FREE: Final Fantasy VIII busted
Complete Solution



issue 23 November 1999

extreme PLAYSTATION magazine

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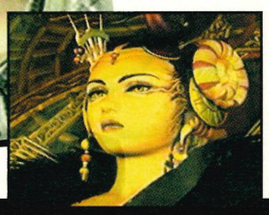
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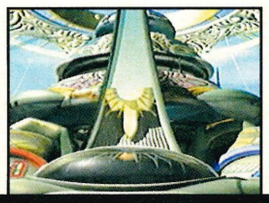
HIGHLIGHTS



FANTASTIC FINAL FANTASY FREEBIE!

Stuck in the biggest game of the year? No problem - we bring you a complete guide to Final Fantasy VIII, including a full review to Sony's rip-roaring RPG...







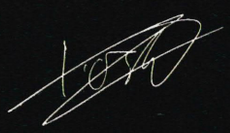
SONY TAKE CHRISTMAS BY STORM!

Once again Sony have a terrific PSX line-up for Christmas, and here at EPM we get a slice of the action...

What a month it's been. We're deluged with excellent games this issue, such as Quake II, Pop n' Pop, Formula One '99 and Pac-Man World. There are also one or two crappy efforts - avoid Gungage and Puchi Carat.

There's plenty of top games in the pipeline too - check out our Tokyo Games Show feature to see what's on the way for your fave console, and see our exclusive PSX 2 piece to look further ahead. Elsewhere we've got an exclusive interview with Jimmy White, a great feature on forthcoming updates of Atari classics and an exclusive first peek at Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation. The rumours are true - you do indeed get to play as a 16-year-old Lara Croft.

Enjoy the issue, enjoy your free Final Fantasy VIII solution and have fun with your plastic soldiers - check out Page 96 if you're wondering why they're there. Finally, here's a big 'thank you' to our designers for printing my signature the right way up this issue...



Ian Osborne
EPM Editor

editorial

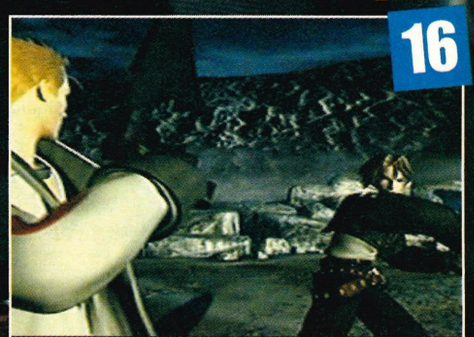
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Life in the Fast Lane...



What's Your Fantasy?



extreme PLAYSTATION

November 1999 issue 23

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Games of the Year?

The long-awaited Final Fantasy VIII finally arrives, and it's every bit as good as expected. We also take an exclusive look at Lara's Egyptian adventure, which is shaping up to be the best Tomb Raider game ever!

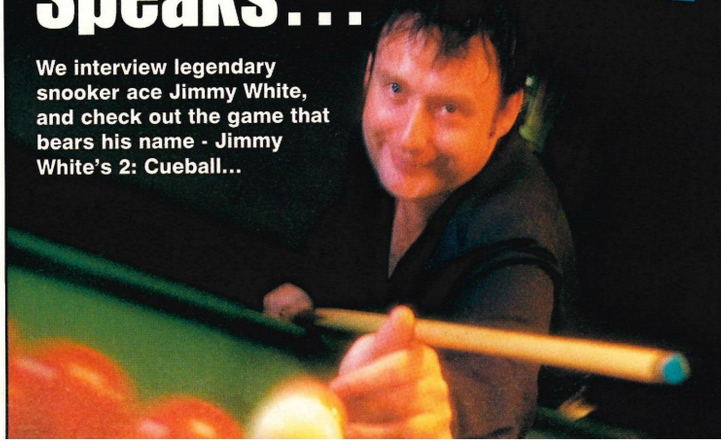
Gaming Legends Return... 24

Atari once produced some of the most respected arcade and console games ever, and now they're back - we take a look at Hasbro's spectacular updates of ageing Atari classics!



King of the Cue Speaks... 22

We interview legendary snooker ace Jimmy White, and check out the game that bears his name - Jimmy White's 2: Cueball...



GAME GUIDE

work in progress

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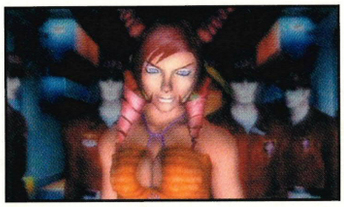
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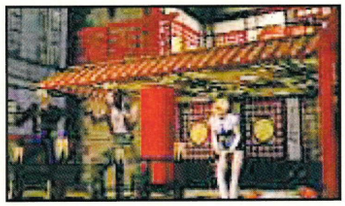
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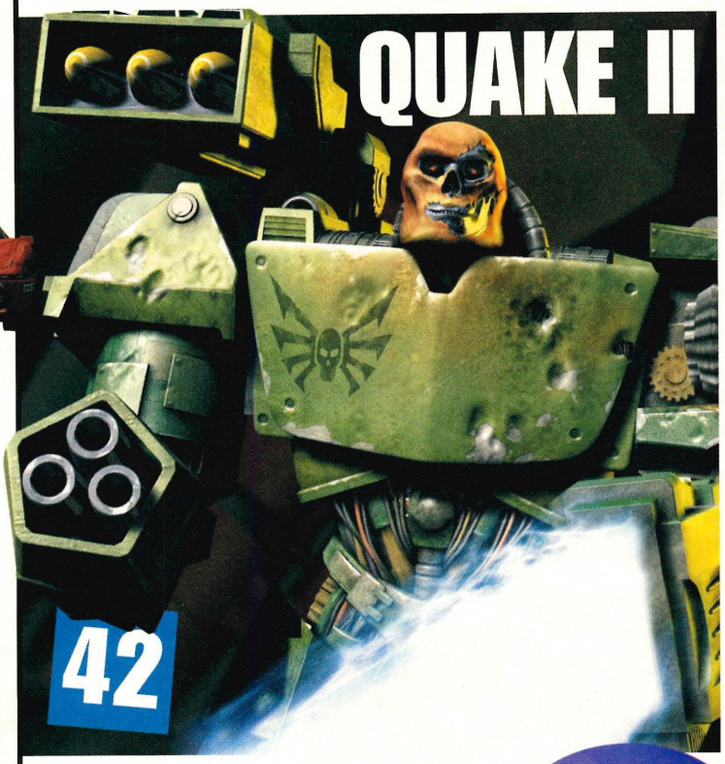
Last month we unveiled Sony's latest killer console, PlayStation 2. This month we check out early versions of the games to be released on this amazing machine.









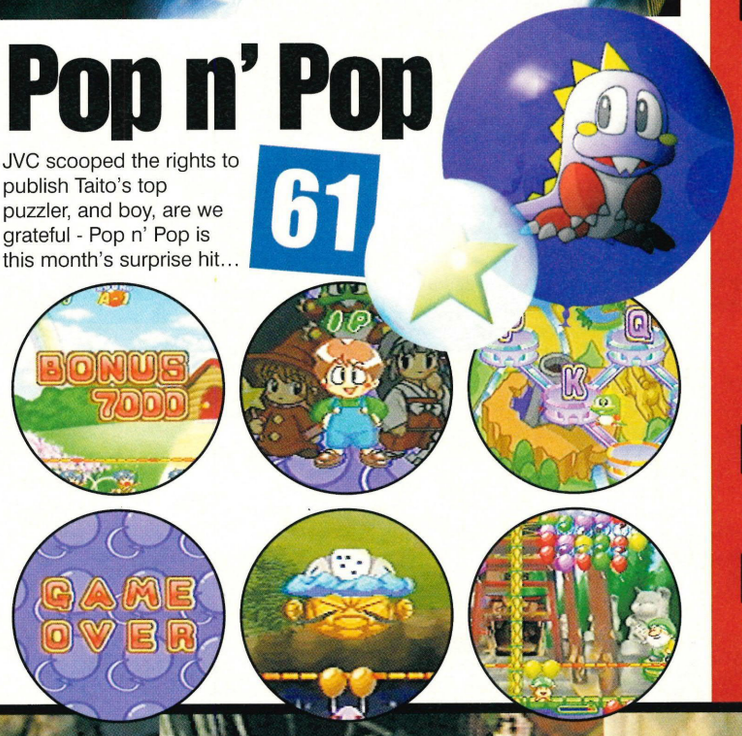


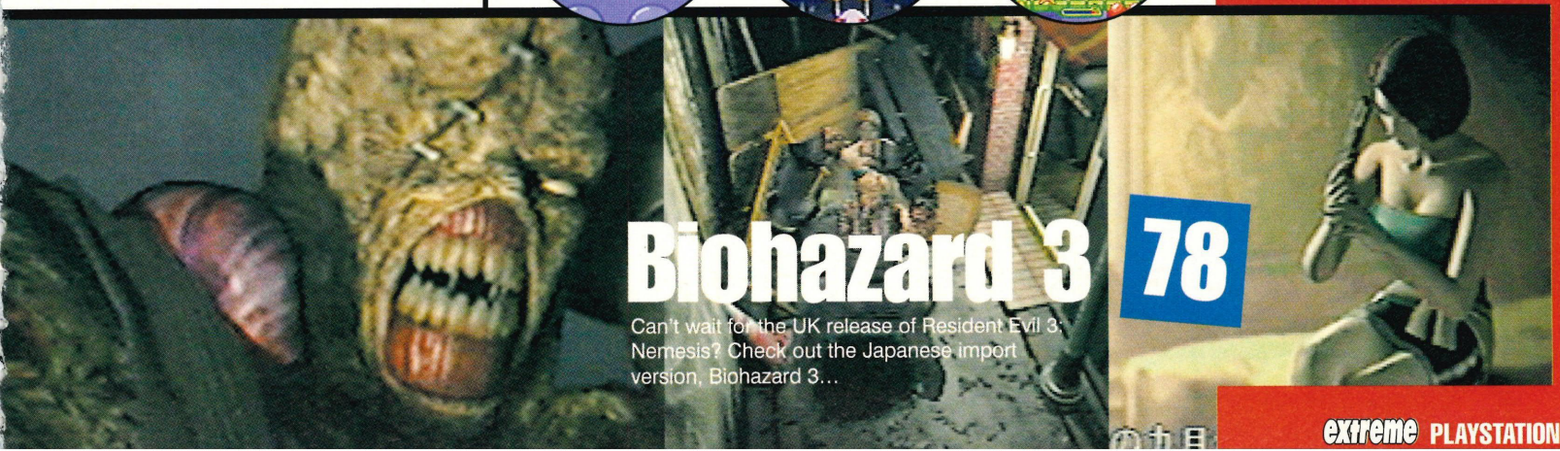
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Pop n' Pop

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JVC scooped the rights to publish Taito's top puzzler, and boy, are we grateful - Pop n' Pop is this month's surprise hit...





Biohazard 3

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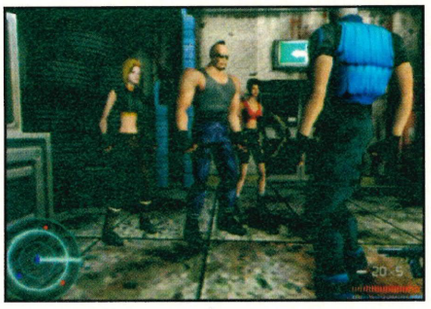
Can't wait for the UK release of Resident Evil 3: Nemesis? Check out the Japanese import version, Biohazard 3...

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TOKYO GAME SHOW '99



On 17th September 1999, Tokyo hosted Japan's premier annual game show. We sent Aidan Minter to check it out...



■ XFire



■ Kessen, Koei's eagerly-anticipated wargame

With the recent unveiling of PlayStation 2, Sony's dominance in the world of videogames was well and truly established in Tokyo. Speculation and rumour was settled as Sony showed off their new machine and some of the games in preparation for its launch.

Having played the original Gran Turismo and Tekken 3 at great length, I was simply blown away at the new PlayStation 2 versions of the games, namely Gran Turismo 2000 and Tekken Tag Tournament. The graphics are polished to almost intro quality, textures and backgrounds are incredibly real and water, smoke and other effects are stunning, giving the new games that much-needed atmosphere lacking in many of today's titles. A minor disappointment was the lack of collision damage in Gran Turismo 2000, a fact that may have something to do with the licence agreements for the cars, though the roster has increased ten-fold. However, these are unfinished projects - let's look forward to seeing the finished article.

The ongoing debate regarding DVD was also laid to rest. The machine *is* capable of playing DVD movies, with no mention of any required add-ons. Blue discs will be the new format, but you can also play original PlayStation games as well as silver DVD ROMs. The only thing it didn't do was dispense coffee, but hey, who knows?

A new Dual Shock controller will be packaged with the console, basically a identical twin of the 32-bit version. The only difference is analogue tactile feedback on every button except Start and Select. PlayStation 2 hits the shelves in Japan on 2nd March, priced Y39,800 (£237). The UK release is set for later next year, with an unconfirmed price of £299.99 and 12 titles ready for the launch.

Dazzling Demos

The best PSX 2 game demo shown at the Tokyo Games Show was Squaresoft's The Bouncer, where rival gangs battle it out in the subways and bars of Tokyo. This is by far a better demo than even the mighty Tekken Tag Tournament, mainly due to how original it looked. Depth of gameplay sees on-screen characters using chairs, tables and other items as weapons in your quest to win territory from your rival.

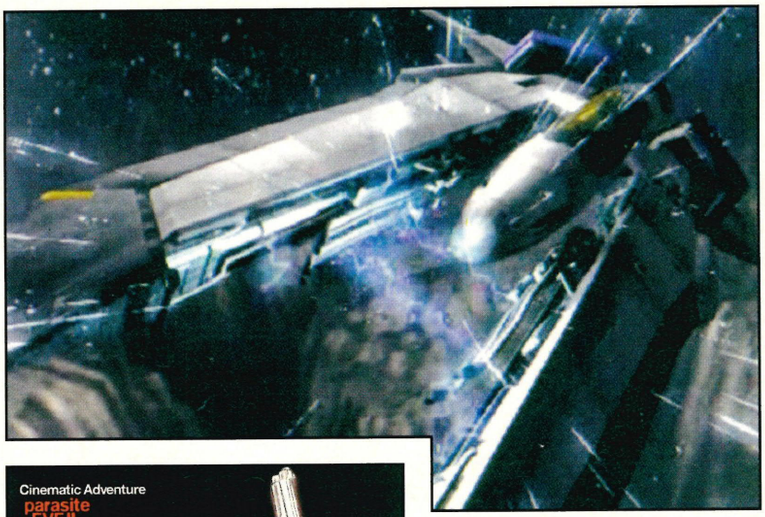
A confrontation on a burning train hurtling through an underground subway was fantastic,



■ Street Fighter EX3

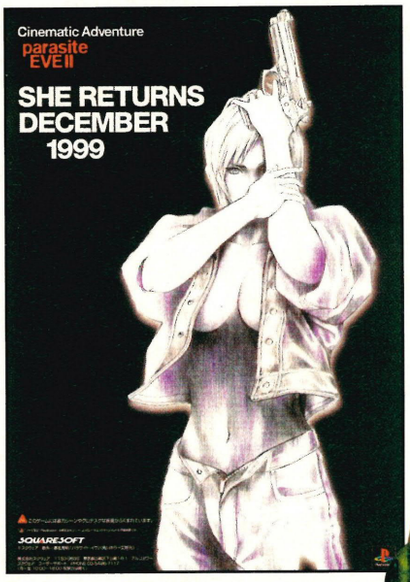


■ 1 on 1 Government



■ Movie-quality visuals...



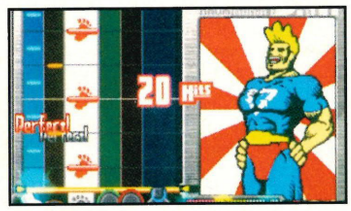


■ Promo poster for Parasite Eve II









■ Drummania

the characters diving off the train before it exploded, bringing down half the station. Don't be fooled; it's not a rendered sequence, with two game sections connected via a cut scene. YOU make the decisions, the outcome of which alters the course of the game.

The PSX 2's Dark Cloud, while not being a major leap with regards to character design, has a real jaw-dropping idea in that you design the landscape much like in Populous, placing selected items like a hill, wood cabin, water mill or trees, which are then built into your game, your character interacting with them.

Great Games

'So what else is scheduled?', you ask. Approximately 84 titles, that's what! These include Cool Boarders, Street Fighter EX3, Kessen, Splash Dive, Bloody Roar 3, Tenchu 2, New Ridge Racer, Bomberman 2001, F-1, Armoured Core 2, Eternal Ring, Pro Golfer and (oddly enough) the game Go! from Taito, which has players driving a train.

While the majority of UK developers are still waiting for the development kits needed to program PlayStation 2 games, Liverpool-based Rage Software is already hard at work on Wild Wild Racer, having linked up its own developers with its Japanese publisher Imagineer. Approximately 40 development studios in the US now have development kits, only waiting for the final part of the kit to produce sound and use the proposed DVD drive.

Konami continued to promote its range of Benami product, which has been a huge success in Japan, with plans to bring it onto PlayStation 2 next year.

Titles like Dance Dance Revolution made an appearance at London's ECTS this year, and also dominated the Konami stand in Tokyo.

The Metal Gear Solid 2000 rumour for PlayStation 2 was just that, and the show was quiet on any news of additional adventures from Snake. Confirmation should be forthcoming soon, though.

WingOver 3 by JVC is currently well under way for PlayStation 2, and this time budding pilots get the chance to fly airliners in a crisis management role, with hijack and engine flame-out scenarios coupled with a combat section too, with a choice of 25 combat planes.

PSX 2 Support will come from just about every publisher, including JVC, Codemasters, Electronic Arts, Hasbro, Reflections, Take 2 and Eidos to name but a few.

On the Original PSX...

By far the most interesting of Sony's forthcoming original PlayStation titles is Legend of the Dragoon, a kind of Final Fantasy meets Panzer Dragoon. No game screens were shown, but instead Sony chose to showreel the intro, which gets my vote as arguably the best intro I've ever seen. However, you can't judge a book by its cover, as they say.

A minor disappointment was the lack of collision damage in Gran Turismo 2000

Vampire Hunter D, from the popular Japanese Manga series, gets a PlayStation debut courtesy of JVC. An impressive intro by the Manga artist kicks off events that take place in a huge castle. Armed with a sword and a mutated hand to cast spells, your quest begins.

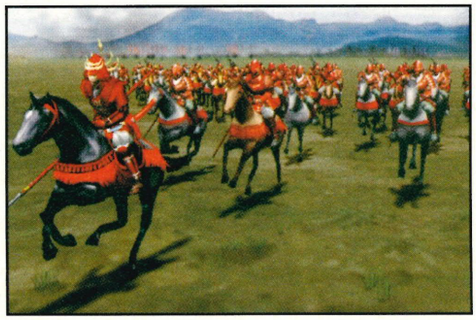
ASCII Japan showed an updated version of Panzer Front on the PlayStation. Players can choose to command an American, Russian or German tank and battle it out in the villages and landscapes of France in World War II. There are currently no plans for a European release, despite interest from several European publishers.

Gran Turismo 2 demonstrated its incredible line-up of cars, with Audi, Ford, Lancia TVR and BMW all making an appearance. The sheer choice is mind-blowing, as each manufacturer has several models, with Nissan alone having over 40 cars to choose from.

There are no real changes to the gameplay, but the off-road element should keep you happy. Why not thrash the gearbox off the Mini Cooper just for a change?

Victory Boxing 3 was shown to an enthusiastic crowd. A combination of sim and arcade, its graphic engine has had a complete overhaul. Sony America will be publishing the title Stateside, and the game has much more depth third time around.

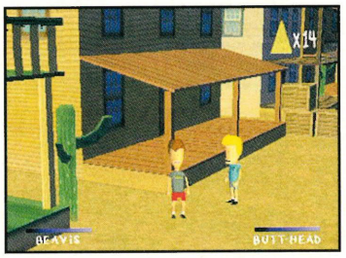
Overall, this is an exciting period for the industry. The PlayStation continues to amaze - there's still life in the grey box yet, so don't worry about its big brother waiting in the wings. Things have only just started...



■ The medieval Grand National, off to a good start...

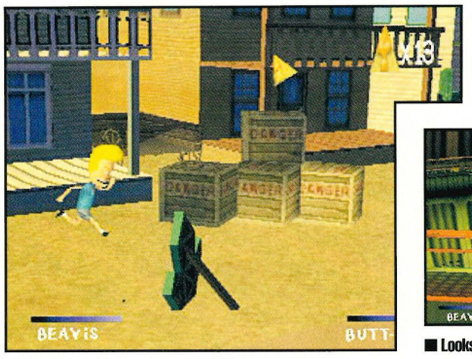
TWO TITLES TAKE A TUMBLE

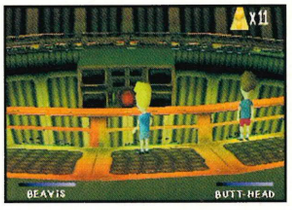
Tanktics and Beavis and Butthead games canned



Gremlin's Tanktics and GT Interactive's Beavis and Butthead do Hollywood have been cancelled, and will not be released on the PSX in the foreseeable future.

Tanktics, a wild and wacky DMA-designed game where you built your tanks by connecting weapons and engines to a chassis then fought with it, was canned for commercial reasons - publishers Infogrames felt it didn't fit into their current release schedule. Beavis and Butthead Do Hollywood was dropped when the game engine was deemed too poor, and the developers were needed for other projects. The team could yet return to it at a later date.





■ Looks like this game's gone off the rails...

SQUARESOFT ANNOUNCE TWO TITLES



first sighting extreme

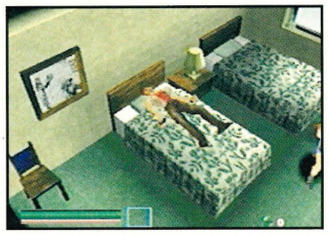
Ehrgeiz and Saga Frontier 2 to hit these shores...

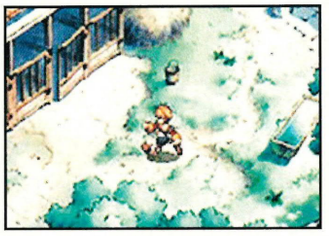
Squaresoft, of Final Fantasy fame, are bringing two titles to these shores in the near-future.

Ehrgeiz was reviewed on import in Issue 14 (as EZ Ehrgeiz), but received an unimpressive 54%. The game's a beat-'em-up/RPG hybrid, with a 'revolutionary 3D engine' and six guest characters from the Fighting Fantasy series. Movement is 100% unrestricted, and there's even four mini-games included, namely the Othello-like Blue Panel, a running race on the Battle Beach, another in an arena (Battle Runner) and an endurance battler. According to Tomohiro Yoshikai, Managing Director of Square Europe, "Ehrgeiz breaks the boundaries of traditional fighting games design and adds some extras that are sure to excite fight fans". Alas, the import version didn't; lets hope improvements have been made for the UK release.

Saga Frontier 2 is more typical Square material, being a traditional-style RPG. The storyline promises to be up to Square's usual high standards, with the player controlling several generations of a family. Each character finds a mate, settles down and raises children who come under the player's control as they grow up.

Mr Yoshikai offers, "With multiple storylines and a wealth of extraordinary characters to interact with, Saga Frontier 2 will challenge even the most experienced RPG fan". We can't wait...







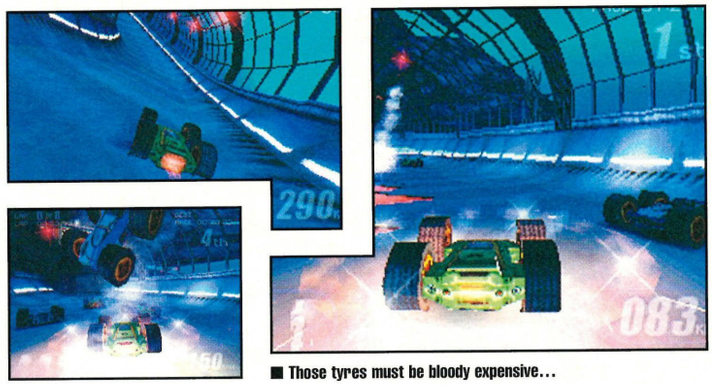
NEW NAME FOR SECOND GAME

update extreme

Rollcage Extreme now to be called Rollcage Stage II

Rollcage developers Attention to Detail has changed the name of its forthcoming sequel to Rollcage Stage II. According to ATD's Chris Gibbs, "There are too many other titles out there with the word 'Extreme' tacked onto them. Also, this might suggest the follow-up title provides an even tougher challenge, which it does not".

The new game, due early next year, addresses the only real criticism of the first by offering new camera angles, reducing the disorientation caused by crashes. Attention to Detail claim this leads to a less frustrating game.



■ Those tyres must be bloody expensive...

HELP ENGLAND WIN THE ASHES

Empire announce cricket management sim...

INTERNATIONAL Cricket Captain 2 IN ASSOCIATION WITH WISDEN

first sighting extreme

If you're into management sims and follow the genteel sport of jolly old cricket, Empire's International Cricket Captain 2 is one to watch. Produced in association with Wisden, the respected cricketing Bible, ICC 2 allows you to manage a team through all major national, international and one-day competitions.

The game features every player and ground you're likely to need, and uses real match data from genuine County Championship ties. Commentary is by the Beeb's Jonathan Agnew. You control every element of team strategy, during and between matches. You can hire staff, including a coach, physio and youth scout as well as players.

Cricket management games are unlikely to prove as popular as their soccer equivalent (this is the first on the PSX), but if you prefer the sound of leather against willow to the roar of the football crowd, this could be the one to hit you for six.



GTA 2 18-RATED

Take 2's violent crim sim Grand Theft Auto 2 has been given an '18' rating by the BBFC. The game, which is due on the 22nd October, narrowly escaped a ban due to its violent content and naughty words.

SONY MAKIN' MUSIC

The cute li'l gal from Sony's Mental Health TV ads is to record a single. Fiona McLean (Fifi) is recording a dance version of the ad music titled Land on Your Own Moon. Let's hope it's better than Rhona Mitra's Lara Croft album...



PSX SPONSORS EURO 2000

Sony are to sponsor the forthcoming Euro 2000 championship, held in Belgium and Holland. The deal will put the PlayStation on perimeter billboards, offer TV coverage and launch a range of PSX/Euro 2000 merchandise. Sony have also signed a five-year deal with the Federation of International Professional Football Unions, giving them sole use of player likenesses and names. The first game to benefit from this deal will be This is Football.

TDK FOR PSX

Electronics giants TDK are to produce games for the PlayStation. No titles have been confirmed, but the first games are expected next Summer.

SANE MOVE FOR PLANE CRAZY

Following weak reviews and the collapse of original developer Inner Workings, publishers Project 2 have delayed the release of the forthcoming Plane Crazy until next January. This gives them time to hand the game to a new developer, who plan to make significant changes to the game engine. Unfortunately for Project 2, this decision was taken too late to prevent reviews appearing in the magazines - Plane Crazy scored a mere 44% last issue, but we'll offer an update should the promised changes make significant improvements to the game.

ASTERIX DELAYED

Cryo's Asterix and Obelix Against Caesar will now be held back until next year. The game, licensed from the movie rather than the comic, will be released at the same time as the film goes rental.

TAXI TIME

Ubi Soft are working on a driving game based on the film Taxi 2. The game will feature actors, music, backgrounds and the storyline from the movie. Look out for this one around Easter 2000.

NEEDELL FOR LE MANS COMMENTARY

The commentary for the forthcoming Le Mans 24 Hours game is to be supplied by veteran racing driver and media personality Tiff Needell. Needell, who has driven at Le Mans as well as in Formula 1, has provided race commentary for the BBC, as well as being part of their Top Gear team. In the PlayStation game he offers anecdotes from his racing career alongside comments on what's happening on the track.



IT FIGURES...

Agetec launch new figurine range





Agetec have launched a new range of action figures based on popular PlayStation characters.

There's a Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace series, consisting of Obi-Wan Kenobi, Qui Jon Jinn, Queen Amidala and Darth Maul, with a variety of vehicles also available. Solid Snake comes with a range of his favourite weapons, and other MGS figures include Meryl, Vulcan Raven, Ninja, Psycho Mantis, Revolver Ocelot, Liquid Snake and Sniper Wolf. There are also Darkstalkers, Resident Evil and Marvel vs Capcom sets. These sets and more are available online (http://agetec-europe.com) or through Agetec's hotline (01923 202097).

Agetec are also running a series of special offers. Buy a Resident Evil joypad for £9.99 and get a Resident Evil toy half price, or buy Master of Monsters for £34.99 and get an ASCii Grip joypad for free.



MIDWAY PLAN SPORTS BLITZ

NFL Blitz 2000 and Ready 2 Rumble Boxing in preparation

Midway have two top sports sims in the pipeline. NFL Blitz 2000 is an arcade-style gridiron game featuring weather effects, secret heads and scores of new gameplay features. Like the first offering, NFL Blitz 2000 eschews simulation-style gaming in favour of fast-paced arcade action. Hopefully the gameplay flaw where the opposition improved or weakened depending on the score will be cleared up - this ruined NFL Blitz's one-player game.

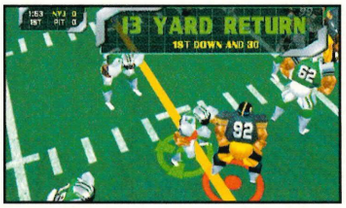
Also on the cards is Ready 2 Rumble Boxing, a game that's already a big success on the Dreamcast. The game features 16 boxers and a plethora of punches, with commentary supplied by Michael Buffer, the world's most famous ring announcer, and includes his famous trade-marked catchphrase, 'let's get ready to rumble'.

No PSX screens are yet available, but here are some N64 NFL shots and Ready 2 Rumble pics from the Dreamcast.

Midway are also preparing a retro compilation called Arcade Party Pack. Six arcade classics will be featured, including Smash TV, Klax and Toobin'.







■ Ready 2 Rumble shots from Dreamcast-NFL Blitz 2000 from N64

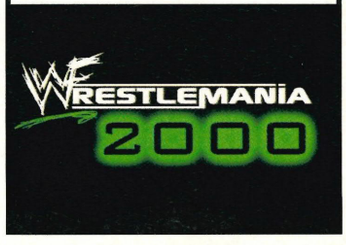
first sighting extreme

MORE BLOKES IN TIGHTS

THQ to release a WWF wrestling game

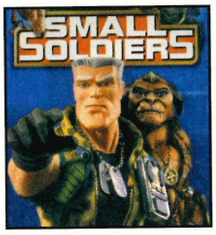
Having wrestled the WWF licence from Acclaim, THQ are working on Wrestlemania 2000. Due for release in March of next year to coincide with the WWF's annual Wrestlemania event, the game will feature all the WWF's wrestling superstars and is being developed by Yuke's Co, Ltd, creators of the top-selling, next-generation wrestling series in Japan, Toukon Retsuden.

'THQ is the premier publisher of wrestling games', said Michael Haller, senior vice president, THQ. 'With the Number One licence in wrestling, unrivalled wrestling development talent and our proven publishing expertise, we're poised to maintain our lead in this highly competitive genre'.



first sighting extreme

MORTAL MOVIE AND SMALL-SCREEN SOLDIERING...



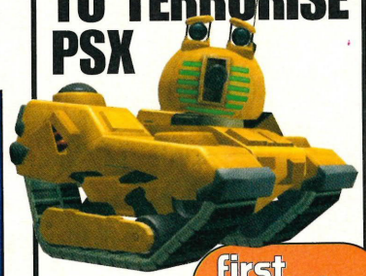
Small Soldiers and Mortal Kombat Conquest available to buy...

Small Soldiers, the film that spawned the rather average EA game, is available to buy from 25th October. Boasting incredible computer-generated graphics, the game follows the adventures of Chip Hazard and his toy commandos, who escape from their toymaker and wage war against the peace-loving Gorgonites, a 'race' of alien toys. Representing humanity is Alan Abernathy who befriends the Gorgonites and becomes a target for Hazard's Commando Elite.

Mortal Kombat Conquest Episodes One & Two, which is out now, is the first in a six-tape saga first shown on SKY TV. Featuring all the expected Mortal Kombat characters, the series features live actors.

Small Soldiers is Certificate PG and costs £15.99, with Mortal Kombat Conquest earning a '15' certificate and costing £12.99. Look out for Episodes Three & Four in November.

TINY TANKS TO TERRORISE PSX



first sighting extreme

Do the best things really come in small packages?

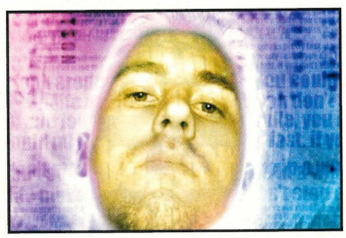
In the beginning of the 21st Century Sentrax, the world's largest arms manufacturer, comes up with a novel idea - build a cute li'l war machine as a fund-raising mascot. Tiny Tank is born. Sentrax' other project (killer robots) goes wrong, the 'droids take over the world - you get the picture.
As Tiny Tank, you must win back the world for mankind. Battle your way through a 3D landscape, upgrading your machine with parts salvaged from defeated 'droids. There are over 25 unique enemies, an original soundtrack and buckets of tanked-up humour.

GAME MUSICIAN MAKES GOOD...

Soundtrack author to release single

The world of PSX is used to music stars lending of their songs for a videogame soundtrack, but now a games musician aims to go the other way. Acclaim Studios' Genik, responsible for the music in Forsaken, Batman & Robin, Re-Volt and the forthcoming Armorines, is to release a remix of the track Flameout from the Forsaken soundtrack album. The single, Sea Dreaming, hits the shelves in November on 12-inch only.

Genik, real name Simon Robertson, is also working on an album while continuing to pump out thumpin' soundtrax for Acclaim.



GADGETS

SAITEK TO THE FOUR...

Bored on a long train journey? Stuck for something to do in the cold, Winter evenings? You need a Saitek 4-in-1 portable board games system. Unsurprisingly given the title, there are four games featured. Chess features challenging opponent AI, but struggles to finish off a near-vanquished player. It even gives you the chance to take back moves, and offers hints for the novice. Line Of Four is a great Connect 4-type game, Draughts is; well, draughts and there's a Mastermind-style game called Top Mind. The unit is comfortable to use, with a touch-sensitive board making it easy to make your moves. The containers for the pieces could be more generously proportioned, but this is a minor niggle. Overall, it's great value for money at £29.99.



COMPETITION

LAZER WARRIORS BEAM DOWN



Fighting wars with plastic soldiers will never be the same again. With Toy Options' Lazer Wars series, you no longer have to flick over stricken soldiers with your finger, adding the blood-curdling 'Aaarrrgh!' at the same time. Instead, each figure comes with its own laser weapon which, when it hits a sensor on its opponent's chest, causes it to scream, vibrate and fall down.

So far, there are three 'good guy' figures and two baddies available. Colonel Chance, Vaughn Jace and Howard D Brett form the Lazer Corp, and protect the Earth from the Obsidian Rebellion, ie. Em Grosser and Brador Ttosc. More figures, as well as exploding vehicles, are planned for the future.

Lazer Wars figures are available from all good toy shops in Combat Ready 2-Packs, featuring Chance and Grosser, and single-figure packs complete with vibrating targets. We've got five Combat Ready 2-Packs to give away...

To stand a chance of winning a Lazer Wars Combat Ready 2 Pack, just answer the following question:

Who's the leader of Lazer Corp?

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

Entries which arrive after 24th November will be shot at until they vibrate and fall over.

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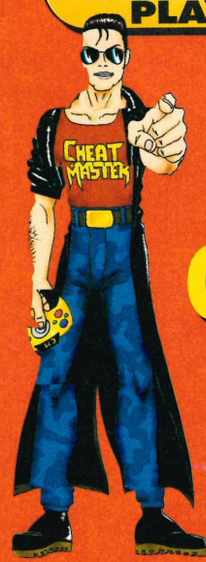
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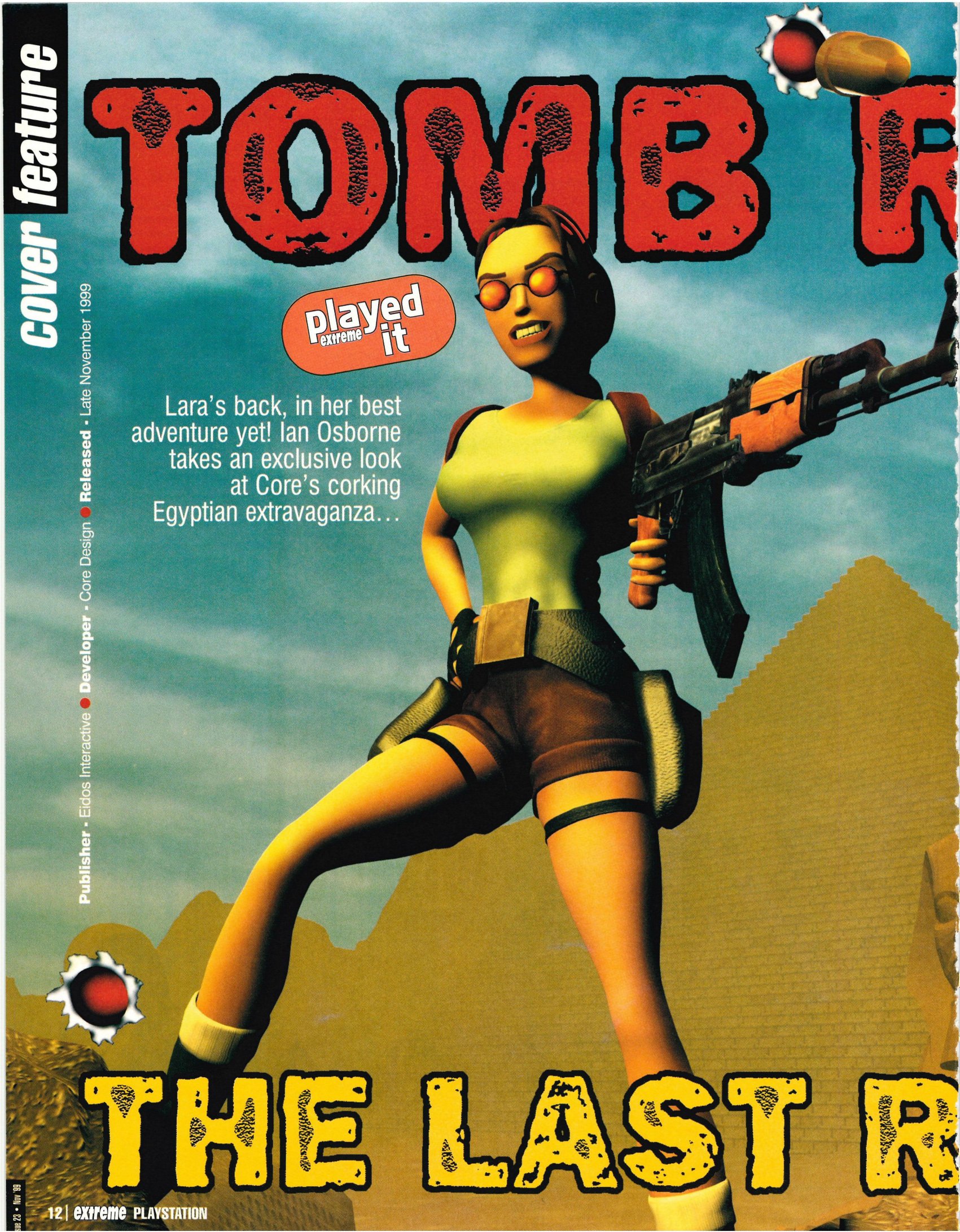
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TOMB R

played it extreme

Lara's back, in her best adventure yet! Ian Osborne takes an exclusive look at Core's corking Egyptian extravaganza...

Publisher • Eidos Interactive ● **Developer** • Core Design ● **Released** • Late November 1999



THE LAST R

RAIDER:

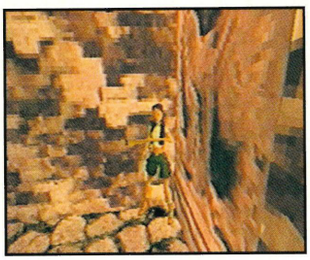


The Young Ms Croft...

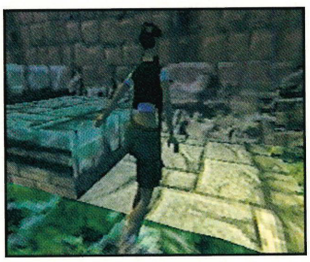
The rumours are true - Tomb Raider: TLR does indeed feature a 16-year-old Lara Croft. She appears in the first level of the game, set in 1984. Lara has accompanied her mentor, an archaeologist called Von Croy, on a trip across Asia. Level One sees him give her instructions and training as they search for a hidden artefact - it's basically there to get you used to the moves, but unlike the training levels set in Lara's House in previous games, it's also integral to the storyline.

The level splits in half towards the end; if you're good enough you get to go down the hard route. The stage ends with a timed race between yourself and Von Croy, after which something goes wrong and Lara leaves her mentor for dead - but is he? During this level we learn a little more about Lara, who wears two pig-tails and longer shorts, and also discover how she came by her backpack.









Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation is coming, and we're the first to play it! The game engine's almost totally new, there are (inevitably) more moves and the graphics have once again been polished. But is it a truly new game or just more of the same? Let's take a look...

The new game sees ropes introduced, so there's more scope for negotiation. Lara can use them to grab, go up and down, swing and gain momentum. They're linked to some of the puzzles and may be used to activate switches and bells. Some ropes are breakable. This feature's looking good, as being able to swing Tarzan-like through the tombs adds a whole new dimension to the game, though they're currently very difficult to get hold of. A little fine-tuning is in order here.

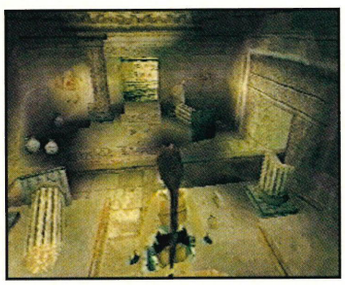
Another new move is the corner climb. Lara can now reach 90 degrees around corners while shimmying instead of just dropping when she reaches a bend. This really opens up exploration potential. Lara can also lean down and pull up trapdoors or jump up and pull down doors or grates in the ceiling. Look out too for crowbar levels, running pick-ups and a swim dash. Existing moves are also modified for easier control and fluid animation.

The new vehicles are looking fine, though the handling is a little suspect. Both the motorcycle and the jeep are easy to get stuck at the moment, though there's plenty of time for minor changes such as this. Lara herself is looking good too, and

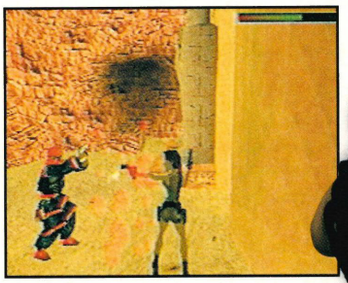
LARA HERSELF IS LOOKING GOOD, AND FAR MORE LITHE THAN IN PREVIOUS GAMES...



■ Not the trendiest bike, but it gets the job done.



■ At last a Tomb Raider game with tombs.



■ Lara guns down another victim...



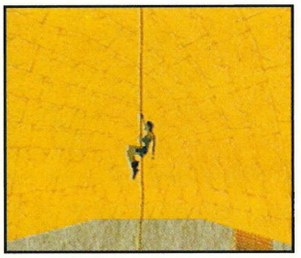
REVELATION

TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION









■ In Tomb Raider: TLR you can now climb ropes. Swing to access new areas, but beware - some are breakable. They're hard to grab, but this should change.

far more lithe than in previous games. She's now skinned and has remodelled hands and head. She can also blink, and her mouth moves so she can talk in cut scenes. Also she can look towards certain important objects and features, helping detection of small items and interactive objects such as door handles and switches.

Her arse has been polished and rounded - she's now got buttocks like two boiled eggs in a handkerchief, and is it just me, or have her boobs grown and her waist shrunk? Just remember, guys - she's not real...

Some very minor changes

The Developers Speak...

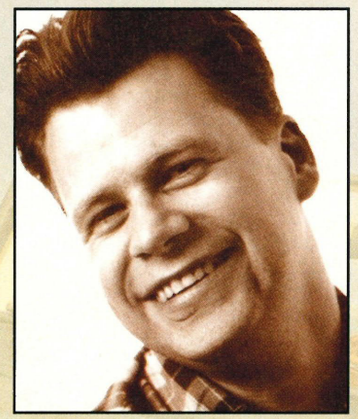
Don't take our word for it - let's hear from Adrian Smith, Core Design's Operations Director...

• What is the team's main goal for the game?

To make this the most compelling and technically/graphically advanced adventure yet. We're focusing on a storyline that's driven seamlessly through the game, making it a continuous experience. Instead of loading screens, the game dissolves into cuts and FMVs. Also, some locations are linked via gaming levels such as a jeep chase and even a level on a train. Although the game is the same size as previous Tomb Raider games, locations are smaller and more atmospheric, plus there's far less wandering around. The player has a very clear idea of what needs to be achieved and puzzles are solved with information or items from nearby. This definitely helps to keep the objectives much clearer.

• For the person who has played the last three versions, what's the most compelling reason to pick this one up?

As soon as you load the game you're presented with a completely new interface. Gone are the inventory rings, passport, etc. We're introducing a brand-new inventory system where items can be collected and combined. Also featured is Lara's diary. This keeps a log of the information, maps and other things she collects throughout the adventure. It can be referred to at any time, and also contains hints and tips as well as a scrapbook that tells us more about Lara herself.



Egypt as a location offers tremendous scope for atmospheric locations, mythological artefacts, tombs and baddies. We've really been able to go to town with some weird and wonderful enemies, and the AI is now vastly improved due to an almost-new game engine. Lots of Lara's enemies have the same moves as she does, so they're much harder to dispatch or outwit. You can't simply stand on a ledge to avoid them... Interaction with characters is far greater, the puzzles are new and Lara has an array of new moves from complex rope swings and climbs to simply kicking down doors. Graphically we're looking at the most detailed game yet. As well as new environment mapping, we've been able to introduce far greater levels of detail via new lighting and object systems. 3D Objects are extensively used to populate environments which would otherwise be sparse, and many of the objects are targetable so Lara can shoot, destroy or interact with them. Gameplay is a lot simpler than TRIII in terms of the player being fully aware of what needs to be done. The difficulty lies in solving the puzzles rather than spending a long time finding the puzzle components or information.

• What are the main benefits and drawbacks of using one locale?

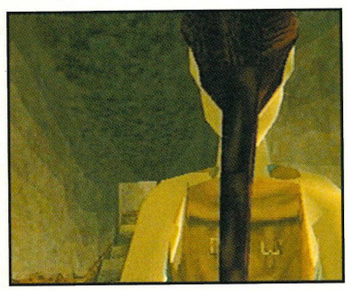
Instead of linking locations on a worldwide basis, we can now make the storyline far more integral to gameplay itself and hence focus the player more toward the plot rather than the next location. Egypt is steeped in mythology and ancient architecture, so we've been able to reproduce stunning locations, many of which are taken from real history, using buildings and temples still standing today. Drawbacks? Well, a lot of sandy, golden colours and stone textures, but the artists have let their imaginations loose and we've been able to produce a lot of variety.

