ISSUE 13

MEGA TECH

MAXIMUM MEGADRIVE MAGAZINE

NUMBER 13 JANUARY 1993 £1.95

STREETS OF RAGE II

A SURE-FIRE HIT?



DRAGON'S FURY™

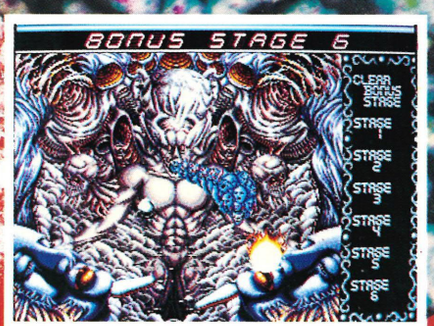
A Totally Awesome Gothic Chamber of Horrors awaits you in this, the Ultimate Video Pinball Game. Incredible Graphics, Great Action Packed Playfields. Six Bonus Rounds and The Chance to Score One Billion Points – *If You're Good Enough!*

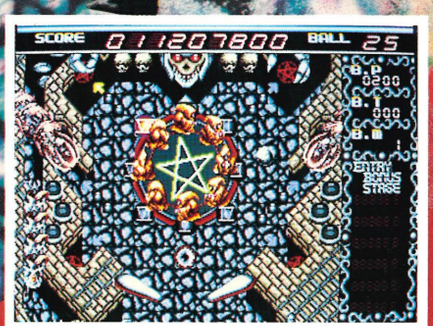
"What can I say but WOW! I have never ever played a game as much as I've played Dragons Fury. Its absolutely Amazing!" *93% SEGA FORCE .*

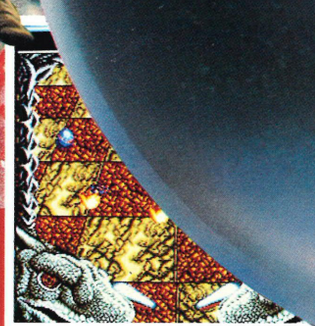
"A remarkable "Gothic" Pinball Sim that succeeds in every aspect. A must for All Megadrive owners!" *92% MEAN MACHINES*

"The Best game of it's genre on the Mega Drive, Graphically Gorgeous, sonically Superb and eminently Playable." *89% GAME ZONE.*

IN-FURY-ATE








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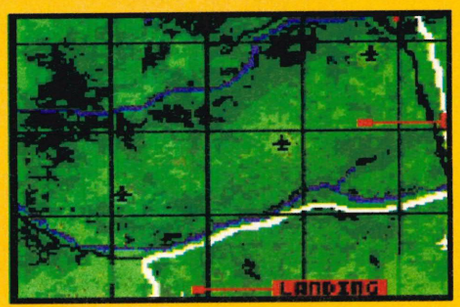
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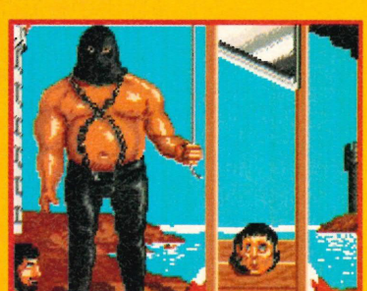
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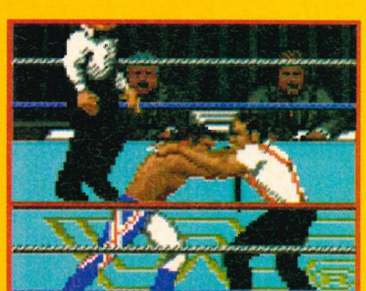
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Tom wants to say hello to Jade from Chaos, who he met at the Sonic 2sday party. Well, we have to let him have his way sometimes.

And if Tom gets to say hello to his friends, Paul gets to say hello to all his chums in Fraserburgh for giving him a good time and a stinking cold.

editorial

1993, HERE WE COME!

Believe me, there's no rest for the wicked, nor even for minor sinners like the MegaTech team. As I write this we're frantically trying to get the issue 'to bed' before we all catch the train to Birmingham for three days of living it up with the Megadrive-playing public at Games Master Live. Of course, by the time you read this it'll all be over but if you were there I hope you enjoyed Sega's go-karts, the Virtual Reality, the Quasar stuff, the live challenges and of course, meeting the MegaTech team and seeing all the latest Megadrive gear! Don't worry too much if you missed out though - we've got all the hottest stuff in this very issue of the mag.

The release of Streets of Rage II is a massive leap forward for Megadrive games, it being the first officially released title to come on a massive 16 megabit cartridge. This means extra memory chips in the cart to store more action, graphics and music than any cartridge game to date and if you turn to the review on page 34 you'll see that the extra memory certainly makes a difference. During 1993, a number of manufacturers will be making the leap from 4 or 8 M-bit cartridges to 12 or 16 M-bits, with titles such as US Gold's incredible Flashback and Sega's massive RPG, Landstalker.

Of course if 16 M-bits isn't enough, maybe a several thousand M-bit game would satisfy you? That's what Sega's Mega-CD offers, and you'll be hearing a lot more of that in '93, too. The American version of this almighty CD-ROM unit is already available across the Atlantic, and it won't be long before British gamers can get their hands on it - and get some decent games to play on it - because Sega plan to launch it over here in the early part of next year. You can read more about that in the news section.

Whether you're an old hand with the joypad, or you tore the wrapping off your machine at 4 am on Christmas morning there'll certainly be plenty of unexplored realms of gaming pleasure opening up for you in 1993... as long as you keep reading MegaTech to make sure you don't miss any of them, naturally!*

And, leaving you with those visions of things to come, I'm off. I've got a bag to pack and a train to catch. The MegaTech team wishes you all a mighty merry Megadrive Christmas, and we'll see you on the other side (of December 31st).

See ya!

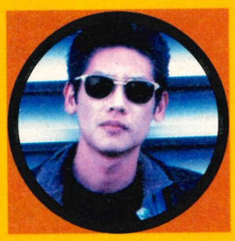
PAUL GLANCEY.

***Sorry, I have to say that.**



EDITOR PAUL GLANCEY

At the age of nine Paul bought a copy of 2000 AD, issue two, which had been exposed to cosmic rays, and after placing the free M.A.C.H. 1 biotronic stickers on his arms he actually became biotronic! With the body strength of twenty men and thinking processes aided by microscopic integrated computer implants Paul became the most powerful human on the planet and was set to change the course of history by establishing peace and justice throughout the world. Unfortunately, that sort of thing requires someone who can get up early in the morning, swim more than ten metres, drive something faster than a Raleigh Chipper and isn't afraid to hit people who are armed with guns. Taking his destiny and the destiny of his race in his hands, Paul decided to save everyone a lot of trouble and stayed in to watch Scooby Doo.



ART EDITOR THE AMAZING JEFF ZIE

What can one say about Jeff that hasn't already been said by Clare Rayner, and discussed at length in Prime Minister's Question Time? International playboy, friend to the stars and allegedly commander of the Desert Rats in a previous life – how on earth does he find time to be a wife and mother? Of course, he's neither a wife nor a mother, which is a stroke of luck for us all as it leaves him room in his packed diary to throw MegaTech's stunningly attractive pages together in his inimitable nonchalant and elegant manner. Was it fate that led him to our offices on the very day we were interviewing people for the post of Art Editor, or was it the advert in The Guardian? And what is it that keeps him here, when there are crimes to be solved and cruel foreign dictatorships to be overthrown? Perhaps we will never know.



DEPUTY EDITOR MARK 'CUJ' HOLMES

Cuj has had what Burke's Peerage will one day call a chequered past. After having been, amongst many other things, a bartender in a bowling alley, an oil and gas exploratory operative in Dorset, a gardener to nobody famous, a hard-looking bloke in a timber yard, a despatch rider, a painter and decorator (something which, of course, he has in common with Adolf Hitler), and working on a video-shoot for Gaye Bikers On Acid, he wound up as Chief Spelling Checker at MegaTech, a job which he plans to use as a stepping stone to landing the job of commander of the first manned mission to Mars. To date, he hasn't had any response from NASA after submitting his application form, but he lives in hope.



STAFF WRITER THOMAS 'THE TOMINATOR' GUISE

After giving his family's entire fortune to a man selling magic beans, being disowned by his friends and kin, then losing his lucky rabbit's foot, Tom's life finally took a turn for the worse when he was shot dead by the militant wing of the Worksop Vegetarians Society. Luckily (in a way) his body was claimed by a scientist who patched up the holes, replaced the unsalvageable bits and revived the corpse with a bolt of lightning. Then, when he got too expensive to feed, Tom was left on the doorstep of the MegaTech offices. He made a rapid recovery and has now recovered his speech and his ability to play Megadrive games. Unfortunately, in spite of extensive therapy he still talks to 'Mr Pixie under the bed' and has recently become a devotee of 'Golfan, the god of golf'.

hang on to yours

You guessed it - he's back with a vengeance. New to Mega Drive, Indy storms into his most explosive adventure yet...

From the silver screen straight to your small screen, this nail biting thriller will leave you battered, bruised 'n' breathless. Jump high, punch low, lash out... anything goes as you battle to find the ultimate prize - the mysterious Holy Grail.

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NEWS!

MEGA-CD HITS AMERICA

After many moons of waiting, the Mega-CD has finally arrived in the USA. Known as the Sega CD over there, it looks identical to the Japanese Mega-CD and slides underneath a Genesis system (American for Megadrive) in the same way. Packaged free with the machine are three CDs. According to our sources, the first is a games compilation disc featuring Golden Axe 1 and 2, Sonic the Hedgehog, Streets of Rage and Revenge of Shinobi. There is also a CD-G. This is a disc that contains a music selection which is accompanied by a graphical pop-video.



The Mega - CD - decent software is now ready...



Batman Returns



Sewer Shark



Night Trap



Make My Video

So far, only six games have been released for the machine. First on the list is Batman Returns, a revamped version of the Megadrive game with an additional Batmobile level. This first-person perspective driving section features some incredible sprite scaling, using some of the largest sprites you've ever seen. At one point a fully functioning fairground on the horizon zooms toward the screen in a fashion remarkably similar to that of Virtua Racing.

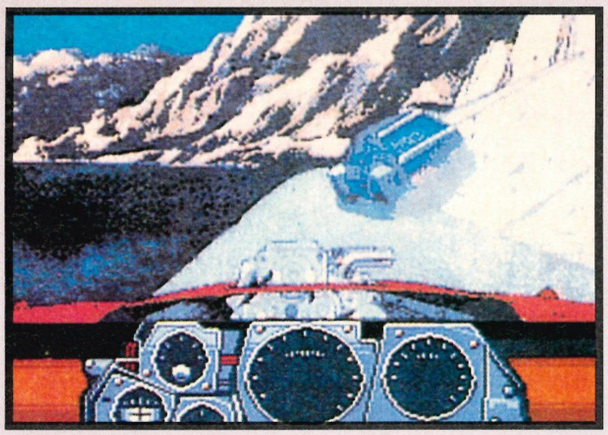
Next up is Sewer Shark, an interactive-movie style game in a similar mould to Thunderstorm FX (reviewed in issue 11), but this time using real film footage. In fact, Thunderstorm FX itself has also been released under the name of Cobra Command.

Night Trap is a bizarre game, again using real film footage. The plot basically follows the antics of a group of teenagers when their house is attacked by aliens. Using a point and click selection system, you can search the house and activate various traps when the aliens near them. What does extra-terrestrial life look like? Well, a bit similar to a couple of tramps in wet suits it seems.

The famed PC adventure, The Secret of Monkey Island has also found it's way on to the Sega CD. Looking just as good as its previous incarnations, this game is Lucasfilm's debut into the world of the Megadrive.

The only other game presently available for the Sega CD isn't actually a game at all. 'Make My Video' allows you to toy with the pop videos of all your favourite (or perhaps not-so-favourite) musicians. You can even direct your own videos to fit the music. The CD contains the music of four mega-stars, Kriss Kross, Marky Mark, INXS and CNC Music Factory. If you love those crazy fellas then you'll definitely want a bit of this, in fact it might just be what you need if you hate them too!

The bad news is that the Sega CD is completely incompatible with British Megadrives, but don't despair. Latest word has it, that the official British Mega-CD will see the light of day on March 1st along with all of these discs.



NO CALM AFTER THE STORM

Following on from their full-motion video spectaculars, Thunderstorm FX and Time Gal (the latter we still haven't seen), Wolf Team are releasing another Mega-CD FMV game, Road Blaster FX. From what we've seen in Japanese magazines, it's not much to do with the old Atari coin-op, because instead of driving a car along never-ending roads shooting at other cars, you tend to find yourself driving off-road, along piers and through people's living rooms! The idea of the game seems to be to run over as many people as possible, though that could just be our sick imaginations, and the objective is really to dodge round them. We really must take those Japanese lessons one day. Anyway, the game should be in your favourite CD importer's shop by now as it was released on the 18th of December in Japan. Review next ish?

A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE



MiG 29 and International Rugby

After a year in which they've had a few misses as well as a few hits, Domark and Tengen have got a packed programmed lined up for Megadrive owners in 1993.

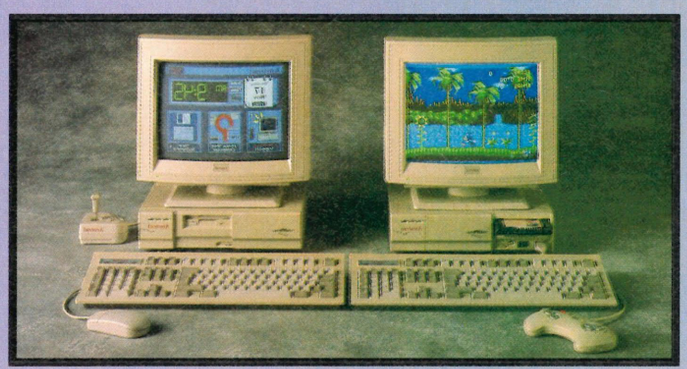
First up, in February, we'll be confronted with the official release of Steel Talons (reviewed on import in this very issue, page 66) and Paperboy 2, the 8 M-bit sequel to Paperboy which features more news-delivery action, on more hazardous streets.

Next for shaving is the long-awaited, Road Riot 4WD, 8 M-bits of 3D rough road racing which will appear in April, at about the same time as the also-long-awaited International Rugby. This is a 4 M-bit Megadrive version of the Rugby Union game Domark released on the Amiga during the Rugby Union World Cup in 1991.

Casting our mystical bones further into the future we see the Megadrive conversion of MiG 29, a combat flight sim based on the mighty MiG Fulcrum, which proved so popular on the Amiga. That's 8 M-bits of airborne action due for release in May. Eventually, in August (boy, that's planning ahead!) we'll have Formula 1 Grand Prix, an 8 M-bit road racing simulation, complete with bits in the pits.

Prices for each and every one of these excitement-promising products is projected at £39.99.

AMSTRAD AND SEGA LOVECHILD REVEALED!



Imagine a machine that is a Megadrive as well as a PC-compatible computer. No, not the sad flop that was Teradrive. We're talking about the MegaPC from Amstrad. What this hybrid machine basically consists of is an IBM compatible 25 MHz 386 with Super VGA graphics and an Adlib sound board which has enough power to let you play all the top PC games. But also tucked beneath that oh-so sensible casing is the circuitry of a Megadrive. Not only can you switch between Megadrive games and PC utilities, but you can also keep your PC up and running whilst playing the Megadrive section, continuing your PC operations where you left off after you've finished toying around. Retailing for around £995, the machines costs around £200 more than a standard PC of the same standard, prompting the question of whether it's really worth the money.



SIX OF THE BEST

With Streetfighter '92 soon to hit the Megadrive, the big question has to be about exactly how the characters will be controlled with only three fire buttons. Pictured here is the answer, the six-button joypad. Unlike the SNES's joypad however, all the buttons are arranged on the front of the pad making the controller far more practical for Capcom's wonder beat 'em up than its Nintendo counterpart. At present the joypad is looking at a March release in Japan, but with Streetfighter '92 set for a February release we may see that date brought forward.

SING-A-LONGA MEGA CD



The Karaoke add-on. Inset: Wondermidi displays its control panel.

With the Wondermega sporting a nifty karaoke feature, it seems only fair that Mega CD owners should be allowed to enjoy those crooning delights. Enter the Mega CD Karaoke. Standing neatly next to the Mega CD combo, it comes packaged with a standard Karaoke-quality microphone.However, with Karaoke not quite setting Britain alight as it does in Japan, it's questionable as to whether the device will ever see the light of day over here once the Mega CD has arrived.

Whilst on the subject of the Wondermega, it seems that a Wondermidi cartridge has just been released in the Land of the Rising Sun. What this nifty cartridge does when plugged into your Wondermega is sample various CD tunes through your machine and play around with the sound much like a studio sampling machine. No doubt, this means you can produce all kinds of bizarre and interesting effects, especially when using the Karaoke option.This one sounds quite interesting and we'll take a good look at it as soon as we can.



The WonderMega

GEE! SPOT!

Presently in production by Virgin is 'Spot the Cool Dude'. Programmed by Dave Perry of Mick and Mack fame, this platform-based game sees the Spot in question traversing all manner of various hazards with naught, but his bubbles to save him.

You may be wondering exactly what the appeal of a spot is. Well the answer lies across the Atlantic. For over there Spot is the marketing character of 7-UP the soft drink. Whereas we have Fido Dido, the Americans are tempted into drinking fizzy pop by the little red spot that is part of the 7-UP logo. The connection is quite apparent throughout the game, as the little spot leaps right off the logo at the beginning, before proceeding to run around areas dotted with 7-UP cans and bottles. On one level he even floats up through a bottle of the fizzy stuff. This game looks incredible and the movement on the main sprite is terrific. Expect the full MegaTech lowdown on this game within the next couple of months.

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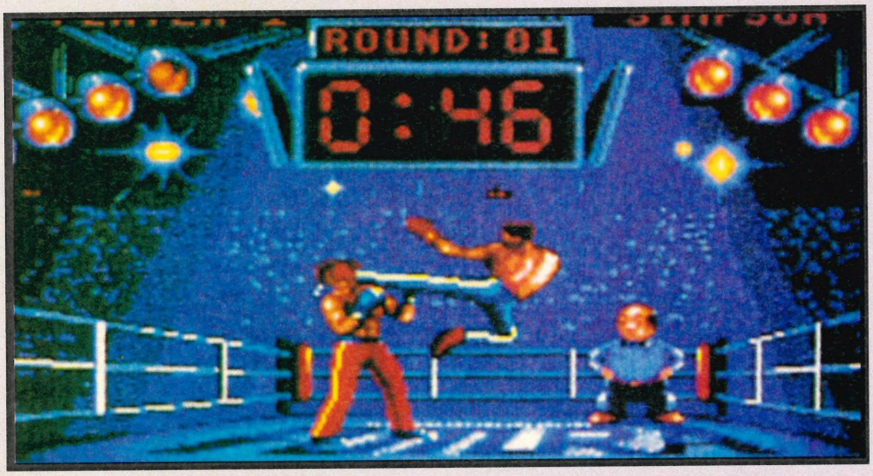
HARDCORE HEDGEHOG

With Sonic 2 recently released, much is the public interest in the little blue one. Released simultaneously with the game was the 'delightful' (ahem) SuperSonic single in which the blue boy races around the game whilst being accosted by a bunch of crazy rappers. Rating a little bit above Tetris and SuperMarioLand in the musical stakes, the single was produced by one Jeremy Healey, supposedly a well known figure on the mixing table scene, but the name fails to collect any rings in our ears.

SONIC BOOM-A BOOM BOY!

Can you imagine a party held in a giant toystore, where the food and drink is free and all the latest arcade games are just sitting, waiting to be enjoyed? Well, that's exactly what the Sonic 2sday party at Hamleys was like and the MegaTech crew were there for the occasion.

Celebrating the release of Sonic 2 were the likes of Fred from Right Said fame, Omar, Cathy Dennis and Todd Carty from Eastenders. After having full run of the whole shop for our exclusive late-night shopping needs, everyone was ferried to the basement Hamley's Metropolis arcade and restaurant where the SuperSonic single and the Mega-CD were previewed. As the night went on a mini-Gamesmaster Show was held by Dominik Diamond and fun was had by all. As the drink flowed free, Tom skipped around showing off his Cathy Dennis autograph to the rest of the unimpressed crew, whilst Jeff summed up the evening in his own precious words. 'Tom, you're too easily pleased.'



MEGADRIVE THAI-IN

You may have seen this one on your mate's Amiga, or even your rather behind-the-times mate's PC Engine. French developers Loriciels were the originators of Panza Kick Boxing, which turned out to be a surprise hit on other machines and will also, no doubt, be well received when it appears on the Megadrive in January. It's a pretty good simulation of the violent sport of Miu Thai Boxing, a strict discipline of combat by kicking your opponents in the head. Don't worry, though, the Megadrive version is sure to be a lot less painful than the real thing. Watch out for the review in a couple of issues time.

SPOT THE SHOT AND WIN! WIN! WIN!



No, it's not a zit-squeezing competition, you sad and depraved person. Actually, this is your chance to increase your games collection, thanks to that oh-so-wonderful software house, Electronic Arts. Yes, there are ten EA carts up for grabs to the winners of our regular monthly competition – and the rules couldn't be simpler! All you've got to do is name the EA game from the screen-grab above, scribble (in a vaguely legible sort of way) your answer on a postcard or on the back of an envelope, along with the name of the EA game you want, and send it in to: EA SPOT THE SHOT (JANUARY), Mega Tech, Priory Court, 30–32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. The first ten correct entries drawn out of the MegaTech Tombola Machine will win the EA game of their choice, along with instant credibility amongst their peer group and a giant leap in sex appeal. So what are you waiting for? Get spotting!

PRIZE SPOTTERS

Hah! We fooled you last month, didn't we? November's shot was Team USA Basketball – and not many of you twigged that the pastoral scene with a bridge over peaceful waters was in fact pulled from a basketball game. A meagre 10 entrants got it right, and here are the victorious ones: Ed Lomas of Rochester, Laurie Watson of Aberdeen, Mark Jameson of Whitby, Tom Healy of King's Heath, Michael Lawlor of Great Barr, Daniel Gallop of Epping, Justin Dunton of Norwich, Miss G Beech of Clayton, Paul Spooner of Swansea and Daniel Collier of Northampton.

MEGA-CD CLUB II

All you imported Mega-CD fans are reminded that you can get the latest imported Mega-CD info from the unofficial Mega-CD club run by young Andy Bartlett who has recently returned from a disc-hunting trip in the USA. Contact him at 27, Hawkers Lane, Wells, Somerset, BA5 3JU (enclosing a stamped addressed envelope) and find out how you can get hold of his rather good newsletters which are packed with reviews, tips and news.

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MT 13
STATUS:
PREVIEW

ANOTHER WORLD

PUBLISHER
VIRGIN

PRICE
TBA

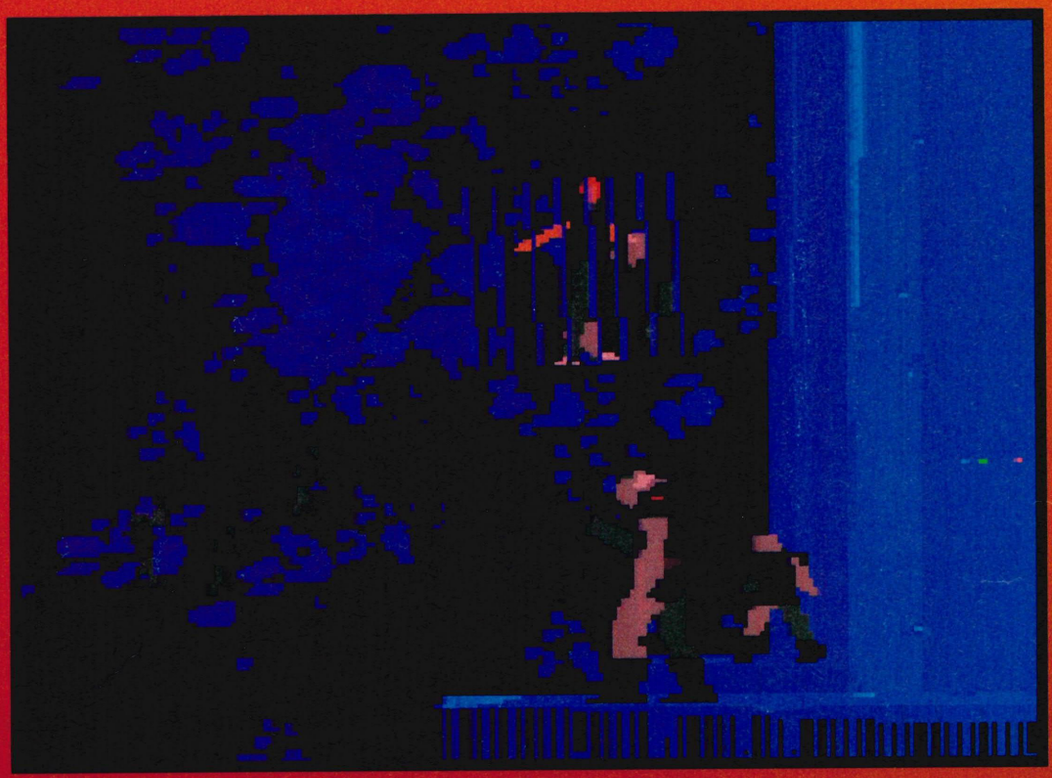
FORMAT
8 M-BIT

DEVELOPERS
DELPHINE

RELEASE DATE
SPRING 1993

ANOTHER WORLD

With the imminent release of the Mega-CD in everyone's minds, there's much speculation that by this time next year we'll all be playing movie-like games with lengthy animated intros. But imagine if you could play a game of this quality on your Megadrive without having to purchase a Mega-CD. Sounds too good to be true, doesn't it? Well perhaps not, because soon to hit the Megadrive is just such a game, Another World.







Following the escapades of hapless scientist Lester Chaykin, Another World looks and plays very much like a cross between Prince of Persia and an interactive movie, with plenty of blasting action and puzzle solving. Featuring superb polygon graphics and digitised sprite movement, this game is a visual spectacular, but most stunning of all are the cinematic intros and intermissions. The opening sequence is more impressive than any of the animated intros so far seen on the Mega-CD, we kid you not!

When Another World was released on the SNES recently it met with rave reviews and having played the Megadrive version for ourselves, we can tell you that it looks just as good and actually plays faster. Want to know more? Then look out for that definitive review in next month's MegaTech.

MT 13
STATUS:
PREVIEW

FLASHBACK

PUBLISHER
US GOLD

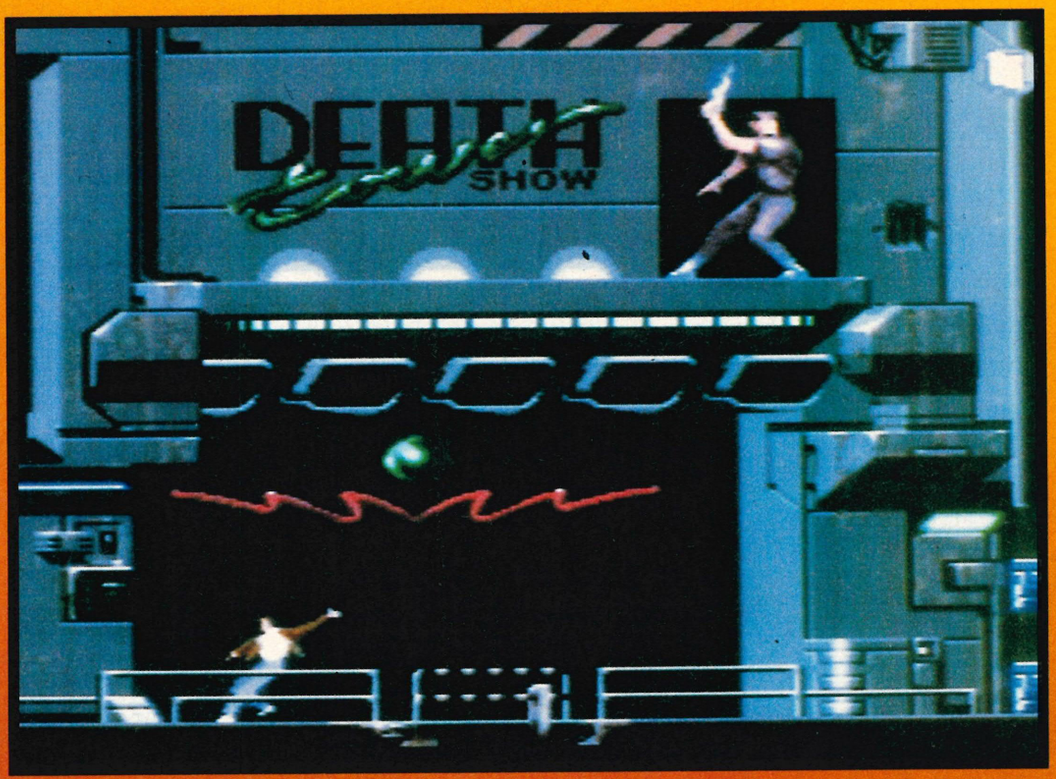
PRICE
TBA

FORMAT
12 M-BIT ROM

DEVELOPERS
DELPHINE

RELEASE DATE
FIRST QUARTER '93

If you've just read the Another World preview, then you'll no doubt be dreaming of movie-like Megadrive games with lengthy animated intros. Well, the dream doesn't have to end yet, because Delphine are just finishing off the sequel, Flashback for release by US Gold early in '93.



FLASHBACK

The plot of Flashback follows yet another hapless scientist, this time a Dr Conrad B Hart, after he is beamed to a distant planet having uncovering an alien plot to take over the world. Escaping from the clutches of his bug-eyed captors, it's up to Connie to somehow return to Earth and warn of the coming invasion.

What this makes for, is plenty of movie-like intros and gorgeous digitized animation as once more, the hero must engage in plenty of blasting, jumping and puzzle-solving action. Unlike Another World, Flashback is a platform arcade adventure which resembles Prince of Persia more than anything else. Each character is beautifully drawn and animated and the Conrad sprite walks, runs, climbs, hangs from ledges, rolls, draws his gun, throws objects all in 24 frames of animation per second. Just as spectacular are the close-up sequences which appear whenever Conrad picks something up or a vital plot-twist needs illustrating. The big question is, which one is the better game? Stayed tuned to MegaTech and all will be revealed in a future issue.





MT 13
STATUS:
PREVIEW

MUHAMMAD ALI HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING

PUBLISHER
VIRGIN

PRICE
£TBA

FORMAT
8 M-BIT ROM

DEVELOPERS
PARK PLACE

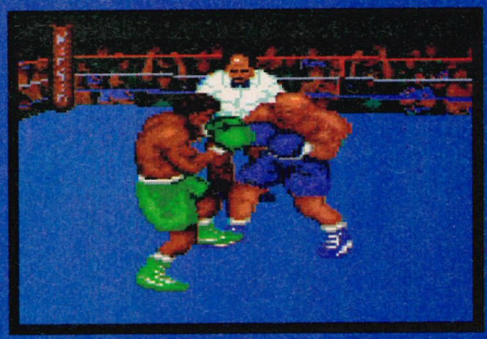
RELEASE DATE
APRIL 1993

Up until now, boxing games on the Megadrive have been about as effective and successful as a Joe Bugner comeback fight. But Virgin are hoping to change all this with their new contender, Muhammad Ali Heavyweight Boxing. Endorsed by the great 'Louisville Lip' himself and programmed by the wizards of Park Place, it has all the credentials for being a real knockout.



MUHAMMAD ALI HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING

Muhammad Ali was the coolest, sassiest boxer ever. So does Virgin's up and coming game do justice to the Ali legend? Well, if the finished version is as good as the preview cart we saw, Muhammad Ali Heavyweight Boxing is going to knock the other Megadrive boxing games out of the ring and into outer space!





Programmed by Park Place (the wizards responsible for the classic John Madden and EA Hockey series of sports sims), MAHB features 360 degree scrolling around the ring, allowing you to view the action from a multitude of viewpoints. There's a one or two-player option, with 10 fictitious fighters to choose from, apart from the man himself. Two difficulty settings – Simulation and Arcade – are provided, and you can opt to fight in Exhibition (one bout) or Tournament (a series of fights with a scrap against Ali himself at the end). With a range of approximately 30 different combination joypad moves and the speediest, most realistic boxing action yet seen on the Megadrive, Muhammad Ali looks set to be the real heavyweight champion of the boxing sims.

MT 13
STATUS:
PREVIEW

MICRO MACHINES

PUBLISHER
CODEMASTERS

PRICE
£34.99

FORMAT
4 M-BIT ROM

DEVELOPERS
CODEMASTERS

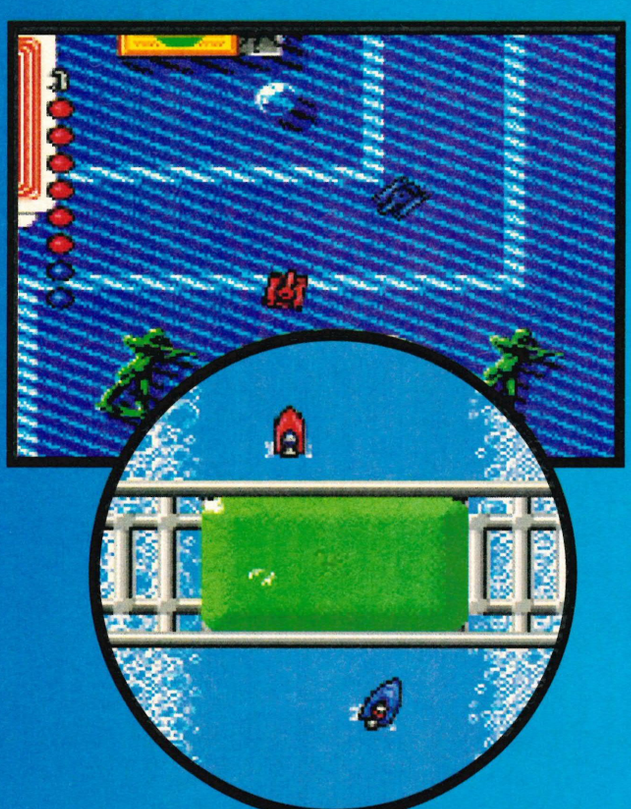
RELEASE DATE
JANUARY 1993

Hot from its triumph on the NES, Micro Machines has been 'tweaked and tuned' for Sega's 16 bit beauty. Soon Megadrivers will be able to experience the thrills 'n' spills of racing a variety of mini-vehicles through a series of micro-environments. Interested? Well read on then...

MICRO MACHINES







"Small is beautiful," according to some people, and Micro Machines is living proof that this old saying is true. Everything in the game has been shrunk down to size – the vehicles, the drivers and the tracks – but it's BIG in the playability department.

The Megadrive version of Micro Machines has, in fact, been tweaked – the graphics and sound have been enhanced from the NES original, and the whole thing scrolls around more quickly too. Add to this the fact that the vehicles are even more responsive, and the computer-controlled drivers are more aggressive than in the original, and you've got the recipe for competitive fun and micro-japes galore!

You get a choice of eleven miniature drivers – each one having a different skill rating – to choose from, and you can opt to race in two-player head-to-head style or against computer-controlled opponents. Eight different types of vehicle are available to race, including sand-hopping buggies, speedboats, helicopters, sportscars and tanks.

The races take place over 25 different circuits, with the terrain taking in such micro-environments as table-tops, bath tubs, flowerbeds and school desktops – all of which are littered with hazardous traps to slow your machine down. Two-player games can be a real laugh – the mini-bumper car effect is great, and if you're feeling in a bit of a Dick Dastardly mood, you can knock your opponent clean off the table, or even down into the pocket of a pool table! Look out for a full review in next month's MegaTech.

MT 13
STATUS:
PREVIEW

PUBLISHER
VIRGIN

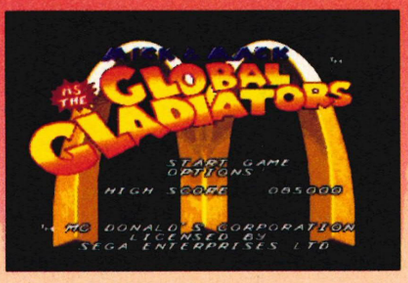
PRICE
£TBA

FORMAT
8M -BIT ROM

DEVELOPERS
PROGRAMMED BY DAVID PERRY

RELEASE DATE
FEBRUARY 1993

MICK AND MACK AS THE GLOBAL GLADIATORS





Virgin's up and coming platform eco-romp features a multi-racial duo striving to rid the world of pollution and all things nasty. Is that 'right on' or what? But hang on – the artwork for the game features the McDonald's logo. Is that strange or what?

Hurrah, hurrah! Soon the inhabitants of Platformland will all be able to sleep safely in their beds without having to worry about life-endangering pollution and holes in the ozone layer – thanks to Mick and Mack, the Global Gladiators. Yes, it's a case of 'black and white unite and fight' in this game, with pollution and all things slimey at the top of the dudesome duo's hit list.

It's a dirty job, but someone's gotta do it, and Mick and Mack take on the task of cleaning up our dirty old world with – weirdly enough – their hi-tech goo-shooters. Our heroes must traverse four worlds, featuring twelve levels of action, on the way to preventing the evil Slugsters from assembling their dreaded Slime Machine. So why is the McDonald's logo featured on the game's artwork? Well, the tie-in's to prove that the fine, upstanding purveyors of burgers to the masses really care about the environment – they're not just money-mad junk food pushers, you know. (Honest.)

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MEGA MAIL

Chortle! Snigger! Tom here. Sorry if I seem so silly, but it's Christmas Eve night and I'm just so excited I can't get to sleep. Right now I'm tucked up in my cot waiting for Santa to arrive. My stocking's hanging up and I've left some mince pies and a glass of sherry out with my Christmas loot list. You know, Santa's my best pal. Every Christmas he clambers down the chimney and asks me if I'll help him on his rounds. Boy, the stories I could tell you. Like the time when he took me back to his secret toy factory in Lapland and I had a tea-party with all his elves. Golly, and what about when we went to Nutwood and I had dinner with the Professor. Oh, I don't know whether to laugh or cry.

Shhh, did you hear that? It sounded like hooves on the roof. Oh gosh, I sure am excited. I can hear him coming down the chimney. Look, there's his sack now! Wait a second, what's that motorcycle noise? Why it's Paul zooming off, what was he doing here? Hang on! This sack is full of MegaMail. Bah, that dirty trickster, well, I'm not answering this. When Santa gets here, I'll tell him to drop it back off at Paul's. In fact, this must be Santa now. Quickly, here's the address to write to. MEGAMAIL, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. See you later, I'm off to the Lapland. Oh, and merry Christmas, Folks!

T – SHIRT WINNER

OBSOLESCENCE MONSTER SPOTTED



Dear MegaTech,
I would like your opinion on something that I am very concerned about.

The story so far: A long time ago I owned a Commodore 64, all was fine until twelve months later I heard a vicious rumour that Commodore were making a 16 bit computer and sure enough the Amiga appeared and decimated the 8 bit's market.

Anyway, back to reality (AWWWW! - PG). I feel this could happen to the Megadrive and Super NES with the introduction of the 32 bit Atari Falcon. Do you think the 16 bit console market will go the same way as the 8 bit market many moons ago?

Finally I would like to raise a point to all those who complain about the Super NES. The Super NES is competition for the Megadrive, which means both Sega and Nintendo have to produce high quality goods to entice the buyers, us. If the Super Nintendo had not been developed, Sega could dominate the market and put whatever prices they wanted on their products, but now they have to make cheaper software and higher quality to stop people buying Nintendo products, and vice versa.

By the way, great mag. And please take pity, I'm an Arsenal fan you understand.

RICHARD WYATT (RAW), PONTYCYMER

I would say that over the past year Megadrive games hadn't really advanced a great deal technically, until the last few months when we've seen such astonishing games as Sonic II, Streets of Rage 2 and World of Illusion. Of course, there were C64 and Spectrum games which pushed the capabilities of the machines but there were still severe restrictions on what could be done with a computer that only has 48K or 64K of memory and limited sound and graphics capabilities. After that there was nowhere for the games to go, but even when the Megadrive's own hardware has reached the limit (which won't be for a good couple of years yet) the advent of the Mega-CD and larger cartridges at lower prices will mean that more advanced games will still be possible. Remember that there are already a vast number of Megadrive players all over the world and that number is set to grow enormously over the next couple of years. This ensures a demand for more and better Megadrive games for some years to come, so there's no point giving yourself an ulcer worrying about your Megadrive becoming obsolete yet.

MYSTERY OF FUZZY LINES

Dear MegaTech,
I am the proud owner of a Megadrive and several decent games, I'm sure you'll agree it is an amazing piece of machinery, but there's one thing that's been bothering me ever since I got it. What the *@!? are those irritating fuzzy lines at the bottom of the screen? During most games they appear at least once or twice, others all the way through. I know it isn't my Megadrive as my friend (James – he's happy now I've mentioned him) has the same problem. Could this be a slight cock-up in the design of the greatest console ever to hit this earth or is it that some programmers just can't be bothered to tie up a few loose ends?

Even though it is only a small problem please enlighten me as it does tend to get a bit irritating after several months of megaplaying.

I'd like a medium sized T-shirt, please. Sorted.

SIMON BAKER, ENFIELD

Unfortunately, the fuzzy lines problem lies within the Megadrive itself, or more specifically, the Megadrive's video chip. This problem usually occurs when black is the background colour, or when the Megadrive is switching from one colour palette to another and is probably most noticeable when the screen fades out, as this is a paletting effect. That's the word from the programmers. So, I guess we're stuck with it.

INSANE SIBLING TERROR

Dear MegaTech,

I was reading The Tale of Tails in issue 10 of your mega mag when my stupid, brain-dead, insane sister ran in and said, "Can I borrow your Walkman, mum says I can." I was about to say no when she said, "What's that you're reading?" She snatched it and the next second it was ripped straight down the middle. I shouted at her and she ran into her bedroom. I got my torn mag back off her and looked at it. It was a mega-wreck.

I have saved your mega mags from issue one. I have asked every mag shop I know if they could sell me a replacement for the copy my sister wrecked, but now they don't have them any more. Please would you send it to me?

PAUL WOODS, SHEFFIELD

Bless you, Paul. Your tear-jerking tale of woe had us all in tears. Due to the heart-rending circumstances of your plea, and the spirit of giving prevalent in the

office during this festive season we've decided on just this ONE occasion to send you a copy. So everything's going to be all right. Tom, stop crying and get off the table.

FOOTBALL AND SENSIBILITY

Dear MegaTech,

In the October edition of MegaTech, pages 24-25, there is a preview of Megalomania by Sensible Software. There is an inset article, under the heading 'Captain Sensible' which describes Sensible's previous successes, one of which was Sensible Soccer. Now in that article you said we should 'watch out for a Megadrive version of that soon!'

Me being an avid, football-seeking game player, I'm yearning for a decent football game such as Sensible Soccer on the Megadrive. So if this is in fact true could you please include some sort of preview in your next issue?

MARK BOWLES, NOTTINGHAM

There's no definite news on the Megadrive version of Sensible Soccer, but the Sensible boys definitely want to program it. In the meantime you'll just have to make do with Super Kick Off, pictured in this month's news pages.

BIG CARTS–LOWWW PRICES

Dear MegaTech,

In my local chain of Dixons I have noticed that in the new release section there is an MD cart entitled Mega Games One. It contains Columns, World Cup Italia '90 and Super Hang On. This cart is retailing for £40 and certainly looks official. I would like to know why the MegaTech boys did not review or reveal the existence of this cart to us readers as it sounds like it's a good deal. Will there be any more of these Mega Game carts?

OLIVER LODGE, STOURBRIDGE

Would you believe Sega never told us about it and the first we knew about it was when we saw it in our local Dixons. It's not a bad buy actually, and Columns and Super Hang On are well worth £40. I suspect that most of Sega's older titles (probably the ones currently in their budget range) will end up on future Mega Games compilations.

