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SEGA ISSUE 22 OCTOBER 1993 £2.25 US$5.95

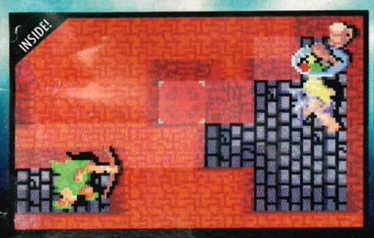
MEGATECH

MEGADRIVE AND MEGA-CD!





STREET FIGHTER II!



GAUNTLET 4!

EXCLUSIVE!

ZOMBIES

FRIGHTENINGLY FANTASTIC!

INSIDE!

GAUNTLET 4
NHL '94
FANTASTIC DIZZY
SNAKE RATTLE & ROLL
WIZ 'N' LIZ
PUYO PUYO
THUNDERHAWK
LETHAL ENFORCERS
KEIO FLYING SQUADRON
BARI-ARM
STREETFIGHTER II
CASTLEVANIA
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: TOURNAMENT FIGHTERS
COSMIC SPACEHEAD
LOST VIKINGS
ZOOL

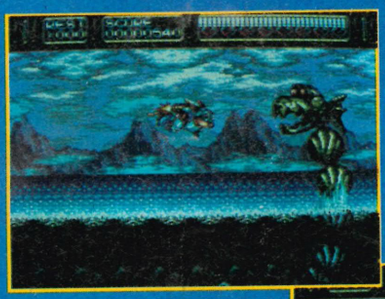
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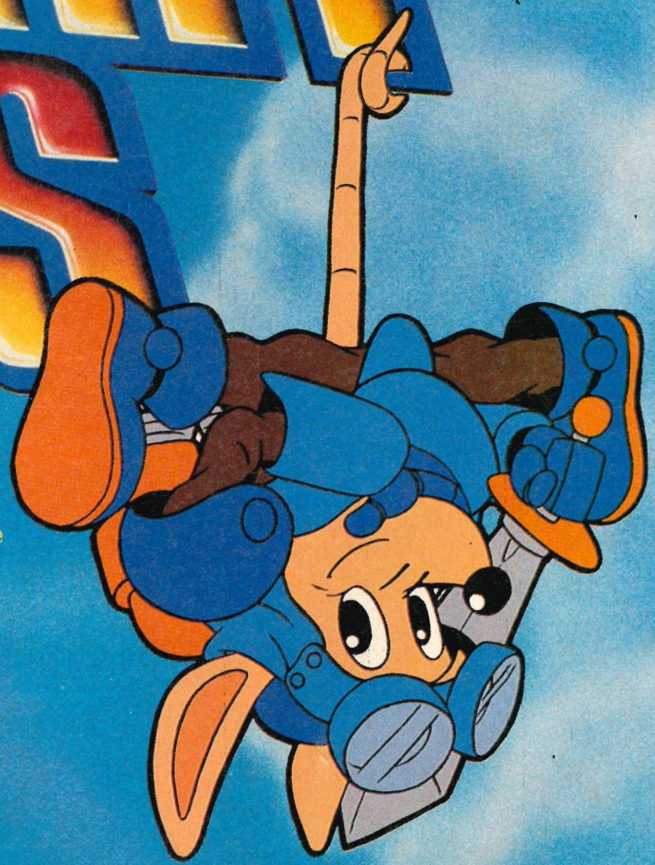








KNIGHT
TURES



Sparkster is hell bent on avenging his master Mifune's death.
Armed with his jet pack and sword of steel his mission is to annihilate
the Dark Lord and restore peace to his homeland once more.

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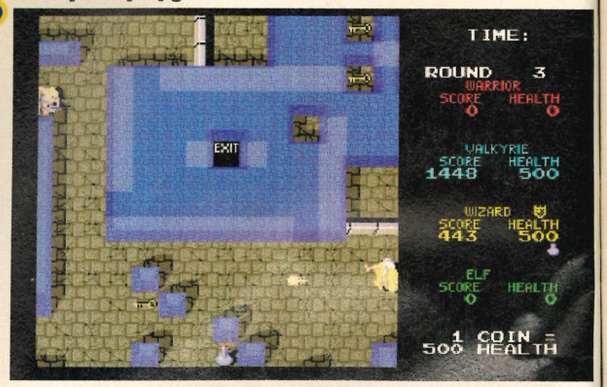
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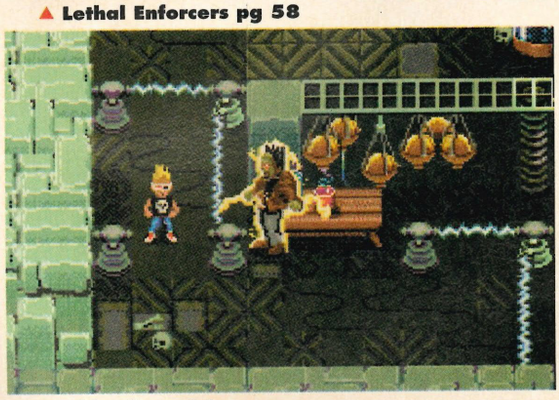
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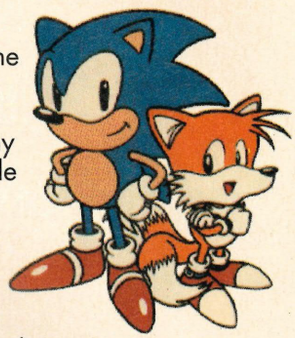
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ENQUIRIES
BACK ISSUES:0858 468811
SUBSCRIPTIONS: 0858 468888

EXPEDIENT COLOUR REPRO BY
Pre Press, London EC1

PRINTED BY
BPCC Magazines, Colchester Ltd.

DISTRIBUTED BY
BBC Frontline, Peterborough

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THANKS THIS MONTH TO:
ICE DISTRIBUTION (0302 340079)
THE VIDEO GAMES CENTRE (0202 527314)

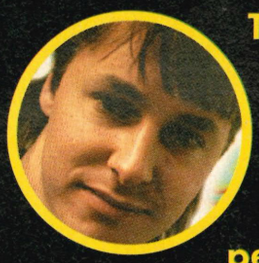
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This month's top tip:
To prevent infection, wipe away from uninfected areas.

MW MEGAWORLD

MEGATECH INTERNATIONAL NEWS NETWORK

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- MEGA-CD RELEASES — MADDEN '94
- EA'S PINBALL — LOTUS II
- DINOSAURS FOR HIRE — SYLVESTER & TWEETY
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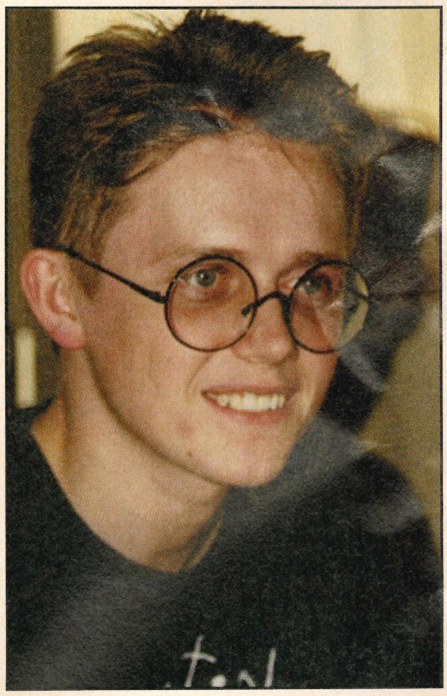


This month has been a cavalcade of incidents, what with people being on holiday, people leaving their jobs to take up other positions in the company and me being as sick as a dog on the last two days of the schedule, but here it is: the latest edition of the finest Megadrive read in existence: Megatech. It's certainly been a major struggle getting this fine organ into your grubby mitts, so I'd just like to thank the Megatech crew for their sterling efforts over the last couple of weeks, because none of this would have ever happened and you never know, without it your life could've been irrevocably...

JAZ RIGNALL

UK NEWS

PAUL GLANCEY EATEN BY LIONS



● PAUL GLANCEY, Brylcreemed beyond recognition.

Sadly it's true. Mr Paul Chesterton Glancey, stalwart and trusty Megatech anchorman for more than a decade, has recently been injured in a bizarre gardening accident and will no longer be editing Megatech due to lack of limbs. However, all is not bad news. He will continue to write for Megatech from his convalescent home in Bishop's Stortford, bringing you his special kind of wit and song. When asked to give a message to his loyal fans, Paul offered this brief and personal statement: 'I've really enjoyed it. Thank you all. This award isn't for me, it's for my mother'.
Well, now comes the big question. Since Jazza's stint in the editor's chair is for one month only, who will therefore be editing Megatech from next month? Is it

A) Miffy. Dick Bruna's fine children's book character.
B) Pippin. Tog's best friend in Pogle's Wood.
C) Steve Merrett. Nintendo Magazine System's soon to be ex-deputy editor.
D) Elvis Presley. This month's cover personality.
E) Henry, the mild-mannered janitor.

Answers on a postcard please to: STEVE MERRETT IS EDITOR COMPETITION, MEGATECH, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. The first one pulled out of a bag will win three fine, spankingly good Megadrive games as selected by the new editor's own fine hand. Closing date is 19th October, just before the clocks go back and it starts getting dark and chilly in the evening. You know, that horlicks time of year.



THE MEGATECH HORROR

"Damn!" said STEVE MERRETT, slamming his fist on the dashboard. His car had broken down on the lonely country lane and the last gas-station he had passed was miles back. Rain fell in sheets from the heavens and thunder rumbled ominously above. It could be hours before another vehicle passed this way. Then just as Steve had resigned himself to a night in the car he saw the light come on in the distance. A house! Perhaps they had a phone. Yes, ha ha of course. Of all the blind luck! Climbing from his battered Ford Popular, Steve headed up the hill toward Castle MegaTech. His destiny awaited.

THE RESIDENTS

COUNT JULIAN RIGNALL
Born two thousand years ago on the savage blood plains of Wimbledon, Julian was kidnapped by Welsh sheep-herders and brought to the unholy town of Tregaron where he lived on the blood of new-born lambs. He gained the infamous title of 'Julian the Impaler' because of his insatiable taste for lamb kebabs. Now he has come to Castle MegaTech because of his lost love for lamb chops and mint sauce, but little does he know, Larry Van Helsing is hot on his trail.

DR PAUL GLANCEY
Since his halcyon days at Arkham University, Paul was always fascinated with human anatomy. Whilst his fellow students spent their free time stealing corpses from the local cometary and attempting to reanimate them with electricity, Paul used his time more wisely, carefully studying his Danish Art magazines in private. Now his final creation is almost complete. A pair of novelty salt and pepper shakers and one of those naughty coffee mugs, all made in his secret pottery workshop. Bwa-ha-ha!

MARK 'THE BEAST' HOLMES
By day, Mark is an everyday man who enjoys growing vegetables in his garden and working on his Austin Maxi, but by night he is a raging monster. Half-man, half-rabbit, all Were-Rabbit! Little did he know, when he bought that pet bunny from the old Chinese curiosity shop, the true horror that awaited. How innocently he named it Twinkle. Then one night he awoke, buck teeth at his throat and now he is doomed to nibble at crisp lettuce for all eternity. Why else does he tend his garden like a man possessed?

THE MYSTERIOUS JEFF ZIE
Wherever the path of evil leads, you can guarantee that top psychic investigator, Jeff Zie will be there, better known by his stage name of 'Magick!' On many an occasion, the master of spells and illusions has been forced to enter the 'other worlds' using only his enchanted top-hat, cape and walking cane to save kids from the Old Gods that lie beyond. Of course, when in the real world Magick spends his time designing the pages of MegaTech. At least until Yog Sothoth rears his ugly head once more!

EILEEN 'DARK QUEEN' O'DONNELL
A new entry to the MegTech fold, Eileen first appeared in a flash of light during one of our popular week-end Twister parties and after cursing us all for not inviting her, she put us all into an enchanted sleep for a hundred years. Fortunately, our snoring and burping soon became unbearable and she relinquished the curse. Now she just spends most of her time in her cave making strange potions with bats'-wings and things .

TOM 'THE GHOUL' GUISE
This might sound bizarre, but we don't know what Tom looks like. Nobody does. Those pictures we print in the mag? They're just photos of some handsome lothario we found in a Scandinavian magazine. Nope, Tom spends all his life locked in the attic at the top of the stairs. Rumour has it he's been there since birth. Sometimes, when we push his gruel through the cat-flap in the door, a scaly paw reaches out to snatch it in and at night weird sobs and howls echo through the house. But that's all we know. Chilling!

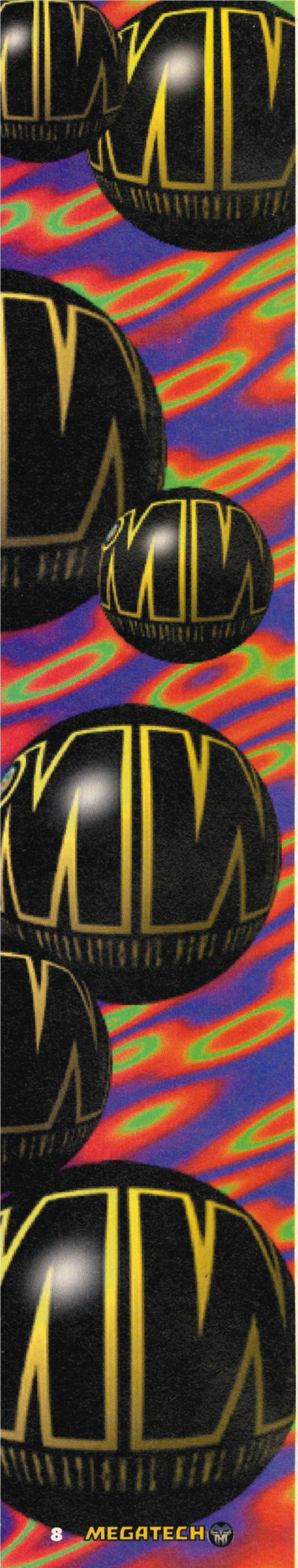
PAUL 'I AM ALIVE' DAVIES
The perfect man. That was what he was destined to be. Built from only the finest body parts by a mad professor, he has the fingers of the finest piano-player, the legs of an athlete, the body of an ex-Mister Universe and even um, other bits, from Tom of Finland. But best of all, he has the brain of a mathematical genius. Unfortunately, it was dropped down the stairs and trodden on and then the dog ate a bit of it and it was left out in the sun too. Oh and as for the rest of him, it was all sewn together with thick stitching. Never mind.

RAD 'GREEN FINGERS' AUTOMATIC
Although he mascarades as a human being, Rad is nothing of the sort. He is actually a synthetic being mimicking the shape and form of an Earth man. Yes, Radion Automatic is a pod-person from planet Mars. Though his disguise is almost perfect, there are occasions when climate changes cause the careful balance of his vegetable molecules to break down. Occasionally his hair turns green, photo-synthesising in the sun. There have also been unconfirmed sightings of potatoes growing from the front of his pants and even parsnips hanging from his armpits.

MARK 'LILIPUT' PATTERSON
Ever since Mark Patterson was a child he has always lived in fear of the words of a gypsy fortune-teller. "Beware the curse of the dwarf!" She said. For years he waited for the little person to strike. Then he realised. He had stopped growing on his twelfth birthday. HE was the dwarf and the curse was on him. Now he lives alone in a room of distorted mirrors, wearing platform shoes. All though we don't know why, because when Mark stopped growing he was already twelve feet high. You see, he's actually a member of an ancient race of giant ogres.

MEGATECH IN 30p RIP-OFF SENSATION

Horror of horrors! Last month we stated that this issue of Megatech would be a mere £1.95. Sadly we were completely wrong, forgetting that from this issue we're going to stick the price up an enormous 30p per magazine to pay for Lord EMAP's annual four-month Carribean holiday. Hurrah! We could have offered feeble excuses about increased paper prices, higher distribution costs and spiralling production costs and stated that we've kept the price of the mag down much longer than our competitors – like Mega and SMAG – but we know you'd never believe us, so we thought we'd open our hearts and tell the truth instead.



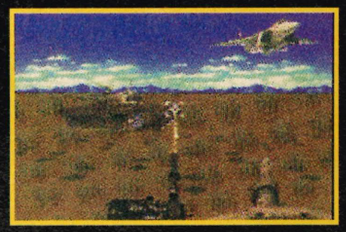
MEGA-CD RELEASE UPDATE

WWF RAGE IN THE CAGE



Software-starved Mega-CD owners will soon be able to feast on a host of new releases. For fans of large, sweaty grappling me there's WWF Rage in the Cage! Featuring 20 different wrestlers and digitised graphics and sound effects, this sounds like it'll have WWF fans creaming in their leotards.

SUPER BATTLETANK



Those who've seen Super Battletank will probably switch off when they hear that there's a beefed-up version coming out on CD – let's face it, the cartridge game was a right old stinking growbag. But wait. Snooze ye not. Apparently, Absolute are using the Mega-CD's 3D custom chips to produce a Thunderhawk-style megablast with all sorts of military equipment to blow to bits. Yum!

STELLAR FIRE



Stellar Fire is another 3D game making use of the Mega-CD's custom chips. And it's another tank game. The difference between them is several hundred years of weapons technology. The scene is stellar war and the enemy are spread throughout the galaxy, thus ensuring plenty of different battlezones and mucho action. The PC version on which this is based is dead good, so hopes are high for this.

THIRD WORLD WAR



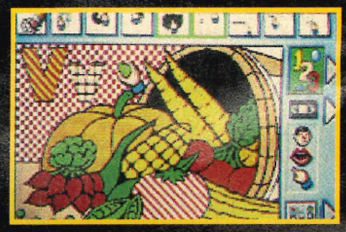
Third World War sounds just the ticket for those who like to play God or just enjoy blowing things up. Featuring a Populous-style viewpoint and 16 different countries to control, this highly original title from Extreme puts you slap bang into the middle of WWIII. Making economic, military and civil decisions, the player must simply survive and win. Sounds good to us...

INSTRUMENTS OF CHAOS



Based on the TV series The Adventures of Young Indy, Instruments of Chaos is a platform extravaganza casting the player as a youthful Indiana Jones. The scene is a familiar one: the Hun are developing a new super-weapon and must be stopped. Hopefully there'll be more in this than just platforms and cinematic sequences in this.

MY PAINT



The terminally cruddy Art Alive failed miserably as a Megadrive art package. But Saddleback Graphics reckon they can do the biz with My Paint, a Mega-CD painting program. Packed with stacks of options and features, this package looks... utterly pointless. Really, what is the point? Call us cynical, but if you want to draw pictures on screen you should really buy a computer and mouse. "Joypads maketh not a decent artist's tool", as the philosopher Plato once said.

Take Advantage with...

DAVIS CUP™ World Tour

This super realistic action packed tennis sim' has everything you could want including tournament competitions, fantastic animated graphics, two player split screen action, video replays, real speech and mid-match stat screens with player rankings.

"Davis Cup is the cream of tennis games." MEGATECH - 90%

"By far the finest Mega Drive tennis sim' yet seen. Buy you fools!" MEAN MACHINES - 90%

"The definitive tennis game is here at last...Fast, loads of shots to choose from and highly addictive." SEGA POWER - 89%







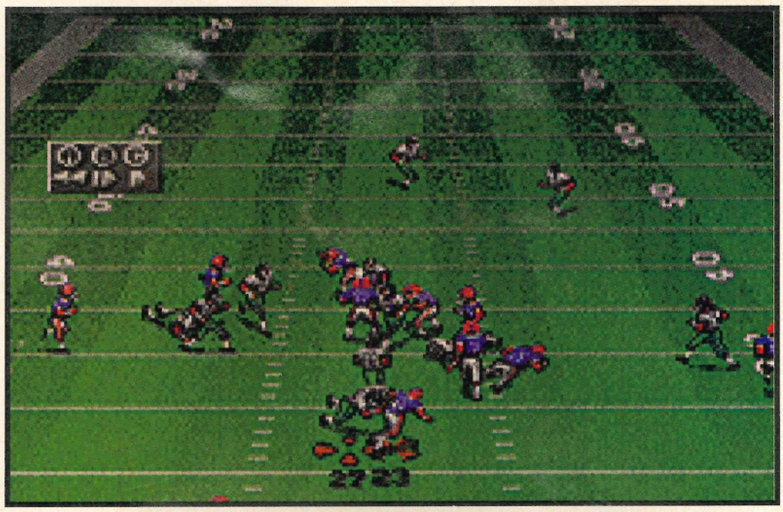
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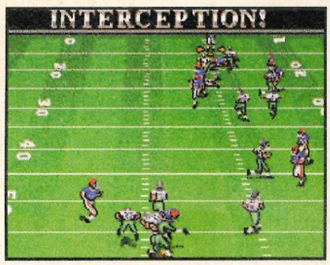
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TENGEN VIDEO GAMES

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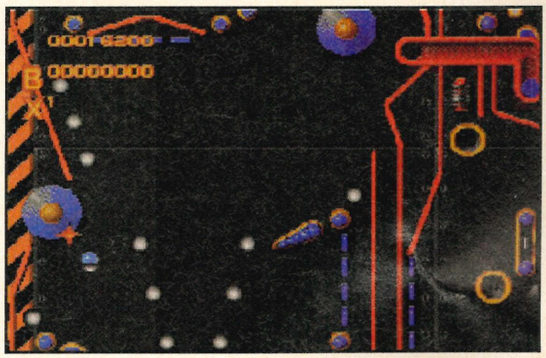
JOHN MADDEN'S EXCITING FOUR PLAY





Electronic Arts are gearing up for Christmas (be careful - there's less than 70 shopping days to go) with a veritable goodie-bag of wondrous weleases with a mixture of new and familiar titles. The most familiar-sounding title must be John Madden's '94, the fourth in the now-annual John Madden's Football yearly update. What's different in this classic American football game this time around? We-e-ell, there's a new graphics engine which means the graphics are different. Not that much different, as you can see, but still, they're different. You've also got all the proper American football teams in there now, complete with correct strips and helmet colours. And there are a couple of new moves, completely updated stats for number fetishists and better play options and selection. The computer opponent is also harder and picks his moves instantaneously. But most important of all, scarecrow, is that there's now the provision for up to four-players to simultaneously participate in the action in any sort of combination - two against two, three against one, or even four against the computer! Although it's not a quantum leap forward, John Madden's '94 represents the biggest leap in development we've seen yet in this series. But will it be the last?

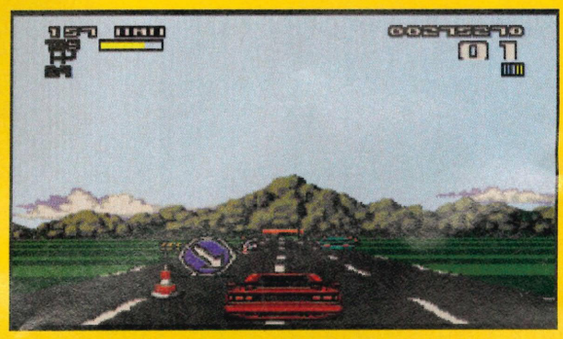
SURE BUILDS A MEAN PINBALL

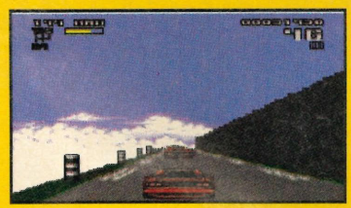




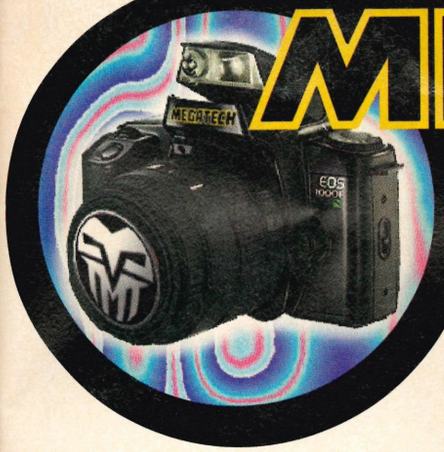
After Dragon's Fury and Crueball, there's not much in the way of pinball games for Megadrive owners to write home about... until now! When Electronic Arts release Pinball, silverball fans will never again be short of pinball action. Why? Because Pinball features a construction set that allows players to design their own tables using the vast amount of bumpers, flippers, drop targets, multiball launchers and themed backdrops available. If you knock up one that particularly takes your fancy, you can even save it on the cart's battery-backed RAM to play and play again. Wowzer. Our minion that saw a 75% complete version was more than impressed and commented on smooth and ultra-realistic ball movement and one of the most user-friendly construction modes he's ever seen. Sounds like one to watch out for.

MORE LOTUS ESCAPADES





Electronic Arts are soon to release a sequel to their successful Lotus Turbo Challenge game. Imaginatively called Lotus II, once again players have the opportunity to take the wheel of a Lotus supercar and drive like a loony over hill and dale and through all sorts of horrible hazards and weather conditions. There are three Lotus cars to choose: an Esprit, Elan and also their M200 concept car, and options exist for one- or two-player action. How does it play? Megatech will tell you in a review coming soon to these very pages.



MEGATECH SPYCAM UPDATE

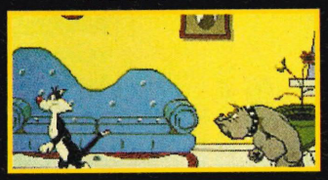
The Megatech Spycam has been out and about, sneakily nabbing shots of the hottest new Megadrive releases. And here are the results.

DINOSAURS FOR HIRE



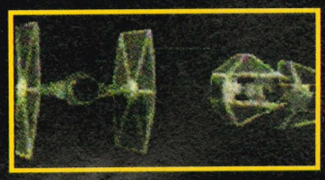
Dinosaurs for Hire is a platform game based on the highly popular comic series. Featuring a band of heavily-armed dinos, the player's task is to battle through the bad side of town and despatch members of a rogue gang. The release date of this originality-starved game is early '94.

SYLVESTER AND TWEETY



Tekmagic's Sylvester and Tweety is still in the testing phase. Featuring brill graphics, but a bit weak in the gameplay department, this platform game (What! A platform game featuring a licenced cartoon character!! Now there's something we don't see often enough!!! JAZ) is set for a Christmas release.

REBEL ASSAULT





Mega-CD owners take note. Rebel Assault continues to evolve into what could well be the greatest game yet seen on the machine. Featuring amazing cosmetics and in-depth gameplay, this is one to watch for.

ROCKY AND BULLWINKLE



Rocky and Bullwinkle, cult children's TV cartoon series, is in its early stages at the moment, but looks promising. It's a – you've guessed it – platform game with the heroic duo travelling the world in an attempt to recover stolen art treasures.

AWESOME POSSUM

Awesome Possum's the name of Tengen's new platform game. Starring the eponymous marsupial and featuring tons of bonus items and hidden rooms, this graphically impressive title could well be worth checking out.

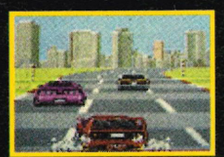


JOE AND MAC

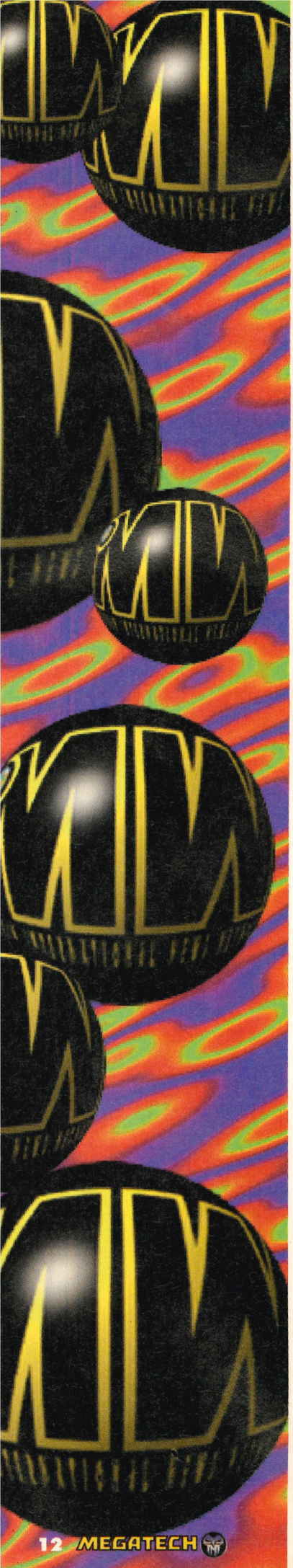


Only one crappy shot here – but as those with magnifying glasses can see, this is Joe and Mac, better known in this country as Caveman Ninja. It's certainly looking tasty, and fans of the coin-op gagging for a Megadrive version are requested to form orderly queues outside their favourite Software Emporium during December.

CHASE HQ II



Another midget-sized pic, this time of Chase HQ II. The previous version of this game was crap, so hopefully Taito have beefed it up and will give the public what they deserve. More news as we get it.



MEGATECH RECOMMENDS

Want to know the names of the very best Megadrive games around? Well want no more, as we present to you the cream of Megadrive games from recent months.

GUNSTAR HEROES

If you're looking for some a high-octane blasting fix, then you've just got to get hold of this awesome platform shoot 'em up. Utterly superb graphics, rock hard tunes, explosive explosions, as well as some of the most fantastic special effects you'll see on ANY console, Gunstar Heroes is fast, addictive and fun, fun, fun. With a great two-player option too!
MT RATING: 95%

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

The ultimate driving game on the Megadrive has to be this, the official Formula One license from Domark. Graphical quite simple, but amazingly fast with an even faster Turbo mode. It features all the genuine World Championship courses and a brilliant split-screen two-player head-to-head. What more could you ask for?
MT RATING: 94%

SILPHEED

It's the game Mega-CD owners have been waiting for. Super-slick shoot 'em up action is the order of the day, but the real thrill comes from the incredible 3D polygon backdrops as giant starcruisers and huge asteroids hurtle and explode all over the shop! All accompanied by Sega's innovative new, Q Surround Virtual Audio. Got a Mega-CD? Get this!
MT RATING: 94%

RANGER X

A game for the more discerning shoot 'em up fan, Ranger X features some awesome blasting action as you guide your flying robot through five levels of baddie-infested mayhem. However, sheer reflexes are not enough as you need to think your way through the game too. Rumour has it the excellent graphics actually feature twice as many colours as any other Megadrive game.
MT RATING: 94%

BATMAN RETURNS

The rather cruddy Megadrive platform game arrives on the Mega-CD and with it comes a superb 3D driving game. High speed thrills are the order of the day as you steer the Batmobile toward the Penguin's hideout, blowing enemy cars off the road.
With some fantastic sprite-scaling and backdrops, we guarantee that no other console could do this game.
MT RATING: 94%

JUNGLE STRIKE

Following on from EA's brilliant Gulf War shoot 'em up is this 16 Meg sequel and it's one of the best shoot 'em ups around. Fly through Washington DC in a race to save the President and battle drug barons in the jungles of South America. You can even comandeer motorbikes, jeeps, a hovercraft and even a Stealth Bomber. Fast reflexes, plenty of intelligence and anti-addiction tablets will be needed.

MT RATING: 95%

THE OFFICIAL SEGA RELEASE SCHEDULE

Once again, it's time to have a look at Sega's release schedule for those games to keep you warm on those chilly winter evenings.

OCTOBER

MEGA-CD

Ecco CD: Identical to cartridge version with extra levels.
Sonic CD: Spiky blue hedgehog hits Mega-CD.
Terminator CD: Platform game based on hit movie.
Thunderhawk: 3D helicopter game.
Make My Video: C&C Music Factory/ Kris Kross: More music video editing.
Sewer Shark: Full-motion shoot 'em up.
Chuck Rock CD: Caveman platform antics.
Hook: Platform game based on hit movie.

MEGADRIVE

Street Fighter II: Special Champion Edition: See preview on page 16.
Asterix And The Great Rescue: Famous French dwarf in platform shocker.
Landstalker: An RPG follow-up to Shining Force.
Wimbledon Tennis: Famous sports licence.
Ottifant: German platform game starring an elephant.
Snake, Rattle And Roll: See review on page 62.
Rugby: Famous Field sport hits Megadrive.
F1 World Championship: 'see MegaTech Recommends'
Davis Cup Tennis: Best Megadrive tennis game yet.
Son Of Chuck: Sequel to Chuck Rock.

NOVEMBER

MEGA-CD

Silpheed VR: See MegaTech Recommends.
Spiderman Vs The Kingpin: Conversion of cartridge version with more levels.
Dune CD: Strategy game with 3D flying bits.
Son Of Chuck: CD version of the cartridge game.
Dracula: Beat 'em up based on movie.
John Madden '94: Latest American Football installment.

MEGADRIVE

Aladdin: Platform game based on Disney movie.
Sonic Spinball: See preview on page 24.
Indiana Jones: Instruments Of Chaos: See news.
Home Alone 2: Game based on movie.
Visionary: Mysterious game.
Winter Olympics: Multi-event sports game.
Robocop Vs Terminator: Platform shoot 'em up featuring famous robots.
Blades Of Vengeance: Platform beat 'em up.
Gauntlet 4: Conversion of 4-player coin-op.


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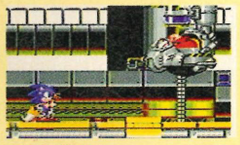
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MEGAWORLD CHART

THE UK MEGADRIVE TOP 20

Once again, the chart is generously supplied by the gorgeously majestic Special Reserve of Sawbridgeworth.

1	1	JUNGLE STRIKE	EA
2	5	MICRO MACHINES	CODEMASTERS
3	3	PGA TOUR GOLF 2	EA
4	2	FLASHBACK	US GOLD
5	15	NHL PA '93	EA
6	8	COOL SPOT	VIRGIN
7	6	TINY TOONS	KONAMI
8	NEW	SPEEDBALL 2	VIRGIN
9	10	ROAD RASH 2	EA
10	NEW	JURASSIC PARK	SEGA
11	9	ECCO	SEGA
12	NEW	WWF WRESTLEMANIA	ACCLAIM
13	NEW	GHOULS N GHOSTS	SEGA
14	12	SHINING FORCE	SEGA
15	14	LEMMINGS	SEGA
16	16	POPULOUS	SEGA
17	4	SUPER KICK OFF	US GOLD
18	NEW	X-MEN	SEGA
19	11	STREETS OF RAGE II	SEGA
20	19	SONIC 2	SEGA

MEGAWORLD

MEGATECH INTERNATIONAL NEWS NETWORK

MEGATECH

PREVIEW



BY: SEGA

price: £TBA
developers: CAPCOM
release date: OCT 1993

Yes, yes, we know that this is the second time we've previewed Streetfighter II, and we realise that you're all probably sick and tired of all the speculation about the game that has been rife throughout the Sega press for the whole year, and we're sorry and all that. But look, we just had to tell you – at long last, we've finally played it! Yes, it's true – today, we managed to get our hands on a copy of the cart that, up until now, has proved as elusive as the Holy Grail. We've actually held it, touched it, loaded it up into the office Megadrive, played it and marvelled at it!

ALL FINISHED AND RARING TO GO!

Now we can put an end to all the speculation and rumour-mongering, because the cart we're playing now is 100% COMPLETE. The only trouble is, the cart has arrived right on our deadline for going to press. We've only got the game for a day, and even if we worked right through the night, we couldn't possibly write a review that could do justice to this ground-breaking cart. So we've decided to bring you the definitive info in the form of a preview, and we can give you a solid gold, 24-carat promise that we'll be bringing you the FULL REVIEW NEXT MONTH! What we *have* got, here and now, is the FULL LOWDOWN ON THE FINISHED VERSION – all 24 musclebound megs of it, and a whole bunch of new screen grabs!

BETTER THAN THE COIN-OP?

Street Fighter II doesn't bear the title 'Special Champion Edition', or 'SFII SCE', for nothing! Not only is it a faithful reproduction of the modified coin-op's Champion Edition board, but it includes the Turbo advancements too. So players hungry to exploit Balrog's new Turning Punch, Honda's Sumo Press and experience Ken and Ryu's gravity-defying Hurricane Kicks need look no further. However, there are plenty more reasons for getting excited about this extraordinary cart.

THE WORKS

Remember how those early screenshots of Megadrive Streetfighter II showed an ugly black border behind the energy bars at the top of the screen. Pretty disappointing eh? Well, dry your eyes, because they're gone in the new SCE version. Yep, now the action covers the full screen, with full colour backdrops behind the energy bars just like in the original coin-op!

EXCLUSIVE FEATURES

Super Nintendo Streetfighter 2 was always criticised for being too slow and Capcom attempted to correct this problem by giving SNES Turbo four speed settings. However, Megadrive Streetfighter 2 beats all this versions hands down with an incredible TEN speeds. The actual Turbo coin-op only reaches Speed Setting 4 of the Megadrive version. At top speed, the game plays at an amazing rate of knots, beating even the arcade machine for high-speed thrills!

Streetfighter II Special Champion Edition also features a Group Battle option which is exclusive to the Megadrive. This takes two forms. Match Play is a series of single bouts in which both players select a team of of up to six fighters each and battle pairs of them together. Whoever takes the most rounds wins. The second Elimination tournament again sees two teams of up to six fighters. However this time it's a case of winner stays on, until one player has no fighters left. These new features alone are enough to mark the Special Champion Edition as the hottest home conversion of Street Fighter II available.

Another option unique to SCE can be discovered in the Versus Mode. Had enough of some of your opponents tricky special moves? No problem, just switch them off! Yes, SCE allows you to handicap other fighters by selecting which moves they can and can't do. No longer will players who persist in employing the M Bison's 'Flaming Torpedo' technique or Guile's Somersault-Kick get away with these annoying tactics. SFII SCE is everything a Street Fighter fan could possibly wish for, at least until the advent of the next game in the series in the arcades.

JUST ONE MONTH AWAY

So the guessing game is over! As we said, we've seen it, we've played it, and now we've told you all about it. All that's left is for Megatech to review it! And now that we've blown away all the speculation and hearsay about the game, surely a month isn't too long to wait



▲ Vega brings down Russian bear-wrestler, Zangief, now in his poncy Turbo colours of turquoise. Even his scars are blue!

STREE
SPECIAL CH



▲ Vega's all-new, five-hit rolling crystal flash in action.



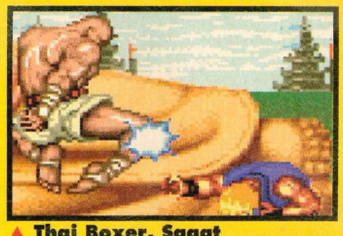
▲ The famous Sonic Boom. Now faster than ever before!



▲ Honda's Super Sumo Press. A deadly double-edged attack.



▲ M Bison. No new moves for the streetfighting master.



▲ Thai Boxer, Sagat performing his Tiger Knee.



▲ Dhalsim. The famous Yoga Flame remains the same.



▲ Chun-li fends off Sagat with the devastating Air Spinning Bird Kick.



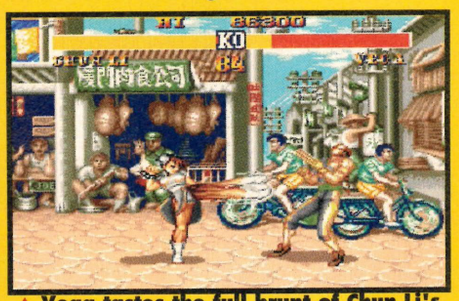
▲ Balrog can now roll fireballs through him with no damage at all!



▲ Every backdrop is there and they all feature the new Turbo Edition colours.



▲ The legendary Dragon Punch. Two hits can be made when pulled off correctly.



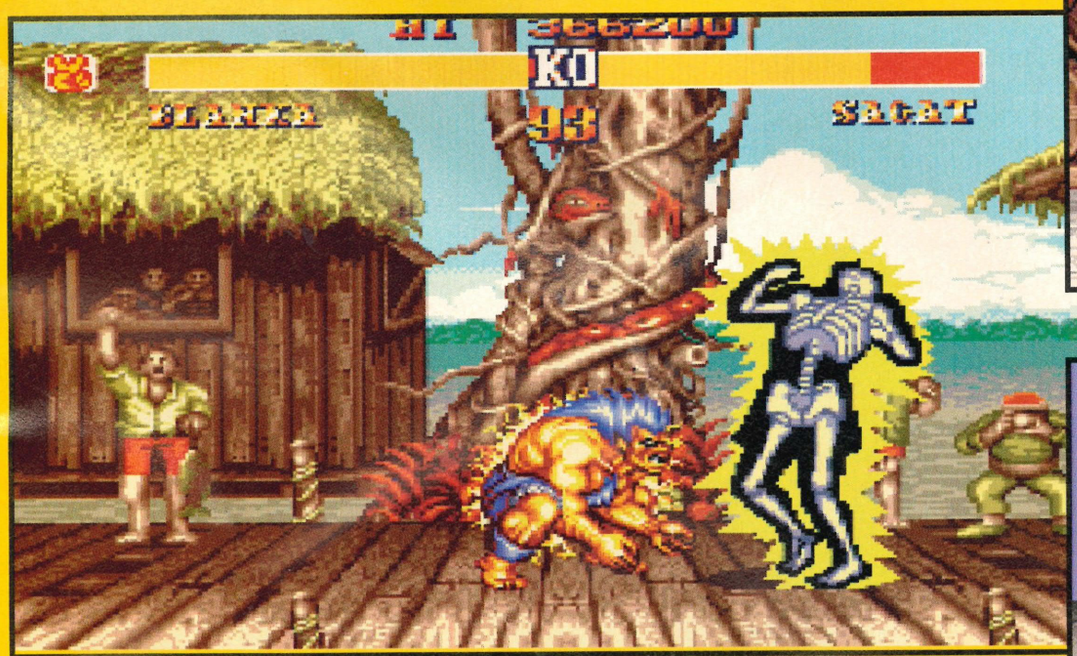
▲ Vega tastes the full brunt of Chun Li's Hundred Foot Quick. Now even quicker.



▲ The ground scrolls around in perfect 3D, identically like in the coin-op.

T FIGHTER II:

AMPIONSHIP EDITION



▲ Blanka, in his new Turbo Edition colours of gold and blue, gives Sagat a taste of his famous Electric Attack. You'll notice the arcade-identical backdrops cover the whole screen.



▲ Barrel-smashing. A bonus level the SNES didn't have!



▲ This version also features the console-only brick-wall bonus level.

PREVIEW



Castlevania Bloodlines

KONAMI

BY: KONAMI

price: £44.99
developers: IN-HOUSE
release date: NOV. 1993

When top Nintendo development house, Konami, revealed that they were going to start producing games for the Megadrive there was only one name on everyones' lips, Castlevania. Would it be coming to the Megadrive? What would it look like? Would it be an all-new game? Well, all those questions can now be answered, because Castlevania IS coming to the Megadrive real soon and to prove it here is the EXCLUSIVE MegaTech Hallowe'en issue preview.



CASTL
A NEW C

For those of you that don't know, the Castlevania series is one of the most popular collections of platform games ever to grace the Nintendo consoles. Following the antics of famed vampire-hunting family, the Belmonts, the aim of the games is to destroy the most deadly vampire of all, the Prince of Darkness, Dracula himself. However, this is no easy task, because being the supernatural being that he is, Dracula always tends to surround himself with such ungodly creatures as zombies, ghouls and skeletons. Fortunately, those Belmont boys always come prepared with their tried and trusted anti-vampire whips, which they always use to great effect.

Following on from the last epic instalment, Castlevania IV on the Super Nintendo, Megadrive Castlevania sees a whole new generation of the vampire hunters facing the dread forces of



ı 300-year old Elizabeth Bartley, ırrect the Vampire less she can be in time. Starting ula Castle, it's a across 19th tury Europe in a st to make sure at the Prince of arkness never ises from the grave.

Although only fifty percent complete, legadrive tlevania already ks like it could ove to be the best stlevania game beating even the r Nintendo . To find out if rue or not you'll dormant in the r homeland until ıth, when we ı on a extra-strong ı of garlic bread giving it the full ech review.



▲ Just look at the polish on that game – you can see your face in it!



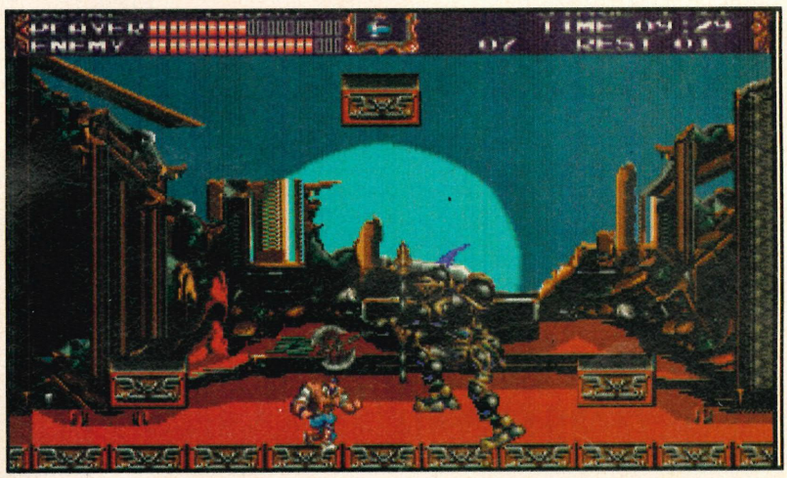
▲ Light blue touchpaper and retire...



▲ ...and enjoy your fireworks!



▲ "Ere, have you got a licence for that huge and dangerous weapon?"



▲ Looks like a bit of a 'David and Goliath' situation developing.

EVANIA: GENERATION



➲ NOT ONE, BUT TWO VAMPIRE HUNTERS!

Hard as it is to believe, Castlevania: A New Generation doesn't feature a single person with the surname Belmont. Nope, Christopher and Simon Belmont, the vampire hunters from the previous games, have long since died. Instead, a newer generation of vampire hunters have risen to the challenge. First up is John Morris, who is actually the son of Quincy Morris, the Texan who killed Dracula with his Bowie knife at the end of Bram Stoker's original Dracula novel. Being a descendant of the Belmont family he actually holds the magical whip, Vampire Killer.