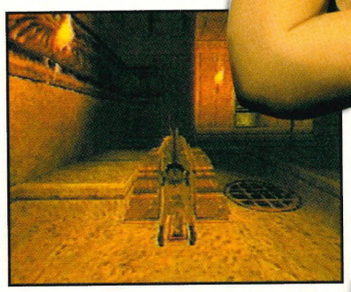


have a huge effect on the game. For example, when you pull a lever or flick a switch, its affect is far more obvious now. Instead of getting a cut scene showing a door opening or a platform emerging, you just need to look around to see what it did - the devices are always close to their function. This improves the pace of the game no end. Likewise, enemies often have the same skills as Lara - you can't avoid them just by jumping onto a ledge. They follow you. It's small subtleties like this that really take the series a stage further...

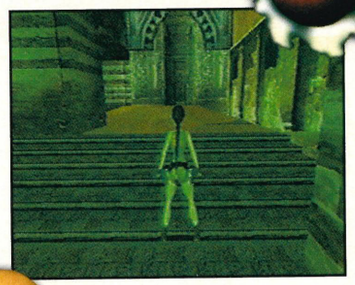
...But not much further. Sure, the game engine's been improved and refined, sure there's more moves, more devices and more puzzle-solving, but this is hardly a huge step from the last Tomb Raider game. Still, if it ain't broke...

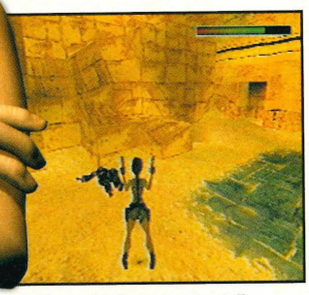
SOME VERY MINOR CHANGES HAVE A HUGE EFFECT ON THE GAME≥











■ ...And she used to be such a nice girl!



• Are there any over-riding philosophies driving the game's level design?

A return the original atmosphere, suspense and puzzle-orientation, with plenty of new and improved twists to keep Lara on her toes.

• What is the main goal of the new inventory interface? How complex will the new puzzles be?

The main goal is to make life easier for Lara and more interesting for the player. Objects can be collected and combined, eg. torch plus batteries for looking into dark corners, torch plus batteries plus gun for shooting into dark areas. Pieces of maps can be collected and once Lara has them all she not only has a full overview of the location, but can access additional secret rooms. The binoculars are used for viewing remote areas and collecting information for inscriptions that would be too distant to read with the naked eye. Once viewed, this info appears in the diary as if Lara has written it herself. The diary's integral to the inventory and has several uses.

Puzzles won't be so tricky they become frustrating - as I said earlier, the player has all the info required to solve the puzzles within easy reach, it's just a case of working them out!

We've looked back at the original game but the majority of puzzles are all-new.

• How would you answer criticisms that the game has no radically new technology?

The progression from TRIII to TLR is the most marked yet. While the engine isn't brand-new, it's been ripped down to its foundations and completely rebuilt, so it's around 90% new. Fundamental elements such as the targeting system have been completely re-addressed, as has the AI.

• Is the gameplay more shooting-based like TRII, or puzzle-based like Tombs I and III?

It's more puzzle-based. We've got pressure-pads, timed levers, rotating hubs, wheels, hanging switches, switches in holes, levers and fulcrums, platforms and blocks that can be raised, trip-wires, breakable walls and direction puzzles (using a compass) to name but a few. The old levers from previous games are now obsolete! We have a whole range of new systems for Lara to operate, using a variety of new animations.

Of course there's shooting, but the targeting system has now been completely re-designed so Lara won't lock on automatically but can toggle between targets. In the previous games, as soon as Lara was near an enemy, she would lock on - this really gave the game away and prevented her from locking on to any other enemy. We were unable to change this before as it was such a fundamental part of the engine.

• And the plot?

Basically Lara is hired to find a new tomb, and she manages to unleash the very evil spirit of Set, Horus's brother. Horus himself bound Set for eternity in this tomb. Lara discovers the only person who can re-imprison Set is the person who has set him free, ie. herself. In order to do this, she must re-animate Horus at the correct alignment of the Orion constellation at the Millennium (so there's a timed element here), so he can do battle with Set and hopefully vanquish him. Obviously, all is not straightforward and the plot takes many twists and turns. Lara, however, is not completely alone and has recourse to an old friend (Jean-Yves) throughout. Jean-Yves helps Lara from time to time and Lara even saves his life when her former mentor Von Croy kidnaps him in an attempt to lure Lara away...

PUZZLES WON'T BE SO TRICKY THEY BECAME FRUSTRATING

• Are the enemies human, animal or fantasy, or a mixture of the three?

As the storyline goes, Set's approach towards Earth gradually begins to wreak more and more havoc, creating some rather unusual occurrences. Statues come to life and things emerge from ancient graves. There's lots of references to ancient mythology and strange creatures. We have a real mixture of enemies ranging from the mythological to the human, but the majority are non-human. Human enemies are mostly followers of Lara's main enemy, Von Croy. We also have fantasy enemies such as skeletons, sphinxes, wraiths and mummies.



• The big baddie is the Egyptian god Set. Where does Lara's nemesis fit into the picture?



Von Croy used to be Lara's mentor (we discover this in Level One). Lara once had to abandon Von Croy due to unforeseen circumstances, but he's now back on the scene and has, unbeknown to Lara, hired her. Lara soon discovers this, so it's a game of cat and mouse to see who comes out on top.

• How many levels are there? Will there be a system where you can choose which way you go through the game, like in Tomb Raider 3?

No - the game is linear so there's no choice regarding order of locations. Lara has to revisit certain points (we're calling them hubs). There will be around 15 'levels', but final number is to be confirmed. This is a continuous adventure, so the word 'levels' isn't really applicable. Size-wise, it's around the same as the previous games, but the locations themselves are smaller and mostly indoors.

• Does Lara have new guns to play with?

Yes - we've got some new weapons, including a crossbow. Weapons are low-tech due to the ancient locations. We have a choice of ammo for weapons such as the shotgun.

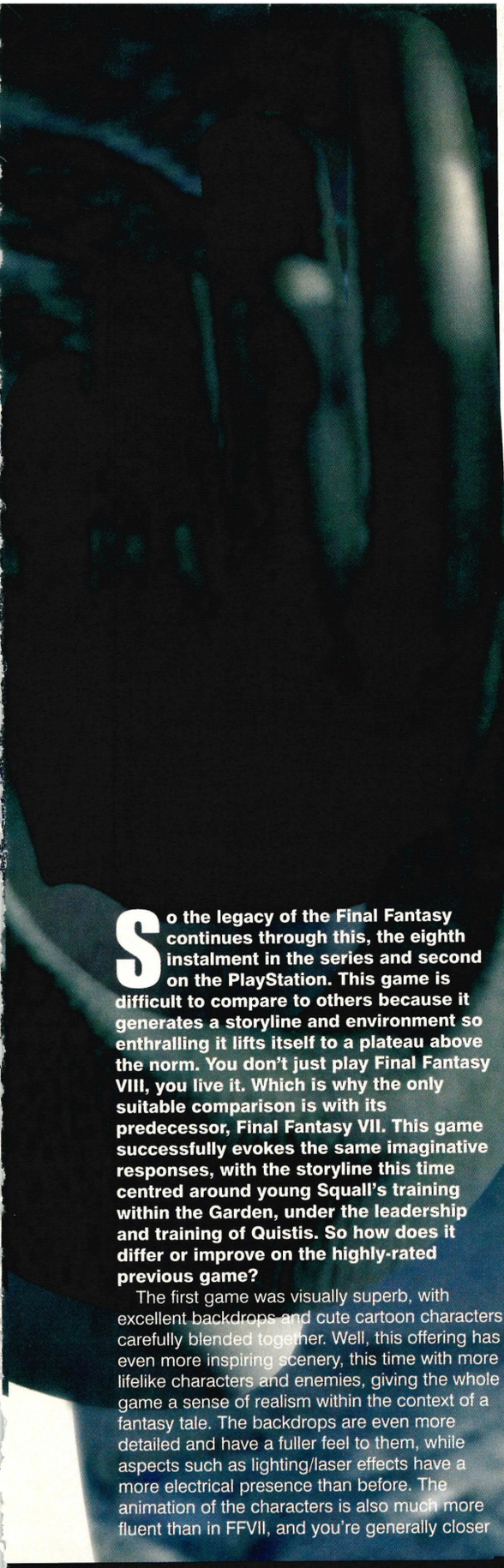
• So, how final is the end of Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation? Is it the last Tomb Raider game?

Well, the title certainly seems to imply that, but who knows?

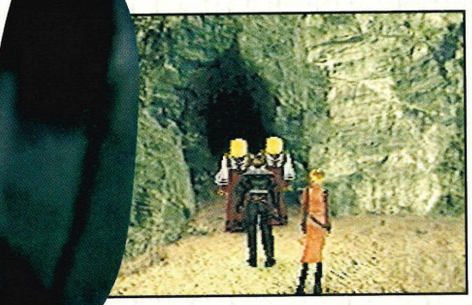
Publisher Sony CEE | **Developer** Squaresoft | **Genre** RPG
Released 29th October 1999 | **Version** PAL | **Price** £44.99 | **Players** One

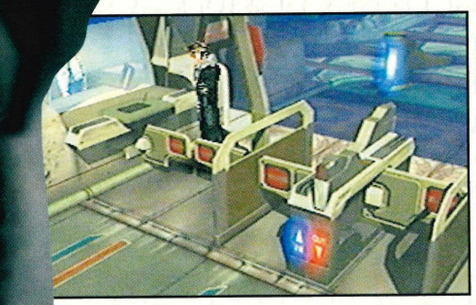
FINAL FANTASY VIII

As the most eagerly-awaited game of 1999 arrives on the UK PlayStation, Dave finds out just how good it really is...





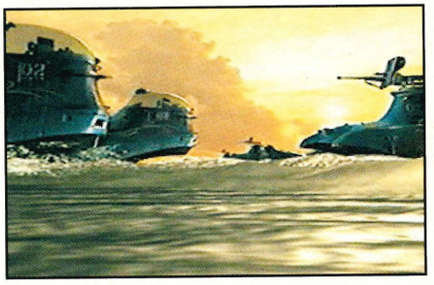




Stunning Visuals

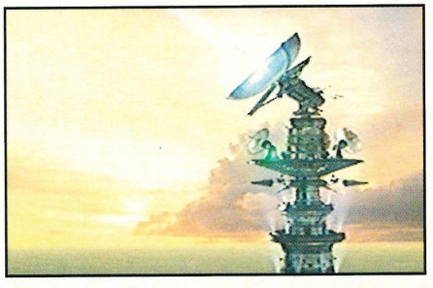
The graphics in Final Fantasy VIII are the best yet on the PlayStation, with incredible attention to detail and smooth animation. FMV sequences are of a higher quality than in VII, and are blended seamlessly with the main action. The characters are now less cartoony but more realistic, and the game probably benefits from this. The camera angles are more informative and closer to the action than before, and the camera cleverly focuses on either the foreground or distance of a particular view, dependent on the position of Squall.











You don't just play Final Fantasy VIII, you live it

So the legacy of the Final Fantasy continues through this, the eighth instalment in the series and second on the PlayStation. This game is difficult to compare to others because it generates a storyline and environment so enthralling it lifts itself to a plateau above the norm. You don't just play Final Fantasy VIII, you live it. Which is why the only suitable comparison is with its predecessor, Final Fantasy VII. This game successfully evokes the same imaginative responses, with the storyline this time centred around young Squall's training within the Garden, under the leadership and training of Quistis. So how does it differ or improve on the highly-rated previous game?

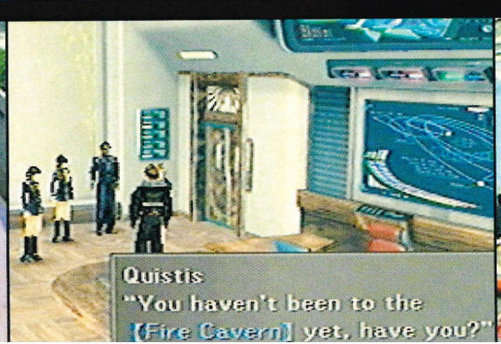
The first game was visually superb, with excellent backdrops and cute cartoon characters carefully blended together. Well, this offering has even more inspiring scenery, this time with more lifelike characters and enemies, giving the whole game a sense of realism within the context of a fantasy tale. The backdrops are even more detailed and have a fuller feel to them, while aspects such as lighting/laser effects have a more electrical presence than before. The animation of the characters is also much more fluent than in FFVII, and you're generally closer to the characters and better able to see what's happening. The characters themselves offer more attention to detail, with everything from the swaying of their hair to the markings on their clothes included. The sequences between speeches or fights are breathtaking, with mind-blowing effects and imaginative design at work. The Guardian Force moves, or GFs (similar to FFVII's Summon spells) are spectacular and have the capacity to develop and become more powerful as you learn from each fight. The control method has also bee improved, with the in-battle controls simpler to use and running now achieved without the need to press a button.

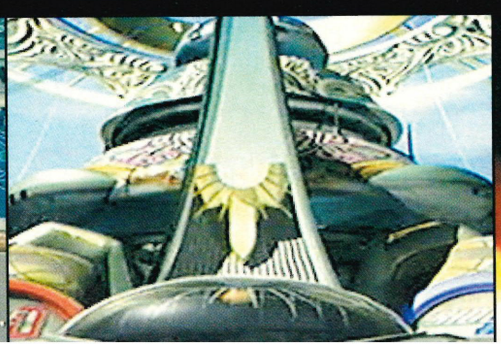
Sound and Vision

The one aspect of both games that slightly lets them down is the soundtrack, which I find slightly boring and lacking relevance to the plot. However, it must be said the tone and style are ideal for this game genre, while the sound effects are complementary to the graphics (particularly in the sequel).

Unlike many follow-ups, which are often



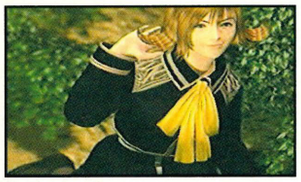


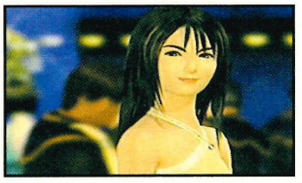
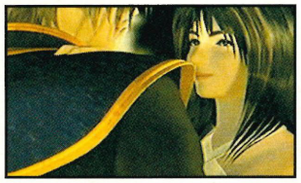
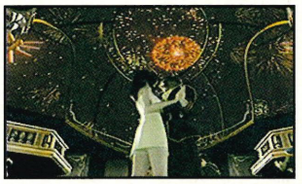




Squall and the Laydeeez...

As part of the game's evolving storyline, you find Squall attracts the attentions of several female colleagues while developing his skills as a fighter and gathering more GFs to help him. Not only does he get talking to a stranger right from the start, whom you are given the option of helping or not, but his teacher gets the hots for him too. The celebration party for successful SeeD exam candidates sees him chatted up by another girl, strutting his stuff with her on the dance floor. As well as these three love interests, the uniform for female SeeD members is a tad skimpy anyhow.



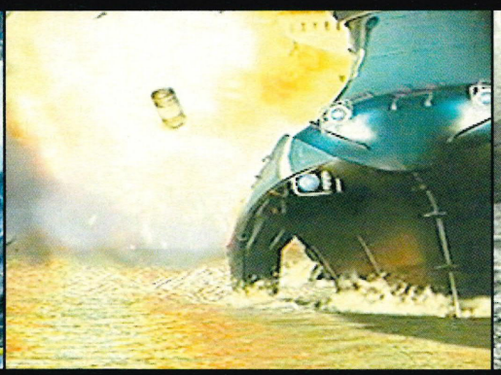





toned-up or ripped-off versions of the first games, this is genuinely a real improvement while still keeping true to what Final Fantasy is all about. This game also differs from Final Fantasy VII because Squaresoft themselves said the romance angle is more important than actually

Junctioning is a feature that adds an extra dimension to the gameplay

killing the bad guys. You see, our Squall's a bit of a ladies' man. This reinforces the point about FFVIII being very much an interactive movie, with you taking the lead role and also writing the script. The virtual world created in and around the Garden, and the ability to move freely within this environment and talk to people, all make it seem more like a carefully-crafted fairy tale than




FINAL FANTASY ANTHOLOGY

With the forthcoming release of the incredible Final Fantasy VIII, extreme gets all mushy at the though of this import release...

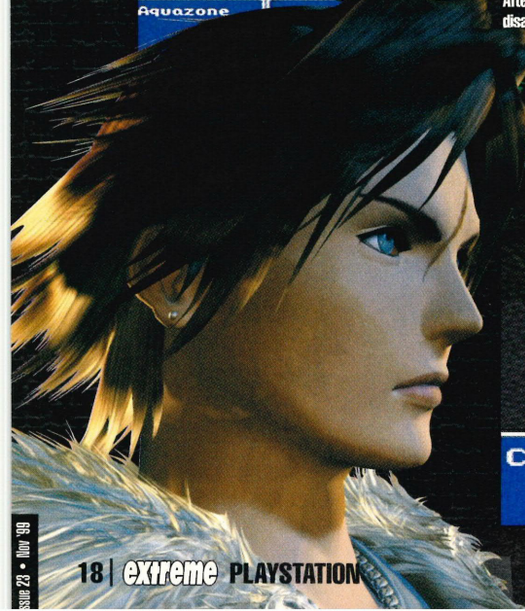


Alas, this forthcoming retro release comprising Final Fantasies V and VI is Japanese and American only, but import gamers should take note.

The story behind Final Fantasy V involves a world that once thrived on the power of the four elemental crystals; Wind, Earth, Fire, and Water. With the power of Wind, people sailed ships. With the power of Fire, they industrialised. With Water, people quenched their thirst, and from Earth, they received blessings. After the Wind Crystal shattered, the King of Tycoon disappears mysteriously during a meteor storm.

...a is the youngest daughter of the King of Tycoon, a kind-hearted and spirited woman who attempts to rescue her father. Saved by the wanderer Bartz, she continues her journey to the Wind Shrine in search of her father. Bartz is affected greatly by the meteor incident and it reveals to him the extent of his capabilities. Sensing a disturbance in the elemental crystals, Galuf, an original Warrior of Light, attempts a return to his home world. Unfortunately, the violent impact of his ship's landing leads to a case of amnesia, robbing him of all memories. Finally there is Faris, the long-lost Princess of Tycoon and Reina's older sister. She was brought up by pirates and through a disguise became their leader.

FFV features job and magic systems as battle options, with designated jobs allowing that character to use the special abilities from past heroes. These magical powers can be absorbed and then summoned upon to use against enemies, with 21 different jobs each having









a game in the traditional sense.

The story revolves around the ambition of 17-year-old Squall to pass his SeeD exam and become a SeeD member (the good guys' organisation). He's helped by various friends along the way, but also hindered by Seifer Almasy, his rival in the group and also his squad leader. Initially Squall is only able to attack with his Gunblade, but after entering the Fire Cavern and challenging Ifrit, he's granted magical powers and the help of the Guardian Forces. Squall is generally perceived by his piers as introverted, apparently lacking team spirit, while Seifer is hot-headed and impulsive.

After a while, Squall has a recurring dream in which he is Lagum Loire, a Garbadian soldier. This dream and Squall's own real life become linked as the tale develops. As Garbadia declares war on Dole (Squall's country), Squall and Seifer are forced to work side by side in a bid to assassinate the evil sorceress behind the trouble.

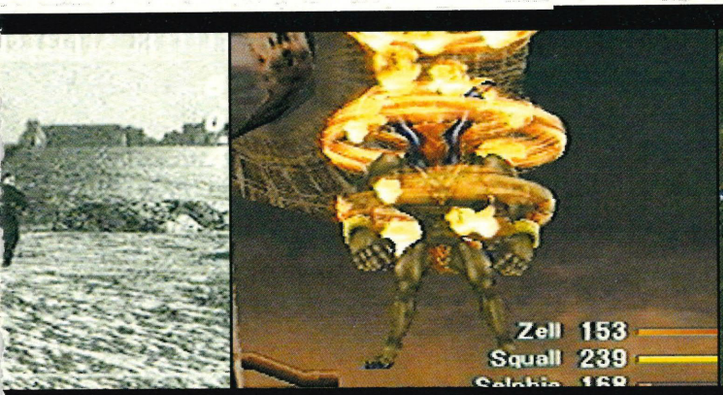


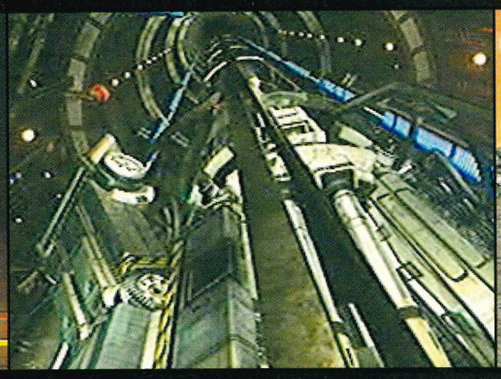


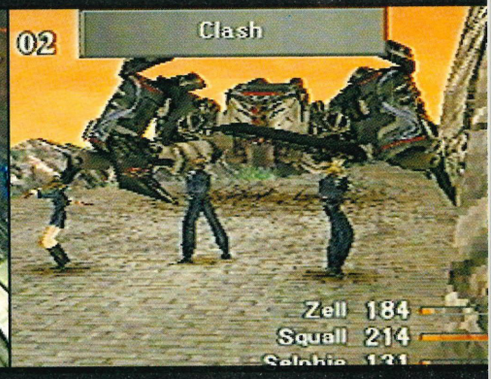


When locked in battles, magic is used to injure enemies by sending a variety of elements at them, such as Fire or Thunder. Magic can also be absorbed from enemies through the Stock option. GFs can be called on to cast powerful spells towards enemies, and also sustain onslaughts from foes. When attacking in battles, it's possible to maximise the impact of your attacks by pressing R1, while after big fights your GFs progress up a level to become quicker, more powerful or stronger. It's also possible for Squall to discover new spells and stones to help him along his way.

If RPGs are your bag, prepare for a defining moment in your gaming life







FINAL FANTASY VIII





their own personal attributes. The magic system allows the characters access to a large inventory of magical spells, with six groups of spells and six spells within each group.

The story behind FFVI concentrates on when the world was run by beings embodied with pure magic. However, the absolute power they had over everything resulted in disagreements and ultimately war. Creatures called Espers were released to carry out the actions determined by their masters, only to cause mass destruction and then disappear. Since that age of trouble, the planet has been given a chance of recovery over the centuries, but now the discovery of an Esper threatens another break out of war.

The game features almost 30 different Espers, which can be used to summon their magic during battles. This gains the player points, which when they have enough of, grants them spells that can be used at any time. Bonuses within the game include the move theatre and gallery options. The movie theatre allows viewing of many of the CG clips added for the PSX release by the creators, while the gallery contains stills of many of the CG sequences and illustrations. There's also a rating system given at the end of the game, covering aspects such as playing time, steps taken in the game and money. This release is a God-send for fans of the series, which is why it's a shame it won't be released over here. Although no playable version is currently available, rest assured it plays pretty similar to the SNES/PC versions, but with the added extra of brand-spanking new sequences.

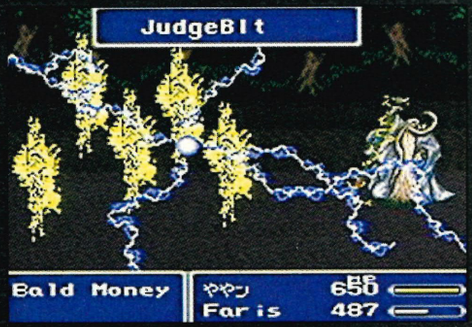




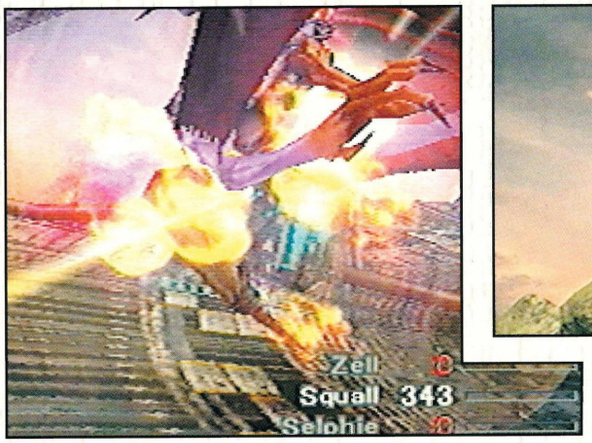




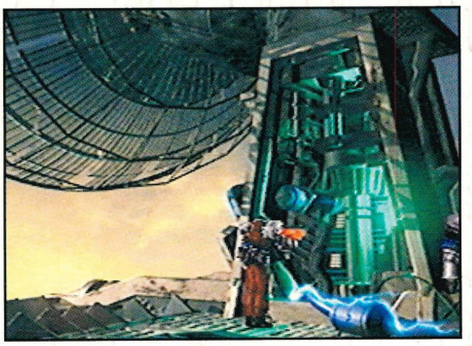












Character Development

Junctioning is a feature that adds an extra dimension to the gameplay. Players are now able to customise the abilities of all characters under their control, giving them advantages in each individual battle. Prior to meeting enemies, the command settings on the menu (which have a limited number of slots) can have items removed or added, depending on how relevant they are to that part of the game. Options such as spells, items or magic are all useful in different situations.

Junctioning enables the player to choose which spells and GFs are made available in the Battle Menu. This method of prioritising gives the game a more strategic viewpoint, as selecting the most suitable spells or GFs becomes increasingly important as the game progresses. This is because monsters are more powerful later in the game, and capitalising on their weaknesses becomes vital.

Often the method of extracting your opponent's magic during combat becomes crucial to your success, making them weaker and you stronger. Equally intriguing are the sub-games included, such as card games that can be played with different characters to win more cards.

Aside from the obvious differences, Final Fantasy VIII is generally more refined than Final Fantasy VII. The control method is better, and now also compatible with analogue and dual shock joypads. The CGI sequences dovetail superbly with the action part of the game, while the FMV sequences are of a higher quality. Cuts between different types of play are seamless, while the character movement is also smoother than before. The game is bigger, with four discs packed full of action - this is an epic!

On a Role...

If RPGs are your bag, prepare for a defining moment in your gaming life. Even if you don't like RPGs, give this a chance, because it's the best they have to offer. The game is massive, spanning four huge discs crammed full of hours upon hours of gameplay. With a cast of thousands and enough dialogue to fill a couple of Shakespeare plays, this is an involving experience to say the least. The characters are believable and likeable, the locations and design wouldn't look out of place on the set of Blade Runner and the battle element has been thoughtfully considered. What more can I say? Buy it.

David Foggon

The one aspect of both games that slightly lets them down is the soundtrack

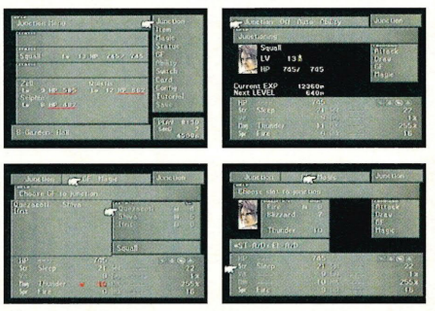
extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS	
Fantastic scenery. Amazing invention. Massive game.	Not enough participation? Soundtrack? That's about it...	96%



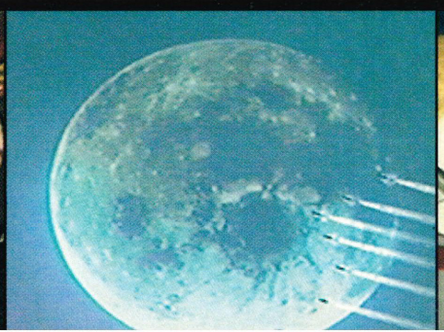
Junctioning

This excellent element allows for the player's tactical awareness to develop, with a limited amount of spells and GFs that can be used in each individual battle. The player must listen to the warnings and suggestions of those accompanying Squall to select relevant choices for each opponent. Different types of enemies have different weaknesses or are more vulnerable to particular types of junction or spell than others. It is important to heed advice or learn from experience to defeat them and advance to the next stage.



FINAL FANTASY VIII









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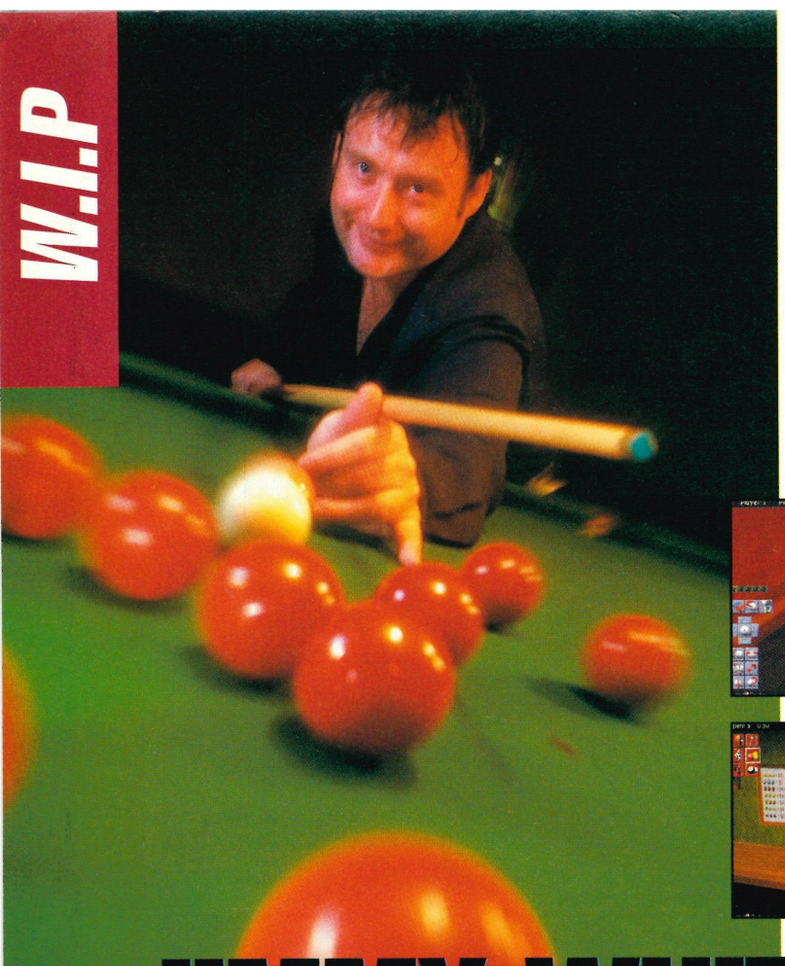


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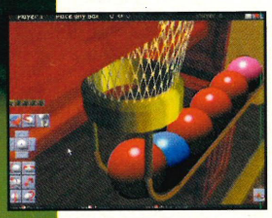
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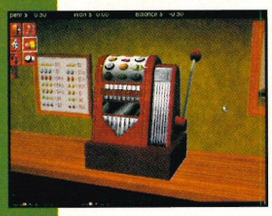
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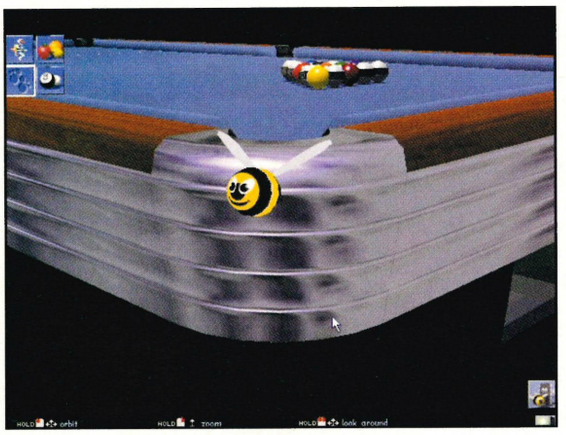


Publisher Eidos Interactive **Developer** Capcom **Released** February 2000

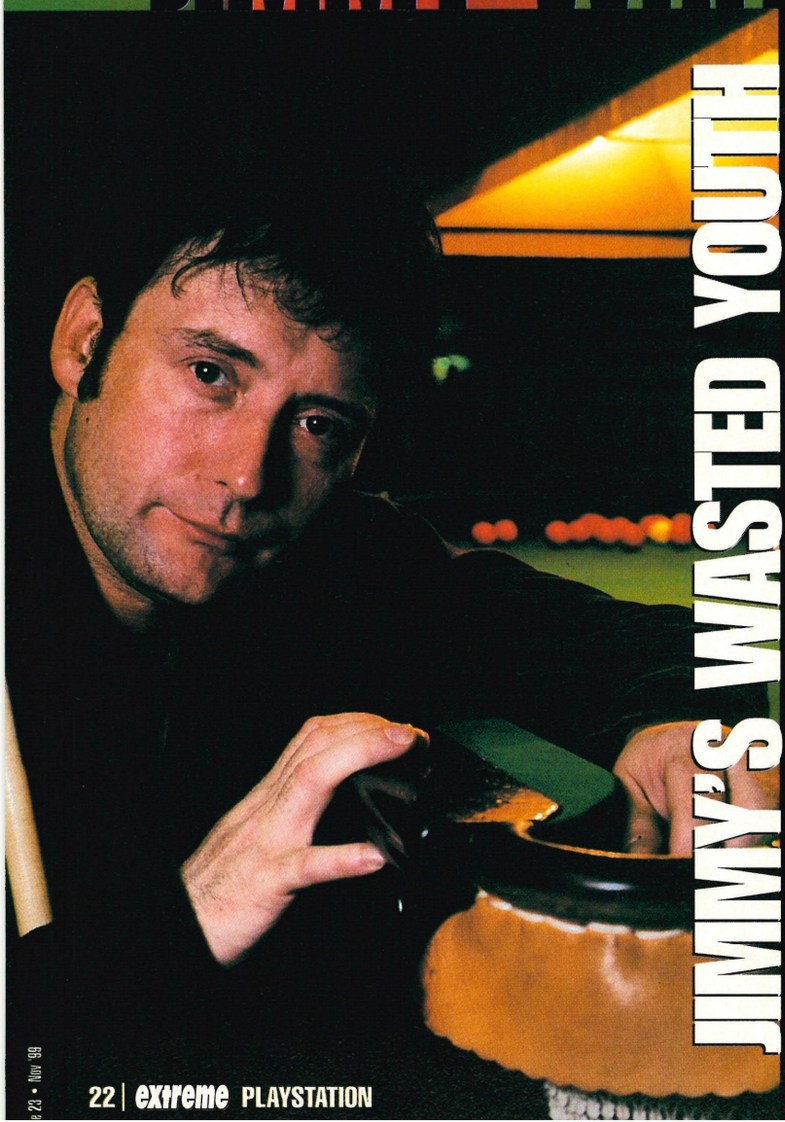
Britain's favourite snooker player, Jimmy White, is racking up on the balls on the PlayStation as he lends his name to Virgin's snooker sim, Jimmy White's 2: Cueball. Dave Gibbon met up with the Whirlwind himself to chat about life and the game itself...







JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL



JIMMY'S WASTED YOUTH

Q: Right Jimmy, what were your ambitions while at school?

Jimmy: Getting out of there! When I went to school there were around 55 in a class. You did half-an-hour lessons and by the time they'd done the register, it was f*****g all over. I had a headmaster called Arthur Beatty who was really good to me. He knew I was good at snooker. He put his job on the line, actually. He used to let me go in on the mornings and have the afternoons off to practice, otherwise I just wouldn't go in. But my dream when I was at school was to get out of there; I was a little b*****d.

Q: Do you find you can read and write OK now?

Jimmy: In my last year at school, I learned to read and then I taught myself on trains and all that. But I'm not a brilliant reader or writer. If I write a letter I make many mistakes. I can read a book, but I get a couple of words wrong so I get the whole story of the book wrong. If you are going to play any sport, you need to go to school and get educated as well. There's plenty of time to practice. You have nights and weekends.

THE NEW TV STAR

Q: What kind of breaks were you achieving after a year?

Jimmy: After a year, I was getting 30 breaks, which was brilliant for me. I made a century break when I was 13 and it was in all the national newspapers. They make 147s now at 13, which just shows you how the game's improved.

Q: Did you get to appear on TV in your early days?

Jimmy: Yeah, I was on Blue Peter when Valerie Singleton was a presenter. I was only 13; I was amazed at people's interest.

HIS FIRST REAL SUCCESS

Q: What was your first major win?

Jimmy: In my first big tournament, I won the English Amateurs at 16. I was the youngest player ever to do that. But since then, my little mate David Gray has beaten my record by a few weeks. But I held that record for 20 years...

Q: When you beat Alex Higgins for the first time, how did that feel?

Jimmy: It was a big match for me because Higgins is my idol. You know, even now I think he's the best snooker player I've ever seen. And for me to have beaten him under so much pressure was brilliant. It was a fantastic atmosphere - people were falling off the ceiling.

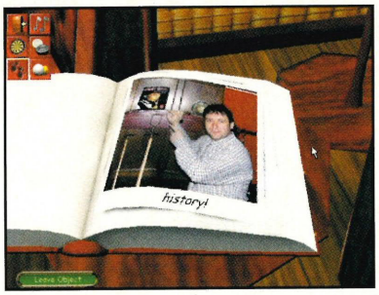
GAMBLING CRAZY

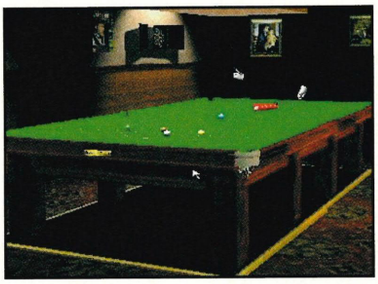
Q: When you reportedly won £114,000 for a 147 break, did it take long to spend?

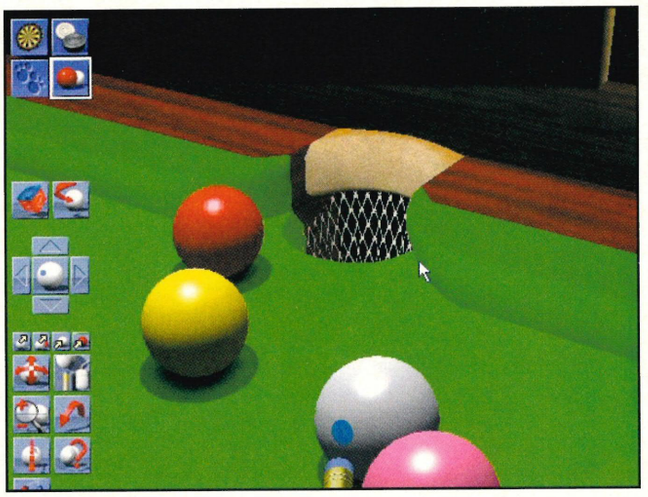
Jimmy: I was gambling big-time then. I was spending it on horse racing, dice, cards and dogs so I soon set fire to it. And I was drinking heavily all the way through it, so it didn't take long. When you win that much money for one frame of snooker, it goes straight to your head.

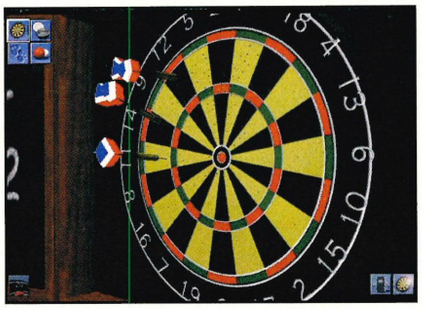
Being the most popular games machine on the planet, you'd expect the PlayStation to have some impressive sports games on the horizon. But while there's plenty of football and snowboarding titles, there's only one snooker game due for launch; Jimmy White's 2: Cueball. Luckily for you, the game has proven to be of fine quality on the PC. And the PSX version is just as good, if not better.

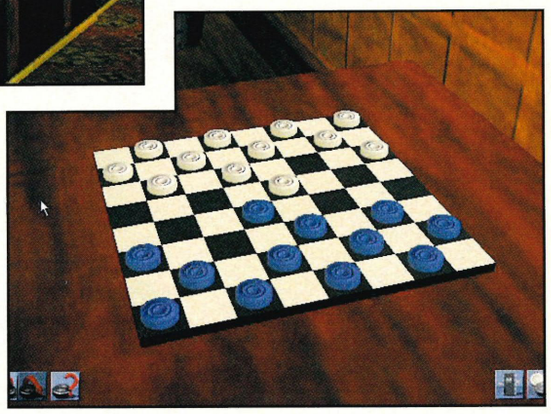
Snooker god Jimmy White, hailed as one of Britain's national treasures, has added his name to developer Archer Maclean's latest baby. The People's Champion comes with natural talent and a loveable rogue image - thanks mainly to his marathon gambling sprees and drinking sessions (not that we know anything about this kind of behaviour, you understand!). We sent Dave Gibbon, all-round sports fanatic and snooker fan, to London's Capital Radio to interview Jimmy while he was playing a charity match. And he returned with a crate of beer in his hands - now there's a surprise!











JIMMY'S BIOGRAPHY

Name: James Warren White.

Date of Birth: 2nd May 1962.

Married: Maureen - they met in a fish and chip shop in Tooting, London.

Kids: Jimmy has four daughters and one son.

Home: Oxshott, Surrey.

Q: What's the largest bet you've had on the horses in one day?

Jimmy: I won £20,000 one afternoon on the horses - and lost it the next day. A small high!

Q: Did all that gambling and drinking teach you anything valuable?

Jimmy: You find gamblers don't do it for the money - they do it for the buzz. If you go into a betting shop and watch someone having a bet, if they lose they have a bit of a moan, and if they win they get a little excited. But it's that two minutes of the horse running that's the buzz. That's the whole buzz, nothing else. But that's all behind me now. I look to the future.

THE PEOPLE'S CHAMPION

Q: How much fan mail do you now receive each week?

Jimmy: I get quite a bit. I get around 100 letters a week. I also have a fab club on the Internet.

Q: With so much money resting on each shot, can you see players taking risky shots while on the table?

Jimmy: Ronnie O'Sullivan does. He goes for all his shots, and if he's on top form no one can beat him. I had that and so did Higgins. He won't win as many games at Stephen Hendry, but when you do win it just looks great and the crowd love it.

Q: Who is your favourite snooker-player drinking partner?

Jimmy: It's the one and only O'Sullivan.

CUEBALL...

Q: What did you think when you first saw Cueball on the PlayStation?

Jimmy: It's a different class. I'm not being biased, but I've done the first one with Archer (Maclean - the game's developer). And this one's got so many things. And this glove thing, where the gloves go round with the cue is the best thing ever. I know the game will just do brilliantly.

Q: Do you own any consoles?

Jimmy: Yeah, we've got the lot!

Q: Did you deal much with Cueball's developer, Archer Maclean?

Jimmy: Yeah, Archer's great. He's a bit eccentric, but then most geniuses are. I went round his house once, he had a Ferrari, a Porsche and some other car and then he had this Renault there. And I said "What's that doing there?" He said it was faster than the other cars - he had it specially made so when he's at the lights and there's a Porsche or something next to him, he just speeds away. And you see the Porsche driver thinking, 'I'm going to take this back to the garage'. Yeah, he's a little bit mad.



RETURN OF THE ATARI CLASSICS!



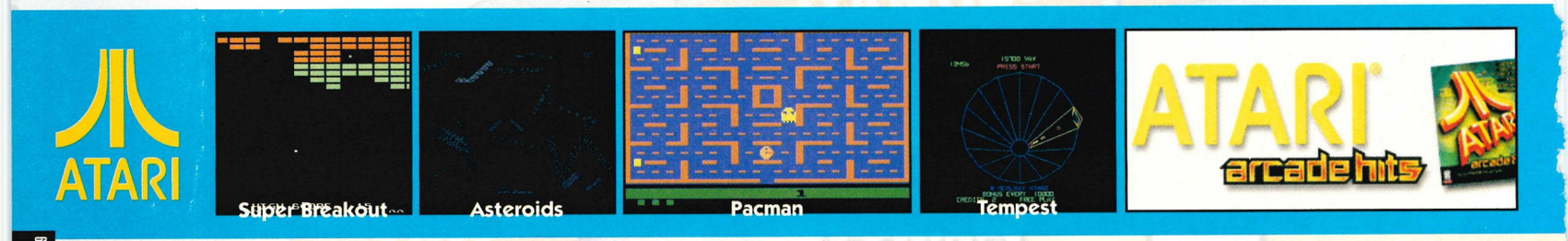
In among the likes of Gran Turismo 2, FIFA 2000 and Spyro 2, there's six new titles wanting to convert you to the good, old-fashioned way. Simon Brew checks out what happens when Atari hits the PlayStation...

Atari are an odd company. They were there, right at the beginning of this videogame thing, choosing to name the first ever game after a bad smell and then continuing to dominate the late Seventies and early Eighties with a series of popular games and successful home games consoles.

Pong was that bad smell, launching the industry in which we live today back in 1972 (it's hard to believe, but we're about to hit 30 years of videogames). Nolan Bushnell was the man behind it all, although he'd sold the company before they launched their very first console in 1977 (he departed altogether the following year). Games such as FIFA were then just a twinkle in the infant programmer's eye.

Unfortunately for Atari, things quickly went pear-shaped. Despite enjoying great success with consoles such as the hugely successful 2600, what can best be described as 'ambitious management' undid their early triumphs. You want an example? How about producing more Pac-Man cartridges than there were machines in use, contributing not insignificantly to the crash of the market in 1983? Or the rumoured $21m spent acquiring the licence to produce a game based on the film ET, only for it to sell around three million copies in total? Oh, and only one person worked on the game, for a total of four months...

So what's brought all this stuff back to the gaming fore? In a word, Hasbro. The worldwide toy giant dipped into its not-inconsiderable resources back in 1998 to buy the Atari brand and all the associated gubbins. The fruits of this so far? A game of Centipede on the PC. For us PlayStation owners? It's only just begun...



THE FIRST ASSAULT

Launching six new titles on the PlayStation before Christmas, Hasbro are clearly keen to make good on their investment. The six all have one thing in common - they're old titles that have been given a modern makeover with the hope of wooing a whole new generation. So, what are they giving us for £30 a time?

PONG

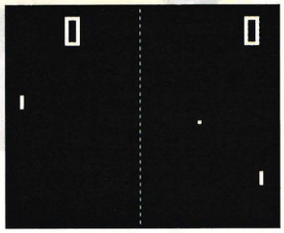
First-up is the grand-daddy of them all, the first truly successful videogame and the one to which we all owe our existence (or something), namely Pong. You must have heard of Pong - it's the one with a bat at either end of the screen and a ball (well, a dot back in those days) bouncing around. The aim was for you to get the ball past the other player's bat, and it's a simple game that's changed little over the years.