THE PAIN OF SCORE FRAUDS

Dear MegaTech,

I have been reading your magazine since issue one and it is easily the best Megadrive magazine out, yet I have one problem: the Hyperplayers section.

I quote from your magazine, 'We can usually spot hooky scores'. Well then how can you print a score of 31 million for Sonic - it is not possible! Neither is the Streets of Rage score (the score is only registered up to six digits) or the Road Rash score (well, it is if you race over 11,000 races). Yet these scores are still printed (amongst others). It is very annoying when your score has been beaten by someone who has obviously cheated.

Why not restart the Hyperplayers section, demanding photographic evidence. If some people want to act like little children then you will have to treat them as such.

NEIL ROWNTREE, PLYMOUTH

Unfortunately it's true. The validity of scores in Hyperplayers has become very difficult to police, and it seems sports game scores are particularly vulnerable to being faked. Anybody can score 141-0 in games like EA Hockey... if they're playing in two player mode without a second player. It seems the only way to get around this is to stipulate the exact game settings for every single game in the table, but then we still have no guarantee that people aren't going to simply dream up a plausible, but exceptional score and send it in.

I suppose photographing the screen is the only fool-proof way of verifying scores, but taking screenshots is none too easy unless you have a pretty good camera. I don't know - I'll have to think about this one. Hmm.

ATOMIC BOMBSHELL

Dear MegaTech,

In MegaTech issue 11 in your Game Index, why did you give Atomic Runner 0% when you gave the graphics a fair percentage and you also gave it a good general comment.

I played Atomic Runner and I thought it deserved more than 0%!

DAVID BURNS, CRIEFF

There's a good reason for that David, and that reason is... Erm... We ran out of 8s from our MegaTech printing kit and... and then there was an earthquake and we all had funny turns and the dog ate my homework and it wasn't my fault and please, sir, don't put me in detention again, sir, my mum will kill me when she finds out.

Brrrr! Woof. No, actually, it was what we in the trade call 'a typo' or, in layman's terms, a 'typing error'. Hey, look, everybody makes mistakes when they're pushed to the limit. I mean do you realise that I'm typing all these letters in AT HOME, using my own electricity, at 11 PM, past my bedtime, when I should be seeing to my laundry. And I don't get paid extra you know. I just do it for love of the magazine. I give... She takes...

BATMAN IN MEGA MARK-UP HORROR

Dear MT,

Firstly I would like to point out a minor typing mistake on your review of Batman Returns (a very good review, as they all are). Well you put the price down as an unbelievable £339.99. I believe you should rectify this mistake as soon as possible.

I also have a question about the Menacer light gun. Does it come with any games or are these sold separately?

Keep up the good work.

ROLAND WISEMAN, RUGBY

Oops! Those perishing typos. Of course, Batman Returns is actually priced at £39.99. Sorry about that. The Menacer will be released with a cartridge of six target-shooting games, one of which stars Toe-Jam and Earl.

SOME DAY MY PRINCE WILL COME

Dear MegaTech,

Why is it that Prince of Persia is on the MS and the GG but not the Megadrive. Will a Megadrive version ever be released?

DANNY LAWSON, FOLKESTONE

Well, hopefully you realise there's a Mega-CD version of Prince of Persia, Danny, but I don't see why there shouldn't be a Megadrive version. After all, with only the original twelve levels, there couldn't have been more than 8 megabits of game code on the CD version so I wouldn't have thought putting it on a cartridge (minus the flashy intro) would be impossible. We'll just have to wait and see.



THE VOICE OF REASON

Dear MegaTech,

What's so brilliant about Sonic? He's only graphics what comes up on the television and why do people have cheap thrills about the Super NES? It's just as good as the Megadrive. Plus I think Alien 3 is brilliant (because I've got it). And it's only 4 mega memory. I said this because I've got Midnight Resistance and that's 8 mega memory. It's a lot crapper than Alien 3 but I admit the game is rather good. About the same as Sonic the Hedgehog. I also think your magazine is the best in the universe.

STEPHEN MARTIN, BRISTOL

I don't think there's much I can add to that.

EX-SONGSMITH PENS LIMERICKS FROM HELL

Dear MegaTech,

I would just love to win one of your MegaTech T-shirts, size M, so to try and win one of them I have written a few limericks.

It really is quite a thrill,
To watch my game playing skill,
I play quite a lot,
Till my joypad gets hot,
With all the baddies I kill.

(DON'T WORRY, READERS, THEY GET BETTER – PG)

If high scores you want to defeat,
Then you must use a cheat,
Press your joypad one way,
The next time you play,
And even the monsters you'll beat.

(NO HONESTLY, THEY DO – PG)

Desert Strike is number one,
The best game under the sun
Give your joypad a tweak,
Play week after week,
For a game it is simply great fun.

(I COULD'VE SWORN ONE OF THEM WAS QUITE GOOD – PG)

My Megadrive was my life,
But it constantly got me in strife,
I played it too long,
My joypad went wrong,
Now I have to spend time with the wife.

(AHA! THIS IS MORE LIKE IT – PG)

One evening she went to tea,
With a boy she started to see,
Gave his joypad a wiggle,
And she started to giggle,
Now they're buying games for three.

Dr Robotnik's a pest,
To Sonic, Tails and the rest,
With a joypad I'm sure,
All his problems I'll cure,
'Cos my game playing's simply the best.
RICHARD ROGERS, ROYSTON

You're not the same Richard Rogers who was part of Rogers and Hammerstein, the lyrical genius who helped write the songs for The Sound Of Music and various other blockbuster musicals? Oh no, of course you're not. I can tell.

MORE GAMES FOR GIRLS!

Dear MegaTech,

I've been introduced to Megadrive games via my son but I notice that the majority of correspondents are (or seem to be) younger than I and most are younger males. I quite enjoy Sonic and Mickey Mouse which are good fun and not full of zapping, shoot 'em up, beat 'em up, non-stop arcade-type entertainment.

What I'd like to know is why software manufacturers gear their market entirely for the young? How about a few games for the older generation, especially the ladies (men have the sports games!) A good game might be along the lines of a soap opera with alternative decisions and endings, or a fashion model whodunnit. Food for thought, eh? Let me know if any such games exist for my son's Megadrive, please.

Thanks from a middle-aged mum

H J COOMBS, BRISTOL

The manufacturers produce games primarily for a young male audience simply because that's where the bulk of the market lies. What that means is that until there is a very large proportion of female players, the likes of Sega won't invest heavily in designing games such as those you describe, specifically for girls. Unfortunately, until they do, a lot of girls may not find video games at all attractive, so that proportion will only increase slowly. It's kind of a vicious circle. As you say, there are titles such as reaction-testing puzzle games and not-too-violent cartoon licences which have a universal appeal (I happen to know a very nice young lady who is unbeatable at Mickey Mouse, Block Out and Columns). I wonder whether soap opera RPGs and fashion model whodunnits are what girls would really want to play, though. No doubt there are certain very large Japanese and American games corporations currently involved in market research into the subject as I write this. Any female players out there got an opinion on this?

THE SUPER NES CONVERTER STORY

Dear MegaTech,

Firstly, I would like to congratulate you on an excellent magazine. I have collected every issue (except number one – how's demand coming along for a reprint?)
I've been told that an English company called Ultra are currently seeking approval to produce converters which will enable SNES players to use Sega software on their machines and vice-versa (Streetfighter II on Sega MD?)

If this is true how can the obvious problem of control (SNES – four joypad buttons, Sega MD – three) be overcome? It doesn't seem possible, does it?

CHRIS LOW, LONDON, E5

I've heard this one as well, and I would be amazed if this company could sell, or even advertise any of these gadgets without Nintendo's and Sega's lawyers banging on their front door bearing massive law-suits. Converters like this would require close copies of such things as custom graphics chips which would infringe on Nintendo's and Sega's patents. The question of joypad buttons would be the least of such a machine's problems, because for a Megadrive to run Super NES games it would need a converter which, to all intents and purposes, WAS a Super NES, so I can't imagine it being much cheaper than buying a separate console. Even if a company did manage to produce such an add-on and actually sell it, I'd be even more amazed if Sega and Nintendo didn't find some way to make it completely incompatible with all subsequent software releases. In short, I might, but probably won't believe it when I see it.

THREE TIMES A MALADY

Dear MegaTech,
I have three things to say to you, namely, (a) a suggestion, (b) a 'joke' and (c) a request.

Here is my suggestion to start with. I was having a look at the Hyperplayers section when the idea of a Crap Players Section came to mind. I confess that I myself am a crap player at Sonic, ie I can't complete Labyrinth Zone act 3 as I can't get off the water slide. So how about it, Editor?

Anyway, on to my joke:
Q: What do you call a small, guitar-like instrument that vomits on you?
A: A pukelele.

Last but not least, any chance of printing a map for the mineshaft level of Taz-Mania as I keep getting lost in it (not the cart part)?

JAMES A THOMSON, GOREBRIDGE

At the moment I'm more concerned with getting rid of the Outrageous Liars Section in Hyperplayers. If you can't get off the water slide and escape the mineshaft in Taz-Mania you'd definitely qualify for the Crap Players Section. Any other takers (don't forget to send photographic evidence)?

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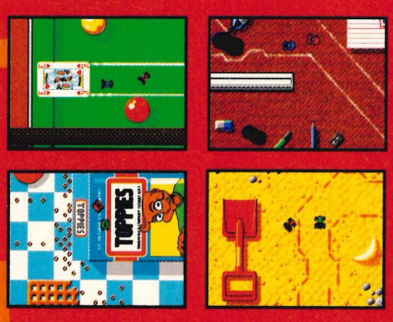
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BEING

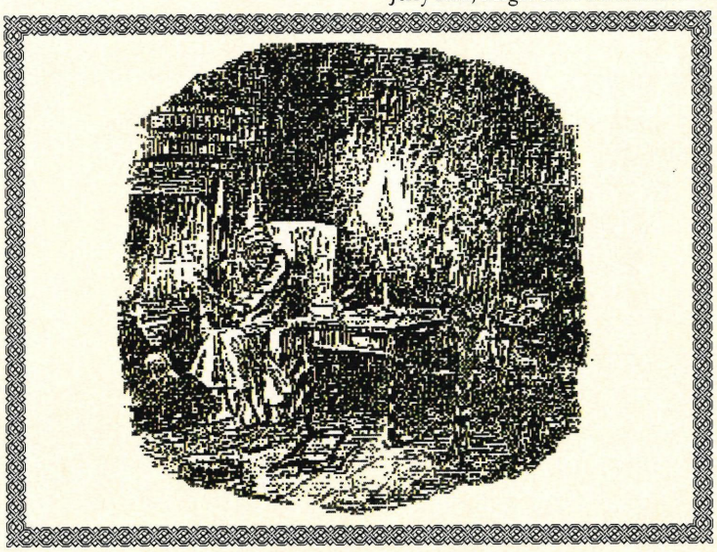
A GHOST STORY OF CHRISTMAS WITH A FEW BITS ABOUT THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THE MEGADRIVE

BY

THOMAS GUISE, WITH APOLOGIES TO CHARLES DICKENS

Seasonal Greetings one and all. On this most festive of occasions, we felt that it would be pleasant to tell you a story. A tale of Christmas and of other things. A look back at what has gone before and what is yet to come. So, slip into your warmest slippers, throw a couple of logs onto the fire and gather round so we can begin.

Once upon a time – of all the good days in the year, on Christmas Eve – old Paul Glancey sat busy in the dingy MegaTech office. It was cold, bleak weather. A mist was drifting in and the muddy slush of the previous day's snow had been carved into thick grooves by the wheels of the many carriages that had passed over the well worn cobbles outside.



Cold as it was without, it was not much warmer within. A fire burned upon the hearth, if the meagre glowing fuel could be described as a fire. Not that the cold bothered PG much. Why, even a raging inferno could not warm the cockles of his miserable stoney heart. Oh! but he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Glancey! A squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous (All right, they get the picture – PG) old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

There he sat, at his large wooden desk, peering out of the corner of his eye at his studious young clerk, Jeff who was busy crayoning various pages of the latest issue of MegaTech. Oh, the beautiful colours that Jeff did use. Christmas Eve it may have been, but that young clerk took such pride in his work. Every page was like a tapestry. Not that it mattered much to PG. His vision had narrowed to the extent that he could no longer enjoy the simple pleasure of colour. In his eyes, all was grey and black, because grey and black crayons were cheaper.

Things had not always been this way. Once upon a time the little office had sparkled with life. But those times had long gone. The deputy editor, Mark Holmes had died in a mysterious boating accident and as for Tom, bless his little heart, well, nobody speaks of that dreadful incident.

"A merry Christmas, Mr Glancey, God save you!" a merry voice cried out. It was Jerry Hall, MegaTech's advertisement manager, a merry fellow, wealthy of girth and rosy of cheek. His face was ruddy from the cold outdoors.

PG looked up, peering at the stout fellow through his wiry-framed glasses. "Bah, Humbug!" he sneered, "And what do you want?"

Clutched tightly in Jerry's pudgy hands was a collection of colourful adverts. Never had you seen such beauty. Filling the pages were colourful pictures of the finest Megadrive games and goodies. But, when PG saw these adverts he tore them up and threw them in the fire without so much as a "Bah, humbug!" The flames ate eagerly at the pages and the clerk held his hands towards them for warmth.

"Get out of my sight!" He sneered. "Video games, such nonsense. From now on we will have no more of this rubbish. I've had enough of video games, and from next issue we'll be reviewing PC financial management software. It's about time we taught these readers of ours about the harsh realities of the job market. They should be out learning a trade, sweeping chimneys, mining coal and suchlike, not wasting their time having fun with these... Megadrives!"

"Well... Erm, a merry Christmas to you anyways, Mr Glancey," said the rotund chappy, wiping a tear from his cheek as he trotted out the door, "and a happy New Year!"

"Christmas! New year! Humbug!"

Outside, the sky was darkening and a thick fog began to cling to the ground. Jeff Zie the clerk pulled his white scarf tight about his neck and tried in vain to gain warmth from his desktop candle, his breath condensing in the chill air. Nervously he glanced at the large clock on the wall.

"I hope you're not thinking of finishing up early?" wheezed PG from behind his desk, his cold, glassy eyes rolling up to meet those of his clerk.

"Oh no, Mister Glancey sir!" exclaimed Jeff hurriedly, "but it is one minute to six and tomorrow is Christmas!"

"Christmas, bah! A time for idling and time-wasting. I suppose you'll be wanting the day for yourself. Still, if you must go then begone, but be here all the earlier the next morning!"

"Oh, I will Mr Glancey, thank you sir and a merry Christmas to you!" said Jeff, and with the long white ends of his scarf billowing behind him, he raced up the hill, stopping only to engage in a snowball fight with some local lads, before pelting home to play blind-man's buff.

PG locked up shop, and after stopping briefly for a cold gruel supper at his local tavern, headed for home. He lived in a large lonely building, in the chambers of his old deceased partner. By the time he'd reached the adjoining courtyard, it was quite dark. Why PG could barely see his hands in front of his face. Fumbling his way toward the door, he reached for its large brass knocker and it was then that his heart, cold as it is, froze even beyond its own iciness.

Staring at the knocker, PG could see, clear as day, that the knocker had changed shape and form. You may be wondering how he could see anything considering the sheer pitchness of the dark. Well, that is the what made the event all the more peculiar, for the knocker was glowing, a strange blue glow of the most unnatural hue indeed. Yet, strange as this was, it only sought to emphasise the most bizarre occurence of them all, the fact that the knocker had become the face of PG's dead associate. It had become Mark Holmes' face.

Holmes' face, it was unmistakable. The way the eyes peered forward in that gormless, empty way. It was all so familiar, even down to the sideburns, and yet, although not contorted in any manner, there was an air of horror about the expression. Without a pause for thought, PG had burst through the door and raced up the stairs, flinging himself beneath the sheets of his bed.

There he lay, trembling, when, almost imperceptibly at first, he heard a clanking noise. It was almost as if someone was dragging a heavy chain up the stairs. Peering out from beneath the covers, he watched as a ghostly figure passed cleanly through the solid oaken door as if it were not even there and entered the room. The window panes rattled in their frames and the clock on the mantlepiece chimed uncontrollably as if to say "I know him! Holmes' ghost!"

"It's h-h-h-humbug still!" gibbered PG, "I w-w-w-won't believe it!"

The apparition glided cleanly to the centre of the room. Transparent it was, as if made of smoke. Yet, so clearly defined was the figure that it was, without a shadow of a doubt, Holmes.

"How n-n-now!" stammered PG, recovering his composure somewhat. "What do you want with me?"

"Much!" It was Holmes' voice, no doubt about it.

"Who are you?"

"In life I was your partner, Mark Holmes." The ghost seated itself on PG's favourite seat, as if, for all the world, it were quite used to it.

Finally, overcome with fear, PG fell to his knees shaking. "Mercy! Why do you trouble me?"

"I am here tonight to warn you, that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate."

"Why, Holmes," cried Glancey, "old Mark Holmes, tell me more. Speak comfort to me, Mark."

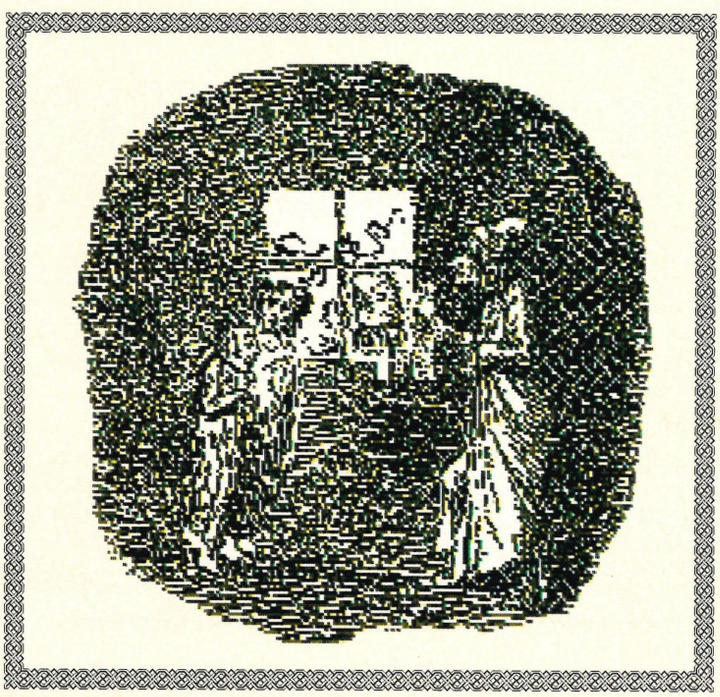
"You will be haunted," continued the Ghost, "by Three Spirits. Without their visits you cannot hope to shun the path I tread."

PG's countenance fell as the Ghost spoke further.

"Expect the first tomorrow, when the bells tolls one. Expect the second on the next night at the same hour. The third upon the next night when the last stroke of twelve has ceased to vibrate. Look to see me no more; and look that, for your own good, you remember what has passed between us!"

These words spoken, the spirit released a most ghoulish wail and with litle more than a shimmer, vanished. Such was PG's terror, that he collapsed onto the bed and fell asleep instantly.

STAVE 2:
THE FIRST OF THE THREE SPIRITS



It was dark when PG awoke. There he lay, smothered in the blankets of his massive four-poster bed waiting for his eyes to adjust to the darkness. A distant church began to ring in the hours. First it chimed the four quarters, then it rang in the hour of one o'clock.The instant the hammer struck the bell, a strange thing occured. The room began to fill with light. A brilliance that expanded, reaching every nook and cranny. Until suddenly, the drapes surrounding the bed were flung open.

Standing at the bottom of the bed was a small, rosy-cheeked boy. There he stood, in a red jumpsuit with yellow trimming. A normal looking boy, except for one feature, he sported a massive pair of ears. This was the first of the spirits.

"Wh-who are you?" questioned PG gingerly.

"I am the Ghost of Christmas Past." said the boy. His voice was high-pitched and plaintively ridiculous. "Come, I have much to show you of Megadrive days gone by." Reaching over, he grabbed PG by the hand and before the grumpy old codger could reply, they had stepped out through the window and into the air. They were flying.

Up they flew, higher and higher, until the clouds were like a woollen carpet beneath them. Higher again they went, so high that PG thought for sure that they would reach the moon. And then suddenly, they were descending, travelling downwards toward a massive ocean. A murky black expanse, beneath which all manner of unknown horrors lurked.

"Look!" cried out Paul, pointing toward a pinpoint of light in the distance. "Why, it's a ship!"

Slowly but surely, they travelled downward, until they were flying alongside the ship. Peeping through one of the portholes, PG could see a large hold packed full of crates. Stencilled on each of the crates were the words, 'Service Games'.

"What is inside?" asked Paul.

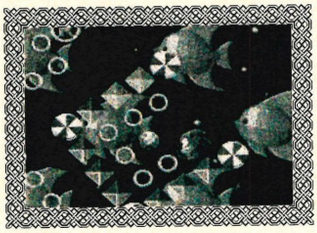
"In each of these crates," said the ghost, "there is an arcade machine. Not the kind of machines that we're used to nowadays, but the sort of coin-ops that were used forty years ago. Antique pinball machines, those naff crane games that give you a cuddly toy, or perhaps those crappy 'Penny Falls' machines."

"Bah! What rubbish! Who would want those?"

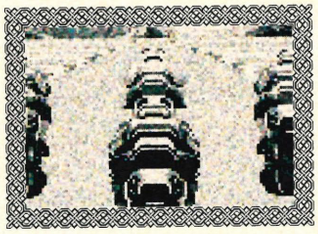
"Forty years ago, this was all that the arcade industry was. This is the birth of Sega. We have travelled back in time to the 1950s, when Sega was nothing more than a company founded by an American ex-serviceman living in Japan. A company that imported arcade machines from the States. The name Sega comes from the first two letters of the words "Service Games'."

"Well, if that's all they had to offer, better they rot, I say!" snorted PG.

"Perhaps," said the ghost, who was beginning to look familiar. "Come, we've more to see." And tugging PG away from the porthole, they once more took to the air. Travelling to a mysterious mainland, they headed for the lights of a distant city. Soon they'd arrived at a familiar looking house.



SONIC THE HEDGHOG



SUPER HANG – ON

"Why, this is my house, as it was when I was a boy," cried out PG racing up to a window, his slippers leaving a dainty trail in the snow. Peeping through the frosted glass PG could see his family gathered around a Christmas tree.

Ah, the family within, such was their merriment. You should have seen the enjoyment on their faces as they opened their presents. Yet, no-one was more delighted than the young boy in the Spiderman pyjamas, the young Paul Glancey. Oh, how he yelled and whooped as he opened his largest present. A Megadrive with a free game, Altered Beast. He was literally weeping with joy as he plugged the cartridge into the machine and gripped the spanking new joypad in his little paws. Watch as he laughed when a level was completed and cried when his character bit the dust. Such joy.

"In truth, it was a dismal game, but how I enjoyed myself that Christmas," said Paul, wiping a tear from his cheek. "It was just... just the best. It was the Christmas of 1990. The Megadrive had only just arrived in Britain. One year after it had first been released in Japan. The first 16-bit console. Oh, how I remember the anger of Nintendo. They said that the release of a 16-bit machine would destroy the 8-bit market. But, boy were they wrong. In fact, the publicity caused by the Megadrive actually increased Master System sales. Admittedly there weren't many good games released at the same time. Revenge of Shinobi, Super Hang-on, Truxton. They were probably the best. But soon, Super Monaco GP arrived and then, John Madden Football. It was definitely an important Christmas for consoles."

"Yes, you were so happy in those early years." agreed the ghost. "But now, it is time to move on." Ever so gently, he tugged Paul away from the window, leaving little more than a nose-print on the glass.

Again they travelled, this time, to a strange looking stable. Around the stable, all manner of people were gathered and above, in the sky, a bright star shone. Pushing through the crowd, they saw that the centre of attraction was a small manger and within the manger, a small blue hedgehog. Oh, bless his little wet nose. There he lay, curled into a ball, thumb in mouth.

"Why, it's Sonic!" exclaimed PG. "He's lovely!"

"Yes," said the ghost. "Dear sweet Sonic. Born in spring 1991. Although in truth, his inception took three years of secret development. He was created through an in-house competition at Sega in Japan. They felt that the company needed a character to rival Nintendo's Mario. A character that was very different from that plumber. Although, they already had a console hero named Alex Kidd," at this point the ghost looked distant and wistful, "they just weren't happy with him. He wasn't marketable enough."

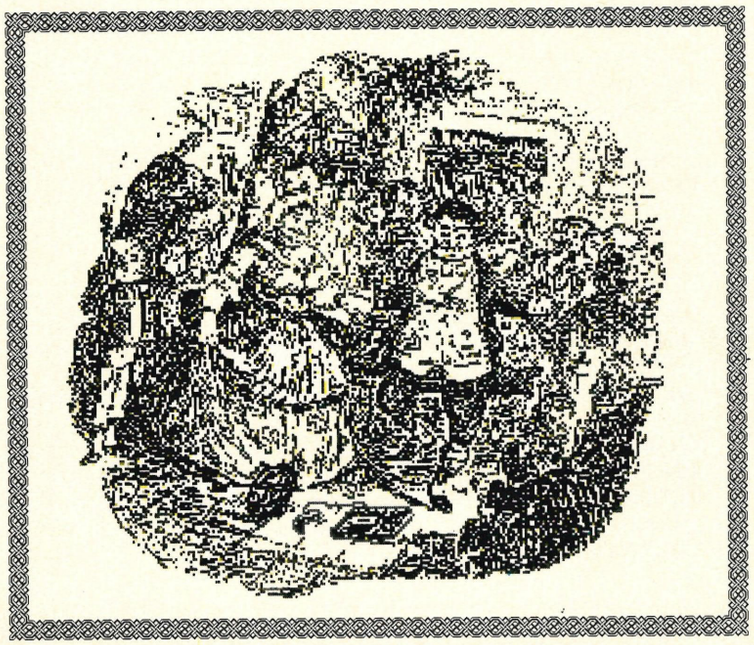
"Sonic the Hedgehog was a hit. The first game sold four million copies worldwide. Such was the power of this character, that sales of the the Sega Megadrive rocketed. Although, Nintendo had a literal stranglehold on the console market, Sega still managed to cut a place for themselves. In America, Sega sold two of their consoles for every Nintendo and in Britain and Europe making them the console leaders. "

"It was all so exciting," cried PG.

"Yes, but that is enough for now." said the ghost. "I must return to the shades of the past. Farewell."

"Wait!" cried PG, "Show me more!". But it was too late. The ghost had vanished and PG was back in his room. Overcome by sudden tiredness, he climbed into bed and fell almost instantly to sleep.

STAVE 3: THE SECOND OF THE THREE SPIRITS.



When next PG awoke, it was due to a strange noise. Looking at his clock he saw that it had just gone one o'clock and considering the darkness outside, he concluded that he must have slept through the whole of the previous day. Stepping out of his bed, he slipped into his dressing gown and slippers and headed for the noise which seemed to emanate from beyond his bedroom door.

Opening the door, he was suddenly bathed in light. As his eyes adjusted to the brightness, he saw that the room was filled with food. A banquet fit for a king and in the centre of it all sat a man. Massive he was, with wispy white hair and yellowed teeth. There he sat, in a shirt and tie with, for some strange reason, a microphone connected to one of his shirt buttonholes and a large American football tucked under his arm.

"I'm the Ghost of Christmas Present." he said in a booming voice with an accent which could have been American. "We got a lot to look at so to see." Pushing a large turkey out of the way, he uncovered the fireplace and plucking PG off the ground as if he were as light as a feather, shoved the startled fellow up the chimney ahead of him as they headed for the roof. Fat as a pig he may have been, but the mighty ghost seemed to slither up the chimney as if he were no more than an inch thick. Why, skinny PG had more trouble, gasping and wheezing as he bashed his sides on the sooty brickwork. By the time they reached the rooftop, he was a bruised wreck.

On the roof there was mighty sled pulled by six reindeer. It was obviously the ghost's means of transport. The vast spirit took PG's hand and shoved him into the sled, while he, stepped in behind him and tugged the reins. In an instant the sled shot off the edge of the roof and into the sky. Onward it flew, leaving a silvery trail of magical stardust behind it until soon they came to a small house.

Landing outside the front door, they climbed out and the ghost bade PG follow him to a window. Peeping through, PG recognised the owner of the home. It was his clerk, Jeff. There he sat amongst friends and family as they gathered around the table for their meagre dinner. Although he was outside the window, PG could hear the voices within.

"Please Father, can we begin eating?" asked one of the children at the table.

Looking down, Jeff patted the child's head and smiled, replying, "We must all wait for Tiny Tom."

"Coming, father." Everyone glanced around as, clambering down the stairs, a small boy came into view. Never have you seen such a sweet fellow. From his beautifully groomed black hair to his well scrubbed nose, upon which rested a pair of tiny spectacles, he was a little angel. However, poor little chap, for some reason he needed the help of a little wooden crutch to move around.

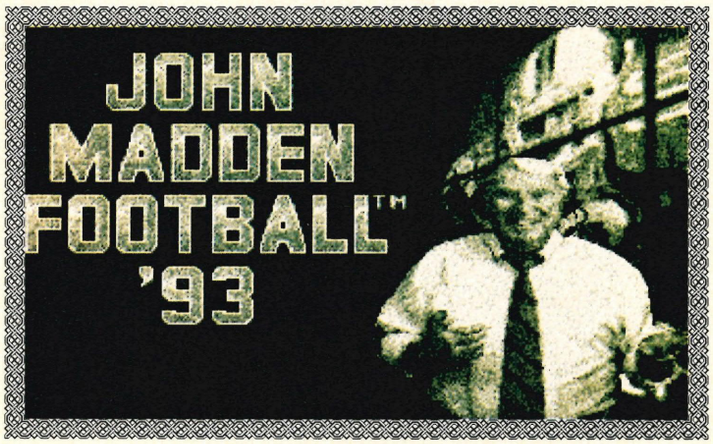
"Why it's Tom, my old staff writer." whispered PG under his breath. "Little blighter. I remember it all so clearly. In a rage at the slowness of his work, I once cracked him across the ankles with an old lump mallet. Naturally, they were shattered and he hasn't been able to get into work since."

There they sat, PG and the ghost, watching as the little gathering ate heartily. When the meal was finished, everyone retired to their stools in front of the Christmas tree where they began to open their presents.

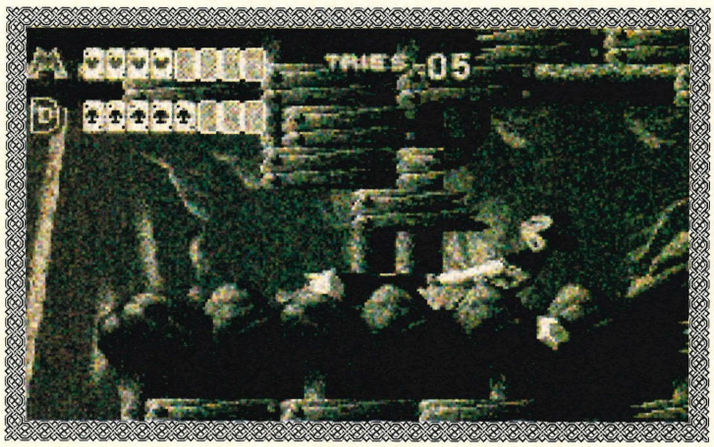
"Look at the gifts," spoke the ghost. "Never has there been a better Christmas for consoles than this one. There are so many good games. Ah, look. Ecco the Dolphin, World of Illusion starring Mickey and Donald, and look John Madden '93." The ghost looked up grinning. "It's goo-ood," he yodeled cheekily.

The last person to open his present was Tiny Tom, little fingers working feverishly to peel the wrapping off the gift until it was revealed in all its glory.

"Why, it's Sonic the Hedgehog 2!" cried out PG. "Sega's big Christmas game for this year. They hope that with the help of this game, they can push themselves into the lead in the console market. Sonic the Hedgehog 2 had already achieved pre-sales of 750,000 before the game was even released on November 24th or Sonic 2sday as it was known. This was Sega's biggest console games launch ever, with the celebrity Sonic 2sday party that was held in Hamleys Toystore and the SuperSonic single released on the same day. Why, they hope to have sold over a million copies of the game before this very year is finished. Last year, thanks to Sonic, Sega made a gross revenue of $1 billion in console sales. Sales that have given them a 65% share of the European console market. All of this thanks to Sonic. God bless him."



John Madden '93



Mickey and Donald

"And let's not forget Tails." added the ghost.

"Of course not, God bless him too."

"God bless us, every one!" exclaimed Tiny Tom from inside the house.

The ghost and PG watched as poorly Tiny Tom tried playing all the new games on his Megadrive. But alas, his almost paw-like hands, and weakened gaming skills meant that he was barely able to enjoy any games for long. Oh, the pain on his face.

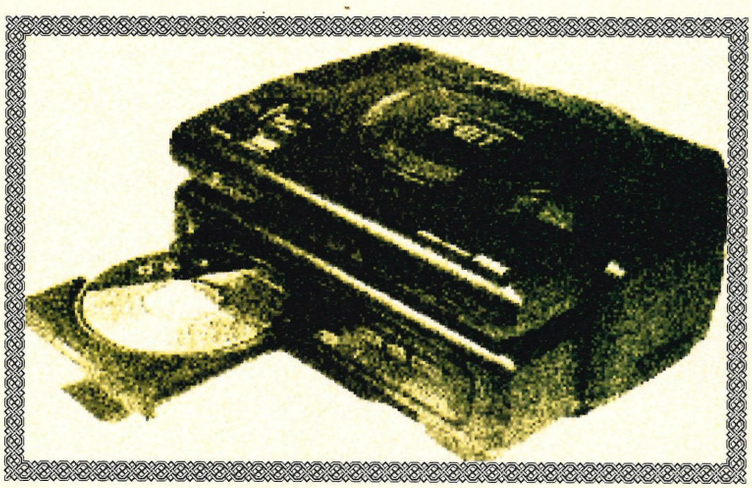
"Spirit," said PG, his heart filled with pity, "little Tiny Tom, he is so poor at games. Will he live?"

"I see a vacant seat," replied the Ghost, "and a crutch without an owner, unless poor Tom can find the enjoyment he so badly seeks at console games."

"No Spirit, tell me that it's not true!" cried PG, but the images were fading. The house vanished, the people were gone. "Come back Ghost, tell me he will live!" Suddenly a clock somewhere began to strike twelve and the ghost was there no more.

As the last chime rang out, PG looked across the desolate landscape he was now standing upon and his eyes fell onto a shadowy figure, a phantom, drifting slowly towards him.

STAVE 4: THE LAST OF THE SPIRITS.



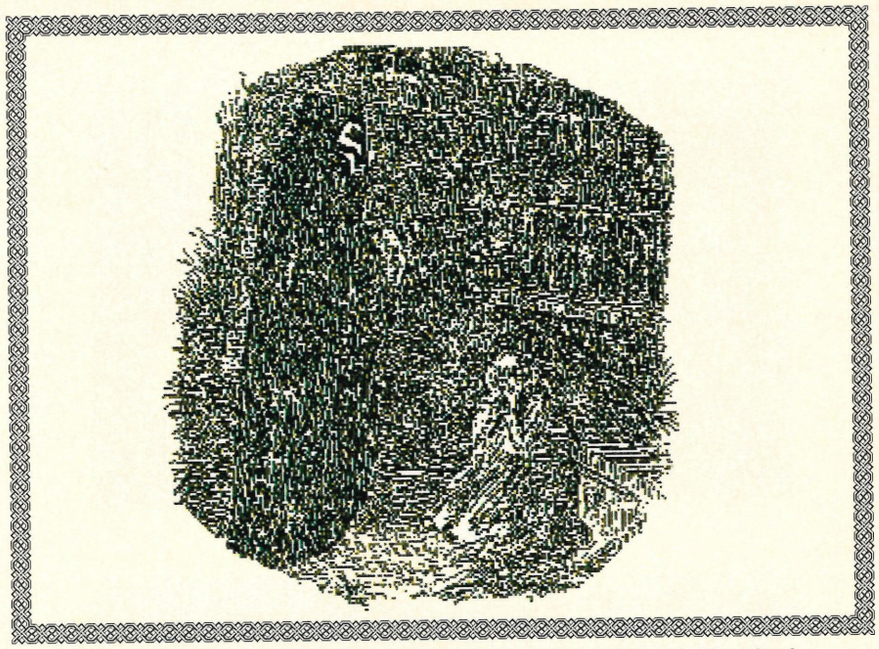
The Mega – CD

The ghost stopped when it reached PG. It was a strange looking creature, skeletally thin and draped in a dark, rough robe which fluttered in a chill breeze which PG felt on his cheek. Atop it's gaunt form, the hood of the robe appeared empty until it slowly lifted to reveal a bizarre skull, seemingly split horizontally into an M-shape above a T. It was bare of flesh, but with a sinister glow emanating from the eye sockets.

"Am I in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come?" said PG.

The ghost said nothing, but pointed onward with its boney hand. Following the direction of it's arm, PG saw a gathering of people standing upon a hill. They were gathered around a small gravestone. As PG looked closer, he recognised many of the crowd as people who had attended the Christmas dinner. There stood Jeff, his eyes filled with tears as he knelt before the little gravestone and placed a tiny crutch against it. Overwhelmed by grief, he looked as if he might fall, but just as he began to lean, he was supported by the man who stood next to him, a plump and wholesome fellow, Jerry.

"It cannot be!" cried PG. "Am I too late to save Tiny Tom? Oh spirit, I will change my ways. Believe me. There are so many new and exciting things that are going to happen in the console world this year. Tom must live to see them. Why, there's the release of the Menacer light gun and then early next year, there's Streets of Rage 2, Super Shinobi 2 and StreetFighter II – Championship Edition on the Megadrive!"



"Tell me, Spirit," pleaded PG, "Reassure me that he will survive the winter to see the official release of the Mega-CD! With the advent of CD technology, we'll see so many new and different games. Games that use real film footage, awesome sprite scaling and rotation, CD quality music and more memory than that of 50 cartridges. In Autumn of 1993, there's the release of SuperSonic, the CD version of Sonic 2. But more importantly, there is the release of the Gigadrive, Sega's 32-bit console. What this console will be capable of is not yet known, but it's sure to be good. Oh, why must Tiny Tom die?"

As PG stumbled around, his slippered feet fell upon an old, weed-covered gravestone. "Whoever this person was, he was not muched liked, that is for sure!" he grumbled. But, as he peered down at the stone, he saw the inscription and his blood ran cold for it was his own name, PAUL GLANCEY. Beneath the name, it read more. 'Killed by stoning for turning MegaTech into a farty old magazine about spreadsheets and management productivity software. Worry not, the stones were big!'

"No, Spirit! No! No! No!"

PG covered his eyes in fear and despair and as he stumbled around he did not realise how close to a cliff-edge he was, for in his experience cemeteries were hardly ever built on cliff-tops. The soles of his Magic Roundabout slippers skidded on the wet grass and as he toppled over the edge, he grabbed at a stray root that was protruding from the cliff-face.

"Help me, Spirit!" He cried, but the ghost just stood at the edge, watching, the terrifyingly stylish T-shaped jaw vibrating with ghostly laughter. Suddenly, the root came free and PG plunged downward, down and down until he landed neatly in his bed. The root he was clutching had become nothing more than a piece of drape.

STAVE 5: THE END OF IT ALL.

PG awoke to find himself in his own bed and that it was morning. Scrambling out, he skipped and danced with glee. His time was still his own and it was a time to make amends.

Opening the window he called to a passer-by. "Excuse me, Sir, what's today?"

"Today, Sir?" replied the confused fellow. "Why, it's Christmas Day!"

"Christmas Day. Hoorah! I'm not too late. Ha ha! A merry Christmas to everybody." he cried, "and a happy New Year to the world. Hallo! Whoop! Hallo!" Oh, he danced a merry jig!

The next day he was into work at the crack of dawn, still giggling to himself. He had arrived before Jeff. There he waited, until Jeff arrived, a full eighteen minutes late.

"Oh sir, I'm sorry. I had a little too much merry-making last night and, well I promise it won't happen again!" spluttered the nervous clerk.

"Bah! It's just not good enough!" muttered PG in his best impersonation of his former self. "To make sure it won't happen again... I'll just have to make you... Art Editor."

Bless young Jeff. His eyes popped out like cranberries on their stalks. But before the ex-clerk could reply the front door burst open. PG's heart leapt, for standing before him, dripping wet from head to toe, was Mark Holmes.

"It cannot be!" cried PG. "You are dead!"

"A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO EVERYBODY."

"No." spake Mark. "I am very much alive. When my boat sunk all those years ago, I was trapped under a mighty timber, in an air-pocket at the bottom of the ocean. My arms pinned beneath me, I lived for years on seaweed and the occasional minnow that would swim past my mouth. I thought my time was up, when suddenly, I was devoured by a whale. Trapped in it's belly, I managed to light a fire by rubbing together two pieces of driftwood. The smoke and flames caused the massive beast to sneeze and I awoke to find myself washed ashore this very morning on the beach not five minutes walk from here."

"Well, I am overjoyed to welcome you back!" laughed PG.

"Thanks!" chortled Mark.

But before they could hug, the door burst open again. It was Tiny Tom sitting astride a miniature pony.

"Ha ha!" laughed PG, "So you received my little Christmas gift!"

"Yes, " chuckled Tom, "Now I can travel anywhere with ease!"

And with that, they all hugged and laughed. PG pulled a two litre bottle of Coke from inside his jacket and the assembled friends drank a toast to the future of the Megadrive and to MegaTech as Tiny Tom exclaimed, "Merry Christmas, one and all!"

THE END

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MENACER

ANYONE FOR MENACE?

How would you fancy one of these in your Christmas stocking? It is, of course, Sega's new light gun for the Megadrive, The Menacer, and it's in the shops now – just in time for it to make a special appearance on your Xmas list. We took The Menacer down to the MegaTech Labs to find out exactly what you get for your £59.99...

WHAT YOU GET

Here's what you find inside the box after you've ripped open the Menacer packaging in a frenzy of excitement...

Master Module

This is the main firing piece. Fashioned from heavy-duty grey plastic, it looks like a futuristic ray-gun and houses the infra-red sensor. The red trigger is the primary shooting button, but there are also three buttons located on the front handle – the bottom one is a Pause button, whilst the other two have various functions according to the game being played. The battery compartment takes six 'AAA' batteries (not included). There is no On/Off Switch – the batteries are activated when you point The Menacer at your TV screen and press the Fire or Pause button, with an automatic shut-off function coming into effect if the gun is left idle for 30 seconds. Battery life is claimed to be up to 20 hours.

Stabiliser Module

The Stabiliser Module is a stock that slides onto the Master Module, engaging with a satisfying ker-chunk! The Stabiliser is used to brace The Menacer against the shoulder or hip to make those sweeping sprays of bullets easier to control.

Binocular Module

A dual-vision targeting attachment that slides into the top of the Master Module. It has an adjustable sight that can be moved to left or right, according to which eye is being used. The idea is to line up the hole in the adjustable sight so that it's dead centre as you look down the sight. Unfortunately, on the Menacer we tested, the hole was always slightly off-centre, so 'deadeye shooting' was impossible using the Binocular Module.

Infrared Receiver

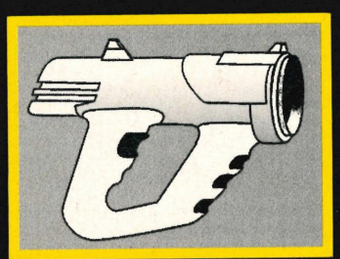
Pretty self-evident, really. This is plugged into the Megadrive port for joypad 2 and placed on top of the TV to, well... to receive the infra-red rays from the Menacer, of course.

