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MEGATECH

MEGADRIVE AND MEGA - CD!





MEGADRIVE



MEGA-CD

ARE YOU READY?

STREETFIGHTER II CHAMPION EDITION









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- NINJA WARRIORS! ● AMERICAN GLADIATORS!
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- VERSUS MODE! ● TOM'S ISLAND!

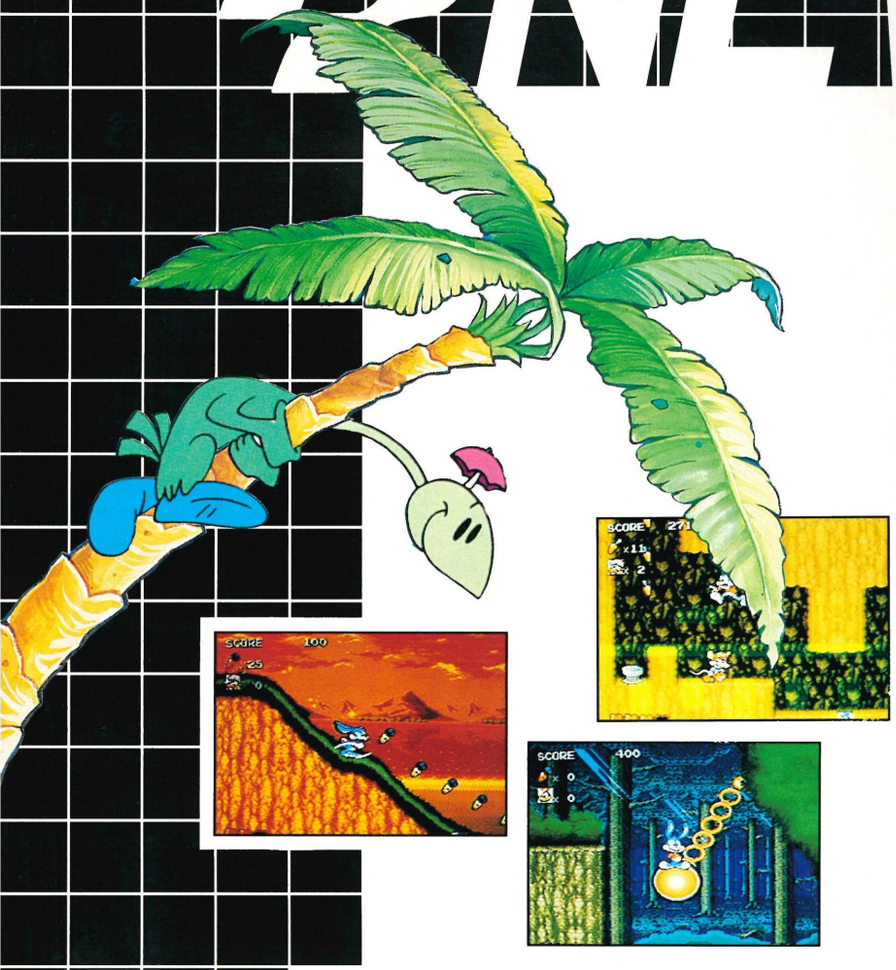
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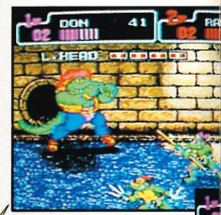
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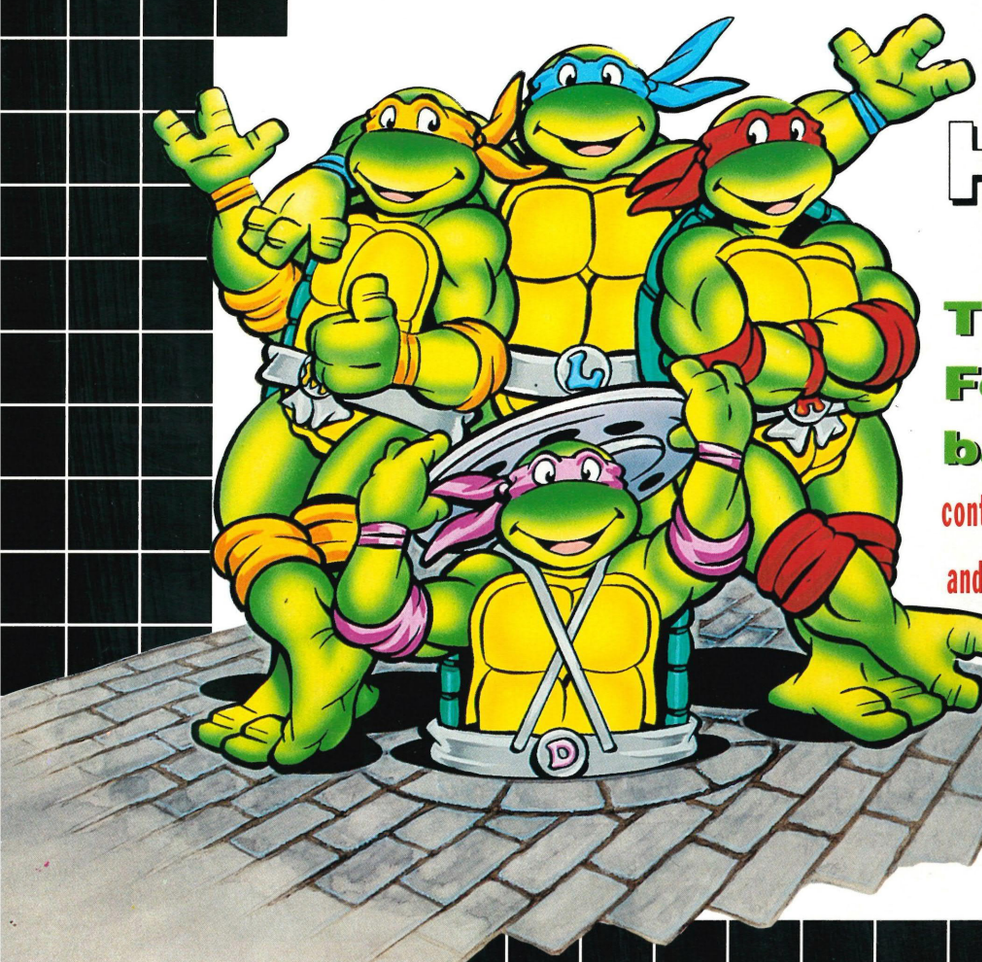
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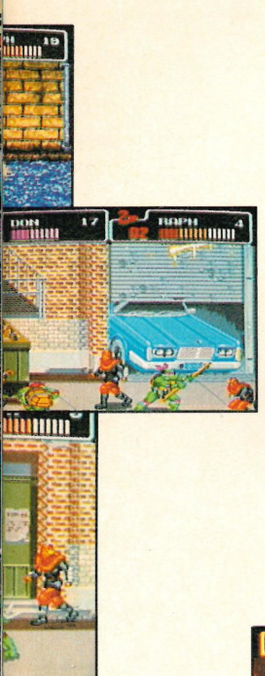
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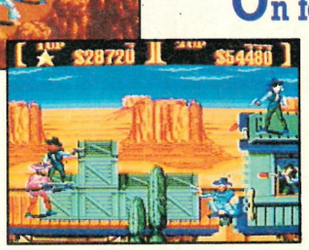
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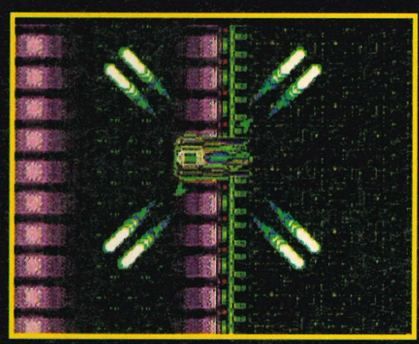
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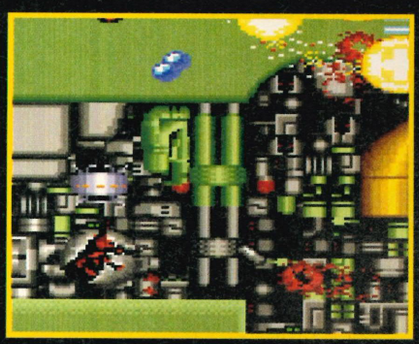
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Return of the (alleged) Proverbs
"Thunderbolts and lightning, very, very frightening." (Trad)



HELP! HELP! I'M BEING REPRESSED!

As you were probably aware, the tabloid press returned with their usual 'Perverse Video Games' non-story this month, concentrating their minute attention spans of Sega's Mega-CD game, Night Trap.

Night Trap, that game of scantily-clad girls having the blood drained from their bodies by evil aliens armed with drills. Yes, you know the one. It's that game with all the grainy digitised graphics and the hilariously camp acting. Absolutely terrifying isn't it?

As is usual, the minute the rent-a-voice politicians got wind of the story they were on the News at One declaring their disgust with the whole situation and how, in their enlightened view (having seen the game before commenting of *course*) it was jolly well about time these videos, sorry, games started to be classified by the British Board of Film Censors... or something. Anything to save the nation's youth from this outrage.

The gist of their argument is that as technology improves the standard of video game graphics, so those graphics become more and more realistic, and hence the player gets involved (sort of) in a very realistic depiction of violence. Well, of course this is possible, but even if it were true at the moment (which I don't think it is) surely only an unbalanced or even psychotic person would actually enact in the High Street what they see on the screen? And who's to say what would trigger these people's crazy, violent tendencies anyway? They might go mad after seeing Jerry hack off the end of Tom's tail or maybe they would see a passing crow as the herald of Satan and start laying into their next door neighbour with a baseball bat just because the crow landed in his garden.

I'm sure that most regular people, who would play Night Trap, would see it for what it really is – an inoffensive spoof of B-movies, full of unclear pictures of unsuccessful actresses and blokes in black clothes – and not an incitement to violence against women.

Perhaps if you've played it you could tell us your views on this 'issue'. You know the address to write to.

Have fun till next time,

Paul Glancey
Lovely Editor

IT'S MEAN, IT'S TOUGH, IT'S BELOW THE BELT.

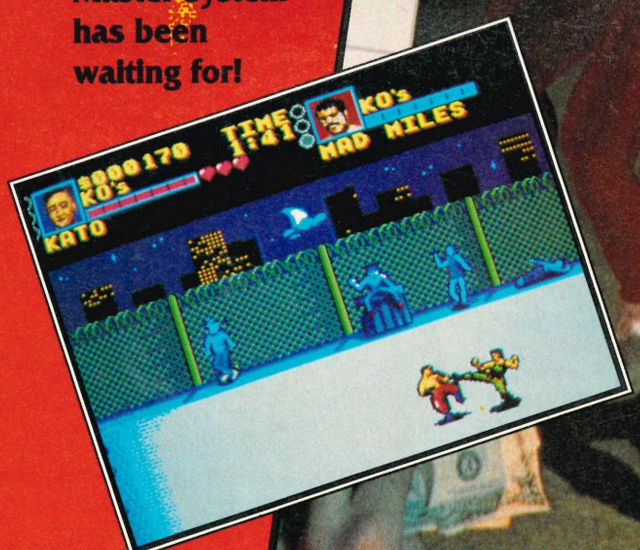
Welcome to the world of...

In the pit it's *mean*, it's *tough* and it's no place for the fainthearted. Take on all comers - The fighting is *below the belt* and rules don't exist. Survival and the *prize money* are all that matter. This is the world of the Pitfighter! It's what the Master System has been waiting for!

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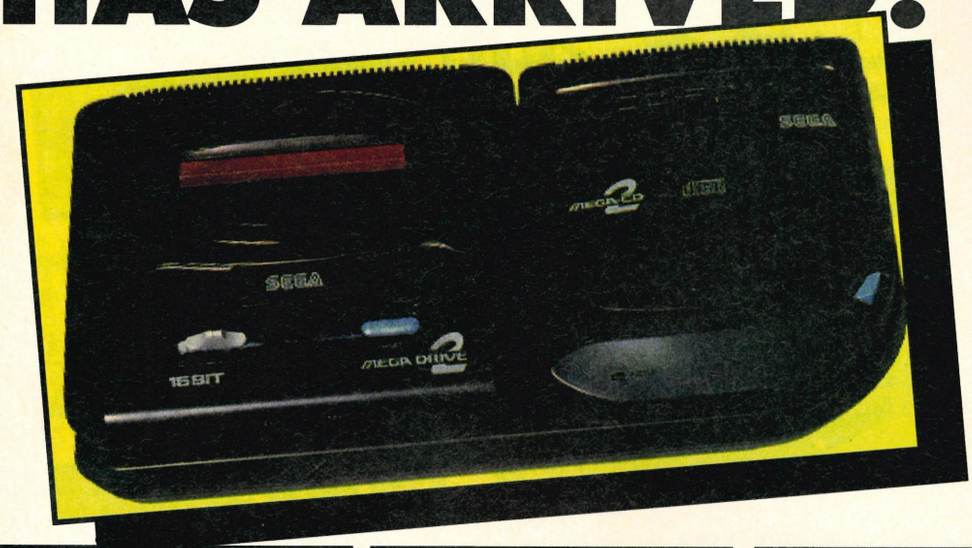
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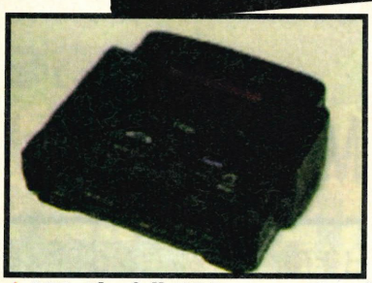
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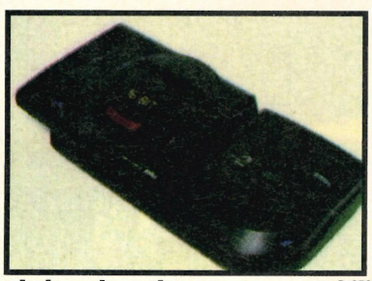
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MEGADRIVE-THE SECOND WAVE HAS ARRIVED!









▲ TOP: The full MD2 set-up. The pics below show the retro-compatability of the MD2 components. And just for jolly, we'vw thrown in a shot of Sonic 2 on CD!

NEWS JAPAN

Following on from last month's exclusive MegaTech revelation that Sega were planning the imminent release of the Megadrive 2 and the Mega-CD 2 in Japan, we can now report that the rebirth has happened. The new systems have arrived. Retailing for around 12,800 Yen (around £74), the new Megadrive system is almost half the price of its predecessor. The same goes for Mega-CD 2 which is retailing at 29,800 Yen (around £173). What's more this is an official price. Many Japanese discount warehouses will be selling these devices for almost a third less than this.

So, what exactly have Sega done to the systems? Well, the machines are now of a completely different shape. The Megadrive 2 is far squarer than its predecessor and the Mega-CD 2, which now connects with the Megdrive at the hip, rather than sitting underneath, is a top far squarer with a support tray for the Megadrive to sit on. However, both machines are compatible with the old Megadrive and Mega-CD systems.

The Mega-CD is now a top-loader too. Although this means that CDs can be loaded and unloaded withourt power, it also means that the machine is far more vulnerable to vibrations than the front-loader. This could possibly result in games crashing far more easily. The Mega-CD also has a new start-up screen is shown.

Gone are the headphone socket and volume control from the Megadrive. It seems that the only way to make use of the Megadrive's stereo sound is to connect the system to a TV via a DIN connector. This will naturally cause problems from our point of view as most British TVs do not possess a SCART connection. How Sega UK will tackle this problem as yet, remains a mystery. Also gone is the MegaModem terminal. Almost defunct in Japan, this device has been absent from Britsh models for some time now anyway. Also, the power consumption of the machine has been halved from 13W to 7W. Energy-saving it may be, but this means that the old power supplies cannot be used with these new systems.

What's more, the Megadrive 2 comes packaged with the a new six-button fighting pad as standard. The old three-button controllers are now being discontinued.



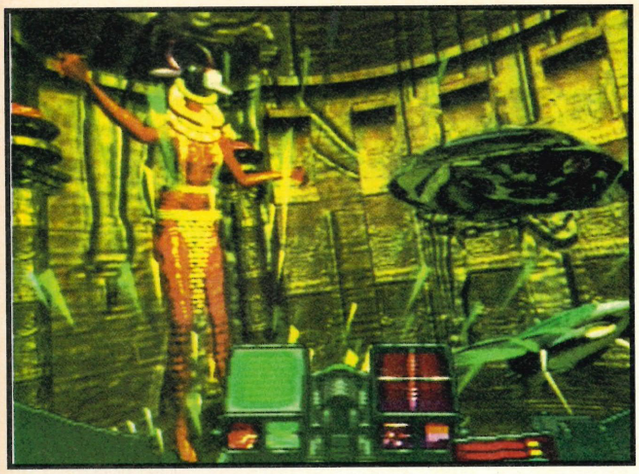
LOOKING TO THE FUTURE!

NEWS JAPAN

Sega opened up the 16-Bit market to the world and rumour has it that they're set to do the same thing with the 32-Bit market. Rumours are awash in Japan that Sega's next console will be a CD-ROM based machine with cartridges now facing only optional usage.

Details are sketchy at the moment, but rumours abound that the machine may run at twice the speed of the up-coming 3DO system. With a 32-Bit processor (perhaps a Motorola 68030 or 68040 for you techno-buffs) the machine is expected to be a top-loader. Compatabiltity with present Megadrive software is also o the cards. As far as picture resolution goes te machine will have to be able to recreate TV quality images almost perfectly and that's going to mean loads more colours. It is also being suggested that these machines will possess standard Sega hardware that will also be used in their coin-ops allowing arcade machines to be grafted far more easily and accurately onto the home systems.

At the moment suggested retail prices for this machine stand at 70,000 Yen (over £400), far to much for the mass retail marke. So it seems that the Megadrive has a long way to go yet before it retires from duty, but you can be sure that 32-Bit machines are only just around the corner.



▲ **The rather stunning Pyramid Patrol.**

LASERDISC: HAS MEGA-CD'S SUCCESSOR ARRIVED?

With the Mega-CD only just released in Britain, it seems that Japan are about to step one step further with the new Mega-LD system being released in July. Created in conjunction with Pioneer's LD-ROM machine, the system sports far superior sound and picture resolution than could ever be created by the Mega-CD.

At present there are a number games set for release with the machine. Pyramid Patrol is a 3D space shoot-em up set inside a pyramid where you have to battle it against massive full-motion Egyptian Gods. 'I Will' is a rather peculiar detective game set in Britain of various famous landmarks. The Judgement of the Devil is a psychology quiz game. Honest. It seems that demon Kogure has returned after 100,000 years and asks you deep and meaningful questions. Not one to look out for, we think.

Finally, there is Quiz Econozaurus an enviromentally-friendly game that suggests that man is an econozaurus, an enviroment-destroying dinosaur. Rumour has it that this game also has deeper meaning whatever that is. It's got comedy graphics though.

UP, UP AND AWAY!

Ever been stuck in the traffic and wished you had one of those flying cars like the one Michael Jackson owns? No, neither have we, but you may be interested in this new game scheduled for Mega-CD release, Night Striker.







It seems that a bumbling professor and his bodacious daughter have been kidnapped by an evil terrorist organisation, so its up to the Night Striker squadron to rescue them. Who are the mysterious Night Striker squadron? Do they use planes, or perhaps choppers? Nope, they use flying cars.

Taking the form of a 3D shoot 'em up, the aim of this Taito game is simply to fly along blasting the seven shades out of everything and everyone. There are 21 levels of action as you have to negotiate cities, factories, canals, tunnels and temples too. Why, there's even a sky level, would you believe it?

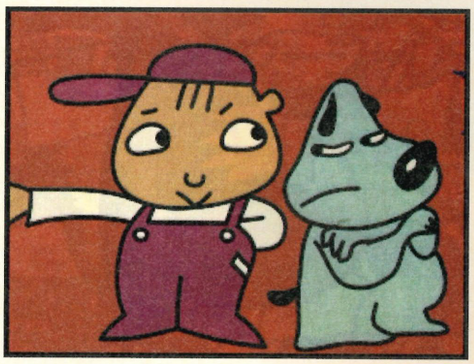
Scheduled for release on the 28th of May this game is reportedly a very close conversion of the coin-op with all the sprites like buildings and billboards present. If that's the case this could be one smart cookie. Look out for this game in the pages of MegaTech soon.



SNOW! SNOW! SNOW! SNOW! SNOW! THERE'S SNOW LIMIT!

Well, Summer is here and with it comes the promise of snow. That's right, Snow Brothers is coming to the Megadrive courtesy of Tengen. Converted from Toaplan's cult-hit coin-op, Snow Brothers is a classic platform romp that follows the antics of two snowmen called Nick and Tom (popular snowmen names) who happen to be brothers, hence the name Snow Brothers. See, simple! Similar in style to Bubble Bobble, the aim of the game is a simple one. Another mindless princess has been kidnapped and it's upto our snowsome duo to rescue her. Leaping around a single-screen platform environment the boys have to pelt all the baddies with snowballs. Everytime a baddy dies they release loads of goodies. Food adds to the score, whereas drinks revive energy. There are 70 levels of action, that's over 20 more than the original coin-op. The arcade game was a great laugh and this 8-meg conversion looks to be just as good. Definitely one to look out for, Snow Brothers is scheduled for release around the end of June, so look out for the MegaTech review, soon.

HIT THAT SWITCH!





NEWS JAPAN

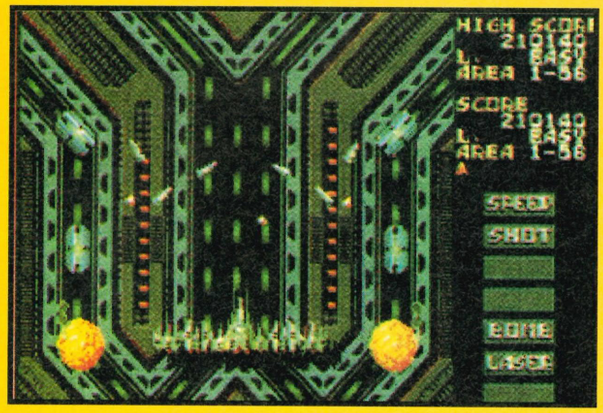
We've been following the progress of a Mega-CD game called Switch for some time now, but it has finally been released in Japan and here's it is. Dubbed as a game of complete nonsense, that is a title that is very easy to believe because Switch looks to be one of the silliest games you could ever wish to play.

The plot is simple, if not bizarre. All the computers in the world have gone haywire the aim of the game is to control the main character in his quest to find all the switches and return order to the planet. Press the wrong switch however and the results can be disasterous, washing machines can spew vomit, parachutes can be replaced by intestines, cigarette machines can become giant cigarette packets and dogs can even develop multiple breasts. Euch!

However, all these humourous situations are merely harmless gags. The most important factor is to try and avoid blowing up any national monuments and that's an easier occurrence than you might think. The Statue of Liberty can be sent flying, Mount Rushmore can be blown to the four wind, the Leaning Tower of Pisa can be sent toppling over and all with the flick of a switch. Destroy 30 monuments and for some reason all the atomic power stations in the world go critcal and the World is splattered like a cosmic melon.

All the vocals for the game are done by an unknown American comedian known as Kent Prick. Born in Hollywood, Kent is supposedly a mimic and a tap dancer. Good old Kent, eh?

With over 1000 different situations to its name, Switch looks like it could be the funniest and possibly the most offensive Mega-Cd game ever. However, its rather controversial form of humour may mean that we never see this game released officially, especially in the aftermath of the Night-Trap witch-hunt. Nonetheless, we can't wait to get our hands on Switch and you'll get the full review as soon as we can get our hands on a copy.



A GOOD SLAPPING!

NEWS JAPAN

Way back in the mists of time there was an arcade game called Slapfight. Although it might sound like a schoolgirl beat 'em up, Slapfight was in fact a vertically-scrolling shoot 'em up. Well, now it's coming to the Megadrive courtesy of Tengen.This conversion consists of two seperate games, the arcade version, which is a straight conversion of the coin-op and a completely new original version. In its day Slapfight was a highly impressive shoot 'em up, mainly due to the awesome array of power-ups it sported, but it would pretty dated by today's standards. How this 8-meg Megadrive version will fare will remain a mystery until its June the 11th release. Look out for more on this game as soon as we see it.



RPGS PDQ

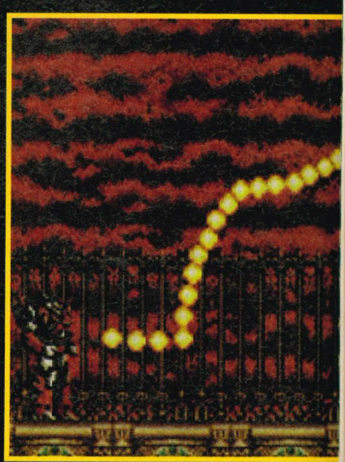
A meaningless headline, atop a news story with plenty of significance... if you're into role-playing games, that is.

Top of the list of upcoming new RPGs is Might and Magic III, a conversion of a pretty lovely PC game which will be appearing on Mega-CD by the end of the year. The original used excellent scrolling, sprite-expanding 3D graphics to display the dark, damp corridors of the Might and Magic underworld which are, not surprisingly, crawling with yukky monsters.

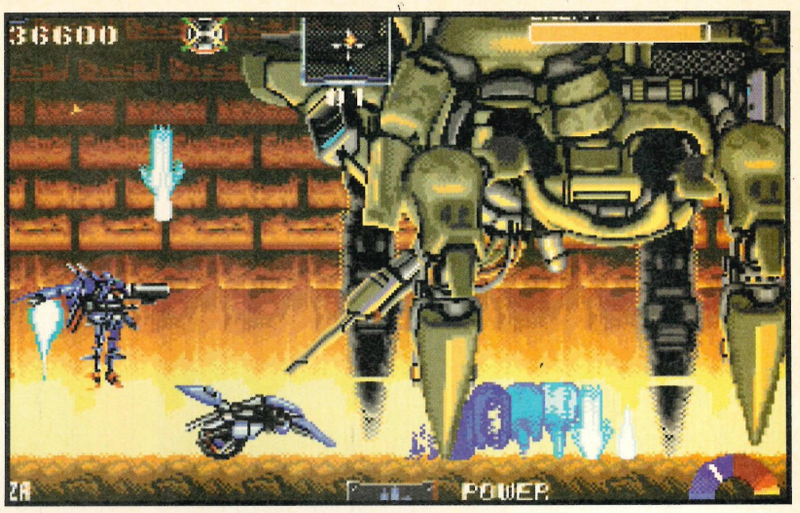
Next, of course, is Phantasy Star IV, the 16 Mbit follow-up to, you guessed it, Phantasy Star III. This should also be out officially by the end of the year and introduces new characters, Lila Frangween and Hahn Maree who have to venture forth from the Motavia Academy to wipe out the usual hordes of biomonsters.

DEVASTATIO





BRUCE HORNSBY AND THE RANGER



Coming soon officially (and probably reviewed next month, actually, seeing as we just got a copy in from Sega right at the last minute this month) is this mighty powerful looking shoot 'em up, which is much in the style of the Super NES' Valken. You play as a giant robot, fully tooled-up with weapons galore and a strange Motorbike-of-Tomorrow with one wheel and perhaps some unusual balancing mechanism, and basically it's up to you to wipe out everything on the landscape with your big guns. Well, we've had a brief look at it, and after that brief look we can say it looks 'KIN ACE!!! The graphics are just mega and this could well take the cake as the Best Megadrive Shoot 'Em Up, and wouldn't that be embarrassing seeing as we've just done a Vs Mode on shoot 'em ups this month? Cor, life, eh?



N CENTRAL!





Out now in Japan is this smart-looking CD shoot 'em up which Japanese journalists are going mad for... but that seems to be because the game's heroines are a gang of "busty, dynamic females", pictures of which we at MegaTech are far too enlightened to show our equally enlightened readers. So you'll have to make do with these pictures of the action instead. As you can see, it's missiles and lasers and ground-hugging bombs a-go-go as you in your Vectorbus (that's what it says) pursue the evil Lineabus (that's what it also says) while dodging the attentions of deadly plant life-forms. Like we say, it's out now in Japan and Jap Mega-CD owners might care to enquire at their local importers for further news on Devastator. If you're more cautious with your cash, we hope to have the full SP in the next ish.



ALMOST A CAT-ASTROPHE

Accolade's tasty-looking, cat-based platform game, Bubsy in **Close Encounters of the Furred Kind** has been delayed till, would you believe, September! A lot of final touches are being put into the 16-level, 16 M-bit game, such as all the visual cartoon gags the designers plan to shove in, as well as the Bubsy speech; apparently when things start going wrong for Bubsy he likes to tell the player his troubles. Also they're still working on the ice level, and where would a Megadrive platform game be without one of those. Review soon, baby.



BE A FUTURE SHOOTER

Yo! Yo! Yo! 'Nuff Noize! Etc! If you're into wearing hip clothes, or even just into wearing clothes (and we hope you at least fall into the latter category) you might just be interested in this new range of Yo! Yo! Happenin' leisure wear which goes under the 'Label' of Future Shooter – Clothing For Screen Warriors, and it all bears the rather Yo! Street design pictured in this picture. T-shirts (in M, L and XL) are where Future Shooter tend to specialise, though you can have short (£12.99) or long sleeves (£17.99) depending on the weather and how attractive you feel your arms are. Though this 'Gear' is currently only available from Tower Records in Kensington, London, Future Shooter assure us that the distribution net is widening daily, but if you really can't wait and want to help buoy up the British fashion industry you can call the guys up on 081 968 9444 or send your order to PO Box 1868, London, W10 6ZH.

JACK YOUR BODY!

We use that particular out of date dance craze term to introduce this little snippet about **Ball Jacks,** a game of the Sega persuasion which we'll be reviewing in the next issue of MegaTech. It's a novel little game (and when we say 'little' we mean it – it's another two meg title) in which two robot crabs face off against each other and have to capture the balls which their opponents are guarding by firing sucker claws across the screen. Odd, eh? It is, take our word for it. And is it one of those games that's so simple it's amazingly good fun? Ummmm.... We'll tell you next month.

SEGA PIRA

What a wild and crazy bunch of scamps those Sega chaps are, eh? They've recently been trying to 'raise their media profile' and promote the Mega-CD with a series of wacky TV, national press and high street billboard adverts. If you were watching ITV or Channel 4 on Friday, May 7, you'll probably know all about it by now – you'll have witnessed their "24-hour interactive TV" concept.

In fact, we've witnessed Sega's £400,000 billboard blitz on the very doorsteps of our palatial MegaTech towers in bustling London Town. Just around the corner are a load of massive billboards and we were all puzzled when an advert was posted up for a washing powder called Ecco, featuring a logo not dissimilar to the one used on a recent top-selling Megadrive game about a certain dolphin. As we're all well clued-up on the latest trends in advertising and media-type things, the cheesy-looking mummy and baby photo made us suspicious (Special Ecological Grunge Additive?) and it didn't take us long to realise that something fishy was going on. We knew that Sega had placed seemingly meaningless ads to promote the Mega-CD in our sister publications featuring "A La Kat" catfood (SAGE flavouring?), so it didn't take us long to put two and two together.

Sure enough, our suspicions were confirmed when, a few days later, a poster-putting-up-type-geezer slapped the pirate face and "Pirate TV" slogan over the original ad. Yes, it was another Sega promotional ruse, just going to prove that the guys from your favourite games company really know how to put the money they make from selling their wares to the public to good use. Nice one, Sega.



GOOOOO



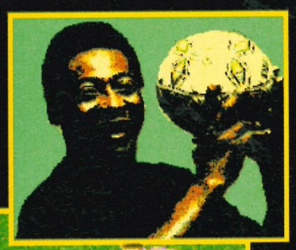
ACY SCAM!





▲ **Will Sega's whacky ad campaign pay off? Is it just a little too self-indulgent, or does it all make sense to everyone?**

OOAAAAL!





Pelé was one of the top international soccer superstars of the seventies. Wearing the distinctive canary yellow and green strip of the legendary Brazilian national side of that era, he was a brilliant striker and earned the nickname 'The Black Pearl'. Following the trend towards sports licences featuring Seventies stars started by Muhammad Ali Heavyweight Boxing, Accolade have started work on a new Megadrive footie game bearing Pelé's name. The game features an unusual three-quarter view, as you can see (this is a very early version of the game, mind you) but it should feature all the usual leagues and stuff you'd expect from a console football game, as well as a special appearance by the acrobatic soccer king himself. We'll be keeping you informed about any further developments with this new soccer sim as and when they happen.

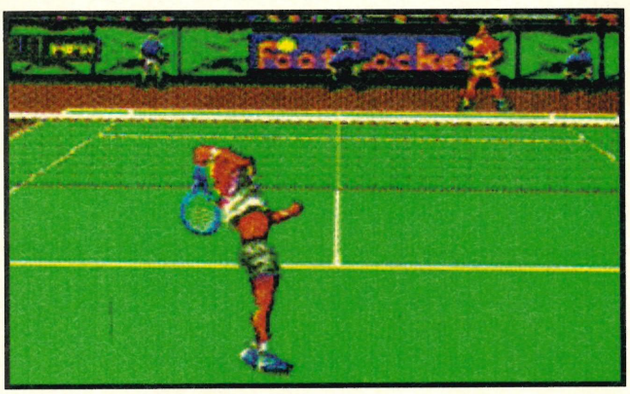


MORTAL KOMBAT IN THE LIFT

It's great being a computer journalist. Sure, there's the long hours you have to work to get the magazine out of the door. Okay, so occasionally a marriage or a romantic engagement has to be broken. Grrrr. Hmmm. We just count ourselves lucky that there are all those nice people in Consoleland who are willing to give you free coin-ops now and again. And so it was that fateful Wednesday when this lovely Mortal Kombat machine turned up on the doorstep with Paul's name on it.

The call came soon after identifying the mystery fun-donors as Acclaim, who thought we might like to 'get some practice in before reviewing Acclaim's Megadrive conversion of Mortal Kombat which is being programmed by Probe Software (Terminator, Alien 3, T2) and will be out this summer.' Yeah. Right. Sure. A blind man with a hangover could see that this is an obvious plan to get some pre-publicity in a national and respected Megadrive magazine, and hah! we're just not going to fall for it. At all.

Damn.



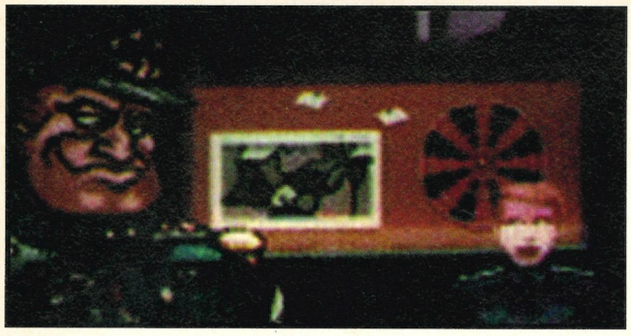
ANYONE FOR AMAZING TENNIS?



This is the game that caused quite a stir in Super Nintendo circles, knocking even the wonderful Super Tennis off its perch in our hallowed offices. And now Absolute Entertainment are bringing this top tennis game to the lovely Megadrive. Like all the other console tennis games available you can play in tournaments, against a friend or variously-skilled computer opponents and on any tennis-type surface you like. The difference between this and the others is in the viewpoint. The 3D point of view is much lower down, so the player sprites are all much bigger, and consequently have to be much better animated than those in other tennis games. Amazing Tennis will be out on import in May, and there's no official release date as yet, but we'll keep you posted.

MEGAWORLD

MEGATECH INTERNATIONAL NEWS NETWORK



GENERAL CHAOS AT EA

NEWS USA

Electronic Arts are hard at work on this interesting-sounding game which is a blend of strategy and Commando-style shoot 'em up. Choose your team of heavily-armed combat gentlemen, then drop them in some unfriendly terrain and let them shoot the place up a bit with rocket launchers and stuff. It all sounds very good, but it doesn't look like we'll be seeing the official game for quite a few months yet.



THE MENACE OF MAD DOGS

NEWS USA

Yes indeed, as Ben Elton used to say, American Laser Games have almost got their Mega-CD conversions of those laser disc coin-ops ready for release. First up will be Mad Dog McCree (pictured), shortly to be followed by Space Pirates and Who Shot Johnny Rock? All of the games feature full-motion video versions of the original laser disc footage, and they will all be compatible with Sega's Menacer light gun. There you are – it was worth getting a Menacer after all.

WHAT BANANA SKIN? WHERE? YIKES!

Sorry, sorry, sorry to all those punters who bought their Mega-CD only to find that they hadn't received their free audio samplers and CD+G discs. Our mistake. We found out just too late that these weren't to be included in the British packs, though we would say that, hey, you're not missing much, and at least you get a pair of audio leads (which we said weren't included in the pack) to hook your Mega-CD up to your hi-fi. Sorry, sorry, sorry once more. It was just temporary bad vibes and it won't happen again, we promise.

MEGAWORLD MEGADRIVE + MEGA-CD CHARTS

UK TOP 20 MEGADRIVE GAMES

What's the best selling Megadrive game in Britain then? Find out with the essential MegaWorld Top 20 as supplied by Special Reserve, famous Sawbridgeworth-based mail order magnates.

1.	NE	SUPER KICK OFF	US GOLD
2.	3	PGA GOLF 2	ELECTRONIC ARTS
3.	4	ROAD RASH	ELECTRONIC ARTS
4.	1	STREETS OF RAGE 2	SEGA
5.	NE	FLASHBACK	US GOLD
6.	12	LEMMINGS	SEGA
7.	5	SONIC 2	SEGA
8.	11	MICKEY AND DONALD	SEGA
9.	6	NHLPA '93 ICE HOCKEY	ELECTRONIC ARTS
10.	NE	MEGA-LO-MANIA	VIRGIN GAMES
11.	2	ECCO	SEGA
12.	7	DESERT STRIKE	ELECTRONIC ARTS
13.	8	JOHN MADDEN '93	ELECTRONIC ARTS
14.	RE	EURO CLUB SOCCER	VIRGIN GAMES
15.	13	ROLO TO THE RESCUE	VIRGIN GAMES
16.	NE	TINY TOONS	KONAMI
17.	14	TAZMANIA	SEGA
18.	18	WWF WRESTLEMANIA	FLYING EDGE
19.	NE	HARDBALL	ACCOLADE
20.	16	THUNDERFORCE IV	SEGA

USA TOP 10 GENESIS + SEGA-CD GAMES

Who's king of the Megadrive ranch in the Big Country this month? Look below for all you need to know!

1.	NE	STREETS OF RAGE 2	SEGA
2.	1	SONIC 2	SEGA
3.	4	NHLPA HOCKEY	ELECTRONIC ARTS
4.	2	JOHN MADDEN '93	ELECTRONIC ARTS
5.	NE	ECCO THE DOLPHIN	SEGA
6.	3	NFL SPORTS TALK FOOTBALL	SEGA
7.	9	NIGHT TRAP (CD)	SEGA
8.	NE	ROAD AVENGER (CD)	RENOVATION
9.	NE	PGA GOLF 2	ELCTRONIC ARTS
10.	-	SEWER SHARK (CD)	SONY IMAGESOFT

JAPAN TOP 10 MEGADRIVE + MEGA-CD GAMES

What's hot and happening in the homeland of the Megadrive? Find out here courtesy of Edmond Honda's Tofu Emporium, the hottest little snack bar in Tokyo.

1.	2	PUYO-PUYO (columns clone)	SEGA
2.	4	SONIC 2	SEGA
3.	3	YUMI MIMIKKUSU (girly adventure game)	GAME ARTS
4.	1	BARE KNUCKLE II (Streets Of Rage 2)	SEGA
5.	NE	MAGIN SAGA (Majin War)	SEGA
6.	NE	F22 INTERCEPTOR	EA VICTOR
7.	NE	J LEAGUE CHAMPION SOCCER	GAME ARTS
8.	NE	G-LOC	SEGA
9.	5	TOKYO MAHJONGLAND (gambling)	GAME ARTS
10.	NE	LUNAR THE SILVER STAR (RPG)	GAME ARTS

THE OFFICIAL-AS-CAN-BE UK RELEASE SCHEDULE

Yes, future watchers, here's the gen on the games that aren't out yet but which you should be watching the shelves for. Sega themselves provide this info, but, not having the psychic baby-like powers of our own Mystic Matthew™, even they can't make guarantees nor is this information carved in stone (they don't have a stone mason working for them either).

MAY

X MEN – SEGA – Marvel platform beat 'em up rated 82% last issue
CYBORG JUSTICE – SEGA – Robot beat 'em up from the creators of Ecco the Dolphin (though not as good as that)
GLOBAL GLADIATORS – VIRGIN – Wacky platform game-cum-McDonalds ad which is rather jolly.
SUPERMAN – VIRGIN – As yet unseen (apart from on import) beat 'em up based on the DC hero.
STRIDER 2 – US GOLD – Also unseen follow-up to the top Megadrive arcade conversion, programmed in the UK by Tiertex rather than by Sega.
SUPER KICK OFF – US GOLD – Current king of Megadrive soccer games
FLASHBACK – US GOLD – Current king of all Megadrive games.
ANOTHER WORLD – VIRGIN – Blimey, this took it's time. Platform/puzzle game from the creators of Flashback.

JUNE

FATAL FURY – BY SEGA – Good one-on-one beat 'em up with Streetfighter II undertones.
BALL JACKS – BY SEGA – Bizarre one-on-one crabs with balls game. Not hyper-exciting.
CAPTAIN AMERICA – BY SEGA – Grotesque Marvel one or two player beat 'em up.
KING OF THE MONSTERS – BY SEGA – Dull monster beat 'em up based on the Neo Geo game
BATTLETOADS – BY TRADEWEST – Interesting, but very tough platform beat 'em up with characters which are spoofs of the Turtles.
MUHAMMAD ALI BOXING – BY VIRGIN – Perhaps 'The Greatest' computer boxing game there is.
COOL SPOT – BY VIRGIN – Smart-looking, nice-playing platform game from the programmers of Global Gladiators.

JULY

SHINING FORCE – BY SEGA – Massive RPG follow-up to Shining in the Darkness.
MAZIN WARS – BY SEGA – Excellent fantasy beat 'em up reviewed on page 32.
DOUBLE CLUTCH – BY SEGA – Rather dull driving game.
FLINTSTONES – BY SEGA – Rather dull platform game starring Fred.
TECMO CUP SOCCER – BY SEGA – Bizarre football strategy game.
RANGER X – BY SEGA – Could this be the best Megadrive shoot 'em up yet?
JUNGLE STRIKE – BY EA – Massive follow-up to Desert Strike.
MUTANT LEAGUE FOOTBALL – BY EA – Jolly Gridiron game packed with violent bits.
BOB – BY EA – Unusual platform shooter starring a dispossessed teenage robot.

FLASHBACK

gus says...

" any reviewer who rates this less than ace is cruisin' for a squeaky voice "

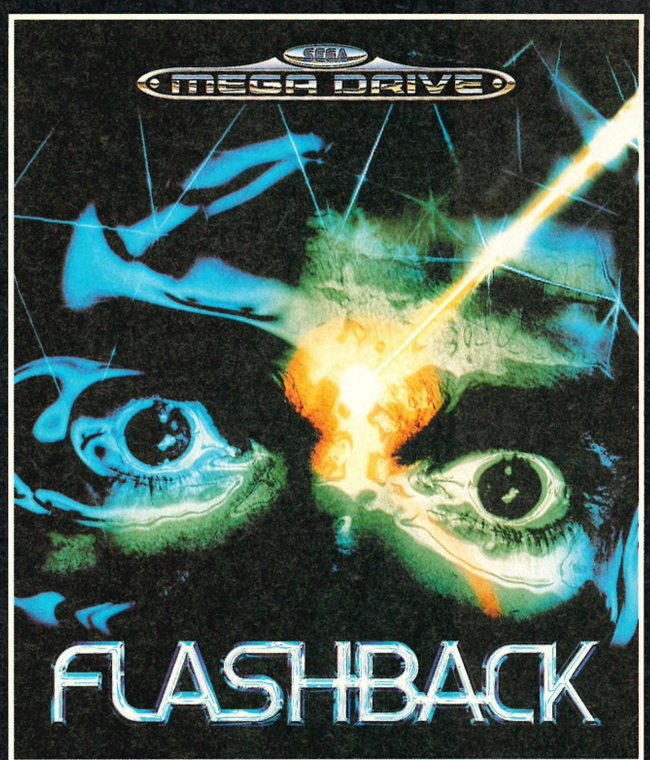
these fellas are safe...



" Stunning graphics and amazing animation makes Flashback one of the best Mega Drive releases for years (*Julian Rignall* - Mean Machines) "

" If you thought you'd seen it all on the Mega Drive, think again. This is one that'll sell by the truckload " (*Paul Rand* - C&VG)

" Absolutely stunning, without doubt the best Mega Drive game so far " (*John Davidson* - Mega Drive Advanced Gaming)





U.S. GOLD

available for your Mega Drive

Delphine Software International

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BY: CAPCOM

price: TBA
developers: CAPCOM
release date: SEPT. 1993

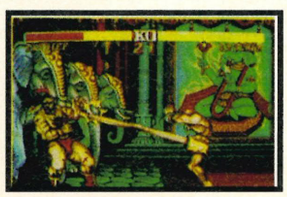


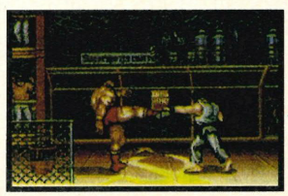
STREETFIGHTER II

CHAMPION EDITION

Well, are you ready for it or what? Judging from the amount of mail and phone calls we receive in the MegaTech office begging for information, you're all gagging for it. So in an attempt to stop you all turning our lives into a misery, here's what you've all been waiting for – a full preview of the Megadrive version of Streetfighter 2: Championship Edition.









The questions have been flying around for ages now: "Which version will it be?", "How will they fit the moves onto a three-button joypad?" The MegaTech mailbag has been bulging with pleas from eager Streetfighter fans desperate to know when it will be released. But we don't deal in rumours – we wanted to wait until we were satisfied we could give you hard facts about what could be the biggest Megadrive title ever.

Last month we showed you several pics which were smuggled out of Japan inside a Daloon Crispy Pancake Roll. Now, as the game enters the final weeks of development, with final touches being added to the graphics, sound effects and configuration of the screen menus, our network of highly-trained spies have come up with the goods to produce this in-depth preview.

HOW? WHAT? WHEN?

Originally it was thought that the game would be coming out on Mega-CD only, but fear not – the game is actually coming on a monster 16M-bit cartridge which matches the speed of the coin-op original (but isn't quite as fast as the Turbo Edition). And whereas the SNES version is merely the bog-standard first version of Streetfighter II, the Megadrive version is a conversion of the Championship Edition. What that means to those who haven't visited an arcade in the last two years is that the same characters can be pitted against each other.

Release in Japan is now set for June, with a strong possibility that us Europeans will have to wait until September before an official version reaches our shores, although Sega Europe haven't fixed a firm release date yet. At the time of going to press, no details were available for the price of the cart. Keep tuning in to Megatech, as we'll keep you posted on developments on the Euro version and we'll give you a red-hot review of the import cartridge as soon as it hits the shelves.



▲ **Sega's new joypad-set to replace the old 3-button model.**



▲ **Capcom's 6-button baby.**

SIX BUTTONS OR THREE?

Regular Megatech readers will have seen our exclusive pics of Sega's new six-button joypad in our news section a few months ago, and the pad is soon to be released in Japan. The responsiveness of the six-button Fighting Pad is good – the control method is very similar to the arcade version and special moves are actually easier to pull off! In fact, the old three-button pad has now been discontinued in the Land of the Rising Sun and replaced with the six button job as standard (a trend which will eventually be put into practice worldwide).

As if that wasn't enough, Capcom have also announced the release of their six-button joystick for the Megadrive. At the moment all we know is that it's very similar to the SNES one and that there's no firm release date as yet.

But the question on every gameplayer's lips is: "Can you use the old three-button pad with Megadrive Streetfighter II or will it only work with the six-button job?" Well, the answer is yes, you can use the old pad, but you're gonna have to be Mr Nimble Fingers from Dexterity City to get the full effect. You can actually program the joypad buttons so that you can switch between two sets of attacks by pressing the Start button (sounds a bit crap, we know, but at least you'll be able to play the game without lashing out for a new joypad if you're strapped for cash).

MEET THE HEROES

Here's the rundown on who's who and who does what in the game. Every one of 'em is a rock hard streetfighter, but their special attacking moves differ wildly. The characters have been faithfully reproduced and their movements follow almost exactly those in the coin-op. Some of them have had sections of the graphics in their techniques cut, but this doesn't have a significantly negative effect on the gameplay, not when most of the fighters now have a few specially-programmed new moves.

Ken

Special Moves: Dragon Punch, Fireball, Hurricane Kick
Master of Karate, Ken, lifelong friend of Ryu, now lives in America where he believes he can find a better quality of opponent. In the Megadrive version he will be much faster than he was in the arcade game.

Ryu

Special Moves: Dragon Punch, Fireball, Hurricane Kick
Ryu's a bit of a sad case, forsaking friends and possessions for the sake of martial arts. That said, he's rock hard and would dish out a good kicking to anyone who said that to his face. His speed is the same as in the coin-op, but his attacks are more powerful.

Chun-Li

Special Moves: Hundred Foot Kick, Spinning Bird Kick
The only female in the game, Chun Li moves like lightning. She's out to destroy Bison, the final boss, who was responsible for the death of her father. Chunny-baby has been sped up even more for Megadrive SF2 and has two new kicks.

Guile

Special Moves: Sonic Boom, Somersault Kick
This airforce major has an unhealthy fixation with his hair and a devastating array of moves, including aerial throws. His somersault kick has now been beefed-up to score double hits.

Zangief

Special Moves: Spinning Lariat, Spinning Piledriver
He's slow, he's strong, he's covered in scars. Zangief is the strongest competitor in the game, capable of destroying an opponent with his spinning pile-driver, and his attacking ability has been considerably enhanced now that he can move while his spinning lariat is in action.

Dhalsim

Special Moves: Yoga Fire, Yoga Blast
After one too many vindaloos, Dhalsim discovered he could blow fire and tie himself in knots. His stretchy arms and legs confound many foes.

Blanka

Special Moves: Rolling Attack, Electrocution
Following a bizarre accident involving a pack of Duracell and a bucket of Castrol GTX, Blanka now has green skin and the ability to electrify his skin. All of his attacks can now be accessed much faster than in the coin-op.

Honda

Special Moves: Flying Head-butt, Hundred Hand Slap
He may be fat, but this lardy has a dazzling array of sumo-type moves. Not only can he kick, throw and punch, he can also use his flabby folds to crush his opponents into submission. His flying head-butt has been accelerated and he can now walk while Hundred-Hand Slapping.



▲ Double Blanka shock!



▲ Chun-Li throws...Chun-Li!



