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five page buyer's guide inside

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January 1992 Issue Three

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games list

Our very own Christmas list of what we've reviewed and previewed inside this issue.

reviews

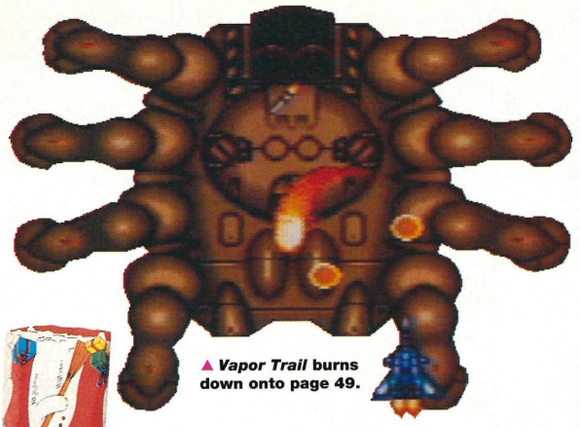
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92 Galaxy 5000 *NES*
93 The Immortal *NES*
90 Top Racer *SF*
93 Turtles 2 *NES*

KEY TO MACHINES

ARC Arcade Game ***GB*** Game Boy ***GG*** Game Gear ***LX*** Lynx ***MD*** Mega Drive ***MS*** Master System ***NES*** Nintendo Entertainment System ***PC*** PC Engine ***SF*** Super Famicom.



▲ ***Vapor Trail*** **burns down onto page 49.**



8 news
More lies, damn lies and statistics from the pages which make *The Sport* seem like a newspaper.

13 in the pipeline: dirty racer
Jackie Ryan covers herself in Duckhams Superlube and a lot of mud before leaping into **Gremlin**'s hot new racer for the Game Boy.

16 vox pop
Who's buying what this Christmas? *Game Zone* asks people in **Virgin Megastore** about games, consoles and pyjamas.

18 reviews
The Cartridge Family cast a critical eye over the new releases before swiping the best ones for Christmas presents. Tight-fisted basts.



▲ **Other interesting knitwear featured in *Zone 7* on page 78.**

50 mega compo
The moment you've been waiting for. The **final part** of our **£4,000** compo. Now you can get your mitts on consoles, stereos and Joe Bloggs togs.





▲ **Win your very own matt black bread bin on p.65.**



▲ **Trog round to p.35.**

52 handheld reviews
Super Kick Off, *STUN Runner* and a host of other tiny games all waiting to sit in the palm of your hand.

56 import reviews
After scoffing their Duty Free choccies, the Cartridge Family leave sticky thumbprints over *Castlevania IV* and *Super Professional Baseball*.

62 the miracle
From *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* to *Let's Go Crazy* in three lessons. *DJ Macca McCandless* learns to **tinkle the ivories** the Mindscape way.

▼ **The world's first paper dart sim on p.29.**



WIN!

spot the spine star!

Surely by now someone must be able to tell who's hiding down our spine? You've got three pieces now. Remember the first person to correctly identify our mystery guest wins some smart software. Here's a clue to be getting along with – it's not Princess Leia.



▲ **Punkhog – p.47.**

65 compo
No Christmas pressies this year? Then **console** yourself with a Mega Drive or Master System from the Merrie Gentlemen of **US Gold**.

ISSUE 3 JANUARY 1992

GAME ZONE

67 pg tips
Brew up with *Daniel Pemberton* and six tannin-filled pages of hints 'n' tips. Plus the chance to **win £50**.



▲ **Praise be, it's a Miracle – I can play. Get funky on p.62.**

74 kill zone
What's got two legs and jangles? That's right *David Wilson* heading down to the arcades to check out the new games.

77 compo
Don't get **bored** this Christmas, enter our compo and get **board** instead, as well as NES carts, thanks to those fun gamesters at MB Games.



▲ **What's on the stick, chick? Find out on p.37.**

78 zone 7
Crimbo wouldn't be Crimbo without a host of **albums** to spend Auntie Ethel's tokens on. *Jeremy Daldry* on the good the bad and the truly appalling.

81 geez!
More evidence that our readers have been putting something very strange on their Golden Grahams - and we don't mean semi-skimmed milk.



84 console countdown
An **unfeasibly large** number of games are given a rating in our five page buyer's guide.

90 tba
As the year ends, a glimpse into 1992 and the likes of *Turtles 2* and *The Immortal* on the NES.

95 soled out
Your chance to **sell or tell** in our free classified ads section.

▼ **Eh?** ***(See p.96. Ed.)***

96 twilight zone
More odd and unearthly ramblings from the strangest three pages this side of the Barodius star system.



GAME ZONE

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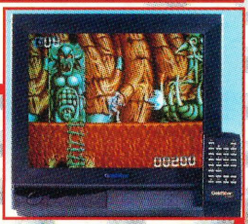
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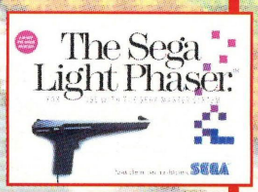
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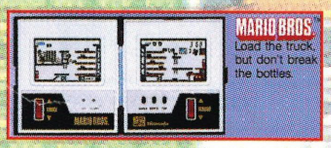
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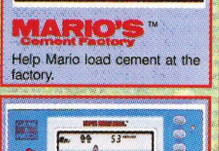
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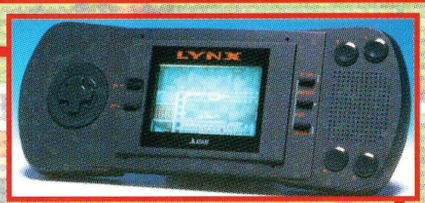
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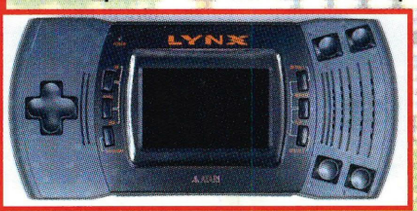
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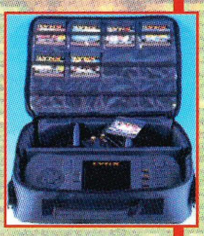
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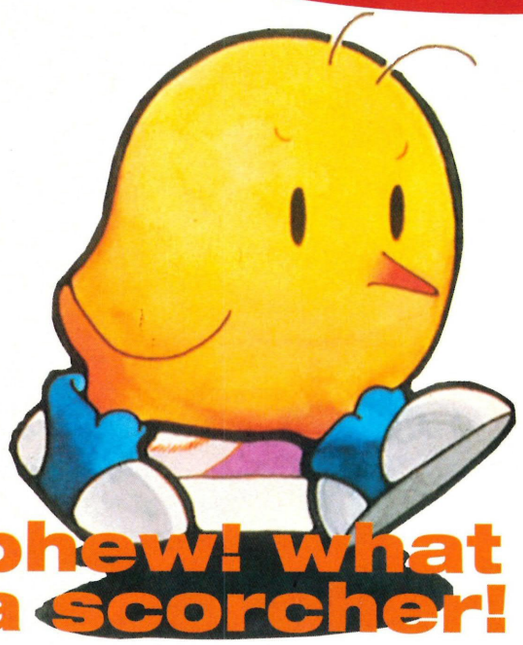
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NEWS



Ho, ho, ho and a big Yuletide greeting to you all. The Christmas spirit (hic) has already hit the *Game Zone* office in a big way. So without further ado, here's the Christmas console news.



phew! what a scorcher!

Christmas in New Zealand eh? It's a funny old business. Sun in the sky, turkey on the beach, presents round the palm tree, and kiwis on the Master System.

Yep, we kid you not. Thanks to Tecmagik, those loveable, huggable, cuddly, cutesome kiwis from down under will be appearing in a Master System version of that hoary old favourite *New Zealand Story* sometime soon.

Poor old programmer Simon Freeman, the brains behind *Populous*, has been spending the run-up to the festive season slaving away over a hot calor gas burner, putting the finishing touches to this totally barmy but brilliant, multi-level platform romp. Erm, perhaps there is something to be said for Christmas in New Zealand after all.



hippy chic

Hoorah! It looks like yet more brilliant Game Boy accessories are on their way. Centresoft has just announced a number of additions to its Nuby range of Nintendo Game Boy add-ons and peripherals. Here's one of them the Game Boy holster, a rather nifty carrying pouch which will house both your games and machine in smart Western style and then perch handily on your hip for ease of transport. Yeeha!

The cost? A mere £7.99. We'll have five please!

it's a christmas giveaway (part 1)

What's pink and hard and strapped very firmly to the front cover of this month's issue of *Game Zone*? Only our brilliant FREE Christmas cover gift, the essential *Game Zone* water pistol, that's what! Now you can have hours of fun playing at being *Terminator 2* or *Predator 236* safe in the knowledge that your pistol, unlike Arnie's, is completely ecologically sound i.e. it won't kill anyone. But if you do miss all that blood, guts and gore, simply add a few drops of red cochineal to your water before filling your pistol for a completely unrealistic blood effect. Hoorah!





chair up!

Is it a torture device? Or an ejector seat? No, it's The Chair from Sega - winner of this year's *Game Zone* Most Awkward Pressie To Squeeze Into Your Christmas Stocking Award.

This completely new concept in games control, may be big, black and look nothing like a joypad - but it does exactly the same job. Just connect it up to your Mega Drive or Master System II, plonk yourself in it and experience your whole body becoming a walking, talking, all singing, all dancing joystick.

How? Well, although this control device has a stop, start and fire button incorporated into its arms, so you'll still need to utilise those itchy trigger fingers, its directional control system is situated in the base. So to move your character on screen, you're going to have to move yourself in your chair. Every movement you make will then be translated into movements made by the character on screen. Lean backwards and forwards and your character will move up and down; lean sideways, left or right and your character will move left or right too. Brilliant for playing *Super Monaco Grand Prix*, but probably knackering for playing *Sonic*!

The Chair costs £109.99 and is available from main console dealers now. Pass the *Game Zone* News chequebook please.

off the cuff

We wish you a merry Christmas, We wish you a merry Christmas, We wish you a merry Christmas, And a happy New Year!

Right, now that's all the seasonal festivities out of the way, it's down to business. Even though we've only got a few shopping days left before Crimbo and we haven't bought half our pressies, we've still managed to squeeze in time (amidst all our frantic and frankly rather poor attempts at Christmas shopping) to root out all the latest gossip that's doing the rounds in the console world.

First off, we heard recently that Atari Lynx was just about to fulfill its claim from earlier in the year that it would have released 40 titles for its cute little colour handheld in time for Christmas. Almost. With titles like *Viking Child, S.T.U.N. Runner*, and *Scrapyard Dog* due on the shelves any minute now, Atari reckons it will have released 38 titles for the Lynx before Christmas. And with still more new titles on the way early in 1992, it looks like Lynx owners will be in for quite a jolly time over the festive season indeed.

It seems that Europress, a company usually renowned for its educational and business software might decide to try their hand in the console market at a later date next year. Whether they decide to develop game or educational software though, remains to be seen.

Don't worry about finding places to spend all of your lovely Christmas lolly this year, 'cos *Off The Cuff* has heard that no fewer than 12 new Microbyte stores and eight new Virgin Games Centres have been opened in the UK in the past year. And of course, you've only got to take a stroll down your local high street to check out all those lovely new individual retail outlets that have been springing up to cater for your every console need. So, come the New Year you should have no trub trying to get hold of all those shiny new, console games like *Super Mario 3*, *Sonic The Hedgehog*, *Dragon's Lair* and *Ghostbusters II* with all your Christmas moolah, 'cos there'll be hundreds of outlets to buy them from. Hoorah!

Off The Cuff recently caught a glimpse of the new Atari Lynx game *Robotron*. So what? Well, It's the first third party Lynx game to be distributed by Atari in Blighty — ever! Check out its brand new packaging. It's fab!

And finally, those fab people at MB Games have just announced two more new titles which they are hoping to bring out sometime early next year. *Corvette Challenge* and *Battle Tank* should be winging their way onto the NES soon(ish).



pc engine cd games machine

The latest development in the CD games systems war is the Duo, an all-in-one CD games system from NEC. Launched in Japan at the beginning of this month, the Duo basically marries together the PC Engine with its existing CD peripheral to create a completely new unit with an increased memory power which now takes up two mega-bytes.

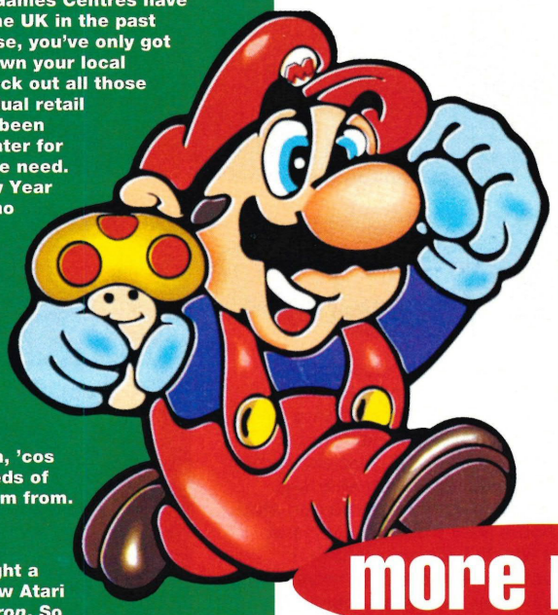
This smart new all-in-one machine, which will be competing against Sega's Mega CD Drive, was launched in Japan along with a SuperSystem CD-ROM card - a card which lets existing PC Engine and CD-ROM peripheral owners upgrade their set-ups to the memory size of the new machine.

Existing PC Engine CD games will run on the new machine, and software taking advantage of the increased memory size will soon follow. Thanks to Advanced Console Entertainment (071) 383 0480 for supplying us with our Duo.

we're dreaming of a green christmas

Make sure you rush down to your newsies pronto on Friday 24 January, 'cos that's when the next fantabulous, amazingly brilliant issue of *Game Zone* will be hitting the shelves. Inside issue four of the best console magazine in the universe, there'll be the usual selection of reviews, previews and features, as well as tons of competitions to enter, too. But if you reckon you might have a bit of trouble remembering the date, take our top tip for a Green Christmas and simply re-use your advent calendar to count down the 24 days into 1992 until the next issue of *Game Zone*. Don't miss issue four of *Game Zone*, out on Friday 24 January.





more mario

You can't get away from him. He's in the shops, he's on the telly and soon he could be on your very own wide lapels. Nah, we're not talking Bryan Adams here, we're not even talking Santa, we're talking Mario of course, the world's most famous plumber.

Everyone wants to have him, but jammy Club Nintendo members seem to have more luck than most, 'cos they can get him in shiny, enamel form for just £1.95 from their club shop.

it takes two baby-eee-eee

Let's face it. Being a dedicated Game Gear player can get a bit lonely at times. Nobbling a ninja and hammering a honcho is all well and good. But occasionally, just occasionally, don't you feel like sharing your Game Gear playing experiences with a friend? Well, now you can? And all it takes is this slinky little piece of smart, black, cable – the Game Gear, Gear-to-Gear link-up cable.

Just slip this cable into the back of your Game Gear, find an able and willing partner who'll let you poke the other end of your cable into their machine and away you go.

For just £4.99 from all good console retailers, this potential match-maker is a veritable barg. Erm, Santa...?

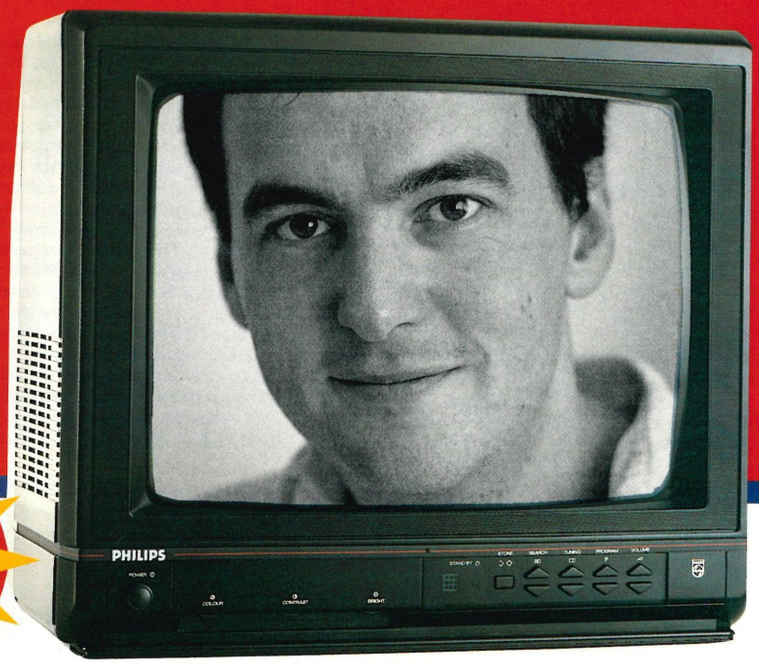




game zone on the telly

Are you prone to those post-Christmas blues? Y'know the feeling. You're stuffed to bursting with leftover turkey, can't sip another drop of mulled wine and all you want is to flop in front of the telly and watch the re-runs of *I Love Lucy*. Well this year things could be different. Check out Channel Four at 6.30pm on Tuesday 7 January and watch *Gamesmaster* the minty new console show. "Wow!" you'll say, as a multitude of images unfold before your eyes along the lines of reviews, previews and celebrity games challenges. "What a stonker," you'll muse. "It's almost as good as *Game Zone* (but not quite)."

In fact, what *will* you be able to say about such an experience without being obscenely biological? Especially since there will be guest appearances by your very own *Game Zone* Ed, Lord Paul in the weeks that follow. Blimey, what an audio visual treat. Hosted by the (almost) famous stand-up comic Dominik Diamond, (and that's his real name, honest!) what else could you want for Christmas? Watch it, it could change the way you think!



turning japanese

(To be sung to the tune of *The 12 Days Of Christmas*)

On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me, Japanese Mega Drive versions of *Guyares* and *Grenada* game copies.

On the second day of Christmas my true love gave to me, a Japanese to English Mega Drive convertor, so I could access my Japanese Mega Drive versions of *Guyares* and *Grenada* game copies.

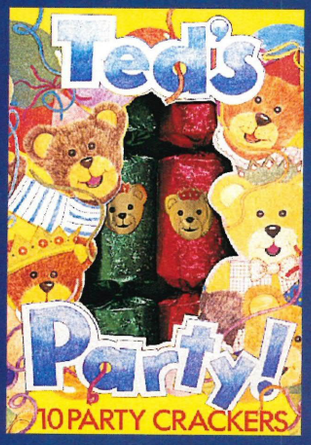
On the third day of Christmas my true love gave to me... *(Sniiip! Ed.)*

Oh. Alright, we better just tell you that Ubi Soft is packaging two Japanese Mega Drive games, *Guyares* and *Grenada*, with converters and translations so you can play them on English Mega Drives. The games cost £34.99 each, but Ubi Soft has no plans at present to bring over any more Japanese games in this manner.

...Two turtle doves...

WIN!

it's a christmas giveaway (part 2)



If you're reading this after the Christmas cracker-pull and pigout, chances are that you're fed up with Christmas cracker jokes (and grub). No? Even after the ones on the right, you want more? Well here you are then. We've got a festive box of 12 as yet unpulled Christmas crackers, stuffed full of paper hats, exciting gifts and oh so dire jokes . And we've decided to give the whole box away to the person who sends us the most pathetically useless Christmas cracker joke we've ever heard.

All you have to do is check out the jokes in your crackers this Christmas, then when you've found the worst one, send it in to Crap Christmas Cracker Joke Competition, *Game Zone*, 14 Rathbone Place, London, W1P 1DE. Entries must arrive before Friday 17 January and don't forget to include your name and address so we can send you your prize.

game strain

Yep, according to serious people's paper *The Times*, some barmy Americans reckon that playing Nintendo games can be bad for your health! Not only has a 35-year old woman suffered from a sore thumb after she played her first Nintendo game non-stop for five hours (well wouldn't you?) but teenager Nicole LaBruzzy said that playing with her Nintendo for more than two hours a day for a year, caused her to suffer numbness and tingling in her fingers. Her lawyer is now arguing that Nintendo games should carry a public health warning.

Meanwhile a Wisconsin doctor has said that using the Nintendo joystick can strain some muscles and cause a condition he calls 'nintendinitis'. We consulted our very own Console Counsellor about this problem. His advice? "Er. How about moderation in all good things." Quite!

crap christmas cracker jokes



Number one

Q. Why can't people play card games in the jungle.

A. There are too many cheetahs.

Number two

Q. How do you catch a squirrel?

A. Climb up a tree and act like a nut.

Number three

Q. What's white, furry and smells of peppermint?

A. A polo bear.



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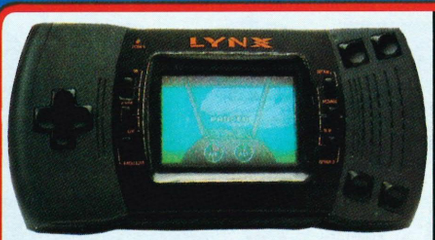


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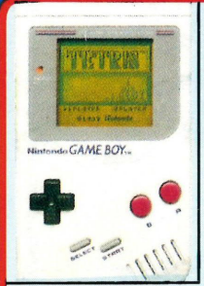
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Shinubi	£21.99	Wonder Boy	£18.99



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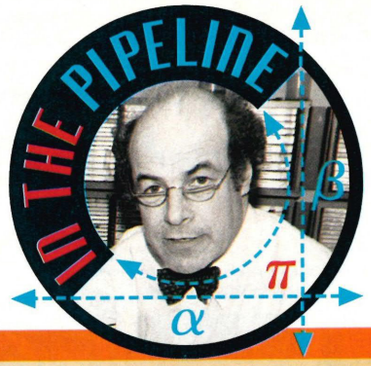
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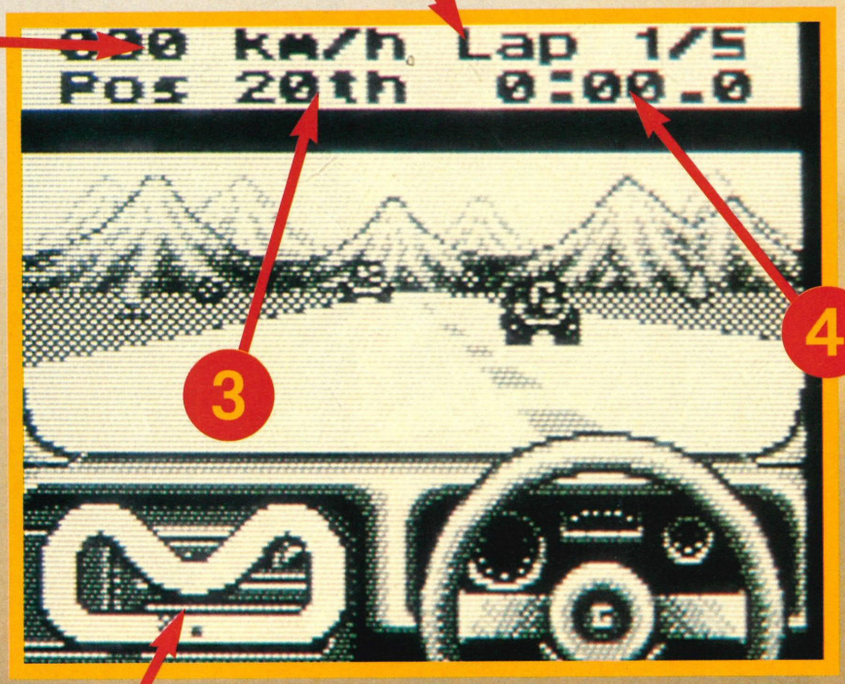
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dirty racer





"Pass the Persil please," said a rather begrimed and grubby looking *Jackie Ryan*, on her return from a spin round on Gremlin's tyre bustin' new racing game *Dirty Racer*.



1 speedometer
The bit that shows you just how fast (or in this case, how slow) you are going.

2 lapometer
Want to know how much further you have to go? Then check your lapometer.

3 position indicator
Oh dear, we're not doing very well at the mo. Twentieth out of 20. Cripes!

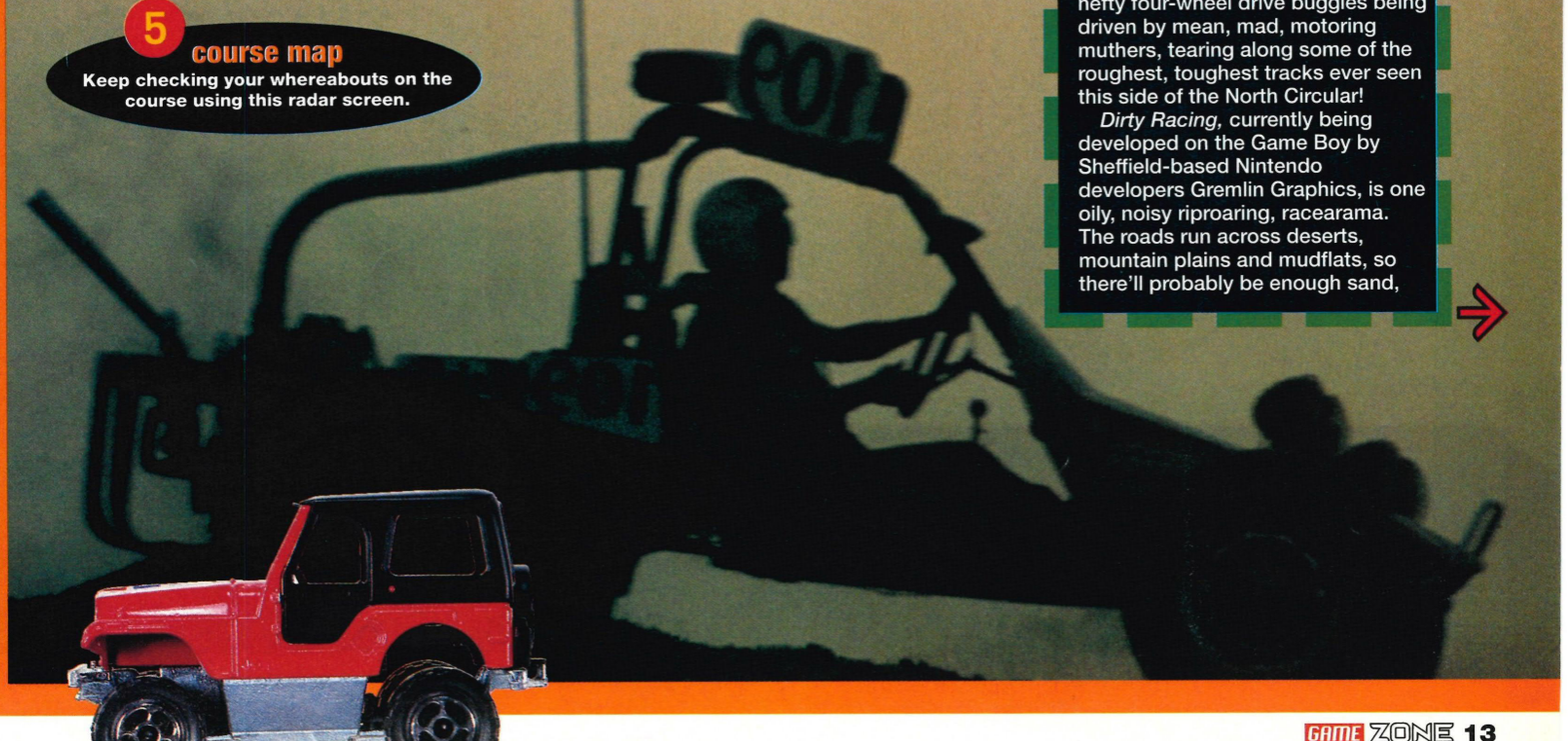
4 clock
Clock this. You can time each lap as you go on. Fab.

5 course map
Keep checking your whereabouts on the course using this radar screen.

GAME BOY

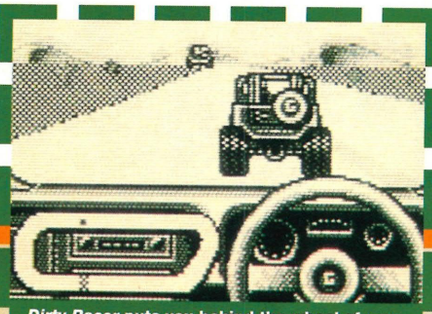
Blimey! And I always thought motor-racing was such a nice clean sport! On the telly shiny, gleaming motor-cars are driven by clean-cut Formula One drivers who whoosh along smooth stretches of slinky, black, unblemished tarmac. But step into the world of *Dirty Racing* and it's hefty four-wheel drive buggies being driven by mean, mad, motoring muthers, tearing along some of the roughest, toughest tracks ever seen this side of the North Circular!

Dirty Racing, currently being developed on the Game Boy by Sheffield-based Nintendo developers Gremlin Graphics, is one oily, noisy riproaring, racearama. The roads run across deserts, mountain plains and mudflats, so there'll probably be enough sand,









Dirty Racer puts you behind the wheel of your mean machine – literally.

and mud flying about to keep the washing powder makers in business for the next 20 years at least.

But apart from all this grime, what else does *Dirty Racer* have to offer? Well, it puts you behind the wheel of a nifty four-wheel drive buggy, capable of speeds of up to 130 kilometres an hour, so it's going to be quite a nippy little number. And since the aim of the game is to drive against 19 other drivers, across 21 tracks worldwide, each with differing hazards and terrain in an attempt to top the *Dirty Racer* championship table, it also looks like being a racing game you can get quite involved in, too.

lean, mean racing machine

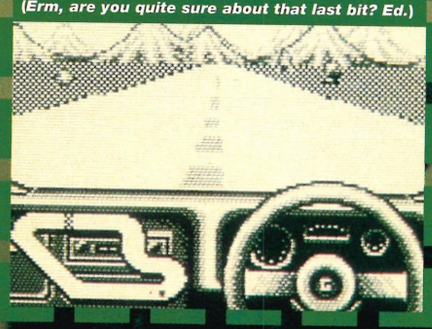
What's that? It sounds like every other racing game you've ever heard of on the Game Boy? Well actually, it's not.

As soon as you settle down to take control of the wheel of your lean, mean racing machine, the first thing you notice is your viewpoint. Most racing games tend to put you behind the car that you're driving, so it's less realistic, but in *Dirty Racer* you sit behind the wheel of your car and view the road from your windscreen. Watch out for dead flies!

Then, just as there's no such thing as a straight or flat road in Basildon, there's no such thing as a straight or flat road in *Dirty Racer*. Instead the tracks twist, turn and undulate worse than a Chivers jelly on the Corkscrew at Alton Towers. On some tracks your car goes up and down so much that you even feel quite queasy. Pass the sick bag purlease!

But how do you start? Choose from the four options available on the menu screen – Practice, Easy, Medium or Hard – and away you go.

Ah, the pleasures of driving. The open road, the wind in your hair and Brian Adams on the stereo. (*Erm, are you quite sure about that last bit? Ed.*)



practice makes perfick

Picking the Practice level lets you access any of the 21 tracks on the championship circuit, regardless of their degree of difficulty for a, um, practice race. Make sure you have your International Driving Licence ready though, as these tracks are situated all over the world from Mexico to Russia, Sweden or Ecuador.

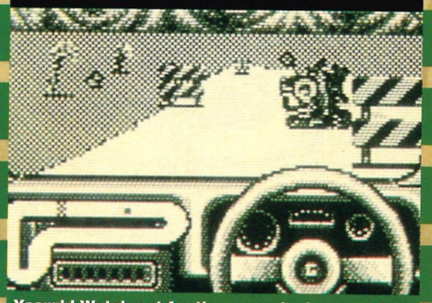
Heading straight for the Easy, Medium or Hard levels on the other hand means you begin your battle for the championship straight away.

Each level has a certain number of races on a number of different tracks. But you'll have to finish in the top ten of each race if you want to qualify for the next one and continue on.

A beginner's strategy would be to start on the practice option to check out tracks found on the Easy level, without the pressure of competition. But as all *Game Zone* staff are tough motoring muthers by definition, I thought I'd head straight for one of the trickiest tracks in the game. Nepal!

Was I in for a shock! Okay, I was warned about the wet, twisting roads, bumpy, hilly track, rocks strewn over the road and the very sharp corners in the pre-race briefing that appears before each race. And I could keep an eye on my progress around the track using the on-screen radar and suss out when to head into a turn, thanks to all the flashing directional arrows that appear to point out what's ahead.

But what I *wasn't* warned about was the amazing amount of things I'd see going on as I headed around the track. The amount programmer Ali Davidson and graphic artist Paul Gregory have managed to squeeze into the little handheld's chip is... well, it's quite a lot really.

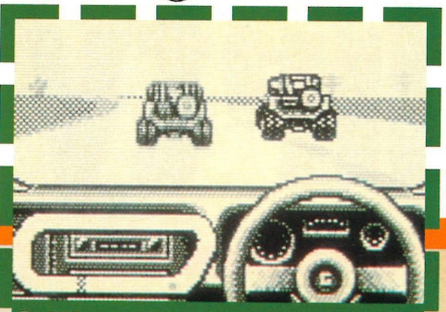


Yaargh! Watch out for those crashed cars and hazard barriers. They narrow the road and make navigating just that little bit more difficult.

big, bold and er... (snip. ed)

To start with, there's lots of big graphics. Both the background and roadside graphics are bold and nicely drawn. Using the four shades of grey available on the Game Boy, Paul has created background scenes of rolling hills, towering sand dunes as well as bushes, telegraph poles and palm trees. On the track itself, the other cars, road signs, rocks and crashed vehicles are nice and chunky, and all seem solid-looking obstacles which you must manoeuvre round.

A lot of thought has obviously gone into the programming of the action too. Controlling your vehicle is a simple matter of pressing A to accelerate, B to brake and the joypad to steer, but the amount of control you have over your car varies according to conditions. You must also watch out for the movements of the other 19 cars on screen, too – they respond and react to race conditions just like you. When one crashes, its wrecked body will remain where it is for the rest of the race – just as it would in real life.



Drat! It's one of those over the hill and straight into trouble situations.

shattering

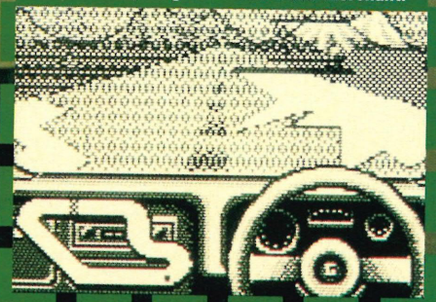
But best of all is the fact that this is not just another scrolling road race game – all the uppy and downy bits, ie hills, make sure of that. There you are, approaching a bend when the track suddenly rises in front of you, obscuring the view ahead. Throwing caution to the wind you speed recklessly into it anyway. But as you meet the brow and start to turn – yargh! – there's two other buggies in front. Cue shattered windscreen!

That's the programming and graphics taken care of, so what about the sound? Well, at the moment there isn't any, but sound man Alex Syrichas is just about to start work on it.

All in all *Dirty Racer* looks like being a rather real-looking racing game. The only way to make it more real would be to get three chums with buckets of sand, mud and grit to throw handfuls of the contents into your face while you were playing. Brilliant!

Out: Mid 1992
Price: £tba
Publisher: Gremlin

Blimey! DIdn't get those brakes on quick enough. Looks like a call-out for the AA – or maybe a job for our friendly neighbourhood metal merchant.



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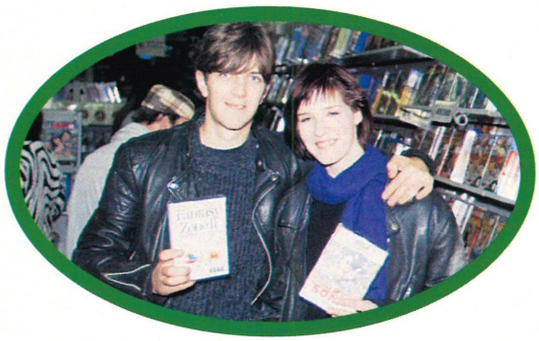
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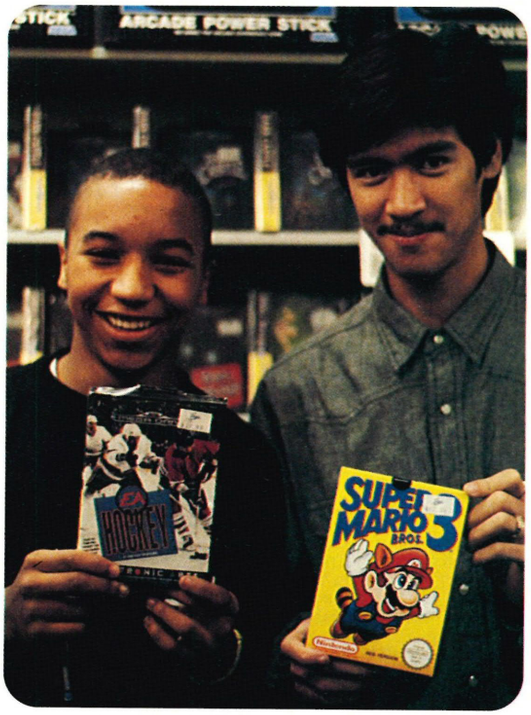
Andrew Skailes, 11½, from Bideford in Devon, is still at school, wears multi-coloured pyjama bottoms and was caught in the act of buying *Castlevania* for his **Game Boy** "because it's a good game." But what he really wants for Christmas is a "Sega Mega Drive." **Fave game:** *Burei Fighter*. **Worst game:** *Bubble Ghost*. **Likes:** Arnold Schwarzenegger and Hale And Pace. **Dislikes:** Pee Wee Herman and Christmas pudding. "Ugh!"



David Saunders, 26, is a retail manager, proud owner of a **Mega Drive** and has a bit of an obsession with sport simulations. His **fave game** for the Mega Drive is *PGA Tour Golf* and if he can't have *John Madden's American Football* for Christmas then "any Mega Drive game will do." David reckons that Cliff Richard must be a dead cert for this year's Christmas Number One. **Fave Christmas Carol:** *Jingle Bells*. **Worst bit of Christmas dinner:** "When there's nothing left on my plate."



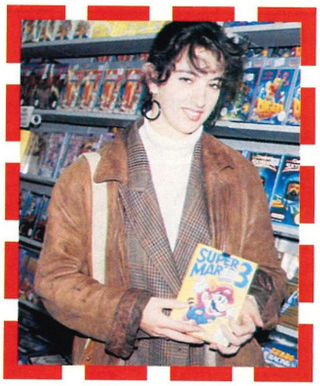
Matt, 21, and **Tracey, 18,** both come from East London and own a **Master System.** "Well, it's Matt's really, but I play on it as well." **Both like:** *R-Type,* Robert Smith and *Drop The Dead Donkey*. **And dislike:** *Ninja Warrior,* Madonna and singing the Bing Crosby classic *White Christmas*. **What do they want for Christmas?** "A Mega Drive please. Or *Sonic* for the Master System, which looks brilliant, or *Fantasy Zone II*. We bought the first one and loved it." **Top tip for Christmas Number One:** "Cliff, of course."



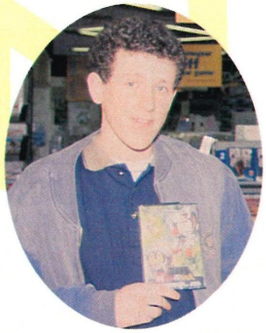
Ron Festejo, 20, and **Edward Wilson, 17,** both work in the Virgin Games Centre on Oxford Street. Ron (on the right) owns a **Mega Drive, a PC Engine, a Game Boy** and a **Super Famicom** and reckons he wants to find either "A Sega Mega Drive CD Rom in my Christmas stocking (I wish!) or *Super Mario 3* 'cos I read the *Game Zone* review and they gave it 93 which was pretty good and I trust them." (*The fiver's in the post. Ed.*) **Likes:** Meg Ryan and singing *Frostie The Snowman*. **Dislikes:** Jesus Jones and Christmas dinner left-overs. Edward (the other one) doesn't own any pyjamas, likes Kid (of *Kid 'N' Play*), owns a **Mega Drive** and a **Game Boy** and reckons he'd like to find a Sega Mega Drive CD Rom in his stocking this Christmas or, failing that, a copy of *Road Rash*. **Top tip for Christmas Number One:** Cliff Richard or Bryan Adams.

"all I want for

...*Super Mario 3*, a Ferrari Testarossa, *Sonic The Hedgehog*, *Quackshot*, Sherilyn Fenn, a Mega Drive CD Rom, a round the world ticket... " *Game Zone*'s resident nosey parker *Jackie Ryan* nipped into the local Virgin Games Centre to check out what *Game Zone* readers wanted from Santa this Christmas.



Gemma Kaye is **20,** comes from London, owns a **Nintendo Entertainment System** and a **Game Boy,** *doesn't* wear pyjamas and reckons **she wants to find:** "A Corrado Volkswagon in my Christmas stocking this year – if it fits! Or *Super Mario 3*. I've got both other *Mario* games and I love them." **Fave game:** *Robowarrior*. **Worst Game:** *Duck Hunt*. **Likes:** David Lee Roth and *Minder*. **Dislikes:** Kylie and Jason and sprouts on Christmas Day.



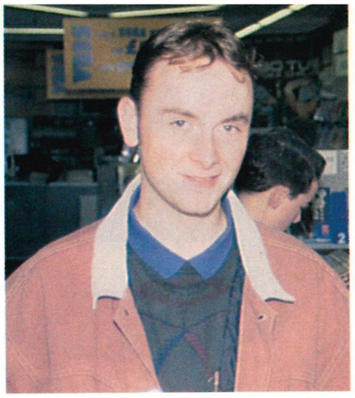
Paul Collins is **21,** comes from Lewes, doesn't own any pyjama bottoms and is an avid fan of the test card. Another **Mega Drive** owner, the best game he's ever bought is *Super Monaco Grand Prix*. **And the worst?** "It's got to be *Wonderboy III*." **Wants:** "To find Sherilyn Fenn" in his stocking this Christmas. **Might buy:** *DEcapAttack*. **Likes:** U *Achtung Baby 2*. **Dislikes:** "The sitting down with my family bit of Christmas dinner."

Photos: Ian Watson.
Thanks to: Virgin Games Centre, Oxford Street, London, W1 and Virgin Mega Store, Oxford Street, London, W1.

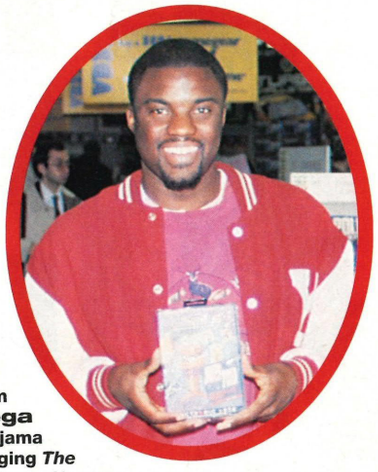
christmas is...



Gareth Williams, 13, from London, owns a **Mega Drive** and a **Game Gear,** is still at school and was obviously well into the Christmas spirit already when we met up with him. **Wants:** "To find loads of money in my stocking on Christmas morning and a copy of *Bonanza Brothers*. I like the look of it and the reviews have been good." **Fave game:** *Sonic the Hedgehog*. **Worst Game:** *Altered Beast*. **Tip for the Christmas Number One:** "Probably Cliff Richard, again."



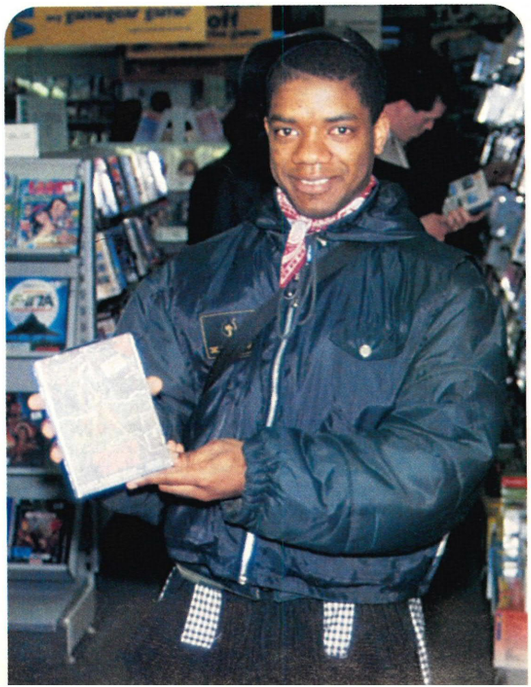
Graham Wooster is **19** and comes from Amersham in Bucks. He hasn't got a console of his own "yet," but plays on his brother's **Mega Drive** instead. "Does that count?" **Colour of pyjama bottoms:** Green. **Fave game:** *Klax*. **Worst game:** *Altered Beast*. **Wants:** "Ooh, *John Madden's American Football* and a FerrariTestarossa for Christmas please." **Likes:** *The Wonder Years* and Demi Moore. **Hates:** Jeremy Beadle and Brussels sprouts. **Christmas Number One?** "I reckon it's going to be Slade. Definitely!"



Dorian West, 24, is a trainee driving instructor from Kent who owns a **Mega Drive,** wears red pyjama bottoms and likes singing *The Twelve Days Of Christmas*. He was taking a sneaky peak at the very fishy *James Pond* when we saw him and reckoned he might buy it as he "liked the game." **Fave game:** *John Madden Football*. **Worst game:** *Altered Beast*. **"What do I want for Christmas?** I'm not that fussy really. Anything will do."



Andrew Hoyal, 22, is a photographic "I hope your photographer's good" student and lives in Bridgewater. He owns a **Mega Drive** and would like to find "*Quackshot*, except it's not out yet," in his Christmas stocking. "But failing that, cash, and lots of it will do." We also caught him looking at *Phantasy Star III* which he reckoned he might buy 'cos "it looks quite good." **Fave game:** *Sonic*. **Worst game:** "Haven't got one." **Watches:** *Tomorrow's World*. **Likes:** The Blue Aeroplanes and singing *White Christmas*. **Hates:** SAW and Christmas pudding.



Aundre Sundimalt is **21,** comes from Tottenham, wears multi-coloured pyjama bottoms and is the recent proud owner of a shiny, new **Mega Drive**, "so I can't really tell you what my best and worst games are since I've only got a few at the moment." **Next buy:** Probably *Ghouls 'N' Ghosts* or *Sonic The Hedgehog* – they both look pretty good. **Likes:** Bill Cosby and *The Cosby Show*. **Dislikes:** Michael Jackson and Christmas pudding, "It's much too thick and stodgy – and besides I don't like raisins." **What does he want to find in his Christmas stocking?** "Er, oh, I haven't really thought about it yet."