Six-Game Cartridge

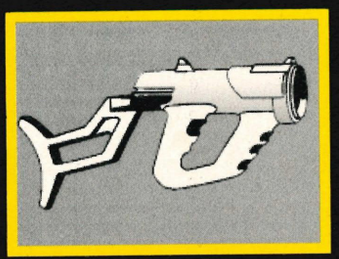
Hey, it's a cartridge containing six games for your Menacer.

THE COMBOS

All the Menacer Modules snap together neatly, making assembly quick and easy. These are the four action set-ups you can create with the components.



▲ Sure Shot



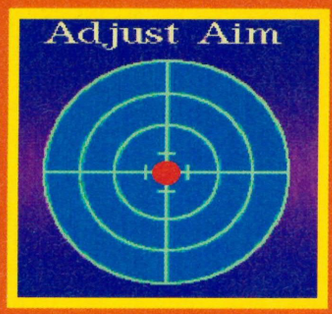
▲ Commando



▲ Dual Vision



▲ Full Tilt



TARGET PRACTICE

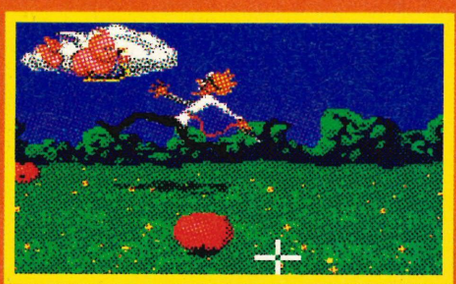
A series of screens may appear before you start to play one of the six games that come with The Menacer. These are to help you to 'get your eye in' and perfect your aiming skills. Some of the games feature the Accu-Sight cursor, an on-screen cross-hair to make targeting easier. This can be turned on or off, according to preference. The Adjust Aim Screen can then be used to set your targeting accuracy – aim at the on-screen target and compensate according to where your shots hit it. Your shooting skills can then be honed by using the Test Aim Screen. You can practice for as long as you want.

THE GAMES



Pest Control

Zap all the bugs that are attacking the piece of pizza in the centre of the screen. Splat them all and you're onto the next level, but if they munch all your pizza, it's Game Over.



Ready, Aim, Tomatoes

ToeJam and Earl-based, horizontally-scrolling splat 'em up. You're ToeJam, using tomatoes as projectiles to splatter the Earth-freaks while Earl keeps score and 'lays on the good words'.



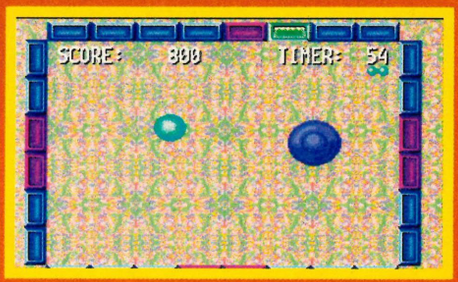
Frontline

Horizontally-scrolling shoot 'em up with a desert war setting. Blow the armour-plating off tanks, armoured vehicles, helicopters and planes with machine gun, anti-tank missiles and anti-aircraft missiles.



Space Station Defender

Aliens are beaming down on the lunar surface outside your space station. Blast them as the doors of their tardis-like spacecraft open or they'll blast you, destroying your defensive shields. Get more ammunition by shooting the ammo bar at the bottom of the screen.



Whackball

You don't even have to use the trigger for this one. The Menacer beams a circular paddle onto the screen – you have to use this to bounce a ball against the tiles surrounding the edge of the screen. Hit a tile and it changes colour, change the colour of all the tiles and you're onto the next level.



Rockman's Zone

Horizontally-scrolling shooting gallery – move past the tenements in the sleazy backstreets of Chettosville, USA. You're an FBI agent and you've gotta shoot the bad guys as they appear at the windows.



Terminator 2

Sorry, this isn't included in the six-game cart – but it should've been. Acclaim's post-Armageddon shoot 'em up dumps over the six free games from a very great height. (See full review on page 42.)

SO IS IT ANY GOOD?

As a piece of hardware, The Menacer seems sturdy and well-manufactured. The different modules snap together quickly and easily, but the Binocular Module on the model we tested was rendered redundant because the sight was off-centre, and anyone trying to use it was rendered headache-stricken.

As for the games, they currently leave a lot to be desired. The six free games are all very, very basic, and for anyone over the age of ten, the only challenge they present is whether or not the player can stay awake longer than his gun-arm. If every game had been of the quality of Terminator 2 this would have been a much more attractive package and we can only hope that future titles are up to T2's standard.

But the greatest potential lies with Menacer/Mega-CD games which use full-motion video graphics, games along the lines of the Who Shot Johnny Rock? coin-op, and if we were to see something like that, the Menacer would definitely be an essential piece of Megadrive hardware.



SUPERSONIC



HEDGEHOG WITH ATTITUDE

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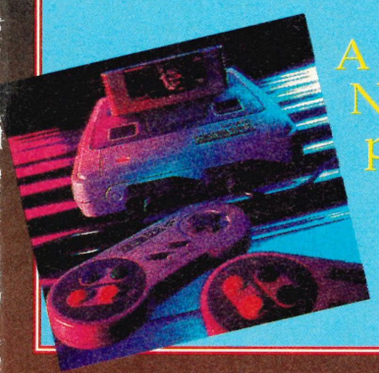
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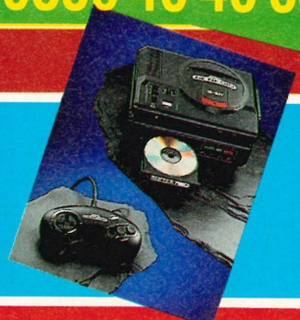
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STREETS

FORMAT: CART
M-BITS: 16

BY: SEGA

PRICE: £44.99

PLAYERS: 1-2

GAME TYPE: BEAT 'EM UP

CONTINUES: 5

SKILL SETTINGS: 3



Times had never been more peaceful in Rage City. Ever since the Evil Crime Syndicate was overthrown three years ago, the fair citizens of the sprawling metropolis had taken to earning an honest buck, turning their backs on the ways of crime. Machismo and violence had no place in everyday life. The pursuit of gentle, constructive hobbies became the standard by which people were now judged.

Yet no hobby was more popular than Bonsai, the art of growing miniature trees. A person's strength, their very power and influence within the city was measured by their mastery of this art, and no person was more adept at the ways of Bonsai than ex-cop, Adam Hunter. After winning the Annual Mini Shrubs Award for two years running, it came as no surprise to anyone when he claimed the award again this year.

But, as Adam made his way to the podium to give his speech of gratitude, he was viciously abducted by a band of cut-throat gangsters. With the people's symbol of honesty and goodness kidnapped, the city has been plunged once more into a dark vortex of chaos and crime. Thugs have returned to the streets and violence has become the law. So it's time to bare those knuckles again as you take to those Streets of Rage once more.

ALL THE RAGE!

Following the format of its highly successful predecessor, Streets of Rage 2 is a good old sideways scrolling beat 'em up. One or two players must traverse the infamous streets of rage, beating seven bells out of anyone who happens to get in the way of their quest to save Adam. This makes for much punching, throwing and kicking as the forces of the dreaded Crime Syndicate venture forth on foot, on bike and even in supernatural form as they seek to thwart the Ragers' mission.

Nothing new so far. However, beneath the mild-mannered exterior of this oh-so normal little black cartridge is the awesome power of sixteen megabits. Streets of Rage 2 is the first officially released Megadrive game to sport this kind of memory. In fact, before now Streetfighter 2 on the SNES was the only console game released in the UK to be privy to a 16 megabit memory capacity. But has all this extra memory been put to good use? Read on and find out.

OF RAGE 2



MEET THE GANG

Unfortunately, due to his captive predicament, Adam is no longer in the line-up of fighters. However, this doesn't mean that there are only two characters to choose from. Joining the other two original Ragers, Blaze and Axel, are new kids on the block, Max and Skate.

Unlike in the original game, the main characters can no longer call on the help of the Special Crimes Police for a smart-bomb style area attack. As recompense for this omission, the programmers have included an awesome array of unique and devastating special attacks that the players can perform. However, each time one of these moves is performed, some vital energy is lost. Take a look at the following player profiles to find out more.



BLAZE

It was Blaze who first realised that Adam had been kidnapped. During her regular Wednesday afternoon Lambada practice, Blaze sensed that something was wrong. Stopping only to call Axel, she grabbed her Lambada partner, Max, and took to the streets. Blaze is extremely fast, excellent in the air and packs quite a punch. She's probably the best all round character.

SPECIAL MOVES:

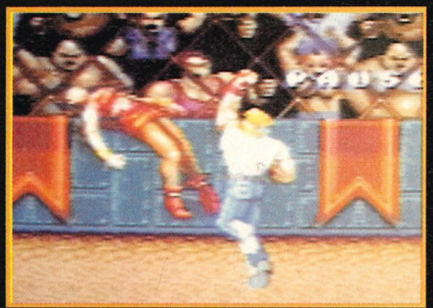
Since the first game, Blaze has learnt how to perform a devastating somersault kick. This spinning cartwheel of death claims everyone in her immediate vicinity and is an excellent manoeuvre for escaping a tight situation. However, even more impressive is her ability to produce a short range fireball much in the mould of the Streetfighter 2 hurricane punch.

AXEL

Much was Axel's anger when he discovered that Adam had been criminally violated. There he was, playing his favourite video games with his young pal Skate, when Blaze broke the chilling news to him over the phone. Although not as sprightly in the air as Blaze, Axel is a stronger, better fighter.

SPECIAL MOVE:

Would you believe it? Axel is able to perform a Dragon punch, the trademark move of Ken and Ryu in Streetfighter 2. This twisting upward punch is lethal if it connects. Having learnt the way of the Dragon, Axel is also capable of a fiery, turning punch. However, if you look closely at his fist while he is performing this move, you'll see that his arm has in fact turned into the form of a fiery dragon.



MAX

Mighty of muscle ex-wrestler Max may be, but he's also a hot foot at the Lambada. Having enjoyed many a friendly jar with his chum Adam at their local tavern, the news of this foul abduction enraged him beyond all control. Max is the slowest of the four characters, but he compensates for this lack of speed with incredible strength. Sporting a snazzy pair of wrestling breeks, Max is definitely the grappler's choice.

SPECIAL MOVES:

Although normally quite slow, Max is able to perform an incredible super-fast shoulder charge. This mighty barge cuts swathes through the enemy ranks and, while in motion, is unstoppable. Also at Mighty Max's disposal are an awesome double lariat spin and a leaping chest-smack.



SKATE

Little more than twelve years old, young Skate earned his nick-name from the lucky pair of roller-blade boots he always wears, a gift from ex-rollerblade star Deadshot Keen. If truth be known, Skate is in fact Adam's younger brother. Enraged by Adam's kidnapping, now is the time to put to use all the martial-arts skills his brother has taught him. Skate is easily the fastest character in the game. He's superb at aerial combat and is able to perform some spectacular moves. However, due to his size and age, his punches are weak and he's also the frailest member of the team.

SPECIAL MOVES:

Whereas Blaze enjoys a bit of Lambada, Skate is definitely a breakdancer. By spinning on his back, the young tyke can pull off an incredible split-leg windmill. Also, when in the air, Skate can body-drill into his opponents in a manner similar to Dhalsim's yoga-spear. Best move of all though, has to be when Skate leaps onto an enemy's shoulders, piggyback-style, and pummels their heads with his fists. Hilarious, especially when used on the other player.

TIME FOR THE FEET TO HIT THE STREET

IT MAY BE CALLED STREETS OF RAGE 2, BUT NOT ALL THE ACTION IN THE GAME TAKES PLACE ON THE STREETS. HERE'S A SELECTION OF SOME OF THE BEST NON-STREET LEVELS.



THE BAR

In their search for dear, sweet Adam, the Ragers' quest takes them into a seedy tavern. Under the lights of the dance floor, our heroes must face the wrath of whip-wielding warrior women and crazed drunks. Upon seeing the Ragers enter the bar, the yellow-bellied coward of a bartender sprints out through the back door. He is later confronted in the pouring rain, having called on the help of his hard-men friends.

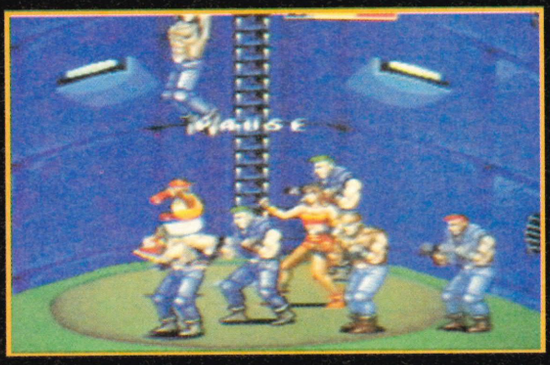


THE FAIR-GROUND

Normally a place of fun for all the family, the funfair has been taken over by unruly hoodlums and vandals. Luckily, our heroes are on hand to save the day. After battling their way around the theme park, the Ragers' quest takes them into one of the attractions – the dreaded Ghost Cave. Here they are confronted by a Blanka-type beast, before having to battle with a mighty mechanical dragon!

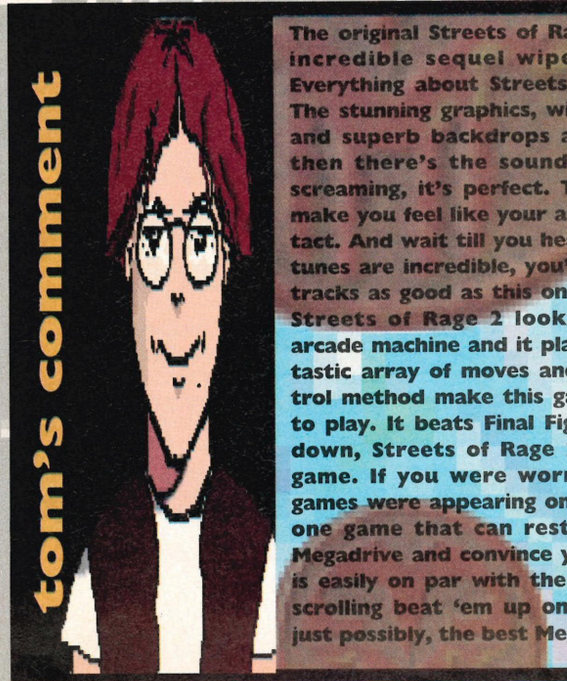


▲ ...YOU DO THE HOKEY COKEY AND YOU TURN AROUND, THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT. OH, THE HOKEY COKEY...



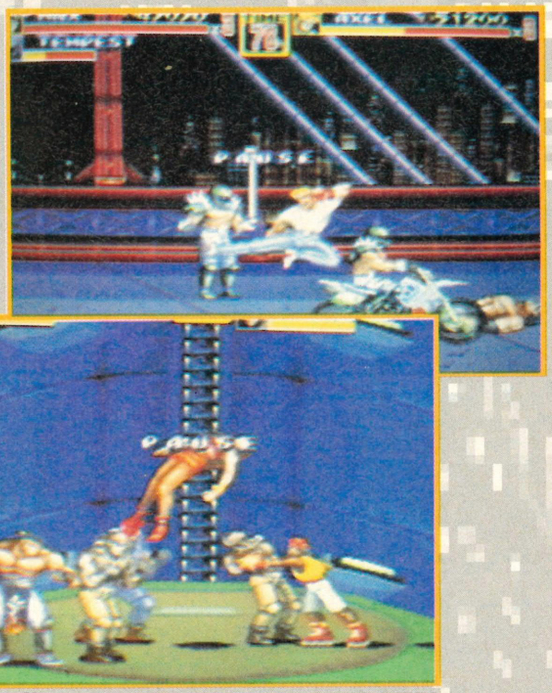
THE LIFT

Rage City's golf course has a dark and terrible secret. It's really an entrance to the Crime Syndicate's underground base. The minute our beloved Bare Knuckle crew step onto the green, they are sent spiralling downwards at a terrifying rate of knots on a massive industrial lift. As they hurtle to the very bowels of the Earth, baddies continually drop from above ready to face the wrath of our heroes.



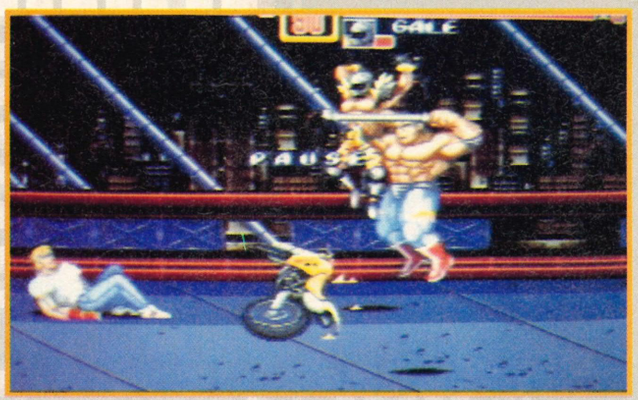
tom's comment

The original Streets of Rage was good, but this incredible sequel wipes the floor with it. Everything about Streets of Rage 2 is brilliant. The stunning graphics, with the massive sprites and superb backdrops are just brilliant. And then there's the sound. Punching, cracking, screaming, it's perfect. The spot effects really make you feel like your attacks are making contact. And wait till you hear the music. Wow, the tunes are incredible, you've never heard soundtracks as good as this on the Megadrive before. Streets of Rage 2 looks and sounds like an arcade machine and it plays like one too. A fantastic array of moves and a super-smooth control method make this game just such a dream to play. It beats Final Fight on the SNES hands down, Streets of Rage 2 is easily the better game. If you were worried that all the best games were appearing on the Super NES, here's one game that can restore your faith in the Megadrive and convince you that the Megadrive is easily on par with the SNES. This is the best scrolling beat 'em up on any console ever and just possibly, the best Megadrive game around!



▲ TOP: YOUNG FRED ENJOYS THE DELIGHTS OF HIS NEW MOUNTAIN BIKE. BOTTOM: HAVING FOOLISHLY SWALLOWED A HELIUM BALLOON, BLAZE PAYS THE DREADFUL PRICE.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

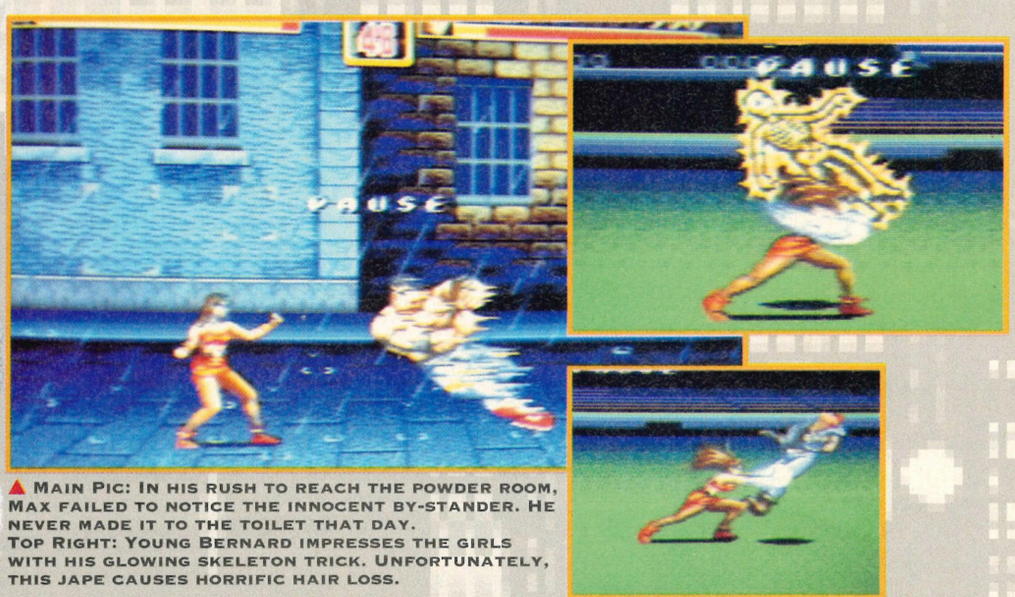


▲ NO MAX, I DON'T THINK YOUR 'PUPPET AND THE PIPE' ACT IS VERY FUNNY AT ALL!

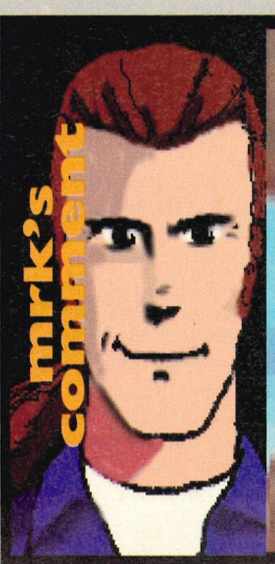
Just like in the original game, the characters are able to use whatever weapons they can get their hands on. Such tools of destruction as knives, throwing daggers, pieces of piping and even swords can all be used in this most wieldy manner. Also, in an improvement over the first game, all of the aforesaid weapons can now be thrown at opponents if necessary.

BANGING YOUR HEADS TOGETHER

An option that was sorely missing from the first game was a one-on-one duel option. There's no such deficiency here. In a similar manner to Streetfighter II, the main characters can be pitted against each other. This allows two players to pit their favourite characters against each other, even if both players happen to like the same character. The backdrops for these duels are selectable, and if one player happens to be better than the other, the various player statistics can be handicapped. However, unlike SF2, this duel option allows players to use weapons to beat their opponent. Beat that!



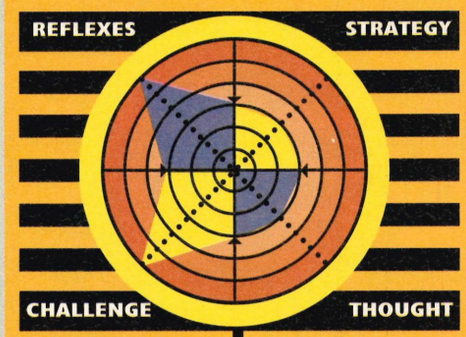
▲ MAIN PIC: IN HIS RUSH TO REACH THE POWDER ROOM, MAX FAILED TO NOTICE THE INNOCENT BY-STANDER. HE NEVER MADE IT TO THE TOILET THAT DAY.
TOP RIGHT: YOUNG BERNARD IMPRESSES THE GIRLS WITH HIS GLOWING SKELETON TRICK. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS JAPE CAUSES HORRIFIC HAIR LOSS.



This is one hot monster cart, and no mistake! As soon as you start to storm your way through Streets of Rage 2, you realise you've got your hands on a game that's been souped-up to give maximum thrills and fun to the world's beat 'em up fans. The silky smooth control system makes it a joy to play – the characters are so instantly responsive and fluid in action, it really does have the feel of an excellent arcade action game. Urged along by the pumping soundtrack, you're powerless to resist the buzz of treating the baddies to a good beating – aided by the hyper-effective new range of special moves. And, as in the original Streets of Rage, there's a lot of backhanded fun to be had when playing with someone else as a team-mate – yes, you can still give your 'compadre' a good belting if you've got a particularly vindictive sense of humour! With Streets of Rage 2, Sega have succeeded in blowing every other scrolling beat 'em up, on any console, into the weeds. I only hope that they can succeed in achieving their aim of getting it out on the streets and into your stocking for Christmas.

GAME TITLE

STREETS OF RAGE 2



% RATING

PRESENTATION

91 Standard presentation and options, but the whole game has such a polished feel to it.

GRAPHICS

95 Massive sprites and excellent backdrops. You'll find it hard to believe you're not looking at an arcade game.

SOUND

98 Powerful spot effects and the most fantastic music you've ever heard on the Megadrive.

SHORT TERM PLAY

95 Immediately gripping gameplay. You'll find it hard to tear yourself away from the game until you've finished it.

LONG TERM PLAY

92 The Hard setting should provide a fair challenge, and you'll be back for more after you've finished it, especially for the duel option.

MEGATECH RATING

95 Who says the Megadrive isn't as good as the SNES? Streets of Rage 2 restores the faith and is, without a shadow of a doubt, the best scrolling console beat 'em up in existence. Buy it.



THE LITTL

FORMAT: CART
M-BITS: 4

BY: SEGA

PRICE:£34.99

PLAYERS: 1

GAME TYPE: FISHY MAZE

CONTINUES: INFINITE

SKILL SETTINGS: 3

THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA AND HIS BATHING BEAUTY



After spying the most handsome man she'd ever seen, Ariel, the little mermaid, decided that she would very much like to be a part of his world. The only problem was that she is basically half-fish, but he's such a dish that Ariel gets Ursula the Sea Witch to grant her a pair of shapely legs in order to woo this fellah. The witch agrees to swap a pair of legs for Ariel's beautiful voice. Of course everything goes horribly wrong, and Ariel's father, as is often the case with lovesick young girlies, intervenes and saves her from disaster.

Now the wicked witch is up to her nasty tricks again, transforming hundreds of mer-people into pitiful looking polyps, a sort of seaweed with two eyes and a mouth wearing a sorrowful expression. It is up to Ariel and King Triton, her dad, to wade in and use their magic to turn their subjects back to normal. Take control of either character and help them to achieve this incredible rescue attempt by finding the bewitched buddies and defeating Ursula.

DEPENDING ON HOW YOU FEEL AT THE TIME YOU CAN CHOOSE TO PLAY EITHER AS ARIEL OR TRITON, BOTH OF WHOM HAVE THEIR OWN SPECIAL POWERS WITH WHICH TO MAKE GOOD OF THE BAD:



ARIEL

Ariel conducts a sparkle of musical notes to release the mer-people from Ursula's spell. The notes are also used for defence against the forbidding undersea monsters. For extra protection, Ariel's super weapon is a shower of magical stars. How lovely.



KING TRITON

The almighty King of the Deep doesn't paddle about with such niceties as music to deal with his enemies. Triton expels fireballs from his powerful trident and summons roaring thunderbolts as an extra show of force! Most likely the fireballs scare the mer-people out of their polyptic states!



Um, well, this looks pleasant enough to start off with, and I'm sure that little kids who enjoyed the film will sit and marvel at the graphics – the characters are perfectly recreated on screen – and the music is almost spot-on, too. However, older players will find the simplistic collecting gameplay just too basic. It's also seriously deficient in the Challenging Gameplay department, and after half an hour of play the four levels will be completed, and that's all the game has to offer. The other thing I found very irritating about The Little Mermaid is the control method, which is very vague – not at all like Sega's other similar title, Ecco (reviewed in MegaTech last month). Like I said, little kids are the perfect audience for this game, but anyone else should ignore it and go for Ecco, which is a much more interesting game.

E MERMAID

SCUTTLE'S MAGICAL COLLECTION



▲ THE LITTLE MERMAID SWIMS ALONG ANGELICALLY, WHILE THE SKELETON LOOKS FORWARD TO HAVING THAT LITTLE FISHY ON A LITTLE DISHY WHEN THE BOAT COMES IN...

As the the King or Ariel go about their business, they often find chests of sunken loot with which they can stock up on special weapons, keys, an extra sparkle to give them one more try at the rescue or even another Flounder, Digger Fish or Sebastian. Who said that friends couldn't be bought? Such items are on sale in that amiable seagull Scuttle's wonderful shop, though it must be said that his shop isn't easy to find, because it doesn't show up on the map and the only Thomson Local Directory for the area is falling apart because it's all waterlogged.

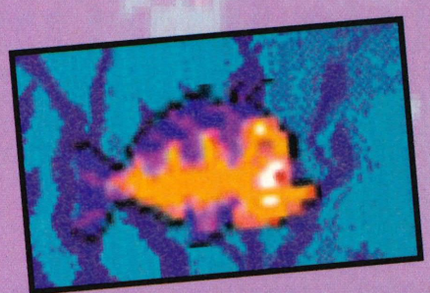
FISH-EE, FISH-EE, FISH-EE FEESH!

BOTH KING TRITON AND ARIEL HAVE THESE THREE MUTUAL PISCINE PALS WHO COME TO THEIR AID WHENEVER CALLED:

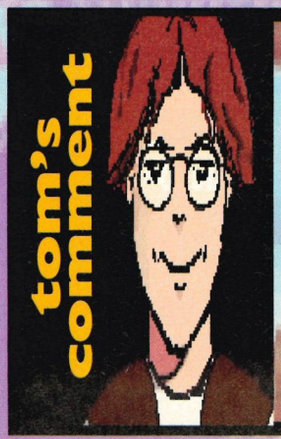


Sebastian: Ariel's guardian angelfish scares opponents away for a while giving Ariel and Triton time to keep up with the rescue mission.

The digger fish: Gladly assists the Royal mer-people by uncovering buried treasure. Hence his name.



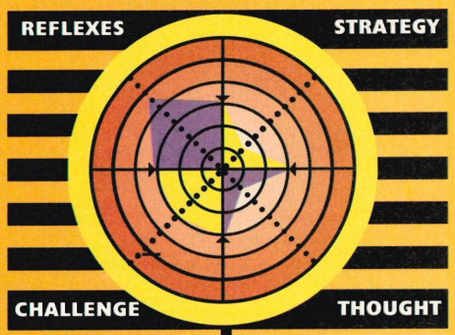
Flounder: Triton might consider him a bad influence on Ariel, they would both be lost at sea without Flounder's ability to push rocks out of the way.



I doubt that this is going to appeal to many people above the age of seven. Not just because it's simple to beat, but there isn't enough happening to sustain interest. As part of a Little Mermaid fanatic's collection, it would sit there just perfectly, alongside the poseable Ariel dolls and Sebastian crab key-rings, because all of the film's best characters are included and done no little justice by the Megadrive. The award-winning soundtrack also plays along quite stylishly in the background. The reason the game flounders so badly is because it's so flippering boring – I'd much rather sit watching the video for an hour or so than trouble myself with this.

GAME TITLE

THE LITTLE MERMAID



%RATING

PRESENTATION

85 Pleasing opening screens, but there could have been more of them. Controls are rather ropey.

GRAPHICS

88 Characters are instantly recognisable and the backdrops are lovely.

SOUND

87 Impressive remixes of the songs from the film's soundtrack and smart sound effects, too.

SHORT TERM PLAY

66 Right from the start the action is rather bland and not overly taxing.

LONG TERM PLAY

40 Experienced players will get about 20 minutes of play out of this. Younger players will enjoy it more.

MEGATECH RATING

57 A pleasant-looking game, but one that's best left to the kids.



SHADOW OF

FORMAT: CART
M-BITS: 4

BY: PSYGNOSIS

PRICE: £39.99

PLAYERS: 1

GAME TYPE: ARCADE ADVENTURE

CONTINUES: NONE

SKILL SETTINGS: 3

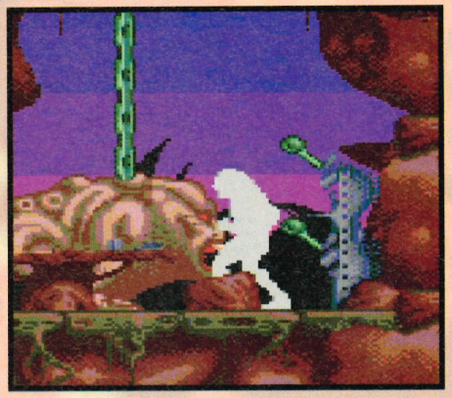
GOING BACK TO MY ROOTS

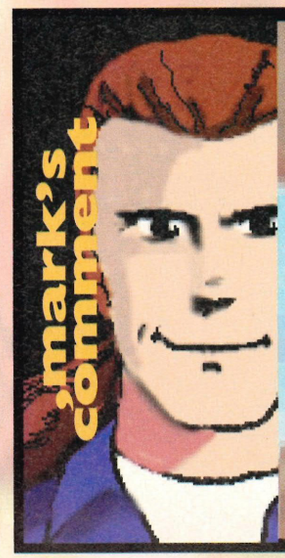
Somewhere in the ravaged wastes of Kara-Moon, in a forbidding keep, a baby is crying. Not that there is any human nearby to hear it and take interest. This dark part of the continent has long since been abandoned by light and humanity, which fled when the Dark Forces landed a long time ago. No-one to save the child chosen as thrall to the Beast Mage, chief demon of this sector. The stolen babe will be bred as she grows into a new beast messenger, the executor of evil's plans. The Beast Mage also sees it as a fitting and perverse justice that she is the young sister of his previous slave who recently rebelled against his master, freeing himself from his hideous form. The defeat inflicted on the Mage in that instance was a severe humiliation in front of his peers, servants of the Beast Lord. But the cruel Mage is unaware of the closeness of his old foe, since the newly-formed human has risked the dangers of this remote country and has arrived in Carmen, determined to find and save his sister – and is willing to face his nemesis once again.



▲ WHETHER IT'S WORKING OUT HOW TO GET PAST BIG GREEN SNOT MONSTERS ON BRIDGES OR FINDING THE LEVER WHICH LOWERS THE BRIDGE, MUCH OF BEAST II'S GAMEPLAY IS PUZZLE-BASED.

This game is the second in a trilogy which made its mark on the Amiga, starting about three years ago. Psygnosis, the original publishers, have already converted the first part, before unleashing this next instalment on the Megadrive. Both games are remarkably similar in look and style, by which we mean they're both arcade adventures with a few platforms knocking about, lots of monsters to engage in combat and a few puzzles to solve. Actually, compared to the first game, Beast II is chock-full of puzzles, and some of them require more than simply finding an object and taking it to the right place.





The main problem, and it's a BIG problem, with Shadow of the Beast II is that it's very, very dull. Graphically and sonically it's a very 'competent' game. The scrolling is smooth, the sprites are quite good and the animation is mostly passable. However, the backdrops do become pretty monotonous and the game's 'dark' appearance comes out more dowdy than atmospheric and gloomy. Atmosphere is the presentational aspect the game most lacks, from its uninspired front-end and plot to its automaton 'characters' that are about as interactive as a signpost. But unfortunately, the atmospherics aren't the only deficiency. This game has no satisfing playability because most 'combat' is a case of unavoidable collisions. The designers took the easy way out of making the energy loss from each collision quite small, but didn't look at the frustration factor that playing creates. Another highly annoying feature is the linear action. Everything must be done in order, and it's easy to mess the entire game up by one false move, only to be stuck with no option but to Reset. I'm afraid Beast II has very few creditable features and is best left on the shelf.

THE BEAST 2

DEFENDING YOUR LIFE

Unlike in the first game, Beast does not start his trek unarmed. His first weapon is a mace, but later in the game he comes across a throwing axe in one of the chests. Just as well, as the place is packed with about 100 different varieties of monsters. Some attack simply by charging into Beast, but others are armed with rudimentary weapons. A few of the larger monsters, like the Dragon Ishran, have magical powers and throw horrible projectiles forth from their hideous maws. The amount of damage you can take is represented as a vial of elixir. The three difficulty levels of the game dictate how much of this elixir is deducted by each hit. Replacement vials are available from the occasional treasure chests. Be careful, you only have one life.



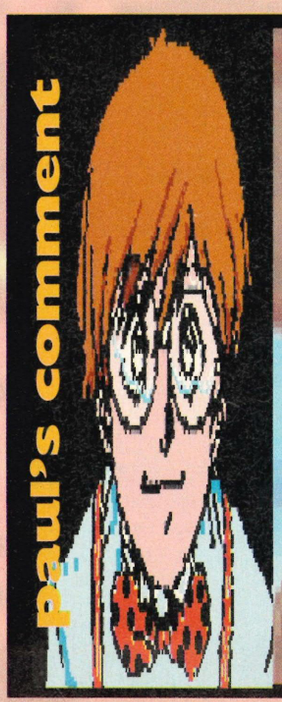
▲ THIS GUY IS SO BIG IT'S BETTER TO KNOCK HIM OVER A CLIFF THAN TRY TO MACE HIM TO DEATH.

SUPER LEVER BROS.

Puzzle action plays a large part in Beast's activity. Various lever-operated mechanisms have been placed by the Beast Mage to keep Kara Moon secure. An early example of such a machine is revealed by an unfortunate man who is almost abducted by a monster. He has heard vague rumours about a lever giving access to further areas. You discover the levers yourself – but only one will bring the lift. The other opens a trapdoor to a deadly poisoned pool.

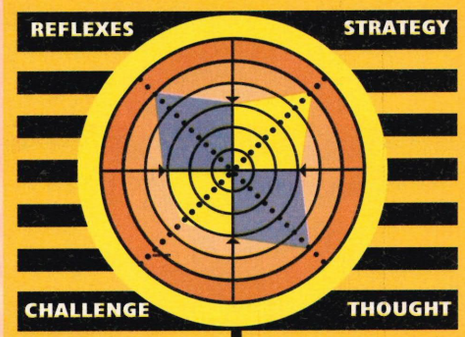


▲ 'GROUND FLOOR – PERFUMERY, STATIONERY, LEATHER GOODS, SHIRTS AND HABERDASHERY, KITCHENWARE AND SHOES'



At first sight this looks slightly better than its odious predecessor, because the graphics are slightly more attractive and there's a stack more things to kill and puzzles to solve. In fact I was thinking, 'Hmm, this doesn't look too bad at all,' until I'd played it for a while. The first whiff came when the action inexplicably paused momentarily as Mr Beast walked a few paces from the start of the game, then did it again when he was halfway up a rope. Why, it was almost as if I was playing the Amiga version which had to load bits of scenery in from disk as you reached them... Could this mean – horrors! – a thinly-disguised Amiga port-over? I'm afraid that's what it looks like. Of course, a few momentary pauses are neither here nor there when you're playing a superb game, but journeying further reveals that this is not a superb game. The puzzles and monsters are vaguely interesting, but they're not particularly original, nor do they provide much in the way of satisfaction when beaten. Any potential enjoyment is further nipped in the bud by the ease with which you can ruin your chances early on by tipping your toe in noxious green ooze and losing all your energy or getting a puzzle wrong early on and screwing up the entire route through the game. And you only get one life and no continues! Gah! I don't like it, and I don't think you will either.

GAME TITLE
SHADOW OF THE BEAST 2



%RATING

PRESENTATION

59 — A few options portrayed unattractively. It also pauses, Amiga-style, where it thinks it should be loading disk data.

GRAPHICS

73 — Sparse, dull, mechanically replicated backdrops, and poorly linked different sections.

SOUND

70 — A very relaxed 'free form' piece wafts on in the background pretty inoffensively.

SHORT TERM PLAY

59 — The graphics are fairly attractive to start with, but the gameplay's appeal is weak throughout .

LONG TERM PLAY

53 — The relative obscurity of some puzzles, and the fight to keep some energy may provide some challenge.

MEGATECH RATING

59 — Sadly, not an improvement on Beast I. Just more of the same, aged, Amiga clap-trap.



TERMINATOR

FORMAT: CART
M-BITS: 8

BY: ACCLAIM

PRICE: £39.99

PLAYERS: 1-2

GAME TYPE: SHOOT 'EM UP

CONTINUES: 5

SKILL SETTINGS: 1

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS BOY?

There is one date in all of mortal history that God has circled in his almighty diary. A date that even even the Supreme Father himself trembles in anticipation of. That date is August 29th, 1996 – Judgment Day. The day after the resurrection of the dead at the end of the world when, according to biblical tradition, God will decree the final destiny of all men, according to the amount of good and evil in their earthly lives.

Judgment Day – the day when the machines will rise from the radioactive rubble of the Nuclear Holocaust to cleanse the world of human life. Commanded by the master computer SkyNet, killer cyborgs known as Terminators will systematically hunt down mankind to the very last person. But there is one man who will threaten to destroy SkyNet – John Connor, the leader of the human resistance. He must be destroyed at any cost – even if it means sending a Terminator back in time to destroy him as a child. A special Terminator that can mimic the shape, colour and texture of any object. There's only one thing that could defeat such an awesome assassin... another Terminator.

Based on the award-winning action movie of the same name, Terminator 2 is a straight conversion of the blockbusting T2 coin-op. Taking the role of a friendly T-101 Terminator (as played by Arnold Schwarzeneggar in the movie), the game assumes a first-person perspective, Operation Wolf style of gameplay. The player (or players, for it seems that the resistance have captured two T-101s just in case a second player should wish to join in) attempts to shoot and grenade his path from the future all the way to the present, in order to protect the saviour of mankind, John Connor, from the lethally efficient T-1000 Terminator who has been sent back in time to kill him. Let's stroll hand-in-hand along the gory path that has to be taken, skulls crunching underfoot.



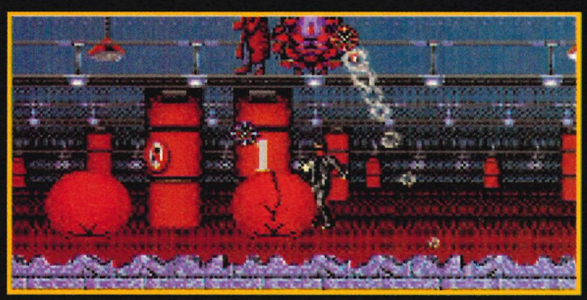


LEVEL 1: LOS ANGELES, JULY 11th, 2029



Welcome to the future. Such is the devastating result of the War of the Machines. Striding across this hell-ravaged landscape are hordes of T-101 endoskeletons, whilst whining across the blood-red skies are dreaded hunter-killers. As the level progresses, missile-launching tanks and even gold terminators fall from drop-ships – all of them gunning for you. Reach the end of the level and you'll be greeted by the first boss – a mighty dreadnought packed with electrical charges, missiles and machine guns.

2: JUDGMENT DAY



LEVEL 2: THE RESISTANCE BASE

This is where the remanants of humanity eke out the last days of their short lives. Living in the ruins of the old subway system, it is from here that the resistance launch their assaults on SkyNet. Unfortunately, a legion of Terminators have infiltrated the base and it's up to you to stop them. This time the T-101s are covered in specially-grown bio-skin, to disguise the fact that they are machines. However, blast them at close range and their cursed metal bodies are soon revealed. Other terrors on this level include death orbs. These floating spheres of doom zip around the screen, causing all manner of havoc – so it's best to destroy them before they hatch from their shells. It's also worth taking potshots at lighting fixtures and fire extinguishers to reveal vital power-ups, but shoot carefully or you could end up with human casualties on your hands.



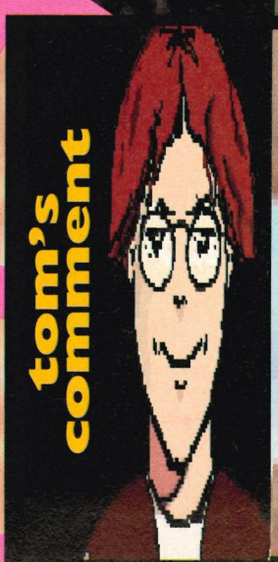
SKYNET

This is the dreaded homebase of the Machines. It's from inside this infernal factory hell that the deadly mechanical constructions of SkyNet spew forth. Once the outer perimeter has been breached, it's a race to the very heart of the base – battling with Terminators, death orbs and strange metal snakes. Then it's on to a confrontation with the SkyNet CPU itself. The enemy Terminator has already been sent into the past, but defeat the CPU and you can follow it through time, mere seconds before the whole base explodes.



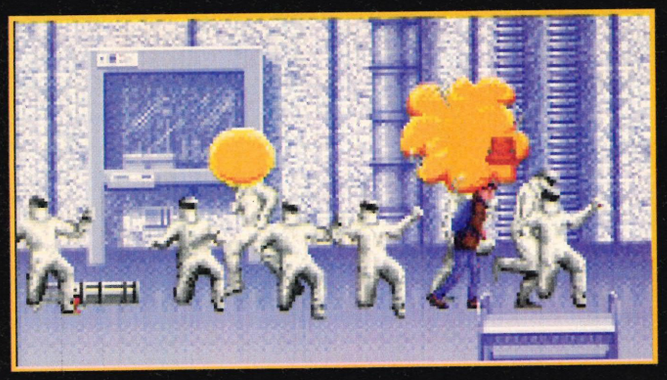
THE TRUCK RUN

The resistance have beaten the machines – it's all over. Or is it? In a last ditch attempt to win the war, SkyNet has sent a Terminator into the past to destroy the resistance leader, John Connor, when he was a boy, and thus win the war before it has even begun. It's a race against time as the resistance must race to SkyNet in order to stop this dread plan from ever being put into action. Driving alongside John Connor's truck, level three sees you attempting to protect him from Hunter-Killers as they soar overhead dropping bombs, and also from Terminators, as they run past the truck shooting at it from close range.



tom's comment

As a fan of the coin-op, I was expecting great things from this Megadrive conversion. As it is, I was quite disappointed with the game when I first saw it. The main appeal of the arcade version came from the gorgeous visuals, like the fabulous intermission screens and the digitised sprites. It's not that the graphics are poor, in fact they're quite smart – they just aren't as good as the coin-op's. However, there's plenty to shoot at, the action is fast-paced and, at times, quite difficult. Couple all this with the superb music and excellent sound effects and the end result is a damned fine blaster. Also, considering there are hardly any Operation Wolf-style games on the 16-bit Sega (with the exception of the bloody awful Death Duel), this one more than fills the gap. Play this game with the Menacer (when it's finally available) and it's even better. Definitely the best light gun game available on any system. I can honestly say that I enjoyed Terminator 2 and recommend it to any fan of the coin-op.



