Europe's most kickin' console mag— exclusively for Mega Drive & M-CD freaks!

nearly NEW!

MEGA machines

SEGA PUT THE BOOT IN!



If your DAY-GLO LACES are missing, don't worry — the mag's worth your dosh without 'em anyway!

Can ETERNAL CHAMPIONS kick the $#!£ outta SF II?

Check out the damage in our eight-page review!

EXCLUSIVE! Absolutely no details on SONIC 3 at all!

WIN! Stacks of DRAGON'S REVENGE stuff from Tengen!

The world's tallest sideways Sega Mega Drive mag!

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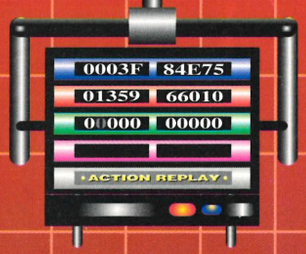
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BUSTING CARTRIDGE



MEGADRIVE & GENESIS ARE TRADEMARKS OF SEGA ENTERPRISES.

Cor blimey, it's...

MEGA machines

Issue Number THREE
February 1994

WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS!

At last, Sega's gargantuan 24-Meg beat-'em-up makes its debut — but is it any good? We rip its guts out and inspect 'em...

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COVER STORY!



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UNSUNG HEROES OF THE MEGA DRIVE

Forget Sonic, Chun-Li, Cool Spot and Sub-Zero, what about the poor sprites who never get a look-in? Stand up and be counted, peripheral characters,

PLAY STUFF!

your 15 minutes of fame have finally arrived!

THE REVIEW BOARD

Pinballs, platforms, puzzles and adventures, there's something for everyone in this month's reviews section... Unless you're a three-headed mongoose from Alpha Centauri, of course, in which case it'll be next door that you'll be wanting.

LEARN TO YODEL! 34
It's true! Just £25 secures your very first yodelling lesson. Oh yeah, an' a year's wurf uh MEGA MACHINES an' all...

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We stole a *Mortal Kombat* coin-op, then gave it away! *And* we had sandwiches and pop to celebrate with.

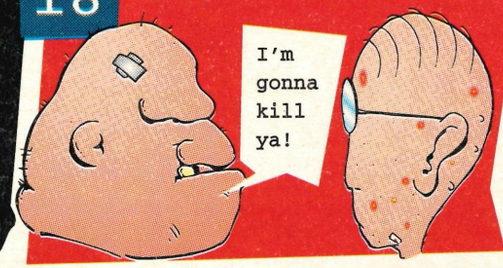
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Don't be a pinball wizard, be a pinball *winner* instead! Sorry...

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You want some tips? Well, here's two: Buy MEGA MACHINES next issue, and buy MEGA MACHINES the issue after that as well.

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Find out what's poop on PC, awful on the Amiga and down-right shite on the SNES this month...

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...On yer wall, that is! Part three of your door-sized Sonic and a crap *Ram Raid!* one too.

GAMEFUL EMPLOYMENT 80
If you want to work in the games industry you'll have to study and work hard. Either that or get a job at Domark!

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Strange, but we're *still* not allowed to review US Gold's *Winter Olympics*, even though a whole school's seen it already!

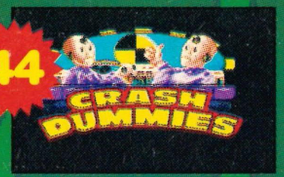
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Our exclusive urine-extracting page always lands us in trouble — usually with the people who've got the biggest gobs.

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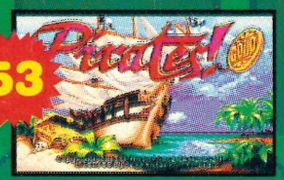
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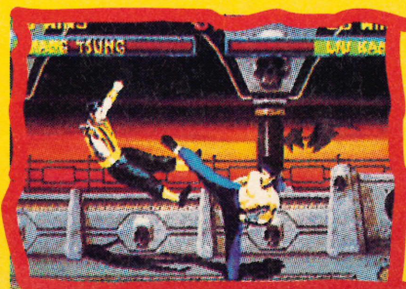
VIBES

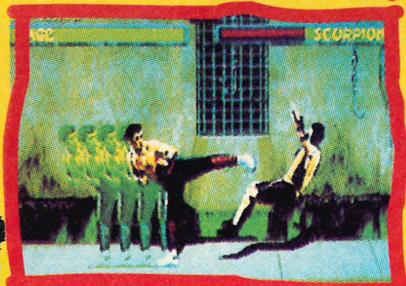
EDITORIAL OLUMN

Gordon Bennet, what a bleedin' ock-up! Traditionally in magazine prodution, the front over and editorial olumn are the last things to be done — and this month has been no exeption. We've been having a bit of bother with the MEGA MAHINES typewriter, though, and just before the issue was supposed to be at the printers… disaster struk!

If you'd like to refer bak to the front over for a moment, you'll see we managed to type in most of the words perfetly, but when it came to our amazing™ fab™ and groovy™ *Soni 3* exlusive, the ' ' on the typewriter just

KOMBAT KRAZY







Just as the world's reeling from the release of **Acclaim**'s, er... acclaimed *Mortal Kombat*, we've received the stunning news that its coin-op sequel is ready to go! **Midway** have finally completed work on ***Mortal Kombat 2*** and it should be in the arcades by the time you read this.

Recently unveiled at an American coin-op show, the new arcade machine is set to go head-to-head with *Super Street Fighter II*. Both machines are going to be munching your pennies in the next few months, so which is the best? We're keeping our mouths shut for now but *Mortal Kombat 2* looks incredible.

For a start, it features 12 ruthless fighters all-out to win the Shaolin Tournament. You may be surprised to learn that only six of the original characters have survived. Liu Kang is back, in a new outfit, as is Johnny Cage, who now sports kneepads and shin-guards. Three ninjas — Scorpion, Sub-Zero and Reptile — are all here, with slight costume alterations. Raiden the Thunder God looks like he's wearing an apron and has a chin like Judge Dredd's!

Young Tsung

The other characters are a bit of a mystery at the moment, but we know for a fact that there are two female ninjas from Sub-Zero's clan, a tough American fighter, mysterious cowboy bloke, toothy monster

MICROCOSMIC?

Last month we had a wee 'into the body' experience with *Microcosm* from **Psygnosis**. The version we saw wasn't finished so, the caring sharing folk that we are, decided not to review it until the finished CD arrived.

If you caught the review — of course you did! — you'll remember Mat was a little scathing, while guest writer James Price bit his tongue until he saw the finished thing. Well, a completed version of *Microcosm* has landed and we're glad to say there *have* been a few nips and tweaks here 'n' there.

Psygnosis have added a touch more detail to the opening sequence, the graphics on the enemy ships are better defined and it plays a wee bit faster than the early version.

So, with last month's comments and the improvements in mind, we can slap in the MEGA MACHINES ratings, which are as follows:

GRAPHICS	93
SOUND	75
PLAYABILITY	69
LASTABILITY	57
ORIGINALITY	61
OVERALL	67

ALTERED IMAGES

The developers of some of the hottest Mega-CD games are about to unleash their best titles yet. **Digital Pictures**, the company behind *Sewer Shark*, *Night Trap* and the *Make My Own Video* series are preparing to release another three top CDs.

Their next release will be ***Ground Zero, Texas***. Similar in feel to *Night Trap*, you take the role of a military observer who's been assigned to a crack US army battalion. The troops are defending a small town which has been invaded by aliens disguised as humans (sound familiar?). Your mission is to uncover their plot, figure out how to stop them (man-made weapons only stun them) and destroy their forces.

Ground Zero, Texas cost a whopping $3 million to shoot and was filmed exclusively for the game. It was directed by **Dwight Little**, whose feature film credits include

dropped right off. It did, honest!

You don't believe me, do you? Go on, admit it. You think I'm bulling you, aren't I right? Well you're wrong, see, 'cos… Oh bugger — that's torn it. Damn it all to Hell!

Okay, I'll own up. Uhm, it was like this y'see: As we never *really* had an exclusive on *Sonic 3* (I swear t'you, Guv'nor, I've never seen the game before in me life. Before last Thursday), Sega wouldn't allow us to use the word 'exclusive' in connection with it. Straight up. Can you believe it?!

No? Oh, all right then, I confess, we nobbed up, big style — but the worst thing about the whole deal is, if I hadn't just dedicated my entire editorial column to the fact, you probably wouldn't have even noticed! What a silly unt I am, eh?

Oh well, Happy Blue Ear anyway… or was that last month?

Steve

Steve Shields
Managing Editor



(who may or may not be Goro) and the master of evil, Shang Tsung. Whether Shang Tsung has all the abilities he had in the original is unknown, but he's younger so there are sure to be differences.

Mortal Kombat 2 has the same five-button set-up as the original but you'll have to learn new combinations as the new characters have unique moves to master and the oldies have cool new attacks. The digitised graphics have been improved to look even more realistic than before and the machine features an advanced digital compression sound system. Another addition is the inclusion of a violence control switch, which tones down the action (probably due to the bad press *Mortal Kombat* received).

This is all fine and dandy, but you want to know when the **Sega** console versions are coming out, don't you? There's no official word on conversions just yet but our sources tell us Midway, the company responsible for producing both *Mortal Kombat* coin-ops, may be developing home console games themselves soon and *MK 2* will be first on their production list. Get over here!

Hot Shot Preview!

MORE MAGIC MARKO

Marko's Magic Football from **Domark** is coming along very nicely, thank you. This unique platform game's set to be one of the top Mega Drive titles of the year when it appears this March.

The story concerns the adventures of young Marko, who chases his wacky football across ten action-packed levels. Along the way he uses the ball to overcome various obstacles so he can progress to the next level.

We'll have a full preview of this cool MD cart in the very next issue, so until then, take a glance at the colourful pics on this page. Cor, isn't that cut-out a beauty!







Marked For Death, Halloween 4 and *Home Alone*.

With over 70 minutes of interactive footage, live actors, expensive sets and superb special effects, *Ground Zero, Texas* is gonna be hot! **Sony Imagesoft** have already picked up this title and are planning a February release.







Ass-kickin' in the USA

Next up is ***Prize Fighter*** which, surprise surprise, is a boxing game.

The digitised action is viewed as if you're in the ring, punching your way through the fighting ranks. Throw a punch and your fist appears onscreen to do the job, get hit and the screen shakes. *Prize Fighter* looks like a classic fighting game and has the feel of *Raging Bull* (a great film starring Robert De Niro — check it out!).

Finally there's the spooky ***Double Switch***, which is a sort of sequel to *Night Trap*. You're trapped in an ancient mansion loaded with surveillance cameras, traps and shady characters. Treasure's buried under the house and you have to find it without getting killed.

On top of all that, Digital Pictures have managed to get **Debbie Harry** to appear in the game! Cor! With more twists and turns than a twisty-turny thing, *Double Switch* could be a winner.

All of the above games use real video footage (or TruVideo, as it's known) to provide a truly interactive gaming experience. *Ground Zero, Texas, Prize Fighter* and *Double Switch* are truly the next generation of video games. As for exclusive previews or reviews of these games… watch these pages. We've got something very special in the very next issue of MEGA MACHINES.

PITCH YOUR WITS

Bet the England football squad are kicking themselves! A free trip to America, sun, sea, sand and sucking oranges? Pretty poor show, huh?

Following England's exit from the World Cup, **Virgin Interactive Entertainment** have decided it's time we were all taught a lesson or two about footy. So much so, the company's announced the 'Virgin Games Schools Football Initiative'.

So what's it all about? Well, together with the government's Sportsmatch programme, Virgin's scheme has been set up to teach schoolchildren how to become skilful footballers. Virgin presented a cheque to the scheme's co-ordinator before the Arsenal v Newcastle in November and the ball's been rolling ever since (corny! —Ed), the government matching Virgin's input pound-for-pound through Sportsmatch.

Virgin hope the initiative will encourage British football nuts to learn soccer skills. They have direct access to 25,000 UK schools through the scheme — that's a heck of a lot of players! The English Schools' Football Association (ESFA) are heavily involved, along with Adidas and football magazine *Shoot*.

Coerver version

The programme introduces the Dutch 'Coerver' method of soccer training, a unique 'one ball, one player' style which promotes skilful footy.

Schools are given the opportunity to take part in the Coerver sponsorship deal, where each would-be Gazza is sponsored to learn five moves made famous by the all-time greats. A donation goes to the ESFA and back into the individual school's funds. Virgin are also running competitions in the *Football in Schools* magazine, which goes out to 25,000 footy teachers.

If you and your mates have been left dithering by the touchline and want to know more about the scheme, give **Brad Shaw Promotion Consultants** a ring — they're the geezers in charge — and have a natter with Mr Shaw himself! The number's **071 354 3377**.

VIBES

BITMAP BROS BONANZA

Hot Shot Preview!

Prepare to enter a strange world where men have been transformed into monsters and the laws of space and time are warped. Welcome to the world of ***The Chaos Engine***.

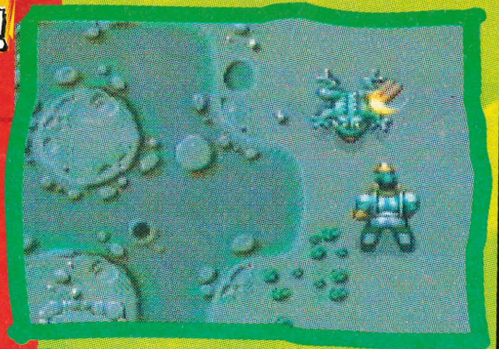
This weird Victorian sci-fi adventure was developed by the **Bitmap Brothers**, responsible for such Mega Drive hits as *Speedball 2* and *Gods*. *The Chaos Engine* is already available for the Amiga; the MD version, due out any day now, is a perfect conversion.

The plot revolves around a unique machine, the Chaos Engine (surprised?), which alters the fabric of space and time. The world as we know it is being changed before our very eyes and only a unique team of mercenaries can destroy the device.

The Chaos Engine is a 16-Meg monster of a cart which boasts 16 levels of high-octane action with such great features as one or two-player action, variable skill levels, a password system, 25 different weapons, digitised speech and a 'technopop' soundtrack. Mercenaries battle hideous creatures and make their way past molten pits, savage sculptures and poison-spitting beetles.

If all this sounds like a riot, believe us when we say it sure is! We'll have a full review of *The Chaos Engine* in the next issue of MEGA MACHINES.







WE COCK UP AGAIN!

Ahem. In last month's **Namco Ram Raid** feature, we made the mistake of making Darren out to be the Managing Director and, um, he's not! Under normal circumstances, we'd either blame the YTS boy or the cat — but we don't have a cat, or a particularly good excuse.

So there you have it. It was all the fault of Milo, the YTS Ram-Raider, and Darren's not the MD of **Namco** but is a bloody good sport for letting us, well, do what we did. Cheers, Darren.

EXBLUESIVE!



8 8

STOP PRESS: Just as we were closing this issue, Managing Ed Steve Shields *didn't* return from a trip to **Sega**'s HQ in London, which he never went to. When he wasn't there, he didn't see anything of ***SONIC 3*** whatsoever: Not the groovy loading screen (which *doesn't* feature a greatly enlarged image of the Blue Dude), nor the massive levels (which *don't* contain loads of parallax scrolling — especially not in the foregrounds), neither did he witness the new character who isn't in the game (and looks *nothing* like Amy from *Sonic-CD*). In fact, he never got to spend 20 minutes playing the game, and wholeheartedly denies the fact he would've thought it was the best Sonic game yet if he *had* played it.

Bah, worra bummer! An' we wanted to be first with the news...

ROBOCOP 8!

Urgent Memo: 'To Steve — I've just noticed that the *RoboCop 3* review says the game is only 4-Meg, when it should read 8 Meg. Is it too late to change it? James.'

'To James — Wasn't that the really, *really* duff Acclaim platformer, with the crap flying sections and piddle-poor pick-ups? Steve.'

'To Steve — Yep, that's the one. What do you reckon we should we do... pull it back from the printers? James.'

'To James — Nah, bollox to it — just bang an item in the news section correcting the mistake. Steve.'

'To Steve — What, like this you mean? James.'

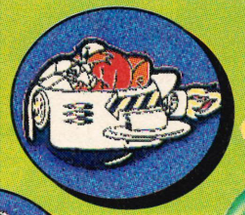
SONIC'S STUCK ON YOU!

With **Sonic** the coolest video game character around, you can be sure his merchandise is the best, too. Tons of Sonic-related items are released into the shops every month but we've got our hands on some of the most collectable and fashionable.

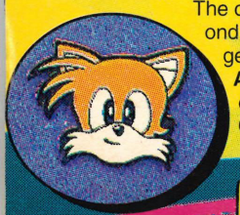
The Official Sonic Pin Collection from **Ace Pin Marketing** features 12 unique designs at low prices. The collection includes all your favourite characters such as Sonic, Tails and Dr Robotnik, as well as the *Sonic 2* and **Sega** logos (why am I telling you all this? You can see the pictures for yourself!). The 'pins' (as Yanks call badges) are of the highest quality and look cool on your coat, shirt, cardigan and even forehead (don't try this at home, kids).

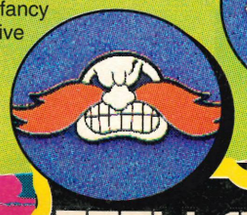
The collection is on sale in most good shops and Ace Pin have a second series planned for later in the year. If you fancy getting your mitts on these grrrrreat items, give **Ace Pin Marketing** a call on **0483 426141** or write to them at **45 Bridge Street, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1HL**.











CRAP ATTEMPT TO GAIN PUBLICITY No.352

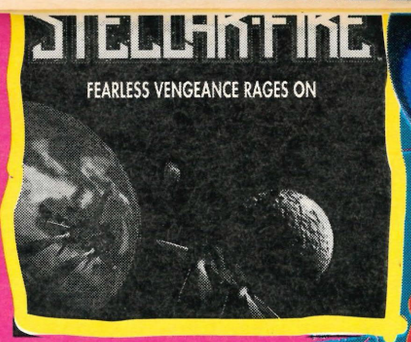
In the last frantic few hours of this mag's production, we heard the shocking news that **Zool**, the alien ninja from the Nth dimension has vanished, presumed kidnapped!

Zool has recently appeared in a



BIG

GUNS ON THE WAY



Hot Shot Preview!



Stellar Fire for the Mega-CD is finally finished and should be out in March. **Dynamix**' scorching CD title has been in development for a long time but the final version looks brilliant.

Set in the year 2206, the Earth is in danger of being destroyed by a cybernetically-linked race known as the Draxon. They're heading for our planet and you, as the head of elite fighter squadron Stellar Force 7, have been assigned to stop them.

Similar in feel to *StarWing* on the SNES, you fly over polygon-generated planets in search of enemy craft. Seven furious levels will tax even the best pilots, while kickin' tunes, speech and awesome graphics make it magic to play.

Although we've only had a glimpse of this smart CD game, we think it's a great title and will review it in these hallowed pages soon.

series of **Sega** console games by top software house **Gremlin**. He was last seen defending the Future Entertainment Show from evil last year.

Since then, he's made no contact with the proper authorities and his mum is worried sick about him. He's described as a 'tall, well-built character, has fluorescent green legs, arms, hands and ears. His head is huge and black with big yellow eyes behind a red headband. He has big black feet and his name is printed on the soles of his boots.'

Anyone with information regarding Zool's whereabouts should contact **Gremlin, Carver House, 2–4 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS.** If your information enables them to locate Zool, you will receive £100 and year's supply of Chupa Chups.

Go to it, crime-busters, and remember, the safety of the free world depends on you!

SONY GO TO 'NAM

Cast your mind back to the last issue of MEGA MACHINES (yes, that's a whole month ago) and you may recall we brought you hot news of **Sony**'s forthcoming CD console. The latest info is that two of the biggest software developers, **Konami** and **Namco**, are to produce exclusive games for the system.

Konami have produced such stunning MD games as *Rocket Knight Adventures* and *Lethal Enforcers* and are aiming to convert some of their more popular arcade machine titles to the CD console; Namco will convert *Ridge Racer*, *Cyber Sled* and **Galaxian III**. In return, Sony are to give technical support to both companies' future arcade releases.

According to Sony, their new wonder machine will be more technically advanced than **Sega**'s 32-bit Saturn currently in development, and Konami and Namco consider it suitable for the kind of advanced 3D games they hope to release in the future.

TABLE-TOP TREK





The popularity of pinball tables has rocketed over the past few years, with gamers spending money on them rather than than giving the latest arcade machines a whirl. Even software developers are realising this: **Capcom** have already produced a *Street Fighter II* pinball machine.

The hottest new table on the market is **Williams**' ***Star Trek: The Next Generation***. Featuring characters from the incredibly popular **Paramount** TV series, its neat extras make it a treat to play: a 'Light Speed' ball launcher and 'Below Decks' multi-ball delivery system, left and right 'Probe Launchers' (used to aim balls at ramps and targets), eight different U.S.S Enterprise missions, six-ball thrills, three Neutral Zone encounters, Holodeck Video modes, different ranks, a Super Spinner, Warp 9.9 and secret modes, Hurry Up bonuses and big jackpots (that all? —Sub Ed).

The TV show's eight starring actors have recorded exclusive speech for the machine and the show's theme music is recreated in perfect digital stereo. This is gonna go where no pinball machine has gone before!

VIRTUALLY HERE

Even though ***The Lawnmower Man*** wasn't a hit at the cinema, it generated a lot of excitement in the video game world. Various versions are currently in development, with **THQ** handling the programming chores for most of them. The Super Nintendo version is already in the shops and the Mega Drive game is due out at Easter.



The *Lawnmower Man* game closely follows the plot of the Virtual Reality movie. You become scientist Dr Angelo and your mission is to stop the plans of your greatest creation/worst nightmare, Jobe. This once-helpless gardener has been transformed into a being of incredible power and now exists in a 'virtual world'.

The game is split into various sections, including a platform level, driving sequence and, of course, Virtual Reality sections. Though the Mega Drive can't perform Mode 7-style perspective scrolling, it features stunning 3D sections including the Cybersled game and a final showdown with CyberJobe.

Also in development is a Mega-CD version, which includes digitised clips from the movie, full speech and more levels. All formats will be out for summer and with the development of *The Lawnmower Man II — Mindfire*, the hype surrounding Virtual Reality's set to continue.



Hot Shot Preview!

VIBES

HORNBY GET CD

One of the main complaints we receive from Mega-CD owners is that there simply aren't enough ways to cheat! Okay, there are level codes for some games and a few dull cheat modes, but what if you want infinite lives or energy or enemies that die as soon as they come onscreen? Wouldn't life be easier if the folks who made the ***Game Genie*** could come up with some wondrous device to help you bluff your way through even the toughest CD game?

The good news is, they have! That's right, **Codemasters**, who developed the phenomenally successful Game Genie, are hard at work on a Mega-CD version.

It was previously thought such a device was impossible, due to the way information is constantly loaded from CD, but Codemasters have cracked the problem by building a Game Genie which slots between the Mega Drive and Mega CD. As data passes through it, the codes for infinite lives, energy etc are added to the game data. The only problem is that this device has to be wafer-thin, to fit in the space between the two machines.

Expect to see the CD Game Genie on sale later this year, once enough of the machines are in circulation.

DamN iT, jamMit!



After producing some of the most commercially successful platform games of '93, **Virgin** are stepping into the world of sports sims. April sees the release of ***Jammit***, a cool basketball game featuring stunning digitised graphics and top-notch gameplay (frustrated journalist saying No.39).

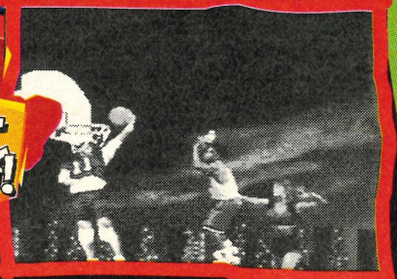
It's a one-on-one basketball game packed with eight versions of the standard game, with some unique extras thrown in, such as Poison, where players have to shoot hoops from moving targets. The animation is silky-smooth; real basketball players were filmed then digitised to provide excellent sprite movement.

Sampled speech, such as 'Get outta here!' and 'You're not so tough', add to the realism and the music's a mixture of funky tunes and hardcore rap. One of the best touches is that you can change the music by walking over to a ghetto-blaster at the side of the court and flipping through the tracks.

As you'd expect with a sports game set on the streets, *Jammit* features moves and rules you won't see in games such as *NBA All-Star Challenge*. Players collide with each other, trade blows and hurl insults — anything to succeed in scoring more baskets.

We'll have a full preview of *Jammit* next time, but until then, check out these pics of what could be the hottest sports game of the year.

Hot Shot Preview!





GOT SOME TIME TO KILL?

So you think *Mortal Kombat* is the mother of all violent games? Think again! *THQ* have a title in the works that makes *MK* look like *Alex Kidd in High Tech World*.

Time Killers is a conversion of a coin-op from a few years ago and features all of the hack and slash action that made it so good. It's in the *Street Fighter II* mold but there's more blood than Dracula could suck in a month!

Eight warriors from throughout time, including Thugg the Barbarian, Lord Wulf the Knight and Orion, a future warrior, take part in a unique contest of strength and courage. Set in various eras, you fight seven computer-controlled opponents in an attempt to gain

BATMAN RETURNS (AGAIN)

Ever since the Caped Crusader appeared on TV screens back in the '60s, Batmania has swept the world every few years. It happened in 1988 when the *Batman* movie was released, three years later with *Batman Returns* and it looks like the Bat's about to strike again.

Christmas Eve saw the US release of the highly-acclaimed ***Mask of The Phantasm: Batman, the Animated Movie***. Based on the popular Saturday morning cartoon show (we get up early to watch it on *What's Up, Doc?*), the full-length feature film tells the story of the Dark Knight's toughest battle yet. Gotham City is being terrorised by a mysterious midnight creature known only as The Phantasm and who's the only one who can stop him? Hmm… tough one, that.

The movie features guest voices from loads of stars including Mark Hamill (Luke Skywalker in *Star Wars*, as if ya didn't know) and boasts the same stunning art deco animation that's made the cartoon series so popular. There's no news of a UK release date but it should be at a theatre near you in early February.

Bat to the future

In other Bat-related news (I've always wanted to say that), our Hollywood sources are getting excited about the prospect of ***Batman 3***.

The current news is that **Robin Williams** is definitely to star as The Riddler and the caped one's sidekick, Robin, will also make an appearance. **Michael Keaton** is once again the face behind the black mask but previous Bat-director **Tim Burton** will not be taking charge of the project. He'll be an Executive Producer but will be busy directing a ***Catwoman*** movie starring **Michelle Pfeiffer**.

Both films are due to start shooting this autumn and no doubt **Sega** will snap up the video game rights to both movies and produce a couple of naff platform beat-'em-ups that only score about 64% in every console mag.

For further news, join us next month, same Bat-time, same Bat-channel.

SONIC SPONG

Mmmm… cakes! We've been sent a tasty **Sonic** the Hedgehog cake and, boy, is it scrummy! Of course, being the kind, considerate folks we are, we should offer this iced delight as a competition prize, right?

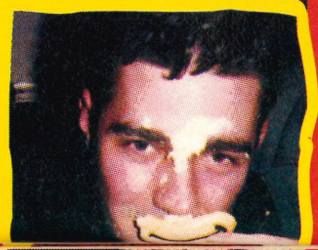
Wrong! We're a bunch of greedy gits and this cake is all ours. Come on lads, budge over, let's have some…

Careful, watch where you're putting your elbow. Warren, be careful — James is right under you. Don't push too... he's fallen in it! Ah well, that's what you get for being a pig, Jimmy-boy.

For fun and cake frolics of your own, pop down to **Marks & Spencers** and grab yourself a super **Sonic Cake** for the knock-down price of £8.99. But be warned! The blue icing turns your wee green (allegedly —Ed).









immortality (sounds v like *Eternal Champions* to me —Sub Ed). The final challenge comes when you have to fight Death himself.

As well as the usual array of fighting moves, each character has a special move that enables you chop off the opponent's arms, legs and head! With names like Head Shred, Flying Guillotine, Satellite Slash and Blood Chop, you can tell this ain't for wusses. The decapitation should ensure *Time Killers* plenty of publicity but whether the game itself stands up to examination remains to be seen.

We'll get our hands on an import copy ASAP so until then, keep that bloodlust in check.





Hot Shot Preview!









YOU ARE THE STAR!

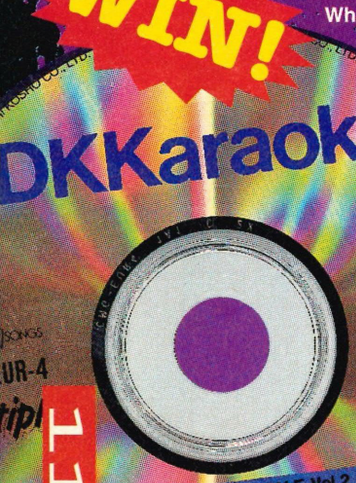
Barry Manilow claims he writes the songs that make the whole world sing, but that simply isn't true — it's ***DK Karaoke***, courtesy of **Arbiter Group Plc**!

Anyway, this is your chance to win your very own bangin' karaoke CD, worth over 15 smackeroonies. Whether you're a budding Elvis impersonator or just some tart who looks like Madonna, you can take the stage in the privacy of your own home. And all you have to do to enter is answer this question:

WIN!

What is the correct spelling of Elvis?

a. Henry Von Shnoinkapoodle
b. Pelvis
c. Elvis



Jot down your answer on the back of an envelope and send it to **Karaoke Kompo, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW** soon. *Yoo neh-verr cloze yur ayes en-nee-more when Ah kiss yur li-hi-hips…*

WIN!

TOMY'S T'RRIFIC TOYS

It's **Tomy** time! We here at MEGA MACHINES love toys. Yep, we're not going to deny it, we've been brought up on Star Wars figures, Evel Knieval stunt bikes and Stretch Armstrong and go completely potty when we receive freebies from toy companies.

So what's this got to do with you lot? Well, the latest items we've had are from Tomy Toys' **Sonic the Hedgehog** range. The *Sonic Water Wizard* (£4.99) is a crazy game where blasts of water direct 'magic' rings onto hooks. A smaller version, *Sonic Water Fun* features similar wet action at a lower price (£2.99).

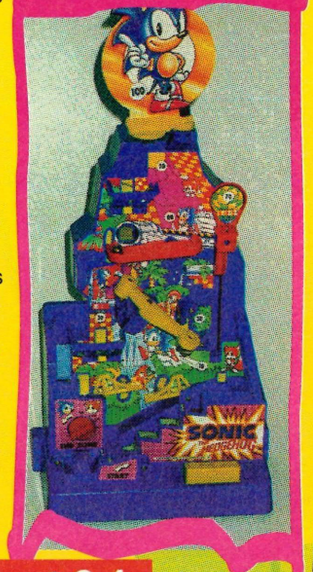
Flippin' 'ell!

Next up is the *SuperSonic Pinball Table*. Double-action (Lockets? —Sub Ed) flippers whack steel balls around the whizzing Megamack, Emerald Hill Zone and tricky oil slick. You have three balls with which to score as many points as possible.

To become the ultimate pinball champion, get all the balls into the Emerald Hill Zone target at the same time and rack up those points. Unique sound effects and neat lights make this a t'rrific table-top treat (try saying that with a mouthful of tapioca).

Finally there's the *Sonic Mountain Quest* game (£18.49). This large blue plastic gizmo offers hours of entertainment and had us hooked this month as we attempted to guide a ball up the side of a tricky mountain. Get past the Breaking Bridge, Robotnik's Balloon, the Magnetic Arm and the Perilous Plateau to become Sonic champion!

Being the true gaming professionals we are, we've already cracked Sonic Mountain Quest, so if you turn to this issue's *Dr Ruthless* you'll find a map and complete players' guide to this hot game. Never let it be said that MEGA MACHINES fails to give YOU, the reader, the latest and greatest Sonic games info.





STIMPLY EEEDIOTIC

All right, where is it, eh? EH?! Beeb 2 were supposed to broadcast wacky cartoon series ***The Ren & Stimpy Show*** last autumn but, er, didn't. *Eeediots!*

For the uninitiated, Ren Hoëk is an excitable, aggressive chihuahua and Stimpson J Cat a fat, dumb moggie. Their show's a cult favourite in America and takes the mad, unpredictable humour of *The Simpsons* one step further — and one step back with the fart gags.

Stimpy's Invention is their first Mega Drive game and, typically, the duo are in trouble. The Mutate-O-Matic was the answer to Stimpy's massive appetite: it turned rubbish into delicious food. But it blew a gasket (as the cliché goes) and sprinkled a few vital components over the city.

In this one or two-player platform 'romp', Ren and/or Stimpy must find the pieces from six levels, slam them back into the machine and switch it off. They begin in their own neighbourhood then progress through the zoo, city centre, dog pound and great outdoors, assaulted by monkeys, wild dogs, gah-gah firemen, psycho giraffes, flamingos, lawnmowers and killer logs along the way!

Other than the unusual characters, what sets *Stimpy's Invention* apart from yer average cartoony platformer are the wacky antics in two-player mode. Among other things, Ren can use Stimpy as a furball gun, ride him like a bucking bronco and roll the tubby feline like a bowling ball, while Stimpson can whack Mr Hoëk with a croquet mallet and use him as a club or helicopter.

If slapstick comedy, silly sounds, logs (the wooden type) and Beaver Power (the animal type) appeal to you, look for **Sega**'s *Stimpy's Invention* on import and watch out for an in-depth p/review soon.

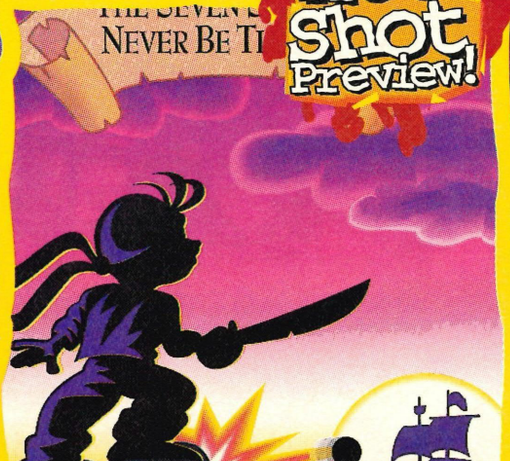
A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE

Sailing the Seven Seas can be a tricky business at the best of times, but when your Cap'n Havoc, a swash-buckling pirate parrot, you can bet life's a lot tougher!

High Seas Havoc is a colourful new platform game from the folks at **Data East**. As the Cap'n, you're out to save your beloved Esmerelda from the clutches of Brutal Bernard. A lucky-for-some 13 fun-packed stages await, ranging from dastardly pirate ships to treacherous mountain tops.



Hot Shot Preview!



As you race against the clock, collecting treasure and rescuing your friends, vile villains try to stop you. But, armed with your trusty sword, you've got a fighting chance to beat 'em!

Although at first glance you might think this is another *Sonic* clone, think again! *High Seas Havoc* has a few surprises and looks like a cracking good romp, me hearties! We'll hopefully bring you a full review of an import copy next month, so hold onto you hats, you salty sea-dogs!

100% ALIVE

Pick up someone else's litter

Send your mum some flowers

Strip right down to your underwear

Go for a run around the block

Tune your radio to Kiss and pull the knob off

Believe in yourself

Eat a pineapple

Write the alphabet backwards

Meet an old friend you haven't seen for years

Make a record

Dance the dance electric

Plant a tree

Phone someone you love

Learn a second language

Go and see Ryan Giggs

Get your nipple pierced

Ring 071 700 3100 and tell London something it needs to know

Play football in the street

Give £100 to a down and out

Make a statement

Order an empty skip and leave it outside your house for a week

Learn something new every day

Throw away your watch

Laugh

Take a picture of your back

Make a cake

Go for a day without speaking

Every day at the same time stop and think about something wonderful

Say a prayer every night

Have a day without TV

Read a page from a book by Charles Dickens

Hug someone of the same sex

Put your change into a bottle for a year and give it to charity

Visit Great Ormond Street Hospital

Go to the market and spend 10p

Help someone today

Wear a wig

Make everyone at work a cup of tea

Take a friend to the zoo

Write to Mother Teresa

Turn your radio up full blast

Teach a child to read

Buy a book on Jeff Koons

Stare at the clouds for a full ten minutes

Buy Marvin Gaye's 'What's going on'

Tell someone a secret

Begin something you've always wanted to begin

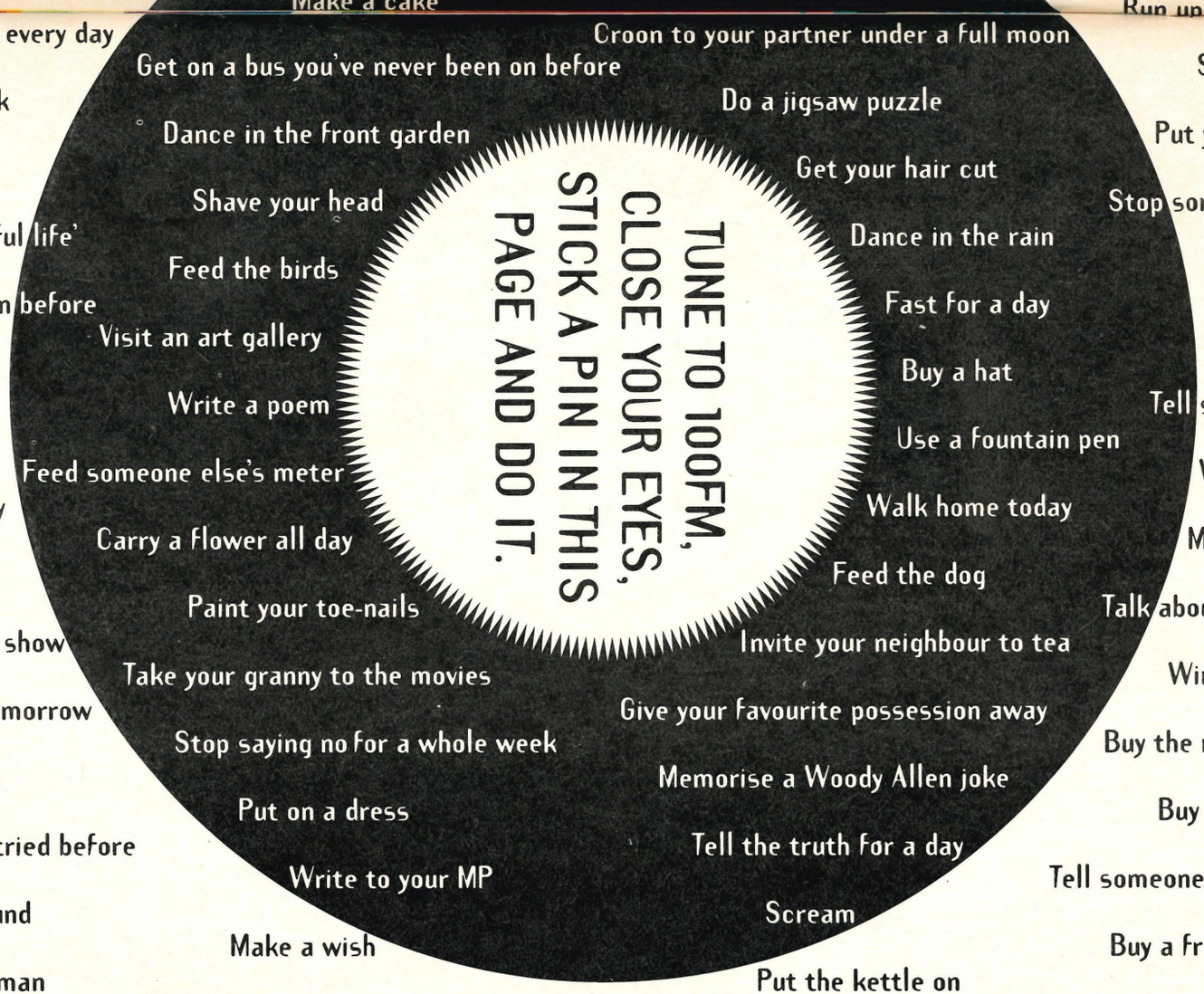
Talk to a child about the future

Think purple

Wallpaper the inside of your car

Go on holiday and don't take any luggage

Run up a downward escalator



Make a cake

Give up your seat on the tube every day

Take a bath in milk

Climb a tree

Watch 'It's a wonderful life'

Get on a bus you never got on before

Drink a glass of water

Clean your ears

Dream for the day

Visit New York

Listen to Jazzie B's next show

Get up an hour earlier tomorrow

Do 100 press-ups

Eat something you've never tried before

Ride a Merry-go-round

Say hello to a policeman

Spend an hour in a place of worship

Send someone a telegram

Put your sofa in the kitchen

Go to a museum

Get on a bus you've never been on before

Dance in the front garden

Shave your head

Feed the birds

Visit an art gallery

Write a poem

Feed someone else's meter

Carry a flower all day

Paint your toe-nails

Take your granny to the movies

Stop saying no for a whole week

Put on a dress

Write to your MP

Make a wish

Go home a different way every night for a week

Learn to listen more

Sing a song at the top of your voice

Help a stranger with their shopping

Write a fairy-tale

Croon to your partner under a full moon

Do a jigsaw puzzle

Get your hair cut

Dance in the rain

Fast for a day

Buy a hat

Use a fountain pen

Walk home today

Feed the dog

Invite your neighbour to tea

Give your favourite possession away

Memorise a Woody Allen joke

Tell the truth for a day

Scream

Put the kettle on

Take up knitting

Photocopy this ad and get someone else to do it

Listen to Rodigan's next show, in the park

Only boil as much water as you need

Spend an afternoon speculating on how to make a million

Learn a new word every day

Forgive someone

Do one thing to make the world a better place to live

Run up a downward escalator

Say yes for a day

Put your name on a star

Stop someone getting AIDS

Learn to fly

Do a cartwheel

Tell someone your dreams

Walk on the grass

Make a million pounds

Talk about God with a friend

Wink at someone ugly

Buy the next record you hear on Kiss

Buy your boss a present

Tell someone you appreciate what they do

Buy a friend your favourite book

Tune into Caesar tomorrow morning at 4am

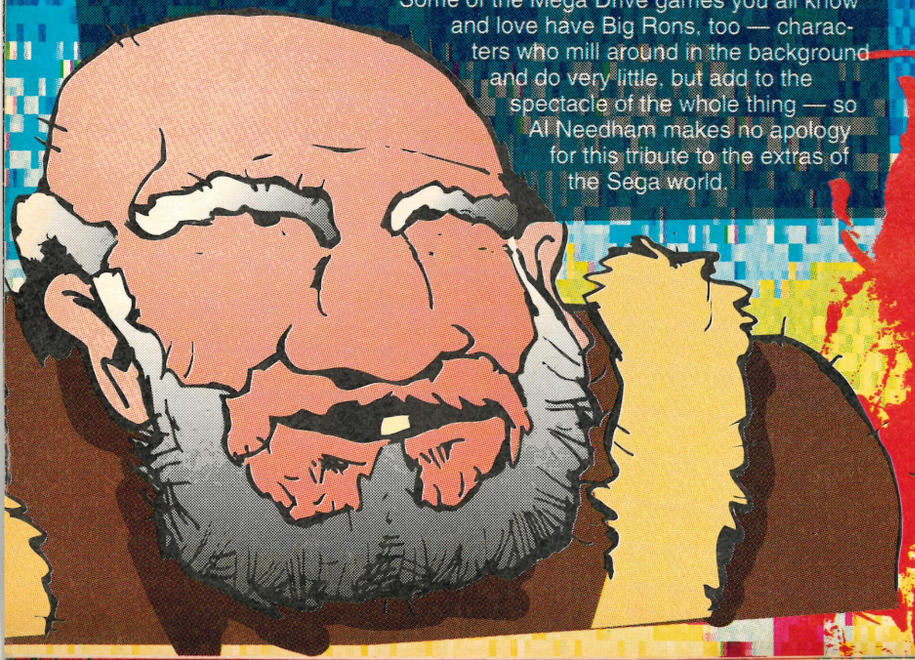
Kiss 100fm

UNSUNG HEROES OF THE MEGA DRIVE

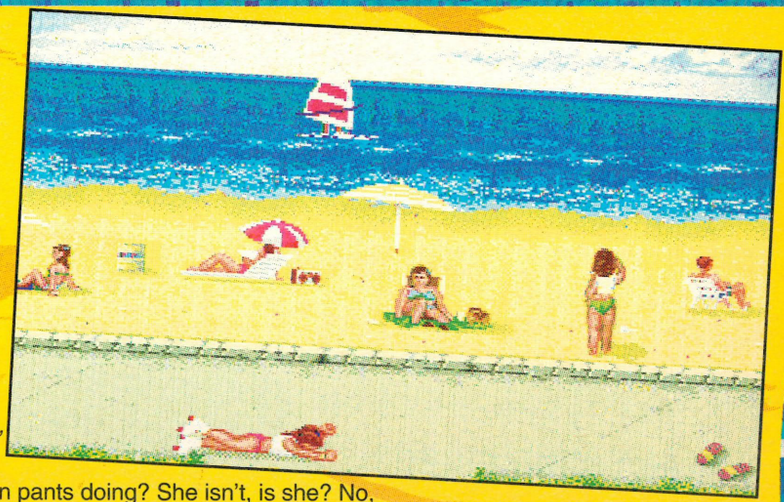
This feature is dedicated to Big Ron out of *EastEnders*. Ron's known in the trade as an 'extra', which means he sits around in the Queen Vic and does nothing. He hardly has any lines – if he's really lucky, Arthur or Mark Fowler will come in and say, 'All right, Big Ron?, and Ron gets to nod.