Both the original coin-op and the early console versions of the game had little in the way of graphical prowess, leaving us excited at the first ever beep we ever heard from a videogame. Hell, we were young.

The modern version keeps the simple bat and ball idea in place, but happily relocates the action to various different scenarios. Football fields and slippy worlds that penguins inhabit are two of the early examples, and both come littered with obstacles that can deflect the path of the ball at will. There are some really nice graphical touches throughout the game, as well as some hidden surprises to keep you on your toes. It's due out at the end of October.





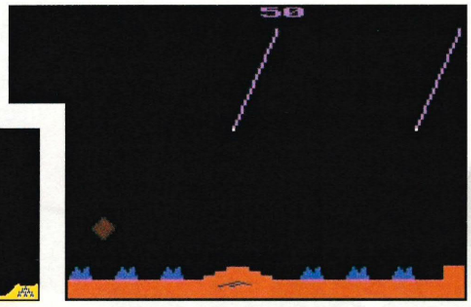


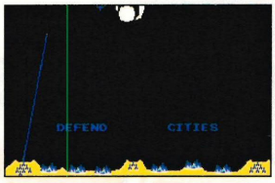
MISSILE COMMAND

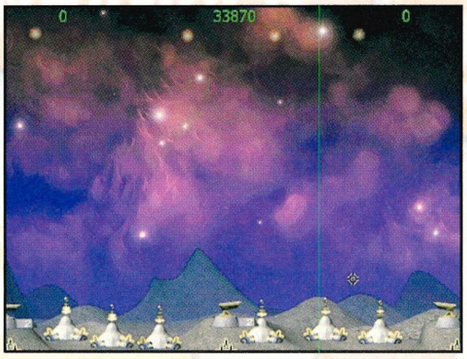
Ah, I remember this one well. Dating back to 1980, it was one of those games that just never ends until you eventually bite the bullet and die, meaning if you were any good at it you'd eventually have to put up with the entire arsenal of the world raining down on the six cities you had to protect. In layman's terms, streaky lines rained down the screen towards the six blobs you were defending, and you had to launch missiles to intercept and destroy the lines before they could impact. Bloody accurate lines too, if memory serves.

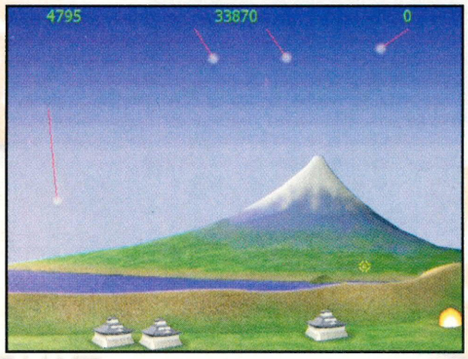
Missile Command also holds well as one of the best ever games on the old Atari 2600 console. Perhaps it always sat better on a home machine than in the arcade, as I have distinct memories of our normally-peaceful house being turned into an instant battleground at the suggestion of a game. The graphics were as dodgy and blocky as always on the 2600, of course, but it's hardly the kind of game where this matters too much.

The new version, while tarted up graphically as you'd expect, seems to be a fairly accurate rendition, with the key additions being better graphics and more cinematic effects. Extra weapons are promised, though, which is a nice evolution of the concept, and certainly this looks one of the more promising of the batch. We're not swayed at all by the impressive-looking cut scenes, of course.









A BRIEF HISTORY OF ATARI

June 1972 Company is founded by Nolan Bushnell, and with less than $1,000 he produced the first Pong arcade machine.

1974 The home version of Pong is launched.

Oct 1976 Bushnell sells Atari to Warner Communications for $28m to raise much-needed capital.

Oct 1977 Atari launch the VCS (Video Computer System) and a range of nine games. People queue up to get hold of one.

1978 Atari release the 400 and 800 personal computers. Nolan Bushnell leaves the company.

1979 The world's first arcade conversion, Space Invaders, is launched onto the VCS console.

1980 Battle Zone and Asteroids are launched.

1981 Centipede is launched.

1982 Atari are a $2 billion company with over 10,000 employees across the world.

1983 Bottom falls out of the console market as home computers such as the ZX Spectrum and Commodore 64 take control. Warner get itchy feet and start looking for a new owner. Rumours circulate that Atari dump 14 truckloads of unsold games they claim are defective in New Mexico, under layers of concrete.

1984 Atari is sold to Jack Tramiel, one of the founders of Commodore.

1985 Atari launch their 16-bit home computer, the ST, famed for being cheap and easy to make music on. It was to be the last successful home machine Atari launched.

1989 Atari release their hand-held games system, The Lynx. Famed for having a colour display the Game Boy could only dream of and for sapping battery power like they were ten-a-penny, the company fail to manufacture enough for the Christmas market, leaving them watching as Nintendo clean up.

1990 Atari finally manage a nation-wide Lynx release in the States, but it's caught in a losing battle with rival formats.

1991 Rumours circulate that the company are working on a new console, going by the name of the Panther.

1992 They announce their new console, now the Jaguar, will be on sale in '93.

1993 The Jaguar goes on limited sale, and sells out quickly.

1994 Atari starts shipping the Jaguar console, and the company announces it will start publishing games for the PC. They stop supporting the Lynx, and sell in excess of 350,000 copies of Tempest 2000 on the Jaguar.

1995 The Jaguar CD-ROM player goes on sale.

1996 Atari merges with and becomes a subdivision of hard disk drive start-up company JTS. All patents and rights cease to exist, and the company officially no longer exists.

1998 Hasbro Interactive spends a cool $5m buying up all licences, patents and rights to Atari brands.

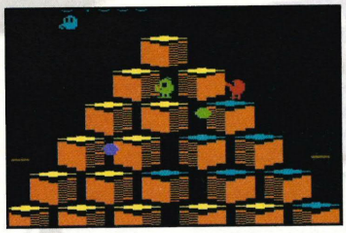
1999 An overworked extreme PlayStation hack knocks out this timeline on the eve of Atari's return...

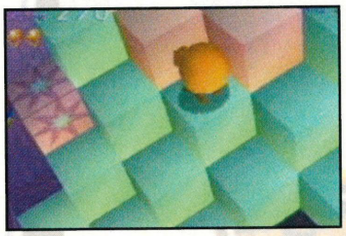
Q*BERT

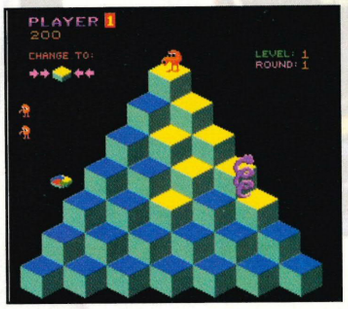
Far nicer in the arcade than it ever was on an Atari console, Q*Bert is a bone fide classic (in my humble opinion). As you'd expect, simplicity is the key - you simply jump on a cube and it changes colour. Sometimes you need to cycle a cube through more than one colour to finish a level, but hey, life's a bitch.

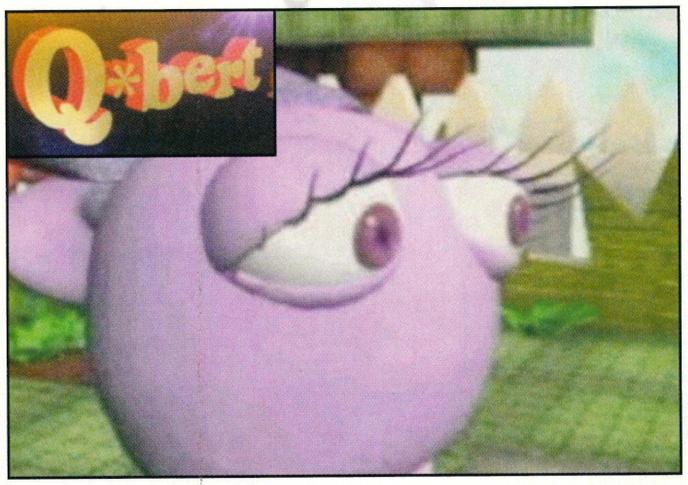
The arcade machine was first released by Gottlieb back in early 1983, giving the company one of their few major hits. The straightforward graphics that were required - a series of 3D cubes and some creepy-crawlies - led to the arcade machine looking clean and as a result was easy to play. The Atari 2600 version was far uglier, as you'd expect, but kept the basics of the gameplay intact.

Due in November, Hasbro are infesting their update with plenty of hidden goodies in order to retain long-term interest in such a simple, but highly playable, concept. Multiplayer options and power-ups predictably take a bow, with bonus rounds and hidden levels to boot.







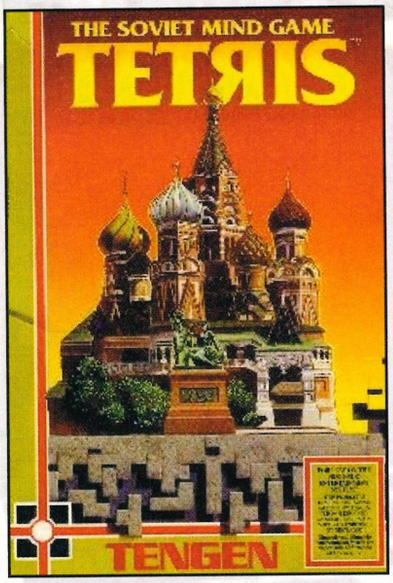


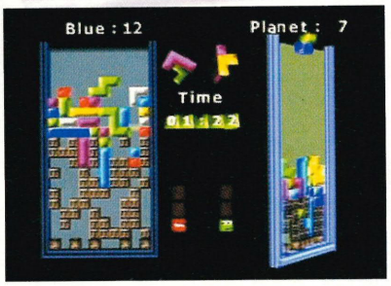
TETRIS

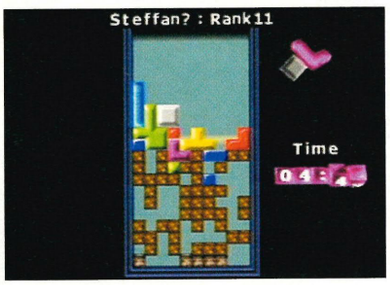
Not quite the ancient classic that some of the other Atari releases are, Tetris actually first appeared in 1985, although its phenomenal success since can largely be attributed to the Nintendo Game Boy version.

It was conceived in 1985 by Alexey Pazhitnov at the Moscow Academy of Science, and had a tricky start. One of the top-selling games in both the UK and the States back in 1988, Tetris' early life was dogged by legal issues over who exactly owned it, at one point leaving Atari thinking they'd got the rights; an infamous version of the game was prepared under Atari's TenGen label. A cease-and-desist order sent in 1989 started the ball rolling on a legal battle that left the rights in the hands of Nintendo, although not before a full-page advert had appeared in USA Today plugging Atari's version. It's rumoured that the company manufactured several hundred thousand cartridges that could never be sold.

Now that Hasbro have picked up the rights to the game, they're left trying to breathe fresh life into a title that's appeared hundreds of times before, both on gaming systems and through the numerous amateur and professional PC versions. The techno soundtrack is the first thing they point out, before drawing our attention to the inevitable graphical update, wobble blocks and various special effects. Far more interesting, though, is the TNT ranking system, which handicaps players by ability to make for some genuinely-weighted two-player battles. It's out any minute now.







BRINGING PONG TO LIFE

extreme PlayStation talked to Peter Williamson at developers Supersonic Software, the team responsible for bringing Pong to the PlayStation...

What's it like updating an age-old classic? Do you feel a heavy burden of responsibility on your shoulders?

Yes and no. Pong is a genuine piece of history - the world's first arcade game, and so we were conscious that we had to respect that heritage and write a game which was true to the spirit of the original. At the same time we had a tremendous sense of freedom! The original Pong was so simple that almost any idea which was fun and involved a bat and ball could be developed and incorporated into the game. It was great to have the freedom to put so much variety into it.

How did you go about reinventing the game for the '90s?

The first thing we did was to try to sum up what Pong was all about. For us it was fun, competitiveness and accessibility - absolutely anyone can pick up the game and play it, it's completely intuitive. After that, we tried to work out what had to go into the new Pong to keep it true to the original. We decided that bat and ball interaction was the only real essential. Once we decided that, we realised we had an amazing amount of freedom to create levels and gameplay and we went about furiously coming up with idea after idea. We must have generated sketches of hundreds of level possibilities before settling on the ones which made it into the game.

What was your favourite classic arcade game? Which influenced you the most?

Galaxians. Again, like Pong, its completely intuitive with simple controls which are hard to master. It's also really good at building tension as the level hots up before giving the player a break as the next level starts. Then it does it all over again...

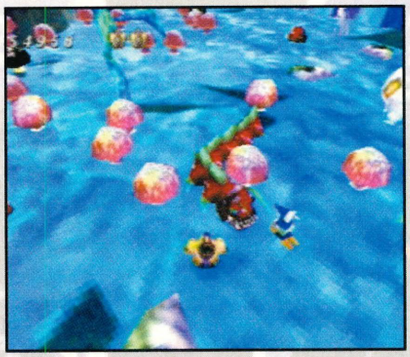
What else have you worked on?

Loads of stuff, right through from Spectrum days till now. Supersonic have pretty-much specialised in multiplayer games. I think competing against your mates and thrashing them is much more rewarding than beating a computer! Recently we've written Micro Machines 2, Micro Machines '96, Micro Machines Military, Supersonic Racers and Circuit Breakers.

Why do you think the game is going to work? What bits are you dying to show off?

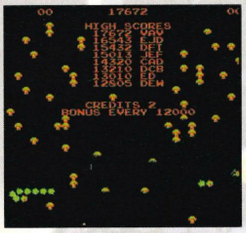
The competitive multiplayer aspect gives the game a really long life - you can keep coming back to it, and every game is different because your opponent never does the same thing twice. I'm probably most proud, though, of the variety of gameplay in the single-player game. As a developer, Supersonic have always specialised in multiplayer games and sometimes the single player part of our games has been weak in comparison. I don't think this is the case with Pong. I'm really happy with the one-player game. I also think Pong is really different from most games out there for another reason; games are getting more and more complicated, and I think unapproachable. Sometimes I think the people who make games forget you're supposed to have fun playing them! In an attempt to give it depth they make it over-complicated. With Pong, we've really tried to make it accessible and have depth. I hope we've succeeded. I don't just want gamers to enjoy the game, I'd like people who don't normally play lots of games to try it and hopefully enjoy it.

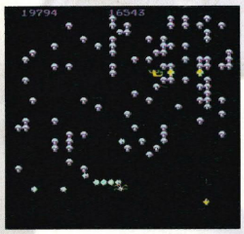
CENTIPEDE



The long tradition of Centipede has, over its many incarnations, dictated one thing - it's got to be in 2D. Predictably, this new version is going to upset the apple cart somewhat.

Centipede is essentially a glorified game of Space Invaders. You're at the bottom, firing towards a centipede that's descending down the screen. If you hit the centipede anywhere other than its head, it splits into two, a process amplified the more times you hit the bloody things. Oh, and there's usually some odd-looking mushroom things in the way as well. Revolutionary aspects? Well, you weren't completely rooted to the bottom of the screen, as you could move up should the various strands of multi-footed creatures come your way. It wasn't much, but it kept us happy.





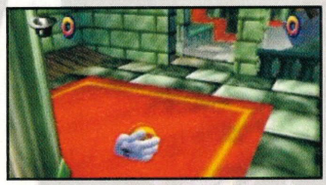
The 1999 version actually first appeared on the PC last year, winning a few friends along the way, but hardly threatening FIFA's reign at the top of the charts. The twists are switchable viewpoints, which get you in with the action as opposed to the overhead, single-screen view you were locked to before, power-ups, and - it says here - 'a pumping techno soundtrack'. It's due for release imminently.

GLOVER



I have to confess, at the start of this article I was a Glover virgin (you can insert your own gag here), not having being exposed at any point in my young and vulnerable life to the antics of a superhero in the shape of a glove. Bloody versatile glove, though, as the damn thing seems to be able to do everything. A double jump? Cartwheels? Crawling? Ball moving? You're well ahead.

It's a graphical adventure really, with you controlling Glover on his (yawn) quest to save the Wizard's kingdom and return some crystals that have gone missing. So it's all an excuse for some puzzle-solving, spell-casting and 20 levels of frolics. November is when the glove makes his PlayStation debut.



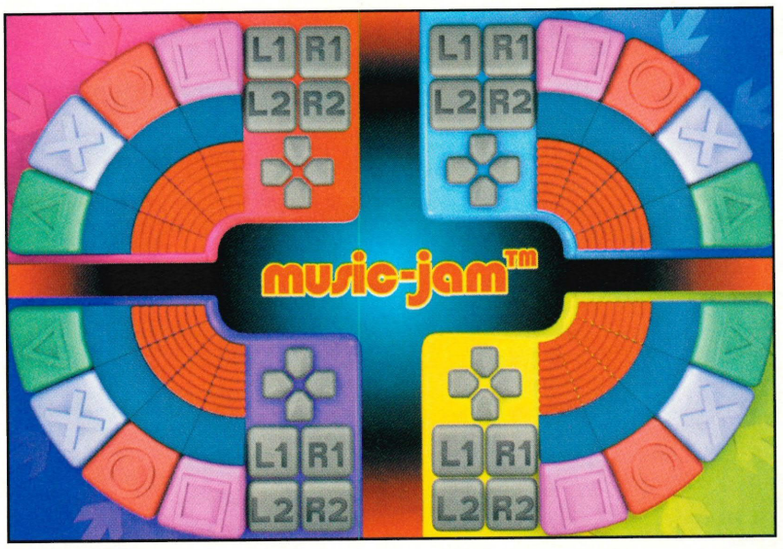


SO WHAT'S THE DAMAGE?

Okay, so there you have 'em - six new titles to bring the Atari name back to life. Okay, we think the addition of Tetris to the line is cheating a bit, but nonetheless there are some classic titles being brought to Sony's box of tricks this Christmas. They'll set you back £30 a-piece, mind, and we'll be finding out how well they compete against the hottest Christmas line-ups on the PSX when they get the extreme PlayStation review treatment. Until then, it's Game Over for now...

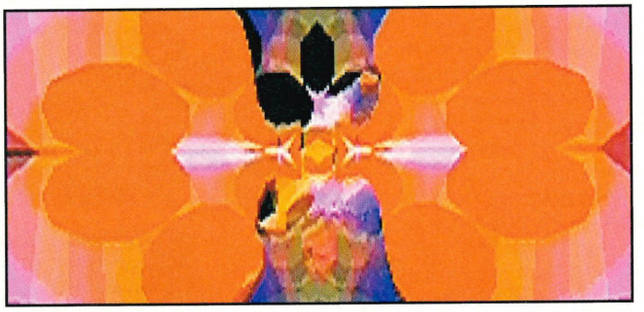


● **Publisher** Codemasters ● **Developer** Jester Interactive ● **Released** Late 1999

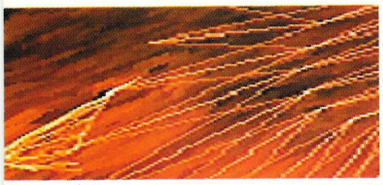


Music 2000

More happening trax from the Codies…



played it extreme



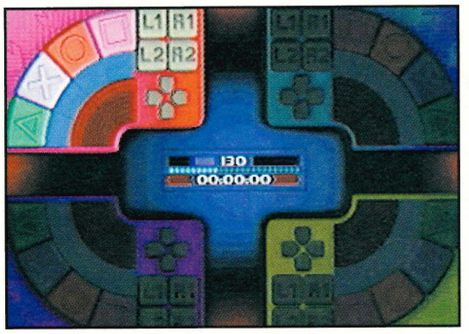
Music's back, and it's looking cooler than ever. The original was phenomenally successful, and the 2000 version builds on this success with a host of new features.

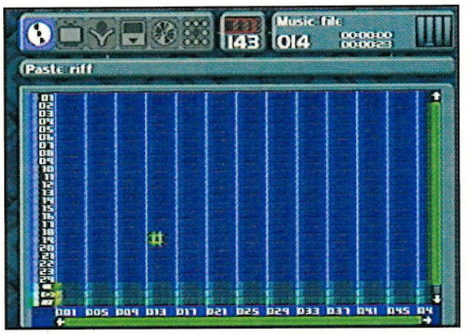
The best new feature in Music 2000 is its diversity of musical styles. Now you can compose rock and indie tracks as well as the expected dance tunes. The new 'game' also has sampling capabilities - you can take samples from any audio CD and trim or edit them to your requirements, then use 'em in your own compositions.

For the die-hard gamers, there's a Music Jam Mode, where up to four players make up a virtual band and follow on-screen button-pressing instructions á là Bust-a-Groove.

Music 2000 offers 24 channels, music and video creation facilities, greater control over the sound samples than ever before and hundreds of new samples to use. Top of the Pops is but a joypad away…





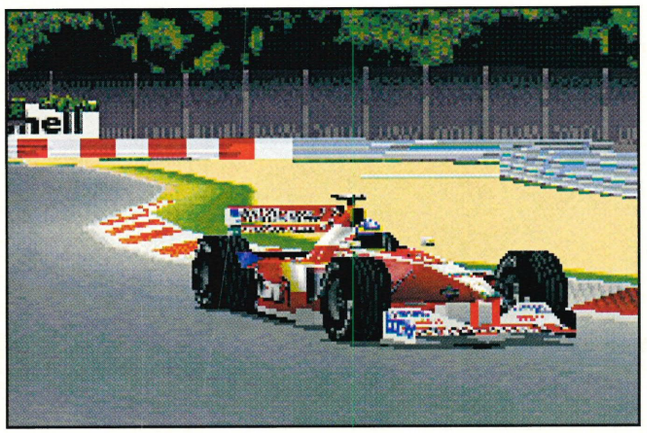


● **Publisher** Eidos Interactive ● **Developer** Lankhor ● **Released** November 1999

F1 World Grand Prix '99

update extreme

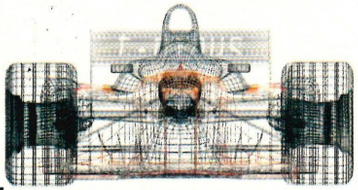
Will it snatch the chequered flag?











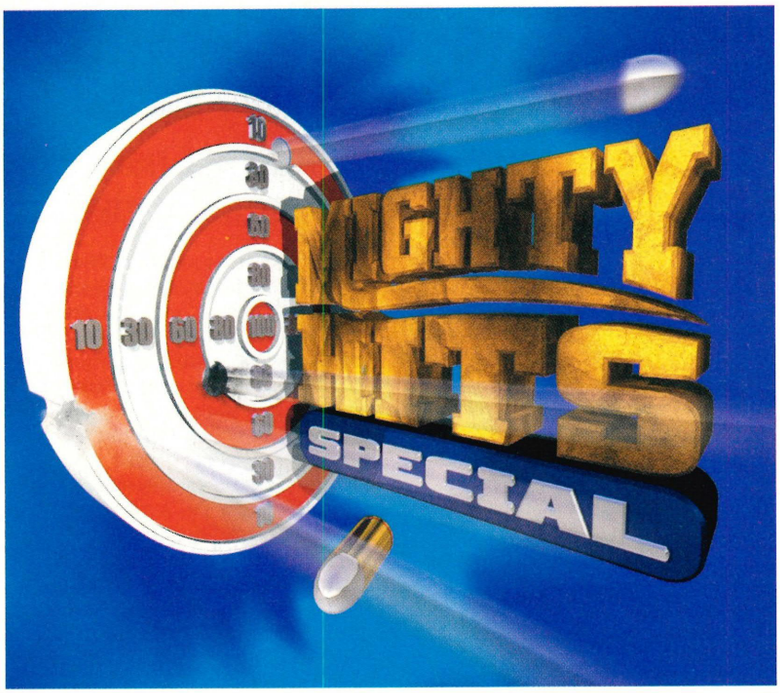
It's getting closer - Eidos' own Formula 1 game is shaping up to be a real motor racing treat, and they're confident it will beat Psygnosis' Formula One 99.

Unlike the Psygnosis game, F1 World Grand Prix (formerly knows as Official Formula 1 '99) features Arcade and Simulation Modes. Driving aids allow instant pick-up-and-play action too. There's also a Scenario Mode where you can play your favourite races over and again, and even exchange them with your friends.

Several camera views are included, as well as an all-new intelligent camera and even viewpoints used for real F1 races. And as you can see from these brand-new screenshots, it's looking really cool.

If you've already read our Formula One 99 review, you know it's a real scorcher, but overtaking it isn't impossible - just very difficult…

Publisher JVC **Developer** Aitron Corporation **Released** Late 1999



Mighty Hits Special

played it extreme

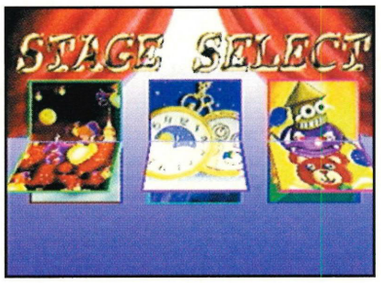
Fast-firing lightgun lunacy from JVC...

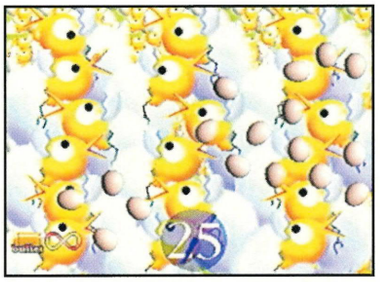
Completed Point Blank and Point Blank 2? Still up for more lightgun laughs? Mighty Hits Special is the game for you...

Like the aforementioned Point Blank games, MHS avoids the ashes-in-mouth cops-'n'-robbers or army scenarios, preferring to go for madcap fairground-inspired action. Thus you're faced with all sorts of tantalising tasks based around brightly-coloured graphics and party games. Spin the plates on the poles, shoot the blue rabbit in a find-the-coin-style game, play a tune by shooting coloured bells - the list goes on.

The graphics and gameplay in MHS look every bit as refined as those of the Point Blank games, though the tasks are more puzzley. It's GunCon compatible too.

PlayStation lightgun gamers are in the ridiculous situation of having almost as many guns to choose from as games. It's great to see JVC redress the balance with a mighty fine game...







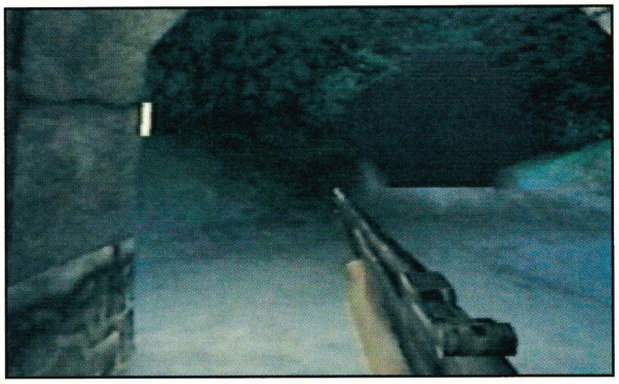


Medal of Honour

played it extreme

A World War II Metal Gear Solid? Well, probably not...

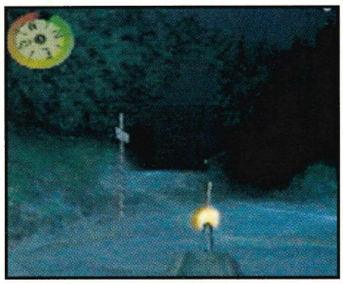
Publisher Electronic Arts **Developer** Dreamworks Interactive **Released** 26th November



This Dreamworks first-person challenge initially centres around the French Resistance in the Second World War, with you taking the role of a lieutenant recruited to help the cause. Similar to GoldenEye on the Nintendo 64, this is structured with a formal mission objective briefing before each mission, with a list of tasks to perform during each. The game begins with you taking charge of a rifle and hand grenades, but you also have the ability to use enemy machine gun posts.



This version of the game looks quite promising, with some nice graphics and lighting effects, although enemy soldiers look quite two-dimensional and pop-up occurs frequently. The movement is quite twitchy to get used to at first, while the aiming is awkward. This game has an authentic Second World War feel to it, and if the early problems can be ironed out, it could well be very playable.









Publisher Infogrames **Developer** Rage Games **Released** February 2000

Millennium Soldier: Expendable

update extreme

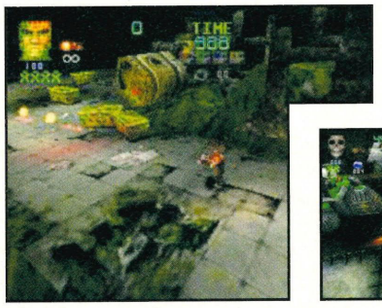
More madcap mindless baddie blasting…

This one was due for release in September, but as it's been put back, here's a few thoughts on how it's shaping up.

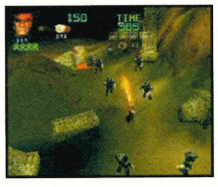
Infogrames are proud of the 3D engine powering this one - there are several features that, according to Infogrames, set Expendable apart from other 3D blasters. There's a 3D 'napalm-powered power-up especially designed for consoles' (the mind boggles), single, two-player co-operative and deathmatch modes, 'immediate emotional response play' (whatever that is) and an instinctive control system.

Interaction is the order of the day here - you can jump or climb over scenery for tactical blasting, and the degree of camera control allows you to direct the action, a little like a movie.

We've yet to see a playable version, but as soon as we do, we'll let you know how these interesting-looking features are panning out.





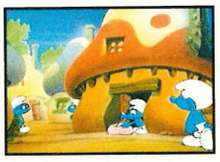


Publisher Infogrames **Developer** Infogrames **Released** Late 1999

Smurfs 3D

Papa's got a brand new bag; well game, actually…

played it extreme





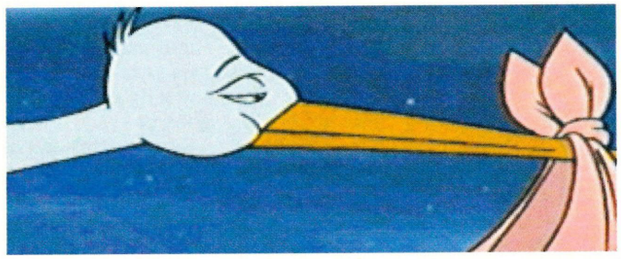




There's no escape. The Smurfs get everywhere - on TV, videos, posters, the radio and now they're on your PlayStation. Whether you admire their combination of white floppy hats and blue skin, or just want to wipe them out for their annoying squeaky voices, you just have to admit that Smurfs sell.

The majority of this platform adventure is actually 2D, shown through a traditional side-on camera view that zooms in and rotates slightly at times. The intro sequence tells how a stork deposits a baby Smurf on a doorstep in the village. Papa Smurf then orders you to embark on a hazardous adventure to obtain milk, dummies, etc. for the little fella. Trouble is, you need to keep him happy between levels by checking the Baby Smurf screen.

Early signs suggest that this is going to be very much a children's game, with colourful, cartoony graphics and a simplistic approach to levels. The level design seems quite sparse at the moment, with few baddies and moves for the character you control. We can hardly wait to find out how it develops.



Publisher Take 2 Interactive **Developer** Rockstar Games **Released** Late 1999



Thrasher: Skate & Destroy

Illegal skateboarding is banned, but hey, it's good fun…

played it extreme

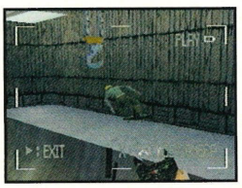


Are we about to witness an influx of skateboarding games on the PSX? Not really a bad thing if we do, especially if they all match up to the excellent Tony Hawk's. This effort from Rockstar could well end up being a pretty enjoyable trick-fest when it's completely finished. Early signs are that the graphics aren't really on a par with the Activision game, but multiplayer modes and a funky old-skool hip-hop soundtrack are definite plusses.

A choice of six boarders and different courses await you, as you skate around various locations such as New York or Paris, through warehouses and parks, trying to avoid a gun-wielding policeman. All the regular tricks of grabs, ollies and flips are present within a go-anywhere environment. Win tournaments to progress to bigger venues and learn more tricks as you go on. The game also features authentic skating clothes, such as DCs and Etnies. Keep 'em peeled for a review shortly.



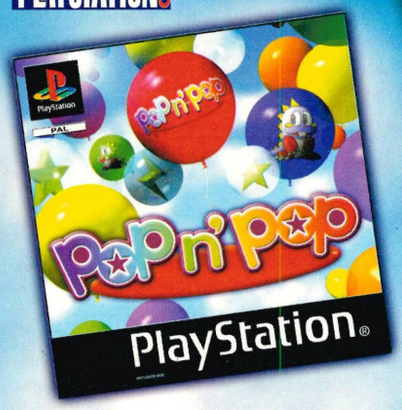




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Publisher Anco **Developer** Anco **Released** February 1999



Player Manager 2000

update extreme

Football's a game of two halves, so let's hope Anco had an inspired team talk at half time...

Let down by having a user interface that simply couldn't match the requirements of the player, Player Manager 98-99 was just too slow to keep you interested for long.

With a sensible number of skill statistics and invisible factors that have to be discovered, the reputation and performance of the players has to be astutely judged by the manager in Player Manager 2000. With almost 30,000 players in the game, the promised 'powerful' search engine is important to the success. Including a shortlist facility similar to that of the excellent Championship Manager series could remove any tedious searching through endless lists, while listing skills in order of priority helps you find the exact type of player you need. Tactics have 96 pre-defined options, plus individual player instructions. Hopefully this will be straightforward and logical, and make the game user-friendly.

The matches themselves feature in-depth commentary and match analysis, as well as advice from your assistant manager. Players can pass into space and play square balls as part of the enhanced player intelligence. It will be interesting to see how much this one improves on the original, but early indications suggest it could be a big improvement on Player Manager 98-99.







Discworld Noir

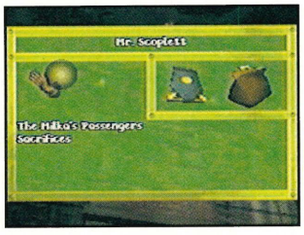
played it extreme

Prepare for a fun and mysterious experience with the latest Discworld game...

Publisher GT Interactive **Developer** GT Interactive **Released** 3rd December 1999

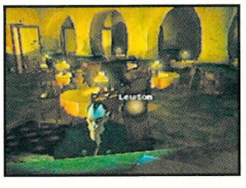


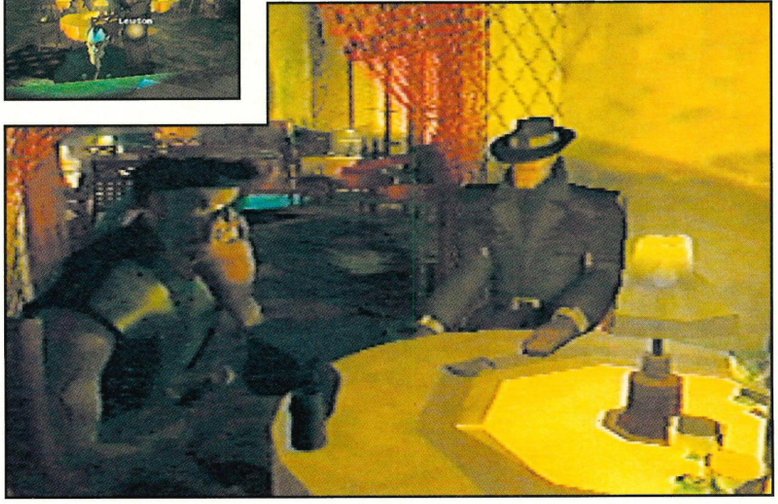




Based on the immensely popular series of novels, and featuring the same dry humour and bizarre concepts, this graphic adventure sees author Terry Pratchett's continued influence in the gaming world. As Lewton, a private detective, you're hired by the beautiful Carlotta to find her missing lover Mundi. Set in the dark and mysterious world of Disc, this story follows a strange written introduction describing a great war between 80 gods. You just know with Pratchett that the game will be designed with an ironic tone and comical slant.

This game is full of Blackadder-style humour, from unashamedly clichéd detective lines to pirates adopting fake accents for the sake of tourism. All this is contrasted with the dark and melancholy visual images. Based on a typical adventure format, with an Action and a Move button, the game requires you to explore each screen and attempt to collect clues and ask people questions. There are various locations for you to explore and people to hustle in this intriguing and very promising adventure, due to be reviewed in next month's issue.





Publisher Activision **Developer** Paradox Development **Released** November 1999

Wu Tang: Taste the Pain

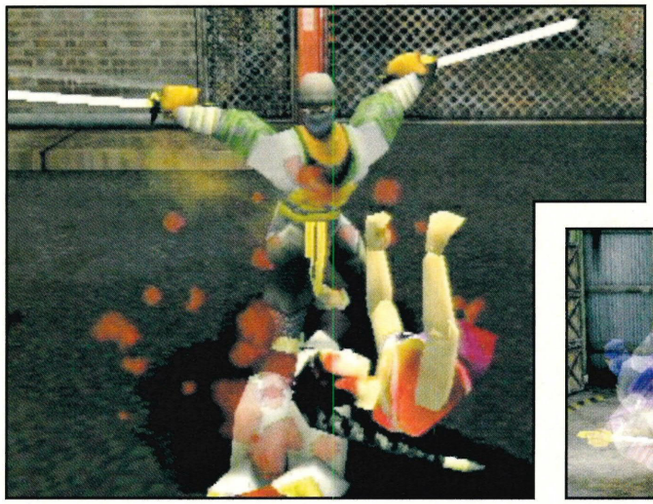
played it extreme

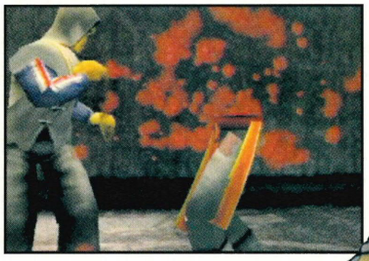
Blood, gore and gangsta rap…

Wu Tang: Taste the Pain is based on the game engine from Paradox Development's controversial Thrill Kill, which allows up to four CPU- or human-controlled fighters to battle it out in a single bout. Thankfully, this results in no loss of speed, though the game needs a little tightening up in the response department - the fighting looks a little sluggish at the moment, but this should be fixed in the final version.

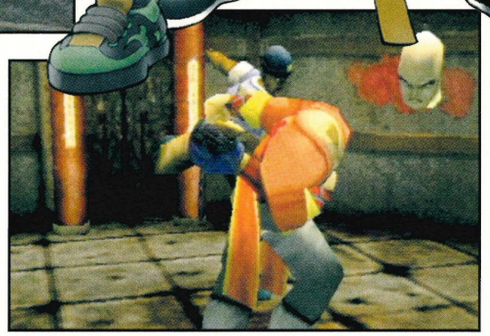
Although the graphics hardly put Tekken 3 to shame, they're far from poor. The characters' fighting styles are shaping up well, looking different enough to keep you interested but not so wildly disparate they look like they're from different games.

Wu Tang: Taste the Pain is so controversially bloodthirsty, Activision are including a Parental Lock-Out Code, printed in the instructions. Only by inputting the code before the game starts can you see buckets of blood, broken bones and assorted gory fatalities, and parents can remove it from the manual if they think their little dears can't handle it. As a taster, here are a few of these fatalities shown in all their gory glory…





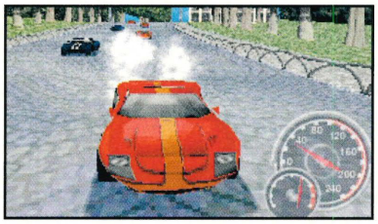






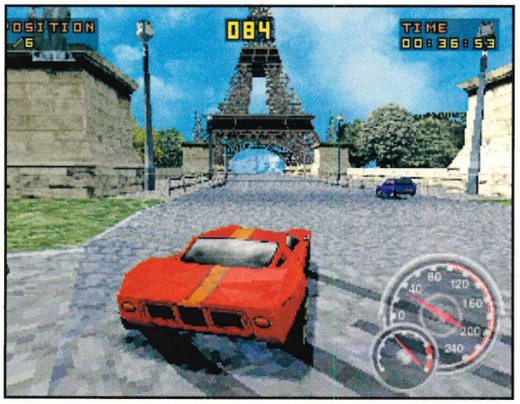
Test Drive 6

Get ready for trans-continental racing fun with the latest in this driving series

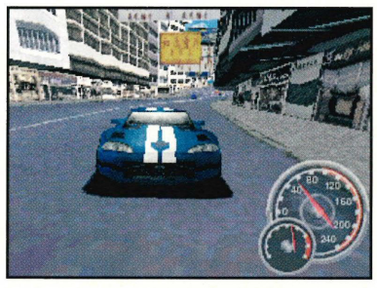


The PlayStation's vast collection of racing games continues to grow with this forthcoming release from Infogrames. This one promises new features not found in its predecessors, such as a new car skin, giving the cars a more lifelike appearance than before. The car physics are being improved to allow the cars to behave more realistically and individually, incorporating qualities such as style and handling.

Although no playable version is currently available, this looks set to be the most successful Test Drive game yet, with 39 licensed vehicles and 30 new tracks from locations all over the world. Expect multiple police car chases and helicopters that inform patrol cars of your whereabouts. All this within an 'interactive driving environment', with breakable objects and unpredictable hazards. The Tournament Mode allows you to upgrade your car with over five attributes, financed by the wagers you place on your races. As soon as a playable version becomes available, we'll let you know how it fares.







update extreme

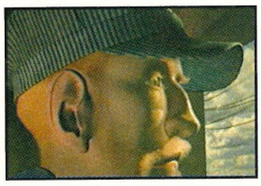
Publisher Infogrames **Developer** Accolade **Released** TBA

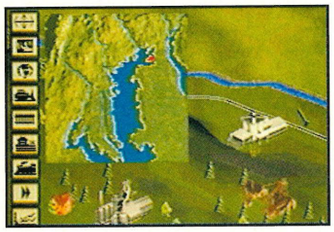
Railroad Tycoon 2

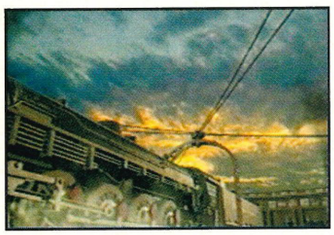
Publisher Take 2 Interactive
Developer Rockstar Games
Released January 2000

Yee-haa! Ain't it just darn spankin' marvellous, this railroad thang? Or something...

played it extreme







This game sees you in the role of an American entrepreneur in industrial USA, keen to exploit the desolate land with your plan to develop a railroad system. Complete with a map view, toolbar and time scale, this is like Civilization, only based on the rail industry. The idea is to develop your system quickly and efficiently, clearing the way by removing trees and bulldozing obstacles, establishing trains and then setting up services. This includes a variety of uses for your trains, such as passengers, mail, paper, goods, milk, coal or food. The idea is to balance between the two major factors of supply and demand.

This early version has an annoying scroll device that could be improved, plus no apparent Pause Game option. The graphics are pretty standard for this type of game - simplistic and quite jumpy in animation, but the gameplay is the most important aspect. It's difficult to tell exactly how the final version will play, but we'll keep you informed.

Publisher THQ **Developer** Radical Entertainment **Released** 26th November 1999



played it extreme

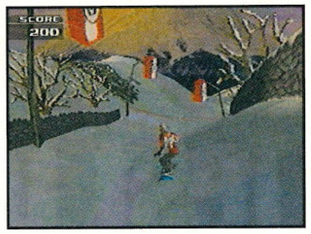
Snowboarding

Could this snowboarding game beat the mighty Cool Boarders 3?

Featuring the latest music to accompany your snowboard antics as you tackle slopes from around the world, this effort from THQ is really starting to look the part. The graphics are quite detailed, with very little pop-up, while the game features seven riders to choose from, each with their own boards, style and abilities. There are five different events and five different game modes, including an option to create your own park.

The aspect of this game that immediately seems promising is the Create-a-Park Mode, something that could help boost the game's lifespan after completion of the five mountain resorts. There's also two-player split-screen racing and genuine snowboarding gear from companies such as DCs, K2 and Forum. One early concern about this game is the apparently easy tracks that allow considerable room for error. However, with 46 tricks to learn and master, this game may well be a potential challenger to the coveted Top Snowboarding Game title.





Publisher Electronic Arts **Developer** Electronic Arts **Released** Winter 1999

Knockout Kings 2000

played it extreme

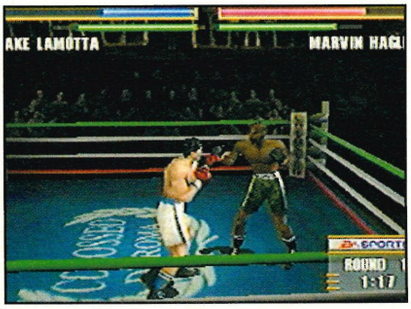
Get ringside for EA's millennium boxing celebration...





Are you the kind of person who melts at the thought of pitting Lennox Lewis against a prime-time Muhammed Ali? If so, Knockout Kings 2000 could be the game you've been looking for. Featuring 50 of the greatest boxers ever, the game includes face wrap technology, giving the boxers a more authentic and realistic appearance. The game has been developed in collaboration with Sugar Ray Leonard, Oscar De La Hoya and Shane Mosley, who, together with referee Mills Lane, were used as motion capture models. Boxer statistics and career records are included, and this, together with their individual styles and abilities, are to be represented in the gameplay.

This game looks to have pretty good animation of the boxers thanks to the motion capture facility, while factors such as Jimmy Lennon Jr's ringside announcements and Sean O'Grady/Al Albert's commentary make the whole experience more believable. The game features a Classics Mode to pit the best of today's fighters against the best of yesteryear, while the career mode gives you the chance to challenge for the belts. Just for fun, you find a slugfest mode, with no weight divisions or rules. We look forward to seeing how the final product fares, but rest assured this one should be significantly better than the original.



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BLAZE VIDEO GAME ACCESSORIES

Publisher Electronic Arts **Developer** The True Kid **Released** Early November 1999

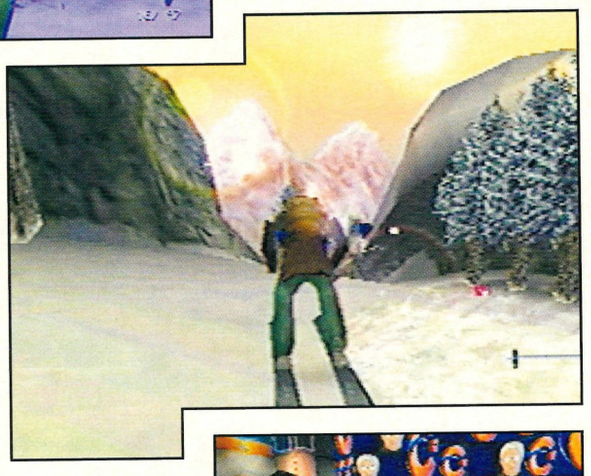
Bond makes his long-awaited debut on the PlayStation, but how do Electronic Arts' efforts compare to the N64's excellent GoldenEye? We found out with this playable demo...