LOS ANGELES: CYBERDYNE

Welcome to the present. Before the war, before the machines. Having located John and Sarah Connor, you've now got to try and prevent the Holocaust from ever happening. To do this, you'll have to blow up Cyberdyne, the company that built SkyNet. It's up to you to take care of the police SWAT teams and the scientists, whilst trying to avoid shooting John and Sarah as they lay down their explosives. Waiting in the last lab are the remains of the Terminator from the first film – his hand and brain CPU. Destroy these and make your exit.



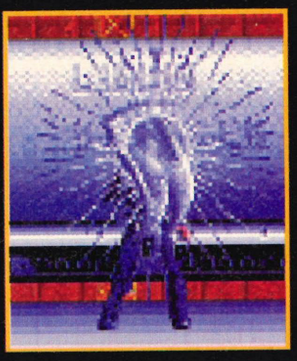
HELICOPTER CHASE

Cyberdyne has been destroyed, the war is prevented. But the T-1000 is still active and it's tracked you down. Racing away in a stolen police van, John and Sarah make good their escape, but hot on their heels is the T-1000 in a police helicopter. Similar to the Truck Chase level, you've got to prevent the helicopter from ramming the van by shooting at it. If the helicopter even touches the van, you can kiss goodbye to the Connor family.



THE METALWORKS

The final confrontation with the T-1000. Standing in front of a tanker filled with liquid nitrogen, he attempts to shoot and punch you to death. By blasting holes in the tanker , you can lower his temperature in an attempt to freeze him and then blast him into bite-sized pieces. He'll soon resurrect himself though, so it's a race through the metalworks, blasting at the unfriendly gun-wielding workmen, before the ultimate battle in front of the lava vats, where, if all goes according to plan, the polymorphic Terminator will meet his doom.



• PHASE PLASMA RIFLE WITH A 40 WATT RANGE!

Just like the film, T2 is packed to the brim with noisy, death-dealing hardware. On early levels, these pump-action trinkets can be found in various crates that sit at the bottom of the screen. On later levels though, the power-ups fall down the screen – only by shooting them can they be claimed. Here's a stock take from the weapons shed.



RAPID FIRE RECHARGE

Continuous fire can take a lot out of your weapon, but this handy device will restore your shooting power to maximum.



EXTENDED RAPID FIRE COOLANT

There's nothing more inconvenient than an overheated shooting tool, but this coolant will keep temperatures low and firing speed up. Best served chilled.



PLASMA PULSE ENERGISER

This little device knocks up the speed and power of your shot, causing much more havoc for much less trigger work. A must for any serious T-101.



GUIDED MISSILE

Thank SkyNet for these apples of death. By aiming the target at your chosen enemy and launching one of these, you're guaranteed mucho destruction.



SMART BOMB

Not a particularly clever explosive, but certainly a powerful one. Shoot one of these and all the enemies onscreen are instantly destroyed.



SHIELD

Picking this icon activates a protective shield, which makes you invulnerable for a short while.



COIN

Worth more than its weight in halfpennies. This wondrous dime from the Bank of SkyNet replenishes a small amount of that much-needed energy.

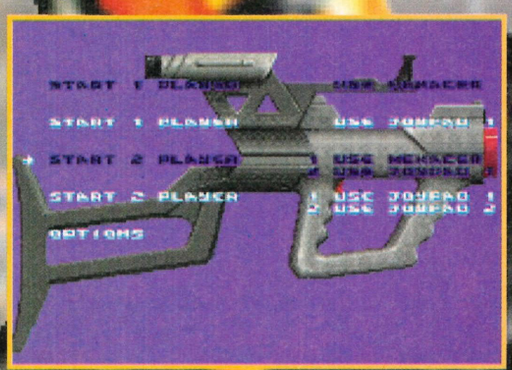


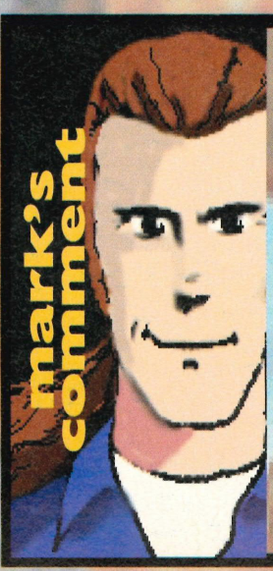
CPU

Shoot at the head of a T-101 when they appear at close range and its brain CPU will fall out. Shoot the CPU and you'll randomly receive one of these...

HASTA LA VISTA, BABY!

Perhaps the most important feature of Terminator 2 is the fact that it's the first game to be written with the Menacer light gun in mind. The soon-to-be-released Menacer works much like the SNES's Superscope, but has removable parts which allow it to be constructed into various different forms, such as a rifle or hand gun. It also has a special mechanism inside which gives the gun a sort of kickback, just like a real gun. Why, you could almost believe you were holding an Uzi 9mm. The only problem is that in two-player mode only one player can use a Menacer.

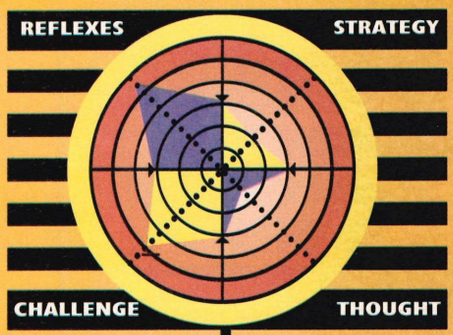




It's true that Terminator 2 fills the hole in the Megadrive market for into-the-screen blasters, but I'm afraid I didn't enjoy it as much as Tom obviously did. The game is suitably post-apocalyptic visually, with burnt red skies and scorched earth backgrounds populated by nightmarish skeletal figures, which explode quite effectively. The sound effects fit in with the theme of Armageddon too – your machine gun makes a suitably machine gun-ish racket and the noise the cart kicks out keeps you pushing on through the levels... for a while. In my case, not for a very long while. The non-stop blasting gameplay quickly became boring for me – blast skeletons... blast aeroplanes... blast power-ups... blast more skeletons... and so on, and so on. It's definitely a game tailor-made for the Menacer – if you're the type of person that enjoys mindlessly shooting up anything and everything onscreen, there's plenty here for you to shoot your load at, and you'll probably get a lot of enjoyment out of this. But if you're into games that involve a little more than blowing things to smithereens, avoid it.

GAME TITLE

T2



%RATING

PRESENTATION

77 Not much in the way of options and a sparse collection of intermission screens. Definitely could have been better.

GRAPHICS

85 Smart looking and well animated, but some of the sprites move a bit comically and the backgrounds are a bit poor.

SOUND

92 Excellent tunes and superb sound effects. Unfortunately the film soundtrack is conspicuous by its absence.

SHORT TERM PLAY

86 Easy to get into, although the targeting system is a bit tricky to start with.

LONG TERM PLAY

84 Fairly challenging with a joypad and harder with the Menacer. The two-player option will have lasting appeal.

MEGATECH RATING

86 A smart, Operation Wolf-style shoot 'em up. The best light gun game around.



DEATH

PISTOLS AT DAWN

FORMAT: CART
M-BITS: 4

BY: RAZORSOFT

PRICE: IMPORT

PLAYERS: 1

GAME TYPE: SHOOT'EM UP

CONTINUES: NONE

SKILL SETTINGS: 1



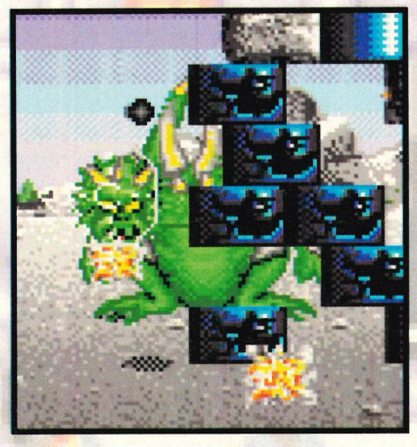
▲ A ONE-ON ONE CONFRONTATION WITH THE DEADLY DARRIUS MORB!

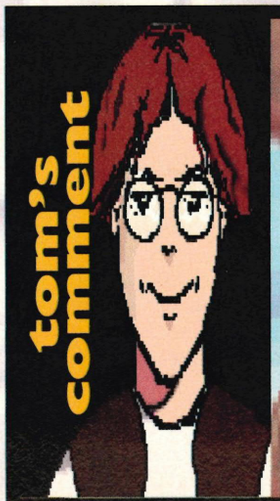
The aftermath of the Great Chibble Disaster of 2139 AD has profoundly affected the nature of intergalactic war. During the famed annual gathering at the Space Maniac's Ball, one of the friendly, but somewhat clumsy Chibbles of Thuxwan 12 accidentally trod on the toe of a Mud Dundar. Such is the tenderness of a Dundar's toe that the Dundan race immediately wiped out the Chibblet race and blew Thuxwan 12 to bits. Naturally action was called for, but no-one dared challenge the Dundars, so a galactic ruling was hastily drawn up – all intergalactic disputes must be settled by duel to the death.

That settled, all the races of the universe went back to their wild partying and all was peaceful once more. That is, until an organisation known as the Super 9 seized control of all the intergalactic flight paths and held the universe to ransom. Better warm up that pistol, because it's duel time!

The dreaded Super 9 are, in fact, nine of the galaxy's super powers. As Jade Barrett, the greatest warrior of the Federation (the tenth and last bastion of justice in the galaxy), it is up to you to wrest the reins of power from these merciless fiends. By galactic law, this means that you must battle each of the Super 9's finest champions in a one-on-one duel to the death.

Featured in first person perspective, each battle takes place in an arena partitioned by a number of walls. Standing face to face, you and your opponent must blast each other to death. The survivor is the winner. Simple! Well, the whole task is made that little bit harder by the addition of a time limit and limited ammunition. If any of these run out, it's game over.



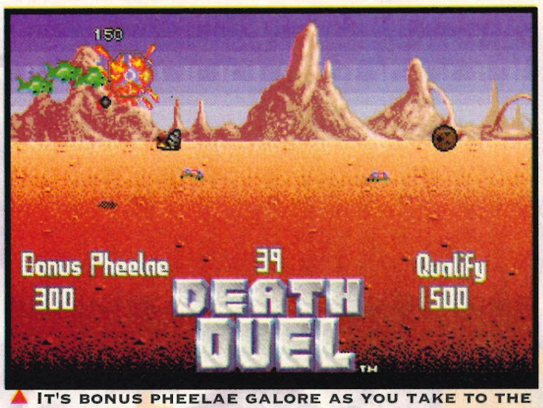


This is one of the most atrocious games I've ever had the misfortune to play. It's dire! The least you'd expect from a first person, one-on one duel game is the ability to move around a 3D playfield, but with Death Duel all you can do is scroll left and right a bit. There isn't even any parallax on the badly-drawn backdrops to give a sensation of head movement – it's like your character is sliding along a set of tram lines. Also, your weapons tend to fire off target, although the excuse for this is that is something to do with perspective. Rub my chin, there's absolutely no 3D perspective to this game. All this would be teeth-clenchingly bearable if there was even an iota of fun to the blasting, but there isn't. Admittedly, it does require a bit of perseverance to defeat each opponent, and it is hard, but it's also dull and unimaginative. When you consider that Faceball on the Gameboy is far better than this, then there's really no excuse for such crap. The programmers describe this game as a new standard in video game challenge. They're right – I just didn't think the standards could ever get this low.

DUEL

TIME IS MONEY

You may be the last hope of the Federation, but being the tight-fisted misers that they are, the Fed's leaders refuse to fork out any cash to help you battle the Super 9 unless you meet their minimum qualification level. After defeating each opponent, you're sent to a shooting gallery where the aim is to blast a number of small, unintelligent creatures in order to attain a certain score in a set time. Fail to do this and you'll lose a life, but if you complete this round you'll receive a bonus in the form of Pheelae – the galactic currency. The quicker you complete a round, the more pheelae you get.



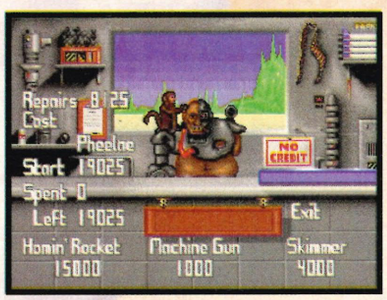
▲ IT'S BONUS PHEELAE GALORE AS YOU TAKE TO THE BONUS ROUND.

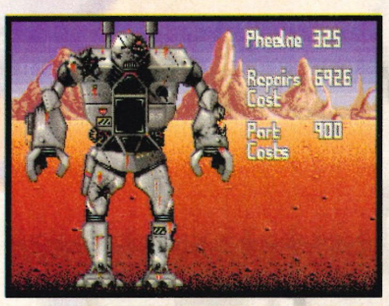
GUNS AND AMMO

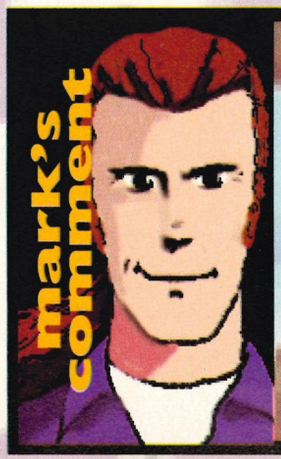
Welcome to Dr. Thrag's Weapon Shop. After each qualifying round, you can come here and purchase everything from bog-standard machine guns to apocalyptic homing rockets, using your hard-earned pheelae.

In your standard issue A-7 Trinity Rote Cyborg battle armour, there are three weapon slots– into each of these may be placed a single weapon, up to a multiple of three. But watch your cash – you'll need to have some change left to repair your armour. Certain weapons are ineffectual against certain baddies, so it's important to choose wisely.

Dr. Thrag likes nothing better than to sell some of his goods at bargain prices, so it's a good idea to check out the Cheap Shots basket. Hidden amongst the Neil Sedaka and Shakin' Stevens albums, you'll find a special offer weapon. But don't just buy it for the sake of good value– make sure that it's the type of weapon you can use against your next foe.

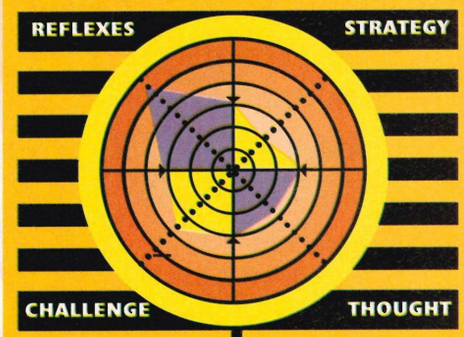






Death Duel? The only death-defying action you can expect from this sad and incredibly limited spectacle is managing not to die of boredom when you're playing it. It takes about five minutes to get the gist of the whole thing – shoot weapons at opposing nastie, blow nastie away, annihilate small creatures on qualifying screen, buy more weapons from shop, repair damage done by previous nastie, shoot weapons at next nastie... and so on. That's it! Yes, the nasties aren't easy to despatch and yes, it takes a while to get used to the 'banana shot' trajectory of some of the weapons and which ones to use against which opponent, but that's as deep as the gameplay goes. In fact, this joyless shooting gallery sim is so mind-blowingly tedious, I can only think of one more thing to say about it – don't buy it!

GAME TITLE
DEATH DUEL



%RATING

PRESENTATION
49 Reasonable interval screens with a sparse array of options.

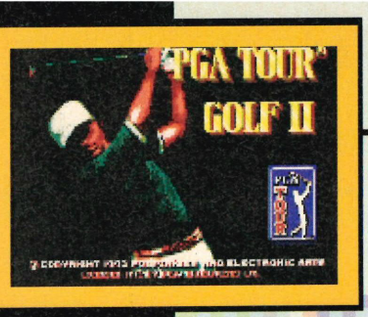
GRAPHICS
52 Poor backdrops, thrifty animation and sad looking sprites. It's a joke – and I'm not laughing.

SOUND
79 Bearable sound effects and some quite decent tunes. The best bit of the game.

SHORT TERM PLAY
35 Poor, limited gameplay makes this game boring from the outset. Let's hope you've got a ten-day money back guarantee.

LONG TERM PLAY
32 First impressions of this game are the right ones. There's little chance of you playing this game after a week.

MEGATECH RATING
34 This game has nothing going for it. At least Dark Castle was funny, this definitely isn't.



PGA TOU

FORMAT: CART
M-BITS: 8

BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS

PRICE: £44.99

PLAYERS: 1-4

GAME TYPE: SPORTS

CONTINUES: BATTERY

SKILL SETTINGS: 1

TEE FOR TWO



▲ JOEY MISPLACES HIS DRIVE FROM THE TEE AND ENDS UP IN THE ROUGH. SHOOTING FROM THE LONG GRASS PREVENTS HIM FROM GETTING MUCH DISTANCE OUT OF HIS SWING WITH THE TWO IRON.

Originally a PC game, PGA Tour Golf made quite a stir when it was released on the Megadrive around a year and a half ago. With its four excellent courses, a multitude of options, on-screen info and superb view-point screens, PGA was an instantly accessible game, but what really made it stand out from the rest was its top-notch playability. The smooth and simple control method, coupled with the well-graded challenge level meant that PGA Tour Golf was enjoyable for both experienced players and beginners. It was a nigh-on perfect golf sim. PGA 2 has been dubbed as an upgraded version of the original rather than a sequel by EA, but, there are a number of new and interesting features in this incarnation. Look and see.



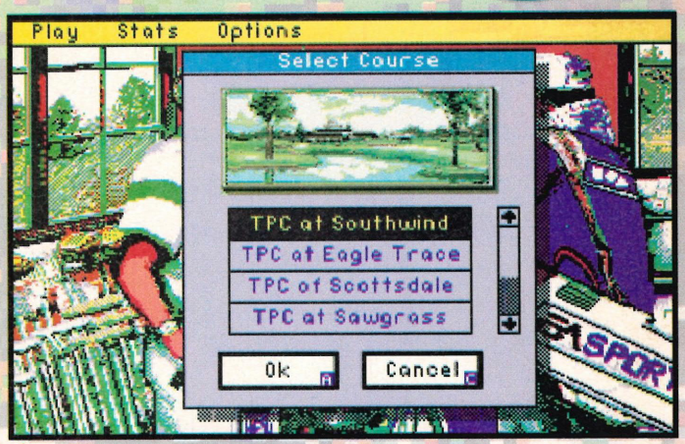
Golf, a game for old people and bad comedians and yet also, a game of intense skill. Harking from way back in 15th Century Scotland, the rules are simple. A player must hit a small white ball from a raised peg or tee across the fairway towards the distant, closely-mown putting green around a hole. It is into this hole that the ball must go. A game consists of playing into 18 consecutive holes spread over an extensive ground known as a golf course. The winner is the player who uses the least strokes to hole their balls. See, simple!

Unfortunately, due to the image of the game created by the aforementioned bad comedians, many people shun the game. The power of Golfan, God of Golf is waning. But a remedy is at hand. PGA Golf Tour 2. Fitting neatly into your Megadrive, this handy cartridge brings all the delights of Golf into your living room and best of all, there are no bad comedians in the whole game. So slip into your Pringle jumper, and Rupert Bear trousers, pull the curtains shut and let the golfing orgy begin.

UR GOLF 2

COURSE WORDS

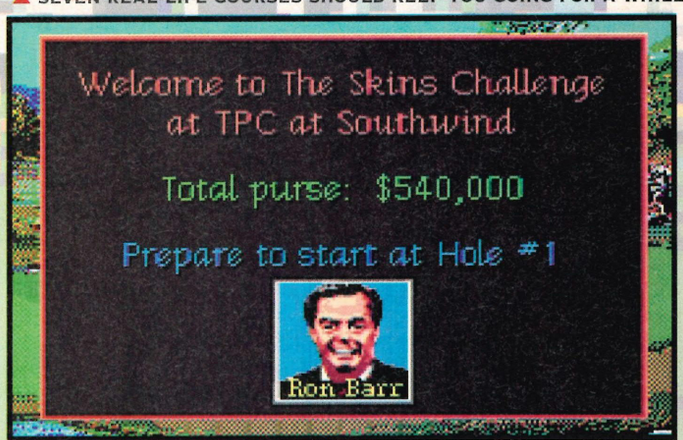
The original PGA Golf only treated golf fans to four delicious professional golf courses. Not so, its sequel. This time around, there are seven fine courses to partake in. Joining original courses, Avenel, Sawgrass, PGA West Stadium and Sterling Shores, comes SouthWind. From deep in the heart of Memphis, Tenessee, this is the home of the Federal Express St Jude Classic tournament. Next up, is the Eagle Trace course in Coral Springs, Florida, the venue of the Honda Classic. And finally, home of the Phoenix Open, is Scottsdale. Providing a fresh challenge to fans of the original, these courses also allow new players a fair stab against their experienced pals.



▲ SEVEN REAL-LIFE COURSES SHOULD KEEP YOU GOING FOR A WHILE.

SKIN JOBS

Golfan is nothing if not generous. Why, in PGA 2 he has even provided a whole new tournament, namely the Skins Game. In this wondrous 18-hole event, two or more players can compete for big money. Each round has a certain face value to it and to win the money a player must achieve a lower par than any of the other players. As the game progresses, the prize money increases. However, if any of the players achieve an equal lowest par, the prize money is added on for the next round. As you can imagine, this can produce massive monetary figures and it can all come down to one shot. The word intense just doesn't describe the feeling this game can produce and the screams of despair are like music to Golfan's ears.



▲ EVER-INCREASING SUMS OF MONEY IS THE NAME OF THE GAME IN THE SKINS CHALLENGE.

PLAY IT AGAIN, GOLFAN

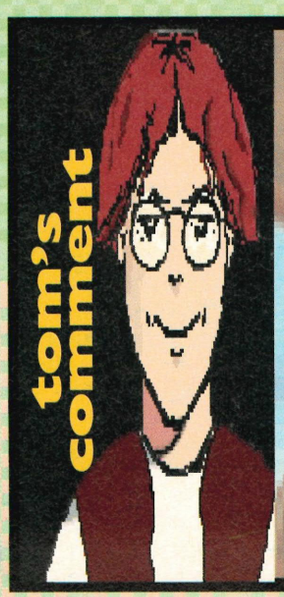
If the mighty Golfan is with you and a particularly superb shot is executed, you'll be subjected to an instant replay of your moment of glory complete with tracer-effect golf ball to map out the trajectory of your shot. However, if you fail to make the grade and the shot rates anywhere between mediocre and crass, do not despair. Simply call up the options menu, select instant replay for yourself and voila, crass-shotted instant replay for even the most hoofed-limbed follower of Golfan.



▲ 'NICE SHOT'? HE COULD HARDLY HAVE MISSED FROM TWO FEET AWAY. GOLFING MITTENS TIED TOO TIGHTLY, PROBABLY.



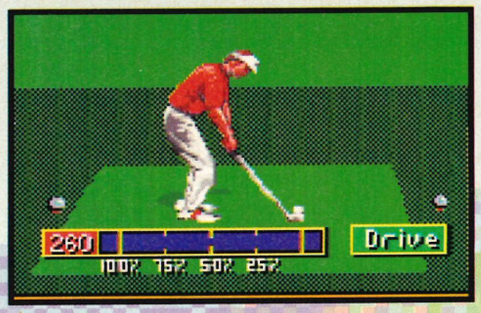
▲ FUZZY SWINGS FOR IT! HE SHOULD CLEAR THAT ENORMOUS SAND-TRAP WITHOUT MUCH TROUBLE.



The original PGA Tour Golf was completely excellent, but there's no doubt about it, PGA 2 is better. As far as graphics and gameplay go, there isn't anything new in those departments, but considering the playability of the original was nothing short of superb, I've got no qualms about that. What makes PGA 2 so good are the little extra touches like the speech. Nothing is quite as rewarding as hearing your golfer call out at a good drive. It takes me back to the old days when I delighted at John Madden yelling 'It's Good!'. To be honest, the hole-browser option, neat as it is, really isn't that much cop and I can't see it being used very much. However, the Skins Game is top-notch and in my books, it's this feature that makes the game. It really is nail-biting stuff, especially when there are a lot of players involved. I don't know whether owners of the first game would honestly get value for money if they bought this, but seeing as I never bought the first one I'll definitely get this. If like me, you thought that golf was boring, this is the game that will change your mind.

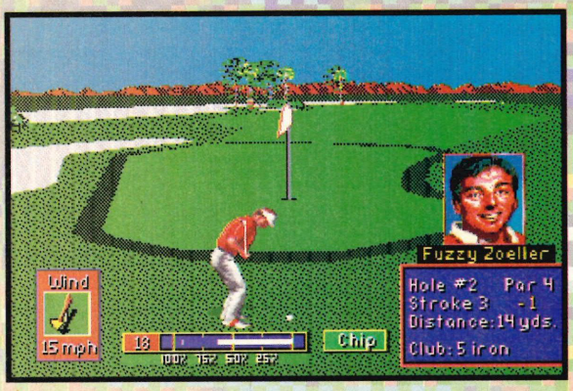
I BROWSE

If you really want to investigate distant parts of the course where you suspect your ball might land, why not activate another of PGA 2's new features, the hole browser? This lets you rise above the fairway, and zoom in on any part you like, just to check the exact nature of the local grass. Thank Golfan!



▲ YOU CAN FOCUS ON ANY PART OF THE COURSE YOU LIKE, BUT IT DOESN'T HELP MUCH.

WALKING IN THE AIR

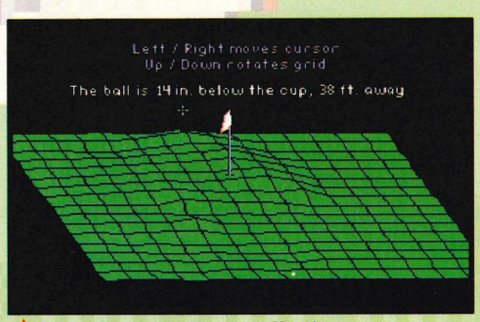


▲ THANKS FOR THE WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT, FRED.

At the beginning of each hole, you are treated to a brief aerial fly-past allowing you to ferret out all the pitfalls and tricky areas. Unless you press the START button and deposit yourself instantly at the tee, you can also take advantage of the advice of such endearing golfing characters as pudgy old Craig Stadler, happy chappy Fred Couples or legume-based Mark McCumber who provide you some priceless gem concerning each hole. Listen carefully to this advice or face the wrath of Golfan himself.

ON THE GREEN

If your balls fly true, you'll will eventually find yourself on the green. It is on this most hallowed turf that the object of your golfing quest lies, for this is the resting place of the hole which in turn is the destined resting place of your ball. PGA 2 gives all would-be Golfanites a hand in depositing the ball in the hole via the provision of the 'Putting Grid'. This handy screen displays an in-depth contour map of the Green, allowing a player to examine all the bumps and dips. It also provides statistical information about the ball's height in relation to the hole, but most important of all, you can finely tune the trajectory of your ball on this screen.

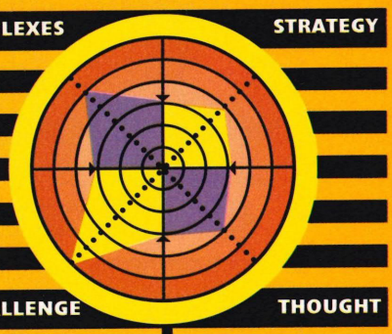


▲ IT'S THE PUTTING GRID. YOU'RE REALLY GOING TO HAVE TO BELT THE BALL TO GET IT 38 FEET AND THEN UP THE HILL.



PGA Tour Golf is one of the most played games in my collection, so I was at a loss as to what miracle EA could perform in another of their game updates. Well, the additions, as usual, are mostly pretty superficial, but there's no denying that overall it's a definite improvement on the original. The extra courses, the finer shot control through the fade options and the Skins Challenge are the most notable new features and make tournaments between experienced PGA players more fun than before. The graphics have also been slightly improved; in the original they were exactly the same as those in the 16 colour PC version, but they now make better use the Megadrive's much greater range of colours. Do these additions make PGA 2 worth buying if you already own the original? Well, I think anyone who did buy the first game would have been keen computer golfers who've now played the original to death and are looking for more of the same, but with new challenges and more refined play. If that's the case, or, of course, if you're completely new to the game, there's no reason why you shouldn't spend your Christmas money on what is definitely the best computer golf game going.

GAME TITLE
PGA 2



%RATING

PRESENTATION

92 — More options that you could shake a club at and tons of informative in-game screens. You couldn't ask for more.

GRAPHICS

93 — Not your usual, exciting Megadrive graphics, but this game is visually about as good as a golf game can get.

SOUND

91 — The superb spot-effects are an improvement on those of the original. Love that speech!

SHORT TERM PLAY

94 — The simple control method means that the game is instantly accessible and instantly enjoyable.

LONG TERM PLAY

96 — With seven courses and the Skins Game you'll be playing this till the cows come home.

MEGATECH RATING

94 — The best golf game on the Megadrive and one of the best Megadrive games there is.

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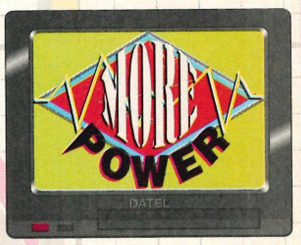


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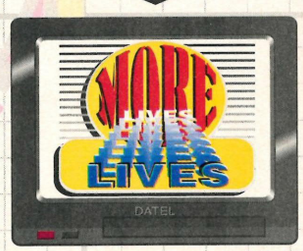
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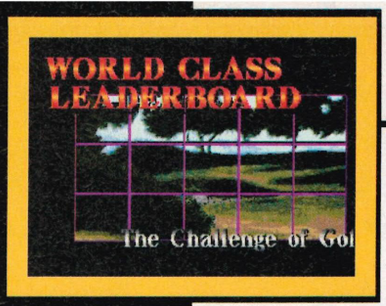
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WORLD CLASS

FORMAT: CART
M-BITS: 4

BY: US GOLD

PRICE: £39.99

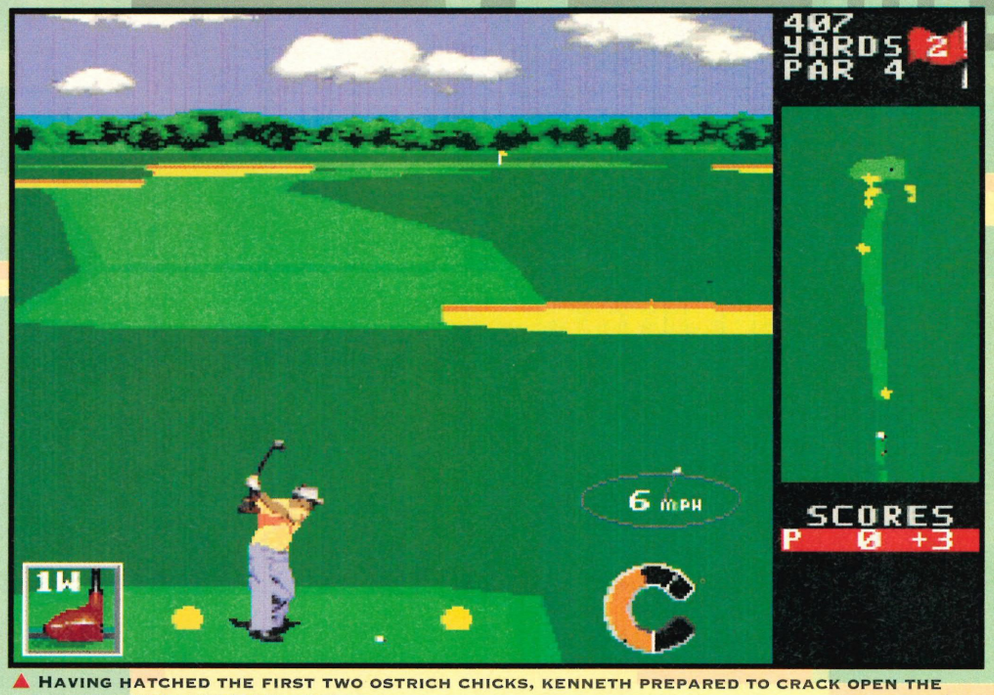
PLAYERS: £1-4

GAME TYPE: SPORTS

CONTINUES: N/A

SKILL SETTINGS: 1

TEE COMES IN A TEEPOT!

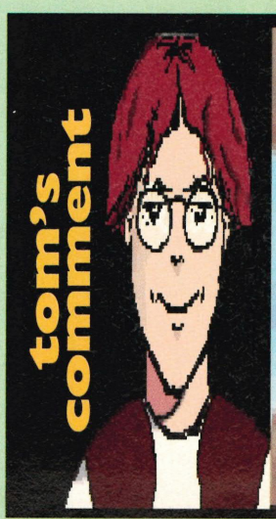


▲ HAVING HATCHED THE FIRST TWO OSTRICH CHICKS, KENNETH PREPARED TO CRACK OPEN THE THIRD AND SMALLEST OF THE EGGS.

Dear Santa, I hope you don't mind me writing to you like this. I am a grown up, a Dad – I might as well confess it, because I know that you've got machines and things that can detect lies. Every Christmas, I sit in my living room and watch as my kids open their presents. They always get such exciting gifts like toys and sweets, but I always receive the same boring rubbish like socks or jumpers. What I yearn for is the thrill of the golfing green. Last night I sat up till the early hours, staring at the local golf course through my bedroom window, but it was all frozen over and covered with snow. Please, is there any way that you could bring the delights of golf into my front room? My son has one of those new-fangled video games machines and I was wondering if it would be possible to purchase a golf game on Megadrive cassette. Do they still use cassettes? Blast it, I'm so old and out of touch – you know, it still amazes me how they get people inside those little television sets! In the old days, things were simpler. We had a game called Leaderboard. Gosh yes, that's what I want. Oh, dear Santa, I've been good this year. Please give me Leaderboard. Yours Hopefully, Mr Dad.

Way back in the murky mists of time, there was a golfing game that made waves on the Commodore 64. That game was Leaderboard. Now, many years later, after having been converted onto just about every computer and console known to man, World Class Leaderboard reaches the Megadrive.

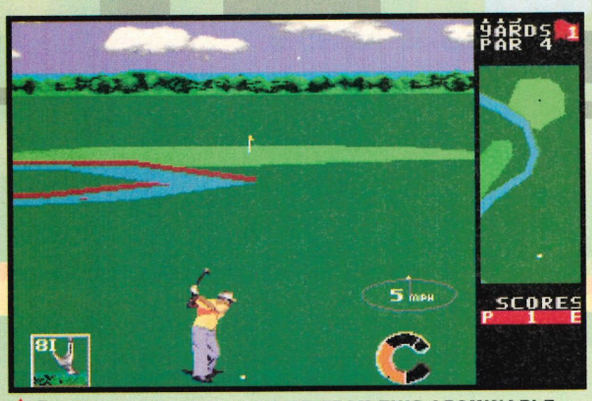
It's the age-old format. Up to four players can compete in an 18-hole round and there are four courses to choose from: St Andrews, Gauntlet, Doral and Cypress Creek. But don't worry if your old pals like Brucie or Tarby don't fancy popping round for a game, because you don't have to go it alone. Four ingeniously-manufactured computer opponents are more than ready to face your challenge. There's good old Mr Chips (co-star of Saturday night's popular Catchphrase), the awesome might of Microman, Ed Logic,2 and the Scottish genius, McMemory.



This game has nothing going for it at all. At best, the graphics are bearable (at least the grass is green) and at worse, the playability is rubbish. The cumbersome power-swing meter is terrible to use and the ridiculously high-speed winds are unrealistic and annoying. Knock the ball onto the green, and you'll experience the true horror of World Class Leaderboard. With almost no information as to the lie of the green, it's almost impossible to accurately putt the ball. Even without the horrendous control method, Leaderboard would still be a poor game. It's just far too shallow and simple to justify being a Megadrive game. With the amount of good quality Megadrive software being released at the moment, the programmers of this game ought to be shot. World Class Leaderboard is just too awful to keep your attention for any length of time and, considering how good PGA Tour Golf 2 is, you'd having to be plain mad to buy this. The less of this trash we see, the better.

LEADERBOARD

SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT

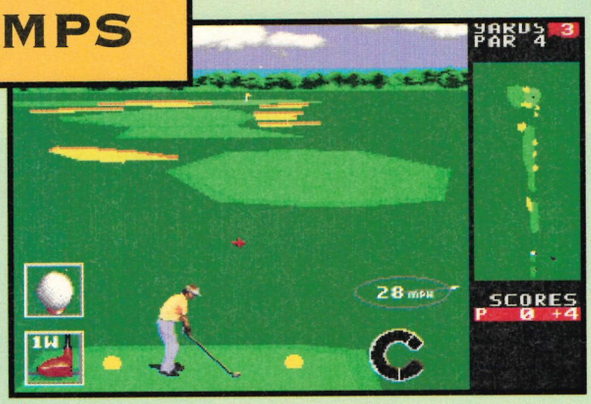


▲ BY THE CLUBS, RELEASE ME FROM THIS ABOMINABLE POSE, GOLFAN, DAMN YOU!

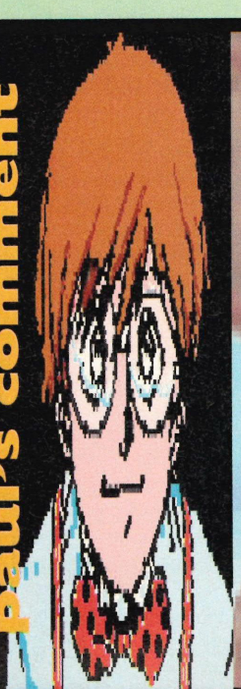
So you've got your clubs and you've prayed to Golfan, the god of golf, but how do you hit the ball? Enter the handy swing-o-meter. Press button A and an amber bar fills the meter. This is the power of the swing. Stop the amber bar at the power level you want and a blue bar appears. This bar must be stopped exactly on the line at the bottom of the meter. This is the accuracy line. If you stop the bar before the line, the ball will hook left. Stop the ball after the line and the ball will slice right, but get it just right and the ball will fly straight and true.

TOP TRUMPS

If there's one flaw that all the courses in Leaderboard suffer from, it's a bad case of wind. Gales of up to thirty miles an hours blow around the course as your foolish golfer takes on the might of Golfan. When hurricanes of this magnitude are blowing, it's important to take heed of the little wind-o-meter at the bottom of the screen lest your ball is blown to the heavens and your little wind-loving golfer's hopes of victory are dashed forever.

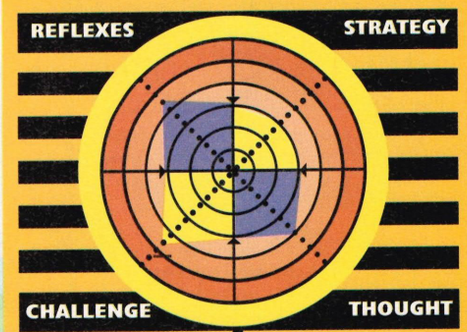


▲ OH, MEG, MY GIANT RAT BUDDY. HOW DID YOU BURY YOURSELF UNDER THERE? NEVER FEAR, JUST A FEW QUICK TUGS OF YOUR TAIL AND I'LL HAVE YOU FREE.



If I was working on a Commodore 64 mag and was writing this in 1985, I would no doubt be well-impressed by this game. Unfortunately, it's near enough 1993 and World Class Leaderboard is a Megadrive game whose direct competition is PGA Tour Golf 2. PGA 2 is an enjoyable simulation with realistic graphics and an excellent control system which allows the player to feel like they really are exercising golfing skills. Playing World Class Leaderboard is more a question of hit-and-hope. Unlike PGA, WCL doesn't suggest a choice of club so you have to keep referring to the instructions to check ranges, and not only are these distances not displayed on the power bar, the bar actually moves way too fast for you to be able to hit shots accurately, which makes the game permanently frustrating. To make things even worse, the speed and direction of the prevailing wind is constantly changing – wildly – and if you leave it long enough you usually end up driving in a 30 mph wind! Who plays golf in 30 mph winds? When putting, the degree and direction of the slope is also indicated by the wind gauge, and in miles per hour – how sloppy can you get? There are so many things wrong with this, it's hardly worth comparing it with PGA because EA's game is in a completely different league and if you're after a golf game it's undoubtedly the only option worth considering.

GAME TITLE
WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD



%RATING

PRESENTATION

50 — A title screen and a variety of limited options, but considering this is a sports sim, those options are surprisingly limited.

GRAPHICS

54 — Nice trees and golfer sprite, but the way the ball moves at hyperspeed 12 doesn't look too realistic.

SOUND

56 — A basic introductory tune and passable effects. Speech digitised from a lobotomised Dalek.

SHORT TERM PLAY

39 — A few minutes of play is all it takes to discover the flaws which make this game such a bitch to play.

LONG TERM PLAY

30 — Playing a whole round is a test of endurance, patience and temper, rather than skill.

MEGATECH RATING

33 — Forget this gaming tragedy and buy PGA 2.



WWF SUPER

FORMAT: CART
M-BITS: 8

BY: ACCLAIM

PRICE: £39.99

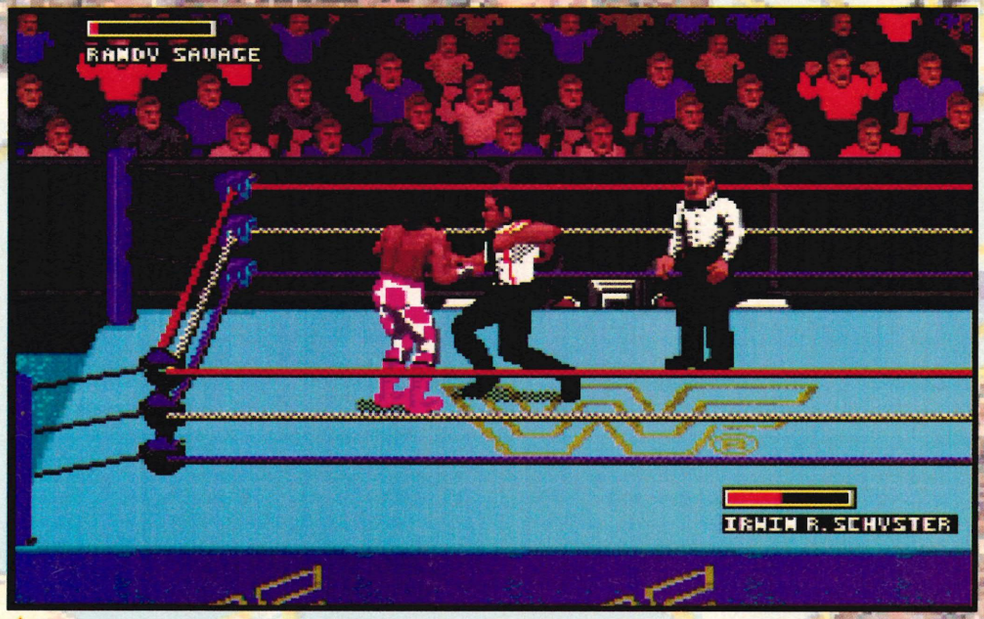
PLAYERS: 1-2

GAME TYPE: SPORT

CONTINUES: NONE

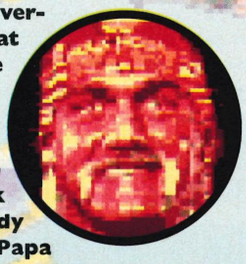
SKILL SETTINGS: 3

IN THE RED CORNER...