Ron reached the pinnacle of his career a few months ago, when he had a heart attack after some crusty ran into him, and as we go to press, he's still in hospital. So MEGA MACHINES takes this opportunity to send out nuff respec' to you, Ron, and get well soon.

Some of the Mega Drive games you all know and love have Big Rons, too — characters who mill around in the background and do very little, but add to the spectacle of the whole thing — so Al Needham makes no apology for this tribute to the extras of the Sega world.



CALIFORNIA GAMES



It's another scorchin' day, 'dude' (God, I hate that word), and all the 'babes' (Jesus!) are chillin' out, catchin' rays, bustin' teeth on concrete and doing other things that end with *in'* instead of *ing*.

But wait! What's that bird in the green pants doing? She isn't, is she? No, surely not…

Steve! C'mere! She is, isn't she? SHE'S SCRATCHING HER ARSE! She's having a crafty scrape of her cheeks, not realising that anyone dumb enough to play the kind of game Amiga magazines chuck on a cover disk can see what she's up to! Well, that's shattered my *Baywatch* fantasies, I can tell you.



NHL '94

This kid here, his parents must be loaded! It doesn't matter where the match is — The Duck Pond, Anaheim, Madison Square Garden, New York, The Boston Garden, The Calgary Saddledome — there he is, in the best seat in the house, pushing his snotty nose against the glass.

Doesn't he ever go to school? Does he spend his young life doing nothing but travelling all over America and Canada, watching ice hockey games? Why does he go to the toilet at least seven times a match? Why hasn't anyone tried to knock his teeth out with a 100 mph slapshot?

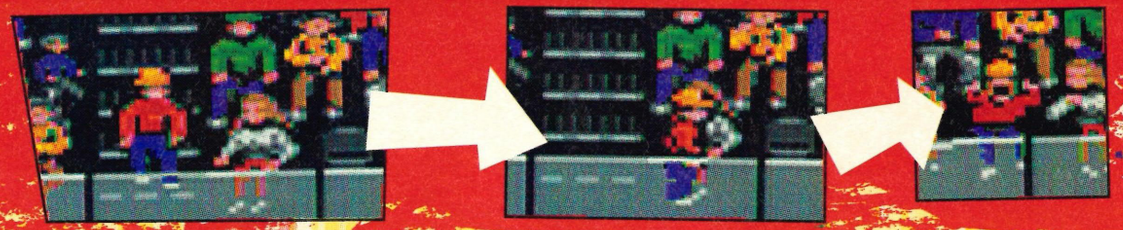
RON BARR

It's about time one of the true heroes of the Mega Drive stood up, stepped into the spotlight and took a bow. Stand up, Ron Barr, and take your place in the sun.

Just like Elton Welsby, he can be guaranteed to roll up to the **EA Sports** studio, plonk himself down at the desk and spout a load of complete bollocks. It doesn't matter what the sport is — ice hockey, American football, basketball, British Bulldog — Ron passes over such minor information as which player's been suspended for ramming their car into the windows of Dixons in a drunken stupor, but always goes on about the decibel level of the crowd. Yawwwnnn…

Unlike other sports commentators, Ron has never been caught eating out of a dog bowl while trussed up in a rubber cat-suit somewhere in Chelsea — but that might change when *EA Bondage* is released.





MORTAL KOMBAT

Tony Hee is a sensitive young man. Gentle, kind, and peace-loving. From an early age, he developed a strong aversion to acts of violence, and became physically sick at the mere sight of blood.

He believed people should live and let live, and found it hard to comprehend why his peers were so fond of violent agery of today's society and became a monk.

Unfortunately, he joined the Order of Shang Tsung, who like nothing more than chillin' out in the courtyard of an afternoon, watching a couple of nutters rip each other's hearts out and set fire to each other. And poor old Tony can do nothing but sit there and watch for the rest of his life without saying a word, because he took a vow of silence.

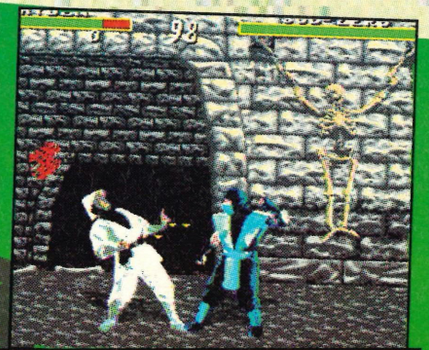
(Yeah, but couldn't he write a letter? —Steve.) No, actually, because he never learned to read or write. (Well, couldn't he just walk out, then? —Steve.) Er, no, because, well, they cut his legs off or something. Don't spoil it by nit-pickin', man, it's a cool story…



corpses we have loved

It's not the most glamourous job, being a dead body in a game. Just lying there, mouldering away, ranks as the lowest thing a sprite can ever achieve.

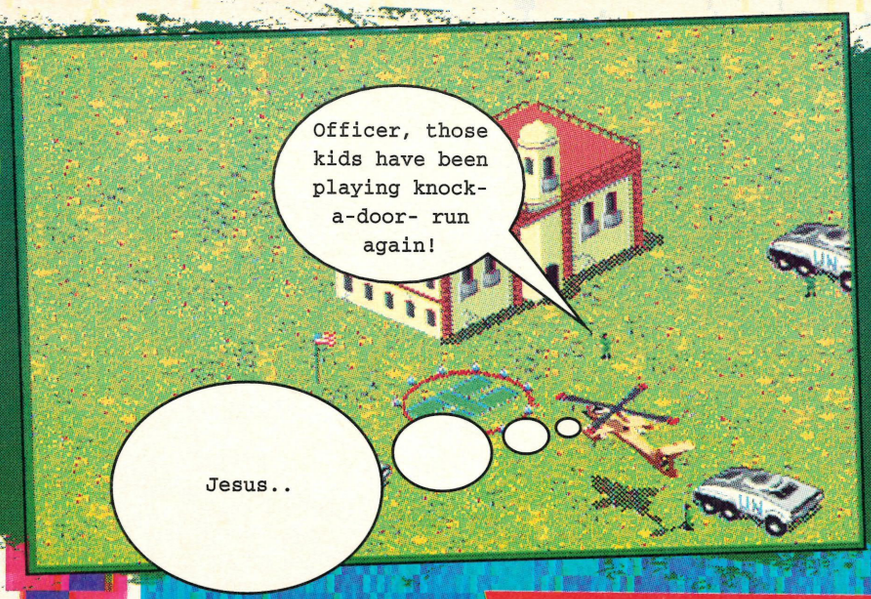
But does it get them down? Hell no! With a smile on their face and a song in their hearts (along with a few hundred maggots), they put a brave face on it and get on with the job in hand. God bless 'em!







jUNgLe StrikE



Jeffery Flange is the kind of neighbour you wouldn't wish on your worst enemy. If next-door's kids hang around outside his front garden or put the stereo on after nine o'clock, or their cat has a slash up his porch, what does he do? Talk it out in a reasoned and level-headed manner? Complain to the council?

No. He sends for a U.N peace-keeping force, armed to the teeth with helicopters and armoured vans, to sort it out. As if getting shot at in Bosnia and Somalia wasn't bad enough, the poor sods are at the beck and call of some stupid old get every time next-door has an all-night party. I dunno, some people...

STREET FIGHTER II

Of course, if you're on the look-out for celebrity sprites, you can do a lot worse than take a trip to *Street Fighter II* City, where some of the best incidental characters live. Here's a selection...

CHI KEN THROTTLA

How long does it take to strangle a chicken, for God's sake? Go to Chun-Li's stage, no matter how many times, and the bloke's still trying to kill the poor sod!

Are chickens in China made of leather or something? Or is he just a weed? Whatever the answer, he could just have a Pot Noodle and be done with it.



THE LETCH BROTHERS

In the jungles of Amazonia, The Letch Brothers — Carlo, Giorgio and Barry — like nothing better than sitting around and leering at women. Carlo in particular has built up an extensive portfolio of photos of various World Warriors' underwear.

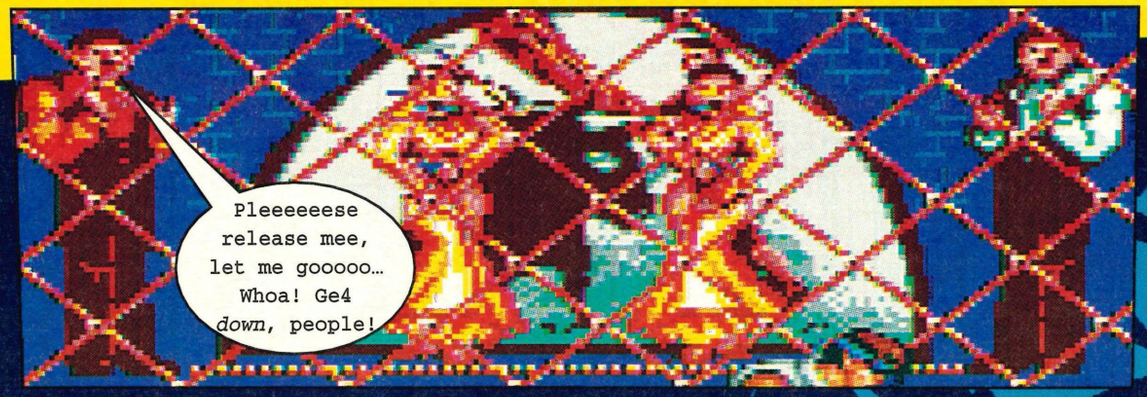
Here we see the lads adding another shot to their collection, before nipping off round the back for a quick sniff of Sonya Blade's leotard. Oh, those red-blooded Latinos!

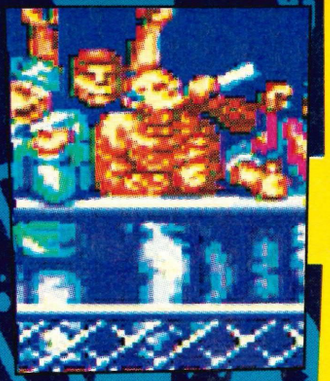


THE BROTHERHOOD OF MANANA

Looking for that something special to make your engagement/wedding reception/illegal pit fight an occasion to remember? Well, look no further than The Brotherhood Of Manana, as recommended by Vega, the rather camp one in *SFII*.

Having already represented Spain in the Eurovision Song Contest, The Brotherhood Of Manana are guaranteed to add a touch of class to any brawl you may be planning. Flamenco dancing a speciality, requests for Elvis songs more than welcome.





IVAN GETYEROKSOV

In the home stage of Zangief, all his home boys get whipped into a frenzy whenever their hero drives another Imperialist running dog into the concrete.

Except our old mate Ivan, who doesn't give a toss about the fight and instead concentrates on getting as much vodka down his neck as possible. Suck it back, geezer!

WANTON VANDALISM

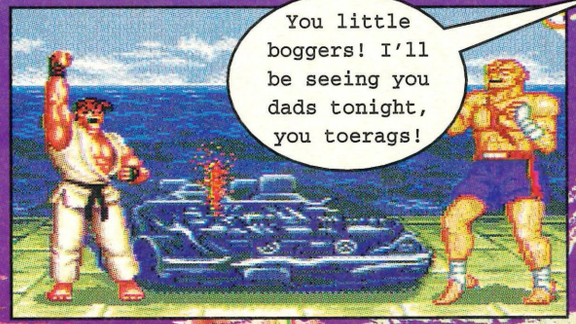
Percy Feltch is a victim of the mindless psychosis which has infected the inner city youth of today. Whenever he parks his car at the harbour, Street Fighters with nothing else to do with their lives smash it up — 'Just for kicks, daddio', as they would probably say in their garbled 'street talk'.

Disgusting! Bring back the birch, I say!









Birds



Cwoarrr, eh lads? Programmers stick a few women (preferably with large breasts) in their games whenever possible, because they know most of the players are too young and too short for 'top shelf magazines'.

So, feast your eyes on the selection we've pieced together just for you, boys. Don't stick the pages together, all right?

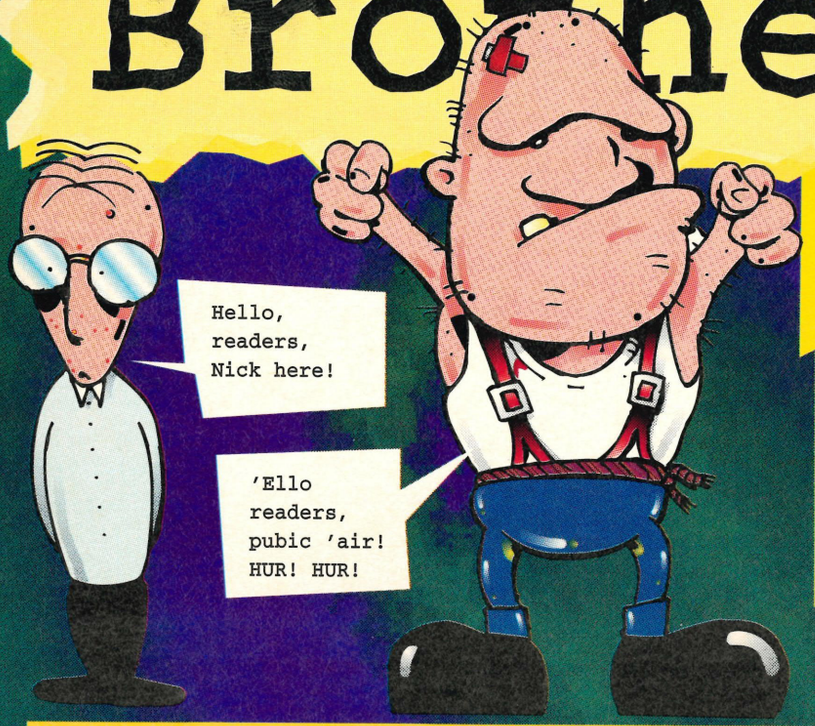




So there we have it. The balance is redressed and the unsung heroes of the Mega Drive get their moment in the sun. And another four pages are filled.

The Write Brothers!





Another month, another visit to the centre of the console universe that is the bedroom of Nick and Nige. A forum for mass debate on the Mega Drive (errrgh! You dirty get! You want dropping, pervo? –Nige). No, Nigel, we mean... oh, never mind.

Nick: Welcome back, friends! Well, here's an exciting time for us, isn't it, Nigel?

one in the morning! Where were you? You know we had homework last night.

Nige: Shattit, Nick! I was on the precinct with the Strongbow Posse,

to us — £50 in cash!

Nige: Gleamin'! You could get, God, at least 250 packets of fags wi' that!

Nick: Yes, for every Letter Of The Month, Naff Newsie, Shop Your Mates and Nick'll Fix It, we'll be giving out £50 each!

Nige: Jesus! How we gunna be able to fork out £200 a month? I'd better get me shoplifter's coat on... not that I'd ever nick 'owt, o' course. Not even a chip fork.

Nick: Hmm. Anyway, let's hear from all you mad folks out there, er,

Mega V.D, More Like!

Dear Nick & Nige
After your 'cut out & keep' *Silpheed* slideshow in Issue 1, here's another way to have Mega-CD quality games without actually buying one. All you need is a video recorder, some of your fave films and a Commodore 64.

Firstly, put the video on and play an exciting action scene from a film — *Star Wars*, maybe, or *Indiana Jones*. Play this for as long as you want and marvel at the amazing 'graphics'.

Next, put the C64 on and play any mediocre shoot-'em-up, platformer, beat-'em-up etc you fancy. There you go! You get a gorgeous intro sequence, followed by a crap game, for nothing!

A far better proposition than doing what I did — wasted my cash on a crap piece of hardware and bog-standard games.

Luke McGovern, Dundee

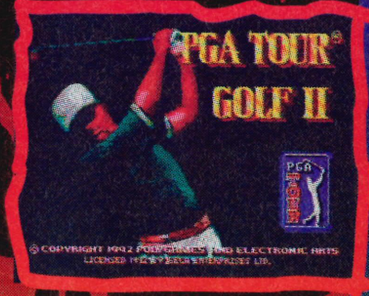
Nick: ***A vindictive, yet painfully familiar, indictment of the Mega-CD there, Nigel.***
Nige: ***Dunno 'bout that, Nick. I reckon they're gleamin'! Look at what I've got on the telly at the minute — Slaphead.***
Nick: ***Silpheed, Nigel.***
Nige: ***Yeah, that an' all. Check it out, youth, it's mint!***
Nick: ***I didn't know we had this, Nigel.***
Nige: ***Yeah, er, me mate lent it me...***
Nick: ***But Nigel, we haven't got a Mega-CDerrrghh!***
Nige: ***Did I accidentally stand on your throat, Nick? Sorry mate, didn't see you there...***

Thomas's Nightmare

Dear Nick & Nige
I've got a problem. The problem is my mum and dad always play *PGA Tour Golf* and I can never play on my game, *Bart's Nightmare*. I can always play it for the first hour and when I come back to my Mega Drive I always find Mum and Dad playing *PGA Tour Golf*.

What shall I do?

Thomas Dewsnap, Chapletown, Yorks





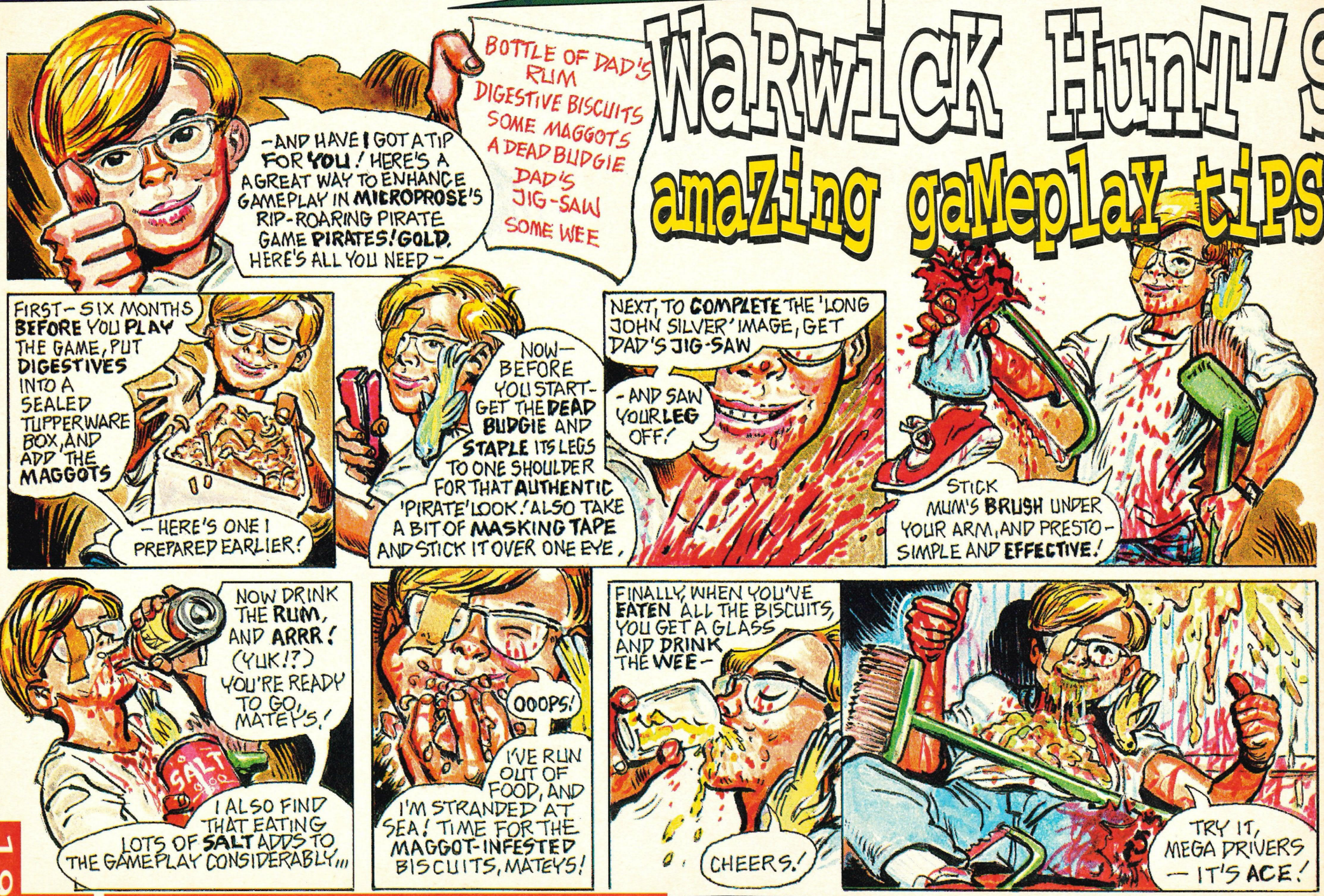
Nige: ***Kill 'em.***
Nick: ***Oh dear, Thomas, what a conundrum! It's always a problem, having your parents taking such an interest in your Mega Drive.***

Nige: *Yawwnn...* Y'wot, Nick?
Nick: Tired, Nigel?
Nige: Er, 'ad a bit of a, y'know, late night, Nick.
Nick: I know! You didn't get in until hanging outside the Fist & Face. Nowhere else. I was there all night. Honest.
Nick: Well, anyway, we've got a wonderful incentive for you to write dude. Send us your points of view to this address: **The Write Brothers, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.**

Nige: *Kill 'em.*
Nick: *However, look on the bright side — you can always talk them into buying a new game which all the family can enjoy!*



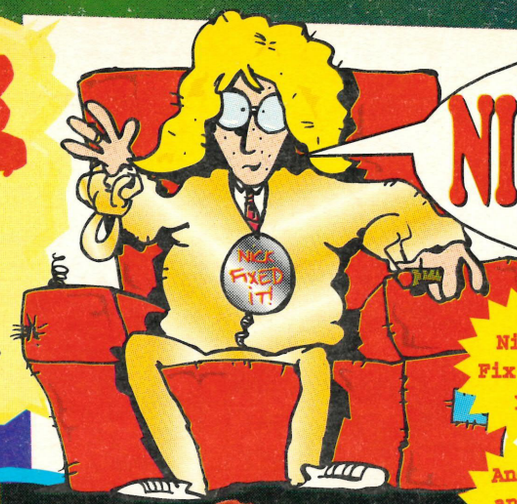
WaRwick Hunt's amaZing gaMeplay tips!

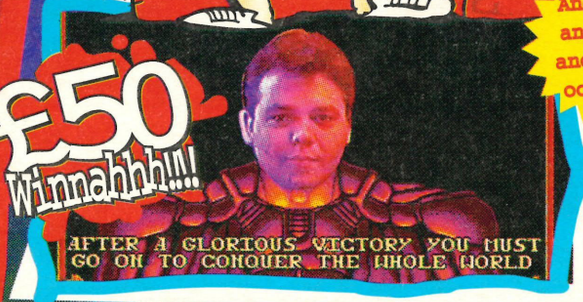


The Write Brothers!



NICK'LL FIX IT





Nick: [puff] Now then, er, guys and gals, welcome to another pulsating edition of [pant] Nick'll Fix It.

This month, we received another letter from our good friends **Damian, Davey** and **Gareth** of **Hanworth, Middlesex**, who pointed out in Issue 1 that their friend, **Fat Dave**, spent a great deal of his 'life' barricaded in his bedroom, playing *Powermonger*, to the detriment of whatever social life he ever possessed in the first place.

Well, they've asked me to fix it for him to fulfil his life's dream and step inside the game. Well, how could I resist?

Well, Dave, I hope you can now get on with your 'life', and perhaps your friends will let you share in the **£50 prize** they've won for suggesting such a wheeze!



Yes, send in those photos and suggestions to **Nick'll Fix It, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW** and not only will I make your dreams come true, I'll throw in 50 quid into the bargain! How's about that, guys and gals?

Oh No, It's That Stupid Old Twat Again

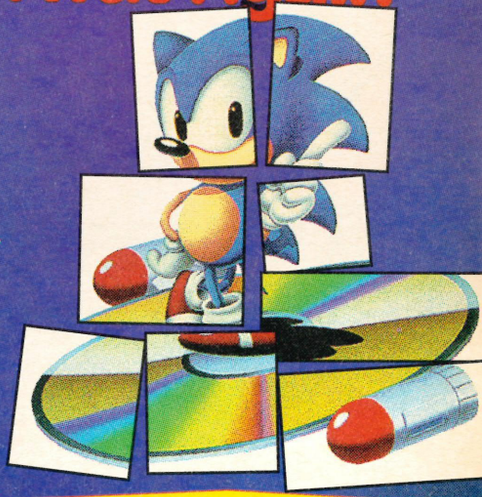
Dear Sirs

After my previous letter to you, it has come to my attention that you are still playing foolish games with my son's consumer loyalty and that of his peers. I refer, of course, to your array of nonsensical pictorial centrespreads.

Thanks to your magazine, not only does my son have a blue ear adorning his bedroom wall, he now has a large white hand to compliment it! Why, I wonder, do you assume that Bernard (my son) simply cannot exist without having a large white hand on his wall?

I don't even wish to speculate what coloured extremity you plan to distribute to our children next month, but rest assured, if it is in the least bit vulgar, I shall be contacting the newspapers.

Richard Flint, Reigate



Nick: ***Um, excuse me, Sir, but as I pointed out to you in the last issue, the appendages you speak of are part of our poster series, which eventually builds into an enormous Sonic the Hedgehog poster. Sorry for any confusion.***

Nige: ***He'll be seein' a big white forehead in a minute, Nick — right on the bridge of his snotbox.***

Nick: ***Yes, violence solves everything in your eyes, doesn't it Nigel?***

Nige: ***It never did Charles Bronson any 'arm, Nick.***

Street Fighter? Ptooo!

Dear Mega Machines

It has to be said, your first issue was brill. It was more brill than Brill McBrill goes to Brill-Land on a brill day and stays in a flat owned by the McBrills (ie, good). Sorry, had to get it out of my system.

My Mega Drive's cool, but I'm fed up with magazines saying *Street Fighter II*'s better than *Mortal Kombat* — it's not, okay? IT ISN'T! I've played both and no way is *Street Fighter II* better than *Mortal Kombat*.

Now I've got that out of the way, I must say (oh, that rhymes) that you should never end this mag, it's so brill.

Stephen Andran, Teignmouth

Nick: ***A controversial point of view, Stephen, but a fair one. We would offer our opinion, and give a straight comparison, but we don't have the carts in our bedroom.***

Nige: ***Yes we 'ave, Nick! Look!***

Nick: ***Heavens! And we seem to have two Mega Drives, a Mega-CD, two SNESs, a vast array of monitors and an enormous selection of games!***

Nige: ***Good, innit?***

Nick: ***Well, Nigel! Santa must have got your letter you sent him last month.***

Nige: ***Yeah, he musta done.***

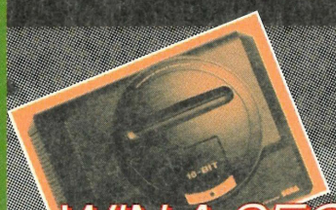
Nick: ***Hang on a minute! Why does this Mega Drive have 'Property Of Impact Magazines' stamped on the bottom? Why... oh, no, Nigel! You* didn't!**

Nige: ***Er... I'm just gunnu ring me social worker, Nick. Don't bother opening the door, I'll take this window...***

Blimey! We've run out of space! Never mind, there's a couple of free spaces on pages 86 and 87! See ya there...

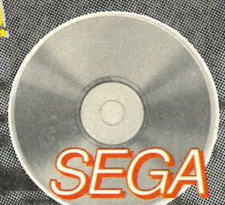
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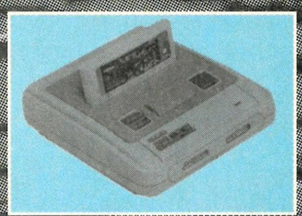
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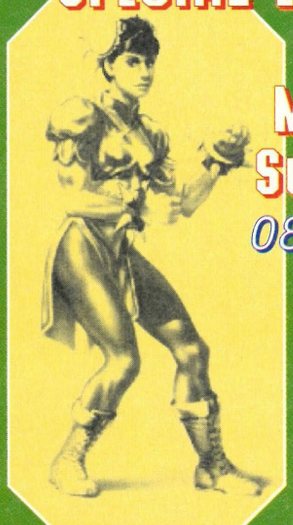
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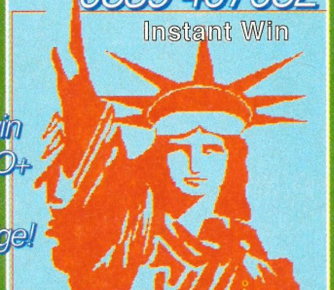
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Calls cost 36p per min (cheap) 48p (other times). Max possible cost £3.60. Please be sure you have permisssion to make this call. Where Instant Win is indicated there is no tiebreaker and prizewinners are decided instantly by playing a deciding game. 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

THE REVIEW BOARD!

Now you've exchanged all those crap book tokens for hard cash, wot're ya gonna spend it on? Gas shares, Premium Bonds, savings plans for a more secure future? Nah. How about blowing the lot on top alien-related, jaw-smashing, gun-toting games for your Mega Drive? Hmm, now there's a possibility. But before you rush to the shops, check our reviews – we're not up anyone's arses and give you at least two honest opinions on every game!

WHAT'S THE SCORE?

Imagine Ulrika Johnson stripped to the bare essentials. Now would you like to see the all-important bits, or would you prefer to cover them up with dials, green and red LEDs, wiggly graphs and the like?

Erm, and that's loosely the idea behind the MEGA MACHINES ratings box. *Very* loosely!

Each of the ratings for the five categories are discussed by the review crew and the final rating is an average of the individual comment marks. They aren't dressed up and don't take half an hour to decipher. And they're honest.

Top Gear

When a game's worth getting, we shout about it! The 'Buy this game' Award is your guarantee that a game plays well, looks good and is seriously worth the dosh. If you don't have a lot of money to spend on games, stick to these and you won't go wrong.

Maybe it *does* look like it took two minutes to draw, but for your information, it took three-and-a-bit. Still, if you see it on a review, that game's a corker!

The MEGA machines "Buy this game" Award!

Culture Corner

Gather ye, gather ye, to the Corner. In the midst of arts funding cuts, we've kept this petite spot as a creative outlet for the artistically-oppressed.

Culture Corner is the place where you, the public, can get your poems, paintings, sketches etc into print. This obviously doesn't include those crappy mime artists who get in your way when you're shopping — they should all be partially dissected then burnt.

Thank you to **Mark Porter** from Bath for sending in a scrap book he made from his dad's grot mags. And yes, Mark, we too have our favourites. Unfortunately, the guy that scans in all the stuff for the magazine has been in the bog with it for the last couple of weeks and won't give it back. But don't let that put anyone off.

You can send anything you like to Culture Corner, from humorous photographs to exquisite poetry, and we'll print it. And if you enclose a picture of yourself, we'll try and get that in, too. Send your masterpieces to: **Culture Corner, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**.

Food for the Mind

By Clive Bilby

They created a Mega Machine,
With plenty of information to glean.
With beer and a curry,
It reads well in a hurry,
Shame it's not as easy to clean.

The Gladiators

By Slug

Me gran fancies Wolf from the Gladiators,
Me dad likes Jet for her jugs,
The kid next door thinks Scorpion's awesome,
But I reckon they're just over-pumped thugs!

Bruce is Back!

Yup, we're still being hounded by the Ludlow tramp. For some reason he actually enjoys the tea from our machine, and once again he's exchanged a quick cuppa for his talents. Bruce?

To the left,
To the right,
Step it up, step it up,
It's all right.
To the left,
To the righ–

Give us that tea back, Bruce — that's the lyrics to the Stereo MCs' record!

The Quality Tray Reviewers Selection

GRAPHICS 13
SOUND 42
PLAYABILITY 56
LASTABILITY 39
ORIGINALITY 74
OVERALL 36

Fudge Finger
Adrian Pitt
Age: 23
Mental age: 14
Physical age: 35
Favourite game this month: *Mean Bean Machine*
Worst brush with the Fuzz: Strange 'Coke in briefcase'-related scandal.
Favourite ailment: Foot and Mouth

Toffee Penny
Warren Lapworth
Age: 24
Mental age: 13
Physical age: 19
Favourite game this month: *ToeJam & Earl 2*
Worst brush with the Fuzz: Wandering aimlessly home from a nightclub in the early hours, the police stopped him. Trouble was, Warren wasn't quite in his right mind...
Favourite ailment: Jaw ache

The ones in purple wrappers
Mat Yeo
Age: 23
Mental age: N/A
Physical age: 23 (boring!)
Favourite game this month: *Supermarket Sweep*
Worst brush with the Fuzz: Got detained for 72 hours under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for carrying eight SAS balaclavas and a clothes line on his way to a Ram Raid for the mag
Favourite ailment: Anything away from the genital region

Hazelnut whirl
James Beaven
Age: 22
Mental age: 3 weeks
Physical age: 28
Favourite game this month: *Eternal Champions*
Worst brush with the Fuzz: Got caught urinating off of a Heritage bridge while on a 'sausage sizzle', aged 18
Favourite ailment: Mad Cow disease (cluck!)

Orange Cream
Steve Shields
Age: 29
Mental age: 423 — senile bugger!
Physical age: 21
Favourite game this month: *ToeJam & Earl 2*
Worst brush with the Fuzz: They've all been bad, but the worst one involved a goat.
Favourite ailment:: Diarrhoea — the only chance he gets for a sit-down nowadays

Praline Crackle
Al Needham
Age: 25
Mental age: Foetal
Physical age: Early Jurassic
Favourite game this month: *ToeJam & Earl 2*
Worst brush with the Fuzz: Put foot through a school skylight and the coppers came around to 'sort 'im out'
Favourite ailment: A nice scab every now and then — passes the time on long train journeys



CHAMPIONS

The second ever 24-Meg Mega Drive game is another scorchin' beat-'em-up: *Eternal Champions*. Never heard of it? Well get used to the name 'cos you're gonna be hearing it a hell of a lot from now on...

MEGA drive!

This is a BEAT-'EM-UP Review



PUBLISHER	SEGA
PRICE	£59.99
RELEASE DATE	LATE JANUARY
SIZE	24 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-2
SKILL LEVELS	8
LIVES	1
CONTINUES	INFINITE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	SUPPORTS SIX-BUTTON PAD

The year is 2225 and the world is teetering on the brink of destruction. For centuries, the balance between good and evil had been maintained by a mysterious energy being known as the Eternal Champion. As the living embodiment of all the greatest fighters who ever lived, he waged a constant battle to prevent darkness and chaos from consuming the planet.

Unfortunately, the Eternal Champion is dying. Knowing he can't defend this blue-green orb much longer, he used his extraordinary powers to scour the timelines for someone to save the planet from doom. He located eight individuals from the past and a ninth from the future, gifted and notorious fighters whose bravery and unique combat abilities would've been a vital force for good, had they not perished.

In various countries and time zones, these fighters will be put to the test in the ultimate fighting experience. There can be only be one winner, for the Eternal Champion only has the power to bestow one prize: the gift of life. The losers will return to their graves, while the victor goes back to a crucial moment minutes before their death, so they can change the outcome and live on to lead the world into a bright, peaceful future.

Pretty corny stuff, eh?

Hey, yeah! Jetta, that's so cool. But if you had a bit of lino to breakdance on like I told ya, you'd be sorted...





The choice is yours

All right, let's get down to the nitty-gritty: '*SFII*-beater' *Eternal Champions* has more options than you can shake a bo stick at, starting with presentation stuff like the storyline and character profiles (you can even call up the programmers' credits if you're particularly sad).

There are options to change the controls (three or six-button pads, which buttons do what), game speed and music/FX sound tests, but the main choices are the age-old One Player, Two Player and Tournament — the first two include Battle Room and Training, detailed elsewhere in this bumper review.

As you'd expect, two-player games are one-off bouts, while solo gamers tackle the other combatants, one at a time, until the big fight against the Eternal Champion and his impressive energy powers.

Much like *SFII*, the selected weirdo — Blade, Jetta, Larcen, Midknight, Rax, Shadow, Slash, Trident or Xavier — find themself in one of nine side-scrolling settings, with a life bar above them and a musclebound, blood-crazed fighter staring them in the face. This is where your dexterity, tactics and knowledge are called into play (or blind panic closely followed by frantic button-pressing, if you're like Warren).

A timer counts down from 99 (not necessarily seconds, it depends on the game speed) in each round of a best-of-three bout and, basically, you've gotta batter your opponent unconscious before they do the same to you.

Here's Slash stopping for one on the way back from the club — after passing up the offer of a nice steak ('I don't like it too well done...')





Eternal C



Ha ha! You didn't bargain on me using my special 'lucky bag water squirt ring' move, did ya?!



SHADOW

Occupation: Corporate Assassin
Time Period: 1993

Hmm. Corporate assassin, eh? Interesting. And look at those, er… eyes. The right time period, too, so– Doh! Damn the new year! Anyhow, Shadow was happy at the Black Orchid Corporation until she learnt that if she made any cock-ups, *she'd* be assassinated. They didn't take too kindly to her resignation so asked her to tap-dance on a narrow window ledge…

Wanna know which of Shadow's buttons to press? For the most pleasing results, do this:

Twirling Fan Attack: these cartwheels aren't for show, they end with a razor-sharp fan attack or three.
Damage: 4–12% ■ Controls: Back, Forward+[A]/[B]/[C]

Flying Mine Uzume-Bi: a small but powerful auto-locking mine's thrown, detonating on impact.
Damage: 18% ■ Controls: Back, Forward+[Z]

Shadow Mode: as a living shadow, she's invulnerable to attack and can use other moves.
Damage: 0% ■ Controls: hold [A]+[B]+[C]

WARREN 79%

I don't like Street Fighter II. I think it's heartless and bland. The characters are as realistic as the new Fingermouse and the endless combinations of pad directions and buttons you've gotta memorise are a pain in the arse. All in all, I think it's nob.

No, really. It's true. Don't expect a jokey 'Ho-ho, had you fooled — it's the best ever'-type sentence, that's really what I think. Soz.

So what about some slightly tacky SFII rip-off? Well it's not the sort of thing you should pawn yer granny for (unless you were planning to anyway), but Eternal Champions is worth considering.

The nine characters (ten, including the Eternal Champ himself) are… how can I put it? Cosmopolitan. Their origins and design are infinitely more imaginative than those in Street Fighter II and Mortal Kombat, being drawn from time periods ranging from 50,000 BC right up to 2345 AD. Their moves and appearance are varied and extravagant — they seem influenced by American superheroes.

If you plan on using any of the fanciful-sounding special moves of these flamboyant fighters, you can forgot about you're 'old faithful' joypad. Even the standard punches and kicks are a pain with one of those, so you'll need a six-button job.

Once furnished with a new control device, you'll learn the majority of the special moves quickly, as over half of them only use the buttons. The remainder generally require simple away/toward opponent directions.

I'm a sucker for a good sound sample, so apart from fancy stuff like Midknight's Bedazzle and Jetta's Ceiling Garb/Death Dive, my face move's the insult. Most of these are spoken in mean, moody voices, while others are suggestive if you don't listen closely. Luv'ly.

Personally, I reckon Eternal Champions is for gamers who want wild characters and instant enjoyment, while SFII's suited to those willing to put in the effort of learning a more sophisticated, 'adult' beat-'em-up. EC is the one for me!

Inner state

All fighters can deliver the same six blows: snap, thrust and wheel kicks, straight, lunge and swing punches. Although Sega class it as a special move, the other common ability is the Insult. Although the word shouted depends on the character, it's delivered in the same way and has the same result of draining Inner Strength.

Yep, not only have you gotta worry about your life bar, but a Ying-Yang symbol next to it which determines how many of your nine special moves you can use. It'd be a pity to lose Midknight's Bedazzle or Shadow's Flying Mine Uzume-Bi, wouldn't it? So make sure you block both life and Inner Strength-sapping attacks.

Things are tough at first, so play a few Practice matches, which allow the time limit, number of rounds, background, skill levels and so on to be tweaked. Like the real thing, there's an action replay facility, either automatic or manual — very useful for analysing past performances.

But once you've developed the art of fighting, only tournaments satisfy. In Round-A-Bout, two players are allotted all nine characters (one group dressed in different colours) and fight until someone runs out of combatants. Single and Double Elimination are knockout tournaments, the first involving up to 32 players. The Double version 'only' caters for 16, but fighters must be beaten twice before they're knocked out.

Don't know about you, but that sounds like an bloody eternity of beat-'em-up possibilities to us!

MM









JONATHAN BLADE

Occupation: Bounty Hunter
Time Period: 2030

It's a TV prog classic: the good cop cursed with a bad temper. One of his suspects constantly hounded him, until Blade nearly thrashed him to death. He was fired so became a bounty hunter, whose last case was to retrieve an Earth-threatening virus from a mad scientist. Blade almost succeeding, but his employers interfered at the last minute. Bye-bye, human race…

Grabbed from the timestream by the Eternal Champion, here are three of his best moves:

Stun Beam: freezes opponent for a few seconds; they're sluggish as they recover.
Damage: 0% ■ Controls: Back, Forward+[Z]

Tracking Blade: smart kitchenware. Hovers then tracks its target and doesn't give in.
Damage: 15% ■ Controls: Back, Forward+[X]+[Y]

Wild Fury Attack: not unlike a certain lard mountain, a lightning series of ten palm strikes.
Damage: 2% per hit ■ Controls: [A]+[B]+[C]







SLASH

Occupation: Prehistoric Hunter
Time Period: 50,000 BC

No, don't laugh, Slash is a smart cookie — for a caveman, anyway. Instead of thrashing out madly and aimlessly, like his colleagues, he thought about and planned his fighting. He had plans for all areas of their lives but the elders of his tribe rejected his fancy ideas. During a clan meeting, the cronies condemned Slash as an evil force. So they stoned him to death…

Us modern-thinking gamers don't object to Slash (his severe B.O problem, yes, but…) or his better moves:

Double-Footed Swing Kick: in mid back-flip, lash out with both feet. Let 'em eat verruca.
Damage: 14% ■ Controls: [A]+[C]

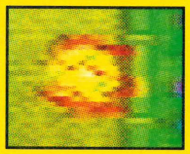
De-Claw: fires a claw embedded in Slash's club, to become embedded in someone's body.
Damage: 12% ■ Controls: Back, Forward+[Z]

Battle Plans

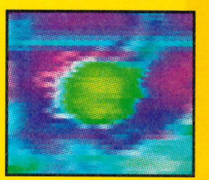
Up to five devices from a range of 18 high-tech torture implements make the Battle Room as dangerous as any part of *Eternal Champions*. The object is simply to survive — almost impossible if you also bring in an opponent. Here are the hard facts on every foul machination…



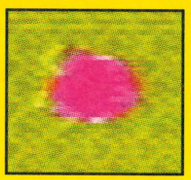
MAGNETIC MINE: freezes you on the spot; a blow from a fighter or missile is the only escape.



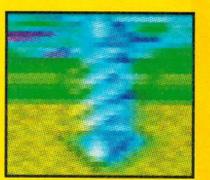
STUN BOLT: like a magnetic mine, except the effect wears off after four seconds.



SLOW MOTION BOLT: y-o-u m-o-v-e s-o-o-o s-l-o-w-l-y… for a few seconds, anyway.