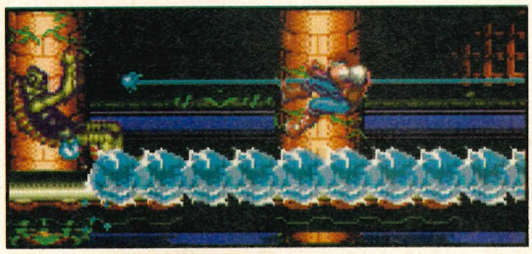
Then there is Eric Lecarde. Once a sculptor, he has now become a vampire hunter because his girlfriend has been possessed by the soul of Elizabeth Bartley. Eric is rather adept at using a huge pike, which proves even more effective against vampires than the trusty whip. If only Simon and Christopher had known, they might still be with us today.

➲ TAKE YOUR WICK!

As with all the previous Castlevania games, A New Generation is packed with candelabras. However, these wall-mounted ornaments are more than just fancy decorations or light fittings. By whipping the candle-holders all manner of vampire-hunting emergency rations can be found. Extra time, whip and spear extensions and even special items like battle axes, holy water and magic boomerangs can be uncovered. If only Dracula had checked the candelabras, he might still be with us today.

➲ DRACULA: EUROPEAN TOUR 1897

Travelling across Europe, our vampire hunters have to face such terrors as the ghost of Marie Antoinette at the Palace of Versailles, the Phantom Ship of Dover, a spectral craft that haunts the Channel, and finally Proselpina Castle, a citadel from another dimension that has appeared in Whitby, England. What's more, Megadrive Castlevania actual features two different pathways through the game depending on which character you play. For instance, on level two, if you're playing John Morris you have to battle your way through the lost continent of Atlantis, however Eric has to confront the Leaning Tower of Pisa which has mysteriously corrected itself. Effectively this means that there are two different games to be played!



▲ "Die, evil scaly scum!"



▲ Eric Lecarde wields his huge pike.



▲ And here he is again – what a poser!





BY: KONAMI

price: £TBA
developers: IN-HOUSE
release date: TBA

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES TO FI

Cowa-flipping-bunga. Just when you thought it was safe to let your kids play around in the sewers, those irrepressible reptilian hard-shelled assassins make their return. Not only with yet another chuffing movie, which is guaranteed about four years' airtime on Movies, Games and Videos on a Saturday morning, but there's also a brand new Turtles game from Konami. Which, thinking about it, is probably also guaranteed about four years of airtime on Movies, Games and Videos.



▲ Ray gives a turtle a good throttling.



▲ Clone turtles come out purple.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA STREETFIGHTER

This is something of a departure from the first four (yes, four for Pete's sake – and that's not counting the Amiga and NES versions) TMNT games. Not for TMNT Tournament Fighter the humble horizontally-scrolling beat 'em up origins of its ancestors, nor indeed the switch-perspective granddaddy that is the arcade game, but a brand new stylee – one-on-one beat 'em uppery. Yes, those four 'hip' 'dudes' from 'California' are back in their very own mutant version of Street Fighter.

PLUS FOUR CHARACTERS

You, the player, are able to pick from eight characters, each with their own strengths and weaknesses and a selection of special moves. There's Leonardo (the one with the swords), Michelangelo (the one with the green skin), Donatello (the one with the shell) and Raphael (the one who isn't one of the others).

Their faithful reporter friend April O'Neal has dressed up like Blaze out of Streets of Rage 2 and suddenly inherited a wealth of martial arts knowledge (and seeing as this is based on the comics and not the cartoon, she isn't a reporter either). There's also be-hockey-masked vigilante Casey Jones, complete with his favourite hockey stick, and two alien types: Ray is a big winged demon thing named after the bloke who goes "Techno, techno, techno, techno" in 2 Unlimited and Sisyphus the insect beast.

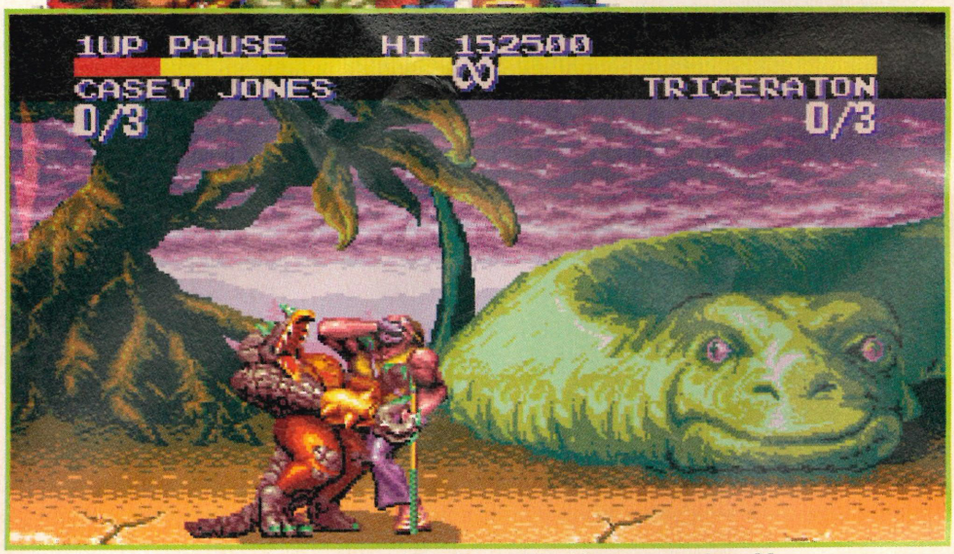
Each of these characters have about five special moves on top of the standard array of punches, kicks and throws. These moves range from fireballs and earthquakes to mid-air throws and Dragon Punches, and absolutely none of them bear any resemblance at all to the moves in Street Fighter 2. The moves are performed in the now-standard joystick direction and button combinations, with the best moves being the hardest to perform.

SEND IN THE CLONES

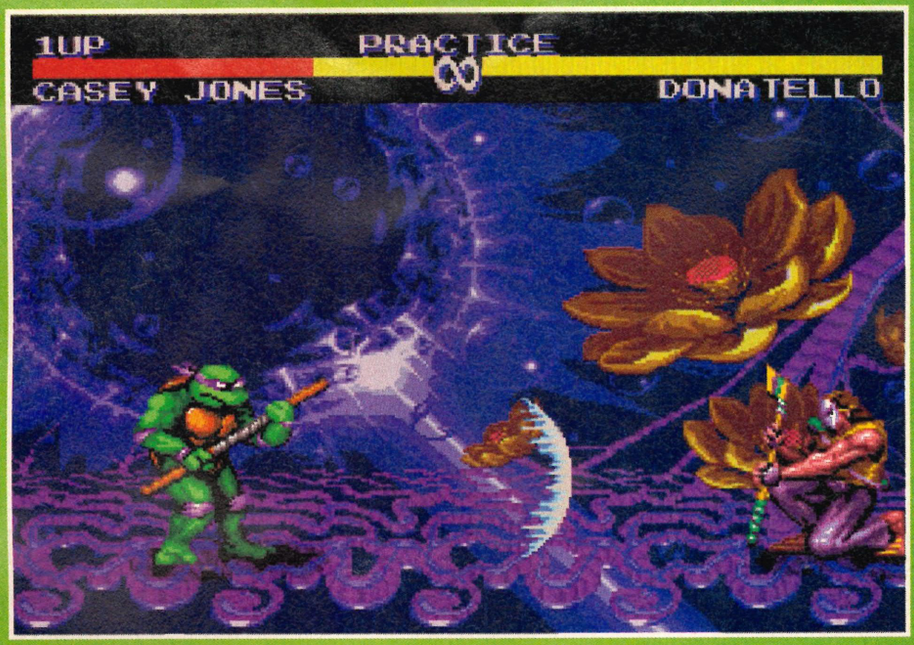
The object of the game is to defeat all the evil clones of the characters manufactured by the dastardly Krang in order to – shock horror! – rescue master Splinter (the rat one). However, even once you've mulched through the clones, a number of boss characters – yes, a bit like in Street Fighter – still stand in your way.

Well, blimey, TMNT Tournament Fighter certainly looks the part.The sprites are huge and very detailed, and there are loads of great backgrounds. Konami certainly had the right idea in putting so many special moves in, giving it that hard-to-master tag and plenty of possible scope for tactical play and all that gubbins. But as for the final verdict on the playability, you'll have to wait for the review in next month's Megatech. Or maybe the month after. It depends.

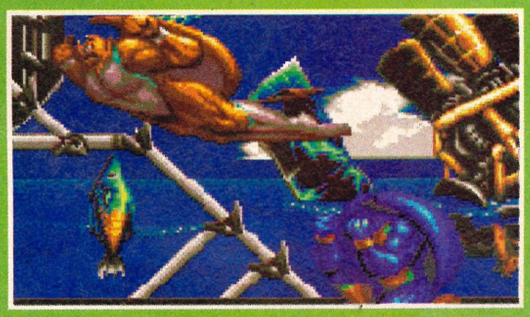




▲ The alligator-type beastie is one of the bosses, and he's non-selectable.



▲ Casey Jones, the man in the mask, readies his special move.



▲ The fish is a non-selectable character.



▲ A clone turtle wallops Casey Jones.

OURNAMENT GHTERS



▲ Turtle bo-stick power ahoy!



▲ Phew! A special spinny move!







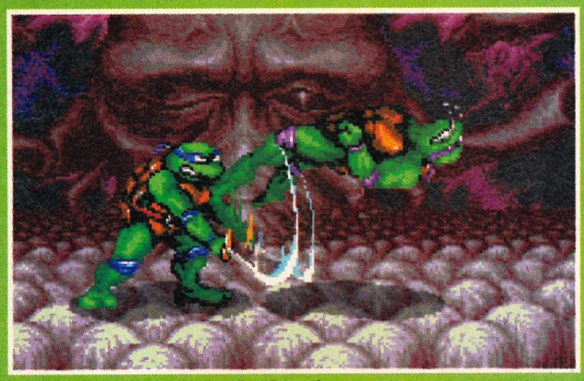




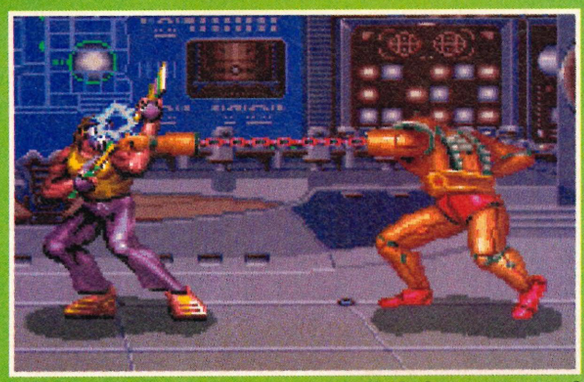
▲ April gives it some flying kick!



▲ Another flying kick from a boss.



▲ One-on-one turtle duel action.



▲ You want dangerous prosthetic limbs? You got 'em!

PREVIEW



BY: CODEMASTERS

price: TBA
developers: IN-HOUSE
release date: OCT 1993

COSMIC SPACEHEAD



In their continuing quest for the next Dizzy, Codemasters have announced their latest cutesy hero – Cosmic Spacehead. An intergalactic tourist, Spacehead has returned from a trip to Earth to his home planet of Linoleum with plenty of tales to recount of Earth and its peoples' funny ways. However, when we are introduced to our hero, he has lost his passport and all evidence of his trip to our little blue planet, which means nobody believes him. Determined to save face, Spacehead decides to return to Earth and collect the evidence needed to convince his mates. Thus, a Monkey Island-style point 'n' click adventure unfolds as our hero, with but one coin in his pocket, scours the area in search of the means to travel.



▲ **Gee, strange-looking planet!**

Cosmic Spacehead begins with our hero standing outside the local passport office. Scattered around the massive flick-screen play area are a series of options and, using a simple cursor system, these can be added to Cosmic's deep pockets. It's not all adventuring malarkey, though, as to move from one location to the next, a series of platform sections must be traversed and the many nasties within intend to stop Cosmic in his tracks. Also on the sub-game front, fans of Micro Machines should be pleased to see a miniature version appears as a sub-game midway through the game. Cosmic's trip to Earth spans three major sections each of which throws more problems at our hero, and he will also need to converse with the many people he meets in order to glean as much useful info as possible. Whether it's worth helping this hapless tourist, though, you'll be able to find out when we review it next issue.

PREVIEW



BY: VIRGIN

price: TBA
developers: INTERPLAY
release date: NOV 1993

LOST VIKINGS

It's hard to imagine Norway ever possessing the most menacing race of warriors known to man. Still, Virgin remember a time when the Norwegians were a force to be reckoned with, and invite you to get lost with them...



Having wowed Super NES owners with its combination of platform-based and puzzles, The Lost Vikings are now ready for some serious Norse-play on your Megadrive - courtesy of Virgin. Unsurprisingly, The Lost Vikings stars a trio of Norsemen who awake to find themselves on an alien spaceship. It transpires that the owners of the ship, the Crutonians, plan to experiment on the three bewhiskered heroes - thus, escape seems like a rather good idea.

A BIT OF NORSEPLAY

Starting in one of the ship's many metallic corridors, the player cycles through which of the three heroes they wish to control. Each of the party has an individual skill, so whilst one is a dab hand at archery and swordplay, the other two

SPACED OUT!

Graphically, Cosmic Spacehead is very nice indeed. The graphics have been given an angled look, similar to those used by Hanna-Barbera for their Jetsons cartoons. The cartoon-quality characters move between buildings Judy and George Jetson would be immediately at home with, and this kitsch appearance is carried through to the assorted sub-games, with the horizontally-scrolling bus game with its weird and wonderful vehicles deserving special praise.



▲ Point-and-click is the name of the game.



▲ Visit many strange locations.



▲ The Jetsons-style graphics look pretty smart, don't you think?



▲ A beast of a screen.



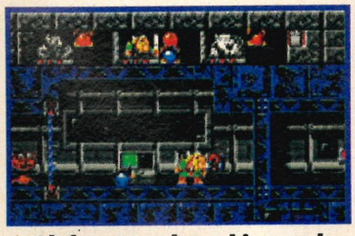
▲ Overgrown, spaced-out spaghetti!



▲ It's Cossie Spacehead!

are adept at jumping and shield-use respectively – skills which are integral to solving the game's many puzzles. Almost immediately, these skills are called into play as the first puzzle involves reaching a warp zone which will send the trio into the time vortex and spinning back in time. Numerous gun-toting aliens wander the scrolling play area, so whilst the shield-owning Viking blocks their fire, the other two use their jumping and archery skills to negotiate the remaining puzzles. In all, five large time zones stand between the Vikings and home, and the puzzles and platform layouts within each get progressively harder as the alien menace step up their attempts to get our heroes back.

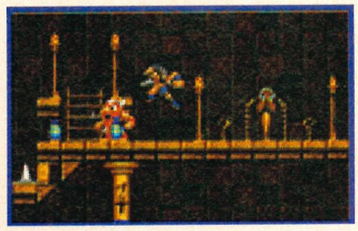
Will the Norse trio make it back home? Will Virgin's game be a bit of Olaf? Stay tuned for more details...



▲ Olaf contemplates his navel.



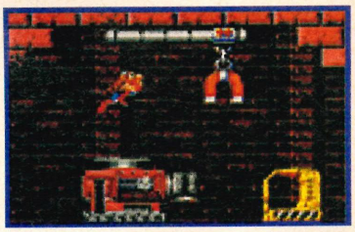
▲ Could this be Prince's pad?



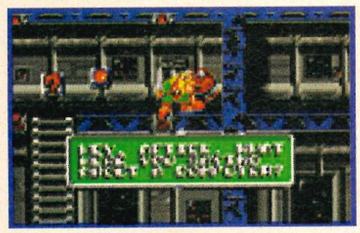
▲ It goes better than it looks.



▲ Is this a caption, or is it a space filler? The choice is yours.



▲ Erik is magnetically attracted by his big horn.



▲ Here comes Olaf and his Norse kin.

MEET THE TEAM

As mentioned, each of the team features an individual skill. Here's the team and what they can do:



OLAF THE STOUT:

A rather large bloke (hence the name), and the shield-owning member of the team. Comes in very useful for protecting his mates from enemy fire as his shield can withstand any number of shots, allowing the other two to work in peace.



ERIK THE SWIFT:

Extremely fleet of foot and the only member of the team slim enough to jump across hazards. Erik's speed also allows him to run straight through walls - although please don't try this at home, kids.



BALEOG THE BESERKER:

Armed with a bow and arrow, Baleog also carries a sword which is why it's always wise to send him off on a recce of the area - in case the other two stumble across the pursuing aliens.

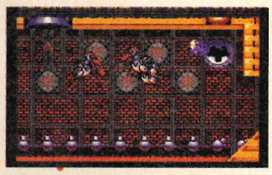




BY: SEGA

price: TBA
developers: SEGA IN-HOUSE
release date: NOV 1993

SONIC SPINBALL



With Christmas rapidly approaching, surely there must be a Sonic game in the pipeline? Well there is – Sonic CD, of course. Aw yeh, but what about all those people who haven't got Mega-CD's? Don't worry, because Sega care about you loveable cartridge players too, and have constructed the fiendishly spectacular Sonic Spinball, just for you. Hurrah!

SPIN MY CHIN!

Actually, we've covered Sonic Spinball before in MegaWorld, but now, with its November release date in sight, we've actually had a chance to glimpse this 8-Meg game in action, and we can tell you how totally spectacular it looks. When we saw the game way back at the June CES show, it was in its very early programming stages and looked decidedly jerky. Well, the jerks are all gone – the new, improved animation is super-slick, as Sonic flies around the screen at an incredible speed.

In case you don't know the story, Sonic's arch-rival, that bad-egg Dr Robotnik, has created a massive volcano hide-out with his penthouse labotoratory resting at the top.What's more, he's filled its hollowed-out interior with all-manner of crazy pinball features. Flippers, rollers, rail-tracks, bumpers, bells and firing triggers litter the game. If you thought the Casino Night Zone was bad, wait until you see this!

FLIPPING OUT!

Working from the bottom of the mountain fortress, the aim is to flip and bounce old Sonic right to the very top. The whole game is just one huge level split into different sections, each one separated by a huge gate. Only by spanging off the locking mechanism can Sonic open the gate and move into the next tier of pinball-related japes. However, once the gate is open, Sonic could fall through, right back to the BEGINNING of the game! To add to the problems, you DON'T control Sonic. Nope, just like real pinball, you have control of the flippers and spring-powered triggers with which you have propel the speedy blue hedgehog up through the game.



SPIN ON THIS!

Of course, being a video game, you'd expect more than just your average pinball mechanisms and that's exactly what you get. Sonic can be buffeted about by jets of steam. There are also strange air bellows-style see-saws that can shunt the spiky speed-merchant up the screen, providing you can get a baddy to climb on the other end.

SPIN, SPIN AND WIN!

Up until now, Devil Crash (or Dragon's Fury as it's known over here) has been the supremo of pinball games on ANY console system. But now the Blue Prince of Platform Games is about to enter the fray, things could be about to change. Will Sonic Spinball hit the right spot? Find out next issue in the full MegaTech review, scheduled to coincide with the big console event of the year,



▲ Can you spot Sonic in this pic?



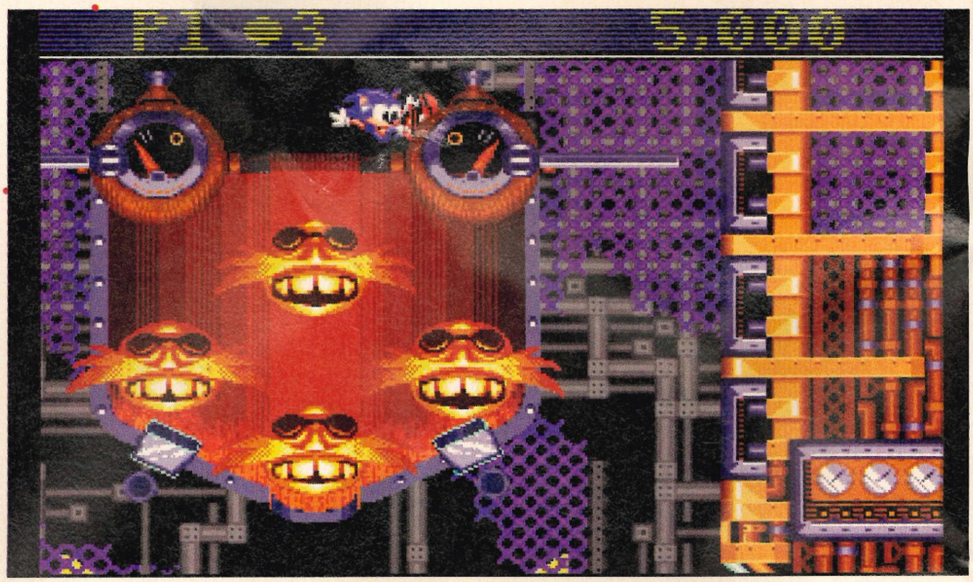
▲ Use the air-bellows to fire Sonic upward.



▲ Sonic dies in a cauldron of boiling lava.



▲ Rocket through tunnels to get emeralds.



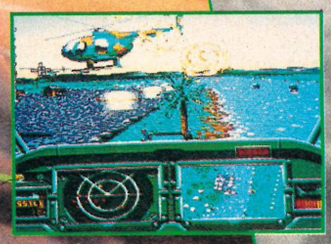
▲ Look out Sonic. It's Dr Robotnik's remake of Bohemian Rhapsody!

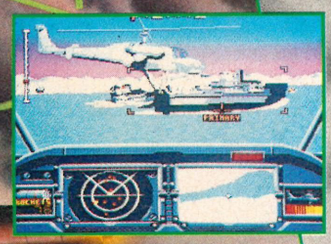
THUNDERHAWK

THE ULTIMATE COMBAT SIMULATOR

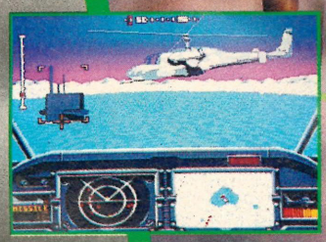
FLY YOUR THUNDERHAWK THROUGH A TOTAL OF 48 MISSIONS SET IN 10 DIFFERENT LOCATIONS. USE STRATEGY AND TACTICS DISCUSSED IN THE BRIEFING ROOM TO LOCATE, INTERCEPT AND DESTROY THE ENEMY IN THIS DEFINITIVE 3D HELICOPTER COMBAT SIMULATION.

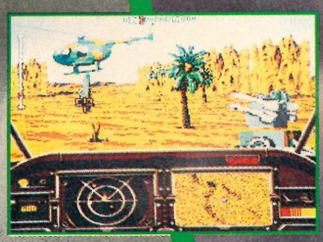












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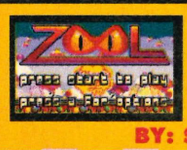
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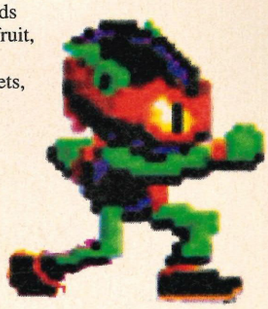
BY: SEGA

price: TBA
developers: IN-HOUSE
release date: OCT/NOV

Oddly enough, Zool started life as Gremlin's attempt to bring all the playability associated with a console game to Amiga and ST owners. Well, what goes around comes around, and having wowed all those floppy owners, Gremlin's 'Ninja From The Nth Dimension' is about to make his Megadrive debut.

INTO THE NTH DIMENSION

For those of you wondering just what the 'Nth Dimension' is, it's not one specific place – it is everywhere. Renowned throughout this weird and wonderful place for his incredible athletic and fighting abilities, Zool acts as the dimension's guardian, keeping an eye out for any unwanted invaders out to destroy the harmony it enjoys. One such baddie is Krool, a rather nasty piece of work bent on world domination, who is ably abetted by his cuboid counterpart, Mental Block. As is the wont of such villains, Krool has sent armies of his cronies to invade the seven themed worlds within the Nth Dimension and these have sent the usually peaceful inhabitants scurrying for cover. With the worlds based around such themes as sweets, music, tools and fruit, the aliens have adapted to blend in with the assorted backdrops and now resemble all manner of jellies, sweets, musical instruments and hammers.

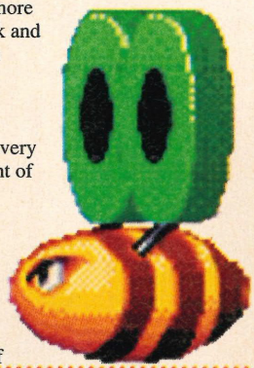


SWEET DREAMS

Starting on Sweet World, Zool's unenviable task involves running and jumping across the eight-way-scrolling, platform-laden play areas in search of the exit. On reaching this, Krool's cronies are immediately destroyed, allowing Zool to progress to the next stage. However, obviously the assorted aliens aren't going to let our ant-like hero get away with his plans of revolution and consequently they dog his every move. Zool's lifespan is shown as three small lozenges at the top of the screen and contact with any of the marauding jellies and things removes these one at a time. It's not all bad news, though, and Zool's aforementioned abilities arm him with a gun of some sort, kicks and punches (well, he is a Ninja) and he can also keep out of harm's way by clinging to walls or simply stepping on the aliens.

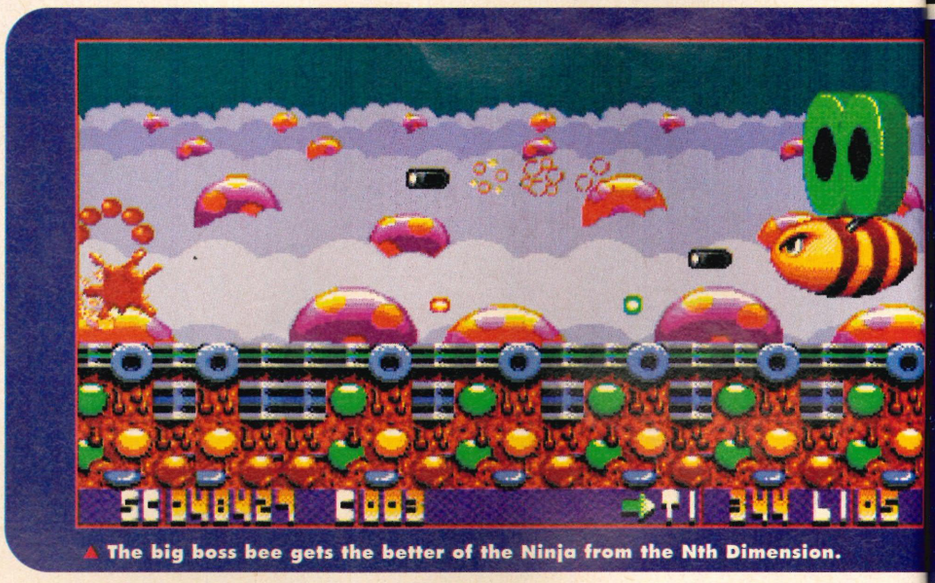
THAT'S MAGIC

As Zool hops and skips his way across the enemy-packed stages, he also has the chance to earn extra bonuses simply by collecting the hundreds of goodies lining the route. These include the basics in life like food but, more importantly, often take the form of black and white capsules marked with a 'Z' which magically enhance our hero's already-considerable powers. For instance, one capsule prompts a ghost-like decoy to appear behind Zool, which mirrors his every move and effectively doubles the amount of damage he can do.



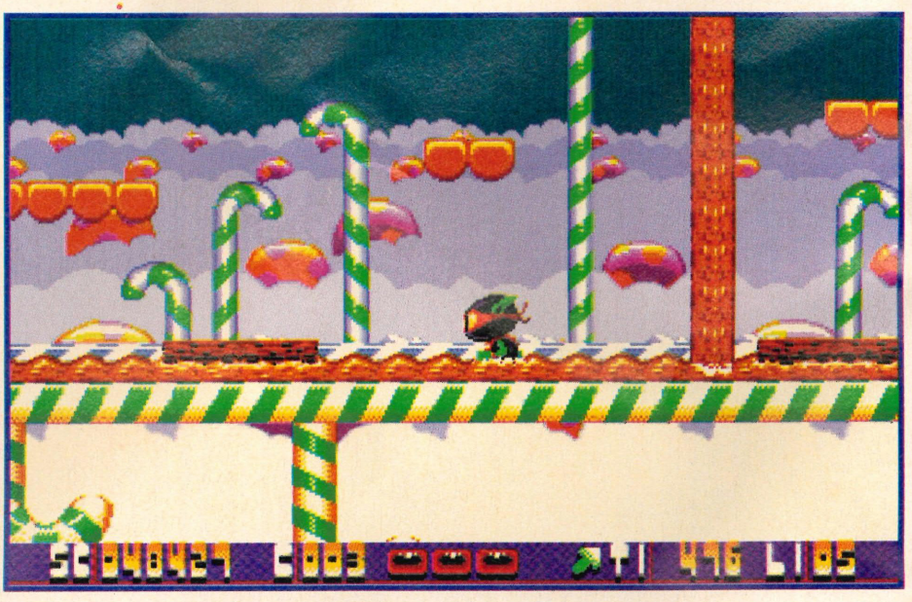
ZOOL'S GOLD

Gremlin are pinning a lot of hopes on Zool, and the release of the Megadrive version is set to coincide with a batch of Zool merchandise, but you can see how it fares when it arrives for review – hopefully in time for the next issue.



▲ The big boss bee gets the better of the Ninja from the Nth Dimension.

ZOO



▲ The early levels all have a distinctly 'sweet' feel to them.



▲ Guess which lollipop manufacturer sponsors this game?



▲ Wading through chocolate. Yummy.



▲ Two ninjas for the price of one!

OL

BOSS-ANOVA

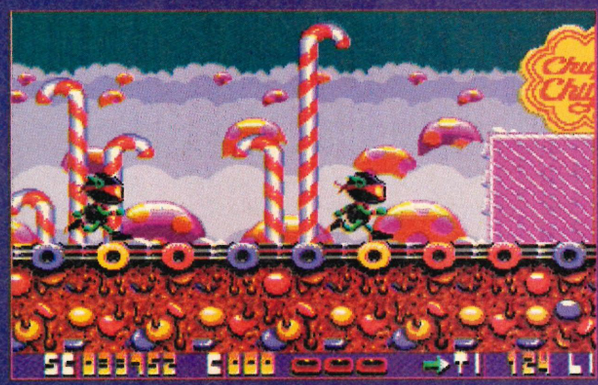
Each world has been split into a series of smaller stages, but before Zool gets to head for the next world a large boss creature stands between our hero and the exit. As with all Zool's foes, these are designed to tie in with the level's theme and range from a large bumble bee in the first stage (no, we don't know why either) to a clown at the end of the funfair. As with most bosses, only a large dose of firepower can send them packing, and it's wise to have magic in tow too...

ALL THIS AND BLASTING TOO!

If Zool struggles past the platform-based stages, his path to a final confrontation with Krool takes the form of a horizontally-scrolling shoot 'em. Jumping into his trusty spaceship (which just happens to look like his head), Zool faces wave after wave of alien fleets before Krool appears as the final boss, with Mental Block in tow.



▲ Level two - all very musical, don't you think?



▲ "Wait for me - I'm your doppelganger!"



▲ Coming in, ready to land on the intro screen.



▲ "Hello, England! Are you ready to rock?"







BY: SEGA

price: £39.99
developers: ACCLAIM
release date: NOV 1993

THE ADDAMS FAMILY



▲ "Hmmm... I recognise that handsome chap on the wall."

Which is the spookiest, ookie-kookiest family ever to appear on a TV or cinema screen? (Be quiet, you there at the back, shouting: "The Munsters!" – it's The Addams Family, you troublemaker!) Yes, The Addams Family, and guess what? – they're about to bring their creepy presence to the Megadrive, thanks to Acclaim. No doubt much whooping, clapping and applying of white panstick make-up will ensue from the die-hard Addams Family fanclub, but how does the game look to us slightly less creepy people in the Land of the Normal?

GO, GOMEZ, GO, GO!

Well, it looks exactly like the SNES title which was released about a year ago, that's what it looks like. And funnilly enough, the plot's exactly the same as the aforementioned Ocean-programmed game. Gomez, the moustachioed and pin-striped patriarch of the family returns one night to the spooky old family mansion and discovers that something has gone missing. No, it's not his slippers or his tub of industrial strength Brylcreem – it's his whole family!



▲ Thing says "Hello."



▲ Gomez aims at a nasty offscreen.

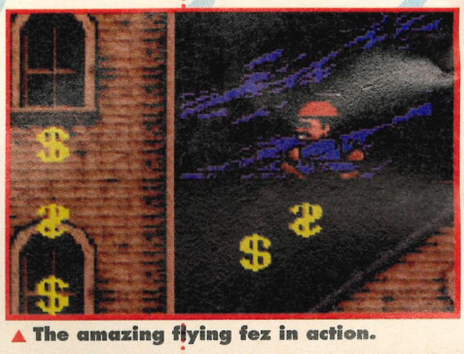
MONEY-GRABBING MAN

In true video-gaming fashion, it transpires that the rest of the Addams Family have been kidnapped by evil baddies, and Gomez has to embark upon a mercy mission to save his nearest and dearest. So how does he do it – does he phone the police, does he get a team of mates from the pub together and go out mob-handed, looking for the dastardly 'nappers? No – he goes on a hunt around the many different rooms of the family mansion.

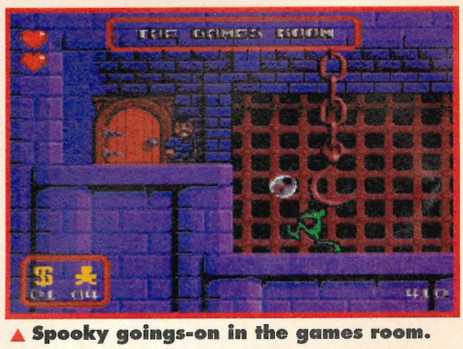
Littered throughout the myriad of rooms are dollar signs – these hold the key to the fate of the captive family members that Gomez must release, and he must collect as many of them as he can. However, things aren't all that easy – also littered throughout the rooms are many a ghoulish, horrible nasty just waiting to stop Gomez in his tracks, and loads of fiendish traps too. How can Gomez defeat all these spooky nasties and rescue his loved ones? Well, he has to resort to the time-honoured tactic of the bottom-bounce, although he can pick up special devices such as a flying fez. But will the Addams Family be the sort of game that you'll want to pick up? You'll just have to read the review in MegaTech, won't you? Soon come.



▲ Watch out for those ghoulies!



▲ The amazing flying fez in action.



▲ Spooky goings-on in the games room.



▲ Er, this one looks strangely familiar.



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Tom

Hi folks, Tom here! Oh dear, things aren't looking too good for me at all this month. Let me fill you in. It was really warm yesterday evening, and I was lying out on the beach of my island watching the sunset, when I suddenly noticed ripples in the water. Looking closer, I saw the cause. A group of female sea-elves were dancing on the surface. What lovely patterns they made, and they kept laughing and beckoning me to join them. Well, stopping only to collect my Spiderman swimming trunks from the beach-hut, I dived in. What a lovely time I had, paddling about. But, just as I was getting in my stride, suddenly they all swam off. Then next thing I knew, a current was pulling me under. The last thing I heard was the rush of water in my ears, then I blacked out. When I awoke I was here - in the belly of a large sea-beast, a whale, I think. There's even an old ship-wreck in here and everything. Oh, I don't know how I'm going to get out. Write to Neptune, get help. You can probably get him at my address. TOM'S ISLAND, MegaTech, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU. I'm going to try and light or fire or something. If I can just make him sneeze...

ISLAND OF THE STRANGE!

Greetings surface dwellers. Soon Halloween will be upon us. A time of pumpkin sculptures, bobbing for apples and trick or treating. Of course, this is all just a cover for all the naked cavorting and sex with goblins that really goes on. Or is it? Four celebrity psychic investigators are about reveal the secrets of the unknown to us. Welcome to Tom's Island of the Strange!



ISLAND OF THE STRANGE 1

The Loch Ness Monster. Fact or Fiction? Seasoned entertainer, Dean Martin reveals all...

You know, Loch Ness certainly is a deep lake. It's 297 metres deep and packed with large underwater caves where the legendary monster could easily hide. But what exactly is 'Nessie'? Some people reckon that it is a prehistoric creature, an Elasmosaur, trapped in the Loch since the Ice Age. There have been many sightings to back this up, V-shaped wakes and humps in the water are common. One 19th Century diver even saw a 'huge frog' sitting on an underwater shelf of rock. Modern-day stories tell of the creature actually coming ashore to feed on lambs. There have even been photos. One, taken underwater, shows a two-metre long flipper. Of course, there are sceptics who claim that the monster is no more than rotting sea vegetables, burped up by marsh gas. The truth? Simple. A secret race of Scottish aqua-people live beneath the surface and are awaiting the day when humankind shall bow before their finny warriors. Especially the Welsh. Bubye.



's Island

GOOD GRIEF, IT'S ANTHONY HOPKINS!

Dear TOM,
I have a question for you. In my game Flashback, there is no continuous music for each level. Just a bit of a tune. Is there something wrong with my game?
Anthony Hopkins, Ireland.

TOM: Uh no, Mr Hopkins, sir. Your game's perfectly alright. There are only brief sections of music in Flashback, so don't you worry. Thank you very much for writing, sir. I have to say, you don't seem half so stupid on TV. And I never thought you'd write a letter on pages torn from an exercise book either. Not that I think it's bad or anything. Oh please, don't slice my face off and eat it. Yeeps!

IT'S NOT FAIR!

Dear TOM,
Why, why, why, why, why, is the new Megadrive/ Mega-CD 2 going to cost the same as the original Megadrive/Mega-CD? I thought Sega had cut back on some of the more expensive items in the Mega-CD, such as the motorized CD tray, and streamlined the chips to make it more compact. If it can be bought in Japan for the equivalent of £60 (Megadrive) and £100 (Mega-CD) why can't it be similar over here, or at least a bit cheaper? Is it just because they know us lot will fork out hundreds of quid for the machines, or what? Loads of people would get the new Mega-CD if it were cheaper. I would. Surely that would be more sensible. What was the point of just changing the outer casing? Come on, Sega!
Andrew T, Emley, W Yorkshire.

TOM: Both the Megadrive 2 and the Mega-CD 2 are designed to be cheaper machines, and in Japan they are. When the British versions eventually come out, they will be sold for around the same price as their Japanese counterparts. The problem is that the Yen (Japanese currency) is so strong in relation to the Pound, that when the Japanese price for the machines is converted into a British equivalent, it doesn't come out at much less than the price for the original machines. So in fact, the machines are technically cheaper, it's just that because the value of the Pound has dropped at the same time the machine's prices have dropped, it ends up at the same price for us. Really, it's not Sega's fault, the state of the British Pound is to blame.

A TAD TROUBLED

Dear TOM,
I'm a tad troubled. "Let me help you. Tell me your worries." I hear you say. Well, it all started in early April, the day of the Mega-CD's release. Being the five-year owner of an Atari ST (RIP) I was looking for a newer machine. Needless to say, I was well impressed with the Mega-CD, and I got my dad to buy a Megadrive and started to save my pennies for a Mega-CD. I was very pleased with the Megadrive and I now have 16 games.
But now I hear about the Mega-CD 2. I think to myself, are Sega going to stop making the original model? I know that the new versions are compatible with the old ones, but they look terrible together.
Furthermore, I have a far greater worry. I was reading the news section of MegaTech 18 and I saw this new 32-bit Sega machine. Then I read Mean Machines Sega (sorry). They had a double page spread all about it. It's called the Saturn apparently and it sounds absolutely amazing. Running at 27 MHz and having a palette of 16.7 million colours, it tramples all over the Megadrive with a pair of size 14 Doc Martens. No cartridge slot either, it's completely CD based. So it looks like my Megadrive AND the Mega-CD I'll be having will both be redundant in December 1994 when the Saturn is released.
Please Tom, dearest pal, say it's not true. Tell me I'm not destined to the same fate as all these poor Master System owners. I don't think I could take it after having an Atari 'no games' ST. Get Mystic Matthew to alter the future or something. Ta.
Richard Worrall, Wednesbury, West Midlands.

TOM: Sega have already stopped making the original Mega-CD. Around 60,000 machines were shipped over here when the machine was officially released way back in April and when stocks of these run out, that's it! Gone forever. I agree that the new Mega-CD looks pretty gross with an original Megadrive, but if you want an old one



ISLAND OF THE STRANGE 2

Top funny man, Norman Wisdom, fill us in on the truth behind spooks.

Ooh-er! Ghosts. The souls of the dead. But why do they exist? Well, some return to avenge their own deaths. Others are trapped in limbo, forever to haunt the place where they die. There are even those that appear to give fateful warnings to the living. I once had this dog called Black Shuck. A beautiful creature he was, with one saucer-sized, cyclopic eye in his forehead. I decided to play a trick on a couple of friends. We went to a graveyard and I told them that the Phantom Hound would come. Sure enough, Shuck appeared, and with foam and fire dripping from his jaws he dismembered my screaming pals. I ran home, laughing at the way they had fallen for my gag. Then I saw him, Shuck. He had never left the house! What strange dog had really appeared that night? Who knows, but in fear I hid the bodies in the local quarry and they've never been found to this day. Spooky eh?





ISLAND OF THE STRANGE 3

What strange creatures live atop the Himalayan mountains? Actor, Harrison Ford tells us.

Yeh, Bong Thang, everyone. The Yeti, or Abominable Snowmen are a legendary race of man-like beasts that live in snowy wastes of Nepal. Covered in reddish-brown hair, these creatures are supposed to stand at around two metres when upright. Although no photos have ever been taken, their huge footprints have been found in the snow, and during the Second World War a number of sightings were made by escaped Polish POW's. An examination was even carried out on one by a Soviet army doctor. Rumour has it that the King of the Yetis, a Dave Lee Travis, has ventured into the human world. I asked Chewie about this, but he said that was rubbish. Dave Lee Travis was far more likely to be a Sasquatch, the North American relatives of the Yeti. These creatures are supposed to be hot fans of the radio pub-quiz, Treble Top. Although the reason why remains a mystery. Hmm.





ISLAND OF THE STRANGE 4

Is there life on other planets? Only one man can answer that – top astronomer, Arnold Shwarzenegger. What's the answer, Arnie?

Yes. Ha ha ha. Dat vos just a bit ov Austrian humour for you. Do you get it? Ov course, you do. But serious now, are dare aliens out dare? Creatures from anuder vurld, beyond our own? Plenty ov pictures have been taken off flying saucers. But are day real? Vell, let me tal you. Day are! I know, because I huv been taken up in vun ov dose space-ships. De creatures inside ver small and dey had big eyars un eyes. Just like goblins, dey vere! Dey told me dey vere from a star called Eta Cassiopeiae. I laughed und said, "You vant to say a big name, try saying Shfartsenegger. " Den dey gott all fidgetty and trew me out ov der ship. Luckily, I made it trew de atmosphere and landed un my feet unharmed. Remember, I am Arnee! Since den, I haff had visions. Now I know der Easter Island statues are alien idols of myself, der great got, Shfarzenegger. Dey are votching us, even now, from dayer hollow base inside der moon. You haff been vworned!



Tom's Island

you'll just have to get your skates on. As for the 32-bit Sega console, it's all true. But like you said, it's not out until December 1994 at the very earliest. It's really up to you whether you want to wait that long for a new system. If we all did that, we'd always be waiting for the next thing to come along and wouldn't ever buy anything. It's just progress. Even Mystic Matthew can't prevent that!

THE SECRET OF THE SATURN!

Dear TOM,
In issue 20 you wrote an article on the Sega Saturn. It seems to me that Sega have taken two 16-bit processors, linked them together to make a 32-bit console, and added the CD drive from the Mega-CD.
The reason I think this, is because you say the price of a Saturn is £500+. Now if you add the cost of two Megadrives with CD, the price would be £510, which is a similar price to the Saturn.
Be a good chap and print my letter and I'll keep buying MegaTech each month. Thank you.
Yours Megally,
Mark Kent, Langley, Berks.



TOM: Holy Toledo! So the Saturn is really just a load of Megadrives stuck together with a Mega-CD? Incredible! And you worked that out all by yourself, did you? Of course you did, I can tell. That's why it's such a load of drooling nonsense. Just you go back to playing your Megadrive. Oh sorry, I mean those two Master Systems you've sellotaped together.

LOOK EVERYONE - A MORON!

Dear TOM,
I think the Megadrive is so rubbish because the Barcode Battler is better. You could even watch 'The Bill' while playing the Barcode Battler. I think everybody who has a Megadrive should sell it and get a Barcode Battler. They are much better than the Megadrive.
PS. I got the address from a friend's mag.
Neil Williams, Malmesbury.



TOM: Oh please stop with your harsh words, I think I'm going to cry. You know, you're right, the Barcode Battler is just the best. It must be so cool when you go shopping with your mum. All those brilliant barcodes for you to scan. I bet your friends must be dead envious of you. Did I say friends? Well I mean other people. But don't worry, you don't need friends anyway. You've got your barcodes for company, right? Yeh, and you can watch The Bill at the same time. Ahahaha, stoppit. I must stop laughing at sad people. He he he.

EXTRA THICK FOR ME, PLEASE!

Dear TOM,
Just the other day I went to my local newsagents as usual, to purchase the latest MegaTech and I began to flick through some other Megadrive mags until I noticed one called 'Mega'. I looked through and to my surprise some of the reviews were by MegaTech's very own Paul Mellerick! Is it true that he also works for Mega as well as MegaTech? I hope it is not!
I also thought a good feature to put in your magazine would be a 'Top 100', which could be updated every month or so. It could replace your games guide. And what about a 'top 10 crap games'? Good eh?
In your CES show report I noticed a game called WWF Royal Rumble and as I'm a big fan of WWF I wondered, have you got any more info on this excellent-looking game? Thanks.
Gary Hague, Brinsworth, Rotherham.



TOM: Does it take any effort to be as completely stupid as you? Try looking in the front of the mag. See Paul's second name? Glancey. G-L-A-N-C-E-Y. Can you say that name? Go on give it a try. Okay now, rest, rest. I can smell the turds inside your head burning up with the effort.

HALF MAN, HALF LEMON, ALL FRUIT!