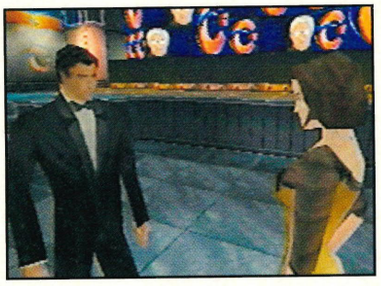
played it extreme

Tomorrow Never Dies



Similar to the GoldenEye N64 game, this title follows quite closely to the plot of the 007 film, giving it a tremendous sense of realism and purpose. An immediate difference between this and the Nintendo game is the change from first-person to chase perspective, which initially caused alarm bells to ring. Will this detract from the excellent aiming and shooting elements the game promises? Not likely, as an automatic locking function moves your viewpoint towards them and the long-range sniper rifle fun remains intact.

Major 'plus' points include the ability to achieve a perfect roll (even while shooting), use a ghost function to imitate first-person views when close to enemies and participate in varying scenarios such as skiing, driving a BMW 750 and piloting a jet on the ground. Incidentally, the skiing section finishes with a Roger Moore-style Union Jack parachute jump. Class. There's also a stealth technique that allows you to sneak up on your enemies.





Licensed to Thrill?

There are other possibilities too, such as playing the roles of different characters like Chinese agent Wai Lin and using a large variety of gadgets such as explosive cufflinks, infra-red goggles and grease/smoke booby traps in the car. Weapons range from the modest PPK and lethal AK47 through to the mighty bazookas.

In terms of health, the traditional armour and medikit situation applies, with plenty of medikits scattered all over the place. Sadly, this game won't feature a multiplayer mode, an element that made the N64 game so popular, and the controls may also be a tad twitchy. Regardless of these two problems, the game still looks excellent and we can't wait to play the finished version!





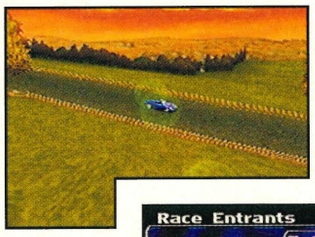
Publisher Titus Software **Developer** Smart Dog **Released** Winter 1999

played it extreme

Roadsters Trophy

Road racing and gambling?





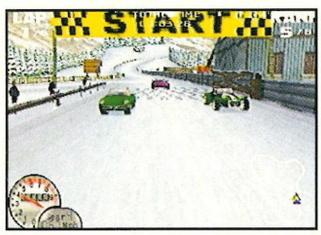


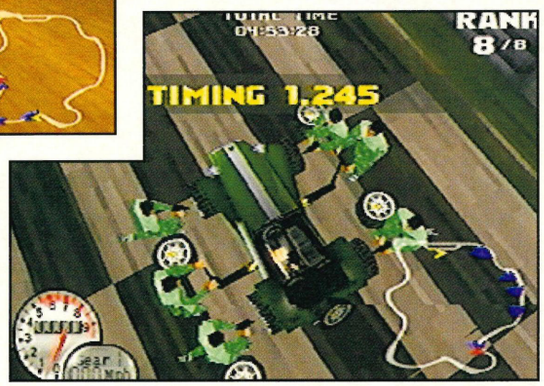


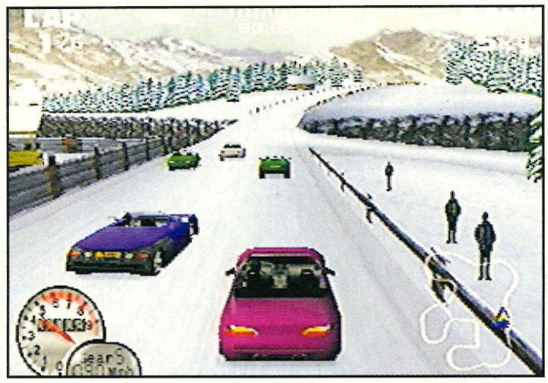
This one's improved since we saw it at September's ECTS, but there's still room for more improvement. The handling's far better now. You no longer bounce from wall to wall like a ping pong ball in a drainpipe. Taking a leaf from Ridge Racer's instruction manual, Roadsters Trophy is very arcadey in its approach. You don't use your brakes much - just accelerate and steer. Still, with so many sim-style divers out there already, perhaps this is a good thing.

The cars spread out a little too much at present - by the middle of a race you're on your own, with no one anywhere near you. Still, there's plenty of time to tidy this one up.

The betting element, where you put money on the outcome of a race and use funds to upgrade or replace your car and enter further races, is now there. It's looking cool, too. The game as a whole could do with a little more speed, but again, this should come with time. Overall, Roadsters Trophy looks promising.







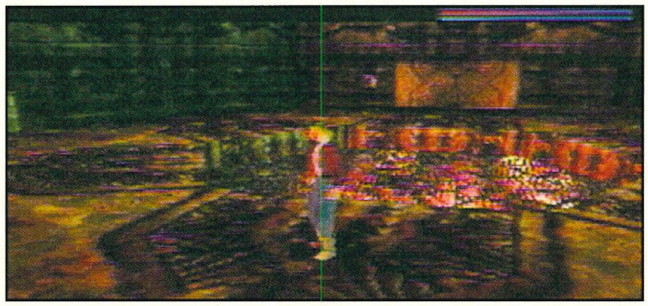
Publisher PBH Systems **Developer** Riverhillsoft **Released** Late 1999

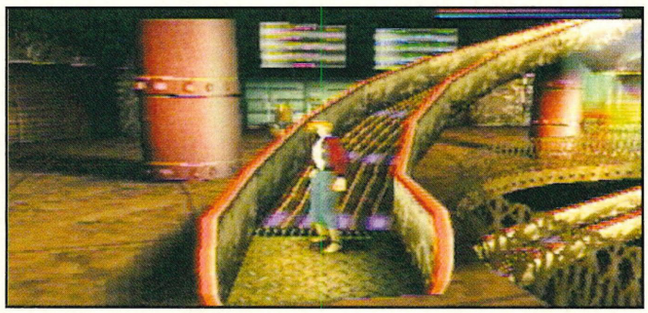
Overblood 2

The future is a dark and dangerous place...



first sighting extreme



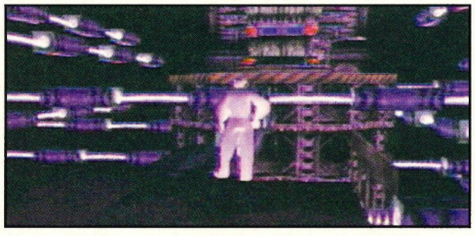


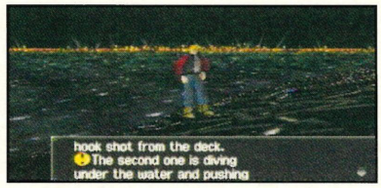
This dark, futuristic action adventure has already sold 200,000 copies in Japan. Coming on two CDs, Overblood 2 features over 69 characters and variable storylines. You can swim, run, fight (hand-to-hand and with weapons), climb and ride all sorts of futuristic vehicles. There's even a light sabre in there!

The game took over two years to develop. Set in the year 2115, due to an unexpected rise in temperature most of the Earth is uninhabitable. On the East Coast of America is an artificially-created environment called East Edge, built around an air cooling machine. It is here Acrano Brani came to compete in a race called Junk Blade. Also on his flight was Veltor Curtis, an old geezer being watched by female investigator Chris Lanbecca. When Curtis is attacked on landing, Brani comes to his aid and is given a mysterious capsule...

Sounds like the setting for a scary game, and if the promised monsters, weapons and combat live up to this promise, Overblood 2 could give the mighty Resident Evil series a run for its money.









PSX 2: THE GAMES!

The PSX 2's looking great, but what games are likely to be ready in time for its launch next year? Ian Osborne takes a look...

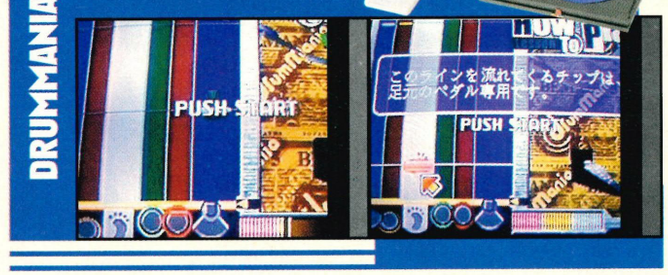


We've told you about the hardware. You know the PlayStation 2 boasts 128-bit processing power, 32Mb of RAM and can play DVD movies as well as games. You also know it's backwards-compatible, so you can play your PlayStation games on it as well as PSX 2 titles. But what about the new games? After all, a happening console isn't much use without some superb software to back it up...

Although games always improve throughout the life of a console (compare this issue's Quake II with, say, Krazy Ivan from the early days of the PSX), the games already in development for PlayStation 2 look pretty good. Very few screenshots have been released, so much of our material is taken from video captures and photographs - obviously these aren't as good a quality, but they give you a good idea of where the console's going...







Namco's PSX 2 interpretation of the **Ridge Racer** series looks amazing. Few details have been released. It doesn't even have a name yet - it's referred to as 'the new Ridge Racer game' - but judging by the screenshots, it's going to be the best-looking racer ever. The cars look smoother than Roger Moore in silk pyjamas, with pristine liveries and accurate light sourcing. The windows are mysteriously non-transparent, a graphical frill you would expect in a PSX 2 game, but perhaps this will be added later.

Of course, the most important factor in a racing game is its handling, and as we haven't played Namco's new Ridge Racer game, we can't comment. Let's face it, though - it's bound to offer the same arcadey driving enjoyed by the earlier games. Its physics-free motoring isn't for everyone, but those who rate racing higher than realism will love it.

Namco are also working on **GT 500**, a bike racer. We know next to nothing about this one, but it's a simulation-style interpretation of motorcycle Grand Prix racing.

If Ridge Racer isn't realistic enough for you and you prefer four wheels to two, you should



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look out for what is arguably the most eagerly-awaited release on the new console - **Gran Turismo 2000**. Once again, the in-game graphics here look as good as the intros to the original game. We played an early version of it at E3 back in March, and although the handling and driving model was little different from the PSX outing, the graphics look amazing. It's like watching a movie. Perhaps the cars are a little too shiny, making them look slightly artificial, but for animation, smooth scrolling and running speed, it can't be beaten. Hopefully the gameplay will be polished and honed still further, making GT2000 the best driver EVER!





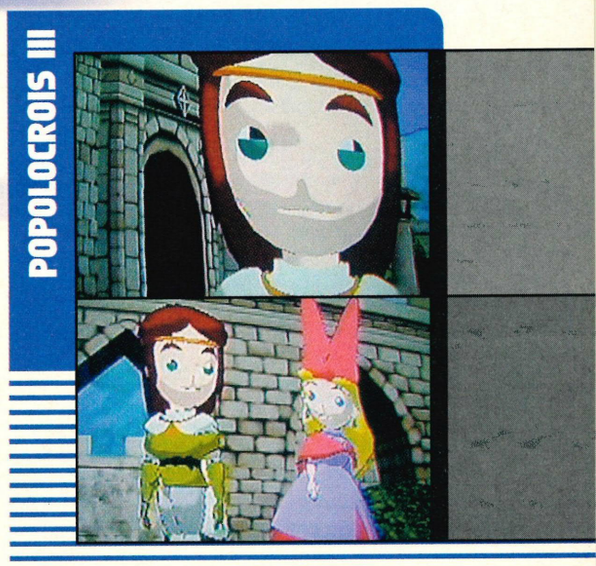
With Fist and Foot...

Namco's other major PSX 2 release is **Tekken Tag Tournament**, a direct port of the arcade coin-op. You won't be surprised to hear the ability to 'tag' in a partner, á là Marvel Vs Capcom, is included here (hence the name). The characters have been completely redrawn, and look even better during the game than those in the computer-generated intro sequences to the original PlayStation's Tekken 3. The backgrounds and objects have been beefed up too.

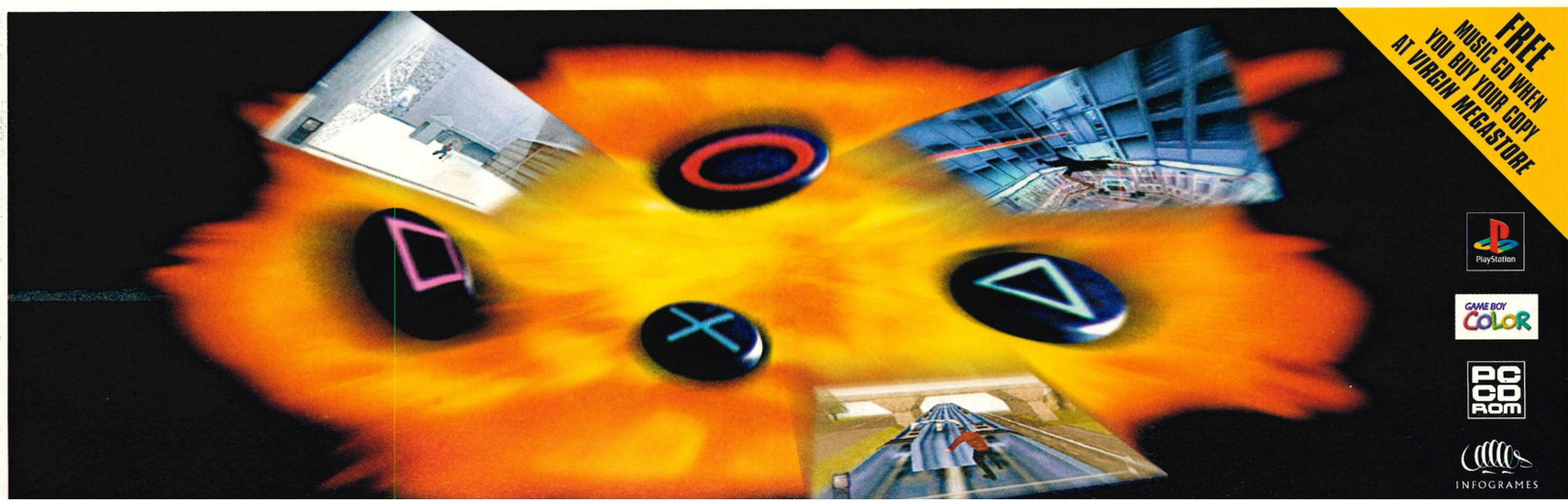
Fight fans can also look forward to Capcom's **Street Fighter EX3**. Again, you can tag in a partner, but apart from that, the last version we saw plays much the same as previous 3D Street Fighter games. Still, with over a year to go before it's finished, that's exactly what you would expect at this stage. Over 20 characters are planned for the final game, but at present only six are implemented - Blanka, Chun-Li, Ryu, Skullomania, Sharon and Jack.

Video sequences from Squaresoft's **The Bouncer** have circulated on the Internet for some time now, and have wowed beat-'em-uppers the world over. Eschewing the one-on-one mayhem of the Tekken and Soul Blade series, The Bouncer offers a progressive storyline, a little like an interactive movie. And 'interactive' is the order of the day - you can pick up and use just about any foreign object, such as tables, chairs and trash cans. Numerous characters can take the screen with no loss of speed, and as they're designed by Final Fantasy character designer Tetsuya Nomura, they're impressive to say the least.



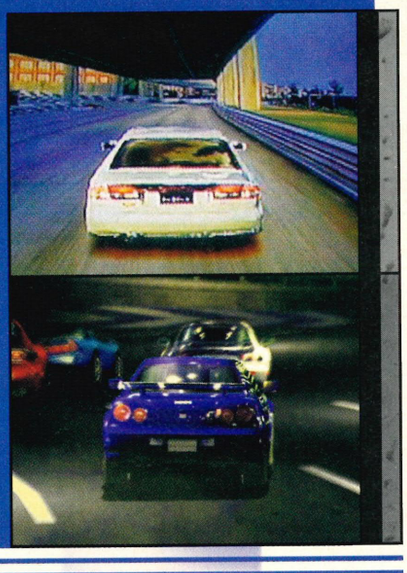






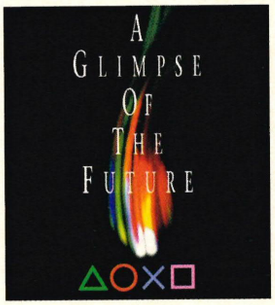


GRAN TURISMO 2000



RIDGE RACER





TIME CRISIS



Square are also going for **Ehrgeiz 2**, another fighter with a storyline and character development.

Role-ing `em Out...

There are several hot RPGs in the pipeline, the most eagerly-awaited of which is, of course, **Final Fantasy**. Alas, although a Final Fantasy game seems pretty inevitable, there's no firm news on what it will be or what form the storyline will take. All we've seen is a rolling demo of the ballroom scene from FFVIII; but what an incredible demo it is. The characters are so detailed every strand of hair is visible.

The stupidly-named **Eternal Ring** is a real-time 3D RPG from the makers of King's Field. Again, the game has hardly been started, but the detail in the dungeons is already looking incredible. Likewise, Sony's cartoony **Popolocrois III**. No game in this series has ever been released outside Japan, but they love it over there, so maybe it could make its UK debut on the new machine.

If Popolocrois' graphics are impressive, **Dark Cloud's** are unbelievable. Achieving this level of detail in a game that's so interactive couldn't be easy, even on Sony's superb new console. Here you can design your own world, placing trees, hills and the like, and then explore it. If only real life was like this - I'd create a world full of Gail Porter look-alikes...

Strategy fans should look out for **A-Train 6**, a train driving sim (!), and the unbelievable **Kessen**. This real-time wargame looks impossibly good, with around 40 mounted soldiers galloping over the plains and engaging in hand-to-hand combat. This really shows off the power of the new console. We've seen nothing more of the game, such as how it plays or what the menus look like, but we can hardly wait...

Makin´ Music...

Quirky music-based games are getting more and more popular, especially in Japan. It's no surprise, then, that two such games are coming out for the PlayStation 2.

DrumMania from Konami is the latest in their Bemani series of games, which includes BeatMania, Guitar Freaks and Dance Dance Revolution (none of which have been released over here - yet). Once more you get a quirky controller, which this time simulates playing a drum kit. The graphics are hardly taxing, so it will be interesting to see where the PSX 2's extra processing power will be used.

If you loved Bust-a-Groove and Spice World, look out for **Unison**. From what we can gather, it plays exactly the same.

Videogame Violence

Fans of blasting and shooting have little to look forward to at present. Tecmo's forthcoming **Kunai** is basically Ninja Gaiden for the PSX 2. Alas, we've no further information or artwork.

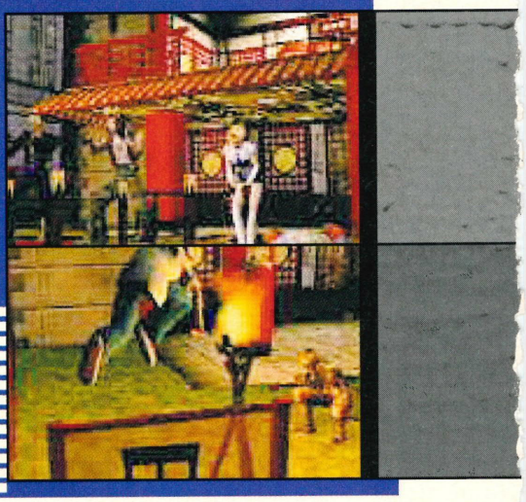
Rumours abound that a **Time Crisis** game will be released on the PlayStation 2, though this is not confirmed. The game (it is said) will be set in the future, and sees you rescuing the President's daughter from the evil Sherudo Garo.

Armored Core 2 offers huge improvements over its predecessor. Where the first game restricted you to firing only eight missiles at a time, the new one lets you launch up to 30. More mechs, greater graphical finesse and a two-player mode are promised.

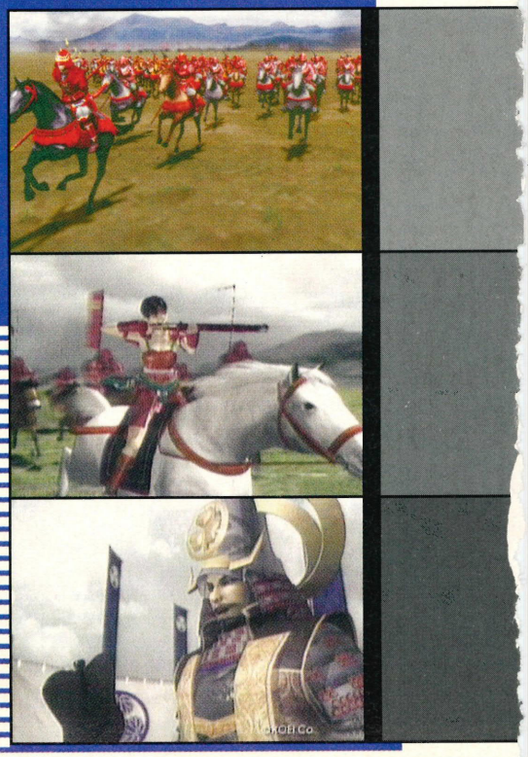
Finally, there's **Den-Sen**. This one's so Japanese it defies description. Hang on sliding cables with a clothes hanger, jump from one to the next - it looks great, but it's bloody weird.

So there we have it - the first batch of PSX 2 games are shaping up well. Some of them are destined for a Japanese-only release, but the ones that make it to these shores will set new standards in videogaming...

EHRGEIZ



KESSEN



UNISON



A-TRAIN



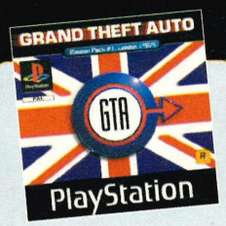
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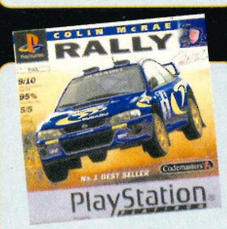
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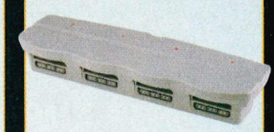
Colin Mcrae Rally
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Street Fighter Alpha plus Ex
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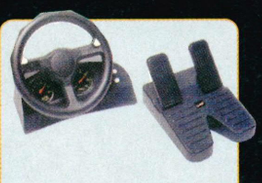
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QUAKE II

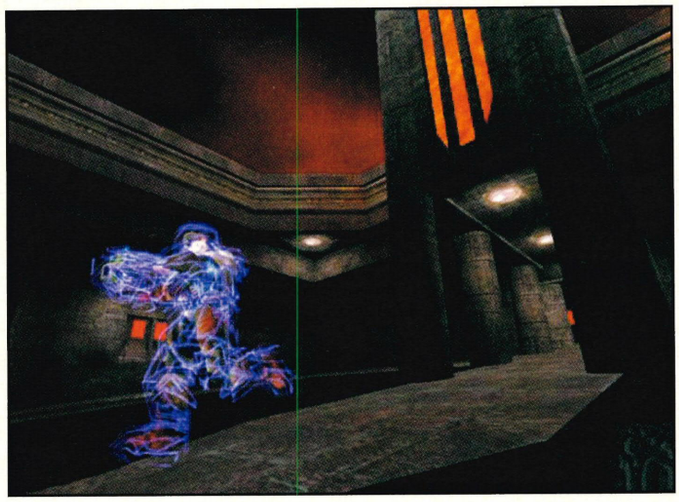
Publisher Activision | **Developer** Hammerhead | **Genre** 3D First Person Blaster
Released Out Now | **Version** UK | **Price** £39.99 | **Players** 1-4



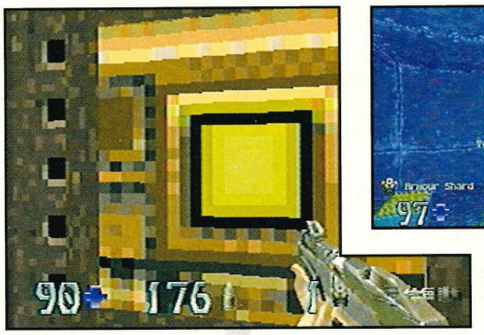
The only genre thought to be outside the PlayStation's otherwise-awesome grasp has finally been cracked. 'Come in GoldenEye', says Russell, 'your time is up!'

Quake III - Arena

Even though Quake II is still in constant use over the Internet (Hell, even Quake's still going strong there!), it has been knocking around on the PC for a fair while now. Currently in development from id Software is Quake III: Arena, which boasts a remarkable new graphics engine and has already earned the accolade 'the greatest multiplayer game of all time', even though it's nowhere near completion! Should you have access to a reasonably top-spec PC with an Internet connection, you might want to zip over to id's official website. There you can download a demo of the game, offering you the chance to test it out for yourself with full online multiplayer compatibility. It's definitely one to keep your eye on - the words 'Quake III' and 'PlayStation 2' spring to mind...







■ Look for the switches to open doors.





It doesn't seem that long ago that I was goofing around with id's first baby, Wolfenstein 3D, while I was meant to be working on my GCSE Business Studies course (which subsequently failed miserably). The coming of its later sequels, Doom and Doom 2, shook the gaming world, not just for addictive gameplay, but for controversial contents. Would these games have set off a media frenzy if their main objective was not to seek and destroy psychopathic, brain-dead humanoids in a truly gruesome fashion?

Perhaps that's a little unfair, but it's clear that many games owe the majority of their success to bad press from governing bodies and reputable newspapers (and the Sun). Grand Theft Auto is an obvious example, as is Carmageddon, but thankfully, as far as Quake II is concerned, this just isn't the case. It's one of the greatest PlayStation games of all time, but not off the back of hype and controversy. No, it's one of the greatest PlayStation games because it has achieved what many people thought just wasn't possible - an excellent conversion from the PC.

Graphically, it was widely thought the PlayStation just wasn't capable of throwing such sizeable and textured polygons around at a playable speed. But the fact is it can - and how! Glitches and pop-up would have frankly been excused, but Hammerhead have cut no corners in their efforts and now they can reap the rewards. No pop-up, no glitching and definitely no damn fog effects - that would have really spoiled the experience.

It's one of the greatest PlayStation games of all time

Enemies can be spied way off in the distance, offering - for the first time on the PlayStation - a real feeling of travelling realistically through a 3D environment. Games like Life-Force: Tenka and Shadow Master have attempted it, but nowhere near as successfully as it happens here. Gameplay can't be questioned at all; Quake II is at the end of a long line of games that have developed gameplay so perfect it's mind-boggling.

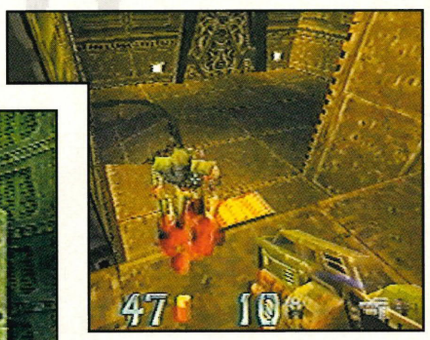
The Story in Full...

Yes, here at EPM we can proudly unveil the amazing story behind the magnificent game...

The future of humanity is a stake as Earth launches its final attack against alien aggressors (oh dear - Ed). Okay, so the story leaves a lot to be desired, but then Quake II wasn't really designed to be an award-winning, story-driven, single-player game. Any serious Quaker would tell you playing the game's many multiplayer modes is what it's all about. 'Who wants to shoot at computer-controlled enemies when there's some hardcore fragging to be had with people around the world?', is the most rounded response. Somehow, however, Hammerhead have adapted the game perfectly for PlayStation without losing any of Quake's magic along the way.



■ Aim carefully - wounded foes are still dangerous.





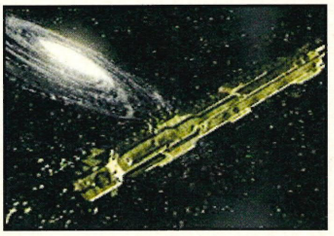




Four-Player Frag Fest!

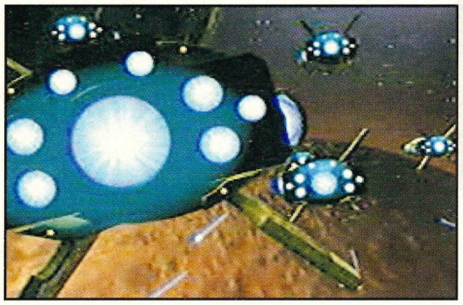
Finally, a damned good reason to shell out for a Multi Tap. Quake II offers 12 huge specifically-designed multiplayer maps for your fragging delights. There's options to play Deathmatch (every man for himself), team games and even three against one, if that's what you want. Quake II takes GoldenEye's crown as the best multiplayer experience with ease. Although the graphical detail dips, clarity and gameplay isn't hindered at all. Who cares if the graphics suffer when what you get is the most satisfying gameplay ever?





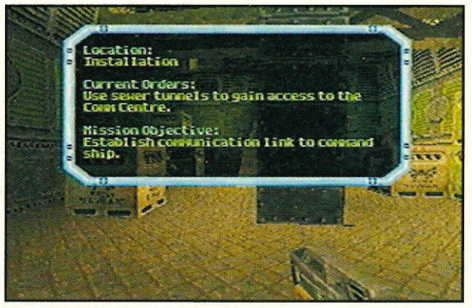












There have been many changes - mostly subtle level edits - to ensure complete single-player satisfaction. Corridors have been widened a little for players using a pad (mouse control allows for quicker and sharper changes in direction), cut sequences have been added and a pumping electric guitar soundtrack has been implemented to fuel the adrenaline rush. It would, of course, have been completely inexcusable for Quake II to have no multiplayer modes at all on the PlayStation, and Hammerhead have come up with some extraordinary two- to four-player split-screen modes (see Four-Player Frag Fest box) and maps. It's amazing to see the game look so good on a PlayStation at all, let alone split four ways!

Hammerhead have cut no corners in their efforts and now they can reap the rewards

Control Freak

When it comes to picking out the single greatest feature in games such as this, you'd expect it to be the graphics or gameplay, wouldn't you? Although they are both quite remarkable in the case of Quake II, you'd be wrong; it's the control method. The incredible amount of time and attention Hammerhead have spent ensuring the control method is perfect shows how much Quake II is respected, even by third-party development houses. There are so many great games out there in PlayStation land that are let down by poor button layout and crappy response times. Quake II, however, leaves no stone unturned to ensure controlling your Space Marine is as easy as humanly possible (given the disadvantages of a joypad over a mouse). A Dual Shock pad is ESSENTIAL to get the most out of the game, as the analogue sticks (yes, that's both of them) play a very important role indeed. You can use one to move in 3D, the other to look around. The amount of different control set-ups possible is bewildering. The only thing it doesn't do is let you assign your own button layout (not that you need to). Once you've chosen your method and are starting to get to grips with it, it's best to stick with it. Soon you're circling enemies while changing weapons ready for the perfect kill. Quake II isn't for the faint-hearted, but it's easily the best game this millennium!

Russell Barnes

Mouse Compatible!

Yes, that's right folks, Quake II can be played with a PSX Mouse and joypad in tandem - this is definitely the icing on the cake! The best Quake II players on the Net use a mouse so they can 'free look' (for direction, looking up and down, etc). The other hand can be used for strafing, cycling through weapons and jumping, using the pad. Top marks to Hammerhead again for thinking of everything.



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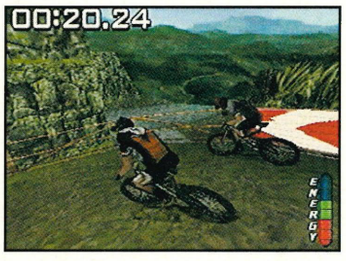
X-rated

Memory Card | Analogue Pad | Dual Shock

Publisher Codemasters | **Developer** UDS | **Genre** Driving Game
Released November 1999 | **Version** PAL | **Price** £39.99 | **Players** 1-2

NO FEAR DOWNHILL MOUNTAIN BIKING

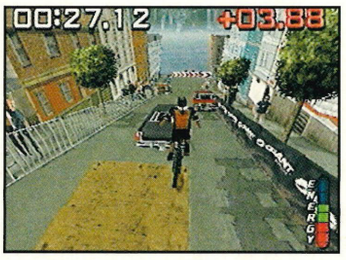
Riders ready, pedals ready - go! Or not as the case may be. Wannabe action man Saul investigates...



Downhill biking's adrenaline-pumping action is ideal stuff for a game, but, and it's a Jo Brand-sized 'but', can the PlayStation handle the intricacies of such a sport and produce a decent representation of it? Well, if anyone can do it, Codemasters can.

No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking casts you as one of eight differently-skilled riders. The aim of the game is simply to get through the three different championships on offer. Oh, and get to the bottom of a big hill before your single opponent does. Yes, I did say 'single', which is probably No Fear's first problem; you rarely get to see anybody else on the track, apart from on the first stretch. Whereas Codemasters' own Colin McRae Rally managed to keep you hooked without any opponents on the track due to a highly sophisticated, challenging and intricate game engine, No Fear only manages to keep you mildly interested. Another problem arises when the opponent IS around, as the artificial intelligence is way too aggressive. If you clash with a computer-controlled rider he invariably rides into you, and keeps doing so until he pushes you into one of the many fences, bushes or general obstacles littered around the courses. This becomes highly frustrating as well as making the challenge seem a little false.

The artificial intelligence is way too aggressive



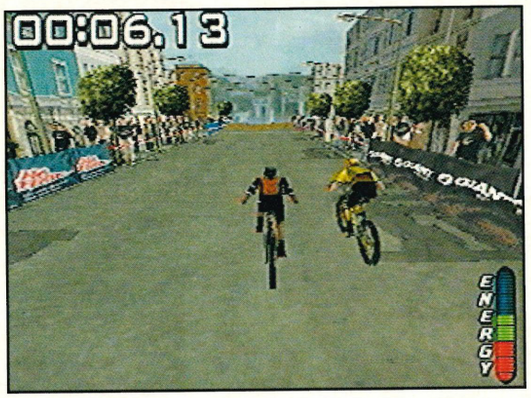
■ Lucky that ramp was there.

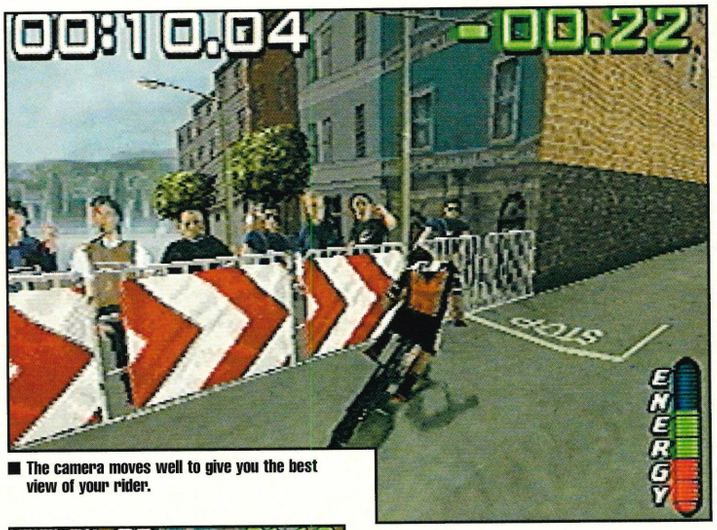


Trick Style

Beat the Amateur Competition and you get access to a trick slope which is basically just a hill filled with ramps and prime trick opportunities. As the stunt controls are so fiddly and hard to pick up, we suggest you stick to simple racing until you beat the Amateur Mode and then come here and practice your stunts. You never know, you might actually be able to pull one off. Then again, maybe not.



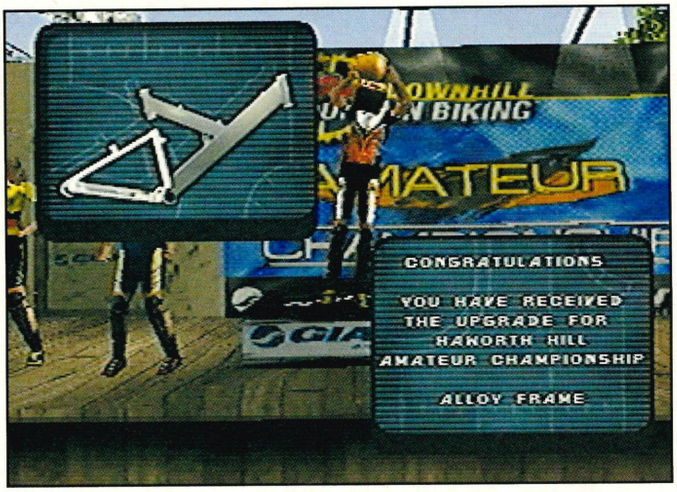


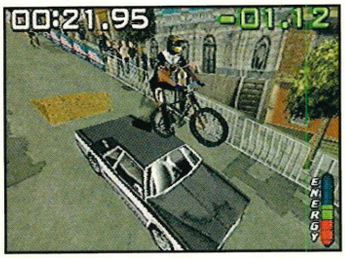


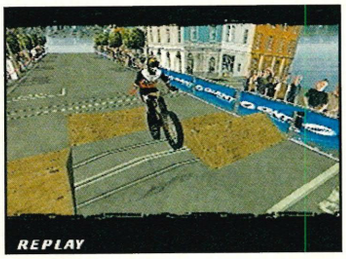
■ The camera moves well to give you the best view of your rider.

Cycle Shop

Although it would be better if you could buy or win new bikes, No Fear does offer an extensive upgrade section. Win certain competitions and you're given bike parts as prizes, then before the next race, you get to change your bike around to make sure you have the best parts for the terrain you're going to race on. In fact, the Upgrade Screen is almost exactly the same as that of Colin McRae Rally, but as the saying goes, if it ain't broke, don't fix it.







Flawed but good; just not Codemasters good

Bike Engine

However, although not up to the single-racer standards of Colin McRae Rally, UDS has done a fine job in creating a fast, fluid and realistic game engine, which, as long as you're on the right course and in the right frame of mind, is very addictive.

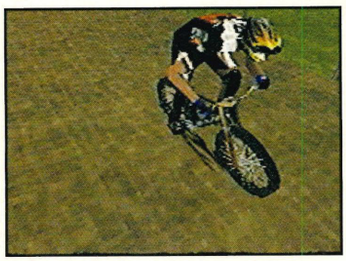
As a mountain bike is pedal-powered, you don't simply hold a button as an accelerator. You have to watch an energy bar that constantly depletes when you're pedalling. Pedal for too long and you slow down, meaning you have to free-wheel to take a rest. This means you have to decide when and where to pedal throughout a course; get it wrong and halfway down you're too tired to be in with a chance to win. Get it right, though, and you can still hit top speeds at the finish. You also have to be very precise and accurate with your braking, as most of the tracks are narrow, steep, devilishly twisty and very bumpy. You don't want to claim air from a jump on a corner, so you have to brake accordingly. This means you generally find yourself dabbing Brake and tapping Accelerate all the way through a race, which makes for interesting and different gameplay.

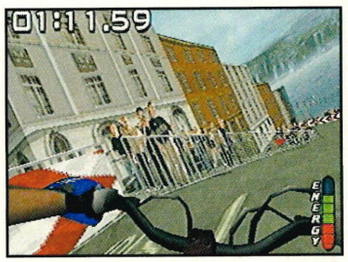
Fast Fear

The competent game engine in No Fear is also backed up with just as competent, and varied, visuals. As I've already mentioned, No Fear runs very fast, although at times this causes the visuals to glitch considerably. The draw-in rate is also affected, meaning much of the time you see parts of the track building itself as you go. This isn't a huge problem, as your eyes are generally glued to your rider and the track immediately in front. There are other graphical annoyances too, particularly the crashes, which are generally hideous-looking and almost always the same. These problems don't make an ugly game, but No Fear isn't the prettiest thing Codemasters have come up with.

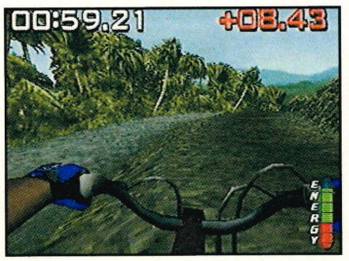
No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking is, I think, one ambition too far for Codemasters. The game does justice to the sport, but does their high standards of quality control no justice at all. It's not a poor game, it just lacks that Codemasters polish we've come to expect. This may be because an out-of-house development team produced it. However, I just think it's a case of ambitions above their station. As a game, though, No Fear Mountain Biking is flawed but good; just not Codemasters good.

Saul Trewern





■ The 'on bike' mode, although daunting at first, is very fast and relatively easy to use.





extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS
Very realistic. Cool sound effects. Solid engine/visuals.	Poor stunt controls. Questionable AI. Can be frustrating.

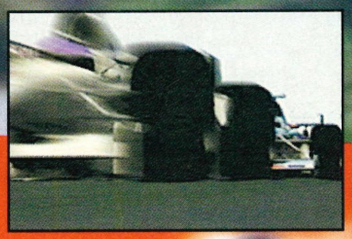
79%

Memory Card | Analogue Pad | Dual Shock | Steering Wheel

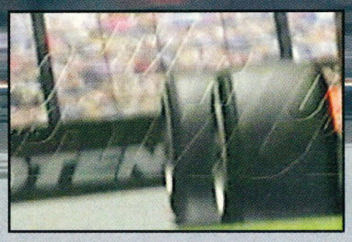
FORMULA ONE '99

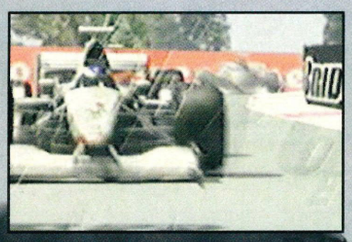
With the Formula One season almost over, Psygnosis give us the chance to relive it. Ian once again drives Schumacher into a wall...

Publisher Psygnosis | **Developer** Studio 33 | **Genre** Driving Game
Released Out Now | **Version** PAL | **Price** £34.99 | **Players** 1-2





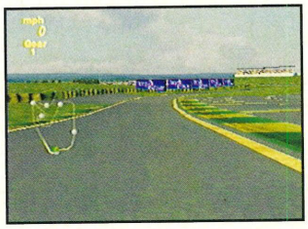


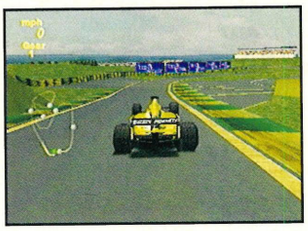


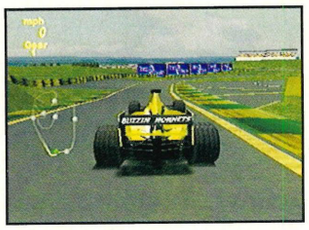


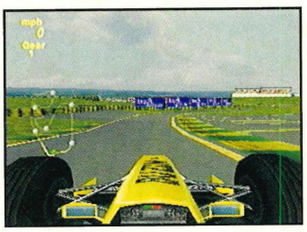
A Matter of Perspective...

There are four viewpoints available in Formula One '99. They're pretty comprehensive, covering the usual in-car, bonnet and chase perspectives, though a camera further away from the car and higher up would be a boon - it's often hard to anticipate corners until you've learned the tracks by heart, and even though this is realistic (real drivers have no choice of viewpoints for obvious reasons), it wouldn't hurt to put one in the game.









Those options in full...

These are the full range of options you can change in Grand Prix mode:

Crash Spin: Can be turned On or Off. This applies to collisions - you can always spin if you drive wide and leave the track.

Damage: Full, Minor or Off. With the damage on Full, you can lose wings and wheels, generally wrecking the car. Minor damage only affects performance.

Laps: Five, Ten, 20 or Full. The Full option gives you the same number of laps as the genuine, real-life race.

Fuel Usage: On or Off. With the Fuel Usage option on, you have to refuel during the race, regardless of how many laps you set.

Weather: Realistic, Rainy, Cloudy or Sunny. Realistic weather mimics the weather conditions experienced at the real-life Grand Prix in question.

AI: Easy, Normal, Hard or Expert. This is basically the skill level, and affects speed as well as driving intelligence.

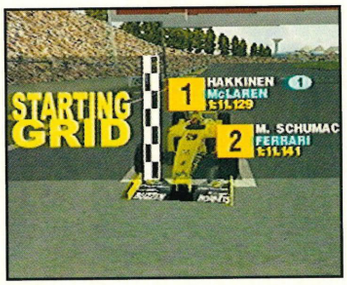
Tyre Wear: On or Off. Again, with this option on, you have to pit in and change tyres.

Flags, Rules: Full Rules, Flags Only or Off. If you set this option to Flags Only, you're told what you did wrong but not penalised. Full Rules imposes penalties.

Failures: Full, Minor or Off. This controls the amount of retirements.

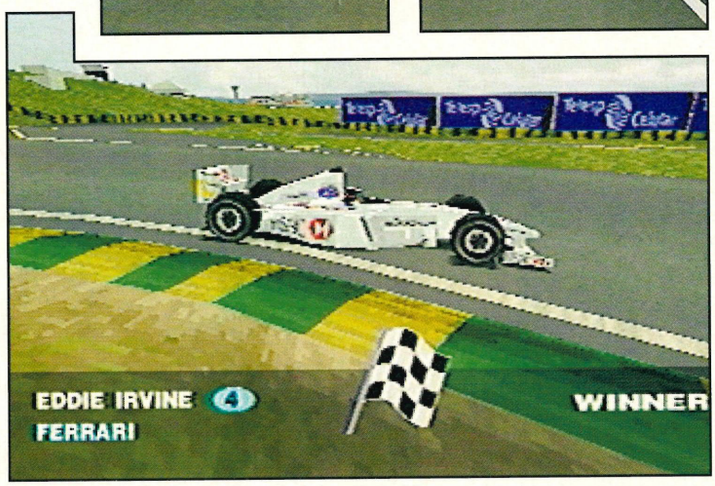
Grid Assist: On or Off. With this option on, you can never jump the lights, incurring a ten-second penalty (if you've got the rules switched on).

Pit Assist: On or Off. With this one on, the CPU takes control of the car as you drive into the pits.

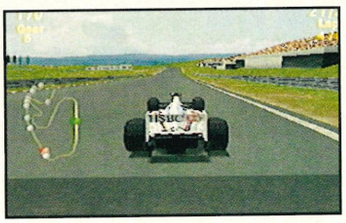


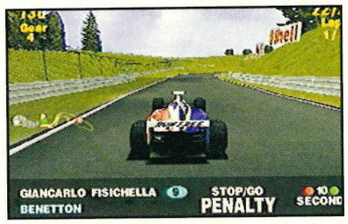
■ It's just like TV...

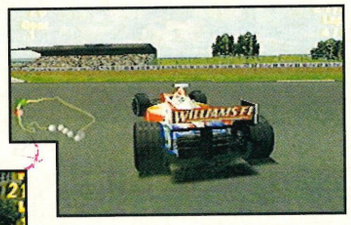




■ Alas, the Stewarts just couldn't match Ferrari for pace...









