SEGA
MEGADRIVE AND MEGA-CD
ISSUE 27 MARCH 1994 US$5.95

MEGATECH

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DOUBLE SWITCH
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SKITCHIN'
Road Rash on rollerblades...

NBA JAM
So what's all the fuss about then?

ANOTHER WORLD 2
HEART OF THE ALIEN

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INSIDE: HYPER DUNK ● NBA SHOWDOWN ● PRINCE OF PERSIA ● DRACULA UNLEASHED ● NORMY ● REN & STIMPY ● LUNAR THE SILVER STAR CD ● MUTANT LEAGUE HOCKEY ● RACING ACES ● PGA EUROPEAN TOUR GOLF ● NHLPA HOCKEY CD + MANY MORE!

"YOU DON'T ARGUE

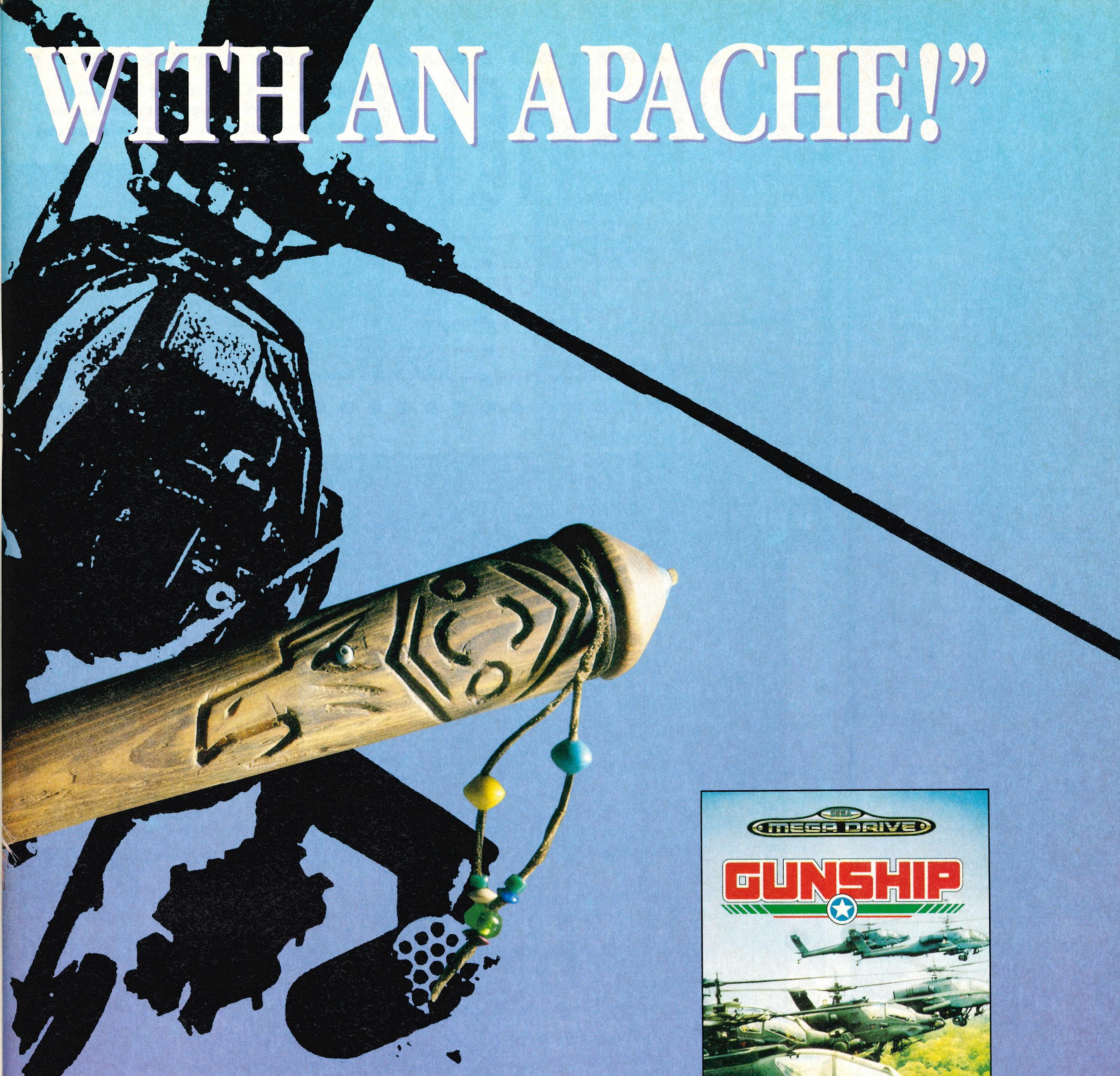


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Gunship. *The only thing this Apache don't carry is a tomahawk.*

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AND GRAB YOURSELF SOME SCALPS!

U.S.GOLD®

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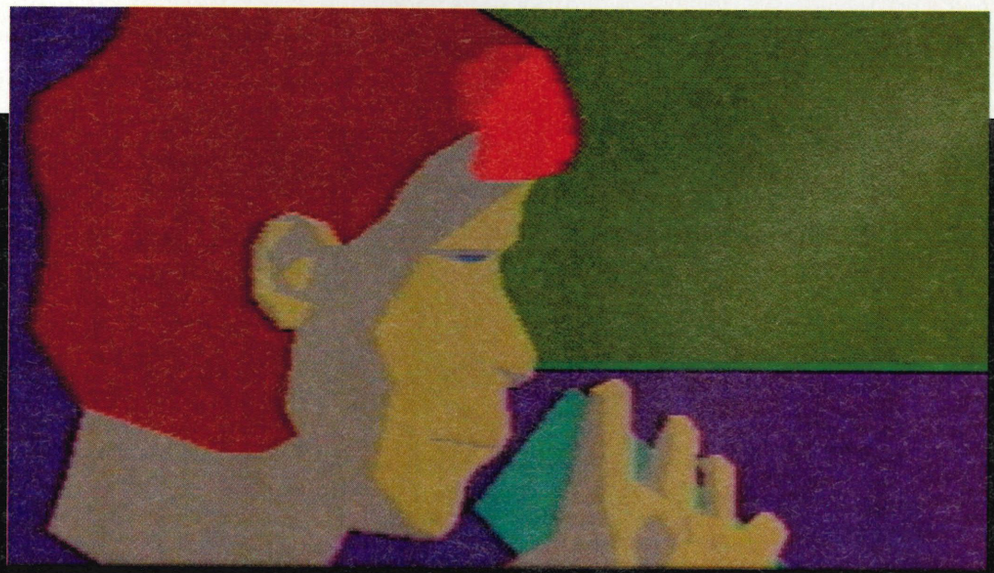
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The incredible Virtua Racing appeared for the first time in the office, as



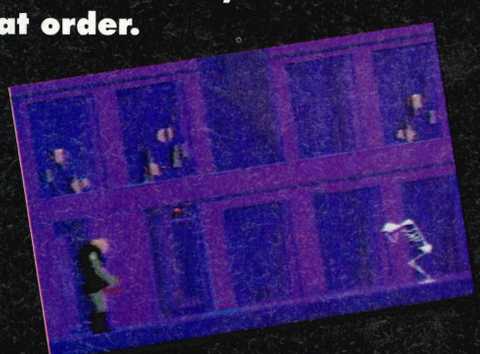


ANOTHER WORLD 2

This was a little late arriving, but thanks to the wonders of modern science and technology Another World 2 arrived on time via TNT and narrowly missed being called 'Another Magazine' or 'Another Month'.

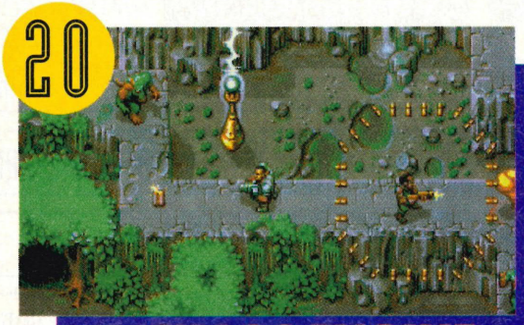
Nevertheless it has arrived, it's made the cover and it's also prompted me to use the following words in this introduction – namely 'exclusive' and 'world', not necessarily in that order.





did Another World 2, Chaos Engine and Charles Barkley: Shut Up and Jam. Permission granted to collapse in shock.





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CHAOS ENGINE

REGULARS

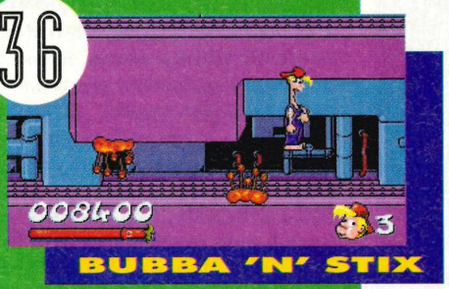
If we didn't put them in you'd only complain, so here are this month's (or for that matter any month's) regulars...

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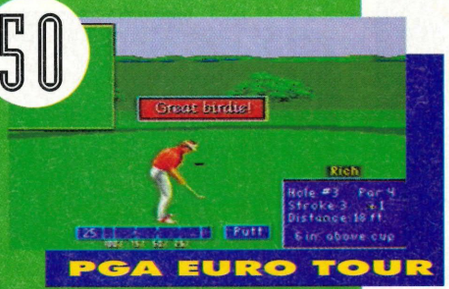
Three basketball games arrived for review this month and received a mixed reception. Acclaim is going all out for a Mortal Kombat-style success with NBA Jam, Konami jumps on the bandwagon with Hyperdunk and EA shocks us all with NBA '94 Showdown. There's also NHLPA Hockey on CD, Sonic 3, Mutant League Hockey, Lunar CD and the very late Prince of Persia among others. Easily the cackest of all though, is the amazing Racing Aces CD.

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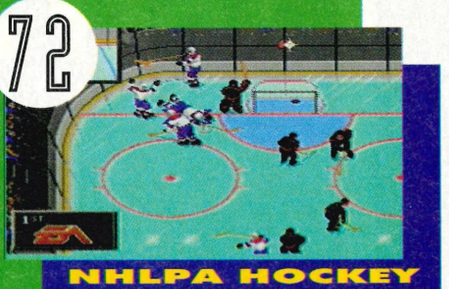
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NHLPA HOCKEY

MEGATECH

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THIS MONTH'S TOP TIPS

1. Remember to switch the lights off if any dogs get on to your mezzanine floor.
2. Don't try this at home, kids – we're experts you know and use plenty of safety equipment.

MW MEGAWORLD

MEGATECH INTERNATIONAL NEWS NETWORK

- SEGA CDX
- CANNON FODDER
- MD IS TOP SELLER
- CONTRA REBELS
- DR FRANKEN
- PIRATES OF DARK...
- POPEYE
- BACKROAD RACERS
- MANSIONS OF HID SOULS
- COLUMNS III
- RADICAL REX
- MD & CD CHARTS

Things seem a little quiet on the Western Front at the moment, and after the hubbub of the Las Vegas CES last month everything seems rather dull and boring! But in the typical MegaTech style we do tend to get excited about the most stupid things, and even the insy-winsiest snippet of news manages to create a buzz here in the office...OK, so I'm lying. There once was a man from Timbuctoo, who had one too many Vindaloos...

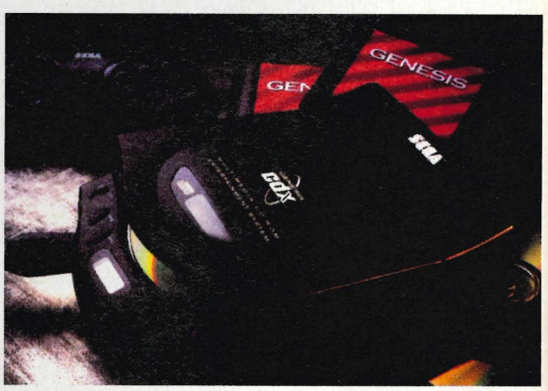
SEGA CDX OFFICIAL LAUNCH

Further to our news item on the brand-spanking-new CDX machine, we can reveal that the compact system WILL be released here in the UK renamed as the Multi-Mega. The machine is to be introduced throughout the country this March at a hefty price of £350-£399.

The new system, scheduled to hit the shelves in time for the big-buying Easter weekend, will be released with six titles probably all on one CD. Which titles will appear in the pack has yet to be finalised, but it is more than likely that the hard-hitting Sonic CD will be one of those games, thus heightening Sonic's presence during the first quarter of the year.

It does seem rather strange that after the rumours circulating last year implying that Sega was only intending to release 10 more CD titles officially, Sega would want to release a brand-new machine so late in the day.

Further news of Sega's hardware development – Sonic 3 (released on 24 February) will also be bundled together in a Mega Drive pack two days before Sonic 3 officially ships. Although some critics have claimed that the console market is grinding to a halt, Sega is pushing ahead on all thrusters determined to prove the cynics wrong.





LOST AGAIN

After the incredible success of Virgin's Lost Vikings for the Mega Drive, developers at Interplay are working on a sequel. Development is in very early stages at the moment and little is available on the game, but according to the press release "Our three friendly Vikings are so lost they can't even find each other!"

The Lost Vikings II is scheduled to be released on all formats sometime in mid-1994, but as is the case with a lot of games release dates are always prone to slipping. Whether Virgin will distribute Interplay's new title is not known.

MANSELL GETS MEGA

Nigel Mansell's World Championship Racing, previously seen on the Super Nintendo last year, is about to get its Mega Drive release through Gametek later this month.

The game features all the 16 Grand Prix circuits and allows you to race through all of them in the tournament mode, or simply practice a few until you get tired of seeing the same corners. There is also a training mode in which Mansell gives you pointers and tips on how to tackle each individual track and its hazardous hairpins.

The Americans don't seem to mind that Nigel doesn't actually race F1 cars anymore...it's a pity most of us can't say the same.

CONTRA THINGY

Just a little teaser this one. Konami's excellent Contra game (seen on the Super Famicom and later on the Super Nintendo as Super Probotector) is going to get released on the Mega Drive later this year. Details on the title are very sketchy indeed and it is unknown whether the game will be a straight conversion of the SNES version or will include any new features or levels.

All we do know is the SNES game was superb and if Konami's track record is anything to go by, then the Sega version will be just as impressive.

MEGA DRIVE TOPS CHARTS

After the crazy spending spree's throughout the Christmas and January sales period, Gallup has announced that Sega was way ahead of Nintendo in the popularity stakes. But it wasn't just the machine that came up trumps, the software from both Sega itself and third party publishers managed to keep Sega and the Mega Drive out in front.

In the All Formats chart EA's FIFA Soccer steamed in to the number one position knocking yet another Mega Drive title, Acclaim's Mortal Kombat, down in to second place. It doesn't stop there because following closely behind in the number three and four spots respectively were Sega's Jurassic Park and Virgin's Aladdin.



CANNON FODDER FOR MEGA DRIVE

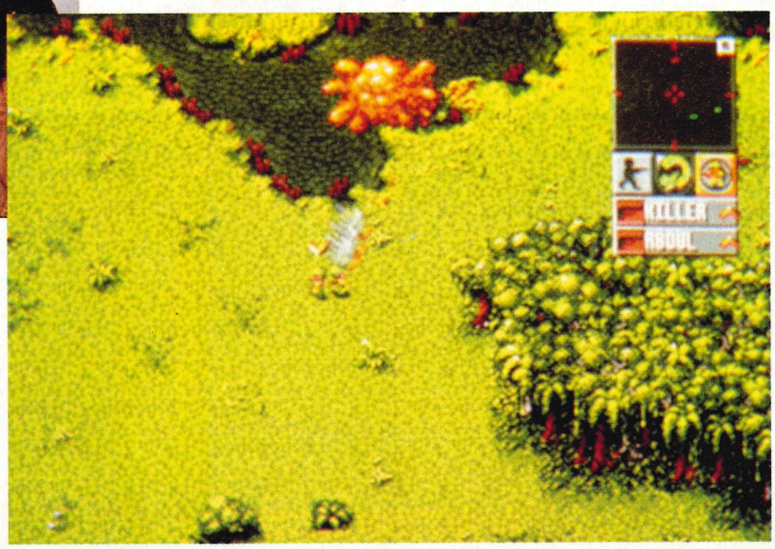


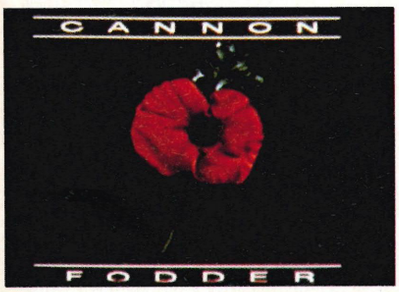
This is probably the best news of the month. Developer Sensible Software, known to Mega Drive owners for its brilliant Sensible Soccer game, is to convert its even more brilliant Amiga game, Cannon Fodder to the Mega Drive later this year.

The conversion will be released through Virgin and will include all the addictive gameplay and features that have catapulted Cannon Fodder to the top of the Amiga charts. Virgin hopes to get a Super Nintendo version of Cannon Fodder out for Christmas as well, and the new format machines like Jaguar have also been targeted.

More news on the Sensible front is that Virgin is also to market Sensible Golf, the follow-up to Sensible Soccer. However, this game isn't going to be seen on the consoles until at least the early part of 1995, so don't go all gooey yet.







CODIES AND ELITE SHOCK



Software house Codemasters has signed up with Elite to convert its acclaimed Nintendo games Joe and Mac: Caveman Ninja and Dr Franken on to the Mega Drive. Both titles will hopefully be released later this year with Elite actually distributing the games. With this deal, Elite will also be distributing Codemasters' Sega titles Fantastic Dizzy and Cosmic Spacehead.

One of the main questions emerging at the news of this deal is whether Elite's superb SNES footy game Striker will see its way on to the Mega Drive. As yet, no one is ready to confirm if we will see a conversion in the near future.

ARE WE PAYING TOO MUCH?

The Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC) is currently investigating the supply of video games. So many retailers and punters alike have been complaining about the high prices of software for such a long time now that the MMC has finally answered our cries.

The proceedings are obviously at a very early stage and it could be a long while before we hear anything favourable. However, if the MMC does find something awry then the current software situation and the high prices could change dramatically.

PIRATES OF DARK WATER

Early morning TV viewers may remember an excellent cartoon series screened on a Saturday morning, called Pirates of Darkwater. For a while now we have been awaiting this game on the Super Nintendo, but it is only recently that we got wind of the game coming out on the Mega Drive as well.

The game, like its SNES counterpart, will be released through Sunsoft in the States and is designed mainly as a scrolling, platform beat'em-up. The game is a massive 16 meg and features some really great sprite animation taken straight from the cartoon series.

The objective of the game is to sail the seven seas and seek out your fortune by discovering the Treasures of Rule. You will be able to play one of the three main characters in Ren, Tula or Ioz as you wield a mighty sword and tackle the villainous Lord Bloth and his pirates!

Sunsoft is also working on a 16 meg game of the Justice League – featuring some of DC Comics' more well-known stars such as Batman, Superman, Green Lantern and Wonder Woman. This game was only announced at the CES and there is nothing to view as yet – more news when we have it.

Pirates will be out in America shortly and Marubeni UK (who distribute Sunsoft's SNES products here in Britain) is negotiating for the rights to distribute the Sega titles as well. We should be seeing the first Sega product, Aero the Acrobat, in the next couple of months.





BUBBA 'N' STIX





Our goofy hero and his friend - an intelligent alien stick - have crash-landed on a weird planet after being captured by an alien spacecraft. In order to get back to Earth, Bubba must use Stix in a variety of different ways to solve puzzles, overcome adversaries and foil the comedic attempts of his kidnapper to recapture him in this multi-directional scrolling puzzle.

MEGA DRIVE

CORE DESIGN LIMITED

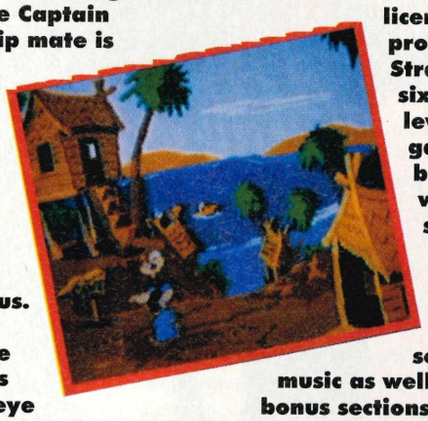
Core Design Ltd. Tradewinds House, 69-71A Ashbourne Road, Derby DE22 3FS. Tel: (0332) 297797 Fax: (0332) 381511

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OLIVE COOKS UP A POPEYE



Shiver me spinach patch Olive, look what's coming to the Mega Drive in May! That's right sailor boy, good 'ole Captain Pugwash's ship mate is cavorting his way through a massive 16 meg action adventure that pits the sea dog against his long running nemesis, Brutus.



The game will be for one or two players and sees Popeye embarking on a daring mission to save his beloved Olive Oyl. The big surprise here is the fact that Technos has designed this new game as an adventure rather than a platform game, which appears to be the norm of late with licensed products. Straddling six different levels the game will boast four-way scrolling, 3D backgrounds, oodles of recognisable sound effects and music as well as a wide array of bonus sections and sub-levels. As yet we haven't heard of anyone signing up this licence for the UK market – watch out for this title at your local importer sometime in May.

VIC TOKAI'S SOUL MOVER



The press release for Vic Tokai's Mansion of Hidden Souls doesn't really tell you anything substantial about the game at all. All it does ramble on about is how scary it is and how their playtester barely came out of the experience alive!

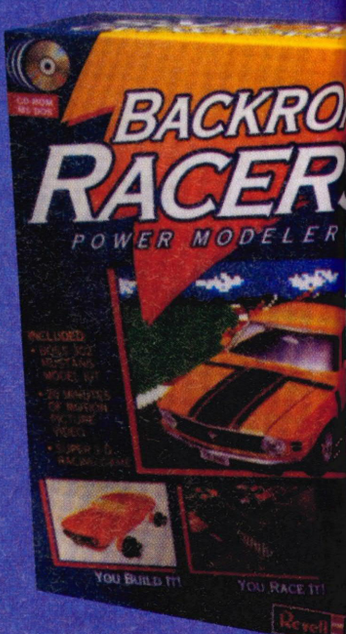
Mansion of Hidden Souls is due to be released on the Mega-CD in the States sometime in the next couple of months. From the screen shots (and numerous other CD titles) we can no doubt expect to see an abundant use of FMV and digitised speech.

Also, from rumours heard at the CES this CD game could be very similar to an excellent PC adventure called Alone in the Dark by Infogrames, but we will just have to wait and see if these rumours hold any water.









CD G
MOD

BEWARE! MAX OVERLOAD

"Get ready for an overdose of games-related comic strip action" boasts a press release from Dark Horse International – publisher of outstanding comics and graphic novels with titles such as Star Wars and Aliens tucked firmly into its ever-widening belt. Max Overload! is exactly what is claims to be, a book filled with full-colour comic strips based on our favourite computer game characters.



Included in the festivities are the loveable Lemmings, Chuck Rock and ToeJam & Earl to name a few. Taking influence from the games we have come to know so well, the comic stories will place our heroes in recognisable situations and will also incorporate specific features from the games.

The first issue of this new comic will already be on sale by the time you read this, celebrating a launch date of 15 February. It will be priced at £1.95, and Dark Horse predicts a staggering first issue circulation of 100,000 copies – so get out there and make the prediction come true!

Now this is a new one! Available in America from February onwards is a unique new Mega-CD package that not only gives you a CD racing game, but also has an Airfix style model kit included a well. Apparently the PC bundles are going down a storm in the States at the moment, and the Mega-CD versions are expected to fare similarly.



The first package – European Racers – is scheduled for release this February and features Lamborghinis and Porsches, while a further package – Backrod Racers – which features classic cars such as Chevvies and Mustangs will be released in June. The computer game part of the set-up allows you to build a simulated version of one of the cars, customise it and then race it around some incredibly advanced race tracks on one of three difficulty settings. To then get the real feel of creating something you can grab a Stanley knife and some polystyrene cement and get stuck into a real model!



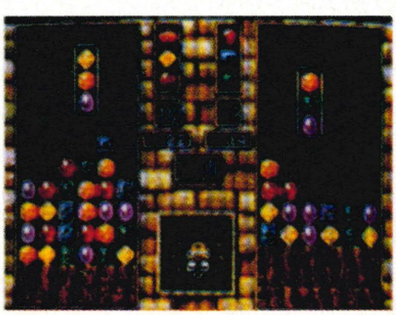
As with any good sim you can muck around with the weather, tyres, track layout and fuel levels to give the game more oomph and realism. And as with any good CD game, you get plenty of FMV! Look out for these brilliant games and later in the year keep your eyes peeled for a flight sim version of the set-up as well as a sci-fi one!

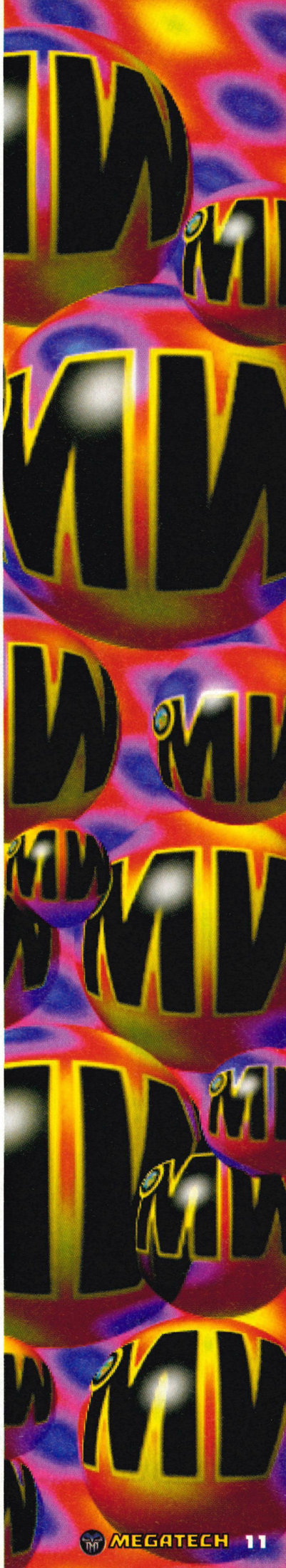
AMES AND EL KITS

MORE COLUMNS AND WE COULD BUILD A FORTRESS

Correct me if I'm wrong, but doesn't this look just like Dr Robotnic's Mean Bean Machine. In fact, didn't Dr Robotnic's Mean Bean Machine look just like Columns...

This next instalment in the long line of Tetris rip-offs comes courtesy of Vic Tokai and is scheduled for release sometime in the next few months. Although why anyone would want another version of this age-old classic is beyond me if you already had something similar. Perhaps the only major difference that this version has above all the others is enhanced graphics and a four-player mode. Nevertheless, look out for a review of this real soon.







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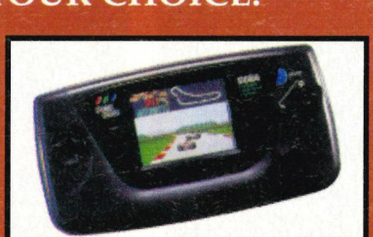
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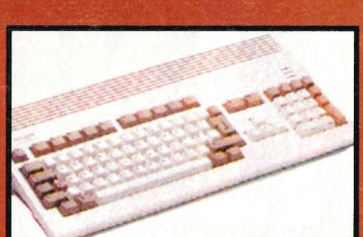


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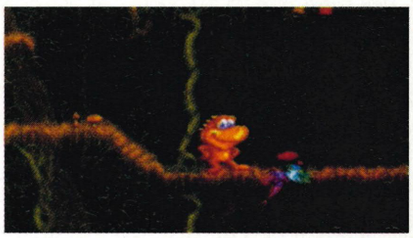
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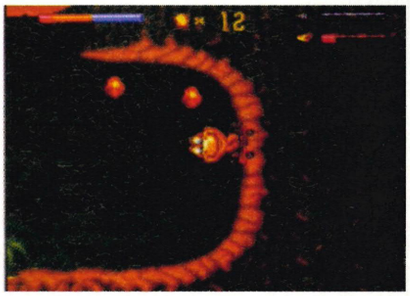
GET RADICAL WITH REX

Oh dear, haven't we seen the last of the dinosaur craze yet? French software house Activision is about to release a new bundle of joy entitled Radical Rex – and guess what, it's a platform game. To top it all off though he's a hip, cool and trendy dinosaur that not only breathes fire and swims underwater but he's also got a skate-board!

The graphics have a cartoon feel with a cute main sprite, detailed enemies and some "raging animation sequences". The game consists of 10 levels that take Rex through all sorts of prehistoric landscapes including a dinosaur graveyard, a swamp, forests and even through the belly of a giant dinosaur.

The game is primarily aimed at the 8 to 14 male age group, but as with all these cutesy platformers it will no doubt appeal to a much wider audience in the long run. Expect to see something on this nearer the summer.





MEGATECH RECOMMENDS

We've seen quite a few CD titles over the last couple of months and surprisingly enough some of them are actually quite good – well, one was at any rate! Here we tell you what we like. We like games. Games we like. We like potato.

THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

Absolutely kicking LucasArts adventure for the Mega-CD, converted straight from the PC version. The graphics are a little grainy at times and considering this is a CD game there's no speech, the disk accessing speeds are also painfully slow, but the gameplay more than makes up for these minor flaws. Lots to do, easy to get into and a riveting good time is to be had by all. As with all LucasArts adventures, there's no faffing around with a bad control system or long winded command executions.

MT RATING: 93%

CHUCK ROCK II: SON OF CHUCK

Great sequel and yet another good CD game! However, it seems pretty pointless putting this on CD though as the gameplay is identical to the cartridge version. There is an absolutely fabba-roony cartoon intro sequence though that lasts for ages, and the sound quality is outstanding. If you've got a CD unit and haven't got this on cart then it's worth getting the CD version purely for the intro! As the game goes, it's great to play.

MT RATING: 86%

GROUND ZERO TEXAS

Huge budget and surprisingly huge gameplay. Similar to Lethal Enforcers and Mad Dog McCree, Ground Zero Texas features oodles of really smart FMV, great speech and plenty of aliens to shoot. The game isn't as linear as its CD FMV cousins and it unravels at quite a startling pace. Is there really a light at the end of the tunnel? Will Mega-CD games actually be any good in the future? Who knows, but until then we'll keep playing this one. Oh, it's on two disks as well.

MT RATING: 85%

CASTLEVANIA: A NEW GENERATION

It about blooming time that Castlevania in some guise or other found its way on to the MD – and here it is! What a smart game it is too. Luckily this version is different to the SNES version, with new and improved level designs and enemy characters. The graphics are pretty nifty with some incredibly detailed sprites and some spectacularly BIG bosses. The game is quite hard but there simply isn't enough of it – you'll wish there was more when you get to the end.

MT RATING: 83%

MEGAWORLD CHARTS

Back on the straight and narrow this month, with the full-price titles taking their rightful place high up in the GAME top 10 best sellers. Considering no one really likes the Mega-CD (from what we hear in our letters), someone's buying the damn games!

MEGA DRIVE

POS	NAME	COMPANY
1	FIFA Soccer	Electronic Arts
2	Sensible Soccer	Sony
3	Eternal Champions	Sega
4	ToeJam & Earl 2	Sega
5	Jungle Strike	Electronic Arts
6	Lethal Enforcers	Konami
7	Great Heavyweights	Sega
8	Aladdin	Sega
9	Street Fighter II	Sega
10	Mortal Kombat	Acclaim

MEGA-CD

POS	NAME	COMPANY
1	Night Trap	Sega
2	Lethal Enforcers	Konami
3	Sonic CD	Sega
4	Thunderhawk	Core
5	Silpheed	Sega

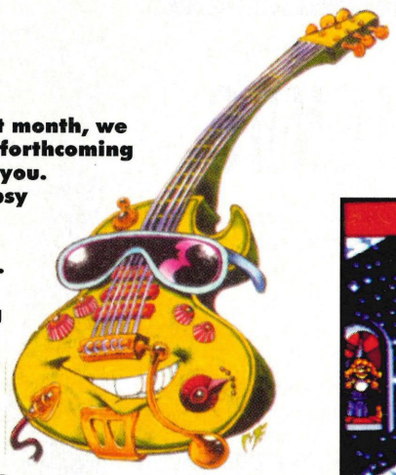
MEGATECH

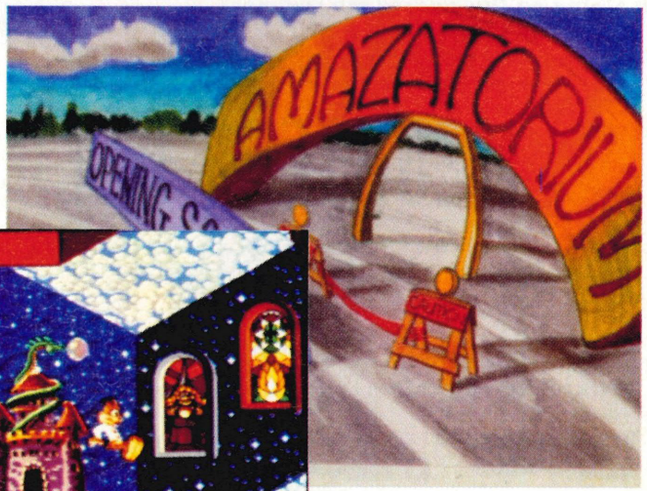
SPYCAM UPDATE

Hey, what's that on that there horizon? Wheedoggie! It's a clutch of new Mega Drive games! Let's take a looksee, and find out what they are...

BUBSY: ACCOLADE

Following on from our news item last month, we have a few more screen shots of the forthcoming Bubsy sequel from Accolade to show you. Scheduled for a summer release, Bubsy II will be an all-new game with an upgraded game engine, enhanced graphics and much, much more to do. There will even be some new faces with a couple of Bubsy's pals making cameo appearances, including Virgil Reality and Arnold Dillo – oh please! Also, check out the preliminary artwork sketches for future characters that will hopefully be featured within the game. We will have a full preview next month, if we can.

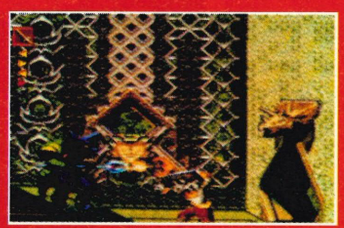




FIRE TEAM ROGUE: ACCOLADE

This next game from Accolade, due to be released around the summer, is a sort of RPG-cum-combat game with some flight simulator bits in it as well. Sounds a bit weird, doesn't it, but at the moment there is very little information available on this new title. It looks a bit like X-Men in places, but how it will look overall is not yet decided. Early on in its development, Fire Team Rogue was one of Accolade's many new products on display at the CES at the beginning of January, but it is hoped that we will be seeing much more on this in the next couple of months.





MICKEY'S MAGICAL QUEST: CAPCOM

At last, some screen shots of the forthcoming SNES conversion of Capcom's Mickey's Magical Quest. True to form, Capcom has managed to recreate the graphics seen in the SNES version almost perfectly and from what we have seen of the up-and-running version, the gameplay is also spot on. The object of the game is to find your kidnapped dog Pluto, who is being held somewhere in evil Pete's castle. Your job is to venture through the kingdom dressing up as a wizard, a fireman or a mountaineer, making it through the various levels. We shall hopefully be seeing this next month.





COSMIC SPACEHEAD™

"A groovy experience in arcade adventuring"
Mega Machines magazine


Electric Shocks


City Streets


Teleport Key


Factory Reception


Planet Detroitica


Night Lights

"Brilliantly original, challenging and great fun - don't miss it!"
Sega Pro magazine

"The interaction is great and the puzzles are really sharp"
Mega Power magazine

How would you prove Earth's Existence?

It's outer-space in yer face! Here's Cosmic - the first alien tourist - in a mad dash through the universe! Join him through 32 action areas and solve the wildest puzzles in the arcade adventure areas. Interact with the oddest bunch of characters in over 300 screens of bizarre and freaky locations! Experience high-speed excitement of racing astro-cars, robot attacks and asteroid fields. It's cosmically out of this world!



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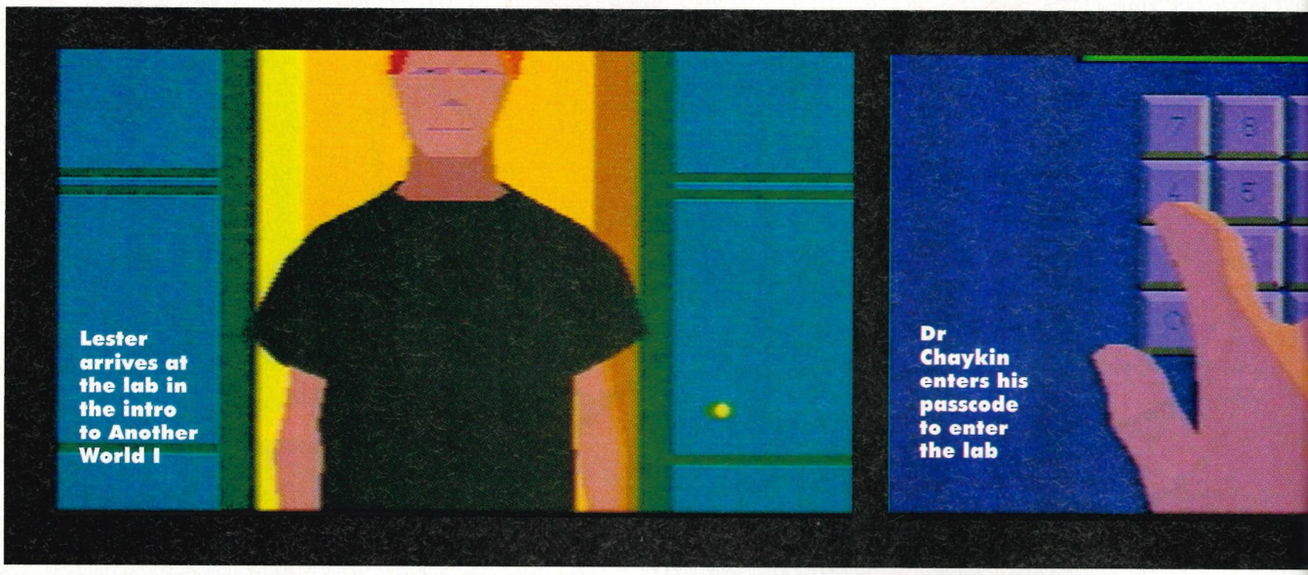
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PREVIEW

BY: VIRGIN

price: TBA
developers: DELPHINE
release date: MAY

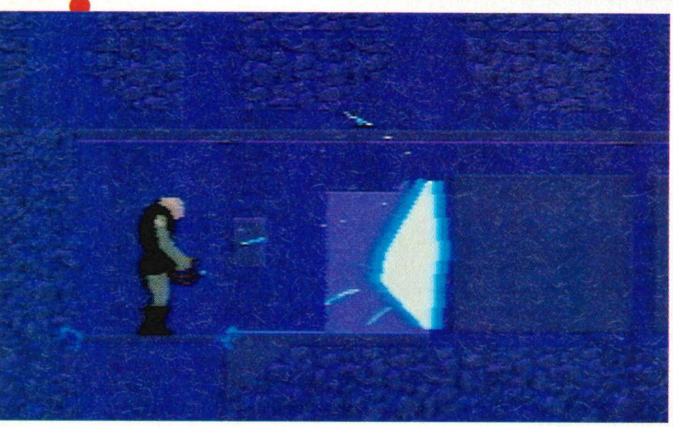
It's been over a year since we saw Another World on the Mega Drive and the country is clamouring for a sequel. Well, the wait is nearly over because Another World II : Heart of the Alien is nearing completion and we've got the EXCLUSIVE preview.



Lester arrives at the lab in the intro to Another World I

Dr Chaykin enters his passcode to enter the lab

▼ Doors needn't stand in your way because you have a very large gun!



