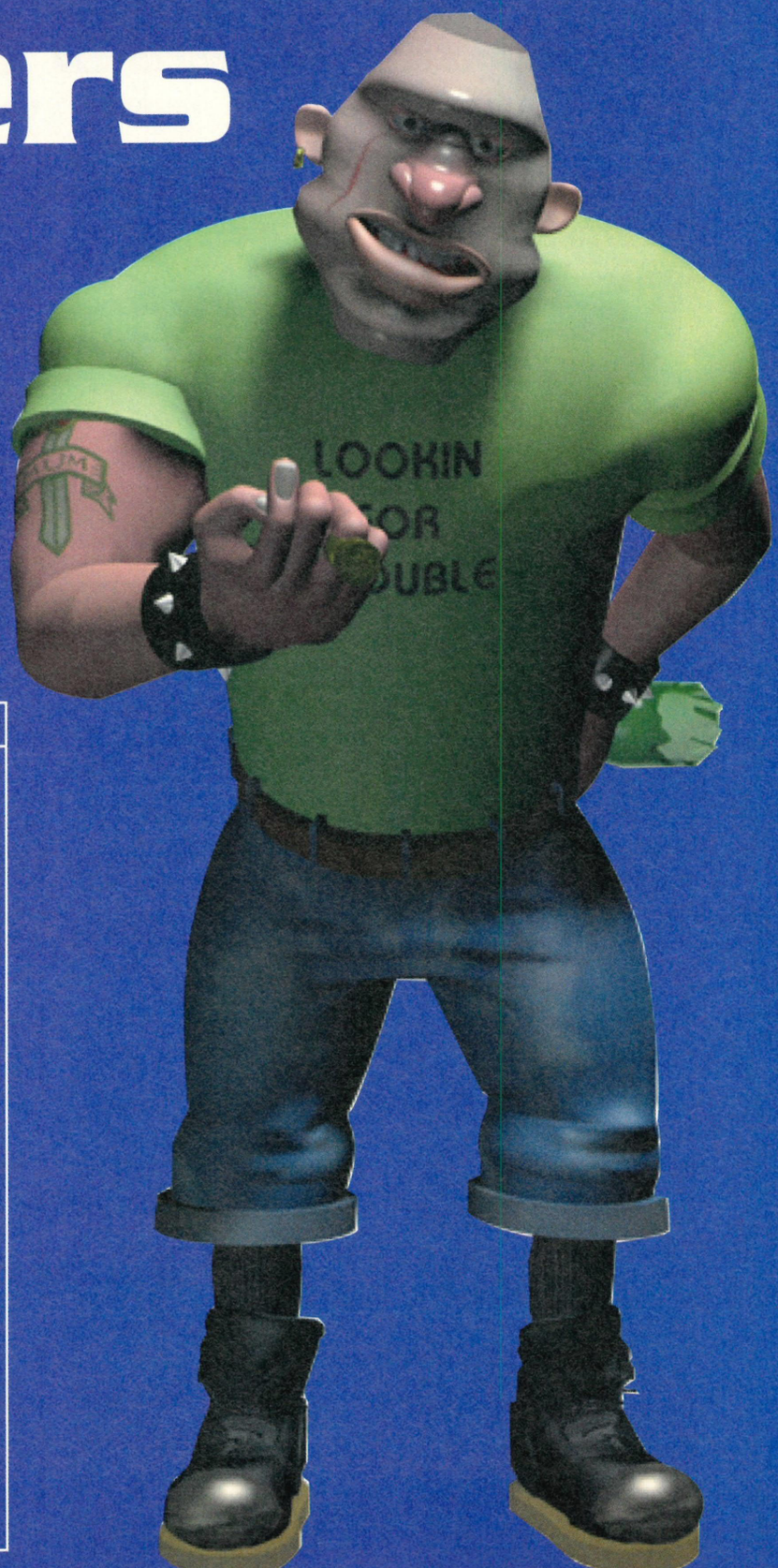
THE SCORE

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	7
LIFESPAN	4

74%

Brain Busters

Strategy games are like taking a long walk in the country. First of all, you're not sure if you can be bothered, but as time passes and the views become more interesting you sometimes realise it was well worth the hike. This is why this month we've covered the genre in fine style by showing you the sights and weeding out the old duffers...



WHAT MAKES A GOOD STRATEGY GAME?

There are a number of points that we always consider when we review strategy games on the PlayStation...

EASY TO LEARN, TOUGH TO MASTER

It's a difficult balance for a development team to create, but you see it in all of the best strategy games. Being able to develop your skills as you progress through a game also helps add longevity, making sure you keep playing until you're triumphant.

CHAMPION CONTROL

At the end of the day you're playing mind games with the game's creators, so what you don't need is a dodgy control method detracting your concentration. It should be simple and intuitive, making sure you have total control of the gameplay environment.

DIAMOND GRAPHICS

Okay, so the graphics in strategy games generally aren't diamond, but should definitely be crystal clear. Say, for example, you're playing a game similar to Command & Conquer; you need to be able to see all your troops and units at a glance. Squinting at the screen trying to work out weather you're shooting a bad guy or not is completely unacceptable.

LEARN THE ROPES

No strategy game is complete without a half-decent training mode offering first rate tutelage for the game in question. It saves the player from being thrown in at the deep end and offers the opportunity to get it all straight before play actually starts.

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED

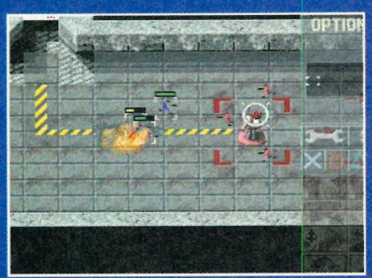
There's no point playing for three hours through the first mission only to find out you've got another 300 missions of exactly the same thing to contend with. As the player progresses they should be rewarded with new items, options and weaponry that changes the course of play.

90 Command & Conquer



Even though C&C has been superseded by Red Alert and Retaliation, it still has plenty to offer, especially at the Platinum price. The basic premise is simple; co-ordinate your troops using different weapons and tactics to defeat enemies on the battlefield. As the game progresses you are required to earn money so you can construct buildings to perform different tasks to aid your progress. It comes on two discs which offers loads of gameplay but unfortunately no link-up two-player mode. A great game for the price, but the later sequels have even more on offer.

91 C&C: Retaliation



The saying, 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' is applicable here, though the great gameplay can begin to wear thin if you've played the other incarnations of the series. It's almost as if you're simply playing an add-on, though it does offer some new weapons and units to your already bulging arsenal. Again you can choose between the good guys and bad from two game discs which offer link-up play against a friend. It's getting the same score as Red Alert due to the sheer quality and longevity of the game, but if you've already got Red Alert, employ a 'try before you buy' stance...

86 Defcon 5



This one can only barely be categorised as a strategy game. There are many action/shooting levels and 'corridor' style gameplay, but strategy has to be employed if you're going to complete the levels in the allotted time frame and progress through the game. Much atmosphere has been employed to really put you on the edge of your seat, and at many junctures of the game your heart is beating ten to the dozen. As you progress the in-depth story unfolds well and reward you for your perseverance through the almost unfairly tough first levels.

91 C&C: Red Alert



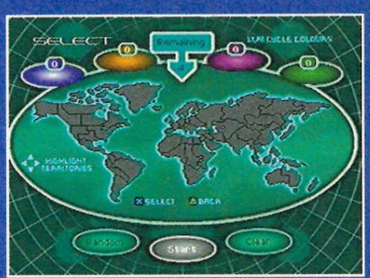
Featuring more of the fantastic gameplay and full motion video scenes that made the first C&C so great, Red Alert is a sure-fire hit. This time there is a link-up two-player mode that offers the chance to fight out personal wars in addictive scenarios that can take hours to complete. If you've seen the original, you know what to expect here but that's not necessarily a bad thing. There's a greater selection of troops and units at your disposal and the interface has been improved for ease of use making Red Alert essential playing for strategy fans everywhere.

82 Constructor



You'd think playing on a virtual landlord simulation would be a bit of a nightmare. Believe it or not, though, playing Constructor (which is basically the same thing) is a great way to get your strategy-flavoured thrills. The basic concept belongs to the Sim City family with the emphasis on keeping the tenants as happy while you make tons of cash. The graphics are sharp and surprisingly detailed while the interface and accompanying controls have been thoughtfully designed. If you're a Sim City junky you'll really enjoy this think-em'-up from Acclaim.

55 Global Domination



The concept here is okay, if a little brutal, but the actual gameplay and challenge is remarkably limited. As always, though, Psygnosis have presented a title with crisp visuals and no expense was spared on the exciting FMV sequences. Basically you must target enemy countries and launch missiles at them in an attempt to gain control of the entire planet. You're instructed to employ either attack or defence strategies in your efforts to win, but the repetitive gameplay style turns you off before too long. It's a rare thing to say about a Psygnosis game, but this is definitely one to miss.

73 KKND: Krossfire

KKND is basically a C&C clone that offers a subtle twist in its storyline department. That's not to say it's bad, it's just that too much of a good thing is bad, to be honest. After battling through all of the C&Cs it's hardly likely you're going to enjoy sifting through a slightly lesser version of basically the same game. It features lovely cut sequences that link up each of the levels beautifully and some innovative background graphics, but that's about it. If you haven't yet seen the joys of C&C at the Platinum price, you'd do wise to go there instead.



Monopoly — 20 PERCENT



Complete and unadulterated madness! Who on God's green Earth would consider (in their right mind) spending up to £40 on a conversion of a boardgame that costs only a fraction of the price? Monopoly is one of those games where family and friends get together around a table and play with funny money for an hour or two. Does this make a good PlayStation game? I think not. Hasbro are guilty of two crimes in the production of this game: unashamed cashing in on the name and unoriginality. The punishment is clear; just check out the score box.

Panzer General — 70 PERCENT



Panzer General is best described as a pure strategy game. Set in the midst of the Second World War, it's your task to co-ordinate troops in the form of Planes, Troops, Artillery and Tanks in your quest to defeat the Allied forces (yes you play the Germans!). You battle through a large range of different war scenarios including some that actually took place in the 1940s. There are very few features that utilise the PlayStation's potential so you can expect to see a very basic graphical representation of the action though what is in there is clear and simply presented for ease of use.

Player Manager Season 98-99 — 64 PERCENT



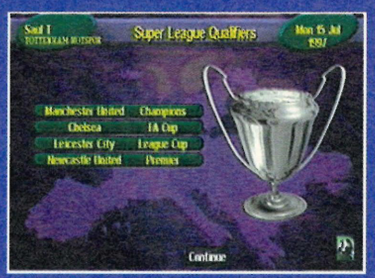
This is Infogrames' latest PlayStation attempt at the football management genre, but it's just too similar to its PC counterpart for its own good. If you haven't got a mouse you struggle trying to click the small and fiddly options dotted around, too much CD loading and memory card reading, unimaginative graphics, etc. At the end of the day you end up not really giving a damn if your home team live or die, let alone win a place in the Premier League. Look a little further on in the guide too see Premier Manager Ninety Nine; that's what you call a real management simulation.

Populous: The Beginning — 86 PERCENT



For many years the name Populous has made good money for the staff at Bullfrog. The original was the flagship God game, if you like, and since then there has been an equally successful sequel. The third in the series is here, and you'll be glad to hear that it's not just a port from its PC big brother. The graphics are all in cracking 3D and the real spherical landscape (the game takes place on a complete planet environment) is world class. The spells and moves at your command are good as is the challenge that's out there.

Premier Manager '98 — 89 PERCENT



If you're old enough to remember you know Premier Manager has featured on computer right back to the days of Atari ST and Amiga. It's always been at the forefront and has offered one of the most realistic adaptations of the job. Buying and selling players is a fundamental part of the action as well as sorting tactical matters and fitness routines. It doesn't quite hold the depth of its PlayStation sequel, but was no doubt the best management game on the market in the summer of '98. Given the choice now though of course PM 99 is the firm favourite.

Premier Manager Ninety Nine — 93 PERCENT



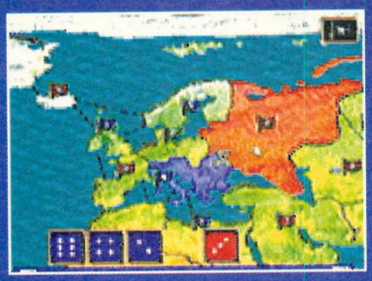
What can we say other than 'top notch management game'? Even though loading times are still reasonably heavy, they're by far the best I've seen for a while keeping the emphasis on developing your team and tactics rather than making the tea. The menu screens are easy to access and control and there are two modes of play for extra longevity (Manager Mode for long term and Career Mode in which you're given specific tasks to complete by the board of Directors). If you're looking for something to really sink your teeth into, PM 99 has it all.

Return Fire — 88 PERCENT

One of the best games to come from the 3DO, believe it or not. The gameplan here is remarkably simple (which in itself is part of the game's appeal); capture the flag of the opposing team (CPU/human) and bring it back to your base for victory. There are around 60 maps in all, and a choice of several vehicles for you to utilise including a chopper, APC (rocket launcher), tank and a rather swift Jeep. Each vehicle has its pros and cons and are suitable for different tactical manoeuvres. The graphics are cute, the violence is horrific and the soundtrack is one of the best to grace your PSX.



Risk — 69 PERCENT



The second of out two board/strategy games from Hasbro (the other being Monopoly) is decidedly better than the first. Not only has Risk been given a fairly faithful conversion to the PlayStation, it has also had some additions like extra playing modes especially designed for the console. These modes offer a tougher challenge than the normal game and include new manoeuvres and possibilities to make your Napoleonic attempts to rule the world that bit more interesting. Watch out for naff graphics and dodgy music though...

Sim City 2000 — 88 PERCENT



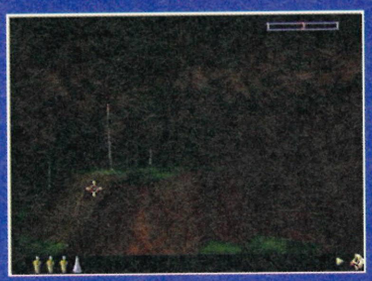
For those of you unfamiliar with the format, the idea is to build (from the ground up) a city of which you are in complete control. You must supply the residents and workers of your city with power and water while constantly upgrading amenities like transport and roads - after all, who wants to move somewhere completely cut off from the rest of the world? Provide them with leisure facilities, police and emergency services and watch them carefully to pre-empt their every need. Sheer brilliance available on the PSX (though not a fantastic PC conversion).

Theme Hospital — 82 PERCENT



Basically Bullfrog's follow up to Theme Park, with a prominent medical twist. You must plan out your hospital to include vital areas like a reception, pharmacy, offices for your resident GPs, etc. Once you've got all you need (or can afford), open the doors to the general public and begin work. Balancing your budget to certain demands operates similarly to Theme Hospital's predecessor, while the comedy touches are back in full force through illnesses like Bloaty Head, Baldness and Invisibility. Well worth the time and money, especially if you're a fan of Theme Park.

Sentinel Returns — 33 PERCENT



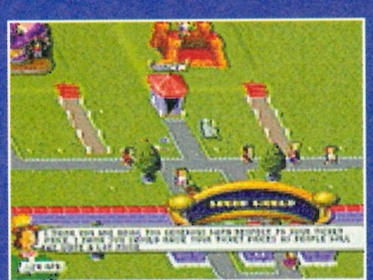
First released on the BBC Micro Computer in 1985, Psygnosis thought it might be cool to jazz it up for today's PSX gamers. We don't think so! All Sentinel Returns offers is basically the same game in a slightly (and I mean slightly) different package. The idea is to ascend to the highest point in the landscape by moving your 'being' from square to square while avoiding the Sentinel playing king of the hill at the top. Replace this Sentinel and absorb his energy to complete the level and continue onto the next 649 levels of basically the same thing. Yes, it really is that bad.

Syndicate Wars — 90 PERCENT



You notice Bullfrog have a few games dotted around in this feature, though none quite as dark and mysterious as this, I can assure you. Syndicate Wars is an action/strategy game that in many ways can be compared to GTA. You can steal cars, shoot coppers, kill innocent people and so on. Now combine more brilliant strategy elements and a chilling Blade Runner feel and you're halfway to understanding what SW is all about.

Theme Park — 86 PERCENT



One of Bullfrog's greatest games, this. It's fun, addictive and is easily deep enough to expand the minds of its younger users. The aim of the game is to create a popular Theme Park from the ground-up and keep it running (while making money) for as long as you can. As you progress, you can include faster rides, better food services and the like, but it's important that you keep everything well maintained or there's trouble. It's got a great balance of originality and playability to keep interest alight though being a PC conversion it has the odd bugbear.

Transport Tycoon — 57 PERCENT

When we look at Transport Tycoon we see a game that should never have made it onto the PlayStation. Sure, it made a fine PC strategy sim, but there are several aspects here that just don't work. The control method, for example, has flaws considering it was always designed to be used with a mouse. Other PC conversion problems are evident in the long loading times and particularly dodgy graphics. The transport business isn't exactly an interesting concept for a PlayStation game, I'm afraid, so it's definitely worth avoiding.



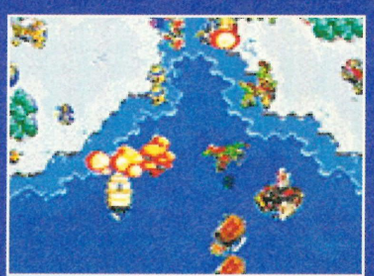
strategy feature

Unholy War — 69 PERCENT



It's part strategy, part brainless beat-'em-up, but it's all unplayable and rather confused if you ask us! It just seems a little chalk and cheese and oil and water for my liking. The mix of the two completely unrelated genres makes overall game unenjoyable. The fighting section is naff to say the least, while the strategy screens are nothing more that an elaborate version of chess. It doesn't shout 'crap' graphically, or scream 'cack' in the originality department, it's just that at the end of the day it's basically duff.