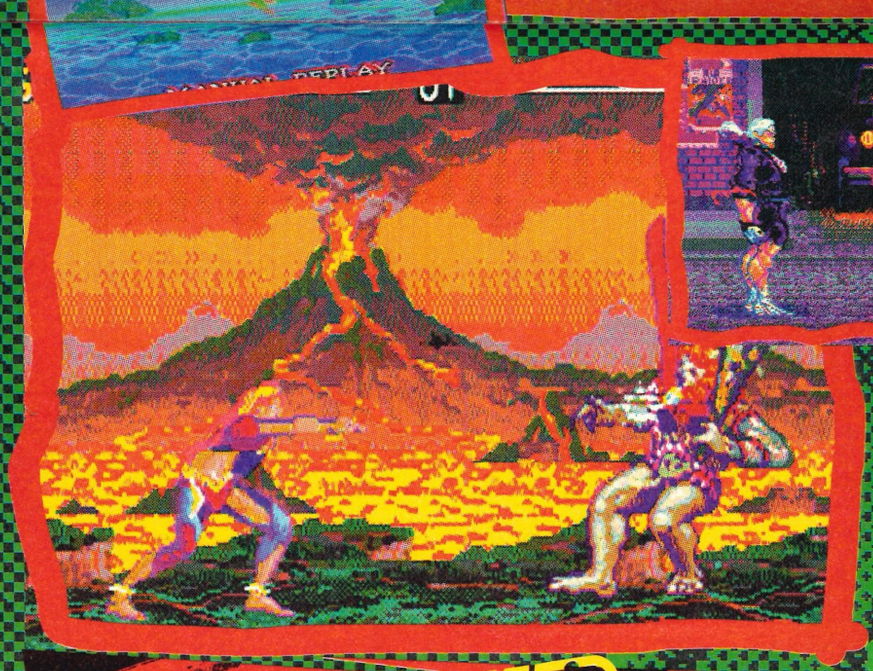
DAMAGE DRAIN BOLT: for six seconds, your moves inflict half as much damage. Bah!

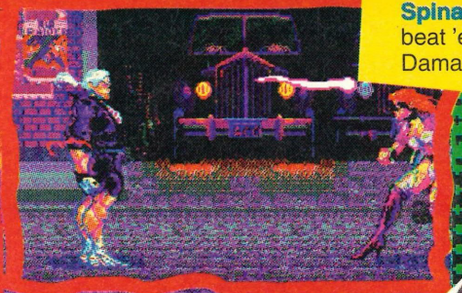


SEISMIC CHARGE: jump! Or you'll be knocked off yer feet when this rumbles by.



TRANSPORTER BOLT: the fighters switch places. They





Spinal Crush: grab an opponent with your feet and beat 'em over the head with the club!
Damage: 4–16% ■ Controls: Forward+[Y]



JAMES 85%

Since its release, the beat-'em-up genre's been dominated by *Street Fighter II*. If anyone's going to top it, it'll be Capcom with a sequel, or Sega, maybe.

Well, that's what I thought, anyway. But it would appear Sega's 24-Meg *Eternal Champions*, despite the hype and cart size, falls short of the mark.

As a two-player game, it's not that bad, but it's a fact of life that you won't always have a pal handy. And to that end, any game must be strong in both one and two-player departments. *Eternal Champions* isn't!

It also has similar playability faults to the likes of *Mortal Kombat* and *Ranma*. The moves aren't instantaneous — beginners find they've rattled off a couple of moves before one takes effect.

I wouldn't say there are too many special moves, 'cos basically you have to take your pick of the ones you like, then choose a couple more when you're bored until you pack an arsenal of special move knowledge. Having said that, a few moves are redundant 'cos they're too damn complicated.

The choice of characters and the control you have is excellent, from a technical point of view, but when I put it into practise, I found it too complicated and fiddly. Most gamers want to get stuck in straight away, but with *Eternal Champions* you have to munch through set-up screens before you hit the action. It's not so bad in two-player mode, but like I said, it should be good for solo gamers.

I'm may be intentional, but it seems it was only designed with the Sega six-button pad in mind. The three-buttoned pad is pointless, and because of the orientation of the buttons on some after-market pads, they're about as much use as wet piece of celery. But putting all that aside, it's the responsiveness of the fighters that put me off.

Eternal Champions ain't gonna knock *Street Fighter II* off its podium, but it's certainly snapping at its heels.

LARCEN TYLER

Occupation: ex-Cat Burglar
Time Period: 1920

Larcen were a funny lad: Al Capone photo on the wall, knuckledusters in his toy box, cardboard policeman silhouette stuck on his bedroom door… But although he loved organised crime, he wouldn't kill — only use his martial arts skills to stop people. Larcen was set up in an incident involving a police chief, a hospital bed and an explosive package (don't ask!). All four went 'boom'…

Make sure you don't go to pieces when you control Larcen and memorise moves like these:

Power Sweep: using a grappling hook and rope, swing into foes, feet first.
Damage: 18% ■ Controls: hold [A]+[B]+[C]

Sai Throw: y'know them big forks, like one of the Turtles uses? Well, throw one.
Damage: 11% ■ Controls: Back, Forward+[Y]

Swinging Hammer Fist: an *SFII*-like move, where punches are delivered at high speed.
Damage: 17% ■ Controls: [X]+[Y]+[Z]

places. They can even be hit by their own projectiles!



CONTROL BOLT: you may as well put the pad down for six seconds, because your controls are scrambled.



LIFE EXTENDER: get in its way! Adds 10% to your life bar — and takes it from your opponent.



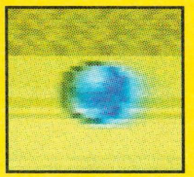
SCATTER GRENADE: splits into two grenades which explode on contact. Damage: 5%



SPIKED BALL: a spherical version of a ninja shuriken (allegedly). Damage: 3%



FLYING BLADESAW: a homing circular saw blade! It even returns when deflected. Damage: 5% per slice



INTELLIGENT MINE: sets the timer on the video. Then homes in on either fighter. Damage: 4%

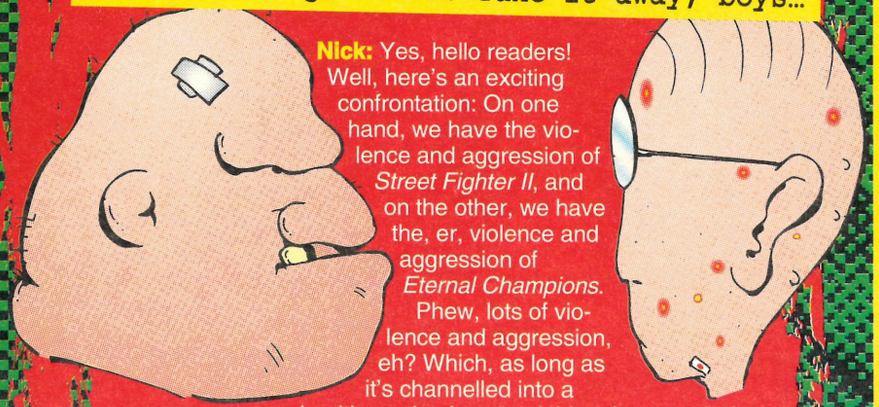


FLOOR FIRE MINE: spreads flame across the floor when it shatters. Damage: 5–10%

SFII Vs EC

Nick & Nige have their say

As a special treat, we let The Write Brothers out of their bedroom and asked them to give us a straight comparison between *Eternal Champions* and *Street Fighter II*. Take it away, boys…



Nick: Yes, hello readers! Well, here's an exciting confrontation: On one hand, we have the violence and aggression of *Street Fighter II*, and on the other, we have the, er, violence and aggression of *Eternal Champions*. Phew, lots of violence and aggression, eh? Which, as long as it's channelled into a healthy outlet, is a good thing. Last week, for example, *The Money Programme* was cancelled due to the snooker and I was *absolutely enraged*! If it wasn't for *SFII*, I would have said a swear word, I would.

Nige: Like 'big boll…'

Nick: Thank you, Nigel. Anyway, readers, let's get to brass tacks. Is *EC* as good as *SFII*?

Well, the first thing to catch my eye was the vast array of fighting styles adopted by the various combatants, from the Brazilian art of Capoeria (a religious dance performed by Angolans over three centuries ago interpolated into a ritual of combat), to Praying Mantis Kung Fu (originated in the 17th century by Wang Lang), to the interesting (and some would say, balletic) Savate, which was formulated in post-Napoleonic France.

Nige: For Christ sake, give it a rest, Nick! Where's the blood then? What's the gore code? This is shite!

Nick: So, you're not particularly enamoured with it thus far, brother of mine?

Nige: Dunno about that, Nick, but I think it's a bit toss at the minute, I'll tell you that for nowt. How do you pull his 'ead off, then?

Nick: Another aspect which quite took my fancy was the veritable smorgasbord of moves and options. There are considerably more manoeuvres available to the *EC* user than his *SFII* compatriot

Nige: 'Ey! Did you see me knee that geezer in the knacks? Look! I just kicked him right in the mush! Watch this… NUT! Stitch that, geezer!

Nick: Nigel, could you stop attacking Ian Osborne and get back to playing the game?

Nige: Awwww! Must I? God, Nick, you're a boring get, you.

Nick: Anyway, readers, another aspect which took me aback was the Battle Room, a most invigorating idea which pushes the beat-'em-up genre a step further. Yes. Very stimulating.

RAX COSWELL

Occupation: Cyber-Fighter
Time Period: 2345

Coswell was one of the best kickboxers in the business — yup, even better than Jean-Claude. But cyber-fighting became the hip thing before he could become world champ, so he underwent painful surgery and tagged Robotic Artificial Xoskeleton onto his name. RAX was betrayed by his promoter, who unleashed a computer virus seconds before his ultimate victory…

Now RAX has the chance to earn the loftier title of Eternal Champion, if he uses these:

Cyber Punch: powers the right arm to maximum to deliver a killer blow. Damage: 16% ■ Controls: [X]+[Y]+[Z]

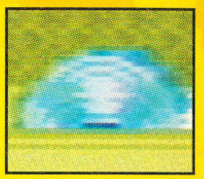
Jet Knee Smash: fly across the screen, knee extended. Hey presto — instant Aled Jones. Damage: 15% ■ Controls: Back, Forward+[C]

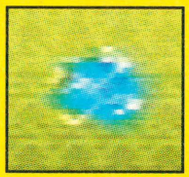
Overload: fried circuits as RAX completely overloads, releasing a fast, powerful energy ball. Damage: 20% ■ Controls: [A]+[C]



Right then, RAX, just wait till you smell THIS one – parp! Now THAT'S what I call a special, okay?

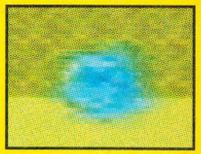
FLOOR BUZZ-SAW: a circular saw that zips through the floor, like in the cartoons. Damage: 6%

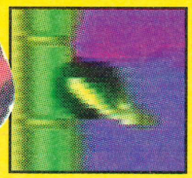




ELECTRICAL BOLT: a Hadoken-like bolt which electrocutes victims. Damage: 7%

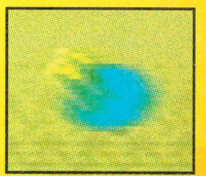
LIFE DRAIN BOLT: the opposite of a Life Extender. Drains some life, only to give it to the opponent! Damage: 10%

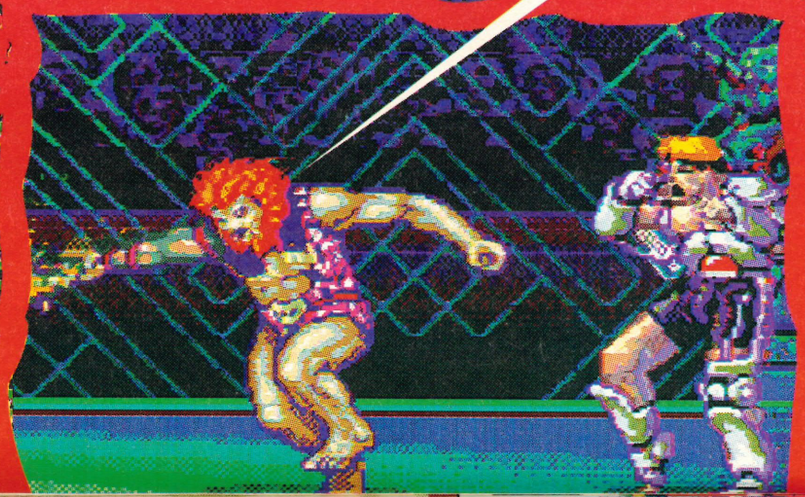


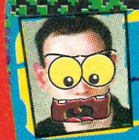


INNER STRENGTH DRAIN BOLT: wave bye-bye to a massive wodge of Inner Strength: Damage: 50% I.S

FLATLINE BOLT: oh sh… There goes your Inner Strength — and your special moves: Damage 100% I.S





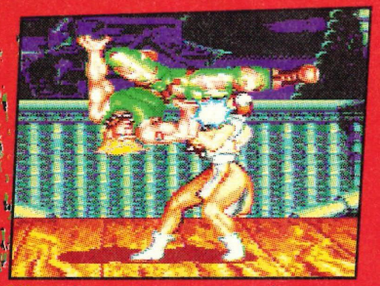


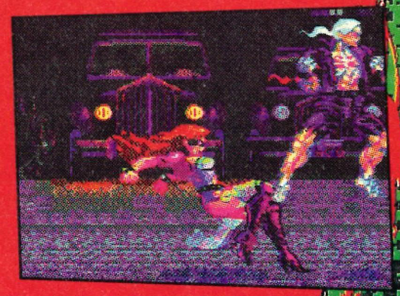
AL 78%

No, it's not as good as *Street Fighter II*. Yet. I say this because ever since I started work on MEGA MACHINES, I have become a convert to the Buddha of beat-'em-ups — even though I'm the crappest in the office and suffer ritual humiliation on a daily basis for being, like I said, crap.

So, unbeknown to anyone, I sneak into the office at midnight and fiddle away. On the game. As it were. And

Nige: My arse it is! Look — I just kicked that bird in the mush and there's no blood! It's toss! Come on, Nick, let's go home and watch *Child's Play 3*.
Nick: So there we have it. In my opinion, *Eternal Champions* is an admirable attempt to usurp *Street Fighter II* and an interesting proposition to those seeking an alternative to the saga of the World Warriors.





Nige: Nah, it's a bucket of wazz.

Hang on. WORRRR! YOU SEE THAT! That geezer just got thrown on the bonfire! He's sizzlin'! *GLEAMIN'!* 'Ey, this is all right, Nick!
Nick: So, Nigel, what do you think? If you had a choice between *Eternal Champions* and *Street Fighter II*, which one would you have?
Nige: I'd nick both of 'em, mate.



TRIDENT

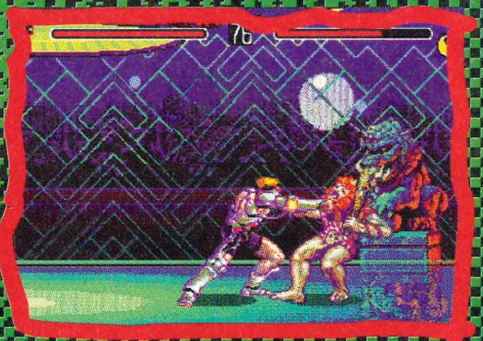
Occupation: Gladiator
Time Period: 110 BC

This Atlantean once fought a shark. He lost the battle — and his right hand, but the trident which replaced it made him very popular at barbecues. His race clashed with the Romans but they agreed to settle the matter by gladiator combat. Trident represented Atlantis but the fight was rigged and he was crushed under a pillar. Thus the Atlanteans were banished to the sea… You may feel drowned under the weight of so many moves but Trident's got some good un's:

Bio-Drain Field: generates a red shield. Anyone who touches it loses half their attack strength. Damage: 0% ■ Controls: [Y]+[Z]

Spinning Trident: this self-explanatory attack is easily executed and causes extreme damage. Damage: 30% ■ Controls: [X]+[Y]+[Z]

Liquid Mode: trapped in a corner? Just turn into water and dribble out of the way! Damage: 0% ■ Controls: [A]+[B]+[C]







'Tickle tickle tickle!' – 'Ooh, tee-hee-hee, cut it out, will ya!? We're s'posed to be appearing in a screenshot…'

We've got a bet on at the office: Al reckons the Jap text reads 'Enjoy Coca-Cola', and we all think it says 'Al Needham is a wa



now, after many hours of hard sweat, *I can actually do Edmond Honda's Hundred-Hand Slap*. Impressed, aren't you? So it's gonna take a lot to pull me away from my life's work…

To be honest, I haven't spent an enormous amount of time on *Eternal Champions*, but what I *have* seen, while impressive in its own right, hasn't convinced me that The New Kid In Town has what it takes to knock the mighty *SFII* off its perch.

Firstly, the characters in SFII are so well defined — their personality oozes off the screen. Their counterparts in *EC* don't attract you in the same way. In *SFII*, people like certain characters and stick with them, whereas… I don't know… I just didn't *bond* with any of the characters in *EC*.

Secondly, the special moves. Yes, there are loads of them, but only a couple impress me in the way Guile's Flash Kick and Bison's Flaming Torpedo and scores of other special moves in *SFII* do. I can't put my finger on it (good reviewer, eh?), but I think the futuristic slant that infects *ECs* makes the special moves less believable.

Also, you can get by a lot better in *EC* by randomly bashing the buttons — if you don't use the special moves in *SFII*, you're dead meat. The upside of this is that beginners and crappos like me can get into it a lot quicker.

Excuse me, someone's just brought in a Sonic cake… Jesus, look at the size of it! It's ace! Cut us a piece, Steve! Bagsie his hand!

Anyway, what rescues *EC* from being just another *SFII* wannabe is the plethora of options, the nifty training modes and corkingly fine Battle Room elevating it into the realms of 'buyable'.

Let's go it through one more time. Below is a list of characteristics. Find the one which sounds like you and act accordingly:
Rich, like beat-'em-ups, already got *SFII*: Buy it!
Not rich, like beat-'em-ups, already got *SFII*: Naaah!
Like beat-'em-ups, haven't got *SFII*: Think about it…
Don't give a toss about beat-'em-ups: You some kind o' nance?



STEVE 84%

You just wouldn't *believe* the cloak-and-dagger-type activity that's surrounded this game. Rumoured to be Sega's 'biggest release to date', I couldn't work out whether they meant in Meg size or promotional spend. Whatever, it IS a big game... and a good one, I reckon (I just wish I didn't have to sign my soul over to the Devil in order to gain a review copy!).

Okay, so Street Fighter II: Special Champion Edition is the better game, but so what? Beat-'em-up fans have had a birrova raw deal on the Mega Drive front, with only a handful of adequate releases to suit their needs. Now they've two top-class contenders to choose from — and my advice to fans of the genre is to buy both.

The range of options and special moves crammed into is enough to boggle minds beyond usual boggling levels. Getting to grips the manual is a fight in itself; it's the War & Peace of the Sega world... without the 'Peace'!

Grappling with the six-button pad, however, is nowhere near as tricky. While controlling Ryu or Ken in SFII, for example, I manage to pull off a Dragon Punch about once in every five goes. There are few moves even approaching the complexity of that old chestnut here, though, making it a lot easier for novices.

With smoother animation, clearer backgrounds and the inclusion of difficulty settings for Tournament mode, this could've been an all-time classic — but as it stands? Hmm...



ADE 74%

Wa-hey! What have we here? A game that caused so much excitement when it arrived, I had to nail the lads to the floor just so's I could get a butcher's.

Well, call it Scorpio intuition (I'm into this horoscope lark) or maybe it's just I'm a clever git, but the moment the crew plugged-in the cart, a little voice in the back of my noddle cried out, 'It's not going to be as good as *Street Fighter II*.'

And do you know something? That little voice (sounded uncannily like Russell Grant, actually) was absolutely right. Okay, there's a great selection of characters. Obviously, some tricks of the trade are better than others and, in time, you discover your fave fighter. Sad thing is, several of the moves were far too complicated for a mere mortal like me to execute in a split second.

Why did it appear I was only guaranteed a 50% success rate on special moves? I can't be that crap, surely? Sometimes each combination of joypad-pressing and button-bashing would work, other times not. This makes com-

training clues



DEXTERITY SPHERE

A floating ball doesn't sound too threatening, does it? Even if it is made from 'solid chrome'. But in this single-round session, it attacks with greater speed as the sands of time run dry, draining energy while you try to rack up points.

HOLO-TRAINER

This time the chrome ball projects a hologram of your chosen opponent. Otherwise the same as a match, scores show which moves are most effective... Hmm, may as well go for a practice bout, really.

PRACTICE SPHERE

Choose a fighter and mid, foot, jump or moving-range ball. It hovers at a certain height, for you to hone attacks capable of nudging it. The mid-range sphere's lights glow red when you make contact. Yep, this shiny ball's versatile, all right.

XAVIER

Occupation: Warlock/Alchemist
Time Period: 1692

Thinks he's cool 'cos he's last in the telephone directory. A failed blacksmith, he turned to the art of alchemy and the old chestnut of turning lead into gold. He failed there, too, but found something better: the secret of clean, unlimited energy. Before he could put it to good use, superstitious townsfolk burned him at the stake...

To turn simple button-presses into solid gold special moves, follow these simple spells:

Dragon Trap: Xavier's cane comes to life, biting and crushing the opponent until thrown off.
Damage: 15% ■ Controls: Back, Forward+[Z]

Attract & Smack: the enemy's plucked off the ground and held helpless while being hit with the cane.
Damage: 12% ■ Controls: [A]+[B]+[C]

Identity Change: the victim becomes a different character! Can't see the advantage, but it's fun.
Damage: 0% ■ Controls: [X]+[Y]+[Z]



Trident attacks Xavier with a special sparkly finger-in-the-eye move, annoying the

JETTA MAXX

Occupation: Circus Acrobat
Time Period: 1899

Rebellious Jetta ran away to join the circus! She learnt gymnastics and martial arts as she travelled the world and was compelled to use these skills to restore order in Japan, where a rebellion was threatening to tear the country apart. The involvement of her native Russia made matters worse, but before she could bring peace, a saboteur cut her safety net...

In the land of the living once more, Jetta can use gymnastic special moves such as these:

Ricochet: oop-la! Curl into a ball, bounce off the ceiling than dash left or right!
Damage: 0% ■ Controls: Down, Up+[A]/[C]

Ceiling Grab: using handy hook-like wrist adornments, hang from the ceiling in preparation...
Damage: 0% ■ Controls: Down, Up+[Y]

Death Dive: only available following a Ceiling Grab, it's one of the most damaging moves of all.

bat frustrating and cumbersome.

Graphically, there aren't any problems. All characters have well smart animation and are nicely drawn, shaded and detailed. The backdrops are fine, some working better than others.

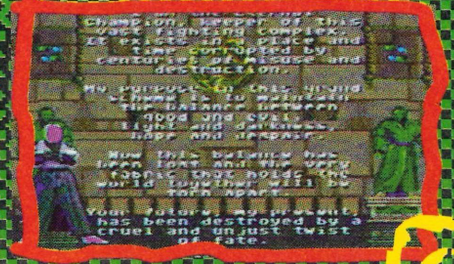
I dunno, I just don't think *Eternal Champions* has the spit and polish of *Street Fighter II*. It's not as slick, doesn't feel as competitive and isn't as fast. *Street Fighter II* has that something about it.

Perhaps I'm being more scathing than the others, but what the hell, *Eternal Champions* doesn't set my world on fire. I feel I could pour out my heart to Chun-Li over a hot chocolate and a couple of Bourbons. She's part of the family now. Geez, I love that gal! I don't think I'll ever feel that comfy with Jetta and her hormone-injected buddies. Sad, but true.





…So he retaliates with a deadly purple ball-thing manoeuvre (you should at least *try* to learn the right names for the moves –Ed).



well 'ard Warlock no end…

Damage: 20% ■ Control: [C]

Just what the world needs — another beat-'em-up! It seems just about every software company in the world has 'the ultimate fighting game' in development at the moment and all are hoping to snatch the limelight from *Street Fighter II*.

The simple truth is they haven't got a snowball's chance in hell. *Street Fighter II* is recognised the world over as the greatest one-on-one combat game ever — for a variety of reasons.

Interesting characters, superb gameplay and impressive moves are just some of the elements that have helped put Capcom's *SFII* at the top of the arcade and console charts. Pale imitations such as *Mortal Kombat*, *Fatal Fury* and *World Heroes* wow you with neat effects but you won't be playing them in a year's time, whereas with *SFII* you're still honing your techniques or learning new moves.

So where does *Eternal Champions* fit into the big fighting scheme of things? Well, it's hard to say. Sega have obviously put a lot of effort into this 24-Meg monster, but after playing it for a while you can't help but say, 'Yeah, so what?'

Some of the characters are Street Fighter clones (Slash and Blanka obviously went to the same school) and of course, there's a female fighter or two. As for impressive moves… there are a few, but the sluggish controls mean you're too busy cursing the joypad to notice them.

That's not to say *Eternal Champions* is a bad game, but surely there are enough yawnsome fighting games on the market without Sega wasting their time on yet another? Not bad but not brilliant.



MAT 84%



MITCHELL MIDLETON KNIGHT

Occupation: Bio-Chemist
Time Period: 1967

Now known as Midknight, Mitchell developed a chemical weapon for use in Vietnam, but bottled out and stole it back. In his haste, Mitch and his deadly formula plummetted into a vat of chemicals. But in true comic-book fashion, he didn't die.

Transformed into the vampire-like Midknight, he slowly rotted as he sought a cure. Midknight was on the verge of success… then an Interpol agent shot him.

Now more undead than ever, some of his special moves are well spooky. How about these three…?

Life Drain: sucks out a sixth of the opponent's life force! Just like in the film.
Damage: varies ■ Controls: Forward+[X]+[Y]+[Z]

Bedazzle: when this bolt strikes, the victim's forced to walk closer to Midknight. Coo-el!
Damage: 0% ■ Controls: [X]+[Y]+[Z]

Mist Attack: vaporise into mist! Float around and inflict damage without fear of harm.
Damage: 5–15% ■ Controls: [A]+[C]

GRAPHICS	82	
SOUND	84	
PLAYABILITY	86	with three-button pad
LASTABILITY	74	with three-button pad
ORIGINALITY	68	
OVERALL	81	63 / 51

Dragon's Revenge

MEGA drive!

An ancient land. A kingdom in turmoil. An unparalleled force of good fighting an evil older than time itself. A quest only one ma- Oh sod it, it's only a bloody game.

Right, let's get this scenario into perspective. There's this village called (for the sake of argument) Ludlow. Everything's peaceful and tranquil (mainly because there's sod-all to do), but underneath the stillness and calm lurks a terrible secret.

Before you ask, it's nothing to do with sheep or children with three eyes. It's a dragon. That's right, a big bleeder of a dragon flying over Ludlow, giving everybody grief and threatening to torch the place unless he's given a human sacrifice every ten years — someone pure in spirit and body (they'd have a job finding someone like that in Ludlow, but never mind).



Once, a shifty village elder called Darzel offers herself up for sacrifice, but instead of becoming a human kebab, she convinces the drag to change his demand to the fittest bird in the village because, hey, this is a fantasy world and that's more of a cliché.

Oi! Dragon! In the car park — now!

Imagine this: you're a sorceress called Rina, and you and your mates have got either steroid-assisted physiques or big jugs. You decide to go to the village to check out what's happening on the sacrifice scene.

When the dragon comes to pick his bird up, you, being a have-a-go-hero, pile in and try to give the dragon what-for. Err-or! Darzel just so happens to possess magic powers of her own and, just out of badness, imprisons you and your spars in enormous crystal balls, scattering them across the countryside, like so many hamsters on the living room floor.

Chins right across the kingdom





ADE 75%

There's no doubt about it, *Dragon's Revenge* is an excellent game. It's playable, addictive, it looks good, it sounds good. If you're after a cart that little bit different from the norm, this is the one to get.

All very positive, huh? Well, yes, I challenge anyone to disagree with me. Thing is, how would you feel about *Dragon's Revenge* if you'd bought the first game, *Dragon's Fury*?

To be honest, I was disappointed. While I can't fault the game, this time around there's nothing new and outstanding to tempt owners of *Dragon's Fury* to part with their well-earned dosh.

The format here is *DF* (hey, this is pinball — what more can you do?!) with a few bells and whistles. There's an extra section to the board, hidden just to the right of the playing area. A lot of nifty flipper work and tilting gets you there eventually.

Bonus games are hidden here and there; they're fun, if frustrating at times, and definitely harder than those in the original. I found myself using the 'tilt' feature a lot more — although tilt too much and your flippers become inactive. A little annoying.

I played *Dragon's Fury* to death. It's one of my all-time favourite Mega Drive games. Even though I found *Revenge* mildly addictive, I didn't play it as much.

If you haven't got the first game, buy this. If you *have*, you'll find nothing gob-smackingly different to make you want to buy *Dragon's Revenge*.



Thanks, lads. A couple of waspy things and blue splodge and you expect pearls of wisdom? Pah!





PUBLISHER	TENGEN
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	JANUARY
SIZE	16 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-2
SKILL LEVELS	1
LIVES	5
CONTINUES	EXTRA BALL
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YES
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	LOTS OF MOANING





are being stroked, but check this out: You're a sorceress, remember? To you, magic spells are as easy as picking your nose. Your mates need help and some old bag and a dragon stand in your way.

Think! What do you do? Summon all your magical powers, contact the 'other side' and spur them on to fight evil? Or go on a long and mystical quest, encountering halflings, fighting ogres and riding hard with the Norse goblins?

'Fraid not

Nah. You nip off to the nearest kebab shop, get yourself a fistful of 50 pees and play pinball. Straight up. There might be some flange in the manual saying how you summon a Mystic Silver Ball and control it with mindpower, but in reality you control flippers with the joypad. Yep, it's another of what seem to be a thousand MD pinball games.

Dragon's Revenge, though, is worthy of attention, as it's the sequel to what many people see as the grandaddy of Mega Drive pinfoolery: *Dragon's Fury*. This game blurred the boundaries between pinball and video games by having such tasty things as sprites wandering across the table, boss levels and a massive play area.

There's not much left to say (if you don't know how a pinball table works, there's little hope for you) except, yes, you can tilt, yes, you have five balls, but no, you can't win replays. What would be the point of that, sad boy?

There *is*, however, a 'match' mode at the end of the game, and if a number matches the last three digits of your score, you get an extra ball. So, for all you roleplaying saddoes out there — the kind who roll against their Strength before they try to open a bottle of lemonade — put down your 12-sided dice, lay aside your character sheets, check out our comments and take that first step towards getting a life!

MM

Great balls of fire! Your tool gets ready to roll in the chute. Let rip!

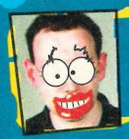






This is Darzel. Sounds like she's been named after a fabric conditioner. She's a nasty old bint who reckons it's clever to take the mick throughout the game.





AL 80%

First off, what's all this toss about the Misty Mountains of Kareggdor, and some dragon who wants the tastiest bird in the village? What's he gonna do to her, for Christ's sake? He'd be better off with some fat bloke with big thighs — he'd get more meat out of him.

Still, it's a good excuse for all the sad Dungeons & Dragons lads to have a good leer at some woman in a tight medieval bikini, innit? Death to all sad fantasy tossers! Get down the shops and get yourself a life!

Anyway, I used all me best Roger Daltrey material last month so I'd better not nob about. *Dragon's Revenge*, with its nice big table and detail, is better than a punch up the snotbox (and the god-awful *Virtual Pinball*, but that's not saying much) but not a real progression from *Dragon's Fury*.

It's common for Mega Drive pinball games to be absolutely crammed with graphics, which get dead confusing, and *Revenge* (as we call it in the trade, 'cos it saves us two syllables) is no different.

Also, why does the bird in the middle moan and groan so much? What's up with her? If you buy this, don't have the sound on too loud or your mam'll think you're watching one o' them films. You know the sort...

Yeah, it's all right. But *only* all right.

DRaG 'eM HOmE

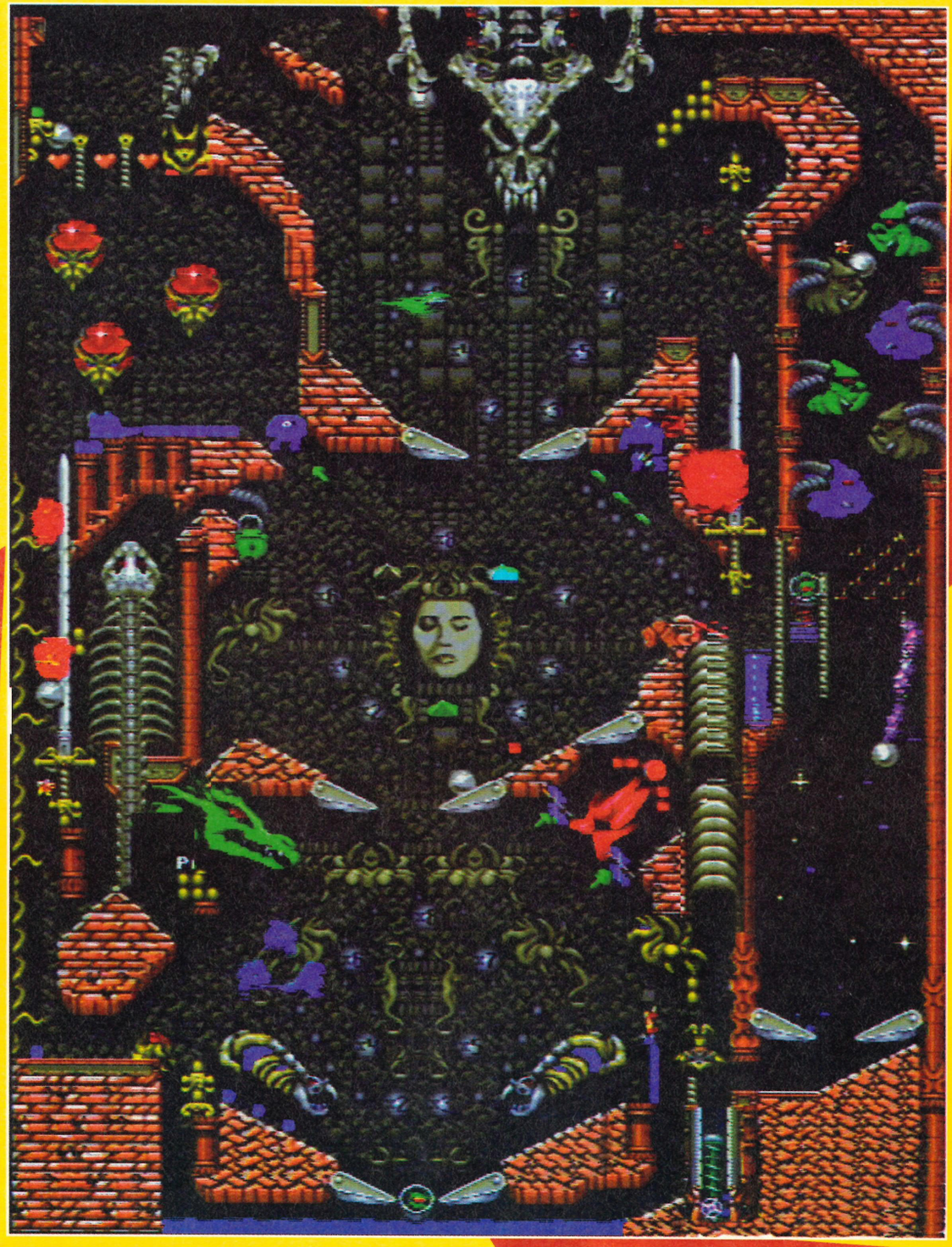
Those wonderful peeps at **Tengen** have given us five goodie-bags to give away, filled with stickers, T-shirts, badges and a copy of *Dragon's Revenge*.

Cor! Just think of it: Write your name and address on the back of an envelope, send it into us and you could be the proud owner of this awesome pinball sim! Now if that doesn't sound like a good idea, may the England football squad come round to the MEGA MACHINES office and knock our balls about!

You know what to do, so send those entries to: **Pin-me-balls Competition, Mega Machines, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**. The first five out of the hat/box/bag/river/whatever we decide to put the entries in win a goodie-bag. Um, hurrah! So get your entries in quick.



PINBALL MAP BIT

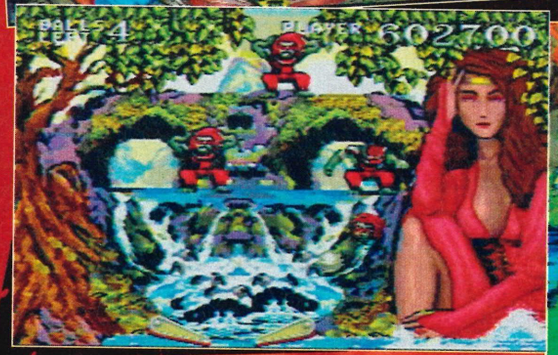


34

BONUS LEVELS











With the lock broken, this whirling dirvish appears under the flippers.





JAMES 91%

Pinball is a game of points, features, skill and luck. Tengen have incorporated *all* of these into *Dragon's Revenge*. I like pinball, and this is the only true simulation.

The features are enough to give it plenty of lastability, although I'm a bit doubtful about the two-player option. For instance, say the first player has a bit of a lucky run; it's more than a faint possibility that player two could die of malnutrition before they get another go. And it's utterly impossible to watch without backseat driving.

The bonus games break up the table action superbly. Okay, so you're still twatting a ball about with flippers, but the 3D perspective sets it apart from regular play.

Having said that, above all the glittering features, tortuous strategy and teasing bonus games, there's one thing which really swung this game for me: the 'Aren't you doing well!' detector. It's incredible! Smeg only knows how they programmed it, but it's there!

Just like on a real pinball table, as soon as someone leans over your shoulder and says, 'Aren't you doing well,' you're doomed. Somewhere inside the game, a little voice announces, 'Will all balls leave the table by the nearest exit.' Then you stand there with a look of disbelief on your face as, one by one, all the balls make a bee-line for the gap directly between your flippers.

It's not often a game makes you think how lucky you are to own a Mega Drive, but this is one of them. The only things that could've made it better would be more levels and better sound, but maybe we'll see that in the future on CD format.

As it stands, *Dragon's Revenge* is the perfect pinball sim — although if you've got or played *Dragon's Fury* to death, bear in mind it's more of same with knobs on.



Light the three hearts and win a Vauxhall Corsa.



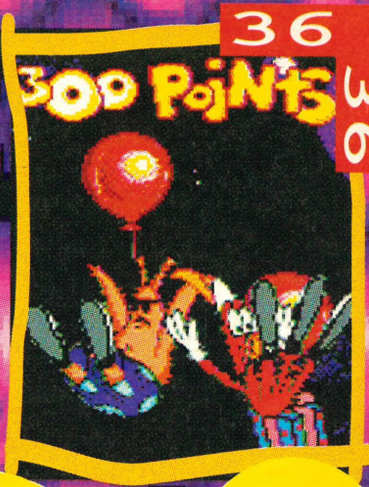
Tip: Break that lock.

GRAPHICS	81
SOUND	74
PLAYABILITY	79
LASTABILITY	76
ORIGINALITY	68
OVERALL	82

They came, they saw… they crashed their spece ship. But ToeJam and Earl survived their visit to Earth and returned victorious – along with a few thousand stowaways. Their second way-out adventure's in the can…







The MEGA machines "Buy this game" Award!

MEGA drive!

ToeJam & Earl in Panic on Funkotron

The original *ToeJam & Earl* was a veritable diamond in the dust. If you haven't heard of it, put this magazine down, start doing a paper round and lay down a mere £20 at your local software emporium for a copy. It was an underground classic when it came out over two years ago and still wees over a good many of today's latest releases.

And — hurrah and huzzah! — the home boys from Hell are back, back, *BACK!* in an all-new adventure. As you may know, their first escapade saw them stranded on Earth, trying to reassemble their spaceship so they could return to their native Funkotron.

Unfortunately, a posse of mad Earthlings attached themselves to their ship and are now running loose, getting on everyone's wick to such an extent that the ruler of





Watch out Funky dudes coz it's… A Platform Review!



Funkotron, the Mighty Funkapotamous, has gone into self-imposed exile.

The space-headed spars are understandably stressed-out by this, and decide to recapture the humans, chuck 'em in a spaceship and send 'em back. How do they do this? With their handy supply of Trap-O-Matic jam jars, of course…





STEVE 94%

Okay, I admit it. I've spent way too long playing *TJ&E2*, and now there just isn't enough time left to write a 'proper' comment. I've got a hundred and three things to do, the phone's ringing off the hook… and I'm late for yet *another* bloody meeting. Bah.

I don't care, though, as it's not often that a game comes in which I'll actually miss my lunch hour to play; since this arrived I've nearly lost a whole stone! It's genuinely funny, easy to get to grips with, hard to put down and looks like nothing on Earth (although, seeing as it's set on Funkotron, maybe that's no bad thing).

I've no idea what kind of artificial stimulants the programmers were on when they wrote *TJ&E2*, but whatever it was I hope it doesn't kill 'em before they can do a third instalment. I love it and, what's more, I reckon I could have just *one* more go before I make that meeting.

It's absolutely shining (er, that's 'gleaming', mate — Nige).



AL 94%

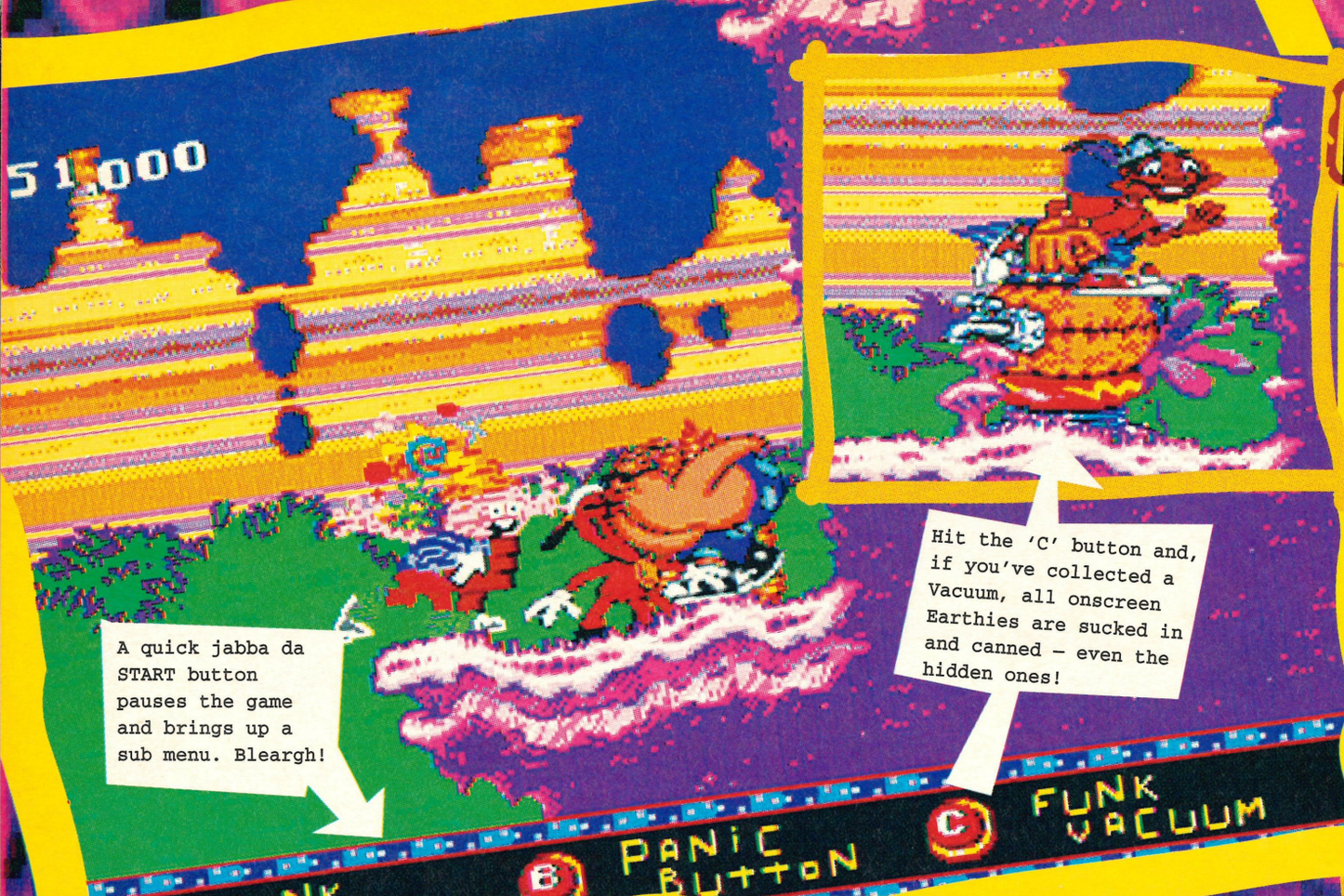
SAFE! Safe, safe, safe, safe, SAFE! Words cannot relay to you how *safe* this game is, friends.