Leslie Compton, 26, comes from London and owns a **Mega Drive.** "I really like sports sims, so if I was looking for something to go in my Christmas stocking today I'd probably go for *EA Ice Hockey*. But hang on a sec, I might go for *Populous*. That's pretty good too. Actually, come to think of it, I'd also like a round the world ticket too." **Fave game:** *Super Monaco Grand Prix*. **Worst Game:** *Altered Beast*. **Likes:** Kate Bush and *Twin Peaks*. **Dislikes:** Gary Bushel, "a columnist on the *Daily Star* and singing *Little Donkey*." **Tip for this year's Christmas Number One:** Right Said Fred.



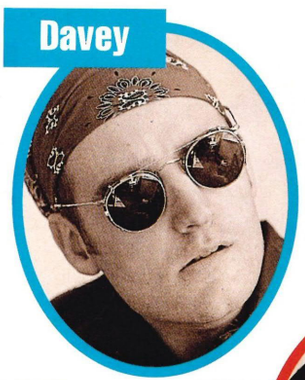
the cartridge family

Our reviewers are, well, reviewers, obviously. But that's not all they are; at weekends they dress in brightly coloured clothes to become The Cartridge Family – the all-singing, all-dancing pop sensation. They love the world, the world loves them. (*And adventure is never far away. Ed.*) This month excitement is in the air, because they've been invited to appear on *Going Live*. They'll be performing their latest song and talking to Philip Schofield...



Lord Paul "This is it," beamed Paul, rubbing his hands together with glee. "It's our first major break. We're going to hit the big time at last." And he was right, of course. It was Friday night, and the very next morning The Cartridge Family was going to be beamed into the homes of seven million people. Paul decided it was time for everybody to get some sleep. "We've got an early start," he said, "I think we all ought to get our heads down." The Cartridge Family said goodnight. (It was just like an episode of *The Waltons*.)







Jackie After ten minutes under her duvet, a blissfully happy Jackie slipped into the land of nod... There she was, getting out of The Cartridge Family tour bus (which was actually a giant hen on wheels – but don't forget, this is a dream). Greeting her and showing her the way to the *Going Live* studio, were Philip Schofield, Sarah Greene, John Craven and Archbishop Desmond Tutu (a dream, remember?). A million people started to cheer. Then a spaceship appeared. Then everything went 'swirly'. It was brilliant.







Jeremy Things were going fine in Jeremy's dream as well – the tour bus started first time and nobody had to squirt WD40 into the distributer cap. His semi-acoustic guitar somehow seemed to have a longer, slimmer neck than usual. Paul drove smoothly, and didn't get lost once. The seats in the bus had new covers – a radiant colour Jeremy had never experienced before. The bus actually drove into the studio – with The Cartridge Family waving from the roof. They were a success. And Jeremy was snoring.

Davey After a pleasant journey through the corridors of the BBC building (which was purple with giant hooks on the walls) Davey's dream took a turn for the worse – probably thanks to the cheese sandwiches he'd eaten for his tea. The *Going Live* audience turned into a sea of molten





ews



TOUCHDOWN!

lava – bubbling and rising. It looked as if it would engulf the entire Cartridge Family. Sarah Greene screamed as she was burnt alive. Philip Schofield stretched across the room like a giant elastic band. It was a nightmare. (Literally.)

Teresa No nightmares for Teresa. She was a mermaid, sitting high, high above the *Going Live* stage. She was on a cloud, and sitting next to her were Trevor and Simon. They were swinging their pants as Teresa swung her tail. "Get up," shouted Trevor. "Get up," shouted Simon. "Get up!" screamed Paul, shaking Teresa vigorously by the head. She opened her eyes and sat upright. "Whaaaa?" "It's eleven o'clock," yelled Paul, "We've overslept! *Going Live* ends in 30 minutes." "Oh no," said Teresa, jumping out of bed.

Macca "Typical," grunted Macca, "Bleeding bloody typical. Who set the alarm?" Dunc admitted responsibility (he'd accidentally set it to PM instead of AM – it would go off during *Blind Date*). Macca snarled. "We're stuffed, aren't we?" Paul felt they might, just might, make it. He dashed outside to the psychedelic tour bus, hopped into the driver's seat and turned the ignition key. "Oh. It's not starting again," he said, "Squirt some WD40 into the distributer cap, quickly." Macca complied and 20 minutes later the engine fired.

Janey "Can we still make it?" asked Janey, polishing her tambourine as Paul crunched another gear and made the bus lurch. "I don't know," he replied. "Possibly, then possibly not. Er, I think I took a wrong turning back there... I don't actually quite know where we are. Um, watch out for signposts to Shepherd's Bush everyone." The distraught octet peered through the windows and ten minutes later Davey started jumping up and down. "There," he exclaimed, pointing. "Shepherd's Bush, 15 miles. We can't possibly make it now."

Dunc Dunc woke with a start, wiped the sleep from his eyes, and looked at his watch: it was eight o'clock in the morning. He whooped with delight – the whole waking up and being late sequence had obviously been part of his dream. He couldn't believe it... He hadn't spoilt everything for the others after all. He bounded into Paul's room. "Wake up," he announced, "We're '*Going Live*'!" Paul grunted. "What are you talking about?" he snapped tiredly, "It's Sunday. Not only did you cock up yesterday, now you've gone and ruined my lie-in as well. Go away."



The Partridge Family*

*A crap '70s group inspired by the far more talented Cartridge Family.



endzone

It's time to tune out of Radio 1 FM and into *Game Zone* 'cos it's review explanation time. And just you be sure you concentrate 'cos we'll be asking questions later. That's the score box on the left: it all looks a bit like a graphic equaliser. It does so too – we spent hours designing it.

OVERALL 85

Out: December **Price:** £39.99
Publisher: Electronic Arts

Scores are broken down into four categories: Graphics, Sound, Addictiveness and Playability. In each of these categories the game is scored out of ten.

There is also an overall score out of a hundred. This is not an average, total or square root of the other four scores. It's a complete stand alone score. In fact you could just read this and ignore the rest of the review, but then we'd all be out of work and you wouldn't want that would you? (Well, we wouldn't.)



CONSOLE

HANDHELD

IMPORT

game zones

The reviews are divided into three sections. Console covers the big, sit-on-the-table-and-look-impressive machines while Handheld takes a peek at their pint-sized relatives. Finally it's into the funny foreign world of Import, games which haven't been officially released in this country but are available from the so-called Grey Importers.



MEGA ZONE

Games scoring over 90 in their overall (not at all average) score win a Mega Zone which isn't a new ice cream from Lyons but shorthand for 'this game is the complete and utter business'.

ZONE GROAN

Any game with a score below 20 gets a Zone Groan and a one-way ticket to the bin.



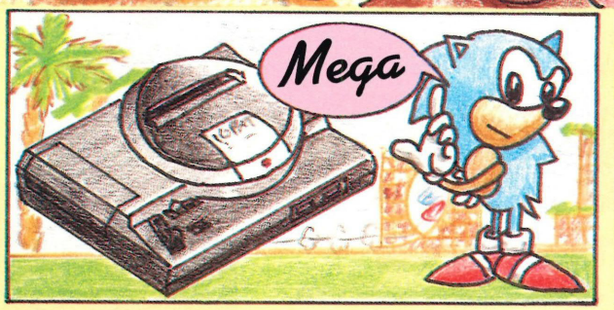
what's on

In the all-go (ahem), business-like (ahem ahem) world of the *Game Zone* offices, some games get played for as long as it takes to do a review. Then they gather dust on the shelves along with our Hula Hoops, Stylophones and (broken) Mousetrap sets. Other games just go on and on. Here are the games getting most workers' playtime.

1. **Super Professional Baseball** Super Famicom
2. **F-22 Interceptor** Mega Drive
3. **Dragon's Lair** Nintendo
4. **Super Kick Off** Game Gear
5. **Castlevania IV** Super Famicom







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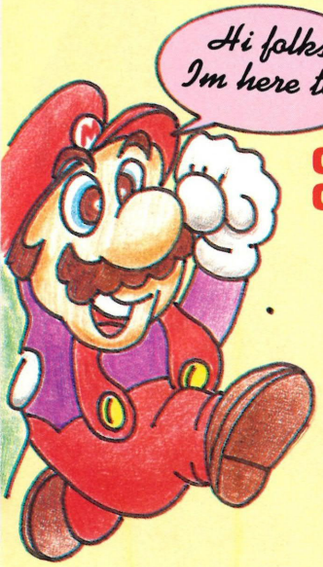


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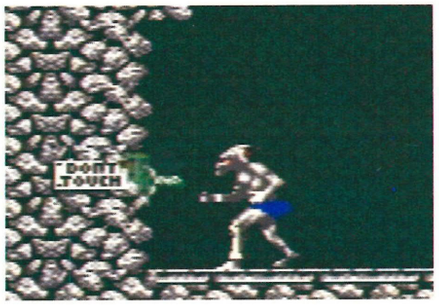
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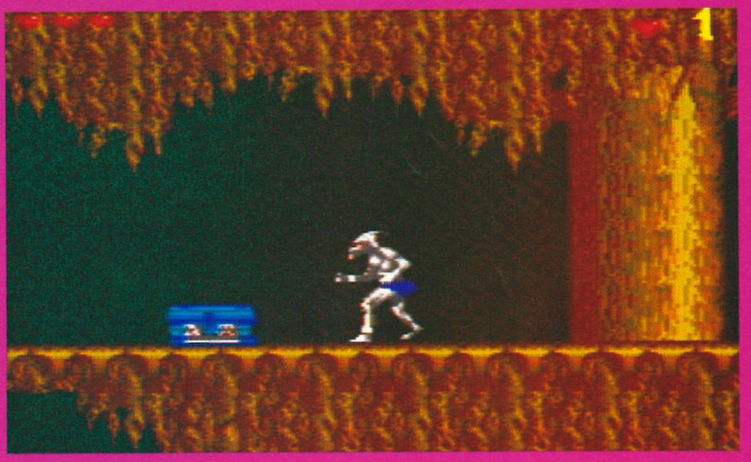
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shadow of the beast

Famed for his shadowy past life and dreadful five o'clock shadow *Paul Lakin* went in search of the *Shadow Of The Beast* to sue him for copyright.



But why? A quick pull won't do anybody any harm.



potent potions

Potions can be found inside chests, barrels, rock piles etc. This one appears to have been hidden inside a rather tasteless, mid-Seventies coffin.

Different colours of potion represent different power-ups (or power-downs in some cases). The only way to find out which is which is to indulge in a bit of tasting. "Hmm this one tastes like an extra life to me, this one is a 1977 Beaujolais and if I'm not much mistaken this is a bottle of instant death. Oh dear."

Always concerned to help our readers out *Game Zone* has produced a buyer's guide to the first few bottles.



Orange gives you a brief taste of what it's like to be Daley Thompson, you too can set new long jump records and do adverts for :Lucozade.



Green restores your energy. Not a lot mind you but better than a poke in the eye with a sharp stick.



Red is the colour of good wine, it's also the colour of a very potent health restorer. Yummy.

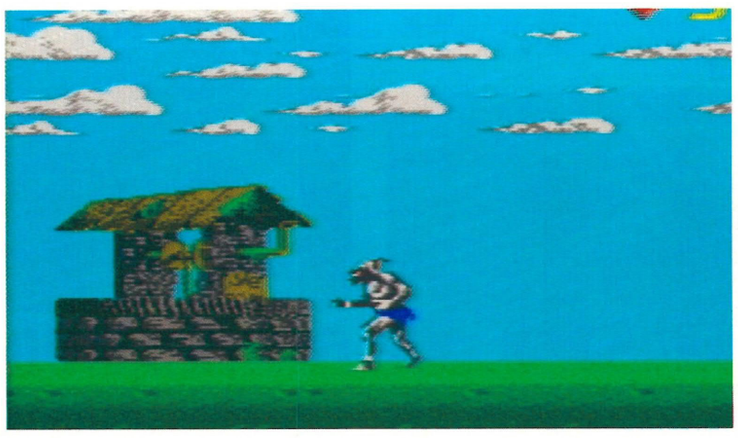
Why *Shadow Of The Beast*? That is the first question that comes screaming into your brain as you scour the office looking for the Master System. I mean the *Beast* bit is easy. For starters he's had a beastly childhood having been cradle snatched and then corrupted. And by corruption I don't mean being allowed to watch dubious Italian satellite broadcasts and drink Red Stripe out of cans, I mean physically corrupted so that he's transformed from a promising "Oooh isn't he cute, just like his Father" Pears baby of the year into a foul scaly-skinned monster clad only in warts and a large pair of knickers.

Alright so he's had a beastly time and, more to the point, he's become a beast but where does the *Shadow* come into it. In pursuit of his father's murderers (who by a happy coincidence are the same people who played such havoc with our hero's torso, nothing like killing two birds with one stone heh?) the beast has to wander through grim caves and shadowy castles. But in that case the game should have been called *Shadow Of The Castle*, or *Shadow Of The Huge Great Skeleton Thing That's Just About To Rip Out Your Small Intestine*.

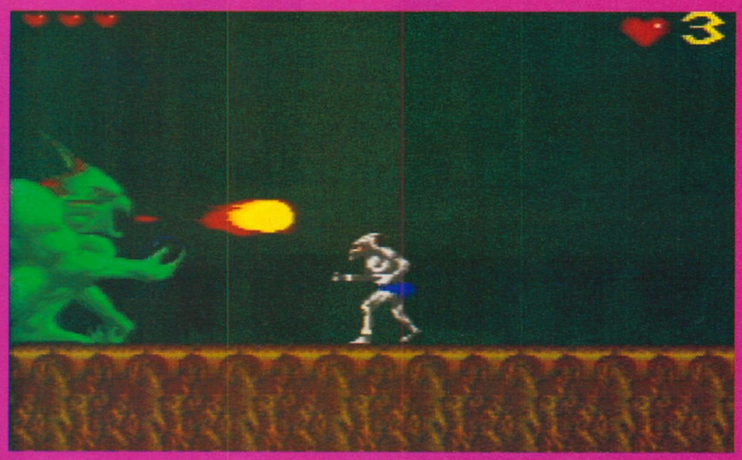
Shadow Of The Beast sounds more like some exotic, late night perfume than a challenging beat 'em up. "Bring out the animal in your man – wear *Shadow Of The Beast*." Ah, but what's in a name after all? Let's get onto what's in the game. (*At last! Very bored reader.*)

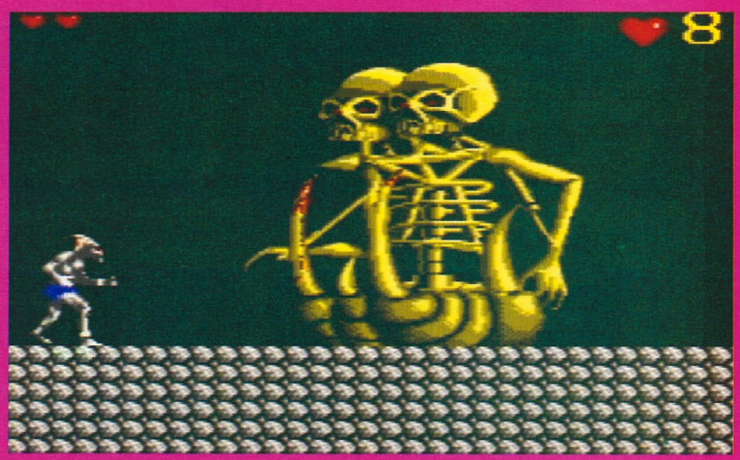
Having regained the memory of your clear complexioned youth you have, not surprisingly, decided to set out on a journey of revenge against the Mages Of Darkness who have done so much to ruin your sex appeal. This means a journey through caverns, caves, castles and California. (One of these is a lie. A free pair of M&S Y-fronts to the first person to identify the intruder.)

The original version of *Shadow Of The Beast* was justly famous for the graphics that added a real atmosphere to the game. Now your humble Master System isn't going to be able to compete with a big mutha 16-bit 256 colour Amiga. Yet Tecmagik has done remarkably well in producing a game that not only looks good but scrolls along at a fair rate of knots too. Too many Master System games seem to bend over backwards to produce arcade



Well, well, well, what have we here than? Er, perhaps it's a well. My God, you're right.





it's monstrous

Guardian Of The Orb: It's flaming hot round this guy. If you're going to knock him out then you'll need to shoot that orb in his hand. Piece of cake? Well it would be if he didn't keep chucking the orb in the air and trying to give you a fiery kiss. It's well worth the effort though 'cos destroying him gets you a plasma bolt which will be jolly useful, if not essential, later on.

Death Skeleton: Bit of a daft name really Death Skeleton. What else is a skeleton if it's not dead? You'd hardly have a Healthy Skeleton Though Putting On Weight A Bit. Just looking at him is clear evidence that he's not well. Not only is he a bit green round the gills but he seems to only able to move around on wheels. Shoot him quick or you'll be more of a pancake than a shadow.

quality graphics and in the process produce Reliant Robin quality speed. Not so with *Beast*. The first thing that strikes when the game starts is the multi layered graphics which scroll in a pretty parallax kind of way.

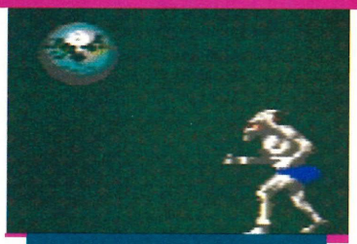
Both landscapes and monsters are well drawn and animated. The beast's chest heaves with exertion when he stops running which, depending on your attitude or mood, is a neat touch of realism or a bit of gratuitous showing off on the programmer's side. It's undeniably clever though. There is a price to pay for the quality of these graphics in that there are a few less monsters than in the original and, more importantly, there is a slight time lag when you come up against a really big beastie. These beggars don't appear in the normal screens but have their own background to play against. This is to save on screen memory but does cause a slight break in the flow of the game.

However far more important than the odd graphical loss is the gains in gameplay. Although *Shadow Of The Beast* is still basically a beat 'em up played over a huge, maze-like landscape, it has gained some puzzle/adventure elements with various potions and weapons to be collected along the way. The potions in particular present a challenge; you not only have to find them but find the right moment to use them. Here's an example of the sort of problem that might face you as you work your way through the game. There's an extra life potion hidden on a ledge. You can only reach that ledge by using your super jump potion the effects of which run out very quickly. So you might end up with an extra life but no way back. Me I'd take the easy route any day.

As so often with these games your success can rest on your ability to execute horribly challenging leaps and bounds. This is a bit of a problem. Well yes I know it's meant to be a problem, after all if it wasn't a problem there'd be no point playing the game. However in this case the problem is slightly more serious. For some reason best known to themselves the programmers have put the control of the leap in the pad not in one of the buttons. This makes running and jumping (which is quite important if wopping great boulders are tearing towards you at a fair rate of knots) more than a little difficult.

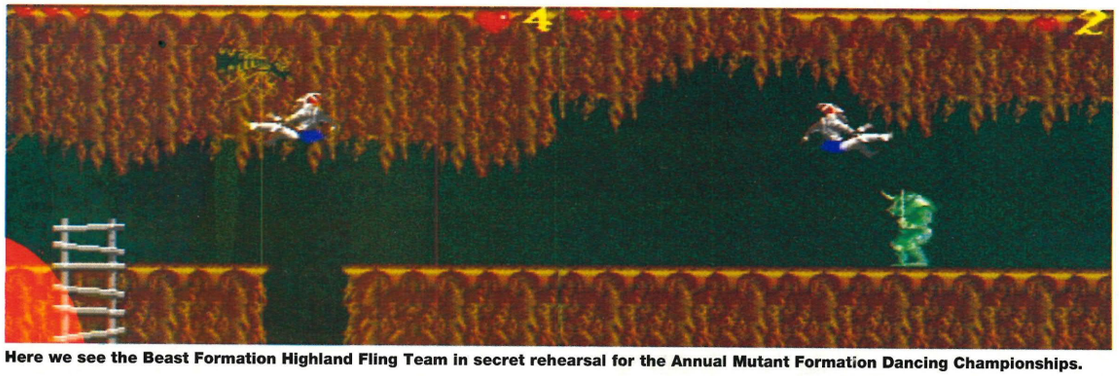
However this is about the only niggle I have with this game. Crammed with puzzles, monsters and a huge map *Shadow Of The Beast* is an outstanding game. It's impressive to see such a strong product converted from a more powerful machine and actually improved upon. This game has everything, except shadows of course.

verdict
An excellent game that looks as good as it plays. A real challenge.



in joke

The original version of *Shadow Of The Beast* was programmed by Psygnosis, a software house with rather too much enthusiasm for the work of Roger Dean. Their logo is a rather spooky owl and spookily enough it crops up in the game. It's a real beggar to get past too.



Here we see the Beast Formation Highland Fling Team in secret rehearsal for the Annual Mutant Formation Dancing Championships.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

OVERALL 90

Out: January **Price:** £tba
Publisher: Tecmagik



It's alright, I hear Listerine is very good. This level nasty moonlights in a kebab house. You can tell, can't you?



" Yes I'm sure Habitat's new ethnic range is very nice dear, but what's wrong with a plain Formica coffee table?" The beast has decor trub.

shadow of the beast

MEGA DRIVE

Not content with copying Paul's choice of sandwich every lunchtime *Jeremy Daldry* has even resorted to reviewing the same game, *Shadow Of The Beast*, even if it is on a different format.

There is an old story, told around camp fires on dark and windy nights. A story that still makes little children cry for fear and hide in their mothers' skirts. It is the story of *Shadow Of The Beast*. The story ran that, in the beginning there was a game, and that game was good. This game had stonking graphics, and those graphics where good. And, lo, as Gabriel said to the gathered shepherds 'Put down the beasts of the field, and look to the gameplay', for it did suck eggs. *Shadow Of The Beast*, a legend in its own lunchtime.

the same old story

It's sad to say it, but it's always been whispered, by the people in the know, that the graphics on *Shadow Of The Beast* are so good, you want to cuddle up to them on a long winter's evening and plan how many children you are going to have together. But the gameplay, oh dear me, the gameplay. More fun, it has been rumoured, could be had from a enema. But why? "Surely this is horribly unfair and cruel," you may cry. And I would say, "Yes it is. But the world's a tough place, kiddo."

green and bug-eyed

So what have those wizards at Electronic Arts done to improve upon the old faithful cart that has been on every system from the Amiga to the good ol' Spectrum? Well for a kick off, gone are those long waits while yet another section of the game boots up. You know the ones, in which you could nip off to the shop, have a cup of tea and generally grow old gracefully while the next game section chugs onto yer screen. But apart from this rather obvious, and expected, change there is a surprisingly close resemblance to the other formats. You, of course, play the vengeful youth, in the blue Y-fronts, who is out to get the dudes who turned him into a green bugeyed monster, which I suppose is fair enough. And how do you go about such a huge task? Well, by charging about the insides of the biggest tree you are ever likely to see. And unless you are rather nifty with your trigger finger you are not likely to see it for very long, because this tree is not your run of the mill oak or fir, oh no. It is full to bursting with nasty things that make you die in a pile of your own goo. Not pleasant by a long stretch of the imagination.



What do you find in an English country garden? A mutant and blue Y-fronts for a start.

darkest, dark bits

Well the graphics all brood away in the manner that you would expect from the underworld, and the sound is so new wave you rather expect to see a crystal contemplation garden level. But what about the all important question: "Is the playability any good?" Well I have to say, yes and no. Yes, if you are looking for a puzzly, very difficult and sometimes annoying graphic adventure. No, if you are looking for some action. Really the choice is yours, but I would have to admit that after such little gameplay I found myself yawning a bit.

verdict

A graphic adventure that will keep you scratching your head rather than itching your trigger finger.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

OVERALL 84

Out: Now **Price:** £44.99
Publisher: Electronic Arts

toejam and earl

Who on earth was going to review a game called *ToeJam And Earl*. Surely it had to be the world's clumsiest and most aristocratic games reviewer *Lord Paul Lakin*.



Yo, kick it. The two most happening aliens in the area.

heroes and villains

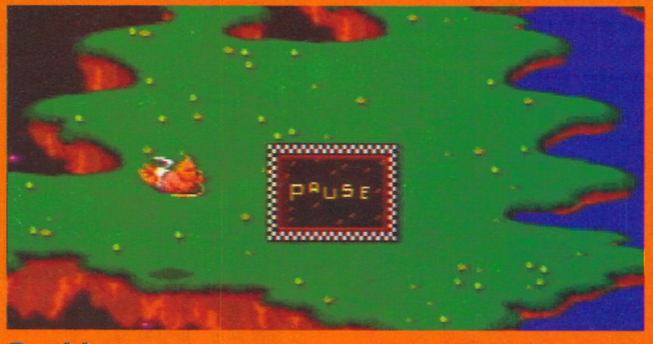
A guide to some of the weird and wonderful creatures that *ToeJam And Earl* come up against.



The wahine: Better known in the pubs and clubs of Luton as the Waaahheee!!! This grass-skirted beauty could dance the arse off Madonna and is more than a match for the likes of T&J.



Hamster in a roly poly ball: Your worst nightmare come true. All that time you spent laughing at Hammy as he trundled round and round in his daft ball. Now he's out for revenge and has the power of a large steamroller. You should hear him laugh as he makes pancakes out of you, but of course you won't be able to.



Cupid: Sweet? Pass the sick bag, Mavis. These fat kids with wings are out to get your heart. Remember love is very overrated and certainly has no place in a spaceship hunt.

Having been well warned of the human race's attitude to strangers (there's nothing wrong with aliens as long as they stay on their own planet) *ToeJam And Earl*, two stranded aliens in search of a space craft, are not over keen to make the acquaintance of too many of its representatives. As if they didn't have enough to do wandering through level after level of the planet trying to track down their craft's ten missing pieces without having to worry about crazed shoppers and insane dentists. Mind you there are compensations such as all the presents that are scattered round the surface and even in the most dangerous moments the dudes find time to rap and skank.

By now you'll have realised that *ToeJam And Earl* is an extremely serious game mixing references to Hobbes' Leviathan with allusions to the condition of eighteenth century Cornish chub fuddlers. Indeed the whole game could be read as a thinly disguised metaphor for the Spanish Civil War. Why... alright, so I'm fibbing. Actually I'm telling huge great porkies. *ToeJam And Earl* is the sort of game that corny old words like 'wacky' and 'zany' were invented for. The game drips humour and energy not least thanks to the stomping soundtrack and sampled speech.

Although the action of the game isn't stunningly original (you're basically just wandering round the planet collecting bonuses, and bits of ship, mapping while you go and trying to avoid the various baddies en route) the graphics and animation are both outstanding. All the characters you run up against are so sweet you want to take them home with you – even if they do go on to kill you. There are some lovely touches to the game, such as the way you can fall from one level to the next and more than likely squash whoever breaks your fall. More usefully if you're playing the two player option the screen splits when you get too far apart so both players can carry on independently.

verdict

An excellent game that still manages to disappoint slightly.

ToeJam And Earl is absolutely loaded with nice touches of imagination and skill but in the end I was ever so slightly disappointed. I'd looked forward to this game like nothing on earth (well almost nothing). Every morning I'd rush into the office crying "Is it in yet?" Yet it's all a bit of an anticlimax. The game's strength is its humour and style. The game itself really isn't anything new. Once you've had a good laugh there's not a lot to bring you back for more. Maybe I'm just getting old and cynical (to say nothing of bald). *ToeJam And Earl* is an excellent game it's just not quite as original or gripping as I'd expected. E

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

OVERALL 89

Out: Now **Price:** £34.99
Publisher: Sega

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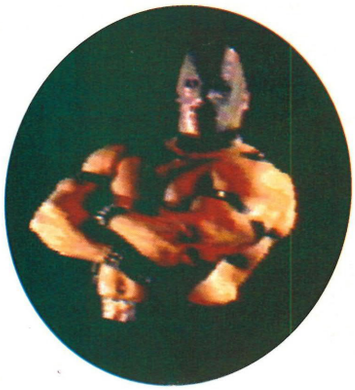
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MEGA DRIVE

pitfig

MEGA ZONE

We were going to get someone who was big, mean and extremely tough to review *Pitfighter* from Tengen/Domark. But then we changed our minds and got *Duncan MacDonald* to do it instead...

Standing in an arcade in Brighton a few months ago, I noticed a large rowdy crowd surrounding something. They were shouting, cheering and jeering. As I was curious to see what all the fuss was about I pushed my way into the melée. To my amazement there was a fight going on. An uncannily realistic video game fight with what seemed to be pure digitised graphics.

Two geezers, stripped to the waist, were kicking the stuffing out of each another – one had blood gushing from his mouth, the other had a split brow. It was savage.

"It's amazing," I said to the chap next to me. "I suppose it must be Tengen's *Pitfighter*." "What on earth are you talking about?" he said. "The *Pitfighter* cabinet's over by the wall... that's a real fight going on in there. It's Billy Smith and Joe Macintosh again. Billy nicked Joe's bird last week."

I didn't half feel stupid. But then it got worse, because the chap shouted across to his mates: "This geezer thought Billy and Joe were digitised pictures." They all laughed and pointed at me. I melted away and snuck across to the far wall to find the *Pitfighter* cabinet.

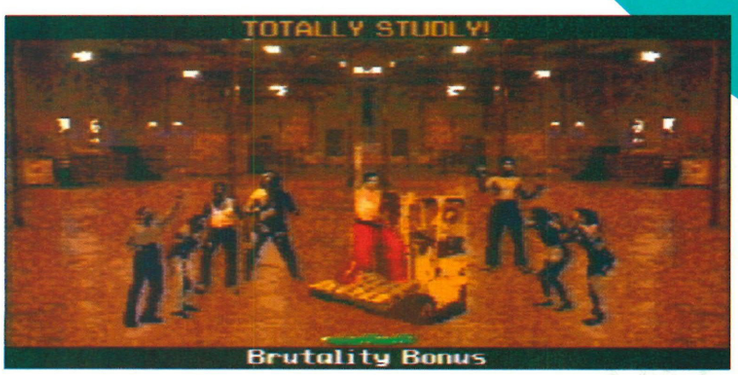
To be perfectly honest with you, I don't see why they found my mistake so amusing. *Pitfighter* **was** very real looking. It **did** almost look like Billy and Joe. Okay, so it was only in 2D while the fight was in 3D, but it was only a difference of one dimension.

As the laughter was still going on, embarrassment got the better of me and I left the arcade.

The thing that brought all those excruciating memories flooding back was the Mega Drive version of *Pitfighter* which really is startlingly similar to the original. Talk about a tight conversion. It's like watching Billy and Joe all over again. Except it is in fact Buzz, Ty and Kato.

what silly names

Yes, there are three fighters to choose from and they all have odd names. The sort of names they'd have to spell to people on a first meeting. Buzz, Ty and Kato have a cunning way of getting round this "What's your name? Sorry, I don't understand" problem. What they do is fight instead. Nobody's going to ask you what you're called if you're standing on their neck.



When he's not earning money breaking bar stools over people's heads Ty can be seen in television commercials. Here he's demonstrating a new range of under arm deodorant

they're 'tasty' then are they?

If 'tasty' is a word which describes someone's hardness and general fisticuff ability then yes, Buzz, Ty and Kato are very tasty indeed. They may look a bit like members of *The Chippendales* dance troupe but nobody would ever dare tell them. So how tasty are they? And is one of them more tasty than the others? Let's find out shall we?



BUZZ is an ex-professional wrestler. Quite why he's not one any more we don't know, but there you go. Maybe he realised that wrestling was too poncey.

He's 6ft 2in tall, weighs 226 lbs and his favourite fighting moves are the Bodyslam, the Headbutt and the Piledriver. Buzz thinks he could beat up Kato. His ultimate ambition is to work with animals.*



TY is a kickboxing champion. Not even an ex-kickboxing champion – he's still 'the boy' as it were. He can kick his legs higher than anyone in the ballet business.

He's 5ft 11in tall, weighs 186 lbs and his favourite fighting moves are the Spin Kick, the Flying Kick and the Roundhouse. Ty fancies his chances with Buzz. His ultimate ambition is to visit Wales.*

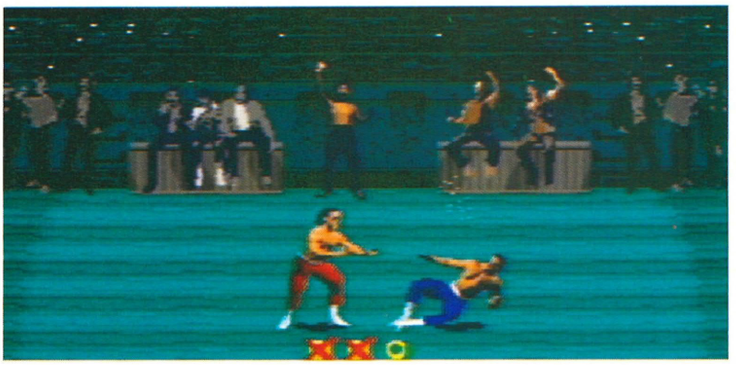


KATO is a black belt in karate and says "Haaaaiaaaaahh" quite a lot as a result. He has a part-time job at a scrap merchant's, where he demolishes cars with his head.

He's 5ft 9in tall, weighs 176 lbs and his favourite fighting moves are the Combo Punch, the Flip Kick and the Backhand. Kato reckons Ty would be a pushover. His ultimate ambition is to be a milkman.*

***These are not their real ambitions. They're just trying to sound nice.**

hter



To round off the evening Dave and Steve indulged in a serious bout of syncronised break dancing. Unfortunately the judges weren't very impressed.



It was Gill's hen night and the girls had layed on some rather special entertainment involving a couple of hod carriers from Letchworth.



When the boys went into their "Jammed Flies" routine Gill got dangerously overexcitied and spilt Babycham all over her sequined boob tube.



No one was sure what Terry was going to do with that rather large stick but Gill was already scrabbling in her hand bag for her Polaroid camera.

so what are the fights like?

For anyone familiar with the arcade original all I need say (and I think I've already said it) is that this is as true a conversion as you could hope to see. For the rest of you I'll put it this way. *Pitfighter* is vicious. There's no two ways about it, it's incredibly violent. You can even hit people when they're down. Nobody actually gets killed – but then again maybe they do. (Because when you finally beat an opponent they flash on and off before disappearing – maybe they **have** died and gone to heaven.)

The fighting area – scrolling two screensworth – is surrounded by a fully animated jeering crowd of fight fans, who throw you back in if you try to get past them and run away. Everybody's violent in *Pitfighter* you see. Men, women, children, dogs, cats, hamsters, the lot. You can't back down once you've started. But you don't have to rely on fists and feet alone because as well as the occasional knife that gets thrown into the ring, you can also pick up other objects. Iron bars, packing crates and even Honda 750s – they're all there to help you floor your adversary. There are no Marquis Of Queensbury rules in *Pitfighter* – dirty fighting is positively encouraged, and a good thing too, I say. Imagine how much more exciting boxing would be if Benn and co hit each other with motorbikes.

is it a lonely fight?

Chumless people can play the game on their own against the Sega, but if you're lucky enough to actually have a friend, then he or she can join in too. Both of you on screen at the same time, knocking the pips out of two computer controlled opponents. Both ganging up on one enemy or both doing your own thing in different bits of the arena. It's up to you, isn't it? And we all know how much fun it is if you're playing with someone who's being rather 'serious' about the proceedings. There they are, locked in mortal combat with one of the fighters on level five, when suddenly your sprite approaches theirs from behind and knocks them down with an iron bar. (It's a laugh, eh?)

The digitised graphics in *Pitfighter* are, well, realistic obviously. They are digitised so what do you expect? They're just smaller versions of the graphics in the arcade machine. And the depth of the game has been retained in the conversion too, meaning that if you move back 'into' the screen your bloke gets smaller, as do the opponents. This coupled with the horizontal line pattern on the floor makes sure that there aren't any annoying 'overlapping' problems – those moments when you think you're going to kick someone but you actually kick thin air behind where they're standing.

All in all, *Pitfighter* is a must buy if you're into beat 'em ups, but there's just one disappointing thing which was in the coin-op too. It would have been nice if you could have a whole five minute bout against a friend without any computer-controlled sprites on the screen. You do get to go head-to-head with your joypad neighbour, but these seem pretty token and last roughly eighteen picoseconds. Still, with a game as polished as this I feel like a bit of a git for grumbling at all.

verdict

Excellent conversion of a classic beat 'em up. Not for the faint hearted.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

OVERALL 90

Out: January **Price:** £39.99
Publisher: Tengen/Domark

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f-22 interceptor

"What do you get if you cross a Mexican rumba band with a small portion of leftover Kentucky Fried Chicken?" quipped *Jeremy Daldry* at a recent *Game Zone* party. "We don't know," chorused the rest of the office. "You get the Mega Drive *F-22 Interceptor* cart from Electronic Arts! Boom. Boom."

Every guy has two dreams as a child. The first is obscenely biological and involves massive quantities of whipped cream. The other is to become a fighter pilot. Guess which one those dudes at Electronic Arts have programmed into their new Mega Drive cart? Yes, *F-22* is a front for a stunning whipped cream simulator that will make millions.

F-22 the first flight sim on any console. (I was lying about the whipped cream – I had to get your attention somehow.) They said it couldn't be done, but *F-22* really is a flight sim. There is a fair amount of violence and quite a lot of combat, but for all that it is a flight sim. You can choose from a huge list of long, demanding missions, take off, blow up some planes, bomb a tank or two, land and then do it all again.

go-faster stripes?

The absolutely stonking bit about the whole cart which makes you go all moist and funny is the customiser. This customiser bit allows you to set how much of a simulation you wish to play. If you think to yourself, "I feel particularly mean and want to make a lot of Iraqis very dead," you can tool up your plane with unlimited missiles, bullets, fuel and the nifty ability to miss the ground. But, if you are in a "Douglas Bader. What a big girl's blouse!' kinda mood, programme your plane to have no missiles, three bullets and to be flying on fumes. Clever eh?

There are also two clever sub thingies you can set. The first lets you fly against the best pilots from each country in a real balls-bad dogfight. The other allows you to customise your own mission. This means you can go up against nothing but helicopters or share the sky with half a dozen Mig-29s and have the ground peppered with anti-air missiles, known as the 'Oh Dear, Can I Have Some New Trousers?' mission.

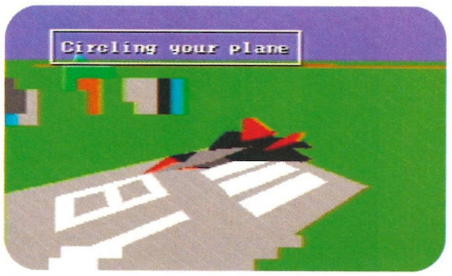
verdict

Original, addictive and no doubt a best seller. Worth buying a Mega Drive for this if you want something more than just a shoot and splat game.



The modern jet cockpit dash, complete with pocket calculator.

why keith shouldn't drink beer*



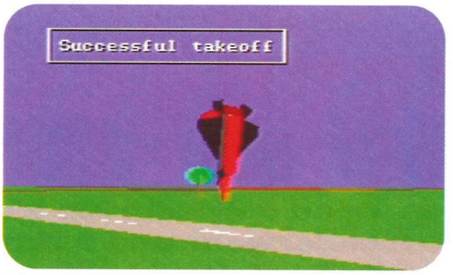
1 On the way home from the *Dog And Turd* public house, Keith saw a parked *F-22*. "Wot a laff," he chortled and, after urinating against the side, he climbed in. "Look at me lads," he called to his chums.



2 "I wonder wot this button does?" exclaimed Keith and foolishly pushed it. We all know that we should never push buttons we do not understand, don't we? "Arr sh*t," shouted Keith as he sailed into the wide blue yonder.



3 "Maybe I should, like, press another button," wondered Keith as he set about a button-pressing frenzy. He pushed one button that said 'Up'. "This seems alright," said poor Keith.



4 "Maybe I should press yet another," thought the unfortunate boy. And that was his last mistake. He had just enough time to think "Ohh fuc... " before his plane hit the ground and burst into multi-coloured flames. "Wot a burk," thought his friends as they wandered home.

The moral of this tale is: 13 pints of Watneys Red Barrel and a supersonic jet fighter don't mix.

And the graphics? They are brillo pad. Probably some of the best 3D graphics you are not more likely to see anywhere on any system. You can either choose to view through the screen, isometrically behind your plane or even with a HUD (head up display, before you ask). There are also loads of camera angle shots that circle your plane and show how the enemy views you, or show a view of the enemy and even the number of spots on the second gunner in the missile site you are about to blow up. And the sound? Cor blimey, the sound. Musak can be on or off, but the sound FX in themselves make for a stonkingly good treat. Loads of samples, loads of bangs and crashes.

F-22 is a pretty brillo game. The graphics and sound are stonkingly good, but the control system can be a bit complex. Playabillity wise, it's addictive and prone to 'onemoregoitis'. If you like a game with more to it than just how long your trigger finger lasts, it's for you. E

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

OVERALL 90

Out: Now **Price:** £39.99
Publisher: Electronic Arts

*a cautionary tale

rampart





After their honeymoon, Henry and Matilda chose a delightful seaside residence (complete with working drawbridge) to settle down in.

The builders took longer than expected to make the alterations but at least their dream home was ready. "It's lovely," sighed Matilda contentedly.

"Oh look, sailing ships," squealed Henry excitedly. "It's just like Christmas. I saw three ships go sailing by." "They aren't sailing, they're shooting, idiot!" snapped Matilda. "Shoot back!"

But it was too late. "Oh dear, back to the drawing board," said Henry. "Perhaps we could move to Purley."

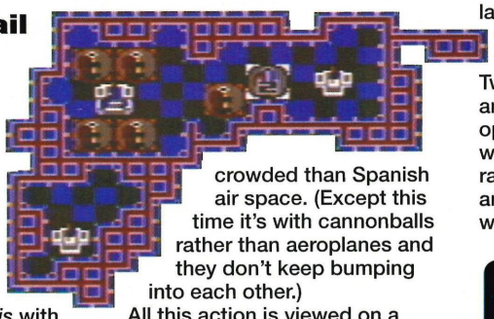
Armed only with his trusty chainmail underwear and a National Trust Guide Book *Paul Lakin* went for a look round Domark's *Rampart*.

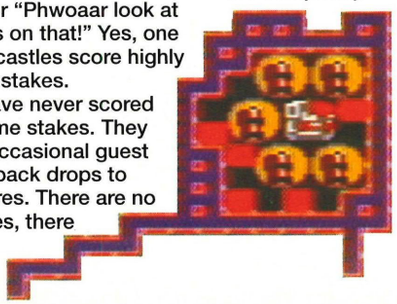


Crenellations. That's a good word, isn't it? It's a much better word than *Rampart*. Then again *Rampart* isn't a bad word either. They both sound slightly rude don't they? You can imagine storming out of the pub shouting "And ramparts to you too, mate," can't you? As for crenellations, it's just got innuendo written all over it. "He kicked me right in the crenellations," or "Phwoaar look at the crenellations on that!" Yes, one way or another castles score highly in the silly word stakes.

Yet castles have never scored highly in the game stakes. They only make the occasional guest appearance as back drops to arcade adventures. There are no real castle games, there aren't even any Roy Castle games. However now we've got *Rampart* and we're all happy aren't we? Aren't we? Well yes we are, fairly.

It's been said before, and no doubt it'll be said again, that *Rampart* is basically *Tetris* with cannons. You start a game with three castles one of which you can build a defensive wall around. From the safety of your fortified castle you lob endless cannonballs at your opponents castle (if it's two player) or ships (if you're playing against the computer).





Rather than turn the other cheek your opponent of course is only too keen to return the compliment. So for a few minutes the skies are more crowded than Spanish air space. (Except this time it's with cannonballs rather than aeroplanes and they don't keep bumping into each other.)

All this action is viewed on a sort of almost 3D, almost isometric screen. Then when the fighting is over the view changes to a more diagrammatic form and it's time for the rebuilding. There's no shortage of bricks to fill the gaps in your masonry. Sadly though having fallen victim of violence, you now fall victim of bureaucracy.

None of the bricks are ever quite the right shape so you've got to wiggle and jiggle to fill the gaps. To make matters worse you can't build over semi-destroyed walls. To make matters even worse, this is all against the clock. If you haven't surrounded at least one of your forts with a wall when the time is up, you're out, kaput, beaten, destroyed. (*We get the idea. Ed.*)

Well, it's not quite as bad as that since there are about a billion continues. On the plus side the more land you manage to surround with walls the more cannons you get for the next round of bang bang. That is the about the long and short of it.

And there's the rub. I really enjoyed the *Rampart* in the arcade and was looking forward to playing it on the Master System. Domark have come up with a really accurate conversion too. So why the disappointment? Well I never knew there was so little to it.

verdict

A faithful conversion of an imaginative game. If there had only been a little more variety it might have been really special. As it stands, it's fun but rather short-lived.

Against the computer you seem to just go on and on. There's a bit of variety such as when the computer's ships actually make land and set up siege equipment around your undefended castles. In later levels you defend a strip of land with water on both sides so you must fight a war on two fronts. But that's about it really. Two player, as usual, is more fun and if you win you get to see your opponent's head being cut off which can lighten the burden of a rainy day however when all's said and done you're left wishing there was a little more to it.

