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MEGA machines

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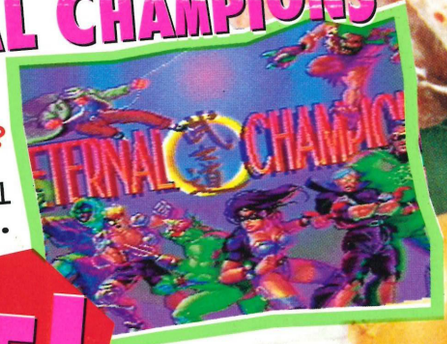
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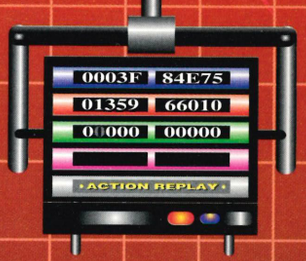
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Gird your loins for...

MEGA machines TWO

Issue Number 4

January 1994

COMPLETELY STUFFED!



Completely Stuffed!
004 Completely Stuffed! You're reading it! Okay, so we cracked the same joke last issue — but hey, that's show-business...

Vibes & Hot Shots
008 The biggest game of 1994 is here! Yes, Sega's *Eternal Champions* get it's first airing on these pages, as well as details on all the other press releases we've received this month.



The Ultimate Challenge 058
The MEGA MACHINES team descend upon Kingsbury High School in Wembly this ish for a gruelling day of *Robo V Termie* bashing. Al Needham missed most of it as he managed to lock himself in the bog, though, while James Beaven still hasn't got out of detention for swearing at the teacher!





018 Dear Santa
Our festive feature provides an indispensable guide on how to get *exactly* what you want this Xmas — plus how to avoid the old socks 'n' slippers syndrome. And you won't even have to snog your granny to get it.

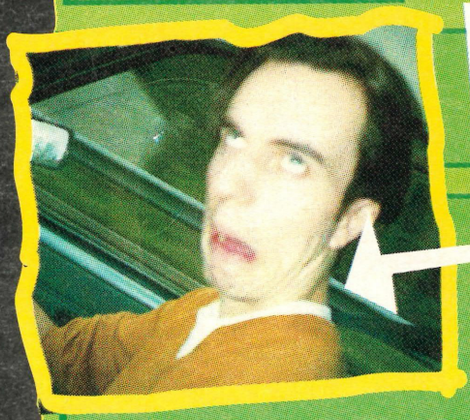
080 Ram Raid!
Poor old Namco. Half the employees at this ace Japanese-owned software house don't speak any English, so when our crack team of expert Ram Raiders bust their gaff, they never knew what hit 'em.



022 The Write Brothers
The Write Brothers
Nick 'n' Nige tear into their first batch of MEGA MACHINES letters, proffering peals of wisdom… along with the obligatory sarky comments. Oh yeah, and they've got a smashin' Naff Newsie for you to meet.



Mega Hits* 082
Our regular anagrammatical column investigates the games you *could* have been playing if you weren't wise enough to buy a Mega Drive. SNES, Amiga and PC releases all get the slagging they deserve — cruel? Certainly. But fun? You bet!



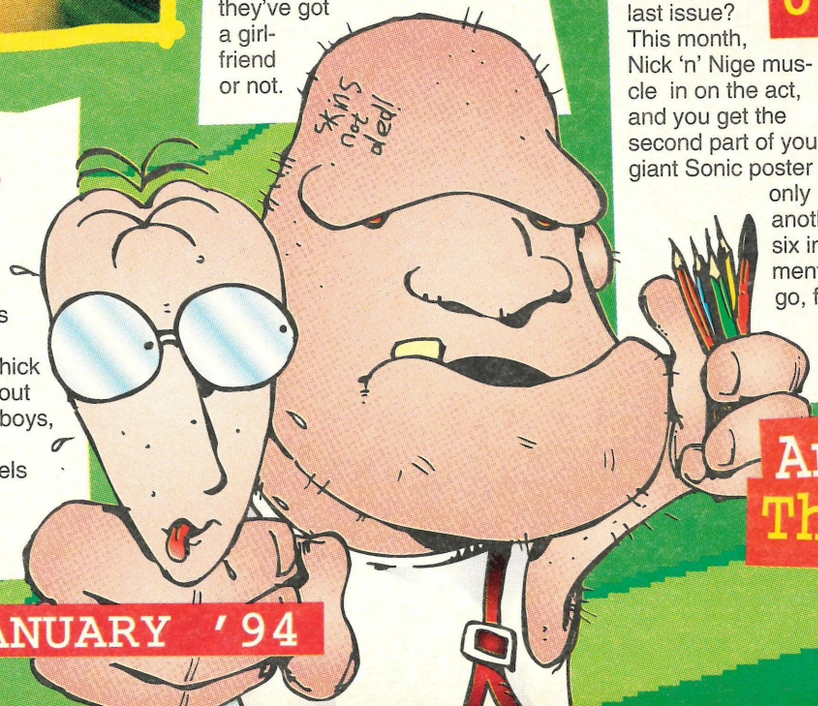
Caught In The Act 024
The Virgin Megastore in Birmingham's town centre was the location — you, the public, are the stars! Find out who's buying what in the funny accent capitol of the universe, and more importantly, if they've got a girlfriend or not.

First Class Poster 065
'Ere, did you figure out who it was last issue? This month, Nick 'n' Nige muscle in on the act, and you get the second part of your giant Sonic poster — only another six instalments to go, folks!

Gameful Employment 94
Going into a Job Centre or Careers Office and saying 'I want to work in the games industry, please' just ain't gonna work. Instead, why not read our regular Gameful Employment feature? You still won't get a job, but it's much less humiliating.

026 The Review Board!
Our panel of experts have had their hands full this issue, with new releases arriving thick and fast. We sort out the men from the boys, the top dogs from the mangy mongrels and, er, the good games from the crap ones.

Kartridge Korner 98
Yep, we know this is a stupendously duff new name for 'The Charts', but as it was the only entry we received in time. We had to go with it. And just think, one young reader got the top-selling Mega Drive game of the month for supplying it. Wot a bloody swizz…



And there's more? There certainly is!

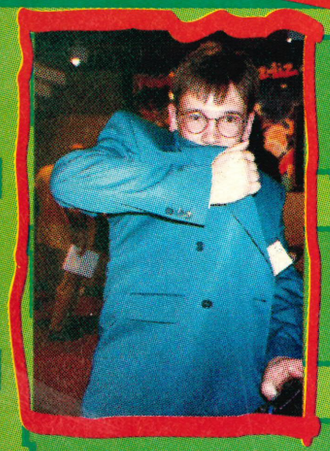
More...

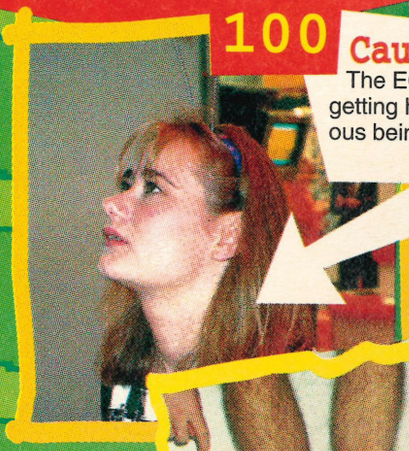
MEGA machines COMPLETELY STUFFED!

The Big Games List Thingie 121
Our pocket-sized buyer's guide is an invaluable help when it comes to Christmas shopping trips. 'It's also an easy way to fill four pages' say the MEGA MACHINES editorial team, '...yipee!'

Give Us Your Money! 126
Yes, it's the deal of the century. You give us some of your money and, in return, we'll give you some of our magazines. Now you can't say fairer than that, can you? The only question that now remains is what wacky wheeze have we thought up to get you to part with your cash *this* month?

Classified Information 128
Are you looking for a few last-minute prezzies? Then your search could well be over. Bargains galore and a whole lot less can be located lurking in our classified section — and if you're a complete saddo, you may even find a pen-friend sucker enough to talk to you!





100 **Caught in the Act: Celebrity Special**
The ECTS show in London is usually packed to the rafters with hot new Sega games, all getting hyped to death by an army of public relations personnel. We catch these mysterious beings in the act to bring you a celebrity special. And take the piss.





It's better to give than to receive at Xmas!

104 **Spin-A-Win**
Roll up, roll up, everyone a winnah! Well, almost. With over 250 Sonic-related prizes up for grabs, why not take *your* place on our exclusive 'Spin-A-Win Prize Wheel™ '? Round and round and round she goes, where she stops nobody gives a toss!

Dr. Ruthless 106
The surgery has been well and truly closed for most of the month, with our resident tipster holed up with a copy of *Street Fighter II*. The usually useless Dr. Ruthless surprised us all by emerging bloody but unbowed — check out his comprehensive player's guide here.

Stray Bullets 130
We got a right ear-bashin' after printing some of our 'inside the industry' quotes last issue — many of those featured were less than pleased. Oh well, better put on the industrial ear muffs, then...

AND ON THE CONVEYOR BELT TONIGHT... 69

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Gods 40
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HASTA LA VISTA, BABY

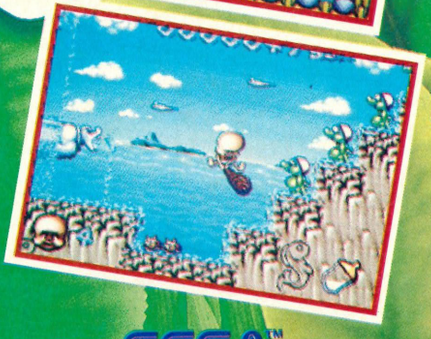


CHUCK ROCK II
SON OF CHUCK









Eighteen months after his victory over Gary Gritter, Chuck Rock is now the owner of the hugely successful 'Chuck Motors' and has become a father. Kidnapped by his evil enemy Brick Jagger, Chuck Rock is likely to become Chuck Dust unless somebody rescues him ... A sudden crash as Chuck Junior bursts from his play pen " Goo Goo Gaa, I'll be back".

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VIBES

Talkin' Turkey

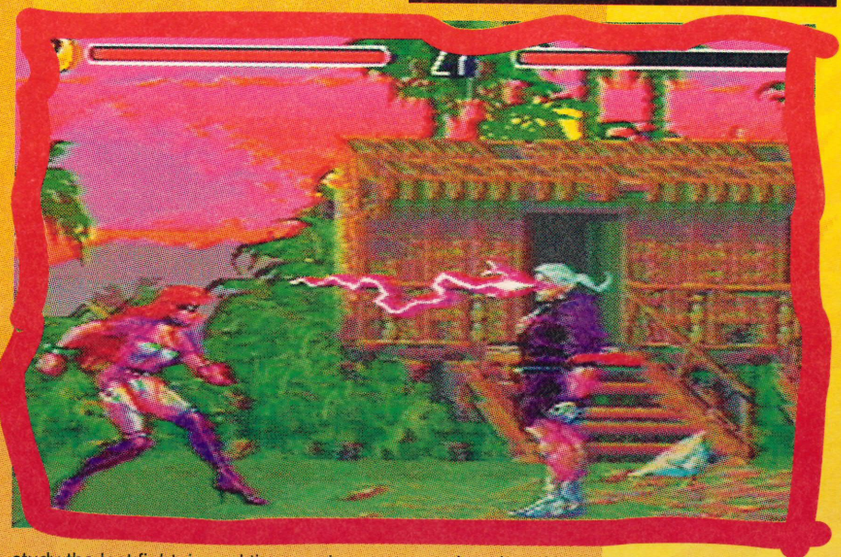
Despite a hectic schedule, and the coffee machine being shagged for the best of it, we've had a righteous laugh this month. Between mammoth sessions on all the latest Mega Drive games and taking calls from rapturous readers saying how much they enjoyed the first issue (bless you, you're so kind), we've had a fine old time. Ram-Raiding Namco's offices in West London was downright hilarious (the poor beggars never knew what hit 'em!), while The Ultimate Challenge this issue was the best blast ever.

We like to get out and about here at MEGA MACHINES — we reckon the only way we're gonna keep this mag heading in the right direction is by getting out on the streets, visiting the schools and software stores of Britain, *demanding* to know what

eternally yours!

Forget *Street Fighter II*. Move over *Mortal Kombat*. Sega are about to unleash the most awesome one-on-one fighting game *ever* — and that's official! MEGA MACHINES is privileged to present this EXCELLENT preview of *Eternal Champions*, a 24-Meg cart set to explode onto the Mega Drive in late December.





Believe us when we say ***Eternal Champions*** is like no other game you've ever seen. For a start, this is **Sega**'s first 24-Meg cartridge (*Street Fighter II* was produced by **Capcom**) and the programmers have used every last byte of memory for graphics, features and gameplay usually reserved for the latest arcade coin-ops.

The plot goes something like this: Nine fighters from throughout the history of time have been gathered together by a strange energy-being known as the 'Eternal Champion', who's holding — can you guess? — a deadly competition. The combatants find themselves in a dark, chaotic world kept in check by this Eternal Champ, an immortal being who's obtained the wisdom and combat abilities of the greatest fighting masters who ever lived.

Unfortunately, the Eternal Champion is growing weak and must find a replacement before he dies. The winner of a fighting competition will be the new Eternal Champion and protect the future of his planet for all time.

At first glance, *Eternal Champions* appears to be just another *Street Fighter II* clone, but there's more to this beat-'em-up than meets the eye...

Come in number nine

For a start, each character has a dazzling going head-to-head with the Eternal Champion himself. In a two-player game, you and a mate duke it out to see who's the best Street, er, Eternal Champion — you can even compete as the same character.

But the excitement doesn't stop there. You can set up two kinds of tournament, where up to 32 players can battle each other, one at a time, to become the best fighter of all time. If you're not quite up to full combat, why not practice special moves in the Training Room against attacking spheres or, if the whim takes you, a computer-generated holographic opponent?

Options upon options

Then there's the Battle Room. This place is similar to the Death Match in *World Heroes* as you, and an opponent if you choose, try to survive lethal killing devices such as magnetic mines, flying blade-saws and spiked balls... while slugging it out. Finally, there's the Training Room where you can study the last fight, in real time or slow motion, to learn opponents' weaknesses and improve your own technique.

Eternal Champions also includes a difficulty feature known as DPA (Dynamic Play Adjustment). Essentially, this means the computer studies the way you fight and adjusts the skill level as it sees fit — the better you get, the harder the game gets.

The version of *Eternal Champions* we've played is 95% complete and looks incredible. But is it better than *Street Fighter II*?

For the answer to that question you'll have to read the next issue of MEGA MACHINES, when we'll not only have a full review but also a comparison with Capcom's classic beat-'em-up. If you haven't bought *SFII* yet, it might be wise to hang onto your pennies.

Welcome to the next level...







the *real* gamesplayers want.

It's true. That's why, starting this month, we're introducing something known in the trade as 'a new thing'. Quite simply, it means this: from now on, when you enter a competition/write to the write bros./send some tips/etc., your name and address will be logged with Milo Jackson (our Ram-Raid driver and sometime staff writer). If we're in your area — doin' another Ram-Raid, Ultimate Challenge, whatever — Milo will access all the relevant info from his lap-top computer, and you can expect us for a surprise visit! All we're after is a nice cuppa, some biscuits and good nose 'round your Mega Drive games collection.

Before we go ahead and make any (more) unscheduled visits, though, I s'pose I'd better wish you all a Merry Christmas. And if anyone out there can possibly face another turkey sandwich, just say the word: we've got enough left to feed the starving half of Wigan since the cover photo was taken — and we're all fed up to the backside with it!

Have A Cool Yule,

Steve

Steve Shields
Managing Editor

array of moves which put even the best Neo-Geo fighting games to shame. In addition to an array of devastating punches and kicks, each character has a staggering NINE special moves to master.

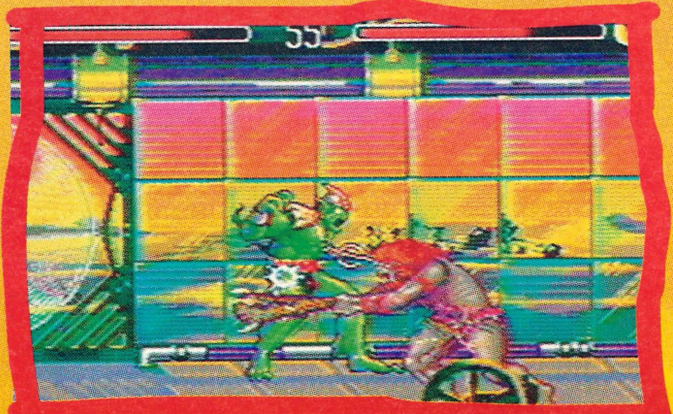
Competitors face each other in nine different time zones and battle it out until only one remains. Using all of your fighting techniques, your must win two rounds per bout in order to victorious (so let me get this straight. What your saying is that it's a 'best-of-three' kinda thing, then? —Ed).

In one-player mode, you face the eight other fighters before out over two rounds.

Other options include various speed settings (Slow, Normal and —gulp! — Overdrive), changeable controls, character biographies, level-select, match conditions (choose how many falls a fighter can take) and the unique Instant Replay feature. This handy option allows you to







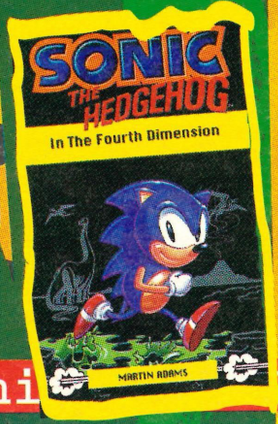


SONIC THE BEST-SELLER

It had to happen. Every major 'cute' character has his own comic, TV series and truckfuls of merchandise, so now **Virgin** are cashing in on **Sonic** with new books.

The first two, *Sonic the Hedgehog in Robotnik's Laboratory* and *Sonic the Hedgehog in the Fourth Dimension*, have obviously been designed to keep computer games on the right side of parents, at the expense of kids who might have bought the books if they were any good.

But still, if your mother makes you buy a present for someone you don't like, one of these should do the trick — and they're only three quid each!



IN THE CLUB

A regular advertiser in this and other console magazines are **Special Reserve**. Known for their quality mail order service, Special Reserve recently opened their second retail outlet (or shop, as some people call 'em) at **43 Broomfield Road, Chelmsford, Essex**, open 10 am till 8pm, seven days a week.

Their grand opening on 5 November was attended by such computer game celebrities as **Sonic**, **Zool** and **Cool Spot**, who were on hand to give presents to all the likkle children what had gavvered there (aah!). The Chelmsford shop is the first in a series of outlets being opened this year.

Special Reserve are expanding quickly and already offer a wide range of consoles, games and accessories. Their mail order club has attracted over 180,000 members since it was formed in 1986 and more are joining all the time. Members' priviliges include money off games and other generous offers.

With a cheap membership rate (just £4), you'd be wise to check out Special Reserve: The Games Club. For a free 12-page colour catalogue, write to **Special Reserve, PO Box 847, Harlow CM21 9PH**.

Oh, and if you're wondering why we're giving them an extra plug this issue, it's because they sent a rather spiffing mouse mat and cheap gifts are guaranteed to sway us.

IT'S A GAS!

Forget all the other news stories you've read this month. One serious story came to our attention just as we were going to press. It seems Liverpool-based company **Psygnosis** have run into a spot of bother over their forthcoming release, ***Wiz 'n' Liz***.

The acclaimed Mega Drive game should've been released by now but it's run into a spot of legal trouble in America. The problem lies in the fact that the two magicians featured in the game have a habit of farting every time they bend over to help their furry friends. The Yanks object to this and are causing a bit of a stink (ho ho —Sub Ed) so Psygnosis have delayed the UK release as well until they can ascertain the public's opinion.

John Beyer, a spokesperson for the **National Viewers & Listeners Association** (in other words, a bunch of grouchy old gits) told us, 'There are a host of computer games glorifying coarse and ill-mannered behaviour. These games are to be deplored because kids look at this and think it's the way to behave.'

That's all the info we have on this major news story this issue but you can rest assured we'll get to the bottom of it. And remember, we at MEGA MACHINES do not condone the anal antics of computer game characters... even if they *do* make us chuckle.

VIBES

PLAY BEFORE YOU PAY

There you are with hard-earned (yet easily spent) cash burning a hole in your pocket, trying to decide which game to buy from the massive selection in your local high street store. Will it be *Street Fighter II*, *Sonic CD* or *John Madden '94*?

It's a tough choice and you can guarantee that whichever one you go for, the moment you get it home you'll wish you'd bought something else. It's a familiar scenario and one which we at MEGA MACHINES fully sympathise with. Remember: We care.

And so do those cheery folk at **Our Price**. As you probably know, Our Price not only stock the latest (and greatest) pop tunes, they also carry a wide range of software for the Mega Drive, Mega-CD and other top consoles and computers.

To help you spend your money wisely, Our Price are introducing new games demonstration areas into 60 stores before Christmas. These neat play stations have been specially created for Our Price and feature a unique selection system, so if you fancy a quick blast of *Lethal Enforcers* before forking out £60, simply select the game and play through the first level.

It's a great idea and if it takes off, Our Price intend to fit the games demonstrators in over 230 shops nationwide. So pop down to your local Our Price and play before you pay!



MUTANT LEAGUE HOCKEY

Hot Shot!



It seems those friendly folk at **Electronic Arts** are in a festive mood this year 'cos their next sports game has a definite frozen feel to it. Following their massive hit *Mutant League Football*, the EA crowd are gearing up to unleash more madness in the form of ***Mutant League Hockey***.

It's basically a parody of EA's most popular sports title (*EA Hockey*), with loads of gore and strange creatures thrown in for good measure. *Mutant League Hockey* features 23 twisted teams from two seperate leagues, each group decked out in murky colours, as are their gloomy stadiums.

Gameplay is, as you'd expect, completely wacky, as two terrifying teams thrash it out on the ice to see who'll win the coveted Golden Trophy. As with *Mutant League Football*, expect heaps of violence, as well as obstacles such as ice sharks, mines and pits. Teams can also choose from six different weapons, including such delightful items as a pick axe and dynamite.

All pucked-up

A feature not included in the last game (for obvious reasons) is the 'Puck Cam'. This handy gadget provides an instant replay of the death and destruction, and also allows you to get real close to your opponent. Unlike *EA Hockey*, on-the-ice fighting is positively encouraged — the action zooms in when two players beat the crap out of each other!

With these and other crazy features, *Mutant League Hockey* looks set to slide into view in January '94, priced £44.99. This monster 16 Meg cart is also compatible with EA's four-player adaptor so you and three other misfits can take part in the frozen fun.

We'll have a full review next issue so stay tuned, sports fans.

FUN & GAMES FOR ALL THE FAMILY

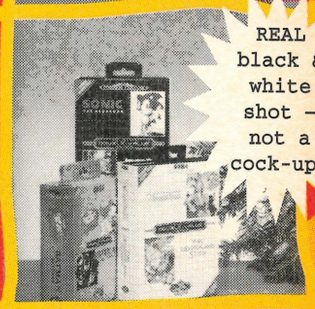
Christmas is almost upon us once more and you're bound to be stuck for prezzie ideas. After all, who wants to spend loads of cash on a massive gift for their brother when some naff piece of old tat from a market stall will do the job just as well?

Those of you searching for a real bargain this Chrimble need look no further, for **Telstar** have come up with a t'rrific idea that'll do the job and save your pennies, too. They're launching a range of ***Double Value Game*** packs that contain not one but ***two*** top-selling Sega games.

But if you're expecting a steep price, think again! With Double Value you get two games for the price of one, and that's gotta be a boon for the Christmas shopper in a hurry!

Fancy a bit of both?

There are already nine compilation packs lined up for the Mega Drive, two for the Master Sytem and two for the Game Gear. The Mega Drive pairings are *Alien 3* & *Predator 2*, *Back To The Future III* & *Batman Returns*, *Sonic 1* & *James Pond II: Robocod*, *Corporation* & *Aquatic Games*, *Wrestlemania* & *Powermonger*, *OutRun 2019* & *Lotus Turbo Challenge*, *Batman* & *The Terminator*, *LHX Attack Chopper* & *Shadow of the Beast*, and *Gynoug* & *Strider*.



REAL black & white shot – not a cock-up

Most of these are covered in our Big Games List Thing, starting on page 121, so you can get the gen on [sound of thumbed pages]... 15 of the 18 carts on offer. Prices start from as little as £29.99, which means you can make savings of up to 50%.

The other good news is that Double Value packs are on sale in your local Woolworths, WH Smiths, Dixons, Rumbleows, Argos, Blockbuster Video and other high street stores — now!

THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF TINHEAD

Hot Shot!





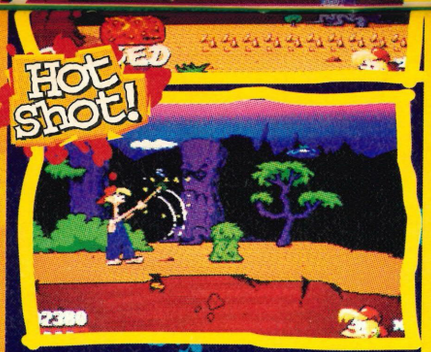
Yes, it's another **Sega** platform game, yes, it's got a cute central character, but ***The Amazing Adventures of Tinhead*** is still gonna knock you for six. Currently in development by top software house **MicroProse**, it's one of their hottest properties yet.

BUBBA 'N' STIX



CaRt-oon tiMe!

Waking up early on a Sunday morning is our idea of living hell, but some clever sod had the idea of sticking a brilliant new cartoon series on Channel Four at an ungodly hour.





On its way from **Core Design** early next year is a weird little number entitled ***Bubba 'N' Stix***. A horizontally-scrolling platform-cum-puzzle-type jobbie, the aim is to guide Bubba, a hapless delivery man, back home to Earth; he was kidnapped by an alien whose spaceship goes out of control, crash-landing on a hostile planet (how ruddy original).

Okay, so the story is about as different as two very similar-looking peas in a podule… but the gameplay? Now that IS different!

Bubba, you see, wasn't the only unwilling occupant aboard the ill-fated alien vessel — it was crammed to the bulkheads with all sorts of strange extra-terrestrial beings (which, along with Bubba, were on their way to a cosmic zoo).

Sticky situation

As Bubba pulls himself out of the mud on the planet's surface, one of the aliens — a living, breathing *stick*, would you believe! — lands on his bonce, then proceeds to tag along.

Setting off in search of a means of escape from the strange world, Bubba must manipulate the stick to negotiate obstacles and deal with enemies. A versatile critter, Bubba's able to use his log-like companion as a tightrope balance, lever, javelin, baseball bat, handy platform and, naturally, to smack enemies with.

Well, it all sounds exceedingly nutty, so let's hope the gameplay's got a hazelnut in every byte, eh?

The Adventures of Sonic the Hedgehog features the ongoing tales of Sega's popular mascot in an action-packed half-hour animated series. The show made its UK debut on 7 November and will run until, er… they run out of episodes, s'pose.

Currently the most popular cartoon show in the USA (they're easily pleased over there), *The Adventures of Sonic the Hedgehog* is set to attract loads of younger viewers. Set on his home planet of Moebius, Sonic's part of a heroic group of freedom fighters out to stop the diabolical schemes of the demented Doctor Robotnik and his Elite S.S.S.S.S.S (Super Special Sonic Search and Smash Squad).



Chicken-shoot

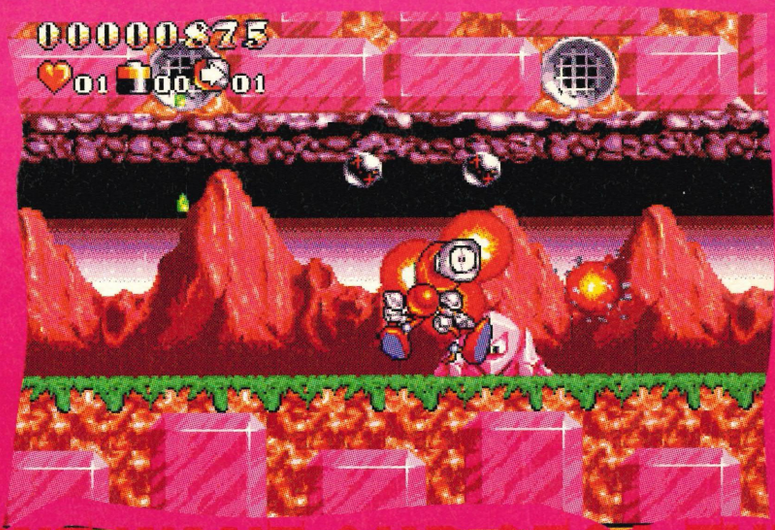
Trying to win the attention of Robotnik are his two lieutenants, the chicken-like Scratch and tank-treaded Grounder. To thwart the Doc and his robots, Sonic has not only enlisted the help of his old pal Two Tails the Fox, but also fellow freedom fighters Princess Sally Acorn (yuck!), Bunnue (double yuck!), Boomer, Antoine d'Coolette (?) and Nate Morgan. With super-speed and ingenuity, the furry folk always manage to stop Robotnik and put the kibosh on his plans.

If you haven't already seen *The Adventures of Sonic the Hedgehog*, tune into Channel 4 early on Sunday morning for the fastest mix of action, adventure and animals around.

Tinhead is the wacky main character who has some unique turbo-boosted morphing abilities (he can change his shape quickly, for all the thickies out there) and a few problems, too. His home planet was a peaceful place with clear blue skies and rolling green hills… until the arrival of The Evil Grim Squidge.

This master of diabolical plans is stealing the stars from the sky, leaving all nearby planets in a right old state (Guv'nor). It's up to Tinhead to do the right thing and stop Squidge once and for all. This entails guiding can-bonce through various challenging platform levels, trashing bad guys, flying around using a rocket pack, bouncing on space hoppers and doing all the things heroic shape-changing robots should.

Although there are a glut of platform-based games on the market, *Tinhead* has enough unique features and decent visuals to make it a winner. There's no news on price or a release date for *The Amazing Adventures of Tinhead* but we'll keep you posted.



SEGA SHOW-OFF

Always one to blow their own trumpet, **Sega** have just invested pots and pots of money in a purpose-built presentations facility in their London Headquarters. The suite features state-of-the-art audio and visual equipment used to preview forthcoming game releases and acts as a regular meeting place for Sega's marketing teams.



Games, promotional videos and other info are displayed on a massive screen using an Electrohome video/data/graphics projector. The room is also fitted with surround-sound and concealed lighting, giving the overall impression of being inside a huge video game (apparently).

Sega's European Product Director Barry Jafrato said, 'The new facility is a tremendous benefit to our European marketing operation. Games, television commercials and sales statistics can all be displayed on the large screen, allowing us to make slick and effective presentations to Marketing Managers.

'We also use the room for press conferences, special events and to launch our latest games — the cast of *Jurassic Park* were present at the recent launch of the game based on that movie.'

The high-tech room isn't open to the public but Sega are already thinking about installing game preview sites elsewhere in the country.

WE WANT OUR SEGA TV!

The much-anticipated trial run of the **Sega TV Channel** has been put on hold. The Sega Channel was set to begin broadcasting before Christmas in the USA but the plan's been abandoned due to technical difficulties, among other factors.

However, a rescheduled January launch is on the cards as **Sega** gear up for what could be one of the most exciting multi-media ideas ever. Sega are joining forces with cable TV operators **Time/Warner** and **Tele-Communications Inc** to give Mega Drive owners the chance to receive up to 50 video game titles via satellite.

To receive the games, users need to buy a special, video cassette-size cartridge which plugs into their Genesis (Mega Drive) and decodes the satellite signal. The price of the cartridge has yet to be determined, but an additional service fee will ranging from $10 to $20.

The Sega Channel will have a limited test run in Portland, Sunnyvale and Buffalo, with national distribution starting later in '94. It's not yet known which games will be available but Sega are keen to use their extensive back catalogue, as well as previews of forthcoming releases.

Sega Channel consultant Howard Burkat said, 'We'll make the gamezoids crazy by showing them one or two levels of a game.' However, **Nintendo** have already dismissed The Sega Channel by stating, 'The dilemma in putting video games on TV is that if you put hot new games on the air you won't sell any, and if you only offer older games they'll be inherently less interesting.'

Whether The Sega Channel will be launched over here has yet to be determined, but it's already known Sega Europe are keen to bring interactive TV into the UK, ASAP. Stay tuned to this station for further bulletins.

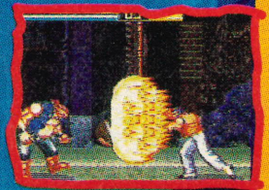
VIBES

ART OF FIGHTING

So what's the hottest games console around? The Mega Drive? Nah. The SNES? No way. What about the Mega-CD? You must be joking!

The machine for the true games fan is the **Neo Geo**. Featuring arcade-quality graphics, sound and gameplay, it costs a whopping £500 and games set you back at least £100. Everyone raves about how hot the 24-Meg *Street Fighter II* is but most Neo Geo games clock in at over 100 Meg.

So what's this got to do with Mega Drive owners? Well, the good news is that another Neo Geo game (following the lukewarm *Fatal Fury* and *King of the Monsters*) is winging its way to the MD, courtesy of **Takara**.



Art of Fighting is a one-on-one 16-Meg street combat game with a difference. It follows the adventures of Ryo (hmm...) and his mate Robert as they battle a tough gang who've kidnapped Ryo's missus.

There are ten fighters to choose from, all of whom have loads of special moves to master. Both the Neo Geo and forthcoming SNES game used cinematic zooming to add atmosphere but whether this will be included in the MD game has yet to be decided.

An official UK release date has yet to be set but expect *Art of Fighting* to appear in Japan in the spring. Let's hope other cool Neo Geo games such as *Fatal Fury 2*, *Magician Lord 2* and *World Heroes 2* follow.



ROBO-RATED



With the Mega-CD game *Night Trap* getting a 15 rating and a parental advice sticker slapped on *Mortal Kombat*, it appears software companies are taking greater care when they release potentially sensitive software.

The latest self-censorship news is that **Virgin Games** are to issue a 16 classification on their forthcoming Mega Drive release, *RoboCop vs The Terminator*. We reviewed this violent game in the last issue of MEGA MACHINES, rating it at 84%, but before it appears in the shops this Christmas a sticker will be applied to the packaging. The sticker is intended to act as a guideline for retailers and parents alike.

Although Sega Europe haven't adopted an official rating system, their American counterparts have already introduced classification. Currently games are rated as GA (for general audiences), MA-13 (for mature audiences — parental discretion advised) and MA-17 (for adults).

Because of the violent nature of *RoboCop vs The Terminator*, Virgin Games have felt obliged to adopt the one-off 16 rating. Sales and Marketing Director Sean Brennan stated, 'When you bring together RoboCop and Terminator, the sparks are bound to fly and the action is inevitably fierce. In discussing this with Sega and gaining a 16 classification, we hope we've played our part in what is an industry-wide effort to ensure video gaming has no negative effect whatsoever.'

ROBOCOP VERSUS THE TERMINATOR

PURE GENIUS!

Got ***Mortal Kombat***? Get a ***Game Genie***! **Hornby Hobbies**' wonder device has the most cheat codes for **Acclaim**'s hot martial arts game.

The Game Genie Helpline is boasting it has an unofficial 'world record' number of codes for one game. Those clever Game Genie geezers have cracked *Mortal Kombat* wide open and come up with 303 special effect codes, apparently the highest number produced for the device.

We'll be printing all the Game Genie codes in the very next issue, as they hadn't arrived as we went to press. Deadlines, eh — who'd have 'em?



MEGA RACE



If you're one of those rich buggers who's got a PC, you'll no doubt have thrilled to the stunning visuals and gameplay in such games as *KGB*, *Conspiracy* and *Dune* from **Virgin Games**, all developed by French team **Cryo Interactive**. They're currently programming CD-only games for various systems and their first Mega-CD game, ***Mega Race***, is shaping up nicely.

This futuristic racer takes place on some of the most challenging tracks ever devised and features stunning 3D-rendered graphics that truly take the Mega-CD to the next level. There's plenty of head-to-head action as you and your opponents face each other in a deadly game of driving combat.

Mega Race features a wide choice of cars, weapons and over 30 minutes of Full Motion Video to gawp at. From what we've seen so far (and to be honest, that's not a lot — in fact it's only these screenshots, by damn and thunder), it's looking very nice indeed. We'll have a full preview next time.

ANOTHER ONE FOR THE PILE

Hey! Is there anybody else who wants to announce their CD console? It seems like the thing to do at the moment, as nearly every console maker in the world has their own CD wonder machine in development.

The Mega-CD is already out, of course, as is the Amiga CD32, Philips CD-i and 3D0 (in America, at least). The new year brings devices from Atari, **Sega**'s 32-bit Saturn and possibly a CD add-on for the Neo-Geo.

The latest company to throw itself into the CD arena is **Sony**, who've combined their Corporation and Music Entertainment (Japan) divisions to form **Sony Computer Entertainment** and produce hardware and software for a new CD games console.

Sony are already claiming the new system will 'offer a breakthrough in gaming technology'. Well they would, wouldn't they? The new Sony machine is scheduled for European release in the first half of '95, so it will be directly competing with the **Nintendo/Silicon Graphics** 64-bit machine.

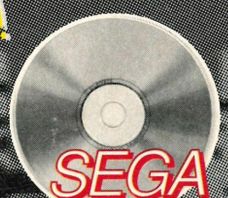
Hopefully, this Sony CD console will become a reality, unlike past announcements such as their link-up with Nintendo to produce the PlayStation.

BREAK DOWN THE DOORS OF OUR FORTRESS TO WIN INSTANT PRIZES...



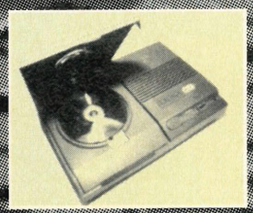
WIN A SEGA MEGADRIVE
0839 407057
Instant Win

WIN!

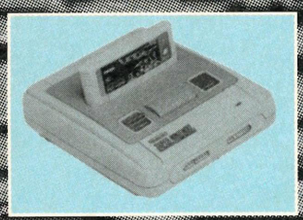


SEGA MEGA CD
0839 407056
Instant Win

AMIGA CD-32
0839 407042
Instant Win



WIN!
SUPER NINTENDO
0839 407058
Instant Win



AMIGA A1200
0839 407059
Instant Win



GAME GEAR
0839 407047
Instant Win

£250 worth of COMPUTER GAMES
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Instant Win

WIN! JOYSTICK WIN!
Any joystick up to £70
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WIN!

RALEIGH ACTIVATOR 2
Or any mountain bike up to £200
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WIN! £100 WORTH OF MANGA VIDEOS!
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WIN STREETFIGHTER II SPECIAL EDITION!
+ SEGA MEGADRIVE OR SUPER NINTENDO
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Fight your way across the USA! Beat the villain to win SUPER NINTENDO+ SUPER MARIO ALL STARS Cartridge!

SUPER MARIO
Play the ALL STARS Adventure!
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Instant Win



WIN COLOUR TV
+ Remote - ideal for use as games monitor!
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KARAOKE MACHINE
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CD SOUND SYSTEM!
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Calls cost 36p per min (cheap) 48p (other times). Max possible cost £3.60. Please be sure you have permisssion to make this call. Where Instant Win is indicated there is no tiebreaker and prizewinners are decided instantly by playing a deciding game. Other competitions close 28.02.94. All competitions involve multiple choice questions. Nintendo/Sega/Amiga/Streetfighter II are all registered trademarks of their respective companies. We are neither related to nor endorsed by them.For rules and winners' names please send SAE to Info Media Services Ltd, PO Box 28, Northampton NN1 5DS.

Impact Jan

VIBES

F1Ve FOR OnE

Late in our schedule, we received the great news that **Sega** are releasing a special charity game pack containing five top Mega Drive carts. The limited edition pack, called ***Help!***, should be on sale by the time you read this.

Sega have high hopes for what they're describing as 'the biggest fund-raising project in UK games market history', aiming to raise at least £250,000 for various children's charities.

Already lined up for inclusion in the pack are *Sonic 2* (Sega), *Bart's Nightmare* (Acclaim) and *Indiana Jones* (US Gold). As we closed this issue, the other two titles had yet to be decided, but they're likely to be contributions from big-time producers **Virgin Games** and **Electronic Arts**.

But simply having five top titles packaged in one sleeve isn't the best news — it's the fact that *Help!* is on sale at the incredible bargain price of £49.99! It's only on sale in Woolworths and Dixons but the majority of the cash goes straight to charity.

All the money raised will be distributed through such charities as **The Prince's Trust** and **Childline**, as well as smaller worthy causes. Past charity games, such as **Comic Relief**'s *Sleep Walker*, haven't been an incredible success, but Sega have high hopes for *Help!*, banking on its top software titles shifting thousands of copies of the bundle.

As well as *Help!*, Sega continued their charity drive with last month's successful *Segathon* sponsored gamesplaying scheme. Who says video games are bad for children?

IT'S A PAD, PAD, PAD, PAD WORLD



Welcome, one and all, to what looks like becoming a regular feature in this quirky mag. Every month we get samples of high-tech Mega Drive controllers just about to be released on an unsuspecting world. We carefully test each joypad or joystick for maximum playability, value for money… oh, all right, we slap 'em on a shelf till we need them for a news item.

First up this month is the ***Micro Genius Remote Controller*** from **TXCE**. Don't be put off by the fact it's a remote-control joypad — real fun when the dog walks in front of the telly.

The Micro Genius features no untidy, annoying wires and operates from a distance of up to 20 feet. It's wide beam means instant and accurate response and two players can use the controllers at the same time. The pad features two-speed shot selection and a slow-motion switch.

The Micro Genius Remote Controller consists of the receiver unit and a joypad. It costs £29.95 and an additional controller will set you back £19.95; both are on sale now.

For more info, contact **TXCE** at **270 Upper 4th St,**

IT'S A BEAUTY!

Disney's Oscar-winning animated movie, ***Beauty and the Beast***, is about to get the game treatment thanks to the talented folks at **Sunsoft**. They've come up with the unique idea of producing a dual game pack (in other words, two games in one box) to appeal to both girls and boys.

In *Belle's Quest* you take control of the Beauty and guide her through a magical kingdom filled with fairies, elves, goblins… what a load of toss! This game's aimed at a previously-untapped young female audience and requires players to use their wit and intellect to complete tasks.

Roar of the Beast is what we're really after! Forget namby-pamby girls' stuff, we wanna be the Beast and be big, strong and very hairy! This is definitely the game for the aggressive male market as you, as the Beast, battle through dark and dangerous platform levels in an attempt to rescue your beloved Belle, who's being held prisoner in a remote forest tower.

Both games are due out in America any time now and we'll try to get our hands on 'em for review next ish.





GIVE US A RING

Loads of wacky devices arrive in the MEGA MACHINES office every day, but none stranger than the ***CD Soundrings*** from US audio developers **Monster Cable Company**. These strange rubber devices (yes!) come in handy packs of ten or 50 and, among other sordid uses, are capable of making your CDs (wait for it, technical talk on the way) sound better.

So what is a CD Soundring? Well, it's essentially a thin rubber ring that's stuck onto the printed side of your CDs. It's removable, so you won't damage your disc, but not reusable. The weight of the ring helps stabilise the CD and give a more consistent signal.

Soundrings work with both audio CDs and Mega-CD games. The difference with audio CDs is immediately obvious — sounds are richer and less tinny. With CD games, there are further improvements.

We tried the CD Soundrings out on a few games and these were the results:

Silpheed: The gameplay isn't dramatically different, but if you have a Turbo pad with a slow-motion function, it runs a lot smoother. Unfortunately, the Soundring doesn't eliminate the appalling access time.

Final Fight: This top arcade beat-'em-up fully benefits from the rubber device — the sound quality's improved beyond belief (you can hear the individual instruments that were used in the soundtrack). Even the gameplay gets a welcome tweaking (levels are harder to get through).

Black Hole Assault: Nothing much to report, except at the beginning of the game the Sega logo fades out instead of just vanishing (whoopee-doo!).

If you fancy getting your grubby mitts on these technologically advanced tap-washers, get in touch with a specialist hi-fi shop 'cos they're a bit tricky to get hold of in high street stores. Failing that, you can always order direct from **Monster Cable Company, 274 Wattis Way, South San Francisco, CA 94080, USA**.

CD Soundrings cost around 50p each so they won't break the bank. We thought they were a goofy idea at first, but you know what? They're not bad. With the MEGA MACHINES seal of approval, they can't go far wrong.



give 'em a call on **0908 231321**.

Super DFII

Next up is the ***Dragon Fighter II*** pad from **Dragon International**. There was no sample for us to test but the press release *did* come with the witty heading, 'Enter the Dragon Fighter II'. Yes, quite.

From what we can gather, the Dragon Fighter II is a six-button joypad available for £15.99 from mid-November. If you're a dab hand at games like *Street Fighter II* and *Mortal Kombat*, it could be right up your wotsit.

As with the official **Sega** six-button pad, the Dragon Fighter II features a mode switch for use with standard three-button games. There's also the bonus of turbo and slow-motion controls.

Dragon International's Robert Stallibrass is quoted as saying, 'This pad is not called the Dragon Fighter II pad just because it's for the new fighting games.' No Richard, it's obviously also for fighting dragons.

If you fancy one of these nifty pads, give **Dragon Intenational** a call on **081 838 1280**, or write to them at **20 Sovereign Park, Coronation Road, Park Royal, Acton, London NW10 7PQ**.



DRAGON'S REVENGE

After nearly a year and a half, **Tengen** have at last announced the release date for their hot new pinball game, ***Dragon's Revenge***, sequel to cult classic *Dragon's Fury*. *Dragon's Fury* was a massive Mega Drive success and spawned such copycat games as *Sonic Spinball* (yay!), *Virtua Pinball* (boo!) and *Crüe Ball* (ditto!).

Released on 17 January, *Dragon's Revenge* follows the fantasy pinball theme established in the original but this time the action's even *faster*. From what we've seen, MD owners are in for a real treat as it features superb graphics, a cracking soundtrack and more of the same frantic flipper fun. The stunning visuals are most striking in the eight hidden bonus levels players must find to complete the game, where a special 3D scaling technique is applied to the metallic ball.

Dragon's Fury has always been a firm favourite with MEGA MACHINES and we have high hopes for the sequel. We'll keep our legs crossed and hopefully bring you a full review of *Dragon's Revenge* next month.

MAD DOGS AND ENGLISHMEN

American Laser Games

One of the major advantages of the Mega-CD is undoubtably its ability to show Full Motion Video (FMV) clips. Games like *Night Trap* and *Sewer Shark* have already used this technique to bring us thrilling interactive games but they're not the first. **American Laser Games** have been producing high-quality arcade laser disc games for years and they're about to break into the world of home consoles. From the start of '94 you can expect to see all their hit light gun games on the Mega-CD, including ***Mad Dog McCree***, ***Space Pirates***, ***Who Shot Johnny Rock?*** and ***Crime Patrol***.

First to see the light (gun) of day will be the smash hit *Mad Dog McCree*. Set in the Old West, you're the only hope for a small town that's been taken over by the evil Mad Dog himself. It's up to you to rescue the mayor and his daughter and make the west a safer place to live.

Sharp shooters

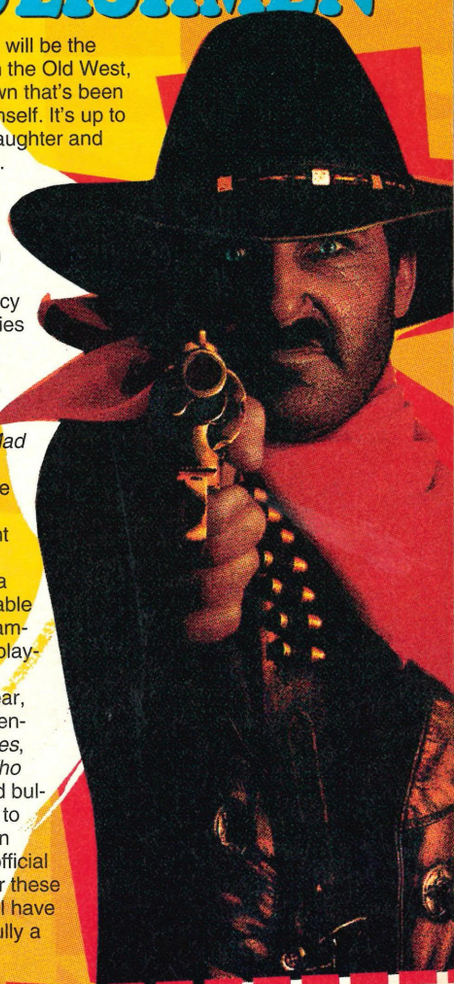
Along the way you encounter outlaws, bank robbers and hard-bitten gunfighters, all out for your blood. You're gonna have to do some fancy shootin' or end up pushing up daisies in Boot Hill (poor old Daisy).

As with *Lethal Enforcers* (reviewed on pages 34–37), *Mad Dog McCree* is expected to come packaged with a replica of the light gun used in the arcades; an extra gun will be available if you want to team-up with another player.

Later in the year, expect sci-fi adventure *Space Pirates*, 1930s gangster epic *Who Shot Johnny Rock?* and bullet-riddled *Crime Patrol* to make an appearance on Mega-CD. There's no official release date or price for these exciting games but we'll have more news (and hopefully a preview) soon.







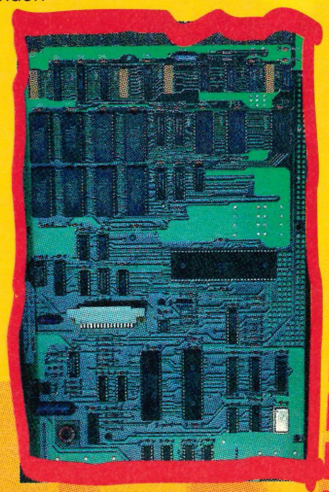
MeG MaChiNe

Cor, look what we've found! This little beauty was sent to us by the big-wigs at **Sega**. It seems they're trying to impress us with their latest technological achievements, as this piece of hardware is a real blinder.

What you're looking at is one the ROM (or chip) boards we use to play pre-production games. A ROM board is essentially a larger version of the circuit board found inside all game console cartridges. We receive chips from software companies, slot them in and feel all smug 'cos we're playing a game you lot probably won't see for six months!

Street Fighter II's a 24-Meg monster but look at this Sega chip board — it's *32* Meg! It's massive! Does this mean Sega intend to release huge 32-Meg games some time soon? It sure looks like it.

We've already got our hands on the chips for *Sonic 3* and can show you this exclusive picture of its ROM board. Okay, so it won't fit into your Mega Drive yet but give Sega a break, they're working on it.



WIN A JOB!

So you finished *Sonic CD* the day you got it, whupped the ass off everyone in *Street Fighter II* and laughed in the face of *Mortal Kombat*'s Shang Tsung? Think you're a hot gamesplayer and all-round clever dick, do you? In that case, you could be the person we're looking for.

You see, we at MEGA MACHINES are always on the look-out for fresh gaming talent and we've currently got a position available for a Staff Writer. We need someone who can complete games without breaking into a sweat, work to tight deadlines and, worst of all, put up with the tea from our killer coffee machine! Of course, having a good grasp of the English language and being able to spell is a help, but hey, it never stopped us.

If you fancy your chances of becoming one of the MEGA MACHINES crew, write to us at **Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**, enclosing your CV and a 300-word review of any Mega Drive game. If you're lucky, you'll hear from us soon; if you're unlucky, we may just give you the job.

Get scribbling and don't forget to include your address and phone number. See ya soon!

" KONA

SUNSETRIDERS

It has obviously had a lot of attention paid to every aspect of its production... it's superb.
MEGATECH 87%
Very impressive SEGA PRO 87%



ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES

A top class product with attention to detail second to none. Amazing. MEGA ACTION 94%

RKA is possibly the best game on the Mega Drive ever. GAMESMASTER 92%



SEGA
MEGA DRIVE

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MI KRED!"



TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES® THE HYPERSTONE HEIST™

Good clean amphibious fun. SEGA PRO 87%

Turtles really is a visually stunning game

MEGA TECH 87%



TINY TOON Adventures Buster's Hidden Treasure™

One of the best plat-formers ever. Megatech 95%

a fast paced platform game that is similar to Sonic, but....better fun.

Mega Drive Advanced Gaming 93%

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Dear Santa...

Mmmfffhh!

You can't always get what you want – or indeed, don't always want what you get. To avoid disappointment, book early… er, and heed our essential prezzy-blagging advice.



Yeee-haaaa! It's almost that time when we get loads of loot from parents, friends and people we haven't seen since, well, last Christmas. Even as you read this, they're planning trips to the local branch of Woolworths, The Body Shop and Boots. And we all know what that means. Yup, another batch of bath salts, unattractive socks, and from those really hip relatives: the £1.99 handheld LCD game from the local all-night garage.

Admittedly, all these things make interesting targets for your air rifle (apart from the socks — they just add to the pile of crap that sits at the bottom of the wardrobe), but wouldn't you rather get what you wanted for once? Yes?

It occured to us there's a basic communication problem here. Getting what you want is a complex game of subtlety, superior intellect and being so incredibly good that money's no object when it comes to your happiness… So it looks like we're all getting socks, bath salts and a crap LCD game for Christmas again this year. Damn!

Well, that's what we thought — until Dr Ruthless let slip, while slobbering over his tenth pint of strong ale, that he'd studied Advanced Psychology before becoming a, er, crazed game butcher.

'A-ha', we thought, 'a profitable Chrimbo is within our sweaty grasp, after all.' So lock the bedroom door, clear a space for all the top loot you're gonna get this year and inwardly digest a lesson or two from Dr Ruthless. Take it away, Doc.

Don't end up with a duffer this Christmas – and we don't mean the old guy who wanders up and down your street in his underpants! We're talking about the turkeys, the lemons, the games so crap they ain't worth the chips they're blown on. Going down...

6 WWF ROYAL RUMBLE

More of the same from the WWF bunch. Bad animation and repetitive moves are top of the complaints list. And that's not all. Games that involve bashing a button faster than the other player are *not* fun, and that's what this game revolves around. It's been a profitable licence but there was never much game there.

Personally, I don't understand what all the fuss is about. Since I got my Do-It-Yourself Surgery Set, all my relations phone me and ask what I want, usually around August or September. I still don't understand why, but who am I to argue?

Anyway, I got a weekend pass out of the psycho ward I call home and scouted around for the best stuff to wack on the A1-size Christmas list. Oh, and remember, don't ask for a mountain bike unless you want to spend January with third-degree gravel rash on your hands, knees and arse.

Lesson 1: THE CHRISTMAS LIST

So what gear's going to be around this Christmas? On the games front, the chances are you might not get another one until your birthday. So study the following well and receive the Ten Commandments of Sega…

1 Thou shalt covet SENSIBLE SOCCER

Rated a skyscraping 96% in the debut issue of MEGA MACHINES, and it deserved every last percentage point. To more than a few people, *Sensi* is the very pinnacle of computer entertainment, with playability that cuts your arms and legs off, puts you in a tea chest and doesn't let go. To play it is to love it. And we do.

2 Thou shalt covet STREET FIGHTER II

The coin-op messiah finally hits the Mega Drive — and the MD goes 'ouch!'. Put it this way: In the combined offices of MEGA MACHINES and SNES FORCE, there are two SNESs and two Mega Drives. After 5.30, when work is finished and it's time to chill, *Street Fighter II* is on both SNESs and one of the Mega Drives. If we had another *SFII* cart, it'd probably be on the other MD as well. It's *that* good.

3 Thou shalt covet SONIC SPINBALL

At first it looked like a cash-in, but it most certainly isn't. At the moment, this is the best MD pinball game available and living proof that the Spiky Blue Overlord is set to reign for a while yet.

4 Thou shalt covet LETHAL ENFORCERS

After the turkey and pud, what better way to celebrate peace and goodwill to all men by shooting at the telly, Elvis-style? This is the kind of game that'll make your dad change his mind about 'poncy video games' — the problem is, will you be able to get him off it?



5 Thou shalt covet ALADDIN

Neato! Play the game of the film poised to mash up the box office this festive season. Relatively easy to finish and not a trace of Frank Bruno or Isla St Clair, but the cartoon-sharp graphics make up for it.

6 Thou shalt covet DUNE CD

An excellent excuse to get that Mega-CD you've been promising yourself. This is *intense*, with the kind of sonic splendour that reeks of atmosphere. A strategy game that will become a benchmark for all CD releases, on all formats.

7 Thou shalt covet FLASHBACK

It's an oldie but it's a goldie, folks! Pulsating platformery has a sexy threesome with adventure gaming and shoot-'em-up ecstacy, and the result was this piece of straight-up fitness.

8 Thou shalt covet JAMES POND 3

While *Aladdin* and *Sonic CD* are graphically superior, you'll probably get more hours out of this funky little cart than both of the others put together. It's a hoot from start to fin.

9 Thou shalt covet SONIC CD

Sonic's perrenial struggle against the evil Robotnik spills onto the Mega-CD, which means bigger, sharper, brighter! It's the same old Sonic, but that's a cause for celebration, innit?

10 Thou shalt covet SILPHEED

No, it's nothing like *StarWing*. Yes, it may well be the bastard son of *Galaxians*. But this frenzied shoot-'em-up is one of a tiny range of CD games worth splashing your cash on at present, due to its speed, playability and the fact it stares you in the face and defies you not to have another go.

All these games have been carefully selected by the MEGA MACHINES crew to last you well into the New Year. All are on the shelves just… about… NOW!

10 ASTERIX

Hmm. We had high hopes for this game. But as it turned out, *Asterix* is about a short frog who walks and jumps and his fat chum who does much the same. The main sprites amble along at a tediously slow pace and the puzzles are more likely to annoy than give the grey matter something to chew on.

9 SPIDER-MAN AND THE X-MEN

This game breaks a trend. Until now, Spider-Man games were going slowly downhill. This one, on the other hand, was at the bottom of the hill right from the word 'go'! If I had to sum up this game in three words, they'd be 'crap, crap, crap'. Repetitive, I know, but so is the game.

8 SPIDER-MAN VS THE KINGPIN

Yee-ha! More top Spidey action, this time on CD! Obviously, the disc format is going to give you better graphics, better sound and an absolutely huge game. Actually, no. You get a nice jumpy soundtrack (bless the old Mega-CD), but as for the rest of it, what a load of cobblers.



7 VIRTUAL PINBALL

Oo, nice idea, but lacks action. The title gives away the fact that this is a pinball game, but it doesn't mention it's not a very good one. Its only redeeming feature is you can design your own table layouts, but seeing as there's no decent features to put *on* the tables, that doesn't save it.

5 LOTUS 2

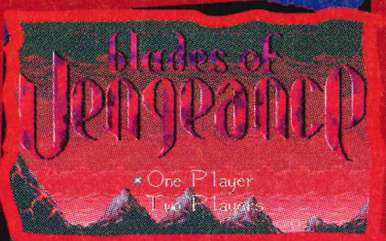
It takes something a bit special to make a driving game stand out these days. *Lotus 2* hasn't got it. The track editor is a nice idea, but the game itself lacks the speed and excitement of the original.

4 HOOK

Oh, please! It's not as if the film was much cop, but the game? Ha! And as a film licence, it's missed the boat a bit. Or maybe it's meant to tie-in with the video release… Moving swiftly on, the game's crap and you shouldn't touch it with someone else's ten-foot barge-pole.

3 STREET FIGHTER II

Ha-ha, only kidding — this game's brilliant and worth every penny!



2 BLADES OF VENGEANCE

Being constructive, *Blades of Vengeance* gets off to a good start, but the graphics aren't too hot and the gameplay becomes repetitive. Mind you, it's got a nice bird in it — but she's armed and that's never a good sign when you're on the pull.

1 PIN THE TAIL ON THE DONKEY

The difficulty curve on this game is *ridiculous*. There's no demo mode or tutorial, and the graphics, well, they speak for themselves. Even th… (Doc, you've run out of naff games, haven't you? —Ed).

Dear Santa...

If you're new to the Mega Drive scene or reckon owning a Mega-CD would be better than taking a shower with Ulrika Johnson (pant!), these are the best deals:



RUMBELOWS

Argos carry most of the standard packages, and they offer you up to twenty quid off software. Check the stores for software 'cos their catalogue changes all the time!

Rumbelows are doing a tidy Mega Drive 2 and Mega-CD 2 deal where you get thirty smackers off, and it'll appeal to the folks 'cos you can get it on interest-free credit.

John Menzies, as do most of all the other stores, carry the *Aladdin* and *Street Fighter 2 – SCE* packs. But shop around for the best sale prices.





Argos

John Menzies Low Low Prices this Christmas

Lesson 2: GETTING THE MESSAGE ACROSS

This is where things start to get complicated. You've got to let them know what you want, but without appearing pushy or spoilt!

So I've some up with the perfect solution: The Dr Ruthless Subtle Hint Stickers. Simply cut them out and stick them around your home, on certain pages of home shopping catalogues, at your gran's house and basically anywhere they might do some good.

Lesson 3: SERIOUS AMMUNITION

Find on old piece of headed note paper from your school. Blow up this letter on a photocopier to 140%. Cut off and stick the header blurb to your new letter and photocopy it again to make it look convincing. Now post it to your home...

Dear Mr and Mrs .....

Special Package

Sega Stress Relief System

A happy kid is a good kid!

The carpet can wait, this is important!

If it smells nice, I don't want it

God wants you to buy this

Go on, he'll love you for it

It's either this or something *really* expensive!

What else are credit cards for?

Time to re-mortgage the house

Guess who'd like one of these?

ME

Credit makes sense!

Look closely into the art of persuasion. Unfortunately, 'but all my friends have got one' doesn't hold the weight it used to, so only use as a last line of defence.

Slashing your dad's tyres if he doesn't take the hint will probably result in getting a bill on Kwik-Fit headed paper in the place of presents, and will seriously inhibit late-night shopping trips.

Every family should own one!

Try asking your mum for a quick lesson on how to work the washing machine — for future reference. This doesn't commit you to chore hell and parents find it incredibly difficult to see through scams from which they would benefit!

Under no circumstances threaten to leave home if you don't get what you want! You'll find yourself stood on the pavement, clutching a toothbrush and your favourite pair of underpants — plus asking strangers for money is demoralising and looks bad on your CV.

Sega increases IQ

Visiting elderly relations is a disgusting pastime. Try to avoid it wherever possible. Instead, phone around, asking if there's anything special they'd like for Christmas. That should score a few points. It also means you get out of interrogation over your academic future and a goodbye kiss that's about as pleasant as snogging a dead horse.

Cheap, isn't it?

Special never-to-be-seen-again sale price

Make a point of telling parents and relations how you won a Mega-CD on a charity scratch card game but gave the prize to a children's home because they'd get more use out of it – even though you've always wanted one yourself. NB This is obviously a lie but requires little hard evidence.

Don't waste your energy by being good all the time. A few choice deeds or carefully-considered words, delivered at the optimum moment, can put you that much closer to the software of your choice.

I am writing to apologise for an unfortunate error on the part of the school.

It has come to light that several members of our teaching staff are quite mad and have given your child numerous unnecessary detentions and bad grades in the past.

We also understand the torment this will have inflicted on your child as they're obviously an exemplary student. This could have damaged parent/child bonding and I would therefore recommend surprising the child with whatever they want this Christmas.

Hopefully the year's experiences haven't been too traumatic for your child and the damage can be nipped in the bud.

Please accept our deepest regret for what has happened.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Right, that's it. Surgery closed. You should get enough gear to fill a small skip this year. I'm off to watch the *The Wizard of Oz*, crack nuts and see how much Bailey's Irish Cream I can drink before I throw up.

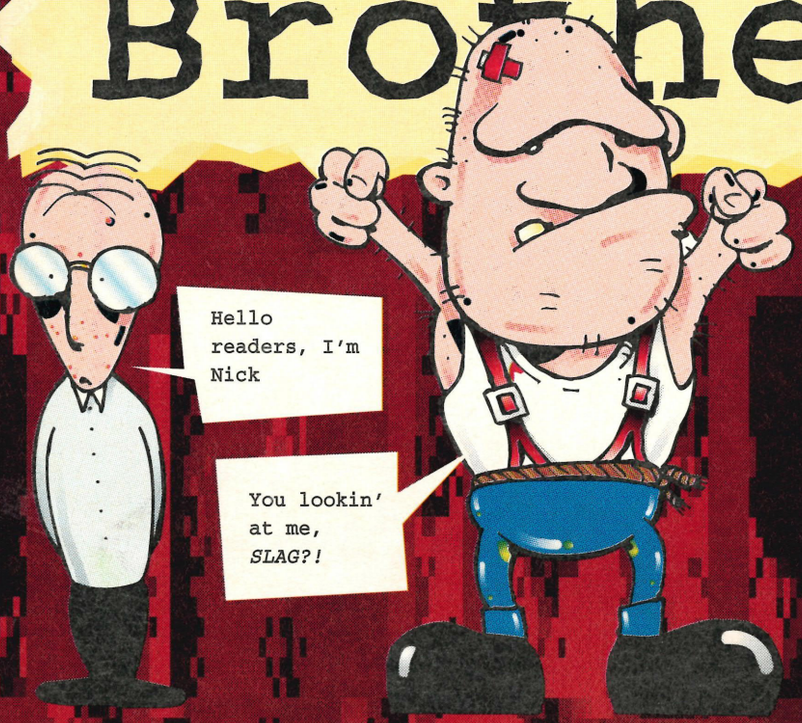
EMERGENCY PLAN

Okay, you're reading this so that means you've messed up or things haven't gone according to plan. There's only one thing for it...

Do you remember how touched your parents were by TV footage of the Romanian orphans? Yeah? Good. Don a blank expression, stare into space and mumble incoherently while banging your head against the TV. That should make them sit up and take notice! And if it doesn't, send your parents off for a blood test — it sounds like there's been a mix up somewhere.

If it turns out they *are* genuine, you've got big trouble. Your best bet is to find someone who's left home; this means there's an unused set of parents somewhere. Check to see if they're better than yours and, if they are, move in!

The Write Brothers!