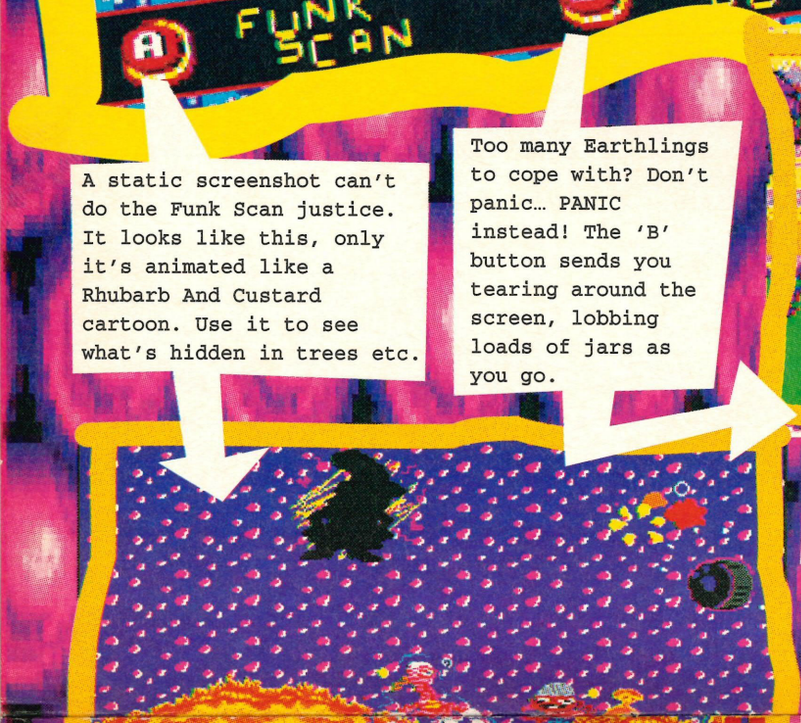
ToeJam & Earl holds a special place in my heart 'cos it was first Mega Drive game I ever played, at my good mate Gareth's house many years ago. We'd get the ales and Boasters in, along with other treats, and just chill.

I've been looking forward to this game for ages, and I've been really tetchy all this week 'cos the first time the game chips came in, some prat had run over 'em in a fork-lift truck. Bah! Now I've got me hands on it, I don't wanna stop playing till I've finished it.

One of the few truly amusing games around, there's always something around the corner which keeps interest level high and makes you want to carry on. I love the interaction with the other alien bro's, and the music just wazzes in the mouths of any CD game I can think of — and many CDs, come to that.

Whoever wrote this game, if you're ever in Ludlow, expect a seriously large amount of pints to come your way as a token of my esteem. Safe! Safe! SAFE! (So you like it then, Al? — Sub Ed)







The Brit's Abroad...


Snotty kid: Chucks stuff...


Little brats: Kick shins...


Pneumatic prat: Shakes the deck...



WARREN 85%

ToeJ*aaahm!* Big Er*rrrl!* I've been waiting for the return of the psychedelic duo since I heard of this game, soon after the original hit the UK. I'd almost given up on it, but preview shots put my mind at rest a few months back and I've been dribbling ever since (partly 'cos've *TJ&E2*).

Just like *ToeJam & Earl*, it's packed with weird characters, funky toonz, bright colours, hilarious samples and surreal situations. Okay, it's a mere side-scrolling platformer, but the switch means the sprites are bigger and the action's faster — the fruitless wandering of the aliens' first cart was its only fault.

Just like the original, there are prezzies galore, although this time their contents (coins, points, funk) are instantly added to your inventory. Much of the gameplay involves shaking trees, parting bushes (!) and lifting manhole covers to find said goodies, but always be prepared to side-step bowling balls, tires and trashcans — unless you're the unadventurous type and always use the funk scanner before searching.

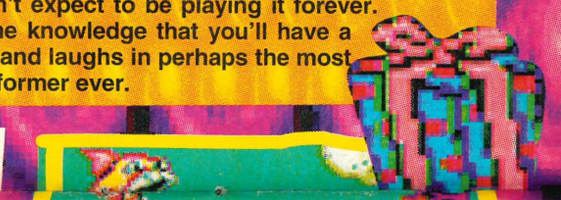
For this type of game, the players' sprites are amazingly versatile and tested in many ways. Cans are thrown in all directions and planted on the ground, underwater passages are swam (fish snogged for air on the way!), bubbles balanced upon, arrows followed, secret passages and doors discovered, pink sponge bounced upon (sometimes under the watchful eyes of a panel of judges), buttons pressed and parking meters fed, not to mention the funk move to teleport out of trouble and the smart bomb-like vacuum.

Sprites and samples are in perfect harmony, from the snapping, yapping pink poodles, through the avid photographers ('How cute?! Smile!' *FLASH!*), to the nude opera singers, warbling away from inside modesty-preserving cardboard boxes. My faves are the ghost cows: they drift toward you with the occasional bellow, then possess your mind, via your ear'ole! An *Exorcist*-style spinning head and grim 'moo!' follow.

ToeJam & Earl 2 has *so* many neat touches. In-game instructions and conversations with friends (which often tell snippets of plot) mean you can chuck the manual straight out the window with this cart, the Simon-style beatbox game adds life, the amazing 'crayon' graphics in scan mode and Hyperfunk zones, superb intro sequence and, overall, the amazing character, humour and unique approach.

As you can tell from this comment, *ToeJam 2* (he's better than Earl) is packed to the gills with sprites, sounds and mad ideas… but the gameplay boils down to searching and trapping, so don't expect to be playing it forever. Buy it safe in the knowledge that you'll have a whole lot of fun and laughs in perhaps the most original MD platformer ever.









Flying witch: Drops crap…



Boogie man: Bites knees…



Total wally. *Really* annoys…



Pea shooter: Er, shoots peas…



Aha! So this is where our designer decided to put that famous 'fish kiss' pic. Not much good *here*, is it?

PANIC!

The main difference between *ToeJam & Earl 2* and its predecessor is that the angled overhead perspective has been abandoned for a more standard side-on platform jobbo. Another aspect that's been shelved is the split-screen feature, which came into use whenever the homies went their separate ways, so teamwork in two-player mode is now even more important.

Fortunately, the lads have a few new tricks up their sleeve — along with a neat warp manoeuvre which transmits you across the screen. The Funk Scan works as radar and detects what's lurking in trees, behind bushes and under manholes, be it hidden Earthlings, bonuses or traps.

The Funk Vacuum, on the other hand, sucks up any Earthlings or bonuses lurking about and dispenses them in handy jar-size pieces. The Panic Button is a good laugh, too: the lads run around like madmen, throwing jars left, right and centre.

Other assorted goodies which inhabit Funkotron come in the shape of buttons to punch, otherworldly dimensions in which to pick up further bonuses, and assorted home boys and girls who help the pair out. Slammin'!

MM





The story involves Funkotron losing its Funk – depicted here by the lack of colour. (That's a crap caption –Ed)





PUBLISHER	SEGA
PRICE	£49.99
RELEASE DATE	ABOUT NOW
SIZE	16 MEG

OPTIONS

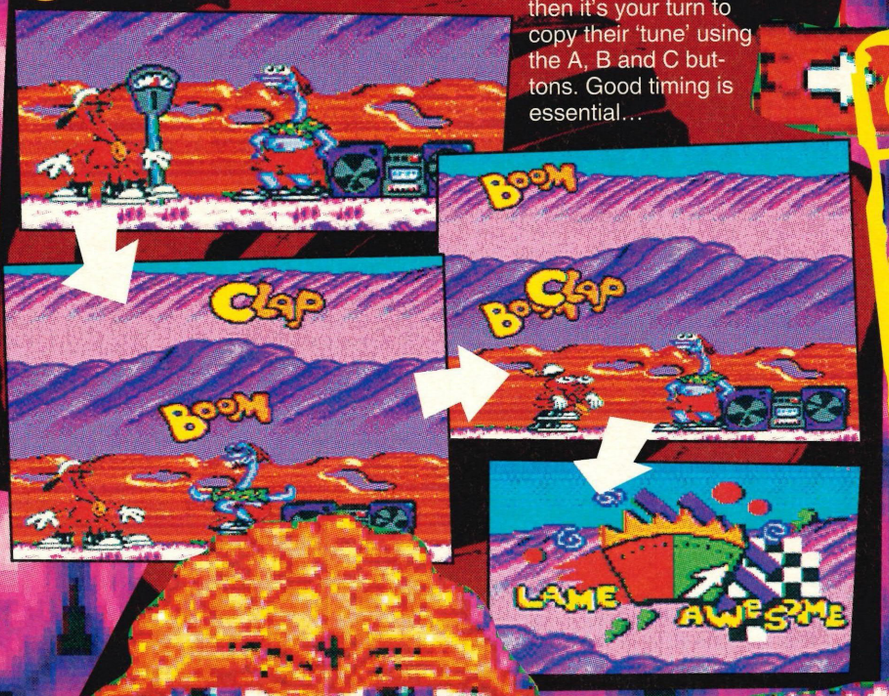
PLAYERS	1-2
SKILL LEVELS	2
LIVES	3
CONTINUES	3
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YES
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NONE





I say, that's got a good beat...

Some characters invite you to rap with 'em. First, they do a series of **B**oom, ch**A**cka & **C**laps, then it's your turn to copy their 'tune' using the A, B and C buttons. Good timing is essential…



GRAPHICS	96
SOUND	94
PLAYABILITY	91
LASTABILITY	87
ORIGINALITY	86
OVERALL	91

ROBOCOP 3

Have you seen many reviews of *RoboCop 3*? Apart from this one, 'course. No, us neither. Wonder why.

MEGA drive!

It's true! Brian Tilsley was an extra in *RoboCop 2*! Check out this bloke here...

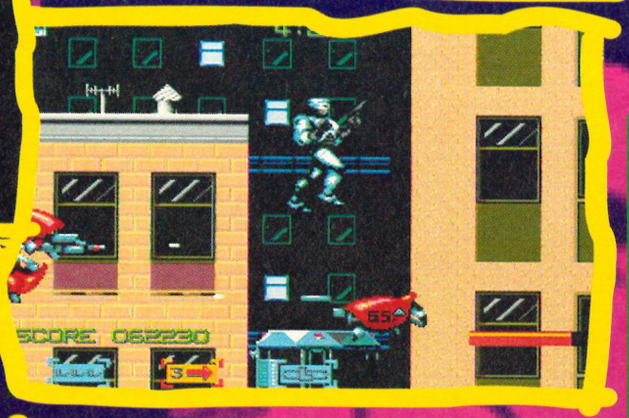


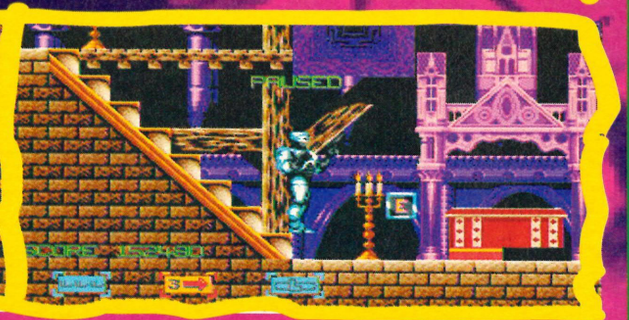
See? When Chris Quinten left 'The Street', he decided to make it big in Hollywood, and this was his big break. Wonder what he's doing now? Anyway, where were we? Oh yeah, *RoboCop 3* review...

Back so soon, mate? Yes, the man-machine himself, RoboCop, is back, back, *back!* in a new episode of tip-top deathfoolery to commemorate the spawning of another film involving the metallic mincer.

RoboCop 3 will be on the screens by the time you read this, although we don't know anything about it (there's only one cinema in Ludlow, and they're still showing *King Kong*), but there's no doubt that Death will be the order of the day. Some corrupt little bogger (probably









JAMES 25%

You might think, '*RoboCop 3*, now that would make a good licence.' And you'd be right. Just look at the material: RoboCop — a multi-million dollar piece of machinery with stacks of firepower! ED-209 — a walking tank with personality! And an all-new rocket pack for the aforementioned police person, to name but a few delights.

That little lot should've had the programmers frothing at the mouth. But it would appear they didn't even develop a slight dribble, and we ended up with this pile of shi– (*SNIP!*—Ed).

Imagine an *I Spy* spotters' book of Gameplay Goofs — you'd have a field day with this game! It's all here, from offscreen shooting to totally unavoidable hits.

These could be compensated for with loads of action and end-of-level guardians tough enough to make you soil your pants on every encounter. But is that what we got? Nope, we got a repetitive, sad, repetitive, infuriating, repetitive platformer with the long-term appeal of a disfiguring disease.

To get anywhere in *RoboCop*, you find yourself crawling along at a snail's pace, in the hope you can shoot the offscreen baddies before a gun appears at the side of the screen and lodges a bullet in your cranium.

And another thing. This multi-million dollar creation is completely incapable of turning 180 degrees while squatting. I ask you, if you spent that kind of money building the supposedly ultimate cop, wouldn't you include some sort of groinal swivel facility?

Anyway, lessons weren't learnt from the SNES version so I've got no sympathy. This game smells!



PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	RIGHT NOW
SIZE	4 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	3
LIVES	3
CONTINUES	YES
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	FAT CHANCE

the Mayor) will be pushing some new drug on 'The Kids' and ol' tin-head's gonna have to clean up the whole town; the air of future Detroit will be cow-heavy and laden with the torture of the Nazerine. Or something like that.

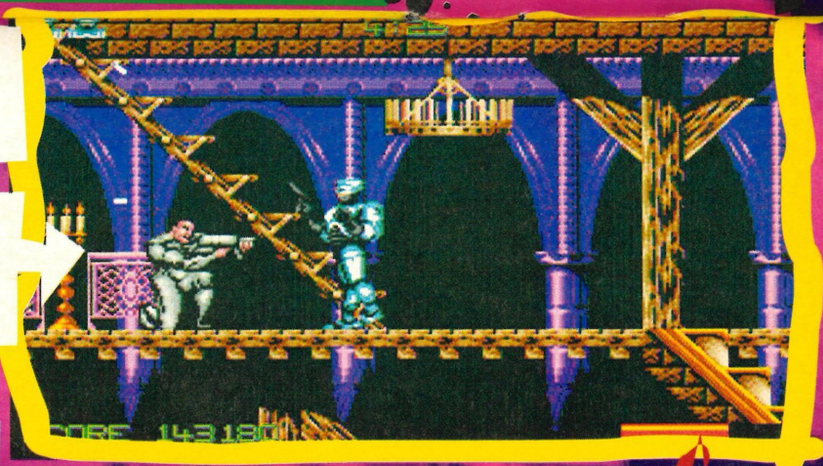
Still, it doesn't matter what the film is actually about — it could be a musical, or a roller-disco film, or even a porno flick — because when Acclaim get hold of it, it's a — can you bear the suspense? — a platform romp! Whoa, big surprise there!

Yes, walk along a bit, pick up various bonuses and weapons power-ups, and jump around quite a lot. And that's all you need to know, really, so look at those screenshots, cast an eye over the comments, then make your mind up.



Isn't this the crappiest looking motorbike you've ever seen in your life?

"Put me out of me misery, mate, just kill me and get me out of this shite game"



You spend ages trying to dodge this truck, then you realise it just passes through you. ERROR!



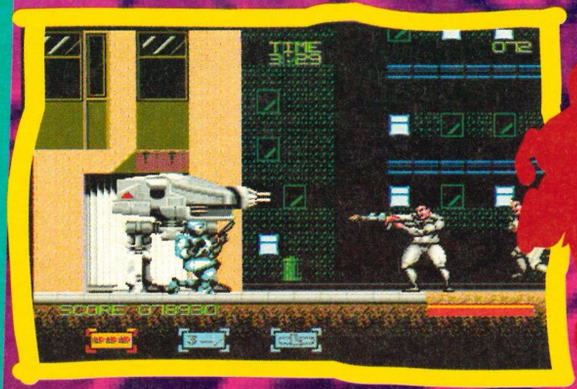
Jesus! If it wasn't enough having to play the bleedin' game, I've gotta caption the sod now. I've had enough! I quit! Where's me coat?











//Subliminal suggestion to the software industry//

Make a game about the ED-209 – he's a lot 'arder.

MM



AL 24%

I went out on the wazz with Steve and James last night. It was a good doss. I had a few pints, some chips, bit of a chill. Didn't get up till 9, so I had a cup of coffee and watched the mighty *Supermarket Sweep* before piling into the back of James' car and rolling into work.

I like *Supermarket Sweep*, don't you? Dale Winton's ever so good. I can remember when he used to be a DJ for Radio Trent.

Sorry, am I boring you? The thing is, *RoboCop 3*'s so shite, it's embarrassing. I really don't wanna talk about it.

I mean, how can a software house release such a crap game and expect people to buy it? How *dare* they offer up this horrendously dull jump-around-and-shoot-things-before-they-shoot-you flange for me to waste a couple of hours of my precious time? I wasn't overly excited by *RoboCop vs The Terminator* but at least Virgin bothered to make it look like it was programmed in 1993, unlike the dated Atari ST-like graphics of *RoboCop 3*.

If you know of anyone sad enough to buy this game, drop us a line here at MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW, and we'll go round their house and have a good laugh at them, okay? I'm serious.

I'm going off for a gargantuan skank round the coffee machine now, 'cos just thinking about *RoboCop 3* has given me a hangover the size of Fat Dave's chest. Keep awaaay!

GRAPHICS	45
SOUND	48
PLAYABILITY	26
LASTABILITY	15
ORIGINALITY	08
OVERALL	25

PUGGSY CD

Bright orange and knobbly. The CD box for the new Pet Shops Boys' album? Nope, a little lost alien with bloodthirsty space pirates hot on his heels.

MEGA cd!

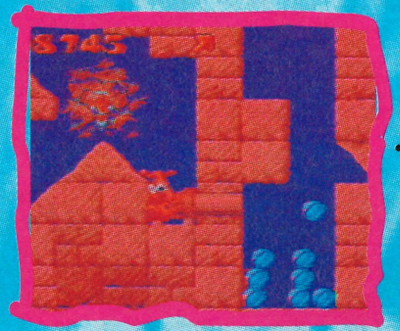
Platform Review

Poor old Puggsy. There he was, a cute, fat, orange alien without a care in the world. Travelling around the galaxy in his spaceship was always fun, until one day he encountered a strange asteroid in deep space. Unfortunately, the seemingly desolate hunk of rock was, in fact, the secret base of a band of villainous space pirates.

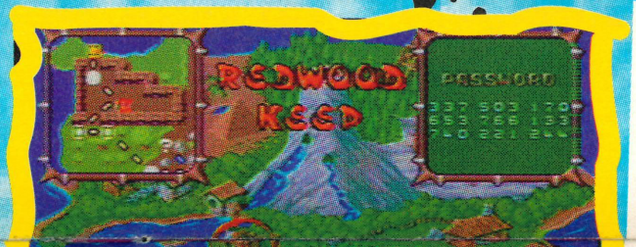
As Puggsy had spotted their hidden fortress — there was no way he was going to be allowed to live. The pirates powered-up their ship and were in hot pursuit before the friendly alien knew what had hit him.

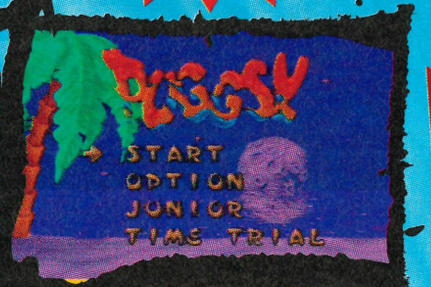
His only means of escape was a wormhole in the fabric of space, into which he fled. However, the pirates were close behind him and followed his ship's vapour trail. But wormholes are funny old things and Puggsy found his craft thrown out of control, spinning helplessly toward an uncharted planet.

This is where you take control of Puggsy and begin guiding him through his unique adventure. What we have here, boys and girls, is a







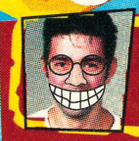


PUBLISHER	PSYGNOSIS
PRICE	£34.99
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
SIZE	CD

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	1
LIVES	5-7
CONTINUES	UNLIMITED
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YES
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NONE

Puggsy wonders about the M-CD and where it's going, and decides the future's so shite he's gotta wear shades!



JAMES 85%

Oh, I love these CD games. They look better than carts, they sound better, and when you've had enough of 'em, you can always turn them into an attractive clock. But that's not the issue here.

The first time I saw *Puggsy CD*, I thought, 'Hmm, so the fat blob wanders around, picks up a few things and heads for the door.' Now that *does* apply for the early levels, but bloody hell, does this game get tough or what?!

The difficulty curve is perfect. It takes about ten minutes play to sort out what's going on, and from there on it just gets harder and harder. I wasn't too sure about some of the end-of-level bosses. Some of them were a bit slow and repetitive — but that's not to say I could beat them straight away (ahem!).

The sound and animation are as every game should be — perfect. I still reckon it needs to be a bit faster, though. There's a lot of wandering back and forth, so it would've been nice to get the chubby main sprite out of low gear from time to time.

There ain't a lot more I can say about *Puggsy*. It's a good, brain-teasing platformer and it'll keep anyone happy for ages — especially at the sexy price of £34.99. Nice one, Psygnosis.



variation on the popular platform game theme, where you perform tasks and solve puzzles to save the cute space hopper's life.

Buttock power!

You have to locate different objects in each level and use them correctly in order to reach the exit. These objects often appear useless but at the correct time and place they could be just what you need. As well as the standard levels, secret passages and hidden sections add to the game's appeal.

Puggsy himself is a great character, in the mold of classic console figures such as Sonic and Bubsy. His primary form of attack is a bum-bounce, which squashes most bad guys. However, a much safer option is to find a gun and put its limited shots to good use.

Levels are populated by creatures such as racoons and rats but they pail in insignificance to the boss characters. These blighters appear every few levels and must be beaten in unique ways.

Although Puggsy only has a limited amount of lives, a save game feature and password system stops you getting too frustrated. For younger players, Psygnosis have included a junior game, which allows you to sample a few easy levels and a guardian.

With these extras, great gameplay and a high addictiveness factor, *Puggsy*'s one of the top CD titles of '94.

MM





gotta wear shades!

A 27-digit password? Wot a pain in the botty!



MAT 87%

I've got to pick my words very carefully here. Psygnosis are a touchy old bunch so I'd better make sure this comment is fair and accurate. *Puggsy* on CD is virtually the same as on cart. It's still a great platform game and the few extras make it a definite purchase for anyone with a Mega-CD.

The 3D rendered graphics used in the opening sequence and level intermissions are superb and easily some of the most stunning visuals seen on the M-CD. In-game graphics are almost as impressive, being colourful and great to look at.

Soundwise, there's not much to shout about. No speech here but plenty of atmospheric music adds to the tone of this addictive platform game.

Although Puggsy gets tougher the further you get into it, some of the puzzles are extremely tricky to suss out. For instance, one of the levels has a well. Chuck a shell in it and you're rewarded with a coin — but who's gonna think of that? Whoops, nearly a gripe there!

What else can I say about *Puggsy*? I've mentioned graphics, sound and playability... hmmm... Oh yeah, once you've picked up the joypad, you'll never put it down. There's no way you'll complete this in a day and with that much lastability, it's gotta be worth having.

BOsSeS



PICK-UP'S



Sunglasses



Barrel



Candle



Coin



Electricity Gun



Harpoon Gun



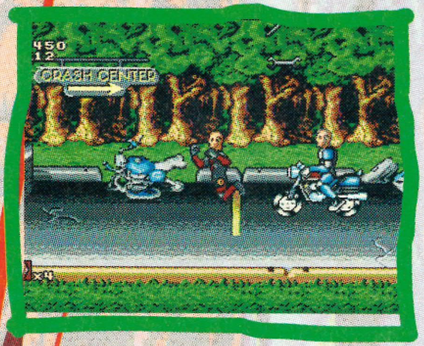
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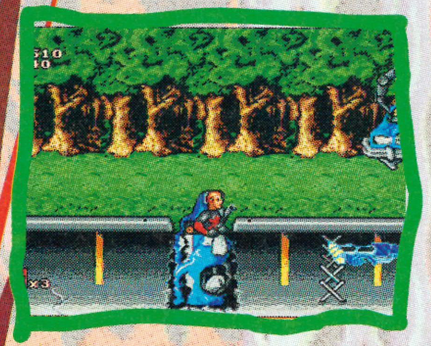
GRAPHICS	87
SOUND	85
PLAYABILITY	82
LASTABILITY	86
ORIGINALITY	88
OVERALL	86

MEGA drive!

CRASH DUMMIES

'Three limbs on my Dummy, and I'm still rolling along. The Junkman's thieves are after me, but I'm sing-ing a ha-ppy song…'







PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	JAN 28
SIZE	8 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	1
LIVES	5
CONTINUES	NONE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	YOUR LIMBS COME OFF

This review begins with big respect going out to Dave Prowse. When not causing Luke Skywalker grief in the *Star Wars* trilogy, Dave would take it upon himself to pull on green tights and prance around under the guise of the Green Cross Code Man.

Some kids'd be about to run out in front of a steamroller and — *shaz-am!* — Dave would magically appear and give the little scamps a good talking to about road safety. Then he'd turn towards the camera and say, 'Remember — I won't be there to help you when *you* cross the road'.

The trouble is, ol' Dave can't detach his limbs at will, so the youths of today aren't interested. Nowadays, Crash Dummies Slick and Spin are where it's at and — hey! — it just so happens Acclaim have released a platform game involving the detachable duo.

The basic plot is this: Doctor Zub, creator of the Dummies, has been kidnapped by the fiendish Junkman, who wants the secret of the T1000 armour (don't ask why, we don't know — it's *that* secret). It's up to you, as Slick, to teach Junkman the ways of righteousness.

It's junk, man!

As previously mentioned, it's a platform romp, but one with a rather gruesome twist: Slick takes five 'hits' before losing a life, but instead of an energy bar decreasing, you lose limbs.

That's right: get hit by a car — *chulp!* Say goodbye to your leg. The next hit separates you from your other leg, and the next two remove your arms, leaving just a torso and head bouncing around the levels. Fortunately, there are a plethora of spanners lying around which magically restore you, limb by limb.

Although it's bound to stir up the Mary Whitehouse posse, this feature adds to the gameplay considerably. For example, having only one leg slows you down to an erratic hop,



STEVE 71%

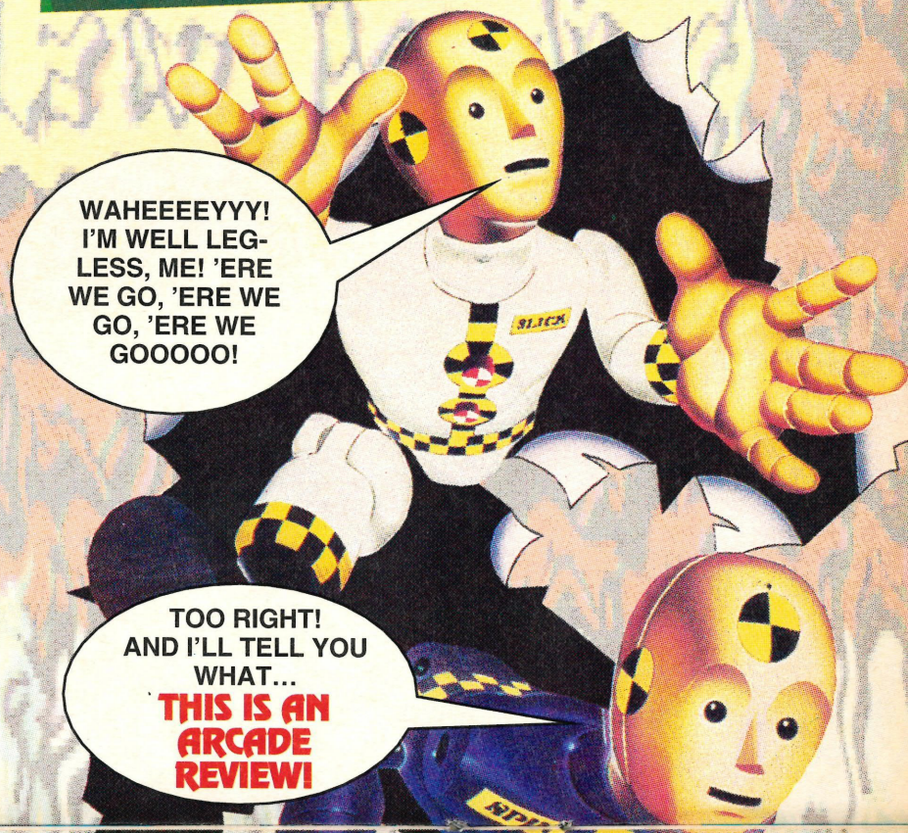
Apparently, the Crash Dummies are two much-loved Yankee cartoon characters whose crazy antics tickle the collective funny bone of US teens the country over. Pity about the game then, innit?

After you've stopped creasing up over the way the character's body-bits drop off after taking a hit — sick, admittedly, but funny nevertheless — it's down to the mundane business of trying to remember which baddies appear where and, for a bit of variety, when. Apart from getting to grips with the simple control method (run, jump, crouch and shoot), that's about it.

Levels are large and only adequately drawn, enemies predictable and pick-ups sparse. The main attraction is the fact that, however you meet your demise, there's always the chance you'll recall what killed you last time… and avoid it on the next go. Ironically, this is also the game's biggest drawback — it gets very boring pretty quickly.

Humorous up to a point (about the seventh go in my case), the run-jump-shoot-and-die antics soon lost my interest. No random elements whatsoever practically guarantee the same game *every* time (if you get it right), and those pathetic bubble-gum dispensers got right up my nose (there were similar adversaries in *Bubsy The Bobcat* only much better executed).

Worth a go if you're the kind of person who looks *at* car accidents instead of the other way — but nowhere near good enough to turn *that* many heads.



THE INCREDIBLE CRASH DUMMIES

Out On A Limb!



"Look here, son, if you go out to play on the roads during rush hour…



…And you end up losing your arms & legs…



…Well, don't come running to me" Ho Ho Ho!

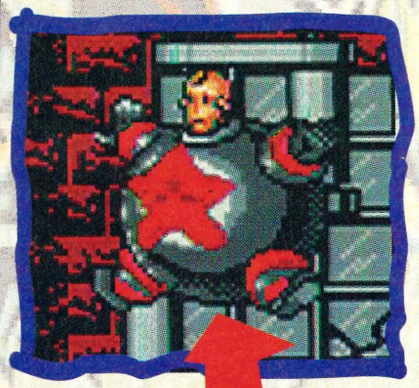


Another Friday night at The Bull, Ludlow.

and having no legs means you can't jump as high. Strangely enough, you can still throw spanners at baddies even when you have no arms — perhaps you spit them out?

Does it cost an arm and a leg? Will our reviewers lose their heads over it? Can we think of more limb-related puns? No.

MM



Being a fat tub o' lard has its advantages sometimes. I can't think of any offhand, tho'. Nuff respeck to the Fat Boy Posse, anyway. Apart from Fat Dave, of course.



AL 69%

I dunno, another month, another locust-like plague of platformers descend upon the MEGA MACHINES office. With so many of them buzzing around my head, it takes something out of the ordinary to catch my child-like attention.

Like a game involving amputees. Although the protagonists are dummies, someone's gonna be a mite peeved about the way Slick drags himself along the floor and bounces around completely limbless. I don't find it particularly offensive — but then again, I had to work next to Ian Osborne and his persistent belching last month, so I'm pretty hardened to the grotesque.

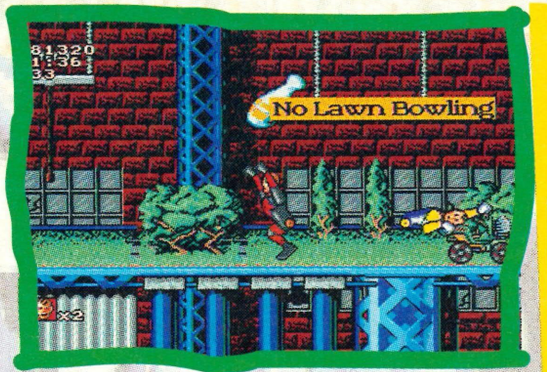
Putting that aside, *Crash Dummies* isn't bad. But you know my feelings on platformers by now — it takes an excellent one to hold my attention even briefly — and before too long I'd lost interest.

Licensed games in particular annoy the hell out of me, because it seems the software houses couldn't be arsed to come up with anything original and are content to sell the game on its name alone. There are just too many platformers around at the minute and reviewing 'em is becoming a chore. Anyway, less of my whining…

Having said that, *Crash Dummies* rings all the bells a decent platformer should. It's a smooth game with a rapid feel, but my main beef is that, apart from the detachable limb element, nothing elevates it above millions of other carts littering the shops.

If you're into the Dummies and like platformers, blah blah blah…

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	64
PLAYABILITY	76
LASTABILITY	72
ORIGINALITY	69
OVERALL	70



Pick-Ups

Makes you go double quick.





A yellow pick-up thing.

Gives you a limb back.





Chuck these at baddies.

Makes you fart like a camel.





Slick & Spin also run their own pizza delivery. Trouble is, you get bits of leg in your Hawaiian. Ik!



Mean Machine

MEGA drive!

The Japanese love beans – even brightly-coloured jelly ones. With eyes. The earlier version of this group-'em-and-lose-'em puzzler was their Number One for months and is still a big seller. Wonder what the fuss is about…



PUBLISHER	SEGA
PRICE	£44.95
RELEASE DATE	NOW
SIZE	8 MEG

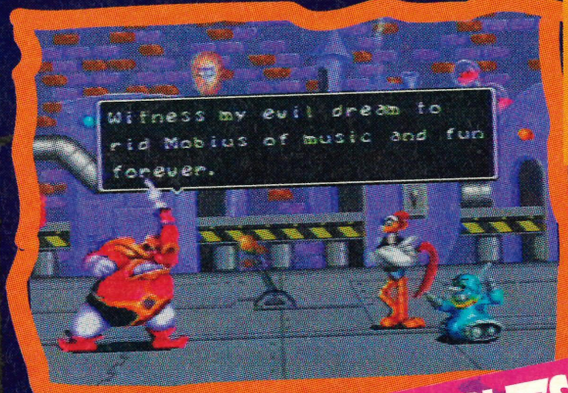
OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-2
SKILL LEVELS	5
LIVES	1
CONTINUES	INFINITE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	YEP
BATTERY BACK-UP	NAH
SPECIALS	LOTS OF BEANS

Beans, beans, they're good for the heart, the more you eat, the more you f… That's quite enough of that, thank you!

Yes folks, if you're a fan of all things bean-related, you've come to the right place. Sega have taken a classic puzzle formula, given it a tweak, added a unique Sonic the Hedgehog connection and — hey presto! — loads of cash for the blokes who programmed it.

The story is that the evil Doctor Robotnik (Sonic's arch-enemy) has concocted yet another devious scheme to bring misery and sadness to the land (doesn't this guy do anything else?). This time, he's picking on the inhabitants of a small, bean-filled town.



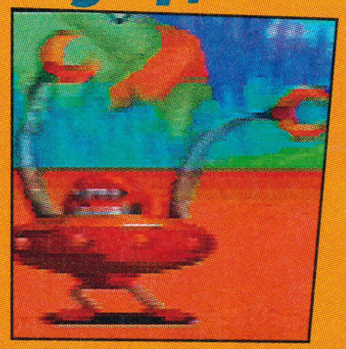


Wahey! Beans of Badness cascade onto your opponent's side when you pull off a hefty chain reaction, and your mates swear at you a lot. Wuuuah!



AL 91%

Jesus! Nobody spark a fag up, f'crissakes!



Arms



Frankly



Humpty



Coconuts



The MEGA machines "Buy this game" Award!

PARP! IT'S A PUZZLE GAME!

Mean Bean Machine

The beans are a happy lot (or as happy as they can be, considering they're beans) and Robotnik hates 'em for it. Invading the town, he captures the beans and sets about turning them into mindless slaves.

That's where you come in. Your mission is to battle Doc's robots and free all the beans. Unfortunately, Robotnik has assigned his best metallic morons to the job of stopping you in your tracks.

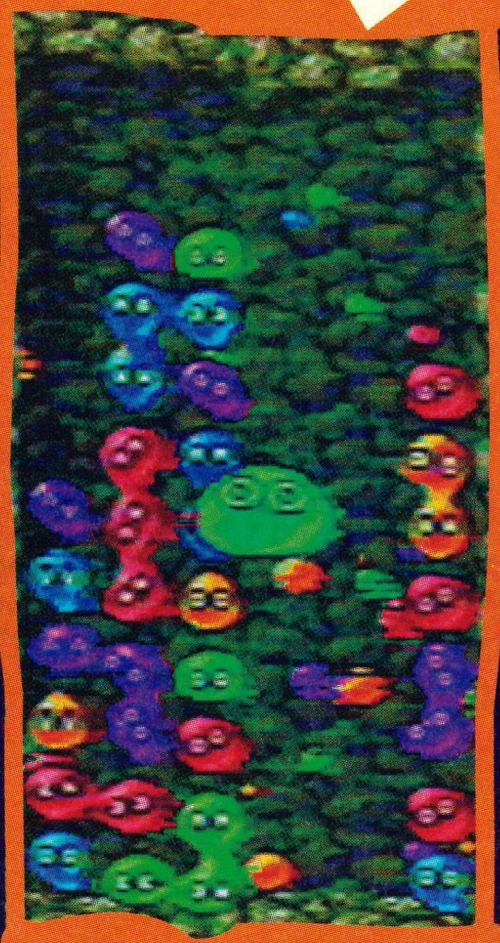
Full of beans

Mean Bean Machine follows the tried and tested *Columns*/*Tetris* formula as you attempt to line up at least four beans to gain points and scupper your opponent.





This gargantuan bean comes in handy during the Exercise Mode – he wipes out a massive column of beans in a single, er, belly flop.



This is the very personification of fineness, friends. I've been into *Puyo Puyo* ever since I started working for MEGA MACHINES and was *this close* to finishing the last level when some urchins broke in and nicked it. Bah! Bring back hanging!

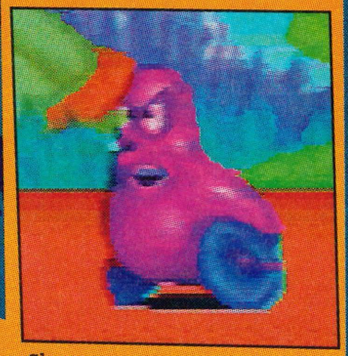
Thankfully, Sega have answered my prayers by tweaking the Jap game to make it more relevant to us Brits. Hurrah! It's too good a game to be left languishing on the Import shelf.

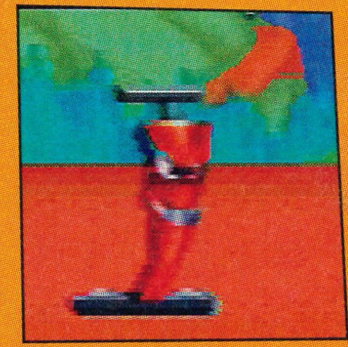
Practically everyone who's had a shufty at it has said, 'Oh God, another *Columns* clone'. But they were wrong, 'cos *Puyo...* er, *Mean Bean Machine* has the ability to piss your mates off by lobbing blocking blobs over to their side of the screen. It's this aspect that gives it a major longevity boost, but don't worry, people with no friends — the computer opponents are a mutha to beat and will take you ages to overcome.

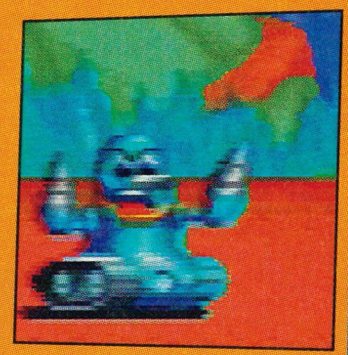
The British version is a straight copy of *Puyo Puyo*, and Good Show to that. The only difference is you battle against robots and monkeys, instead of those old Japanese favourites: the baby with one foot, some fat scorpion-man and Madonna (straight up).

Nice conversion, Sega — crap title, though. At least I didn't resort to talking about the farts, eh?


Davy Sprockett


Skweez


Dynamight


Grounder

Dr. Robotnik



Scratch




Dragon Breath


Sir Ffuzzy-Logic


Spike

DOCTOR ROBOTNIK'S





MAT 89%

So what does *Mean Bean Machine* have going for it? Not a lot, really... apart from the fact it's a brilliant puzzle game, incredibly addictive and one of the best Mega Drive games ever! I've lost count of the amount of afternoons we've spent huddled around a monitor, gasping in horror as AI attempts to arrange rows of colourful beans while taking on Robotnik's technological terrors.

At first glance, you might think it's a basic puzzle game with some flashy extras, but don't be fooled. Sit down with *Mean Bean Machine* for more than a few minutes and you're hooked.

For a start, the gameplay is extremely frustrating. You'd be mistaken for thinking that arranging rows of beans was a doddle — just trying going one-on-one with Robotnik's favourite pet monkey! As each level progresses, the action gets faster; lining up beans requires a keen eye and fast hands (so that rules us lot out).

Visually, *Mean Bean Machine*'s superb. Take a look at the screenshots of Robotnik himself — the shading's nothing short of stunning. The artists at Sega get a hearty pat on the back from us as they've pushed the colour-generating abilities of the MD to the limit once again.

Everyone's bound to have noticed the similarities between this and *Columns*/*Puyo Puyo*, but don't let that put you off. Sega have taken the classic puzzle format and bolted on enough special treats to warrant you grabbing this cart the day it hits the shelves.

***Mean Bean Machine* is yet another top-notch effort from the big blue 'S' but I can't help but wonder if they're planning 57 varieties of this game. For now, though, it's enough.**

There are three types of game to play, the first being Scenario mode, where one player's pitted against Robotnik's creations.

There are 12 foes to defeat and the further you get, the harder and faster they are.

You're goal is to reach Robotnik and stop his mad plans, once and for all.

The main difference between *Mean Bean Machine* and **Columns** is that successful lines can zig-zag and make transparent blocker beans crash down onto your opponent's side of the screen. Once their pit's completely full, the floor gives way and you go to the next stage.

In two-player mode, a mate takes the place of the robotic foe; use the independent skill settings to make it a fair fight. There's also an Exercise game so you can practice bean-stacking alone before taking on some real competition!

Mean Bean Machine is one game you won't complete quickly. Even with a password system and infinite continues, you'll be playing it weeks after you've bought it.

The only problem is the price. *Columns* is available at the knock-down budget price of £19.99, whereas *Mean Bean Machine* will set you back £44.95. Value for money? We certainly think so...

MM



Ha Haaa! The computer opponent gets really stressed out when it's on the verge of defeat. Suck on *that*, geezer! (Alan, put that away this instant! — Steve)





This little fella, Has Bean, is the sole survivor from the original game. Mainly because he slept with the programmer.

Here we see Dr Robotnik having a go on a bouncy castle at Vange Primary School's Summer Fete. The evil sod! He didn't take his boots off!