GAME ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

OVERALL 75

Out: January **Price:** £tba
Publisher: Tengen/Domark

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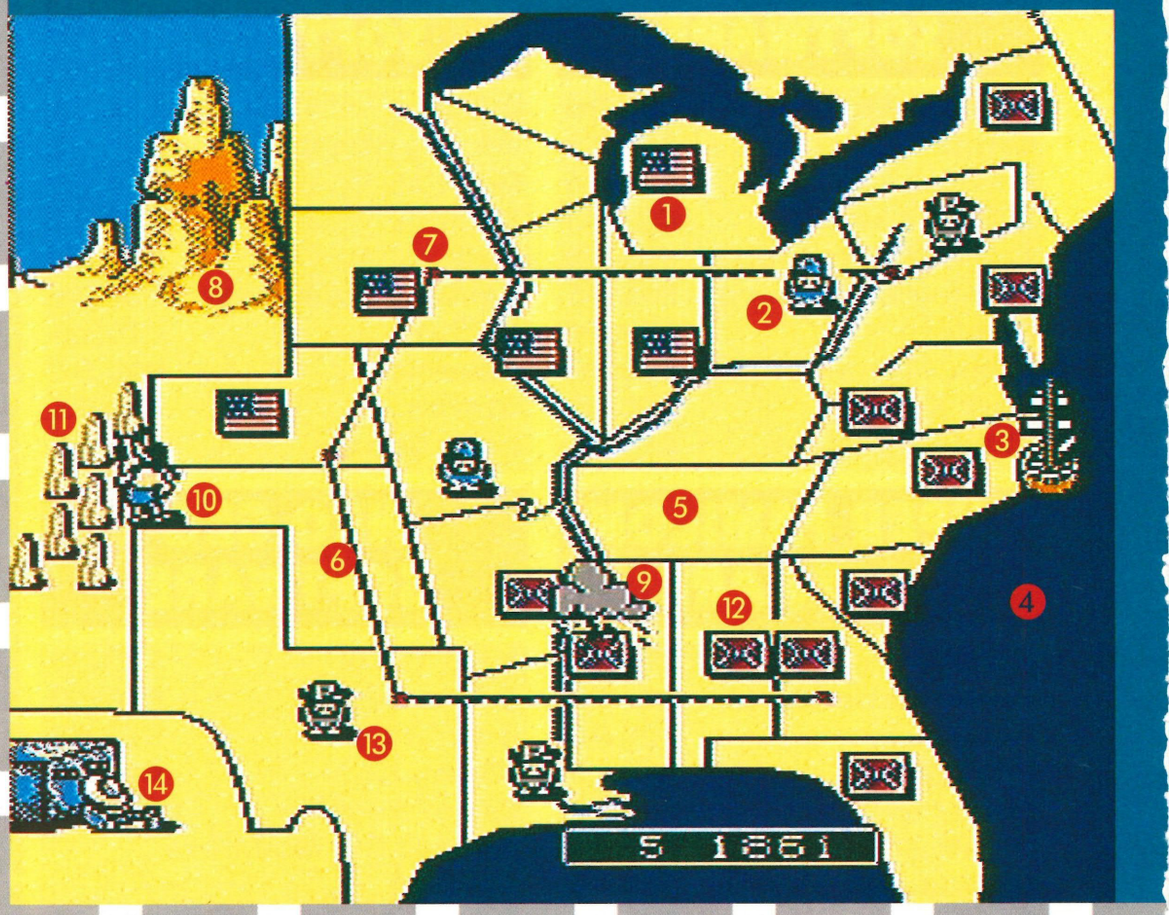
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north and south

god bless america



Hamburgers, Coca Cola and the New York Jets. Apple Pie, the American Dream and Watergate. *Jeremy Daldry* knows nothing about all of these things. We therefore thought he'd be perfect to review *North And South* from Infogrames.

Way back in the 1860s, in the virgin territories of the United States, men were real men, women were real women, horses were real horses, small squigily worms were real small squigily worms, the blue smelly stuff you found under your toe nails was real blue smelly st... (*Please. That's enough. Ed.*)

what is it good for?

Look, the point I am trying to make here is that in order to bring home the bacon back then, it wasn't just a matter of nipping down to the Co-op. You had to go out and catch the porker and then skin it with your bare teeth. You had to be a real man to survive, so rather unsurprisingly, with all these over active male hormones flying around, a war was bound to break out. And so it did, when the South (or the Feds) decided that the North (or the Yankies) really weren't terribly nice and that they no longer wanted to share a continent with them. And I suppose as wars go, this is no dumber reason than any other to start killing each other.

dead fed

And guess what, that is exactly what *North And South* is all about. You play either the Yankies or the Feds and your aim is to clear the map of computer or player 2 controlled opponents, all in the name of freedom, justice and the American Way, you understand.

The game basically divides into two sections. A *Risk*-type section where you move your armies around America (visiting the sights, buying



Field sports Mid West style. Avoid the cannonball catching.

1. You can tell the Yankees own this state by the itsy bitsy little flag.
2. What a nice pair of blue PJs this dude is wearing. You would have thought that if he was going into battle he would have been wearing something more substantial.
3. 'Shiver me sea dog and call me an ol' timber.' Hold on, something's not quite right there. Anyway, if the boat appears and you own the state it docks in, you get an extra army. Not bad hey?
4. Erm this is the sea. And it's deep and blue and... erm, well, kinda wet.
5. This is the land. Erm, it's a bit like the sea really. Except it's drier. And you can't swim in it. Well you can but you might get locked up and... (*Get on with it. Ed.*)
6. "Pardon me boy, is that the Chatanooga Choo-Choo?" "No. Piss off." Well that wasn't very nice. This is the track that Casey Jones makes a living chugging back and forth on.
7. I know it doesn't look like it, but this is one of your forts. Defend it at all costs 'cos this is where you get your spondollies from.
8. What dynamic scenery. Guided walks are available through these stunning natural features, at a price.
9. Feel a nip in the air? This storm cloud is a bit of a begger. It moves around the playing area randomly and if it moves onto one of your armies you can't move for a turn. It's a kinda miss a go, thingy.
10. Heap big pow wow pale face. Every now and again the Red Indians come down from 'them there hills' and attack. When they do you don't even get a chance to fight, and you lose an army. Bit rough that.
11. This is the little known giant willy forest of the American Midwest. I think the less said about this the better. (*Good idea. Ed.*)
12. This is a little Fed state. *Dukes Of Hazard* country or what?
13. Not such a nice coloured uniform as the Yankies, but a much nicer hat. Still wearing his PJs though.
14. Hondalay, hondalay, yaheba. Welcome to ol' Mec-i-co. Here we is sleepy ol' day, we don't figh no war, has we be drink in the Tequila.

what's it all about then, eh?

In an occasional series, we invite famous Christians to explain the plot behind a featured game. This month Thora Hird and *North And South*.



Thora: Yo kickin' dudes. This is the mean, lean, preaching machine hitting da ghetto on the tuff turf, smooth as a Twinkey. Heads up.

GZ: Thora? You feeling alright?

Thora: Yo my chillin' man. Word up we are ar' grooving and a moving to da street zounds.

GZ: About *North And South*?

Thora: Yo, my brother. *North And*, like yo say da, *South*. True kick bound game. In da which yo play either da Feds or da Yank stains in the Civil, like, War of the US of A. Yo take da land not unlike the kickin' *Risk* and then da battle rage hard in da ghatto. Know what I mean? Respect and loving, like, peace, man.

GZ: Oh. I see. So *North And South* is a game, not unlike *Risk*, in which you move armies around the States of America, during the Civil War. You then fight battles to destroy the opposing armies and gain land. You can hijack gold shipments from either forts or trains to swell your army's powers. And the winner is the player who totally destroys the opposition. Yes?

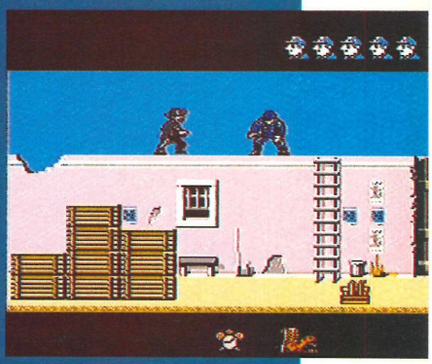
Thora: Chill my man.

Next week The Pope discusses the basic tactics he prefers when playing *R-Type* on his Game Boy.

land of the free

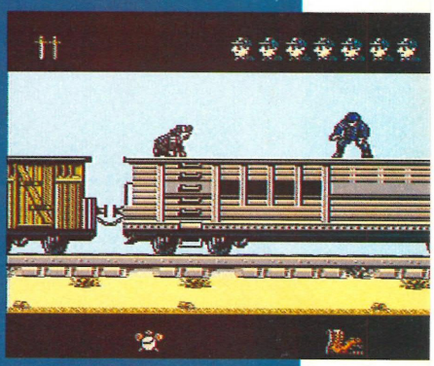
fort of no return

Bit of a des res this. Oh yes. Talk about SW1. Capture the enemy fort and you can hijack their gold shipment. The only prob is that the enemy isn't gonna sit there and say, "Please have my home and all my gold." Oh no. So you have to capture this ol' fort. Simple? Narrrr!



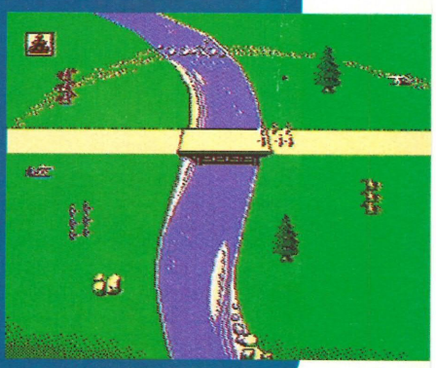
mind the doors

This is a bit like the fort on wheels. Actually it is a fort on wheels. You do exactly the same as above, but how do you get to play Casey Jones? Well if you own a state which has a train track through it with enemy forts at both ends (gasp) you can hijack their gold shipment for a) a slap-up feast at the nearby Happy Eater or b) to buy yet more armies.



the killing field

This is where the real action takes place. The battle field. Here you and your chum can slog it out for all you are worth and the last one left standing wins. If you want to be particularly sneaky you can double up your army's strength and have two or even three armies against one. But that just isn't cricket. (*No, it's bloody carnage. Ed.*)



postcards etc.) and a combat section.

When two opposing armies turn up in the same state (state as in Louisiana, not state as in paralytic and half naked) then action switches to tiny cartoon-style soldiers. Each army has a small detachment of infantry, cavalry and artillery, only one of which can be controlled at a time. War was never this much fun. (*Surprise, surprise. Ed.*)

Roaming over the whole of the States your armies grow in strength as you take on and, hopefully, defeat the opposing armies. Your little men can capture the mean ol' enemy's forts and hi-jack their gold shipments. The more dosh you can stash, by fair means or foul, the more armies you can afford and the more of those nasty misguided opponents you can blow away. And that is more or less, that. *North And South*, chess with swords.

balls and bangs

But what about the balls of the game? The thing that makes all games tick; the graphics. Well, they are really rather sweet and cartoon-like, (which is rather unsurprising as the whole shebang is based on, of all things, a Belgian cartoon). You control lots of little Yankee soldiers who dash about wearing their oh so sweet little blue hats and coats. But the cartoon graphics aren't just restricted to the main screens, oh dear me no. There are oodles of little extra touches dotted around, like when you try to take a fort and little dogs run around causing all sorts of probs. And in battle you can blow up poor, unsuspecting, and I'm sure very nice, trees. All good stuff. So if the graphics get a big thumbs up what about the sound? Well maybe it would be a bit unfair to expect too much, but it's all a bit basic. You're restricted to little bangs (story of my life really) in battle, and the occasional outbursts of musak. For the full orchestral soundtrack, I'm afraid you'll have to wait until the Famicom version hits the streets.

verdict

A pretty nifty arcade strategy game. Well worth a look if you want a cart you can come back to time after time.

oh say, can you see...

Usually strategy games are not my cup of tea. Unless, of course, that tea has been left to go cold and then hidden away under the stairs for a couple of months so that a nice film of mould floats on it. (*We get the picture. Ed.*) But *North And South* is different. It manages to mix both arcade-ish bits with strategy bits to gain the flavour of both, without one overpowering the other. (*Who do you think you are? Fanny Craddock? Ed.*)

So if you want an original game with long-lasting appeal, then you could do a lot worse than plump for *North And South*. Boiling your head in hot oil, for example, would be a very great deal worse. A fine game with long-term appeal. Bit of a classic.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

OVERALL 84

Out: January **Price:** £tba
Publisher: Infogrammes

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trog



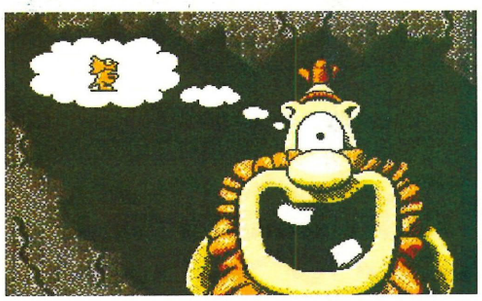
NINTENDO NES

With a rather prehistoric taste in all things from music to clothes, *Jeremy 'remember Woodstock' Daldry* seemed the natural choice to trog around the new palaeolithic release from Acclaim.

MEGA ZONE



For one Dino au vin, lightly marinade in a fine vin de plonk and cook on gas mark four for several hundred years.



"I'm dreaming of a... erm, small, yellow dinosaur thing."

Lets face it, ancient man didn't have a lot of laughs. Sure there was Raquel Welch wandering around wearing nothing more than a couple of inches of rabbit skin and a smile, but apart from that there wasn't a lot going for 'em. Cold, damp caves and large plasticine monsters roaming about the place – it couldn't have made for a bundle of laughs. God, I bet your average caveman really hated Ray Harryhausen. *(The guy who made all the models in those sci fi films. Ed.)* Many a time, I imagine, they sat round their cave fire, sharing a Bronto Burger and chatting, only to have the whole cosy thing ruined by a large plasticine monster. In fact *Game Zone* can exclusively reveal that hidden away on a previously undiscovered cave painting at Lascaux in France, are the words,'Ray Harryhausen. What a real git.'

glam slam thank you mam

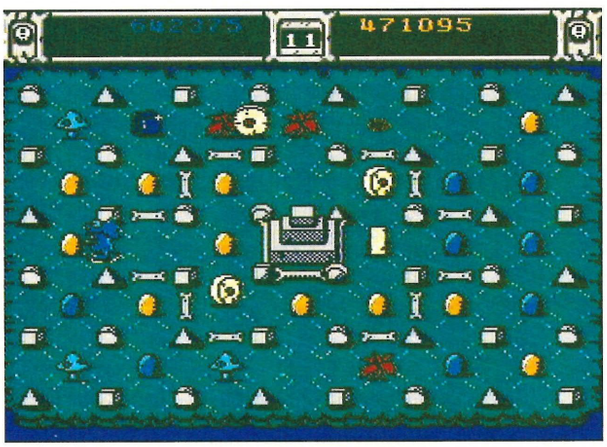
Dodgy 1970s special effects men aside, what's *Trog* all about then? Well, think of *PacMan*. Substitute the small round yellow thing with a small round(ish) dinosaur. And there you have the idea behind *Trog*. Original? Well, to be honest, when you load up this game originality is not the one thing that screams out at you. Instead of collecting pills, Dino collects eggs; instead of being chased by ghosts, Dino must avoid hungry Trogs (or caveman to us laymen); and instead of eating a power pill that makes all ghost-like things go blue, Dino has a taste for pineapple which turns him from a mild mannered dinosaur to a really rather cross T-Rex (and we are not talking dayglo flares and high heels here). So in the originality stakes *Trog* may not be the most revolutionary of games, but the playabiliity more than makes up for this.

treacle tarts

Trog's playabillity, well what can you say? It's so sweet, you just want to take it home and cuddle it for hours on end. And it's not just the playability. The graphics have that special treacle tart quality that so many games lack. The kind of quality that brings all the girlie members of the office round the monitor when you are playing so that they can go: "Ahh, look at 'im, 'ickle blue dino." Now, don't get me wrong, this usual excess of cuteness makes me want to throw up. Why? 'Cos I'm a ruff, tuff kinda guy who prefers a deathsplat game to all this sweet nonsense.

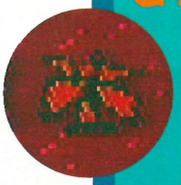
pacman revisited

But *Trog* touched me in that special place that only hardened games players know. It is a very playable game, there is no getting away from it, especially in two player mode. It *is* only *PacMan* with a couple of extra power-ups that you can collect, but like *PacMan* it may just be a classic. If you want a game to keep you going on Crimbo day with your new NES, go for *Trog*.



Torvill and Dean this ain't. Dino cools his heels while at the same time trying to avoid the marauding stone age wheels. Hells angels on ice?

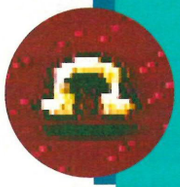
weed, speed & mushrooms*



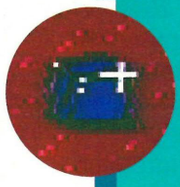
1 Like most weeds this has a strange effect on you. However in this case it makes you dash round really very quickly. It's a kinda speed weed.



2 Has the opposite effect of the speed weed. These mushrooms are definitely not magic, and in fact slow you to a crawl.



3 Like most horseshoes this proves to be very lucky, and gives you temporary invincibility. Very useful.



4 Cool stuff this. Pick up the ice cube and the Trogs go blue with cold and can't move for a couple of seconds.



5 Not sure if this is a flaming branch or a Chilli Dog. Not that it matters as it allows you to spit fire. Glass of water anyone?



6 Why should a pineapple turn you into a roaring monster of a dinosaur? I quite like pineapple, but obviously Dino doesn't. Now if it were a kumquat...

*among other things

verdict

A *PacMan* for the nineties. Great cute, fun, simple idea that's very well executed. A Crimbo winner.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

OVERALL 90

Out: Early 1992 **Price:** £tba
Publisher: Acclaim

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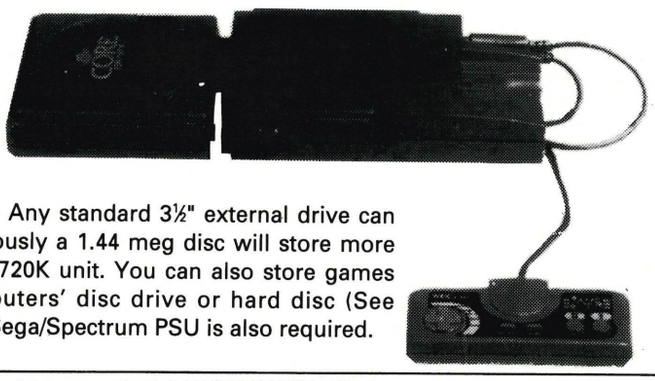
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The medieval Madonna, famous for her act involving a spear and a tribe of Gaulish Warriors.



sturm
Tough as nails and about as amusing as a soggy Weetabix Sturm hasn't smiled since 410 AD.



caramon
Eccentric warrior; interests include flower arranging and wearing huge pink Y-fronts.



raistlin
Slightly highly strung fashion designer from East Croydon. Hates bri-nylon and socks.



tanis
Morose Nordic bowman. Appears in *Guinness Book Of Records* for most attempted suicides.



tasslehoff
Vegan actress. Has appeared in numerous sitcoms and a short play about chickens.



riverwind
Son of Zark The Flatulent and Edith The Incontinent. Never far from the local conveniance.



flint
The eighth dwarf whose scenes were edited out of the final cut of Snow White. Very bitter.

heroes of the lance



Thinking that it was about busting boils, *Ian 'I always wanted to be a surgeon' Ross* sped off eagerly with his trusty scalpel to dissect *Heroes Of The Lance*.

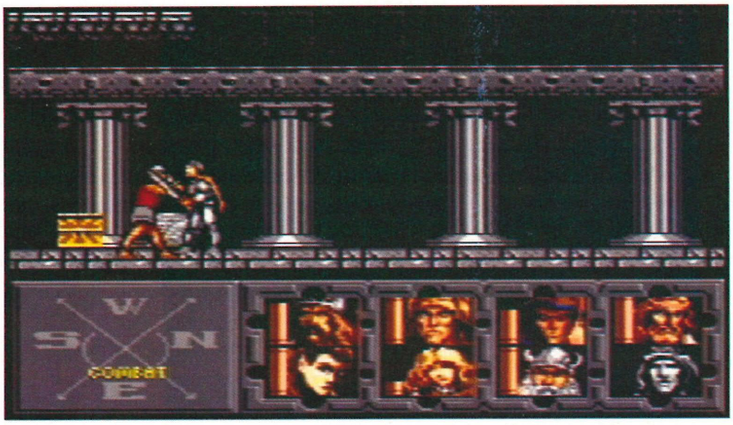
Heroes Of The Lance has been around for some time on most home computers and it is now the best-selling computer-based *Advanced Dungeons And Dragons* game in the universe. The game, based on the successful *Dragonlance Saga* books, inevitably comes with a scenario which makes *LOTR* seem like a Ladybird book.

This all leads to the meeting of the eight companions and would-be heroes (they only become heros on completion of the quest).

Your task is to mastermind the recovery of the discs of Mishakal (Latin for 'typographical error') from the ruins of Xak Tsaroth (Latin for 'Look, who bought this typewriter in the first place?'), thus restoring the people of the land of Krynn's faith in the Old Gods and all the subsequent advantages this will bring. Unfortunately for you, these precious frisbees aren't just lying about willy-nilly. They're guarded by all manner of mean uglies including trolls, wraiths, hatchlings and a black dragon with an unpronounceable name *(He's probably Welsh. Ed.)*

Your motley crew are a well-hard, well-equipped bunch with two of the eight – Raistlin and Goldmoon – capable of dishing out some nad-pumpin' spells which are easily cast via menus called up with a simple button press. They all have various characteristics and equipment which govern their attack strength, hit-points and suchlike, giving the game a strong role-playing flavour.

Goldmoon – the cheiftain's daughter – is your most valuable asset. She resurrects anyone careless enough to get themselves killed and can cure any wounds that may be messing up the floor. This kinky leather-wearing blonde *(There's nothing kinky about wearing leather. Ed.)* is the key to your mission as she has the clerical staff.



What a crap museum, no exhibits and the security men keep hitting you with swords.

verdict

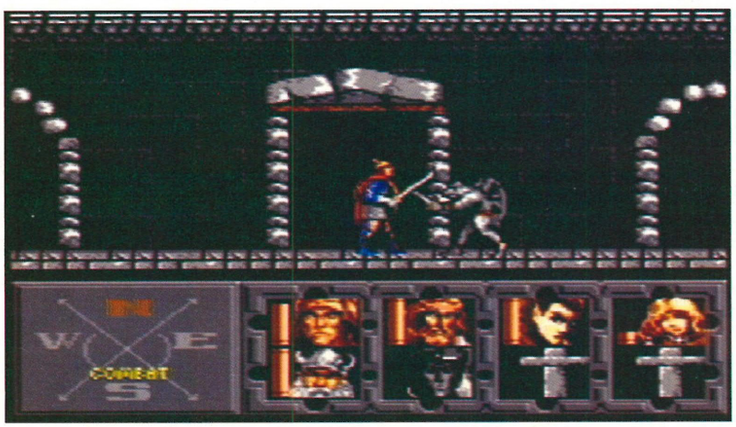
There's a very good game in there trying to get out, but some dodgy playability – especially in combat – ensure that it never becomes a great one.

The action is viewed side-on with the leader of the party, visible at any one time. En route through the various ruins, mazes and sewers you will become the victim of traps, have to leap nearly unleapable pits and be accosted by the aforementioned goons who are dispatched in various ways. Cast spells in any situation or just attack head-on with whatever weapon your leader is carrying. Weapons, scrolls, potions and gems can be collected and it's up to you to dispense these useful resources.

Player's characteristics can be viewed on screen, for you to make crucial decisions about who to put at the front, what weapons to use and whether to include a magic user in the first four. Real cowards do it at the back.

On the gameplay side, control is sluggish so hand-to-hand combat is very risky. However, the spells more than compensate and a foe can easily be snared in a web, put to sleep or dealt deadly bolts of magic fire. The best pitjumper is Raistun – a valuable magic user – one slip and it's goodnight from him. (Resurrection from the bottom of a chasm is not possible.)

Your eyes are treated to a show of smooth scrolling and some nicely animated sprites. Certain bland, orange text screens which proclaim things like: "The waterfall curses your wounds," would be improved if you could actually see a waterfall doing so. As for sonics, the less said the better – a grating tune and minimal effect. E



Friends heh? Never around when you're being attacked by a grim beastie from Tharg.

END ZONE

Graphics

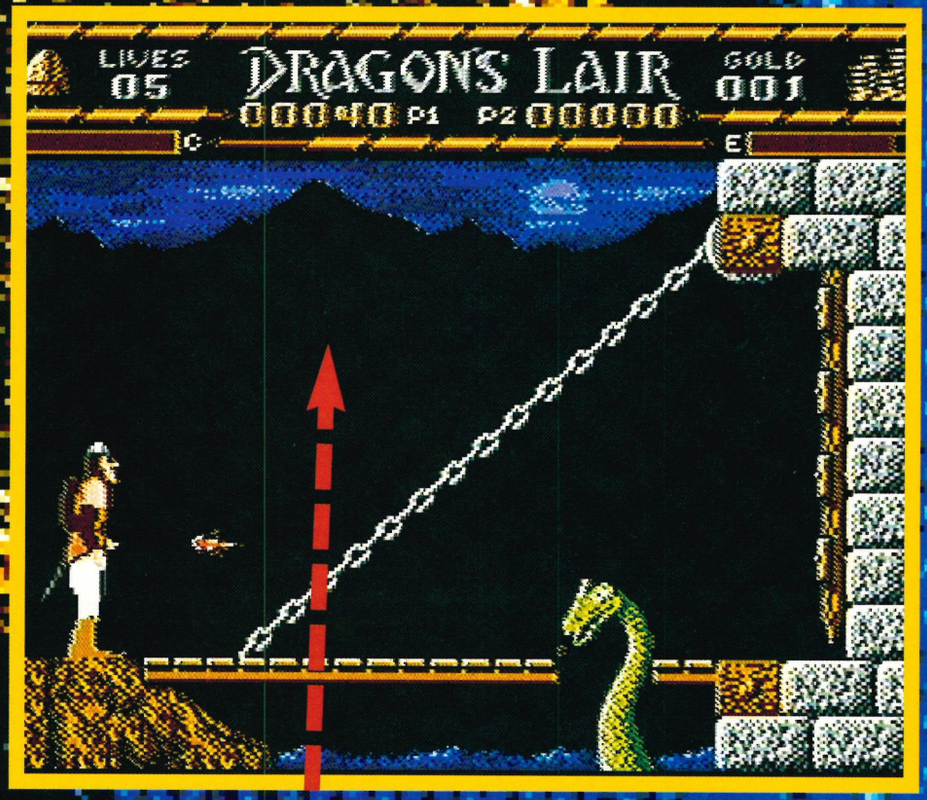
Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

OVERALL 74

Out: Now **Price:** £27.99
Publisher: US Gold



the drawbridge

Here's where it starts - and once you've got the hang of this, you'll know roughly what to expect as you progress through the game. Of course, if you don't get the hang of it, it could be time for ritual disembowelment. Or *Neighbours*.

the gold bonus screen

Points galore for grasping Dirk, who's just as keen on his groats as his oats. When he finally finds the Princess, he wants to be a pretty rich Dirk into the bargain. Fortunately, the gold bonus screen turns up at the end of each level.





the entrance hall and treasury

Level one proper, and evil with it. You'll encounter all sorts of unpleasantnesses here, but few more so than the Floating Lizard King, who does worse than kill you - he nicks all your readies. Kill him before he touches you, or you'll have to go to the Treasury at the end of the round to get all your cash back.

the hall of the grim reaper

If anything, twice as difficult as the dungeon. Crammed with beasties and waiting for you at the end is the dreaded Grim Reaper himself, who is very keen on sending you away - and we're not talking about a fortnight in Florida either. Watch out for floating skulls and treacherous swinging wall pendulums as well as a rumoured guest appearance by Paul Daniels.



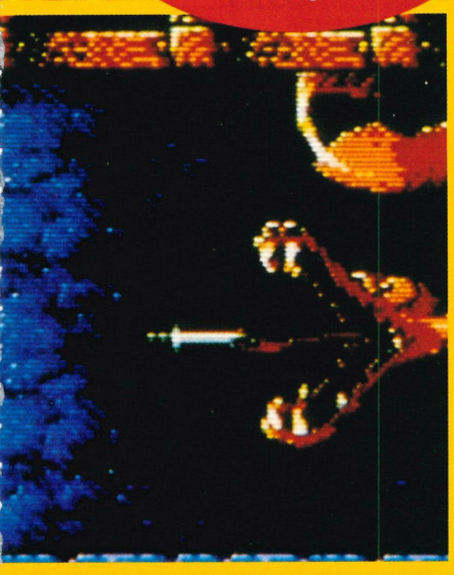
singe's cavern

Here you encounter dragons' eggs that have a tendency to hatch whenever you're in the neighbourhood. Watch out for foul gaseous waters, eggs being dropped from above, and of course Singe himself, a rather more substantial dragon who isn't too pleased to see you. Dirk The Daring? Dirk The Dipstick, if you ask me.

dragon's

lair







Listing his hobbies as playing arrows, fire-eating and being captain of the St George Dragonbeaters footie team (sponsored by Listerine) *Marcus 'Don Quixote' Berkmann* had all the right credentials to tackle *Dragon's Lair*.

the elevator shaft

Once past the entrance hall, you're in the castle proper and all the game's other levels are accessible from here. Get off the elevator at the wrong level, and you could get stuck in the dungeon, which isn't a proper level, merely a trap. You'll have to kill all the prisoners bar one to get out.

Hmm, this isn't bad. Rather spiff-ho, in fact. Hey, let's not muck about: this is top whack, cheek-waving good fun. Magic darts. Back of the net. Fabuloso, in short. Yes, yes, I know it's a wrinkly old game which wrinkly old gameplayers will remember lovingly shoving 50ps into about four million years ago. *Dragon's Lair*, if memory doesn't betray me utterly, was the very first of those video disc arcade games we all raved about a few aeons back, and quite a sight it made.

This isn't, it has to be said, quite the same can of peas. The poor Nintendo, lovable and naffly grey box of plastic though it may be, is not capable of producing video disc-style interactive action. It can't even produce a decent cup of tea for Pete's sake. But who needs spanky graphics? Who needs amazing hi-tech vid technology? The game's the thing, and by golly it's here all right. Let no-one tell you otherwise.

For a start, there's your hero, and a mighty fine figure of a geezer in steel underwear he certainly makes. He may go clank when he breathes, but my, is he hefty! By my reckoning he's virtually a third of the screen tall, which may make him a little difficult to manoeuvre (more of that later), but at least you can see him, which is more than you can say of a few characters on the NES.

Then there's the gameplay which is fast, hard and requires all your massive brainpower for the duration of the game and beyond. Forget the homework, don't bother cooking dinner, stop inventing a new nuclear fusion reactor that will halve the world's energy costs - you'll need every cell in your cerebellum for this one. Hard though it may be to admit it, even I needed a little help.

The scenario is familiar enough. "From deep within Mordroc's castle," it says here, "a foul stench rose up to mix with the cold, damp midnight air." Those takeaway curries can play hell with the digestion, can't they? In fact, here we're dealing with an evil wizard, who, like most evil wizards, has filled his castle full of nasty sprites which are out to get you.

You, of course, are Dirk The Daring, and you have come to rescue the beautiful Princess Daphne, who has been imprisoned in the dark and deadly caves far below the surface. What this all boils down to is a four-level game of gripping complexity and fiendish hardness, which Dirk The Daring has about as much chance of completing successfully as the Ed has of becoming Prime Minister.

Take the first screen, the Drawbridge. It's nasty. Okay, so you've got these bats flying at you which, if they hit you, reduce your energy a smidgeon. They're no problem. You can pick them off easily. But what of the bridge that collapses in certain points whenever you step on it? And, more crucially, what of the dragon that leaps up and spits fireballs at you? Aha, what do you say to that?

Well, of course, there is a technique, which, once mastered, makes the whole screen pretty cinchy. (Shall I tell you? Shall I? Shall I? Nah.) Mastering it, though, takes a bit of working out, and thereafter, a bit of doing. There's luck involved. After you've got into the castle, there are a couple of easy-ish nasties to get past, but then there's a poisonous snake which suddenly appears very close to you and spits out more fireballs. These fireballs kill you and they can't be avoided - not by any method I've yet found anyway - which means that the three daggers you need to throw at the snake to kill it have to be thrown very quickly indeed. Sometimes you'll do it. Often you won't. If someone knows a better route through this obstacle, I'd love to know it.

Making things slightly more difficult are the controls which, no doubt because of the sheer magnitude of old Dirk, are just marginally on the sluggish side. You do eventually get used to this, but when time is short, as it inevitably is, you tend to need all the help you can get.

Along the way there are several letter icons to pick up, some of which are useful, and some of which are very useful indeed. G, for instance, is gold, which you are also trying to collect, as Dirk is keen to make a good healthy profit out of the whole adventure. E is energy, D daggers (you don't, sadly, have an unlimited supply) and C, candles as if you run out of light, you may as well forget the whole thing.

Of course there's more to it than that, for every last puzzle will get you thinking and one or two of them might spark off the sort of violent reaction that often starts minor wars. In its attention to detail, as well as its big sprites, *Dragon's Lair* reminds me of all those old Don Priestly games that used to appear on the Spectrum and C64 - *Trap Door*, *Flunky* and *Popeye* to name three.

Fortunately it's not quite as hard as they were - the puzzles are more straightforward and usually confined just to the screen they're on. But for the NES this is a neatly conceived and well-programmed bit of arcade adventuring, with a very high "Just one more go" factor. Dirk The Daring may be a bit of a Dirk The Dork, but his game's definitely a winner.

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

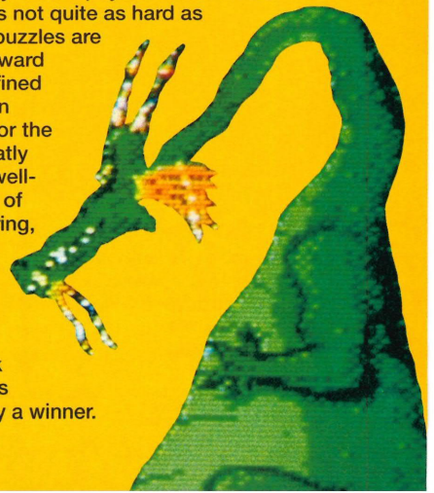
Playability

OVERALL 87

Out: Now **Price:** £tba
Publisher: Elite

verdict

Fine, imaginative NES rendition of crinkly old arcade adventure.



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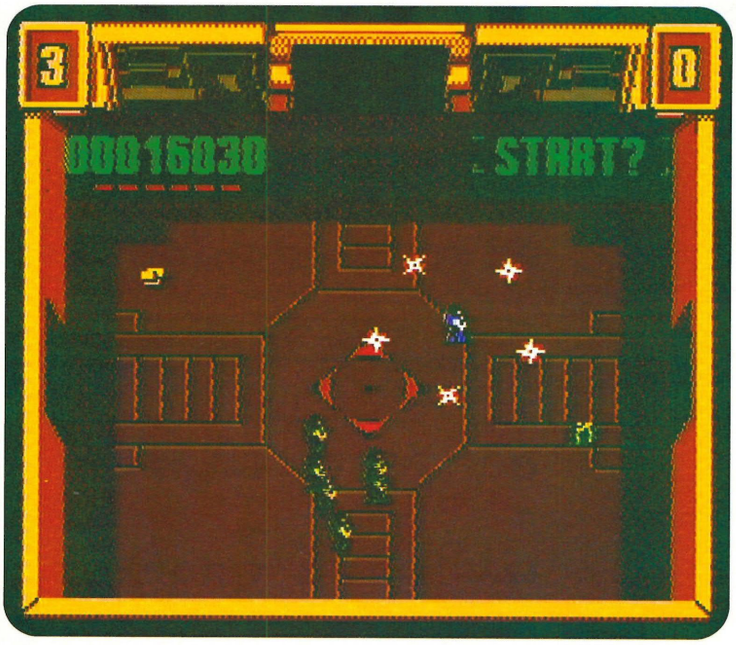
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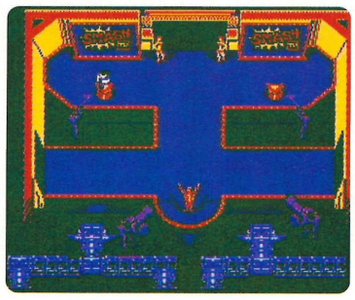
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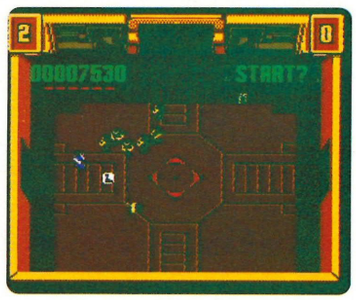
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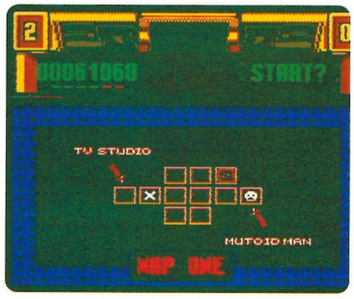
Stars In Their Eyes **– but where's the main man Leslie Crowther? This is the hero's impression of Nerys Hughes. Recognisable innit? (*No, not really. Ed.*)**



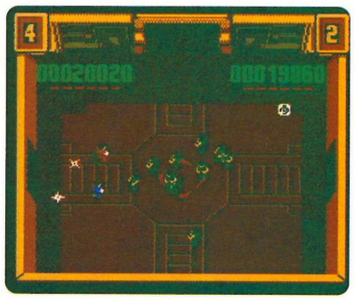
This is the main title screen where you start your quest for material wealth.



Yet another 'interesting' playing area. Public toilet brown was always my fave.



Not exactly Ordnance Survey, but it lets you get from A to B.



Boredom with a chum. You can admire varied playing areas in two-player mode.

smash tv

Having lived a true rock 'n' roll life style and trashed more hotel rooms than Guns 'n' Roses, *Marcus Berkmann* seemed the ideal man to test out *Smash TV*.

It's been said, not without reason, that what the NES really needs is a damn good shoot 'em up. We've got adventures galore, but a good blaster? Not a hint of it. Something with pizzazz, something with speed, something with good solid old-fashioned violence – that's all we ask for. Sadly, *Smash TV* ain't it.

It's a goodish idea, although one that will probably appeal more to American Nintendites, not surprisingly, as it's been aimed fairly and squarely at them. *Smash TV*, it turns out, is a wacky game show based on random violence. Yo ho, how satirical. If you've seen *Rollerball*, a film about a wacky game show based on random violence or *The Running Man*, another film about a wacky game show based on random violence, this won't be an idea that's new to you. Nor will it if you've played a few computer games over the years. As a theme it's about as gnarled as Bob Monkhouse and not quite as funny.

So, with a couple of very iffy sampled spoken bits, the game show host, surrounded by luscious young lovelies in skimpy cossies, welcomes you to the fray and you start zapping. Each level is made up of a number of arena-type screens and we see the action, such as it is, from above. Your little man – and we're talking tiny sprites here, a grim reminder of old Sinclair Spectrum days – wanders around being chased by little green men. Fortunately they're not armed so picking them off is fairly straightforward. Unfortunately they only need to touch you to do you untold harm.

Power-up capsules of various sorts appear – you have to pick them up before they disappear. This is not necessarily as exciting as it sounds. Some of them at least give you better weapons, but these only last for a short time. Others only give you more points – and if you're killing people, let's face it, who's interested in points? Or even cheesy game show prizes, which are described for you in dull green type in a window in the top left hand corner. As you're not actually getting a brand new VCR or whatever, this is almost mindbogglingly boring. It's also very irritating, as in the split-second that you've been reading the description, one of those green men has caught you up and killed you! Nothing, though, could possibly compare with the irritation of someone who's paid for this game, gone home and found out what they have got for their money. Once you've blasted your way through one screen, there's just another identical screen waiting for you, and so the game goes on, getting slightly harder but never really developing in any way that's likely to keep you awake. The game show motif doesn't really fit the gameplay at all and appears to have been tacked on to conceal the inescapable fact that the game is desperately boring. No number of hilarious showbiz gags can make up for dreary gameplay, especially when those hilarious showbiz gags aren't that funny. No, I'm afraid we expect rather more of our NES games these days and anyone who's recently snapped up *Super Mario 3* or the incomparable *Solstice* won't want to waste their money on this. Come on down? Nah, don't bother. E

verdict

Feeble shoot 'em up with a game show theme in place of interesting gameplay. Even *Crosswits* is better than this.



Wot a laugh, eh? Well, not for this dude as his game is well and truly over.

GAME ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

OVERALL 23

Out: Early 1992 **Price:** £tba
Publisher: Acclaim

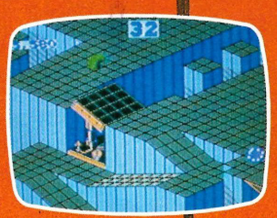
MARBLE MADNESS

IT COULD PUSH YOU OVER THE EDGE !!

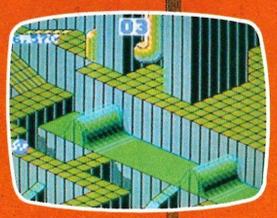
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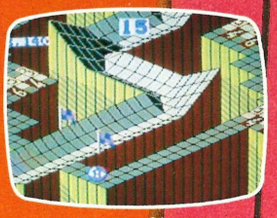
Taken from the Arcade Classic.



Risky Romps

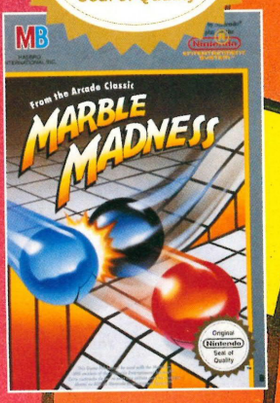


Wicked Waves



Slippery Slopes

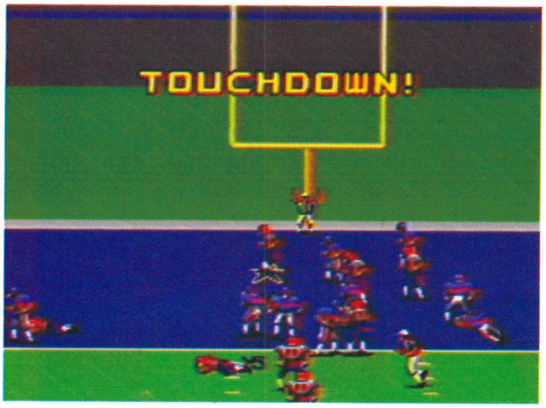
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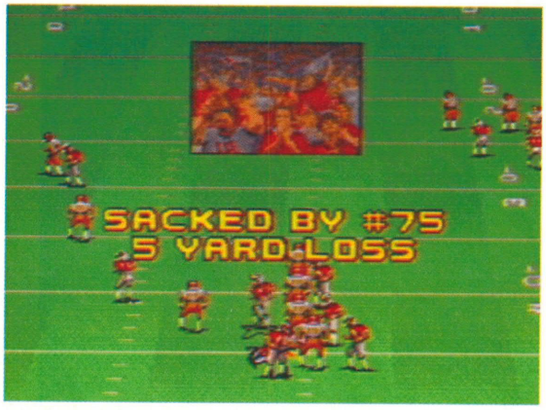
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BATTLE YOUR WAY THROUGH TIME

TIME LORD



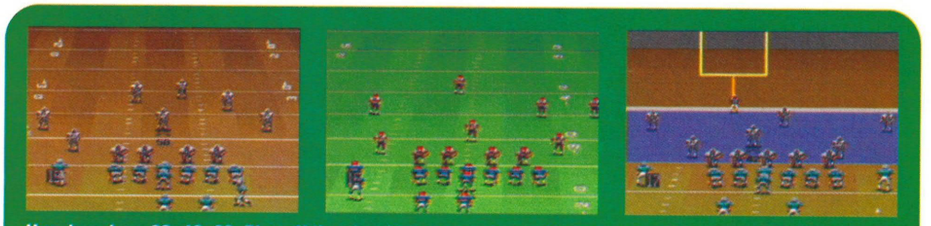
With each touchdown the scoring player now does a little dance and we're not talking foxtrot or waltzes here.



Sacked. The quarterback slips up and allows the offence to gain possession. Whoops the fans aren't pleased.



It may all look terribly complicated but the play select screen really is quite cute and cuddly when you know it.



Hup, hup, hup. 28, 42, 28. Play-off time in which no matter what the weather, several very large men shout out a series of unusual numbers before running and hugging each other. No, it's not the Masons.

MEGA DRIVE

Oh-my-Gaaahhhd! It-it's HUUUUGE!! *Patrick McCarthy* owns the biggest, most battered helmet we've ever seen in our lives. That's what comes of spending so much time on a bicycle as a child. Incidentally, he also wears it when playing American football games.

MEGA ZONE



Go up to anybody in the street and ask them what the best American football game on the Mega Drive is, and like as not they'll say to you, "Get away from me for you have a head like a salted peanut and your breath smells of Mavis Riley." That'll teach you to go down the street where all the surrealists live. Ask someone who actually knows something about console games, however, and they will snap tetchily in their horrid, common, accent, "Jongmadd'n'a'course," and poke you painfully in the eardrum with a cotton bud.

So, if Madden's the best, why have Electronic Arts decided to overhaul it? Are they mad? And why have they called it *John Madden Football '92*? Let's ask the great man himself.

***Game Zone*:** So, John, what happened to the other 90 versions of *John Madden*?

John Madden: Well you see this guy goes here, he spots the gap and cuts back inside the pulling guards – hey, I can show you on the coach's clicker...

***GZ*:** Er, no thanks, it's alright. How do you like having a picture of Ron Pickering on the title screen?

JM: It's kind of, like, way out there, ya know what I'm saying? Hey, though, I'd have to say that's where I'd want the situation to be heading, in this situation against the dime and with this set-up and backfield alignment...

***GZ*:** A-ha. Mmm. Thanks John. (Click as tv is switched off). Sod it.

Okay let's start again. (1) *John Madden* on the Mega Drive is the best computerised simulation of American football in existence. (2) EA have decided to change it. (3) I've had a go of it and you haven't. (4) I'm going to tell you what it's like. (*Praise be to Thora Hird. Ed.*)

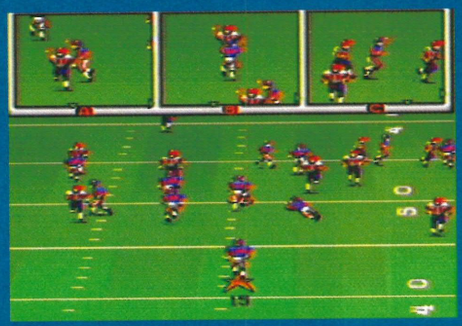
EA has decided to make all their sports games under the EASN (Electronic Arts Sports Network) tag. This means all games have a replay facility, two player option and teams with individual characteristics and lots of other things I can't remember. The first game to feature these facilities that has really sold well in this country (and rightly so) is *EA Hockey*. If you've seen *EA Hockey*, the opening screens of *John Madden Football '92* will look familiar to you. And if you've seen *Road Rash*, the opening music will also sound familiar.