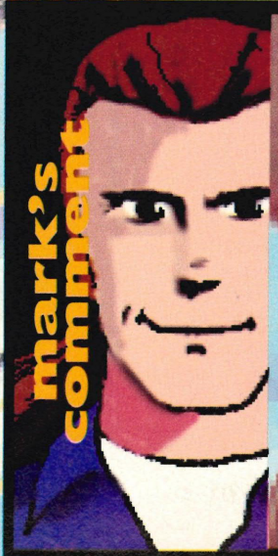


▲ THE ANNUAL SILLY PANTS CONVENTION COMMENCES AS THE CREW OF THE STARSHIP ENTERPRISE LOOK ON IN ANTICIPATION.

WWF Wrestling is gaudy, tacky, totally over the top It's a world populated by enormous freaks with massive egos and that all-American urge to win while showing off as much as possible. WWF wrestlers make Giant Haystacks and Big Daddy look like Claire Rayner on steroids, and top grapplers like Hulk Hogan, The Ultimate Warrior and Randy 'Macho Man' Savage enjoy superstar status in the States. The emphasis is firmly on entertainment and American-style razamatazz rather than out-and-out blood 'n' violence, with each wrestler trying to outdo the others with more and more outrageous costumes and behaviour. Having conquered America, WWF wrestling now seems to be taking Europe by storm – over the past year, exhibition bouts and tours have boosted the 'sport's popularity, and a Super NES interpretation of the WWF experience was released earlier this Summer. Now Acclaim are hoping to make it big on the Megadrive. So it's seconds out, and let the bout begin!



There are eight wrestlers to choose from in the Megadrive version of WWF Super Wrestlemania, compared to the ten that apeared in the Super NES version. But unless your favourite wrestler has been left out, it won't make a lot of difference, as the most wrestlers you need to select in any given contest is four (in Survivor Series matches), which leaves four grapplers left for your opponent. So which characters are on offer for wrestle-hungry Megadrivers? Well, you can choose from: Hulk Hogan, Ultimate Warior, Ted Dibiase, Shawn Michaels, Randy 'Macho Man' Savage, British Bulldog, Irwin R. Schyster and Papa Shango. Fans of The Undertaker, The Snake, Sid Justice, Animal, Typhoon, Earthquake or Hawk might be disappointed, as these characters were included in the Super NES version, but, hey – WWF Wrestling's a tough game, buddy!



I was very pleasantly surprised by this game – it's a really enjoyable grunt 'n' groan sim. There are a wide variety of moves to be pulled off, but it does take a bit of practice before you can really do your wrestler justice with the range of button-pressing combinations. The sprites are well-animated, and move fluidly with the speed you'd expect from a 20-stone man-mountain.

Control is more a case of button-squeezing rather than button-tapping – the sprites seem to respond better if your fingers and thumbs are trying to crush the life out of the joypad – and this seems to add to the feeling that you're engaged in a real tussle. After a particularly hectic bout, your hands will be aching like mad. Where Wrestlemania really scores is in head to head combat with another human opponent – it's just so much fun. The whole thing gives the impression of a more light-hearted contest than some deadly serious beat 'em ups I could mention. If you like lots of bone-crunching sound effects and buckets of blood and gore, you won't like this game, but if you prefer to play physical contact games on the Megadrive with a grin on your face, rather than a scowl, you'll have a lot of fun with this.

WRESTLEMANIA

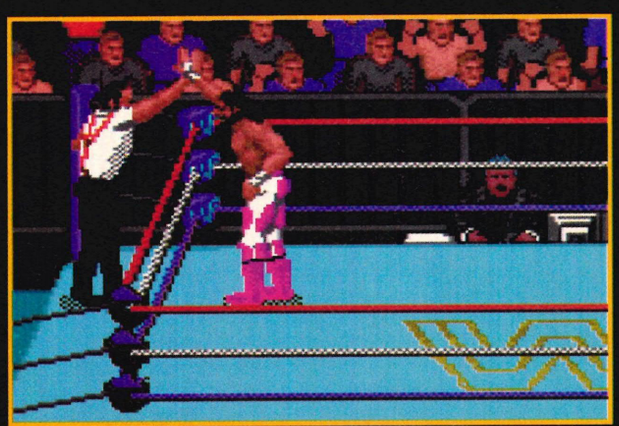
SECONDS OUT!

You can opt for one of four different types of contest in Wrestlemania. For each type, you have the option of either playing against the computer or a human opponent, the exception being the WWF Championship which is one-player only. Each type of bout allows you to choose from easy, medium or hard settings. At the start of each bout, you get a screen in which an MC appears in the middle of the ring, with speech bubbles introducing the wrestlers who are about to do battle.



ONE ON ONE

Literally a head-on conflict between your chosen WWF star and whichever wrestler your opponent selects. First one to be pinned to the canvas for a count of three is the loser.



TAG TEAM

A natural progression from one on one, this is basically two on two – you and your opponent choose two wrestlers each to do battle with. If one of your grapplers is getting fifty shades of crap beaten out of him by your opponent, you can move him over to your corner, where your tag partner awaits outside the ring. Give him a quick 'high five' hand-slap and he'll get in there and mix it, while your first chap gets a well-earned breather. Strictly according to the rules of wrestling, only one of your men should be in the ring at any one time, but in this version, as in real life WWF bouts, rules can be bent. If you're being pinned to the canvas, you temporarily take control of your tag partner – move him over to give your enemy a swift kick in the butt, and hey presto! – you're up and out of danger, while your partner climbs back out of the ring.



SURVIVOR SERIES

Double-up two on two, and what do you get? That's right – four on four, or the Survivor Series, as it's known in WWF circles. You pick four wrestlers, your opponent picks four and the bout commences with one from each opposing team. Your other three men are held in reserve, but tagging is not allowed. The bout continues in one on one style until one wrestler is counted out, after which he leaves the auditorium and one of his team-mates takes his place. This continues until all four members of one team have been defeated – the losers.



WWF CHAMPIONSHIP

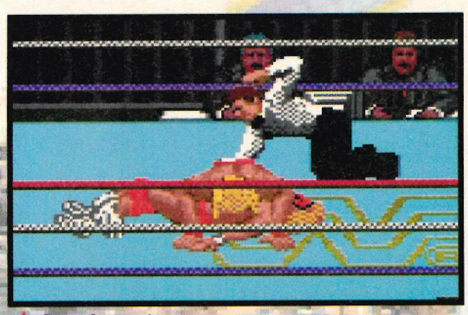
This is a one-player option only – it's a tournament in which your chosen guy is pitted against all seven of the remaining wrestlers, one after the other. You have to defeat each one of the opponents in turn on your way to becoming WWF Champion (you hope).



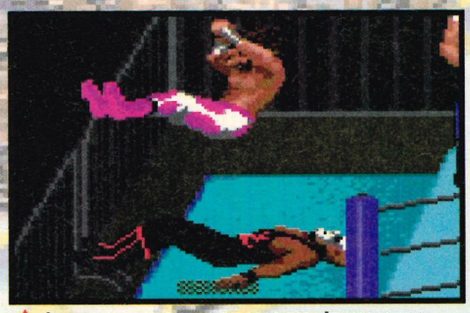
THE MOVES

Once you've had your fun making your chosen WWF superstar goosestep around the ring and have failed to knock out the referee with punches and kicks, you'll want to get to grips with all the moves that inflict maximum damage on your opponent. Pressing different combinations of buttons produces certain routines, depending on which positions you and your opponent are in, and each wrestler has his own particular trademark move too. For instance, if both wrestlers are standing up, pushing the C button will make your man punch, while pressing C when your opponent is running towards you gives you a clothesline (a move in which your forearm is raised to meet your enemy's oncoming neck).

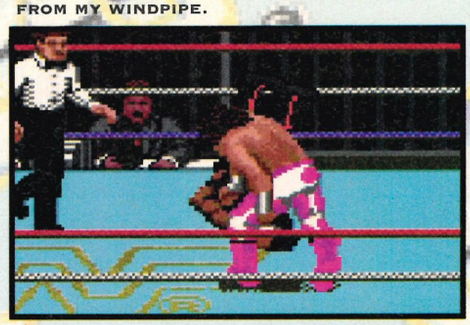
Apart from the basic punch and kick moves and the aforementioned clothesline, there's a wide variety of specialist wrestling manoeuvres to be performed, once you get the hang of which buttons do what in each situation. When both men are in a lock, head butts can do a good deal of damage or alternatively, in the same situation, you can atempt to bodyslam, push your adversary into the ropes or give him the benefit of a 'suplex' (a bodyslam where he lands on his neck rather than his back). Flying dropkicks are a flamboyant way of kicking your enemy in the face, and if he's running towards you, you can do a hiptoss on him (like a judo throw, using your hip as a lever). Cimb on top of one of the the 'turnbuckles' (the posts at the corners of the ring) and you can perform a flying elbowdrop, landing on the other guy if you're lucky – if you're unlucky, you'll land on the canvas like a 20-stone packet of lard. Knock your rival to the canvas and you can either pull him back up to inflict further damage to him while he's upright, stamp on him, subject him to a vicious elbowdrop or go for broke and pin him down to the canvas. Each time you inflict some major damage on your foe, his energy bar is depleted. To win a bout, you must pin your opponent to the canvas for a count of three, but you'll only be successful if his enrergy bar is very low – if he's still got a decent reserve of energy, he'll be able to push you off. If you find your man floundering on the canvas, you can roll your man away from your rival to avoid the deadly pin.



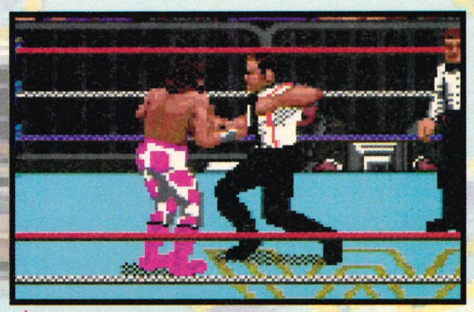
▲ AWW! WHO'S MIXED MY YELLOW PLASTICINE WITH THE RED?



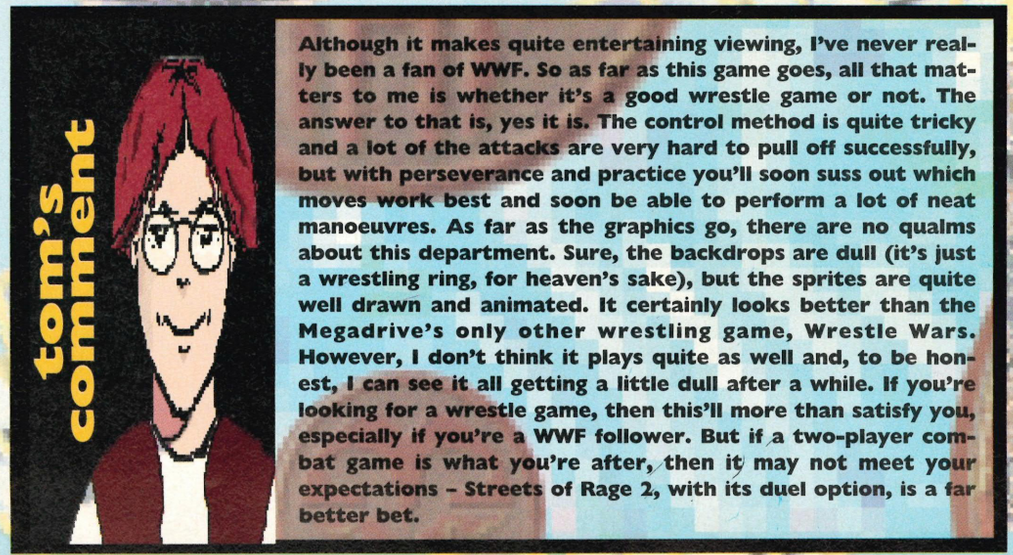
▲ JUST LEAP ON MY STOMACH. IT MAY BE THE ONLY WAY TO DISLODGE THAT PEANUT FROM MY WINDPIPE.



▲ EXCUSE ME, GARCON. DO YOU HAVE THESE BREEKS IN A SIZE 10?



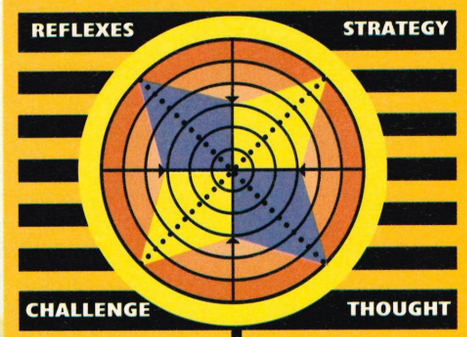
▲ DAA-AD, I WON'T WEAR THESE TROUSERS TO SCHOOL – I JUST WON'T!



Although it makes quite entertaining viewing, I've never really been a fan of WWF. So as far as this game goes, all that matters to me is whether it's a good wrestle game or not. The answer to that is, yes it is. The control method is quite tricky and a lot of the attacks are very hard to pull off successfully, but with perseverance and practice you'll soon suss out which moves work best and soon be able to perform a lot of neat manoeuvres. As far as the graphics go, there are no qualms about this department. Sure, the backdrops are dull (it's just a wrestling ring, for heaven's sake), but the sprites are quite well drawn and animated. It certainly looks better than the Megadrive's only other wrestling game, Wrestle Wars. However, I don't think it plays quite as well and, to be honest, I can see it all getting a little dull after a while. If you're looking for a wrestle game, then this'll more than satisfy you, especially if you're a WWF follower. But if a two-player combat game is what you're after, then it may not meet your expectations – Streets of Rage 2, with its duel option, is a far better bet.

GAME TITLE

WWF



%RATING

PRESENTATION

65 — Very basic intro options screen, with poorly animated MC introducing wrestlers with speech bubbles.

GRAPHICS

86 — Smooth, smartly animated sprites with neat action routines.

SOUND

59 — Could definitely do with some more hard-hitting sound fx.

SHORT TERM PLAY

86 — The controls take a while to master, but it's worth it once you do.

LONG TERM PLAY

79 — The sort of cart you'll go back to now and again, even after the novelty's worn off.

MEGATECH RATING

84 — Wrestlemania injects a large dollop of fun into the stable of Megadrive beat 'em up-type games.

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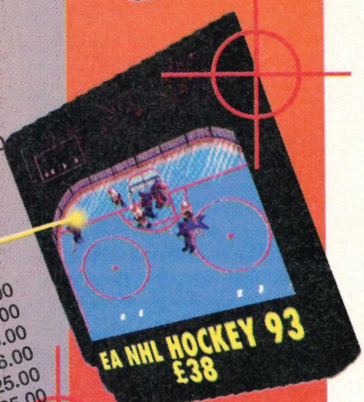














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RAM

FORMAT: CART
M-BITS: 4

BY: TENGEN

PRICE: IMPORT

PLAYERS: 1-2

GAME TYPE: STRATEGY

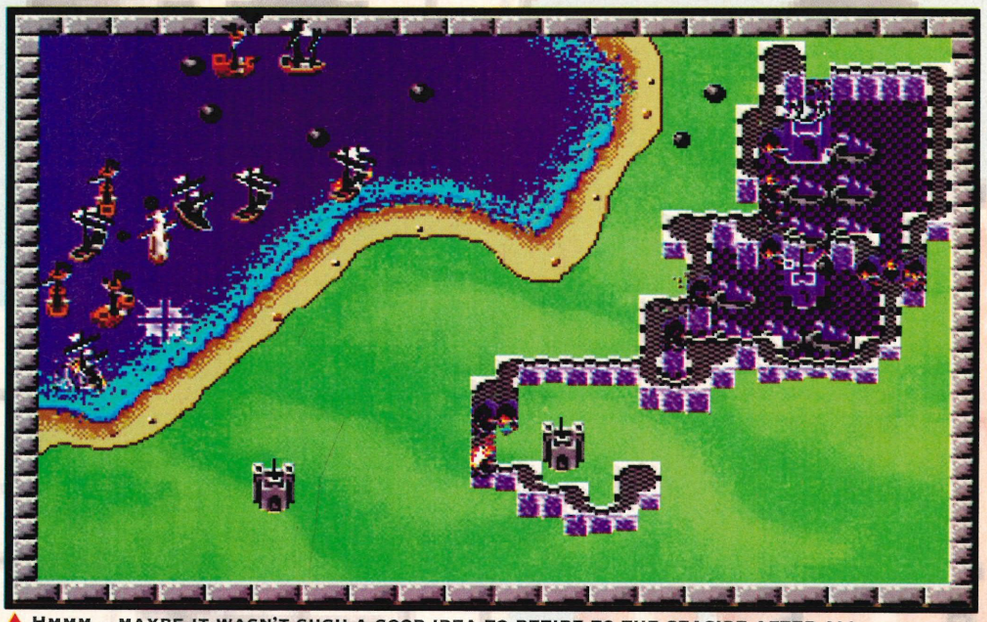
CONTINUES: 3

SKILL SETTINGS: 3

It must've been brilliant to have been a baron in Medieval times. A life of unadulterated pleasure – all that hunting, feasting, wenching and lording it over the commoners, making sure the serfs didn't get a square deal by pressing them into your own private army or forcing them to build a new en-suite bathroom with jacuzzi onto your private chamber. But it wasn't all fun and games for the lord of the manor, mainly because there was always another power-hungry baron nearby. And as sure as chain mail pants give you a sweaty gusset, your neighbour would have his eye on your castle as a potential second home, so feuds were an intrinsic part of everyday life.

Rampart is a strategy game set in the Medieval era, which focuses on these territorial conflicts between aggressive, warring overlords. Expanding your battlements, defending your castle against insurgent enemies with cannons and inflicting as much damage as possible on your foe are your aims.

PICK A CASTLE, ANY CASTLE



▲ HMMM... MAYBE IT WASN'T SUCH A GOOD IDEA TO RETIRE TO THE SEASIDE AFTER ALL.

Whether you're playing against the computer or a human opponent, you'll have to choose the particular battlefield and exact site for your castle. Once you've picked the battlefield – you can go for either beginner or advanced level, with a choice of fields for each type – several locations are offered on the overhead plan-view screen, each of which has different strategic advantages and disadvantages. Once you've selected your site, battlements are automatically built up around your home castle, completely enclosing it. Now you're ready to start attacking your enemy.

FEUDING SYSTEM



▲ TWO CANNONS LEFT TO PLACE, WITH TEN SECONDS TO GO... BUT I'M RUINNING OUT OF PLACES TO PUT 'EM. AIIIEEEE!

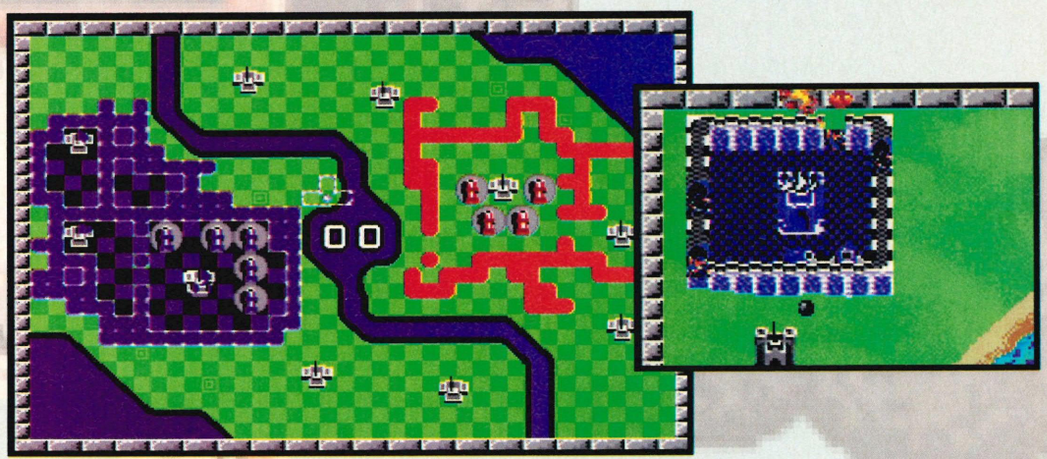
Once your ramparts have been constructed, you can start to install cannons with which to deal out destruction to the enemy. Your territory which is completely surrounded by battlements is picked out in a darker colour to the surrounding landscape, which is also divided up in a grid, chequerboard style. Your cannons must be placed inside the boundaries of your territory within a pretty strict time limit – and each piece of artillery needs four squares (ie two by two) of clear space to be positioned in. For the first round you're rationed to just two cannons, and once your firepower is positioned, the bombardment can begin.

In one-player mode, castles are located on coastal sites, and the enemy comes in the form of a flotilla of ships heading in towards land. Using a floating targeting-sight, you must aim your cannonballs at the incoming armada, hopefully sinking them without trace. These vessels vary from Gunships and Flagships, which fire at your castle as they advance, to Troop Carriers which off-load troops if they manage to reach land, and each require a different amount of direct hits before they're destroyed.

PART

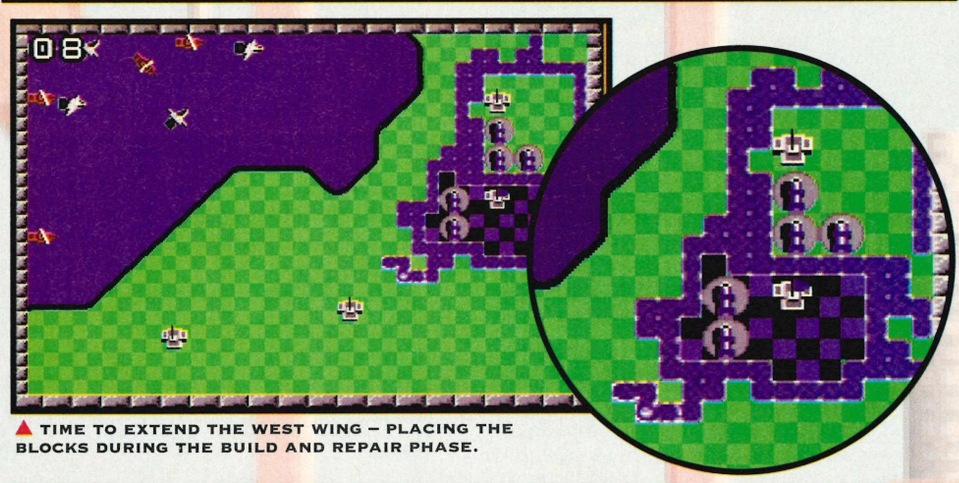
If you're playing against a human opponent, there are no ships and the aim is to reduce as much of your enemy's ramparts to rubble as possible –the more damage you manage to inflict, the more points you'll accumulate and the more difficult it is for your opponent to rebuild his battlements. As you become more experienced in battle, you'll learn which are the best sections of your foe's ramparts to aim for in order to cause maximum inconvenience.

As the Battle Phase commences, the graphics change from the chequerboard effect of the initial building phase to a graduated green landscape, with the castle ramparts picked out in red or blue. In the heat of battle, the cannons roar and cannonballs rain through the air, landing with explosions and flames, until the cry goes up: "Cease fire!"



▲ OH DEAR, LOOKS LIKE THE RED PLAYER HAS BEEN NEGLECTING HIS TETRIS PRACTICE – LOOK AT THOSE JERRY-BUILT RAMPARTS.

JIGSAW FEELING

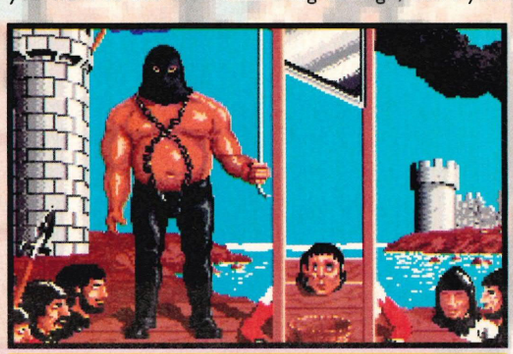


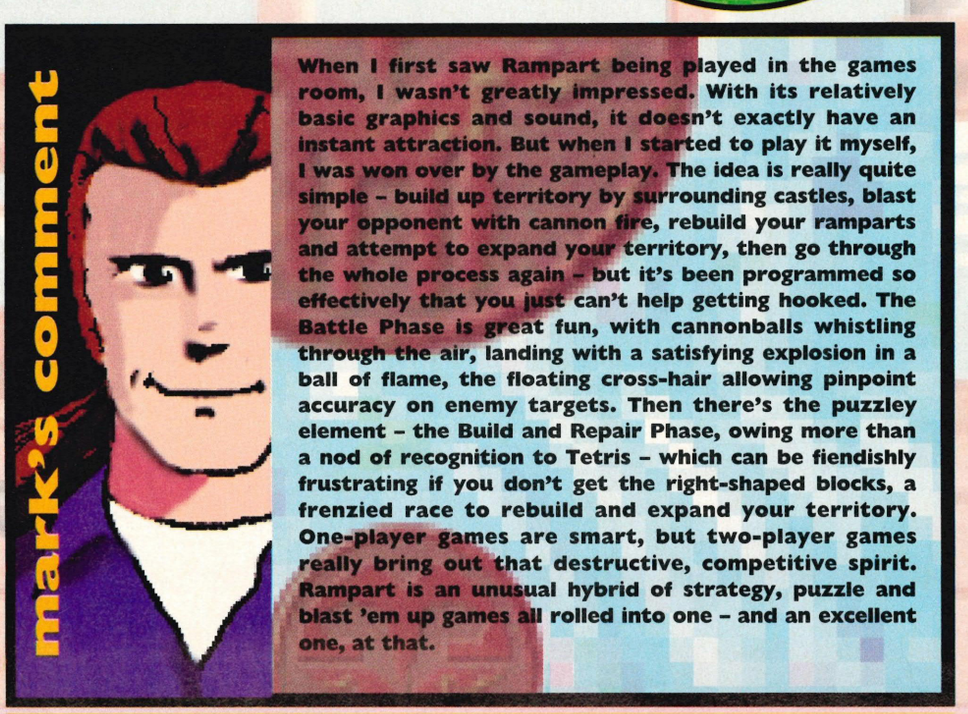
▲ TIME TO EXTEND THE WEST WING – PLACING THE BLOCKS DURING THE BUILD AND REPAIR PHASE.

With the Battle Phase over, you get the chance to survey the amount of damage you've done and the amount of damage you've suffered. Then it's on to the Build and Repair Phase – time to restore your ramparts to their former glory by filling in the blocks that have been blown up by enemy fire. But it's not just a simple case of contracting in the cheapest bunch of cowboy stonemasons you can find – that would be too easy. The way you have to rebuild your battlements in Rampart is via a puzzley section which can be incredibly frustrating – and it's against the clock too.

Basically, you have to fit Tetris-style building blocks of various shapes and sizes into the gaps in your walls. Each piece must fit exactly – it must not overlap any other parts of your wall, the boundary wall, any water or any destroyed cannons – but it can be rotated to fill the desired hole. As you move the blocks around, desperately trying to make them fit, your efforts are accompanied by an irritating tune which sounds as if it's being played on a biscuit tin, although it does seem to add to the tension of playing against the clock.

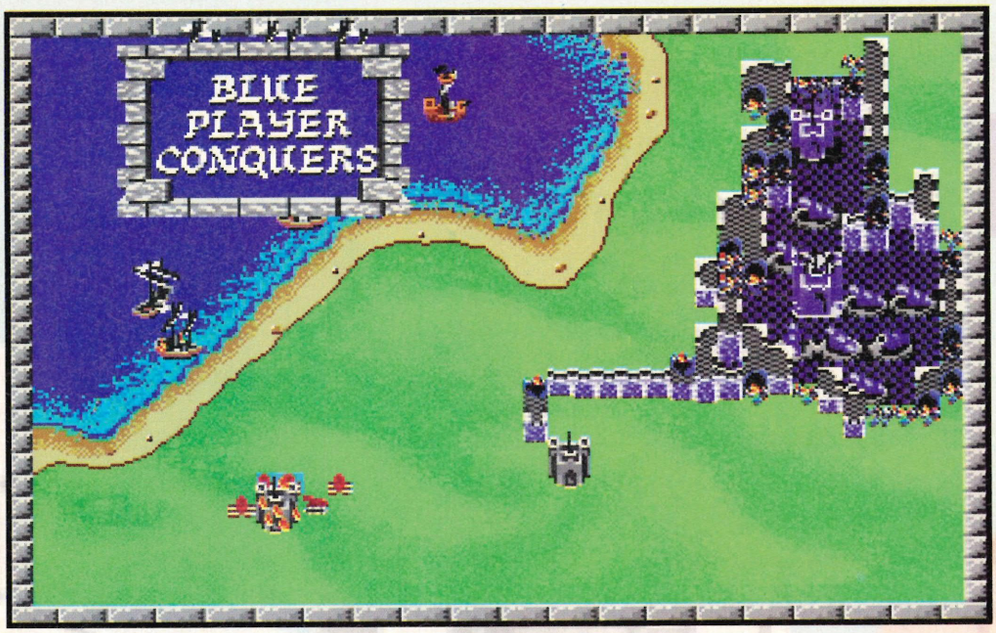
Before the time limit runs out, you must rebuild your ramparts so that they completely surround your castle. This is where the Turbo button comes in handy – it increases the speed at which your cursor moves around the screen, so you can place more blocks in the time allowed. Fail to fully rebuild your battlements and the first phase of your castle-building programme is over... but the game goes on. You lose what's left of your battlements, but you can continue the game if you want to – with a 'starter castle' and reduced armaments. This is a pretty neat feature – having selected a five, seven or nine round contest at the start, you want to see the whole thing through, don't you?



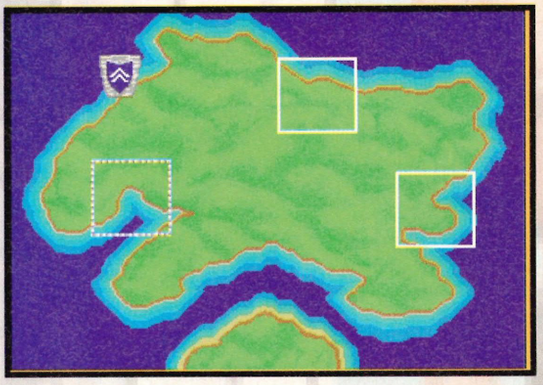


When I first saw Rampart being played in the games room, I wasn't greatly impressed. With its relatively basic graphics and sound, it doesn't exactly have an instant attraction. But when I started to play it myself, I was won over by the gameplay. The idea is really quite simple – build up territory by surrounding castles, blast your opponent with cannon fire, rebuild your ramparts and attempt to expand your territory, then go through the whole process again – but it's been programmed so effectively that you just can't help getting hooked. The Battle Phase is great fun, with cannonballs whistling through the air, landing with a satisfying explosion in a ball of flame, the floating cross-hair allowing pinpoint accuracy on enemy targets. Then there's the puzzley element – the Build and Repair Phase, owing more than a nod of recognition to Tetris – which can be fiendishly frustrating if you don't get the right-shaped blocks, a frenzied race to rebuild and expand your territory. One-player games are smart, but two-player games really bring out that destructive, competitive spirit. Rampart is an unusual hybrid of strategy, puzzle and blast 'em up games all rolled into one – and an excellent one, at that.

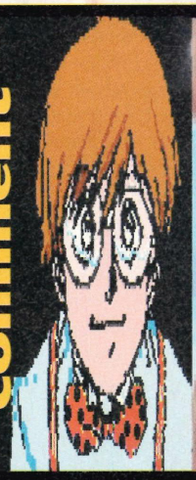
RAMPANT RAMPARTS AND EXPANDING ARSENALS



▲ ANOTHER TRIUMPH OF HUMAN SKILL OVER COMPUTER TRICKERY – A ONE-PLAYER VICTORY.



The ultimate aim in Rampart is to grab as much territory as possible. Once you've repaired the walls of your home castle, you can start to expand your territory by enclosing some of the other fortresses in your section. The more castles you manage to surround with building blocks, the more cannons you'll get in the next Cannon Placement Phase. Two cannons are awarded for holding the home castle, with one more added for each further castle you've managed to surround with ramparts. Cannons are only active if they're completely enclosed within walls – fail to completely surround any of them during Build and Repair and the stranded weapons will not fire. Obviously, the more firepower you have, the more damage you can do to the enemy, but you do have to be careful to leave enough room for placing your arsenal when surrounding a castle – if the distance between a castle and the ramparts enclosing it is too small, you won't be able to use the extra firepower because the cannons won't fit!



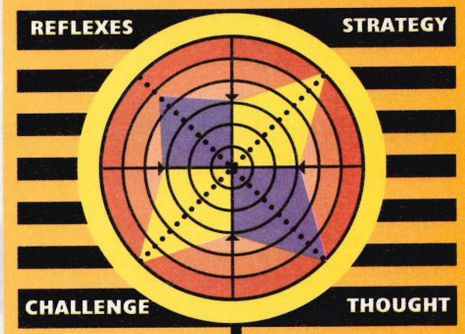
Paul's comment

I always liked the idea of Rampart, but I never enjoyed the coin-op because I just couldn't get the hang of using a trackball to position the bricks during the rebuilding stage. The joypad makes this version slightly easier to play in that respect, but otherwise it's still a very challenging game and it took me a while just to get past the first set of castles. From then on the ships are piling onto the screen at a rate of (ahem) knots and frantic fusillades are the order of the day. Switching between Missile Command-style shoot 'em up action and Tetris-type puzzling (with a bit of Qix-esque space capture thrown in for good measure) works really well, keeping boredom at bay in the one-player mode and the even better two-player game. It took me a while, but after getting the hang of the strategies and tactics I was well and truly won over by Rampart. If you like your action fast and furious, this is the game for you.

THANKS!

Thanks to Shekhana Consoles (071 631 4627 or 081 889 9412) for the loan of the cartridge for this review.

GAME TITLE
RAMPART



% RATING

PRESENTATION

75 Pretty basic intro and intermission screens, but they serve their purpose.

GRAPHICS

85 Neat battle sequences, with flying cannonballs and castles in flames.

SOUND

83 The music sounds like it was played on a biscuit tin, but the explosions and whistling cannonballs in battle are ace.

SHORT TERM PLAY

90 Simple to get the hang of – instant addiction guaranteed.

LONG TERM PLAY

93 A timeless game that really has that 'just one more go' factor – the strategy element will keep you coming back for more.

MEGATECH RATING

90 An excellent strategy game with smart battle sequences and a bit of Tetris thrown in.

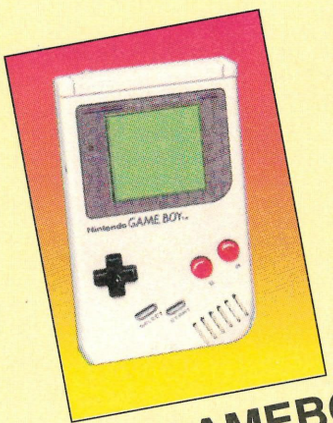
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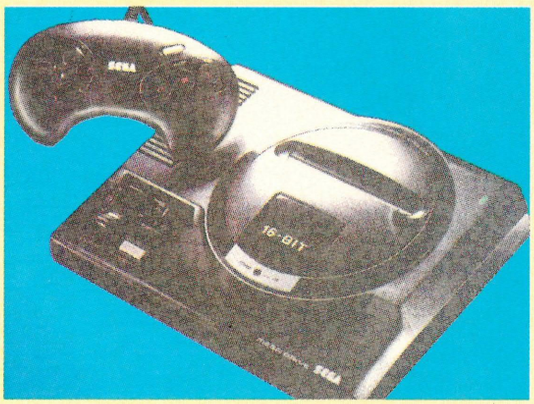
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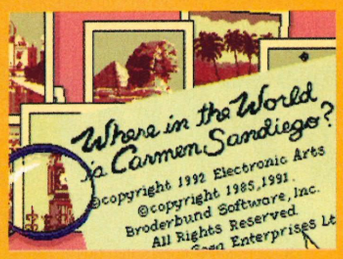
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WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?

FORMAT: CART
M-BITS: 4

BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS

PRICE: £42.99

PLAYERS: 1

GAME TYPE: PUZZLE

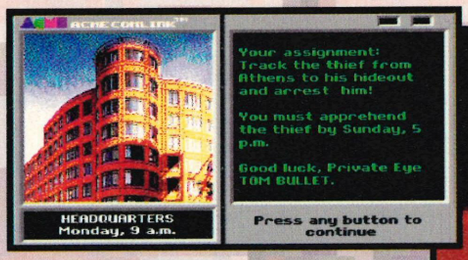
CONTINUES: PASSWORD

SKILL SETTINGS: 1

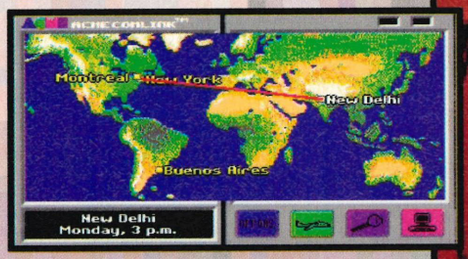
Strange deeds are afoot! All across the world, priceless artefacts are going missing and nobody has a clue where they're going. Siberian sable rugs, ancient T'ang horses, the royal quartz collection of Katmandu, even a Viking rune – it's as if they've just vanished into thin air. The police are baffled, there are no clues, no leads, nothing. But the word on the street is that Carmen Sandiego is back with her dreaded criminal cartel, VILE.

Who can stop this wicked lady and all her dreaded cohorts? Who can reclaim the loot and save the day? The Acme Detective Agency – that's who. So it's time to dig out your magnifying glass and deerstalker hat and put your nose to the ground as you hit the investigating trail in an attempt to bring VILE to justice in this sequel to Where In Time Is Carmen Sandiego? You'll need to pack your suntan oil and toothbrush, because this time the whole world is your playground.

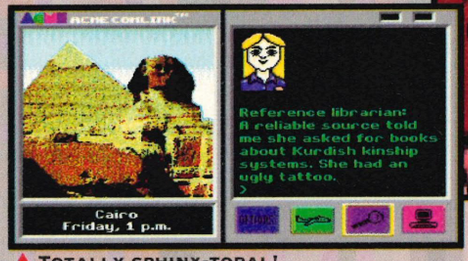
YOUR MISSION, SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TO ACCEPT...



▲ IT'S ACME HEADQUARTERS!



▲ WHY, IT'S A MAP OF THE WORLD!



▲ TOTALLY SPHINX-TORAL!



▲ IT'S CARMEN SANDIEGO.

As the newest member of the Acme Detective Agency, it's up to you to hunt down Carmen Sandiego and her band of itchy-fingered thieves. Each time a theft is committed, you're given a set amount of time to locate the missing artefact and return it safe and sound to it's owner. To do this, you must follow the path of the felon in question all the way from the scene of the crime to their secret hideout, wherever in the world it may be. Fail to locate the crook in time and they'll slip through your fingers with the loot in tow.



The problem with the original Carmen Sandiego game is that it all got very dull, very quickly. Unfortunately, the programmers don't seem to have learnt from their mistakes. Initially, the game is actually quite good fun. The way the investigations lead you from country to country and the suspect elimination section all makes for quite an interesting time. However, after having solved a couple of crimes it all becomes a tad tedious. All the investigations are basically the same and the difficulty level doesn't get any harder as the game progresses, giving the impression of just retracing the same steps again and again. Also, when playing this kind of text game, you'd really expect a little more depth of play or more interactive investigation work. As it stands, Where In The World is more like one of those pub Trivia machines than a decent adventure. In fact it's even easier than its predecessor. What a shame, because there could have been so much more to this game.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?

IT'S A SMALL WORLD!

There are certainly plenty of places in the world for an accursed VILE agent to hide, but wherever they go they're sure to leave a trail as clear as day – that is, if you know where to look. Starting at the scene of the crime, you can talk to various people and glean vital facts about where the mysterious thief might be heading. What at first seems like trivia could, in fact, be an important clue. For example, if you're talking to a museum curator who mentions that your quarry spoke of the Andes, then they'll more than likely be headed for Lima in Peru, while loose talk of a red and white flag normally means they've gone to Canada. Easy peesy! In fact, if you have any trouble with the more than obvious clues that are spattered throughout the game, it might be worth consulting a handy book of facts. A World Almanac is already provided in the game package, so remember, folks – study hard and you'll save time!



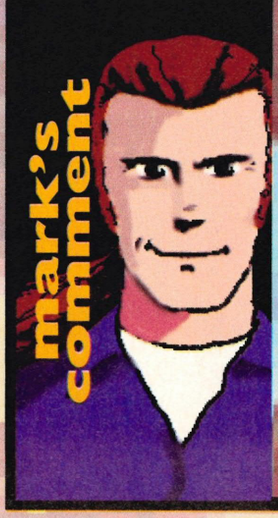
▲ YOU'D BETTER STAY SCARED COPPER, BECAUSE WHEN I GET OUT OF HERE, YOU'RE FISH FOOD!

SEIZE HIM, ODDJOB!

Until you've actually cornered your quarry, he or she will never reveal themselves. However, you can be sure that you're on the right track if you happen to see a VILE henchman appear onscreen whenever you enter a new country. The closer you get to the hideout, the more life-threatening the behaviour of said-henchmen, until axes, daggers and even guns are used. Seeing as you can't be killed, you can laugh in the face of these foolish displays of violence and continue your quest. Far worse than being faced by a henchman is NOT being faced by a henchman, because this means that you've gone to the wrong country. Doh!

WHO ARE YOU? SHOW YOURSELF!

Having tracked the villain to their hideout, you can happily call in the police to arrest them. However, the police are powerless to bring the crook to justice unless you can produce an arrest warrant. To acquire one, you'll need to identify exactly which VILE agent it is you're tracking *before* the police raid the criminal's den. To do this, you must pick up various clues about the mystery character's appearance and interests during your travels. Such information as the colour of their hair and eyes, what car they drive and whether they have scars or tattoos is all useful. The next step is all very similar to that old MB game Guess Who? or Cluedo. By entering these details into your Acme Crime Computer you'll be able to eliminate various suspects from your list until only one person is left – the thief in question! Once revealed, you'll be immediately issued with a warrant for their arrest. Beware though – if you guess at any of the information and produce the wrong warrant, the criminal will get away scott free!



I've always managed to avoid text-based adventures like the plague until now, and I'm afraid Where In The World Is Carmen Sandiego certainly hasn't turned me onto the genre. The screen set-up is self-explanatory and simple to use, accessing the options is a piece of cake and the thrill of the chase maintains interest initially, but the whole thing gets repetitive very quickly. In the light of recent developments in the adventure-gaming field, this type of game format – mainly static screens with text running on the right-hand side of the screen – looks very dated. With the emphasis on knowledge of the flags of the world, geography and other encyclopaedia-type stuff, this seems to be little more than a one-man Trivial Pursuit with some investigatey bits thrown in. Weighing in at a hefty £50 with the World Almanac thrown in, you could probably buy yourself a Sherlock Holmes-style deerstalker, pipe and magnifying glass, embark on your own detective career and have a lot more fun into the bargain. But young wannabee international crimefighters with high boredom thresholds might disagree.

GAME TITLE
WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?



% RATING

PRESENTATION

59 The screen set-up is quite user friendly and the options are easy to access.

GRAPHICS

69 Little animated henchmen and some pretty smart digitised static screens, but nothing to raise an eyelid over.

SOUND

19 The odd spot-effect and an intro tune. Big deal!

SHORT TERM PLAY

72 Initially, this is quite an enjoyable game. It's all quite interesting and, at times, mentally stimulating (almost).

LONG TERM PLAY

62 The repetitive nature of this game soon sets in and there's very little challenge. It's a big game, though.

MEGATECH RATING

65 An interesting trivia game that masquerades as an educational adventure. Educational it is, adventurous it isn't.

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STEEL

INTO BATTLE... CHAARGE!