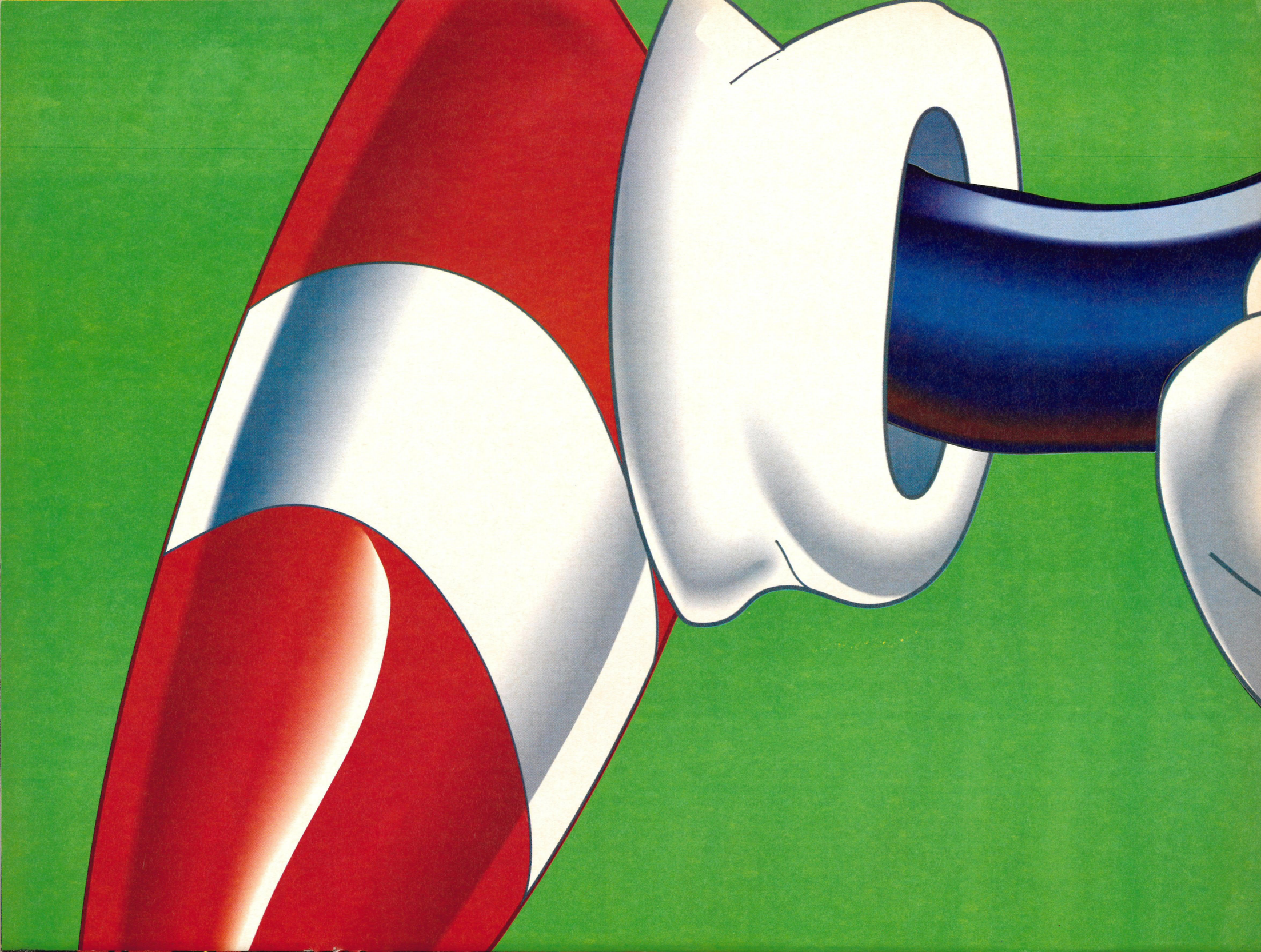


GRAPHICS	64
SOUND	71
PLAYABILITY	88
LASTABILITY	89
ORIGINALITY	65
OVERALL	90




RAID


MEGA
machines



Strategy Review

Pirates! GOLD

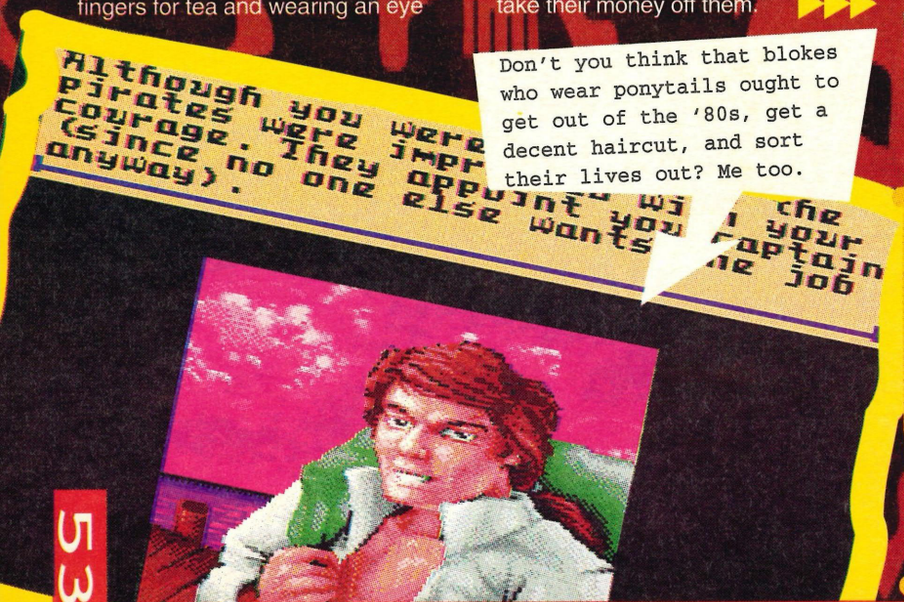
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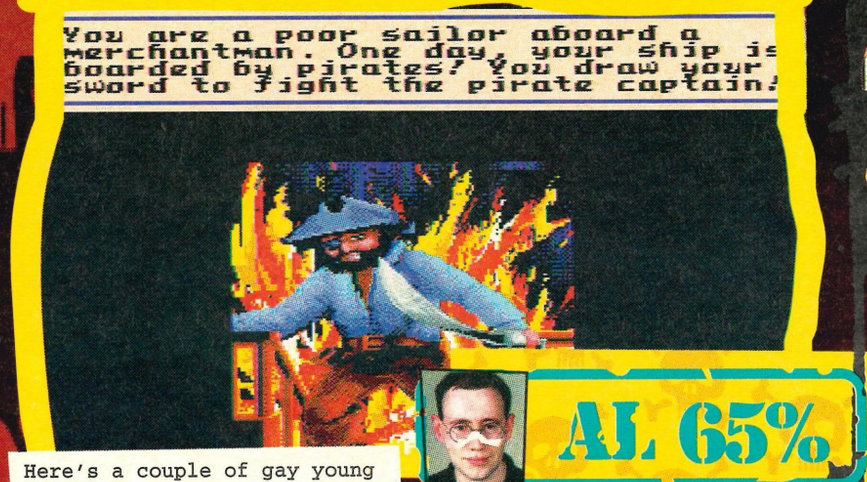
Cheap sea-going gags ahoy! The aged *Pirates!* game finally reaches the shores of Sega Land. Uh-oh. Al can feel a song coming on...

Of all the pirates on the sea,
The worst of them was Blackbeard.
So damnable a fiend from Hell,
He was the one we most feared.
Any man who sailed with him was taking quite a chance,
He'd hang them from the gallows just to see if they could dance!
Ha haaa!

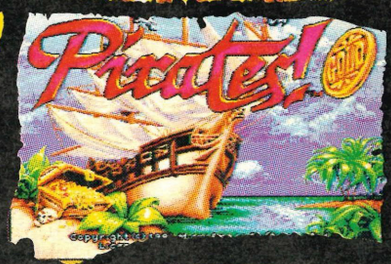
Thank you, Adam Ant, for that evocative rendition of life on the high seas as it was in the 15th century. In those days, being a pirate wasn't all fish fingers for tea and wearing an eye patch even if you didn't need one. It was fraught with danger, barbarism and disease. And there was no telly, neither.

However, if you were handy with a sword, ruthless with a crew and a bit fruity with the cabin boy (who was always called Jim, for some reason), there was many an opportunity to plunder the vast riches of the Carribean. And — hey! What a coincidence! — MicroProse have given all you budding buccaneers a chance to sail the Seven Seas, kill folk and take their money off them.









PUBLISHER	MICROPROSE
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW ON IMPORT
SIZE	8 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	4
LIVES	1
CONTINUES	NO
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NO
SPECIALS	NOT LIKELY!

AL 65%

This is an extremely weird situation. Before I even start, I'd love to know why MicroProse have converted such an incredibly old Amiga game. It's bizarre!

I had a right old moan about the plague of Amiga games infesting the Mega Drive *last issue*, but this takes the biscuit! *Pirates!* is so old, you can pick it up on budget re-release!

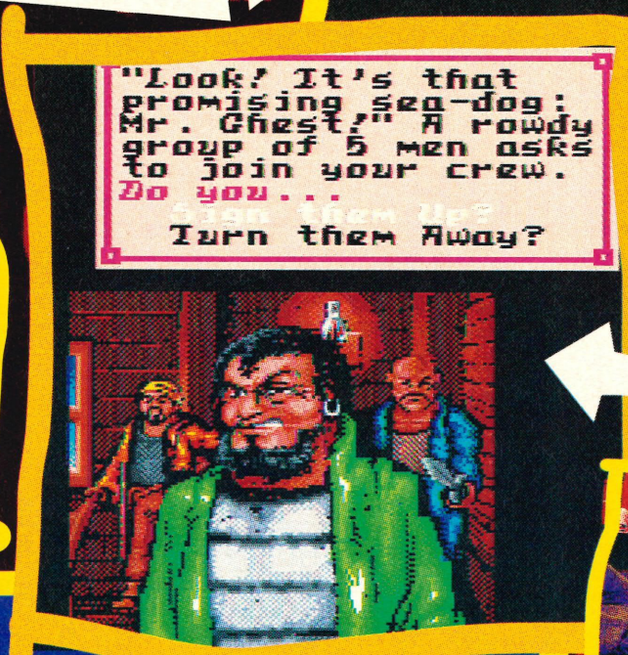
What's even more odd is that, apart from not having to wait a couple of months for the game to load up, there seems to be no attempt to improve the damn thing (apart from a smattering of digitised speech and the lack of a mouse)! It looks exactly like a crusty Amiga game.

That shouldn't really put you off if you're at all interested in arcade strategy, because it has a certain ramshackle charm. It pays smoothly enough, and those of you interested in immersing yourself in a not-too-taxing strategy game will enjoy toddling round the Carribean, but it's not the kind of game most Mega Drive owners will take to, I'm afraid.

MicroProse have brought out some absolute killer games in the past, but sadly *Pirates! Gold* is not one of them.











MAT 63%

Prepare yourselves, me hearty's, for a life of adventuring on the high seas. There's plenty of loot to be looted, oceans to be sailed and battles to be fought in *Pirates! Gold* from Microprose. Shiver me timbers you salty old sea dogs, splice the main brace and...oh sod it, that's enough bad pirate puns for one review!

This game has been around for donkey's years and has already appeared on the Commodore 64 and Amiga home computers. It's now been updated for the Mega Drive and features a unique mix of strategy and arcade action. Set primarily in the 17th Century, *Pirates! Gold* allows you to become an apprentice ship

Trelliswork

You (yes, *you*) take on the role of an apprentice sea-dog — a YTS pirate, if you will — and bid to make a career as a swashbuckling, er, swashbuckler, eventually retiring as a rich and famous sea-dog.

To this end, you begin with a tiny ship, a small crew of men and the whole of the Carribean at your disposal. You're given a number of choices, depending on the historical period you choose, your nationality (English, French, Spanish or Dutch), the difficulty level and, most intriguingly, what special ability you'd like.

Perhaps you'd like to start off with a high fencing ability (you need it later on, believe us), navigational nous (makes your ship travel faster), weaponry skills (making your cannons fire true and accurately) or medicinal expertise? Or perhaps you'd like to possess the wit and charm of Al Needham, and sweet-talk government officials and the birds into estatic submission? (You taking the mick, son? —Steve.)

We're talking arcade strategy here, friends, and we know what means: loads of different sections and sub-games in yer face. *Pirates! Gold* doesn't disappoint on that from city to city. Combat is divided into two parts: naval argy-bargy, where you fire a barrage of cannon fire at your opponents or ram the blighters, then it's straight into the nitty-gritty of hand-to-hand sword-play.

You face off your opposite number on deck, rapier in hand, giving it some serious thrust and parry. If you succeed, you win the geezer's ship, which you can either keep or strip bare.

Mrs Strategy makes an appearance in the shape of all-important trading and diplomacy sections, accessed whenever you take shore leave. You can flog your booty (oo, yes please! —Mark Skidd) to the town's resident merchant or offload surplus vessels and cannons at the shipwrights (and get leaky boats patched up).

At taverns, hardy roughnecks are there to be picked up for a price. You can hire them to crew your ship, as well! (You're on your final warning, Needham! — Steve.) There's a bank where you can divide your spoils or keep it all for yourself, but I can't think of anything trite or titilating to say about it, so take it away, Adam...!

Prince Charming! Prince

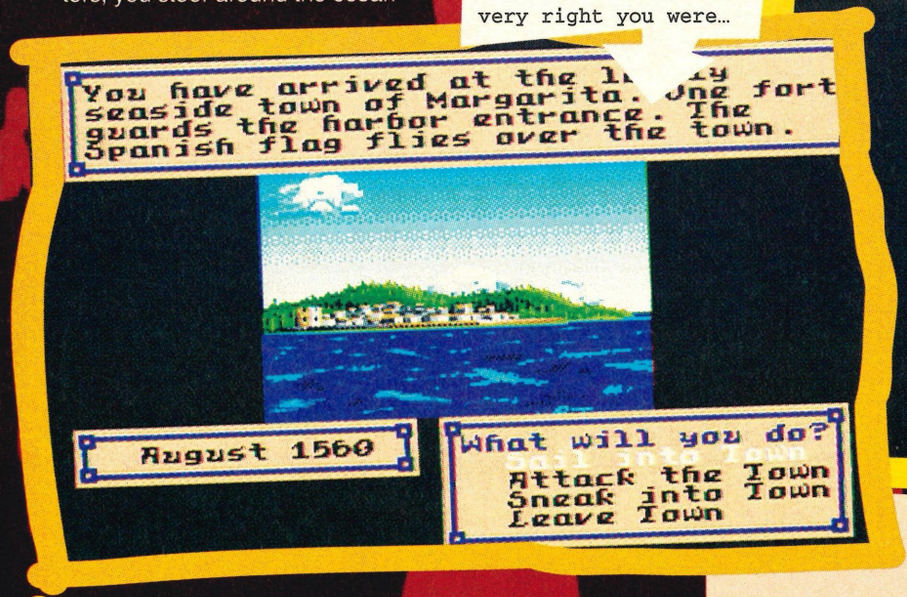
count.

Alan! Parry!

In between multiple-choice questions which abound whenever you encounter other ships and characters, you steer around the ocean

Charming! Ridicule is nothing to be scared of... MM

Let's have a drink. It's Margarita Time... Oh, Status Quo, how very right you were...





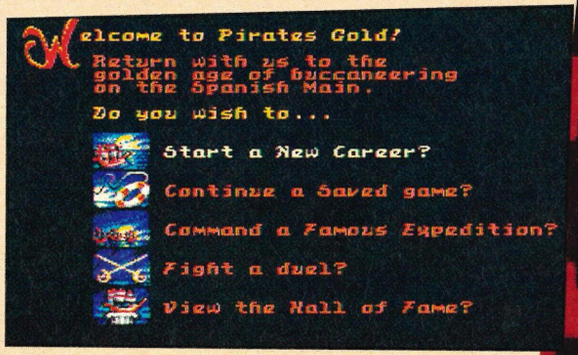
With all these seamen about, it's surprising that the pages haven't stuck together, Eh lads? Knowworramean? (Knowing wink)

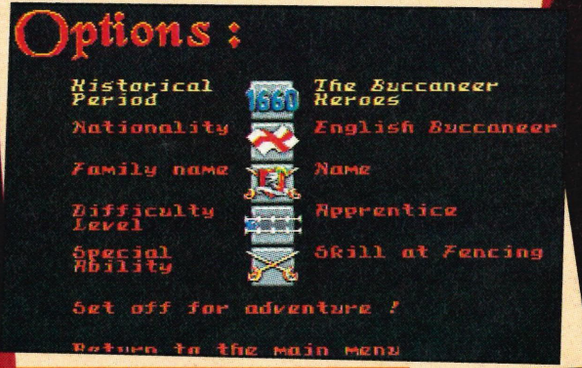




Making Your Mind Up!

Crap title for the Options Screen, I know, but it ties in nicely with the early '80s theme quite well.





captain and sail the seven seas in search of buried treasure, enemy ships and infamy (infamy, infamy, they've all got it infamy).

Unfortunately, the idea of a pirate sim seems a bit lame and playing the game is hardly a roller-coaster ride from start to finish. Sailing around for what seems like forever is a real pain and when you get to your destination, it's even more annoying to find there's nothing there of any interest. The swordfighting sections are hardly in the same league as *Street Fighter II* but to give Microprose credit, they do work.

I'll admit that this is a strategy game, and not exactly my cup of tea, but even for a game that tests your grey matter, it's tedious to say the least. If you're a fan of this type of game then give it a whirl, otherwise try LucasArts *Monkey Island*. These two games are similar but *Monkey Island* is the grandaddy of swashbuckling RPG's. You have been warned.

GRAPHICS	61
SOUND	70
PLAYABILITY	71
LASTABILITY	63
ORIGINALITY	75
OVERALL	64





No matter which team you choose, you get this bunch o' cheesers with the vile green & white stripes. Nasteeee!



PELÉ

MEGA drive!

FOOTBALL SIM REVIEW

'GGOOOOOOOOOAL!! Eh?! That was *in*! There's something very odd about this game…' Al calls for the ref.

Wa-hey! It's the obligatory footy review! MEGA MACHINES has been up to the eyeballs in pulsating goal-mouth action lately. If we're not withering in the genius of *Sensible Soccer*, we've been knocked into an empty Cup-a-Soup mug by the lush splendour of *FIFA International Soccer*. So it's gonna take something pretty special from the new boy to make us sit up and take notice.

Accolade reckon they've got what it takes and their case has not been harmed in the slightest by getting the endorsement of none other than the World's undisputed greatest football player, Tony Adams.

Ooer! I mean Pelé, Brazilian God of Footy. Did you ever see that game in the 1970 World Cup Final where he saw the keeper had come off his line, so he tried to chip it in

So, Ian, What Happened Next?



1. The ball's on the spot…



2. He's sort of opened his legs a bit…



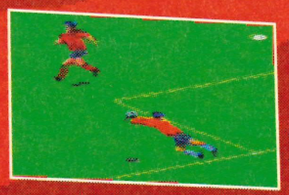
3. It's behind the line! Goalll!!



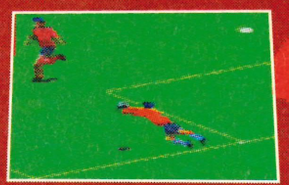
4. Hang on, where's the ball gone?



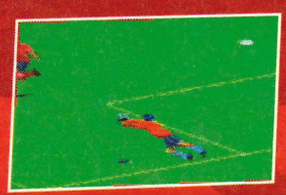
5. Good Lord! Now the goalies got it!



6. How the hell did he get that?



7. Now he's hanging in the air!



8. Oh, sod this! I'm off to the pub…

OOOooooooooWWEEEEEEEeeeeeeOOOooooooooOOOOO!!!

This month, MEGA MACHINES sought the expert comments of Percy Pring, former England and Gribblethorpe Albion centre-back, and extended a cordial invitation for him to compare and contrast the various merits of three football sims: *Pelé*, *Sensible Soccer* and *FIFA International Soccer*.

The catch was, Percy's been dead since 1956. So out came the Ouija board, a polystyrene cup, a pack of tarot cards and the crappiest albums from Steve's excessively sad record collection…

Woz: Come on Rob, I want to get home for my tea!
James: Silence, fool!! Ready?
Rob: Let's join hands…
Woz: Jesus…
James: Right. Percy Pring, we call to you from the other side…
Rob: Is there anybody there?
Woz: Come on pleeease! , I'm gonna miss *Midlands Today*.
James: If you are with us, knock three times…
Rob: Did you hear that?
Woz: Don't lie! That was you!
James: It wasn't!
Rob: Silence!
Woz: C'mon, lads, stop messing about, eh?
Rob: All right. Percy, we command you to tell us… which game has the best graphics and sound?



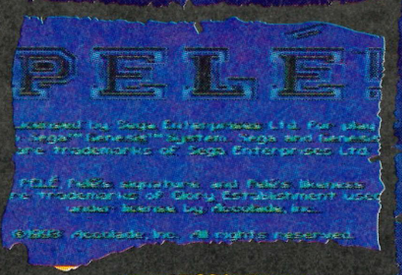
from the kick off and missed by *this much*?

Easy as...

Anyway, the game's remarkably similar to *FIFA*, in the sense that a slightly tilted TV perspective is the order of the day, along with big sprites. There's a 40-game league season to play, along with a tournament involving teams from all over the world.

All three buttons are utilised: The [A] button lays on delicate chips into the box or toggles to the player nearest the ball. Button [B] sprays pin-point passes around the park, sends the lads up for headers or, if you're in defence, produces a nice body charge. Finally, [C] produces a net-ripping blast or bicycle kick when the ball's in the air. Defenders use this button for slide-tackling tomfoolery. *Pelé* has most of the features incorporated in *Sensi* and *FIFA*, including Instant Replay, crowd noise, subs and lots of lusty young men in an enormous bath. Okay, I lied about the last one. Ho ho! Aren't *I* the comedy genius? (You want us to answer that, Al? — Everyone.)

MM



PUBLISHER	ACCOLADE
PRICE	£39.99
RELEASE DATE	JAN 21
SIZE	8 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1-2
SKILL LEVELS	NONE
LIVES	N/A
CONTINUES	NONE
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	YES
SPECIALS	AMAZING 'MISS BOAT' ABILITY



STEVE 44%

Before playing a solo game of *Pelé* against the CPU, I took on Mad Al in an Exhibition Match. I played Amsterdam, Al took Vancouver, and the dialogue went something like this...

Al: 'Cor, gleamin'! Did ya see that header? Magic, that was!'
Me: 'Yeah, cool Al, but can we get on with this game now? Nutting coffee cups into the bin's a doddle, anyway — even James can do it.'
Al: 'Okay mate, but I warn you — I'm a dab-hand at soccer games, me.'
Me: 'Right then, me to kick off, is it...? Hang on a minute, I passed to *that* player, not *that* one. Why have I got control of a player right over *there*?'
Al: 'Cuz ya gorra press the [A] button to switch between players.'
Me: 'What!? You mean control doesn't automatically switch to the player nearest the ball?'
Al: 'Nah, mate. It's a pain, isn't it? But look at this — my defender's dribbled the ball right down to your penalty area. Just a quick tap on the [C] button for a shot and... huh!?'
Me: 'Woah, nice save! You didn't tell me that my 'keeper had special teleporting abilities. Neat!'
Al: 'Bah, this is crap. Wanna game of *Street Fighter II* instead?'
Me: 'Go on, then, but only a quick one, mind, 'cos I've got to have a go at *Pelé* against the computer so I can get me comment written.'
Al: 'I shouldn't bother mate, it's just as bad.'

And you know what? He wasn't wrong. The action replay feature would be great — if the ball didn't disappear when you use it. And the sound would be excellent — only it isn't.

Despite the veneer of quality (detailed sprites, decent options, straightforward control method etc), lurking below the surface you find gameplay so seriously flawed that I couldn't recommend the game even if *Sensi* or *FIFA* had never been released. Very dis-a-pointing!



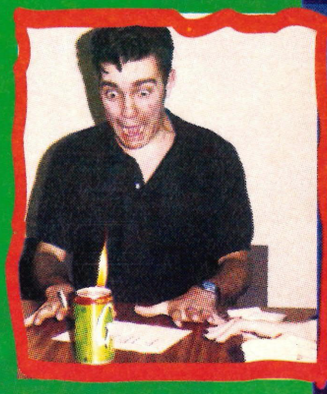


Woz: Arrgh! Did you see the cup mysteriously move across the table?
James: Concentrate! Now then, Percy, which game has the most playability?



Woz: No! The cup moved towards Sensi (for the benefit of readers who can't make out the writing in that last poorly taken photo)! Ii's dangerous to meddle with the occult, that's why I was the only boy in our schcol who never watched *RentaGhost*.
James: All right, there's just one more question we need to know... Percy, what do you think of *Pelé*?





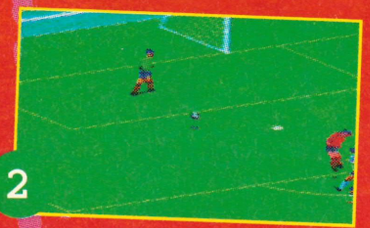
James: Nooooo! The cup has mysteriously turned into a fiery can of Gini!
Rob: It's the Devil's work! Flee!
Woz: I told you we shouldn't have critisised *Microcosm*!

The three meddlers beat a hasty retreat (well, they went down the pub, if you must know) but indeed, they'd learned their lesson to never use such a cheap trick to pad out their reviews. And let it be a lesson to one and all that dabbling in the occult is a dangerous business, and also, if you swallow chewing gum it gets wrapped around your lungs, and you can't breath or nothing and, and you *die*. Honest.

NO PANE-NO GAIN!



Here's a tip for all you youngsters out there...



If you can't score, here's what you do...



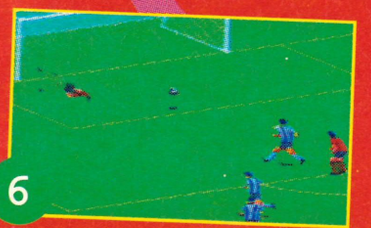
Before the start of the match, get a pane of glass



...Sneak onto the pitch with it, without anyone looking



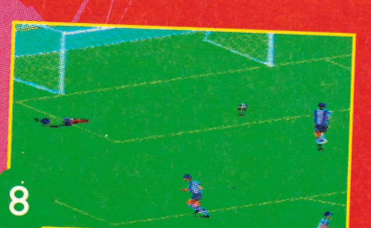
...and stick it in front of the six yard box.



So when the keeper dives for the ball...



...It 'magically' bounces off the glass...



...and back into the path of your centre forward!



That's the only way you can score in *Pelé*...



...it really is a complete bucket of wazz.





This is what the inside of your head looks like after you've played Pelé for long enough. Just Say No, kids!



Take notice of the screen. You'll be seeing it every three bleedin' seconds if you're sad enough to buy the wretched thing.



AL 43%

Oh dear. If this game had been released six months ago, Accolade would've made an absolute killing, as every other football game around then was pretty poor. But they cocked it up big stylee by letting the mighty *Sensible Soccer* and graphically orgasmic *FIFA Soccer* get their oar in first, and most people with an interest in footy will have got one of those already.

So, how does *Pelé* match up to the other two? Not very well at all, I'm sorry to say. The problem which let down *FIFA* — y'know, players leaping about for the ball like salmons — is even more of a pain here.

It's absolutely impossible to score a goal. The ball has been charged with magic powers: whenever your forwards are bearing down on goal, the ball magically disappears on the lip of the six-yard box then appears in the goalie's hands five seconds later!

Even better is the 'guided missile' option. When you use aftertouch and bend the ball one way but don't like the shot, don't worry! Just bend it the other way! This Pelé bloke, he was good, but not even he could do that!

It's a shame that such a top geezer as Pelé has lent his name to such a poor game. Once again, the Yanks prove that if you give them such a cool sport as footy, they're guaranteed to cock it up, just like they're gonna cock up the World Cup this summer. I can't be bothered to be nice anymore — it's toss.

GRAPHICS	61
SOUND	70
PLAYABILITY	31
LASTABILITY	63
ORIGINALITY	55
OVERALL	44

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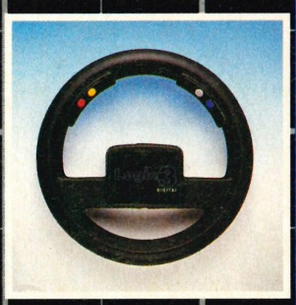
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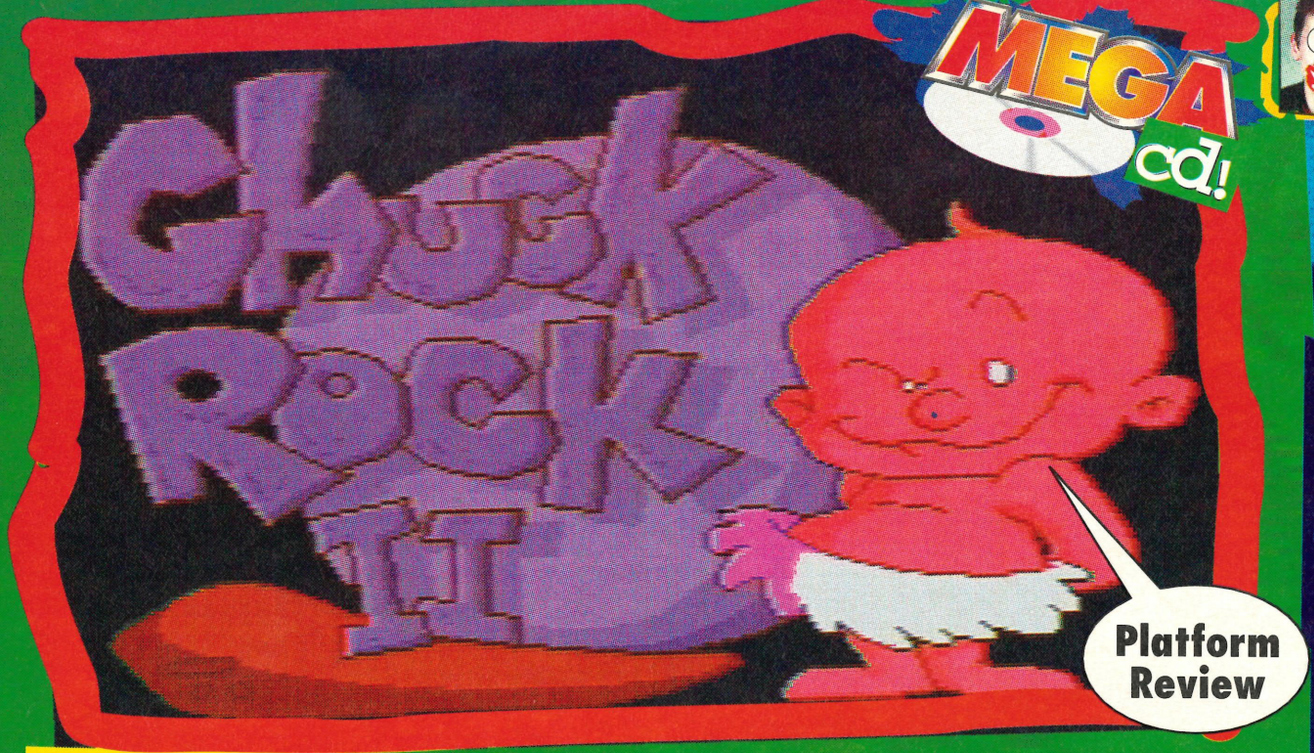
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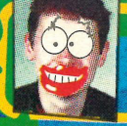
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LG4 08 10 93





WARREN 75%

What an intro! Sure, *Microcosm*'s has more colours, uses FMV (that's Full Motion Video, jargon-busters!) and has astronauts in it, but *Chuck II*'s opening sequence is the Mega-CD's first real cartoon. It has character, a spot-on soundtrack and is genuinely funny — my fave bit's where the missus throws a wobbly.

Into the game proper and... Well, the sounds are still great. The tunes fit in with the prehistoric/jungle theme yet feature a mixture of styles — the calypso, complete with 'ye-ha-haa!'s, the most memorable — and atmospheric background effects (bird calls, monkey yelps etc). The sound effects major on Chuck Jnr's baby noises, which can annoy.

As it's set during the Earth's infancy — as well as Junior's — backgrounds mostly use greens and blues for sky, water and vegetation, highlighted with bright flowers. But this soothing scene only partly compensates for the sometimes frustrating gameplay!

Is it just me, or is Chuck Junior's jump a bit on the weedy side? There's many a platform 'out of bounds' (ho bloody ho —Ed), often tantalisingly decorated with sweets or energy-giving milk bottle, or spike pit too wide to jump. A pain — literally, for the cave-kid.

There's an unnatural fixation for puzzle-solving, too, involving rocks, bananas (to tempt monkeys) and barriers. It's easy to miss them when you've been merrily toddling along for a few screens and this can lose you energy.

It's worse when the path is at a lower level, because Junior leaps high in the air when impaled. You drop onto spikes, lose energy then find yourself back on the higher level! Suicide is sometimes the only way out of such situations.

Take it easy, look for ways out of dangerous situations and *Chuck Rock II* opens up, becoming playable and mildly fun. It ain't an *Aladdin*-beater, by any means, but if you're a fan of the original there's no reason why you shouldn't keep up with the Rock family's escapades.

With a beer belly the size (and consistency) of a bean-bag and brain the size of a dried pea, it's a miracle Chuck Rock landed such a gorgeous wife, let alone invented the motor car. Only in video games...

CREATURE FEATURES

The instruction book is dead! The compact disc has given programmers about 600 Meg to play around with, and *Chuck Rock II* is an excellent example of how a small piece of tree can be saved by putting the instruction booklet on disk. So, like, yeah! No more instruction books, er, man.

Chuck Rock II: Son of Chuck kicks off with the best intro sequence EVER! The scenario and instructions are presented in glorious full-motion cartooniness.

The basic storyline goes: Chuck Rock has gone into the car manufacturing business, gets rich, marries a bird with big jugs, has a sprog, then gets kidnapped by Brick Jagger's henchmen — he's the bad dude with less money than Chuck.

Chuck's missus throws a wobbler and runs about a lot, and it's left to Chuck Junior to take on Brick Jagger — which is the sort of attitude that had kids being sent up





That's a bonus level, mand you've just lost. That's why you're looking so pissed off.

chimneys.

Armed with the obligatory club and a change of stay-dry-longer disposable nappies, Junior sets off across six levels to rescue his dad. These levels amount to approximately 20 stages, if you count the boss and bonus bits.

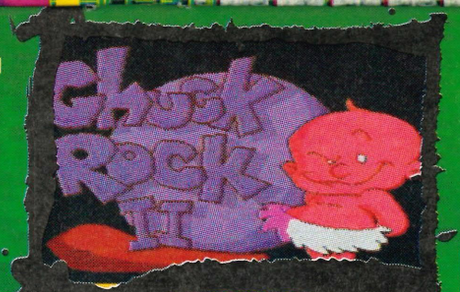
Join the club

Chuck Jnr's club is similar to the one sported by Captain Caveman, star of ever-popular, late-70s cartoon — except the Cavey Club was more a deluxe or GTi version, with all the extras. Junior's handy head-basher is less sophisticated.

Of course, it has the usual ability to shatter the average mammal's jaw upon contact, but it can also move certain rocks, bash away scenery and doubles as a handy torch/fag lighter combination. Oh, and the acrobatic Master Rock can balance on it, too.

The format is very similar to the previous *Chuck Rock* game. The platform levels are reasonably simple: you've more or less got the choice of chundering straight through, taking the hits and missing the pick-ups, or toddling through a bit slower, exploring the secret platforms and grabbing stashes of sweets or power-ups. The bosses are big, bad and bashable. Most of them follow a pattern, so after taking a few hits it's quite easy to spot where to belt 'em. Anyway, let's see if we can get comments out of anyone while the rest of us watch the excellent cartoon intro again...

MM



PUBLISHER	CORE DESIGN
PRICE	£TBA
RELEASE DATE	THIS MUMF
SIZE	BETWEEN 1 AND 600 MEG

OPTIONS

PLAYERS	1
SKILL LEVELS	2
LIVES	3
CONTINUES	1
PASSWORD SYSTEM	NO
BATTERY BACK-UP	NOPE
SPECIALS	GREAT CARTOON!

This geezer gives you a bunk up on the higher platforms Oo-er, missus!





If you want a lot of chocolate on your biscuit, stand on your club. Or perhaps not.





ADE 71%

If you've never seen or played the Mega Drive version of *Chuck Rock II*, read on, 'cos neither have I. There'll be none of this 'compare and contrast' nonsense — I'll tell you how it is from a first-timer's point of view.

Well, errrr... it's another all-action platform romp (crikey! we've got a bright spark here! —Ed), but how does it differ from what we've seen so far on Mega-CD? Well, not that much, really.

The intro sequence is the only thing that makes it stand out from the crowd. It's a blinder! The best cartoon sequence I've seen.

The first Mega-CD game I played was *WonderDog*, also by Core Design. *Son of Chuck* reminds me so much of that. The graphic style, sprites, animation, backdrops, sound FX — the lot. That's no bad thing.

Young Chuck is superbly animated and easy to control. Each level's jam-packed to burstin' with colour; backdrops are smart and scroll beautifully.

I just worry that the gameplay's a touch flat, that's all. Zipping through each level, bonking prehistoric beasts on the bonce, collecting sweeties and bottles of milk, is all very well for a while, but the whole caboodle gets bloomin' boring after Level 4.

Variety is the spice of life. Sadly, both variety and spice are lacking here. I looked at the game and thought, 'What's new?' Sad, really, 'cos it looks such a stunner.

Platform addicts may be a touch disappointed but newcomers to the collect 'n' bonk scene won't find *Son of Chuck* a disaster. All you have to do now is decide which of the two categories you fall into. Easy, huh?





Chuck's kidnappers throw a message on a slab – tied to a rock! Ah ha ha ha ha! It's a Tee and a Hee, folks!

GRAPHICS	85
SOUND	83
PLAYABILITY	56
LASTABILITY	30
ORIGINALITY	71
OVERALL	73

UX marks the SPOT!

CAUGHT in the act!

Say cheese!

Well, Lordy, Lordy flip! Would you believe word has got round on the crinkly old jungle vine that the MEGA MACHINES crew are out on the road leaping from behind bus shelters and wheelie bins, snapping everything that moves. So much so, we're told folk in Birmingham, London and the windier parts of Glasgow are actually lolling around outside computer games stores waiting for the crew to turn up!

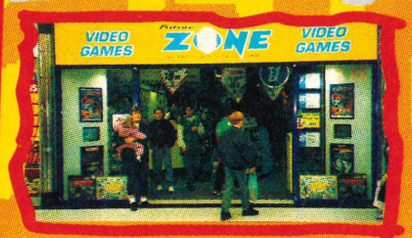


Seems it's true, 'cos on arrival at the Pavilions shopping centre in sunny Uxbridge, a blinkin' huge crowd descended on us mere mortals, completely ignoring a wicked scrap between Robbie from Take That and a marmalade sandwich. Megastars at last, huh?

So it was we trotted into Future Zone, that wonderfully wonderful chain of high-tech video games stores, and prepared to let rip with another series of thought-provoking, brain-boggling questions to tease and torment the game-splaying public (that's you, that is!).

A big cheesy 'thank you' to the shoppers of Uxbridge for pretending to look as though nothing was happening when James attempted to encapsulate the ambience of the passing scene and a massive sopping wet slobbery kiss to Tracy, Marcus and Jessica for allowing us to run rampant through the Future Zone store.

Right, without further ado...



Ta-da! Here it is! The **Future Zone** store in leafy Uxbridge. There are almost 50 stores up and down the country selling the best in console and computer entertainment. There's bound to be a Future Zone in a town near you (well, there's one in Wolverhampton for a start! —Ade).

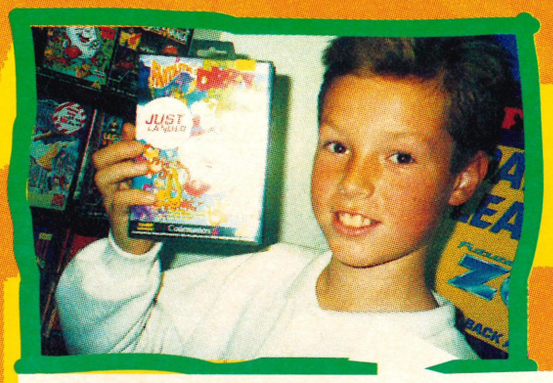
Pop inside and pick up a copy of the *FZ* magazine. It highlights the latest and greatest games on release, with tons of hardware and software at competitive prices.

That's enough of the hard sell and blatant plugging, let's get on with this darn feature thingy...

John Cosgrove is 12 years old, lives in Slough and goes to Chalfonte School (snigger!). His hobby is playing Mega Drive games to death

What are your fave TV programmes? *What's Up, Doc?* and *Bad Influence.*
What's your favourite Sega game? *Street Fighter II.*
What games do you really hate? Football games (hmph! —Al).
What type of games are you into? Beat-'em-ups and RPGs.
So, what do you look for in a beat-'em-up? The characters, I think.
How often do you buy a game? I only get two a year.
What do you think is a reasonable price for cartridges? I'd say £35.
What are your thoughts on the computer shows on TV? They're good for hints and tips.





This is Jason Aldors, he's 24 and comes from Billiricay (can someone look up the spelling of that?! –Ade), which sounds a bit Irish to us! He's a messenger for a living but gets bugger-all money, so how does he pass his time?

What hobbies have you got, Jason? I play football a lot, I'm into console games, of course, and I go to the gym (that coat doesn't do his muscles justice, girls! —Ed).
Have you got a girlfriend? Yes. Her name's Michelle.
What do you and Michelle like to nosh? Mexican food.
What TV programme are you into? *Red Dwarf.*
And music? I like U2 (*eeek!* —Sub Ed).
How long have you had your Mega Drive? About two years.
What's your favourite Sega game? *Desert Strike.*
What about the worst game you've played? *Afterburner II.*
What elements make a good game? Has to be lastability, really.
How often do you buy a game? I tend to swap most of my games.
If you go out and buy a game, what influences you most? Hmmmm... I'd say word of mouth.
In an ideal world, how much would you be prepared to pay for a Mega Drive game? £20–25.
Which game do you intend to buy next? *FIFA.*
How many people are you going to tell about being in MEGA MACHINES? Ooooh... at least 20!

Tom Forster is the tender age of 11. He comes from Ickenham and his passion is playing computers. He eats loads of hamburgers, his favourite TV show is Gamesmaster and he thinks Tandy's electrical store should be Ram-Raided! Obviously holds a grudge!

So, Tom, what's the worst Sega game you've ever played? Hmmm... *Sonic*, I reckon.
And the best? *Dizzy.*
What are your favourite type of games? I enjoy beat-'em-ups.
What elements in a game are important to you? Graphics and playability.
What influences you into buying a game? Magazine reviews.
If it were left you you, what price would you put on Mega Drive games? Probably about £20.
What game are you hoping to buy next? I've seen *Dizzy* but haven't bought it yet. That'll be the next game I get.
Anything else to add before you disappear? Yes. Sega should drop the price of games, school sucks and hello to Mum, Dad, Ross, Peter and David.



Here they are! Creepy creepy, crawl crawl, the luvverly Future Zone staff: Tracy, Marcus (he's the one in the middle!) and Jessica. Their aim is to serve and please — in that order.

Cor blimey! Lo and behold, look what Marcus and Tracy were holding in their mitts the moment we walked through the door. Yes, it's that delightful Impact Magazines publication, MEGA MACHINES! Would you Adam-and-Eve it?!





Ladies and gentlefiends, let's introduce Mark Magill from Uxbridge. He's 14, has a girlfriend called Cheryl and enjoys fishing and computers. Or was that fishing for computers? Anyway, he gets £3 pocket money a week and has loads of fave Sega games

So tell us what they are, Mark I enjoy playing *Street Fighter II*, *Road Rash 2*, *Golden Axe* and *Golden Axe 2*.
What's your least favourite game? Errrr… *Sonic*, I think.
What makes a good game, Mark? It has to have good graphics and the control of the sprites has to be fast.
What's your favourite type of game? I'm into action games.
How often do you buy a cart? About every three months.
What's your biggest influence when you go to buy a game? Reviews in magazines.
If it was your decision, what price tag would you put on Mega Drive games? I'd make them five quid each!
Really? Anything else you'd like to add? Just tell Sega to get their prices down!
What do you reckon to computer games shows? Well, *Gamesmaster* gets a bit boring, but *Bad Influence* has lots of reviews.
Are you going to tell many people you're in MEGA MACHINES? Yeah! Everyone at school.



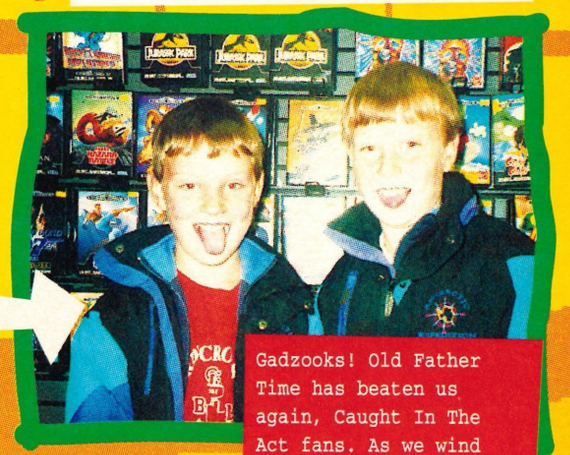


Meet Mike Watson and his cohorts Lalla Mundy and David How. Mike is 15 years old and enjoys sport. Good job, really – he has to burn off all the McDonald's burgers he eats!