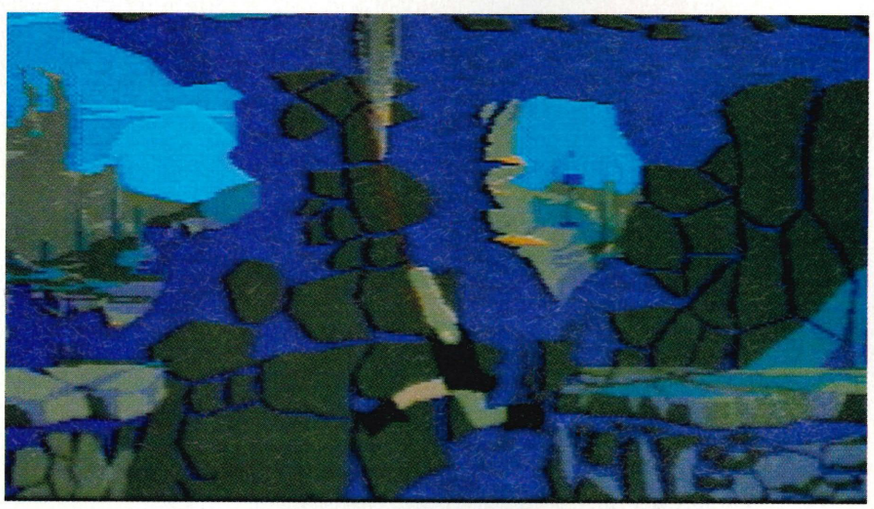
ANOTHE
HEART O

LESTER, DEAD?

Remember Another World, the polygon-based graphic adventure? It was a massive hit on the Atari ST and Amiga three years ago and went on to be converted to the Mega Drive and SNES, but never saw a Mega-CD release. In case you don't remember it, the plot went something like this…

You are Doctor Lester Chaykin, renowned physicist and specialist in particle acceleration. Late one night in the lab, a freak thunderstorm combines with the experiment to catapult you into Another World of strange creatures and danger.

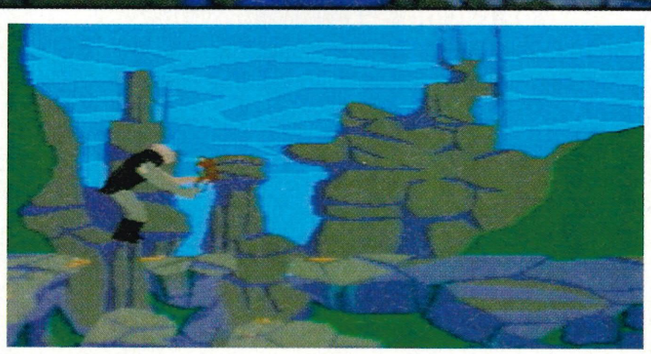
As Lester, you can run and jump, and if you find a gun, fire both small and large bolts of laser energy. The small bolts create a force field in front of you and the large bolts can be used to destroy doors. Further into the game you are taken prisoner of a strange alien race with two subcultures – you are befriended by one of these aliens and together you try to escape your captors. Lester is hurt badly late in the game, but is rescued by his ally, Buddy, and in return fries an alien attacking his friend. The last scenes show Buddy and Lester flying away on the back of a winged serpent to places unknown. This is the beginning of Heart of the Alien.



◀Buddy can use his whip to grip over-hanging rocks and swing across large gaps



◀The gruesome death sequence – watch in horror as the skin falls away from Buddy's bones



◀Buddy jumps from outcrop to outcrop, with his whip swinging in his left hand

ANOTHER WORLD I

Included free on the CD is the first game, Another World. This involved the now sadly dead Lester Chaykin who you meet again in Buddy's dreams...

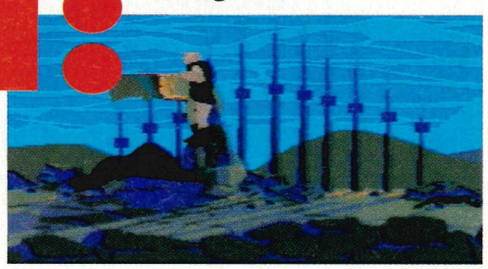


The computer confirms your identity

The Beast has confronted you – it's time to leg it in the other direction

R WORLD II: F THE ALIEN

▼ A beast has chased Buddy, and he has clambered to safety onto a ledge



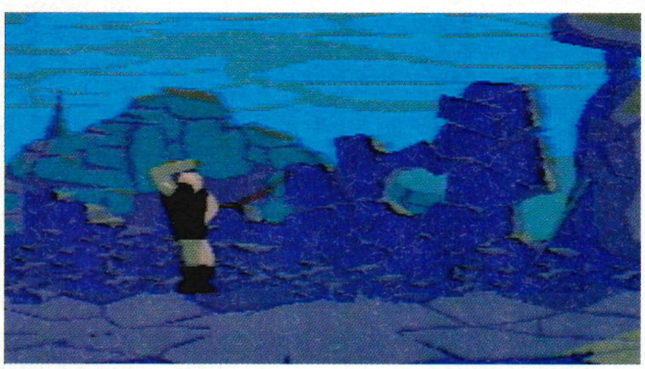
BETTER ANIMATION?

In an excellent cinematic introductory sequence we see the flying serpent drop off Lester and Buddy in a destroyed alien settlement where we finally learn the basis for the division in the alien society – those with red eyes are the aggressors, constantly at war with the more passive blue-eyed aliens.

Buddy's flashback shows the settlement before its destruction with the peaceful aliens living in harmony. Then comes the invasion of the red-eyed aliens and the subsequent pillaging of the village. It is in these ruins that Lester finally breathes his last breath, leaving you in control of Buddy to right the wrongs in the alien society and avenge the death of your friend.

Buddy is a little more able than Lester was, and as well as a laser pistol he also possesses a whip with which he can whip monsters and swing over large gaps, Indiana Jones-style! The gameplay is very similar to the original game as is the graphical style, and that is no minus point as the original was graphically excellent. The sprites move very well and quickly. Of course, this should come as no surprise because the programmers, Delphine, also made last year's smash-hit Flashback.

In case you ever wondered where Buddy went in Another World when Lester left him behind, you can find out in Another World II because those bits are included as memories in this game. You will meet Lester on your journey (even though he's dead), because you have to re-enact your memories at some stages of the game. If this all sounds a bit strange, believe me it will all become crystal clear when you play the game and you'll be too engrossed in the action to worry.

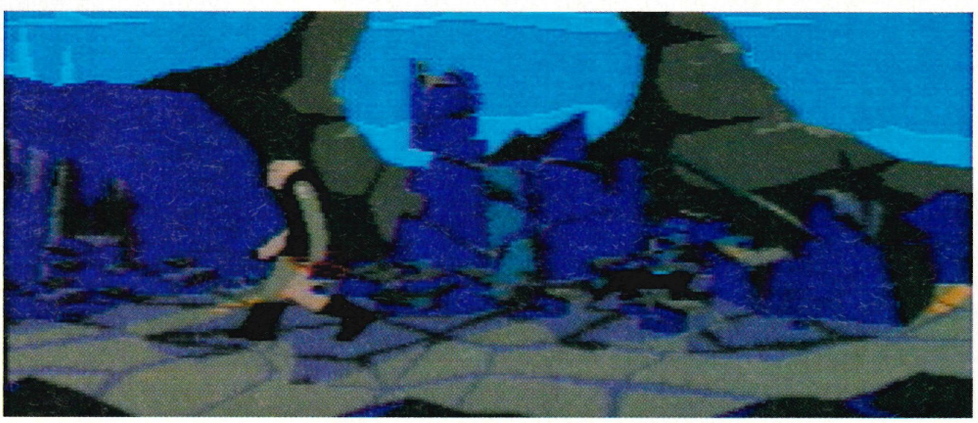


▲ Buddy practises his whip skills in an otherwise unoccupied screen

ANOTHER WORLD FREE?

Unfortunately for all those Mega Drive owners out there, at the moment there are no plans to convert Heart of the Alien to any other format, so only Mega-CD owners will see this game. As an added bonus the original Another World has been added to the CD at no extra cost. Even though the game never got a Mega-CD release, it has been ported over and some CD music has been added. So you now get to play the improved original, then the sequel for the price of one! Amazing!

Of course, with this being a CD we can expect great things in the sound department, as well as a massive game to boot. The version we played was far from complete and in fact the game has a release date of 1 May, but the essential elements of the game were all there and those crying for more polygon action will certainly not be disappointed.



◀ This is the first screen of Heart of the Alien. There is an animal scurrying around in the rocks

MORE LEVELS?

You are thrown straight into trouble, just as in Another World, with a strange alien beast blocking your path. Some nimble climbing will get you out of trouble. From there you travel 'whip-style' over a huge chasm and jump past some poisonous fungi while being chased by another beast.

Acid drops and armed guards also bar your progress in the early stages of the game, with electricity becoming very troublesome later on. We don't want to spoil the whole game for you though, so the rest you'll have to discover yourselves. However I will tell you that the action is frantic throughout, and the dangers come thick and fast with little time for resting.

Some of the attention to detail is incredible. At one stage you swing a gap on your whip, kicking a guard into a hole in the process. Later you encounter the same guard stuck in another hole below the first, trying desperately to escape or at least take you with him. Survive that and you have the pleasure of using the guard's dangling legs as an anchor to swing across another chasm, before pulling him to him doom in a spiked pit! Touches like this are prevalent throughout the game and add to the atmosphere of interaction tremendously.

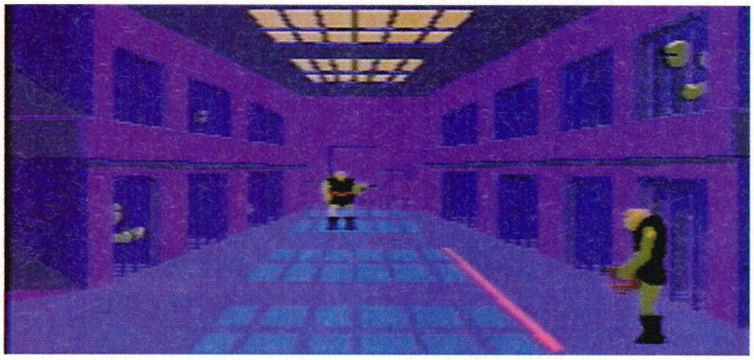
▼ **UUh, Ohh, you've been fried in an electrical beam. That won't help your hairdo**





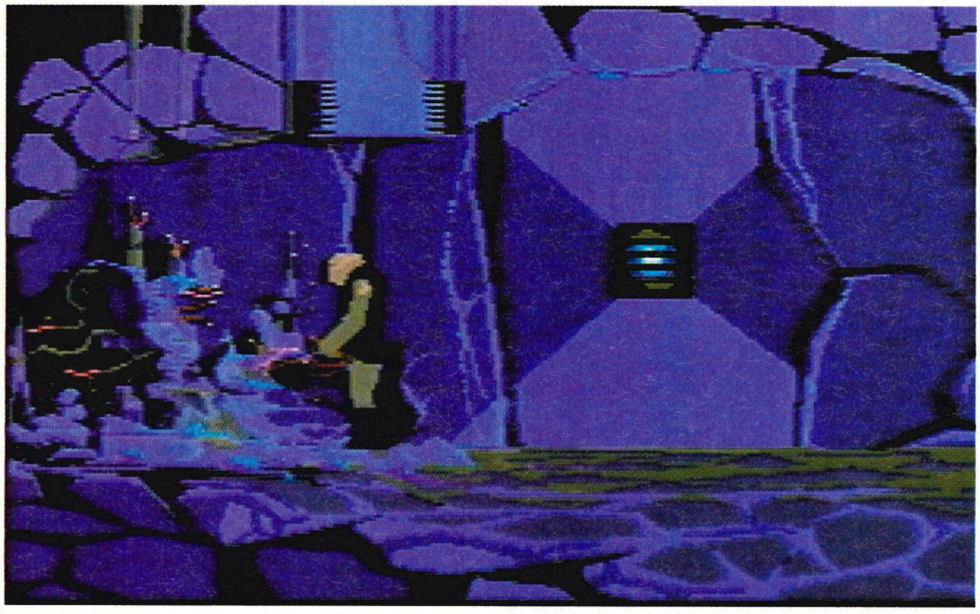
▲ **Lester is swept away to Another World and emerges from this lake – note the Beast in the background**

▼ **A guard fires shots down the corridor at you. Here you have to time your run very carefully**



▶ **Charging up your gun to let loose a powerful blast. Anyone in the way had better watch out!**

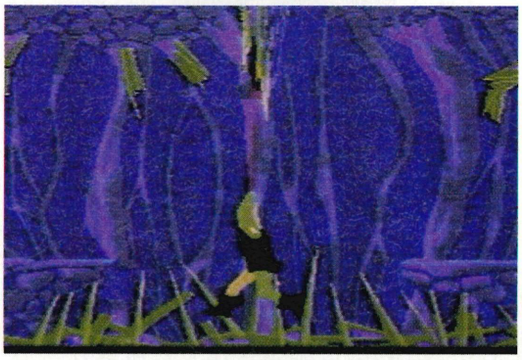




◀ **To eliminate electricity you have to blow up the generator, like this!**



◀ **Buddy lashes out with his whip, to take out a guard**



◀ **Another 'whip-swing' to traverse. Watch those spines below!**



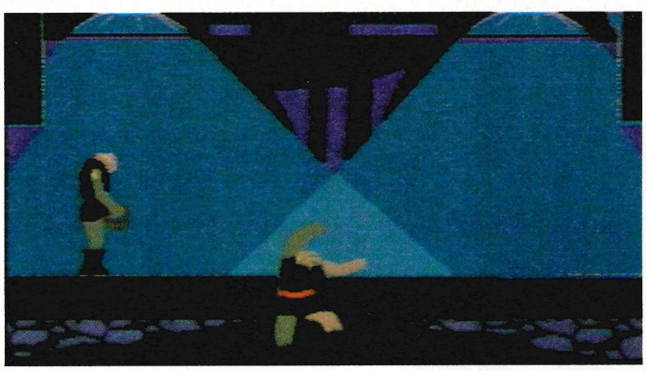
▲ **Another one bites the dust. Guards explode in a shower of ashes when shot!**



▲ **If a guard gets too close to shoot, he may grab you and beat you senseless with his fists**

▼ You can never get enough practise with a whip. Just ask Indiana





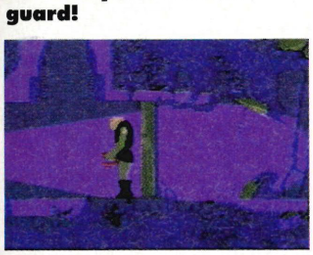


▲ Lester has just crawled through the space above and left you with this guard!

▲ This is the guard you'll have kicked down earlier. He'll take you with him if you let him

ANY MORE QUESTIONS?!

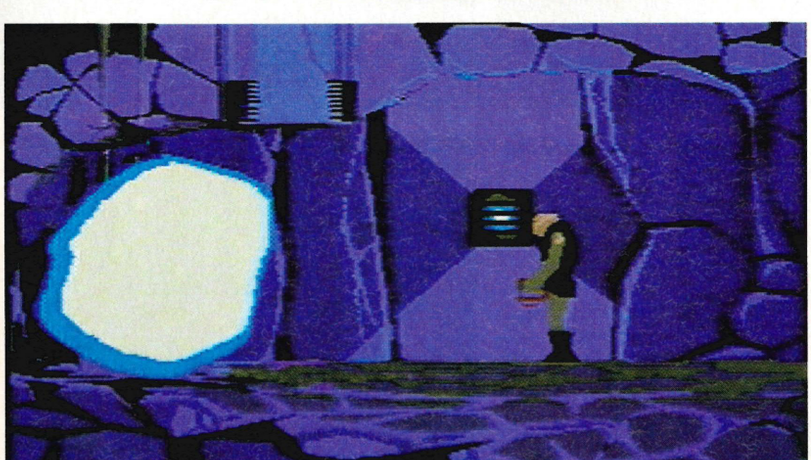
For those of you who liked the original or those looking for a more stimulating platformer, this will be the best thing you've seen in ages. It is looking like the perfect remedy for the post-Flashback blues that every player experiences after finishing Delphine's last masterpiece. All we have to do now is sit back and wait for the final copy to pop through the door for review. With any luck this should be the issue after next, until then feast your eyes on the screen shots on these pages.



▲ A transporter above you will whisk you upwards. Who needs lifts anyway?



◀ The electricity prevents you using the lift again



▲ The generator is blown – no more trouble from electricity. We hope!

CINEMA, CINEMA, CINEMA!

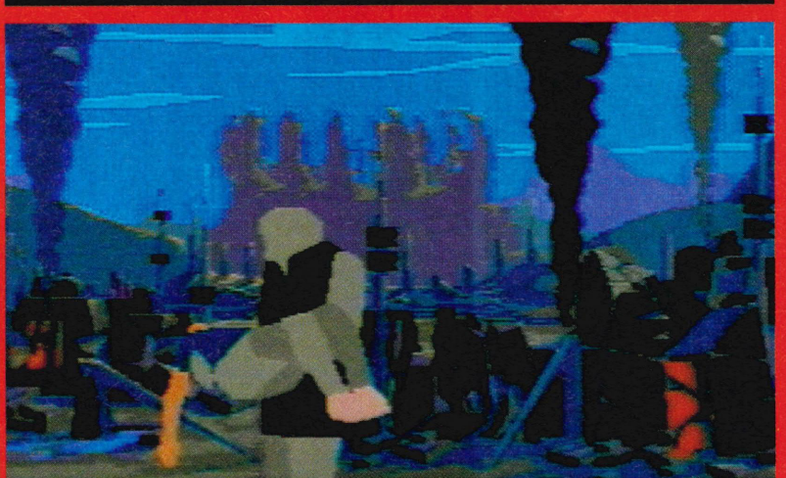
The introduction to the game has to be seen to be believed. Full-motion polygon graphics moving at a film-like frame rate. Incredible!







Buddy carries the injured Lester from the flying serpent





Buddy's memories include one of the evil red-eyed aliens...



MICROPROSE



BY: MICROPROSE

price: TBA
developers: IN HOUSE
release date: MAY

THE CHAOS ENGINE

The Chaos Engine originally surfaced on the Amiga just over a year ago, and at the time it was hailed as being one of the most innovative games of its genre. Developed by famed programmers the Bitmap Brothers (noted for outstanding games such as Speedball II and Xenon II, among numerous others), the game takes top-down view shoot'em-ups into a new era. Fundamentally, The Chaos Engine is a shoot'em-up in a similar vein to Smash TV, but in practice it proves to be much more, with an advanced artificial intelligence and original gameplay concept. Now, thanks to Microprose (more widely known for its superb simulation games), The Chaos Engine will be seen on the Mega Drive this May.





I want big guns. Big, big, big guns! Enormous guns! Huge guns! Grenades...rocket launchers...Exocet missiles...more, more, MORE!

ENGINUITY

The main genius of the game is its unique game system aided immensely by some clever artificial intelligence. The game is for one or two players, but at all times there are always two characters battling against the forces of darkness side by side. There are six game characters to choose from – navvy, mercenary, preacher, thug, brigadier and Victorian gentleman – and each one has different attributes, skills and tactics for handling various situations.

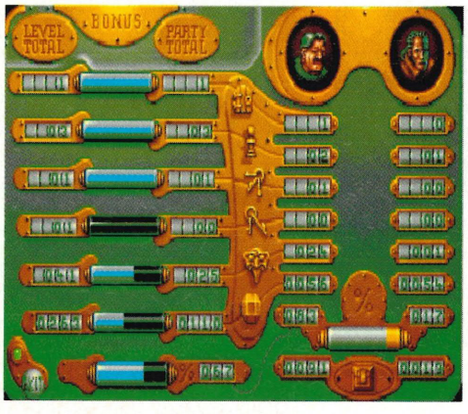
When playing a two-player game the system is like any other two-player shoot'em-up, wherein each player selects a character and off you go into the folly. However, if you are playing the game alone then you must also select a character for the computer to control alongside your own.

This is where the gameplay of the The Chaos Engine gets really ingenious. Depending on which character you have selected for the computer, it will automatically utilise it to the best of that character's abilities. The computer will employ strategies and tactics, not making stupid mistakes by blindly moving the player into dangerous territories or situations, and will attempt to cover your back wherever possible – it's like having your best friend as an outrider. The main thing though is that the computer will not try and run the game for you – you are in control, the computer will not lead you to the correct route through the level, it will merely play follow-the-leader and more often than not save your ass!



OUT OF MY WAY! I was in line for the deli counter next, not you





If I twiddle this knob then...oops, no that's not the right one. How about this one...erm what do masses of flashing red lights, screaming klaxons and "Core Meltdown!" mean? Hello? Anyone?





TELL US A STORY GUV'

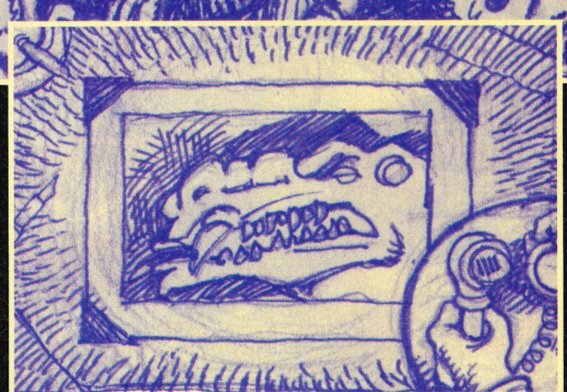


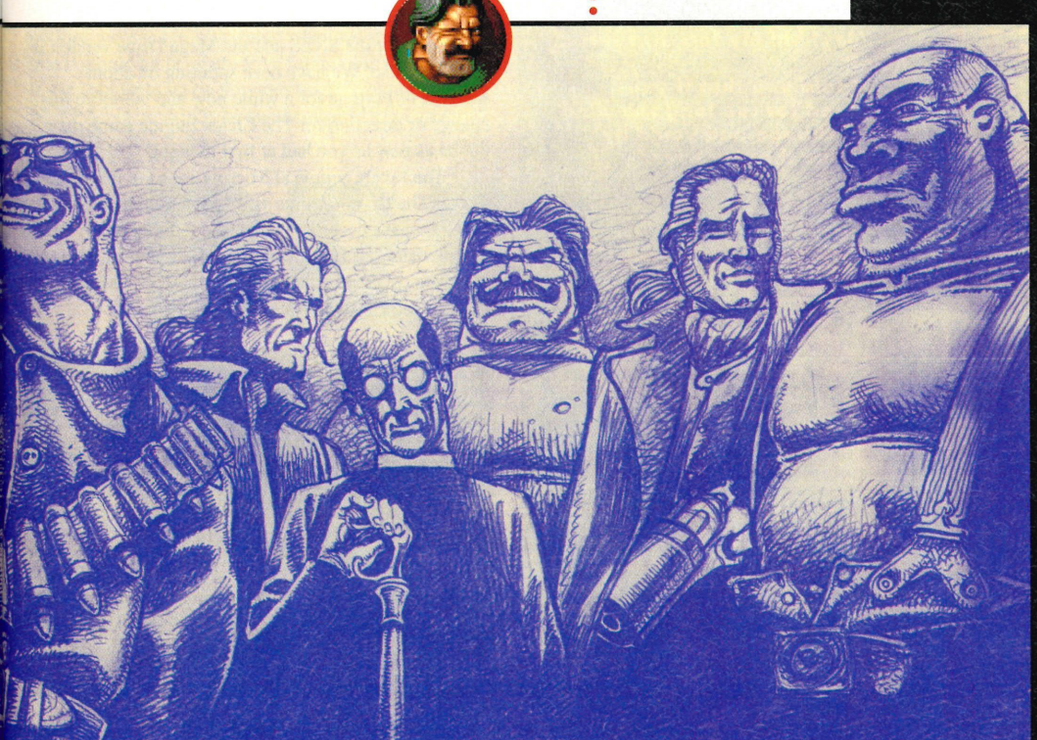


▲ I really do think that we should talk about this

OS







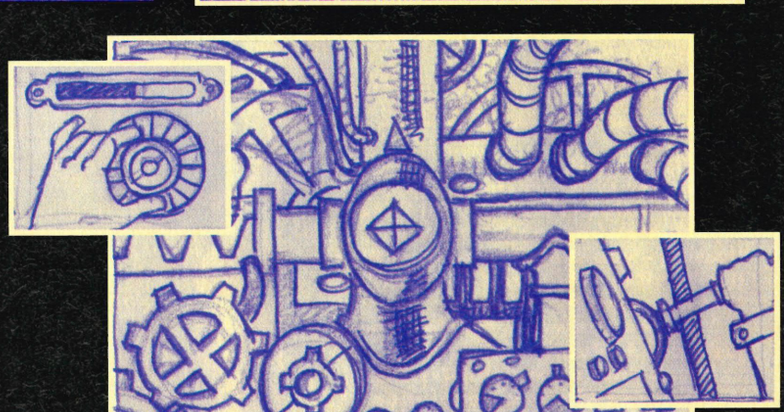


CHAOS THEORY

The story behind the game is fairly straightforward (if you could call the space/time continuum straightforward that is). A nutty professor by the name of Baron Fortescue has invented a devastating new device called the Chaos Engine which is a frightening contraption that can distort and rip apart the fabric of time and space. Faced with the terrifying prospect that the world as we know it won't exist for much longer, a band of mercenaries have taken it upon themselves to rid the world of the Engine and the Baron once and for all.

Set in Victorian times, the characters have very little modern technology with which to do battle. There are no laser rifles, plasma cannons, disrupters or Jelly Bellys – just good old fashioned grenades and pistols. It is up to the gamer to battle through a whole host of intricately designed levels, blowing an alarming number of monsters and aliens into atoms.

Please note that according to history books, there were no aliens or monsters in Victorian England, apart form Jack the Ripper, Frankenstein and Mrs Miggins from Ye Olde Pie Shoppe. The presence of such undesirables was thanks to the rip in the time/space continuum caused by the Baron's horseless carriage with attitude.



GENTLEMEN, START YOUR ENGINES

Like any Bitmap Brothers' game seen on the home computer formats, the graphics are highly stylised and despite undergoing conversions to the console platforms the games have retained a unique style that is instantly recognisable (See Speedball II for example).

From what we have seen of this Mega Drive version, it too will retain all the vitality that we have come to expect from both the Bitmaps and Microprose, with a brash use of colour and detail. All the graphics included within the game were first meticulously planned out on paper to ensure that the correct 'feel' was being captured. Then each character and background was lovingly recreated in pixel form. Even the game's plot was first storyboarded in comic book-style before the final scenes were transferred to the game.

Whether the actual level designs will remain the same as the Amiga version still rests in the balance. The game system is true to the original, but it is highly probable that the levels will change in appearance so as not to disappoint the conversion sceptics and those gamers who already own the Amiga version.



No that wasn't the pizza I ordered, I wanted pepperoni not anchovies. No, I won't pay. RAT-AT-AT-AT-TAT-TAT! Oh, OK then (splutter, cough, blood), here's £10. Keep the change



I think we should take off and nuke the site from orbit – it's the only way to be safe

SMILE FOR THE BIRDIE!



"Arghhh! My face has stuck, help!"

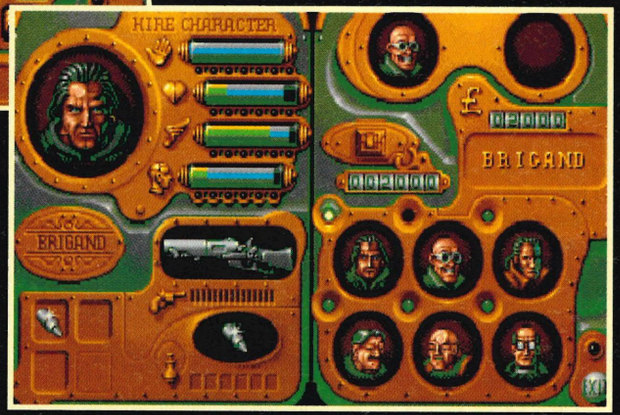
"I told you that if you grimaced for too long the wind would change and you'd be stuck like that for ever."





"Don't be such a cretin. You've been watching too many episodes of Jackanory!"

"Well, what's the problem then?"



"My chewing gum as got caught around my dentures, and now I'm stuck. If I move I'll rip my teeth out!"

"That's what you get for not flossing – you should have tried Plax, it kills all known germs dead, or is that Domestos?"

"Er, are you sure I shouldn't have just gone to Radio Rentals?"

"Nah, that's not right! Try Pepsi, it's the taste of a new generation"

ENGINE FAILURE

You may have heard about The Chaos Engine's advancement to the console market previously, but managed to remain completely unaware of the development. You see, over in the States the Bitmaps' game has been going under a pseudonym, namely Soldiers of Fortune, helped along by the American branch of Microprose, Spectrum Holobyte.

Soldiers of Fortune has already been released over there for the SNES and the Mega Drive version is imminent also. We have been spouting on about Soldiers of Fortune for a while now and therefore this change of direction for The Chaos Engine game may not be as new as you had at first thought!

The lovely people at Microprose have informed us that The Chaos Engine will be released here by May, but as is becoming an all too familiar story, the release date could slip somewhat. However, it's best to keep your pecker up and hope for the best – May isn't that far away really, now is it?



Take that you alien fiend!



Oh my God, we're all gonna die! They're coming out of the walls. Oh no!







BY: SONY

price: £39.99
developers: IN-HOUSE
release date: APRIL

BRETT HULL ICE HOCKEY

Hockey has long since been a pastime of the Mega Driver. The excellent EA Hockey and its follow-ups have been at the top of the heap for a long time, while pretenders to the crown fell away. Now Accolade bring us its Hockey game, which is endorsed by the NHL's most valuable player of '90-'91, Mr Brett Hull.

HANG ON

The view of the rink is like that of FIFA soccer, but as you can see from the screen shots, it runs the other way. The game includes all the statistics you could wish for, as well as the most up-to-date list of NHL teams to choose from, including the two newest teams into the NHL. You can even play up to a full 84-game season, if sitting up for several weeks is your sort of thing.

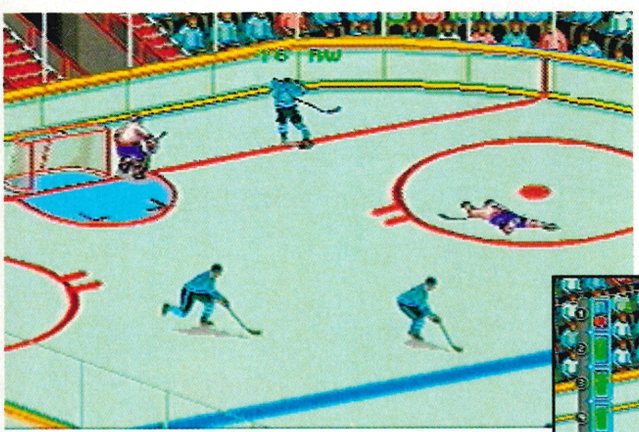
The game is played to full commentary by Al Michaels, so the 16 meg cart is full to bursting point with speech and music. In addition, the options include instant replays to watch your most glorious moments again and again, and fighting, which is sadly lacking from NHLPA '94. You can also call line changes on the ice, and check players into the walls, Hard!

At present the game is still in pre-production, and some of the in-game options were not implemented when we saw it. However Accolade assured us that it would all be ready for a full review soon. Whether the game will be up to the standards set by previous hockey games is yet to be seen. Will it beat NHLPA '94, or will is be another sad Mario Lemieux?

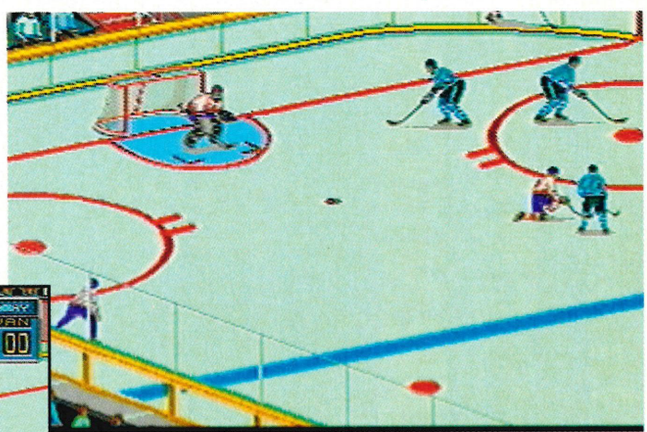


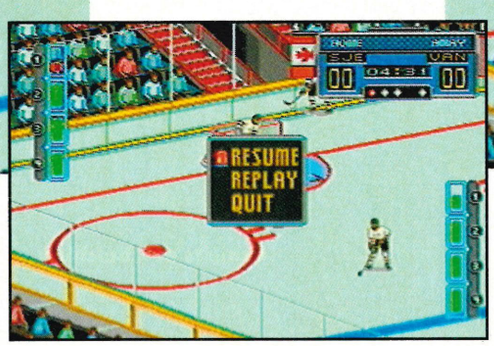
▲ After a tremendous shot, the goalie just manages to stretch out a leg to it. The lucky swine





◀ The player on the ice has just been put there by the number 16, who is skating away looking very happy with himself.





▶ In pause mode, several selectable options become apparent, although none were working in our pre-production copy

▲ "And the puck is heading for the goal, can the goalie keep his composure, or will it be another fluky leg catch?"





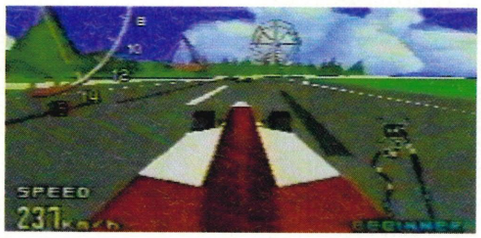


BY: SEGA

price: £89.99
developers: IN-HOUSE
release date: JUNE

VIRTUA RACING

You've seen the incredible Virtua Racing in the arcades, haven't you? Well, the Mega Drive version is nearing completion, utilising the new SVP (Sega Virtual Processor) chip and it's looking like a bloody good conversion.



Changing view in real-time, this time between cockpit and follow modes

ARCADE ACTION

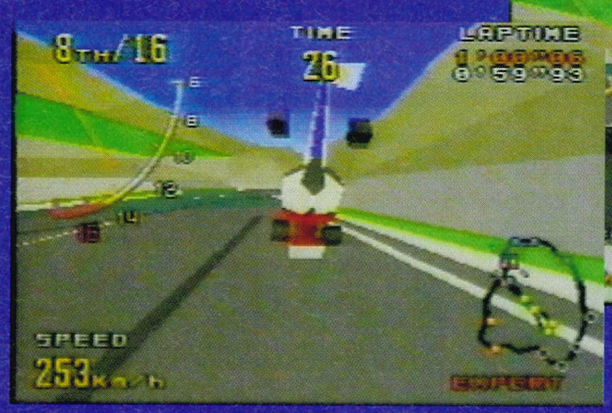
Virtua Racing in the arcades is absolutely brilliant. A polygon-based car racing game that runs at an amazing frame rate. The game also features four different views from the car, all of which can be selected while the game is running. Turning into skids to realign your car and accelerating through bends reward the player with better lap times, just like in real racing car.

Now, what would you say if this game was available for your Mega Drive? You'd be surprised wouldn't you, because Virtua requires a 32-bit processor to run in the arcade and the Mega Drive only has a meagre 16-bit 68000. Well, Sega has developed the SVP chip which accelerates the maths involved in polygon production and means that Virtua on the Mega Drive is not only a possibility, it's reality!

Of course you'll probably be thinking, "Well, it still won't be any good" but you're wrong – it is really good and we've got the pictures to prove it. Not only does this look just like the original coin-op version of Virtua, albeit with a few minor details taken out, but it also runs at a breathtaking speed. You will not believe how fast this game can go.

CRASHED AND BURNED HUH, MAV?

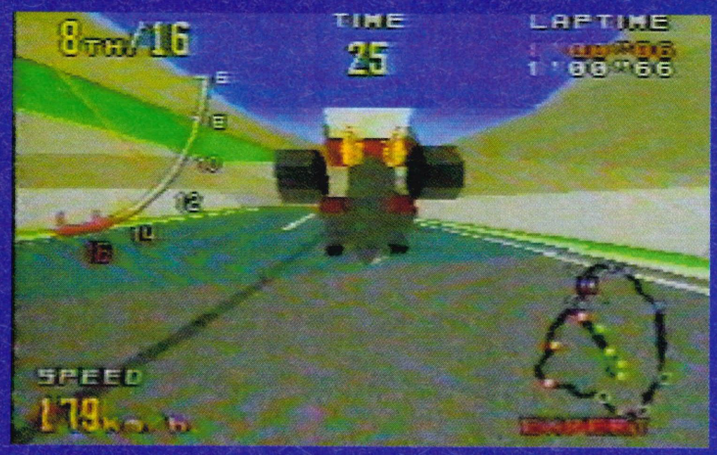
Being a fast-moving car racing game, you'd expect to crash now and again. Believe me, until you practice you will crash time and time again!





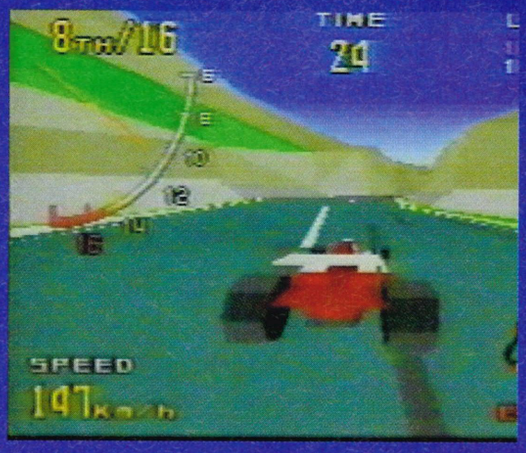
You've driven too close to the grass, you'll probably skid out!

Skidded! You hit the roadside and have been catapulted into the air



The car is coming in to land now. The exhausts are belching flames in disgust

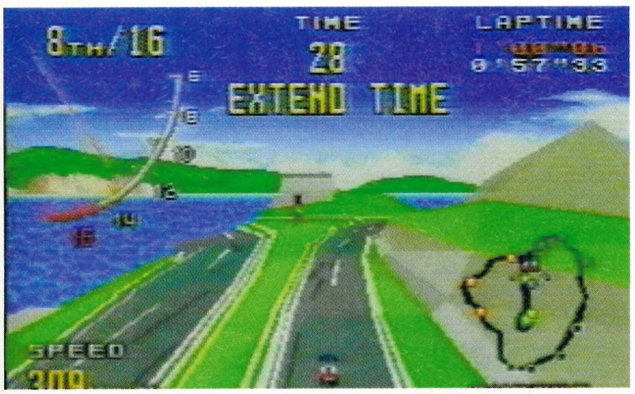
Crash! You finally hit the ground, leaving a massive skid from your right tyre. Look out for that on your next lap



SUPERSONIC SVP SPEED

The Mega Drive version supports all four of the original in-car views and they are can be selected during play, just like the arcade. Now all this might be true, but how does it play, I hear you cry! From the versions of the game we have seen the gameplay is also well up to the standards set by the original coin-op, so tactics you have already learned will work here too.

The attention to detail is amazing, for example as the cars race around the track they leave skid marks on bends and the computer records these, so when you come around the lap again you see your skids on the tarmac! The game could get pretty dull of course if there was only one track to play on, but hold your horses again because MD Virtua has the original three courses enabling you to play beginner, medium or expert. You can also play with either automatic or seven-speed manual gears.



You're racing in aerial view approaching a massive 360-degree bend...time to hit those brakes!

Driving inside the car gives you the best feeling of speed but makes manoeuvring difficult

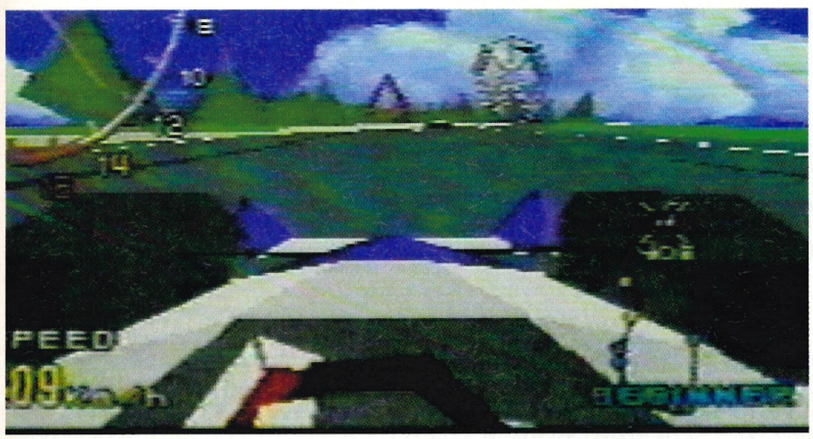


As you change gear, you can watch the driver's hand move the gear stick on the steering-wheel.

SPLIT-SCREEN SHENANIGANS

"Yeah, but I have a friend!" Well lucky you – this game also features a two-player mode which is exactly the same as the one-player version, except you compete against your friend and the other players. The view is split-screen and still runs at a tremendous pace, and the view for both players can be different so you can both choose a different one in real time!