Nick 'n' Nige have been very busy this month. Their bedroom's been filled to suffocation with letters, postcards and parcels, which has annoyed Nige no end because he can't find his collection of *Nutters Who Like Killing Folk* Monthly...

Nick: Hello readers, I'm Nick and I want to be your friend. We can go

Cheat Fighter Too (too pointless for words)

Dear Sega Force Mega (eh? —Nick & Nige)
I've found a cheat for *Street Fighter II* on the Mega Drive. Select a one-player game but plug in a second joy-pad, and when you are about to fight, press *Start* on the second joypad and select a fighter. Do this till you get to M Bison and fight him.

This cheat will enable you to get 'Perfects' all the way up to the last fighter.

Andrew Digby, Southampton.

Nige: ***So you mean, if I choose a two-player game, I can cane the other bloke? 'Cos he's just standing there, doing nothin'?***

What's the point o' that? If I want to kick in a passive bystander, I don't have to put the Mega Drive on, do I, Nick?

Nick: ***Nigel, please take your hand from my nneckh*****hhh...**

nnnnnnggggghhh...!

Now What's The Question?

Dear Amnesiacs Anonymous
I intended to enter your crazy compo in Issue 1 — I could do with a free Mega-CD and I wouldn't say 'nein' to a free cart, either (you want nine of 'em? Greedy get! —Nige).

I faithfully cut out the coupon, entered my name and address and... Okay plonkers, where is it? I found the bit marked 'My answer is:...' on the coupon, but where's the bloody question?

Is this some sort of hippy Buddhist Zen test, where you have to sit on a mountain and contemplate the history of the universe before getting 'the answer'? Or maybe it's a post-modernist statement on the concept of greed?

Personally, though, I think you made a complete balls-up!

Michael Adams, London

Nick: ***Erm, yes, Michael, well spotted! There was no question included in the* Microcosm *competition in MEGA MACHINES 1.***

Nige: ***The dozy sods forgot to put one in, so we 'borrowed' the Mega-CD and gold disc! Heh heh heh! Cheers, lads!***

Nick: ***Our Editor, Mr Steven Shields, swears blind he put one in, but it went missing before the magazine was printed.***

Nige: ***He said he was gonna give you a special prize for being such a nit-picking little toe-rag, but guess what? You forgot to include ye name and address! HUR HUR HURRR!***

MEGA machines EXTORTION EDITION

Dear N-Team
I've had a brilliant idea for making twice as much money on MEGA MACHINES every month. Why not sell the same magazine twice? Not *exactly* the same magazine of course, but a few effortless tweaks are all that's needed.

First of all, publish a copy of MEGA MACHINES. Then change the colours on the front, slap on a different picture and put the barcode in a different place. This new, 'improved' edition should hit the shops a week after the first and be called *The Championship '93 Special*, or something equally patronising.

Don't laugh, this can really work — EA did it several times with their

want to be your friend. We can go on picnics together, spot trains, catalogue our stamp collections…

Nige: Shaddap, Nick, you're making a plonker of yourself. Nige 'ere, and my hobbies include nutting Nintendo owners, polishing my Doctor Martin's and causing riots. Mess with me and…

Nick: Don't be so rude, Nigel! These people are our friends. We want them to send us letters, invite us round for tea, partner us in country dancing…

Nige: Are you sure you're my bruvver? *This* is how you get letters: WRITE TO US, YOU BUNCH OF BLEEDING WIMPS, OR I'LL KILL YA!! There — that wasn't too hard, was it?

Nick: But what about the address, Nige?

Nige: Balls to the address!

Nick: But Nigel, they won't know where to write to.

Nige: Shaddap, I said! AND DON'T CALL ME NIGEL!

Nick: B-b-but… *AAARRGGH!*

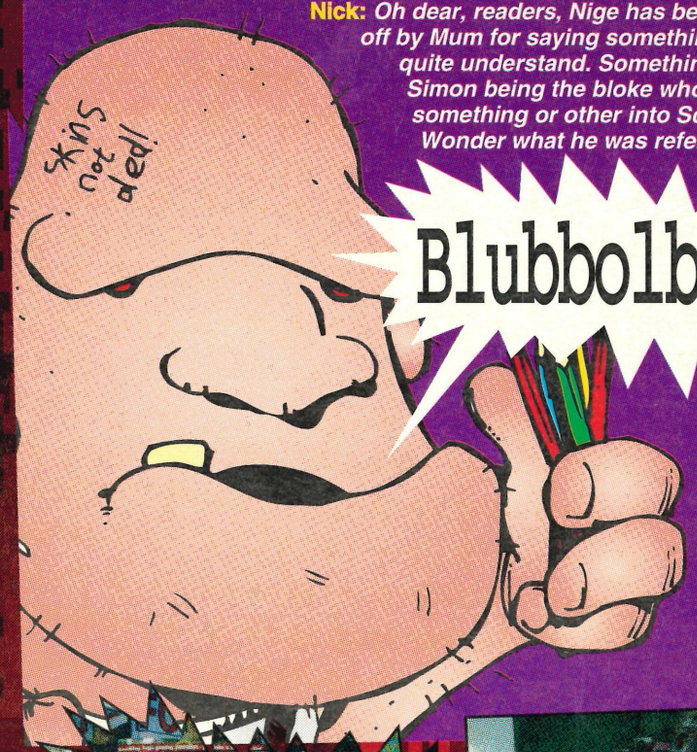
(Sorry to break in on this touching display of sibling kinship. If you've anything to get off your chest, slap it in an envelope and send it to: **The Write Brothers, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.** There's 50 quid on offer for our star letter — and that's more than I get paid, so get writing —Al.)



Don't laugh, this can really work — EA did it several times with their hockey game, and look at the saga of *Street Fighter II* on the SNES!

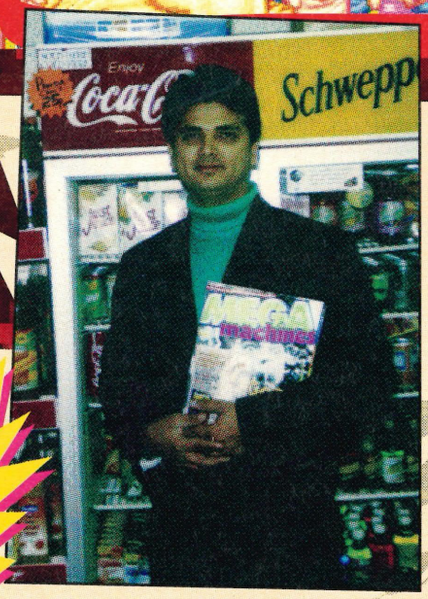
Cynical Simon, Scunthorpe

Nick: *Oh dear, readers, Nige has been dragged off by Mum for saying something I didn't quite understand. Something about Simon being the bloke who put the… something or other into Scunthorpe. Wonder what he was referring to?*



Blubbolbulox!

NAFF NEWSIE OF THE MONTH!



Nick: Yes, it's that time when we scour the country and turn the spotlight on a lucky member of the newsvending fraternity. And boy, do we have a good un' this month!

Nige: We got this letter, right, from this geezer called Lewis Connick, who reckons his newsagent is an Indian film star. We thought he was talking a right load o' boll–

Nick: Yes Nigel, we certainly did cast doubt upon Mr Connick's claim. But we made enquiries, and surprise surprise–

Nige: The unexpected hits you between the eyes!

Nick: –It was true! So, say hello to Mr **Inder Vishal Rathor**, aged 30, who when not starring in Hollywood blockbusters, avoids screaming fans by running the **I & V Newsagents**, at **274 London Road, Hounslow.**

He divides his time between making films such as *Sabar* (*Patience*), in which he played a likeable illegal immigrant forced into drug-dealing in order to survive (who eventually kills the evil drug baron he works for), and telling the surly youths of Hounslow to sod off when they've been gawping at the top shelf for too long.

Nige: Gleamin'! Gerruz 'is autograph, Nick.





Nick: All we can say is, congratulations, Mr Rathor, for reaching the pinnacle of two professions. Please accept our highest respect, and have you got any broken Kit-Kats around the back we could have?

Nige: If you have a local newsagent you wanna slag or brag about, send us a photo and tell us about 'em, right? To **Naff Newsie Of The Month, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.**

Go on, then! What you waitin' for?

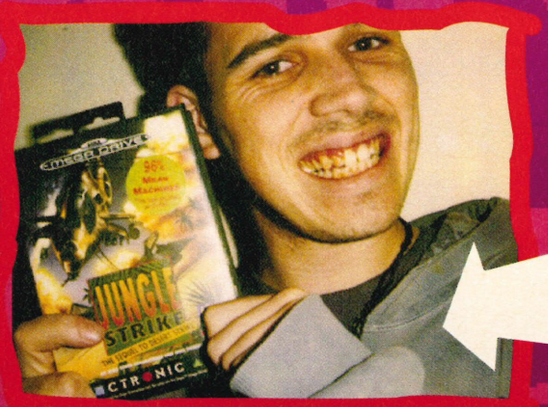
NIGE: Oh, Christ! That designer of ours is bloody at it again! I thought we had a whole seven pages together and he gone and split 'em up! Prat! You'll 'ave to turn to page 54 to read da rest! Soz!

CAUGHT in the act!

BRUNDEAL

Say cheese!

We've struck again! Yes, Caught In The Act has been out on the road once more and this time we've targeted the innocent folks of Birmingham. The Virgin Megastore in Corporation Street was the place and if you were one of the unfortunate victims we pounced on, we'd like to say thanks to you and don't worry about the scars, they'll clear up in a few years. Thanks also this month to Brian Mahon at the Virgin Megastore for being such a good sport and a big cheesy grin to the security guard who tried to stop us taking photos even though we'd already been merrily snapping away for hours. Enough gassin', let's get on with the show...



Glenn Turner, age 24 from Birmingham: A lifeguard (we've never seen him on Baywatch!), likes Midnight Oil and is the only person in the country to watch Casualty on a regular basis.

So, you're a lifeguard then? Yep
Where? Usually where there's lots of water... and people. That helps.
What's your favourite Sega game? With a shadow of a doubt, I'd say *Flashback*. It's brilliant.
And the worst Sega game? *Micro Machines* (are you mad? That's one of the best MD games ever. Oh well, what does a lifeguard know anyway).
How much do you spend on games a month? I reckon about £80 (how much? Bah, I wish I'd learned to swim! — Sub Ed).
Which game are you intending to buy today? I'm gonna give *Desert Strike* a go (only because Mat told him to buy it. What a sucker!)
What are your thoughts on the cost of games? They're just too expensive at the moment. I wait until they've been out for a few months and let the price drop.
What elements make a great game? As long as it gets my grey matter working, it's worth having (how original. An intelligent lifeguard).



James Sheasby, age 14 from Birmingham: Too shy to have his picture taken for this feature and so his stunt double, Dave, took his place (you sure he wasn't just plain ugly? —Ed).

Have you got any hobbies? Yeah, I play football and go fishing on the weekends.
What's your favourite food? I love Big Macs. I'm always in McDonald's (were you the one in the red wig and clown make-up?)
What's your favourite Sega game? *EA Hockey* is the business!
And the worst Sega game? There are too many to name... er... what about *Super Thunder Blade*? *Batman Returns*? *Alex Kidd*? (Whoa! Hold on there pardner, we only asked for one!)

Zahid Aslan, age 15 from Birmingham: Still at school, loves chicken (?) and sure likes his fighting games.

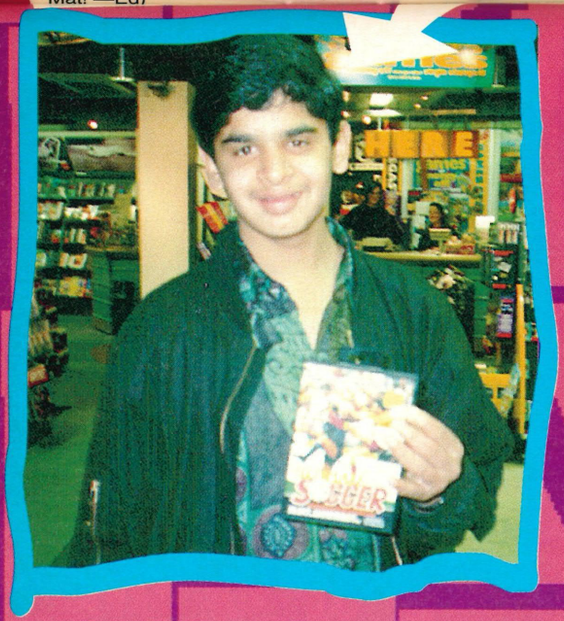
What's your favourite MD game? It's got to be *Streets of Rage II*.
What's the worst Sega game you've played? I can't really think of any... wait a minute, oh yeah! *Super Hang-On*'s pretty crap (we agree).
What's your favourite TV programme? I never miss an episode of *Brookside*.
Have you got a Mega-CD? Yeah, I had one for my birthday.
What do you think of it? It's a good machine but there are no decent games around for it.
What is your favourite type of game? Beat-'em-ups — and I like sports games too.
So what's the next game you're gonna buy? *Ultimate Soccer*, I've read it's supposed to be pretty good. (You shoulda told 'im to get *Sensi* or *F.I.F.A.*: They're both better.



Gary Parr, age 13 from Birmingham: A McDonald's addict (another one), listens to UB40 and owns a Game Boy. What the...!?

So what are you doing in the Mega Drive game section then? I've got a Game Boy at the moment, but I'm hoping to get a Mega Drive for Christmas (thank God for that!).
Which computer magazines do you read? Only *GB Action*, but I'm going to

Mat! —Ed)



Eric Monroe, age 16 (and his bruvver): Both live locally and are painter and decorators. When they're not stuffing their faces with burgers, they're bopping away to the latest rave tune (er, I'm not 100% sure that 'bopping' is the right word, Mat. Ask one of our YTS lads? —Ed)

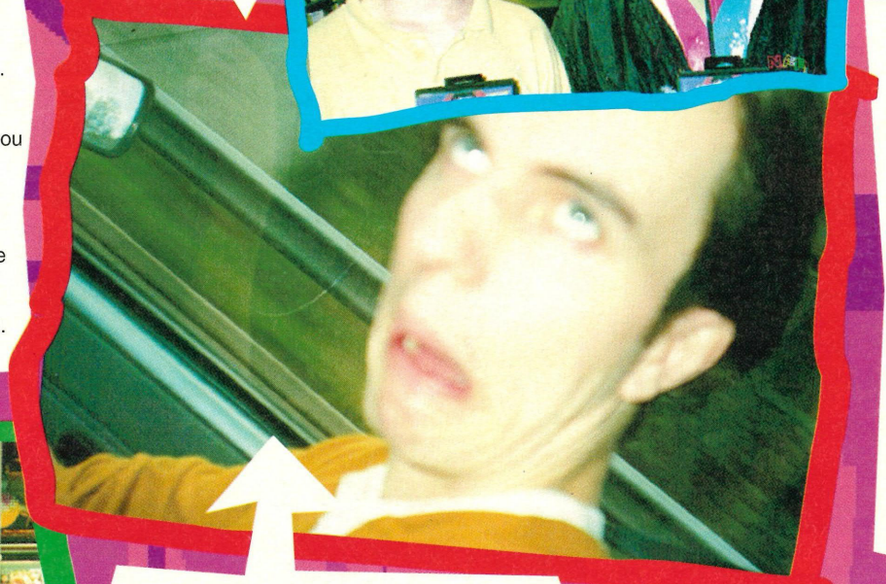
What's your favourite Sega game? *Street Fighter II*. I use to play it in the arcades all the time, but now I've got the Mega Drive version and it's really good.
What about the worst Sega game? I know everyone rants on about how good *Sonic the Hedgehog* is... but I think he's crap (steady on there)!
Which are your favourite types of games? As long as there's plenty of fighting in them, I'm happy.
Have you got a Mega-CD yet? I've had one for a couple of months, and I think it's alright. There aren't enough games out for it yet but I've seen some pics of *Thunderhawk*, and that looks good.
What's the next game you're going to buy? Nothing at the moment. There's not a lot of good stuff out.
What's your favourite TV programme? I watch *Bottom*, and it's excellent.
How much money do you spend on games a month? Only about £70... if I've managed to save it.



Tim Murcott, age 17 from Brent Hill in Birmingham: A sucker for anything fattening, owns an Amiga (aaaggh!) and is just about to buy himself a Mega Drive.

What's it you do for a living? Er... it's a little difficult to explain. I'm a... oh, what is it again? You better just put shop work (well, that narrows it down a bit!).
Got any hobbies? Nope. Apart from computer games... nothing (and you admit it!? —Ed).
What's you favourite Sega game? I've actually got an Amiga and a SNES at the moment — but I'm going to buy a Mega Drive today (you must be loaded!). I'm probably gonna get *Mortal Kombat* as well.
What's the worst Sega game you've ever seen? I reckon it's got to be *Last Battle*. (absolutely — Sub Ed).
What elements do you think make a decent game? It's got to have playability, good graphics and... um... an original storyline helps as well.
Got any views on the Mega-CD? I'd like one but it's so expensive and the price of the games is well steep.





And so we bid a fond farewell to the UK's second largest city. With a tear in our eye and a lump in our throats (those McDonald's are terrible!), We clamber back into the MEGA MACHINES van and drive off into the sunset. The look on Mat's face says it all: sadness, tiredness and boredom have finally taken their toll on the MM crew (but mostly sadness, I suspect —Ed). We'll see you next month with more fun, frolics and suspect local accents. Ta-rah for a bit!

start getting yours as well. It looks great (little creep)!
What are your thoughts on the price of games? They're really expensive. I can't afford to buy them at the moment. They should bring them down to about £20.
Which game are you going to get next? *Zelda IV* for the Game Boy.
Got any hobbies? I like fishing, football and computer games.
What's your favourite Sega game? I'd go for *EA Hockey*. It's a laugh when I play it round at my mate's house.
And the worst? *Ranger X*.

Which Sega game are you going to buy today? I'm going to get *Jurassic Park* on the Mega Drive. I've only just seen the movie and it was brilliant. I hear the game's okay as well.
Which pop tunes get your feet a-tappin'? Apache Indian.
What's your favourite TV programme, then? *Soldier, Soldier.*



Steven Jones, age 18, from sunny Cannock: Works in the local Quicksave, he's a BIG Depeche Mode fan and thinks Newman and Baddiel are actually funny!?

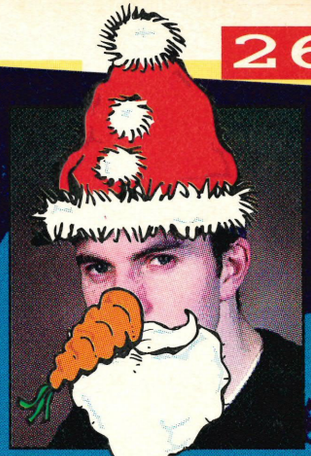
Apart from playing computer games, do you have any other hobbies? I like roleplaying when I get the time.
What's your favourite Sega game? *Gunstar Heroes*. It's a brilliant shoot-'em-up and the graphics are great (they sure are).
What's the worst Sega game you've played? *Last Battle*. It's crap!
And your favourite type of game is... ? Shoot-'em-ups because they're fast and furious and you need to be a good gameplayer to complete 'em.
Have you got a Mega-CD? Not at the moment.
What do you think of it? I want one for Christmas but the amount of games available for it at the moment is really limited.
How much do you spend on games a month? About £50 if I can afford it.

Ah, the hustle an bustle of a typical Brummy street.This month Caught in the Act takes place in the plush surroundings of the Virgin Megastore, Corporation Street, Birmingham. Here you'll find a perfectly-formed and packed computer games department stocking all the latest Mega Drive, Mega-CD, Master System and Game Gear games, as well as mags and consoles. It's a must for anybody thinking of blowing a load of dosh on their favourite hobby. As for next month...who knows where we'll be? Keep an eye out for us at your local games shop and you might find yourself appearing in these hallowed pages yourself!

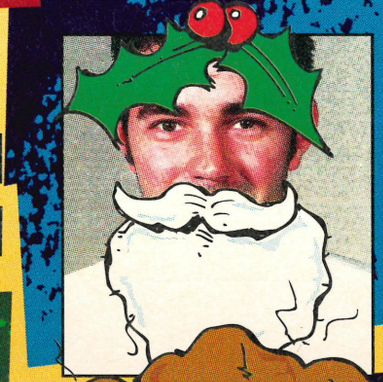
THE REVIEW BOARD!

Waving your wad around your local games emporium without first consulting our Review Board is equivalent to picking up a porcupine with your butt-cheeks. In other words, read our honest, in-depth game reviews – or don't come crying to us with a sore bottom!

And Your Hosts For This Evening Are...

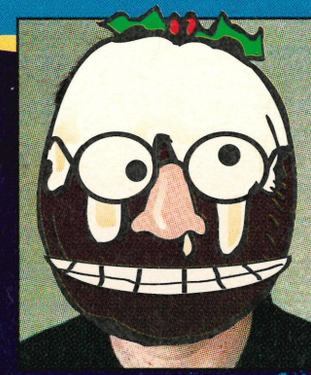


Name: James Beaven
Age: 22
Position: Reviews Editor
Fave game o' the month: *Lethal Enforcers*
Worst game o' the month: *Hook*
Fave TV show: *Red Dwarf*
Dear Santa: 'I'd like a date with the fit bird from *Baywatch*. I love her!'



Name: Warren Lapworth
Age: 24
Position: Sub Editor
Fave game o' the month: *Sonic Spinball*

Name: Mat Yeo
Age: 23
Position: News Editor
Fave game o' the month: *Lethal Enforcers*
Worst game o' the month: *Blades of Vengeance*
Fave TV show: *Wild Palms*
Dear Santa: 'Have you got such a thing as a D.I.Y. vasectomy set? That's what I'd like' [Any problems at home, Mat? —Ed]



Name: Alan Needham
Age: 25
Position: Staff Writer
Fave game o' the month: *Lethal Enforcers*
Worst game o' the month: *Spider-Man vs The Kingpin*
Fave TV show: *Supermarket Sweep*
Dear Snata: Al claims he is a part-time Satanist and, as such, doesn't celebrate the holiday.



But Is It Any Good?

We have a very simple policy here at MEGA MACHINES, and that policy is this: Keep It Simple! Where lesser Mega Drive mags pile on the knobs, dials and L.E.D displays, our ratings box cuts the crap and gets straight to the point. You won't need a slide rule and pocket calculator to work out whether each release is worth your wonga — one glance at OUR ratings box will furnish you with all the relevant information.

The entire reviews team discuss the merits (or otherwise) of each game and agree on the percentage marks for each of the five categories, while the overall rating is simply the average of the individual comment marks. This ensures consistency and fairness.

We would like to take this opportunity to point out that cynical bribes and death threats from software houses have absolutely no effect on our integrity. If the game's a goody, you'll know about it. If it sucks, not even TWO bottles of Tizer could sway us from telling it like it is!

Mind you, we *do* have a soft spot for those little chocolate-covered marshmallow things with the biscuit base and jam centres...

Cup A Load O' This!

Occasionally, a Sega game arrives in the smelly hole that is the MEGA MACHINES office and proceeds to wow the entire team. It's rare, it must be said, but it has been known to happen.

In cases like this, there's only one thing to do: instruct our chief designer to dust down the 'Special Award Logo' and place it prominently upon the page with the review. And, just so you know what to look out for... here it is!

Okay, so it looks pretty naff and the handles are all wonky; but would you believe that the promise of receiving this very award has been known to make the Managing Directors of software houses the world over

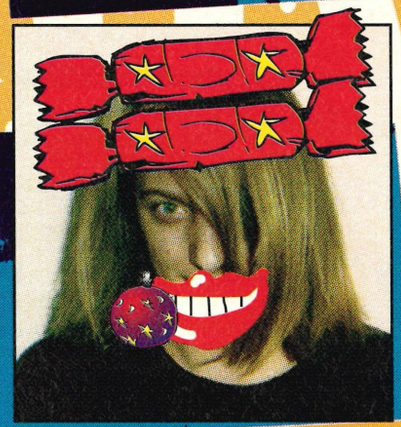
GRAPHICS 67

SOUND 86
PLAYABILITY 59
LASTABILITY 48
ORIGINALITY 30
OVERALL 72

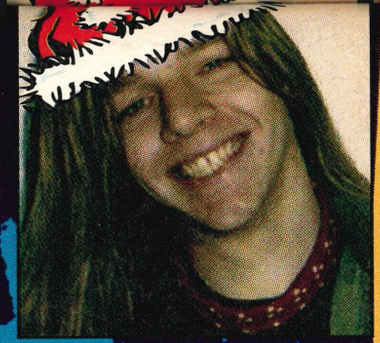
break down and cry like babies!? Oh, I see. You would believe it.

The MEGA machines "Buy this game" Award!

Name: James Price
Age: 19
Position: Guest Reviewer
Fave game o' the month: *FIFA International Soccer*
Worst game o' the month: *Hook*
Fave TV show: *Red Dwarf*
Dear Santa: 'I want a flash car, loads o'dosh, a smart gaff, a better job, er, oh yeah, and some friends please!'



Worst game o' the month: *Virtual Pinball*
Fave TV show: *The Buddha of Suburbia*
Dear Santa: 'I want the game Ghost Castle™ from M&B Games' [He's actually being serious! —Ed]



Name: Miles Guttery
Age: 21
Position: Guest Reviewer
Fave game o' the month: *FIFA International Soccer*
Worst game o' the month: *Spider-Man vs The Kingpin*
Fave TV show: *Mork and Mindy*
Dear Santa: 'Can I have a life, please? Thank you very much.'

Culture Corner

It's not all games, games, games, y'know. In order to inject some variety (and have a birrova laff into the bargain), MEGA MACHINES proudly present Culture Corner. Each month we invite you to submit intellectually-stimulating works of art which you think will help the mag achieve good standing among the academics and artisans of Britain. No prizes, no bribes; just the chance to air your talents and express your artistry.

This month, two priceless poems found their way to us, but (very) short stories, paintings, sketches, photographs or even carefully-sculpted mounds of South Korean aardvark dung are also welcome — just as long as it's arty! Send your masterpieces to: **Culture Corner, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.**

Disney Last Long

Aladdin from Virgin Looks great,
I paid half each for it with a mate,
The lad himself. Is a visual treat,
The trouble was though that it
took us about three and a quarter
hours to complete.

Garry Anderson, Southwark, London

Little Beggar

Mark Jenkins, Solihull, Birmingham

I liked your first issue
It made me say 'wow'!
And I'll buy your second one
Can I have a tee shirt now?

Let's Meet Tonight's Contestants...

28 Virtual Pinball
30 FIFA International Soccer
34 Lethal Enforcers
38 Hook
40 Gods
44 Zombies
48 F-117 Night Storm
52 Lotus 2
62 Blades of Vengeance
70 The Lost Vikings
72 Dune 2
74 Aero the Acrobat
78 Sonic Spinball
86 Spider-Man vs The Kingpin CD
88 Microcosm CD

Virtual Pinball

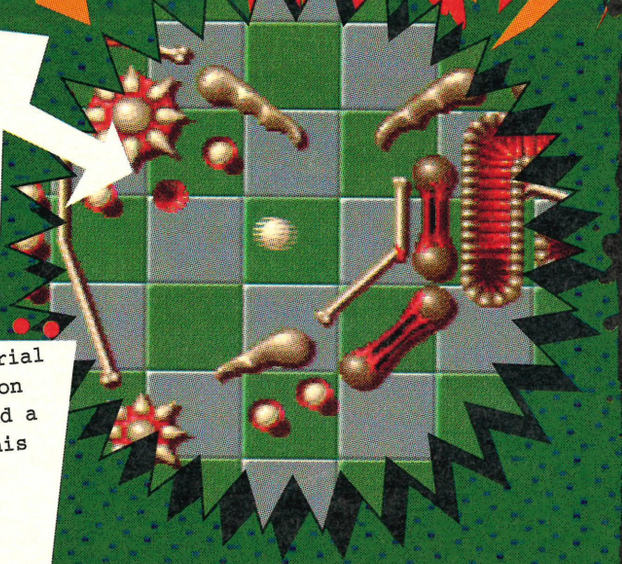
Highly-polished balls, extra-twangy elastic bands, odd noises and aching wrists. This better be a pinball game!

Arcade Review

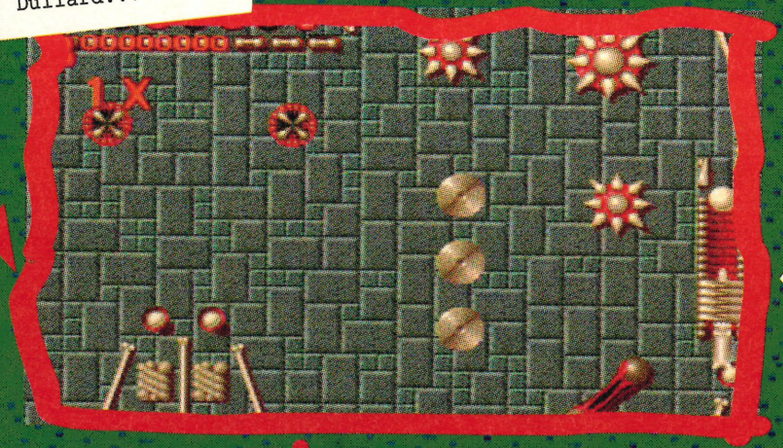
MEGA drive!



This is what it would look like if you built a pinball table on your bathroom tiles. Pretty disgusting, eh?



Milo, our 'Editorial Assistant' (jargon for 'YTS Lad' had a go at devising his own table. It's called 'Milo's Pinball Table'. Dullard...



You can't play pinball on a stone floor! The ball'd get stuck in one of the gaps. And It'd be murder on your knees. And some git'd be walking across the floor. And it'd be covered with dog sh(Yes, point taken – Man Ed)



PUBLISHER	ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE	£49.99
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
SIZE	16 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-4
SKILL LEVELS	3
LIVES	5
CONTINUES	NOPE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NOPE
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	VOLUNTARY POLICE FORCE

Nice, eh? The MEGA MACHINES masses took advantage of the rather original option in EA's latest offering, *Virtual Pinball*.

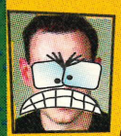
In addition to a range of 22 tables on which to practise your wrist-oriented skills, there are ten completely blank screens. No, it's not a swizz, mate — these are where you design your own pinball dreams from scratch (where have we heard that before?).

There are a cornucopia of flippers, bumpers, targets, spinny things and, well, holes to choose from, and an industrial-sized skipful of styles and backdrops to choose strictly speaking, virtual. EA have improved on the real thing by enlarging them to roughly twice the size (you'd have to be either Stretch Armstrong or Mr Tickle to play 'em in real life) and offering speed, action and music options. And don't forget — you can alter all the original tables or start from scratch and save them to battery back-up!

We at MEGA MACHINES decided to have a go and, with just a fistful of trickery, came up with this wang-dangger of a table. Wither in our genius!



Yes! Here's an exclusive shot of Princess Diana working out! What? They've banned it? Oh. Here's another pinball table



////AL 45%///

Whoa! Spectrum flashback! This is the kind of game you'd get on cassette back in the '80s, stick in your tape recorder and suffer 30 minutes of horrible grinding noises (you'd spend the time watching *Razzmatazz*, sniffing glue or leering at pictures of the the two birds in Tight Fit). Well, thanks to Electronic Arts, you only have to wait for

from as you create tables guaranteed to make Roger Daltrey go blind. You can toggle the decor and playing modes of all games, giving a staggering permutation of 2304 different pinball machines!

The tables themselves are not,

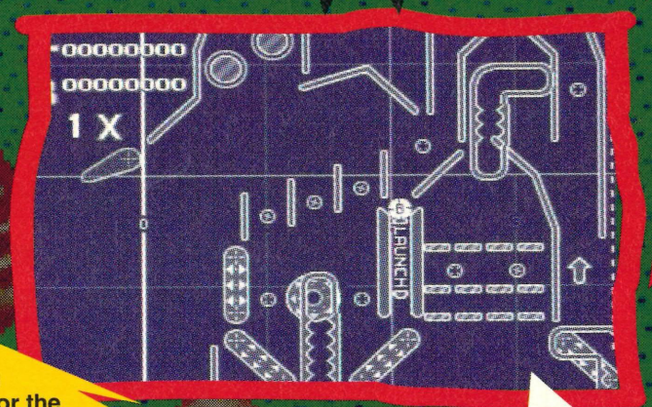
few seconds before 'enjoying' the 'delights' of *Virtual Pinball*.

Roger Daltrey, in the film *Tommy*, played pinball by sense of smell. And hey, he could play *Virtual Pinball* like that as well, because it *funks* of dullness, *reeks* of poor quality and absolutely *mings* of pointlessness.

Lord, it's a poverty-stricken little bleeder. They've opted for loads of crap little tables when one decent one would do.

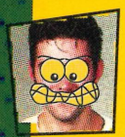
Unlike all good tables, there's nothing to do, nothing to aim for and nothing that makes you want to stick at it. The design option's good but I've got a life, for God's sake, and I'll be buggered if I'm gonna spend it putting bumpers and flippers on a screen.

The manual challenges you to play all the tables (a challenge in itself, I can tell you) then design a better one. Someone already has, mate — it's called *Sonic Spinball*!





/JAMES/ //47%//



So this is a pinball game, huh? There's not a lot to say about it, apart from you belt a ball around until fate, mixed with a heavy helping of gravity, takes a turn for the worst. Well, that's what I thought, anyway. *Virtual Pinball*'s been designed to offer something a bit different from the standard belt-a-ball-about pinball frolics.

It's table design feature means, theoretically, you won't get bored. That's its selling point, and you'd be looking at a hot product if it wasn't for one fundamental problem: it's bland!

You must have noticed, on every pinball table you see in arcades, pubs and skips, there's a point to each one — a main theme, if you like. And that's what *Virtual Pinball* lacks.

Take, for example, the *Terminator 2* pinball game. It's got multi-ball features, bits to aim for, guns to load, ramps to send the ball up and time-rush jackpot features. Or wiggle a wandering eye over the *Addams Family* table. Once again, loadsa features, jackpots, bits that go thribble when hit and a humming great magnet under it to mess with your head.

Virtual Pinball lacks a point, a reason for playing. I'm not saying it needed a licence, just a bit of imagination. And you can't even create better tables 'cos the little bits you throw together lack imagination.

Maybe all this was intentional. Maybe there's a market out there for a sleek-looking, bash-a-ball-about-until-it-goes-down-a-hole kind of game. I really doubt it. This is closer to a bagatelle sim, and I don't like it!

Yes, with a designer mode, even the KGB can join in the fun...

GRAPHICS	72
SOUND	70
PLAYABILITY	55
LASTABILITY	60
ORIGINALITY	88
OVERALL	46



PUBLISHER	EA
PRICE	£49.99
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
SIZE	16 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-8
SKILL LEVELS	2
LIVES	1 – IT'S FOOTY, INNIT?
CONTINUES	THERE'S NEXT SATURDAY
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YES
BATTERY BACK-UP	YES
SPECIALS	FOUR-PLAYER OPTION

FIFA international SOCCER

'Listen, lads, it's a tough match but I've taught you everything I know. Go out there and give me 110%, that's all I'm askin'…'



MEGA drive!

Football Sim Review



one but two new carts out this winter.

over the years).
For starters, they've gone for an

CELEBRITY FORUM

Goal poacher and hair-care specialist Terry Perme, top striker for Everpool in the '70s, casts his expert eye over the big match...

Sensi	FIFA
8	Graphics 10



After what seems an eternity, the Big Match is about to kick off. Finally, Mega Drive owners get to play a decent game of football on their systems, with not Arsenal we've had to suffer

Mounting an almost immediate challenge to last month's champions, *Sensible Soccer*, are the classy American side Electronic Arts, who field the attractive *FIFA International Soccer*. EA, renowned the world over for comprehensive sport sims, are primed to unleash an impressive arsenal (as opposed to the boring

unorthodox three-quarter top-down perspective (sounds like a Ron Atkinson tactic) which looks like they've strapped an unfortunate cameraman to the floodlights.

Not only that, but the sprites utilised are as big as Ian Wright's ego. That is to say, massive. Just a cursory glance at the screenshots is enough to get anyone a bit excited. ▶▶▶







////AL 89%/////



Let's not nob about. I know what you want to hear — whether *FIFA International Soccer*'s better than *Sensible*. This is an accurate transcription of what it sounds like in the office when both games are played...

***FIFA Soccer*: Cor, look at those graphics! Wow, hear the crowd! Jeez, did you see that bicycle kick? Ooo, that was a good foul!**

***Sensi*: WOOOOORRRR! You see that cool pass? Split the defence... YOU FOULING GET! He's gone past two, three, *four!* YES! YESSSSSSSS! PICK THAT ONE OUT!**

See what I mean? *FIFA Soccer* leaves you marvelling at the beauty of it all, while *Sensi* turns you into a gibbering football fiend.

For me, it took five minutes to look beyond the presentation and be frustrated by the gameplay. For example, although the big sprites are amazing, they get in the way of play. I thought *Sensi* had a tiny pitch but EA's isn't much bigger, and the size of the sprites reduces the game to a scrappy playground free-for-all.

This is coupled with the fact you can't see a great deal of pitch at any one time, which virtually eliminates the passing game and, more often than not, means you end up toe-nogging the ball upfield in the hope of connecting with another player.

Yes, I know you can do bicycle kicks, diving headers etc, but the novelty wears off when you find no real skill's involved and you can't stop the sods throwing themselves all over the park to prevent a throw-in. Scoring's just a matter of booting the ball at the keeper enough times and doesn't satisfy in the way a *Sensi* goal does.

***FIFA Soccer* was obviously created with an American audience in mind, with all the 'thrills' of football — loads o' goals, flash moves etc — but ultimately didn't satisfy me. It's not a crap game, by any stretch of the imagination, and it's brilliant that it literally offers a new perspective on the sport, but it's not as good as *Sensible Soccer*.**

No question, Brian. The boys from EA look so much better. You can't lose with a big sprite in the box, as Bill Shankly used to say. *Sensi*'s no bad looker, but *FIFA*'s one of the best-animated sport sims ever.

7	Sound	9

Again, I've gotta go for the EA lads. The full range of crowd sounds take me back to the days of the Kop, when I was banging 'em in (that's when I wasn't on the razz with Bestie and Stan Bowles). At the end of the day, *Sensi* weren't at the top of their game, with a limited range. But that's football.

9	Skills	9

Nothing to choose between 'em, Saint. *FIFA* has all the silky skills of the Brazilian lads, and the bicycle kick's always a winner with the crowd, but you'd be a fool to rule out *Sensi*, with its superior passing game and dribbling ability. I wouldn't like to bet on the winner in this department (even though I had to sell my boutique to pay off my debt at Ladbrokes).

9	Tactics	7

This is where the *Sensi* boys take the upper hand. *FIFA* has all the tactical options but in *Sensi* they make more of a difference to the outcome and they're easier to use. And at the end of the day, football's about the simple things. Like me.

10	Playability	9

Again, I've gotta go with *Sensi*. *FIFA*'s too scrappy in places, whereas *Sensi*'s got something special. I can't define it, 'cos I only came out of school with 'O' level Metalwork.

10	Options	9

Little to separate the two, Brian. Both have the standard time, pitch and weather options; *FIFA* boasts league, cup and World Cup tournaments, while *Sensi* covers the UEFA front and Euro-National competition. *Sensi* has the edge, due to its flexibility. You can have up to 64 players at one time — almost as many chicks I had during our 1974 FA Cup run.

0	Hairstyles	0

What a disappointment! I was as sick as a parrot at the poor range of coifs on offer in both games. Nary a demi-wave in sight — not a single Billy the Fish cut. This really put a dampener on it for me. I'm gutted.

53	OVERALL	53

In the final analysis, it's a toss-up. On paper, its *FIFA*'s graphic superiority against the smoothness and excellence of execution that is *Sensible Soccer*. But as we all know, it's what happens on the field that counts, after 90 minutes, between 22 lads and a ball, blah, blah, blah...



HANDBALL!!! COME ON REF! He bloody well handballed that! PENNO! He's not given a penno? BLIND BUGGER! You USELESS TWAT, ref? Can you believe it? I DON'T BELIEVE IT!!! You what? He's allowed to do that? Oh. Jammy get, anyway…



Give it some a' that!

Coupled with this impressive line-up are a vast array of tactical and competitive options. There are 48 international teams to choose from, a league (yes! EA have finally wised up and bunged a league format into their carts), knockout cup and World Cup-esque tournament.

Options include action or simulation game (simulation means the lads' legs get heavier and their heads drop as the game wears on), weather, pitch type, foul options, offside, automatic or manual goalies, and whether you want Jimmy Hill to pop up at the end of the match and spout on about how crap you are and how much better he'd be.

The amount of skill exhibited by these lads is nothing short of inspirational. Bicycle kicks, one-twos, diving headers and nifty backheels are all on display. *FIFA Soccer* also utilises EA's 4-Way adaptor, which means sexy foursomes are on the cards.

Overall, *FIFA* mounts what seems to be a concerted challenge to the *Sensible* squad. But is it enough? It's over to our panel…

Fouling Dutch Git

Below is an accurate representation of the foul perpetrated by Ronald Koeman on Brave English Hero David Platt in the World Cup Qualifiers. We gave David the chance to get his own back, and he did us proud with this array of fouls. Get in there!

/////JAMES 88%////

We'd better get one thing straight before starting this comment: I am absolutely crap at football. My 4–0 defeat by a girlie in the *Sensible Soccer* challenge last issue was no joke (incidentally, my friends still aren't talking to me). My childhood dreams of football stardom were crushed when I asked my games teacher what side of the ball I was supposed to hit. But then again, I'm stupid!

I'm about as unskilled as they come on soccer games and this one gave me a feeling of, well, claustrophobia. I need my space, man! Just leave me alone! It's *my* football, *I* paid for it and *I'm* gonna be a picker… (sob). Erm, maybe this isn't the right time to get on the shrink's couch. Anyway, the play area is quite tight and I found myself hoofing the ball to the other end of the pitch, all too often in a desperate attempt to get a, er, thing.

With all these soccer games jumping onto the shelves at more or less the same time, a comparison's warranted. And I have to say my vote goes to *Sensible Soccer*.

As a complete novice, my patience ran off to have a shower with the other patients waaaay before the end of my first *FIFA* match. I need a game I can pick up instantly, and so can friends when they come round for a few beers. This was too complicated for me. But it *is* an excellent game, and given time I know I could give most teams a run for their money.

If you do buy this game, do so with your eyes wide open; it requires more skill than, say, *Sensible Soccer*. (Okay, 'Sensible Soccer' —Al.) Bad joke, Al, but thanks anyway. *FIFA* gives more 'special moves' and a more realistic sim, but isn't as instantly playable as *Sensible*.

Don't get me wrong, though, this one isn't overly-complicated, and if you were to buy it, of course you'd put some practice in. Just bare in mind, by the end of January you'll have three corking soccer games to choose from — this is one of them!

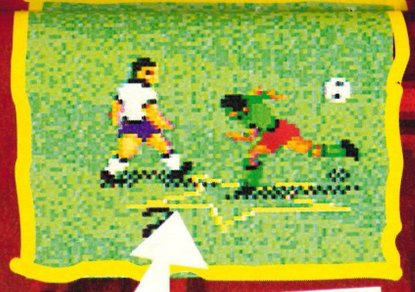


You can pull off some ace diving headers in FIFA Soccer. You can also do a really nifty 'Turn your back on the ball and look for your mates in the crowd' maneouvre as well!

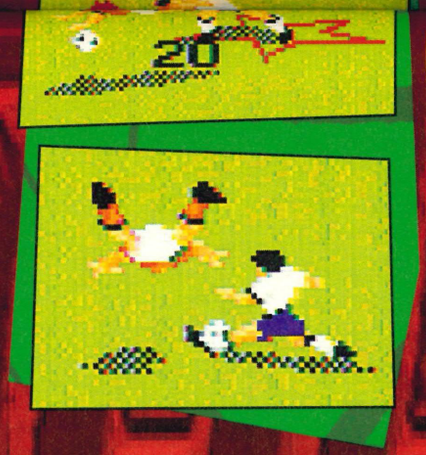


Italy's star striker goes to extraordinary





"…and so, by clenching my bum cheeks very tightly, I can propel the ball in an interesting fashion…" One for the kids to pick up on there!







extraordinary lengths to check if he's got dog crap on his boots…

ON THE SPOT!

Kev Pixel, England and Virtual Madrid midfield genius, comes under the spotlight of Barry Mongo, The Voice Of Football...

What was your ambition as a child?
To be in a football sim which didn't reduce me to the size of Jimmy Krankie.

What's been your biggest thrill in *FIFA Soccer*?
My first goal from a bicycle kick was a really special moment.

What would you be doing if you hadn't made it as a footballer?
Probably an end-of-level boss in *Mick & Mack: Global Gladiators*.

What's your favourite ground?
I've only ever played on one ground. The state of the pitch is a togglable option, though, which is nice.

What is the funniest moment you have seen on a football pitch?
The way the opposition never line a wall up for free kicks doesn't half crease me up.

What was your saddest moment in *FIFA Soccer*?
Losing to the Ivory Coast. Y'see, even the minnows are a sod to beat in *FIFA Soccer*. And there's no difficulty level.

The toughest opponent you've ever faced?
Sensible Soccer.

Do you have any superstitions?
Yes. Before every match I pray that they haven't switched on the Offside option. It slows the game up like buggery. Sometimes they blow for offside and the geezer's just crossed the halfway line.

What has been your biggest inspiration?
The crowd, every time. Their chanting really fires me up (though why they all shout 'We Love You Wednesday' is a mystery) and the sight of a packed stadium is nothing short of amazing.

Who was your boyhood idol?
Has to be Craig Stickman, who played for Badly Animated United in *Football Manager* on the Spectrum. An inspiration to us all.

What is your most prized possession?
My battery back-up. I couldn't live without it.

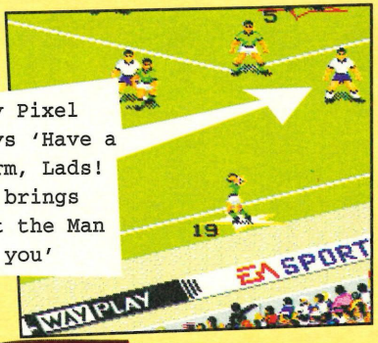
Which world figure do you most admire?
Eh? I'm just a sprite, mate, I don't know what you're going on about.

Who would you like to meet?
Look, sod off, pal, I don't exist.

What's your favourite pre-match lunch?
Do you want me to cave your head in, youth?

Why am I pretending to interview a footballer in a Mega Drive game? Wibbley Wib!!

(Next week, Barry Mongo reports on the annual Broadmoor Prisoners Vs Wardens match. For the rest of his life).



Kev Pixel says 'Have a Perm, Lads! It brings out the Man in you'



GRAPHICS	97
SOUND	95
PLAYABILITY	84
LASTABILITY	83
ORIGINALITY	79
OVERALL	89

MEGA cd!

MOTORS

'Nice shootin', son. What's your name?' Live out your cops and robbers fantasies with one of the most ambitious coin-op conversions yet.

Oh dear. *Lethal Enforcers* arrives in the office and look what happens...



Shoot-'em-up Review

Al Needham thinks he's going great guns. We didn't have the heart to tell him that the Menacer doesn't work with *Lethal Enforcers*...

Holy helicopter! Take care when faced with this awesome whirly bird – she can be a right bitch!

James hasn't quite got the hang of these joypads yet. No lad, not like that. Doh!

'Eat cheese, sucker!' Warren is playing with his food again...





After five years of running a mobile shop, Theodore Feltcher finally snapped. Now, all he was selling was a family-sized packet of death...



...Male power fantasies rear their ugly head again. Any opportunity to 'pack a piece' (even if it's made of pink plastic) and away they go, lost in a world of revolvers and AK47s, violence and death.

Before you ask, you can't use the Menacer light gun in *Lethal Enforcers* — but don't tell Al 'cos he got so carried away, he and James piled into the MEGA MACHINES Ram Raid van and went on a drive-by shooting. 'I'm off to kill someone's mother, funksters!' he screamed, brandishing the Menacer. At least, we *think* that's what he said...

Lethal Enforcers is a conversion of the coin-op sure-shot that brought light guns back into the fold and gave Mary Whitehouse and her mates another



PUBLISHER	SEGA
PRICE	£54.99 CD, £64.99 CART
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
SIZE	16 MEG/CD

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-2
SKILL LEVELS	3
LIVES	5
CONTINUES	5
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	KONAMI LIGHT GUN

///JAMES////90%///



Phwoooooaaaaarrrr! Gimme, gimme, gimme! This game is brilliant! Would you believe it? Three exclamation marks in the opening paragraph, and every one of them warranted! As was that one.

If there's one arcade machine I'd like in my room, it's *Lethal Enforcers*. Sod *Street Fighter II* flippin' *Turbo*, I haven't had a buzz like this since I played me mate's Tin Can Alley game, 12 years ago! Konami, I love you.

All our lives we've been bombarded with cop versus crim shows like *Miami Vice*, *Lethal Weapon*, er, *Lethal Weapon 2* etc. And there ain't a single person alive who hasn't thought, 'Gimme a gun and I'll sort out this 'ere town!' And that, ladies and gentlemen, is *Lethal Enforcers*.

We've given this game a thorough play-testing on every size TV imaginable — and we're still not bored with it. But I've got to

reason to have a go at the industry. Basically, the aim is to kill people.

And the Mega Drive version has all the firepower and destruction you want, death fans! The blood-stained bullet-holes! The balaclava-clad baddies, with their taunts of 'Eat lead'! The pathetic girlies who whine 'Help meeee!' like a castrated mouse! It's all here for you to take home and savour. ▶▶▶



Lethal Enforcers gives you the chance to kill third rate techno bands like Activ 8

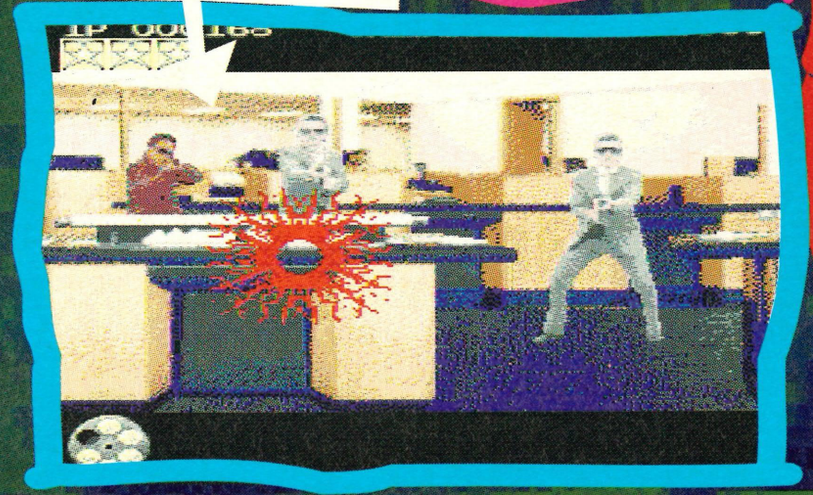
Al's still having problems finding accommodation in Ludlow. At least he doesn't have to share a bedsit with Nick Lawrence anymore...



London Transport discover a new way to clamp down on fare dodgers – they kill them!



The Hounslow branch of NatWest pay the price for charging Al £150 interest on his overdraft. DIE! DIE! DIE!

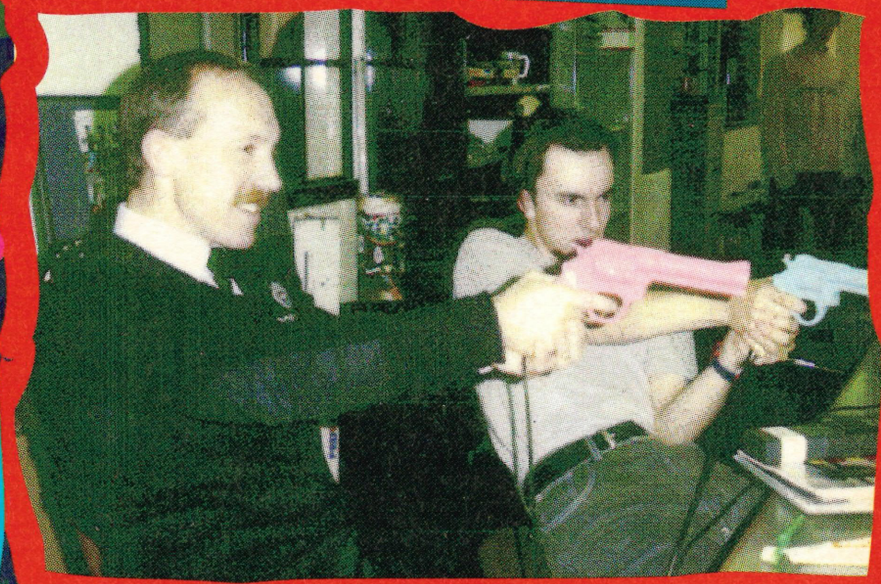


admit, I couldn't see any obvious advantages with having this available on CD and cart formats, as the games are identical.

Of course, the disc gives you better sound and looks better than those boring old carts, and there's an unintentional advantage: the loading time gives you a quick break. This is a bit annoying at first, but becomes very welcome after two hours of gun-toting frolics.

Ah yes, and on the subject of the guns, they're hardly the most attractive pieces of hardware. But they're light, sit in the hand nicely and have enough cable for you to squat behind the sofa. I just hope Konami bring out a uniform and holster as optional extras.

Copper load of this!



Lethal Enforcers comes with a nice big plastic gun which you plug into port two of your MD. But if you and a spar want to cock the hammer, you'll have to buy another gun — don't bother playing with the joypad, it's crap.

Konami have dubbed this extra weapon The Justifier, which plugs into the butt of the first gun. Incidentally, they're painted in such garish colours police marksmen won't think you're a terrorist and shoot you. In fact, we invited the local Ludlow copper in for a cuppa and a quick blast (above), and he reckoned it was a blast and a half!

'How I could just kill a man'

You step into the trousers of a crack-shot of law enforcement, shooting first and asking questions *never*. None of this clipping young offenders around the ear and teaching them the ways of righteousness — you just kill them!

That's all right, though, because they're similarly tooled-up and just as keen to blow you away. Baddies pop up from behind desks, cars and windows, hanging on ropes and generally all over the shop.

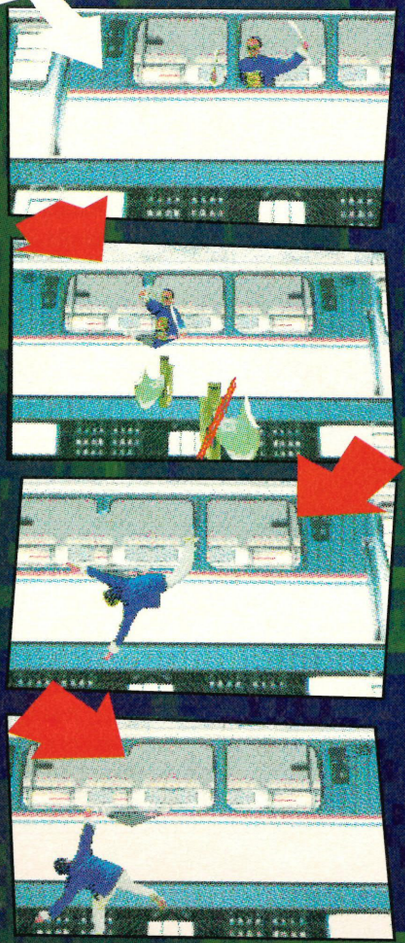
It gets as hectic as London during rush hour (now there's an idea...) but fortunately there are power-ups in the shape of Uzis, automatics, rifles and Magnums lying around on the floor (like they do — we found a Kalashnikov under the toilet seat the other day).

And just like the coin-op, you can team up with a partner and then the clichés really start flowing: While this review was being written, James was lying in a pool of blood but *insisting* that Mat go on without him. Mat just slung him over his shoulders and blasted his way out of danger. What a guy.

Yes, male bonding is the order of the day, with lots of high-fives and 'Yo!'s bandied about. 'How could I leave you, man? You're... you're like a *brother* to me!'

Yeah, right James. Could you put me down now

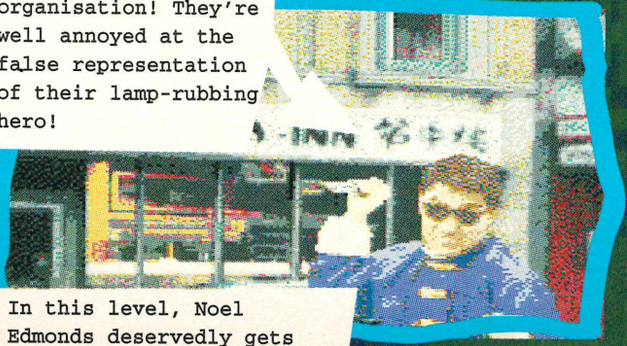
Good Lord! It's Samurai Ticket Collector! Best kill him before he realises you've skanked the train fare...



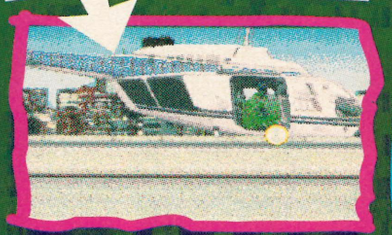
Beware the booby-trapped poultry outside the take-a-way, chucks!



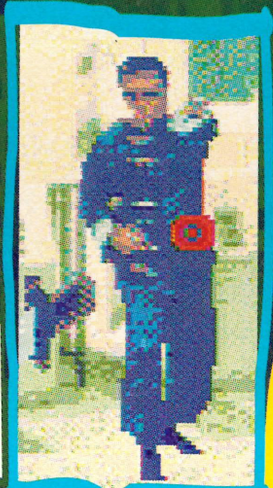
Oh no! It's the anti-Disney 'Aladdin is Chinese' terrorist organisation! They're well annoyed at the false representation of their lamp-rubbing hero!



In this level, Noel Edmonds deservedly gets some. This one's for Telly Addicts, bearded scum!



Better shoot that grenade before it lands in your Cup-A-Soup and makes a mess of your bullet-proof vest.





Meanwhile, back at the Station...

So you've taken out all the bad guys, including the end-of-level boss with an explosive buzz-saw rocket, and you're feeling pretty good about yourself, huh? Then you'll be rather dischuffed to hear the boss chew you out and make you do the level again!

That's what happens if you don't come up to scratch. If you 'accidentally' shoot an innocent bystander or your hit percentage is below 60%, your chances of promotion are nil. However, if you shoot straight and true, you're promoted from Patrolman to Detective then beyond.

Between levels, sharpen your skills in the shooting gallery. There you're faced with stationary and moving targets, including a series of cut-out figures to help you distinguish between villains and innocents.

Unfortunately, playing cards aren't among the targets, so no goldfish. Sorry.



/////MAT 94%/////



It's pink, it's hard and you can wave it at your telly. Yes, the plastic gun that's packaged with *Lethal Enforcers* certainly has its uses! The best of them being you can shoot lots of bad guys and cause massive amounts of damage in what could be the greatest Sega game ever.

The *Lethal Enforcers* coin-op is a favourite of mine (apart from the fact the light guns weigh four tons each and are attached to the machine by 12"-thick battleship chains) and Konami have done an amazing conversion job.

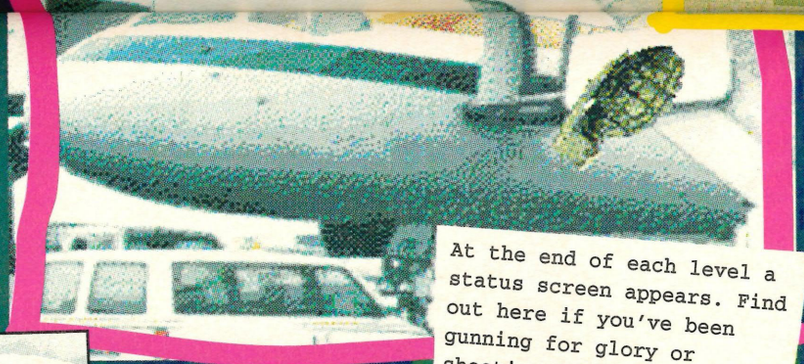
Using the same type of digitised graphics seen in *Mortal Kombat*, *Lethal Enforcers* gives you that feeling of 'being there'. Manic gunmen pop up from nowhere, knife-throwing Chinamen try to turn you into human kebab, and what about the deadly chicken!? Brilliant stuff.

Blasting away at a TV may not sound like everyone's cup of tea, but just wait till you've tried it. Even the most timid of you will be transformed into Dirty Harry as you pump leaden death into the screen. Konami have kept the level of violence down: there's no

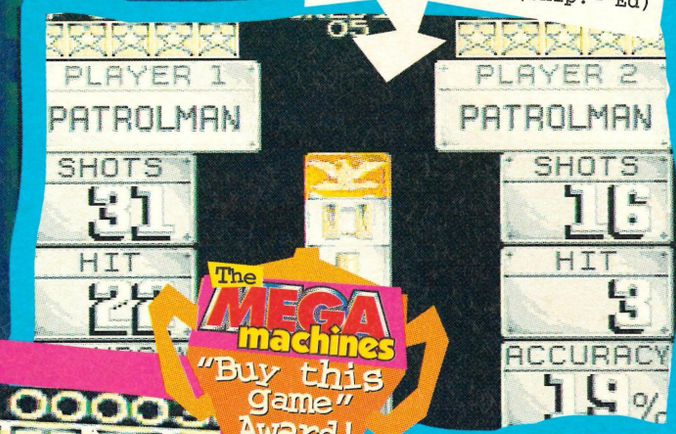
blood-splattered corpses and you lose points (and maybe your badge) for hitting innocent civilians.

My only gripes are that you have to be a crack marksman just to get off the easiest of levels and the whole package is quite expensive. Although the Mega-CD game is cheaper than the MD version, buying another gun (for two-player fancy shootin') makes it a costly package.

That aside, *Lethal Enforcers* is near the top of my cart chart this year and ranks as one of the best arcade conversions ever. Buy it or the dog gets both barrels!

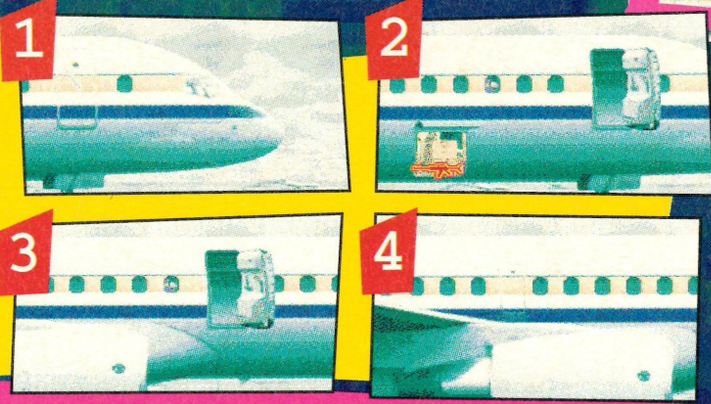


At the end of each level a status screen appears. Find out here if you've been gunning for glory or shooting like sh(snip!– Ed)

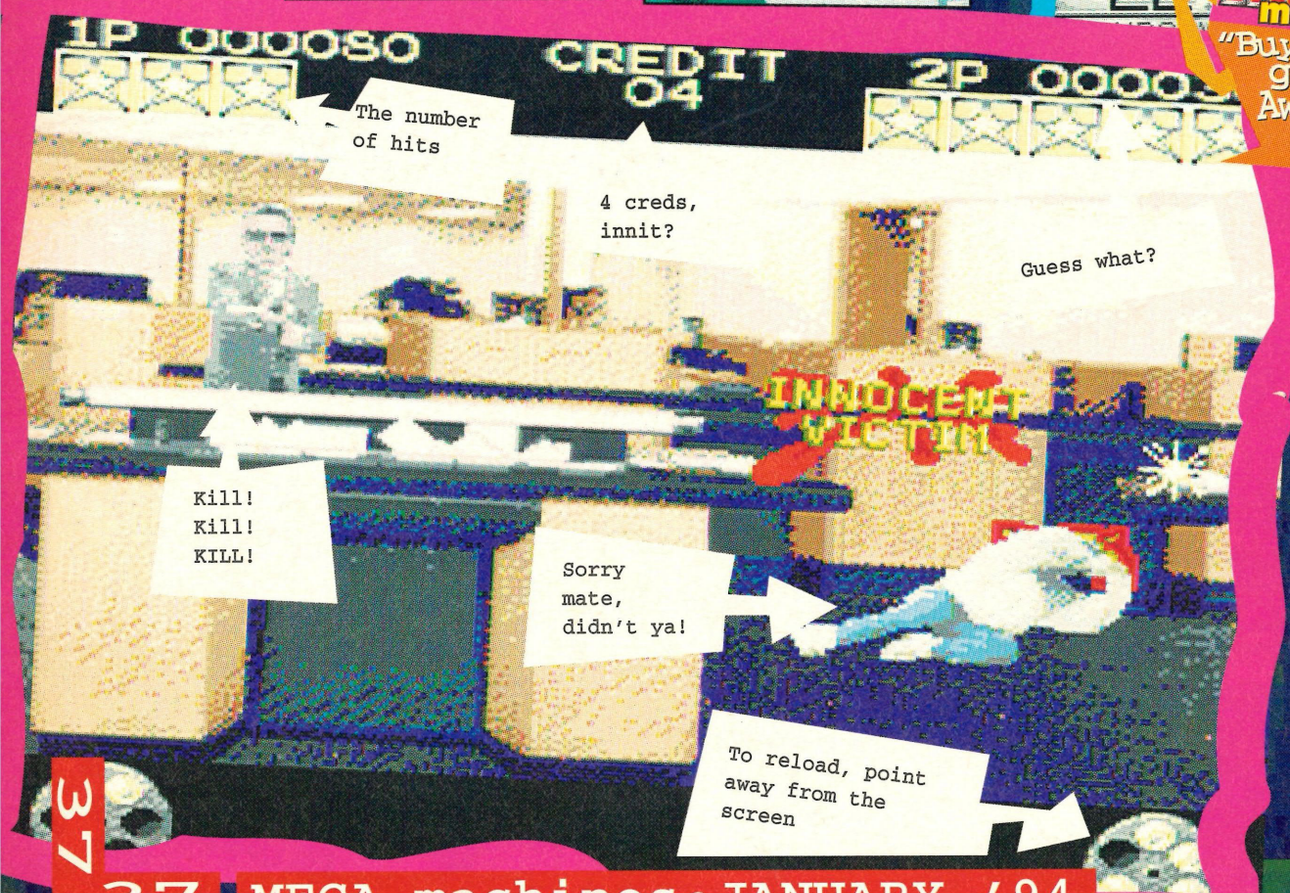


PLANE SAILING

'Oh this year we're off to sunny Spain!' The terrorists on the last-but-one level are hard to hit through the tiny windows.