Warcraft 2 — 90 PERCENT



In many ways Warcraft 2 can be compared to C&C, but in our eyes it's much more detailed and has a depth more appealing to strategy players. The gameplay is much closer to the action, often involving hand-to-hand combat as opposed to long-range combat offered in some of the more hi-tech strategy games. Graphically everything is bigger, and the fantasy edge works well to portray the battle between humans and Orcs. If you're looking for a challenge, you won't go wrong with Warcraft 2; just be prepared for slightly awkward controls.

X-Com: Enemy Unknown — 85 PERCENT



A fantastic (if a little aged) turn-based strategy offering brought to you by Microprose. Once you've discovered an enemy presence on Earth, pack up your troops and ship out to their location for a scrap. Pick up on their technology and weaponry to develop new weapons for yourself and develop new tactics to suit. It's vital to take your time with a game such as this, so patience is required if you wish to play long term. It's well worth the budget price it's probably at by now, so do a bit of hunting around; it's well worth it.

Warhammer — Shadow of the Horned Rat — 86 PERCENT



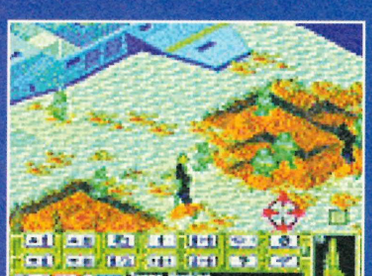
The idea is taken from the Warhammer Fantasy Battle System used by many thousands of avid Games Workshop fans up and down the country. Don't worry about rolling dice or painting tiny goblins, though, because this has been especially developed for the computer games market and utilises the PSX well. Each mission earns you 'X' amount of gold and you must choose a band of warriors to suit your budget. Too few troops results in death, but too many could result in running out of gold. It's an intriguing strategy game not just for Games Workshopaholics.

WarGames — 93 PERCENT



Loosely based on the old film of the same name (only the game is set 20 years on with the then-young David Lightman now working for War Operation Program Response - WOPR). The game itself is excellently presented, almost like playing one of the Strike games while you're able to control your units almost like troops in C&C. The graphics are sharp and with detail, and the gameplay allows an excellent level of control over your troops. One of the best features has got to be the multi-player modes that allow you to slog it out or play co-operatively through the game.

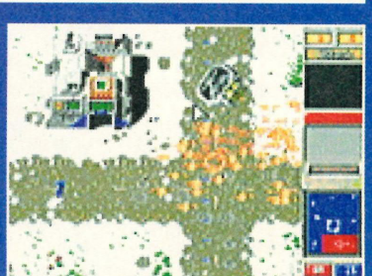
X-Com: Terror from the Deep — 88 PERCENT



Microprose is back again with the sequel to Enemy Unknown one year on (somewhere around Christmas '97) and kicking alien ass has never been this cool - for a strategy game anyway! This time the alien busting action/strategy takes place in the depths of the seven seas of earth and the threat is greater than ever before. Microprose has released a game better than the original, even though it has more than just a few similarities. Fans of the original will be pleased nevertheless, but new players need not play the original first.

Z — 69 PERCENT

Unfortunately Z suffers greatly from a lack of originality (basically C&C with robots) and gameplay that seems to focus more on tactics rather than strategy as a whole. Graphically the best aspect of the game are the cut scenes, while the in-game graphics are small, fiddly and sometimes indistinguishable from the enemy. It doesn't mean that it's crap as a whole, because any game that emulates one of the best strategy games ever can't be that bad, but that's just all it is; a copy. Strategy fans need only apply if you're desperate for a more tactical edge, otherwise it doesn't cut the mustard.



A-Train

68 PERCENT



Here's your chance to run every mode of commuter transport available to man (and woman). If you think you can do any better at getting millions of commuters to work on time than Virgin or Railtrack, here's your chance to prove your prowess. Graphically A-Train is something of a non-starter, offering only minimal presentation, but with games of this ilk what else would you expect? There are tons of options and functions to take care of making the game quite inaccessible to begin with; in fact it takes ages to get into if you're willing to give it a chance.

Chess Master 3D

73 PERCENT



This little gem stands alone as the only chess game on the PlayStation. Brought to you by Mindscape in '96, it's by no means a new release but nevertheless offers players the 'real chess deal'. Stacked full of options and tweakable menu items, Chess Master 3D has more than enough on offer to keep a single player happy for a fair old time. The 3D boards are all reasonably well drawn, but there is also the old-style 2D board for the players struggling with the sometimes awkward perspective. If you're up for learning the ancient board game, you can do no better on the PSX.

Space Hulk

73 PERCENT



At last - a boardgame conversion that's actually worth converting. Space Hulk sees you controlling a band of space marines as they retake a series of ships from the invading aliens. You've a limited number of moves each turn at your disposal, each character moving according to how fast he is and how much equipment you've given him. Charging in mob-handed is disastrous - instead create diversions, fight rear-guard actions and generally think your way through the battles. It's old, but still worth a blast.

Bedlam

64 PERCENT



Another PC conversion for you here in the form of a Syndicate clone. It offers a shorter and simpler challenge, but holds the same dark and death-dealing gameplay and offers owners of the PlayStation mouse a head start in the gameplay and control departments. Saying that, though, the control method is quite clumsy at best and the level layout is fiddly and stark, which does nothing to help the situation. If you're a huge Syndicate fan you'll find Bedlam reasonably playable, but why plum for second best?

Civilization 2

61 PERCENT



Funnily enough, this is the first Civ to appear on the PlayStation, as the first was released on the PC around about eight years ago. Unfortunately for PlayStation gamers, like the original, the sequel was designed to run on PCs only so you find the main game interface tough with only a controller in hand. Because the PSX just hasn't got the memory capabilities of PC, the game's been cut down to size. I'm not sure I would bother playing a game I know has been downgraded to make an appearance on the PlayStation...

Allied General

72 PERCENT

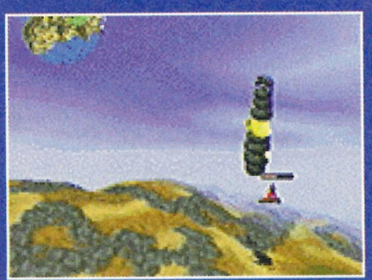


It's not hard to work out that Allied General is Mindscape's follow-up to Panzer General, only this time (and here's the twist) you play the good guys instead! Graphically the game has remained basic and sound effects are few and far between. As was the case with the original, this PC conversion relies on it's tactical and strategic gameplay alone to keep it from immediately being chucked in the bin. It has a few reasonable FMV sequences from WWII as well, if you're interested...

Magic Carpet

70 PERCENT

Originally designed as a showcase for the power of the first Pentium chip (PC), it turned out to be something of a hit and winged it way onto the PlayStation. The mysterious and atmospheric graphic and sound effects were quite original at the time for the PSX, and the strategy/shooting action was also something of a first on the machine. It's main attraction, though, has to be the real freedom of movement it offers the player while keeping the action strategy mould of games like Doom.



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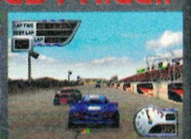

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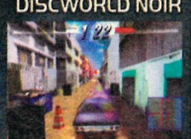

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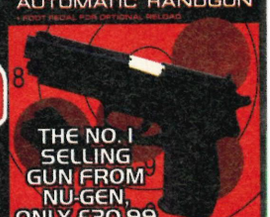


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tips & cheats

Dr Claire's back with all the very best hints and codes. Now you need never get stuck in a game again...

Welcome gamers, to another dose of the best cheats around. Lots of you have been writing in, but only a few are addressing it to me, Claire. I don't know whether it's just a case of you're forgetting, but just for this month I'll forgive you. There have been loads of great games released recently, so I've tried to find cheats for as many of them as I can. If I haven't included some you desperately need, write in and I'll include them in the next issue. But for now, let's get started...

Last issue we gave away a tips and cheats book, but to our surprise there were errors in Ninja: Shadow of Darkness and Tomb Raider 3. So in case you're still having problems, here are the corrections.



NINJA: SHADOW OF DARKNESS

Invincibility
While the game is paused press L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, R2, R2, ●, ▲, ■, ●, ▲, ■. If you have entered the code correctly you hear a chime and the ninja turns into a skeleton. Do the code again to change back.

Level Select
Remove your memory card then turn on the PlayStation. When the screen says 'Checking Memory Card' quickly press L2, L2, L2, R2, R2, R2. The words 'DELS LEVEL CHEAT ON' should appear. Then begin a new game to access the level select menu.

Random Weapon
While the game is paused press R2, R2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, R2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2.

Severely Damage Bosses
This code allows you to weaken bosses to the point where they will only be able to sustain a few more attacks. During any boss battle, just pause the game and press L2, L2, L2, R2, R2, R2 and then ▲ six times.

Start With a Sword
At the main menu press ←, →, →, ↑, ✖, ✖, ■

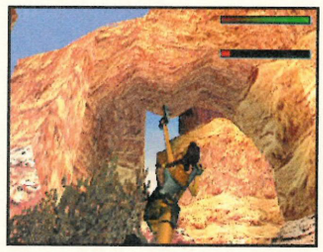
TOMB RAIDER 3

All secrets and Keys
While playing press L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2.

All Weapons, Med Packs, Flares and Save Crystals
While playing press L2, R2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, R2, L2, R2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2.

Level Skip
While playing press R2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2.

Racetrack Key
To get the racetrack key press R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2.



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Dr Claire's Tips Clinic

Your problems solved...

DIAGNOSED AND CURED

Another month has gone by, loads of new games have been released and I've had more cheats requests than ever. Well, that's what I'm here for as you know. So many letters have arrived on my desk that I doubt I can answer them all this Issue, but don't worry if I've missed you out; just keep watching this space...

Stuart Coombs from Brachnell gave me an entire list of games he wants cheats for. Unfortunately I can't include them all, but here's a few...

CRASH BANDICOOT 3: WARPED

Five Extra lives on the Yellow Gem Path
When you get to the end of the yellow gem path, jump over the gem and keep on going. You arrive at a steel block wall. Slidejump, then do a double jump over the wall and you see five lives.

Beat Neo Cortex
To beat Neo at the end of the game, you have to wait until he throws his exploding mines. Once they have exploded, immediately attack Cortex and knock him into the sewer. Do this three times to defeat him.



Hot Coco Level
The level Hot Coco can be accessed through Road Crash. When you see the sign that shows an alien head, hit it and you're taken to Hot Coco.

Dinosaur Level
Begin Level 11 and get onto the gold gem, and then go until you start racing. Get caught by the second pterodactyl to go to the secret dinosaur level.

Hidden boxes in Tomb Time
When you reach the dead end with the picture of the purple gem in a square border, keep on super body slamming (✖ and ● or R1 buttons) to break hidden boxes.

TOCA TOURING CAR

Hidden Track
To gain access to the hidden fire track, simply input your name as JHAMMO

Moon Mode
For reduced gravity, enter your name as CMLOGRAV

Hummer Mode
To gain a grenade launcher, enter your name as TANK

Restore Health
While playing press R2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2.

TOMB RAIDER

Maximum Weapons
Go to the inventory screen and press L1, ▲, L2, R2, R2, L2, ●, L1. Then return to the game. When you next go to the inventory screen, the weapons are there.

Level Skip
If you are using the default control system (Type One), enter the following at the inventory screen: L2, R2, ▲, L1, L1, ●, R2, L2. If you are using Type Two, press L2, R2, ●, ▲, ▲, L1, R2, R1.

ROLLCAGE

Deathmatches
To earn the Deathmatch option you must come first in every track of the league





Mirrored Tracks
To earn Mirror Mode you have to win all three leagues

SHORTCUTS

Harpoon Paradise
When you're at the first straight, go to the right side close to the wall. When you reach a dead end, go straight through it and you enter a cave. When you come out you're near the start/finish line.

Sapphire G-Force
When you are on the straight after the tunnel, turn left and you enter a very large tunnel. When you come out you're on the last straight of the track.

Neoto Park Life
When you pass the arrows in the wall, do not go down. Go to the right and you enter the park. When you get out you have already passed the two tunnels.

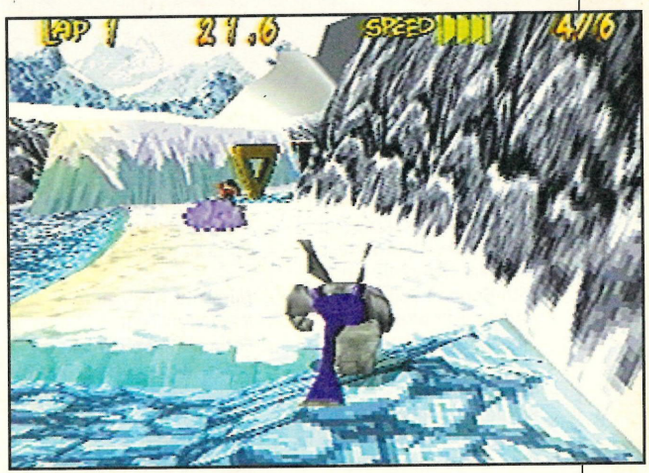
RUNNING WILD

Alternate Uniforms
To change your uniform colour press L1 or R2 when choosing your character

Shortcut in Jungle
Jump through the next to last waterfall in the Jungle and you're at the finish line.

Shortcut in Lava Level
In the Lava level soon after the finish line, there is a hole to your right after you jump over all of the lava pools. Run onto the last booster before the hole in the wall and then jump into it. This hole cuts across part of the level.

Shortcut on Moon
The shortcut is directly after the split tunnel starts on your left. Run to your right, then jump at the wall on your left after you pass the ramp.



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All Cars
Enter your name as CMGARAGE, or GONGOGO

Speed-Up
Enter your name as XBOOSTME

AM Malik from Blackburn asked me if I knew any 'multiparts' for King in Tekken 3. I've tried, but I've failed to find any, so if any of you know it, I would be grateful if you wrote in. In the meantime, here are some extra cheats to make up for it...

TEKKEN 3

Fight as Panda
Highlight Kuma at the character selection screen and press ●

Beach Ball Mini-Game
View all endings of the ten base characters to enable the 'ball mode' option.

Fight as Tiger
Complete the game with 18 characters.
Highlight Eddy at the character selection screen and press ▲

Fight as Bryan
Complete arcade mode with six characters

Fight as Anna
Complete arcade mode with five characters

Chris Murphy from Stockport has requested some cheats for Theme Park, so here goes...

THEME PARK

All Rides, Shops and Attractions
Enter BOVINE as a nickname

Money
Enter BOVINE as a nickname. Press ●+■+✖ during the game. This code may be repeated as needed.

Super Park
Enter BUD as a nickname. Then, press ■ at the park selection screen. Once you have begun the game, maximum prices may be charged for the concessions, games and park entrance.

William Phillips from Belfast needs some cheats for Heart of Darkness, and after many a hour of searching I found the following...

HEART OF DARKNESS

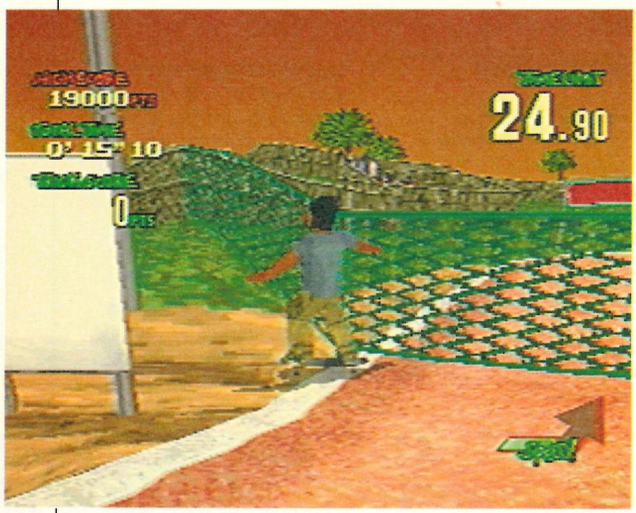
Cheat Menu
First make sure your PlayStation is turned off. Hold L1, L2, R1 and R2 on Controller Two and turn the system on while still holding all four buttons. When the main menu appears use Controller One to go to the options menu while all four buttons are held on the second controller. Once in the option menu you can let go of the buttons and look for a new cheat menu.

Daniel Lomax's teacher at his school in Nuneaton has asked him to ask us if we know any cheats for Tomb Raider II; ask a silly question...

TOMB RAIDER II

Level Skip
Hold walk and side-step left, right and left again. Still holding walk, step back once and forwards once. release walk and rotate three complete circles in the same direction (either will do). Jump forward and perform a mid-air

tips & cheats



STREET SKATER

Bonobo Secrets
If you beat the game once with Bonobo you receive some new skateboards. If you beat the game twice with Bonobo you get Los Angeles in normal or reverse track mode.

Bonus Boards
For new skateboards, beat the game once with each of the hidden characters.

Hidden Characters
To play as secret characters beat the game twice with any of the regular characters. TJ gets you Sarah, Jerry earns Mick, Ginger earns Bonobo the monkey. Beating it with Frankie gets you Saho the Rollerblading ninja.

Mirrored Track and Day/Night Select
For a real bonus, beat the game twice with each of the four hidden characters.

Unlock the Gates
Beat the Street Tour with each character to open the blue gates you couldn't enter before. Each character you do this with unlocks two gates.