The Mega Drive sound chip is not quite up to the job of reproducing the coin-op's thumping rock background tracks, but it has been programmed to the best of its ability and puts out a very acceptable version of the arcade original music. The game also includes the arcade game's attract sequence, where the camera pans around your car showing an all-round view – brilliant!



VIRTUA VALUE?

This all sounds like the recipe for a perfect game, doesn't it? That's exactly what it is except for one small flaw – the SVP chip doesn't come cheap, so this cart isn't going to be cheap either. In fact, the latest price quoted for the cart is a whopping £89.99! That's more than a standalone Mega Drive costs, in fact you could even buy a (Sssshhh) SNES for that price. But I suppose if you want the latest technology, you have to pay the price. Current word from Sega is that it'll see a June US release and importers are ready to charge you over £100 for a US copy that will undoubtedly be PAL locked anyway.

Sega may use the SVP again in other polygon games, most notably the conversion of Virtua Fighters, a polygon-based SFII-type beat'em-up from the arcades. The current idea is to sell the SVP in a separate 'part-cartridge', then buy the specific game 'part cartridge' and make your full game cartridge by connecting the two. Thus the price of the SVP would be just an initial outlay and not a repeated cost.

As soon as we receive a full review copy of the game, you can rest assured we'll be bringing you details, but until then feast your eyes on the fastest race game ever to grace the Mega Drive and begin saving those pennies.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Just so you can see the difference between the two, here are some shots of the arcade machine next to those of the Mega Drive version. Can you tell the difference?



Coin-op playing cockpit mode



The 16-bit rendition of cockpit mode



Follow mode, from the arcades



Mega Drive follow action, with opponents' cars coming up



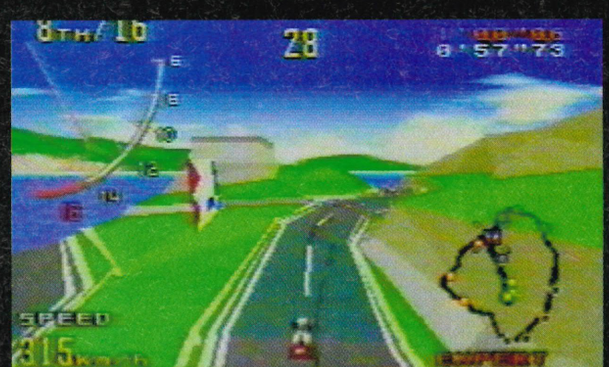
The float mode, 32-bit



Float mode, using Sega's new SVP chip

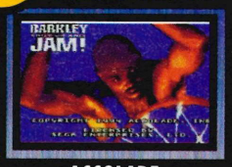
Arcade aerial action





The aerial view between the mountains on the expert track

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



ACCOLADE

SPORT

CART

STYLE

SPORT

PRICE TBA

PLAYERS 4

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

MAR '94



She got a plate, a knife, a medium (not thick) cut loaf and various pots of different flavoured jam. ALLIE WEST was now ready to play...not with her food, but basketball.

BARKLEY:

Don't we just have a cornucopia of basketball games in this month's issue of MegaTech? Titles like NBA Jam and NBA Showdown have had quite a high profile for months, but we have heard very little about Charles Barkley: Shut Up and Jam!...and who is this Barkley person anyway?! I know Michael Jordan, Larry Bird, Magic Johnson and even Shaquille O'Neal (well, not personally), but where did 'Sir' Charles come from? The answer to that question my fine friends, is the street and this is where we find him again – on the Tarmac jamming it with some of his tall pals...

JAM SANDWICH

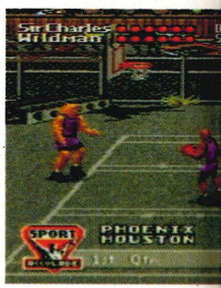
What do we have here then? While most basketball games favour an arena-style setting with beautifully polished boards, light reflecting on the surfaces, a well-groomed crowd, some fanciful cheering and a ref, Barkley: Shut Up and Jam! goes for a different approach. The man in question, 'Sir' Charles Barkley, is apparently one of the NBA's most promising stars. Making a real name for himself at the 1992 Olympics, Barkley is up there with the likes of SHAQ and Jordan, but unlike his colleagues Barkley started his career on the streets and not in some plush arena, which is where Accolade has set its new game.

Throwing convention to the wind, Accolade's basketball simulation is not only Street Ball, but a 'two-on-two jamfest' as well. Instead of the favoured five-man teams that we have tended to see in other basketball sims, Barkley: Shut Up allows up to four players to compete using the Sega Tap adapter or EA's Four-Way Play. In a one-player game you control the team captain with the computer automatically taking hold of the other three characters, but you are unable to switch between your players so when the computer player has possession you're left totally out of the picture! In a two-player game you can either play on the same side or as opposing team captains – a feature which increases the competitiveness of the game.



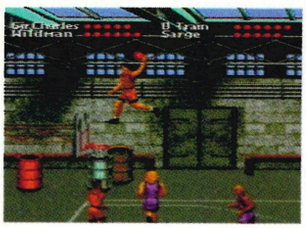
Is it really possible to jump THAT high?



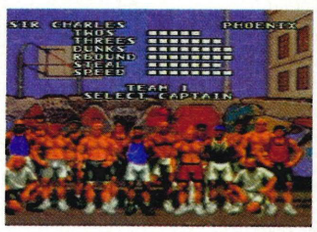


▲ **Street basketball eh? On the beach?!**

▼ **What a superb triple salco – we'll give 9.9 for that one**







WHITE MEN CAN'T JUMP...[AHEM]

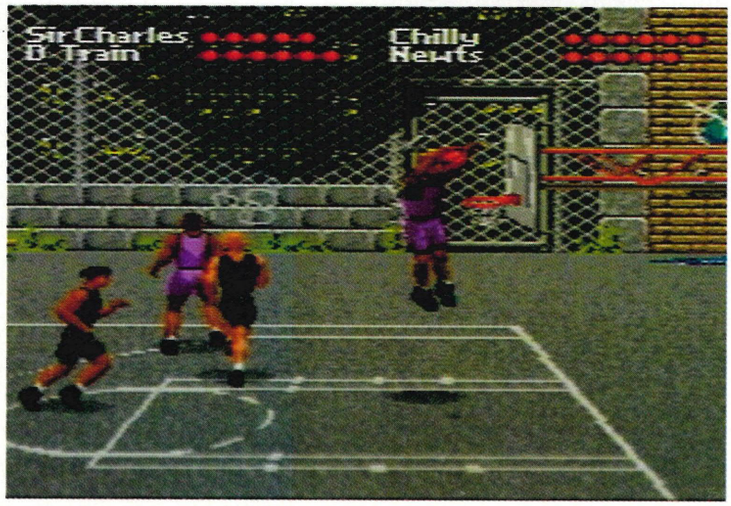
But it isn't all bad! The features included within the game are quite comprehensive – there is a standard exhibition game, a series match with the best out of five or seven games, or a full tournament visiting eight cities. There are also 16 different characters to choose from, each with varying stats and attributes, thus injecting a strategic element into the play.

The game also runs reasonably fast, with the sprites dashing to and fro with considerable responsiveness to joypad direction changes. However, you never really feel in control of your player – sure, you can barge into the other players and tackle, you can even perform the most outrageous special moves, but the execution of these manoeuvres leaves you wanting more involvement as opposed to a lot of pushing and shoving with very little tactics. It also gets boring, simply running backwards and forwards scoring goal after goal – actually that's one thing we can say about this game, the matches sure are high scoring!

NOT A BELLY-DANCER FOR SURE

Apparently the sprites are rotoscoped to capture realistic player movements, but they appear far too static to make this statement believable. While movement is executed nicely with some incredibly over the top super shots and dunks, there simply doesn't seem to be enough individual frames to make the animation really smooth.

Also, in trying to capture the 'street' feel of basketball it would seem that Accolade has succeeded only in presenting a two-dimensional backdrop with no real depth or character to the settings. While the screen scrolls left and right as the players leg it backwards and forwards, and moves up slightly when a goal shot is played, the sprites don't actually appear to be part of the graphical image, merely looking like superfluous add-ons twisting and turning like headless chickens!



◀ **Don't fake the funk on a nasty dunk. Oops, wrong guy**

SHUT UP AND JAM



CRANBERRY JELLY AND A TURKEY

Charlie boy had a lot of input when this game was at the design stage. He sat with the programmers, explaining to them how players mark, attack and defend in this kind of competitive street basketball. With this, Barkley: Shut Up isn't simply a licensed sports game, it is more Barkley's own game and the press release proves it with classic quotes such as "Shut Up and Jam is as rough as it gets..." and "This game never lets up. The sweat never stops dripping. Hey, what'd you expect? I didn't make this game for wimps!" promoting the product.

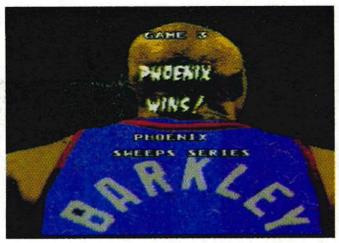
Why do I find such profound statements hard to believe? Initially, Barkley: Shut Up is quite fun, but sadly it soon becomes apparent that there is actually very little involved gameplay included within the overall structure of the product. If Barkley did sit down and design this game according to his own on-court antics, I'm obviously not missing anything by saying that I've never actually seen him play. In all this is quite an enjoyable game but you never really feel part of the action – the computer characters happily bound back and forth regardless of you, and the control system lacks comprehensive depth. This is definitely one of those games that is for more than one player.

The main thing about Barkley: Shut Up is that it is exactly what it is trying to portray – a game from the street, and as a result it lacks the professionalism that oozes from the NBA.



▲ **I always wondered what the Earth would look like from orbit**





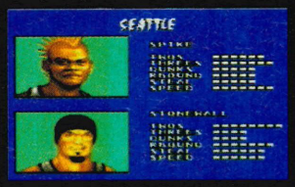
▶ **Come on, catch me if you can. Come and have a go if you think you're hard enough!!!**

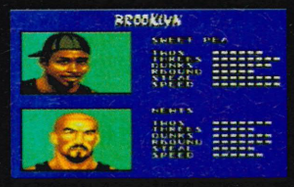


LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE PLAYERS....

Would you let any of these guys near your kids if they were playing basketball on the streets? No, I didn't think so! Plus, who'd let their kids play on the streets anyway?











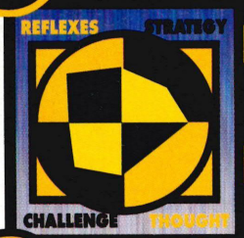
THE SECOND OPINION



STEVE CHAPMAN

This game has all the hallmarks of a rush release to cash in on a minor basketball craze stirred up by the success of NBA Jam in the arcades. The idea of a street basketball game goes as far back as early C64 titles such as Street's Sport Basketball, so it is not as if we're looking at an original game by any means. Funnily enough, the graphics themselves look almost C64-like in appearance so it's not just a bad idea that Barkley has adopted! Limited options and tuneless music do nothing to improve on the game, but by far the most annoying aspect of Shut Up and Jam is the computer controlled team-mate, which runs away with the bloody ball the moment you pass it to him. Whose crap idea was it to release a game that you sit and watch while the computer enjoys itself?

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 73%
Superb box artwork, nice shots of Barkley himself, but overall look is pretty plain

GRAPHICS 78%
Sprites appear quite blocky. Backgrounds are a little uneventful

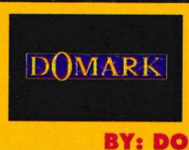
SOUND 83%
Barkley's speech for this and it comes across OK, but scratchy. Funky music

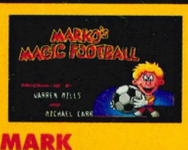
SHORT TERM PLAY 94%
Very easy to get into, with simple controls and no rules to contend with

LONG TERM PLAY 72%
It all gets a little repetitive, however the four-player mode holds your attention

OVERALL 70
70% at a HUGE push! This is playable, but offers little in the way of real gameplay and tactics – it's just goal after goal after goal...







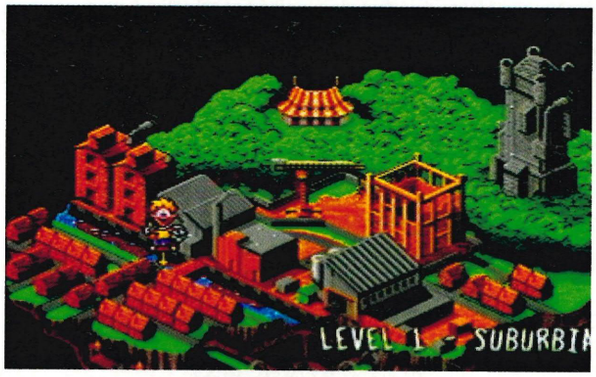
BY: DOMARK

price: TBA
developers: IN HOUSE
release date: MARCH

MARKO'S FOOTBALL

On the Mega Drive front, Domark has recently been in the limelight with its highly playable (if a tad overdue) Prince of Persia conversion for the cartridge platform. Next in line for release this year is a plucky little platform romp entitled Marko's Magic Football, which incidentally finds the lead character being named after one of the big boss men at Domark!

This is the sad tale of one boy's attempts to save the world from certain destruction at the hands of an evil professor and some hideously mutated toys. Marko's Magic Football is currently awaiting its cartridge release, but the Domark programmers (also known collectively as the Kremlin) are also working on converting the game to the Mega-CD platform. But that's jumping the gun somewhat – let us first look through the round window at the cartridge game...



▶ **It's never too early to start thinking about a career. Marko here for instance, wants to work for Ordnance Survey when he grows up**

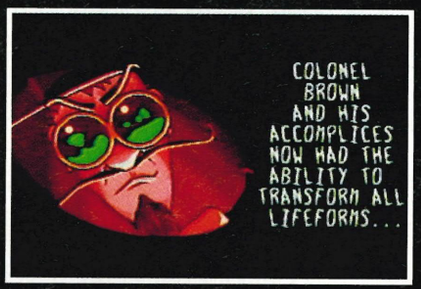
NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL MAGIC!

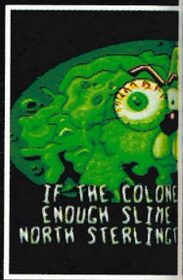
This story begins when some geezer decides to cripple humanity by closing down a prosperous toy factory in order to make mutant minions and ultimately take over the world. There is also some hubbub about animal testing (I think the programmers just wanted to use a cute picture of a bunny rabbit and in turn, appeal to our sentimentalities), then a magic football enters the story and that is where I get completely lost. The football, made 'magic' by strange sludge at the toy factory, gets grandiose ideas about saving the world. Woah, this is out there – past Pluto!

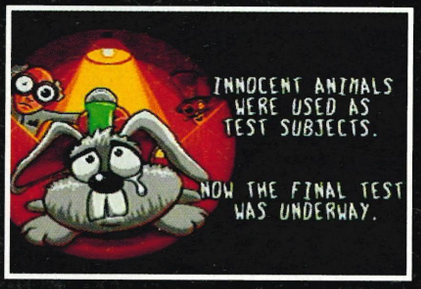
Quite where the football really fits into all of this is beyond even the programmers, let alone you and me! However, there it is. Unlike many platform games today, Marko does not have the ability to stomp all over his opponents' heads and get away with it – oh no, a bit more precision is called for this time! Marko can only defeat his enemies by displaying some nifty footwork and impeccable bowel control, using his magic football as a first strike weapon. Marko can not only kick the ball into the opposition's half like an amateur, but he can display some rather impressive moves that wouldn't look out of place at Wembley. Boy, can that lad dribble (you'd have thought his parents would have cured that disorder when he was a tot) and would you look at that flying back flip – no wonder he walks funny.



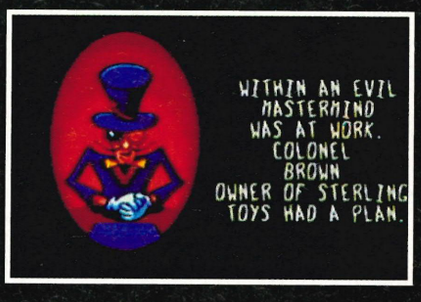
▲ **Fly! Be free!**

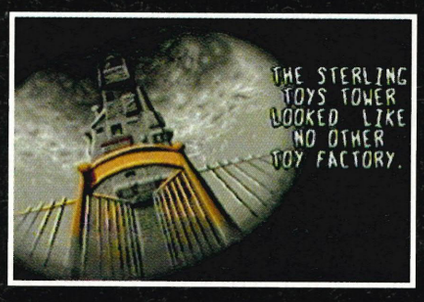


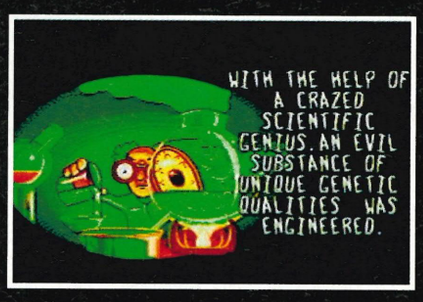


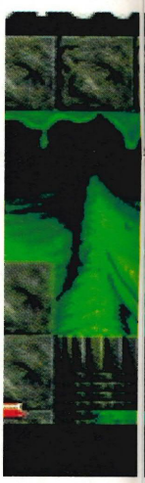


Once upon a time there lived a small boy and his beloved football. The boy loved his football almost as much as he loved his pet rabbit...











They don't call me Pelé for nothing, you know! Actually, they don't call me Pelé at all

MAGIC

HERE WE GO

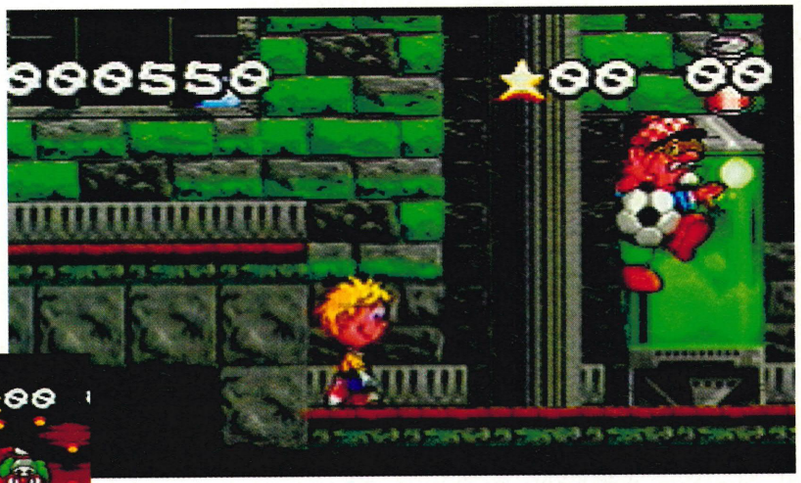
Filled with all manner of foul manifestations, the game presents a gripping challenge. Marko's Magic Football is not simply a platform affair – it incorporates puzzle and maze elements throughout also. The enemies increase in difficulty as you progress as does the basic design of the levels, with more obstacles being hurled in your general direction.

The version we saw was still undergoing considerable changes and in parts the gameplay was non-existent. For example, in one section of the game – the woodland area – we were unable to take any screen shots as the graphics were not yet completed and as a result the stage was devoid of enemy presence. From what we did see though, sections like the woodland will be rather impressive when finally finished, with the play area sprawling in all directions.

COULD IT BE MAGIC?

The game is divided up into about 12 main levels (this however could change if the programmers decide to add even more spice to the game), but there are in fact only seven different graphical backgrounds. Your adventure starts in the city streets and leads you through creepy locations such as the sewers, factories, woodland, the circus and finally onto the ominous toy factory. At the beginning of each stage you are shown a detailed map, clearly indicating your position and progress through the game.

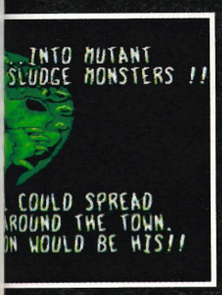
Luckily, when we had a look at the game we were fortunate enough to have access to the cheat mode and therefore were able to see all the different stages planned for inclusion in the final game. Thanks to this, we were able to get a real picture of how the end product will look and at the moment, with changes still to be made, the game is looking mighty comprehensive to say the least!

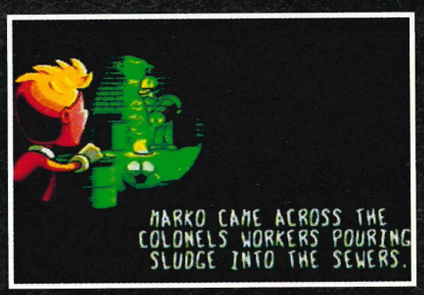


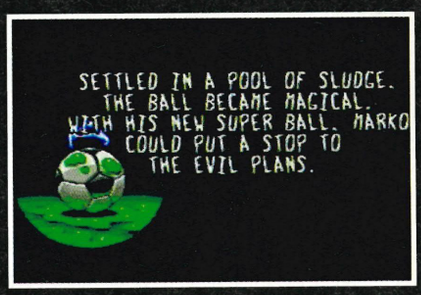
England 1 – Scotland 0



Watch what you do with your balls, dear boy!









COR GUV', WOULD YOU LOOK AT THAT!

A lot of effort has gone into the graphical content of Marko's backgrounds and sprite animation – the game is full of vibrant colour, despite the Mega Drive's limited colour palette. The backgrounds are quite detailed and convey the appropriate atmosphere for the locations being represented (such as slimy, rat-infested sewers and a bouncy, cheerful circus) with clarity and style. However, the biggest round of applause has to go to the animation of Marko himself, with some 300 individual frames making up his many characteristics. Marko dribbles a ball better than Cantona and shoots with more precision than Lineker, and it's all down to some superb line work!

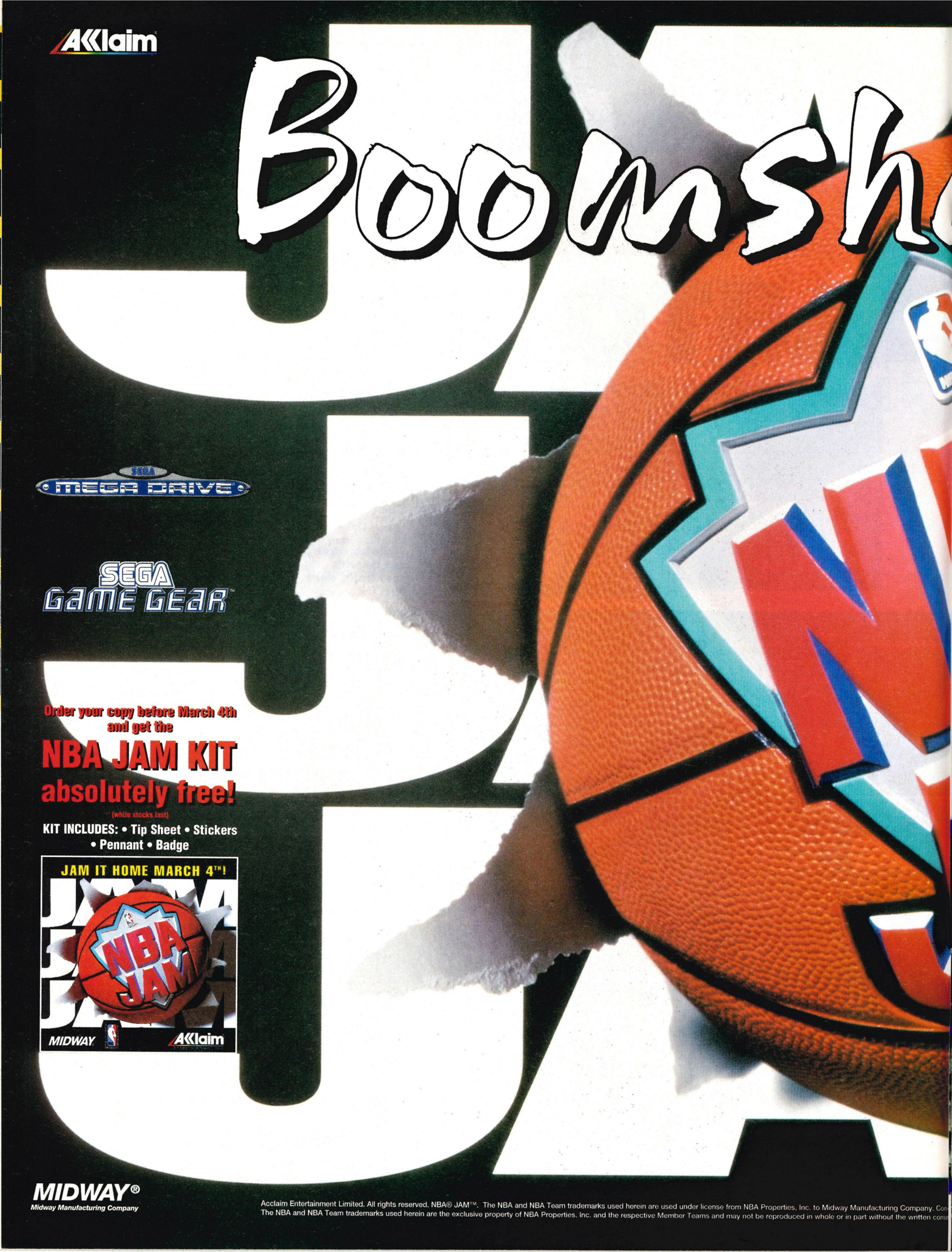
There are also a wide variety of different creatures to overcome and it has been the programmers' intent to display new enemies on each of the various levels. Some of them will appear continuously throughout the game, but a good proportion of them are limited to certain stages. The opposition ranges from deranged policemen, savage hedgehogs, spitting dinosaurs and mutant sludge monsters (yeugh!), and each one obviously loathes football.

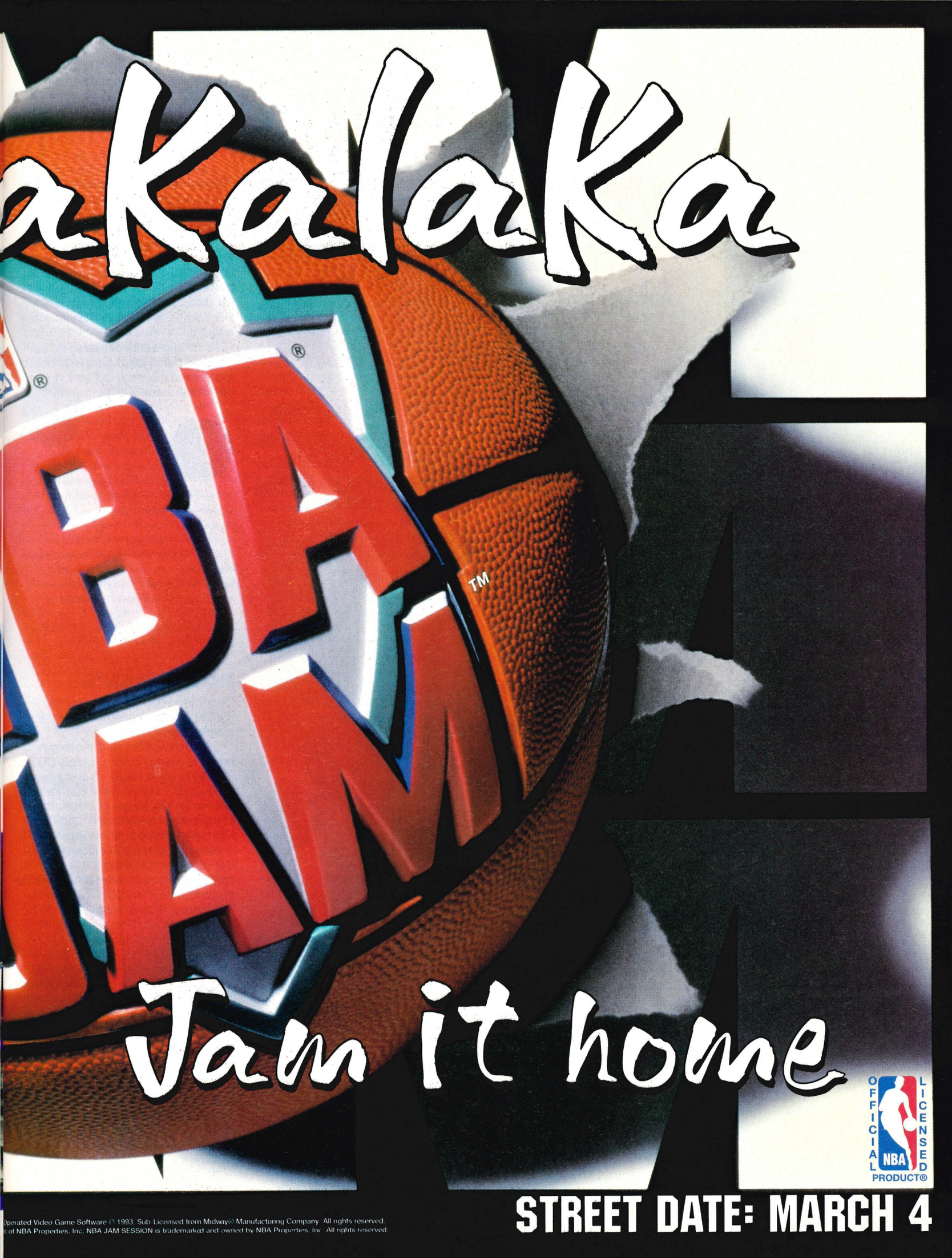


I've heard of ice sculpture, but bogey sculpture? That's a new one on me



Policemen, hedgehogs and footballs. What kind of game have we got here?


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Lloyd's Barber Shop

Welcome back dear readers. It's short back and sides time again in the old barber shop. After brutally commandeering these hallowed pages last month the Lloydman is back to cut your hair and trim your egos down to size with his razor sharp wit (hmmmmm!). Something for the weekend, sir?

Lloyd's Barber Shop, Maverick Magazines, 16-17 Hollybush Row, Oxford, OX1 1JH.

MOTORCYCLE

Dear Lloyd,
I'll come straight to the point. Where is the second part of the maps for Flashback you promised that would be in ish 22?

If you can't print the maps please tell me what I must do. I can't get past the part where there is a bloke behind a door that won't open and underneath him. What do I do? Please help.
Neil Johnson, Gwynedd

LLOYD: Eh? I'm afraid I can't help because I can only speak English, and not the strange language you seem to practice. Talk about being vague! If anyone else speaks geekoid then maybe you would be kind enough to write in and help this poor individual out. Next time try to actually explain where you are stuck because my psychic power booster is broken at the moment. That way we might actually be of some help and not waste loads of our precious time which we could have spent with our feet up sinking a few tinnies.

PITH

Dear MegaTech,
I'm sick to death of the way people slag you and the magazine off. It really PSs me off. Anyway let's get to the point. For Christmas I had a Mega-CD and I also had Sewer Shark with it but the only problem is that I can't seem to get anywhere so I would be grateful if you could send me some tips so I can progress to further levels. Just before I go could you answer my questions.
1) When will Mortal Kombat CD be available?
2) When will SF2 be on the Mega-CD?
3) Is Ground Zero Texas worth getting?
4) When MK2 comes out at Christmas, will it be available on the Mega-CD?
Thank you, James Mudge, Cardiff
PS You're the best
PPS Please print my letter and I will promise to buy your mag every month
PPPS Please please give me a reply with tips for Sewer Shark.

LLOYD: At first this looks like a normal, sane, intelligent letter. The typing was impeccable, the spelling spot on, and the English was pretty good too. So what's with the extra stuff scrawled on in felt tip pen?

Being a mere human I don't know the answers to your questions but I will consult the all-knowing games guru – Arthur the gamesplaying goldfish
1) Arthur says that MK CD will be out in April, and MK2 in September, fingers crossed (or fins crossed or whatever).
2) A literal translation of this reply would be unprintable, but it involves you, some kippers, and a small hedgehog named Stanley. SF2 has only just come out on cart, and so the CD version will be a very, very, very, very long time.
3) Read the review in last month's issue. That's why we write them.
4) Your guess is a good as ours, me old bean.

By the way, get clipping that subscription form! As for Sewer Shark, the only advice I can give is to listen carefully to the directions given and don't run out of Spam. As of now I declare this letters page a Welsh-free zone.

HARD

Dear MegaTech (or should I say Lloyd?),
I am writing to bloody well complain about all you Maverick people taking over from the EMAP guys, I mean it's bloody disgraceful, and what's this tossing Tom's Island out the window and putting Lloyd's Barber Shop in its place? I mean come on I'm sure loads of people loved Tom's Island and all the EMAP guys and now they've all gone (sob! sob!!)

All I can say is all you EMAP guys out there get MegaTech back or start your own mag which is even better.
Mr Blobby, Childwall, Liverpool
PS Tom Guise was the funniest guy ever.
PPS I'm not really bothered if you don't print this letter (you're probably too scared anyway) but as long as someone reads it I'll be happy.

LLOYD: Well, well, a letter from a fat eight foot pink knob that talks cobblers on Saturday TV. The reason we 'tossed Tom's Island out of the window' as it were, was because Tom doesn't work on the mag anymore and so he can't answer any letters can he? So, if I'm the one who's supposed to be scared why did you sign your letter Mr Blobby and not use your real name. Mr Brown trousers or what?

I have your address. WATCH OUT!

POLICEMAN'S

Dear MegaTech,
Please could you answer these few simple questions for me:
1) Will Syndicate ever be converted onto the Mega Drive or Mega-CD?
2) Way back in issue 13 in the news section you mentioned a Karaoke add-on for the Mega-CD. Are there any plans for an official release? How much will it cost? Will the Jap version work with the official Mega-CD using the CDX cart?
3) And finally, will or when will Mortal Kombat be out on CD?
Thank you for answering,
Martin Cadman, Doncaster

LLOYD: Sing hosana, for we have seen the light and it is called Syndicate on the Mega Drive. We saw an early version of it when we were down at Bullfrog and it should be released pretty soon by Electronic Arts. It is highly unlikely that the Karaoke unit will be released over here as we aren't into it as much as the Japanese are. However, there are a few CD-G karaoke titles available on the DKSingAlong range. Oh what fun we had with the Elvis disk!

As for Mortal Kombat CD, see the letter titled 'Pith'

SPACE

Dear MegaTech,
I am writing to ask you if any more four-player games are coming out. I already own Gauntlet 4 and FIFA Soccer.

I would like a four-player Royal Rumble game, a four-player beat'em-up just like Pitfighter or Streets of Rage. Also a four-player shoot'em-up a bit like Mercs.

I know that there must be other people out there who would love these games too. So could you have a word with the guys at the top please because four-player games are more fun. I also that your magazine is ace, but not all the letters that get sent in. All they do is argue and criticise each other.
Stephen Swann, Birmingham
PS Please could you print this letter.

LLOYD: There are a lot of people who would appreciate new four-player games, and I'm one of them! It seems that nearly all four-player games are sports games, but that is probably due to the fact that EA seems to be the only one actually releasing them at the moment.

Columns 3 is actually a FIVE-player game if used in conjunction with Sega's Multi-tap adapter. There seems to be a huge gap in the market because a shoot'em-up or beat'em-up like you suggested would be fantastic. Unfortunately Gauntlet 4 is the closest thing we have to it at the moment, and as you already know that is really smart. The only new four-player games around at the moment are NHLPA '94, John Madden '94, Mutant League Hockey, Barkley's Shut Up and Jam, and NBA Showdown.

CRASH

Dear Lloyd,
I am sorry but I cannot understand how some of the readers ever got past early learning. Why do I nearly always see a letter from someone saying "In a rival magazine I saw a review for XYZ game, and they gave it a different score to you, who should I believe?". This must be one of the most pointless questions to ask a magazine. As if you are going to say any other but your own mag. Would Graham Taylor say, "It's all my fault that England are out of the cup. I tried to tell them not to give me the job but they had to go and spoil England's chances by employing me. Mr Blobby would have been better at it than I ever could be"? I doubt it!

The other sort of letter I hate is "You said XYZ game was really good and was the best game of the month. Well, I went out immediately and bought it, and I thought it was crap!". Have these readers never heard of 'personal preference'? Just because you thought the game was the best thing since sliced bread, does not mean that anyone else will.

As you may know by now, (from past letters) I buy four Sega mags every month and I read all the reviews (although unlike most I read the worst reviews first, it's the sadist inside me) and whichever game has got the best all-round reviews I buy. I have noticed that Sega mags seem to be more unified in their preferences (which is a shame when a lot of good games are released close together). I think they write these sorts of letters just to see their name in print.

I have been playing computer games of one sort or another since the age of 13 and now I am 23 and I still enjoy a game or 10. However, I do not go out after the game and start hitting people, and never have done. If anything I use the violent games to release tension and stress when it builds up by playing the game when I feel angry.

There maybe someone thinking "What about the James Bulger case, and the media telling everyone to get rid of their copies of the video Child's Play 3?". Well, this is a different medium and not really for discussion in a computer mag but I will say this: Child's Play 3 was a film. The images were realistic, therefore I believe children are influenced more by film than games. CP3 was an 18 certificate, so why did the children have access to this film? I think it is a good idea for the BBFC to give games certificates providing they do not declare open season and we start getting games like Space Invaders being given a 15 cert because of the violence or Pac-Man getting an 18 cert because of the graphic cannibalism.
Ashley Price, Lewes

LLOYD: Phew! What a long letter. Sorry about cutting some of it out, Ashley, but you did cover quite a lot of subjects. I hope I have managed to portray your points as you intended. You are quite right about the sort of letters we get. I think that some readers reckon we keep things secret and won't tell them until they ask. Most questions people ask can be answered simply by flicking through the news pages! It's not as if we have got Super Street Fighter in and want to keep it to ourselves or anything.

As for the personal preference stuff, you are right again. This is why we have more than one person commenting on a review and then we get together to give an overall score that everyone thinks is fair.

As for the censorship argument, I think this is a pretty dodgy area. Like you, I've played games for years and I haven't killed anyone yet. Classifying games is a good idea but censoring them is not. Take Doom on the PC for instance – it is a stunning game that happens to be very gory and should carry an 18 cert and young kids shouldn't play it. Like you said, films with 18 certs shouldn't be allowed to fall into kid's hands, and adult games shouldn't either.

Cheers for such a thought-provoking letter by the way. Hopefully others will take note and raise other important topics. Don't leave it too long before writing again. Who's next? Ah. It's you again!

GERMAN

Dear MegaTech,
I've been thinking! Yes, I do that now and then, it's amazing what you can do when you try...

CDs are cheaper to produce than carts, I have read as much as £10 cheaper so why don't the software publishers do us Mega-CD owners a favour and bring out cheaper versions of their games on CD? Let me explain this better.

The average price for a game on cartridge seems to be heading towards the £45-£50 mark. So far, when the publishers have done CD versions they have only had better sound and a few more levels, but have been £40.

So my thought is this. Why don't the publishers do a version, but put that version on both cart and CD. The CD version could be quite a bit cheaper as they don't have to pay for programming time or advertising twice. Then, both groups are catered for and those of us with a MCD will have the benefit of a cheaper version.

I think this would help promote the MCD and maybe more would sell. If people believed as well as getting better quality games they were also getting cart games on CD at a cheaper price surely that would influence them more.
Ashley Price (again), Lewes

LLOYD: Yet more good points from one of our more intelligent readers. EA is actually about to release some of its games on CD at a cheaper price than carts, but these versions actually use the Mega-CD's capabilities to good effect. There are a few rumours flying about at the moment that Sega is going to stop producing CD games altogether in order to concentrate on its new Saturn which isn't good news for Mega-CD owners.

As soon as we find out more about this, if it is actually true or not, we will let you know in the news pages.

Right, I've had enough of the serious letters, let's have something from someone who would have trouble beating Benny from Crossroads on Mastermind. You hear what I'm saying...

FIREMAN'S

(Written verbatim)
Dear Lloyd-the-Barbar,
Just a trim, Please! Ha-ha! I just couldn't resist that one. I have a few questions you shall answer!!(Shall I? You cheeky little so and so! - Lloyd)
I, the king of the umpa-lumpas have spoken!!!
1) Are you Welsh ? (This is your last warning - no more Welsh references please!! - Lloyd.)
2) Now MEGATECH hes new owners and a new address and new writters and so on, dose this mean the old staff like Tom Guise (incidentally Tom, nice Castlevania revew, very nice), Mark Holmes, Poul Davis, and my other favourite revewers will no longer write in my favourite mag?
3) With britan coming out the reccesion, and britans pockets fill up with loads-'a'-money thye pound should gain value on the yen (the japanese currancy) as well as other currancys. Dose this mean we will se a drop in prices of Mega Drives, Mega CDs and most other things from overseas?please print my letter as it is the 3rd time I have written.
To all readers of MegaTech: Please continue to buy and read MegaTech.
Eddie Askew, Kendal

LLOYD: Lloyd the Barbar? What do you think I am, the King of the elephants or something? Eddie (or can I call you Ed? Or how about thickie? That's more appropriate) I now promote you from King of the Umpa-Lumpas to King of the Gimps. All of the stupid people around the world will can now unite and they will recognise you as their leader and pay homage to you by bringing gifts of assorted fried fish and incontinence pants. How can you read computer magazines and not know how to spell review? All that mint cake must affect your brain.