You know the score. The original Psygnosis Formula One, programmed by Bizarre Creations, pushed back the boundaries of driving sims with its televisual graphics and amazing atmosphere. Alas, it was cursed by some hideous bugs and very un-Formula One-like AI. The sequel, Formula One '97, improved on the original with better (but far from perfect) opponent intelligence and a split-screen two-player mode. However, it was still buggy and pop-up raised its ugly head. Bizarre Creations handed over the reins (or steering wheel) to Visual Sciences for Formula One '98, but they set themselves an impossible task by trying to completely rewrite the engine in nine short months. The result was a graphical backwards step, poor handling and atrocious draw-in, though the opponents behaved themselves better. Now it's time for the '99 game, programmed by Newman-Haas developers Studio 33 - and it's a corker...

Enough history - let's race. F1 '99 offers ALL the drivers and races from this year's F1 season, even down to replacing Michael Schumacher with Mika Salo after the kraut's unfortunate smash at Silverstone. Even Jacques Villeneuve is there - no 'Driver X' nonsense in this game. The circuits, regulations and liveries are accurately reproduced too. The only thing missing is the cigarette ads, but who gives a toss about that?

The handling of the cars is superb. In the dumbed-down Single Race, the game's very lenient with spins and smashes, and the other drivers lack straight-line speed, offering an arcadey experience without ignoring the laws of physics. Slap the game into Grand Prix mode, though, and you're in for the ride of your life.

The handling of the cars is superb

The cars handle like a dream. they're sensitive, but not so twitchy you can't control 'em, and you can make the driving model as harsh or forgiving as you like using the Race Options. You can set up your vehicle to your own requirements too, though most gamers will just plumb for one of the three standard set-ups, which default to the most appropriate for the circuit in question.

I've no idea how realistic the driving is as I've never driven a real F1 car, but it 'feels' right. You're on the edge of your seat on every bend, desperately trying to out-brake your opponent without overshooting into the (very forgiving) gravel traps. It really feels like you're in control of a million pounds-worth of hi-tech hardware. And unless we want the game to be so damned tough it's undrivable, this is enough.

The game's far from easy, though. Expect to spend lots of time on the grass for your first few plays, as you approach bends too fast, brake too late or try to turn and brake at the same time, spinning the car. Never mind - just go into the Race Options and tailor the game to suit. You can always up the realism later, when you're used to finding the racing line and braking points (both very important).

Formula One '99 is the ultimate F1 experience. If you like your motorsports, or just driving games, this is one you'd be barmy to miss.

Ian Osborne

extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS
Super-fast graphics. Superb car handling. Top opponent AI.	Arcade mode's gone. Difficult at first. Limited viewpoints.

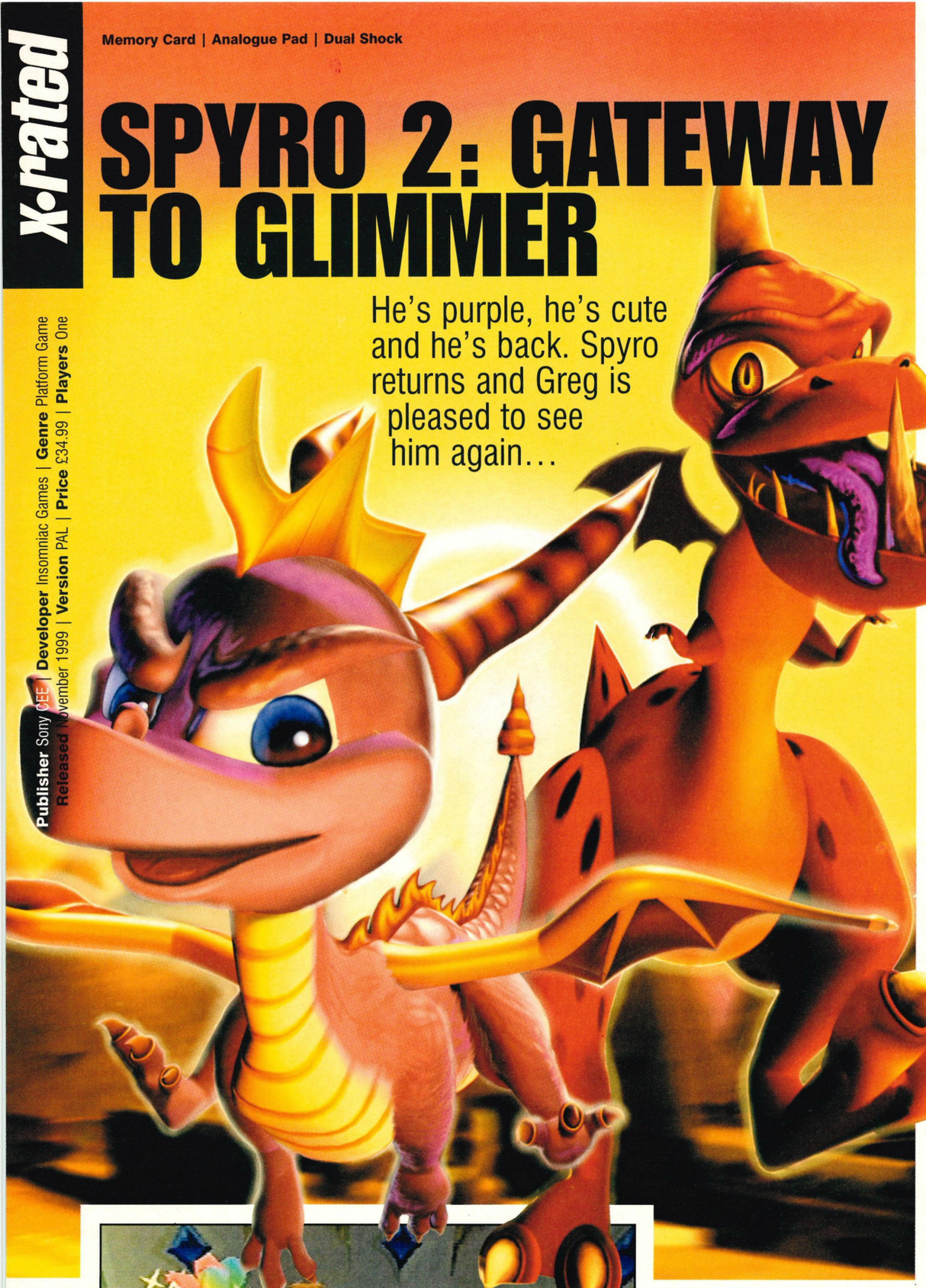
96%

Memory Card | Analogue Pad | Dual Shock

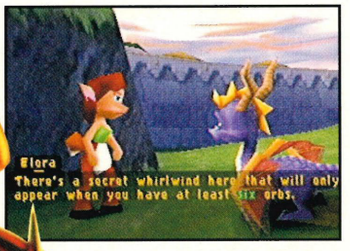
SPYRO 2: GATEWAY TO GLIMMER

He's purple, he's cute and he's back. Spyro returns and Greg is pleased to see him again...

Publisher Sony CEE | **Developer** Insomniac Games | **Genre** Platform Game
Released November 1999 | **Version** PAL | **Price** £34.99 | **Players** One







New Moves

Spyro has renewed his membership of the Dragon-Gym and can now swim, climb and generally do a lot more. The list is long, but includes a burntastic superflame, cheeky invincibility, the ability to carrying bombs and stones for spitting, up, up and soaraway superfly and finally the springboard.









Dragons are so lucky, aren't they? Spending their days wallowing in Autumn mist or blowing fiery smoke rings, these supposedly fearsome creatures may need a new image. Take young Spyro, for example. Cuter than a sweetened Nintendo character, the wee dragon is back, aiming to save the world all over again. This time he was simply trying to enjoy some well-earned rest after his exertions in the first game. Tempted by a seemingly catch-free offer of a holiday, Spyro is unwittingly transported to a world ruled by an evil dragon-hating baddie. Your task is to restore harmony and finally grab some quality vacation time on the beach. OK, so it's not exactly Shakespeare, but the story unwinds throughout the game, doing a solid job of keeping you interested.

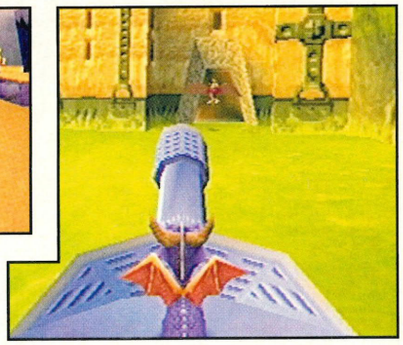
The first things you notice are the high-quality visuals, which, despite the sugar overdose, are superbly

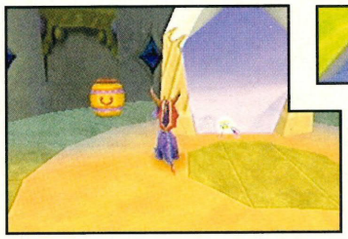
Spyro 2 is a platform fan's dream



■ They're wild, wacky, and er, frozen. Just one of the odd bunch of characters you meet.

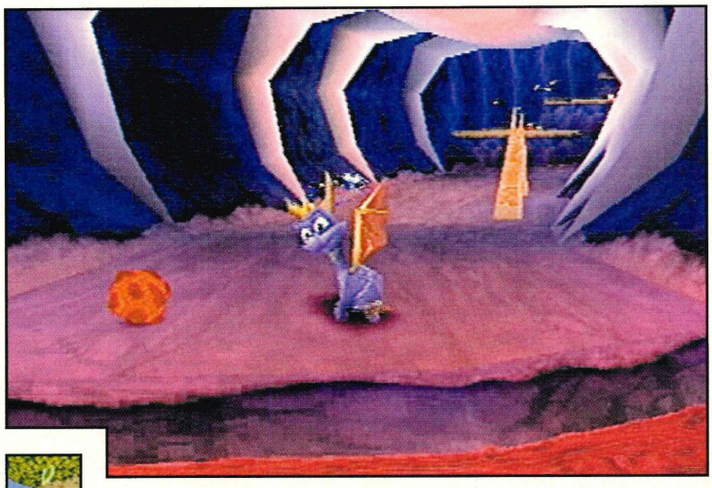


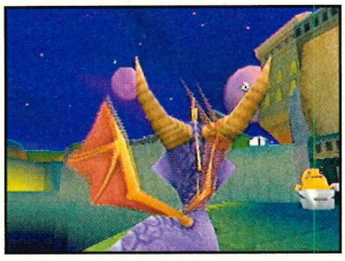














obligatory hub system, which can be attempted in a relatively non-linear manner. You can dip in and out of levels and whilst achieving the primary aim, getting the next. Or, with the wind in your wings, you can explore and get involved in rock-throwing challenges to win the aforementioned orbs. You also need to go back and forth between levels, returning to fully complete the stage when you learn new skills, which are portioned out through the game. From the start, you're eased in gently with the all-American Hunter (tiger) and Elora (goat) helping you learn moves and giving advice. The other characters you meet are too quirky to be loveable, but the amusing cartoony intro/end to levels helps. The baddies are ape/robot standard but, in pure slapstick style, they often start attacking each other when you're out of range, making it easier for you to steam in, nostrils flaming.

Candid Cameras

So far, so good, but are there any problems? 'What about the camera?', I hear you ask. Vitally important in 3D games, the camera here is unfortunately as erratic as most. Spyro walking towards the screen looks great, but does little to help you see where you're going. The viewpoint also wobbles alarmingly on occasion, making those leaps of faith harder than hoped for.

Drunken David-Baileyisms aside, Spyro is a top-notch 3D adventure. Although not yet threatening Mario, Spyro certainly beats off all known Crocodiles and Bandicoots. The variety of addictive tasks threaten your social life, but watch out for periods of intense frustration. Despite its playschool look, Gateway to Glimmer offers a stern test, particularly in the speedway bonus races. However, the sheer amount of things to do, people to see and places to go, combined with the gorgeous graphics, mean Spyro 2 is a platform fan's dream.

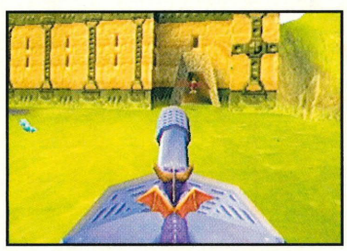
Greg Howson

Gateway to Glimmer's main improvement over the original is in the level design

drawn. Water, hills and skylines fade convincingly into the distance, and everything looks and feels solidly interactive. Spyro himself is a picture of health, with his wings, breath and general demeanour befitting a dragon used to success. Unlike the vulnerable and rather limited creature in the first game, Spyro has now learned all the right moves. The most useful of these is swimming, enabling you to enter some interesting underwater levels. He can now also climb, hover and stomp his numerous foes, making this sequel a far harder and more varied proposition altogether.

Devious Design

Not only is it better looking, but Gateway to Glimmer's main improvement over the original is in the level design. Gone are the straightforward batches of variety-free worlds which characterised the first outing. Instead there are now 30 stages, accessed through the talisman, is easy enough at first, things do get a lot tougher. And that's before you bring in all the sub-quests on each level. These range from rounding up sheep-like creatures to planting seeds in an attempt to smooth the path of true love. Completing these challenges gives you orbs which increase in significance as the game goes on. Confused? You will be, but this freedom to explore is crucial to your enjoyment of the game. For example, on the first level you can simply collect gems before moving on to the



■ It's not all flying and jumping. You get to go on a cannon too.

Characters

They may be cute, but a more motley bunch you struggle to meet. Ripto is the bad guy with the English accent.







extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS
Loads to do.	Erratic camera.
A real looker.	Tougher than old boots.
Decent soundtrack.	Possibly too cute?

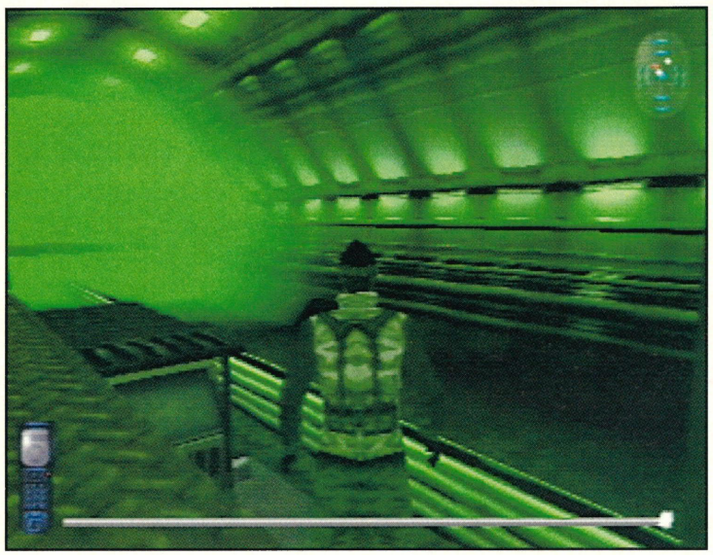
90%

Memory Card | Analogue Pad | Dual Shock

Publisher Infogrames | **Developer** XAP | **Genre** Stealth/Spy Sim
Released Out Now | **Version** PAL | **Price** £34.99 | **Players** One

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

Disguises, gadgets and guns; the game of the film of the TV series is here. Greg sneaks a peek and then self destructs in five seconds...





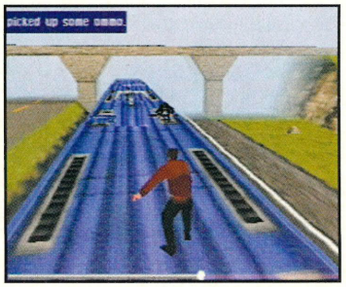


Mission Impossible is a fully paid-up member of the 'gadgets are great' club

What great music this is. You can't beat that inspiring 'dah dah de dah' classic. The tape may well self-destruct, but you're too busy bopping away to notice. This familiar soundtrack sets the scene for some exciting, innovative and, at times, frustrating action. Mission Impossible is an, erm, mission-based stealth-'em-up which mixes the sneakiness of Metal Gear Solid with some commie-bashing GoldenEye atmosphere.

Despite bearing no resemblance (living or dead) to Tom Cruise, you're cast as Ethan Hunt, IMF (Impossible Mission Force) agent, who gets caught up in a sprawling plot full of betrayal, intrigue and facemasks. Just imagine being able to change your face! The possibilities for fun are endless, and that's just the legal ones! In MI, it's the most innovative tool you possess. For example, to complete the very first level, set in typically snowy Russia, you need to assume the identity of the camp commander. Simply KO the commandant, adopt his face as a disguise and get the guards to eat out of your hands, or at least stop shooting at you. How the

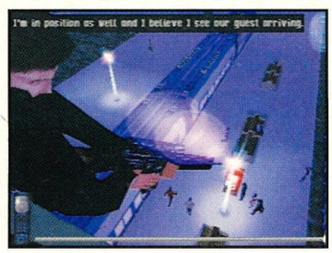




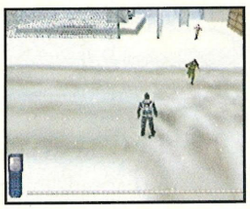
■ Waiter, waiter, there's a spy in my soup (M10)

Wonderful weapons

There are loads of weird and wonderful weapons in Mission impossible. There's a 7.65mm silencer, essential spy weaponry, a sniper rifle to pick 'em off at long range, a dart gun to put the bad guys to sleep and a blowpipe - archaic fun which avoids metal detection. Look out too for gas capsules for devastating chemical carnage in confined areas and explosive gum; chew, stick, boom!



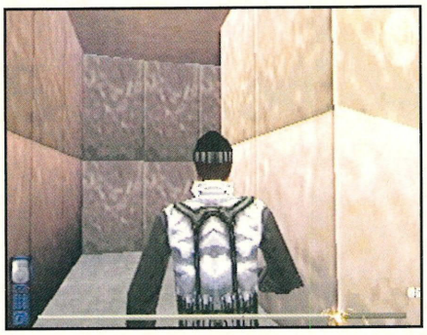


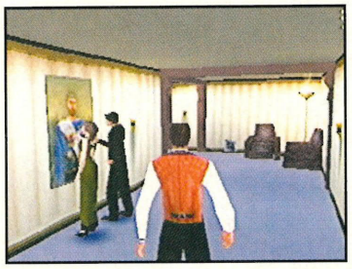




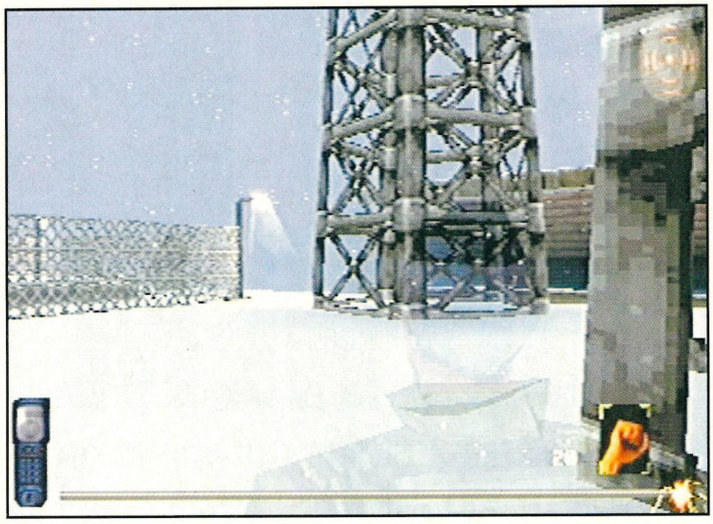
MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE

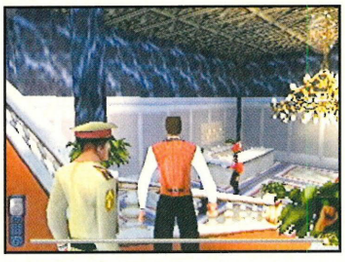












■ Snow, ice and facemasks.

facemaker works isn't fully explained, but why let science get in the way of a story? Suffice to say that previously-hostile guards salute rather than shoot, enabling you to go about your espionage unhindered. On later levels you need to adopt the features of an ambassador's aide, among others.

Bits `n´ Bobs...

In fact, Mission Impossible is a fully paid-up member of the 'gadgets are great' club. From the classic briefcase recorder to the wonderful facemaker, there are over 30 Bond-style goodies to play with, including cameras, night-vision goggles, sensor mines, gas capsules and communication scramblers. And play with them you will, as the struggle to be top spy intensifies.

The N64 version was released last year to muted applause, although it sold well on the title-starved platform. The PlayStation version is more than just a port, as it is not simply content with looking and sounding better. Developers XAP have rewritten a lot of the code, meaning, in many ways, it is a different game. CD-quality music and spot effects have helped the cinematic vibe, but it's the less obvious improvements that make the difference. For example, you can now save mid-level, which helps banish those frustrating restarts which bugged the N64 version.

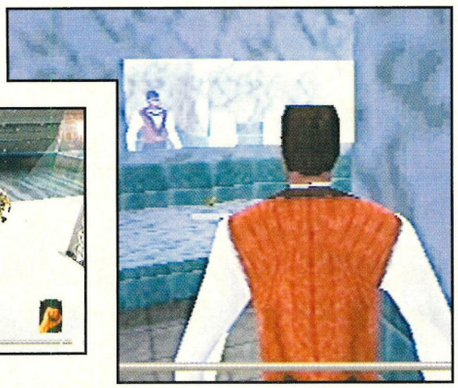
Almost Impossible?

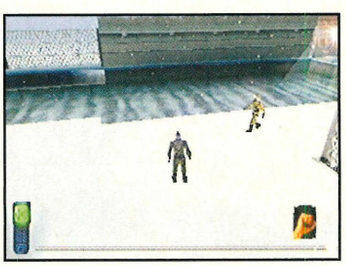
But enough comparison! How does it play? Pretty well, but the difficulty level, although not being impossible, is set high. Take the first snowy level, for example. Going in all guns blazing may seem like a good idea, but it's unlikely to get you very far. Much better to sneak around in disguise and avoid most of the guards. This is just the first level, with the other 19 offering a similar amount of variety. New tactics are needed for each section, although it's disconcerting to veer from sauntering party guest to underground nerve-gas dodger in consecutive levels. As you'd expect, this variety means it takes a while to get accustomed to each mission. Luckily there are some very handy hints provided, although in some cases these are TOO useful. A helpful clue is appreciated, but when you're often told exactly what to do things are getting a bit out of hand. Entering the toilet to be informed 'this is a good place to secretly knock someone out' is fine, but then any satisfaction gained when actually doing this is lost. Anyway, I thought secret agents were clever enough to work things out of their own accord?

Despite the loose controls and rigid objectives, this satisfying spy action is very playable

Mission Impossible is at times absorbing, and at times frustrating, but always interesting. The variety of levels is superb, with rope dangling and Waterloo style sniping just part of it. Despite the loose controls and rigid objectives, this satisfying spy action is very playable and, should you choose to accept it, offers plenty of gadget-'n'-guns enjoyment.

Greg Howson





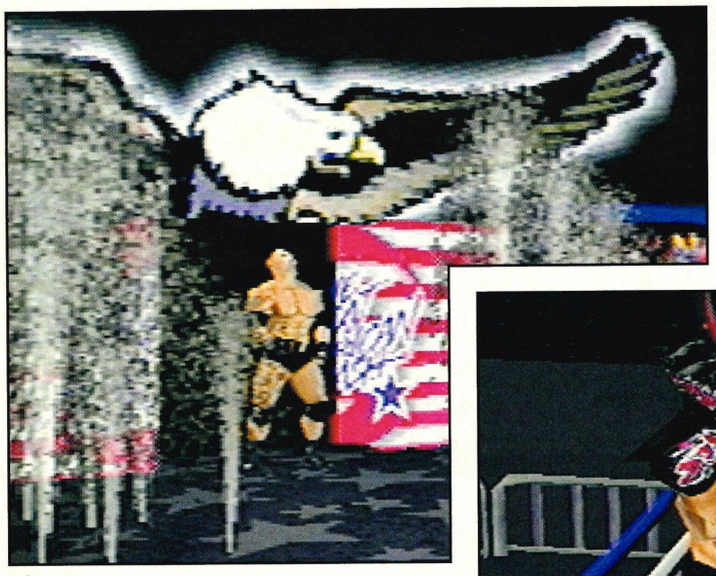
■ Ambassador, you really spoil us

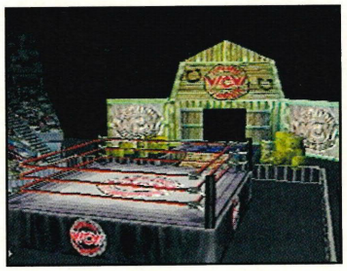
extreme

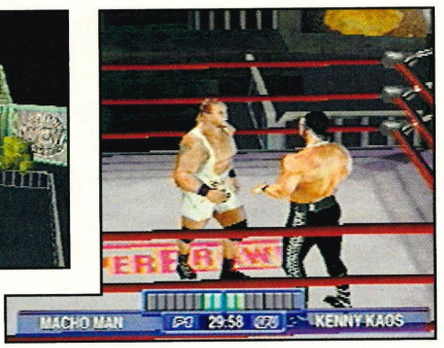
UPPERS	DOWNERS
Lots to do and see. Varied missions. Great to look and listen to.	Very tough in places. Controls can be fiddly. No sign of Nicole Kidman.

85%

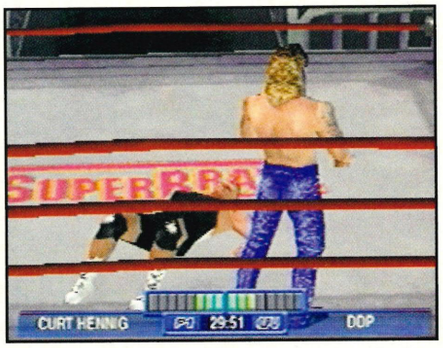
Memory Card | Analogue Pad | Dual Shock | Multi Tap











WCW MAYHEM

Publisher Electronic Arts | **Developer** Kodiak | **Genre** Sports
Released Out Now | **Version** PAL | **Price** £34.99 | **Players** 1-4

Grega-Mania's gonna run wiii-ld on ya as 'Hollywood' Howson takes a look at EA's first wrestling game...

Wrestling games are big. They are big sellers and the stars themselves are very large, with names like Diamond Dallas Page and Hollywood Hogan. This cross between sport and movie is huge in the US, as well as increasing in popularity over here, although Giant Haystacks is nowhere to be seen. EA's first foray into the lucrative wrestling market is as typically stylish and comprehensive as you'd expect.

The sport is all about licensing and WCW is a good one to have. Sixty of the best and most popular fighters are here, including Goldberg, Konnan and Sting who, incidentally, is no relation to our favourite Geordie crooner. Each participant has his own understated intro, which is subtle and full of respect for his opponent. Tosh, of course; the wrestlers enter the venue with a high dose of brash and dodgy guitar rawk. Still, it gets you in the mood for some serious rope-pummelling action.

Chairshots...

However, what really sets this apart from its competitors are the options, storyline and out-of-ring action. Yes, that's right; in WCW-Mayhem you get to leave the ring and continue battering each other on the stage and even into the locker rooms. And you won't be clouting each other with used shampoo bottles either. In a slapstick style, you get to use chairs and even cattle prods, but be careful as prolonged use of said items allows your opponent to reverse the effects. The wrestling equivalent of Yoda would no doubt advise you to 'use chair wisely you must', so heed the warning.

Being of the American variety, there are numerous options included to play around with. You can go for the straight Championship Mode or for a number of special pay-per-view events. There is also tag-team and, of course, some big multiplayer action.

Wrestlers are generally an unattractive bunch, but the graphics here do a fairly good job. Although misshapen when standing still, with their oddly-formed wrists, the motion-captured stars move well around the ring. There are some particularly nice swooping camera shots which show off the moves, and generally you won't find many better looking wrestling titles. While you are fighting, there's plenty of authentically inane dialogue from the commentators to enthral you. Despite the lack of handbag-toting grannies, the chanting crowd, who both boo and cheer, contributes to a decent atmosphere.

If you have any interest in the sport at all, WCW is recommended

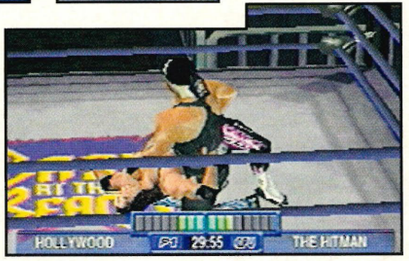
Come Wrastlin'

Control-wise, WCW plays very fast and arcadey. It is more like a



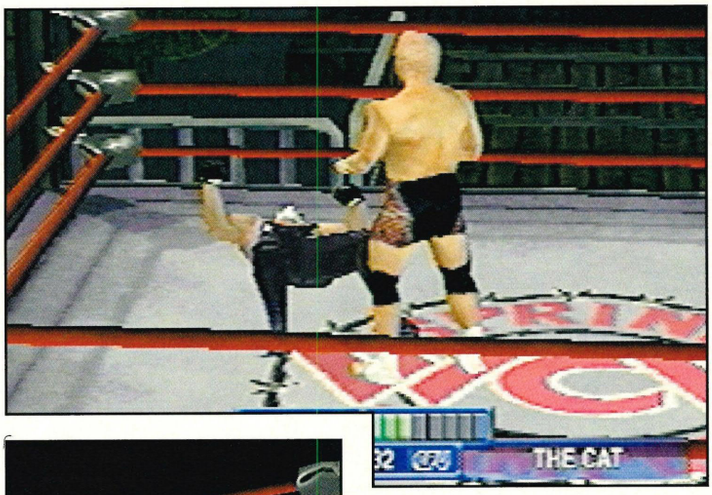






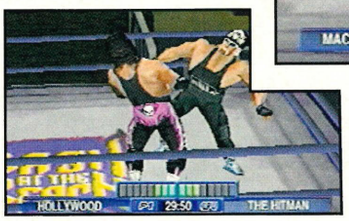


■ Don't tell me what he's doing - I just don't wanna know...

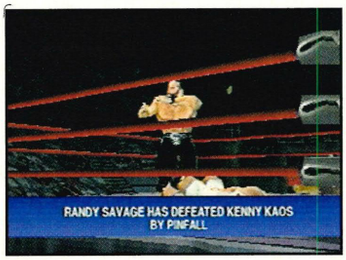








■ Check out those ridiculous wrists...



traditional beat-'em-up in some ways, with plenty of instinctive moves and avoidance rather than strategically planning your next move as in other titles. Success is all down to speed and who can get the first move in, although you can reverse your opponent's move if you're quick enough. There are no ten-button special moves to learn here, so you can just get stuck in and grapple. Your progress is shown by a momentum meter, which measures your success. As you execute good move after good move, the bar rises up to a point where you are able to finish off your adversary. Although innovative, it does get annoying at times, especially when you would like a clearer idea of your opponent's state.

Create a Wrestler is the Frankenstein option, allowing you to tinker where nature fears to tread. Whilst not as comprehensive as Acclaim's WWF Attitude effort, you're free to do your worst and mould a wrestler as you see fit. It does add something to the game, but its limited options mean it is not nearly as much fun as in other wrestling titles.

The main problem with WCW is the limited AI of the computer opponents. Often resorting to taunts rather than clambering out of the ring after you, their stupidity makes it frustrating going at times. Despite this flaw, WCW is a decent grapple-'em-up with enough options, razzmatazz and moves to appeal to wrestling fans. The out-of-ring shenanigans are undoubtedly the highlight, and if you have any interest in the sport at all, WCW is recommended.

Greg Howson

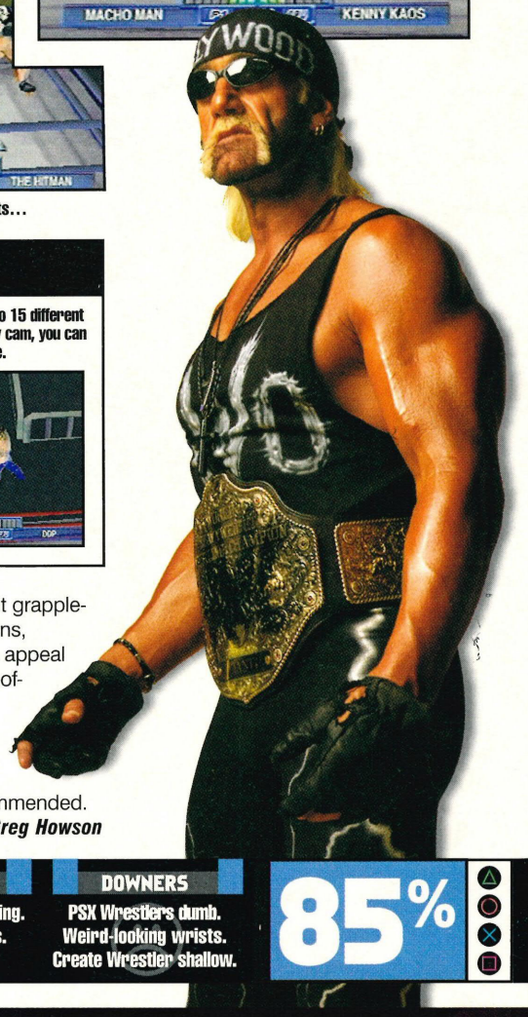
Out of the Ring

WCW Mayhem allows you to get out of the ring and continue your brawl outside. You can go to 15 different backstage areas, including garages, changing rooms and toilets! Viewed through the security cam, you can whack your opponent with such items as chairs, baseball bats and even the kitchen sink. Nice.





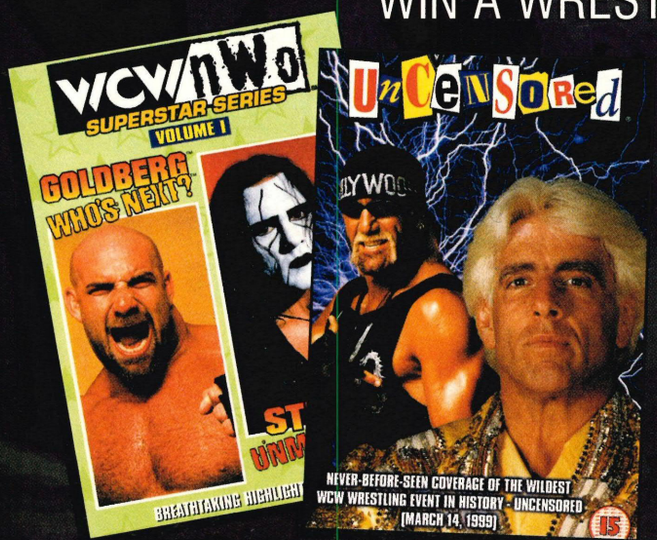




extreme	UPPERS	DOWNERS	
	Getting out of the ring. Feel those moves. Looks great.	PSX Wrestlers dumb. Weird-looking wrists. Create Wrestler shallow.	85%

COMPETITION!

WIN A WRESTLING VIDEO OR A COPY OF THE GAME!



To celebrate the release of WCW Uncensored and Superstar Series: Goldberg and Sting on video, we've teamed up with Warners and Electronic Arts and have one of each and also a copy of the WCW Mayhem game to give away.

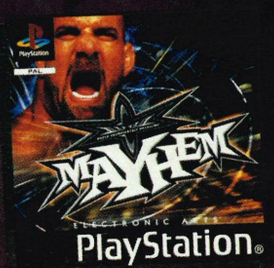
Our lucky winner will receive WCW Mayhem, with two runners-up getting WCW Uncensored (which is in the shops now) and WCW Superstar Series: Goldberg and Sting (released on 15th November) respectively.

To stand a chance of winning one of these excellent prizes, just answer this simple question:

What do the initials WCW stand for?

Answers on a postcard to:
Get the Pinfall Competition,
extreme PlayStation,
22 Strand Street,
Poole,
Dorset
BH15 1SB

Entries that arrive after 24th of November will be wrestled into the bin.
You must be over 15 years old to enter this competition.
It is illegal to falsify your age.



Memory Card | Analogue Pad | Dual Shock | Multi Tap

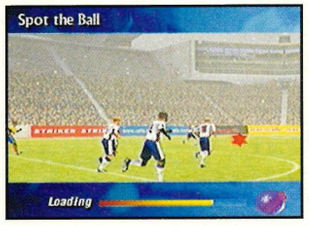
UEFA STRIKER

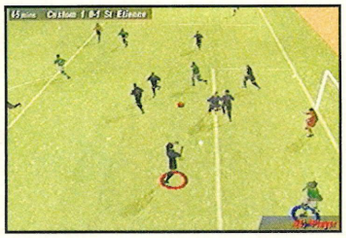
Rage Software's 16-bit classic Striker makes a welcome return to the football foray. And Saul gets to review it...

Publisher Infogrames | **Developer** Rage Software | **Genre** Sports Sim | **Released** November 1999 | **Version** PAL | **Price** £39.99 | **Players** 1-2

Spot the ball

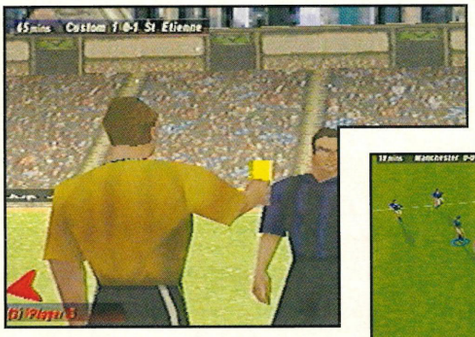
The loading screen gives you the chance to play Spot the Ball. If you get it right, you're given a code that opens new areas in the game. This could be extra abilities or new Classic Matches.





Being a huge fan of the original Striker, I was a little dubious as to the thinking behind this PlayStation version. It only took me five minutes of play to realise, though, that UEFA Striker is no cash cow, and is in fact a brand new game, simply influenced by the classic Striker. Which means we have a game that feels like Striker, is as fast as (if not faster than) Striker and with graphics and gameplay elements that the 16-bit machines could never hope to achieve. And it rocks!

Football games may be two-a-penny in the golden years of the PlayStation, but there are only a handful that really offer a satisfying gameplay experience and a realistic simulation of the world's favourite game. See World Cup '98, Michael Owen's World League Soccer and ISS Pro for real quality. Now UEFA Striker joins these three great games as one of, if not the, best football game ever.



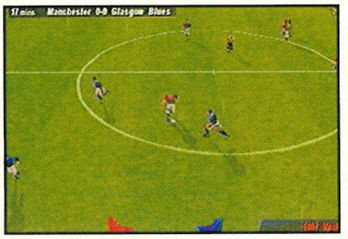
■ Getting a Yellow Card is a rare occurrence in UEFA due to the excellent controls.

Realistically Fluent

Why? It's down to providing a realistic, fluent and exciting recreation of the game. The control

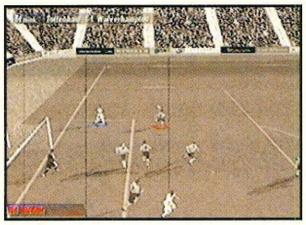
The controls really let you do what you want

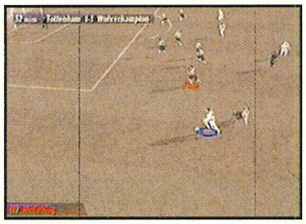




Classic Matches

The Classic Matches section allows you to take part in some of the most memorable matches from the UEFA Cup's history. You don't actually play the whole match, though; instead you're given a scenario that you have to come back from, eg. your team's 2-0 down at half time. Make sure you win. Oh, and it's all done in black and white movie-style film. Even if the match is from the Seventies!

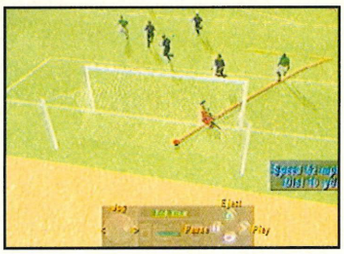


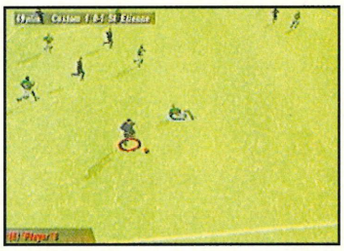


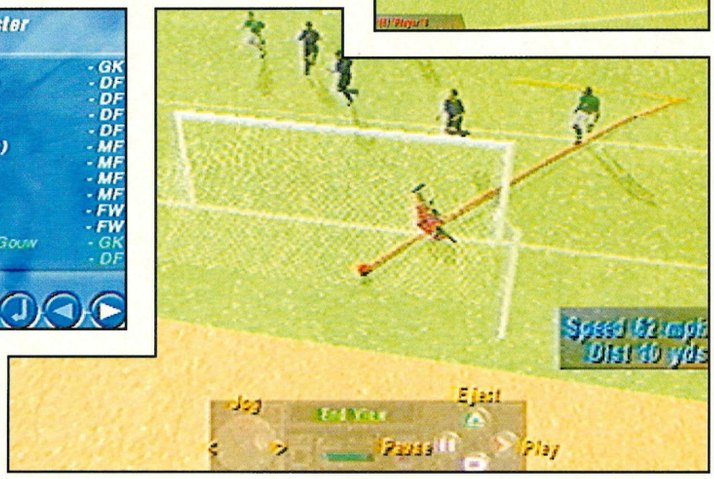












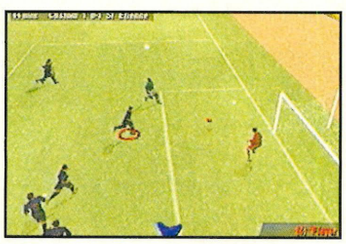
■ **The best football game replays ever? Loads of time, camera angles and any speed. Cool.**

system has been designed to offer several layers of depth, meaning beginners can take part in a tight and playable match while old hands can make a mockery of the best teams around. It's simple stuff, though; kick, pass, shoot, cross and speed-up are the main controls. It's how your input is received by the game that really shines. You want to pass out to a man on the wing, but another of your players is in the way? Simple - just kick the ball a little harder and put a little direction on it and the job is done. How about letting the ball run past you, circling a defender and collecting it to shoot on goal? Even simpler - move slightly, run, collect the ball and shoot away. The controls really let you do what you want, and although you do need to learn the subtleties of this almost-perfect control system, you can still dive in and have a great match from the start.

It truly deserves a place alongside the PSX footballing greats

Ahead Of The Field

UEFA Striker is also ahead of the field in the graphical department. And most notable here is the way the players look and move. Every animation is near-perfect (no missing frames as in most soccer games), and the fluidity of the player movements has to be seen to be believed. This actually helps you play the game. Most football games have a 'tackle and hope' system, but UEFA Striker allows you to judge your tackles perfectly due to the amount of detail on screen, which in turn means you don't commit fouls every other tackle and end up with half your team being sent off before the end of the match.



On top of the graphical detail, UEFA Striker also manages to create a cup final-like atmosphere with each game. And although this isn't incredibly important to making a football game great, the on-the-ball commentary and roar of the crowd certainly help in providing a real footballing experience.

The only real problem with UEFA Striker isthat, great as the gameplay is, the lack of teams (especially international sides) may mean it only appeals to the real football fan. The teams on offer are only those in this year's and past UEFA Cup competitions. I know this doesn't detract from the gameplay, but non-football fans would surely want a wider scope of teams.

Still, even though I'm not a great football fan, I'm enamoured with UEFA Striker. With its superlative control system, incredibly good-looking and detailed graphics and a general all-round feel of polish, it truly deserves a place alongside the PSX footballing greats. It's got its work cut out in the following few months, though, with FIFA 2000 and ISS Evolution on the way. But my money is on UEFA Striker doing exactly what the original Striker did and blowing the competition away.

Saul Trewern

Soccer School

The Training and Certification Section allows you to learn all the skills then put them into practice over several set challenges. If you beat the challenges, you gain certain attributes and new areas in the game open up.





extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS
Superb controls. Crisp graphics. Realistic play.	Lack of teams. Very hard. Man Utd.

93%

Memory Card | Analogue Pad | Dual Shock

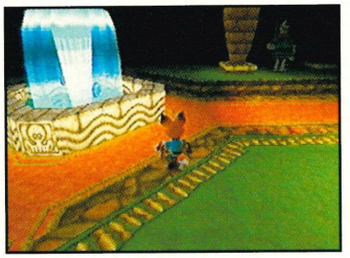
KINGSLEY'S ADVENTURE

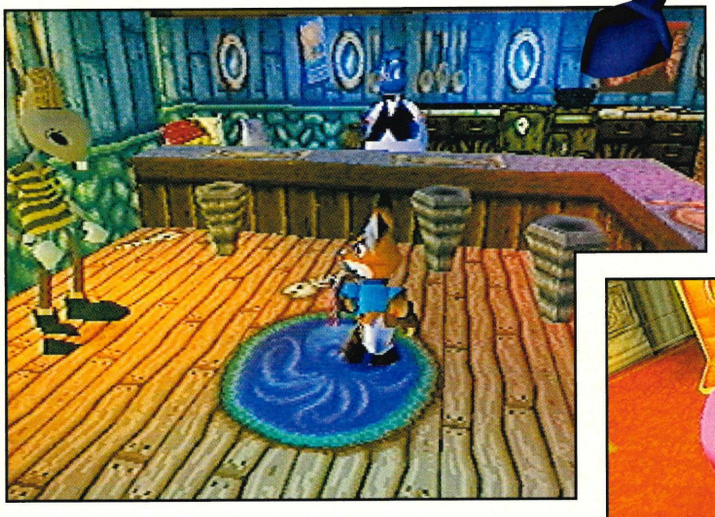
Publisher Psygnosis | **Developer** Psygnosis | **Genre** 3D Platformer
Released Out Now | **Version** PAL | **Price** £34.99 | **Players** One

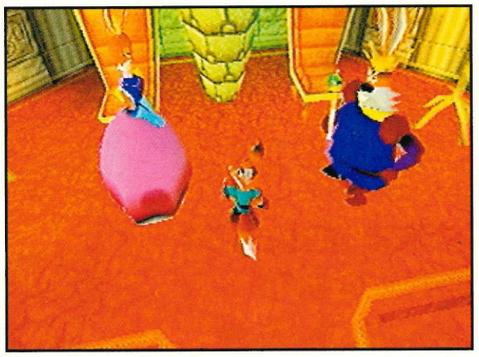
"Countryside dwellers, put your pack of hounds and blood-red jackets away!", implores Christian. "This quick, brown fox is actually your furry friend"...



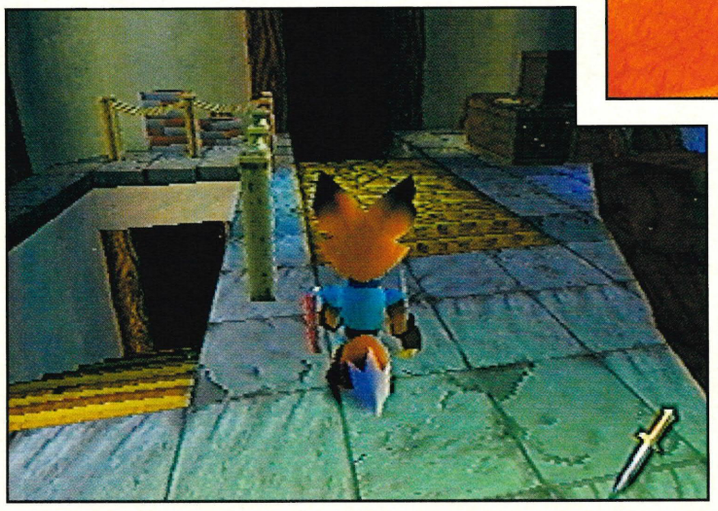
Once upon some time or other there was a young and heroic fox named Kingsley. An appropriate name as it turns out, as he was the cub Prince Regent of the Fruit Kingdom, an idyllic and presumably fructose-rich domain. However, his regal parents could not keep the fact that he was actually an adopted child from the young dustbin-rummager for long. They were quite obviously from another species, so they told him of his real father, a True Knight of high nobility who unfortunately disappeared before Kingsley could get to know him (and probably hate his taste in music). Now he is of a reasonable age, the diminutive chicken-worrier is determined to set out and find his absent old man (with or without help from the Child Support Agency), righting wrongs and injustices on the way and hopefully avoiding anyone with a bugle.