The MEGA machines "Buy this game" Award!



//AL////89%///



What a good doss! This is the kind of game you wanna play with a fine bit of Cypress Hill on the turntable and a few ales down your neck. The light gun's great — the aim is pretty good and it's not as cumbersome as the Menacer — but don't even bother trying to play with the joypad 'cos it's too damn slow.

Lethal Enforcers' drawback is it's inevitably repetitive — y'know, the same geezers popping up again and again. Having said that, it's a fine blast and even better with a mate.

If you get this for Xmas, expect your dad and his mates coming home from the pub to live out their Charles Bronson fantasies. Good show!

GRAPHICS	85	
SOUND	Mega CD 91	Mega Drive 89
PLAYABILITY	92	
LASTABILITY	87	
ORIGINALITY	76	
OVERALL	Mega Drive 91	Mega CD 92

MEGA drive!

HOOK

They're a nasty lot, these pirate types, what with their robbing, pillaging and general skullduggery. But what does 'shiver me timbers' actually mean? Better ask good old Cap'n Hook...

A year before his masterful update of those laughable Japanese B-movies where Plasticine dinosaurs flatten Tokyo (what would Channel 4 do without 'em?), Steven Spielberg plagiarised a historical piece — the legend of Peter Pan.

Whether you thrilled to his adventures or thought him a bit of a girly (dodgy green tights and a fairy for a best mate), you can't deny the fame of the boy who never grew up — only he did, see! Peter Pan is alive, well and shops in the same branch of Safeway as Elvis. He's even had his wicked way — and has the kids to prove it (one wonders what Mother Goose would've thought about that).

Peter Panning (the name's been changed to protect the not-as innocent-as-we-thought) lives in New York and remembers nothing of his years in Neverland. Nothing, that is, until his arch-enemy, Captain Hook, kidnaps his children and whisks them away.

There's a lesson here, kids: bonking leads to babies and babies mean trouble — don't do it!

Here we go again

Tinkerbell, the mischievous fairy, takes Peter to the land of his childhood to save his offspring and duff the evil Hook, once and for all. On his arrival, however, the Neverland folk are a tad sceptical; could this 37-year-old family man truly be the boy who never grew up? The only way Peter can prove his Pan identity is to defeat numero uno Doubting Thomas, Rufio, and regain the magic sword.



Peter runs, leaps and somersaults through a multi-directional scrolling lanscape, negotiating platforms, avoiding swarms of bees and swiping roving minions with his dagger.



///MILES 40%//



Take a jolly fairy story, incorporate it into a tried and tested game formula and add a decent licence for good measure — a recipe for a half-

////WARREN 43%////



Now call me tasteless, call me old fashioned (you're tasteless and old fashioned —Everyone), but I really enjoyed the *Hook* movie. Sure, it had more than its fair share of sloppy scenes and sentimentality — I expected nothing less of a Spielberg movie — but it was a lot of fun. With Robin Williams and Maggie Smith, you can't fail.

However, with Sony and a movie licence, you surely *can* end up with a duffer — the *Hook* cart's living proof of that. There's nothing *disastrously* wrong, but the quibbles soon add up.

It's on rocky ground to begin with, because another licence has become yet *another* platformer. How many more times are software houses going to make this tiresome, predictable move? On second thoughts, don't answer that — it's too depressing.

The backgrounds are lush, bright and, surprisingly, almost cinematic in feel. A pity, then, that the sprites are wishy-washy (and I'm not talking stereotyped panto characters, either). Fantasy or no, they should be bold, not dream-like soft focus figures.

And the main sprite looks more like Una Stubbs than Robin Williams, although it is amusing when all energy's lost and it pops to the Peter Panning identity (which resembles John Candy).

The control system's limited for a swashbuckling character — more sword moves would've been appreciated — but you're constrained by the level designs anyway. Walk, stop, swipe, jump... walk, stop, swipe, jump... wa– you get the picture.

The repetitive play wouldn't be so bad if it all added to progress, but restart points are virtually non-existent. Lose a life and prepare for déjà vu as you're taken back to the start of the level and have to do the whole thing again. Or switch off.

The only difference between this and the Mega-CD version is the soundtrack, which shows how unimpressive the disc was. The real music added much to the feel, however.

good measure — a recipe for a half-decent arcade blast, I'm sure you'll agree. So why such a bilgesome load of old cobblers?

For a start it's *sooo* slow! Trudging along, stopping occasionally for the odd sword-swipe, is hardly frenetic. It boils down to remembering where baddies appear and waiting for them to walk into your blade.

Infinite continues are a blessing (though they severely reduce lastability), but restart points within levels are all too scarce. Limited credits but restarting where you died would've been better.

Visually, *Hook* never rises above the competent, with passable parallax and animation. As for the intro... the embodiment of the 'really can't be bothered' syndrome. Still pics accompanied by scene-setting text — hardly the MD at its best.

I'd recommend *Hook* to anyone after a heavy Saturday night; it's a sobering experience.

Actually, my station in life's working for a Commodore 64 magazine (it's a living...). I only got lumped into this comment 'cos the MEGA MACHINES lot are missing, presumed drunk at the pub. There I was, looking forward to the bright lights/big city of Consoleville and... WORRA DISAPPOINTMENT! Don't cry, little C64, Daddy's coming home...

At the end of Level 1 he's confronted by Rufio, magic sword in hand. Defeating him in suitably heroic, Pan-like fashion earns the people's trust, then he can set about the serious business of saving the sprogs.

The next level sees Peter running, leaping and somersaulting his way through a multi-directional scrolling landscape, negotiating platforms, avoiding swarms of... hang on! Yes, folks — it's a variation-free game, through and through.

So little choice...

Completing a level brings up a scrolling map of Neverland, showing Pan's path through many locations. There's basically only one route through each stage — one or two dead ends add a simplistic mapping element but certainly not enough to warrant pen 'n' paper.

Of course, there are the obligatory secret rooms containing lives, energy power-ups and the usual guff. A slightly more innovative idea is Pan's ability to fly to otherwise unreachable bits, but to do this he's gotta locate Tinkerbell, then stand under her shower of pixie dust to charge his 'fly meter'. When the bar's full, Pete can take to the sky — but not for long.

Pan must battle through nine sections before taking on salty sea dog Hook aboard his pirate ship. Success in this confrontation means happiness and peace in Neverland, leaving Peter to reunite his family in the real world. Don't you just love happy endings?!





Here we see P Pan engaging in his favourite leisure activity of pot-holing. Lucky he packed his waders this time, eh?





Peter Pan lashes out at one of his pet hates: skateboarders. 'God they're irritating! Rumbling past your door at all hours, scaring the cat...'









Hook is a game that's been in development for a long time. Originally it was going to be a platform game, then it was going to be a beat 'em up, then it was going to be a platform game again. Finally it's a platform game with beat 'em up elements. The final disc was. The real music added much to the feel, however, and with mere Mega Drive 'instruments' there's nothing to lift *Hook* out of the crowd. A whole sack of pixie dust couldn't shift it.

Hook™

PUBLISHER	SONY
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
SIZE	DOESN'T MATTER

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	1
LIVES	3
CONTINUES	INFINITE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NONE

GRAPHICS	67
SOUND	61
PLAYABILITY	60
LASTABILITY	42
ORIGINALITY	38
OVERALL	41

GODS

Shh! Be very quiet, and don't open up the pages too far – an Amiga owner might see this review and mock you when they see such an aged game has finally hit the MD.

MEGA drive!

Let's take a good look at what religion has given us: wars, corruption, deaths by the thousand and a set of morals which say you should love the dude next to you — unless he believes in another god, when you've the right to dice them into bite-sized chunks or burn them! Oh, and of course, it makes a great game licence — although we doubt the proceeds will end up in an omnipresent pocket.

Anyway, on to the game. You play a chap called Hurcules who wants to become a god. 'Not so fast!' cry the other gods, 'if you want be be in our club and hang around in ladies' changing rooms undetected, you're gonna have to wander around a lot and kill some stuff.'

So all the gods toddled off, spooked a couple of peasants and came up with four devilishly hard worlds, each containing three levels and a host of things that enjoy getting real close to you. And your task, surprise surprise (sod off, Cilla), is to make it through all four worlds. It's inspired, isn't it?

Now before you start yawning and thinking it's the same old slice 'n' that'll have you crying yourself to sleep. It's a big mixture of 'what if?s' and 'how come?s', not the usual leap 'n' lob effort.

Levers control your path. Pulling the wrong lever at the right time brings a healthy bonus raining down on your head, but pulling the wrong lever at the *wrong* time can cause a drill to thrust where only tapeworms would dare to go. There are also gems, potions, weapons and trick dog poo to collect, each having a specific purpose and a space in your inventory.

Finally, what game would be complete without a mythical Army Surplus Store to exchange gems for instruments of destruction? To this end it has the



//AL 66%/////

Bugger! It's times like this when I don't half wish I was a Jehovah's Witness. If I was, I could say '*Gods*? That's a bit sacreligious, isn't it? There's only *one* God, after all', refuse to review the thing, storm off in a huff and have a good flick through *The Watchtower*. But — *cuh!* — I'm not, so I'll have to get on with it.

What is it with all these Amiga conversions popping up on the MD? I mean, converting the Great God *Sensi* was a stroke of genius, but *Lotus 3*? *Zool*? *Kick Off?* Chuffin' hell, missus, why not go the whole hog and port over *Pong* and *Space Invaders*? Why does it seem Sega are relying on other systems to produce games for their console, instead of bringing out benchmark-setting games off their own bat? It annoys me, it really does.

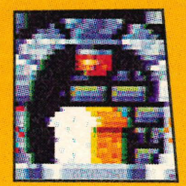
***Gods* may have been praised to the skies in its original Amiga incarnation, but that was a long, long time ago. It still looks and plays like an Amiga platformer, which is a Bad Thing for a cartridge game that will take up a considerable**

Looking for a gift for that awkward Barbarian?


Axe


Familiar


Fireball


Food


Health

dice action, there's something you should know: this is not a game where you can let your thumbs do the thinking. Yup, *Gods* is going to have you casting doubts on the parental origins of the programmers.

Sampled urine...

The first thing you notice is the fact you don't have a sword. 'That's handy!' you'll say to yourself, then stand there, completely bemused, while monsters appear and strip off energy (the small urine sample in the bottom left-hand corner).

After a couple of lives have made like Robert Maxwell and jumped ship, the really astute among you will walk to the right and pick up the sword. Now you can throw deadly blades around like a mad fool and breeze through the game... um, can't you? (Supporting cast look on with solemn faces and shake their heads.)

What sets *Gods* aside from other arcade adventures is the same thing obligatory old git and his all-night World Of Weapons establishment.

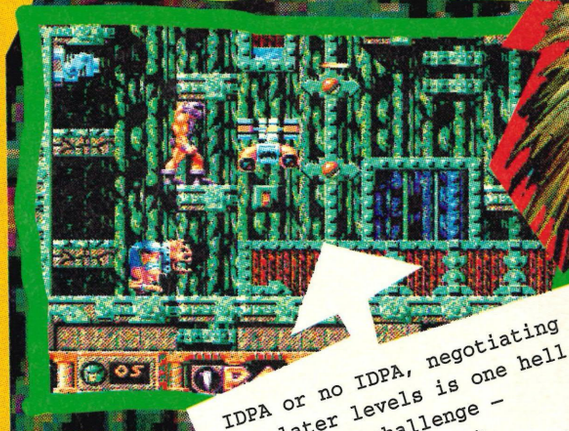
So there's *Gods* in all its glory. But it doesn't end there. It features Innovative Dynamic Play Adjustment which, in the real world, would have something to do with a 12-disk multiplay in-car CD system, but in this case it means if you're crap, the game goes easy on you, and gets nasty as you improve.

Hmm, IDPA. It has a certain ring to it, don't you think?



Deep in the cellars of MEGA MACHINES, only the foulest MD games lurk and fester. Watch out for that copy of *Spiderman & The X-Men*, mate! It's lethal!





IDPA or no IDPA, negotiating the later levels is one hell of a tough challenge – especially the tight, claustrophobic ones like this



//MILES 60%//



The Bitmap Brothers are back — but don't expect another *Speedball 2*. At best, *Gods* is a very average outing that can only sell on its reputation.

You can tell at a glance it's a Bitmap blast — mean, moody graphics with copious amounts of blue. They're not as hot as you'd expect, though: the dungeons lack any semblance of spookability and the animation on the main character's well below par. He's *so* stiff and wooden.

The game design's showing it's age, too. Today's gamers expect more from their platform shoot-'em-ups than this basic blast. Plodding along, climbing ladders and shooting things, just doesn't cut it anymore.

The playing area's featureless in the extreme, with little variation and sod-all in the way of devious devices or tricky traps. After five minutes' play, I didn't want to go on.

Some may have thought *Gods* groundbreaking when it was released on the Amiga, but if it wasn't by the Bitmaps it would've scored average marks even then. And if it hit the Mega Drive with no pedigree or hype, the other Sega mags would tell the truth.

amount of Xmas/paper round/pocket money. Don't get me wrong, it's not massively crap, but when there are newer platformers like *Aladdin* and strategy games of the calibre of *Dune CD* and *The Lost Vikings* available, what's the point?

The graphics are pretty nasty, bringing back hideous flashbacks of *Spider-Man & The X-Men*, which as you know, bring me out in a nasty case of the sweats, so I'll have a lie-down.

Oh, and if you *do* buy it, don't play it when someone else is in the room, 'cos they get on your wick by nagging at you to go left when you wanna go right. James, in particular, had a go at me for being unable to jump from ladder to ladder (when it was the crappy joypad's fault, honest). Now he's the first person to operate a joypad with his sphincter muscles.

I'm going to ring Norris McWhirter, but before I do, remember: *Gods* isn't much cop.



Hunter



Mace



Magic Potion



Magic wings



Spear



Starburst



Weapon arc, standard

Shop till you drop! (some more...)


Weapon arc, intense


Power claws


Shield

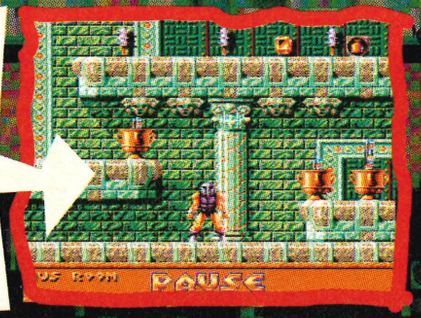

Shield upgrade

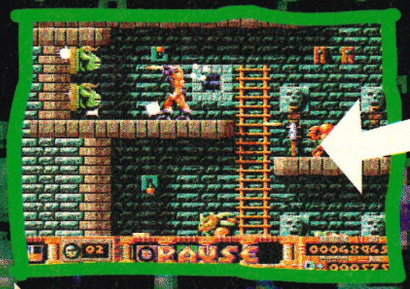

Health upgrade


Extra life


Weapon arc, wide

Our hero stops for a refreshing Cup-A-Snake. Just add boiling water, and a snake. Mmmmm!





Those two green heads gob balls of fire at you. Best give 'em a good going over, before they scorch your privates.

///JAMES 79%///



To say this game is infuriating doesn't even come close. You're constantly bombarded by all manner of nasties and it doesn't let up when there's a puzzle to be solved, which had me reaching for a Paracetomol or two.

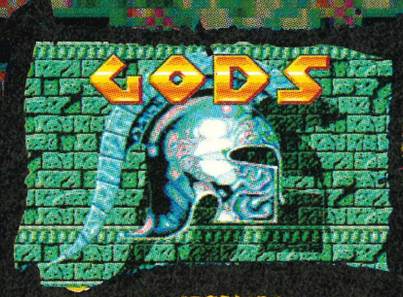
The thing that really got my goat was the control method. This God-to-be should be a dab-hand in the combat department, but is he heck!

Apart from the unresponsive handling, the hero can't crouch and fire at the same time without chundering the entire contents of his inventory over the floor. This means you'll take a couple of hits when taking on two or more nasties, and nine times out of ten you forget about the shortcoming and have to run back for the bits you dropped.

Graphically, *Gods* is superb — again, apart from the main sprite. The hand-painted backdrops, the bug-eyed nasties, they all look great. But the one that counts, the one that's onscreen all of the time... he moves like someone out of a 1920s newsreel. Yuk!

For me, there's too much hit-and-miss puzzling. I prefer the kind of game where you apply logic to solve puzzles, not pull a level and hope that the roof doesn't cave in on your head. But all in all, it's a tough and worthwhile challenge — if it wasn't for the animation and control, this would be a top-scorer.

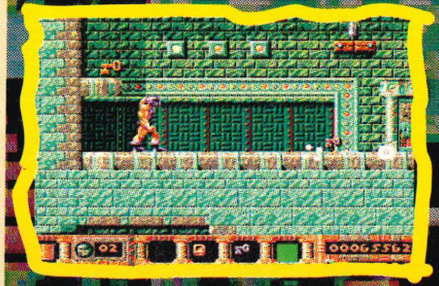
Oh, one last word of warning: *Gods* is prone to back-seat drivers. When Al was playing it, I stood behind him and bleated instructions. And when I was playing... well, let's just say it all got rather bloody.

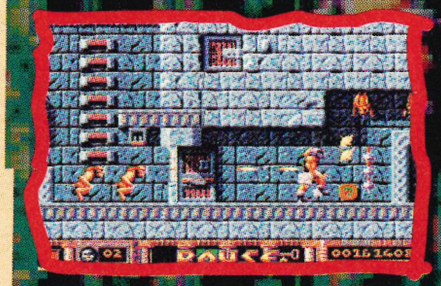


PUBLISHER	ACCOLADE
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
SIZE	8 MEG

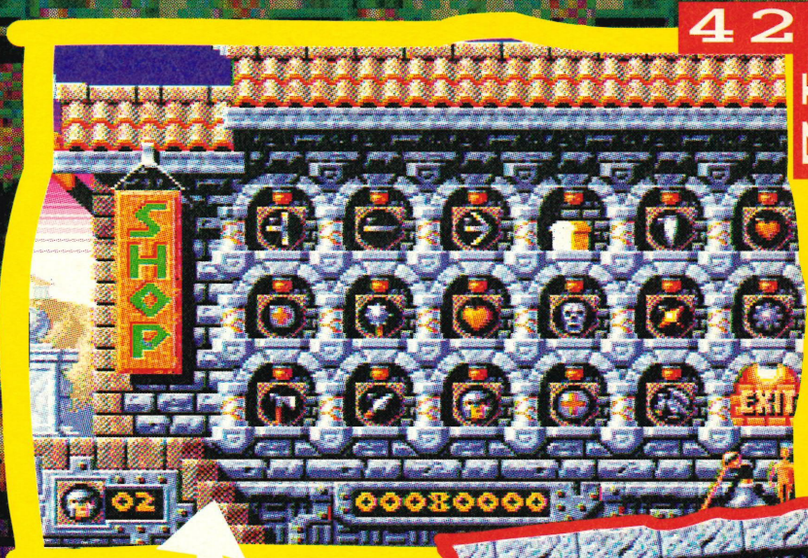
OPTIONS

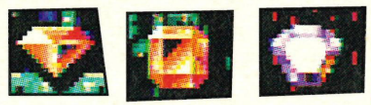
PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	SELF ADJUSTING
LIVES	3
CONTINUES	NO
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YES
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	I.D.P.A











Tell 'em about the money, honey! Collect every gem you see laying about the levels – or you'll never get to see a shop screen this well stocked...



At the end of some levels, a bloke in a dress asks you to look at his bulging sack. Tell your parents right away!

GRAPHICS	69
SOUND	70
PLAYABILITY	76
LASTABILITY	81
ORIGINALITY	72
OVERALL	68

THUNDERHAWK

THE ULTIMATE COMBAT SIMULATOR

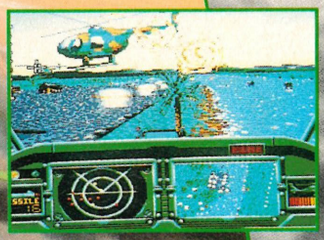
FLY YOUR THUNDERHAWK THROUGH A TOTAL OF 48 MISSIONS SET IN 10 DIFFERENT LOCATIONS. USE STRATEGY AND TACTICS DISCUSSED IN THE BRIEFING ROOM TO LOCATE, INTERCEPT AND DESTROY THE ENEMY IN THIS DEFINITIVE 3D HELICOPTER COMBAT SIMULATION.

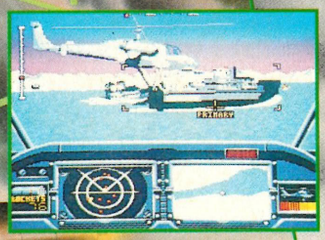












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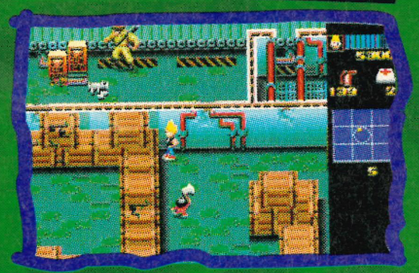
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ZOMBIES

MEGA drive!

Arcade Action Review

The MEGA MACHINES staff on Monday mornings? The front rows of a heavy metal concert? Or cannon fodder in Konami's latest?



According to the limited stock of the local video library, zombies are a bunch of dead dudes who walk about with arms outstretched, making a right old nuisance of themselves — until some heroic type dismembers them or gives them a stern talking to.

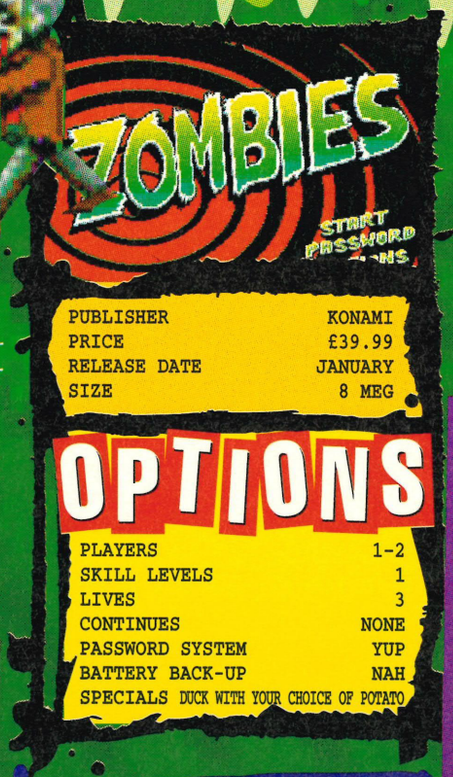
Zombie stroke supernatural disposal seems to be a national pastime in the States. And you might have noticed, it's not the armed forces, FBI or CIA who have to deal with these nightmares. Nope, it's the most innocent, the unsuspecting and the least likely to own any serious firepower.

So without further ado, meet Zeke and Julie — our innocent, unsuspecting but surprisingly well armed neighbour-savers.



Okay, okay, so the kid's wearing 3D glasses. If you were fighting psychotic kids with axes, mad men with chainsaws and stiffs with, er, green skin, wouldn't you try and do something to take the edge off the situation?

Actually, that's what Konami have done with the entire game. The majority of pick-upable weapons are definitely worth a chortle and the bad guys are hardly yer run-of-the-mill nasties.



PUBLISHER	KONAMI
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	JANUARY
SIZE	8 MEG

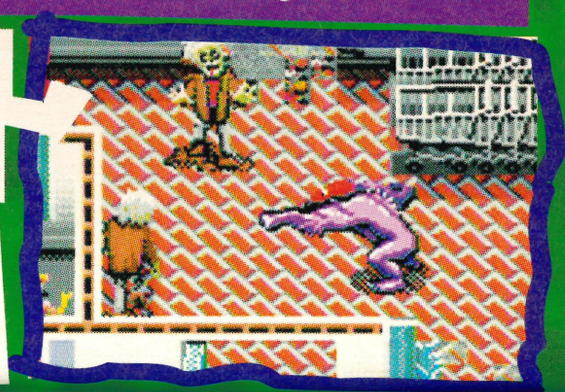
OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-2
SKILL LEVELS	1
LIVES	3
CONTINUES	NONE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YUP
BATTERY BACK-UP	NAH
SPECIALS	DUCK WITH YOUR CHOICE OF POTATO



There's 5p off all potions for turning you into a big scary monster at Tesco's this week.

He's a big kid, look what he can do. He can wear big kid pants too. And he gets right on my wick.



////////AL 85%////////



Very nice. Very nice indeed. Konami bring us another long-awaited release in the shape of this horror-laden masterpiece. I've got a confession to make — I used to have a crush on Penelope Pitstop when I was a kid. Arrgh! Wrong confession! Forget that line!

Ho ho, folks! Er, yes. What was I going on about? Oh aye! I've a confession to make — every now and then, I have a good old fiddle on the Super Nintendos belonging to our office partners on SNES FORCE, and one game which grabbed my attention was none other than this one.

And for a refreshing change, I reckon the Mega Drive conversion is just as good, if not better. Unlike the phlegm-clogged tones of Dhalsim and chums in *SFII*, we have atmospheric sonics by the bloated corpse-load.

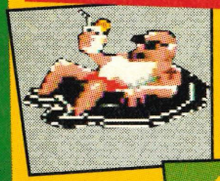
The game's tone lends itself to pure cheese and has its tongue in its cheek (or someone else's cheek, if the undead are anything like those in *Zombie Apocalypse*, which I was the first in our school to see, so *thank you*.). It's amusing in the extreme, and although a tad easy at first, hots up to be a real challenge.

Konami get nuff props from me (as I slip into 'street' mode, in order to impress the 'kids') for recognising the six-button joypad, because it makes the furious toggling between the multitudes of weaponry and other items a lot easier. It needs to be: the zombies and their mates get quicker and quicker.

There's quite a hefty strategy element as well; choose your weapons wisely. More than once, I was trapped on a level without keys or weapons, which wasn't at all agreeable.

The two player option is a right guffaw, and just like *Sesame Street*, encourages co-operation in order to get past the tougher levels. *Zombies Ate My Neighbours*, but I don't 'ate this game.

Dead 'eads



Some fat git on an inner tube



A normal sized baby.



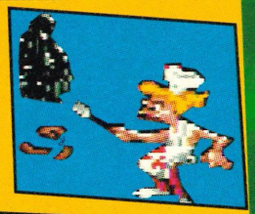
A Soldier. No, really.



Hang on, that's my Uncle Ray! It is!



He never told me he was into cross dressing!



Our Dad'll go bloody mental!



He's been looking all over for them tights!



Where was I? Oh, and this is a zombie.

'This way!' 'Nah — this way!'

The object of each level is to find and rescue your beloved neighbours (fortunately not the the cast from Ramsay Street) before the dead dudes and evil ones catch up with them. You score points for everyone rescued and once they're out of the way, a doorway opens to the next level.

That may sound easy, but it ain't! No matter how trigger-happy you get, zombies pop up faster than rabbits on heat. And they've a taste for human flesh!

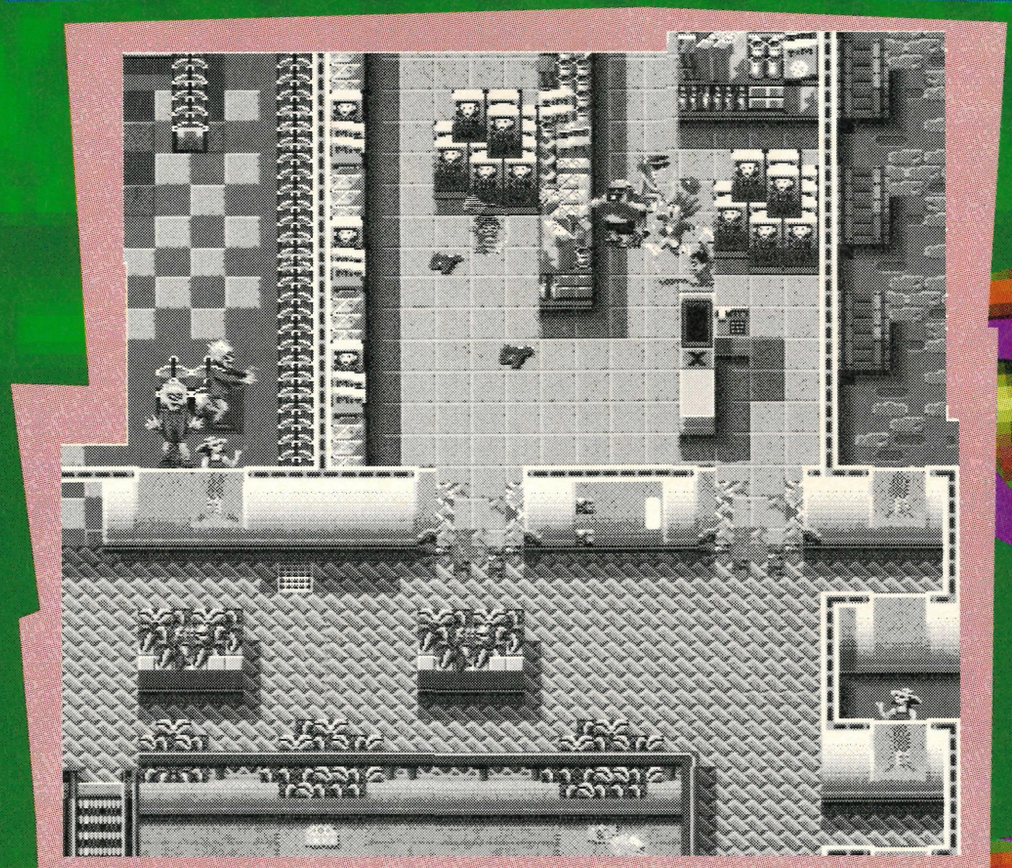
You play through maze-like levels from a slightly angled top-down view, which works particularly well, even in simultaneous two-player mode. Of course, with two players on the go, a lot of co-operation's involved: you can't wander off in separate directions without jamming the screen in a stalemate.

Collectables like door keys, magic potions and the sort of hardware you'd expect to find if you crossed a Stallone film with The Three Stooges are scattered everywhere. The magic potions are a great feature! One slug of the red liquid and you transmogrify into a huge beast that batters down doors, stamps on babies and doesn't give a damn when it breaks a nail.

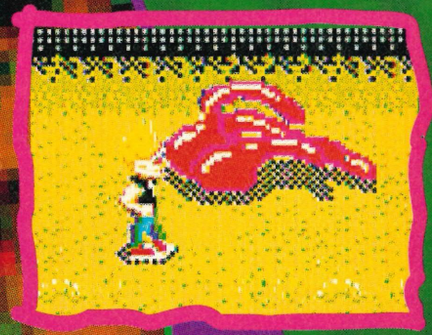
Completing *Zombie*'s gonna take a while. Even though a password pops up before particularly tough levels, it's all too easy to blast away with an impressive-looking weapon, only to find you need it later. That means hitting the old Reset button and doing the sodding lot all over again.



Satan's Shopping Centre



Julie has a nose around the back of the supermarket. Just like I used to do when I stacked shelves at Bulwell Co- Op. What a doss! When the gaffer wasn't about, we'd eat all the lard out of the dustbins. Try it, Kids! It's ACE! (Needham, you're a sad man - Ed)



//JAMES//
///87%///



We may have beaten the Super Nintendo spuds down the other end of the office to *Lethal Enforcers* but they've had this game for a while — and loved it! Now that it's on the sexy Sega, I can understand what all the fuss was about.

I'm one of those unfortunate people who had the bulk of their attention span surgically removed at birth. Consequently, any game that involves wandering around results in my brain fudging up and swamping itself in condensation. *Zombies*, despite packing a fair bit of wandering, doesn't leave you alone long enough to let you work out how many times you've strolled around the screen.

I also suffer from terminal stupidity, so a game such as this lasts me ages. Learning what weapons to save and how to avoid the nasties when you've no room to manoeuvre is a necessity, and without the passwords I could be playing this until next Christmas. The variety of weaponry is enough to put a lump in anyone's trousers (that's if you were to tie a knot in the legs and fill them with all the collectable baddy-bashers) and it's just as much fun with two players.

The most compelling reason to play is the variety of bad guys. They're brilliant! It's a pretty safe bet that whoever programmed *Zombies* will be committed before the turn of the century. I just hope I'm not on the same ward when *I* get sent down.

Anyway, I like this game a lot. The two-player mode and 55 levels sold it for me. So what if I'm too stupid to be able to complete it?!





The Sandworms in *Dune CD* make a special guest appearence. Next month, they'll be turning up in EA Netball...

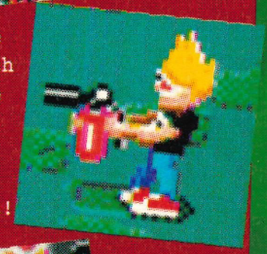




Check out this little beaut! A nice big bazooka!



Neck it in one! Neck! Neck! Neck! Neck!



This fire extinguish-er's ace for letting off at Pizza Hut!

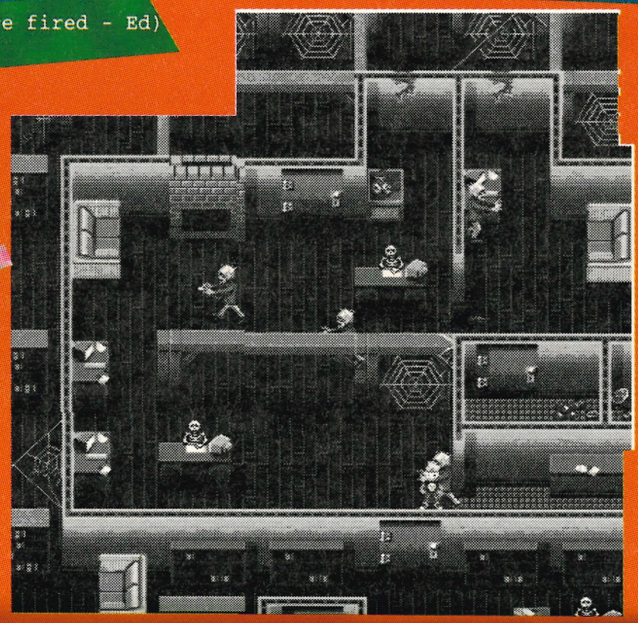


It don't half annoy the waitress though! Oo-er!



Satan's, er, Office?

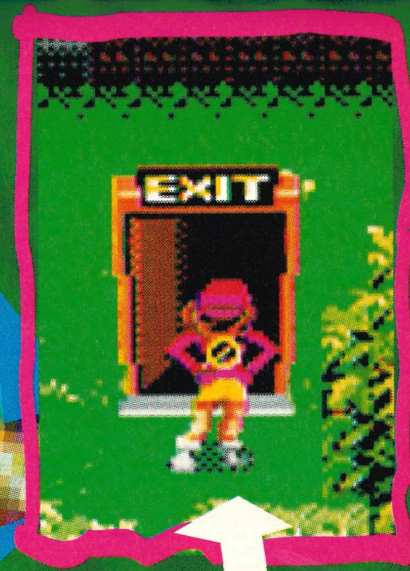
(You're fired - Ed)





Typical! You get all the charcoal briqettes, pick the bits of ash out of the ribs, buy all those crappy little things for holding the corn-on-the cobs, and it chucks it down. Or, a Were-wolf rips your chest open. Bah!

Sorry I'm late, Steve, but I've got a good excuse. I sort of died and then ended up rotting away for a few centuries before a strange mystic force brought me back. You got any paracetamol?



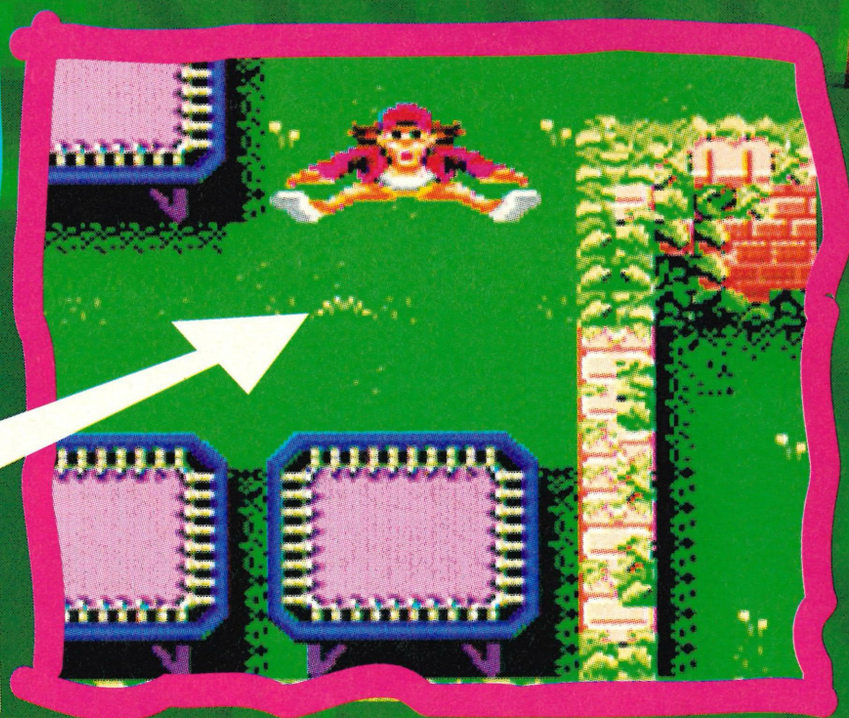
When all the survivors have been rescued, away you go into the next level! Alternately, you could always stand around like a nance and contemplate euthenasia.







"Hi! I'm Julie, star of Zombies. Even whilst running away from 50ft babies and UFOs, I managed to stay fresh and dry, thanks to my Left Guard armpit stick. Look, I can even bounce about on this trampoline and not smell like Giant Haystack's crouch"



GRAPHICS	90
SOUND	92
PLAYABILITY	81
LASTABILITY	69
ORIGINALITY	75
OVERALL	86

F-117 NIGHT STORM

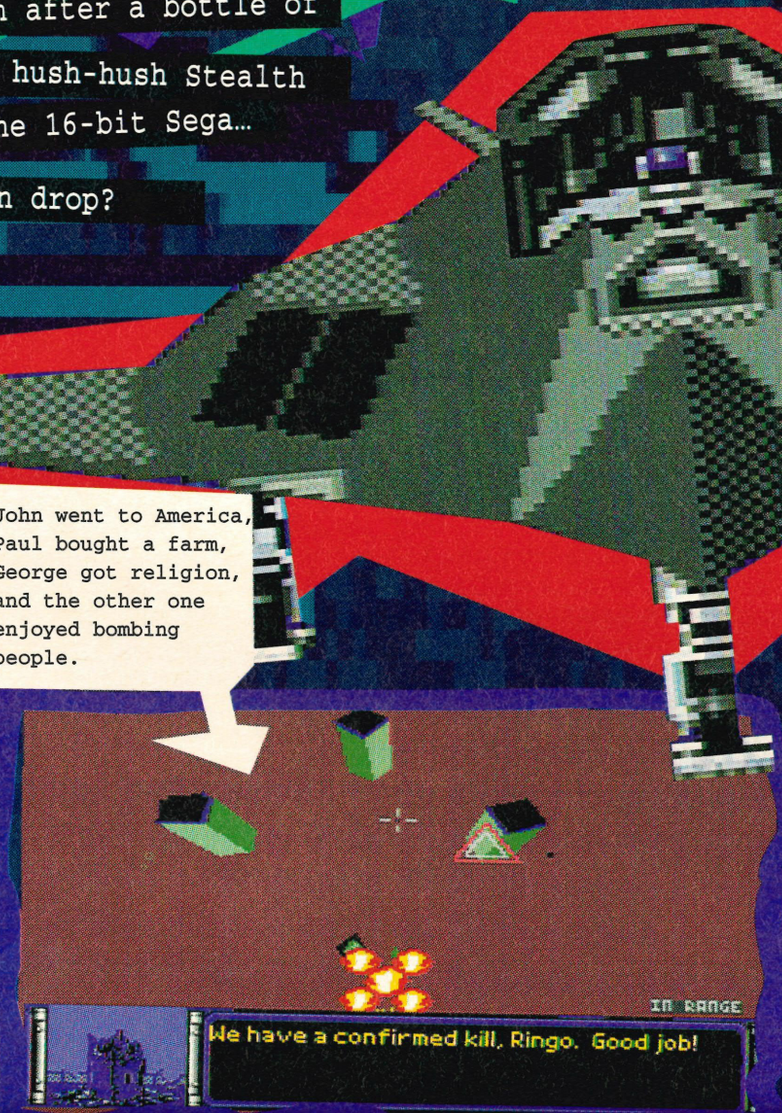
MEGA drive! Flight Sim Review

Sneakier than James Beaven after a bottle of R Whites lemonade, the hush-hush Stealth fighter whispers onto the 16-bit Sega… Did anyone hear a pin drop?

The F-117A Stealth fighter is a covert operations aircraft, designed with sneak attacks against the toughest enemy targets in mind. If it felt like it, it could deliver a 2000 lb laser-guided bomb from 25,000 ft in total darkness, directly onto the head of the geezer with the beard in Take That. It is so undetectable to radar, it could raze the studios of GMTV to the ground without anyone realising it was there. Yes, in the hands of the right people, an F-117 would be a tool for justice and liberty.

Unfortunately, Yanks own it, so once again our old chums Achmed Foreigner and Terry Communist line up for another all-American pasting.

There are two main options in EA's latest flight sim, Arcade and Campaign. The Arcade option is self-explanatory — you fly into an amusement arcade along Southend seafront and wipe out surly-looking teenagers pestering honest folk for their last man in *Mortal Kombat* 'cos I know how you do Kano's death move and it's ace'. Oh, all right then, you fly round with unlimited fuel and weapons and blast away at everything. So far, so good.





Super twist

The Campaign mode, however, has a novel twist. You start in 1982 as a Cadet and learn the complexities of the craft bit by bit, thereby keeping instruction book-wallowing to a bare minimum. When fully accomplished, work your way through all the main air campaigns up to the present day, including the Libyan air strike, invasion of Grenada and the Gulf War.

In all, there are 30 scenarios set in nine theatres of war. But like the bloke in those adverts for Thighmasters and the like would say, '*Wait!* That's not all!'

EA have also included what they call 'Political What Ifs'. These let you find out what would've happened in recent history if the Americans had poked their noses into other people's business even more than usual. For example, what if the Yanks had interfered in the Iran/Iraq war of the mid-'80s?

How about...

Hopefully EA will follow this idea up with other 1980s scenarios, such as 'What if Arthur Scargill had an F-117 during the miners' strike?' and 'What if the USAF carried out a tactical strike on Al Needham's school on the day of his 'O' levels?' Yeah, that'd be a good one...

EA have applied a little artistic licence by tilting the balance over to the 'game' side and away from the 'sim' side of things. For example, the missions throw you straight into the action, completely bypassing the taking off and landing many players find fiddly.

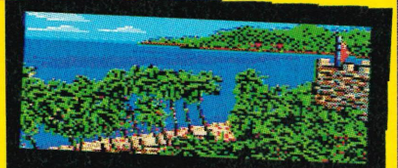
EA include what they term a 'Movie Inset' window in the cockpit. From time to time this is filled with comments and instructions from the top brass, fellow pilots, flight commanders and even enemies. Through this box, clues are given and the plot unfolds.

The boys in the hangar advise you on which missiles to load up before each mission and the lady in the command tower warns you of potential dangers. During certain fraught moments, she says 'Take Six'. But should you buy one? Oh-ho!

"Clear this bloody mess up! It looks like a bomb's hit it!"



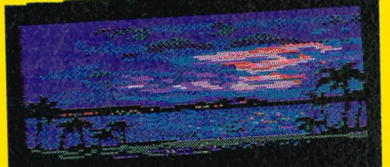
TONOPAH, NEVADA
September, 1982



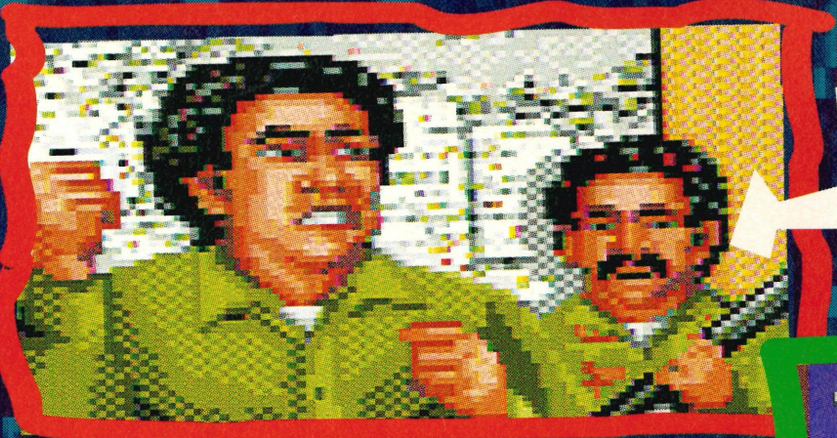
Grenada
October 25, 1982
Operation Nickel Grass



Cuba
March, 1995
Operation Wood Acre



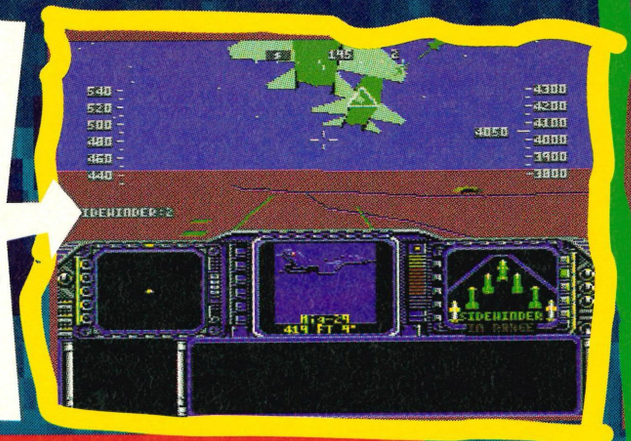
Libya
April 14, 1986
Operation El Dorado Canyon

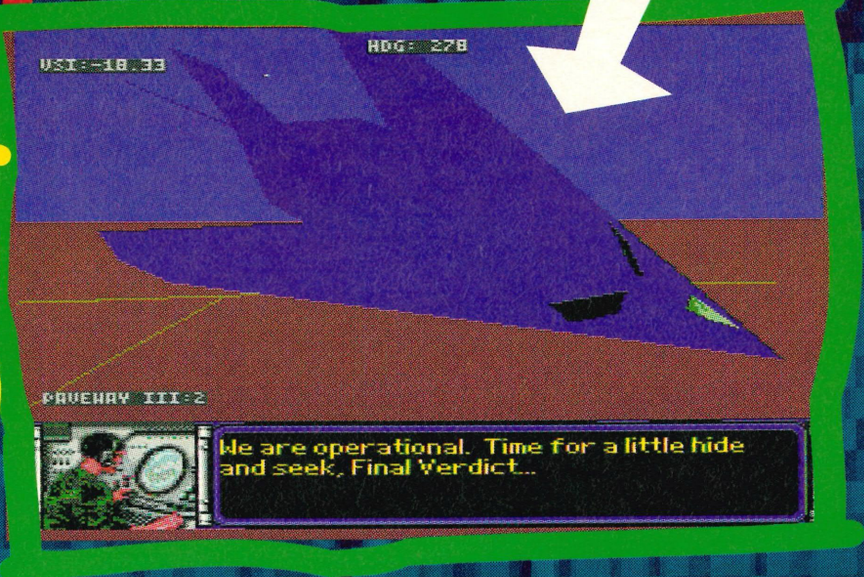


"Bloody typical! You wait ages for a 117, then you get three at once – and they bomb your flamin' house!" Col. Gaddaffi does a bit of fist-shaking at the naughty little boggers.

"Oh, God! Me Dad coulda told me he was coming this way – he could've given me a lift!" Oh, the amusing things we used to say when we were young...

The Arcade mode gives you opportunities a-plenty to shoot at people. Then again, if you're that interested, you could always move to Los Angeles...





//////JAMES 87%//////



Cor, I've always wanted to be a pilot, me! I *did* want to fly X-wings for a living when I was younger, and I would've been good at it, too. How was I supposed to know America's Star Wars project involved nuclear missiles and Princess Leia was a fake? So my dreams of heroically blasting across the heavens in a futuristic craft were scuppered — until now. Hurrah!

F-117 Night Storm is the most fluid console flight sim I've seen. And you get to fly a plane that's almost exactly the same shape as a piece of Dairylea soft cheese!

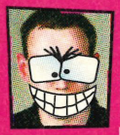
The wait is finally over for those who've been yearning for a faithful flight sim. It plays like the sims that were around about six years ago for the 286 PC. That's not such a bad thing; all that's lacking is ground detail and the break-neck speed the 486 box of tricks can deliver.

You've a surprising amount of control over your F-117. The three-buttoned controller does the business with little of that awkward toggling to select screens. Admittedly, it would've been nice to see the six-button pad in there as an option for greater control, but hey, we can't have everything.

Oh, and that's the other thing that's missing: you can't take off or land the bugger. Of course, you could say you can't do that in PC flight sims, but that's usually down to lack of skill in the piloting department!

Well, that's that, then. We've got our flight sim for the Mega Drive, all we have to do now is sit back and wait for some boffin to whack one on CD format. Ooo, isn't that a gorgeous thought?

///AL////
///85%///



Well, well, well, flight sims are coming in thick and fast on your friendly neighbourhood Mega Drive and EA, no strangers to the world of aerial combat, have weighed in with this little number (well, low three-figure number, if you catch my drift).

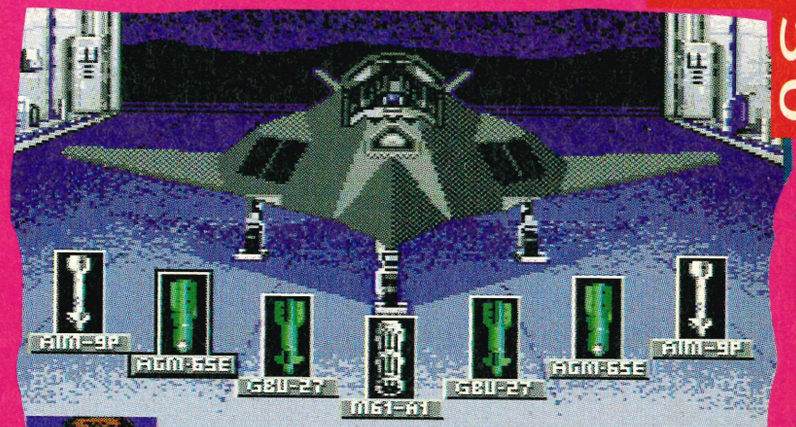
And let me tell you, it's not bad at all. EA have wisely avoided annoying me by incorporating a comprehensive training session in Campaign mode, which means impatient air cadets can get stuck in without wading through the game instructions equivalent of *War & Peace* beforehand.

Another relief comes in the fact that pausing the game in order to toggle the togglable is kept to a bare minimum; the flow of the action is hardly ever interrupted. When confronted by a flight sim, my attention span's usually as long as the average 5-year-old's while watching *The South Bank Show*, but the hint of a storyline and 'what if?' scenarios kept me interested for a lot longer.

Missions are enhanced by contact with base (even though there were a few times when I wanted to ram a Maverick down the geezer's throat), and although the cockpit views are your standard browns and greens, the overall presentation's superb. The plane's handling ranks among the most responsive I've ever come across.

Obviously, the lack of buttons is a drawback — it would've been nice if *F-117* supported the six-button joypad — but this little beaut is as close to the definitive MD flight sim as we're gonna get at the moment.

GRAPHICS	74
SOUND	87
PLAYABILITY	78
LASTABILITY	83
ORIGINALITY	76
OVERALL	86





The E-model Maverick uses your laser designator to find it's target. If you can spot it, it can find it!



Suck on that, mate! The F-117 is a bomber first and foremost, but it's a pretty handy in a scrap as well.

The E-model Maverick uses your laser designator to find it's target. If you can... Oh, no! I wondered where I'd heard that one before!

You Blew It!



YOU'VE MADE A CRATER!

You have managed to completely destroy $111.2 million dollars' worth of premier United States Air Force technology. This is a most unfortunate occurence. Try not to let it happen again.



YOU HAVE FAILED THE MISSION DIRECTIVES!

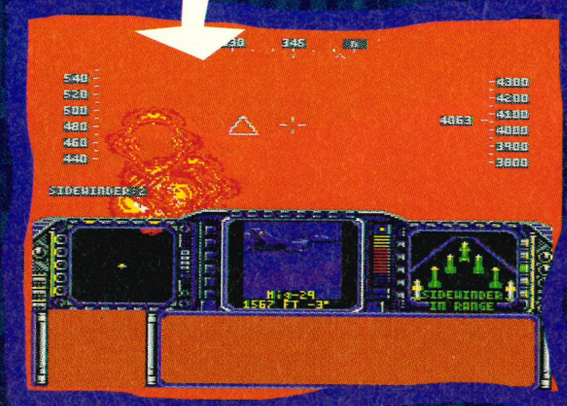
You have returned to base without completing the mission. Ordered to stand down, you assist the maintenance crews in the necessary function of keeping the hangar area spotless.



YOU HAVE BEEN SHOT DOWN

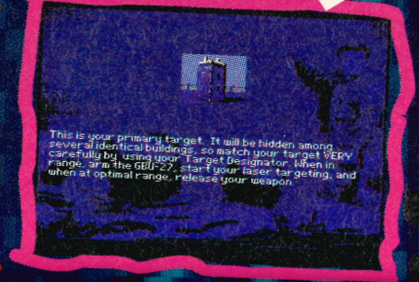
You successfully eject from your stricken aircraft. You watch helplessly as your plane spins wildly down, trailing black oily smoke. There is a great explosion of fire and debris as it impacts the ground.

This has not been a good day ...



"Today, Men, you'll be bombing the Arndale Centre, Luton. No particular reason, I just don't like it. It hasn't got a Mister Byrite. That'll be all, Men"







PUBLISHER	EA
PRICE	£49.99
RELEASE DATE	JANUARY
SIZE	8 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	1
LIVES	YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE...
CONTINUES	YES
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YES
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	ARCADE MODE

STRIKE POWER



DESERT STRIKE

IT'S WHAT THE MASTER SYSTEM & GAME GEAR HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR...



The number one hit helicopter sim' has now arrived on the Master System and Game Gear! Pilot your AH-64 Apache helicopter through 27 in depth missions. Destroy scuds, tanks, nuclear reactors and rescue vital personnel in this all action test of speed and skill.

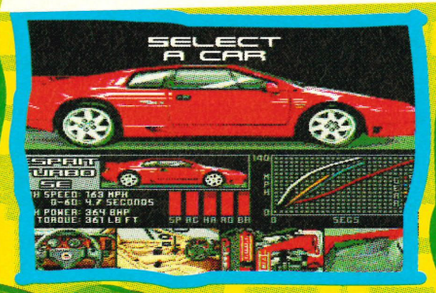
DOMARK®

The Top Guns

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Desert Strike is a trade mark of Electronic Arts. © 1993 Electronic Arts.
Published by Domark Software Ltd.,
Ferry House, 51-57 Lacy Road, Putney, London SW15 1PR, England.



Player One wastes valuable seconds as he frantically fast-forwards through *NOW VOL. 371* on the in-car hi-fi system. Seeing his chance, Player Two zooms into the lead…





MEGA drive!

Racing Sim Review

LOTUS 2

The Turbo Challenge continues as EA try to catch up the Amiga's series of *Lotus* games. The bodywork's great but what about the handling?

Have you ever noticed what the people who drive flash cars look like? By and large, they're dull men with dull (but highly-paid) jobs. Psychologically, they have a severe inferiority complex and feel that owning such an object will elevate them both physically and mentally over their peers. This is a state of mind which Freud called Phal…

(Needham! You aren't at college anymore! —Man Ed.) Oh aye. Erm.

Hey, gang! Big cars, eh? Not 'arf! Everyone loves a nice big shiny sports car — *especially the dolly birds*! Yes, they're magic!

Rollin' down the Queen's Highway looking like a streak of lightning! Burnin' rubber! Tearing the strip up! (Is this all right, Steve? I can't think of any more driving clichés.)

For those up for a bit of motorised mayhem, it's your lucky day, matey-boy, 'cos here comes EA's latest, *Lotus 2*, an MD conversion of Amiga best-seller *Lotus 3*.



Environmental hazards

There are more options in *Lotus 2* than in life itself, and the one EA are most chuffed with is their RECS mode. This stands for… hang on, let me get the manual… oh aye, Race Environment Control System, which to you and me is a good old track construction thing.

Before you recoil in horror with memories of spending three hours fitting one piece of track onto another, then realising you'd missed a bit and you'd keep slamming into the same section of wall, don't panic! *Lotus 2* does all the boring bits, you just decide what kind of track you planet. Every track has its own password, so you can create and call up as many courses as you like.

You also have a choice of three different Lotuses (Lotus'? Lotii?): the Esprit Turbo, which has the fastest 0–60, the M2DO, which handles the road best, or the fastest ride of the lot, the Elan. When you've got your wheels, enter a full championship

////////AL 58%////////



I don't believe it! Someone ring *Tomorrow's World*! EA and Gremlin have invented the world's safest car! The Lotus whatever-it-is is incapable of being wrecked, mangled or scratched — not even Nigel Mansell could trash it.

You know the sound kids make with their mouths when they're pretending to punch each other in the gob? Sort of like, '*kshhhhh!*'? Well, according to EA, that's the sound a Lotus makes when it crashes into a rock or the back of another car. Then, instead of exploding in a ball of fiery death, it pings — yes, *pings* — off whatever object it hurtled into and carries on oblivious, without a care in the world! Amazing.

Another technological advance is that when you need fuel, instead of veering off into the pit lane, you just brake or crash into something to slow down and your tank magically fills up! How do they do it? Does a mole pop out of the ground with a pump or something? What will they think of next?

Hopefully a better driving game than this pile of flange, which pulls off the astounding feat of being even worse than the original Amiga incarnation. However worthy the addition of the RECS system, it amounts to nothing when the programmers can't even get the basics right.

Like the way you're the only driver who has to make pitstops. Like how other cars seem to pass through yours while overtaking. Like how the wind blows you across the track, even though the sides of the road are sheltered by rocks. Like how you can't hear the engine

Why isn't it called *Lotus 3*, then? Well, MEGA MACHINES can exclusively reveal that there's a clause in all Sega's contracts which states that all MD conversions of Amiga games must subtract a number from its title.

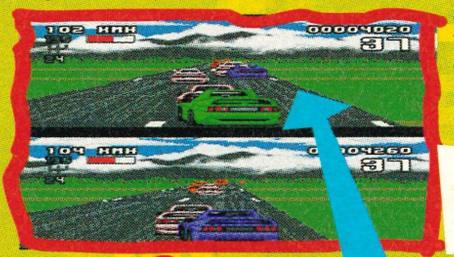
For example, *Formula One Grand Prix* would, if converted by Sega, be known as *Formula Zero Grand Prix*, along with *Back One The Future* and *Reach Three The Sky*.

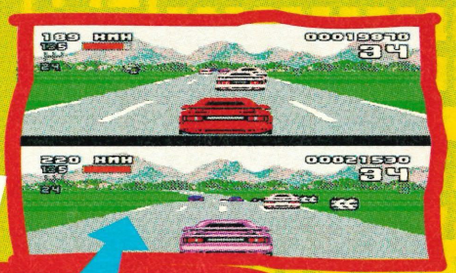
want, with varying degrees of length, steepness of hills, sharpness of corners, difficulty level and track location, be it in the desert, on a motorway, in the Alpines or on another season against a host of computer-controlled speed-freaks or race against the clock.

Either way, you can take on a friend head-to-head in an orgy of split-screen motoring. So get your motor running, get out on the highway, looking for adventure, and der der der la dee-dee…

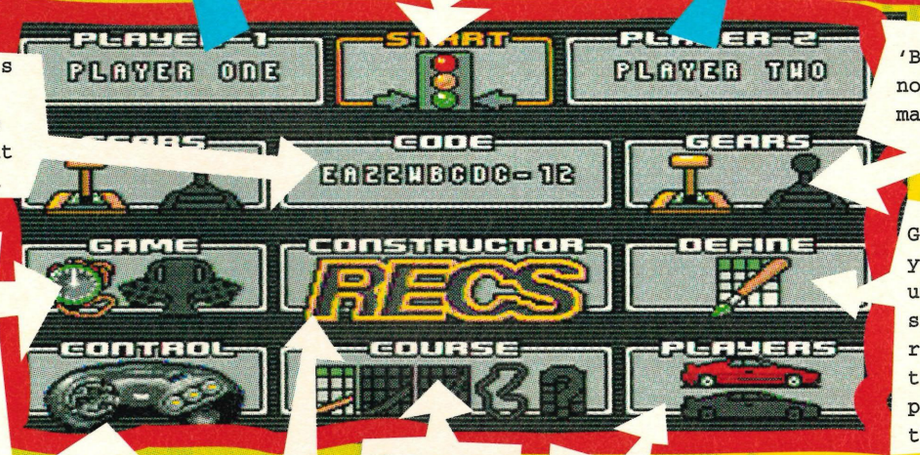
unless you turn the music off (and you will, you will) — and then it sounds like you've forced one of those little battery-powered fans into your ear.

I don't like it. I won't have any more to do with it. Get it out of my life!





Are you starting?! C'mon then, I'll take you on — ya weed!



Dr. Ruthless claims he has ALL the passcodes at his clinic…

'But it's not in the manual!'

Select between Time Trials or Championship mode. Failing that, don't bother!

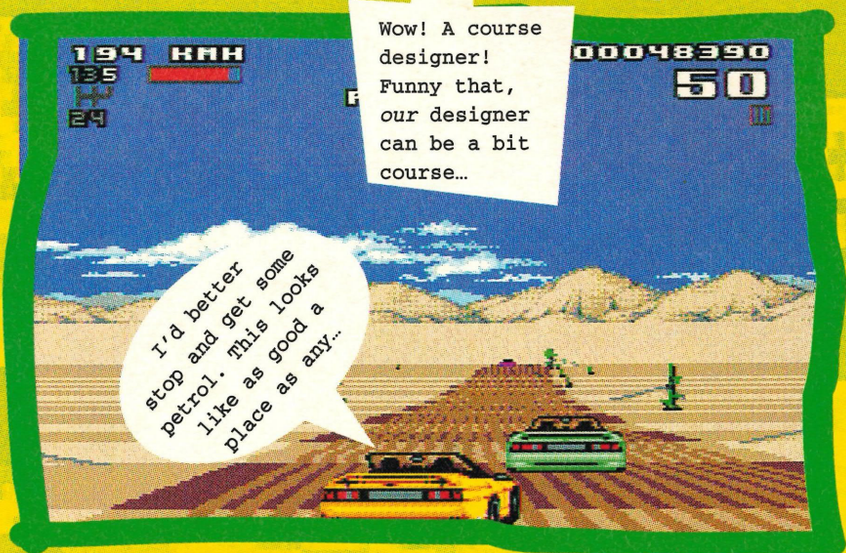
Generate your own unique season of races to test your patience to the limits…

We know you're bursting to find out what this does — but you'll just have to control yourself!

Play a ready-made CPU course or one of your own…

Burn rubber with a friend!

Wow! A course designer! Funny that, *our* designer can be a bit course…



LOTUS II RECS

PUBLISHER	ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE	£49.99
RELEASE DATE	NOW
SIZE	8 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-2
SKILL LEVELS	A FAIR FEW
LIVES	1
CONTINUES	NONE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YOU BET!
BATTERY BACK-UP	YES
SPECIALS	TRACK DESIGNER

///MAT///
///56%///



After the success of *Lotus Turbo Challenge* and an upsurge in brilliant racers throughout the gaming world (*Virtua Racing*, *Ridge Racer*, 3DO's *Crash 'n' Burn* etc), EA could hardly go wrong with a sequel to one of their top-selling games. Or could they?

From the moment you switch on your machine, you'll be disappointed. EA have taken a step backwards with *Lotus 2*, as it lacks the excitement, speed and playability of the original.

In fact, I may as well take this opportunity to get on my soapbox and complain about the all-round naffness of EA's latest software. *Blades of Vengeance*, *Virtua Pinball* and now *Lotus 2* show that this once-mighty software house has got shaky foundations. (Hmm. Worrabout Pond 3, NHLPHA '94, etc? — Man Ed).

Lotus 2 offers very little in the way of playability. The cars are unresponsive, you can pass through objects as if they weren't there and, in our version at least, there were no sound effects to speak of. The addition of a track/course editor is a good idea, but who wants to race on Saturn?

All in all, there's very little here to recommend to even die-hard racing fans. Stick to the original game and steer well clear of this poor effort.