FORMAT: CART
M-BITS: 8

BY: TENGEN

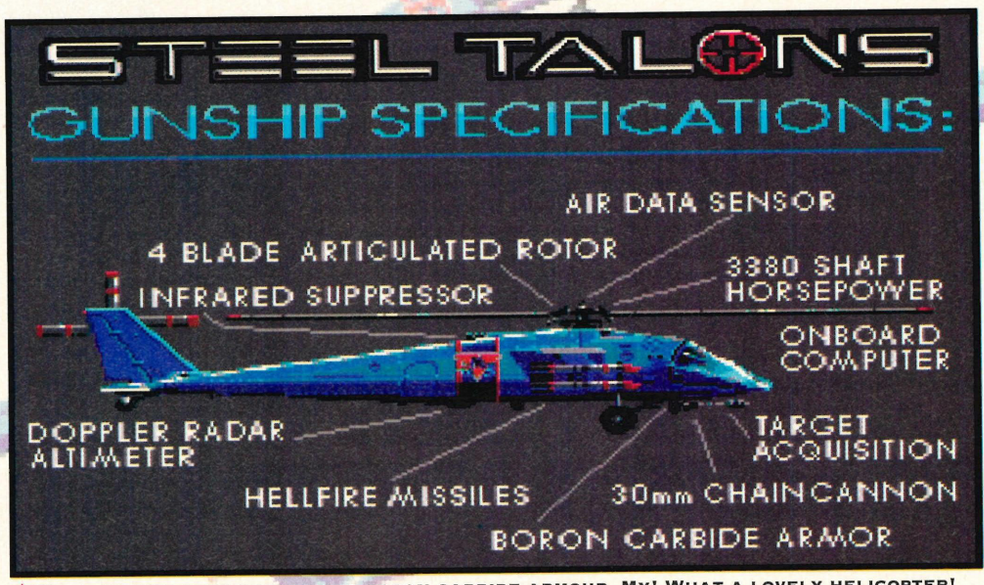
PRICE: B IMPORT

PLAYERS: 1-2

GAME TYPE: SHOOT 'EM UP

CONTINUES: NONE

SKILL SETTINGS: 3



▲ MMM, ARTICULATED ROTORS AND BORON CARBIDE ARMOUR. MY! WHAT A LOVELY HELICOPTER!

Being Top Stick might not sound as good as being Top Gun, but that's the title every helicopter pilot in the US Army aims for, apparently. This arcade conversion conscripts you into the Steel Talons squadron where all the other Top Sticks wind up. But, even after having your bottom painted green and the 'head down the toilet, looking for the goldfish' episode, you're not a fully initiated member of the gang. To earn the secret password and decoder ring you need to undertake twelve practice missions and come out of them with all bodily parts intact.

This means piloting your heavily armed gunship around canyons and deserts, making bulletholes in tanks, helicopters and jets and putting the torch to machine gun nests and airstrips. Naturally, the targets don't just sit there and take it, and if you don't eliminate them quickly they'll have you in their sights and... KABOOMA! To make things even trickier, all the missions are timed and failing to destroy the required number of targets within the time limit results in mission failure, disgrace, and probably another goldfish hunt when you get back to base.

Each mission starts with a few words of advice from the flight instructor while you're hovering over a landing pad in the centre of the 'arena'.

Heeding his advice about not wasting time, a quick flick of the D-button sends the helicopter charging towards one of the flashing dots on the centre screen which mark the targets. As you close in, the targeting system locks on to the building, jet or tank, and automatically aims the chain gun at it. Stabbing the B button launches a volley of 30mm rounds, but if the target is already firing at you it's best to get rid of it quickly with a Hellfire missile and run away.

Not surprisingly, every hit you take from ground fire brings you ever closer to burying the helicopter. Specifically, the shots puncture the armour around your fuel tank and drain your fuel. Run out of gas and you also run out of altitude, and pretty soon after that your head runs out of blood.

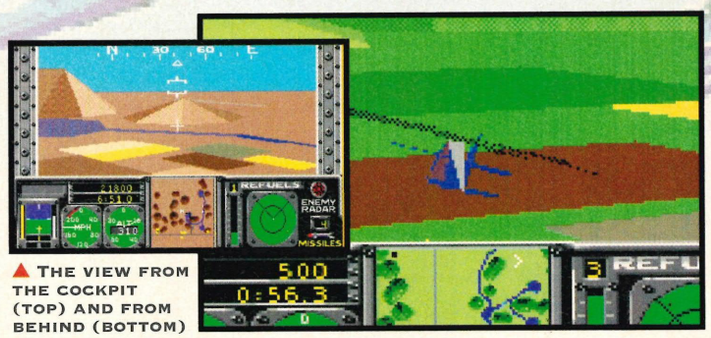


▲ YOUR CHOICE OF THREE GAME-TYPES. ALAS THE HEAD TO HEAD GAME IS AGAINST THE COMPUTER AND THE ONLY TWO PLAYER OPTION LETS YOUR MATE HELP CONTROL YOUR HELICOPTER.

TALONS

VIEW TO A KILL

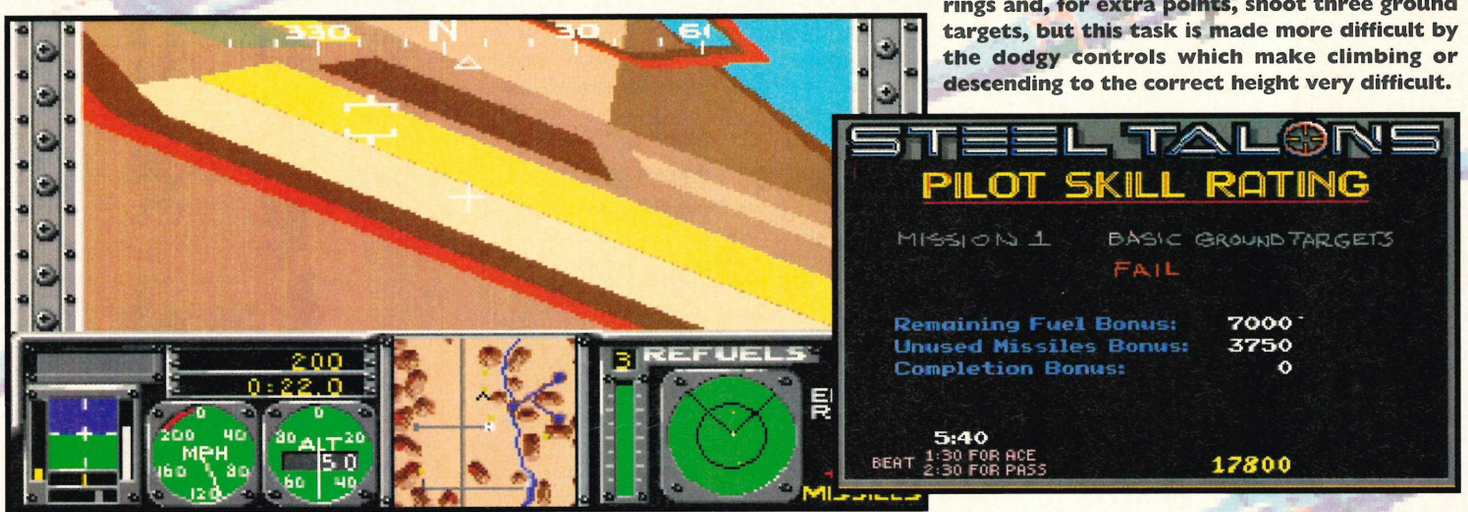
Other 'flight sims' allow the player to switch between different viewpoints for a different perspective on the action, and Steel Talons is no different. Well, it actually gives you two points of view, one from the cockpit and one from directly behind the helicopter. For most of your tootling around, you'll find things easier if you keep the view in cockpit mode, but the jerkiness of the vector graphics makes flying around mountain ranges rather tricky so it's best to approach them with the 'rear view' activated so you can get a better idea of how close you are to the mountainside.



▲ THE VIEW FROM THE COCKPIT (TOP) AND FROM BEHIND (BOTTOM)

TRAINING COURSE

This preliminary to the twelve missions is actually a bit trickier than most of the sorties. All you actually have to do is fly through a course of floating hexagonal rings and, for extra points, shoot three ground targets, but this task is made more difficult by the dodgy controls which make climbing or descending to the correct height very difficult.



▲ FLYING THROUGH THE RINGS ON THE TRAINING COURSE IS HARDER THAN SOME OF THE MISSIONS!

HEAD TO HEAD

Unlike the arcade game, this doesn't let you enact a dog-fight with another player (not surprising really), but pits you against a computer-controlled helicopter in a best of five, seven or nine competition. Instead of the usual eight rockets you get an immense load of 75 to squander on pounding your foe into submission.



▲ THERE HE IS! FIRE A MISSILE, QUICK!





I feared the worst for this conversion, after all a Megadrive game with vector graphics has the odds stacked against it from the start. In their desire for a faithful conversion, the programmers have shunned the EA method of 'sparse scenery = fast gameplay' and included vast mesas, mountains and hills which the Megadrive has to struggle to draw every time the helicopter moves. The jerky update makes the game look rubbish at first, but after playing for a while you tend not to notice it too much because it doesn't interfere with the gameplay until the last few missions. These are more crowded and the combination of dodgy display and difficult controls can get you into some really frustrating fixes. Steel Talons isn't a terrifically bad game – it could certainly have been a lot worse – but LHX Attack Chopper offers the same brand of action and is by far the superior game.

CONVERSION PERILS

The problems with converting a popular super-coin-op like Steel Talons onto a comparatively piddly piece of machinery like a Megadrive is that you have to somehow cram all the controls (the Steel Talons machine has two control sticks and two foot pedals) onto a three button joypad and somehow get the graphics chip to come up with extremely complicated 3D vector scenery which it was never designed to produce in the first place.

The programmers have done a fair job of squeezing as much as possible out of the Megadrive, though not entirely successfully. The height and speed controls are crammed onto the D-button, so you can't ascend and descend while you're speeding up or slowing down.

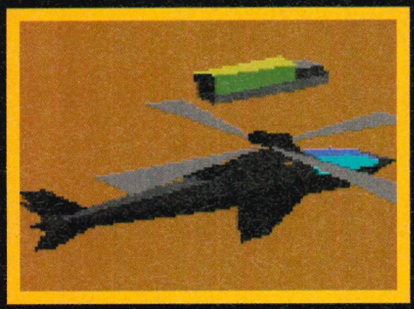


Fortunately, the two player, two joypads mode gets around that, but it doesn't make the screen update any faster. There is an awful lot of scenery for the Megadrive to draw, so every time you rotate the helicopter it seems to leap about 45 degrees to the left or right. This is something you tend not to notice when you've played about halfway through the game, but then you find yourself in the midst of a load of mountains and it suddenly becomes very easy to crash into a hillside.



The main attraction of the Steel Talons coin-op came from the fact that it allowed two players to battle away in a head-to-head option, this coupled with the realistic helicopter controls made the game into a fairly decent arcade flight simulator. With these features stripped from the Megadrive version, what you are left with is a very simple shoot 'em up. There are no take off or landing sections, your weapons automatically target and damage merely removes sections of your fuel. This all makes for very shallow gameplay. Also, the graphics are none too good. The update is slow and jerky and sometimes it's very hard to discern how far away the terrain is, causing many a stupid crash. The weird control method, an attempt to mimmick the arcade's control system, prevents you from changing your altitude whilst moving, a feature which is quite annoying. All this said, Steel Talons is fairly enjoyable for a short while, its problem is that it falls somewhere between simulator and shoot 'em up and doesn't really deliver the goods in either category.

ALTERNATIVELEY



LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

£ £39.99

by ELECTRONIC ARTS

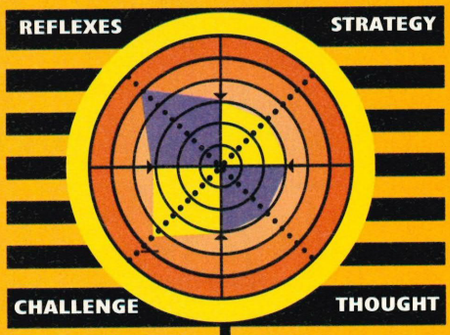
More simulatorish than Steel Talons, with less scenery but loads more missions and targets. Vector graphics are slightly more sparse but much faster, resulting in a much more playable game.

THANKS!

Thanks to Shekhana Consoles (071 631 4627 or 081 889 9412) for the loan of the cartridge for this review.

GAME TITLE

STEEL TALONS



%RATING

PRESENTATION

70 Not a particularly impressive opening, but the selection of options isn't bad.

GRAPHICS

65 Colourful, but the slow screen update does a lot of damage to the gameplay.

SOUND

78 Tunes are rather weedy, but the sound effects and speech are good.

SHORT TERM PLAY

67 Simple gameplay makes it easy enough to get started, but it does get frustrating quickly.

LONG TERM PLAY

69 Finishing all twelve missions is simple, and the Head-To-Head game isn't much incentive to return.

MEGATECH RATING

68 Unwieldy controls and jerky graphics make this a rather uninviting purchase.

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CHIKI C

FORMAT: CART
M-BITS: 4

BY: CAPCOM

PRICE: IMPORT

PLAYERS: 1

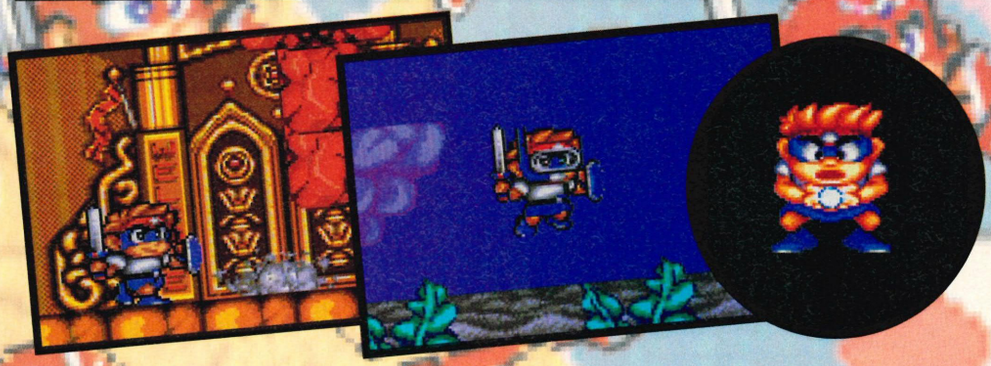
GAME TYPE: PLATFORM

CONTINUES: 1

SKILL SETTINGS: 3

The Alulu Kingdom is in a sorry state. No-one seems to know who they are or why they're there because, since the cataclysmic invasion of the monsters fifteen years ago, nobody knows their true identity. This is very sad indeed because the names of heroes are always recorded in history, but the titles of the two boys that are about to save one and all shall only ever be remembered as the Chiki Chiki boys (alias the Mega Twins). These unlikely heroes were born at the time of the invasion and have learned the ways of the monsters that rule their land. With a profound knowledge of magic, and in the hope that a legendary precious stone known as the Dragon Blue Eyes exists to help them along their way, they embark on a terrific adventure. Their journey takes them through crystal caves and sunken ship wrecks – battling against the monsters in their castles and towers, traversing land and sea and even floating through the sky. You are the only person that can make their mission a success by guiding them along the way.

MAGIC MOMENTS





▲ HALFWAY THROUGH HIS QUEST, ONE OF THE BOYS REALISES THAT HE FORGOT TO WEAR HIS DEODORANT!

For the past fifteen years, the Chiki Chiki Boys have had to rely on their instincts for survival, so their knowledge of their homeland and its many secrets is second to none. They are especially well-versed in the ways of magic. But the twins' magical powers are dependent upon the magic pearls contained within various molluscs, which can be found scattered about the realms of the Alulu Kingdom. There are four kinds of mollusc, each represented by a different colour – the various hues affect the form that the ancient magic takes when released.



Red: Provide a magic shot known as "bound". A succession of brightly-coloured energy balls bounce around the immediate area, inflicting much damage on the enemy.



Orange: A bomb is summoned through the orange gems – an explosive device of mystical proportions that is a sure way of clearing the way, whatever the odds.



Blue: The twins call to the fray a typhoon that literally blows the monstrous opposition away.

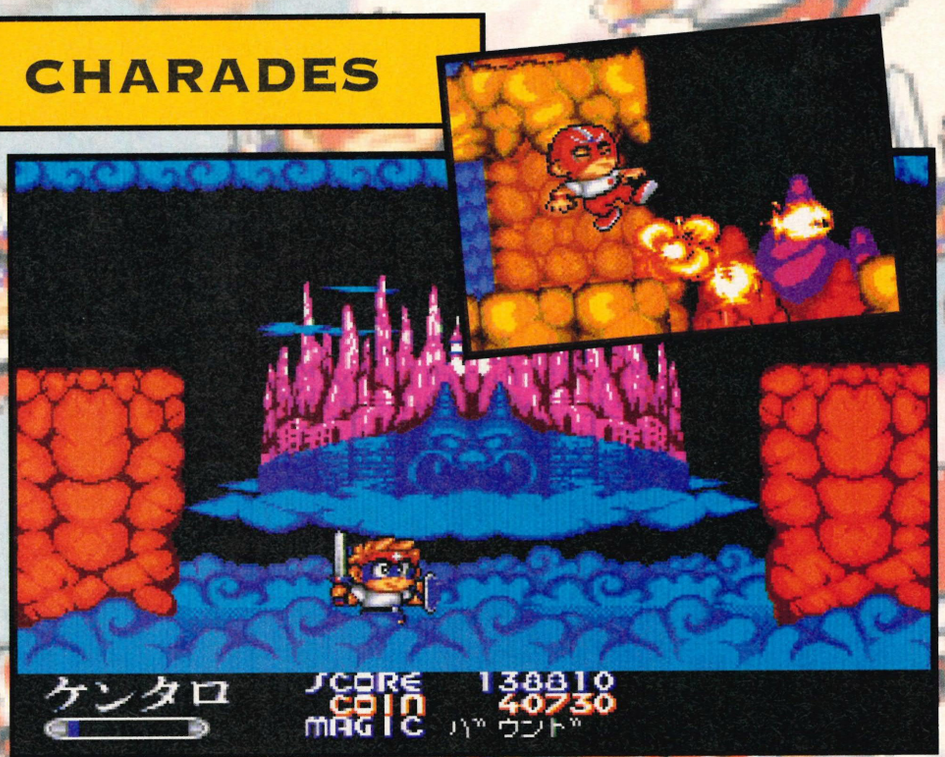


Green: A flaming fire erupts from the ground when the green pearls are used. With perfect timing, this proves itself to be the most powerful magic of all.

CHIKI BOYS

CHIKI CHIKI CHARADES

The Chiki Chiki boys find themselves in many ridiculous situations – in the kind of places they'd normally avoid, were it not for the job at hand. There are eight rounds of swashbuckling fun for the taking in a variety of locations. Thanks to the adventure holiday the twins took before the grip of the monsters grew too tight, they are not averse to a splash of scuba diving, a spot of mountain climbing or hanging perilously from rope bridges. It's a good job too, as these are the kind of activities their task requires of them if they're to find the dragon Blue Eyes and bring peace to Alulu once more.



▲ MUMMY TOLD HIM NEVER TO BUILD CASTLES IN THE AIR. HE IGNORED HER, OF COURSE, NOW LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENED. (INSET) HE SHOULD NEVER HAVE EATEN THAT CURRY!

SECRET TREASURE

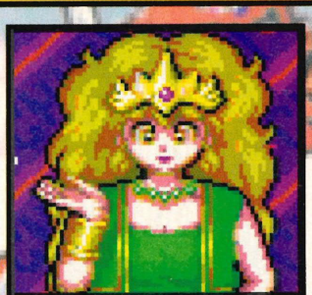
By swiping the air at strategic points, the twins may reveal a number of secret chests. These either contain tons of cash or power pills, both of which are very useful. Yet the Chiki Chiki boys should exercise caution if and when they discover chests that are the colour of green, for they are home to gangs of vicious frogs – we kid you not! – and homicidal grasshoppers! They're both easy to kill, but a tricky kind of menace all the same.





▲ (LEFT) CURSES! YOU CAN NEVER GET A TAXI WHEN YOU WANT ONE! NOW HOW THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO GET THIS HOME?! (RIGHT) I'M NOT TRAVELLING IN THAT THING EITHER!

ANY SPECIAL OFFERS TODAY?



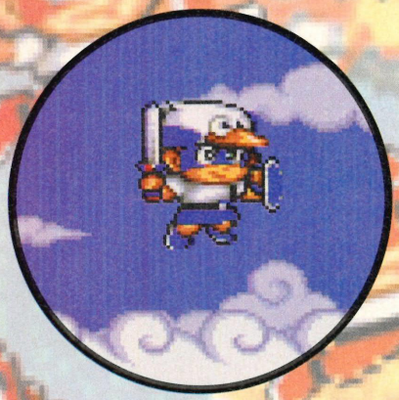
At the end of each round, the crusading Chiki boy is treated to the appearance of a cutesy shopkeeper and all that she has on offer. On such occasions, the young lad makes his choice between a new sword, shield, extra energy, or even an extra life if he finds himself running short. The prices are very high, so it's wise to gather as much cash as possible from the previous round in order to buy anything truly worthwhile. The problems really start if you use a continue because that reduces his cash by half!

tom's comment



I'm a bit of a Capcom junkie, so I've been looking forward to the next game to come to the Megadrive from Capcom for ages. While you all wait in excruciating suspense for the arrival of Street Fighter II, you should definitely treat your Megadrive to a copy of this! Listen, just because it looks cute doesn't mean that there's nothing exciting about the gameplay! Chiki Chiki Boys is a tough challenge, especially on the Hard setting, with enough features and incredible graphics to put many Megadrive games to shame. Also, if you want to hear a good example of how good the Megadrive can sound, check out the music in Chiki Chiki Boys. It isn't quite Streets of Rage II but, for the style of game, it works wonderfully. Although this may not be an obvious hit at first, it isn't long before you discover what a classy title it is. If platform games are your thing, you and the Chiki Chiki Boys should get on famously.

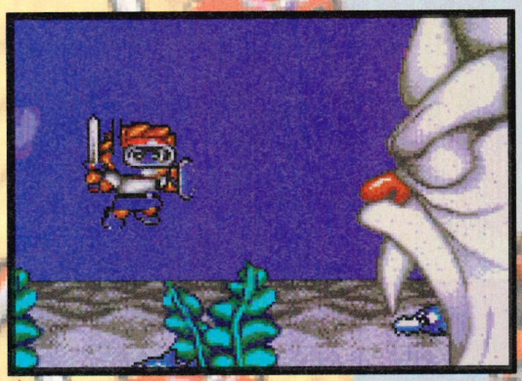
LITTLE BOY BLUE VS RED RIDING HOOD



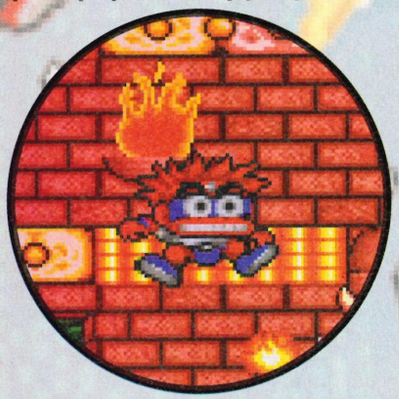


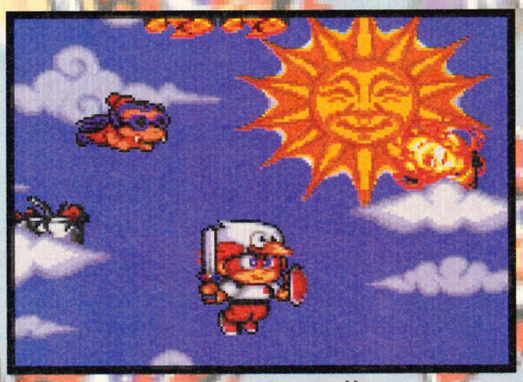
▲ VERY GOOD BUT LETS TRY THAT AGAIN. AFTER THREE: THREE "I'M WALKING IN THE AIR...."

Identical twins they may be, but not everything about them is the same. We're not sure of their names (the manual's all in Japanese), but to save confusion we'll call the blue chap Bertrand and the red lad Roy. It's the best we could come up with. Anyway, Roy is a dab hand when it comes to magic. As a result, he starts the game with a supply of five sentient molluscs at his disposal. He's a bit lacking in the swordplay department though, unlike his brother Bertrand. Young Bert is quite the little Zorro as he parries about the place, but he's a bit of a Tommy Cooper when it boils down to it. He only starts off with three magical pearls. Choose whichever suits your style of play, and away you go. Go on!

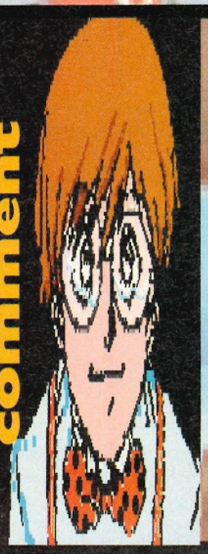


▲ WHAT BIG EYES, NOSE MOUTH AND ALL THAT YOU HAVE! GRANNY! IT IS YOU!





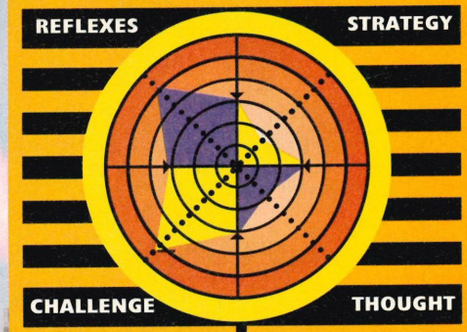
▲ THIS SON HAS GOT HIS HAT ON. HIP, HIP, HIP HOORAY(GROAN).



This wasn't one of my favourite Capcom arcade games, so I wasn't particularly looking forward to the Megadrive version, but I'm surprised to find it's a really fun game. I'm not as bowled over as young Tommy, mind, but there's no denying that it's a very good attempt at a conversion with high quality graphics, sound and gameplay. I suppose the lack of the two player option is regrettable, but I suspect that wouldn't have added much to the game for most players and would probably have slowed the snappy pace of the action. The pleasant surprise is that the gameplay isn't the same all the way through – well, it is in a way, but at least there's a lot of variety in the scenery and, best of all, in the bosses, which are all a far cry from the sort of simple fatso sprite with big guns that you find in a lot of games. The only problem is that all the text on the smart interlude screens is in Japanese (even on a British machine) which makes following the story impossible. Even so, as Tom says, this will bring a smile to the face of any fan of a good platform game and I'd say this is definitely one of the best imported games I've seen lately.

GAME TITLE

CHIKI CHIKI BOYS



%RATING

PRESENTATION

84 Well presented throughout with animated sequences, bonus stages and the overall feel of a story unfolding.

GRAPHICS

89 Large, colourful sprites and great animation. The scenery is often quite amazing.

SOUND

89 Rousing, stomping themes, magical melodies and arcade quality sound effects.

SHORT TERM PLAY

86 The quality of the game isn't obvious straight away – could it really be so good?

LONG TERM PLAY

84 Fairly easy on Normal level but Hard level really lives up to its name. Once completed the game offers nothing else.

MEGATECH RATING

86 An excellent platform game with a few surprises along the way.

BIG prizes to be won on the MegaTech Hyperlines!

We're giving away more prizes than you could safely shake a joypad at, and as if that wasn't enough, there's a helpline



packed with cheats for all the latest games. All you have to do is dial this number, choose the line you want and listen to the instructions. It couldn't be easier, so get on the blower - NOW!

0839 500 807

WIN A MEGA-CD

On line one we're giving away a Mega-CD, the add-on that's set to revolutionise the world of Megadrive games.

What can it do that's so hot? Well just one CD can hold 660 times the data of a normal 8-megabit cartridge. That means more graphics, more sound and more game for your money. In addition there's an extra 16-bit processor that runs along side the one in the Megadrive, allowing all sorts of extra graphic effects such as sprite scaling and rotation and arcade quality 8-channel PCM sound. And as if that wasn't enough recorded music and speech can be incorporated directly into the game from the disc!

WIN A STEREO MONITOR WORTH £300!

On line two you can win a top-of-the-range Phillips stereo monitor, which means you can connect your Megadrive via its SCART socket for stunning graphics and sound. No more being dragged from the TV just as you're about to reach a high score.

WIN £200's WORTH OF SOFTWARE!

On line three you can win 200 sovs worth of the latest cartridges. Not any old games though, you get choose what cartridges make up your prize. All you have to do is answer three simple games-related questions. What are you waiting for? Get dialling!

THE HYPER TECHNIQUE LINE!

Gone through all the cheats in this issue? Well, try taking a look at those we'll be printing next month. On this line you'll find a smattering of tips and cheats straight from the pages of the next Technique Zone. Keep one step ahead of your friends and call this line now!



Calls are charged at 36p per minute off peak, and 48p per minute at peak times. If you're under 18, please make sure you OK things with whoever pays the 'phone bill before you call!



WHEEL OF

VANNA WELCOMES YOU

FORMAT: CART
M-BITS: 4

BY: IMPORT

PRICE: IMPORT

PLAYERS: 1-3

GAME TYPE: PUZZLE

CONTINUES: N/A

SKILL SETTINGS: 2



America: once a great nation, now apparently as much in recession as the rest of us, and perhaps the gameshow has a hand in that fact. Imagine millions of homes, all at once tuned into the likes of Every Second Counts, The Price is Right and, of course, Wheel of Fortune. Each of them draining the mental energy of the workforce: sapping each individual's will to live. In this nightmare world, Wheel of Fortune is monarch – and Vanna White is its capped-tooth Queen. She is the one who turns the magic cards, throwing away fortunes for solving riddles as simple as the contestants. She is gatekeeper to a fabulous world of yachts, champagne and as much high-quality dentistry as you can manage in your mouth. D'ya feel lucky? Then spin the wheel, spin the wheel...

Vanna White, your compere, has the skilled task of turning the cards, not to be sniffed at when you see the stilettos she's decked out in. On TV Vanna is a massive celebrity, earning megabucks, so it was natural to feature her on the Megadrive. However, unkind graphic design has left her with a cleft palate and bad posture in the game.



Wheel of Fortune is designed as a three-entrant experience. On the Megadrive you are allowed any combination of human/computer players. Playing alone is really just a word teaser but with other players you compete to win the most money. In three player-mode, two contestants have to share one of the joypads.

Fundamentally, the game is like that old classic, Hangman, but with money. You are presented with a board full of blank squares which represent the letters in a word or a whole phrase which you have to guess, letter by letter. Below the board is a brief clue to help you.

When the game starts each player must decide whether to spin the wheel of fortune, buy a vowel or take a guess at the puzzle. If you decide to spin, you determine the speed of the spin by pressing a button to stop a moving bar. If the wheel stops to display a sum of money (rather than a BANKRUPT or some other forfeit), you get the chance to pick a consonant which you think might be in the puzzle. If it is, all occurrences of that letter are revealed and you win the amount the wheel stopped at for each one. If the letter isn't there, play passes to the next contestant.



If I was to be generous I'd say the programmers were onto a loser from the start with this one. I only like my money in the hard cash form, as I suspect most people do and I felt no inclination to compete for an imaginary wad of notes, or a digitised caravan. What's more, the word game behind 'Wheel Of Fortune' is so basic and tedious, I'd hesitate before even going on the TV programme. The choice of phrases (there are about 5000 in the cart) are largely inexplicable, and suffer frequently from Americanisms (eg 'jump rope' for skipping rope). On top of all this, some of the programming is frankly cack-handed. You'd expect some pretty digi-pics and good samples in there to tart it up, but the graphics are dire, and the speech is awful. The game plays at a corpse-like speed, and a frequent scenario involves the computer player happily playing away with itself for ages. In short, it's dreadful, and is remarkable only as a new exhibit in that select group of carts known as the 'Chamber of Horrors'.

FORTUNE

VOWEL PLAY

The other options include BUY A VOWEL, but each vowel costs $250. Pick one that's in the puzzle and every occurrence is revealed and you get another turn. If no vowels of that type are contained in the puzzle, the next player gets a go.



▲ OOH! DOESN'T SHE LOOK LOVELY IN THAT BACKLESS DRESS! WHAT A DREAMBOAT!

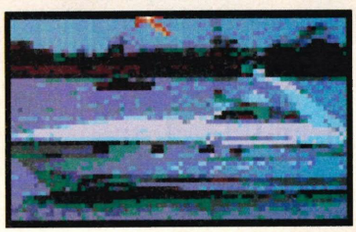


▲ THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR! OF COURSE! IT'S A PIECE OF CAKE THIS GAME. THE CLUES GIVE IT AWAY (IN THIS CASE THE CLUE IS 'EVENT').

The final option is to guess the puzzle. Each blank space is highlighted in turn for you to fill in and if your guess is correct the puzzle is finished and your current winnings displayed. After three puzzles, the contestant with most money carried forward plays the bonus game.

ONE OF THESE FABULOUS PRIZES

The bonus game is the final challenge for the leading player. Five prizes are represented by the letters of the word 'WHEEL'. By picking one a puzzle is displayed. Vanna will generously reveal any instances of the most common letters that are in the puzzle. Then you are allowed to pick three consonants and a vowel of your own. Any of these in the puzzle will also be revealed, and the timer will start. The object is to fill in the missing gaps within the time-limit. Succeed, and a picture fantastic reward awaits!

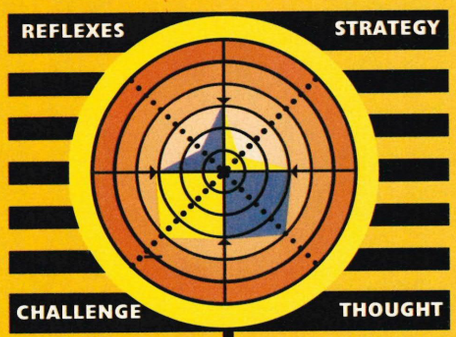




I could just about stand watching the British version of Wheel of Fortune, but I'd rather set my new sofa on fire than play this awful Megadrive version of the American show. To be fair, it's not really meant for the consumption of non-Americans, but if you've seen it in your local importer's shop and are thinking of buying it, be warned that nearly all of the puzzles are solved by guesswork rather than judgment and when you do stumble across the answer you're usually none the wiser (the first puzzle I was confronted by turned out to be 'ELIAS HOWE' – who?!) so it's not enjoyable in the usual play-along-with-the-contestants gameshow sense. The whole thing looks thoroughly iffy also, and I'm sure Vanna White wouldn't appreciate how her voluptuous form has been recreated as a crippled sprite. In short, this isn't very good, and unless you're a home-sick, expatriate American, don't buy it.

Thanks to Shekhana Consoles (071 6314627 or 081 8899412) for the loan of the cartridge for this review

GAME TITLE
WHEEL OF FORTUNE



%RATING

PRESENTATION

61 A basic game of this type needs a vast amount of skill levels, options etc to look appealing. It hasn't got them.

GRAPHICS

39 'Visually challenged' is the polite description of afflicted contestants and zero variety graphics.

SOUND

40 Awful speech, interminable periods of silence, and ghastly FX.

SHORT TERM PLAY

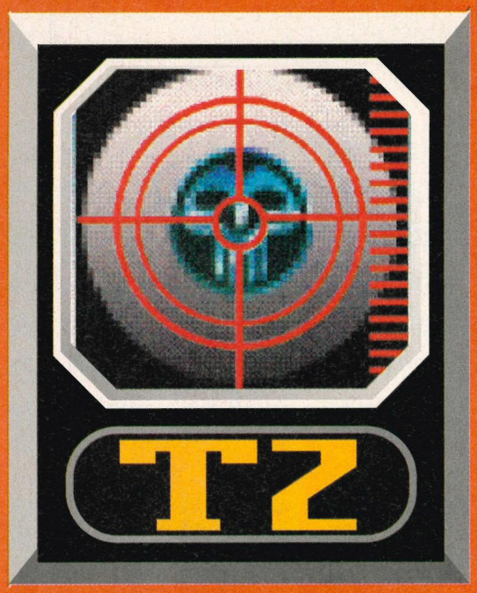
30 Play through all three rounds? Never has the 'cheque-book and pen' seemed so appealing.

LONG TERM PLAY

16 You'll show your mates once, for a laugh. Then never, never again.

MEGATECH RATING

23 A candidate for worst Megadrive cart ever, but 'Wheel' retains the slight charm that only a true disaster can have.



TECHNIQUE ZONE

There's an old Japanese proverb which says: "No-one can know everything there is to know about every single Megadrive game in the world." So if you've got a new tip you'd like to enlighten the rest of the world with, send it in to: Technique Zone, MegaTech, Priory Court, 30–32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. A prize of five games awaits the lucky sender of the best tips we print.



LEMMINGS

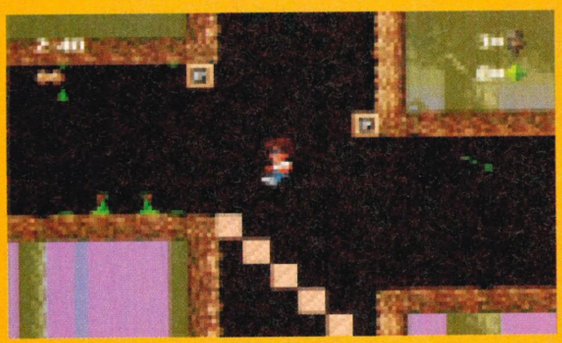
TZ1/10
LEVEL CODES FROM JANE PUTTOCK, HASLEMERE, SURREY.

Passwords a-gogo! Here are the codes for the first 30 levels of this classic puzzler involving very small and extremely stupid furry animals – on the Fun, Tricky and Taxing levels of difficulty.

FUN	TRICKY	TAXING
1 –	1 XTDYD	1 YFDTD
2 QWKYN	2 MSJXX	2 ZJKWP
3 NDDTD	3 XFDWF	3 CRDQF
4 SWKYN	4 TSJYX	4 DNKWP
5 FTDVN	5 TVDXN	5 VKDSN
6 KMKBX	6 HMKZG	6 BSLPB
7 HDTVM	7 SYDXN	7 DZDJR
8 MMKBX	8 PMKZG	8 FWLPB
9 VDDTD	9 LKDWF	9 SNDHJ
10 ZWKYN	10 DMKBP	10 TRKKT
11 XDDTD	11 PYDMJ	11 WYDDK
12 CXKYN	12 LMKBP	12 XVKKT
13 PDTVM	13 LPDPR	13 PSDGS
14 TMKBX	14 YFKRK	14 VLKBX
15 RTDVM	15 KSDPR	15 XSDVM
16 WMKBX	16 GGKRX	16 YPKBX
17 VHDVD	17 SGDPJ	17 GLDVD
18 ZZKZN	18 GFKNC	18 DPKXP
19 XHDVD	19 RRDLK	19 GWDRF
20 CBKBP	20 NFKNC	20 HSKXP
21 PXDWM	21 NHDNS	21 YPDTN
22 TQKCX	22 BYKPL	22 FLXQB
23 RXDWM	23 MLDNS	23 HFDLR
24 WQKCX	24 JYKPL	24 JBLRB
25 FJDVD	25 FWDLK	25 WSDJJ
26 KBKBP	26 XJJCX	26 XWKLT
27 HJDVD	27 JWDZD	27 ZDDGK
28 MBKBP	28 FXJCX	28 BBKMT
29 YXDWM	29 FMDCN	29 SXDHS
30 DRKCX	30 SCKFG	30 FXKFX

KID CHAMELEON

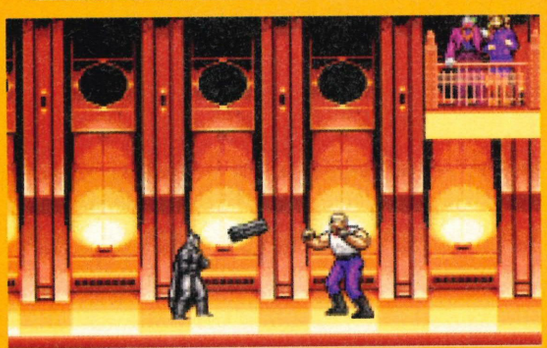
TZ2/10
GET TO FINAL BOSS FROM BRYAN GREENOCK, STRATHAVEN, SCOTLAND.



On Blue Lake Woods 2, go to the end of the level and jump onto the block above the flag. Press and hold down B, then press and hold down C, press down to crouch, then press down and right. You should then be magically warped to the final boss, who goes by the name of Plethora.

BATMAN

TZ4/10
HOW TO GET 99 BATARANGS FROM JOHN HAMMOND, HARDWICK, CAMBRIDGE.



On level three (the Flugeleim Museum), at the top of the second tube on the left you'll encounter an axeman – above him, you'll find five batarangs. Kill off the axeman, collect the five batarangs and go onto the top platform again. Let the platform go down – when it comes up again, you'll be able to collect another five batarangs. You can repeat this procedure again and again until you've accumulated 99 batarangs, but don't fall onto the second-lowest platform, because when you get back up, the axeman will have reappeared.

MAXIMUM GAMING KNOWLEDGE FROM MEGATECH

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER

TZ3/10
LEVEL CODES FROM WAYNE BURGESS, BENFLEET, ESSEX.



Blimey! It's only just been released and Wayne has already cracked this list of level codes.

Level 2: CHSGM
Level 3: MKSNS
Level 4: SGGBY
Level 5: JLGPH
Level 6: JDRSD
Level 7: PKSND
Level 8: CWBPN
Level 9: SFTNP
Level 10: CMVDG
Level 11: BYTCM

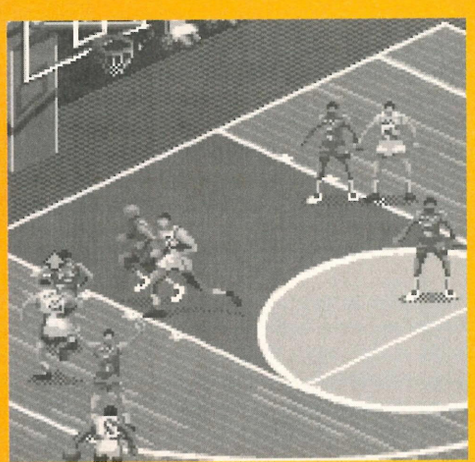
JAMES 'BUSTER' DOUGLAS BOXING

TZ5/10
DEALING WITH IRON HEAD IN THE FINAL BOUT

Wipe the cheesy grin off Iron Head's face by using the mega punch (press A, B and Up). It's important to walk back, then forward, punching the iron of his head each time to ensure his defeat. If you should happen to get beaten, press Up and Start for another pop at the Iron man.

DAVID ROBINSON'S SUPREME COURT BASKETBALL

TZ6/10
CODES FROM DEREK MORGAN, CRAIGBANK, GLASGOW.



Use these codes to dribble your way straight to the respective game.

Tournament Mode

Game 1, LA v Detroit : UAR123YCA
Game 2, LA v New York: UAR123YKA

Semi-Finals

Game 1, LA v Chicago: UAR123YSE

Finals

LA v Detroit: UAR123YIF

EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER

TZ7/10
DEVIOUS GENERAL TIPS

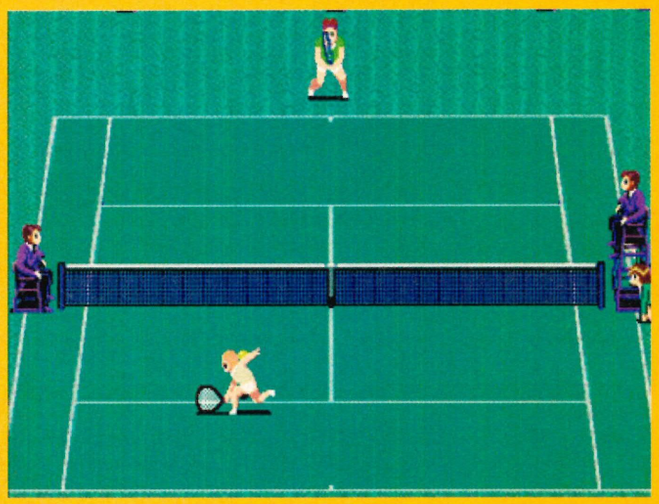


It's a game of two halves, Barry, and no mistake, but at the end of the day these sneaky tips will make your mates sick as a parrot when you play them at Euro Club Soccer.