Dear TOM,
Did I hear right? Can it be true? It seems you have given me the best news I've heard since Match Day 2 on the Spectrum. What more could a humble Megadrive owner ask for. 'Barbie Super Model'. What's the World coming to? A future best-seller, undoubtedly.
As you usually start off your reply by saying 'I have a few answers' I might as well ask a few questions. So without further ado, here they are.
1. Will the 6-button joypad come in a special pack with Street Fighter 2, and if so how much will this pack cost?
2. Might the SNES game 'Super Soccer' be coming out for the Megadrive, and if so, when?
3. What are the MegaTech staff's views on the Maastricht Treaty?
4. Are there any future plans for a version of Jimmy White's Snooker on the Megadrive?
5. What is the meaning of life?
If you could find your way clear to answer these questions I would be mighty grateful.
PS. Remember this saying. "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me."...but a swift fist to your skull would. I bet you're scared now.
Sean Lemon, Dunmarry, Belfast.



TOM: Ah Sean, my old friend. You were doing so well there. You made a joke, asked some questions and then your bitter nature squeezed out of you. Your human disguise was peeled away and the twisted lemon interior was revealed. I'm sorry if I offended you before. I meant no harm. I truly believe that humans and citrus fruits can live on this planet together. Let me make amends and answer your questions. Juiced for you.
1. No. The six-button pad will come packaged with the new-look Megadrive. It will also be available seperately for around £14.99 at a squeeze. Heh.
2. Nope, never. But please don't get bitter. Ha ha.
3. The answer would take too long and we're a bit pipped for space. Pip? Oh ho ho!
4. Not that I've curd of. Heard of, I mean. Ahahaha!
5. To be picked from the tree, squeezed and put in a carton. Well in your case anyway. Hehehe!
You see, Sean, no need to get sour. Ha ha ha. Do you still want to pulp, ha ha ha, my skull? Or are you yellow? And oval. Bwa-ha-ha-ha!

LOST CAUSE!

Dear TOM,
I have lost the manual for Fatal Fury and I can't remember the moves. Please will you send me a complete list of the moves (including the special ones) as it's making the game impossible to play. I would be very grateful if you could.
Alastair Pursey, Ravenshead, Notts.



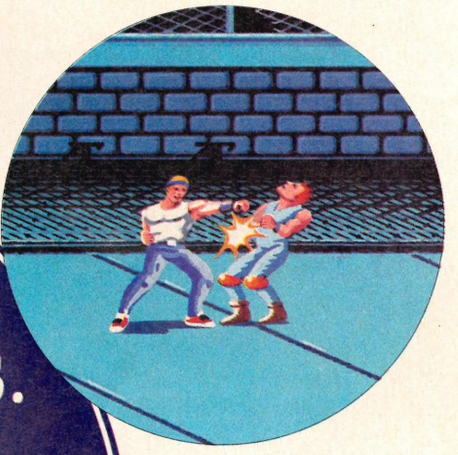
TOM: Oh dear. Lost your manual, eh? And you can't remember the moves? Ho ho, you must be pretty miserable. Okay, stop crying. You'll find all the special moves in issue 19 and try to learn them this time. It must be pretty hard reading the manual and playing the game. It isn't a Barcode Battler game you know.

BORING QUESTIONS

Dear TOM,
I would like to ask you a few questions on Street Fighter II CE for the Megadrive.
1. Is it true that the Street Fighter characters are really small?
2. Will you think this will be the top game of the year or will it be Mortal Kombat?
3. I'm thinking about getting Street Fighter II, but do you think it is worth it? Because £60 is a lot of money.
4. How haven't you reviewed this game yet, or have you, if you have what issue?
PS. I think your mag is the best out of all the others.
Alan Thoirs, Stirling, Scotland.

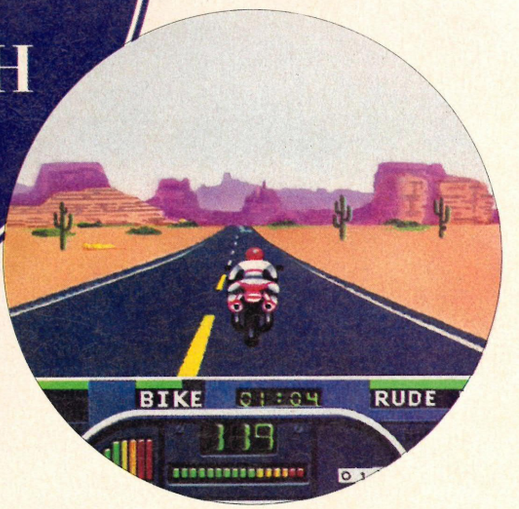
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Tom's Island

TOM: Our mag is the best out of all the others. What kind of a sentence is that? Who are you, Dr Kris Kross or something? You don't come here with your inside-out language, mister. Well anyway, thanks Doc, your questions are more interesting than nobody elses.

1. Yeh, they have to be, so you can fit their little bodies inside the TV. Fnurk, just fooling. No, they're the right size, but they look even bigger on a Japanese NTSC Megadrive.
2. I will not think it will be Mortal Kombat. Perhaps I will not think it will be Streetfighter 2 either. Maybe I will think it will be something else. We will see.
3. It depends. If you like Streetfighter 2, then definitely. Megadrive Streetfighter 2 is going to be brilliant!
4. We haven't, have we? No we have not. How have we not? I haven't know how. Oh yeh I have. It haven't come out yet, have it? Well, when it have, then we have review it.

See you later, Dr Kris Kross. Speaking with you, nice, it has been. Yes.

DUTCH MAGS!

Dear TOM,
I'm a reader of your mag and it's real great.
All Dutch mags aren't as good as mags like MegaTech and CVG. They haven't got the sense of humour you Englishmen have.
I have got a few questions for you.
1. How can you use your CDX with an import copy of Silpheed if you have to use a plug-in co-processor?
2. Is there going to be a 2 Unlimited Make My Video CD?
3. In a Dutch mag, I was reading a letter of a boy who said he already knew two names of Sonic 4. Viking Berserker and Ransacked Forest. Is this true? I don't believe him.
4. In almost every issue of your mag, that guy Ed Lomas appears. How many games does he have and what does he do for a living?
And final, aren't you lonely on your island? And who is the strongest man of the MegaTech Crew?
Nando Van Kleeff, Vlaardingen, The Netherlands.



TOM: Strongest man in MegaTech? Well, Mark Holmes fights grizzly bears before breakfast and Jeff can fillet a person with just his teeth, but by far the most powerful member of the MegaTech crew is Mystic Matthew. The force is strong with him and he can balance up to five melons in mid-air with just a thought. Anyway.

1. The plug-in co-processor doesn't exist. We got it wrong. Silpheed is CD only.
2. 2 Unlimited: Make My Video. Ho ho ho. And there's you saying that you Dutch folk don't have a good sense of humour. Hahaha!
3. Of course he's lying. But again, that crazy Dutch sense of humour comes shining through. Viking Berserker, chortle, nice one!
4. He just happens to pull together some really good tips every month. That's why he's always in the mag.

PUT ME OUT OF MY MISERY!

Dear TOM,
I have got some copies of your magazines. I like reading them and looking at the pictures.
I am writing to you because I am having difficulty at some of my computer games.
I would like to know if you could get infinite lives on Space Harrier on the Master System Two.
So please, please, please, write back.
Alex Oliver, age 12, North Leigh, Witney.



TOM: Oh Alex, I'm sorry. We're a Megadrive-only mag. We don't do tips for the Master System. Or the Oric. Or the Dragon 32 either. Perhaps Yellow Pages can help you. They're not just here for the nasty things in life. Please keep looking at our pictures though. They'll remind you of how good your Master System is. Ha ha ha!

JOHN MADDEN TALKS BACK!



He's a lump of lard, shaped into human form, with currants for eyes and a grapefruit for a mouth. Yep, it's top sports commentator and king of the Orang-utans, John Madden, here again with more of his stale shirts and yellow pants. Today's topic – Body Hair.

Aloha, Sports Fans. Look, I know that body hair is a sign of virility. And there's nothing wrong with it, in moderation. But it really gets on my tits when there's too much of the stuff. It really does. All over my tits, in fact. Down onto my quivering beach-ball of a belly, over my water-retentive shoulders and even covering my legs like a pair of carpet-trousers. What's more, it all looks just like my head hair. Thick, matted wisps of white hair with the ocassional fish skeleton sticking out of it, or a bit of old fruit skin, caught in the strands, rotting away and letting off a right stench. Ungh, it also holds in all the rough crumbs from my lunchtime crusty baps and they really scratch me up rotten. Still, it helps soak up all the sweat I build up when I'm on the toilet. Yup, I sure do perspire when I'm on the throne.

Anyway, I would complain about all the dandruff too, but it's not a problem anymore, because the lice eat all the dead skin. God only knows how I got them, but they're huge, like small mice. And they're even bigger after a feed. Bloated and red with a stomach-full of my skin flakes. I can't sleep at night either, cos they rub the hairs on their legs together and make mating clicks. And now it's really serious. This morning, I went to the loo and found young John Madden Jnr motionless on the floor. I gave him a small kick and he broke open, spewing lice all over the floor. To my horror, he had used one of my towels. That's no way for a Madden to go. Oh well, I hope this ointment the doc gave me works. Catch you later, dudes.

APOLOGY ISLAND

Oh by the way. Last month I referred to Tom Glennister as the Editor of Sonic the Comic. He is in fact the Ad Manager. I apologise humbly to Paul Burton, the real Editor.

HASTA LA VISTA, BABY



CHUCK ROCK II
SON OF CHUCK









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

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MEGADRIVE REVIEW



MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: KONAMI



8 M-BIT

STYLE



SHOOT 'EM UP

PRICE £44.99

PLAYERS 1-2

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

NOV 1993



Dead men tell no tales or do they? MegaTech's psychic investigator, TOM GUISE, hopes he doesn't have to find out for himself.

ZOMBIES

Dear readers, these are probably the last words I will ever write. I only pray that this message reaches you before it is too late, for I have made a terrible discovery. Aliens are on Earth. They have assumed human form. It's true and that's not all. The dead have risen from their graves. Zombie flesh-eaters and ancient Egyptian mummies now walk amongst the living. But there's even worse to come. HE has returned. The Prince of Darkness himself, Dracula. Every unholy creature imaginable has awakened on this most sinister Halloween, all with one foul purpose, to feast on the still-warm flesh of my neighbours. Your neighbours too. Everybody's neighbours! It's all the dreaded handiwork of the latest game from Konami, Zombies Ate My Neighbours. So run, get away before it's too late. Don't bother to call the police, they're probably in league with the monsters. And just remember, everyone's a neighbour to someone, even YOU! Now, where did I put my crucifix? Oh yeh, it's right under that paw. Paw? Scream!

FIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS

Rescuing your neighbours from the monsters is easier said than done, especially since it's sometimes hard to tell which are which. Yep, Zombies features some of the most obnoxious neighbours you're ever likely to meet. Even the monsters look cuter. Decide for yourself.



▲ **Axe-wielding dolly water-pistolled in supermarket – shock horror!**



THEY'RE COMING!

Zombies Ate My Neighbours. The name says it all really. Yep, it's horror-time, surface-dwellers. Welcome to small-town America, home of the typical middle-class American family. Sunny, suburban and safe, nothing strange ever happens here. At least, not until today. Who knows what went wrong? Perhaps the neighbourhood was built on an ancient Red Indian burial ground. Or maybe a child-murderer was burnt to death in the disused power-station nearby. What about that strange meteor shower last night? Well, whatever the reason, only thing is certain. Nobody is safe from the zombie invasion. The nightmare has begun!

BE AFRAID. BE VERY AFRAID!

Enter Our heroes for tonight's chilling episode – two teenagers. The only people who know about the terror that grips the town. Playing as either a boy in 3D specs or a girl in a baseball cap (or both in two-player mode) the aim of the game is simple. To rescue the neighbours from a fate worse than death – undeath! Taking on a sort of plan-view approach, the game starts in your average American neighbourhood just as the residents of the local graveyard awaken from their eternal slumber. And boy have they got voracious appetites. On the menu tonight – soul!

It's a race against time as our heroes have to reach each unsuspecting neighbour before the zombies do. There are eight neighbours to rescue on the first level and once they have all been accounted for, either by the living or the dead, the exit to the next level is revealed.

BACK, FOUL BEAST, BACK!

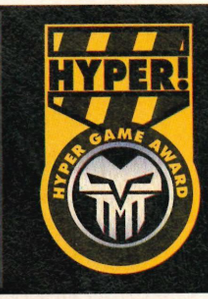
Although the quest for good begins in your quiet American town, the trail soon leads further afield. Later levels see the war with the forces of evil taken to the local shopping mall, a desert island, an ancient Egyptian tomb and even a gothic castle.

Unfortunately, each of these new levels harbour their own brand of ghastly creatures. Mummies stalk the pyramids, vampires live in the castle and in the shopping mall, axe-wielding dollies break out of their boxes.

The further into the game you go, the more horrendous the nightmare. Forty-foot babies, creatures from the Black Lagoon, even Martian pod-people who look just like you, stalk the unsuspecting neighbours. Worse still, monsters from previous levels pop up in the later levels. This means you can get zombies, mummies, pod-people and forty-foot kids all in ONE level. Aargh!

ATE MY NEIGHBORS





FIENDS



ZOMBIES
Woken from their eternal slumber only to find that a housing estate now covers their plot, they stop only to comb the worms from their hair before seeking revenge.



MUMMIES
Who dares trespass in the tomb of King Tut? Mummy and the Band-Aid brigade decide to find out and all who stand in their way will become permanent residents. Ha ha ha!



POD-PEOPLE
"You, you look just like...me!" Yes, after a strange meteorite shower, mysterious pods landed in people's backyards. Now they intend to take over the neighbourhood!



DEATH DOLLS
Definitely not the ideal Christmas present, these axe-wielding dollies have come to life, seeking retribution on little kids. Only Barbie and Ken can save the day.



CHAINSAW KILLER
"Those branches need trimming, Martha, and so do YOU!" Yes, the mind-controlling powers of a strange new brand of chainsaw has sent the town's gardeners into a blood frenzy.

NEIGHBOURS



FAT AMERICAN TOURISTS
It was just supposed to be a quiet weekend break for John Madden and his wife. Little did he know that he was destined to join the ranks of the undead!



ARCHAEOLOGISTS
They had uncovered the lost tomb of Mum-Rah. Fame and riches would be theirs, but they had not heeded the curse. What use is money to the dead?



CHEERLEADERS
An all-night party? Just the thing for a bevvy of teenage lovelies to attend, but tonight there were going to be gatecrashers... from Hell!



SOLDIERS
Ever since that peculiar meteorite had landed in the field, the Army had cordoned off the area. Watching the crater, they failed to see the shadow rise up behind them!



DOGGIES
They had escaped from the pound and hoped to find their master. Why, could this be him? He certainly smells of Chum. But he never used to bite their heads. Yap!

YOU CANNOT KILL WHAT DOES NOT LIVE!

Fortunately our heroes are not helpless against the creatures of darkness. They start the game armed with the ultimate exorcist's sidearm, a water pistol. One short squirt of holy water is guaranteed to get rid of even the most unholy zombie.

Alas, not all the undead are as easy to kill as your average zombie, some of the tougher monsters require a stronger dose of exorcism.

By searching through trash-cans, cupboards, under sand-dunes or in ancient pots, more powerful weaponry can be uncovered. Knives and forks, plates, even fire extinguishers can be used against the forces of darkness. Pop into the grocery section of the supermarket to find some holy tomatoes, or enter the large freeze lockers out the back to collect some anti-zombie lollies. Of course, these weapons aren't all that effective. Far better to use some gas canisters, the rocket launcher or best of all, the crucifix. Nothing better for getting rid of unwanted demons than the raw power of God!

However, some weapons are designed for a specific problem. For instance, on later levels there are strange mushrooms that spread across the ground from a mysterious meteorite crater. Alien mushrooms! Lethal to the touch! Introducing- the holy lawnmower. Strimming away with this garden appliance soon clears the path. Funnily enough, it's also quite effective against mummies too.

GET OUT!

Terrified yet? Well don't be, because Zombies isn't scary at all. It's actually completely hilarious. Picture your favourite scene from a late-night 1950s B-movie and you're bound to find it in this game in one form or another. There are chainsaw maniacs, swamp-things, psycho dollies, even the Blob and the whole spooky atmosphere is captured just perfectly. There are so many neat touches.

On the second level, when the sun goes down, the street-lamps come on, looking just like the famous street-lamp from the Exorcist. Fire a grenade at one of the axe-wielding dollies and they catch fire, racing around screaming manically. On Dr Tongue's Castle of Terror, if you find Dr Tongue, he escapes by drinking a teleport serum and then his 'creation' frees itself from its bonds. Even little things, like the way the title for each level crashes into view or blood runs down the screen when you die, all add to the feel of the game. Its chilling.

COULD YOU LOVE THIS?

Graphically, this game is just tops. As you'd expect from Konami, they've produced something that just



▲ **Dr Tongue's creation can give you a shock!**



▲ **Mowing up the dagerous alien mushrooms.**

doesn't look like a Megadrive game. It looks better. Gorgeous full-colour backdrops really capture the setting of each level. Creepy Egyptian tombs, strangely empty shopping malls, the idyllic suburbs, everything looks just spot-on.

Likewise, the sprites look and animate brilliantly. The main characters are great, especially when using the rocket launcher which kicks back, or jumping on the trampoline, where they actually get closer to the screen. The baddies are smart too: the zombies staggering around, complete with gormless expressions, the mummies clambering out of their tombs, or the dollies hacking their way out of their packaging. Best of all are the pod-people who grow out of the ground. It's extra-spooky being chased by a legion of yourselves.

The only naff sprites are the neighbours who don't seem to do much at all. Occasionally a soldier might start sweating when in danger, or a cheer-leader sometimes waves her pom-poms in distress when you're nearby, but in general, they all look very two-dimensional. The best one is the barbecue neighbour who's actually cooking some snags on the grill. If only he knew of the terror that is to come.

DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING?

Of course, no good horror flick is complete without a chilling soundtrack, and Zombies Ate My Neighbours is no exception. Each level has it's own special creepy tune, from the John Carpenter-esque music that accompanies levels like Weird Kids On The Block, to the more haunting church-organ accompaniment on Dr Tongue's Castle level. They all sound superb, especially the Hedgemaze Massacre tune which is particularly ominous. The sound effects are great too. Sarcophagus doors creak open, forty-foot baby's feet crash onto the ground and pod-people rise from the soil with a sort of moist slurp. Best of all, though, is the sound of chainsaws hacking through hedges. If ever there was a sound to make you run for the hills, it's that one.

RUN! SAVE YOURSELVES!

Of course, underneath all the flash graphics and sound, Zombies is still just a shoot 'em up, similar in most respects to that ancient blaster, Gauntlet. However, the whole comedy-horror element really makes it that much more fun. Racing to save the neighbours before it's too late adds that thrill to game. It really chills your blood when one of the neighbours is claimed in an off-screen death and their blood-curdling scream echoes out. Even worse, when you reach them too late and you see their soul leave the body. "If only I'd been quicker, the guy next door might have seen tomorrow," you'll say to yourself, shaking your head, before realising that you're surrounded by mummies and all you've got to throw at them are some knives and forks. Nooo!

KILL ME! KILL ME!

There are over fifty-five levels to Zombies. Admittedly, there are only around eight different backdrops and the gameplay is very samey throughout, but it's just so challenging. The first couple of levels are easy, but then it starts getting trickier. Trying to find that last neighbour whilst chainsaw-wielding maniacs chase you around a maze, hacking through the walls to get at you, really adds to the thrill. And it takes quite a bit of thought and effort to get through the later levels. Each one is so well designed. Sometimes there's only one neighbour to get, but they're locked behind a door and you have to find the key. Others just put all the neighbours in view, but drench the screen in monsters. And of course all the humorous touches keep the game fun even when you're stuck on a bit.

In one-player mode it's an excellent laugh, but play it with a friend and it's a riot. Running around, shooting at baddies, screaming at your partner to open the door, because they've go the key and you're surrounded by beasties. This is definitely one of the better two-player games to surface recently.



YOUR MOTHER SEWS SOCKS THAT SMELL!

Throughout the game there are some excellent parodies of classic horror movies. Here's a familiar selection



EVENING OF THE UNDEAD!
The lesser known sequel to that George A Romero classic, Night Of The Living Dead, perhaps?

I FEEL STRANGELY DIFFERENT

Apart from weapons, there are other items that our trusty undead exterminators can make use of. First aid kits replenish life force, whereas sneakers allow them to race around at an incredible rate of knots. Other items include miniature Golden Arks which destroy everything on screen, laughing inflatable clowns that act as decoys, attracting the undead to attack them instead, and serums. Each of these strange potions has a different desired effect. Some even turn you into a giant purple monster. Crikey!



▲ Open the Golden Ark to destoy all monsters, smart-bomb style.



▲ Bring on the clown decoys!







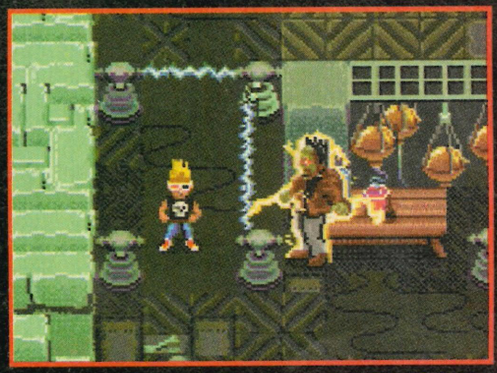
▲ That's a monster of a brew!



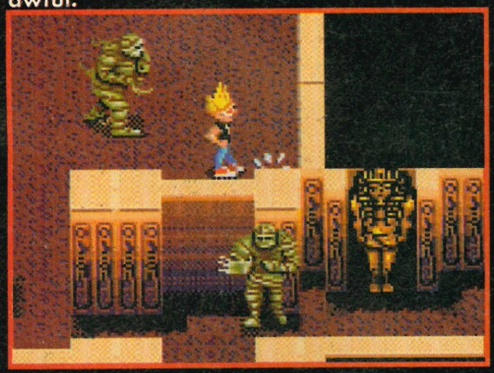
TERROR OF THE TITANIC TODDLER!
Better known as Honey, I Blew Up The Kid. A horror film because it's so horribly awful.



WEIRD KIDS ON THE BLOCK!
A passing resemblance to that cult classic, Revenge Of The Body-Snatchers.



DR TONGUE'S CASTLE OF TERROR!
Dr Tongue has constructed a monster from body-parts and brought it to life with lightning. Frankenstein? Nah!



PYRAMID OF FEAR
There's absolutely no way that this level could possibly be based on The Mummy.



HEDGEMAZE MAYHEM
Chainsaw-weilding psychopaths in hockey masks? Surely no relation to the Texas Chainsaw Massacre?

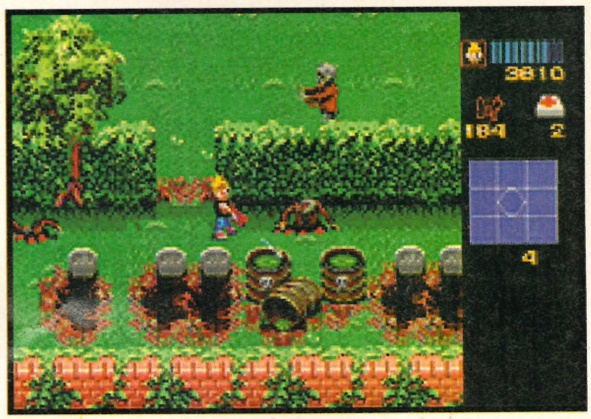


▲ Monsters leap out of dustbins!

DARE YOU WALK THESE STAIRS AGAIN?

Yep, Zombies Ate My Neighbours is a real hit. Great-looking, excellent sounding, fun, challenging, tons of levels and with a great two-player mode, it's bound to become a classic. I guarantee you'll love this game. It's so addictive, it's suspicious. Perhaps it's some Silver Shamrock cartridge that everyone will buy and then on Halloween their brains will turn into worms or something. Who knows, but I reckon it's well worth the risk.





▲ Zombies ooze out of radioactive cannisters...



▲ ... and dig themselves out of the graveyard.

THE SECOND OPINION



Julian Rignall

Featuring a fantastic assortment of B-movie monsters, great graphics and sound, a wonderful sense of humour and beautifully-crafted gameplay, this highly original title is one of the best games I've ever seen on the Megadrive. It's just so addictive! The difficulty level is perfectly balanced – not hard enough to be completely frustrating, but certainly challenging enough to regularly stop you in your tracks with the feeling that it'll only take another go to get to the next level. And there's always a real desire to progress – Zombies continually comes up with surprises with a stunning variety of different screens. Ranging from shopping malls and playing fields to castles and hedge mazes, you really want to see what's going to happen next. I really can't praise this game highly enough. With 55 massive levels and even a simultaneous two-player mode, it's an essential purchase.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 82%
Highly polished feel, but no intro and very poor options.

GRAPHICS 90%
Excellent backdrops, great sprites. Neighbours are a bit on the poor side.

SOUND 91%
Excellent atmospheric tunes, great spot effects. Very spooky.

SHORT TERM PLAY 92%
Instantly playable, highly addictive. Great fun.

LONG TERM PLAY 90%
Challenging, tons of levels. Great two-player option.

OVERALL 90
Zombies is an excellent horror-parody shoot 'em up. A classic game and no mistake.

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: SEGA

SEGA

8-MEG

STYLE

PUZZLE

PRICE IMPORT

PLAYERS 1-2

SKILL SETTINGS 4

RELEASE DATE

OUT NOW

ALTERNATIVELY

85

KLAX
by TENGEN
PRICE: £34.99
Highly successful coin-op puzzle game in which coloured tiles have to be guided off a conveyor belt to make patterns. Similar to Puyo Puyo, with its chain reaction system.

THANKS TO...
The Video Games Centre in Bournmouth for being the first people to find a copy of Puyo Puyo and loaning it to us. If you're interested in purchasing the game call them on (0202) 527314



What's this? A game about multi-coloured beans? MegaTech's highly-respected beanologist, TOM GUISE, grabs his toast and investigates...

PUYO P

Puyo Puyo. What kind of a name for a game is that? It doesn't tell you a thing. Why can't games have decent names like they did in the old days? Names that tell you something about the game. Like Herzog Zwei or Gynoug. But Puyo Puyo, that's just plain silly. Ah, but you see, that's because it's Japanese. If you could speak Japanese you'd know that the term Puyo Puyo does in fact mean 'puzzle game where small coloured blobs with eyes fall down the screen'. So there you go. Isn't it incredible how they get all that expression from just two short words, one of which is the same as the other. Amazing!

THE PUYO PUYO MYSTERY

Actually I've been waiting patiently for months to get hold of a copy of Puyo Puyo. I first saw pictures of it in a Japanese magazine when it was released over there, way back around Christmas, but at the time I thought it looked like just another Columns clone. Then a strange thing happened. It went to straight to the top of the Japanese games charts and stayed there! Every month I'd check out the top ten games and there it would be – Puyo Puyo at number one. This game had to be something special. The thing was, no importers seemed to know anything about it. That is until now, and here it is – Puyo Puyo.

JELLY BEANS

At first Puyo Puyo IS very similar to Columns or Tetris or any of those other shape-dropping puzzle games. Pairs of coloured blobs, called puyo, fall down the screen, piling up at the bottom. Should the pile reach the top of the screen, the game is over. However, the player can rotate the puyo and guide them down, sticking puyos of the same colour together. Should four or more identically-coloured puyos join together, they vanish and all the puyos above trickle down to fill the gap. So far, so Columns-like.

However, the big difference comes when playing against an opponent (either the computer or a human player). Should a string of four puyos be made, a hard translucent blob is sent over to the opponents screen. This bad puyo cannot be joined with other puyos and the only way to get rid of it is to make a puyo-line adjacent to the hard one, which vanishes with the others. By making longer strings of identically-coloured puyos, more hard beads can be sent onto your opponents screen. Five puyos sends two hard blobs, six puyos send three hard blobs, eight send five hard blobs and so on.

Puyo Puyo sure is one tough game to master, but not for seasoned pro's like the MegaTech team. Here's a short demonstration of how to make a winning Puyo Attack.



▲ **1. Watch the pair of yellow puyos in the centre of the screen. They'll join with the two groups of yellows at the bottom.**

CHAIN REACTION

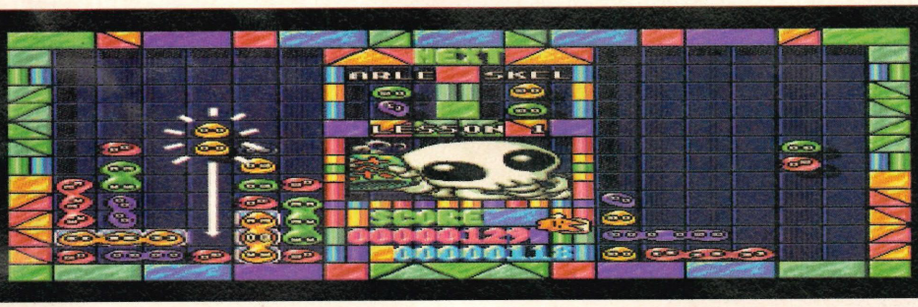
Now here comes the juicy bit. As puyos trickle down to fill the space made by their vanished companions, they too can join with blobs of their own colour and vanish, leaving space for more blobs, which in turn can join which their respective blobs and vanish too. In effect, it's a Puyo Puyo chain reaction! In single player mode, this chain reaction multiplies the score with each collection of puyos made and massive scores can be acquired, similar to the scoring method used in Klax.

In two-player mode the chain reaction multiplies the number of hard blobs that are sent to the opponents' screen. The longer the chain, the more terrible the attack, until large hard blocks (worth one line of translucent puyo) wait at the top of your opponent's screen, ready to drop. You know you're onto a winner when a huge yellowed-eyed red rock sits above your opponent's screen. These are worth five lines of bad puyo, and when they drop onto the screen the result is catastrophic. Any more than one red rock and you can kiss goodbye to winning, because there just isn't room left at the top of the screen to save yourself.

TUTTI FRUTTIES

Of course, this makes for some mind-bending gameplay. Although it's easy to just make tidy sets of four, that isn't going to get rid of your opponent. And they could drop loads of beads onto your screen unless you do it to them first. But then, in order to make a chain reaction, you've got to pile your blobs quite high. That's a risk, especially if they make a chain whilst you're vulnerably high. It's edge-of-the-seat stuff and really gets your mind ticking away as you try to work out how to build up a good chain reaction. Disappointing as it is finding your chain reaction didn't work properly, it's even worse when the other player drops hard beads all over your lovely plans, spoiling everything! But the *satisfaction* you feel when you make a good chain – ha ha, now that's really something.

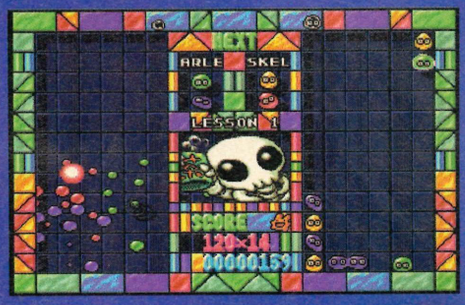
UYO



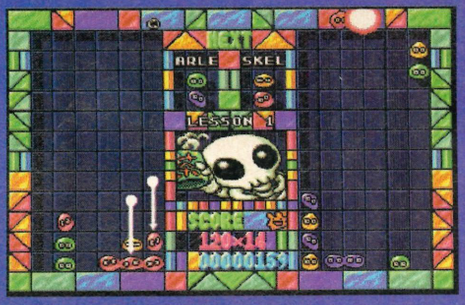
HYPER! HYPER GAME AWARD



▲ 2. They join, vanishing. All the other puyos slide down. The red and purple ones on the left and the green ones on the right will join...



▲ 3. ...vanishing! And sending more bad puyos to wait at the top of the other player's screen.



▲ 4. Now the remaining red ones on the right fall in place to make another puyo-line.



▲ 5. 'Cantana!' They vanish too, sending a final beam of bad puyos across the screen.



▲ 6. The calm before the storm. The bad puyos wait patiently until Player Two has dropped their puyos...



▲ 7. ... before a ton of hard puyos rain onto the screen. Player Two can do nothing but weep.

TIMED SEQUENCE

DURATION: 10 SEC.

A REAL BEAN FEAST

Now you might think there isn't much they could do to make a puzzle game about coloured beans particularly attractive. Wrong. Puyo Puyo is surprisingly atmospheric. Each of the computer opponents is a bizarre character with its own unique playing strategies. There's a fish-man, a scorpion-tailed dwarf, an angel and even a baby with one large foot for its lower body. Throughout the match these characters make facial expressions, depending on how they're doing. For instance, the fish-man chuckles when he's winning or shivers in fear if he's losing, shrivelling up when he's lost. Tears actually well up in the one-footed baby's eyes if he's in trouble. Even the puyo blobs wobble individually. It's all creates a very jolly atmosphere.

TOTALLY BEANO

Puyo Puyo is great. Admitedly, it is very similar to Columns, but the Puyo-attack element adds a real edge to the gameplay. Learning to make chain-reactions will take you ages to master and you never lose that horrible gut-feeling when your opponent sends a big Puyo-attack your way. Playing in one-player mode is just a tough reflex test, but pit your wits against the computer opponents or a real player and it's totally addictive fun. You can guarantee this is one game you'll battle your friends on for ages. This is definitely the best puzzle game on the Megadrive, and for two-player fun it's even better than Tetris too. Get it!

TEST YOUR JOYPAD

One neat feature of Puyo Puyo is a joypad Input Test . Selectable on the options screen, this actually allows you to check whether all the buttons on your joypad are working correctly, so there are no more of those 'joypad doesn't work properly' blues. Especially important for playing a game like Puyo Puyo, it's also useful if you think your joypads are playing up on other games too. Now you can find out if it's the pads or the game that's at fault!



BAD BEANS !

Unfortunately, Puyo Puyo will never be released officially over here, but don't fret because Dr Robotnik's Mean Bean Machine will. Yes, it's exactly the same game, but starring Dr Robotnik and his merry band of Badniks. The plot of the game remains a mystery, as does the fate of Puyo's original characters. Will it star the baby with one foot? Find out when the game is released this December.

THE SECOND OPINION

JULIAN RIGNALL

My first reaction to this was one of apathy – another ruddy Columns clone. But one should never judge a book by its cover, and further play proved this to be an adage to which every reviewer should adhere. Underneath that seemingly cute, but dull exterior lies an immensely enjoyable and highly addictive arcade puzzle game. It requires fast, logical thinking to plan ahead, and on later levels you need swift reflexes to survive. The simultaneous two-player option is where the game really excels - especially when it comes to giving Tom a severe caning. One-player is tough and challenging, but I think long-term appeal is questionable due to the fact that the game is always basically the same sort of thing. If you're a silver-fingered, quick thinker, this meld of arcade and puzzle action is definitely well worth a look - particularly if you often have a second player around to engage in head-to-head battle. But if you're a thicky with digits of lead, stick to mainstream stuff.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 92%
Pretty intro & intermission screens. Options include joypad test!

GRAPHICS 86%
Mainly coloured blobs, but a lot of endearing animated characters.

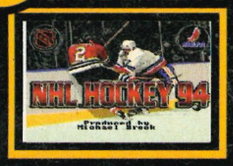
SOUND 84%
Some smart tunes, good spot-effects and a some fine quality speech.

SHORT TERM PLAY 91%
Instantly playable. Highly addictive. Great fun. Hazaar!

LONG TERM PLAY 90%
A tough game to master and infinite two-player enjoyment.

OVERALL 91
Puyo Puyo is the best puzzle game around for the Megadrive and one of the best two-player games too.

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: EA

EA SPORTS ELECTRONIC ARTS

8-MEG

STYLE

SPORT

PRICE £44.99

PLAYERS 1-4

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

OCT 1993

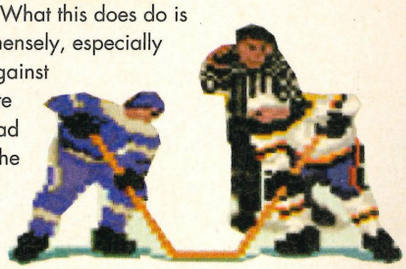
MARK PATTERSON hits the ice, cruisin' for a bruisin', in EA's latest update of their classic ice hockey game, but fails miserably to pick a fight with the new breed of non-violent, padded-up pacificists of the North American National Hockey League. Could this be the start of the Moral Majority backlash?

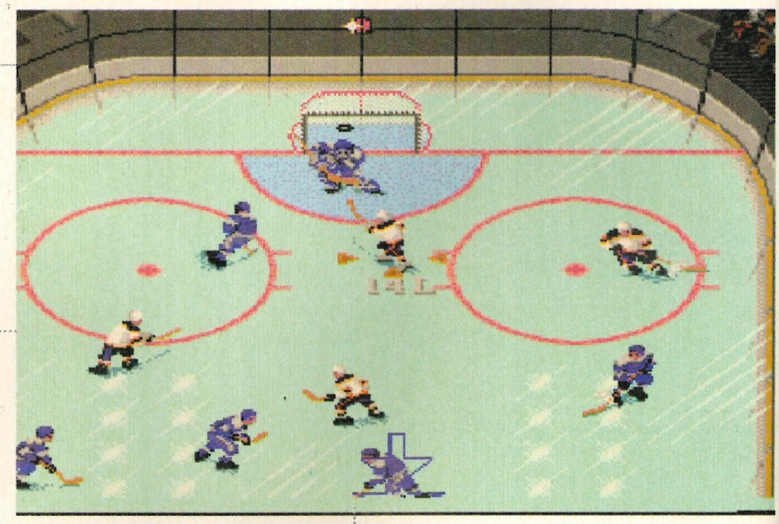
NHLPA

Look carefully at these pictures – look familiar, do they? Perhaps the name rings a few bells? Perhaps you've mysteriously stepped into another dimension where all the games look the same, like that episode of the Twilight Zone where all the people where identical. Or perhaps this is another re-hash from a software house desperately struggling to improve on their best ideas.

A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

NHLPA '94 is the official game of the North American National Hockey League, and as such features all the star players. This fact is played up to an annoying level, with more statistics than you can possibly digest, digitised cameos of the stars and top hockey pundit Ron Barr (don't worry, I thought "Who?" as well) giving his opinions on the make-up of the teams. This feature isn't quite as pointless as it first seems. Certain players have hot and cold streaks, and these are the guys you want – or don't want, as the case may be – in your side. What this does do is complicated things immensely, especially when you're playing against the Megadrive. I'm quite happy to plug my joypad in and go full welly at the machine – I don't need all this faffing around with squad members.





▲ The new one-timer shots make unstoppable volleys possible.



▲ The excellent replay mode in action.



▲ How come that Wayne Gretsky gets into every single ice hockey game?

PUCK OFF

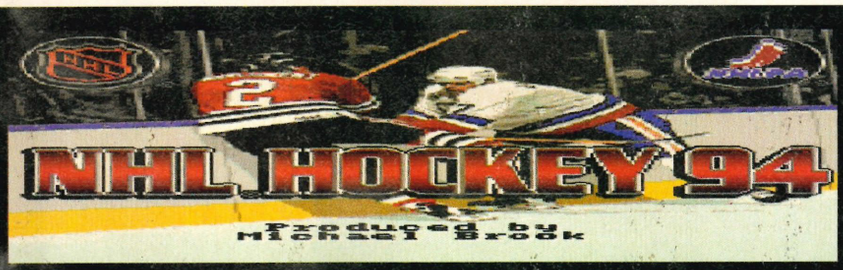
Once you get going, you can compete in league matches, tournaments and one-on-one games. The beauty of this title, like its predecessors, is that the controls are extremely easy to get to grips with, but the game itself demands skill by the truckload.

Because the players are on skates, they can't just turn around, so the trick is to make the best of speed and position to get them behind the puck. It sounds very complicated, but once you've got the knack you'll be able to wipe out lesser opponents with the minimum of effort. Because the goals are so small, timing is also all-important. If you hit a shot too early, it'll drift lazily to the keeper, while a perfectly hit slap-short will result in a real net-buster.

FOUR-WAY PLAY

The main feature, and EA's biggest selling point of this game, is its compatibility with EA's new four-player adaptor, the Four-Way Play. This is going to be the first official release to use it, with John Madden '94 following close behind. Providing you've got the cash for this widget and couple of extra joypads, you and up to three mates can go two-on-two, or two against one if you find one of your buddies offensive, and happily thrash the pants off each other in a non-violent manner. That's right, I said non-violent. Surprised? Read the next paragraph and find out more.

'94



HYPER! HYPER GAME AWARD

SCRAPS SCRAPPED

For some mind-bogglingly inexplicable reason, EA have chosen to remove the fight scenes from this version of the game. There can be no good reason for this. They weren't particularly violent, especially when compared to likes of Mortal Kombat, and it's almost odds-on you'll see a ruck in a real game of ice hockey. They where hardly realistic enough to incite kids to take to the streets in face masks and pads to smack seven bells out of each other.

Although it wasn't a major feature of the game, it still made a nice break in the action. It really was a mistake to remove it. Another feature missing is the blood which accompanies serious injuries – it was utterly unecessary, but a nice touch all the same.

HOT SHOTS

A few new shots have been added to your arsenal, the most notable of which are 'one timers'. These have been added mainly to spice-up the two-player game, although they're just as easy to execute in single-player mode.

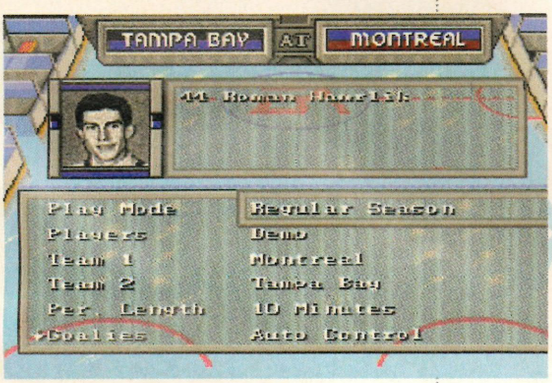
They take split-second timing to get right. First you have to pass to a player who's got a reasonable line on goal, and the second the puck makes contact with their stick you need to press C. Get it right and the result is an awesome shot which will blast past the goalie, or at least leave him with a nasty headache.



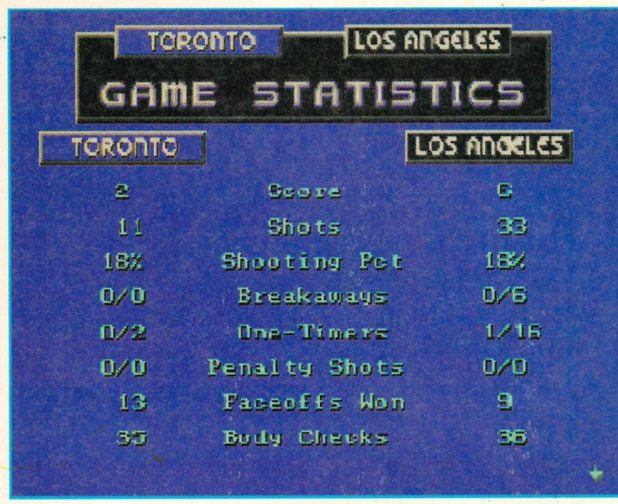
▲ **The familiar face-off screen is still in there, complete with close-up of Mr Stripey the referee.**

CONTROLLABLE KEEPERS

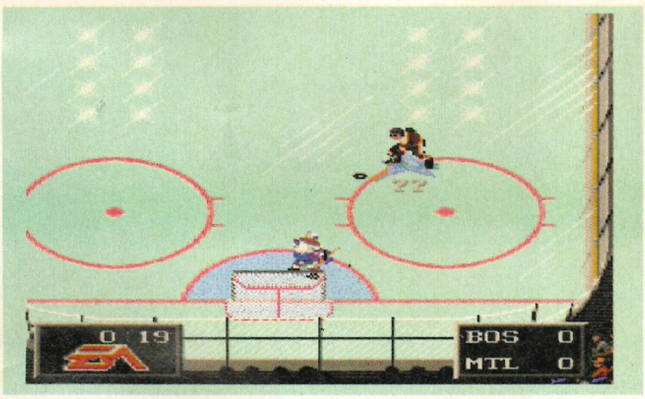
The goalkeepers have also undergone a minor revamp. For one thing, you can now control them, although this extra defensive burden is too much to cope with and you'll end up leaking goals like Oldham Athletic on a bad day. Instead, it's best to leave the 'keepers on computer control, which isn't a bad thing as they're a lot better than before. The only time good goalkeeping skills come in handy is for the new penalty shoot outs. These occur when a match is drawn, and basically pit one man against the goalie with 15 seconds to score. The first team to miss loses.



▲ **The game features individual payer cards and all the stats the statoholic could ever wish for.**



YANKEE DOODLE DANDY



▲ **Draw a match and it's penalty shoot-out time!**

With its glaring omissions and sporadic new features, NHLPA seems very much geared towards the American market. A lot more could have been done instead of some of the more pointless additions. For example, who really needs 72 different pieces of organ music? Not me. I'd like to have seen a greater variety of shots, possibly a larger court and certainly beefier sound effects.

I'm really stuck between a rock and a hard place with this game. For one thing, it's not as good as NHLPA '93, despite having all those lovely player statistics, but on the other hand, it is four-player. If you've got the people and the equipment, the multi-player game is excellent, especially with the new one-timer shots. If you've already got '93, this is a bit of con, even with the new features, and if you haven't got '93 this particular version is only worth buying if you're intent on getting the lads round for a three or four-player game. Personally, the previous game holds more attraction, and I just hope that Electronic Arts can be bothered to actually make some real changes to the inevitable sequel to NHLPA '94.

WHAT? NO FISTICUFFS? BOO!

TIMED SEQUENCE
DURATION: 2 SEC.



▲ Having skated around the back of the goal, Toronto's Bobby Moosehead tries to keep the pressure on the Los Angeles goal by passing the puck around the boards towards his team-mate Pierre LaRouche.



▲ Turning on a sixpence, Pierre moves towards the path of the puck, but so does one of his burly, well-padded opponents. Oh no! It's notorious clogger Vince 'The Mincer' Vespucci. Watch out, Bobby!



▲ BOO! The valiant offensive player is taken roughly from behind, viciously hacked to the ice by the relentless skating juggernaut that is The Mincer. The crowd are baying for blood, surely the sparks are gonna fly?