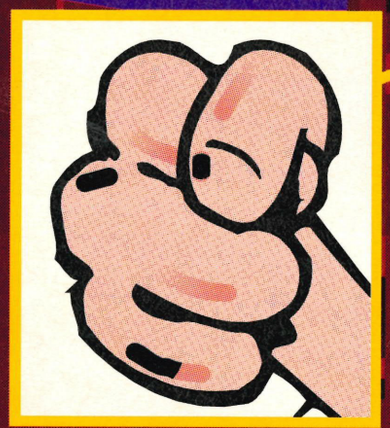
GRAPHICS	78
SOUND	56
PLAYABILITY	65
LASTABILITY	77
ORIGINALITY	68
OVERALL	57

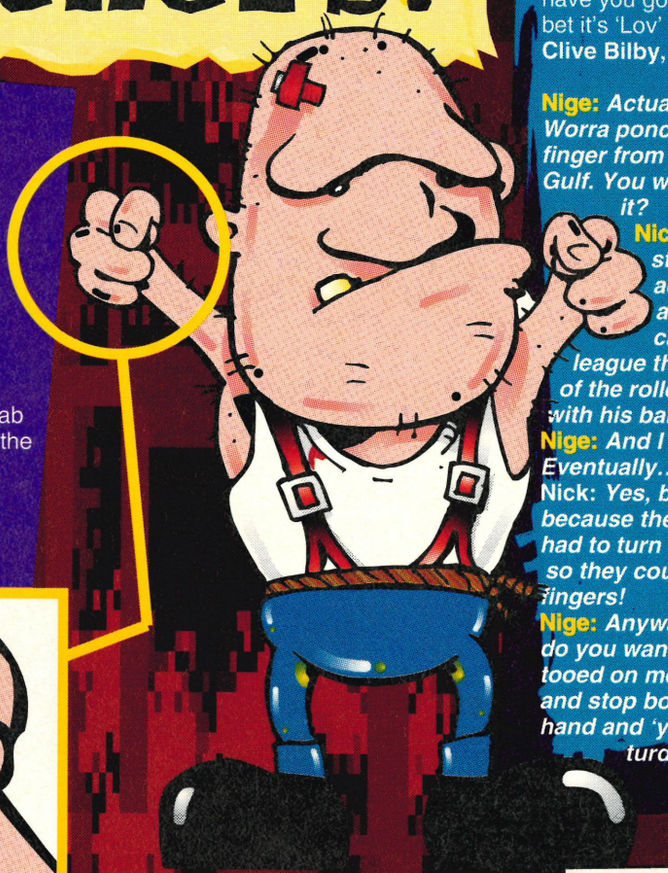
The Write Brothers!

Now There's An Idea...

Dear Nige,
Can you do me a favour? Grab a baseball bat and demolish the *Sega Pro* offices.
E Eldred, Bangor, Wales

Nige: *All right, then.*





Extended Four-Finger

Hey, Nige Write, answer me this: If you've only got three fingers, what have you got tattooed on 'em? I bet it's 'Lov' and 'Hat'.
Clive Bilby, Basildon

Nige: *Actually, Clive — Clive! Worra poncy name! — I lost a finger from each hand at the Gulf. You wanna mek summat of it?*

Nick: *The Gulf petrol station down the road, actually, when he got a summer job at the car wash. He bet a colleague that he could stop one of the rollers from spinning with his bare hands.*

Nige: *And I did, an' all! Eventually...*

Nick: *Yes, but that's only because the ambulance crew had to turn the power supply off so they could amputate your fingers!*

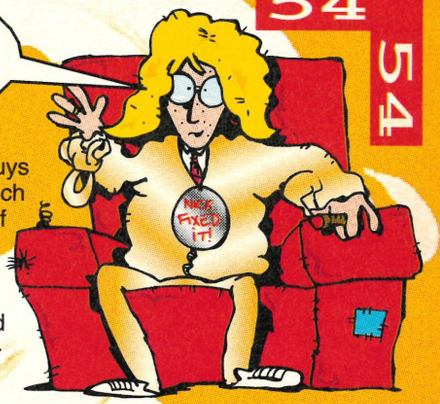
Nige: *Anyway, Clive (snigger), do you wanna know what's tattooed on me fingers? 'Piss off and stop bothering me' on one hand and 'you annoying little turd' on the other.*

Bloody Yokels

Dear Nick 'n' Nige
After extensive research and several prescriptions from Dr Goodtime, I've discovered a few home-truths about the MEGA MACHINES team.

Steve Shields: In a previous life he was a lavatory brush — he's got the haircut to prove it. He was recently in hospital with a bad case of in-growing chin, but was cured by grafting Warren Lapworth's arse just under his mouth (how does this guy know so much, I wonder? — Ed). They should've stuck it on top!

NICK'LL FIX IT



Nick: Er, now then, now then, erm, Guys and Gals. Here is a new feature in which you, the reader, can live in the world of your favourite Mega Drive game. Er, 'ows about that, then?

To start the ball rolling, here's my brother, Nigel, who has always wanted to rip someone's head off, so our wonderful designers helped me to fix it for him...



Nige: Cheers Nick, that were gleamin'!
Nick: Think nothing of it, Nige. Now then, if any of our readers want to live inside the world of their favourite game, send details and a photo to: **Nick'll Fix It, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**. Perhaps you'd like to give Chun-Li a good seeing to...
Nige: Phwoar! Not 'arf!
Nick: In a combat-related sense, Nigel! Or maybe you'd like to be a footballer in *FIFA Soccer*, or end-of-level boss in *Lethal Enforcers*? The choice is yours. Uh-ur uh-ur uh-ur!

Your letter is only the start of it...



much, I wonder? — Ed). They should've stuck it on top!

James Beaven: When the River Teme last flooded, the Impact offices were saved by piling unsold copies of COMMODORE FORCE magazine along the bank. When the waters eventually subsided, the mags were covered in a peculiar orange slime.

Left overnight, it seeped into the soil and in true Jack and the Beanstalk style, a huge vine sprang up. Before the rest of the team could cut it down (and believe me, they tried), James Beaven shinned up it.

Mat Yeo: Last issue you said he once won a 'Decorate Mr Potato Head' competition. What you didn't say was that he cheated by entering his own face!

The 'bizarre swing incident' in which he lost an eyebrow is fictitious — it fell off when the spike on the back snapped.

Warren Lapworth: Strange as it may seem, Warren is actually an animated pipe-cleaner man. How he came into being is anyone's guess, but he gets very irate if you point out he has no genitals.

He was once told he's worth his weight in gold, but he's so thin and scraggy that's only about 4p.

Adrian Pitt: Rumour has it his real name is Seth, but he changed it 'cos he thought it was a bit crap (if you get my drift). He wanted to be a champion sprinter but his ears caused too much wind resistance, so he joined the MEGA MACHINES team instead.

Alan Needham: Like Steve, he gets his hair cut by nasty Nige — those garden shears are bloody sharp!

He freelances as president of the John Lennon Impersonation Society. He's got the glasses right and the rest of the team are working on the bullet wounds.

So there we have it. Have you any embarrassing skeletons in your closets?

A Jackson, Truro, Cornwall (ah, I see. It's Milo's cousin, innit! — Ed)



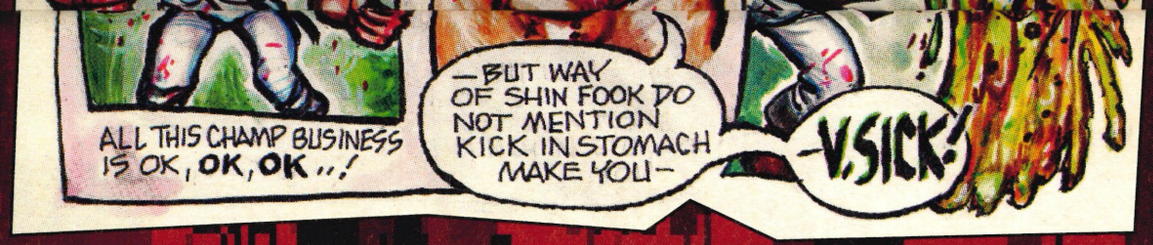
Nige: *Dear A (Arsehole?), you callin' my mates a bunch o' puffs? Eh? You want smacking? I'll have a skeleton in my closet soon — yours, after I've took a machete to your 'ead and skinned you alive!*

Nick: *No need for violence, Nigel. Yes, ha-ha, Mr Jackson! Very whimsical! Perhaps other readers might wish to 'diss' MEGA MACHINES staff in such an amusing manner.*

Nige: *P'raps they might wanna get their faces punched in, an' all!*

Nick: *Or perhaps they would like to give their friends a good 'joshing'. We're not fussy.*

Apparently, this magazine is to blame for the existance of James Beavan. How odd.



Shop your mates!

Nick: Once again, the faceless bureaucrats at the DOSS (Department Of Sega Sadboys) are on the prowl, tracking down the less skilled members of society, the consolically-challenged underclass, so that once again, decent folk may walk the streets unafraid.

Nige: He means 'let's have another laugh at some mongs'.

Nick: Thanks, Nige. Yes, it's time to dive into the Pit of Sadness as our readers report their mates for being awful at Mega Drive games — or life, basically.

This month's informer is a Mr Chiefy D of Oxford, who alerted us to the activities of **Davey Leaning**, known to his 'posse' as the Cheesy Chieftain.

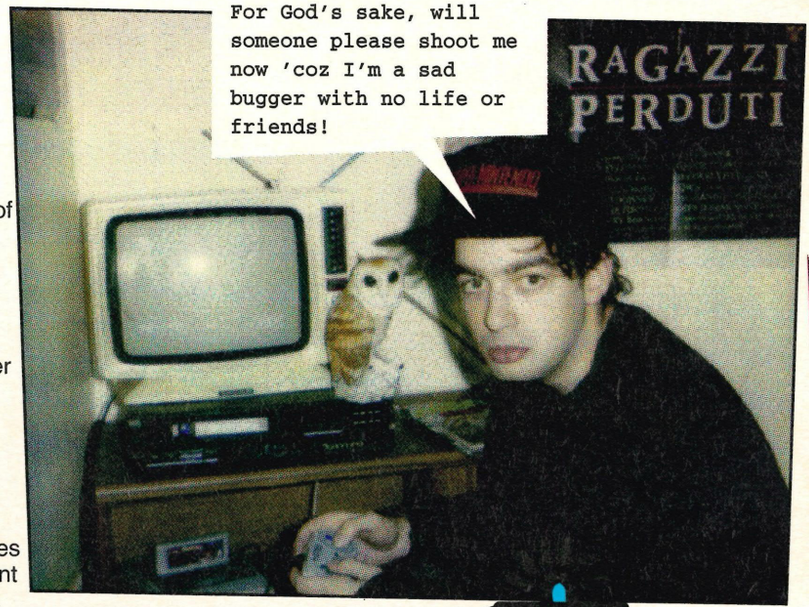
Nige: Yep, he looks a prat-and-a-half, Nick. But 'ang on! He's gorra bleedin' SNES! Wot's he doin' in a Sega mag, then?

Nick: This is the point Chiefy D's making, brother of mine. Apparently, Davey used to own a Mega Drive and a good collection of top games, but he sold it and bought a brand new SNES with *StarWing*.

That was all well and good, but after finishing the game, Davey realised he couldn't afford any other carts, because SNES games are more expensive.

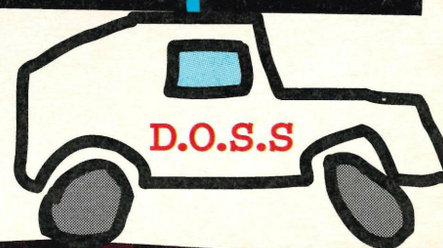
Nige: You mean all he's got is *StarWing*?! HA HA *HAAA*! Worra prat!

Nick: Indeed. According to Chiefy, now he hasn't got any decent games anymore, Mr Leaning is the recipient of many a 'diss' in the Oxford area, and he's resorted to barricading himself in his room, with only his long-finished copy of *StarWing* and a porcelain owl for company, until the inevitable arrival of the DOSS.



Nige: They ought to lop his cobblers off, Nick, and no mistake.

Nick: The DOSS await your call, readers. One word from you, and a photo, and they'll swing into action. Send all relevant information to: **Shop Your Mates, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**. Help us to help them.



The Write Brothers!

Miraculous Recovery...

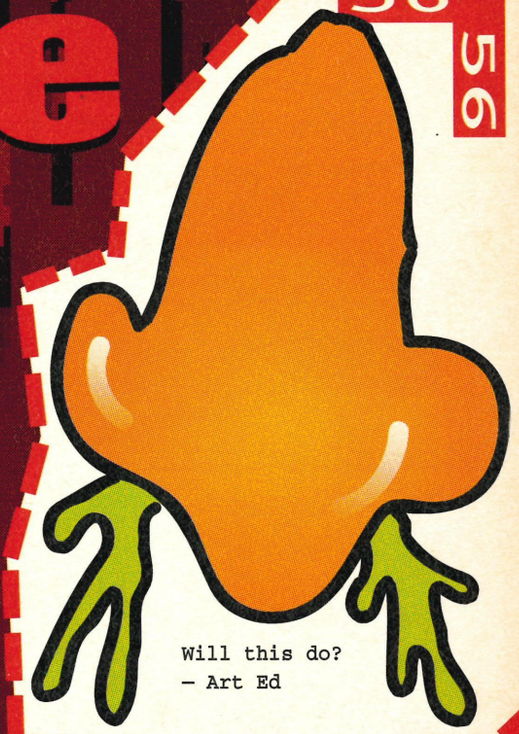
Dear N & N
While sitting down this morning (bet that was exhausting for you —Nige), I thought of a few questions. Answer them or else!
1. What the heck happened to the 100,000,000 or so people the papers say have epilepsy caused by computer games? Have they been miraculously cured and have people stopped getting epilepsy because the papers have shut up about it?
2. Why don't you have any female members in your production team? Is it because you're sexist?
Anyway, congrats on the mag and keep up the good work.
Bob Partridge, Flitwick, Beds

Nick: *Thanks for those words of encouragement, Bob.*
Nige: *Arse-licking toe-rag!*
Nick: *Nigel! Don't be aggressive with the readership! Anyway, to answer your questions:*
1. *The reason why you don't hear about people suffering from epilepsy anymore is because...*
Nige: *...They all* died! All of 'em! *They had one go too many goes on* Sonic *and they snuffed it!*
Nick: *Nigel...*
Nige: *That's what happens, y'know. You play any new game on the Mega Drive and you* die! *It's true! It were on the telly, honest!*
Nick: *Nigel...*
Nige: *So if anyone's gorra new Mega Drive game, you gorra get rid of it NOW. Especially if it's* Street Fighter II. *So send 'em all to me at MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW, and I'll get rid of 'em.*
Nick: *NIGEL! PACK IT IN!*
Sorry about my brother's vulgar opportunism, Bob. The real reason why you don't hear about it anymore is simple — it's not newsworthy. I'm not denying for a minute that certain unfortunates have suffered epileptic attacks due to console games, but it was blown out of all proportion by a media desperate to seek a cause for the malaise in today's society.
Nige: Yaaaaaawnnn!
Nick: *Am I boring you, Nigel?*

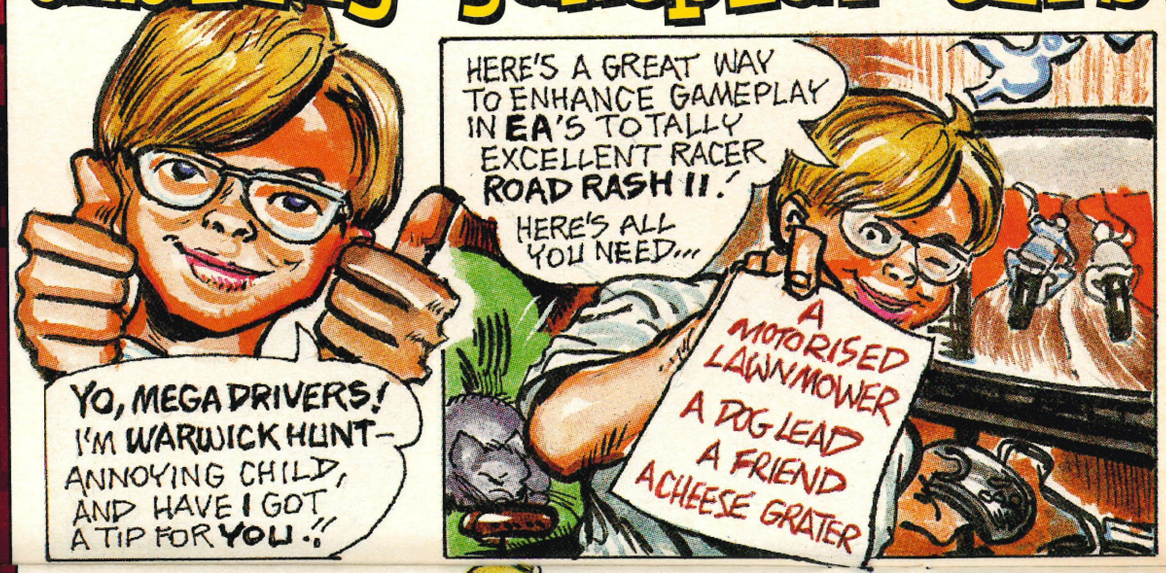
EaR AChe

Dear Sirs
I write this letter after coming across a copy of your magazine, which my son recently purchased. While not exactly understanding the format of your magazine, my son deemed it to be quite 'wicked', whatever that's supposed to mean.
However, I was quite intrigued and disturbed to find, as part of a centrespread, a large picture of something quite abstract. After much thought, I came to the conclusion that it must be a blue ear. What would my son want with a blue ear?
There's enough foolishness in the media as it is without your magazine filling our children's heads with even more nonsense. What are you going to publish next issue, I wonder? An orange nose?
Richard Flint, Reigate

Nick: ***Um, I'm sorry if I appear a little presumptuous, but it states quite clearly that the 'blue ear' you speak of is part one of our enormous Sonic the Hedgehog poster.***
Nige: ***Whoo-hoo-hoo! Worra dick'ead!***
Nick: ***Shush, Nigel! He's a parent! The ones who buy the games!***
Nige: ***E'yar, geezer, here's a picture of a nice pink...***
Nick: ***Nigel! NO!***



WaRwick HunT's amaZing gaMeplaY tiPS!



Nige: *Nick, you always bore me. You're such a boring get, they named a cheat in Mortal Kombat after you.*

Nick: *Hmmm. In that case, I'll go on to the next question…*

2. To be honest, we don't know why there are no women on the staff, either. Being a man of the '90s-

Nige: *MAN?! YOU?! Hur hur hur!*

Nick: *Being a man of the '90s, it bothers me that one of the biggest leisure industries has such a low percentage of females. There are practically no female programmers and just a few women involved in the publishing side of things.*

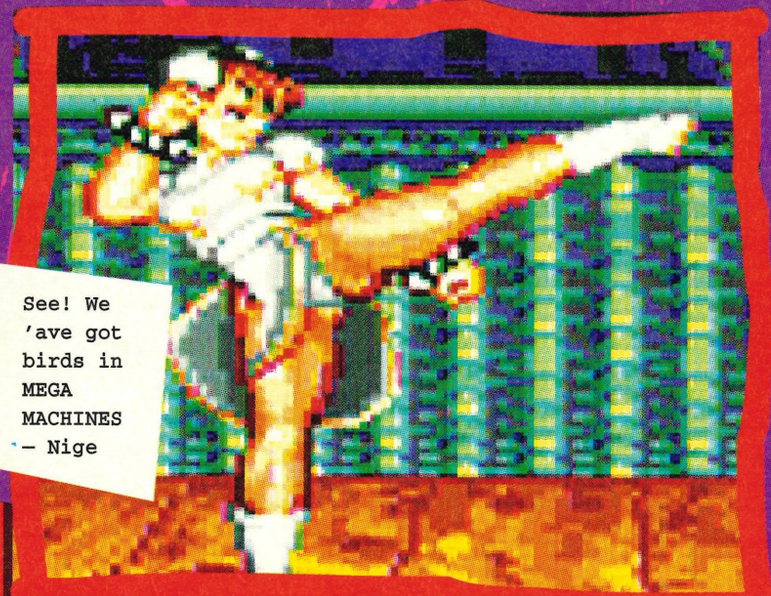
Nige: *They should all be home, gerrin' us tea ready…*

Nick: *At present, the role of women in the industry is confined to the important job of PR (that's Public Relations, for people of Nigel's mentality), but hopefully this situation will change.*

The reason why there are no female writers in MEGA MACHINES is simply because no women applied for the job. Hope this has answered your queries.

Nige: *I expect to have it on the table when I get home. And I don't mean me tea, neither!*







The Ultimate Challenge

KINGSBURY ROOLS!

This month MEGA MACHINES teamed up with Virgin Games and ventured down to the Big Smoke. London's Kingsbury High School played host to the second Ultimate Challenge – where we gave pupils the chance to test their skills on a game others are only reading about. The game this month: *RoboCop vs The Terminator*. The challengers: 26 eager Year Seven gamers.

This event saw something a bit different to the usual one-on-one format. The challengers were divided into four teams of five and one team of six (cheats!). Each group was given five full minutes to get the highest score in a metal-against-metal platform relay.

With a Mega Drive and a copy of *Aladdin* up for grabs for *each* of the winners, nothing short of a general anaesthetic was going to keep this lot quiet!

The Crew



James, Virgin's mild-mannered game tester

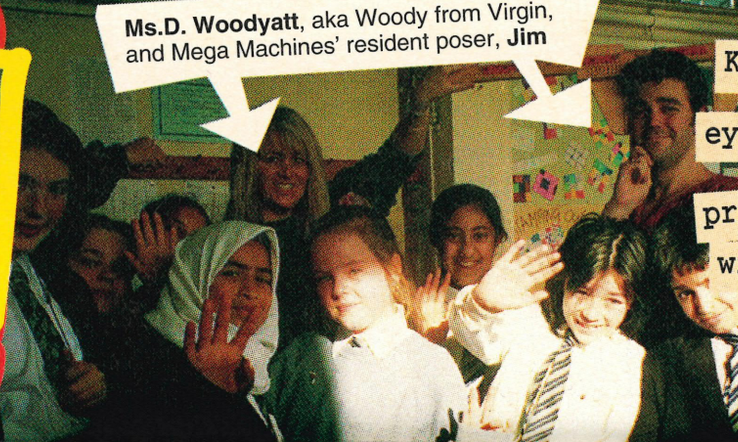


Doug, also of Virg





Alison (the Teach) who originally thought this was a good idea



Ms.D. Woodyatt, aka Woody from Virgin, and Mega Machines' resident poser, **Jim**

Keeping a careful eye on the day's proceedings (well, with the exception of the MEGA MACHINES envoy)...

The Teams

Team A

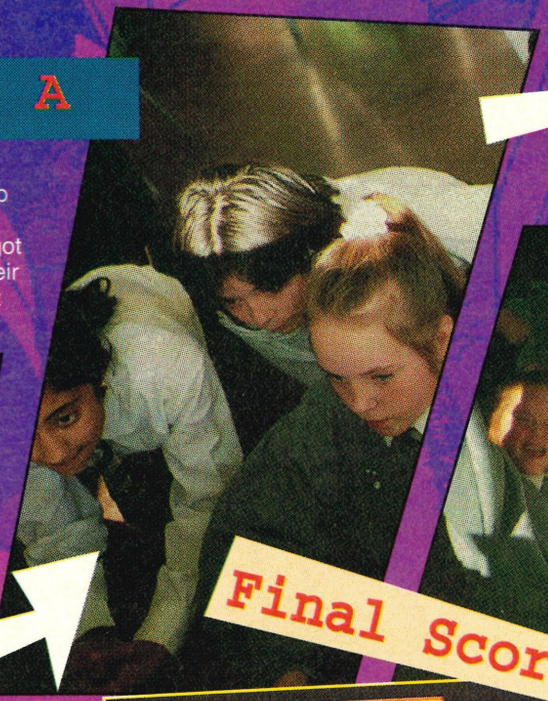


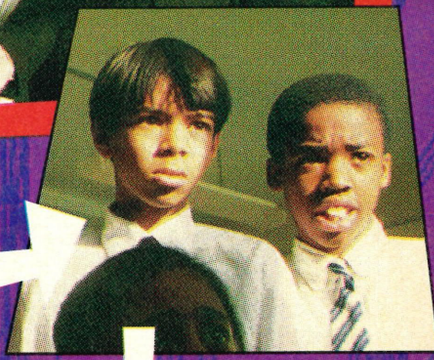
First team to the TV (from left to right) **Hanifa Ebrahim**, **Nicarka Miller**, **Roberto Buena**, **Mitin Patel** and **David Bishop**.

Challenge A

After a quick run-down on which buttons do what, Team A got off to a flying start. Despite Hanifa's incredibly large tongue — which got in the way from time to time — their score set the standard throughout the challenge.









Final Score

LIFE:

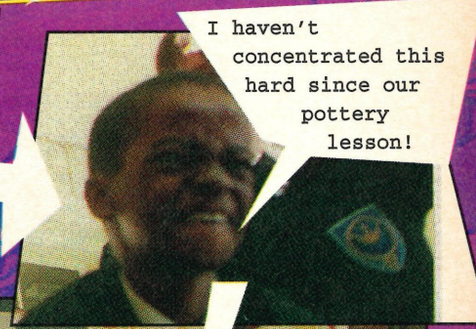
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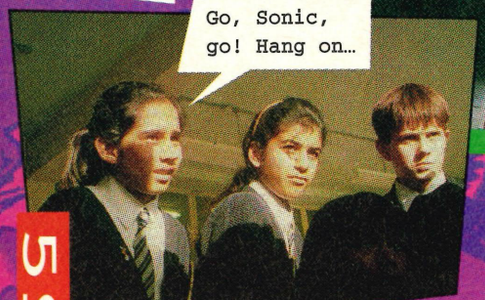
Next in the hot seat(s), **Vaishali Makwana**, **Bhavna Zinzuwadia**, **Jan Suppun**, **Michael Brown** and **Craig Cameron**.

Team B









Challenge B

Craig Cameron took a break from distorting his facial features and looked serious with the rest of them for round two. After a few initial problems with the change-overs, they picked up speed and one heck of a lot of points.

But even Doug and James' expert guidance couldn't give them the extra points they needed.



Final Score

0011990

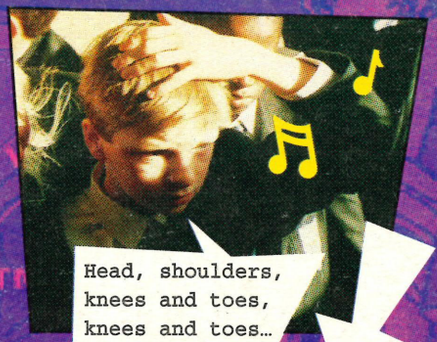
Team C



Third up, with the occasional guest appearance from Craig Cameron, **Jessica O'Dell**, **Sarah Mansbridge**, **Meera Varsani**, **Michael Stokes** and **André Welch**.

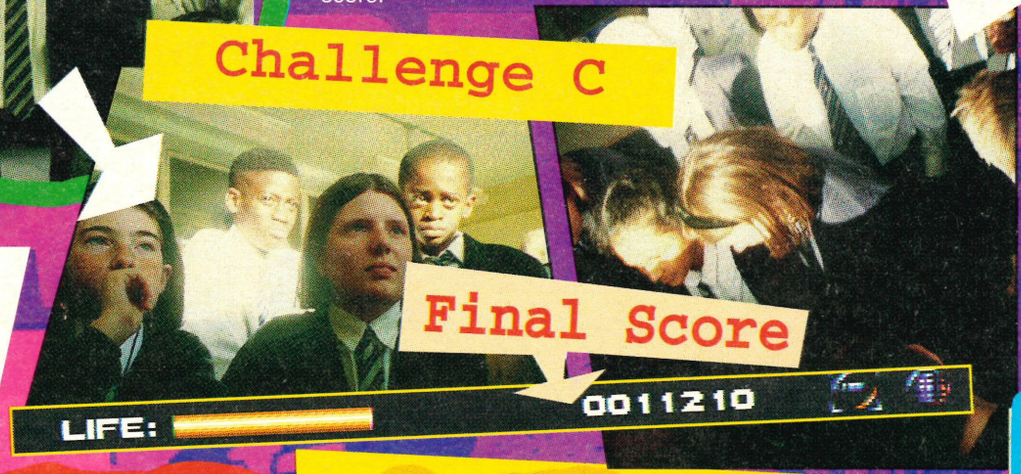
By this time, tempers were rising and caffeine was flowing thickly through the veins. Team C had some of the quickest change-overs, almost throwing the joypad into each other's hands.

Sadly though, when the going got tough, the tough got lost. And a few slips on the ladder sections meant they couldn't top Team A's score.



Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes…

Challenge C

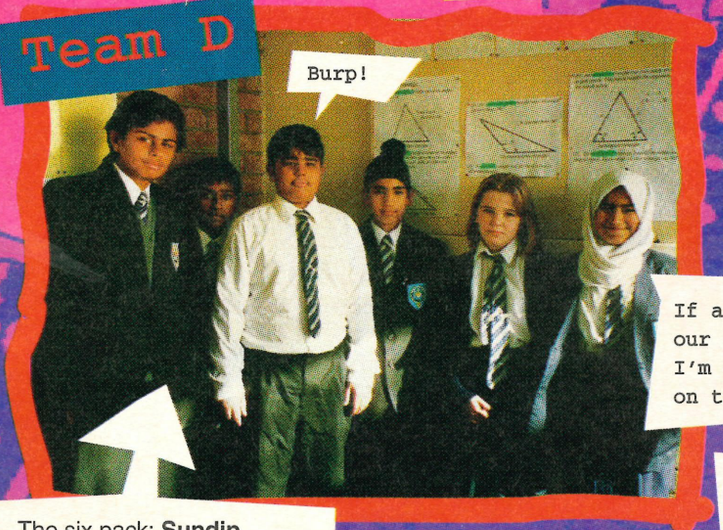


Team Spirit



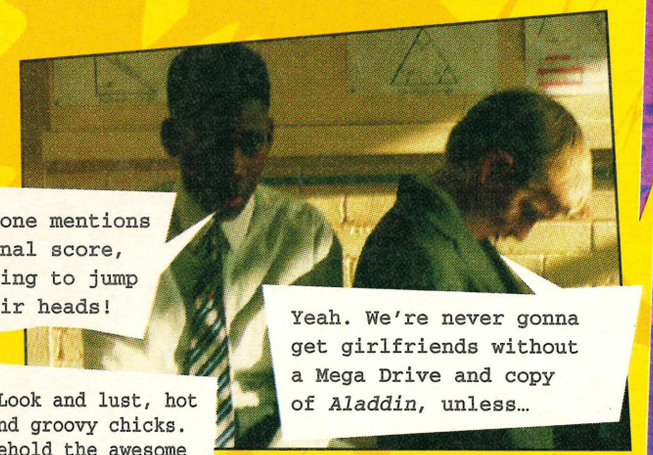
How to boost team morale: Always pull a face behind other members of the team while they're having their picture taken, expertly demonstrated here by André Welch.

Team D



The six pack: **Sundip Meghani**, **Vimal Halai**, **Simon Mehra**, **Harvinder Paik**, **Lelanie Bailey** and **Shatha Ali**.

Social Outcasts



If anyone mentions our final score, I'm going to jump on their heads!

Yeah. We're never gonna get girlfriends without a Mega Drive and copy of *Aladdin*, unless…

…Look and lust, hot and groovy chicks. Behold the awesome *RoboCop vs The Terminator* leather jacket that turns me into a 4' 3" weapon of luurrrrve!



Team E



And our last contenders, **Nikit Pankhania**, **Ali Al-obaydi**, **Dimple Patel**, **Sneahal Modha** and **Dipti Patel**.

Challenge D



Team D had an obvious advantage… didn't they?

Actually, no. They still only got five minutes of play, but had 50 seconds each instead of a full minute. If anything, they were at a disadvantage, having to swop six players around in the same time.

Challenge E



It was all down to Team E. They'd watched all the other attempts, knew the best routes to take, knew which weapons killed the quickest.



But they did it, and in a dramatic last attack crept past Team A, whose score

Final Score

0015220





Victory was within their reach — or was it...?

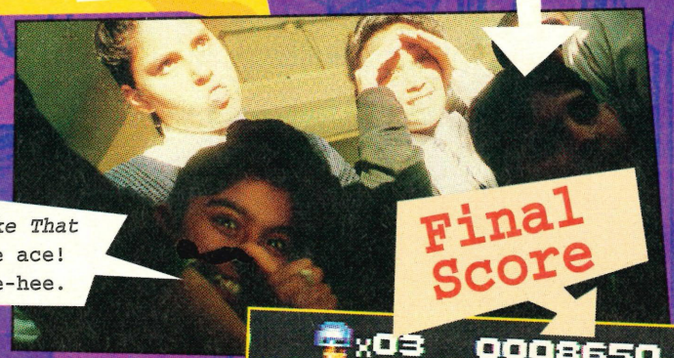
When the time came for Team E to do the damage, the strain was too much. One by one, they began to crack under the pressure (apart from Dimple, who grinned the whole time, occasionally sticking her thumb up). In the end they fell apart and waffled excuses.



THE WINNERS

At the end of the day, there could only be one winner... Erm, but we seem to have six of them, alias Team D: **Sundip Meghani**, **Vimal Halai**, **Simon Mehra**, **Harvinder Paik**, **Lelanie Bailey** and **Shatha Ali**.

Their monster score of 15,220 has won each of them a Mega Drive, a copy of *Aladdin* and a Robo-Termy T-shirt. And people ask what kids learn at school these days? Pah!







One final pose before the lunchtime bell rings and we say goodbye to another group of crazed gamers...

Bbbbbrrrrriiiiinnngg!



...And they're off! Er, guys? Can we have one more photo? Guys? Oh, bye then.

STAR PR

MEGA MACHINES would like to thank Woody, James and Doug from **Virgin Games** for all their help and stumping up all the T-shirts, badges, Mega Drives and copies of *Aladdin*. We love you all, in a special kind of way.

Isn't that typical? You drive 150 miles, give up your entire day, and not one of the little bleeders asks for your autograph — not one!

Wait a minute. Where's Woody gone? I didn't get a T-shirt.

Wooooooddddddyyyyy...!

Do you want to take the Ultimate Challenge?

How do you fancy the chance of playing games that your mates can only read about in mags? Every month, the MEGA MACHINES team visits a different school with a box-load of goodies, a Mega Drive and a game that hasn't even been released. Next month it could be your school.

All you've got to do is fill in the coupon, get it signed by your Headmaster and send it into the address below. And remember, the more forms we get from your school, the better chance you have. Got it?

Dear MEGA MACHINES

I've had a word with my headmaster/headmistress, and they said it'd be okay to miss a games lesson ('...just this once, mind you') in order to thrash you so-called journalists at your own game. So please descend upon our humble primary/secondary school bearing free T-Shirts a-plenty and a decent Mega Drive game. We'll show you who's *really* got the talent when it comes to wielding a joypad, ya pansies! Oh yeah, and if you *do* decide to hold your challenge at our school, contact the head teacher to sort out the details, will you? Ta!

MY NAME: .....

SCHOOL NAME:.....

SCHOOL ADDRESS: .....

.....

.....

.....**POST CODE:**.....

SCHOOL PHONE NUMBER:.....

***HEADPERSON'S NAME:**.....

HEADPERSON'S SIGNATURE: .....

*Dear Head. If you would like more information about our National Schools Sega challenge before committing yourself, please phone Managing Editor Steve Shields on 0584 875851 during normal working hours. He'll probably be by the coffee machine having a fag (well, it makes a change from the bike sheds), so please be patient.

Once completed, send this form to: **The Ultimate Challenge, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**

VENGEANCE

Platform Review

In days gone by, sprites didn't need fancy and clever options, they made do with the simple things in life. Time for a flashback...

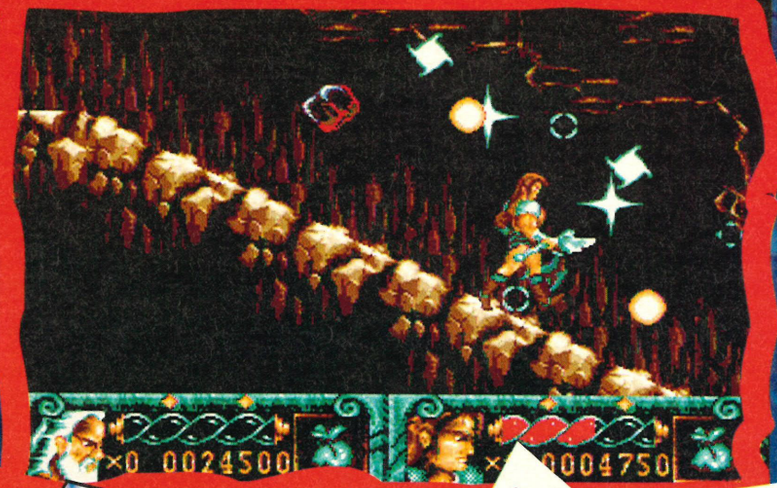
Ho, traveller! It's time to strap on your leather jockstrap and rub baby oil into that phenomenally large chest of thine! Yes, once again an evil force has overwhelmed the land and Darkness pervades. A quest of many paths (platforms, actually) is about to be undertaken, and by dint of brawn and magic, The Dark Lady will be destroyed, peace will reign and all the little hobbits will skip around and sing, 'Hey nonny-nonny, I like custard creams'.

Blades of Vengeance is a platform romp with a *Dungeons & Dragons* theme. Choosing from three characters, The Barbarian, The Huntress and The Wizard, the object is to hack and slay your way through various levels, and the obligatory end-of-level guardians sometimes barring the way.

Small sliced loaf, tea bags, vinegar...

The Barbarian and Huntress are similar in the sense they're both pretty handy with a blade (Barbarian wields a big axe, The Huntress is nifty with a longsword), whereas The Wizard casts bolts of doom from his trusty mace, and is therefore an expert at long-range combat. These characteristics come into play during a two-player game, but as the screen gets more cluttered, teamwork becomes of paramount importance.

Littered about the screen,



MEGA drive!

It's a hard life, captioning. I'm supposed to say something witty (yet informative) about this shot, and I can't. Back to the dole for me, then.



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Blades of Vengeance

One Player
Two Players

PUBLISHER	ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE	£49.99
RELEASE DATE	JANUARY
SIZE	18 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-2
SKILL LEVELS	2
LIVES	3
CONTINUES	EVERY 75,000 POINTS
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	N-N-N-NONE!

BLADES OF

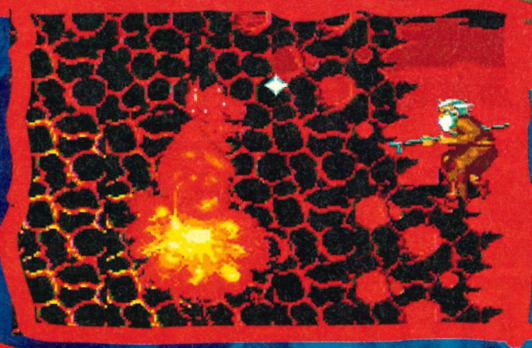
either in chests or from the ashes of the dead, are power-ups a-plenty. Healing potions, Strength scrolls and keys are just a few of the handy-dandy items on offer.

Silver and gold are useful when you reach the store at the end of each level. It's a medieval Tesco's, really, where you acquire all those necessary groceries such as armour, extra lives, assorted potions and weaponry.

Onward, proud warrior! A magical land awaits!









///WARREN 42%/////



What are EA playing at? They usually release original, trend-setting products, but *Blades of Vengeance* is about as fresh and exciting as a Dennis Waterman sit-com — minus Sam Kelly's character. Straight down the line slash 'n' search games like this were considered old hat a couple of years ago; Razorsoft were wise enough to hold back on a similar cart, *Keeper of the Gate*, last Christmas.

Select from the same tired sprites — steroid-scoffing barbarian, bird with big Bristols and magical old fart — then hop around rugged rock platforms and cavernous castle interiors. All the classics we know and yawn at are here: fireballs, crumbling bridges, keys and potions, not to mention spikes, pits and end-of-level creatures.

It wouldn't be so bad if the presentation and graphics were up to scratch — last issue, *Aladdin* proved there's life in every format, even platform. But *Blades of Vengeance* has no zing, pizazz, razzamatazz or any other exciting words with 'z' in them, just dull backdrops and mediocre animation.

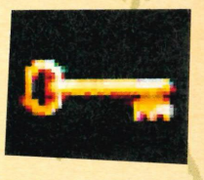
If you had a computer before your Mega Drive, you could buy *Blades of Vengeance* and reminisce about the old days, before those new-fangled six-button joypads and CD machines came along. There's plenty to do but little for the modern gamer.

PICK-UP REMEMBRANCE

Gas Potion: protects you from noxious gases (pretty useful here).



Key: opens more doors than becoming a Mason.





Strength Scroll: gives you that extra bit of combat clout. Transformation Scroll: instant horror movie! All creatures become zombies.



Force Field: …for The Barbarian and Huntress, robe and hat for The Wiz.

Midas Ring: turns foes into silver (shouldn't that be gold? –Ed).



Invisibility Potion: what the baddies can't see can still hurt them.





Healing Potion: soothe those wounds away with a quick swig. Force Field Potion: ooo, oo, oo, oo – monsters can't break the force.

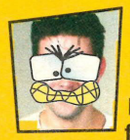


Blast Stick: kills most things with a single shot! Cool.

Heart of Life: an extra life, but we lost the picture! Here's an artist impression, then…



JAMES 52%



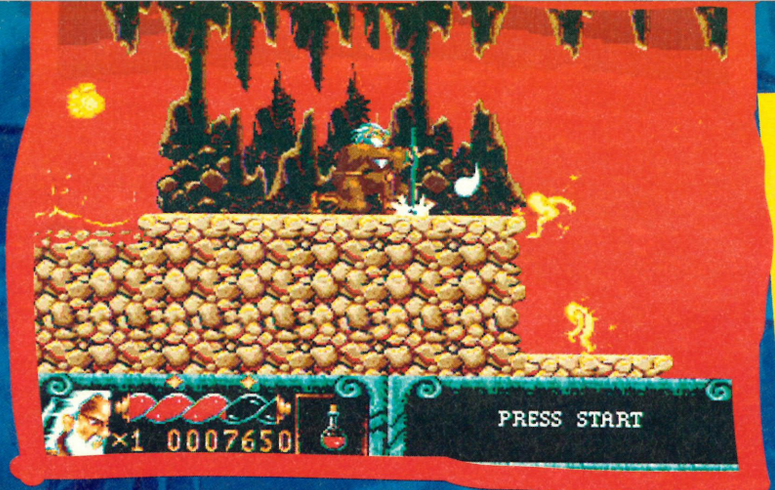
Ahhh, the swish of an axe slicing through the air, the snapping crunch of sword against bone, the 'gerrump-pzzzz' of a wizard casting his spells. Oh yes, how I miss holidays in the sleepy Exmoor village of Beggars' Roost. But enough of these twee recollections of action-packed family vacations, we have some slice 'n' dice platform action to access. Actually, after playing a couple of games of *Blades of Vengeance*, renditions of my holiday hell seem like a good idea. But then, that's not what you're buying the mag for (speak for yourself! —English Tourist Board).

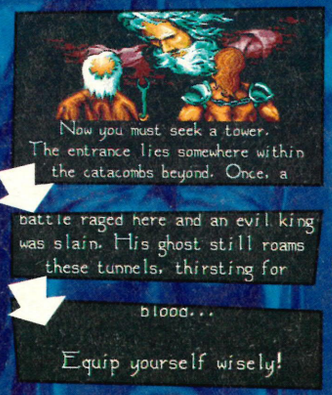
Blades of Vengeance is a tough but unexciting excuse for a platformer. The difficulty level of bosses isn't too far off the mark, but ousting them is incredibly repetitive.

The *really* big and cheesy problems rear their ugly heads long before you get to the end-of-level big dudes, though. All the ingredients are there for a typical platform game, like secret rooms, oodles of power-ups and, er, lots of things to wave your chopper at. But the thing is, it's dull, dull, dull.

Blades of Vengeance doesn't feature a continue option — which spells doom for the skilfully challenged among us. It also means that if you want to get anywhere, you have to crawl through at a snail's pace to avoid blundering into a horde of baddies. And that really annoys me. What's the point of including features you can't avoid and strip you of energy for the sheer hell of it? Why not just chop your energy bar in half before you start?

Oh forget it. I've had enough of this game. It's taken me over 15 attempts to get off the first level, only to be wasted by the same things over and over again. If it was just tough, I could put it down to me being crap. But for once it's not that. *Blades of Vengeance* is a very average game and it won't be long before it's banished to the bargain bucket.







AL 45%



At first, I thought *Blades Of Vengeance* was a shaving sim: get rid of all the bum fluff round your chin without slicing off that mole on your neck. After five minutes' play, I began to wish it was. There are two things in this world that get on my tits. The first is the 'fantasy' genre. The other is bog-standard platformers. Put the two together and — presto! — the epitome of dullness manifests itself on a Mega Drive.

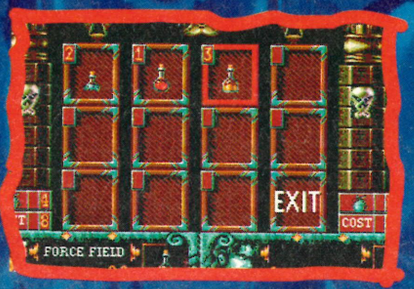
All the clichés are dragged out and put on display: There's a man with a big chest! There's a woman with an even bigger chest, sporting (surprisingly enough) a medieval bikini! And there's a little geezer who uses magic (or *magick*, if you're excessively sad)!

Gameplay is just as clichéd, dated and dull. *Blades of Vengeance* wouldn't be worth 45 quid if they wrapped the cart in a £50 note.



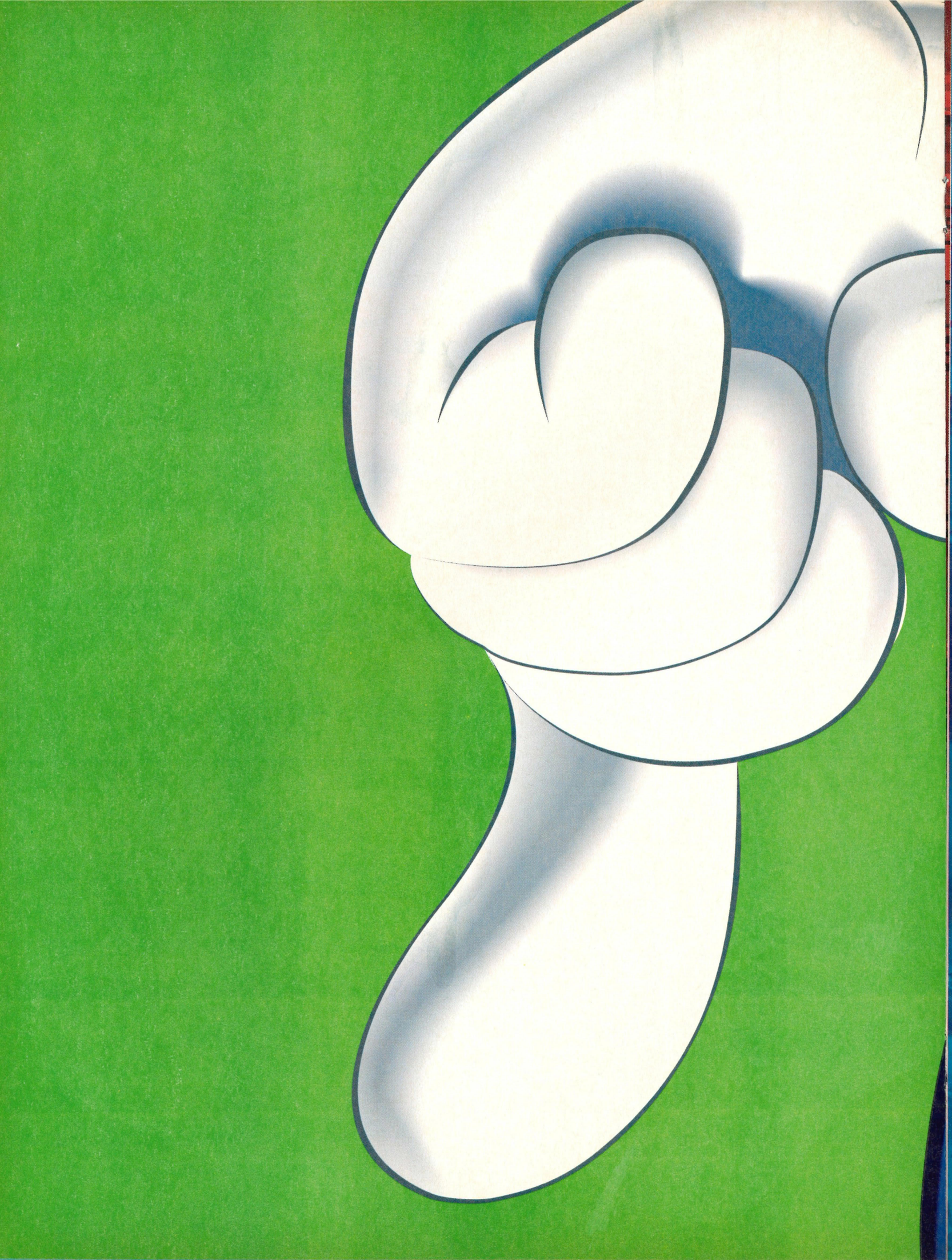
No, I'm just not amusing this morning. I can't even conjure up a flicker of humour from this character selection screen. Think I'd better go and work for *Sega Pro*.





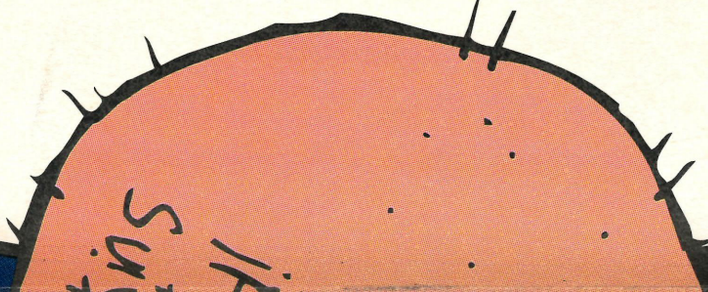


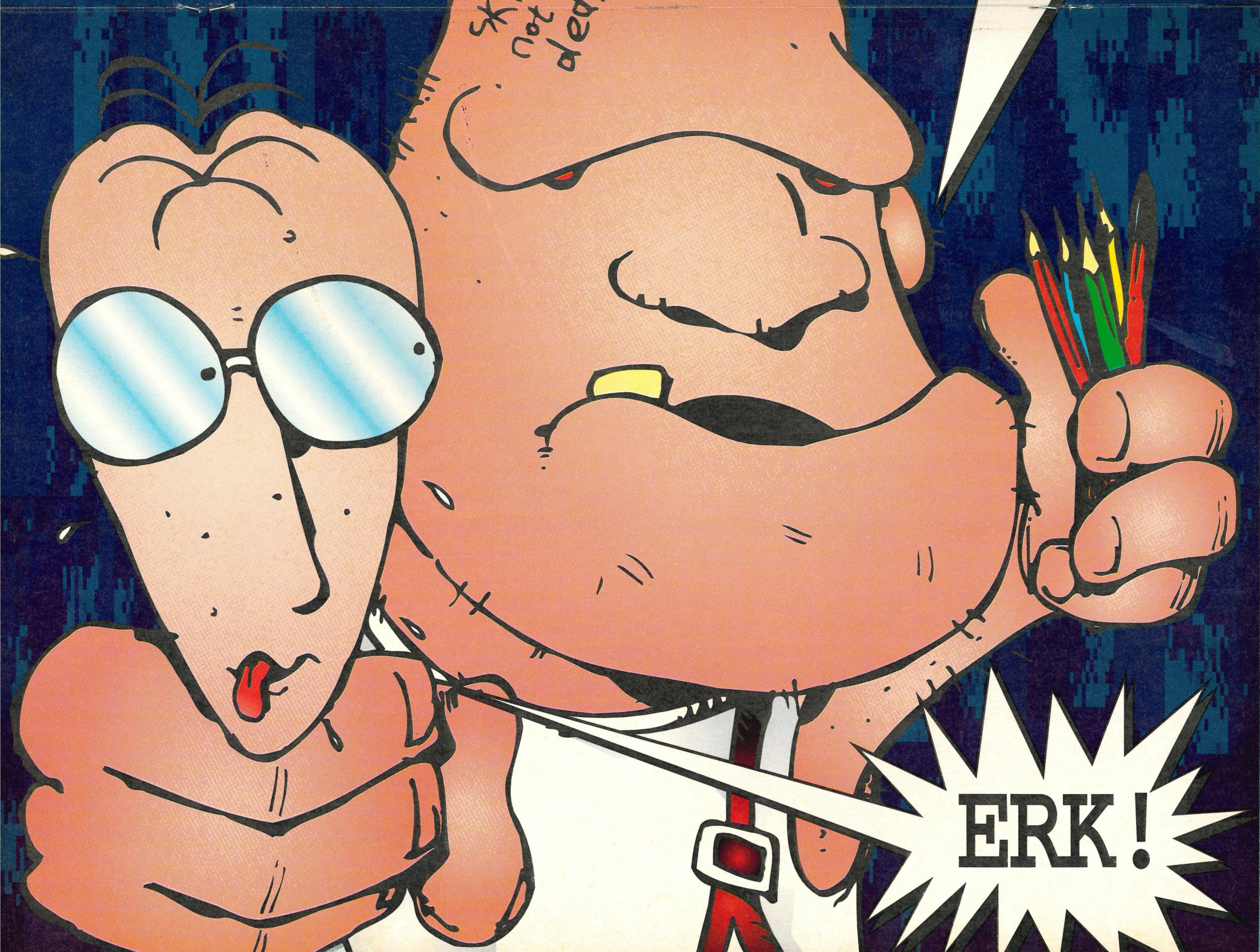
GRAPHICS	69
SOUND	68
PLAYABILITY	65
LASTABILITY	56
ORIGINALITY	43
OVERALL	48

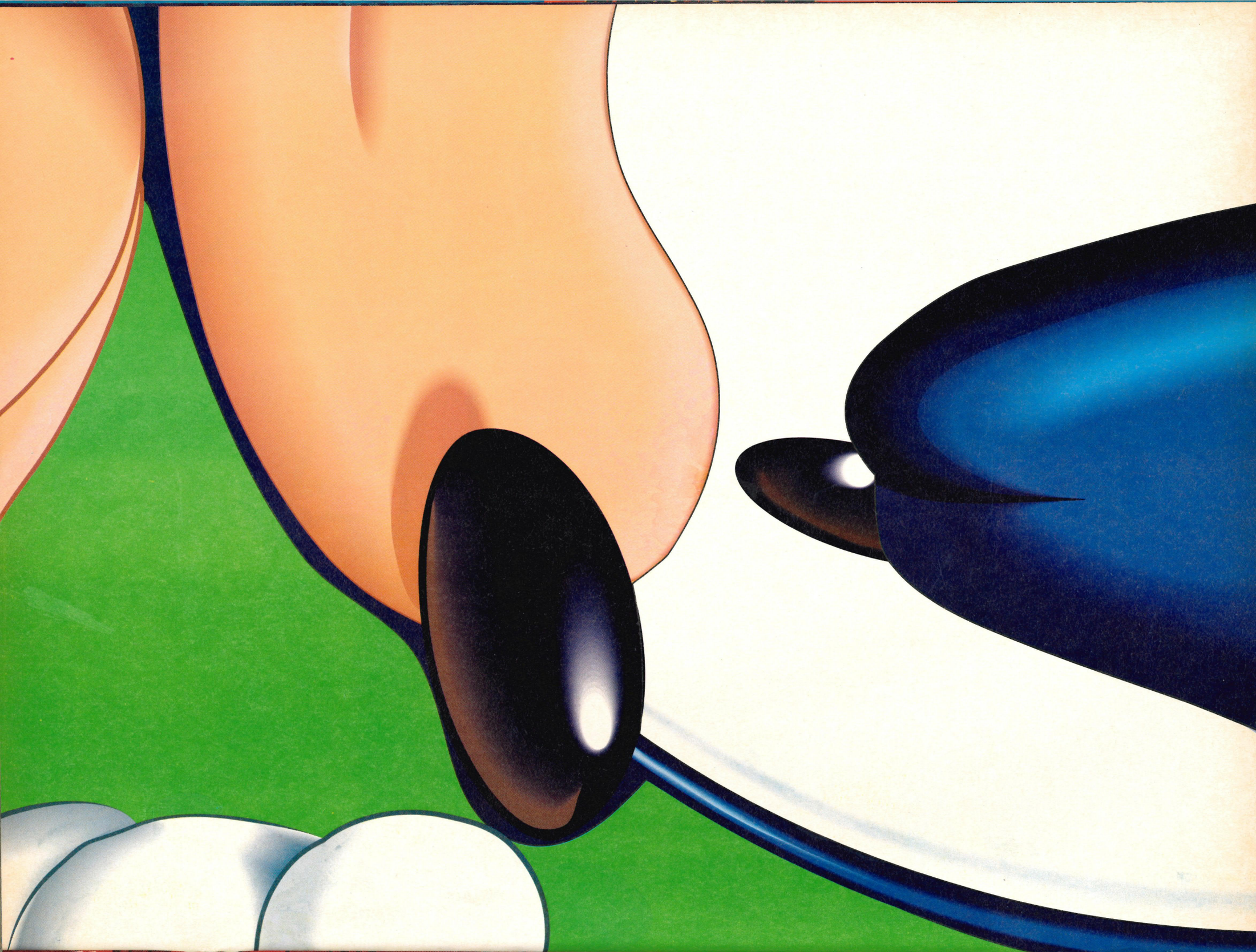


MEGA machines

Read da Write Brothers every month, else I'll duff yer up! Tell 'em, Nick...



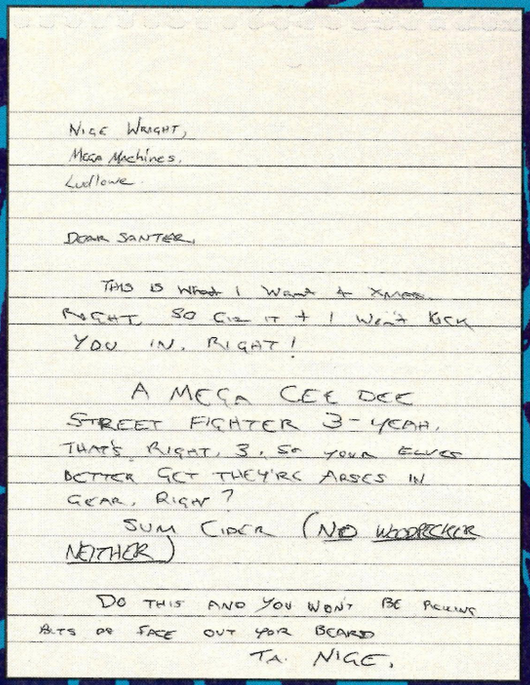

ERK!



The Write Brothers!

And FiNaLLY...

Nick: Seeing as it's the season of Good Will To All Men, here's a letter I found under our bunk bed which encapsulates the spirit of Christmas. I'm sure it will fill us with good cheer and hope for the future...



NIGE WRIGHT,
MEGA MACHINES,
LUDLOWE

DEAR SANTER,

THIS IS WHAT I WANT 4 XMASS.
RIGHT, SO GIVE IT 4 I WON'T KICK
YOU IN, RIGHT!

A MEGA CEE DEE
STREET FIGHTER 3 - YEAH,
THAT'S RIGHT, 3, SO YOUR ELVES
BETTER GET THEY'RE ARSES IN
GEAR, RIGHT?

SUM CIDER (NO WOODPECKER
NEITHER)

DO THIS AND YOU WON'T BE PICKING
BITS OF FACE OUT YOR BEARD

TA. NIGE.

Nige: Give us that back, you bummer!
Nick: Well, Nigel, at least you have some innocence left inside that hardened exterior!
Nige: You're *dead*, youth!
Nick: In fact, let's have another look under the bed, shall we? Perhaps you've left a stocking out!
Nige: NICK! NO!
Nick: Nigel... why is there an enormous *Microcosm* question under the bed?
Nige: Er... what *Microcosm* question?

DESERT ISLAND GAMES!



Welcome to a brand new feature, *Desert Island Games*. This month and every month, Nigel's pet spider, Sue Crawley, interviews a leading industry figure and asks a simple question: if you were stranded on a desert island with every computer and console ever created, which ten games would you take with you? You're also allowed one luxury item, which can be anything you like as long as it's of no practical consequence.

This month it's *Codemasters'* *RICHARD EDDY...*

Sue: Okay Richard, what's your position in the computer industry?
Rich: Cut the crap, you can get all the waffly bits from the Gameful Employment feature on page 94.
Sue: Erm... okay. So what's your first game?
Rich: *Micro Machines* on the Mega Drive. It's the best game I've ever played, and it's by **Codemasters**!
Sue: What a surprise! I believe your second game's on a machine not usually associated with games?
Rich: True, but the Apple Macintosh version of *Sim City* is hopelessly engaging and megalomanically entertaining.
Sue: So that's why you're always 'in a meeting' when we phone you at Codemasters!
Rich: My third game's *Pang* on the Amiga. It's superb bubble-bursting two-player mayhem.
Sue: And your fifth...?
Rich: Hold on, you haven't had my fourth yet! *Cosmic Spacehead* on the Mega Drive — it's funny and gorgeous to look at.
Sue: Trust you to plug your own games! I was a bit surprised to see Game Five is on an 8-bit format.
Rich: Yes, *Zak McKraken and the Alien Mindbenders* on the C64. It's the first Lucasfilm game I ever played and it's smart — I've enjoyed them all.
Sue: Your sixth choice of game?
Rich: *Pilot Wings* on the Super NES. It's a top flight action game that requires loads of talent.
Sue: That's most Nintendo owners out, for starters! I believe planes feature heavily in your next game...
Rich: *Microsoft Flight 5.0* on the PC. I'd love to learn to fly and this is probably the cheapest way of doing it.
Sue: Let's fly on to Game Eight.
Rich: Erm...
Sue: Game Nine?
Rich: Sorry, but that's about it.
Sue: Er... Ten?
Rich: Look — just go away, will you?
Sue: Fair enough. But what about your luxury item? Pure luxuries only, remember — it can't be anything useful.
Rich: A chef with an extensive selection of Italian, Indian and Thai dishes!
Sue: I prefer dead flies myself.

Richard from Codemasters, thank you for agreeing to be stranded on our desert island. We MIGHT get around to sending a rescue boat in a decade or so...

If you wish to add to the healthy debate surrounding all things Mega Drive, such as gore in games, the price of carts and such things, why not write to another magazine?

If you wish to converse with a pair of cartoon characters, on the other hand, send those letters to The Write Bros, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW. Don't forget – 50 quid for the best letter (unless I can forge a better one –Nige)!

THE LOST VIKINGS

MEGA drive!

Platform Puzzler Review

'I'm *sure* Norway's around here *somewhere*. Straight past France, turn left, can't miss it… Pass us the map.'

You have to hand it to the Vikings. Their beards were longer than ZZ Top's, they couldn't play a decent riff on the 'leccy guitar if you paid 'em, and not one of them brought out a rock video full of leggy blondes. But they did all right for themselves — and got smashed a lot!

So when an alien pops up and snatches three of them for an exhibit in his own intergalactic zoo, you can imagine they ain't gonna have none of it.

The three Vikings in question are Erik the Swift, Baleog the Berserker and Olaf the Stout. Now obviously, if you try and cage three blokes whose idea of a 'good time' involves spending six months at sea and taking the occasional break to ram-raid a coastal resort using an 80-foot rowing boat, you're going to need one mother of a cattle prod to keep them there.

This alien life form wasn't that far advanced and didn't realise this. So off the fearsome three toddle on their quest to return home.

Ginger? Nuts!

Each of the three horny-headed heroes has his own particular skill. Erik owns a pair Viking Nike Airs, so he's the runner of the gang — and the only one who can jump. He's also one can short of six-pack because he's willing to charge headlong into a wall, smashing it, at the touch of a button. But then he's got ginger hair.

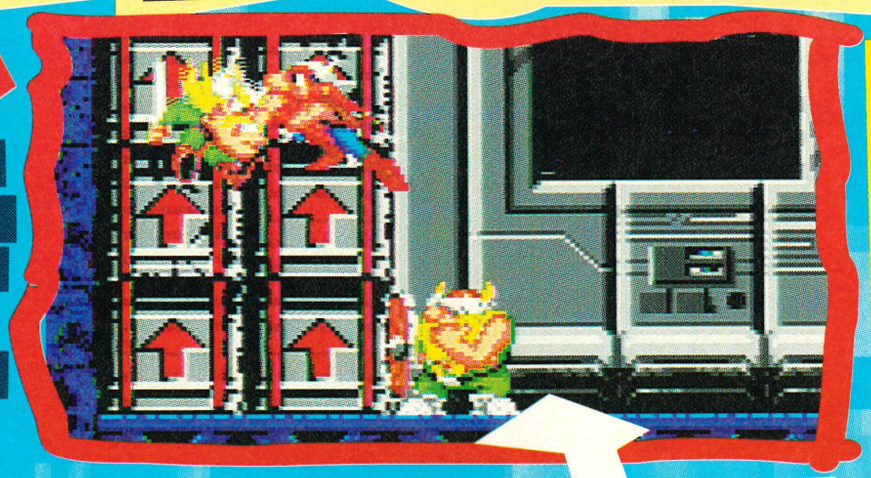
Olaf's the defender of the group, comes gift-wrapped in excess lard and owns a shield. With this shield he can act as a handy stepping stone for Erik, block the path of charging nasties and defy the laws of physics by using it as a parachute.

Lastly, and sporting the optional moustache instead of troublesome beard, Baleog. He's a must at parties and frequently gets his chopper out. And for those tricky long shots, he also packs a bow, making him the team's attacker.

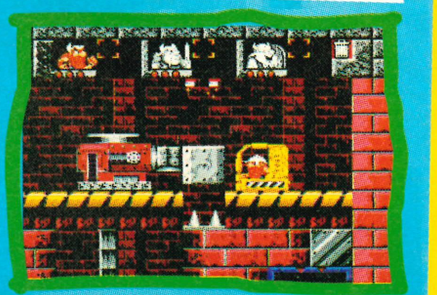
You control the guys individually, sending them in to do their thang, and get them to safety at the end of the level.