- **Throw-ins (defending): Stand by the referee – you will usually get to the ball quicker than the opposition.**
- **Throw-ins (attacking): Aim just between the goalie and the post or directly at the keeper to score.**
- **Time-wasting: To waste time if you get a free-kick or throw-in, just don't press anything, or alternatively make a substitution.**
- **Formations: To play defensive, use 1-3-3-3 – you can still get good attacks as well as good defending, and this formation is better than 5-3-2.**
- **Kick-off: If you're playing with at least three men up front, and as long as the opposition has at least two, three or four (not five), press C and then push Left or Right (depending on which way you're kicking), then C again and run at goal. The ball should bounce under the keeper and into the goal.**
- **Penalties: During the match, press C and Left or Right to score. In shoot-outs, press B for your first three, then C, then B for the fifth.**
- **Free-kicks: To win a free-kick, when a player slides into you, run into him and get him booked or even sent off!**
- **Corners: To score from a corner, aim at the far post, press C to lob the ball over the keeper and run your players at the ball to knock it over the line. To defend corners, stand by your keeper and press C to head or volley clear.**

JENNIFER CAPRIATI TENNIS

TZ9/10
POWER TIPS AND HOW TO GET A SECOND CIRCUIT



Make your player as powerful as possible by choosing a right-hander with a drive shot, who has double-handed ground strokes, five points for both forehand and backhand power, and two points for footwork. Stay at the baseline and aim for the corners.

Get to play 24 new players, all called by their first names and all much faster than before, by using this password:
GRA ND. SLA M.. ...
... ...
... ...
(with full stops, not dashes), which is given when you finish the normal circuit.

Since the players are so much faster in the second tour, power play doesn't work. Give your player five points for footwork and net skills and one for forehand and backhand power to keep up with them. Try to come to the net as often as possible.

Use this password:
I. (heart symbol) .CA PRI ATI ...
... ...
... ...
to control a man with a jumbled-up name, who wears a cap like Correa's, which is otherwise unobtainable, and plays at the net, ranked number one. This works in both circuits.

PITFIGHTER

TZ8/10
HOW TO PLAY 'MERCY, MERCY!' BY STUART WARD, READING, BERKS.

Remember that old playground game 'mercy, mercy!', where you'd grab each other's hands and squeeze until one of you screamed for mercy? Well, here's how to get play that very game in Pitfighter (or something that looks very similar, anyway). Move player one towards player two then, when they're together, both players press A and B together. Now press really hard to win.

JOE MONTANA 2

TZ10/10
RECOVER AN OPPOSITION PUNT OR FIELD GOAL FROM NEILL PROTHERO, BISHOP'S STORTFORD.

When the opposing team is attempting a punt, field goal or extra point, change players until you get the nearest one to the center (or the man with the ball) before the snap. Make sure the circle (and only the circle) underneath your player is on the ball. Wait until they snap the ball – they will fumble the ball and you will recover. It's a good idea to turn off the penalties first, so that you can practice.

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LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

BY G HOYLE, EPSOM



The LHX Attack Chopper manual doesn't give much away as far as flying and combat hints go, so here's G Hoyle's guide to this marvellous pseudo-sim which should help you frustrated chopper pilots along a treat. Mr or Ms Hoyle gets his or her choice of five Megadrive games for this Herculean effort.

LHX ATTA

CHOPPER CHOICE

Before you make the choice between the LHX and the Apache, it's probably worth noting the differences between the two.

The LHX is faster but has a smaller armament, while the Apache is slower and slightly better tooled-up. Having said that, both are pretty similar to fly in the game, and the choice boils down to whether or not you want those extra eight Hellfire missiles. They do come in handy, particularly in the air combat missions, but unless you're playing on the harder skill settings you can get the job done quite adequately with the cannon.

DANGER: LOW-FLYING AIRCRAFT



Probably the most important survival tactic in LHX Attack Chopper is to stay low. Unless you're facing off against enemy aircraft there is no reason for you to climb above an altitude of around 100 feet. Waltz into a heavy fire zone at 300 feet and the enemy artillery will have spotted you in time to give you a really hot reception, and 300 feet isn't a good strafing height either, so you won't be able to return fire effectively.

The only occasion you should need to break this rule is when you're under attack from helicopters and jets. If aircraft are significantly higher than you, it's difficult to target them without pulling back so far that you start to slip backwards. Instead, climb to about 1,000 feet when they're entering missile range and you should find that you're almost level with the targets. An even better attack position is slightly above the enemy, as this means you can point the nose down slightly to provide some forward motion, and you can still keep the aircraft targeted.

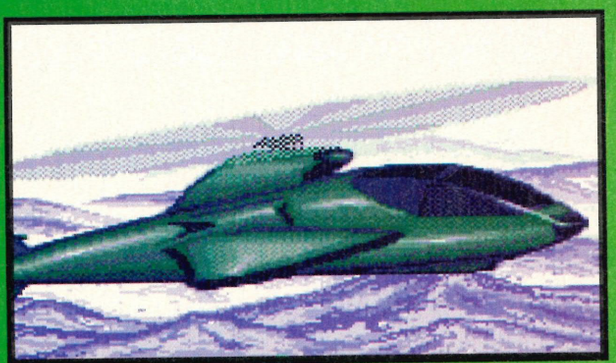
'LOOK LEFT'



When the co-pilot starts shouting about looking left, right or behind you, he's referring to radar sources detected by the radar warning receiver which appear on the display as red dots. These sources usually take the form of radar vehicles, C & C vehicles and S-23 180mm guns. Unless these are miles out of your way, it's a good idea to destroy them as quickly as possible because even if they can't attack you themselves they'll alert other artillery to your presence and that's not something you want just as you're reaching your mission goal.

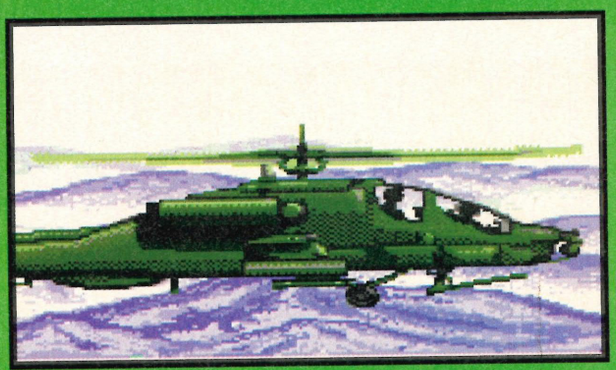
If you ever find yourself low on ammunition on the way back to base, concentrate on destroying these targets and you should increase your chances of surviving to the next sortie.

ACK CHOPPER



LHX

Maximum Ground Speed: 340 km/hr
Radar Warning Receiver Range: 1.3 miles
Cannon Rounds: 2,000 (20 mm)
Sidewinders: 4
Hellfires: 8
Flares And Chaff: 25



APACHE

Maximum Ground Speed: 272 km/hr
Radar Warning Receiver Range: approx 3 miles
Cannon Rounds: 1,200 (30 mm)
Sidewinders: 2
Hellfires: 16
Flares And Chaff: 15

WEAPON STOCKS



Even on the higher difficulty levels, your most useful weapon is your cannon and it's this that you'll be making the most use of throughout the game. A couple of bursts of 20 or 30mm shells is enough to obliterate soft targets such as C & C vehicles, ZSUs, BRDMs, 180mm guns and, of course, enemy infantrymen (chilling, eh?) The T-72 and T-80 tanks are much tougher targets, but they do yield to sustained cannon fire, as do bunkers and other buildings which are sometimes strangely resilient to missile attack.

Missiles are best kept held in reserve, until you're approaching your mission goal, as this is almost always surrounded by plenty of heavy artillery which has to be destroyed very quickly before the gunners get the chance to line their sights on you.

It's best to circle the area first, destroying radar sources first, then anything that looks dangerous before closing in on your objective. Attack the most dangerous targets (missile batteries and tanks) with missiles first, then use your cannon on whatever's left.

GUNS VS AIRCRAFT



The manual states that guns cannot be used against aircraft. That's rubbish. It certainly isn't easy, but just because you don't have any missiles left you don't have to run for it when a Hip, Hind or even a Flogger or Frogfoot is bearing down on you.

The only problem with using the cannon is that it will not lock on to an airborne target and just fires towards the targeting cross in the centre of the HUD. So climb or descend to the same height as the enemy aircraft and hold your position. Wait until the target is flying towards or away from you, and aim just ahead of it. Fire off several bursts and you should see it spinning earthward.

Shooting down MiGs like this is a little more complicated, because they tend to circle just out of range rather than coming directly for you. Hold still and rotate the chopper to follow them as they circle, constantly checking their range. When they seem to be closing slightly, fire a prolonged burst about half a screen ahead of them and you should score a hit.

If you try this, but find the cannon keeps locking onto a ground target, press START and C to switch off the computer targeting system. The gun will now fire directly ahead.

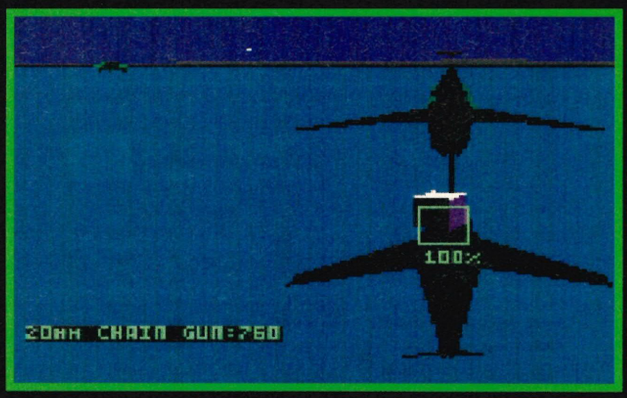
LHX ATTACK C

USING RADAR



The manual also states that your RWR (Radar Warning Receiver) does not distinguish between allied and enemy targets. Rubbish again. Allied targets are always shown as a grey dot, while blue dots mark enemy targets. Red dots, of course, are enemy radar sources.

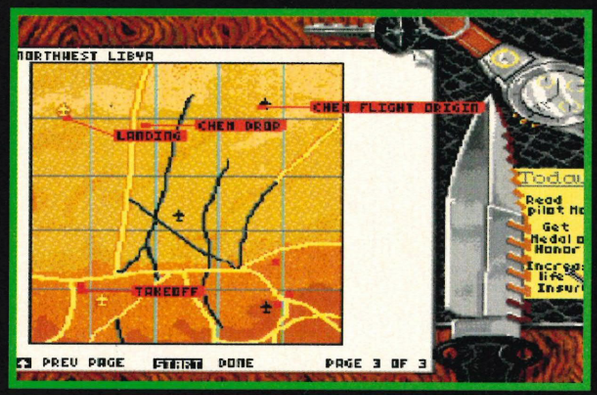
CRATE STUFF



On occasion, the targeting computer may spot a crate in the middle of battle zone, and these can be collected in the usual way, by going down to 30 feet and using the winch.

The crates usually contain the TOWs and Folding Fin Aerial Rockets which you usually only get if you're flying the Apache. In fact, these aren't much good in most situations because they're difficult to guide onto targets (TOWs have to be hand-steered using the missile view camera and FFARs only fire directly ahead). Also, TOWs and FFARs replace any Hellfires you might have on hardpoint two, so it's only worth collecting them if supplies are running short and things are looking pretty desperate.

MOVING TARGETS

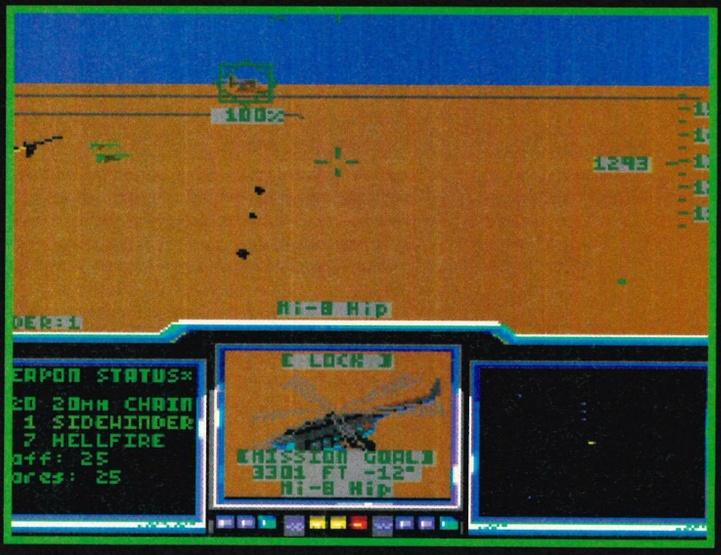


In the seek-and-destroy sorties which require you to shoot down an enemy helicopter, the waypoints are automatically set to Enemy Origin and Enemy Destination. Don't follow them to these locations, because by the time you reach the first waypoint they'll almost certainly have left already, and you'll be struggling to keep up with them.

Instead, it's best to work backwards, flying to the destination first, then turning towards the origin. Fly to a point about halfway between the two and wait for them to come to you.

If you haven't been spending time taking out ground targets on the way, you should get to the halfway point with a couple of minutes to spare before the enemy choppers appear on the Radar Warning Receiver. Spend this time putting the torch to any nearby SAM sites, tanks and anti-aircraft guns – in a little while there'll be quite a lot of things shooting at you, so anything you can get rid of at this early stage is best eliminated. This will also make it easier to aim Hellfires or the cannon at the helicopters if you run out of Sidewinders.

Once you've cleaned up the ground forces, ascend to between 1000 and 1300 feet, which is approximately the height the enemy will be coming in at, and the best position in helicopter combat is always up above your enemy.



It's worth remembering that, in the helicopter missions, there is only one helicopter you need to destroy to complete the mission, and that's usually a Mi-8 Hip-C transport. So as soon as the enemy come into visual range, try to get the target reticle over the Hip (it's a slightly rotund, grey helicopter) and loose off a Sidewinder or, if you don't have any of those, a Hellfire.

It's very important that you do this, because once the battle starts, the escort ships (either Hinds or Havocs, or both) will keep you busy with their air-to-air missiles while the Hip gets away. In fact, by the time you've destroyed the escorts, the target helicopter will more than likely be sitting on the landing pad at its destination or dropping Green Rain, and you'll have failed the mission.

CHOPPER



THE TURKEY SHOOT



The truck chasing missions are much easier than those described opposite, so they serve as good practice.

In this mission you don't have to worry about flying for halfway points. The trucks are so slow compared to your chopper that you can head for the first waypoint (the convoy origin), and if you're quick they will only just have left. As soon as you reach the origin, select the second destination waypoint and follow it. The convoy should only be a few miles up the road (watch out for a line of three ground traces on the RWR) and the trucks aren't armoured at all, so all you have to do is select your cannon, crank out about thirty rounds on each one, then head for home. No trouble.

LOBSTER QUADRILLE



These chopper escort missions aren't as easy as they first seem. The simple part is following the waypoints to the landing zone strafing everything within about a mile of your flight path. The Blackhawks give you three or four minutes' head-start, which is plenty of time, so you can be quite thorough.

Once you've cleared the route and reached the LZ you can't just head back to base, though. The time it takes for the Blackhawks to arrive is enough for the local enemy artillery to call up air support, which means by the time the Blackhawks get there they'll probably have a couple of Hokums buzzing around their heads. Unless you're there to fend off the attack, the Blackhawks will probably crash and burn and you won't complete the mission. Therefore it's absolutely vital that you hang around the LZ until they arrive, and make sure they land safely. Then, when they take off, the mission will be accomplished.



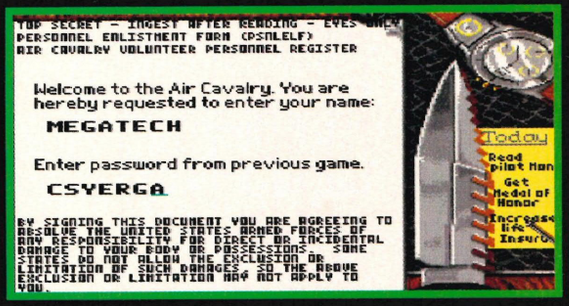
MAKING PICK-UPS AND DROPS



These missions aren't usually much of a problem once you've cleaned up any enemy ground forces who might be hanging around your landing zone. Make sure you don't hit someone you're supposed to be helping out, though, or you'll get back to base and the mission will be declared a failure (which isn't surprising, really).

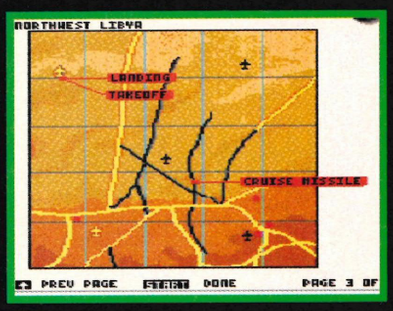
Find the spot where you're supposed to land by looking for a group of soldiers who are identified as 'MAN' rather than 'MAN WITH AK-47' or 'MAN WITH SA-7' or friendly vehicles. Descend into the middle of the group (30 feet for supply drops and 20 feet for personnel pick-ups), then switch to chase view and use the shadow of your helicopter to get your position exactly right. Couldn't be easier!

TOP SECRET MISSION CODES



These aren't very secret really, because they're only for use on the easy skill setting which isn't very troublesome. Still, if you're having trouble with getting the hang of LHX, it's worth using these to practise. At least you'll get a crack at all the different types of mission, over all the different types of terrain. You can't consider yourself to have finished the game until you've accomplished all the missions on the highest level, though.

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buck rogers

buck rogers: countdown to doomsday



I'm having problems trying to defeat the Ram Heavy Cruisers. I've tried all kinds of ways to beat the ship (such as constantly firing all its weapons first), but in the end I always get my butt well kicked. My crew are all Grade 8, and I've completed all the missions except mission 7 – Mariposa III. Please help.

TONY, HODDESDON

The answer to this one was in our Buck Rogers Hyper Technique Zone in issue nine, but here it is again. Close to range three and keep firing beam lasers at the weapons, then the controls. Don't close any further until the weapons and controls are all destroyed, and if he closes in don't move away.

wonderboy in monsterworld

wonderboy in monsterworld



In Wonderboy in Monsterworld, I have collected the Legend Sword, boots and armour. After collecting the armour, I get stuck walking through a circle of doors. I can see a chain, but cannot reach it. My main problem is trying to find the Legend Shield. Please can you help me? Also, in the underwater scenes I can see treasure chests, but cannot reach them – can you help?

J MADDEN, MANCHESTER

What you're missing is a hidden door just before you go up the tower to the bit with the chains. The door is at the bottom left of the screen on the lowest level after you've come off the moving platform. Push up and you will find yourself in a miniaturising chamber which will let you get through those tiny passages at the top of the tower.

The treasure chests are also reached via hidden doors. Keep pushing up on the joypad when you come to dead ends in the underwater mazes.

spiderman

spider-man

Please can you print a level select or invincibility cheat for Spider-man.

PHILIP ROPERT, JERSEY

What can we tell you, Phil. There isn't one so you'll just have to practise.

chuck rock

chuck rock



I cannot for the life of me get to the end of level two on Chuck Rock – how do you do it? Also, are there any decent cheats for this game?

MATT KING, LUTON

You shouldn't have any trouble getting TO the end of level two. If it's the sabre-toothed tiger that's giving you problems just concentrate on jumping and kicking him rather than belly-butting. Simple.

decapattack

decap attack

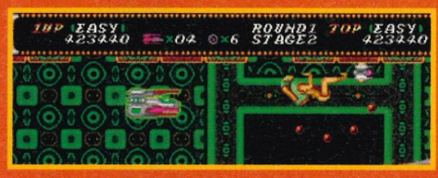
Please could you tell me if there are any cheats for a level select on Decap Attack?

MARK NOONE, UPPER BROUGHTON

No cheats or a level select, really. Oh, hang on though. You could try this for extra energy. Whenever you come to a spring pole, jump directly on it from above and bounce straight up and down again. As you keep jumping the pole will change colour, segment by segment, giving you extra energy with every bounce.

hellfire

hellfire



You're my last hope! Please tell me how to destroy the mother at the end of level six (the last level) of Hellfire? The reason for my frustration is that on my second attempt to defeat the mother, I actually succeeded. I used two Super Lasers, which lowered the mother's red shield. I was then able to finish off the mother using single-strength firepower. Since my first victory, I have not been able to defeat the mother again. I've fired up to five Super Lasers into it, but the red shield fails to lower. Please help!

JOHN CARR, WEST EWELL

We find the best way to beat this boss is to activate the diagonal shot and go to the top-left of the screen. Dodge the bullets and the missiles and shoot the 'headpiece' when the shield is lowered.

shining in the darkness

shining in the darkness

I've rescued the princess, but I can't find Dai to continue. Could you tell me where he is and how to get there?

R DOYLE

Look near a corridor of one-way doors for The Cave of Wisdom. You'll find Dai in there.

afterburner 2

afterburner 2

On my Afterburner 2 game, when I press the A and B buttons whilst the plane is refuelling, the following messages appear on the following levels:
Level 3: PRINCESS CAPTURED DARK FORCE RESCUE PRINCESS MIA TOM
Level 5: THE NAME OF DARK FORCE IS SIMEKIRI
Level 9: TOM FIGHT THE FORCE AT G-PEN AND TONE
Level 11: DARK MASTER USES SPELL BOTTSU!! TOM FEELS EVIL POWER
Level 13: OH ITS IS SO DANGEROUS!
Level 16: I NEVER GIVE UP TOM USES ITEM YUNKKELU!!
Level 19: TOM DRAWS AND DRAWS PRINCESS MIA ONLY PRAYS

They haven't got anything to do with the game, so what do they mean?

CARL BRANTON, HULL

Sounds like you've got a dyslexic spirit with very bad grammar haunting your copy of Afterburner 2! Er... we don't actually know what this gibberish means either – can anybody out there in MegaTechland throw any light on this mystery?

castle of illusion



Please could you tell me if there is any easy way of beating the fourth end of level boss – the pink dragon – on hard mode in Castle of Illusion.

MARTIN FRASER, CAITHNESS, SCOTLAND

You should be able to beat the dragon by staying on the middle platform and throwing balls at it when it appears. If you run out of balls it is possible to bottom-bomb the dragon with careful timing. More than that we can't say.

corporation



I'm stuck in a certain section of Corporation. I can get to lower level three and collect an embryo, but I cannot escape with it. I have Security Access 7 with very little personal damage and I have enough items to recharge fully.

ROBERT ASH

As soon as you've picked up the embryo, just head straight for the Car Park level – it's that simple!

sonic the hedgehog



Please help me! I'm still stuck on the end of level baddie in the Labyrinth Zone of Sonic. Have you got any hints or tips to help me?

BARY KNIGHTS, MITCHAM, SURREY

Just keep jumping to make sure you keep up with Robotnik as he goes up the shaft – but don't touch him or you'll die.

bart vs the space mutants



I am able to get past every single bit of Bart vs the Space Mutants, until I reach level five. To the left of the fourth floor there is a room which contains some nuclear rods, but I cannot seem to enter this room – you can just about see the room when you're standing in the same room as Maggie on the fourth floor. I've tried everything – even using Homer to wipe everything off the screen by eating his doughnuts – but it just doesn't work.

RICHARD BROWN, PRESTON

Sorry, we're a bit rusty on this one, but isn't there a lift that runs through that room from below? Surely it's just a matter of using the lift isn't it?

HELPLINE HEROES

Due to the inflexible nature of time and space within the confines of MegaTech, we can't print replies to all your queries. But here's another one of the ever-growing band of Helpline Heroes who'll be pleased to help you out (as long as you include a self-addressed envelope with your letter, that is).

MARK JAMESON, LONG COTTAGE, 19 COACH ROAD, SLEIGHTS, WHITBY, NORTH YORKSHIRE YO22 5AA.

Sonic The Hedgehog, Winter Chalenge, Road Rash, Altered Beast, Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego?, Back to the Future 3, Euroclub Soccer, John Madden's Football, Super Monaco GP, F-22 Interceptor, EA Hockey, Spider-man, Bonanza Brothers, Little Maruko Chan's Exciting Shopping, Desert Strike, Buck Rogers, The Immortal, Revenge of Shinobi, Two Crude Dudes, Rings of Power, ToeJam and Earl, Devil Crash/Dragon's Fury, Alien 3.

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PLEASE NOTE: ONLY ONE WORD PER BOX. PHONE NUMBERS COUNT AS ONE WORD. WHEN FILLING IN YOUR MESSAGE, USE BLOCK CAPITALS, AND WRITE NEATLY TO AVOID MISTAKES.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

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● FOR SALE

Megadrive Jap, plays all games with 8 games included. Boxed £210 ono. Buyer collects. Tel: 0932 344342 (Woking area)

Megadrive Jap, seven games £250.00. Phone 0892 545966.

Games for sale: Splatterhouse II, Phantasy Star III and Fatal Rewind. Games between £20 and £25. £70 for 3. 0689 835370

MegaTech 1-12 except 2, 1-3 Megadrive Advanced Gaming, 1-4 Console XS, 1-3 Mega 1-3 for Euro Club Soccer or sell. Buyer collects. Tel 0227 781580.

NHL Hockey and Road Rash for sale. Both in good condition. Call Andrew on 0494 762989.

UK Megadrive with Sonic and Golden Axe 2. Three months old . Sell for £110.00 or swap for Game Gear with games. Telephone Peter on Runcorn 0928 565108 after 6 PM or write to 123 Bridge Street, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 1BE. (All boxed)

Megadrive owners! Buy my games from £12.50. Will consider swaps. Please ring 02145 97576 for big list. Top games wanted!

Immortal, PGA Golf £25 each, Revenge of Shinobi £17, also issues 2 to 11 of Megatech £30. Phone (0533) 879161

Super Monaco GP and Sonic the Hedgehog for sale. £22 each. Both official. Phone 071 515 7847 ask for Danny after 4pm

Megadrive (UK) + Arcade Powerstick, Altered Beast, Bonanza Bros, Rambo 3, Arch Rivals (USA), Pitfighter, Desert Strike £150. Bargain! Bryan Lewis, 3 Waterloo Terrace, Carmarthen, Dyfed, Wales. SA31 1DQ.

Megatech magazines issues 3 to 11 £10.00 the lot. Tel: 0928 565108 after 6pm

Altered Beast £7, Quackshot £20, Sonic £15, Super Monaco 2 £25. All boxed with instructions. Phone 0753 855888 ring after 5.30pm

Megatech issues 2 - 12 mint condition for sale or swap for any 2 good Megadrive games. Offers ring 091 3863153 anytime.

Fantastic Megadrive games for Sale / Exchange. Titles include Desert Strike, PGA and many more!! For list phone Michael on 0232 844473.

Megadrive games £15 - £25. Quackshot, PS III, Mickey Mouse, Sonic, Altered Beast, Arrow Flash, World Cup Italia 90, Thunderforce II, Spiderman, Alex Kidd E.C. Game Gear with Adaptor, Ninja Gaiden, Donald Duck, Pulman £115. Games £12.50 each. Tel: (0223) 249675.

Megadrive £75. Buck Rogers, Ghouls and Ghosts, Warriors of Eternal Sun, Madden Football '92, Populous, Revenge of Shinobi £20 each. Starflight, Star Control, Sonic, Eswat £15 each or all for £240. Call Chris 0865 52595.

Game Gear with Shinobi and Columns plus mains adaptor, 5 months old. Boxed still under guarantee only £55. Dave 0942 726545.

Amstrad CPC 464 with Modulator plus over 50 great games, good condition. Bargain at only £65. Tel Dave: 0942 726545.

Desert Strike, Tazmania £30, Populous £25, The lot £80, or swap for Game gear with Sonic, Castle of Illusion. Also Yamaha Keyboard PRS - 6 100 Preset voices, 10 rhythms with stand. £90. Tel Peter (0922) 26809 after 5.30pm.

Aliens 3 £30, Streets of Rage £25, M.M. Castle of Illusion £30, Sonic £25 or swap for LHX Attack Chopper, Sonic 2, Thunder Force 4, Lemmings or a Sega Arcade Power stick (as show on P13 of Megatech No. 7 (The top one)). Tel: 0872 42020.

Megadrive for sale with five games, Mario Lemieux, Toki, Herzog Zwei, James Pond 2, Sonic and turbo joypad. Tel 081-5738524

● WANTED

Wanted Sega Megadrive and SNES with good collection of games. Also wanted SNES, Famicom, Megadrive games please Tel: 0527 32230.

Wanted Rainbow Islands for the Mega Drive. Phone: (0795) 668100 after 6.00 and ask for Gary. Swaps considered.

Wanted your top games for my top cash! Ring me if you have good stuff to sell me. Tel: 021 459 7576.

SWAP

Swap Mickey Mouse and Streets of Rage for NHLPA Hockey and Bulls vs. Lakers. Must be good condition. Ring: 091 386 3153.

Swap Eswat for Speedball 2, Super Off Road, Euro Soccer, Bulls vs. Lakers, Hellfire, Budokan or Corporation. Phone (03013) 222 at weekend.

Please please will you swap my brilliant Megadrive games which are Desert Strike, Strider, Super hand On, Quack Shots and Ghostbusters. For any excellent titles. If you are interested ring (0670) 819999 Now!!!

Splatterhouse, Alien Storm, Buck Rogers, Hellfire, Mercs, Road Rash and more. Swap Megadrive 19 games, Power Stick Action Replay. Over £700 worth for Amiga 1mb with Stereo sound sampler all mine boxed as new. Phone Swindon 0793 522894, Call Gary.

Large selection of Megadrive games to swap. For a list of my games, phone Michael (0232) 844473, may sell some.

Swap my Super Monaco GP or Fighting Masters for your Tazmania or Mercs. Excellent condition (0480) 454689 ask for Alan.

Will swap Buck Rogers, Populous and Super Monaco for Sword of Vermillion, Corporation, Speedball II, LHX Attack Chopper or Phantasy Star III. Phone Steve after 6.30pm on: 091 487 9709 all games with instruction manuals.

I have Streets of Rage. Will swap for PGA Tour or Monaco 2. Also Golden Axe and 3D Blockout for anything good or both for Krustys SFH or S/Ball 2. 20 Magazines (Sega) for any game. Phone Kris - (0964) 543796 (6 - 9pm).

Swap Toe Jam and Earl, Wrestle War, F-22 for Pitfighter, Starflight, Populous or David Robinson's. Phone 0222 868696 after 4pm.

Swap my Moonwalker and Sonic for Desert Strike or any other game considered. Phone Thomas on 0274 883528 after 4pm.

I will swap Sonic the Hedgehog for anything. Ring 0384 293537 and ask for Carl after 4.30pm.

● PEN PALS

Gamer Link! The pen-pal club for gamers run by gamers! Free swap service! SAE for details to 28 Church Field, Ware, Herts, SG12 0EP. Also, free tips and cheats library! Members worldwide! Write now for full details and a form!

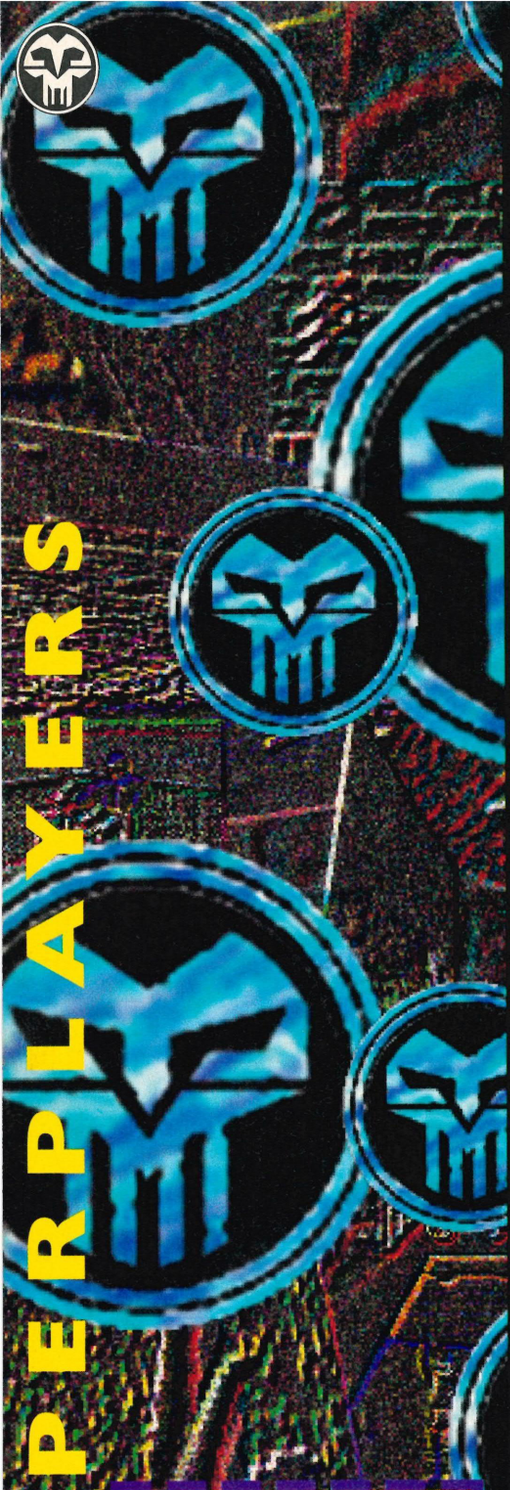
MEGASELL

For just £1 you can use this service and write your own ad containing up to 20 words. £2 gets you 40 words, which is fairly simple arithmetic, I suppose...

What do you have to do? Fill out the form (or a copy of it) and send it with a cheque or PO made payable to MEGATECH, and send it to MegaTech MegaSell, MEGATECH, Priory Court, 30–32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Due to deadlines, allow up to six weeks for your advert to appear in the magazine.

ATTENTION! MEGATECH MegaSell is for private advertisers only. Anybody sending in a trade advert will not have it published. It will be ignored, your cheque will not be cashed, and no correspondence entered into!



HYPERPLAYERS

In light of public suspicion regarding certain scores, we've decided that the Hyperplayers section is in need of a revamp starting this month. We've taken out some of the two player sports games such as John Madden '92 which are so easy to cheat on and which aren't really what you could call challenges anyway, but they will be returning next month, when we will be setting strict rules about lengths of games and other skill settings which will help us eliminate fraud scores.

Send in your current personal bests for other players to beat, either on the form provided or on the back of a postcard to HYPERPLAYERS, MEGATECH, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. And no cheating...

NAME.....
ADDRESS.....
.....
.....
.....
GAME.....
DIFFICULTY SETTING.....
LEVEL.....
SCORE.....
GAME.....
DIFFICULTY SETTING.....
LEVEL.....
SCORE.....
GAME.....
DIFFICULTY SETTING.....
LEVEL.....
SCORE.....
GAME.....
DIFFICULTY SETTING.....
LEVEL.....
SCORE.....

AFTERBURNER
27,861,520
Daniel Sullivan, Coventry

ALIEN 3
14,360,450 (Hard)
Martin Charles, Cardiff

ALIEN STORM
100 Supreme Ruler
Jim Graham, Stevenage

ALISIA DRAGOON
Elven Mage (Level 7, Normal)
Anthony Dowd, Telford

BATMAN
561,900
Danny Kenmure, Edinburgh

BATTLE SQUADRON
8,912,101 (easy level)
Asif Akhtar, Wimbledon

BLOCK OUT
296,534 (Level 0-I, 12x5x5, Flat Fun)
The Loveable Sharon Mitchell, Fraserburgh

BONANZA BROTHERS
9,762,777
Paul Whiting, Kidlington

CALIFORNIA GAMES
Footbag: 854,370
Martin Charles, Cardiff
Double Footbag: 379,400
Jonathan Philips, Cardiff
Surfing: 10.0 (Turbo setting)
Yuen Aw, Birmingham
Skating: 12,530
Martin Charles, Cardiff
Half-Pipe: 47,398
Martin Charles, Cardiff
Double Half-Pipe: 65,599
Jonathan and Timothy Phillips, Cardiff
BMX: 146,760
Martin Charles, Cardiff

CHUCK ROCK
412,125 (Completed)
Mathew Forster, Newport Pagnell

COLUMNS
72,994,617
Philip Butler, Cramlington

DARIUS 2
6,530,390
Mark Hogg, Burton-on-Trent

DESERT STRIKE
4,995,700
Liam Cullen, Welwyn Garden City

DICK TRACY
339,900
David Rowntree, Devon

DJ BOY
9,835,700
Jonathon Tilbrook, Sheffield

DOUBLE DRAGON 2
51,280
Bob Payne, West Bromwich

EARNEST EVANS
1,480,050
David Wheeler, Caerphilly

ELEMENTAL MASTERS
356,530 (completed on Normal)
James Terry, St. Albans

ESWAT
345,900
Warren Noble, Eastbourne

F-22 INTERCEPTOR
USA: 35,577
Dean Lloyd, Rugeley
USSR: 35,577
Dean Lloyd, Rugeley
IRAQ: 36,477
Dean Lloyd, Rugeley
KOREA: 36,477
Dean Lloyd, Rugeley

FANTASIA
11,683,600 (hardest level)
Chris Maginnis, Linlithgow

FATAL REWIND
3,658,180
Jody McLarty, Aylesbury

FIRE SHARK
7,122,130 (Completed)
Cuddly Sharon Mitchell, Fraserburgh

FLICKY
3,334,800
Stephen Gallimore, Bournemouth

FORGOTTEN WORLDS
1,991,800
Daniel Gallop, Essex

GAIARES
1,608,352
Asif Akhtar, Wimbledon

GALAHAD
2,071,300
Lawrence Simpson, Walthamstow

GHOSTBUSTERS
17,758,000
Wayne Lockwood, Boroughbridge

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS
999,980 (Professional)
Mick+Barry Gosling, Coventry

GOLDEN AXE
984.0 (Hard level)
Ben Tucker, Catford
247.0 (Duel)
Kevin Shirley, Cheshire

GOLDEN AXE II
983.0
Nathan Preston, Mid-Calder

GRANADA X
23,563,545
Carl Bown, Bournemouth

GREENDOG
211,300
Neil Brockhouse, Bolton

GYNOUG
2,345,760
Wesley Thomson, Fifef

HARD DRIVIN'
634,483 (Normal)
Nicola Whittaker, Eastbourne

HELLFIRE
16,598,070
Neil Lemon, Middlesex.