▲ So what does big Bobby do? Does he scramble to his feet, throw away his gloves and stick, and lay into The Mincer, fists pumping? No. He just lies there, waiting for the ref to blow his whistle. BOO!

THE SECOND OPINION



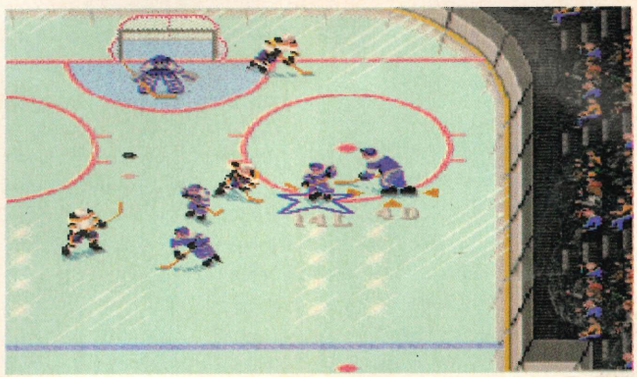
MARK HOLMES

I've got to start off by saying that I've been a big fan of the EA ice hockey games right from the word go. The original, EA Hockey, was excellent, but even that was surpassed by the sequel, NHLPA '93, which, after J League Pro Striker, is probably my second favourite Megadrive game of all time. The superfast, superexciting, superslippery gameplay of the original was all still there, as were the highly entertaining, button-bashing in-game punch-ups. The atmosphere of highly competitive needle was hyped up even further with the addition of one little bloodthirsty feature – the ability to injure an opposing player so badly that he ended up squirming on the ice in a pool of his own blood. So why, oh why have EA decided to take out not only this harmless little bit of comedy blood-letting but the punch-ups as well? Who was this game programmed by – the Moral Majority? As Mark says, they weren't graphically violent – certainly not strong enough to incite youths to heinous acts of thuggery – and they added that little bit of extra needle that makes a good competitive game into a great one. Although I am one of those strange people who does actually enjoy hearing the 72 different quirky organ tunes, this and the addition of the new shots in no way make up for the loss of fisticuffs and blood – it makes the game lose some of its edge. If you must have four-player simultaneous action, buy this, but if you can live without it and just want the best Megadrive ice hockey game ever, get NHLPA '93.

TWO-WAY REPLAY

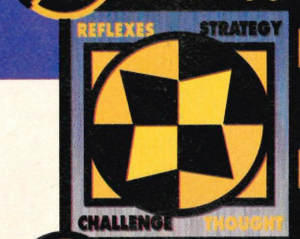


NHLPA '94 boasts the same excellent replay facility as its two predecessors – pressing Start at any point in the game will enable you to replay the piece of action immediately preceeding. On the replay screen, you can fast-forward, rewind, review at normal speed or play the action forward or backwards frame-by-frame. So far, so similar, but '94 does have an additional feature in that you can view your moments of glory from two different angles. By using the 'Reverse Angle' feature on the replay screen, you can flip the angle of view between behind the goal or in front of the goal, thus enabling you to treat your opponents to replays of your best goals against them from two different viewpoints.



▲ Top and above: Same shot, different angles.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 92%
Four-player mode and more features than you can shake a stick at.

GRAPHICS 85%
Tidy, well-animated sprites, but little else.

SOUND 88%
72 pieces of organ music! Whoa!

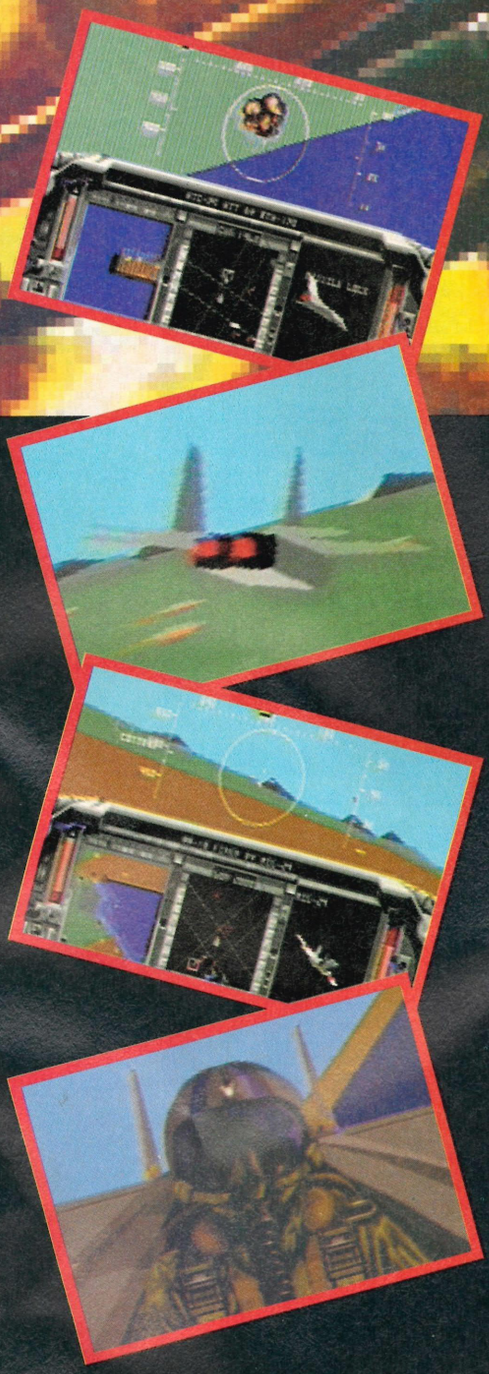
SHORT TERM PLAY 92%
Action-packed thrills and spills throughout.

LONG TERM PLAY 90%
Good four-player mode, but not as gripping as '93.

OVERALL 90
Excellent, but disappointingly similar to the last game.

Hot Enough To Make Your MegaDrive Melt!

F-15 STRIKE EAGLE II



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MEGA-CD REVIEW



BY: VICTOR ENTERTAINMENT

Victor

MEGA-CD

STYLE

SHOOT 'EM UP

PRICE IMPORT

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

OUT NOW



Since he was a little boy TOM GUISE has always dreamed that one day he would become the boss of the Playboy empire and command a bevvy of beautiful bunny girls to pander to his every whim. This game is about as close as he'll ever get.

KEIO FLYIN

Bunny girls. Do you remember them? Those Playboy Club hostesses who wore little more than a fluffy wabbit tail and a pair of flopsy ears and served a drink with a smile. Sigh, those were the days, when men were men and Paul Nicholas and Gareth Hunt were studs. Sadly, those days are long gone now and bunny girls are no more.

But whatever happened to the bunny girls? Where did they go? Did they just fade out of fashion or did something more sinister happen? What if bunny girls weren't really waitresses at all, but in fact space-women sent to Earth by aliens to protect their secret bio-factory? What if they rode atop mighty dragon-steeds in skimpy oufits and never served drinks to your table with a smile?

Sounds a little far-fetched? Well let me show you undeniable proof of this strange-but-true fact in the form of Victor Entertainment's latest Mega-CD shoot 'em up, Keio Flying Squadron.

BUNNY GIRL IN HORIZONTAL ACTION!

The Keio Flying Squadron. What sort of air force is it? A formidable fleet of World War II bombers perhaps? Or a group of the latest jet fighters? How about a futuristic battalion of space cruisers? Nope, the Keio Flying Squadron is in fact a dragon-riding bunny girl. But before you get your hopes up thinking this is one of those dodgy X-rated Japanese games we never get to see in this country, I'd better tell you that it's just a horizontally-scrolling shoot 'em up. That's right. No under-the-table hanky panky here, or gratuitous storage of tips in the undergarments. Nope, just the kind of good old-fashioned frenetic blasting action that we're all used to. There's plenty of power-ups to collect, loads of baddies to shoot, huge end-of-level bosses to battle and of course, a dragon-riding bunny girl. Er, right.

DR PON AND THE BUNNY GIRL

Confused about where the bunny girl fits into the picture? Well, a quick rundown of the plot should clear things up. Meet Rami, a lovely girl who just happens to be a descendant of Noah (of Noah's Ark fame). What's more, she is also the guardian of a golden key. This key can unlock all the secrets of the Ark which, I can now reveal, is in fact an alien bio-factory that evolved all life on Earth!

Enter one evil genius by the name of Dr Pon. During a midnight raid he steals the key. With this awesome weapon in his possesion he hopes to unfathom the mysteries of the great Ark and use it for his twisted purposes.

Blaming herself for the theft Rami realises there's only one thing to do. That's right, dress up as a bunny girl and ride her pet dragon, Pochi, after the fiend. And that's where the game begins. All that make sense? Good.



RACCOONS EVERYWHERE!

So what foul servitors of Dr Pon must Rami face on her quest? Giant death-dealing robots or genetically-engineered sandworms perhaps? Well no, raccoons actually. That's right, Dr Pon leads a legion of the warrior raccoons. Which is not as silly as it sounds when you realise that he too is a raccoon.

Throughout the whole game, swarms of raccoons battle against our



CHASING



BON



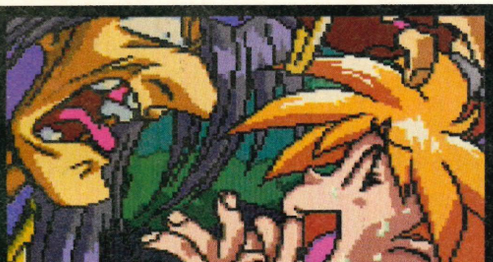
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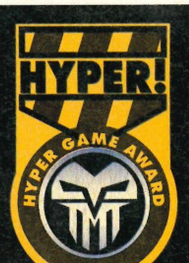


SHUR

SECONDARY

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HE DRAGON!



BS



DRAGONS



KEN

WEAPONS

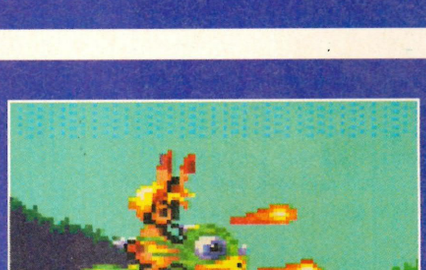






ONE-SHOT FIRE BREATH







SPREAD SHOT FIRE BREATH







SMART BOMB DRAGON

dragon-riding bunny girl, appearing in flying rowboats, basket-lifts, gondolas and on the backs of dolphins and giant frogs. They even power the huge mid-level bosses like a giant Buddha-shaped tank on level one which has tons of fireworks packed inside its head.

OTHER ANIMALS TOO!

However, it's not just raccoons that serve the evil whims of Dr Pon. Nope, flocks of cute birdies make good blasting fodder for Rami as do puppies on flying carpets and little doggies in propeller-powered barrels. Venture further into the game and there are strange green sausage men that run through the air after our heroine. If you don't blast them early on, then you can soon find a whole herd of the Pepperami-style fellas hot on your tail. Then there are flying pigs, cats in pots, clockwork turtles and even giant mechanical chicken-heads, to name but a few.

ENTER THE DRAGON!

Fortunately though, Rami isn't helpless against this deluge of domesticated pets, farmyard animals and sausages. Being a shoot 'em up you'd naturally expect her to be able to shoot back and so she can in the form of fireballs which her dragon-steed, Pochi, blasts from his mouth. And that's not all Pochi can do. Take your finger off the fire button and he'll make a baby dragon appear. Do it again and you find yourself accompanied by TWO dragonettes each firing their own brand of junior fireball. What's more,

Some games feature death-dealing weaponry like laser guns and homing missiles. Keio Flying Squadron, on the other hand, features dragons. Exploding dragons, kamikaze dragons, fire-breathing dragons, the lot. Don't believe it? Look and see.

if the situation gets too hectic these baby dragons can be detonated destroying everything on screen. A sad, but necessary sacrifice.

HAPPY BOSSES

As with all shoot 'em ups Keio Flying Squadron has its fair share of bosses. Known collectively as the Seven Happy Gods, one of these crazy generals appears at the end of each level in some of the most bizarre contraptions you've ever seen.

For instance, at the end of level one a large bamboo tank trundles onto the screen, pulled by a cow. Not only do you have to avoid the rockets the tank fires at you, but you also have to watch out for the deadly streams of bananas that the tank's monkey mascot throws at you. Blow up the main gun and the monkey and then the cow starts taking pot shots at you. There's just so many separate attacks to keep your eyes out for.

Bosses on later levels are no less challenging or bizarre, with strange pirate robots rising from the sea, blowing crabs out of their mouths and firing lightning out of the tops of their heads. And of course there's Dr Pon and the Ark to face at the end of the game.

FLYING HIGH!

Keio Flying Squadron might seem like quite a weird game, but underneath all the fancy graphics and weird visuals it's still just a plain old shoot 'em up. The question is, is it a good shoot 'em up? Well, yes it is. It's extremely good fun. This game might look cute, but it certainly doesn't play cute. You'll be on the edge of your seat over the sheer amount of baddies you have to face. They may be raccoons and little puppy dogs, but when the whole screen is filled with the blighters and you have to avoid the masses of lethal bullets flying around it can get really tense. It's actually a lot more challenging than a lot of shoot 'em ups I've played, especially with regard to the bosses which not only send tons of firepower in your direction, but also takes an age to destroy.

ATTRACTIVE BUNNY GIRL ESCORT

The graphics in Keio Flying Squadron are superb. The backdrops are brightly-coloured and highly detailed, but it's the sprites that win the prizes. The huge contraptions that appear throughout the game like the Buddha-tank, the giant pirate boss and the ink-firing octopus carried on the back of a raccoon, that appears halfway the second level are all incredible, but most impressive of all are the little sprites like the raccoons. There's just so much attention to detail, like the way they shuffle around in their pockets looking for their catapults or row their little boats. On later levels a collection of swim-wear raccoons even do warm up breathing excercises before diving off a huge cliff. Blow away a section of the train on level three and there they are, working a large wheel inside. You almost feel bad about destroying them. Almost.

THE ORIENTAL CONNECTION.

It's quite obvious from the whole look of the game, with pagoda-roofed boats, chinese lanterns and everything seemingly made out of bamboo, that the programmers wanted to give the game a strong Oriental feel. This is emphasized by the fact that even the score is in Japanese, something I don't think I've ever seen in a video game before.

It also comes across in the music. Crazy Japanese-style tunes using instruments like gongs, symbals and wooden blocks play through the game. As you'd expect from the Mega-CD, the sound-quality is exceptional and the actual tunes themselves are top-notch too. You can tell that a lot of time was spent composing them and the end result was worth it. Certainly the music adds a great deal to the overall atmosphere of the game.

REVENGE OF THE BUNNY GIRL!

DURATION: 60 SEC. TIMED SEQUENCE



1. Swarms of little birdies! I can't kill them. I just can't. Oh heck. Budda-budda!



2. Aww. Puppy wet noses. Now,



5. That showed them. Aargh! What a horrible squid. Aim for the little fish-man.



6. Phew, that Cannons and

RACCOON MAROONS!

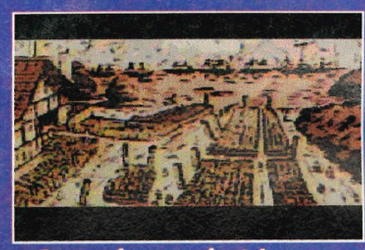
Raccoons are taking over the World! It's official. Throughout the whole game, raccoons battle against our bunny girl heroine using all manner of crazy appliances. Here's a selection of the furry blighters in action.



▲ "We are t

TOTALLY KEIO-D!

Perhaps you're wondering why the game is called Keio Flying Squadron. Well, Keio refers to the period in Japanese history between the years 1865 and 1868, known as the Edo Shogunate. It was at this time that the Shoguns (the military rulers at the time) were pressed into restoring power back to the Meijin Emperor. All the events in the game supposedly takes place during this period, but exactly how a dragon-riding bunny girl and a legion of raccoons fit into all this though, remains a mystery.



▲ Scenes from ancient Japan...



▲ ...so where's the bunny-girls?



cgs now. Look at their little
, I can just aim right...



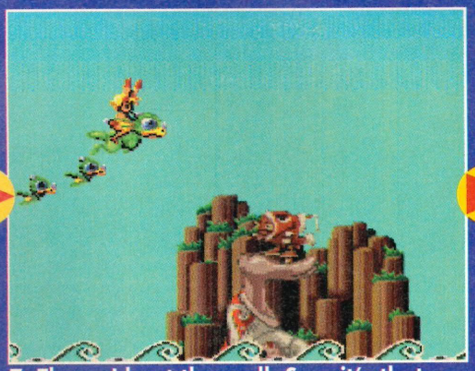
3. Hey, what are these fella up to? Like you're pants, buddy. Ha ha ha.



4. Yipes, they're diving. Shoot them all! Oh, and fly over the fish for an extra life.



vas close. Now what?
nre raccoons. Die, scum!



7. There, I beat them all. Say, it's that fish-guy again, what does he want?



8. Eh? Crikey! Evil Fish-man magic. Shoot! Kill! Avoid the lightning! Help!



h raccoons... we're cool."



▲ "We can fly and we dont need shades...



▲ ... 'cos our eyes are black already!"

ALTERNATIVELY



92 ROBO ALESTE
by SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
An excellent up-the-screen shoot 'em up starring a rocket-powered ninja. Great graphics, excellent sound and superb blasting fun.

IMPORT WARNING!

The version of Keio Flying Squadron used in the review is a Japanese disc and will not run on official Mega-CD's without the use of a Datel CDX converter. Also, on official Mega-CD's the sound will not run at the same speed as the visuals, resulting in sections of game with no sound.

FLYING SQUADRON NOSEDIVE!

Now here comes the gripe. Superb as Keio Flying Squadron is, you just expect more from the Mega-CD. Yes, there is a gob-smacking cartoon intro, yes, the music is obscenely good, but we know the Mega-CD can do that and it's been done a zillion times before. Take all that away and what you're left with is an ordinary, if excellent Megadrive shoot 'em up. I don't think there's anything here that the Megadrive couldn't handle, except perhaps the amount CD memory that has been used storing the massive variety of sprites.

But I'm being picky really, because Keio Flying Squadron is great. It may not use any flash Mega-CD hardware tricks, but it is still undeniably one of the better shoot 'em ups around. If you have a Mega-CD (either a Japanese set-up or one with a CD-X) and want a new shoot 'em up, then this is without doubt an essential purchase. It wouldn't make you buy a Mega-CD, but if you've got one, then you really ought to have this.

THANKS TO...
A great big thanks to George at Ice Distribution for sending us the review copy of Keio Flying Squadron. If you're interested in purchasing te game contact him on (0302) 340079.

THE SECOND OPINION

Paul Glancey



Okay, so maybe it doesn't use any obvious Mega-CD hardware tricks, but Keio's Flying Squadron is certainly a very impressive shoot 'em up. In fact while I was playing it I couldn't help but be reminded of Konami's Parodius, which is one of my favourite Super NES games. It's the great graphics, the crazy enemies (potted octopi, cow-powered tanks – you never know what you're going to come across next!), the jolly music and the bullets-from-every-angle gameplay that make it so enjoyable to play. It's really challenging and addictive too, and I for one will be playing it until I reach the end (if I live that long, that is). This is a game every blasting fan should enjoy and I would recommend it without any reservations.

RATINGS



PRESENTATION 89%
Great cartoon intro and loads of options in incomprehensible Japanese.

GRAPHICS 90%
Smart backdrops. Excellent sprites. Neat animation. Just great.

SOUND 92%
Brilliant oriental tunes play through-out. Reasonable spot-effects.

SHORT TERM PLAY 90%
Top-notch blasting fun. Addictive from the start.

LONG TERM PLAY 88%
Very challenging. You'll play this one until you beat it.

OVERALL 90
Not the kind of game you'd buy a Mega-CD for, but nonetheless one of the best shoot 'em ups you could play.

MEGADRIVE REVIEW

CODEMASTERS
Absolutely Brilliant!

BY: CODEMASTERS



8-MEG

STYLE

PUZZLE

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE
OCT 1993

Seeing as he's the one who usually ends up with egg on his face, MARK PATTERSON was the logical choice when it came to reviewing the first Megadrive game which stars the produce of a battery farm.

FANTASTI

The land of the Yolkfolk is one of those distant, faraway places that fantasy writers prattle on about, complete with rolling fields, talking trees and poncey elves and pixies. Naturally there's a big old spanner in the pastoral works, which comes in the very unoriginal form of an evil wizard. Zaks, as he likes to be called, has made off with Daisy, the girlfriend of Dizzy, the Yolkfolk's greatest hero.



HANKY SPANKY

Not being the sort of egg to take things lying down, Dizzy sets out to rescue his sweetheart and give Zaks a jolly good spanking. Being little more than a failed chicken, Dizzy is at an instant physical disadvantage when pitted against animals who've managed to go beyond an embryonic stage. Instead, the ovoid one must apply his extensive brain power to solve problems in order to vanquish Zaks' minions and rescue Daisy.

The puzzles themselves are often extremely linear, but are made all the tough as Dizzy can only carry three objects at a time, although where he puts them is a complete mystery to me (bend over!). These items have to be used in conjunction with other objects or people to allow Dizzy to progress. Other problems are more taxing, requiring a mental run-up to overcome. Most of the things you need to find are in out-of-the-way locations, so there's a lot of exploration to be done to get through.

NOT FREE RANGING

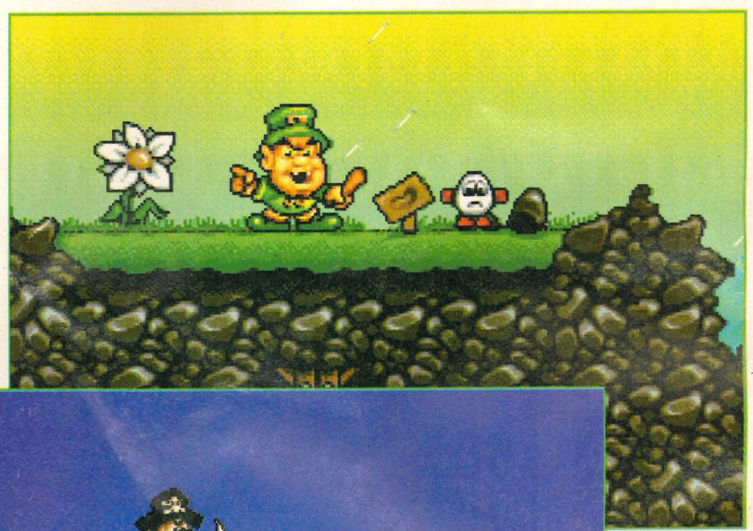
Dizzy himself is a very limited character, only being able to jump and pick up and drop objects. Not being able to kill things certainly limits the action, but then again, if you could go around zapping everything that moved, the game would be more than a little easy. One of the only criticisms I have with the control system is that when Dizzy's carrying three objects, if you want to use the last object you picked up, you've got to drop the other two. This is particularly annoying if you have some massive creature bearing down on you and there's just not enough time to go through the rigmarole to get the object you need.

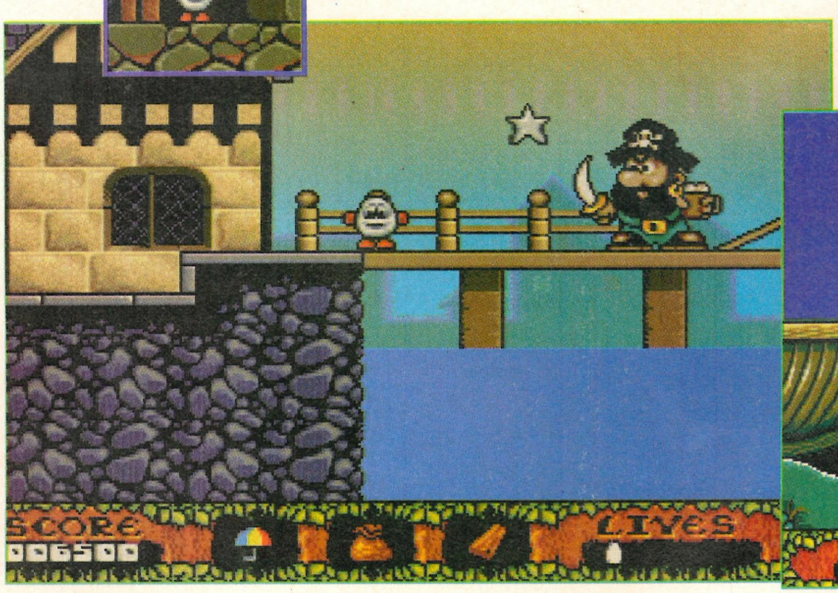
OMELETTE ALERT

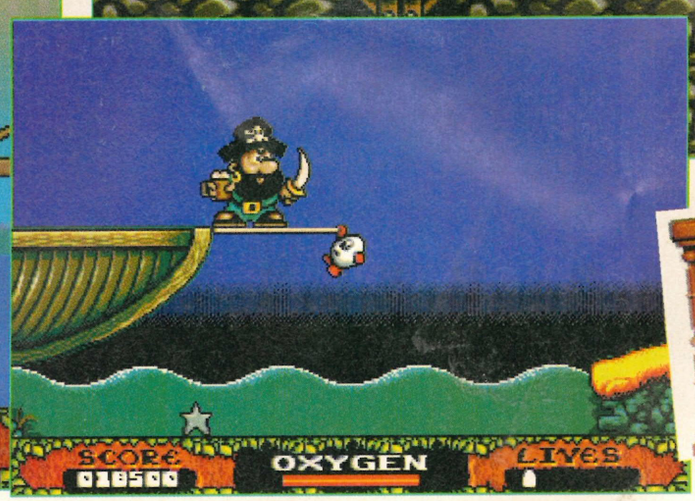
Because eggs aren't the strongest of things, you need to keep Dizzy out of harm's way. A damage meter increases every time he clatters into one of the game's many nasties, and if it reaches the maximum Dizzy can't help but crack up. Fortunately for him, fruit in the world of Yolkfolk acts as a sort of Pollyfilla for eggs, patching up any damage he takes.

His troubles don't finish there, though. Zaks is no mug, and



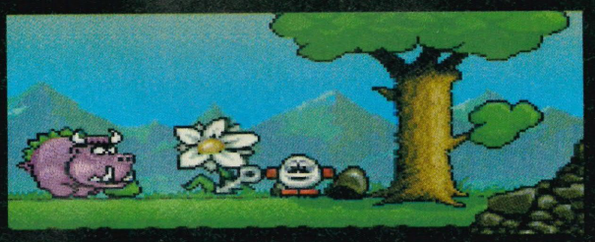








C DIZZY

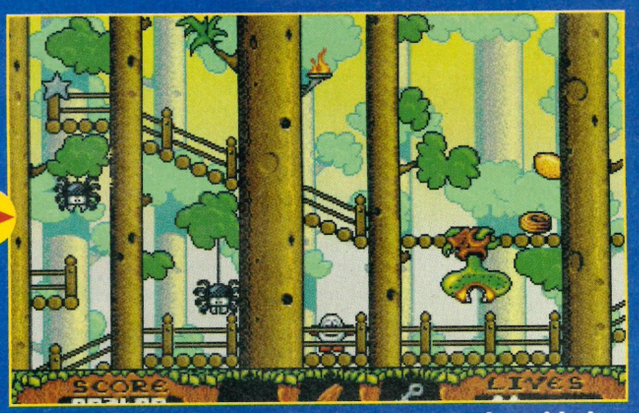


DURATION: 60 SEC.

SEQUENCE • TIMED •



▲ 1) Dizzy starts his quest in his house. Because there's so much evil afoot, he's locked himself in, so the first priority is to grab the key and get out. Don't forget to collect the stars or you'll come up short when you reach the castle.



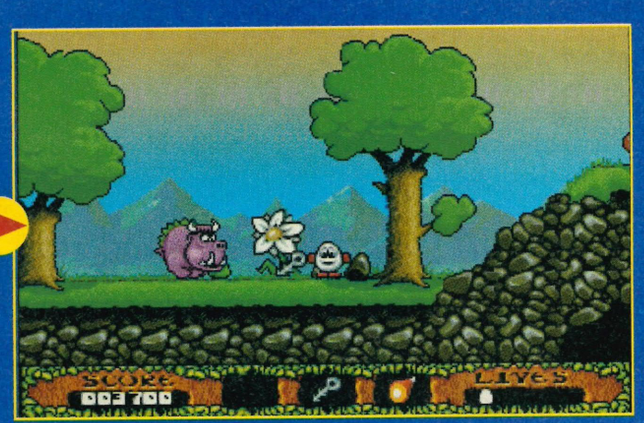
▲ 2) Ahh, the fresh air of the forest. Don't play with the animals though, no matter how sweet they look, they'll drain Dizzy's energy. Don't be greedy either, save some of the fruit for when you really need it.

SCRAMBLED EGGS

Dizzy has to overcome all sorts of hazards before he can even get near Zaks. As he can only carry three items at a time, you need remember where you left the stuff you couldn't carry. Here's an example of the problems you're going to face.



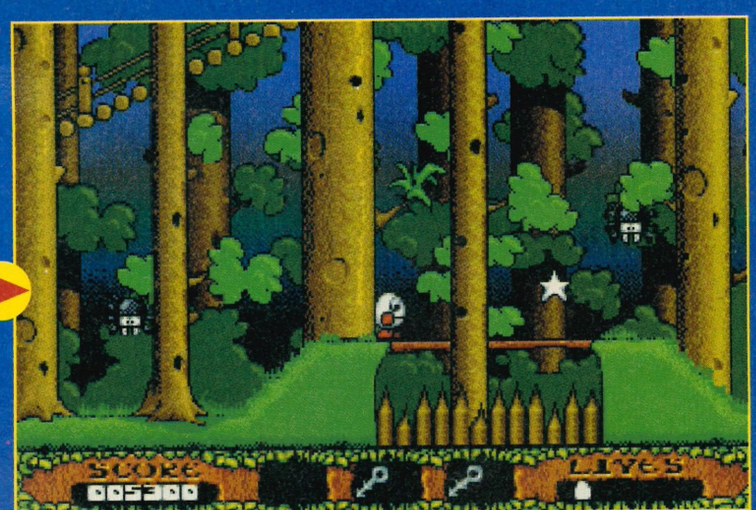
▲ 3) Pick up the elevator keys and the ham, you'll need them later on. Head left and you'll soon encounter...



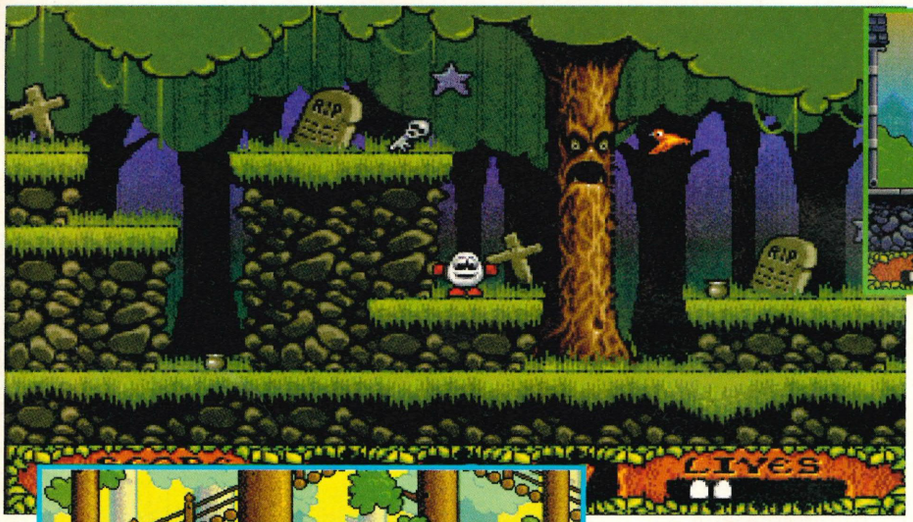
▲ 4) ...Porker! This spiny pig is so hungry, he doesn't care what he eats. Let him indulge in a little cannibalism by chucking the ham at him. Once he's out of the way you can grab them back.



using his strange mystic powers he's sealed the entrance to his castle with a particularly powerful magic spell. The only way Dizzy can neutralise it is by collecting a staggering 250 stars which are scattered throughout the game. Although it didn't happen to me, I should imagine that it's possible to get right up to the castle gates without having collected all of them, which would completely write-off the previous couple of hours of intense puzzle-solving.



▲ 5) If you head in the opposite direction, you'll come to a pit full of large pointy spikes. Select the log and – as if by magic – that 12 inches of wood extends to cover the whole pit.









ALTERNATIVELY

90 PUGGSY BY PSYGNOSIS £39.99
Excellent platform-based puzzler starring a spacehopper-shaped alien with a variety of solutions to each level.



EGGING YOU ON

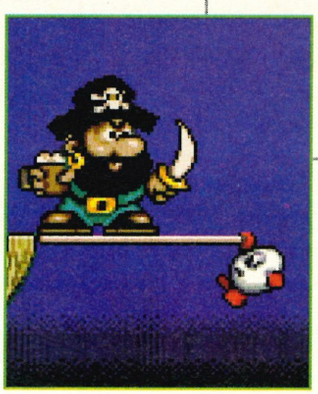
The game's presentation is almost faultless, despite the complete lack of options. Throughout the first few stages of the game, you're prompted with little diagrams of joypads, showing you what button you should press and when. The control system is easy to get to grips with, and there are very few awkward moments when pixel-perfect timing is called for.

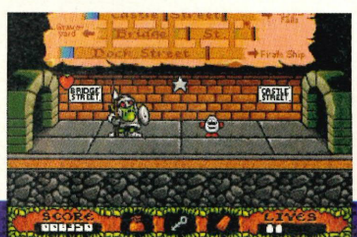
Even at its simplest, the game doesn't become boring. The levels are extremely varied and there's always some new twist in the gameplay hiding around the corner.

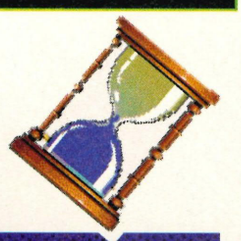
This is definitely a game for younger players, though. The characters, puzzles and action seem geared firmly towards kids. That's not to say that it's a bad game, or an easy one for that matter, but for me it just didn't do the biz. What I don't think Codemasters took into account is that the Megadrive already has several excellent action-adventures, such as Wonderboy 3, which I'd choose over Dizzy any day.

SLIDO - DIDO

Being a popular chap, Dizzy has loads of mates willing to help him rescue Daisy. Theodore the magician, for example, can be found hanging around various locations. He'll help Dizzy out by giving him an extra life, on the condition that he completes a simple slide puzzle first.









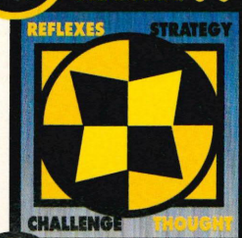
THE SECOND OPINION

JULIAN RIGNALL



Occasionally reviewers disagree with one another's opinions, and today is one such day. It's a simple and straightforward disagreement – Mark likes Dizzy and I don't. You see, eight years ago I played Dizzy games on the Spectrum and didn't like them much. Eight years on, I like them less. It's not just the totally standard platform action, the average graphics and sound, the linear gameplay or the fact that the game features a main character who's about as appealing as a pair of sandpaper-lined Y-fronts that I don't like. No. It's also the fact that when Dizzy was first released on the Spectrum it was available on Codemasters' own budget label at £2.99 and now they expect players to shell out £39.99 to play basically the same game with tarted-up sonics and visuals. Being objective, if I was a tiny child of limited intellect who'd never played a platform game before, I'd probably enjoy its simplistic puzzles and pedestrian action. But when it comes to the bottom line, even young kids want more than this. I mean, who'd pay £40 for a simple and bland game starring a farty little egg when, for the same price, they could get action, excitement and challenge from a game featuring their favourite cartoon characters like Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, The Tazmanian Devil, Batman and so on?

% RATINGS



83% PRESENTATION
A slick game, even it doesn't have any options.

59% GRAPHICS
Tiny sprites, backgrounds are unimaginative.

52% SOUND
Short, irritating ditties. Feeble sound FX.

36% SHORT TERM PLAY
Very easy to get into, but control system is awkward.

59% LONG TERM PLAY
Will only tax novices or children.

OVERALL 69
Average platform puzzler with an eggy main character.

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THE BIG~VALUE FOOTY MAG WITH IDEAS YEARS AHEAD OF THE REST.

MEGA-CD REVIEW

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: CORE DESIGN

MEGA-CD

STYLE

SHOOT 'EM UP

PRICE £44.99

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

SEPT 1993



Braving flashbacks and post-stress trauma, MegaTech mercenary PAUL GLANCEY leaves his hi-tech supercopter parked inside that extinct volcano and checks out Core's long-awaited Mega-CD megablast!

THUND

I smiled a grim smile as my finger tightened on the fire button. "This one's for you, Johnny!" A spray of rockets flashed out from beneath the cockpit and the tanks below disappeared in a cloud of bright flame. "Incoming bandit!" yelped the co-pilot.

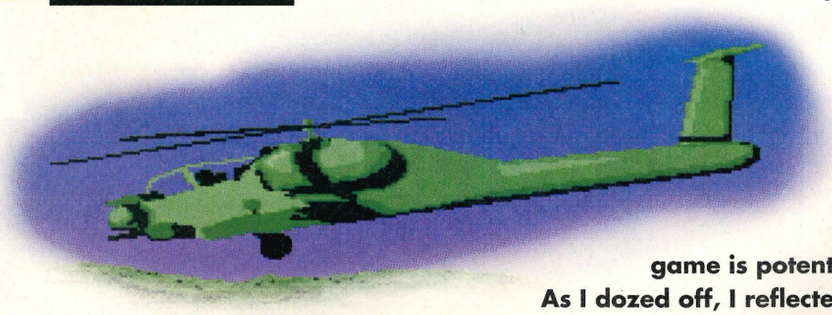
In one movement I swung the helicopter around, armed a Hellfire missile and released it at the speeding gunship. I could almost see the pilot's face, his look of horror, an instant before he and his cockpit exploded and the remaining scrap spun in behind some trees. "And that one's for you, Tommy!"

And then the doorbell rang. It was the man upstairs wanting to know if I could please turn the bloody noise down and stop bloody shouting about Tommy because it was

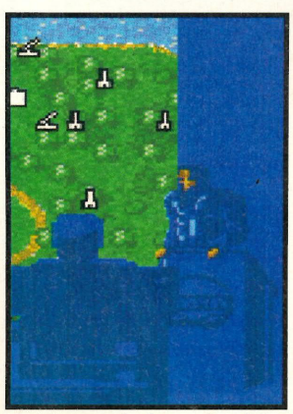
frightening the baby. And anyway, didn't I know what the bloody time was?

Couldn't he understand that if it hadn't been for me and my helicopter, terrorist forces would already be dining heartily on his baby while he was being tortured for the location of the hidden radio installation and the secret hiding place of President Vargas? I was about to point out that brush wars don't run to office hours, buddy, and anyway I was working to South American time, when he showed me the aluminium baseball bat. Suddenly everything became clear.

After agreeing absolutely with my heavily-muscled neighbour and wishing him sweet dreams, I returned to the Mega-CD, ejected the Thunderhawk disc and switched everything off before retiring myself, to dream my Stringfellow Hawke dreams. Man - this game is potent stuff!



As I dozed off, I reflected that all of my favourite games are the ones with 3D graphics. Scrolling shoot 'em ups are good fun, but me, I want to feel like I'm there in the thick of things. Missiles parting my hair, huge obstacles in my face. I've even been known to start ducking around things if they look like they're getting too close. Thunderhawk has all of this, which is why I was causing a breach of the peace.



▲ "Your mission, should you choose to accept it..."

OPERATING ABOVE THE LAW

The game is based on a rather excellent combat/flight sim which Core released on the Amiga over two years ago. For this version of Thunderhawk, the original programming team decided to forget about putting any pretence of simulation in and just use the Mega-CD's hardly-touched 3D graphics routines to make a hardcore 3D shoot 'em up. So, here you find yourself enrolled in MERLIN, a secret, crack, elite squadron of pilots who operate above the law. When all else fails, the world's security forces turn to you to sort out the local gang of gun-runners, terrorists or evil madmen running amok with automatic weapons.

SEE THE WORLD

You get your choice of ten trouble zones to visit in Thunderhawk. Each of these operations comprises between three and six missions.

OP 1: SOUTH AMERICA: ARMS RUNNING

Weapons are being smuggled from a hidden factory to terrorists. The smugglers have a small army and they may be planning an attack on your base, but it's up to you to cut off their supply routes by destroying bridges, before locating the factory and demolishing it.

OP 2: SOUTH AMERICA: STEALTH DOWN

An F117-A Stealth bomber has crash-landed in the jungle and enemy forces have already removed top secret technology for their own study. First destroy the flattened aircraft, then the train carrying the equipment to an enemy base. The base is your final target. Only three missions, but they're all played at night!

OP 3: PANAMA CANAL: CANAL CRISIS

Terrorists have lined the banks of the canal with heavy artillery and are in the process of laying mines in the water. All this makes the canal unusable to commercial shipping, so you have to put the terrorist plan out of operation immediately!

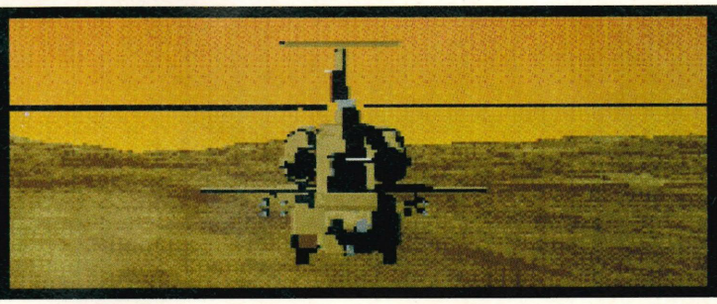
OP 4: CENTRAL AMERICA: RECAPTURE TOWN

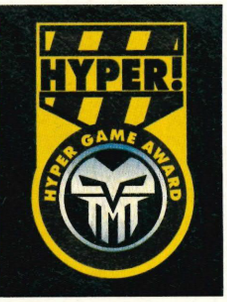
Guerilla forces are holding civilians prisoner in a town. Your mission is to take apart the guerillas' operation piece-by-piece. Expect a strong retaliation after your first attack, and there's a rescue mission just before you launch your final assault on the town.

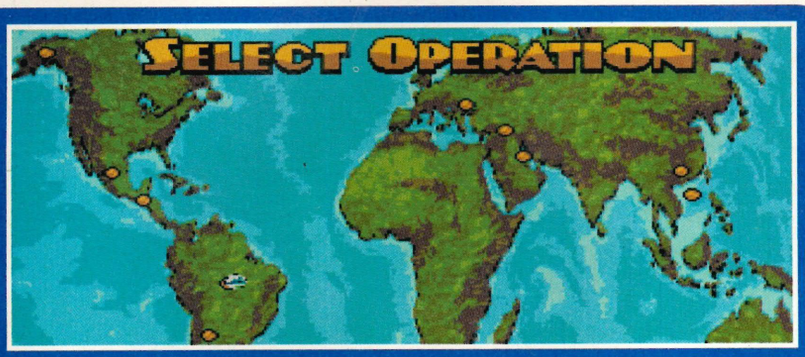
OP 5: ALASKA: BIO-HAZARD

Contact with an Alaskan bio-research base has been lost and it's feared that they may have come under attack by enemy forces. Investigate and make sure this potentially dangerous research doesn't fall into enemy hands. Watch out for submarines and gunboats.

ERHAWK

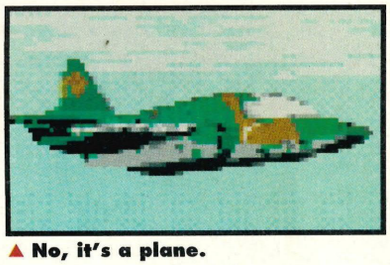






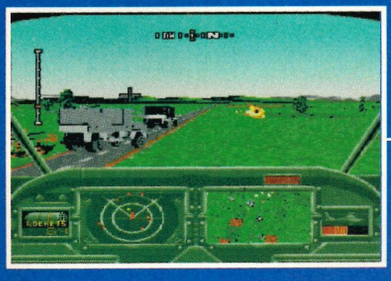


▲ Is it a helicopter?



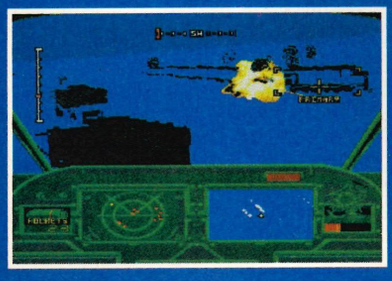
▲ No, it's a plane.





OP 6: EASTERN EUROPE: CONVOY ESCORT

A convoy of UN trucks is taking supplies to a besieged town. You've been given the job of riding shotgun for them. Make sure all hostile artillery is out of their way before they run into danger, and keep them safe from air strikes.

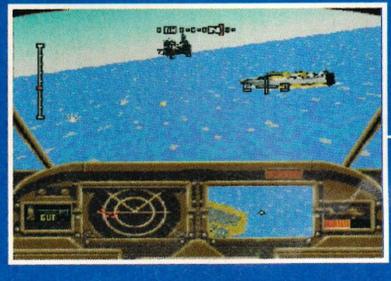




OP 7: MIDDLE EAST: UN ESCORT

Guard a convoy of UN forces driving through a canyon to an allied base which has been occupied by terrorists. You'll also need to protect a supply helicopter which is scheduled to arrive part-way through the operation. Don't fly into the canyon walls!





OP 8: MIDDLE EAST: OIL DISPUTE

Unknown forces have seized control of an oil refinery. Liberate the refinery by destroying the surrounding gunboats and submarines, then track the enemy back to their base and destroy it.





OP 9: SOUTH-EAST ASIA: CHEMICAL WARFARE

An invasion force from a small state is trying to seize control of a neighbouring country using chemical weapons. Fend off their ground forces, then find the SCUD missile launchers carrying the weapons before destroying the assembly plant.





OP 10: SOUTH CHINA SEAS: PIRACY

Merchant ships are running into trouble from a gang of sea pirates operating from island bases. Destroy these bases and the nearby refuelling stations to make the sea lanes safe again.

In this game (for it is a game of course, readers - not real life) you can expect to be called upon in ten different locales, and in each of these you need to complete between three and six danger-laden missions.