▲ Dahlsim's halitosis proves to be an advantage...



▲ Squaddies, eh? This one beats himself up!



▲ Wayhey! It's Honda vs Honda-Fat Bloke alert!



▲ Ken fights his twin brother, famous hairdresser, Maurice.



▲ Zangeif shows Ryu the qualtiy craftmanship of his new pants.



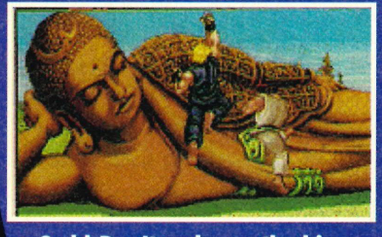
▲ Ooh! Cheeky! That M. Bison's trying to look up Chun's skirt!



▲ Hang on! You can't hit a girl!



▲ Blimey! This could be a lard-eating competition!



▲ Sssh! Don't wake up the big bloke..



▲ Why is it that Guile's mates just stand around and watch?

STREETFIGHTER II
CHAMPION EDITION

BONUS BONANZA!

Although SNES Streetfighter II only contained two bonus stages where the fighters can test their strength and agility, the Megadrive version features all three bonus stages featured in the coin-op. Naturally these involve hitting things. The first has barrels descending from the top of the screen, which have to be smashed, the second requires a car to be destroyed within a time limit, and in the third the fighters have to destroy a pyramid of oil barrels.



▲ Bouns levels are the same as the arcade version; car and barrel-smashing. What fun!

STREETFIGHTER II FOR BEGINNERS

For the uninitiated, the aim of the game is simple – become the greatest streetfighter in the world by kicking seven bells out of the other international contestants. There are 12 characters in total, each with their own set of moves and fighting styles, apart from Ken and Ryu that is. These two survivors of the original Streetfighter coin-op shared the same master and thus have the same moves, including the devastating dragon punch. In the first version you couldn't control the last four characters, which severely miffed many people. Fortunately Capcom rectified this with the Championship Edition.

PLAYERS' DOZEN

"So how many characters can you play?" We can hear you crying. Well, you can forget the limitations of the SNES version, which only allowed you to control eight different streetfighters. Megadrive Streetfighter II allows you to take control of all twelve of the coin-op characters, including the four who merely acted as bosses in the Nintendo version: Balrog, Vega, Sagat and M Bison.

THE 'EMPERORS'!

These are the bosses, whom you couldn't play as in the Super NES version, but are accessible from the options screen in Megadrive SFII.

Balrog

Special Moves: Dashing Uppercut, Running Punch
With an arsenal consisting only of punches, Balrog is usually a push over. Don't get too close though, or he'll open up with head-butts.

Vega

Special Moves: Rolling Crystal Flash, Izna Drop
The fastest, and some say the toughest, fighter in the game. Vega is armed with a metal claw and the ability to leap higher than any other character.

Sagat

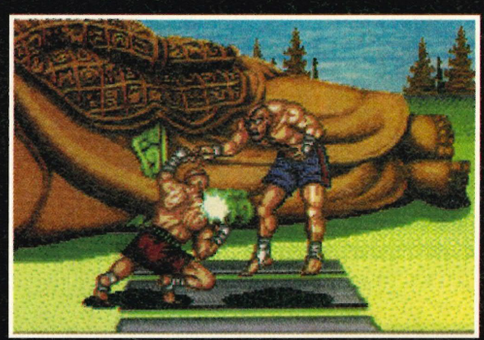
Special Moves: Tiger Shot, Tiger Uppercut
Another throw-back to the first game. This giant is short on moves, but fast enough to match any opponent.

M Bison

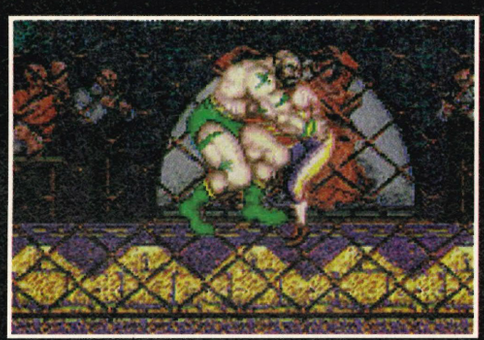
Special Move: Knee Press, Energy Torpedo, Head Crush
The final boss. Quick, strong and deadly, you'll need all your skills to beat him.



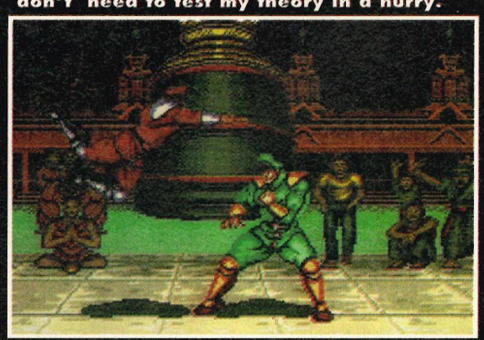
▲ Maverick pugilist Balrog isn't much of a contender. Still, I wouldn't like to bump into him on a dark night.



▲ One-eyed Muai Thai master Sagat probably has no sense of distance. But I don't need to test my theory in a hurry.



▲ Russian wrestler picks up bullfighter in Spanish bar!



▲ I wonder what the 'M' in M. Bison stands for? Is it a secret worth dying for?

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Tel: 0247 820688

Megamania
219 Castlereagh Road, Belfast.
Tel: 0232 453071

SCOTLAND
C&A Games
Marketplace, 61-63 South Street.
Perth. Tel: 0738 440669

C&A Games
6 The Parade, Stirling Central.
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BY: DOMARK

price: £39.99
developers: THE KREMLIN
release date: JULY 1993

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY

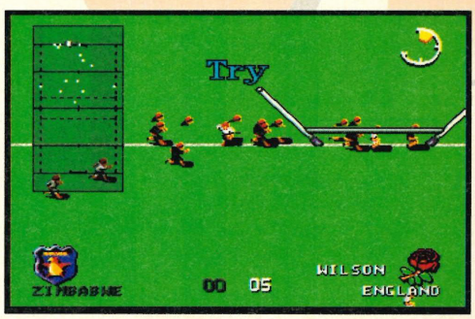
Rugby is a game played by men with oddly-shaped balls! HAHAHAHAHAHA! WHAT A SCREAM!

Now that we've got the hilarious rugby gag out of our systems, let's talk previews. This little lovely is Domark's 'conversion' (bit of console/rugby terminology there) of their game of the Rugby World Cup which was moderately popular (on ST, Amiga, etc) during the last Rugby World Cup. It wasn't tremendously well received by rugby-loving reviewers, as we recall, because the programmers decided to sacrifice a few of the rules of the game for the sake of playability. However, this time around the gameplay has been slightly re-jigged so that the action is as realistic as possible while also being as playable as possible.

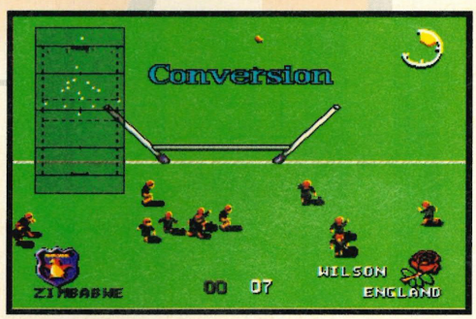
International Rugby combines on-pitch, mud-based action with off-pitch, car-coat-wearing managerial action, allowing you to study your players' form, pick the men for the job, then run them around the field using your own high-speed joypadding skills. As we say, pretty much all of the rules of the sport have been included, as well as some of the no-rules such as barging, shirt-pulling and eye-poking. Well, maybe not eye-poking.

No less than 16 top teams are featured and you can play in friendly matches or take your boys to victory in either The Five Nations Championship, The Rugby Triple Crown or even The Rugby World Cup. Swing loooow, sweet chaaaaariot, as they say.

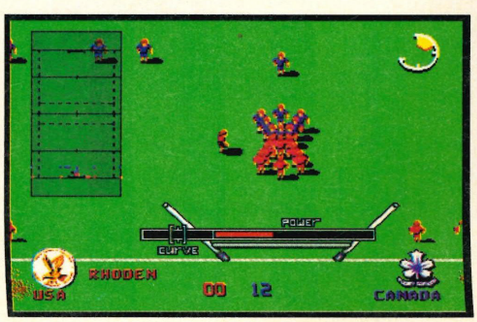
Oh, review next month, as we say.



▲ I'm trying as hard as I can! Oh, you mean a try as in rugby!



▲ The England squad score a conversion against Zimbabwe. What a shock result.



▲ Now, this looks interesting. The USA vs Canada. No wonder the scrum looks so pretty.



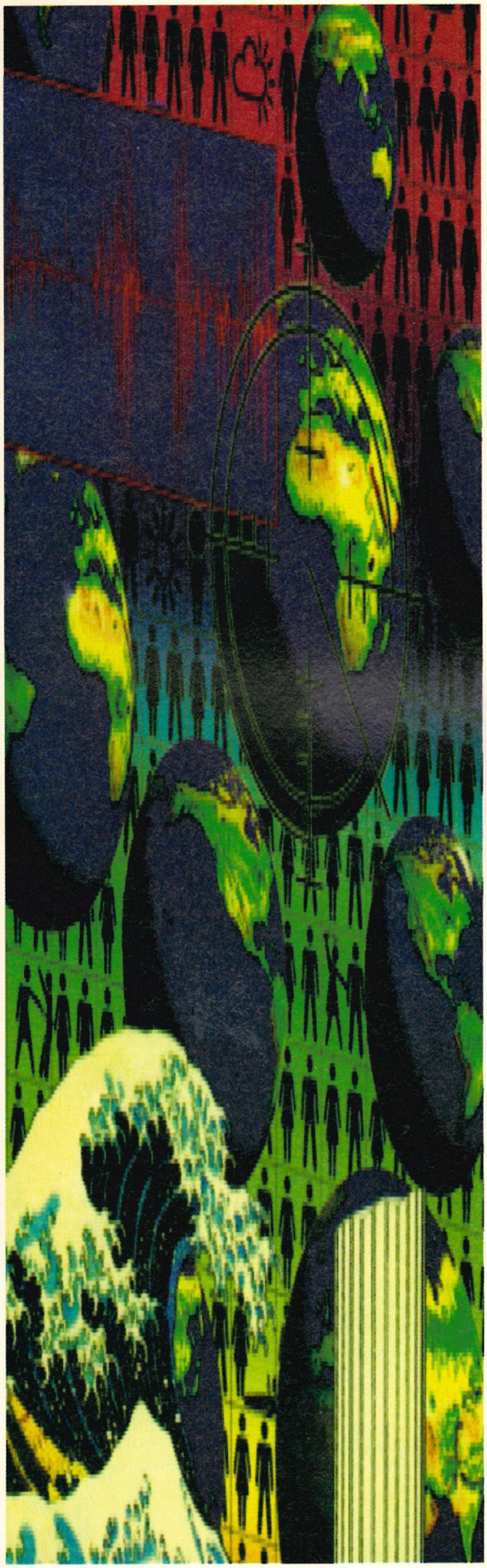
▲ Hmm, as in real-life, the game is 'spoilt' by unsavoury characters. Never mind, there's a streaker to jolly things up!





BY: VIRGIN

price: TBA
developers: BULLFROG
release date: JUNE 1993



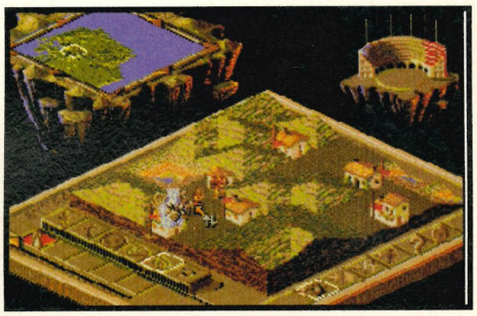
TWO TRIBES: POPULOUS II

Three years ago, the original Populous was released, creating a whole new genre in the process – the God sim. The game style was revolutionary at the time, with its isometric view of a section of land bordered by icons which brought various 'acts of God' into effect, and spawned several imitators. Regarded as a classic amongst those who like a lot of strategy in their gaming, Populous was incredibly popular in its day.

Now Bullfrog, the company which programmed the original, have decided it's time to give the game a revamp, hence the imminent appearance of Two Tribes. The presentation of the new version is very similar to the original game, featuring the instantly-recognisable isometric close-up map combined with a larger scale overview of the landscape. The familiar manna bar is still present, as well as other options around the edge of the landscape. The game plays in basically the same way, with your aim being to level out the land to enable your followers to go forth and multiply, increasing your omnipotent power in the process.

It may sound like the same old game so far, but Two Tribes does feature improvements in just about every department. There are loads more destructive 'acts of God' to plague the enemy with, for a start – the original's six has been bumped up to a death-dealing twenty, and they're all more sadistic to boot. Devastating pillars of fire and awesome tidal waves which sweep across entire oceans offer true pleasure to the angry god in you. Not only that, grotesque gorgons and giants run amok savaging the population too!

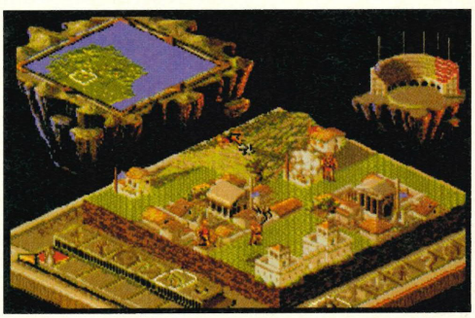
The graphics have also been much improved from the original game, with an appropriately 'ye olde mythological' look to them. Populous has never been a game for the thrill-seeking blaster merchant, but Two Tribes is shaping up to be a real treat for those of us who like to use a bit of the grey matter when playing their Megadrive. So keep your eyes peeled, strategists – we could be reviewing this long-awaited sequel in next month's MegaTech.



▲ **Fire! I just hope you're insured, mate! Waddya mean 'act of God?' Surely you can tell them it was an accident...**



▲ **Why, it's a scale model of Camden Market! Where's the stall with the 'novelty' pipes and aromatherapy oils?**



▲ **Fight! Fight! It iS Camden Town! And it appears to be a Saturday night! That means the World's End isn't far...**



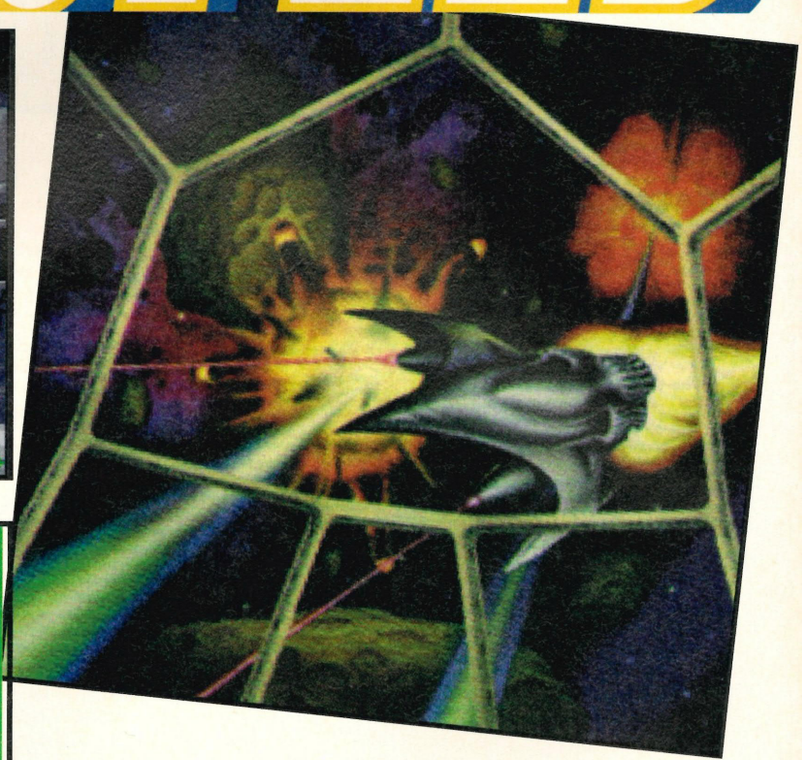
BY: ACCOLADE

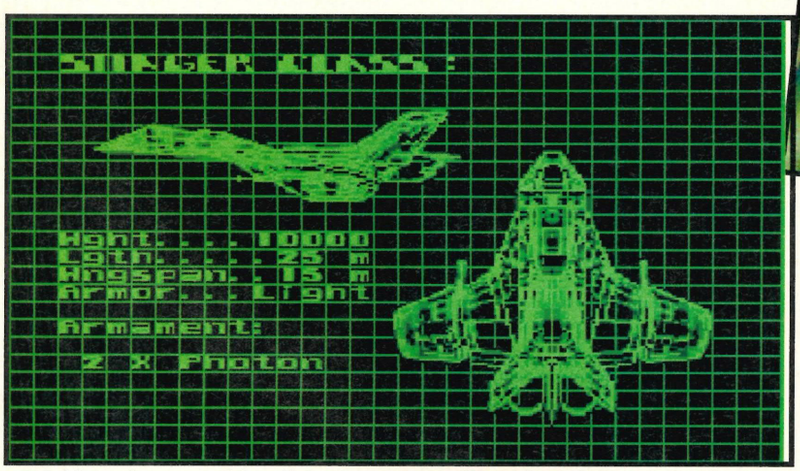
price: £34.99
developers: ACCOLADE
release date: MAY 1993

WARPSPEED



▲ Hey, look! Giant cheese and tomato sandwiches!





▲ A blueprint-type thing (it's green, yet still a blueprint). Fascinating.

Quick! Put your clothes back on! The Kelbo are attacking! Those fiendish insect beings from beyond the planets have suddenly popped up in battle-swarms throughout the galaxy and they've got their composite eyes on our attractive space stations. Well, they're not going to get them without a fight and so get your flight szzzzzzz...

Eh? Whassamarrer? The standardness of that plotline must have sent me to sleep. So, where were we? Fighting the Kelbo, that's it.

The difference between Warpspeed and all those other Megadrive games that use this plot is that Warpspeed is your actual 3D space combat simulator in which you have to steer your starfighter around the cosmiverse, firing cheese footballs of laser energy at anything that swoops past your windscreen. The warping comes when you've mopped up Kelbo forces in one square of the old space map and have to hop to the next one.

Apart from that, there's not much more to Warpspeed. There are seven sets of missions to undertake, though, as well as training sorties and a full campaign which you can save with a password if you start to get space-sick.



▲ Blasty-blasty action as you pursue your prey.



▲ This is the 'warp' bit of Warpspeed. Obvious, really.

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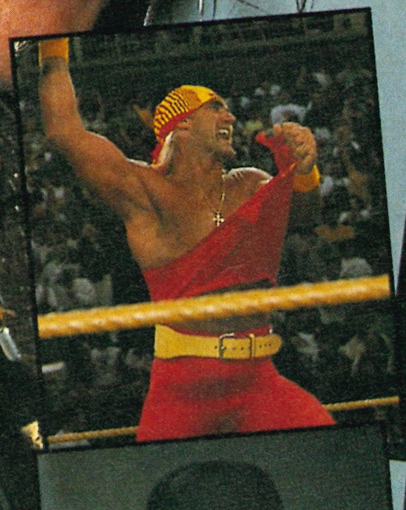
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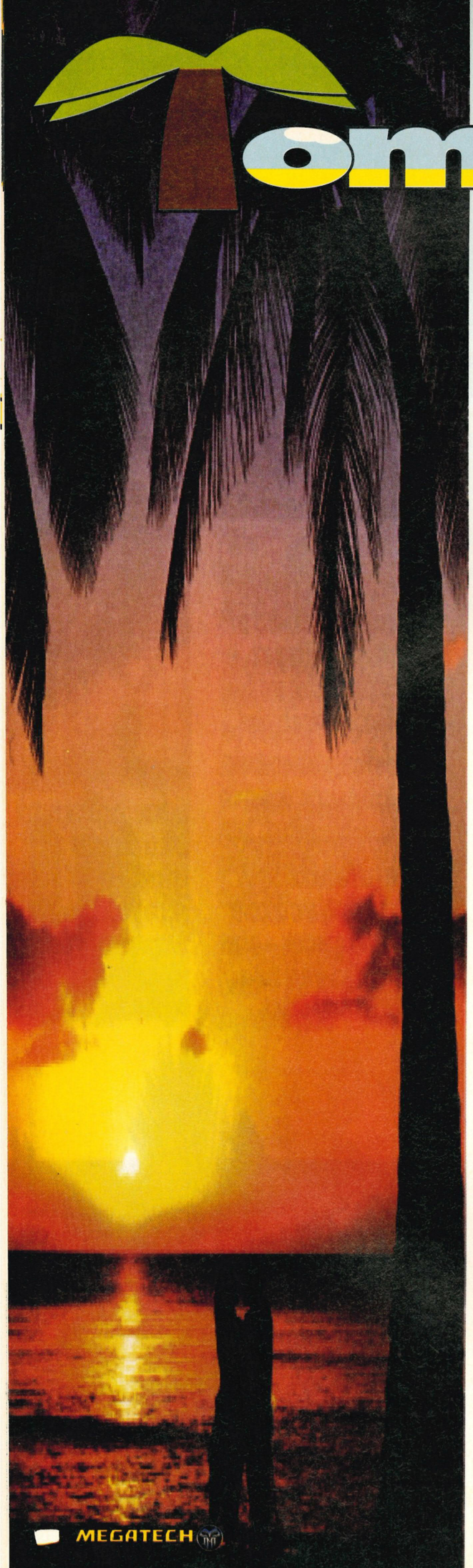




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Tom's Island

Hi folks, Tom here! Welcome to my island. You know, it's really great here. The sand is soft and white and it's just brilliant for making sandcastles with. Hey, and this palm tree is pretty darn smart too. It's a magic palm tree. That's right, magic. Every time I pick a coconut off it the nut is replaced by the next morning. Incredible huh? What's more, I don't just have to eat coconut all the time, no sir. All I have to do is put the nut under my armpit and wish for whatever food I want, like roast chicken and spuds for instance. Then I crack open the nut and hey presto, there's my grub, all hot and covered in gravy. Yum, yum. In the afternoons I go whale-riding on my pet whale, Samson. Ah, with the breeze in my hair and my dolphin pals swimming beside me it's just so invigorating. Yep, I'm King of the Oceans, me. Oh, here's Samson now, better not keep him waiting. Here's that address to write to.

TOM'S ISLAND, MegaTech, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU. Aloha, or whatever they say on Hawaii-five-O.

OLD JEDI MIND TRICK!

Dear TOM,

I'm writing to ask you about your two free copies you're giving out. Is there any chance you could send me them. Also I would like to congratulate you on creating 100% awesome mag, more information and style than the rest. Everybody probably asks you if you could put more in on Sonic 2, so I won't ask you to. By the way my name is GARETH and I'm 12 years old. So see ya later and I can't wait till you put the next MegaTech mag out.

Gareth, Launceston.

TOM: Two free copies?!! Oh, ha, ha, I see. You were trying to pull the old Jedi mind trick on me, weren't you? It almost worked too. Almost, but not quite. Try your powers on some other weak-minded fool, Gareth of Launceston.

THE CASE OF THE STOLEN CASES!

Dear TOM,

For Christmas we got our son a Megadrive and two games. After saving up and receiving some games for his birthday, my son now has seven games. The problem is, we recently went away for the weekend and my son took his Megadrive and games with him, leaving the boxes at home. When we returned home we had been broken into. In addition to the other things we lost they took my son's boxes (what they wanted with seven empty boxes for I don't know). I have tried to purchase the boxes my son lost with no luck except one. I sent letters to Sega USA and England, Virgin USA and England and to Electronic Arts, Flying Edge, US Gold etc. The only reply I received was from Virgin USA who sent me a box for the Terminator for free. I have sent a thank you letter to Virgin, but I would like to say a big thank you in print to Judy Leon of Virgin USA. Could you please print this letter, if only to show that some companys care about their customers. I have included the letter I received from Virgin.

PS. The other boxes my son lost are Risky Woods, NHPLA Hockey '93, Krusty's Funhouse, Road Rash 2, Bio Hazard Battle and Batman: Revenge of the Joker (import). He only just got this one after paying £45 for it.

Mrs D Smith, Manchester.

TOM: Well done, Virgin USA! Rest assured that Santa always repays such generosity in kind. I contacted the Sega Europe (at their Green Hill Zone residence) and they said that they do have a few spare cases that they could send you. If you're interested, try contacting them on 071 373 3000 and ask to speak to the Consumer Services Department.

HIM AT THE END!

Dear TOM,

HELP! I have got to the end of Mickey and Donald, but can't seem to kill him at the end. It is very hard, I've clocked him 5 times, but he's not going away. To make it harder there's ghosts coming out at you please could you help.

Shelley Louis Barnes, age 9, Wisbech.

TOM: There's only one way to kill this fella, Shelley Louis Barnes, aged 9 of Wisbech. Stand on the rising platforms and keep jumping onto the highest ones so you don't get caught at the bottom of the screen. All you have to do is keep leaping up and whipping the boss in the face. You'll know when you've hurt him because he'll make a pained expression. Keep this up, all the while avoiding the ghosts, and after a few hits he'll soon bite the biscuit.

PLUTO CALLING EARTH, COME IN EARTH!

Yo TOM,

Don't worry about the aliens in your body, I know a solution . All you need is a game called Ecco and a blonde called Pamela Anderson. If it don't work there is another solution,

PANIC.

Anyway, the real question was why does none of the cheats for Road Rash work and will there be any of those bodacious, excellent, totally cool, massive posters in future issues.

Yours Beggingly, Master.

Matthew Raff, Somewhere in England planet Pluto.

TOM: You imbecile, Servitor Raff! I told you never to communicate with me at my Earth address. Why, if the FBI ever found out my true identity, they'd dissect me for their cruel experiments. Anyway, I don't know which Road Rash cheats you mean. Also there are two massive posters given away with this very issue. Use your human eyes. Now, away with you. Eeechoota, away, away.

THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING MEGADRIVES!

Dear TOM,

I'm writing to the you as a first step. I acquired my first Megadrive over two years ago, since then I've bought two more Megadrives and I am soon to buy a fourth. You may be asking yourself does he sell them or is he some sad prat who keeps buying faulty Megadrives. Well how should I put this? I'm pissed off, not pissing about. I've had three Megadrives stolen with 27 games altogether. (approx £1500), everyone knows how hot these consoles are nowadays, everyone wants one. They don't care where they're from if they can get them cheaper than in the stores, which makes them a must for burglars.

Understanding this, why then have Sega not developed a form of security for their machine such as a security coded chip or coded card to render the Megadrive uselss to anyone but the original owner, therefore making them worthless to thieves. I'm sure most people would willingly part with a few extra pennies for their peace of mind. If Sega are not willing to surcome to people's wishes, why have none of the accessories companies thought of such a needed device, which I'm sure would make them some money I would like to know your views on this situation and my ideas, any criticisms welcome.

PS. Don't slag me off as a burglar alarm was fitted the last two times. Also, being unemployed it's like having holes in your pockets.

A Cooke, Walsall.

TOM: Blimey, four Megadrives in two years! I don't suppose you've been struck by lightning more than once too, have you? Joking aside, I can understand how peeved you are, but I don't think there's enough of a demand for a console security device. Perhaps in the future consoles may be fitted with a coding device similar those that many videos have, but I can't see Megadrives ever getting this kind of treatment. Sorry. Burglar alarms should more than suffice, but I find that they work better if they're on. Oh, and try using locks too. Good Luck!

I AM EXCITED!

Dear TOM,

I am a Megadrive owner and like many others I am excited about the Mega-CD. The problem is, I don't know whether an official Mega-CD will be compatible with my machine. I have an imported Japanese Megadrive, but it has been converted to show English text. Will an English Mega-CD work? I don't really like adventure games. Please, please, please print this letter as I can't get a Mega-CD before my question is answered.

Andrew Kenning, Littleport.

TOM: Alas, I very much doubt that your Megadrive will work with an official Mega-CD, but seeing as you don't like adventure games I can't see any reason why you shouldn't get a Japanese one. After all, the Japanese text shouldn't really effect your enjoyment of any other games. Anyway, there is a remedy on hand. A cartridge called the Pro CDX has just been released. This allows you to connect up any combination of Mega-CD and Megadrive. What's more, it will also allow you to play any Mega-CD games, import or official. Nifty eh? Still, it'll set you back about £50.

KIDS CLUB MENU

Dear TOM,

Firstly I would like to congratulate you on the mag because it's brill and thank you for being the only mag that treats their readers like 3 year olds.

Now that's the grovelling over with. I am just a lonely voice speaking out amongst the millions, but I would like to think of myself as speaking for a lot of them. Anyway, coming to the point, yesterday one of my mates said to me, "Yes, but MD games are just too easy." Well, just to be awkward can I disagree with him and say that most MD games nowadays have level settings and/ or continues. This is what I would say is one good thing about MD because I can take longer to complete a game, even though some stupid gits sit there and put it on easy and say, "What a waste of money, that only took me 2 days to complete." Well it speaks for itself, doesn't it?

I don't mean to tell you how to do your job, but how about a small section reviewing all the joysticks you can buy for your MD because I want to buy a joystick and don't know which to get.

PS. No jokes about my name, I get enough of that at college.

David Moaner, Newthorp.

TOM: I won't joke about your name, David. Why would I do something nasty like that? Anyway, about your letter. You sure do like a moan, don't you? Ha ha ha! I mean, what a moaner! Moany, groany, moan, moan, moan. You just don't stop. I've never heard so much complaining. Is Moaner your surname or something? Oh yeh, it is. He he he! Boy, you've really tickled my funny bone. Bone? Sounds like moan. Ahahaha!

DINOSAUR DOO-DOO!

Dear TOM,

HELP! I have had the Revenge Of Shinobi for some time and I'm completely stuck with killing the brontosaurus on the end of level seven. Are there any good ways of killing him? And is there a level select or any other cheats apart from the cheat which gives Musashi infinite shurikens?

Ian Towy, Essex.

TOM:The only way I know of killing that big galoot is by using three Mijin magics in a row. If he's still alive after that then use a Kariu. Unfortunately, this costs three lives, but it's the only way I've ever been able to beat him. Sorry.

I AM HOWARD DOUPE!

Dear TOM,

Wake up! In Oliver El-Korasky's letter you said that you don't know who Howard Doupe is. Well I am the person whose SECOND letter you printed in issue 15.

Now that I have that off my chest I would like to congratulate you on a brilliant mag which is by far the best Megadrive and Mega-CD one.

Can you please answer my questions?

1. When will the Mega-CD price be lowered?
2. Why is Sonic 2 so easy?
3. Where has Spot the Shot gone too?
4. Will Streetfighter 2 be released on the Mega-CD?

PS. Please print my letter and keep up the good work.

Howard Doupe, Southport

TOM: My humblest apologies, Howie, of course I know who you are. I was merely feigning complete stupidity in order to draw you out into the open. Anyway, here are some answers to your questions.
1. The Mega-CD will never drop in price. However, the Mega-CD 2 (a cheaper version of the present one) will be available sometime in late autumn.
2. Because it's a tart.
3. To competition heaven.
4. Yes.

RAMPANT!

Dear TOM,

I'm writing about a subject which though rampant on computers is still to hit consoles in a big way. Software piracy.

I don't know about England, but in Australia every video store allows you to rent out games. It

costs about $4 overnight and these video stores have huge selections of games both old and new and many yet to be released officially.

Now as you know, buying games is not cheap. How many readers out there buy a game, play it for a few week, get sick of it and start saving for a new game? With games now costing $100 a piece, this hobby isn't cheap.

Now onto the part you're not going to like. Back-up sysytems. I recently bought one of these systems, the Magicdrive and it's the best investment I could have made with my Megadrive. Now when ever I want a new game I simply have to rent a copy and make a back-up. Altogether, including the price of disks, it now only costs me about $7 or £3 for a perfect copy of that game.

I realise that if everybody did this then the software companies would go broke and no-one would produce new games, but where do Sega of UK or Australia get off charging us double what the Americans or Japanese pay. As long as I don't sell the games it's legal, but until games are priced more fairly, eg. in line with America and Japan, I shall continue to make back-ups.

PS. You may not agree with some of my ideas, but please take them into consideration.

Jason, Melbourne.

TOM: Naturally you expect me preach to you about the evils of software piracy. You assume that because I work in the software industry things such as Magicdrives are going to be abhorrent to me. Well the thing is, I can see your point. I think that £40 for a cartridge is expensive. Yes, some games are worth it, but a lot are not and these pirating devices are a very tempting purchase. After all, why pay for a game when you can have it for free? On the surface, it seems to make sense, but try looking further than your nose. Piracy IS a crime and a very damaging one at that. You whinge about Sega and their ridiculously-priced carts, but do you really think that by pirating games you'll force them to lower their prices. Of course you won't. If anything Sega will put up their prices to compensate for the lack of sales. Look at the Amiga industry, software piracy has almost crippled it. Zool, one of the Amiga's top-selling games has only sold 80,000 copies worldwide, but there are millions of Amiga users in the world. Where have all the other users got their games from? I'll tell you, piracy.
So, how does this affect the man on the street? Well,, the money from software sales goes back into the development of new games. Less sales, less money for development and the result is poorer software. Surely you don't want to see that happen?
At the moment top-selling video games like Sonic 2 sell in their millions and the console industry is thriving. In a matter of time software prices will drop. But, if machines like the Magicdrive become legally available, as it seems might happen, then consoles could be dead within a matter of years.
Oh, and as for your software back-up antics being legal, it's fine to do this as long as the software you back-up is your own software, a reason that seems a little defunct in the console industry since carts rarely break. However, you are pirating rented games and that is a crime. Still, it seems you know this already since you neglected to include your full name or address. That's all I have to say.

SEGA- SWINDLERS OR NOT?

Dear TOM,

I would just like to congratulate you all on the 'new and improved' magazine. The news section is brilliant! The reviews are miles better with more information and the Timed Sequence' boxes are a great idea. I just hope all this quality lasts and doesn't slowly fade away in future issues.

Anyway, there is another reason for my letter writing antics. I am proud to be the first person in Britain to buy a Mega-CD from Boots. I bought it on the 1st of April. Now, according to your reliable information I should have got my new piece of hardware with the Sega Classics, Sol Feace, Cobra Command, Audio Sampler and CDG discs. But I didn't. I got three game discs, but not the two sample discs.

Could it be that MegaTech got it wrong or have Sega swindled me?

Also, do you have any news on the extra memory cartridges because my back-up RAM is full of tracks from XJ220 and I can't make any more until I empty it.

Thanks a lot and keep up the good work. See ya.

Pob, Littleborough.

TOM:Pob, Pob, little Pobby, it's bad news I'm afraid. MegaTech got it wrong. Hush now, let me explain. Originally it seemed that the Audio Sampler disc and the CD+G disc would be packaged in with the official Mega-CD as they are with the American version, but in the end Sega decided to leave them out. Still, you're not missing anything because they're both a load of horse chestnuts. Believe me, I saw them. Never again.

YOU'VE ALL BEEN SO KIND!

Dear TOM,

I bought your magazine because I thought it was about all computers and consoles, but alas I discover it is just for Megadrive owners. I am the unhappy owner of a Master System looking for a magazine purely for Master System owners. Megadrive owners are very lucky, they have magazines just for them. Please could you assist me, why not start another magazine for Master Systems called MasterTech? And another thing, why are computer magazines so expensive?

PS. Suprisingly enough I haven't seen any flying chimps.

R.S.V.P., but not in MegaTech, because I won't buy it. You could put it in MasterTech or just send me a letter.

Yours hopefully,

Chris Heald, age 10, Lichfield.

TOM: MasterTech, ha ha. Nice one Chris, I like it. Ha ha... ah, you're serious. Oh Chris, how can I put it? MasterTech will never exist. Never. But don't worry, I've replied to you here and and in Hoop And Stick User as well. Bwa-ha-ha!

WHICH, WHEN, WHAT AND HOW?

Dear TOM,

I have some questions for you.

1. When will Megagames 2 be coming out and what games will it feature?

2. Will ther ever be a ToeJam and Earl 2?

3. Megadrive Advanced Gaming say that Streets Of Rage 3 will be 24 M-bit. Is this true? Will it be a Megadrive or Mega-CD game?

4. When will you be doing a Complete Technique Zone booklet volume 2?

5. Which is best for 2 players, Lotus Turbo Challenge or Road Rash 2?

6. Which is best, Tazmania or Robocod?

7. Which is your favourite character in a) Streets Of Rage 2, b) Street Fighter 2?

8. Which is best, Tiny Toons or Sonic 2?

Thanks for reading my letter.

Leigh Cobley, Leicester.

TOM:I have some answers for you.
1. Pass.
2. Yes.
3. I've heard nothing about it and I find it very hard to believe. It's not impossible, but it would be so expensive. Why not just stick it on CD?
4. In the foreseeable future.
5. Lotus Turbo Challenge.
6. Robocod, but I don't like either.
7. a) Skate and b) Chun Li.
8. Sonic 2 I suppose, although I prefer Tiny Toons more because I'm bored of Sonic 2.

Look, I think that this letters page looks a tad boring and I want to do something new with it. If you have anything you think might spruce it up then send it in. Anything. Pictures, stories, photos, ideas, whatever takes your fancy. Hey, my island is your island. Aloha again.

WHAT MAKES YOU TICK

ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS AND YOU COULD WIN THE TEN GAMES YOU ALWAYS WANTED!

Short of money? Can't buy the games you desire? Well, this could be your big chance to pick up those desirable titles without the need for expensive money. All you have to do is tell us about yourself. You know. The real you. The MegaTech reader-you that has helped make this a beautiful, courageous, kindly magazine and is about to make it a beautifuller, courageouser, kindlier magazine by answering the questions in this worthy reader survey. Yes, just tick those boxes you lovely people, then send in your form (or a photocopy, should you not wish to damage your mag) to:

THE GREAT AND BEAUTIFUL MEGATECH READER SURVEY, MEGATECH, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON,EC1R 3AU

by June 20th and you may well get your entry pulled from the MegaTech Postbag Of Fun to receive your choice of ten bright and sparkling Megadrive games. Well, then, why do you tarry? Grab yourself a biro and start ticking!

ABOUT YOU

1. Are you: ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. How old are you

Under 10 ☐ 11 ☐ 12 ☐ 13 ☐
14 ☐ 15 ☐ 16 ☐ 17-19 ☐
20-23 ☐ 24-29 ☐ 30 or over ☐

3.What do you do?

Secondary School ☐
6th Form/6th Form college ☐
Further education (university/poly/college) ☐
Full-time employment ☐
Part-time employment ☐
Unemployed ☐
Other ☐

4.What do you do in your spare time? Please rate how keen you are on each of the following activities out of ten (10=super-keen, 0=don't do it at all).

Play video games ☐
Play sports ☐
Watch TV ☐
Watch satellite TV ☐
Watch videos ☐
Listen to music ☐
Listen to the radio ☐
Play arcade games ☐
Go to the cinema ☐

5.On average how much time a week do you spend playing video games?

Less than 1 hour ☐ 1-2 hours ☐
2-4 hours ☐ 4-6 hours ☐
6-8 hours ☐ 8-10 hours ☐
10-20 hours ☐ 20+ hours ☐

6.Where do you normally play your games (tick more than one box if necessary)?

☐ In my bedroom ☐ In my lounge
☐ At my friend's house
Somewhere else ☐

7.How do you usually play your games?

☐ On my own ☐ With a friend
☐ With a group of us

8.What is your favourite TV programme? ☐

9.What is your favourite TV movie/video? ☐

10. What is your favourite music CD/tape? ☐

11. What is your favourite non-video games magazine/comic ☐

12. On average, how much money do you earn/get given each month?

£0-10 ☐ £11-50 ☐
£51-100 ☐ £101-500 ☐
£501-1000 ☐ £1000-1500 ☐
Over £1500 ☐

13. Which of the following do you regularly buy?

CDs ☐ Tapess ☐
Videos ☐ Clothes ☐
Shoes/Trainers ☐ Sweets and Crisps ☐
Drinks ☐ Takeaway food ☐
Books ☐ Comics ☐

14. Do you have a bank account
Yes ☐ No ☐

ABOUT YOUR GAMES PLAYING

15. Which of the following machines do you (**1**) own and do you (**2**) have access to (perhaps via a friend)?

	1	2
Sega Master System	☐	☐
Sega Megadrive	☐	☐
Sega Mega-CD	☐	☐
Sega Game Gear	☐	☐
Nintendo NES	☐	☐
Nintendo SuperNES	☐	☐
Nintendo Game Boy	☐	☐
Mega-PC	☐	☐
Lynx	☐	☐
Amiga	☐	☐
C64	☐	☐
PC	☐	☐
Macintosh	☐	☐
Atari ST	☐	☐
PC Engine	☐	☐
PC Engine GT	☐	☐
PC Engine Duo	☐	☐
Neo Geo	☐	☐

16. Which machine do you want to buy next?

Sega Master System ☐
Sega Megadrive ☐
Sega Mega-CD ☐
Sega Game Gear ☐
Nintendo NES ☐
Nintendo SuperNES ☐
Nintendo Game Boy ☐
Mega-PC ☐
Lynx ☐
Amiga ☐
PC ☐
Macintosh ☐
Atari ST ☐
PC Engine ☐
PC Engine GT ☐
PC Engine Duo ☐
Neo Geo ☐
3DO ☐

17.How many games do you own?

None ☐
One ☐

2-5 ☐
6-10 ☐
11-25 ☐
26-50 ☐
More than 50 ☐

18.On average how many games do you buy?
Never buy games ☐
A couple every year ☐
One every three months ☐
One every couple of months ☐
One per month ☐
Two per month ☐
Three per month ☐
Four Per month ☐
Five per month ☐
More than five per month ☐

19.How many games do you get given (as presents etc)?
None ☐
A couple every year ☐
One every three months ☐
One every couple of months ☐
One per month ☐
Two per month ☐
More than two per month ☐

20. How many different games do you play in a month – either of your own, at a friend's or elsewhere?
None ☐ 15 ☐
6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐
15-20 ☐ 20+ ☐

21. How long have you been playing video games?
A month or less ☐ 1-3 months ☐
3-6 months ☐ 6-12 months ☐
12-18months ☐ 18months-2years ☐
2-3years ☐ 3-4 years ☐
Over 4 years ☐

22. How much do you spend on video games on average in a month?
Nothing ☐ Under £10 ☐
£10-25 ☐ £25-50 ☐
£50-75 ☐ £75-100 ☐
£100-150 ☐ £150-200 ☐
Over £200 ☐

23. In order of preference which of the following are the most important things that help you decide which game to buy? (1 is most important, 8 is least important)
Games magazine review ☐
Games magazine preview ☐
Reccomendation by a friend ☐
Saw an advert in a games magazine ☐
Editorial coverage in other types of magazine ☐
Saw it on TV ☐
Saw an advert on TV ☐
Shop demonstration ☐
Other ☐

24.Where do you normally buy your games and equipment?
Mail order ☐ Dixons ☐
Local computer shop ☐ Vigin ☐
Woolworths ☐ Argos ☐
Comet ☐ Boots ☐
Toys R Us ☐ WH Smith ☐
Microbyte Games ☐ Our Price ☐
HMV ☐
Other ☐

ABOUT THE MAGAZINES YOU BUY AND READ

25. Where do you usually buy your computer magazines from?
Local newsagent ☐ WH Smith ☐
John Menzies ☐ Martins ☐
Fourbuoys ☐ Tesco ☐
Somewhere else ☐

26. Who pays for the magazine?
You ☐ Your parents ☐ A friend ☐

27.How many other people apart from youself will read your copy of MegaTech?
Nobody else ☐ One ☐ Two ☐
Three ☐ Four ☐ Five ☐
More than five ☐

28.How often do you buy or see (perhaps a friend's copy) of MegaTech?

	Buy	See
Every month	☐	☐
Once every couple of months	☐	☐
Once every three months	☐	☐
Less often	☐	☐

29. Please indicate if you think the following statements are true or false:
- I expect to get a free gift when I buy a computer magazine
True ☐ False ☐
- I am prepared to pay more for a magazine one month if the gift is good enough
True ☐ False ☐
- When I'm deciding which magazine to buy the quality of gift is more important than the game featured on the cover
True ☐ False ☐

30.Would you ever buy a game without seeing a review in MegaTech first?
Yes ☐ No ☐

32. How do you rate MegaTech as a games magazine out of 10 (10=brilliant, 1=rubbish)?
☐

33. What do you think of the different sections of MegaTech?

	Good	Average	Poor
Covers	☐	☐	☐
Cover gifts	☐	☐	☐
News	☐	☐	☐
Previews	☐	☐	☐
Reviews	☐	☐	☐
Competitions	☐	☐	☐
Hints & tips	☐	☐	☐
Maps	☐	☐	☐

34. What other magazines do you normally buy or see and how would you rate them out of 10 (where 10 is brilliant and 1 is rubbish)?

Magazine	Buy	See	Rate
C&VG	☐	☐	☐
Mean Machines	☐	☐	☐
Gamesmaster	☐	☐	☐
Mega	☐	☐	☐
Nintendo Magazine System (NMS)	☐	☐	☐
Super Pro	☐	☐	☐
Super Action	☐	☐	☐
GB Action	☐	☐	☐
Bad Influence	☐	☐	☐
Console XS	☐	☐	☐
Sega Zone	☐	☐	☐
Sega Megadrive Advanced Gaming	☐	☐	☐
Sega Power	☐	☐	☐
Total!	☐	☐	☐
Sega Force	☐	☐	☐
Game Zone	☐	☐	☐
Super Play	☐	☐	☐
N-Force	☐	☐	☐
Sega Pro	☐	☐	☐
Control	☐	☐	☐

35. If you could change one thing about MegaTech to make it better what would it be?

That's It. Thank you very much for your time and your views. They have been a huge help and will help us to make MegaTech even more the magazine you want to read!!

IF YOU WANT TO BE INCLUDED IN THE PRIZE COMPETITION YOU MUST REMEMBER TO FILL IN THE COUPON BELOW:

Name:

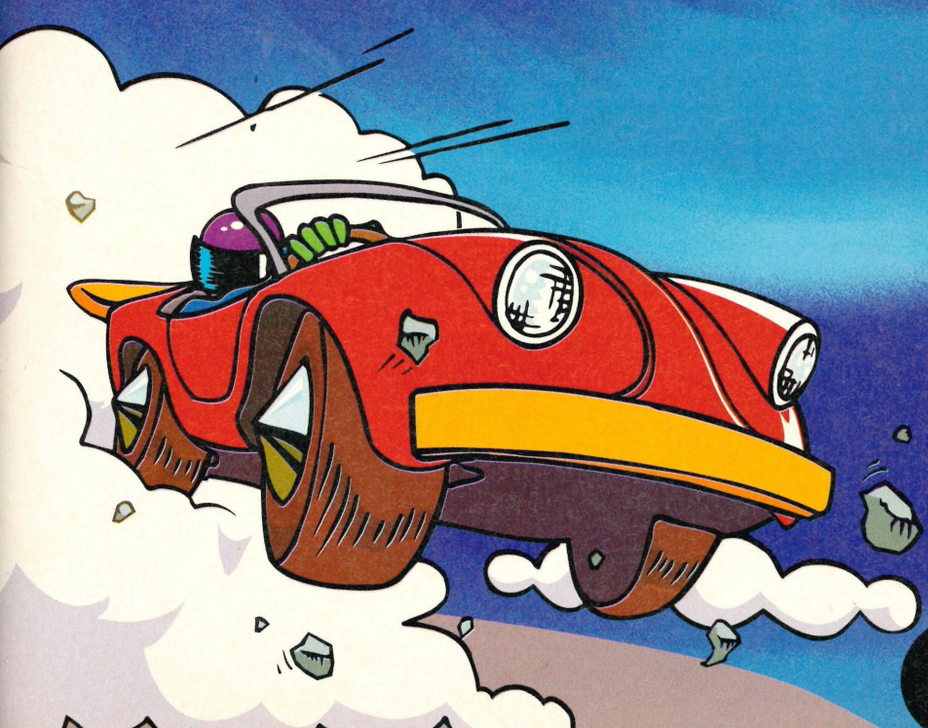
Address:

And my choice of games (should I win) are:

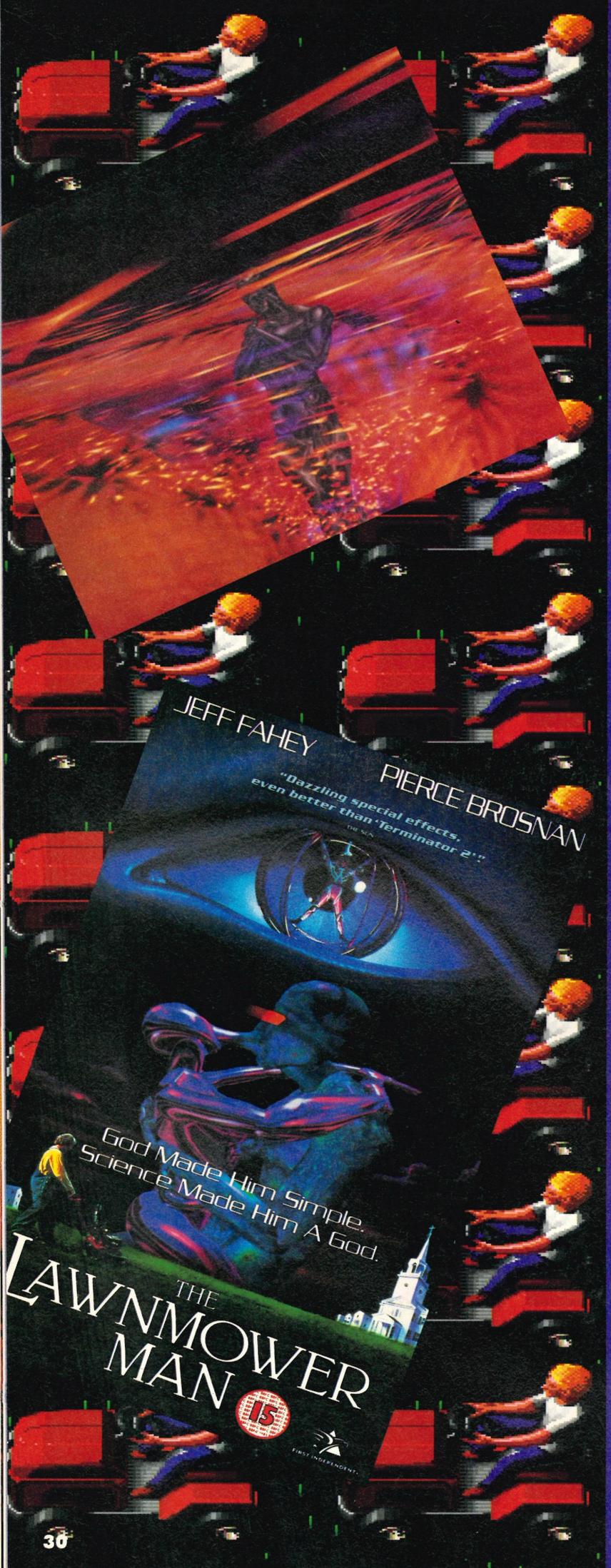
Now send this whole form to: THE GREAT AND BEAUTIFUL MEGATECH READER SURVEY, MEGATECH, FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU.