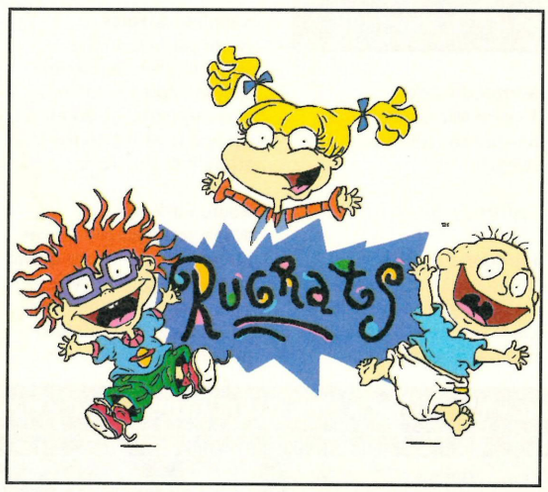
RUGRATS: THE SEARCH FOR REPTAR

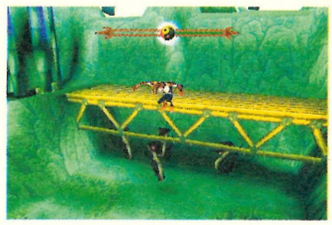
Easier Putt in Mini Golf
While putting in the mini golf course, hold down the walk button and the aiming line moves a lot slower, making it an easier aim.

Jumping Down the Stairs
While you are in the house, get to the top of the stairs and make sure you are facing down the stairs. Now you should be able to jump the entire staircase and Tommy won't even get hurt.

Secret Reptar Bars
When playing Hole Eight on Ice Cream Mountain, go around to the other side of the pyramid. Go into the entrance way and explore the whole pyramid. Here you find an abundance of Reptar Bars, and also Mr Friend's mummy.

Shortcut in Incident, Isle Seven
When you go where the plants are, there are three balloons tied together. Run into them and press ●, this brings you to the middle part of the board.





T'AI FU: WRATH OF THE TIGER

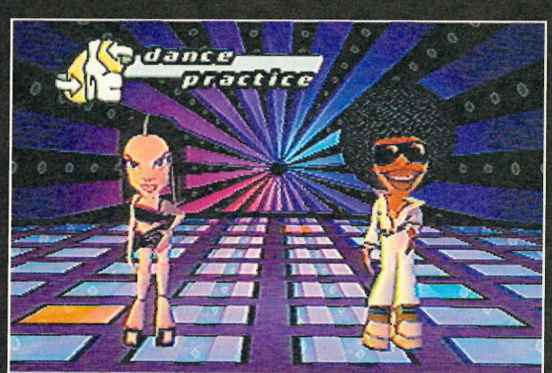
Cheat Mode
Begin gameplay and complete a level. Then, press L1+L2+R1+R2+Select at the map screen.

Unlock Map
Press R1+R2 while T'ai is walking between levels. Any part of the map may now be explored. Press ■ to play the selected area.

Final Boss Battle
Enable the 'Unlock map' code. Press ● while exploring the map to advance to the final boss with all styles.

In Issue 15 we gave you only a couple of cheats for Metal Gear Solid, so as it's such a huge game I though I would include some more for you; I didn't find them, Adam Weir from Glasgow did...

PS CLINIC • TIPS CLINIC • TIPS CLINIC • TIPS CLINIC • TIPS CLINIC • TIPS CLINIC • TIPS CLINIC • TIPS CLINIC • TIPS CLINIC • TIPS CLINIC • TIPS CLINIC • TIP





All Weapons
Hold walk and side-step left, right, and left again. Still holding walk, step back and then forwards. Perform three complete circles in either direction (but all three turns must be in the same direction), jump backwards and perform a mid-air roll with ●. press select to check your now-full inventory.

roll by pressing ●. The screen freezes and you are transported to the end of the level.

Unlimited Flares
Press ▲ and as Lara draws her guns, press L2. She puts her guns away and strikes a flare, even if she has none.

Exploding Lara
Hold walk and step forwards and then backwards. Turn three circles in the same direction and then jump backwards - Lara explodes.

Lisa Stevens from Staffordshire fancies herself as a bit of a Spice Girl and would like some cheats for Spice World. Well, if it's what you really really want...

SPICE WORLD

Giant Spice
At the menu screen where your character walks across the globe, hold the Start button and press ●, ■, ●, ■. Your code appears on the screen to confirm it and your character is blown up to giant size.

Handbag Code
At the 'globe' menu, hold the start button and press ■, ▲, ●, ▲. With that code on the screen, enter the TV studio with your 'act' prepared. Instead of standing in a line, the girls are crowded around a pile of handbags on the floor.

THE CRITICAL LIST

Here are the readers who are in need of help this month...

• Alan Lee Newton from Birmingham is stuck on *MEN IN BLACK*, particularly the Amazon level. We gave away a full solution to this one with Issue 11, but if anyone knows any cheats, please write in.

• Martin from Fulham is on the very last level of *WING COMMANDER 3* and has got himself a cloaking device, but he doesn't know how to activate it - can anyone help?

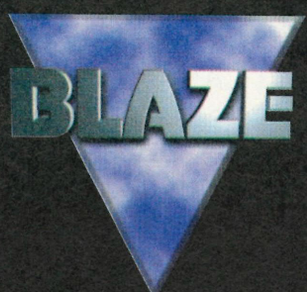
• Finally, Oliver Houghton from Stockport needs some cheats for *WARGAMES*. If anyone can help, write in.

If you need any help with any PlayStation game then write to:

Dr Claire
extreme PlayStation Magazine,
22 Strand Street,
Poole,
Dorset,
BH15 1SB

Don't forget to tell us which game you are having problems with. The best letter received wins a selection of Blaze goodies.

Tips & Cheats is sponsored by Blaze. Send in your hottest cheats and win some Blaze goodies.





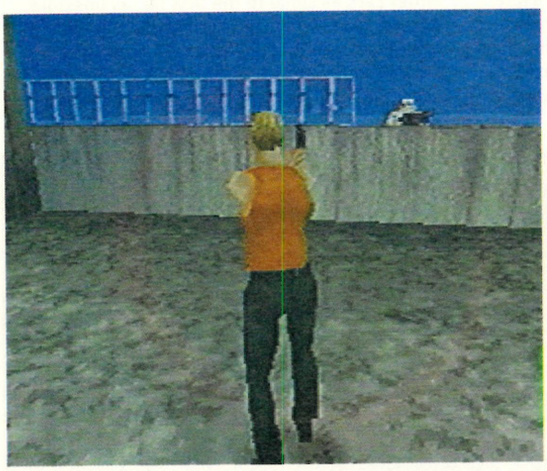
METAL GEAR SOLID

Quick Nikita Launcher
Travel through the first two levels and when you reach the third, return back to the second level and in the place of the 50Cam pistol is the launcher

Get the Camera
Get a Level Six key card then return to the tank hanger. take the elevator to Basement Two, go into the hall before the room where you found the Ocelot Revolver. Blow a hole in the wall with C4, inside are two rooms, the camera is in one of the rooms with some ammo and a ration.

Policenauts
Defeat Ninja for the first time and then meet up with Otacon. He specks about Japanese Metal Gear prototypes. Then there's a movie about Policenauts.

See through the eyes of Mantis
When fighting Psycho Mantis hold ▲ to see through his eyes instead of Snake's.



POOL HUSTLER

Bowlliards Mini-Game
Press ↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, ▲, ▲, ✕, ✕, ←, →, ■, ● at the title screen.

THE FIFTH ELEMENT

Level Select
At the main menu press L1, L2, R2, R1, Select, Start.

X GAMES PRO BOARDER

All Circuits
To unlock all normal circuits, enter ✕, ●, ✕, ▲, ▲, ■

Control the X
While the game is loading, use the D-pad to control the spinning X.

Play as Ollie B
On the password screen enter ▲, ✕, ■, ✕, ▲, ●

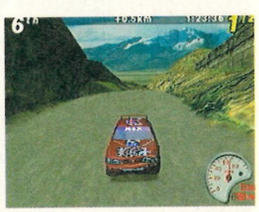
Super Circuit and Secret Boarders
Enter the password ▲, ✕, ■, ✕, ▲, ●



MAX POWER RACING

The Max Power Track
In Arcade Mode, highlight Peru and tap ●, ■, R2, R2, R1, R1. A new territory, the Max Power Track, opens underneath it. On this course you drive a wonderfully-liveried touring car, and your opponents are in identical vehicles.





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ALIEN TRILOGY

Infinite health
$865DFC2C5A5A

Rapid fire
$865DFC0E5959

Infinite shotgun shells
$865DFC325A5A

Infinite pulse grenades
$865DFC3C5A5A

Infinite charge grenades
$865DFC445A5A

Infinite handgun bullets
$865DFC2E5A5A

Infinite flame thrower ammo
$865DFC3A5A5A

Infinite pulse ammo
$865DFC385A5A

Infinite smart gun ammo
$865DFC405A5A

Infinite batteries
$865DFC425A5A

Possess shotgun
$865E4F265959

Possess flame thrower
$865E4F325959

Possess pulse rifle
$865E4F2A5959

Possess smart gun
$865E4F2E5959

G-POLICE

All weapons
$B661575C595A
$1663B72C598A
$8663B748595A

GEX 3D: ENTER THE GECKO

Infinite Energy
$865DDDEC5956

GHOST IN THE SHELL

First complete one level:

Access All Levels
$36657A0A5963

Enable All Movies
$B6655756595A
$16657A885959

Level 1

Infinite Shields
$36685C585924

Infinite Grenades
$36685C5C595B

Level 2

Infinite Shields
$366549945924

Infinite Grenades
$36654998595B

Level 3

Infinite Shields
$366861345924

Infinite Grenades
$36686138595B

Stop Countdown
$36686128594F

Level 4

Infinite Shields
$36687DA85924

Infinite Grenades
$36687DAC595B

Stop Countdown
$36687D9C594F

APOCALYPSE

Unlimited Health
$8668F52A595A

Unlimited Smart Bombs
$8668FB685959

Unlimited Lives
$3660AD205956
$866354548C7A
$366351545956

O.D.T.

Infinite Life
$3660F4C859B6

Infinite Mana
$3660F2A259B6

Max Armour Powerup
$3660EC4759B6

Max Weapon Powerup
$3660EC4559B6

Max Spirit Powerup
$3660EC4B59B6

Infinite Blue Energy
$3660F14E59B6

Max Blue Weapon Power
$3660F1545962

Infinite Read Energy
$3660F25659B6

Max Red Weapon Power
$3660F25C5962

Max Green Energy
$3660F25E59B6

Max Green Weapon Power
$3660F2645962

Max White Energy
$3660F26659B6

Max White Weapon Power
$3660F26C5962

ODDWORLD: ABE'S EXODDUS

Invincible
$365B3BFE5959

Glow In The Dark
$365B3B065959

Rollcage. It's pretty fast, innit? It's a little on the disorientating side too. In fact it's one of the toughest, fastest racing games to hit the PlayStation. Which is where this month's tips focus comes in...

Rollcage

RIA
Although this stern-looking bird likes to act tough, she actually has the weakest car in the game. Make sure you don't get into any car-on-car dogfights. She has good enough stats in all other departments to make it possible to avoid to much entanglement with the other cars, though. Her above-average top speed and grip mean once you're out in front you should be able to pull out a good lead on the other cars due to the ease of control.

LEON
A good grip and strength score make Leon a character worthy of note. His car is lacking in the acceleration department, but this shouldn't cause to much of a problem if you avoid crashing too much and make sure you get a power start every time. His grip and strength make him a contender if you want a physical race as he can hit other cars and still stay level. This should allow you to get out in front, but you need to find the best lines on the track as his car isn't exactly fast.

LENNY
Lenny the punk is as tough as they come. He has the strongest car in the game, so if you're after a physical race, this guy is the one to go for. You need to make sure you take out all the other cars as close to the first lap as possible, though, as the lack of acceleration puts you at a disadvantage from the start. He does have a very high top speed, but the lack of grip makes it hard to control, which is why we recommend that only Rollcage pros go for Lenny.



THE DRIVERS

Rollcage offers you the choice of six different drivers, each with their own set car. The driving styles of each driver varies greatly, and choosing the right one for you is just as important as being able to react to the high-speed destructive action out on the course. Here's a run-down of those six main characters...

TONY
Tony really only loses out in the grip department. This makes him difficult to handle as his car is capable of hitting some very high speeds in a short amount of time. The car's strength is also very good, which makes him a good bet for winning in the later leagues, just as long as you have enough experience to handle his car's lack of grip at the high speeds it can reach.

JET
Jet really is only useful for showing Rollcage rookies the ropes, or giving Rollcage veterans a real challenge. She has poor acceleration, top speed and strength, but a very high grip score. This makes her very easy to race with but don't expect to be pulling firsts out of the bag unless you're already very accomplished at playing Rollcage.

LOTHAR
This guy is average in all departments, although he does lose a little on top speed. This makes him a good choice for beginners as he has the acceleration and grip to keep you in the race but his slower top speed won't scare the pants off of you. He gives a balanced race and is about the safest bet for success early on in the game as you're likely to get.

Ten Of The Best

Still struggling? Here are ten top tips to help you along...

1. The power-start allows you to get out in front with a good lead right from the word 'go'. If you're at the back of the grid in a car with a low strength score, make sure you have a clean line through the pack for a power-start, otherwise you could easily end up hitting a car, spinning off and having to play catch-up. To do a power-start, hit the accelerator as the countdown hits One.





2. The blue speed-up arrows on the track are an integral part of the game. Some tracks allow you to hit a succession of these arrows to achieve some ridiculous speeds. Be cautious and selective, though, as sometimes you can end up going too fast, and losing control is inevitable. Speed arrows can also be found on walls and tunnel ceilings, so keep your eyes peeled for that extra bit of speed, if you think you can handle it.



3. Landing your car, whether from a normal jump or upside-down out of a tunnel, is a skill you must learn to be really good at Rollcage. If you're going too fast or land at even a slight angle, you most likely spin off of the track. Always make sure that when you hit a jump you're directly in line with the track in front of you. If you can't do this, tap the brakes as you land to take the edge off of the speed, which should give you a better chance of regaining control.





4. Use driveable walls and tunnels to your advantage. For instance, if a tunnel is packed, use the ceiling to overtake. Driving along walls is often advantageous too as the cars stick to them like glue. Make sure you get off of the wall before it ends, though, or you end up landing on the side of your car. It may result in a spectacular crash, but it won't help you win.





5. look out for short-cuts and hidden racing lines to give yourself the edge over your fellow racers. Almost all the tracks have short-cuts, although most of them are hidden very well. To get your racing times up in the league, explore the tracks in Time Trial Mode to locate all the short-cuts and find the best racing lines. A lap in Rollcage can be less than 20 seconds, so it's possible to memorise every racing line you need to take. Don't rely on this, though, as you often lose your racing line due to other cars or your own error.





6. Use the brakes. Rollcage may look like a full-on, pedal-to-the-metal kind of racer, but you do actually need to apply some anchor action at certain points. Some of the later tracks have some very twisty roads you simply can't make it through at top speed so be aware. You also find huge areas obstructed by buildings which you need to slow down to avoid.





7. Use the old police tail-ending technique to knock your opponents out of the running. Get close to them on a corner then simply nudge them from behind at an angle as they turn the corner. This should send them spinning off as you sail on by. This technique is most successful in the stronger cars.

8. The weapons in Rollcage can also be used to blow buildings and scenery to pieces, causing them to crash down onto the track. The best time to launch a rocket at a piece of scenery is when you're in front, as the resulting destruction should slow your opponents up a great deal. Watch out on the next lap as you have to avoid the remaining debris. If you have some rockets, simply blast your way through it.





9. The First Place Missile can either be a great hindrance, or a huge help. If you manage to collect one, try and save it until later in the race where it might come in more handy. If one is fired at you, the first place icon flashes and you hear a beep. The flashing and beeping increases as the missile gets closer, and the only way to avoid getting blown from the track is to use a shield, if you have one. Don't fire a First Place Missile if you're in first place as it swings around at takes you out.





10. Practice makes perfect. Use the Time Trial Mode and simply keep trying to better your times. Find the best lines, shortcuts and how fast you can take jumps at and you should be on your way to completing a perfect lap. If you can get perfect laps in a race scenario, nobody can touch you.



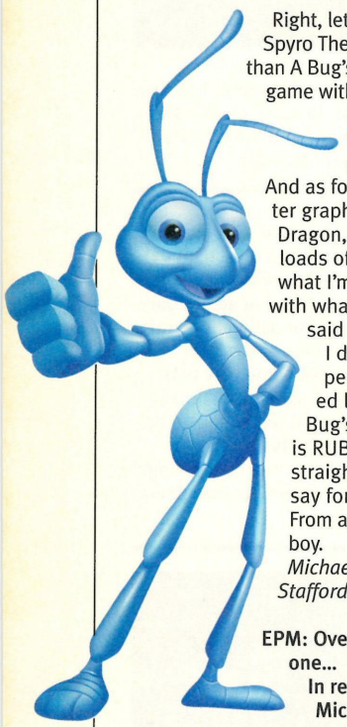
exchange

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EPM SAYS...

In last month's Exchange we asked for your opinions on PlayStation 2, and we got them. The whole thing has got us thinking. PlayStation 2 is on its way. Even though we won't see it in Blighty until late in the year 2000, the PlayStation still has plenty to look forward to. Okay, we're all dying to find out more about PlayStation 2, but let's not forget we still have the best games console in the world right now. And the games are only going to get better. Not one developer has yet managed to harness the full power of the PlayStation. Most of the greats like Metal Gear Solid, Gran Turismo and FFVII only managed a mere 75% of the PlayStation's power. Surely, then, the sequels to these classics are the current hot topic, and not a console that doesn't even have a shape or a price and won't be released in Europe until nigh-on 2001? A Space Oddysee PlayStation 2 may be, but it ain't 2001 yet...