■ The King and Queen. Quite obviously lupine, not at all fox-like.



Crazy Like a Wossname

Luke Skywalker/Darth Vader scenario similarities may abound, yet Kingsley's Adventure is not a major cultural event but a workmanlike (if inoffensive) kind of Junior Tomb Raider, luxuriant with anthropomorphised animal characters and nursery-slope learning curves. The small-fry hero is no Solid Snake. His stubby wee arms make his fighting arc somewhat unimpressive, endangering only kneecaps within his itsy-bitsy reach, although he can defend himself with a trusty buckler shield and pop off

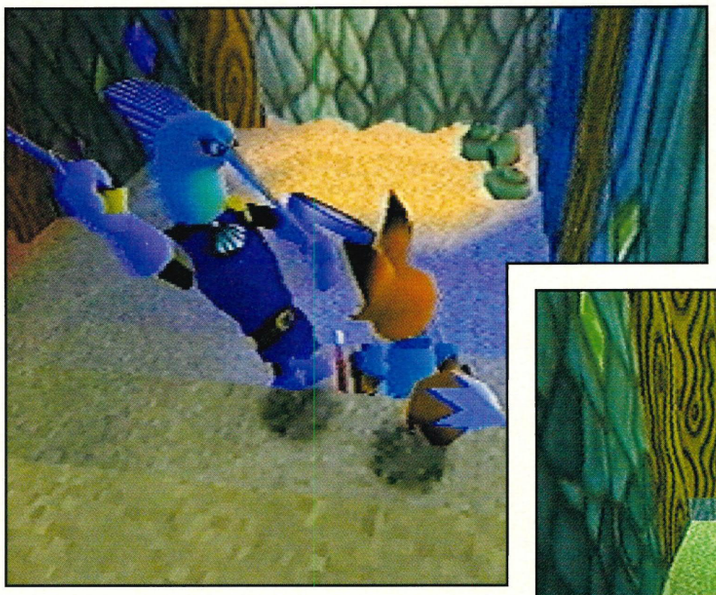
That's the way to do it!

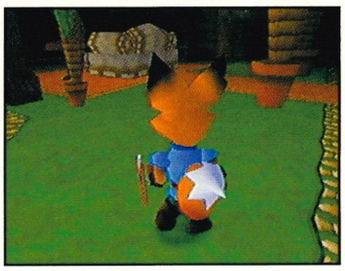
The intro sequence to Kingsley is told in a mildly original Punch and Judy fashion, with paper hand puppets representing the heroic Kingsley and his villainous canine nemesis, Bad Custard. 'He's behind you!' - or something...



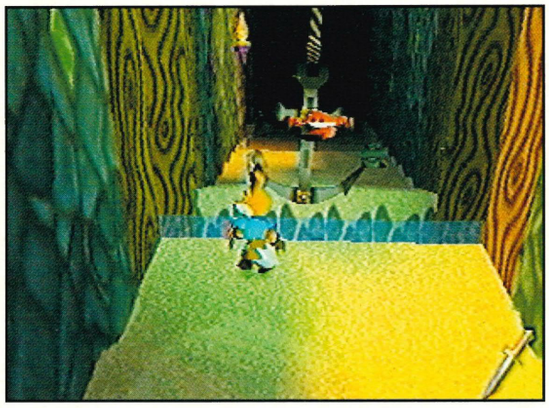


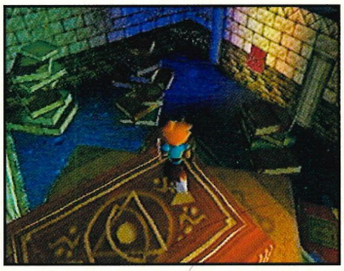












■ The library is full of books that are nearly as big as Kingsley, for some dim reason...



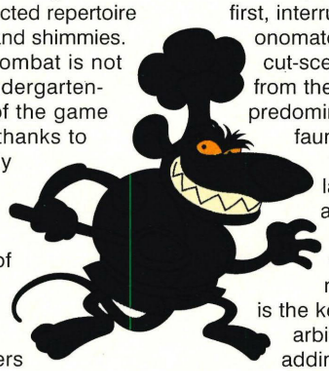


■ It's not only festival-goers and foreign students that wear silly floppy hats, y'know.

crossbow bolts at more distant targets. He's taught these skills by a wizened septuagenarian badger through a series of training rooms that allow even those kids whose concentration has been fried by too many E-numbers to get to grips with the expected repertoire of fighting moves and shimmies.

Hand-to-hand combat is not as easy as the kindergarten-level positioning of the game suggests, mainly thanks to Kingsley's painfully slow speed of rotation and the surprisingly relentless nature of his assailants. These range from predatory cellar spiders and lobsters (which remorselessly chase you up steps and along corridors, but can be seen off by putting the boot in), through to vicious martial sea horses and a zoo-load of other nasties. Being struck isn't too troubling as the life system is set at a gentle five strikes for each of the five lives you initially have. Extra energy is often released when an enemy is vanquished too, so the war tends to be one of steady attrition that keeps the level of frustration suitable for even the most spoiled of brats.

The puzzle elements are accordingly kept at to a Teletubbies-pleasing difficulty at first, interrupted regularly by onomatopoeic Pingu-style cut-scene conversation from the supporting cast of predominantly friendly fauna, including the marine pub landlord Briny Jim and No-Beard, a crap dolphin pirate wannabe. A necessary linearity is the keynote, with arbitrary coin-collecting adding to an effectively inconsequential score. Grown-up players will ho-hum without doubt; those under-tens not out joyriding or catching meningitis should prove less cynical.



It's gladdening that Psygnosis have concentrated on keeping the gameplay fluffy rather than expending energy going for empty visual flashiness

For Fox Sake...

While this long-time coming and low-profile title was obviously never intended to push back the frontiers of videogaming, it's still a technically adequate effort, although there's a liberal use of fogging to disguise what must be a dire case of pop-up (even indoors). Other gripes include some recurring and cavalier polygon clipping when character models get too close to one another and the troubling manner in which the graphical standard takes a sudden nose-dive from the second level onwards (in particular the shoddy 'waves lapping' animation that jerks up and down the seashore in a mere three steps).

The in-game loading is shocking for a 1999-era game, necessitating a regular blank screen even when just walking down an ordinary corridor. Whether Little Johnny will be bothered by this is open to question, but it's gladdening that Psygnosis have concentrated on keeping the gameplay fluffy rather than expending energy going for empty visual flashiness, as seen in their other notorious 'it's for kids!' game Rascal (the title that heralded the scouse publishing house's rapid fall from grace, from which they are only just beginning to recover).

If you need a convenient Christmas present for your console-owning little cousins, this will no doubt have been discounted to a more palatable price by then, but in the meantime, hang on to your pennies for the undoubtedly higher production values and slinkier gameplay of Spyro 2.

Christian Slater



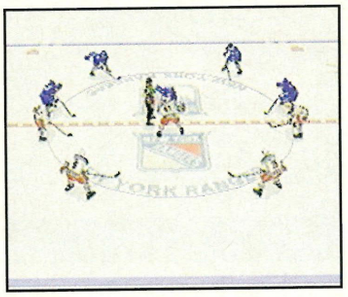
■ Being attacked by an armoured sea horse is no fun, despite their hermaphrodite nature.

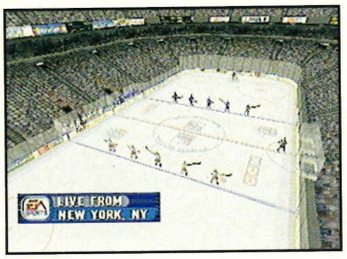
extreme

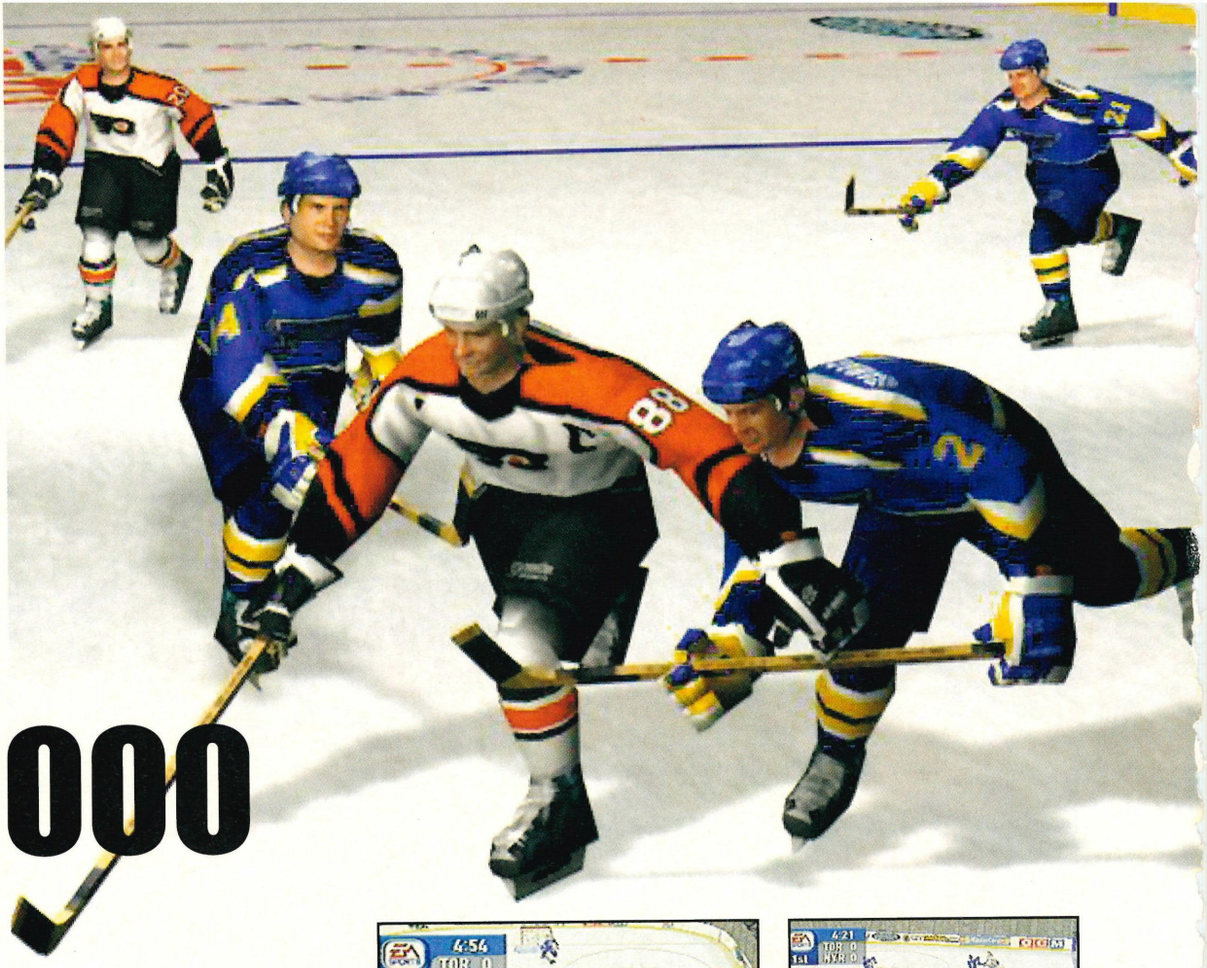
UPPERS	DOWNERS
Better than Rascal.	Awful recurrent loading.
Reasonably playable.	Rough-edged graphics.
Bound to end up cheap.	Only for the little people.

70%

Memory Card | Analogue Pad
Dual Shock | Multi Tap







NHL 2000

Publisher Electronic Arts | **Developer** EA Sports | **Genre** Sports Sim
Released October 1999 | **Version** PAL | **Price** £39.99 | **Players** 1-8

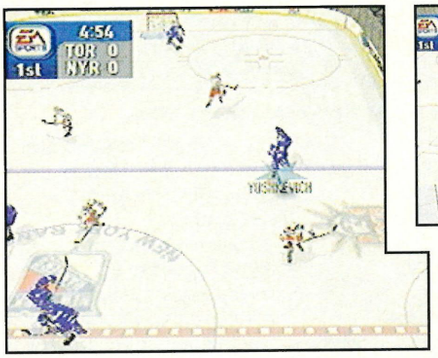
Ice Hockey: A sport close to Christian's heart. Or was that croquet?

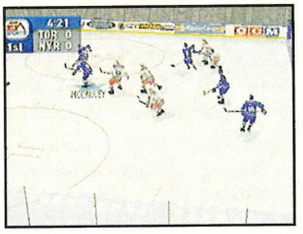
Lawks-a-lordy, is it that time of the year already? Another wave of Identikit NHL, NBA and NFLs come a-rollin' in from the land of weak beer and massacre-inviting gun laws, and we poor journo scum in doughty Blighty get to play every bleedin' one of them.

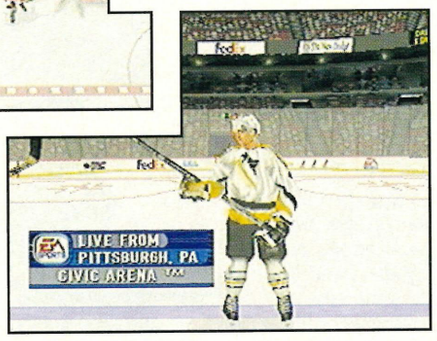
As you might expect, Electronic Arts is the McDonalds of this phenomenon, their legion of heavyweight sports licences and dubious 'brands' getting the inevitable annual sequelisation thanks to the conservative tastes of the Yanks. Most of them get released on these shores as well, despite their niche appeal. Like soccer games, the technical and gameplay innovation has virtually ground to a halt, with the effort going into atmosphere-creating visual cosmetics and a grindingly accurate roster of real-life players, authentic commentators and so on. The usual dapper EA front end leads into a surprisingly glacial loading period before the rink-based action bullies off proper, allowing you and up to seven other ice hockey-loving friends (is this possible?) to partake in some teeth-smashing puckery.

Ice, Ice, Baby...

Well, no surprises here either. The sport translates better than basketball, but not as nicely as football. Most of the rules need to be disabled to make the game fun (tellingly, these are switched off at default), and getting a shot on target and past a goalie who is basically the same width as the goal seems to be arbitrary, based on luck rather than skill. That aside, the flow of play is fluid, the players look the part and there are enough camera angles to make even a coked-up BBC producer happy.





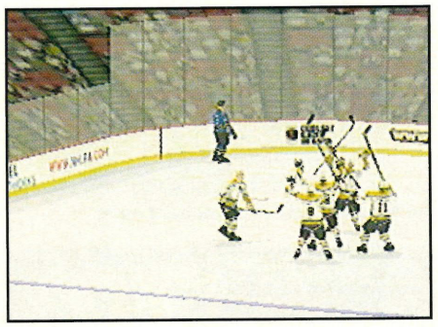


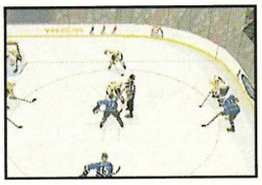
Like the real game, however, the most entertaining portion is when blind, ugly violence flares and two players duke it out to the crowd's intense delight. NHL 2000 provides for this eventuality, with a dedicated fighting sub-game that's more akin to Track and Field button-bashing than Tekken, but provides a welcome cheap thrill. The all-important ambience is created through nice echoey rink sounds, suitably inane tannoy announcements and the exclamatory observations of the commentators, although these seem to have some kind of transatlantic satellite delay problem, leading to your slapshots being vocally admired a dramatic pause after they've actually been slapped.

Uncharacteristically for Electronic Arts games, the soundtrack isn't a brace of squalling rock fodder but a tastefully assembled ensemble of trendy dance-type tunes that may well have been selected to specifically appeal to a European audience, including a no-doubt expensive track from Garbage, rambunctious drum and bass, sophisticated house and bouncy big beat. If you're a home-grown ice hockey fan this is probably up your street, but the mainstream player will be itching for something with more direct playability.

Christian Slater

If you're a home-grown ice hockey fan this is probably up your street







■ Here, the team of armoured and dentally-challenged brutes celebrate perforating the goalie's spleen.

extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS	
Smart soundtrack. Option-tastic. The fighting is funny.	Sloppy seconds again. Not a visual feast. Typical plasticky EA sheen.	75%

Memory Card | Analogue Pad | Dual Shock

Publisher JVC | **Developer** Taito | **Genre** Puzzle Game
Released October 1999 | **Version** PAL | **Price** £29.99 | **Players** 1-2

POP N' POP

Time for Dave to get his thinking cap on, as he tackles this mischievous puzzler inspired by Rainbow Islands and Bubble Bobble...

Let me tell you a story...

The main body of Pop n' Pop's gameplay is centred around the story of a girl who the characters come across whilst on their way home from the park. Her name is Princess Lena and she reveals an evil king is attempting to conquer the world with evil monsters. It's up to you to pass the levels and defeat the monsters at the end of each stage.



No, it's not about Pringles, but balloons. And this incredibly addictive puzzle game from JVC is designed by the same man behind that retro classic, Space Invaders.

A colourful cartoon adventure, Pop n' Pop features columns of different-coloured balloons hanging underneath descending clouds, with a line at the base of the screen which they mustn't cross. You take control of a character heralding from New Zealand Story, Rainbow Islands or Bubble Bobble, and are given two balloons in each shot to fire at the existing balloons. If you manage to connect three balloons of the same colour, they explode and disappear. It is possible to rotate the balloons before firing them, to achieve their best position on the grid.

Be warned - this game is incredibly simple, yet also surprisingly involving. It's the sort of game you leap out of bed to play, and stay up until 2am retrying the same screen.

This is one of our favourite games of the year



■ Mind your 'P's and 'Q's; this game's one 'I' of an experience - OK?





The levels are surprisingly varied, as different kinds of balloons, enemies firing at you or varying balloon formations keep you interested for hours. There are balloons for freezing time, for turning all balloons in the same column that colour and balloons that can only be destroyed by surrounding them with regular ones. This game comes complete with a variety of game modes and loads of levels within each mode. The two-player option allows for an interesting slant on the game, and this can be perfected by playing against the CPU. The Challenge Mode has 100 puzzles that must be completed within a limited number of moves; sort of like Tetris against the clock.

Bustin´ Bubbles

Titles such as this prove that gameplay is by far the most important factor in a game, and other developers could do a lot worse than follow Taito's lead. The graphics are basic to the extent that they appear deliberately simple, just reinforcing the power of the gameplay. The sound too may seem repetitive after a while, but just turn the volume down and get involved. You find it very difficult to put the joypad down.

This game is brilliantly easy to get to grips with, but can become infuriatingly hard as you progress. In the Story Mode, you become increasingly aware as you reach Level K and onwards that match tactics must be employed to be successful. Not only do you begin to search for combinations and chain reactions, but you have to actively attack specific areas first in order to reduce the load in other areas.

This is one of our favourite games of the year, reintroducing the classic gameplay elements from old formats and proving they can still be successful today. The only real problem with this game is the effect it has on your social life.

David Foggon

extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS
Incredibly addictive.	Too addictive.
Brilliantly simple.	Poor graphics.
Superb gameplay.	Makes you angry.

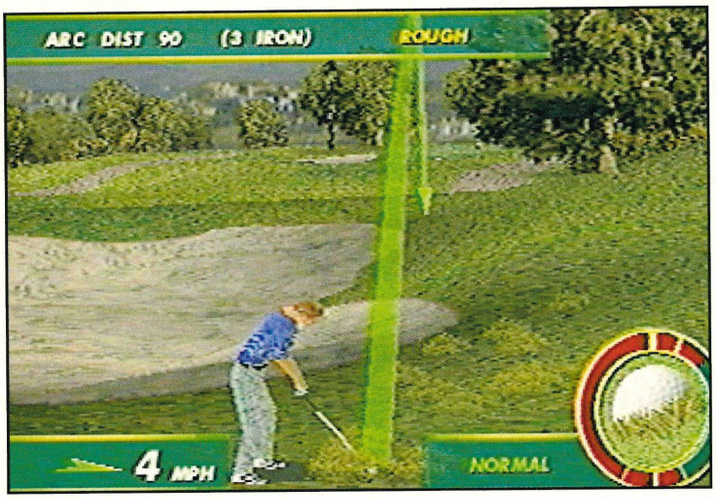
90%

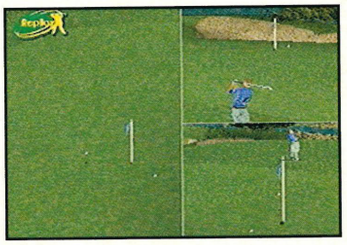
X-rated

Publisher Infogrames | **Developer** Gremlin | **Genre** Sports Sim
Released Out Now | **Version** PAL | **Price** £39.99 | **Players** One

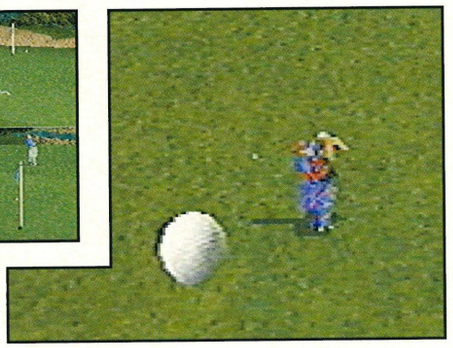
EUROPEAN PGA GOLF

Does Gremlin's latest sports venture score a birdie, or just pick up a bogey? Dave whacks on the old plus-fours...





■ One of the replay split-screen modes.



After the disastrous Actua Golf 3, Gremlin needed to produce something more convincing if they wanted to keep their reputation as decent sports sim developers intact. Sadly, the use of this official franchise is merely a mask for a rather average game.

Graphically this is very poor, with trees on the course transparently two-dimensional and textures so grainy they appear almost 16-bit. There's also a noticeable amount of clipping between players and trees, while the animation of the players is extremely jumpy and rough. The game has a relaxing soundtrack to accompany the clear and logical menus, and pretty standard sound effects. Commentary by the legendary Peter Allis and Alex Hay should have golfing fans wetting their pants in delight, with varied descriptions and analysis throughout.

The game's structure makes up for the poor graphics, based on a similar format to the excellent EA Sports classic, PGA Golf. A simple three-click hitting gauge determines whether you strike the ball sweetly, hook it left or slice it right. There's the option of changing clubs, distance, height, direction or shot type. You must take into account the terrain, wind direction or hazards that lie between you and the ball's destination. Once onto the green there's a white grid system to describe the various dips and bumps that must be considered. Due to the official licence, this game features famous players such as Colin Montgomerie, Nick Faldo and Lee Westwood. There is also a non-tour mode, complete with Practice, Strokeplay, Matchplay, Skins, Foursome and Fourball Modes.

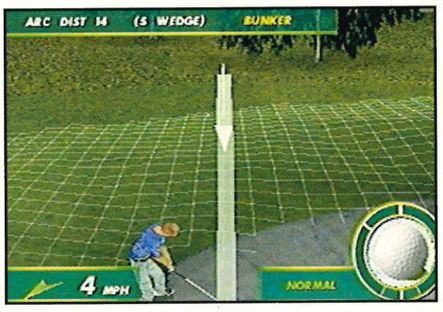
Its good points are overshadowed by negative ones

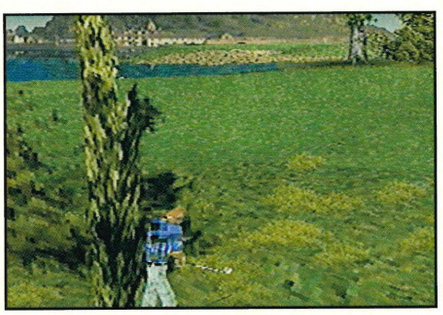
Fore!

Despite a variety of game options, the actual gameplay is disappointing. Behaviour of the ball on the course is quite unrealistic, while it becomes annoying when your opponents seldom miss a putt and nearly always successfully recover from the rough or bunkers. Also inaccurate is how the different weather conditions seem to barely affect the play. This is quite far from being a true representation of real golf, although it must be said the American Ryder Cup fans could learn a lot from this mild-tempered bunch.

A decent golf game can be highly enjoyable but an average golf game can be quite frustrating, and sadly this falls nearer the second category. Not a bad game, but its good points are overshadowed by negative ones. Stick with Tiger Woods 99.

David Foggon





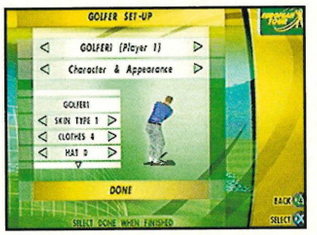
■ More clipping goes on here than in Nicki Clarke's studio.

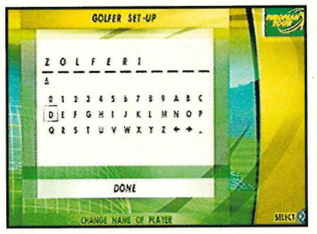


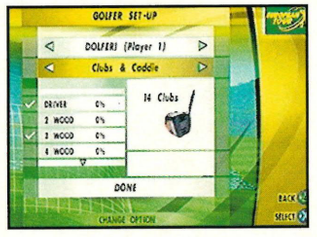
■ When the line goes white, you're aiming okay.

Golfers 'R' Us

The golfer set-up option allows you to customise the Player One golfers and re-design them. You can give them a new name, skin colour, set of pink clothes and even a ridiculous Clint Eastwood hat. More importantly, you can control which golf clubs you take with you and whether there's a caddie to advise you or not.







extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS
Commentary.	Crap graphics.
Clear menus.	Annoying.
Real players.	Golf.

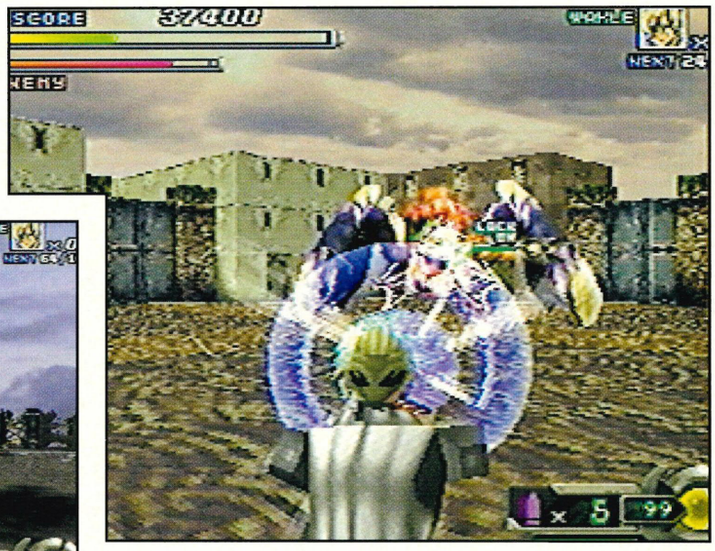
75%

Publisher Konami Europe | **Developer** KCET | **Genre** Shoot-'em-up
Released Out Now | **Version** PAL | **Price** £29.99 | **Players** One

GUNGAGE



Insect armies from another dimension, pulsating laser beams, dodgy graphics, bad pop-up - Ian goes for his gun and yawns...





As soon as you boot this one up, the larger-than-life graphics and in-yer-face music give the impression of a late-Eighties coin-op. Unfortunately, the main character's barely-animated leap and the way you rotate without moving your legs do nothing to dispel this idea. Worse comes when you move - he runs at a snail's pace and when he strafes, his upper body doesn't seem to be attached to his legs. Come on, Konami - this is 1999!

As you plod through the game, often losing your way in the near-identical 3D scenery, the graphics don't improve at all. The sound is endlessly looped and terrifyingly bad, but by now you're playing with it switched off, so you've only the disgracefully-drawn enemies to contend with. These are huge, and because of their size they're either on top of you before you see them or spotted far away and taken out with the gun's lock-on feature before you're anywhere near their attacking range. The game's too bloody slow for intricate, strategic blasting anyway, even when fighting colossal boss baddies.

Now You See It...

Talking of the game's speed, with the graphics moving this slow, the degree of pop-up is absolutely unforgivable. Objects are drawn in as you walk, without even a hint of fogging to hide their embarrassment. Why? It's not as if the visuals are particularly detailed. The sprawling levels give little sense of progress either, leaving you wandering around almost aimlessly. Indeed, variety isn't Gungage's strong point. Sure, there are two secondary weapons to use, but if there are any bonus weapons or power-ups to find (ammo and health aside), I've yet to find them.

Perhaps the worst thing about Gungage is it's so bloody boring. You do the same things over and again, all executed at a snail's pace. There's nothing particularly difficult about it, but you give up through sheer lack of interest long before you get stuck.

Ian Osborne

Perhaps the worst thing about Gungage is it's so bloody boring











■ Even the boss baddies are clichéd and unimaginative.





■ How can a baddie this size look so bad?

extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS
Erm... ...Er... Better than Pax Corpus?	Shite graphics. Shite sound. Shite gameplay.

32%

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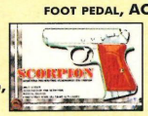
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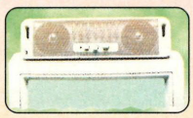
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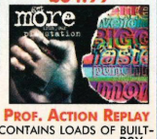




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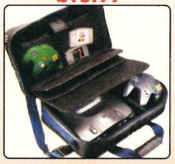


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GAMEplay

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To assist you in choosing the right game, we have included review scores from both Play and Playstation Plus, two of the country's leading PSX magazines. PY=Play, PP=Playstation Plus.

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Formula 1 '98	68% PY	£21.99
Formula 1 '99	**Due 20th October**	**£28.99**
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N_2O	70% PY, 89% PP	£9.99
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NASCAR 2000	Due 29th October	£31.99
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TOCA Touring Cars 2	**92% PY**	**£23.99**
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ADVENTURE / ROLE PLAYING



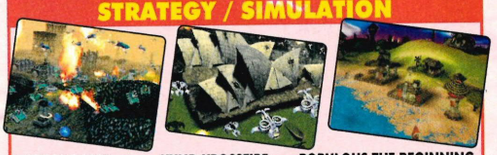
Alundra	**91% PY, 91% PP**	**£16.99**
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Legend of Kartia	Due 24th September	£28.99
Monsterseed	N/A	£27.99
Riven	84% PP	£24.99
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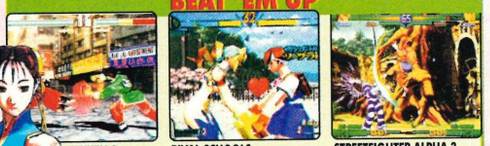
ARCADE ADVENTURE



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Tomb Raider 2	95% PY, 95% PP	£16.99
Tomb Raider 3	**93% PY**	**£23.99**
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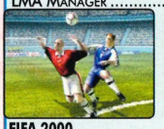
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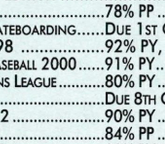


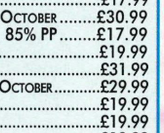


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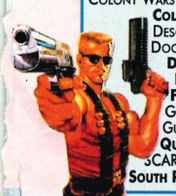


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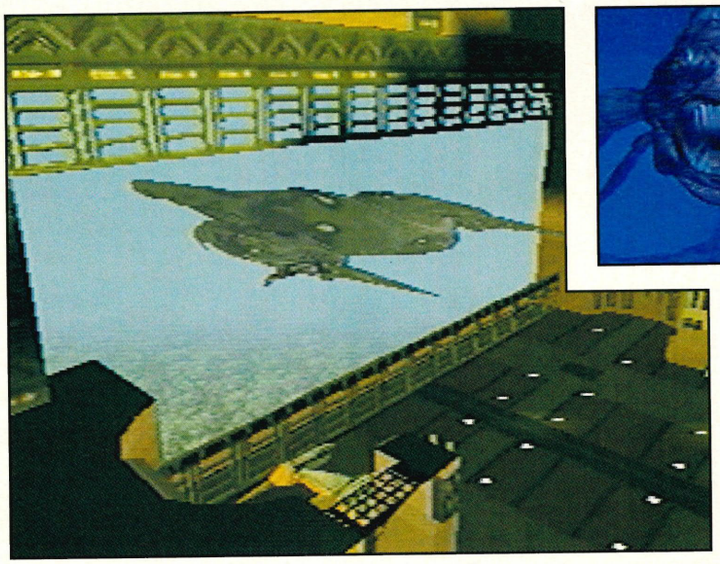
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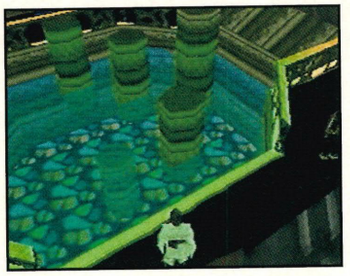
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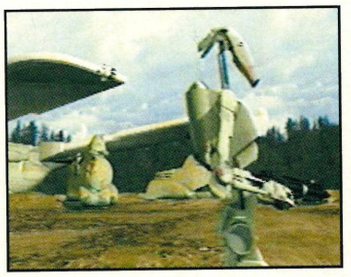
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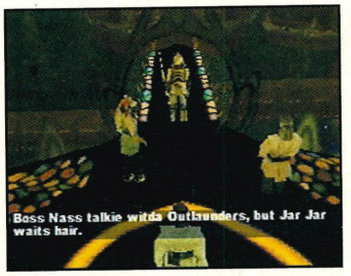
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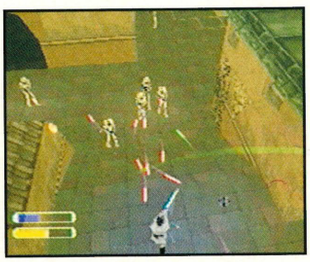


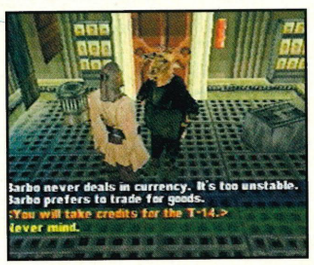
STAR WARS EPISODE 1: THE PHANTOM MENACE

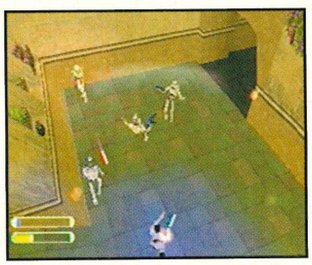
Publisher Activision | **Developer** LucasArts | **Genre** Action Adventure
Released 1st October 1999 | **Version** PAL | **Price** £39.99 | **Players** One

Use the Force...

The Force feature in this game is useful for both combat and RPG sections. During battle you can temporarily stun enemies on one side of you by 'pushing' them over, allowing you to hack the crap out of those on the other side. When you use the Force, a power bar appears. This must re-charge before you can use the Force again. The other way in which it can be used is during conversation with some mean-ugly alien creatures. When you see '<' and '>' around the speech, it means they will repeat your instructions and obey them.



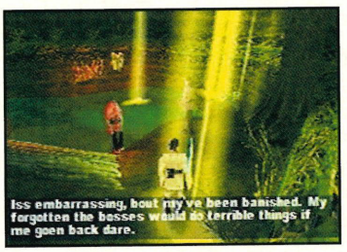




Strike Dave down and he becomes more powerful than you can possibly imagine, but is the Force with this game?

"I have a bad feeling about this", reveals Obi Wan in the opening scene to this game, and indeed the film. His concern is not without cause, either, as this LucasArts game is, in general, a disappointment.

That's the pessimistic bit out the way, then. The game is really very playable, accurate to the film and quite intelligent in its planning. Taking the role of Qui-Gon Jinn and his student Obi Wan Kenobi, you soon learn random hammering on the fire button gets you nowhere. Defeating enemies requires tactical thinking - you must watch through the third-person aerial view how enemies are operating round corners, when their backs are turned, how many of them there are, etc. Deflecting oncoming laser beams with your light saber requires timing and movement of your character. It's also possible to finish levels in slightly different ways, as by attacking the Gungans you attract the guards' attention, but by leaving them and running away you can sneak off.



■ You must protect Ja Ja and save Qui-Gon early on.

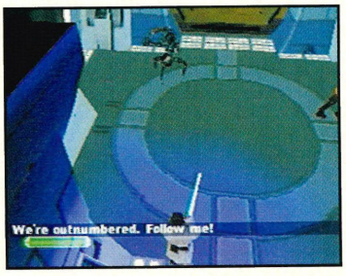
Generally the graphics are not as good as they could be, being quite rough in places with a camera view that can be quite awkward at times.

But the animation is smooth, the controls sensible and the depiction of characters and enemy types does them justice. The movement of the light saber is just like in the films, leaving traces with movement and behaving in the same manner. The sound is superb, retaining the atmospheric soundtrack from the film, which varies in accordance with how tense the game is at that stage. The sound effects are also absolutely spot-on,

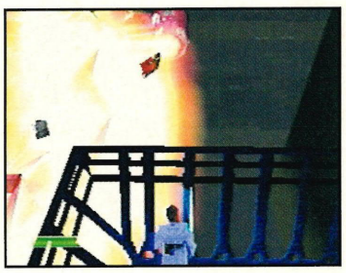
If you're a Star Wars fan you will enjoy this

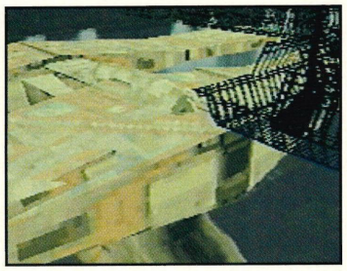


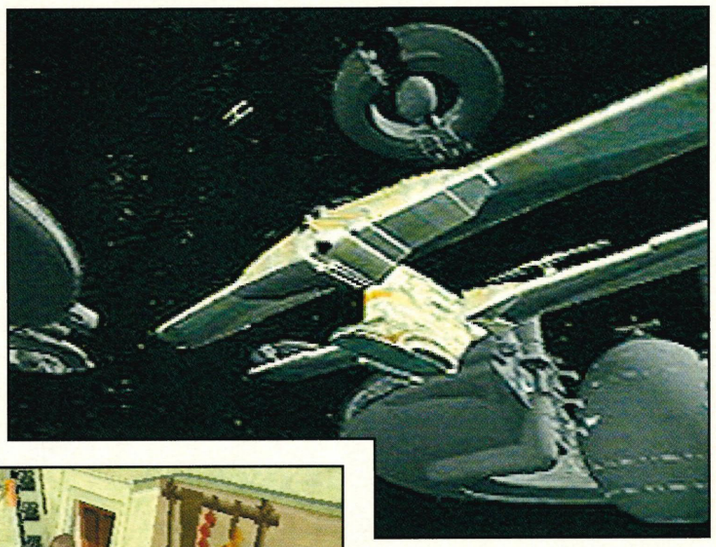
■ "Get the hell outta here!", as a Jedi wouldn't say.

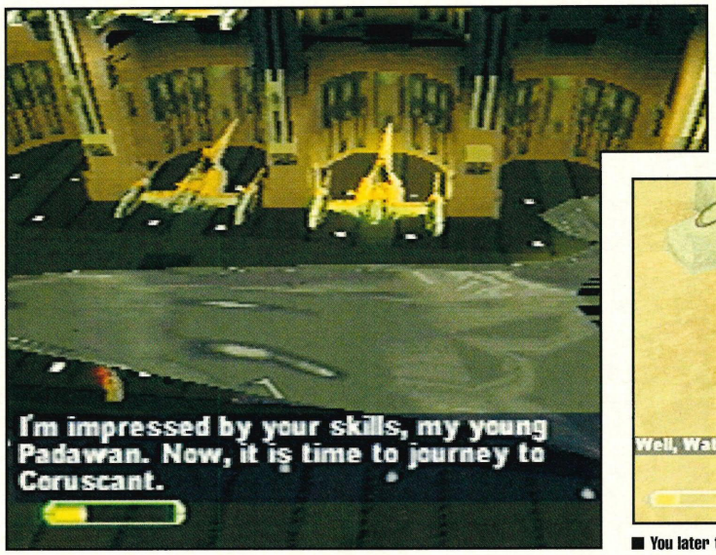


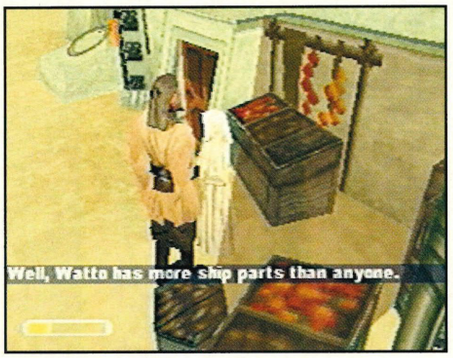
■ Qui-Gon guides you through the first stage.





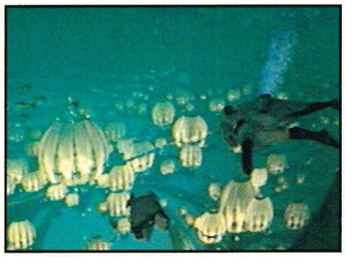






■ You later take control of Qui-Gon Jinn.





■ Some of the CG sequences are really stunning.

with light sabers, guns and ships all identical in sound to the film. It's nice to see the game is based quite closely to the plot, while there are also some great CG sequences detailing defining moments. So why isn't it a brilliant game?

The Force is With Us?

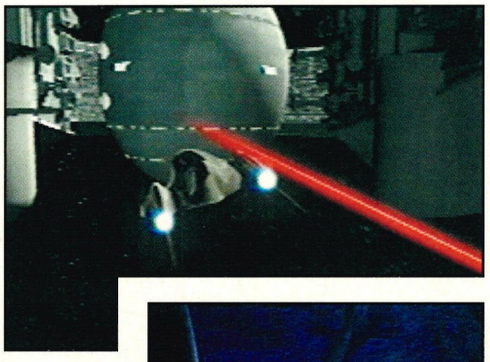
Well, as I said before, the graphics could be better and despite the variety of weapons and RPG sections, the game seems a bit one-dimensional. Perhaps it could have been improved by a button allowing you to switch between third- and first-person cameras, as first-person is most useful for gun battles while third is better for light saber fights and stunts. Apart from this, the scenarios lack inventiveness, with often-bland horizons and settings that are a real let-down. What the game really lacks is a sense of refinement - it's basically without the quality touches of sharper graphics, no clipping and more detailed backgrounds.

The problem with a Star Wars game is that before it's even made, the basic concept has all the ingredients for an excellent game - great characters, enemies, sound and storyline, so when it doesn't come up to scratch it's a big let-down. This a pretty good game, but probably partly because it's Star Wars and not, say, Buck Rogers. If you're a Star Wars fan you will enjoy this, but if you're not too bothered, think twice.

David Foggon

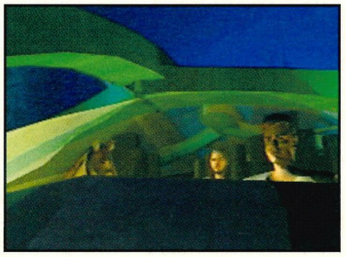


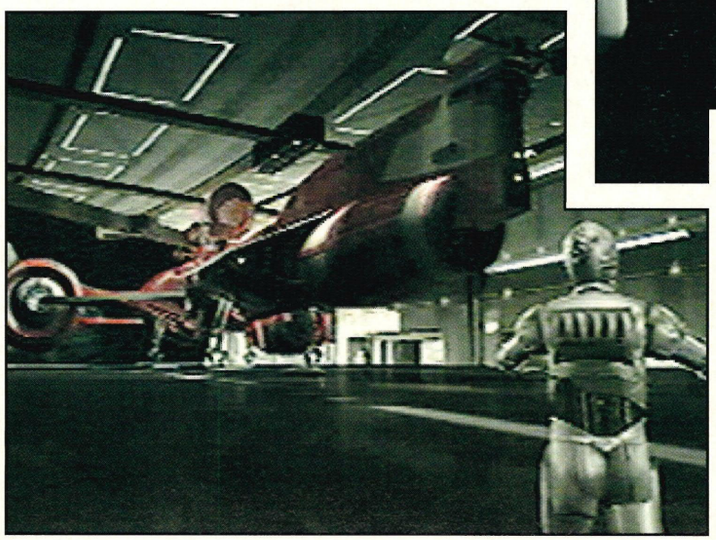
Generally the graphics are not as good as they could be











extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS	
It's Star Wars. Sound effects. Based on film.	Dodgy cameras. Bland settings. Chunky graphics.	80%

Memory Card | **Analogue Pad** | **Namco Paddle**

Publisher PHB Systems | **Developer** Taito | **Genre** Puzzle Game
Released Out Now | **Version** PAL | **Price** £34.99 | **Players** 1-2



PUCHICARAT

Polished puzzler or rubbish rip-off? Nick gets to grips with Taito's Arkanoid/Columns hybrid…

It's back to the tank top-wearing days of the Eighties with this latest Breakout /Arkanoid clone. Looking extremely similar to the old SNES game Puyo Puyo, the game unapologetically borrows from the old titles and adds very little.

I say 'borrow', but perhaps 'steal' is a better word, because there is absolutely nothing new or original here. After five minutes, you realise it's basically the same old game; knock down the blocks or combination of blocks and achieve the best score as quickly possible.

In an attempt to jazz it up for the '90s, power-ups and 12 Manga-type characters have been included which, once you start playing, disappointingly only offer different-coloured bats and background wallpaper. Gifted with bizarre names like Pearl, Garnet and Opal, the characters are surplus to requirements in the single-player game.



■ The version we played had yet to be translated.







Playing in Arcade Mode, the game suddenly reverts to Tekken-like storytelling with each character having its own story to tell as you complete each level. I wish I could be more enthusiastic, but the stories offer lifeless, two-dimensional cartoon stills which are incredibly strange and do very little to enhance the game.

After the novelty has worn off, you're left feeling unfulfilled

Two-Player Twaddle

Playing two-player does inject some much-needed enjoyment. Players can choose from the characters on offer and the usual fight options (number of rounds, etc). The Vs Mode includes various power-ups that seem to appear for no apparent reason and offer no strategic advantage. Using a reduced playing area, the game becomes too frantic and random for the power-ups to be of any use.

The music is actually quite amusing. A blend of cheap Japanese rock and Commodore 64 sound effects.

Gameplay is fine. Controlling the bats is easy, but so it should be since it is hardly the most complex game created. Using an analogue paddle supplied with the game does evoke memories of days gone by, but after the novelty has worn off, you're left feeling unfulfilled.