The game set-up screen now allows you to

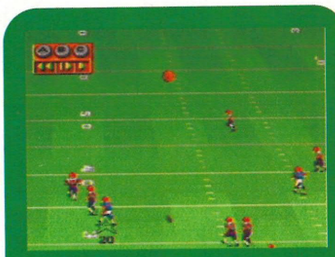
john madden

it's so much harder

Supposedly some big-headed little twerps somewhere have been boasting to EA that passing was too easy in the original *John Madden*. I'd like to get my hands on them, whoever they are. Personally, I always thought that it was more than balanced by the difficulty of the running. Anyway, the passing has been made more difficult; your receiver frequently has to dive in between two or even three defenders, with the result that a lot more passes get knocked away and (gasp) intercepted (basts). If they're going to do that the least they could do is make the running game a little easier. (Whine whine.) Admittedly it does depend on the team you pick in the first place. The defenders are more intelligent, too. You can't just keep running the same play over and over again, because they catch on and stand there waiting for you, with a brick in either hand.

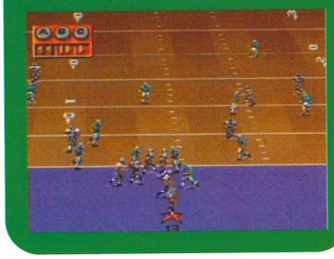


Pass the parcel New York Jets-style.

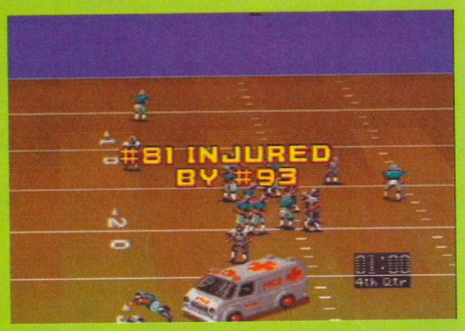


it's got replay

There's a smart new replay facility: watch any play again and again, in slow motion if necessary, to rub in just how much you hurt your opponent's quarterback when your psycho ninja linebacker jumped on his oesophagus. You can move the camera about so that it's keyed on an individual player too, so now you'll know just what your ace receiver was up to when he should have been thirty yards downfield catching the ball. There's no such thing as privacy any more.



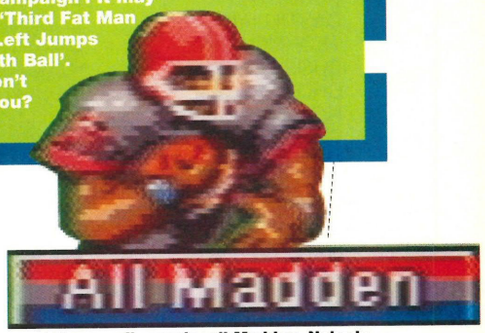
it's more complicated



Dee-daah, dee-daah, dee-daah.

There are more formations and more plays to pick from, and some of them (like the pc version) have macho names from real life; Mad Tiger, Tuf Bronco and Red-dog, for example, or the Nigel Kennedy-inspired Monster Blitz.

I don't know that this naming stuff is necessarily better – at least with the old simplistic names you looked for one that said 'Fat Man Hits Skinny Man' at the top and knew what you were getting. 'Monster Blitz' may mean 'Maniac Is Annoyed By Nigel Kennedy And Is Provoked Into Saturation Bombing Campaign'. It may only mean 'Third Fat Man From The Left Jumps On Man With Ball'. You just don't know, do you?



All man, all muscle, all Madden. Nobody calls our John a pansy and gets away.

determine the Play Mode. A Pre-Season option, in which computer opponents don't go all-out, has been added. Other options have been expanded: the players (Demo, One, Two, Head-to-Head, Two Teammates); the teams (there are now all 28 teams plus the All-Madden team); the quarter length, the stadium, type of pitch and the weather conditions (fair, windy, rain or snow).

The team comparison screen is also now like *EA hockey*, with the teams rated by a system of ticks. This is combined with a few words of advice from JM himself. Like, "Go home now, you don't have a hope, you fat ugly sucker." The crowd's boos and cheers are strangely familiar and seem to have been lifted straight from *EA Hockey*.

The graphics have been tweaked all round; the sprites are smaller, so that more are on the screen at any one time, and the animation has been refined. There are some nice inlaid graphics – crowds shout approval or jeer, kickers look pleased if they score, or fiddle with themselves Down There if they miss and there's a close-up of the chain used to measure close yardage calls.

After you score a touchdown you're now shown a summary of the 'drive' that produced it and what method you used to get the yardage (running, passing, napalm or whatever).

verdict
The best American football game you can buy.

There's one rather nice feature that will appeal to shandy-drinkers everywhere; if you have a call go against you (pass interference, usually) and watch it again on replay, you get the choice of over-ruling the decision if you think it incorrect, or allowing it to stand against you.

The two team-mate option is pretty smart – you can both choose which player you control and can click to the one nearest the ball at any time, so the chance for defensive mayhem is greatly increased, and there's more chance of getting the ambulance on.

EA said their aim was to improve the best American football game rather than make 'Madden 1' obsolete and that's exactly what they've done. Everything's the same, but slightly better, if you see what I mean (adopts deep voice). The best just got tweaked.

As to whether you need it if you've already got the original *John Madden*, I'd say no. But if you're rich and want to buy it anyway, or if you don't have one and you're looking for the best American football game – accept no substitute.

One last question, John. Why is the touchdown celebration music the theme tune from *Crimewatch*?
John: Hey – when it's third and long and the ground's like it is (click!) E

END ZONE

Graphics 9
Sound 9
Addictiveness 9
Playability 9

OVERALL 95

Out: Now **Price:** £39.99
Publisher: Electronic Arts

football '92



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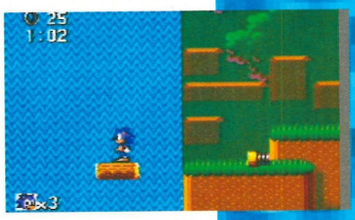
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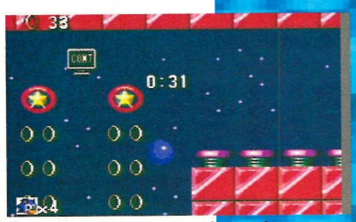
Sonic meets his blind date. Will there be a trip to Crawley in that golden envelope?



Sonic was caught short, and sadly failed to check for nettles first.



I'm a lumberjack and I'm okay. Sonic, auditions for the part of the sixth Python.



Once there was a young hog, who sure could play a mean pinball.



Sonic weighs things up (and down and up and down).

Sonic The Hedgehog. He's a bit like Bryan Adams really isn't he? Cuddly, cute, a guaranteed chart topper and a massive media mega star to boot. But up until now, unlike Bryan, who's been available on vinyl, cassette, video, CD, T-Shirt, badge, keyring, and cuddly toy, Sonic's only been available on erm, cartridge. Mega Drive cartridge to be precise. And as a result, poor old Master System owners have had to spend the last few months trying to live down the fact that they can't get hold of one of the best games of the year, unlike their Mega Drive 'chums'. Until now that is.

Yes, the great blue hope has finally hit the 8-bit Sega machine just in time for Christmas. And he's every bit as fast, furious and addictive as you could ever hope to expect.

As on the Mega Drive, we first come across Master System Sonic in the middle of a surrealist Greenpeace member's nightmare. Innocent animals have been kidnapped. Cutesome crabs and cuddlesome caterpillars, have been turned into robotic monsters. And to top it all off, the entire stock of Ratners gold-plated eternity rings have suddenly appeared hanging heavily in the air. Sonic of course, is the only hedgehog capable of saving all the cutesome little animals from the clutches of the evil Doctor Robotnik and ridding the world of the rings. So off he sets, across six varied zones in an attempt to free the animals, collect the rings and meet the evil Doc at his hideout.

The nasties facing Sonic as he crosses each zone range from crafty crabs and caterkillers to buzz bombers and ballhogs. The hazards that he must tackle include hills, collapsing bridges, waterfalls and caverns to name but, erm, four. Throughout each zone, Sonic can pick up power-ups like power sneakers for extra speed and extra lives. And if he finishes each act with over 50 rings in his possession he can bound into the rather brilliant pinball effect bonus level. Here Sonic gets rocketed around a pinball table environment in search of a continue bonus. Very handy when you want to restart the game where you left off.

But of course, it's not what Sonic actually does as he makes his way towards the Doc's lair that makes this such a fab game, 'cos well, let's face it, killing nasties, collecting rings for extra points, picking up power-ups and discovering hidden bonuses, is all in a day's work for most cutesy super heroes. No, it's the way Sonic does it. In other words the gameplay is really rather good.

Yep, Sonic is as fast and agile on the Master System as he is on the Mega Drive. He fair races along on each level and his deadly Super Sonic Spin Attack is as lethal as ever. The speed of the game has translated almost perfectly from the 16 to the 8-bit machine — it's faster than anything else on the Master System – and the whole thing is more addictive than a very moreish bar of Dairy Crunch.

Sonic on the Master System is a real supersonic stormer. If you haven't got hold of it yet, send a note to Santa quick.

CONT

END ZONE

Graphics

Sound

Addictiveness

Playability

OVERALL 90

Out: Now **Price:** £29.99
Publisher: Sega

MEGA ZONE

And lo, it came to pass that a small, blue and rather prickly thing called Sonic was sent forth to save the planet from all manner of evil nastiness this Christmas. *Jackie Ryan* followed him.



verdict
The fastest, bestest and probably most cutest platform game to hit the Master System yet.

MASTER SYSTEM

sonic the hedgehog

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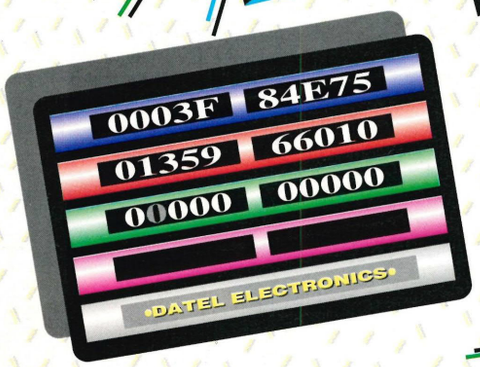
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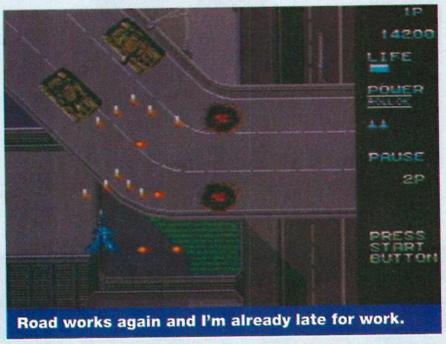
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Avoid the silver darty and orangey swirly things.



Road works again and I'm already late for work.

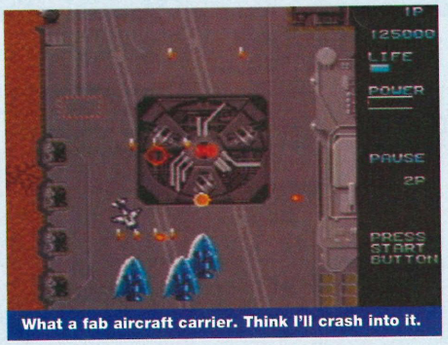


I'll be okay you said. It'll never take off you said.



Oh no, the jumbo jet's done do-dos again.

vapor trail



What a fab aircraft carrier. Think I'll crash into it.

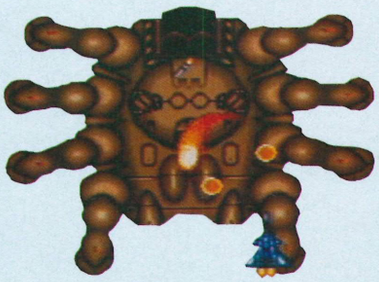
A classic pub game converted by Gallic Giants Ubi Soft. Who's our expert on pub games such as sliding under tables and throwing up in strange people's anorak hoods? Why, *Jeremy Daldry*.

Vapor Trail isn't so much, "Those magnificent men in their flying machines, oh they went up tiddily up, they went down tiddily down" as "Those magnificent men in those flying machines, oh they went down tiddily down in a mass of flaming molten metal." Yup this is true deathsplat territory. But let us not get ahead of ourselves. As Dylan Thomas once said: "To begin at the beginning."

the beginning

It's the year 1999 and some rather unpleasant chaps have broken into NORAD's (No relation to dubious yank organisation Noraid.) central computer. Instead of leaving an amusing little message along the lines of 'John Major has gonads the size of Cardiff', they decide to take over the world's nuclear defence. And guess what, unless the world's governments hand over control they will blow the world into next week. A bit of a quandary, hey? Unfortunately for you, you're the only one who can save the world from this awful fate. Why is it so unfortunate? Well, because to save everyone's buns you have to go up against the most tooled-up clone fighters you are ever likely to meet. The second reason why it is unfortunate is because you are a check-out attendant who works in the Bromley branch of Safeways. (*Are you sure about this? Ed.*) But why do it? The only reason that you are prepared to take on such a ridiculous mission is because you are desperate to stop being Colin the cashout clerk, and become Collete the cashout clerk, if you know what I mean. And the guys at NORAD have promised that this mission would scare the balls off anyone. (*Methinks you do make it up too much! Ed.*)





the middle

Well what can you say about a game like *Vapor Trail*? It's a shoot 'em up viewed from above with lots 'n' lots of lovely power-ups to collect and erm... well that's about it really. The graphics are as near to the arcade original as yer could expect and the sound is splatty in the best sense of the word. The backgrounds are varied and nicely animated, as when a massive B-52 rolls away to reveal yet more little tanks to be dispatched to the great tank graveyard in the sky.

So if the graphics are nice rather than brill-o, that means the gameplay must be an absolutely stonking great thing of true biblical playing preportions. Right? Well, if I were to say that, it would be like saying that Phillip Schofield can sing. He can't and it ain't.

After you have dispatched yet another wave of mutant death vipers your interest does wane a bit. In fact you find yourself beginning to go into a kind of dangerous daze. Half awake, half asleep you have entered the *Twilight Zone* of console gaming - when you suddenly realise how to defeat the end-of-level mutoid, but can't be arsed to play through all five levels to get there. And of course the answer is to fling the game under your bed and pretend that you never lashed out such a lot of dosh in the first place on such a boring load of old dog do.

verdict

An okay shoot 'em up in the tradition of all things that go bang. But the long-term appeal of this game is equal to the long-term appeal of having a pit bull down yer trousers.

the end

That is always the problem with these kinda games. Long term, the playability of this kind of game is lower than low. The learning curve is way too shallow and with almost limitless continues the whole thing is way too easy. Ho hum, looks like the free world will have to save itself this time.

END ZONE

Graphics 8

Sound 7

Addictiveness 3

Playability 3

OVERALL 50

Out: Now **Price:** £44.99
Publisher: Ubi Soft

WIN! it's a gi

WIN £4,000 WORTH OF MEGA DRIVES,



Just what you've always wanted? Well now's your chance to grab one! We've got ten Nintendo Action Sets to be won, each worth a cool £110. Each set comes complete with a Light Gun, two control pads, and a double game pack of two top selling titles, *Super Mario* and *Duck Hunt*. Wow. With hundreds of other games to play this console is a real winner. Are you?

10 nintendo action sets

10 personal stereos

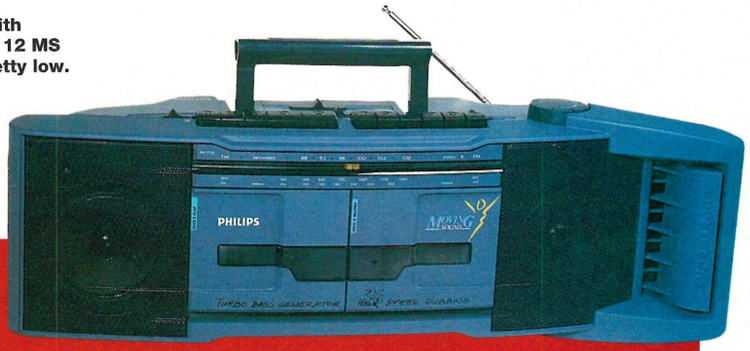
We've got ten Philips Moving Sound AQ 6404 MS auto-reverse personal stereos to give away to all you music masters out there. Each personal stereo cassette player is worth £30 and comes complete with Dynamic Bass Boost, lightweight headphones, fast forward and fast rewind on both sides, an endless playback mode, plus a handy belt clip. Kicking sounds all the way.



veaway! PART 3

NINTENDOS, PHILIPS STEREOS & JOE BLOGGS GEAR!

Bass, how low can you go? With Philips Moving Sound AW 7112 MS ghettoblasters the answer is pretty low. Every system features 50W of exhilarating music power blasting through a three-amplifier three-speaker system with TBG (Turbo Bass Generation) so you can really kick it. Also included are dual tape decks for high-speed dubbing, continuous play, one-touch recording and a rather smart FM radio option. We've got ten of these awesome amps, each worth £100, to be won. For sound system mobility you can't get any better.



10 turbo bass hi-fis



10 sega mega drives

Blimey! We are just too nice to you. We're giving away ten Sega Mega Drive machines. With its excellent graphics, animation and playability this marvy machine, worth a whopping £149, comes complete with a copy of *Altered Beast*. Plus there's more than 50 other games you can get your hands on too, titles like *Sonic The Hedgehog*, *John Madden Football* and *Populous*, with even more to come.

10 t-shirts & sweatshirts

Hit the streets in the latest Joe Bloggs gear for free 'cos we've got ten Moving Sound T-shirts and sweatshirts up for grabs, all designed by Joe himself. The sweatshirt, which is worth £29.99, has the Joe Bloggs logo emblazoned across one sleeve and the Philips Moving Sound logo on the other. The white T-shirt, which would set you back £19.99, has an equally groove-bound logo across the chest. Win yourself one and get radically cooler than cool.



Can you believe it? *Game Zone*, in conjunction with Philips, is giving away a massive £4,000 worth of brilliant prizes in this mega three-part competition. We've got ten Nintendo Action sets, ten Sega Mega Drives, ten Philips turbo-bass ghettoblasters, ten personal stereos, ten Joe Bloggs long-sleeved sweatshirts and ten Joe Bloggs T-shirts up for grabs. And they're easy as pie to win, you'd be totally daft not to try to get your mitts on them. Want to know how? Just read on.

the animal III

Last month, in the most unusual outing for a moo cow since one jumped over the moon we hid a cow somewhere in the magazine. This month we've treated a horse to a day trip out onto the pages of *Game Zone*. You've got to find it, tell us on which page and exactly where it's hiding and answer this simple tie-break question.

tie break III

Which of these words, when added to 'horse' doesn't make a new word?

a) clothes
b) fly
c) paper
d) radish

fill in the coupon

Jot down the answer on the coupon, add your name and address, not forgetting to tell us where the horse has wandered off to. Now, hunt out the other two coupons that you should have saved from issues one and two of *Game Zone*. Remember to tell us where the pig and cow were hidden in the first two issues. Then place all three coupons in an envelope and send to: **Old MacDonald's Mega Compo, *Game Zone*, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE.**

rules

- Employees of Dennis Publishing and Philips who enter will have to muck out Lord Paul's stables.
- All entries must reach us before 31 January. Any received after that date will be used as silage.
- Old MacDonald's decision is final.



Find me! (Woof.)

I'm really clever and know the answer to your ever so simple question and have discovered the horse hiding away on page_____beside

The odd word out is:_____

(Enter the appropriate letter.)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

_____**POSTCODE** _____

I would prefer to win the_____



What a lovely smooth lawn. Shame about all the smelly footballers.



On the 'ead, son. The Vinnie Jones school of football etiquette.

super kick off

GAME GEAR

MEGA ZONE

Paul: Is there any format in the whole world which *Super Kick Off* has yet to conquer? Early Aztec society is rumoured to have played the game on the abacus. Since then it's conquered everything from Babbage's Calculating Machine to the NASA Main Frame. Well let's not get carried away but it does seem at times that you can't move for copies of *Super Kick Off*. Now the world's smallest footballers have moved onto one of the world's smallest games machines.

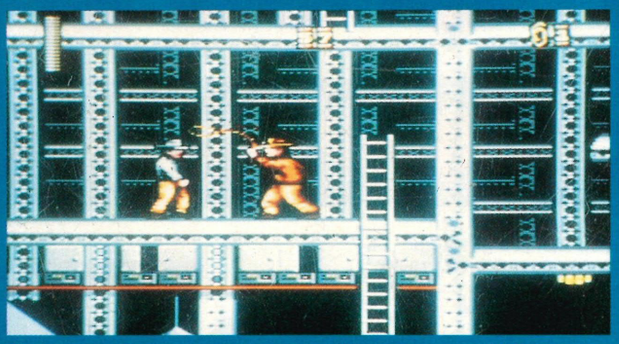
Surprisingly, size is not a problem. (Haven't I always said so?) in fact the sprites look more realistic on the small screen and except in the worst goal mouth scrambles there's no real problem seeing what's going on. However detailed control, such as tackling, is a bit of a problem but that's a good excuse for flattening your opponent.

For the rest, it's all the same as the Master System version (so you'd better get hold of a copy of last month's issue and read the review, 'cos I'm not going through it all over again, oh dear me no), complete with cup and league options and a kit design section. By linking two Game Gears together you can even use a two player option. One or two player, it's all fast, furious, action. It's almost too exciting for its own good; you know how in console games you twist and turn at a tense moment, wrenching the joypad all over the shop. Fine. Except when you do this in a Game Gear game you're moving the screen out of the way. There are few sights more pathetic than Lakin twisting the Game Gear upside down to try to force the ball into the back of the net. Still all that proves is that the game's very exciting and I'm an idiot. This is one of the best versions of a brilliant game.

OVERALL 92

Out: April **Price:** £tba
Publisher: US Gold

indiana jones and the last crusade



Window cleaning was never so much fun. Fun and games with Squeegees.

GAME GEAR

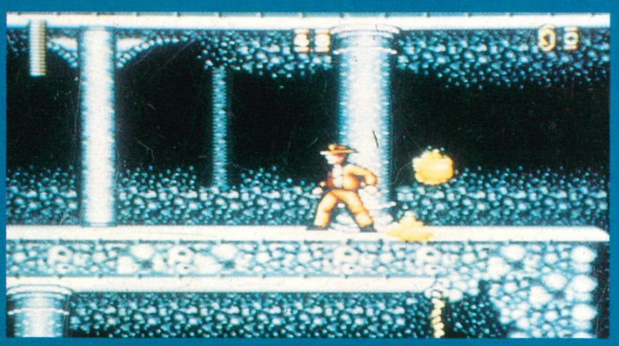
Jackie: I must admit, I quite like a good whip now and again. *(Are you sure you should be telling us this? Ed.)* Give me a pint of milk, a rotary egg beater and a packet of strawberry flavoured Bird's Instant Whip and I'm happy. So when the Ed told me there would be plenty of whips to be had in US Gold's latest offering for the Game Gear, I eagerly donned my apron and ordered a few extra pintas – only to find that the whips in this game weren't quite the kind I was thinking of! You see, *Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade* is, of course, all about the adventures of hunky archaeologist Indiana Jones and his trusty *bull*-whip. Ahem!

Just as in the film of the same name, in this rather fab, six level, horizontally and vertically scrolling arcade adventure, your task, as Indy, is to discover the Holy Grail. To do this though, first you have to take a bit of a *Wish You Were Here* world tour. It begins in America where you find yourself battling your way through the caves of Coronado and running the length of a moving circus train, continues in Germany as you puzzle your way around Castle Grunwald, dip into the depths of the dungeons, and reach for the skies in a Zeppelin, and ends up somewhere near Egypt as you tread the pathway of death in your attempt to reach the Holy Grail. But it's no Judith Chalmers sunshine holiday though 'cos on each level Indy has to shin up and down ropes, leap yawning chasms, pick up various pieces of useful treasure, dispatch gun-toting Nazis with either his fists or whip *and* reach the level exits, all before time runs out.

But luckily, as the gameplay in *Indy* is pitched just right, graphics are nicely detailed (all the sprites are well drawn and large enough to see and control on the wee Game Gear screen) and the sound's rather cheerful too. You should have quite a pleasant whip, whoops trip, even though there's not a dollop of Bird's Instant Whip in sight.

OVERALL 85

Out: December **Price:** £24.99
Publisher: Us Gold



That's funny. I thught the Government had closed the coal mines down.

viking child

Jackie: Just ask yourself this; have *you* ever heard of a viking called *Brian*!? Thor, yes. Odin, probably. And Eric, definitely. But Brian! *Brian!* Let's face it, being landed with a name like that, whilst belonging to one of the most feared races of the Dark Ages could've turned out to be just a bit of a handicap. So when you hear that the hero of *Viking Child* is a mad marauding Viking called... erm, Brian, well you just know things can only go from bad to worse for the poor chap. And of course, they do.

Brian's family you see, have been kidnapped by the evil god Loki, which puts Brian in a rather awkward position. If he ever wants to see his parents again, he must travel through Loki's dangerous kingdom to rescue them. Luckily for his parents, though, Brian is not one to hold grudges, so off he sets.

As he begins his quest Brian, armed only with a sword, must battle his way past various nasties,



Here Brian decorates his large Xmas tree.

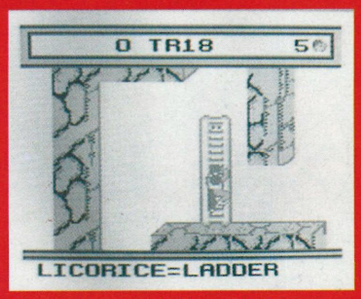
dispatching killer snakes, manic mushrooms, and terrible tortoises, picking up gold coins in return for each kill. At various shops en route he can then exchange his gold coins for new and more lethal weapons. All of which he'll certainly need when he finds himself face to face with Loki's evil apprentice monsters at the end of every level.

As he travels the lands in search of his parents, Brian can also pick up extra points by finding the secret bonuses and gems hidden. But he can't be too slow about the whole thing. He only has a certain time limit in which to complete his quest.

Viking Child is a well-executed, multi-level arcade adventure in the style of *Wonderboy*. The gameplay isn't new, but if you like cutesy arcade adventure style games (and I do, I do), then you'll love this.

OVERALL 83

Out: December **Price:** £29.99
Publisher: Atari



Aka *The Boy And His Nasal Discharge*.

the boy and his blob 2
the rescue of princess blobette

Jeremy: What is going down in *The Boy And His Blob 2*? Is it about a young person with severe nasal discharge? Or maybe a particularly sad chap who has no other friends, but for a small piece of moulded Blu-Tack? But no. *The Boy And His Blob 2* has nothing to do with either snot or ways of fixing your Kylie poster above your bed, which is a shame if you ask me.

The Boy And His Blob 2 follows *The Boy And His Blob1*, rather unsurprisingly, quite closely. And as anyone who is anyone will know, *Blob 1* was a stonker. *Sooooo* it doesn't exactly take a genius to work out that *Blob 2* is also a pretty nifty cart. And so it is. If graphic adventures with puzzles are your bag then you will love the cotton socks off this one. But if you prefer action and things that go 'ping', you will be asleep before you're off the first screen.

So the boy is back. And so is his blob along with its rather bizarre habit of munching jelly beans that then turn it into really rather amazing objects. So if it gobbles a liquorice jobbie it turns into a ladder. An apple bean? He becomes a jack. Easy eh?

If you want to test your brain rather than just your trigger finger then *Boy And His Blob 2* will keep you occupied for many hours of happy puzzling. Some of the graphical touches are really nice, even if the sound is functionary rather than breathtaking, but all in all *Blob 2* is not a bad old game. Original idea, cute-ish kinda cart. Yer, I like this one.

OVERALL 87

Out: January **Price:** £19.99
Publisher: Nintendo

STUN runner

Paul: The first time I played the *STUN Runner* arcade machine I'd just had a huge lunch and felt like nothing more than a gentle snooze, warming my feet in front of the cat. What I didn't want was a twisty speedy futuristic racing game but that's what I got. As a 25th Century pilot/driver you have to pilot (or drive) your craft through tunnels and dangerously incomplete highways in a frantic race against the clock. Extra speed is gained by crossing booster stars. However just as important is following the correct 'line' of the tunnel or road.

Yup, this is a driving bore's dream. All the waffle about following the line of the road comes into its own The time is so tight that if you ignore this Advanced Driving skill you won't finish on time. It's also possible that if you eat a huge meal before playing you won't finish at all.

There are other problems to contend with apart from your rapidly rising lunch. Namely the other road users. Most of these can be simply blasted out the way but there's the odd, irritating, indestructible mega mother, a sort of juggernaut of the 25th century. Get stuck behind these and it's goodbye victory.

Whereas some of the other versions of *STUN Runner* were a tad on the disappointing side this is an absolute corker. The scenery flashes past at such a rate and in such a blur of colour that you begin to feel dangerously car/air sick. Speed is of the essence in this game and the Lynx version has got it dripping out of every socket.

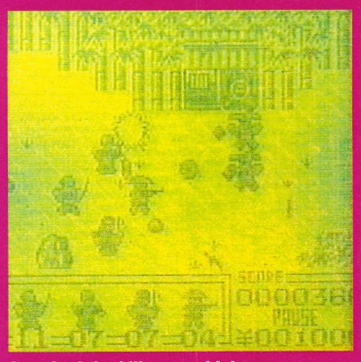
Admittedly the sound isn't up to much but that's about the only flaw you can find. Tracks not only get more difficult they also get more interesting – more twisty and turny. As long as you're blessed with a strong stomach or a light lunch, then this is a great racing game.



The Circle line circa 2000 AD.

OVERALL 86

Out: Now **Price:** £29.99
Publisher: Atari



Attack of the killer grey blobs.

mercenary force

Paul: Now call me a hardened old cynic if you like, but when I first picked up this game I thought: "Oh well here we go. Another of those kung fu beat 'em ups that seem to make up half the Game Boy back catalogue." I was wrong. Call me a hardened old dyslexic if you like, but I'd missed the importance of this being 'samurai', not ninja or adventure, nor death fest.

Rather than one fighter you control a team of four. Choose your team from a selection of servants, samurai, guards, monks or mystics. The difference between these characters is partly in the amount of hits they can withstand but more importantly in the direction they fire. Servants, samurai and guards fire forwards, monks fire diagonally and mystics sideways. (Not so much mystic as damn stupid if you ask me.) Obviously you must bear this in mind when selecting your team. A team consisting entirely of samurai and servants will make short work of head-on attacks but will be vulnerable to attacks from the side. Likewise monks will be vulnerable to head-on attacks and a team of mystics will be dead before they the end of the first screen. Mix and match is the answer.

Once you've chosen a team the game is a straightforward shoot 'em up with plenty of scenery and more than enough nasties. You can shuffle your group a bit, if the guy in front is getting a pasting, but most of the time, action is of a fairly normal move and fire style. However the game is unusual and interesting – an above average shoot 'em up.

OVERALL 82

Out: January **Price:** £19.99
Publisher: Nintendo

scrapyard dog

Jeremy: What can you say about the Lynx? It's a difficult one really. It's a question with no answer like why is the fluff in your navel always blue, *no matter* what colour your clothes are? If you ask me I would say the Lynx has a great deal of potential. Potential to be the best handheld, potential to make a lot of young people very happy. So why does it never live up to it's own screaming possibilities? Well it's the carts. For ages there were hardly any, and now there are oodles more, but they do seem to be of a varying quality.

But what about *Scrapyard Dog*? Well, it falls somewhere between *Chequered Flag* (which I think is the best racing game on any handheld) and *Turbo Sub* (a bigger pile of dog do you could not hope to find). So I guess you could say it falls into the Twilight Zone of being almost a good game, but not quite. It's one of those cute platform games where you try to rescue your kidnapped dog from the clutches of someone who, presumably, doesn't like dogs very much. You run, jump and throw non-violent tennis balls at the assorted bad guys, who also don't go a whole bundle on dogs either. Why you just don't pull out a .45 automatic and blow their heads off is beyond me. Or just give up your old dog to medical experimentation, and buy a new one? Save a lot of trouble. But oh no, this is cute 'n' cuddly land, so off you trek through a scrapyard land towards Sugar Candy mountain where it never rains and everyone is happy.

Both graphics, animation and sound are cartoon-like, but you're left thinking, so what? You want to stick a large rocket up the hero's backside, light the blue touchpaper and stand well back, just to get some action in there. *Scrapyard Dog* is okay, but not as much fun as... (snip) *(You can't say that! Ed.)*



It's a dog's life in the world of scrap.

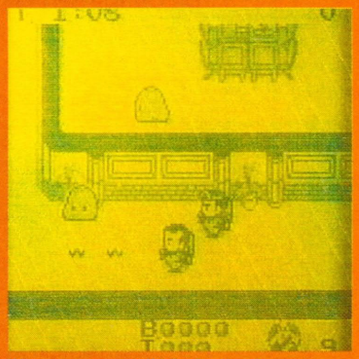
OVERALL 60

Out: Now **Price:** £29.99
Publisher: Atari

ghostbusters II

Jackie: Spook! They're back. And this time they're more frightening than a pair of striped winceyette pyjamas. More garish than a lurex lampshade and more ghastly than an in-growing toe nail. Yes those surreal, supernatural terrors of the night, the ghostly ghouls and mangy monsters of New York, New York are back in town. So who you gonna call? Erm, well, the Ghostbusters might be a good idea. Especially since *Ghostbusters II* has finally materialised on the Game Boy, courtesy of Activision.

In this maze-like shoot 'em up, you must select two of the famous gang of four – one to stun, the other to capture the ghosts – and then guide them as they pass through 13 ghost-laden levels. En route pick up power-ups which let you stun and kill ghoulies in one as opposed to



Who ya gonna call? A plumber?

two blasts and also change your characters mid-quest if you wish to.

But watch out! Your ghostbustin' will take you though various levels ranging from school classrooms, where only a few ghosts lurk, through to subway tunnels and courtrooms, where more and different ghosts creep, until finally you reach the City Museum Of Modern Art where you battle it out against vicious Vigo The Carpathian.

Things can get sticky at times with all that ectoplasm flying about and there are annoying bits, like the way your characters can get stuck to the sides of corridors and ghosts appear right in front of you thus eliminating all chance of escape. But seeing as you have four lives per character and three continue options, gameplay is not interrupted too much. *Ghostbusters II* is a jolly good multi-level, shoot 'em up romp. Spook!

OVERALL 75

Out: December **Price:** £@@@
Publisher: Activision



People love music whether it be classical or rock. The desire to play music strongly motivates millions of people to sign up for lessons, buy pianos and purchase song books. Parents encourage their children to take up an instrument because it enriches their child's education and provides hours of healthy enjoyment.

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THE MIRACLE
PIANO TEACHING SYSTEM

Grey is quite a popular colour these days, whether you're talking gentlemen's fashion or games cartridges. Grey Imports are games which have been released in Japan and/or the USA but have yet to see the light of day over here. However they are available from shops which stock imports. Some of these games may be officially released at a later date.

Imports are a good way of getting hold of the very latest games technology but you should know what you're buying. Imported games may not be compatible with your machine and unless you speak fluent Japanese some games may be something of a closed book to you. (*Except they're not books. Ed.*)



Very dramatic, but hard to keep warm in winter.


Heads up! Snogging session imminent.


A little dash of paint, some chintz covers and a stuffed sausage dog draft excluder and the place would look quite homely.

MEGA ZONE

castlevania IV


I've come across some daft ideas, but why put candlesticks outside?

SUPER FAMICOM

Jeremy: Some people never learn. Take this dude Simon Belmont. You'd think after three previous adventures battling the evils of Dracula he would have a break. You'd also think he would've already had enough excitement wearing leather shorts and wielding a whip in public. You find yourself asking, "Why doesn't he retire and live a quiet life running a florist's in Bridport?" The answer is, because yet another hapless member of his family has get himself kidnapped or killed (or both, it's difficult to tell when the instructions are in Japanese).

And, instead of admitting that he never liked them very much anyway and that now he can both pinch their collection of New Seeker albums and avoid having to visit them on Boxing Day all in one fell swoop, our Simon decides to rescue them. What a heroic dude.

In *Castlevania IV* Simon battles through the whole of the dude with the teeth's domain. You wander through overgrown gardens that

would make Percy Thrower have a heart attack. (*He must have already seen it. Ed.*) There are shallow rivers full of nasty things that even Jacques Cousteau would avoid and a cliff face that makes K2 look like nothing more than a sand castle. You could say it is not much of a picnic, but you are more likely to call it a massive platform, graphic adventure kind of thing.

As in every *Castlevania* you use your whip to blow away the mutoids that Drac has in his pay and to collect all the lovely powers-ups that are hidden, bizarrely, in candlesticks. How did Dracula's interior decorator hide axes behind candlesticks. Just clever I guess.

Something else that is kind of clever is the fairly stonking graphics. I mean we have come to expect graphics of a high standard on the fab Famicom but *Castlevania*'s graphics are so good, after seeing them for the first time you have to go and have a little lie down somewhere to recover. Straight up, they are that good. Look out for the room that revolves through 360 degrees while you hang by yer whip from a metal thingy attached to the wall. Good stuff.

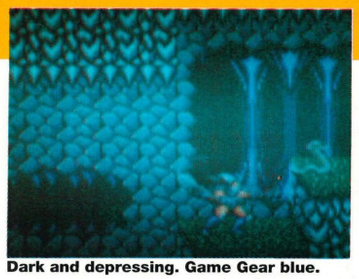


But what about the sound then? Well this is one of my personal bugbears. *Castlevania* has some great FX, wolves howling, wind whistling and the sound of the whip cracking through skulls, but the music, oh dear me the music. But in a half-deserted castle you don't want to hear a constant barrage of supermarket musak, do you? No. You want spooky, moody music that wouldn't be out of place in a Hammer House Of Horror B movie, not the Co-op soundtrack. You almost expect a disembodied voice to tell you there is, for a limited time only, 5p off a tin of Baked Beans.

So what do you get when you flash the cash for a *Castlevania IV* cart? Well you get a stonkingly good game that should keep you interested for some time. My only grumble would be that it's a bit easy, but thats probably because I'm such a good gamesplayer. (*Please! Ed.*) Super graphics and FX, slightly annoying music and a good learning curve. Almost as good as *Ghouls 'N' Ghosts*, but not quite. Still an amazing kinda cart.
Supplied by Advanced Console Entertainment.

OVERALL 90

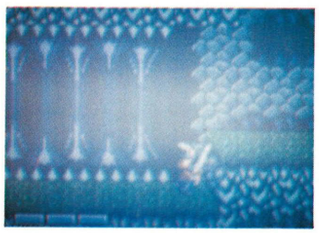
Instructions: Japanese
Price: £55 **Publisher:** Konami



Dark and depressing. Game Gear blue.

axe battler – a legend of golden axe

Paul: Well this is a little strange and no mistake. We all know and love the arcade classic *Golden Axe* but I'm really not sure what to make of this. For starters it's Japanese and enough of an adventure to make my linguistic ineptitude something of a handicap. For much of the game you control a small sprite moving over a fairly basic map and encountering people, monsters and things that aren't quite monsters but not quite people either. (The sort of things you meet in the early hours of morning gate-crashing your party.)



***Golden Axe*? More slimy blue axe.**

When you come across these mythological party poopers you enter a combat sequence and that's where *Golden Axe* comes in. The fighting could easily be lifted from that game but with one crucial difference - your fighter isn't exactly overendowed with fighting moves. Standing up and stabbing, crouching and stabbing, jumping and stabbing. Pretty complex eh?

In the wide open plains the combat is simply one-to-one and whether you win or lose you return to the map screen afterwards. Once you get underground the game opens up into much more of an arcade adventure as you battle your way across bridges and through tunnels while being attacked from a million directions at once. In this section your lack of fluent Japanese ceases to matter and the game becomes quite fun. However it's frustrating to feel you're only really getting half the game.
Supplied By Advanced Console Entertainment

OVERALL 73

Instructions: Japanese
Price: £25 **Publisher:** Sega



The gardener discovered he had a flair for topiary.

image fight

Kai: Shoot 'em ups. Love 'em or loathe 'em, you can't help admiring the little darlings. Someone, somewhere is sitting in a rather expensive villa, probably in the south of France, with rather a lot of money, simply because he came up with the idea of writing a game in which you shoot absolutely everything that should pass your way. Not really all that earth-shattering a concept, but there you go!

Over the years we have seen sackloads of shoot 'em ups, most were okay, some were good and a very select few were excellent, the dog's woss, and so on. *Xenon II* springs to mind at this point, but that's another story. Now, through the mists of all these different games comes *Image Fight*.

The basic aim of the game is, erm... to shoot absolutely everything. Should you leave a single little splodge of life on the screen, then your botty will be smacked and you'll be sent to bed without any tea. So there! More specifically, you have to defend the world from a terrible onslaught of mutinous bug-eyed beasties with nothing but your trusty spaceship for company. Oh, and rather a lot of guns. Now, back to the game.(*Yes. Ed.*) *Image Fight* is a vertically scrolling number, with a rather impressive side order of bolt-on accessories. Lasers, flames, sort of swirly green things, they're all here in the shape of the formidable add-on. Undoubtably this adds a bit of life to the game, but I'm not sure if it is enough to detract from the fact that *Image Fight* is basically a spruced up shoot 'em up which is rather too flash for its own good.

For instance, at the end of each level you are given the lowdown on how you did in terms of percentages. Although interesting, this does not really do enough for me to make me come back more than a couple of times. "Seen it before, John," is the unfortunate conclusion. Fast, slick, cuddly even, but definitely not original enough.
Supplied By: Advanced Console Entertainment

OVERALL 82

Instructions: English
Price: £20 **Publisher:** Irem





C is for cabbages, captions and crafty PC Engine games.

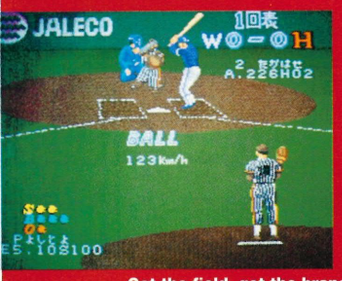


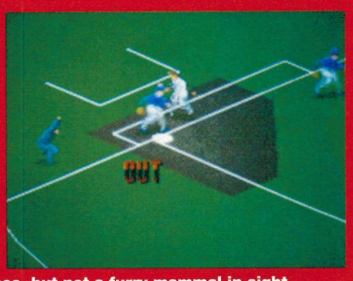
Bottom of the ninth, bases loaded, it's all up to you son. Now go play ball! (*Who do you think you are, Raymond Chandler? Ed.*)

super professional baseball

SUPER FAMICOM

Jeremy: Before I start this review, I thought I would impart to you, the humble reader, the origins of the game that has become known as baseball. Way back in the mists of time there was a large woolly mammal, not unlike a small hairy cow, it was called a Barse. Neolithic man spent the many long hours that made up pre-history by inventing a mind-numbing game in which they took huge round branches and chased the Barse round a large field. The point of this game was to try to hit the Barse's rather over developed nether regions into next week. Not surprisingly the Barse became extinct. And after decades of change Barse's Balls became baseball.





Got the field, got the branches, but not a furry mammal in sight.

And now baseball has made its way onto the Super Famicom and there isn't a woolly mammal anywhere to be seen. But there is a bit of a stonker of a game. Usually sporting games in general, and baseball games in particular, are a bit crap. How many times have you loaded up a baseball sim to find it bears about as much resemblance to the real thing as a Barbie doll does to Sarah Greene. (*Hold on, they're exactly the same! Ed.*)

But that all changes with this new Famicom cart. It's so real you can smell the Hot Dogs boiling, crunch the popcorn under foot and even get asked to take off your rather large hat by someone behind you, who can't see. It's that real. If I was feeling clichéd I'd call it a mean, lean, pitching machine.

So why does it pee on every baseball sim so far known to man? Why is it so good that even Neolithic man would have put down his club and given the lowly Barse a break? Well, it's the playability.

The graphics might be a bit blocky, and, although the animation is of a tear jerkingly high standard, you sometimes have difficulty judging either the speed or height of the ball. But for all that, it's one of the most enjoyable and instantly playable baseball games around. You can select any one of a dozen teams and up to eight pitchers who can be swapped about during play.

There is an amazingly high number of pitches available and an equally high number of batting strokes. So, all in all, there is enough variety here to keep even the most avid baseball fan happy, especially in two player mode where you can challenge a chum to battle it out on the plates. "But surely," I hear you cry, "there must be a fault somewhere!" And I guess there is. Like all sports games, when you play the computer you are up against a real toughie. Even if the computer plays the worst team possible (The Douglas Bader 9) it is still a tall order to beat it. But that is a midgey little complaint when you think how boring it would be if you beat it on your first outing.

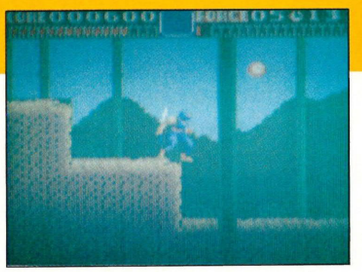
Super Professional Baseball is a pretty amazingly good game. A stronger argument for Nintendo releasing the Famicom in the UK, I could not think of. It's brill-o. Beg, borrow or steal a Famicom to play this game. And just think, if it had been available a couple of thousand years ago, there would still be herds of Barse roaming our hills, gonads intact.

Supplied by Axe Direct

OVERALL 92

Instructions: Booklet: Japanese. Screen: a mix, mainly English
Price: £49.99 **Publisher:** Jaleco

MEGA ZONE



Wot no daffs!

ninja gaiden

GAME GEAR

Paul: I wish I knew what 'gaiden' meant. Not that it's probably very important to the game but you never know. It might mean 'Person who doesn't like hurting people really but has just had a very bad week at the office'. Then again on the basis of this little number 'gaiden' probably means 'I like killing people quite a lot'.

The key word really is 'ninja' rather than 'gaiden'. This is an attractive if fairly standard horizontally-scrolling ninja beat 'em up. Working your way through various levels of violence and mayhem, battling past bad guys and picking up weapons and power-ups along the way until you come face to face with an end-of-level nasty. Most of the fighting is done courtesy of a fairly useful sword however along the way you can pick up trusty shurikens and the like. (The like includes some three-way shot which seems strangely out of place in a ninja game.) This means that it's all fairly standard ninja fair but none too bad for all that. Action is smooth and colourful as are the backdrops. The main sprite animation is okay with the ninja able to execute the usual range of whirls, twirls and wall scaling for which the hooded ones are famous. Reasonable though it is, the Game Gear's *Ninja Gaiden* isn't a patch on the Lynx game of the same name. Good but not special.