A DRAGON'S FOR (BUG'S) LIFE



Right, lets get one thing straight. Spyro The Dragon is way better than A Bug's Life. I mean, how could a game with a stupid ant possibly be better than a game with a fire-breathing beast (the games for babies)? And as for A Bug's Life having better graphics than Spyro the Dragon, what a load of junk. I bet loads of people would agree with what I'm saying and disagree with what a certain Claire Webster said in Issue 15.

I don't know about other people, but to me it sounded like you were saying A Bug's Life is great and Spyro is RUBBISH!!! Get your facts straight. What do you have to say for yourself?

From a very mad 12-year-old boy.

Michael Gritt, Staffordshire

EPM: Over to Claire for this one...

In reply to your letter, Michael, I really think you should read my review again. Then you'll see what I wrote the following about Spyro, who, I might add is my favourite game character - EVER! In my own words I wrote, 'but [A Bug's Life] is nowhere as big as our fire-breathing Dragon's game, and it's not quite as much fun either'.

Spyro also got a higher score than A Bug's Life as well. A Bug's Life got 88% while Spyro got 90%.

One thing I never, ever want to do is offend Spyro or any of his fans. I spent four whole days constantly playing the game and loved every second of it. Therefore, Michael, I am VERY VERY sorry if I upset you, and just to make it more clear; Spyro the Dragon is better than A Bug's Life. Now you can't get more honest than that!

INDIAN DILEMMA

I am writing to you regarding a query which nobody seems able to answer. I intend to emigrate to India in about three years' time. I have a collection of nearly 50 PlayStation games (at time of writing) which I would like to take with me, along with my console. I will also be purchasing another console to take with me as I don't think PlayStation is available in India yet. Will I be able to use my console in conjunction with the televisions in India? When PlayStation does become available in India, will I be able to use the games I have purchased here? Having spent a not inconsiderable sum of money on my collection, I would be loathed to leave it behind and start again. Any help and advice you can give would be greatly appreciated.

May I also take this opportunity to congratulate you on your publication which contains sensibly written articles and features without resorting to unnecessary crudeness which some other magazines seem to think is amusing.

Nelson Dias, Byfleet

EPM: Thanks for the praise Nelson. As for your Indian quandaries, our resident expert on Indian PlayStation compatibility tells us that as long as you use a SCART TV, your games should be fine on your English PlayStation. However, powering it will be a different matter. you may need to get some kind of adapter. If you buy an Indian PlayStation, your games undoubtedly won't work on it. Which means your 50-plus game collection is out of the window. Stick with your existing PlayStation and search out a power adapter.

STEERING STORY

I have recently purchased a PlayStation and am trying to find a suitable racing wheel that will be appropriate for the rally games, eg. Colin McRae Rally. I don't know whether it's just me who has the problem, or if this is a common question/complaint, but the joypad just doesn't have the same effect and restricts your playing. So could you help me and other PlayStation owners resolve this situation and advise us on the best decision to make.



Simon Gale, Carlisle

EPM: Finding the best steering wheel is really down to personal taste. The Official Jordan Grand Prix Racing Wheel does stand out from the pack, though.

The best controller for Colin McRae Rally, however, is not a steering wheel. Just get an Official Sony Dual Shock pad for pixel-perfect control, acceleration and cornering. It may take you a little while to get used to, but it's far

STAR LETTER

GREAT USE OF THE WORD 'BINT'...

With reference to Max Power Racing 'adverts', Max Power may well have the attitude 'racy cars and racy women' (what's a 'racy woman' anyway? Sally Gunnell?), but I think most people (apart from certain one-handed extreme PlayStation adult adolescent readers) tend to associate racy cars with thick men.

Also, what was the point of using said poster of addled tart to illustrate the point of the letters when there was a picture of another dopey bint and what appears to be someone's slightly deranged mother who's forgot to do her shirt up on the previous page? Could it be to up the tit count? No, no, I'm being to cynical. Or I hope I am.

Look, these ads are sad and silly and pathetic and you don't need 'em. OK, you may lose some money at first, but you never know, you might gain some readers. Incidentally, I don't want 'hunky men with big lunchboxes' either. Go on, be brave! Be innovative! Dump the dogs! I darez ya.

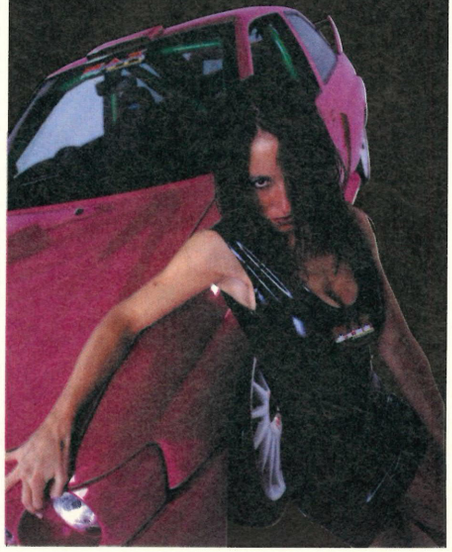
K McDonald, Rugby

PS. Poor old Claire, that's what I say.

PPS. Re. 'Post Taste'; I CAN cook and I've got big bouncy boobs! Ha ha!

PPPS. Hey Ian. Nice poster! No wonder you need glasses.

EPM: Interesting point about the use of pictures of women in the mag (but didn't you notice the 'dopey bint' and 'slightly deranged mother' were the same person?). It's not one we can answer without sounding like a bunch of male chauvinist pigs, but we don't have a 'tit count' as you call it, unlike some mags. How often do you see EPM gratuitously using shots of semi-clad girlies? Not enough if some of the letters we've received are anything to go by. Anyway, we stand by our Max Power poster - all day long with one hand in our pockets. By the way, if you want your Star Letter game you'd better get in contact and tell us what game you want, 'cos while on your high horse, you forgot to name one. Doh!





better than any steering wheel; on this particular game anyway. In fact, nobody has really hit the nail on the head when it comes to steering wheels. There are some good ones out there, but you can't beat analogue joypads for precise and reactive control.

DON'T DO DEMOS?

I am writing to ask why you don't give out free demo discs with your magazine, like other publications do? It is better to play the game as well as read about it.
I bought another magazine and it had a free demo disc with it. I read about the game and then played it. I thought that this was an excellent way of showing how good (or otherwise) a game was.
In a previous issue you said you would review certain games, such as in Issue 13 it said that next month's issue would review South Park, Silent Hill and others. These have not yet been reviewed - why?
Lyle Mitchell, Perthshire

EPM: If we ran demo discs, Extreme PlayStation would end up twice the price it is now, (which is something we don't want), as the blank discs have to be bought direct from Sony. We can't use any old discs. As for demo discs themselves, are they really that important? The only two mags that have regular demo discs are the two most expensive PlayStation mags, and is the quality of the content really worth that extra cash? We'd like to think that you can trust us to help you in deciding what games to buy and which avoid in our review section.
As for reviews not appearing, well that isn't our fault. If we're told a game is soon to b ready for review but then it slips back, there really is nothing we can do about it. It's not as if we have the review copies of these games in the office and we're keeping hold of them to disappoint our readers, is it?

CHARACTER ANALYSIS...

Okay, here I go. I am writing for several reasons. The first is to congratulate Dave Moss (Issue 16) on realising the excellence of FFVII. I am now making my way through the game for about the fifth time (and yes, before you say it, I DO have a social life!) and am waiting patiently for the release of FFVIII.
I completely agree with what Andrew Wallace said about the creativity and innovation of game and character designers. Where are the new and upcoming heroes of the future? To prove just how easy it is to design a new character , I've come up with two of my own, AND because the majority of the population of gameplayers are male (unlike myself) I have made them both female. Fair enough, I couldn't be bothered to create the whole scenario and scenery of an entire game, but you get my point.
Melanie Platten, Lincoln



EPM: Thanks for the superb pictures Melanie, but without character backgrounds, that's all they are; pictures, albeit extremely well drawn. To create a good game character you need to write a whole life for them. Game characters need an attitude, a context and a past. Without these all you have is a drawing. We do agree, however, that there isn't enough innovation in this area of the game industry. Perhaps you should create a character background for your drawings and send them off in the context of a game idea to some software companies? You never know, you might get lucky and land a job as a character designer where you can sort the problem out yourself.

PEARLS OF WISDOM...

• The PlayStation 2 is miles of yet. Besides I still haven't completed Tomb Raider III or Metal Gear Solid, and I'm well looking forward to Silent Hill, Syphon Filter, GT2 and FFVIII. So to tell the truth I couldn't care less about it. Yet.
Simon Thompson, Bristol

EPM: Come on, you're dying to know aren't you? We are anyway, but we do agree that there's plenty of life left in the old PlayStation yet.

• My friend has an import Dreamcast machine and I've seen a few of the games. Why is it that they look great but play crap?
Darren Saunders, Eastbourne

EPM: They were basically rushed out to meet the Japanese launch. The games for the UK launch should be a little more polished. Why are you asking us, anyway?

• Love the Max Power Racing poster from a few months back. Those alloy wheels are great. Nice spoiler too. Oh yeah, that bird's got a lovely set of waps.
Aaron Sykes, Manchester

EPM: Yeah - we like the air vents in the bonnet best.

• Can I have Metal gear Solid if I win the star letter prize?
Everyone, everywheresville

EPM: What, just like the other 200 letters we've read through?

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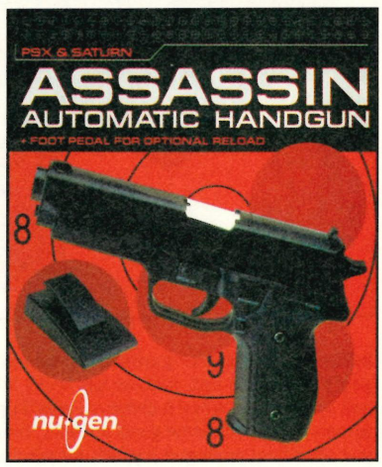
Don't forget to state what game you would like should you win.

stuff

We've got some great stuff for you this month, especially with the coloured official analogue pads and the official V3 Racing Wheel making an appearance - you can't buy better, you know...

ASSASSIN AUTOMATIC HAND GUN

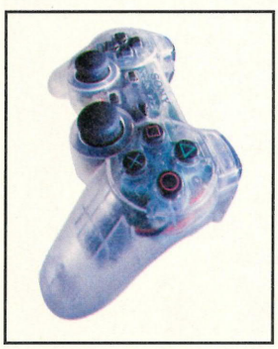
PRICE: £39.99 **BY:** NU-GEN

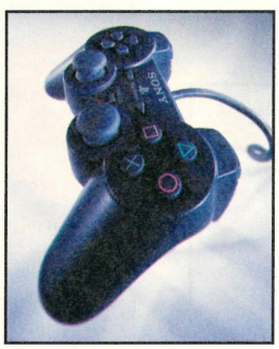


By no means the cheapest gun on the market, but it does come with a Time Crisis-compatible foot pedal. It has a Normal/GunCon switch and is fully compatible with all the gun games available on the PSX. It's lightweight and comes with plenty of extra button controls for auto-fire and auto-reload as well as a special function button just in case there's a game in the future that might require it.

VERDICT: 7 OUT OF 10

The handgun itself is easy to handle, with a long enough lead to allow across-the-room shooting. The trigger is a little loose, making pulling it a little long-winded, but it doesn't cause big problems during play. The overall compatibility of the gun is very reassuring, though it does feel a little delicate (I don't think it would last as long as a GunCon). All in all, a Jack-of-all-trades, and a good price considering what you get.





OFFICIAL COLOUR PADS



PRICE: £19.99 **BY:** SONY

They're by Sony, they're Duel Shock Analogue, and they now come in a sexy range of colours. What more needs to be said, other than it's available now at the excellent price of £19.99? Nothing really...

VERDICT: 10 OUT OF 10

What can you say? The official range of Sony products are renowned for their robust quality and lifespan. Buy one of these colour pads next week and you can pretty-much guarantee that it will still be with you when Tekken 6 hits the shops!

V3 RACING WHEEL

PRICE: £49.99 **BY:** INTERACT

Yes I know, another steering wheel, but you can't review enough of them, especially when you consider the compatibility problems that seem to plague some of the third party offerings.



VERDICT: 8 OUT OF 10

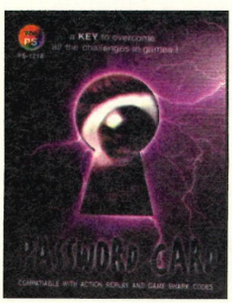
Sony's choice of the Interact V3 as their official product was indeed a wise one. It's sturdy in manufacture has is compatible with all the driving games we have in the office at the moment (and that's quite a few, you know!). The under-the-leg design is handy for armchair addicts and the pedals are accessible from many positions. Some of the buttons might have been better placed, but what you get is well worth the cost.

SPHERE 360 PAD

PRICE: £49.99 **BY:** ASCII (AVAILABLE SOON)



Welcome to the wonderful world of true multi-axis 360-degree movement courtesy of the Sphere 360 pad. It is said to be the most advanced hand controller on the market thanks to its use of NASA's own technology used to aid astronauts in the frictionless environment of space. It's perfect for use with games like Decent in which complicated button and direction combinations are replaced with a single hand movement. Simply tilt the sphere up or down to alter your pitch or strafe by actually pushing the sphere from side to side! We're yet to see a complete version of this innovative pad in the office, but as soon as we get our hands on one, you'll see a full review right here...



PASSWORD CARD

BY: IMPORT

PRICE: VARIES

The Password Card looks like a grey import; heck, it probably is a grey import, but it seems to do the job pretty well. It is compatible with both the Action Replay and Gameshark codes, so it's also pretty versatile.

VERDICT: 7 OUT OF 10

It seems there's no standard price for the Card, so they will vary, but it's definitely worth about a tenner due to its compatibility. Watch out for them in your import and second hand stockist, but make sure you get a receipt!

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Jackie Chan TM

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House of the Dead 2

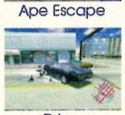

Blue Stinger

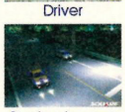
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Ape Escape


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Racing Lagoon

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NINTENDO 64


Beetle Adv. Racing


California Speed


Snowboard Kids 2

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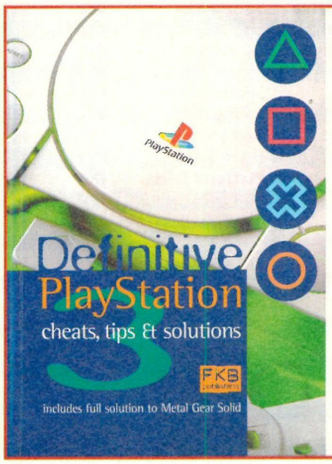
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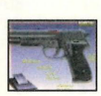
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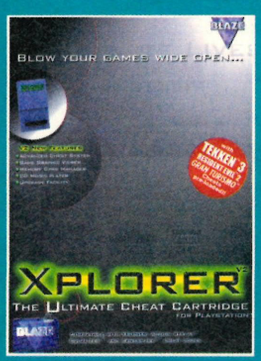
Welcome to extreme PlayStation's round-up of every game we've ever reviewed. If we've covered a game more than once (eg. at full price and again on Platinum), we use the latest review.