JAMES 'BUSTER' DOUGLAS BOXING
18,031,120
Daniel Creser, Earls Barton

JAMES POND
1,829,560
Wayne Turner, Chelmsford

KID CHAMELEON
1,248,790 (Normal)
Wayne Turner, Chelmsford

KLAX
8,064,580 (import version)
The One And Only Sharon Mitchell, Fraserburgh
6,376,775 (official version)
The Other One And Only Sharon Mitchell, Fraserburgh

KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE
999,990
Michael Steward, Milton Keynes

M1 ABRAMS BATTLE TANK
702 (First Lieutenant, 100 kills)
Stewart Parker

MAGICAL FLYING HAT
135,170
Richard Rogers, Royston

MARBLE MADNESS
205,360
Darren Neale, Helston

MERCS
Arcade Mode: 1,407,500
Neil Kendall, Birkenhead
Original Mode: 5,107,950
Stu Gorlner, Gorsley

MICKEY MOUSE
1,924,600
Nathan Preston, Mid-Calder

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE
2,104,100
Dan Towes, Gillingham

MOONWALKER
949,400
Philip Butler

MUSHA ALESTE
133,896,380
Rodney Scotland, Northampton

NEW ZEALAND STORY
522,360
Nigel Weston, Wilmslow

OLYMPIC GOLD
Archery:171
Ben Mills, Peterborough
Diving: 473.50
Meredydd Wilson, Swansea
Hammer Throw: 93.45m
Angus Poland, Scotland
110m Hurdles:12.73 sec
Angus Poland, Scotland
Pole Vault: 6.40m
James Ward, Huthwaite, Notts
100m Sprint: 9.38 secs
P Watson, Hayes, Middx
200m Swimming: 1:41.37
Ben Mills, Peterborough

OUTRUN
37,004,160 (Hyper level)
Justine Miller, Sutton Coldfield

PACMANIA
1,000,111 (Hard level)
Lee Tooze, Brixham

PGA TOUR GOLF
Avenel: 235 strokes (best 72)
Dean Lloyd, Rugeley
Avenel: 51 strokes (best 18)
Stewart Bonner, Hemel Hempstead
Sawgrass:207 strokes (best 72)
Stewart Bonner, Hemel Hempstead
Sawgrass: 49 strokes (best 18)
Gavin Stevenson, Stirling
West Stadium: 218 strokes (best 72)
Stewart Bonner, Hemel Hempstead
West Stadium: 51 strokes (best 18)
Dean Lloyd, Rugeley
Sterling Shores: 222 strokes (best 72)
Jody Osman, Warwickshire
Sterling Shores: 51 strokes (best 18)
Simon Shone, Heywood, Lancs

PITFIGHTER
2,449,350
Stephen Gallimore, Bournemouth

POPULOUS
515,090 (Genesis level)
Philip Best, St Austell

PREDATOR 2
12,355,340 (Easy)
Nathan Preston, Mid-Calder

QUACKSHOT
10,077,000
Martin Hunt, Maidenhead

RAIDEN TRAD
2,072,650 (Easy level)
Neil Morgan, Reading

RAMBO III
999,999,995 (Hard level)
Tim Burton, March

REVENGE OF SHINOBI
9,999,900
Daniel Sullivan, Coventry

ROBOCOD
13,780,300
Simon Shone, Heywood

ROLLING THUNDER 2
554,180
Scott Hazel, Trunch, Norfolk

SHADOW DANCER
2,650,965
Astf Akhtar, Wimbledon

SPACE HARRIER 2
27,283,600
Lee Royle, Reading

SPEEDBALL 2
251 Points (Division two winners)
Sandro Matty, Chessington

SPIDERMAN
23:03:42 remaining (Nightmare level)
Scott Hazell, Norfolk

SPLATTERHOUSE 2
878,910 (Hard)
Wayne Turner, Chelmsford

STREETS OF RAGE
9,999,000
Nathan Preston, Mid-Calder

STRIDER
236,800
Mick & Barry Gosling, Coventry

SUPER HANG-ON
90,892,640 (Expert level)
Stuart Morgan, Kegworth

SUPER MONACO GP
6,002 Driver's points
Neil Boswell, Pembroke Dyfed

SUPER MONACO GP II
160 Driver's points
Wayne Pearce, Haddlesey

SUPER OFF ROAD
199,000 (no continues, 48 races won)
Mike houghton, Stockport

TASK FORCE HARRIER
765,000
Neil Brockhouse, Bolton

TAZMANIA
1,130,160 (Hard)
Wayne Turner, Chelmsford

TERMINATOR
1,141,920 (Easy level)
Gavin Pinkett, Abertillery

TEST DRIVE 2
411,384 (Desert in Porsche)
Andrew York, Bolton

THUNDERFORCE II
2,689,719 (Hard level)
Steven Cooper, Fife

THUNDERFORCE III
11,528,100
Hywel Llewellyn, Pentyrch, S. Wales

TOE JAM & EARL
1,697 (Toe Jam)
Adam Welbourn, New Romney

TOKI
334,200 (Hard)
Sven Chesters, W.Sussex

TROUBLE SHOOTER
669,780 (Normal level)
Ben Randell, Hastings

TRUXTON
30,300,503
Lawrence Simpson, Hackney

TWO CRUDE DUDES
999,999 (Hard level)
Astf Akhtar, Wimbledon

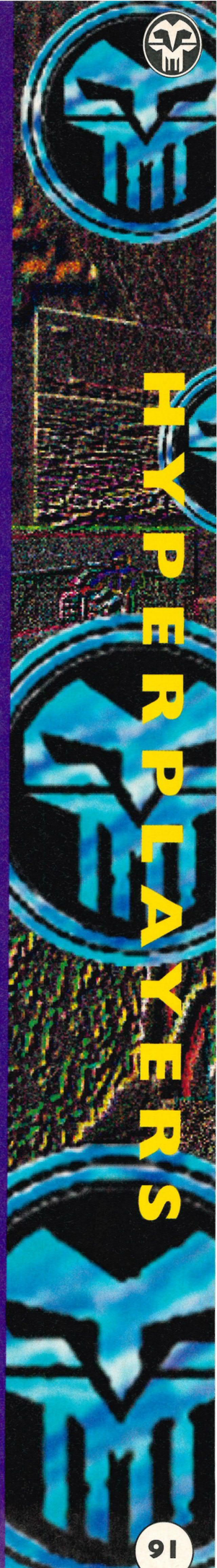
WARDNER
1,290,900 (Normal level)
Richard Lunt, Bagillt, Clwyd

WINTER CHALLENGE
Speed Skating: 20.02 seconds
Tom Cull, Petersfield
Cross Country:3 mins 26.8 seconds
A J Walsh, Romiley
Downhill: 1 min 37.25 seconds
P Watson, Hayes, Middx
Ski Jump:115.8m
Nitin Shah, Edgeware
Biathlon: 4 mins 7.3 seconds
A J Walsh, Romiley

WONDERBOY IN MONSTERWORLD
596,651 (Gold)
Stuart Tolcher

ZANY GOLF
18 strokes (completed)
Yuen Aw, Birmingham

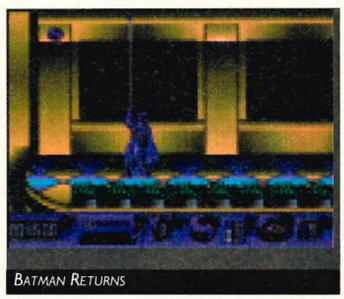
ZERO WING
2,584,700 (Easy level)
Craig Wilkins, Delapre

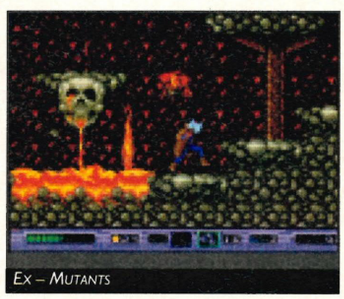


GAME INDEX

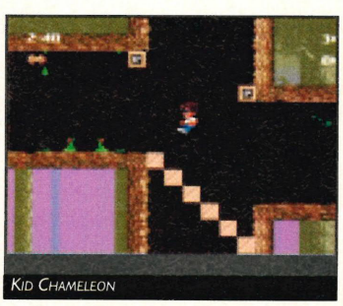
GAME NAME	BY...	PRICE	RATINGS %						GENERAL COMMENTS
			PRESENTATION	GRAPHICS	SOUND	STP	LTP	M'TECH RATING	
688 ATTACK SUB	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	80	80	89	85	86	87	An excellent submarine simulation which gives you ten missions to complete as a US sub commander, or six as a Soviet. It sounds dull, it's a very compelling game and is thoroughly recommended to someone who's after something different (with plenty of "depth").
AEROBLASTERS	KEMCO	IMPORT	78	84	81	85	71	78	A fairly easy-to-complete one or simultaneous two-player horizontally scrolling blast. The graphics, sound and playability are all excellent, but that low challenge factor means it can only be recommended to shoot 'em up novices.
AFTERBURNER II	SEGA	£34.99	86	80	88	85	78	79	A good convcersion of the 3D jet fighter coin-op, with speedy graphics and thumpy soundtracks. All the gameplay of the original is in there, but alas that never amounted to much, and it can become a little dull after a while
ALIEN STORM	SEGA	£34.99	84	84	80	89	69	70	This would be an outstanding conversion of the coin-op were it not for the fact that it's a piece of cake to complete. Great graphics and highly enjoyable one or two-player action, but it's all over too quickly.
ALISIA DRAGOON	SEGA	£39.99	83	94	80	84	89	88	Alisia Dragoon and her pet dragon's inhabit the far-flung dimension of fantasy land, where all is not well. An evil dictator controls the land and only Alisia can wrest it from his grasp. What this boils down to is a multi-directional scrolling platform game, with plenty to shoot and lots of features to keep the player hooked. A fresh approach to an old format.
AQUATIC GAMES	EA	£34.99	76	89	82	70	50	59	James Pond's third game, an attempt at a humourous sports simulation is disappointing. The graphics are excellent, but the series of seven mediocre are boring. For little kids only.
ARNOLD PALMER'S GOLF	SEGA	£39.99	85	79	69	86	80	85	This is a pretty decent golf sim. Featuring a variety of options, excellent graphics (the 3D viewpoint and the animation on the large golfer sprite are both superb) and a very tough course indeed, Arnold Palmer's Golf will appeal to golf and sports simulation fans alike.
ATOMIC RUNNER	DATA-EAST	IMPORT	83	88	89	78	82	0	Join Chelnov, the Atomic Runner, as he runs through scrolling platform levels zapping aliens. Great graphics (though Chelnov himself is a bit weedy) and challenging gameplay.
AYRTON SENNA'S SUPER MONACO GP 2	SEGA	£49.99	91	90	77	94	92	93	Ayrton Senna's replaces the original Super Monaco GP as the number one Megadrive driving game. While not radically different, GP II features extra tracks, improved sound and loads of digitised pictures. If you don't have the first game this one cart you should get.
BATMAN	SEGA	£34.99	79	79	75	71	65	70	Quite a smart-looking game of the first Batmovie, but not only is the gameplay very basic (walk around, punch some blokes, jump on a platform) it's very easy to complete.
BATMAN RETURNS	SEGA	£39.99	69	73	70	75	80	76	Big graphics and more involved platform punch-up gameplay make this the better batgame, but it still lacks star quality. Sometimes it goes beyond challenging and becomes frustrating so it's not one for novices.
BATTLE SQUADRON	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	78	83	79	82	81	80	A tough, frantic and noisy one or simultaneous two-player up-the-screen blaster. Although it's pretty much devoid of original features, it's a fun game and lays down a challenge to test even the most experienced of shooting fanatics.
BIOHAZARD BATTLE	SEGA	£39.99	73	93	86	87	86	88	Spectacularly gross graphics and enjoyable, challenging gameplay set this apartfrom the bulk of Megadrive shoot 'em ups. Well worth buying, and watch out for it under it's Japanese title, Crying.
BLOCK OUT	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£34.99	78	70	30	90	91	91	This sort of 3D Tetris is surely the finest Megadrive puzzle game available. Packed with tons of options (including a simultaneous two-player mode) and featuring highly addictive gameplay, this is a must for your collection.
BONANZA BROS	SEGA	£34.99	82	88	84	79	55	69	Like Alien Storm, this is another superb conversion which is let down by the fact that it's just too easy. The two-player action is fun, but at the end of the day what you need is a challenge, and unless you're a games novice, this simply fails to deliver.
BUCK ROGERS- COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£49.99	88	76	58	89	90	90	As RPG's go, this is one of the best on the Megadrive. Based around the TSR board game, it's set in the 25th century and casts you as the leader of a platoon of six rookie soldiers who are out to stop the evil RAM organisation from taking over Earth. Absorbing gameplay, and a must for RPG fans.
BUDOKAN	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	87	83	79	87	86	88	Billed correctly as a "thinking man's beat 'em up", this graphically and sonically superb oriental fighting game lets you take out your aggression with four different martial arts skills - nunchuku, bo, karate and kendo. With over 25 moves per art and 12 very tough opponents, Budokan isn't a game you'll master overnight.
BULLS VS LAKERS	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	95	85	83	75	83	80	Probably the best of EA's basketball simulations, featuring all the big name American teams, fast and realistic on-court action and the named players have all their real-life special moves. Good stuff.
CALIFORNIA GAMES	SEGA	£39.99	80	88	70	83	79	80	Head off to the sun-soaked Californian coast to partake in five events such as surfing, skateboarding and roller skating. Totally excellent fun.
COLUMNS	SEGA	£39.99	76	69	93	88	87	88	Sega's answer to Tetris, the aim of this rather cerebral game is to match groups of three differently-coloured jewels as they fall down the screen. The sound is excellent, and there's a huge variety of options, including arcade-style time trials, three different difficulty settings, nine different starting levels and a two-player head-to-head mode which adds to the game's lasting appeal.

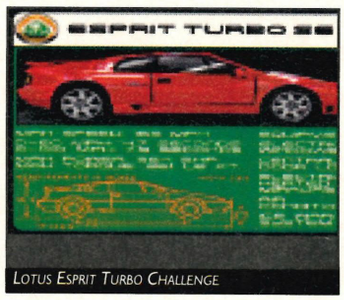
GAME NAME	BY...	PRICE	RATINGS %						GENERAL COMMENTS
			PRESENTATION	GRAPHICS	SOUND	STP	LTP	M'TECH RATING	
CORPORATION	VIRGIN	£39.99	80	76	84	76	91	87	Corporation is an absolutely huge 3D strategy game. As a secret agent, your job is to penetrate the HQ of a massive corporation and bring back evidence of illegal activities. It's very different, and very absorbing. Worth checking out if you're after a more cerebral type of game.
CURSE	MICRONET	IMPORT	66	62	64	71	62	65	While Curse is fun to play, it suffers from a lack of originality and one very annoying feature - when you die you lose all your extra weapons, and it's very difficult to continue. Try out other shoot 'em ups like Hellfire or Atomic Robokid before shelling out for this.
CYBERBALL	SEGA	£34.99	79	79	82	81	72	76	A decent conversion of the multi-player coin-op American football game which features robots instead of humans, Cyberball features pretty neat graphics but has been overshadowed by the likes of John Madden '92, which are offer superior gridiron gameplay. If you're an American Football fan, try this out - but not until you've seen these others.
DARIUS II	TAITO	IMPORT	83	85	82	84	80	82	A very stylish horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up which sports tremendous graphics and seven completely different endings, depending on which route you take through the game! Recommended to ardent blasting fans.
DAVE ROBINSON'S BASKETBALL	SEGA	£39.99	81	86	77	85	80	83	This game beats Lakers vs Celtics by a narrow squeak to become the best basketball game on the Megadrive. The pitch is viewed at a 45° angle, and flips over when the ball carrier crosses the halfway line. This means he goes from running down to up. This causes some confusion to begin with, but this is still and excellent game.
DECAPATTACK	SEGA	£34.99	74	80	70	83	81	82	A fun-filled platform game which is basically identical to the old import game, Magical Flying Hat Turbo Adventure, except it has different sprites. Platform fans will love it - if you're one, check it out.
DESERT STRIKE	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£34.99	92	91	85	95	93	93	Put on your flight gear, and get your bird whirlin', in this novel shoot 'em up. You have to pilot your AH-64 attack helicopter against the forces of a middle-east country. Loads of action and plenty of missions. Essential.
DEVIL CRASH	TECHNOSOFT	IMPORT	86	91	84	93	88	90	A stunning-looking pinball simulation which is packed full of features. The ball movement is completely realistic, and the general game "feel" makes it the best pinball game yet seen - a must-buy for silverball fans.
DICK TRACY	SEGA	£34.99	83	85	78	88	85	85	A sort of Shinobi-style game with machine guns, Dick Tracy is a challenging and addictive action game which should appeal to fans of the movie and gamesplayers alike.
DJ BOY	SAMMY	£34.99	78	75	70	60	59	59	A beat 'em up on roller skates which looks quite novel to start with but soon grows tedious. It's very easy to complete as well so you'd best give it a miss.
DOUBLE DRAGON	ACCOLADE	£29.99	65	75	67	50	30	53	Despite being superior to Double Dragon 2 (which was released before it) DD is a very poor game. Most people should be capable of completing this within half an hour of first playing it. It may llok like the coin-op, by it plays nothing like it.
DYNAMITE DUKE	SEGA	£34.99	83	82	74	84	61	73	One of the few Operation Wolf-style games available for the Megadrive, this provides plenty of blasting fun and frolics, but is ultimately let down by the lack of challenge. Once again, only novices really need apply.
EA HOCKEY 2	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	88	85	86	89	88	87	EA's original ice hockey simulation is still pretty hot stuff, but of course, now that they've released the tougher and slightly spruced up sequel, NHLPA Hocky, you're best off going for that instead.
ECCO	SEGA	£39.99	97	96	90	94	93	94	A very unusual game in which you play a dolphin on an underwater mission to find its friends. Graphics are absolutely spectacular and the puzzle action, though not fast and furious, is most engrossing.
ESWAT	SEGA	£34.99	86	87	82	87	82	85	A smart conversion of the Sega coin-op (without the two player mode, unfortunately) which casts the player as a cyber-suited cop of tomorrow roaming a city full of high tech bad guys.
EX-MUTANTS	SEGA	£39.99	92	80	72	89	92	89	Based on the Malibu comics, this is an action-packed platform game in which you control a heavily armed hero or heroine on a mutant-mashing mission. Graphics aren't superb, but it's great fun.
F1 CIRCUS	NICHIBUTSU	IMPORT	90	68	69	76	82	80	Despite its poor-looking graphics, F1 Circus is a really good game. It's very fast,there's plenty to do, including pit stops and car customising. Only on import, but well worth checking out.
F22 INTERCEPTOR	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	94	80	76	89	90	90	EA's first flight sim is impressive with fast 3D graphics, and stacks of combat missions to fly. Sometimes seems a little unrealistic, but if you fancy a change from mindless shoot 'em ups, check this out.
FANTASIA	SEGA	£39.99	72	93	44	52	47	49	This sequel to Mickey Mouse was keenly anticipated, but turned out to be a massive disappointment. The graphics are excellent, but sadly naff sound and poorly designed, bland and frustrating gameplay result in a game that has very little appeal - even to the biggest Mickey fans.
FASTEST ONE	HUMAN	IMPORT	41	35	25	31	28	29	This split screen one or two-player racing gamecompletely fails to deliver. Crap graphics, sound and playability and utterly tedious action results in the worst Megadrive racing game by far. Steer well clear.


BATMAN RETURNS


EX – MUTANTS


GREY LANCER


KID CHAMELEON



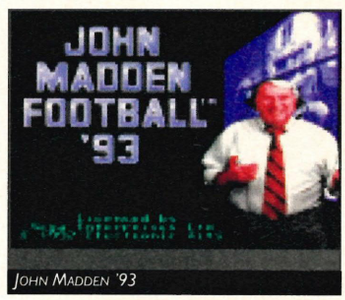
LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE

GAME INDEX

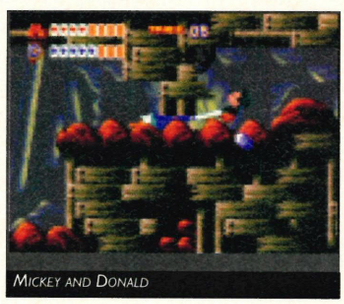
GAME NAME	BY...	PRICE	RATINGS %						GENERAL COMMENTS
			PRESENTATION	GRAPHICS	SOUND	STP	LTP	M'TECH RATING	
FATAL REWIND	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£34.99	72	84	81	84	82	80	Better known as Killing Game Show, this is a very fast and furious platform game where memorising the screen layout is the key to success. Some may find its high difficulty level just too frustrating, but if you're after a challenge, this is where to be.
FIGHTING MASTERS	TRECO	IMPORT	79	85	79	88	78	84	As a one player game Fighting Masters falls flat on its face. The two-player mode is a different kettle of fish. You can pound your opponent with one of twelve intergalactic wrestlers with a variety moves unique to the individual characters. The best on-on-one Megadrive beat 'em up.
FORGOTTEN WORLDS	SEGA	£39.99	82	79	86	79	80	82	Forgotten Worlds is a good looking one- or two-player blast, with plenty of action on offer. Like other Megadrive games, it's easy to finish on the easy level, but offers plenty of challenge on difficult. Check it out if you're into destruction.
GAIARES	RENOVATION	£39.99	81	88	75	80	85	84	An excellent-looking game, Gaiares is one of the toughest shoot 'em ups available on the Megadrive and is highly recommended to blasting fans who are hankering after a challenge.
GHOSTBUSTERS	SEGA	£39.99	84	85	83	84	81	82	Featuring humorous cartoon-style graphics - some of the end-of-level ghosts are truly superb - and some excellent tunes, Ghostbusters is a platform game which will keep you amused for some time. If you ain't afraid of no ghosts, try this one out.
GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS	SEGA	£39.99	88	92	93	93	92	93	Ghouls 'n' Ghosts is a stunning conversion on the classic coin-op, combining stunning graphics and sound with very challenging gameplay. It's a truly superb game, and is a must for your Megadrive software library.
GODS	MINDSCAPE	IMPORT	80	91	88	89	88	89	Solve puzzles and beat off mythical monsters in this great platform shoot 'em up. Sega Europe didn't like it enough to release it officially, but it's worth chasing an import copy.
GOLDEN AXE II	SEGA	£34.99	79	80	67	72	67	67	Sega couldn't improve on the original with their sequel, in fact they produced a game which wasn't a patch on the first. Golden Axe 2 lacks playability, and a long term challenge. If you haven't already, get hold of the fast game, it's much better than this.
GREEN DOG	SEGA	£39.99	77	84	86	62	52	56	Trek across six Carribean islands in the hunt for a wasted surfer's surfing powers. A rather action-unpacked platform game which looks great but is dull to play.
GREY LANCER	MASAYA	IMPORT	89	80	70	80	60	72	A slick-looking space shoot 'em up from the creators of Gynoug. Though it's well programmed, Grey Lancer's content is unoriginal and it borrows from just about every other shoot 'em up in the cosmos.
GYNOUG	SEGA	£39.99	89	96	86	89	94	92	Gynoug stands head and shoulders above most Megadrive shoot 'em ups.It's playable, challenging and the graphics are stunning, with some fantastic bosses. A game no self-respecting Megadrive owner should be without.
HARD DRIVIN'	TENGEN	£34.99	845	88	89	76	70	75	Tengen's conversion of Atari's Hard Drivin leaves a lot to be desired. The vector graphics are jerky and it's very easy to complete. Steer well clear of this turkey.
HELLFIRE	SEGA	£34.99	60	85	81	93	89	93	Featuring novel four-way selectable firepower and power-up weapons, this is a slick and very good looking blaster which oozes playability. There are plenty of surprises , especially on the final level. If you're a shoot 'em up fan looking for a challenge, check this out
HERZOG ZWEI	SEGA	£29.99	76	71	75	76	74	76	A weird title for a weird game. Herzog Zwei is a sort of strategy shoot 'em up in which one or two players attempt to defeat opposing enemy forces by strategically positioning their own armoured divisions. Rather short on action, but an interesting title which would be more suitable for thetacticians, rather than arcade players.
HOME ALONE	SEGA	£39.99	70	71	64	73	59	70	Guide the Macaulay Culkin sprite around the neighbourhood, foiling the plans of a pair of burglars by setting traps and attacking them with home-made weapons. Fun for a while, but too easy to appeal to any but a young player.
ISHIDO	ACCOLADE	£35.99	76	65	76	74	81	80	Ishido is an overly-colourful puzzle game which is played with 76 tiles on a 96 squares big board. The object is stick all the tiles on the board by placing them next to tiles with a matching shape or colour Fun for a while, but very difficult.
JAMES POND	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	44	80	66	77	72	78	A cute and entertaining twelve-level aquatic platform game which provides plenty of fun. There are lots of hidden levels, and ardent platform addicts will definitely enjoy the action. It's since been over shadowed by its sequel, Robocod, which has many more levels.
JOE MONTANA 3	SEGA	£39.99	88	86	93	82	72	78	Sega combined all the best features of the first two Joe Montana games to produce an American Football game which still isn't quite as playable as John Madden '92. The spoken commentary is as spectacular as ever, though.
JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '92	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	90	95	93	89	96	95	This is the best American footy game anywhere on any machine. The graphics are excellent and, more importantly, the control system is easy to understand and use. No megadrive owner should be without a copy of this.,
JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '93	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	87	90	87	92	93	91	This has a few extras over JM92 (classic teams, speech, battery save, a few extra moves). It's also slightly slower and tougher, but it's not much of an advancement. That said, it's an excellent game, but don't buy it if you've got '92.

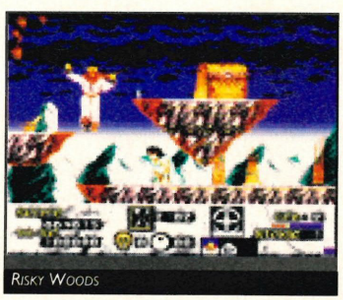
GAME NAME	BY...	PRICE	RATINGS %						GENERAL COMMENTS
			PRESENTATION	GRAPHICS	SOUND	STP	LTP	M'TECH RATING	
KID CHAMELEON	SEGA	£34.99	60	65	78	77	60	64	Kid C is a platform game with a novel twist, the hero can change his form by collecting hats. This power lets him masquerade as a samurai, a tank, a psycho and a host of other characters. What lets it down is the lack of challenge which persists throughout the game, bar one level.
KLAX	TENGEN	£34.99	90	74	85	84	82	85	Beware! The Japanese import version of this isn't particularly good due to a vague and imprecise control method. American and official versions have that problem cured and are much better. Fans of the original coin-op and puzzle game players in general are recommended to try it out.
LEMMINGS	SEGA	£39.99	91	89	85	89	93	92	All the features of every other version of this classic puzzle game have been included in the Megadrive game, including the music, all the levels and the two player mode. Hours of fun for all the family!
LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	89	80	70	87	89	85	Drive an Elan or an Esprit around tortuous courses, dodging obstacles and other cars and trying to cope with various forms of bad weather. An excellent race game with a particularly good two player mode.
M1 ABRAMS TANK	SEGA	£39.99	85	80	82	83	79	81	A thoroughly enjoyable simulation which features eight missions to test the skills of a budding tank commander.
MARBLE MADNESS	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£29.99	73	80	78	86	55	73	An extremely accurate conversion on the ancient Atari coin-op. It has all the original's features, including a mere six levels. If you're a fan of the coin-op you'll liked this, otherwise there isn't enough here to warrant buying.
MARVEL LAND	NAMCO	£34.99	76	81	80	85	79	81	A huge, sprawling platform game with loads of levels. Although original features are few and far between, it's a playable, fun game which should appeal to fans of the genre.
MERCS	SEGA	£39.99	89	85	84	91	80	90	This as good a conversion of the coin-op as fans could hope for. You also get two versions of the game on the one cartridge - an action game and original mode, where you recruit other Mercs to help your cause. An essential for shoot 'em up fans.
MICKEY MOUSE IN THE CASTLE OF ILLUSION	SEGA	£39.99	88	90	79	90	76	87	Although the first Mickey game has been superseded by World of Illusion it's still an excellent platform game with great graphics which is perfect for younger players.
MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE	SEGA	£39.99	80	85	90	88	78	85	A very faithful coin-op conversion which packs all the looks, sounds and levels of the original machine. On the lowest setting the challenge is lacking, but stick it on hard and you should have a great time!
MIGHT AND MAGIC 2	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	85	77	50	79	85	79	An decent menu/text-driven RPG which should keep purists scratching their craniums for months. Non-RPG fans will find the lengthy combat system heavy going, though.
MIKE DITKA'S POWER FOOTBALL	ACCOLADE	£39.99	69	74	80	76	69	70	A cross between Joe Montana Football and John Madden's Football, but not as good as either. Check this out only if you're desperate for something different.
MOONWALKER	SEGA	£34.99	84	79	88	80	71	80	With its excellent graphics, thumping soundtrack (which includes such hits as Beat It, Billie Jean and Bad) and sampled speech this is a simple, but enjoyable collect 'em up.
NEW ZEALAND STORY	SEGA	£34.99	85	84	83	88	85	85	New Zealand Story might look as cute as a litter of kittens, but it's tough and challenging, with different screens from the arcade version to make life difficult even for coin-op experts. Highly recommended.
NHLPA HOCKEY	EA	£39.99	88	85	86	90	88	89	This update of EA Hockey is nearly identical to the original. The subtle extras do add more realism but only real ice hockey fans will notice them. Worth buying only if you don't have EA Hockey.
PACMANIA	TENGEN	£34.99	82	82	73	80	60	70	This is a perfect conversion of the coin-op, unfortunately it's very boring, and you have to be an appaling games-player not to be able to go all the way round on your first go. Not an essential purchase by any means.
PGA TOUR GOLF	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	90	85	87	94	94	93	Simply the best golf game available on any system. Superb gameplay, a tough challenge, multi-player options, battery-backed RAM and loads of courses make this a sports simulation not to miss.
PHANTASY STAR III	SEGA	£49.99	89	84	77	85	92	89	Another enormous role-playing game, but this one has far more depth and variety than its predecessor. The combat-by-rounds might be a bit off-putting for beginners but experienced players should enjoy it.
PITFIGHTER	TENGEN	£39.99	90	78	70	76	80	80	Though the digitised graphics in this conversion occasionally look a bit ropey, and the animation sometimes has strange effects, Pit Fighter is a surprisingly enjoyable beat 'em up, especially in two player mode.
PREDATOR 2	ARENA	IMPORT	80	65	79	85	54	62	A game with lots of potential for violent shoot 'em up action, but which is marred by naff graphics and a lack of challenge. Even beginners should be able to finish this in less than a day.

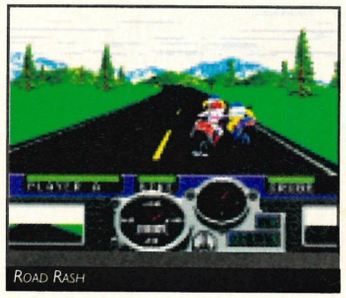

LEMMINGS



JOHN MADDEN '93


MICKEY AND DONALD

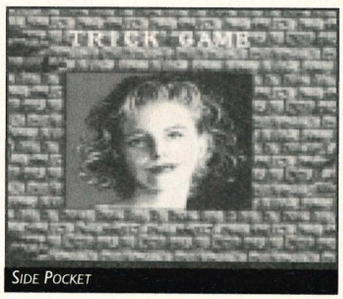

RISKY WOODS


ROAD RASH

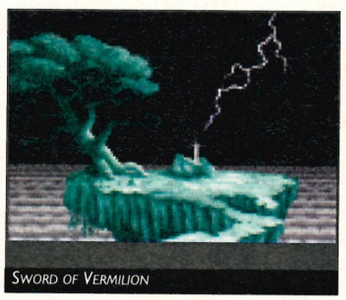
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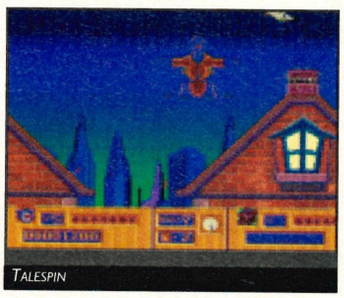
GAME NAME	BY...	PRICE	RATINGS %						GENERAL COMMENTS
			PRESENTATION	GRAPHICS	SOUND	STP	LTP	M'TECH RATING	
PRINCE OF PERSIA	VICTOR CORP	IMPORT	85	89	90	80	90	90	This doesn't make much use of the Mega-CD's facilities, but it's still one of the best Mega-CD titles. Great music and graphics, fiendish platform puzzles and a twelve level of swash-buckling make this compulsive playing.
QUACKSHOT	SEGA	£39.99	80	92	89	83	80	82	Donald Duck is the star of Sega's third Disney game, and a good effort it is too. Donald has to set off in search of the lost treasure of King Garuzia, aided by a host of Disney stars. The graphics are excellent, but the infinite continues make the game easy to complete.
RBI 4	TENGEN	IMPORT	70	79	61	79	72	74	An action-packed baseball game with decent graphics and plenty of features, but really, unless you're well into baseball already you probably won't get a ton of fun out of tbis.
REVENGE OF SHINOBI	SEGA	£34.99	85	92	93	95	91	94	This is a slick, superb looking, great sounding and incredibly playable platform game in which you guide hero Shinobi on a solo infiltration deep into enemy territory. The game is huge, spread over 20 different and very long sub-levels. If you're a platform game fan, this is an essential purchase.
RISKY WOODS	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	80	88	78	86	89	84	A fantasy platform game in which you guide a knight across possessed landscapes trying to rescue wise monks from nasty monsters. The action is nothing new, but the graphics are good and it's quite entertaining.
ROAD BLASTERS	TENGEN	IMPORT	79	82	80	77	70	72	This is a conversion of a old coin-op that puts you in the driving seat of an armoured assault-car, traversing a post-holocaust landscape putting paid to bad guys with machine guns, electro-shields and cruise missiles. It's very fast, but not enough happens to make it interesting or warrant paying any significant amount of cash for.
ROAD RASH	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	89	92	92	94	88	92	Take your high-powered bike into the Road Rash tournaments, a series of races where the objective is to travel the Super Hang-On-style roadways indulging in violent acts with other "Rashers". Lots of races, lots of bikes to ride, and plenty of thrills 'n' spills make Road Rash the best racer on the Megadrive!
ROAD RASH 2	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	88	89	69	88	83	88	As with most of EA's sequels, Road Rash 2 is more of the same. This time you get an additional weapon, the heavy chain, and there's a split-screen two player mode, which, surprisingly, doesn't add that much to the game.
ROLLING THUNDER II	SEGA	£39.99	90	89	88	86	86	88	An excellent conversion of the arcade smash-hit. There's loads of levels, the graphics are tops and the sound effects are ace.
SIDE POCKET	DATA EAST	IMPORT	82	85	70	85	83	83	A video game translation of American Pool which features single and two player modes, a nine ball game, a pocket game and a trick shot game. Good fun.
SOL FEACE	WOLF-TEAM	IMPORT	85	75	76	84	74	80	Sol-Feace, apart from being Wolf-Team's first Mega-CD game, is also a very decent shoot 'em up. Although it doesn't put the hardware to much use, the game itself is very playable. Worth checking out.
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG	SEGA	£39.99	85	93	81	93	93	83	Sega's hyped-beyond-belief character stars in a game heavily inspired by Nintendo's Mario platform game series. It's very addictive with brilliant graphics and speed. However, the gameplay is frustrating at times and experienced gamers should have this one licked within days.
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2	SEGA	£39.99	94	98	85	94	90	95	Sonic returns, accompanied by a two-tailed fox cub, in one of the best Megadrive games yet! Loads of levels, superb graphics, an excellent two player mode and challenging gameplay put this game head and shoulders over the first game.
SMASH TV	ACCLAIM	£39.99	74	80	81	78	72	70	Fair conversion of the destruction-packed Williams coin-op. Graphics and sound are okay, and the gameplay would be fine, were it not for the rather annoying control method which leads to many an unfair death.
SPIDERMAN	SEGA	£39.99	88	84	86	92	90	91	Marvel's web-slinging hero hits the Megadrive in style, with excellent comic-like backdrops and sprites with great gameplay. With plenty to see and do, Spider-Man should appeal to anyone after an excellent, challenging platform game.
STAR CONTROL	ACCOLADE	£39.99	86	68	90	93	90	90	Two space empires battle it out for supremacy in this awesome rendition of the arcade classic, Space Wars (albeit with extra strategy bits thrown in). A bit dull in one-player mode, but the highly entertaining two-player version more than makes up for it.
STREETS OF RAGE	SEGA	£34.99	90	90	94	94	89	92	Yes! The Megadrive needed a fabulous beat 'em up, and Streets of Rage more than delivers. With excellent sprites, backdrops and brilliant music, Streets of Rage is initially very appealing. Add in great gameplay and simultaneous two-player action and you've got an essential buy.
STRIDER	SEGA	£34.99	84	94	88	94	87	91	This conversion's graphics and sound are nigh on arcade-perfect, and it also packs a considerable challenge. Packing a considerable challenge, Strider is a truly superlative coin-op conversion which will appeal to any arcade fan - and its multiple difficulty levels means that it won't become boring very quickly.
SUPER HIGH IMPACT FOOTBALL	ARENA	IMPORT	93	87	89	85	45	62	A conversion of a rather zany American Football coin-op, in which the emphasis is on the game's violent aspects rather than on the strategies and tactics. This results in a game which is fun for a while, but is ultimately rather shallow and tedious.
SUPER OFF-ROAD	BALLISTIC	£24.99	82	79	84	88	78	83	This is a great conversion of an old Leland coin-op. Four trucks (two of which can be driven by human players) have to race around sixteen dirt tracks, collecting winnings and spending them on custom parts. The two-player game is a good laugh, but it dulls slightly in one player mode.

GAME NAME	BY...	PRICE	RATINGS %						GENERAL COMMENTS
			PRESENTATION	GRAPHICS	SOUND	STP	LTP	M'TECH RATING	
SUPER VOLLEYBALL	VIDEO SYSTEMS CO.	IMPORT	77	80	55	69	50	61	Although it looks good, the rather fiddly and irritating control method means that only the most ardent of volleyball fans will be willing to persevere with this.
TALE SPIN	SEGA	£39.99	72	79	82	74	57	63	Lots of irritating little glitches, iffy graphics and dull and frustrating gameplay make this one of the weakest Megadrive Disney games.
SWORD OF VERMILION	SEGA	£49.99	85	79	94	85	90	87	A sizeable RPG with a gripping plot and excellent graphics. Even better (for non-RPG veterans) the combat is played in an arcade style which is much easier to get to grips with than the combat by rounds used in the Phantasy Star games.
TAZ MANIA	SEGA	£39.99	70	90	89	89	75	82	Taz Mania has stunning graphics, great sound but falls just short of becoming a classic by being too easy to complete. Taz is beautifully animated, to the point of being cartoon quality, as he leaps from platform to platform. A perfect game for younger players, and a fun jaunt for everyone else.
THE TERMINATOR	VIRGIN	£39.99	84	85	90	73	50	60	The Terminator starts off with a fantastic intro, and a visually stunning first level, but from there the next three levels decrease in quality. What kills the game is that it's so easy to complete. Most seasoned games players will finish this within an hour of getting it home. A sad end to a potentially great licence.
THUNDERFORCE 3	SEGA	£39.99	82	88	86	91	86	89	The Thunderforce fighter is back in a six-level graphical tour de force. The graphics are truly marvellous, with parallax-scrolling backdrops and some great sprites. The sound isn't bad, either. Put those together with the great gameplay and you've got a superb shoot 'em up which is highly recommended.
THUNDERFORCE IV	TECNOSOFT	IMPORT	90	96	91	94	94	94	Probably the most spectacular scrolling shoot 'em up on the Megadrive with a vast number of levels, loads of extra weapons and hours of challenging gameplay. Currently it's only available for Japanese SCART Megadrives, but an official version is coming.
THUNDERSTORM FX	WOLF TEAM	IMPORT	93	94	97	91	85	87	A conversion of an old Data East laser disc game, this is one of the most impressive Mega-CD titles yet. Pilot your helicopter through ten cartoon levels, shooting down enemies and dodging buildings and missiles. Amazing sound and graphics.
TOE JAM AND EARL	SEGA	£39.99	87	80	89	85	90	87	A completely bizarre one or simultaneous two-player arcade adventure that's absolutely jam-packed with humorous touches - both visual and aural. The game is very laid back, and the emphasis is on exploration rather than rushing about. Thoroughly enjoyable, thoroughly weird and thoroughly worth checking out.
TONGUE OF THE FATMAN	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	85	87	75	80	62	71	This one or two-player arcade-style one-on-one beat 'em up throws the player into the futuristic arena where combatants have to fight one another in a gladitorial style contest. The gameplay, which to be blunt, is far too easy. Check it out by all means - if just to see the excellent graphics - but play before you buy.
TRUXTON	TOAPLAN	IMPORT	76	81	79	83	78		Although original features are distinctly lacking in this vertically scrolling arcade conversion (which incidentally is also known as Tatsujin), it's a good, solid blast which offers plenty of action, speed and excitement.
TURRICAN	ACCOLADE	£39.99	65	71	72	77	72	73	A quite enjoyable platform/shooting game which has one flaw - it starts out fairly tricky, but gets easier the further you go!
TWINKLE TALE	WAS	IMPORT	83	91	90	89	86	88	Great graphics and enjoyable blasting gameplay make this an appealing and unusual shoot 'em up. Guide a mini-witch past all sorts of supernatural terrors with only a few magic spells at her disposal.
TWO CRUDE DUDES	SEGA	£34.99	88	94	76	88	85	87	This is a conversion of the Crude Busters coin-op, and it stays faithful to the original. The graphics are fab and there are many neat touches. It's two easy to complete though, so this will appeal to fans more than anyone else.
UNIVERSAL SOLDIER	BALLISTIC	£34.99	70	60	79	79	59	60	This was going to be Turrican 2 until Ballistic got the Universal Soldier licence, and it shows. Much like Turrican it's a mega-weapons platform shoot 'em up, but unlike Turrican it's very easy to complete. Graphics are occasionally very duff and the links with the film are most tenuous.
WANI WANI WORLD	KANEKO	IMPORT	65	77	80	87	70	80	With its colourful graphics and two-player mode, Wani Wani World is instantly playable. It's based around the age-old coin-op Space Panic, with the object being to smash holes in platforms, lure creatures into them and then push them through. A lack of lasting appeal is Wani's only drawback.
WARSONG	TRECO	IMPORT	84	64	75	77	88	85	Being a swords and sorcery wargame, Warsong can be counted unique on the Megadrive. The object is to command your armies through 20 scenarios as you attempt to free your kingdom. Providing you don't mind placing thought over reflexes you'll enjoy this.
WONDERDOG	VICTOR CORP	IMPORT	89	95	91	88	79	82	A pleasant, Chuck Rock-style platform game on CD only. Wonderdog has to get through loads of levels full of monsters and hostile canines to reach his home planet. Great graphics, but a bit too easy for most players.
WORLD OF ILLUSION	SEGA	£39.99	92	96	90	96	90	94	Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck star in this marvellous one or two player platform game which is definitely the best Disney licence to date. Super graphics, music and gameplay make this an especially good game for youngsters.
ZANY GOLF	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£39.99	79	85	80	85	65	72	A very smart looking attempt at a crazy golf game, with nine levels of wonderfully bizarre obstacles. Alas, nine levels don't last an awfully long time, so the fun wanes all too quickly.



SIDE POCKET


SWORD OF VERMILION


TALESPIN


THUNDERFORCE III


WONDERDOG

NEXT MONTH

So you wanna know what games we're gonna be reviewing next month, huh? Well, to be honest, we don't know. You see it's very difficult to line games up for definite, what with the vagaries of the software industry – they're always changing their release dates, so if we've promised you something and then can't get hold of it in time, we end up looking stupid. That's why we've enrolled the services of...

MYSTIC MATTHEW!



He may look like an ordinary baby, but within this cranium pulses the brain of a New Age genius. Yes, due to being wrapped in a copy of MegaTech immediately after birth, Michael was exposed to the mind-expanding effect of the most brain-boosting Megadrive mag in the known galaxy – as he drew his very first breath! Having increased his amazing powers by reading every single issue of MT, he is now able to predict precisely which Megadrive carts will be winging their way to us next month. So we asked Mystic Matthew which games will be reviewed in our February issue. This is what he said...

"Go-goo... gurgle... Powermonger, Mega-lo-Mania... brrrrrrrlibble... blub... Rolo to the Rescue, Mick and Mack... ga-ga-ga-ga-goppy-gooop... Another World, Double Dragon III... hic... burp... Nobunaga and his Ninja Force, Afterburner III... mmmmmummmmmmy... potty... potty..."

Well there you go. He's a little wonder, isn't he?

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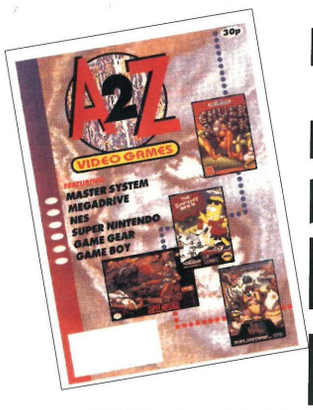
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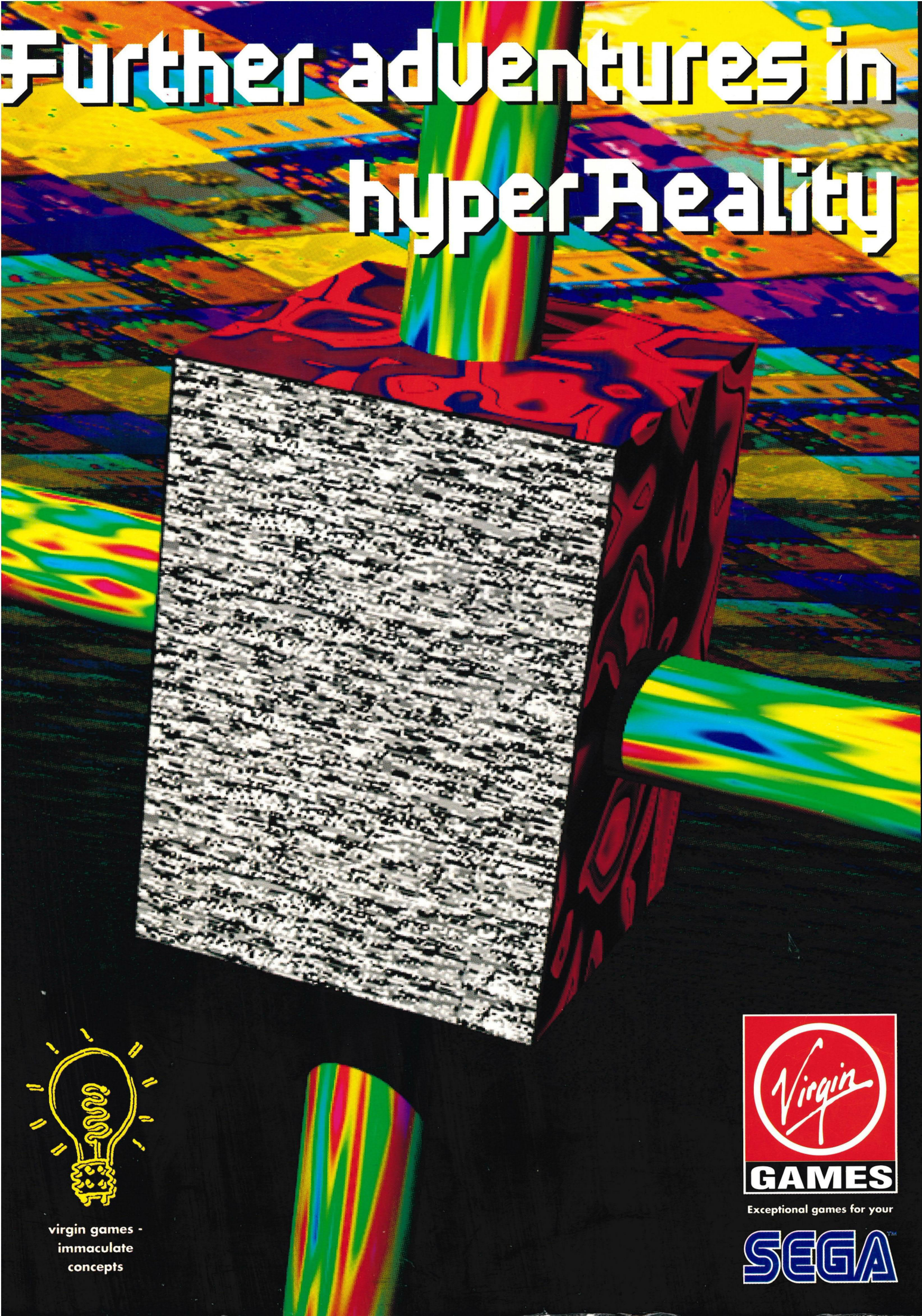
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