Supplied by Advanced Console Entertainment

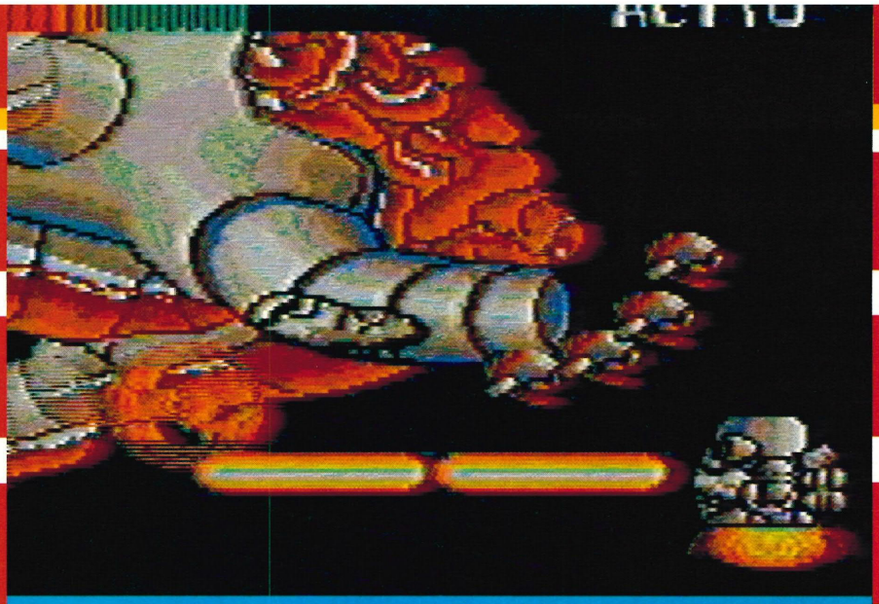
OVERALL 74

Instructions: Japanese
Price: £25 **Publisher:** Sega

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I've seen some unfair fights in my time, but this just about takes the biscuit.

atomic robokid

Kai: "Look" exclaimed Lord Paul one fine Monday morning, "I've got this rather spiffing game for review. It's called *Atomic Robokid*. The concept is simple enough. You're a little *Atomic Robokid* (Surprise! Surprise!) who has to accomplish some fiendish task, the exact details of which I'm a little hazy on, as my Japanese isn't really up to scratch, but which will definitely involve a fair degree of mutilation and probably some element of world-saving as well. Of course add-ons feature fairly heavily in the proceedings, and they come in the shape of guns... lots of guns: sideways guns, uppey guns, downy guns, small guns, big gu... (*Okay, we get the idea. Ed.*)

Of course, with so many weapons to choose from there must be rather a lot of firepower trying to stop you. Well you'd be wrong. Wrong wrong wrong wrong wrong. At least wrong until about level 3. Level 3 is rather hard. Very hard, in fact. So hard that I couldn't do it. At least I could, but I needed to justify having put five 'wrongs' in one sentence. Seriously though, this is the game's worst flaw; it starts off easy, and then plunges you into the thick of it a couple of levels on. The learning curve looks uncannily like a straight vertical line, because that's exactly what it is. All in all I would say that this was a spiffing shoot 'em up with super Zippy McFlash scrolling and big fluffy cuddley sprites, but which suffers a bit from the 'Seen-it-all-before-John' syndrome. Tragic, but true.

"So," he continued. "Who wants to review it?" Little did he know, I had concealed an ultra small tape machine in the sleeve of my jacket, and his every word had been recorded. Ha! Ha! Ha! Pulled a fast one on him, didn't I boys and girls? (*You're Fired! Ed.*) Oh dear!

OVERALL 81

Instructions: English
Price: £25 **Publisher:** UPL

Supplied By Advanced Console Entertainment

What do you mean you haven't got any John Innes No 4? How can I pot on my dahlias?



kabukai soldier

Paul: Just when I was beginning to think that beat 'em ups were getting boring along comes one with enough variety and beauty to give my gameplaying a real kick start. In scenario/formula the game isn't wildly different from a thousand and one others. You trog your way through screen after screen of horizontally scrolling backgrounds beating up everyone and everything that gets in your way.

However these screens are fairly special with a distinctly Japanese look to them. At times you appear to be working your way through a traditional Japanese house complete with beautifully decorated paper walls. It makes a change from the endless succession of New York subways and sewers. The beauty of the surroundings are not carried on into your opponents who are some of the ugliest you'll see outside the House Of Commons.



All together now, "Look behind you!"

What really makes the game is the animation, particularly the range of fighting moves available to you. Not only are there kicks, punches, flyings kicks, forward somersaults that end in a kick – that would've been a riot at School Sports Day – but you can also pick up an opponent and swing him round like a club or even lob him on top of other attackers. Another particularly neat weapon is a sort of Japanese boomerang that takes out the guy in front then comes back for the little sneaker behind you.

If anything your warrior is too powerful, too well armed. I never thought I'd say this but Kabukai is somewhat on the easy side. Even a lemon tea sipper could get through the first few screens. Still, it's a strong beat 'em up with the sort of graphics and animation that give violence a good name.

Supplied By Ice Distribution

OVERALL 82

Instructions: Japanese
Price: £37.90 **Publisher:** Taito

Helicopter hats are obviously all the rage in mythical Japan.

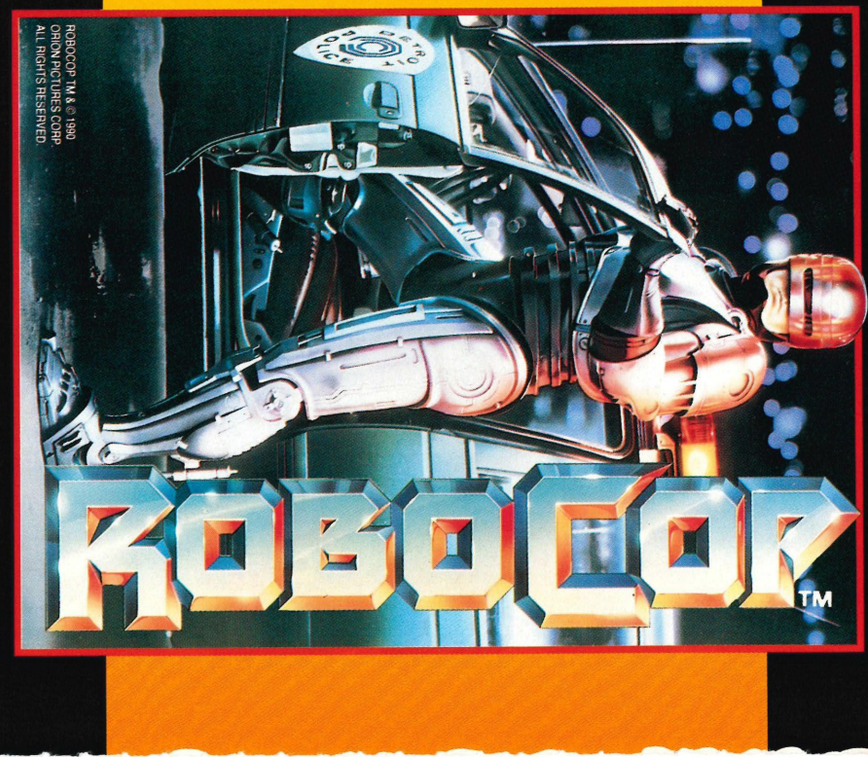


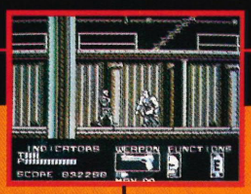
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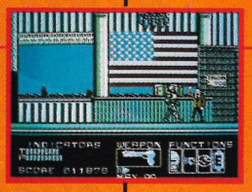
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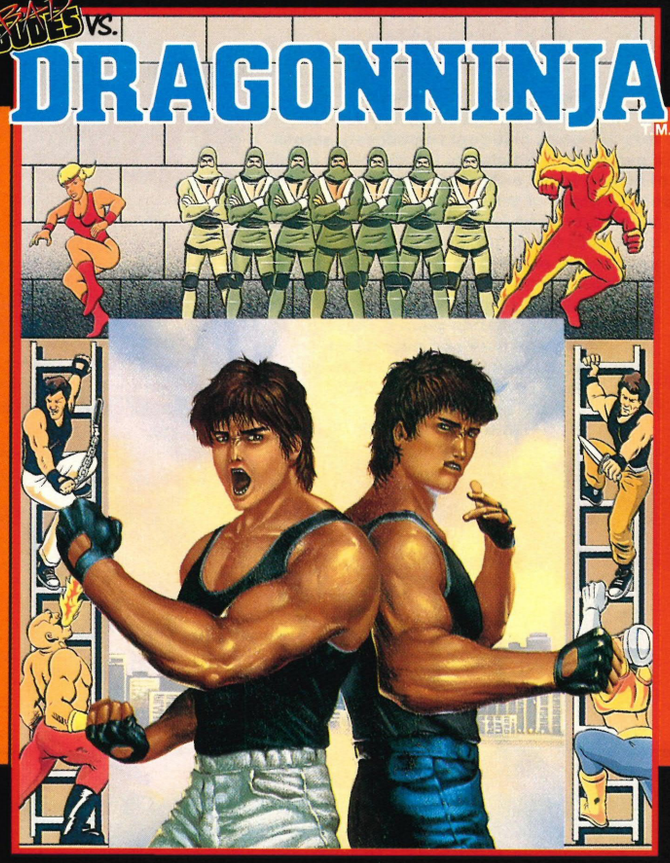
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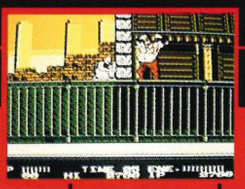


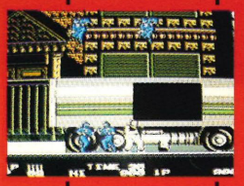


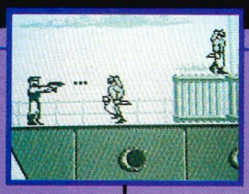


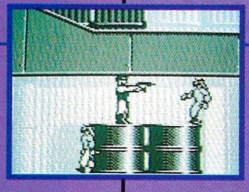






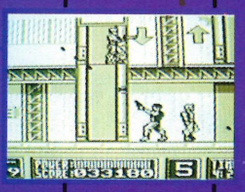






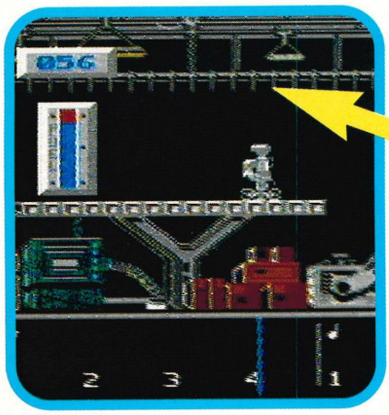






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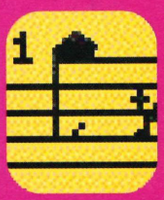
roboman

The setting: a warehouse. The character: Roboman. He's in full forward gear, charging relentlessly across a gangway. Predictably, the gangway is full of gaping holes and gaps. You must play the correct notes of the tune in the correct order to build bridges for Roboman. You can get away with being quite crap, but if you lose your timing or play too many 'blinders' the bridges don't appear and poor Roboman falls, clattering and shattering into a million scintillating pieces. Playing this game over and over again teaches you that all important thing, 'rhythm', hitting the notes on the beat and staying in time.

Let's face it. There is nothing more boring than being forced to play the piano. A stuffy teacher in a flowery skirt, lots of musical theory (yawn) and a ton of exams and grades that frankly you could do without. Given the chance, wouldn't you want to learn piano the easy way, in between bouts of *Super Mario Land* and *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles*, with your NES in one hand and a ninja death keyboard (with drum sounds) in the other?

Well, you've pretty much got the chance now with The Mindscape *Miracle* Piano Teaching System which is packaged with one such ninja keyboard and a slot-in non-stuffy, non-flowery skirted tutor. But is it easy? Does it teach you? Is it fun? The *Game Zone* musos gave it a whirl...

the miracle





the keyboard

The *Miracle* Keyboard is an impressive looking box. It's black, which is good. It's big, which is also good. It's got a lot of flashing green lights and space-age buttons on it, which again is very good. Anything you play on it however, sounds just like shopping mall music. Just visit your local cheap chemist or Tesco superstore and wander down the aisles to get a taster of what Christmas carols sound like on the *Miracle*. It has six main sounds on it. Things like Piano, Harpsichord, Organ and Synthesizer, plus a whole range of instruments (one hundred and twenty eight actually) that form the '*Miracle* Orchestra' – guitar, bass, violins, cellos, saxophones and percussion.

STAGE 1: a bit crap

Stardate: 12.00 pm

Okay. I've got the *Miracle* keyboard squatting impressively on my lap. The house is empty of anyone who might find my early attempts hilarious (i.e. sisters, mothers, fathers, friends, grandparents, neighbours – everybody in fact). What's the first step?

Miracle: There are white keys and there are black keys.

Me: Yeah, yeah.

Miracle: You need at least five fingers to play them.

Me: Really? This seems pretty basic *Miracle*. I suppose you're going to tell me tunes are made up of notes next?

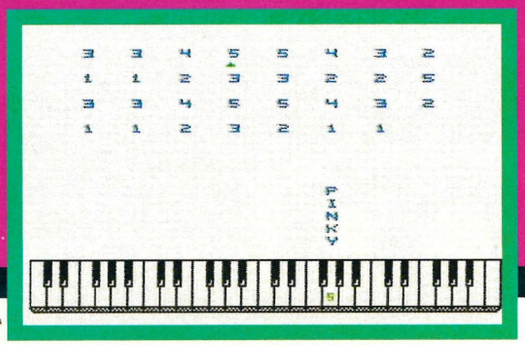
Miracle: Tunes are made up of many notes.

Me: (snarling arrogantly and thumping the keys rather impatiently) Thank you very much, *Miracle*. This is a doddle.

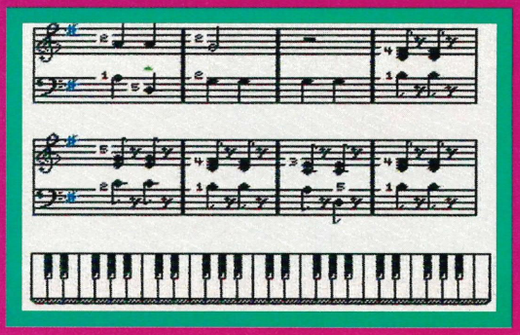
Miracle: Now you're going to play "Ode To Joy" by Beethoven in time to a beat with all five fingers.

Me: Ah.

The *Miracle*'s approach is very simple without being too patronising. The bottom half of the screen has the 49 keys of the er, keyboard, while the top half has a load of numbers showing which finger to use next. The metronome beat clicks you in and the cursor moves from number to number as the words 'middle', 'index' and 'pinky' appear above the notes on the keyboard.



Beethoven? Take a leap. Bach? Eat my shorts. Mozart? Make way. Here comes maestro, composer and DJ *David McCandless* with the new Nintendo add-on and music tutor, *The Miracle*.



STAGE 3: hey! I'm good

Stardate: 7.05 pm

Sixty-five cups of tea later and the keyboard is looking distinctly grubby. I have a beard now and my hands are sweaty. The people in the cupboard are banging to be let out but I'm still not ready. I'm getting much better now, much more knowledgeable. I now know how to 'ostinato' properly and can play those classic chart hits "Chopsticks", "Amazing Grace" and "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" with my eyes closed. Come on *Miracle,* give me your worst...

Miracle: Okay, we'll try a little jazz tune called "Channel 11".

Me: No problemo.

Miracle: (smugly) It's got tied notes in it.

Me: Which are... ?

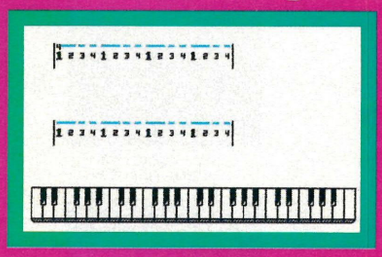
Miracle: To play tied notes, just hold the key down for the length of both notes. Try tapping the right hand part – it's easy.

Me: It certainly is. Let's try it then. This is a doddle.

Miracle: Oh, and I want you to play the bass part at the same time with your left hand.

Me: Did anyone ever tell you you are a git?

The screen is getting more complicated now. The keyboard is still there but the rhythm bar, rests, time signature and note lengths are all appearing on the top half of the screen. Not that I can't handle it, of course, it's just, you know...



STAGE 2: getting better

Stardate: 14.39pm

Several hours and a growth of stubble later, the *Miracle* is still sitting on my lap. My parents and friends have come back but I've locked them in the cupboard until I'm good and ready to let them hear me play. I've been taught black notes (or sharps and flats as they are to me now), the basics of the stave and that some notes can be longer than others.

Miracle: Let's try an ostinato rhythm.

Me: A what?

Miracle: An ostinato rhythm thickie!

Me: What the hell is an oestrogen rhythm?

Miracle: That's 'ostinato' dickhead. It comes from the word 'obstinate' meaning 'stubborn'. It's a rhythm that stubbornly goes on and on and on.

Me: [mumbling] Just like you.

Miracle: I heard that.

Again, we have a keyboard on screen, but the numbers are replaced with a rhythm indicator. The metronome clicks in and you have to thumb the notes in time with the beat. You think it sounds easy – you should try it. I practise it over and over again and then eventually get it right. I am feeling right chuffed with myself when I suddenly realise that this is only section ten and there are sixteen other sections to master, each sub-divided into ten lessons.



STAGE 4: you can call me ludwig

Stardate: 4.03 am

Here I am, ninja keyboardist, playing "Let's Go Crazy" by Prince. Bassline left hand, melody and chords right hand, foot-tapping, people in the cupboard banging out the drum part. So waddya think Mr. Smug *Miracle* Crappy Keyboard Ostinato Doofer Git?

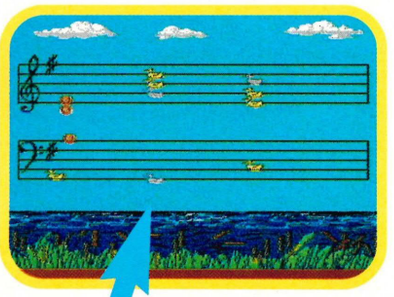
Miracle: Not bad. Not bad.

Me: (Lots of young girls screaming/crying/throwing flowers etc.)Thank you! Thank you! See you at Wembley!

verdict

In a word: "Very impressive." (*That's two words. Ed.*) The *Miracle* system is surprisingly addictive and excellent to use. Starting simply it gets increasingly complicated, without being too confusing, as you get increasingly confident. You won't end up a maestro but it's a good 'entry level' into pianos and music. If you put time into it, you'll end up with a surprisingly large amount of knowledge about music and performance (which is very good for pulling the chicks, let's face it).

Out: Now **Price:** £249.99
Publisher: Mindscape



mallards

The duck shoot sub-game teaches you the musical stave and where the notes are located. A huge flotilla of ripe in-season mallards pile onto the screen, their flightpath crossing a note on the stave. You, sitting armed and dangerous at your *Miracle* Death Box, must shoot the right notes and blat the duck. Score a load of correct hits in succession and you will actually be playing a tune. Miss lots of ducks and it's very embarrassing.

man child

At the start of the tutor you're asked to choose whether you're an adult or a child. No self-respecting child is going to admit he's a child, while no adult is going to select 'adult level' just in case it's too hard. But in fact it's only the language that changes.



example 1

CHILD: Yo, man get's your pinkies on the keyboard and let's get jammin'.

ADULT: Dear sir, please place your digits on the (if I may be permitted this little euphemism) 'the ivories' and let us tally ho and partake in some expressive musical connotations.



example 2

CHILD: Yo man, you're playing too quiet man. Hump up the volume and let's kick some butt.

ADULT: Sir, you're playing approach is a little tentative. Try adding a little more pressure to your finger movements.

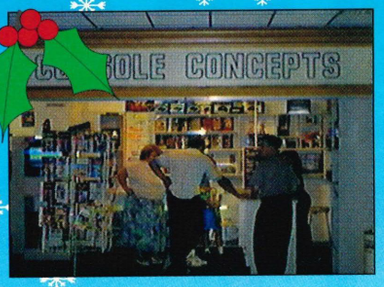
example 3

CHILD: Yo man, that was crap.

ADULT: Er... er... well done sir. You're excellent, sir. You're more than adept to take on the next advanced lesson sir.

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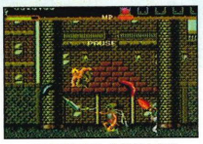
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Access

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WIN!

a mega drive

two game gears

five master systems

25 US Gold goodie bags



great golden goodies*

* well actually they're kinda black and shiny and...

To celebrate Master System classics like *Paperboy, Impossible Mission, Gauntlet, Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade* as well as their hot new releases such as the excellent *Super Kick Off, World Class Leaderboard* and *Outrun Europa* (gasp) those very nice people at US Gold are giving away absolutely mountains of goodies.

For starters, since they're about to hit the Mega Drive market in a big way, US Gold are offering a fab Mega Drive. Plus there's a mass of Master Systems and a group of Game Gears. *(Alright don't get carried away. Ed.)* The sort of thing that anyone would be happy to find in their Crimbo stocking. Imagine if you awoke on a dark, cold Yuletide morning to find a Mega Drive or Master System nestling in amongst the St Michael matching Santa sock and brief set. Happy? Not half!



wow! what a lot of goodies!

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boring rules bit

★ Gold diggers belonging to either Dennis Publishing, or US Gold will be tarnished if they try to enter this compo.

★ Any entries received after January 10 will be melted down and tossed onto the slag heap.

★ Be sure to get the permission of the head dude of the house as these calls cost 36p per min cheap and 48p per min at all other times.

★ The Ed's word is as good as gold and his decision is final.



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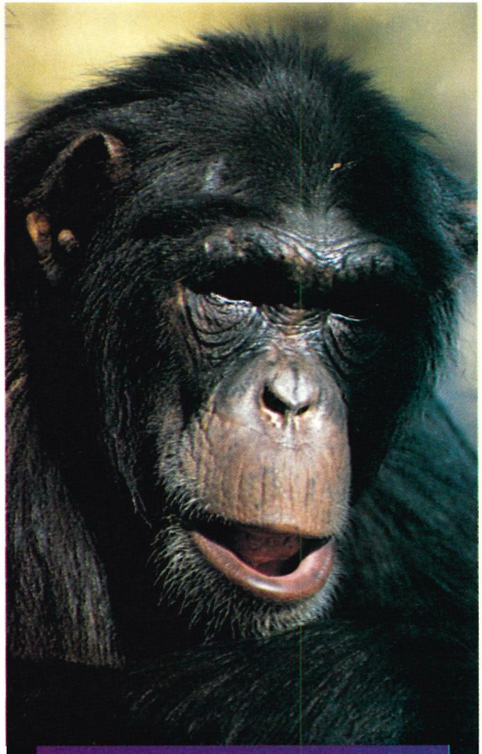
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PG tips

Are your gamesplaying skills a bit on the wobbly side? Do you prefer your tea with lemon instead of milk? Then you're in luck because you've stumbled across PG Tips where the cheats come more smoothly than a spoonful of Häagen Dazs ice cream. So please welcome your host with the most... *Daniel Pemberton*.

win £50* in cash!

*plus a packet of biscuits

Greetings once more tea time tipsters. Welcome to yet another chapter of PG Tips. You should know the drill by now, but if you don't, here goes. All our tips are 'conceived' over a tips tea break – but we're far too lazy to do all the work so we want you, Joe Public, to help us. All we're asking you to do is to send us your tips, maps, cheats, complete solutions, fan mail and back issues of *Rainbow* mag.

But you're not going to do it for nothing. Oh no. Everything printed will receive the most wanted fashion accessory since Gary Glitter's Y-fronts. Yes, you could soon be the proud owner of a highly coveted 'I'm a PG Tips tipster' badge. Wow! Not only that but the best tip of the month will receive a hefty £50 in used fivers. That's a lot of money in anybody's pocket. And you'll get the biscuit of the month, which this month happens to be the Jaffa Cake. So don't delay, send your tips etc to:

PG Tips
Game Zone
14 Rathbone Place
London
W1P 1DE

NB Don't forget to follow Daniel's Dazzling Dozen Rules.

gunsmoke

Paul Magni, being a Wagon Wheel muncher, has sent in a cheat which will give you a machine gun with 100 bullets. Press A, A, A, A and RIGHT twice to activate it.

darius 2

Following on from last month's codes, **Scott Kirkwood** has provided us with a few more cheats for this aquatic blaster. On the title screen press the following:
A, B, C, A, B, C, A, B, C, A, B, C – Play Data
C, A, C, B, C, A, B, A, B, C, A, C – Level Select
C, C, C, C, C, C, C, C, C, C, C, C, – Special Mode

sword of sodan

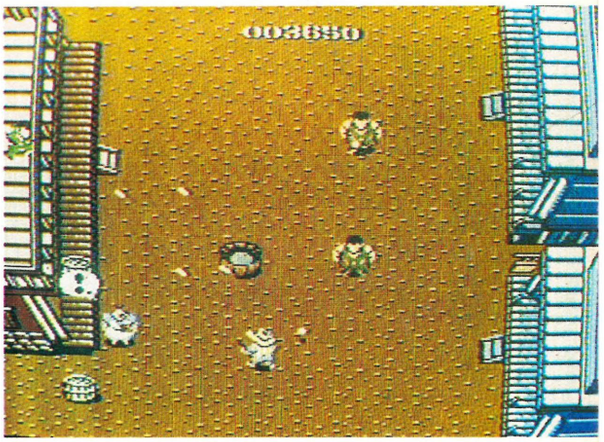
Many more tips and **Scott Kirkwood** is going to be feeling very sick, the first man alive to overdose on Jaffa Cakes. Still that's his problem – we show no mercy in our quest for tips. Enter your name as HINANP on the high score table. Now if you press START on controller two during the game you'll skip levels. Wow!

parodius

Robin Wilson seems to think that if you pause the game after you've picked up a ship and press UP, UP, DOWN, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT, B and A and then unpause it you'll have shields, missiles, lasers, water pistols etc. He'd better be right you know.

super monaco gp

I always thought that *Super Monaco GP* was a good French doctor but **Anand Unadkat** has proved me wrong and told me that if you hold down A and B when you cross the finish line in wet conditions, you'll see yourself lift up your head instead of the cup! Pretty useful heh?



Yup, out west, men were real men, women were real women and small blue blobs were real small blue blobs.

track and field II

Victoria Omen, being a sporty type, has given us the codes for every day on this fab Olympic game:
Day **2** / TRLK**star**4ZNG,
Day **3** / DH1+Q3ZLG, Day **4** / NHLK**star**3ZHG, Day **5** / 11LKQ4PXG, Day **6** / MBH+**star**4P1**heart**, Day **7** / ZB**arrow down**WQ3PLN, Day **8** / R**arrow down**B55PL1

daniel's dazzling dozen rules

1 Say what machine the tips are for.
2 Make sure it hasn't been printed before.
3 Use writing that can be read by a human.
4 Make sure it hasn't been printed before again.
5 Enclose your name and address.
6 Enclose a large sum of money (optional).
7 State your favourite biscuit.
8 Stick all this in an envelope and post it.
9 Oh yeah, don't forget to put a stamp on the envelope.
10 Err... sing a haunting ballad in Cantonese
11 Um... Go down to the shops and buy the new Dannii Minogue album (optional).
12 Er... that's it!

pg tips

casino games

Self-acclaimed budding tipster **Darryl No-Surname** *(Is that the Hampshire No-Surnames? Ed.)* has two different methods to get loads of money. The first is to rob a bank, the second is entering the code MR SEGA 8314853112. Personally I'd plump for the latter and another cup of tea with one sugar.

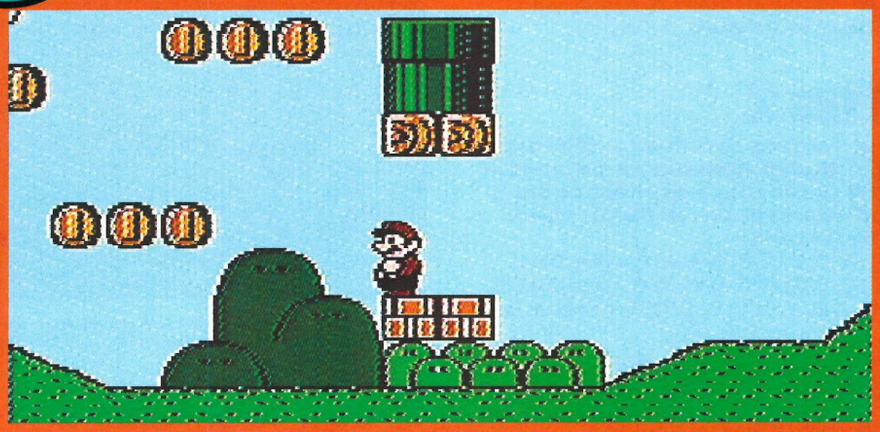
batman

Andrew Paiten once more assures us that there's a simple way to get unlimited lives. Apparently in level 3 at the far right end of the museum's first level is a 1-UP. Get this, then jump onto the platforms that move. Once you get to the third platform, jump back down and you should find mother 1-UP. Repeat this for more lives than I've got custard creams.



***Faery Tail Adventure* or the new workout video from Ms Fonda. The guy on the left has been overdoing it a bit.**

£50 CHEAT super mario bros 3



Little plumbers of the world unite. *Mario*, not so much a game, more a way of taking over the world.

Yes the game that is selling faster than something that sells very fast makes another appearance in the star cheats section. Last month we gave you a warp to level 7. This month the helpful (and now £50 wealthier) Paul Carroll has sent us reams of hints and tips to help you through the game. Here's the pick of a huge bunch (so to speak).

world 1-2: There is a cross pipe on 1-2 from which Goombas descend. When Mario is a Raccoon or Tanooki Mario he can float by rapidly tapping the A button. Use this tactic and superjump (hold A) when you land on the Goombas. The score when you hit them will change from 100, 200, 400, 800, 1000, 2000, 4000, 8000 and then a 1-UP will appear. You can carry on collecting 1-UPs until your time runs out. When your time runs out just go back to the same place in the world level and carry on getting 1-UPs.

Also when you go down the first available/open pipe there are some coins. You can carry on going in and out of the coin room collecting coins. To get into the pipe use the 'P' switch beneath it or turn the coins into bricks. Hop up along the bricks and go down the pipe.

red musical note to heaven: You can repeatedly go up to collect coins you have missed. Fly up when you come to the beginning of the big white cloud (covers background) and you will find an extra life.

world 2: On levels 2-4 there is a brick in the top left hand corner. Try to become a racoon. Fly up breaking the blocks and you will find loadsa coins, loadsa money.

On levels 2-5 there are some bricks on the ground near a beanstalk which a small Mario can get to. Use a Koopa Trooper to break the bricks and then just climb up the beanstalk to coins and a leaf.

world 4-5: When you come to a scene with three cannons and a brick at the top of the screen jump up on a bullet, hit the block, jump up on another bullet and climb the beanstalk that comes up. Tanooki suit!

faery tail adventure

Yorkshire's number one digestive dunker **Andrew Paiten** tells us that you should enter 7R2KUL6RS2 XSK6NHGSDCB720663R12H07 as a password to warp to the end game. Phew!

megaman

Rockman world. Chocolate biscuits aren't only biscuits with chocolate on them. They're also the favourite biccies of **Jon Lister** who provided this code to go to Dr Whily with all the weapons. SPOOK! Coincidence or what? Enter A2 A3 B4 C2 C3 as the code.

ikari warriors

To come back more times than the Rolling Stones press A, B, B, A once you've died. Thanks to **Brian Lawther** for that short, sharp tip.

rad racer

"The minute you start," **Fiona Finnigan** said, "keep on holding down DOWN until you find the soundtrack you like. Also, chucking the cartridge in the waste disposal unit is likely to break it."

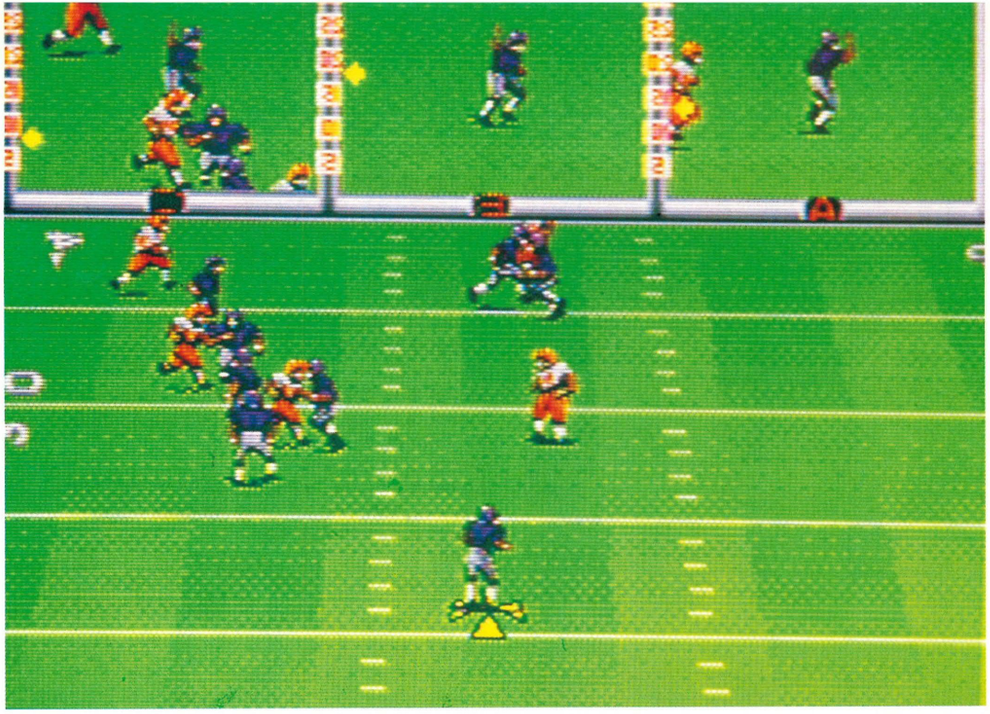
alex kidd in miracle world

Now thanks to **David Jones** you can beat the monsters at the junkin matches. NB What is written is what you should use.

1 Goozeba (Stone man) – Stone, Scissors
2 Chokkinna (Scissor man) – Scissors, Paper
3 Parplin (Paper man) – Stone, Scissors

Once you've beaten them they'll want a rematch so use the following:

1 Goozeba (Stone man) – Paper, Paper
2 Chokkinna (Scissor man) – Stone, Stone
3 Parplin (Paper man) – Stone, Scissors



Hup, hup, hup. 36, 24, 91. Play. Yer well, I don't really know what it means either, but I'm told that it is either a) a new Yorkshire pudding recipe or b) an American football play. Guess which? My money's on the footie play.

nemesis

"Oi, Daniel. Last month's power-up trick wasn't good enough. I want something where I can pick and choose – and if you don't tell me, I'll beat you up." Oh dear. Luckily **Jon Lister's** on hand to save me. He suggests that you pause the game then enter the following codes. NB They only work once.

1 Speed and force field: Press B, B, B, B, B, A, A, A, A, A and unpause.
2 Smart bomb: Press UP, RIGHT, DOWN, LEFT, UP, RIGHT, DOWN and LEFT. Now unpause.
3 Ye olde full power-up (just in case you missed this one): Press UP, UP, DOWN, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT, B and A. Then unpause.
4 Power down: Press A, LEFT, A, LEFT and unpause. Bloody un-useful that one!

curse

After taking a ludicrous amount of sugar **Mark Brown** told us that we should hold down A, B, C and press START on the title screen to get to a top secret options screen.

elemental master

"Holding down A and pressing START on the title screen will stick you to an options screen" said **Mark Brown.** He also said that he likes bourbon biscuits – but don't hold that against him.

herzog zwei

To get to the last battle, custard cream muncher **Wayne Llewellyn** tells us to enter LHJKINAFAMA as one of the codes. Wayne comes from Cardiff but that's probably not his fault.

wrestleball

To get four extra teams hold down B and DOWN on the team select screen. Now wait for four seconds and the extra teams should appear. **Wayne "Cardiff" Llewellyn's** the one to thank for that.

john madden's american football

Knowing his weakness for Jaffa Cakes we managed to bribe **Scott Kirkwood** into giving us some of the codes to this great game.
0465100 – Second Round, **0075121** – Third Round, **0475121** – Final Round

gargoyle's quest

Enter JXAJ RR74 for a surprise! Once again **Wayne Llewellyn's** the one to thank.

roadblasters

Herbal tea drinker, **Asa Plant,** tells us that if you drive along the edge of the road on level 7 holding down B you'll bump into a tree and be given a level select.

populous

Ben Speed's the biscuit muncher who's supplied us with a packet of half-eaten garibaldis. Oh yeah, he's also given us some codes to one of the most converted games ever.
level 1999 ALPDEEND, **level 2999** SADENG, **level 3999** SUZLOPDON, **level 4999** KILLOGOAL

sonic the hedgehog

Have you ever had the urge to turn a hedgehog into a rabbit or seal? Well, this is now possible thanks to **Luke Sullivan.** When you finish the game (If you can't, try UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, START and A on the title screen for a stage select.) hold down A, B and C when the doctor is escaping. When Sonic starts to run through the levels, release and press A to turn into different animals. Experiment with the other buttons. Then give up.



What's roundish, blue and goes like the clappers? Everyone's fave punk mammal. *Sonic 'I remember '73' The Hedgehog.*



pg tips



It's the dude with the oversized head. Why, everyone in Bonk land seems to suffer from this unfortunate affliction is beyond me. Either they are all terribly clever or they need to give their noses a good blow. (*That's just snot funny. Ed.*)

pc kid 2

There's no fly biscuits on **Jimmy May** who tells us that if we hold down II and RUN on the first option of the mode select screen we'll enter a level select screen.

super mario world

This isn't really a cheat but more of a translation! Well, as most of us aren't fluent in Jap language, here's a useful tip. You can exit any level (and go back to the map) by holding down START and SELECT. Also press SELECT and whatever's in the box will float down from the screen!!

sonic the hedgehog

Ben Speed's a bit of a jammy dodger as he's got a cheat printed in these hallowed pages – except it's not really a cheat. Anyway, finish stage 1-1 in 29 seconds or under for 50,000 points!

rad racer

Never fear all you herbal tea sippers, here's a cheat that I actually did myself *(You mean you actually did some work Pemberton? Ed.)* which lets you go straight on to the ending. On the demo screen push A, UP and RIGHT at the same time. Now press B 60 times, then hit START.

boxxle

Andy Lewis has sent in the following passwords. **1** BDBD. **2** DBBD. **3** GBBD. **4** HBBH. **5** JBBJ. **6** KBBK. **7** LBBL. **8** MBBM. **9** NBBN. **10** PBBP. **11** QBBQ

super hang on

If you want to slow the timer down on this fabby biker game **Simon Gray** suggests that you hold down A and press START on the title screen.

goal

Here are the codes for the World Cup Final as provided by **James Heeps.** Take it away!

v **Algeria** CTXAREZCGPLOPEOB
v **Argentina** JTXAREZCGXIKLEVL
v **Belgium** ATXAREZCGRHFOEOB
v **Brazil** ITXAREXCGPIGKCMB
v **Denmark** ITXAREZCGVIGKWIL
v **England** JTXAREZCGAISKWHJ
v **France** ETXAREZCGAISKWHJ
v **Holland** QTXAREZCGWLUDUGJ
v **Italy** DTXAREZCGAHKLUIL
v **Japan** PTXAREZCGXMKLMIJ
v **Poland** ATXAREZCGUMJPCTD
v **Spain** DTXAREZCGULGKESB
v **Uruguay** ITXAREZCGULGKESD
v **USA** HTXAREZCGWHKLWEJ
v **USSR** ZTXAREZCGOHGDERB
v **West Germany** LTXAREZCGTMGOCRD

electrocop

Not content with p-p-picking up a penguin, **Marcus Powling** has p-p-picked up all the door codes for this fabby arcade adventure. E# stands for exit to #(level no.) and W stands for weapon.

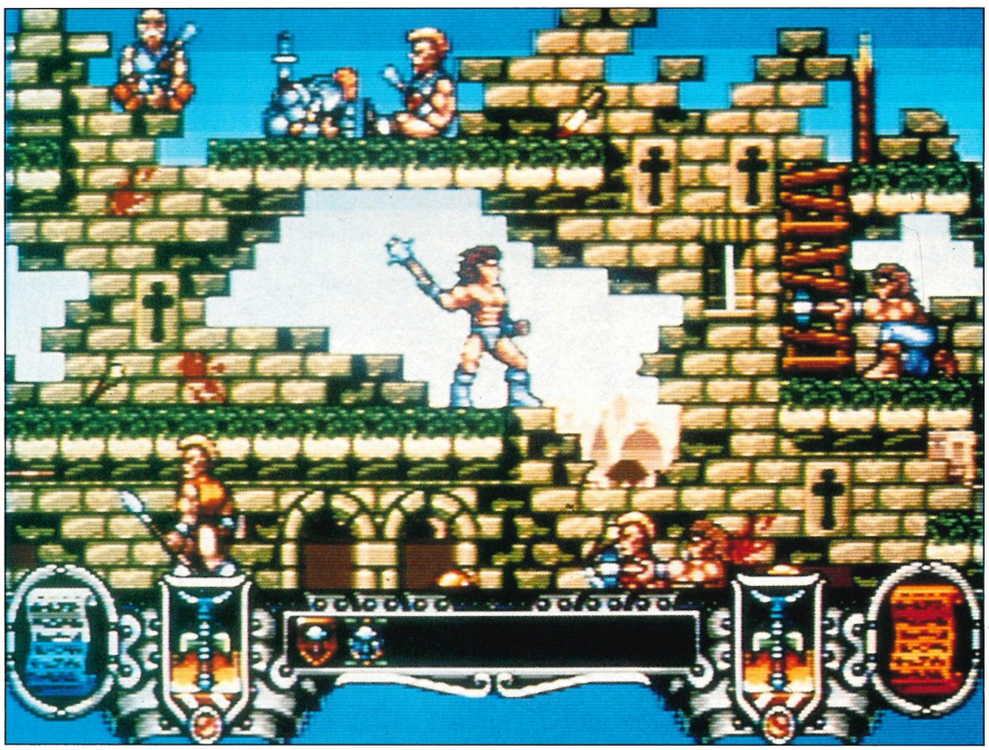
Level 1 #1 2473 EL2, #2 9874 EL2, #3 8743 W
Level 2 #1 3287, #2 5409
Level 3 #1 9284 EL4, #2 7210 EL4, #3 3936 W, #4 7395 W, #5 8294
Level 4 #1 0394 W
Level 5 #1 8658, #2 5462, #3 9973, #4 7642, #5 0912, #6 0974, #7 7865, #8 4285
Level 6 #2 8765 EL 12
Level 7 #1 6021 EL4, #2 5824 EL9
Level 8 #1 0170 W, #2 1092, #3 7102 W, #4 4726, #5 1375 EL11, #6 2857 W, #7 6998 W, #8 1798 W, #9 4391 EL1
Level 10 No doors.
Level 11 #1 0293 EL
Level 12 #1 2987 W, #2 6443 W

gradius III

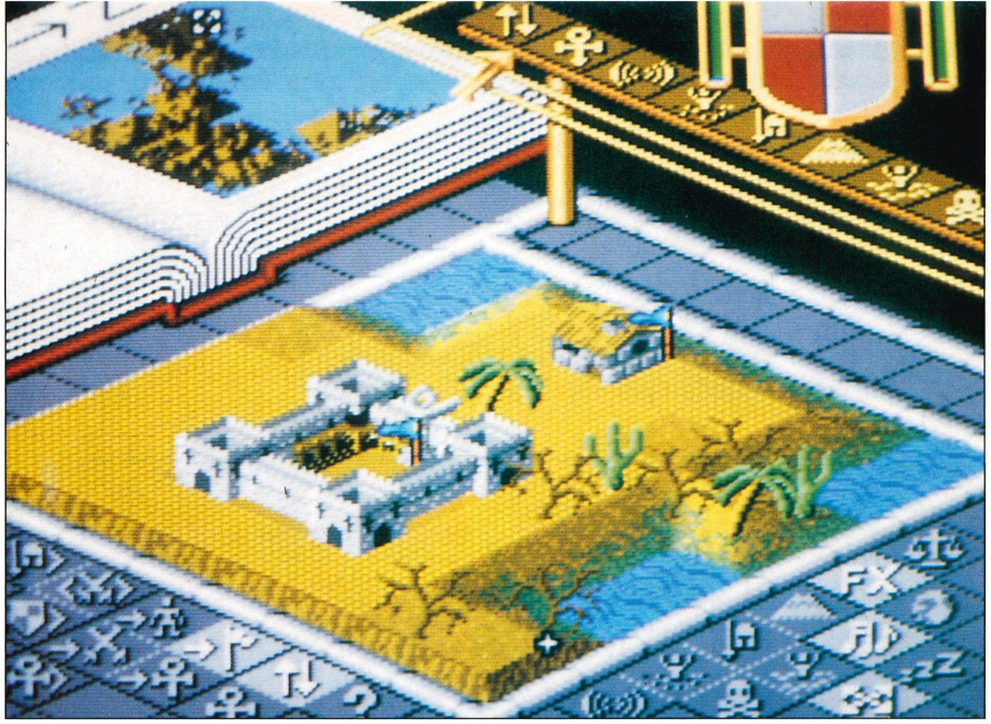
Are you as cool as Mr Kipling? If you are, then this self-destruct completely useless cheat might make the game harder. Press UP, UP, DOWN, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT, B, A while the game is paused. Your ship will now explode rather dramatically. Alternatively, you could do the above but for the LEFTs and RIGHTs use the buttons at the top of the controller. Your ship will now be meaner than... er... a rather meaty pie.

onslaught

Ben Flanagan told us that if you choose effect three from the options menu and rapidly press A, B, and C you'll get infinite lives. He also told us that he prefers milk chocolate Hob Nobs to plain ones – even though that has no relevance at all to this cheat.



Ever tried to get rid of that unwanted party guest? Well this is yer man, the perfect bouncer. And all in his Y-Fronts.