Micro Machines
THE ORIGINAL
SCALE MINIATURES

take your
SEGA
for a
mega drive



Codemasters™



WIN VIRTUAL SEX!*

*WELL, A VIDEO WITH VR SEX IN IT AND A JACKET AND T-SHIRTS TOO!

Great news, futuristic video kids! The Lawnmower Man has just been released on video. Based on Stephen King's short story about a simple gardener who becomes superhuman through the power of Virtual Reality, this futuristic thriller has received rave reviews, especially for its incredible computerised animation effects.

The video is available in normal or widescreen formats for only £12.99, but we're giving you the chance to experience the visual thrill of The Lawnmower Man in the comfort of your own home for free! We've got together with the film's distributor, First Independent, to bring you this competition. You could even end up with a totally cool Lawnmower Man crew jacket or long-sleeved T-shirt!

★ **FIRST PRIZE**
A Lawnmower Man crew jacket.

★★ **SECOND PRIZE**
Five Lawnmower Man videos.

★★★ **THIRD PRIZE**
Five long-sleeved Lawnmower Man T-shirts.

ONE MAN WENT TO MOW...

In order to stand a chance of winning the prizes, you're going to have to solve this little puzzle.

Lawnmower Man has had a hard morning cutting the grass and he can't wait to get stuck into his lunchpack. But he's got to finish off this lawn before he can take a break. The lawn is 15 metres long by 10 metres wide. His mower blade is one metre wide and it takes him one minute to cut a 10 metre strip of grass. How long will it take him to reach his lunchbox?

When you've sussed out the answer, write it down on the back of a postcard or sealed-down envelope and send it to:

TURF GUY COMPO,
MEGATECH,
PRIORY COURT,
30–32 FARRINGDON LANE,
LONDON EC1R 3AU.

Don't forget to include your name and address and state whether you'd prefer normal or wide-screen format if you should win one of the videos. Any entries received after the closing date of June 20, 1993 will be thrown on the MegaTech compost heap, and the Editor's decision is final.

REVIEWS

RATINGS WARS

WOW! MORE REVIEWS THAN EVER BEFORE!

You wanna know what are the tastiest treats to feed your Megadrive or Mega-CD this month? Well, you're looking in the right place, pal. This month, we've crammed in a record-breaking number of reviews to bring you bang up to date with the latest and greatest games for your favourite machines.

● 32 MAZIN WAR ● 36 FLINTSTONES ● 38 WILLY BEAMISH ● 42 AMERICAN GLADIATORS ● 44 SPLATTERHOUSE 3 ● 48 SUMMER CHALLENGE ● 52 **JUNGLE STRIKE – MEGA GATEFOLD PULL-OUT!** ● 60 TIME GAL ● 64 ANNETTE AGAIN ● 68 HARDBALL 3 ● 70 NINJA WARRIORS ● 72 KING SALMON ● 74 DORAEMON ● 78 HUMANS ● 80 DOUBLE CLUTCH

THE RATINGS PANELS

Here's the rundown – how the scores are put together and the lucky, lucky people who rate the games.

THE TECHOSCOPE
It's a weird, circular thing divided up into four quarters, but what does it all mean? Well, this is our strange little way of demonstrating which particular skills you'll need to be strong on to be able to play the game well. Each quarter of the circle represents a gaming skill – Reflexes, Strategy, Challenge and Thought – and each of these has a rating, shown by the distance that the coloured area within each quarter sticks out from the centre towards the outside of the circle. Got that?

PRESENTATION
Presentation covers the standard of the intro, intermediate and options screens, and whether the game has been put together thoughtfully and playtested seriously, or just thrown together carelessly.



GRAPHICS
The standard of the visuals – backgrounds, sprites and animation – is covered by the Graphics category

SOUND
The Sound department gives you a percentage rating for sound effects and soundtrack.

STP
The Short Term Play rating tells you whether the game under review is instantly playable or takes a while to get into.

LTP
If you want to know if the cart will probably stay in your Megadrive for months to come or if it's destined to gather dust on a shelf in your bedroom after a few plays, check out the Long Term Play score.

OVERALL
The final Oerall score is not arrived at by averaging out the scores in all the categories above – it is not an average mark, it is only achieved after heated debates between the members of the MegaTech Ratings Panel – many a voice is raised, tables are pounded by fists, and blood is often spilt as the panel make their considered judgements on the game in question.



PAUL GLANCEY
"Hello, I'm the Editor, so what I say goes and everybody else better agree with me. And I'm ten feet tall, so stop looking up my nose, shrimp features."
Favourite Game of the Month: Jungle Strike



MARK HOLMES
Hi there, viewers! Have we got some great prizes lined up for you this month. (Ooops, sorry – thought I was doing a gameshow for a minute.)"
Favourite Game of the Month: King Salmon



TOM GUISE
"Oooooh, I can feel a giggle coming on... no, I think I've stopped it... uh-oh, I just can't help myself... Teeeeheee heeeeheeeeeheeeee... teeeeheeeee...
Favourite Game of the Month: Mazin Saga

RAD AUTOMATIC
"Mum, mum, you've got to help me... no, I can't raise my voice, someone might hear... those nasty MegaTech people are trying to steal my Max Wall wig...
Favourite Game of the Month: Micro Machines

MARK PATTERSON
"No, I refuse to smile for the camera... look, I'm not being a miserable git at all, I'm trying to grab this bloody irritating game, can't you see? Go away!
Favourite Game of the Month: Humans

PAUL DAVIES
"I can't be there on the reviewers page this month – I'm on holiday in sunny Rochdale. But my friend, Monster in my Pocket, has a few words to say... (silence)... (more silence)...
Favourite Game of the Month: Doraemon

GUS SWAN
"Hello, I'm Gus Swan's chair, and I'd like to complain about my horrendous working conditions – how would YOU like to slave away all day beneath a Scottish person's bottom?
Favourite Game of the Month: Mega-lo-Mania

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: SEGA

SEGA™

8-MEG

STYLE

BEAT 'EM UP

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 2

RELEASE DATE

JULY 1993

Stay in your homes! Aliens are invading the Earth! Fortunately, MegaTech's own Flash Gordon, TOM GUISE is on hand save the day.

MAZIN

Mazin Wars! What's this then? Some sort of fighting game based on cool slang, like Bogus Battles or Cowabunga Combat? Nah, it's actually a beat 'em up set in the not-too-distant future where robots battle against alien invaders amidst the backdrop of a post-apocalyptic Earth. Ha, of course, but we've seen a million of these games before, what makes this one so amazing? Well, it seems that the word Mazin is not a description of the game's quality, but in fact the name of its hero, Mazinger Z. Oh. Right.



THE ALIENS ARE COMING!!

Meet the plot. The year is 1999 and everything is fine and dandy when suddenly alien motherships fill the sky. Before you can so much as wet your knickers, the world is crawling with horrible, mutated alien invaders who immediately proceed to, well, invade. It's terrible. Scientific experiments are conducted on humans, family dogs are electrocuted and school is cancelled for the day. Things are definitely looking grim. Led by the evil Godkaiser Hell, the alien Biobeast Force takes over the world in a matter of months. Humanity is crushed.

Our story cuts to a secret underground laboratory. Enter Dr Kabuto a hard working scientist who is on the edge of a ground-breaking achievement. "They called me mad, I'll show them all!" he mutters. Suddenly a bomb strikes his bunker. The old fool buys the farm, but this invention survives, brought to life in the wake of a nuclear explosion. A robot, Mazinger Z.

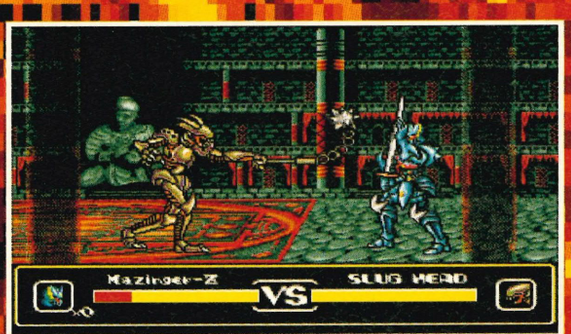
ROBOTIC MOVES

Well, that's the story, but what about the game? Well, it's sideways scrolling beat 'em up time once more as you take control of Mazinger Z and race across the Earth reaping vengeance on the Biobeast force with sword and foot as you head towards the final confrontation with the Godkaiser himself.

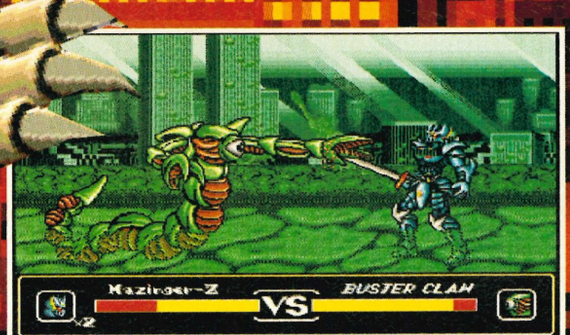
The action is very similar to beat-em ups like Turtles or, from this month's selection, Annette Again. As well as the standard slashing, kicking and throwing moves, our lithe robotic hero can also perform a number of special moves such as a hundred-hand slash or super fast figure-eight sword manoeuvre (my descriptions, not theirs). Also, as is standard in this type of game, a double tap in one direction will make Mazinger run and this can be followed by a rather nifty somersault attack. Wow!



▲ Hey Chuck, these little crunchy snacks are great! Mind if I have another one?



▲ Get lost, you've baked your conker in vinegar. !



▲ There's some mustard on the side of your mouth. No, the other side.



▲ Hey quit messing around fellas, I think my metal detectors picked up so Roman coins. Come quick!

WAR

HYPER! HYPER GAME AWARD



ALIEN WORLD TOUR

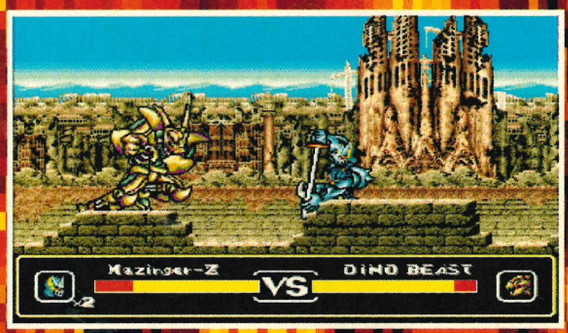
There's no shortage of beating fodder for our tinpot hero either. Level one sees him battling against giant prawn creatures, lion-men and a bunch of your average mutant foot-soldiers-types amidst the ruins of Tokyo. Later levels, like the snow-caps of India or the radioactive desert of Europe pit our hero against yet more foot soldiers, but this time there are knife-wielding monks from Mars, speeder-bikes and even polymorphing ghouls, to name but a few. It's worse than Gerry Cottle's Circus.

Of course, there are bosses at the end of each level. Massive skeletons, living statues. They're all out to kick metal-boys brass-ass. However, beat these fellas and you get to face the real bosses. That's right, I said the REAL bosses.

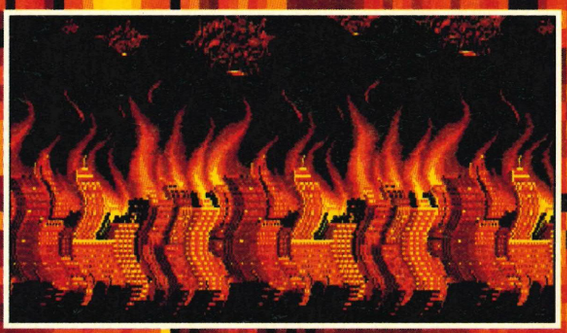
THE BIG BOYS ARE IN TOWN

Taking the form of a one-on-one battle, this section really is tough. Armed only with his sword and no special moves, Mazinger Z has to defeat each end-of-level foe in true medieval fashion, only the baddies always possess special blast attacks and such like. With such names as Garada-K7, Slughead and Dinobeast these boys fight as ugly as they sound. Each opponent behaves really intelligently. You can't just block and wait for them to walk into your attack range. Nope, these fellas will wait for you. Hrumph.

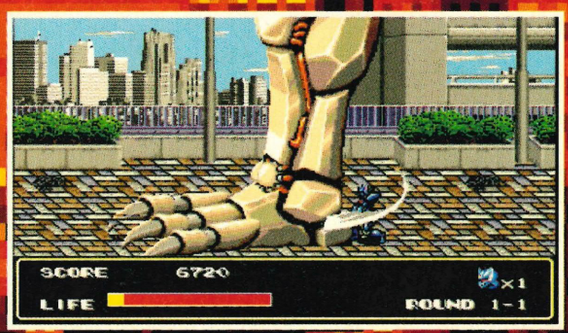
The characters are massive and the body parts of each one are made up of separate sprites which makes them move very realistically. With each hit, the fighters reel backwards with the momentum of the impact, it's incredible. In fact, the movement of the sprites on this section rivals that of Cyborg Justice (and in my opinion betters it).



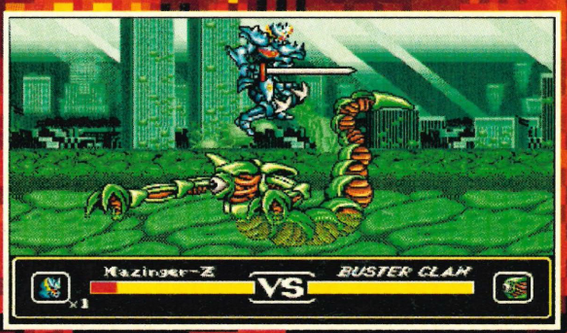
▲ Hang on a second, I've got a stone in my shoe. Hey, I said hang on!



▲ Jonathan, is something burning in the kitchen? If you've left the cooker on I'll kill you.



▲ Gee thanks, Mazinger. You're right. I do feel better now that rough skin's been removed.a

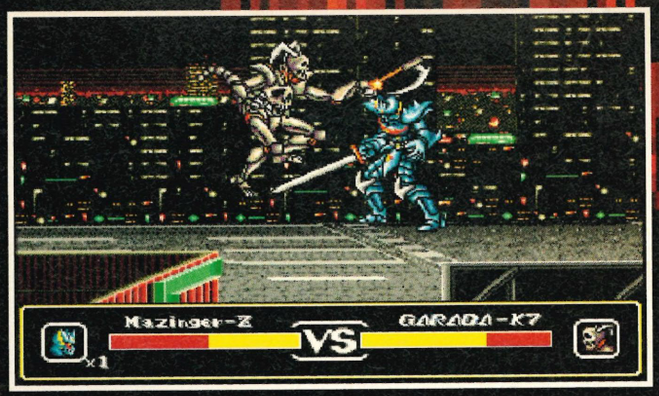


▲ What? Where? He was here a second ago!

STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN

In fact the graphics in the whole game are pretty darned smart all-round. The sprites on the main levels might be small, but they're perfectly formed too. The animation on each character is great. Just watch as they lean backwards at your throat swish before grimacing forwards at a belly cut. The movement really is fluid. And the backgrounds aren't half bad either. Some of the levels look a bit simplistic, but in general they're really atmospheric. From the burning cityscape of Tokyo by night to the snowy temples of India this game is one pretty face. In fact, the floors on the one-on-one levels even move in beautiful parallax. Who said only the Super NES with its Mode 7 chip could do this? Whoever they were, they were wrong.

Hey, and while I'm on a roll I might as well tell you about the great sounds this game possesses. From the thumping hard soundtracks, especially on the boss levels, to the excellent clanging sounds of steel on iron. It's brilliant! And wait until you hear the moist crunchy noise when you kill the prawn-beasts. A better shrimp-shelling sound you couldn't wish to hear.

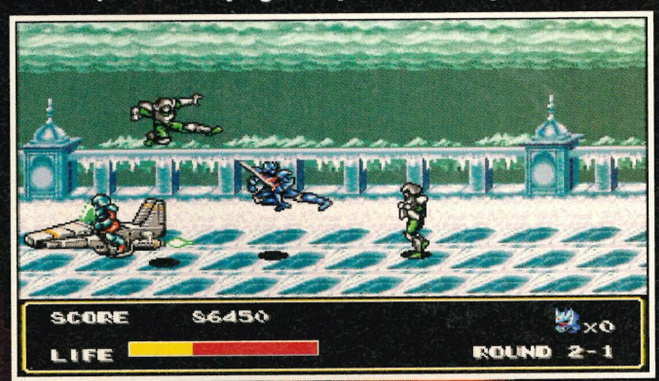


▲ Ow, ow. Your scythe's caught it my hair. Eeh, get it out. No, I'm not crying. It's just something in my eye.

JUST AMAZING!

So, mazin' graphics, mazin' sounds, but what about the gameplay? Well, that's pretty mazin' too! At first the puny main sprites give you the impression that this is one poor game, but that's definitely the wrong impression. The actual gameplay is superb. Okay, so it lacks variety, but the fast fighting action is very addictive and the boss levels which help to break up the game nicely. What's more, this game really is rock hard. I've being playing it on and off all month and I still can't get past Buster Claw, the boss on level four, and it's driving me nuts, but I still keep coming back for more.

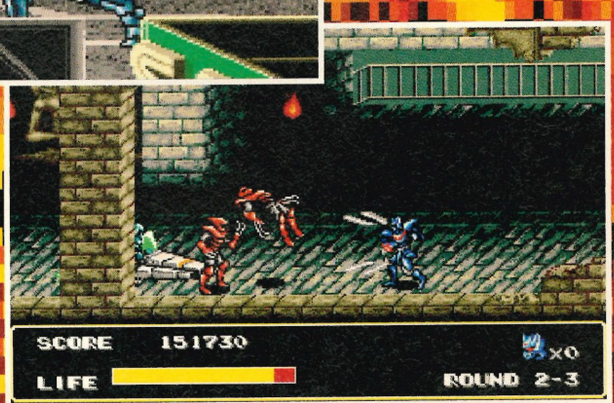
What more can I say? Well how about this, Mazin Wars is my favourite game this month. It really is a very polished, very challenging and very addictive beat 'em up. My only complaint is that there's no two-player option. Two players in the main game would have been great, but a two-player one-on-one section would have been just the best. Nonetheless, if I bought this game I 'd still be very pleased with it indeed. It's a classic. Mazin? It most certainly is.



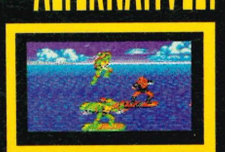
▲ Hey you kids, get off the road! Good Gravy, I almost hit them.



Oh ha ha, give me scythe back. Come on, quit foolin', I'm gonna be late for class.



ALTERNATIVELY



87 **TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES: THE HYPERSTONE HEIST**
by SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
One of Konami's first Megadrive releases, Turtles is a great beat 'em up that's just a little too easy.

ALTERNATIVELY



84 **CYBORG JUSTICE**
by SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
With similarly constructed sprites to those of Mazin War's boss level, this is a great two-player game.

THE SECOND OPINION



PAUL GLANCEY

I really wasn't expecting a great deal from this, but being the dutiful reviewer I am I began to subject myself to what looked like a Golden Axe clone with crappy little graphics. Hey, wait a minute, though! These little sprites are really cool! They move brilliantly and your guy has loads of smart moves. But the real surprise comes at the end of the levels – the one-on-one bits could be a game in their own right, they're that good. The giant boss graphics are superbly drawn and the animation is unlike anything else on the Megadrive. The only problem is the bosses are rock-hard to beat, because they all seem to be so much better armed than Mazinger-Z. He could really have done with some kind of missile attack. That aside, this is an amazingly good game, and it could be the surprise hit of the summer.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION 80%
Sparse options, a thrifty intro, but nonetheless quite polished.

GRAPHICS 88%
Tiny main sprites, massive boss sprites. Excellent animation.

SOUND 91%
Great tunes, smart spot-effects. Love those shrimps.

SHORT TERM PLAY 92%
Instantly playable. Fast-paced and fun.

LONG TERM PLAY 88%
A bit linear. Very challenging. Perhaps too tough.

OVERALL 90
A simple, but highly enjoyable beat 'em up. Thoroughly recommended

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MEGADRIVE REVIEW



MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: SEGA

SEGA™

4 M-BITS

STYLE



PLATFORM

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

JUNE 1993

THE FLINT



MARK HOLMES is a bit of an ancient fossil who loves watching cartoons, so we gave him THE FLINTSTONES to cheer the grumpy old git up a bit. Well, we didn't know it was going to be as much fun as a dead dinosaur, did we? (Yuk-yuk.)

Just like the Flintstones cartoon, this game's chocka-block full of amusing prehistoric situations. There's a head-to-head drinking and brontoburger eating competition between Fred and Barney, an into-the screen bowling section using Pebbles and Bam-Bam as bowling balls and the great bit where Fred can demolish the whole of Bedrock town centre using his works brontosaur. Well no it isn't, actually, I've made it all up – The Flintstones is just another formula platformer knocked together from all the ingredients any platform fan will have seen hundreds of times before. In fact, the whole game's about as much fun as scraping winnets off a frozen brontosaurus's backside.



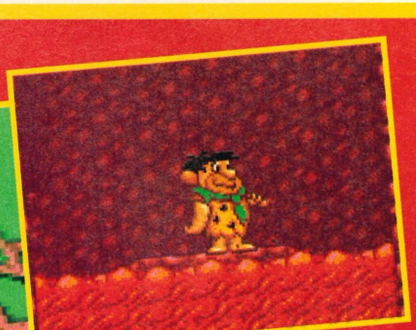
▲ Oh, surprise, surprise – a train level. And there's Fred doing his bit to accellerate the extinction of the dinosaurs with a few clouts from his club.



▲ Wow, he drives his rockmobile around...



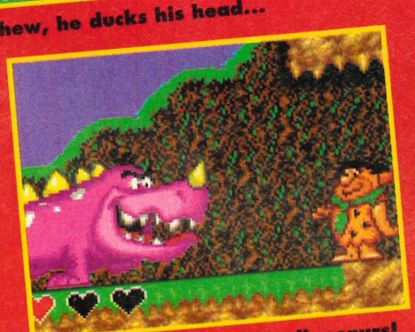
▲ Phew, he ducks his head...



▲ Cor, he stands on the spot...



▲ OOh, he outruns a lava stream...



▲ And confronts deadly dinosaurs!

FRED FLINT-STONE'S CRAZY CAVE-MAN CAPERS

ROCK BOTTOM

What you've actually got to do involves exciting tasks such as find Wilma's missing necklace and salt cellar, locate Barney's lucky fishing hook, get Pebbles after she's run away (probably to get away from the terrible plot), save Betty's ribbon from a prehistoric bird... snore... snore... (sorry, I must have dozed off there for a minute)... and not much else besides. Thrilling it ain't.

HEY, HAVEN'T I SEEN THAT TRICK BEFORE?

The ingredients that make up The Flintstones are as old and as lively as a fossilised skeleton – the whole thing's so predictable you hardly even have to think about playing it. The programmers have just cobbled together a load of clichéd old scenarios and tricks without adding anything new into the bargain...

- Surfin' Section: On level one, Fred has to surf on the back of a shark to cross a section of water – what a coincidence, the Turtles surf across a stretch of water in The Hyperstone Heist! There's a lot more fun to be had with the Turtles, though – for a start you can get into two-player surfin' antics, and for seconds there's a whole load more obstacles and baddies to manoeuvre your way through.
- Animal Helper: At certain points in the game, Fred can ride a prehistoric bird, giving him extra speed and height capabilities. Funnily enough, you can do a remarkably similar thing in Chuck

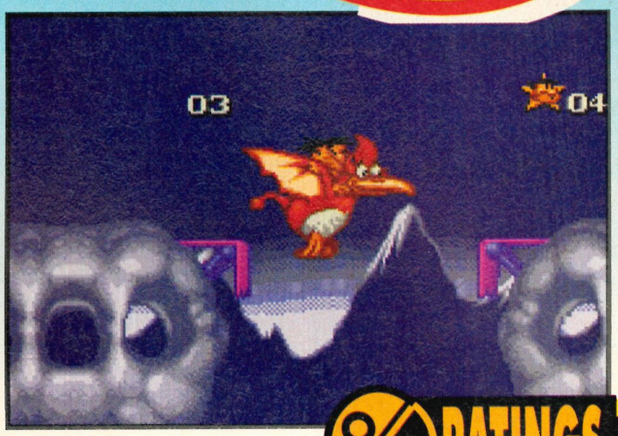
STONES



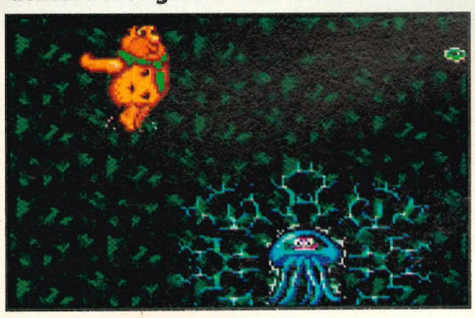
▲ This has got to be one of the easiest and dullest bonus games ever seen.



▲ Another easily-defeated end of level tastes the sharp end of Fred's club.



▲ Fred takes off with his bird. Ho-hum.



▲ These jellyfish glow in the dark when you belt them one with your shinty stick.



▲ The train/ice level combined – a new milestone in platform game clichés.

Rock, as well as using a bunch of different prehistoric animal buddies to help you along the way.

- Lava Run: On the second level, Fred has to run along an underwater passage, racing to the end before a stream of lava roasts him into oblivion. Sound familiar? It should do – you'll no doubt remember the lava run from the original Sonic the Hedgehog (and loads of other games too).
- Driving Bit: No platform game can be complete without a section where the main character takes to wheeled transport, and Fred takes to his rockmobile in the third level. It reminds me of the mine-cart section in Taz-Mania, but with easier obstacles, more power-ups to collect and a lot less fun involved.
- Train/Ice Level: The two biggest platform clichés have got to be the scrolling train level and the ice level. The Flintstones combines two platform clichés in one – the train that Fred has to hop over in level four carries blocks of slippery-slidey ice in the middle. How original.

PREHISTORIC BORE

There's precious little fun to be had playing The Flintstones, because the whole thing is just so dull and unimaginative. I finished the game in Easy mode at my first serious attempt – it's only got FOUR levels! – and then managed to reach the end of level five on Normal before boredom got the better of me.

The only thing this game has going for it is half-decent graphics, because the sounds are dire – the Flintstones theme tune sounds like it's been played on a school glockenspiel, and the sound effects are so basic it's a crime. It's just a one-player game, and you can only play as Fred Flintstone, whose range of moves is seriously limited. Combine this with the fact that the whole game wouldn't stretch the gaming skills of a five year-old, and you end up with a game that offers about as much challenge and enjoyment as getting out of bed in the morning. If you're after a fun caveman platform game with some unique touches, buy Chuck Rock, 'cos The Flintstones is as stale as thirty-million-year-old dinosaur doo-doo.

ALTERNATIVELY



86 CHUCK ROCK BY VIRGIN

Prehistoric platform/puzzler/beat 'em up, starring Chuck Rock and his deadly belly-butt. Fun, involving and varied, with a great cast of cartoon-style dinosaurs.

THE SECOND OPINION



TOM GUISE

Grrr. Nothing annoys me more than cop-out out games. I was expecting a platform game, but not something as totally unoriginal as this chuff. When I think of what could have been in this game it really irks me. Those little ideas that Mark joked about at the beginning of the review really don't sound half bad. Bowling sections, brontosaurus riding, crazy prehistoric inventions... this licence had so much potential, but instead all we get is an imitation of every other platform game in existence, and not a particular good one either.That said, I think Mark has been a tad harsh. I've definitely seen worse than this. It's okay to look at and okay to play, but with such a wide range of platformers available, you'd have to be nuts to pay £40 for this. Get Tiny Toons instead. It may be just as unoriginal, but it's also a compliment to the genre. This is not.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 25%
Limited options. Crap level intro screens.

GRAPHICS 65%
Recognisable cartoon characters. Some good backgrounds.

SOUND 20%
Awful, irritating tunes. Dull sound effects.

SHORT TERM PLAY 50%
Basic gameplay, child's play to get the hang of...

LONG TERM PLAY 35%
...but it's so dull you might fall asleep at your joypad.

OVERALL 45
Dull, derivative, no fun platformer that you'll finish in a day.

MEGA-CD REVIEW

MEGA CD REVIEW

Adventures in Willy Beamish

BY: DYNAMIX

CD ROM

STYLE

ADVENTURE

PRICE IMPORT

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

JUNE 1993

Thanks to Advanced Console Entertainment for lending us this game. Contact them on: 071 4391185.



Willy Beamish – the story of one young man's fight against reactionary forces to become top dog in the world of computer games. Uncanny! It's just like the story of RAD AUTOMATIC's life, so he was the obvious choice to review it.

While the moral minority are all ready to have every computer gamesplayer burnt at the stake for their corrupt and evil ways, there are always good, wholesome kids like Willy Beamish to present a good image of the scene. Willy might be something of a mischievous little rascal, but he has one thing in his favour – he's really good at games. So good, in fact, that he's favourite to win at the American Nintari Games Finals, picking up the megabucks grand prize in the process.

PARENTAL DISAPPROVAL

Most parents would be quite pleased by this spirit of enterprise in their youngster. They'd probably be busy dreaming up ways of, ahem, 'looking after' the money for their boy until he's 'old enough and responsible enough' to handle it (by which time they'll be six feet under and immune from the consequences of having frittered away all his loot. Mr and Mrs Beamish, however, take a different outlook on their son's computer enthusiasm, and are just itching for an excuse to pack him off to a military academy at the first opportunity.

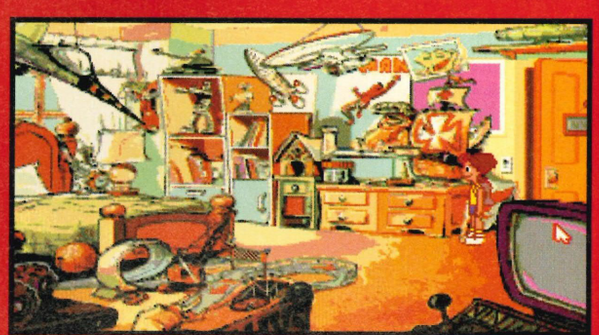
Due to an unfortunate incident with an amphibian, the threat of a long spell learning the art of killing according to Uncle Sam looms large over young Beamish's head. Willy is the proud owner of a pet frog called Horny, who travels everywhere in his master's rucksack. With incredibly bad timing, Horny made a break for it during the end-of-year address at Willy's school, managing to dislodge the headmaster's toupee in his leapfor freedom. The head, a Mr Frick, subsequently gave young Beamish a detention, and made it known that a rather unfavourable report was winging its way parent-wards. Will has to stop that report reaching his folks, or it's off to Colonel Kendrick's Academy of Disciplinarian Brutality.

SAVE WILLY'S SKIN

As the player of the game, quite obviously, it's your job to save Willy's skin in this role-playing/adventure from Dynamix. The game started life on the PC, but the storage capabilities of the Mega-CD have finally allowed a console conversion. What this means is a complete absence of reflex-type, arcade-skills-of-doom-testing gameplay, and a big emphasis on role-playing and strategy. Most of the progress made in the game depends on what Willy says to the various characters he meets around the town – a misplaced sarky comment can ruin everything for Beamish Junior.

However, just in case going around Anytown USA being nice to people and waylaying the postman sounds a bit easy, there's a lot more to Willy Beamish than the intercepting-the-report affair. You see, if Willy is to complete his life plan he has to practice his gaming and make it to the finals, which means juggling time to get his chores done so that he can avoid being grounded and still keep in top joypad-wielding shape.





▲ Willy goes bedroom-hopping... here's his room...







▲ Okay, nurse – you squeeze me there and I'll do the same for you...



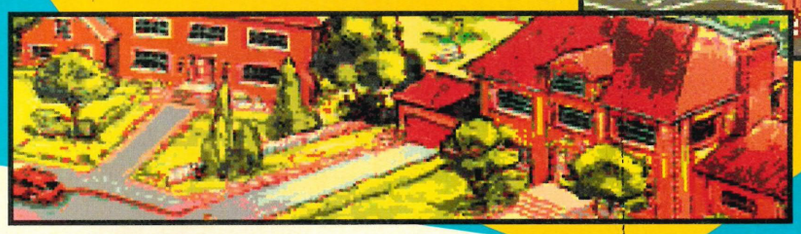
▲ It doesn't hurt, but can we just try that one more time?

Willy Beamish

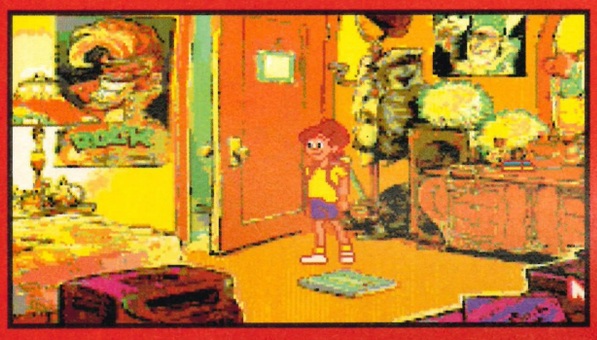


▲ Willy wags his way out of class.

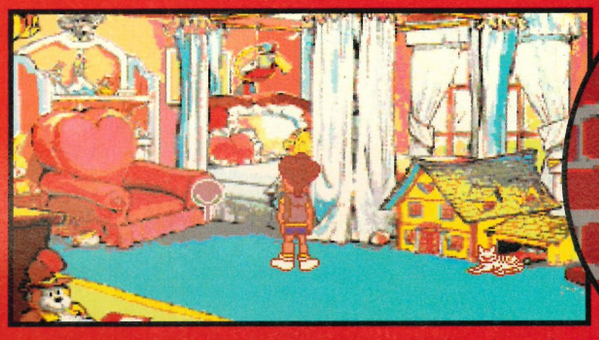




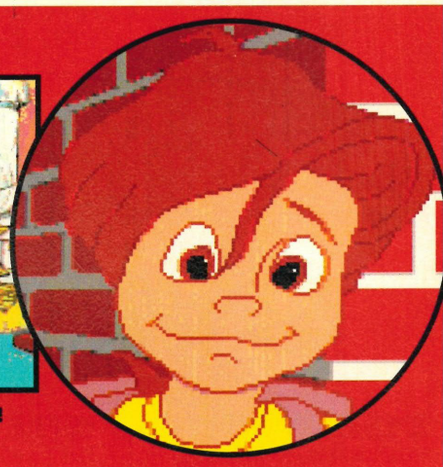
▲ Anytown, USA (or should that be Dullsville, Arizona?)



▲ Now let's take a look at his his mother's boudoir...



▲ And here's sister's room. Phew, nobody's home!















DODGY CHARACTERS

There are a number of characters hanging around ready to help or hinder Bill. These range from the benevolent (such as the dreamy school nurse who all the pupils feign illness just to see), through to the malevolent, (like your dear papa with his military-academy visions and your bratty kid sister who can't wait to see the back of Willy just so's she can get his room), via the ambiguous (such as your stereotyped kitchen-dwelling mater). Needless to say, the malevolent folks outweigh the nice ones, with characters like Chubby, the nasty fat kid, Ms Glass, the nasty old crone school teacher and Carmine, the nasty (but cool) juvenile delinquent all on Willy's case.

SASSY BACKCHAT

Fortunately, Willy has quite a tongue on him, and he can usually talk his way out of even the most hostile confrontations by carefully choosing the best-sounding phrase from a menu of possible choices. Each phrase has a sample to back it up, and the player is able to preview these by pressing the A button when the desired quote is highlighted. This is a very important thing to remember, as sometimes Willy's tone of voice totally changes the meaning of a phrase, meaning the seemingly most innocent/relevant sentence gets him into even more bother!

WILLY'S SACK

Whilst the art of conversation is very important to progress in The Adventures of Willy Beamish, it's not the only route to advancement. Will also has to accomplish a number of lesser tasks, each generally requiring the use of an object in Willy's rucksack, represented by the inventory screen. To get the required kit, Willy has to travel around his hometown and beg for, steal or gainfully come into the acquisition of the item. However, Willy's rucksack only has room for a limited number of items, so make sure you can distinguish the useful stuff from the red herrings.

HE'S A GAME BOY

Another thing essential to Wills' success is his complete mastery of the Game Buddy game known as Super Space K'Noidtrix.This is a complete game-within-the-game which, should you be in the Willy's Bedroom location, the player is free to have a go at. Indeed, the more practice you get the better.

Super Space K'Noidtrix is a sort of cross between Tetris, Breakout and Space Invaders. A number of blocks drop from the top of the screen, and your space fighter has to destroy as many as possible. Any blocks that get past stack up at the bottom of the screen,and when they reach the top, it's game over. This is the game Willy plays in the video game finals, so make sure he gets plenty of credits in.



▲ Decisions, decisions: Each option has a digitised speech function.







▲ Hi, I've got big jugs!

Willy Beamish

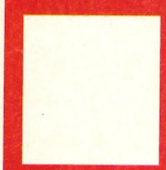
DISAPPOINTING WILLY

Now, Willy Beamish actually sounds like a really exciting game, and respect is due to the Dynamix posseee in the house, homeboy, for trying something this different and original on a console. The scores of plots and subplots wending their way along, whether Willy has anything to do with them or not, give the game a lot of depth, and it takes quite a few games just to get the hang of what's actually going on. The story itself is pretty good too, and you really do get involved.in the sequences of events which unfold.

The graphics are truly splendid, the sprites have an excellent cartoon quality about them, the animation is superb and very fluid throughout and each background is a masterpiece. Whoever the graphic artist on Beamish was, they certainly know their stuff. The sound matches up to the already very high standard of presentation – there's so much sampled speech it's difficult to believe. Everything that everyone says has a sample to accompany it, and the quality of the samples themselves is surprisingly good, although the acting is a little iffy.

However, whilst The Adventures of Willy Beamish may have a lot of good points, it's let down by a few bad ones. For starters, whilst on the one hand it's great having all t he plots evolving around Willy without relying on him, it actually means that if he just sat in his room most of the world wouldn't notice Beamish Junior was missing. This means that a lot of interaction is taken out of the title because Willy doesn't really have to do much, except in the way of conversation. Another problem is the irritating control method. Having been designed to be used with a mouse, the system proves sluggish and erratic when used with a joypad. A slight rethink of the front-end would have made a big enough difference and really can't have been too difficult. The third, and arguably most detrimental, point is the loading time. When the Mega-CD was launched, we heard loads of reports about how it could run CD sound, graphical stills or the game itself whilst accessing the disc, which supposedly takes no time at all anyway. So why then, in Willy Beamish, do we have ten second blank-screen delays whenever our pal decides on a change of locale? Every time young Beamish goes anywhere, even into a different room in the house, there's something of a time-freeze. This brings the pace of the game right down to almost zero, which is a shame, because that's the real gravedigger. In short, Willy Beamish is a potentially incredible, very original game, spoilt by a sloppy bit of programming. If you've got the patience to sit through ten years or so of incredibly tedious loading, give this a go, but if you have a temper that's any shorter than a Zen monk's, Willy Beamish won't be your cup of tea.

THE SECOND OPINION



MARK HOLMES

Oh no, run to the hills! The menu-driven graphic Adventure – that incredibly boring gametype that has up until now only cursed the larger 'home computers' – has hit the Mega-CD. If this game is "different and original," my granny's a world-famous striptease artist. It's the kind of tedious game that's been around on Amigas and PCs for ages and to make matters even worse it suffers from terrible disc accessing delay in its Mega-CD incarnation. One thing's for sure – if you buy this and you've got the patience of a saint, it'll be in your Mega-CD for ages. Trouble is, you'll have grown a beard by the time you've solved it (even if you're female).



▲ Whoever heard of a young lad entering a bathroom of his own accord?

%RATINGS



70% PRESENTATION Very glossy, but disc accessing time lets it down badly.

80% GRAPHICS Fantastic animation and some nice backgrounds.

85% SOUND More samples than a crate of 2 Unlimited albums.

76% SHORT TERM PLAY Takes a bit of getting into, as the saying goes.

78% LONG TERM PLAY It's very big indeed, and should take ages to solve.

OVERALL 65 A great idea and a brave departure spoilt by poor coding.

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MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: GAMETEK

GAMETEK

8 M-BIT

STYLE

SPORT (!)

PRICE IMPORT

PLAYERS 1-2

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

OUT NOW

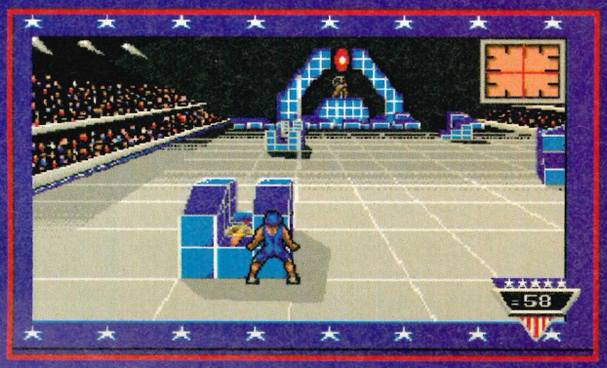


Of course, pumping iron and gruelling tests of physical strength and endurance are all blasé to RADION AUTOMATIC (ahem), so who better to review this new muscle-bound game?

If following the antics of Wolf, Jet, Ironing Board, Biscuit Tin, Terry and the rest is your scene the events in American Gladiators will bode no surprises for you, apart from a whole new set of well-built shameless hunks to idolise. Yes, the original American Gladiators make their presence felt at last on the Megadrive.

The televisual grunt 'n' flex sessions of Gemini (an actor in commercials), Nitro (an ex-pro footballer and actor in commercials), Turbo (he likes fast cars), Thunder (he's got silly hair and he's a dietitian), Laser (hey! He acts in commercials!), Ice (blimey - she acts in adverts), Blaze (she wants to go to college, apparently), Lace (she wants to be a newscaster, and she used to be an, er, ahem, model), Gold (suprisingly, she acts in advertisements) and Zap (who owns a gym) are yours to control with Gametek's license.

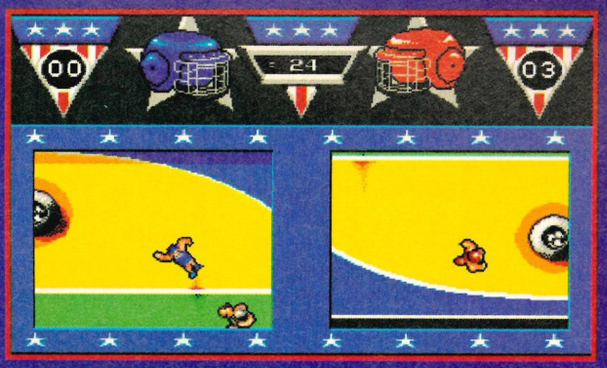
AMER GLADI



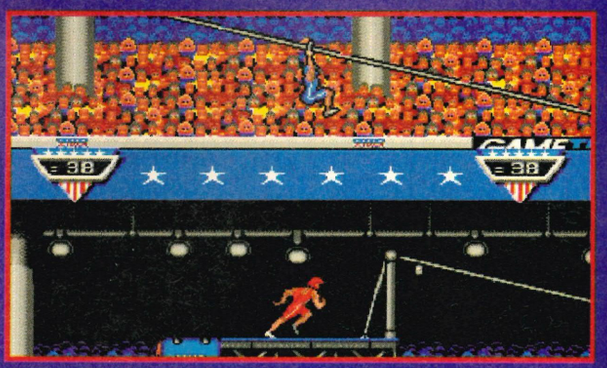
▲ **Assault: Shoot the Gladiator with a variety of soft, harmless projectiles whilst avoiding his barrage.**



▲ **Joust: Batter the Gladiator off his/her perch with a big, heavily-padded Pugil Stick.**



▲ **Power Ball: Pick up a ball from one bin and dump it in another bin, running a Gladiator gauntlet to do it.**



▲ **The Eliminator: A one-on-one race to reach the end of A gruelling assualt course.**

ASSAULT!

There are six events lifted from the show for your delectation. First off is the Assault level. Here, your contestant has to use one weapons littered around the arena - each of which is hidden behind a safety barricade – to shoot a target at the other end of the room. However, there's a Gladiator at the other end spanging tennis balls at you, and should you be hit by one of those you're out. It's made harder by the fact that in this game the player has to press button sequences to pick up the weapon, target it, put down the weapon and then step aside from the barrier if they've missed to resume the run to the next piece of hardware. The dash between bunkers is played in an overhead viewpoint, whilst the actual loosing of the projectiles is done from a behind-the-player point of view.

THE JOUST!

The second event is the Joust. Yes, pugel sticks at the ready, it's time to spend a minute perched upon an eight foot high platform trying to knock your opponent (a Gladiator) off of their perch. If you manage to stay standing for the full whack, you earn yourself a mighty five points whilst the ultimate accolade of dislodging the mighty Gladiator reaps twice that. A number of offensive and defensive moves are available, from lunges (which put your player off balance), to jabs, which don't do much, through various parries, all of which are completely useless. The object is to knock down the energy bar of your opponent so as they flop uselessly to the floor.

The third event is The Wall, which is the one where you have to climb the wall before the Gladiator catches up with you and pulls

I CAN ATORS

THE SECOND OPINION

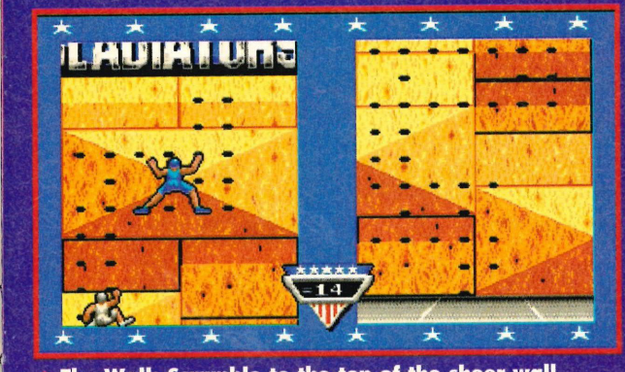


PAUL GLANCEY

Boy, this is bad. We've had some poor games this month, but this takes the biscuit. The graphics are of a uniform low standard throughout, and even if the sprites in one event are good, you can bet the animation and the backgrounds are bad. The sound effects are inaudible (we could have done with a bit of cheering or something) and the rocking soundtracks have become weedy, warbly tunes, reminiscent of a Commodore 64 on an off-day. Even worse is the gameplay. There are all sorts of little buglets, usually with the controls, that cause annoyance, but the main problem is that the games are over very quickly and aren't a great deal of fun. I suppose part of the problem is that a lot of the appeal of the show lies with the razzmatazz and watching out for your favourite gladiators (usually the girls) – all you get in the game is anonymous meaty blob-sprites which all look the same. Hopeless. Don't bother.



▲ **Atlaspheres: Ramble round in metal hamster balls, clanking your way to the pressure points to score.**



▲ **The Wall: Scramble to the top of the sheer wall before the pursuing Gladiator pulls your pants off.**

you down. The handholds are clearly marked out, and it's your job to steer the contestant through the route of least resistance whilst furiously hammering the B button to make them go faster. Should the Gladiator grab your legs you're immediately done for.

ATLASPHERES!

The next game is Atlaspheres – those funny things that look like mesh hamster wheels. Your contestant is placed inside one of these, and you have to steer them over the sensors on the floor to score points, which are registered with a plume of smoke. However, it's not all plain sailing as two (count 'em) of those evil Gladiators are out to stop you by smashing your sphere out of the way! Cah!

POWERBALL!

After this test of your mettle comes the Powerball event, the one which isn't in the British version of the TV show. Here your task is to grab a ball out of your end zone and deposit it into one of the bins littered (ho ho) around the arena. However, all of the Gladiators are out in force to knock you to the ground, clutter around the bins, and generally make it impossible for you to pick up any points.

ELIMINATOR!

If you manage to earn more points than your rival in these events, you move onto the Eliminator assault course. Getting past this requires negotiating The Treadmill, The Handbike, The Balance Beam, The Cargo Net, The Zip Wire, The Hurdles, The Sprint, and of course wrestling past The Gladiators. Actually, it's just a matter of hitting the A and C buttons alternately, with the events simply meaning a difference to the speed your on-screen chappie waddles at.

TWO WAYS TO PLAY!

There's two ways to play American Gladiators. The first is head-to-head against a friend, whereby you simply run through all of the events either alternately (Assault, Joust) or with a kooky split screen (all the other events), with the points gained being used as a handicapping method in The Eliminator. Otherwise, if you've got a load of bored mates around, up to sixteen people are able to participate in the Tournament option, with the remainder of opponents being composed of computer rivals. This boils down to having to play through the whole thing up to three times, depending whether you get through to the finals or not. Should you win the finals you're crowned an American Gladiator, no doubt with plenty of work in commercials to follow.

Unbelievably, that's all there is to American Gladiators. Six whole events, all of which you get to see on your first go. However, this was obviously intended to be played against a friend (or fifteen), in which case the limitation of the game is slightly less heinous. However, American Gladiators isn't just limited in the number of events - the events themselves are just as bare. It basically comes down to a matter of how fast you can press your buttons, with a complete lack of skill in evidence in any event. Even The Joust, with its host of moves, is a completely random affair. Sometimes you need only jab repeatedly to the head, others even Ninja Kendo Master the Gladiator would have difficulty.

But hey – the TV show's pretty lame too, but at least it has some sort of showbizzy atmosphere. Sadly, the graphics, sound and presentation of American Gladiators translate nothing of this. The wobbly and flat sprites jerk and dither their way around the arena, all the Gladiators look exactly the same (there isn't even that one who's going a bit bald) and the events are accompanied by some of the worst "music" and "effects" ever heard, not even rating Master System quality. If you're a big fan of the series, well, you probably wouldn't be able to read this review for starters. But if you like the show, save your cash for the live event (snigger), as this game is one of the most crudely executed pieces of piffle in all Christendom.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION – 56% – Lacks any of the glitz and glamour of the show.

GRAPHICS – 53% – Vary very slightly in quality, but the overall standard is rather low.

SOUND – 48% – Ghastly music and that's about it really.

SHORT TERM PLAY – 41% – Finishing is easy, so why do it again?

LONG TERM PLAY – 35% – Two or three circuits of the events is enough.

OVERALL – 32 – Pretty dreadful game of the show which lacks any sort of appeal.