As for the whereabouts of the old MegaTech crew, Steve Merrett is now editor of Mean Machines Sega, Tom and Paul (for that is how you spell it) are writers on NMS, and Mark Holmes is now driving very flash cars for Top Gear Magazine (The complete and utter spawny git). By the way, most word processors have a spell checker – use it.

CYCLING

Dear MegaTech,
I wish to complain about a Mega-CD club which was featured in MegaTech 13 in the news column. I sent away my address to him and it is now 1 year since I sent it off. Was this a joke or was the address wrong?
Peter Bland, Wales
PS Sorry if I am moaning.
PPS Your magazine is brilliant.

LLOYD: Is it my imagination or do all MegaTech readers live in Wales or what? It's not that I have anything against them, but it is getting a bit silly. More letters from readers around the world please. Anyway, back to the letter, don't you think a year is quite a long time to wait? I don't think you will hear anything from them now. Just consider yourself lucky that you didn't send them any money.

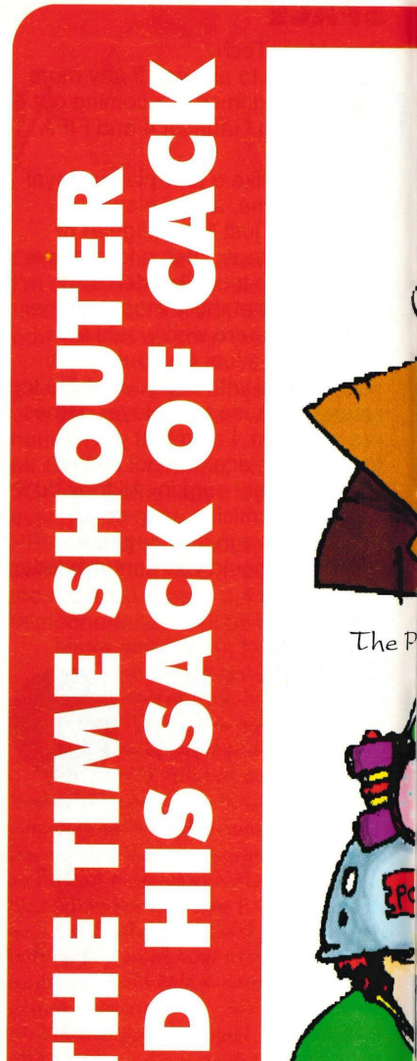
DIVER'S

Dear MegaTech,
1) Is the FMV in Ground Zero Texas any good?
2) What's your favourite Mega Drive game?
3) What does the 24 meg Sonic 3 have that the 16 meg version doesn't?
4) When is the 24 meg version of Sonic 3 coming out?
5) Can you be Tails on his own in the 24 meg version
If you don't print this letter could you please send me the answers to my questions.
KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.
Stefan Hood, Northampton

LLOYD: The Ground Zero Texas FMV is good quality-wise but the acting leaves a lot to be desired. My favourite Mega Drive game at the moment has to be Sensible Soccer, and my favourite SNES game is the fantastic Legend of the Mystical Ninja 2 (Patronising mode). As for the rest of your questions, you seem to be a little confused. As we said last month, the 24 meg cart will have more levels. Sonic 3 will be out on Sonic Turdsday, sorry, Sonic Thirdsday, which is the 24 February so it should be out by the time you read this. From what we have seen you can't play Tails on his own (Smug mode). Glad you like the mag Stefan.

VIRTUAL REALITY

Dear MegaTech,
I buy your magazine every month as it is the best in the shops. I would like to start by criticising Anthony Pearce from Cleethorpes. The reason for this is the fact that he said the Mega-CD is crap. I myself have a Mega-CD and I am proud of it. I agree that they have not yet produced a game worth boasting about but sooner or later there will be some real good games. Well, enough of that crap now and onto the questions.
1) What are the audio + graphics CDs and will we ever see one?
2) Will SF2 ever come out on the Mega-CD?
3) Do you know when the virtual reality mask is due to be released and how much it will cost?



Karl Gilford, Stoke on Trent
PS It would be brill if you printed this letter.

LLOYD: Hands up everyone who is disappointed with Mega-CD games at the moment? A few of them are good, like Thunderhawk and Lunar the Silver Star, but most of them are dross so just leave poor old Anthony alone, right? Calm down, calm down – are you starting or something? I might even have to ask you to step outside young man. Well, enough of that crap now onto the answers.
1) CDGs are normal music CDs that have computer graphics stored on them. A small number of CDs have this, and if you have a large music collection you probably own one already. As I said previously, there are some karaoke CDs available that use this feature.
2) Probably. Who knows?
3) Hopefully the virtual headset will be out in the summer, but at the moment Sega is more than likely going to be



His fear knows no limits. Can nothing stop this man? He is the Time Shouter and he travels through time raking through computer-related knowledge that no one really cares about filling up his big bag o'shite. In this bag are all the crap facts of life and winnets of information the rest of us forgot long ago. As you can probably tell from the smell, some of this information spilled onto my desk and slightly stained the letters page. I tried to scrape it clean but to no avail

QUESTIONS

1. From which Commodore 64 game is the music for the Ariston (and on and Ariston) advert taken?
2. What was the name of the haywire computer in 2001 and why was it so called?
3. What games did the following characters star in? GI Joe Crack, Miner Willy, Henhouse Harry, Arthur Pendragon, Wally Week.
4. As we all know, the first computerised superloos were found in Denmark, but which organisation organised them?
5. Why did Nintendo change the name of StarFox to StarWing?
6. What were Nolan Bushnell's two main impacts on the entertainment industry?

1. Robocop.
2. HAL, which is a spoof on IBM.
3. Commando, Manic Miner & Jet Set Willy, Chuckie Egg 1&2, Sabre Wulf, Everyone's a Wally.
4. KRAP.
5. Atrolasoft released a game with the same name on the Commodore.
6. Pong, which led to the development of ATARI, and the Cabbage Patch kids.

concentrating all of its efforts on the Saturn instead.

PURPLE

Dear MegaTech,
I am writing to you in utter disgust at your magazine's extremely dodgy hints and tips. For example 'Sonic CD time attack cheats'. OK, I understand that many of your cheats are sent in by the public, but why oh why don't you check them out first. I am the owner of 52 Mega Drive cartridges, a Mega-CD with 8 CDs so I know what I'm talking about and your magazine is really going downhill. It seems that you are running out of ideas. On the whole your magazine is the best Sega mag around, but please oh please print some original cheats that work.
Please can you help me with a few minor problems...
1) Are there any cheats on Final Fight CD
2) Lloyd, do you ride a girl's bike around Harrow Weald and wear your mum's knickers on your head?
3) What does barcoobar mean when you let the alien out of the cage in Another World?
Yours Menacingly,
Rob Neil Benny, Harrow Weald
Please print this letter as it would make my dying Grandma's day.
PS In the future we will be observing your magazine's progress and WILL be in touch.

LLOYD: My secret is out. Many times I have prayed that no one saw me live out my wild fantasies in the early hours of the morning. My biking antics will now have to stop. I think you are being a bit unfair slagging off the whole mag simply because you couldn't get some cheats to work, which incidentally do work. It is quite rare that we get cheats from the public that are original. In the case of Sonic CD the cheats were first printed in Tsushin, a Japanese magazine, which we translated and tested. So there. Unfortunately there aren't any cheats for Final Fight which is a shame as it is rock hard.
What do you think 'barcoobar' means? Having just rescued the alien he probably tries to say thanks or something. What did you expect? "Cheers for that, mate, I'll buy you a few jars down the local?" Send my regards to your dying Grandma.

CHEESY

Dear Lloyd,
Just writing to congratulate you on doing an excellent job as presenting the letters page. I have written quite a few letters to Tom in the past and now I thought I would start writing to you. Anyway could you please answer me some questions?
1) In your review of Mad Dog McCree you mentioned something called a Justifier. What is it?
2) When Super SFII comes out will it be as dear as SFII Special Championship Edition?
3) Is there ever going to be a SFIII?
4) When will Virtua Racing be out?
5) Which is the best game out of NBA Jam, NBA '94 Showdown and Tecmo Super NBA basketball?
6) Is it true that there is a cheat on Road Rash II to enable you to get a bike called 'Wild Thing' and have unlimited continues?
That's the lot for now. Thanks for sharing your excellent games knowledge.
Howard Doupe, Merseyside
PS I'll be back!!

LLOYD: Glad you like the column Howard. Feel free to drop us a line anytime you like.
The Justifier mentioned in the review is Konami's light gun that comes with Lethal Enforcers which I prefer to the Menacer. When Super SFII comes out the Mega Drive might have gone out of date, so who knows? Inflation will probably have risen by then driving the prices up anyway.
3) Undoubtedly.
4) It will be out in May and from what we've seen it looks better than we expected!
5) All basketball games are pretty similar so the choice is up to you. I hate them all equally.
6) Yes.

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



This is the story of a man with a stick that has a life of its own. Doesn't LLOYD HOWE know all about that?

BUBBA 'N'

CORE DESIGN

16 MEG

STYLE

PLATFORM

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS N/A

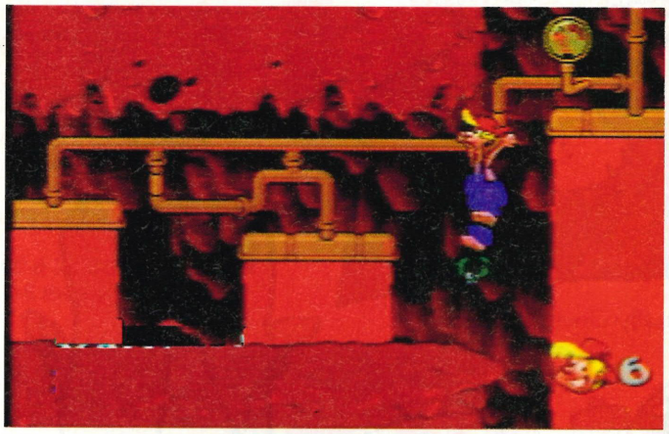
RELEASE DATE

MARCH '94

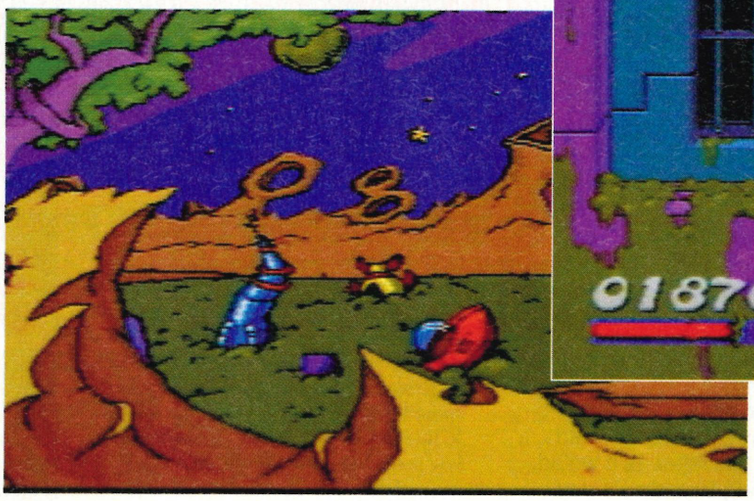
Elvis is not dead!! After years of controversy and reports of sightings in supermarkets in Chigwell, we can exclusively reveal that Elvis is alive and kicking and starring in his very own game. It seems that his disappearance was due to the fact that while he was working at a zoo some aliens came down and kidnapped him to put in their menagerie...What's that?! It's not Elvis Presley but some other Elvis? Surely not. And there I was all excited as well. I'm all shook up!

BLUE SUEDE SHOES

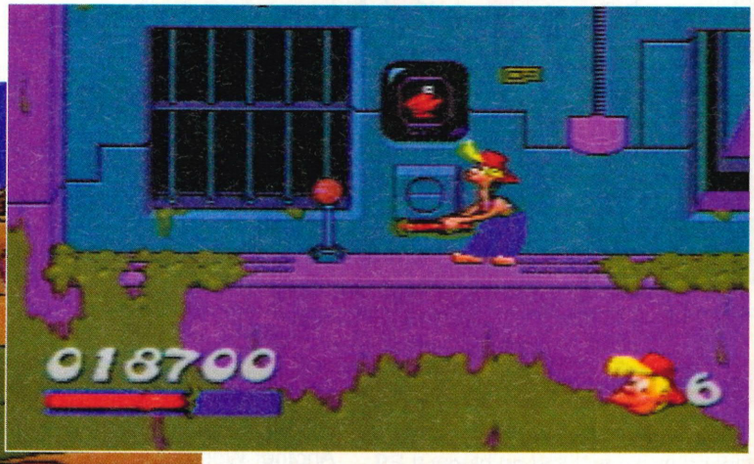
After being kidnapped, Elvis Bubba was held on a spaceship which went out of control and crashed on a nearby planet. He escaped safely, as did some of the other aliens. As he walked off into the sunset he noticed a strange creature was following him, which turned out to be a living stick. Their friendship was cemented and they set off together, determined to find their way home.



▲ **Off he goes. Leaping straight up and over the ledge...my hero. Haircut of the month must surely go to this person too – even Lloyd can't compete with that mop**



▼ **At last we see the stick finally being thrown. Carry on then, carry on**



◀ **The alien forest and other such places of interest are to be found in this area. Top stuff, eh folks?**



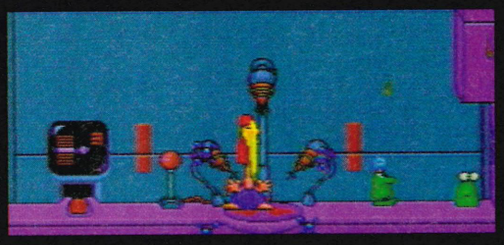
HEARTBREAK HOTEL

Initially this seems like just another run-of-the-mill yawnsome platform game, but it isn't – mainly due to the stick that Elvis carries. Seeing as it is a sentient being, the stick comes in very handy and it is this that separates Bubba 'N' Stix from all the other platform games around. As well as guiding Bubba through the platforms, over the boulders and past the aliens, you must help him to solve puzzles, which is where the stick comes in rather handy. He can perform many different tasks with it, including using it as a club to bash monsters with, throwing it like a boomerang, sticking it in walls to help him climb up and even as a pool cue.

Nearly every puzzle encountered involves using the stick in a different way. For example, at one point you come across a ledge that is too high to climb and there is no way around. On top of the ledge is a giant boulder and on the other side of the ledge is a giant monster. What do you do? Simple. Just jump up in the air and lob Stix at the right time – this will dislodge the rock onto the monster's head, knocking it out, and the boulder will bounce back towards you and fall at your feet. By standing on it, it's now possible to progress.

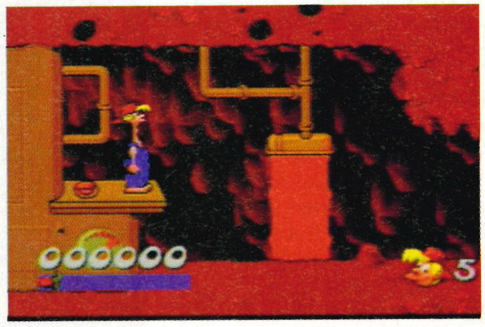


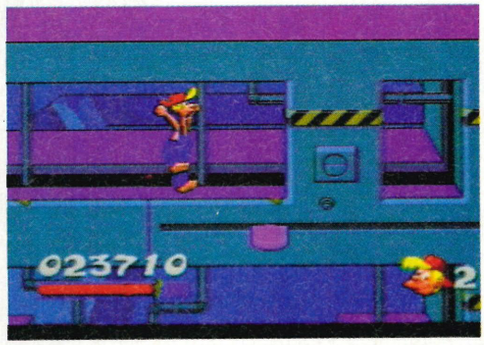
STIX



HOUND DOG

The first level is set in a forest where all the trees have eyes, and even the shrubbery is on the warpath! Even though it is the first stage it takes quite a bit of thought to work out how to actually finish the level. The second stage takes place on a derelict spaceship where all the defence mechanisms have gone a bit screwy. Here there are lots of computers that can be activated by the flick of a switch. Most of the time this produces an item that must be used to solve a puzzle, but the main problem is working out what each item does. There are few clues about and some of the puzzles are quite hard, but a bit of lateral thinking will always get you through in the end.





LOVE ME TENDER

Other levels are set in swamps, volcanoes, high in the sky, under the sea, in outer space and even in an alien zoo. With 11 levels in all, this game will present even the most ardent games player with one hell of a challenge, but the main question is, would you really want to finish it? There may be some good ideas implemented but there isn't really enough to entice you to play it all the way through. Some parts are really quite hard and can be infuriating when you fail at it for the umpteenth time. This is a shame because Bubba 'N' Stix could have been a great game, but sadly it just falls short of the mark.

THE SECOND OPINION



JOHNNY 'JAG' McALLEICE
To throw Bubba 'N' Stix into the old, well-trodden platform bag would be making a big mistake. The game has many appealing features and undoubtedly many of you out there will love it, the difficulty factor and all. However, to be brutally honest I found the game boring – nothing had my blood pressure rising. The thing seemed to plod along forever and then all of a sudden I was dead and thrown back to an incredibly far away restart point. I am more than a little disappointed, because I had played preview copies of the game and was hoping for a lot more. Lloyd played it for a longer period of time than I did, but my gripe was that I didn't want to see what was coming next. A boring game from Core? It would seem so.

With a hip and a hop and flip, flip, flop. The yokel makes it to the platform with ease. Or is it just the person behind the controls?

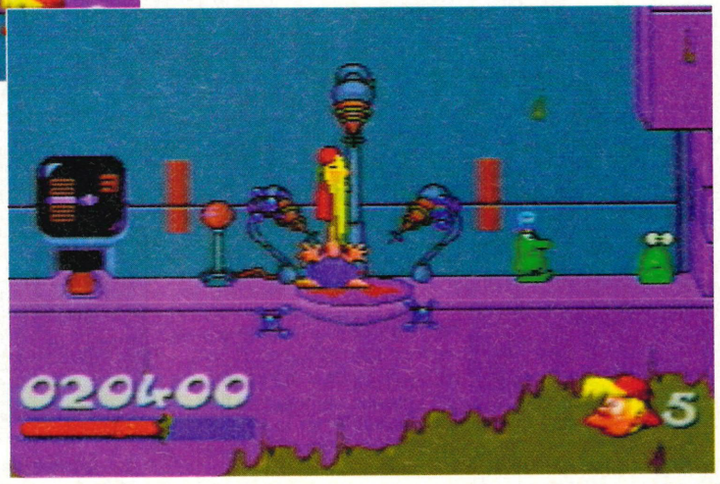






Green stuff covers the walls. It can only mean one thing...this is the dreaded slime world

Someone beam me up. Yes, it's the teleport section of the game. It's also incredibly difficult and very irritating



%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 79%
Some easier difficulty levels would be nice

GRAPHICS 87%
Simple-looking backgrounds with nice animation

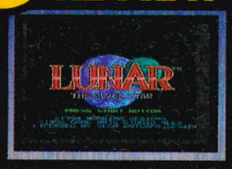
SOUND 78%
Cheerful ditties play all the time

SHORT TERM PLAY 75%
The first levels are quite hard which is fairly off-putting

LONG TERM PLAY 84%
As you get used to controlling Stix things get better

OVERALL 83
A good attempt at an old genre, with a few novel twists

MEGA-CD REVIEW



BY: WORKING DESIGNS



CD-ROM

STYLE

RPG

PRICE £39.95

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

OUT NOW



Faced with the choice of either staying in and watching Neighbours or going adventuring with a woman who loves him, Julian Connolly took the only real option...Emmerdale.

LUNAR THE

Young Alex is something of a dreamer. He fancies himself as an adventurer following in the footsteps of the village hero, Dyne. Every day he goes to Dyne's memorial on the outskirts of the village and dreams wistfully of the moment he can go adventuring. Predictably we pick up the plot just as that day arrives. His mate Ramus has heard a story of a big diamond hidden in the Dragon Caves some distance away, and reckons they should go and find it. So does Alex, although his girlie Luna isn't so sure. Eventually he talks her round and off they go to get the diamond, with barely a leather tunic and a rusty dagger between them.



What do you mean this party isn't fancy dress?

LET'S GO FOR A WALK

The best place to start with something like this is the beginning. Profound that, wasn't it? Anyway, the game is designed in that naive style where you get to see the roof and the front of the building at the same time, without a hint of perspective. For the most part you'll be wandering around a shrunken view of the area for ease of movement, but when a place of interest is encountered it changes to the enlarged view to let you wander and explore in greater detail.

The party of four you initially begin with (Alex, his two mates and this strange flying cat called Nall) has Alex at its helm and he is the character you control. The other three follow closely behind in a manner not unlike those round-the-pool congas you feel obliged to take part in after two jugs of cheap sangria. Manoeuvring a little bloke through trees and mountains in games like these is often really fiddly and tricky, but in Lunar the Silver Star you just push the pad in the general direction and if something gets in the way, Alex just hugs the edge of it until he finds a clear passage. This makes the character so much easier to control and move around.

Do you want to come and see my puppies?





How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck would chuck wood?

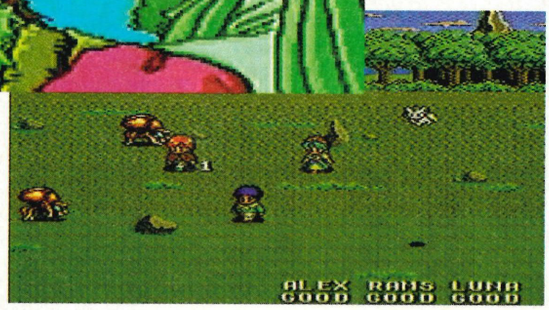
Green hair? I think someone's been messing around with the hair dye again



ARE YOU STARTIN'?

In common with other RPGs, the basic plan is to collect what you can, solve puzzles and pick up lots of expensive jewellry. Of course to be able to just bimble about and do all this would be far too easy if an element of fighting was not also included. The programmers of Lunar clearly realised this, because there is a stupid amount of fighting involved in this game. When you are walking about you can't actually see the enemies approaching, the first thing you know about being attacked is when you are plonked in the middle of the fight screen facing up to anything from one to five uglies. You can usually run away without taking any damage, so this isn't quite as annoying as you might think. It is worth fighting most opponents early on because they aren't all that tricky and it is also good to get your experience level up – the higher the level, the higher the maximum number of hit points and magic points you can attain.

The actual process of fighting is very simple – decide which members of your team want to attack, which are going to run or flee (hang around for the experience points, but don't fight), or whether an item, magic spell or magic song is going to be used. Once this turn is played out the monsters attack and you do it all again. It is a simple process but you can find yourself doing an awful lot of it and at times it can become quite a nuisance. If, for example, you keep getting harassed by lots of weak enemies, killing them involves nothing more than about six button presses, which hardly seems worth the effort.



Giant cockroaches plague the land, but Alex is so roughie-toughie that he can beat them with one swipe of his sword



SILVER STAR



That'll be Alex's house then. Head for the cellar first and get some togs from the chest

Ramus' house. He's the fat one who thinks it'll be a good idea to go and get a diamond off a dragon

The allotments. One of the many places in the village where all sorts of people come up to you and talk in riddles

The weapons shop. This being a very small village you can't buy much more than a short sword or a sling

General store. Buy and sell anything from herbs to heavy clothes here





▲ Each team member can be examined in thorough detail and have their inventory toyed with from this simple menu



◀ Piles of standing stones have the miraculous power to restore your health and become checkpoints should you die

COULD IT BE MAGIC

The role magic plays in the game increases the deeper you get into it. Initially all you have to use are Luna's magical songs – she starts with four but collects more powerful examples as the game progresses. These range from healing ditties to more aggressive, stuff-your-opponent-in-a-big-way arias. They use different amounts of her magic points depending on their power, so you have to be judicious about when and where they are used. Later on Alex collects spells as do the other two new members of the party, recruited deep into the game. Each member with magical abilities has their own range of spells: wind-based, fire-based and that kind of thing. These need to be used carefully as well, so you can save them for the more, erm…huge opponents you'll meet. It takes a while to get to know which are the best for which situation, but once you get the hang of it nothing is more satisfying than knocking 150 hit-points off five enemies with just one spell.



▲ Deep in the caves on the way to see the dragon, giant snails and nasty green lumps make things a little more difficult

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH IT?

Items – magical and dull stuff like clothing, weapons and food – are collected from all over the place, or bought with the silver you always seem to pick up from monsters (despite them being completely devoid of pockets). The party has a group inventory with each member drawing on this for their own personal collection – only when they have an item in their pockets can they actually use it. The trick is to figure out which item is best used where and when. That Dragon Ring may look very shiny but it is only of use in a certain location. Shops abound in the big cities where you can buy and sell items to maximise the efficiency of what you are carrying. Weapons get bigger and more powerful as the game goes on and by God you'll need them once you start facing up to the giant skeletal monsters that populate the later parts of the game.



So much for giving the world a song – this girl wants to wipe it out



Lucky devil! Gee, I bet he's over the moon about that. Look– Ramus is on the floor in tears as he's over-come

THE SECOND OPINION



STEVE CHAPMAN

This is one of the few RPGs that I've ever played for any length of time, and I must admit that I liked it a lot. This is unusual for me because on the whole I think RPGs are about as good as constipation, but I was very surprised at how well presented and playable Lunar is. Whether fans of this genre will agree with me I don't know, but neither do I care as I get paid to like games that you lot hate, so therefore I am merely doing my job. And very well too, may I add.

MUSIC MUSIC MUSIC

One of the most striking aspects of the game is its soundtrack. Lunar makes full use of the CD's potential and each area of the game has its own little soundtrack appropriate to its atmosphere. One minute you'll be wandering around a pretty little forest with a chirpy little tune playing, then you'll be thrust into a battle where big, bold and fast-moving orchestral music will get you in the mood. Early on in the game there is a lot of speech (a little too cute and American for my taste), and Luna even sings to Alex, which is all a bit puke-inducing, but you can't deny the quality. The visuals are all cute and bouncy betraying its Japanese origins, but it still manages to look sinister and foreboding when it needs to be, with the music always helping in these situations.



Not, as it might first appear, a brothel, but actually a sacred place where health and energy can be restored for a small donation



Do not, under any circumstances, try to remove the big pink thing, it will end in tears believe me

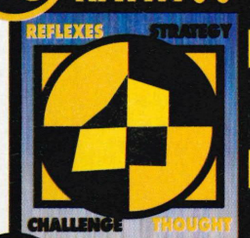


It's about now that you wished you hadn't made that "Oooh, Clifford" comment that the dragons the world over are sick of

LUNATIC

One of Lunar's big selling points is its accessibility. Without losing the feel of a good RPG, the early puzzles and enemies aren't too tricky and the first quest is played out in a reasonably small area. It is by no means the most convoluted game you'll ever come across and for my money there is too much fighting, but once you pick up the spells later in the game you find yourself itching for a chance to use them on something big. The ease of movement and the menu-driven control system – any task can be completed with a few button presses – mean that it is a very accessible game. In all, Lunar isn't brilliant and for my money doesn't compete with Landstalker, but for the RPG novice this could be a nice introduction to the genre.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION 86%
Top-notch all the way through, plus a great intro and a few good tunes

GRAPHICS 78%
Cute and obviously Japanese. Some high points but a few too many weak links

SOUND 91%
Fascinating song during the intro and the soundtrack really builds atmosphere

SHORT TERM PLAY 75%
Accessible to the uninitiated but a little too much fighting

LONG TERM PLAY 83%
Everything gets bigger and better the more you get into it

OVERALL 82
Great for beginners and enough there for more hardened RPGers

• new for MEGA DRIVE • new for MEGA DRIVE • new for MEGA DRIVE •

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N-FORCE

"Arguably the best race game ever written"
Neil West, 92% Mega magazine

"One of the best and most original games ever"
Look-In

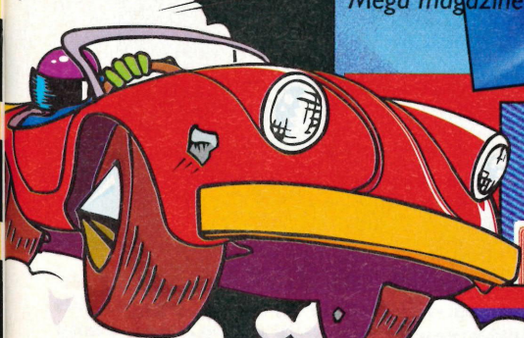
93 PERCENT **"Probably the most playable game I've ever seen on the Mega Drive"**
Games Master magazine

16-BIT CARTRIDGE

MEGA GAME

97 PERCENT PLAYABILITY
Mean Machines Sega

IF YOU DON'T GET IT, WHAT ARE YOU PLAYING AT?











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MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS

ELECTRONIC ARTS

8-MEG

STYLE

SPORTS SIM

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1/2

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

OUT MAR



Rollerblading, hanging off the back of cars and punching anyone with a Mohican within a three mile radius! Sounds like fun, but peace-loving Julian Connolly may not be quite so impressed.

SKITCHIN'

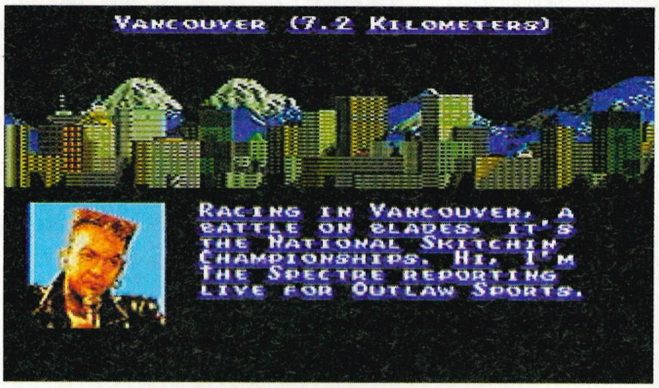
So Electronic Arts is sitting there one day discussing what game to do next. John Madden Crochet '94? NHLPA Ice Polishing '94? Lotus 36? Or Road Rash again – with a different twist? They chose the latter.

Skitchin' is based on the incredibly dangerous activity of putting on a pair of rollerblades, grabbing hold of the bumper of a passing car and getting dragged along. So, if you take Road Rash and replace the bike-riding with this crazy hobby you've got Skitchin'. Everything else is pretty much the same.

PRESENTABLE?

Now I might be alone in this, but I was utterly convinced that the graphics in Road Rash were naff; about 2.5 colours, and a resolution roughly akin to that of a chess-board. Well, rest easy folks, Skitchin' has stayed faithful to the concept of looking crap-but-functional. So now instead of dodgy-looking blokes in funny-coloured leathers you get dodgy hip-looking blokes who don't tuck their shirts in and wear matching baseball caps.

The sound however has improved with about 12 tunes in that West Coast funk/metal style that people who wear woollen hats with designer labels on the front like. You know, the ones who started a revival in lumberjack shirts.



▲ **Each race is introduced by the overpowering Spectre, reporting for Outlaw Sports. If you are lucky you may pick up a few hints here**



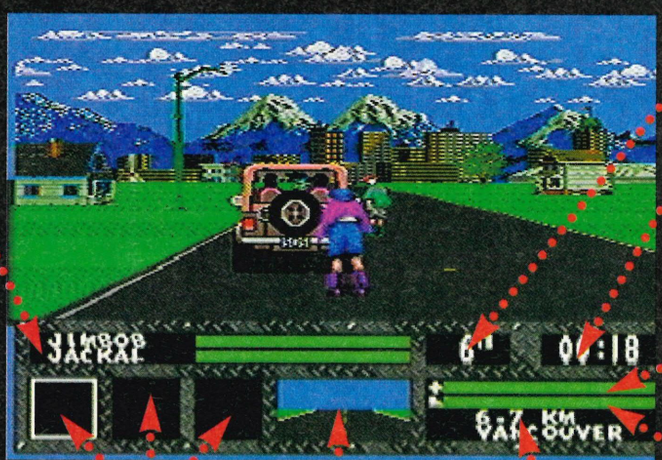
◀ **Make a successful landing after leaping over a ramp and three people give you mid-air performance marks out of 10**

▶ **The jump went slightly wrong and we'll need some serious washing powder to get all of the grass stains out**



▲ **Spread-eagled in mid-air is great fun while you are doing it, as long as you don't worry about the inevitably painful landing**

HOLD ON TIGHT





▲ **The post-race report on how you did. The better you do the more cash bonuses you are likely to collect**

PICK IT UP

You aren't alone out there either. There could be up to 10 other skitchers that you'll have to compete against and let me warn you now that sportsmanship isn't going to cut any ice with these guys. There are only two things they understand: speed and violence. The most common example of the two together is when you and maybe three other skitchers catch a ride on the same vehicle. What then follows is an almighty punch-up as you try to knock them off before they can do the same to you.

Of course things can be made easier if you have managed to pick up one of the nasty weapons that occasionally appear on the road. Ranging from crow bars to bicycle chains these all despatch any opponent far quicker than any punch or kick could.

Three weapons can be carried at any one time, but with them being so darn difficult to pick up the chances of collecting three even during a full game are fairly slim. Imagine it, you are haring along the road at a fair old pace, but because of the game's viewpoint the road ahead is slightly obscured, so usually it isn't until the last second that you realise a weapon is on the road in front of you. Even if you do spot it you still have to crouch down and reach out for it. Most of the time I was just too late.

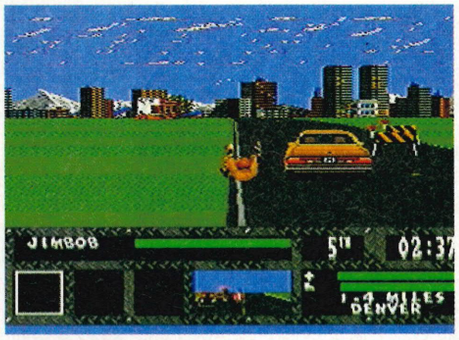


▲ **The equipment status screen keeps you up to date on which bits of kit are in need of repair or replacement. Green means they are fine, red means they are dead**

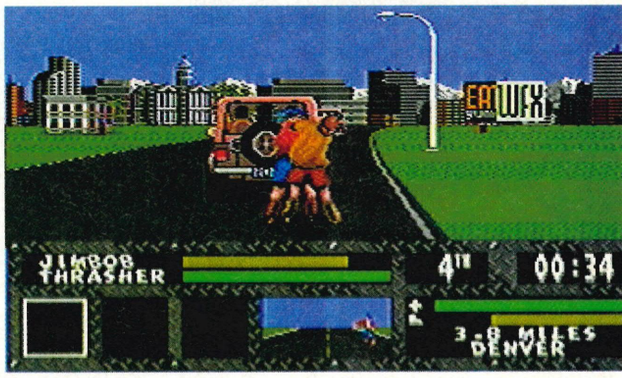


▲ **This is the man who wants to separate you from your money and sell you better specified and more expensive equipment every time**

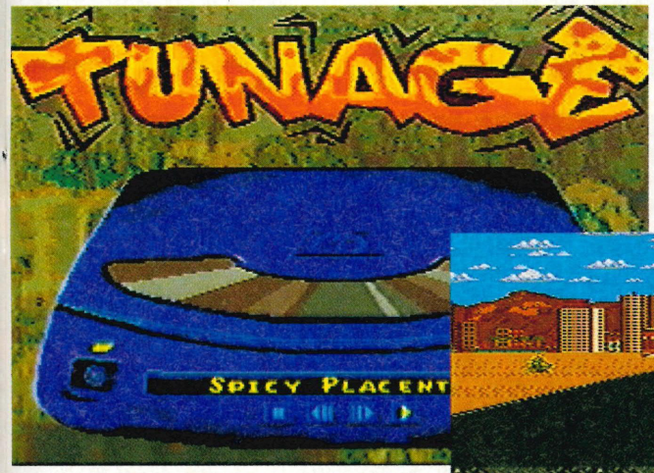




▲ **If you've ever wondered what it feels like to get run over, this game is the closest I've come to finding out**



▲ **Hanging on for dear life to the back of the Jeep and some geek comes along and wants to pick a fight**



▼ **This is what sorts out the men from the boys. If you can hang on to this cop car without getting arrested you really are a top-class skitcher**



▲ **12 tracks can be played from this CD and they all turn up in the game. Some of the titles are slightly less than tasteful**

A little too dangerous?

Well, there isn't a great deal to this game. The idea is that skitchin' (an amalgam of skating and hitching) has become a huge underground sport in America. Illegal races take place in a number of cities across North America and all you have to do to enter is strap on your boots, pay your entrance fee and grab hold of the nearest passing car.

Just skating along the road won't give you enough speed to compete with the top skitchers, so you can't avoid that terrifying moment where you just have to stick out your arm, grab hold of something firm and hope you don't get run over. Once you've got the hang of it it isn't that difficult, you learn the best place to be in the road and the optimum speed to stand a good chance of pulling off a decent skitch.

As this game is all about racing, just hanging on to the back of a car won't be enough to get you into the top five places in order to qualify for the next race. You have to be able to perform slingshots. This is where you balance your momentum against the speed of the car and pick the best time to thrust yourself forward and gain speed. Get it right and you'll sail past four cars before you slow down, get it wrong and you may well end up further back than you were, or worse – face down on the Tarmac.

TIMED SEQUENCE

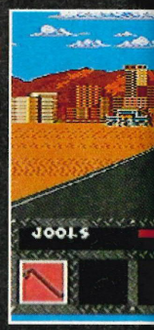
DURATION: 3 MINS



It isn't true, I'm not a loser. I have a totally fulfilling existence



Just going for a slingshot



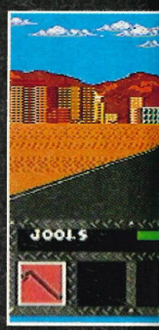
Getting r next car



I've just been run over...very painfully



Back on the skates , but a long way back



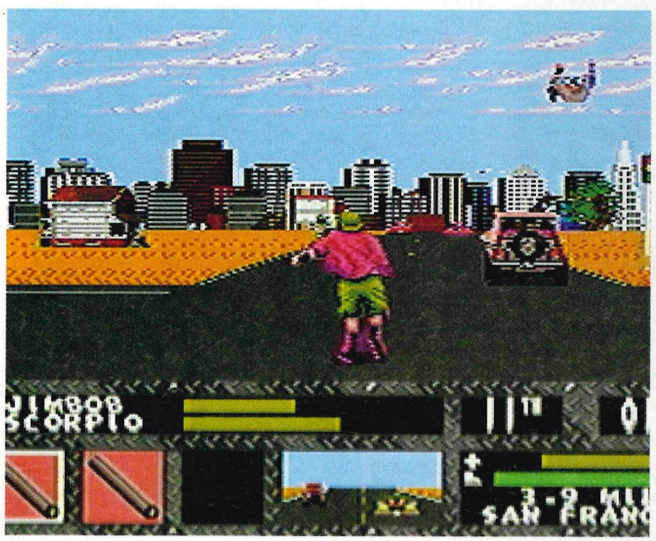
20 seconds qualifying

'ELLO, 'ELLO, ELLO'

There are hazards to all this skitchin' besides getting beaten up. The biggest nuisance is the police – skitchin' is illegal after all so they aren't too keen on it. Should you so wish you can pick up some extra bonus cash by skitchin' on a police car for as long as you think is safe. Stay too long however and you'll be thrown in jail.

Another major hazard is getting run over. The game provides a rear-view mirror so you can see the cars coming up behind and thus time your skitch. Warning: lose concentration and wander into the path of an oncoming car and it will hurt.

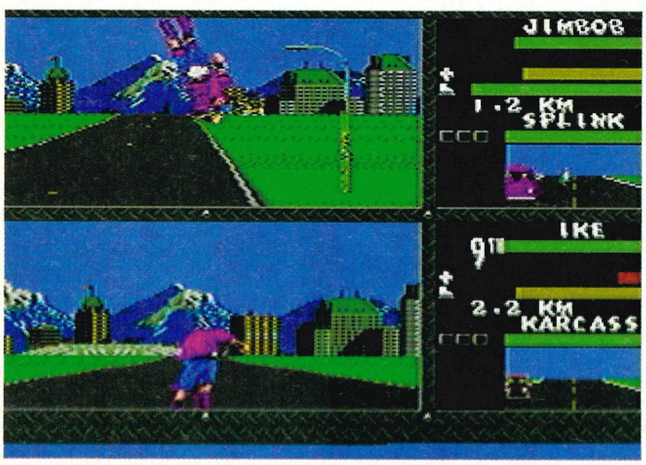
After the initial thump of flesh on metal you'll sail high into the air and come down heavily. Should you be lucky enough to land off the road all you have to do is get up and start again, but land on the Tarmac and you'll be very lucky not to get run over again. This is immensely frustrating because there is so little you can do about it.