Attractive des res with extensive room for redevelopment and interior decor. Large garden for the children to play in and the closeness to the beach make this the perfect home for the active go-ahead couple of the nineties. Offers.



pg tips

sonic the hedgehog

Well, here's a spooky little cheat we found earlier for this fabby game – but as we forgot to write it down, **Damien Hagger** has come up with the goods. To access the debug mode on the title screen press C then UP, then C, then DOWN, C, LEFT, C, RIGHT. You'll now hear a dog. Press START and than quickly press START and A until you see the score split in half. Now pressing B will turn Sonic into one of the game's sprites. A will change it and C will make it stay on screen. Hurrah!

my hero

Nick Smith is everyone's hero as he tells us that if you jump over the knife throwers and punch them in the back you'll get yourself an extra life.

bill and ted's excellent adventure

A most triumphant film, but the most bogus of computer games. Luckily we have a most excellent amount of passwords as supplied by **Toby Finlay.** Hit me with your noble replies, Toby! Stage **2** 555 4234, Stage **3** 555 6767, Stage **4** 555 8942, Stage **5** 555 4118, Stage **6** 555 8471, Stage **7** 555 2989, Stage **8** 555 6737, Stage **9** 555 6429, Stage **10** 555 1881

devil crash

If you enter the code TECHNOSOFT you'll start with ten balls. (Phwoarr!!) If you only want to start with seven balls enter DEVILCRASH instead. The mysterious **New Besotted Reader** sent in that tip.

populous

Is your name David Icke? Are you a bit of a second rate god? Well thanks to **Owen Greenwood** you can now move up a notch. While playing, hold down A and B. Now release them and hold down LEFT and RIGHT and press A, B, X, then SELECT. Now go to the swamp icon and press B. If it doesn't change colour the cheat has worked – you should now have full power. By the way if you could follow that you're a bit of a god too.

ninja spirit

On the title screen, hold down SELECT and START. You'll now be able to enter the sound test. Thanks to **Paul 'Chin-chin' Bush** for that 'Hob Nob' of a tip (ie. nice but not very practical).

metal gear

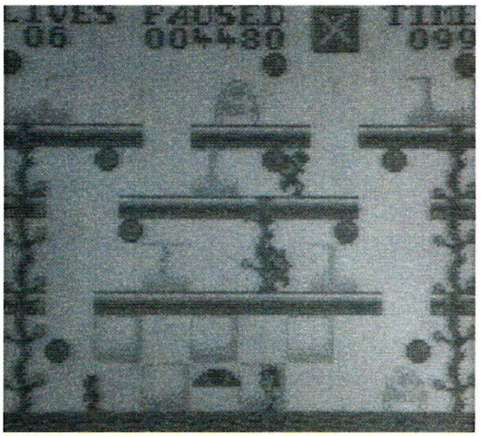
To get to the end of the game (you herbal tea drinker, you!) enter the following password.
T1111 11611 11111 11111 11116

space invaders '91

On the title screen, press and hold buttons A and C. Now press START. The title screen will now fade into darkness. As it is black, press B, A, C. You'll now be presented with a level select. Hurrah! **Jimmy May's** the one who knows his nuts (ginger nuts, that is) from his noodles.

super r-type

Here's a quick cheat for a level select on this shoot 'em up. On the title screen hold down the RIGHT button (the buttons on the side of the controller) and press UP nine times. You should now hear a noise. Now start the game and pause it. Hold down the RIGHT button and A, then press SELECT. A number (your level) will appear in the bottom left corner which can be changed by pressing UP and DOWN.



Not so much *Bill And Ted's Excellent Adventure*, more *Bill And Ted's Really Rather Crap Adventure*.



That deaf, dumb and blind kid sure plays a mean pinball. Yer well maybe, but even Tommy might need a little help.

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console counsel

Hello and welcome once more to the only real caring section of the magazine, Console Counsel. This is the place where you can share your troubles, misfortunes and problems with me... and er... the other thousands of people who read *Game Zone*. But remember, he who dares wins, so be brave. Write to: Console Counsel, *Game Zone*, 14 Rathbone Place, London, W1P 1DE and you'll feel a lot better. I may give you a hard time but remember, a problem shared, is a problem known by virtually the rest of Britain.

Dear Console Counsel,
Er, I'll try to explain this calmly. Well, I'm stuck on the third masked ninja in level 7 of *Shinobi* on the PC Engine. (*Well why don't you use your magic? Ed.*) Oh yeah and don't tell me to use my funny 'spell thing' because I've already used it on ninja no.2. If you can't reply to this letter I'll tell all my friends that this mag is a pile of buffalo dung!
Howard Watt, Darras Hall, Ponteland.
Now firstly, Howard, threats will get you nowhere, especially when they're lies! Anyway, I can see you're clearly distressed, so help is on hand. You might be in need of a level select and I suggest holding down SELECT until the words 'mission one' appear – but you probably know that. In your letter you haven't made it clear what ninja you're talking about (ie. end-of-level or usual in-game ones) but I reckon your best bet is to keep firing at him and when he does a somersault move into the opposite direction and start shooting again – but don't get too close. By the way, I thought your envelope was rather fab!

Dear Console Counsel,
Please help me before I go mad. I've got this problem you see. I'm crap at every game I've played. You name it, I can't get past level 1 – even on *Outrun!* Please, please help me. All my friends say I'm sad. What can I do?
Thomas Teodordzuck, Notting Hill, London.
Well, Thomas, I've only got one thing to say; you are sad! Your friends are all right, so here's what I suggest. Sell your games and consoles and buy yourself a nice big stamp album. And to start you off, I've sent you one with a picture of the Queen on it. Also a bit of train-spotting now and again wouldn't go amiss.

storm lord

Not content with having the cheat for extra lives printed last issue **Thomas 'Piles' Holden** tells us that you can skip a level by pausing the game and pressing C, B, B, B, A, A, A, A, C, C, A, A, A, A and then unpausing. But he was rudely interrupted by two shady characters by the names of **Miles** and **Peter Seddon** who told us that if you pause the game and press B, A, A, A, C, UP three times, A, A, A and unpause it you'll get some extra time.

warrior of rome

Here's complete shandy for all you china tea drinkers. If you're too crap to get anywhere type in GREBDQ3QNE as a code and you'll see the ending sequence. **Jimmy May** is the one wearing the laurel wreath. Problem is he's dipped it into his tea.

devil crash

Here's a password which gives you 65 balls and 999,999,6000 points. You now only need 300 points to complete the game! **KGCMMCMLBN**

captain skyhawk

One lump or two? **Jonathon Page** says that he prefers two. He also has a quite handy cheat for all you pathetic peppermint tea drinkers out there who can't get anywhere in this game. Press A, B and UP on controller two and you'll skip the level. And while we're on the subject of herbal tea, **Ben Flanagan** tells us that if you press UP, RIGHT, DOWN, LEFT and UP and repeat this sequence another three times on the screen where the letters all fall and bounce about, you'll become invisible.



Blimey! Trick or treat wasn't like this when I was a kid.

alien storm

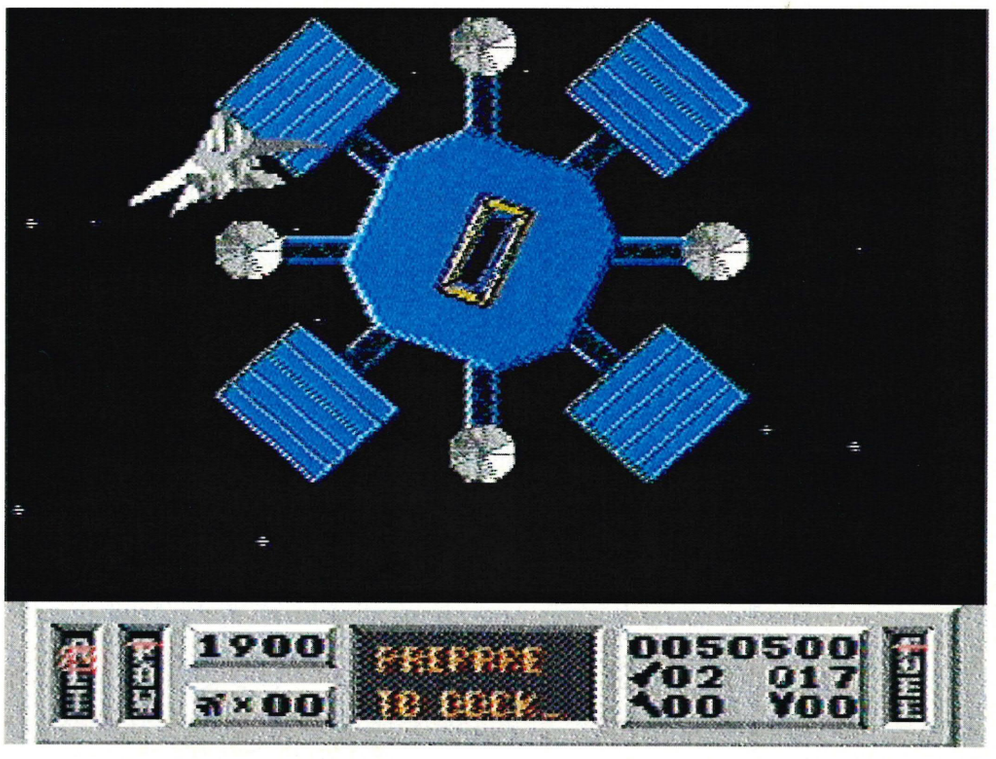
Next up to delve into the depths of the biscuit barrel was **Andrew Lewis.** After he'd upset us all by half-inching the last choccy digestive, he told us that if you're Scooter The Robot, blow yourself up on your last life and you'll become invincible. He'd better be right or... er... else.

chessmaster

Ben Benstead must sip his tea from porcelain cups as he's sent a cheat which gives the white player loads of queens and the black player one, lonely, small king. Anyway to achieve this, enter 00100000vbmppppWzVy on the code screen.

fire mustang

Not only can **Nick Turner** eat a packet of cream crackers without taking a drink but he knows how to get a rather tasty power-up and extra life. For the power-up hold down RIGHT and A on the title screen, then press START. Do the same for the extra life but substitute RIGHT and A for LEFT and C.

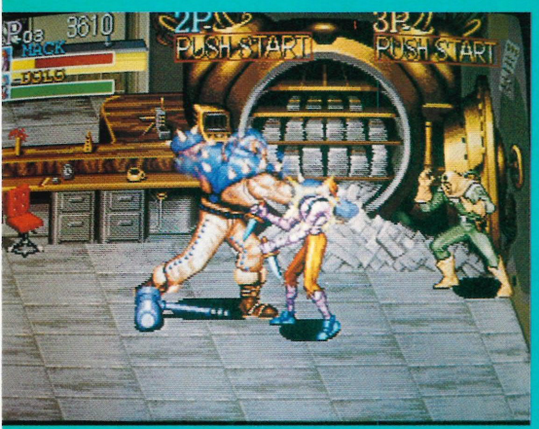


Not so much a flight sim, more a kinda not very good NES game sim. Things that make you go: "Why did I buy this?!"

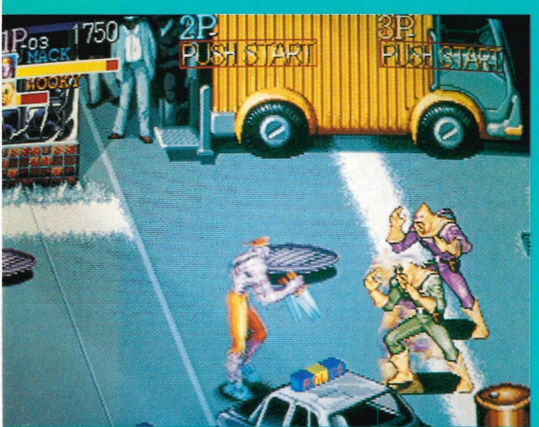
kill ZONE

There are three vital criteria for enjoying the next couple of pages: a) you love a bit of violence. b) you have a gi-normous stash of spare £1 coins and c) your favourite music has a "dobedobedobedo-bee" sample in it. Only once you comply with all three are you ready to join *David Wilson* in the *Kill Zone*.

captain commando



Captain Commando. What a butch chap. Shame his middle name is Shirley.



The amazing Fenaldo, knife-thrower extrordinaire, is seen here practising his act.

With the untimely demise of Captain Bob, you can console yourself with a bash at *Captain Commando*. And what a strapping SAS figure of a man, our Cap'n is to be sure. He heads a band of rather salubrious merry men who stalk the streets cruising for a bruising against the likes of thugs and vicious leather-clad women. Believe you me, these are not the kind of folk you'd like to meet on a dark night in Birmingham. Nor for that matter would you like to meet the Captain's men either when they go through life with the charming names of Ginzu The Ninja, Mack The Knife and Baby Head...

You start by choosing your character. Ginzu The Ninja's strengths, are, surprisingly enough, of the Japanese fighting kind. He's nimble and can really kick where it hurts (ouch). Mack has more knives at his disposal than your local Dewhursts. Fine for making mincemeat of the oncoming louts except if they're into using bullets and firebombs as ammo. Baby Head has rather more stamina for this sort of action. His robotic arms are lethal – ideal for end-of-level baddie bashing.

Co-ordination is a must for this game; one false move and it's curtains (which has done wonders for my flat's decor). Be sure to look out for the pairs of electro-magnet wielding babes who approach from either side. If you stand between them, you'll suffer a fatal electric shock.

You do get your quid's worth with Captain Commando with a good eight levels to complete. However, I'm not too sure how long you'll want to play it as the game offers nothing new in those vital 'one more go' stakes.

● **Publisher:** Capcom

SCORE

tumble pop

Yep, you guessed right first time, any game with the word 'pop' in the title is bound to be a cutsie wootsie platform game. And this one's no different. You possess a rather handy pop gun with which you lay the baddies to rest. They're so sweet that you're compelled to use a euphemism for your actions. After popping them (sob) they tumble around and somewhat unvindictively turn into gold coins, bags of gold and other goodies, including power-ups. Jewels such as diamonds and rubies give you extra lives and points, roller skates mean extra speed, plasma guns aid your mission.

This is an internationally-flavoured platform number with you choosing the country you wish to play in before you start. Unfortunately, this option adds nothing new to the game apart from altering the decorative background: choose Egypt and you'll have a plethora of pyramids to accompany your waggling. Ho hum. Then it's off to do battle with the little skeletons, snowmen and ghosts. Get them before they touch you. Jump up, press fire and stun them into a false sense of security. Whilst they're shaking their heads in bewilderment, hop up to their level and hoover them up into your gun. It's certainly dog eat dog in this game.

Tumble Pop's a simple, rather unexciting game that'll leave you weeping for your sins.

● **Publisher:** Data East

SCORE

Red alert! Illegal aliens breaking out of quarantine at Ellis Island. Actually make that orange and neon green alert.





I'll have a 'p' please, Bob, fnarr, fnarr.

block

Without doubt *Block* is the Kill Zone game of the month. It's a bat and ball number and you'd be forgiven for finding it reminiscent of *Arkanoid* and *Super Breakout*. The good news is – it's even better.

For novices amongst you here's a quick 'how to do it' resumé. There's a paddle at the bottom of the screen which you have to slide from left to right. You start by bouncing the ball off the paddle so that it'll hurtle up-screen and ricochet off the multi-coloured tiles. When these tiles are hit they disappear and that's the goal of the game – to rid the screen of as many tiles as possible.

However, it's not as simple as it sounds and the fun really starts when the ball bounces back down the screen. Sadly your co-ordination is put to the test as you frantically struggle to catch the ball in the paddle. Fail, and both your ball and paddle disappear with the subsequent loss of a life. To make matters even more tricky, the tile formation changes with each new level and some are harder to crack than others. You'll find yourself confronted by immovable blocks which have to be hit several times and others which no amount of perseverance will destroy.

Ah, and then there are the pick-ups. Trap a magnet and it handily stops the ball rebounding back off the paddle. Opt for a fruit and it'll double the length of the paddle. In addition you can try your luck with larger balls (ahem) and extra time. The dilemma comes when you have to make that vital choice between going to catch the ball or the pick-up first. Juggling hopelessly between the two is likely to make you hysterical.

Block is easy to get into and superb fun. You can play it by yourself or against a chum. It's very colourful and so hugely addictive that you might as well forget about buying Christmas presents.

● **Publisher:** Capcom

SCORE

spiderman

Hurrah, our webbed hero is here – and, in between swotting flies, he's got himself another dastardly mission to sort out with the help of his loyal assistants, Sub-Mariner, Black Cat and Hawk-Eye. Yours is the task of halting the evil Dr Doom before he wreaks untold havoc on the world. The reassuring thing is, you can choose a new character when you die which means that if you use much skill and judgement, you can pick the right fighting bod for each new scenario. Black Cat has a deadly funny claw thing on the end of a rope whilst Spiderman of course has his trusty 'take all prisoners' net. No surprises there.

Essentially Spiderman is a multi-player beat 'em up. You begin by fighting off the interminable baddies pouncing from both sides of the screen. The sprites themselves are big and meaty but sometimes this means that the flip-screen scrolling creates a blind-spot and you're not too sure who or what's attacking from the far right. So if you're taken by surprise, you'll pop your clogs like billy-o. And that's before you've even got to the end-of-level mutha who changes to three times your size thanks to a magical spell from dear old Doctor Doom. Unless you're as skill as I was (*I beg your pardon? Ed.*) you'll have a nightmare fight to deal with. Survive and you're shrunk to dwarfish sprite size which'll allow you to clamber up and down, left and right between the various levels.

Fans of the Marvel comic will love this game. All the old POWS!, THWACKS! and KERPLUNKS! are there to get you into the spirit. The glossy intro sequence contains fab graphics and large, neatly animated sprites. In addition, the change in characters, graphic style and the inclusion of a platformy bit after the end-of-level baddie encounter, makes this a cut above the rest in the beat 'em up stakes.

● **Publisher:** Sega

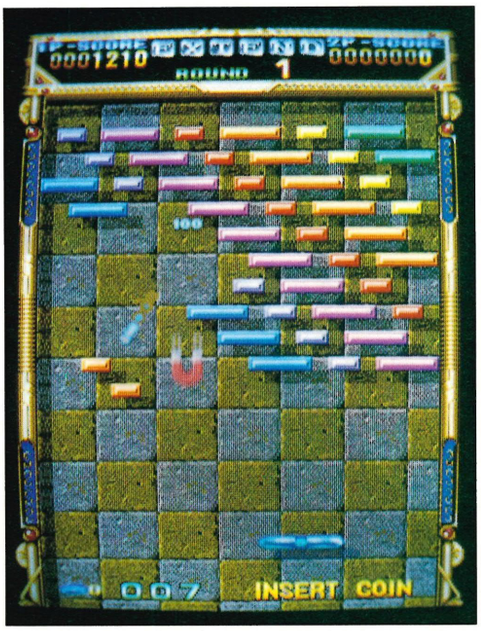
SCORE



Here we see the end-of-level baddie, who we can exclusively reveal is Roy Hattersley in his disco-dancing gear. Groovy!



Saturday night at Sellafield where it's fashionable to have some form of genetic mutation. The guy in green is *hip*.



There is a fine art to caption writing, something which takes years of dedication and practice. For example:"This screen is covered in blocky blue things." Art or wot?

ghox

***Ghox* is basically a variation on *Block* with slightly bizarre differences. Like er... a whole flock of sheep manically jumping about the screen. What this had to do with the bat and ball theme was quite beyond me. However, being quite fond of sheep, I was all too ready to forgive the programmers had the screen not been so packed with pick-ups that it was nigh on impossible to find the ball. It's all horrifically like Saturday morning in Sainsburys (minus the screaming kids) with cakes, lollipops, burgers and balloons hurtling at you from every which way. There's also an irritating scoreboard which keeps counting down the seconds while you fumble for your magnifying glass in a last attempt to find the ball. Unfortunately, the more time passes, the speedier your ball becomes and it all got too confusing for words.**

***Ghox* tries to pack too much in and it doesn't really come off. Bound to be popular with shepherds though.**

● **Publisher:** Toaplan

SCORE

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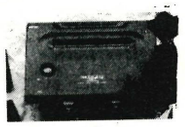
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(a corking christmas competition in five acts!)

Win four Nintendo carts from MB Games worth over £100! Plus a selection of brilliant board games for the runners-up

act 1: A Christmas Past

Christmas Day, 1990. A small family dwelling somewhere in England. The turkey's been gobbled, the mince pies massacred and the afternoon blockbuster watched. The family sits cowering in fearful anticipation.
Auntie Joan: Isn't it about time for a nice game of *Snap* then?
Family members: Yaargh!

act 2: A Christmas Present

A few weeks before Christmas, 1991. The *Game Zone* offices.
Phone: Ring, ring.
***Game Zone* (picking up receiver):** Hello?
Phone: Oh hello, this is MB Games here. You know, those awfully nice people who brought out *Marble Madness*, *California Games*, *Time Lord*, and *Digger T Rock* for the Nintendo.
***Game Zone*:** Oh yes, hello.
Phone: Well, it's nearly Christmas and we're feeling particularly full of seasonal good cheer and merriment at the moment, so we thought we'd like to give one lucky reader of *Game Zone* a rather nifty Christmas present – a complete set of all four of our Nintendo titles.
***Game Zone*:** Wicked!
Phone: We've also got brilliant board games like *Taboo*, *Scattergories*, *Splat!*, *Ready, Set, Spaghetti* and *Rattle Me Bones* to give away too. In fact we'd like to give a pack of all five of those games to one lucky person and ten copies of *Taboo* to ten others. Are we generous or what?!
***Game Zone*:** Smart! We'll run a Chrissie compo.

act 3: A Christmas Conundrum

Hours after the 1991 Christmas issue of *Game Zone* hits the streets. That same small family dwelling visited in Act 1. Two members of the family are poring avidly over the magazine.
Family member 1: Hey look! We can win four NES games or some board games in this great *Game Zone/MB Games* competition!
Family member 2: If we win one of those prizes we'll never have to play *Snap* with Auntie Joan on Christmas Day again! How do we enter?
Family member 1: It's easy. We've got to work out which one of the four celebs shown in the boxes above is *not* a well-known game show host. Then phone 0898 299 268, (remembering to get permission first, 'cos calls cost 36p per minute cheap rate and 48p per minute), give the letter that corresponds to our answer, our name and address, then hang up.
Family member 2: Brilliant!

act 4: A Christmas Future

Christmas Day 1992. That selfsame small family. The turkey's been tucked into, the mince pies murdered and the afternoon blockbuster seen. This time though the family is sitting comfortably.
Auntie Joan: Let's play *Snap* then!
Family members 1 and 2 (with glee in their voice): No, let's check out these brilliant MB Games that we won in the *Game Zone* competition last year. Yo!.

act 5: A Christmas Moral

And you will be too if you heed the *Game Zone* ghost who appears in the pub quite regularly.
Ghost: Wooh! All those who work for MB Games or *Game Zone* may not enter this corking Christmas compo, unless they wish to be doomed to playing gin rummy with Auntie Joan every Thursday afternoon at 2.00pm.
***Game Zone*:** Gasp!
Ghost: Don't phone in your competition answers after 15 January, or an army of Amstrad GX4000s will plague your sleeping hours.
***Game Zone*:** Double gasp!
Ghost: The Ed's decision is final, so don't argue. (He gets rather annoyed if you do.)
THE END

0898 299 268

ZONE 7

Just what is it that makes Crimbo so special? Is it the sense of goodwill to all men, women and farmyard animals? (Except turkeys and pigs... oh and geese. Alright so there's not a fat lot of goodwill to farmyard animals.) Is it the fact that everyone gets shopping fever and is driven by a primeval desire to buy something, anything, at 5.25pm on the evening of 24 December?

Or is it that everyone, but everyone, gets a really crap Crimbo present. The present that is so horrible that no matter what you take, you can't smile when you meet the Great Auntie that blessed you with yet another Brut Christmas box set, or a packet of festive M&S Y-fronts.

But, of course, the real stonker of a crap pressie, is the record. We are not talking the record you want. Or even the record you may listen to once or twice out of interest and then mould into an attractive flower pot. We are talking the grand mother of all tasteless records. We are talking the kinda record that will be in the Woolies bargain bin till the turn of the century. We are talking the mutant ninja record from hell, that gives young children nightmares and makes all ladies faint from shock and disgust.

Yup kids, it's Cliff Richard time.

pretty far

they're taking jesus out of christmas

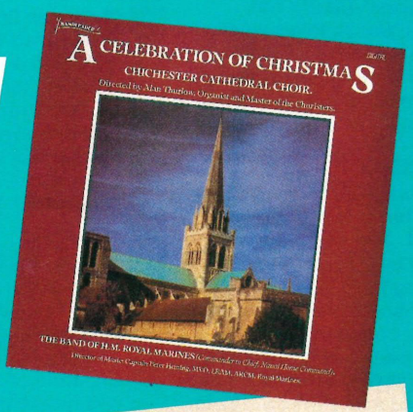
Feelings At Christmas
Bob Gline And Clare Mance

Who the f**k are Bob Gline and Clare Mance? And what has happened to make them so twisted and sad as to release this crime against music? Of course *They're Taking Jesus Out Of Christmas*. He doesn't make any money. They've replaced him with Mario. I could understand Gline and Mance getting worried if, whoever 'they' are, were taking turkey or pressies out of Christmas. But not the dude with the sandals, I doubt he would be missed. Get down to classic dance tracks *O Fir Tree Dark* and *Hosanna Everyone*. Yo kickin' I don't think. Gline thinks he's a Frank Sinatra with a social conscience. Clare Mance seems to think she can sing. Sad characters. More to be pitied than hated.

make we merry on this fest

A Celebration Of Christmas
Chichester Cathedral Choir

Oh dear me. I've always had a deep distrust of choir singers. Don't know why, but it's probably something to do with the fact they go about wearing a dress. This vinyl has the lads from Chicester belting out the all time winners, *The Virgin Mary And A Yuletide Souffle*. God knows what a souffle is but presumably you have one at Christmas, maybe with cream and brandy butter. You know what this one sounds like before you hear it. Very choral, very holy and really very boring but undeniably Christmassy. Ideal present for Gran.





marshmallow world

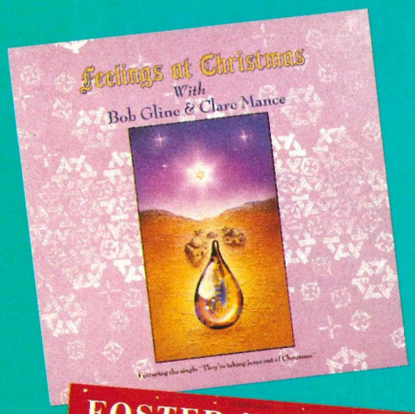
The Phil Spector Christmas Album
Various

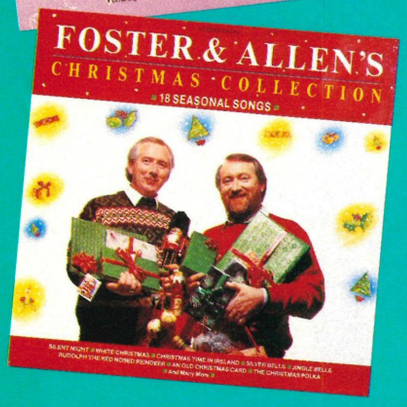
The Christmas album of all time. This is the one that will make your mum and dad's eyes go moist with memories. Way back in the sixties this dude called Phil Spector got together a collective and put down a Motown reworking of some trad Crimbo tunes. Kind of like Soul II Soul but without the back beat. If you are looking to buy a pressie for the wrinklies then you could do a lot worse than check this one out. You'll find that you love it too. The classic album to sing along to around the tree while you eat mince pies and knock back mulled wine. Great stuff.

little saint nick

It's Christmas
Various

There is always a really big prob with compilation albums like this. You play the tracks you like and never play the tracks you don't. So you end up wearing out some tracks and never playing others. What a to do, hey? Fortunately this album solves the problem 'cos after one play you realise that you like not a single one of the tracks, so none of them will ever get worn out. You'll know every song on the album and every artiste from Shakin' Steven to Cliff Richard. However I've a horrible feeling that in the end everyone will end up buying this record. If not this year, then next and if not next, then the one after. It's got a tragic inevitability about it.





the greatest gift of all

Foster And Allen's Christmas Collection

Foster And Allen

What can you say about Foster and Allen, without being obscenely biological? These two wear cardigans and are not afraid to use them. With such yuletide classics as *Let It Stay White* and *Pretty Paper*, you find yourself asking why? Why are these two allowed? Why isn't there a law against Irish folk singers or all folk singers for that matter. Maybe we are being unfairly harsh. Perhaps they're particularly good live? I bet they do a lovely Christmas TV Special.

It says on the sleeve notes that that they had wanted to record 'a Christmas Album for all our fans'. Well guys, I'm sure they'll be happy. Avoid.

out?





mr songwriter

I Will Cure You

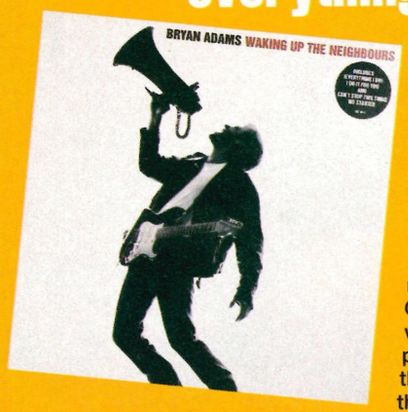
Vic Reeves

There is always a real problem with comedy records. They're like jokes. Once you've heard them they cease to be particularly funny. I mean how many times can you hear the punch line "Only with mayonnaise, Vicar" and still find the joke funny? Not many I'll be bound. So what has light entertainer and all round sex god Vic Reeves done to overcome this? Well not a lot really. A couple of the tunes are pretty nifty without being jokes, like the excellent ex Number One *Dizzy* with the groove-bound Wonderstuff. But apart from that the majority of the cuts are a bit naff after listening to them for the second or third time. Good laff once, a good giggle twice, a smile thrice and on the fourth listening it, frankly, gets on your nerves. Very.poor? Certainly not very good.

play that funky musak

Okay, so we have dealt with the tat. But what about the serious stuff? The stuff that could just make it to Number One in the weeks leading up to the big pig-out and paper rip, Crimbo day itself. Bet yer it's one of these two.

everything i do



waking up the neighbours

bryan adams

It's that man and that song. The song that haunted all our summers. It all seems just like a bad dream now doesn't it, those many weeks at the Number One slot. And of course it was, the worst dream possible. Loved by thousands, the blandness of the man is only matched by the blandness of his music. All very sad. *Waking Up* is, of all things, a double album with twice as many songs to thrill you. Most of the tracks are a lot... er... rockier than the single so all the Simon Bates listeners who bought it might be a bit disappointed. All those who thought the single was crap will find the album no surprise whatever.

Look, I know loads of people like our Bry and thousands bought the single, but I can't help thinking it was a case of mass hynopticism or something. I'm sorry I just can't believe that so many people have so little taste. Oh well, bang goes my chance of being loved by the nation, and nothing I can say will change anyone's mind but, please, for me, don't buy this.

into the arms of america



achtung baby

U2

The boys from Ireland are back. After almost five years of doing next to nothing they have burst back onto the music scene with that stonking guitar romp *The Fly* – a more rock 'n' roll kinda tune you could not hope to find outside of the Deep Purple back catalogue. And I can tell you that this is pretty much where the whole of the rather groovy album is coming from. If you dig that kinda guitar feedback sound that The Edge does so well then you will cream yer pants over some of the more rocky tunes on *Achtung Baby*.

But why, oh why has almost every member of the band got such a silly name? Bono? The Edge? Why haven't they got nice and sensible names like Keith or Brian? (*Like another rather famous band? Ed.*)

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geez!



Send all your inky ramblings to: Geez!, Game Zone, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE

Readers eh? You'd expect them to write in about CD-Roms or the legitimacy of the grey market. Not our readers, oh no. Sad really. We so wanted to be a serious magazine full of techie letters.

If you can do better (or even worse) then write to Geez!, *Game Zone*, 14 Rathbone Place, London, W1P 1DE. If we print your letter, we might just send you a prize. Then again, we just might forget.

grand scheme

I have not missed a single issue of your mag and have an idea to improve it. Why not offer a choice of games for the star letter (e.g this one) or a nominal cash prize, around £1,000 would do it.
Chris Swanson, Forest Hall, Newcastle Upon Tyne.
● *Great idea Chris, it's a shame that you're not the star letter really isn't it?* **Ed.**

gas

Isn't it a shame games consoles don't run on gas. The current calorific value for gas is 38.6 mj/m^3, with Therms at 45.9 pence each. Just compare that with your electricity bill!
Mike Tipping, Haxby, York.
● *All* Game Zone *consoles run on a complicated system involving water wheels, gyroscopes and Jeremy's pet gerbil. This saves an awful lot of power... it doesn't work mind you but it does save an awful lot of power.* **Ed.**

corny or wot

It's me, I'm the one honest, I've been doing it ever since I was nine. I've been making those corn circles. You see it all started when my mum's cousin's, aunt's daughter's cousin's twice removed daughter's brother told me the secret. And I bet all of you out there would like to know how you do it so you can have little ones in your garden. Well I'm not going to tell you, so rasp.
Mark 'Corncircle' Luscombe, Plymstock, Devon.
● *Never understood the big thing about corn circles meself. It's bad enough walking about with one corn, let alone a whole circle of them on your foot.* **Ed.**

easy pc

Firstly I would like to thank you and your bunch for making my day. It's as though a whole big weight has been lifted off my shoulders. That weight has been weighing me down for years and years until now, with the help of your mag. Since now I've had to read other crappy console mags but none of them ever has anything on the PC Engine. But your mag gives me news, reviews, hints 'n' tips. It's all too much for me to take in at once.

Oh well that's enough praise. And now I wonder if all you lot could answer some questions which I can't find answers to:

1. With the PC Engine GT handheld. Can you watch TV on it?
2. If anything went wrong with a handheld PC Engine where could I send it to get it fixed?
3. Do you know how long the batteries last on a Game Boy and in a GT handheld?
4. Do you think Jonathan Ross has really got all those consoles?

Dave, Brumyland.
● *There is a convertor for the GT Handheld which allows you to watch TV on it. Unfortunately it's NTSC only so it's no use in this country (and consequently not available). Advanced Consoles (071) 383 0480 do repairs, modifications etc on PC Engines. Batteries last for about 18 hours in a Game Boy and... er... not very long at all on the GT Handheld. And yes Jonathan Ross has got all those consoles. Pretty lucky eh?* **Ed.**

mock turtles

On the whole, issue one was excellent. You obviously have something new to offer the console games player. Hopefully you'll be able to keep producing the mag in the same high quality as in issue one.

What I hope won't continue is something that appeared in the free tips booklet and tarnished an otherwise superb introduction by yourselves.



crap letter corner

Each month we'll be giving away a fab Amstrad GX4000 console to the reader who sends in the most stupendously bad letter. This month's letter comes from one of our celebrity readers.

My name is John Major. I'd like to tell you about my terribly interesting working day. I wake up and walk out into my hall. It is a very interesting and definitely British – not European in the slightest. I sit down in an interesting way and call for my servant. While I wait, I think that most ERM currencies are only allowed to have their exchange rates move up or down 2.25 percent to keep the currency stable. Once I thought about how the ultimate aim of the EMU is to reduce permitted fluctuations in currencies until we can have the ECU, but I do not believe in the ECU as it will destroy our terribly interesting sovereignty. I think about the balance of trade deficit too.

I can never decide what I want for breakfast. Sometimes Norma decides for me. Where was I? Oh yes, balance of trade deficit. Now... (*This letter has been cut on humanitarian grounds.*)
James Harland pp John Major, BFPO.
● *Fascinating Mr Major (may I call you sir?). You really are an interesting man. Your whole cabinet shimmers with dynamic personalities. There's er... that balding one in the suit and... well, that fat balding man in a suit. Any chance of a knighthood?* **Ed.**

geez!



The first 'letter' mentions and I quote: "I've got two left hands and a club foot." It would have been sufficient for the 'fictitious sender' to just say that he had two left hands in offering an explanation as to why he was crap at games. To mention that he also has a club foot is totally irrelevant and, in my mind, in bad taste. To whoever really composed the letter I say this: "Don't mock the afflicted."

I hope to be buying *Game Zone* for many years to come because I am impressed with your first issue but please, no more cheap shots eh?

Mick Reilly, Bradford, W. Yorks.

● *It was also a bit of a cheap shot at left handed people, who've been a persecuted minority for far too long. Seriously though Mick, it's a fair point. Remarks like these tend to be thoughtless rather than malicious but we'll be more careful in future.* **Ed.**

geez... er

Geez! What does it mean? Who thought of it? Does he/she need psychiatric help? Who cares? Great mag. It should of course have been published ages ago because people all over Britain have been waiting ages for an up-to-date modern console magazine. Well done. By the way how many bits is a Game Gear?

Lee Hendricks, Finningley, Doncaster.

● *Not telling. Not telling. Yes. Mrs E. R. Patterson. Eight. Nuff said?* **Ed.**

conversely

I'm writing to you to tell you that I don't think it's fair that the Mega Drive and Game Gear have a convertor and better games like *Sonic The Hedgehog*, *Zalor Mercenary* and *Road Rash* and things like that. I have a Master System and I think there should be a convertor so Master System owners can play Mega Drive and Game Gear cartridges or I will get a Nintendo Super Famicom or Game Boy for Christmas.

Chris Carroll, Ivybridge, Devon.

● *The good news is that you can get* Sonic The Hedgehog *on Master System. However you must remember that the Mega Drive is a much more powerful machine than the Master System so games on it will tend to be faster, more colourful and louder. This is also the reason why you can buy a convertor to play Master System games on Mega Drive but not the other way round. Most Game Gear games are available on MS anyway. I'd like to see you try running a Super Famicom game on the Game Boy.* **Ed.**

overdrive

Seeing as it took me five days to find your brill new mag I thought it must be worth reading it cover to cover. I proceeded to do so and as I got to the *News* section I found a column called "Sega Plays NES" which suggested that Master Drive and Mega System owners would be getting a visit from *Terminator 2*. Now was this mix up of consoles a fiendishly clever idea to confuse us readers or was it just a common dense mistake? Please inform me because I've been losing sleep over the whole thing.

P.S Could we have a picture of Jane Goldman in a yellow polka dot bikini please?

Gavin Lucas, Morden, Surrey.

● ***a)*** *The Mega System is a fab new console being developed in secret by IBM in conjunction with NASA.* ***b)*** *It was late and we typed in the wrong thing. You pays your money, you takes your choice.* **Ed.**

please please me

Please, please, please, please, please, please, please, please, please, please, please, please, please, please... (*This goes on for about 15 lines. Ed.*)... please, please, please, please, pleeeeaaaasssseeee could you... erm... er... damn I've forgotten, hang on I'll think of it soon... It was something about my Mega Drive I think, naa!... erm...

James "... er..." Pearson, West Wickham, London.

● *We were going to send you a really fab prize, but then we forgot where we'd put it. Shame really.* **Ed.**

woolly beast

I purchased an official Sega Mega Drive from Woolworths last year and have enjoyed it very much but earlier this month I heard rumours about the arcade hit *Altered Beast* being released in Japan. Is this true? If so when is it being released in Britain officially and when on import as this must be the most eagerly awaited game on the Mega Drive yet.

David Sutton, Lichfield, Staffs.

● *Oh dear. The problem with having a* Crap Letter *is sometimes I'm not sure if a letter is a wind up or legit. Let's take this one at face value (22p plus a little something for the paper).* Altered Beast *is out on the Mega Drive and has been for some time. You can even get it packaged with the machine. I hope you didn't await it that eagerly 'cos... well let's say I've had more fun in Luton.* **Ed.**

slumberland

Thaw a mattress, thaw a mattress, reel good mattress... eighth of a mattress... quarter of a mattress... half of a mattress... yeah, yeah. *(This drivel goes on for about two pages. Ed.)* Hast du gamatteress. "Jump inside (my wooden head)" said the first little boy. And this is what the second boy said; "Be my, be my, be my, be my little mattressed up messed up mattress. All right don't then."

Matt Ress, Somercotes, Derbyshire.

● *Oh dear.* **Ed.**

brillo pad

I think your mag is totally brill. Let me tell you how I came by *Game Zone*, I was going to the shops, I was looking for something totally brill and mega to read and at a great price. BINGO! a new mag called *Game Zone*. I got out my dosh and got it as soon as possible and it's the best decision I've ever made.

How do you know when someone has won the prize?

Michael Theobald, Dronfield Woodhouse, Sheffield.

● *We know someone has won the prize when we pick their name out of the hat. No seriously you'll find out 'cos every few issues we'll print a* Compo Round Up *of all the winners (won't we, Jeremy?).* **Ed.**

kev's kool kode

In the trenches, against the rise of naffness, Kev is the last hope of the truly Kool. When flares and button down collars are on the march Kev'll be on the barricades fighting for style.

Each month the Che Guevara of style goes into action, offering help, advice and deadly poisonous spiders. *(Er, you sure about this? Ed.)*



Dear Kev

I'm going on holiday with some mates this Christmas. We're going to spend a week in Manchester checking out the scene. Sounds great huh? Well think again 'cos my flaming Mum says it'll be wet so she's bought me a kagoule. It gets worse. 'Cos she's seen all these 'Children Should Be Seen And Not Hurt' ads, she's bought it in bright red. I mean, thanks very much. I can really see me walking round Manchester in a bright red kagoule. What do I do? Stay in all week? There's no way I'm going to get away without packing it.

S. Alvens, Cambs.

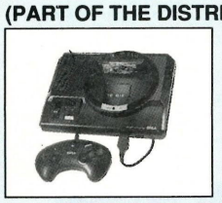
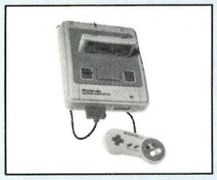
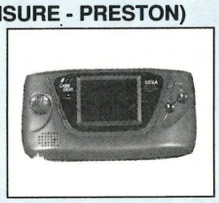
Well, I must admit I nearly gave up on this one. Kagoules, particularly in bright colours, are more than a match for most style warriors. How can you defeat something that has 'tourist' written all over it? You might as well walk round with your (sensible) trousers tucked into your socks. Still I think I've got a solution to your problem S (Do you mind if I call you S?). Your only hope is satire. Purchase a tin of fluorescent paint and cover the kagoule with slogans like TRAINSPOTTER, KAGOULES ARE KOOL etc. Then wear it with the hood up but tucked behind your ears. You can now convince yourself that people are laughing with you rather than at you. Hopefully.

Any image worries should be sent to Kool Kev at the usual Geez! address.

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joe gazed out from skylevel on top of the cybercorps building as night descended over the smog of the neon sprawl. he rewound 3 decades to the 90's when the cybermarket placed its first communication .....

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sure, it was real, the admen still held the purse strings, but the subversives made sure to take them out first in the 93 riot. it was hot. the kids wanted cheap games and plenty of them and the cybermarket was the only place to get jacked in. pretty soon, everybody wanted in. 92 was when the big money moved in on the plug & play boys. but the little people got BIG. cooler now. by 97 people didn't read fiction anymore. it was all too real now. president arnie launched the first sim-sat beaming virtual reality into the global living room. hey, come on, you knew that film stars always got to play the president. in 99 the computer jocks at cybercorps opened the first virtual reality theme park, sim city, out of tokyo, not a molecule of living tissue in the place. cyberpunk heaven.....fast forward with cybermarket

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console countdown

5 PAGE PULL-OUT GAME GUIDE!

If you think a back catalogue is a mail order company specialising in replacement vertebrae then you're in the wrong part of the magazine (you're also probably on the wrong planet). However if you have little interest in vertebrae, but lots of catching up to do on games you've missed you're in the right place. In the next few pages are listings of pretty much every game currently available (except those we've forgotten). The list doesn't attempt to cover every import, though it does have a quick breeze through a few PC Engine, Turbo Express and Super Famicom games.

For each game we've listed the title, publisher and price. There's also a brief summary of the game and a Zone rating. Now all you've got to do is go out and buy the games. Blimey, if we took any more care of you we'd be putting the sugar on your cornflakes.

the scores

- ★★★★★ Essential buy
- ★★★★ Well worth a blast
- ★★★ Mediocre
- ★★ Seriously dodgy
- ★ About as exciting as Arsenal

Mega zone games don't get a score 'cos... well they're beyond the scoring of us mere mortals.

MEGA ZONE

Ace of Aces

Sega/£29.99 ● Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear. I've seen some tat in my time. For example the Sinclair C5, Color Me Badd, plastic dog do, but I think *Ace of Aces* must take the Golden Turd Award for True Awfulness.

★

Aerial Assault

Sega/£29.99 ● Very unimaginative shoot 'em up. A case of holding down the fire button and tuning your brain to vacant.

★★★

Alex Kidd In Shinobi World

Sega/£29.99 ● Ninja-style graphic adventure in which the puzzles play as important a part as the blood-letting. Smooth scrolling, however little variation makes this rather dull.

★★★

American Baseball

Sega/£29.95 ● One or two player mode available. Standard sports management program plus active play sequences gives you enormous control over your 'team'. One hell of a game.

★★★★★

Assault City

Virgin/£24.99 ● An atmospheric, shoot 'em up. Very colourful and action packed, if a little low on originality.

★★★

Basketball Nightmare

Virgin/£24.95 ● Standard basketball game with the twist of playing against various mythical and fantasy creatures, including a Wolfman and a Water Imp. Addictive.

★★★★

Battle Out Run

Sega/£29.99 ● Rather similar to the arcade version of *Chase HQ*. A fairly standard road racer game which, while low on originality, is very playable.

★★★★

Chase HQ

Sega/£29.95 ● Arcade classic that suffers little in the conversion to the Sega. Various chase and destroy missions keep interest alive and help to maintain the game's high level of addictiveness.

★★★★

Dynamite Duke

Sega/£34.99 ● Above average shoot-everything-that-moves game. High quality graphics and sound, but this is only for you if you don't want to have to think about what you are doing.

★★★★

NEW ENTRY The Flintstones

Grandslam/£29.95 ● All really rather sad. Pathetically easy and with absolutely no long-lasting appeal. Play *The Flintstones*? I think I'd rather eat my dog.

★

MEGA ZONE

NEW ENTRY Super Kick Off

US Gold / £29.99 ● The grandaddy of all footie games makes a long-awaited appearance on the Master System. Yer, so the MS is a bit slower than, say, the Amiga but the sheer playability of *Kick Off* itself shines through. Great football fun. Eer we go, eer we go, eer we go.



Galaxy Force 2

Sega/£t.b.a. ● Sega's massive coin-op has been converted onto the Master System. The 3D scrolling is just as crisp and sharp with great arcade-quality sound.

★★★★★

Gauntlet

US Gold/£29.99 ● Faithful conversion which retains all the playability of the original. Two player mode brings the game to life. Still a good buy despite its age.

★★★

Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade

US Gold/£29.99 ● A standard platform adventure with the added attraction of Indiana Jones, who is after the Holy Grail. US Gold has managed to inject some variety into this rather tired gameplay and has produced a bit of a corker.

★★★★★

Operation Wolf

Sega/£29.95 ● Traditional kill-or-be-killed action. Six levels of *Operation Wolf* are all well animated and scroll smoothly. Fine if your brain is in your trigger finger.