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: NAMCOT



16 M-BIT

STYLE



BEAT 'EM UP

PRICE TBA

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

TBA 1993

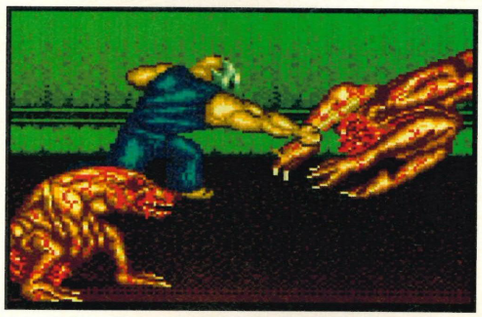
SPLATTER
3: BI



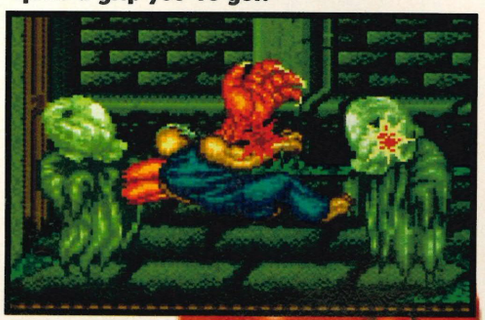
At one point or another, we've all wanted to splatter TOM GUISE all over the office walls. But he's turned the tables on us by going on his own brain-mulching spree, playing the latest in the excessively gory, giblet-infested SPLATTERHOUSE series from Namcot.

There's nothing quite like a good bit of gore, eh? Everyone loves it. Well, if you're a gore-lover looking for some bone-splintering, twitching-flesh action, you're in luck, because the third instalment in the blood-drenched Splatterhouse saga has arrived on the Megadrive and once more the air is filled with the pungent stench of rotting corpses and dripping entrails.

Once more it's hapless American teenager Rick who takes the lead role. Poor old Rick – his life is just one long string of bad luck, and it doesn't help that his dizzy girlfriend Jennifer keeps getting herself abducted by monsters. It's no different this time either – once more Jennifer has foolishly climbed into a strange monster's hearse with the vague promise of seeing some skinless puppies. So it's up to Rick to rescue her from their evil clutches before they make her into human pie or something.



▲ Hi buddy, the name's Rick! Heck, that's quite a grip you've got!

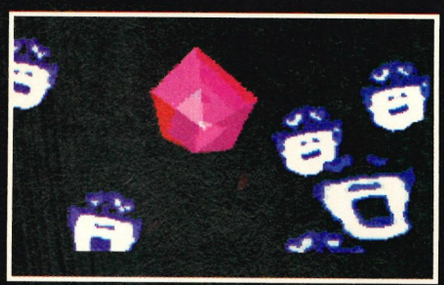


▲ Grandma, what a big claw you've got!

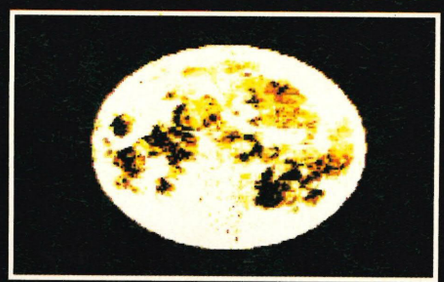


▲ Heh, heh. Oh! Oh! Ha, ha, h
how ticklish I am! Stop, before

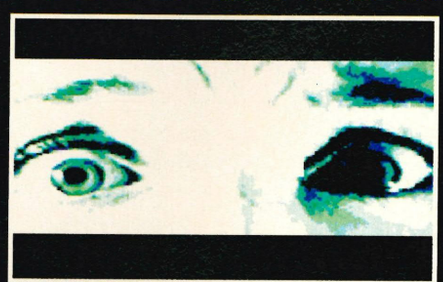
OUR STORY OPENS ON A COLD AND STORMY NIG



▲ Ha, ha, look, Bill's blowing his face on the screen. Ho, ho!



▲ Meanwhile...up in the sky...nothing is happening!



▲ Aaargh! There's someone looking through the letterbox!



▲ It was pr
heh. But he



▲ Back at the Mall... Thanks miss, I'll take that hockey mask there, please.



▲ Hang on, I feel a strange urge. An urge to... to... to kill. Bwa-ha-ha!



▲ No, that's not how I feel at all. I'd much rather have some Popcorn Chicken.

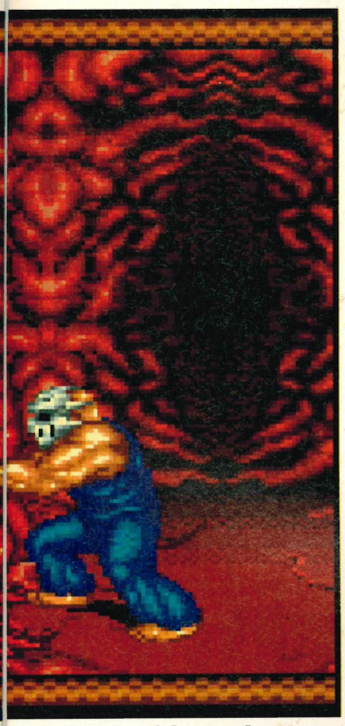


▲ But shoul
Look get thi

RHOUSE III

HOUSE III

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



, ho. Please Rick, you know
wee myself. Aah, ha, ha!

MASKED MARAUDER

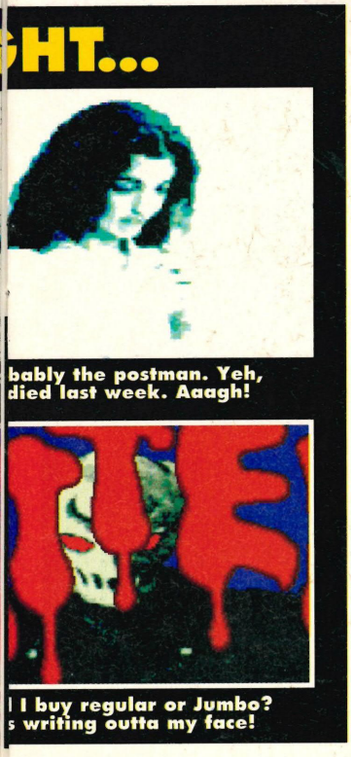
So what does Rick take with him to battle the rising hordes of undead that he will undoubtedly face? A high-powered chain-gun perhaps? How about some holy water or a couple of sharp wooden stakes? Nope, Rick just prefers the comfort of his favourite hockey mask. However, this is no ordinary hockey mask. The most noted piece of demonically-possessed sportswear since Deadshot Keen's football boots from the epic Tiger Comic adventure strip, Billy's Boots, Rick's hockey mask is in fact the home of an evil spirit.

When Ricky straps on the mask, not only does he contract a bad case of cold sores, hair lice and cooties from the various bits of gob and scalp flakes left in the mask by its previous owner, but he also becomes possessed by an awesome strength, allowing him to shatter bones and crack skulls open with his bare fists.

REVOLTING KEBABS

Perhaps a better name for Splatterhouse 3 would have been something like Kebab-fighter, because the only thing missing from this greasy graphical flesh-feast is the pitta bread. Starting on the ground floor of a haunted house, Rick has to travel from room to room battling against all manner of unspeakably revolting beasties, and when I say unspeakably revolting, I mean it. Boy, do I mean it!

There are dogs whose intestines hang out, dragging painfully along the floor, toad creatures whose heads break off after continual hitting only to reveal their tongues which flap about in the neck sockets, occasionally flicking out in attack. Then there are big belly-monsters whose only features are giant, telescopic mouths. Kill them and their bellies burst open, flooding the floor with green spew. This is definitely not a game to play whilst eating cabbage and broccoli soup.



HT...

bably the postman. Yeh,
died last week. Aaagh!

I buy regular or Jumbo?
s writing outta my face!



▲ Yeh Mum, that's me peeping in on the left hand side. Hi!

GROSS EFFECTS

The gross effects go far further than just the baddies. With a 16 M-bit cartridge to play with (that's as big as Streets Of Rage 2), the programmers have really gone to town with those chewy, gristle-like effects. All over the walls there are bits of meat, sinew and leftover carcasses. Wander into certain rooms and trussed up corpses will drop from the ceiling, stand around for a bit and they twitch. Neat! Do it again, Mister. There are also some neat parodies of other games. For instance, extra energy takes the form of a heart. So what, you might say. Well, these hearts have arteries and they beat too.

What's more, there are loads of little digitised pictures throughout the game which really add to the whole gross atmosphere. For instance, at the end of level one Rick finds Jennifer. "Rick!" "Jennifer!" "I love you..." and all that stuff, but wait a minute – something's not quite right. Jennifer smells of rot! Did she forget to rinse her plate brace after that liver and kidneys dinner? Nope, she's being devoured inside-out by boreworms. Yeuch, slug sandwiches or what! And we get to see it all in digitised picture detail. Tuck in and feast, gore-fiends.

DEADLY WEAPONS

It all seems a little hopeless for poor Rick, doesn't it? Possessed hockey mask, boreworm-infested girlfriend and a bad case of the cooties. What's a man to do? Well thankfully Rick has more than just his blood-drenched fists at his disposal. Scattered throughout the game are various weapons which our young chum can use. Baseball bats, machetes, planks, even chunks of granite can be found. What's more, they add extra splatter to the splatter-action. Rather than just punching out a baddy till they pop, try the baseball bat and watch their heads explode open after repeated impact.

Unfortunately, a couple of the neat weapons that featured in Splatterhouse 2 are sorely missing, in particular the shotgun and the shears. Opening someone's head with a twelve-bore from six feet is far better than beating them around the face with a plank. (I'm talking in game terms, of course. Physical violence in any form is definitely frowned upon by the peace-loving MegaTech team.)

BODY-POPPING

The lack of weapons is more than made up for by Rick's new party trick, body-popping. You might think that went out in the mid-eighties, but when you're wearing a possessed hockey mask it's hard to keep in touch with all the latest fads. Anyway, Rick's body-popping is a little different from your average disco robotics. By collecting various crystal balls, Rick can transform into a bigger, more muscular version of himself. Fair enough, but now he can also perform a sort of 'porcupine spines' attack where loads of muscular phallic projections burst from his body with devastating effect. He can also grab at enemies, leap into the air and bring them crashing down on their heads with devastating effect.



▲ Must have been a difficult choice between that and Popcorn Chicken!

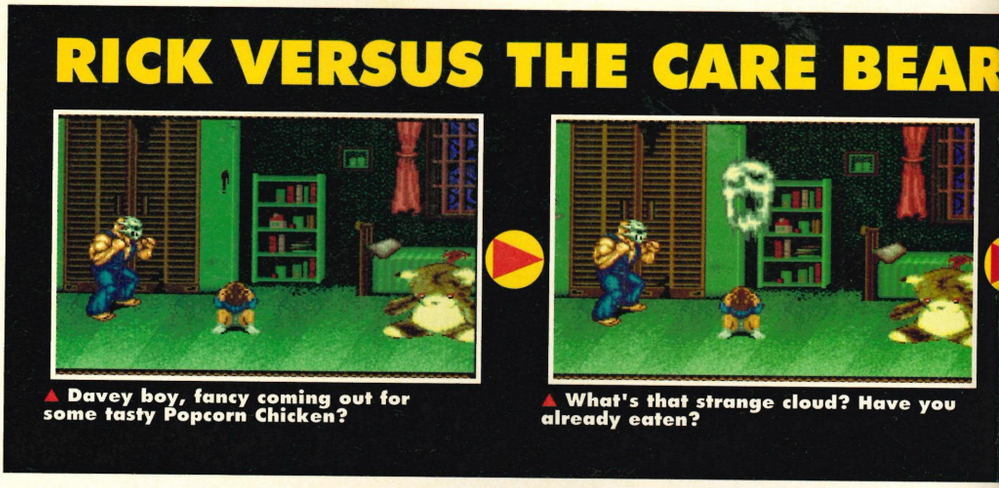


▲ Dear Evil One, Get well soon. Love Rick.



▲ Mmm, that Popcorn Chicken was nice. I think I'll just lie down for a bit!

▲ Urp! I don't feel very good at at all. My stomach hurts. Muu-um!



▲ Davey boy, fancy coming out for some tasty Popcorn Chicken?

▲ What's that strange cloud? Have you already eaten?



▲ That was me, Benny Costers, before I took Super-slimquick shakes!

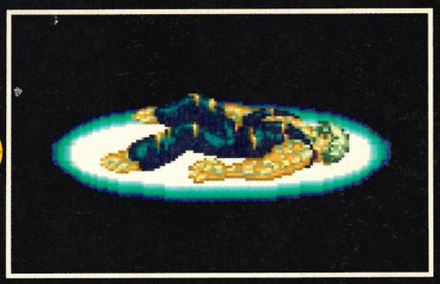


▲ Come on, cough it up lad! Get it out of your system.

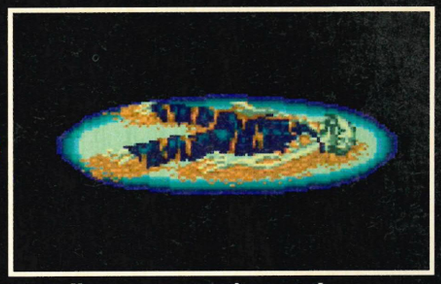


▲ Heh, I can feel a real strong fart coming on. Here goes. Phhhhh... Oh no, I've still got my enema in. Aaaargh!

KE... ACID DEATH!



▲ If I can just let off some gas I'll feel better, I know I will. Muu-um!



▲ Totally popcorn-tastic, mate!



▲ Your mother sucks Popcorn Chicken in hell! Mate!

FROM HELL!



▲ Wha... the teddy's attacking me. He must have smelled Dave's popcorn chickeny trump!



▲ Hang on, that's no teddy. It's a Popcorn Chicken in disguise!



▲ By the power of the popcorn. I am the Colonel!

BEST SPLAT EVER?

So, how does it compare with Splatterhouse 2? Is this a better game? Well, yes it is. The problem with Splatterhouse 2 is that it was all very linear, there was a limited amount of movement and it all become very monotonous very quickly. With Splatterhouse 3, these problems have been removed to a certain extent. Instead of just moving from room to room, each level now consists of a fully explorable floor of the haunted mansion. Rick can travel back and forth between the rooms and take different routes towards the end of each level. With the addition of warp rooms, the digitised picture intermissions and the strict time limit on each level, the game is made far more interesting.

However, just because Splatterhouse 3 is better than Splatterhouse 2 doesn't mean it's a great game. It does have gruesomely good graphics and some enjoyable splatter action, but when compared to other beat 'em ups it just doesn't match up. When you consider that the programmers had 16 M-bits to play with, the least you'd expect is a variety of different baddies, tons of action on screen at any one time and a whole range of fighting moves. What you actually get is a bunch of the same baddies, only three sprites on screen at any one time (one of which is Rick) and about five different moves. What the programmers have spent all the memory on are the digitised pictures and the lengthy intro. Excellent they are, granted, but unfortunately that's not what a beat 'em up is all about.

I did enjoy, Splatterhouse 3, more for the tongue in cheek comedy horror element than for the action, but I far prefer something like Streets Of Rage 2. Visually, Splatterhouse 3 works very well. If it's blood and guts you want, well, you'll never get a better bit o' gore on your knife, but if you're looking for a quality beat 'em up, you'd be better off looking elsewhere.

ALTERNATIVELY



63

SPLATTERHOUSE 2
by NAMCOT
PRICE: £44.99
The same again, but less. Gory graphics, but very limited beating action. It soon becomes boring.

ALTERNATIVELY



95

STREETS OF RAGE 2
by SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
The best Megadrive beat 'em up around. Great graphics, great action... just great!

THE SECOND OPINION



MARK HOLMES

Well, I think Tom's hit the nail on the head with a large, blood-encrusted hammer on this one. There's no doubt that this is a major improvement over Splatterhouse 2, and I enjoyed the bloodthirsty fun of playing it, but once you've got used to the grossness of the gory graphics, the gameplay isn't varied enough to keep you gripped to your monitor. It's kind of like watching a cheap horror flick – so over the top it's fun for a while, but tedious after you've got over the novelty of all the giblets splattered all over the place.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 93%
Long intro, loads of digitised pics, password option.

GRAPHICS 87%
Gruesome, gory, grotesque, really quite good.

SOUND 85%
Tinkly horror tunes, neat splattery sounds.

SHORT TERM PLAY 81%
Immediately playable. Smart comedy-horror splatter action.

LONG TERM PLAY 72%
Limited moves and lack of variety. Soon gets boring.

OVERALL 74
Great splattery fun for gorehounds, but the novelty soon wears off.

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: ACCOLADE

8 M-BIT

STYLE



SPORT

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1-8

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

JUNE 1993



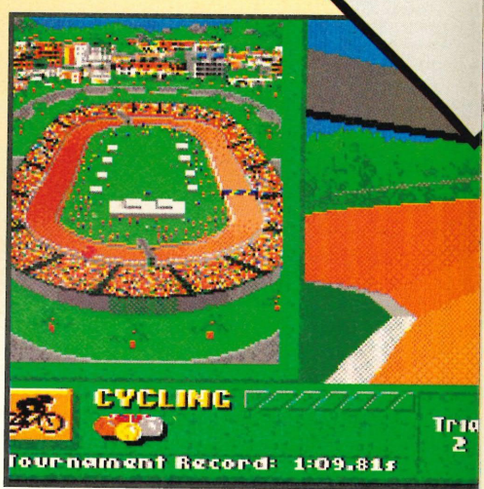
It's time to get the steroids out again. SUMMER CHALLENGE is here, with a fistful of high-performance events designed to aggravate that groin-strain of yours. GUS SWAN has made an Olympian effort to bring you the review, while rubbing on the Deep Heat.

SUM CHALL

It's been a while since the Megadrive was graced with a compilation sports game. Almost a year, actually, since US Gold stormed the summer with Olympic Gold, official computer game of the Barcelona bash. Looking back, that fared only averagely, the events lacking the lasting interest to make it a worthwhile buy. Summer Challenge offers eight familiar events which are strung together in tournament form, each using a different control method. Points and medal ceremonies are the contestants' reward. So have Accolade produced an Olympic-beating contender in Summer Challenge? The company already has experience in producing this type of game, having brought out Winter Challenge last year. This seasonal successor bears many of the hallmarks of that game, the 3D graphic style being very similar. However, let's put all preconceptions aside, and let the games-testing commence!



▲ 'Arrers' – lovely, smashing, super.



▲ Who's that idiot with the Flash Gordon hat



▲ Who am I? What do I do? Where am I from?



▲ No, it's not a shopping mall – it's the Games Village.

RECORD BREAKERS

You can play events individually in Practice mode, or launch into a whole tournament. Practising is recommended early on, as some of the events have a tricky control method, and sometimes one error is enough to end an event.

The tournament is played at Amateur, Professional or Olympic level, and believe me, even the amateurs are hard to beat! If less than eight human competitors are taking part, you are able to replace them with as many computer players as you want. Select one of the ugly mugs, pick a nationality and a name for your players and sit back for the (rather cacky) opening ceremonies. Once in the tournament you may pick the events in any order, but play them only once.

CONTROL FREAK

The controls you are required to master vary greatly for each event. For the archery, handling the player is quite simple. Load the arrow with a press of the button, use the joypad to compensate for his wobbling body, then release the button to launch the arrow. The only other element in this event to worry about is flogging off all twelve arrows within the time limit. This makes the event quite enjoyable, but unchallenging after a while.

At the opposite end of the spectrum are events like kayaking and equestrian. These take ages to complete, as your player wends his way round huge courses, aiming to jump fences/pass through gates. The kayaking is particularly gruelling, since the course takes about four minutes, the controls are very unresponsive, and once you're in that canoe you're in to the finish. The Equestrian trial is quicker and easier to muck up. Dismount once or refuse a single fence and the event is kaput. This event takes a lot of practic just to make it round on the nag's back, without even thinking about sharp times. Just watch those ten second penalties pile on!

The track events are pretty conventional javelin, cycling and hurdles are all of the 'bc the buttons' variety.

With the javelin, the secret lies in keepin speed above 30, and getting an angle at the somewhere near 45 degrees. Work out the sys and you'll be a Backley-beater every time. Watc with pride as your spear penetrates the 100m zone. Thankfully, you get three tries at the event, case you spoon it.

The cycling is a less subtle bash round the velodrome, quick as you please, sir. Practice this a lot and you'll be looking at premature arthritis of the finger joints.

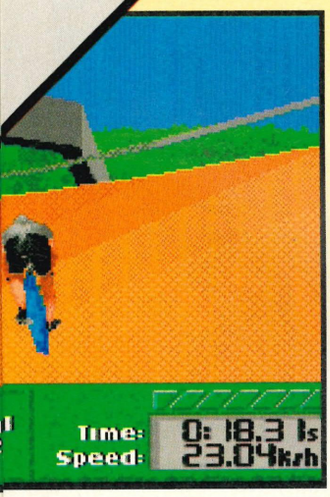
MER LENGE



▲ Why do I have to compete in the bottom half of a baby's romper suit?



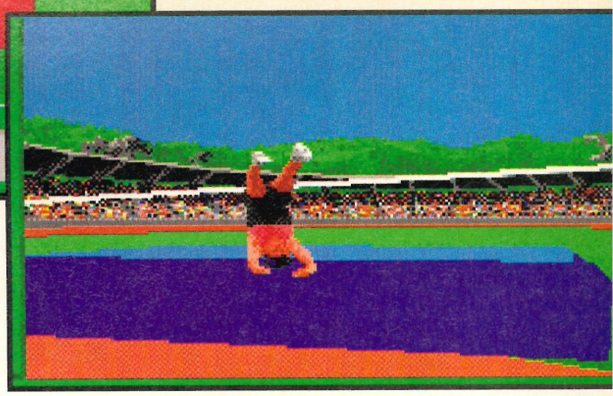
▲ Oi, you in the stands... CATCH!



and the wiggly bum?



▲ I say, where's that jolly fox jolly well gorn?



▲ A new event – the World Headbanging Championships.

TOUGH NUTS

A couple of the events in Summer Challenge are frustratingly tough, even at the simplest level, to a joypad-banging degree.

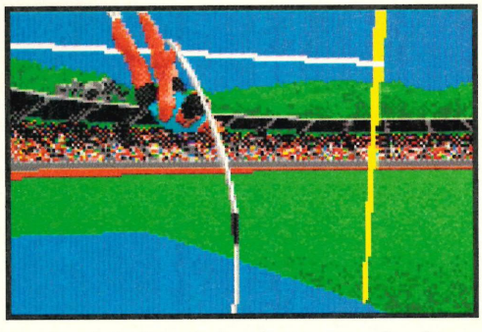
With the pole vault, the difficulty lies with the sequence of presses needed to plant your pole, raise yourself, then let go at the right time. As there are no gauges or meters to aid you, it's a matter of instinct. Likewise, the high jump presents problems because it's all over so soon. Your Fosbury has flopped well under the bar before you even know it.

With these events particularly, you need to be a patient type to appreciate Summer Challenge. They make the game less suitable for casual players wanting to join in for a laugh. That's a shame, considering the eight player mode seems to make this the ideal game for Granny to try at Crimble. Can you risk her having a breakdown over screwing up the Pole Vault?

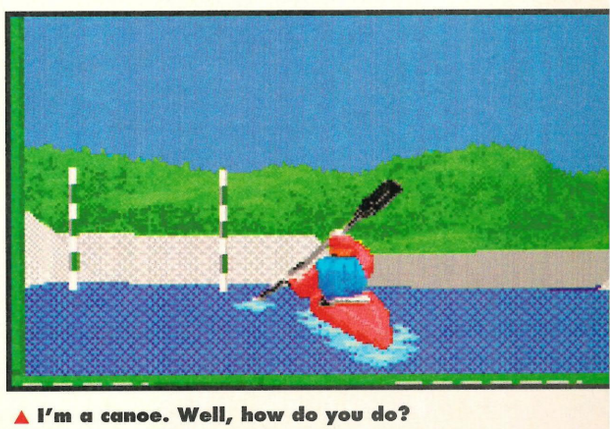
HIP 3D GRAPHICS

What makes Summer Challenge distinct from other sports sims (except perhaps Winter Challenge) is the use of 3D effects to display the action. Usually an event like hurdles is shown with the player running left to right, over a scrolling background. Summer Challenge shows the track from a perspective just behind the hurdler, and each hurdle scales towards the player.

Similarly, the fences on the equestrian course, the velodrome and the kayaking are all in true 3D. The effect is constructed using polygons, using simple geometric shapes and light shading to portray movement. How it affects or improve the gameplay is secondary to the distinctive appearance it lends the game.



▲ The ridiculous balancing contest begins.



▲ I'm a canoe. Well, how do you do?

SUMMER CHALLENGE

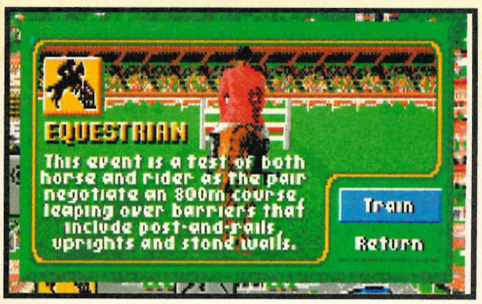
SOLID BRONZE

All the good things Accolade have achieved here are instantly apparent. It's a brave attempt at breaking out of the flat mode of presenting sports games, to breathe new life into events like the javelin that have been done to death. However, the forces of poor playability seemed mobilised against it, and the credit it ends up with seems mostly for effort. I think there is something fundamentally flawed in the multi-event format. Without tons of memory lavished on game of this sort, lots of little simple events won't come together to make a satisfying whole.

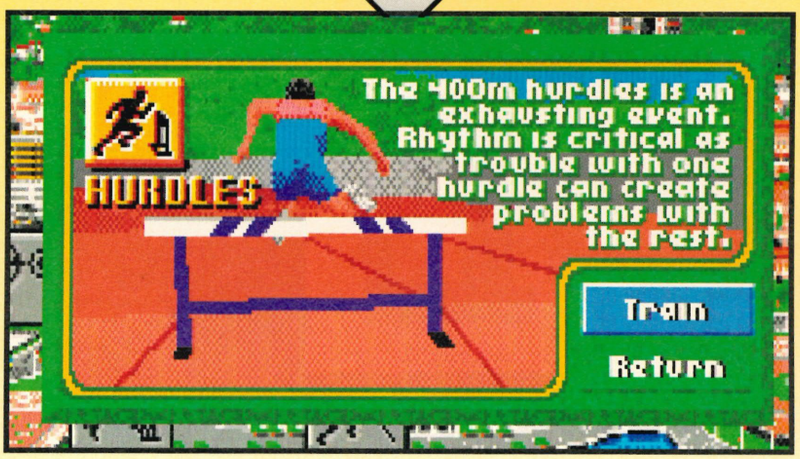
Summer Challenge is very much a mixed bag, but the events that do work – equestrian, javelin and archery – aren't enjoyable enough to carry the ones that don't. The problem of badly thought-out gameplay is compounded by the failure of the polygons to create a convincing 3D effect on many occasions. The kayaking is the best example of this, where the water and the gates graphics jerk around the screen, making the judging of distance very tricky. Otherwise, Accolade have presented the game well onscreen, trying to create a cohesive atmosphere out of events that wouldn't normally fit together, and making Summer Challenge the kind of game you might just want to whip out in front of friends to impress them.



▲ Grins all round on the winners' rostrum.



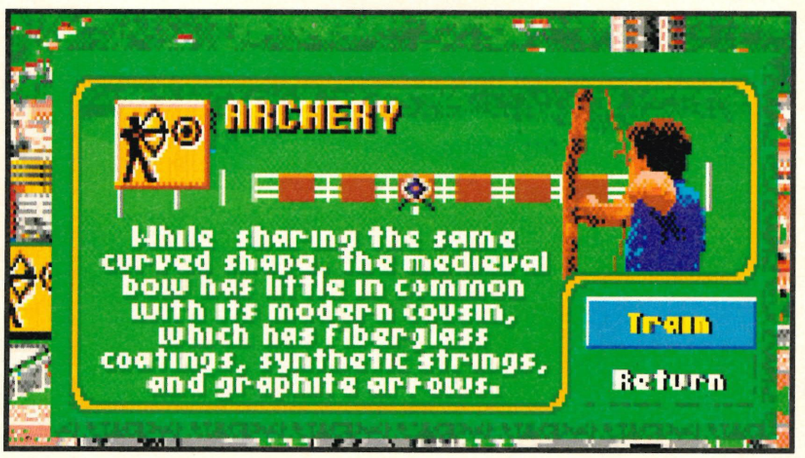
▲ Yes, that's reeeallly interesting.



▲ Handy hints onscreen – talk about stating the obvious!



▲ The 'Postcard to Send to the Folks Back Home' screen.



▲ Caption

THE SECOND OPINION



PAUL GLANCEY

The problem with Accolade's Winter Challenge was that, though the events were technically well done, they were just boring and not very playable. Unfortunately, Summer Challenge suffers in exactly the same way.

There's a wide variety in the events, and the 3D ones look like they're going to be particularly good, but once you've started playing they just seem to go on for ever and you're thinking, 'When's it going to end?' As Gus says, though, that seems to be a problem with all multi-event sports games – the events might be okay, but none of them are really good, making for a rather mediocre game overall. Not being into any of the sports portrayed here there wasn't anything in Summer Challenge to keep me interested for any great stretch of time, and I wouldn't recommend it to mainstream gamers.

ALTERNATIVELY



79 **CALIFORNIA GAMES**
BY:SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
The events of this wacky compilation are well though-out and fun to play. Pity there's only five of them. However, the graphics and sound still look impressive a whole year on.

ALTERNATIVELY



70 **OLYMPIC GOLD**
BY:US GOLD
PRICE: £39.99
Although this bears the official Barcelona seal, look inside to the bland events, which don't give it much lasting appeal. Some events are walkovers, others are control nightmares.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION 83%
Thoughtfully presented options. Trashy, Olympic opening ceremonies.

GRAPHICS 76%
Polygon 3D FX range from the impressive to the unhelpful.

SOUND 52%
Very weak – Summer Challenge sounds flippin' awful.

SHORT TERM PLAY 73%
Eight events seems a lot, but many are thin indeed.

LONG TERM PLAY 64%
Soon becomes dull, frustrating or both.

OVERALL 67
Distinctive to view, but distinctly average to play, more's the pity.

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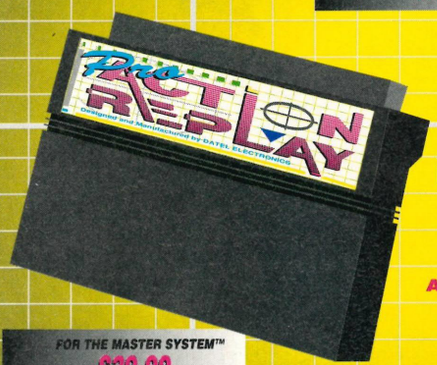
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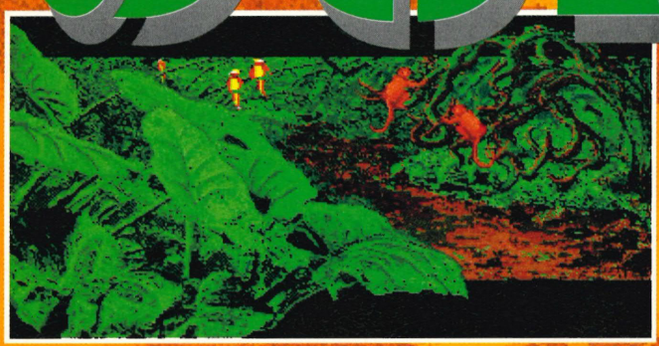
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GATEFOLD REVIEW

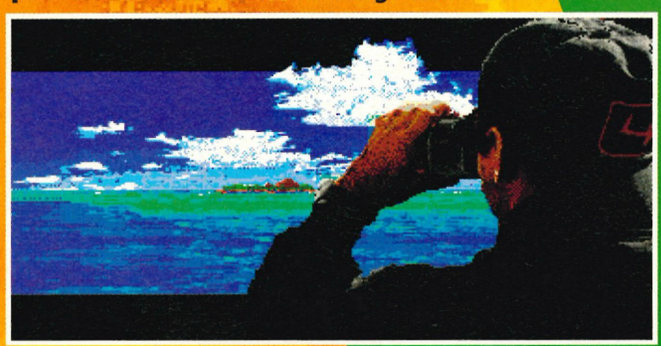
JUNGLE



▲ See the parrots. See the monkeys. Hear the parrots squawk. Hear the monkeys chatter.

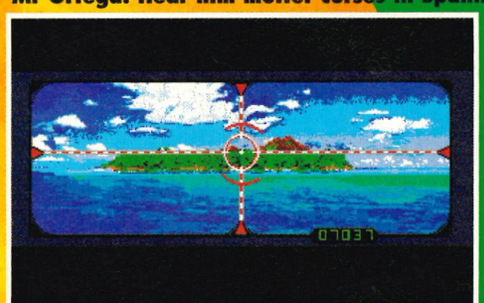


▲ See the idyllic Carribean island where the monkeys and parrots live. Hear the surf crashing. Crash. Crash.



▲ See the insane, psychopathic drug baron. His name is Mr Ortega. Hear him mutter curses in Spanish.

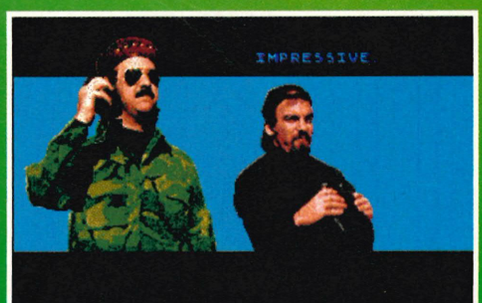




▲ Look, Mr Ortega, look. Target the monkeys with your atomic bomb.



▲ Boom! See the big cloud of superheated gas. Doesn't it look like a mushroom?



▲ See Mr Ortega's friend. His name is Mr Kilbaba. He has a portable telephone.



▲ Se
conce

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS



16 M-BIT

STYLE



SHOOT 'EM UP

PRICE £49.99

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

JULY 1993



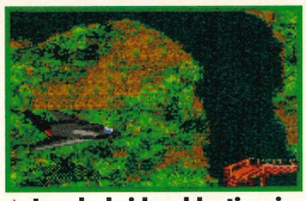
▲ 'Bottle, glass – glass, bottle. Wait a minute...'



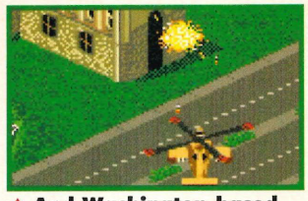
▲ 'Shoobie doobie doooo... Jus' meee and my binocularrrrrs... oh yeah... babeee.



▲ 'You kids keep yer filthy 'ands off my motor!'



▲ Jungle bridge-blasting in the new stealth bomber!



▲ And Washington-based building demolition.

The story picks up from where Desert Strike left off. Destroying General "Not Sadam Hussein" Kilbaba's baby milk factories brought peace to the Middle East, but now there is an imminent threat on a new front. Vile drugs baron, Carlos Ortega has just bust out of jail in Florida, and so vile is he that as soon as he got back across the border he went down to his local bank and withdrew enough of his stinking drug money to buy (gasp!) nuclear weapons! And you'll never guess who's supplying his plutonium – why it's none other than vile Ibn Kilbaba, the general's vile son with a vile name to match!

Anyway, the two of them are hatching some pretty terrible plots between them, but first on Ortega's hit list is the entire city of Washington DC. Evidently somewhat peeved by the way his American jailers treated him, Ortega plans to teach the nation a lesson by (a) laying waste to most of Washington's important buildings and (b) assassinating the President! But even worse, his ultimate aim is to build his atom bomb and drop it on Capitol Hill!

Luckily, US intelligence agencies have got wind of these goings-on and they've brought the Special Forces helicopter team in to help sort things out and, playing their top pilot, this is where you come in.

APACHES AND COMMANCHES

Since the Desert Strike missions, the Special Forces have retired the old squadrons of AH-64 Apaches in favour of the new Super Commanche attack helicopter, which is more heavily armoured and carries a substantially larger weapons payload, which is all the better to blow up terrorists with. Like the Apache, the Super Commanche has a two-person crew, one pilot (you) and a gunner/winchman who targets the weapons and picks up any supply crates with the winch. As before your cockpit buddy has to be picked from a roster of differently skilled personnel at the start of the game. When you start the game the best people are all missing in action, and it's up to you to find them during the course of the game.

Once again you're given the good old isometric view of the



DURATION: 15 mins

CAMPAIGN ONE: THE STREETS OF WAS

Terrorists have taken control of the streets of Washington DC and are causing mayhem with their surface to air missiles and their Kalashnikov automatic rifles (as you might expect). The police are cowering under their bulletproof desks so you're job in this first campaign is to hunt down the evil-doers and wipe 'em out. Slobber.





MISSION ONE: PROTECT NATIONAL MONUMENTS

Those evil terrorists are planning to drive up to 'our' (ie the Americans') most cherished national monuments, the Washington Memorial, the Library of Congress and the Jefferson Memorial and blow them up, just for kicks! How evil can you get? Lucky you're here to reduce them and their treacherous camper vans to smouldering garbage.

RESTOCK WEAPONS

After all that action at the Jefferson memorial you need to refill those rocket pods. Find an ammo truck, destroy it and hey presto! a weapons crate appears for the picking up. Bit drastic, mind, but there you go.



MISSION TWO: DESTROY TER

Being too dishonest to rent a room or ever
government buildings and run their own fl
guards surrounding the building, then dem
missiles to flush out the ringleaders. Captu
three.

DROP OFF HOSTAGES

With only 50 armour points in the bank, it'
the FBI offices or the hospital and you can
armour.

JUNGLE

action (still somewhat unusual for a Megadrive game, which is a shame because it's very effective) and all you have to do with yourself is use your computer map to track down all the targets in each of the eight campaigns and make them go bang, all with the ultimate aim of preventing Ortega from building his bomb and irradiating Washington. As before you get points for icing the bad guys and for rescuing the good guys.

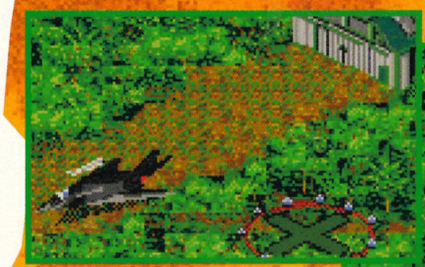
But of course it's not all BOOM and destruction and stuff like that. Well, okay, most of it is, but there's also a bit of hostage rescue, and the missions (there are usually five or six in most of the campaigns) are quite cleverly structured so you can't just go mad with your missiles – there's a bit of strategy too.

Remember in Desert Strike how, if you didn't torch the radar sites first, the rest of the enemy ground forces always knew you were coming so they would be that much more ferocious when you finally met up? Well, that's been largely carried over to the campaigns in Jungle Strike, so for example, when you get to campaign two the only way you can reach the experimental combat hovercraft is by rescuing some stranded Navy SEALs (like Charlie Sheen – you saw that film didn't you?) who will then deactivate a force field around the island where the hovercraft is parked.

SO WHERE ARE THE NEW BITS?

Did I say hovercraft? Why, yes... You were wondering when I was going to get to the new features weren't you? Okay, the most interesting addition to the original game is that, as well as getting a meatier helicopter to fly around in you can also park your chopper and take the controls of one of a whole range of new vehicles. There's the hovercraft, a stealth bomber and a motorbike, all of which have slightly different control systems to master and their own sets of weapons.

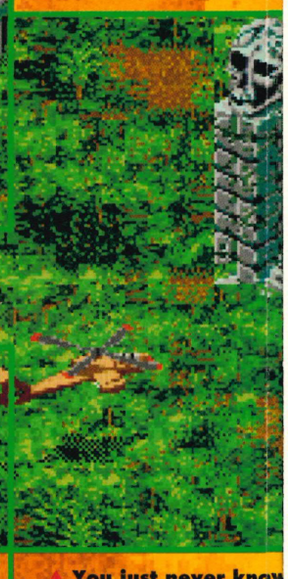
This and the fact that the campaigns are all significantly different from one another are the two improvements you really notice when you're playing. I mean, Desert Strike was good, but it was all in the desert so the scenery and the targets didn't change that much. In this game you're flying around Washington destroying car



▲ Our plucky pilot trades in his helicopter for a stealth bomber at Honest Tarzan's Jungle Aircraft.



▲ More weapons! More death! Hehe! Hehe! Snort! Gibber!



▲ You just never know going to come up with around the jungle. She your Hellfires will be

SHINGTON DC.



RORIST HEADQUARTERS

buy their own HQs, the terrorists have seized ags up the pole! Gah! First eliminate the olish the front porch with a couple of Hellfire re them and you get info you need for mission

s time to get those holes filled. Land either at trade the enemy commanders for extra

MISSION THREE: LOCATE AND DESTROY CAR BOMBS

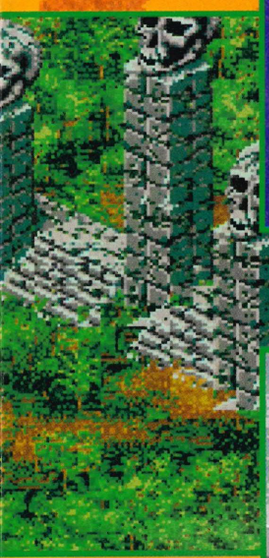
Deranged psychopaths that they are, the terrorists have packed ordinary cars with high explosives and are planning to use them to blow up US embassies. Luckily, those captured commanders spilled their guts and your map display shows where the cars are hidden. The suicide bombers are easily identifiable by the fact that they drive with their heads out of the window, while carrying rocket launchers. Maniacs, eh?



MISSION FOU RESCUE AGE AKBAR

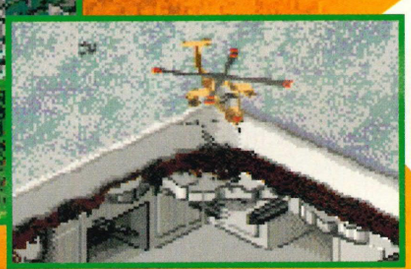
Akbar is the only o knows where an at President's motorc place. Unfortunatel the bad guys have up in a basement s Gunmen are holdi police's rescue atte few well-aimed roc polishes off any ter resistance.

STRIKE





▲ Rescue the SEALs and shoot the sharks (or ignore them if you like)



▲ Well, if it isn't an underground Arctic base! What a nice surprise!

ow what you're
th when you're flying
hoot the skulls and
cursed for eternity.

bombs, buzzing around in your hovercraft trying to stop plutonium shipments in speedboats, wiping out terrorist training camps in the desert and blowing up weapons factories in the jungle. And that's just the first four campaigns.

Mind you, with twice as much memory space in the cart big new gameplay features are all you would expect. What you might also expect is some expansion on all the little scene-setting animations which occasionally popped up in Desert Strike. As they say at Burger King, "You got it." There are plenty of intro animations and the occasional action scene in the middle of a campaign, but if anything these are the game's worst feature. The graphics and animation in these bits are occasionally, well, ghastly, sometimes even worse than Desert Strike's Giant Winchman Climbing Out Of Tiny Helicopter. That's odd, because the graphics and animation in the game itself are superb, with that same fluid, realistic helicopter movement which seemed to react to the controls so perfectly, and more detailed and varied scenery.

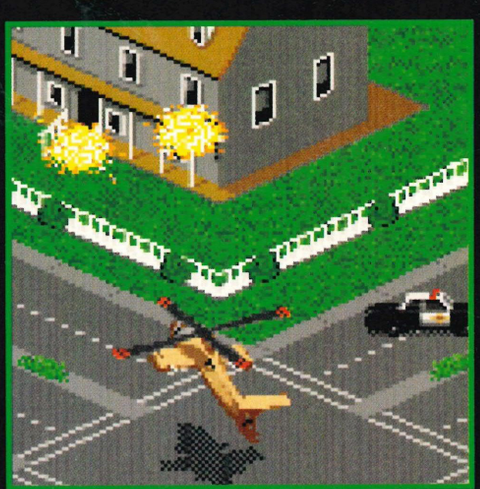
As well as having better game graphics, Jungle Strike has improved sound too, with more rockin' music, meatier explosions and weapon sound effects and even the occasional bit of speech (it only says "mission accomplished", mind, but it's the thought that counts).

Compared to Desert Strike, the difficulty curve in Jungle Strike is slightly shallower. That's not to say that it's badly judged, but it took me a while to get to campaign four (the last one) in Desert Strike, but only a couple of days to finish campaign four in Jungle Strike. However, after that the difficulty level increases dramatically and the later missions are of course tougher, with more, deadlier targets and less weapon and fuel supplies, and they are a lot more testing than Desert Strike's finale.

As I said before it's the variety and depth of gameplay – not qualities you expect from a Megadrive shoot 'em up usually – that keeps you glued to Jungle Strike. You definitely won't get bored with the action, it's very challenging and very, very playable. Is it worth £45? Well, it's surely the best shoot 'em up on the Megadrive, so if that isn't worth a top cartridge price tag, I don't know what is.

OUR:
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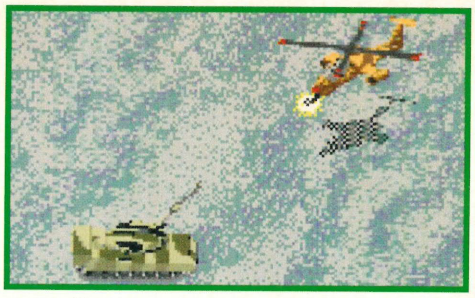
MISSION FIVE: SAVE THE PRESIDENT!

There's the President's Limo, and there's a terrorist road-block. Get rid of it before they perforate the Prez, then guide him through the streets of Washington to the White House, demolishing any terrorist forces that get in the way.





▲ 'Come on, chase me! Come on! He he!'



▲ 'Hallo Mr Tank. How would you like it if Ishot big holes in your turret?'



▲ 'Let's stop here and get the toboggans out. Then we can steal a Christmas tree.'

THE SECOND OPINION



TOM GUISE

I like it ! Jungle Strike is one mean game. Although it might not have the immediate face-slapping action of more standard shoot 'em ups like Thunderforce 4, there are far more, better qualities to this game. It's more of a shoot 'em up adventure really. Searching for hostages, racing to destroy car bombs before they find their mark, the excitement is just immense. And the tension when your armour is low or your fuel is running out is just nail-biting. This game is guaranteed to make the hairs on the back of your neck prickle. Add to this the fact that the game is twice as large as Desert Strike and there are all those extra vehicles to control and what you're left with is just the best shoot 'em up around. You may not get as much immediate satisfaction from this game as you would from more out-and-out blasters, but in the long run you'll find this one far more rewarding. Oh, and if you haven't played Desert Strike yet, well don't worry, you won't want to after playing this. Jungle Strike is that much better. Tom's tip: Buy it!



▲ Ha! Well, that's ruined their Christmas!



▲ 'We are now landing at The Middle of Nowhere Airport...'

ALTERNATIVELY



94 DESERT STRIKE BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
Well, it's the only Megadrive game with a similar mix of strategy and shoot 'em up action, but Jungle Strike is so superior that Desert Strike only qualifies as an alternative purchase on this technicality.

RATINGS



PRESENTATION 80%
Sufficient options. Intro graphics sometimes look amateurish.

GRAPHICS 94%
Scenery, sprites and animation are highly detailed and superb overall.

SOUND 93%
Great music and sound effects are good and meaty.

SHORT TERM PLAY 95%
Heavy-duty shooting action is amazingly addictive.

LONG TERM PLAY 94%
Loads of variety, levels and thrills will keep you glued for ages.

OVERALL 95
An excellent sequel to one of the best Megadrive games of last year.

MISSION SIX: REPEL SNIPER ATTACK

Presidential assassins have abandoned grassy knolls and this one has taken cover in the CIA's building so that he can nail the President just as he's pulling into the White House drive! What a git! Flush him out with a few rounds of cannon fire, then capture him so he can tell you the location of Ortega's jungle base.



STRIKE

HYPER! HYPER GAME AWARD





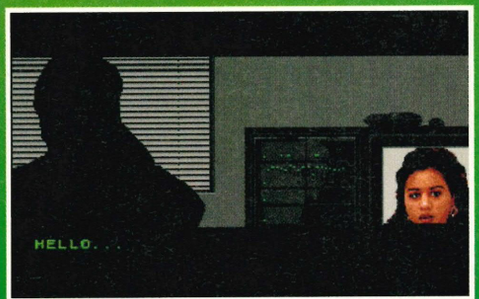
Dealing with psychopathic drug barons and dangerous megalomaniacs is something that PAUL GLANCEY is content to do on a daily basis these days. After all, it keeps him off the streets.

Before they decided to unleash all those sequels on us last year, Electronic Arts got big cheers all round for that smart shoot 'em up, Desert Strike. Now that was one game that needed a sequel and here it is. The original game designer, Mike Posehn has collaborated with the programmers at High Score Software to produce Jungle Strike, a shoot 'em up with twice the megabits of the original cartridge and more than twice the number of levels. But is it twice as good? Well, I hope not because we gave Desert Strike 94% last year and if this was going to be twice as good we would have to mark it at 188%, which would be silly.

To find out exactly how good it really is, join me, on a voyage of discovery and reviewing into the savage, primeval, heaving playground of mayhem that is... Jungle Strike!



the attractive newsreader. See her rned expression.



▲ See the shadowy figure who threatens to destroy Washington DC. Help! Help!

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MEGA-CD REVIEW



BY: WOLFTEAM



CD ROM

STYLE



ADVENTURE

PRICE IMPORT

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

JUNE 1993



Time

Cor, travel through time? Ask Mark Patterson. 'Yes' said the beneficient Paul. 'There's just one drawback, you have to go as a nubile young girl.' 'Wow,' exlaimed Mark, 'It just gets better by the minute.'

Following up on their previous Laser disc-style effort, Cobra Command, Wolfteam have swapped helicopters for a time-travelling school girl with peculiar attitude to danger.

Wolfteam failed to make an impact with the first Mega-CD game, Sol Feace (see this month's VS Mode), and the unfortunate Earnest Evans was nothing short of laughable in some areas. Undetered by these throw-backs, Wolfteam have taken the drastic course of hiring an animator to produce yet another, to coin a now common phrase, 'Mega-CD graphic feast'.

This time you're not racing through sewers or piloting the latest thing in assault helicopters, no, you play a young, scantily clad girl. Something which may appeal to some of you, it definitely does to a certain free-living MegaTech designer.

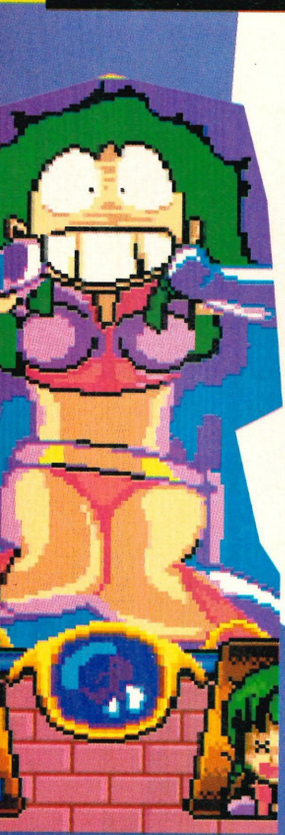
As to her name, well my Japanese isn't to good, and I'm far too polite to refer to her as 'she' and 'her' throughout this review, so I'll call her Prunella. It appears that while on the trail of a particularly nasty villain she's be blown back through time, and in true Quantum Leap fashion, when she's finished in one part of history she warps into another.