Bombs away

The first four levels help you get to grips with their team-play and let you



Olaf The Stout pauses to give his nose a good rake-out and fails to notice his friends are trapped in an anti-gravity field





//MILES//

///88%///



Hang on to your beards 'cos the Vikings are here, and they're… um, lost. Yeah — this is one kool game, and original, too! Okay, so at first the platform/puzzle idea's reminiscent of *Rick Dangerous* (old 8-bit explorer dude), but utilising each character's unique skills adds a new dimension.

Some sections occasionally walk that perilously fine line between tricky and downright frustrating, but a strong line in throwaway humour (check the characters' banter between levels) and challenging yet eminently solvable problems keep one foot steadily ahead of the other.

Gripes-wise, all but completing a tough section only to get creamed in a moment of wandering concentration means starting over. But hey — it's all part of the challenge.

And speaking of challenge, this is one sucker you won't be completing at your first sitting… or second, or third. Passwords are a Godsend, as early levels ease you into the action before you're dropped down the dunny without a bog brush — stacks more fun than raping and pillaging.

Get it, play it, like it!





PUBLISHER	VIRGIN GAMES
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	FEBRUARY
SIZE	8 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-2
SKILL LEVELS	1
LIVES	1 PER VIKING
CONTINUES	INFINITE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YUP
BATTERY BACK-UP	NOPE
SPECIALS	SORRY



Eric the Swift



Eric really kuses his head to get through walls



And he's the only one that can jump.



Baleog the Berserker



Dice alien gut with the sword in close attacks…



… And lance zits at fifty paces with the bow and arrow



Olaf the Stout



His shield doubles as a parachute



He can also block the path of nasties

stock up on collectables such as food and bombs. But things really get moving when you get off the ship and hit solid ground.

One of the most enjoyable features is how the characters interact with the levels. It's not just a case of bombing around shooting, blocking and jumping the odd gap. Cranes, bicycle pumps and bubbles all have to be used in a specific way to make any progress.

You could fall into the trap of thinking there are more than a few similarities between this and *Lemmings*, in that you have to use characters' particular skills to make it through levels. But the big difference is you've only got three of 'em and they're 'arder than an entire game-load of Lemmings, armed to the teeth with exploding comrades.

As for the way it plays, well, it's over to the comment boxes to get the low-down in that department…





//////JAMES 89%//////



Vikings, eh? This game sounds like it's right up my street. What could be more fun that controlling a bunch of guys who like wine and women and don't cut the fat off their meat? Nothing! That's the answer, absolutely noth… Wait a minute. Where are all the fit birds? Oh flip, it's a puzzle-platformer! See you in a year or two.

…Er, sorry, I'm at a really crucial point…

…Just another couple of minutes…

…Look. Will you sod off? I'm in the middle of a game, here…!

Eh, that wasn't bad. It's not often I can sit down and play a game like this for long — none of the chairs in my house are very comfortable. And believe me, you'd better make yourself comfortable when *The Lost Vikings* takes up residence in the cartridge slot, 'cos you're gonna be glued to it for some time.

Graphics 'n' sounds are top notch and the controls are faultless. There wasn't one occasion when I thought, 'I wish this game came with a mouse', like some puzzle-platformers I could mention. The daunting prospect of getting to grips with the helmetted ones wasn't so daunting in the end. (Er, in other words: learning how to use the characters was a cinch.)

What more can I say other than it's got me hooked — intellectually-challenged as I am!

GRAPHICS	92
SOUND	89
PLAYABILITY	85
LASTABILITY	82
ORIGINALITY	92
OVERALL	89

DUNE II

The MEGA machines "Buy this game" Award!

THE BATTLE FOR ARRAKIS

An original offering or just Sim City in the sand? Virgin's latest release is definitely for the strategy buff, but does it kick up a desert storm?

MEGA drive!

Arrakis, the most important planet in the universe. Why? Because it's the only place where the spice is found.

In the world of Frank Herbert's Dune, spice does more than flavour your food: those who take Arrakis's fabled produce can live for hundreds of years (not unlike Jimmy Stewart and Barbara Cartland). It also allows the user to 'feel' his way through hyperspace; without it interplanetary travel is impossible. He who controls Arrakis controls the universe!

Three groups fight for domination of spice production. Taking a 'house' of your choice, you start each level with a construction yard and a few credits.

Before you can start mining spice, you need to develop your base into something a little more useful. Concrete slabs form an attractive patio and essential foundation for later building, while wind traps provide power and refineries govern the harvest and production of the miracle substance itself.

There's something out there… Harvested spice gives you dosh to spend on further building, production of vehicles and robotic infantry (if you have the required factories), or you can save it for a rainy day (a long time on a desert planet).

Each level has a set objective, from building up a certain amount of moolah to the complete destruction of a rival base (there's always one nearby). This is achieved by sending out your weapons of war and blasting seven shades of Shields out of it.

But you've got to find it first, though — unexplored areas are shown only as a black void. And remember, the enemy can trash you, too. Later in the game, you can build defensive walls, rocket turrets and even aircraft.

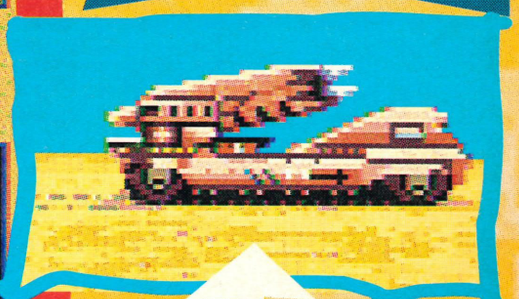
After each level you're given a code, so you don't have to plough your way through the entire game in one sitting and can skip around, replaying earlier stages. After all, variety is the spice of Dune II.





"Hide, lads! Baron Harkonnen's looking to ponce a fag off us!"

Is this your first time



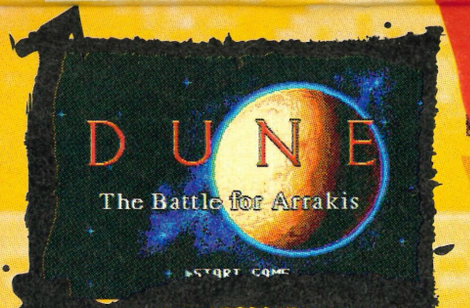
72 //JAMES P 94%///



What a game! It's not often a strategy game mixes genres so successfully, but Dune II does it with ease. You've got money management, forward planning and real-time ass-kicking combat on offer, yet the individual elements fit together really well. Comparisons with Sim City are unfair — Dune II is far less open-ended, building and planning a means to an end rather than an end in itself.

The user interface is spectacular. Getting used to Dune II's a piece of pizza, making real-time interaction a boon rather than a bane. Keeping tabs on your building projects (like Rome, your base isn't built in a day), weapon construction, vehicle deployment and combat can be a handful, but in a challenging rather than frustrating way — this is a cart you can't put down! The graphics and sound are also first rate, with excellent speech samples rounding off a top-notch release.

If you're into games like Populous or Mega-lo-Mania, this cart's for you — its real-time strategy action's right up your cartridge port. If you enjoyed the odd wargame on your old Speccy but were frustrated by awkward interfaces, get Dune II. It's got enough depth to sink a battleship but without the anal-retentive user-unfriendliness that's scuppered many a strategy game. Buy it!

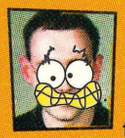


PUBLISHER	VIRGIN GAMES
PRICE	
RELEASE DATE	JANUARY
SIZE	16 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	1
LIVES	1
CONTINUES	NONE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YES
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NONE

//////AL 89%//////



Yep. I like this. Another killer Dune game manifests itself on the MD, but don't ask me if it's as good as Dune CD — I couldn't get a go on it last month, because I didn't have the patience to join the enormous queue around the building.

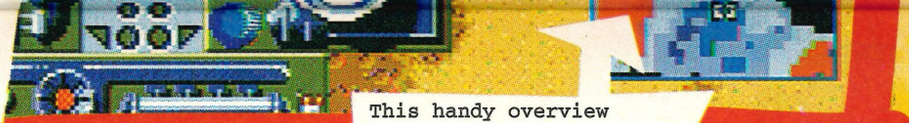
Yeah, Dune II's extremely reminiscent of Civilisation and its predecessors, but a thousand times faster, a thousand times simpler, and the gameplay is smooooth!

That's all you need to know, really, except to warn you that if you do buy it, let your friends and family know you won't be coming out at the weekend, so they won't worry about your disappearance too much.

Personally, I could've sat there all day and played it. In fact, I think I will!

Yeah, I like this job...

in a Harvester, Sir? You can visit the salad bar as many times as you like...



This handy overview tells you where all the Spice is, and where the toilets are.

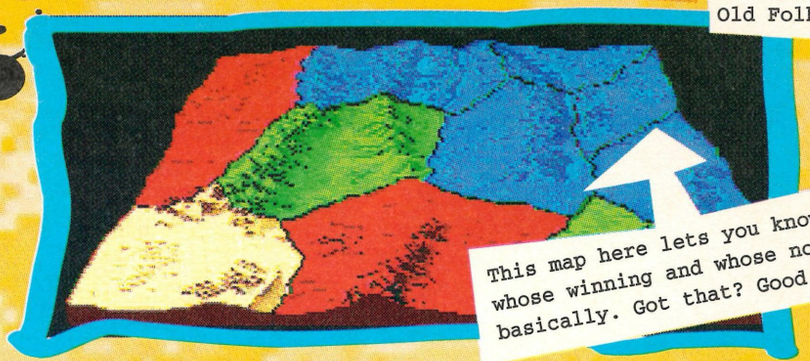
The Harkonnens love a good curry, so get well stocked up on Spice. And Rennies...

"We plough the fields and scaaater..." After every harvest, the House of Atredes gather round a loaf of bread shaped like a bail of corn, sing a few hymns, and then take tins of fruit round the Old Folk's Home.



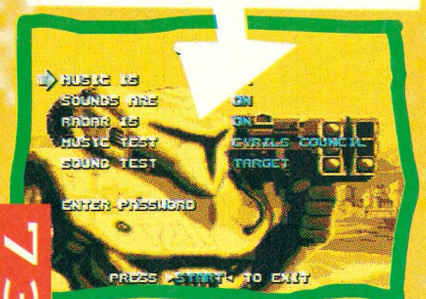


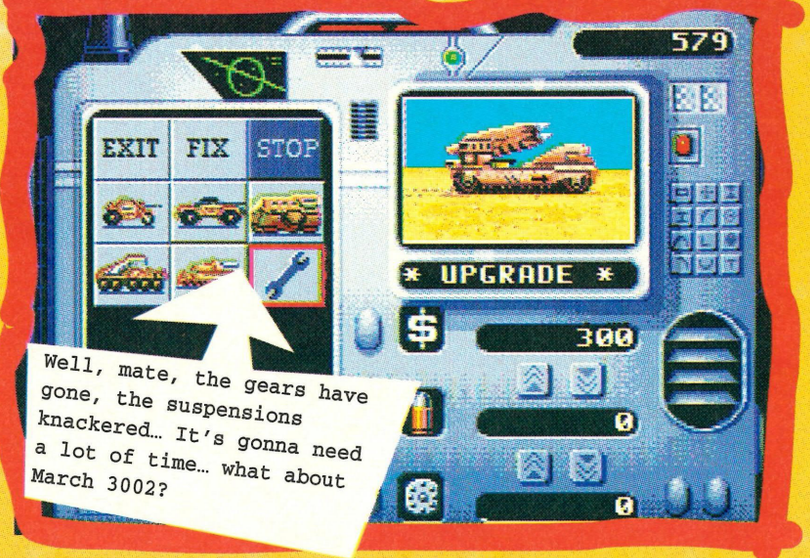
A soldier of Dune tries to scratch his nose with his weapon. Perhaps he should take his helmet off as well...



This map here lets you know whose winning and whose not, basically. Got that? Good.

The options screen is a screen with the options on! Honest!





Well, mate, the gears have gone, the suspensions knackered... It's gonna need a lot of time... what about March 3002?

GRAPHICS	88
SOUND	89
PLAYABILITY	93
LASTABILITY	95
ORIGINALITY	79
OVERALL	92

AERO THE ACROBAT

MEGA drive!

Oh what a circus, oh what a show! Aero's more of a manbat than a batman, but it's his task to make the Big Top safe for Mum, Dad and the kids.

PLATFORM REVIEW





PUBLISHER	SUNSOFT
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	OUT ABOUT NOW
SIZE	8 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	2
LIVES	5
CONTINUES	YES
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NONE

A breakdown of Aero's performance is displayed after every level...





Edgar Ektor is a good name for a villain. The combination of hard consonants and rhythmic structure make for a foreign, yet somehow familiar title. It effectively captures the taint, the slightest whiff, of evil. Nuff Respeck, Sunsoft, for such an evocative personification of doom.

(Sorry about the above paragraph, but as you can tell, we've got another platform game to review, and we couldn't be bothered with the stan-

///WARREN 74%/////



He flies through the air with the greatest of ease, that darling y– Hang on, though — this Aero the Acro-bat (Acro the Aero-bat? Whatever) can't fly! A bat that can't fly? What an awful idea.

And, sure enough, the control system's bollocks. Though the levels are full of wide open spaces, you can only fly for a few seconds at a time — and that's only when you collect a particular icon. The other token gesture towards flight is the ability to hover for a second. Wow.

Okay, it's a platform game, so graceful, effortless flight would severely reduce the difficulty level. But if, for example, hammering away at a button flapped your wings, gameplay would be more enjoyable while retaining the challenge — and living up to expectations. I mean, what makes bats unique is the fact they're flying mammals.

And there's more. Aero's spin-attack — the Drill — is a jump which becomes a directable dive with a second button-press. Ousting foes with this unusual manoeuvre is well tricky: many's the time my 'Drill' overshot or fell short, losing me energy rather than ridding the screen of a clown sprite.

Sexy Al's waxed lyrical over the graphics, but I'm not impressed (Come again? — Ed). The backgrounds are okay, if on the gaudy side, but the sprites are mostly ugly little things. Aero himself isn't exactly a looker and a tad small for a lead character.

You've seen my overall mark for *Aero the Acro-bat* (haven't you? Just glance at the top of this column of text, then. Go on, you know you want to), so what balances out the negative elements? In a nutshell, there are plenty of levels, lots of things to see and do, and a big challenge.

That last element almost killed *Aero*, for me. In places, it's *too* tough, *too* fussy, which leads to much gnashing of teeth. But with cannons, trapezes, see-saws, trampolines, unicycles etc to play around with, I couldn't resist for long.

With four worlds, each composed of four or five levels *plus* boss and bonus stages, *Aero* will drive you batty for weeks. A pity there's no password system...

dard, 'Yo, kids! It's another bum-bouncemungous platformer! Jumptastic!' flange you've come to expect from, y'know, *lesser* magazines. Read MEGA MACHINES — understand life. Nuff said.)

Some hard facts now: *Aero the Acro-bat* is a platform romp set in a travelling circus. Aero is a cocky little sod who uses his bat-like skills in a most entertaining fashion, delighting one and all with feats of derring-do, such as riding a unicycle along a high wire, being fired out of a cannon and jumping 500 ft off a diving board into a tin of processed peas.

Everyone loves him. He loves wearing his knobbly red boots. Everything's wonderful.

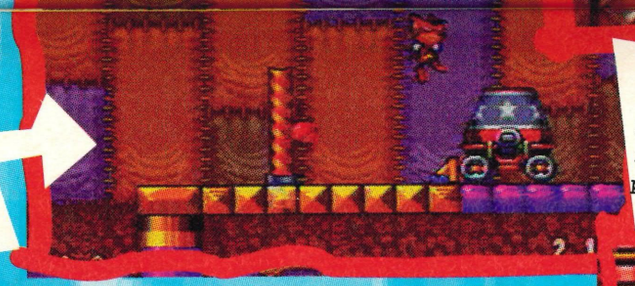
Edgar's barren show

Until the arrival of — can you guess? — the excellently-titled Edgar Ektor. Edgar was born and bred in the Big Top but, tragically, he took Jeremy Beadle as his role model. He thought playing evil japes on the honest, hardworking circus folk was a good crack, so he was booted out. His bitterness toward circuses festered, and when he grew up, he organised a terror campaign against any circus he came across. Including Aero's.

Evil Ed has planted an array of booby traps and Aero must defuse them before the Big Top explodes, showering molten lumps of elephants and clowns upon the fear-stricken audience.

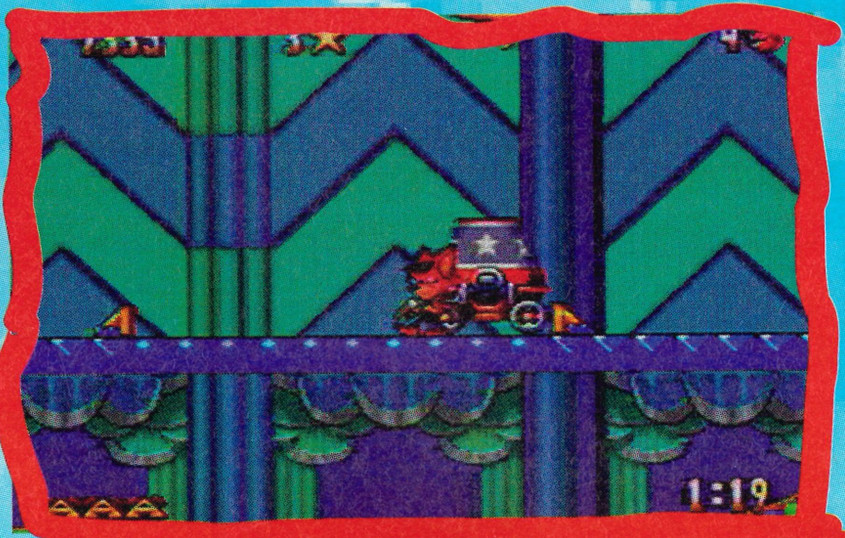
Yeah, it's a platformer, and jumping and climbing are the order of the day, but that doesn't necessarily make it unoriginal. The circus setting is a natural home for platformery, with its trapezes and hoops, and there are 25 stages to overcome, set over four locations.

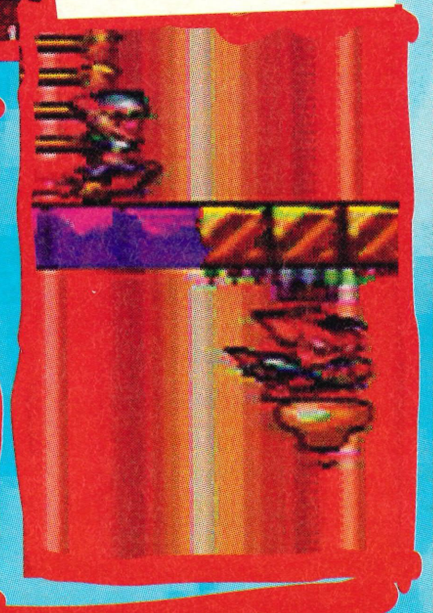
Aero has a nifty attack move, the Drill. After leaping into the air, another press of the jump button spins him like a breakdancer in a tumble-drier, enabling Aero to knock various baddies flat on their back. This attack gives *Aero the Acro-bat* a novel twist (sorry).

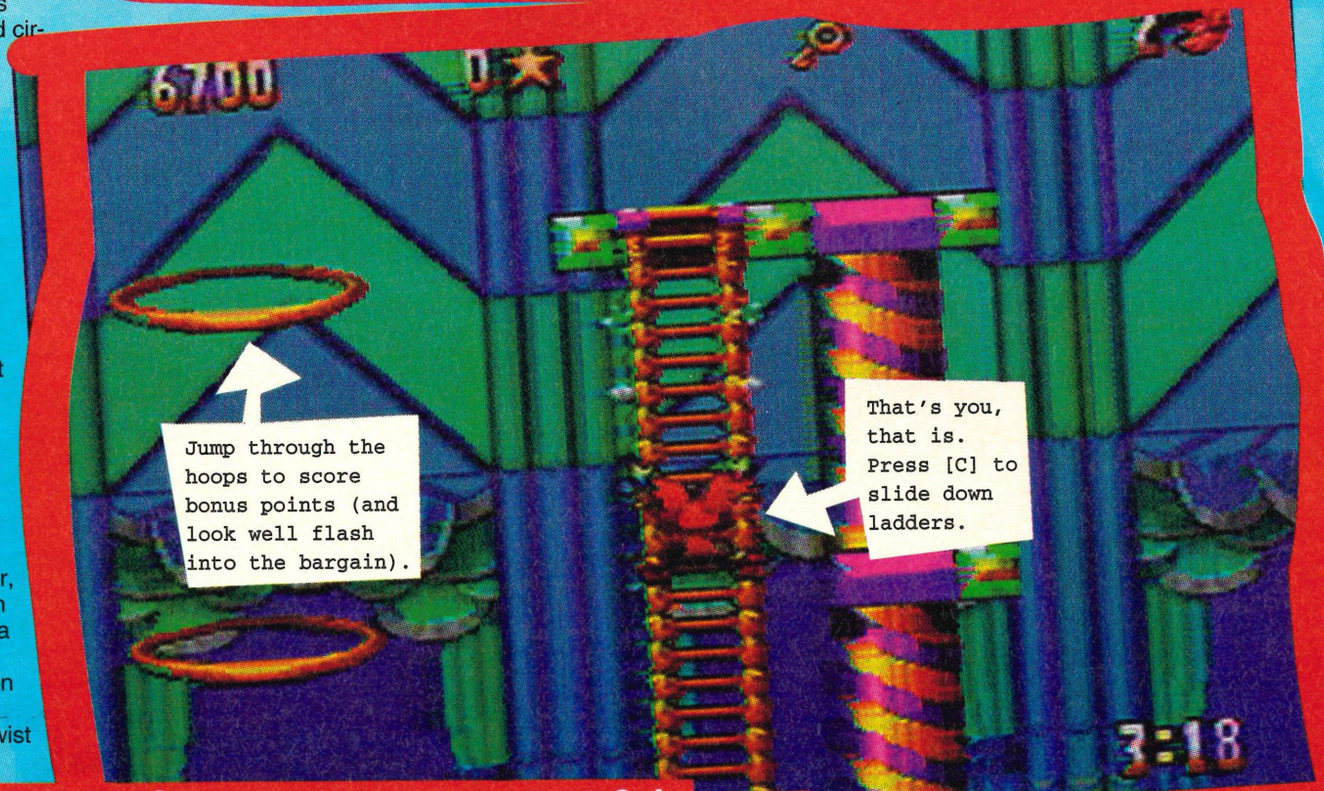


Having just past a restart point, Aero heads for a cannon. Shove it into position, and simply jump on it then pull down to operate.

This peculiar platform is a bit original, innit? We haven't seen anything like it since, ooh, the last platform game...







Jump through the hoops to score bonus points (and look well flash into the bargain).

That's you, that is. Press [C] to slide down ladders.

AERO'S ACRO-BITS



Bonus: without this little beauty, you can't enter the bonus stage. Sniff, sob...



Food: full of fat and E numbers but also bursting with points and energy-giving calories.



Parachute: 1000, 2000, 3000, check! Glide to a safe place with a silk sheet and strings.



Wings: duff band formed by Paul McCartney. Also allow a few seconds of flight.



Lightning: 'double Drill' to make short work of Formica, masonry and tough clowns.



Stars: duff album by Simply Red. Also thrown to kill enemies from a distance.



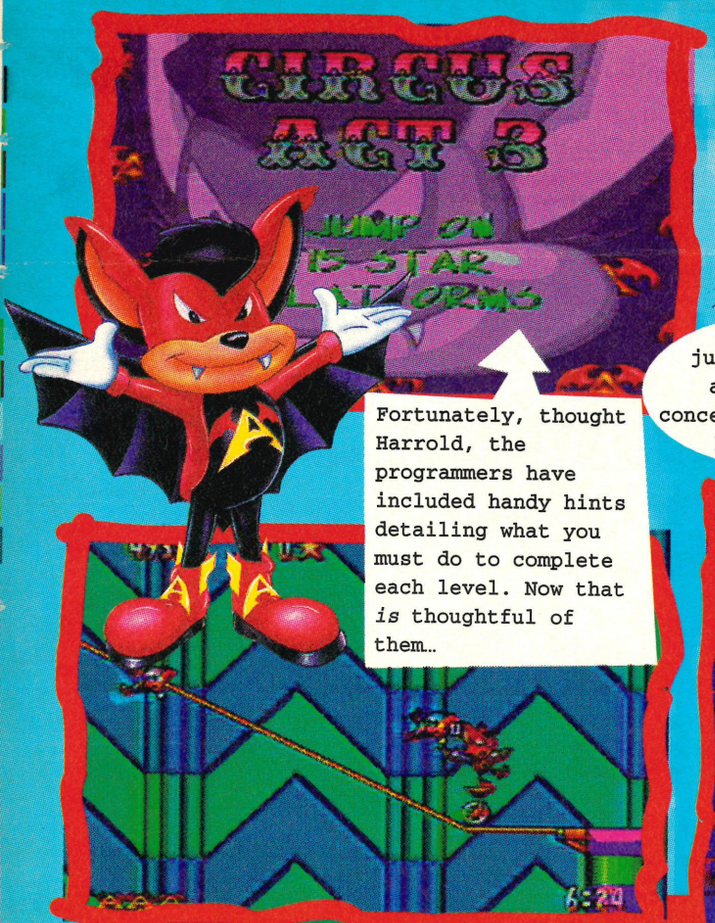
Health: ie, as long as you've got your -, that's the main thing. Keep your bat alive.



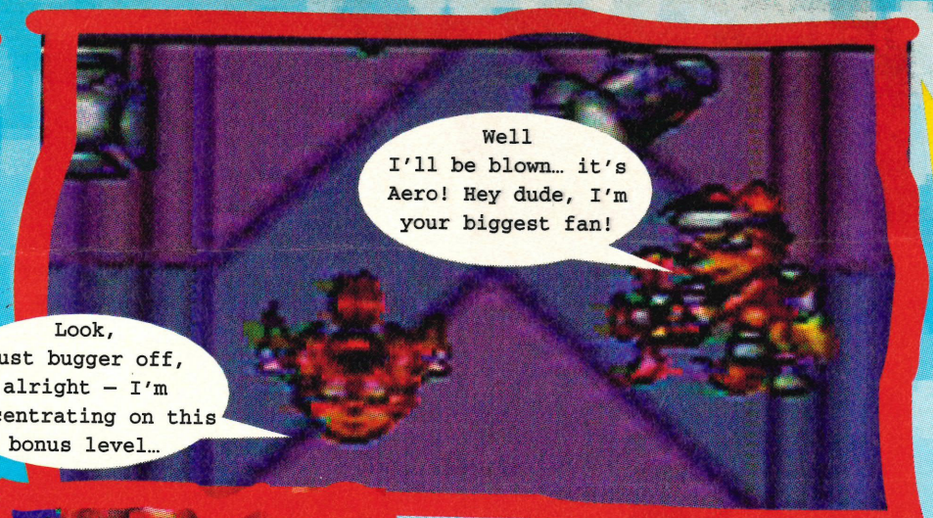
Clock: adds a minute to the timer. And what do minutes mean? Bonus points.



Aero: mint or orange-flavoured bubbly chocolate. Or in this case, an extra life.



Fortunately, thought Harrold, the programmers have included handy hints detailing what you must do to complete each level. Now that *is* thoughtful of them…



Look, just bugger off, alright – I'm concentrating on this bonus level…

Well I'll be blown… it's Aero! Hey dude, I'm your biggest fan!

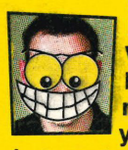






He fell into a burning ring of fire. He went down, down, down and the flames went higher. And it burns, burns, burns…

//AL 83%/



Aero — luv'ly bubbly! (I won't bother trying to do the Barbara Windsor laugh, 'cos I might blow a big snot bubble out me nose and you might be having your tea while you're reading this, but you know what I'm getting at.)

Yep, another game elbows its way to the front in an attempt to change my mind about platformers being as interesting as picking misshapen Noodle Doodles out of a tin. I'll tell you what, *Aero*'s been a breath of fresh air in a month of weak-ass Mario clones.

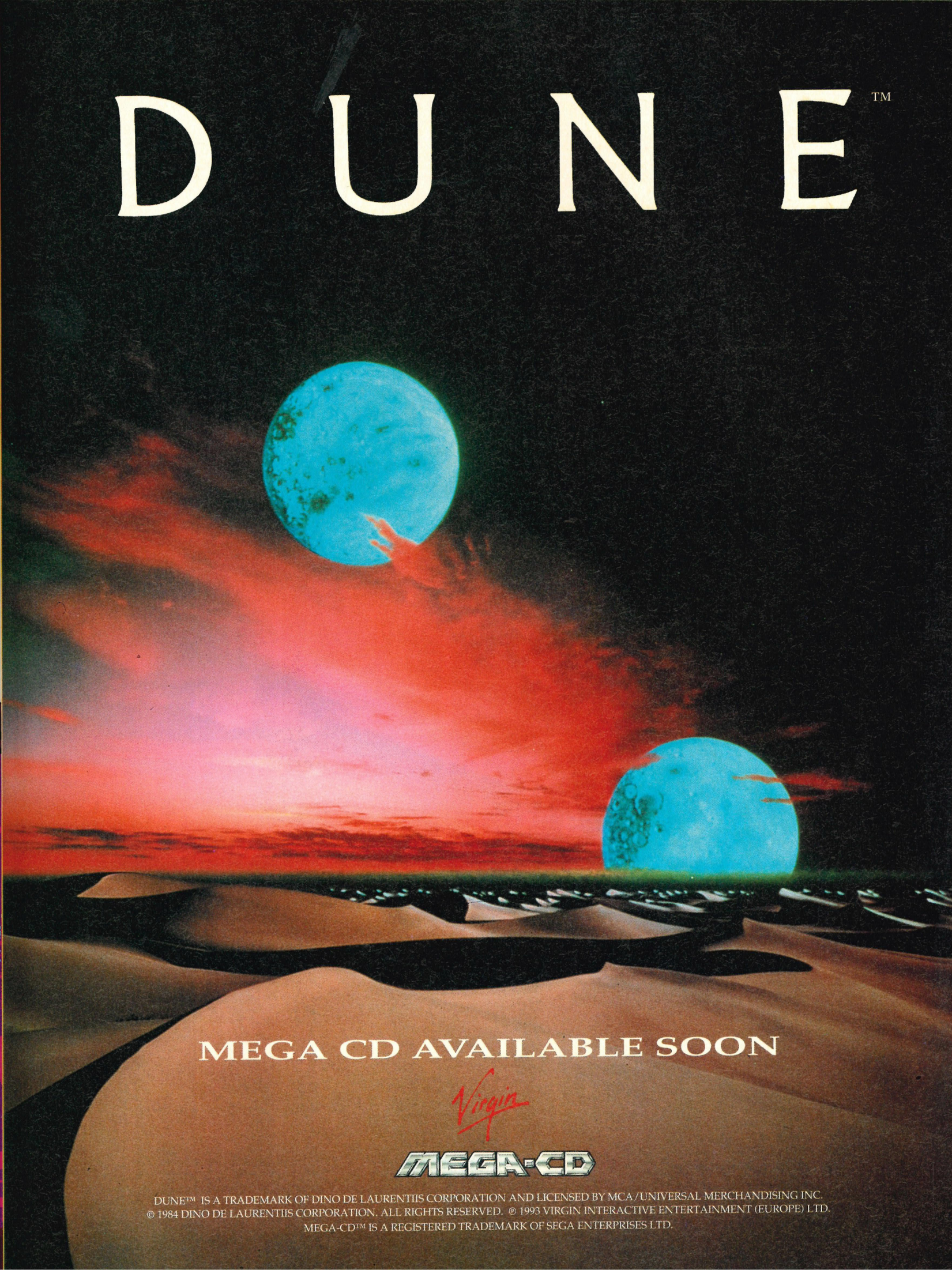
The graphics (and parallax-scrolling backdrops in particular) are SNES-like in their demeanour, and that's a high compliment. Shame the music took me *this* close to scraping me fingernails down the wall in annoyance.

And another thing, why is it when you get a continue, you have to start right at the beginning of the stage? It's pointless when you haven't got off the first level. A shame, really, 'cos this is one of the few games this month I'd actually play again.

I was going to round up this comment with an amusing bat-related pun, but I couldn't think of one. Never mind.

GRAPHICS	91
SOUND	78
PLAYABILITY	89
LASTABILITY	79
ORIGINALITY	75
OVERALL	79

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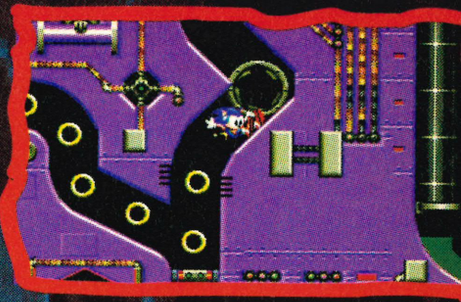
Arcade Review

SONIC The Hedgehog SPINBALL

MEGA drive!

The MEGA machines "Buy this game" Award!

It's bumper-to-bumper action all the way as we go full tilt for Sonic's latest adventure. It's flippin' crazy!



What, no *Sonic 3* this year? Fret not, folks, 'cos Sega have the good sense to provide hedgehog junkies with an alternative fix of fast-paced action. This year it's Sonic *x 3* as they roll out *Sonic Chaos* for 8-bit systems, *Sonic CD* for Mega-CD and now *Sonic Spinball* for the Mega Drive.

As true Sonic fans know, *Spinball*'s based on the Casino Night Zone from *Sonic 2* but expanded to fill a whole cart. The storyline (yep, there is one) is set on a volcanic island Doctor Robotnik has converted into a gigantic factory called the Veg-O-Fortress.

Using the fluffy inhabitants of Moebius as workers, the evil scientist aims to produce an entire army of metallic slaves and take over the planet. As usual, it's up to the hedgehog with attitude to stop him.

With the aid of his pal, Tails, Sonic flies over to the island. However, Robotnik has anticipated the arrival of the spiky speedster and constructed a devilishly clever device to stop him. The Pinball Defence System is an enormous pin table area which must be negotiated before Robotnik can be stopped.

It's up to you to guide Sonic, curled up as a ball in his super-spin pose, through four tricky levels and beat various traps plus Robotnik creations. Sonic starts each stage in a relatively safe spot but soon finds himself in the heat of the action.

Bouncing bosses

Each level's laid out much like a standard pinball table, with extra surprises to keep you going. The aim is to collect a certain number of hidden Chaos Emeralds then make it to the top of the screen, where a chamber opens to reveal one of Robotnik's mad mechanoids. The boss creations can't kill Sonic but dropping through the flippers at the bottom of the screen leads to an untimely death.

As you'd expect with a pinball game, massive scores can be racked up by hitting objects on the table such as markers, bumpers, multiplier lights and Robotnik's minions. These often take the form of mechanical chickens which fly round the table, causing a nuisance. Slam into them, however, and they release a trapped animal friend.

As with other Sonic games, bonus levels are accessed once you pass a level. These, too, are pinball games, this time played by Sonic himself. With his hands either side of the table, he must slam the ball into tubes to free his friends. Robotnik moves around the table, trying to stop the ball; once your mates are free, hit the fat fiend himself.

You're gonna need super-speed reflexes and frighteningly fast flipper fingers to beat Doctor Robotnik this time!



Grab the lever and raise the minecart bridge before riding the rails.

There's more frantic flipper action in the Bonus Levels. Free Sonic's trapped friends and hit the Doc.

Use the generators to line up the Emerald containers.

Be careful! If Sonic falls through the level he may meet a molten death.

AL 88%



That deaf, dumb and blind kid sure plays a mean pinball! Except he isn't deaf, dumb or blind.



Use the flippers to whack steel balls into Robotnik's craft. Your furry friends are trapped in the containers at the top of the table.

Make it to the top of the table and tackle Robotnik's latest creation. Clock up a massive score by getting multiple hits.

Sonic remains in his Super Spin Attack mode for most of the game so you won't lose any rings if hit.

MAT 92%

The strangest thing's been happening in these offices lately. Usually, the rabble from our sister magazine, SNES FORCE, are engrossed in the latest Super Nintendo cart, but recently they've flocked to MEGA MACHINES to check out some of the most original and fun games around. The past few months have seen such cracking Sega games as the incredibly addictive *Lethal Enforcers*, button-bashing *Street Fighter II* and now *Sonic Spinball*.

I might be pining for *Sonic 3* but both *Spinball* and *Sonic CD* are a breath of fresh air after some of the carts we've received. The idea of computerised pinball is hardly new but the Sonic element makes *Spinball* a joy to play. The graphics are top-notch and even though Sonic's a ball for most of the game, he retains the colour and speed he's known for.

And it's so flippin' addictive! Leave *Sonic Spinball* on and someone's bound to wander past, mutter 'Hmm, that looks interesting', pick up the joypad then hog the Mega Drive for the rest of the day!

With great visuals, accessible playability and loads of neat features, *Sonic Spinball*'s an essential purchase for hedgehog fans and those who like the finer things in life.

And he's a hedgehog. But so what? It's a cool way to kick off a comment, innit?

All I want to say is thank God Sega didn't cock up such a good idea. Pinball games on the Mega Drive are renowned for their crapness and *Sonic CD* didn't raise too much of a bulge in the trouser department, but — hallelujah! — *Sonic Spinball* is a bit fine.

Sega have succeeded in producing a pinball sim and another episode in the Sonic saga without detracting from either genre. It plays like a pinball table (well, as near as possible on a Mega Drive) and cunningly incorporates the Sonic features we all know and love (eg, the Robotnik end-of-level machines).

The only niggle is that when you lose a ball/life, you have to start the 'table'-busting process from scratch, which gets on your wick after a while. Other than that, it's quite ace.

Big Up, blue spiky chieftain!



PUBLISHER:	SEGA
PRICE:	£49.99
RELEASE DATE:	NOVEMBER
SIZE:	BIG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS:	1-4
SKILL LEVELS:	2
LIVES:	3
CONTINUES:	NONE
PASSWORD SYSTEM:	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP:	NO
SPECIALS:	NONE

GRAPHICS	88
SOUND	75
PLAYABILITY	89
LASTABILITY	70
ORIGINALITY	86
OVERALL	90

RAM RAID

NAMCO GET NOBBLED!



They're back! MEGA MACHINES' very own Lethal Enforcers, The Ram Raiders, are once again putting the squeeze on the software industry, and acquiring the info on the latest releases the only way they know how – by brute force! This month, Ade's been a bit peaky so Al's brought in top aggro specialist Jimmy B, and is keeping an eye on the team's YTS lad, Milo. It was another London job – this time, the employees of Namco were in for a little visit...

Namco are renowned around the world for their coin-op creations. It was they who gave the world such games as Pac-Man, Galaxians and Pole Position. At present, they're poised to launch an assault on the Mega Drive market. It's a fact that today's coin-ops are tomorrow's console games, so the Ram Raiders' mission was simple — to discover the day after tomorrow's console games. If you see what we mean...


1
Russ Abbot?
It's, um... that geezer off the telly...
5
'Ere, you know how to get to Namco, mate?
When I'm not trying to slap an extra 15% on the price of books and magazines, I like nothing better than browsing through my favourite MD mag – MEGA MACHINES! Only £2.50... at the minute.
Who was that?
'Ere we go!
WAAAAAAAAAHHH!
Got any biscuits?
Namco's Japanese management team take a well earned rest from the workaday hassles by brushing up on their Cockney accents and pouring scorn on English cuisine...
(L to R) Akira Aoyagi, Akio Watanabe, and Kevin Yanagihara.
2
Boilk! That scampi's gone right through me, guv, and no mistake...
My old man, said follow the van, and don't dilly dally on the waaaayy....
You won't 'arf be Tom & Dick in the morning, me old china..
6
It's just round the corner, lads. Would you like me to give your windscreen a wash while I'm not doing anything?
Ooo, cheers youth.
Nothin' like a nice fat glossy magazine for knockin' out alarm systems...
12
13
Right, time to synchronise watches... what's going off 'ere?
But when you've got a YTS lad on your side, any time is teatime...
14
I've got the kettle on, lads...
Wahey!
Cor blimey O'Reilly! Look at this! It's a brand new Namco SNES cart that hasn't even been announced in the press yet! It'll be a world exclusive! Hold the front page!
Nahh, who gives a toss?
16
Meanwhile, the Ram Raiders sped towards their destination...
3
Have you found it yet, plonker?
Urrr.... what are we looking for again?
Now then, Milo, here's what we call expenses. Petrol money, camera film, parking fees, lunch... let's call it 50p, eh? Don't spend it all at once, there's a good lad.
One Prime Ministerial rinsing later, The MegaMobile® was parked...
7
Cor! Ta, Uncle Al!
It wasn't long before the boys hit paydirt...
15

17

Whilst Al was clearing the office of rubbish, Jimmy B set about the briefcase of Kevin Yanagihara, Representative Director...

Milk and five sugars, James...

Cor, all those numbers... and here's me, who can only count up to 73.

18

The lad was ferret-like in his demeanour...

ACE! Gerrem on the table!

Let's see if there's any shillings down the back of here... WHOA! I've found some documents!

27

A hot lead! Al wasted no time (for a change)...

How d'ya work this, then?

Namco HQ receives an extortion note...

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

TO: THE GAFFER, NAMCO JAPAN
FROM: THE RAM RAIDERS
DATE: TODAY

THIS IS US! WE'RE 'ARD!

OI! GEEZER!
GIZ ALL THE GEN ON THEM NEW MEGA CD GAMES, YOU KNOW, THE DRIVING ONE + THE BEAT-'EM-UP RIGHT? COZ IF YOU DON'T, YOUR STAFF ARE GUNNA PAY!
NO NEED TO GET THE FUZZ INVOLVED

28

While we're waiting for them to cave in to our demands, I'll have a go on ROLLING THUNDER 3...

19

But...

Bah! It's all in that funny writing!

Hold it up against a mirror...

20

Bleedin' 'ell! It's all in Japanese! And I still have a problem with English!

I've got an idea...

29

Meanwhile, Milo did what came naturally to him. What a credit to the nation's youth he most surely is!

Suddenly, the fax machine cranked into life...

VIA FACSIMILE

TO: THE RAM RAIDERS
FROM: NAMCO LTD. CONSUMER SALES DEPT. Hiroshi Ochiai
DATE: Nov. 08, 1993
SUBJECT: TOMORROWS COOL STAFF
CC: Mr. Kevin Yanagihara

You can do whatever you want with our staff. We don't care. You'll never uncover the secret of our new Mega CD games, understand? Never! Nyah Hah HAAAHHH!

Yours,
The Gaffer,
Namco Japan.

P.S. Could you ask your Milo to nip out and get us some fags?



ROLLING THUNDER 3

Yes, it's more of the side-scrolling two-handed shoot-'em-up tomfoolery we've come to know and love...



ROLLING THUNDER 3

21

Let's have a good doss and watch MTV!

Ooo, are Modern Romance still number one?

Whilst Al & the Jimster writhed in a coin-op ecstacy, the tousle-haired YTS lad from Ludlow instinctively knew what was required of him...

25

Whose up for some crisps?

HURRAH! You can come again, son!

Bah! Never mind, I'll have a good fiddle on *SPLATTERHOUSE 3*, the follow-up to, er, *SPLATTERHOUSE 2*. I think.

30



SPLATTERHOUSE 3

The young whippersnapper clearly needed to be instructed in the ways of righteousness...

22

Bleedin' kids today! They got no discipline. Bring back National Service, I say! Never did me any harm...

You never did National Service, twonk...

I know! That's why it never did me.

But that wasn't quite enough for our balaclava-clad heroes. They demanded more info. The unfortunate Ms Plumridge was interrogated to within an inch of her life. Sort of.

Alright, you've forced me to do this. Milo, a cup of the foulest coffee from the Impact drinks machine!

The disappointment of rejection was too much for Al. Something inside that cool, bespectacled exterior snapped. Diane Cottee, the P.A to the M.D, was the first to pay...



Errrgh! That's put me right off me tea, that.

SPLATTERHOUSE 3

I know! That's why it never did me any harm! Boom Boom!

With that homage to Cannon & Ball over, Jimmy B had a good rummage through someone's raincoat...

23

What's these slides? Boring holiday snaps? Hang on tho'...

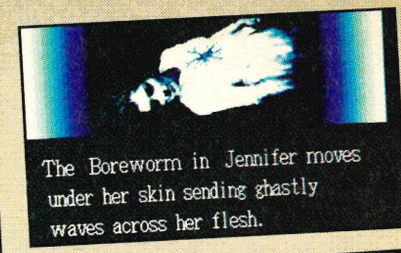
26

It's no good, you won't get a peep out of me about Namco's forthcoming Mega CD releases. Don't even bother trying to force me to admit that one's a driving game and the other's a beat-'em-up. And I'd forget trying to work out how I can talk whilst gagged with a tatty Man United scarf.

Not... *39 strong?* I can't look...

31

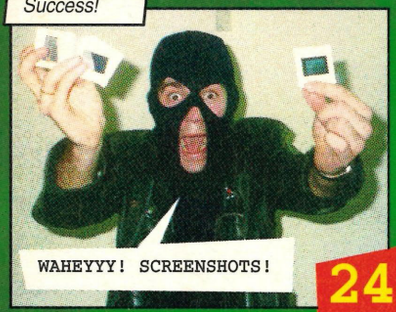
Jesus...



The Boreworm in Jennifer moves under her skin sending ghastly waves across her flesh.

SPLATTERHOUSE 3

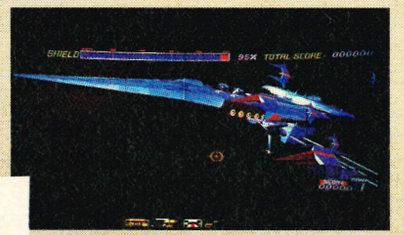
Success!



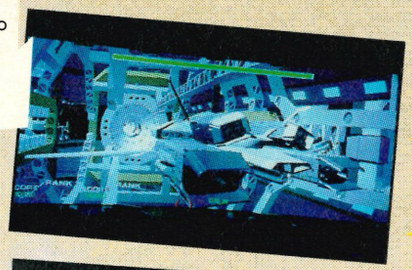
WAHEYYY! SCREENSHOTS!

24

GALAXIAN 3 is a major revamp of an old favourite with a BIG difference – up to *six* people can blast away at once! Each player has their own battle station set in what looks like a public toilet, but how many public toilets do you know with 3D computer generated graphics and multi-channel surround sound?



GALAXIAN 3



GALAXIAN 3

Jimmy B, ever the gentleman, allowed Administration Assistant Sheila Campbell one last smoke before the ultimate torture...

Oi! Only one fag, right?

Jimmy! Get the phone!

32



MD Darren Fisher, in a pathetic attempt to alert the police, was stopped in his tracks. For defying the will of the Ram Raiders, he was subjected to an appalling act of atrocity...

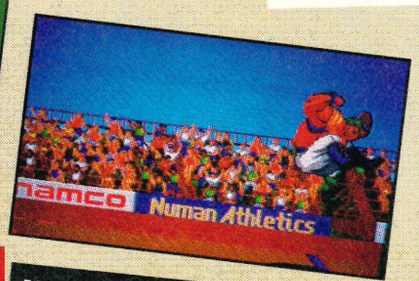
Right, you've had it now!

33

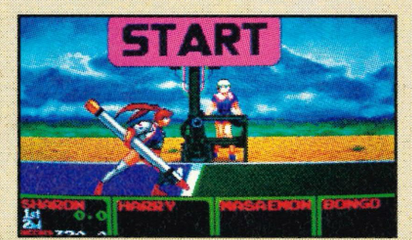


The Ram Raiders had stumbled upon a cache of preview shots for a welter of Namco Coin-op and console games yet to be released, including coin-ops ***NUMAN ATHLETICS*** *and* ***GALAXIAN 3...***

NUMAN ATHLETICS is a bizarre hybrid of old favourite *Track & Field* with a dash of *SFII*, with a pinch of Cosmic Blast Man for good measure. Eight different events in eight different countries, including the Scud Toss, 1km Turbo Dash, and stopping a bullet train!



NUMAN ATHLETICS



NUMAN ATHLETICS



NUMAN ATHLETICS

Young Milo couldn't wait any longer — he had to ring his girlfriend and tell her everything was alright. Ahh, bless...

34

Yeah, I *am* wearing me scarf... and I had those sandwiches you did for me... I dunno when I'll be getting back, Al and James wanna go to Stringfellows... No! I can't kiss you, there's someone taking a photo...

This wanton waste of company resources was too much for Akira Ayoagi to bear.

35

BANZAI!!

OOOOOFF!

36

84

84

HA-DO-KEN!

The Namco team, led by Ms Cottee, fought back...

37

Gaaahhh!

38

Errrrggghhh!

C'mon, lads! Leg it!

These files will tide us over quite nicely, thank you! Just a shame we never got to see *RIDGE RACER*, the new Namco coin-op which is poised to stun the world with its phenominal graphics, out at an arcade near you next month!

Quick, lads– to the MegaMobile!®

39

DRAYCOTT AVENUE

40

Eh? Where's the bleedin' motor?

Look at this note, lads!

41

METER OUT OF ORDER

Dear Ram Raiders,

We've gone and towed your motor away, 'cos we don't like your faces. Har har Har!

Yours, The Fuzz.

Oh, WHAT?

And so, another successful mission for the Ram Raiders draws to a close, and we bid a cheery farewell as they try to get back to Ludlow. Who knows where they'll be next issue, and what japery they'll get up to? Until next month, when hopefully James won't be wearing his balaclava inside out!

This is your chuffin' fault, Milo! I told you to put some more cash in the metre while you were running them errands!

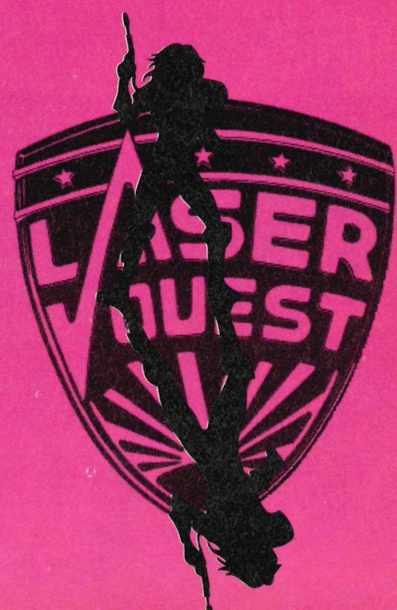
This is coming out of your wages, son – so no cash 'til 1996!

42

I've a dream, Silver Dream Machine...

mortal combat for real.

Call the Laser Quest linkline now for your nearest Laser Quest arena on 0800 543210.



IT'S MORE THAN JUST A GAME

The Amazing SPIDER-MAN VS. THE KINGPIN

MEGA cd!

CD

Freelance photographer Peter Parker, known as Spider-Man to his gaudily-dressed, super-powered buddies, is developing a rogues' gallery of games. Another swings into view...

Spider-Man, Spider-Man; He can't stick on a frying pan; Is he strong? Is he heck!; Bring him here and I'll break his neck...' Yes indeed, the songs we used to sing in the playground.

Spider-Man has already made an appearance within the hallowed pages of MEGA MACHINES, when we looked at *Spider-Man & The X-Men* last month. We gave them a Chinese burn, pushed 'em up against the toilet walls and took their dinner money, leaving them with nothing more than a paltry 41%.

Well, Spidey's back in an all-new adventure. Sort of. Okay, it's a rehash of 1991's cart, but boasting bigger and more levels, cartoon interludes and a wider selection of baddies to throw webs at.

It's a normal day for Spidey: climbing up skyscrapers, rescuing old ladies from muggers etc. When he gets home to the missus for a snog on the sofa, a newsflash, er, flashes on the, y'know, news. It's none other than The Kingpin, top criminal and fat ponce supreme.

Fat git

He disses the arachnid-like youngster on national TV in fine fashion, not only showing video evidence of 'Spider-Man' stomping on some old biddy's poodle, but also claiming Spidey has planted a nuclear bomb somewhere in New York. Of course, The

The superhero's 'Spider-sense' tells him The Kingpin has called some of his criminal chums out to play (conveniently speeding up the plot), so on comes the red and blue lycra and the pulsating action begins...

The object of *Spider-Man vs The Kingpin* is to give the fat man and his mates a good pasting and find five keys in order to defuse the bomb. The keys (and villains) are scattered throughout New York City; every time you locate and defeat a baddy he gives you a key or a clue to finding one.

You only have 24 hours to do this. All of Spidey's skills — web-spinning, climbing walls, sucking the blood out of flies — will be pushed to the limit. Except for the last one.

So, he can do whatever a spider can, can he? Well, why's he making like a frog then?



////////AL 35%////////



There I was, the very second after the first MEGA MACHINES was finished, and what do they give me? A bottle of champagne? Nice big cigar? The day off? No. *Spider-Man vs The Kingpin*, that's what.

Yes, once again, Satan's crusty tissues spawn another pile of unmitigated flange for me to waste a couple more precious hours of my life upon. Once again, Spidey comes along to rain badness upon me. Cheers, mate.

What is it with the bloke? Does he really enjoy starring in such mediocrity? Does he get some perverse kick out of having another crappy game released in his name? I think he does, y'know.

Yes, it's an improvement on the cart version, but so what? Pat Sharp got rid of his hairstyle (and I use the word 'style' exceptionally loosely) but he's still Pat Sharp, isn't he? And this game is definitely the Pat Sharp of the Sega world.

The only pleasure anyone'll get out of this is during the thigh-slappingly appalling end-of-level sequences, with *Monkey*-style bad dubbing a-plenty. At times, the characters speak each other's dialogue, and the tracks keep sticking, as if Spidey's enemies are hard of hearing. It's a tee and a hee, but not worth the cash.

I haven't mentioned the gameplay, because to tell the truth, I'm still traumatised by it. Do not even consider buying it as a Christmas present, unless you're looking for a novelty coaster for Uncle Tony. Avoid like Tommy Boyd.



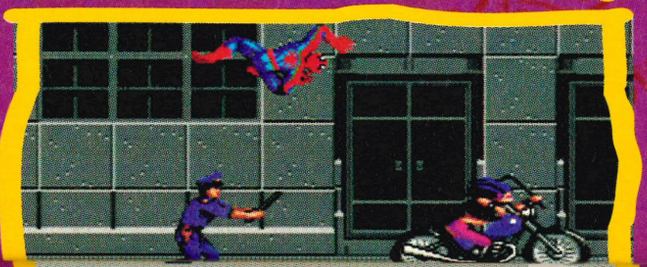
PUBLISHER	SEGA
PRICE	VARIES
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
SIZE	CD

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	3
LIVES	1
CONTINUES	TOO MANY!
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YES
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NONE









One advantage with being a top crime fighter - you get all the fittest birds

Kingpin's a businessman so everyone believes him (bit of politics there!).

Ooo, a pinball section! Now where have you seen one of those before?





Big respect to GAME ZONE for lending us Spidey! Call 'em on 0908 226696 for all your gaming needs!



Your game is loading. Your game is loading. Your game...



/////JAMES 42%/////



Spider-Man vs The Kingpin **could be labelled 'Greatest Gameplay Goofs Of Our Time'. It's absolutely packed with bits guaranteed to bore, frustrate and stub the toe of platform players!**

One of my pet hates is off-screen shooting. It's not only pointless but very frustrating, and whoever wrote that into the game should be shot themselves.

Spidey's supposed to be kitted-out with loads of special powers and optional extras, but still can't punch or kick in more than four directions. So you can bet your bottom dollar any bad guys who turn up are either out of range or hop around so quickly our crap Spidey-sprite won't be able touch them.

Another thing that cheesed me off more than not having Ulrika Johnson's phone number was the lack of content in some levels. To say they were dull doesn't even come close! Some were about as exciting as walking in the Yorkshire Dales — which is number one on my list of boring pastimes.

Spider-Man vs The Kingpin **does hot up a bit... Actually, hot is the wrong word. It's more slightly defrosted in places, but that only happens when the end-of-level bosses come into play. The rest is dull, dull, dull!**

On the plus side, no one's got a gun to your head, forcing you to buy it. And as for the full-motion, out-of-sync stuttering — gimme a break!

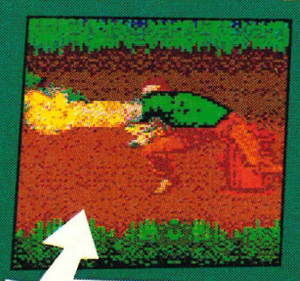
ARACHNAPHOBICS



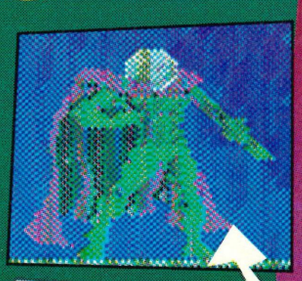
Kingpin



Dr Octopus



Sandman



Mysterio



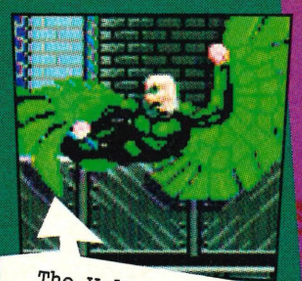
Electro



The Hobgoblin



Venom



The Vulture

GRAPHICS	65
SOUND	55
PLAYABILITY	58
LASTABILITY	48
ORIGINALITY	36
OVERALL	39

MICROCOSM

MEGA CD!

When Van Gogh cut off his ear and sent it to his heart-throb, he had the wrong idea – most of the human anatomy's a right turn-off. So So why have Psygnosis made a game based around it (guts and stuff, not ears)? James Price investigates…

SHOOT-'EM-UP REVIEW

Heh heh. This miniaturisation stuff… I'm a great fan. Especially as it's helping me in my greatest plan this week.

You see, Al Needham has a particularly attractive girlfriend. I'm being miniaturised, along with a small craft I missed *Lovejoy* to build, and injected into Al's bloodstream so I can make my way to where his brain should be and take control.

Next time Al goes over to his loved one's house for a snog, I'm going to shift the balance of power slightly. After insulting her as much as my imagination can facilitate — from inside Al's brain — she'll doubtless go to the pub to drown her sorrows, where I can step in (once back to real size) with a shoulder to cry on, a couple of quid to buy her a drink and with many an evil intention…

'Ooo… Oh…'

It doesn't matter how hard I try, there's no way I'm going to get through this truncated review without making comparisons between *Microcosm* and the film *Innerspace* — so let's get that bit over with now.

Both involve the injection of a miniaturised craft into a human subject, frame after frame of artery-based images… even the craft is spookily reminiscent of *Innerspace*'s own vessel. Okay, so Meg Ryan's conspicuous by her absence, but so's the film's convoluted plot; a blessing, perhaps?

Microcosm's been a loooong time in the making. From initial synopsis to its current form of preview copy, it could be the biggest Mega-CD game yet.

So you'd think that, as so much development time and cash has been invested in it, *Microcosm*'s going to be a highly-rated, critically-acclaimed extravaganza? We're not so sure.

The version we've played is nearly complete and, as you'd expect from a **Psygnosis** game, it looks bloody marvellous. The intro sequence is astounding: speech, realistic animation on well-defined characters, fades between scenes… and it goes on for a while, too. Forget anything you've seen before, this wees on the bonfire of any Mega-CD animation so far.

Yet, when everyone crowded around the Mega-CD to watch *Microcosm* for the first time, comments were hardly the stuff of on-packaging quotes. You see, after the intro and — ugh! — injection bit, the





Some of Microcosm's end-of-level dudes are simply breath-taking. In fact, hang about too long admiring 'em and they'll take YOU away. Permanently!





PUBLISHER	PSYGNOSIS
PRICE	£44.99
RELEASE DATE	26TH NOVEMBER
SIZE	600 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	NO
LIVES	3
CONTINUES	NONE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YES
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	WELL SMART INTRO

MAT



Poor old Psygnosis. Just when it seems they're about to release a stunning game onto the market, we computer journalists take it upon ourselves to rip the crap out of it. In fact, we wait patiently for any new product from the Liverpool-based company with an evil glint in our eye and a manic grin on our faces. How can so many talented people make so many mistakes?

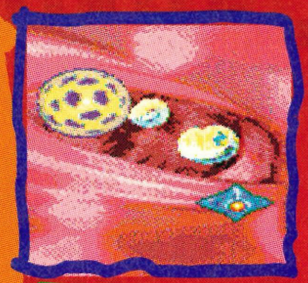
Take *Beast II*, for example. The sequel to one of the best console platform games was dire. Then there was *Dracula* on Mega-CD. Great graphics, great sounds, but there was something missing... gameplay, I think they call it.

Which brings us rather neatly to *Microcosm* (very Barry Norman — Sub Ed). Computer-generated 3D graphics, texture mapping and CD-quality sounds might sound rather tasty, but as it stands the game's nothing more than a mediocre shoot-'em-up.

Preliminary pics showed your view from the cockpit of a miniaturised craft. The version we've ended up with has a small spaceship in the centre of the screen, moving slowly and unconvincingly.

Why even bother placing a beautifully-crafted game like this on the Mega-CD when it's only got 256 colours? If I wanted to stare at grainy, out-of-focus images, I'd buy a copy of *The Daily Sport*. Unless *major* alterations are made, *Microcosm* will be another missed bullseye for *Psygnosis* and another naff CD game for Sega owners. We shall see...









'Great scott! Look at the size of that thing!' Al's brain cell causes havoc...



'I don't know what it is, Captain, but it sure is ugly!'

game itself is disappointing. Unexceptional sprites whirl around the screen, occasionally firing, and your craft... the kindest comment made by the rest of the crowd before they departed was, 'Great intro sequence...'

Red blobs

Unlike *Sewer Shark*, in *Microcosm* you've no choice over which artery, tunnel or orifice you travel through — movement of the scenery is totally CPU controlled (à la *Silpheed*). You can manoeuvre your vessel within the confines of the screen, shoot assorted assailants and — after the easy first few minutes of play — dodge the odd dangerous bit of scenery. That's it.

Every now and then, the game takes over to impress you with a film sequence or possibly an end-of-section bad guy, but *Microcosm*'s utterly free of complexities.

Yet, after ploughing through arduous levels, later sections showed promise. I began to enjoy it. At one point you change ship, but despite extra speed and cosmetic differences, the sprite's still poor.

Collecting power-ups — didn't I mention those? — adds a little spice, but they're similarly unimpressive at present (Psygnosis may enhance 'em before the game's released). Basically, your standard shot is one red blob, the next grade is two red blobs and the next — no prizes — is three red blobs. There's a laser-type shot (a big blob) and even a smart bomb... with no red blobs at all!

Too little, too late?

Currently, the problem with *Microcosm* is that its two major elements — sprites and backgrounds — don't seem to be connected. The scenery is of a very high standard, but the sprites aren't. It looks as if all that development time went into producing the flashy graphics, when suddenly someone said, 'Bugger, we've forgotten the gameplay, guys', and the rest was thrown in as an afterthought.

Still, *Microcosm* could be good. Psygnosis have said there's a great deal of tweaking to be done before it reaches the shops, but I've got to admit to feeling more than a little cynical. After all, when you consider how much *Microcosm* must have cost them so far, are they *really* willing to miss the big Christmas/New Year buying period to tart up the gameplay?

We're reserving judgement until we see the game in its final, packaged form — you'll notice we've omitted the ratings box — so if you're sufficiently clued-up, you'll wait for our final opinion next month. Here's looking at you, Psygnosis.

Anyway, back with the *really* important business. I'm still trying to find Al's brain but, divvy that I am, I forgot to bring a map. Still, all this effort will be worth it — this is my best girlfriend-snatching plan yet.

Hang on, what's that big... Oh, you've got to be joking! If that hole's what I think it is, then I'M REALLY in the sh...

SNAZZY INTRO



/JAMES P/



Hey, pretty pictures! As much as I admire *Microcosm*'s undeniable looks, charm and whatever else it's got that's good, I'm apprehensive about the early stages. Sure, they look smart, but there's not much to them, is there?

At this point in *Microcosm*'s development, it's difficult to pass fair comment — Psygnosis insist there's many an alteration to be made and the finished product will incorporate X number of improvements — so all I'll say is it's okay, in a 'wow, that's impressive, but...' sort of way.

It's inevitable that comparisons between *Silpheed* and *Microcosm* will be made, and they're justifiable, but for my money this could well have the edge.

One must ask oneself, how will the concept affect innocent, impressionable Mega-CD owners? Remember, it's only a game, and injecting miniaturised capsules into your body will lead to no good. Drink white spirit instead — it kills, but at least it gets you pi–



Select your weapon from the menu at the bottom of the screen. Each device only has a limited amount of shots so use 'em wisely.







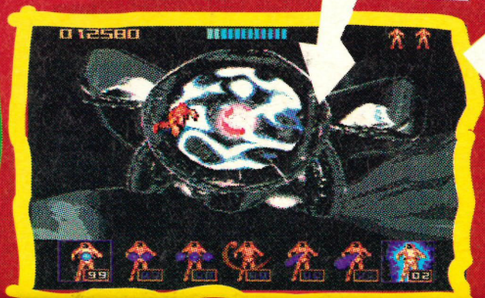




Here's a pic of some bloke with an outboard motor strapped to his back.

Hit the glowing red sphere to kill the last guardian.

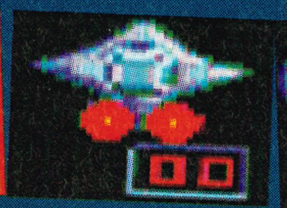




BLOB SELECT



Start with this weapon and yep, it shoots tiny, red blobs. So what?



Er..great. Now you can shoot twice as many tiny, red blobs!



Hey! No red blobs this time, just a spinning blue thing.



Missiles wipe out tough foes. Wow,a sensible caption at last!