How much pocket money do you get a week, Mike? Around £5.
What's your favourite TV programme and pop group? My favourite programme is *Red Dwarf* and I like *2 Unlimited*.
How long have you had your Mega Drive? Two years.
What do you like playing on it? *Super Kick Off* and *Street Fighter II*.
Can you remember a really dire game you've played? Yes! *Jordan vs Bird*.
Do you buy games regularly? I get one a month.
Any comments on computer games shows? I wish they'd show more about the games, not stuff people don't understand.
Who would you like to see Ram-Raided? Ram Raid Sega until they knock down their prices!

James and Matthew Owen are… errrr… brothers. They live in Gerrard's Cross and get 50p a week pocket money. These guys are burger fanatics, too! (Your faces'll stick like that if the wind changes! –Ed)

What do you do in your spare time? Swimming, playing football and playing on our Mega Drive.
What's your favourite TV programme? The *Ghostbusters* cartoon.
What music do you like? Take That.
How long have you had your Mega Drive? About a year.
What's your favourite Sega game at the moment? *Jurassic Park*.
Can you think of a really terrible game? Yep — *WWF*.
How often do you buy games? We get three a year.
Do you think the price of carts is too high? No, they're a fair price.
Which game do you intend to buy next? *Aladdin*.
Do you have a favourite computer games show on TV? *Bad Influence*.
Who would you like us to Ram Raid? *Gamesmaster*.
Are you going to tell anyone you'll be in the mag? Yes — everyone!



Chris Brown and Glen Nevell from Harrow and Denham claim to be 24-ish. Glen's got a job – he takes home around £80 a month – Chris is at college. They'd like to say a big 'Hi!' to Emma and between them list Pitch & Putt (?!), metal miniatures and playing rugby as their hobbies.

What's your favourite food, lads? Chinese.
What do you watch on TV? *Quantum Leap* and *Red Dwarf*.
What music do you listen to, Glen? I like Megadeth (I like The Eurythmics —Chris).
What's your favourite Sega game? *Lethal Enforcers*.
Have you come across anything really poor? *Super Kick Off*, even though we like sports games.
What elements does a game have to have to tempt you to buy it? A two-player mode and it *has* to be addictive.
How often do you buy a game? About every two weeks, although the prices are steep and should be cut to around the £20 mark.
Which game will you buy next? Probably *Monkey Island*.
What about the computer shows on TV? They're pretty good for tips and reviews, but less of the kids playing games, please.
Who's got the best TV ads at the moment, Sega or Nintendo? Hmmmm… Sega.
Anyone you think should be Ram-Raided? Yep. The offices of the Nintendo helpline!



Gadzooks! Old Father Time has beaten us again, Caught In The Act fans. As we wind our merry way back to chilly Ludlow to rake through these fine people's dirty linen, we'll dream up a destination for next month's feature, even more spine-tingling than lubbly-jubbly old Uxbridge.
Keep a look out for the MEGA MACHINES crew. You'll spot 'em no sweat. They're the ones with a big chip on their shoulder – Wilson's chippy ran out of newspaper!
Until next month, stay warm and keep 'em peeled…







BeforE HE subSCribeD TO MeGA mAChinES, trEVoR PlayEd GuitaR iN A Rock 'n' roLL baND...





But noW hE's leArnEd tO yOdeL!



I want to receive a copy of MEGA MACHINES through my flap every month for the downright ridiculous price of just £25.00 per year (UK only) and I'm already wearing my Lederhosen in anticipation of my first yodelling lesson...

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If you decide that MEGA MACHINES is, well, crap — which you won't — we'll be more than happy to refund any issues of your subscription that we haven't mailed yet. There ya go, can't say fairer than that now, can we?

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MEGA machines

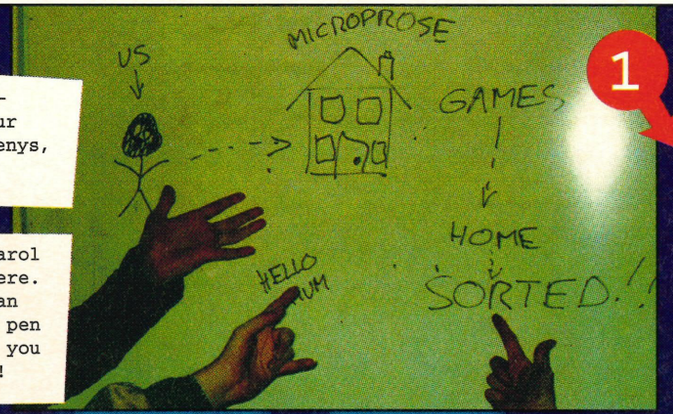
RAM RAID

MAYHEM AT MICROPROSE!



Aren't software companies daft? You'd think with all the publicity surrounding the recent MEGA MACHINES Ram Raids, they'd have sorted out their security systems by now. But no! Brain-dead Philistines that they are, the industry big knobs are making it easier

The time: 0900 hours. The place: Ram Raid HQ. The mission: To locate Chipping Sodbury, storm the MicroProse offices and grab as many games as possible before the MicroProse staff realise travelling balaclava salesmen don't actually wander around buildings shoving software down their pantie-girdles. First things first — the mission briefing…



See that — that's your Auntie Glenys, that is!

Blimey! I wish Carol Vorderman were 'ere. The things she can do with a marker pen and a wipe board you wouldn't believe!

In another part of the stratosphere, just over the Severn Bridge and left a bit, MicroProse's top PR girly, Emma Garrett, is blissfully unaware of the events that are about to change her life and her underwear forever. We join Emma as she interviews her new PR assistant…



So, Mr Plant — you don't mind if I call you Robert? Are you able to sound bubbly on the telephone, even though you feel like you've slept in a monkey's armpit and your Y-fronts ride up more times than the Lone Ranger?

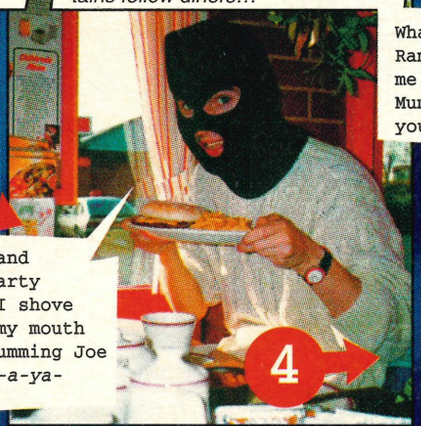
The Raiders are on their way! Just time to stop off for some scoff and check out the quality of the bog paper in the Little Chef.



Do you know my balaclava's itching me?

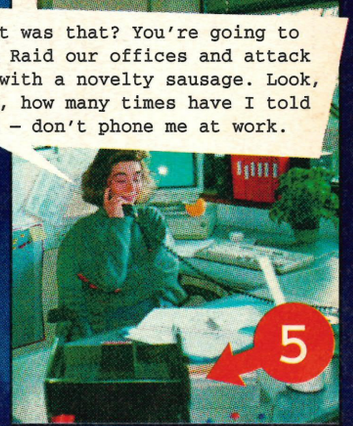
No, but you crack on and we'll join in at the third verse!

As Al and James nick off to make a threatening phone call, Mat entertains fellow diners…



And now, ladies and gentlemen — my party piece. Watch as I shove this plate into my mouth sideways while humming Joe Dolche's *Shaddap-a-ya-Face*.

Back at MicroProse…



What was that? You're going to Ram Raid our offices and attack me with a novelty sausage. Look, Mum, how many times have I told you — don't phone me at work.

Thirteen Barry Manilow songs later, the Ram

and easier for the 'RR' posse to infiltrate their empires.

All of 'em, that is, except MicroProse. These clever geezers have gone and hid themselves in Chipping Sodbury of all places, so no beggar can find 'em.

Fortunately, fitted with the latest heat-seeking radar equipment, the MegaMobile® has been designed to find even the most obscure places in the United Kingdom – yes, it's even been to Kidderminster!

With Jimmy B, Adey P, Matty Y and Alan Em on board, getting to Chipping Sodbury should prove no hassle. Ahem…

Raiders arrive in Chipping Sodbury.

6

CHIPPING SOD…

TWINNED TOWN

I'll have a consonant please, Carol. And a vowel. And another consonant, please. And another…

Five minutes later, the lads are out and about and ready for action.

D'ya think they've clocked us yet?

7

Nah, mate, don't think so. Your idea to disguise ourselves as three pimples on a bush is wicked!

MICROPROSE VISITORS CAR PARK →

D'ya think they've clocked us yet?

8

Nah, mate, don't think so. Your idea to disguise ourselves as three pimples on a lamp-post is wicked!

Time to make a move. An open window! An excellent opportunity. Doh! James can't stand heights. Let's face it, he ain't Spider-Man! Anything over two feet and he hallucinates…

Blimey! Look lads, there's a whole community down here – Bonnie Langford, Cheryl from Bucks Fizz and Judy Finnigan are having a Tupperware party at Lulu's house!

Cut the crap, James. Listen – I'll go around the front, walk through reception, leg it up the stairs, pop in this 'ere room and ask if we can borrow a chair to help us climb in. See you in a sec.

9

Moments later…

Yeah! Nice one, Al!

Jesus! Me bladder's pushing against me leather-effect belt, James. You can sniff out a toilet at ten paces. Get us there – and quick!

Cheers, mate, you're a diamond!

12

Inside that same office…

S'cuse me, geezer, my name's Al and me and my mates over there are about to completely trash this building. Do you mind if I borrow that chair so we can climb through your window?

10

Yeah, no problem mate, help yourself – only don't all stand on it at once, it might bust and I wouldn't want to see you get hurt.

Al makes his way back outside.

11

Hey, lads, look what *I* got! Diced with death to get this chair. I tell you something, they're mean muthas in there. I virtually had to prise the thing out of this geezer's hands. Right – let's do it!

All I do each night is spray, hoping that I'll be a part…

Before the raid gets into full swing, the lads pay a visit to see Mr Armitage Shanks… point Percy at the porcelain… you know, have a wee-wee and all that.

James, I hear the MicroProse cubicles are spotless, why not do whatever you're doing in there?

13

In one of MicroProse's spotless cubicles…

14

Hi! I'm a roll of MicroProse bog paper. I'm hiding in here 'cos I heard it on the U-bend that we were expecting a gang of Ram Raiders in today. I tell you something, they ain't getting their butts on me!

15

COME HERE, YOU LITTLE BLIGHTER.

See, told ya!

Having fed and watered the MicroProse toilets, the Ram Raiders remember the purpose of their mission — games, games, GAMES!

A-ha! A 'No Entry' sign! Just the kind of thing we like!

16

Weeeeeeeeeeeee!!

The other side of the sign, James finds the MicroProse security system.

17

Wouldn't want to tread on any of those nasty little pressure pads now, would we? Long live my security system-disabling scrubbing brush! It never lets me down…

WAAARGH! WAAARGH! WAAARGH! WAAARGH!

Alarm sound FX by Group 4

In a far away room, the head of MicroProse is oblivious to the Ram Raiders' ever-so dastardly deeds. The alarm's wailing, but he can't hear a dicky-bird.

Bermuda Triangle, try and see it from my angle…

18

Back downstairs the lads are fretting. The alarm system has to be disabled before the MicroProse staff get wise. A shufty through a drawer supplies the answer.

19

A pair of black leather gloves and a Cup-a-Soup later…

20

Cup-a-Soup! Wholesome. Substantial. Fills you up. Keeps you warm and is the perfect antidote for those alarm bell blues. Try it! Oh, by

21

Okay, lads! An instant beverage saves the day. Let's get looking for those games!

PAXO Croutons

Come off it! This is Accounts! There won't be any games in here, only stuffy old blokes in Marks and Spencers' white shirts and crappy polyester trousers. You know, the kind of kegs where when you cross your legs, the static they give off could charge the National Grid. Let's find that Emma Garrett. She'll know where the games are…

The search begins…

22

blues. Try it! Oh, by the way, sorry I'm late, there was a cow on the motorway.

23

Moments later in Emma's office...

Eeek! Please don't hurt Robert. I'll tell you everything, but please, don't take my plant! (Was that good enough? Do you like the pained expression? I did Drama at school, you know.)

24

Make it look as though you're walking away, Al, even though we're standing on the spot!

25

26

Okay, so your mother doesn't wear a balaclava, but get this – the Mega Machines novelty sausage. Eat meat, sucker!

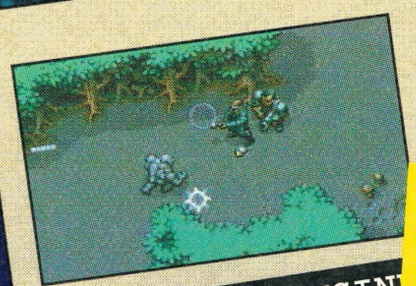
My God! It winked at me!

Over the other side of the office...

27

You are in my power. You will tell me your telephone number... errrr... whoops! Sorry... you will tell me where your game information is, *then* tell me your telephone number!

Hmmm... It's 0454 – ahem! The stuff's in the filing cabinet over there. Anyone seen my Cup-a-Soup?

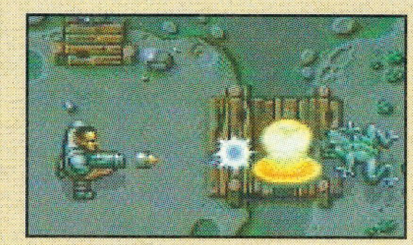


A-ha! At last! Info on *Chaos Engine, Tinhead* and *Pirates! Gold*. Strewth! This Ram Raiding's jolly hard work. Tummy's rumbling, kids. Time for a munch before we go in search of more games.

The screen shots from *The Chaos Engine* look just un-bloody-believable! What a shame that the jerk responsible for making them appear on the page shagged 'em up righteously, then. Luckily, our poorly-paid colleagues on Amiga Force swapped us some of *their* pics for ten Benson's and a packet of Chocolate Hob Nobs – and they look identical to the Sega ones! Phew, that was close...









At the filing cabinet...

28

Rudey pictures of Emma on the beach at Bridlington. Not sure that's what I'm looking for. Better put them back!

29

Lamp from IKEA, £29.99. Also available in white



Pirate's Gold let's you do all those pirate-type things you've always dreamed about - without chopping one leg off or getting scurvy.

in the canteen...

30

Hello, luvvers! Come and taste my wares. I hope your eyes aren't bigger than your bellies. I've gone to great trouble to prepare this coconut tart.

I've never been near a tart in my life and I don't intend to start now.

That's right, girls, queue up nicely now. (Hmmmm... quite fancy the one in denim. He can poke his fork in my lasagne any time.)

31

Downstairs, the lads locate the photocopier. Just time to copy a few MicroProse release schedules.

A quick game on the canteen arcade machine and it's back to hard graft.

I've heard of Jake the Peg but this is ridiculous!

32

33

James, I know you're used to barfing down toilets, but isn't this taking things a bit too far?!

The lads make their way to the art department. Surrounded by Take That fans, the crew start to crack...

34

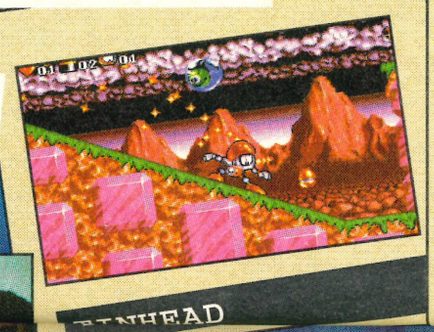
Gimme! Gimme! Gimme! If you don't give me that *Tinhead* artwork, I'll take off my mask and reveal I am, in fact, a member of that top pop combo, Worlds Apart.

Wrong, blimpo! I know for a fact they're on tour in Malta. The artwork stays.

At the other end of the office, James is taking the mickey out of a group of marginally famous pop stars...

Rumour has it these blokes are doing the theme music to *Tinhead*. Or was it Barry Manilow? Al, check that one out.

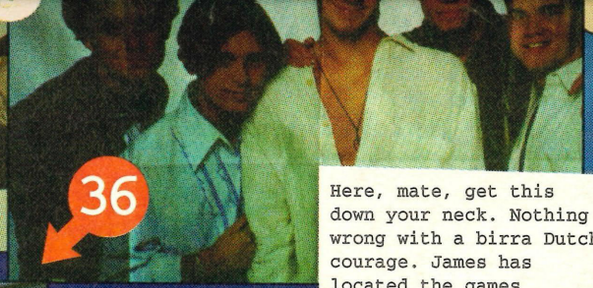
Oi, you! Who the hell do you think you are? You don't 'arf look daft with that big glove on yer head. At least *we* know the meaning of style. *Relight my fire... lah, lah, lah, lah...*





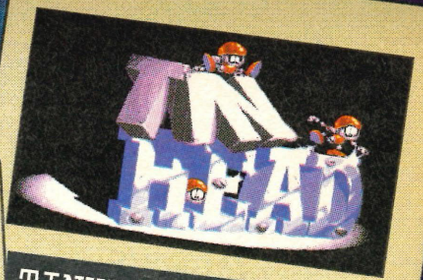


35



36

In this game you play a *morphing* robot (that means you can change shape) with the job of saving a galaxy.



TINHEAD



TINHEAD

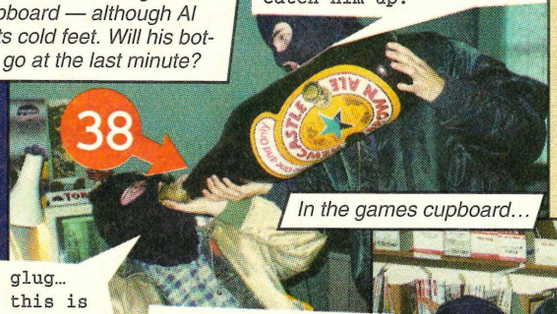
Style? Style? It's you young un's who don't know the meaning of style. Clock a load of this…



37

Time to storm the games cupboard — although Al gets cold feet. Will his bottle go at the last minute?

Here, mate, get this down your neck. Nothing wrong with a birra Dutch courage. James has located the games cupboard. Quick, let's catch him up.



38

In the games cupboard…

Glug… glug… blug… this is cold tea, Mat… glug… glug…



Right you lot – let's go! Errrr… hang on. I've just got to say goodbye to someone first.

Ace! Cracking MicroProse gear. Dig these glasses, man. They're the authentic specs worn by Tom Cruise in *Top Gun*. They are! Emma told me and Emma's my friend.

39

I'll miss you, Sinead. Promise you won't forget me. Aye-up! Here comes a boss geezer! Scarper, lads!



40

Outfits by Fat Dave, Inc
Make-up by Rentokil

On the way to the fire exit…

The quick-thinking Raiders remember to tie up the receptionist on the way out, just in case she phones the police.



And don't come back.

Mind the jacket, James. I've gorra give it back to the Victoria & Albert Museum on Monday!

41



42

Hello, Wong's Chinese. Yes. Yes. A 35, yes. A 129 and a 77. Okay, I've got that. It'll be about 20 minutes, mate, one of our drivers is off sick. Okay? Ta-rah!

Rejoice! Another successful mission for Ram Raiders United.

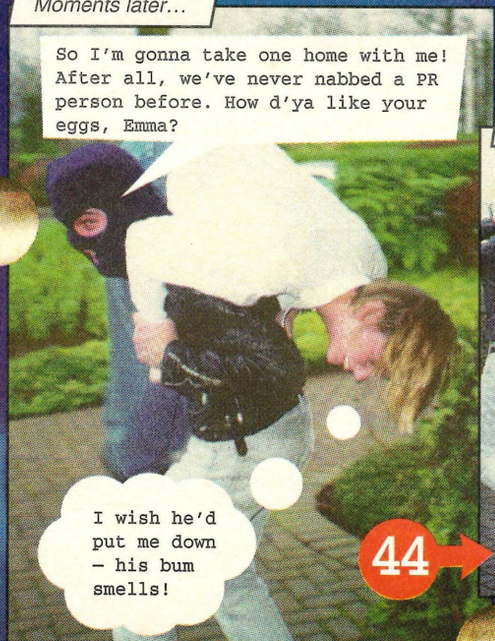


I'm gonna miss these guys…

43

Moments later…

So I'm gonna take one home with me! After all, we've never nabbed a PR person before. How d'ya like your eggs, Emma?



I wish he'd put me down – his bum smells!

44

The Ram Raiders disappear into the sunset.

Bring me sunshine, lah, lah, lah…



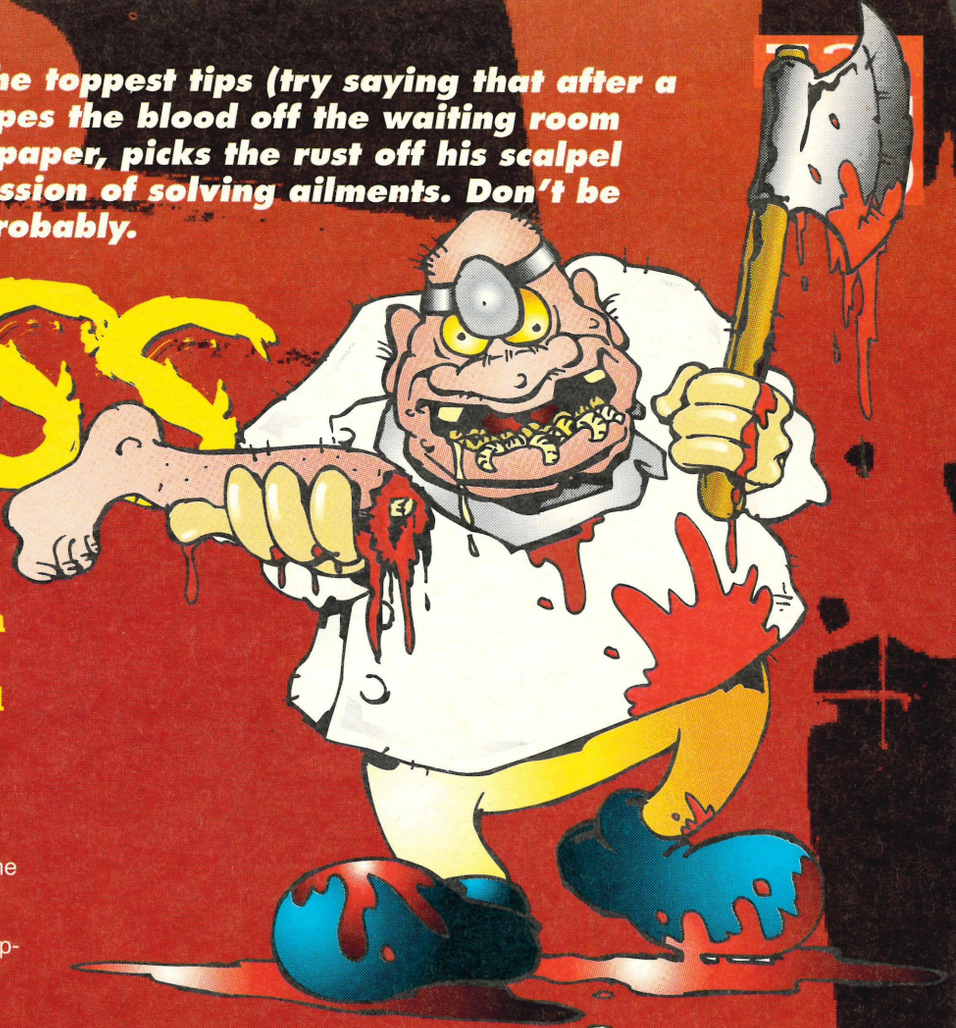
45

Heck! Did anyone remember to shut that window?

Playing Tips

DR. RUTHLESS

Dr Ruthless, tip-top top tipper of the toppest tips (try saying that after a few bottles of Diamond White), wipes the blood off the waiting room floor, hangs up another strip of flypaper, picks the rust off his scalpel and opens the clinic for another session of solving ailments. Don't be shy, he knows what he's doing... probably.



STREET FIGHTER II



Ed Lomas, Overlord Of Tips, saves the day once more with a life-saving serum of *Street Fighter II* cheats and Game Genie codes, kept at absolute zero and flown across the country by Noel Edmonds.

The cheat code happens to be the same as the SNES version: Down, [Z], Up, [X], [A], [Y], [B], [C]. Notice that the cheat only works on the six-button joypad, so those with outdated implements will have to upgrade to the cutting-edge model.

If you enter the cheat with controller one on the Capcom screen, it turns off the regular punches and kicks so you can only do special moves; if you use it when the skyscraper disappears, it speeds up Champion Edition mode; and when controller two does the dirty deed on the Match Play and Elimination option screen, players can choose the same character.

Now for the codes. Ed's had problems getting hold of the Master Code, but he says you can use the cheats without it. Here's how: Input the codes in with the Game Genie switched off, then press Start and wait for the Sega screen to appear. When it does, turn the Genie on and it should work perfectly.



GLGT-AAGC	Odd colours on the character-select screen and weird flame colours
4GGT-AAV4	A rapid-fire pad! Hold Start when playing for slo-mo with a regular pad
ACMT-BAET	No music — just funky drumming, rude boy!
CEBT-AAEY	Black background — you can only see bits of animation
AABT-AAEA	Very colourful background!
CEFT-AAEY	Can't walk or jump — can only move with special moves and slides etc
CEJT-AAEY	Throws are fatal
CEJT-AAEC	Throws do no damage
AAZT-CADA	Markers across player one's energy bar
AAZT-CADG	Use with previous code
AACT-AAE8	Neither you nor the computer can throw fireballs
AAFT-AAE8	When left alone, the characters walk to the left
GLGT-AABC	The characters keep jumping to the right
AAEA-AAE8	Player one hasn't got a shadow

ZOOL

My assistant, the indomitable Sister Spoon, has just flown across the country with life-saving codes for Gremlin's *Zool* packed in ice, just in time for this month's surgery. If you're in urgent need of a life-or-death cheat transplant for this hyperactive platformer, let me put this mask over your mouth and deeply breathe in the following instructions:

D = Down
U = Up
L = Left
R = Right
A = [A] button
B = [B] button
C = [C] button

DULLARD

Adds one life to Zool's collection. Most welcome.

BARRACUDA

Sets the energy to six bars (only three will be displayed, as usual) and adds 30 seconds to the time.



CRABBALLARD

Activates the level-select. All levels on all worlds can be accessed. After pausing the game, the first two digits can be set to [illegible] and return to the main game and

GLGT-AAAC You can't punch!
AADA-AAN0 All of the characters look like Ryu on the character-select screen, the writing's weird and when you smash background crates etc, they act strangely!
AADA-AAD6 The character-select boxes flash rapidly and fights start quickly

[A]+[B]+[C] to return to the title page and the game starts on the requested level.

RADARBLUR
Sets the energy and time cheat. Next time a life is started, Zool has 240 energy bars and the timer counts down from 999.

OUT PATIENTS

Once again, we say goodbye to more games who've been given a clean bill of health and a goodbye kiss from Sister Spoon. This month, thanks to Jason Lloyd Brooks of Nuneaton, we focus on the Mega-CD ward.

Batman Returns
On the options screen, highlight the 'driving only' section. Hold the pad Left and press [B]. Repeat this for all options. When you reach the bottom, go back up the list, repeating the procedure. A jingle sounds to confirm the cheat. During play, press Start then [C] to select the level.

Black Hole Assault
Secret Game: Enter your name as AZY and highlight mission BHA. Enter AZY again and you can play *Black Ball Assault*!
Invincibility: Enter your name as MUTEKI. Highlight mission BHA, and enter your name as MUTEKI again.
Cheat: Enter your name as BIGNET. When you meet an opponent, press Start and he drops to the floor.

Cobra Command
Level Select: On the title screen, press Left, Right, [A], [B] and [C]. When playing the game, pause and press Left or Right to change level.
Debug Mode: On the title screen, press Up, Down, Left, Right, [B], [C] and [A] to enter the level-edit screen, where you can play back sections of the game, including the end.

Earnest Evans
Level Skip: Pause the game and press Up, [A], Down, [B], Left, [A], Right, [B].
Warp: Climb the wall to the left of the starting point on Stage 6. When you're offscreen, you'll warp to the stage's boss.

Heavy Nova
In versus mode, if you manage to kill a guardian without losing any energy, you're rewarded with one million points.

Hook
For up to 99 lives, drop to the bottom of the first pit in the caves on Level 5. Walk right, swim under the rocks to the leaf and collect the 3-Up bonus, then kill yourself. Repeat this as often as you like, or until you reach the maximum of 99 lives.

Kris Kross: Make My Video
To reach a hidden screen (you should want to hide yourself if you bought this thing!), press [A], [B], [C] and Right on the caller screen.

Marky Mark: Make My Video
To view a secret scene (presumably one where 'Marky' doesn't ponce around in his kegs, the sad tosser), hold [A] and [C] and press Start to go to the U-Direct mode, then [A], [B], [C] and Right.

Nostalgia 1907
When Sega logo appears, press and hold [C] until Sir DeWave appears to skip the yawnsome intro.

Road Avenger
From the start, push up to access the options screen, then press [A] six times to get a level-select.

Sol-Feace
On the title screen, press [A], [B], [C], [A], [B], [C], [B], [C], [B], [A]. When you hear a sound effect, press Start. In Config Mode, you'll now find Start and Mode. Go to Start and select a level with Left or Right; Mode allows you to adjust the difficulty. If you press Right a few times while holding [A], you gain invincibility.

Time Gal
Passwords: 1991 AD = SHKXGJWF, 2001 AD = XPTMCSHD, 3001 AD = QWCDHRKT.
Level Select: On the menu screen, press Up three times, Down three times, Left twice, Right twice and Up.

Wonder Dog
Planet Weird = REEVES, Planet Foggia = PIXIES, Planet Knirius = WOOPIE.

For his invaluable assistance above and beyond the call of duty, Jason earns himself a karaoke CD — the only disc we had left after our recent burglary ('strue!).

Micro Machines

Ed Lomas is back — already! — with GG codes for the 'Masters superb racer; I thoroughly recommend it as a supplement to your daily game intake. Make it strange with these...

AANA-AEDY	Makes really odd noises
REXT-A6YR	Only shows who's in first place
REXT-G6YR	Codemasters screen is *weird*...

Specialist Cases

Being a new monthly feature where the Doctor takes a look at game sprites' ailments

This month, I'm looking at the condition of amnesia. This ailment causes a degree of memory loss, which in some cases results in a complete lack of recall.

Take this patient, for example, who's suffering from a severe attack — we'll call him 'Ken'. Ken's amnesia has become so intense, he cannot even recall his own name, as this picture demonstrates...



A pitiful sight to behold, and a warning to all who enjoy throwing fireballs at folk.

Dr RoBotNik's MeAn BEAn MaCHinE

For those of you suffering from extreme flatulence after a surfeit of beans, here are the Easy level passwords you need to take the wind out of Robotnik's sails.





Frankly	Has Bean, Blocker, Yellow, Yellow
Humpty	Blue, Blocker, Red, Yellow
Coconuts	Yellow, Blue, Blocker, Purple
Davy Sprockett	Has Bean, Green, Blue, Yellow
Skweez	Green, Purple, Purple, Yellow
Dynamight	Purple, Blue, Green, Has Bean
Grounder	Green, Has Bean, Blocker, Yellow
Spike	Blue, Purple, Has Bean, Has Bean
Sir Ffuzzy-Logic	Has Bean, Red, Yellow, Blocker
Dragon Breath	Blocker, Red, Red, Blue
Scratch	Green, Green, Blocker, Yellow
Dr Robotnik	Purple, Yellow, Has Bean, Blocker.

Dr Ruthless and the Maze of Blue Plastic

Good day. Dr Ruthless back again with a step-by-step guide to Tomy's *Sonic Mountain Quest* (£18.49), which, according to Tomy, will 'boost your cred'.

The thing to remember for expert ball-caressing is: 'Let Stealth Be The Watchword'. The 'Push' button has to be punched with varying degrees of strength in order to reach the final goal; your powers of finesse will be tested to the limit.

Firstly, for that authentic Sonic & Tails look, why not paint one ball-bearing blue (for Sonic) and one beige (for Tails)? Advanced players can

The End-of-Level Spinny Bit of Cardboard

This is where you need to summon up all your reserves of accuracy, patience, subtlety and

The Balloon Thing 5

Finesse and pin-point accura-

SONIC 2

Suffering from severe hyperactivity in *Sonic 2*? **Richard Johnson** of **London** has discovered an interesting side effect of the level-select cheat, which results in a slow motion mode.

Basically, after utilising the level-select and starting the game, pause and press and hold [B]. While holding [B], you can move Sonic around in slo-mo and use [A] or [C] to jump.

One word of warning: pressing [A] on its own resets the game.

SONIC CD



Nurse! The screen! The title screen of *Sonic CD*, that is, because that's the place to pull off this level-select cheat — who could want for more? Apart from every National Health hospital in the country, 'course? Anyhow, it goes something like this...

Simply press Up, Down, Down, Left, Right and [B] on the title screen. The problem is, you can only play the stage you selected, but it's better than having a triple heart bypass and being stitched back up again, only to find the surgeon left his thermos flask inside you.

DA Garden

If you try the Time Attack mode and finish it under a total time of 37:27.57, something called a 'DA Garden' will be added to the menu screen.

This is the sound test mode, where you can tap your toe to the swinging sounds of *Sonic*, Daddio! (I think that's what the youths are saying nowadays.) Press [A] to display song title, Left or Right to choose a toon and Start to hear the chosen track.

The little planet graphic can also be manipulated. Move it using the control pad, press [B] to alter the direction of rotation and [C] to zoom in or out.

Visual Mode

Finish the Time Attack under a total time of 26:46.12 and Visual Mode

Tails)? Advanced players can test their skills to the limit by playing with two balls at once, which requires expert timing — try getting one ball over the Bridge of Doom while trying to find the other from under the sofa.

Now that step-by-step guide…

reserves of accuracy, patience, subtlety and intestinal rectitude.

Wait until the turning magnet appears over your ball and strike hard and fast. With persistence, vigour and determination (and a little bit of luck!), you'll finish the game and be treated to a stunning end sequence, consisting of a resonant 'Ping!', a rattling sound and the sudden reappearance of the ball at the bottom.

cy are the hallmarks of a successful foray through this stage. Alternatively, you can just bash away whenever the red plastic thingy is level with your ball. Now you've broken the back of the challenge…

The Most Amazing Sight in the History of Mankind

After the ball goes around the back and magically appears at the other side, a miracle roughly comparable with the Second Coming appears. To be frank, it's the Most Amazing Sight in the History of Mankind.

Balance the ball precariously on the right-hand edge of the red thing and wiggle — yes, wiggle — the button in a furtive manner. Eventually, your ball will — and I'm not making this up — rise into the air in an arc, hover above the next level and plop into the blue trough.

Patience is of the essence here, as aggressive bashing of the button is punished by the ball flying across the room and being vacuumed up by your mother.

The Tricky Three-Jump Bit

Another testing level. This time, rhythm and precision is the key. My tip is to wait until the left-hand side of the bridge has risen to its highest point before beginning the sequence, thus safeguarding against a reverse move.

Basically, three rhythmic stabs sees you through. Expert players can achieve this in only two inch-perfect pokes.

Start

A deceptively simple beginning. Just a firm (but steady) push on the button gets you underway. The stairs are battery-operated so sit back and take in the majestic aura emanating from the machine.

Cheat Mode

If the game gets too hard for you, here's an excellent cheat you can use. Simply pick the ball out of the trough at the bottom, like so:



The Springy Bit

Power and aggression are the watchwords here. Unleash a plastic-shattering hit and gasp in awe as the ball swings across to the next stage…

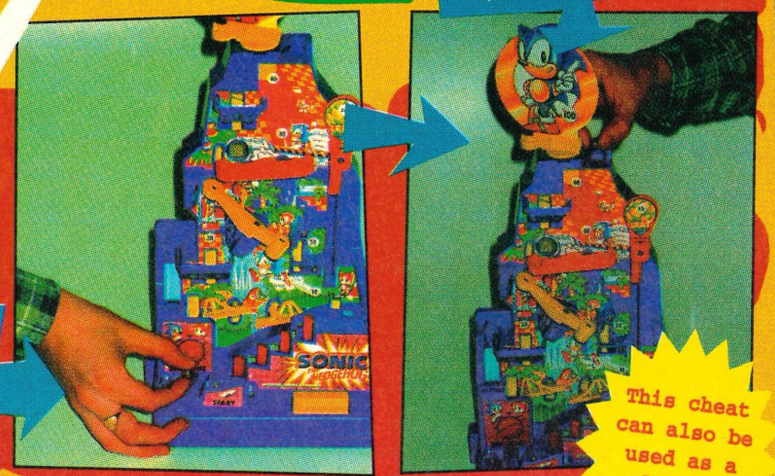
The Bridge of Doom

For my money, this is the hardest section of the entire game. Master this and you'll be well on the way to victory.

The thing to watch is the left-hand side of the bridge. When it's rising and roughly 49 degrees to the perpendicular of the vertical, strike sharp and true.

The ball either shoots over the bridge or just trickles over to the left-hand side and rolls down to the next level.

Then drop the ball through the hole at the top:



Finish the Time Attack under a total time of 26:46.12 and Visual Mode is added to the menu, too.

Now you can bathe in the splendour of the opening and ending sequences without playing through the whole damn looping match, and see the original drawings of animations. Isn't it nice to have knowledge of internal parts?



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MORTAL KOMBAT

It's *Mortal Kombat* time – as if you didn't know! Daniel Swanson of Tyne & Wear sent these facts and figures to help you inflict maximum damage and earn massive scores. For his able assistance, Dan earns a fabulous TurboTouch 360° joypad. Impressed? Oh, please yerselves…

MORTAL KOMBAT

POINTS

		SPECIALS	
HIGH PUNCH	= 500	CANNON BALL	= 5000
LOW PUNCH	= 500	KNIFE THROW	= 2000
LEG SWEEP	= 1000	ICE FREEZE	= 0
UPPER CUT	= 2000	POWER SLIDE	= 1000
ROUND HOUSE KICK	= 2000	SPEAR	= 2000
VERTICAL FLYING KICK	= 2000	TELEPORT PUNCH	= 2000
FLYING KICK	= 2000	PACKAGE CHECK	= 5000
FLYING PUNCH	= 1000	SHADOW KICK	= 5000
GROUND KICK	= 500	FLAME BLAST	= 2000
HIGH KICK	= 2000	TORPEDO	= 5000
LOW KICK	= 2000	TELE PORT	= 0
THROW	= 5000	ELECTRICTY	= 2000
KNEE	= 5000	CONCORDE KICK	= 2000
CLOSE RANGE ATTACK	= 2000	FLAME BOLT	= 2000
		ENERGY WAVE	= 2000
		LEG TOSS	= 2000
		SUPER PUNCH	= 2000

UN DEFENDABLE ATTACKS

KANO: Use an *upper cut* in the corner ... the as soon as you gain control once more use a *cannon ball* and you will hit them before they even get up.

SUB-ZERO: Use an *upper cut* any were and as soon as you gain controll once more do a *power slide* and you will hit them before they hit the ground.

SCORPIAN: Start punching after a few punches press backwards twice and when they fall away you will drag them in. This is undefendable!

Here are all of reptiles clues.

PERFECTION IS THE KEY.
FATALITY IS THE KEY.
BLOCKING WILL GET YOU NOWERE.
TIP EIT FO MOTTOB (BOTTOM OF THE PIT.
LOOK TO LA LUNA (MOON).
ALONE IS HOW TO FIND ME.
YOU CAN'T MATCH MY SPEED.
10,000,000 POINTS IF YOU BEAT ME.

SO THIS IS IT THEN IF I WIN COULD YOU SEND ME A COPY OF STREETFIGHTER 2 CE.
AND EXPECT A FULL GUIDE WITH IN THE NEXT FEW MOUNTHS.

THIS WAS COMPILED BY : DANIEL SWANSON OF 56 MARINA VIEW HEBBURN TYNE & WEAR NE31 1RX.

MORTAL KOMBAT

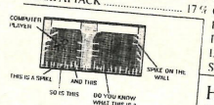
NEVER SEEN BEFORE CODE!

I won't insult your intellegence by telling you what the blood cheat is or tell you the secret options screen (besides you saw it in issue 1#). But what I will tell you is how to turn all the caractures digetised in green !

Her's how :
When you have defeated REPTILE and it shows the words fatality press start on pad 2.
It is as easy as that.

You may wonder how much of the oppents energy your attack causes , well now you do.

		SPECIALS	
HIGH PUNCH	5%	CANNON BALL	18%
LOW PUNCH	6%	KNIFE THROW	20%
HIGH KICK	17%	ICE FREEZE	0%
LOW KICK	16%	POWER SLIDE	8%
UPPER CUT	25%	PACKAGE CHECK	19%
ROUND HOUSE KICK	21%	SHADOW KICK	18%
CROUCH KICK	11%	FLAME BLAST	16%
LEG SWEEP	10%	SPEAR	9%
HORIZONTAL FLYING KICK	22%	TELEPORT PUNCH	17%
VERTICAL FLYING KICK	19%	TORPEDO	23%
FLYING PUNCH	16%	TELEPORT	0%
THROW	25%	ELECTRICTY	18%
KNEE	18%	CONCORDE KICK	23%
CLOSE ATTACK	17%	FLAME BOLT	19%
		ENERGY WAVE	19%
		LEG TOSS	26%
		SUPER PUNCH	19%



A MAP OF THE PIT !

HERE'S A CHALLENGE

It is possible to beat the computer without the timer even starting. See if you can. HINT: only one person can.

ABNTCABN	Gore code	BJ9ACAG2	Start on endurance match three
AKRAAA7N	Infinite time	BN9ACAG2	Start on Goro match
AJ9ACAG2	Start on match two	BT9ACAG2	Start on Shang Tsung match
AN9ACAG2	Start on match three	AKXAAA22	Always get a faultless victory bonus
AT9ACAG2	Start on match four	AC7TAAA2	Throws do no damage
AY9ACAG2	Start on match five	SC7TAAA2	Throws do more damage
A29ACAG2	Start on match six	8C7TAAA2	Throws do maximum damage
A69ACAG2	Start on mirror match		
BA9ACAG2	Start on endurance match one		
BE9ACAG2	Start on endurance match two		

In one of my more fiendish experiments, I've been breeding highly toxic Game Genie codes for everyone's favourite spine-jiggling beat-'em-up, *Mortal Kombat*. I've got over 300 of the blighters and... what was that? Oh no! Some of them have escaped into the atmosphere! Al-eeeee!



WOMEN ONLY

It's a sad fact that most gamesplayers are blokes — but even worse, from my point of view, that female tipsters are especially rare. I'm so interested in hearing from 'the fairer sex' and addressing this problem that I'm offering *this* cuddly Sonic as a prize to *girls only*.

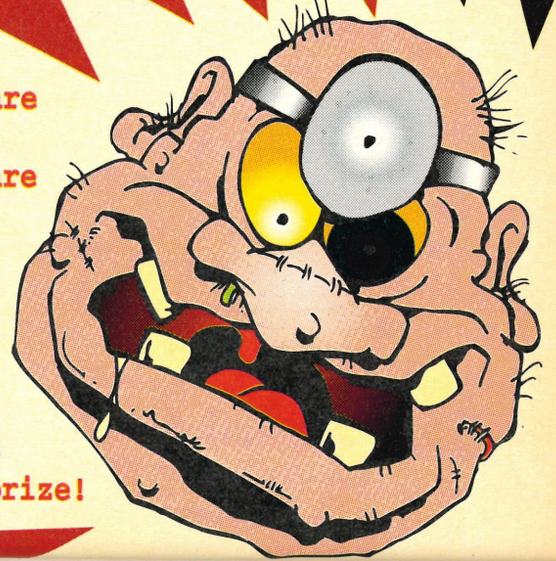
So, get your tips, maps, cheats and codes on a piece of paper and send 'em to Dr Ruthless at the usual MEGA MACHINES address, along with a photo to prove your girlieness. Go on — jump to it!

The Waiting Room

A visit to the Tips Clinic wouldn't be complete without an obligatory nod to those patients who sent in tips which, due to his busy workload (the Doc's on the NHS, you see), Ruthless couldn't attend to. So thanks to the following people, and please, make sure you all get a fair share of the 1978 *Roy Of The Rovers* annual…

Glenn McMurray, Andrew Fletcher, Terry Hill, M.E Smith, Gary Green, Scott 'The Main Man' Pegg, Edward Smith, Tony Whiteside, Natalie Frigieri, S Martin, Jason Wright, Jeth Hughes, Lee Connor and Stuart Overall.