ME AND MY HELICOPTER

Your 'battle chariot', if you will, is the AH-73M Thunderhawk attack helo, which comes in all sorts of camouflage colours. It carries a self-targetting 30mm chain gun up front with two hardpoints on the winglets, one for guided Hellfire missiles and one for unguided Folding-Fin Aerial Rockets or bombs depending on your mission. Not surprisingly, the more powerful missiles are always in limited supply, so you can't just spray them around willy-nilly, but the Thunderhawk benefits from allied scientists' recent breakthrough in the manufacture of Magic Bullets, so no matter how many chain gun rounds you fire, there are always more in the magazine. Actually, this is good because the gun is loaded with mighty powerful shells and half a dozen bursts of fire is usually enough to demolish a tank.

TANKS A MILLION

That's just as well, because while you're out in the field you can expect to come under heavy fire from every angle. These are definitely the best-equipped terrorists/gun-runners the world has ever known. Vast battalions of tanks are cruising the landscape, leading ZSU anti-aircraft vehicles and armoured personnel carriers between a multitude of SAM sites. Stray too close to a

SAM sites. Stray too close to a radar site and you'll suddenly find yourself being buzzed by Hokum and Defender helicopter gunships, and the occasional SU-25 Frogfoot.

MISSION CONTROL

Before each mission you're given a spoken briefing by your commander, who declares your primary targets and points them out on a scrolling map. Once in the air, you must wipe out all of those targets before you escape into a safety zone off the edge of the map. Failure to do so means the mission is a failure, and though you can then progress to the next part of the operation, it may well be much harder with that radar installation still operating, or whatever. Failure is also rewarded by a de-merit. Get enough of these and you're grounded.

The missions don't vary an awful lot. Most of them require you to get out there and smash up some hidden base, or destroy a bunch of artillery sites before bugging out. Occasionally, though, you get a different task to accomplish, such as flying ahead of a convoy of trucks or ships and clearing the way of enemy tanks, or, in the river raids, floating mines. The more exotic ones require you to destroy a submarine surfacing amongst pack-ice in Alaska, bomb vital bridges or protect your home base from an oncoming horde of tanks.

My favourite, though, was rescuing the downed pilot. His wrecked plane is surrounded by signal fires and when you land nearby he runs towards the Thunderhawk and climbs aboard – all very reminiscent of that excellent old Lucasfilm game, Rescue on Fractalus.

SEAT OF MY PANTS

Most of the time, though, the missions aren't particularly complicated and don't require a great deal in the way of tactics, and that would have been where this game fell down. In fact, after we had played an unfinished version of Thunderhawk a few months ago we were a bit concerned that the gameplay was going to be just too basic. Even though the commander suggests a course of action during the briefing, this just appears to be a bit of waffle. The finished version still doesn't have rigid mission structures, nor does it require tactics in the same way as something like Jungle Strike or LHX Attack Chopper does. But, actually, after a few games that didn't matter to me.

In those other two games you HAD to find and destroy things like radar sites first or they'd spot you and you wouldn't stand a chance when you came across your main target. In Thunderhawk, it's a good idea to take out the radar sites first, but it doesn't appear to make that much difference.

Once you get into enemy territory, there is so much flak flying that you don't really have time for tactics anyway, so you end up acting pretty much on instinct, bombing around and blasting everything you see. It might not be as realistic, but this seat-of-the-pants action is great fun.

NEEOWW! KABLAMMO!

What makes it so much fun is the superb graphics and sound. The 3D effect is absolutely wonderful, much better than in a Super NES game, and it's so fast! Flying close to the ground may be pretty dangerous, but HOOWEEE!! The feeling of speed you get as you slalom through the trees is just amazing! The sprite expansion on all the sprites as they move in and out of the screen is excellent, and the banking and rotation has been very well done too.

If you haven't done it already, Thunderhawk is the perfect excuse for hooking your Mega-CD up to a hi-fi. The guitar rock soundtracks are sometimes a bit Def Leppard, but when they're combined with the digitised effects, the explosions, the gunfire, the whooshing of rockets, the rotor sounds of helicopter gunships sneaking up on you from behind, it really is like you're there!

TIMED SEQUENCE **DURATION: 2 min.**

RESCUE BILLY-BOB!

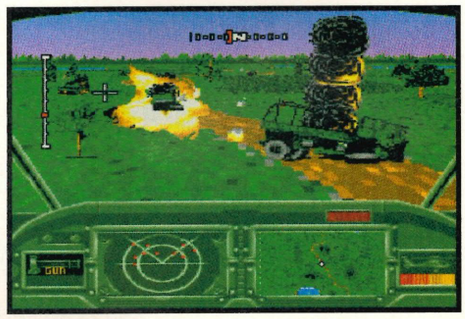
OP 4: CENTRAL AMERICA: RECAPTURE TOWN

Guerilla forces are holding civilians prisoner in a town. Your mission is to take apart the guerillas' operation piece-by-piece. Expect a strong retaliation after your first attack, and there's a rescue mission just before you launch your final assault on the town.

OP 5: ALASKA: BIO-HAZARD



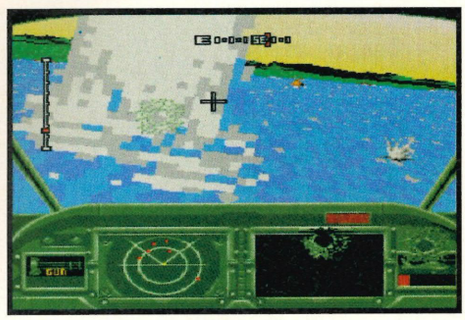
▲ **Yeeha! It's just like being back in 'Nam!**



▲ **Eat rocket, Mr Armoured Car!**



▲ **Whee! Watch that baby go!**



▲ **Whoo! Let's go flying fishing!**

SEE THE WORLD

You get your choice of ten trouble zones to visit in Thunderhawk. Each of these operations comprises between three and six missions.

OP 1: SOUTH AMERICA: ARMS RUNNING

Weapons are being smuggled from a hidden factory to terrorists. The smugglers have a small army and they may be planning an attack on your base, but it's up to you to cut off their supply routes by destroying bridges, before locating the factory and demolishing it.

OP 2: SOUTH AMERICA: STEALTH DOWN

An F117-A Stealth bomber has crash-landed in the jungle and enemy forces have already removed top secret technology for their own study. First destroy the flattened aircraft, then the train carrying the equipment to an enemy base. The base is your final target. Only three missions, but they're all played at night!

OP 3: PANAMA CANAL: CANAL CRISIS

Terrorists have lined the banks of the canal with heavy artillery and are in the process of laying mines in the water. All this makes the canal unusable to commercial shipping, so you have to put the terrorist plan out of operation immediately!



Contact with an Alaskan bio-research base has been lost and it's feared that they may have come under attack by enemy forces.



Investigate and make sure this potentially dangerous research doesn't fall into enemy hands. Watch out for submarines and

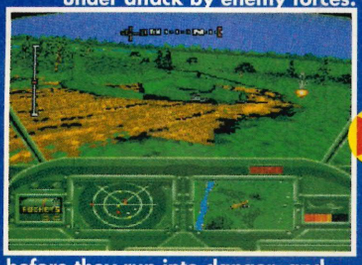


gunboats.

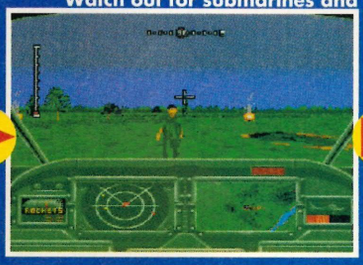


OP 6: EASTERN EUROPE: CONVOY ESCORT

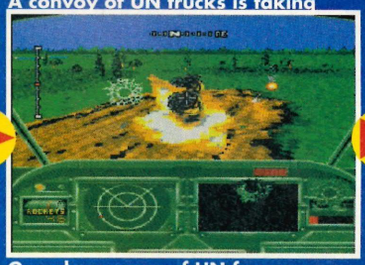
A convoy of UN trucks is taking supplies to a besieged town. You've been given the job of riding shotgun for them. Make sure all hostile artillery is out of their way



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OP 7: MIDDLE EAST: UN ESCORT



Guard a convoy of UN forces driving through a canyon to an allied base which has been occupied by terrorists. You'll also

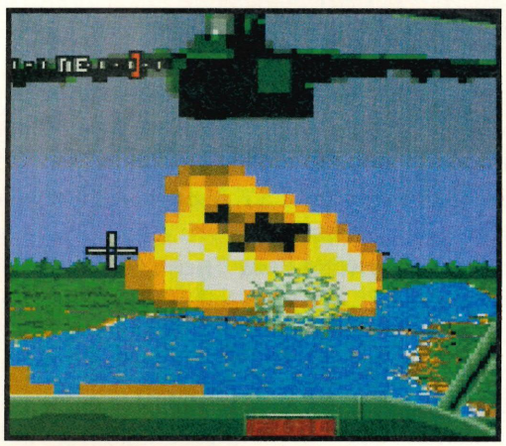


need to protect a supply helicopter which is scheduled to arrive part-way through the operation. Don't fly into the canyon walls!

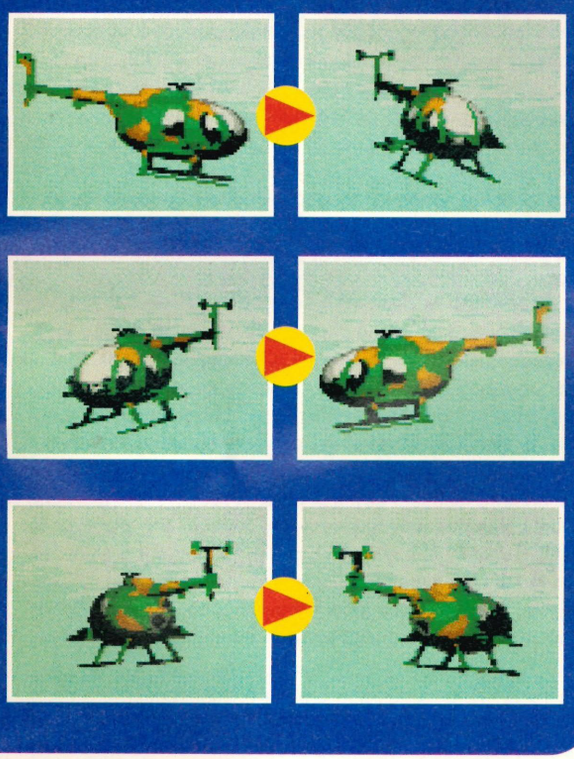
THE FLY IN THE OINTMENT

If there is one thing that spoils Thunderhawk slightly, it's the ability to start the game at any of the ten warzones on the map. It might sound like a nice idea, but what you tend to do is try the first one for a bit, then skip around the map, so although you're not likely to complete it all first time around you do tend to spoil some of the surprises. I think it might have been better if you had had to work your way around the world to the tougher missions.

But, PAH! This is a paltry complaint. Thunderhawk is definitely one of the two most impressive Mega-CD games yet (the other one being Silpheed). Mindless shoot 'em up it may be, but it's certainly fun and it really shows what the Mega-CD is capable of when the programmers know how to use the hardware. More stuff like this would be very welcome!



▲ Exploding death from above!



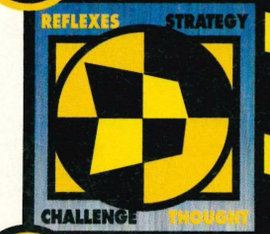
THE SECOND OPINION



JULIAN RIGNALL

Finally great things are beginning to happen on the Mega-CD. After months of graphically superb, ineptly-playing titles, Thunderhawk bursts onto the scene using the Mega-CD's previously untapped 3D chips to produce a highly impressive combat game. Core could have gone the simulation route, producing something like Electronic Arts' LHX Attack Chopper, but instead they've gone for all-out action. The end result is a very fast and furious shoot 'em up with knobs on. The graphics are truly stunning, with fast and realistic 3D which knocks the Super NES' Mode 7 effects into a cocked hat, and the sound is also suitably raucous. Gameplay? That's very good too. My only criticism is that you can start the game on any of the ten levels. This means that it doesn't take long to see everything the game has to offer. Still, at least you can practice individual levels – finishing the game in one go is very challenging. If you've got a Mega-CD, you'd be off your rocker to miss this.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 90%
Smart intro, briefing animations, standard options and ability to save your missions.

GRAPHICS 97%
Superb use of the Mega-CD hardware for realistic 3D effects.

SOUND 96%
Play it in stereo and you're surrounded by realistic effects and grest music.

SHORT TERM PLAY 92%
Almost brainless blasting, but excellent fun nonetheless.

LONG TERM PLAY 90%
Loads of missions: three skill settings, but not much variety.

OVERALL 91
A couple of minor flaws, but this is still a knockout shoot 'em up.

MEGA-CD REVIEW

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: KONAMI

KONAMI

CD-ROM

STYLE

SHOOT 'EM UP

PRICE £TBA

PLAYERS 1-2

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

OCT 1993

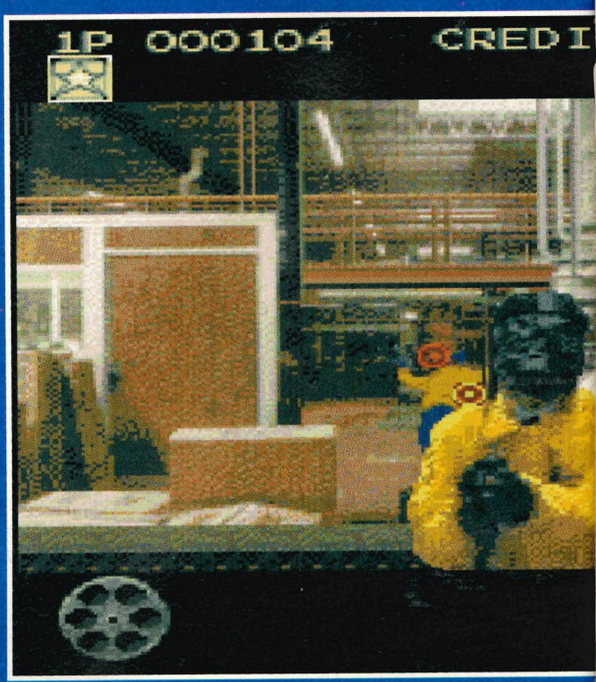


We didn't have to put a gun to PAUL GLANCEY's head to get him to review another of Konami's games. But does Lethal Enforcers live up to their previous efforts?

LETHAL EN

Excuse me, but before we start can I just check something? If you're psychotic, a bit deranged or start tutting and snarling to yourself when standing in long queues, would you please sit down quietly in a soft seat and turn to the review of Fantastic Dizzy. That's a NICE game. This is a NASTY game, with guns, and shooting people, and here at MegaTech we DO NOT want to suggest to anyone who is in a badly adjusted mental state that shooting real people is all a bit of fun. No, no. It's very, VERY BAD. DON'T DO IT! PLEASE! Understand?

But hey, admit it. There are times when we all want to be Robocop or Dirty Harry or Martin Riggs and chase bad guys with a gun. Of course, the vast majority of us won't actually buy a .357 Magnum, step out of the gun shop and cut down everybody in range, on the premise that "no-one is really innocent any more". So let's all be grateful that we normal people can actually give vent to our natural urges in the safety and privacy of our own homes, with games like Lethal Enforcers.



▲ Look at this guy in the Chemical Plant – he deserves

AHEM, MY SHOOTTING IS A LITTLE OFF-TARGET, DOCTOR

If you want to test your marksmanship in a non-combat situation, you can take on your partner in the safety of the shooting range back at the precinct. This section is obligatory between levels and can be practiced before you play the real game.

All you've got to do is shoot as many of the pop-up targets as possible in a limited amount of time. The targets range from simple bull's eyes to glass bulbs to placards bearing pictures of armed felons and innocent people (whom you shouldn't shoot at, of course). Shooting accuracy is rated at the end of each bout, and you're given a rank somewhere between Patrolman and Captain, corresponding to your shooting ability. My tip is to take your time and be at one with the gun.



▲ Shoot the targets...



▲ ... and win a lovely prize.

FREEZE! STARSKY AND HUTCH!

This game puts you on the side of Law and Order (hooray! nothing sinister here!) as a member of Squad 5 of the Lethal Enforcers Tactical Troubleshooting Elite Police Danger Department, and boy, what a stress-packed life you have. This is just the start of a normal day, and already you've got five potentially explosive situations developing around town. The normal police are just too crap to deal with situations classed as Potentially Explosive, and while they might be knocking around, getting in the way as they usually do (tchah!), only you and your Saturday Night Special can sort things out. Well, I say there's only you and your Saturday Night Special, but in fact, like the Konami coin-op on which this game is based, two players can 'buddy-up' to take on the local forces of evil.

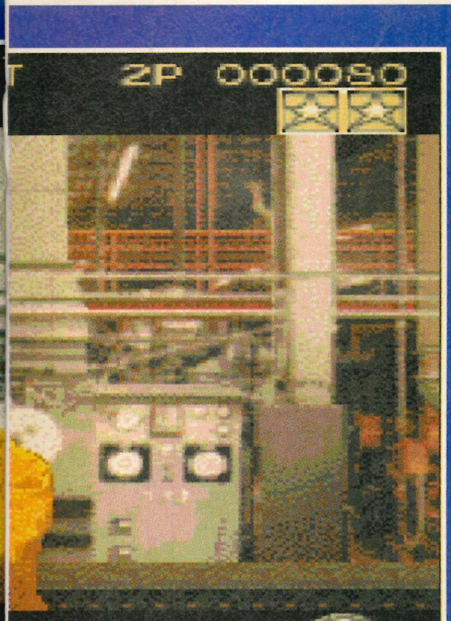
I AM THE LAW

So, there you are at the scene of the crime and what do you see? You see a grainy, digitised picture of a building or a bank or whatever, and before you can yell, "Nobody move! I am a Lethal Enforcer!", grainy, digitised pictures of evil blokes jump out from windows, or from under tables, guns drawn. Stupidly, they always hesitate before they pull the trigger, giving you the chance to whip out your firearm, take aim (using either a joypad-steered gunsight or a Lethal Enforcers issue revolver – see the box) and plant a bullet right between their eyes. But, phew, instead of being hurled back ten feet by the impacting shell or having their skulls disintegrate, these guys just strike a pained pose, say, "Urk!", flicker for a moment and disappear. No blood, nothing. What a relief!

As usual in these situations, there are hostages or innocent bystanders who have just had the misfortune to get caught in the

FORCERS





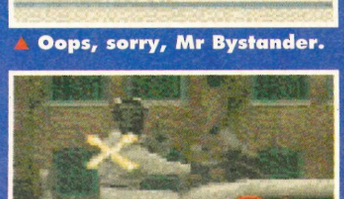
l he gets, wearing that yellow mac.



▲ Shoot these mini-tanks right up the muzzle!



▲ Oops, sorry, Mr Bystander.



▲ Motorcycle emptiness.

line of fire. Being sensible people, they want to escape with their bodies intact, so watch out for them jumping out, screaming,"Don't shoot!" and running off screen with their coats over their heads as if that was some form of protection. Anyway, the idea is not to shoot them because you get points knocked off when the scores are added up at the end of the level. (And shooting innocent people is immoral anyway, of course.)

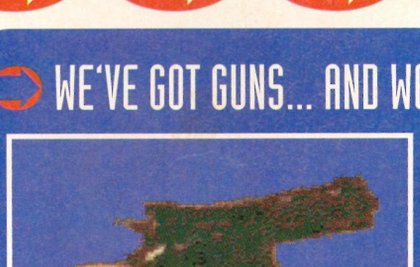
Once you've shot all the available bad guys, it's time to chase the ones that got away into the next scene. It varies from level to level, but there are between three and five scenes to each level, and at the end there's always some formidable boss-type character who unleashes volleys of rockets or grenades or knives in your direction, until you dispose of him hygienically.

DID HE FIRE SIX SHOTS? OR ONLY FIVE?

By this time, your little six-shooter is showing its limitations. It really does only fire six bullets, so you have to listen out for a voice saying "Reload!", then either press the Reload button on the joypad or point your light gun away from the screen, then pull the trigger. Sometimes you don't get the voice so, if you can, your best bet is to keep a count of how many shots you've fired, because it's a bit of a pain to have to keep checking the ammo display at the bottom of the screen when you're in the heat of the battle.

What you could really do with is an automatic, though, or better still, an M16 Assault Rifle, or a grenade launcher, or an Uzi. But wait, because these CAN be yours if you happen to nail, oops, ahem, 'apprehend' a criminal who happens to be carrying one such weapon. Just shoot the flashing icon and you get the double benefit of extra shots and more powerful ammo. If you get shot, though, you drop your new toy and have to go back to your revolver.

WE'VE GOT GUNS... AND WE'RE NOT AFRAID TO USE 'EM!



The reason we can't give you a definite price for Lethal Enforcers is that, at the time of writing, Konami still haven't worked that out themselves. They've had to bin their usual pricing equation, because accompanying the disc or cartridge in the Lethal Enforcers pack is a light gun, and that has meant putting up the price of the game to, well, no-one knows at the moment.

The gun is shaped exactly like the ones connected to the Lethal Enforcers coin-op. It's meant to look like a revolver, but it has a very wide bore to contain all the light-sensing gubbins, and attached to the butt is a three-metre cable which you plug into the second control port on the Megadrive. You'll also notice that, compared to real firearms, the gun is very gaily coloured. This is so that the police don't shoot your little brother as a suspected terrorist if he steals it and starts running around the neighbourhood with it.

But what good is one gun in a two-player game? Well, check the options screen and you'll see that you can play a two-player game using either one gun and a joypad, two joypads or two guns. If both players decide they need a gun, Konami will be selling single guns separately (again, price unknown) and the second one simply plugs into a socket on the butt of the first.

And why can't you play with the Menacer you paid all that money for last Christmas? Probably because you can't play any game with two Menacers because of the way the infra-red receiver box works. Think about it – it'd be like two people each having a remote control for the TV and both trying to change channels at the same time!

THE JUDGEMENT IS...

So, sounds like fun, eh? Well, yeah it is actually. The only major problem is with the graphics – they're okay, but I couldn't help thinking that it might have been better if they were drawn rather than being digitised from the coin-op. Most of the sinister terrorists look just like blokes in suits (possibly members of staff at Konami's arcade division?), and the really sinister ones have dark sunglasses too! Also, the same guys keep popping up over and over again, suggesting that the city's crime problems are all the work of one very large family or an evil genetic scientist and his Acme Clone-o-Tron.

The background graphics occasionally look very ropey, mainly because the digitising process has made them look extremely grainy, and corners have obviously been cut. Check out the car chase scene on the first level and you'll see that the National Rubber Stamp Company has approximately a hundred branches on the same street.

The sound goes some way to making up for this, though. The CD music isn't outstanding, but it's okay. The best bits are the gun effects – they all sound very realistic, and there's a satisfying CHUNK-CHIK when you reload the pump-action shotgun.

I've been thinking about it, and there really isn't that much to say about the gameplay, except that I enjoyed it. It's very simple, a bit like Operation Wolf, but having the guns to play with makes it a good laugh (ahem, not that shooting people is funny of course, but then these aren't real people). It's not just a shooting gallery – the bad guys do get a bit smarter as the game progresses. Some run for cover, then take pot-shots at you while you struggle to shoot at them past obstacles. Others appear right by civilians, making it very easy to shoot the wrong guy, with guilt-laden consequences.

My only other misgiving is that, because you really need two players with two guns to get the best out of Lethal Enforcers, I can see it all getting very pricey. Konami have said the pistols will be compatible with future Konami gun-oriented releases but I can't imagine there being that many of them. Still, if you can't afford such an extravagance you could always rob a... er, no never mind.

THE SECOND OPINION



Mark Holmes

Lethal Enforcers is quite a laugh when you first start playing it, but like all 'shooting gallery'-type games, the novelty wears off very quickly. I agree with the point that Paul made about the satisfaction of playing out your 'Dirty Harry' fantasies in your own front room – it's the sort of game where you find yourself shouting "Freeze, mutha!" or "Eat Lead!" at the screen, especialy when you're teamed up with a partner. But this factor only really comes into play when using the guns – playing with the jopypad just doesn't give you the same feeling (or degree of control, for that matter), and as Paul said, buying an extra gun is gonna cost you more dough. This fact, coupled with the repetitive gameplay and grainy graphics, means a lot of outlay for not enough entertainment.

CARTRIDGE AND CD?

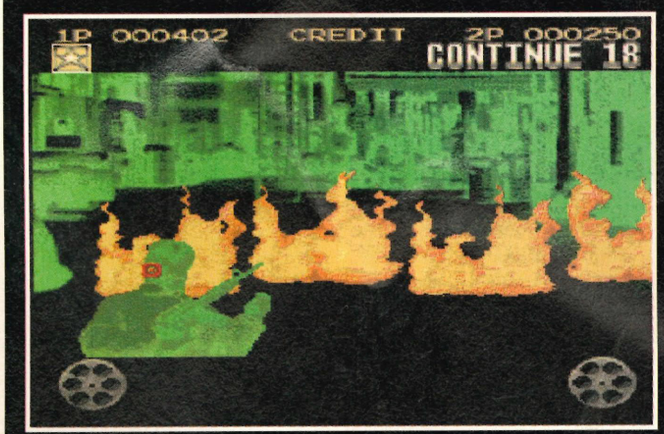
Yep, Konami are bringing Lethal Enforcers out on two formats. The Mega-CD version is the one reviewed here, and the word from Konami is that the game will be practically identical (apart from the CD soundtracks and the gunshot sound effects which are generated by the Mega-CD's PCM chip) on the 16 M-bit cartridge. Price is, unfortunately, unknown, but the package will include one gun and it will be out at the same time as the CD.



▲ Airborne scum – blown 'em out of the sky.

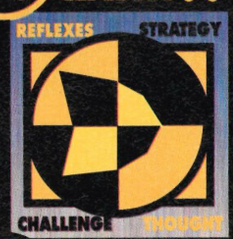


▲ Incoming grenade – shoot it up or get blown up!



▲ The Night Sight level – spooky, eh?

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 89%
All the features of the coin-op. Gun mode is great, joypad control isn't too bad.

GRAPHICS 75%
It's the arcade game in Digitised Grain-O-Vision! A bit ough in places.

SOUND 80%
Great gun sound effects, and the music is decent.

SHORT TERM PLAY 81%
Simple stuff, but good fun, especially with a gun in your hand.

LONG TERM PLAY 80%
Five levels with several stages each. Some of the bosses are a bitch to beat!

OVERALL 80
An enjoyable conversion of the coin-op, though getting the whole set-up could run expensive.

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MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: RARE

8-MEG

STYLE

PLATFORM

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1-2

SKILL SETTINGS 1

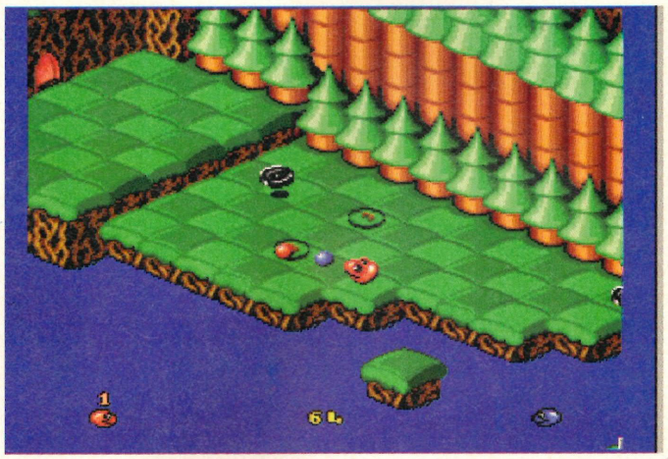
RELEASE DATE

TBA TBA

RADION AUTOMATIC often speaks with a forked tongue, so we thought he was probably the best person to get to grips with this snake-related NES-to-Megadrive conversion.

SNAKE RATT

After being constantly bombarded with adverts and so-called health experts harping on about eating properly and making yourself look like Karen Carpenter, it's nice to see a game that promotes unhealthy eating tendencies and scoffing absolutely as much as possible. No doubt a game showing the positive side of gross obesity will be very popular America, but what is the rationale behind this potentially coronary-inducing artery-hardening bean feast? Well, the story runs as follows. There are two snakes called Rattle and Roll (hence the hilarious punsome title – tee ho) who are stuck on the hick planet Mellotron. The only way they can escape is by opening a number of top secret concealed doors and portals in certain areas of the globe. As it happens, the only way to do this is to plonk a big huge heavy weight on a nearby set of scales. Being snakes, and not logical human beings, Rattle and Roll decide the best way to do this is to eat millions of Mellotron's defenceless native creatures, the Nibbly Pibblies, until one of them reaches the requisite weight.



▲ Hey, there's Rattle, or is it Roll – I can't tell the difference.

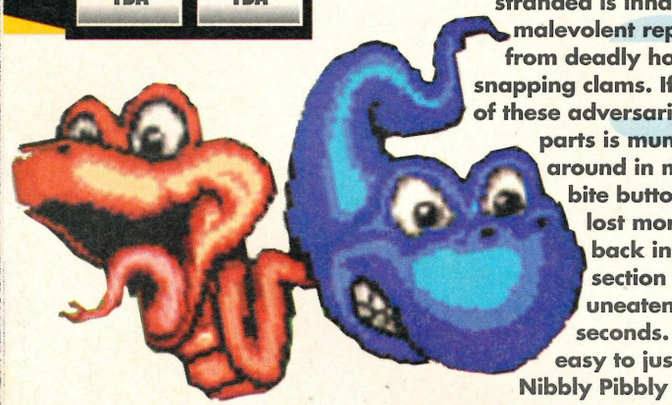


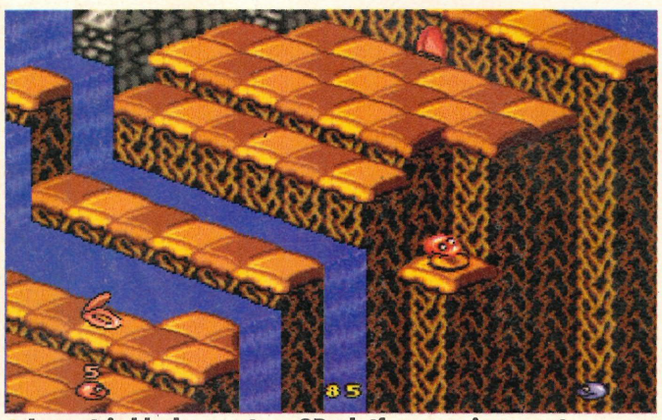
▲ Now he's definitely Roll. Then again, it could be Rattle...

REMEMBER JETMAN

Still, at least the snakes have their uncanny digestive systems going for them. Each asp is composed of a number of spherical body links, and every time Rattle or Roll eats a Nibbly Pibbly another one of these is added, making the snake both longer and heavier.

However, things aren't as easy as all that for the serpentine chums, for the planet upon which they are stranded is inhabited by a number of malevolent reptile-munching species, from deadly hopping mushrooms to snapping clams. If either snake is hit by one of these adversaries, one of their body parts is munched right off and floats around in mid-air. By pressing the bite button, it's possible to snap the lost morsel out of the sky and back into belly-land, but the section is gone forever if it's left uneaten for more than a few seconds. You may think it'd be easy to just go back to the nearest Nibbly Pibbly generator and chomp on few more of the little blighters, but the stringent time limit makes it impossible to do this more than a couple of times, especially as the Nibblies begin to catch on quickly and soon bound around on springs, swim around in the shark-infested waters surrounding each area or just plain run away when they see snakes. This makes weighing enough to clang the bell on the scales and open the door a much harder task, as all too many times an essential length is consumed by a rogue piece of wildlife just before you thud down onto the target.





▲ Isometric blocks create a 3D platform environment.

WHAT ABOUT KNIGHT LORE?

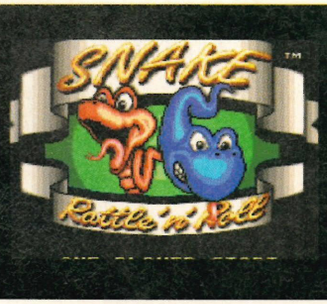
But it's not just the fauna that present a threat to Rattle and Roll – the very landscape itself is perhaps the biggest danger. Mellotron is a planet composed entirely of isometric blocks, creating a 3D platform-style environment. Luckily, Rattle and Roll are little-known Mexican Jumping Snakes and are capable of taking great leaps no matter what weight they are.

However, a proliferation of precipices, overhangs and waterways stretches this novel talent, and even the pair's remarkable twisting-around-and-changing-direction-in-mid-air skills are put to the test as they try to jump around corners. It's Mellotron's river



▲ That's definitely a severed foot!

LE AND ROLL

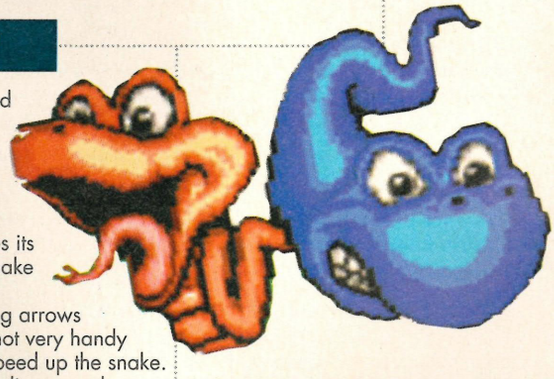




tributaries that really make things hard, though. As everyone knows, snakes can't jump in water so it's essential to float your snake using the current towards the nearest platform to make any necessary leaps. The dangers of playing around at great heights is ever present, should a snake fall too far it tumbles right off the edge of the world and loses one of its three lives. Similarly, any contact with the sharp and pointy-topped trees which grow in abundance around the world instills instant death.



OR 3-D ANT ATTACK ?

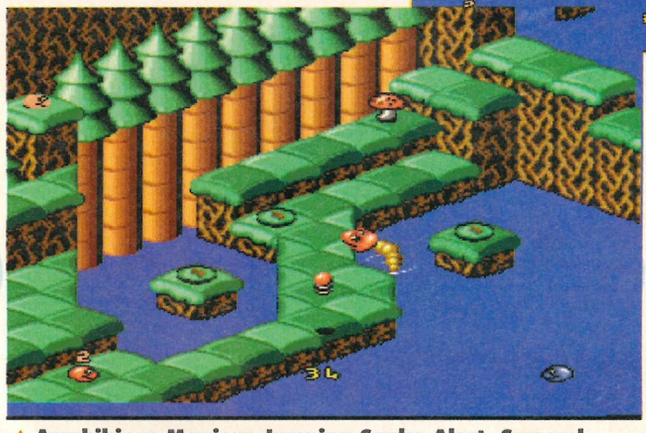


You may believe that the odds are stacked completely against the luckless slitherers, and indeed you'd be right. But there are a couple of helpful things dotted around Mellotron that help the snakes make their escape. These take the form of glowing, glimmering icons, each of which illustrates its use most effectively. For example, mini snake heads donate an extra continue, crash helmets provide invincibility, two opposing arrows reverse the controls (although that one's not very handy come to think of it) and clockwork keys speed up the snake. Collecting these is a simple matter of crawling over them.



OH NO, THAT WAS THEM, WAS IT?

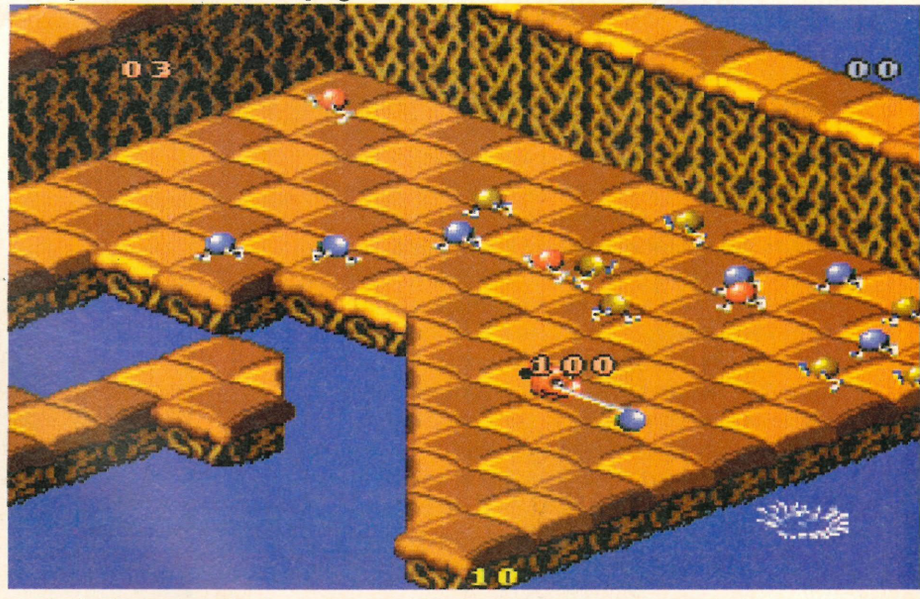
By now, anyone who's ever heard of Rare (who used to be called Ultimate and do really great Spectrum games in case you haven't been bored to death about that already) is probably frothing at the gills, especially if they've seen the NES version of this same title. Is this sort of worrying behaviour justifiable? Well, nearly. The original game has certainly been faithfully translated; the levels and puzzles and enemies and Pibblies and all the rest. The action is now much faster and everything looks lovely. The colours are very bold without being garish and the chunky blocks give the game a nice solid feel. Sadly, some of the enemies are a bit on the titchy side and lack detail. However, as every cliche fan knows it's the gameplay that counts – so is it any good? Well, to tell the truth, it's a bit poor. The game design, the multitude of levels and the excellent two-player mode



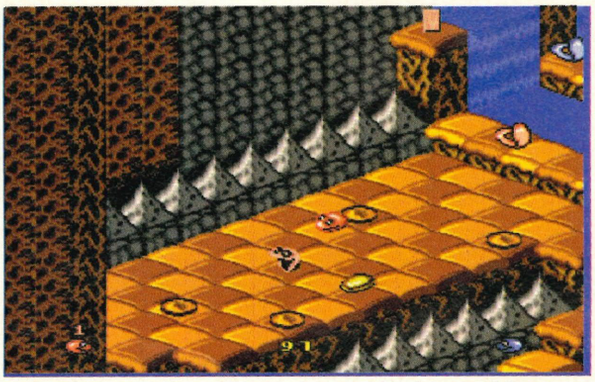
▲ **Amphibious Mexican Jumping Snake Alert. Scream!**

▼ **Stop this game, I want to get out – it's just too surreal!**





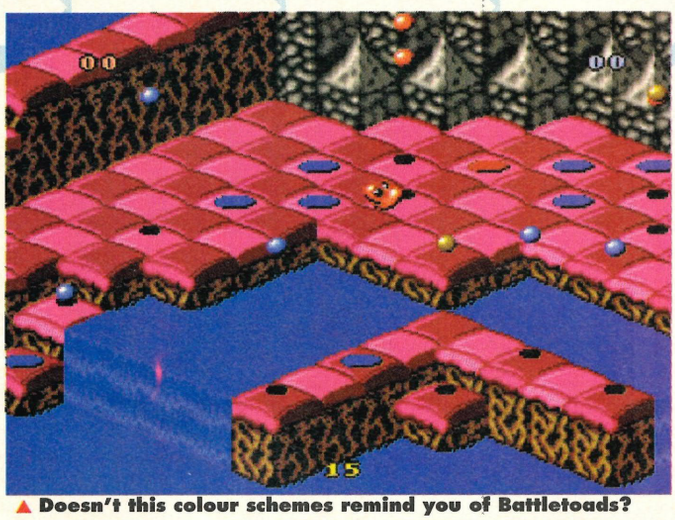
▲ **Well, this 3D platform environment looks more like a silk cushion to me.**



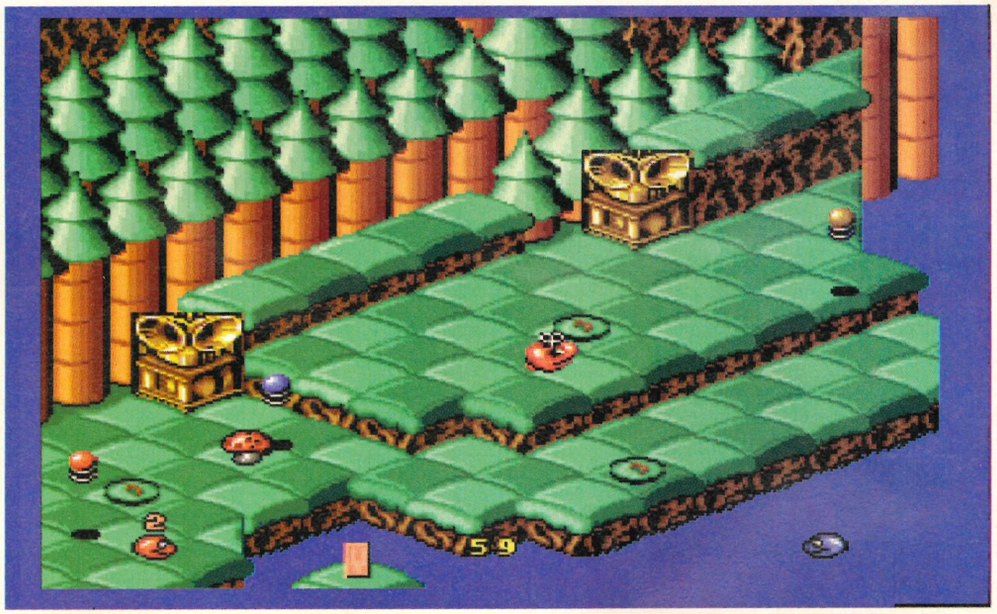
▲ Hang on a minute – I've just noticed something...



▲ ... the perspective on this game's all funny!

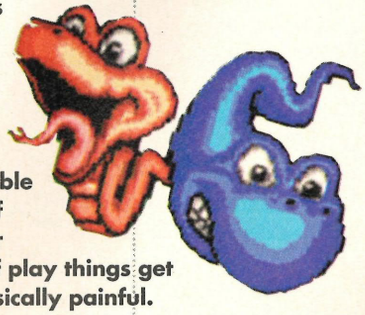


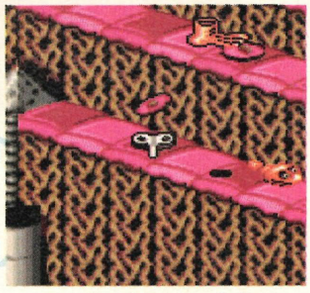
▲ Doesn't this colour schemes remind you of Battletoads?



▲ "Wicked sound system, guys – where's the rave?"

are all brill, but the mechanics let the side down. For some reason the perspective on Snake, Rattle and Roll is wrong. Everything looks fine until you try a jump near a wall or a steep drop only to find yourself flying off in the wrong direction to certain doom, which is particularly frustrating. Mind you, this may have something to do with the other problem with the game: the controls are completely crap. Do not ever attempt to play this title with a joypad unless you fancy severely straining your thumb with the sheer effort of trying to get your snake to go in a straight line - it's pretty much impossible. Even with a joystick it's still a recipe for aching hands. Those slippery serpents seem to have a mind of their own and resist your every attempt at making them do what you want. This ruins what could so easily have been one of the great Megadrive classics. Snake, Rattle and Roll is pretty enjoyable for a short period of time, but sadly after extended periods of play things get frustrating and physically painful.





▲ It's that foot again!

THE SECOND OPINION



JAZ

The original NES version features brilliant gameplay which has somehow been lost in the translation to Megadrive. The snakes are very tricky to control, and since much of the game requires pixel-perfect jumps around corners and leaping from tiny platform to tiny platform, this lack of precise control makes the game immensely frustrating. Especially when you realise that the collision detection on the edge of platforms is also extremely dodgy - I lost count how many times the snake fell to its doom when it looks as though it should be safe. It's a real shame, because everything else is very nice: the graphics are appealingly colourful, the music is jolly and the basic game design is excellent. If you can put up with the frustration, Snake, Rattle 'n' Roll certainly offers originality and challenge - but I don't think many will...

PIBBLIES WIBBLE BUT THEY DON'T FALL DOWN

There are two clear factions of Nibbly Pibbly. The majority are the modern, progressive Nibblies found sprouting from Pibbly Generators, which look a bit like Siamese French horn twins. Once they've popped out they generally laze around on the floor for a bit before moving on. The other Nibblies in the game are the wild, back-to-nature types. These are much harder to find, hiding as they do in their burrows. The only way to get them out is to bite the trapdoor entrance to their dwelling, thus causing the house-proud Pibble to leap out to see just what is bally well going on, by jove. However, having lived in a harsh environment all their lives, these Pibblies have the sense to have it away on their toes like Billy-o when they see a snake, thus making them harder to catch.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION 76%
Pretty sparse, but at least there are some options.

GRAPHICS 81%
Great backdrops, but some sprites lack detail.

SOUND 79%
Jolly tunes and crummy effects.

SHORT TERM PLAY 82%
Great fun in short bursts, but controls are frustrating.

LONG TERM PLAY 68%
Highly challenging - but will you and your joypad take it?

OVERALL 71
Could have been brilliant but is sadly let down by lack of proper control.

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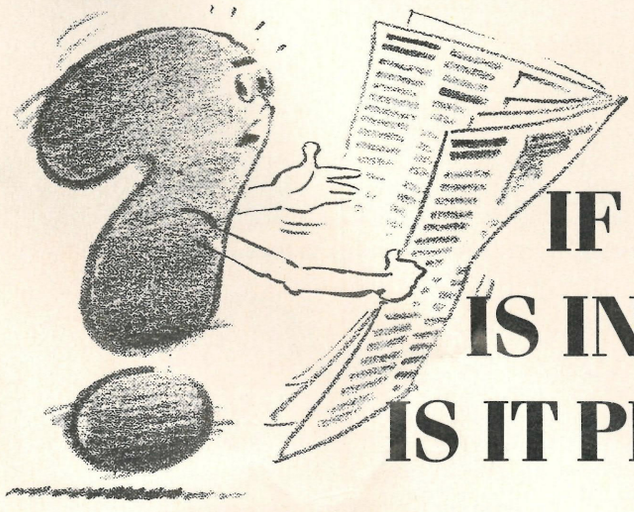
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MEGA ARCA

SEGA UNVEIL VIRTUA FIGHTER AND VIRTUA STAR WARS!