For some inexplicable reason, despite all the dangers she faces, Prunella lets out chorus after chorus of giggles.The words that would be coming out of my mouth while running from a fire-breathing tyrannosaur would have far more to do with the current situation and the state of my trousers rather than any hidden jocularity.

The graphics are in the now typical Japanese Animé style, with fast cuts, weird angles and an overdose of eye-melting action. While all this unfolds on your screen, your attention is cruelly dragged away to the uninteresting sides. Globes situated on the top, bottom, left and right of the screen light up at the appropriate moment showing which way to press the D-pad. If you time it right Prunella should leap to safety, otherwise you're shown a short sequence of her befalling whatever fate her current foe had in store for her. Alternatively, you could ignore the globes and watch for bits of the background to light up, these indicate that it would be a really good idea if you moved Prunella there before she gets fried. The problem with playing this way is that it's not always the obvious bits which are highlighted, so it pays to keep an eye on the globes just in case.

The levels are very short, lasting between 15 seconds and a minute. Often the action happens so fast that you spend so much time concentrating on the globes that you actually miss what's happening on screen. For some utterly inexplicable reason the death sequence animations are really poor. Obviously they couldn't make them too horrific, but keeping them to the same standard as the rest of the game would have been nice.

As much as I dislike this type of game, praise needs to be given to the programmers for trying to make the game as varied as possible. They've certainly exploited the time-travel aspect to the full, with the game taking place in a variety of quasi-historical settings. One minute she could be avoiding giant prehistoric turtles, the next she can be balancing on the wing of a second world war fighter plane. It's these drastic changes of scene that give you the urge to play on.

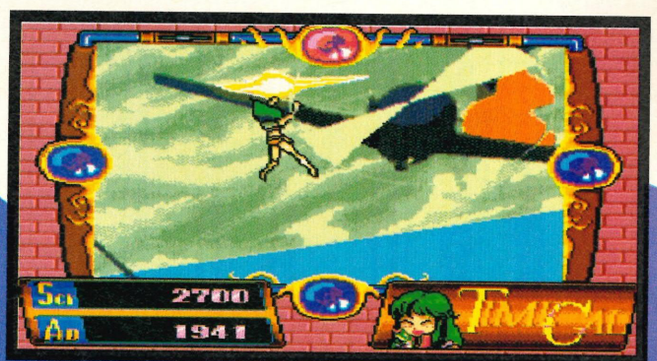




▲ Now there's something you don't see every day.



▲ Quick! Sound the Woolly Mammoth Alert!



▲ You fly Air Pearl Harbor and this is what you get.



▲ 'What pit of boiling lava? Where? Yikes!'

e Gal



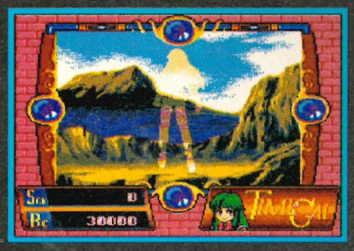
POT LUCK

Should all four globes flash at once it means 'Hit the A button!' If you're lucky Prunella will simply whip out her gun (although I don't know where she keeps it) and blast whatever creature she faces. On the other hand, the screen could turn red and you're then presented with three choices of action. Here's where having an import version of Time Gal is a bit of a downer because the choices are in Japanese. Selecting the wrong one against the cavemen, for instance, will result in Prunella inexplicably vaporising herself, or being captured. While getting the right one (which is the shortest one, incidentally) has the cavemen netting themselves while she warps onto the next zone. Naturally this won't be a problem if you wait for the UK version, which gets a little box-out (as we call 'em) of its own elsewhere in this review.



TIMED SEQUENCE — DURATION: 60 SEC.

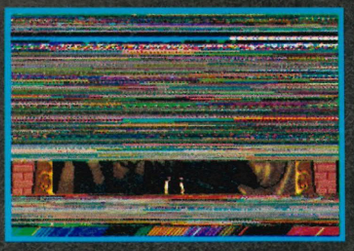
Time Gal vs The Cavemen Fiends from 30,000 BC!



Our heroine warps in, and runs straight into trouble with the natives.



Hit right to dodge those rocks, then leap onto one to keep out of harm's way.



Grab onto a branch to stop her hitting the water at 100Mph...



...then drop onto a convenient log.



She's not out of it yet, there's a waterfall to avoid. Leap to safety at the last minute.



Oh no, more cavemen. Avoid their clubs then it's up, up and, up again.



Blast the pterodactyles then drop down to Earth.



Get it right and the cavemen will tie themselves in knots.

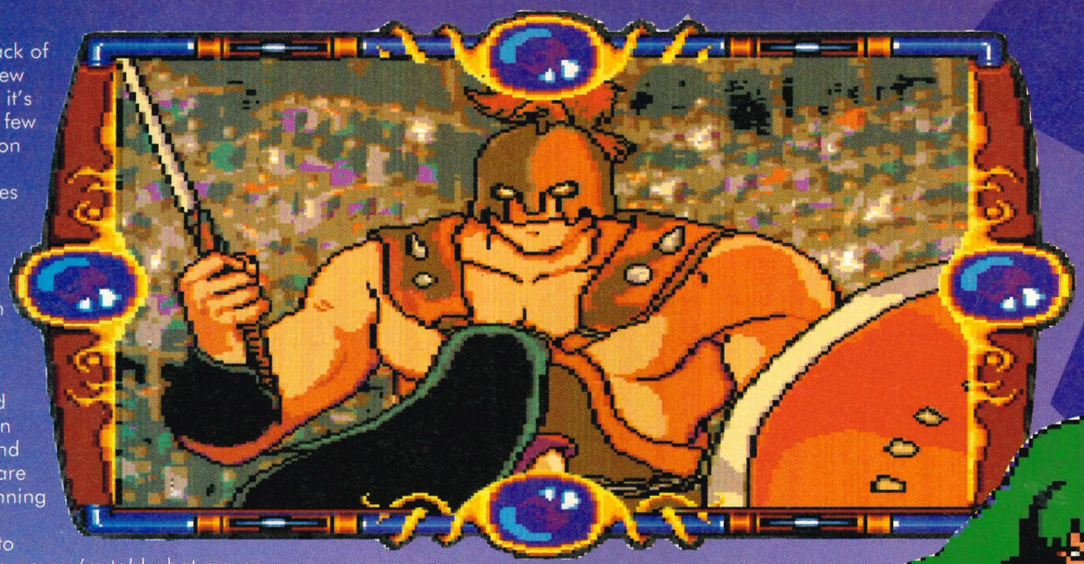
One drawback I found was the lack of level codes, having to play the same few minutes of game over and over again it's much the same as watching the same few minutes of video constantly for hours on end. It becomes very monotonous.

Completing a series of stages does earn you a view code. Entering this allows you to watch the complete animation of the section you just completed as many times as you want, as if you handn't seen it enough already, without having to control Prunella.

I sincerely hope that this type of game is not going to be the be all and end all of Mega-CD entertainment. On current form with Cobra Command and Sewer Shark, it looks like real games are losing out to those with those with stunning visuals and gameplay deficiency.

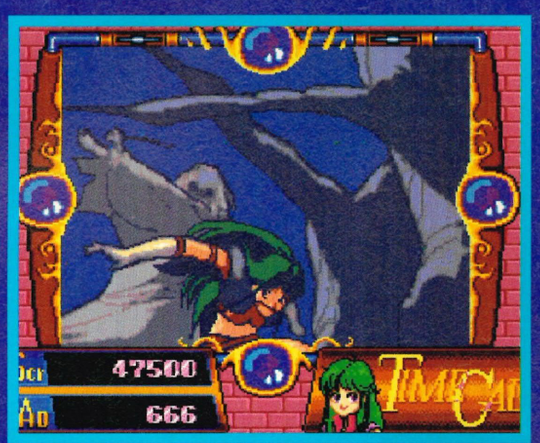
Ultimately the game is very easy to complete, no real skill is required because you're told what moves to make. Just to confuse you, some levels are reversed from game to game. This means that where you went right first time around, you'll need to go left this time. While this does add to the gameplay slightly, it severely limits your ability to pre-empt Prunella's next move so you can't take it easy and watch the graphics while automatically executing the moves.

As these games go, this is one of the better ones, which isn't saying much. However it does nothing more than tax the occassional reflex while you stare at the screen waiting for the next globe to light up. If you want to impress your mates, show them Cobra Command, after all, the animation is very similar to this and you got it free. As for Time Gal, save your money, there are many better games on the way.





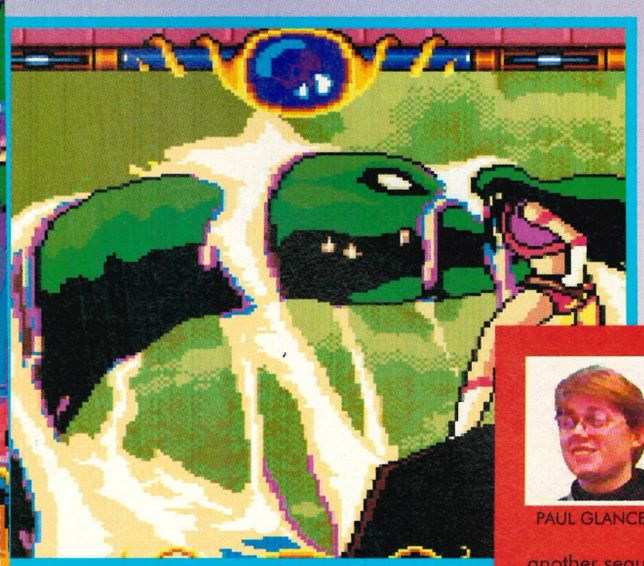
▲ It's the pirate captain, come to shiver your timbers and splice your yard-arm (or worse).



▲ Mr Grim Reaper here wants to hang your head in the garden for the blue tits to peck at.

UK UPDATE

The version reviewed here is Japanese, so all you Sega CD owners had best steer clear of it. However, Sega are planning a UK version for release in this country in July. One of the advantages of a game such as this is that it doesn't require any reprogramming, just a trip down to the dubbing studios with a willing actress and presto! A UK version.



THE SECOND OPINION

PAUL GLANCEY

I'm beginning to quite enjoy these Mega-CD games with the cartoon graphics, but while this looks really good, the gameplay is very short-lived. It takes a couple of goes to memorise which direction you're supposed to press when, but once you've worked it out it's amazing how short each sequence is. The action lasts maybe 20 seconds, then it screeches to a halt and another sequence starts in another time zone. If it didn't jump around so much you'd have a good feeling of a plot progressing, but you don't get that and consequently it's not as enjoyable as, say, Cobra Command. What's there is okay (it's funny at least), but there's just not enough to get your teeth into.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION 80%
The ability to view the levels is a nice touch.

GRAPHICS 87%
Good animation apart from the death sequences.

SOUND 88%
Nice sound effects apart from the girlish giggles.

SHORT TERM PLAY 77%
Having to replay levels right from the off is very dull.

LONG TERM PLAY 50%
Easy to finish, with no reason to go back to it afterwards.

OVERALL 59
Nice graphics, but could do with a lot more gameplay.

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MEGASELL

MEGA-CD REVIEW



BY:WOLFTEAM



CD ROM

STYLE



BEAT 'EM UP

PRICE IMPORT

PLAYERS 1-2

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

OUT NOW



• Thanks to the Video Game centre for lending us this game. You can contact them on: 0202 527 314

Annette A



Japanese Wonder Woman alert! MARK HOLMES attempts to solve the mystery of Wolfteam's new heroine-based slash 'em up ANNETTE AGAIN and ends up talking to himself. What a nutter.

Annette again? Call me Mr Sieve Brain, but I don't recall Annette the first time around. (Ah, Paul's just filled me in – apparently, Annette was the star of a Japanese Megadrive game called El Viento which came out in 1991. 'El Viento' was her superhero-type name, 'cos she had superpowers and stuff, but to her mates she was just plain old Annette. So there you go.)

In true Japanese superchick fashion, Annette has long green hair, enormous goo-goo eyes the size of goldfish bowls, supermodel's legs and wears the shortest mini-skirts this side of indecent exposure. Well, she does in the Anime-style intro, anyway – the Annette sprite in the actual game is a more stunted version and, of course, you can't see her goggle eyes.

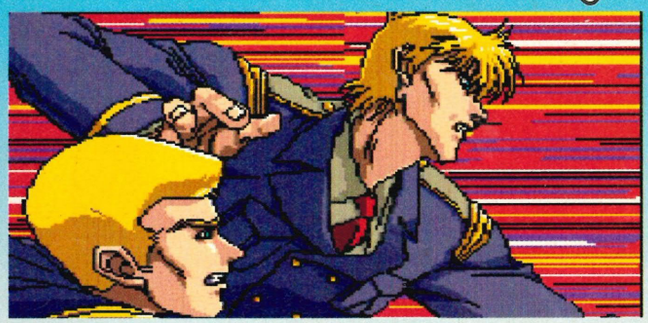
WHAT'S THE PLOT?

I dunno, it's all in Japanese.

BUT YOU MUST HAVE SOME IDEA

Look, I'm not a Japanese translator, you know. But yes, I suppose it is possible to make some sort of sense out of the intro. That Earnest Evans geezer is involved somewhere along the line (he's Annette's boyfriend, see, and as regular readers will know appeared in his own Mega-CD game a while back).

The intro starts with Earnest and Annette ariving at an exotic location on a ferry – maybe they've gone abroad on holiday to escape the pressures of being superhero-type do-gooders for a while? Anyway, whilst looking round the local museum, the dynamic duo are approached by a chap in a uniform. Next thing, they're in a palace, being quizzed by what looks like the local queen. Then her uniformed henchmen suddenly lunge at our Annette, who has to escape by leaping through the panes of a window. After that, it's straight into the game, with our heroine being attacked from all sides by evil henchmen of various types. It seems to me that having green hair must be against the law in this country, and the queen has ordered her secret policemen to arrest Annette for violating this hair code. But because Annette is such an internationally famous superhero, her henchmen have to go about their task in disguises, to avoid any bad publicity. Yeah, that must be it.



▲ "Stuff Guard Duty – we wanna RAVE!"

COME OFF IT, THAT SOUNDS A BIT FAR-FETCHED!

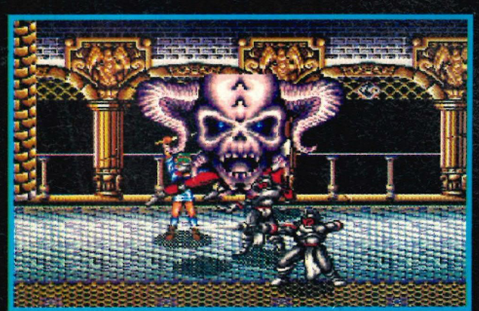
Yes, I know, but this is Video Gamesworld we're talking about here – suspended reality, anything can happen, you know. Anyway, this is one of those games where the plot is about as important as the colour of the main character's eyes – it's just a very straightforward scrolling beat 'em up with a few Mega-CD tricks thrown in to jazz things up a bit.

IS IT ANY GOOD?

Not really. It's very similar in style to Mazin Saga, which we previewed last issue, but nowhere near as smart in the graphics, animation or gameplay departments and it doesn't have the superb one-on-one swordfighting sequences of MS either.

It's one-player only – naturally you play Annette, hacking your way through a different bunch of baddies on each level. But I found that sometimes, when I'd dispatched one wave of baddies, I had to hang around, stranded on the same screen, waiting for the last baddie of the wave to make an appearance for what seemed like ages. This gets really frustrating – you can see the baddie's icon and energy bar at the top right-hand corner, so you know he's about to make an appearance, and the game refuses to scroll onto the next screen, so all you can do is wander about, waiting for Mr Nasty Slowcoach to turn up. Snore.

As you make your way to each not-very-impressive end-of-level boss, you can pick up extra energy in the standard beat/slash 'em up way – smash the statue-type things at either side of your path and



▲ Magic No. 1: Skull comes down, screen goes black, baddies fall over.



▲ Magic No. 2: Screen flips upside down, baddies take a hit.



▲ Magic No. 3: Whirlwind descends, baddies are sucked through top of screen.

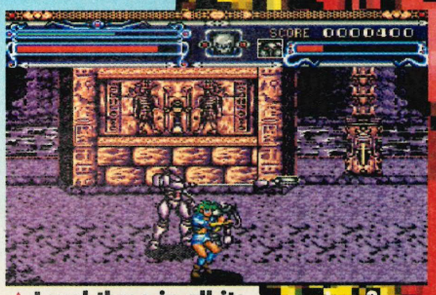
Again

pick up the Coca-Cola-type cans that pop out.

Compared to Mazin' Saga, Annette's moves are limited (see sequence), but she does have another trick up her rolled-up sleeve – she can do magic.



▲ Level one boss – a bit of a nonce.



▲ Level three in all its, r... glory?



▲ Flame-grilled female superhero, anyone?

MAGIC? WOW!

Yes, but don't get too excited – it's not as impressive as it sounds. This is how it works. As you progress, your magic level, displayed at the top left-hand of the screen, increases. When the bar is full, an icon will appear in the frame to the right of the magic bar, indicating that you have enough magic energy to cast a spell. Pressing the magic button on your joypad will then cast the spell, giving those nasties a good dose of supernatural spanking. There are five different magic spells available (see magic screenshot sequence), and you can 'save up' your magic power to get the one you want.

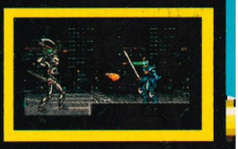
The magic has obviously been added to the game to justify its Mega-CD status, because the usual factors which make a Mega-CD game stand out over cart games – flashy intro and sound quality – are both crap. Unfortunately, the 'magical' effects amount to little more than a few screen-flipping and sprite-stretching tricks, and do nothing to raise this game above the level of the mediocre.

THE SECOND OPINION



I'm getting really fed up with seeing sub-standard tripe on the Mega-CD. Ninja Warriors and this, all in the same month. Annette Again is such a dull game. Run right and kill baddies with all three of your moves and that's about it. Yawny-yawn. Horizontally-scrolling slash 'em ups may be as old as the hills, but that doesn't mean there's no room for new ones. Take Mazin Wars, now that's a game I like. This is just a poor imitation. Annette Again was well-hyped in the Japanese mags and I was expecting something smart, but disappointment is the order of the day. Very average graphics, long boring intros and a complete lack of variety make this game one big stinker. When you consider that Golden Axe came out on a 4-meg cart around three years ago with tons of variety and two-player action, there is no excuse for this bumph. I'm gonna have to agree with Mark – the man said "mediocre" and that's exactly what it is. The Mega-CD can really do without rubbish like this.

ALTERNATIVELY



85 ALTERNATIVELY MAZIN WAR
PRICE: TBA

Previewed last month (when it was called Mazin Saga), we're hoping to see this released real soon. Similar style to Annette Again, but with smaller sprites and the bonus of excellent one-on-one swordfights with mega sprites at the end of each level. And it's miles better too.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION 60%
Reasonable-Anime-style intro and inter-level screens.

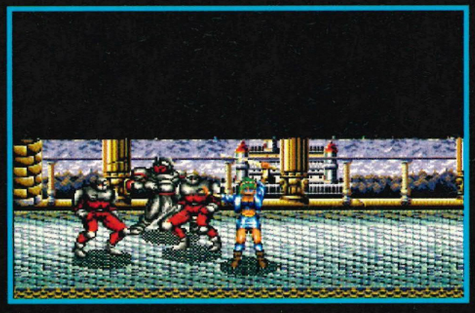
GRAPHICS 60%
Blocky back-grounds, diddy sprites. Clumsy 'magic' effects.

SOUND 50%
Dull tunes, basic fighting sound effects.

SHORT TERM PLAY 65%
Basic slash 'em up style, easily picked up.

LONG TERM PLAY 50%
Reasonable challenge, but very samey.

OVERALL 59
Basic scrolling slash 'em up with a few cheap 'magic' tricks thrown in.



▲ Magic No. 4: Half the screen blacks out, all the baddies hit the deck.



▲ Magic No. 5: Dragon flies to top of screen, bye-bye baddies.

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From the makers of Nintendo MAGAZINE SYSTEM PCreview MEGA MACHINES SEGA ONE AMIGA

9 Hou

MEGADRIVE REVIEW

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: ACCOLADE



8 M-BIT

STYLE

SPORTS

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1-2

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

MAY 1993



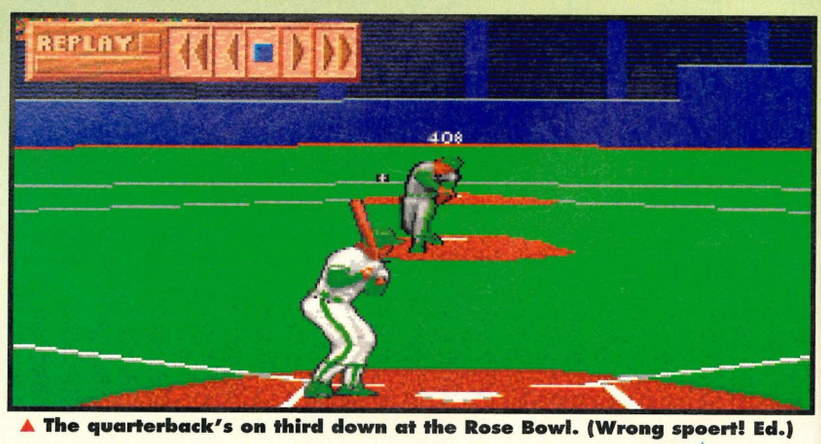
Can the many wonders inherent in Hardball III turn the cynical head of PAUL DAVIES, one who refers to the honourable institution of baseball as "Rounders in poncey outfits"? Read on and see for yourself...

Ladies and gentlemen, before we start I would like to stand up and confess something. I'm sorry, but it would be dishonest of me to say that Baseball is my all time favourite sport, and video-game Baseball... well, I'd rather douse my trousers in petrol and set fire to my legs. Those other Megadrive baseball games may have had praise heaped upon them, but I remained unconvinced and although Accolade have crammed as many features of the sport into the cart as they can, I was still a bit dubious. But Hardball III was going to have a good go at convincing me.

Hardball III is produced with the aid of that 'famous' baseball star, Al Michaels, and it's the velvet voice of Al who welcomes you to the game. Yes, Accolade have taken a leaf out of Sega's book, digitising the voice of a famous sports star to provide play-by-play commentaries. And that's not the only presentation plus in Hardball III. The front end of the game has so many options to mess about with that it is almost unbelievable. Everything, from the colour of your team's shirts and caps right down to who they play and where, is open to change. It's even possible to name your chosen team and design a logo for them. If there's anything you wish to change to suit you, Accolade have made this as easy as possible!



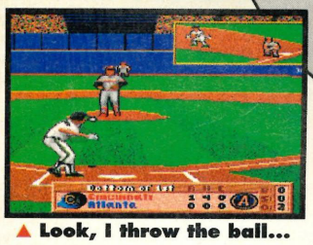
▲ The shortstop's shooting off a round robin 1-2-3 play. (You what? Ed.)



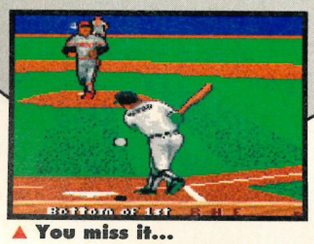
▲ The quarterback's on third down at the Rose Bowl. (Wrong spoert! Ed.)



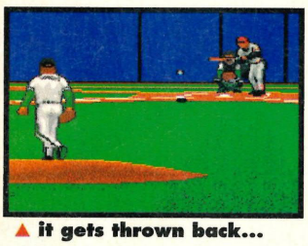
▲ Let's play ball...



▲ Look, I throw the ball...



▲ You miss it...



▲ it gets thrown back...



▲ Then we play kiss-cat!

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME

After a team is decided upon it's off to the ball park. Here is where the player chooses to enter into the series, the Baseball equivalent of league matches, or take part in a 'friendly' against the CPU or a second player. In either case there is the opportunity for a spot of pitching or batting practice just to warm up.

Both pitchers and batters have a selection of five techniques available to them. With the pitcher this selection relates to the speed and curve of the ball upon throwing it; the batter's menu gives him the choice of swings. As you might guess there is little scope for sad 'Hey! I didn't want it to go that way' type excuses in Hardball III - something which I was sadly quite good at until Accolade took the ability away! Meanwhile Al Michaels mutters away to himself in the background, bless him.

DIAMOND GEEZER

Once you're satisfied that your pitching and batting techniques are God's gift to baseball it's onward to the game itself. Here is where Al Michaels speaks his mind at every available opportunity! After announcing the line-up in his best Android-English, Al is persistently at the ready for providing updates on the action and divulging the odd snippet of advice for hopeless Baseball losers, such as myself. For the first half an hour or so, Al and I got along famously. Al's presence certainly adds to the big ball-park scene. Yet it wasn't long before I felt that I could do better without his constant waffle. It's a nice feature though.

CHAELS ANNOUNCES

alBall III



▲ Get out from behind that Menu Box and face the ball, you chicken!



▲ This is a baseball game, right? So this must be a stats screen, yeah?

THE SECOND OPINION



PAUL GLANCEY

Like Paul Davies I've never liked computer baseball games but, unlike him, Hardball III did nothing to change my opinion. The smart presentation is laudable but, as in all the other baseball games, this still relies on the player being well into baseball before the action starts. Baseball itself is such a simple game that once you start playing there's simply too little for you to do. The different pitching options don't give the hitting player much variety to contend with and the hitting controls are so vague that you can never be certain of where the ball is going to end up, if you hit it at all. I was surprised at the low quality of the graphics which don't add much in the way of realism – the main pitcher and hitter sprites are okay, but the fielders are tiny blob-men who quake around the outfield not catching the ball. There is nothing in this game to attract the average non-baseball fan, and lots to turn them off, and I would have thought that would apply to just about every British Megadrive player.

WATCH OUT – HERE COMES THE PITCH!

Now, I've played a few video-baseball games in the past and I must say that they're not the most accurate representations of the sport. However, Hardball III seems to have found a good mix of strategy and action to make this adaptation as true to life as possible, whilst still making for a fun console game. In two-player games especially, the tension is quite high whenever the ball is pitched and likewise when the batter strikes. Or not. Once the ball is hit and the batter makes his bid for first, second or even third base, the gameplay steps up another gear.

On many occasions the control of fielders and players stranded on bases is very confusing in lesser baseball carts. Thankfully this is not the case here. The action is very straightforward with the control over both fielders and base-men being very clear with no messing: Move your fielders beneath the ball and, hopefully they catch it; Use the D-pad to select a base and press a button to have your chosen base-man make a run for it. Simple. And with Al Michaels offering his congrats or condolences in the background.

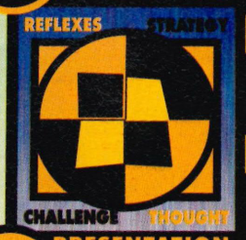
So Hardball III is responsible for twisting my arm and having me admit that it is possible to produce a decent baseball game on console, and if you don't mind an aged Baseball hero chatting to you the whole time then you should enjoy this. Though there's no way in the world this is as essential as John Madden's '92 for top quality, two-player excitement, It is certainly the best example of Baseball on the Megadrive that I have ever experienced.

ALTERNATIVELY



74 RBI BASEBALL 4
BY: DOMARK
PRICE: £39.99
Loads of features, presentation on par with Hardball III (but without speech). Not really for non-baseball fans, though.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 89%
Enough options to keep any baseball buff happy.

GRAPHICS 69%
Could have been better. Above average pitcher and batter sprites.

SOUND 79%
Speech is quite good, but the music isn't exceptional.

SHORT TERM PLAY 67%
Like baseball? You'll like this! Don't like it and you won't!

LONG TERM PLAY 68%
If you persevere for the first ten minutes, you'll play it for a while.

OVERALL 69
Another baseball game which is best left to the minuscule gang of European baseball fans.

MEGA-CD REVIEW

MEGA CD REVIEW



BY: SEGA

TAITO

8-MEG

STYLE

BEAT 'EM UP

PRICE IMPORT

PLAYERS 1-2

SKILL SETTINGS 4

RELEASE DATE

JUNE 1993

Thanks to Advanced Console Entertainment for lending us this game. Contact them on: 071 4391185.



What's that sound of tortured agony? Is it the cries of a nation under the rule of an evil criminal tyrant, or just RAD AUTOMATIC playing Ninja Warriors? We're afraid it's the latter. Oh dear.

Criminal masterminds, eh? Once they've built up a substantial stash of money gained through drugs, prostitution, gambling, extortion and stolen dinner money they build themselves a big, impenetrable fortress stuffed with machine-gun toting guards and await the inevitable onslaught from the latest lone hero. However, Banglar is slightly different. Using his pile of dishonestly-obtained loot, he simply paid for a huge advertising campaign and went and got himself elected as President of the USA, probably partly to do with his promise of free drugs, gambling and er, all that to the masses, and also partly thanks to the fact that he was no different from all the other candidates.

However, President Banglar's style of ruling was slightly dissimilar to those who went before. Banglar dissolved the mighty Congress, burnt the Constitution and proclaimed his desire to conquer the entire planet. So actually, thinking about it, maybe he's not all that different from the others after all.

Anyway, Professor Von Dek of the Resistance decided there was only one way this evil tyrant could possibly be dealt with – two barely-armed Ninjas must single-handedly storm the White House and kill Banglar. Sadly, Ninja assassins haven't really had that high a profile since the twelfth century, and even that was in feudal Japan. Luckily, Von Dek is a master of robotic engineering, so building two spiritually-attuned magical robot Ninjas was an absolute doddle for him. However, it takes a very specialised kind of remote-control enthusiast to control such creations, which is where the player enters the scene.



▲ A pixelly blob is brutally beaten.



▲ But it reforms into human form.

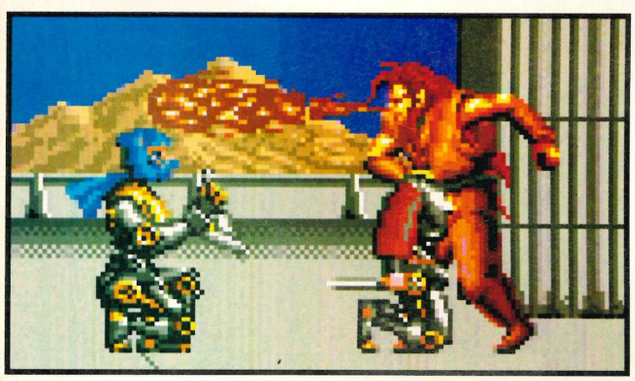


▲ Help, get me off this awful game!

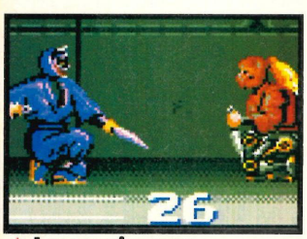


▲ Sorry, pal, you're in it for goo!!





▲ Jeez, this game's so awful, I think I'm gonna... bleurgh!



▲ I recognise you...

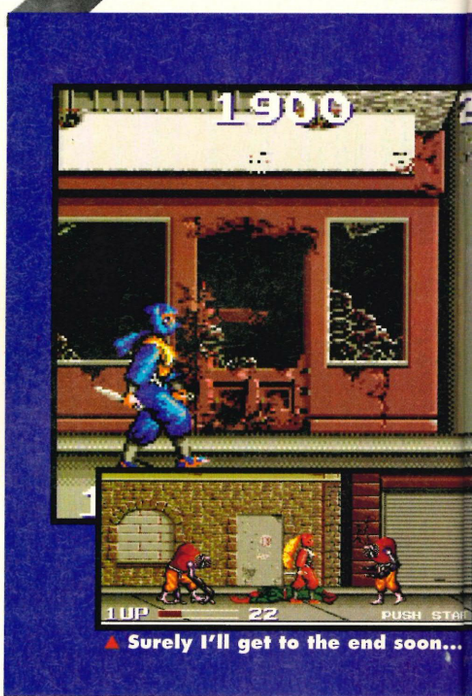


▲ You're David Coverdale!

FREEDOM FIGHTING

It is your job, and the job of a friend if in two-player mode, to guide the robots through the area leading up to the White House itself, slashing and killing until freedom is ensured. There are a number of ways in which the automatons can go about this. First off are their trusty katana swords. Any enemy who strolls within hacking distance is certainly done for, thanks to these weapons. The ninjas also start the game with thirty shuriken – the notorious throwing stars of the ninja. These weapons are for long-range use, although they are nowhere near as powerful as the sword, and it generally takes two or three throwing stars to do the job of one chop.

However, whilst the initial supply of these projectiles is limited, should your robot stop firing for about thirty seconds or so he is able to manufacture another five in his internal production line. The ninja are also able to defend themselves against attack. Simply keep the slash button held down for a second or so and your prefabricated warrior crosses his arms, thus somehow making him invulnerable to all attack. Well, nearly – he can still be harmed by enemy bullets or by his foes simply running directly into him. So, come to think of it, it's not really worth the bother. Anyway, as the ninjas take more damage, more and more of their simulated flesh is stripped away, exposing lots of rather natty-looking robotic parts.



▲ Surely I'll get to the end soon...

PAP MUSIC

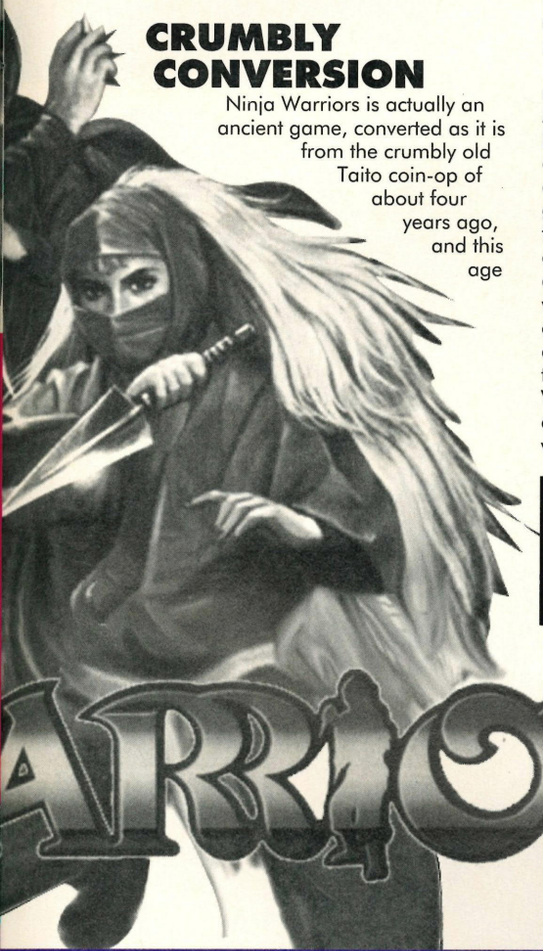
Marching across horizontally scrolling landscapes hacking millions of corrupt government employees to pieces isn't all there is to this game. On the title screen, there is an option labelled ZUNTATA. This gives the player some background info as to the plot, in the form of a text-and-pics story. Then, after a while, this cuts into what could be labelled only (and even then, loosely), as a pop video, although it's difficult to believe it could ever be popular. The band responsible for the in-game music (Zuntata, one surmises) now jerk and swing to a variety of their tunes thanks to a quantity of live footage from one of their concerts. Needless to say, Take That have nothing to worry about.

CRUMBLY CONVERSION

Ninja Warriors is actually an ancient game, converted as it is from the crumbly old Taito coin-op of about four years ago, and this age really does show. The game design is unbelievably simplistic, there's nary a platform nor hazard to dodge, just a succession of horizontal levels full of foes to kill. This wouldn't be so bad if the game was fast paced and had plenty of moves to use, but sadly this isn't the case. If you can press Right on your joypad and hit one button, Ninja Warriors should pose no challenge for you, as this is all that's required.

Every so often, a nasty chances upon the screen, and is promptly dispatched with one thrust of your sword. It's possible to get most of the way through the game simply by crouch-walking through it, slashing constantly, occasionally turning round to exhume someone at the rear. Obviously, this becomes enormously tedious within seconds. There's about as much scope for skill in this game as there is for enjoyment – pretty much none at all.

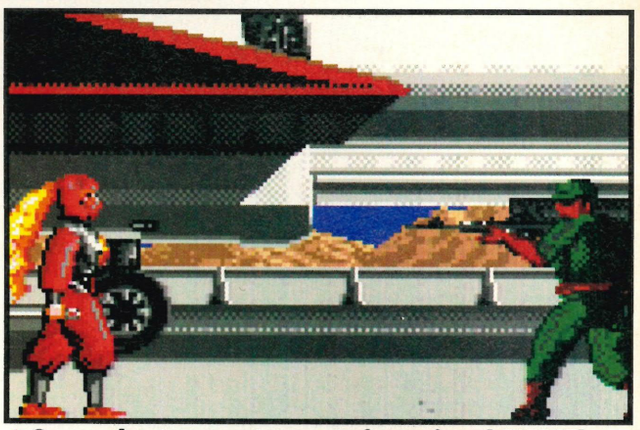
And it gets worse. This is a Mega-CD game, and yet it looks and even sounds like a below-par Megadrive title. The graphics appear to have been drawn for the Master System, and the sound doesn't come out much better. The in-game tunes are weedy, repetitive and irritating, much like the game itself in fact. Taking into account the fact that this is an expensive CD title utilising cutting-edge games technology, it is appalling that Taito actually believe they can get away with it. The words "a complete waste of the Mega-CD's capabilities" seem to be cropping up everywhere at the moment, but that's the only way to describe the programming shambles which is Ninja Warriors. If it's a CD beat 'em up you're after, check out the excellent Final Fight CD, and steer well clear of this monotonous heap of pants.



NINJA WARRIORS



▲ Zuntata – up against the wall... aim... FIRE!



▲ Go on, shoot me – put me out of my misery! PLEASE!



▲ Maybe a prayer will help me out?





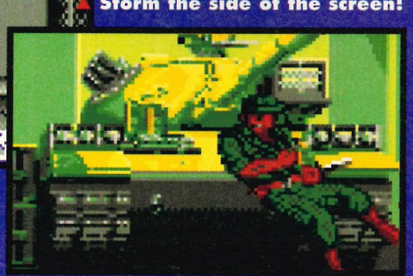
▲ Poor bloke – a shadow of his former self – he didn't make it out.



▲ Oh no, it just seems to go on and on forever... think I'll start sleepwalking, it's the only answer.



▲ Storm the side of the screen!



▲ Gung ho, boys! We'll get out of this darned game if it kills us!

THE SECOND OPINION



PAUL GLANCEY

I had a distant memory of this being at least half enjoyable as a game, but whatever it may once have had, Ninja Warriors has certainly lost with the passage of time. The sprites are really dismal, badly animated and out of proportion, and the backgrounds are really dull to look at. It's the hopeless gameplay that really kills it, though. This really is a game you could play with one hand tied behind your back and looking out of the window. As long as you keep the D-button held right and keep pressing the attack button you're safe. It really is that dull. If there was one thing I liked about this game it was the fact that I didn't have to do any complex weighing up of pros and cons when I wrote this comment, simply because with Ninja Warriors there are no pros. At least British Mega-CD owners can take comfort from the fact that this is only playable on Japanese machines.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 78%
Many options, the lovely Zuntata bit, but it's very bland.

GRAPHICS 54%
Gnn! Wobbly, ill-defined sprites and featureless backgrounds.

SOUND 67%
Zuntata truly deserve shooting, as does the sound effects man.

SHORT TERM PLAY 64%
Pretty uninspiring right from the start.

LONG TERM PLAY 38%
It gets worse when you realise it doesn't change at all, ever.

OVERALL 41
Even big fans of the coin-op (of which there can't be many) would loathe this.

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: VIC TOKAI



4 M-BIT

STYLE

SPORT

PRICE IMPORT

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS N/A

RELEASE DATE

OUT NOW



After a vomit-drenched all-day lobster fishing trip off the coast of Cornwall in his early teens, MARK HOLMES vowed never to get involved in sea fishing again. But then he discovered KING SALMON, the angling sim where you can fish without losing your lunch...

King Sa

This game has been driving me mad for the last few days. Yes, I know – you're probably looking at the screenshots and thinking, "Yeah, looks like a pile of crap! I think I'd go round the bend if I had to play a game like that." But that's not the reason why King Salmon is driving me to distraction. It's just that I've been playing it, on and off, for the past few days and yes, I'm hooked (come on, you knew I'd have to get that phrase in somewhere in this review, so I might as well get it over with right at the start).

HAIL THE KING!

King Salmon takes you to the Mecca of chinook fishing, Vancouver Island on the coast of Canada, where your task is to compete in four local tournaments. Each tournament is judged on the gross weight of king salmon landed – get into the the top three and you're through to the next round. Your ultimate aim is to reach the World Record Challenge, where your aim is to land a record-breaking fish.



▲ Get this message on the Wide Area Map and you're in business!





▲ Right, you've got one on the hook, and he's looking pretty strong!



▲ The fight is on! Pump that reel and pull him in – he's getting closer!



▲ Yes! Landed one – but is it a king or just a pretender?



TROLLING AROUND

At the start of each tournament, the screen gives you a view of the 'Wide Area Map' – you control your boat, searching out a good spot to start fishing. You can test out the viability of the location by pressing A, which brings up a message onscreen. If the message is negative, you can continue in your search for a salmon-rich stretch of water. If it's positive, pressing C will take you to a blow-up map of that particular area.

Now you can start fishing for a big catch. Each stretch of water is marked out in different colours, showing the varying depth of water. Shoals of fish swim about beneath the waves – herring in black, salmon in red – but it's not always easy to track them as they move over the darker areas of water. After a while, you can suss out which are the most likely spots to get a bite, but it's impossible to accurately predict the shoals' patterns of movement. This is where the art of trolling comes into use.

Trolling is a method of fishing whereby a lure or piece of bait is towed behind a boat to attract the quarry. It's a skill that takes a while to perfect. For a start, you have to spot the shoal before it gets too close to the edge of the screen or you'll lose it and secondly, if your boat goes directly over a shoal, your outboard motor will scatter them and the fish will disperse. So you have to perfect the technique of manoeuvring your boat around the side of the shoal until your lure is in the right position, then motoring along, trailing the lure with the shoal and hoping for a bite. Alternatively, of course, you can just hang around in one spot, hoping for a fish to take the bait, but that's incredibly boring.

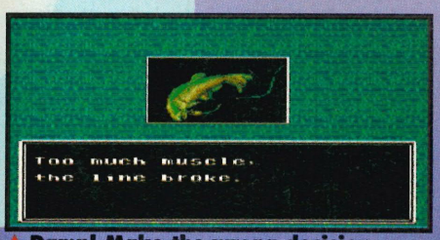
IT'S A LURE

Fishing for king salmon isn't just a case of trolling around, hoping for a lucky bite – there's a lot of strategy to it, you know, and the options in King Salmon reflect this. When fishing in the close-up 'Point Map', you can press Start at any point to call up the trolling screen. This gives you options to change the type of lure you're using, the length of your line and the depth at which you're trolling your lure. You can also check on your catch so far, check up on your current skill level or give up and call it a day from this screen.

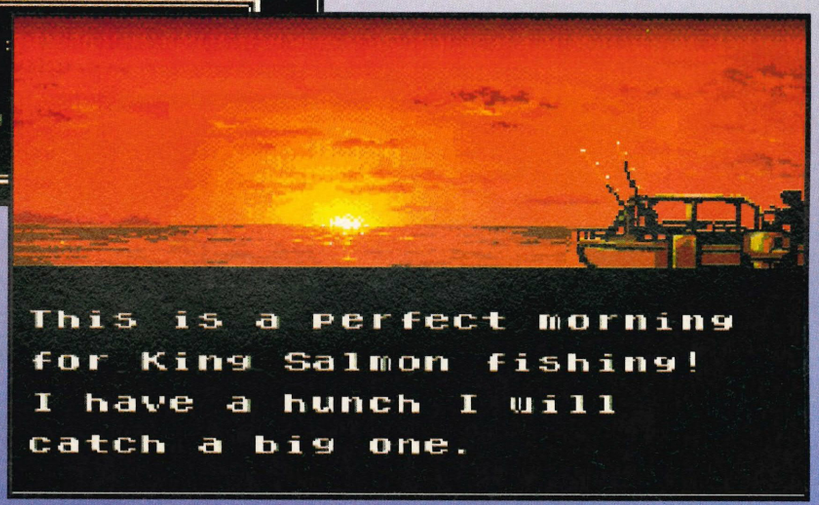
lmon



▲ **A 15 pounder! Sorry, mate – only king salmon count in tournaments.**



▲ **Damn! Make the wrong decision during a fight and it's bye-bye, fishy.**



▲ **This screen gives you weather conditions at the start of each tourney.**

KINGFISHER BLUES

Look, I've been taking a lot of stick around the office for the last few days, but I'm unrepentant – I like King Salmon. I know that the graphics look like refugees from a particularly dull Master System game, but once you get into the game and start hooking a few fish, the game's quite compulsive. The most surprising thing about the game is the depth of the strategy element – you have to be very careful to choose the right spot to fish as well as the right lure, line length and depth to fish at, and it takes a fair bit of practice (or a good dollop of luck) to get it right.

The fun really starts once you've hooked a fish and start fighting to reel the blighter in – the control method, combined with the functional graphics and the problems that flash up in text boxes requiring instant decisions, give you the feeling that you're involved in a real fight (honestly). And it ain't easy either. So if you're up for a challenging game with a strong strategy element, aren't bothered about flashy graphics and can put up with 'it's that weirdo who likes fishing games' jibes from your mates, King Salmon could be quite a catch.



▲ **Your boat trolling a shoal of salmon – it takes skill to perfect technique.**

THE SECOND OPINION



TOM GUISE

Oh dear. I've just seen the men in white coats leading Mark out of the office, but boy did he put up a fight. He kept screaming about how he'd seen the King, but I haven't seen Elvis anywhere. But jokes aside, I have to agree with Mark. There's something horribly appealing about King Salmon. Look, I know it's a fishing game, but it has a number of addictive elements. Give the game a chance and you'll see. The trolling about requires quite a bit of strategy and once you've hooked a fish you really do cheer. The music changes, and you have to skillfully reel the blighter in. It's quite a challenge. Catch a big one and you've really got a fight on your hands. What's more, the little comedy elements like the poor fish tiring out and then crying really are amusing. In fact, you tend to side with the little finny fella. I can't seriously recommend this game, because a fishing game just won't appeal to many people and I certainly wouldn't buy it, but I was pleasantly surprised and did enjoy it. This is about as good as a fishing game can get.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 75%
Lots of options, including password.

GRAPHICS 65%
Very basic, but very functional.

SOUND 30%
Totally dire tunes, no sound effects.

SHORT TERM PLAY 65%
Takes a while to get to grips with.

LONG TERM PLAY 80%
Strategy and difficulty make for longevity

OVERALL 70
Surprisingly enjoyable fishing sim with strong strategy element.

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: SEGA

SEGA™

4 M-BIT

STYLE

PLATFORM

PRICE IMPORT

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

OUT NOW



Have you ever considered why some animals are alive? How a few bizarre, creatures slipped through the evolutionary net? Take the duck-billed platypus, or DORAEMON, the earless cat. And then there's that weird, mutated beast TOM GUISE. Surely a match made in heaven here.

DORA ADVE

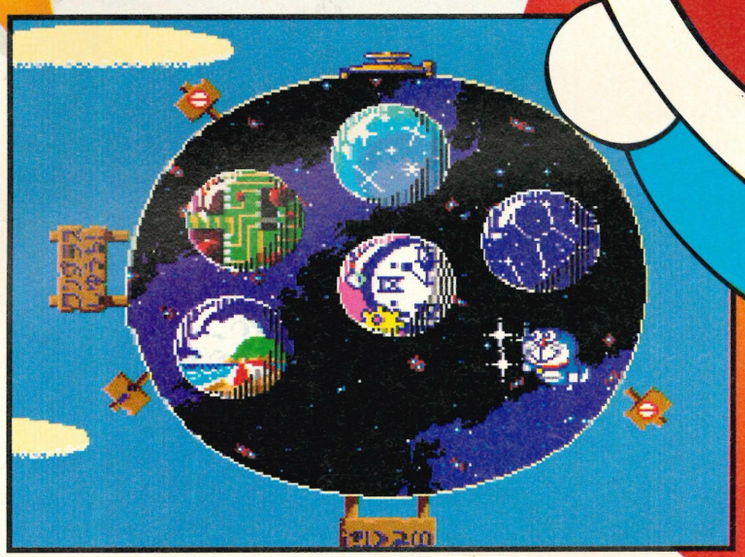
A cat with no ears. That's what he is. That's Doraemon for you. We've had blue hedgehogs, two-tailed foxes, robotic cods and now this. Talk about jumping onto the 'deformed animal game' bandwagon. At this rate it won't be long before we start seeing lipless ponies and club-footed pigeons in their own games. But, hang on a second, it seems that Doraemon is older than all these characters, for as the box states, our ear-free pal has been a fine purveyor of cutesy cartoon capers since 1970. Yep, Doraemon's a bit of a superstar in Japan and now this champion of the aurally challenged has arrived on the Megadrive in his very own game.

PUSS IN PLATFORMS

So what kind of wild and wacky adventures does a cat with no ears get up to? Does he fight to overcome his handicap by composing a symphony? Or perhaps go on a quest to find a pair of legendary magical ears which will restore his hearing and herald him the Prince of Cats? Or does he negotiate an eight-way scrolling platform environment collecting stars? Yep, it comes as little surprise to learn that it's jumpy-jumpy platform time again, as our earless chum follows in the well-worn footsteps of every other deformed, yet cute animal to have entered the console world. The plot? Well, a villainous, red-furred, shades-wearing hyper-being has stolen the dreams of all the children in town. Using the power of these dreams he has created a strange pocket universe in which reside seven bizarre worlds known as the Gonzansu. No doubt he intends to take over the Earth or some other such dastardly scheme. Fortunately though, Doraemon was in the area at the time promoting his latest pencil case and eraser set. There he was performing humourous visual pranks and hanging out with the kids when the red-furred one struck. Although he couldn't



▲ Doraemon turns heli-cat with the smart 'rotor blade hat' power-up.



▲ Five new worlds await on the level introduction screen.

● Thanks to the Video Games Centre, Bournemouth, for lending us this game. Contact them on 0202 527314.