About the only age group this might appeal to is the pre-teen. It's easy to play and there's no guns or blood. But, these days, even the pre-teens want something more stimulating than just hitting a ball against blocks. Unlike the original Breakout, which was fresh and new, it seems whoever created this intensely boring and unimaginative game has taken a couple of steps down the evolutionary ladder.

Nick Gear



extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS
Two-player mode. Ideal for very young kids. The music.	80s style graphics. Addictive, not! The music.

38%

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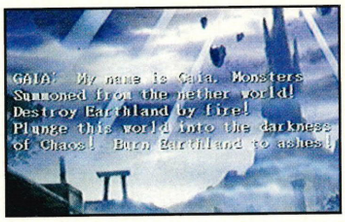
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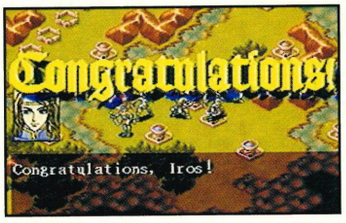
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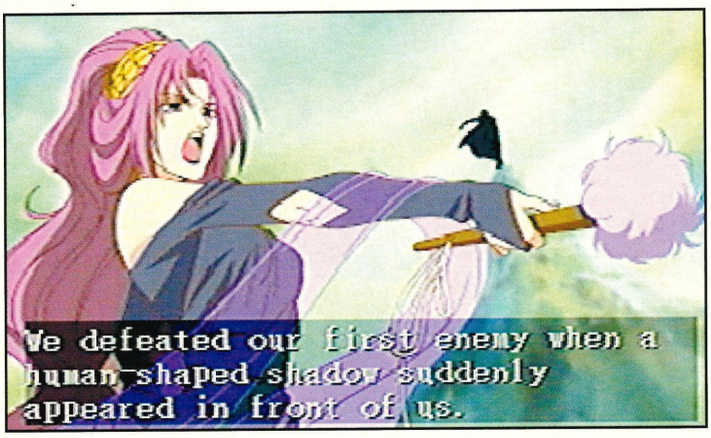




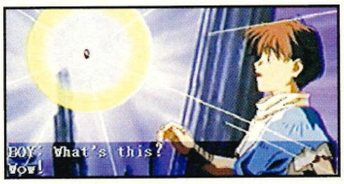


Dave explores this unique strategy game that requires very little strategy...

Publisher Sony CEE | **Developer** Agetec | **Genre** Strategy Game
Released Out Now | **Version** PAL | **Price** £34.99 | **Players** 1-4







■ Little Iros gets his powers.

Set on the planet of Earthland, this strategy adventure focuses on the plight of the people caught up in a vicious war. Staring down from above, the gods watch the chaos below until Gaia unearths his strong magical powers. He then breaks free from the gates and descends to cleanse the planet of chaos, ultimately causing more damage. A young boy called Iros witnesses these actions, resulting in the death of his father and mother, and then cries out for unnatural strength to avenge their losses. He suddenly receives a pendant from the heavens, granting him magical powers. You take the role of Iros, as he uses Gaia's disciples to create armies of monsters and cast magical spells in order to occupy territory.

This game is played on a map viewed using a top-down format, with crudely-displayed graphics reminiscent of a 16-bit game. This wouldn't matter if the gameplay was up to scratch, but the structure of the game is too similar to existing titles, with no added twist and not enough direct confrontation with the enemy. The whole game seems rushed, with a distinct lack of imagination evident. There is an element of interest in the game, however, with the options of using various different monsters, casting spells and attacking or occupying enemy territories. Trouble is, these elements are simply not elaborated on enough, meaning the gameplay is just not diverse enough. Success for this type of game depends largely on the gameplay as the major factor, and this one just fails to deliver. Playability increases as you get further into the game, due to more enemies and the requirement for preparation before each battle, but the almost random factor deciding your fate in battles becomes frustrating.



Same Old Story...

The main problem with this strategy game from Agetec is its lack of originality, making it just too similar to existing RPG/strategy titles, only without the same essential ingredients of playability, high-quality graphics or compelling gameplay. The title itself is unoriginal, and when added to the tired storyline together with a Summoning function that smells like a blatant copy of Final Fantasy, the term 'same ol' cack' springs to mind.

This game is playable and easy to adapt to, but it really isn't worth buying

There are many far better games that could be bought instead of this, such as Asterix or Populus. This game covers only one of several elements found in real strategy sims such as the PC's Civilisation II. This game is playable and easy to adapt to, but it really isn't worth buying.

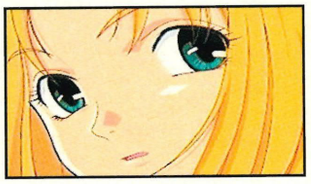
David Foggon

Gaia's Disciples

Necromancer: Always suspicious of Gaia. This stern and hot-blooded master doesn't see eye to eye with Fortuner, who he believes is pompous.



Summoner: This kind-hearted orphan devotes herself to the cause, using her summoning skills to maximum effect. She dislikes Warlock.



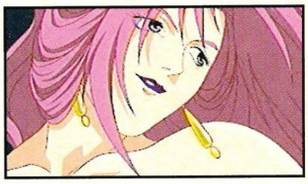
Justice: Focused entirely on stopping Gaia causing any more damage, she's willing to risk her own life to see justice done.



Warlock: After becoming Gaia's disciple, his strength grows to eventually make him far superior.



Fortuner: She resents the arrogance of Justice and suffers the torment of having a lover killed, a loss she blames on herself.



Shadowmaster: He broke through the gates of heaven and was recruited as Gaia's right-hand man.



extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS	
Easy to use. Good tutorial. That's all.	1D gameplay. Boring. Awful graphics.	45%

Memory Card | Analogue Pad | Dual Shock

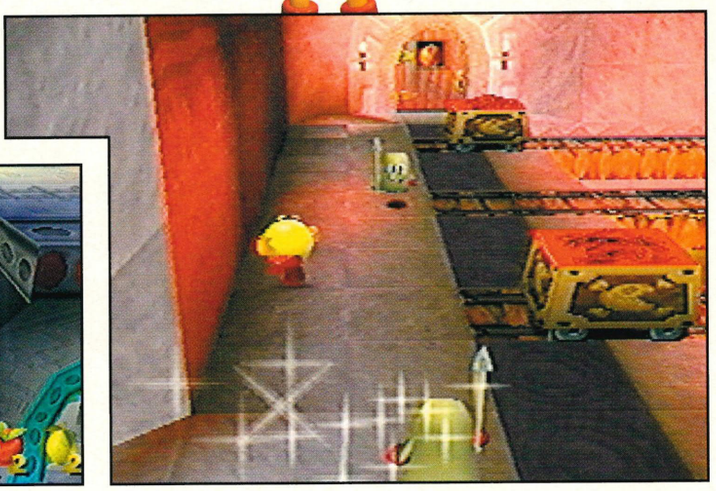
Publisher Sony CEE | **Developer** Namco | **Genre** 3D platform adventure
Released Winter 1999 | **Version** PAL | **Price** £39.99 | **Players** One

PAC-MAN WORLD

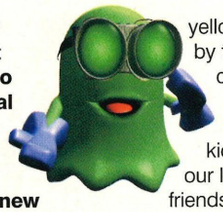
Wakka, wakka, wakka... Dave takes a peek as the mighty Pac-Man comes out of retirement for the PlayStation...







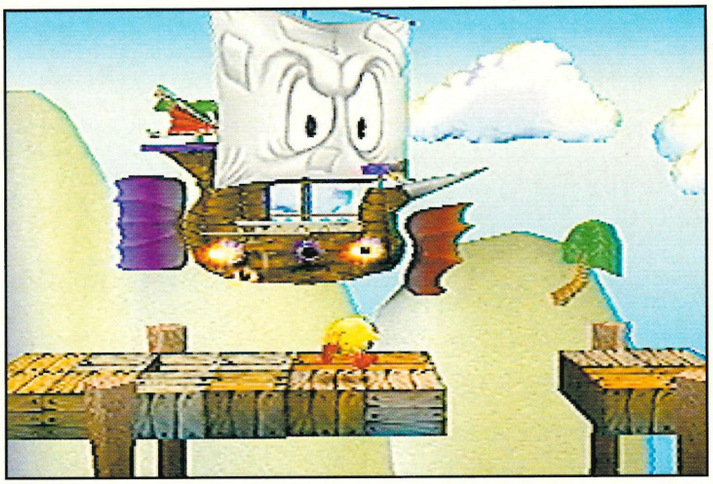
3D platformers are great, innocent fun, and best epitomised by our Tasmanian friend Crash. But can the king of the '80s make a successful transition into this world? This platformer sees our yellow friend in all his 3D glory, as he attempts to gobble up fruit, jump on spiders and open doors to the finishing Namco coin. It certainly seems as if the fellas at Namco have managed to incorporate the essential characteristics of Pac-Man in a 3D format, especially with the added maze mode and new free-roaming levels. But is it too similar to Crash Bandicoot?



Well, kind of 'yes' and 'no'. It's based on a similar game engine, with the same camera views and graphics found in the trilogy. However, he manages to bring his unique style and presence into the genre. This is found through the maze modes, view changes which give a modern slant on the classic game, and the old coin-op version is thrown too. This is more challenging than the Crash games, but probably lasts about the same length. The combination of game style and original features means that the end result is definitely Pac-Man.

The story revolves around Pac-Man's innocent little world of round yellow people being intruded by the evil Toc-Man. New characters such as Chomp-Chomp the dog and Baby Pac are kidnapped, and it's up to our little guy to rescue his friends by eating his way through beaches, caves, cannon-infested castles and space levels. Pac-Man has developed into a bit of an athlete, with new-found abilities of butt-bouncing, rev-rolling, swimming, Pac-Dot attack and Super Pac-Dot.

If you're after a trip down memory lane or you want a decent 3D platformer, this is a little gem



Pac `em In...

Pac-Man World allows for exploring in six new environments - Funhouse, Archaeology, Factory, Pirate, Space and Haunted Mansion. Each has increasingly trickier levels. There are the original ghosts of Blinky and co, plus plenty of new bad guys. Interesting elements to give the game diversity include over 30 different mazes, the chance to collect letters for 18 bonus stages and a fruit machine at the end of each level to gain extra lives.

With nice colourful graphics, varying locations and some clever little extras, this is great fun to play and watch. The animation of the characters is smooth, and there is very little clipping to speak of. Sound effects are clear and accurate, and the soundtrack atmospheric.

If you're after a trip down memory lane or you want a decent 3D platformer, this is a little gem. It's not quite brilliant, and lacks originality, being remarkably similar to Crash Bandicoot 3, but it's a highly enjoyable game nonetheless. A nice celebration of 20 years of the king.

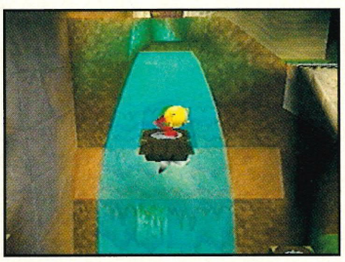
David Foggon

A-mazing features...

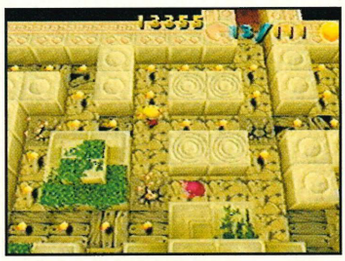
The maze arenas in Pac-Man World are essential to the game's success, as they give the whole game that extra ingredient of diversity and they also link it back to the original game. There are three optional views, one being just the same as the original game only with 3D graphics, and loads of Pac-dots to collect without being caught. There are over 30 mazes in the game, ranging from outer space-style to ancient history.







■ Get ready for the plunge!



■ One of the many maze arenas.

extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS
Definitely Pac-Man.	Not that original.
Maze mode.	Too short.
Classic mode.	Minor Clipping.

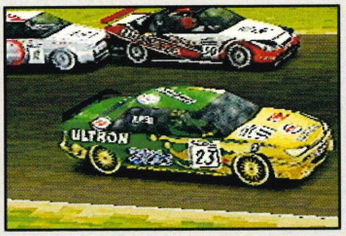
87%

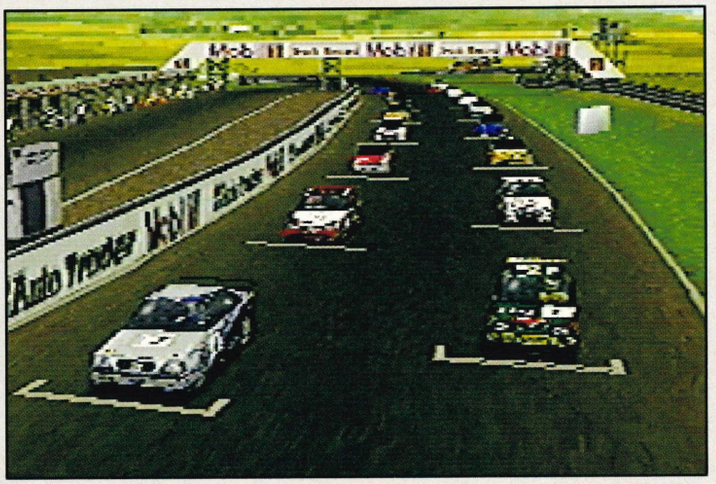
platinum X-rated

TOCA 2 TOURING CARS

One year on, this four-wheeled frenzy still runs on hi-octane playability. Ian takes the wheel once more...

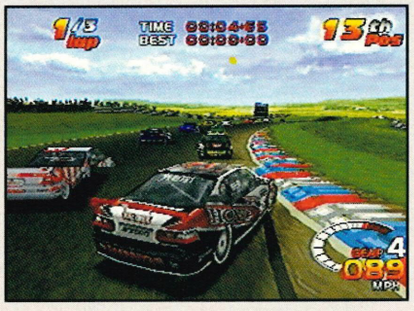






You can't fault this one for accuracy. In its day it was the most accurate driving game ever, and it's still looking cool even now. The opponents' AI is spot-on, taking the racing line through every corner and driving like genuine touring car racers, not just driving. The crash damage is superb, with the windscreen popping out after a harsh bump, tyres wearing throughout the race and every British Touring Car Championship course, driver and team from the 1998 season present. There's even a horn to warn the mechanics as you drive into the pits.





You Can't Fault This...

Nor can you fault TOCA 2 for options. There's multiple difficulty levels, a Full Championship, Arcade Style Challenge, Time Trial, Single Race, Support Car Championship and Multi-Player Link-Up. Two players can play split screen or link-up, or with two PlayStations and a split screen you can have four racers at once.



For PSX motor racing fans, it's a steal at £20

You can't fault it for graphical polish either. The liveries are superb, the totally-remodelled cars amazing and the weather effects astoundingly realistic. For once, rain appears to fall instead of just crossing the screen. The in-car views are brilliant, with your driver turning the wheel as you corner and working windscreen wipers in the wet. Even with a chase camera the windscreens are transparent, meaning you can see inside the cars.

There's no four-player split-screen option, but this is hardly surprising - how many games this old have one?

In fact, the only thing you can fault TOCA 2 for is the degree of pop-up experienced. The backgrounds look great, but when racing on tracks set in the English countryside, rows of trees often appear out of nowhere. This is no worse than many other games (and better than most), but when the scenery appears just where the track meets the horizon, you can't help noticing it.

Still, for a game that's a year old this is only to be expected, and the ace racing action makes up for it big-style. For PSX motor racing fans, it's a steal at £20.

Ian Osborne







■ Even the windscreen wipers work realistically.





■ Cane it too hard and you spin off.

extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS
Superb visuals. Realistic handling. Great in-car views.	Pop-up. No four-player mode.

93%

Publisher Codemasters | **Developer** Codemasters | **Genre** Driving Game
Released November 1999 | **Version** PAL | **Price** £19.99 | **Players** 1-2

Memory Card | Analogue Pad | Dual Shock | Multi Tap

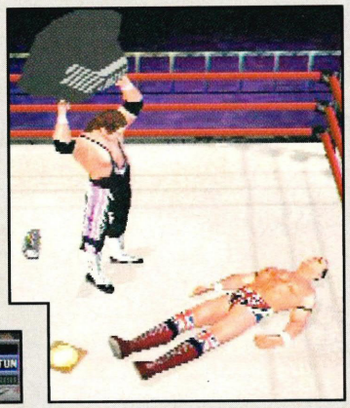
Publisher Acclaim Sports | **Developer** Acclaim | **Genre** Beat-'em-up
Released Out Now | **Version** PAL | **Price** £19.99 | **Players** 1-4

WWF WARZONE

Bone-bending American style. 'But is it any good?', asks Ian...











■ The Bulldog tripped over the security railings and fell flat on his face.

What a difference a year makes. This one scored a respectable 79% in Issue Nine, but a lot has changed since then. For example, WWF Attitude appeared. The graphics and animation in Warzone were great in their day, but next to Attitude (also by Acclaim, by the way), they're distinctly second rate.

The WWF's changed in the past year too - many of the wrestlers appearing in the game are no longer bending bones with the organisation. For example, Bret Hart is now WCW (actually, he'd already left when the game came out first time around, but we'll let that pass), his brother Owen was killed at a wrestling event in Kansas, Shaun Michaels retired through injury and Ahmed Johnson didn't get a contract renewal.

1-2-3...

WWF Warzone isn't a bad game by any means, but the recent price war in PlayStationdom means the difference between Warzone and the far-superior Attitude is £10 at most. Despite the razzmatazz, the fluid animations and interesting multiplayer mode, Warzone just can't keep up with its younger, fitter stablemate. Perhaps it should retire and get a job as an American politician...

Ian Osborne

extreme

UPPERS	DOWNERS
Features WWF wrestlers. Good on razzmatazz. Good graphics.	Weak one-player mode. Out of date. Bad create-a-wrestler.

64%

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import

on import extreme

OVERSEAS NEWS

All import titles are available from PROJECT K (Details available on page 71)

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY...







Agetec's Bass Landing is now unlikely to get a UK release, so fishing fans should look for it on US import. The game features 14 kinds of fish, tutorial, solo or tournament modes, five lakes and realistic fishing environments. You control every aspect of angling, including the tackle box, the time of day you fish, lures used and more. The game also comes with its own dedicated controller, replicating a fishing rod.

GOING UNDERGROUND...

Sony of America publish a quarterly CD-based PlayStation mag called PlayStation Underground CD Magazine. Each issue comes on two CDs, and features game demos, memory card downloads, behind-the-scenes reports with game developers and import news (from Japan and Europe - this is an American product).



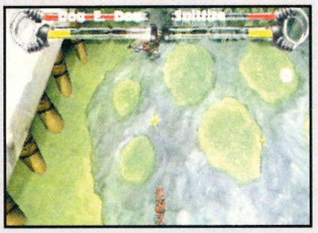
PlayStation Underground CD Magazine costs $29.95 plus shipping for a year's subscription (four issues) and is available on-line (http://store.playstation.com), or try your import dealer.

ALUNDRA 2 ON THE WAY...



Sony Japan are working on Alundra 2, the sequel to Alundra (no shit!). The game, which is Dual Shock compatible, offers a very different graphical style to the cartoony first title. No news on a UK release yet, but it's very likely to happen.

DEDICATED PSX STORE TO OPEN IN SAN FRANCISCO





METREON™
A SONY ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

Sony have opened their first ever PlayStation-dedicated shop, in San Francisco. The store, which sells nothing but PSX games, hardware, peripherals and magazines, is located in Metreon, the Sony theme park-style entertainment centre.

As well as selling all things PlayStation, the shop gives gamers the opportunity to test out new products - there are more than 30 interactive gaming stations there, so you can try before you buy.

Other features offered by the Metreon centre include Sony IMAX theatres, restaurants, and shopping. If you're in California, give it a go - it's in downtown San Francisco.



NEVERSOFT GO BOOM!

Neversoft, of Skull Monkeys fame, are working on a beat-'em-up called Boombots, a robot fighter. The emphasis here is on projectiles such as missiles and guns rather than the usual fist and foot offerings. The robot warriors range from humanoid creations to robotic animals.

Neversoft boast the game puts a new twist on the fighting genre, in terms of gameplay strategies as well as graphically. Again there's no news of a UK release, but it should be available on US import before the end of the year.



LANGUAGE BARRIER

Import games can be a real pig to understand if you don't speak the language they're produced in. That's why we give every import game a Language Barrier rating. The higher the score, the more difficult it is to play the game without being able to read the instructions and on-screen prompts. Thus an American game would score 0% (for obvious reasons), while a Japanese RPG might reach into the 90s...

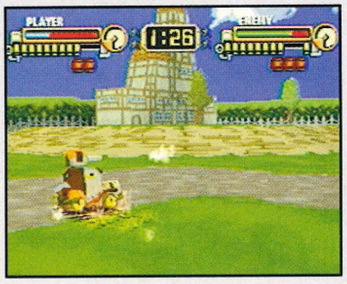
language barrier 14%

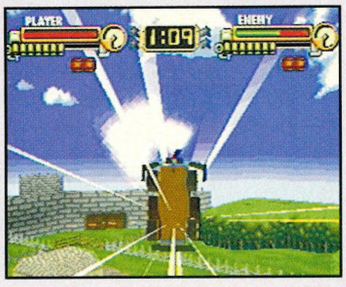


Publisher Enix | **Developer** Stmbio Systems | **Genre** Driving Game
Released Out Now (Import) | **Version** NTSC (Jap) | **Price** £40-50 | **Players** 1-2

POP'N TANKS

Getting tanked up once more...





This one should've been more fun than it actually is. Pick your tongue-in-cheek tank and do battle with a series of opponents in various arenas - sounds great, but a serious design flaw really lets it down. After a severe hit you're thrown into the air, and are then invulnerable for a short time. Fair enough, but trouble is you recover from your mid-air flip too quickly, giving you the chance to pursue the other tank while safe. It's also very difficult to get away from an opponent you've just hit, especially if his tank is faster, so you end up taking it in turns to strike.

The game has some interesting touches

The game has some interesting touches. The tanks are seriously funny, and it's not bad as a two-player outing after the pub, but overall it's a missed opportunity.

Ian Osborne

language barrier 14%





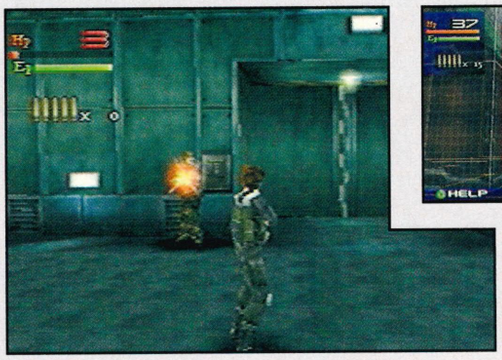


extreme 55%

Publisher FromSoftware | **Developer** Division 2 | **Genre** Game
Released Out Now (Import) | **Version** NTSC (Jap) | **Price** £40-50 | **Players** 1

SPRIGGAN: LUNAR VERSE

Haven't we seen this somewhere before?





language barrier 71%

Hmm... Metal Gear Solid meets Tomb Raider. You can't fault the graphics here - the 3D world is devastatingly believable, and the animations work a treat. The controls are a little awkward at first, but so were those of the aforementioned classix.

The game offers just the right balance of exploration and fighting, with some areas demanding you strike while the iron's hot, but others needing a more tactical approach. There's usually a sneaky way of toppling the baddies unhurt, but you have to find it first.

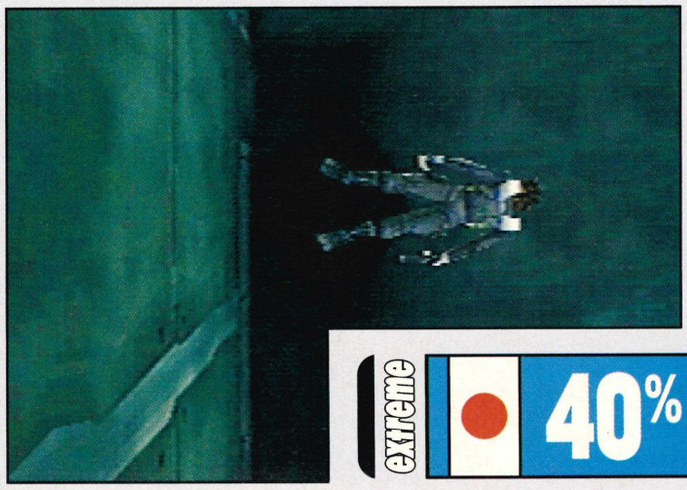
Where the game is really let down is on its difficulty level. It doesn't let you get far enough into the game before it gets tricky, leading to frustration. Not being able to read the mission briefings doesn't help either. Still, if you've a little patience and are looking for another Tomb Raider, MGS or Syphon Filter, here it is...

Doug Williams





Where the game is really let down is on its difficulty level



extreme 40%

Publisher Capcom | **Developer** Capcom | **Genre** Action Adventure
Released Out Now (Import) | **Version** NTSC (Jap) | **Price** £40-50 | **Players** 1

BIOHAZARD 3: LAST ESCAPE

IMPORT

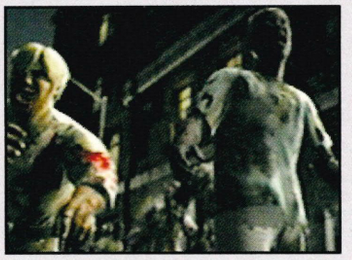


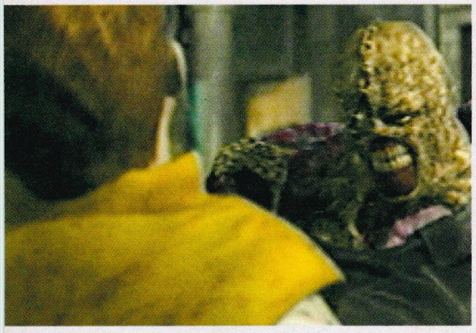
Smitten with the preview version from two months ago, Dave just had to get hold of this, the Japanese import version of Resident Evil 3...

language barrier 30%









If, like me, you just can't wait to get your mitts on the forthcoming Resident Evil 3: Nemesis, this import version could whet your appetite. Shinji Mikami's Japanese release has a different title, but is definitely the same game, with unmistakable detail in scenarios, smooth animation, moving sound and an impressive introduction.

You have to be impressed by the excellent characterisation and seamless dovetailing of action with speech in Biohazard 3

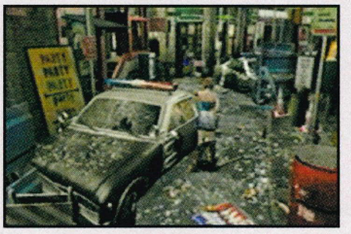
The action takes place just after Resident Evil and just before Resident Evil 2, with heroine Jill Valentine trapped inside Raccoon City, desperate to escape. As she attempts to free herself from the armies of zombies, she's relentlessly pursued by a huge mutated monster, intent on killing her, namely Nemesis. It's while trying to find a way out she discovers the injured Carlos Oliveira inside the newspaper offices. This 21-year-old South American reveals that he and his group of mercenaries have been recruited by Umbrella Corp to rescue survivors from the city. Jill later becomes injured and seriously ill, enlisting the help of Carlos and his team to help her find a cure and way out.

Monster Mash

You have to be impressed by the excellent characterisation and seamless dovetailing of action with speech in Biohazard 3. The acting is believable, while the dramatic timing is executed to keep the player on edge throughout, as periods lacking in action are immediately followed by striking





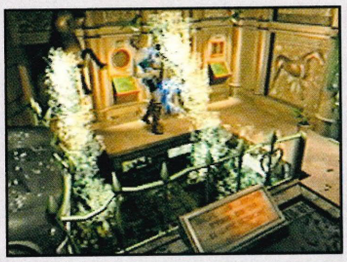


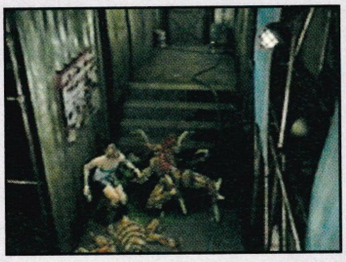












events. Swift loading times between screens enables an even more dramatic impact in this way.

The game demands a lot of the player, and requiring you to search for items, solve puzzles, be wary of Nemesis and kill zombies. All this while you keep an eye on your health and ammo.

With more doors to go through, a variety of zombies to confront and new monstrous creatures to flee and destroy, you definitely find this improves on the past two games. Hoping to give this one a clear edge on the predecessors, Capcom have developed the Live Selection concept that allows decisions to be made at crucial points in the game, determining the outcome. This signifies a move away from pre-defined game paths, giving the gamer more control. There are new control methods to make the game that much easier, such as the automatic running up staircases and the new Dodge feature that makes it easier to avoid an enemy's attack. Jill also indicates, through her movement, when enemies are approaching and which objects are interactive. Background objects can now also be used for defensive purposes, as jumping onto certain crates or stalls allows a quick escape from the zombies.

What's Wot?

The game fits well into the Resident Evil series, but generally has a sense of refinement and higher quality when compared with the previous games. More detailed scenarios and better sound add to the realism, while a superbly simple yet atmospheric soundtrack gives the whole game an ominous tone. This version is hampered by the transition from Japanese to English, as objects found can not always be clearly identified, while files and notices can't be read. If you really can't wait for Resident Evil 3, you'd probably be better advised to invest in its sister game, Dino Crisis, rather than struggle through this.

Biohazard 3 is blessed by some incredibly smooth character animation, combined with highly detailed settings and dramatic light effects. The sound is more graphic and stirring than before, while the zombies are that bit more varied and believable. However, 'refinement' is a word that really sums up this game. Don't get me wrong, this is an immersing and wonderful experience, but it really is just a tuned-up version of Resident Evil 2/Biohazard 2 with some nice extras thrown in. Fans of the first two games will be expecting more gory action in the third, and they won't be disappointed. Biohazard 3: Last Escape is like another helping of the same grotesque, bloodthirsty gameplay supplied by Biohazard 2. And I love it.

David Foggon

Nemesis!



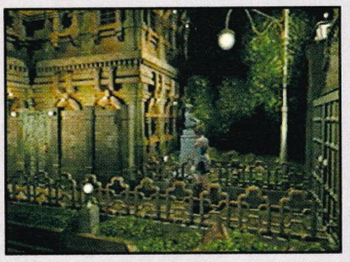
This nasty piece of work can run faster than you, is taller than you, stronger than you and carries a huge piece of rocket-launching kit about with him. The problem is, it's you he wants to kill. After witnessing this mutated creation of Umbrella Corp kill her friend, Jill flees as the monster runs through the city in search of her. Tackling this bastard requires judgement, as sometimes he requires a few bullets in the head, whereas at other times you'd just better leg it. Manage to knock him down for a minute and you can steal an item off him.

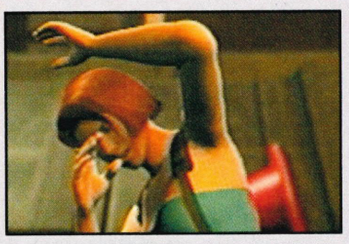


Biohazard 3 is blessed by some incredibly smooth character animation

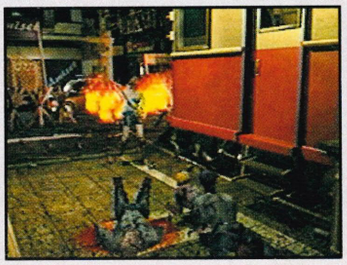




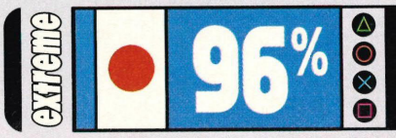












TIPS AND CHEATS

Always up to date with the latest in PlayStation releases, and with a couple of favourites thrown in for good measure, the guys at extreme are here for you once again. In this edition you'll find several recently-reviewed games, but if there are any you want that aren't covered, just drop us a line at the usual address!



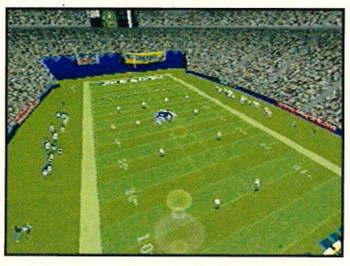
SLED STORM

Play as Jackal
At the Password Screen, press L2, L2 ● R2 ■ R1 L1 ▲

Run Over Rabbits For Extra Points
If you see little rabbits hopping across the course, run into them and they give you an extra 7500 points.
Note: if you see a wolf, don't waste your time trying to hit it. This has been tried, and in fact we have managed to run into it, but to no avail.

MADDEN NFL 2000

Dodge City: Old West Stadium
If you enter WILDWEST, this old west stadium appears on the Stadium Select screen.



Fantasy Team: Marshals
If you enter COWBOYS, the secret team Marshals appears.

More Injuries
If you enter PAINFUL, more injuries occur.



DESTREGA

Maximum Charge Dash
Charge two or three levels then cancel with a dash. These dashes can deflect lower level attacks. For example, Dash Level Three deflects Level Two attacks.

Random Level Select
Press Start on the Level Select screen to randomly pick a level.

Secret Characters
Finish One Player Mode with any character, then in the Character Select, press Start on that character to get the hidden character.

JADE COCOON: STORY OF THE TAMAMAYU

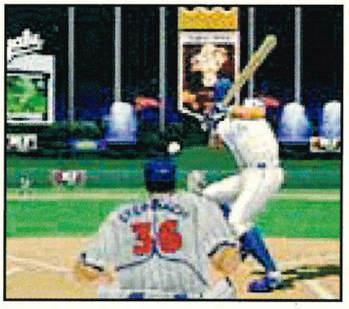
Lots of Mugwort Herbs
After you meet Koris for the first time in the Beetle Forest, when he says he will train you, select 'Attacks and Defence' and start training. He gives you a Mugwort Herb. During the battle, on the first, second, or third turn, ignore what Koris tells you to do and select a different command (except item) and he tells you that you must obey. The fight ends and you have an extra Mugwort Herb! You can repeat this until you have as many herbs as you like, up to the item maximum of 20.

MLB 2000

Big Heads
At the Start/Options menu, press R1+✖+R2+Select simultaneously. A beep confirms the code.

Bloopers Video
Turn on the game, but don't press any buttons. Let the game run all the way through the introduction and the demo half-inning of the game. After that, it goes back to the MLB 2000 Logo and the bloopers video starts.

Easy Hits
To get an easy single or sometimes a double, you set Average on the power and then hold ⇩ and swing and hit the ball sharply to centre field. Sometimes you ground into Double Plays.



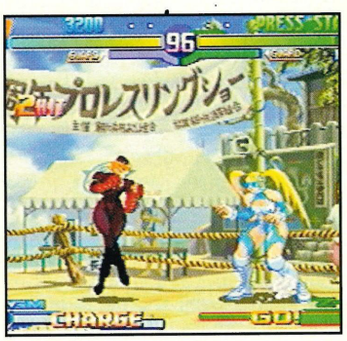
Extra Out after Catching a Fly Ball
Catch a fly ball and throw it to Second Base. Throw the ball back and forth between the second baseman and the short stop (just keep pressing ▲. Eventually, one of the two players throws it away into left-centre field. If you catch the ball with the centre fielder, the umpire says 'out' as with a normal call.



TIPS CLINIC

Your problems solved...

Heavy Hitter
In Create Player Mode, name your player Scott Murray or Kelly Flock. He hits a 606-foot home run every time you connect with the ball in fair territory.
Note: This feature doesn't work in the Home Run Derby.
Instant Strike Against Computer
This is not the easiest code to do, and takes some practice to do perfectly every time. Just choose a fast ball, set it in the lower corner opposite the batsman (if you have a right-handed batsman, then set it in the lower-left corner), and make the ball just barely touch the outside corner. The batsman doesn't swing, and the umpire should call it a strike. They hit it sometimes, but very rarely.



MARVEL SUPER HEROES VS. STREET FIGHTER

Cheat Menu
At the main menu press:
R1 ● ⇦ ▲ ▲

Hidden Extra Options Screen
At the main menu, highlight Options and press R1 ● ⇦ ▲ ▲ to access a hidden extra options screen.

Easy Way To Beat Cyber Akuma
To easily beat Cyber Akuma, first enter the Options cheat. Set your gauge to Full and recovery Fast. Then fight your way through the game until you reach Cyber Akuma. To defeat him, you have to crouch and block at the same time. He attacks a lot and when he teleports to you, quickly do a Tag-Team Move or a Regular Super Move. Repeat this process until he's dead.
Play as Apocalypse
Beat the game without using any continues.

DIAGNOSED AND CURED
You know where to come for your medicine!

Eamonn Green is just kicking himself over his need for help with FIFA '99.

Atlanta Attack Team
Win the Champions Cup as Brazil on the Professional difficulty setting. Then select the Custom Cup and choose International Team.

Formations
The best attacking formation is 4-3-3. Push both wings out and have the centre forward further up than your other two attackers.
The best midfield formation is 4-4-2. Push both attackers forward and keep your midfield flat. Send the defence back and keep them tight.
The best defence formation is 5-3-2, keeping your defence back and the wingbacks close to the rest of the defence. In the midfield, send the wingers out wide and have a fast centre. Keep the attackers as they are.

Mark Robinson of Southampton has lost the Force with Star Wars: Master of Teras Kasi, as he needs the cheat for Mara Jade amongst others.

Mara Jade
Hold down L1 L2 and R2 and enter Team Mode on Jedi difficulty. The computer automatically chooses your team (Rebel characters) and you must defeat the computer team (the Empire) to unlock Mara Jade.

Princess Leia Dressed in Slave Gear (oh, behave!)
With all settings on Default, set the difficulty to Jedi. Then complete the game using Princess Leia.





Change Clothes
Hold L1 on the Character Select screen.

Big Head Mode
Hold Select during loading.

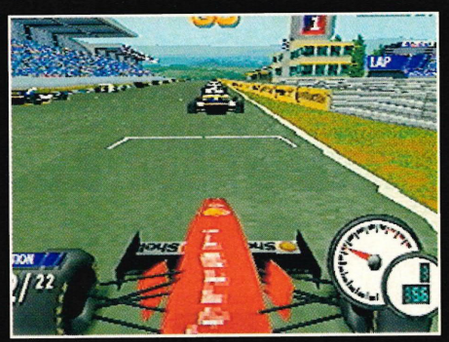
Super Deformed Mode
Hold Select and press:
⇩ + ✖ during loading.

Power and Life Regeneration
Hold ⇩ ⇨ + ✖ during loading.

Nathan Pointer, Barnsley is gagging for these Sim City 2000 cheats.

Free Credit
Have bonds at 0% interest by going to the budget screen, holding ▲ and pressing L1 L2 L1 L2 R2 R1 R2 R1.

Loads of Money
Increase your money by $1 million by carrying out the following instructions:
Access City Info/Budget while you're in the game. Hold R1 and press ✖ ● ▲ ■ at the Budget screen. Release R1, and hold L1 while you press ✖ ● ▲ ■ Release L1. Now hold R2 while you press ✖ ● ▲ ■ then release R2. Finally hold L2 while pressing ✖ ■ ▲ ● and release L2.



Formula 1 '97 has got some entertaining little codes to keep Tom Davidson amused.

Hidden Arcade Tracks and 60s Mode
To access the hidden track for each Arcade setting, you must win every race.

Cheat Options
To enter the following cheat codes, select Grand Prix Mode from the main menu, then choose Select Driver. Edit the driver's name and replace it with the cheat code.
Helicopter View: ZOOM LENSE
Virtual Reality Graphics: VIRTUALLY VIRTUAL
WipEout 2097 Mode:PIMAN
Background Music: SWAP SHOP
Fat Tyres LITTLE WEELZ

William Morgan from Kent needs help with the ninja on Metal Gear Solid...

Ninja
Your guns don't work against the ninja, so you need to get up close and use your punch, punch, kick

TIPS CLINIC

combo (PPK combo). When he has lost 50% of his energy he cloaks himself; use the Thermal Goggles to find him and attack. Once he has lost another 30% of energy, he de-cloaks and fights you hand to hand.
When you try to attack him, he darts behind you and attacks from behind. Throw a single punch then turn around as he darts around you and attack. When he is down to around 5% energy, he starts to short circuit. Do not stand too close or you're hit by his energy field. Wait until it dies down, then either use grenades or run up and attack with a combo to finish him off.
Talk to the scientist Hal and he gives you a Level Four Keycard. Collect the items from the room then collect the grenades from the Level Four room in the gas-filled corridor. Return to the elevator and go up to floor B1. Be careful as Meryl is



disguised as one of the guards on this floor. She should be on the left side of the lower computer room. When you find her, follow her to the ladies' bog. She gives you a Level Five Keycard and the PAL Key. Return to the lower computer room and collect the Diazepam and the Night Vision Goggles from the side rooms. Return to the corridor and enter the Level Five room at the end of the corridor.

Hopefully D. White's cheats for Gran Turismo will useful to Charlie Pundy...

Extra Tracks (Arcade Mode)
Win on all the four standard tracks with all three different grades of cars to open up four new tracks on the Easy difficulty setting.

Extra Cars (Arcade Mode)
Win on all of the extra tracks with all three different grades of cars to open up the four new sets of cars on the Easy difficulty setting.

End Movie (Arcade Mode)
Win on all the eight tracks with all three different grades of car on the Normal difficulty setting.

Hi-Fi Mode (Arcade Mode)
Win on all the eight tracks with all three different grades of car on the Hard difficulty setting.

Hi-Fi Mode (Gran Turismo)
Win the Gran Turismo World Cup to open GT Hi-Fi option.

Harry Walker from Stoke requires some urgent attention for Bust-A-Move 2

Character Select
To choose a character, start a Puzzle game and when the stage map appears, press ⇦ ⇦ ⇧ ⇩ Next press L1 L2 R1 and R2 together and a Character Select screen pops up. To choose your character, use the ⇦ and ⇨ buttons and press ✖ to continue. When you play the game, the new character appears.

Extra Credits
To gain up to 29 credits, highlight Credit in the Option mode, and press ⇦ ⇨ R1 R2 L2 L1 ⇧ ⇩ Next press ✖ repeatedly as quickly as you can until the timer runs out.

Modified Levels
Press R1 ⇧ L2 ⇩ on the selection screen where you see Game Start, Time Attack, etc. The words 'Another World' should now appear below the single-player Story Mode which contains modified versions of the levels.
It may seem ages since Euro '96, but Simon Muldoon wants some spice added to Three Lions...

Bonus Teams
Codes for the Team Selection Screen:
Oranje L1 ⇧ ⇧ ⇨
Azzuri L2 ⇧ ⇧ ⇨
Aus Asia Stars R1 ⇧ ⇧ ⇨
African Stars R2 ⇧ ⇧ ⇨
North American Stars L1 ⇩ ⇩



THE CRITICAL LIST

These readers need your help...

Jez Peterson from Derby is stuck on Tenchu: Stealth Assassins at the third stage, while Ian Wilson requires cheats for Pandemonium 2.

Can anyone help? If so, send your handy hints to:

The Tips Clinic,
extreme PlayStation,
22 Strand Street,
Poole,
Dorset
BH15 1SB

When you select your character, do the following:
1. Highlight Akuma
2. Press Select six times, then press any punch or kick button.

Play as Armoured Spiderman
Highlight Spiderman at the Character Selection Screen, then hold Select and hit any button.

RUNNING WILD



Alternate Uniforms
To change your uniform colour press L1 or R1 when choosing a character.

How to access The Jungle
Beat Challenge Mode on the Easy difficulty level to unlock the first hidden stage - Jungle. You can only play this course on the Medium difficulty level.

Shortcut in Jungle
Jump through the next-to-last waterfall in 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 all the way to your right after you jump over all of the lava pits. Run onto the last booster before the hole in the wall and 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.

TWISTED METAL 3

99 Freeze Missiles
Go to the password screen and enter ▲ ⇧ ● ⇨ Start.

All Pickups are Power Missiles
Enter the password Start, L1, Start, L1, Start.

Fast Weapons
Enter the password: R1, R1, L1, L1, L1. It makes your weapons shoot faster then before.

Get Eight Specials
In the Hanger 18 level, destroy all four control panels and enter the

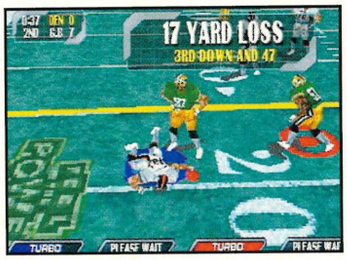
Nov 98 • 22 issue

warp inside the UFO. Wait a while on top and you see a UFO flying around. Shoot it down and you get eight specials.

Giant Ricochet Bombs
Enter ⇦ ⇨ ⇦ ⇨ ⇧ at the password screen.

Homing Rain
Enter ⇧ ⇩ ⇧ ⇩ ⇧ as your password to have the 'rain' weapon home in on your opponents when fired.

Infinite Specials
Enter the password L1, L1, R1, R1, R1. Then you return to the main menu. Now begin a game, then quit. When you begin a game again, you have an unlimited amount of your character's secret weapon.



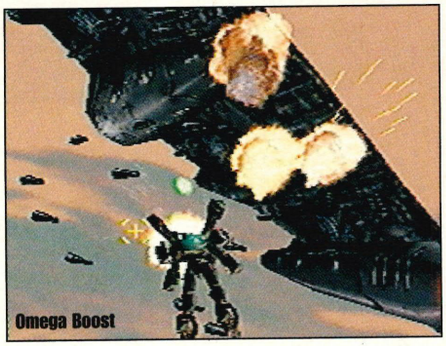
Invincibility
At the password screen, press L1 ■ ✖ R1 Start.

NFL BLITZ 2000

Cheat Codes
Enter these codes on the Matchup screen. The numbers tell how many times you have to press the Turbo, Jump and Pass buttons. For example, 5-2-5 means: Press Turbo five times, press Jump twice, press Pass five times.

0-1-0 ⇧ : Late hits
0-1-2 ⇩ : No CPU assistance (Two player agreement required)
0-2-1 ⇨: Show more field (Two player agreement required)
0-2-2 ⇨: Night game
0-3-0 ⇩ : Fog on
0-3-2 ⇦: Fast turbo running
0-4-0 ⇧ : Huge head
0-4-1 ⇩ : Thick fog on
0-4-5 ⇧ : Super blitzing
0-5-0 ⇨: Big football
1-0-0 ⇧ : Use team plays
1-2-3⇨: Headless team
2-1-1 ⇦: No out of bounds
2-3-3 ⇧ : Power-up team-mates
3-0-1 ⇧ : Asphalt field
3-0-2 ⇧ : Dirt field
3-0-3 ⇧ : Astroturf field
3-0-4 ⇧ : Snow field
3-1-0 ⇨ Team tiny players
3-3-3 ⇦: Invisible receiver highlight
3-4-4 ⇧ No interceptions
4-3-3 ⇧ : Invisible
5-2-5 ⇩ : Weather: snow
5-5-5 ⇨: Weather: rain
5-5-5 ⇧ : Hyper blitz (Two player agreement required)





OMEGA BOOST

Toggle Load Time Effect
While the game's brief loading occurs, there's a cool graphical effect that sucks in the red squares. Using either the directional pad or the analogue stick, you can control the direction of where it's being sucked. Not really a cheat, but fun anyway.