• KEY RU: Round-up review taken from a genre feature; PL: Platinum title; IM: Import Review

Title	Publisher	Genre	Issue	Score	Comment
2Xtreme	Sony CEE	Sports Sim	#16 RU	30%	Dodgy extreme sports offering that's been totally eclipsed by the Cool Boarders series.
3D Lemmings	Psygnosis	Puzzle Game	#8 RU	60%	The 3D perspective makes for awkward controls that take the heart out of the game.
4-4-2	Virgin Interactive	Sports Sim	#10 RU	20%	The worst football game ever. Unbelievably shallow and simplistic.
Abe's Exoddus	GT Interactive	Platform Game	#11	75%	Packed with gimmicks and gags, but not everyone will appreciate its slow pace.
Abe's Oddysee	**GT Interactive**	**Platform Game**	**#9 PL**	**94%**	**An all-time classic platform puzzler executed with real style. Top animation too.**
A Bug's Life	Sony CEE	Platform Game	#15	88%	Fantastic graphics make this 3D platformer a joy to watch as well as play.
Ace Combat 2	Namco	Flight Sim	#9 RU	72%	The flight simmer's flight sim - definitely not for the arcade-oriented.
Actua Golf 3	Gremlin Interactive	Sports Sim	#12	49%	Shoddy and poorly-executed golf sim from people who really should know better.
Actua Ice Hockey	Gremlin Interactive	Sports Sim	#3	74%	Rushed out to be on the shelves in time for the Nagano Winter Olympics - shame.
Actua Soccer	Gremlin Interactive	Sports Sim	#10 RU	88%	Puts in a good performance overall, but the goalies are a little weak.
Actua Soccer 2	Gremlin Interactive	Sports Sim	#1	88%	Controls are awkward at first, but great graphical touches.
Actua Soccer 3	**Gremlin Interactive**	**Sports Sim**	**#12**	**91%**	**The ball travels too fast when in the air, but this is the game's only real fault.**
Actua Soccer: Club Edition	Gremlin Interactive	Sports Sim	#13	59%	A cynical Premier League cash-in version of the original Actua Soccer.
Actua Tennis	Gremlin Interactive	Sports Sim	#11	31%	Disgustingly badly programmed sports sim. A complete joke.
adidas Power Soccer	Psygnosis	Sports Sim	#5 PL	39%	Arcadey football sim - not worth buying, even at Platinum prices.
adidas Power Soccer 2	Psygnosis	Sports Sim	#10 RU	65%	The best of the adidas games, but that's not saying much.
adidas Power Soccer 98	Psygnosis	Sports Sim	#7	55%	Shoddy soccer sim. Matches are slow, tedious and disjointed, and scoring arbitrary.
Agile Warrior F-IIIX	Virgin Interactive	Flight Sim	#9 RU	35%	Old flight sim which raised few cheers when first released and fewer still now.
Air Combat	Namco	Flight Sim	#9 RU	43%	Too much time spent doing nothing destroys this flight sim. Hideous fogging too.
Akuji The Heartless	**Eidos**	**Platform Game**	**#13**	**90%**	**Scary 3D action game with epic storyline developed through shocking cut scenes.**
Alien Trilogy	**Acclaim**	**3D Shoot-'em-up**	**#7 RU**	**90%**	**Another Doom clone, but for once the film licence actually adds to the game.**
All Star Soccer	Eidos	Sports Sim	#10 RU	34%	Tongue-in-cheek footie game with over-the-top violence and frustrating gameplay.
All Star Tennis '99	Ubi Soft	Sports Sim	#13	80%	A decent game of tennis with a few arcadey events thrown in for good measure.
Alone in the Dark	Infogrames	Action Adventure	#3 RU	70%	Dodgy conversion of great PC game. Too short to boot.
Alundra	Psygnosis	RPG	#5	83%	Arcadey RPG in the Zelda mould, but lacking in plot.
Andretti Racing	Electronic Arts	Driving Game	#14 RU	69%	Lightweight IndyCar/NASCAR sim which can't hold its own with modern drivers.
Apocalypse	**Activision**	**Shoot-'em-up**	**#11**	**90%**	**Spectacular 3D blaster starring Bruce Willis. Atmospheric and exciting.**
Arcade's G. Hits: Atari Col. 2	GT Interactive	Compilition	#8	60%	Paperboy, Marble madness, Gauntlet, Crystal Castles, Road Blasters & Millipede.
Area 51	Atari	Light Gun Game	#6 RU	79%	Light gun game with lots to offer. Superb interactive backdrops.
Armoured Core	Sony CEE	Shoot-'em-up	#6	65%	Slow and uninteresting mech game. Fun at first, but gameplay's too thin.
Assault	**Telstar**	**Shoot-'em-up**	**#10**	**90%**	**3D shoot-'em-up with great graphic explosions. Difficult to aim shots, though.**
Asteroids	Activision	Shoot-'em-up	#13	80%	Top update of the old '79 classic, which retains the charm and subtlety of the original.
Atlantis: The Lost Tales	Cryo Interactive	Adventure	#11	40%	Graphic adventure with a great engine but weak gameplay. Too many sudden deaths.
Auto Destruct	Electronic Arts	Driving Game	#2	67%	Boring and repetitive driving combat game made redundant by Vigilante 8.
Ayrton Senna Kart Duel	Phillips	Driving Game	#14 RU	72%	Interesting variant on the sports driving sim. Not perfect, but worth a look.
Ayrton Senna Kart Duel 2	Infogrames	Driving Game	#14 RU	74%	Not a bad game, but really only a tweaked version of the first offering.
Azure Dreams	Konami	RPG	#9	69%	Great new ideas in this RPG, but they don't really come off.
Baby Universe	Sony CEE	Utility	#10	40%	Create your own light patterns. A pointless and badly executed pile of shite.
Batman & Robin	Acclaim	3D Action Game	#8	70%	Interesting action adventure, but badly programmed and unoriginal.
Battle Arena Toshinden	Takara	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	30%	Beat-'em-up from the dawn of time - dreadful by today's standards.
Battle Arena Toshinden 2	Takara	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	58%	Interesting tactical weapons-based fighter, but too shallow for anyone but beginners.
Battle Arena Toshinden 3	Takara	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	70%	More of the same, but let's face it - there are better beat-'em-ups around.
Big Race USA	Empire Interactive	Pinball Sim	#14	48%	What's there's good, but only one table? Not good value as a full-pricer.
BioFreaks	GT Interactive	Beat-'em-up	#11	80%	Great blood and gore in this beat-'em-up, but the aerial combat is unconvincing.
Black Dawn	Electronic Arts	Flight Sim	#9 RU	73%	Flight sim lite, featuring a helicopter and lots of arcadey bangs and flashes.
Blam! Machinehead	Sony CEE	3D Shoot-'em-up	#7 RU	55%	This Doom/mech offering's a chore to play, and has no real sparkle.
Blasto	Sony CEE	Platform Game	#8	80%	The graphics on this 3D platform shooter are terrible, but it plays better than it looks.
Blast Radius	**Psygnosis**	**Shoot-'em-up**	**#8**	**91%**	**Outer space dogfighting at its best. Intelligent enemy AI keeps you on your toes.**
Blaze & Blade: Eternal Quest	Funsoft	RPG	#11	81%	Four-player RPG puts new perspective on the genre. Interesting storyline too.
Blazing Dragons	BMG	Adventure	#3 RU	80%	Fun graphic adventure starring Monty Python's Terry Jones. For the younger gamer.
Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain	Eidos	RPG	#11 PL	88%	Mean and moody RPG with great cut sequences and chilling voice-overs.
Bloody Roar	Virgin Interactive	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	72%	Beat-'em-up where you can change from human to animal form mid-fight.
Bloody Roar 2	Virgin Interactive	Beat-'em-up	#16	87%	Not quite up there with the Tekkens, but a playable and original fighter nonetheless.
Bomberman Wars	Hudson Soft	Puzzle Game	#8 IM	78%	Interesting Final Fantasy Tactics clone using the Bomberman characters.
Bomberman World	Sony CEE	Puzzle Game	#6	83%	Excellent multi-player game, but flawed single-player offering.
B-Movie	GT Interactive	Shoot-'em-up	#12	76%	Fast-paced and thoughtful shoot-'em-up that takes the PSX to its limits.
Brahma Force	JVC	Mech Game	#7 RU	76%	Doom meets mech in this fun but flawed offering. Fun for a while, though.
Breath of Fire III	Ocean	RPG	#7	86%	Little new in this Jap-style RPG, but if it ain't broke, don't fix it...

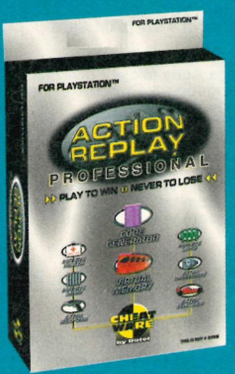
PERIPHERAL HEAVEN...

The best cheat carts money can buy...



XPLORER 2
By: Fire International, £29.99
The second version of the Xplorer boasts a more intuitive interface, a handy memory card manager, a CD player and a larger capacity for holding cheats. Fire International update their cheats regularly

ACTION REPLAY PRO
By: Datel, £39.99
As well as a comprehensive database of cheats which can be added to as you see fit (only 50% of the available space is occupied), the Datel Action Replay Pro offers 24 megs of memory card, a unique code generator and the ability to play music and FMV sequences from game discs.



GAME CHAMPION
By: Datel, £6.99
Although not as powerful as the other two carts featured here, the Game Champion has two big advantages. It's phenomenally cheap, and is updatable using Game Champion CDs. This one works by downloading save game positions from the CDs and saving them onto memory cards. Game Champion CDs cost £4.99 each, and the series is constantly updated to cover the latest and greatest PSX releases.

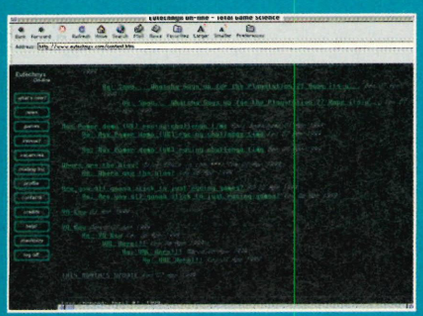


Title	Publisher	Genre	Issue	Score	Comment
Brian Lara Cricket	**Codemasters**	**Sports Sim**	**#12**	**90%**	**As cricket sims go, this is as good as it gets. Flawless graphics and presentation.**
Brigandine	Atlus	RPG	#11 IM	74%	Solid but unspectacular RPG. Plays well, but offers nothing new.
Broken Sword	Sony CEE	Adventure	#3 RU	80%	Great graphic adventure, but sampled speech takes its toll on loading times.
Broken Sword 2	Sony CEE	Adventure	#1	81%	In-depth but occasionally obscure graphic adventure. Good plot, though.
Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling	THQ	Sports Sim	#14	89%	Excellent ten-pin bowling sim wisely released at a budget price.
Bubble Bobble Pack	Acclaim	Compilation	#13 RU	79%	Two classic games (Bubble Bobble and Rainbow Islands) and an update of the latter.
Bubsy 3D	Bubsy 3D	Platform Game	#13 RU	25%	This 3D platformer redefines the term 'bland'. It's awful.
Buggy	Gremlin Interactive	Driving Game	#11	70%	Driver based on remote controlled cars. Fun for a while, but shallow.
Bug Riders	GT Interactive	Shoot-'em-up	#8	51%	Playable for a while, but no lasting fun. A flawed concept is poorly executed.
Burning Road	Funsoft	Driving Game	#14 RU	70%	An ageing driver with lots to offer, but not when compared to the newer racers.
Bushido Blade	**Sony CEE**	**Beat-'em-up**	**#2**	**90%**	**A beat-'em-up with no life bar? A devastatingly slick and original offering.**
Bushido Blade 2	Sony Japan	Beat-'em-up	#15 IM	86%	Satisfying sequel that builds on the original. Speech in Japanese doesn't help.
Bust-a-Groove	**Sony CEE**	**Puzzle Game**	**#10**	**94%**	**Follow button sequences to make your character strut his stuff. Brilliantly executed.**
Bust-a-Move 2	Acclaim	Puzzle Game	#8 RU	80%	Not as good as its sequels and not worth buying if you have one, but a great puzzler.
Bust-a-Move 3 DX	Acclaim	Puzzle Game	#4	86%	This puzzler's based on a simple concept, but is interesting and addictive.
Bust-a-Move 4	**Acclaim**	**Puzzle Game**	**#13**	**90%**	**Breaks no new ground, but offers the same addictive gameplay as its predecessors.**
Capcom Generation 5	Capcom	Compilation	#15 IM	77%	Three arcade-perfect versions of Street Fighter 2, with tips, art and info thrown in.
Cardinal Syn	**Sony CEE**	**Action Adventure**	**#5**	**90%**	**Fast and bloodthirsty beat-'em-up with weapons. Powerful stuff.**
Cheesy	Ocean	Platform Game	#13 RU	14%	Great CGI intro, but the game's a woefully inept platformer. No fun at all.
Chill	Eidos	Sports Sim	#4	46%	A disastrous snowboarding effort with awkward controls and ill-conceived time limit.
Chronicles of the Sword	Psygnosis	Adventure	#3 RU	60%	Very poorly presented adventure with clichéd puzzles and weak animations.
Circuit Breakers	Mindscape	Driving Game	#6	89%	One of the best multi-player racers ever, and a damned good one-player offering too.
City of the Lost Children	Psygnosis	Adventure	#3 RU	81%	Slow interface, but its dark, depressing plot keeps you coming back for more.
Civilization II	Activision	Strategy Game	#16	61%	Deep as you like, but a little too much like an interactive history lesson.
Clock Tower	ASCII Entertainment	Adventure	#2	77%	Shoddily put together, but at times terrifying real-time adventure.
Colin McRae Rally	**Codemasters**	**Driving Game**	**#8**	**95%**	**The definitive rally driving game. Brilliantly realistic interpretation of the sport.**
Colony Wars	**Psygnosis**	**Action/Strategy**	**#14 PL**	**90%**	**A brilliant space combat offering with a great storyline and interesting strategy element.**
Colony Wars: Vengeance	**Psygnosis**	**Strategy Sim**	**#12**	**90%**	**Epic space combat and strategy outing with six possible endings. A truly epic game.**
Command & Conquer	**Virgin Interactive**	**Strategy Sim**	**#6**	**91%**	**Top strategy offering, but the lack of a link-up mode is criminal.**
C&C Red Alert: Retaliation	**Virgin Interactive**	**Strategy Sim**	**#10**	**91%**	**More of the same Command & Conquer action, but if it ain't broke, don't fix it...**
Constructor	Acclaim	Strategy Sim	#12	82%	City building and resource management in this wonderfully humorous strategy sim.
Contra: Legacy of War	Konami	Shoot-'em-up	#5 RU	60%	Dodgy 3D shoot-'em-up. Unspectacular in the extreme.
Cool Boarders 2	**Sony CEE**	**Sports Sim**	**#2**	**90%**	**Irons out the flaws which cursed the original and adds a host of new features.**
Cool Boarders 3	**Sony CEE**	**Sports Sim**	**#13**	**92%**	**A much bigger game than Cool Boarders 2, and with polished gameplay to boot.**
Courier Crisis	BMG	Driving Game	#1	82%	A game where you ride a bicycle? Fun, but imperfectly executed.
Crash Bandicoot	Sony CEE	Platform Game	#4 PL	82%	Surpassed by its sequels, but still worth a look at Platinum prices.
Crash Bandicoot 2	**Sony CEE**	**Platform Game**	**#16 PL**	**90%**	**More of the same, but who cares if it's this good? Oozes atmosphere.**
Crash Bandicoot 3: Warped	Sony CEE	Platform Game	#13	89%	Loveable 3D platformer, but repetitive after a while. Basically, more of the same.
Crime Killer	Interplay	Driving Game	#8	64%	Race 'n' chase cops 'n' robbers action, but too samey and full of design flaws.
Croc	Fox Interactive	Platform Game	#10 PL	67%	Not the worst 3D platformer on the PSX, but far from the best.
Crusader: No Remorse	Origin	Action Adventure	#5 RU	80%	Poor controls and lousy graphics fail to kill this strategy shooter. Great ideas.
Crypt Killer	Konami	Light Gun	#6 RU	11%	Disastrous light gun offering. One of the worst PSX offerings ever.
Cyberia	Interplay	Adventure	#3 RU	54%	Hopelessly linear adventure where exploration leads to almost-inevitable death.
Cyber Speed	Mindscape	Driving Game	#14 RU	65%	Hovercar racing/combat game made redundant by the WipEout series.
D	Acclaim	Adventure	#3 RU	62%	An adventure with a two-hour real-time time limit, no save and no pause - honest!
Dark Forces	LucasArts	3D Shoot-'em-up	#7 RU	79%	Technically superb Star Wars-licensed Doom clone, but the levels are a little too large.
Dark Omen	**Electronic Arts**	**Strategy Sim**	**#4**	**90%**	**Warhammer wargame in the Command & Conquer mould. Fiendishly addictive.**
Darkstalkers	Virgin Interactive	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	80%	Street Fighter clone licensed from a Japanese cartoon.
Dead Ball Zone	**GT Interactive**	**Sports Sim**	**#6**	**91%**	**Violent futuristic sports sim. Spectacular gameplay, and a superb management system.**
Dead or Alive	Sony CEE	Beat-'em-up	#7	84%	Competent fighter, but not as good as the inimitable Tekken 3...
Deathtrap Dungeon	Eidos	Action Adventure	#4	88%	Hack-'n'-puzzle offering based on Ian Livingstone's Fighting Fantasy gamebook.
Descent	Interplay	3D Shoot-'em-up	#7 RU	78%	Quality gravity-free Doom game, but only if you can think in 3D.
Descent 2	Interplay	Beat-'em-up	#7 RU	50%	The sequel throws in extra weapons and gizmos, but throws out the original's playability.
Destruction Derby	Psygnosis	Driving Game	#14 RU	85%	Banger racing sim with a few flaws, mainly in its crash physics.
Destruction Derby 2	**Psygnosis**	**Driving Game**	**#3 PL**	**90%**	**Be the last car moving as you drive into other racers. Edge-of-your-seat stuff.**
Devil Dice	**Sony CEE**	**Puzzle Game**	**#13**	**90%**	**Fiendish puzzler where you make dice disappear by matching their numbers.**
Diablo	Electronic Arts	Action Adventure	#4	64%	An arcade shooter with RPG overtones. Combat is very straightforward and dull.
Die Hard Trilogy	**Fox Interactive**	**Compilation**	**#3 PL**	**94%**	**Three games in one, all of which could stand alone - superb!**
Discworld	Psygnosis	Adventure	#3 RU	80%	Too difficult for non-Pratchett fans, but otherwise a sound adventure.
Discworld 2	Psygnosis	Adventure	#1	86%	One of the best graphic adventures on the PSX. Great off-beat humour.
Disney's Hercules	Sony CEE	Platform Game	#12	73%	Stupid title, but the game's a great for-the-kids 2D platformer.
Disruptor	Interplay	3D Shoot-'em-up	#7 RU	89%	Too short at 12 levels, but now it costs around £20, this Doom game's a winner.
Diver's Dream	Konami	Action Adventure	#16	70%	Dodgy flaws bring down what could've been a classy game. Awkward controls.
Dodgem Arena	Black Friar	Sports Sim	#12	85%	A driving game crossed with a sports sim? This football/racer hybrid works well too.
Doom	**GT Interactive**	**3D Shoot-'em-up**	**#9 PL**	**91%**	**Spectacular level design makes this 3D own-eye shooter a real winner.**
Duke Nukem	**GT Interactive**	**3D Shoot-'em-up**	**#7 RU**	**91%**	**Doom with attitude - takes the game's interactivity a stage further.**
Duke Nukem: Time To Kill	**GT Interactive**	**3D Shoot-'em-up**	**#10**	**93%**	**Owes more to Tomb Raider than Doom, but Duke's inimitable humour is intact.**
Dynasty Warriors	KOEI	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	75%	Fighting game with lots of weapons but no kicking moves. Interesting, but unremarkable.