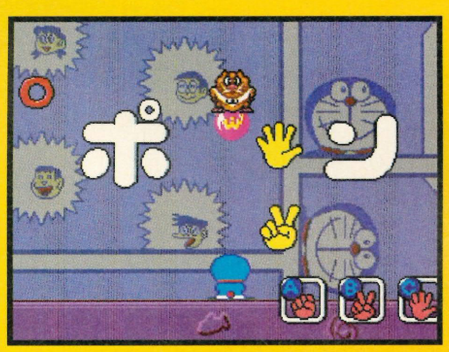
THE PUSSY AND THE PARTY GAMES

At the end of each level Doraemon has to face a boss. "What's new?" you might say. Well, instead of fighting the baddie, the Earless Wonder has to beat the villain in a game of Rock, Paper, Scissors. The first character to claim three rounds is the winner.

Weird as that might seem, the final boss level is without doubt the strangest, for Doraemon must face all the previous bosses in a game of Musical Chairs. The tension mounts, the chairs are positioned and the music starts. Surely this is a first.



▲ Caption



▲ Look, I know this looks easy to you...



▲ But as well as beating the bosses...



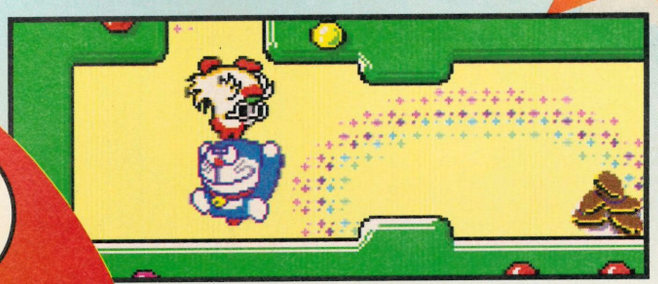
▲ You have to turn away,

AEMON NTURE

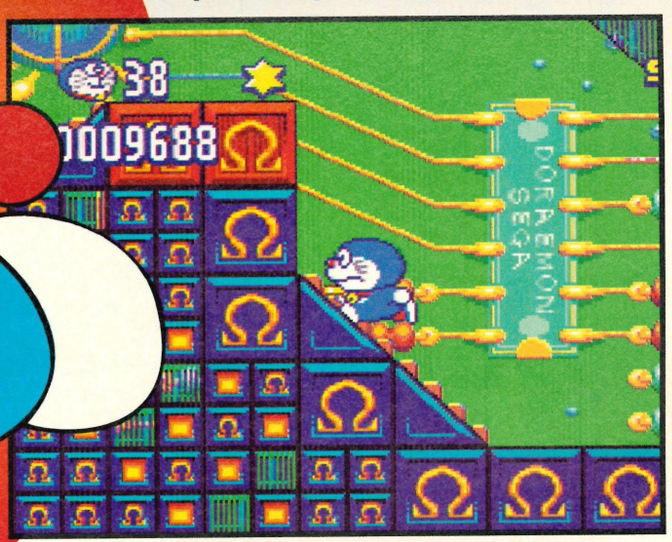
hear the children's tortured screams of pain as their dreams were torn violently from their minds, he no doubt sensed something was wrong when they turned a horrible shade of grey and started throwing up blood (not really). So with nary a care for his own safety Doraemon set off to rescue the children's dreams and restore peace to the galaxy. Bless his little heart.

SEVEN LEVELS TO SWING A CAT IN

All the usual traits of a cutesy platformer are here. Loads of baddies, plenty of strange things to pick up and a fair few bonus rooms. There are seven levels in all, one for each of the dream worlds and all of them have their own unique theme. The first one, with its Doraemon wallpaper-style backdrops, has loads of bingo ball type machines which blow our pussy pal into the air. Level two is made up of rainbow-coloured slides and there are musical stepping stones for Doraemon to negotiate, not that he'd appreciate them (no ears, you see). Later levels see our non-eared pal tackling giant circuit boards, massive clock faces and astrological charts, to name but a few. Most incredible of all, however, is the fact that there is not a mine cart or ice level in sight. Will wonders never cease?



▲ That Doraemon! He knocks chicks out, picks 'em up and then chucks 'em!



▲ Microchip World – sponsored by Omega watches.

EARLESS AND FEARLESS!

The baddies in this game are nothing if not bizarre. Green imps armed with clubs, chickens in sunglasses, evil-looking black balls and little peas carrying giant 2B pencils, amongst others. However, Doraemon isn't completely helpless. Unlike your average two-eared domestic feline, our earless buddy is armed with a laser gun – no bottom-bouncing for our Japanese celebrity. One quick blast of his shooter and not only are the baddies incapacitated, but they're turned upside down too. They can now be ritually abused, either by using them as platforms or picking them up and throwing them at other baddies.

CAT IN THE HELICOPTER HAT

Hi-tech laser weaponry isn't the only thing available to the modern day cat, no sirree. Scattered throughout the levels, just ripe for the picking, are cat biscuits for extra lives, clockwork keys for invincibility, helicopter hats with which he can take to the skies, mannequins which give Doraemon an identical twin and even a stop-clock which freezes the opposition solid for a short while.

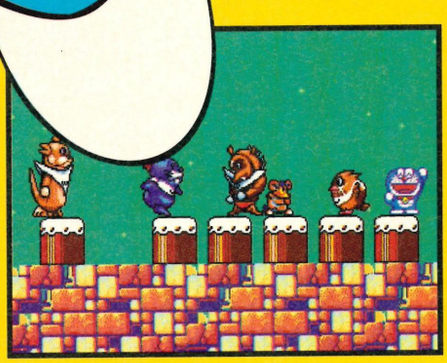
NINE LIVES OR EVEN MORE!

Sonic collects rings, Mario collects coins, Doraemon collects stars. For every seven stars he collects, our earless buddy gets himself an extra life. However, collect 77 of the blighters and young no-ears is transported to a secret bonus level where stars are sprayed out of a strange machine. This is a great opportunity to clock up an absolute ton of lives.

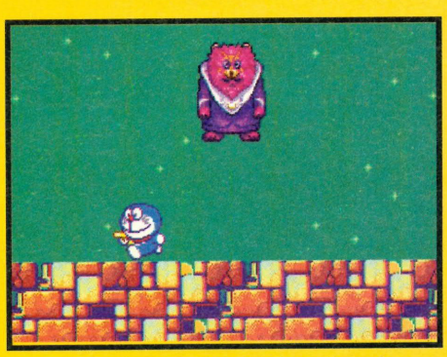
Also, by finding special doors, Doraemon can enter a special mathematics bonus room. Here he has to place the faces of various characters from the game into an equation to total up yet more lives. Red-furred baddies are worth nothing, but Doraemons are worth three. Earless he may be, but worthless he definitely isn't.



rom them too!



▲ Musical Chairs hits Megadrive shock!



▲ And the boss is left high and dry!

DORAEMON ADVENTURE

TOP CAT

To us, Doraemon may be just a very stupid-looking cat with no ears, but to the Japanese he is a god. Well, not really a god, but definitely a superstar. However, why does he have no ears? Well, it seems that Doraemon is, in fact, a robot. This, of course, doesn't answer that question at all, but at least he didn't end up with scissor hands (he'd lose at rock, paper, scissors every time). Anyway, this disfigurement hasn't affected his popularity, for he can be found on all kinds of merchandise in the Land Of The Rising Sun, with T-shirts, mugs, baseball caps and all manner of stationery sporting his cheeky little earless face. In fact, the game itself comes packages with a Doraemon pencil case, pencil and rubber set, and all for £50. A pretty hefty price, but better than having your ears lopped off.

LETTING THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG

Doraemon is a highly entertaining game. Although it's very similar to every other platformer around, the strong Japanese flavour, both in looks and gameplay really does give it that weird edge. The graphics, although simple, are very colourful and stylish and the main sprite is wonderfully animated. It all looks very reminiscent of the Mario games. Likewise, the sound is of a high quality with decent tunes and plenty of cat-speech (if there is such a thing). However, it can get a little grating after a while, especially with Doraemon's death meow. In fact, Paul even told me to turn it down or he was going to shove the cartridge somewhere I wouldn't like. Yikes!
The actual gameplay is quite enjoyable. The levels are inventive and in places fairly challenging. Perhaps the best bit of the game is the musical chairs level at the end – an unusual idea that works very well.

However, the problem with Doraemon is that it's just way too easy. With so many lives scattered around the levels, not to mention the bonus level lives bonanzas, it's so easy to clock up tons of lives. I was just messing around and I managed to total up twelve. It's a shame really, because if it wasn't for this factor Doraemon would be quite a toughie. There are loads of reflex-testing hazards and pitfalls, but you know you can afford to take chances because you'll soon make up any lives you lose. Surely a result of bad play-testing.
All in all I can't recommend Doraemon. The sheer easiness of the game means that many people will finish it in their first sitting. What's more, I imagine that unless you like the strong Japanese feel of the game you may be a bit turned off by the whole thing. It's just so cutesy-pie and sugar coated that at times I felt quite nauseous. It's not a bad game, but definitely not in the league of Sonic or Tiny Toons. This is one cat that doesn't quite land on it's feet.

THE SECOND OPINION



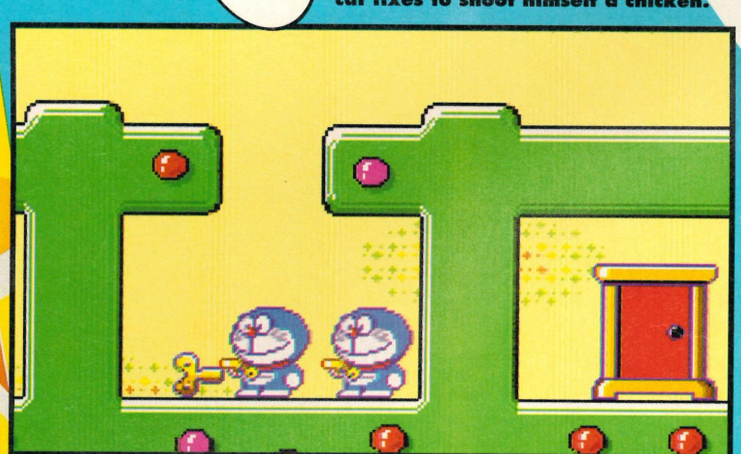
MARK HOLMES

Oh no! I'm going to have to agree with Tom! Doraemon looks dreamy, in a kiddies' nursery wall sort of way and it's programmed to be playable, not over difficult. I must admit the look of the game and the childish tunes put me off initially, but when I played it myself I got quite hooked on its surreal charm. There's next to no chance of Doraemon coming out officially over here – it's just to quirkily Japanese for European tastes. But I think a few of the companies over here who are producing stale, samey platform games could benefit from seeing this because there are some really simple, fresh ideas in there. Musical chairs in a Megadrive game – brilliant!

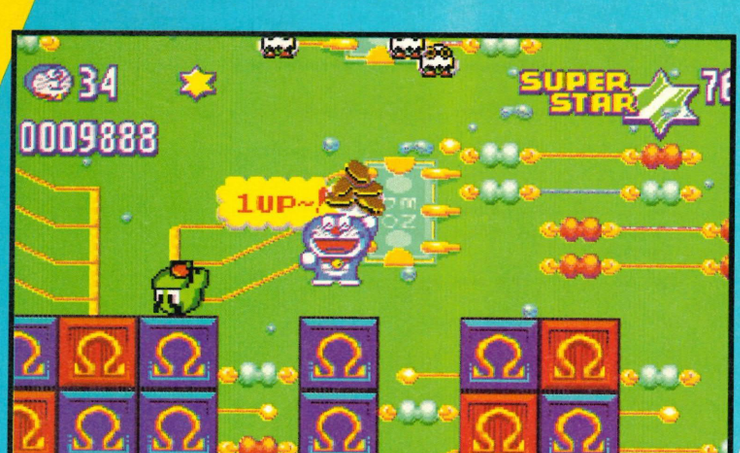


▲ Behind you, Doraemon, behiiiiind yoooouuuuuu!

▲ Standing atop a Battenburg cake, our cat fixes to shoot himself a chicken.



▲ Mannequin power-ups make Doraemon grow himself a twin cat.



▲ He's such a show-off! The earless cat just can't resist an Olympic gold-winning type display when he picks up a power-up.

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ALTERNATIVELY



95 TINY TOONS
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A superb platformer starring Bugs Bunny's nephew Buster. He's another blue deformo animal.

RATINGS



PRESENTATION 69%
Plenty of options, but they're all in Japanese.

GRAPHICS 89%
Simplistic, but stylish. Very colourful. Smart main sprite.

SOUND 73%
Cutesy tunes that grate, lots of speech.

SHORT TERM PLAY 85%
Easy to get into. Fun and playable.

LONG TERM PLAY 60%
Way too easy, by far.

OVERALL 72
A nice, playable platformer that loses out because it's just too easy. A shame.

THANX TO GORGEOUS POUTING DAVE KELSALL FOR THE DORAEMON BITS!

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MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: GAMETEK

GAMETEK

8 M-BIT

STYLE

PUZZLE

PRICE: IMPORT

PLAYERS: 1

SKILL SETTINGS: 3

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW



Evolution. That's something our Cenozoic pal RADION AUTOMATIC could do with brushing up on, so we gave him this to review...

In the beginning, there was the word. And that word was "Urruhhurr". Sadly, the meaning of this all-important phrase is lost on contemporary man, who has progressed only as far as "Ooh ah Cantona" and is obviously millions of years behind our clued-up ancestors. However, Humans provides the player with the opportunity to change all that. Yes, whosoever is in control of this game has the power over human evolution. Will man be cruising magnetic freeways and preaching universal exploration by 12 BC? Or will he still be throwing up after a curry and blathering on about his XR3i in 3023?

HUMANS BEING

The game itself is Lemmings-esque puzzler. You take control of a leading tribe of humans. All the humans are capable of a number of activities. For starters, they can pick things up. And they can put them down as well. It might not seem much, but it's a start. The object of each level is to reach the next technological advancement, which lies at the end of a course of platform-style hazards.

Guiding the tribe towards the next step of evolution couldn't be simpler. First of all, select the human you wish to control by cycling through the tribe using the C button. Now select the activity you wish them to perform by shuffling through the menu situated at the bottom of the screen. When your human is at the desired point in the level, press the B button to have them perform the desired activity. As the humans progress further, they're able to utilise the previous discoveries. For example, whilst at the onset of the game your tribe is only able to pick up items, drop them, and climb up on top of each other once they achieve the first objective - inventing the spear completely changes their lives. They are able to use this new-found power to ward off dinosaurs by brandishing spears, kill persistent dino offenders by throwing them or using them to vault across chasms. Discovering fire is an even greater leap for mankind, and it eventually leads to the revelations of rope and the wheel.

However, this bias on the forward march of science doesn't mean an end to the superstitious ways of man. The tribe still has its own witch doctor who appears in certain levels to cast his enemy-killing spells – useful when an enemy tribe invades the screen and attempts to chase your tribe out of the running.

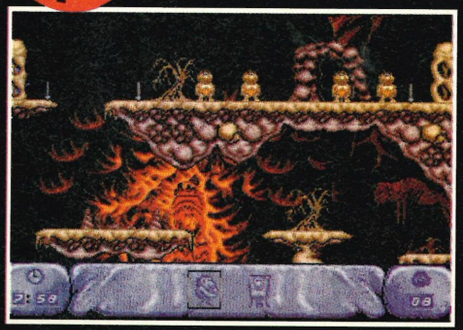


▲ Stupidity amongst Humans leads to apes inventing the Ferrari Testarossa.



HU

TIMED SEQUENCE — DURATION: 2 mins. — A REALLY HILARIOUS



▲ Here's our little tribe of game discoverers, wound up and ready to go.



▲ SPROING! how spears



▲ As Herman heads towards the bottom of the cave, Erno follows, spear at the ready.



▲ For Erno to he has to cli



▲ Aiiiee! Dinosaurs! Keep 'em back with your deadly spear.



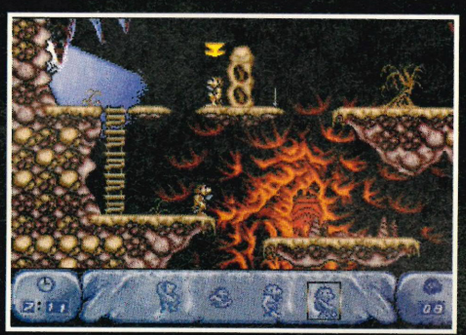
▲ A captured Human yields a bonus if you can be bothered to rescue him.

UMANS

/WITTY/INFORMATIVE/REASONABLE LINE



ere's Herman discovering ake good catapults.



▲ With little Herman across the gap, it's time to call up Erno. SPROING! he goes.



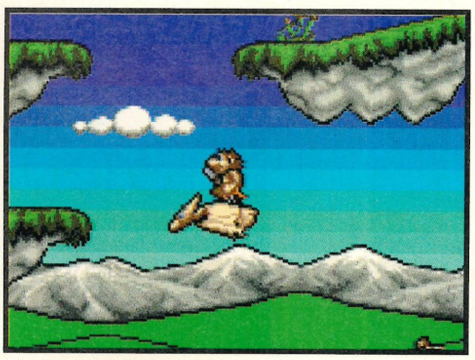
get across to the finish button b on Herman's shoulders.



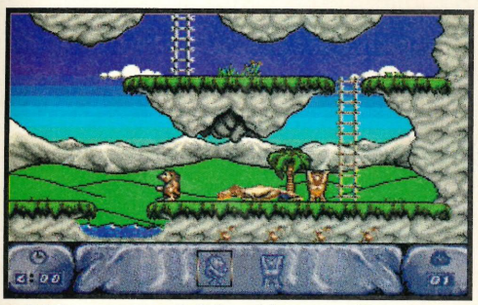
▲ Hurray! Completed! Oh, it's only level two. Well, on to the next testing stage!

THE ORIGINS OF HUMANITY

The origins of this game are even more obvious than those of the amoeba. However, some people said Streets of Rage 2 was nothing more than Final Fight clone, so maybe there's something to Humans which redeems its obvious plundering of the Lemmings idea. On second thoughts, perhaps there isn't. Okay, there are a couple of new ideas present in Humans, the progressive "evolution" of your little tribe is quite a good twist, meaning each new level requires the use of your new-found knowledge, plus the invading enemy tribes and scary dinosaurs do add a bit of spice and danger to the proceedings. However, that's about all that makes this any different from Lemmings. The control method, the goal of getting a certain proportion of your tribe to the end of the level and so on is exactly the same. This is fine if you've already completed Lemmings, but if you haven't got the original game, or you still haven't beaten it, Humans is a bit redundant. There aren't nearly so many levels as in the Psygnosis game, and to be honest, the control method is a little fiddly when you're trying to keep your eye on a couple or more precariously-positioned chaps. If you're really into puzzle games, Humans may be worth a look, but if you haven't already bought the excellent Lemmings, that should be the priority purchase.



▲ More history-defying human/dinosaur action. What an outrage! Teaching falsehoods with their devilish plot devices!



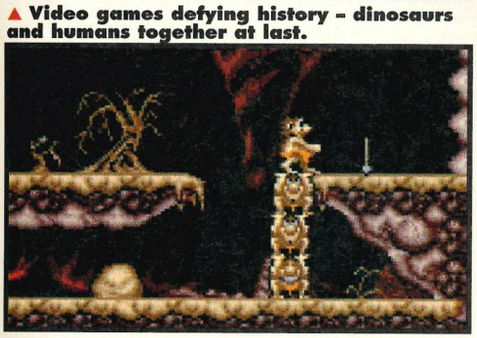
▲ Video games defying history – dinosaurs and humans together at last.



▲ Early Man With Spear.



▲ The Dawn of Comedy.



▲ Anyone can discover The Spear with a little help from a friendly totem pole.



▲ Discover the danger of not stubbing out cigarettes.

THE SECOND OPINION



PAUL GLANCEY

Part of the appeal of Lemmings was that you could set things up then set the Lemmings running – usually into a flaming pit or under a large metal crusher. At that point you reached panic stations and everything suddenly went a bit crazy. The levels in Humans are cleverly designed but the thing that makes it a slightly less enjoyable game than Lemmings is the fact that you have to conduct all of your little blokes through every hazard and that sometimes gets a bit tedious. Even the first levels aren't particularly enticing, because they require several humans to share one spear to get across chasms, so you have to get one bloke across, throw the spear back, get the next guy to pick it up, spring across, throw it back... I suppose it would be less of a problem if the controls weren't so fiddly, but, frankly they're a bit of a pain. After a few goes it does get easier and a bit more instinctive, but while you get the impression that Humans is a clever game, it doesn't have the pace or the danger element of Lemmings. It's a decent alternative, but it's not the superior game.

%RATINGS



88% PRESENTATION – Lots of okay presentation screens and twixt-level japes.

73% GRAPHICS – Well defined, but the backgrounds are a little repetitive.

71% SOUND – Nothing to write home about, but not too offensive.

70% SHORT TERM PLAY – Controls take a bit of getting used to.

78% LONG TERM PLAY – Once you get into it it's a lot more fun, but not startlingly original.

OVERALL 76 – A bit limited and a bit easy but a bit of fun in spite of its problems.

MEGADRIVE REVIEW

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: SEGA

SEGA™

2 M-BIT

STYLE

DRIVING

PRICE £34.99

PLAYERS 1-2

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

JUNE 1993



Well, we were certainly clutch-ing at straws (or should that be scraping at barrels?) when we asked RADION AUTOMATIC if he'd do some work for us, so what better title for him to check out than this lead to a rather weak pun?

There's absolutely no getting away from the fact that Micro Machines is my most favouritest game in the history of the world, and so, should a contender to its throne arrive on the scene I'm naturally interested in seeing whether it lives up to the mark or not. Double Clutch initially had a good start – it was to be the first of Sega's new budget range. However, there was a last minute re-think in the pricing department and it was bumped up to the full 35 quid. Still, Sega are confident there's enough to Double Clutch to warrant the price tag. So what exactly is it about?

DO CLU

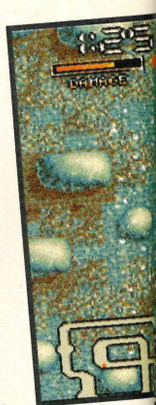
MEET MR TRACTION

Basically Double Clutch stars you, and up to a single friend should you have access to one, as a pair of top stars in the overhead-view, eight-way scrolling racing stakes. Your task is to guide your driver through the many tracks of overhead-view racing ahead of him, finishing in the top three places every time in order to stay in the competition.

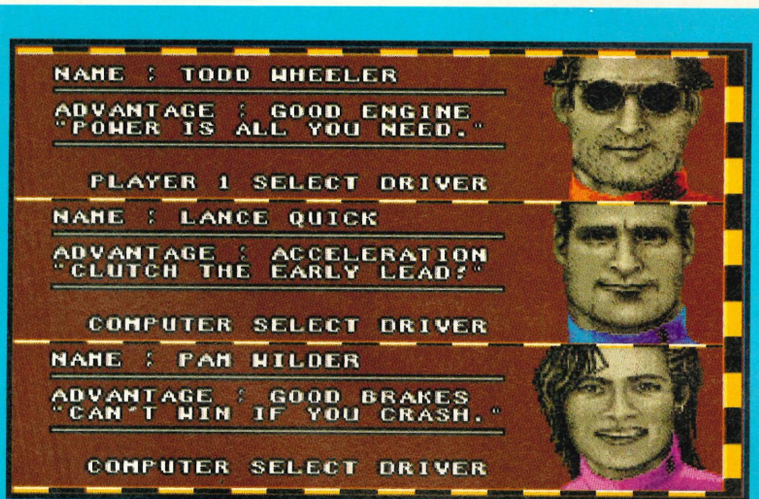
Double Clutch stars the four greatest names in the circuit, from which you are able to choose your favourite to control. Todd Wheeler has a high top speed and reckons a "big engine's all you need" (although it's not size that counts, it's what you do with it, right kids?). Then there's Lance Quick, endowed with particularly smart acceleration. Pam Wilder is a slow, old female driver, and is a bit of an expert on the brakes, and finally there's Joe Thunder, whose high-grip tyres have earned him the 'handle' of Mr Traction. However, whilst your initial choice of driver has some effect on the initial race, with Lance being the most useful, it makes no difference once you start customising your car.



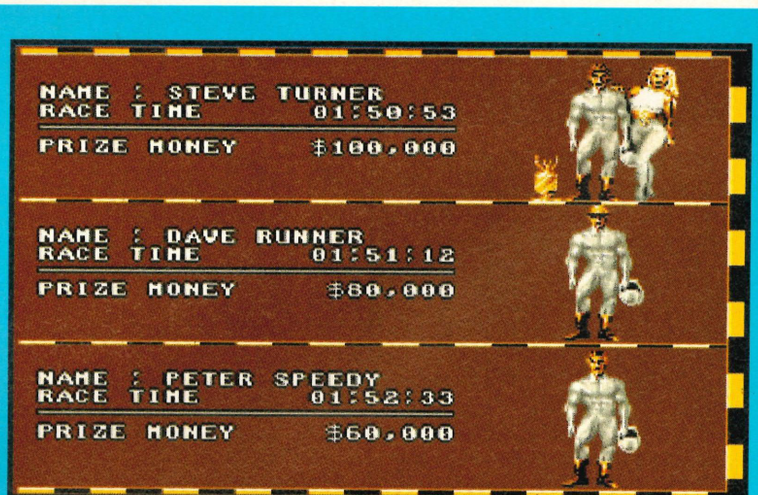
▲ BRR! Rain, rain, go away, you stinking weather condition.



▲ Snow! W
no heating



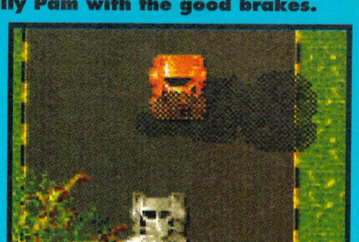
▲ What an attractive bunch. Especially Pam with the good brakes.



▲ This lot don't look too healthy, though. That's the price of winning.



▲ 'Refit your car!'



▲ Cloudy day racing... What fun.



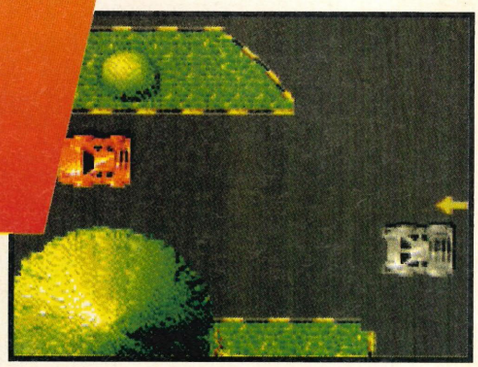
▲ The orange car takes an unscheduled detour. There's no time for picnics!

DOUBLE CLUTCH



▲ I'd put my thermal pants on. This car's got no stereo. Cost a fortune as well...





▲ Ooh! This game is so fast and exciting! Or is it?

CUSTOM CAR WEEKLY

Customisation requires cash, obtained by winning races (sponsorship being out of the question). First place reaps a hundred grand and coming in third only brings in 60K. Suping-up each aspect of your car, engine, brakes, acceleration or tyres costs varying, and strangely disproportionate amounts of cash. For example, good traction is pretty important, and yet costs loads less than a slightly higher top speed. Miserly gits will be pleased to hear that there are always a few icons spread around the course which grant you an upgrade to one of your car's possible areas of improvement.

THUNDERBOLTS AND LIGHTNING

Of course, making your way around the course isn't as easy as they make it look on TV, for not only are there the usual banked corners and chicanes of any racing track, there are also hazards indigenous to console driving games. On the first level there are a few randomly-strewn oil slicks which spin the car around, and later on you have to contend with puddles which also slow your car down. As the races continue, weather conditions grow progressively worse. Rain on the track, drifting clouds which obscure your view and driving blizzards can also cause problems which test for even the most accomplished diver.

EASY RIDING

Actually, that might be overdoing it a bit. Fair enough, snow and ice do make the game harder, but even then it's not what you could really deem in the realms of the very hard. This is the first non-stumbling block you come across in the game – it's far too easy. It's possible to just zoom through most of the levels in no time. Okay, so Micro Machines could have been a bit harder, but it's still tougher than Double Clutch, and it has more levels too.

Also, Double Clutch has one gameplay flaw too many. The controls are a little sticky, your car doesn't really respond when you want it to. The action is also a bit too slow, conveying more of a potter-through-a-mine-field than a hell-for-leather engine flog. Fair enough, it does have features Micro Machines doesn't, the shop and the weather for instance. However, the add-ons available in the shop don't really make any difference to the game, and the weather is so predictable it ruins the real effect it would have if sprung randomly on a course when the player is unprepared. At the original budget price, this could have been a contender, but pricing this in the same bracket as Codemasters' legendary (and oh-so-soon to be released) title is just pure folly.



▲ Oh no! He's right on your tail and you're bound to lose this important race!

THE SECOND OPINION



PAUL GLANCEY

Rad's got this right. First impressions are of an okay little game, nothing flash but fairly playable, and hey, at least it's cheap... ish. Then as you burn effortlessly around circuit after circuit (noticing that the tracks are the same and you're just going around them in the opposite direction) you start to wonder. And then you realise that this is a two (count 'em) megabit game selling for £35. And then the appeal starts to wane and you realise you could've had the far superior Micro Machines for the same price. And then you get depressed. Take my advice. Avoid this debilitating depression and spend the money on Code Masters' game instead.

ALTERNATIVELY



92 MICRO MACHINES BY CODE MASTERS
PRICE: £34.99
A similar racing game based on the tiny toys, though with far more variety and funness than Double Clutch.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 65%
A modicum of options. Bland between-race screens.

GRAPHICS 79%
Basic, but passable sprites and backgrounds.

SOUND 75%
Okay tunes and bog-standard effects.

SHORT TERM PLAY 79%
Although it's slow it's still entertaining for a short while.

LONG TERM PLAY 48%
It's all too easy, and there's not enough there to keep you hooked.

OVERALL 63
Somewhat overpriced when compared to the utterly superior Micro Machines.

TECHNIQUE ZONE

For tips, tricks and Megadrive tactics you have come to the right place. This month in Technique Zone we've covered so many games that if the Anti-Tips Police ever found out we'd probably all be sent directly to jail without collecting £200. This month aslo sees the debut of a specially-constructed Mega-CD section for all you lucky Mega-CD owners (who else?).

If you've got a sunny, carefree tip of loveliness you'd like to share with us, send it in to Technique Zone, MegaTech, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU. Go on. We'll be your best friends.

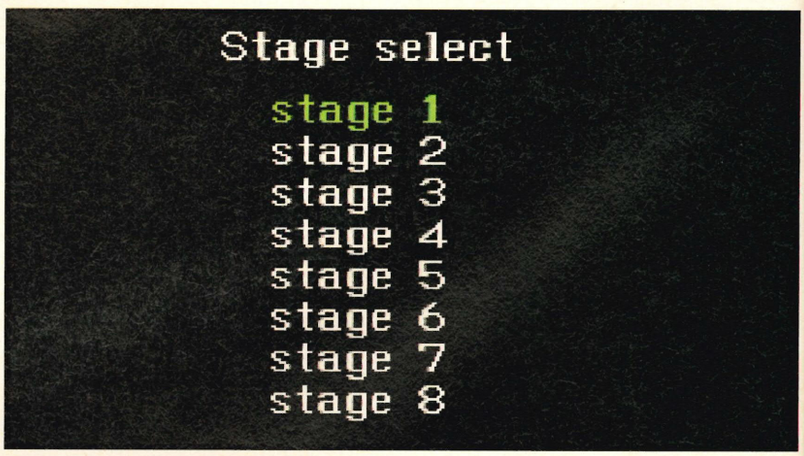


● AQUATIC GAMES HIDDEN BONUS FROM CRAIG McQUEEN

To liven up the 100m sprint event, don't move until after the penguin kicks you into the water. For that, you receive a 10,000 points bonus and the clock is reset, giving you a chance to hammer the buttons and come in with a record time.

● BATTLE MANIA HIDDEN SURPRISE FROM YES, CRAIG McQUEEN

Here's a quicky for those of you with this odd little shooter. When the SEGA logo appears, press START on the second joypad for a 'Hidden Surprise'.



● BIOHAZARD BATTLE LEVEL SELECT FROM: TOM GUISE!

Tom's wobbling fingers do come in useful occasionally, as they did on the day he discovered this handy cheat. On the title screen, hold down C and rotate the D-button in a clockwise direction. Keep doing it until you hear the wibbly-wobbly sound then set up your options. Now when you start the game a stage select screen appears and you can zip straight to level eight, if that's your idea of fun.

TECHNIQUE ZONE

BONANZA BROS LEVEL WARP FROM CRAIG McQUEEN

This game hardly needs to be made any easier, but if you want to go straight to the more challenging levels, go upstairs in the first house and collect the blue triangle you should find up there. Now watch as the levels fly by!



DRAGON'S FURY EXTRA MUSIC FROM CRAIG McQUEEN

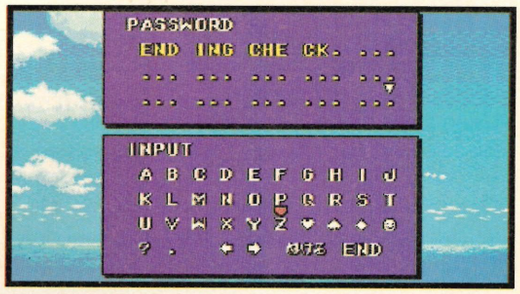
If you wanted any further proof that Tecnosoft program some of the best Megadrive background music as well as some of the best games try this trick. Go to the password entry in Dragon's Fury (or Devil Crash) and enter OMAKEBGM. Follow this by any of these numbers to change the normal Devil Crash tunes to music from these Tecnosoft titles.

00 Thunderforce II
01 Herzog Zwei
02 Thunderforce III
03 Elemental Master
04 Shinkugyokuden (this one's the best!)

EL VIENTO LEVEL SKIP FROM CRAIG McQUEEN

Craig McQueen, plucky Craig McQueen, sent in a whole stack of tips ages ago only to have them somehow 'misfiled', then, cheerily, uncovered in this month of months.

Anyway, to get to the point, warping to the next level in this interesting but unattractive import game is simply a matter of pressing UP, LEFT, RIGHT, DOWN and then B. Annette will then jump into the background and land in the following stage.



GRANDSLAM TENNIS PASSWORD FROM STEPHEN WORTHY

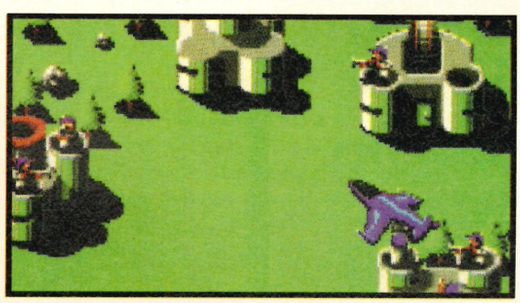
Stephen has unearthed another password for this decent tennis game (now available officially, sports fans!). How does he do it? Anyway, here it is, and it gets you to the game's end sequence.

END ING CHE CK. ...
... ...
... ...

Don't forget the full stops!

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE LEVEL 2 WARP FROM: MYSTERIOUS LIZ OF LONGBENTON

Liz's ace tip will save the hair of anyone struggling through the second circus train level. When you get to the Magic Hat Truck get rid of the baddies and avoid the cables, then stand over the small roof-top at the beginning of the car and jump four or five times. You should then fall into the car and warp past the whole, annoying mid-section, saving time and, as I said, strain on your scalp.



MEGA-LO-MANIA LEVEL CODES FROM: LOTS OF PEOPLE

Yep, seems this was a pretty popular game (and deservedly so) as we've had loads of people sending in their access codes for the various levels. First out of the postbag, though, were Steven Hawkins' (not to be confused with Stephen Hawkings, wheelchair-bound physics genius) and these are they:

EPOCH 2: OIGAMSJCHHF
EPOCH 3: HZOBGZMUUTP
EPOCH 4: XTZBQCIOVHZ
EPOCH 5: SJFASNDQAIX
EPOCH 6: IYEBOPWJGUP
EPOCH 7: CTQAIGPECUR
EPOCH 8: ESSCGQKYHUV
EPOCH 9: QSBBODQMEOM
THE MOTHER OF ALL BATTLES: CPFDGLLTUMA



NHLPA HOCKEY EXTRA PLAYERS FROM SHAHEEN KHAN

You can have up to seven players on the ice at any one time by using Shaheen's tip. All you have to do is get a couple of your players in the sin bin, then pause the game and go to EDIT LINES. Change your whole team, then unpause the game and carry on playing. You should now have a full team on the ice again. Now when the Time of Sin is over, the sinners join return to the rink and you can play on with a larger team.

POPULOUS EXTRA CONTINUES FROM CRAIG McQUEEN

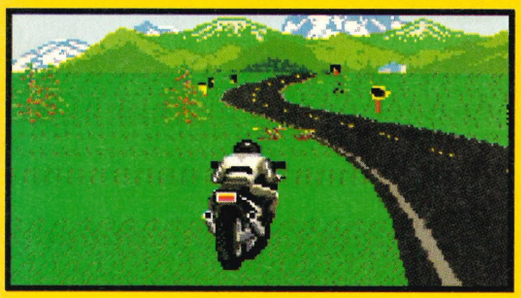
For an extra six continues, press C, A, B, A, C, A, B, A on the chapter one screen. Populous experts who are losing the will to live might be invigorated to learn that an extra difficulty level, 'EXPERT', becomes available after completing the game in 'ADVANCED' mode.

RAINBOW ISLANDS INSTANT SPEED-UP FROM CRAIG McQUEEN

If you're one of the lucky ones who got this game when it was available on import try this tip to start the game with the speed-up shoes. When the title screen appears, just press UP, B, DOWN, LEFT,

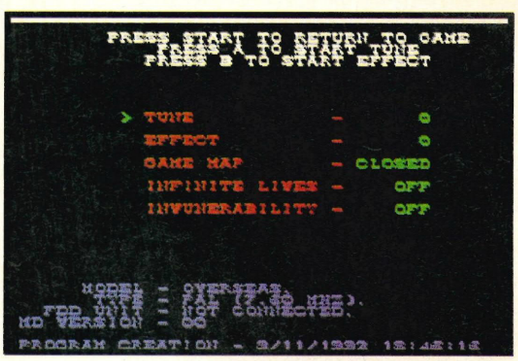
TECHNIQUE ZONE

C, A, A, then start the game. Even better, you can begin with the shoes and the red pot using this combination at the same place: UP, B, DOWN, LEFT, C, A, A, B.



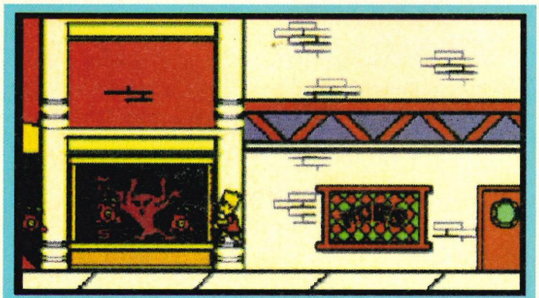
ROAD RASH 2 SUPER BIKE FROM: NUMEROUS PEOPLE

This tip has been printed elsewhere, but it's too good to leave out so thank you to all those of you who diligently copied it out and sent it in.
If you want the long way round, this is it. On the title screen, hold down UP, then A and C all together, then, to add to the troubles of your overstressed digits, press START as well. Now when you start the game you are astride 'The Wild Thing', a bike with a top speed of 225 mph! Come to think of it, that's probably the quick way to activate the cheat. The other way is to enter this code:
009N 1V00



ROLO TO THE RESCUE LEVEL SELECT AND INFINITE LIVES

FROM WILLIAM DIXON AND JULIE THOMSON
A couple of very smart cheats here from William. On the title screen hold the D-button in the UP/LEFT diagonal position, and press A and C at the same time. With all these held, summon all of your finger-power to hit the reset button. When the title screen reappears, press B and a new menu appears with a sound and effects test, game map open/closed, invincibility on/off and infinite lives on/off options.
Using these cheats alone will let you finish the game easily, but you won't see the full ending sequence unless you also use this tip from Julie. Open the whole map, then start the game. Go immediately to the friends screen and hold down A and B and press the D-button in any direction. You should see pink lines going up the screen. Rolo then reappears next to the transporter, having magically released his cuddly buddies. If you want proof you can re-enter the level and see that all the cages are empty.



THE SIMPSONS: BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS SECURITY CODES FROM: IAN THORPE

Bit old, these codes for level five of The Simpsons, but we've never had the opportunity to print them before so thanks to Ian for sending them in. The security door codes are as follows:
FLOOR 1 – 14
FLOOR 2 – 32
FLOOR 3 – 11
FLOOR 4 – 41
FLOOR 5 – 21
To find the missing screens, stand under the red door with NO written on it and press UP.

SPLATTERHOUSE III LEVEL CODES FROM: STEPHEN WORTHY

Tipped already, and by expert tipster, Mr Worthy! To play any stage (should you be so bold), use these passwords:

STAGE X: GOFMTS
STAGE 2: REISOR
STAGE 3: ETLBUD
STAGE 4: TABRAE
STAGE 5: RUATNC

Stage X is The Strange Zone, an area loaded with goodies which you get sent to if you finish level one with more than three minutes to spare.

In case you hadn't worked it out (the instructions are in Japanese after all) the yellow



doors on the map are warps which usually lead to extra lives. Some them also let you skip half of the level but others force you to go through more rooms than before. For example, the yellow doors on stages one and three move you forward, while the ones on level two move backwards. Learn the door layouts and you can use them to shave many a second off your completion times.

When attacking, try to back enemies against a wall, punching and grabbing them. If there are two of them present don't grab one, though, or the other one hits you. Instead, use the roundhous kick (attack and jump buttons together). The powered-up version of this is a sort of supernatural smart bomb which is especially useful against the level four boss.

STAR CONTROL EASY WIN FROM STEPHEN WORTHY

Prolific tipster Stephen sent in this handy technique, which cynics might dub 'completely bleeding obvious', to which we would counter, 'You never can tell these days.'
If you're playing the Alliance, your best ship is the Arilou Skiff, which skillful pilots can easily use to conquer much larger enemy ships by taking advantage of the inertialess drive. All you've got to do is park up behind a planet and let the Hierarchy scum come towards you. The effect of gravity pulls the opposition into the planet causing much damage, while you remain oblivious on the far side.

This is an especially useful trick if you're confronted by the Ur-Quan Dreadnought, because you can get its squadrons of fighters to chase you, then hide and watch them splatter their disdainful Ur-Quan bodies on the surface.

TECHNIQUE ZONE

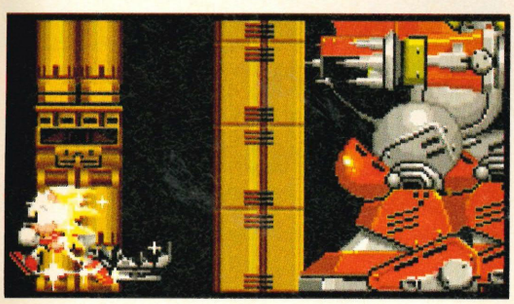


TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES LEVEL SELECT

Switch on and when the Konami logo appears press these buttons in this order: C, B, B, A, A, A, B, C. If you hear a sound, you've got it correct. But you're not out of the woods yet. Wait until the title screen appears and press A, B, B, C, C, C, B, A. You should hear another sound to indicate that part has worked. Now just select a one or two player game and, presto-changeo-how's-your-father, there's your level select.

SONIC 2 ALL SORTS FROM LOADS OF PEOPLE

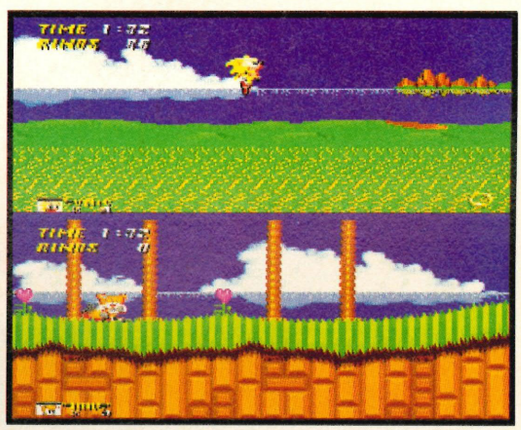
'Not MORE Sonic 2 cheats??' you cry. 'Well, yes,' is our response. MegaTech readers are still wringing new weirdities out of this game.



MULTIPLE ROBOTNIK ROBOTS: Ed 'Pinky' Lomas (tipping regular and one of the first members of TEAM MEGATECH) has been continuing his experiments in the Death Egg Zone and has discovered a way to create multiple Robotnik robots! Carry out the level select, level constructor and Super Sonic cheat, then warp to the Death Egg Zone and beat Meka-Sonic. Now chase Robotnik along to his robot suit and when it stands up, change Sonic into a TV set. Put it somewhere in the room then change back and collect it. The game will now go a bit odd, and Sonic will be standing in a bit of crashed scenery graphic. Press B and go up until you're at floor level again then, as a ring, just chase Robotnik into his suit again. When he stands up you can go to the other side of the room and do it again, resulting in as many robots as you like. Beware, though, that you'll have to beat them all to finish the game.

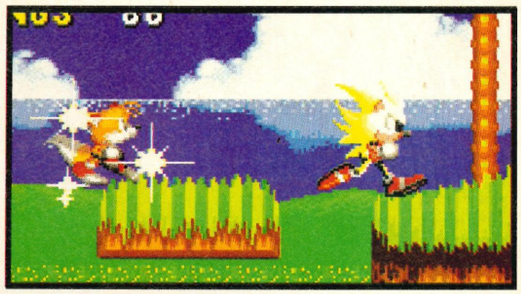


COLOUR CHANGES: Ed is also one of a number of people who found that, after using the level constructor, then playing a special stage, you can change the colour of the normal stages. When you leave the special stage hold down A, B, C and START until the action recommences to make the foreground brighter and the background darker.



VS MODE TRICKS: Quite a number of you sent this one in. This is Chris Ginn's version. Enter the level select and Super Sonic cheats then start the game at the first act of Emerald Hill Zone. Collect 50 rings to become Super Sonic and hurry to the end of the level. Do the same for act two ('Bless you!' - Senile Music Hall Comedian) and when you've knacked Robotnik's car let your bonuses add up, then reset the game.

Now go to the options screen. Go down to VS MODE ITEMS and set it to TELEPORT ONLY, then set it back to ALL KINDS OF ITEMS. Press START again and you should find yourself on the Vs Mode level screen. Start on the level you want, collect 50 rings and transform into Super Sonic. If you now hit a teleport telly, Tails' player will find he now has command of Super Sonic's superness.

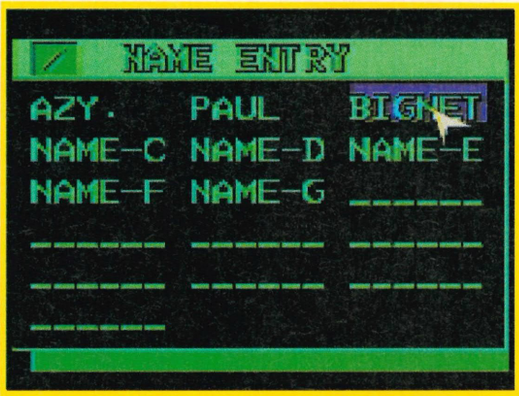


SUPER TAILS AGAIN: You can make both players 'super' like this. Use the level select, the construction cheat and the Super Sonic cheat together. Start the game, create 50 rings and become Super Sonic, then make a teleport telly and something to make you drop your rings (such as some spikes). Return to normal, jump on the TV (Tails should now appear to have invincibility) then walk onto the spikes. This turns Super Sonic back into Sonic but also makes the Super Tails effect permanent, so just collect another 50 rings for Sonic and crash bang wallop, you're away again!



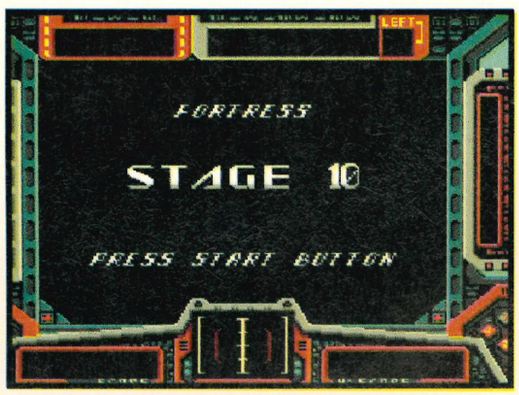
MEGA-CD

MEGA-CD SECTION



● BLACK HOLE ASSAULT EFFORTLESS ENEMY DEVASTATION

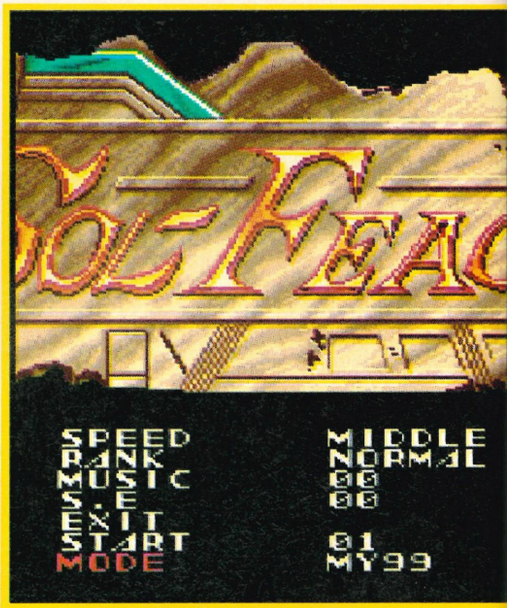
If things are getting tough in the BHA game, try entering this cheat before you start. Go to the name entry screen and enter BIGNET then start the BHA mode and select BIGNET as your name. Now, fight! fight! fight! or if you would prefer to take the less strenuous approach, plug a joypad into port two and press START. This activates the Mega-CD's hidden ultrasonic beam transmitter which instantly obliterates any enemy who happens to be on screen. Actually, that's baloney, but it does wipe out the bad guys in an instant so we're not complete liars.



● COBRA COMMAND STAGE SELECT AND TRAINING MODE FROM PAUL MAYHEW

We printed something like this before when this game was released on import as Thunderstorm FX, but it's a brilliant cheat and it's worth printing again just for the benefit of all those new Mega-CD owners out there. Get to the title screen (the one with GAME START on it) and push the joypad UP, LEFT, RIGHT, RIGHT, UP. You should hear an explosion, indicating that the cheat is working. Now when you start the game and the stage title appears you can press left or right to pick a different level. If you get stuck part way through a level you can be lazy and just press START to go to the next one.

The other cheat that Paul sent in activates a training mode which lets you restart the level from just after the point you get killed at, so you don't have to go back to the last restart point. To get it going press UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT on the title screen and you should hear another explosion. Now go to the configuration screen and select the training mode which is now on the difficulty menu.