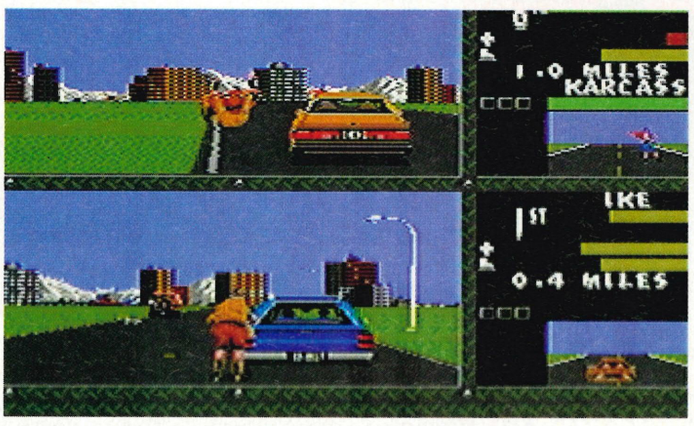
It isn't only the human players who can get run over – any skitcher can fall foul of one ton of pink Jeep



Landing flat on your f Tarmac results in some ve the jump judges

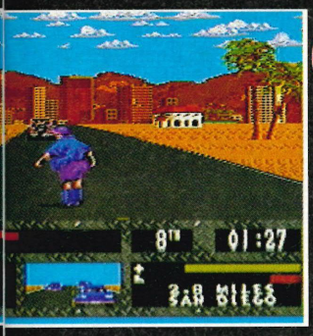


Player two just skates along while player one goes on for a full-on moebius flip off a ramp



Player one gets flattened by a Cadillac, but player two gets a ride with one of those huge American station wagons

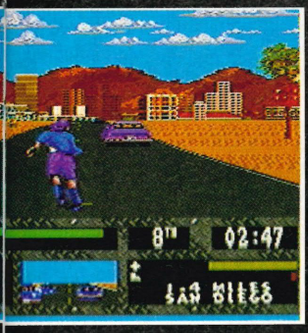




dy to grab hold of the



▲ Trying to catch another skitch



on and still no near to



◀ Got a skitch but only 0.9 miles to go

JUMPING JACK FLASH

Should you actually manage to finish a race in the top five, you receive cash bonuses which depend on how well you have performed. What can help bump this up is performing a few tricks off the ramps that turn up at regular intervals. Timing is the important factor here because all tricks are activated by a simple push on the control pad, but do it too late, or attempt it at too low a speed and you'll be chewing Tarmac yet again. Too many falls and you'll be spending most of your cash in the shop trying to replace cheap equipment instead of saving for better, more expensive stuff.



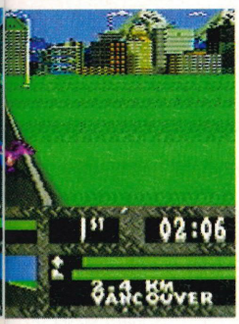
▲ One thing not to do is try and skate through the barriers

IT TAKES TIME

Even with the inclusion of a two-player head-to-head mode Skitchin' isn't instantly obvious as being good fun. It takes too long to get the hang of actually grabbing the cars and slingshotting effectively. Once you do though Skitchin' begins to get better the more you play it.

We've already established that it looks awful, but there is some variety in the track layouts and backgrounds – each city is distinctive from the others and they have at least managed to get a good quality soundtrack. The difficulty level is very well done – you should see a bit more of the game each time you play, and all the while you'll be getting much better and finding the speed needed to win races.

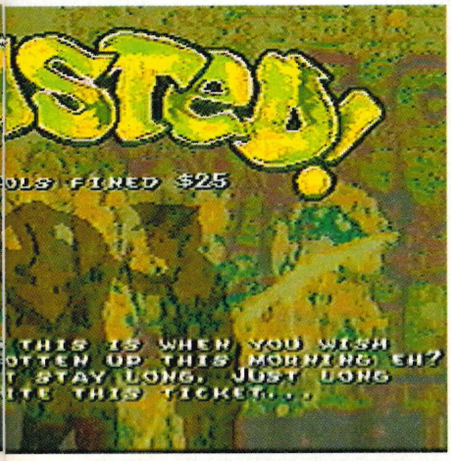
Skitchin' isn't a classic, but it is certainly a grower – the more you play it the better it gets and if two half-decent players get together it can be very good fun. It isn't truly original, but it is a very good game.



ice and chewing
y poor marks from



▲ Damn! The skates fell apart, that's the race over



◀ Ooops! A night in the cells with some big, affectionate men and you may never be able to skate again

THE SECOND OPINION

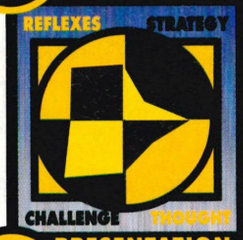


JOHNNY JAG McALLEICE

Jools has played this a hell of a lot more than me and assures me it's a bit of a grower. I'm none too convinced. The graphics look a shade on the old side and the action is inferior to Road Rash 2. The great 'beat your fellow contestants up' section is missing, it's just a little slow in one player and the split screen two-player mode is disgustingly bad to control.

Perhaps in the long run Skitchin' could be well worth the money, but I remain unimpressed by this second rate Road Rash rip off from Electronic Arts.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION 85%
Good-looking title screens and intermediate screens

GRAPHICS 65%
Blocky and not very colourful, but they do at least move fast

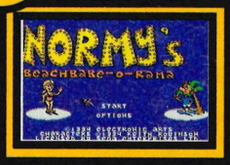
SOUND 82%
Funky and fast moving but the tunes have some tasteless names

SHORT TERM PLAY 67%
At first you haven't got a clue what all the fuss is about

LONG TERM PLAY 86%
It grows on you and you really want to keep playing

OVERALL 83
Great two-player action, and you need a real skill to get anywhere

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS

ELECTRONIC ARTS

8-MEG

STYLE

PLATFORM

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

OUT MAR



He's a geek with no tan who deludes himself that he can find a gorgeous woman to fall in love with on the beach. But enough about Julian Connolly, let's hear about Normy.

NORMY'S B

He's a lawyer or something equally dull. He has no friends, no fun and most importantly of all no love life. He's effectively a kid's version of Leisure Suit Larry. One day he thinks to himself that spending some time on the beach hanging around bikini-clad babes will actually make him more of a man.

Unfortunately a number of time travellers have kidnapped various goddesses (Sun, Surf, Music, etc) which means that the beach has become a bit of a dull place. Improbable as it may sound, but no more improbable than any other video game plot. Normy is the only man who can save the day, and the babes, by travelling through time to rescue them. You get the picture, right? It's a platform game with a number of different backgrounds. Oh well...

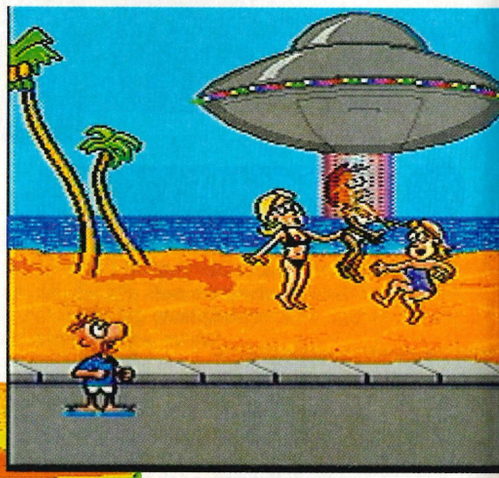


▲ **Hurrah! Normy's found the women of his dreams, all gorgeous and pouting everything**

I NEED A HERO

It must be some kind of post-modernist thing or something, but a few years ago video games were populated by clean-cut muscular types, with funny-coloured suits and maybe even capes. Y'know, your typical hero. Now though, we get lumbered with these geeky types who couldn't rub two women together if they tried – they're all sagging biceps and no dress sense.

I guess it is supposed to make us feel some affection towards them, and that way we'll try harder to finish the game and, naturally, change their lives in the process. Well, I'd just like to say that I really don't care who is in the game, what they look like, or which social interaction problem they happen to suffer from. All I want is a good game. Sadly, this isn't it.



▼ **This is what we need, a comedy boxing glove hidden in a mallet to whack cavemen on the head with**



▲ **Lo, what is this? The time travelling aliens have nicked all the babies and Normy either goes blind or rescues them**



▼ **One of Normy's few talents is being able to leap a long way and almost have a thought at the same time**

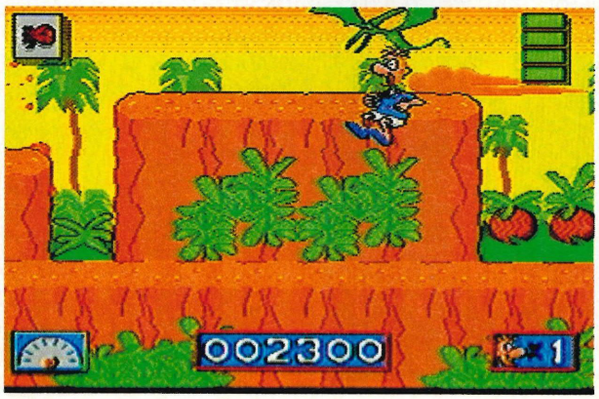


NORMY NORM

Normy can do four things: he can run very fast and become very difficult to stop, or he can walk very slowly and become very difficult to stop. He can jump, but not very high and he can use a weapon, depending on what the level will give him.

If he does a running jump he'll go further, but you can never see where you are going to land and it really isn't worth the risk most of time. Hardly inspirational I'll grant you, but better games have come from less.

Oh, he can also take eight hits from the enemies he encounters. There are no pick-ups, apart from one weapon per level and a few hearts to help the energy levels, and if he passes a signpost with a hand on it that is in fact a checkpoint – should he carelessly expire he'll restart the level from the last checkpoint he passed. That, in essence, is Normy.



◀ **Get off me you fool! I can do without being transported off the end of the level thanks very much**

EACH BABE-O-RAMA



▲ **A moment of great wit this: "We apologise for the interference due to inept gameplay but normal service will be resumed as soon as possible"**

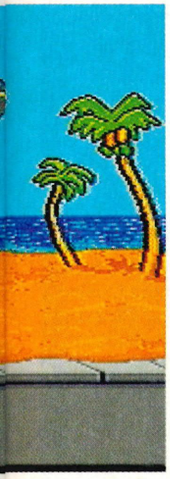
SAME, SAME, SAME

While the levels profess to be in different time zones, from prehistoric to early in the 21st century, they all have remarkable similarities. A lot of the levels have doorways at regular intervals out of which come little men wielding some kind of throwing weapon. If there aren't any doors for them to come out of they'll still come and harangue you.

There will also be things that fly around and either attempt to pick you up and carry you somewhere you'd really rather not be, or drop things on you that you'd probably be far better off without. Another staple are the pigs-cum-trampolines – jump of them and you'll soar into the heavens. So far, so dull.



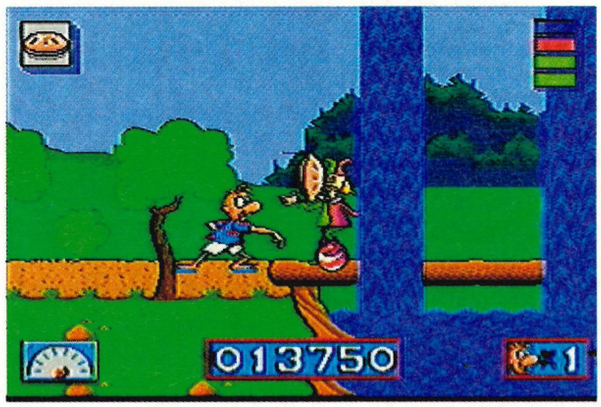
▼ **Fred Flintstone makes a cameo appearance as an end-of-level guardian**



WHERE'S THE MEAT?

OK, so there isn't much to it, but Space Invaders was a good game and that was hardly sophisticated, so what is the real problem? Well, it's Normy himself. When he is just walking about he moves so damn slowly that there isn't much you can do when a faster moving enemy comes towards you and needs about three hits to be killed – you will take damage. Then when he starts haring around like a headless civil servant he becomes almost impossible to control.

So we have a lousy control system, little or no discernible gameplay and it looks awful. I think it's meant to look awful actually, but the programmers kind of missed the point. Reasonable tunes do something to save the day, but just not enough. At least one good thing will come out of this: Normy will never be alone again. There'll be plenty of them all sitting together in some warehouse somewhere for years to come.



▲ **England 1447: I may be wrong, but clowns on balancing balls didn't make a very big appearance in any history book I read**



◀ **Replacing the comedy boxing glove as a weapon we now have the oh-so-hilarious comedy dead chicken**



▶ **How much do you charge for a Knight then? Boom, boom**

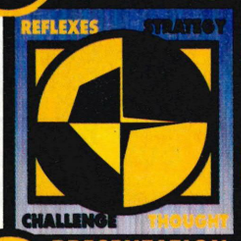
THE SECOND OPINION



ALLIE

Initially this is quite funny to play – there's some neat quirks that lift the corners of the mouth slightly. Developed by the same team who brought us the original ToeJam & Earl game you can see distinct similarities in the design, but the guys just haven't managed to pull it off with Normy. Like Julian said, we think the graphics are supposed to look 2D and blocky, but surely not THAT blocky? Oh dear. I admire EA, but I think it's really got a duffer on its hands with Normy. Very disappointing.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 45%
Lacklustre, unoriginal and not at all appealing

GRAPHICS 56%
They have their moments but attempts at an overall 'style' fall flat

SOUND 65%
Some half-decent tunes and a couple of nice effects help raise the level a bit

SHORT TERM PLAY 44%
For at least half an hour you wonder if it is going to get better

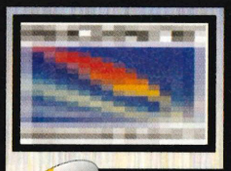
LONG TERM PLAY 32%
There is nothing here to make you want to play this for any length of time

OVERALL 38
Not a lot goes right for this game

MEGA-CD REVIEW



SONY



CD-ROM

STYLE

BEAT'EM-UP

PRICE TBA

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 6

RELEASE DATE

OUT NOW



Steve Chapman is partial to a bit of sledging and recommends ICI Perspex. Available from all good empty council houses across Britain, it's a cheap and cheerful way to enjoy snow, experience the thrill and terror of uncontrollable breakneck speed and perhaps even gain an informative and educational trip to the casualty department of your local hospital.

CLIFFH

Ever since Ocean Software produced a licenced game of Oliver Stone's 1988 film Platoon, officially endorsed 'games of the film' have provided software companies with a ready-made story-line to work from when producing what usually amounts to a poor platform/beat'em-up game. On other occasions a game has been released, only for everyone to suddenly realise that the film plot wasn't really that good anyway. Here is a Mega-CD game that fits both of the above descriptions perfectly!

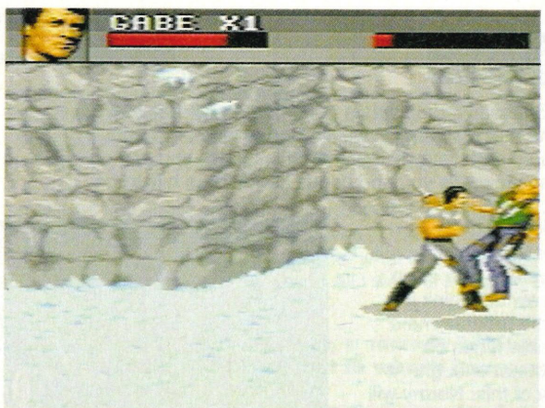






STOP OR MY MOM WILL SHOOT

Sylvester Stallone. Once his name brought the Midas touch to any movie that carried it…until he tried comedy. After a string of comedy films that ranged from mediocre to utter cack, Sly (as us showbiz friends like to call him) gleefully took the opportunity to return to his money-spinning ways and shoot another all-action film. Cliffhanger was a massive success and Sly was happy. Sony was also happy – happy to grab the licence for an official game and more than happy to fill a CD version chock-full of FMV footage from the movie. Oh, and there's a game in there too. Allegedly.



CLIFF MITCHELMORE

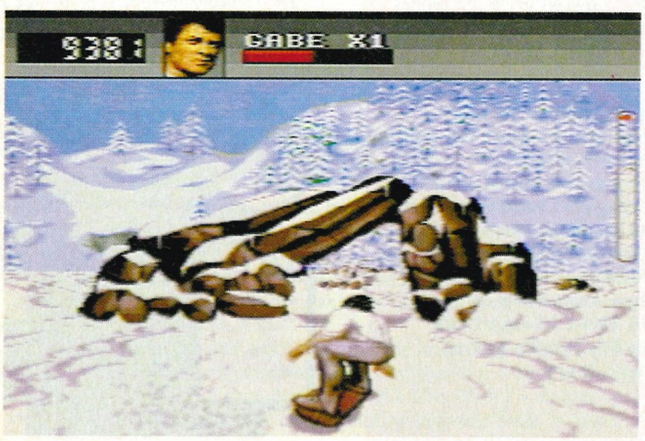
Gabe Walker was an experienced mountain rescuer until one fateful day when he unfortunately dropped a woman 3000 feet to an untimely death. Subsequently, his mountain rescuing days are over as far as he's concerned, so it's down to the log cabin at the bottom of the hill for a lifetime of drinking beer, smoking fags and looking hard.

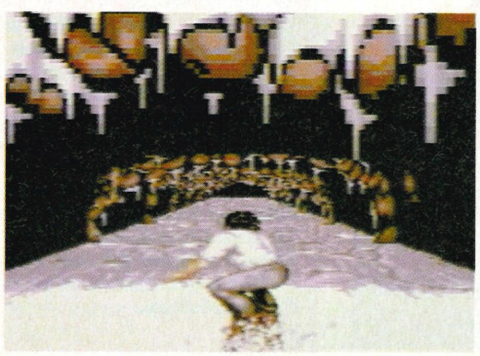
Meanwhile Qualen, a terrorist with a passion for all things 'terroristy', has vainly attempted to hijack a plane carrying $100 million. But would you credit it – some flamin' hero FBI agent has gone and spoilt it all for him by shooting Qualen's plane out of the sky and down into the Canadian Rocky Mountains where Gabe dwells, scattering three suitcases containing the money across the snowy terrain. To cut a long story short, Gabe ends up on the mountain rescuing Qualen, who promptly holds him at gunpoint and orders him to climb the mountain and get the money back.

(Right & Below) With the mountains in the distance, Gabe tackles the perilous icy path. Note the imaginative use of 'grey' along the score panel at the top of the screen. Lovely









MR FROST

This is where the game begins and what a thoroughly refreshing piece of software this game is. Or at least, what a refreshing piece of software one particularly long-winded section of this game is. Basically, all Cliffhanger amounts to is a very, very, bad scrolling beat'em-up, interspersed with a superb 3D race section in which Gabe (the player) must ride a snowboard across a snowy terrain. Those of us who have seen the film will know that Sylvester Stallone doesn't actually ride on a snowboard during the film, but when it becomes the only redeeming feature of an otherwise very bad game, you tend to allow for a little artistic licence.

ANGER CD





▲ **Well isn't that just typical? You climb 3000-odd feet to rescue some idiots trapped on a mountain wearing nothing but flip-flops and a towel and what happens? They send you looking for $10 million at gunpoint**

FANTASTIC FMV

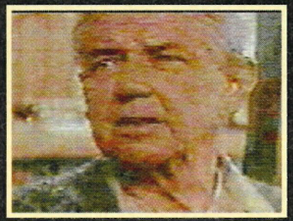
Cliffhanger is a visual treat as far as film footage is concerned. The first half hour of the movie is edited into a few minutes as the plot is explained. It is impressive, but it's a pity the rest of the game had to suffer because of it.













SNOW BUSINESS

Seven levels grace Cliffhanger, the majority of which feature a badly animated Gabe walking along beating the same blokes up over and over again. Of course, this isn't necessarily such a bad idea when you look back at successful series such as Streets of Rage. A very similar format was also undertaken by Batman Returns CD, in which an impressive 3D section dressed up an otherwise lifeless platform game, however Cliffhanger fails to live up to the standards set by either of these two games. The backdrops are especially dire during the scrolling sections and the sprites are so unconvincing and bland that an actual sleep-like state nearly overcame me as I played. However, should you manage to drag yourself through this lot, the 'meaty' part of the game follows.

The Mega-CD's 3D capabilities are finally being utilised as of late. Sonic CD, Thunderhawk and the amazing Mega Race are prime examples of what the Mega-CD can actually do with decent programming, and Cliffhanger is no exception to this trend. The snowboarding levels are viewed from behind Gabe as he wrestles for control of his very own Perspex sledge. Rocks, trees, tunnels and a huge chasing avalanche face the player who is now racing along at an incredible pace. The 3D update is smooth and realistic, scrolling the obstacles towards the player from all directions without any slowdown, regardless of how quickly Gabe is moving. As you would expect however, Sony has played on the 3D sections' impressiveness, resulting in some very long-winded and frustrating stages of constant dodging, jumping and using continues like they're going out of fashion.



▲ **Should you finally make it through a snowboard stage the view of Gabe changes as he sledges away, the camera panning away from him as he does. Very cinematic!**



▲ **Decent graphics let down by a substandard game**

HANG ON

Other than these impressive snowboarding sections, what are we left with? I'm sorry to say that there's not much else. Sound is (of course) 'very CD', with plenty of original soundtrack orchestra shoved onto the CD for your listening pleasure, but even this can't detract from Cliffhanger's many drawbacks. Dull, long-winded, bland, waste of CD space and pointless are words that immediately spring to mind. 'It', 'buy' and 'don't' are others.

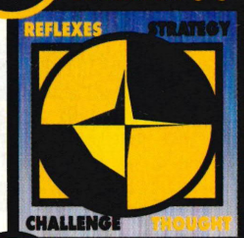
THE SECOND OPINION



'JAG'

Was the CD really designed for rather average scrolling beat'em-ups? Sony would seem to think so. Taking a film licence with the backing of a Hollywood blockbuster seems to be justification for a god awful game. Do they think throwing in a few grainy FMV sequences really improves the gameplay? Well it doesn't and this game is nothing more than insulting.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION — 80%
Lots of very spectacular film footage

GRAPHICS — 75%
Excellent 3D, but crap other bits!

SOUND — 79%
Film score tunes dumped on the disc. Very imaginative, I don't think

SHORT TERM PLAY — 70%
Be encouraged by the 3D graphics...

LONG TERM PLAY — 58%
...But be bored silly by the 3D graphics...and everything else

OVERALL — 49
Not a good game by any standards whatsoever. Avoid

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: EA

EA SPORTS ELECTRONIC ARTS

8-MEG

STYLE

SPORTS SIM

PRICE £44.99

PLAYERS 8

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

OUT NOW

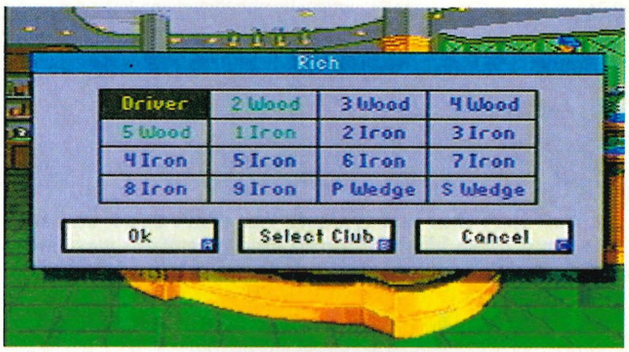


When a beautiful lady asked him if he wanted to play a round, Lloyd Howe thought she was talking about playing golf. And she was too. What a shame.

PGA EUROP

Golf has always struck me as being one of the most boring games of all time. Let's face it, watching a man bang a ball about with a stick isn't the most enthralling way of spending a Saturday afternoon, especially when you end up seeing some lucky git win more money than you are ever likely to earn in a lifetime.

Strangely enough computer golf sims are a completely different kettle of fish. Some people reckon that Leaderboard is the ultimate golf simulation on any computer format, but sadly the Mega Drive version was not much cop and the highly successful PGA Tour series stomped all over it.

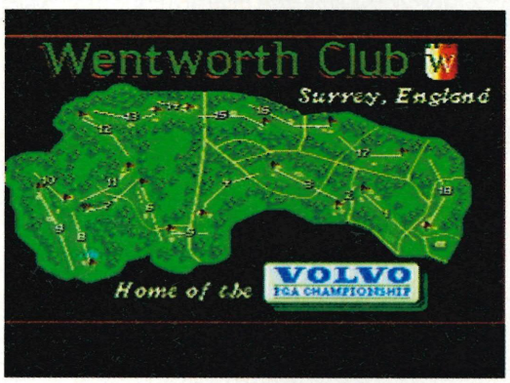


▲ **Before playing a round select which clubs you would like to play with**

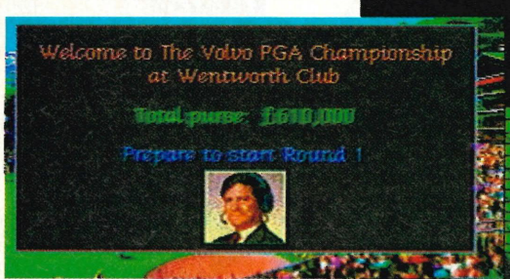
GREEN WITH ENVY

PGA Tour 2 scored a whopping 94 per cent back in MT 13 making it the best Mega Drive golf game ever. PGA European Tour includes all of the features of PGA 2 but has lots of new and exciting options as well, and is played over five completely new courses. As well as the usual tournament and practice modes there is a new shoot-out play mode as well as a match play option where you can win loads of money (not real moolah unfortunately).

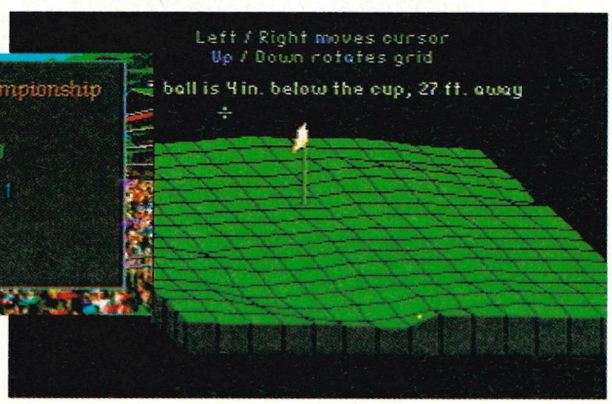
In the shoot-out game four players line up and play three separate holes. The player that took the most amount of shots on the first hole is eliminated, and so on, until only one player remains and prizes are awarded accordingly. Match play is another four-player game where four teams of two play three rounds of golf, the losing team being eliminated at the end of each round.



◀ **Good old Blighty, eh? There was me thinking that Volvos were made in Sweden**



▲ **For hitting a ball about a bit for a day or two you too could win 600 grand...and here I am writing this review! Sort of puts things into perspective, doesn't it. Lucky buggers**



▲ **When playing with your balls it is best to try and get a good lay**

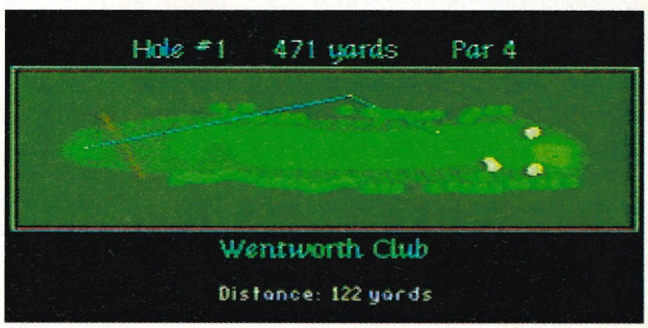
YOU WOULDN'T LET IT LIE!

As we all know, the whole point of golf is, put simply, to get the ball down the hole in as few shots as possible. To make the game more realistic all sorts of conditions and factors must be taken into consideration. At first it seems that the most important thing to try and overcome is the wind, which can blow the ball all over the place, but you soon learn how to shoot the ball into the wind with enough curve to perform more accurate shots.

What takes more practice though is learning how the lie of the ball and the surrounding terrain affects your shots. Masters will only ever get their ball on the fairway, on the green, or in the hole, but we mortals who aren't so good have to cope with other areas of the hole like the rough, or the fringe. Landing the ball in one of these areas will drastically affect the accuracy of your next shot and reduces the distance you can hit the ball. Land the ball in a bunker or in the water and you will have even more problems!

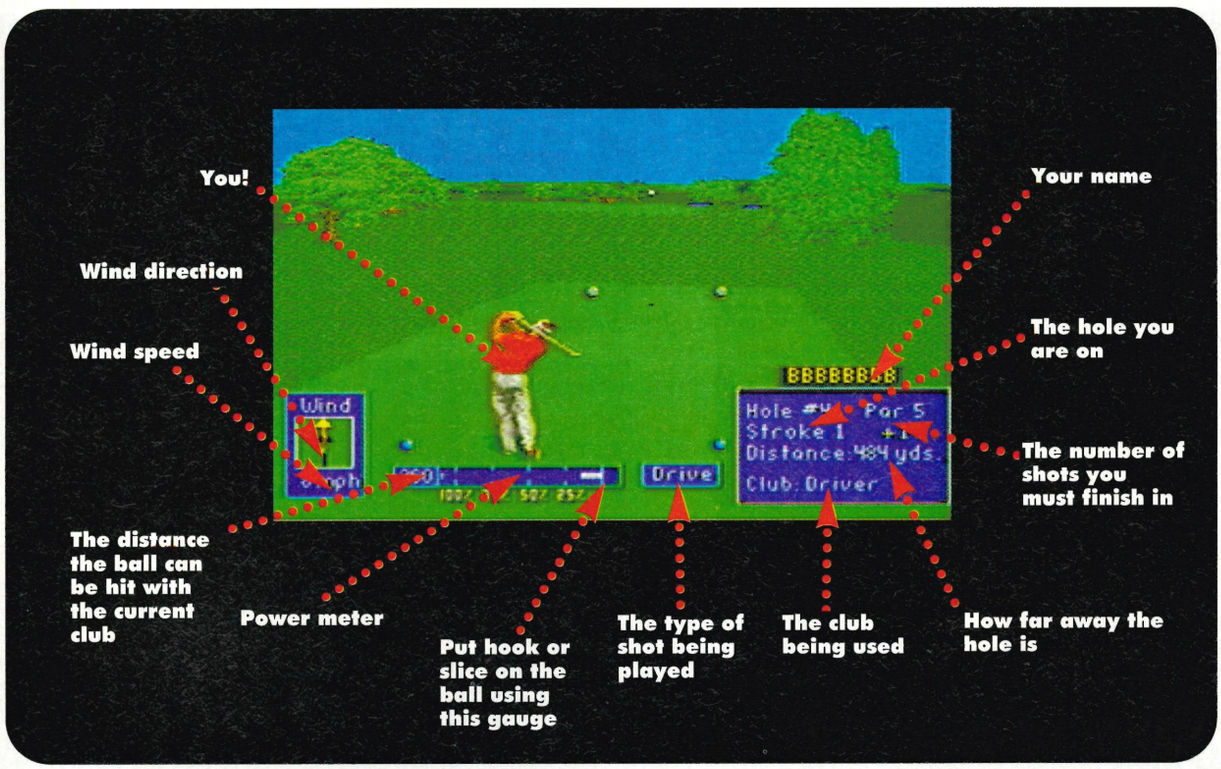


◀ **It's the fly-by camera. Use the joypad to move the camera about. Quite why you would want to do this is beyond me, but you can**



▲ **The overview shows the path that your ball has taken. Take a good look and you will see how totally crap I am at this game**

EAN TOUR GOLF



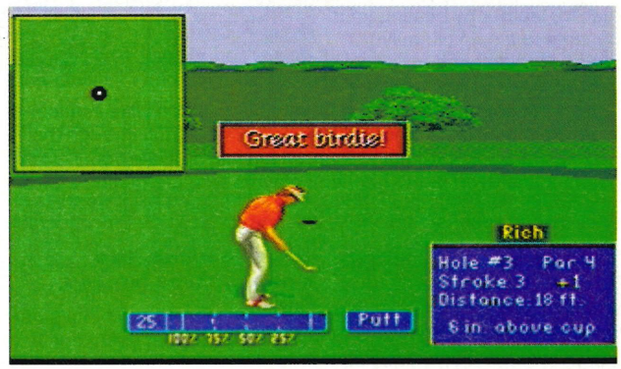
A HORSE IS A HORSE, A HORSE OF COURSE

The original PGA game had four courses and the follow-up had a grand total of seven. Now for some reason we seem to only have five courses again, but never mind because they are all based on courses located throughout Europe in the PGA Tour. Two of the courses are from England, and the others are from Spain, France and Switzerland.

Each course in the game was designed from the original ground plans and as such is about as faithful to the original plans as possible. At the start of each hole the course is displayed using a 'fly-by' camera, but in this version it is now possible to control the angle and position of the camera so that you can view the course from any desired position



◀ If ever you perform any outstanding shots an instant replay will be shown straight away



▲ Great stuff. The crowd goes wild. Obviously I'm not as bad at this game as I first thought

SO IS IT ANY GOOD OR WHAT?

Although Euro Tour is an improvement on the other two games it must be said that if you owned one of the series already you would be quite disappointed if you purchased this as well. The improvements aren't sufficient to warrant spending another £45 on. However, if you don't own a PGA game and you are interested in golf simulations then you can't go wrong with this.

THE SECOND OPINION



THAT "JAG" MAN

Lloyd makes some very interesting and valid comments, however I have to disagree with him on more than one topic. To receive full enjoyment from this game I think you must at least have more than a little patience and above all have at least a passing interest in golf. I do not confess to being a golf fanatic and subsequently I found myself yawning slightly after a few hours play. This, by no means should be taken as a slur on the game but the subject matter is hardly inspiring is it? EA has obviously done its homework but I just can't raise any enthusiasm for PGA Euro Tour. Sorry chaps. Now where's my copy of FIFA...

HYPER! HYPER GAME AWARD

ALTERNATIVELY



As golf games go there are three choices: either one of the PGA series, Leaderboard or Jack Nicklaus but none of them are as good as this.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION 73%
It looks a bit too green for my liking

GRAPHICS 79%
The course is generated using polygons but they move a bit jerkily

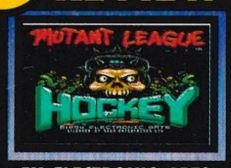
SOUND 70%
Spot FX mainly but there are some tunes thrown in for good measure

SHORT TERM PLAY 68%
The control system takes a lot of getting used to

LONG TERM PLAY 84%
There are five courses and lots of multi-player events to master

OVERALL 90
This is the best golf game on the Mega Drive to date and you can quote me on that

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS

ELECTRONIC ARTS

16 MEG

STYLE

SPORT

PRICE £44.99

PLAYERS 4

SKILL SETTINGS 5

RELEASE DATE

MAR '94





On a bad day ALLIE WEST could be mistaken for one of EA's mutants, and therefore would feel quite at home playing Mutant League Hockey. Today is a bad day...

MUTANT

I remember the first time I saw Mutant League Football, all I could think was "What the hell is this? How dare EA sacrilege the mighty game of American football!". However, after I had played it for a while I soon realised that the exciting essence of the game remained intact despite all the mutilations, growling and blood! Mutant League Hockey is in exactly the same vein as its footy cousin, and where ML Football used the Madden game engine ML Hockey utilises the same engine seen in EA's NHLPA. However, I'm not really a hockey fan so the bizarre alterations do not offend – this time!



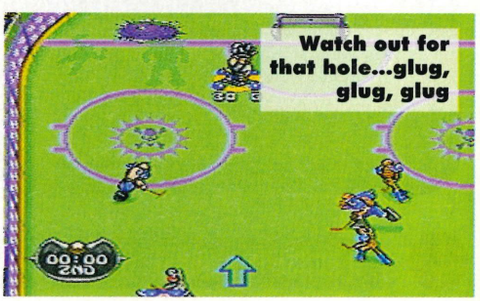
Did somebody sneeze or is there really that much green in the game?!

TOXIC AVENGER

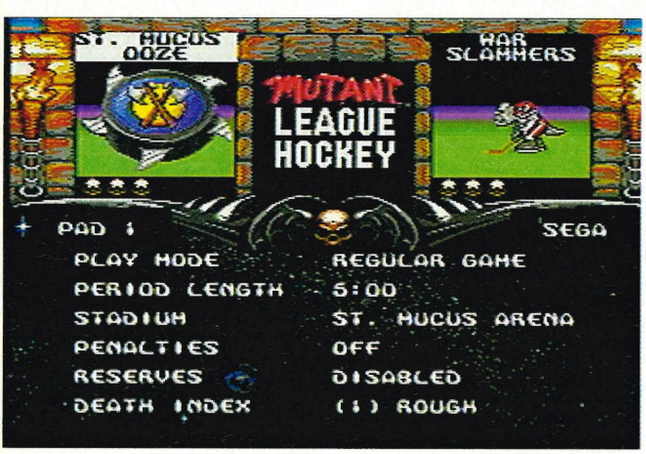
Basically Mutant League Hockey is your average ice hockey sim with one major difference – the players. This game is riddled with some of the most grotesque characters in Pixeldom and, like Mutant League Football, features more than its fair share of blood, guts and black humour. People have said that ice hockey is quite a ferocious game anyway, with boxing bouts on the ice and the odd annihilation of the ref, but you haven't seen anything until you've played this game.

The idea of the game is simply to play hockey, but you also get the opportunity to really go hell for leather by beating your opponents to a pulp (literally!), breaking the odd bone (or all of them if you've had a particularly bad day) and gorging something's eye out if you don't like its face! You can also pick up weapons, kill or bribe the ref, fall through the ice, avoid shark fins protruding through the ice, mutilate your opponents and even fart to get rid of players who are getting a trifle too close!









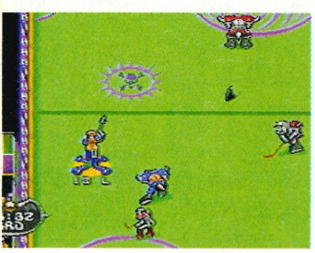
One banana, two banana, three banana, four...

Hoorah, we won! We won! What a miracle!

TWO HEADS, THREE ARMS AND A LIMP

The graphics are incredibly stylised, with some really detailed intermittent screens such as the end-of-quarter screen. The sprites and images used to represent the refs and coaches are quite superb, as well as being incredibly comical. You really do feel like your Mega Drive is getting a run for its money with every colour available from its palette being utilised to the full. Like its football predecessor you again have a wide variety of gruesome geeks in your team, each one illustrated cleanly and, surprisingly, differing from one another.

The biggest downer is the size of the on-ice sprites. Having previously compared this game to NHLPA this is where ML Hockey deviates, with the sprites appearing a little too small and blocky. Then there's the puck, or should I say 'Where's the puck?'. Is this is a joke? I know there's a lot to cram on to the screen but did the programmers really have to make the puck so insignificant – correct me if I'm wrong, but doesn't the puck play an important part in the game of ice hockey? Also, one thing that I did notice when playing this game is the inordinate amount of green in the overall image – the ice, the monsters, the slime and there are probably some bogeys in there somewhere too!





Computer dating the EA way

LEAGUE HOCKEY

IS THIS YOUR EYEBALL?

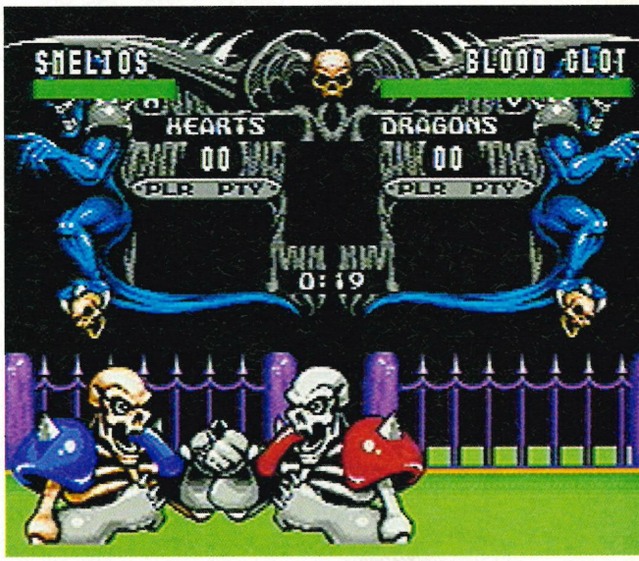
There are 20 teams to choose from, each with varying player skills and its own coach who has a unique way to incite enthusiasm in his players (usually threatening to rip their limbs off if they don't win!). At first this is fun, but as you can imagine the gutter humour soon gets a little tedious. The gameplay follows in a similar vein with the blood, guts and exaggerated violence factor getting in the way of simply playing hockey – you sure wouldn't see this type of behaviour from Brett Hull or Wayne Gretzky!