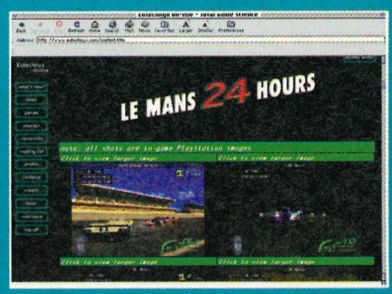
WEB SITE OF THE MONTH...

Eutechnyx Online: www.eutechnyx.com

This site's main strengths lie in what it doesn't have. There are no pointless graphics taking up valuable bandwidth, no pain-in-the-arse animations which slow your machine to a steady crawl and no ridiculous techno-garbage demanding you download and install the latest versions of several plug-ins before you can even start to view. Instead what you get is crystal-clear, well written information on the latest Eutechnyx games, including Total Drivin', Max Power Racing and the forthcoming Le Mans 24 Hours. At Eutechnyx Online you can find all the latest news, screenshots and cheats for the aforementioned titles. If you're after a job in the industry, check out the vacancies page. The site also has an Interact section where you can ask questions, offer opinions and generally discuss all things Eutechnyx. Best of all you can join their mailing list and be sent regular e-mails offering exclusive news and cheats.



Perhaps Eutechnyx Online could be expanded to offer small sections on older Eutechnyx releases such as Pete Sampras Tennis and Motor Mash, and a text-only page offering all the site's cheats would make them easier to print, but however it develops, we hope the site retains its clarity and accessibility. It's a refreshing change from web sites that are damned-near impossible to navigate without a ridiculously powerful machine and an ISDN link.



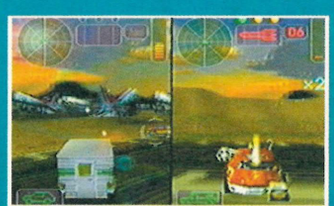
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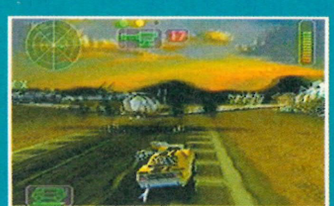
Title	Publisher	Genre	Issue	Score	Comment
Earthworm Jim 2	Virgin Interactive	Platform Game	#13 RU	60%	A direct port from the Mega Drive version. Good, but surely the PSX deserves more?
Einhander	**Squaresoft**	**Shoot-'em-up**	**#7 IM**	**95%**	**Fantastic side-scrolling blaster with superb attention to detail.**
Elemental Gearbolt	**Sony Japan**	**Light Gun**	**#6 RU**	**94%**	**Superb import light gun game. It's about time it was released over here...**
Eliminator	Psygnosis	Shoot-'em-up	#14	43%	Acceptable two-player mode, but disappointing one-player blast.
Epidemic	Sony CEE	3D Shoot-'em-up	#7 RU	51%	Unofficial sequel to Kileak. Too little game spread over too much playing area.
ESPN Extreme Sports	Sony CEE	Sports Sim	#16 RU	20%	Dire graphics and events that basically play the same. A disaster from the past.
Everybody's Golf	Sony CEE	Sports Sim	#6	65%	This one has a cult following, but we didn't like it. Lacks challenge.
Excalibur 2555AD	Telstar	Action Adventure	#7	78%	3D action adventure with object-based puzzles. Lacks polish.
Exhumed	**BMG**	**3D Shoot-'em-up**	**#7 RU**	**92%**	**Doom crossed with an adventure and set in Ancient Egypt. Superb stuff.**
Explosive Racing	TOKA	Driving Game	#14 RU	62%	Cartoon-style racer high on speed but lacking in depth and with weak controls.
EZ Ehrgeiz	Squaresoft	Beat-'em-up/RPG	#14 IM	54%	Interesting mix of game styles, but it doesn't work as a complete game.
Felony 11-79	ASCII Entertainment	Driving Game	#1	80%	Driving game where you steal cars. Fun but too short.
FIFA 97	Electronic Arts	Sports Sim	#10 RU	70%	Big improvements over the previous version, but still shoots wide of the goal.
FIFA 99	**Electronic Arts**	**Sports Sim**	**#12**	**92%**	**It's a FIFA football sim again. Well what did you expect? Virtua Country Dancing?**
FIFA: Road to the World Cup	**Electronic Arts**	**Sports Sim**	**#2**	**91%**	**Stunning football game outlining the World Cup qualifying tournament.**
Fifth Element, The	Sony CEE	Action Adventure	#9	85%	Interesting though imperfect Tomb Raider clone. More puzzles would help.
Fighting Force	Eidos	Beat-'em-up	#1	78%	A 3D run-around fighting game with too many glitches to be outstanding.
Final Doom	GT Interactive	3D Shoot-'em-up	#7 RU	80%	A polished sequel to Doom, but why only 30 levels when the PC game had 64?
Final Fantasy Tactics	**Sony CE Japan**	**Strategy Sim**	**#11 RU**	**90%**	**Turns-based RPG combat. Cool game, but only available on import.**
Final Fantasy VII	**Sony CEE**	**RPG**	**#1**	**96%**	**The best RPG ever - huge, in-depth and full of things to do.**
Final Fantasy VIII	**Squaresoft**	**RPG**	**#16 IM**	**96%**	**Spectacular role-player that comes on four disks. Great characterisation and plot.**
Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2	Core Design	Flight Sim	#9 RU	79%	Very old helicopter arcade flight sim. Showing its age technically, but can still thrill.
Floating Runner	THQ	Platform Game	#13 RU	21%	Awkward perspective and stupid controls destroy this 3D platformer.
Fluid	Sony CEE	Utility	#8	54%	Part game, part sequencer, but neither has the depth to justify the asking price.
Formula 1	Psygnosis	Driving Game	#5 PL	88%	Superb driving game, but cursed by some terrible bugs. Opponent AI's weak too.
Formula 1 '97	Psygnosis	Driving Game	#14 RU	84%	No replays or link-up, but fewer bugs than the original.
Formula 1 '98	Psygnosis	Driving Game	#11	80%	Significant improvements on opponents' AI, but overall the game has regressed.
Formula Karts SE	Telstar	Driving Game	#1	87%	It's a little short, but thrilling nonetheless. A whole new perspective driving games.
Forsaken	**Acclaim**	**3D Shoot-'em-up**	**#7**	**93%**	**Doom meets Descent, taking the best of both and melding them into a top 3D blaster.**
Frenzy	SCI	Shoot-'em-up	#7	59%	Kiddie's shoot-'em-up where it's almost impossible to die.
Future Cop: LAPD 2100	Electronic Arts	Shoot-'em-up	#11	85%	Soviet Strike on the ground. Nothing ground-breaking, but fun nonetheless.
G*Darius	THQ	Shoot-'em-up	#10	74%	Fun retro blaster, but at times relies on filling the screen with too many baddies.
G-Police	Psygnosis	Flight Sim	#14 PL	87%	Great space combat, but showing its age technically.
Gex	BMG	Platformer	#13 RU	70%	This platformer seems to have it all, but is somehow a little uninspiring.
Gex 3D: Enter the Gecko	**BMG**	**Platformer**	**#5**	**93%**	**Fantastic 3D platformer - real effort has been put into the level design.**
Gex: Deep Cover Gecko	**Eidos**	**Platform Game**	**#16**	**91%**	**The lizard returns in his best outing yet. A little thin on baddies, though.**
Ghost in the Shell	Sony CEE	Shoot-'em-up	#5	81%	Great Anime blaster, but too insubstantial to be good value.
Global Domination	Psygnosis	Strategy Game	#15	55%	Dull strategy war sim with poor controls. For die-hard fans only.
Grand Theft Auto	**Take 2 Interactive**	**Driving/Action**	**#10 PL**	**90%**	**Steal cars, bomb police stations, smuggle drugs; no wonder it's '18'-rated.**
Granstream Saga, The	Sony CEE	RPG	#15	72%	Slow storyline and easy puzzles, but not bad for beginners.
Gran Turismo	**Sony CEE**	**Driving Game**	**#6**	**96%**	**Near-cinematic visuals and great driving physics make this a real winner.**
Grid Run	Virgin Interactive	Puzzle Game	#8 RU	49%	Tag in a maze - useless in single-player mode, and not great even with friends.
Gunship	Microprose	Flight Sim	#9 RU	38%	Helicopter flight sim with terrible graphics and unusable in-chopper perspective.
Hardcore 4x4	Gremlin	Driving Game	#14 RU	75%	Monster trucks and rugged tracks, but little lastability.
Heart of Darkness	**Ocean**	**Action Adventure**	**#7**	**90%**	**Ground-breaking action adventure, but a little short.**
Hebereke Popitto	Sunsoft	Puzzle Game	#8 RU	34%	Derivative puzzler which 'borrows' from several games but fails to match any of them.
Hexen	GT Interactive	3D Shoot-'em-up	#7 RU	33%	Uses the Doom engine, but retains none of its playability and verve. Best forgotten.
Hi-Octane	Bullfrog	Driving Game	#14 RU	54%	Slow frame rate, sluggish controls and lack of visual detail make this one to miss.
Hugo	ITE Media	Platform Game	#11	64%	Don't laugh - it's for the kids. The very young will enjoy its cartoony graphics.
Hyper Tennis	Gremlin Interactive	Sports Sim	#16 RU	34%	Crude animations, dire graphics and shoddy gameplay destroy this tennis sim.
Impact Racing	JVC	Driving Game	#14 RU	58%	Destruction Derby-type racer, but nowhere near as accomplished.
Independence Day	Fox Interactive	Shoot-'em-up	#9 RU	29%	A complete joke. Bad graphics, dodgy gameplay and ridiculously samey levels.
International Moto X	Warner Interactive	Driving Game	#14 RU	71%	Motorbike scrambling game. Not bad, but lacklustre opponents' AI.
In the Hunt	THQ	Shoot-'em-up	#5 RU	59%	2D blaster for kids - sluggish and with poor visuals, but reasonable fun.
Indy 500	JVC	Driving Game	#4	53%	IndyCar game for kids - simplified driving models and easy handling.
International Track and Field	Konami	Sports Sim	#16 RU	70%	This one's quite addictive, especially in multiplayer mode. Fun multi-eventer.
Invasion	Microids	Flight Sim	#16	27%	Dire sci-fi blaster that fails on every level. Technically inept and cursed by poor design.
ISS Deluxe	Sports Sim	Konami	#10 RU	66%	Update of an old SNES game. Can't keep up with today's offerings.
ISS Pro	**Konami**	**Sports Sim**	**#10 RU**	**90%**	**Perfect mix of simulation and arcade action. Graphics showing their age, though.**
ISS Pro '98	**Konami**	**Sports Sim**	**#9**	**95%**	**This tactical, in-depth soccer sim puts in a world class performance. A winner.**
Iznogoud	Sony CEE	Platform Game	#13 RU	10%	Disastrous 2D platformer. Don't even think of buying it.
Jeremy McGrath SC 98	Acclaim	Driving Game	#7	71%	Flawed, sub-standard motocross sim. For die-hard fans of the sport only.
Jersey Devil	Ocean	Platform Game	#13 RU	89%	Full freedom of movement in this fully-3D platformer. Great visuals.
Jet Rider	Sony	Driving Game	#14 RU	44%	Dull courses, dumb computer opponents and dodgy physics - it sucks.
Jet Rider 2	Sony	Driving Game	#14 RU	61%	Better-designed courses than the original, but still ropey and frustrating.
Johnny Bazookatone	US Gold	Platform Game	#13 RU	64%	A platformer for younger gamers. It's not bad, but is definitely showing its age.
Jonah Lomu Rugby	Codemasters	Sports Sim	#16 RU	89%	Intuitive controls and a true representation of the sport make this a joy to play.
Judge Dredd	Gremlin Interactive	Light Gun	#6 RU	33%	Boring light gun game with bugger all to do with Dredd. Not good.
Jumping Flash!	Sony CEE	Platform Game	#13 RU	79%	An own-eye perspective platform shooter? Sounds terrible, but it works really well.
Jumping Flash! 2	Sony CEE	Platform Game	#13 RU	86%	A similar game to the first one, but with tighter, better designed levels.
K1 Arena Fighters	THQ	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	44%	Kickboxing sim with foes so thick they throw punches while you're miles away.

THE BARGAIN BIN...

VIGILANTE 8 (ACTIVISION)

This one's never really achieved the recognition it deserved. With legions of race-style driving games on the PlayStation, Activision wisely offered something slightly different in that the cars are packed to the brim with deadly weapons - this isn't a race, it's a fight to the death. The game is based around a feud between two driver gangs, the mean, murderous terrorists called the Coyotes and their sworn enemies, the Vigilantes. Taking control of a single character, the player must blast his way through several mission-based levels, each driver's storyline developing differently. Alternately, go for the battle mode where you aim to be the last car in one piece. You can pick up a copy of Vigilante 8 for around £20 these days. It's worth every