● SOLFEACE LEVEL SELECT AND EXTRA LIVES FROM ED 'PINKY' LOMAS

Another tip which you new Mega-CD owners will find useful. On the title screen (where it says PRESS START) press A, B, C, A, B, C, B, C, B, A. Listen for the magic noise then press START and enter the CONFIG. MODE screen. At the bottom you should see two new options, 'START' and 'MODE'. The first lets you set your starting level and if you go down to MODE and press right a few times 'MY99' appears, giving you 99 lives to play with.

Ed adds that this cheat also lets you warp through troublesome levels by pressing A, B and C together while your playing.

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SHOOT 'EM UP SHOOT

One of the areas the Megadrive is over-endowed in is the high-action world of the shoot 'em up. With such a wide variety you might think that it's tough to make a choice between them, but strain your brain no longer, we tell you what's good and why from this liberal smattering of Megadrive favourites.

IN THE RUNNING:



Thunderforce IV
Sequel to the highly successful Thunderstruck 3 (what else?), this game boasts some of the best graphics of any shoot 'em up.



Sol Feace
Representing the Mega-CD is Sol Feace. Armed with CD sound and the occasional rotating sprite, this was one of the first games to appear on this format.



Bio Hazard Battle
The action icky and the graphics stomach churning as you battle insects and aquatic life forms.



Hellfire
It's old and it sure 'ain't pretty, but this still ranks as one of the best Megadrive shoot 'em ups ever. Has it stood the test of time.

ROUND 1: BOSSES

After fighting you way through countless waves of small-fry, you should be expecting something pretty special at the end of the stage. The ubiquitous bosses are the creatures who are cunningly positioned to undo all your work from earlier in the stage, and there's nothing worse than being done over by a crappy boss.



Thunderstruck IV
When it comes to end-of-level-guardian types, this game has a real mixed bag. They range from compact, but extremely tricky ships, to massive multi-screen space craft with more elements than you could safely shake a stick at. Some bosses do take a ridiculous amount of time to overcome, which makes for an element of tedium.
4/5



Hellfire
The guy who designed the bosses for this game is definitely a few sandwiches sort of a picnic. Level one ends with a fairly innocuous space ship, but from there things just take a turn for the weird. Stage two finishes with a sarcophagus which is the strangest boss yet seen in a game. On the whole, the big 'uns are original and require a wealth of tactics and joypad wizardry to overcome.
4/5



Sol Feace
This CD offering is decidedly lacking when comes to the spectacular. The very first boss is a spider/crab combo which creaks onto the screen in a blaze of CD sound. Beating the bosses in this game is a case of finding safe spots rather than an exploration into tactics. The bosses also flicker when the screen gets cluttered which is very off-putting.
3/5



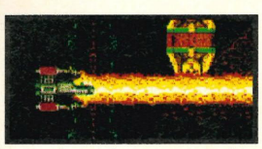
Biohazard Battle
In keeping with slithery look of the game you can expect to come across equally gross bosses. However they look, there's no depth to them. Simply find a relatively safe location, then suss out which bit is the bosses' soft spot. Once that's done simply keep blasting away without fear of any surprises.
3/5

ROUND 2: POWER-UPS

Death dealing is the name of these games, but you can't get down a dirty without the proper hardware. Just what kind of weapons do these games offer, and do they live up to their spectacular-sounding names?



Thunderstruck IV
Cor blimey! Collect the right pods and you're in line for a real weapons fest. If the whirring, spinning and exploding projectiles aren't enough for your, there's the mega CLAW weapon which can be collected, giving your ship one of the hardest set-ups in any shoot 'em up.
5/5



Hellfire
Before you collect anything, your ship is equipped with four different firing modes; forwards, forwards and rear, vertical and four-way in diagonals. Collecting power-ups boosts the size and effectiveness of the lasers and the ship also has the potent Hellfire mega weapon.
4/5



Sol Feace
Stolid lasers and homing missiles are all you encounter. However, your ship comes with two adjustable laser guns which let you shoot away from the ship at angles. Useful for getting at those pesky hard to reach space craft, but hardly the most stirring of weapons.
2/5



Biohazard Battle
Your weapons depend on which ship you use. Power-up crystals appear from time to time and collecting one boosts your weapon by one level, although it decreases by one if you're shot. Whatever, there's nothing spectacular or devastating, and the power-ups are plentiful so you can afford to take a few hits.
3/5

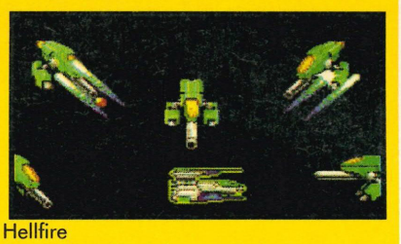
T OUT!

ROUND 3: DIFFICULTY

After shelling out for your shoot 'em up you'll be wanting a few good weeks of gameplay. You don't want to power-up and find out that the venomous hordes of Zargan are lacking in fight department.



Thunderforce IV
Predictable attack waves, but there are plenty of them. Couple this with the massive, multidirectional scrolling levels and there are more than enough features to keep you busy. There are also several very tricky stages which require you to manoeuvre through some very tight gaps indeed, which makes a nice change from merely shooting things while dodging their bullets.
4/5



Hellfire
Several words spring to mind when describing the challenge this games poses, horrendous is one of them. The word easy has no meaning here, as each level throws new hazards. Losing a life means losing your weapons, which is as good as game over. You'd be hard-pressed to find more a challenge on any Megadrive game.
5/5



Sol Feace
Until you get the hang of the angled guns this game poses quite a challenge. Once you've mastered the art of shooting things with them the everything becomes substantially easier. There aren't many thrills or stunningly diverting features though, just similar waves and the not-too inspiring bosses.
3/5



Biohazard Battle
A constant assault of crawling and slithering critters make life hard. You can expect to take a real hammering on the later levels, and that's before you get to large creatures like the giant caterpillar.
4/5





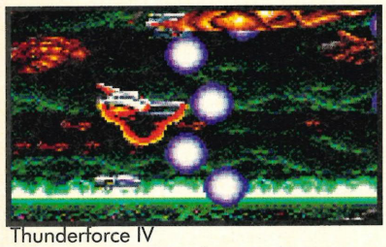




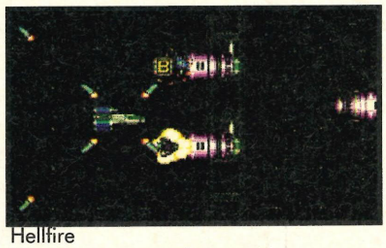


ROUND FOUR: ACTION

They're called shoot 'em ups, so you'll be expecting plenty of things to blast. Not every game delivers the action, nice if you want to give your joypad a rest, but not much good for battle freaks.



Thunderforce IV
There's an occasional respite between attack waves and if you're hungry for more action there are mid-level bosses too. Like most shoot 'em ups it's very much a case of getting into the right place at the right time to blast the ships as they drift onto the screen.
4/5



Hellfire
Wave upon wave of shootable space craft invade the screen making things very uncomfortable for those without autofire joypads. You come under attacks from above, below and behind as well as in front and you're hardly given any breathing space before the next load of aliens attack.
5/5



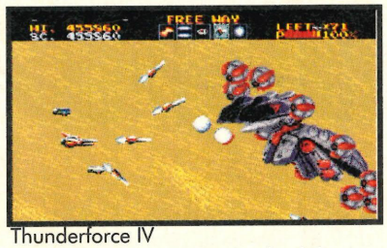
Sol Feace
Slow going at times, with little to shoot but plenty to dodge. Gives your trigger finger a break, but doesn't exactly do the term 'shoot 'em up' much justice. A few more attacks waves with a bit more originality wouldn't have gone amiss.
3/5



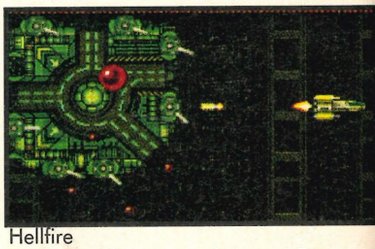
Biohazard Battle
You're given almost on respite as hordes of suitably foul creatures invade the screen. You're not given much of a breather between waves which are frequently punctuated by larger craft which take a hell of a lot of hits to destroy.
4/5

ROUND FIVE: GRAPHICS

Atmosphere's important, and that only comes with the graphics. Explosions and excellent enemies make for good games, after all, shoot 'em ups are hardly famed for their varied gameplay.



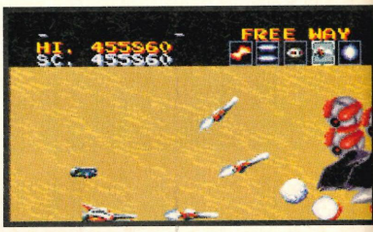
Thunderforce IV
Stunning sprites, staggering backdrops and an overall stylishness which is unparalleled. Some of the bosses could have looked a little better, but this is more than made up for with some excellent visual effects such as the way the ship darts in and out of water.
5/5



Hellfire
With graphics as out of date as flares and big afros, the big, garishly coloured sprites do nothing for the game's image. This is compensated for by the sheer amount of craft which attacks you, along with the speed which hardly suffers.
3/5



Sol Feace
Bland backdrops do nothing to disguise the sprites, which look decidedly rough around the edges. The bosses have an equally grainy look and when the screen gets busy you can expect plenty of slow down and flickering.
2/5



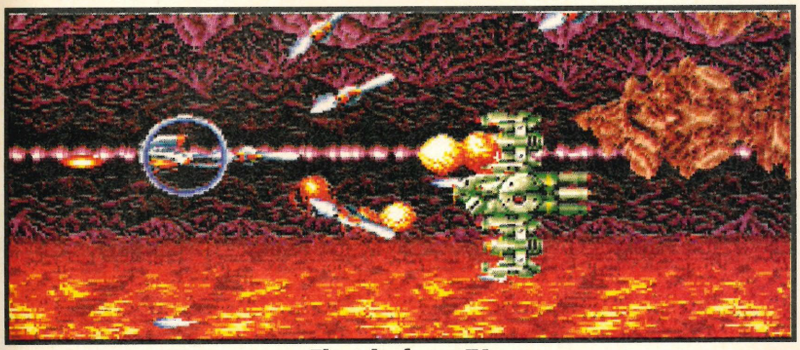
Biohazard Battle
Smart backdrops and some really fantastic sprites gives this game an excellent look. Apart from making a welcome changes from the usual space-based shoot 'em ups, the creatures are the kind of things you'd actually stamp on if you saw them in your house, so there's added incentive to shoot them in the game.
4/5

AND THE WINNER

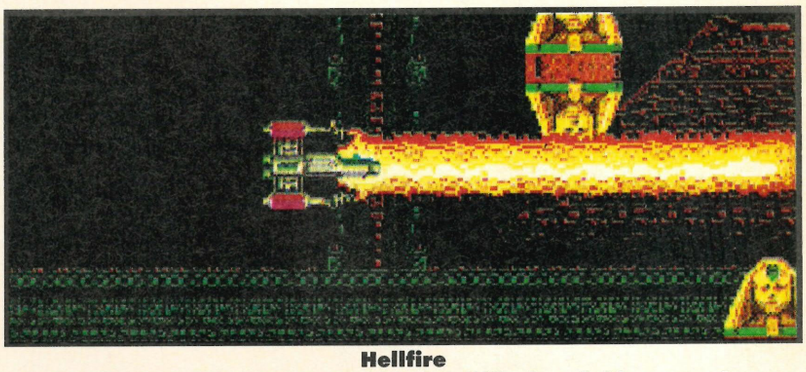
	Bosses	Power-ups	Difficulty	Actio
Thunderforce IV	4	5	4	4
Sol Feace	3	2	3	3
Hellfire	4	4	5	5
Biohazard Battle	3	3	4	4

ADDICTIVENESS

Will it keep you hooked, or will monotony be your greatest enemy?



Thunderforce IV
The excellent graphics and smart features really make you want to see further into the game. Additionally, the cool power-ups and varied action keeps you held for ages.
4/5



Hellfire
The sheer frustration generated by the difficulty of this games leaves you either wanting to beat it or your Megadrive. Totally addictive and will last for ages.
5/5



Sol Feace
What makes you stick at this game is the promise of Mega-CD-related features. Unfortunately it lacks these and offers very little to keep you playing.
2/5



Biohazard Battle
The graphics offer the biggest incentive to keep playing. There are so many varied creatures to discover that it makes up for the rather linear gameplay.
4/5

IS...

Graphics	Addictiveness
4	4
2	2
3	5
5	4

25 Thunderforce IV

Slick graphics and gameplay make this the most stylish shoot 'em up. What it lacks is the intense edge which makes Hellfire so tough and addictive. That's not to say this is bad game, if you want to impress your mates this will do the job

15 Sol Feace

Oh dear, more like Sol Farce. The only horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up on Mega-CD is a bit of a wash-out. The fact is it just doesn't have enough action or features to contend with its cartridge-based rivals, who out-match it in almost every category.

26 Hellfire

It may be old in Megadrive terms, but Hellfire is still one of the most fiendishly addictive games yet devised. A combination of relentless action and a level of difficulty almost unsurpassed by any shoot 'em up help push this game above the field.

23 Biohazard Battle

Despite its straightforward gameplay, the original nature of the graphics and its taxing gameplay combine to produce a surprise hit, although it suffers from a lack of features which shows against the competition.

BARGAINS

Greetings Mortals. Welcome to the MegaTech vaults. It is here in this dark and stygian crypt that the vast hordes of Megadrive games are kept for all eternity. Bwa-ha-ha! Ahem, excuse me, we have so little to laugh at down here, bloodless, disemboded souls that we are. Anyway, the time has come once again when we re-review those games that are neither alive nor dead. The budget titles. Undead cartridges that have been given a new lease of life by their half-priced status. So come in and have a browse. Stay awhile, stay forever! Bwa-ha-ha-ha!

MERCS

BY SEGA
PRICE: £19.99
RELEASED: DECEMBER 1991
GAME TYPE: SHOOT 'EM UP

Converted from Capcom's hit arcade game, Mercs is another Commando-style shoot 'em up. The coin-op featured a three-player option, but unfortunately the Megadrive version doesn't even have a two-player one. Still, don't fret because this game is nonetheless an excellent conversion. All the levels are there, as is all the action. There's plenty to shoot at, from tanks and choppers to armoured trains and gunboats, as well as plenty of troops to slaughter too, of course. What's more you can even take control of various vehicles like jeeps, tanks and speed boats. And there's the added bonus of a completely original Mercs game with brand new levels and baddies, in which you can recruit the help of other Mercs. A great game that's even greater at its new budget price.

PRESENTATION	**89%**
GRAPHICS	**85%**
SOUND	**84%**
SHORT TERM PLAY	**91%**
LONG TERM PLAY	**85%**
OVERALL	**90%**







SUPER HANG-ON

BY SEGA
PRICE: £19.99
RELEASED: NOV 1990
GAME TYPE: DRIVING

The very first race game to hit the Megadrive, Super Hang-On is a straight conversion of Sega's smash-hit motorcycle coin-op. Identical in every way to its arcade counterpart except that you don't have to sit on a full-sized motorbike to control the game, Super Hang-On pits you against the clock as you race across the world from checkpoint to checkpoint avoiding other riders. There are five different continents to choose from and an original mode which allows you to build up a custom bike from prize winnings. It may be old, but it' has aged very well with good graphics, smooth scrolling and plenty of challenge. At the new budget price it's certainly good value, but it's also available on Sega's Mega Games 1 compilation and at only £39.99 including Columns and World Cup Italia '90 that may be a wiser choice.

PRESENTATION	**75%**
GRAPHICS	**83%**
SOUND	**70%**
SHORT TERM PLAY	**88%**
LONG TERM PLAY	**65%**
OVERALL	**80%**







MOONWALKER

BY SEGA
PRICE £19.99
RELEASED: FEB 1991
GAME TYPE: PLATFORM

The King of Pop and in his very own Megadrive game too. The evil Mr Big has stolen all the children (and why not?) and of course the best person to rescue them is weedy, pop mad-person, Michael Jackson. Based on Jacko's movie of the same name, Moonwalker sees you in the role of Mickey-boy himself as he attempts to rescue the kids. Ahem, of course. There are five baddy-infested levels as Jacko travels from night clubs and urban ghettos to the zombie-filled graveyards from Thriller. Reasonable renditions of hits like Beat It and Bad play throughout the game and there are some complimentary sampled "Oohs!" and "Ows!" too. What's more, Mike can even moonwalk the baddies to death. A bit on the easy side, Moonwalker has dated and as such is a rather ordinary looking, okay sounding, but nonetheless reasonably playable platform game.

PRESENTATION	**75%**
GRAPHICS	**78%**
SOUND	**82%**
SHORT TERM PLAY	**80%**
LONG TERM PLAY	**68%**
OVERALL	**72%**



ZERO WING

BY TOAPLAN
PRICE: £19.99
RELEASED: JULY 1991
GAME TYPE: SHOOT 'EM UP

Considering tthis game is from Toaplan (the makers of Truxton) it comes as no surprise to find that it's a shoot 'em up. There are eight levels of horizontally scrolling action and plenty of baddies to fill those levels. As usual there are power ups to collect, lasers, homing missiles and the like, although not as many as are sported my some games. One neat feature is the tractor-beam which neutralises enemies and draws them towards the front of the ship using them as a shield. The graphics are quite good and the main sprite is excellent. However, compared to other Megadrive blasters like Hellfire and newer releases like Thunderforce IV, the action seems a little too basic to make it a real classic. Still, it is none the less a very playable shoot 'em up and at half price is definitely worthy of consideration.

PRESENTATION	**80%**
GRAPHICS	**82%**
SOUND	**75%**
SHORT TERM PLAY	**85%**
LONG TERM PLAY	**72%**
OVERALL	**82%**





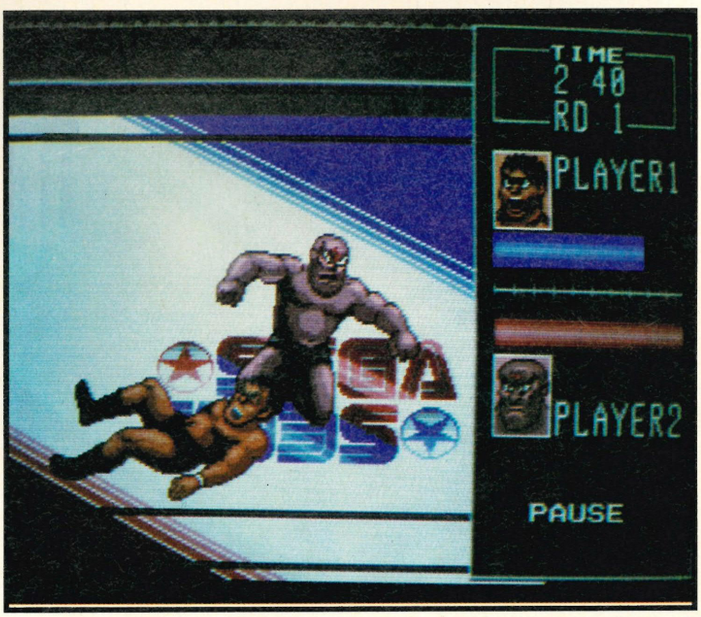


WRESTLE WAR

BY SEGA
PRICE: £19.99
RELEASED: JUNE 1991
GAME TYPE: BEAT 'EM UP

The Megadrive's first wrestling game, Wrestle Wars is quite a worthy attempt. Allowing you to choose from eight different characters (although only one in one-player mode) the aim of the game is obviously to wrestle your opponent into submission. Graphically, it's very amusing with the characters pulling all manner of comical expressions when in pain. There's a fair amount of moves and the game is quite a challenge. However, the more recent WWF Wrestlemania is a superior buy with better depth of playabilty. Still at half the price of WWF, Wrestle War isn't that bad and if your looking for a fun beat 'em up you could do worse.

PRESENTATION	**65%**
GRAPHICS	**70%**
SOUND	**72%**
SHORT TERM PLAY	**68%**
LONG TERM PLAY	**65%**
OVERALL	**66%**



BARGAINS

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D'you know what this is? It's a typesetting code, that's what it is. And it's taken Paul days... DAYS... of this sort of gibberish to bring you this lovely, neat and tidy Games Index. It's even made his eyes go funny. But it's as comprehensive as possible, and hey, that's what counts, because it's you, the reader, that we're here to serve. Who cares that it's taken a week of solid typing and referring back to old issues. As long as this is the best buyer's guide going, with all the relevant tips and high scores and stuff, well, that's what counts.

And on the subject of high scores, if you can beat any of those listed here we want to know about it. So fill in the form below and mail it to MEGATECH'S VERY OWN HYPERPLAYERS, MEGATECH, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. And no cheating, because it's not big and it's not clever and you're only kidding yourself and Santa Claus won't visit your house next Christmas.

NAME:
ADDRESS:
GAME:
DIFFICULTY SETTING:
LEVEL:
SCORE:

MEGADRIVE GAMES
These are the ones that are worth watching out for.

688 ATTACK SUB
BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
Submarine simulation in which you can captain a US or Soviet nuclear sub, navigate hazardous waters and play havoc with your torpedoes.
▲ Lots of depth and a good simulation feel.
▼ The Thrills per Second gauge barely twitches so it won't appeal to everyone.

MT RATING: 85%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
Try this method to complete the final Hit and Run mission, in Beginner and Standard modes. First activate the top-down map and zoom out until a target appears. Arm a missile and head to periscope depth. You will probably be detected by a patrolling sub and have a missile launched at you, but concentrate on launching all four missiles as soon as they're ready and once they're on their way, run for it! There's no way you can check on the missiles' progress so don't hang around. Set speed to 1/3 to effect a turn to 330 degrees, and head for the edge of the continental shelf. Activate contour mapping and as soon as you reach the drop-off, dive as deep as you can and increase speed to full or flank. Head NW, using the contour mapping to steer around obstacles while occasionally checking the top-down map to make sure you're going in the right direction. Don't risk diving too deep, though, as the last thing you want is to scupper yourself on the sea bed. As you approach Denmark the enemy will try to find you on sonar. Do not use your own sonar or try to attack them. Just keep going and by the time the mission clock reaches about 25 minutes you should have reached safety and the mission is over.

A

AFTERBURNER II
BY SEGA
PRICE: £19.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
Conversion of SEGA's 3D, warplane-shooting which gives you wave after wave of warplanes to shoot at (in 3D).
▲ Whizzy graphics and thumping music provide a bit of a buzz.
▼ Gameplay is a bit samey all the way through.

MT RATING: 72%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
When GAME OVER comes up try the following sequence – LEFT, LEFT, LEFT, B, B, B, C, C, C. Then hit START to carry on from where you died. Alternatively, on the second title screen hold down A, B, C and START to choose any level up to 20 as your starting stage.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE
27,861,520 by Daniel Sullivan, Coventry

ALIEN 3
BY ARENA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 9
Nothing like the film, this puts you in control of a megaweapons-toting Ripley on a platform crusade to waste the aliens and rescue the cocooned humans.
▲ Excellent sound effects, music, graphics and gameplay. Really challenging too.
▼ It's so good it's suspicious.

MT RATING: 94%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
When the game starts, go to the options screen and, using the second control pad, press C, UP, RIGHT, DOWN, LEFT, A, RIGHT and DOWN. You should hear a noise. Leave the options screen and start the game. When you wish to skip a level, pause the game and press C, A and B. Lines should run down the screen. Now when you unpause the game, you should move onto the next level.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE
15,570,450 (Hard level) by Robert Guthrie, Galashiels

ALIEN STORM
BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
Pizza-esque aliens have arrived to conquer the planet and only one or two players can stop them! A conversion of the SEGA coin-op which was a sort of Golden Axe of Tomorrow beat 'em up, but with lasers... er...
▲ Nice graphics and quite jolly fun, with all the stages of the coin-op.
▼ Completing the game in two player mode is a piece of cake (Victoria Sandwich).

MT RATING: 70%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
To get to the end of the final level very easily just keep choosing the route on the far left and you should only have to clear out three levels before you meet the Alien Brain.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE
100 (Supreme Ruler) by Jim Graham, Stevenage

ALISIA DRAGOON
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 4
Become mistress of a multitude of mythical monsters in this lengthy and unusual platform shoot 'em up.
▲ Superb graphics + novel gameplay = good fun.
▼ Hardly a downer in sight.

MT RATING: 85%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
Switch on and after 'SEGA' disappears from the screen hold down A until 'GAME ARTS' has disappeared. Now hold down B until 'GAINAX' has disappeared. Now hold down C until 'MUSIC COMPOSED BY...' has disappeared. When the stars come out of the crystal press START and you should hear a sound. Start the game and press C on the second controller to blank the screen. This warps you to the next part of the current level, or you can warp even further using these button combinations:
C – Stage one
B – Stage two
B and C – Stage three
A – Stage four
A and C – Stage five
A and B – Stage six
A, B and C – Stage seven
START – Stage eight

CURRENT HIGH SCORE
Elven Mage (level 7, normal) by Anthony Dowd, Telford

ANOTHER WORLD
BY VIRGIN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 14



Lester Chaykin (scientist) is transported by a twist of fate and a particle accelerator to Another World where he has to somehow evade death at the hands of evil spudhead aliens and get back home for tea.
▲ Ace graphics and animation, and the way puzzle, adventure, platform and shoot 'em up action is combined is great.
▼ Controls are a bit dodgy, and once you've finished the game you won't come back to it.

MT RATING: 86%

AQUATIC GAMES
BY ELECTRONIC ARTS

PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: MT 10
Join James Pond (of James Pond fame) and his cuddly mates in an eight-event silly sports game with such attractions as Kipper Watching and Shell Shooting.
▲ Really smart graphics.
▼ Really dull events. Perhaps younger players would enjoy it, though.
MT RATING: 59%

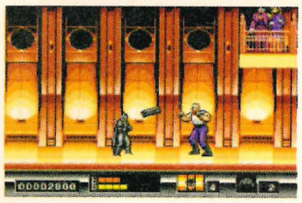
ARNOLD PALMER'S GOLF
BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
Choose your clubs and join the famous golfer of yesteryear on a round or in a tournament.
▲ Nice big golfer sprites and decent golf action.
▼ Doesn't feel as good to play as PGA Tour 2.
MT RATING: 75%
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
Hit 100 shots on any one hole without sinking the ball and 'GAME OVER' appears. Wait a bit and a miniature, playable version of Fantasy Zone appears!

ATOMIC RUNNER
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 10
A bizarre platform game in which the hero has to leap and blast his way through numerous alien-infested levels.
▲ Great background graphics and a decent, if unusual blend of shoot 'em up and platform action.
▼ Atomic Runner sprite is a bit weedy.
MT RATING: 80%
CURRENT HIGH SCORE
112,600 by Alan Sainty, King's Lynn

AYRTON SENNA'S SUPER MONACO GP 2
BY SEGA
PRICE: £49.99
REVIEWED: MT 6
Update of the excellent 3D race game, with extra tracks, better sounds, slightly tweaked gameplay and digitised pics of Ayrton Senna looking grumpy.
▲ Best Megadrive race game.
▼ A bit pricey. The extra features don't make it THAT much better than the original Super Monaco.
MT RATING: 93%
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
Select Japanese text from the options menu, then go to Free Practise mode. Press the D-button down to scroll through the text and a flashing red arrow appears to indicate the most difficult corner on the circuit.
CURRENT HIGH SCORE
160 driver's points by Wayne Pearce, Haddlesey

B

BATMAN
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 7



Take on the Joker and his band of clowns-gone-bad in this game of the first Batmovie. The action takes the form of platform beat 'em up stuff interspersed with scrolling Batmobile and Batwing shoot 'em up bits.
▲ Smart graphics and fairly enjoyable gameplay.
▼ A bit boring and a bit too easy to complete.
MT RATING: 70%
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
When you're being attacked press START to pause the game. Hold down B and START again and you shouldn't take any more hits from that baddie.
CURRENT HIGH SCORE
561,900 by Danny Kenmure, Edinburgh

BATMAN RETURNS
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 12
Based on the second Batmovie, this pits the Batman against Catwoman and The Penguin in a variety of platform beat 'em up scenarios.
▲ Lots of levels and quite a lot to do.
▼ Graphics are big but grainy so it's sometimes hard to see what's happening and the action is v frustrating. Not for novices.
MT RATING: 76%

BATMAN: REVENGE OF THE JOKER
BY SUNSOFT
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 16
This Batgame's based on the comics rather than the movies, but it offers similar platform beat 'em up action to the others. Fight off The Joker and his cronies with your flying batfeet and wrist-mounted bat laser weapons.
▲ Enjoyable blend of platfom and shoot 'em up with a fair amount of variety in the levels/
▼ Graphics are pretty garish, and not altogether wonderful. Unlimited continues make it quite easy to finish.
MT RATING: 75%
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
You don't lose your Invincibility bat capsules when you die so you can keep collecting them, dying, then going back and collecting them again, thus storing up dozens and making it very easy to conquer the bosses.

BATTLE SQUADRON
BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
A vertically scrolling space shoot 'em up of the old school. Aliens, aliens, aliens. And invisible aliens. And more aliens. Two player mode adds a spark of variety.
▲ Wonderful for its age. Well, maybe not wonderful but the graphics still look okay and the action is challenging and enjoyable in two player mode.
▼ Just a bit old-fashioned, really.
MT RATING: 79%
CURRENT HIGH SCORE
8,912,101 (Easy level) by Asif Akhtar, Wimbledon

BIO HAZARD BATTLE
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 11



Take control of a laser-armed insect-fish-ship-thing on a mission to wipe out a wide variety of mutant insects and other assorted nasty creatures in this one or two player blast.
▲ Spectacularly gross graphics, two player option, unusual scenario and good extra weapons systems make this a winner.
▼ 0896
MT RATING: 88%

BLOCK OUT
BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
A sort of 3D Tetris in which you have to dump oddly-shaped blocks together in a well to make solid layers. These completed layers then disappear which is good, because if they didn't the blocks would spill over the top of the well and that would be the end of the game.
▲ Tons of options (including two players, head-to-head) make for loads of game variations, all of which are excellent fun.
▼ Sometimes the game slows down and the controls go a bit dicky resulting in the occasional misplaced block.
MT RATING: 91%
CURRENT HIGH SCORE
435,311 (Level 0-!, Flat Fun) by Lee Nixon, Sheaford

BONANZA BROTHERS
BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
A coin-op conversion in which one or two players get to burgle the houses of the rich and villainous. Dodge guards and guard dogs and subject your characters to all sorts of jolly sight gags (standing on rakes, crashing through walls).
▲ Stylised bubbly graphics look great.
▼ Is INCREDIBLY easy to complete.
MT RATING: 69%
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
Buy the cartridge. Play it for about half an hour and you've won.
CURRENT HIGH SCORE
12,741,100 by Tom Knight, Girton

BUCK ROGERS
BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £49.99
REVIEWED: MT 4
Role-playing game based on the TSR board game in which you have to lead your six rookie troopers around numerous space scenarios in a quest to vanquish the evil RAM organisation. Lots of gun battles, strategy-based spacecraft battles with a soupçon of puzzle solving.
▲ Good plot and quite enjoyable, even for players with only a passing interest in RPGs.
▼ Rather basic graphics may put off your standard Megadrive fan.
MT RATING: 88%

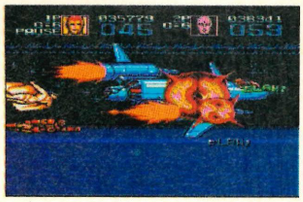
BULLS VS LAKERS
BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 10
Probably the best of EA's basketball simulations, featuring all the American big name players, replete with their speciality moves.
▲ Good graphics and feels like a realistic simulation.
▼ Not as instantly accessible as David Robinson's Supreme Court Basketball.
MT RATING: 80%

C

CALIFORNIA GAMES
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 3
An unusual sports game in which the five events are surfing, roller skating, BMX, half-pipe skateboarding and footbag juggling. Good, as far as it goes, but it could do with more events.
▲ Makes a pleasant change from the usual sports sims. All the events are quite playable, moreso with two players.
▼ Could have done with some extra events, even the Master System version has more!

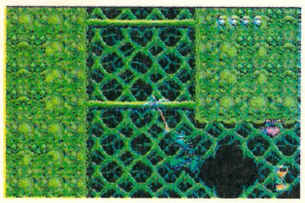
GAME INDEX
MT RATING: 79%
CURRENT HIGH SCORE
Footbag: 854, 370 by T Philips, Cardiff
Surfing: 10.0 (Turbo setting) by Yuen Aw, Birmingham
Skating: 12,530 by Martin Charles, Cardiff
Half Pipe: 47,398 by Martin Charles, Cardiff
BMX: 146,760 by Martin Charles, Cardiff

CAPTAIN AMERICA & THE AVENGERS
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 14



Take The Cap and three of his Avenger buddies (The Vision, Hawkeye and Iron Man, all with their special powers) into battle against various Marvel super-villains in this scrolling beat/shoot 'em up.
▲ Would have been an excellent use of the Marvel characters...
▼ ...Had the graphics not been so dismal and the game so easy to complete.
MT RATING: 57%
CURRENT HIGH SCORE
685,454 by Alan Sainty, King's Lynn

CHAKAN
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 15



Chakan is an undead swordsman who has to hack up all platform-based supernatural evil before he can settle down for an eternal rest.
▲ Excellent graphics and lots of variety in the later levels.
▼ A bit too much challenge and not enough fun.
MT RATING: 73%
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
Put the game in practice mode and find the air portal (at the bottom right of the navigation screen). It's the only portal with a small platform above it. Jump on the platform and you'll find that, though you've collected no potions, you can activate the portal spell. Do so and you are given a full complement of potions, all the weapons

and Chakan is warped past the first twelve levels.

CHAMPIONSHIP PRO-AM
BY TRADE WEST
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 14
A straight translation of an old NES game in which you get to race radio controlled trucks and cars around hazard-laden tracks. The addition of rocket and bomb launchers on the cars livens things up.
▲ Good and whizzy, just like the real thing, and the weapons are fun.
▼ After the 20th race it does grow tedious and it's surprising more wasn't done with the Megadrive conversion.
MT RATING: 78%

CHIKI-CHIKI BOYS
BY CAPCOM
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 14



A conversion of the Mega-Twins coin-op in which two young fellah-me-lads go on a platform treasure hunt, swiping at cuddly monsters with their swords and magic weapons.
▲ Pleasant enough game with nice graphics and enjoyable action.
▼ Lacks the arcade game's two player mode which would have made it something special.
MT RATING: 80%

COLUMNS
BY SEGA
PRICE: £19.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
Sort out coloured gems as they fall down the screen in this Tetris-style puzzle game.
▲ Hypnotic music and graphics make this almost unputdownable. Two player competition mode is superb.
▼ Sometimes success is as much down to accident as design (which may not be that bad).
MT RATING: 88%
CURRENT HIGH SCORE
97,633,647 by James Montague, Chelmsford

CORPORATION
BIY: VIRGIN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 4
A huge 3D adventure with a bit of shooting 'em up, in which you have to get past the security robots in a high-tech office building.
▲ Good graphics and unusual and absorbing gameplay.
▼ Doesn't quite achieve it's potential because some of the best ideas in the game aren't used quite as well as they might have been.
MT RATING: 87%
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
To finish the game the easy way use this method. Get to level five and update your access before descending to level four. Update your access on level four and go back up to level five. Once in the lift, take down the password and reset the game. When you start again enter the password and repeat the process. You should find you can update your card seven times and con now go to any level you like, so go to level -3 where the embryo chamber is to be found. Collect an embryo and head straight for the car park on the ground floor to complete the game.

CYBERBALL
BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
A conversion of the robotic American Football coin-op in which the players have to get the ball sufficiently far down the pitch before it explodes!
▲ Decent graphics and excellent speech effects. Quite good fun too.
▼ If you want American football the John Madden games have got more plays and more realistic action.
MT RATING: 69%

D

DAVID ROBINSON'S SUPREME COURT BASKETBALL
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 6
Become the basketball champions of the USA in this semi-sim which puts the management of the squad in your hands, as well as the on-court action.
▲ Good graphics and strikes the right balance between realism and fast arcade action.
▼ The way the court flips round as you cross the half-way line takes a bit of getting used to. Real basketball fans my prefer something more simulationy, like Bulls vs Lakers.
MT RATING: 83%

DECAPATTACK
BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
Rather large platform game in which you play a sort of Frankenstein's Monster creature who gets rid of the baddies by throwing his head at them.
▲ Unusual gameplay makes it fun to play.
▼ Not particularly flash in the graphics and sound departments.
MT RATING: 79%
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
You can pick up extra lives by jumping straight down onto the springy poles. As you hit the top, keep springing up and down and the pole segments should light up. When they're all lit an extra life is yours.

DESERT STRIKE
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 3
Lay waste to a mad dictator's desert army, rescue hostages and blow up his 'baby milk factories' in this helicopter shoot 'em up.
▲ Lots of variety, great graphics and terrific gameplay make this one of the best shoot 'em ups on the Megadrive.
▼ Slightly dodgy 'No, no, nothing to do with the Gulf War, honestly' premise.
MT RATING: 93%
CURRENT HIGH SCORE
4,995,700 by Liam Cullen, Welwyn Garden City

DICK TRACY
BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
Shinobi-style beat\shoot 'em up game starring 'The World's Greatest Detective'. Take on the likes of Lips Manlis and other deformed gangsters as Dick tries to get to the bottom of a bomb plot.
▲ Challenging and good fun, with a good mix of game styles.
▼ Perhaps not quite enough variety in the beat 'em up bits.
MT RATING: 79%
CURRENT HIGH SCORE
339,900 by David Rowntree, Devon

DJ BOY
BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
A beat 'em up in which the hero has to do battle against all sorts of mobile meanies while on roller skates. Crazy, eh?
▲ Unusual concept and nice looks.
▼ Tedious and easy to complete.
MT RATING: 51%
CURRENT HIGH SCORE
9,835,700 by Jonathon Tilbrook, Sheffield

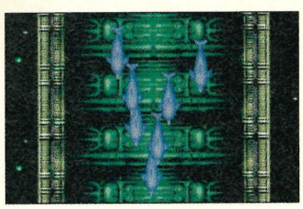
DOUBLE DRAGON
BY ACCOLADE
PRICE: £29.99
REVIEWED: MT 5
Help Billy and Jimmy Lee rescue a kidnapped young lady in what is supposedly a conversion of the seminal two-players-against-an-army-of-urban-thugs beat 'em up.
▲ It doesn't cost 40 quid.
▼ So easy that we finished it within half an hour of receiving it. Not much like the coin-op either.
MT RATING: 48%

DRAGON'S FURY
BY TENGEN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 1
Originally reviewed as Devil Crash (the Japanese version) this is a pinball game which lets you bash a ball around a three-screen-high scrolling table and eight bonus sub-tables, all populated with little devils and ghostly monks.
▲ Superb graphics and sound and it has a superb pinball feel to it.
▼ Religious fundamentalists may not approve of a pinball game with Agents of Satan sprites.
MT RATING: 91%
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
Try entering TECHNIQUE NOSOFT as a password to start the game with ten balls and a 2,000,000 points bonus. Entering DEVILCRASH starts you with seven balls, and ALCLAE8ECK gives you 21 balls and enough points to take you right to the final screen.

DYNAMITE DUKE
BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
An Operation Wolf-style 3D blast\beat 'em up based on a semi-popular coin-op of yesteryear.
▲ Smart graphics and fun to play.
▼ Yet another of that 'All Too Easy' breed of Megadrive games.
MT RATING: 70%
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
On the title screen press C ten times then go to the options screen. Press C another ten times and you should find you can select SUPER OPTIONS which lets you start on the later levels with extra credits.

E

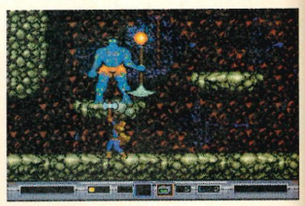
ECCO THE DOLPHIN
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 13



Become a dispossessed dolphin which has to solve the puzzles which block his way in over 20 undersea mazes so that he can find his mates who have all mysteriously disappeared.
▲ Original concept combined with wonderful graphics and amazingly engrossing gameplay make this a classic.
▼ Hundreds of people rang us up asking how to beat the Helix in the Darkwater level. Hey, it was a downer for US.
MT RATING: 94%
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
With this game you don't need any others. When the name of the level appears press A, B and START and Ecco will be invincible.

E-SWAT
BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
A single player conversion of the old cop shoot-out arcade game in which the player gets to enforce the law from inside an armoured flying suit with flame throwers and lasers.
▲ Lots of platform action, decent graphics.
▼ Nothing special these days. It's a shame you have to play several levels before you get the armoured suit as this could have been a super-destruction game.
MT RATING: 79%
CURRENT HIGH SCORE
642,900 (Completed on Normal) by Harry Weichers, Ferndale, S Africa

EX-MUTANTS
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 12



A platform game based on the cult comics, in which you play a heavily-armed hero or heroine on a mutant-mashing mission to rescue your fellow heroes.
▲ Challenging and fun, and captures the atmosphere of the comic well.
▼ Graphics are mostly a bit cheesey.
MT RATING: 89%

F

F22 INTERCEPTOR
BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 1
The first Megadrive 'flight simulator' is a pretty simple air combat game in which you first have to train, before being sent on lots of basic missions to various parts of the world.
▲ Fast and fun, simple to get to grips with and loads of little missions to complete.
▼ More of a simple shoot 'em up than a flight sim.
MT RATING: 88%
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE
You can beat all the aces using this simple tactic. Simply pull a very steep climb straight into the sun and keep going with your afterburners on. The enemy plane will follow you and when you see it levelling off in the monitor dive straight down onto it,

shooting as you go, and you'll be able to dust it, no trouble.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

USA: 35,577 by Dean Lloyd, Rugeley
USSR: 35,577 by Dean Lloyd, Rugeley
IRAQ: 36,477 by Dean Lloyd, Rugeley
KOREA:36,477 by Dean Lloyd, Rugeley

FANTASIA

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

The second Disney game puts you in control of Mickey Mouse in Sorceror's Apprentice garb. He has to use simple magic spells to get rid of the walking brooms, crocodiles and other Fantasia characters which populate the platformy landscapes.

▲ Lovely graphics.
▼ Completely hopeless gameplay which is extremely frustrating. Even the renditions of the movie's music are dismal.
@RATING:MT RATING: 40%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

When you start the game, walk right and you should see two brooms walking along the floor to the left. Follow them and as they're about to reach the wall, destroy them both (or at least the one on the right) and 'Alakazam!' – a bonus object will appear on the stairs.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

11,683,600 (Hardest Level) by Chris Maginnis, Linlithgow

FATAL REWIND

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

Platform blast in which you control a chickenesque robot in what is supposed to be a game show. Shoot little flying blobs, find keys, open doors and that's about it.

▲ Fairly smart graphics and gameplay is pretty tough.
▼ Ropey controls and lack of variety make it a bit un-fun to play.

MT RATING: 65%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

3,658,180 by Jody McClarty, Aylesbury

FORGOTTEN WORLDS

BY SEGA
PRICE: £19.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

One or two players participate in this conversion of the unusual Capcom coin-op in which two floating blokes have to decimate loads of fantastic monsters with meaty weapons.

▲ Good weapons, smart graphics and pretty good fun to play.
▼ A bit easy, that's all.

MT RATING:79%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

1,991,800 by Daniel Gallop, Essex

G

GAIARES

BY RENOVATION
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 2

Yet another horizontally-scrolling space shoot 'em up, but this one has loads of weapons, enemies and levels to keep you occupied as you go on a mission to free the universe of space pirates.

▲ Smart graphics with lots of variety, loads of everything and it's pretty tough to beat.
▼ The only thing wrong with this is that perhaps it's not amazingly original.

MT RATING: 84%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

Plug in two controllers and press START and B on pad one to bring up the options screen. Select tune 18 and hold down A on pad two then select EXIT with pad one. Still holding A press C on pad one and keep them held down until the SEGA logo disappears. Now hit START and you've got a level select.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

1,608,352 by Asif Akhtar, Wimbledon

GHOSTBUSTERS

BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

Choose your favourite Ghostbuster, ready your proton pack and exorcise a whole load of spooks from platform-laden houses, thus uncovering a supernatural plot to plunge the city into the seventh level of Hell.

▲ Jolly graphics, lots of variety, it plays well and it goes on for ages.
▼ Music is a bit iffy.

MT RATING: 86%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

17,758,000 by Wayne Lockwood, Boroughbridge

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

BY SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

Conversion of the ghost-slaying coin-op in which Sir Arthur has to rescue his princess from the clutches of a demon and his army of spooklings. Lots of platforms to jump around and plenty of extra weapons to pick up.

▲ Looks great, plays great, great music. Just great.
▼ Price is also great.

MT RATING: 93%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

If you've got the official version of the game you can use this for invincibility. Go to the options screen and exit four times. Then on the title screen press A four times, UP, UP, DOWN, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT. Then hold down B and press START.

G-LOC

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 15



Conversion of the Afterburner-like coin-op (see AFTERBURNER, if you like) in which you get to blow aeroplanes out of the sky from the cockpit of another aeroplane.

▲ Fair 3D graphics, considering there's no sprite-scaling hardware being used.
▼ Alas, it's all rather boring.

MT RATING: 69%

GODS

BY MINDSCAPE
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 11



Lots of Greek mythology stuff here, as you control the platforming activities of a warrior who has to brave Harpies, Minotaurs and lots of other monsters in his quest to solve puzzles and generally embarrass the gods of Olympys.

▲ Really slickly done, with excellent graphics and decent puzzle/shooting/platforming gameplay.
▼ Would have been frustratingly difficult even without the dodgy control system. Torn-out hair may be a side effect of playing this.

MT RATING: 89%

GOLDEN AXE II

BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

It's the barbarians against the monsters in this re-run of the beat 'em up coin-op. One or two players go on a hack-and-slay beat 'em up-type mission... with hilarious consequences. Well, not that hilarious.

▲ If you liked Golden Axe this is more of the same.
▼ But it's simply not as much fun. If you have the option get the first one or wait for Golden Axe 3, out later this year.

MT RATING: 67%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

At the end of level one hold down A while you're attacking the boss. Let go when the story screen appears. During the rest stage don't collect any magic or touch the wizards. Cast a spell at the start of the second level and you'll now have infinite magic power. You can actually keep collecting magic and you'll be able to cast the other characters' spells, but this can cause the game to crash.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

992.0 (Normal) by Mick and Barry Gosling, Coventry

GREEN DOG

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 10

Leap around six Caribbean islands in the hunt for a wasted surfer's surfing powers, using your frisbee to beat off the attacking wildlife and various odd modes of transport (skateboards, flycycles and rollerblades) to get around. Apparently based on a hit American board game.

▲ The graphics are really excellent.
▼ The gameplay is unspeakably dull. Where are you, the patron saint of Video Game Excitement?

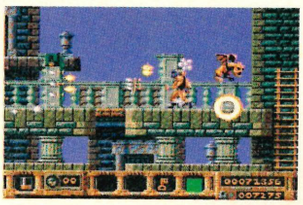
MT RATING: 56%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

596,400 by Karl Smith, Long Lawford

GREY LANCER

BY MASAYA
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 11



More horizontally-scrolling shoot 'em up excitement in yet another horizontally-scrolling shoot 'em up... set, surprisingly, in space. This one's from the makers of Gynoug (see GYNOUG) that other famous horizontally-scrolling shoot 'em up.

▲ Looks good. Plays good.
▼ And by golly, it's very unoriginal. Steals a lot of bits out of other games and doesn't use them to do anything particularly new.

MT RATING: 72%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

To activate the hidden MANIA skill setting wait for the title screen to appear then press UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, B then A. The title should turn gold and you can access the new level from the options screen.

GYNOUG

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 5

Angelic Gynoug (angelic because he's an angel) has to rid the underworld of all sorts of nasty demons in what appears to be a horizontally-scrolling shoot 'em up. Uncanny.

▲ Fast gameplay, lots of power-ups and some of the graphics, namely the bosses, are spectacular.
▼ Errr...

MT RATING: 91%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

On the options screen go down to DIFFICULTY and press A, B, C and START together to get a secret EASY setting. Alternatively, go down to CONTROL and hold down A until a stage select option appears.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

2,345,760 by Wesley Thomson, Fife

H

HELLFIRE

BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: MT 5

It's surprising that a little-known Toaplan coin-op should become such a popular Megadrive game, but then life's full of surprises. What makes this different from other horizontally-scrolling blasts is the unusual rotatable guns fitted to the player's ship.

▲ Weapons system works really well and leads to clever, tactical blasting. Graphics, of course, are great and it's all just very good fun.
▼ What downers?

MT RATING: 92%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

Go to the options screen and set the game to HARD. Now select tune 1 on the sound test and leave it to play until YEA RIGHT appears. You now have 99 credits, but the game difficulty is set to super hard.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

19,478,220 by Robert Guthrie, Galashiels

HOME ALONE

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 11



Tour the neighbourhood, foiling the plans of a pair of burglars with weapons and traps made from whatever the little Macaulay Culkin sprite can find on his travels. Based on the movie, of course.

▲ Weapon-building is quite novel and occasionally comical.
▼ Runs out of gameplay a bit too quickly. One for younger players?

MT RATING: 60%

I

ISHIDO

BY ACCOLADE
PRICE: £35.99
REVIEWED: MT 2

A board game based on some other ancient puzzle game (presumably not on a computer) in which you have to fill squares on a board with tiles by matching shapes and colours.

▲ Unlike most Megadrive puzzle games it doesn't appear to have its roots in Tetris.

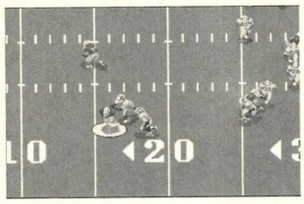
▼ Blimey it's difficult. One for real puzzle maniacs only.

MT RATING: 80%

J

JOE MONTANA 3

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 11



More Amerian football action in a game which combines all the features of the first two Montana games, including the full spoken commentary, the different pitch views and all the teams and plays you'd expect from an American Football game.@EXTRA:

▲ Good fun, smart graphics and the speech is just gob-smacking!

▼ Unfortunately still not as good a Gridiron simulation as John Madden '92

MT RATING: 78%

JOHN MADDEN '92

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 1

Electronic Arts' second American Football game is arguably the best of the lot. A 3D pitch display, and lots of player involvement with tactics, plays and steering your squad of little sprites around the screen make you feel like you're really in the thick of it.

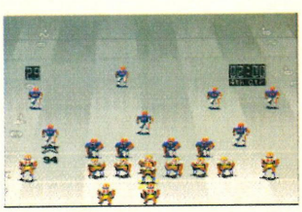
▲ Such a smart game that you'll enjoy it even if you don't care much for the sport. The two-player game is superb.

▼ Nowt.

MT RATING: 95%

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '93

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 12



Classic teams, more speech, battery save and extra moves are what this has over JM'92. Apart from that it's practically the same game, so don't consider buying this if you've got the other. Unless you're a real gridiron nutter.@EXTRA:

▲ It has all those extra features, so if you really follow the sport closely you'll appreciate the additions.