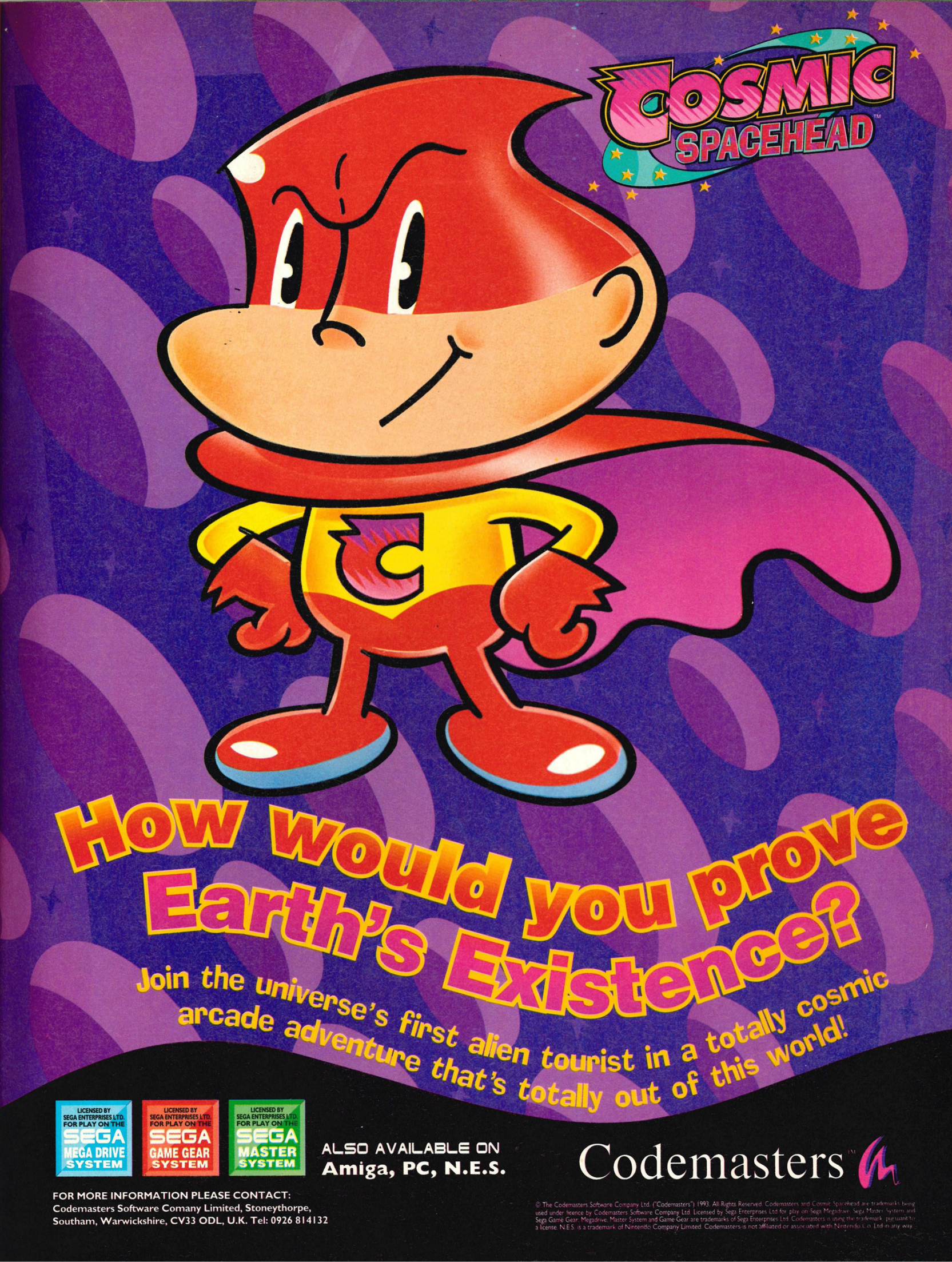
Damn, what was this again? Oh, you know..it's that energy thing.



The ultimate weapon! Blows up bad guys, walks the dog, etc.

GRAPHI
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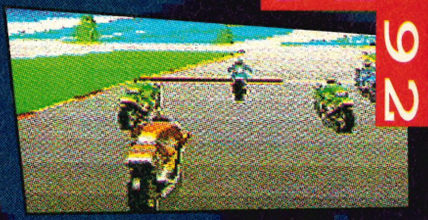
There were no finished versions of *Microcosm* available for review, so we're holding over our final ratings until we see one. Next issue, then, hopefully...


COSMIC SPACEHEAD
How would you prove Earth's Existence?
Join the universe's first alien tourist in a totally cosmic arcade adventure that's totally out of this world!
LICENSED BY SEGA ENTERPRISES LTD. FOR PLAY ON THE SEGA MEGA DRIVE SYSTEM
LICENSED BY SEGA ENTERPRISES LTD. FOR PLAY ON THE SEGA GAME GEAR SYSTEM
LICENSED BY SEGA ENTERPRISES LTD. FOR PLAY ON THE SEGA MASTER SYSTEM
ALSO AVAILABLE ON
Amiga, PC, N.E.S.
Codemasters
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
Codemasters Software Comany Limited, Stoneythorpe, Southam, Warwickshire, CV33 ODL, U.K. Tel: 0926 814132
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Ah, the marvellous Mega Drive. Better than the soppy SNES or archaic Amiga – just look at the games you *could've* been playing if you hadn't had the sense to buy Sega…

MEGA HITS*

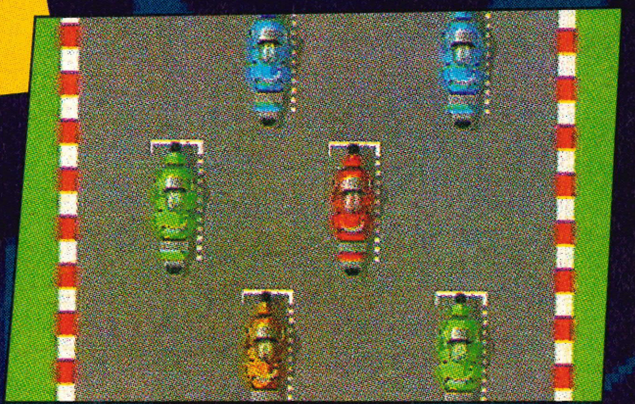
* Anagram





Lamborghini Challenge.....SNES





Cor! Fast cars, fast women and fastening seat belts! *Lamborghini Challenge* has none of these and consequently is boring shite!

Ah, the prospect of setting foot in America with wild dreams of becoming a millionaire. It's so poetic, so far fetched. Wait for it, it gets better: you get a Lamborghini Diablo dead cheap, thus giving you the chance to enter loads of illegal races all over America.

This is the storyline to a wonderfully prattish game which gives you the chance to compete in lots of boring races, have your car done up in a garage, then race again. I'm sorry, but the other day I found counting snowflakes a more exhilarating challenge (and it wasn't even snowing).

Anyway, back to the plot… er… Oh! Sorry, there isn't one. This is almost as boring as real life (speak for yourself! —Ed). All it entails is taking part in painfully easy races against supposedly nasty pieces of work that are really just pictures of characters you'll probably see in EuroDisney.

I don't know about you, but I'm a great fan of the type of games where more than two movements are needed. With this Lamborghini tripe, I could easily manage bowel movements while maintaining full control of the vehicle.







MAT

Hot Rubber.....Amiga

From the beginning, you can tell this game is going to be absolutely dreadful. I mean, with a name like *Hot Rubber*, it's all a bit suspect. Right, down to the dirt…

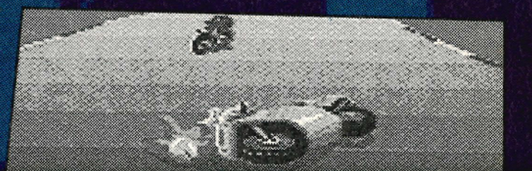
Simply struggle to steer a clapped-out motorcycle around a track in the vain hope of pulling fit birds with umbrellas and winning a small amount of money to add things to your bike like 'Young farmers are wasters' stickers. That's pretty much the game.

The most fascinating part of *Hot Rubber* is when you fall off the bike and almost get run over. Wow, just watch those graphics go mental.

Hot Rubber's been done many times before, with even seedier titles like *Helmet Capers*, *The Motorbike Game* and *Cindy's A Good Rider* (only joking). Don't even think of playing this game unless you'd like to simulate the effect of watching a seed germinate into an oak tree (er, that'd be an acorn mate —Ed). (Ooh. Stop being so bloody picky all the time, will ya!? —Al).

AL









NBA All-Star Challenge.....SNES

The world's full of pointless sports that we're supposed to take seriously. Take cricket, for instance — one of the worst pastimes in the history of cack sports (especially for England).

One of *America*'s favourite pointless sports is basketball, a rip-off of the girly game of netball. And guess what? There's a SNES cart based around this rubbish.

As in the proper game, *NBA* has several teams to choose from, all of whom are rather titchy for basketball players and make lots of daft noises. Once you've selected a gang of dwarf hooligans, it's on to the action of the almost real-life NBA.

There's one important thing to remember while playing *NBA All-Star Challenge*: DON'T BLINK or you'll miss what little action there is. Even on the so-called Hard setting, it's a quantity of urine.

If you want to enjoy yourself while playing *NBA*, watch the spectators — they're the most energetic people in the whole game. Very sad.

AL

Crazy Sports.....SNES



Hmm! What an interesting title to give a game which has little in the way of zany behaviour. ***Dull** Sports*, perhaps...

That James Pond's a one, isn't he? The situations this wet fish gets into never cease to amaze me. In this bizarre and, er... well, just *bizarre* outing, he's caught up in a series of inane sports events which are supposed to be challenging yet fun and crazy to play. Well, the fun part was eating tuna sandwiches beforehand, so that a beautiful fishy aroma lingered throughout the game.

The events have to be seen to be believed. Among several prattish escapades, there are the wonders of the daft Relay Race, incredibly funny (joke) Tour de Grass and downright cack 100-Metre Splash

Turning the boring multi-event formula into a funny fishy frolic has failed. Instead you get a rubbish game that's as much fun as any other badly thrown together sports sim. James Pond's wasted here. He's a lovely fish who should be more careful about the carts he appears in.

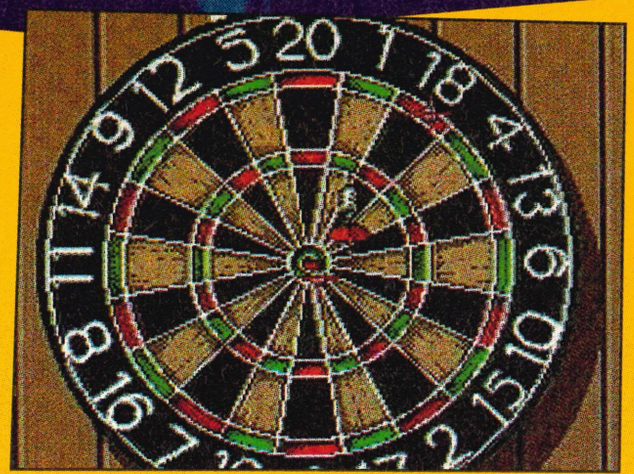
MAT





Jocky Wilson's Compendium of Darts.....Amiga





Beer bellies, breaking wind, bad language and Jim Bowen: the perfect equation for darts. It's not the type of sport you'd expect to translate into a winning computer game, with all the skill and tricks of the real thing.

Well, it hasn't — unless you count this pile of dross. Your host for this journey into ill-fitting imitation silk sports shirts is an agreeable fellow known to his friends as Jocky Wilson, but known to the rest of us as 'that porky, loud-mouthed bloke'.

The rules are simple: aim your darts at the board or the back of Jocky Wilson's head and press fire. The first player to score several-hundred-and-one wins the game. Wow, what a concept.

As you might imagine, *Compendium of Darts* is awful to play and awful to watch. The only plus is that if you're not sure what numbers come between one and 20, the answers are all here. Another thing you learn is how rubbish darts is and why they hardly televise it anymore!

But if you're into the sort of sports which involve very little movement but lots of beer, this is the game for you.

ADE



Ho hum, another day another dollop of dross. You sure are lucky to own a Mega Drive y'know – just imagine having to play any of this little lot. It's enough to make your toes curl! Next month, look out for some even worse rubbish...

CODEMASTERS AND SERVANTS!

Gameful Employment P45
You're sacked! Did you hear me? I said sacked!

Oh, we're so famous, talented and beloved by the public! In virtually every console and computer games mag, the reviewers' names and faces are plastered all over the shop. But where would we be without the games themselves? Nowhere. So MEGA MACHINES takes a look behind closed doors, as we go… through the – er, as we find out what makes software houses tick.

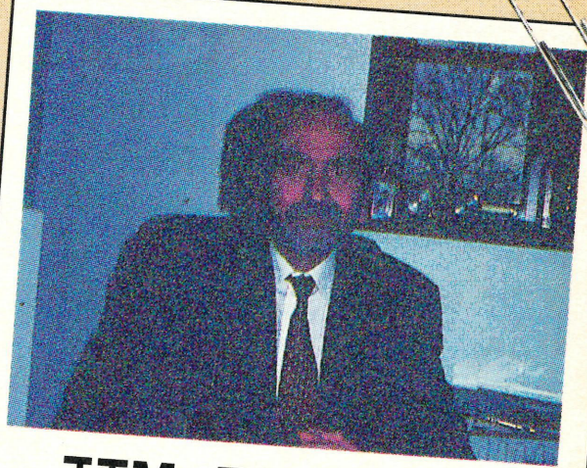
It's not all work, work, work. But then again, it's not all Swiss bank accounts, red Porsches and champagne sipped from new-and-perfectly-hygienic ball-room slippers. No, creating games is a hectic business, full of trouble, strife, apples and pears. Just ask **Codemasters**.

Don't worry yourself, we've already asked them all sorts of questions, and they were only to eager to reply. From the mightiest of big cheeses, through Marketing and Public the bargain. Their father, Jim, gave them financial backing and a helping hand.

They chose to target the growing 8-bit computer budget market, releasing games on cassette for £1.99, and early business was encouraging. Press interest and sales grew with the launch of the infamous *Simulator* series and the birth of the cult game character, Dizzy, brainchild of another youthful duo, the Oliver twins.

Spreading their wings into mid-





JIM DARLING

Jim Darling's Chairman of **Codemasters** and therefore ageless (well, he *is* God, isn't he?). He helped form the company seven years ago, regretfully leaving his career as an ophthalmic specialist, designing and prescribing contact lenses.

Jim has overall responsibility for the Codemasters group of companies worldwide — a grand fromage indeed. He works closely with each company's Managing Directors to ensure profitability and appropriate positioning for the future in this fast-developing industry.

Did you get any qualifications?
Passes with distinctions at 11+ exams. (Eleven *what*? No wonder he never owned up to the age question! —Ed.)

What qualities are needed to do your job?
The ability to objectively assess corporate opportunities and the determination to put in place the structures to realise those opportunities (say wha'? —Ed).

What do you like most about your job?
The challenge.

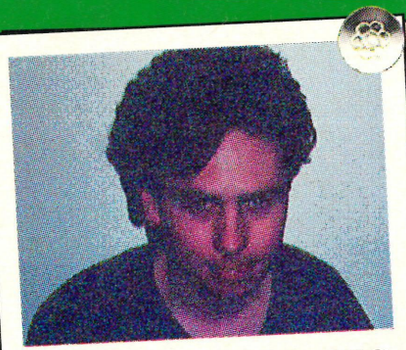
And what do you *hate* about it?
Having to put up with the occasional failure.

Apart from 'don't bother', what advice would you give readers interested in pursuing a career in the games industry?
You must be prepared to make difficult short-term decisions in order to achieve long-term goals.

What did you most want to do when you were little?
Run my own company.

Where do you see yourself in five years' time?
I hope to be in the same place. I expect Codemasters to be at the forefront of entertainment software on the world stage.

Come on then, tell us: How much cash to you get?
More than John Major (who grew up a few streets away from me in Clapham). And I don't have to put up with all those jokers in the House of Commons!



DAVID DARLING

David Darling, 27, left school with a selection of 'O' levels and has educated himself further through his own research. He was a programmer with budget computer software house Mastertronic then developed an inter-

What are the best things about it?
The rewards of a successful business.

Some parts have got to be a bind, though
Funnily enough, for everything the company's been through, legal matters can be long-winded, frustrating and ultimately a lot of paperwork.

How much dosh to you rake in?
Enough to enjoy life — I've slummed for a long time now. I can afford to achieve my personal goals.

What skills are needed for your job?
The ability to look at everything happening around me and make

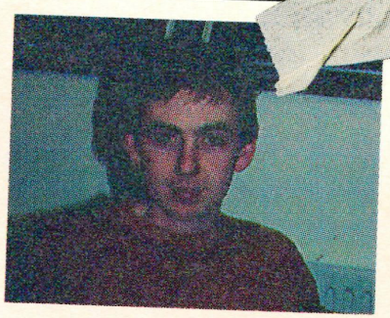


Blimey! It's that cracking Mega Drive corker *Cosmic Spacehead*! But did you know that Cosmic, or 'Coz' to his mates used to be Old Mr Grace out of *Are You Being Served*? No? Well he did! Honest.

Relations to tea-making, they told us what's what.

Codemasters' history is a classic tale of rags-to-riches, whizzkids turned business tycoons. It began in the mid-'80s, when brothers David and Richard Darling thought it would be a lot of fun to start their own software house, earning some cash into price releases and 16-bit computers, the console market beckoned. The first products were conversions of earlier Codemasters computer games, released in America for the 8-bit Nintendo Entertainment System, but more recently they've had original Mega Drive hits with games such as *Micro Machines* and *Cosmic Spacehead*.

Using profits from these games and their co-creation of the Game Genie, the Codemasters HQ in Stoneythorpe, Warwickshire, has expanded in leaps and bound. It was there that we spoke to those in the know.



RICHARD DARLING

A year younger than his brother, Richard's also an ex-programmer and Managing Director, but deals more in research and development. At the moment he's heavily involved in establishing Codemasters in Germany, where there's a vastly expanding console market.

Like David, he's learned much from the games market and personal experience. He enjoys earning 'lots of cash' in a business he finds interesting.

What qualities do you need in your job?
Basically, a real interest in all things technical. Because things can take a long time, you have to have a solid interest in what you're doing.

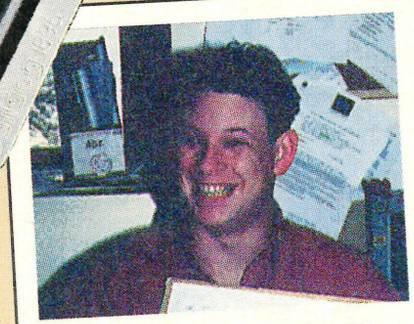
The effort's worth it in the end?
After a long development time, it's very rewarding to see risks and investments pay off.

And the money?
The harder I work, the more successful I become, the better life I can have. At the moment I can afford to live very well and keep the babies in nappies!

What advice should readers take?
Believe in yourself and enjoy what you do.

What did you dream of becoming when you were young?
Astronaut (hence *Cosmic Spacehead*? —Sub Ed).

Where do you see yourself in five years?
Still running Codemasters and the company still being one of the world's leading software entertainment companies. And worrying about how my two daughters are doing at school.



RICHARD EDDY

When we spoke to Richard Eddy, 25, he'd been Marketing Director for all of two hours (hey! You heard it here, er... *last*, folks! —Ed)! He was PR Manager for two years before this promotion.

His role is all about communication: liaising with all the departments, taking all the best elements to create the public image of the company. It covers everything from talking to journalists to planning company hospitality and events, negotiating deals to sales presentations.

What qualifications have you got ?
Ten 'O' levels — English, Literature, Art, Theatre, Physics, Maths, Biology, Typing and Woodwork — and two 'A' Levels — English Literature and Art (bloomin' show-off! —Sub Ed).

How did you get your previous job?
I'd worked in the industry on magazines for five years, then Codemasters offered me the PR Manager job two years ago.

What other jobs have you had?
I worked at all levels in magazines, from trainee writer through to Managing Editor. I've also done bar work, though only for one night — I drank more than I served!

What qualities are needed to be a Marketing Director?
You need to be very conscientious in everything you do — from writing sales notes to getting the best contract in a deal. Having more ideas than you'll ever need and the conviction to take the right ideas through to the end.

What's the job's 'good news'?
Working with the many other creative people and devising all the great ideas. Also I love travelling and meeting people. Best of all, cracking the best deals.

And the bad news?
Dealing with idiots, rude people and the bloody photocopier!

How much do you earn?
Enough to have the cash for wonderful holidays, yet sadly the workload's too much to take any time off.

What job advice do you give?
Lie, cheat, bluff your way in, then work like hell. Always have a goal and achieve it — no matter what!

What career did you want to follow in your youth?
Teacher, journalist. Anything that involves communication.

Where do you see yourself in five years' time?
In charge of the best marketing team ever, so all I have to do is wander in and say 'Well done' and spend the rest of the day nattering on the phone — my favourite!



JUDITH WARDER

Judith Warder (27… ish) has been European Marketing Manager for four months, developing the commercial aspects of **Codemasters**' product launches. She's used a crop of qualifications — seven 'O' levels, a BTec National and U.M Marketing — in various sales and marketing jobs.

Judith was with a Birmingham ad agency when the Codies asked her to visit for a chat — and she never left! (And don't I know it! — Codemasters' caretaker.)

What qualities are needed in your career?
Enthusiasm, excellent communication skills, the ability to think on your feet… and patience.

What are the nice parts of your job?
The sense of achievement when the solution is apparent. Dealing with people.

What are the nasty bits?
The boring groundwork — tying myself to a desk and analysing reams of facts and figures.

How much money do you take home?
Enough to stop the cashpoint machine eating my card in the middle of the month.

What career advice would you give?
Qualify before working — it's hard work sitting exams, revising and writing essays after nine hours in the office.

Where do you see yourself in the future?
That's hard! Overseas, hopefully (with or without the hubby).



STEPHANIE OWEN

Stephanie Owen, at 20 the youngest Codie we contacted, has been a PR Executive for nine months. She has GCSEs and 'A' levels, but got the job via Marketing Director Richard Eddy, who she knew at Newsfield (which is what Impact used to be called. Sort of —Ed).

She's responsible for **Codemasters**' European Public Relations, ensuring magazine editors receive the latest information via regular mailings and visits. Stephanie also oversees advertising budgets and helps Codemasters' French PR agency.

What personal qualities do you need?
Enthusiasm, dedication, a personality, humour, organisation skills, understanding of the market and negotiation skills.

What are the good things about your work?
It's constantly changing, very challenging and rewarding. There's never a dull moment.

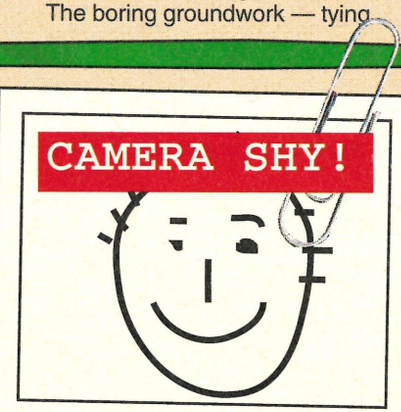
The bad?
Release schedules — are they ever correct? (No! —Ed.)

What would you say to a would-be PR Exec?
Subject yourself to as many people as possible — anyone and everyone. If you can talk to absolutely anyone, you've already got one of the fundamental skills needed for a career in PR already.

What was your childhood dream? I wasn't a very ambitious child, so I didn't really have a 'dream'. I knew I didn't want to be a doctor or nurse — I'm a complete wimp when it comes to injections and hospital tubes!

Where do you see yourself in a few years' time?
With only the simple things in life: A directorship; a house/mansion; an extremely expensive car; and an obscene amount of money.

You're not rolling in it already, then? How much do you earn?
Not as much as I'm worth.



PAUL RANSON

Paul Ranson, 26, has held the highly responsible post of Development Manager for three years, organising the development of **Codemasters**' software and hardware. He also has to collate all the necessary information for packaging and marketing.

Armed with 12 'O' levels, an 'AO' level and three 'A' levels, he worked at Titterson's, the butchers, in Stockport! It was a step down to be Project Manager for Binary Design so he set up his own development company, Big Red Software, who took on projects for Codemasters. Paul worked with them so well that they invited him to work for them.

What does it take to be Project Manager?
Patience — determination to see a job through to the end. The ability to make a good cup of coffee (it keeps programmers awake). But generally it's the skill of listening to all aspects of the development team — programmers, artists, designers, sales, marketing etc.

What do you enjoy about your job?
Getting letters from Codies fans, telling us we write (absolutely) about the day-to-day running of Codies — I prefer to be getting our games out on the shelves.

Decent pay?
I am amply rewarded, I have to admit, but I could do with some more, Dave!

Any words of wisdom for those interested in a similar job?
Get yourself good groundwork in game development and learn how to program video games.
The best games development people tend to be ex-programmers — even Rich and David Darling started off writing games!

What did you fancy doing when you were a nipper?

Dave joined **Codemasters** around the same time as his 23rd birthday, a year ago. An ex-dolphin trainer (!), he was a freelance programmer at the time and was simply offered the job of Project Manager, which involves product management, game development and testing, plus some video production and a helping hand with packaging and marketing.

What qualities are needed for the job?
Good management abilities, technical knowledge and big balls.

What are the good things about it?
Seeing a game in the last two weeks of development. Everything just fits together and all the hard work seems worthwhile.

The bad things?
To be honest, nothing!

Any worldly advice for those about to enter the job market?
Stand by your decisions and take crap from no one.

What kind of work did you dream of doing as a kid?
Programming games.



SHÂN SAVAGE

What qualities does your 'task' require?
Most importantly, a sense of humour! Obviously, a good understanding of design and what looks good. You have to know the industry and keep up to date with what's going on around you, not only in the computer world but with new techniques, print, computer software and what's considered 'in' artistically. Oh, and organising skills are a must.

What do you like about your

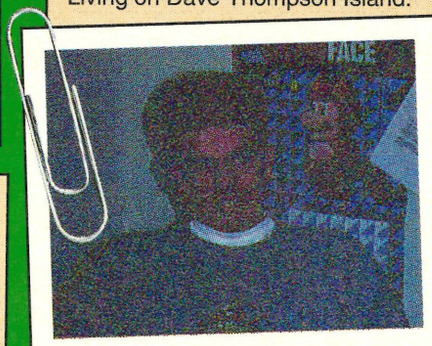
brilliant games.

What do you *dislike* about your job?
Getting a review from someone telling us our games are *not* absolutely brilliant! Seriously, I hate having loads of meetings

was set to become a pilot in the RAF.

Where do you hope to be a few years down the line?
Behind the yoke of Codies' corporate jet, flying to my winter holiday in the Virgin Isles.

Where do you see yourself in five years?
Living on Dave Thompson Island.



DAVE THOMSON

Creative Design Manager Shân Savage, 27, has been struggling with 'an impossible task' for two-and-a-half years. She's in charge of artwork, packaging design and the smooth running of the art/Mac/production department.

Shân's spent six years working in art and design, and four years within the computer industry. She used to work in America but her Visa ran out so she was forced back to cold, wet England. She applied for a job at **Codemasters** hoping to earn the money to return to the States, but somehow got stuck over here!

We've heard you've had a colourful life. What jobs have you had?
Believe it or not, I used to be a veterinary nurse! Also, a stand/exhibition designer and dresser, illustrator for a couple of years and shark 'fisher person' in the Mexican Gulf — probably the most strenuous work I've done in my life!

job? Definitely the creative side. Working with artists, organising and stand-designing for computer shows. Although everyone moans about the pressure, it's good fun and rewarding when deadlines are met.

Anything you don't like?
The paperwork and the lack of understanding of the involvement of packaging — sometimes! That's it.

How would someone go about getting a job like yours?
Get a varied background in art/design and work experience. Get into the industry. Start at the bottom and work your way up — if you're good you'll get there!

Where do you want to be in the future?
Still within the industry. It's addictive!



GERARD GOURLEY

Gerard Gourley's a 24-year-old musician with a bank note fetish. His job involves writing tunes for Codemasters' console games, making the tea and entertaining Ziggy (?) when everyone else has had enough. Further info is best left for the man himself to divulge…

Did you get any qualifications?
A degree in Applied Physics and Electronics from Durham, which was close enough to home for my mum to mail plenty of food parcels.

How did you get the job?
I can't tell you — I promised to keep the photographs a secret.

What other jobs have you had?
I had a paper round once, but I had to give it up because I didn't have time to attend my college lectures.

What qualities are required to be a games musician?
The ability to distinguish a C from an F and a liking for the dark (there are plenty of late nights here).

What do you enjoy about this job?
I get paid for it (most of the time). The fact that I love creating pleasant sounds is a bonus.

What do you dislike?
Sometimes the potatoes from the shop are raw in the middle, and sometimes they forget to give you a fork as well, which can be really annoying.

What advice would you give to readers interested in pursuing a similar career?
Get a degree in Physics and Electronics and then, for no apparent reason, decide to become a musician, much to the annoyance of your parents, who spent all that money on a good education.

What did you want to be when you grew up?
The bloke who burns all the used £50 notes at the Bank of England.

Where would you like to be in five years' time? I still want to be the bloke who burns all the old £50 notes at the Bank of England (my trousers have big pockets).

How much money do you get?
Not as much as the bloke who burns all the used £50 notes at the Bank of England. (Why are all my bank statements printed in red ink?

Paul Adams, 25, is a graphic artist and games designer who's been with **Codemasters** for three years. He has *12* 'O' levels, two 'A's, Foundation Art Diploma and HND in Graphic Design.

Previously a draughtsman, a friend who'd done freelance work told Paul Codemasters were looking for artists. His job involves design, visualisation (storyboarding) and game graphics ('Basically all the creative visual elements that the games offer!').

So what's it take to be an artist?
You need to be creative, different, have good observation and colour sense. Know your competition, have patience with programmers and a lot of determination.

What's the best part of the job?
I always enjoy the end result, when a game's finished and out in the shops. I suppose I'm very impatient when it comes to review time!

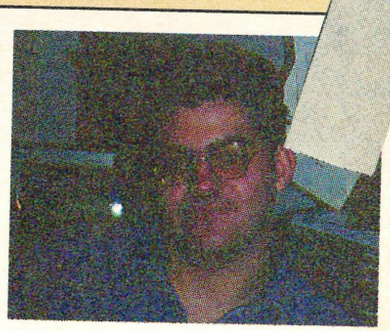
And what's the worst?
The only thing I dislike is that there aren't enough hours in the day to get as much work done as I want to.

What's the money like?
Upwards of £12K a year (at last, an honest man! —Ed)

What would you say to someone who fancies your job?
Follow your nose!

What career did you dream of when you were at school?
I always wanted to be involved in the making of films, or an architect or interior designer, fashion designer. So much to do, so little time!

What job do you think you'll be doing in five years?
Who knows! I'd love to do TV graphics or stuff for films.



PAUL ADAMS

Thanks to everyone at Codemasters for their words of wisdom – they were great. But it's time for us to wave farewell and point the MEGA MACHINES Dormobile toward a spooky, undisclosed location (not unlike the Mystery Machine out of *Scooby Doo*). Rest assured it will be the home of another top games software company offering employment for talented people.

KARTRIDGE KORNER

ELSPA CHARTS PENGUIN
COMPILED BY GALLUP · SPONSORED BY PENGUIN BISCUITS

Say what you like about the charts, they're a good way of filling two pages. If you want to know what's hot and what's not, check out the reviews – the charts tell you what's selling.

Well that was a damp squib, wasn't it? We offer you the chance to supply us with a heading for our charts page (a great honour in itself), even throwing in the best-selling cart of the month, and what do we get? ONE BLOODY ENTRY!

Congratulations, **D Preston** of **Rochdale, Lancs**, you've won by default. Rest assured you wouldn't win any other way (*Kartridge Korner*? Ha!).

Come on, guys, you can do better than this. You didn't even use our letters to spell out rude words (not that we'd have understood 'em).

Get yourself a pair of scissors (if you're as clumsy as James, get an adult to help you), cut along the dotted lines and use the letters to design a better title for our charts pages. Send your entry to

USA MEGA drive!

1	MORTAL KOMBAT/ARENA
2	STREET FIGHTER II SCE/CAPCOM
3	BILL WALSH COLLEGE FOOTBALL/ELECTRONIC ARTS
4	JURASSIC PARK/SEGA
5	SHINING FORCE/SEGA
6	SHINOBI III:RETURN OF THE NINJA MASTER/SEGA
7	SPIDER-MAN AND X-MEN/FLYING EDGE
8	SORCERER'S KINGDOM/AMERICAN SAMMY
9	PGA TOUR GOLF II/ELECTRONIC ARTS
10	GENERAL CHAOS/ELECTRONIC ARTS

UK MEGA drive!

GALLUP WEEKLY REPORT W/E 13/11/93

3.10 TOP 20 SEGA MEGADRIVE

RANK TW	LW	TITLE	PUBLISHER LABEL	RRP
1	1	STREETFIGHTER 2 CHAMP. EDITION	SEGA	59.99
2	2	F1	DOMARK	49.99
3	4	ALADDIN	SEGA	49.99
4	3	MORTAL KOMBAT	ARENA ENTERTAINMENT	49.99
5	5	JUNGLE STRIKE	ELECTRONIC ARTS	44.99
6	7	ULTIMATE SOCCER	SEGA	44.99
7	6	SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2	SEGA	39.99
8	11	MICRO MACHINES	CODE MASTERS	34.99
9	8	JURASSIC PARK	SEGA	49.99
10	RE	MICKEY & DONALD	SEGA	39.99
11	RE	ROAD RASH 2	ELECTRONIC ARTS	39.99
12	12	PGA TOUR GOLF 2	ELECTRONIC ARTS	39.99
13	10	ECCO	SEGA	39.99
14	19	SUPER KICK OFF	US GOLD	44.99
15	15	NHLPA HOCKEY 1994	ELECTRONIC ARTS	44.99
16	NE	ALIEN 3 / PREDATOR 2	TELSTAR FUN & GAMES	39.99
17	RE	BUBSY THE BOBCAT	ACCOLADE	39.99
18	9	LANDSTALKER	SEGA	59.99
19	RE	TERMINATOR	VIRGIN	39.99
20	14	MEGA-LO-MANIA	VIRGIN	44.99

'Kartridge Korner' isn't much better than 'The Charts', **MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**.

Oh yeah — if you run out of letters, use photocopies. Better still, buy another copy of the magazine. If you're really sad, you can make a cute little Scrabble set out of the leftovers.

A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	C	C
C	D	D	D	E	E	E	E	E	E
F	F	F	G	G	G	H	H	H	I
I	I	I	I	J	J	J	K	K	K
L	L	L	M	M	M	N	N	N	O
O	O	O	P	P	P	Q	Q	R	R
R	S	S	S	T	T	T	U	U	A
V	V	W	W	X	X	Y	Y	Z	Z

UK MEGA cd!

GALLUP WEEKLY REPORT W/E 13/11/9

3.13 TOP 10 SEGA MEGA-CD

RANK TW	LW	TITLE	PUBLISHER LABEL	RRP
1	2	ECCO	SEGA	44.99
2	1	NIGHT TRAP	SEGA	49.99
3	5	FINAL FIGHT	SEGA	44.99
4	3	BATMAN RETURNS	SEGA	49.99
5	7	SHERLOCK HOLMES	SEGA	44.99
6	4	ROAD AVENGER	SEGA	30.99
7	RE	INXS - MAKE MY VIDEO	SEGA	44.99
8	10	AFTERBURNER 3	SEGA	39.99
9	8	WOLFCHILD	SEGA	39.99
10	RE	TIME GAL	SEGA	39.99

Jap Megadrive Chart — November 1993

1	Street Fighter 2 Super Championship Edition	Capcom
2	Shining Force 2	Sega
3	Sonic the Hedgehog CD	Sega
4	Gunstar Heroes	Sega
5	Puyo Puyo	Sega
6	Thunderhawk CD	Victor Entertainment
7	Winning Post CD	Koei
8	Gauntlet	Tengen
9	Silpheed CD	Game Arts
10	J League Pro Striker	Sega

Courtesy of Beep Megadrive magazine

READER CHART

'Memo to Steve: Did anyone read this bit last ish? We didn't get any entries. It's not too difficult, is it? Make up your own Top Ten and send it to 'Reader Chart' at the usual address.

'The only person who bothered to write was Warren's mum, and her chart consisted of Tom Jones and Barry Manilow singles. Not really what we had in mind, but it's marginally better than *Hook*.'

This month's charts pages were brought to you by the letter 'W', Ian Osborne, and this symbol:

THE BLACK MARKET ECONOMY

Not too many industry freebies this month, so we thought we'd tell you about some of the dubious 'exchanges' that go on in the MEGA MACHINES office. With all this bodging, it's a wonder our marvellous mag doesn't look as bad as *Mega*.

1 Sellotape — swiped off SNES FORCE

2 Ian Osborne — on temporary loan (send him back, for Christ's sake!)

3 Biros — don't ask, just DON'T ASK!

4 Desert Island Games — pinched the idea from *Desert Island Discs* (don't tell 'em!)

5 Designers — we've got every designer in the building working on this ish, so don't expect any of our sister magazines to come out on time.

Despite the lack of freebies, Tengen's cheap promo stunt is worth a mention: a golf ball in a turf-lined box... while the inflatable *Puggsy* and fluffy *Wiz 'n' Liz* rabbit from Psygnosis provided hours of fun (well, for Al at least).

CAUGHT in the act!

Say cheese!

Celebrity Special!

Prize PR show offs!

The European Computer Trade Show in London has its fair share of colourful characters. The brightest and breeziest of the lot are the console industry's PR people, folk who effervesce quicker than a Bicarbonate of Soda tablet. The MEGA MACHINES crew copped a few of 'em going about their business for this Caught In The Act special...



Danielle 'it'll wash off in the pool' Woodyatt, young at heart, PR Manager for



The Business Design Centre in London, decked out in all its ECTS glory. Here the crème de la crème of the software industry strut about with their Filofaxes™ and ponytails, looking down their noses at magazine staff writers and patting fat businessman on the back crooning, 'Julian, daaaaaarrrrling! Haven't seen you in aaaaages!'

Well, the MEGA MACHINES roadies were at the show to stomp on all that stuffiness. They leapt out from pot plants, stalked victims from behind perspex walls and disguised themselves as innocent members of the gamesplaying public, just to infiltrate each software house's lair.

And you know what? It worked!

Caroline 'I used to be a Virgin' Stokes, age 21 (aaaahhhh! –Ed), UK PR Manager at Sony Electronic Publishing

Bet you've got a boyfriend called Robert Yes! [hysterical laughter]
Got any hobbies? No. I'm too busy working for a top-notch company!
What are your fave MD games? I love Cool Spot and I'm a fan of Desert Strike.
What are your favourite type of games? I'm really into fantasy role-playing games and puzzles games.
Do you think the Mega-CD is any good? It's okay. Games developers are just beginning to take advantage of the machine's capabilities.
What about the price of software? I sympathise with gamesplayers, but when you work this side, you can understand why games are so high.
Have you got a motto for life? Hmmmm... that's a tough one! Probably, 'Just do it! Don't just sit there. Get off your bum and do it.' Yeah! That's a good one. Oh, 'Work hard and play hard!' put that one as well.

Woody, have you got any hobbies? Ooooh, let me think. Drinking, heavy socialising and doing Zig and Zag impressions with Ian and Simon from Ocean Software.
What music are you into? Hmmmm… put something that sounds hip 'n' trendy. Paul [shouting to Virgin's top Marketing bod], what music do I like? Oh heck! I'd say Nirvana, The Spin Doctors, Rage Against The Machine and The Manic Street Preachers.
What are your favourite MD games? Cool Spot, Another World and… errrr… Jungle Strike.
What elements make a good game? Depth of game-play. You have to want to play a game over and over again.
What do you think of the Mega-CD? It's the next step forward in technology. The games are slightly better than MD games and the machine combats piracy.
Do you think Sega games are expensive? Crikey! That's a bit political! They're cheaper than Nintendo games. Errrr… It's not our fault. It's the pound against the yen.
What do you watch on TV? Zig and Zag (Woody and I want to be Famous for Five Questions —Ade) and French and Saunders.



Emma 'ever heard of Chipping Sodbury?' Garrett, age 22, PR Executive for MicroProse

Got any hobbies? Errrr… going to the pub. Staying in the pub. Being carried out of the pub.
What's your favourite food? Pot Noodle.
Which MD game are you addicted to? I'd say Tinhead. It's one of our games. It's not out for a while.
And your favourite type of game? Cutesy platform, I reckon.
What elements make a good game? It can't be repetitive or frustratingly difficult.
Have you any thoughts on the price of games? They should be cheaper, but Sega dictate prices.
What music are you into? I like dance music [sounds embarrassed]. Take That are good, too.
Have you a boyfriend? Ooooh — on and off!





Anna 'hope we've spelt your surname right' Macario, age 29, PR Manager for Domark

Where do you live? England.
Do you have a boyfriend? Hmmmm… just put 'not married'!
What are your favourite MD games? F1 and Davis Cup World Tour.
What makes a good game? Loads of options, plenty of action, good graphics.
What do you reckon to the Mega-CD? It's good, but you can't appreciate the full effect of the visuals on a small TV screen.
What about the price of software? Oh dear! I'll chicken out of that one!
What do you like to scoff? Pasta.
What music are you into? Oh heck! I'm stumped! Oh yeah — World Party. Have you heard of them? (Huh? 'Course we have! —Ed.)





Andrea 'I've been on Scottish television' Griffiths, age 27, PR Manager (consoles) and Marketing Assistant for US Gold

How much money do you earn? [Laughs] Not tellin'.
Where do you live, then? Solihull — the posh end!
What are your fave Sega games? Flashback and, errrr… Robocod.
What do you reckon makes a good game? Authenticity and a head-to-head option. Yeah. A game has to be competitive.
Have you seen the Mega-CD? I have, although I reckon there's not enough good software around.
If you had to buy any two games, what would they be? Robocod and Winter Olympics.
Who do you listen to on your Walkman? River City People.
Got any hobbies? I'm an aerobics instructor in my spare time (she does a good diet plan, does our Andrea! —Ade) and I windsurf.

Prize PR Show offs!



Greg 'where's me two-speed hammer drill?' Baverstock, age 24, European Sales Executive for Virgin Interactive Entertainment (he's not a PR bod – but he's a top geezer so we thought we'd bung 'im in)

How much money do you earn? [Puts on a 'Excuse me, that's extremely confidential' tone] I'm not tellin'!
Got any hobbies, Greg? Sport and DIY.
What's your favourite MD game? Cool Spot.
What do you think of the Mega-CD? There's not enough good software around. Wait till you see what Virgin have to offer (funny, didn't EA and Sony come up with that one?! —Ade).
The price of games is a bit steep, don't you think? I blame the yen, too!
What's the next MD game you'd buy? Aladdin.
Fave TV programme? Any comedy. Oh, and Zig and Zag on The Big Breakfast.
Who's your favourite pop group? The Wombles. Oh, can I just say hello to my fiancée, Jeanette?

Joanne 'you'll miss me when I'm gone' Hotson, age 21, PR Assistant for Domark

So, you're leaving Domark, then? Yep! I'm going back to Middlesex University to continue my Business Studies course. I was on placement at Domark. We'll miss you Ahhhhhhh! Thanks!
What are your favourite Sega games? Domark's, of course! And I reckon MD Street Fighter II is excellent.
What's the worst game you've played? I can't think. I haven't played any really dire ones.
What elements make a good game? Graphics. It can't be repetitive. If it's a platform game, it's got to have a cute character and good music.
How much do you spend on games? I don't! My friends lend me them.
What hobbies have you got? Going on holiday. Can that be classed as a hobby?
You live somewhere bizarre, don't you? Where was it again? Errrr... [laughs] Chiselhurst!



Mark 'top quality suit' Blewitt, age 26, PR Manager for Psygnosis

So, you're a Liverpudlian, then? No! I'm more a Mancunian. I come from Wigan.
Have you got a girlfriend? Yep. Her name's Amanda Jayne. She's a PA to the Marketing Director of a North Sea oil company (oooh! —Ed).
What's your salary?

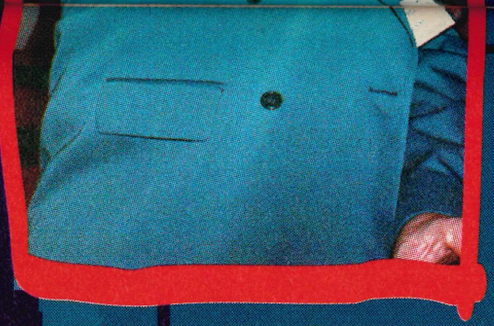




Mark 'hello, folks, I'm the new boy' Cochrane, age 26, Product Marketing Co-ordinator for Accolade

Hello, Mark. Have you any hobbies? I enjoy sport and going clubbing.
Do you earn enough to go clubbing? Enough, but I'd like more! Wouldn't everyone?!
What are your fave console games? I like StarWing on the SNES and Gods on the Mega Drive.
What elements make a good game? For me, it's gameplay and graphics.
What do you reckon to the Mega-CD? [Says a naughty word!] I'm not convinced. I don't think the MD can handle the machine's capabilities. I'll wait and see.
Would you like to see game prices come down? Yes. If Sega and Nintendo didn't charge companies as much for the use of their carts and licences, we'd be able to sell games cheaper.
If you had to buy a game, what would it be? I think Thunderhawk and Silpheed compare well to StarWing.
Have you a favourite film? Terminator 2. Oh, and put Total Recall.

I prefer lettuce!
What are your favourite games? OutRun, Impossible Mission and California Games (ah, the old classics! —Sub Ed).
What are your favourite type of games? Platform/adventures.
What's a good game, then? It's an interactive experience that leaves you satisfied and stimulated — wanting more.
Games are quite expensive, aren't they? Well, when looking at the cost of entertainment, if you achieve a value rate of a pound per hour, you're doing very well.
If you were given the dosh to buy any Sega game, what would you get? Impossible Mission on the MD, when it comes out.
Got any hobbies, Mark? Playing computer and video games, old cars and writing.
What tickles your taste buds? Hot pizzas and Mexican food.



Sorry, Sue, but we never got the tenner in time — so to prove it was no idle threat, here's that pic of you wearing the deely boppers. Next month, slip us a fifty or we'll print the *other* pictures…



Sue 'what do I look like?' Bray, age 20, Personal Assistant to the Marketing team at Codemasters

Are those deeley-boppers on your head? Yes.
Do you do aerobics with them on? No! But I do like aerobics and socialising.
What's your favourite MD game? Cosmic Spacehead. What do you look for in a game? It has to be fun and playable.
Have you seen the Mega-CD? No.
Any thoughts on the price of games? They're quite expensive for children.
What's your favourite food? Chinese.
Do you watch much telly? Not really, but I do like French and Saunders.
How do you get that dress off? I have to do this stupid pose and pretend I'm diving! (Was that supposed to be a chat-up line? —Ed.)

Alan 'not sure whether it's one "l" or two' Wellsman, age 27, International PR Manager for Sony Electronic Publishing

How much money do you earn? About £5500 a year (always good to start with a joke! —Ed).
Got any hobbies, Al? I play the guitar, grab any new music I can get hold of and — oh yes — I collect toenail clippings.
What's your favourite game? Has to be PGA Tour Golf. Do I get points for honesty as it's not a Sony game?!
Do you think Mega-CD games are any good? There are a clutch of good titles. Wait till you see what Sony have to offer (funny, that's what EA said about their games! — Ade).
Is software priced too high? To an extent, although when you consider the time spent producing some games, I can see why they're the price they are.
What's your favourite film? One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.
And music? I like Frank Zappa and new rap (a rad kinda guy! —Ed).



Michele 'one "l" not two' Harris, 'I'm as old as the man I feel', Events and Promotions Manager for Electronic Arts

Have you got a boyfriend? No! I'm a desperate woman!
Have you any hobbies? [Thinks hard] Errrrr — no! I'm a bit boring, aren't I? [Rings up three days later] You can put cycling. I enjoy cycling.
Do you get paid loads for doing your job? Enough to buy a beer!
What's your fave MD game? Got to be FIFA International Soccer. Every home should have one. What are your favourite type of games? Strategy/action games.
What do you reckon to the Mega-CD? It'll be good when more games come out for it. Wait till you see what EA have to offer!
Are game prices too high? Games should all be in the same playability league as Jungle Strike. If a game can be played again and again, it's worth the money.
What do you watch on the telly? Brookside. I never miss it.



As the MEGA MACHINES tour bus zooms into the sunset, on its way to a brand new location (watch out, folks, we could be in your town next month), we wave a fond farewell to those friendly PR people, blow them a kiss, smile and say, 'Look, you cretins, now we've made you famous, let's sort out a few exclusives, shall we? We've got your piccies. Do the dirty on us and we'll plaster your mushes on bill posters from here to…' (ahem! That's quite enough of that, thank you —Ed).

SPIN-A-WIN

Stacks of Sonic stuff must be won!

Is there no end to it? In the run-up to Christmas, the MEGA MACHINES office has been awash with Sonic stuff — from snazzy silk ties to quite nice quilt covers, brilliant back-packs to puzzling puzzle balls (eh? —Ed), we've had the lot. Everyone, it seems, has some form of Sonic merchandising on offer this Yuletide… and they'd all like us to tell you about it.

We didn't want our news section littered with such dross, to be honest, and figured it'd be a decent gesture on our part to give the goodies away. So we phoned all the people who'd sent us Sonic stuff and said, 'Sure we'll plug yer products, but you'll have to send more if you don't want us to say they're crap'! Hey presto — instant competition!

Most companies sent between ten and 50 items each, and all we had to promise was that we'd print a picture of what they're flogging, with the price and details on how to get hold of it. To give you a much better chance of receiving something, only one prize will go out to each winner (and so far we've gathered over 250 items!).

You can tell it's Christmas!

Once you've filled out the coupon at the bottom of the page, cut it out and send it in. Because of the way we're going to pick the winners to this bumper comp, no photocopies will

YEARBOOKS

From **Grandreams** books, this is a great annual, packed with comic strips, celebrities and even an interview with Sonic himself! Worth £4.95 and available from 'all good book shops'!



DUVET COVERS

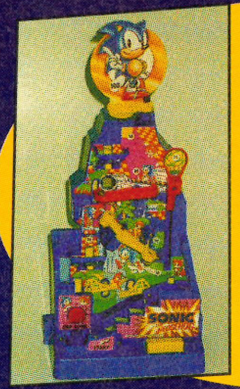
Got a drab-looking bed? A single duvet cover could be winging its way over to you, plastered with our man Sonic. They're from **Hamilton McBride** and usually cost £25 — from the sorts of places that sell duvet covers!





PUZZLE BALLS

It's a ball! It's a puzzle! What the heck is it? Well it's a lot of fun, anyway, and it's from **Tomy**. These things soon have you ripping your hair out and cost £8.99 in the shops — a special price for Christmas but we've 20 to give away!



SONIC MOUNTAIN QUEST

This wild game is from **Tomy** and can be found in most high streets (£18.49). Work the ball-bearing to the top crossing various hazards along the way. Kept us lads in the office amused for days (especially Al, the Mad Get!)

1994 CALENDARS

This cool product is from **Danilo** and can be found in high street stores like Athena and Woolworths. Each month has a great picture starring either Sonic, Tails or Dr Robotnik. £3.99 to buy!

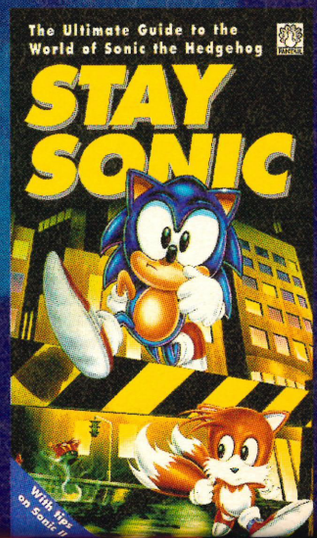
SPORTS BOTTLES

Ideal for drinking out of! Milk, orange juice, water — it all goes in the top and can be sucked out of the plastic straw! They're 75p a piece from **JLR Sales**; you'll be the envy of all your friends if you have one. Pop down the town and find them in the top shops.



STAY SONIC BOOKS

The guys and gals at **Penguin** have come up with a load of *Stay Sonic* books — the ultimate guide to Sonic the Hedgehog. They cost £4.99 each and include step-by-step guides to the top games. All good book shops stock this beauty.

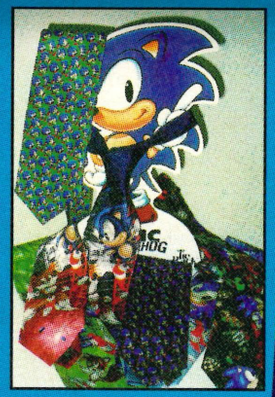


be accepted.

The closing date is 15 January and on that day, every entry will be stapled to the edge of our exclusive Spin-O-Meter Prize Wheel™ (basically, a massive piece of circular cardboard with a hole in the middle, stuck to the wall so it spins). An arrow above the Prize Wheel™ will denote who's won when the wheel stops and whatever Sonic consumer item Al Needham happens to be holding at the time gets slung in a Jiffy bag and mailed off.

We'll go through the entire mound of freebies, one at a time, until we: a) run out of goodies, or b) run out of entries (in which case the last coupon on the Prize Wheel will get what's left of the pile).

Go on, give it a whirl...

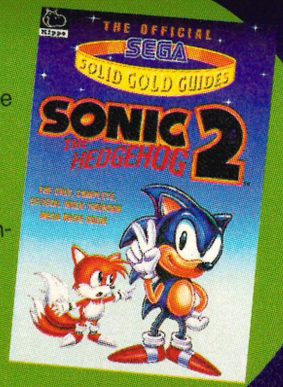


SILK TIES

Tie Rack have a fantastic range of Sonic silk ties with lots of colourful designs. You might not like dressing up for a wedding or meal out but with one of these around your neck you'll be the trendiest hipster in the place!

SONIC 2 GUIDES

Another great book is the *Sonic 2* walk-through guide. Complete with colour pictures, this shows you all the game's nooks and crannies. It's from **Scholastic** books and costs £3.99. Hmm, wonder if 'all good bookshops' will stock this one?

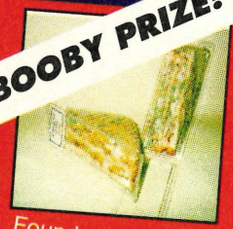




SOCKS

Sonic socks are really popular at the moment. They're produced exclusively for **Marks & Spencer** and are for ages 7–10. **Courtaulds Socks** are the dudes behind them and they'd cost you around £2 to buy.

BOOBY PRIZE!



Found under Milo's desk when we were looking for the Selotape...

CRISPS

Chomp, chomp, slurp! There's nothing better to go with your morning elevensies that a packet of cheesy Sonic crisps! They're from the guys and gals at **Bensons** and you'll find them in your newsagents.

BACK-PACKS

At only £10 each, these are cool items to add to anyone's school kit. They're from **Dekkertoys** and have... well, a strap to put over your shoulder and a zip so your stuff doesn't fall out! Pop down your local high street if you don't win one.



BICYCLE HELMETS

Be seen and be safe when you're out on your bike! And Sonic can help you do this with these excellent helmets from **Oxford Products**. They're worth £24.50 each and help save your skull.



SONIC COMIC

A great little read from **Fleetway**, including stories about your favourite blue animal (No! You just gave away the answer! —Ed) plus comic strips on other Sega favourites and more competitions!



SUPERSONIC PINBALL

Another great **Tomy** product. Switch on and enjoy the excitement of a flashing light and vibrating bumpers! It makes quite a racket, too, and all for just £27.49. Wow!

GET THIS QUESTION RIGHT TO EARN A PLACE ON THE OFFICIAL MEGA MACHINES 'SPIN-O-METER PRIZE WHEEL™'...

Question: **What colour is Sonic?**
Answer:

My name is: .....

.....

I live at: .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

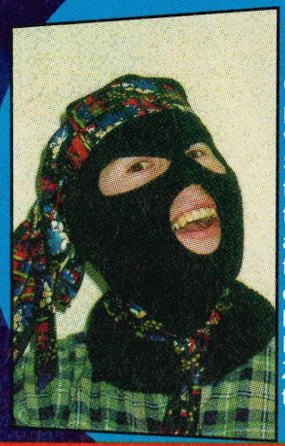
My age is:

Send your entries to: **SPIN-A-WIN Competition, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**. And get 'em here by Jan 15th, okay?



MORE SOCKS!

Another company making feet-warming socks are **Byford & Co**. They're available from all branches of British Home Stores and show the cheeky little hedgehog in all his glory.



MORE TIES!

Cityfax also produce ties with our man Sonic plastered all over them. Theirs are made from polyester and have the Emerald Hill Zone on them.



The aftermath of a MEGA MACHINES photo shoot is something quite spectacular. And just imagine — if you're lucky enough to win a job here (see Vibes), it could be your responsibility to clear it all up. Don't worry, this pile o'crud will be still be festering in the corner when you arrive...

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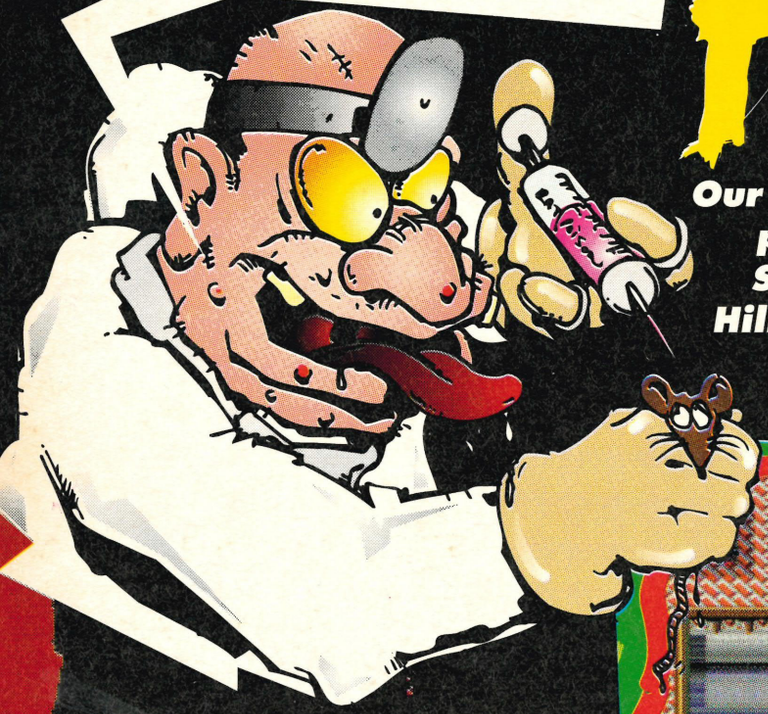
Playing Tips

Poison

Hello, I'm just conducting a very important experiment that will no doubt advance Mankind considerably. I'm trying to find out what will happen if you inject a rat with a large dose of Rat Poison… Oh, there's an surprising result. It died. Hmm. I feel one significant step closer to a cure for cancer. Anyway, onto the tips…

DR. RUTHLESS

Our resident tip surgeon, Dr Ruthless, has just emerged from a self-inflicted period of solitary confinement, locked in his clinic with only a copy of Street Fighter II and his collection of celebrity organs (including Benny Hill's pancreas, Michael Jackson's original skin and the lower intestines of most of the cast of Dad's Army) for company. And, boy, did it pay off! There's a full SFII players' guide nestling within these pages...

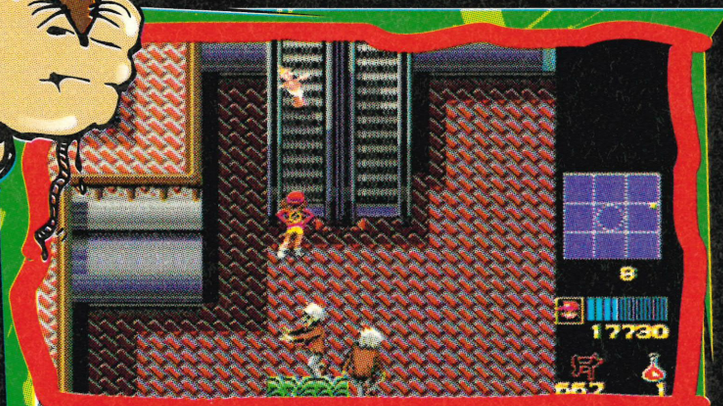


MUTANT LEAGUE FOOTBALL

Action Replay

Here are a couple of Action Replay codes I prescribe for all *Mutant League Footballers*. And keep in mind, January is Discount Month for painless and undetectable removal of all those unsightly extra limbs and eyes.

FFFD5E0002 Super-charged running
FFE1E60003 Start the game in the finals (flick the switch on the Team Select screen)



ZOMBIES

Action Replay

My friend James Beaven came in this morning. He's got piles. Piles of AR codes for Konami's grape-crushing *Zombies*, so he gave them to me in return for a large bean-bag and a vat of Anusol.

FFFA7500FF Unlimited squirt gun water for player one
FFFB1500FF Unlimited squirt gun water for player

SILPHEED

I was disappointed when I learnt this odd-sounding game wasn't based on an obscure foreign disease. Ne'er mind. After spending hours of endless frustration on this great blaster, I'm pleased to pass on these cheats:

Mania mode

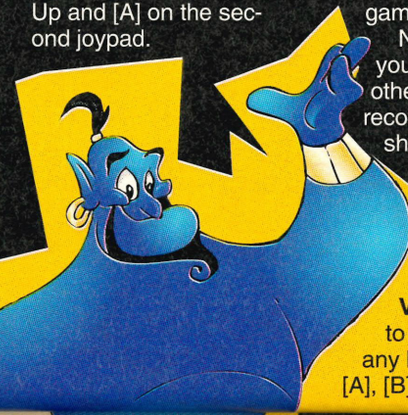
If you think *Silpheed*'s a wee bit easy, do the following after the first demo screen: Press [B], [B], [A], [C], Up, Left, Right, Down, [C], Up and [A] on the second joypad.

Recharging shield

After the Games Art logo, press Right, Left, [A], Right, Up, [C], [B], Down, Left, [B], [A] and Up on player one's joypad. Press Start and play the game as usual. Now every time you press [A] on the other joypad, you recover your lost shield!

Extra Continues

When you've one continue remaining, press the following for ten extra continues: Right, Up, [A], [B], [C], Left, Left, Down, [C], [A] and Start.



Aladdin

Vince Lambert of **Spalding** offers relief to all those suffering from hot foot. To skip any level, pause the game and press [A], [B], [B], [A], [A], [B], [B], [A].

SUPERTAILS!

Another cheat for ***Sonic 2*** is available on prescription, thanks to the persistence of **Dafydd Griffiths** and **Dion Thomas** of **Weston, Herts**, and **David T Johnston** from **Glasgow**. This one continues on from the level-select, construction and SuperSonic cheats featured last month.

Firstly, enter the level-select cheat (go to Sound Test, play sounds 19, 65, 09 and 17, reset, hold [A] and press Start), then the SuperSonic cheat (play 04, 01, 02, 06. If you collect 50 or more rings and press [B] & [C], you become SuperSonic, but you knew that already, didn't you?). Next, still on the Sound Test, play 01, 09, 09, 02, 01, 01, 02, 04. This is the construction cheat.

For SuperTails, don't select the last three levels or the bonus stage — the cheat won't work. Use construction mode, pressing [B] to turn into an object, [A] to cycle through them and [C] to make the selected object appear.

This is how you become SuperTails: In a two-player game, collect 50 rings or more and become SuperSonic, then turn into a teleport box and make it appear. Get Tails to jump on it and when it breaks — SHAZAM! — SuperTails!

Dafydd points out that SuperTails can die if he falls down bottomless pits or gets squashed, because he's off the screen at the time. It's best to try the cheat on the earlier levels, and remember that whenever you start a level, Tails returns to his normal self.

FFFA8F00FF	Unlimited keys for player one
FFFB2F00FF	Unlimited keys for player two
FFFA8100FF	Unlimited soda cans for player one
FFFB2100FF	Unlimited soda cans for player two
FFFA8300FF	Unlimited tomatoes for player one
FFFB2300FF	Unlimited tomatoes for player two
FFFA8500FF	Unlimited ice-pops for player one
FFFB2500FF	Unlimited ice-pops for player two
FFFA8900FF	Unlimited plates for player one
FFFB2900FF	Unlimited plates for player two
FFFA8B00FF	Unlimited silverware for player one
FFFB2B00FF	Unlimited silverware for player two
FFFA8D00FF	Unlimited footballs for player one
FFFB2D00FF	Unlimited footballs for player two
FFFA7700FF	Unlimited fire-extinguishers for player one
FFFB1700FF	Unlimited fire-extinguishers for player two
FFFA7900FF	Unlimited Martian bubble gun for player one
FFFB1900FF	Unlimited Martian bubble gun for player two
FFFA7B00FF	Unlimited weed-eaters for player one
FFFB1B00FF	Unlimited weed-eaters for player two
FFFA7D00FF	Unlimited ancient artifacts for player one
FFFB1D00FF	Unlimited ancient artifacts for player two
FFFA7F00FF	Unlimited bazookas for player one
FFFB1F00FF	Unlimited bazookas for player two
FFFA9100FF	Unlimited speed shoes for player one
FFFB3100FF	Unlimited speed shoes for player two
FFFA9300FF	Unlimited monster potion for player one
FFFB3300FF	Unlimited monster potion for player two
FFFA9500FF	Unlimited ghost kid potion for player one
FFFB3500FF	Unlimited ghost kid potion for player two
FFFA9700FF	Unlimited random potion for player one
FFFB3700FF	Unlimited random potion for player two
FFFA9D00FF	Unlimited First Aid kits for player one
FFFB3D00FF	Unlimited First Aid kits for player two
FFFA9F00FF	Unlimited Pandora's Boxes for player one
FFFB3F00FF	Unlimited Pandora's Boxes for player two
FFFAA100FF	Unlimited skeleton keys for player one
FFFB4100FF	Unlimited skeleton keys for player two
FFFAA300FF	Unlimited decoys for player one
FFFB4300FF	Unlimited decoys for player two
FFFA47000A	Unlimited energy for player one
FFFAE700FF	Unlimited energy for player two

MICRO MACHINES

For those people who suffer from back problems because of constantly racing round the breakfast table in a car the size of a matchbox, pathological tip fiend Ed Lomas of Rochester has an array of cheats for your delectation and delight. All are activated during the race, when the game's paused.