Title	Publisher	Genre	Issue	Score	Comment
Kartia	Atlus	RPG	#9 IM	82%	This RPG's almost two games in one. It has a real heart-wrenching storyline too.
Kensei	**Konami**	**Beat-'em-up**	**#14**	**90%**	**Top fighting game with superb blocking animations.**
Kick Off '97	Maxis	Sports Sim	#10 RU	60%	Fair-to-middling soccer sim. It's not bad, but there are better games around.
Kick Off World	FunSoft	Sports Sim	#8	70%	So-so kick-around which just can't manage a Premier League performance.
Kileak the Blood	Sony CEE	3D Shoot-'em-up	#7 RU	28%	Great technically, but where's the game? As interesting as juggling on the radio.
King's Field	ASCII	RPG	#11 RU	69%	First-person perspective RPG. For die-hard fans of the genre only.
KKND: Krossfire	Infogrames	Strategy Game	#16	73%	Command & Conquer clone, but not quite as good.
Klonoa	Sony CEE	Platform Game	#6	74%	A decent cutsey platformer, but lacks long-term appeal. Ideal for kids, though.
Knockout Kings 99	Electronic Arts	Sports Sim	#13	42%	Abysmal graphics and dull fighting make this one to avoid.
Krazy Ivan	Psygnosis	Mech Game	#7 RU	43%	Mech game with graphics showing their age and simplistic combat.
Kula World	Sony CEE	Puzzle/Platform	#6	88%	Puzzle platformer where you guide a beach ball over some weird structures.
Kurushi: Intelligent Cube	Sony CEE	Puzzle Game	#8 RU	79%	Lousy presentation, but this unusual puzzler scores heavily in the gameplay department.
Legend	Funsoft	Beat-'em-up	#11	81%	Side-scrolling beat-'em-up in the Double Dragon mould. Good, but unremarkable.
Lemmings	Psygnosis	Puzzle Game	#12	59%	Retro compilation featuring the original Lemmings and the data pack for £20.
Lethal Enforcers 1&2	Konami	Light Gun	#6 RU	23%	This retro release shows how far games have moved since the 16-bit days. It's crap.
LiberoGrande	Sony CEE	Sports Sim	#13	80%	A new look at PSX football - you control a single player, not the team.
Lifeforce Tenka	Psygnosis	3D Shoot-'em-up	#7 RU	52%	Superb interactivity which makes Doom look dated, but the game itself is uninspired.
Little Big Adventure	Electronic Arts	Adventure	#3 RU	76%	Isometric perspective and interesting puzzles make this a cool adventure.
Live Wire!	SCi	Puzzle Game	#15	73%	Fast and colourful, but ultimately too clever for its own good.
Lomax	Psygnosis	Platform Game	#13 RU	45%	A 2D platformer set in the land of the lemmings. Poorly designed levels ruin it, though.
Lone Soldier	Telstar	Shoot-'em-up	#5 RU	22%	Insipid disaster of a 3D shoot-'em-up with the worst control system ever seen.
Lost Vikings 2	Interplay	Puzzle Game	#8 RU	89%	Three Vikings with individual abilities puzzle their way through this epic game.
Lost World, The	Electronic Arts	Platform Game	#13 PL	29%	Outrageously shoddy platformer that breaks every known rule in game design.
Lucky Luke	Ocean	Platform Game	#4	84%	It's a kiddies' cartoon platform game, but an intelligently put-together one.
Madden NFL 99	Electronic Arts	Sports Sim	#10	81%	Great gridiron action, but scarcely changed from the last Madden game.
Masters of the Teräs Käsi	Virgin Interactive	Beat-'em-up	#4	82%	Star Wars beat-'em-up. Fun, but easy when you find Luke's near-unstoppable move...
Max Power Racing	**Infogrames**	**Driving Game**	**#13**	**92%**	**Top arcade-style driving game with loads of courses and real-life cars.**
MDK	Interplay	Shoot-'em-up	#1	85%	A brilliantly innovative 3D action game, but a little too easy to last.
MechWarrior 2	Activision	Mech Game	#7 RU	71%	Excellent mission-based objectives, but why is the scenery so uninspiring?
MediEvil	**Sony CEE**	**Arcade Adventure**	**#10**	**92%**	**Fiendish arcade adventure with lots of zombie-slashing and problem-solving.**
Megaman Legends	Virgin Interactive	Platform Blaster	#13	82%	Megaman, that old warhorse from the 16-bit consoles, returns in glorious 3D.
Megaman x4	Virgin Interactive	Platform Blaster	#13	79%	Looks and plays like a SNES game, but this 2D platform shooter is still enjoyable.
Men In Black	Gremlin Interactive	Action Adventure	#8	38%	Bloody awful 3D action adventure with lousy controls and disastrous glitches.
Metal Gear Solid	**Konami**	**Action Adventure**	**#15**	**96%**	**James Bond with knobs on - a fantastic 3D cinematic experience.**
Michael Owen's WLS '99	Eidos	Sports Sim	#13	70%	Awkward controls and unforgivable bugs bring down this otherwise-impressive game.
Mickey's Wild Adventure	Sony CEE	Platform Game	#12	69%	Another fun kiddie 2D platformer from Disney. A must for Mickey fans...
Micro Machines V3	**Codemasters**	**Driving Game**	**#3 PL**	**93%**	**Brilliant top-down racer featuring tiny vehicles and imaginative tracks.**
Midnight Run	Konami	Driving Game	#14 RU	60%	Conversion of a Konami coin-op. Lacks substance and longevity.
Monkey Hero	Take 2	RPG	#14	88%	Interesting action-style RPG for the younger PlayStation gamer.
Monster Seed	Sunsoft	RPG	#16	48%	Tedious RPG that tries to be different but leaves the gameplay behind in the process.
Monster Trucks	Psygnosis	Driving Game	#14 RU	69%	Mediocre truck game with too much pop-up and poor handling.
Mortal Kombat 3	GT Interactive	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	60%	Gimmick-riddled gameplay, but no depth. The series is getting tired.
Mortal Kombat 4	**GT Interactive**	**Beat-'em-up**	**#9**	**91%**	**Mortal Kombat enters the realms of 3D with its gameplay intact and even improved upon.**
Mortal Kombat Mythologies	GT Interactive	Beat-'em-up	#13 RU	20%	Platform beat-'em-up. Should've been good, but is riddled with flaws.
Mortal Kombat Trilogy	GT Interactive	Beat-'em-up	#5 PL	60%	All the characters from the first three MK games, but same flat gameplay too.
Moto Racer	Electronic Arts	Driving Game	#16 PL	73%	Two styles of racing (scrambling and Grand Prix) don't mix well, but it's still fun.
Moto Racer 2	Electronic Arts	Driving Game	#10	86%	Scrambling and Grand Prix motorcycle action in this arcadey driving game.
MotorHead	**Gremlin Interactive**	**Driving Game**	**#5**	**90%**	**Great driving game, but bloody hard. Nothing to do with Lemmy and the boys, either.**
Motor Toon GP	Sony	Driving Game	#14 RU	70%	Great for the kids, and amazing considering it was coded in 1994.
Motor Toon GP 2	Sony	Driving Game	#14 RU	83%	Cartoon racer which makes significant improvements over the original.
Mr Domino	**JVC**	**Puzzle Game**	**#7**	**91%**	**Great puzzle game based on domino tippling. Excruciatingly hard, though.**
Music	Codemasters	Utility	#11	84%	Create your own music tracks, along with its own light show. Flexible and accessible.
Myst	Broaderbund	Adventure	#3 RU	55%	Ridiculous puzzles, lack of plot and slow pace ruin this adventure.
N2O	Gremlin Interactive	Shoot-'em-up	#8	60%	Great psychedelic visuals, but ultimately it's just another flawed Tempest clone.
Nagano Winter Olympics 98	Konami	Sports Sim	#3	50%	Huge number of events, but all are too shallow and unenjoyable.
Namco Museum Volume 5	Sony CEE	Compilation	#2	72%	Five retro reissues - three good games and a couple of fillers.
NASCAR Racing	Electronic Arts	Driving Game	#14 RU	43%	Half finished in almost every respect - avoid this four-wheeled flop.
NASCAR 98	Electronic Arts	Driving Game	#14 RU	61%	Better, but limited by the sport itself - for NASCAR nuts only.
NASCAR 99	Electronic Arts	Driving Game	#11	79%	Contains all the real-life teams and drivers, but driving round in circles doesn't excite.
NBA Fastbreak '98	GT Interactive	Sports Sim	#5	89%	Basketball sim - great graphics, shit sound, realistic gameplay.
NBA Live 99	Electronic Arts	Sports Sim	#13	73%	A basketball sim for true enthusiasts. Has all the 1998 season rosters.
NBA Pro '98	Konami	Sports Sim	#4	71%	A very user-friendly, though ultimately unremarkable basketball sim.
Need For Speed	Electronic Arts	Driving Game	#14 RU	79%	A cool game in most respects, but despite the title, lacks speed.
Need for Speed 2	Electronic Arts	Driving Game	#15 RU	68%	A poor update of the original - bad graphics and no real feeling of speed.
Need for Speed 3	Electronic Arts	Driving Game	#4	83%	An excellent driving game, with the added attraction of racing coppers.
Newman Haas Racing	Psygnosis	Driving Game	#4	60%	Disappointing race game based on the American Indy Car series.
NFL Blitz	GT Interactive	Sports Sim	#11	73%	Arcadey gridiron game. Cool as a two-player offering, useless on your own.
NFL Xtreme	Sony CEE	Sports Sim	#13	49%	Arcadey five-a-side gridiron game. Let down by dodgy perspectives and bad controls.
Ninja: Shadow Of Darkness	**Core Design**	**Action Adventure**	**#10**	**90%**	**Run around slashing things in this Tomb Raider-style epic of Japanese proportions.**
NHL 99	Electronic Arts	Sports Sim	#11	87%	Yet another update of the NHL series. Cool stuff, with up-to-date rosters.
NHL Face Off '98	Sony CEE	Sports Sim	#3	80%	Smooth controls, but overall it's a little too clinical.
NHL Face Off '99	Sony CEE	Sports Sim	#16	73%	An ice hockey sim with lots of attention to detail. Still not perfect, though.
NHL Open Ice	Midway	Sports Sim	#3	80%	Very arcadey ice hockey game, but none the worse for it.
NHL Powerplay '98	Virgin Interactive	Sports Sim	#3	82%	Exciting and packed with options, this one's got a great long-term challenge.
Nuclear Strike	Electronic Arts	Shoot-'em-up	#5 RU	89%	The EA helicopter-based thinking person's shoot-'em-up saga continues. Great FMV.
O.D.T.	Psygnosis	Shoot-'em-up	#12	82%	Awkward at first, but as you get into it, this 3D shooter improves.
Off World Interceptor	BMG	Driving Game	#15 RU	31%	One of the first games on the PlayStation. Bad controls and sluggish movement.
Ogre Battle	Atlus	RPG	#11 RU	79%	Not a bad RPG/wargame hybrid, but basically just a SNES game with a makeover.
Olympic Games	US Gold	Sports Sim	#16 RU	61%	The individual games in this multi-eventer are too close for comfort. Average.
Olympic Soccer	US Gold	Sports Sim	#10 RU	82%	Arcade-style soccer played at break-neck speed. Includes good overhead perspective.
Onside Soccer	Telstar	Sports Sim	#10 RU	45%	Awkward footie game. Plays unbelievably slowly and the gameplay frustrating.
Overboard!	Psygnosis	Shoot-'em-up	#13	58%	Interesting ideas, but this ship-to-ship combat game is too smart for its own good.
Pandemonium	BMG	Platform Game	#5 PL	88%	3D camera, 2D action but a great platformer nonetheless. Better than its sequel.
Pandemonium 2	Eidos	Platform Game	#11 PL	52%	Dodgy sequel which retains the original's charm, but not its gameplay.
Parasite Eve	**Sony Japan**	**Action Adventure**	**#6 IM**	**94%**	**Great Resident Evil-style offering, but a nightmare if you can't speak Japanese.**
Parodius Deluxe	Konami	Shoot-'em-up	#5 RU	70%	Great Japanese-style shoot-'em-up, but basically a SNES port.
Pax Corpus	Cryo Interactive	Action Adventure	#9	19%	Woefully inept Tomb Raider wannabe - everything about it sucks.
Peak Performance	JVC	Driving Game	#15 RU	25%	Embarrassing physics, wonky collision detection and abysmal AI. Rubbish.
Pet In TV	Sony CEE	Virtual Pet	#9	71%	Train your pet using rewards and punishments. Innovative and different.
Pitball	Warner	Sports Sim	#16 RU	44%	Violent future sports offering let down by poor controls and too large a playing area.

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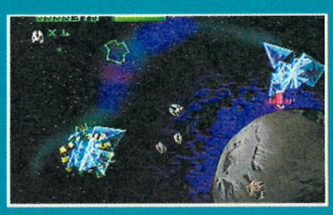
Title	Publisher	Genre	Issue	Score	Comment
Pitfall 3D	Activision	Platform Game	#13 RU	72%	A few flaws prevent this free-roaming platformer being a classic, but it's not bad.
Phat Air	Funsoft	Sports Sim	#13	31%	Dodgy snowboarding sim which 'rewards' winners with a new jacket.
Philosoma	Sony CEE	Shoot-'em-up	#5 RU	55%	This shoot-'em-up is cheesy, dated and visually unremarkable, but still manages to be fun.
Player Manager 98-99	Infogrames	Sports Sim	#16	64%	Not a disaster, but it's too slow to be outstanding. Get Premier Manager instead.
Pocket Fighter	**Virgin Interactive**	**Beat-'em-up**	**#10**	**92%**	**Cutesy beat-'em-up featuring kiddie versions of the Street Fighter characters.**
PO-ed	Interplay	3D Shoot-'em-up	#7 RU	69%	A Doom clone based on a chef gathering ingredients. Is it meant to be funny? It isn't.
Point Blank	Sony CEE	Light Gun	#6	89%	Fairground-inspired light gun high-jinks. Superb depth and gameplay.
Pool Hustler	Activision	Sports Sim	#15	79%	Near-genius representation of the sport, but lacking in presentation.
Pool Shark	Gremlin Interactive	Sports Sim	#12	45%	Dreadful presentation and terrible graphics make this pool sim one to avoid.
Populous: The Beginning	Electronic Arts	Strategy Game	#15	86%	A wonderfully-accessible god sim, and a must for fans of the 16-bit Populous games.
Porsche Challenge	Sony CEE	Driving Game	#4 PL	79%	A quality game, but with only one car and four tracks it's just too short.
Power Soccer 2	Psygnosis	Sports Sim	#1	65%	More uninspiring than outright bad, and made redundant by subsequent soccer sims.
Poy Poy	Konami	Puzzle Game	#4	89%	Great multiplayer brawling. Grab objects and bombs and chuck 'em at your mates.
Poy Poy 2	Konami	Action Game	#15	78%	A wonderful multiplayer combat experience, but lacking in one-player mode.
Premier Manager '98	**Gremlin Interactive**	**Strategy Sim**	**#5**	**91%**	**Spectacular and in-depth football management sim. User-friendly too.**
Premier Manager Ninety Nine	**Gremlin Interactive**	**Strategy Sim**	**#14**	**93%**	**Top football management game, even for soccer haters.**
Primal Rage	Midway	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	85%	Too few characters to be a real classic, but fun nonetheless.
Project: Horned Owl	Sony Japan	Light Gun	#6 RU	43%	Another import light gun game. Dull and boring enemies make it a thrill-free zone.
Psybadek	Psygnosis	Sports Sim	#12	46%	Boring, frustrating hoverboard game with colourful graphics but sod all gameplay.
Psychic Detective	Electronic Arts	Adventure	#3 RU	50%	Confusingly unplayable adventure, but with genuine innovation.
Raging Skies	Warner	Flight Sim	#9 RU	70%	This flight sim's not for beginners, but offers very realistic gameplay.
Raiden Project	Ocean	Compilation	#5 RU	49%	Two old coin-ops on one disc. Cursed by losing all your power-ups when you die.
Rampage World Tour	GT Interactive	Smash-'em-up	#2	72%	Updated retro game doesn't give you enough for your money.
Rapid Racer	Sony CEE	Driving Game	#15 RU	58%	Great visuals, but boring, samey course design lets down this powerboat sim.
Rapid Reload	Sony CEE	Platform Blaster	#5 RU	41%	Dated platform blaster in the Mega Man mould. Looks and plays like a 16-bit game.
Rage Racer	**Sony CEE**	**Driving Game**	**#15 RU**	**90%**	**Conversion of coin-op Rave Racer, enhanced for the home console.**
Rally Cross	Sony CEE	Driving Game	#15 RU	36%	Too short and erratic difficulty level, but reasonable graphics and four-player mode.
Rally Cross 2	Sony CEE	Driving Game	#15	40%	Shite graphics and abysmal physics, and you hardly ever need to brake. 'Nuff said.
Rascal	Psygnosis	Platform Game	#13 RU	50%	Dodgy platformer with a dreadful main character and flawed design.
Rayman	**Ubi Soft**	**Platform Game**	**#13 RU**	**91%**	**Brilliantly colourful 2D platformer. Endearing and exciting, if not totally original.**
Ray Tracers	Sony CEE	Driving Game	#15 RU	70%	Chase HQ for the 90s, but not very challenging. Fun for a while, though.
Reboot	Electronic Arts	Sports Sim	#4	80%	Crap American TV show becomes good PSX hoverboard game.
Resident Evil	**Virgin Interactive**	**Action Adventure**	**#10 PL**	**94%**	**Blood-thirsty action adventure. Unbelievable atmosphere and sickening violence.**
Resident Evil 2	**Virgin Interactive**	**Action Adventure**	**#4**	**97%**	**Clever design, brilliant atmospherics, chilling plot - need we go on? A classic.**
Resurrection: RoR 2	Acclaim	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	20%	Sluggish characters and slow loading times render this one almost unplayable.
Retro Force	Psygnosis	Shoot-'em-up	#16	67%	A blaster from the old school, but with late-nineties graphics.
Revolution X	Acclaim	Light Gun	#6 RU	31%	Rescue Aerosmith in this light gun blaster. Only for die-hard fans of the band.
Ridge Racer	Sony CEE	Driving Game	#15 RU	88%	Direct port from the arcade coin-op. Small, but perfectly formed.
Ridge Racer Revolution	Sony CEE	Driving Game	#15 RU	87%	Basically Ridge Racer part two, but with improved graphics, link-up and more courses.
Ridge Racer Type 4	Namco	Driving Game	#13 IM	85%	Wonderful to look at, drives like a dream but far too easy to complete.
Riot	Psygnosis	Sports Sim	#16 RU	71%	A violent future sports sim in the Dead Ball Zone mould. If only it wasn't so hard...
Rival Schools	Virgin	Beat-'em-up	#14	86%	Colourful fighter filled with fresh ideas and Japanese totty.
Road Rash	Electronic Arts	Driving Game	#15 RU	80%	Graphics are a little 16-bit, but it's still a hot and violent motorcycle racer.
Road Rash 3D	Electronic Arts	Driving Game	#8	82%	3D update of the respected 16-bit bike racing and combat game.
Robotron X	GT Interactive	Shoot-'em-up	#5 RU	70%	Update of ancient classic which retains the heart of the original, but lacks its addictiveness.
Rock and Roll Racing 2	Interplay	Driving Game	#15 RU	21%	Lousy PSX update of a SNES classic. Terrible gameplay insults the original.
Rogue Trip	GT Interactive	Driving Game	#11	81%	Futuristic taxi driving game. Great car combat and some seriously crazy characters.
Rollcage	**Psygnosis**	**Driving Game**	**#16**	**92%**	**Who said there's no such thing as an original driver? Fast, furious and above all, fun.**
R-Types	**Virgin Interactive**	**Compilation**	**#9**	**90%**	**Retro at its best - two classic blasters in one. Sure they're old, but who cares?**
Rugrats	THQ	Action Adventure	#15	81%	Faithful to the cartoon, and great for kids. Controls awkward, though.
Running Wild	**Sony CEE**	**Sports Sim**	**#16**	**90%**	**A fresh variation on the racing theme - it's a running race between animals!**
Rushdown	Infogrames	Sports Sim	#12	34%	Rushed Out, more like. A dodgy sports sim with some disastrous flaws.
Sampras Extreme Tennis	**Codemasters**	**Sports Sim**	**#16 RU**	**91%**	**One of the most playable tennis sims on the PlayStation. Gorgeous motion capture.**
San Francisco Rush	GT Interactive	Driving Game	#9	69%	Dodgy loading times and sloppy driving physics kill this arcade racer.
S.C.A.R.S.	Ubi Soft	Driving Game	#11	80%	Combat racing with futuristic cars and cool weapons. There's a four-player mode too.
Sensible Soccer ECE	GT Interactive	Sports Sim	#13	20%	Disastrous update on the 16-bit classic - the game has lost all its playability.
Sentient	Psygnosis	Action Adventure	#3 RU	78%	Absorbing adventure, but too easy to lose your way.
Sentinel Returns	Psygnosis	Action Adventure	#10	33%	...But we wish it hadn't. Ugly, confusing update of an old classic.
Shadow Gunner	Ubi Soft	Mech Game	#14	36%	Boring, frustrating mech offering with non-existent learning curve.
Shadow Master	Psygnosis	3D Shoot-'em-up	#7 RU	74%	Brilliantly executed 3D Doom-style blaster, but a bit too samey.
Shanghai: True Valor	Sunsoft	Puzzle Game	#15	37%	Mah Jong conversion with awkward controls and an appalling skills curve.
Skull Monkeys	Electronic Arts	Platform Game	#3	65%	Great animation, but very little gameplay. One to rent.
Small Soldiers	Electronic Arts	Shoot-'em-up	#12	72%	Woeful interpretation of the film which wastes the licence completely.
Smash Court Tennis	**Sony CEE**	**Sports Sim**	**#16 RU**	**93%**	**The best tennis game on the PlayStation is long-deleted and very hard to find. Shame.**
Snow Racer '98	**Ocean**	**Sports Sim**	**#3**	**90%**	**Skiing and snowboarding simulation. Works well and offers good longevity.**
Soul Blade	**Sony CEE**	**Beat-'em-up**	**#15 PL**	**92%**	**King of the weapons-based beat-'em-ups. Great animation and top moves.**
Soviet Strike	**Electronic Arts**	**Shoot-'em-up**	**#3 PL**	**91%**	**Spectacular strategic helicopter game - the thinking man's shoot-'em-up.**
Spawn: The Eternal	Sony CEE	Action Adventure	#5	59%	Dodgy 3D action adventure-cum-beat-'em-up - boring as hell.
Spice World	Sony CEE	Puzzle Game	#7	75%	This isn't what you want, what you really, really want. Geri's still there too...
Spider	BMG	Platform Game	#13 RU	75%	Platformer where you control a spider who can cling to the underside of platforms.
Spot Goes To Hollywood	Virgin Interactive	Platform Game	#13 RU	24%	...And we wished he'd stayed there. This game's crap, basically.