In their continuing quest for coin-op supremacy, Sega have unveiled a host of new arcade machines at the Jamma Coin Operated Show in Tokyo. This is where all the latest coin-op are revealed first, and MegaTech was there to find out what we'll be playing this time next year...

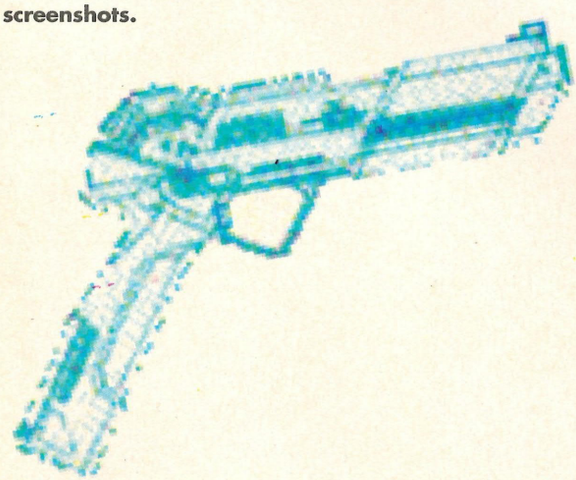


▲ **Sega's new Quazar-style set-up in action.**

VIRTUA FIGHTING

Quite easily the most impressive game at the show was Sega's potential Street Fighter beater, Virtua Fighters. The machine features the fastest, most fluid polygon graphics ever seen in an arcade machine, whilst delivering one of the most playable fighting games around. When we saw it, the game was still far from complete, but it was apparent from the crowds surrounding it that this is going to be big news when it finally hits the arcades.

A number of fighters are at the player's disposal and – as can be expected in these days of SF2 and Mortal Kombat – each features a variety of special moves. In a way, Virtua Fighting is the next logical stage after Mortal Kombat, with lifelike personalised characters and plenty of challenge. What next? Actually getting hit by the machine?! Unfortunately, Sega had a complete ban on photographs of the machine, but as soon as we can we'll print some screenshots.



VIRTUA STAR WARS



The other Sega star of the show came in the form of Virtua Star Wars (although the name may change). Even though it was only 20% complete, the short demo featured the famous trench scene, with the player avoiding laser turrets and TIE Fighters as they sped towards the Death Star's weak spot – a tiny exhaust port.

Although the game is a long way from completion, the trench scene looked fantastic and hordes of people were clamouring for a look. If the whole game looks as good and plays as well as this one scene, Virtua Star Wars could prove to be a real coin-gobbler. Unfortunately, the Sega photo-ban extended to this too. Oh well...

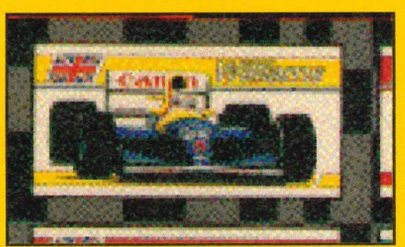
DE SPECIAL

F1 SUPER LAP

Sega's sequel to Virtua Racing – F1 Super Lap – was also revealed for the first time. It has already been snapped up as the official arcade game of the Formula 1 World Championship. Coo! Actually, calling this a sequel is a bit of a cop-out, as it's basically an enhanced version of Virtua. Even so, Super Lap features state-of-the-art polygon graphics (which have already been superseded by Virtua Fighters) and some of the slickest racing gameplay ever. All the usual views are there, allowing the player to swoop around the car and enjoy the smooth 3D, and the sound is equally impressive with loads of engine roars and crashes. F1 Super Lap was a little disappointing if the truth be known, but it's still worth a look, just for its tweaked playability.



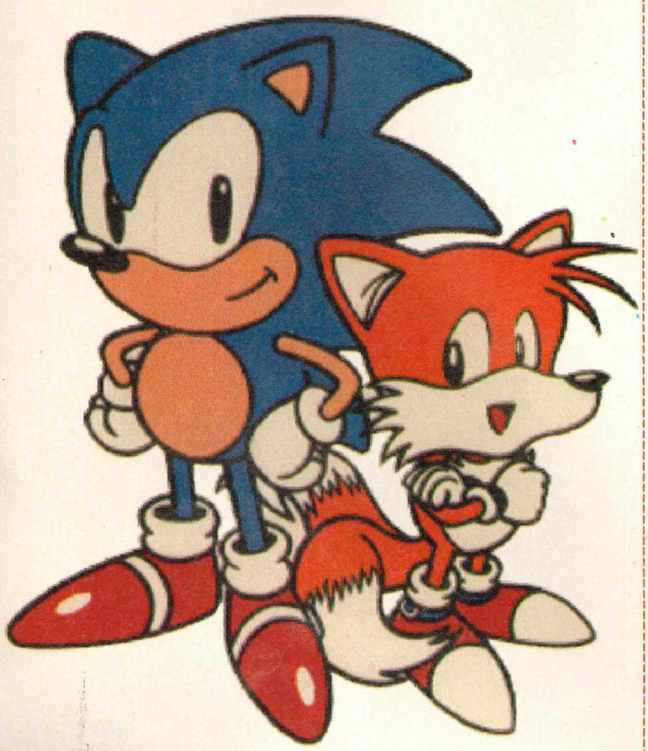
▲ **F1 Super Lap Machine – sequel to Virtua Racing coin-op.**



▲ **Slickest racing gameplay ever!**



▲ **State-of-the-art polygon graphics.**



SEGASONIC

Sega's blue-spiked hero heads for coin-opdom in Segasonic, and with two new pals in tow. Select your hero from Sonic, Ray or Mighty (any combination, or all three) and pit them against the worst Dr Robotnik can throw your way in this diagonally-scrolling rush 'em up. The three characters are very similar, but each features an individual personality. It's a dash for survival across Robotnik's seven-stage world of hazards and traps, followed by an escape sequence when Robotnik finally bites the bullet.

Surprisingly, Segasonic uses a trackball control method – you frantically spin said appliance to propel Sonic and his pals across the screen. There are too many features in the game to recount at length, but one of the best is a Temple Of Doom send-up where Sonic grabs hold of a falling rope bridge, smacks into the cliff and climbs up the other side. Definitely one of the best coin-ops in quite a while, with fantastic graphics and incredible attention to detail. Prepare to part with serious silver.

SEGA UNVEILS QUAZAR CLONE

Hot off Sega's production line is a Quazar-style set up which should retail at less than fifty quid a pop. For this less-than-considerable sum, you get a nifty light-sensitive headpiece and a fairly big gun. Basically, the headpiece works as a sort of targetting device (complete with Head-Up Display), whilst doubling up as target area for any low-life street scum tooled up with the same piece of kit. The system works up to a range of 55 metres, and features extra goodies like a shots counter and a game select switch.

It all looks a bit of a laugh, but Sega staff wouldn't allow the prototype to leave their stand. The currently-unnamed gadget could prove one of the best-selling toys this Christmas, and will go on sale in Japan soon at 5,600 yen (about £45) with a discount double-set retailing for 11,600 yen (£90). With a little luck, these will hit UK stores in time for Christmas. We'll keep you posted.

BURNING RIVAL, LOONY TUNES, ALIEN 3

If Virtua Fighting and the rest aren't enough for you, Sega are also set to unleash three more coin-ops. Burning Rival is an adequate Streetfighter clone, while Loony Toons is a horizontally-scrolling race against time, which sees those tiny and toony characters off around the world. The best of the also-rans, though, has got to be Alien 3 – The Gun, in which you get to blow away the acid-blooded scumsuckers with a full-size replica of the pulse-laser Ripley used in Aliens! It's very similar to T2: The Arcade Game, but features buckets more gore – not bad for a film based on the tamest of the trilogy!

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



A review in which MARK HOLMES gets involved in a bit of fruity witchcraft tries to save a whole bunch of fluffy-wuffy bunny wabbits and ends up talking like a cross between Elmer Fudd and Jonathan Ross.

WIZ 'N'

BY: PSYGNOSIS

8-MEG

STYLE

PLATFORM

PRICE £39.99

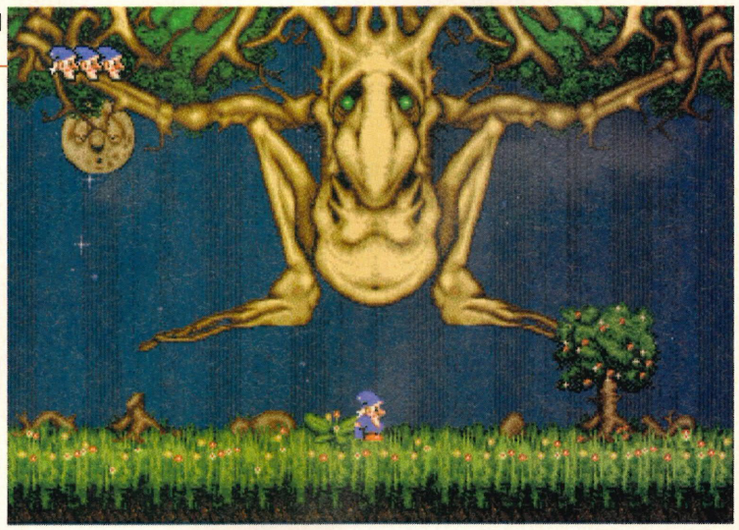
PLAYERS 1-2

SKILL SETTINGS LOTS

RELEASE DATE

OCT 1993

Wabbits. That's wight – I said wabbits. Cute and fluffy-wuffy, the little bweeders are wesponsible for this wittle game weaching your Megadrive. Why? Well, it seems that the two stars of the game – the dwarf-like chap Wizzy and the witch-type hag Lizzy – have lost their pet wabbits after a bit of dodgy sorcery went wrong. The bunnies (and there's a hell of a lot of 'em – you know what wabbits are like) ended up scattered throughout many different faraway lands. But instead of making an emergency call to the WSPCA like any wesponsible pet-owner would, the duo decide to take things into their own hands and go off on a mission to save the little thumpers from the clutches of the evil magic guardians who wule the lands they've been accidentally twansported to. So that's the scenario. Are you weady for the weal weview? Good, now I can stop witing in this widiculous Elmer Fudd accent.



▲ The Evil Oak – one of the spooky World Guardians.

WIZ OR LIZ ?

Wiz 'n' Liz can be played as a one or two-player game. Select a one-player game and you're presented with a series of options: choose between playing either Wizzy or Lizzy, select the difficulty you require from a choice of six, or enter a previously-gained password. Then select Play and you're straight into Homeworld, the place where you return after each level to mix up spells and make use of any special features you may have created (more about that later). Hop through the Exit and you're onto the rollercoaster level select screen, where you can choose the world you want to play first.

Each world has a different background, ranging from the snowy wastes of Snow World to the green and Stonehengey Grass World, and they all look gorgeous, with lots of neat little graphic touches. However, you won't get the chance to really appreciate the visual loveliness of the surroundings because you'll be too busy rushing around like Linford Christie with his arse on fire, trying to save the wabbits...



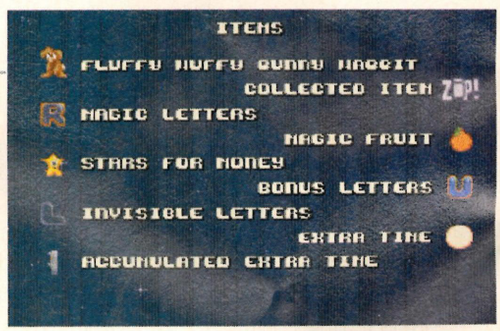
▲ Wiz somersaults around the level at an incredible speed, picking up magic letters as he goes.



SPEED FREAK SPECIAL

The first few times I played Wiz 'n' Liz, I didn't have any instructions so I didn't really know what I was doing. That didn't stop me having a great time though, because the speed at which your tiny character careers around the screen really is breath-taking. The Psygnosis chaps claim that Wiz 'n' Liz are the fastest controllable sprites in the business – slower than Sonic 2 in superspin mode, but then he's not fully controllable – and judging by the eye-boggling speed at which they zip around, I have no reason not to believe them.

I had Wizzy hurtling around the screen, popping wabbits and desperately trying to grab the pick-ups that floated out of them, mindlessly following the help messages that come up on the screen, and managed to get a fair way into the game without really understanding what I was doing. "Hmmm... this is very fast and a lot of fun, but there's not much to it," I thought. How wrong I was.



▲ Wow! All these things to collect!



LIZ



▲ They're off! Wiz takes an early lead, zapping through the wabbits and picking up the letters that float out of them, like a dwarf possessed.



▲ But Liz is fighting back – she's caught up with Wiz and they're level-pegging. But cheeky Wiz is about to nick Liz's 'Q' – that 'll set her back a bit!



▲ Wiz's letter-nicking activities have paid off – he's saved enough wabbits to open his Exit door, while Liz lags behind, desperately hunting her last wabbit.

WORD UP

On reading the instructions, everything became clear. Running over the wabbits causes them to release different icons. Some of these take the form of letters, which, if collected, will automatically fill up the relevant letter in the strange word at the top of the screen. Apparently, these are all real words, albeit obscure ones like 'STROKLE' and 'SUMPTER', and the idea is to pick up all the letters that make up the relevant word.

This is the first step to completing the level, but as soon as you've completed the magic word, your next task is to save enough bunnies to get off the level. A counter at the top of the screen tells you how many more wabbits you need to save, and when you've saved them, you'll have to find the Exit door and hop through it. This will either take you through to the next round in the world you've chosen (worlds have either two, three or four rounds, depending on the difficulty level you've selected) or, if you've completed all the rounds on that world, back to Homeworld where you can get up to a bit of spellcasting. After completing eight worlds, you'll come up against a Guardian, which you have to defeat using magic – these range from the wimpy Freaky Flower to the well stroppy Deadly Dragon.



TIME-BOMB WABBITS

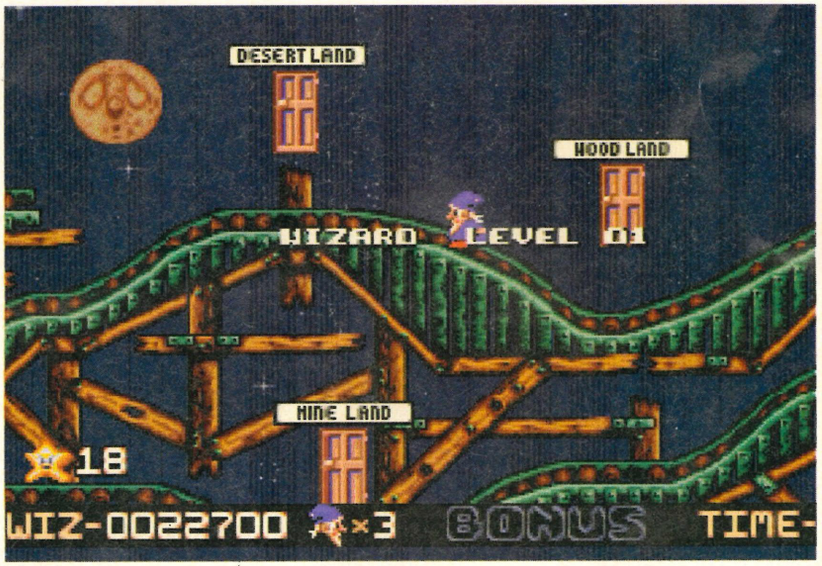
The fact that you're playing against the clock makes things even more manic, and if you're really pushing the time limit, you get an onscreen countdown. This is when things get really tense – you can end up speeding around the level, desperately trying to find the last few wabbits as the final few seconds tick away. You might strike lucky and manage to run over the wabbit which gives out the glowing time ball, buying you an extra 30 seconds of time, but managing to actually pick it up while you're zapping around is not an easy task. Some other extra time icons, giving you an extra 10 seconds, can be picked up,



▲ But Lizzy storms back to win! While Wiz flounders, she picks up her last wabbit and leaps through her Exit like a flash (too fast to capture with our screen grabber, in fact!)

but they'll only give you extra time in the next round.

Things get even more crazed in the later levels, because the wabbits start to explode. Luckily, any wabbit about to blow up starts flashing, and your little character will gain a little flashing fairy which automatically points to any bunny in immediate danger of exploding. If you don't manage to save the wabbit before it goes up, it's a great laugh watching it balloon up and pop, but it's not so much fun when you realise that each time a rabbit explodes, you lose all the letters you've collected and have to start collecting them again from scratch. Fail to collect enough wabbits in any round and you'll lose one of your three lives.



▲ Wahay! It's the roller-coaster world selection screen.

SEGA CENSORSHIP!

This a scene you won't see in the officially-released version of the game. Pressing Down and B on the original version made Wiz or Liz bend over for a quick release of methane. However, when Sega saw this pump-powered sequence, they ordered the offending fart to be removed from the game. Boooo!





▲ Homeworld – put the fruit in the cauldron and cook up some spells.

WIZ 'N' LIZ

It's the two-player game, I suspect, that will be responsible for keeping this game slotted into Megadrives for a while to come. The screen is split, with Wizzy on the top and Lizzy on the bottom, and basically it's a headlong race to complete your magic word, save your wabbits and get through your exit first. The wabbits are colour-coded, so you can only pop your own particular colour, but beware – once a wabbit is popped and a letter floats out of it, your opponent can steal it from you, which makes things even more of a frantic scramble and adds a bit of needle to the proceedings.

The two-player options are also superbly tailored to allow the game to be played between anyone from a complete novice to a wabbit-hardened veteran. Each seperate player can choose from nine different skill levels, and there's a choice of fast or slow modes for both players too, so there's more than enough scope for handicapping. The number of worlds that have to be won for one player to emerge victorious can also be toggled between three to nine and the amount of lives each player starts off with can be set between one and nine too, so contests can range from sudden death challenges to long battles.

IS IT A WHIZZ ?

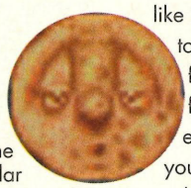
I really enjoyed playing Wiz 'n' Liz. The combination of the blinding speed, original game concept, gorgeous graphics, increasingly challenging gameplay and the polished but loadsafun feel of the thing gave me a really refreshing buzz in these days of thrown-together formula games. There are loads of other smart little extra touches in the game which I haven't got the space here to describe which, along with the masses of spells, sub-games and special effects, really add to the fun and help to fill out what is a unique but pretty basic game concept. It's the kind of game that will appeal to players of all ages, the perfect game to load up when all your relatives come round for Christmas. Now you'll have to excuse me, I'm off for another go...

COOKING UP SPELLS



As I said, once you've completed a world, you can hop back to Homeworld. This is where the fruit icons that float from some wabbits when you've been playing the previous round pay dividends. If you've managed to pick up enough of these fruity pieces, they will magically reappear, hanging from the trees in Homeworld. Grab two pieces of fruit and throw them into the cauldron and – shazam! – you've cooked up a spell.

There are 14 different fruit to be had, giving a staggering 105 different spells. The effects of this strange fruit magic include: allowing you to access sub-games such as Space Invaders (with wabbits as the invaders), Wabbitoids (yes, you've guessed it – asteroids with wabbits) and Splat Those Dudes (in which you throw tomatoes at the programmers of Puggsy); in-game effects such as turning all the wabbits red or giving your character a little friend (just like Sonic and Tails); and one particular spell opens the door to the shop, where you can buy or sell your accumulated fruit to enable you to cook up different spells. You'll only find out which fruit cocktails produce which spells by experience – you don't get any recipe suggestions – so you'll be experimenting for ages with different concoctions, and believe me, some of the results come as a real surprise!



THE SECOND OPINION

TOM GUISE



I must confess to never having been a great fan of Psygnosis games. The whole, over polished, Amiga-style graphical look they all possess has always put me off. However, although the graphics in Wiz and Liz are about as Psygnosian as you could imagine, this game actually appeals to me because it's just great fun to play. Racing around, saving rabbits might seem like awfully simple gameplay and it is, but using all the spells and finding all the bonus levels will take ages. What's more, the speed of the game is incredible and that really comes into it's own in the superb two-player game. Just beating your opponent to the exit really gets the adrenalin flowing. However, playable and fun as Wiz and Liz is, the sheer lack of depth makes me question how long the appeal will last.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 88%
Well thought-out options. A very polished product.

GRAPHICS 89%
Visually gorgeous. Loads of neat touches. Incredibly fast.

SOUND 85%
Tunes just on the cool side of cutesy. Unremarkable sound FX.

SHORT TERM PLAY 85%
The speed and fun gameplay hook you instantly.

LONG TERM PLAY 87%
Challenging one-player + smart two-player modes give longevity.

OVERALL 86
Very fast, visually superb and lots of fun, Wiz 'n' Liz is another good 'un from Psygnosis.

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MEGA-CD REVIEW



BY:HUMAN ENTERTAINMENT

MEGA-CD

STYLE

SHOOT 'EM UP

PRICE IMPORT

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 4

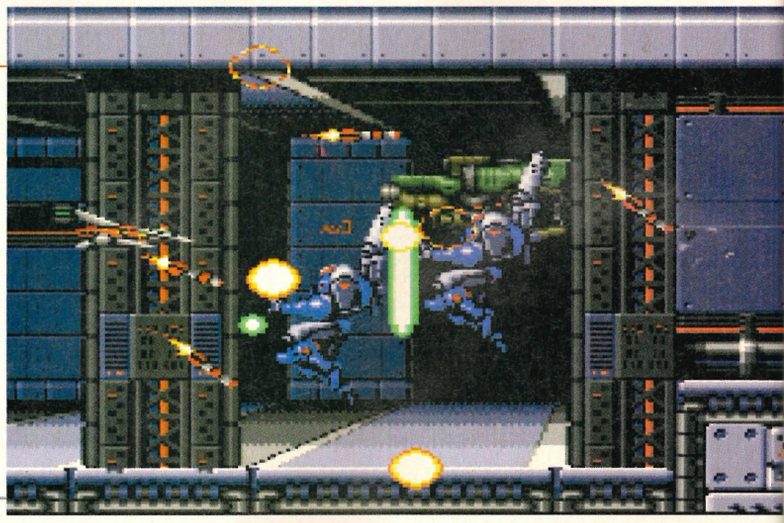
RELEASE DATE

OUT NOW

"He's alright." "He's 'armless, really." "He's got a lot of bills to pay." Just three of the things being said about PAUL DAVIES at the moment. But is he as 'armless as they say? Not at all — he has Bari-Arm to review!

BARI-

Just about every month, a game happens along that is truly nothing very special at all, and this is one such cart. Bari-Arm is the first game to go by the name of Bari-Arm and, in the ground-breaking originality department, that's about as much credit as the game gets. But let's not harbour too much contempt for what is quite a fine rip-off of every single shoot 'em up known to the games-playing public. No. Instead, let's discover how successful the Human team have been in blending a cocktail of all the best bits cloned from the mediocre shooters of recent years.

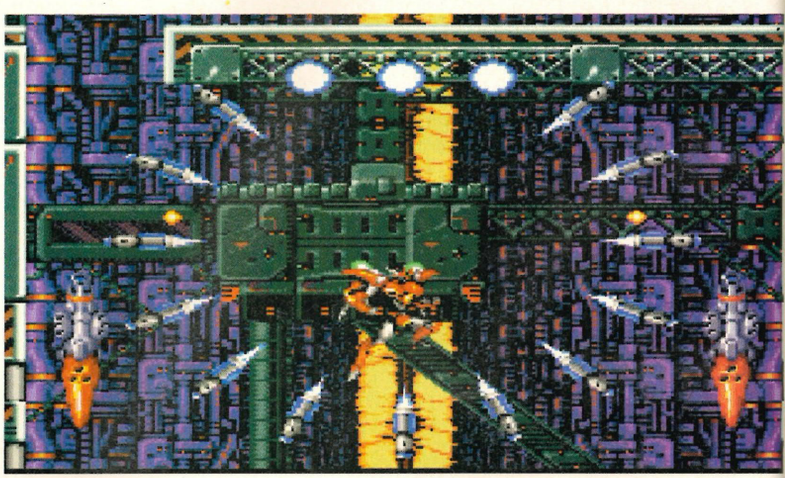


▲ Okay, so what if you can't see what' going on – just shoot!

PREDICTABLY BIZARRE

Even the plot to the game is predictably bizarre. It's AD 2192 and the Independent Military Nation, Zeus, is planning some kind of Universe domination fiasco. Working from their base, called 'Olympos', nestled in Saturn's rings, the IMN develop a breakthrough in intergalactic arms technology, the Geo-system — capable of destroying entire galaxies in one life-consuming blast! Zeus's flagship battle-cruiser, the Guzanji-owl, is enlisted to carry the system straight into the heart of the Earth's United Nation colonies on the planet Jupiter!

It looks like certain disaster for the UN. Their only hope of reversing fate is to develop an effective Geo-system of their own. Bari-Arm is the answer to their prayers. A wicked space-fighter convertible, the Bari-Arm is empowered with the latest in Geo-system advancements. With a bit of luck, the scum back at Olympos don't have a hope...



▲ Ever get the feeling you're surrounded?



FAMILIARITIES BREED CONTEMPT

For the benefit of the uninitiated, a successful shoot 'em up possesses three vital ingredients. The first and most important essential is a cool ship. Nobody wants to engage the enemy piloting something that resembles Oscar's dustbin out of Sesame Street! The spectacular lack of success enjoyed by the blaster Heavy Nova is a case in point. Consequently Bari-Arm, with its cool fighter, is a bit of a masterpiece. Secondly, the enemy is required to employ enormous 'boss' characters that exist to give the player a hard time and to signify the end of each stage. What's the use in battling through rank upon rank of enemies only to find a pea-sized, flickery sprite awaiting at the end of the level?! Last and, quite frankly, least, the player's cool ship is expected to pack a wide range of futuristic weaponry with which to deal with the enemy. The weapons in Bari-Arm are impressive enough to meet the grade. Obviously the Bari-Arm market research department have done their work well. But although the game makes the grade in all the right departments, there's a distinct lack of any original features or ideas.



▲ Missile salvo mayhem.

ARM



BARI-ARMED TO THE TEETH

There are four weapons to choose from. The Thunder Cracker is the most basic of all and it's this weapon with which the Bari-Arm begins its mission. Satellite bombs are launched from the top and bottom of the Bari-Arm and these prove to be the most damaging weapons, although they do require tight targeting skills. It's easier to use the Chase Cannon, as the missiles it fires are heat-seeking, which leaves the pilot to concentrate solely on dodging enemy fire. Most disappointing of all is the Burning Wave – its dynamic title leads you to expect more than the feeble laser show displayed by Bari-Arm with this weapon on board!

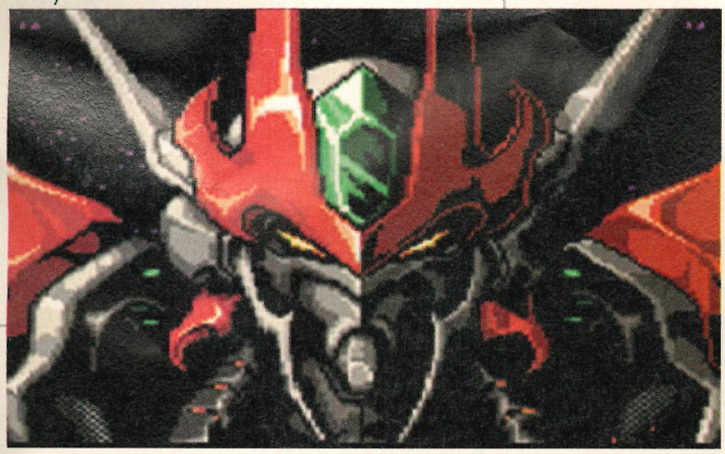
ARMS UPGRADING

If all this isn't enough to satisfy the ardent blast-freak, the opportunity to upgrade each weapon to three times its original power certainly is. By collecting POW icons, the Thunder Cracker develops backwards-firing capabilities, the Satellite Bombs account for a much wider area and the Chase Cannon seeks and destroys practically everything on screen, if not some enemies that are out of view! The Burning Wave, though improved, remains decidedly unimpressive.

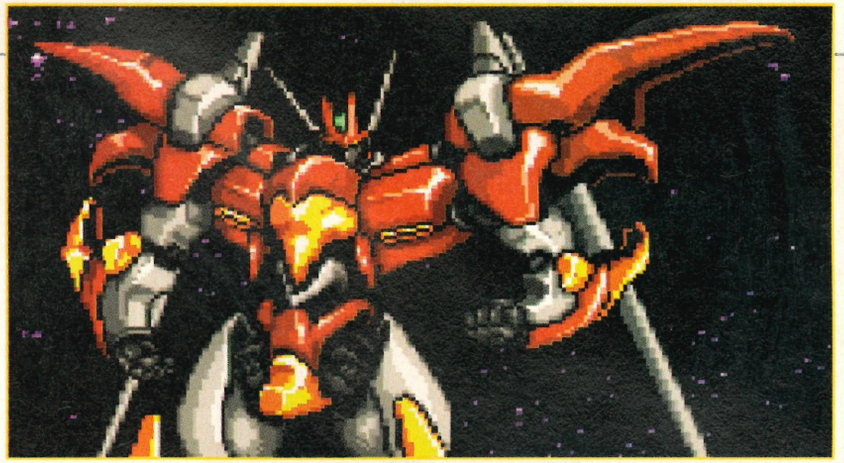
All weapons are afforded extra boost by means of a charge meter. Should the Bari-Arm cease fire for a short period, the meter rises until the trigger is pressed once more. At this point the full, devastating effect of the relevant weapon is inflicted on the enemy. Both the Satellite Bomb and Thunder Cracker's special attacks lasts for a split second, whereas the Burning Wave and Chase Cannon's onslaught extends to the amount of time it takes for the charge meter to deplete of all energy. Astonishingly, the Burning Wave's laser attack here is probably the best available.

CHOOSE A COLOUR

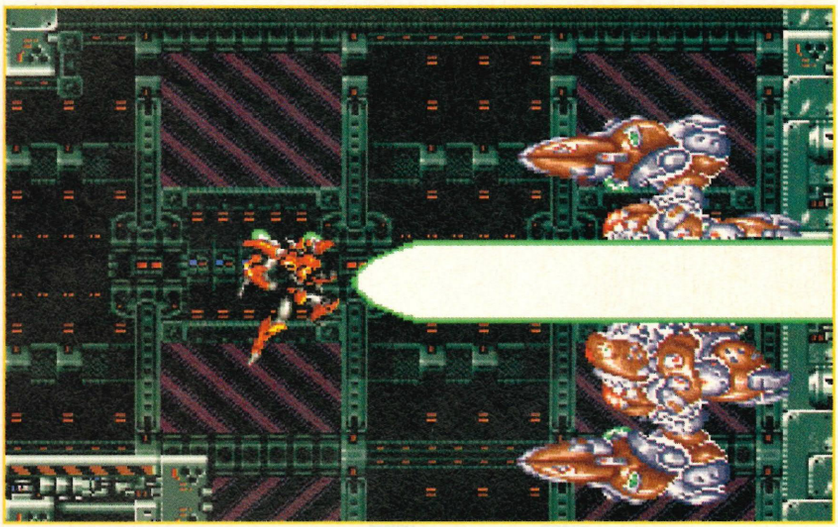
Selection between weapons is based largely on opportunity. The option to switch from Thunder Cracker to Chase Cannon, for example, is a case of collecting the corresponding orb. Yellow orbs provide the Bari-Arm with the Thunder Cracker, green donates the Burning Wave sadness, blue heralds the Satellite Bombs and red selects the Chase Cannon and all it's homing-missile powers. The orbs also dummy as POW icons, should the colour of the orb correspond with the current weapon in use by the Bari-Arm.



▲ **Photo from Bari-Arm's holiday snapshot album: Clacton, AD 2033.**



▲ **Bari-Arm: He's a big, strapping lad, and no mistake!**



▲ **Bari takes a part-time job as a flying advertisement puller.**



▲ **Look at that shooting – lovely grouping from the robotic boy.**

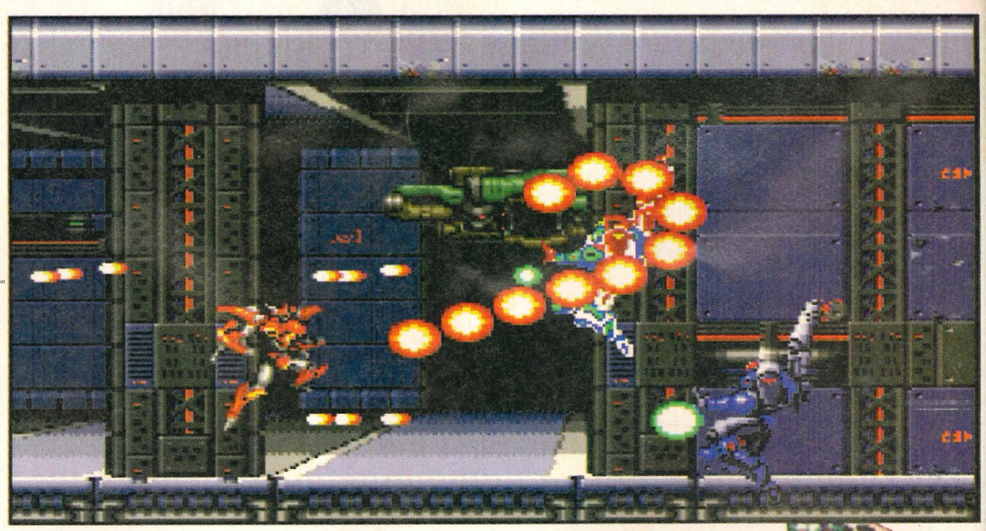
BARI, HEY, BARI

There are two ways to make Bari-Arm put in an appearance – either picking up a grey orb or powering-up three times with the POW icons. Whatever the means, the arrival of this great robot-suit gives the player the luxury of one extra hit before losing the ship altogether. Otherwise the Bari-Arm has no special functions, except for looking rather good.

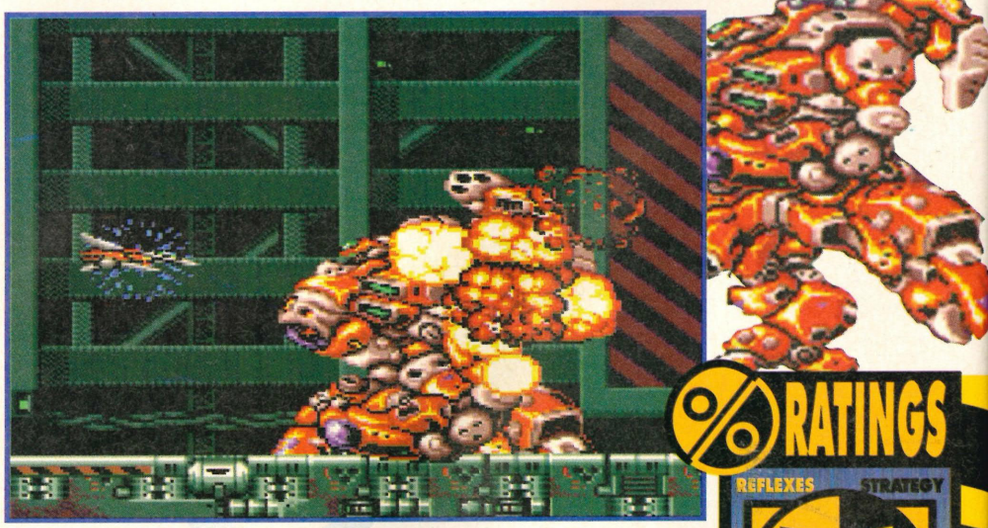
AND...ACTION?

As the pilot of this state-of-the-art fighting machine, there's surely the possibility of some hard-and-fast shoot 'em up action in the offering... surely? Well, surely not as it happens. The six waves of attack faced by the Bari-Arm are never overwhelmingly fantastic and only occasionally raise an eyebrow. Certainly there's nothing in the game to match the incredible effects witnessed in Thunderforce IV, nor the inventiveness discovered in the later levels of Bio Hazard.

The initial stages of the game are very similar in structure, and it isn't until stage five that the environment begins to have any effect on Bari at all. Stage two's ascent through the Gravity Pagoda is nothing new and the high-speed rally through the Zeus Fleet is bettered beyond doubt by the armada in Thunderforce IV. The Scramble/Aeroblasters high-velocity gauntlet-run through the tunnels is all that excites as far as inanimate obstacles are concerned. all the enemy sprites are quite stupid too – posing as sitting ducks, spouting clumsy fire in set directions. Once again it's the boss encountered at the end of the Moon Base in stage five that presents the first real problems to any serious player.



▲ **"Oh no – I forgot about the boomerang effect. Aieeeeee!"**



▲ **The mother of all explosions just had a baby.**



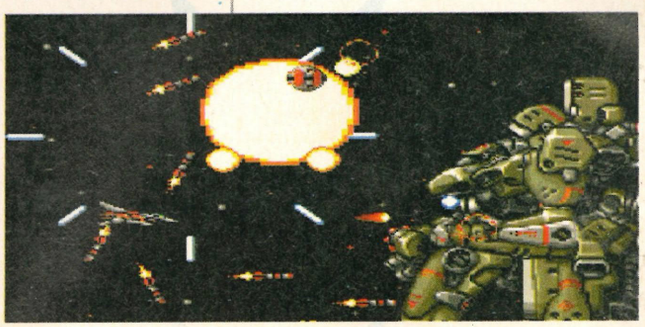
▲ **'Ere, it's one of them UFO-type things, innit?**

AS ABOVE, SO BELOW

At least there's room to explore and discover targets missed during previous sorties. In most cases, the play area extends above and below what is originally perceived as the outer limits. Players with an exploratory mind have the chance of discovering all manner of secluded icons that may benefit the Bari-Arm in its quest. By the same token, a player also forfeits weapon advancements or even safer routes to the encounter with a stage's boss.

ONLY HUMAN

Of course Human are a reputable company, and their eforts have saved Bari-Arm from being a complete disaster. There is obviously a great deal of enthusiasm behind this work and it shines through in the presentation. The response of the ship is smooth and movement of all the sprites is fluid. Against its contemporaries, Bari-Arm is hard pushed to make an impression. Placed alongside its Mega-CD contemporaries, Bari-Arm fairs especially badly. Though it is a polished product its lack of originality fails to raise it high enough for any serious recommendation from me.



▲ **"I love the smell of burning spaceships in the morning."**

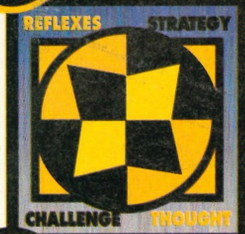
THE SECOND OPINION

Mark Holmes



Another Mega-CD deep space shoot 'em up? I'm afraid so, and a not-very original one at that, even as far as these type of games go. There's no doubt that Bari-Arm looks the part – as Paul has said, all the right elements are there – but the problem is that's all that is there. You got it – it's formula spacey/weapony/blasty time again, folks, with nothing to really set it apart from the massed ranks of all the other games of this type. If you're the kind of Mega-CD-owning person who's bang into Anime-style robots and anything featuring spacey Japanese backgrounds and sprites, you might well enjoy this particular blaster, as the graphics are of a high standard, even if the style is hackneyed. Everybody else should avoid this run-of-the-mill effort.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 91%
Anime influenced robots and spaceships explode into action. Very impressive.

GRAPHICS 82%
High standard sprites and backgrounds, but well-worn designs.

SOUND 84%
Hard-rock music grunges away. Decent explosions/weapon effects.

SHORT TERM PLAY 71%
The game is appealing at first because of its impressive looks. Fluid controls.

LONG TERM PLAY 65%
A chore to play through once. A laborious second sitting is unlikely.

OVERALL 69
It's about time people began marking these by-products down for the imitations they are. So there you go!

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MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: TENGEN

8-MEG

STYLE

SHOOT 'EM UP

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1-4

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

OCT 1993



Remember when everyone wanted to own a Gauntlet machine? STEVE MERRETT does and now, thanks to those chaps at Tengen, he can return to his misspent youth without having to do a paper-round to amass the pile of ten pences required for the adventure of a lifetime.

GAUNTL

Back in 1985 a revolutionary one to four-player coin-op hit the arcades and swiftly became the biggest money-earning machine of all time. Indeed, it held that title for five years until the all-conquering Streetfighter II knocked it off the number one slot. It's a simple game – one to four players take control of either an elf, wizard, warrior or valkyrie, enter a never-ending series of overhead-viewed, multi-directionally scrolling dungeons and do battle with the denizens contained therein.

GHOULIES ON THE LOOSE

Survival is the name of the game, and finding the exit to each dungeon is the objective. Each player has a constantly shrinking amount of energy which is reduced even more every time he or she sustains a hit from a baddie. There's energy-giving food dotted around each screen along with other character-enhancing goodies, and grabbing them all is vital to keep the player healthy and battle-ready. And being ready for action is vital, because each dungeon is packed with enemies and enemy generators – getting to the pick-ups always means cutting a swathe through hordes of ghoulies, ghosties and monsters!

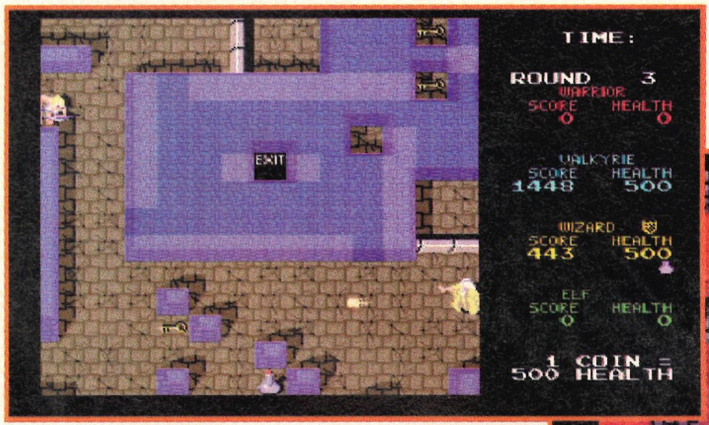
Tengen's Megadrive versionof this classic is absolutely arcade-perfect - especially as there's a facility to use the newly-released four-player tap for true arcade-style multi-player action! But it doesn't stop there. Gauntlet 4 goes several steps beyond the arcade machine with the addiction of new play modes and option screens which are the most comprehensive I've ever seen on an arcade conversion!

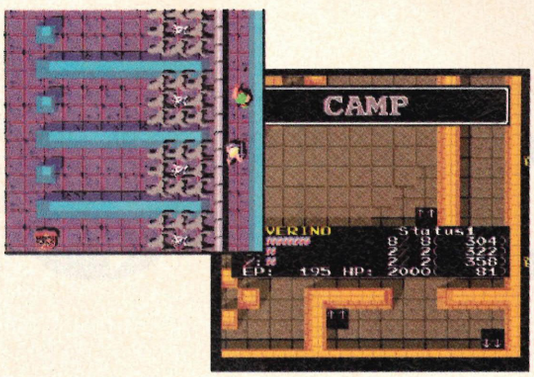


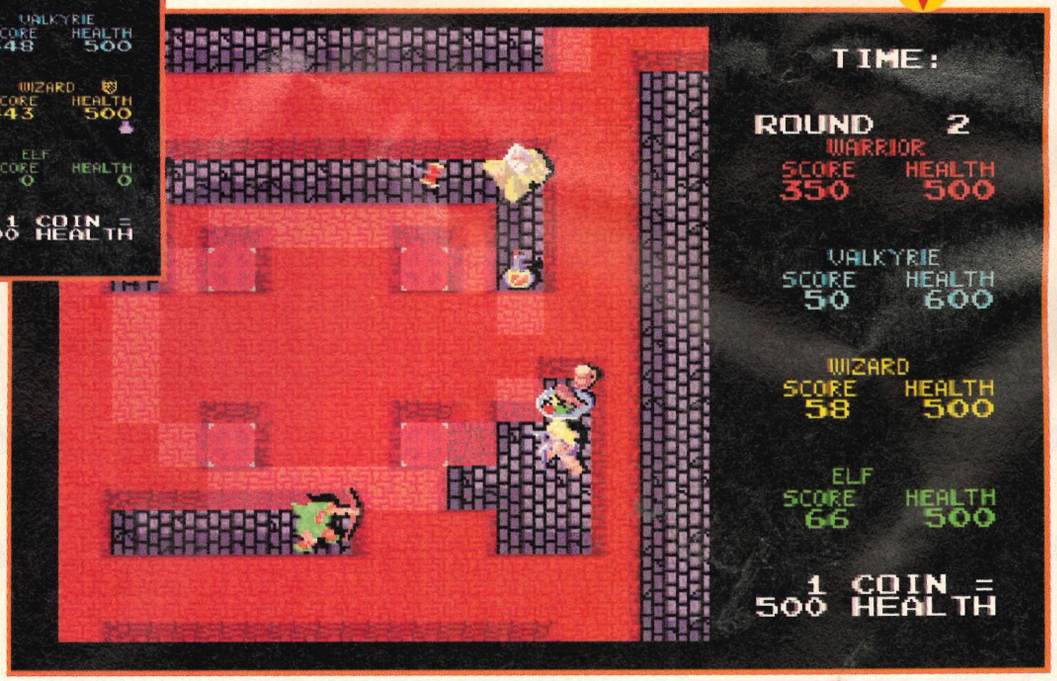
▲ The Valkyrie's looking fit and feisty...



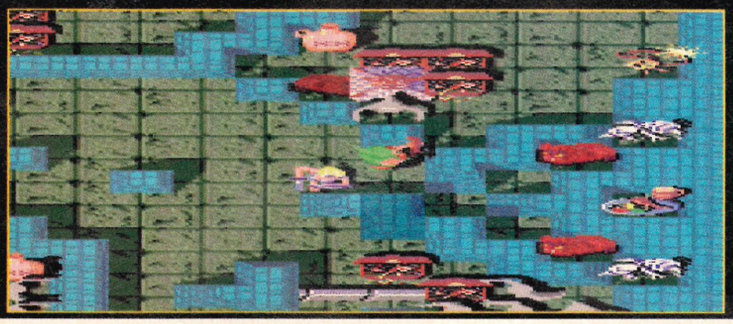
▲ ...and he's storming through Round 2!