Luckily some real tactics and strategy remain in the game. You can alternate between your team players and as well as using weapons you can also barge and tackle the opposition or play various stylised shots. The goal-mouth can be changed into a 'real' character which likes eating the pucks, players can get sent off and sent to the Graveyard, you can bribe the ref or you can get in to a scrap with an opposing player in a one-on-one fisticuffs bout. Sadly though, the fact remains that all this cosmetic glitz gets in the way of the real game.

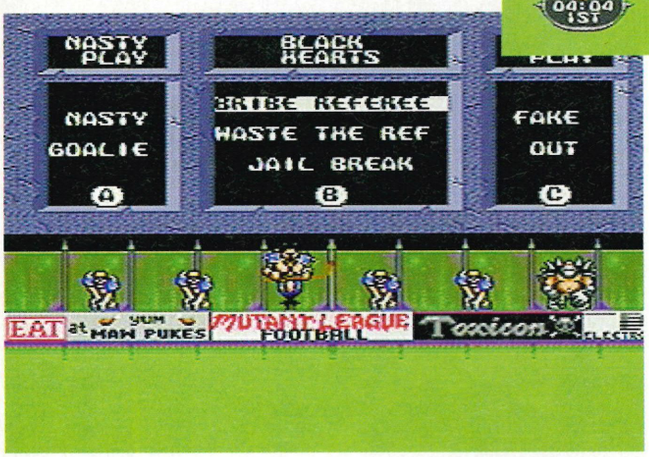


I'm sorry dad, I promise I'll never do it again





Ouch! Look at that puck – it's no wonder the players end up as a pile of bones!

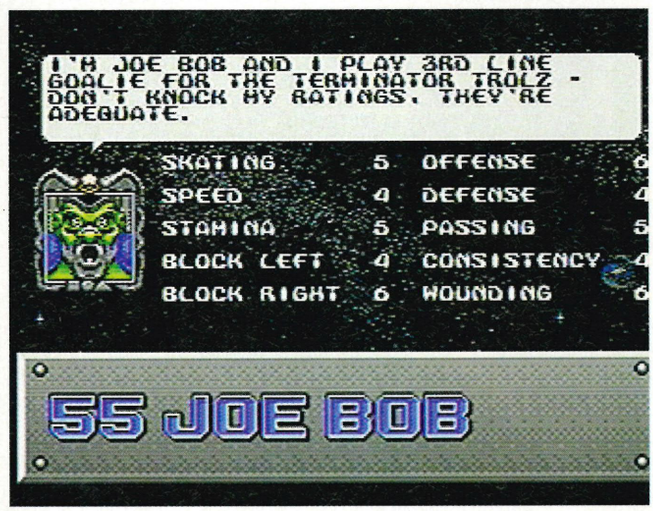


Now who should I kill today? Ah, I know...the ref

EH, CALM DOWN OH!

The main problem we found with this game is that although it runs incredibly fast and appears very impressive, it is actually too fast for your eyes to keep up with. With the players being so small and the puck practically non-existent, it is so hard to focus that after a while everything simply fades in to a blur – the speed at which the puck moves even challenges Linford Christie's 100-metre sprint record!

We wouldn't recommend this game to die-hard ice hockey fans. Although you do get a ref and are restricted by rules such as icing, there really isn't that much of a strategic element within the game. The emphasis in this game is obviously on fun, but playing against the computer soon becomes tiresome with the players making the same old, tired manoeuvres. Even the five difficulty (or 'gore') settings rarely fail to offer any real challenge in the long run.



Hello, my name's Joe and I like knitting, pretty pooches and maiming my team-mates...

THE SECOND OPINION



JAG

As an ice hockey game this really isn't very impressive. With the likes of NHLPA around it falls far short as a real sim. However, as a less serious hockey game it tries very hard to impress and does so in some ways. As a single-player game this isn't really worth the cash – I finished the game on my first go, albeit not with the weakest team. The multi-player options are the only way to play this game and are quite enjoyable. Some of the gory touches are excellent, as is the presentation throughout. The scrolling is very fast, although at times it makes it very difficult to spot the puck, as do the very complicated sprites. If you want a fun hockey game then by all means buy this game – it is enjoyable only with friends though, and hockey purists should look elsewhere for their thrills.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 80%
Lots of out-of-game option and menu screens. All fits together well

GRAPHICS 83%
Detailed intermittent screens with comical character animation

SOUND 64%
Nice grunts and groans, but pretty average rock-style soundtrack

SHORT TERM PLAY 81%
Easy to get into, but the control system isn't as user-friendly as NHLPA

LONG TERM PLAY 80%
The tournament roster and five brutality settings add to the entertainment

OVERALL 78
Great fun to play, especially with more than one person, but not recommended for fanatical ice hockey fans

YOUR WORST KNIGHTMARE!



Broadsword Television is currently planning a new series of the computer generated adventure Knightmare. The new series is to be filmed in July and Broadsword is currently looking for new hopefuls to enter the Knightmare catacombs and take on the might and magic of Treguard.

To celebrate the new series, Broadsword is offering five lucky gamers the chance to win a super goodie bag each packed with a blood-red Frightnight sweatshirt, a Knightmare mini Frisbee, a puzzle, the acclaimed Knightmare board-game, stickers and a badge.

Broadsword is also looking for contestants to compete in both Knightmare and a brand-new series called Virtually Impossible – a virtual reality TV game where the contestants are "suspended within a VR experience as a hostile world of computer games becomes a gruelling obstacle course"! See the box on the right for more details.

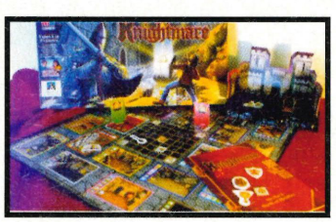
To enter the competition all you have to do is tell us which TV channel Knightmare was screened on. Was it:

A: BBC

B: ITV

C: Channel 4

The closing date for the compo is 31st March '94 and all entries must be on a postcard or the back of a sealed-down envelope.



BROADSWORD

If you want to be considered as a contestant for the new TV programmes you must be over 11 years old and under 16 and have three friends of the same age to make up a challenge team. For an application form send an SAE to:

TV Games, Broadsword Television, Anglia House, Norwich, NR1 3JG.

Remember though – filming starts in July so if you want to stand a chance at getting a place you'll have to write in soon!





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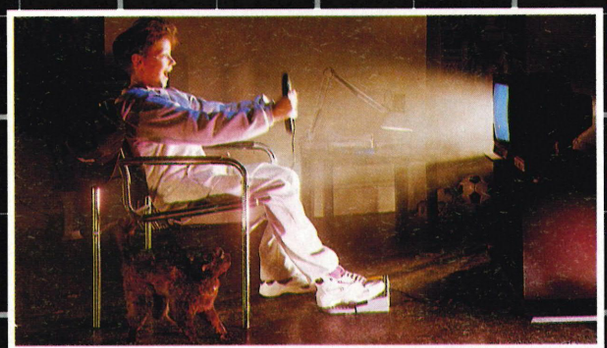
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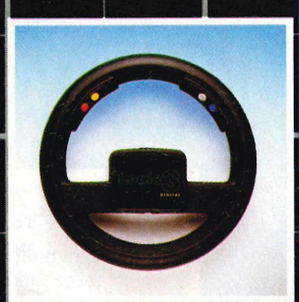
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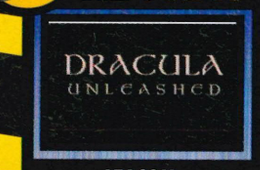
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MEGA-CD REVIEW



VIACOM





STYLE



ADVENTURE

PRICE £44.99

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

IMPORT IMPORT



Ahh, the creatures of the night. What sweet music they make. Unless LLOYD HOWE is about of course, making his usual inane racket. Oh dear...

DRACULA

Ancient legends tell of Vlad the Impaler, aka Count Dracula, lording it about in Transylvania, sucking blood from innocent young virgins and turning them into the living dead. Francis Ford Coppola's recent film is supposedly the most accurate translation of Bram Stoker's original book, but sadly many people, including myself, thought it was a bit of a disappointment. Bring back Christopher Lee, that's what I say.

Anyway, I digress. We all know about how Vlad came over to Whitby and fell in love with the fair Mina, who at the time was the girlfriend of a certain Jonathan Harker and how Van Helsing sorted him out good and proper by giving him a very big splinter in the chest.

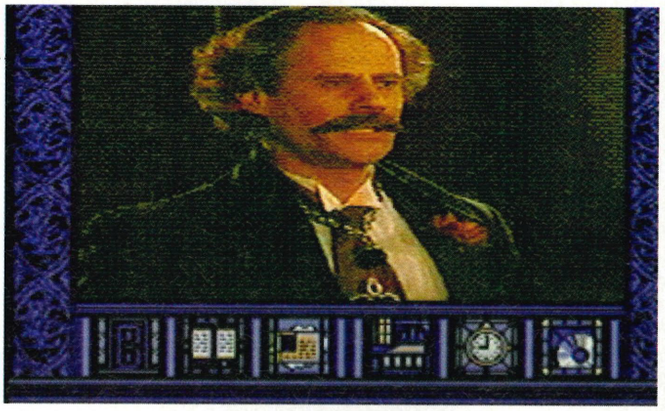
Years after these events Quincey Morris, your character's brother, mysteriously died and sparked off a whole new series of strange events.

EVERLASTING LUST

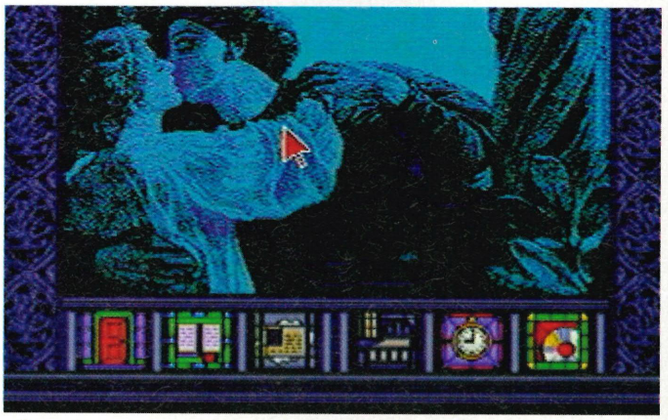
Dracula Unleashed is set many years after the incidents in the film/book took place. Jonathan has now married Mina and settled down and he owns his own law firm.

Sadly Winona Ryder no longer plays the part of Mina, Dr Van Helsing has moved over to Amsterdam and is probably checking out night creatures of a different sort. Dr Seward is still in charge of the loony bin looking after an even crazier Renfield, who actually died in the film, but what's a few facts between friends? Arthur Holmwood and Quincey were both good friends of Jonathan and were pretty close to the beautiful Lucy before Dracula borrowed a few pints from her.

All of these characters are in the game, along with some new ones, and because nearly all of them fought Dracula originally none of them want to admit that it might actually be happening again. This is the main reason why everyone is keeping stum and refusing to help you find out what happened to your brother.



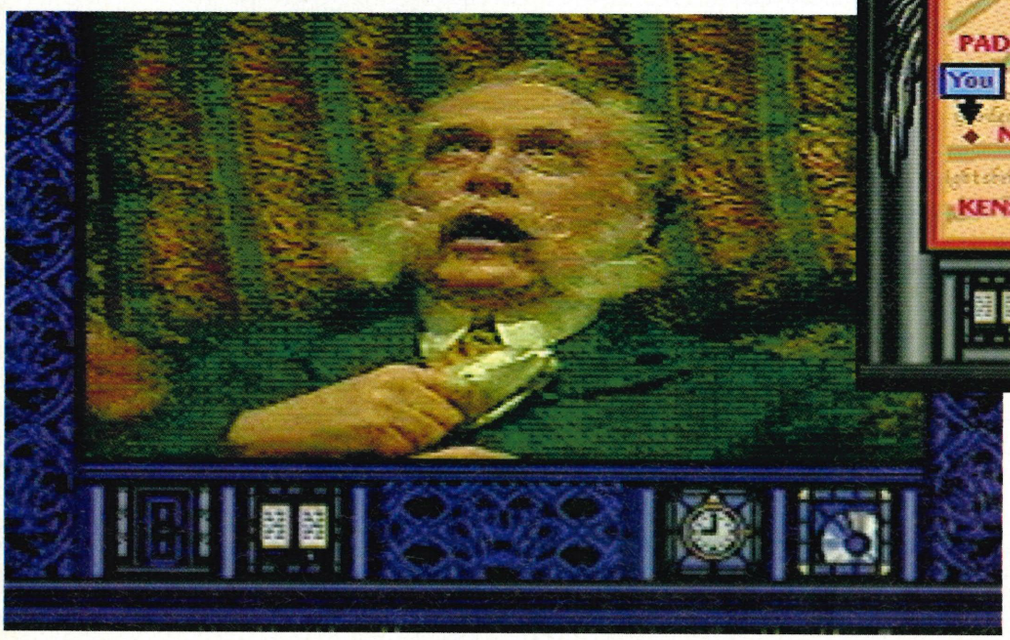
▲ **Help me! A vampire slug has attached itself to my face**



▲ **Oo-er! What's all this? We can't have this sort of thing in a decent family magazine. Mind you, this isn't a decent family magazine so it's all right**



▲ **Fair old London town. Use this screen to work out distances between two points**



◀ **One of the first suspicious events is the death of this old geezer. What significance is the piece of cloth that he is holding? Do we care? I think not**

UNLEASHED



YOU ARE OFFAL — BUT I LICK YOU...

Seeing as this is a game based on one of the most evil characters in history it is obvious that it isn't going to be all sweetness and light. Vampires aren't very nice and have a habit of sucking blood out of various parts of the body. These are a few shots of some of the nastier scenes in the game



Go to sleep at night and you might have nightmares. .or are they real?



The woman you dreamt about has a nasty habit of turning into a ferocious wolf and ripping you to pieces. You should see someone about that, darling



My, what large teeth you have. To most she's a nightmare but to orthodontist s she's a dream come true



Game over. See that grave? That's yours that is



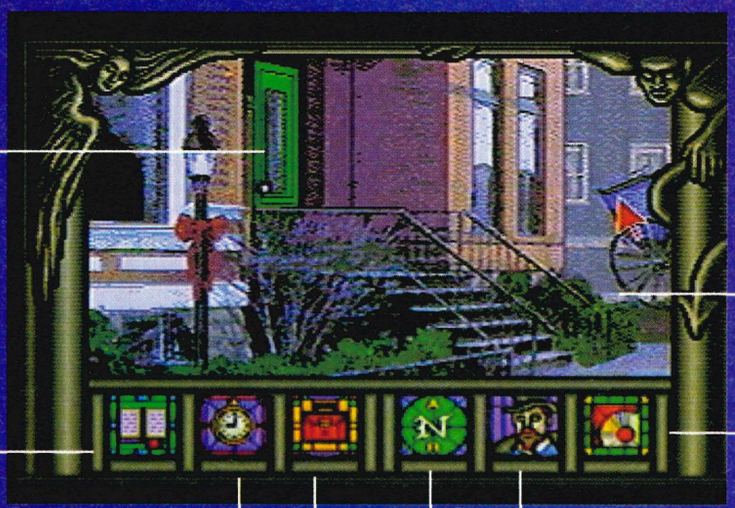
Don't hang around at night in graveyards, my mum always told me, and this is the reason why – your hair might go all funny like this

BLOOD IS LIFE

The game starts off in Notting Hill of all places, with you at the side of your brother's grave. No one is quite sure how he died, and then your top mates, the Holmwoods, find that their driver has been drained of blood and then decapitated. "It's an 'orrible business" exclaims a typical Cockney policeman in a badly acted FMV scene.

So, the case is afoot and no one else is around to find out what is going on. In a blatant plug for another similar game you even find out that the consulting detective, Sherlock Holmes, has retired and is probably living in Mablethorpe drinking Ovaltine or something with his good over-friendly chum, Dr Watson. The only person that can save the day is you, Alexander Morris, armed only with your trusty journal and over-large satchel.

WHAT NOW DR VAN HELSING



The doorways. Select the doorway to enter the house. Make sure you are carrying any relevant objects first

The carriage. Gentlemen shouldn't walk the streets which is why your only form of transport is this horse-drawn carriage

The Journal. This is the most important item in the game. After witnessing events turn straight to it and make a note of what you saw

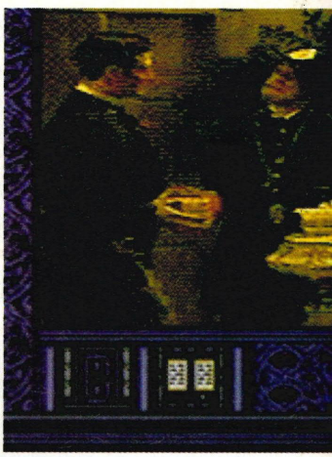
Options Icon. From here it is possible to load and save games, and adjust any other of the options

Van Helsing. The kind doctor explains the icons for you

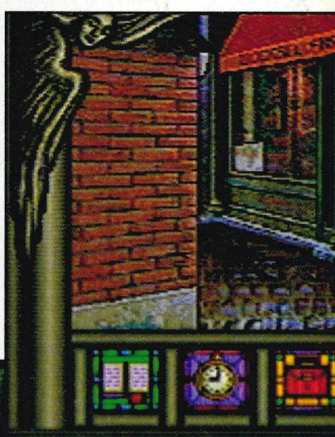
The clock. Time is of the essence. Use the clock to make sure that you arrive at any appointments on time or else you will lose the game

The satchel. Any items that you are given in the FMV sequences are automatically placed in your inventory

The map. Selecting this icon brings up a map of London. Use the map to find out how much time it takes to travel between two points



Ho ho! The game is afoot as you find your first clue – the address of Mister Jonathan Harker, ex-lawyer to the prince of darkness





In the loony bin things aren't going too well. This poor bloke is about to receive a nasty blow to the head

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

Dracula Unleashed is the closest thing we have seen to an interactive movie on the Mega-CD to date. All of the action is played out using FMV sequences, strung together by very poor-looking static screens. The game is set across 13 different locations which you can travel to at any time you want using the carriages that are (curiously) always parked nearby. By travelling between these locations and talking to anyone who is there it is possible to unearth many clues as to what is going on.

The main problem in the game, apart from blood sucking monsters, is the clock that is always ticking. Events happen at certain locations at specific times, and if you are too slow then you will miss vital clues, and you might even be too late to save your loved ones from a miserable death. If, by the end of the first day, your girlfriend doesn't have a certain pendant around her neck then you'd better start using that garlic deodorant because she'll be out after your blood – literally.

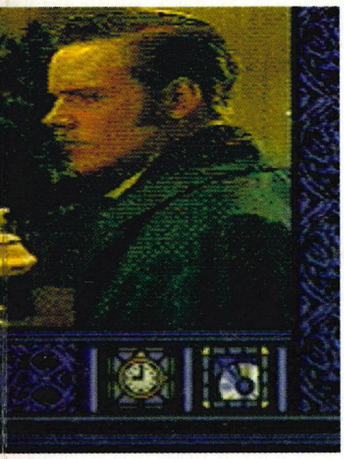
The other thing to bear in mind is that if it is two o'clock people don't take kindly to people knocking on their front doors. The obvious thing to do at this time is to go home and go to sleep, but each night you have a horrible nightmare and can't get back to sleep again so you end up hanging around at three in the morning waiting for something to do.

THREE THINGS YOU WO



The Hades Club indeed. Sounds a very suspicious place...I think a trip there is the order of the day





LOOK AT ME, LOOK AT ME, NOW

After visiting each location it is vital to make notes in the journal. Thankfully you don't have to enter any text yourself as any vital clues and addresses will be noted automatically.

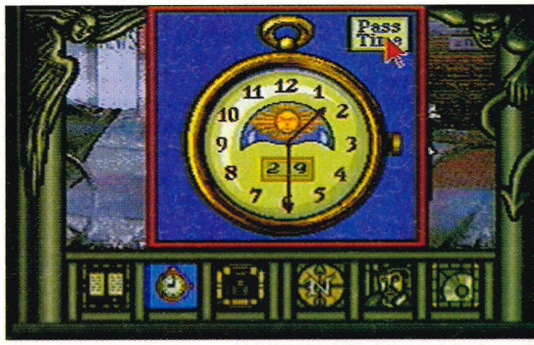
Sometimes in the FMV scenes a character gives Alex an object which appears in his satchel and you can examine them at your own leisure. By clicking on an item it is possible to place it in Alex's hand so that he can use it in the next location he enters. Careful thought about which item to have in his hand could drastically alter the outcome of the game. For example, by going into the telegraph office with a business card in your hand you can wire a message to the appropriate person.



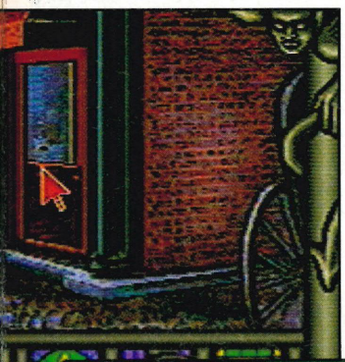
LIFE ETERNAL

The main problem with so-called interactive movies is that there isn't much interaction – this game is no different. After examining all the objects you are carrying at the start of the game it becomes obvious that you must make a trip to see your girlfriend, Anissette. After visiting her the only thing to do is call on your mates, messrs Harker and Holmwood who will give you the odd clue and maybe even a new address. Then you go there, get another address or make an appointment to see someone else at another time. All you ever seem to do is move between locations and watch what is going on. You don't even have to watch the FMV sequences because you can cancel them and then look at the notes made in your journal.

It's not exactly brain taxing stuff and most of the time it's not very interesting either. It doesn't help that the FMV scenes are worse than usual quality-wise and that some of the acting is appalling. One of the characters has even got a ridiculously stupid false moustache that wobbles around horrendously as he overacts his scenes. The main concept behind Dracula Unleashed is a very good one, but it could have been done much better. With good actors and some puzzles to solve this would have been great, but as it stands it is very shallow and dull.



▼ **The bookstore could prove to be a mine of information, but why is the owner so concerned when you cut your finger?**





THE SECOND OPINION

ANTONY LEA

The Carmina Burana music at the beginning makes you think a good game is on the way but this notion soon falls through. All the FMV sequences are terrible, with very badly chosen colour in large blocks, and awful acting. The quality of the speech though is good. The game itself is more of a trial and error thing, and you don't actually have to watch any of the FMV at all, because anything important is written in your diary and address book by a simple button press. The game from then on is a case of simply visiting each location at the right time of day, carrying the right object and trying not to be killed by Dracula's minions. A nice idea for a game, but the story is far too linear and the graphics aren't up to much.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 84%
No intro but Carmina Burana is played during the credits giving a moody feel

GRAPHICS 77%
There are 140 FMV scenes but they look terrible

SOUND 92%
CD quality sound. The speech is good but the actors aren't!

SHORT TERM PLAY 80%
At first this is quite involving and you want to see what is next

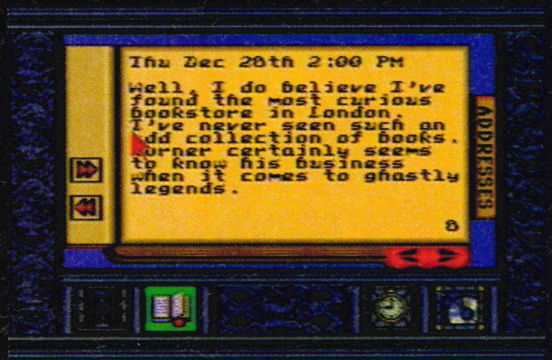
LONG TERM PLAY 54%
It soon becomes very boring and repetitive

OVERALL 62
A novel attempt but sadly lacking in excitement and gameplay. Quite disappointing

...LD BE SEEN DEAD WITHOUT

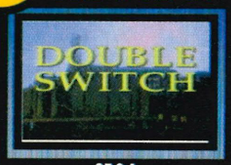


◀ **Any objects found get put straight in here. Stick an item in the hand to use it when you go into the next location**



◀ **Your most important possession is the journal. Write down any clues you find for future reference**

MEGA-CD REVIEW



SEGA



16 MEG

STYLE

INTERACTIVE ADV

PRICE TBA

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

IMP ORT



After all the fuss over Night Trap, ie the sex and violence controversy, who else could review the follow-up game other than Lloyd?! Such a shame there's no sex or violence in this one....DOH!

DOUBLE

Night Trap caused a massive fiasco when it came out. All the newspapers got excited saying that FMV games would corrupt the innocent and that people who liked playing games were shady drug dealers whose sole mission in life was to destroy society as we know it. All that fuss over a game that happened to have a scene in which a woman was standing in front of a mirror in the bathroom when some blokes in black suits burst in and kidnapped her. Wow – how depraved can you get?!

Why am I going on about this though? The answer is simple – Double Switch is the latest interactive CD game and bears an uncanny similarity to the game that struck fear into the hearts of many parents. The only difference is that this time there is no controversial stuff whatsoever.



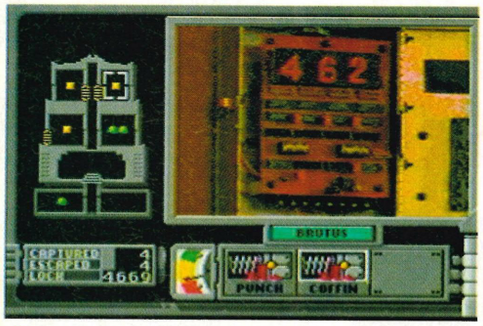
▲ Make sure that no one escapes, like this guy has. Oh dear...

ATOMIC

All of the action takes place in The Edward Arms, which has been run by the Edwards family for hundreds of years. It became run down until one of the family, Eddie (not the skier), decided to do the place up and protect it from burglars by installing hundreds of traps in all of the rooms. Legend has it that there is gold hidden somewhere in the building, and what's more it seems that an ancient Egyptian statue has disappeared from its resting place. All this can only mean one thing – trouble!



▶ When one of the bad guys gets into the basement, drop him through a hole in the floor or he'll put your lights out... permanently



▲ Eddie Edwards, who is played by Corey Haim from the Lost Boys, is stuck in the basement. Find the codes to get him out







◀ Some of the traps are pretty spectacular, as you can see here



▲ Debbie Harry puts in an appearance as a Cleopatra look-alike

IN THE FLESH

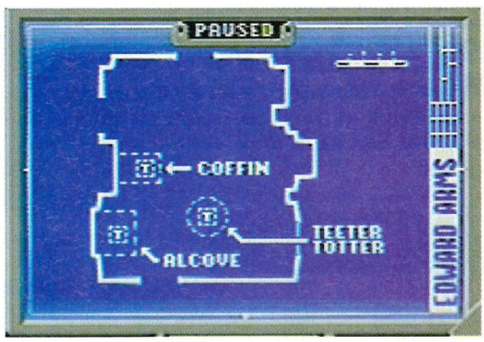
The whole game is viewed through cameras as in Ground Zero Texas, and by changing cameras it is possible to look in on action happening in any area of the hotel. At the start of the game Eddie is locked in the basement and he wants you to find the code to get him out. The code consists of four numbers, each of which is located somewhere in the apartments above. The problem is you are only a passive viewer and can't explore the building yourself, so someone has to do it for you.

SWITCH



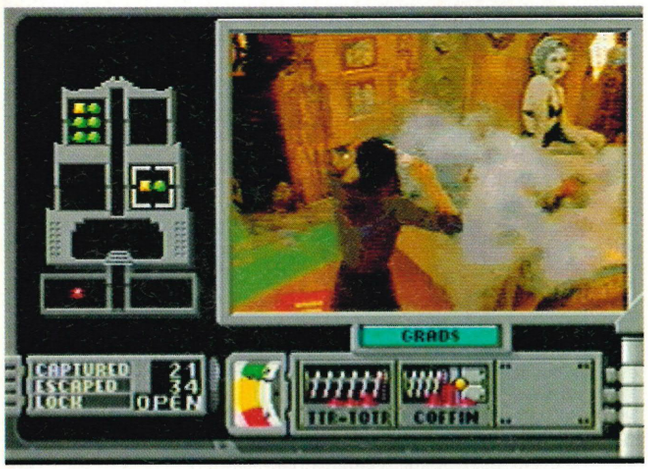
RAPTURE

After Eddie has finished talking, the burglar alarm will go off in one of the rooms. Someone is breaking in! Highlight the room on the hotel map and look in at what is happening. A gangster will walk in and pester Alex, a blonde but dim journalist out for a story. When the gangster is in a certain position it is possible to activate one of the two traps in the room. Get it right and he will be captured, but get it wrong and he escapes. For the traps to work the victim must be in exactly the right place, but this isn't very hard because these spots are clearly marked on the floor. Wait until the person steps on the appropriate square and BAM!, a trapdoor opens up beneath them and they have been captured.



FRENCH HISSING IN THE USA

As if this wasn't bad enough, gangsters are breaking in left, right and centre and have to be captured before they attack the residents. The scanner on the left of the screen shows a plan of the hotel, with green dots representing tenants. Yellow dots mean that an outsider is there, be they good or evil, and a red dot means trouble. When lots of dots appear you must decide which room is the most important to protect, bearing in mind that if an intruder cuts the phone lines or the power in the basement then it's game over.



▲ **Oops...it is possible to capture innocent people as well. DON'T DO IT AGAIN**

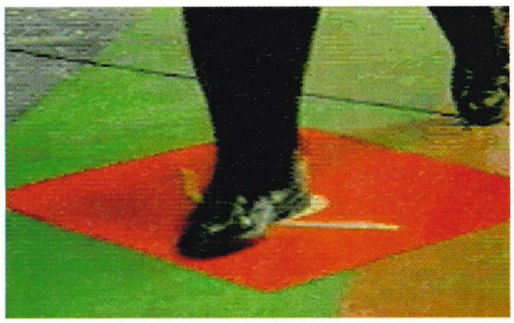
▼ **These Egyptian guys are after a sacred statue and will stop at nothing to get it**



HEART OF GLASS

The problem with Double Switch is that it is just too repetitive. All you do is switch camera views, charge up the traps and then set them off. Some of the traps are actually quite ingenious but you don't have time to watch the intruder get captured because by the time you have set the trap off it is time to move to another room. Sometimes the game ends unfairly due to too much going on or because you made a wrong decision regarding which room to go to. On the whole this is yet another disappointing CD game that is all mouth and no trousers.







THE SECOND OPINION

ANTONY LEA

Double Switch is quite entertaining to begin with, but the basic flaw lies in the fact that you can't possibly be in the right place at the right time unless you play the game over and over again. This means that to finish the game you WILL have to play it repeatedly for a long time, which is not a fun prospect. The FMV is fine and the acting in this game is better than previous Digital Images' outings, but the gameplay is boring. Like Night Trap before it, watching traps go off is amusing until you've done it 25 times, then you simply want to give it up in frustration. Yet again, a Mega-CD game that looks good, but has sod all gameplay and is annoyingly difficult.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 78%
Lots of out-of-game option and menu screens. All fits together well

GRAPHICS 85%
A slick-looking game but sadly there are no difficulty options

SOUND 91%
What can I say? Speech and music straight from CD

SHORT TERM PLAY 84%
Watching all the traps go off is quite fun

LONG TERM PLAY 63%
Watching the traps go off again and again gets tiresome

OVERALL 74
Good graphics and sound but not much on the gameplay front. Thankfully it is better than it could have been though

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS

EA SPORTS

16-MEG

STYLE

SPORTS SIM

PRICE £49.99

PLAYERS 1/4

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

MAR 94



Julian Connolly probably wouldn't look too good in a vest and shorts, even if they were purple. Fortunately all he has to do is review this game, not take part.

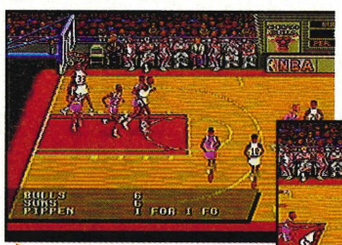
NBA SHOW

Electronic Arts has been knocking out variations on the basketball theme on a regular basis for some time now. This one boasts a new game engine and a whole raft of new stats, new options and special signature moves. It may not be such a great improvement.

PAST SUCCESS

EA has had a reasonably good track record when it comes to basketball games. The game engine it has used for the past couple of years in games based on the NBA play-offs, has seen a few tweaks over the years but basically it has remained the same playable, fun game.

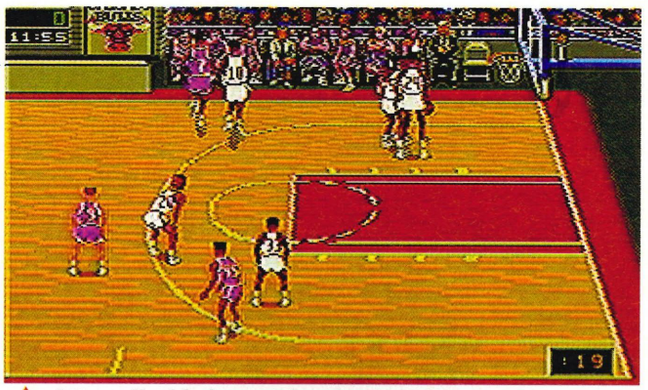
Something has gone a bit wrong with this one though. Nothing seriously wrong in any one aspect of the gameplay but little things all over the place that combine to make you come away from NBA Showdown with an overwhelming sense of annoyance.



Look at that irresponsible devil. What did they teach him in school?



Wa-hey! Look who it is boys and girls, it's Mr Interesting Grab!!

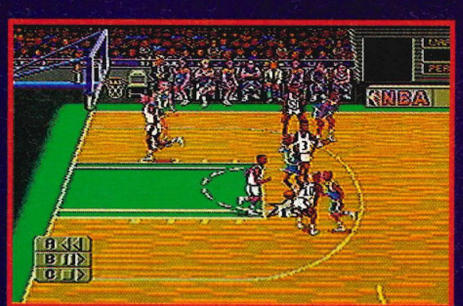


OK, well, this is a typical basketball game

DEFENSIVELY SPEAKING

On the pitch you control one of the five players at any time, either the one with the ball or the one nearest the attacking player when you are on the defensive. While defending you can switch between other players in defence and try and keep an eye on what's going on. It's while defending that you notice one of the most annoying failures in the game. The defence needs to work fast because basketball is very fast-moving game, but in NBA Showdown the defence is inadequate when left to their own devices. You can change the plays, change their assignations, do whatever you want, but when it comes down to it they can't be left alone.

Before long you'll find yourself frantically pressing the button to switch between players and trying to move each of them to somewhere more useful. Naturally because of the pressure you'll probably make a mistake and move the wrong guy, or jump to block a shot too early or worst of all commit a foul because you thought you were somewhere else on the pitch.



Our man begins by spots a hole opening up in the defence...



The ball magically begins to float above his head...



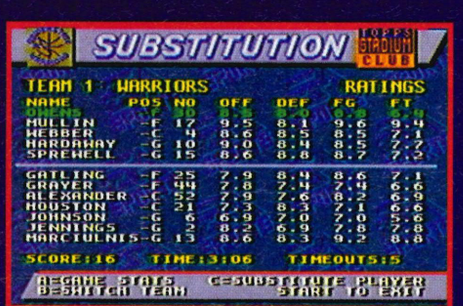
Luckily, our man retrieves it from its ghostly state and shoots...



Up he goes and it's looking good (my god this is wearing thin)



It's there, naturally. Well I'd hardly use one where he missed, would I?



But I substituted him anyway. Ha ha! Power!

DOWN



HE SHOOTS, HE MISSES

Another problem in defence is caused by the inability to see who has got the ball or where the hell they are when more than six players crowd the area around the net. If you try and jump to catch a rebound unaware that you've got the ball, you'll probably try and jump again. Fair enough, but if you do have the ball, pressing the jump button actually shoots so you'll waste a perfectly good chance to attack by accidentally attempting to score from your own end of the court. From this distance it is very rare that you score. A perfectly good chance is blown purely because you couldn't see what the hell was going on.

The problems in defence are only one example of the problems caused by the graphics. I think the area covered by the screen is too big, meaning the players are too small to distinguish from one another when they get into a group. Similar things can happen in offence when the auto-pass (you always pass to the player nearest the hoop unless you specify a direction) gives the ball to a player you were only half aware of, and before you know it you've taken him out of bounds because you thought you were going to be controlling someone else.



I just died of excitement



A foul is committed, and the smell's too much for the ref

THE SECOND OPINION

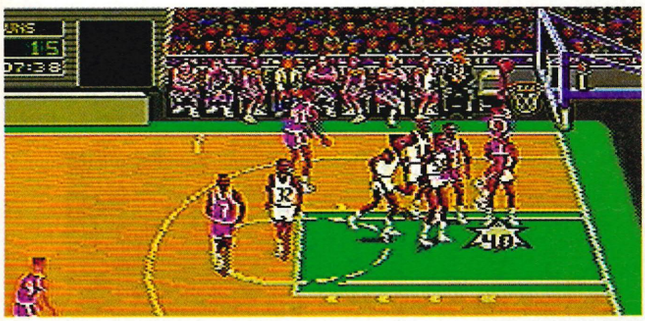


JAG

I'm truly dismayed that Electronic Arts is planning on releasing this game. For a company of such standing which has constantly produced such superb software, NBA Showdown and all its glaring faults came as a complete and utter shock. I don't agree with Julian's comments on the animation – in my opinion the gangly, blocky sprites move almost as bad as they're drawn. I can't fault the usual vast array of options available r the superb way in which the product is presented, but I'm afraid that someone somewhere just forgot to add a game to the end product. Frustrating, confusing, annoying and most of all unplayable – what a shocker from EA.



The free throw. In case you hadn't guessed



Another fabulous piece of action from a basketball game. Much more of this may induce death

WHAT'S GOING ON?

When you look at each player in isolation a good job has been done with the graphics – each player is well animated and some of the signature moves are a joy to witness, if there aren't too many players in the way. When there are 10 tall black sprites moving around the pitch however, it becomes too difficult to stay in effective control.

Yes, each player is always highlighted when you are in control by a star or circle around his feet, but if someone stands in front of him, he will obscure part of the star. If this someone becomes three, again we have a situation where too many players equals no bloody idea what's what and who's who.



It's the thrilling defensive matchups screen with a star-studded line-up



A farting competition breaks out to the delight of the crowd



More of the usual interruptions from Mr Egg, the referee with a difference – he's got no legs!

TEAM FOULS

With each player in the NBA having their own statistics, options for play-offs, seasons, exhibition matches and everything you've come to expect from EA, this game has the muscle to make it an essential purchase for basketball fans. The usual slick EA Sports presentation is in full effect as are the magnificent signature moves – watching the star players perform a spectacular flying dunk while spinning in mid-air and pulling off a couple of pirouettes in the process gives a great feeling of satisfaction, as does the action replay function. Even the crowd noises are superb. In fact EA has put together an excellent package bar one thing: it is virtually unplayable. I'd rather have a cracking game without stats and fancy bits for 50 quid, than this.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION 86%
The impeccable EA Sports oozes all over everything

GRAPHICS 36%
Too small and they ruin the game

SOUND 82%
Builds a great atmosphere right from the beginning

SHORT TERM PLAY 32%
Extremely infuriating and frustrating right from the beginning

LONG TERM PLAY 28%
It gets worse the longer you play

OVERALL 38
Lots of everything you could possibly want, except some enjoyable gameplay. Back to the drawing-board chaps!

MEGADRIVE REVIEW

HYPERDUNK

BY: KONAMI

KONAMI

8-MEG

STYLE

SPORTS SIM

PRICE TBA

PLAYERS 1/8

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

OUT NOW



Basketball is a game that requires skill, strength, stamina, agility and all-round physical excellence. Perhaps this explains why LLOYD HOWE is hopeless even at the console versions.