★★★★



Outrun Europa (Master System)

NEW ENTRY Outrun Europa

US Gold/£29.95 ● *Outrun* but with a subtle, yet sexy, difference. You play an international spy who has had his car stolen. Not the most obvious reason to dash across Europe, except for the top secret files that were left on the parcel shelf. All very careless. So off you dash in a car, on a bike, speedboat and anything you can get your mitts on. Good stuff.

★★★★

MEGA ZONE

Pacmania

Tecmagik/£29.99 ● A seriously old game, but in its new revamped form it can still pour beer over the heads of most modern competitors. The aim of the game is unchanged, eating pills while avoiding ghosts, but now it's in glorious 3D and with a really blasting sound-track. Playability is unsophisticated but still mega addictive. A supreme arcade conversion.

Paperboy

US Gold/£29.99 ● Above average conversion of one of the oldest games around. Worth adding to your collection!

★★★★

NEW ENTRY RC Grand Prix

Sega/£29.99 ● A motor racing game with a difference You dash round in a remote controlled car. And what difference does this make to the gameplay? Not a single thing. Not bad for all its bizarreness.

★★★

Speedball

Mirrorsoft/£25.99 ● Not unlike the excellent film, *Rollerball*, this is a highly violent cross between hockey and volleyball. It's the two player option which makes the game. Both graphics and sound are a little disappointing, but if you're a budding Jonathan E, this is the game for you.

★★★★

Spellcaster

Virgin/£29.95 ● Animated sword and sorcery action adventure, set in Japan. With ultra-smooth graphics and sound, *Spellcaster* is one of the best games available on the Master System.

★★★★★

Ultima 4

Sega/£39.99 ● Role-playing game in the vein of *D&D*. You roam the countryside earning money, partaking in jolly japes etc. Very free-form game that allows a great deal of variety.

★★★★





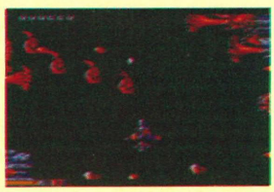
console countdown

MEGA ZONE / MASTER SYSTEM

Populous
Tecmagik / £34.99 ● Ever fancied wearing a rather natty beard and wings, floating around on a cloud all day meddling in the affairs of mortal men? With *Populous* you get to meddle to your heart's content, (although you have to supply your own wings and beard!). A near legendary game which has been on more formats than I have had hot dinners. I must say, it shapes up rather well on the humble Master System. You get 5,000 worlds to potter around in where you can generally act in a godly manner. A superior game and a superior conversion.

Vigilante
Virgin/£24.99 ● Ninja inspired, multi-screen, multi-level beat 'em up. Good visually, plenty of action, plenty of screens. Plenty of fun in this one!

Wonderboy: The Dragon Trap
Virgin/£29.95 ● Attractive sound and interesting graphics make *Wonderboy* a winnah! Horizontal scrolling, cute, fighting fantasy graphic adventure.



Xenon II (Master System)

World Class Leaderboard
US Gold/£29.99 ● A re-worked version of *Leaderboard* with an increased playing area, and better graphics by far. Up to four players can compete over eighteen holes. This is one of the best golf sims around for any console.

NEW ENTRY **Xenon II**
Image Works/£29.99 ● Potentially a game of greatness, let down by some very ropey collision detection. But for all that, there are some very nifty graphics and sound. If you want a shoot 'em up for your Master System, then you could do worse...

NINTENDO NES

Bayou Billy
Konami/£34.99 ● Multi-level action adventure in which you must fight, shoot and drive your way through to save your kidnapped girlfriend.

Blades Of Steel
Konami/£34.99 ● Ice hockey sim which comes into its own in two player mode. Dodgy skill levels, in one player mode, make the game either impossible or a walkover. Great game if you've someone to play with.

NEW ENTRY **California Games**
MB Games/£34.99 ● The idea of surfing on the NES is a bit bizarre if you ask me, you couldn't stand up on it for a start. It's got poor graphics, annoying sound and wobbly gameplay, so unless you've nothing else to do with your £35, invest in something else.

Captain Skyhawk
Milton Bradley/£29.99 ● A cross between a flight simulator and shoot 'em up. *Captain Skyhawk* is let down though by the worst gameplay you are ever likely to see.

Defender Of The Crown
Palcom/£39.99 ● Ever fancied ruling the whole of ye olde England being quite unpleasant to one and all? If you have, then *Defender of the Crown* is for you. Above average game. Worth a peek.

Digger T Rock
MB Games/£39.99 ● Loveable Digger runs and digs around for all his heart is worth. The animation is okay, so's the sound. Actually the whole thing is okay rather than gob-smackingly good.

Gauntlet 2
Nintendo/£39.99 ● Not unlike *Gauntlet 1*, in fact, almost exactly the same as *Gauntlet 1*. Good fun when it first came out, but that was an awfully long time ago.

Ghosts 'N' Goblins
Nintendo/£24.99 ● Classic multi-level, arcade-style adventure game. Rescue the princess and kill the monsters.

Gremlins 2
Sunsoft/£20 ● An arcade adventure,with extremely nifty graphics and puzzles, which keep both your mind as well as your mitts busy. Highly addictive.

Gun Smoke
Nintendo/£24.99 ● Wild West, commando-style shoot 'em up adventure, where items must be collected and enemies removed. Nothing new.

Life Force
Konami/£t.b.a. ● Conversion of coin-op classic *Salamander*. One or two player mode with even levels scrolling vertically and odd levels scrolling horizontally. *Life Force* is one of the best games you can buy for the Nintendo.

NEW ENTRY **Low-G-Man**
Taxan/£tba ● An initially unpromising game comes good the more you play it. Pretty standard platform fare, with nothing particularly original. But *Low-G-Man* is relatively fast, well animated and really quite addictive. Not bad stuff at all really.

Marble Madness
MB Games/£39.99 ● Remember those old games that used to come in a wooden box? The ones where you had to guide a little metal ball round a maze? MB have converted it to the NES and jolly good it is too.

Pin Bot
Rare/£34.99 ● Pinball simulator which manages to convey the feel and playability of a table. Excellent animation results in a ball that runs smoothly and realistically.



Low-G-Man (NES)

Probotector
Konami/£34.99 ● After mastering the odd control system this game holds little to challenge any but the most inexperienced games player. Not really worth the price.

Rad Gravity
Activision/£29.95 ● A challenging graphic adventure with a huge playing area. High on originality and humour, with the technical back-up of superb sound and graphics. Will keep you going for hours.

Rescue : The Embassy Mission
Kemco/£24.99 ● Remember the Iranian embassy siege in the early eighties? This is the video game of that international incident. The Iranian embassy is never mentioned but the connection is obvious. Rather a sick idea but rather a good game too.

RoboCop
Data East/£34.99 ● A very pale conversion of the best selling computer game doesn't do justice to the film. Poor animation, lousy sound and awful gameplay makes *RoboCop* a real stinker.

Robo Warrior
Jaleco/£29.95 ● A dull and dated concept with very little to justify the price.

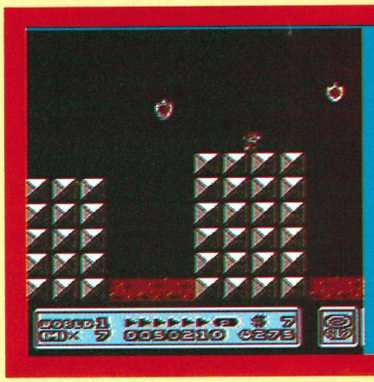
Rush 'N Attack
Konami/£22.95 ● Horizontally scrolling, kill-everything-that-moves multi-level adventure. Spread over six increasingly difficult levels.

Shadow Gate
Nintendo/£39.99 ● Adventure time. All a bit taxing with loads of thinking and very little out 'n' out action but worthwhile if adventures are your thing.

Shadow Warrior
Nintendo/£34.99 ● A standard slash 'n' dash, horizontally scrolling adventure. Well worth a look, if only for the brill animation.

The Simpsons
Acclaim/£34.99 ● The inevitable spin off from the cartoon. A rewarding mix of arcade action and strategy, with a fair splash of humour. Definitely not an underachiever.

NEW ENTRY **Ski or Die**
Tengen/£34.99 ● *California Games* on ice. And not much better really. Choose from half a dozen assorted winter sports and let the boredom begin.



NINTENDO NES / MEGA ZONE

Super Mario 3
Nintendo / £39.95 ● What can be said about this game that has not already been said with so much more wit and skill in other pages of this magazine? Very little I expect. *Mario 3*, simply the best *Mario* to date. Platforms, hidden levels and more turtles to jump on than ever before.

Snake Rattle 'N Roll
Rare/£34.99 ● Original 3D platform adventure with sound graphics and animation, all of a high standard plus excellent playability. Well worth the moolah as it will keep you happy and occupied for many an hour.

Solstice
Imagesoft/£30.64 ● A pale version of *Cadaver* which lacks the oomph to lift it beyond averageness. Rather poor puzzles that are too few and too easy. Not really very good at all.

Super Off Road
Nintendo/£34.99 ● Fine conversion of a nifty coin-op. More fun than the *Monaco Grand Prix* but still reasonably realistic. A fab game that's worth every penny!

Super Spike V'Ball
Nintendo/£29.99 ● If you like rolling around in the sand, but don't really like getting grit in yer kacks, then *V'Ball* is for you. A nifty sports sim. Good control, sound and a surpassingly varied range of graphics gives you something nice to look at. Not a bad little game.

Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles
Nintendo/£39.95 ● Superbly designed game with many surprises. Excellent animation and sound add to the already marvellous gameplay. A worthy addition to any Nintendo games library.



Ski Or Die (NES)

NEW ENTRY **Top Gun: The Second Mission**
Konami/£tba ● Not so much a flight sim as an uneventful shoot 'em up that tries to look like a flight sim. Neither one thing nor another really.

Track And Field 2
Nintendo/£39.99 ● Follow up to the ancient *Track And Field 1* which, must be among the oldest games around. It shows its age as well. Not very interesting.

Wizards And Warriors
Acclaim/£24.99 ● Poor sword and sorcery animated adventure. The graphics and sound are passable but nothing special.

NEW ENTRY **Wrestle Mania**
Acclaim/£29.99 ● One of the saddest games I have yet seen. Wrestling games can be great, this is just crap. Awful control system means that pin-downs are a matter of luck rather than skill. Avoid.

WWF Wrestle Mania
LJN/£29.99 ● Three things that have all been hyped in their time: Sigue Sigue Sputnik, appeasement and *WWF Wrestle Mania*. Three things that were crap when they arrived: Sigue Sigue Sputnik, appeasement and *WWF Wrestle Mania*.

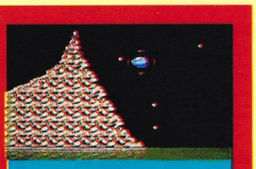
MEGA DRIVE

After Burner 2
Sega/£34.95 ● Classic arcade coin-op transfer which does not suffer at all in the move to the Sega. Fast, slick and very deadly, one of the best, if not the best, shoot 'em up around.

Alex Kidd In The Enchanted Castle
Virgin/£22.95 ● Adventure-based, multi-level quest game. Part of the *Alex Kidd* series of 'cute' games that lacks challenge.

Alien Storm
Sega/£34.99 ● *Golden Axe* meets *Buck Rogers* with a tad of *Operation Wolf*. Great fun in two player mode with deliciously slimey sprites. Good fun, but a bit 'samey'.

Arnold Palmer Tournament Golf
Sega/£34.99 ● Fine golf simulator, which may not be high on action, but is certainly well animated and accurate to the game itself. Fairly nifty if you fancy a more laid back sports sim.



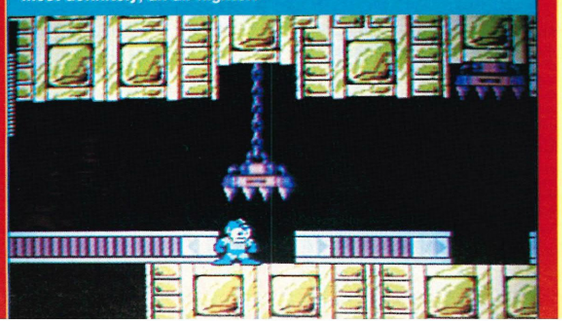
NINTENDO NES / MEGA ZONE

Solar Jetman
Tradewest / £34.99 ● Way back in the mists of computer gaming history, under a dusty pile of ancient cassettes, lies a game. Half legend, half myth, that game is *Jetpac*. The original Spectrum classic shoot 'em up of many moons ago has re-emerged on the NES, under a new name and with a new plot. Nothing new in the gameplay, but the high standard of graphics and sound keep the *Jetpac* tradition alive. A *Jetpac* for the 1990s.

NINTENDO NES / MEGA ZONE

Megaman 2
Capcom / £39.95 ● This is a dream of a game, a true stonker. NES owners should put it to the top of their 'must have' list immediately.

Megaman 2 , unusually for a sequel, has playability written all over it. Positively buckets of the stuff. It also boasts some very neat graphics and sound, which means you have something nice to look at while you play it long into the night – this game is, most definitely, an all-nighter.



console countdown





MEGA ZONE / MEGA DRIVE

NEW ENTRY **F-22 Interceptor**

Electronic Arts / £39.99

Yet another classic Mega Drive game from EA. They keep on doing it don't they? The first flight sim of any use on any console anywhere in the world. Loads of action keeps interest alive without sacrificing the graphical quality (the availability of different perspectives allows you to view your demise from a different angle every time). More balls than the entire English Rugby team, *F-22* is simply brill-o. Buy, buy, buy...

Arrow Flash

Sega/£34.99 ● Rather humdrum shoot 'em up, with little or no variation. Not really worth nearly forty quid.

688 Attack Sub

Sega/£39.99 ● You can play either a Russian or American sub commander in a range of missions from a training exercise to subaquatic war. Complex gameplay, nifty graphics and reams of sampled speech make this rewarding game worth having.

Budokan

Electronic Arts/£39.99 ● Martial arts sim. All the karate moves are very realistic which may be why the animation is so slow. Only for die-hard karate fans.

Centurion

Electronic Arts/US Import ● As the title suggests, this is a strategy shoot 'em up which requires a large amount of thought and planning to be able to achieve the ultimate goal – namely world domination.

Dick Tracy

Sega/£34.99 ● This conversion of a rather overrated movie into a none too brilliant game. You play the man in yellow who has taken it upon himself to clean up the city. Average in all respects.

The Faery Tale Adventure

Electronic Arts/£34.99 ● Once upon a time, a long time ago, there was a game called *Faery Tale Adventure*... Graphic cum movement cum combat game, *Faery Tale* is a brave stab, but if you want a fantasy game wait for *The Immortal*.

NEW ENTRY Fatal Rewind

Electronic Arts/£34.99 ● An original and clever platform blow 'em away. Nice touches, including an instant replay of your recent destruction which you can take over and play at any point, thus changing your own destiny, make for a superior game.

Fantasia

Infograms/£39.99 ● While it all looks really sweet with dancing brooms, waddling cauldrons and Mickey in a natty red dressing gown, the game plan stinks. Awful collision detection doesn't help the learning curve which resembles Mount Everest. Great to look at, crap to play.

Flicky

Sega/£34.99 ● Sometimes the simplest ideas are the best, and sometimes they're just plain boring. *Flicky* is not simply boring, it was the biggest pile of smelly brown stuff ever. Don't waste your money.

Gain Ground

Sega/£34.99 ● It's many years into the future and the most popular form of entertainment is *Gain Ground*, in which human contestants are dragged into a maze full of android nasties and either emerge victorious or die horribly and slowly. A very worthwhile game.

Ghostbusters

Sega/£34.99 ● Very tired platform formula, with little new to offer. Both graphics and sound are acceptable rather than outstanding. Only really worth looking at if you are a dedicated *Ghostbusters* fan.



Klax (Mega Drive)

Golden Axe

Sega/£29.95 ● Highly faithful coin-op conversion of an arcade classic. Excellent sound, graphics and animation make *Golden Axe* highly addictive.

NEW ENTRY Hard Drivin'

Tengen/Domark/£34.9 ● Not so much *Hard Drivin'* as rather easy drivin'. The classic arcade game that was only classic 'cos you had a pneumatic piston jolting up and down on your bum to stimulate, amongst other things, the sensation of driving. Of course you don't get that on the Mega Drive, so it's all a bit crap really.

Ice Hockey

MEGA ZONE

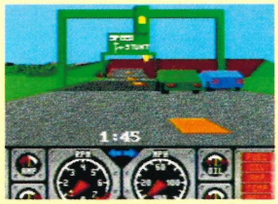
Electronic Arts/£39.99 ● Electronic Arts' *Ice Hockey* is amazing. Ultra-smooth animation and some amazingly detailed graphics coupled with the highly addictive game of ice hockey make this one game any Mega Drive owner must have. Violence galore, including frequent punch-ups combined with authentic sound make this a dream to play.

James 'Buster' Douglas Knockout Boxing

Sega/£34.99 ● Not a bad boxing simulator, but as with all boxing simulators, it suffers from a lack of variety. The animation is jerky but colourful and the sound rather predictable.

NEW ENTRY Jewel Master

Sega/£tba ● A rather standard fighting fantasy game in which you collect rings to give you extra special powers. Nothing original, pretty pictures and okay muzak.



Hard Drivin' (Mega Drive)

John Madden Football

Electronic Arts/£39.99 ● If you're into American Football this is a must. Even if you aren't, it's worth learning the rules just so you can play. Amazingly smooth graphics, great sound and intelligent gameplay make this a game not to be missed.

King's Bounty

Electronic Arts/£34.99 ● A graphic adventure exploration kind of game. It's a bit difficult to explain, but suffice to say it's very good. Up to EA's usually very high standard.

Klax

Domark/£34.99 ● *Klax* must have been on more formats than any other game. And true to form, here it is on the Mega Drive. Okay if you like arranging fast-moving coloured blocks into ever-more complex patterns, but nothing earth-shattering.

Lakers Versus Celtics And The NBA Playoffs

Electronic Arts/£39.99 ● A very high quality sports sim. This time it's basketball and comes packed with high standard animation and sound. Great, addictive stuff.

Last Battle

Sega/£34.95 ● *Last Battle* is a beat 'em up game in the style of so many ninja games before it. Violent and bloody, it's expertly animated and has a variety of levels to keep your interest.

M1 Abrams Battle Tank

Sega/£38 ● A cross between simulator and shoot 'em up has you in charge of a battle tank in the midst of a Third World War battle zone. Smoothly scrolling 3D action.

Mickey Mouse And The Castle Of Illusion

MEGA ZONE

Sega/£19.99. ● Out to rescue Minnie Mouse from an assortment of fluffy woodland creatures, Mickey must journey through a variety of terrains to a final conflict with the Witch Mizrabel. Animation is of the highest standard, as you would expect from anything bearing the Disney name, with fairly nifty sound too. An outstanding game.

NEW ENTRY Mercs

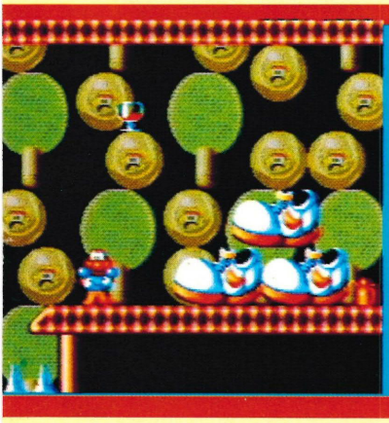
Sega/£39.99 ● Superior coin-op conversion has you playing the part of the only mercenary on the block who can save the free world. Lots of power-ups and violence, combined with an over the shoulder viewpoint, makes for an addictive shoot 'n' splat game.

Mike Ditka Power Football

Accolade/£34.99 ● Difficult to get into, but once there a worthwhile play. Not as good as *John Madden*, but let's face it, will anything be as good as *John Madden*?

Moonwalker

Sega/£35 ● A straightforward conversion of the coin-op. With the sugar-coated presence of Michael Jackson as the hero, the rather twee gameplay is saved only by excellent graphics and sound.



MEGA DRIVE / MEGA ZONE

NEW ENTRY **James Pond 2: The Adventures of Robocod**

Electronic Art / £39.99 ●Pond is back in an adventure so festive that it has all but fairy lights hanging off it. Silky smooth graphics and animation as well as an oh so sweet story line. Well worth a look. Measures up to the usual EA standard. Check out last issue for a full review.



MEGA DRIVE / MEGA ZONE

NEW ENTRY **The Immortal**

Electronic Arts / £44.99

Despite the fair hefty price tag *The Immortal* is a stonker of a game and worth every penny. The best graphic adventure available on the market, incredibly violent and gory. A true classic. Worth it just for the goblin with the exploding head. I kid you not; save your pennies and buy this game. It's the dog's.

Outrun

Sega/£40.00 ● An old classic that dates very badly. The plot is, of course, near legend. You must dash across the States in a kind of road movie cum hippy dream. All good clean fun, but rather dated.

PGA Tour Golf

Sega/£39.99 ● Converted from the PC version this highly realistic golf simulator suffers hardly at all in the 'downgrade' to the Mega Drive. It's easy to learn, but very hard to master. A true sporting classic.

Phantasy Star 2

Sega/£59.99 ● Despite a hefty price tag, this graphic adventure is worth every penny. A massive playing area offers all kinds of possibilities that can be explored for ages.

NEW ENTRY Phantasy Star 3

Sega/£49.99 ● Bit like *Phantasy Star 2*, in fact almost exactly the same as *Phantasy Star 2*. Rather expensive for a sequel that is so like the original. Worth it? Not really.

Populous

Electronic Arts/£39.99 ● Here, not unlike *Sim City*, you get to play God. But unlike *Sim City* you get to develop your own race of people in competition with another race. A classic game.

Road Rash

MEGA ZONE

Electronic Arts/£39.99 ● Not an unpleasant skin complaint contracted from too many hours in the saddle, but a rather nifty motor bike racing game. Far superior to just about anything around right now, Road Rash is a true 'must buy' for any Mega Drive owner.

Shadow Dancer

Sega/£34.99 ● An arcade conversion which owes a lot to *Super Shinobi*, but doesn't stand comparison. Both graphics and sound are fine, but *Super Shinobi* wins hands down.

Sonic The Hedgehog

MEGA ZONE

Sega/£34.99 ● One of the best, if not the best, games around, *Sonic* is destined to become as famous as *PacMan*. Amazing graphics and sound combined with some of the smoothest and fastest animation ever. The gameplay is so addictive, it keeps you gripped for hour after hour after hour. *Sonic The Hedgehog* is a true console classic

NEW ENTRY Shing And The Darkness

Sega/£49.99 ● Unfortunately these guys they are being released at the same time as *The Immortal*. An okay kinda graphic adventure but not a patch on *The Imm*. The only way it scores over its better EA partner is that you can save your position within the game. But apart from that, mine's *The Immortal* every time.

Spider-Man

Sega/£39.99 ● An initially cumbersome control system but it's worth plugging away at it. Once mastered, *Spider-Man* jumps, rolls and fights baddies with the agility of a Russian athlete. Lovely animation and sound with a fair splash of humour make this one of the best Spidey licences around.

Star Control

Ballistic/£37.95 ● Remember *Asteroids*? Well, *Star Control* is a bit like that but with loads of extra little bits added on. It is very playable and great fun. Especially in two player mode. Great reworking of an old-fashioned game. Bit pricey though.

Streets Of Rage

Sega/£34.99 ● Widely regarded as *the* beat 'em up for the Sega. Little new as far as plot is concerned. But for animation, range of movements and pure blood and balls style, you really can't beat it.

Strider

Sega/£34.99 ● Above-average horizontal graphic adventure set in the distant future. Sparkling graphics and ear-bending sound make this a treat.



Mercs (Mega Drive)

Super Monaco Grand Prix

Sega/£36 ● A completely fab Grand Prix simulator. You have to compete in all sixteen rounds of the World Championship, prequalifing in each, for a grid position. The control system does take a little getting used to, but once you've got the hang of it, you can race with the best of them.

Super Shinobi

Supervision/£40 ● Leaps and bounds ahead of pretty much anything on either console or computer, *Super Shinobi* is one of the best games of its type. A ninja slash 'n' dash game with stunning animation which doesn't affect the high speed of play.

Sword Of Sodan

Electronic Arts/£34.99 ● Below par sword and sorcery graphic adventure which is really rather easy to complete. Bit of a let-down at nearly forty quid.

Technocop

Razorsoft/£34.99 ● You are a good cop, out to clean up the city of dirty crims. You have a big gun that goes bang and makes the baddies fall over. That's about it really. Not really up to much. In fact, rather smelly.

Thunder Force 2

Techno Soft/£29.95 ● Fast and smooth scrolling shoot 'em up. Excellent sound and graphics – one of the ultimate shoot 'em ups.

Thunderforce 3

Techno Soft/£37.50 ● Ker splat, pow, spagooo. This is our kind of game. No messing, no poncing around on platforms or in enchanted forests, oh no. This is the real thing, a shoot 'em up to end all shoot 'em ups. Amazingly fast, amazingly smooth, with great chunks of graphics flying all over the screen. This is the Chilli Dog of computer games, pretty far out.

Truxton

Sega/£34.99 ● A straightforward arcade conversion of the well known shoot 'em up. Very good arcade conversion, with sound and graphics to match the original.



console countdown

Turrican
Ballistic/£39.99 ● *Turrican* is truly vast and really rather brill. A conversion which stands up to the original. In fact, it does more than just stand up to the original, it goes right up to it, gives it the two finger salute and then saunters off into the nearest bar to start a fight. It's that cool.

Wonderboy 3: Monster Lair
Sega/£39.99 ● Usual platform game with Wonderboy once again having to rescue his girlfriend. Neat puzzles, good graphics and sound keep this from being just another *Wonderboy* game.

World Cup Italia '90
Sega/£29.99 ● Under par footie simulator which, like so many other footie sims, is disappointing mainly because the animation lets it down so badly.

Gunhed
Hudson Soft/£34.99 ● Coin-op quality shoot 'em up with the graphics and sound to match. A definite must for the shoot 'em up addict.

Hell Explorer
Taito/£35 ● Tired graphic adventure with little long-term appeal You play a monk on a journey of enlightenment. Very poor.

Image Fight
Irem/£35 ● A standard arcade style shoot 'em up. However it's sadly short on originality and, after a while, plain boring.



Legend Of Hero Tonma (PC Engine)

Batman
Sun Soft/£35 ● Below standard conversion. Rather repetitive gameplay and a lack of decent presentation does not do the game justice at all.

Bloodia
Hudson Soft/£29.99 ● Very complex strategy game where you control a rolling ball through various sized pipes. Like *Klax* a very simple idea – unlike *Klax* not particularly addictive.

Chan And Chan
Import/£30 ● If you took *Super Mario Brothers*, removed the cuteness, and replaced it with a good dash of toilet humour, you would have *Chan And Chan*. Not to be missed.

Dead Moon
TSS/£31 ● Deep space shoot 'em up that has little new to offer, but is well written, with smooth parallel scrolling.

Devil Crash
Irem/£35 ● This computerised pinball game is one of the best of its genre, combining both the traditional aspects of the pinball machine, with the excitement of a shoot 'em up.

Dungeon Explorer
Import/£34.99 ● A high quality rip-off of *Gauntlet*. However, despite its obvious origins it holds its own well, with a large playing area, and a multi-play option.

Japan Warrior
Micro Media/£29.95 ● A cross between a traditional hack and slay ninja game and *Space Harrier*. Big, bright and very colourful sprites are well animated.
A very difficult game to 'get into'.

Legend Of Hero Tonma
Hucard/£35 ● A cute platform adventure, which, while nothing original, is well put together and highly playable.

Mr Heli
Irem/£29.95 ● Shoot 'em up, with colourful and detailed graphics. Cute, but not sickly, *Mr Heli* is highly playable and well worth a look.

Rabio Lepus Special
Video System/£35 ● Bizarre shoot 'em up in which you play a rabbit toting a machine gun. Amazing graphics are over-shadowed by the sheer difficulty of the game.

Puzzle Boy
Telenet Atlus/£30 ● Standard format puzzler with little new to offer anyone who's played *Tetris* or *Klax*. Not really worth the £30 price tag.

Saint Dragon
Aicom/£33 ● Superior shoot 'em up. Animated with thought and care, *Saint Dragon* is good value for money.

Violent Soldier
IGS/£31 ● The title says it all really. A rather slow and uneventful shoot 'em up. Nothing to write home about.

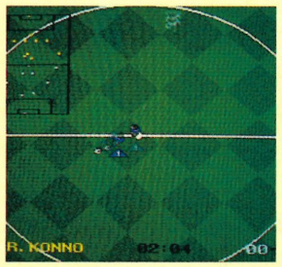
Volfied
Taito/£24.95 ● A simple and much used game format. You must recover segments of the playing area by leaving a trail but without your enemy touching your trail, which causes you to lose a life. Very simple, very addictive.

Actraiser
Enix/£49.99 ● Describing this game as *Populous* with arcade sequences gets over the style, but not the game's depth and playability. A medieval strategy/slash 'em up verging on the unmissable.

Area 88
Capcom/£50 ● An aerial shoot 'em up involving three planes and a multitude of baddies. The scrolling can be a bit jerky when the screen's crammed with action. Still it's no mean bundle of fun.

Darius Twin
Taito/£34.99 ● Slick space shoot 'em up with a strangely aquatic feel. Battling your way across a solar system crammed full of baddies and power-ups you'll meet some impressive graphics, but little that you haven't already seen in a million other games. Fun but unimaginative.

F-Zero
Nintendo/£49.99 ● Fast, aggressive futuristic race game with excellent 3D graphics. The range of craft, courses and difficulty levels are more than sufficient to keep you hooked well beyond your first win.



Pro Soccer (Super Famicom)

Pilotwings
Nintendo/£49.95 ●Take to the air in a biplane, hanglider, parachute, rocket pack or helicopter and then come back down again. Sounds simple and boring? Not so. It's murder and it's also murderously addictive – the graphics just have to be seen.

NEW ENTRY Pro Soccer
Imagineer/£45.00 ● Remember those old table football games, the ones that every youth club in the world owns? You know how unrealistic they are, well *Pro Soccer* is even more unrealistic. A sad day. Famicom footie promised so much and delivered so little. Oh well, maybe one day.

Sim City
Imagineer/£45 ● One of the all-time classic games makes an outstanding appearance on the Super Famicom. Build a city, raise taxes and try to keep the people happy (and hard working). The Japanese text might be a bit of a turn off for people who haven't played *Sim City* before.

Super R-Type
Irem/£49.95 ● *R-Type* was a classic in the far off Spectrum days.Now it returns in a super duper new form and it's lost none of the old magic. Smoothly parallaxed backgrounds plus zillions of detailed and colourful sprites bring the game screaming into 1991 – and screaming in stonking stereo at that. The price and the difficulty level are somewhat on the high side, but if you're loaded with skill and dosh then *Super R-Type* is a must.



NEW ENTRY Toe, Jam and Earl
Sega / £39.99 ● The much vaunted *TJ And E* is a bit like a *Sonic* house mix. So laid back it's virtually horizontal. Complete with funky tunes, spaced out graphics and some rad sampled speech. Pretty far out stuff. A kinda graphic adventure in which the kickin' brothers wander around collecting things in a side-splitting way. Cooler than cool, *TJ And E* show *Sonic* and *Mario* to be the 70s kickbacks they always were.

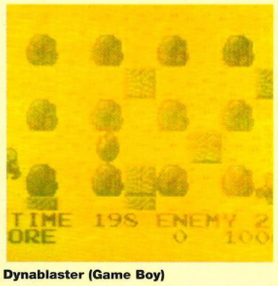
Alleyway
Nintendo/£29.99 ● A tired version of *Breakout*. Not really worth the cover price. Very uneventful.

The Amazing Spiderman
Enter Active/£26 ● Good quality beat 'em up has Spiderman out to rescue his kidnapped boss. You must face all Spidey's traditional foes, one after the other.

The Amazing Spiderman
OJN/£19.95 ● A cheaper, and slightly better game, than that from Enter Active. A good variety of both levels and traps must be overcome so that Spiderman can rescue his kidnapped wife.

Balloon Kid
Nintendo/£19.99 ● Not unlike *Wonderboy*, this multi-platform adventure is low on originality, but if you are looking for a game of this type, you could do worse.

Batman
Sun Soft/£26 ● The classic home computer game on the Game Boy. With smooth graphics and great sound, *Batman* is a classic.



Dynablaster (Game Boy)

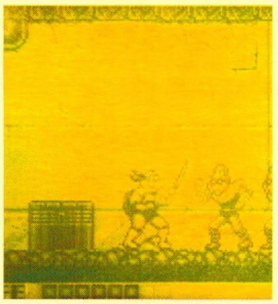
Boulderdash
Nintendo/£21 ● Fast paced and addictive this 'collect and avoid' game suffers in conversion to the Game Boy. Move too fast and your character blurs to the point of being annoying.

Bugs Bunny
Kemco/£27 ● A well animated game with sixty levels to complete, *Bugs Bunny* is very playable and destined to become a classic.

Caesar's Palace
Nintendo/£19.99 ● Never really seen the point of gambling on a console. This is okay, but I wouldn't bet on it being a hit. (Ha, ha.)

Chess Master
Nintendo/£19.99 ● An average chess simulator given a boost by some amazing sampled speech. Even if chess isn't your cup of tea, this is a worthwhile buy.

Contra
Nintendo/£24.99 ● Non-stop action and highly addictive gameplay elevate this standard shoot everything game to something a bit special.

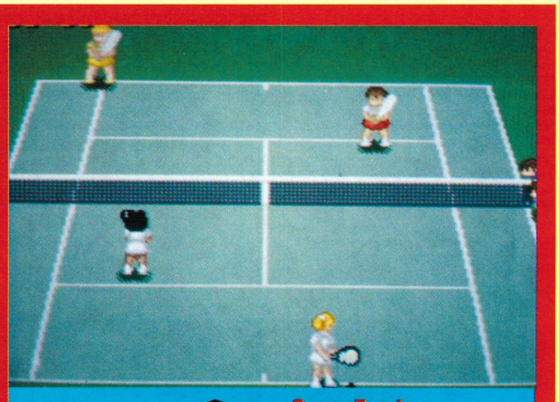


Fall Of The Footclan (Game Boy)

Double Dragon
Nintendo/£19.99 ● Very unoriginal slash 'n' dash adventure in which you must rescue a stray family member in traditional ninja style. An okay game but nothing special.

Jackie Chan
Hudson Soft / £31 ● Jackie Chan is a bit of a mega film star in Asia where all his films are smash hits. In console form he also has mega hit written all over him. A combined beat 'em up and platform game, with both elements equally strong. The fighting sequences contain an impressive number of moves from arm flails to ultra kicks. The platform sections drip with puzzles and landscapes. Add to this large, sugar-sweet and well animated graphics and this is definitely one for the software shopping list.





Super Tennis
Tomkin / £45.00 ● The best tennis game ever. No, I mean it. It really is the dog's scrotum. Tennis has never been this good on the telly before (except for Wimbledon week, but that doesn't count). All it's missing is a Dan Maskell simulator, and a free bowl of strawberries. If ever you wanted a reason to buy a Famicom then *Tennis* must be it. Truly great stuff.

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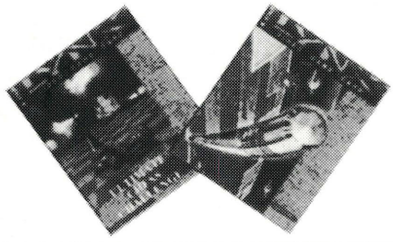
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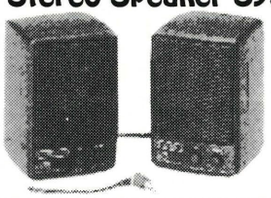


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console countdown

Double Dragon 2 – The Revenge

Acclaim/£19.99 ● Large repertoire of combat moves raises the average, and let's face it unoriginal, plot above the level of yawns-ville. Even so, there is very little here that wasn't in *Double Dragon 1*.

Dr Mario

Nintendo/£26 ● If you crossed *Klax* with *Tetris* and added the Mario name you would have a fair idea of what this game is about.

NEW ENTRY Dynablaster

Nintendo/£24.99 ● A puzzle-style game. You have to plant loads of time bombs that have an annoying habit of blowing up under your nose. Quite unusual, but the sort of thing that works well on the Game Boy.

NEW ENTRY Fall Of The Footclan

Konami/£24.99 ● Standard beat 'em up in which you can choose to play any of the green shell-suited heroes. Nothing of any originality to raise it above the norm. Okay as far as it goes.

Fortress of Fear

Acclaim/£26 ● The high degree of cunning and originality within this sword and sorcery game raise it above the average platform adventure.

Ghostbusters 2

Activision/£tba ● Who yar gonna call... Well I'm not sure, but I know for a fact it ain't gonna be whoever programmed this. Not so much poor, as poverty stricken.

NEW ENTRY Kung Fu Master

Nintendo/£19.99 ● Better than most, this martial arts beat 'em up. The hero has a nice wide range of moves, but it's all a bit easy. Well executed and put together, but seen one, you've seen them all.

Mickey Mouse 2

Kemco/£21 ● Yet another format outing for this multi-platform adventure featuring everyone's favourite rodent. And just as on all the other formats, the Game Boy version is well animated and highly playable.

Paperboy

Mindscape/£25 ● This conversion of the arcade classic manages to retain all the original addictiveness of the original by making the most of the Game Boy's snappy sound and graphics.

Parodius

Konami/£25 ● You don't just play *Parodius*. You live it. A weird shoot 'em up in which you face flying pigs, belly dancers and all manner of strange creatures. Bit like *R-Type* meets *Alice in Wonderland*. Weird stuff, but very playable.

Pipe Dream

Bullet Proof/£21 ● One of the best of the many simple but addictive puzzlers. Direct the flow of water through different shaped pipe sections. Simple? Don't you believe it.



R-Type (Game Boy)

Robocop

Ocean/£25.53 ● Pale version of metal man on the Game Boy. The learning curve is set too high to make for a good game. Poor.

NEW ENTRY R-Type

Nintendo/£19.99 ● The shoot 'em up of Biblical proportions reaches the Game Boy. And it's not bad either. The lack of colour makes for some frustrating moments, but for all that, it's a pretty nifty conversion.

NEW ENTRY The Simpsons

Acclaim/£19.99 ● Cartoon capers spin-off. Yet another outing for the dude with the jaundice problem. This time he is sent off to summer camp. Very addictive, with nice graphics and sound. Good stuff.

Tennis

Nintendo/£29.99 ● Standard tennis simulation game with above adequate sound and animation. For all that, a basic, functional tennis game with one and two player options.

GAME GEAR

Chase HQ

Taito/£25 ● Standard race and shoot game, that makes *Outrun* look truly ancient. Unfortunately it is all a bit easy and you find yourself pining for the arcade version.

Columns

Sega/£19.99. ● *Tetris*-style stack game which proves to be just as addictive. Well worth a look.



World Class Leaderboard (Game Gear)

G-Loc

Sega/£24.99 ● Conversion of a far from brill game. Relatively smooth graphics give the flight sim feeling, but after a couple of plays interest wanes. A case of goodbye rather than good buy.

Mickey Mouse And The Castle of Illusion

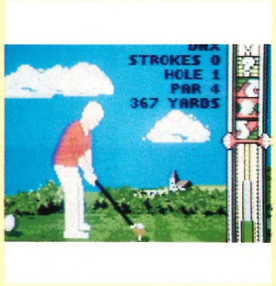
Sega/£24.99 ● The scaled down version of the excellent Mega Drive game loses little in the conversion. It retains the high standard of graphics and animation with some ear-curling sound effects.

Outrun

Sega/£24.99 ● Naff conversion of the ancient pub-bound coin-op. With little of any interest to offer.

Pengo

Sega/£19.99 ● Version of the much used and dated *PacMan* gameplay. Unfortunately *Pengo* shows its age.



Awesome Golf (Lynx()

Shinobi

Sega/£24 ● The classic slash 'n' dash, over four levels, survives the transition to the Game Gear well. Ultra-smooth graphics combined with a varied gameplay.

Spider-Man

Sega/£39.99 ● Quite standard fare this, all action on many platforms. With nice smooth animation and sound. Quite good stuff but nothing to cream over.

Super Monaco GP

Sega/£19.99 ● One of the few Grand Prix games available for any handheld, also one of the best. With a load of tracks and car extras, it's enough to grease anyone's axle.

Super Wonderboy

Sega/£19.99 ● Cute and detailed with nice graphics, *Super Wonderboy* is highly playable. Will keep you involved for hours.

Woody Pop

Sega/£19.99 ● This is *Breakout*. No matter how many little add-ons and extras you tack on. A basic breakout game. Not a bad breakout game, but still a breakout game.

NEW ENTRY World Class Leaderboard

Out Now/£tba ● *The* classic golf game. The diddy sprite size is no great problem and the animation is both smooth and functional.One of the better golf handheld games around right now.

NEW ENTRY Super Ghouls 'N' Ghosts

SUPER FAMICOM MEGA ZONE

Capcom / £45.00 ● What do you get if you cross a near classic arcade game with the balls bad graphic ability of the Super Famicom? Well you get *Super Ghouls 'N' Ghosts*, of course. Bloody difficult but incredibly addictive means you come back time and time again. Get your buns down to your local grey importer right now as the word on the grapevine is that it's selling out fast.



LYNX

NEW ENTRY Awesome Golf

Atari/£29.99 ● Slightly less serious than *Leaderboard* on the Game Gear but for all that *Awesome Golf* plays as near to the real thing as possible with some pretty amazing graphics and a control system to match.

NEW ENTRY Bill And Ted's Excellent Adventure

Atari/£29.99 ● How many versions of this cartoon can there be? Loads of really exciting things to do in this game, like collect guitar notes. Nothing special.

California Games

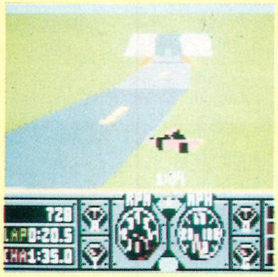
Atari/£29.95 ● Multi-event beach sports game including surfing, skateboarding, BMX and foot bagging. Highly detailed and very smoothly animated sprites.

Electro Cop

Atari/£29.95 ● A 3D shoot and search game after *RoboCop*. An interesting and addictive game with some very high quality sub-games within the main program.

Fidelity Ultimate Chess Challenge

Atari/£29.99 ● Speaks for itself really. A choice of levels and perspectives offers any player, no matter what his standard, a chance to improve.



Hard Drivin' (Lynx)

Gates Of Zendocon

Atari/£29.95 ● Horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up. All action, very fast graphics, there's nothing to beat *Zendocon* on the Lynx.

NEW ENTRY Hard Drivin'

Atari/£29.99 ● Using the electronic equivalent of a crow bar, Atari has managed, to cram the coin-op classic onto their dinky handheld. Some frustrating moments on the small screen. But all in all, it's not bad stuff.

Klax

Atari/£29.99 ● Combine the addictiveness of *Klax* with the handheld ability of the Lynx and you've got a problem. You will never put the thing down.

Ninja Gaiden

Atari/£29.99 ● Superb graphics, highly detailed backdrops and absolutely brilliant animation If you are going to buy one game for your Lynx, then make it this one.

Pacland

Atari/£30.64 ● *PacMan* up dated, revamped and given a third person perspective. Unfortunately all this plastic surgery has had a near terminal effect on the gameplay. Saying the learning curve is steep is like saying Bobby Davro is crap.

Rampage

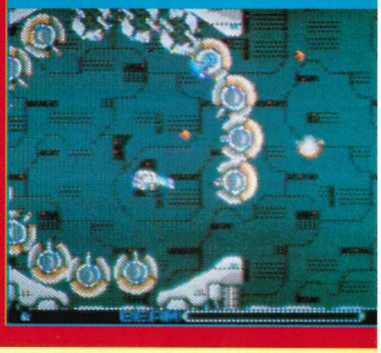
Atari/£34.99 ● Play a classic monster who must chew his way through as much of New York as possible. Pleasantly animated with nice touches of humour.

TURBO EXPRESS

R-Type

NEC / £35 ● What can you say about *R-Type* that hasn't been said before? Very little I expect, and on the TurboGrafx, *R-Type* shines with all its usual 'shinyness'. Baddies shoot all over the place, with only one thing on their mind, and we're not talking hugs and kisses here. Both graphics and sound are amazing, making this an utterly classic game. *R-Type*, you can't beat it, verily a shoot 'em up amongst shoot 'em ups.

MEGA ZONE



Shanghai

Mediagenic/£29.99 ● Ancient strategy game which isn't high on action or body count, but if you want a brain teaser, you can't get much better than this.

Turbo Sub

Atari/£30 ● A bit of *Afterburner*, a bit of *Stingray* a mere pinch of *R-Type*, simmer gently on an average heat for several hours and serve with a soupçon of garlic sauce. Not bad, but by no means original.

Warbirds

Atari/£29.99 ● Very nearly an air sim for a handheld. Through the cockpit World War One dogfights with a number of increasingly difficult missions.

MEGA ZONE

Xenophobe

Atari/£29.99 ● This game proves wrong those who said the Lynx didn't have good software. A superbly animated graphic adventure with enough variations to keep the most hardened adventurer happy.

TURBO EXPRESS

Tale Spin

NEC/£35 ● A sort of Disney game without the Disney film to go with it. Unfortunately graphics, sound and gameplay are all on the average side

Bonk's Revenge

NEC/£35 ● A titter ye not name, fine graphics and sound rescue this cute adventure from a quagmire of syrup. Familiar but well executed and packaged.

Splatterhouse

NEC/£35 ● Get the six-pack in, bung the latest PWEI LP on the turn-table, turn the lights down low and grab a grease burger. Enough bodily fluid, of one kind or another, to wash away a whole army of Marios. Pretty far out.

tba

In this month's Totally Bland Anchovy we, once again, spill the beans on the up and coming goodies from those nice people, the software houses. Read on and prepare to be gob-smacked.



double dragon 3

Let me ask you a question. If you had a chance to trog round the whole of Asia and Europe, what would you bring back as a souvenir? Model of the Eiffel Tower? Tea towel with a picture of Buddha on it? Or maybe an attractive toast rack styled from a piece of the Berlin wall? Maybe one, or maybe all of these. But sure as God made little apples, you would not come back with a collection of interesting stones. Not unless, of course, you are the star of the new Acclaim cart that is. And, into the bargain, you're a battling ninja kinda collector of interesting stones. It takes all sorts.