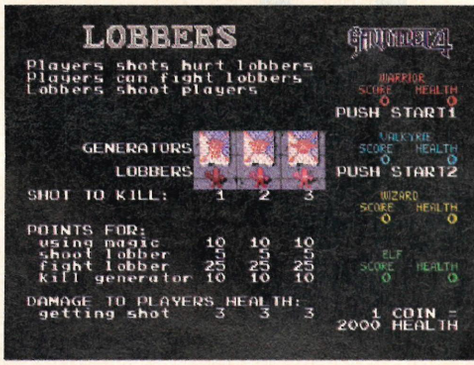
ET 4





IT'S THE QUEST

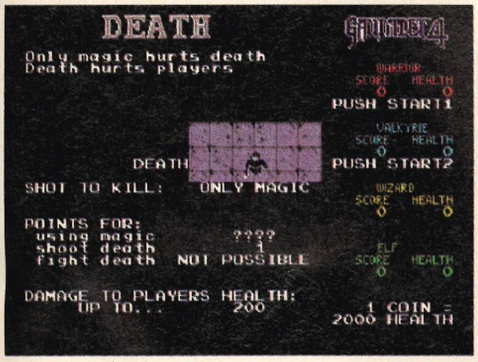
As well as the game's original hundred stages, Tengen have added another fifty in the shape of an arcade adventure-style Quest Mode set within four towers. There's also a very smart head-to-head Battle Mode, where players attempt to either kill each other (or at least force their opponents into an exit), and an ongoing Record Mode. However, it's the arcade version most people are concerned with, and I think it's pretty fair to say that you're not likely to see a better version than this.

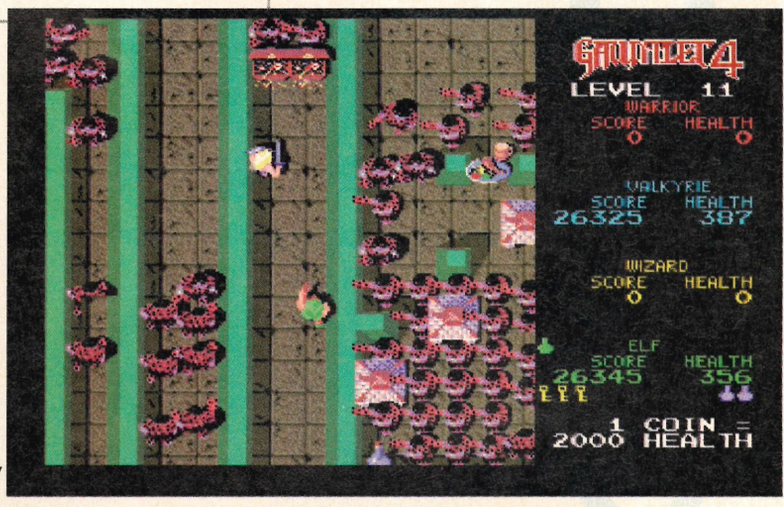


▲ **Remember these from the arcade game?**

THE A-TEAM

Each character has his or her own strengths and weaknesses. The Wizard is a dab hand with magic, and if he can grab one of the many magic potions littered throughout the game he's able to blast an entire screen clear of hostiles. The downside is that he's very weak at hand-to-hand combat and is best suited for stand-off conflict. The warrior is completely the opposite – very much at home in close-quarter combat, but an absolute gimp with magic. Elf is very fast, but his magic arrows are weaker that all the other characters' offensive weapons. However, he can console himself in the fact that he's second only to the wizard in the magic stakes. Valkyrie is a sound all-rounder – good with magic, packing a strong sword and a good ally in a melee, she is a Jacqueline of all trades and master of none.

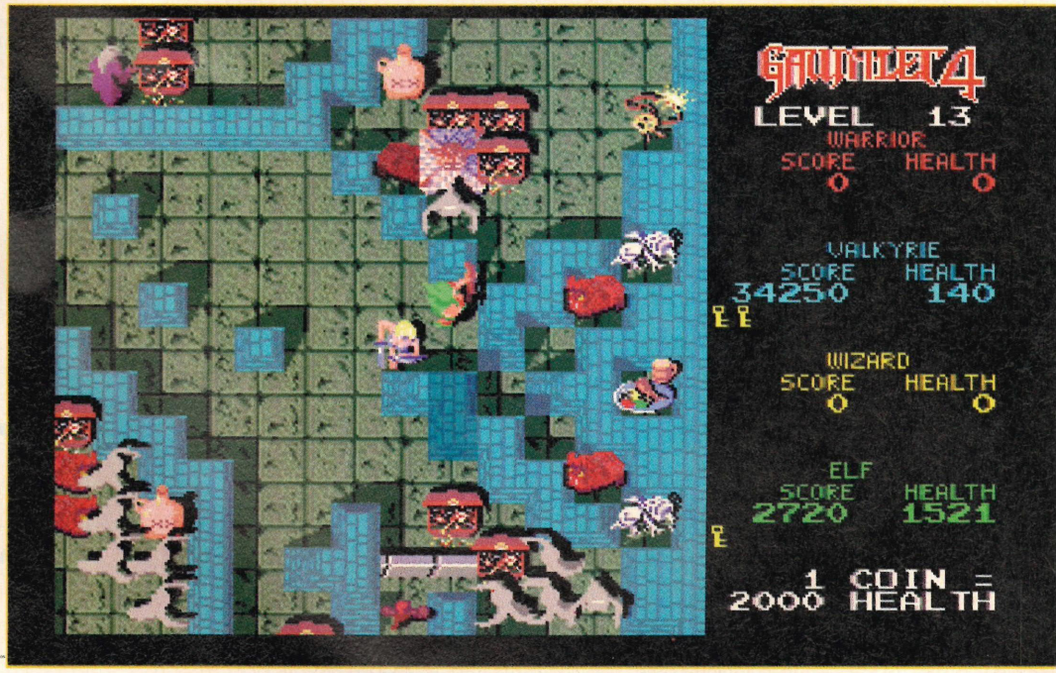




▲ **Level 11 and the pesky little elf edges into the lead.**

SPOT-ON CONVERSION

Players of the original arcade machine will find themselves instantly at home with this conversion – it's identical to the coin-op. Everything looks the same, the dungeon layouts are perfect, the baddies follow identical attack patterns and the gameplay is absolutely spot-on. There's only one thing that isn't quite right, and that's the addition of a soundtrack to the game. Granted, the music suits the action perfectly, but for purists there's only one option – turn off the BGM and have sound effects only. Then you really do have the arcade machine in your front room!



OH WHAT AN ATMOSPHERE

The action itself is flawless and in four-player mode (courtesy of the Sega Tap adaptor), the atmosphere generated by the bunch of MegaTech, NMS and Mean Machines delinquents who queued for a go was identical to the sort created by my friends and I when we played the game constantly when it first appeared in the arcades. As the group progressed through the game's dungeons, all the old calls and shouts instantly returned, as did Gauntlet selfishness - players who do things like rush and grab food when they don't need it, rather than leave it for one of the

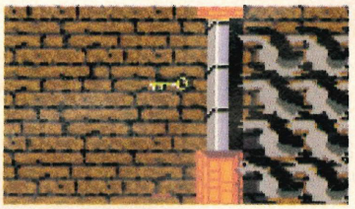
ailing members of the group, or grab potions when they're useless to them when they should let the Wizard snaffle them up! This is a true testament to Gauntlet's longevity and charm, and another example of just how well Tengen have recaptured the 'feel' of the original.

BUILT TO LAST

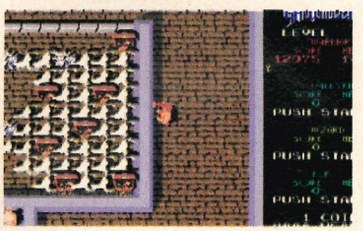
I could spout on about this for hours. It's very easy to look upon old games through rose-tinted specs, but Gauntlet really has stood the test of time. In terms of graphics, everything has been incorporated, as has the content. All the old faves - Lobbers, Death, potions, extra power-ups - have been included, and any tips you learnt from the coin-op will stand you in good stead here.

The sound, too, is nothing short of excellent, with dozens of samples, all of which add to the atmosphere. Basically, Gauntlet 4 is nothing short of excellent. Its Arcade Mode will win it a legion of fans, whilst the other two modes will ensure it endures as one of the longest-lasting Megadrive titles in your collection. A brilliant game, and one that warrants immediate attention.





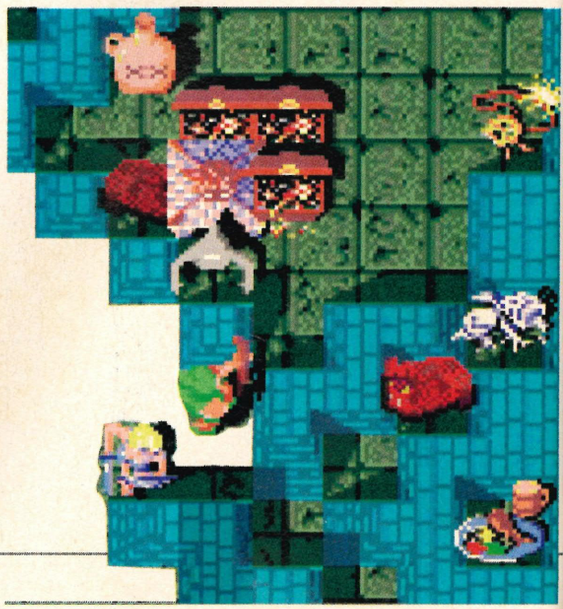




CHARACTER BUILDING

Deep within Gauntlet's many dungeons you encounter all manner of strange foes. For the most part, the game's numerous ghosts and demons are created by destructible generators, but others are a little more tricky to deal with:

Sorcerers: Have a nasty habit of disappearing and reappearing, which allows them to sneak up on you.
Lobbers: Standing behind walls so the player's shots can't hit them, they hurl energy-sapping balls at the party.
Thieves: These little tea-leaves steal an item if they're allowed to touch a character. Killing them returns the object to the character's inventory.
Death: The most fearsome hostile - its touch severely depletes energy. Death can only be killed with a potion.





▲ **Somewhere here...**



▲ **...is a smashable wall...**



▲ **...but so many ghosts...**

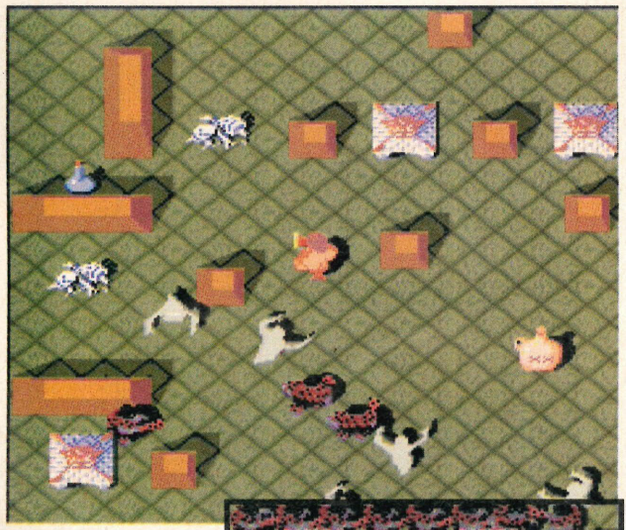


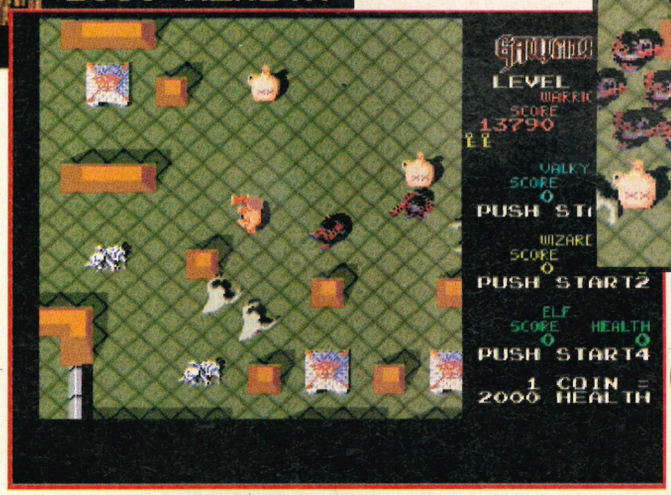
▲ **...require a potion or two...**



▲ **... but they soon return unless the generators are shot.**







JUST BE POTION-T

With Death literally around every corner, it's essential the heroes stock up on the necessary potions needed to get them through their numerous scrapes relatively intact. Here's a guide to Gauntlet's equivalent of Boots the chemist:

Magic Potion: Your ordinary, run-of-the-mill 'Smart Bomb' effect - weak when used by the Warrior, but screen-clearingly devastating in the hands of the Wizard.

Armour Power: Reduces the amount of energy lost when bumping into enemies.

Speed Power: Gives you a 'case of the Linfords' by allowing your character to run faster.

Magic Power: Useful, especially if you're controlling the warrior, as it boosts a character's spell-casting abilities slightly.

Shot Power: Increases the potency of the weapons.

Shot Speed: Grants the user with a better rate of fire.

Fight Power: Hand-to-hand fighting is often essential. This increases a character's strength.

Invincibility: Surely you can work this out for yourselves...

QUEST FOR THE BEST

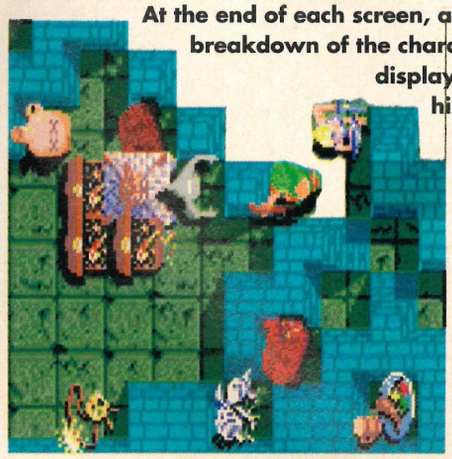
Gauntlet 4's Quest Mode is for real experts. Taking the form of an arcade adventure, the player chooses a character and enters four different baddie-packed, multi-floored towers in an attempt to find a crystal and destroy the curse blighting the lands of Gauntlet. All the floors are inter-connected, and finding the right way through each tower requires true skill and plenty of mental cartography! There are shops where equipment may be bought and it's also possible to communicate with some of the game's characters. It's a very tough game, and finishing it takes considerable skill!

BATTLE FRENZY

This simple, but highly entertaining multi-player mode dumps all the participants in a baddie-free kill-or-be-killed zone. There are two ways of disposing of opponents: either kill them before they wear down your own energy bar, or knock them in to one of the screen's many exits with a well-timed shot. The action in this game is fast and furious, and with several players participating, you soon learn who your best friends are!

PLAYING THE RECORD

The final option is Record Mode. Here a player is given 99 continues and is forced to play on the hardest setting. At the end of each screen, a detailed breakdown of the character's abilities is displayed, along with his performance for that screen and a password to enable the player to continue from where he or she left off. This mode is definitely one for real Gauntlet campaigners!



THE SECOND OPINION



Julian Rignall

I devoted an inordinate amount of time and money playing the original coin-op in the mid-80's, caned the C64 and Atari ST versions and even played the Master System version until I was blue in the face. And they're all nothing compared to this: Gauntlet 4 has got it all. The graphics, sound and gameplay are all absolutely spot-on and the overall presentation is superlative; this game isn't so much as arcade perfect - it's arcade better. The original game is a time-tested classic that's as fresh today as it was eight years ago, Quest Mode - a brilliant game in its own right - is a rock hard challenge that even Gauntlet experts will find hard to complete, Battle Mode is a superb bundle of multi-player laughs and there's even Record Mode for purist Gauntlet fans who wish to know their performance stats after every level. Gauntlet 4 is a standard-setting coin-op conversion that offers a level of challenge and addiction of the highest calibre.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 98%
Near perfect. Every option you could ever wish for.

GRAPHICS 92%
Arcade perfect, although slightly dated. Varied sprites, detailed backdrops.

SOUND 89%
Loads of digitised effects. Reasonable tunes.

SHORT TERM PLAY 95%
Dead easy to get into. Controls are simple, the objective even simpler.

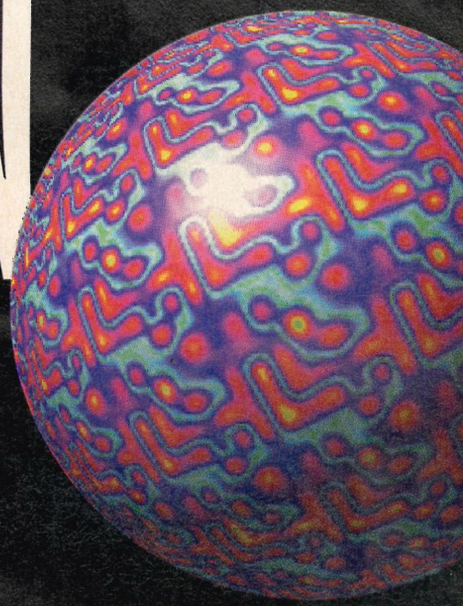
LONG TERM PLAY 94%
Three basic styles of game, all extremely playable and variety packed.

OVERALL 94
Gauntlet is no spring chicken, but it's stood the test of time perfectly. A brilliant conversion of a true classic.

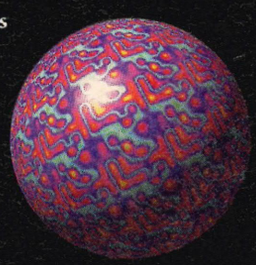
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ROCKE ADV

Easily one of the best Megadrive releases this year is Konami's Rocket Knight Adventures. Receiving a monumental Hyper Game rating of 97% in issue 20 it's fast, action-packed and absolutely chock-full of ingenious baddies. Fear not though, because here is the complete MegaTech Players Guide to help you defeat the Black Lord. The fate of Planet Elhorn and the lives of many young opossums rests in your hands, so good luck!

ROCKET KNIGHT CLASSES

The first step to beating this game is to master Rocket Knight's outstanding range of moves. By perfecting control of the little opossum you'll have most of the game's problems solved right from the onset. For this reason our guide is launched, Sparkster style, with a taster of just how agile the little fellow is.

- **SWORD LORE ONE:** Always bear in mind that Sparkster's sword inflicts the most damage when used in close range attacks.
- **SWORD LORE TWO:** An effective use of Sparkster's rocket-pack is to release its power whilst ducking down. An impenetrable, swirling sword attack ensues with Sparkster tucked into a ball.
- **SWORD LORE THREE:** By rocketing high into the air or along the ground at high speed, Sparkster can cut a swathe through the enemy in one fell swoop.
- **A TELLING TALE:** Rocket Knight's tail allows him to hang safely and keeps his paws free to swing his sword.



SWORD LORE ONE



SWORD LORE TWO



SWORD LORE THREE



SWORD LORE FOUR

STAGE ONE: EARTH, SEA AND FIRE



THE QUEST BEGINS

Trees afford Sparkster some health opportunities. Good use of his tail in sliding along bowed branches can give access to apples for extra energy and even an extra life. If this proves too tricky, Sparkster can use his rocket-pack to reach these bonuses.

High-score merchants are provided with some sport in the form of the Dark King's, front-line grunts. Having knocked the armour flying from a hog's back there's a another opportunity to whoop their asses by striking them a second blow as they scarper off in their undies!

PINK TANK

As our hero approaches the end of the first scene he is met by a gang of hard-nosed hogs wearing red armour. After materialising from nowhere, the hogs leap into the air. A rocket-powered charge from left to right is the quickest way to dispatch them. They, however, are the least of Sparkster's problems. The bridge is occupied by the defeated hogs' furious officer - in a tank! Position Sparkster as close to the tank as possible, jumping and swiping with the sword. The closer the better. Boss Hog's cannon-balls are easily avoided but his flame-throwing antics are not. It's better to have the tank suffer the most damage before the flames begin.

As the bridge collapses, its occupants plunge into the frothing water. Position Sparkster at the right-hand side of the screen. The floundering tank and its captain enter the fray from the top-right-hand side of the screen. Now keep the tank at bay by repeatedly knocking it back against the left-side of the watery arena.

SEVERED SERPENT

As Sparkster takes to the air a mighty sea serpent crashes into view. Wait behind its head. When the

T KNIGHT VENTURES

STAGE TWO: THE RISE AND FALL OF A ROCKET KNIGHT

HOG-BOT ALERT!

No sooner has stage two begun than a giant hog-driven robot attempts to pluck Sparkster out of the water. Simply leaping from the water and slashing at the robot's nose is all that is required of Sparkster. TheJet-skiing hogs who are next in line are no problem. There is a bunch of bananas beneath the water's surface should Sparkster require them.

BRANCHING OUT (AND IN)

At the start of the waterfall, a 1-Up can be found by propelling upward into the air. Crawling along the branches of the trees is easy until a GO! appears. There's nowhere to go except down ontoa bed of spikes! No worries — Merely use the rocket-pack to power to safety.

WATER SNAKE

By using the wheeling platforms to travel in and out of the curtain of water, Sparkster reaches the mid-level boss. The water snake's tail takes the heat, so it's best to hang from one branch only during the battle and hack at the assailant. Though he may take a little damage, its's better than falling onto the spikes below.

IRON CURTAINS

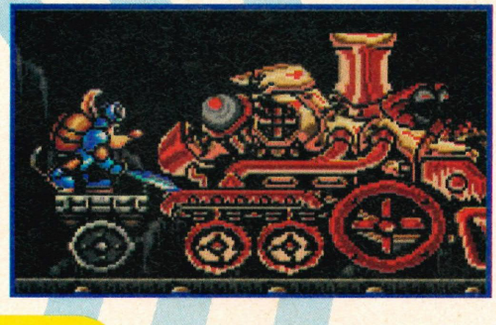
Spiked-balls lie in the watery pit that follow. They are dealt with hanging onto poles with Sparkster's tail. Don't pass up the bananas located at the top, right-hand side of the cavern. This area's final curtain is one of maces. Though it seems tricky, all Sparkster need do is rocket to safety before he becomes snagged.

SOME DUCKS AND A FEW CHICKENS

During the high velocity, mine-cart activities, squat for safety.



Dodge the barrage of bombs launched from hogs in carts by nipping in close under the arc of explosives. Flashing carts indicate that Sparkster is soon required to jump off — either onto another or to a point of safety such as the roof of a building. Hogs travelling on an elevated section of the track now roll into view, merrily dropping an endless supply of bombs onto Sparkster. Have the oppressed opossum fight back by charging his rocket-pack in the safety of the bottom-right, corner of the screen, then flying up across the line of hogs.



serpent turns and plunges toward Sparkster, simply concentrate on dicing the monster's face head-on. Repeat until vanquished.

HOT PANTS

Sparkster's path through the burning castle is pretty much marked out for him. Just keep away from the fire and rely on the dips in the floor for cover as the heat-blasts scorch the air above his ears. A 1-Up floats in one of the topmost sections as does a bunch of 'nanas prior to the big-bad-boss.

BOSS 1: TRI-CLOPS

The first boss,Tri-clops, crashes through the ceiling and walls of the room in which Sparkster's now finds himself. It does so in this pattern: Through the ceiling from the middle, then left, then right . In through the walls from the left then from the right. These are all opportunities for Sparkster to execute some swift, close range attacks. Next the Tri-clops spits pairs of tiny parasites into the room. By positioning Sparkster to one side,



the bugs' attack-formations are more easily jumped over. This attack wave is punctuated by the appearance of a red bug that Sparkster should rocket-charges into bit.

Finally Tri-clops pokes its ugly features through the top-left hole in the ceiling, then the middle with it's tail rolling in from the right and then the middle once again, only this time with its tail uncurling from the left. Of course the tail is avoided, but Sparkster should be able to finish Tri-clops off with repeated blows to its head.

BOSS 2: THE LOCOMOTION

Stage 2's train boss steams in from the left of the screen, its cannon firing at our hero's cart. Upon slicing the cannon from Loco's nose, Sparkster is further assaulted from above by Loco's extended arms. Slash Loco's hands with your sword, and then move to the bottom-right of the screen, adopting whichever angle of attack is necessary whilst avoiding contact with Loco's engine.

Loco is seemingly finished as its arms flare up, but it makes one last run and enters the scene from the right side of the screen. Its renewed cannon-fire, this time from its lid, raining from above, is easily dodged and a few slashes to its engine terminates its journey.

TECHNIQUE ZONE

STAGE THREE: HEAT OF THE KNIGHT

ON REFLECTION

Use the reflective properties of the enchanted lava-pool and traverse the ledges to safety.

TIDING HIM OVER

Fishes swimming in the cavern's water are minor irritations compared to the potential lacerations offered by the spiked obstacle course. Use the rise of the tide to cross the stepped section and rocket-power across the surface of the lengthy bed of spikes encountered at the end of the level. There is a handy bunch of bananas located underwater mid-way through the level.



CRAB BEAT

The colossal mecha-crab protects itself with deadly claws. So they are Sparkser's first target. As the crab rises from the depths it is also best to have Sparkster dive-bomb its hulk. Take care of both claws and the crab starts blowing bubbles. Needless to say they are avoided by Sparkster as he dive-bombs the crab into submission.

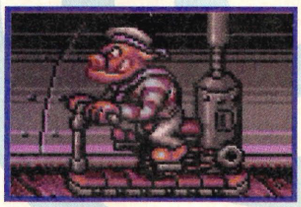


BOSS 3: FISH OUT OF LAVA

After traversing the lava lakes atop a walking platform, climbing off for the low-roofed sections, a giant fish attempts to eat rocket-powered opossum for dinner. Ride the tiny platform until the last possible moment before being eaten, then leap onto the safety of a platform to his left. As the larger platforms drop into the lava, Jumps over onto the ledges at the right and dodge the lava being spewed from the fish's mouth. An officer hog leaps from the fish's maw and it is he that Sparkster has to attack.

Now leap to the right, taking three blocks at a time and remain on this side of the screen for a repeat performance from the lava-spitting fish. Particularly telling blows to the jack-in-the-box hog usually finish him here, otherwise the cycle of attacks continues again. Always station Sparkster to the right of the fish for a speedy victory and collect the bananas that come out of it's mouth.

STAGE FOUR: AVAST 'EE LAND LUBBER



CATCH!

A pirate, who at first disguises himself as the Princess of Elhorn, lobs bombs at Sparkster. Return his service by having Sparkster rally them right back.

POLE POSITIONING

Sparkster's stroll along the top of the airship is hampered by an onslaught of barrels. Leap the rolling ones and ignore the bouncing ones as they pass harmlessly overhead. Should Sparkster come unstuck grab hold of the aerials.

BAR SNACKS!

Whilst dangling from the air-ship's underside and dealing with the bomb-like troops, Sparkster obtains an extra-life by dropping from his vantage point and powering back into the air, having charged his rockets beforehand.

BLOWING HIS TOP!

The rather ill-tempered looking contraption that

STAGE FIVE: HOT IN THE CITY!

LINE OF FIRE

Fly Sparkster to the middle of the screen, then to the left, hold his position then return him to the middle of the screen to avoid the anti-Rocket Knight fire from below.

ROCKET FRIGHT

Huge missiles now dog the opossum. The safest positions on screen are as follows: Top middle, top middle, far left, top middle.



GRADIUS IN LEGS

Gradius or Nemesis aficionados should find the attack pattern of the mid-level boss very familiar. Upon its arrival it's best to duck in the bottom left-hand corner of the screen to avoid being squashed. Next use close range attacks on the mother to hack away at the pilot's shield — three protective barriers. Once this phase is over the boss transforms into a circular contraption with its pilot hurriedly trying to swat Sparkster with the

STAGE SIX: JOUSTER SPACE



CONSTELLATION PRIZES

The first objects for concern on this level are slow-moving meteors. They fire homing missiles!

GREEN SHIELD STAMPED

Hogs are looking harder than ever in this stage. One pig dressed in a green space-suit uses a shield for protection. Consequently Sparkster needs to position himself above this character to take chunks out his helmet. Lasers fired from above and below the shield afford Sparkster just enough space to shelter between the blasts.

A LARGE LASER

Stay clear of the blasts from the huge laser the red and blue clad warrior hog sports. Keep Sparkster positioned well above or below and slightly behind this character for safety.

CONTACT

Or the lack of it is important when taking on the gun-ship. As much as half Sparkster's life-meter can be lost upon colliding with its bulk! After blowing the ship's bottom turret, the spiked hatch opens allowing you to blow any chance of their getting away. The hull splits in two,allowing Sparkster to sever the bulk of the ship from its head. Now the front of the ship grows legs and shuffles around as if dancing on hot coals. Dodge and weave between the spray of bullets. Next a homing laser follows our hero about the screen. A

hassles Sparkster now, breathes fire from the nozzle on its head. Kill of the bomb-like enemies when they are above the grumpy so-and-so and the little blighters fall on its head.

BEING POLITE

Greeted by guards carrying bazookas, that shelter behind force-field gates, the errant Knight should make good use of his manners by allowing his enemy to 'go first'. After firing their bazookas the hogs are vulnerable to attack and Sparkster rises from a crouching position to attack them.

BOSS 4: THE PIRATE!

The irate pirate makes his last stand here with the aid of a giant, robotic version of himself. Debris falls from the ceiling and Sparkster's best form of protection is a



spinning attack. Next the robot's stomach emits some monster plasma-blasts. The interval between blasts is just long enough for Sparkster to perform a sword swipe. Three carefully timed hits are all that is needed to bring about the robot's downfall. Finally the pirate himself lunges at the Rocket Knight, but a leap over the pirate's head with a swing of his sword should do the trick.

ship's new-found tentacles. Again a close range attack is most effective.

RUN AWAY!

Sparkster is required to forego his principles by running away throughout the whole of the next area. There now follows four puzzling encounters that he must overcome. Each involves a race to a transporter that is guarded by one or more Black Knight Hogs.

UP AND OVER

The first sees Sparkster leaping over the hog's head with the aid of the solitary platform.

GET DOWN!

Race the hogs to the bottom of the screen by descending from ledges as possible.

CHARGE!

Use Sparkster's rockets to power him beneath the precarious hogs.

ABOVE IT ALL

Use of the green stones that decorate the tower's walls are the best gauge for timing jumps as the platform rises. Have his rockets charged for when he reaches the topmost level, as the transporter is not within running distance.

THE RISE AND FALL OF SPARKSTER OPOSSUM

The following sections, involving switch-triggered platforms, hide two 1-UPs. One can be found in the top left corner of the second section in the first room. Use the platform to give Sparkster the extra height he needs when propelling himself upwards.

Another 1-Up nestles in the bed of spikes that lie across the topmost route in the second room.



simple circular motion is all that is needed for Sparkster to escape this. An orange pod is emitted from the strange contraption's cockpit and this is the target area. One hit and the pod explodes. The legs/ bullets/ laser attack is repeated three times altogether with the orange pod presenting itself for attack in each. Survive this and Sparkster is off to the Pig Star for final confrontation.

BOSS 5: THE DARK ROBOT



A high-speed chase through a simple, yet infuriating maze is the premise for this punch-up. Keep pumping Sparkster's rockets to the max to make good his flee from the encroaching colossus, piloted by the Dark Knight. Upon climbing into his own robot suit, the ensuing bout can be won by enticing the Dark Knight into swinging first, then coming back at him. Incredibly this is not the end of the game!

STAGE SEVEN: BOSS HOG



PORK STOPS

Meet the Black Lord. Jet-propelled attacks to his stomach have him collapsing in a heap, whereupon he reforms and takes to the air. The Black Lord's extending limbs are no match for continued rocket-powered rammings to his belly.

HIT AND RUN

In the Android Storage Department completed, monster-droids have little sense. Thwackhem with the sword, then keep well out of their way.

THE BOUNCER

The Dark Knight, who is seemingly the final obstacle, has three tactics. Firstly, given the chance, he spins into Sparkster and causes masses of damage! Avoid this by having the goodly Knight repeatedly rocket across the room and spear his belly. Bouncing back to the starting point each time and avoid the blasts from Dark Knight's sword. Also avoid enticing him into any more spin frenzies.

A test of rocket-pack prowess is now required as we see Sparkster holding on for dear life as the Pig Star explodes around him. When the Dark Knight flies into view fend off his missile attacks whilst scraping away at his enemy's armour. Almost defeated now, the Dark Knight presents himself as a spinning wreck which Sparkster needs to sear with his jet-propelled sword attack. However the attacks are only successful should the Dark Knight be moving slow.

BONUS SUPERSTORE

At the top of each row of crstals in the Low-G room there are bonus items. These are accessible only by having Sparkster charge his rockets, jump and then release the power to take him as high as possible. Two bunches of bananas and a 1-UP await. There is a further 1-UP located in the top-left corner of the room's partitioning wall.

THE ADVENTURE ENDS

In a secret room within the Pig Star lurks THE REAL final boss. It bounces around a low-gravity room enticing Sparkster with a red crystal mounted on a wand. Strike the crystal and the boss vanishes only to return. Repeat this procedure at least twice more.

Following this, the boss attempts to electrocute Sparkster. Escape being fried by standing between the pulses. Odd, ring-like beams are fired from tall turrets that rise from the boss's interior. In all this it is important to return Sparkster to the centre of the screen each time, as the position of the wand is more easily predicted by doing so and Sparkster's victory depends on his smashing of the red crystal. This is especially true as the boss employs rotating chains of colourful energy-rings. Most often the wand sits directly above Sparkster if he remains central when the boss vanishes then re-appears.

THE END — REALLY!

The final scenes are of Sparkster entering Elhorn's atmosphere leaving the Pig Star to self destruct in the distance. He is given chase from a tentacled creature that tries to swat him into oblivion. Dodging the attack is Sparkster's only option as he is helpless within the confines of a shuttle. In time Elhorn's atmosphere incinerates the pursuer and the adventure is at an end.

TECHNIQUE ZONE

Tips. They're always useful. Wash your coloured clothes seperately from your whites. That's a good tip. Cook your meat before you eat it. That's another good one. Or go to the doctors for de-worming tablets because you didn't cook your meat before you ate it. Yup, it's always good to heed a tip. In fact, that's a pretty good tip in itself, one day it could save you from a bad case of worms. Well anyway, Some tips are more valuable than others, none more so than the ones featured in the awesome Technique Zone, a bonanza love-session of the finest Megadrive tips you could wish for, as this month's jam-packed selection prove. There's the usual batch of ingenious little ones that make you think 'How did they ever find that ridiculous combination of button presses?' and a big fat guide on Rocket Knight. Of course, if you have a hot tip you think we should know about, send it here. The address is TECHNIQUE ZONE, MEGATECH, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. Use it to get your mail here. Now that IS a good tip.

Well that's about it, now read on. See, ANOTHER good tip there. Golly!



BATMAN RETURNS

Great driving bits, crap platform bits. That's what we said about this game. We also said it was a bit hard, but never fear because here's a fantabulous Bat-Level Select to help you in your fight against crime. Simply go to the options screen and select the 'Driving Only' option. Now hold down LEFT and B. Next go down to 'Difficulty' and again hold down LEFT and B. Do this for each option, right down to 'SFX' and then do it all again, going up the screen back to 'Game Type'. A ring should sound, meaning the cheat has worked.When the game starts, by holding START and C, you can skip throught the levels. Oh, but don't forget to first set the options back to 'Normal' otherwise you won't be able to play all the levels.

AYRTON SENNA'S SUPER MONACO GP 2

Even though it's quite old, this is still one of the best racing games on the Megadrive and here's a rather quirky ltle tip that breathes new live into it by allowing you to play the game using a motorbike. No ordinary motorbike either, but the legendary two-wheeler from that racing hit of yesteryear, Super Hang-On.

First reset the World Championship and input HANG–ON at the name-entry screen. Save it and then press RESET. Now go to the Free Practice Image Training and, after setting the number of laps and the grid, press DOWN and A until the transmission select screen appears. Select your transmission as usual, and voila, Super Hang-On madness on all the World's most famous Formula One race courses. Bizarre or what?

X-MEN

Curse those foul Marvel super-mutants, their game is almost...impossible! Well, it's quite hard, anyway. Meanwhile, across town, a mysterious pair of characters known only as Hert and Matt Miller from Oldham were constructing a fiendish stage select and here it is. Before the title screen appears, press A and C. When the title screen does appear, release the buttons and hit start. Now here's the fiddly bit. Remove the joypad from Port 1 and plug it into Port 2, pressing start. Put a second pad in port 1 and press start on that too. Now start the game and lo and behold...nothing. But wait, the control panels on the wall actually relate to the different levels in the game. Simply pick one and you're off.

BATTLETOADS

Battletoads on the Megadrive was criticised for being too much like its 8-bit Nintendo counterpart and fair criticism it is too. So similar is the Megadrive version,



that it even has the same hidden warp to Level 3. At the beginning of the first level, headbutt the two pigs and then jump on to the grassy platform on the right. A warphole will appear. Go into it and you'll skip two levels. Be warned though, you have to be quick to catch the warp, although it is easier with two players.



CHEATS / TIPS / CHEATS

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TECHNIQUE ZONE



TIME GAL

We printed the passwords for Time Gal way back in issue 19, unfortunately though, they only work on the Japanese version. However, there's no need to fret, because Nick Ward of High Wycombe has provided the full range of official codes for the Visual Mode and here they are.

BC 70,000,000	**—BMCFXWRL**
BC 65,000,000	**—GJRPOVKS**
BC 30,000	**—THMZCYFB**
BC 1600	**—RYFGSXDK**
BC 44	**—FTGBDQPW**
AD 500	**—VSLCZKTJ**
AD 999	**—CYVZPBMG**
AD 1588	**—DRXHTLQJ**
AD 1941	**—WBMRJZVH**
AD 1991	**—SHKXGJWF**
AD 2001	**—XPTMCSHD**
AD 2010	**—ZVYFLGQJ**
AD 3001	**—QWCDHRKT**
AD 3999	**—PLQTVMXY**
AD 4000	**—LKDWBSYF**
AD 4001	**—KYGPRZCW**

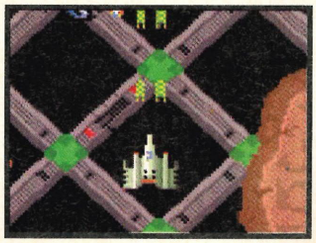
He also add that the level select featured in the Japanese version still exists. Press LEFT, RIGHT, RIGHT and UP on the Game Start/ Options/ Visual Mode screen and then select Game Start. What's more, if you use the cheat and then press A, B, C and Right, the pass code will appear across the screen.

AFTERBURNER 3

It's has to be one the WORST Mega-CD games in existence. It's dreadful! Ghastly! Unbearable! Perhaps even competing with Dark Castle for the title of worst console game ever. However, if you're ill-fated enough to own a copy, here's a tip to help ease the torment. When the title screen comes up, go to the options screen and put the View Mode on 'Cockpit' and the Rolling Mode to 'Free'. Start the game, take off, and power up your Afterburners to the max whilst turning your plane at a 45 degree angle. Now just fly and shoot. Shoot like the wind! So fast will you go, that you will be impenetrable, a fiery pheonix of hope. A defender of the free. Actually, you'll probably still get hit and even killed on occasions, but the levels will fly by much quicker and besides a few bullets in the gut is still more painless than a slow ride through this game. If enemy fire gets to rough, just go up and down to avoid it and perform 180 degree turns to shake someone off your tail. And then one day the horror that is Afterburner 3 will end. We're praying for you, whoever you are out there.

SLAPFIGHT

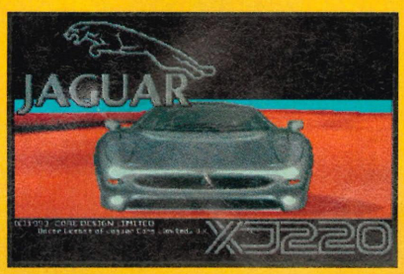
Old as the coin-op is, the recent Megadrive conversion of Slapfight is still a damn fine blaster. Unfortunately, it's also a bit of toughy. Never fear though, because here we are with whole basketful of cheats for the game. Now follow closely.



1. When playing the game, pause the action and then press RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT, DOWN, UP, DOWN, LEFT and then unpause it. Incredibly enough, you will be invincible. But wait, because there's even more...
2. Pause the game again, pressing START and RIGHT at the same time. This will allow you to skip the area. Neat huh? And yet, there is more...
3. Pause the game again, and holding down START press UP. The screen will now fast forward through the game. There's more though. More.
4. Pause the game again. Keep DOWN pressed and continue to press start. The remaining lives at the top of the screen will start vanishing. Not very useful, that one. Never mind, because it's not over yet.
5. After entering the cheat, hold down B and press C. The Weapon Select gauge can now be moved around. Any weapon is yours. Are we finished? No we are not.
6. Using the cheat in Special Mode, infinite Typhoon Bombers can be released by building up wings using the Weapon Select. Had enough yet? Well tough, because we've got one more.
7. Go to the control settings in Options Mode and press A, B and C together. The screen will change to TOA PLAN mode (Toaplan being the creators of the coin-op). This tweaks the game, making it identical to the coin-op with the shield operating on a time system and the difficulty increasing. Also, by putting the difficulty to normal 32, you can play from the 32nd round. And that's the lot. Phew.

DEVASTATOR

A somewhat disappointing Mega-CD game, this one. Nonetheless, here's a level select for you oh-so disappointed owners out there. If only you'd read OUR review, fools. Simply pause the game and press A, B, A, C, UP, C, A, B. The level will thus finish.
Perhaps it will cheer you up to know that, using this method, you can now watch the not-so-disappointing, rather-excellent-in-fact, . cartoon intermissions, all the way through.



JAGUAR XJ220

If you've got this game for your Mega-CD, this cheat might also interest you. It allows you to skip through up to 12 stages. Simply go to Name Entry on the options screen, delete the current name and enter MAR instead. Now go back to the menu and choose World Tour option. Select the country you wish to race in and when the race starts, pause the game. By pressing A, B and C simultaneously you can instantly qualify and win the race. Wow!



RANGER X

Fancy skipping through the levels on this excellent robot shoot 'em up? Well, here's how. Pause the game at any time, and enter UP, DOWN, UP, DOWN, UP, DOWN, C, B, A, RIGHT, LEFT. The background music should start. Now press the A button and the game will go into Frame Forward mode. Pressing B will skip you through to the end-of-level boss, or if you are already there it will move the game on to the next level. Here's a neat extra bit though. Go to the Difficulty Setting on the options screen and press A, B, C, A, B, C, A, B, C. You will now be able to play on Easy or Hard settings. It's worth having a go on Easy just to see the special cutesy first level.

Not written by sad gits

(Honest!)

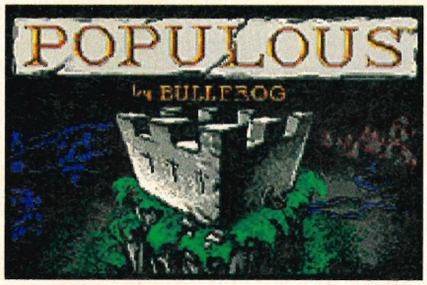


BRITAIN'S BIGGEST AND BEST SELLING SEGA MAGAZINE

Yes! This month we take a look at the wonderful world of God games. These are the carts that put you in charge of the lives of men, women and small fluffy animals as you attempt to dominate the world of your choice. So pull up a comfy chair, break out the bread and wine and be prepared to bow down and worship the game that we think gives you the closest feeling of Godliness.

let ther

THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE!



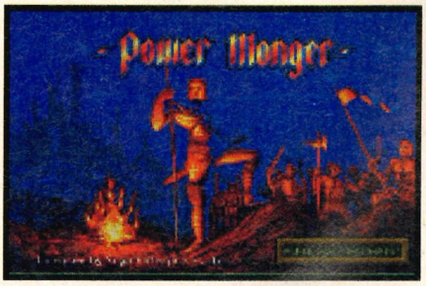
POPULOUS

This is the grandfather of them all. Bullfrog's Populous was the first ever God game, and as such scooped more awards for innovation that you could possibly cram into a trophy cabinet. The aim of the game is to conquer several hundred worlds by beating off a rival God, using your people and divine powers to wipe out all his believers.



POPULOUS 2

Not content to sit on their sizable laurels, Bullfrog went all-out to create a sequel to Populous. They included more powers, more strategy and improved graphics in an attempt to surpass the original. The plot and objectives are the same as its predecessor, as is the basic gameplay, but there are loads of new weapons in your arsenal to unleash on rival denominations.



POWERMONGER

Bullfrog roar back with yet another God game, although they take a slightly more unconventional approach with this one. Instead of an all-powerful deity, you now play a general on a mission to conquer the world. From your lofty position, you get to command legions of men as they wipe out village after village, recruiting men and developing new weapons in a quest to conquer all the world.



MEGA-LO-MANIA

The only one of the four God games not programmed by Bullfrog, Mega-Lo-Mania is by Sensible Software, and takes you through various time zones as you pit yourself against three rival Gods. You start in the stone age where your people are armed with spears and axes and end up in the future where you can unleash squadrons of UFOs and bombardments of nuclear missiles on you foes.

re be LIGHT!

VERSE 1: INTERFACE

God games require a good communications interface to allow the player to talk to his subjects. So how do these ones shape up?



POPULOUS
Before you get to grips with the God business, you've first got to master the bewildering array of icons. This game uses a point-and-click system – first you select the power you want to use, then click on the person or bit of land you want to deal with. Some actions are a little complicated to get to grips with, such as ordering your people to band together and then converting the population mass into a knight, the game's toughest character. On the whole, though, the icons are clear and easy to understand and it takes surprisingly little time to get to grips with them all.
★★★★



POWERMONGER
Because you control your people directly in this game, rather than influencing the events around them, the game's interface is a lot more detailed than the others. It mixes call-up menus with a point-and-click system, and the result is very confusing to begin with. Even when you've got to grips with the game and know what you're doing, the interface still provides stumbling blocks. For instance, tracking down your armies can be very difficult, especially if you've moved the map to check out another area.
★★★



MEGA-LO-MANIA
For sheer simplicity of use, this game stands out above the crowd. It's the only one of the four that doesn't require you to target minute people, graphics or areas of the map with the cursor, because any orders you issue are global, affecting all the people on the screen. When it comes to laying down the law to your subjects, a system of easy-to-follow icons come into play. Even in the game's most complicated areas, such as assigning production and research quotas, it doesn't ever get confusing.
★★★★★



POPULOUS 2
In their attempt to create something which would better Populous, and at the same time wipe the floor with any competition, Bullfrog have inadvertently made the game almost too complicated. Instead of just being able to dump a swamp wherever you want or summon up a volcano, you now have to go through a system of categories where the dozens of powers are grouped together. As a result, there are loads of icons and features to get to grips with, which makes it the most complicated of the lot.
★★★

VERSE 2: POWERS

In order to make mincemeat out of your rivals and their followers, you need a hefty arsenal of powers for yourself and weapons for your people.