As both myself and Sister Spoon are still recovering from New Year celebrations, our opening hours are shorter this time around, but we're always looking for new tips, maps, cheats and so on to cure readers of their gaming problems. Send them to Dr Ruthless, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW and you could win a mystery prize!



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ANY CHEESE ONES LEFT?

We give away a stolen Mortal Kombat coin-op!

A hushed silence fell over the crowd as the first two Kombateers took their positions at the coin-op. The atmosphere was oppressive, the air thick with menace – and then, suddenly, Al Needham arrived with the sandwiches…

Once upon a time, in an office not too unlike this one, there was a computer games magazine called SEGA FORCE MEGA. One day, the company who published this monthly journal for Mega Drive and Mega-CD owners decided it'd be a really neat idea if they made *another* magazine for 16-bit Sega users, only this time they decided to staff the mag with a bunch of unsavoury characters…

Before the SEGA FORCE MEGA team knew what hit them, the MEGA MACHINES crew had taken over! An entire mail sack full of readers' letters were swiped for the first issue… along with all the entries for a 'win a *Mortal Kombat* arcade machine' competition. So they went and nicked the coin-op, too.

Originally, this competition was to be held and judged by the Sega Forcers but, since they'd moved to a new location in Cornwall, the MEGA MACHINES posse figured to hell with it, *they'd* hold the challenge! Ten readers were invited… six arrived.

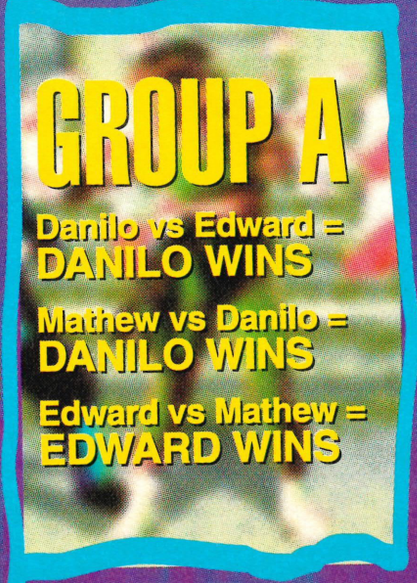
Their challenge? To reign supreme as the *Mortal Kombat* coin-op champion. The prize? Three grand's worth of top quality arcade machine.

And the sandwiches? Mmm, they were lovely. Thanks, Al!

Name That Tuna

After a hearty nosh-up (with lashings and lashings of fizzy pop), the six hopefuls were split into two groups of three. Each entrant was given two chances to demonstrate their Kombatability, taking on the other two members in their group for a best-of-three bout of mindless Mortal Mayhem.

The competition was fiercely fought, with some dazzling displays of deft death-dealing, and at the end of the knock-out preliminary rounds this is how things stood:

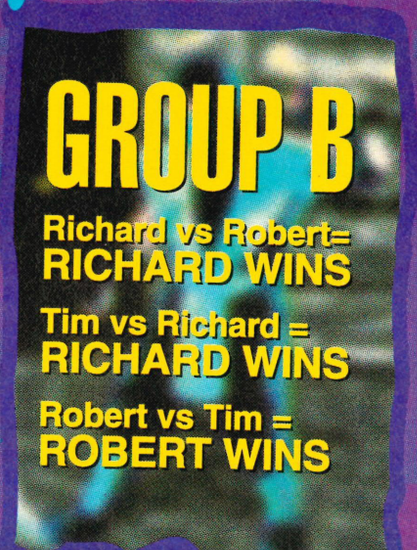


GROUP A

Danilo vs Edward = DANILO WINS

Mathew vs Danilo = DANILO WINS

Edward vs Mathew = EDWARD WINS



GROUP B

Richard vs Robert= RICHARD WINS

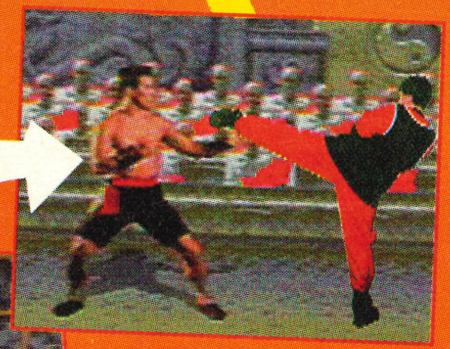
Tim vs Richard = RICHARD WINS

Robert vs Tim = ROBERT WINS

MeRE mOrTalS

ROBERT YARGI

Naming *Pit Fighter* as his all-time worst-ever Mega Drive release and *Mortal Kombat* as the best, 14-year-old Rob is a Birmingham dweller with a penchant for Sky Sports. Chosen character: **Rayden**





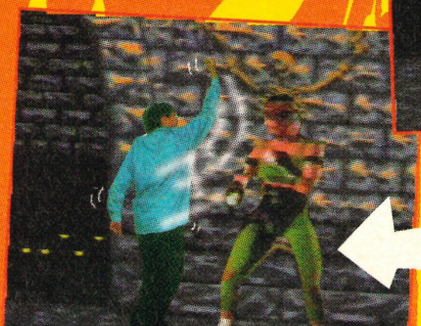
MATHEW DAVIES

Hailing from the unpronounceable town of Llwynhendy, this plucky 13-year-old's favourite games are *SFII* and *Mortal Kombat*. Chosen character: **Sonya Blade** (no wonder he didn't win, then, innit? —Ed)

DANILO WALDE

A 14-year-old London lad who's an absolute whizz on *Street Fighter II* (he beat office champion Simon Hill without breaking into a sweat!). Chosen character: **Sub-Zero**





EDWARD LACDAO

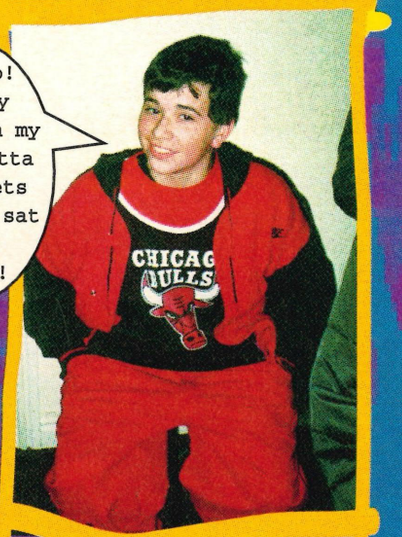
Another *SFII* devotee from London, Eddie is 13 years old and can't stand the *WWF* games (and who can blame him?). Chosen Character: **Sub-Zero**



Aren't parents great? They drive you miles to enter some dumb compo, and STILL find time to fart about for photos!



Oh, poo! If only I'd taken my hands outta me pockets before I sat down. Muuuum!



Ladies and gentlemen, let's have a big hand for the sandwiches – yeah!



DIE!



So the scene was set. Two conclusive victories a-piece in the qualifying rounds looked likely to produce a thrilling final. Three best-of-three bouts to go and tensions were running high. There was only the one coin-op up for grabs, but two dank bedrooms yearning to give it a home. Whose would it be?

Danilo, controlling Sub-Zero, waded into the fray with all guns, er, ice-blasting. Richard didn't appear too worried, though. In fact, his expression only changed once the entire day — and that was when he espied Al's last-minute surprise: Cadbury's Chocolate Fingers!

Neck-and-neck right up till the final kick (Richard taking the first bout, Danilo the second), it was only sheer persistence and a bit of luck in the closing seconds that secured the first round for Richard.

The lads didn't hang about, though, getting straight in to the action for a second time. Again the Kombateers were evenly matched, winning a bout each before Danilo — with a nifty array of moves — closed in to take the second.

Ham salad daze

This time, smiles and jovial quips were abandoned in favour of scowls and muttered abuse, as the two finalists locked horns in the decider. With a round each under their belts (plus a few bags of Hula Hoops), the two final Kontestants were determined to win. Both confessed that, if they got to take the coin-op home, they'd have no hesitation in charging their mates 20p-a-go when they got there. And so, with thoughts of unlimited pocket money in mind, they set about one another with a vengeance.

Richard was first to take some stick, succumbing to Danilo's ferocious attacks as the London lad went in for the kill. There seemed to be no end to the onslaught and, before long, Dan had taken the first round.

'Wooooo!' gasped the crowd. 'Parp!' went Richard. 'Are there any cheese ones left?' said Al…

The boy from Brum wasn't about to throw in the towel just yet, however, and launched a frenzied combination of punches and kicks upon his opponent as soon as the 'Fight!' sample had faded from ear-shot. This pre-emptive strike was enough to knock the wind outta Dan's inflated sails, and Sub-Zero soon bit the dust. Wow! What a ruck!

The last bout of the day was, perhaps, the closest of the Kompetition. As kicks, punches, lightning strikes and ice-blasts landed home, each player's energy bar diminished. Pixel-for-pixel right till the end, only Al, it seemed, was oblivious to the nail-biting carnage (he was locked in a desperate struggle of his own — trying to decide between salt 'n' vinegar or cheese 'n' onion).

In the end, one last leg-sweep was all it took to knock Danilo to the deck for good. The lad was gutted, evidently, but a jubilant Richard remained a gent and they shook on it.

It had been a close thing, but, at the end of the day, SEGA FORCE MEGA could only stump up one machine. Ah well, at least they got a *Mortal Kombat* T-shirt each for their troubles, not to mention a fine selection of tasty snacks.

Next month, we steal *Sega Power*'s chief designer and hold a raffle…

TIM WHITLOCK

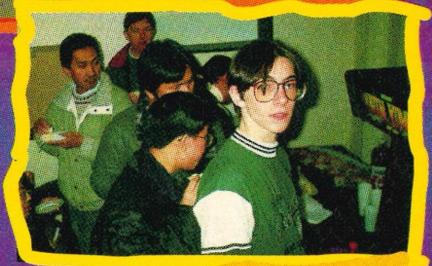
Mild-mannered Cambridgeshire lad Tim was the senior contestant. At the ripe old age of 17 years, he's a SNES fanatic (spit!) who makes his own magazine at home (we'll show you it if he sends us a copy, like he promised). Chosen character: **Liu Kang**





RICHARD SMITH

Another Brummie, Richard is 11 years old and a self-confessed *SFII* nut. Sporting a snazzy shellsuit and manic grin, he claims *Cyborg Justice* is the worst Sega game he's played. Chosen character: **Rayden**







Wa-hey! Right then, who wants a game? It'll cost you, though – 50p a go, okay?

You're sacked! Did you hear me? I said sacked!

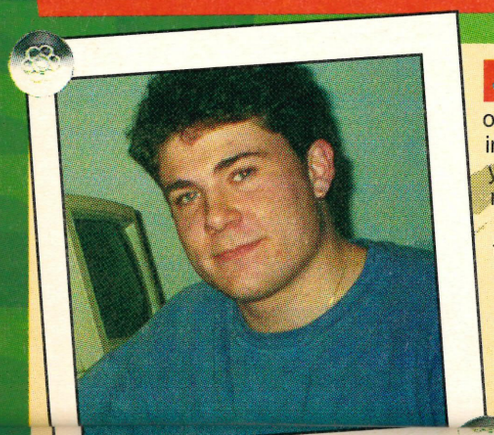
On DomaRks... Get SEt — GO!

Who usually takes all the credit when a corking game storms onto the shelves? The software house, of course! But what about the folk *behind* it? It's not often *they* get to do a moony in public. Well, that's about to change as the MEGA MACHINES crew take to the road yet again and have a shufty behind the scenes of another top gaming empire...

Many years ago (ten, actually), when Ade was wearing deely-boppers and a spangly purple boob tube, two clever geezers, **Dominic Wheatley** and **Mark Strachan**, came up with the nifty idea of setting up a software publishing house. They called the company **Domark**. (Clever, huh? Using the 'Do' out of Dominic and the, er... 'Mark' out of, er... Mark. Or was it the 'Dom' out of Dominic and the 'ark' out of Mark? Oh, never mind!)

Their first year's turnover was £336,000. They had four members of staff. Ten years later, Domark employ 80 people and the expected turnover for '94 is £20 million! We think it's safe to say these guys are on a roll, with such beauties as *F1*, *MiG-29* and the forthcoming MD *Prince of Persia* and *Marko's Magic Football*.

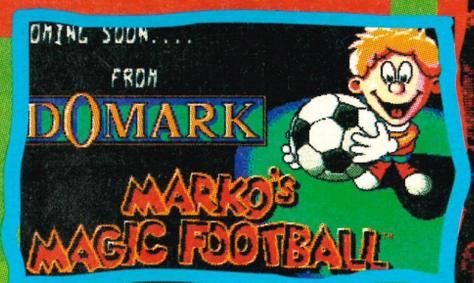
Domark are renowned for having fun. So, with this in mind, let's have a peek behind the scenes and see if they're really as laid-back as they claim. First person to spot a clown's nose and a spinning bow tie gets a Mars bar!



At the tender age of 21, Matt Hicks has risen to the heights of Graphics Manager. He's been involved in graphics for nearly five years and a manager for just six months.

Artistic talent is just swimming through this man's veins. So, time to hear what he's got to say for himself...

What qualifications do you need to be Graphics Manager, Matt?



This is Dean Roach, volunteered by Anna to tell us his life story and smile for the camera! Dean is 21 and works as an Accounts Clerk. He's been in this position for six months. Like Nick,



MATT HICKS

You've *got* to have that natural artistic talent and a keen eye.

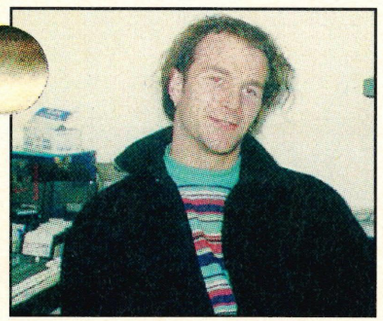
What are the main elements of your job?
I have to set schedules, delegate projects, train people, sort things out if something goes wrong. Basically, make sure things run smoothly.

What do your team expect from you?
I have to be a good listener and understand their needs. I'm expected to be in the know so I keep an eye on what's happening in the industry.

What are the best and worst bits of your job?
The best bits are seeing the games on the shelves and, errr… the money! The worst thing is 'end-of-project stress'!!

Did you always want to do this?
No. I wanted to be an architect.

Will you be an architect in five years' time?
Don't think so! I'll be travelling around Africa — hopefully!



MIKE ASH

Mike Ash is 21. He's **Domark**'s Music Engineer. Mike's been involved in the dance music scene for three years, creating music for the dance charts. He's now made the move into computer games…

Do you need any qualifications or training, Mike?
I was completely self-taught. I didn't even go to my music lessons!

So, tell us about being a Music Engineer?
I write the soundtracks and sound effects for games and ensure they can be fed into the machine and are within the machine's memory limits.

You obviously have to be very creative, but what other qualities are essential to your j[illegible]?
I have to be able to get along with lots of people, all of varying personalities. I have to take criticism, manage myself and keep an open mind when I hear other people's ideas.

Is it a good job?
Yes, I get to play loads of games [laughs]! I just love music. I love equipment, I'm a real techno-boffin. It's like I'm being paid to do my hobby!

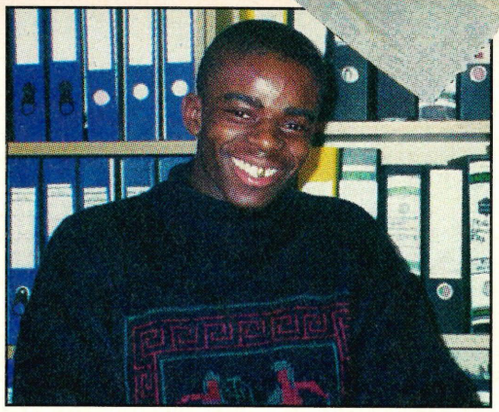
What's the worst bit of the job?
Having to get up in the morning!

If there are any budding musicians who think they could get into computer games, what would you advise?
Listen to absolutely everything. Watch television and discover why music causes a particular mood. I think computer game music is a bit like music in films — it creates an atmosphere. If something sounds crap, you've got to know *why* it sounds crap. Listen to everything.

When you were little, what job did you want to do?
I always wanted to be a record producer. Now I'd like to be a big pop star, that's what I'm really aiming for.

Dean started on the YTS scheme. He was taken on full-time after just three months.

What qualifications have you got, Dean?
I've a BTEC First in Business and Finance, I hold an NVQ in Information Processing and then I've got three or four GCSEs.



DEAN ROACH

What are you duties as Accounts Clerk?
I deal with all the invoices that are processed by me and any raised purchase orders. I handle expenses, posting invoices, raising staff credit notes, writing cheques into the manual cash book and I look after the filing.

What do you find interesting about accounts?
Using the technology here, learning about the different packages I'm involved with and just picking up as much information as I can.

Do things ever get stressful?
Yeah! Especially when someone files something in the wrong place and you find it six months later!

Any words of wisdom for those who think accounts could be for them?
I was lucky being taken on full-time after three months. Just stick with it, you'll eventually see the rewards.

So, you were always going to go into accounts?
No. I wanted to be a pilot.

Where do you see yourself in five years' time?
Hopefully not at this desk in this position! Five years is a long time.

Take a look at the Mega Drive version of *Marko's Magic Football*. It looks to be a real smasher. The concept and design are the brainchild of The Kremlin.

'It's been great working on *Marko*,' says Jolyon. 'We've had complete say of what we can put in. Sometimes I'd be driving home from work and have another idea for a new character! I hope we can be involved in more projects like this one.'

When we visited Domark, the crew were busy programming the finishing touches to the game and were about two weeks away from pulling the whole thing together. Watch out for our preview and review of *Marko's Magic Football* soon.



NICK ROBERTS

They get younger! Nick Roberts is 19 and finds his home in Customer Services. He's been helping the public with their game problems for nine months now. He started on a YTS scheme and was taken on full-time.

In between answering phones and opening letters, Nick managed to tell us a bit about what goes on his department.

So, Nick, what's involved in Customer Services?
[Phone rings] Er… excuse me a moment! [Five minutes later] Well, I'm here to answer the phone [phone rings]… excuse me! [Moments later] …I get lots of post to open, I replace games that may be faulty and help with any queries customers may have on Domark products.

What qualities do you need to deal with the public day to day?
Obviously I need to be good on the telephone. I have to be patient and a good listener. If you're not listening to a person's problem, you may as well forget it. I like to be a bit of a comedian, put my sense of humour across. I have to show a caring side and explain to the caller that their problem isn't as bad as it first seems.

You sound as though you enjoy your job?
Yes — I love everything about it.

Oh, come off it! There must be some crappy bits?
No! I can't think of any.

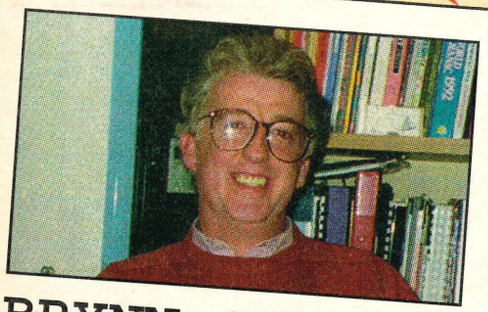
What would you say to someone who wants to do what you're doing?
Don't! You'll put me out of a job! Seriously, get loads of experience. I was lucky, the YTS helped me gain the experience I needed to deal with people in the right way.

So, you always wanted to do something like this?
I wanted to be a fireman, like my grandad. I'd still like to, but I can't because I wear glasses.

Can you give us the Domark Customer Services number?
Yes, it's 081 780 2224. [Phone rings] Errrr… excuse me!

Gameful Employment P45

You're sacked! Did you hear me? I said sacked!



BRYNN GILMORE

Brynn Gilmore is **Domark**'s Head of Marketing. He's 'older than Anna' and has two claims to fame: a) He has a blow-up shark on his shelf unit, b) Any Macintosh computer he touches suffers severe bouts of nervous exhaustion and has to be placed in a darkened room and wiped down with a damp tea towel! Like Anna, he started his career in the music business.

You were a Rep at EMI, weren't you, Brynn?
That's right, and from there I got involved in various roles — buying, accounts, managing. I spent a short time at CBS, too. I met Nick Alexander (he's the Managing Director of Sega Europe —Ed), who offered me a job at what was then Virgin and later became Sega. I was Sales Manager and Marketing Manager. I left my last position two-and-a-half years ago.

What qualities are needed to be a head honcho in Marketing?
Bloody-mindedness (and the ability to type! —Shouts from all around the office). The pressure's always on in this department, there are always deadlines to meet, but at the same time, you have to keep control and be able to get on with people. Also, know the market place. Know what sells and what doesn't.

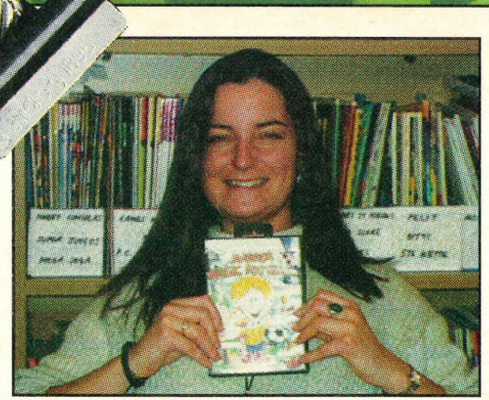
What are the rewards of your job, Brynn?
When something works. When a campaign you've worked on really comes together. There's a real buzz when that happens. When the product's out of the door and people come up and congratulate you. I get a lot of enjoyment from doing things in a humorous way. If you can inject humour into what you do, that's a good thing.

You must feel low sometimes?
I suppose so. There are times when a plan doesn't come together. We'll do a splendid campaign, but some elements might let it down. It's a case of, 'Well, we really did try our best, but it just hasn't happened.' Fortunately, that doesn't happen very often.

Any advice for budding Marketing folk, Brynn?
Only go into Marketing if it's a real vocation. This is a pressurised world. Make it fun. Some of the time, things aren't always interesting — make them fun. There's a lot of hard work involved. Be prepared to take the rough with the smooth. Go to it and enjoy it.

When you were a young un', what job did you dream of doing?
I wanted to be a rock star. I played in a band when I was young — I knew Sting in the early days! Oh, and I had thought of playing football for a living.

Where do you see yourself in five years' time?
I'll be in a role at Domark, when the company is THE Number One software house.



ANNA MACARIO

Ladies and gentlefolk, a warm welcome, if you will, for **Domark**'s top Public Relations bod, the dee-lightful, the dee-luvverly Anna Macario.

Anna is 29 (NO! NEVER! — Everyone in the office) and worked in the music industry for three years, mingling with such stars as Reg Thrumpett and his singing ostrich and, errrr… Oh, all right then, we lied about Reg, but yes indeedy, she's met some big names in her time.

Now she's mixing with the crème de la crème of the software industry and thoroughly enjoying herself. Anna has been Public Relations Manager for four months. (She's also a very good Agony Aunt! —Ade.)

Anna, are you a clever so-and-so?
I've a B.A in Business Studies.

Who did you work for in the music business?
I spent time with Chrysalis Records, Mute Records and Ice Records (get us some free Erasure CDs, could ya?! —Ade).

So now you're in Public Relations. What does your role as PR Manager involve?
Well, I get as much coverage as I can for Domark games in the specialist press, on TV and radio. I do all this for the UK and Europe.

Do you have to be a good communicator?
Oh yes! You have to get on well with everyone. That's people on magazines and in the industry as a whole. I have to be very outgoing and prepared to work very hard.

What are the best bits of your job?
Talking to journalists (aaaaah! We love you, Anna! —Ed) and going to visit journalists all around the world!

Surely it can't all be fun, fun, fun?
No. I'm not keen on doing mail-outs and boring paperwork. Sitting by the fire exit's not nice, either — it means I'm cold all the time!

Any hints and tips for anyone considering following PR as a career?
Be prepared to get on with everyone at all times, even if you don't feel in the mood. You also have to have a good command of the English language and loads of imagination in order to write interesting press releases.

When you were a nipper, what job did you dream of doing?
I wanted to be a post lady, because I never used to get any mail myself (aaaaah! We'll send you some, Anna! —Ed). Oh, and then I wanted to be a psychologist in America and earn loads of money.

And finally, Anna, where do you see yourself in five years' time?
Rich and retired and sitting on a beach in Queensland, Australia [several minutes after saying this, Anna went on a severe guilt trip and could be heard wailing around the office, 'Oh no! Can I change that last answer? I might get the sack!'].



GARY PATINO

Meet 20-year-old Gary Patino. He's the main man in **Domark**'s Quality Assurance department. He's been in this position for eight months. He manages the testing of projects, sees that games meet a high quality threshold and ensures product goes to Sega for evaluation.

How did you get your job, Gary?
I phoned in, they asked me to send my CV, I came for an interview and, errrr… well, they must've liked me!

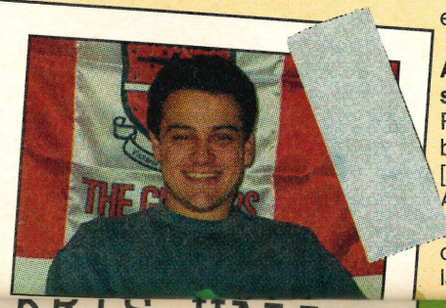
What other jobs have you had?
Hmmmm… I've managed a video shop, I've been an office junior at a solicitor's, a DJ at a club, and in the software industry, I've been Software Assistant and Assistant Producer.

What are the best bits of being in Quality Assurance?
Travelling! (Gary had just been jet-setting!) I think project work's the best. Working on different projects and learning about software development.

And the worst bits?
Long hours and… well, I think that's it!

Did you always want to work with computers?
Yeah! They've always interested me. I wanted to be a graphic artist, really.

I think in five years' time, I'd like to own a company. Is that realistic? Well, if not that, I'd still like to go into graphics, or start producing projects.



Kris Hall is 20 years old (they make 'em young these days! —Ed) and Software Producer at **Domark**. Something tells us he's also an Arsenal fan! Let's find out more…

Is yours a stressful job?
Well, I have

KRIS HALL

How long have you been a Software Producer, Kris?
Let's see. I was Assistant Producer for a year-and-a-half and I've been Producer for a few months now.

Tell us what your role involves
I take a product from its design stages, to duplication, to packaging. I also manage the game programmers and artists.

Do you need any major qualifications to work in software production?
Not really. It's all down to experience, at the end of the day. Start at the bottom, get loads of experience and ensure you've an eye for a good product.



MARTIN DEFRIES

Martin Defries, hot-foot from a trip to Barcelona, was singing when we entered his office. A man happy with his lot!

Martin is **Domark**'s Sales Manager. He's been with the company for five years and two weeks. He started his career working for a distributor (that's the company wedged in between the software house and the retailer). So what does his role at Domark involve?

Tell us what a Sales Manager does, Martin
Well, I introduce customers such as distributors and retailers to Domark products at an early stage. I suppose you could say I pre-sell the products, explaining each game, all its advantages and plus points, and what makes it special.

Then, when the press and media have seen the game, I go back to those customers and get orders using the press coverage a product has received. Then I'm involved with an after-sales service, in a way. You know, ensuring the product's in the right packaging, turns up on time, that kind of thing.

How did you get your job at Domark?
I was poached from another publishing house! Heck! That sounds dodgy!

to be very tolerant. I try hard to get on with the programmers! I have to be patient and prepared to muck in.

Spill the beans, then: what are the best bits of your job?
The industry dinners, working with Anna and seeing her smile. Seriously, I'd say seeing a product you've worked on being successful.

What about when Anna's not there?
Right! The worst bits are Bank Holiday weekends in the remotest part of Wales, trying to finish a project.

Had you any dream jobs when you were a wee babe?
I wanted to be a footballer, racing car driver or a boxer.

Will you still be sitting here in five years' time?
Well, hopefully I'll be Development Manager with a string of Number One hits behind me. I'll be successful, earn loads of money and drive a nicer car!

What kind of person do you have to be to work in Sales?
Confident and reasonably personable. I have to spot customer needs and desires, be sensible and, at the same time, have a ruthless streak to get a sale.

What rewards do you reap by being in Sales?
Seeing a product hit the dizzy heights in the charts. When you've been living and breathing a game for, say, two years, like *F1*, and been involved in a lot of the preliminary work, seeing it out on the shelves and its position in the charts is very satisfying.

And the downside?
Product being late!

How would you best advise someone who wants to go into Sales?
Hmmmm... if you want to get into Sales in software publishing, it's good to get to grips with as many areas as possible. Get involved in all sides, Marketing, testing etc. This'll help you find all the features and benefits of a game, which is a very big part of Sales. Of course, Sales training is always good.

When you were a whipper-snapper, what job did you think you'd end up doing?
I wanted to be a journalist! (I think we've found ourselves a guest writer! —Ade.)

And in five years' time?
Hopefully, I'll be at Domark running either the European office or a huge Sales office, selling loads and loads of excellent software.



WARREN MILLS, MICHAEL CARR & JOLYON MYERS

Pray silence game fans, one and all, for 'The Cartoon Mavericks'. Warren Mills, Michael Carr and Jolyon Myers can be found in a dimly-lit room in the bowels of the **Domark** building.

They're three members of the company's in-house programming team, The Kremlin. At the moment, they're busy on Domark's forthcoming blockbuster, *Marko's Magic Football*, and for this project are working under the guise of 'The Cartoon Mavericks'.

Warren and Michael are programmers, Jolyon is a graphic artist (or senior animator, as he likes to call himself!). Warren has been programming for six years, Michael for five years and Jolyon has been involved in graphics since he was 14 years old.

Explain your role to us, Michael
A programmer brings everything together: music, graphics, backgrounds etc. I'm working on the main character, Warren has worked on the intro sequence, the background animation and how the game scrolls, while Jolyon works on all the animation, presentation, some of the backgrounds and some of the music.

How did you get your job, Jolyon?
I went to a computer show and was offered a job!

What qualities do you have to possess to work here, Warren?
You have to be creative, dedicated and imaginative. We have to try and get on with each other. Working as a team, we get fed up with each other from time to time.

What are the rewards of your job?
Seeing the game finally coming together and then seeing it on the shelves.

Michael, when you see a review of one of your games in a mag and it's received a poor mark, do you take it to heart?
If you see a bad review and you think you've done a good job, that's a bit of a downer. I think we all take bad reviews to heart.

Are there any other downers?
Towards the end of a project, you don't get much of a social life.

A piece of advice for budding programmers and graphic artists...
If you want to be a programmer or graphic artist, the lads advise you work hard, learn everything about the machine you've got and a few others if you can. Once you've learnt the aspects of programming, ring around the software companies. Many of them offer training schemes.

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MEGA HITS*

* Anagram

If it stinks, if it hums, if it smells like baboons' bums, I, Louis S Kidmark, will wipe it off the face of the bog seat, good 'n' proper.

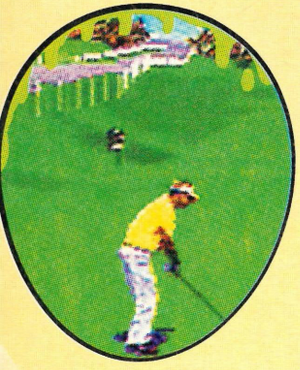
Down 'ere in the bowels of the MEGA MACHINES building, they fling some right crap at me, I can tell ya. In between jamming me brush down the U-bend and scrubbing obscenities off the bogatory walls, I tolerate some great piling steamers, believe me.

So, while you're 'ere, have a butcher's at this month's pile of old stinkers on other formats, think yourselves lucky you own a Mega Drive then leave me in peace, ya hear?

LINKS — Amiga

I'm quite good a dropping things in holes, but when it comes to golf I'd rather dangle from the Severn Bridge wearing nothing but a pair of loon pants.

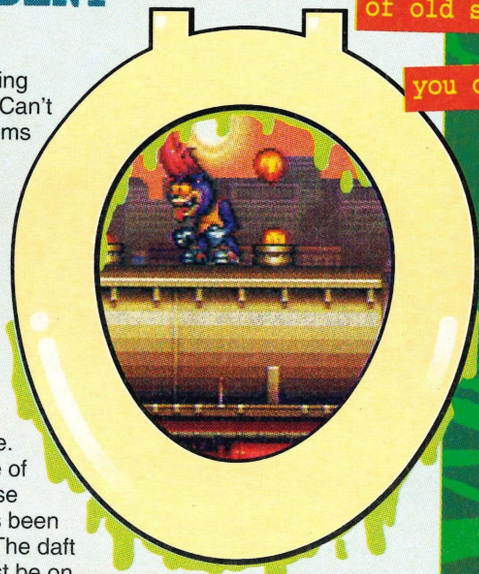
Well, it *looks* like a golf game, so that's a good start, and although I don't reckon knocking a ball about on a big pitch (it *is* called a pitch, isn't it?) pumps the old adrenalin to overdrive, *Links* is severely constipated. It's *so* slow.



You brats ain't got none of this disk-accessing bull to contend with — just plug in your carts and away you go. These suckers with Amigas haven't lived. You could fit a new shower in the time it takes to re-draw the course after every shot. I'd rather squat in a bunker and scrawl four-letter words in the sand.

Get me off this game, I've a new cistern being delivered this afternoon an' I've gorra look me best.

ROCKY RODENT — SNES



What's this? Something from the Far East. Can't stand the food, me. Seems I'm not the only one — you wanna see the lav on a Monday morning after this lot 'ave bin on a weekend of booze, chow mein, chow mein and booze. Green haze and blue-bottles — say no more.

Anyway, Rocky's a rat. And *I* should know — I see plenty down 'ere. He's come to the rescue of a restaurant owner whose daughter has been kidnapped. The daft 'apeth must be on something if he's chin-waggin' with rodents.

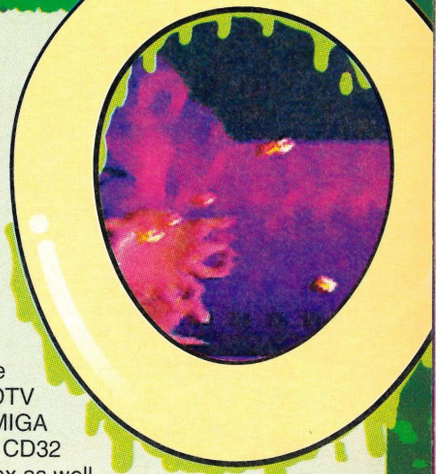


Surprise sur-bloomin'-prise, as Rocky, you must scurry through God knows how many billions of levels, hitting irritating little gits and praying you've a rat in hell's chance of finding the stupid bint. Talk about having a dump with no bog paper!

This is crap! The backgrounds are as bland as a bland-type thingy — I'd rather sit staring at the lav walls. The gameplay's as dull as bog-water and Rocky trundles around as though he's got a great glob of whiffy stuff down his Y's.

This is a big chocolate log. The sort that won't go down. The sort you have to beat with a stick for fear of it biting your ass. If you want my opinion — shove it!

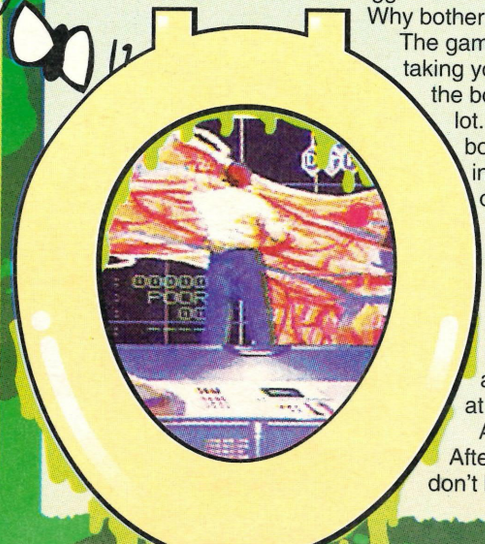
FANTASTIC VOYAGE — CDTV/CD32



Ever wondered what happens to a big plop when you pull the chain? It goes on a *Fantastic Voyage*, that's what!

Some clever toenail at Commodore has decided to release a CD machine that's gonna kick the Mega-CD's butt. Pah! This 'ere game was first produced for the ill-fated CDTV thing and some smarmy boffin on AMIGA FORCE tells me it works on the new CD32 egg box as well.

Why bother, I say.



The game's split into three levels, each taking you through a different part of the body — bowels, intestines, the lot. Throughout the journey, the body sees you as a foreign invader, so all its defences are out to get ya.

The graphics are basic, the gameplay's about as sophisticated as the workings of a lavatory ballcock and I'd rather watch the Andrex puppy pulling half a mile of bog paper around Hyde Park than gawp at the scrolling.

Am I cruel? Nah! Just honest. After 33 years in sewage, you don't beat about the bungalow.

The Write Brothers!

12-Year-Old Virgins In London Shocker!

MEGA machines Star Letter!

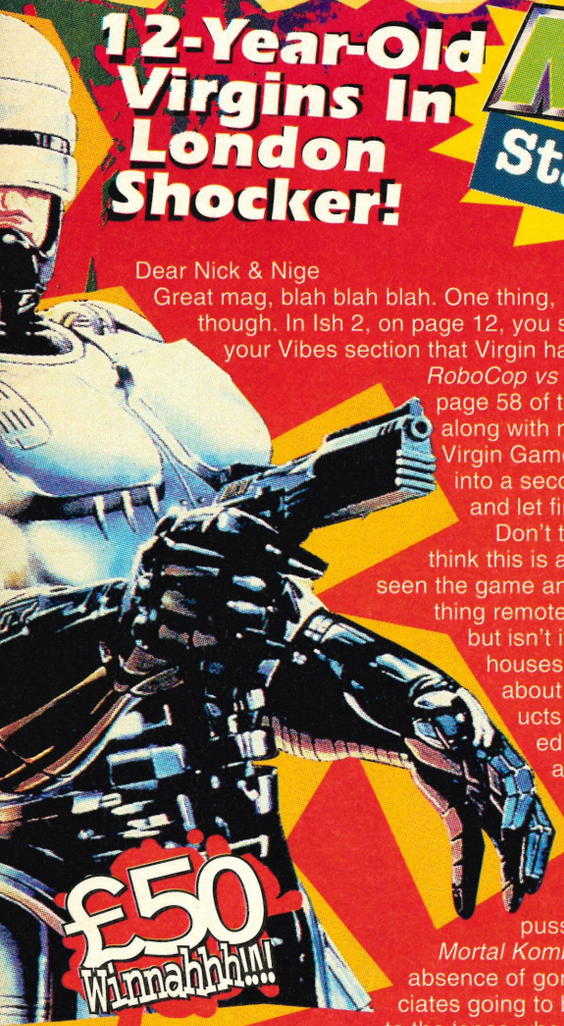
Dear Nick & Nige
Great mag, blah blah blah. One thing, though. In Ish 2, on page 12, you say in your Vibes section that Virgin have slapped a '16' rating on *RoboCop vs The Terminator*. But, on page 58 of the very same issue, you, along with none other than the PR of Virgin Games, take the very same cart into a secondary school in London and let first year kids play with it!

Don't think for a minute that I think this is an evil act, because I've seen the game and I don't think there's anything remotely gross or offensive in it, but isn't it ridiculous that software houses are forced into worrying about whether or not their products are going to be scapegoated by the media etc, and not allowed to concentrate on more important issues, like bringing out quality product at a reasonable price?

Nintendo have already pussied out (their version of *Mortal Kombat* was ruined by the absence of gore), so are Sega and associates going to be the next ones to pander to the 'ones who know better'?

Sorry to dribble on, but I reckon it's a valid point.

Cheers,
Sam Driscoll, Exeter



£50 Winnahhh!!!

Nick: ***It certainly is, Sam! We were going to get in touch with Virgin Games to ask them why, but unfortunately Directory Enquiries had never heard of them.***

NAFF NEWSIE OF THE MONTH!

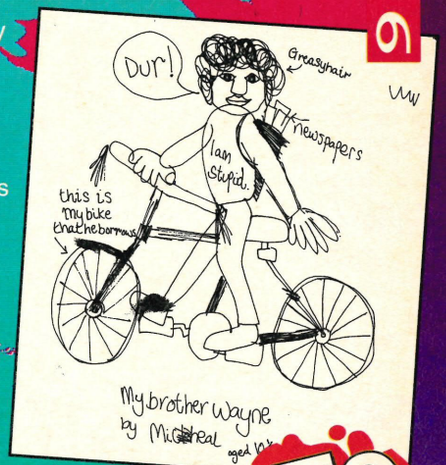
Nick: A special edition of this hallowed feature this month, chums. We turn the spotlight away from the news vendors, and instead focus upon their youthful minions — paper boys and girls.

Yes, those surly, at times bovine denizens of the early morn who cut across people's front gardens on their mountain bikes and try and steal dirty magazines when the newsagent's not looking.

Nige: I wunt do owt like that though, honest.

Nick: Glad to hear it, Nigel. Anyway, step up, **Wayne Curtis** of **Ancoats, Greater Manchester**, your time has arrived. And your own brother, Michael, has nominated you for this prestigious award!

Let's hear it from the man himself...



Dear Nick & Nige
I want to make Wayne Curtis Naff Newsie of the Month because he is my brother and he is stupid. He's got a paper round and he makes me get up and take the papers round with him dead early and he only gives me 50p.

So I think he's naff, don't you? He's not very good at it and he makes me sick. So here's a picture I drew of him.

Michael Curtis, Ancoats

PS He chucks papers into people's back gardens, too.

Nige: Worra tosser!

Nick: True and fine words, Nigel. To make up for this alarming case of brotherly maltreatment (with which I empathise entirely), here's £50.

Nige: Get yoursen an air rifle and see if he gives you 50p a week *then*!

Nick: If you know of a Naff Newsie, send us the info and a photo, and £50 could be winging your way! That's: **Naff Newsie Of The Month, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.**

£50 Winnahhh!!!



Sad Dad

Dear Nick & Nige
You had a photo of some Welsh women in the first ish of MEGA MACHINES, so here's a picture of my old man, Colin Fyne, doing an impression of Adam Ant.

Isn't he sad? Don't tell him that I've sent this off though, 'cos he'll batter me.

Ta.
Allan Fyne, Chapel St Leonards

Nick: ***Thanks, Allan. Perhaps other readers have photographs of their parents imitating early '80s pop stars.***

Ce To Pay

Nige mate, I've got a problem

My name's James Price — I'm the editor of COMMODORE FORCE, a magazine produced in an office near you.

Your Managing Editor — Steve Shields, as if you needed telling — *used* to be a mate of mine. I worked under him when he was the Ed of COMMODORE FORCE and AMIGA FORCE, I've been out on the wazz with him... I've even made a few comments about his girlfriend without getting my face smashed in.

Last month he asked me — as a mate — to help out on MEGA MACHINES by doing the *Microcosm* review (Issue 2). When the mag arrived back from the printers, I sat down to smoke a fag and have a glance through it (MEGA MACHINES, not the fag)... Well, what I really mean is I went straight to the review I'd written to check I'd not made a prat of myself.

I was a bit shocked to see my name next to a comment for *Dune 2*. For the life of me I couldn't remember doing it, but I'm a dozy get at the best of times, so I read it in the hope I'd recognise something.

Funny thing is, Nige, I didn't write that comment, but my name was put on it. It was, in actual fact, penned by a guy called Ian Osborne.

Normally I wouldn't mind that so much, it's just that in the comment he mentioned the Spectrum, wargames...



Nige: *They had a Virgin Interactive, but what the bleedin' 'ell's that? Sounds a bit like 'intercourse' to me, knoworramean?*
Nick: *There's no need for innuendo, Nigel.*
Nige: *That sounds like intercourse an' all! Hur hur!*
Nick: Sighhhhh...

Shop your mates!

£50 Winnahhh!!!

Nick: All over the country, Sega Sadboys of every age, size, race, creed and colour are cowering in their bedrooms, curtains a-twitching, living in fear of the doom-laden footsteps of the DOSS (Department Of Sega Sadboys).

Where will they strike next? Which supposed friend or neighbour has tipped them off? Above all, who will be the next lifeless husk of a child to have his bedroom door kicked in at four in the morning, to be dragged out of their home, thrust into the piercing glare of the spotlight and, well, have the piss took out of him?

This month, the Dept Of Sega Sadboys have outdone themselves in their debauched — but necessary! — task to bring the consolically-challenged to book. Not only have they pounced on a mere slip of a boy — **Jake Rach**, aged 9 — but they went all the way round the world to do so! **New South Wales, Australia**, to be exact.

Nige: No sh…

Nick: No shame. Is what they've got. As Nigel was going to say.

Nige: Anyway, what's this little toe-rag been up to?