▼ Most players won't spot the differences. Besides, this is slightly slower than '92.

MT RATING: 91%

K

KID CHAMELEON

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 4

Kid has been sucked into a virtual reality arcade game and to get out he has to leap around level after level of platforms and monsters. The gimmick with this one is that by collecting different hats and putting them on Kid gets different powers (some of which are quite wacky).

▲ Unusual style of gameplay is a plus, the hats bit is a good idea and the graphics are nice.

▼ A bit too easy, apart from one bit which is incredibly tough.

MT RATING: 64%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

This tip crashes our copy of Kid Chameleon but it might be worth trying on yours. At the end of Blue Lake Woods 2 jump on the block above the flag. Hold down B and, keeping it pressed, hold down C. Press DOWN to crouch then DOWN and RIGHT. You should be warped to the final boss.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

1,409,960 (Normal) by Mick and Barry Gosling, Coventry

KLAX

BY TENGEN
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

Tetris-derived puzzle game in which coloured tiles roll down a conveyor belt and have to be caught and tossed into a bin to make point-scoring patterns.@EXTRA:

▲ Lots of scope for developing strategies make this extremely playable.

▼ Nothing much, but it's not quite as playable as Block-Out.

MT RATING: 85%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

9,754,765, (Largest Klax 11x67,000) by Sharon Mitchell, Fraserburgh

L

LEMMINGS

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 11



Get the suicidal lemmings across obstacles and into their home in this conversion of the classic puzzle game, which has all the features of the original and more levels.@EXTRA:

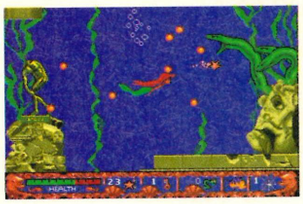
▲ Tons of levels to beat, and the idea of the game is terrific, though sometimes it's more fun watching the Lemmings die than it is saving them.

▼ Who can say?

MT RATING: 92%

THE LITTLE MERMAID

BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: MT 13



The Merpeople have been transformed into weedy polyps by evil undersea witch, Ursula. Guide Ariel or her dad, King Triton, around four undersea mazes to fight off Ursula's henchfish and free the fishy folks with subaquatic magic blasts.

▲ Looks gorgeous.

▼ A good player can whip through all four levels in 20 minutes flat. Kids only.

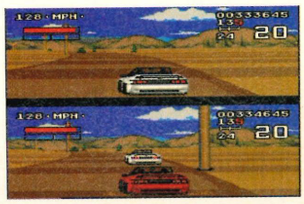
MT RATING: 57%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

685,454 by Alan Sainty, King's Lynn

LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 12



Drive Lotus Esprits and Elans around increasingly tortuous tracks, with ever-worsening weather conditions to add further to your troubles. Split screen two player mode.

▲ Very playable 3D racing game. Two player head-to-head game is excellent.

▼ The weather effects are nice but as a whole the graphics look like they could have been better.

MT RATING: 85%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

Try entering MANSELL as a password and you should qualify in every race you drive in.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

83,766,72 by Paul Thomson, Gillingham

M

MARBLE MADNESS

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £29.99
REVIEWED: MT 2

Steer your marble around convoluted courses of perilous ledges and precarious platforms while all sorts of nasty objects try to knock you off into oblivion.

▲ Excellent conversion of the cult coin-op with all the original levels and the two player mode.

▼ There are only seven levels to beat and that doesn't take too long.

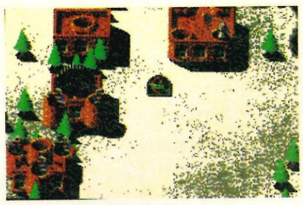
MT RATING: 73%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

205,360 by Darren Neale, Helston

MEGA-LO-MANIA

BY VIRGIN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 13



Populous-style strategy game in which you have to lead your race of people out of the Stone Age and into the future by teaching them to build weapons and implements which help them conquer nearby races.

▲ Very easy to get into and the quantity of features and the quirky touches make it fun from start to finish.

▼ There are only nine levels, but they should keep you going for quite a while

MT RATING: 92%

MERCS

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 1

Commando-style shoot 'em up in which you have to gun your way through hordes of soldiers, destroying tanks, gunboats, etc, buying more destructive weapons as you go. This version includes a second game variation not found in the arcade game in which you have to recruit new allies to fight alongside you.

▲ A really good blastfest.

▼ Lacks the arcade game's two player feature.

MT RATING: 90%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

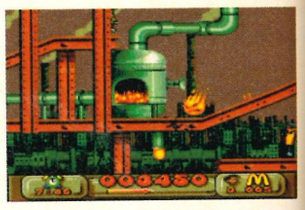
Finding the game too easy? Just activate original mode, then hold down A, B, C and START to make it even harder!

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

1,407,500 (Arcade) by Neil Kendall, Birkenhead
5,107,950 (Original) by Stu Gorlner, Gorsley

MICK AND MACK: GLOBAL GLADIATORS

BY VIRGIN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 15



Mick or Mack join up, somehow, with McDonalds (of hamburger infamy) to fight various environmental threats (such as blobby slime monsters and mad beavers) in this platform game.

▲ Smart graphics and gameplay is fast and jolly.

▼ Alas, it's all a bit too simple to be interesting for very long, and it actually comes across an 8 megabit McDonalds ad.

MT RATING: 81%

MICKEY MOUSE IN CASTLE OF ILLUSION

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: PRE MEGATECH

The notorious mouse has to rescue his missus, Minnie, from evil witch Mizrabel in this cute and cuddly platform adventure with lots of Disneyesque monsters.

▲ Wonderful graphics and very playable.

▼ A bit easy to complete, so it's best for kids.

MT RATING: 84%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

There are at least three hidden treasure rooms in this game. One is in the third part of level one and another is in the first part of level three. To find both of them just fall down the pit and walk through the wall on the left to find loads of goodies.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

2,824,500 by Nathan Preston, Mid-Calder

MICRO MACHINES

BY CODE MASTERS
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: MT 15

Now that all legal problems between Code Masters and Sega have been cleared up you should be able to get hold of this one or two player race game in which you have to steer your toy car/boat/helicopter (the Micro Machines of the title) around tracks set up on the beach, the breakfast table, in the garden and more.

▲ Tremendous fun in single or double

player modes. Really recreates the childhood feeling of driving toy cars around the garden.

▼ A bit simple, but that doesn't really count against it too much.

MT RATING: 92%

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE

BY SEGA

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

Commandoes-on-platforms blasting action in this arcade conversion. Lots of add-on weapons and bad guys to use them on.

▲ Good guns 'n' destruction action, with a good level of control over your bloke.

▼ A bit easy to complete, and it doesn't have the arcade game's two player mode, which would have been fun.

MT RATING: 85%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

On the title screen, wait until START is highlighted in red then hold down C and press START. Once the game has begun press START and then A to warp to the next level!

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

2,104,100 by Dan Towes, Gillingham

MIGHT AND MAGIC

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

Absolutely gigantic role-playing game with 3D graphics in which you have to get your party of thieves/warriors/wizards around cities and countryside populated by an incredible range of monsters and villains (dinosaurs? ferocious cats?).

▲ Vast depth should keep hardened role players going for ages.

▼ Iffy monster graphics and long-winded combat system may be off-putting to non-RPG veterans.

MT RATING: 79%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

For free gold, gems and powerful weapons at any time of the day or night use this secret technique. Choose 'VIEW CHARACTER' and when 'VIEW WHICH' appears hold down left, A and C on the joypad. Let all three go simulataneously and when the character menu appears keep pressing left and you should see a load of odd characters which should mean the cheat has been activated.

MOONWALKER

BY SEGA

PRICE: £34.99

REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

Watch in awe as 'The King of Pop' braves zombies, mad dogs and men in white coats (actually they're gangsters in white coats) to rescue a bunch of adoring kids who have been mercilessly hidden in platformy levels.

▲ Great renditions of Michael Jackson tracks from the Bad album, and fairly jolly gameplay.

▼ It's all a bit basic, though, so it doesn't hold its appeal for too long.

MT RATING: 72%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

Plug in two joypads and go to the screen with the 1P START option. Push the D-button on joypad one diagonally up and left while holding down A and START on pad two. Press START on pad one and a level select appears.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

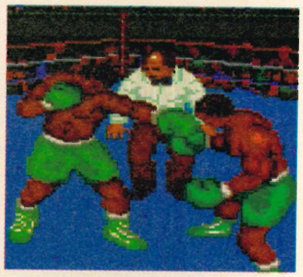
949,00 by Philip Butler, Cramlington

MUHAMMAD ALI BOXING

BY VIRGIN

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 15



Park Place (the original programmers of the John Madden and EA Hockey games) designed this boxing simulation in which you can help the legendary Ali recapture his title by beating off nine other heavyweight challengers.

▲ The 3D boxing ring graphics, the controls and the whole feel of the game captures the atmosphere of boxing better than any other boxing game.

▼ Ummm... Rather naff 3D intro sequence, but that's about it.

MT RATING: 92%

N

NHLPA HOCKEY

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 10

Ice hockey simulation which is a slight advance over its predecessor, EA Hockey. One or two player options, league championships, and that essential ingredient in any hockey game, a punch-up sub-game when the players start to get under each others' feet.

▲ Superb, fast, end-to-end hockey action, with a wonderful two-player option.

▼ Pretty much the same as the first game, so don't buy it if you have the original.

MT RATING: 89%

P

PAPERBOY 2

BY TENGEN

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 16



Help your bicycle-bound paperboy or (this being a real game of the Nineties) papergirl survive a week's worth of newspaper deliveries in three crazy neighbourhoods. Accurate tossing is required to make sure your regular customers get their papers, and to whack any hazards (skipping girls, runaway prams, bank robbers) out of the way.

▲ A few comedy accidents (hit a jack with a paper and watch it drop on the mechanic's head) which are funny the first time you see them. Gameplay is... 'pleasant'.

▼ Not much in the way of variety or thrills so it grows pretty dull after a while.

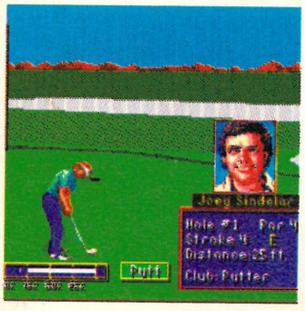
MT RATING: 58%

PGA TOUR GOLF 2

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 13



Seven 3D courses based on real-life PGA Tour venues are the setting for this prime golf simulation. Multi-player and skins tournaments, on-screen advice from the pros, battery game save – this cartridge is just loaded with features.

▲ Superb control method provides a perfect feel, as do the excellent graphics.

▼ Like a lot of EA's sports sims, it's a bit similar to its predecessor, PGA Tour Golf.

MT RATING: 94%

PHANTASY STAR III

BY SEGA

PRICE: £49.99

REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

Another gigantic RPG with a futuristic fantasy theme. The plot can take several routes across several worlds and through different generations of heroes so it really does take ages to conquer.

▲ Sheer vastness is its best quality.

▼ Graphics aren't particularly inspiring and the combat by rounds system doesn't make it too attractive to RPG non-veterans.

MT RATING: 89%

PIT FIGHTER

BY TENGEN

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 2

Venture forth into the seedy underworld of illegal fist-fighting in this conversion of the Atari beat 'em up coin-op. Two players can participate as any of three different characters, all of whom are portrayed in (rather chunky) digitised people sprites.

▲ Good, violent fun.

▼ Graphics look a bit over-chunky.

MT RATING: 77%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

2,449,350 by Stephen Gallimore, Bournemouth

POWERMONGER

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 14



Lead your gang of savages to supremacy on a vast archipelago of islands in this pseudo-sequel to Populous. Teach them to build boats and weapons and build up alliances with neighbouring leaders. It's a bit like Mega-Lo-Mania only it takes a much more serious tack.

▲ Technically it's excellent and feels very simulationy.

▼ It's the serious approach that makes it less enjoyable than Mega-Lo-Mania, plus it's very samey from island to island.

MT RATING: 81%

PREDATOR 2

BY ACCLAIM

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 11



Play the part of Captain Harrigan, a vice squad copper who has discovered most of his suspects butchered, apparently by an alien hunter. Harrigan has to run around mini-maze-like levels, shooting drug-dealers and other street thugs, while rescuing helpless hostages before the Predator trains his sights on them. Take on the Predators themselves on later levels.

▲ There's a sort of mindless fun to be had from this.

▼ Pitifully easy to beat and the graphics are pretty dismal.

MT RATING: 62%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

The level codes are as follows:

Level 2 – Killers

Level 3 – Camouflage

Level 4 – Los Angeles

Level 5 – Subterror

Level 6 – Total Body

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

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

PRINCE OF PERSIA

BY SEGA

PRICE: £44.99

REVIEWED: MT 10

Escape from your dungeon and run, leap and swordfight towards the the luvly Princess of Persia, cruelly locked up by mad Grand Vizier Jaffar. Evil traps and evil henchmen are everywhere in this twelve-level Mega-CD platform game which demands fine control and route-learning from the player.

▲ Brilliantly animated characters and cunning traps make this gripping from start to finish.

▼ It's a bit short-lived. Considering it's on CD you might have expected it to have more than twelve levels.

MT RATING: 89%

Q

QUACKSHOT

BY SEGA

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 1

Donald (famous Disney Duck) is after treasure and lots of it. This lust for gold leads him on a massive around-the-world treasure hunt on platforms, in which he has to enlist the help of various Disney characters and do over various other Disney characters (but nastier ones).

▲ Superb graphics, like all the other Disney games, and quite a testing game overall.

▼ Or at least it would be testing if you didn't have infinite continues to play with.

MT RATING: 82%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

10,077,000 by Martin Hunt, Maidenhead

R

RAMPART

BY TENGEN

PRICE: IMPORT

REVIEWED: MT 13

GAME INDEX

Line your cannons up on approaching galleons full of invaders in this unusual medieval shoot 'em up with a hint of Missile Command. Meanwhile, the invaders have got your castle in their sights, and after they've knocked your walls down you have to rebuild them by dropping oddly-shaped bricks into the gaps, almost like Tetris. The two player game is similar, only instead of ships, your enemies are other players in other castles.

▲ Superb blend of different game styles which plays brilliantly in one and two player modes.

▼ Nothing. It's lovely.

MT RATING: 90%

REVENGE OF SHINOBI

BY SEGA

PRICE: £34.99

REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

Joe Musashi, top ninja, is out to rid the world of a band of gangsters with bases on both sides of the pacific. Eight lengthy levels of platform beat 'em up action lie afore the player, in which he has to get the mighty Joe past all sorts of supernatural soldiers (some of whom are more supernatural than others) with only (only?) the power of his fists, sword, shurikens and mystical ninja magic.

▲ Excellent graphics, gameplay and sound (music is by Yuzo Koshiro of Streets of Rage fame).

▼ Downers? Nein danke!

MT RATING: 93%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

For infinite shurikens (yes, this old chestnut) go to the options screen and set the shurikens to 00. Wait a bit and, after a wibbly-wobbly sound, the 00 changes to a ∞ (ie. an infinity symbol) meaning infinite shurikens are yours.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

9,999,900 by Daniel Sullivan, Coventry

RISKY WOODS

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS

PRICE: £34.99

REVIEWED: MT 12



A fantasy platform game in which you steer a knight armed with flying swords across lengthy levels rescuing petrified monks (ie monks who have been turned to stone, rather than monks who are frightened at being surrounded by loads of monsters, which they are). Power-ups! Magic bits! Large bosses! They're all here.

▲ Very smart graphics. Mmm. Lovely. Yes.

▼ Not very original and, though playable, it's not particularly addictive.

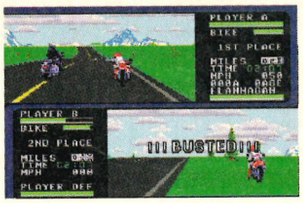
MT RATING: 79%

ROAD RASH 2

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 12



More no-holds-barred motorbike racing action from EA, this time with an extra weapon for your biker (a heavy chain) and AND a split-screen two player mode.

▲ First rate combination of 3D race game and beat 'em up (though, to be honest there's not much beating 'em up). Good fun.

▼ Two player mode doesn't add that much to the gameplay, surprisingly so it's not actually much of an improvement over the original.

MT RATING: 89%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

To start racing with any bike you like start by selecting the Mano A Mano game then choose the bike you want. From the bike shop, go back to the game select and choose two player Take Turns game. Then select the solo game and start and you're astride your chosen machine.

ROBOCOD

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 1

Nasty Dr Maybe (ever noticed the bad press doctors get in video games?) has hijacked Santa's toy factory at the North Pole and it's up to famous fish agent, James Pond, to sort things out. Aided by his new stretching cyborg body, Jim has to leap and climb around an absolute stack of platform levels, dodging Maybe's multitudinous monsters as only a fish can.

▲ Ace cutesy graphics and loads of levels and hidden bits.

▼ Despite lots of graphical variety there really isn't that much to the gameplay.... Still that didn't seem to bother too many people when it came to this game.

MT RATING: 85%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

Select your starting level by switching on the game, then holding down A, C, diagonally down and left and START. You can also gain a very long-lasting shield by starting the game and collecting these objects (which are on the roof near the start of the game) in this order: cake, hammer, Earth, apple, tap. Once this is done you can activate another cheat which opens all the doors in the game by going through the first door you come to, collecting the nearby star then leaving through the exit on the left.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

13,780,300 by Simon Shone, Heywood

ROLO TO THE RESCUE

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS

PRICE: £34.99

REVIEWED: MT 14

From the creators of James Pond comes yet another cutesy platform game. This one stars a baby elephant (you don't get much cuter than that) out to find the circus owner who kidnapped his Mum and apparently locked up all the other country animals he could find. Rolo has to recruit the freed bunnies, squirrels, etc, and use their varied skills (rabbits can jump, squirrels can climb) to find him points bonuses and, more importantly, the keys and bits of map which can lead him to his pilfered parent.

▲ Excellent graphics, puzzle gameplay is simple but well thought out and enjoyable.

▼ There are over 100 levels and because there's no password system it'll takes hours and hours to go through the whole game in one sitting.

MT RATING: 89%

ROLLING THUNDER 2

BY SEGA

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 17

Someone is blocking satellite communications and it's up to top secret agents codenamed Albatross (player one) and Leila (player two) to find who's at the bottom of the plot and eliminate them. This is yer actual shoot 'em up in which the two heroes have to leap around the ledges on a scrolling screen dealing lead-flavoured justice to the minions of the sinister organisation, preferably without getting themselves perforated in the process.

▲ A great conversion of the arcade game, with lots of levels and action.

▼ Potentially even better Rolling Thunder 3 is coming soon on import, though that may well be blocked from working on official machines.

MT RATING: 89%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

554,180 by Scott Hazel, Trunch, Norfolk

S

SIDE POCKET

BY SEGA

PRICE: £34.99

REVIEWED: MT 17

An American Pool simulation, this, in which you can play solo or two player games, 'pocket' games, nine ball games or mess around with a trick shot option. There's also a tournament mode in which you get to tour the bars of America looking for competition.

▲ Good ball movement and control and it's interesting the way the programmers have combined arcade elements (such as hitting certain targets for extra shots) with the traditional green baize action.

▼ Pool and snooker purists may turn their noses up at it.

MT RATING: 80%

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

BY SEGA

PRICE: £34.99

REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH



Vile Dr Robotnik is capturing woodland creatures, turning them psychotic and putting them in heavily-armed robot suits. Sonic has to put a stop to this by jumping and dodging over colourful platform landscapes packed with hidden hedgehog traps, freeing his mates as he goes.

▲ Really smart and stylish graphics, and a fair bit of action.

▼ Lacks gameplay depth, unfortunately, and it's very easy to finish.

MT RATING: 83%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

On the title screen press UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, then hold down A and START to get a level select.

SONIC 2

BY SEGA

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 11



Sonic returns with a small fox buddy named Tails in tow. Once again he has to do battle with Robotnik, but this time there are more traps, more levels, more monsters and... more players. The split-screen mode lets you play as Sonic while your mate takes control of Tails.

▲ Looks, plays and sounds brilliant. The 3D bonus game is a real wow!

▼ A bit easy to complete, though definitely not as easy as the first game.

MT RATING: 95%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

Go to the sound test on the options screen and select these tunes in this order, pressing C after each one: 19, 65, 09, 17. Press START and when the title screen appears press A and START to be greeted with a level select.

Now go to the sound test on the level select screen and select tunes 01, 09, 09, 02, 01, 01, 02, 04. Choose the stage you want to play and hold down A and START to start a level construction cheat. Pressing B changes Sonic into a scenery graphic, pressing A cycles through the graphics available and C places it on the landscape. Press B to start playing your new level.

On the same screen select 4, 1, 2, 6 on the sound test. Now select the level you wish to play, collect 50 rings and, hey presto, you're Super Sonic!

To give yourself 14 continues go to the normal sound test and choose 19, 65, 9, 17, 1, 1, 2 and 4 before starting the game. You'll know the cheat has worked if the background music throughout the game is track 4 and there are no sound effects.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

1,143,030 by Kevin Broughton, Woolwich

SMASH TV

BY FLYING EDGE

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 10

A conversion of the terrificm, destruction-packed coin-op. The scenario puts you in a futuristic gameshow in which you and a mate (this can be a two player game) have to wipe out hordes of cyborgs with various exotic weapons to win prizes.

▲ Captures the speed and frantic nature of the coin-op very well.

▼ Doesn't capture the coin-op's double-joystick control method, nor does it seem that the Megadrive controllers are able to simulate it. This results in many an annoying death as you let rip with your gun in completely the wrong direction.

MT RATING: 70%

SPIDERMAN

BY SEGA

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

The nasty King Pin has planted a bomb under New York, and blamed your friendly neighbourhood Spiderman! As Spidey, you have 24 hours to find the bomb by swinging and crawling around mazes of platforms, whacking and webbing bad guys and a fair few Marvel supervillains.

▲ One game that really makes good use of the character. Loads of levels and they're all challenging and excellent fun.

▼ Nary a downer to be seen.

MT RATING: 91%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

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

STAR CONTROL

BY ACCOLADE

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: PRE MEGATECH

The evil Ur-Quan empire are out to enslave the populations of Earth and her allied planets. It's up to you to take on the twelve spaceships of the Empire races in one of the twelve ships of Earth's Alliance in open space combat. All the ships are wildly different and success is down to mastering the many different weapons and special weapons at your disposal. Of course you can take on a friend, head to head, or play a drawn-out strategy game variation.

▲ One of the best two player Megadrive games ever. Learning the tactics and using

the wild weapons is great fun.
▼ Not quite as much fun in single player mode.

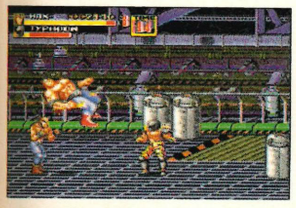
MT RATING: 90%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

If you're playing the strategy game you can get loads of special items using this method. Start Full Game mode then hold the D-button diagonally down and left and keep B pressed until the star map appears. You should find every unexplored planet now has a precursor relic on it.

STREETS OF RAGE 2

BY SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 13



Sequel to the excellent urban beat 'em up, with two new characters, more moves and much improved graphics. One or two players can brave the scrolling back alleys and back bars to rescue their captured buddy from the clutches of an evil gangster and his many and varied cronies.
▲ Amazing graphics and sounds (music by Yuzo Koshiro) and really enjoyable gameplay.
▼ Sadly, rather easy. Make sure you play it in hard mode (or MANIA, as explained below)

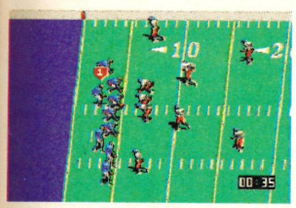
MT RATING: 94%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

When you get the chance to start the game or access the options menu put a controller in port two and highlight OPTIONS. Hold down A and B and press START. Keep them held down until the options screen appears and you can now start the game on Very Easy or Mania skill levels, with up to nine lives and on any level up to level 8.

SUPER HIGH IMPACT FOOTBALL

BY ARENA
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 11



Zany American Football game opts for an alternate route from the very simulationy John Madden games, leaving tactical thinking on the bench and putting the emphasis more on the running around, colliding with other players then beating them up.
▲ Quite a laugh for a while.
▼ Lacks any sort of long-term appeal.

MT RATING: 62%

SUPER KICK OFF

BY US GOLD
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 15



Conversion of that seminal piece of soccer software. Loads of options for different tournaments, weather conditions, strip colours – the lot. And real teams, British and Continental (though not real players, British or Continental). You can even save your teams and progress through championships onto battery-backed memory.
▲ Super Kick Off's feel and playability is unrivalled by any other football game on the Megadrive at the moment.
▼ £45? Seems a bit steep, isn't it?

MT RATING: 94%

SUPER OFF-ROAD

BY ACCOLADE
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: MT 6

Once an obscure coin-op by Leland, this Super Sprint-style race game has been converted to every format imaginable. Drive your little monster truck around bouncy courses in the pursuit of three computer opponents (though one can be another player) and prize money. The cash lets you upgrade your truck with new engine bits and so on.
▲ Starts off as really good fun, and there are loads of different courses.
▼ It's quite easy to wipe the floor with the opposition during the first 20 or so races, get a fully tooled-up truck, then keep winning for a while before the computer catches on and gives its best drive 66 nitros, suddenly leaving you with no chance. What a bummer.

MT RATING: 83%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

199,000 (no continues, 48 races won) by Mike Houghton, Stockport

SWORD OF VERMILLION

BY SEGA
PRICE: £49.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

As a dispossessed prince you have to regain your kingdom from the evil forces which have usurped it. This amounts to lots of travelling between towns and through hidden caves, fighting trolls and the usual fantasy RPG fiends while solving the odd puzzle.
▲ Very well put together; the plot is good and the combat is more arcadey than usual, so less experienced players should enjoy it. Oh, and the music is ace too.
▼ It seems a bit pricey for an old 6 megabit game.

MT RATING: 87%

T

TALE SPIN

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 12



Baloo, the bear in pilot's clothing, and his little chum Kit (it's a one or two player game, this) have to secure an air freight contract by recovering lost cargo in this platform game based on the Saturday morning cartoon show. In between platform levels, they take to the air to see off the 'norty' Shere Khan's pilots in a mini-shoot 'em up bit.
▲ Interesting idea for a two player platform game...
▼ ...which doesn't work. As soon as the different characters start to move apart on the screen things get a bit screwy. The action isn't particularly exciting anyway and the graphics are rougher than you'd expect from a Disney game.

MT RATING: 63%

TAZ MANIA

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 6



Another Saturday morning cartoon becomes a Megadrive platform game. Taz (the Tazmanian Devil) has to whirl his way around the deserts, jungles, and abandoned mines of the Tazmanian islands on the hunt for some giant eggs for his breakfast.
▲ Marvellous cartoon graphics and the music and sound effects are spot on.
▼ This is one of the easiest Megadrive games ever.

MT RATING: 82%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

On the title screen press A, B, C and START on both controllers at the same time and you should hear a sound. Now start the game and when Taz appears press START and C to pause the game. Push left or right to alter the bottom number which has appeared and you can choose a different level. You can use a similar method to make Taz invincible, but instead of pressing C and START, pause the game, press B and unpause it.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

1,360,260 (Hard) by Gavin Pinkett, Abertillery

TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES: THE HYPERSTONE HEIST

BY KONAMI
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 16



Vile Shredder is using his new-found Hyperstone to shrink down New York, building by building, and only the Turtles can stop him. Much like the popular coin-op, this is a scrolling beat 'em up in which one or two players can take their favourite Turtle on a Foot Clan-smashing mission.
▲ Tremendous graphics (the Turtle sprites are just great) and sound and loads of fighting action. Great fun.
▼ The fighting isn't hard work at all and experienced players will be able to beat the game easily.

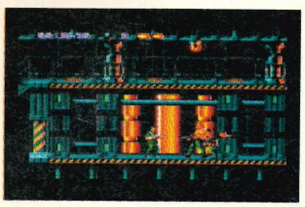
MT RATING: 87%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

Watch out for this next month!

THE TERMINATOR

BY VIRGIN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 6



Based on the cult SF movie, this game puts you in the stolen overcoat of soldier-of-tomorrow, Kyle Reese, who has returned to the 1980s to protect the mother of his future leader from a cyborg assassin. Reese has to run, jump and shotgun his way through various scenes from the film, populated by street thugs, hostile police and, of course, the Terminator.
▲ Great graphics and Megadrive renditions of the film score.
▼ There are only four levels and it's so easy to finish the game it's hard to believe. Plus the action isn't much like that in the movie at all.

MT RATING: 60%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

4,274,350 (Hard) by Gavin Pinkett, Abertillery

TERMINATOR 2

BY ACCLAIM
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 13



This Terminator game is based on the hit Operation Wolf-style coin-op in which you play a resistance fighter of the future who has to blast away at the never-ending ranks of Terminators marching out of the screen at you. Works with Sega's Menacer light gun to make it even more like the arcade game.
▲ Good graphics and good fun too, with one or two players. With the Menacer it's excellent.
▼ The third level is so hard it's mega-annoying!

MT RATING: 86%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

When the T2: THE ARCADE GAME title screen appears press UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT until you hear the Terminator's voice say, 'Excellent'. Now when you're playing the game just press A, B, C and START to go straight to the next level.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

4,274,350 (Hard) by Gavin Pinkett, Abertillery

THUNDERFORCE III

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

Six level space shoot 'em up by Tecnosoft (programmers of such cracking games as Dragon's Fury and Thunderforce IV) with loads of extra weapons, massive boss monsters and weird scenery to keep the player occupied.
▲ Brilliant graphics, sound and gameplay. A very addictive blast.
▼ Recently superseded by Thunderforce IV.

MT RATING: 89%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

Pause the game at any point then press UP ten times, then keep pressing B, then DOWN, then B, then DOWN. You'll know if it's working when the weapons start appearing in the boxes at the top of the screen. You should now be endowed with all the weapons and the next power-up you come across will be a Claw.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

11,528,100 by Hywel Llewellyn, Pentyrch.

THUNDERFORCE IV

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 9



More space shoot 'em up action, this time with more levels, a couple more weapons and video effects which will knock your eyes out of your head and possibly into a low Earth orbit.

▲ The graphics really are a knockout and the gameplay is just ace. Definitely the best Megadrive shooter at the moment.

▼ Lots of new effects, but the basic gameplay is nothing original

MT RATING: 94%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

Set the SHIP STOCK on the options screen to 00 and you'll start the game with 99 lives. You can also start with all the weapons with this method. Start the game without altering the options then, when the stage select appears don't press anything and wait for the action to begin. Pause the game and press UP, RIGHT, A, DOWN, RIGHT, A, C, LEFT, UP, B, UP.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

4,632,910 by Leon Evans, Aberdare.

TOE JAM AND EARL

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH



Toe Jam and Earl are two 'spaced-out' (ho ho! What a laugh) aliens who happen to have crash landed on a strange world of 20-odd levels arranged like floors in a department store. Their objective is (either on their own or together this being a game with a two-player option) to avoid getting knackered by all the crazy inhabitants of the planet and find the bits of their spaceship so they can escape.

▲ Lots of wacky noises, kooky graphics and the two player option make it fun.

▼ Very basic gameplay which is only propped up by all the wacky noises and kooky graphics.

MT RATING: 82%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

There are secret islands accessible from level one. To reach both you need to find either Icarus Wings or Rocket Skates or a Float on one of the levels above, then fall down to level one. Activate one of these presents and go either towards the top-right corner where there's an island loaded with presents or to the bottom-left, where there's an island with a hole in the middle. Fall through the hole and you land in level 0 where you can replenish your energy and enjoy a few new sights. Also, when you finish the game, don't follow the yellow brick road as instructed but explore the bottom-right and the very top of the level to find a few extras.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

1,802 (as Earl) by David Hall, Birmingham

TURRICAN

BY ACCOLADE
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

A platform shoot 'em up with loads of platforms and loads to shoot up... Actually you play a bloke in a robot suit who can pick up a stack of weapons and use them on malevolent creatures great and small.

▲ Loads of powerful weapons which are quite good fun.

▼ The graphics aren't up to much, and the gameplay is frustratingly hard to begin with (touching a baddie for just an instant is enough to drain all your energy) and gets progressively easier!!?

MT RATING: 55%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

Go to the options screen and put the arrow on EXIT. Then, pushing down on the D-button press A, B, B, A, B, A, A, B, A, A, B, A, A. Another options screen should then appear which lets you set various game parameters to infinity and provides a level select. Press START to switch the various cheats on and off.

TWINKLE TALE

BY WAS
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 11



It's that old story of the little witch going on a scrolling shoot 'em up adventure against all sorts of creepy beasts who are turning her local Green Belt area into a steaming cesspit of unrefined malevolence. She only knows three monster-killing spells, but she can power them up a couple of times so she gets by.

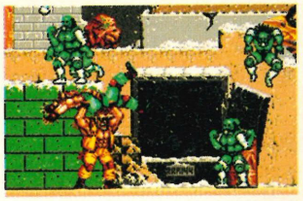
▲ Nice graphics and it's a really good example of an unusual shoot 'em up.

▼ We'd buy it for a dollar.

MT RATING: 88%

TWO CRUDE DUDES

BY SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: MT 5



One or two players can be the crude dudes, fat punks who have to fight through post-holocaust suburbia looking for the labs where sinister scientists are churning evil mutants out of their test tubes. Cartoony, comedy beat 'em up action is the order of the day, with out two heroes grabbing anything they find (telephone poles, cars, tanks, each other) to club the opposition into submission.

▲ Great graphics and great fun.

▼ Dead easy, though.

MT RATING: 84%

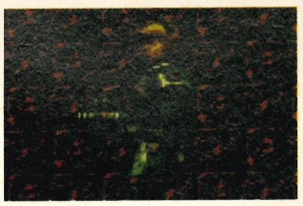
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

Play a one player game and plug in a second pad. When you start to run out of lives in single player mode, press START on pad two and you'll be able to continue.

U

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER

BY ACCOLADE
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: MT 12



The hopeless action movie becomes a hopeless game. Sorry to let the cat out of the bag so soon after you started reading, but this is a pretty poor. It's really just a sequel to the rather grim Turrican and plays in exactly the same way, except that the heroic robot has been replaced by a heroic, lobotomised soldier in a boiler suit. Apart from that it has hardly anything in common with the movie.

▲ Plenty to shoot at and lots of good weapons.

▼ Graphics are tragic, the gameplay has little variety and we completed it within a day of getting it.

MT RATING: 50%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

These codes provide invincibility, and make all the hidden bonus blocks visible. For the former input PWRZS at the password screen and to reveal the bonuses use SHBXZ.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

1,441,987 (Hard) by James Dudley, Solihull

W

WANI WANI WORLD

BY KANEKO
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 4

An update on that old game of Space Panic in which you had to bash holes in platforms to trap monsters, then smash them on the head until they fell through and died. A bit cruel, perhaps, but there you are. This one casts the player or players as cute little dinosaurs who have to dodge around the platforms and ladders, wielding their mallets and picking up bonus points.

▲ Colourful graphics and simple, fun gameplay.

▼ Not a vast amount of variety between levels so it does induce boredom if played in large doses.

MT RATING: 80%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

To start the game with 200 lives press reset twice when SEGA appears on the screen. If it's worked you should see question marks on the lives counter.

WARSONG

BY TRECO
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 4

A fantasy strategy game in which you have to lead your army of wizards, warriors and assorted mythical beasts into battle in several scenarioes with the overall goal of regaining your throne.

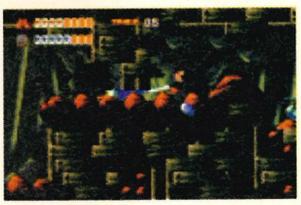
▲ Simple controls and fun battle scenes make this enjoyable even for someone who's usually not that keen on this sort of game.

▼ Graphics aren't super-duper.

MT RATING: 85%

WORLD OF ILLUSION

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 12



Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck have been transported into some magical land of crazed Disney characters (most of whom seem to have come from Alice in Wonderland) and if they're ever going to get back to their Hollywood penthouses they'll have to get around numerous levels of platforms and other obstacles, helping each other out if your playing with both characters in two player mode.

▲ The best graphics of any Disney game yet and you can play slightly different games by choosing to play as Mickey or Donald or both together (in which they have to co-operate).

▼ This is definitely aimed at younger players and is very easy to finish.

MT RATING: 90%

WWF WRESTLEMANIA

BY FLYING EDGE
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 13

Become your favourite fat wrestler (providing their one of the eight included) and use their own special moves in this game of the phenomenon. Recreates pretty well the in- and out-of-ring shenanigans which make this branch of the sport so lively, and lets you participate in tag matches, one-on-ones, survivor series or a WWF Championship.

▲ Looks great and successfully gets across the excitement of the 'real' thing.

▼ There are ways to beat all the opponents with one move... but we won't ruin it by telling you what that move is here.

MT RATING: 84%

Z

ZERO WING

BY SEGA
PRICE: £19.99
REVIEWED: MT 5

Evil space pirates have reneged on a treaty they signed with us Earthlings and have attacked our space cruisers. Only one Zig space fighter escaped the conflagration and you're at the controls, so now you have to pilot your Zig into enemy territory and give them some hot laser death right where they live.

▲ The sprites and backgrounds look really sharp.

▼ There are only three weapon types to play with and the action isn't particularly varied.

MT RATING: 82%

MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

Watch all of the intro screens then start the game and collect all the green power ups and nothing else (not even speed-ups or smart bombs) then when the next green is due to appear the purple mega power-up should come on instead. If it doesn't, change weapons and try it again with the new weapon. Occasionally it doesn't work and you get a 1-UP or a 10-UP instead.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

2,584,700 (Easy level) by Craig Wilkins, Delapre

MEGA-CD GAMES

Disc games official and unofficial here revealed. Backwards writing already enough of this! Forward gear engage!

AFTERBURNER III

BY CSK
PRICE: IMPORT ONLY
REVIEWED: MT 15

Hey! It's G-LOC! Well, it's not really, but it's near enough to make no odds. Fly your deadly fighter de jet through wave after wave of oncoming planes. Lots of Mega-CD sprite scaling and rotation in evidence here.

▲(Sound of scratching heads)...Um, well, it's about the only Mega-CD game which actually makes much use of the sprite scaling and rotation hardware. Supposedly.

▼Ghastly music, hopeless graphics, hardly any action at all and the fact that the guns fire automatically means that even a concussed iguana could play it on a cold day when it was feeling lethargic.

MT RATING: 22%

BLACK HOLE ASSAULT

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 14



Robot beat 'em up in which you can either go head-to-head against another player (on various planets) or go on a mission to free the Solar System from robo-domination.

▲Fast action, smartish graphics, good clanging sound effects and smart intro bits.

▼Not enough variety in the combatants to keep you hooked. Cyborg Justice is actually better and that's on a 4 meg cart.

MT RATING: 61%

EARNEST EVANS

BY WOLF TEAM
PRICE: IMPORT ONLY
REVIEWED: MT 3

Ernie is a sort of Indiana Jones-type adventurer, complete with whip and (occasionally) hat, who is on a platform-going mission to recover some lost magic book from an evil agency of some description. Anyway, it's wacky occult platform action a-go-go in this game, which is unusual insofar as Earnest himself is actually made up of about nine different sprites, two for each limb, which makes him look like a sort of butch Pinocchio whenever he moves.

▲Well... the game designers obviously had some nice ideas.

▼It's just that the programmers didn't share the same, inspired vision. Yukky graphics and lots of gameplay glitches cause the problems.

MT RATING: 50%

FINAL FIGHT CD

BY CAPCOM
PRICE: IMPORT ONLY
REVIEWED: MT 17



The arcade game comes to your Megadrive. A one or two player beat 'em up in which you have to recover a nice young lady from a vile, slobbering gang leader who probably has rude things on his mind. All the levels of the coin-op, as well as all the characters, the bonus rounds and a new time attack mini-game as well.

▲It IS the arcade game... and more!

▼It's not out officially till June.

MT RATING: 94%

HOOK

BY SONY IMAGESOFT
PRICE: IMPORT ONLY
REVIEWED: MT 16



Join up with the lost boys and help old Pete back to his former Pan status so that he can track down his own kids, kidnapped by Cap'n Hook. Of course, it's the top-grossing film of 1991 turned into a platform game, in which Pan has to fight, leap and occasionally fly his way past Hook's henchmen.

▲Really nice graphics and the CD music is most impressive. Plays quite well too.

▼It's a bit frustrating at times, and it's a shame that the voices of the original actors weren't used in the cut-scenes, as they seem rather amateurish.

MT RATING: 80%

JAGUAR XJ-220

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 16



Much like EA's Lotus Turbo Challenge, this game lets one or two players drive Megadrive replicas of British sports cars either in tournaments or in split-screen, head-to-head races.

▲Lots of tracks, smart 3D graphics, ace music and the two player mode is great.

▼Single player mode gets a bit boring after a while.

MT RATING: 90%

KRIS KROSS: MAKE MY VIDEO

BY SONY IMAGESOFT
PRICE: IMPORT ONLY
REVIEWED: MT 16



The Mega-CD provides a new form of entertainment. You have to run a video request TV show by splicing together three constantly running 'tracks' of full-motion video to fit one of three Kris Kross track and the whims of a caller. You can even add rudimentary special effects.

▲It's fun in an unusual sort of way and some of the video clips are quite wacky.

▼There are only three songs to mess around with and unless you're well into Kris Kross the novelty soon wears off.

MT RATING: 80%

NIGHT TRAP

BY SONY IMAGESOFT
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 17



Svelte young ladies are being lured into a house where they are drained of blood to be used in the manufacture of a (gulp!) soft drink. Luckily, SCAT (the Sega Covert Action Team) are onto this and they've given you control of the house's security cameras and hidden traps. You have to use the cameras to keep up with what the girls are doing and watch out for the vile kidnapping Oggers who are lurking around the house, and capture them before they nab the lovely damsels.

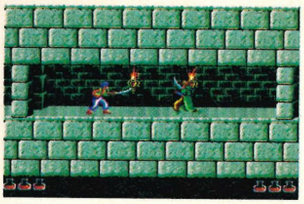
▲Two whole discs provide an hour and a half of fairly entertaing full-motion video exploits.

▼The gameplay is mostly trial and error and one mistake can lead to disaster.

MT RATING: 79%

PRINCE OF PERSIA

BY SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 10



Escape from your dungeon and run, leap and swordfight towards the the luvly Princess of Persia, cruelly locked up by mad Grand Vizier Jaffar. Evil traps and evil henchmen are everywhere in this twelve-level platform game which demands fine control and route-learning from the player.

▲Brilliantly animated characters and cunning traps make this gripping from start to finish.

▼It's a bit short-lived. Considering it's on CD you might have expected it to have more than twelve levels.

MT RATING: 89%

SEWER SHARK

BY SONY IMAGESOFT
PRICE: IMPORT ONLY
REVIEWED: MT 16



As the pilot of a high-speed sewership, you have to find your way through a vast maze of smelly tunnels populated by nasty sewer critters to the sunny climes of Solar City. Fast 3D flying and blasting is the order of the day.

▲The Mega-CD's full-motion video capabilities are used really well and the atmosphere created really makes the game. Once you get into it, it's good fun.

▼The actual gameplay is pretty basic stuff and if you make one mistake it's Game Over.

MT RATING: 87%

SHERLOCK HOLMES: CONSULTING DETECTIVE

BY SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 16



GAME INDEX

There are three chilling cases for Holmes and Watson to solve in this full-motion video extravaganza. Sherlock has to interview all the suspects and piece together clues from his many sources to identify the murderers before bringing them to justice.

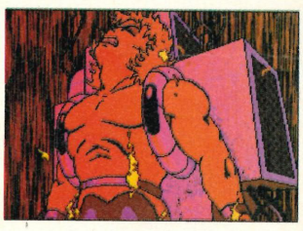
▲A good idea for a game, nicely presented.

▼Holmes is a bit limited in his investigative abilities. It would have been good if he could do more than just talk to suspects. Oh, and the acting in the video clips is somewhat ropey, but hey, we're game reviewers, not drama critics.

MT RATING: 79%

WOLFCHILD

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 16



A conversion of an old Amiga game, this puts you inside the hairy skin of a lad who's prone to transforming into a fireball-shooting werewolf. Handy, this, because on his quest to rescue his kidnapped dad he has to shoot a lot of monsters and robots and stuff.

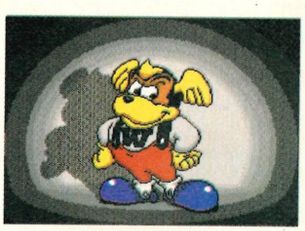
▲Quite a playable platform shoot 'em up with decent music.

▼Nothing really new and the pseudo-Anime graphics in the intro are a bit naff.

MT RATING: 82%

WONDER DOG

BY JVC
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 12



Wonder Dog has just crash-landed on Earth and has to get back to his home planet of K-Ninus by hopping around platforms and dodging hostile weirdoes on various planets. This is on CD only and will be available officially in the summer.

▲Great graphics and sound.

▼There just aren't any really smart or innovative features in the game and it's quite easy to beat.

MT RATING: 82%

NEXT MONTH



Mystic Matthew's taking a well-earned rest this month to recharge his psychic energy cells – he's orbiting the earth just above the stratosphere at this very moment, glowing like a super-nova as he drains supernatural power from deep space into his tiny body. So the task falls to us mere mortals, the MegaTech crew, to predict the menu of tasty treats and hot snacks we'll be serving up for you game-hungry people in next month's issue...

PAUL: Aha! We can review POPULOUS 2, for sure.

TOM: Paul, Paul! What about RANGER X, you know – that scrolling shoot 'em up that's called EX-RANZER in Japan.

JEFF: And we can all give J-LEAGUE SOCCER a good kicking – it offers full four-player action via the Sega Tap.

MARK: How about an in-depth tips special on KING SALMON?

PAUL, TOM & JEFF: NO!!!!!

MARK: Oh, alright then. We can go down the pub, get drunk, sing lots of rude songs, bare our bottoms and try to review INTERNATIONAL RUGBY!

JEFF: Yeah! And that cool beat 'em up from Acclaim, MORTAL KOMBAT, that's coming out soon – we could do a big preview!

PAUL: Hmmmm... we need more...

TOM: There's always ANDRE AGASSI TENNIS and ULTRAMAN...

PAUL: That's true, but we need something really smart to show our loyal readers... (*He looks heavenward for inspiration*)... Got it! We could preview the Megadrive version of STAR WARS!

TOM: Oh, wow! I love that film:"Come on, R2, we're going... brrrrrrippcheepwhistle..."

PAUL, MARK & JEFF: SHUT UP, TOM!!!!!!!

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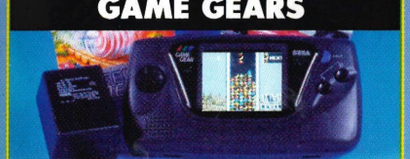
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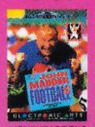
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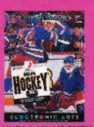
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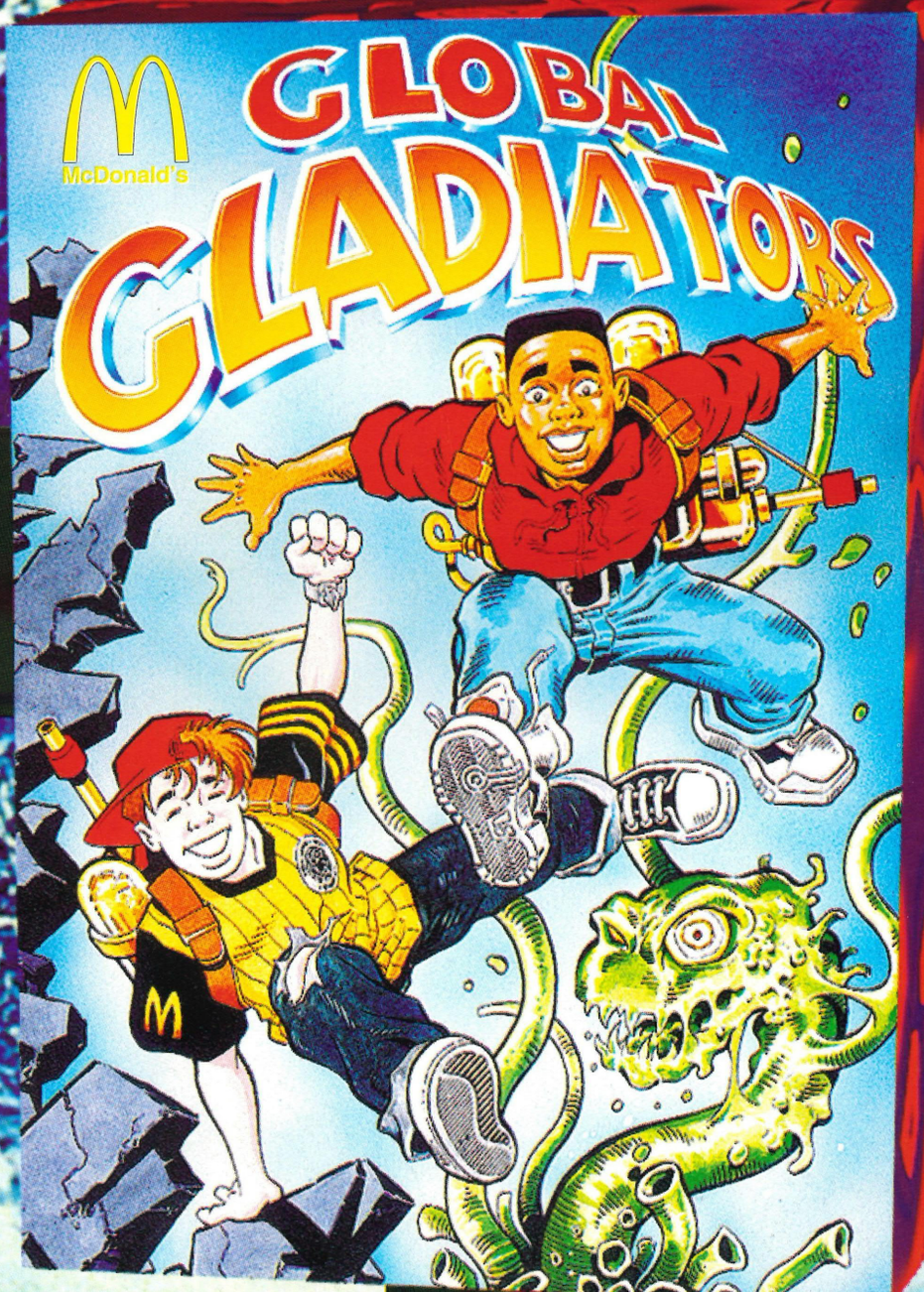
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