The plot behind this little cart, is that you are wandering around pretty much the whole world trying to collect all the Sacred Stones in order to save your chick, who goes by the rather un-ninja name of Marian. And of course this couldn't be ninja land if it wasn't for an all-powerful bad guy who is hell-bent on stopping you from rescuing your true love. Some people are just spoilsports. Slash and dash action, with an international air of travel and adventure. Ninja Whicker?

● Available from Nintendo in early '92, price £tba.



top racer

Oh no, your rear axle crank differential shaft has gone again. Better pull into the pits and change it for a turbo superlube wheel rim. Know the feeling when, just as your favourite pit technician is tightening your wheel nuts, you see all 15 other members of the racing field zoom past the pits, laughing a lot and flicking Vs at you? You pull out of the pit lane, a sad and lonely boy racer, many miles behind the rest of the field. What do you do? Knuckle down, crunch the gears and burn rubber in a valiant attempt to catch the rest of the competitors? Narr. With a flick of the wrist you execute a perfect handbrake turn, spin your broom broom through 180 degrees and head off round the track in the totally wrong direction. If you can't win, nobody else will. You become the Ninja Deathsplat Car from Hell.

Top Racer **is from those northern-bound games masters at Gremlin, who, word has it, are gonna be hitting the market with a fair few Nintendo games in general and Famicom games in particular. A split screen, dual action kinda game, with more options than I have had hot din dins. (Do you want the furry dice toggle on or off?)** ***Top Racer*** **is a bit of a balls-bad game. Racing over 32 stonkingly difficult tracks, in eight different countries and against all of 18 different cars, you really will have your work cut out. Check it out.**

● Available on import from early '92, price £tba.



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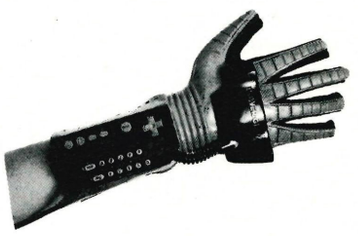
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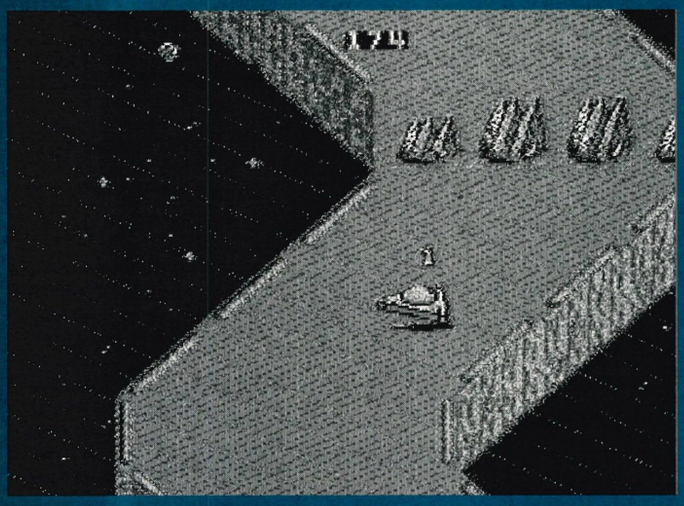
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galaxy 5000





When I was a kid I used to play a strange game. (*I'm not sure we want to know about this! Ed.*) You pinched your grandma's old tin tea tray and took it to any large hill at the local park. You then jumped onto the tray and slid down the hill at a high rate of knots, smashing into the iron fence at the bottom and breaking your face. Great fun.

Why bring this up? Well, it is not a million miles away from the plot of *Galaxy 5000*, the new cart from Activision. The year is 5000 AD and mankind's main source of entertainment comes from Galaxy racing. But what is Galaxy racing? Well it's a kinda sport in which a chap jumps into a space age tea tray and shoots round a track, more often than not breaking his face. See it all ties in, in a terribly subtle way. However being the 'future', which is a terribly violent place, you only have a certain amount of time to complete each track before it melts away to nothing, leaving you looking either very silly or dead. Or more often, both.

However once you have completed three races on one planet, the whole shebang moves onto a totally new and exciting planet to start a new set of races to the death on a new track. Of course along the way you can collect assorted power-ups, strap-on cannons and the like, that aren't half useful in beating those all too familiar traffic problems. If you collect enough dosh you can even get completely new ships. Useful, or what?

G 5000 (as it is known to its friends) features fair huge chunks of sampled speech dotted throughout the game. All rather impressive when you think that the NES boasts only a humble 8 bits. This coupled with a surprisingly addictive gameplay means that *Galaxy 5000* becomes one of those unexpected 'one more go games'. Well worth watching out for.

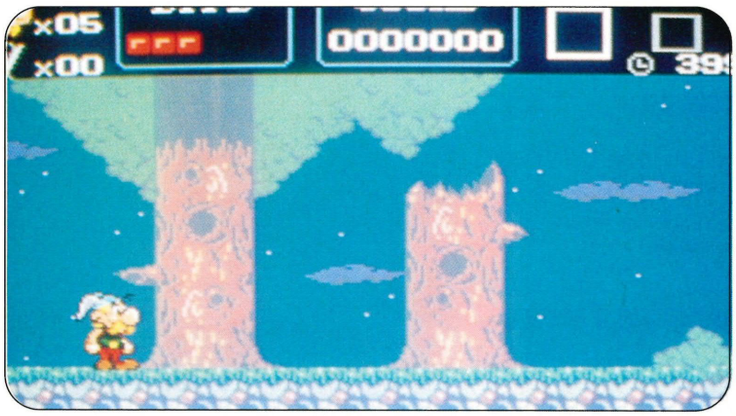
● **Available from Activision at the end of Jan '92, price £tba.**

MEGA DRIVE chart

1. **Sonic The Hedgehog** Sega
2. **Super Monaco GP** Sega
3. **Fantasia** Infogrames
4. **Wrestle Wars** Sega
5. **Moonwalker** Sega
6. **ToeJam And Earl** Sega
7. **Shining In The Darkness** Sega
8. **Populous** Electronic Arts
9. **Mike Ditka Power Football** Accolade
10. **Fatal Rewind** Electronic Arts

✪ Chart supplied by Virgin Computer Games Shop, Virgin Megastore, Oxford St, London W1. Tel (071) 631 1234

asterix the gaul



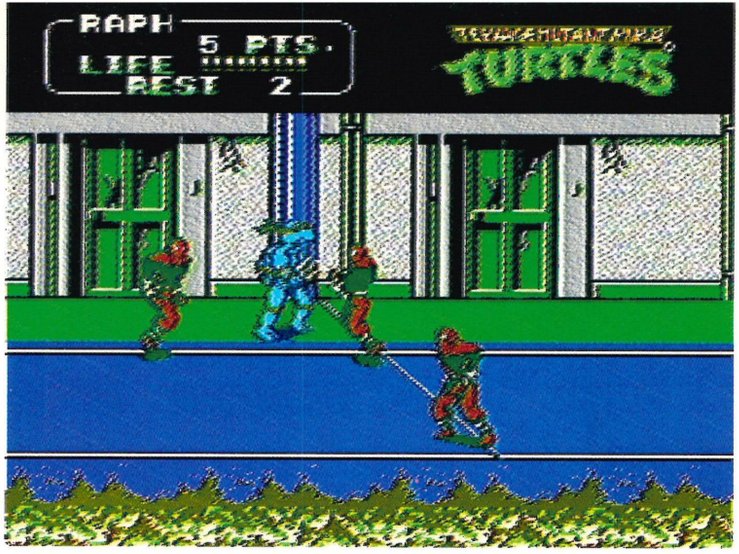
Remember Asterix? He was that little French guy with the handlebar moustache and the big nose, who went around hitting fat Romans? Well, following hot on the heels of other cartoon stars to make it onto the console screen, like Fred Flintstone, Asterix now has his own game in which he has to... err hit fat Romans. Sticking to the plot of the cartoon books really rather closely, the *Asterix* game should be a real stonker of a graphic adventure. Watch out for it in the new year.

● **Available from Sega in Jan '92, price £tba.**

MASTER SYSTEM chart

1. **Castle Of Illusion** Sega
2. **Mercs** Sega
3. **Sonic The Hedgehog** Sega
4. **Back To The Future III** Mirrorsoft
5. **Bubble Bobble** Taito
6. **Speedball** Mirrorsoft
7. **Super Monaco GP** Sega
8. **Moonwalker** Sega
9. **Spiderman** Sega
10. **R-Type** Sega

✪ Charts supplied by Virgin Computer Games Shop, Virgin Megastore, Oxford St, London W1. Tel (071) 631 1234

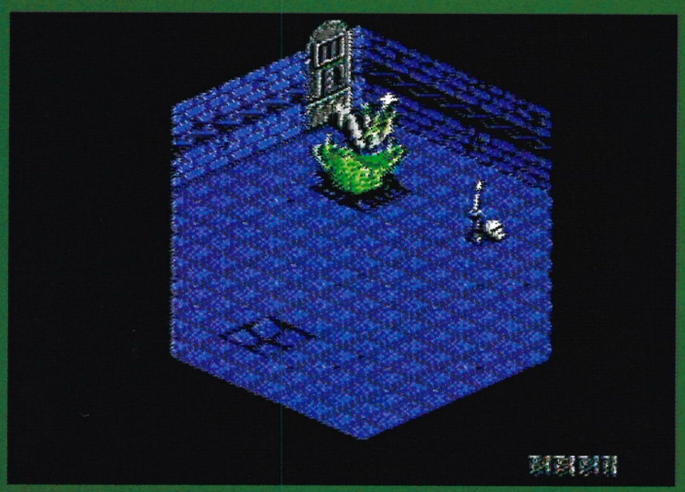


turtles 2—the arcade game

Those lean, green, pizza-munching machines are back. Following hard on the heels of the really rather awful film *The Secret Of The Ooze*. We find the reptilian quartet out to save their reporting chum April from the clutches of the really rather unpleasant Shredder. Why they want to save a month of the year from a piece of office equipment is beyond me. Why not save November from the photocopier? You can choose from any of the four dude-like characters, each boasting their special ability and rather annoying drawbacks. After that, off you adventure into the wild blue yonder, well actually into the middle of a flaming building because that is the setting of the first level.

After dealing with one set of dudes with a bad attitude you move onto the street to clean up another set of bad guys. And we're not talking Mr Sheen, here. A bash and dash kinda game, converted from the stonkingly famous and popular coin-op. All a bit good really.

● Available from Nintendo in May '92, price £tba.



the immortal

Who would have thought it hey? *The Immortal*, probably one of the stonkingly best games ever on the Sega, transfered lock, stock and wandering Orc onto the NES. I kid you not. It's true. Now Nintendo owners everywhere can dash around the many levels of a suitably dank, dark and smelly dungeon trying to save their lost master. On the way there are all the usual mountains of bad guys to overcome, puzzles to solve and all the things you would expect in the exciting world of international dungeoning. Still, a stonking game and certainly one to watch out for. There is even a guest appearance by everyone's favourite plumber, riding across the back of the dragon at the very end of the game. (*Really? Ed.*)

● Available from EA/Nintendo in May '92, price £tba.

GAME BOY chart

1	**Super Mario Land**	Nintendo
2	**Duck Tales**	Capcom
3	**Robocop**	Ocean
4	**F1 Racer**	Nintendo
5	**Gremlins 2**	Sunsoft
6	**Batman**	Sunsoft
7	**Bugs Bunny**	Kenco
8	**TMHT The Fall Of The Footclan**	/Konami
9	**Spiderman**	Nintendo
10	**Dr Mario**	Nintendo

NINTENDO NES chart

1	**Super Mario Bros 3**	Nintendo
2	**The Simpsons**	Acclaim
3	**WWF Wrestlemania**	Acclaim
4	**Gremlins 2**	Sunsoft
5	**Duck Tales**	Capcom
6	**The Adventures Of Link**	Nintendo
7	**Super Mario Bros 2**	Nintendo
8	**The Legend Of Zelda**	Nintendo
9	**Robocop**	Ocean
10	**Solstice**	Nintendo

WIN!

40,000 SETS OF WWF CARDS

Blimey! *Game Zone*, Acclaim and Merlin Trading have got together to give away a staggering 40,000 sets of WWF trading cards. All you have to do is answer this, mind-numbingly simple question and you too could have your very own set of these cute and cuddly cards.

where's the catch?

There isn't one! We are simple giving away 40,000 sets of cards. It's a gift! Aren't we kind?

stonkingly easy bit

To win your cards just simply answer this question.
What is the WWF star Hulk's surname?
Difficult? Narr!

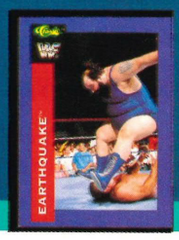
blimey that was easy, what now?

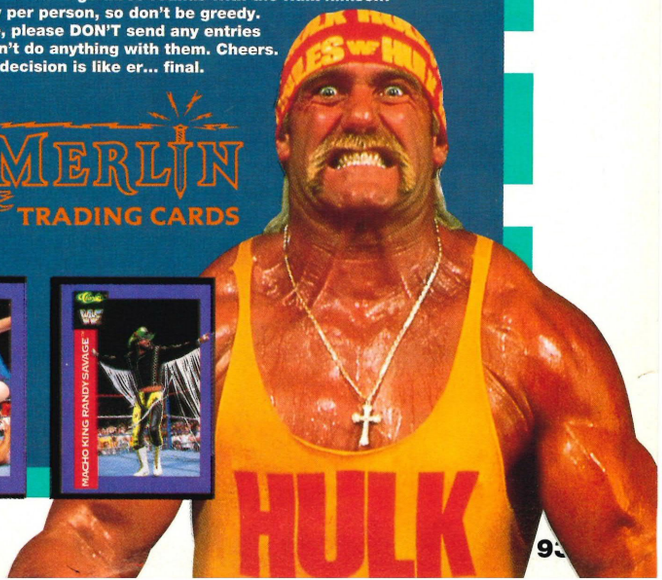
Now just plonk your answer on a postcard, along with your name and address and post it off to: It's on the cards, Acclaim Entertainment, 4 Walcot Place, Winchester, Hants. SO23 9AP

stern words

● Employees of Dennis Publishing, Acclaim or Merlin Trading caught entering will be forced to go three rounds with the Hulk himself.
● Only one entry per person, so don't be greedy.
● Please, please, please DON'T send any entries to us 'cos we can't do anything with them. Cheers.
● The Ed's final decision is like er... final.

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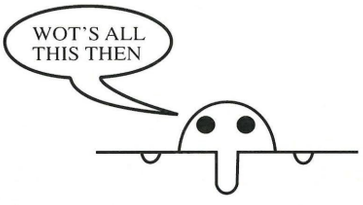
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hard ZONE

✪ For sale. Nintendo Entertainment system, two control pads, light gun, *Mario Bros, Duck Hunt, Gauntlet II,* boxed, very good condition. £100. Phone David 0892 662611

✪ Sega Mega Drive with Quickjoy SG Fighter joystick, no game, hence £80. *Strider* £25, *Budokan* £20, *Joe Montana Football* £18, *Spiderman* £20, Nintendo *Top Gun* £15, *Trojan* £15. Phone 0983 840363.

✪ Sega Master System for sale with four games including; *AKMW Double Dragon*. Two control pads, one joystick worth £170. Sale for £110 ono. Contact Wayne on 0734 421811.

✪ I will swap my Game Gear plus two games including *Mickey Mouse*, *G Loc* and power supply for your Mega Drive and five games, or sell for £180. Matt, 0763 241402.

✪ Boxed Amiga 500, six months old. Excellent condition, as new. with extended warranty, games, jotstick etc. Worth £600, will sell for £335. 081 691 7456 after 7pm. Ask for Kimwem. Buyer collects.

✪ Master System boxed, with instructions, including r.p.u. Plus seven games including *Golden Axe* and *California Games*. Worth £266, will sell for £100. Phone Suresh on 071 551 2355.

✪ For sale, Sega Mega Drive with six games including *Sonic*, *EA Hockey* and *John Madden*. Worth £350 will accept £220 o.n.o. Or swap for Famicom and games. Call 0742 583551 and ask for Kieran.

✪ For sale. Game Gear with four games; *Shinobi*, *Wonderboy*, *Monaco* and *Mickey Mouse*. All for only £130. If interested please phone Joe on 0973 225691 after 5pm. Weekdays only.

✪ Sega Mega Drive, two joypads plus *Streets of Rage*, *Devil Crash* and *John Madden*. Phone Reading 0734 472427. Ask for Pete.

✪ For sale Amstrad 6128K disc drive and green screen monitor. Also 20 good games, including leads for tape deck. £185. Call Ross on 081 591 7949

✪ Amstrad GX4000 plus four games, including *Pang* and *Navy Seals*. Everything boxed as new, including a selection of mags. Worth £195, will sell for £60. Phone Brian on 0773 710715.

✪ Sega Master System, with light gun and Konix joystick. Also included; five top games. All worth £250, will sell for £160. Call John on 0480 69072.

✪ Nintendo Game Boy for sale. Headphones, link-up cables, full instructions and three games. *Double Dragon, Dr Mario* and *Tetris*. Everything in pristine condition. £120 o.n.o. Phone Natalie on 081 879 0172.

✪ Super Famicom (scart) boxed and guaranteed. Includes five games: *Baseball*, *Mario 4*, *Ys 3*, *Final Fight*, *Actraiser* worth over £450. Best offer over £250 takes the lot. Tel 061 705 1271.

soft ZONE

✪ Japanese Mega Drive only for sale. Every single game available inc. latest from Japan (over 150 games). £800 or swap with Super Famicom, monitor, games +£200. Tel 0822 616412 and ask for Alan.

✪ Will swap *Xenophobe* on my Lynx for *California Games*. Call 0429 234926 and ask for Paul.

✪ Mega Drive swaps. *Columns*, *Strider*, *Mickey Mouse* (Jap). Wanted: *Rainbow Islands*, *New Zealand Story*, *Ghouls And Ghosts*, *Magical Hat*, *Marvel Land*. All callers listed for future swaps. Carl 0623 556 096.

✪ Yo! I would like to swop *Electrocop* for *Paperboy*, *Klax*, *Rampage*, *Robo Squash*, *Gates Of Zendocon*, *Chips Challenge* or any rad good condition game from the Lynx range. Tel 0600 772 861.

want ZONE

✪ Wanted: unreleased Game Boy games at a reasonable price, such as *The Simpsons*, *T2*, *Battle Toads* etc. If you can help please phone 0203 610 902 between 5pm and 9.30pm.

✪ Wanted: Sega Mega Drive. Will swap loadsa Amiga originals worth over £300. 16 games in total inc. *Monkey Island*, *PGA Golf*, *Swiv*, *Man United Europe*. Will collect in Midlands. Tel 021 427 7431.

✪ Wanted: Nintendo Entertainment System with game or games £30 and Game Boy with game or games, £25. Must be in Wyre Forrest area. Phone 0562 820 266 after 4pm and ask for Paul.

✪ Atari Lynx games for sale, call Dick on 081 363 4876.

love ZONE

✪ Depressed, unhappy, manic 15-year old boy seeks similar girl, into Indie music and lasting relationship. (No Sharons.) Phone 081 422 1376. I'm very lonely, please help, from Simon.

✪ Yes, I'm bored. Please write to me about anything. Now! Ant. 18 Brize Norton Road, Carterton. OX18 3JF.

fan ZONE

✪ *Console Crazy*. Issue two of this great console mag is out now. £1. Loads of reviews and news. Cheques payable to CC. Write to 28 Watergate Lane, Woolton Liverpool. L25 8Q3.

✪ Attention Fanzine Editors. In the near future we will be running a *Zone 7* dedicated to Console Fanzines. So if you want to see your fanzine in print, send us a copy so we can have a peek!

scribble ZONE

✪ I need a penpal. Must be interested in Nintendo (and own one), aged between 12 and 15, boy or girl. Phone me on 061 775 1992 to swap addresses.

✪ Mark, 22. Looking for a female pen pal 18+. Hobbies are playing with my Game Boy and watching video films. All letters answered. Send a photo to 29 Vernon Street, Hafod, Swansea, SA1 2EZ.

thing ZONE

✪ Happy 14th birthday to a great friend. Dougie Spitz from Tunc Taylan. P.S. Sorry about the lampshade.

Hey you lot! How about some more wacky messages, words of love and plain sillyness? The best message under the Thing Zone section each month will win a much sought after *Game Zone* badge. Groovy eh?

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THE TWILIGHT ZONE

You've nearly finished this issue, which means you're in The Twilight Zone. So what is The Twilight Zone? Well, The Twilight...

HANG ON, YOU'RE WRONG. I HAVEN'T NEARLY FINISHED THIS ISSUE.

...Whaaat?

I HAVEN'T NEARLY FINISHED. I READ MAGAZINES FROM THE BACK TO THE FRONT WHICH MEANS I'VE ONLY JUST STARTED READING. I WON'T HAVE FINISHED TILL I GET TO THE CONTENTS PAGE.

But you're meant to read *Game Zone* from the front to the back. Why do you insist on being so difficult?

JAPANESE PEOPLE DON'T READ THINGS FROM THE FRONT TO THE BACK, SO WHY SHOULD I?

Yes, but this isn't a Japanese magazine, is it? You're being very annoying and you're spoiling things for all the sensible readers who read things the normal way around. Go away and come back later.

I KNOW MY RIGHTS YOU KNOW. I PAID FOR THE MAGAZINE AND I CAN READ IT IN ANY ORDER I LIKE. IF YOU'RE GOING TO GET FUNNY ABOUT IT I'LL GET MY SOLICITORS ONTO YOU.

Okay, okay. We'll start again. Welcome to The Twilight Zone, whether you're reading it first or last. (Happy?) So anyway, what is The Twilight Zone? Well, The Twilight Zone is...

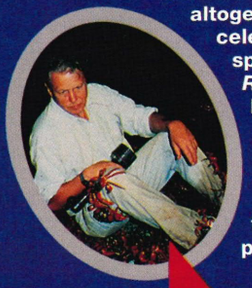
(Now you've run out of room. Ed).

THAT DOES IT. I'M WRITING TO MY SOLICITORS.

Bah! Why is life so hard? Here's the Twilight Zone Address: The Twilight Zone, *Game Zone*, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. Oh, and don't forget, there are badges up for grabs. Badgey wadgey gadgeys.

celebrity phone call corner

If you're a new reader you need to know something – we've got a spooky phone line. Maybe it's our number, maybe it's a dodgy connection in the BT network or maybe it's something altogether more weird, but there's one thing for sure – celebrities keep on coming through by mistake. We've spoken to Anne Diamond, Billy Bragg, Geoffrey from *Rainbow*, Keanu Reeves and Jeremy Beadle to name but a few. They all thought they'd phoned a friend or colleague, but they were through to us by accident. We asked you to send questions for us to ask these stars, so we could transform the telephone mix-ups into interviews. Roy Dawson of Kendal in Cumbria took us at our word and sent about 900. As we were picking some out, the telephone rang...



TELEPHONE: Ring ring, ring, click...
T-ZONE: Hello?
DAVID: Hello. Is that the Natural History museum?
T-ZONE: Blimey. You sound like David Attenborough.
DAVID: I am David Attenborough.
T-ZONE: Cor. Can we ask you a few questions? For our magazine?
DAVID: A magazine? Hmmm! Oh, alright then.
T-ZONE: Brilliant. What's the film called?
DAVID: What film?
T-ZONE: How long did it take to do the film?
DAVID: I don't know which film you're talking about.
T-ZONE: What's the film about?
DAVID: Look - I don't understand... What film?
T-ZONE: When is your next tour?
DAVID: What do you mean, my 'tour'?
T-ZONE: When is your next release?
DAVID: Release? What are you talking about? I don't understand.
T-ZONE: How's your girl or boyfriend?
DAVID: I'm married. I haven't got a girlfriend. I've got a wife.
T-ZONE: When are you getting married?
DAVID: Are you deaf? I said I am married.
T-ZONE: Who are the celebrities?
DAVID: Whaaat? Who are what celebrities?
T-ZONE: How are the Boswell family (Bread)?
DAVID: I've had enough of this. Goodbye. (Click).
T-ZONE: Hello? Hello? Hello? Hello?

There you go. Another rather successful interview under our belts, thanks to Roy's probing questions, and he (of course) gets a badge. As could you. Send your questions in: as many as possible and on any topic you want. And who knows – we may even get royalty on the line next month. Stranger things have happened.

readers' extremely useless models

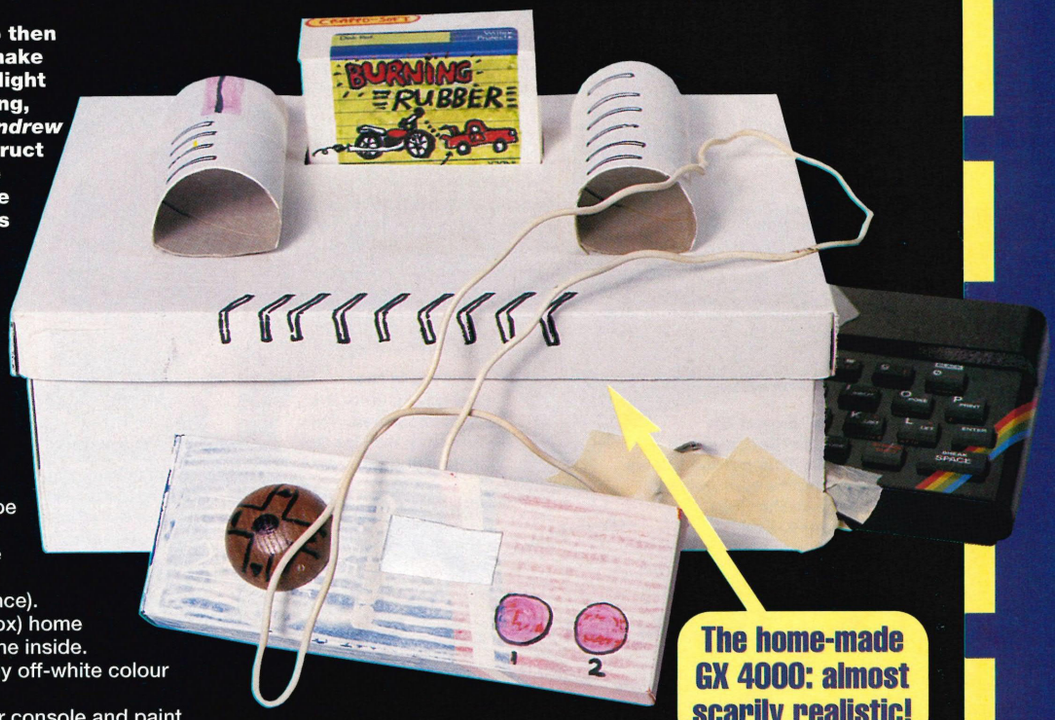


We asked you to send us models made from Blu-Tack, wood, Plasticine, Lego, turnips or anything so we could show the other readers how clever you are. Unfortunately, this month's exhibitor clearly isn't very clever. Why? Because he (or she) didn't include (a) their name (b) their address or (c) a description of what the model is meant to be. So all we can tell you is that it's made of Blu-Tack and has (as usual) been a bit squashed in the post. (*Sad. Very very sad. Ed.*) Can do better? Of course you can (It wouldn't be hard, would it?). Don't forget, any material will do. Leaves, bark, cork, clay, Meccano, whatever. And you could win a badge. Go for it.

making your own things...

no 3: a portable wipe clean trainspotter's notepad *and* an amstrad GX 4000 console

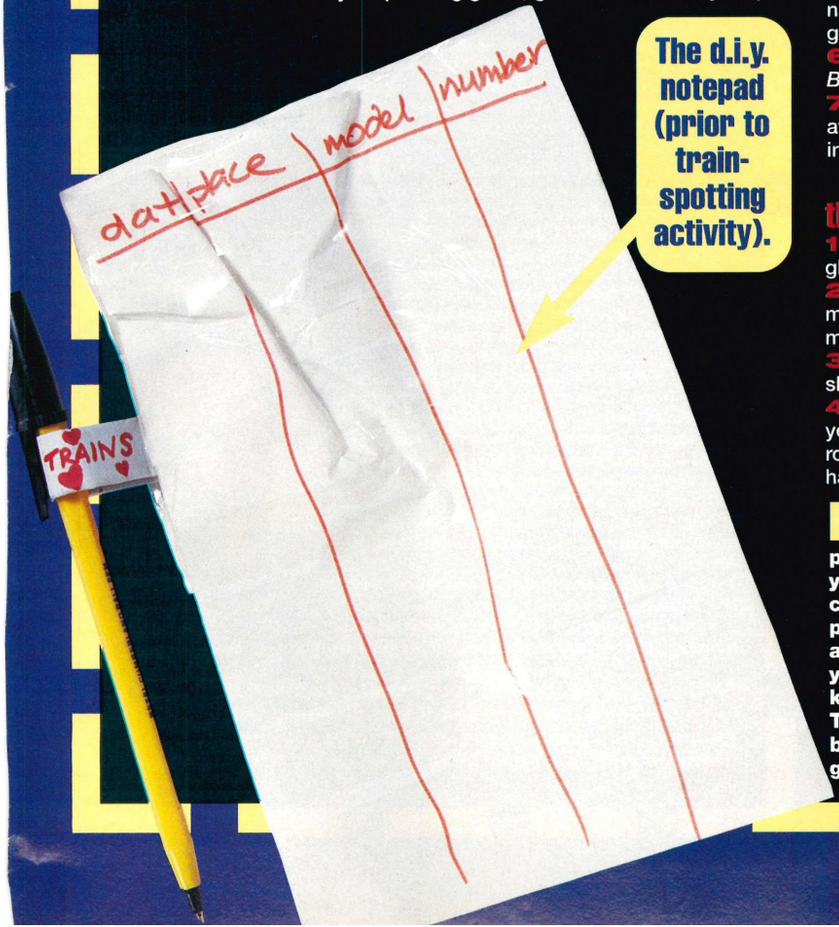
If you want to make something crap then watch *Blue Peter* – if you want to make something smart then read the Twilight Zone. That's what the world is saying, and it's no surprise why. This month *Andrew Weir* of Cumbria explains how to construct a do-it-yourself Amstrad console while *Peter Edwardson* of Cheshire has some good news for spotty people in anoraks – a wipe-clean trainspotters notepad for all those extremely interesting locomotive numbers.



The home-made GX 4000: almost scarily realistic!

the amstrad GX 40000 console

1 Go to your local 'friendly' shoe shop and ask the 'friendly' shop assistant for an empty shoe box. She will either:
(a) Punch you in the face.
(b) Make you buy a pair of shoes.
(c) Measure your feet, make you buy new shoes, new socks, some black and grey shoe polish, scuff remover, slippers, trainers, one of those funny plastic things and THEN give you a shoe box.
(d) Give you a shoe box (a very rare occurence).
2 Take your newly found friend (the shoebox) home and carefully sellotape a 48K Spectrum to the inside.
3 Paint the whole thing a disgusting creamy off-white colour which will make people feel ill.
4 Sellotape two bog-rolls to the top of your console and paint them the same colour.
5 Make an incredibly crap racing game, give it an incredibly crap name like *Burning Rubber* and give it away free with the console (i.e. give it to yourself for nothing).
6 Decide not to make any more games so that you will have to play *Burning Rubber* all the time.
7 Design a joypad that will give you incredibly painful finger cramp after a few minutes of play, paint it the same sicky colour mentioned in step three and your console is ready.



The d.i.y. notepad (prior to train-spotting activity).

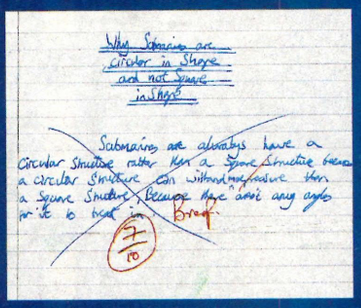
the portable wipe-clean trainspotter's notepad

1 Take a plain sheet of paper and cover it with sticky tape, leaving a glossy sheen.
2 Attach a piece of tacky paper to the left hand side and carefully make a loop big enough to hold your trusty NOBO finewriter dry marker pen. Call this your holder.
3 With the finewriter pen, write the following at the top of your sheet: Date, Place, Model and No.
4 It's finished! Now you can write those train numbers wherever you go, giving a detailed account of the place. When you have no room left on the board simply wipe it clean with an unwanted handkerchief.

Brilliant! A console AND a trainspotting aid. Well done both of you – *Game Zone* badges and *Game Zone* potatoes are in the post. But what about everyone else? Do you think you can do better? Want to show us how to construct a DIY motorbike, a time machine or a photocopier? Or something completely different which will astound and entertain for years to come? It's up to you what you make, we're just the 'go-between'. Share your knowledge with thousands and thousands of eager people. They'll love you for it, and we'll love you too. Fame, a free badge, a free potato and possibly a free game await you, so get your blue-prints in without delay.

the thumbprint analysis

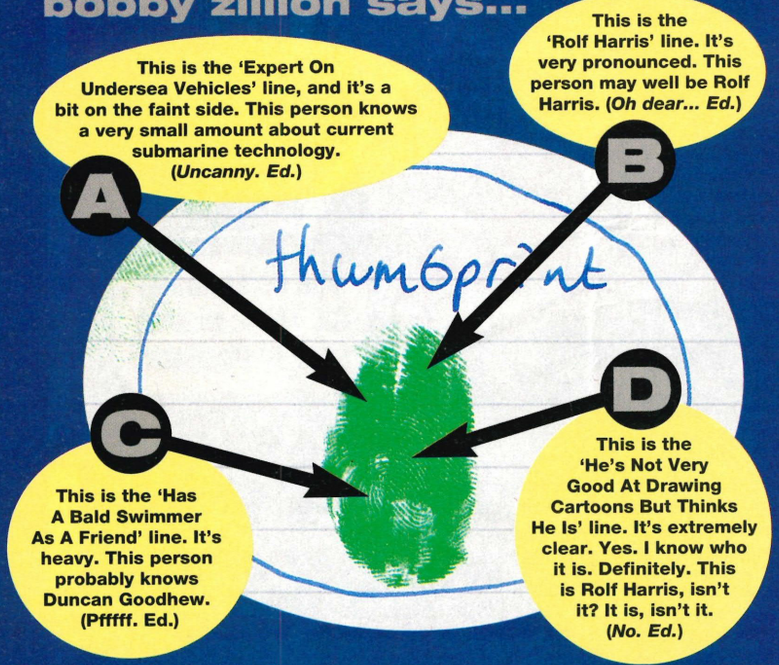
with bobby zillion



Gherkin Machine is a reader from Four Oaks in Sutton Coldfield. He sent us several items, but the one which caught our eye was his thumbprint. It was on the back of a bit of his homework. Here's his homework...

In case you can't read the writing, here's what it says: "Why Submarines Are Circular In Shape And Not Square In Shape: Submarines always have a circular structure rather than a square structure because a circular structure can withstand more pressure than a square structure because there aren't any angles for it to break in." His design and technology teacher awarded Gherkin seven out of ten for this, but felt the explanation to be a tad on the brief side. We wondered what Bobby Zillion would think, so we passed on Gherkin's thumbprint...

bobby zillion says...



Oh well, Bobby got off to a good start – and Gherkin Machine gets a badge for his troubles. We can probably count this as our first real thumbprint success. We want to try again though, so drop us a line (but make sure there's a clear thumbprint on it or we'll be jiggered before we start). Oh, and badgey wadgey padgey. Understand? Of course you do. Badge! See you next month.

we need

Things to make, questions for the interview, thumbprints, models, doodles done while talking to a boring person on the phone, horrendous passport photos, photographs of pets dressed in bizarre clothes and photographs of the inside of your house so we can do a 'Through The Readers Keyhole' as if it was the Loyd Grossman programme. Oh, and anything else you care to send. Remember. Gadgey, badgey, zadgey... (*Snip. Ed.*)

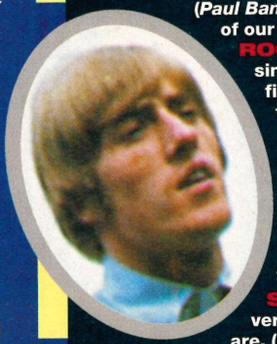
readers' survey results

Yes, that's right. Here are the results of our survey from the first ish. So what's the average *Game Zone* reader like? We took 200 completed coupons at random from the post sack and collated the data to produce this definitive guide...

MILKMEN: 35% of *Game Zone* readers wanted to be a milkman when they were four years old. You're obviously an ambitious lot then. Still, it's better than wanting to be a custard factory quality control foreperson. (*Eh? What's wrong with wanting to be a custard factory quality control foreperson? Ed.*)

GHERKINS: We've all been there haven't we – outside a McDonalds with a cheese quarter pounder in the hand. But how many of you fish out and chuck away the gherkin slices? The answer is 90%. Nine tenths! And that same figure probably applies to the entire population of the world, so McDonald's is draining the planet's gherkin supplies for nothing (the naughty eco villains).

TIMMY MALLET: He's a scamp, isn't he? Unfortunately he's a particularly annoying scamp and we think he should be sent to prison. And guess what? A whopping 99.5% of you agree. (*Paul Bannin* of Dorset didn't though. He must be one of our mad readers).



ROGER DALTREY: Roger Daltrey used to sing with The Who. He's been in a couple of films, too, and he owns a trout farm. We thought that someone like Roger would be bound to have 'love children' scattered throughout the country – so we asked you if you were one. And the result? Amazingly he's fathered 35% of you. What a 'boy', eh? And in case you're interested, his extra-marital exploits seem to have taken place for the most part in Devon, Cumbria and the West Midlands.

STUPID: We wondered if you were very, very, very stupid, and apparaently 35% of you are. (Especially *Damian Rice* who Tipp-Exed 'clever' over the word 'stupid' but then accidentally ticked the wrong bit so it said "I am very, very, very clever..." followed by a tick in the "No" box). (*What a clot. Ed.*)

SPOONS ON NOSES: Not many people can balance a spoon on their nose. Not very many 'normal' people, that is. But in the case of *Game Zone* readers a whopping 50% can. Half of you. And *David Cork* of Birmingham can manage 25 at a time. He's skill!

AMSTRAD: The poor old Amstrad GX4000 console – everyone seems to think it's crap. We wondered if you all thought so too, and 65% of you did. We're saying nothing.

EAR WAGGLING: It's not easy, waggling the ears without touching them. Still, 30% of you can waggle your ears, 69.5% of you can't and *Christopher* from Essex didn't know whether he could or he couldn't. (Mind you, he didn't know his surname either, so it's hardly surprising.)

CORN CIRCLES: Maybe we'll never know who or what is responsible for producing corn circles, but that didn't stop 99.5% of you from guessing. In fact 10% thought aliens were responsible while 20% plumped for hippies. The clear winners though, with 69.5% of the vote, were 'clever farmers'. (*Christopher* from Essex wasn't too sure again but we know about him, don't we.)

JOHN LESLIE: *Blue Peter*'s John Leslie may have loads of fans somewhere, but not very many of them seem to read *Game Zone*. We asked you to explain in less than fifteen words exactly what you thought of the sizeable TV presenter and here are some of the less favourable responses...

"He needs help, he's a sad case"... "He's a giraffe"... "A total plonker"... "He should be sent to jail" (*He could keep Timmy Mallet company. Ed.*)... "He's a ponce"... "A doddering poor excuse for a presenter"... "He fancies himself a bit"... "A spamhead"... "A spoilt ignoramous"... "He's even more irritating than Roy Castle and Cheryl Baker"



And on it went, the same story from 98.5% of you. However, there are still the 'not so unfavourable responses'. All 1.5% of them. Here are three...

"He's a very nice man and I'd like to meet his parents." (*Stuart Broadbent* of Bradford.)

"He's a good footballer." (*Andrew Brown* of Fleetwood in Lancs.)

"John has carried *Blue Peter* with good old bulldog spirit into the nineties." (*Matthew Hodgson* of Bristol).

So there you go. All you ever needed to know about the average *Game Zone* reader. If you disagree with our findings then write in and explain why. If you don't disagree with our findings then, er, don't. (Obviously.)

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THE UPPER ELBOW, THE UPPER ARM...?

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"The Immortal ™" a macarbre 3D descent through 50 dungeon chambers in search of your old master Mordimar. Each level will prove to be more puzzling and more gruesome than the last. Your only chance is to fight fire with fire, slime with slime and slice, behead, electrocute or spike anyone or anything that stands in your way.

"John Madden's Football '92 " is tough. Very tough. The update on all-time best selling football title, is now even more crunchingly realistic. It features more game-plays, more teams, instant replays, improved animation, a new TV-like perception and the opportunity to knock quarter-backs into the middle of next season.

"F-22 Interceptor ™" is the first true 3D combat flight-sim title technical break-through for MegaDrive. Piloting the Lockhead F-22 Advanced Tactical Fighter, it's so up-to-the-minute, you'll even find yourself flying into the red-hot Iraqi war-zones.

In "James Pond II ™Codename: Robocod ™", the amazing aquatic agent is back to reduce his enemies to underwater weeds. Only now, able to operate on land as well as in water, he's out to save 9 different arctic toy factories, equipped with all the latest gadgetry including a flying bathtub.

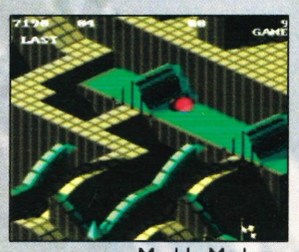
"Fatal Rewind ™" from Psygnosis is a Game Show with a difference. The first prize is your life. It's a battle against the clock, blasting, leaping and clawing your way out of 16 Pits of Death, while keeping an eye on the ever-rising tide of Deadly Life Liquid.

Also from Psygnosis "Shadow of the Beast ™" pitches you against a monster with a few scores of his own to settle. He controls no fewer than 132 different sadistic associates, all of whom you must cojole, fool, fight and destroy, to gain access to the enemy camp.

Finally, "Buck Rogers ™. The 25th Century. Countdown to Doomsday" is your chance to lead a ramshackle crew of delinquents against the combined might of the Russo-American Mercantile. Your mission of course, is nothing less than to save the Planet Earth, both on land and in space through a previously unseen ship-to-ship combat system.

So go for it! Try your hand at all of them.

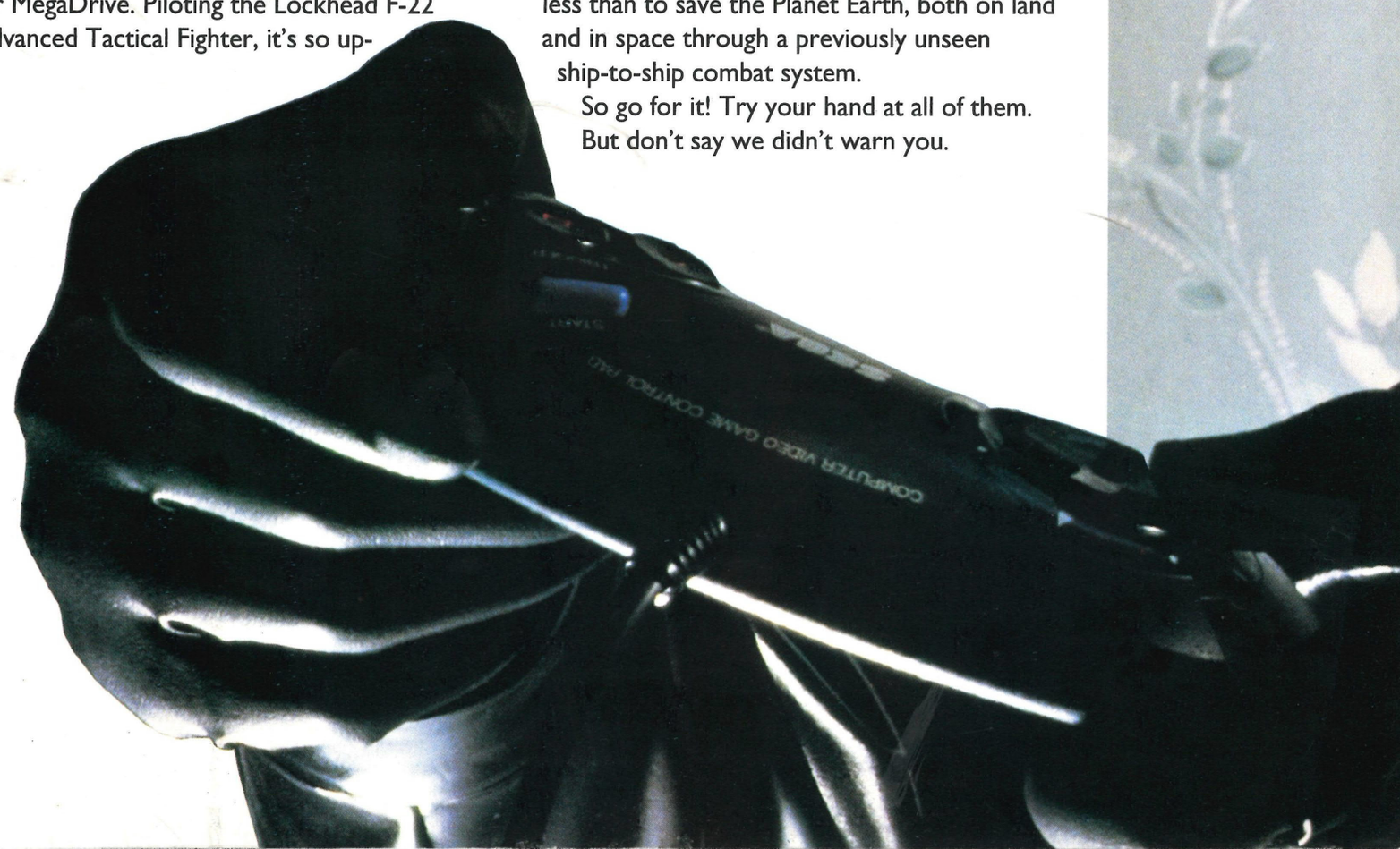
But don't say we didn't warn you.

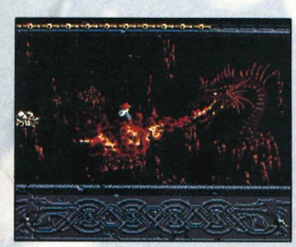


Marble Madness

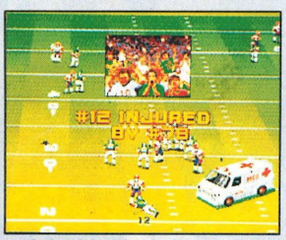


James Pond II





The Immortal



John Madden's Football '92



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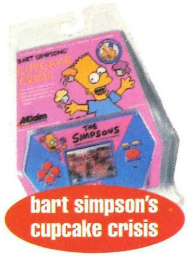
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