To make your vehicle go faster: Up, Down, [A], [B], Left, Right, [C], Start
Increase your vehicle's grip: [A], Up, [B], Down, [C], Left, Start, Right
More powerful crashes: [C], Up, Left, Right, [A], [B], [A], [C]
Tougher computer opponents: Left, Right, Left, Right, Up, Down, Start, Down
Even tougher opponents: Left, Down, Up, Down, Right, Down, [A], Down
Infinite lives: [B], Down, [C], Down, Up, Down, Left, Down.

X-MEN

If you want to become a smashing hero, what could be better than this level-select? But don't forget, you need two joypads for this to work.

Before the title screen appears, hold down [A] and [C]; release them when the title screen appears and press Start. Plug controller one into port two and press Start again. Got that so far?

Now plug your other controller into port one. If you've done this correctly, the different panels in the control room correspond to levels, the first on the far left, Level 2 next to it and so on.

Quackshot

When you've a choice of going up for the money or down for the ice-creams in Duckburg (cables), make sure you go up. When you've done that, go back to where the ladder and booms are. Return to the cables and repeat this set of moves several times for some extremely helpful extra lives.

Mortal Kombat

Ah, here comes Mr Kano — he keeps me well stocked with transplant organs. Heaven knows where he gets them from. The last delivery just happened to be wrapped in this sheet of paper, which contains Action Replay codes for *Mortal Kombat*... Ooo, that'd go quite well with a few onion rings.

FFFF5B0001	Activates the cheat screen (for gore mode, feature 'flags' etc)
FFCAB90078	Infinite energy for player one
FFCBB90078	Infinite energy for player two
FFAC7E0099	Unlimited time
FFAABB000X	Replace X with 0–C to select stage
FFAAAE000X	Replace X with 0–7 to select character for player one
FFAAAF000X	Replace X with 0–7 to select character for player two



MUHAMMAD ALI'S BOXING

Avoid having the bones in your nose pushed into the back of your head with these codes. They let you challenge the world champion in both Arcade and Simulation modes

Simulation	Arcade
H07KEHCZ	007KEHCZ
H07EBXCZ	007EBXCZ
H075C7CZ	0075C7CZ
H07B4NCZ	007BCNCZ
H072N4CZ	0072C4CZ
H07CNCCZ	007CCCCZ
H07WNBCZ	007WCBCZ
H074NECZ	0074CECZ

Playing Tips

poison

OUT PATIENTS

Another wardful of games are given the all-clear and leave the clinic completely disease-free – we shouldn't see these again. Hurrah!

TAZ-MANIA

On the title screen, plug in both controllers and press [A], [B] and [C] on both pads. While holding them all, press start on pad one (you should hear a funny noise) then start as normal. Press Start again to pause the game and [C] for a level-select and [B] for invincibility. Now press Start again.

Thanks to **Nicola Giles** for this smashing tip.

ALIEN STORM

When you get to the end and battle Big Brain, concentrate on attacking the aliens. After destroying the guards, old BB has no defences so you can kick his butt.

STEEL EMPIRE

To begin on Stage 2, press and hold button [B], followed by Start on the title screen.

FORGOTTEN WORLDS

Use two-player mode and when a player dies, press Start several times for infinite continues.

STRIDER

This tip may only be useful for patients with an earlier Jap copy… For continues, press this combination when The Master laughs at the start: [A], [C], [B], [C], [A].

SUPER SHINOBI

To get loadsa lives, go to Round 4-2 and perform a shooting somersault to reveal a 2-Up. Collect this and lose a life. Repeat this a few times to rack up the lives!

Thanks again to **Nicola Giles** for this tip.

DARWIN 4801

Enter the Sound Test and choose tune 32. Press [A], [B] or [C], several times, where the number of presses is equivalent to the stage you want plus one.

Alien 3

Action Replay

To avoid those embarrassing moments at dinner parties when an alien being bursts out of your stomach, spreading entrails over the table, try a hearty dose of Replay codes:

FF08450099	Unlimited machine gun rounds
FF08470099	Unlimited flame
FF08490099	Unlimited Mortars
FF08EB00XX	Lives (XX is the number you start with)
FF090B0009	Infinite lives
FF08670050	Freeze the timer
FF0811000X	Number of hostages (try replacing X with 1)
FF08130002	Level-select (start the game and lose a life before correct level is selected)

David Robinson's Supreme Court Basketball

Problems with your balls bouncing on the floor? You need urgent help, friend. Here are four passwords which enable you to reach the final:

First Round
PQSTUZYBK
Second Round
PQSTUZYIK
Semi-Final
PQSTUZYQC
Final
PQSTUZYYA



SHADOW DANCER

I knew a Shadow Dancer, once. Got on Very well with Hank and Cliff, but after the accident… Thanks to Nicola Giles from Manchester for this guide to finding extra lives.

Level 1-1

When you reach the hostage who gives you a power-up, jump up in the air and fire right. Wa-hey! A 1-Up symbol appears.

Level 1-2

Above the hostage to the right there's a platform with a ninja on it. Jump up and kill him, then shoot along the floor of the platform. Voila! A 1-Up appears.

Level 2-1

Below the fifth hostage there's a platform with two gunners on it. Drop down and kill the baddies then shoot to the right for a 2-Up symbol.

Level 2-2

When you come to a trailer with boxes on it (and a warehouse behind), walk to the right and jump off, toward the fence. Fire in the air for a 1-Up.

BATMAN RETURNS

Game Genie

The Game Genie code BLYTAA5N grants a Caped Crusader near you the gift of invincibility. *Sigh.* If only there was such a code for us mere mortals…

Streets Of Rage 2

Action Replay

FFEF830005	Infinite lives for player one
FFFD05000X	Difficulty level, where X is 0 (very easy), 2 (easy), 4 (normal), 6 (hard), 8 (hardest)

Gunstar Heroes

SIM TWO TRIBES

When Two Tribes go to war, one is all that you can score. Not very good, is it? However, thanks to these codes sent in by G Wingate of Bournemouth, you can get more out of this god sim. To create a really powerful

Rocket Knight

Action Replay

Konami's boss character epic gets the Action Replay treatment — very useful on the last level, when you have to tackle almost all of the swines, one after the other.

FFA4250065	Infinite energy for player one
FFA6250065	Infinite energy for player two
FFA46F00XX	Replace XX with one of the following for first weapon: 04 = Force, 08 = Lightning, 0C = Chaser, 10 = Fire (player one)
FFA66F00XX	Replace XX with one of the following for first weapon: 04 = Force, 08 = Lightning, 0C = Chaser, 10 = Fire (player two)
FFA47100XX	Replace XX as above for second weapon (player one)
FFA67100XX	Replace XX as above for second weapon (player two)

POPULOUS

deity, enter ADKDSD-NASPEGDAWD, and **here are some level codes...**

Level 25: TIHOAD
Level 49: SUSOAC
Level 75: EMAAAG
Level 100: ADPEAT
Level 126: JISUAC
Level 145: ETETAG
Level 175: UHDDAC
Level 201: AMJIAG
Level 227: HOTHAB
Level 254: JITTAT
Level 274: TUOWAF
Level 298: ALLOAK
Level 326: OOOPAK
Level 350: GHOMAD
Level 375: MNTTAK
Level 401: ETIT
Level 423: WOUBAC
Level 448: DOLYAD

Mr Wingate receives a copy of *Shining Force* for his troubles. Yes, for the top cures sent in to my tips clinic, a **special prize** is awarded. So send in those tips to me, **Dr Ruthless, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**.

Level 3-1
When you've rescued the third hostage, don't jump onto the platform above. Instead, walk right and you should see a ninja on a block. Kill him and shoot the space he occupied. Much to your surprise, a 2-Up appears. To collect it, go above and drop onto it.

Level 4-1
After you collect the third hostage, there's a flight of stairs leading down, with gunmen on each step. At the bottom there's another step. Hey nonny-nonny! A 1-Up appears.

Level 4-2
The 1-Up is in the same place as hostage three.

Level 5-1
The 1-Up's right by the first hostage.

Level 5-2, Room 3
A 1-Up's on the opposite side of the block to the hostage.

Rocket Knight ADVENTURES

Want to help Sparkster the Possum avenge his master's death and slay the Dark Lord? The mental hospital's over *there*, sir. Patients seeking *Rocket Knight Adventure* tips and AR codes need look no further.

FFFB0D0005	Unlimited lives
FFC041003F	Unlimited energy

Also, if you press Down six times, Up twice, and Down twice when the Konami screen appears, you can access the Very Hard mode. Thanks to **Anthony Whiteside** of **Wesham, Lancs** for that advice.

Well, that's all from me this month, but you'd better return to the clinic next month for a check-up (...on all the best tips). Have yourself an agreeable Christmas — I hope your tree decorations are as original and tasteful as mine...



The Waiting Room

Due to space restrictions and all that, not all the tips that were sent could be used. So here's a quick list of all those intelligent people who're going to have to sit in the waiting room and suck lollies. (Time for your daily injection, Doctor — Sister Spoon.)

David Gaafar, Michael Davey, James Grove (who should refer to MEGA MACHINES 1 for the *Mortal Kombat* cheat he's desperate for), **Peter Gdaniec, Keith Maclennan, John Paul Samuel, David Harrison, Richard Donnet, Dean Whittaker, Abbie Fletcher, Jason Dobkin** (no, we never said 'your tits could earn you £100 in cash' — you must be thinking about a different magazine), **Peter Sturgess**, and **Anthony Stubbs** and his homey, **Robin D Smith**, who sent in the weirdest *Sonic 2* cheat imaginable as we went to press. If it works, we'll feature it in the next issue.

Thanks to each and every one, and I hope you have a good look at that copy of *Bunty* on the coffee table.

STREET FIGHTER II SPECIAL EDITION

Playing Tips poison

TIPPED TO DEATH!

Are you suffering from flaming balls? Do spinning birds give you a kick? If so, then you've certainly come to the right place! Honestly, you wouldn't believe some of the *SFII*-related injuries I've seen just recently. My waiting room has had to be scrubbed clean a dozen times at least, what with weary World Warriors leaking all over the place. Ah well, here's a hefty prescription which will enable you to beat your way through to the end – using any of the twelve characters...

SAGAT

This guy has learnt a new and powerful move recently: the Tiger Knee. Despite sounding like an obscure medical complaint, this is a pretty good move to take out any enemy who moves in close. This latest addition to Sagat's armoury makes him a good all-round character.



Vs Vega

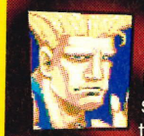
Let's face it, Vega has some stupidly-named moves, and therefore he doesn't deserve to win. But fate has decreed that this will be a tough match to win because of his great speed.

If he jumps onto the fence for a mid-air suplex, stand under him and do a strong Tiger Uppercut as he jumps off. The uppercut is a very effective move against the Tumbling Claw (though a fireball can be more effective) and is the best way to counter a mid-air kick.



Vs Sagat

Beat yourself at your own game by using loads of high and low fireballs then attacking with the Tiger Uppercut as he jumps toward you.



Vs Guile

Annoyed by that Sonic bloody Boom? Use the second it takes Guile to charge it to counter with strong fireballs, then he's pretty defenceless. If he walks toward you, crouch and block then use a strong sweep when he's in range.

If he attacks from the air, smack him one with an uppercut. And don't jump at him as he counters with Flash Kicks, so use fireballs and uppercuts instead.



Vs Balrog

Balrog spends a lot of time blocking before attacking with a fast series of punches, so watch out for this. When you see a slide-punch coming your way, stop him with a fireball or a Tiger Uppercut.

To get out of a corner, try a jump-kick; when he goes for a sliding uppercut or punch, duck under it and use a strong sweep.



Vs Bison

Okay, so Bison moves a hell of a lot faster than you, but you can get to him with your kicks. If he tries the mid-air head stomp, make sure you block it and



Vs Honda

Honda's a little more difficult but definitely possible. Don't let him corner you or you'll never get out alive (cue evil laugh). Watch for his sumo head-butt (which he always starts by crouching or walking backwards while he charges it) and counter it with a Tiger Uppercut or Tiger Fireball. The uppercut is more difficult to time but saps his energy much more.

And fireball him when he starts his Hundred Hand Slap to stop him in his tracks.



Vs Zangief

Make sure Zangief doesn't get close enough to inflict serious damage. A good way to do this is to use a combination of high and low fireballs, and the uppercut if he jumps them.

Don't get cornered, as he'll cause a lot of damage with his Spinning Piledriver.



Vs Dhalsim

Blocking plays an important part in your fight with Dhalsim. He has two vulnerable



Vs Ken

This shouldn't be too much of a problem. Just wait for him to chuck a fireball then use the combination of countering with a fireball of your own, followed by a strong jump-kick and strong low kick. You can then repeat the double-kick to take him out.

The only word of warning is to watch out for Dragon Punches and make short work of any mid-air attacks with a Tiger Uppercut. Oh, and careful with your timing when you attack — Ken is much faster than Sagat.



Vs Ryu

Ryu often begins with a fireball attack, so just do the same back to him — as you can shoot fireballs much faster than him, you should get the upper hand quite quickly. When he jumps at you, sort him out with a Tiger Uppercut and watch him sprawl.

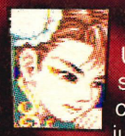
If he tries the old Hurricane Kick trick, use your Tiger Knee to knock the wind out of him (boom boom!).



Vs Blanka

If Blanka tries the jump-kick attack, use a Tiger Uppercut and follow with a fireball or sweep timed to get him as he lands. You can bring him out of his Cannonball Attack the same way, but watch out for his Vertical Cannonball as it's much more difficult to take care of. The best way is to block high and strong-sweep his legs as he lands.

Just don't ever jump towards him, or you'll usually end up fried.



Vs Chun-Li

Use Tiger Uppercuts to stop her getting in close then make her jump by fireballing her; follow this up with an uppercut while she's in the air.

The best overall strategy is to

STREET SPECIAL CHAMP

Block low if he tries to move in close, then attack with an uppercut. You're better off staying on the ground and fireballing than attacking in the air, so wait for him to come to you.

RYU/KEN

These characters are pretty similar and have the same basic moves, so I've lumped them together as you can use them to defeat opponents in the same manner.



Vs Sagat

You can sort out Sagat by waiting for his fireballs and jumping toward him with a strong kick. Follow this up with a strong sweep.

If he has the temerity to try his Tiger Uppercut, catch him as he lands and throw him to the ground.



Vs Dhalsim

Attack Dhalsim's Yoga Fire with your Hurricane Kick. Dragon Punch him when he tries the Spinning Drill attack.

If you're close to him when he reappears after teleporting, strong sweep him as soon as his feet touch the ground. There's nothing else I can advise, so just practice.



Vs Bison

Dragon Punch him to stop his air and torpedo attacks. The best thing is to use a fireball to make him jump and then counter his attack with a Dragon Punch. When he tries the Head Stomp, block as he touches your head and then attack with a Dragon Punch when he lands on the other side of you.

give him a taste of your Tiger Uppercut before he lands.

Fireball his Flaming Torpedoes to stop him, but beware: there's no trick to beating him every time, so be on your guard and block a lot.



Vs Vega

When Vega starts his jumping attack, use the Dragon Punch to foil his evil plan then counter his jumping-off-the-wall antics with a strong kick.

When he goes into an invulnerable back-flip, wait for him to stop and then do a Hurricane Kick. You may even be able to do a few of these before he can block.

When he goes for the Barcelona attack or mid-air suplex, wait for him to get in line with your head then do a Hurricane Kick, which should hit him before he has a chance to hit you.



Vs Ryu

The combination to beat Ryu is to jump toward him when he starts throwing a fireball, then strong kick him and fireball or sweep him as you land, finishing with a Dragon Punch.

Don't do a jumping attack or he Dragon Punches you. Wait for him to make mistakes then take advantage of them.



Vs Balrog

It shouldn't be too hard to take out Balrog, as long as you remember not to use fireballs while he charges his Sliding Punch, as he's immune to them at this point.

Just do a Dragon Punch when he begins the Sliding Punch then use fireballs to keep him far away and jumping. As he lands, use a strong sweep or Hurricane Kick; the windy leg move's also useful if you're cornered.

times in his attack when he can't block: when he teleports and appears close to you (you should go for a strong sweep — there's nothing he can do about it) and when he's sliding toward you, when you should block then go for a strong low kick before he can block it.



Vs Chun-Li

If you want to be really sadistic, use fireballs to make her jump then use a Dragon Punch. Her new fireball leaves her defenceless so get her with a strong jump-kick and leg sweep combination. Don't use fireballs too often or she could use the same combo on you.



Vs Zangief

Use a strong jump-kick on Zangief, followed by a strong sweep. If your timing is perfect, you can do a series of strong jump-kicks until you stun him, when you should quickly use the double-hit Dragon Punch.

Don't let him corner you, as he'll use his Spinning Piledriver and take you out (sounds quite nice of him, actually —Sub Ed).



Vs Guile

Wait for Guile to make mistakes and take advantage of them. Use loads of fireballs and Dragon Punch him if he jumps them, followed by a fireball timed to hit him just as he's scraping himself off the bottom of your telly.

Another cunning plan is to fool him into doing a Flash Kick (a small Dragon Punch just out of his range is a good one) then use a strong Dragon Punch while he's still in the air.

And don't forget that your Hurricane Kick completely destroys his Sonic Boom, so if you start close enough you can kick him before he blocks.

use aerial attacks yourself as she's much better than you here. Instead, get behind her when she jumps off the wall and use a strong jump-kick in the back, followed by a fireball.



Vs Ken

Make Ken jump by fireballing him, then Dragon Punch him before he lands. Get close to him when he jumps around and do a strong crouch-punch or Dragon Punch.

To take care of his Dragon Punches and put yourself on the offensive, make sure he misses then throw him to the ground as he lands. The best way to beat him is with a combination of fireballs and Dragon Punches.



Vs Honda

Like Blanka, the best way to beat Honda is to keep him at a distance with your fireballs. When he jumps them, sweep his legs before he lands.

Watch out for his all-new double-hitting Belly Flop™ — this causes maximum pain. As he lands he's incapacitated (look it up) so sweep his legs away.

If he starts that Hundred bloody Hand Slap again, block it and use a mid-air Hurricane Kick to get out of the corner.



Vs Blanka

Use your fireballs as much as you can to make this freak keep his distance, as he tends to run or jump into them! If he gets close or jumps them, you should use a strong jump-kick followed by a strong sweep or Dragon Punch.

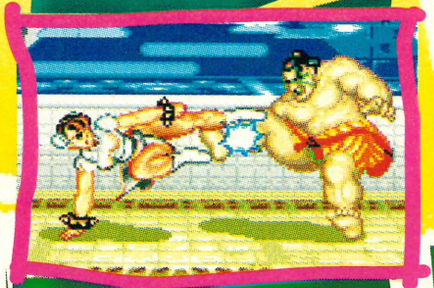
You can also use your fireball against the Horizontal Cannonball, but he'll get you with the Vertical Cannonball if you try to jump over him.

Playing Tips poison

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Vs Bison



Okay, so Bison moves a hell of a lot faster than you, but you can get to him with your kicks. If he tries the mid-air head stomp, make sure you block it and give him a taste of your Tiger Uppercut before he lands.

Fireball his Flaming Torpedoes to stop him, but beware: there's no trick to beating him every time, so be on your guard and block a lot.

Vs Dhalsim



This one's a piece of cake because Dhalsim's so slow in the air, making him an easy target. If he jumps, use the mid-air throw or Spinning Bird to get him before he lands.

You can take care of Yoga Flame attacks with a fireball or by jumping over it and attacking with a strong kick and strong sweep combination. Remember to block his slide attack and strong sweep before *he* has a chance to block.

After using his teleport move, he's defenceless for a while. You can use this time effectively with either a strong sweep or a throw.

Vs Vega



Chun-Li and Vega are the two fastest characters so this won't be a pushover. The fireball/strong sweep tactic can still be useful, but your timing's going to have to be perfect.

When he attacks off the fence, do the following: stand to one side, jump, do a mid-air neck throw, then time a fireball to hit him as he lands. Tough to time, but worth it.

When Vega tumbles backwards he's invincible, but use the time to charge up a Spinning Bird and you can kick him to shreds as he stops.

Vs Ryu



Wait for him to miss a Dragon Punch then capitalise on his mistake by using either a mid-air throw or throw as he lands.

When he does a fireball attack, jump and strong-kick his head, followed by a strong sweep and fireball. Although the fireball may not hit him, it makes it more difficult for him to get up. Don't try to jump over him or you'll be caught out with a Dragon Punch.

Vs Honda



When Honda jumps toward you, use your fireball to hit him just before he lands, so that he can't block it. Another trick is to shoot a fireball then leg sweep him after he jumps it.

You can counter any sumo head-butts with fireballs or strong punches, and you get out of tight corners by jumping off the wall then jumping over him and stomping on his head.

Vs Balrog



Take Balrog out by ducking and blocking his Sliding Punch, then strong-sweeping him to the floor. Fireball him, making him jump, then strong sweep him before he can land. If you charge up your Spinning Bird quickly enough, this delivers multiple hits and sometimes even a stun.

Vs Sagat



Do a jump-kick just out of Sagat's reach to make him do a Tiger Uppercut, then jump and perform a mid-air neck throw while he's still in the air. A strong punch or a crouching strong punch should make him keep his distance if he tries to come near you.

The best way to defeat him is to anticipate the pattern of his fireballs, jump over a low one and attack with a strong high kick and strong sweep. Just don't use the Spinning Bird Kick.

Vs Chun-Li

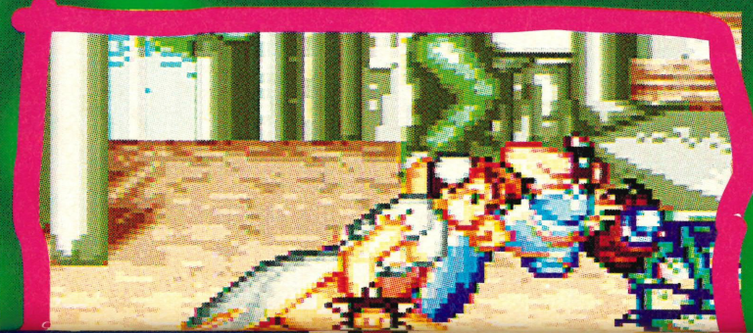


Cor! Bitch fight! To succeed in *SFII*'s tribute to *Prisoner: Cell Block H*, charge a Spinning Bird Kick and let her have it as she attacks you. When she jumps off the wall, move behind her while she's in the air then jump and take her into a mid-air-throw.

If she looks as if she's about to unleash a fireball, jump and attack, followed by a strong sweep.

CHUN-LI

The woman who made it acceptable to wear American Tan tights again is pretty good at long-range battles due to her fireball, as well as being very fast and good at countering airborne attacks with her Spinning Bird manoeuvre. And she's got big chunky thighs.



Vs Guile



The match with Guile is going to be tough, but fret not. Don't jump at him as he'll always Flash Kick you, so stay back and wait for him to attack.

Unleash your fireballs as defence against Sonic Booms and do a vertical kick as he comes toward you. While you're in mid-air, charge up a Thousand Foot Kick to score maximum damage as he lands.

Vs Zangief



Don't bother with the old fireball routine against Zangief as his Spinning Clothesline counteracts them. Instead, jump toward him with a small kick and follow it with a Thousand Foot Kick when you land. Don't let him get too close or he'll use his deadly Spinning Piledriver.

Vs Bison



Block Bison's head stomp, and throw him as he falls. Use fireballs or weak, crouching punches to counter his Flaming Torpedo and Scissor Kicks.

If he jumps, throw yourself off the wall and use a strong mid-air kick or neck throw.

Vs Blanka

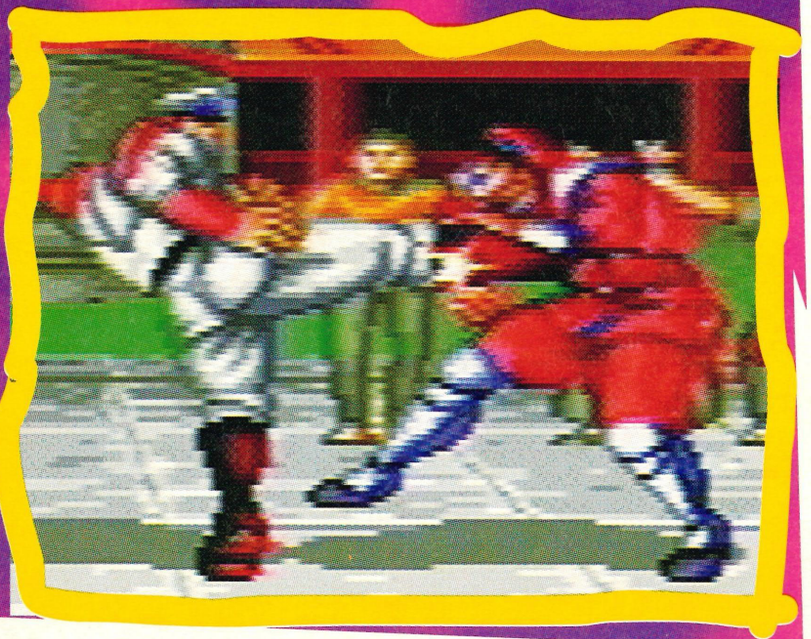


If Blanka uses a Horizontal Cannonball, use a fireball or strong crouching punch to turn him into Blanka butties. Then jump toward him with a weak kick and as you land do a Thousand Foot Kick. This should hit him before he can block and sometimes even stuns him.

Try using the fireball, followed by a strong sweep as he lands, but don't try jumping over him as his Vertical Cannonball will take you out.

BISON

This chap's the toughest of the bunch in the original; here he's in line with all the other characters. He's got a huge selection of moves so it takes a while to get to know how to handle him (oo, Matron).





Vs Bison

Oh God, another one of these confusing matches. Jot down on a notepad what colour your Bison is wearing.

Stay back from Bison and wait for him to miss or make mistakes. If he tries a Head Stomp, jump back and throw him when he lands. Stop his Flaming Torpedo using a volley of weak, crouching punches then get in there to give him a taste of his own medicine.

Weak sweep kicks followed by Tornadoes work well against Bison… er, yourself. Whatever.



Vs Zangief

The Russian wrestler's slow and has a beard. Consequently, most of the fast combinations work on him, the best being a vertical jumping strong kick, charging the Torpedo while in the air. When you land, let it rip.

This means you can keep clear of most of his moves (and his beard) and repeat the process until he's had enough and promises not to call you a puff anymore.



Vs Ken

Pssst. If you haven't gathered by now, Ken's virtually identical to Ryu — apart from the fact Ken likes two sugars in his tea and Ryu doesn't like snooker.

As before, don't jump in toward him, unless you know a good dentist or he's just let off a fireball. Remember, his defences are down for a second after Dragon Punches and Fireballs. At this time, get in and throw him to do maximum damage.



Vs Blanka

The key to beating Blanka is to counter his Cannonball with a Torpedo. If he uses the Vertical Cannonball, avoid the first hit and catch him with a strong throw as he lands.

Our top combo here is to do a weak kick, land two more crouching weak kicks, charge up the Torpedo and WHAM! This might even stun him.

If he uses Electric Shock tactics, jump on the sucker's head.



Vs Dhalsim

Take advantage of Dhalsim in the air… Sorry, that *should* read, 'take full advantage of Dhalsim's slowness in the air'. Use your speed advantage and get in there with a strong kick.

If the bugger teleports, take his legs away from under him with a strong sweep when he appears 'cos he's defenceless for a while. Counter Yoga Spear and Torpedo with a jump, and avoid Yoga Flame and Fire — they hurt a great deal and, of course, his breath stinks.



Vs Balrog

Balrog's attacks are strong but slow. Most of them comprise of sliding or turning punches. And once again, he's deadly if he corners you.

Avoid using the Flaming Torpedo, as one punch from him can knock you out of them. The Head Stomp followed by a strong punch to the head is a suitable combo, as are the tactics used on Honda.

If he uses a Sliding Punch, slide underneath to attack his legs.



Vs Vega

This springy little sucker will try and jump from the wall. Get behind him, do a strong throw followed by a Flaming Torpedo or a strong jumping kick as he lands.

No doubt he'll get fancy and try a Tumbling Claw attack. Watch out for these — three hits and you're stunned.

If he jumps on the fence, he's not trying to get away. The chances are he'll perform a Barcelona or mid-air suplex move. As he leaves the fence, jump back and strong kick — his attack misses you and he cops it in the wotsits.



Vs Chun-Li

The Chun is a difficult opponent for Mr Bison. I recommend a strong jumping kick, followed by a sweep — see how she responds to your advances *then*! Remember, Chun-Li's a bit of a girl when it comes to fighting and can't take too many hits before she's flat on her back.

If she makes a pass at you in the air, block her and chuck her when she lands. If she throws a fireball, jump and attack with a strong kick followed by a Flaming Torpedo.



Vs Sagat

Aw, this guy is nothing! When he lobs Tiger Fireballs at you, jump in with a strong kick ,followed by a strong sweep. Charge up the Torpedo and sock him at the end of the combo. This will stun him and a throw inflicts a lot of damage. This is a nice easy combo that can be repeated throughout the fight.

If he misses a Tiger Uppercut, get in with a strong throw when he lands, followed by a Torpedo.



Vs Ryu

Bison's Flaming Torpedo is the key to success in most of his battles. When Ryu launches a fireball attack, jump and charge up the Torpedo as you fly through the air, then execute the move as you land. Ryu will be too busy re-enacting scenes from *Saturday Night Fever* to make good a defence.

Getting in with a head stomp is another good one as Ryu's defences are down immediately after performing a fireball. But be warned, don't jump toward him unless he's doing a fireball, otherwise he might plant a Dragon Punch in yer kisser.



Vs Guile

Guile makes few mistakes, apart from not realising that camouflage gear went out with Wham and pinstripe jeans. If he does make an error, take full advantage of it.

If he jumps toward you, fend him off with a strong punch or kick. If you're fast enough, charge the Torpedo and plant it in his face. Don't jump toward him 'cos he does a Flash Kick every time.

When the Sonic Booms start flying, Head Stomp him and follow up with a strong punch. If you've done it correctly, he won't have the chance to Flash Kick.



Vs Honda

Now here's some useful advice: don't get trapped in the corner or take him on in close combat, he'll win every time. Keep him at a distance using fast combos and attacks. If he tries to jump in on you, sock him with the Torpedo when he lands.

Get out of the way of the Hundred Hand Slap by Head Stomping, followed by a strong punch and a quick jump to safety. Remember, getting blocked in the corner by tubby Ed is very unhealthy!

Playing Tips poison

STREET FIGHTER II SPECIAL CHAMPION EDITION

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Vs Ryu



If that sly little mutha lets rip with a fireball, block it with Yoga Flame.

Trying to jump over him is a stupid, stupid thing to do. It'll only result in you copping a painful Dragon Punch and saying, 'Ta-ta, testes!'. Instead, teleport behind him when he fireballs and whack him one before he blocks. He won't know what hit him.

Vs Guile



Guile tries to get you in a corner with his Sonic Booms and butch looks. Teleport out of the corner or slide underneath the Booms if he's close.

The Yoga Spear is a useful attack when he's Sonic Booming and should get a couple of hits to your credit before he blocks.

Vs Chun-Li



Chun-Li will jump in toward you. Move back slightly and belt her with a medium kick. Move in straight away and give her an affectionate Yoga Noogie.

A useful combination to use is a Yoga Spear or Torpedo, followed by a head-butt. Two hits stuns her, so be ready with a throw. The best time to strike is when she's in mid-fireball.

Vs Vega



The teleport comes in very handy against Vega. When he goes up the fence at the back, wait until he's ready to jump off, then teleport out of harm's way.

Vega spends a lot of time in front of the mirror and in the air — the latter we have to worry about. Use the Spear when he's about to jump. He has to charge up a Claw attack and this is a good time to fry him with a fireball.

Hug the ground as much as possible or he uses his air superiority to crush you.



Vs Sagat



To triumph in the battle of the baldies, dodge them Tiger Fireballs and counter with a Yoga Drill. Leap over the next fireball and follow-up with a Medium Sweep.

If he misses with an uppercut, wait for him to land then stick the old nut on him. Stitch that! If you find yourself nice and close to him, use a powerful throw.

Don't jump toward him unless he's performing a fireball or he'll uppercut you.

Vs Balrog



Most of Balrog's attacks, like the Sliding Punch and uppercut, leave him wide open at floor level. A strong slide does the business here, but make sure the ground is free from splinters and grit.

Always be ready to follow up an attack with a fireball when he falls to the floor. Even if he blocks it, you'll do some damage. If he tries to jump in on you, give him a strong kick to chew on when he's at the top of his jump.

Vs Honda



Make Lard Boy jump toward you with a fireball and catch him in mid-air with a strong kick. The Yoga Spear is a good move to knock him backwards and leave you squaring him up for a head-butt. The Spear can also be used to knock him out of his Torpedo.

At some point, he makes with the flab and belly-flops you. Move backwards slightly then get in there with a slide when he lands. Easy, huh?

Vs Blanka



Firstly, don't jump toward him or you'll land on a couple of thousand volts, which obviously ain't gonna help your situation a whole lot.

The Spear or Torpedo takes him out of his Cannonball attack. Fireballs have the same effect but are risky to use on a vertical roll.

If he gets adventurous and jumps toward you, sock him with a medium punch before he lands — that'll show him!

Vs Zangief



Yoga Flame/Fire don't work when he's doing his Spinning Lariat. If he walks toward you, time it right and you can get a throw in before he hits you.

Only use the Yoga Spear if he's jumping. If he's on the ground, he blocks, grabs then performs one of those slightly suggestive wrestling moves on you — usually a Spinning Piledriver, a move yet to be seen on *WWF* (unfortunately).

DHALSIM

In the original, Dhalsim was more of a novelty street performer than a Street Fighter. Here, he's been enhanced with a teleport move. It's difficult to master, but when you do the benefits are vast.



Vs Ken



Most of the tactics used against Ryu work on Ken. But for a bit of variety, wait for him to Hurricane Kick or Dragon Punch and get under his defences as he lands with a slide.

Vs Bison



No problems for the bendy-limbed Asian lad here. Put a stop to those Flaming Torpedo shenanigans by countering with the Yoga Spear. If you have problems with that, block the Torpedo and throw him as he comes out of it.

Block the Head Stomp, and as he lands on the other side, nut him. If he uses the Scissor Kick, respond with either the Yoga Drill or Yoga Fireball.

Vs Dhalsim



Teleporting is a dangerous business when fighting your mirror image. The chances are, he'll be waiting for you to do it and will strike quickly with a throw. Doh!

A better attack is to time a fireball to hit him when he comes up from a slide.



VEGA

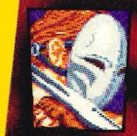
Along with Chun-Li, Vega's the fastest character in the game. Use his speed and mobility to the full, master those fast attacks and nifty combos, and you've a friend for life.





Vs Sagat

Sagat's a very basic fighter. When he goes for the Tiger Fireball, jump over, and attack with strong kick and strong sweep, followed by a Tumbling Claw if he's stunned. Don't go to the air too often, as his Tiger Uppercut's a lethal defence.



Vs Vega

Use fast combos to put one over on yourself. Strong kicks followed by strong sweeps do the job nicely and if you charge up the Tumbling Claw while doing the kicks, so much the better!

If he tries to attack off the fence, stand still. As he jumps away from the fence, jump back and strong kick him. Block the Tumbling Claw and before Vega does anything, strong sweep him.

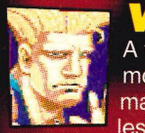


Vs Chun-Li

A tough match, as both are extremely fast. If Chun-Li jumps, attack her with a mid-air throw. If she fireballs, jump over it and perform a strong kick and strong sweep.

Duck under the Spinning Bird Kick, charge and attack with a Tumbling Claw as she lands.





Vs Guile

A tough one, 'cos most of your aerial manoeuvres are useless against Guile and his Flash Kick. Hang back, wait for him to attack, avoid Sonic Booms and when he's close enough, strong sweep followed by Tumbling Claw.

If he attacks from the air, strong punch him before he lands. The moral is: be patient.



Vs Honda

As always, letting the fat one back you into a corner spells instant death. Vega, however, can use his Wall Jump to get out of trouble. A vertical strong kick-strong sweep combo does the trick.

If he Belly Flops or Seat Drops, sweep his legs as he lands.



Vs Balrog

Keep your distance 'cos he always wins toe-to-toe. When he tries to slide or turn, block low — he's now vulnerable to a strong sweep or punch.

Use the Tumbling Claw sparingly, as you'll be open to his siding punch.





Vs Bison

A combo of vertical jumping kicks and sweeps gets Bison easily decked.

Don't forget, you can charge up the Tumbling Claw while performing another move, so try a few weak sweeps as you charge up and let go. Time this right and you've stunned him.

Block his Head Stomp and sweep his legs as he lands.



Vs Ryu

Use your speed to attack from above when he slings a fireball. Time it right and you can pull off a stunning strong kick-strong sweep-Tumbling Claw combo. While he's stunned, do a suplex and, voila! Three-quarters of his energy is gone!

As always, never jump over Ryu unless he's throwing a fireball, or it's D.P time…



Vs Zangief

No need to ponce around here. Use strong jumping kicks followed by strong sweeps then jump to safety. No probs.



Vs Ken

…And the same goes for Ken. Also, if he misses a Dragon Punch, suplex him as he lands.



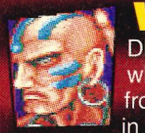


Vs Blanka

Blanka can't handle mid-air attacks so get in there with the suplex and Barcelona. The Tumbling Claw's very effective when he's dazed, as it gives three hits and is nigh-on impossible to block.

Counter Blanka's Horizontal Cannonball attack with multiple weak kicks. The Vertical Cannonball is more difficult to block, but block high and when he lands, strong throw for maximum damage.





Vs Dhalsim

Dhalsim can't block when he reappears from a teleport, so get in there with a strong sweep. Use the same tactic after a slide attack.

He's well slow in the air, so use that Barcelona attack to maximum effect. Anticipate the jump, charge a Wall Jump in advance and attack with the Barcelona while he's in mid-air. If he's high enough, use the mid-air suplex.

Playing Tips
Poison

STREET FIGHTER II
SPECIAL CHAMPION EDITION

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ZANGIEF

The close-range master and beard-wearer. Zangief's a bit slow, but wouldn't you be with all those muscles? Probably the toughest challenge in *SFII* is taking this bloke to victory.



Vs Ryu

Block his fireballs and keep inching your way over to him. Counter his Dragon Punch with mid-air kicks. When you're close enough, grab the little sod and slam him to the ground like a sack o' potatoes.

Vs Bison

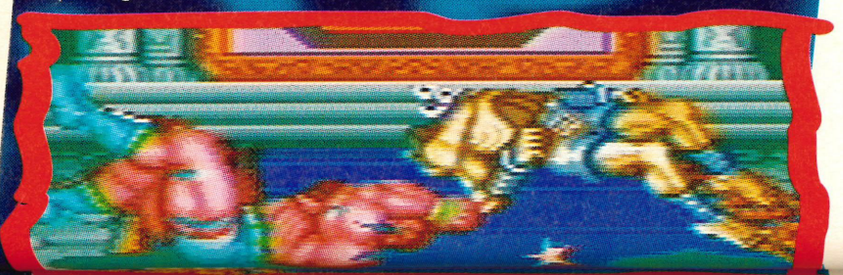
Another challenge-and-a-half for our Russian chum. Wait for Bison to perform a Flaming Torpedo and block it so he lands very close. Now do a strong throw or, even better, a Spinning Piledriver. Follow it with a jumping kick or sweep.

Bison's other weak spot is after he does a Head Stomp. Block it, grab him and use a powerful throw.

Vs Dhalsim

It's easy to get in Dhalsim's face 'cos he's so slow in the air, so get in there and run a power move on him. Get ready for potential teleport manoeuvres. If he misses with the Yoga Spear or Torpedo, grab and throw him.

Fire attacks are the bane of Zangief's life 'cos he jumps like he's got half a ton of concrete inside his pants, so block, move in and unleash the Spinning Clothesline.



Vs Blanka

Wait for him to perform a Horizontal Cannonball then block. Before he gets the chance to land, block again, move in and throw. This also applies to the Vertical Cannonball, but remember to block the second hit as he comes down before attacking.

And watch out for the 'leccy attack!

Vs Zangief

Jump and sweep manoeuvres are the key here, and in this

Vs Guile

As always, don't jump at him — he uses a Flash Kick every time. And don't hang too far back — he Sonic Booms you into the corner and wears you down.

The trick is to walk toward him, blocking the Sonic Booms, and force him into a corner using strong kicks and punches.

Vs Vega

Oh Lordy, this is probably the toughest opponent for the Bearded One!

Vega has an enormous speed advantage so to avoid getting sliced up like Brian Tilsley outside the Graffiti Club, go on the defensive. Get in close, block like a nutter and whenever the chance arises, throw him.



Vs Balrog

This match-up is a real slugfest, as both are all power and little speed. Your best bet is to block his slides then throw him.

Keep as close to him as possible, because if he gets any distance between you, he charges up a sliding punch. Get stuck in!

Vs Honda

Keep away from those corners! As he comes at you, do a vertical jump kick, followed by a strong sweep.

If he goes for the sumo headbutt or Sumo Splash, block and throw.

Vs Sagat

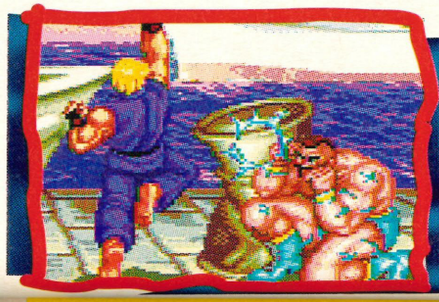
Sagat's a bit of a sod to overcome, due to his incessant fireballing. The best way is to block them and move in. When you get close enough, wade in with a very strong attack or throw him.

If he misses with an uppercut, give him a taste of the Spinning Piledriver.

Vs Chun-Li

She's a cow to ger close to, so when you do, take full advantage. Throw her whenever the chance arises.

Block mid-air attacks and counter as she lands. Eventually, block her into a corner and knock seven kinds of kinky out of her.



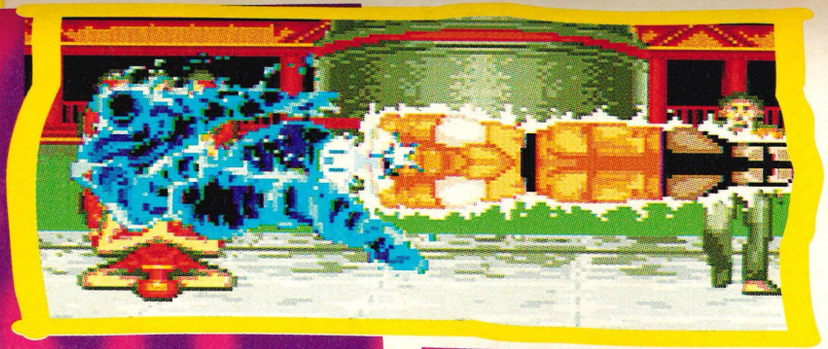
Vs Ken

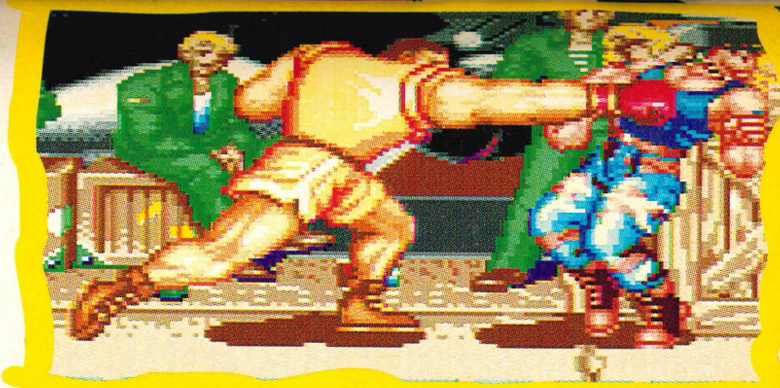
Same as Ryu, really, but watch out for that Hurricane Kick.

Ken's pretty crap at the Dragon Punch so get ready to grab him as he lands and grind his head into the turf with a Spinning Piledriver.

case, it's best not to go toe-to-toe. Your double can do all the same moves, remember.

Hang back and attack only when he closes in.





Vs Bison



Block high when he utilises the Head Stomp — as he lands, he can only watch in horror as you dish out a Dashing Uppercut. Block the Flaming Torpedo or, if you're feeling a bit cocky, knock him out of it with a few well-timed low punches.

When he advances, do a jumping strong punch followed by a crouching punch.

Vs Vega



There's a chink in the formidable armour of the effeminate-looking Spaniard. When he jumps off the wall, get stuck in just before he lands.

Also, block the Tumbling Claw and follow up with a slide punch. If he jumps from behind the fence, block and head-butt as he lands, followed by a Dashing Uppercut. Suck on that, Pedro!

Vs Ryu



Come on, everyone, we all know what we must never do against Ryu, don't we? Altogether, one, two, three... that's right! Never jump toward him. Anticipate a fireball, jump over it and strong punch before he blocks.

If Ryu misses a D.P, have him with a Turning Punch as he lands. Duck the Hurricane Kick and attack as he lands

Vs Zangief



Keep away from him, mate! He's got a decent range on that Spinning Piledriver of his. As he approaches, do a vertical jumping strong punch, followed by a crouching strong punch. Zangief's a bit slug-like in his demeanour and always fails to defend against that particular combo.

If he comes on with a Spinning Clothesline, chill, and power-up a Flashing Uppercut and chin the sod when he stops spinning.

Vs Guile



Old Guile's a hard nut to crack. Leaping about isn't advisable unless he's stunned — he Flash Kicks you to death. Wait for him to come to you.

Jump over Sonic Booms rather than blocking them. When you're in his face, unload a few weak punches and when he backs off, attack with a sliding punch you powered-up while weak-punching. It takes time to wear him down, but it works.

Vs Blanka



Jumping toward Blanka is an error, as he immediately goes into a Vertical Cannonball. Wait for him to come to you and attack with a jumping strong punch, crouching strong punch, followed by a turning punch.

If Blanka goes for the Horizontal Cannonball, block and follow up with an uppercut.

Vs Sagat



Sagat's main weapon is the Tiger Fireball, which is bad news for Balrog as he hasn't got any certificates on his wall for jumping.

Two words: Block and Advance. While doing this, power-up a sliding punch. When you get into range before the next fireball, slide punch.

Watch out for that Tiger Uppercut, and when he misses, give him a good fisting (pardon?! — Sub Ed) as he lands.

Vs Honda



Nae bother, unless you're pinned in the corner. Keep him at arm's length with power punches and stun him with various combos.

The combo used on Blanka is pretty effective, so is vertical jump punch-crouching punch-dashing uppercut.

Vs Ken



Similar to Ryu, obviously, but bear in mind Ken's Dragon Punch has a greater range.

Vs Dhalsim



Because Dhalsim's fond of jumping around, there's opportunities a-plenty to give him a nice sliding punch as he lands.

After he teleports, his guard's dropped, so charge up a turning punch in advance. Block the Yoga Drill or Spear, they're lethal, but once again he's vulnerable, so stick one on him.

Vs Chun-Li



When the chunky-thighed Oriental jumps over you, get behind her as she lands and give her the Glasgow Kiss. When she breaks free, use a sliding punch powered while you were head-butting her.

Jump the fireballs and follow up with a strong punch-crouching strong punch combo. If she tries the Thousand Foot Kick, jump and let loose a strong punch.

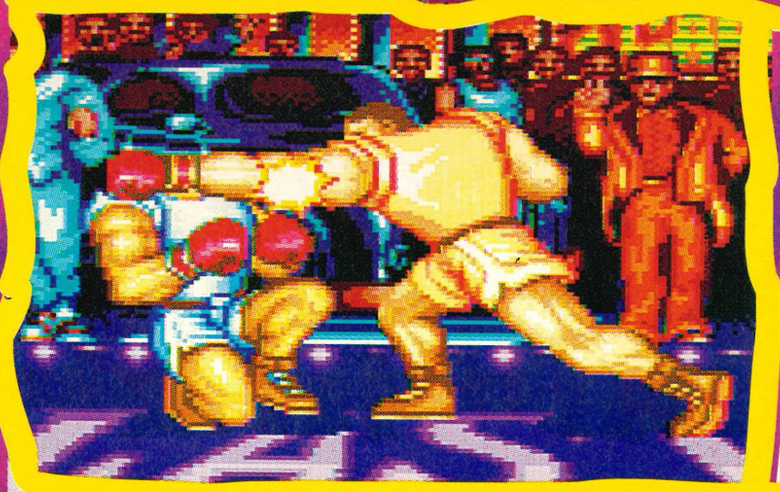
Vs Balrog



Wade into your mirror image with sliding punches and Dashing Uppercuts to get him pinned into the corner.

If he attacks with a strong punch, block and charge a turning punch, using it after his attack wears off. Use the head-butt to stun, and when he recovers, slide punch before he gets a chance to respond.

And don't get cornered!



BALROG

One of the bosses in the original coin-op, he's now controllable if you so wish. He's a brawny youth, with some powerful moves, and all of 'em can be powered-up while blocking. And he's got a bad haircut.

Playing Tips

poison

STREET FIGHTER II SPECIAL CHAMPION EDITION

TIPPED TO DEATH!

BLANKA

The obligatory mutant fighter has a new trick, the Vertical Cannonball attack. He's a good choice for the beginner, as most of his moves are easy to pull off… and he bites people's faces off! What more could you want?



Vs Ryu

Blanka's got a speed advantage over Ryu, so jumping over fireballs is a breeze. Follow this up with a jumping kick and strong sweep, but make sure you're close enough to prevent him from sweeping.

If he Hurricane-Kicks, get under him and charge up the Electric Attack, frazzling him when he lands. If he misses with a Dragon Punch, grab him and eat his face.



Vs Ken

Basically, use the same tactics as for Ryu. Also, use the Vertical Cannonball against the Dragon Punch and Hurricane Kick.

Vs Zangief

As long as you keep away from the corners, you'll have no probs.

Try this combo: strong vertical jump kick followed by strong sweep. Don't bother with the Horizontal Cannonball, 'cos if he blocks, you're in trouble.

Vs Blanka

Block the inevitable Horizontal Cannonball and before he lands and blocks, hit him with a strong crouching punch. He jumps at certain points so make ready with the Electrical Attack.

When he comes on with the Vertical Cannonball, block high and sweep when he lands.

Vs Balrog

When he does a sliding punch, duck and strong sweep his legs.

Like Zangief, Balrog would just love you to use a Cannonball so he can block and slide punch the crap out of you. Similarly, don't jump toward him unless he's stunned — he grabs and nuts you as he lands.



Vs Bison

Block high if he does a Head Stomp. Use a strong punch-strong crouch kick combo as he lands.

If he launches himself across the screen, charge the Electric Attack to hit him upon landing. Alternatively, charge a Vertical Cannonball and hit him as he goes over you.

If he walks toward you, time your vertical jump to hit with a strong kick, followed by a strong sweep.

Vs Vega

If Vega jumps off the side wall, try to meet him in the air with a strong jumping kick. Jumping toward him and using a strong kick causes him to back-flip, so power-up an Electric Attack as he starts to move and he flips right into it.

If he jumps onto the fence, use a Vertical Cannonball as he jumps. This prevents him from using his deadly special move.

Vs Guile

Tease the Guilester into performing a Flash Kick by jumping vertically just out of range, then grab him and give him a nice big love bite.

Keep in close so he doesn't Sonic Boom you into a corner and unload those uppercuts and kicks. Don't forget that Electrical Attack as he leaps toward you.

Vs Honda

When Honda jumps toward you, charge a Vertical Cannonball and hit him in mid-air, followed by a strong sweep when he lands. Get in close and do a Head Bite followed by a Horizontal Cannonball, charged up while biting.

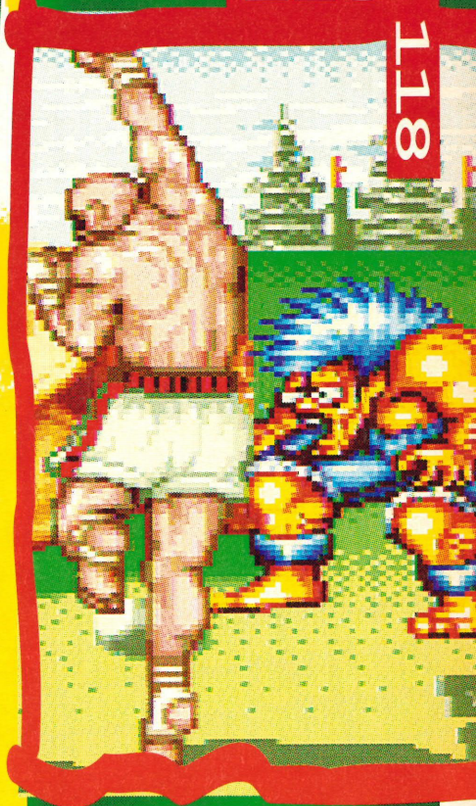
Avoid the Hundred Hand Slap at all costs.

Vs Chun-Li

Annoyingly fast but she jumps around like a mad cow, so get busy with the Vertical Cannonball — works every time!

When she comes on with the Spinning Bird Kick, don't try to combat it with a Horizontal Cannonball — you'll lose. Instead, wait for her to spin over her head and do a Vertical Cannonball, which causes sufficient damage without leaving you open to punishment.

If she jumps off the wall, get behind her, grab her and bite as she lands.



Vs Sagat

Stay away from his kicks. If he uses a Tiger Fireball, move in. When he fires a high one, use a low crouching punch or sweep. However if he tries a high fireball, jump and attack with a strong punch/strong sweep combination.

Jumping toward Sagat is risky, due to his Tiger Uppercut, but trick him into doing one and Head Bite as he lands.

Vs Dhalsim

Easy! Dhalsim's snail-like in the air, so you've loads of time to give him some grief. Vertical Cannonballs are the most effective.

When he teleports, wind up an Electrical Attack to fry him when he reappears. Block the Yoga Spear or Drill and before he recovers, give him a full power Horizontal Cannonball.



Vs Balrog



Duck any frequent Dashing Uppercuts and while he's still punching, strong-sweep him.

Never use the Torpedo unless he's stunned, because he counters with a sliding punch. Getting in close is risky because he grabs and head-butts, so stay at a distance and wait for him to come at you.



Vs Chun-Li



If Chun-Li jumps off the wall, charge up with a head-butt and hit her as she lands. Jump her fireballs and attack with a strong kick followed by a strong sweep.

Her Head Stomp is very dangerous and lands multiple hits, so be alert and keep blocking. Duck any Spinning Bird Kicks and hit her with a Torpedo as she lands, charged while ducking the Spinning Bird.



Vs Honda



Keep Honda at a distance — the computer charges special moves instantly. If he jumps toward you, hit him with a torpedo as he lands.

Honda uses the double-hit Seat Drop a lot. The best way to counter it is to power-up a Hundred Hand Slap, timed for him to drop into.

Vs Vega



When Vega jumps off the side walls, have a Torpedo charged up and hit him as he lands.

He's invulnerable during a back-flip so move in on the last flip and start a Hundred Hand Slap. If timed right, he flips right into the deadly wrist action.

Vega's Tumbling Claw is deadly, so block it then charge a Torpedo.

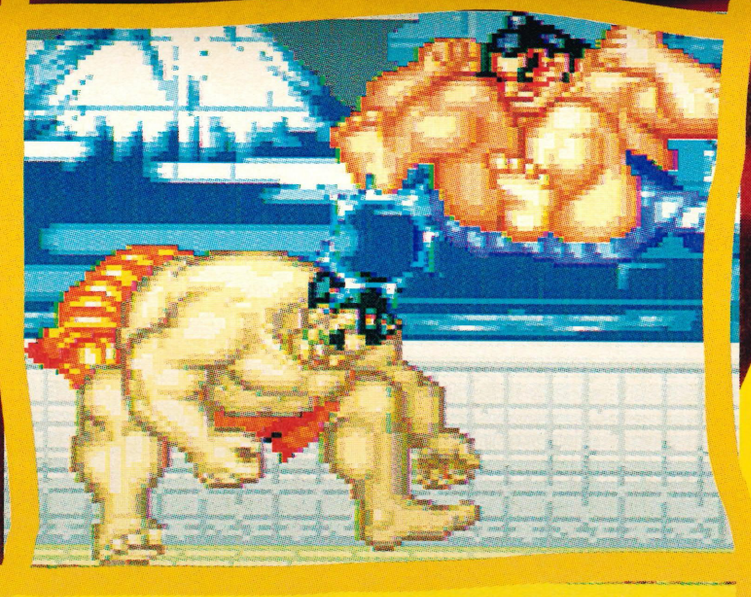


Vs Sagat



Sagat uses his Tiger Fireball all the time, so getting past these is the key to winning. Avoid low fireballs with a Torpedo, which also delivers a blow to Sagat.

The high Tigers are more difficult. If at a distance, duck, but if you're close, charge a double-hit Seat Drop.



HONDA

Edmond, the Japanese sumo star, is one of the most improved characters and potentially one of the best warriors. His Hundred Hand Slap is deadly, cornering opponents quickly and causing massive amounts of damage. The Belly Flop is another excellent move.

Vs Bison



Block Bison's Head Stomp and strong-throw him as he lands. His Flaming Torpedo's tricky to combat, so get the Hundred Hand Slap going to stop him in his tracks — timing's very important.

If he does a strong slide attack, block and he's stunned so take full advantage by grabbing him for a strong throw. The double-hit Seat Drop is useful for taking him out of the scissor kick.

Vs Zangief



At certain times, Zangief walks straight at you. There are two ways to combat this: either do a vertical jumping kick, followed by a strong sweep as he gets close, or grab him and strong-throw him followed by a Torpedo. This combo is difficult to time but does far more damage.

However, if Zangief jumps toward you, charge a Hundred Hand Slap to hit him as he lands. Try not to get cornered.

Vs Guile



Jumping toward Guile is risky, so avoid unless completely necessary. The best tactic is wait for Guile to come to you and attack him.

When Guile strong-sweeps, he does two, leaving him vulnerable, so charge up a sumo Torpedo and hit him as he starts a second sweep. The Belly Flop is good for avoiding Sonic Booms and hits him before he can block.

Vs Blanka



Blanka's strong punch leaves him vulnerable for a few seconds if you block, so make full use of this by charging a head-butt in advance.

Counter the Horizontal Cannonball attack with a well-timed Torpedo. If he jumps over you, grab him and throw as he lands.

Vs Ken



Ken is much the same. The main difference is he uses more special moves so counter-attack with the appropriate moves.

Vs Ryu



Jump Ryu's fireballs and attack with a strong sweep. Block the Dragon Punch and as he comes down, grab and throw him. Don't jump toward him as he Dragon Punches every time.

Use the Belly Flop to avoid fireballs and attack — don't forget it's a double hitter — but it takes timing.



Vs Dhalsim



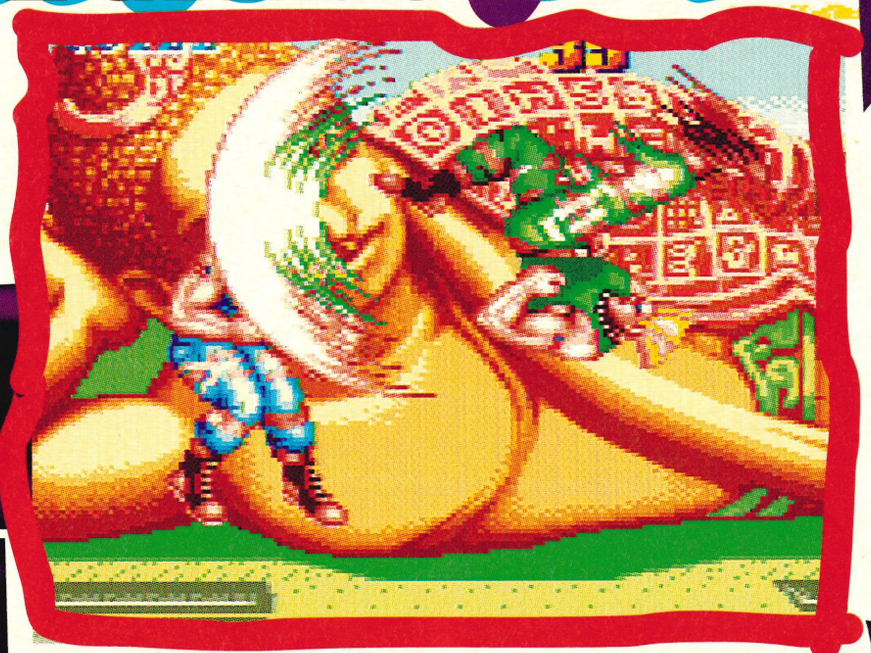
Dhalsim's biggest weakness is his slowness in the air. If he jumps, charge up a Torpedo and hit him at full strength as he lands.

His teleport's easy to combat. Wait for him to reappear and hit him with a strong sweep. If you don't hit first, he grabs and throws you. Block the Yoga Spear and Drill and, before he blocks, attack with Hundred Hand Slaps.

Playing Tips
poison

STREET FIGHTER II
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Vs Ken



Not too different from Ryu, though he uses his special moves a lot more so blocking and counter-attacking is the key.

Never jump over Ken as he uses Dragon Punches every time, and always block unless attacking because he's very fast.



GUILE

Most people's choice of original *SFII* character, but he hasn't been improved much so he's not so impressive. He's still a tough opponent and difficult to stop.

Vs Bison



Block Bison's Head Stomp and grab him as he lands on the other side of you and suplex. This takes timing but works well.

If Bison does his Flaming Torpedo, take him out with a well-timed Sonic Boom. Counter his scissor kick with either a Sonic Boom or Flash Kick. The Flash Kick takes more timing but delivers double hits.

Block his strong slide and counter with a double-hit Flash Kick.

Vs Blanka



Keep Blanka retreating with a barrage of quick attacks. Follow a Sonic Boom with a upside-down kick — particularly good due to its excellent range.

Vs Balrog



Keep a safe distance — his turning punches are very powerful. Duck them and land a free sweep on his legs. This is the best way to defeat him because virtually all other tactics require you to get close.

Also use Sonic Booms to keep him at a distance.

Vs Zangief



The most important thing to remember is to stay out of the corners and don't get too close, as he has quite a reach on the Spinning Piledriver. Use a combination of jumping strong kicks and strong sweeps and you'll be okay.

Vs Vega



When Vega leaps onto the fence, power up a flash kick and execute it as he jumps, taking him out of the air. Block his Tumbling Claw and hit him with a Sonic Boom as he finishes.

If you block his strong slide, he's vulnerable for a few seconds, so take advantage of this by hitting him with a double Flash Kick.

Vs Sagat



Jump Sagat's Tiger Fireballs and attack with strong kicks, a strong sweep and a Sonic Boom. This combo does loads of damage.

If you're close enough, Flash-Kick through the fireballs and hit him before he has time to recover. Because Guile's so fast, do a Sonic Boom and as Sagat jumps, meet him in mid-air with a strong kick. You win every time.

Vs Honda



Counter Honda's Torpedo with a Sonic Boom. It's possible to use a flash kick, but this takes excellent timing.

If he does a Hundred Hand Slap, use the Sonic Boom to stop it. Honda jumps Sonic Booms so meet him in mid-air with a strong kick.

Vs Dhalsim



Use loads of Sonic Booms to pin Dhalsim into a corner. If he tries to attack you from the air, just Flash-Kick him.

Vs Ryu



Jump Ryu's fireball attack and attack with a strong jumping kick-strong sweep combination. If you're close enough, charge a Flash Kick and release it as he fires — you go right through the fireball and hit him.

Don't use the Sonic Boom much because Ryu Hurricane-Kicks through it and hits you. If he does a mid-air Hurricane Kick, wait for him to come down and grab him with a suplex before he hits the ground.



Vs Chun-Li



Jump Chun-Li's fireballs and attack with a strong sweep, followed by a Sonic Boom timed to hit her as she gets up.

Jump the Thousand Foot Kick and attack with a strong kick-strong sweep combo.

Vs Guile



Beat this dude at is own game. Use Sonic Booms to keep him at a distance and wait for him to come to you. Trick him into Flash-Kicking, catch him as he lands and suplex him. He jumps Sonic Booms so meet him in mid-air with a strong kick.

Always keep Guile on the retreat, because if he moves forward he's difficult to stop.

few laughs but the gameplay's basic.

JOE MONTANA II
SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 76% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222
Joe is John's rival to the American Football crown The controls aren't as good as *Madden's*, the zoom function's confusing and there's no play-offs. On the positive, graphics and sound are good, gameplay's suitably hectic.

JOE MONTANA 3
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 80% ◆ Tel 071 371 3000
Poor old Joe! This game doesn't put a foot wrong — plenty of options, several viewpoints, great graphics and heaps of quality speech — but still plays second fiddle to *John Madden '93*. Aaaahh!

JOHN MADDEN '93
EASN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 87% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
When EA beefed up '92's graphics, added more speech, stats, battery backup system and classic teams, they created one of the best sports sims ever. If you're even mildly interested in American Football, purchase this forthwith!

JOHN MADDEN'S FOOTBALL '92
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.95 ◆ 92% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
The original *Madden* was great, this is better. Improvements are mainly cosmetic but the new plays, Run & Shoot formation and instant replay function make it more professional. The ultimate American Football game.

JORDAN VS BIRD SUPER ONE-ON-ONE
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 55% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
The biggest names in basketball go head-to-head. Presentation's high but the sprites are sometimes blocky and gameplay's simply boring. One-on-one is the basis of a sub-game, *not* an entire cart.