HYPERD

In case you hadn't noticed, there are quite a lot of basketball games coming out pretty soon. Some of them are serious simulations, like NBA showdown and others are more orientated towards fun like Berkley's Shut Up And Jam. Konami's Hyperdunk is a mixture of both these types of games because even though all of the rules are accurately implemented, the gameplay is far from realistic. Action is the order of the day because all of the players are super athletes and can perform the most outrageous feats ever seen in a game of this kind

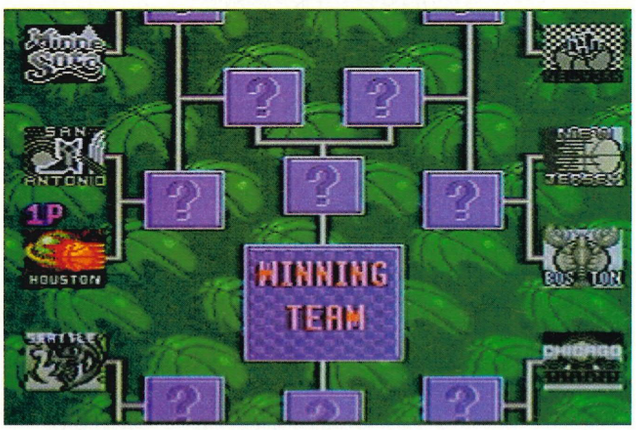


▲ **This is what we like to see. A bloke slamming his balls all over the place. Oo-er!**

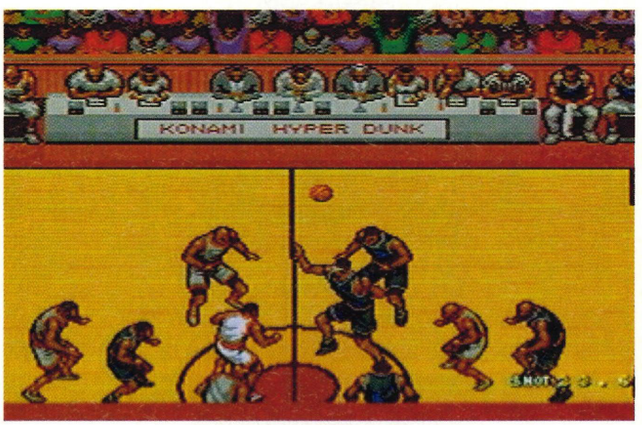
SLAM, JAM, THANK-YOU MA'AM

As a spectator sport, basketball is one of the best because (usually) the action is fast and furious and skilful players like Shaq and Michael Jordan perform the most spectacular physical feats in order to score baskets in style.

On a console basketball games usually involve one player getting possession of the ball, running up the court and scoring, and then the other player does the same so at the end of the day all you do is run backwards and forwards.



▶ **All of the teams can enter a league and the winning team unsurprisingly gets put in the 'winning team' box**



▲ **At the face-off the bloke who jumps highest wins the ball. With Clark Kent playing it's not hard to tell who's going to win!**

LICENCE? WHAT LICENCE?

It seems the NBA has been making a lot of money recently with the amount of licences it has been giving out. Hyperdunk is not officially licensed though, which means you won't see any of your favourite players here.

Even though all the players have individual skills such as shot power, speed, jumping ability, accuracy and height advantages, none of them are real basketball players. Most of the teams are made up of popular characters and people instead. A certain Mr H Simpson makes an appearance, as does JRR Tolkien and Ren Hoek. Perhaps the player to watch out for is a Mr Clark Kent whose jumping ability isn't quite as high as it should have been!



▲ **Some new players make their basketball débuts in the line-up. Raymond Chandler takes time out from writing to join his mates General Custer and Robert Plant to play for San Antonio**



▲ **What an outrageous shot. The bloke in the white shirt grabbed the ball, jumped backwards out of the three point line and just slung it over his head. The shock is, it actually went in!**

UNK

HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS ON GILLIGANS ISLAND

Even with the inclusion of players' signature moves and other features, console basketball games that try to capture the true feeling of the game somehow never really succeed.

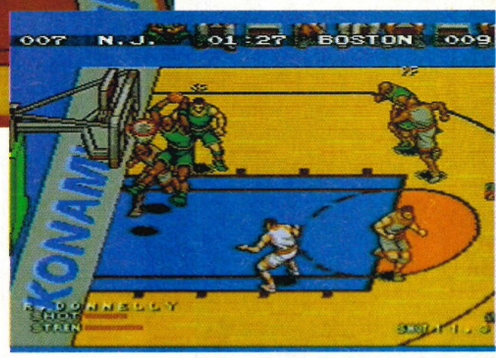
Take NBA Showdown for example. Technically, it is excellent with all the plays and licensed players but it soon gets boring. Perhaps it is for this reason that Konami has gone for a more arcade-orientated game where virtually anything goes. Even though all the rules have been programmed it is possible to turn the fouls off so the odd barge here and there doesn't interrupt the game. This makes the game great fun because you can get away with murder and steal the ball when you wouldn't normally have been able to.

The best part of the game though is the ability to perform ludicrous attempts on the basket. If your player is near the basket he will nearly always go for a slam dunk or a simple throw, but by moving the joypad while your player is jumping you can spin the player around and get him to throw the ball at unfeasible angles.

At one point I had a man on the halfway line and I managed to make him jump and spin around twice before throwing the ball backwards over his head. The ball bounced on the hoop and rolled around the edge twice before giving me three points! There are loads of laughs to be had by doing shots like this when playing multi-player games, but sadly in one-player mode the fun is very limited.

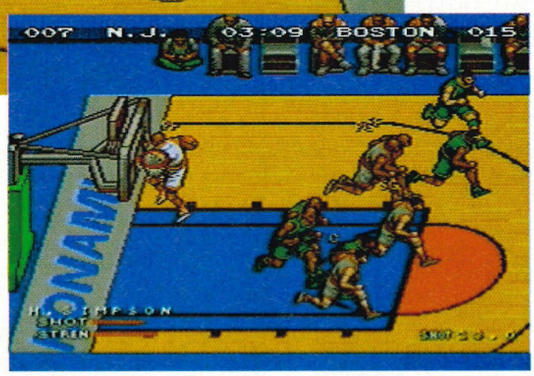


Wahay! Sartre scores in style and swings off the hoop after slam dunking the ball



Donnelly jumps for the basket, but look carefully and you will see someone about to jump in the way and throw him to the ground. What a nasty bloke





Run away! I knew that bloke shouldn't have had all those beans last night





THE SECOND OPINION



JULIAN CONNOLY

If the one-player game had been merely two on two instead of full teams this would probably have been a lot more fun. As it stands it only becomes enjoyable when two or more players take part and try to out do each other with the most outrageous baskets. I applaud Konami's idea of going for and action oriented style, abandoning all those annoying rules and things, and it certainly makes for a fast moving game. Like Andy said though, this is not a game you'll be playing every minute you can, just when you've got a few friends around and nothing to do.

THE FOURTH QUARTER

At the end of the day Hyperdunk is quite a fun basketball game and is definitely the best one I have played in quite a while, but games like this have a very short life indeed, especially if you are a solo player.

With the Sega Tap things can get very exciting, but this is one of those games that you will dig out every now and then to have a bit of a laugh and then let it gather dust on your shelf for a while before it ever sees the light of day again. Even with the different play-off and elimination competitions I have to say that you will soon tire of this game, which is a shame really.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION 83%
All of the intros are smooth and slick, with lots of attention to detail

GRAPHICS 76%
The sprites move well but the flickering shadows are really eye strainers

SOUND 71%
Average music and sound effects

SHORT TERM PLAY 82%
This is very easy to get into and great fun at first...

LONG TERM PLAY 53%
...but on your own you will get bored quite quickly

OVERALL 68
A good attempt at a basketball game but sadly it is not enough

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY: DOMARK

DOMARK

16-MEG

STYLE

PLATFORM

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

OUT MAR



Donning a rather fetching turban and a groovy pair of strides at least five sizes too big, ALLIE WEST gets ready not to swing through the jungle, but to say "Welcome to the dungeon" instead.

PRINCE OF

I remember a rather nifty game which surfaced on the ST when I were just a wee nipper. Completely original at the time and featuring some of the best character animation ever seen in a game up until that time, I was shocked and a little bit stunned by it to say the least. The game? Prince Of Persia of course, and since then it has emerged on practically every damn format that will have it home for dinner.

Although we have already seen a version of Prince Of Persia for the Mega-CD, it didn't exactly leave a lasting impression on the player! Now we have the horrendously overdue cartridge version of the game from Domark. Perhaps if this adaptation had reared its pretty little pixels about two years ago I would now be jumping around the office with joy, but the Mega Drive is moving on to new and better things and here we are, witnessing the rebirth of an ancient concept. Hello...is this 1994 or 1984?!



We're all going on a summer holiday...lah, lah, lah, dee, dah, dee...oooh, Cliff you're so ageless...hol-ee-day!



Gates can only be opened by finding the relevant floor pad and stomping on it!

Now pay attention. This hip bone is connected to the thigh bone, then the thigh bone is connected to the knee bone, the knee bone...

Ta dah! Hoorah, you've found the sword. It is imperative that you find the sword, I mean, what are you going to kill all the guards with – your fingers?!

Oooer missus! Now I've heard of people lying on a bed of nails, but this is ridiculous! Surely it can't be doing your botty any good sitting on all those spikes

Dead end! You've obviously not been paying enough attention to the level's design. Now turn around and go back the way you came...go on, move!

PERSIA



PRINCE AND THE REVOLUTION

If you are unaware of Prince Of Persia (although I can't imagine where you have been for the last couple of years), I will oblige by telling you what you are up against. You control the Prince who is a deft little chap with amazing stamina and physical attributes. Confronted by a platform-style game, it is your simple task to find the exit to each level by navigating the labyrinthine stages. However, it isn't merely a question of finding the correct route through the maze-like structure which towers above and below you, as well as in front and behind – you must also utilise numerous floor pads trying to work out which ones open gates that block your path and ultimately, where the pad to open the all-important exit door lies hidden.





▲ **Hup, two, three, four. Hop, skip and a jump – 170 metres! An all-new World Record goes to the man in the turban!**

The game engine for this Mega Drive offering is identical to the previous versions of this classic game, wherein you control the Prince through the weaving levels with a hefty one-hour time limit hanging weightily around your neck. Your mission is to escape from the dungeons within the time limit to rescue a fair princess who has been kidnapped by an unruly Sultan (aren't they always), and who will be married off unless you can save her. Of course, you can finish the game after the time limit is up, but you won't get your bit of totty and a big sloppy, wet kiss at the end of it all for your efforts.



The start. This diagram must look very confusing, but there is actually a starting point – believe it or not!

For longer drops you have to carefully lower yourself down through the gap rather than falling. Even sprites handle broken legs very badly!

To open the exit you first have to find the floor pad which activates the door. Nice and simple in theory, but much harder in practice

Watch out for the crumbling platforms – sometimes the drop below isn't as minimal as this. And for the sadists among you, sometimes there are some lovely spikes below

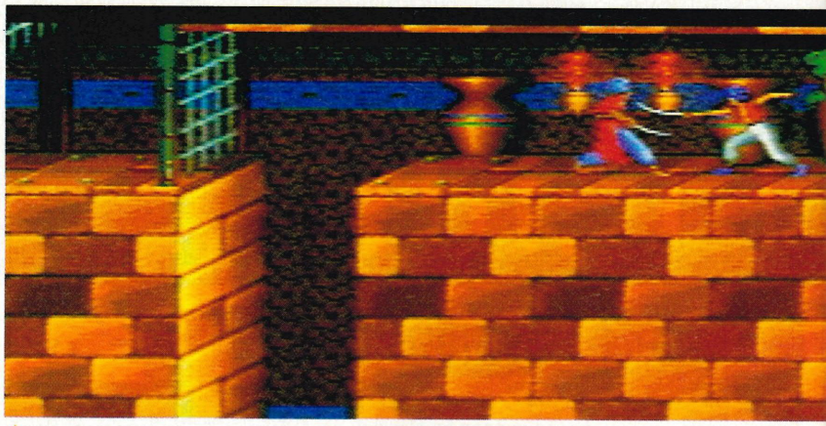
Fancying a quick pint, the Prince can stop off at his local King's Head drinking establishment and get a boost from the local liquor

Now you've got the sword you can give this guard a good whipping or stabbing...a thrashing perhaps?

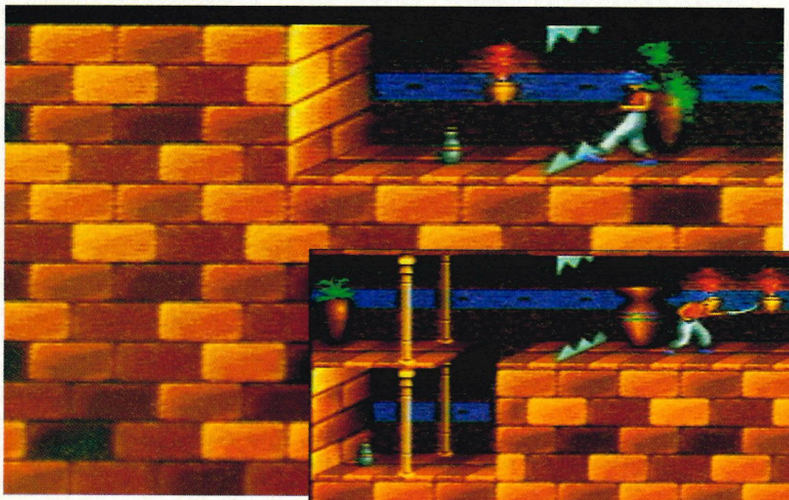
GO SEE THE PRINCIPLE

It is easy to conform to the control system's limitations – which is made up of simple sprite movements such as run, jump and climb – therefore the game is easy to get into. The main problem arises when trying to get used to the pixel-perfect nature of it all – one millimetre out and your Prince will plummet to his death. The mass of giant leaps, crumbling platforms and high climbs also make this a challenging game, but it is the wide array of sword-wielding guards, snapping blades and protruding spikes that add the real nail-biting essence and makes it so damn perilous.

The early levels are painfully straightforward, requiring you to first find a sword with which to arm yourself against the vicious guards which block various routes. After you have escaped the first level, numerous hazards are thrown at you such as the hidden spikes and chomping blades. Although these obstructions are easy to overcome, they consistently cause your stomach to take a turn for the worse at the mere thought of timing your movements just right, so as not to get your privates skewered after it has taken you so long to get this far in to the level!



▲ **Strictly Ballroom? Pah! Dirty Dancing? Not a chance! The Prince Of Persia is the new step now**



◀ **Surely there are better ways to clip your toe nails!**

▶ **Arghhh, my bottom!**

PERSIAN RUG

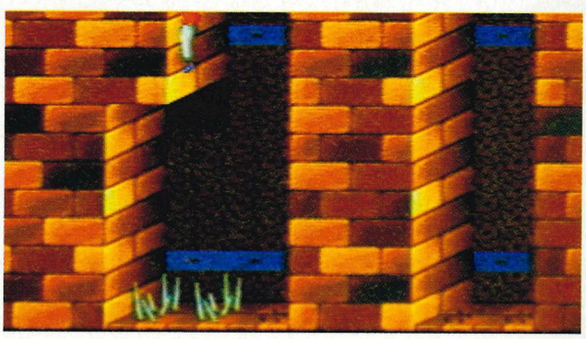
Graphically the game is rather impressive, although not when compared to the SNES version (actually, that was quite harsh and is an unwarranted comment when you consider how superior the Super Nintendo's colour palette is). The sprite again appears rotoscoped and moves with outstanding fluidity and realism, and although it is quite small it's clean and well detailed. The way in which he performs a climb or leap is quite energetic too, and when he puffs and pants at the end of the manoeuvre it is very easy to believe that he is completely and utterly knackered!

The background graphics are clean and there are some nice touches, namely the flaming torches flickering along the dungeon walls. On each stage there is far too much use of one colour such as the base grey or yellow, leaving the overall image quite dull. However, this is all by the by, because the graphics do succeed in conveying the dank and dreary atmosphere of the dungeon very well indeed. They may not be the best graphics we've ever seen, but they do the job well, and if you're not quite as picky as me I am sure you'll find them more than satisfactory.

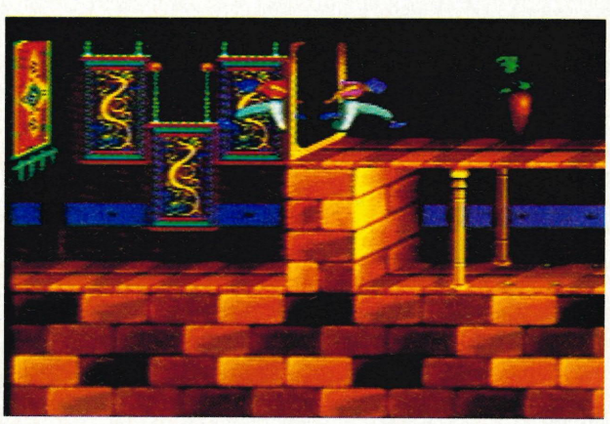
RIGHT ROYAL RAMPAGE

Having played numerous versions of this game including ones for the ST, the SNES, the Game Gear AND the Mega-CD, I have become somewhat familiar with the whole POP theme. However, I still really enjoy playing it despite knowing some of the levels backwards. It's not always the familiarity of the game that matters, but how hard it is to contend with the reoccurring problems. The more you become accustomed to a level the easier it is to make a mistake – one thing you can't be in this game is overconfident, because this leads to pathetic mistakes, believe me!

Actually the only downer I can find with Prince Of Persia (apart from the fact that this game has been overdone to death and is laughably old) is that some of the levels are identical to those of the SNES version. I think it is a bit presumptuous to believe that all Mega Drive owners don't have a SNES as well. I for one have been dying to get my hands on a console adaptation of the PC's Prince Of Persia 2, which this unfortunately is NOT!



▲ **Sylvester Stallone eat your heart out – my fingers are stronger than yours. Nah, nah, nee, nah, nah!**



▲ **As we all know, breaking a mirror is bad luck and it is here too. The Prince loses one hit point**

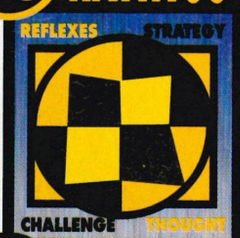
THE SECOND OPINION



LLOYD HOWE

Many moons ago Prince Of Persia was released to much critical acclaim. The reason everyone raved about it was because the animation was rotoscoped, a system where live actors are used to create the animation frames. Nowadays systems such as these are used all the time and the impact POP once had has lessened with time. It was fantastic once, but now it is just another run-of-the-mill platform game. The control system seems really weird at first but after a few hours play it becomes quite instinctive. This isn't a classic, but it is a darn sight better than the Mega-CD version.

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 76%
The intro sequence lacks real gusto and the menu screens are drab

GRAPHICS 83%
Too much of the same colour throughout the levels, but the animation is superb

SOUND 79%
Arabian-style music with a few grunts and groans – nothing special

SHORT TERM PLAY 86%
Easy controls and the game idea is simple to pick up

LONG TERM PLAY 90%
Frustratingly hard, it will take you a long time to perfect especially within allotted time

OVERALL 82
Great fun, but isn't the whole POP concept a little dated now?

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MEGA-CD REVIEW

RACING



SEGA



It's cold outside, but the office is warm and so is this nice cup of coffee by my side as I write. Now, what have we here? Oh dear, Racing Aces CD. Pass the alcohol someone, this looks BAD.

SEGA

CD-ROM

STYLE

SHOOT'EM-UP

PRICE £44.99

PLAYERS 1

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

IMPORT

Sometimes a game comes along that is so cack it actually smells when you take it out of the box. There have been a few such games reviewed in past issues, but none compare to the smell of rancid poo that emitted from the CD case containing Racing Aces CD. Put simply, this racing/flying/shoot'em-up is the plankton in the food chain of entertainment software, a floater in the mighty cesspit of poor-quality CD games, a yellow-head on th...(yes, we get the message Steve – John).

MOULDY GREENY CRUST

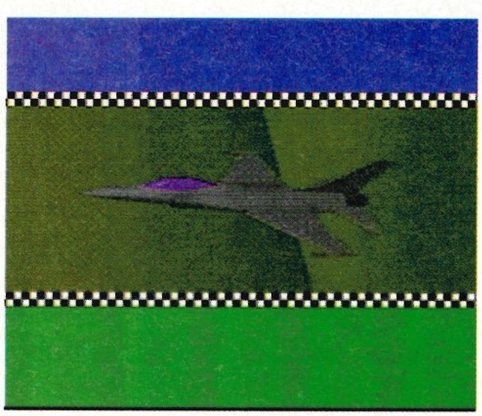
How about this for a good game idea then? You get 30 pilots and give them a choice of aircraft. Each aircraft has a basic arsenal that can be added to, providing you can afford it. To win money you must take part in races against your 29 opponents, over a course mapped out by a coloured line that blazes a trail across the hills and valleys of the earth below. To win you must use all means necessary, fair means or foul, which means using missiles, machine-guns, rockets and mines – all of which hide in large balloons and float around the landscape. Repairs and shields also dwell aboard the blimps, but you must remember that there isn't just yourself on the lookout for the power-ups – everyone else is looking for the same thing.

DROP THE PILOT

30 individual pilots can be chosen from. It would have been far too dull to list them all, so here's a few of the more comical ones, including Mr Steve Skegger. I don't know about you, but where I come from 'Skeggy' is the term used to describe a right scruffy git. Strange...



Here's a bit of FMV to remind you that it's a Mega-CD game



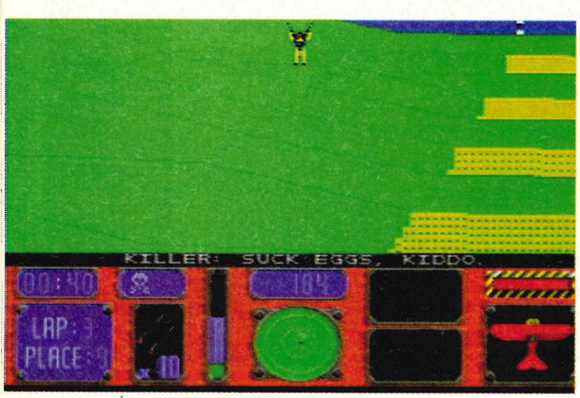
FESTERING HAIRY MOLE

Anyway, you win a race and get some prize money, then you twaddle off to the shop and buy a few extra weapons or maybe another plane and the whole thing starts again until you're the champion. Throw in a few obligatory FMV intro sequences, a large selection of good options and (of course) some very professional sounding CD music and you've got a winner on your hands!

Great idea eh? Of course. But as is the case nowadays, great ideas suffer at the hands of software houses and lazy programmers. Racing Aces is no exception – it really does have all the ingredients that make classic games and the fact it is on CD should have at least meant it would resemble something half decent, but it doesn't. The whole game is graced occasionally with some very nice hi-res options screens, but with the mere press of the button they are replaced by an absolute abortion of a caricature, backdrop or sprite. Then you play the game itself...

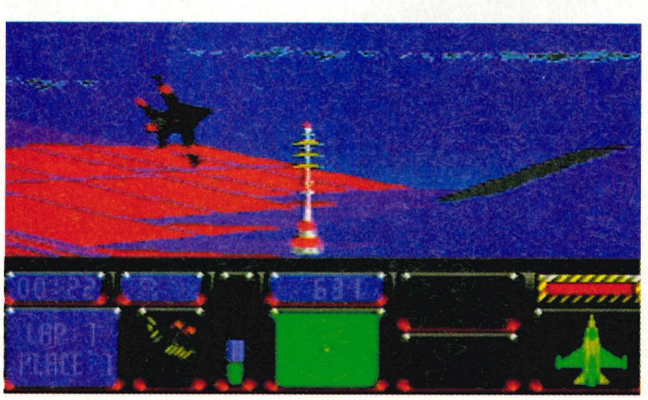
Approaching a repair balloon...or at least I was until I disappeared off the screen





That's me at the top as I parachute (and not for the first time) from my blazing plane. 'Killer' was the offending enemy and his parting comment says it all. Git

Smashing. I turn a corner in glorious 'crap-o-vision'



Doesn't it look absolutely marvellous?



ACES



LARGE SACK OF HORSE POO

With the view of the action taking place behind one of three airplanes you chose before the game, there's plenty to see and unfortunately plenty for the Mega Drive to move around. This is where Racing Aces takes the biscuit gameplay-wise. Shoddy is too kind a word to describe the scaling effect…ramshackle, dilapidated maybe. Everything moves so unconvincingly, whether it's moving towards, left, right or away from the player. A feather-like touch of the D-pad will either throw you into an insane roll or do nothing at all, and it would seem that the game decides which to do on your behalf.

The computer pilots are, as you'd expect, Top Gun trained 747 pilots. They whiz off at the start line, only returning to zoom past you seven laps in front or blow you out of the sky with some expertly aimed missiles. Should you be fortunate enough to get one in your sights for long enough, you can return the complement. The words 'easier', 'said' and 'done' spring to mind.

A number of people in the office fainted with sheer excitement when I performed this tricky manoeuvre





The left view is only available on a six-button pad. It's useless, but it wouldn't be Mega-CD if it wasn't

BOSS! THE PLANE!



To begin with you get three basic choices of aircraft, each with their differing strengths and weaknesses



SEEPING PUSS-FILLED BOIL

The scope of available options is exemplary on paper, but in reality are badly implemented, pointless or just limited and serving no real purpose. The pitch and roll control can be toggled although it didn't actually make any difference in my opinion, there is a practice and friendly mode of flight, shopping for weapons both legally or on the black market, and the chance to fly a variety of aeroplanes against your mix-match of friendly and unfriendly opponents (very Road Rash).

There is more, but the game is that bad and the compulsion to leave it and do something else (usually after your first go) is so strong, that all the options under the sun would fail to rescue anything worthwhile from the whole sorry affair. This game is so bad in fact, that I'm going to wrap this review up here and now, and go and do something better…like counting the hairs on Howe's head.

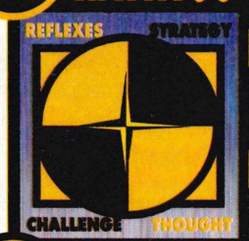
THE SECOND OPINION



'JAG'

This game has to be the worst that I have ever had the misfortune to play. To me it seems that the majority of software developers think that if they slap a crap game in a nice-looking box with a pretty illustration on the front, bung in a few minutes of so-called FMV and a semi-decent theme tune, then we the unsuspecting punters will buy it. Whatever happened to gameplay, good graphics and most of all originality? Do not waste your money on this product it sucks big time!

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 20%
Lots of pointless options, with still screens drawn by a dog. Usual FMV

GRAPHICS 15%
A joke. An absolute disgrace during flight and overall an insult to the Mega-CD

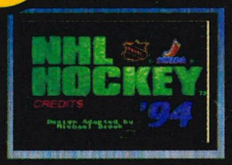
SOUND 17%
Basically what you'd expect – flash, dull, bland, stupid, stupid, stupid

SHORT TERM PLAY 3%
'Three' being an approximation of the number of minutes you'll play

LONG TERM PLAY 0%
Before you die of terror

OVERALL 8%
The worst Mega-CD game I have ever, ever played. A shambles

MEGA-CD REVIEW



ELECTRONIC ARTS

EA SPORTS ELECTRONIC ARTS

CD-ROM

STYLE

SPORTS SIM

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1-4

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

OUT NOW



Not content with updating the classic hockey game, EA hockey, EA now proudly presents the updated version of the updated updated version...I think. We sent LLOYD HOWE down to investigate.

NHLPA HOC

If you haven't played one of the EA hockey games then where have you been? EA Hockey was the game that set the ball rolling and to put it simply it was superb. It was fast and playable with the only downer being that it was quite easy to score. In 1993 EA acquired an official NHLPA license and released an updated version, this time with all of the current teams and their statistics. It was harder to score goals but for some reason the game ran slightly slower. 1994 saw the release of the next version, with updated teams and some new features. Now CD owners can have a go because NHLPA '94 has been revamped especially for them, and what's more it's cheaper than the cartridge version!



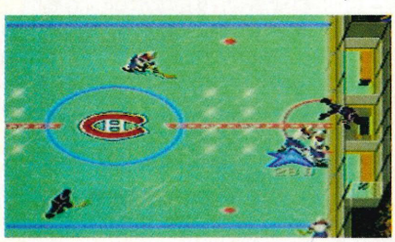


ICE ICE BABY

Right from the start I must state that this game is being aimed at people who own a Mega-CD but don't already own NHLPA '94 on cart. This is because it is exactly the same game, except with much better presentation and a better price tag. Bill Walsh College Football and Powermonger are also going to be released on CD in this way.

The differences are clear from the first moment you start up the machine – instead of the title screen appearing, a spectacular intro comes up featuring a couple of minutes of full-screen FMV (which is better than the FMV seen in most other games), showing hockey players being put through their paces and getting slammed about a bit. The camera then pans out to show the action continuing on a TV screen, and other screens scroll into view along with logos of all the teams in the game – very impressive indeed. To be perfectly honest however, I would rather see more attention paid to the quality of the game instaed of having five minutes of boring FMV every time I load a CD game. It may look good but what purpose does it really serve?!

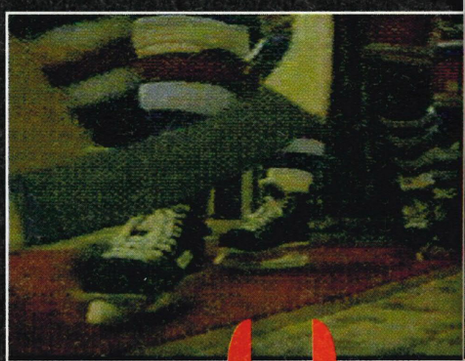
JOLLY HOCKEY STICKS



There can't possibly be anyone who hasn't played one of these games before, but just in case an alien from the planet Bong happens to have beamed up a copy of this fine mag onto its spaceship, I shall explain the rules. The game is split up into three halves or periods or whatever they are called. Each period starts off with the players in the centre of the rink for the face-off, where the ref throws the puck up into the air and promptly buggers off as there is a flurry of fists and sticks as the players scrabble for possession. They must then try and get the puck into the remarkably small net at the other side of the rink to score a goal, and that's about it.

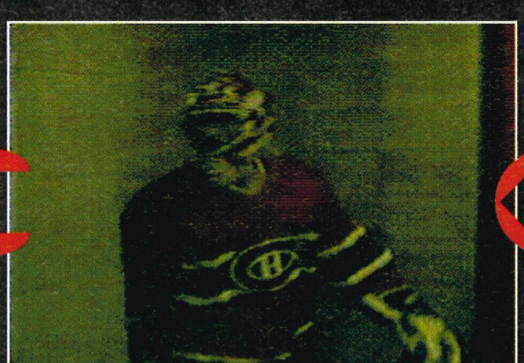
Hockey is renowned for its violence, but fighting is not allowed and neither is tripping or hooking people with your stick. When this happens the offending players are sent to the sin bin, which is a strange name considering they don't actually commit any sin whatsoever while in the bin. Thankfully it is possible to turn the penalties off, resulting in all the matches ending up as multi-player free-for-alls.

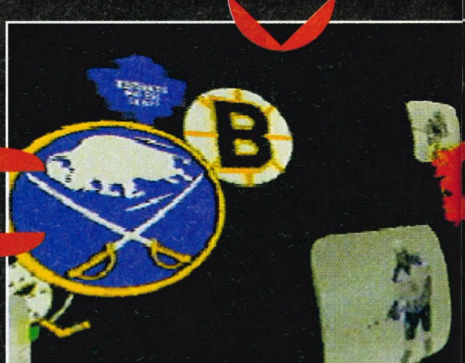
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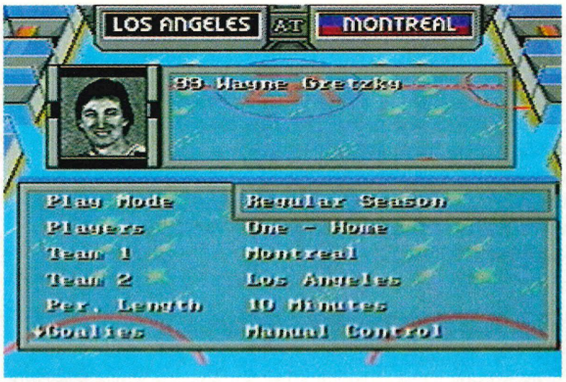
KEY '94 CD



HYPER! HYPER GAME AWARD



Contrary to popular belief the shoot-out does not involve two blokes putting holes in each other with bullets – it's a penalty shoot-out instead. We know which type we would have preferred though, don't we kids? Corruption – what's that?!



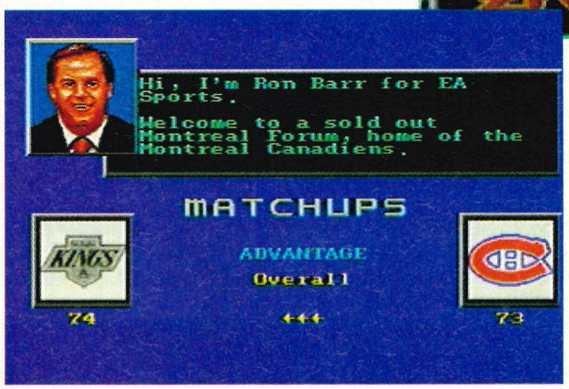
Wayne's World, Wayne's World...oops, wrong Wayne. What a daft name anyhow

THOSE VISUALS

The intro sequence features some of the smartest full-screen video we have seen to date. To whet your appetite, have a gander at these piccies...



Sadly you can't fight in this game, but you can make up for it by decking people with your stick (but only in the game, eh kids? Hee hee hee)



Look out, it's Ron Barr. Now who'd have thought he'd be in this game? Not me, for sure



ICE STATION ZEBRA

So, you already own NHLPA '94, but should you buy NHLPA '94 CD? The answer is no, however if you don't own the original cart then this is a game to add to your collection. The gameplay is excellent and all the FMV scenes and other features add to the overall effect, resulting in a highly polished package that is well worth shelling out forty sovs for. The original was a fantastic game and this is too. This game is so much fun even if you only play it on your own, and the play-off options give the game a very long life. Get it now.

THE SECOND OPINION

ANTONY LEA

Well, I can see the point of this game, but only just. What you actually get is the NHLPA '94 cartridge on compact disc, for the same price. This version is identical as far as I can see, which is no bad thing because the cartridge version was the best NHLPA yet. In fact you also get a very smart full-screen colour FMV introduction as well as digitised pictures of all the NHL players into the bargain, plus much improved organ music. If you have a Mega-CD and don't own NHLPA '94 then do buy this – it is excellent. However, it is not worthwhile for those who already own an EA hockey game.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION 91%
This boasts one of the best intros in a long time, plus there are tons of options

GRAPHICS 84%
Good sprites and, shock horror, some decent FMV!

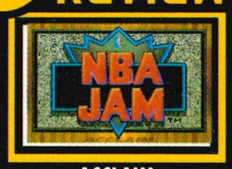
SOUND 86%
The organ music may be crap, but it is in real life! Good FX too

SHORT TERM PLAY 78%
To begin it is hard to score goals

LONG TERM PLAY 83%
Four-way play – what more need I say?!

OVERALL 91
This is the definitive hockey game for CD owners

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



ACCLAIM



16 MB

STYLE



SPORT SIM

PRICE TBA

PLAYERS 4

SKILL SETTINGS 5

RELEASE DATE

TBA TBA

OK, so ANTONY LEA isn't that tall, but that's no reason to force him into this NBA Jam review. "No I won't do it! Absolutely, definitely not. Oh all right then, for a tenner."

NBA J

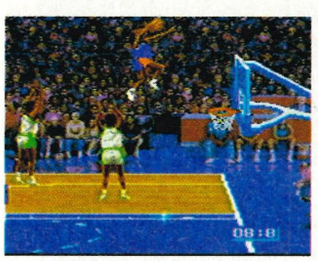
You know, this month must surely be called 'Basketball' month for Mega Drive releases. Not only have we been thrown Barkley: Shut Up And Jam, NBA Showdown and Hyperdunk, but now we have to contend with NBA Jam too. I guess you want to know which is the best one too? Well, get reading...

NBA HAM

If you've been into an arcade recently, in among the Mortal Kombat and Street Fighter II machines, you should have seen a rather smart-looking basketball game by Midway, called NBA Jam. This Mega Drive game, as you may have guessed, is a conversion of that coin-op, and it's not half bad. The arcade game itself had amazing graphics and sound, as well as a great four-player option. Just how has the conversion come out?

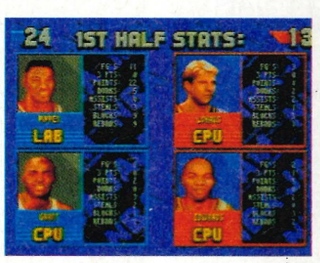


▲ **Dallas is coming back, after New York throws in a two-pointer. Jackson is on the ball**





▲ **A three-pointer for Harper, and the other team are unable to reply**





▲ **With only 14 seconds on the clock, it's another three pointer!**

▶ **Both players go up, but Anderson gets to well over seven feet!**



▲ **The shot clock in the corner shows there are only 19 seconds left for the team to shoot. Good job it already has then!**



▶ **It's a pass from player one to player two, and a long one at that. Neither are on the screen**

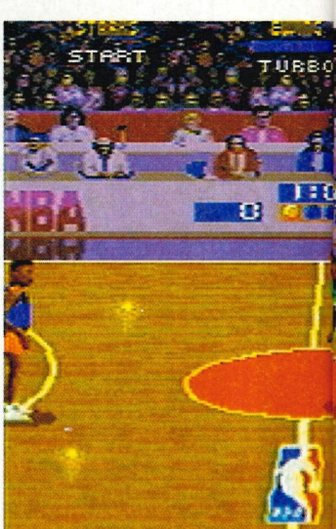
NBA JAMBOREE

The game is played as a two-on-two game only. If you play one-player the other three players are computer controlled, and so on up to four human players. In two-player games you can either play as a team, or as members of opposite teams. You can select any of the 27 NBA teams to play as, although you only play as their two star players. The game has battery back-up to keep your win and loss record – when you play again, simply enter your initials and you can start off where you left it last time.

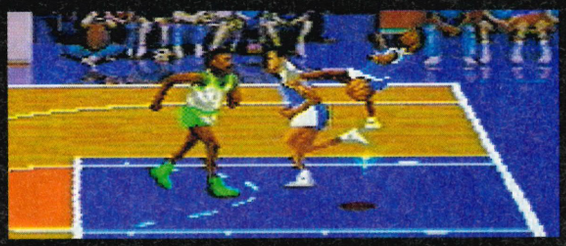
As a conversion, this is excellent. Everything that was in the original game has been faithfully reproduced on the humble Mega Drive. The graphics are still top-notch, all the players have their own signature moves (even if they are 'ever-so' superhuman), and the animation is superb! The commentator shouts out during play, "He's warming up" or "Boom, Shak-a-Lack!", and the music is as close to the arcade original as possible. The presentation throughout is excellent too, with profiles of all the players and teams. Even the four-player option has been retained. So is this the best game ever then?

Well, no actually. The arcade NBA Jam did look and sound incredible, but the gameplay was not up to the presentation. As this is an arcade conversion, the same faults lie in this version – there is little or no strategy involved and the game is basically a 'run-to-one-end-then-the-other' type affair.

▼ **The computer is on the attack, and that pass has left Ewing standing**



AM

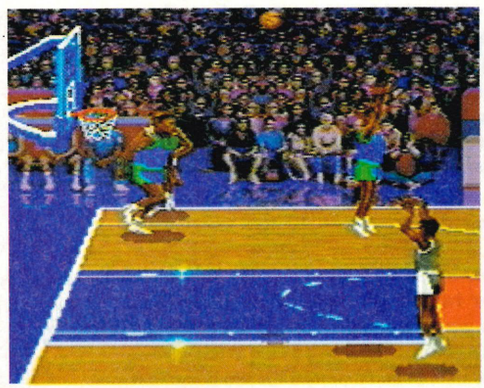


BOOM! SHAQ-A-LAQ

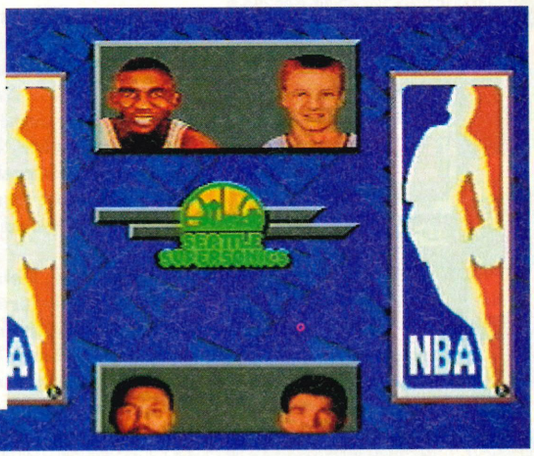
You can't say that this game is a push-over – although the game difficulty can be changed to easy, the game still provides a very strong challenge. The aim of the game is to beat all 27 NBA teams, and even though there are no play-offs or tournaments at all it could be some time before you complete the game.