BUGS BUNNY LOST IN TIME

When in the Time Selector or in the Level Selector of an era, while holding down R1 and L2, you can input the following cheats:

Full Level Open
✖ ■ R2 L1 ● ✖ ■ ■ ■

Full Regular Carrots
✖ ■ R2 L1 ● ✖ ■ ■ ●

Full Abilities
✖ ■ R2 L1 ● ✖ ■ ▲ ■

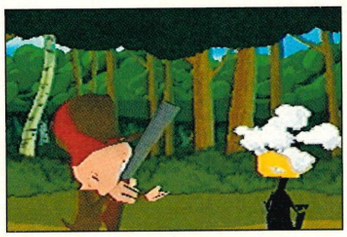
Full Energy
✖ ■ R2 L1 ● ✖ ■ ● ●

Get a Key
✖ ■ R2 L1 ● ✖ ● ■ ■

See the Ending When it's Completed
✖ ■ R2 L1 ● ✖ ● ■ ●

See the ending When it's Not Completed
✖ ■ R2 L1 ● ✖ ● ● ■

Death
✖ ■ R2 L1 ● ✖ ● ● ●



XPLORER
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XPLORER CODES (FOR USE WITH THE EXPLORER CHEAT CARTRIDGE) © FOR MORE CODES, CHECK OUT HELPLINE: (STANDARD RATE, 24 HOURS, 7 DAYS) 01302 32 5860 © WEB SITE CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.X-PLORER.CO.UK

Bust-A-Move 2

Guide Dots on All Levels
86578628595A
86578626595A
866985905959

No Hurry Up
86695694595A

Infinite Credits
866397005961

Game Area Stays at Top of Screen
866A9CA05961

Casper

Infinite Health
867314DC5A46

Infinite Fools' Gold
865B3EA4594F

Infinite Iron Keys
865B3E9C594F

Infinite Brass Keys
865B3EA0594F
CastleVania

All Relics
965DD0CC5A59
B6715756595A
165DD0CC5A59

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PERSONS AGED UNDER 16 CALL THIS NUMBER ONLY
09066 098053
PERSONS AGED 16 OR OVER MAY CALL THIS NUMBER
09066 098160
Calls to the above numbers cost 60p a minute
This service should only be used with the agreement of the person responsible for paying the bill. Calls to the number for persons aged under 16 years have a maximum cost of £3.00, the call will be terminated by forced release after 5 minutes. Calls to the number for persons aged 16 years and over have no maximum cost and call time restrictions. Ensure you are calling from a touch tone phone. Accuracy of the information is not guaranteed.
Please put comments or queries in writing to Interactive Telcom Ltd., 8 Grants Walk, PL25 5AA or call our customer service on
0800 1982784

EXCHANGE

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EPM SAYS:

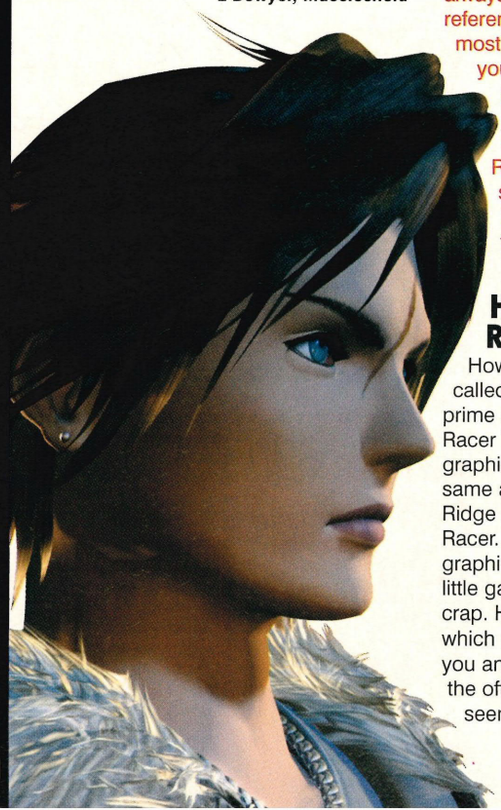
It's official. The PlayStation 2 is well on its way, and is going to pack a mighty punch. Our exclusive news feature last month prompted loads of you to write in with your views, many remarking on how short-lived the Dreamcast's going to be and how exciting the prospect of DVD films is. What we find really exciting about this is the possibility of all-new Gran Turismo and Final Fantasy games for the new system. If the wait is just too unbearable for you, soak up some of the latest games to come to the original console (see Final Fantasy VIII and Tomb Raider: TLR). And hey, you can even play these classics on the Sony's next little baby...

READING BETWEEN THE LINES

I bought your extreme PlayStation magazine Issue 20; the August issue, and reading through it, I noticed that according to Page 91, the Directory Enquiries section, you did a review of Command & Conquer: Retaliation in Issue 17. So I filled in the Back Issues coupon and requested it. This duly arrived, and although interesting in its own right, it didn't have a review of C&C: Retaliation. It does say on Page 93, the Directory Enquiries section again, that there's a review of C&C: Retaliation in Issue Ten. So what is going on? Is this one of Baldrick's cunning plans to sell old issues of extreme PlayStation, or are you going to offer the old lame 'printing error' excuse? Anyway, whatever the reason is, I would appreciate a reply.

L Bowyer, Macclesfield

EPM: Had you taken the time to read the enquiries section properly, you'd have noticed it actually said 'RU' quite clearly next to the issue number, indicating a 'round-up' review. We always provide the latest review reference for a game, to give it the most up-to-date score, and I think if you look at Page 72 of Issue 17 you'll find a strategy game feature. This gives you a sense of perspective, placing Retaliation next to other existing strategy games and seeing how they compare. Issue Ten offered the original review.



SECOND HELPINGS

STAR LETTER

John Bean's letter in EPM 22 reminded me of how I used to be. I too was very unsure of second-hand games. Until I saw a game I was looking for, going for a mere £10 in my local Electronic Boutique (Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo - I kid you not!), and I thought I'd chance it - no problems at all. A few weeks later I was in another EB shop in another town and I got a copy of Resident Evil 2 - mucho cheapo - but this one did not load correctly. I took the copy to my local EB with receipt and without question they offered me a full refund! I took another copy of the same game and it plays great! So go on Mr Bean, if you are near an EB buy second hand - you've nothing to lose. If this gets a prize, can I have a second-hand copy of Colin McRae Rally please?

Gerard Cartor, Co. Derry

EPM: Great point, mate. Large outlets that deal in second-hand games are an excellent way of picking up a little bargain now and then. If you keep the receipt there shouldn't be any problems at all if it doesn't work. Without meaning to advertise for EB, it seems that they have a sensible policy regarding refunds for games that you've taken home and tested, which is good news for gamers wanting to save a bit of cash. Enjoy a copy of Colin McRae. Sadly it's brand new.



HARDLY REVOLUTIONARY

How dare Namco give their so-called 'Gran Turismo Beater' a nice prime review? We all know Ridge Racer Type 4 only has decent graphics. The gameplay is exactly the same as; er, let's see - Ridge Racer, Ridge Racer Revolution and Rage Racer. Again, all these games were graphically impressive but they had little gameplay. The gameplay was crap. Hit a car, slow to a speed at which a tortoise could easily fly past you and still not break into sweat, while the offending car is nowhere to be seen. I had a second-hand copy of Ridge Racer and got rid of that. I didn't even touch Ridge Racer Revolution, and then borrowed my mate's copy of Rage Racer. He's since got rid of the game because it was crap. I think I played it once and for the rest of the two weeks I had it, it stayed on my shelf collecting dust. So there.

Dean Michaels, Redbridge

EPM: Although not quite so violently devoted to the cause, we have to agree there is no absolutely comparison between Gran Turismo and Ridge Racer Type 4. R4 is highly unrealistic and inaccurate, while Gran Turismo was and still is massively popular and revolutionary in console gaming. Never before have we seen such an excellent depiction of a racing driver's career, and we surely won't again until GT2 hits the shops. And we allocate review space, not Namco.

THE NEVER-ENDING STORY

I am a person who has looked at, and indeed admired, the games over the past few years for the Sony PlayStation. However, to this very day I am still not an owner of a machine! I have now realised that I cannot live my life in total peace and harmony unless I buy one. So, I went out and bought about £10-worth of PlayStation

magazines (including the best one - EPM) to look, I suppose, at the kind of games that were on the market for it. After spending endless hours looking at them, and reading the previews of all sorts of games, I have come to the conclusion that, although I never really kicked my butt to buy a PlayStation a few years ago, I certainly could not have chosen a better time than now! Come on you lot out there like me, who don't own one of these machines - my advice to you is the same advice I duly gave myself a few weeks ago. Buy a PlayStation NOW! The games on this machine have never been better. Games that caught my eye include Dino Crisis, Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation, Gran Turismo 2, Driver/Driver 2, Resident Evil 3, Quake 2, Warpath: Jurassic Park; and the list goes on! What more can I possibly say? The list is endless! Is the Sony PlayStation dead? Ha ha, anyone who makes such a statement…

CW Lobb, Cornwall

EPM: Sorry to cut you off there Lobby, but there are only 100 pages in this magazine and we've only two days until the deadline. We're happy you're still excited about the PlayStation, and looking forward to the new game releases, which reminds people of just how alive and kicking the mighty grey one still is. Just try to keep them a little bit shorter and sweeter from now on, eh?



CAST-OFF

I am writing to give you my verdict on the new Dreamcast. The answer to the ultimate question (will PlayStation be pulled down by Dreamcast?) is: well of course they won't. I went into a Comet store and they had a Dreamcast plugged in, so I stupidly tried the machine. It was not a touch on the PlayStation. The 120Mb the machine has was not by any means used to its full extent; the graphics were crap and the control pad did not do what you wanted it to do until five seconds later. My advice is, if you have £199, buy a PlayStation and some games, or if you already have one, wait and save that little bit more to get the PlayStation 2! EPM, what is your verdict?

Timmy Wright, West Yorkshire

EPM: The trouble with flashy new consoles is that despite their impressive hardware, they don't always have the games to support them. Just look at the disappointing N64 and disastrous Saturn for two prime examples. Then there's PlayStation - hundreds of top games and a new console with promised support from software developers. 'Nuff said.

MONEY SPINNERS

I am proud to say I'm a devoted reader of your top-quality magazine, and I feel an important subject should be discussed on its top-quality pages. The matter I am referring to is the dire quality of sequels to otherwise-excellent games. For example, Tomb Raider was among the best games of its time. Not only did it boast the first fully three-dimensional environment, decorated ornately at every point, but it also had a clear and involving storyline and an excellent mixture of mind-bending mystery and frustratingly difficult action. The sequel, however, was completely dumbed down. The storyline was so shallow it could almost be described as transparent, which was mainly due to sweeping aside the mystery for more action. Also, although the frame rate had increased, the intricate decoration had been lost. Other examples of sequel stupidity include Resident Evil 2, which lacks the edge-of your-seat atmosphere and mystery of its predecessor, and Broken Sword 2, which sadly contains no more than a mere fraction of the original's longevity. I know that developers of these games only churn out sequels to make extra cash (and why not if it does just that?). But what really pisses me off is that they don't care about public enjoyment, providing people spend their money on the developer's software, and I (along with millions of other people) ran out and spent up to £40 on these unworthy sequels after being so impressed by the first instalments. If I win the Star Letter, can I have Gran Turismo 2?

OMJ Houghton, Stockport

EPM: It's a tad ironic, OMJ, that after slating sequels for about five minutes you request one yourself. Just what is your point, exactly? First you criticise excellent sequels such as Tomb Raider II, then you say fair enough if it generates a few quid. Then you moan about developers not caring enough. Make your mind up, please. Simple solution: don't like them - don't buy them. One more thing we don't get - what were expecting when you bought a sequel? They're not supposed to be dramatically different from the original, hence them having the same name.

PEARLS OF WISDOM

My choice of game should I win would be WCW Mayhem.
James Dillon, Birmingham

EPM: That's a little optimistic when this is your entire 'letter'.

On WWF Warzone, Mankind sounds gay when he shouts 'mummy'.
Tom Arnold, Kent

EPM: Thanks for that incredible insight, Tom. It really is amazing how you can learn something new every day.

If man evolved from monkeys and apes, why do we still have monkeys and apes?
Bish, Barnsley

EPM: Can't argue with those fine words, Bish. Except the theory of evolution revolves around the survival of the fittest. In other words, one particular type of monkey took alternative measures to survive, involving a gradual adaptation to the fields from the trees, eventually resulting in them evolving into humans. Not that this is at all related to the world of computer games.



WIN A TOP GAME FROM GAMEPLAY

Every month, the sender of our Star Letter wins a top game of his or her choice from Gameplay. When writing to extreme PlayStation, make sure you state which game you would like should you win this coveted award. Send your merry missives to:

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

Or you can e-mail us on: exchange@quaynet.co.uk

Remember, you can have any game you like - just include your full address and choice of game.

STUFF

This month's stuff features a pretty special piece of kit that can transform your gaming experiences, plus some new tilt-sensitive controllers and a hand-held steering wheel. Read on...

EVOLUTION CONTROL PAD



By: Gamester
Price: £29.99

This tilt-sensitive pad lets you change its responsiveness. There's also a Default Mode, Program Mode and No Tilt Mode. The overall shape and ergonomics of this pad are well designed, with a solid feel that allows easy control of all the buttons. There are also a couple of thoughtfully-placed grip pads on the underside.

However, the general appearance of this pad is a tad boring and '80s, while the analogue levers have a flimsy feel to them - they rotate by being twisted and leave gaps between the stick and pad. The digital pad is a nice single rotational button that responds pretty well to your control, while the shoulder buttons are nicely within reach. Featuring G-Force technology, this pad has to be recognised as something fairly special because of this aspect alone. The only problem with the tilt effect is that by relying on this too much, you might find its responsiveness tot sluggish for the genre it's most suitable for - racing.

THE VERDICT 8/10

300W SOUND STATION

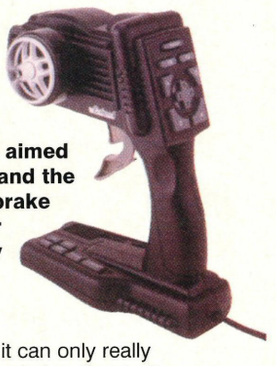


By: Logic 3
Price: £49.99

For a really mind-blowing experience, try this 300W three-way sub-woofer speaker system from Logic 3, compatible with almost any console, PC or hi-fi.
With bass and volume control, this tasty piece of kit features two satellite speakers and a main sound station. Whether you want to enhance the in-game sound effects of Resident Evil 2 or pump out some tunes from WipEout 3, this makes the whole experience that much more involving. The output can be muffled on a high bass setting, but generally the performance is impressively powerful. This all comes in a tasty little coloured/transparent or blue box, stylishly shaped just like those lovely iMac computers.

THE VERDICT 9/10

TOP DRIVE REACTOR



By: Logic 3
Price: £29.99

This digital/analogue hand-held steering wheel is aimed at combining the realism of a car steering wheel and the control of a joypad. With two trigger buttons for brake and accelerate and a sideways-situated wheel for left/right, this has a quality fell to it, illustrated by the weight behind the wheel, similar to that of a car's steering wheel.

One problem is that due to the type of controller this is, it can only really be of any use to a right-handed player, which is quite restrictive. Due to the positioning of the regular symbol and shoulder buttons, you may find it tricky to master gear changes, and in games such as Gran Turismo the controls need to be customised. The responsiveness of the throttle is heavy, as it should be, and the brake appropriately sensitive. Generally this isn't great, but if you're after a trigger-type controller, this could well be your answer.

THE VERDICT 6/10

EVOLUTION CONTROL SYSTEM



By: Gamester
Price: £49.99

Inspired by the same ideas behinc the tilt pad, this motion-sensitive control device has two parts to it - a glove that fits either hand for steering, and a grip stick with the and shoulder buttons on it. Using G-Force technology behind the till reactor responds to the movemen hand. Apart from looking ridiculou this device, it must be said it seen purpose. Yes, it's very clever, but i necessary? It's not noticeably eas and gives no more realism for the driving/shooting/flying genres. Thc enjoy a good slouch and really ca be bothered to pick up a joypad c find this answers your prayers, bu is really something our Japanese friends would probably appreciate more. The genre this is most useful for is flying games, but there aren't really a wealth of fantastic flying sims on the PlayStation, are there?

THE VERDICT 6/10







PlayStation Chameleon Pad



Turbo Feedback Steering Wheel



Playstation Primal Pad



PlayStation Soft Touch Pad



Playstation Sabotage Pad



Playstation Kick Back Pad

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SURGE PROTECTORS

By: Kingshield
Price: £16



At just £16, this little device could well be a worthy investment. Power surges can cause serious problems to memory cards or the circuitry of your PlayStation, sometimes even completely destroying it. Not always instantly recognisable, the effects can be gradual, as the circuit boards and memory becomes eroded. This protector requires no wiring and just plugs into the power supply of your console. It absorbs excess electricity, thereby preventing it from powering through the console and damaging it. If your idea of a nightmare is having your best scores wiped, this is definitely worth a look.

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.

extreme GAMES DIRECTORY

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.
3Xtreme	Sony CEA	Sports Sim	#19 IM	59%	Useless imported extreme sports game which doesn't know whether to be arcadey or a sim.
360: Three Sixty	Cryo	Combat/Racing	#18	82%	Futuristic hover-bike racing with some clever course design.
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.
A					
Abe's Exoddus	**GT Interactive**	**Platform Game**	**#22 PL**	**92%**	**Humorous and interesting platform puzzler, but not everyone gets the joke.**
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.
Activision Classic Games	Activision	Compilation	#18 IM	10%	30 games directly ported from the Atari 2600. Why, why, why?
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 Ice Hockey 2	Gremlin Interactive	Sports Sim	#17	79%	It's an ice hockey game. Again. It plays ice hockey. Of course...
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.
Aironauts	Red Storm	Action	#18	70%	Aerial action featuring fighting and racing; a bit of an also-ran.
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.**
Allied General	Mindscape	Strategy Game	#17 RU	72%	Follow-up to Panzer General. But this time you play the allied powers.
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.
Anna Kournikova's SC Tennis	**Sony CEE**	**Sports Sim**	**#19**	**91%**	**Looks ugly, plays great - just the opposite of Anna herself...**
Ape Escape	**Sony CEE**	**Platform Game**	**#19**	**91%**	**Involved and original platformer that demands you use an analogue stick.**
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.**
Asterix	Infogrames	Strategy/Platform	#17	78%	Seen better, seen worse - an interesting if unremarkable hybrid.
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.
A-Train	Ocean	Strategy Game	#17 RU	68%	Build and manage your own railway. Crap graphics but high on depth.
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.
B					
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.
Beatmania	Konami	Music	#18 IM	47%	Music making action with a controller that costs £100; crap music, crap game.
Bedlam	GT Interactive	Strategy Game	#17 RU	64%	You need a mouse to play this strategic PC port. Poor relation to Syndicate Wars.
Big Air	Electronic Arts	Sports Sim	#17	73%	Great animation, but too slow. Why bother when there's Cool Boarders 3?
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 Lines	Sony CEE	Sports Sim	#17	45%	Futuristic game of tag? No thanks...

Title	Publisher	Genre	Issue	Score	Comment
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	Virgin Interactive	Puzzle	#18	85%	All-time classic puzzle action returns to the PSX, excellent for one to four players.
Bomberman Fantasy Race	Virgin Interactive	Racing	#18	32%	A particularly poor racing game that tarnishes a good licence name.
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...
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.
Bugs Bunny: Lost In Time	Infogrames	Platform Game	#20	53%	This useless platformer is a complete waste of a promising licence.
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	Enix	Music	#18 IM	77%	Sequel of the hit 'Simon Says' that doesn't match the might of the original.
Bust-a-Move 2 (Groove)	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 Generations	Virgin Interactive	Compilation	#22	73%	Thirteen (yes, 13) old Capcom games. Some are better than others.
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.**
Castrol Honda SBR	THQ	Driving Game	#23	70%	Half-hearted bike racer. Nothing much wrong with it, but no real sparkle.
Cheesy	Ocean	Platform Game	#13 RU	14%	Great CGI intro, but the game's a woefully inept platformer. No fun at all.
Chessmaster 3D	Mindscape	Strategy Game	#17 RU	73%	It's chess. For the PlayStation. And it works very well...
Chessmaster II	Mindscape	Strategy Game	#20	79%	As a chess sim it couldn't be better, more could be done to make it a game.
Chill	Eidos	Sports Sim	#4	46%	A disastrous snowboarding effort with awkward controls and ill-conceived time limit.
Choro Q Wonderful	Takara	Driving RPG	#23 IM	40%	RPG with cars as characters. Too simplistic, and language barrier kills it...
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**	**#19 PL**	**91%**	**Another cool driver. No overtaking, but plenty of rally racing.**
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	**Virgin Interactive**	**Strategy**	**#18 PL**	**93%**	**A distinct improvement on the original, offering more of everything and now only £20.**
C&C: Retaliation	**Virgin Interactive**	**Strategy Sim**	**#17 RU**	**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**	**#17 PL**	**90%**	**Not as good as the third outing, but ideal for the casual snowboarding fan.**
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.
Croc 2	Fox Interactive	Platform Game	#19	68%	Weak platformer which uses every platforming cliche. Dodgy, derivative and dire.
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.

C

D



BARGAIN BIN

Discworld 2: Missing, Presumed...!?

Psygnosis





Buying this one's a bit of a risk. It's not that it's a bad game - it isn't. It's also one of the very few pure 2D graphic adventures on the PlayStation, with puzzles a-plenty and no action or shooting sequences. If you liked Broken Sword, you MIGHT love this...

...Or you might not. When it was first released, many criticised it for being too damned difficult, but others found it pretty easy to get into. For experts only? No, you don't have to be an adventure prodigy to play, but you definitely need a seriously off-beat sense of humour.

Based on the best-selling novels by Terry Pratchett, you help Rincewind find the missing Grim Reaper, gathering items and solving puzzles as you go. Nothing is as it seems, and unless you really 'click' with the Pratchett humour, some of the tasks seem ridiculously illogical. If you do, they don't. Clear? Good...

Those who find Discworld 2 to their liking will love it to bits, but many just won't get the joke. It's worth the risk at bargain bin prices, though.

Title	Publisher	Genre	Issue	Score	Comment
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.
Darkstalkers 3	Virgin Interactive	Beat-'em-up	#17	65%	Basically a Street Fighter clone with boring characters. Not outstanding.
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.
Defcon 5	Sony CEE	Strategy Game	#17 RU	86%	Strategic shooting - fun if you can pass the ridiculously hard opening levels.
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.
Destrega	Sony CEE	Beat-'em-up	#23	28%	This lousy fighter should've been called 'disaster'.
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!**
Dino Crisis	Capcom	Action Adventure	#20 IM	86%	Great Res-Evil-with-dinosaurs action, but puzzles impossible unless you speak Japanese.
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.**
Dreams	Cryo Interactive	Platform Game	#20	31%	Pandemonium wannabe, cursed by dodgy graphics, boring gameplay and illogical characters.
Driver	**GT Interactive**	**Driving Game**	**#19**	**93%**	**Car crime in full 3D. It's a steal.**
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.
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.
Evil Zone	Titus Software	Beat-'em-up	#19	86%	Two-button beat-'em-up - ideal for beginners, but will frustrate Tekken experts.
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.
FA Manager	Eidos Interactive	Strategy Game	#20	68%	Not baaaad, but hardly earth-shattering. A bit like Bristol City.
FA Prem L'gue F'ball Man. 2000	Electronic Arts	Strategy Sim	#23	68%	Not a baaaad footie management game, but hardly LMA Manager.
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 World Cup	**Electronic Arts**	**Sports Sim**	**#19 PL**	**91%**	**Top footy game, but no real surprises.**
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**	**#18 PL**	**96%**	**The greatest RPG ever just got better at a Platinum price.**
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**	**#19 PL**	**91%**	**Bugged but brilliant F1 sim. A genuine televisual experience.**
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.
G-Police 2: WoJ	**Sony CEE**	**Flight Sim**	**#22**	**92%**	**Space-based blasting doesn't get much better than this. A great technical achievement.**
Guardian's Crusade	Activision	RPG	#17	63%	Spectacular fresh ideas, but weak in a few areas.
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.**
Grand Theft Auto: London	Take 2	Crime Sim	#18	83%	World's first PSX add-on disc, a great addition to the original.
Granstream Saga, The	Sony CEE	RPG	#15	72%	Slow storyline and easy puzzles, but not bad for beginners.
Gran Turismo	**Sony CEE**	**Racing**	**#18 PL**	**95%**	**Amazing visuals and an incredible driving engine for 20 quid; 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.
Guardian of Darkness, The	Cryo Interactive	3D Action Game	#23	35%	Takes a while to get into, and it isn't really worth the effort.
Guitar Freaks	Konami	Music Game	#22 IM	72%	Cool guitar interpretation of Beatmania, but harder than a brick with a flick-knife.
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.
Hard Edge	Sunsoft	Action Adventure	#17	82%	Not as good as Res Evil, but a fine 'tribute' just the same.
Heart of Darkness	Infogrames	Arcade Adventure	#17 PL	74%	Interesting, graphically excellent but essentially flawed. Also too 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.

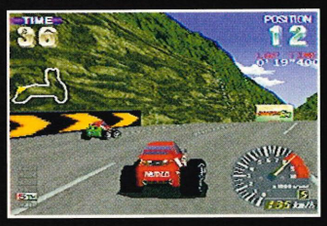
BONUS GAME OF THE MONTH

Game: Ridge Racer Revolution
Bonus Game: Galaxian '88





There's a cool bonus game in Ridge Racer Revolution. Finding it requires no effort at all (it's impossible to miss), and you can access some interesting effects in the main game by playing it... Galaxian '88 is familiar to all retro fans. It's an ageing Namco classic where you control a ship that hogs the foot of the screen, blasting the aliens as they enter in formation. Simple stuff, but state-of-the-art in its day. The version offered in Ridge Racer Revolution is played while the game loads - there's no waiting around bored here.



There are two bonuses you can gain in Ridge Racer Revolution by playing Galaxian '88. By holding R1, L1, Select, ▲ and ⇩ after the machine is switched on, and keeping them held throughout the Galaxian game, you get a homing laser that picks off the aliens as soon as they hit the screen. You get a perfect score, and when the Ridge Racer game starts you race tiny cars with a child commentating. Alternatively, blast all the baddies without using the cheat for eight extra cars.

Title	Publisher	Genre	Issue	Score	Comment
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.
Jade Cocoon	Crave Entertainment	RPG	#23	60%	Neat RPG game from the newcomers, but far from a gem.
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.
Jonah Lomu Rugby	Codemasters	Sports Sim	#16 RU	89%	Intuitive controls and a true representation of the sport make this a joy to play.
Johnny Bazookatone	US Gold	Platform Game	#13 RU	64%	A platformer for younger gamers. It's not bad, but is definitely showing its age.
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.
Kagero Deception 2	Virgin Interactive	Strategy	#18	77%	Fiendishly clever strategy game that's let down by poor control and iffy graphics.
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 Final	Sony CEE	Puzzle Game	#22	88%	More of the same, but who cares? The original was great...
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.
Legend of Kartia	Konami	RPG	#19	68%	Interesting if uninspiring RPG - fun, but no FFVII.
Legend of Mana	Squaresoft	RPG	#23 IM	60%	Cool RPG, but avoid it if you can't speak Jap.
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.
LMA Manager	**Codemasters**	**Strategy Sim**	**#23**	**92%**	**The best football management game on the PSX, bar none.**
Lucky Luke	Infogrames	Platform Game	#23 PL	40%	This platformer's two bullets short of a revolver.
Madden 98	Electronic Arts	Sports Sim	#19 RU	76%	Imagine Madden 97 with updated rosters and a few minor tweaks. That's Madden 98...
Madden NFL 2000	Electronic Arts	Sports Sim	#23	87%	Yet another American sports game from EA. Is there no end to them?
Mad Panic Coaster	Takara Co.	Driving Game	#23 IM	77%	Curious roller coaster game. Fun, but tricky.
Magic Carpet	Bullfrog	Strategy Game	#17 RU	70%	Incredible feeling of freedom, but overall, the game is showing its age.
Marvel S. Heroes Vs SF	Virgin Interactive	Beat-'em-up	#17	86%	Your fave Street Fighters meet the men from Marvel. Not a bad scrap.
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.

Title	Publisher	Genre	Issue	Score	Comment
MechWarrior 2	Activision	Mech Game	#7 RU	71%	Excellent mission-based objectives, but why is the scenery so uninspiring?
MediEvil	**Sony CEE**	**Arcade Adventure**	**#22 PL**	**93%**	**Stunning slash-'n'-solver which keeps you playing for months.**
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.
Monaco Grand Prix	Ubi Soft	Driving Game	#17	78%	Reasonable Formula One racing action, but with no licenses the cars look bland.
Monkey Hero	Take 2	RPG	#14	88%	Interesting action-style RPG for the younger PlayStation gamer.
Monopoly	Hasbro	Strategy Game	#17 RU	20%	What's the point of releasing a PSX game based on Monopoly? Utter madness!
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.

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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 Hangtime	Acclaim	Sports Sim	#19 RU	50%	Useless basketball sim. Who buys this crap?
NBA in the Zone 2	Konami	Sports Sim	#19 RU	85%	Oh no, not more basketball…
NBA Jam Tournament Ed.	Acclaim	Sports Sim	#19 RU	80%	Top arcade action in this pleasantly unrealistic basketball offering.
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.
NBA Pro 99	Konami	Sports Sim	#19	87%	It's a basketball game. No more, no less…
NBA Shootout '98	**Sony CEE**	**Sports Sim**	**#19 RU**	**90%**	**Arguably the best basketball offering on the PlayStation. Top stuff.**
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.
Need for Speed: RC	**Electronic Arts**	**Driving Game**	**#17**	**92%**	**The best Need for Speed game yet - great pursuit mode.**
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 Breakaway '98	Acclaim	Sports Sim	#19 RU	75%	Yet another ice hockey game. Not a bad one, mind…
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.

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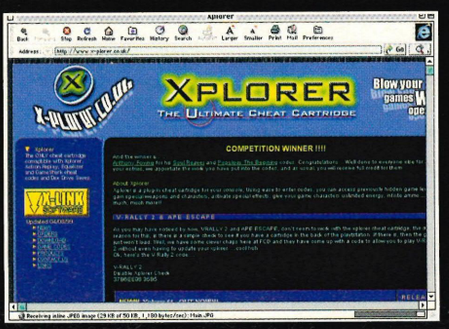
O.D.T.	Psygnosis	Shoot-'em-up	#12	82%	Awkward at first, but as you get into it, this 3D shooter improves.
Off World Interceptor	BMG	Driving Game	#15 RU	31%	One of the first games on the PlayStation. Bad controls and sluggish movement.
Ogre Battle	Atlus	RPG	#11 RU	79%	Not a bad RPG/wargame hybrid, but 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.
Omega Boost	Sony CEE	Shoot-'em-up	#20	75%	Wonderful-looking blaster, but let down by repetitiveness and lack of power-ups.
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.

WEB SITE OF THE MONTH

http://www.x-plorer.co.uk

If you're a fan of Fire International's X-Plorer cheat cartridge (and if you want a codes cart, it has to be this one), check out their dedicated web site. It contains news and information on the entire X-Plorer range, including the X-Link cable and software which allows you to connect an X-Plorer to a PC. There are competitions to enter and all manner of X-Plorer-related tips. Best of all, the boyz at Blaze have sourced over 3000 cheat codes for use in with the X-Plorer, all of which are offered on the site. What's more, it's free!





Title	Publisher	Genre	Issue	Score	Comment
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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.
Panzer General	Mindscape	Strategy Game	#17 RU	70%	Strategy wargame for the purest of purists. Basic hex-based graphics.
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.
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.
Plane Crazy	Acclaim Entertainment	Racing Game	#23	44%	The best thing about this aerial racer is the pun in the title.
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.
Point Blank 2	**Sony CEE**	**Lightgun Game**	**#22**	**91%**	**More fairground frolics and GunCon mayhem. Who thought a lightgun game could be cute?**
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.
Powerful Baseball	Konami	Sports Sim	#22 IM	53%	Cute baseball sim as only the Japanese can do 'em. Language barrier makes options tricky.
Power Move Pro Wrestling	Activision	Beat-'em-up	#19 RU	82%	One of the better wrestlers on the PSX, but no licence...
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 League STARS	Electronic Arts	Sports Sim	#22	78%	Another game based on the FIFA engine. Too many flaws and too few enhancements to be a classic.
Premier Manager '98	**Gremlin Interactive**	**Strategy Sim**	**#5**	**91%**	**Spectacular and in-depth football management sim. User-friendly too.**
Premier Manager 99	**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.
Pro 18 Golf	Psygnosis	Sports Sim	#18	75%	Excellent graphics help to spotlight an otherwise run-of-the-mill game.
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.
Puma Street Soccer	Infogrames	Sports Sim	#18	30%	Soccer games are ten-a-penny as we all know, so why did Infogrames bother with this?
R					
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.
Rainbow Six	Take 2 Interactive	3D Action Game	#23	66%	Interesting but flawed counter-terrorist Doom-style game.
Rampage 2: Universal Tour	GT Interactive	Action	#18	35%	A very old arcade beat 'em-up reborn; okay for ten pence in the arcade...
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.
Rat Attack	Mindscape	Save-'em-up	#23	74%	Cartoony rat-catcher that oozes originality.
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.
R/C Stunt Copter	**Virgin Interactive**	**Software Toy**	**#20**	**92%**	**Fantastic simulation of flying a remote controlled helicopter.**
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**	**#20 PL**	**93%**	**The most violent and gruesome game ever? An all-time 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.
Return Fire	Warner Interactive	Strategy Game	#17 RU	88%	This capture-the-flag offering provides great strategy action.
Re-Volt	Acclaim Entertainment	Driving Game	#23	42%	Neat ideas, but this remote controlled racer's batteries are somewhat flat.
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.
R4: Ridge Racer Type 4	Sony CEE	Driving Game	#17	88%	Desperately unrealistic but a cool arcade drive nonetheless.
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...
Risk	Hasbro	Strategy Game	#17 RU	69%	Based on the boardgame, the console version offers new modes.
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-Type Delta	**Sony CEE**	**Shoot-'em-up**	**#17**	**92%**	**A fine update on one of the best blasters of all time.**
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.
S					
Sampras Extreme Tennis	**Codemasters**	**Sports Sim**	**#16 RU**	**91%**	**One of the most playable tennis sims on the PSX. 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.
ShadowMan	Acclaim Entertainment	3D Action Game	#23	82%	Deep, dark and mysterious Tomb Raider clone. Fun, but not perfect.
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.
Silent Hill	Konami	Action Adventure	#20	83%	Gruesome shock horror offering which entertains, but isn't the blockbuster we expected.
Sim City 2000	Maxis	Strategy Game	#17 RU	88%	A little awkward on the PSX, but great fun nonetheless.
Skull Monkeys	Electronic Arts	Platform Game	#3	65%	Great animation, but very little gameplay. One to rent.

Title	Publisher	Genre	Issue	Score	Comment
Slam 'N' Jam '96	BMG	Sports Sim	#19 RU	74%	Not a bad basketball game, but woefully dated.
Sled Storm	**Electronic Arts**	**Driving Game**	**#23**	**90%**	**An utterly brilliant obscure sports driver. Speed, handling, tricks - it's got the lot.**
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.**
Soul Reaver	**Eidos**	**3D Action Game**	**#19**	**96%**	**At last - a 3D game to beat the mighty Tomb Raider.**
Soviet Strike	**Electronic Arts**	**Shoot-'em-up**	**#3 PL**	**91%**	**Spectacular strategic helicopter game - the thinking man's shoot-'em-up.**
Space Hulk	Electronic Arts	Strategy Game	#17 RU	73%	Good conversion of the boardgame. Turn-based fun, if a little slow.
Space Jam	Acclaim	Sports Sim	#19 RU	64%	Dire basketball movie tie-in starring Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck and - Michael Jordan?
Spawn: The Eternal	Sony CEE	Action Adventure	#5	59%	Dodgy 3D action adventure-cum-beat-'em-up - boring as hell.
Speed Freaks	Sony CEE	Driving Game	#22	86%	Cool four-player karting frolics. Not a Mario 64-beater, but the best on the PSX.
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.
Sports Car GT	Electronic Arts	Driving Game	#17	35%	Terrible sports racer with boring tracks, lifeless cars and dodgy graphics.
Spot Goes To Hollywood	Virgin Interactive	Platform Game	#13 RU	24%	...And we wished he'd stayed there. This game's crap, basically.
Spyro the Dragon	**Sony CEE**	**Platform Game**	**#23 PL**	**91%**	**One of the greatest PSX platformers. Great exploration.**
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 Alpha 3	**Virgin Interactive**	**Beat-'em-up**	**#17**	**92%**	**New moves, new characters but all the old faves too. A must for fans.**
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 EX+Alpha	Virgin Interactive	Beat-'em-up	#22 PL	85%	Street Fighter makes the transition to 3D reasonably successfully, but no side-step.
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.
Syndicate Wars	**Bullfrog**	**Strategy Game**	**#17 RU**	**90%**	**Dark, mysterious action/strategy game in a chilling Blade Runner-style setting.**
Syphon Filter	**Sony CEE**	**Action Adventure**	**#19**	**93%**	**Rough-looking, hard-playing Metal Gear Solid play-alike. A thinking person's blaster.**

T

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**	**#20 PL**	**90%**	**The best beat-'em-up ever, though it's showing its age a little.**
Tempest X3	Atari	Shoot-'em-up	#5 RU	57%	Boring retro update. For die-hard Tempest fans only.
Tenchu: Stealth Assassins	**Activision**	**Action Adventure**	**#22 PL**	**95%**	**The first ever stealth game. A bloodthirsty, atmospheric marvel.**
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	Driving Game	#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.
Theme Park	Bullfrog	Strategy Game	#17 RU	86%	Build a theme park, develop new rides and attractions, balance the books...
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.
Tony Hawk's Skateboarding	**Activision**	**Sports Sim**	**#23**	**92%**	**This little gem will appeal to skaters and non-skaters alike.**
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.
Transport Tycoon	Ocean	Strategy Game	#17 RU	57%	Just doesn't work on the PSX. Poor controls and loading times.
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.**
Triple Play 2000	EA Sports	Sports Sim	#18	89%	Baseball isn't very popular here, but this simulation should do something about that.
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.

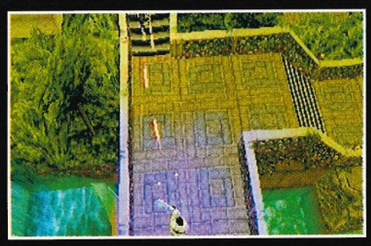
U

UEFA Champions League	**Eidos**	**Sports Sim**	**#18**	**90%**	**Using the WLS engine UEFA offers a vast improvement in almost every respect.**
Um Jammer Lammy	Sony CEE	Music Game	#20	89%	Copy the button combos to make Lammy play guitar. Great, but short.
Unholy War	Eidos	Wargame	#10	69%	Wargame/beat-'em-up hybrid? Too much compromise to really work well.

V

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.

ChartTrack



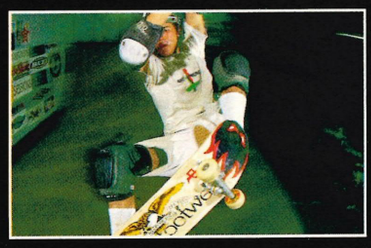




CHART ATTACK

All Formats Charts: October 1999

1: Star Wars Ep 1: Phantom Menace	EPM #23, 80%
2: Driver	EPM #19, 93%
3: Pokemon Red	(Game Boy only)
4: Pokemon Blue	(Game Boy only)
5: Tony Hawk's Skateboarding	EPM #22, 92%
6: C&C: Tiberian Sun	(PC only)
7: South Park	(Review next month)
8: Soul Reaver	EPM #19, 96%
9: Tekken 3	EPM #20, 90%
10: Colin McRae Rally	EPM #19, 91%

STAR WARS EPISODE I THE PHANTOM MENACE

Another good month for the PlayStation. Only three games in the All-Formats Top Ten aren't on the PSX, and two of those are Pokemons. If you're wondering why South Park is in the charts but has yet to be reviewed, it's because we weren't sent a review copy - the game went straight into the shops, and was released too late to make this issue. Don't even think of buying it until you've read next month's review, though - games which aren't sent to us for review are usually awful!

Title	Publisher	Genre	Issue	Score	Comment
Virus	Cryo Entertainment	3D Action Game	#20	27%	Yet another dodgy Tomb Raider rip-off. Take our advice - avoid.
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.
V-Rally 2	**Infogrames**	**Driving Game**	**#19**	**95%**	**One of the best racers ever? We certainly think so...**
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.
Wako Volleyball	Athena	Sports Sim	#23 IM	39%	Boring, shallow volleyball sim. Sad stuff.
Warcraft 2	**Electronic Arts**	**Strategy Game**	**#17 RU**	**90%**	**Despite awkward controls, the C&C-style fantasy bash is a real winner.**
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.
Warhammer	Mindscape	Strategy Game	#17 RU	86%	Command & Conquer with a Tolkienesque theme. Top stuff.
Warhawk	Sony CEE	Flight Sim	#9 RU	39%	The PSX's first flight sim. Well presented, but severely lacking in gameplay.
Warzone 2100	Eidos Interactive	Strategy Game	#17	88%	Direct control over vehicles puts a new slant on Command & Conquer-style games.
Wayne Gretsky's '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.
WCW Vs The World	THQ	Beat-'em-up	#19 RU	75%	Interesting game, but no blockbuster. Will there ever be a great grappler on the PSX?
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.
Wing Over 2	JVC	Flight Sim	#17	79%	One of the best flight sims yet, but a little over-ambitious.
Wip3out	**Psygnosis**	**Driving Game**	**#23**	**91%**	**Top future racer. The best of the series, and a fantastic game in its own right.**
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 Attitude	**Acclaim Entertainment**	**Beat-'em-up**	**#20**	**90%**	**The best wrestling sim on the PlayStation. Excellent 'create a grappler' option.**
WWF In Your House	Acclaim	Beat-'em-up	#19 RU	60%	Spectacularly arcadey, but a little on the shallow side.
WWF Wrestlemania	Acclaim	Beat-'em-up	#19 RU	55%	An arcadey wrestling game with unrealistic special moves and awkward graphics.
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.
X-Com: Enemy Unknown	Microprose	Strategy Game	#17 RU	85%	Thoughtful if a little dated turn-based strategy sim. Worth buying cheap.
X-Com: Terror from the Deep	Microprose	Strategy Game	#17 RU	88%	Improvements made over Enemy Unknown, but it's basically more of the same.
Xenocracy	**Grolier Interactive**	**Shoot-'em-up**	**#5**	**90%**	**Poor compared to Colony Wars, but fun for strategic blasting fans.**
X-Files	Sony CEE	Adventure	#22	79%	Interesting four-disc point-'n'-clicker using FMV. Dark and moody, like the show.
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.
Yoyo's Puzzle Park	JVC	Puzzle Game	#17	82%	Superb platform puzzler in the Rainbow Islands/Bubble Bobble mould.
Z	Sony CEE	Strategy Game	#17 RU	69%	ZZZZzzzzzzzz...
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.

W

X

Z

Y



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You've got the soldiers, but can you face the war?

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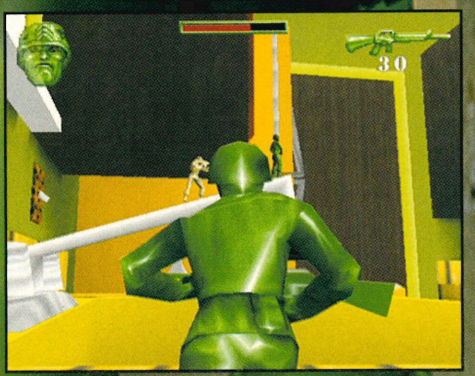
"Stand up, side by side on the desk - that's right, side by side. Look proud - you're Army Men now, Sarge's Heroes, every one of you. If you're gonna' make 3DO's top action game, you need to be fighting fit and ready to roll...

"YOU! MR TAN! Eyes FORWARD, you pathetic piece of plastic. Don't look at me - I know I'm gorgeous, but keep your eyes FORWARD. If you can't parade, how do you expect to get into Army Men: Sarge's Heroes? The game's out next March, and if you're not fit enough, you won't make it.

"Time to train - you need a range of skills to take on the best in Army Men: Sarge's Heroes. 3DO aren't easily impressed, so sharpen up. If you make the squad, you've 14 missions to tackle, with up to five objectives in each. It ain't no cake-walk. You need to be able to use assault rifles, bazookas, flame throwers, shotguns, M-60s, machine guns, sniper rifles, mines, mine sweepers, mortars and, of course, C-4 explosives. Impressed, Mr Green? YOU SMEGGING WELL SHOULD BE! 'Cos when you get into the field and start fighting, you've got to stop Mr Tan and his friends here taking over the house and garden. You, Mr Tan, must secure the area, room by room, pushing back Mr Green and his chums. Got that - good! Now let's have 50 press-ups from both of you!

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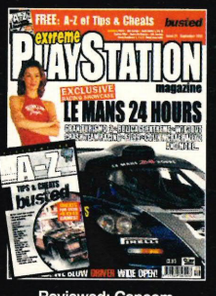
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NEXT ISSUE

DINO CRISIS

From the team that brought you Resident Evil comes this, a superb action adventure with fearsome prehistoric foes. The import version scored 86% in Issue 20, and the PAL game looks likely to be hotter still, with more action and more monsters.

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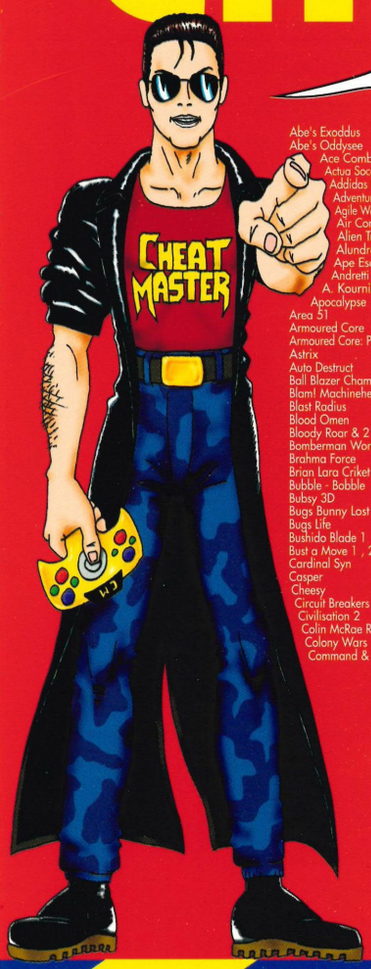
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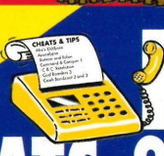
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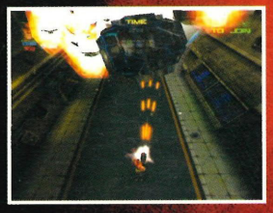
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