MARIO LEMIEUX HOCKEY
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 49% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
A Mario game on Sega! But this namesake is no gaming star: players are sluggish, the control system's tricky and you spend half the time trying to find out who you are. Nice to look at, bad to listen to.

MUHAMMAD ALI HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING
VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 87% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255
The greatest heavyweight boxer lends his name to the greatest boxing game! Naturally, the aim is to become champ, although exhibition bouts can be organised. Presentation, graphics, sound and gameplay are of the highest calibre.

MUTANT LEAGUE FOOTBALL
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Funny aliens and crafty demons add variety and humour to this vertically-scrolling American Football spoof. Pitches are dull but big sprites portray inevitable, enjoyable violence.

NBA ALL-STAR CHALLANGE
FLYING EDGE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
The basic concept's a loser: it's one-on-one. Worse, some of the sub-games (as in 'way below par') are simpl.y shooting practice. There are clear digitised portraits and realistic animation but lastability's low.

NHLPA HOCKEY '93
EASN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 84% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Fights and the Sin Bin join team and player stats; the top 50 slappers have special moves! Professional presentation, EA's usual wide array of sport options and realistic graphics and sound: a top-notch sim.

OLYMPIC GOLD
US GOLD ◆ £39.99 ◆ 80% ◆ Tel 021 625 3366
Hurdles, the 100 metres, pole vault, diving, swimming, archery and hammer throwing — not quite the full Olympics but their controls are easily mastered. Superb with the full complement of four players.

PGA TOUR GOLF II
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 73% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Restrained visuals and an upmarket approach mix well with comprehensive options and clever features. A 'skins' game and 'draw and fade' facility help bump this onto the 18th green.

POWERBALL
NAMCO ◆ £39.99 ◆ 30% ◆ Tel 0101 408 496 6371
A future version of football, blandly-drawn teams from around the globe compete on a dull pitch. It's difficult to see who's got the ball but you're unlikely to have it long, anyway. Still, the presentation's good.

PRO QUARTERBACK
TRADE WEST ◆ £39.99 ◆ 52% ◆ Tel 0101 903 874 2683
This attempts to steal Madden and Montana's thunder with fancy 3D perspective — which doesn't work! The number of plays is limited and their selection is confusing. It's fast, fun to watch and the music's funky.

RBI BASEBALL 4
TENGEN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 89% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Large sprites, smooth movement and quality sound make this a treat. A spread of options, numerous teams to choose, piles of stats and easy to learn controls complete the happy picture. Fourth time lucky!

SIDE POCKET
DATA EAST ◆ £39.99 ◆ 73% ◆ Tel 010 408 286 7080
The game's pool, Nine Ball and Pocket against another human, Trick Shot Challenge and a States-skipping solo Pocket game. The latter soon sets horribly high target scores but the two-player option's always fun.

SPEEDBALL 2
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 90% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
In a smooth-scrolling metallic arena, teams battle it out for possession of a metal ball. Collect coins to improve the team. Manic gameplay and great presentation. One of the best two-player sports games.

SUPER HIGH IMPACT
ARENA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Smart speech and pulse-pounding effects increase atmosphere in this crunching American Football game. It's aimed at newcomers to the sport and adds aggression with its Hit-O-Meter. Worthy of attention.

WINTER CHALLENGE
ACCOLADE ◆ £34.99 ◆ 80% ◆ Tel 081 877 0880
Gather up to nine friends, choose nationalities and enter luge, downhill and cross-country skiing, bobsled, speed skating, slalom, biathon and ski jumping. The events vary in quality but feature realistic animation and 3D scenery.

WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD
US GOLD ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 021 625 3366
US Gold gave up their snap-hook graph in favour of a fancy circular one for MD *Leaderboard*. Control is a hit-and-miss affair with the new device. Blocky graphics and weak sounds but there are plenty of courses and game types.

WORLD CUP ITALIA '90
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ SF8 ◆ 59%
Get England into the final! Viewed from above, about a tenth of the pitch is shown at any one time. The graphics are colourful and movment's speedy, but with only three kicks to master, it won't keep you playing for long.

STRATEGY

Organise your troops, plan your moves, distribute resources... if your the type who thinks before they act, the following games should be right up your street.

KING SALMON
TOKAI ◆ £39.99 ◆ 57% ◆ Tel N/A
There's nothing fishy about this being in the strategy section. Bait type, line length and depth, where to fish... even the arcade sections require thought. Remarkably enjoyable but not for long.

MEGA-LO-MANIA
VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 90% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255
Somewhere in space, flamboyant gods struggle for control over epochs. Devote manpower to mining, invention, defence and combat. The icons are a touch confusing but speech is excellent and gameplay unsurpassed.

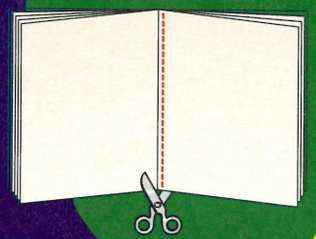
MONOPOLY
SCULPTURED S/WARE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 51% ◆ Tel N/A
As in the board game, go round and round the board, deciding which property to buy and where to put houses. It's well presented and easily played but nowhere near as satisfying as the real thing.

POWERMONGER
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 70% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
An in-depth version of *Populous*, men are recruited, land is farmed and power struggles develop in a war against computer commanders. Massive depth but the control system cripples the gameplay.

WARRIOR OF ROME II
MICRONET ◆ £39.99 ◆ 56% ◆ Tel N/A
Walk in Caesar's sandles and prevent the rebellion which killed him. Train men, organise troops, build colosseums and fortresses before going into combat. It takes a lot of time and patience.

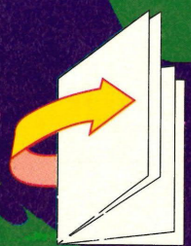
the BIG GAMES list thing

Have you been planning a big Chrimble shopping trip? You have? Well now you've no excuse to put it off any longer, 'cos here's a big games list thing to hawk around the shops with you. Use it wisely and it'll give invaluable advice on what to fork out for – and what to flob on in disgust. Now, if you went to all the trouble of cutting and folding the beggar from last month's issue, and figure that you may as well do it again since it's bound to have been updated with all the latest games, forget it. Yep, that's right – only this bit of blurb (and the colours) have been altered, as we've all been way too busy to consider such a mind-numbingly mundane task. Oh yeah, if you're disappointed by that, take comfort in the fact that we're all going to get the biggest bollocking ever when the bosses read this bit. Ah well, Merry Christmas everybody...



1 Take a sharp pair of scissors and cut along the dotted lines as shown...

2 Fold the pages in half and arrange in correct order. Slap in a couple of staples to hold it in place.



ARCADE GAMES

Coin-op conversions and mixed-genre games make these games the most action-packed around. Dragon's Fury leads the pack with 92% — what could be more arcade-like than pinball?

ALISIA DRAGOON
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
A magical wench, unleashing thunderbolts and teaming up with little dragons to save a fantasy world. Plenty of good ideas and not enough enemies, but a bargain at this price.

AMERICAN GLADIATORS
GAMETEK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 45% ◆ Tel 0101 305 935 3995
Compete against the Glads or some friends in six events, including The Assault, Atlasphere and Joust. Graphics, sound and events are uniformly mediocre and the package soon bores. For die-hard fans of the series.

BATMAN
SUNSOFT ◆ £39.99 ◆ 77% ◆ Tel 010 1714 8914500
Based on the Tim Burton movie, graphics are as dark and grim as the real thing. Platform, beat-'em-up and racing elements keep you busy but it's a bit easy.

BATMAN RETURNS
SEGA ◆ £49.99 ◆ 65% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
The Bat's back — as are the murky visuals. The Caped Crusader is slow and a devil to control, gameplay's repetitive but there's a challenge this time.

BATMAN: REVENGE OF THE JOKER
SUNSOFT ◆ £39.99 ◆ 59% ◆Tel 0101 714 891 4500
The laughing one has henchsprites everywhere but the comic version Batman has a multi-purpose Batarang. It's monotonous and *tough*. Some good graphics, though.

BATTLETOADS
TRADEWEST ◆ £39.99 ◆ 58% ◆ Tel 0101 903 874 2683
Pimple the Battletoad has been captured and one or two toad colleagues launch a rescue. Various types of level and colourful graphics are commendable but it starts very difficult and gets easier!

CLASSIC ARCADE COLLECTION (CD)
SEGA ◆ £42.99 ◆ 66% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
One winner — the original *Streets Of Rage* — but *Columns* has had its day, *Revenge Of Shinobi* is middle-of-the-road and they've taken the two-player option from *Golden Axe*.

CRÜEBALL
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 60% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Motley Crüe music and aggressive metallic graphics but (or should that be 'so'?) this is a dull pinball table. Few bumpers and ramps, progress is slow. Buy the next game…

DRAGON'S FURY
TENGEN/DOMARK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 92% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Three smooth-scrolling screens of mystical pinball 'table'. Thumping good sounds and fast, realistic ball movement bring it to life, and with a host of bonus rooms, you'll flip over the lastability! Who would have thought console pinball could be so much fun?

DJ BOY
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 32% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
As the Boy, skate and bash through levels. Graphics are drab, effects similarly basic and controls are unresponsive. Available for years on import, it's terribly old fashioned and deathly dull.

GADGET TWINS
IMAGITEC/GAMETEK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 0101 305 935 3995
Bop and Bump take to the skies to find their king's gem, collecting coins in order to buy better baddie-bashing gadgets. Bright, cartoony graphics, a big challenge and superb two-player option.

GREENDOG
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 69% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Greendog dodges animals or stuns them with a frisbee as he searches for the Lost Surfboard of the Ancients. He travels on skates or skateboard on alternate levels, adding flavour to a so-so cart.

MAKE MY VIDEO: KRIS KROSS
SONY IMAGESOFT ◆ £44.99 ◆ 70% ◆ TEL 0101 310 858 3777
Not exactly arcade, but it doesn't fit *any* category. Use three video screens and several effects to recreate videos request by 'listeners'. If you like the band, you'll love it, otherwise interest soon palls.

MARBLE MADNESS
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £34.99 ◆ 75% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Weird geometric landscapes are the home of weirder creatures, all out to stop the marble. Graphics are unusual but effective, controls and gameplay are unique. If only there were more levels…

OUTLANDER
MINDSCAPE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 0444 246333
In a post-nuclear world, hit the road… slowly, and nudge and shoot bikers. The action switches to scrolling beat-'em-up when you enter a village. An average *Mad Max* crash 'n' bash.

PAC-MANIA
DOMARK ◆ £29.99 ◆ 71% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Pac-man gets an update, receiving three-dimensional mazes and a jumping ability. Gameplay's simplistic but highly playable, helped by a nicely-shaded Pac sphere and toe-tapping music. Wonderful semi-nostalgia.

PAPERBOY
DOMARK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 49% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Trundle along diagonally-scrolling streets, throwing papers into mail boxes and avoiding odd people. Graphics and sound are quite close to the coin-op but the gameplay's novelty soon wanes.

PAPERBOY II
DOMARK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 55% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
More of the same, but you can choose your sex and launch papers both left and right — though this is unneccesary on individual sections. Lots of great speech but gameplay's strictly limited.

ROLLING THUNDER 2
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 77% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Become Secret Agent Leila or Albatross (or both) and infiltrate enemy bases, pumping adversaries full of lead and ducking into doorways. Large, realistically-animated sprites, tough but playable.

SAINT SWORD
TAITO ◆ £39.99 ◆ 65% ◆ Tel 0101 708 520 9280
Hack your way along levels and transform into a centaur, birdman or fishman! Collision detection's cruel but short, dull levels mean you won't care. Reasonable graphics, few effects.

TOXIC CRUSADERS
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 60% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Become a Crusader (or two) and skate along six levels, bashing baddies and collecting power-ups. Repetitive gameplay, iffy collision detection and bad control response send this to an early grave.

ARCADE ADVENTURE

Perfect for those who want to use equal parts of brain and digital dexterity. Two of the winners, *Prince Of Persia* and *Flashback*, sport the best MD animation ever.

ALEX KIDD IN THE ENCHANTED CASTLE
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 37% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Explore Paperock Planet, battling and chatting to various characters. Games of Paper, Scissors, Stone earns items to help you. Bland MS-like graphics, naff scrolling, forget-table effects, poor controls and insipid gameplay.

ANOTHER WORLD
VIRGIN/DELPHINE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 90% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255
An experiment gone wrong sends Lester to another world. Armed with his wits, a gun and stunning polygon animation, he tackles its dangers. Sharp reflexes and a sharp mind are required to conquer this atmospheric epic.

BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS
FLYING EDGE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Eek! The Space Mutes are plotting to take over the Earth! Bart uses a spray can and ingenuity to spoil the items they need. Neat sprites, bubbly muzak and Bart samples polish up this engaging cartoon-like adventure.

ECCO: THE DOLPHIN
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
The dolphin's chums have been 'napped. Ecco explores, consults glyphs and uses sonar to stun opponents. Superb graphics, evocative sounds and a strangely soothing challenge.

FLASHBACK
US GOLD/DELPHINE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 93% ◆ Tel 021 625 3366
Conrad's travelled to an alien planet to thwart their Earth-conquering plan. Many objects are collected and places visited, all richly coloured. Animation and attention to detail are unbelievable. The best of its kind.

NIGHT TRAP (CD)
SONY IMAGESOFT ◆ £54.99 ◆ 67% ◆ Tel 0101 310 858 3777
Controversy time! Scan different sections of a house and trigger traps to defend young women. It's a repetitive matter of finding enemy after enemy, but the sound's great and digitised video pleasing.

PRINCE OF PERSIA (CD)
BRODERBOUND ◆ £44.99 ◆ 69% ◆ Tel N/A
What else but save the princess? There's a good intro and a great set of eastern tunes but the graphics are mediocre for CD game and it doesn't play as well as the Master System version. Let the damsel croak.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST
SEGA/TECMAGIK ◆ £19.99 ◆ 51% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Traverse scrolling plains and vast caverns to find your loathed master. Keys, potions and weapons are collected, although fists are often used. Parallax scrolling and detailed sprites don't increase lastability.

SMASH TV
ACCLAIM ◆ £34.99 ◆ 72% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
One or two players explore the single screen rooms of a futuristic gameshow. One of the novelties is the ability to fire in one direction while running in another, vital for survival in this hectic blaster. A flawed conversion.

SPACE HARRIER II
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 55% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
The original began the trend for hydraulic chairs and cabinets in the arcades. Blastin' nasties and dodging obstacles has limited appeal as their patterns are soon learnt, but at this price it's okay as a piece of nostalgia.

SUNSET RIDERS
KONAMI ◆ £39.99 ◆ 84% ◆ Tel 081 429 2446
Back in the Wild West, one or two bounty hunters pump mean cowboys and meaner bosses full of lead, collecting ammo and cash along the way. Its lighthearted graphics and gameplay are appealing.

SUPER FANTASY ZONE
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 90% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Cute, bold and *very* colourful graphics hit you between the eyes! Spare parts and weapons shops are very necessary to survive this fast, tough shoot-'em-up. Addictive, take-no-prisoners blasting at its best.

SUPER THUNDER BLADE
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 36% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
In its day, the coin-op's graphics wowed gamers, but the same was never true of the MD's. Slow, jerky movement detracts rather than adds to the weak gameplay the coin-op's 3D graphics disguised.

THE TERMINATOR
VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255
First in 2029 then back in 1984, Kyle Reese defends Sarah Connor from a Terminator. There are plenty of ladders and stairs to negotiate and even more foes to blast. *Terminator* fans will love it, others should try it first.

TERMINATOR 2
ACCLAIM ◆£39.99 ◆ 92% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Direct gunsights and blow Terminators to scrap metal, but remember to collect ammo and gun coolant. This *Op Wolf* update is the best of its kind. Superb graphics, raucous sound and non-stop action. Even better with the Menacer.

THUNDER FORCE IV
TECNO SOFT ◆ £39.99 ◆ 88% ◆ Tel N/A
Following three respectable shoot-'em-ups, it's no surprise this is one of the best blasters around. Other than some slowdown, there's nothing to fault but plenty to enjoy. Stunning graphics, high quality sounds and addictive gameplay.

THUNDERSTORM FX (CD)
WOLFTEAM ◆ £39.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel N/A
A cartoon view from an attack chopper is overlayed with a gunsight, used to blast terrorists. *Thunderstorm FX*/*Cobra Command* is already looking crude compared to new releases but offers a hew hours' amusement.

TWIN COBRA
SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 52% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
It uses the changing icon method of power-ups — the weapon you get depends upon its colour when collected. Average graphics and sound but plenty of levels to keep you busy, if you can stay interested.

TWINKLE TALE
WAS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel N/A
Viewed from above and just behind the hero, there's an arcade adventure feel to the varied level designs and a numb feeling in your fingers after you tackle end-level guardians! For both beginners and experienced gamers.

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER
ACCOLADE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 081 877 0880
Armed with an automatic gun, laser whip, power lines and gyroscope mode, find yet more weapons as you destroy waves of dull mechanical opponents. An above-average platform blaster but disappointing licence.

ZERO WING
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 74% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Up against Cat's forces (no, not from *Red Dwarf*), you can use a tractor beam to grab enemies and launch them at others! Good use of colour, cool explosions and weapon effects, but gameplay's run-of-the-mill.

SPORTS

Balls of all sizes, shapes and textures feature in these games, the odd hockey, boxing and multi-event cart breaking the pattern.

THE AQUATIC GAMES
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 77% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
James Pond and his 'Aquabat' chums compete in running, jumping, seal-minding, shell-flipping and kipper-feeding events. Graphics are gorgeous, sounds are superb, but there's limited enjoyment, even with a few players.

ARCH RIVALS
FLYING EDGE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 71% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
A conversion of a two-on-two coin-op (the second basketballer controlled by the computer), it features superb cartoon intermissions but gameplay foibles. Limited gameplay against the computer, fun with a friend.

BULLS VS LAKERS AND THE NBA PLAYOFFS
EASN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 77% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Options up to yer eyeballs and a versatile control system ain't enough. It's a struggle to get into then is too samey to keep you interested. Some good animation and FX but odd music.

CALIFORNIA GAMES
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 74% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222
Up to nine players compete or practice half-pipe skateboarding, footbag, surfing, rollerskating and BMX racing. The different control methods are soon mastered but this mixed bag of events soon loses appeal.

CAL RIPKIN JR BASEBALL
MINDSCAPE ◆ £34.99 ◆ 66% ◆ Tel 0444 246333
Although there's not much of it, the crystal-clear speech is the only thing to differentiate this from the crowd: Exhibition, League and Home Run games, 18 teams, pitching variables, stick man fielders…

DAVID ROBINSON'S SUPREME COURT
ACCLAIM ◆ £34.99 ◆ 57% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Manual player selection and difficult stealing make defence a pain but beating the computer's easy. The court flips 45° at the halfway line, confusing all games. Aesthetically pleasing but the gameplay's lacking.

EURO CLUB SOCCER
VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255
Control any of 170 teams, enter the five-round European Cup then aim for the ultimate: the Super Cup. The action's viewed from the stands and all three buttons are used. Once you've got the hang of it, it's playable.

EVANDER HOLYFIELD'S 'REAL DEAL' BOXING
SEGA ◆ £49.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Customise your boxer, train him then hop in the ring and bash his opponent! Versatile yet easy-to-use controls, large boxers and realistic controls. Expensive and superceded by *Muhammad Ali* but give it a go.

FLAMING DODGEBALL KID
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 76% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Similar to volleyball, the basic idea's to hit members of the second team with the ball. A worthwhile alternative sport and well represented by sizeable Japanese cartoon graphics. Give it a play.

GRANDSLAM TENNIS
TELENET ◆ £34.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel N/A
Plenty of options: design a character, practice shots, compete in exhibitions, play doubles… All buttons are used but text book plays and tactics don't work. B1and graphics are the plain vanilla icing on the stodgy cake.

HARDBALL III
ACCOLADE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 081 877 0880
Although the rhythm's often mechanical, the running commentary adds life to this baseball sim. Piles of options but menus are used in gameplay, too. Expect more strategic elements than fast-paced sport.

JENNIFER CAPRIATI TENNIS
RENOVATION ◆ £39.99 ◆ 84% ◆ Tel 0101 408 982 2700
Oodles of options, nifty FX and smooth character and ball movement get Jenny's game off to a great start. The variety of shots, tournaments and two-player option make it the best MD tennis game.

JERRY GLANVILLE'S PIGSKIN FOOTBRAWL
RAZORSOFT ◆ £39.99 ◆ 59% ◆ Tel 0101 405 843 3505
American Football with a barbarian slant. The pitch is littered with tree stumps and rocks, the indoor arena has trap doors and *more* rocks. The cartoon violence gives a

and shoot or stun g uards. This wacky coin-op conversion features unusual Lego graphics and neat cooperative gameplay. Original, fast-paced fun.

CAPTAIN AMERICA

DATA EAST ◆ £39.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 0101 408 286 7080

Choose from four Avengers then use fists and weapons to tackle the Red Skull's thugs and super-accomplices. A suitably bright, cartoon-like, energetic game, it has loads of wacky speech.

CHAKAN

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 62% ◆ TEL 071 371 3000

Doomed to eternal life until he rids Earth of supernatural evil, use Chakan's twin swords to do just that. Controls are awkward, levels play and feel the same. Moody graphics, lukewarm gameplay.

CHIKI CHIKI BOYS

CAPCOM ◆ £49.99 ◆ 81% ◆ TEL 0101 4087 270 4000

Sword-swiping Chiki Boy becomes Flying and Sea Chiki in certain sections of this typically Japanese, cute and colourful romp. Varied graphics, plenty of hidden extras and tough levels.

CHUCK ROCK

VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 80% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255

Chuck's main weapon against five levels of dinosaurs is his belly-butt. He uses rocks as stepping stones and to kill baddies. Cheerful graphics, vertical and leftward sections and puzzle elements make this highly playable.

COOL SPOT

VIRGIN GAMES ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255

The red dot from 7-Up cans has to rescue spotty chums. Fizz-blasts dispatch crabs, mice, frogs and birds, small spots give essential coolness. Very slick but too similar to the superior *Global Gladiators*.

DECAPATTACK

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

Become a Mummy and use its heads to free an island! One head extends from the stomach, the other's thrown. Power-ups aid the quest against equally strange adversaries. The idea and graphics are great but it's too easy.

EX-MUTANTS

SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 85% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

As Ex-Mutant Ackroyd or Shannon, hack into mutants and rescue your mates. Comic-book graphics and cool sampled sounds complement easy-to-get-into, hard-to-master gameplay.

THE FLINTSTONES

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 87% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

Fred's family and friends have lost various items and it's down to him to recover them. He clubs dinosaurs and clings to ledges, later travelling by car and train. Great cartoon graphics and engaging action.

GALAHAD

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 77% ◆ Tel 0753 549442

Galahad's a vulnerable chap — *anyone* would be, set against these tough monsters. There's a neat selection of swords and armour but not enough continues. Gameplay grows on you, perhaps not quick enough.

GLOBAL GLADIATORS

VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 94% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255

Detailed foregrounds, neat graphical effects, slick presentation, wacky sprites and sounds. The eco-friendly gameplay's just as good. One of the most addictive platformers there is.

HOME ALONE

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 62% ◆ Tel 071 371 3000

As loveable Kevin (ha!), sledge around outdoors, invent weapons from household objects and set burglar traps. Good options and sound but gameplay's very repetitive. Original but flawed.

HUMANS

IMAGITEC/GAMETEK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 83% ◆ Tel 010 305 935 3995

Using different implements and types of caveman, traverse from platform to platform till the end of the level where a new invention awaits. Sounds simple but *Humans* is a unique brain-bending platform game.

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

US GOLD ◆ £39.99 ◆ 83% ◆ Tel 021 625 3366

As punching, whipping, leaping Indy, work your way through five levels to retrieve the Holy Grail. Platform puzzles, blandly-coloured but well defined sprites, crisp FX and a sizeable challenge.

JAMES BOND: THE DUEL

DOMARK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 80% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222

One of 007's worst enemies has kidnapped Prof Jones. First on a tanker, Bond finds hostages and bomb parts then tackles Jaws. Crisp graphics, nice sounds, realistic animation and four tough levels make Bond's mission a success.

JAMES POND II

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 86% ◆ Tel 0753 549442

As the cyborg Pond, negotiate countless screens in a bid to save Christmas. Pond squashes himself into a ball to kill enemies and stretches his mid-section to reach high platforms. Superlative graphics, sound and gameplay.

JEWEL MASTER

SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 74% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222

To free Mythgard from Jardine the Mad, use magic rings separately or combined for offence and defence. Backgrounds, sprites and sounds are all dull. Dumb assailants and samey gameplay. A wasted concept.

KID CHAMELEON

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 82% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222

Sucked into a video game, Kid headbutts blocks and jumps on monsters. A variety of masks give different identities and extra powers. Kid's sprites give flavour till gameplay builds up and takes the lead. Enough to keep you busy.

LITTLE MERMAID

SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

Play music to scare away sea creatures as you search for merpeople. When things get tough, call a fishy friend for help! Great graphics and soothing music set the Disney atmosphere. Best for younger players.

QUACKSHOT

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

Donald's on a globe-trotting treasure hunt and hops along platforms, 'plungering' enemies before plundering the goodies. Superb sprites and animation; this near-classic has enough depth for all the family.

RISKY WOODS

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 74% ◆ Tel 0753 549442

As robed Rohan, rescue monks, negotiate platforms and gather weapons. Terrific graphics but temperamental controls and a tiring onslaught of enemies is irritating. 'Kill or cure' pick-ups don't help.

ROLO TO THE RESCUE

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 93% ◆ Tel 0753 549 442

The elephant jumps on enemies and collects keys to free animals, which follow Rolo then use their distinctive talents individually. Cute, colourful graphics and deep, addictive platform action. A legend in its own buntime.

SONIC 2

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 95% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

A two-tailed fox helps Sonic speed around levels, collect rings and stop Robotnik. Play as Tails or in a two-player split-screen race. Backgrounds are bright and smooth-scrolling, sprites are full of character. Very impressive.

STRIDER II

US GOLD ◆ £39.99 ◆ 83% ◆ TEL 021 625 3366

With a laser sword and spider-like abilities, acrobatic Strider takes on impressive robotic adversaries on the way to the evil Master's lair. Great speech, tough levels but versatile controls.

TALESPIN

SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 68% ◆ Tel 071 371 3000

Baloo and little bear pal Kit are really crate! They've gotta find ten on each level and fire balls at baddies. An air battle breaks up simplistic yet frustratingly difficult gameplay. Pleasant graphics don't save it.

TAZ-MANIA

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 89% ◆ Tel 071 371 3000

Taz searches for legendary birds and their yummy eggs. Authentic Warner Bros cartoon graphics with sounds to match really make this game. Although it's a touch easy, its originality and character make it a classic.

TINY TOON ADVENTURES

KONAMI ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel 081 429 2446

Buster Bunny and his wacky companions star in an ultra-slick mixture of *Sonic* and *Super Mario World*. It's as fast as it is addictive; you're hooked as soon as you start. One of the best.

TOKI

SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 73% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222

Toki the Ape spits fireballs at enemies as he searches for his girl and a spell to restore his humanity. Happy music and good sprites spur things along, but although it's easy to get into, it gets repetitive.

WONDERDOG (CD)

CORE DESIGN ◆ £44.99 ◆ 89% ◆ Tel 0332 297797

WonderDog races through seven levels, throwing stars at odd animals. Wings, happy pills and bones are collected and secret levels found. Superb sprites and animation, smooth eight-way scrolling and hum-along CD sounds.

WORLD OF ILLUSION

SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel 071 371 3000

Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck use magic sheets to blow away assailants. Teamwork and special features help them. Superb sprites and animation, loads of tunes and addictive play are only tainted by relatively low lastability.

PUZZLE GAMES

Pure thought and deductive reasoning (almost) replace fancy graphics — with the exception of Sherlock's digitised video and Krusty's winning cartoon sprites at 93%!

CLUE

SCULPTURED S/WARE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 54% ◆ Tel N/A

'It was Professor Plum, with the candlestick, in the study,' and similar accusations. Amusing graphic interludes and a variety of remarkably fitting tunes but you can't beat the real board game.

GREAT WALDO SEARCH

THQ SOFTWARE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 25% ◆ Tel 0101 818 591 1615

Magnifying glass icon at the ready, search for scrolls and bonuses then the bespectacled drip in the red and white scarf — Waldo. Even bearing in mind its for children, *Waldo*'s horribly simple.

JEOPARDY

GAMETEK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 40% ◆ Tel 0101 305 935 3995

Well presented but questions soon repeat and have an American bias. Answers have to be entered letter by letter and spelling errors aren't excused; computer players aren't afflicted. Jolly music, though.

KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE

FLYING EDGE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 93% ◆ Tel 0962 877788

Position blocks, tube sections, fans and springs to direct dumb rats, while using custard pies to kill patrolling enemies. Mind-scrambling puzzles, madcap platform action and hidden rooms to find.

LEMMINGS

SEGA/SUNSOFT ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

Use limited numbers of digging, tunneling, bridge-building, climbing and floating lemmings to overcome obstacles. Loads of levels and tough yet incredibly addictive gameplay make *Lemmings* unmissable.

SHERLOCK HOLMES, CONSULTING DETECTIVE (CD)

ICOM/SLEUTH ◆ £44.99 ◆ 86% ◆ Tel N/A

Consult suspects and colleagues, travelling around Olde London as you do so, and reconstruct one of three crimes from the facts you glean. FMV and CD sound lend credibility and humour.

WHEEL OF FORTUNE

GAMETEK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 62% ◆ Tel 0101 305 935 3995

A tiled wall hides a (supposedly) familiar phrase. Spin the wheel to set a cash value and pick a letter. If it's in the phrase, the letter's revealed. Guess till your wrong or solve the puzzle. Dull sound, dull graphics, dull gameplay...

RACERS

Hands on the steering, pedal to the metal. Jostle for position and lean into those corners. Swear when computer cars cut you up and steal the lead...

AYRTON SENNA'S SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX 2

SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 88% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

The original was great, this is better. In addition to 16 'real' tracks, Senna designed two special tracks and had snippets of his speech digitised. Speed and scrolling are top notch and the car handles well.

CHAMPIONSHIP PRO-AM

TRADEWEST ◆ £39.99 ◆ 70% ◆ Tel 0101 903 874 2683

An angled aerial view scrolls to track remote control-style trucks. Steering's relative to the car so controls are confusing. Fun when mastered but tracks are samey. There's no two-player option — what folly!

FERRARI GRAND PRIX

FLYING EDGE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 61% ◆ Tel 0962 877788

Five control systems, five custom car options, choice of weather, two-player split-screen game, realistic race series... This has plenty of features but the game itself is plain and too unforgiving.

HARD DRIVIN'

TENGEN ◆ £34.99 ◆ 68% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222

Fast 3D graphics portray the wild tracks, cars and trucks in this accurate coin-op conversion. It's a race against time and the Phantom Photon but a mere two tracks mean it doesn't match up to today's standards.

JAGUAR XJ220 (CD)

CORE DESIGN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 65% ◆ Tel N/A

A split-screen display accomodates two players, if desired, and a track editor allows the position of your own curves, dips and obstacles. The soundtrack's brilliant but perspective's questionable — as is playability.

LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 0753 549442

A split-screen display from the traditional racing viewpoint where a selection of tracks and weather conditions await. The two-player game's simply brilliant and provides many laughs, so if you want a head-to-head racer...

MICRO MACHINES

CODEMASTERS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 90% ◆ Tel 0926 814132

Steer miniaturised vehicles around odd courses such as a breakfast table, bath and garden path, viewed from above. Colourful graphics, smooth scrolling and superb controls make *MM* one of the most playable racers.

OUTRUN

SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 55% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222

Long in the tooth and lack lustre nowadays. Choose your path across the States and put your foot down, taking in the colourful backgrounds, excellent music and speech. Limited courses and shallow gameplay are its downfall.

OUTRUN 2019

SEGA ◆ £37.99 ◆ 51% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

It runs at fine speed but roads twist unconvincingly and roadside obstacles jerk into view. The futuristic setting offers nothing new and tracks follow predictable patterns. The yawns soon follow.

ROAD BLASTERS FX (CD)

WOLFTEAM ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel N/A

You're out for revenge! Sometimes staggeringly-fast cartoon animation is used for both through-the-windscreen and cut-away action. Wild stunts to make you gasp and versatile controls, for this type of CD game.

ROAD RASH II

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 86% ◆ Tel 0753 549442

If you were born to be wild, head out on the highway astride a high-tech cycle, clubs and chains at the ready. Good 3D and sense of movement, a lot of fun and a big challenge. Don't buy if you have the original.

SUPER HANG-ON

SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000

The age-old aim: reach checkpoints in time. The road scrolls quickly and smoothly and the illusion of movement's convincing. The only fault is the bike's a little sluggish to handle, but at this price who's complaining?

SUPER OFF-ROAD

BALLISTIC ◆ £29.99 ◆ 68% ◆ Tel 081 877 0880

Drive small but perfectly formed 4x4 trucks around rugged single-screen courses. Computer is opposition is too tough and although you can update five vehicle attributes, it doesn't do much good.

TEST DRIVE II: THE DUEL

BALLISTIC ◆ £39.99 ◆ 65% ◆ Tel 081 877 0880

A Ferrari, Porsche and Lamborghini are at your disposal in a race against the computer to Rusti's Garage. The cars handle well but the scenery's so dull you may as well be stationary.

RPGs

A land to free, a magical item to find, a galaxy to liberate! In-depth adventures all have their rewards — and Virgin's high-tech *Corporation* gets 91%!

THE ADVENTURES OF WILLY BEAMISH (CD)

DYNAMIX ◆ £39.99 ◆ 58% ◆ Tel 0734 303322

As American schoolboy Willy, escape detention then get into surreal scrapes with your sister and dead grandfather. Cartoon graphics, fully characterised speech but horrific loading times cripple amusing gameplay.

BUCK ROGERS: COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £49.99 ◆ 82% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Various space-faring alliances face one another as Buck selects a crew of various skills. Plenty of gameplay and detail for RPG fans but more could've been made of the space scenario.

CADASH
TAITO ◆ £32.99 ◆ 60% ◆ Tel 0101 708 520 9280
Become a fighter or mage and go a-roving! Pretty slowly, mind you, and you'll be hard-pushed to find the role-playing elements. You're left with a weak platform game with nicely drawn but poorly animated graphics.

CORPORATION
VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel 081 960 2255
It's you versus robots and mutants. Superlative 3D rooms and corridors and a host of gadgets firmly set the atmosphere. Defence systems are shut down with a mixture of firepower and logic. A massive challenge.

HOLLOW WORLD
SEGA ◆ £59.99 ◆ 67% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Scour the newly-formed Hollow World for threats. Villagers are nattered to, armour and weapons upgraded and special objects discovered. Nice graphics but no atmosphere and little to keep the experienced adventurer busy.

RINGS OF POWER
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £49.99 ◆ 85% Tel 0753 549442
Travel on foot and by Dino, Landbeast and boats to find the Rod Of Creation. Slick programming and great isometric graphics are the first attraction, in-depth tasks and a massive challenge follow.

SHINING IN THE DARKNESS
SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 89% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
The duff storyline is forgotten when the superbly designed and coloured graphics flash onscreen. Magic and different fightings tactics defeat monsters, lateral thinking's needed at other times. One of the best Sega RPGs.

SUPER HYDLIDE
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 47% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Small ugly graphics are a bad sign. You die frequently for no apparent reason, then run out of time and patience. RPG afficionados will find enough to stay occupied but there are better on the market.

SHOOT-'EM-UP

Whether aboard a helicopter, space ship or plane, or running along as a soldier, robot, wizard or cop, blasters have as many victims as they do fans.

AFTERBURNER III (CD)
CRI/SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
A CD sequel to the coin-ops. Jet fighter sprites look good and move realistically but ground graphics are crude and dull. There's great music and effects but not enough to do. Spend your loose change on the real thing.

ALIEN 3
PROBE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 92% ◆ Tel N/A
Part exploration, part shoot-'em-up, slaphead Ripley's got her work cut out for her. Grisly graphics and superlative sounds set the scene for a heart-stopping battle. Be quick on the trigger but keep an eye on your ammo.

ATOMIC RUNNER
DATA EAST ◆ £39.99 ◆ 66% ◆ Tel 0101 408 286 7080
Detailed, original backgrounds mix ancient artefacts with technology. But great graphics do not a game make: it's unimaginative, controls are very awkward and 15 continues put paid to lastability.

BIO-HAZARD BATTLE
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 82% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Aside from its toughness, it's the unusual creepy-crawly enemies (hence the 'bio') which set this aside from the average blaster. Sprites are superior, backgrounds a touch bland, but it's playable.

DEATH DUEL
RAZORSOFT ◆ £39.99 ◆ 30% ◆ TEL 0101 405 843 3505
Great pics between levels but graphics are otherwise childish in this cursor-controlled shooter. Duff FX, restrictive controls and boring gameplay. Taking pot-shots at cowardly monsters ain't fun…

DESERT STRIKE
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 92% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Pilot an Apache 'copter on five taxing missions, taking on (and out) anti-aircraft units and SAM sites. The missions are well put together; superb sprites, responsive controls and realistic effects bring them to life. A classic blast.

EMPIRE OF STEEL
FLYING EDGE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 72% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Blast seven shades of **** out of Lemmy! Om, sorry, you set against the Motorhead *Empire*. Well shaded parallax backgrounds, oodles of weapons, pumping tunes, great effects and speech, compact sprites… A pity it's so easy!

FINAL ZONE
RENOVATION ◆ £39.99 ◆ 73% ◆ Tel 0101 408 982 2700
As Howie Bowie (sic), climb into a powersuit and stomp through seven war zones. Controls are a pain and plenty of wandering and repetition is required. Dull backdrops, good sprites but there's often slowdown. Missed potential.

FIRE SHARK
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 62% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Strange: you fly a bi-plane yet can acquire three-way fire, Wide Shot and Super Shot — a four-way laser! Scrolling's smooth but backgrounds are similar, sounds are irritating and it's too easy and unexciting.

GALAXY FORCE 2
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 42% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Once, it was an impressive, expensive coin-op. Now it's a cheap and pretty nasty cart. The ship handles badly, there's sprite flicker and an irritating voice babbles at you during tunnel sections. Too easy.

GLEY LANCER
NCS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel N/A
On paper it's a standard scrolling shooter — power-ups, end-of-level craft etc — the only difference being a selectable permanent add-on. Good use of colour, infinite continues and a *hard* Hard setting. A good, slick blast.

G-LOC
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 70% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Don't expect anything as flash as the coin-op, but as a straight-laced shoot-'em-up, *G-LOC*'s entertaining. A fast, smooth blast with sampled voices, realistic effects and presentation pics.

GYNOUG
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
A graphic treat: smooth, parallax-scrolling backgrounds, dazzling ripple effects, big, well animated enemies and no slowdown. The sounds aren't bad and the six levels will keep you playing.

HELLFIRE
SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 92% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
A galaxy-saving mission, various power-ups and end-of-level motherships. So far, so predictable. But the ship has unique directable firepower, which adds strategy, and gameplay's very tough, in an unputdownable way.

JUNGLE STRIKE
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 94% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Pilot a Comanche helicopter, combat hovercraft, Stealth fighter and Special Forces motorbike to stop a madman. The graphics and sound are staggeringly realisitic and the missions are all challenging and fun. Superb stuff.

MERCS
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 83% ◆Tel 071 373 3000
Jog along vertically-scrolling levels, *Ikari Warriors*-style, and let fly with various collectable firearms. Seven brightly-coloured levels provide an unoriginal but playable challenge.

MUSHA
SEISMIC ◆ £39.99 ◆ 70% ◆ Tel N/A
Frog-like robot armour flies up few but lengthy levels; by the time you're used to them, you run out of game! Great visuals — big, colourful, smooth scrolling — but too easy and unoriginal.

PREDATOR 2
ARENA/ACCLAIM ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
A Predator's on the loose but Harrigan's on his tail. He blasts drug dealers and finds hostages on isometric 3D levels before the alien makes things difficult. Small sprites and bland backdrops, unoriginal and unexciting gameplay.

SEWER SHARK (CD)
SONY IMAGESOFT ◆ £44.99 ◆ 84% ◆ Tel 0101 310 858 3777
Fly along FMV sewer tunnels, blast Radigators, bats and assorted mutated creatures while keeping an ear open for directions. It's great to look at and the digitised actors perform well, but lastability isn't good.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST II
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 66% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
The hero's in search of his sis. Enemies are dispatched with a ball and chain, objects are found, used and traded. Graphics and sound are impressive but gameplay's tough and puzzle solutions are tenuous.

TIME GAL (CD)
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 68% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
To help guide Gal through time, react to globes at the screen's edge. Japanese cartoon action portrays dinosaurs, WWII planes, pirates, sharks and the undead. Great fun but sadly limited.

TOEJAM & EARL
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 90% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Three-legged ToeJam and fat Earl search for parts of their ship while gathering 'presents' which fend off adversaries. An astonishing array of wacky sound samples and cartoon graphics make it a feast for the senses. Weird — but cool!

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
As an Acme detective, search for Carmen and her henchmen. An icon-driven control system's used to gather clues which lead to various locations. Digitised pics and cartoon sprites but it's the deductive gameplay that hooks.

WHERE IN TIME IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £49.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
Use the enclosed encyclopaedia to find clues to historic times and places. A pointer system enters clues to narrow down and capture suspects. Graphics are bland but 80 missions keep you busy and teach you a few things, too.

WONDERBOY V
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 81% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222
'Boy explores Monster Land in arcade sections, slaying monsters to earn money for weapons, magic spells and items. A relaxed pace but the mixture of arcade and RPG works well. Battery backup keeps you going.

BEAT-'EM-UP

If inflicting black eyes, bruises and broken limbs is your idea of fun, there's sure to be something here you'll enjoy. Several involve platform sections but body blows are king.

CYBORG JUSTICE
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 78% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Bash mechanoids' bolts. A number of robot-rattling options, including 'build your own', and superb animation.

DOUBLE DRAGON
BALLISTIC ◆ £29.99 ◆ 39% ◆ Tel 081 877 0880
Jimmy and/or Billy Lee pound through thug after thug, level after level, to rescue they're favourite girl. It doesn't take them long because *DD*'s easy, not to mention outdated.

DOUBLE DRAGON III
ACCLAIM ◆ £39.99 ◆ 64% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Jimmy and brother go in search of magical gems which bring people back from the dead. Great graphics and sound but limited moves and repetitivegameplay.

FATAL FURY
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
From eight ugly, muscly streetfighters, one-on-one bouts are arranged. Massive characters, minimal slowdown. Moves take time to master. The computer's a good opponent but a second player's better.

FISTS OF STEEL
SAGE'S CREATION ◆ £44.99 ◆ 29% ◆ Tel 0101 415 346 2278
A crusty coin-op featuring cute dwarven fighters. But their animation is pitiful and FX are dreadful. There are only two moves you can't retaliate once an opponent starts laying in. A loser.

GOLDEN AXE II
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 84% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222
One or two players become a barbarian, dwarf or Amazon woman to retrieve the axe. Basically the same as the original but with tougher, faster enemies and controllable magic level.

KING OF THE MONSTERS
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 51% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Become a Godzilla lookalike, rock creature, mutated insect or giant superhero and mangle Japanese towns while battling another monster. Frivolous graphics for frivolous gameplay but it passes a few hours.

LAST BATTLE
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 18% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
One of the first MD games — and it shows. Standard walk and punch gameplay, few moves and awful sound, *Last Battle* is the standard reply to 'What's the worst game you've played?'

MAZIN SAGA
SEGA ◆ 39.99 ◆ 67% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
In a post-apocalypse world, command the Mazinger-Z armour in *Golden Axe*-style levels, switching to *SF II* one-on-one at the end of each. Graphics are amazing but gameplay lacks 'oomph'.

PIT FIGHTER
DOMARK/TENGEN ◆ £49.99 ◆ 76% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Become Buzz, Kato or Ty and fight down and dirty with ten fighters. Digitised graphics and sound add realism as you pound the controls, learn moves and grab handy objects. Pricey and crude but still exciting.

POWER ATHLETE
KANEKO ◆ £39.99 ◆ 57% ◆ Tel 0101 708 808 1370
A *Street Fighter II* wannabe. In one-player mode, you're stuck as Joe, and there are few moves. It's too easy but there are plenty of options and graphics are crisp and smooth.

SPLATTERHOUSE 2
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 41% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
Transform into a steroid-poppin' psycho to rescue your girlfriend. A variety of horrific beasts attack; retaliate with fists, feet, staffs and chainsaws.

STREETS OF RAGE II
SEGA ◆ £44.99 ◆ 93% ◆ Tel 071 373 3000
The best got better. The four heroes have many moves and several objects to maim the mobsters who stand between them and Mr X. Big, fast sprites, parallax, brilliant music and sampled effects. An epic bone-crusher.

TMNT: THE HYPERSTONE HEIST
KONAMI ◆ £39.99 ◆ 79% ◆ Tel 081 429 2446
Konami's first MD game is nothing amazing (it *is* only the Turtles) but the cartoon graphics, sense of humour and frantic action are enough to keep anyone happy.

WWF WRESTLEMANIA
ACCLAIM ◆ £39.99 ◆ 72% ◆ Tel 0962 877788
Grappling fans are well catered for, with one-on-one, tag team, tournament and Survivor Series matches and eight WWF wrestlers. Slick presentation, big sprites and many moves put Wrestlemania in your hands.

FLIGHT SIMS

Get away from it all. Fly into the blue and above the clouds, relax… before pumping several dozen rounds into an unsuspecting enemy fighter! Not much choice, yet.

F22 INTERCEPTOR
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.95 ◆ 80% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
F22 takes the complication out of flying — you automatically refuel and don't take off/land, unless you choose otherwise. What's left is fast action and lots of it. Slick 3D and good FX put you in the picture.

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91% ◆ Tel 0753 549442
An Apache also at your disposal, missions involve many vehicles, weather conditions and strike times. Impressive external views and rockets/explosions.

MIG-29
DOMARK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 84% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Take a MiG on five varied combat missions around the Middle East. The polygon graphics are detailed and fairly fast, the soundtrack's great and pull-down menus easily used. Realism and depth for your money.

STEEL TALONS
TENGEN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 62% ◆ Tel 081 780 2222
Pilot an Apache attack helicopter on 12 missions in an attempt to earn Steel Talons membership. Good vector graphics but perspective and occasional sluggishness puts you off. Uneventful; missions are easy to give up on.

PLATFORM

Conquer villains and strange lands in leaps and bounds. A range of styles is represented here, from the strategy of *Humans* to *Captain America*'s heroics and aquatic antics of *The Little Mermaid*.

BONANZA BROS
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 75% ◆ Tel 071 373 2222
As Robo and/or Mobo, break into buildings, collect swag

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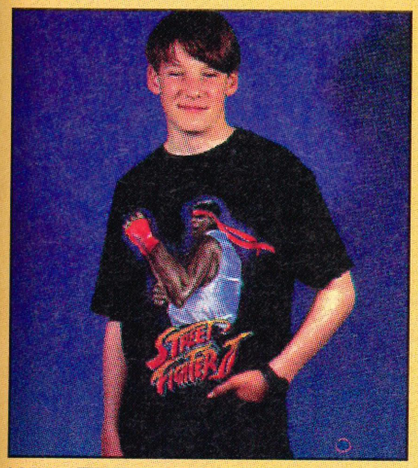
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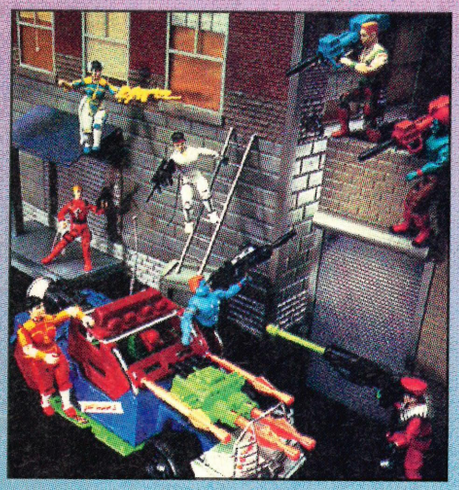
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SNES, two joypads, with some games. Desperate to buy, pay between £40 and £50. Contact Tony on 0992 442278.

I'm after old Commodore CARTRIDGE games. Willing to pay up to £7.50. Send list to: Jamie Hutchinson, 77 Nunburn-Holme Park, Hull HU5 5YN.

Games up to £20 for Game Boy, Game Gear, SNES and Sega Master System (UK only). Also good condition machine required. Ring 081 503 4931.

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Game Gear, seven games, AC adaptor, mags, still boxed, perfect condition. Sorry, buyer must collect. Tel 0946 66277, bargain at only £130. Write to Andrew McManus, 1 Solway View, Sunnyhill, Whitchaven, Cumbria CA28.

Game Gear for sale with four games, including Donald Duck, also with case and two-player adaptor, £99. Tel Chris on 081 979 3346.

Sega MD for sale, four games including Ecco, Quackshot, Sonic and Bonanza Bros, all boxed. Very good condition, £130. Phone Tom after 5pm on 0474 815171.

Sega Mega Drive games, X-Men £23 and Jungle Strike £25, both games as new. Tel 0626 776773.

C64, boxed, includes joystick, 25+ magazines, 250+ games, music maker, bargain at £175 ono. Call John on 0254 670481 after 5pm, worth over £500.

For sale, Pandavert fast radio-control buggy, includes radio equipment and charger, vgc. Eight runs only. Ring Tristan on 0865 513328, weekends only.

Mega Drive games for sale: European Club Soccer £20, Smash TV £20, F22 Interceptor £20, Thunderforce II and Sonic, £12 each. Ring Andy on 0935 78958.

Game Gear plus six games for sale. Also comes with magnifier and adaptor. Will sell for £129 altogether, but will sell separate. Ring 0562 886526.

Mega Drive tips book, printed using a Mac computer, with 100+ tips. Send SAE and £1 to David Johnston, 70 Norse Rd, Scotstown, Glasgow G14 9HT.

Lynx 2 and one game, £40, plus many other games, £15 each. Ring Spencer on 081 367 9346 (5–9pm).

A600, printer, games, joysticks and external disk drive, all for sale. Phone John on 0279 600770.

Mega Drive games for sale, Splatterhouse 2 £15, Predator 2 £15, Twin Hawk £10, Rambo 3 £15, Galaxy Force 2 £10. Tel Reading 574299.

Mega Drive, eight games fully boxed, and SNES with three games, fully boxed with converter, £166 each. Tel 0865 390760, buyer must collect unless in Oxfordshire area.

Sega Master System II with two control pads, joystick and Aliens 3, Wonderboy 3, Shinobi, Alex Kidd and Pro Wrestling. £90 ono. Ring 0792 893091.

For sale, MS II, seven games, sell for £135. Games include Batman, Alex Kidd, Terminator, Op Wolf (light gun), World Soccer, Sonic 2. Contact Tim on Newbury 71312.

Sega Master System, six games, three controllers, 12 magazines. Worth £250, will sell for £75. Ring 0652 633319, Humberside area only.

Sega Master system II, two control pads plus eight good games, vgc, £80 ono. Phone after 6pm on 0734 752959.

Oi! I have Issue 1 of Sega Force, £15 ono. Also Issue 7, £5. Call 0757 638630.

Mega Drive games Warpspeed £27, Powermonger £25, Herzog Zwei £20. All excellent condition. Phone Andy on 0257 268047.

Mega Drive, two joypads and case, with Sonic 1&2, Micro Machines, Mickey & Donald, £180. Call after 4pm on 071 381 1290.

Bargains! Master System games, Sonic, Castle of Illusion, Rocky, Spider-Man, £10 each, Sonic 2, Donald Duck, Chuck Rock, £13 each, clear all for £70! Ring Keith on 061 761 6367.

Swap or sell eight MS games, four GG games and one MD game. I'm open for all offers. Please phone Nathan on 0532 789891.

For sale, Road Rash II £20, Super Kick Off £25, Hardball 3 £25. Please write to Martin Harrington, 30 Chrismas Ave, Aldershot, Hants GU12 4PJ.

Atari Lynx, five games, boxed with instructions. Worth £230, will sell for £50. Phone Grant on 0603 737465.

Rainbow Islands and New Zealand Story for the Mega Drive. Both are in excellent condition, boxed with instructions, have them both for £125, no splits! Collectors' items. Phone Steven on 0768 899773.

Atari 520 STE 'Xtra pack', double-sided drive, joypad, mouse, word processor, £600 of software including F1 Grand Prix, RoboCop 3, Jimmy White Snooker, MicroProse Golf. Worth £850, sell for £500 ono. Ring Michael on 071 704 2914 before 7pm.

Mega Drive, excellent condition, boxed with seven games, including D Strike & J Strike, two joypads, £195 ono. Phone Lewis on 0834 871 969.

Game Gear with no games, £45. Phone Matthew on 0495 215950 now!

Mega Drive, good condition, including Flashback and Ecco. Six months old, two joypads, sell for £200. Contact Andrew on 0760 338790, buyer must collect.

Jap/US compatible British Mega Drive with Sonic 1&2, World Of Illusion, Desert Strike, Streets Of Rage 2, Alien 3, NHLPA '93, Wrestlemania and Cool Spot. Two joypads included, only £130 ono. Tel Mike on 0933 704414.

Will sell John Madden '93 for £30 or will swap for any good games. Phone Paul on 051 526 0016. Used twice, unwanted gift.

Amiga for sale, boxed with joysticks, mouse, built-in modulator, lots of games, including Body Blows, Super Frog, Chaos Engine. Vgc, eight months old, sell for £295. Ring 061 653 9321.

PEN PALS

Jemima, I've lost your address, please write to me with it. John of Skegness.

11-year-old girl looking for male or female pen pal, any age, photo if possible. I will reply to all letters. Write soon to: Kate Smith, 61 Belmont Drive, Stoke Gifford, Bristol BS12 6US.

Two totally awesome babes looking for two boys aged 13 to 15. Please include recent photo. Write to Catherine & Collette, 79 Boundary Rd, Cheadle SK8 2WE.

Wanted, pen pals. I am a 19-year-old girl, age between 15–25 approx. Write to Vicky Crump, 80 Meadow Rd, Yeovil, Somerset BA21.

13-year-old boy looking for female pen pals 13+. Please send recent photo to: Paul Williams, 30 Trelawney Rd, St Ives, Cornwall.

34-year-old golden oldie seeks friends, any area, nationality, overseas welcome, interests Mega Drive, music, reading. Send photo if possible to: Douglas Browne, 60 Rannoch Place, Castlepark, Irvine, Ayrshire.

Fun-loving 21-year-old lad looking for pen pals. Photo if possible and all letters answered. Please write to: Chris, 214 Stockport Rd, Ashton, Lancs OL7 ONS.

Looking for a good laugh? Look no further if you're female, 14+, write to: Ian, 38 Lawson Street, Kirkcaldy, Fife KY1 3JB.

9-year-old boy seeks pen pal his age. Likes Zool and Sonic, owns a Master System. Write to: Robert Bealey, 51 Hardy Ave, Yateley, Camberley, Surrey GU17.

Any 16–20-year-old girls wanting lighthearted conversation with a red-hot 18-year-old male, write to 'Sonic', 3 Battlesbrook Rd, Old Heath CO2 8EQ.

user groups

Sports games enthusiasts interested in serious club competitions in NW area. For details, send SAE to Steve, 10 Cronton Park Avenue, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 9DJ.

SWAPS

Swap Atari Lynx handheld, six games, carry bag and power adaptor for Amiga computer. Phone Paul on 081 593 4670 (Dagenham or London area).

I will swap my Road Rash, Spider-Man and Sonic 1 for Mortal Kombat or Flashback on Mega Drive. Must live in or around Hull, otherwise swapper must collect. Tel 0482 568874.

I'll swap Flashback or The Immortal for Mega-lo-Mania or Jungle Strike, or sell The Immortal for £20, California Games £15. Tel 0532 393775.

I will swap David Robinson Supreme Court Basketball, OutRun or PGA Tour Golf for Fatal Fury or NHLPA Hockey '93. Call Steven on 0651 862688.

I will swap my Game Boy with carry case and six games for SNES with one game and two controllers. Phone Gravesend 567793.

Want to swap Spider-Man for F22 Interceptor on the Mega Drive, or LHX Attack Chopper. Ring Philip on 0691 655579 between 8pm to 9pm.

Master System with nine games, including Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and Rastan, two control pads, light phaser and joystick. Worth £289 but will sell for £120 ono or swap for Mega Drive with three or four games. Phone Tom on 081 893 1209 after 5pm, please.

Swap Mega Drive Menacer, five games, two joysticks for Amiga 500/500+, printer. Small cash adjustment also required. Phone Alan on 0430 441835, Humberside area collected.

Will swap Castle Of Illusion for Sonic 2 on the Game Gear, or OutRun for Sonic 2 on Master. Ring 0624 861408, ask for Ross.

Atari Lynx games wanted, will buy or swap for Mega Drive games, including Dragon's Fury, a 93% top arcade game. Write to: Neil Cooper, 81 Wilton Ave, Franche, Kidderminster DY11 5QE.

Swap my SNES plus five games (incl SFII) and convertor for (Eng) Mega-CD and game(s). Will sell for £200 ono. Phone Dan on 0977 555331.

I wanna swap Bart Vs The Space Mutants for ToeJam & Earl or Batman (other games considered). Phone Allister on 0432 274769.

Swap my Speedball 2, Star Control, Bulls Vs Lakers or The Immortal for your Cyborg Justice, PGA 2, Streets Of Rage 2 or Mega-lo-Mania. Phone Paul on 0606 883905.

Will swap Mega Drive plus two joypads and four games for Amiga 500 and some games. Phone after 8.30pm on 0282 457812.

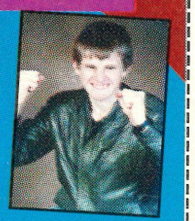
Swap Ecco for PGA Golf II and Mystical Fighters for LHX, Lotus Turbo or Rolling Thunder 2, must be near Edinburgh area. Ring 5522065.

Swap Mega Drive game LHX Attack Chopper for Micro Machines, Cool Spot, Jungle Strike, Road Rash 2 or Ecco. Phone David on 0202 884157.

Mega Drive with Sonic, NHLPA '93, Road Rash, Dragon's Fury and WWF for your SNES with SFII and F1 Exhaust Heat. Tel 0268 752827.

I would like to swap my Master System II (without box) with two games for a NES. Please write to Kevin Mowatt,12 Shakespeare House, Lime Grove E4 6PY.

SAD AD



This delightful photo of ex-editorial assistant Kevin Bailey will soon be winging its way to the sender of this month's saddest ad, 'Sonic' of Old Heath (see 'Pen Pals'). Hiding behind a hopelessly unimaginative nickname, Sonic's unlikely to gain (let alone hold) the interest of any girls, but at least he'll be able to chat to this pic of Kev.

CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

Send this coupon to: The Classified Department, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW. For private use ONLY. No trade ads accepted. The Managing Editor reserves the right to alter or refuse ads which do not conform to acceptable standards (but they'd have to be pretty damn shocking, as he's a birrova yob on the quiet).

PLEASE TICK WHICH CATEGORY YOU'D LIKE YOUR AD TO APPEAR UNDER:

FOR SALE	☐	**SWAPS**	☐
ITEMS WANTED	☐	**PEN PALS**	☐
UCER GROUPS	☐	**OTHER**	☐

I would like my classified ad to read:

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

.....**Postcode:**.....

STRAY BULLETS

Another sodding page to write, a good excuse to print some shite. Another heap of crappy dross (they're all for real, but who gives a toss?). Another… oh bugger it, I can't be bothered to write in rap.

Stray Bullets is yet another attempt at upsetting the entire industry by printing curious quotes that gave us a cheap laugh. They're all entirely genuine, too, whatever the libel lawyers tell you…

'On August 13, I raced to my local newsagents to buy *Sega Pro*. Upon opening it, I got a strange whiff of sick…'
Reader's letter,
Sega Pro, Nov 1993

'Thirty pages? Ooh, about ten minutes, mate'
Matthew Uffindell, Production Bloke, MEGA MACHINES

'BULLS**T FREE'
Advert for *Mega* magazine.
But do they mean 'with every purchase'?

130
130

'THRILL to the complicated road systems.'
Dominik Diamond, the *GamesMaster* book

'Warren, say something funny'
Desperate Stray Bullets compiler

'No, I *still* haven't seen a copy!'
Caroline Stokes, PR Star, Sony Imagesoft

'Very addictive indeed… 91%'
Sega Mega Drive Advanced Gaming on Microcosm. How do they know? At the time of writing, it isn't even finished!

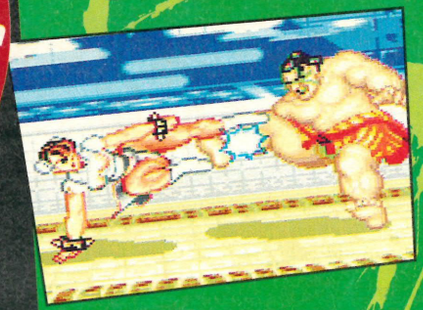
'I just made the best deal ever — I swapped my Mega Drive for a C64!'
Intellectually-challenged COMMODORE FORCE reader

'And don't come back. Ever!'
Darren Fisher, Managing Director, Namco UK

'Buy *Cosmic Spacehead*!'
Richard Eddy, Codemasters
— about 500 times

'How many sugars, mister?'
Milo Jackson, Ram-Raider, MEGA MACHINES

NEX MUMPH





Eternal Champions goes up against *Street Fighter II* — could Sega's biggest-ever beat-'em-up be all mouth and no trousers? Or will it wee-wee over the World Warriors?

THE FEB ISSUE OF MEGA MACHINES HITS THE STREETS ON JANUARY 6th — BUT DON'T BUY IT… SUBSCRIBE INSTEAD, YA TIGHT-WAD!

MEGA machines

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BIG RESPECT DUE THIS ISH:
ALISON DIMBLEBY (for our ultimately challenging day at her school)
IMPACT EDITIONS (for letting us use their imagesetter)
SEGA EUROPE (for Eternal Champions - thanks!)

BIG DISRESPECT DUE THIS ISH:
FAT DAVE ('cos we 'ate 'im!)
IAN OSBORNE (for being born)

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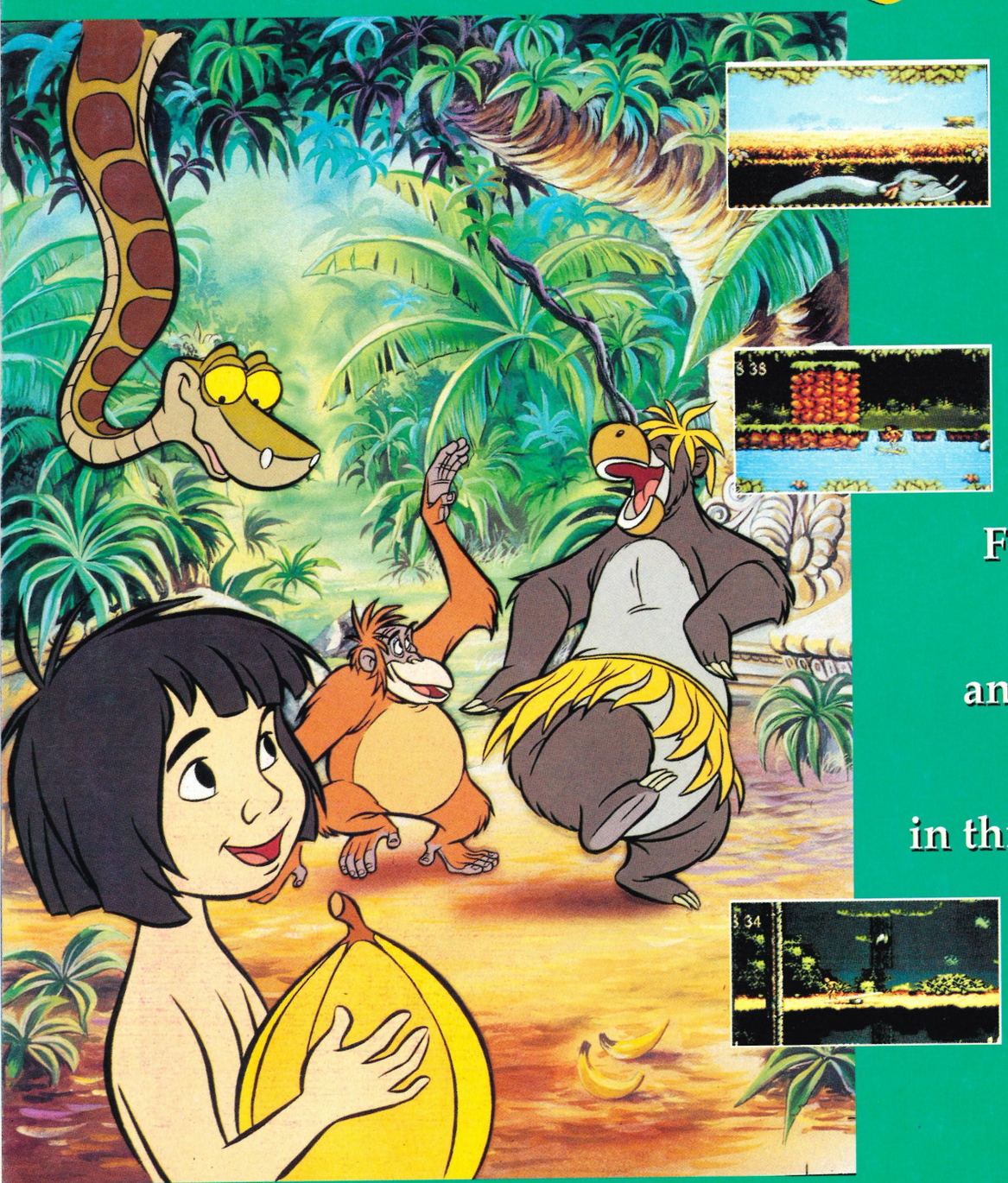
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