Nick: On the surface, young Jake hasn't done anything particularly wrong. On the contrary, he's more than adequate at *Alex Kidd In Miracle World*.

Unfortunately, he is wont to boast overmuch about his average achievements (100, 280), and this is the reason for his persecution.

Nige: As if that's worth bragging about! God, when I was 9, I was in and out of Borstal.

Nick: That's only because you kept trying to break in there, and Mum'd have to come and collect you.

Nige: Cow.

Nick: The DOSS are now stepping up their campaign to such an extent, readers, that they're offering £50 to anyone willing to pass on information about their inadequate friends.

To claim your reward, simply send them a photo and relevant info to: **Shop Your Mates, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW**. Don't worry — all information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Nige: I dunno, Nick, Youths of Today. They do such terrible things, don't they?

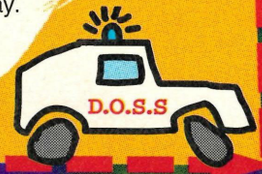
Nick: You're quite right, Nigel.

Nige: Like say 'Big dog's nob' in a national magazine.

Nige: *If so, shove 'em up your ring-piece. Don't bother us with 'em.*



Poor old Jake here thought he was going to get his pic into Sega Force Mega – but little did he know the D.O.S.S. was onto him…



A Terrible Pri

that piece of text was the work of a sad wan[censored, but only enough so everyone with half a brain knows what it is] and no mistake. Steve must have known I didn't write it and would object to my good self being 'credited' for it but, Welsh ba[censored — see above] that he is, thought it'd be hilarious to see my face when I realised what had happened.

No, right, listen, uuh, okay, yeah… I love my Spectrum, right, and, er, buy Lynx Nevada yeah? Oh, and erm, uh (etc)

I'll get to the point. I can't do anything dodgy at Impact at the moment, because I'm hoping for a pay rise, so I want to ask you a favour, Nige — will you smash Steve's face in for me? I'll buy you a pint.

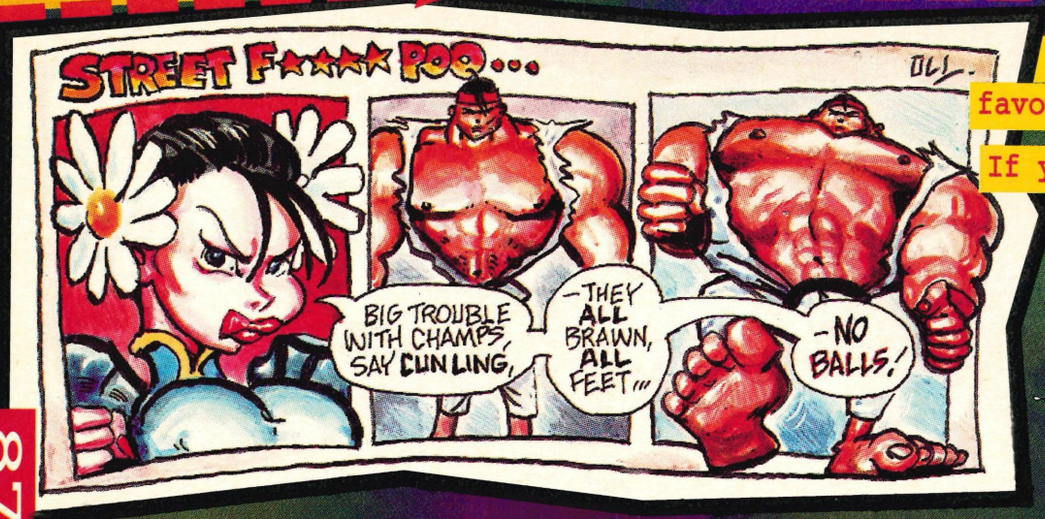
Cheers mate,
James Price, Impact Magazines, Ludlow

Dear Nick 'n' Nige
Hi! All right, lads? Just thought I'd drop you a line to say how much I enjoyed helping you guys out last issue.

The *Microcosm* job wasn't much fun (I don't usually interface with that particular genre too well) but I found the strategy/wargaming elements of *Dune II* really exciting, I can tell you. Ahh, it was just like the good old days, when there was just me and my Spectrum against the amassed forces of Darkness. Bliss!

Anyway, got to run (like a mong? —Nige). Byeeeeee!
James Price, Impact Magazines, Ludlow

Nick: *Oh dear, readers, we seem to have two letters from two different people, both claiming to be James Price. Which one is the real James Price, I wonder?*
Nige: *Well, which letter smells the most of Lynx Nevada deodorant?*
Nick: **Cough! Hack!** *I don't know!* **Choke!** *The whole room stinks of Lynx now! Open a window, for Heaven's sake!* **Gag!**
Nige: *Oh, who gives a toss anyroad? Any excuse to kick in Steve, though… Where's me nunchukas?*



So, until next month, it's a cheery farewell to everyone's favourite brothers (well, who gives a toss about Bros nowadays?). If you wish to give them 'nuff respeck' or a 'big shout', or if you want to 'diss' someone or give them a 'big up' (Jesus! What are the youth of today *on*?), here's the address: The Write Brothers, MEGA MACHINES, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW. £50 notes litter the office, just waiting for you to win them.

The Ultimate Challenge

NICE TO SKI YOU!

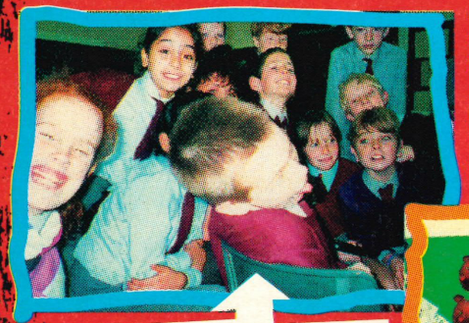
When the weather gets chilly, what better way to spend an afternoon than in a warm classroom with 39 enthusiastic children playing *Winter Olympics*. This month, MEGA MACHINES starts the snowball rolling with US Gold, as pupils from D'Eyncourt Primary School in Wolverhampton get to grips with the official licensed product of the 1994 Lillehammer games. Let's ski what happened!

ADRIAN PITT reports from the piste...

The Ultimate Challenge bus shuddered to a halt in the West Midlands this month. A poignant moment for little old me as... errrr... well, let's just say many years ago, I was a pupil at **D'Eyncourt Primary**. In my maroon jumper and short trousers, I was a playground monitor, telling fellow pupils to 'go back and walk' if they stepped out of line on their way from the playground to the classroom. The memories came flooding back, I can tell you!

I never dreamt I'd be back, accompanied by numero uno **US Gold** PR bod, **Andrea Griffiths**, a Mega Drive, TV set and a copy of the corking ***Winter Olympics***. But there I was, staring at 39 expectant faces, all ready for the day's challenge.

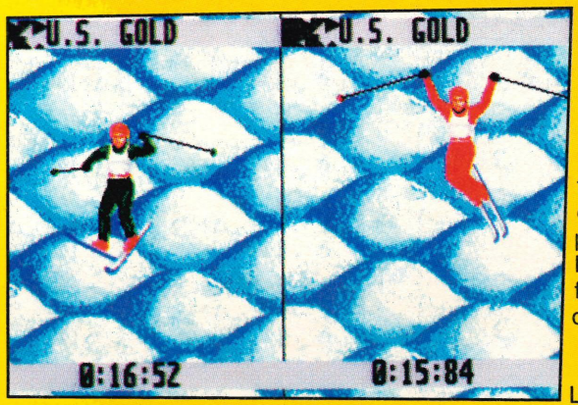
Talk about excitement! Tons of US Gold goodies and copies of *Winter Olympics* up for grabs — there was no stopping 'em!

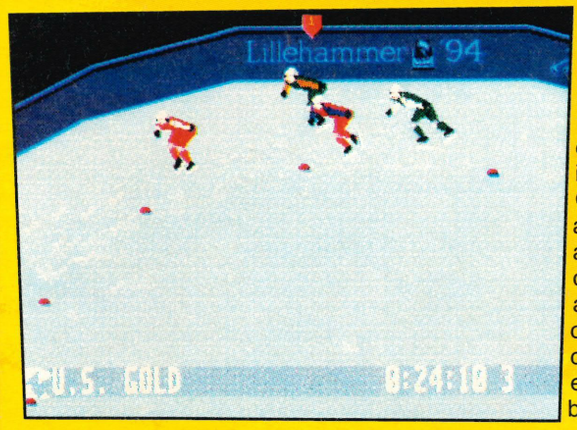


Feeding time! Here they are, the D'Eyncourt Fourth Years, all hyped up and raring to go. First person to spot



A WINTER WONDERLAND!

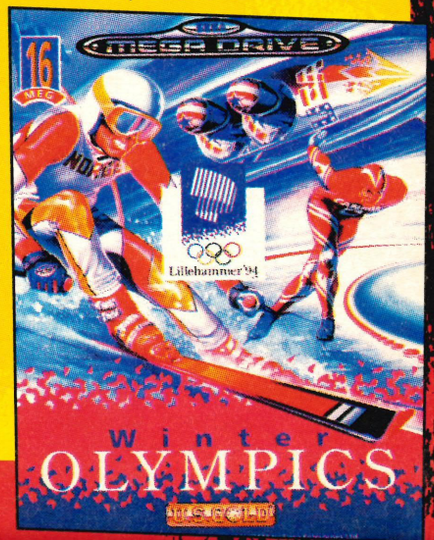




US Gold have clinched the deal to produce another top Olympic Games title. *Winter Olympics* is the official licensed game for the 17th Olympic Winter Games, which is being held in Lillehammer, Norway. Make a note in your diary, folks: the Games start at 1pm on 12th February and last for 16 days.

The Mega Drive version incorporates images and designs from the Lillehammer spectacular. The opening and closing ceremonies are based on the actual events that will take place in Norway. The landscapes and backdrops of Lillehammer have been faithfully reproduced and the venue for the ten Olympic events in the game mirror the actual stadia and course/track designs.

The Lillehammer Olympic Organising Committee ensure all licensed products conform to the Lillehammer design programme and US Gold have done a bloomin' good job. Up to four players take it in turns to either train in each event or compete in the Mini or full Olympics, which include all the top events such as the giant slalom, the downhill, Super G, luge and speed skating. Our challengers had the choice of competing in either the ski jump or bobsleigh.



Challenge B

Well, errrr... what happened to the other two geezers, eh? Never

go. First person to spot Andrea Griffiths wins a Mars bar!

A fine bunch of men. Matthew Ellis (left) and his mates prepare to slug it out in the bobsleigh.

Quick – scarper! Sir's coming! The man in charge, D'Eyncourt's Deputy Headmaster, Mr Swift. Does he look like he knows what he's letting himself in for?



Challenge A

'Four competitors in each round, please!' we cried. A mad scramble later and we were sorted, four gamers in each — well, more or less!

First onto the bobsleigh run were **Matthew Ellis**, **David Harris**, **Chris Jones** and **Craig Fallon**. They had to compete against each other to see who could complete the bobsleigh course in the fastest time. Andrea took the lads through the controls. A quick run-up before the men mounted the sleigh is essential.

Matthew was first to show his prowess. He took the course at a steady pace, which is no bad thing for a first-timer. The knack is not to climb too far up the sides of the run; the sleigh can topple over. Matthew's top speed was 95 km/h and he completed the run in 1:15.84.

Sadly, David and Chris were a bit too heavy-handed! David went head over heels after 16 seconds, Chris lasted just 14. Nevertheless, they managed to raise a smile. Good sports!

Craig's turn. With gritty determination, he set about trying to beat Matthew's time. Here was a man with a steady hand and a good eye. Believe it or not, he completed the course just one second faster than Matthew.

The champ for Challenge A — Craig Fallon with a time of 1:14.84.



Andrew Ellis and Christopher Nickholds are all smiles after the event. Christopher managed to beat Craig Fallon's time in the bobsleigh.

mind!

Best mates **Andrew** and **Christopher** saw how the bobsleigh works and were ready for some adrenalin-pumping action.

A confident Andrew frantically pressed the [A] and [B] buttons on his run-up and started on the slippery slope to success… or failure. Unfortunately, he took the first bend too quickly, shot up the side of the run and toppled over. Better luck next time, mate.

Cool, calm and collected Christopher took hold of the joypad and gritted his teeth. His run-up looked good and he was quickly off the mark.

The indicator at the top of the screen shows how far around the course the sleigh has travelled; just over halfway, Christopher reached a speed of 103 km/h and looked set to get the fastest time so far. Call me psychic — a super-fast 1:06.92.



Victorious! Pray silence for the fastest man on Earth! Christopher Nickholds gets a supersonic time on the bobsleigh.

Challenge C

Andeep Gill, **Mark Walford** and **Andrew Aston** were next to test their skills. Ahem! They'd bottled out of the ski jump and plumped for the bobsleigh. Better the devil you know, eh lads?

Bet they wished they'd gone jumping! Poor old Mark and Andrew got a bit over-excited and were disqualified in the first few seconds.

Andeep, on the other hand, lasted a lifetime — all of 15 seconds! Not to worry, folks — watch me!

Let me just tell you, this was the first time I'd played *Winter Olympics* (stop making excuses, Pitt, you weren't the only one —Ed). I did everything Andrea told me. I listened to every word she said. I watched her every move — honest!

I don't think lasting 19 seconds on the sleigh is anything to be ashamed of, do you?!! Strewth! I did such a good run-up as well!





I got disqualified, how about you?

Yeah, me too. I'm not going to be able to show my face in public again… What? I'm appearing in a magazine read by millions? Pull the other one!



Challenge D

Our first group of female contenders and, good on 'em, they chose the ski jump. The idea here to compete against each other and execute the longest jump.

A quick press of the [A] button sends the skier down the slope. Once in the air, it's important to keep the skis as straight as possible; crossing them usually leads to disaster.

When the guy's about to make his landing, let go of all buttons and hope for a successful outcome! If it's a good landing, points are awarded for style and distance. Falling on ya bum leads to disqualification.

Natasha was first to try the jump. She seemed worried at first, but kept her cool in mid-air. The landing wasn't successful but she managed a worthy 62 metres.

Gillian was okay with the controls. Her skis crossed a little in mid-air and the landing was a little more dramatic than Natasha's! She also reached a distance of 62 metres. Neck and neck so far, then.

Kate and **Jodie** were close with their distances, too. Both landed in a heap, Jodie with 65.50 metres and Kate with 66 metres.

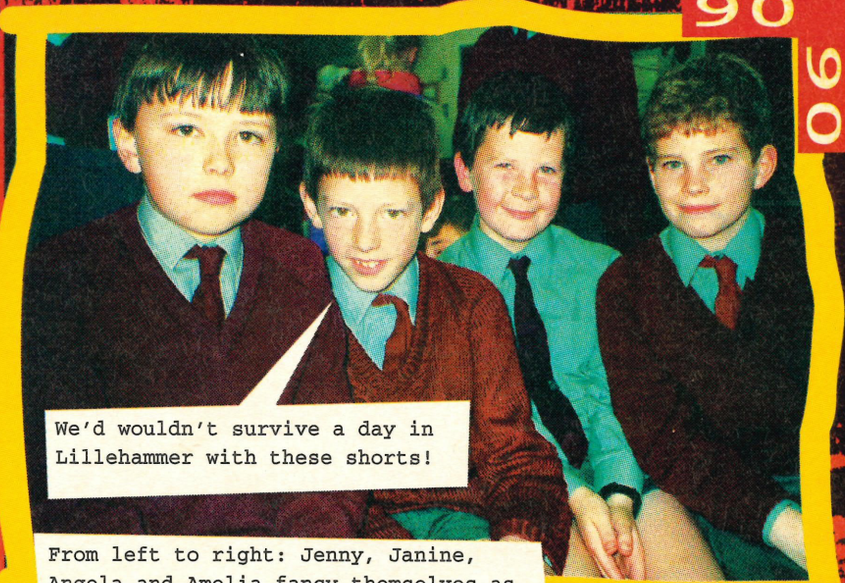
It was left to **Louise** to show them how it *should* be done, distance-wise. Her aerial actions were a little smoother and she achieved a distance of 69 metres. Still a poor landing, though!

Challenge E

Another group of lads now. Surprise surprise, they went for the bobsleigh! **Carl Fox** and his band of merry men — **Richard Eccleston**, **Glen Palmer** and **Steven Turner** — fancied their chances at beating Christopher Nickholds' time.

A pretty commendable show, actually. These guys had been spying from the wings, watching the others make mistakes, determined not to repeat them. 'Don't let him have a go on the on the jump now,' said Mr Swift of Steven, 'he waxes his skis!'

Carl achieved a time of 1:20.66, Steven 1:21.44 and Richard 1:22.40. As for Glen, well, he was sort of… errrr… let's just say he didn't get very far!



Challenge F

Like Natasha's gang, **Jenny**'s group wanted to try the ski jump. Little did we know there was an expert ski jumper in our midst. Methinks this group had been secretly practising.

They were really rather good at distances. Jenny managed to keep her skis straight. Although the landing was a little dodgy, she managed to reach 65.50 metres.

Amelia was a little unsure of the controls, but a bit of nifty finger work led her to a distance of 62.50 metres.

Angela was like a bullet out of a gun! Her distance of 83 metres — yes, 83 metres — had even *her* surprised! Sadly, she fell flat on her bottom but, nevertheless, an excellent attempt.

Janine was the heroine of the event. She couldn't top 83 metres but *did* manage to execute an excellent jump and land perfectly — the only contender to do so.

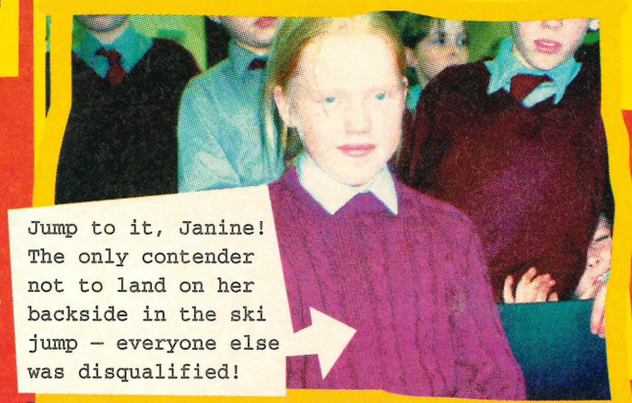
She jumped 62.50 metres and earned herself 32 points for distance and 32 points for style.



Challenge G

This was a weird challenge, 'cos while our backs were turned, **Matthew Phillips** and his mates, **Timothy** and **Neil**, were each playing different events. One hundred lines: 'I must listen to the nice man from the magazine at all times.'

Matthew tried the ski jump and whizzed over 86 metres, but landed like a beached whale! Timothy went for the bobsleigh and completed the course in 1:29.56. Neil also tried the sleigh, but was disqualified after 33 seconds.





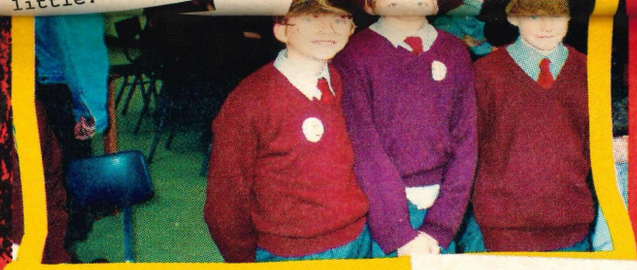
THE SCORES ON THE

Challenge H

Mandip and **Amrita** were left to show their expertise in the final head-to-head. It was the bobsleigh for them but sadly things didn't last very long!

Mandip slipped up on 32 seconds and Amrita only managed 22 seconds (well, that's three seconds more than you, Ade! — Ed).





There were six winners in all, each receiving a copy of *Winter Olympics*. We've sifted through the scores and chosen the three highest from the bobsleigh and ski jump events.

BOB SLEIGH

1 **Christopher Nickholds**		1:06.92
2 **Craig Fallon**		1:14.84
3 **Matthew Ellis**		1:15.84

SKI JUMP

1 **Janine**	Perfect landing	62.50m
2 **Matthew Phillips**	Dodgy landing	86m
3 **Angela**	Dodgy landing	83m

Janine was the only one who landed correctly. In real terms, Matthew and Angela would be disqualified, but we're nice geezers and let them win anyway!



Miss Thorpe is coaxed into having her picture taken by Caroline and Laura.



Swoon! Swoon!

Aimee Bagwell really enters into the spirit of the Winter Olympics. 'Anybody seen my skis?!'



Mandip auditions for *The Clothes Show*. 'It's a brilliant game,' she croons, 'I'd give it eight out of ten.'



A very big 'thank you' to Andrea Griffiths at US Gold for allowing us to frolic in the snow and for all the US Gold freebies. We love you, in a lubbly-jubbly kinda way.



Let's hear it for the **D'Eyncourt Primary** Fourth Years! Hip-hip…

Everyone had a really good time. They all wanted Andrea and me to come back the following day! I asked a few of the pupils what they thought of *Winter Olympics*:

'It's really good' —Laura Stackhouse
'I'd give it ten out of ten' —Natasha Felton
'It's good. The graphics are great' —Mark Walford
'It's a little bit hard' —Glen Palmer
'Brilliant!' —Andrew Aston & Carl Fox

DO YOU WANT TO TAKE THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE?

Fancy playing a game that hasn't been released yet? Fancy being the first lot of gamers in the country to get their mitts on a corker of a game? Well, now you can!

Every month, the MEGA MACHINES crew visits a different school with loads of equipment and a skipful of goodies for you and your school chums to take home. All you have to do is take a look at the Ultimate Challenge form, fill it in, show it to your headteacher and send it to us.

All we need from you is a plug socket or two and buckets of enthusiasm. It's as easy as that! So if you'd like us to come round and spend an afternoon with you — get scribbling!

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: .....
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.....
.....
.....**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.**

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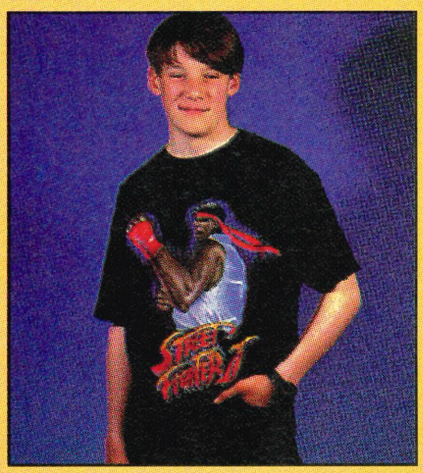
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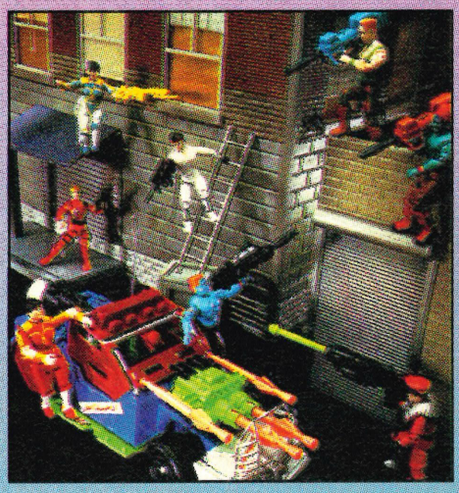
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50 slappers have special moves! Professional presentation, EA's usual wide array of sport options and realistic graphics and sound; a top-notch sim.

OLYMPIC GOLD

US GOLD ♦ £39.99 ♦ 80%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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!

SENSIBLE SOCCER

SONY IMAGESOFT • £34.99 • 97%

The ultimate computer soccer game is now the ultimate console soccer game. Versatile, instinctive controls, more options than you could possibly need, huge playability and, if playing against a human opponent, near-infinite lastability. A monster game.

SIDE POCKET

DATA EAST ♦ £39.99 ♦ 73%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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

DUNE II

VIRGIN GAMES • 92%

Use icons to construct and develop a spice mine, thwarting rivals by working more efficiently or simply blasting the basts! For a game of this type *Dune II*'s really fast, so reacting to situations in real time is no problem. User-friendly and thoroughly absorbing.

KING SALMON

TOKAI ♦ £39.99 ♦ 57%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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.

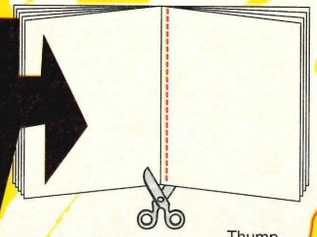
The games' numbers

ACCLAIM 0962 877788	KONAMI 081 429 2446
ACCOLADE/ BALLISTIC 081 877 0880	MICROPROSE 0454 326532
CODEMASTERS 0926 814132	MINDSCAPE 0444 246333
CORE 0332 297797	SEGA 071 373 3000
DOMARK 081 780 2222	SONY IMAGESOFT 071 734 5151
DYNAMIX 0734 303322	TENGEN 0604 790785
ELECTRONIC ARTS 0753 549442	US GOLD 021 625 3366
FLYING EDGE 0962 877788	VIRGIN GAMES 081 960 2255

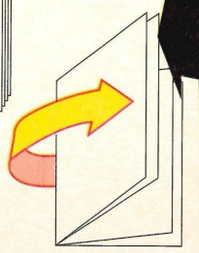
The Big Games List Thing!

If you go down to the shops today you're in for a big surprise. If you go down to the shops today you'll never believe your eyes. For every game that ever there was, is gathered there for certain because, today's the day the the big stores have their January Sales! Okay, so it doesn't rhyme and it isn't funny – but hey, it's only a big games list thing for Christ's sake… whaddya expect? Comedy? Bah, there's no pleasing some people, is there? You go to all the trouble of writing a new bit of blurb every issue, just outta kindness mind, I'm not *made* to do this, and look what happens: you run out of space before it's

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

ALISIA DRAGOON

SEGA ♦ £19.99 ♦ 78%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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.

SONIC SPINBALL
SEGA • £49.99 • 90%
It's Sonic! It's pinball! It's *Sonic Spinball*! Though there are only five 'tables', each is massive and takes some beating. There are no passwords and few continues so you'll be flipping away for many a night, racking up points by the million. Another victory for Spiky Blue.

TOXIC CRUSADERS
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 60%
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.

VIRTUAL PINBALL
ELECTRONIC ARTS • £44.99 • 46%
…Virtually worthless. The built-in tables are dull to look at and dull to play; you can design and save your own but it takes an age to get even a simple table running smoothly. Big fat raspberry.

ZOMBIES
KONAMI • £39.99 • 86%
Solo or with a chum, dash around various parts of an American neighbourhood and blast the undead. It's a firmly tongue-in-cheek affair, where a Martian bubble gun, silverware and a monsterising potion are just a few of the daft pick-ups. If it wasn't for the iffy lastability, it'd be one of the best two-player action games.

ARCADE ADVENTURE

ALEX KIDD IN THE ENCHANTED CASTLE
SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 37%
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, forgettable effects, poor controls and insipid gameplay.

ANOTHER WORLD
VIRGIN/DELPHINE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 90%
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%
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.

COSMIC SPACEHEAD
CODEMASTERS • £39.99 • 84%
Using one of them fangled 'point and click' control systems, meet aliens and use and find objects. But that's not all! Between the adventure elements are various platform and arcade sub-games. A unique graphic style helps endear this lighthearted biggy.

ECCO: THE DOLPHIN
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST II
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 66%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
'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

CYBORG JUSTICE
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 78%
Bash mechanoids' bolts. A number of robot-rattling options, including 'build your own', and superb animation.

DOUBLE DRAGON
BALLISTIC ◆ £29.99 ◆ 39%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
Become a Godzilla lookalike, rock creature, mutated insect or giant superhero and mangle Japanese towns while battling another monster. Frivolous graphics for frivolous gameplay.

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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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

THE AQUATIC GAMES
ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 77%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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.

FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER
ELECTRONIC ARTS • £49.99 • 89%
Much like arch-rival *Sensible Soccer*, there are many options and moves, but it's not quite as playable. The angled viewpoint and detailed graphics make for realistic-*looking* action, and an array of samples mean it *sounds* realistic, too.

FLAMING DODGEBALL KID
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 76%
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%
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. B1land graphics are the plain vanilla icing on the stodgy cake.

HARDBALL III
ACCOLADE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63%
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%
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%
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 few laughs but the gameplay's basic.

JOE MONTANA II
SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 76%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
Fights and the Sin Bin join team and player stats; the top

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%
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%
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%
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.

GODS
ACCOLADE • £39.99 • 68%
The juddery hero's trying to become a god. The graphics and gameplay aren't a match made in Heaven, but at least the backgrounds are rich and detailed. Controls are unresponsive, you can't crouch and fire without dropping everything and the 'puzzles' are of the 'suck it and see' variety. Plenty to explore, though.

HOME ALONE
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 62%
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.

HOOK
SONY IMAGESOFT • £39.99 • 41%
An all-too-late licence from Spielberg's take on Peter Pan, the action's slow yet unforgiving. There are infinite continues but almost no restart points. Pretty backgrounds but woolly sprites and mediocre sound.

HUMANS
IMAGITEC/GAMETEK ◆ £39.99 ◆ 83%
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%
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%
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%
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.

JAMES POND III
ELECTRONIC ARTS • £44.99 • 88%
Worra laff. Old JP runs around various areas of the moon — *fast*. His boots cling to any surface, so he can run up sheer slopes and even dash around ceilings! There are loads of objects, scores of beautifully-designed foes to shoot or stomp and over a hundred levels. Presented in the unique *Pond* graphic style, this shows Mario a thing or two.

JEWEL MASTER
SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 74%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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 CD
SEGA • £44.99 • 85%
'Sonic on CD?! That's *gotta* be great!' Well, yes… and no. It's tougher than the previous two, as to complete it fully you must travel into the past of each zone (and future, too, if you like), but the CD medium basically means there's 'real' music, one or two half-decent visual effects and disappointing 'Mode 7' bonus rounds. If you own *Sonic 2*, get *Sonic Spinball* over this.

SONIC 2
SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 95%
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.

SPIDER-MAN & THE X-MEN
ACCLAIM • £39.99 • 41%
All the fun of the fear! A wacky X-Men villain, Arcade, has captured them and Spider-Man has to rescue 'em. Then Cyclops, Wolverine, Gambit and Storm tackle their own levels, based around deadly fun fair attractions. Despite five characters to play with, this soon bores.

SPIDER-MAN VS THE KINGPIN CD
SEGA • £44.99 • 39%
There are a few extra stages, cheesy cartoon interludes and cheesier music, but otherwise it's the aged cart version. Only confirmed Spidey addicts need buy (even Warren doesn't like it).

STRIDER II
US GOLD ◆ £39.99 ◆ 83%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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.

ZOOL
GREMLIN • £39.99 • 83%
The ant-ninja-alien leaps and spins around brightly-coloured worlds of sweets, fruit, toys and musical instruments. *Zool*'s fast and a challenge-and-a-half, the creature's clinging ability and flashing blade adding to the fun.

PUZZLE GAMES

CLUE
SCULPTURED S/WARE ◆ £39.99 ◆ 54%
'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%
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%
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%
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%
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.

THE LOST VIKINGS
VIRGIN GAMES • £39.99 • 89%
Three Vikings, somewhat amiss as to their current location. One of them's a defence expert, another's athletic and the third enjoys inflicting pain. A bit like *Lemmings*, use their skills to solve puzzles; use DIY tools to convert your gaming chair into a bed-cum-kitchen-cum-bathroom, 'cos you're gonna find it hard to drag yourself away from this beauty.

SHERLOCK HOLMES, CONSULTING DETECTIVE (CD)
ICOM/SLEUTH ◆ £44.99 ◆ 86%
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%
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

AYRTON SENNA'S SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX 2
SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 88%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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…

LOTUS II
ELECTRONIC ARTS • £49.99 • 57%
This sequel includes a course designer but lacks the speed and playability of the original — and all for only £10… extra.

MICRO MACHINES
CODEMASTERS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 90%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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%
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

THE ADVENTURES OF WILLY BEAMISH (CD)
DYNAMIX ◆ £39.99 ◆ 58%
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%
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%
Become a fighter or mage and go a-roving! Pretty slowly, mind you, and you'll be hard-pushed to find the roleplaying elements. You're left with a weak platform game with nicely drawn but poorly animated graphics.

CORPORATION
VIRGIN ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91%
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.

DUNE CD
VIRGIN GAMES • 94%
Strategy, diplomacy and problem-solving are required to keep spice production smooth and steady on the planet Arrakis. A compelling soundtrack, video clips and gripping gameplay keep you playing *Dune CD* on planet Sega — until you collapse from lack of sleep. A truly remarkable piece of software.

HOLLOW WORLD
SEGA ◆ £59.99 ◆ 67%
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%
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%

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%

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

AFTERBURNER III (CD)

CRI/SEGA ◆ £39.99 ◆ 63%

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%

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%

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%

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%

Great pics between levels but graphics are otherwise childish in this cursor-controlled shooter. Duff FX, restrictive controls and boring gameplay. Taking potshots at cowardly monsters ain't fun…

DESERT STRIKE

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 92%

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%

Blast seven shades of **** out of Lemmy! Om, sorry, you set against the Motorhead *Empire*. Weil 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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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.

LETHAL ENFORCERS

KONAMI • £64.99/£54.99 (CD) • 92%

Whether you buy the CD or cart version, there's a superb revolver-style light gun in the package, used to shoot at digitised villains popping up from digitised backdrops. Accuracy's essential if you're to be promoted to the next level — lucky there's a practice range, huh? It's mindless action but masses of fun.

MERCS

SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 83%

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%

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%

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.

ROBOCOP VS THE TERMINATOR

VIRGIN GAMES • £44.99 • 84%

Metal mayhem! Robotic riots! Futuristic flatulent fun! Robo has a wonderful array of massive guns to blast thugs, psychos and the occasional Terminator. 'Cop can carry two weapons at once — and he needs 'em later on, when he travels to a Termie-infested future. Loud, violent and bloody — love it!

SEWER SHARK (CD)

SONY IMAGESOFT ◆ £44.99 ◆ 84%

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.

SILPHEED (CD)

GAME ARTS • £49.99 • 88%

Gameplay's straightforward — steer your ship in all directions and fire at oncoming craft — but the filled polygon graphics… Breathtaking. The most impressive 3D you're likely to see in a long time. Definite Mega-CD showcase material.

SMASH TV

ACCLAIM ◆ £34.99 ◆ 72%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

Direct gunsights and blow Terminators to scrap metal, but play but it passes a few hours.

LAST BATTLE

SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 18%

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%

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.

STREET FIGHTER II: SCE

CAPCOM/SEGA • £59.99 • 90%

Okay, the speech is gruff and garbled, the music's duff and the animation ain't the best. Oh, and it's bloody awful if you use an ordinary three-button pad. But it's *SFII*, with all the characters, moves, locations and skill settings. What more do you need to know?

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.

TMNT: TOURNAMENT FIGHTERS

KONAMI • £49.99 • 69%

Become a good or bad Turtle, April O'Neill, Casey Jones (*dah de-dah de-dah-dah*), Ray Fillet or Sisyphus and knock hell out of the others, computer or human-controlled, one-off or (quelle surprise) tournament. The [C] button's merely used to trigger a sample, restricting moves… but choose the right one and you can thwart many foes simply by repeating it. Bogus!

WWF ROYAL RUMBLE

ACCLAIM • £49.99 • 58%

Basically the same as *WWF Wrestlemania*. There are more options and moves, but for a game around a year younger and a tenner more expensive, it's disappointing.

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

F-15 II

MICROPROSE • £44.99 • 76%

Three buttons plus various options (when paused) manage to cover most flight sim options, though it takes some getting used to. Despite various war zones, ranks and missions, it can become samey. Try it if you've already got the other f sims.

F22 INTERCEPTOR

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.95 ◆ 80%

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.

F-117 NIGHT STORM

ELECTRONIC ARTS • £49.99 • 86%

Aboard a swish Stealth fighter, blast away in Arcade mode or jaunt around the Campaign, where you begin as a rookie then train up and take part in international incidents. Best use is made of the joypad and the craft actually seems high-tech. Unless you prefer choppers, this is the sim for you.

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

ELECTRONIC ARTS ◆ £39.99 ◆ 91%

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%

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%

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

ADDAMS FAMILY

ACCLAIM • £39.99 • 81%

Gomez Addams' family are guarded by bosses at the end of smooth-scrolling, head-stompin' levels. The sounds aren't as wacky as the SNES but the speed, slickness and free-form approach make it irresistible.

AERO THE ACRO-BAT

SUNSOFT • £39.99 • 91%

Edgar Ektor's got a major downer on circuses, so use this near-flightless bat to stop him before another Big Top becomes Small Pile Of Ashes. Trapezes, cannons, trampolines and unicycles are just a few of the oddities which make *Aero* an original game.

ALADDIN

SEGA • £49.99 • 92%

Based on the cool Disney cartoon, *Aladdin*'s amazing sprites are almost as well drawn and animated as their silver screen originals. Full of humour, action, top-rate effects and humalong music, the apple-throwing, scimitar-swinging gameplay's addictive. It's a beauty!

ASTERIX

SEGA • £39.99 • 59%

Amid often bland landscapes, the short Gaul and his fat chum, Obelix, bash Romans and solve the odd puzzle. Have we put you off yet? In that case, the controls are sluggish, effects are poor and the difficulty level's as consistent as Steve's custard.

BLADES OF VENGEANCE

ELECTRONIC ARTS • £49.99 • 48%

Okay, the main sprites are decent (but clichéd sword and sorcery) and there's a fair challenge, but overall it's hopelessly outdated. Unless you yearn for the old days of cassette games and the birth of the Amiga, don't bother getting your groats out.

BONANZA BROS

SEGA ◆ £19.99 ◆ 75%

As Robo and/or Mobo, break into buildings, collect swag 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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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%

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.

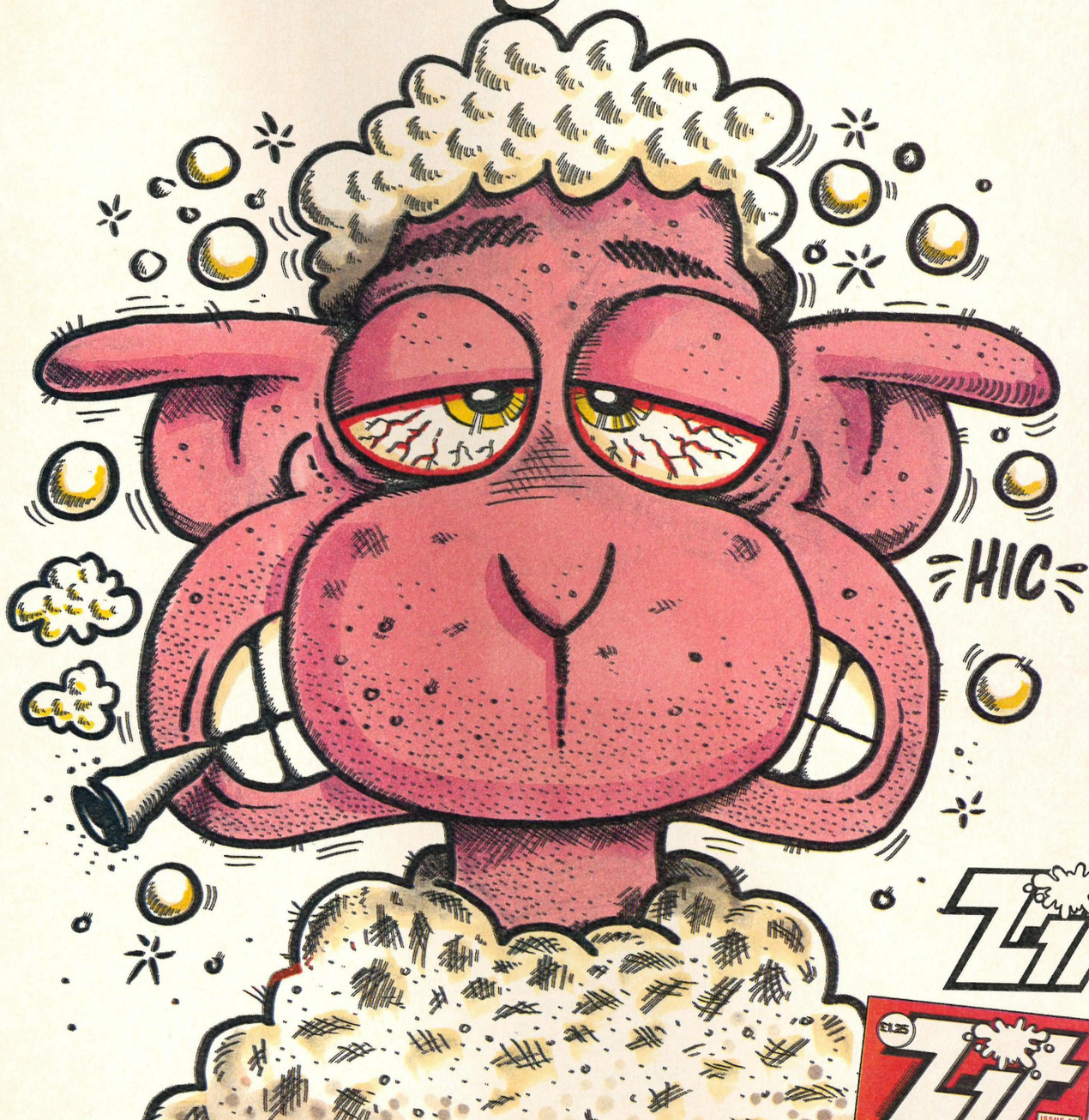
EX-MUTANTS

SEGA ◆ £34.99 ◆ 85%

As Ex-Mutant Ackroyd or Shannon, hack into mutants and

“To get this p★★★★d takes ages”

Lambrusco, sheep.



ZIT

MUTTON KOMBAT



ONLY IN ZIT. AVAILABLE MONTHLY FROM ALL GOOD NEWSAGENTS... NOW!

STRAY BULLETS

And now, the end is near, and so we face, the final curtain. Who's idea was this page, anyway? Do they realise the torment and heartache we go through every month compiling these quotes? Yeah, well, we want a recipe from Right Said Fred on here next month, so think on…

98 96

Stray Bullets is our way of upsetting everyone in the industry, getting software publishing houses to cancel their ads and causing friction between members of the Impact staff. (If anyone dares to reveal my identity — 'cos it's me who compiled this month's crop of crispy quotes — I'll twat 'em.)

'Come on, lads, make that the last game' Steve Shields, MEGA MACHINES Editor, to *Mean Bean Machine* addicts on approach to deadline.

'What's happened to Sega Force Mega?' Everyone in the World

'I find it hard to see where I'm walking' MEGA MACHINES fan on the trials and tribulations of reading his favourite mag

'I look like a pear on sticks!' Val 'heavily pregnant' Barr, TecMagik

'The moment we get an exclusive, we spell it wrong!' Adrian Pitt, MEGA MACHINES Features Editor

'The figure we're currently looking at is between £200-£300 each' Santhosh Thomas, Impact's Financial Director on the staff Christmas bonus

'Just for a laugh, we'll leave 'em with a copy of US Gold's *Summer Challenge*. That'll *really* piss 'em off!' The burglars who ripped off nearly every game in our office

'God! I'm bored already…' Adrian Pitt after just 14 seconds' play on that infamous Mega-CD game beginning with 'M'

'She's got to have it' Advert for Sega Power. We're not sure whether the 'it' to which they refer is a brain transplant or a sense of humour

THE NEXT ISSUE OF MEGA MACHINES IS ON SALE FEBRUARY 3rd – AN' IF YOU WANNA KNOW WHAT'S IN IT, HERE'S A CLUE…



MEGA machines

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BIG RESPEC' THIS ISSUE TO:
ANDREW WRIGHT (for not showing *SONIC* to Steve, when he did't visit)
SEGA FORCE MEGA (for their *Mortal Kombat* coin-op machine. Thanx lads!)
MICROPROSE (for having a sense of humour)
MARCKS & SPARKS (for the Sonic cake)
DR. MARTIN (for making the most excellent footware ever. Buy 'em, kids!)

BIG *DISRESPEC'* THIS ISSUE TO:
FAT DAVE (for being Fat Dave)
CRIMEBUSTER MAGAZINE (for hogging the Imagesetter & scans dept.)

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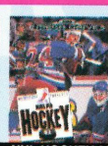

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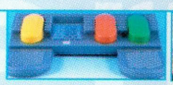
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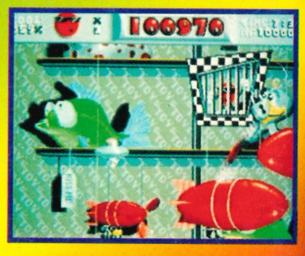
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