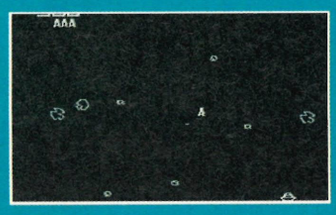
BONUS GAME OF THE MONTH...

Game: Asteroids Bonus Game: Classic Asteroids

When Activision updated the 1979 Atari classic Asteroids to the PlayStation, it was inevitable they would include the original, vector graphics version as a bonus game. Where the 90s update featured legions of baddies, differing rocks to blast, a choice of three ships and weapon-enhancing power-ups, the original offered a single ship with a standard cannon, asteroids that differed only in size and space ships as the only enemy. It matters not - the gameplay was still there, which is probably why people are still talking about it 20 years later.

You can access the bonus game by blasting the old-style rock found in the first sector of the 90s version. It then appears as an option in the menu.



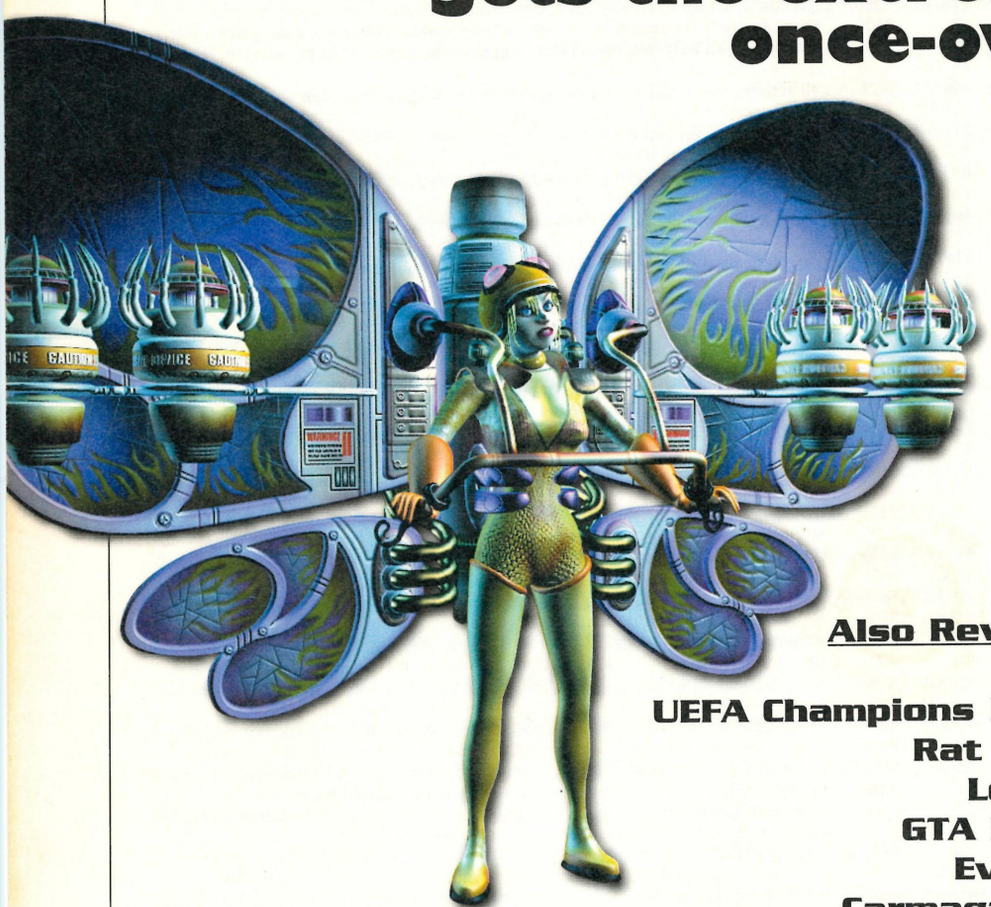
Title	Publisher	Genre	Issue	Score	Comment
Spyro The Dragon	**Sony CEE**	**Platform Game**	**#11**	**90%**	**This 3D platformer's an unbelievable technical achievement. Great main character too.**
Star Gladiator	Capcom	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	23%	You can complete this beat-'em-up on the hardest setting using only one move.
Star Winder	Mindscape	Driving Game	#15 RU	42%	Blatant WipEout clone, but nowhere near as good. Redundant.
Steel Reign	Sony CEE	Shoot-'em-up	#2	68%	This tank combat game makes good use of the analogue pad, but is ultimately boring.
Streak	**GT Interactive**	**Sports Sim**	**#12**	**94%**	**Futuristic hoverboarding sim with stunts based on physics rather than button combos.**
Street Fighter Collection	Virgin Interactive	Compilation	#4	70%	A retro collection of three Street Fighter offerings, but two are virtually identical...
Street Fighter Collection 2	Virgin Interactive	Beat-'em-up	#16	60%	Retro fever in full effect, but what's the point with better 2D fighters around?
Street Fighter Ex+Alpha	Capcom	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	89%	The first 3D Street Fighter game, but the action is largely 2D with a 3D camera.
Street Fighter: The Movie	Acclaim	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	21%	Terrible beat-'em-up which features graphics digitised from the film.
Street Fighter Zero 3	**Capcom**	**Beat-'em-up**	**#14 IM**	**92%**	**Unoriginal but brilliant 2D fighter with some neat touches.**
Street Racer	UBI Soft	Driving Game	#15 RU	42%	Cartoon kart racer with four-player mode and weird, wacky weapons.
Street Skater	Electronic Arts	Sports Sim	#15	54%	Dodgy physics make this game an insult to the sport of skateboarding.
Strike Point: Hex Missions	Elite Software	Flight Sim	#9 RU	50%	Flawed helicopter sim. Both perspectives both cause the chopper to obscure your view.
Suikoden	Konami	RPG	#11 RU	88%	RPG with 108 characters and a home base which grows as you go.
Super Pang Collection	Ocean	Compilation	#4	82%	Essentially three versions of the same game, but it's a very good game...
Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo	**Virgin Interactive**	**Beat-'em-up**	**#8 RU**	**92%**	**Puzzle game with the Street Fighter characters added for cosmetic appeal.**
Supersonic Racers	Mindscape	Driving Game	#15 RU	46%	Micro Machines V3 clone, but nowhere near as good.
Swing	Software 2000	Puzzle Game	#16	45%	This weak puzzler's too complicated for its own good - for anoraks only.
Tactics Ogre	Atlus Software	RPG	#8 IM	78%	An RPG/wargame hybrid in the Final Fantasy Tactics mould. Samey after a while.
T'ai Fu	Activision	Beat-'em-up	#16	88%	This exploration-based fighter is full of fresh ideas and great cartoony graphics.
Tank Racer	Grolier Interactive	Driving Game	#16	70%	They don't handle much like tanks, but so what? It's great apres-pub fun.
Tekken 2	**Sony CEE**	**Beat-'em-up**	**#4**	**94%**	**Second only to its sequel in the beat-'em-up stakes, this one's a cut-price killer.**
Tekken 3	**Sony CEE**	**Beat-'em-up**	**#10**	**93%**	**The king of all beat-'em-ups. A little sluggish compared to the Jap version, though.**
Tempest X3	Atari	Shoot-'em-up	#5 RU	57%	Boring retro update. For die-hard Tempest fans only.
Tenchu: Stealth Assassins	**Activision**	**Action Adventure**	**#10**	**93%**	**3D action game which demands stealth and cunning rather than speed and brawn.**
Tennis Arena	Ubi Soft	Sports Sim	#16 RU	77%	A very accurate tennis sim, but not as technically perfect as Sampras or Smash Court.
Test Drive 4x4	Electronic Arts	Beat-'em-up	#11	82%	Off-road version of Test Drive. Works reasonably well without being outstanding.
Test Drive 5	Electronic Arts	Beat-'em-up	#12	80%	Fun racing game, but let down by one or two minor niggles.
Tetris Plus	Jaleco	Puzzle Game	#8 RU	70%	It's Tetris; guide those falling blocks and fit them together. Classic puzzler.
Theme Hospital	Electronic Arts	Strategy Sim	#3	82%	Build and run a hospital? Sounds boring, but it's actually very rewarding.
Three Lions	Take 2	Sports Sim	#6	85%	Weird team set-up system, but delivers a good game of football.
Tiger Woods 99	Electronic Arts	Sports Sim	#13	89%	The golf sim's finest hour. The motion capture has to be seen to be believed.
Time Crisis	Sony CEE	Light Gun	#11 PL	89%	One of the most exciting light gun games ever. Almost arcade perfect too...
Tobal No. 1	Squaresoft	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	85%	Dreadful one-on-one fighter saved by an excellent Quest Mode.
TOCA	**Codemasters**	**Driving Game**	**#1**	**93%**	**A great simulation-style racer. The driving physics are incredible.**
TOCA 2: Touring Cars	Codemasters	Driving Game	#12	89%	More of the same - another brilliant touring car racer.
Tokyo Highway Battle	THQ	Driving Game	#15 RU	68%	Not a bad racer, but the controls are twitchy and early cars drive poorly.
Tombi	Sony CEE	Arcade Adventure	#8	55%	Interesting arcade adventure but spoiled by dated presentation and awkward gameplay.
Tomb Raider	**Eidos**	**Action Adventure**	**#4**	**96%**	**The 3D action adventure that launched a legend - Lara Croft.**
Tomb Raider II	**Eidos**	**Action Adventure**	**#16 PL**	**95%**	**Outstanding as a full pricer, but as a Platinum game it shouldn't be missed.**
Tomb Raider III	**Eidos**	**Action Adventure**	**#12**	**96%**	**By investing a little time and effort into the design, Core have come up with a top game.**
Tommi Mäkinen Rally	Europress Software	Driving Game	#7	41%	Disastrous rally game that drives like a brick. Technically inept and devoid of gameplay.
Top Gun: Fire At Will	Microprose	Flight Sim	#9 RU	59%	This flight sim suffers due to its complete disregard of inertia.
Total Drivin'	Infogrames	Driving Game	#14 PL	87%	Top driver with five styles of car and some great hidden elements to find.
Total NBA '98	Sony CEE	Sports Sim	#6	85%	It's yet another basketball sim. No more, no less.
Trap Runner	Atlus	Action Adventure	#16	70%	Spy vs Spy-style action. Set traps for your hapless foe, and avoid his own efforts.
Treasures of the Deep	**Sony CEE**	**Action Adventure**	**#6**	**90%**	**Underwater espionage at its finest. Unbelievable visuals and tactical gameplay.**
Tunnel B1	Ocean	3D Shoot-'em-up	#7 RU	68%	A driving mech game? Whatever it is, it doesn't really excite.
Twisted Metal	Sony CEE	Driving Game	#15 RU	75%	Drive and fight in this car combat game. Dated, but fun.
Twisted Metal 2	Sony CEE	Driving Game	#15 RU	88%	AKA Twisted Metal: World Tour. More of the same, but better executed.
Unholy War	Eidos	Wargame	#10	69%	Wargame/beat-'em-up hybrid? Too much compromise to really work well.
V2000	Grolier Interactive	Strategy Blaster	#11	80%	This strategic blaster takes some getting used to, but it's rewarding in the extreme.
Vandal Hearts	Konami	RPG	#11 RU	82%	Battle-based RPG with incredible depth, but only 16-bit quality graphics.
V-Ball	Infogrames	Sports Sim	#16 RU	58%	Beach volleyball - honest. It works OK, but there isn't enough to it.
Versailles	Cryo Interactive	Adventure	#9	59%	Reasonable edutainment adventure, but puzzles too obscure and info too intrusive.
Victory Boxing 2	JVC	Sports Sim	#10	85%	More of a sports sim than a beat-'em-up, this boxing game packs a heavy punch.
Viewpoint	Electronic Arts	Shoot-'em-up	#5 RU	55%	Diagonally-scrolling blaster in the Zaxxon mould. Boring sprites fail to excite.
Vigilante 8	**Activision**	**Driving Game**	**#6**	**92%**	**Car combat in the 1970s. Great fun, especially in two-player mode.**
Viper	Ocean	Shoot-'em-up	#7	61%	Dire shoot-'em-up with ridiculously dark graphics and a main sprite that blocks your view.
Virtual Golf	Core Design	Sports Sim	#16 RU	75%	Playable arcade golf outing, but not a simulation by any means.
Viva Football	Virgin Interactive	Sports Sim	#14	89%	A cool game of footie with great ideas, but not without its flaws.
V-Rally	Infogrames	Driving Game	#8 PL	89%	Not a realistic simulation, but this arcade rally driver has stood the test of time.
VR Baseball '99	Interplay	Sports Sim	#12	45%	Average baseball sim with no real strengths or weaknesses - just so-so.
VR Powerboat Racing	Sony CEE	Driving Game	#15 RU	67%	Bog-standard driver on water, but looks a treat. Not bad, not great.
Vs	THQ	Beat-'em-up	#6	61%	Awful beat-'em-up you can complete by using the same move over and again.
WarGames	**Electronic Arts**	**Action/Strategy**	**#8**	**93%**	**Control multiple units in this great arcade/strategy hybrid. A 'must' for Strike fans.**
War Gods	Midway	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	55%	Great 3D perspective, but very limited gameplay.
Warhawk	Sony CEE	Flight Sim	#9 RU	39%	The PSX's first flight sim. Well presented, but severely lacking in gameplay.
Wayne Gretsky's 3D Hockey '98	Sony CEE	Sports Sim	#5	55%	Competent but workmanlike - nothing disastrous, but lacking in sparkle.
WCW Nitro	THQ	Beat-'em-up	#6	55%	Wrestling game with huge roster of bone-benders but shoddy execution.
WCW/NWO Thunder	THQ	Beat-'em-up	#15	34%	Shoddy wrestling sim that's too slow and too boring. Waste of a licence.
Wild 9	**Interplay**	**Platform Game**	**#9**	**92%**	**A platform offering with some really neat ideas. Gruesome ways of killing your foes.**
Wild ARMS	Sony CEE	RPG	#13	80%	Starts slowly, but unfolds into a compelling RPG. Not bad at all.
Wing Commander III	Electronic Arts	Shoot-'em-up	#9 RU	65%	Interesting cinematic experience, but too many cut scenes and too little game.
Wing Commander IV	Electronic Arts	Shoot-'em-up	#9 RU	76%	More of the same, but the in-game graphics are more sophisticated.
WipEout	**Psygnosis**	**Driving Game**	**#15 RU**	**92%**	**Hi-speed future racing thrills. Superb, if unusual, driving physics.**
WipEout 2097	**Psygnosis**	**Driving Game**	**#3 PL**	**95%**	**Is this the fastest racer ever? Futuristic vehicles offer unusual driving physics too.**
World Cup 98	**Electronic Arts**	**Sports Sim**	**#7**	**90%**	**The official World Cup license comes up with the goods in this great soccer sim.**
World League Basketball	Mindscape	Sports Sim	#2	60%	This simulation-style sports game looks good but plays relatively poorly.
World League Soccer	Eidos	Sports Sim	#10 RU	70%	Average football game let down by dodgy power meter.
World League Soccer 98	**Eidos**	**Sports Sim**	**#6**	**94%**	**Bad commentary, but a superb game of soccer. Hard to score, though.**
Worms	**Ocean**	**Strategy Game**	**#8 RU**	**95%**	**Fiendishly addictive strategy puzzler, and one of the best multiplayer games around.**
Wreckin' Crew	Telstar	Driving Game	#7	58%	Poor combat racing game with lousy driving physics and awkward gameplay.
WWF Warzone	Acclaim	Beat-'em-up	#9	79%	Well executed, but lacking in depth. Captures the spirit of the sport really well.
X2	Team 17	Shoot-'em-up	#5 RU	81%	2D blaster from the old school, but with spectacular graphics and sound.
Xenocracy	**Grolier Interactive**	**Shoot-'em-up**	**#5**	**90%**	**Poor compared to Colony Wars, but fun for strategic blasting fans.**
X Games Pro Boarder	Sony CEE	Sports Sim	#13	75%	What's there's great, but this snowboarding sim is just too darned small.
X-Men Vs Street Fighter	Virgin Interactive	Beat-'em-up	#10	83%	Yet another Street Fighter game - it's good, but the cash cow's running low on milk.
Zero Divide	Ocean	Beat-'em-up	#4 RU	59%	Nothing disastrous about this beat-'em-up-with-robots, but there's no sparkle either.
Zero Divide 2	Sony CEE	Beat-'em-up	#12	52%	See above - this one's just more of the same. And it's still no good.

next issue

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Red Lemon's intriguing airbourne action game gets the extreme once-over



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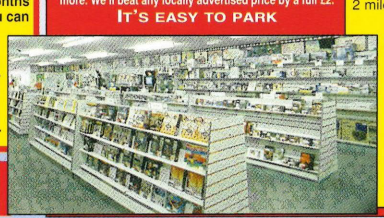
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