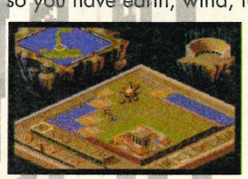
POPULOUS
In this, the first of the God games, you're given a fair-sized battery of old-fashioned powers. Your strength comes from the number of your believers, so the more you have, the greater the damage you can inflict on your rival's forces. Your basic power lets you build and flatten land to make it arable so that your people can thrive, or raise it and make it uninhabitable to keep the enemy at bay! Further up the scale you can create volcanoes which leave large clumps of rock behind and generate swamps and floods which drowns anyone unlucky enough to have built their house on low-lying land. All in all a moderate collection, but nothing outrageous.
★★★

POWERMONGER
The power game works slightly differently here, as all the dirty work is taken care of by your troops. To begin with your massed legions are outfitted with puny swords, which are OK when it comes to taking on pitch-fork wielding villagers, but aren't much cop against enemy armies. As the game progresses your scientists develop new and better weapons such as muskets and cannons. While they have a significant affect on the outcome of the battle, they're not much to look at and don't rate very highly when compared to those in Mega-Lo-Mania.
★★★



MEGA-LO-MANIA
Although it's set in a far more humorous vein, Mega-Lo-Mania is basically very similar to Powermonger, as you have to develop new weapons for your people. This is done far better than it is in Powermonger. Armies start with crude spears, but as you progress through the different time zones, catapults and cannons start to appear, then much later on nuclear weapons, laser guns and UFOs. If you get hold of these weapons before your rivals you're almost guaranteed to come out on top in the end. All in all, an impressive range of equipment which is both inventive and good to look at.
★★★★

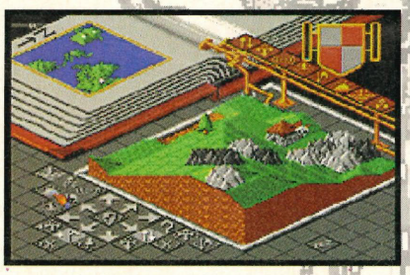
POPULOUS 2
Realising that power sells, Bullfrog greatly expanded on the original Populous to include some really stunning effects. Now your weapons are divided up into groups, so you have earth, wind, fire and water



powers amongst others, each of which has five effects depending on how many believers you have. For instance you can smite your foes with lightening bolts, send forth tidal waves and make the sky rain fire. On top of all this there's also the occasional giant. A good laugh and no mistake, all we need now are some rivers of blood and plagues of locusts.
★★★★★

VERSE 3: CHALLENGE

It's all nice and well being lord of all you survey, but you don't want it to stop there. Hell, you're an all-conquering deity, so what's the point in existing if there aren't lands to subjugate and people to be crushed?



POPULOUS

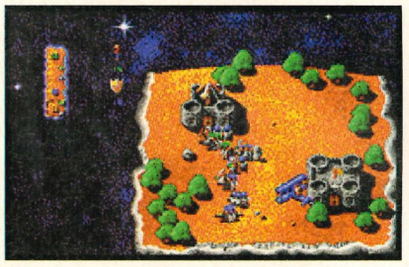
Once of the most notable features of Populous is the massive amount of levels. There are hundreds, and although they don't vary much, there are a host of conditions which do affect how difficult your next conquest is going to be. Your opponent's reaction time alters; if it's slow he hardly notices what you're doing, if it's fast he often second-guesses what you're about to do! You also encounter levels where your powers are limited, or you don't start with many worshippers so it takes a long time to build up enough faith to start dishing the real heavy stuff. Difficult, and there's a lot to get through.

★★★★

POWERMONGER

Because this game requires a more subtle, strategic approach rather than the heavy-handed warfare of Populous and its sequels, you're constantly required to evolve your game plan. Some levels pit you against seemingly insurmountable odds where you either have to dig in to survive, or send your men out in a do-or-die attack. This unpredictable variety is combined with dozens of well-thought levels to provide a challenge that you won't beat for some time.

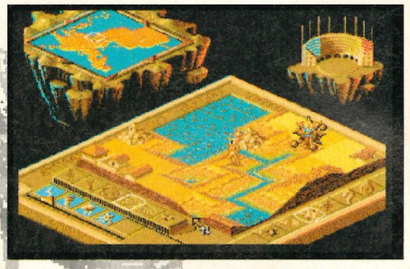
★★★★



MEGA-LO-MANIA

Unlike the other three games which throw seemingly limitless amounts of levels at you, Mega-Lo-Mania has a definite cut-off point. The game is divided into nine time-zones, each in turn split into three islands. It doesn't take long to carve your way through the first few stages and it's only when the computer intelligence starts to speed up that it offers a serious challenge. The final level, which is just all-out warfare from the start, is extremely taxing, but when the whole package is compared to its rivals, Mega-Lo-Mania is too easy by half.

★★★



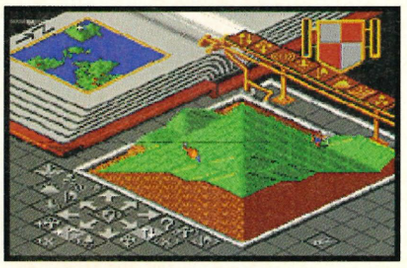
POPULOUS 2

At first this game seems like it's not going to tax you any more than the first one, but it has an ace up its sleeve. Rather than make life easy and cough up endless verdant landscapes to battle on, you're also faced with much harsher terrain where your people reproduce slower, thus limiting your powers. In this situation you really have to plan your next move instead of just trying to steam-roller over your enemy. Apart from that there's also various levels of computer intelligence to deal with, which are more than a match after 20 levels or so.

★★★★★

VERSE 4: PLAYABILITY

With a hands-off approach to the action, a God game needs to be good to hold interest.



POPULOUS

Despite scoring well when it comes to the number of levels, the chances are you'll have trouble forcing yourself to play through them all. When it first appeared Populous was innovative, but now it just doesn't offer enough to keep you playing. There isn't a great deal of variety in the levels and once you've tried out all the powers (which happens around level three) and realised that there are only a couple of tactics you need to employ to win every time (that occurs between levels six and nine), the playability soon dries up.

★★

POWERMONGER

Strategy is the name of this game. Although, like Populous, it lacks variety between levels, it's the size of the armies at the start of the levels which dictate the strategies you need to employ. A few surprises wouldn't have gone amiss, though, as the game starts to get a bit predictable after several levels as the various lands you're required to conquer don't vary in any way. It's still more absorbing than Populous, but lacks the necessary spark of inventiveness to give it a decent amount of long-term interest.

★★★



MEGA-LO-MANIA

What makes this game so playable is its wicked humorous streak, superb sampled speech and great graphics. There's a nice, progressive feel to the action and there's plenty of variety from level to level. It's just a shame there aren't more levels.

★★★★★

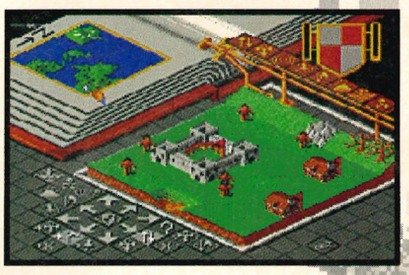
POPULOUS 2

Learning from the problems with the original Populous, Bullfrog have installed several major gameplay changes in this version. For starters your powers are rationed, so instead of being able to go right through your arsenal early on in the game you have to go through plenty of levels before you can access the formidable ones. The variations in terrain also make for some interesting encounters and breaks the game up nicely. Should you get bored with the preset levels, you can always use the world-designer to create your own.

★★★

VERSE 5:GODLINESS

These are supposed to be God games, so when you play them, do you really feel like you're controlling the destiny of a civilisation, or do you feel they're running their own affairs?



POPULOUS

Throwing your divine weight around with your enormous powers is fun, but your people often seem to have a mind of their own and don't follow orders very readily, which does get frustrating.

★★★



MEGA-LO-MANIA

This is how it should be! Regular reports from minions, instant, unquestioning support for your ideas and superb graphics showing exactly what your people are up to makes you really feel in control of this very aptly-named game!

★★★★★

POPULOUS 2

Similar to Populous, but with faster-reacting people, this is a logical step forward but still doesn't quite give you the feeling of power that Mega-Lo-Mania does.

★★★★

POWERMONGER

Controlling your armed forces is a rewarding experience. Although the graphics aren't spectacular, you still feel in control of your subjects s they maraud around the battlefield.

★★★★

the SCORE TABLE

	POPULOUS	POWER-MONGER	MEGA-LO-MANIA	POPULOUS II
INTERFACE	4	3	5	3
POWERS	3	3	4	5
CHALLENGE	4	4	3	5
PLAYABILITY	2	3	5	3
GODLINESS	3	4	5	4

JUDGMENT DAY

So who's bad in the God world? When all's done and dusted, here are the winners. For best effect read in reverse order.



MEGA-LO-MANIA
With its mix of humour and mass destruction, Mega-Lo-Mania has seen off the competition and takes the throne as King of God games. It may not be the most challenging of the quartet, but it's certainly the most entertaining. And let's face it, even Deities want to have fun!

22



POPULOUS 2
Sitting at the right-hand of Mega-Lo-Mania is Populous 2. A failure to provide much variety was off-set by the excellent range of powers, but even then the lasting appeal is tarnished by the lack of real variation in the gameplay.

20



POWERMONGER
This is definitely a game for the more strategy-minded types. There aren't any real powers, but it's still a good laugh sending your marauding hordes out to conquer enemy villages. Again, longevity is the problem with this one.

17



POPULOUS
Pulling up the rear is Populous. It's the oldest of the quartet of God games and it shows. Being first just isn't enough when compared to its successors. It soon becomes tiresome and there's just not enough variety to keep it interesting in the long term.

16

VERSUS MODE

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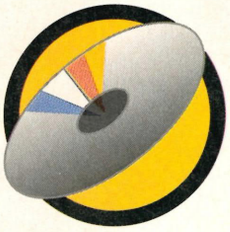
GAME INDEX

Welcome to the MegaTech Game Index, the top buyers' guide to the best Megadrive and Mega-CD games available, with secret tips and high scores thrown in for good measure.

If you can beat any of the high scores listed here, fill in the form below and mail it to: MEGATECH HYPERPLAYERS, MEGATECH, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. And no cheating, because we know, you know.

NAME:
ADDRESS:
GAME:
DIFFICULTY SETTING:
LEVEL:
SCORE:

GAME:
DIFFICULTY SETTING:
LEVEL:
SCORE:



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.

▲ Well, at least you couldn't do all those hardware sprite tricks on a Spectrum.

▼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%



BATMAN RETURNS

BY SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 19

An enhanced version of the mediocre cartridge Batgame, but what enhancements! As well as having the old platform bits (which are largely unchanged) the game uses the CD hardware for spectacular 3D driving/shoot 'em sections in which you get to blast the Penguin's henchmen from their motorcycles/cars/giant cannon-bearing lorries.

▲ Switch off the platform bits and just play the driving sections – they're excellent and are a game in themselves! The orchestrated music and sampled speech adds to the atmospher

▼ It's a shame the platform bits weren't improved. The driving sections are also REALLY tough.

MT RATING: 94%

BLACK HOLE ASSAULT

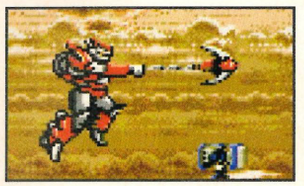
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 14

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%



DEVASTATOR

BY WOLFTEAM
PRICE: IMPORT ONLY
REVIEWED: MT 20

Yet another robot beat 'em up for the Mega-CD. Basically a platform shoot 'em up in which you have to blast everything in sight, but with flying shoot 'em up sections bolted on.

▲Very impressive intro and inter-level anime-style animations.

▼Seen-it-all-before, nothing new – like an old cartridge shoot 'em up.

MT RATING: 62%

ECCO CD

BY SEGA
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT21

CD retune of the underwater puzzling classic. Exactly the same as the cartridge game, except for the addition of a full motion video intro, seven extra levels set in a sunken galleon and improved music and sound effects thanks to Sega's new QSound 'surround sound' system.

▲ Extra levels and souped-up sound.

▼ The rest is just like the Megadrive version.

MT RATING: 92%

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!

▼ Unless you're seriously opposed to senseless violence, there are no downers.

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.

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. Handling isn't as good as Domark's F1 World Championship.

MT RATING: 87%

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%

NIGHT STRIKER

BY TAITO
PRICE: IMPORT ONLY
REVIEWED: MT 20

Sad 3D shoot 'em up, Space Harier-style, featuring a transforming flying car fending off invading aliens.

▲Fast action... but in a crap sort of way.

▼Appalling sprites, badly animated. Nasty musical score, limited movement

MT RATING: 17%

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.

▼ Controls are terrible and it's a bit short-lived. Considering it's on CD you might have expected it to have more than twelve levels.

MT RATING: 70%



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

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%

SHERLOCK HOLMES II

BY SEGA
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT21

Exactly the same concept as Sherlock Holmes I, but consisting of three longer cases on two CD's – the last two are pretty tricky. Very good presentation and a few added options that improve on the original

▲ Three new, longer cases to solve for Holmes freaks. Added options.

▼ Limited long-term playing potential – once you've solved the murders, there's no point going back to it.

MT RATING: 84%

SILPHEED

BY SEGA
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT21

Undoubtedly one of the best games yet for the Mega-CD, especially if you're into outer space shoot 'em ups. Awesomely smooth and detailed animated intro sequence matched by amazingly smooth, visual cortex-warping 3D graphics. Guide the starship Silpheed through enemy spaceships, giant meteorites and other floating inter-space flotsam and jetsam, blasting away as you go. The combination of realistic graphics and QSurround sound really give you the feeling that you're in the thick of the action, providing thrills despite the fact that the gameplay, although challenging, is nothing revolutionary or spectacular.

▲ Amazingly smooth 3D graphics, QSurround Sound, challenging gameplay.

▼ Basically, it's another spacey spaceship shoot 'em up.

MT RATING: 94%



SWITCH

BY SEGA
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 19

A very odd game in which you're presented with all sorts of strange situations and you just have to press buttons to try and get out of them. The overall aim is to get to the bottom of a maze of locations, without pressing the buttons that blow up various world monuments. Usually though, hitting the wrong button results in hilarious things happening. There are over 1,000 gags stored on the disc and the fun comes from waiting for the (very) unexpected to happen.

▲ Uses the Mega-CD well for all sorts of graphical tricks and sound and music effects and the variety and the overall hilarity makes it a sort of up-market activity centre.

▼ If you don't have a rather odd sense of humour you probably won't see the point. If you do have that sense of humour the sad part is that Sega will probably never bring this out officially.

MT RATING: 90%

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%



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.

A

AEROBIZ

BY SEGA
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT21

Would you believe it? An airline management sim for the Megadrive! And it's really good, too! Well, it is if hard-core strategy games are your bag, because this game takes you into every aspect of running your own airline, from buying new planes, building hotels, setting up marketing plans and prices to consulting the board of directors and looking at flight statistics. It's a cut-throat business, and you can get up to four players involved in the fight to be the top 'line. It's a really complicated game with loads of options and it's certainly not for you if you've got the attention-span of a hyperactive three-year-old. Strategy buffs will cream over it,

though!
▲ Highly complex game with loads of options. Massive potential for devising and revising strategy.
▼ Incredibly boring if you're not a strategy fan.

MT RATING: 90%

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

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.

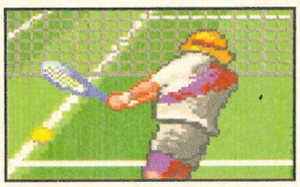
MT RATING: 85%

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



AMAZING TENNIS

BY ABSOLUTE ENTERTAINMENT
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 19

A tennis game with the strange novelty of a behind-the-player-sprite viewpoint. The player graphics are big and well animated, but their size makes it quite difficult to see past them to the other side of the court. That said, generous collision detection makes it easy enough to hit the ball back. Plenty of strokes to master and opponents to beat, and of course there's the two player mode.
▲ Graphics look very smart and overall the game is very playable.
▼ In the two player mode, the guy at the far side of the court has some difficulty seeing what's going on.

MT RATING: 82%



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%

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

310,000 by Russell Halford, Bracknell, Berks

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.
▲ Fast 3D graphics and loads of tracks to race on.
▼ A bit pricey. The extra features don't make it THAT much better than the original Super Monaco. Formula One World Championship is faster and more fun.

MT RATING: 90%

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 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%



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: £19.99
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-I, Flat Fun) by Lee Nixon, Sheaford

BUCK ROGERS

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £19.99
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%

C

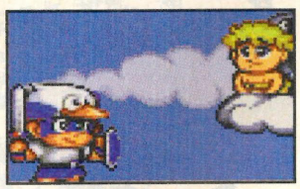


CHAKAN

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%



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%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

288,330 by Andrew Thorne, Dorking

COLUMNS

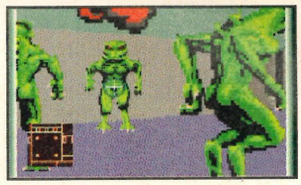
BY SEGA
PRICE: £19.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

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

BY 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.

CHUCK II: SON OF CHUCK

BY CORE
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT21

The sequel to Chuck Rock doesn't feature Chuck himself or his belly-butt, it stars his son, a Stone Age toddler with a deadly club. The wacky Stone Age graphics are of the same high standard as the original and althought he gameplay is far from original, it's still great fun to play. Bonus levels featuring boat races, rock-carving etc give welcome variety to the platform-based gameplay and the game gets pretty hard quite quickly, providing a real challenge to the avid platform-player.
▲ Fun to play, smart graphics, pretty challenging.
▼ Nothing revolutionary or gob-smackingly inventive.

MT RATING: 86%

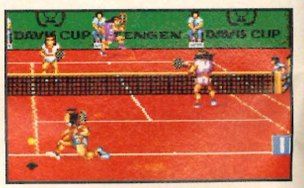
D

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%



DAVIS CUP TENNIS

BY DOMARK
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 19

A tennis game whose strength is its speed of play and its range of options. Practice against all sorts of players or machines on all sorts of courts, then take part in singles or doubles tournaments all around the world. Lots of moves of course.
▲ Loads of options, superfast gameplay

and the two player options make this the best Megadrive tennis game.
▼ Nothing major, although when the players are wearing their pink kits it looks like they're playing butt naked!

MT RATING: 90%



DESERT STRIKE

BY 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

6,220,200 by David Morgan, Seaford, Sussex

DRAGON'S FURY

BY TENGEN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 1

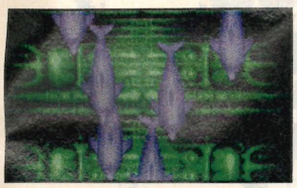
Originally reviewed as Devil Crash (the Japanese version) this is a pinball game which lets you bash a ball around a three-screen-high scrolling table and eight bonus sub-tables, all populated with little devils and ghostly monks.
▲ Superb graphics and sound and it has a superb pinball feel to it.
▼ 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.

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.

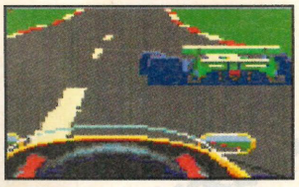
EX-MUTANTS

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



F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

BY DOMARK
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 20

This is the official Formula One game, featuring all this season's international tracks. As the Megadrive goes, this is the best racing game money can buy – an incredible sensation of speed (the turbo mode is like trying to control a missile blasting down the track) and lots of thrills 'n' spills in one-off races or a 12-race tournament. There's also the choice between Arcade mode (where you drive for points, scoring every time you pass a car) or normal racing. And there's a superb two-player mode too. Brilliant!
▲ Two different speed modes, both with varied difficulty settings – speed increases with difficulty. Mega-exciting one or two-player racing action, 12 realistically-mapped Grand Prix circuits. Superb sound effects.
▼ Er... the car configuration screen is a bit limited for obsessive car-tuners. That's all, really.

MT RATING: 94%

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

FLASHBACK

BY US GOLD
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 18

Spy/scientist Conrad Hart has to uncover an alien plot to destroy the human race in this huge platform adventure. All sorts of Prince of Persia-type puzzles and guard-shooting exploits abound in five big levels packed with weird and wonderful scenery.
▲ Excellent graphics, sound, gameplay... and everything!
▼ It's one of those games that's so good you can't stop playing it, so finishing it doesn't take that long.

MT RATING: 94%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

80,344 (Finished in 7 hours, Expert setting) by R Franklin, Barking.

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.

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 Olympus.
▲ 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%

GUNSTAR HEROES

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT21

Mega-blasting arcade shoot 'em up action – one or two-player mayhem as you guide your Gunstar Hero(es) through a variety of graphically superb backdrops swarming with blastin' baddies and frighteningly impressive bosses. Incredible animation, superb destructin'/blastin' sound effects, plenty of high-octane action and a high degree of originality in game design and gameplay make this a real classic of an action-blaster.
▲ Fast blastin' action, incredible graphics & animation, smart weapons, mega bosses, exciting gameplay, innovative game design, great sounds.
▼ Er... can't think of any downers.

MT RATING: 95%

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%

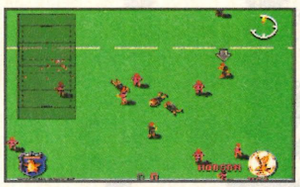
MT SECRET TECHNIQUE

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

I



INTERNATIONAL RUGBY CHALLENGE

BY DOMARK
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 19

As the name suggests, this Kick Off-esque rugby simulation lets you play in the big three international rugby tournaments, namely The Triple Crown, The Five Nations and the World Cup. Just about all the rules of the sport are observed and clever control devices make it easy to carry out the unusual moves.

▲ A cleverly-done conversion of a sport which doesn't lend itself to computer conversion. If you're into rugby, you'll enjoy it.

▼ Suffers from a few annoying flaws, such as the way the computer players tackle perfectly, but you only get a result about 50% of the time.

MT RATING: 75%

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



J-LEAGUE PRO STRIKER

BY SEGA
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 19

Take to the field as one of ten Japanese teams from the J-League in this prize soccer game which is loaded with features. The style is Kick Off, but the graphics are better and it's easier to control the ball, which leads to some spectacular and realistic-looking football. If you're prepared to pay an extra £25 for Sega's multi-player joypad connector up to four people can play at once, two-a-side.

▲ The multi-player options, the excellent graphics and the amazing playability make this the best football game on the Megadrive at the moment.

▼ It's a shame that all the text is in Japanese as it makes some of the more exotic options (such as the instant replay) impenetrable.

MT RATING: 93%

JOE MONTANA 3

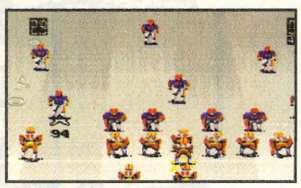
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 11

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.

▲ 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.

▲ 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%

JUNGLE STRIKE

BY EA
PRICE: £49.99
REVIEWED: MT 18

Over one year on, and EA have finally produced the sequel to their awesome Desert Strike. Following on from the last game, you're now pitted against drug lords deep in a South American jungle and on the streets of Washington DC. The graphics are stunning and you now get to pilot a number of different vehicles, including a stealth fighter and a hover craft.

▲ Impressive graphics and tons of missions action. Even better than the first game.

▼ Shock, horror! None at all!

MT RATING: 95%

JURASSIC PARK

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT21

The Megadrive version of the mega-grossing dinosaur blockbuster is a bit of a disappointment. Basically it's a platform-based jump and hop shoot jobbie, with the novelty of being able to play either the hero or the villain – fossil-hunter Alan Grant or a velociraptor – with the type of baddies you encounter depending on which you choose to play. The dinos look pretty good, but sadly the game doesn't capture the atmosphere of the film – the action is paced too slow and most of the carnivorous killing machines you encounter can be felled with one shot from a dart gun. The levels are quite predictable and the puzzle element is basic, to say the least. There is a reasonable challenge to the game, but it's the dodgy control system that's the hardest thing to beat.

▲ Dinosaurs look great. You can play as a human character or a velociraptor.

▼ A Lacks the atmosphere of the film. Most dinos can be knocked out easily. Dodgy control system. Unimaginative gameplay.

MT RATING: 77%

K

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.

▲ 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%

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

86,132,636 by Paul Bartlett, Erith, Kent

M



MAZIN WAR

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 18

Dash along a series of increasingly difficult levels hacking apart everything you encounter. It sounds simple, but you're presented with challenge after challenge including some completely massive bosses. It could be better looking, but it plays fine as it is.

▲ Lots of action in the Golden Axe vein and incredible bosses.

▼ If anything the game is too difficult and apart from the bosses offers few surprises.

MT RATING: 90%

MEGA-LO-MANIA

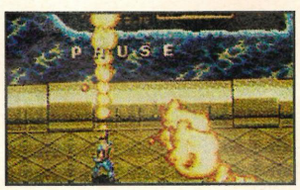
BY VIRGIN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 13

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%

MORTAL KOMBAT
BY ACCLAIM
PRICE: £49.99
REVIEWED: MT21
Faithful conversion of the wildly popular coin-op. A typical one-on-one beat 'em up, but with digitised fighters and lots of corny gore (if you know the right codes to tap in, that is – see MT21). Not so much a case of gratuitous violence as comical violence. The soundtrack is excellent, the special moves are relatively easy to pull off and the game's highly enjoyable to play.
▲ Highly playable, faithful conversion of the coin-op. Special moves easily executed. Lots of gore.
▼ A Fighting experts will be able to defeat the computer opponents easily. Not as good as Streetfighter II.
MT RATING: 90%



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

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%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE
SCOTTSDALE: 242 Strokes (best 72) by Darrell Simmonds, Cirencester
SOUTHWIND: 242 strokes (best 72) by Steve Jones, Portsmouth

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%

POPULOUS II
BY VIRGIN
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT21
Long-awaited follow-up to the original God sim, which offers no radically new features apart from a Customise option which allows you to create new lands and also allocate your god experience points. Apart from that, it's the same 'flatten the land and let your people go forth and multiply' action, although a larger range of disasters are at your disposal with which to wreak havoc on your enemies.
▲ Follow-up to the classic original god sim, with an added Customise feature and a wider range of more spectacular disasters on hand.
▼ A Apart from that, it's the same old stuff.
MT RATING: 89%



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%

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%

PUGGSY
BY PSYGNOSIS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT21
Excellently designed and thought-out platform-based puzzle game with a difference. There is no set solution for each problem, and there are several solutions which will enable you to get off each level. The star of the game is Puggsy, and there are over 40 different objects he can use, each of which has a different effect in helping him along on his mission to find his spaceship. The game features 'real physics', in that heavy objects weigh Puggsy down, rubber ducks help him to float in weater and balls bounce around realistically.
▲ Unique and highly original. Puzzles can be solved several different ways, giving good longevity.
▼ A Control system takes some getting used to. Objects tend to bounce around when you try yo stack them up.
MT RATING: 90%

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

RANGER X
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 19
A platform shoot 'em up starring a giant jumping, flying robot with an array of big guns and the occasional use of a hi-tech unicycle and a flying machine. The idea is to travel the many and widely varied scrolling zones, taking out a particular variety of target and anything else that fires back.
▲ Major league bosses and fancy graphics tricks make this look streets ahead of any other Megadrive shooter. The variety and smart ideas makes it play better than any other Megadrive shooter, too.
▼ There's a bit of sprite flicker when things get busy on the screen.
MT RATING: 94%

RAMPART
BY TENGEN
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 13
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: £19.99
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



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%

ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES

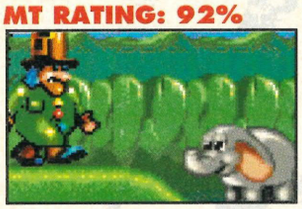
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 20

Rocket-powered oppossum Sparkster has to defend the planet Elhorn against the Black Lord and his pig-troops in one of the best Megadrive platform shoot 'em ups we've see for a good while. Loads of big bosses, original, inventive levels and excellent-looking, well-animated graphics all add up to lots of fun.

▲Smart graphics, excellent bosses, ingeniously-designed levels. Lots of fun.

▼A bit easy (but only on the lower difficulty settings).

MT RATING: 92%



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

SHINOBI III

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT21

Ninja Joe Mushashi returns for his third visit to the Megadrive and the result is one of the best MD action titles around! Apart from the usual hack 'n' slash platform-based ninjascopics, there's a horseback section and even a level where Joe takes to a rocket-powered surfboard to take on his arch-enemies, the Zeed, in his attempt to prevnt them achieving their aim of total world domination. Great, fast-paced action, brilliant graphics and sound and a few new tricks up Mushashi's sleeve make this a must for action fans. Seems easier than the first Shinobi game, although this is mainly due to the fact that Joe is a much more versatile character with a wider range of moves and attacks, and it does require a lot of practice to complete the game on Normal or Hard.

▲ Great ninja action with superb graphics and sound, plus variety in the levels. Joe has more attacks and moves than before.

▼ Not as hard as Revenge of Shinobi.

MT RATING: 93%



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%

SLAP FIGHT

BY TENGEN
PRICE: IMPORT ONLY
REVIEWED: MT 20

Conversion of a ten-year-old coin-op – a real old-fashioned up-the-screen shoot 'em up with bolt-on power-up weapons and hosts of swirling spaceships to blast. You get two versions of the game on this cart – a totally faithful reproduction of the arcade original and an updated version with different baddies and backgrounds.

▲Two games for the price of one. Extremely playable, with fast and challenging action and loads of different weapons to play around with.

▼Too short, and it's a bit of a nostalgia trip for old shoot 'em up fans – very old-fashioned..

MT RATING: 83%

SNOW BROS

BY TENGEN
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 19

A conversion of an obscure old Toaplan coin-op, similar to Taito's Bubble Bobble. In it you play Nick and Tom (yes, it has a simultaneous two player option), two snow-chucking icemen who have to leap up and down numerous levels of platforms combatting monsters with fiery weapons.

▲ Excellent two player game, with great graphics and plenty of action.

▼ Rough and tough players may find the password system makes it a bit easy to finish.

MT RATING: 86%

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%



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

SPIDERMAN

BY SEGA
PRICE: £19.99
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

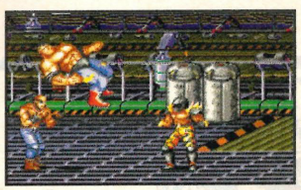
BY ACCOLADE
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: PRE MEGATECH

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%



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: 92%

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.

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

708,480 (Normal) by Craig Wilkins, Northampton
724,490 (Hard) by Kevin Golder, Malvern
969,790 (Hardest) by Aaron Seddon, Wigan

SUNSET RIDERS

BY KONAMI
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 16

Having the distinction of being the only cowboy shoot 'em up on the Megadrive, this one or two player game is similar to Rolling Thunder. Leap onto saloon roofs and up cliffs, shooting bad-hats and injuns and rescuing captured ladies (not politically correct, this game). There's also the thrill of a horseback bonus collection section.

▲ Great graphics and sound and excellent fun, especially in two player mode.

▼ Only four levels so it doesn't take long to finish.

MT RATING: 87%

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

T



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%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

1,534,480 (Hard) by Imelda Khoo, Hailsham



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.

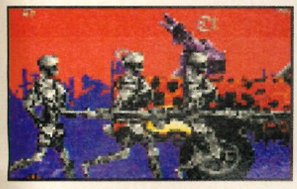
▲ Tremendous graphics (the Turtle sprites are just great) and sound and loads of fighting action. Great fun.

▼ The fighting isn't hard work at all and experienced players will be able to beat the game easily.

MT RATING: 87%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

1,103 by Chris Biggar, Accrington, Lancs



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

6,702,800 (Normal) by Peter Davis, London, SE5

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.

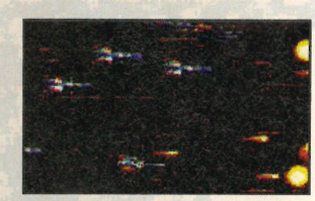
MT RATING: 89%

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.

▼ 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

6,134,410 (Easy) by Daniel Gidman, Bristol

509,697 (Normal) by Lee Harrison, King's Lynn

5,280,880 (Hard) by Gay Fairholm, Dumfries

TINY TOON ADVENTURES: BUSTER'S HIDDEN TREASURE

BY KONAMI

PRICE: £39.99

REVIEWED: MT 17

Buster Bunny (of TV cartoon fame) is off on a treasure hunt through 33 big levels of platforms. Trying to make sure he gets to the treasure first is evil kid, Montana Max, who has populated the place with his cuddly but dangerous hench-creatures, and with the aid of Dr Gene Splicer, Buster's brainwashed pals. As usual, lots of items to collect for points and secret rooms and bonus levels.

▲ Fast and fun with great graphics and sound.

▼ Not a great many new ideas and not terribly difficult to finish.

MT RATING: 94%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

421,300 (Completed with 23 lives left) by Ali Forbes, Medstead, Hants.

TOE JAM AND EARL

BY SEGA

PRICE: £19.99

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.

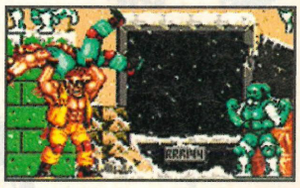
▲ Lots of wacky noises, kooky graphics and the two player option make it fun.

▼ Very basic gameplay which is only propped up by all the wacky noises and kooky graphics.

MT RATING: 82%

CURRENT HIGH SCORE

1,802 (as Earl) by David Hall, Birmingham



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.

W

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

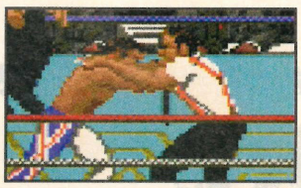
REVIEWED: MT 12

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

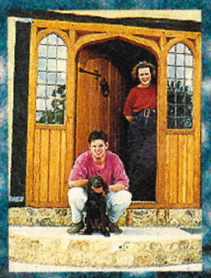
Watch all of the intro screens then start the game and collect all the green power ups and nothing else (not even speed-ups or smart bombs) then when the next green is due to appear the purple mega power-up should come on instead. If it doesn't, change weapons and try it again with the new weapon. Occasionally 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

out to lunch

Two days after Micro Machines was released on Megadrive, it shot straight into the multi-format computer game top ten at number one! So it seemed like the ideal time to visit the Codemasters' HQ in deepest rural Warwickshire and get the lowdown on The Codies' latest projects from their top bloke, RICHARD EDDY.



"Micro Machines sold 70,000 on its first day of release – if it was crap, it might have sold 4–5,000 and that would have been the end of it. And the people producing it would probably have hung themselves!"

MegaTech: Codemasters' policy seems to have been to bring out games that are cheaper than anyone else's – Micro Machines is £5 cheaper than the average price for a Megadrive cart – are you going to continue this policy?
Richard Eddy: What we're trying to do is offer a sensible retail price. Obviously, we're still trying to make money, because looking at the future of games, you need to invest so much more money. At the moment, we're investigating full-motion video for CD products – we're looking at an outlay of hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars in equipment, and obviously that money's got to come from somewhere. Micro Machines itself is only a small game – four megs – so it doesn't need as many chips as a larger game. But I think we can generally guarantee that our cart prices will stay under £40 for the moment. We realise that £40 is a lot of money, but it is our policy to only produce games that are worth the money. We operate under very basic rules – the game must have total playability and lastability.
MT: How seriously are you investigating the CD side of things?
RE: Well we don't have a Mega-CD title that we're working on as such. We're investigating all the possibilities and looking at what will be happening in two years time. There's been a lot of disappointment about the products released for the Mega-CD so far, and we certainly don't want to convert Micro Machines and just add on stereo sound – it wouldn't do anything to enhance the game. When we release a CD product – whether it be for the Mega-CD or whatever comes after the Mega-CD – we want that product to outshine everything else. We're looking into all the possibilities for CD, like digitising live action, incorporating film sequences, having special effects sets built and staging special effects to be integrated in video games. But it'll probably be at least a year before we commit to anything – we just want to make sure we're right when it happens.
MT: Yes, most of the stuff that's been released for the Mega-CD so far has been incredibly disappointing – most of it has just been reworked cartridge and home computer stuff.
RE: Well, it is early days yet. I think that a lot of people expect the industry to move far too quickly at the moment. It just doesn't happen – it took three or four

years for the Amiga to get really big, for instance, and the Mega-CD's only been out for about four months. Maybe in 18 months time, we might start to see some really special stuff coming out for it. We've never been a company to jump in a year before a new machine's launch – we've always looked for a market and then developed what we think is the best thing for it. We could've jumped into the Megadrive market two years ago, but then you wouldn't have had that much special stuff from us. We actually started developing Megadrive games about 18 months ago, when we thought it was going to be big, then last Christmas it went huge and now we're coming up to the big saturation point, where there's a massive market for Megadrive games. We analyse what games are around and what people are buying for the Megadrive and hopefully come out with the right stuff.

MT: So you're more of a 'populist' company than one that's at the cutting edge of technology, then?

RE: Well, Codemasters has always produced games for the games-playing public. We don't do things to impress the trade and we don't buy huge licences just to get boxes out on the shelves or anything like that.

MT: Okay. Why did it take Micro Machines so long to come out for the Megadrive?

RE: Well, we were going to release Micro Machines independently at the beginning of this year, but Sega served the writ on us to prevent us publishing it. We went to court, but ended up settling out of court before a judgment was actually given. We came to an agreement which means that Sega are actually distributing it, but the result of all this was that it was delayed for six months.

MT: When all that Micro Machines legal stuff was going on, there was a feeling that you were sort of 'taking them on' and trying to break Sega's power to enforce which Megadrive games could or couldn't be released. Was that your intention or was it just a set of circumstances brought about because you really wanted to release that particular game?

RE: Well, we always have and hopefully always hopefully always will be in control of our own publishing. We can still choose which games we want to put out, when to put them out and so on...

MT: But can Sega still actually stop you bringing out any particular game for the Megadrive?

RE: I don't think so, no. I mean if we think we've got a game that we think deserves to be marketed, it's gonna get out there. We still are very independent publishers. But it's actually worked out really well – Sega have done a wonderful job distributing the game.

MT: Does that mean that any other companies can go the same route and bypass Sega?

RE: If they've developed the technology and could beat Sega through the courts, they probably could. But if someone tried to do that now, by the time they actually got round to putting the game out, the Megadrive would probably be dead and buried.

MT: You're working on a football game at the moment, aren't you? How's that shaping up?

RE: At the moment it's in the very early stages of development. The programmers are just doing some basic routines – just trying to get the movements right and stuff. With footie games, the fluidity of play is all – the way the ball moves, the way the players respond and so on. At the moment, all you can see is blocks moving around the screen... but they move around the screen beautifully.

MT: And you do most of your game development in-house, don't you?

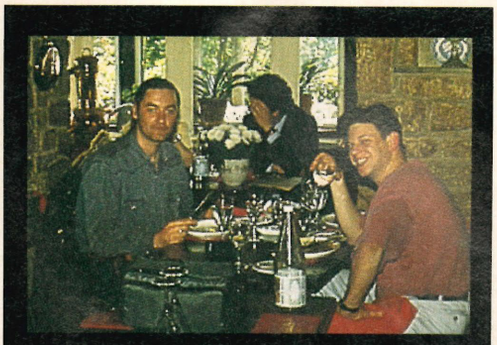
RE: That's right. The farmhouse is a great work environment anyway, so most people actually want to come and work there. It's always better if everyone works as an entire team throughout the whole project rather than using a programmer who's working on a game 60 miles away, who won't have any feedback from his work until he gives us the finished product. It's best if they're working in a place where everyone's looking at their work, play-testing it from start to finish. Most of the people at the farmhouse play games – everyone knows what makes a good game and what makes a shit game. And David and Richard (Darling), who run the company, started out as programmers, and games still mean everything to them, so any game we produce has got to be good to get out there.

MT: Where do your programmers come from? There might be some MegaTech readers out there who fancy their chances as programmers.

RE: Basically, you've got to come to us as a programmer – we don't do any training, although obviously help people with basic skills to move on. Say, if you're great at writing Nintendo games, but you want to move onto doing Megadrive games, that can be sorted out. The main thing is to know the basics. It really involves sending in a demo of what you've done before and proving that you're worth it.

MT: So what if someone comes to you – from school, college or whatever – who's done a few bits of programming off their own back, hasn't actually worked on a game, but is really talented?

RE: Well, working on a game is obviously an advantage, because you'll understand the production process for a title, but if you've got the talent, you could certainly come and do your first game here. Micro Machines was originally created by a guy called Andrew Graham, and it was his first game.



"... I think we can generally guarantee that our cart prices will stay under £40 for the moment. We realise that £40 is a lot of money, but it is our policy to only produce games that are worth the money. We operate under very basic rules – the game must have total playability and lastability."



MT: Do you all make loads of money then?

RE: Ha-ha! What I will say is that it's one of the few companies that I've worked at where very few people whinge about what they're being paid or the way they're being treated.

MT: What sort of games do you like then?

RE: I still rate Micro Machines as the most fun you can have with a joypad. I also love Pang – I love two-player games. There's nothing better than playing against another human opponent.

MT: Yeah, the move towards more multi-player games has got to be a good thing. Are you thinking of making your footie game compatible with the Sega Tap, or developing your own four-player adaptor like Electronic Arts are doing?

RE: As I said, the football game is still in its very early stages. But there's every possibility that it might go that way.

MT: Do you have any other games under development at the moment?

RE: We're working on an arcade adventure which should be out on Megadrive in November, called Cosmic Space Head. The gameplay is sort of Lucasfilm-y 'point 'n' click' style. You play Cosmic Space Head, the universe's first alien tourist. The story is that he's visited Earth and returned to his home planet, where the game starts, and no-one believes he's found this planet. The point of the game is to prove the Earth's existence – you've got to travel through several planets to reach Earth again, and then bring back some proof of its existence. The graphics are all done in 1950s style – very 'Jetsons' – it's got good gameplay that anyone can get into, and it's not so 'off-the-wall' that no-one will understand it, but it's got a different twist to it, just to grab people's imaginations.

MT: You've got your own factory where you make all your own cartridges, haven't you?

RE: Yes, all the carts are produced locally. It's quite good that, in these times of recession, we're building up a bit of British business. We opened the factory last year – it's quite small, certainly not Sega proportions, but it gives us enough capacity to put out our own titles throughout the year.

MT: So are you the only company which is producing its own carts in this country?

RE: As far as I'm aware, we're the only ones doing it in the UK. EA and Accolade do their own, but I think they manufacture them in the USA.

MT: What gave you the idea to make the carts a different shape?

RE: Basically, we wanted something that actually fitted the Megadrive. It's a very rounded games deck, and yet all the cartridges are really square, which we always thought was an odd design from the start. So we wanted to design something a bit more curved and aerodynamic.

MT: You also developed 'plug-in' technology for NES carts, where you produced a standard chip set to be plugged into the game deck, enabling you to produce the games on cheaper 'mini-carts'. Is it possible to do a similar thing with the Megadrive?

RE: It's not something you can do with the Megadrive. With the NES, there are actually some chips in the game cartridge that really should be built into the game stack, so basically it's a waste of money. But there's not that waste in a Sega machine – all you need is the game chips. At the moment, everyone's begging for CDs, because they're so much cheaper to produce. Chips cost between two and three quid, so bringing out a game on CD rather than cart will save about eight quid in production costs – that's another eight quid you can either cut off the retail price or plough back into game development. For at least the next two years, that money will have to go back into development, because to get a good studio going to develop really good CD stuff going, you could be spending up to a million quid. The money has to come from somewhere.

MT: So the introduction of CD-Rom won't immediately mean cheaper games, then?

RE: Not instantly, not unless they're based on Megadrive games. But we think the money's better spent on developing better quality games to come out in two years' time. If you think about CD's catching on and the game technology catching up with them, it could be a long time before we see CD as a proper standard, with really good games coming out. The difference between a Megadrive game, which may take two years to produce with a team of five or six people and producing a CD game is massive. The equipment and amount of people needed to produce a CD game is the same as you'd need to produce a TV programme.

MT: So how many people would you need to set up something like that?

RE: Oh, God! Your game development team would probably run to about twenty-five people, minimum. You'd need two graphic artists doing in-game graphics, a whole team producing all the in-and-out animation, artists producing backdrops on paper to be scanned and dropped into the game, people who are experienced in film animation, special effects engineers... a great big crew. It's a huge effort to get a game out these days, and it has to be absolutely right, because of the huge amounts of money that get tied up in a game. Three flops in a row and the company could be dead, because only good Megadrive games sell nowadays. Micro Machines sold 70,000 on its first day of release – if it was crap, it might have sold 4–5,000 and that would have been the end of it. And the people producing it would probably have hung themselves!

NEXT MONTH!

Mr Newsagent

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[OUT WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 20]
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BONG THANG!

STREETFIGHTER II:
THE WAIT IS OVER!



It's seems like we've been hanging on since the dawn of creation for this one, but at last the most eagerly-awaited Megadrive cart since Sonic 2 is 100% complete, finished and ready to be released (on October 15, Sega reck-on). We've had it in the office, we've played it, but we weren't prepared to review it until we had the time to do the game justice (see Preview, page 16).

However, we can give you a CAST IRON, SOLID GOLD GUARANTEE that we'll be reviewing

STREETFIGHTER II:
SPECIAL CHAMPIONSHIP EDITION

next month (barring any earthquakes or other catastrophic acts of God in the Farringdon area), as well as loads of other really smart stuff, including **SONIC SPINBALL** and **SONIC CD**.

Even MegaTech's resident New Age psychic boychild, Mystic Matthew, has been bitten by the Streetfighter bug. When we told him we only had the game for a day, and had to send it back, he went into a weird mood change, threw an enormous tantrum, and then disappeared in a flash of psychic energy. We haven't seen him since, and we're afraid we might haave lost him forever. If any of you readers have any idea where Matthew might be, please get in touch with us at the usual address. Anyway, see you next month...

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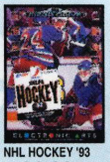
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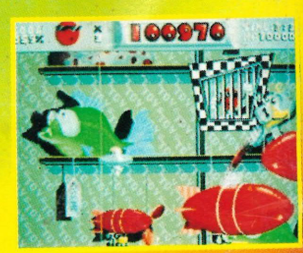
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