To stack the odds more in your favour, the game includes a turbo button which enables you to move faster. You also have more chance of scoring if you get three baskets in a row because you get on a 'hot streak' where the ball glows orange, and everything you throw seems to go in. This all ends when you are scored against.

In one-player versions you can play in two different modes: either with the computer helping, or without. With a helping team-mate you never have directional control of anyone but your selected player, although you can make the other player shoot or pass back with your controls. This means that if the ball is passed away from you, you have to rely on your computer team-mate to help. This is the same feeling of non-participation that Barkley features, and detracts from the game somewhat. Without the helping player, you gain control of whichever player has the ball. Of course this can still leave you with only the computer in defence.

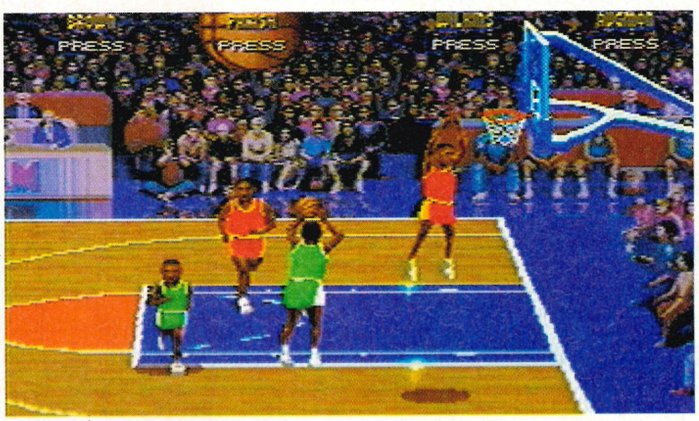


▲ **A two point attempt, with no one blocking, it can't fail to go in!**



▲ **This is part of the attract sequence. The teams scroll by downwards, as the NBA logo scrolls smoothly upwards**

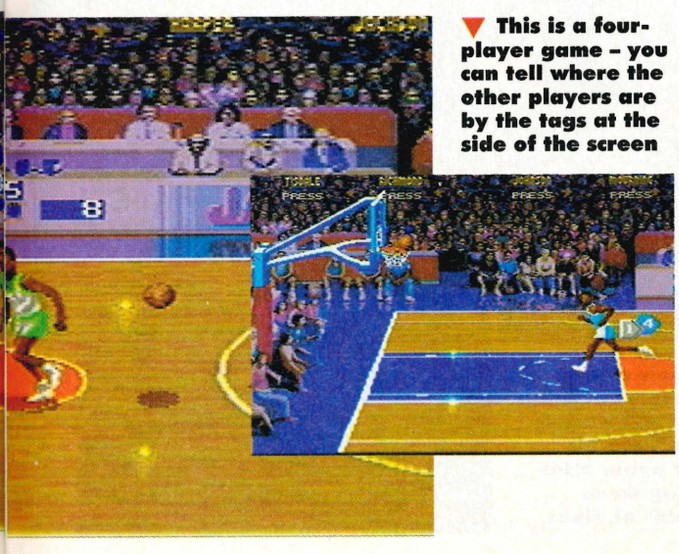




ASTOUNDING ARCADE ACTION

Even though this is mostly a washout as a one-player game, it is far better as a two or three-player game and as four-player it is an excellent game of two-on-two basketball. The gameplay is by no means poor, it just seems to have no real depth. It is far better though, than any of the existing basketball games, I guess they just weren't up to much.

This is a very strong contender for best arcade conversion ever. If you liked the coin-op, or want a pure action basketball game, you really ought to buy this. Basketball purists, who prefer more strategy in their play, are better off looking elsewhere.



▼ **This is a four-player game – you can tell where the other players are by the tags at the side of the screen**

THE SECOND OPINION



STEVE CHAPMAN

By far the best of all the basketball games I've seen this month and a top-notch conversion of the arcade game. Acclaim has obviously tried to cram all of the arcade's features onto the cart without sacrificing the gameplay. Graphics, animation, sound, four players, it's the arcade game right down the line, which is also where its problems lie. The lack of a tournament or play-off mode brings longevity into doubt and the lack of any 'simulation' of the game may put fans of the sport off. Still, not bad by any means and certainly the best of a bad lot.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION 88%
Half-time reports, coaching tips, player profiles...you name it, it's all here!

GRAPHICS 88%
Well-defined and well-animated sprites and court

SOUND 82%
Excellent speech throughout the game. The music is a little bit too 'bleepy'

SHORT TERM PLAY 82%
Easy to get into, and hard to put down. Four-player games give most fun

LONG TERM PLAY 75%
No tournament as such, just 27 teams to beat. It isn't easy, but it does get dull

OVERALL 86
Excellent action basketball game, especially as a multi-player game. A perfect copy of an unfortunately imperfect arcade machine.

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



SEGA

SEGA

16-Meg

STYLE

PLATFORM

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1-2

SKILL SETTINGS 1

RELEASE DATE

OUT NOW

Thanks to Dream Machines 2 (0429 869459)



After a titanic office 'wrestle-fest' STEVE CHAPMAN emerged victorious following a particularly impressive suplex during the final bout against Lloyd 'the legend' Howe. The reason for these grappling antics? Why, the game of the year of course – Sonic 3!!

SONIC THE

Just what did happen to Robotnik then? You thought that he'd gone for good at the end of Sonic 2, didn't you? Think again. The Death Egg crash-landed on a mysterious island that, with the power of Chaos Emeralds, floats in the sky. Robotnik, being his usual self, tricked Knuckles, guardian of the island, into believing that Sonic and Tails would try and steal the Chaos Emeralds and bring the island crashing down.

Of course, Robotnik's story was simply a diversion, set in place in order to buy him time to repair the Death Egg with the power of the Chaos Emeralds. So once more, Sonic is thrown into a battle with the Badnik's in all their different forms, as well as the tricky Knuckles who knows the island like the back of his little pink hand. The young spiky one really has his work cut out for him this time!

YOU EEDIOT...

Not unlike its predecessors, Sonic 3 has a basic level structure – six individual zones each contain two stages, the second containing a boss of some description. So in total there's 12 levels to explore for the single player, and huge levels they are too – but more of that later.

Tails appears once again following his absence from Sonic CD and as in Sonic 2, the second joypad enables a second player to join in and try to keep up with the speedy one. However, the fox has learned some new tricks, namely the ability to pick Sonic up and fly him out of danger at times, which comes in extremely useful unless you're playing on your own, in which case you're stuck scrabbling around like an idiot, looking for the second pad.

That's not all of the two-player attractions on offer, however. There's a new inclusion for two players in the form of the 'competition' option on the title screen. Here, the players have a choice of playing Sonic, Tails or Knuckles before they go on to battle in a head-to-head race over five completely new split-screen levels!

KEEPING A LEVEL HEAD

Throughout Sonic 3 there are loads of mid-level guardians and bosses who try and thwart the dynamic duo. Here we have a look at just a few of them to show you what you will be up against – after all, we don't want to give everything away now do we?



HYDROCITY

This finds Robotnik hassling Sonic with a cunning machine that sucks water, and Sonic with it if he's not careful, right up towards that dangerous fan!

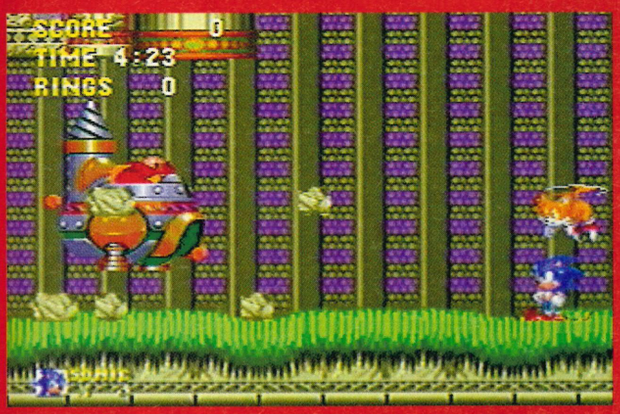


▲ **Um, it's one of those, er, occasions when Sonic is, um, sort of thrust up into the air by a big sort of swoosh of water, yeah great!**



▶ **Sonic relives experiences of Alton Towers as he prays he won't see his dinner again after whizzing down hundreds of pipes**

HEDGEHOG 3



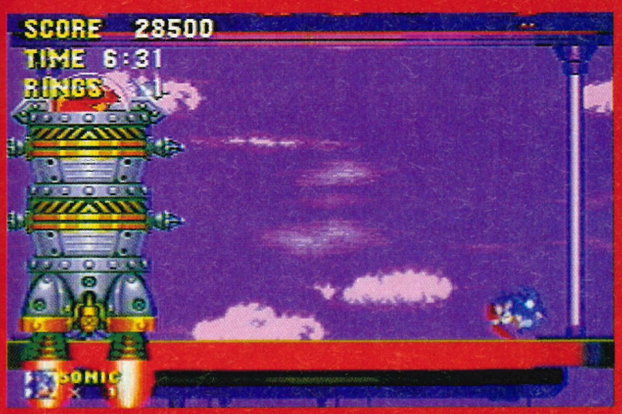
MARBLE GARDEN

Robotnik gets ready to drill Sonic's pretty little head to a pulp, but Tails is on hand to lift Sonic's spirits – literally!



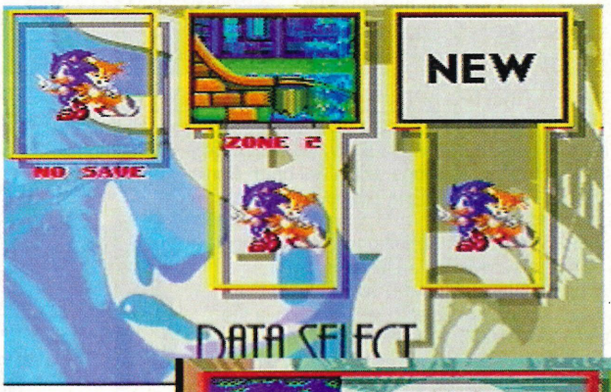
ICE CAP ZONE

Robotnik throws out a freeze spray which encases our heroes in blocks of ice and consequently causes Sonic to lose all his precious rings

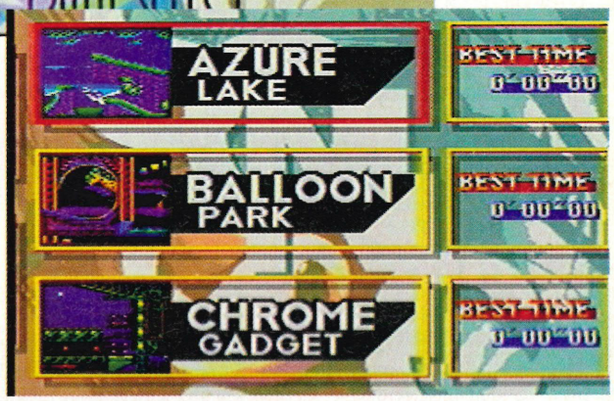


LAUNCH BASE

At the launch base Robotnik tries to outwit Sonic with a HUGE metal jobby and fires lasers across the screen just in case Sonic wasn't at all intimidated



Sonic has six save-game facilities for the extra-talented gamers out there, or you can simply start from scratch if you're a bit crap



There are five different terrains to have a bash at in two-player mode. I know, I know, there are only three shown here – you people want blood!

SO WHAT'S NEW?

So what's new and improved this time around? Well a whole lot, surprisingly. Apart from Knuckles, there's the five extra levels available for the two-player competition option from the title screen. Selecting this option opens up three sub-options; the Grand Prix where one or two players race through the five zones, Match Race where any of the five can be chosen to race on and Time Attack which is basically a practice mode for a lone player.

There's now a battery back-up facility which automatically saves your game when your final life is lost or the reset button is pressed – very handy for those moments of frustration leading to premature resetting. There are six save positions open for selection every time a new game is begun, along with the option not to save a game or delete a previous adventure.



Hoorah, the bonus section! Now does this beat Sonic 2's tunnel run or what? You have to steer yourself around a sphere collecting lots of balls in order to win a Chaos Emerald

SONIC DRY

The lives and continues allocations also remain the same as the first two adventures, so I'll run through it quickly. Sonic begins with three lives and by collecting rings can add to this total. 100 rings gives an extra life during normal play, lowered to 50 per life on the special stage, which is where extra continues can also be won.

Free lives can be found dotted around each zone if you look hard enough, along with the usual array of power-ups and extra rings. Chaos Emeralds must be collected from the special stage of each act, which in effect means that you're looking at collecting 12 Emeralds before you complete the game proper and are rewarded with the stage select option on the title screen! Nightmare!

THREE OF KIND?

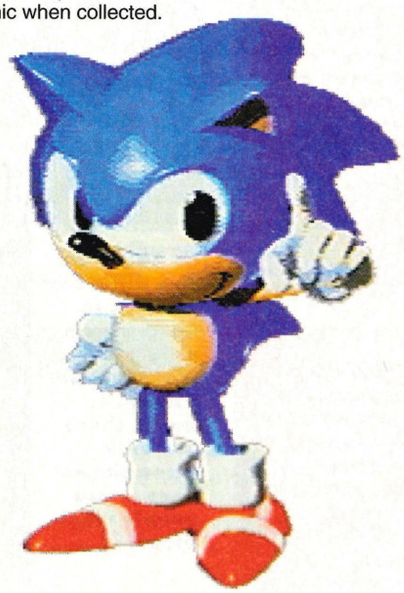


What of the adventure itself? Rest easy! Thankfully, Sonic 3 isn't just a re-hash of the original game; a criticism that Sonic 2 came under occasionally. Sonic now has an abundance of new power-ups in addition to the standard invincibility and spin dash/attack.

First comes an instant shield which lasts for a split second when a button is quickly pressed while jumping. There are three new shields to collect; Flame, Water and Lightning. All three explain themselves to a certain extent; Fire shields protect against heat and bestow a special 'fire attack' which turns Sonic into a fireball(!), Water shields allow Sonic to breathe and bounce underwater. But it's the Lightning shield which takes the biscuit – not only does it protect from electric and energy ball attacks and give an extra boost when jumping, but it also has the power to attract rings to Sonic as he passes them! Ace!

On the downside however, (and there's always a downside, folks) Robotnik has also planted bonus boxes containing his image which will harm Sonic when collected. The Special Stage is also an all-new affair, providing you can find it among the sprawling levels.

Here, Sonic must race around a huge sphere, collecting smaller blue spheres as he travels. When all have been collected, the all-important Chaos Emerald appears and the stage is complete. A bonus stage can also be entered via the starposts when Sonic is holding 50 rings or more. The gumball machine dispenses, you guessed it, gumballs, each of which have a different effect from extra lives and power-ups to absolutely nothing at all!







A giant plane swoops overhead dropping its load all over Tails – dumb fox should have got some speed boots like Sonic's!

TWO AT ONE!?!

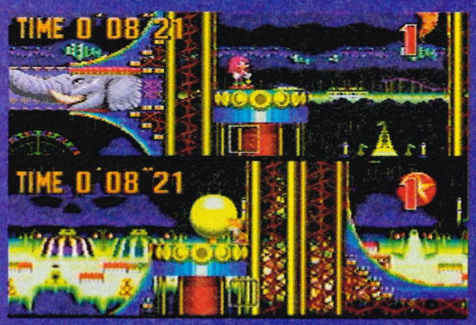
The simultaneous two-player mode is different to that in Sonic 2. Instead of using two shrunken screens on which to play, the sprites themselves have been reduced in size so you can see more of the level in both of the windows.



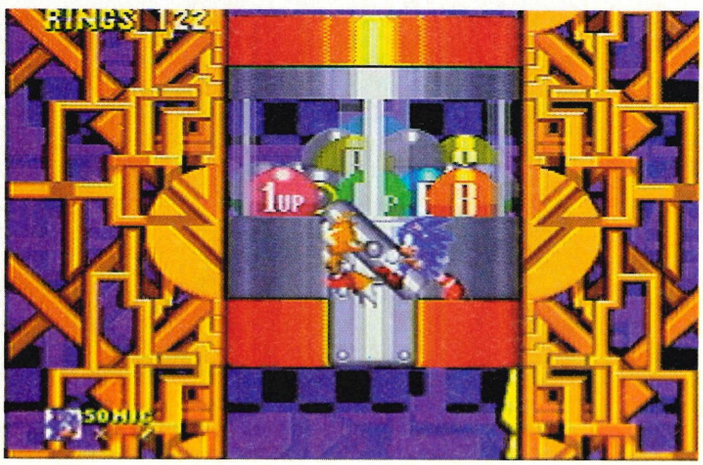
There are three options to select from in the two-player mode – OK, so if you count the EXIT option there's four. Don't be so pedantic!



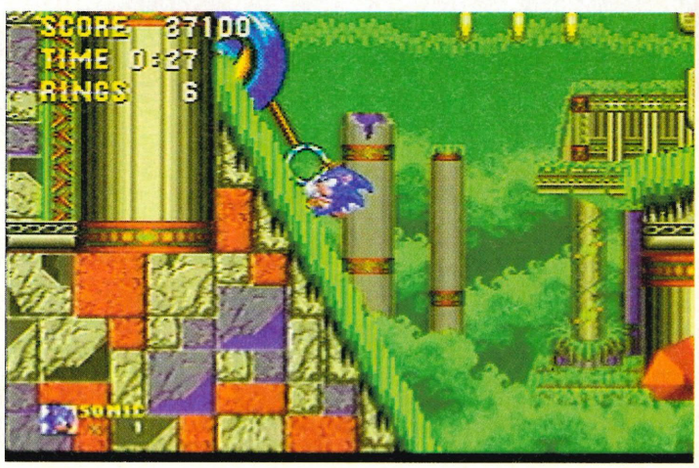
You probably don't have any friends if you have a Mega Drive so why bother with a two-player option? Who said that?

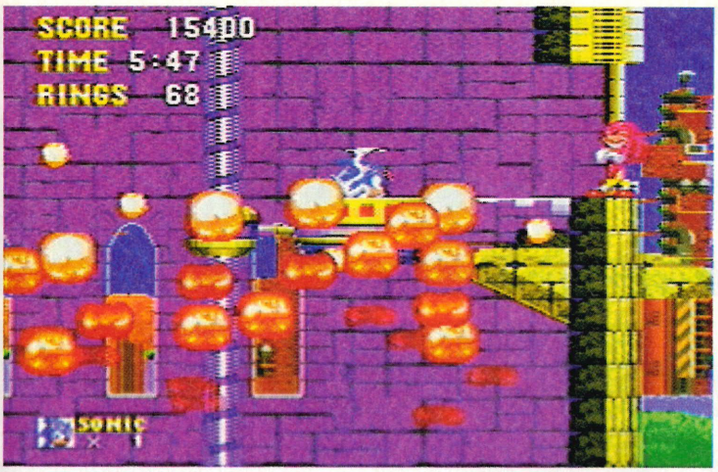


In the Grand Prix mode the first person who completes five laps of the short circuits is victorious



This is the gumball machine which you reach by collecting 50 rings and then running into a restart point. By knocking the flippers you can collect loads of really cool bonuses





TWO'S COMPANY, THREE'S CENSORED

So what have we got? Well, I must admit that Sonic 3 is as close to a perfect sequel-to-a-sequel as you'll ever see on the Mega Drive. Many will say that it's nothing more than a platform game, but then again it doesn't pretend to be anything else does it?

Wholly excellent backdrops and animated characters adorn some exquisitely designed and fiendish levels, each of which is far bigger than any of the previous two games. Music is excellent as per usual, contrasting between sweeping orchestral numbers to upbeat tunes in competition mode. There's new traps, new characters, secret corridors and rooms, new special and bonus stages, a totally re-hashed single and two-player option and the ability to save it all onto one of six game positions! What more could anyone ask for?

Sonic 3 not only impressed me, it exceeded my expectations in terms of just how much has been added to the overall game. You really can't fault Sega for producing a decent platform game that, despite its third cartridge release, still has that universal appeal that made the Sonic's previous two outings such successes. There's enough here to keep even the fiercest platform game critic (like myself I must confess) very happy, and this particular cynic recommends it to you all wholeheartedly.

OH SONIC, YOU'RE SO SPECIAL...



Sonic and Tails race around the sphere collecting blue balls. Watch out for the reds!



All the blue balls are collected, the reds disappear, and the path to the Emerald is clear!



And they did it. Sonic and Tails have grabbed an Emerald, only six more to go until SuperSonic



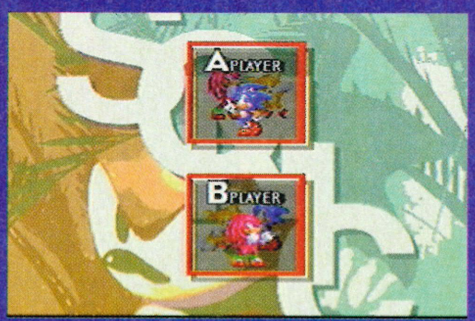
Grab the big ring to enter the special stage. There is one in every act. Can you find them?



▲ Oh no! I can't hold on any longer, my fingers are slipping – but I'm not telling Tails this because we're underwater and I'll drown if I open my mouth.



Huh, huh, pant, pant! Hold the lift, please! The 241st floor is too far up to take the stairs



In the two-player mode you can play with either Sonic, Tails or Knuckles – oo-er, missus! Steady on, there are small children present

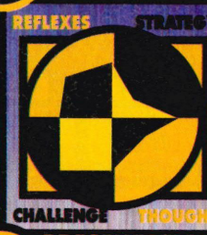
THE SECOND OPINION



LLOYD HOWE

After the excellent Sonic CD, Sonic 3 had a lot to live up to, and to my surprise it did! This is by far the biggest of all of the Sonic games and it is also the best. At heart it is still the same old platform game, but there is a lot more to do and it is also harder than the original which was criticised for being far too easy. Some great new features have been included, and the save game feature is a major blessing because it means that you don't have to play through the early levels to get back to the point you reached. If you liked Sonic then you will love this. It's more of the same, but this time it is 10 times better.

% RATINGS



PRESENTATION 93%
Faultless. User-friendly from the outset and full of the usual superb touches

GRAPHICS 92%
Excellent from start to finish, both before, during and after

SOUND 91%
As usual, a wide variety of technically polished music and sound effects

SHORT TERM PLAY 92%
Gripping from the outset. This is Sonic we're talking about!

LONG TERM PLAY 94%
Challenging and addictive, and the save game option is a stroke of genius

OVERALL 93
You've got to hand it to Sega. Astounding.

MEGADRIVE REVIEW



BY SEGA

SEGA

8-MEG

STYLE

PLATFORM

PRICE £44.99

PLAYERS 1/2

SKILL SETTINGS 3

RELEASE DATE

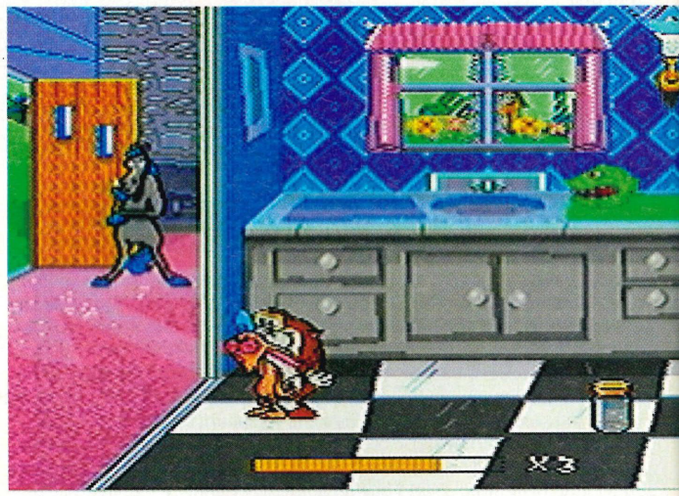
OUT NOW



Bug-eyed and plagued by hairballs, Julian Connolly was the right man to send in to review this latest Ren & Stimpy game

REN & STIM

Before Christmas this game may well have been greeted by a resounding chorus of "Who?" by all but a few mediaphiles. However since 10 January when this dysfunctional cat and dog started blazing a trail across BBC2, their popularity has soared. This particular game based on the characters' surreal antics, sees Stimpy inventing a machine that can turn household garbage into ordinary food. Ren doesn't believe this and in a effort to show how successful this Mutate-o-Matic can be, Stimpy overloads it causing it to explode. The game commands that you take control of one of the crazy-eyed mammals and recover the lost parts, including the all-important Gizmo and the Thingy. Predictably it is a platform game, but something tells me that it may be a little more unusual than most.



▲ **With a bipedal horse guarding the door Ren & Stimpy have no choice but to go on**

HAPPY HAPPY JOY JOY

Unlike previous attempts at R&S games on other formats, this one at least emulates the style of the cartoon series. From the sweet-looking giraffes that suddenly become raving carnivores in the zoo, to the eyeballs that scream when you burst them in the fridge level (eye-scream, geddit?), it is blatantly obvious that the anarchic humour has been transferred, in part at least, into the game. That is good news and helps make up for the fact that while Sega may have transferred the humour, all this cart really can offer is a platform game with a few extra bits – and there aren't very many of those, but more of that later.

It does at least look the part, with R&S both having the same wandering eyes and strung-out expressions we'll all come to know and love soon if the BBC has its way. Powdered Toast Man, the backwards flying superhero, makes an appearance and apparently many of the other characters in the game will be familiar to anybody who knows R&S. Oddly the backgrounds seem colourful but still a little dull – not exactly what I'd expected from this game.



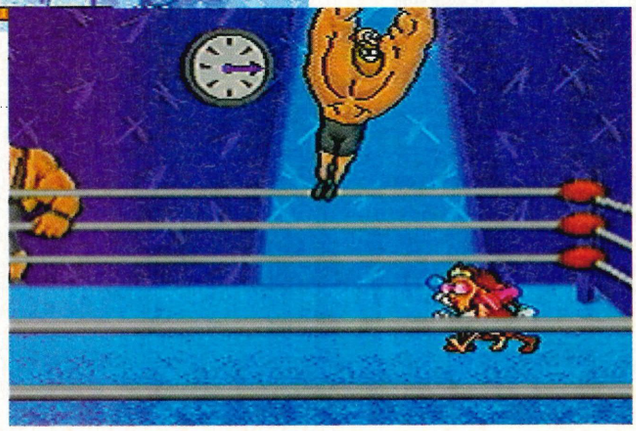
IMPORTANT WARNING!

The version of the game used in this review was an AMERICAN IMPORT and may not work on an official UK Mega Drive



◀ **Stimpy makes a balls-up and Ren just has to slap him across the chops**

▼ **Avoid the wrestler for as long as you can**



STIMPY YOU EEDIOT!

The humour is very evident though, right from the soundtrack through to what the two characters can do to each other during the course of the game. Control Ren and you can do all sorts of nasty things to Stimpy and vice versa – my personal favourite is when Ren slaps Stimpy and shouts "You eeediot!", which does nothing to the game but has me on the floor every time. Some of these are more useful than others, Stimpy's furballs actually cause damage whereas Ren's belch doesn't, but both characters have versions of each other's important moves. Each can dig a hole with the other and increase the length or height of the jump, all in typically mirth-inducing style. The theme here seems to be abuse your partner to gain some advantage in the game.



▲ **An enemy up above you can't reach? Just throw Ren up to get it!**

PY PRESENT STIMPY'S INVENTION



THINGS STIMPY CAN DO!



▲ Grab him round the stomach and squeeze. You'll get a big loud belch for all to hear and be disgusted by



◀ Use Ren for pole-vaulting large gaps

◀ "Pedal, Stimpy, pedal". Having just taken a hit R&S has gone a funny colour



▲ Need a hole digging? Just up-end Ren and use his snout as a spade



▲ Stimpy's favourite trick is to use Ren as a boomerang in order to pick up things and take out enemies





▲ Anyone for croquet? I don't think Ren is too chuffed but – hey! – who cares?

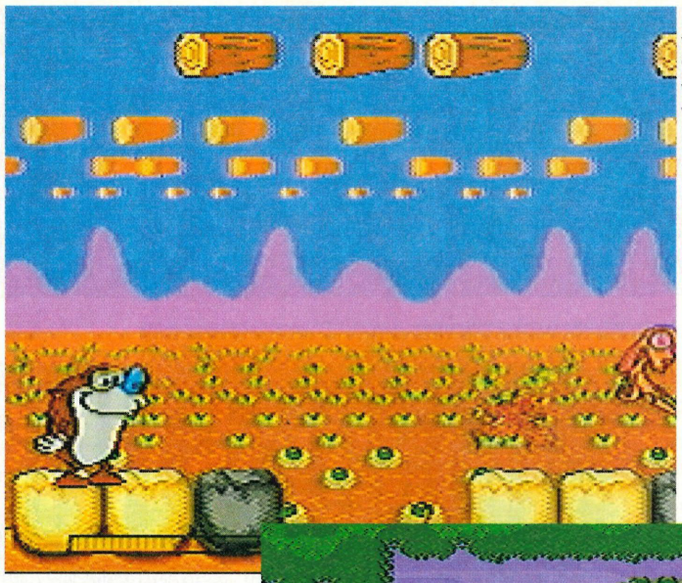


▲ Spin Ren's head fast enough and he'll soar into the air like a helicopter, all Stimpy has to do is hang on

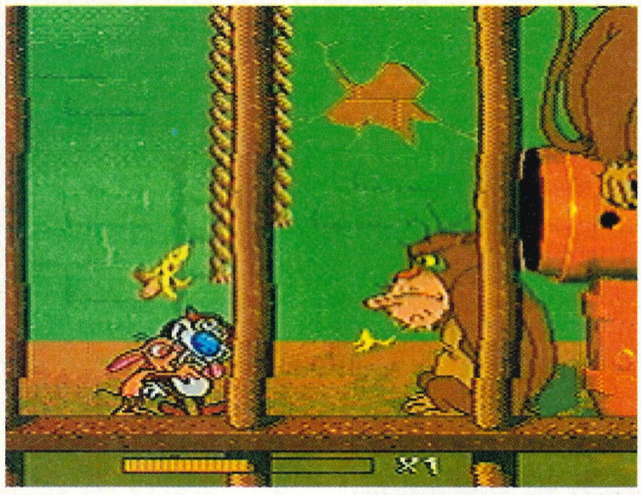
GRITTY KITTY LITTER

In the one-player game you control either of the two main characters, while the other one follows you around (to be used and abused). You bound through five levels, fighting off the attentions of anything from lawnmowers to hippos, all the while keeping an eye out for whatever bit of the machine you're are looking for on that level. All fairly standard so far, but with the wide variety of jumps and enemy-defeating tactics there should be a lot of variety in this game. For example Stimpy has three ways of flinging Ren about to hit enemies and collect bonus points, but most of the time you'll probably use just the one. The game doesn't throw enough difficult situations at you so you don't have to think a lot about which particular method of attack to use, you'll just stick to the basic one.

Of course the main problem is that the game doesn't throw enough gameplay at you – on easy mode three people completed the game within half an hour. Admittedly it isn't all platform game, there is a cycling section and a section reminiscent of Bubble Dizzy, but while the humour and gameplay make it really good fun there just isn't enough of it. To make things worse a password system and continues have been included, so if for some inexplicable reason you use all your lives before you finish it, you don't have to waste the 10 minutes or so it takes to play the first three levels.



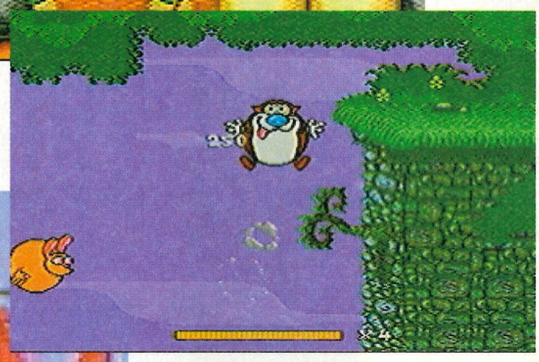
This is where things get very odd with flying logs and huge teeth?



About to get beaten up by an ape and all Ren can do is play with Stimpy's nose

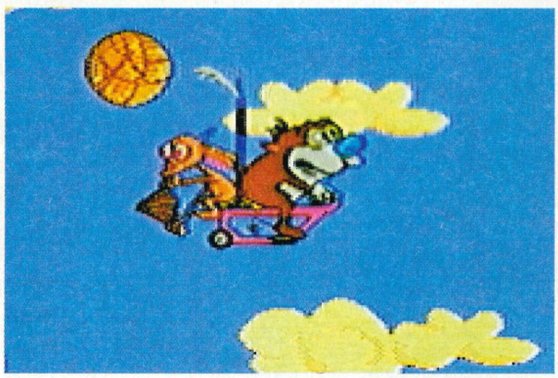


Dangling from washing lines is a favourite pastime in these parts



YOU LOUSY BUM

This is definitely unusual – for once we have a cartoon licence that is actually great fun to play! The potential for the gameplay is obvious, but unfortunately there is just not enough game. The sound is great with loads of speech and sound effects from the series, the animation of the two main sprites is almost perfect and there is loads of fun to be had just chucking each other around. This, coupled with the two-player game would mean that I am very close to recommending this game wholeheartedly…but I can't. How can I recommend a game that is the silicon equivalent of ordering a half-pint of beer at closing time – great while it lasts, but that's it and you ain't going to get any more? Maybe if the game was harder (even on hard level you can't hide the fact there is bugger-all quantity on this cart) then it might have been better. But as it stands it represents lousy value for money.



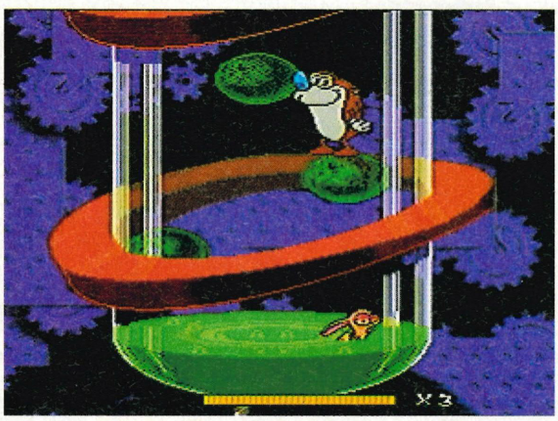
More frantic pedalling, but just look out for those flying rocks

THE SECOND OPINION



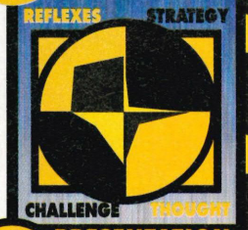
ALLIE WEST

Having been a fan of the cartoon series for a long time, I was somewhat dubious as to how the level of humour would be incorporated into the game. The SNES version was pretty appalling so I wasn't all that optimistic. However, what we have here is a brilliant little game incorporating some of the weirdest humour you are ever likely to see – but where's the gameplay? This game was beaten, thrashed and thrown back into the cupboard before the kettle had even boiled! Pah, not much money's worth here I can tell you.



Stand on the bubble, look smug and try to jump off before it bursts

%RATINGS



PRESENTATION 79%
Intro tune isn't so hot, but intro itself worth watching

GRAPHICS 83%
Top-notch representation of R&S but the rest is a little patchy

SOUND 78%
Plenty of little samples from the series but not much else

SHORT TERM PLAY 81%
Magic. Total hilarity as soon as you pick up the joypad

LONG TERM PLAY 12%
There isn't any. You'll have this finished within two hours

OVERALL 45
This has so much potential but the programmers just couldn't be bothered to give it enough room to work

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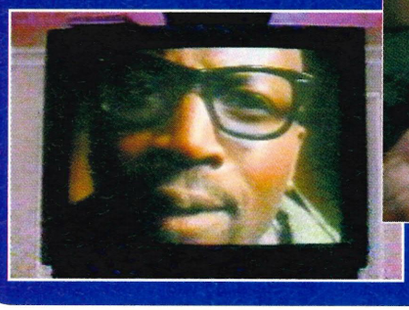
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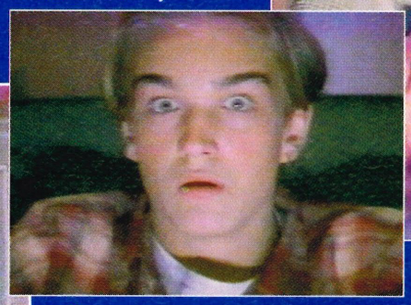
1993 was a good year for Sega. From a latest sales report issued from Sega USA, the Genesis outsold the Super Nintendo by "a significant margin", sales of the Game Gear increased by over 200 per cent and the Sega CD achieved an installation figure of one million units. Sonic also made yet another huge impact on the games market with his self-proclaimed pinball extravaganza Sonic Spinball, while Sonic CD stormed into the charts even though there have been critical reports cast at the legitimacy of Sega's flailing CD unit. But not one to rest on its laurels, Sega is set to attack 1994 with even more fervour than ever, hitting an unsuspecting audience with a powerful game-filled punch. In this special Sega preview feature we have a look at what you can look forward to in '94.

SEGA CD AD CAMPAIGN

Sega is quite proud that its CD unit has achieved nearly one million sales in the States, and this could be thanks to a forthright and visually impressive advertising campaign as seen here in these shots. However, considering America has a population around the 300 million mark I don't know if a piddly one million sales is really anything to get excited about!



"Haven't you got a Sega CD yet?"



"Well take a look at this!" Oh shit...

SEGA 1994: THE NEXT LEVEL

REBEL ASSAULT CD

Other than Virtua Racing, Rebel Assault is probably THE most eagerly awaited Sega CD game of this year - well it is in this office any way. Apparently it is to be a close conversion of LucasArts' PC game with the gamer taking the role of a Rebel pilot strapped in to the cockpit of highly manoeuvrable X-Wing, T16, Snowspeeder, or A-Wing craft.

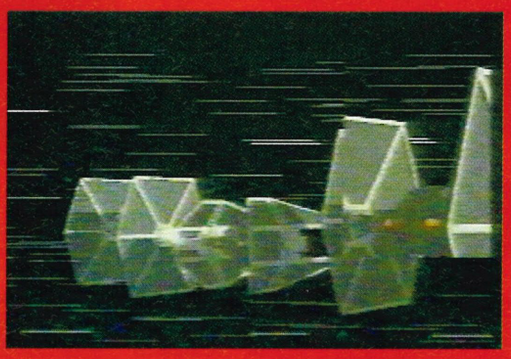
This game will not only appeal to Star Wars fanatics but flight sim and shoot'em-up fans as well. OK, so basically there's a lot of manic blasting and high speed chase sequences, but there's also a lot of strategy involved too. As a Rebel pilot you will have to master the controls of your craft and fly hazardous training missions before you can embark on a full blown assault on the forces of darkness and the ominous Death Star .

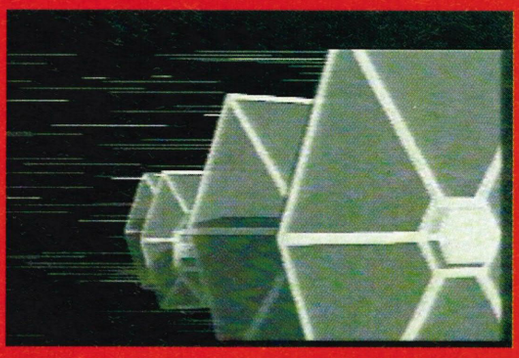
With the game based oh-so loosely on the first Star Wars film we can expect to see a considerable amount of FMV footage and crisp rendered graphics. It also seems likely that the full Star Wars soundtrack will be included for added atmosphere and effect, while we can also slaver with anticipation at the promised digitised speech.

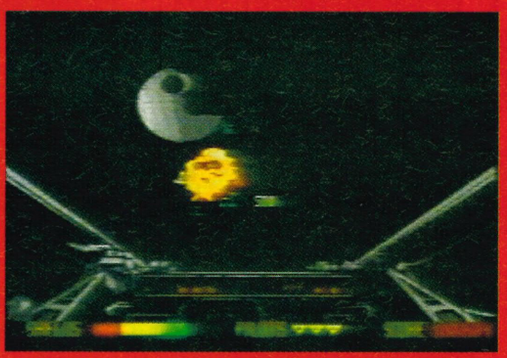
If the PC version really is any comparison to the Mega CD game then we will be treated to a visually stunning product with some fantastic sequences. That's right peeps, the Snowspeeder assault against the Imperial Walkers and the Death Star trench run await your presence.

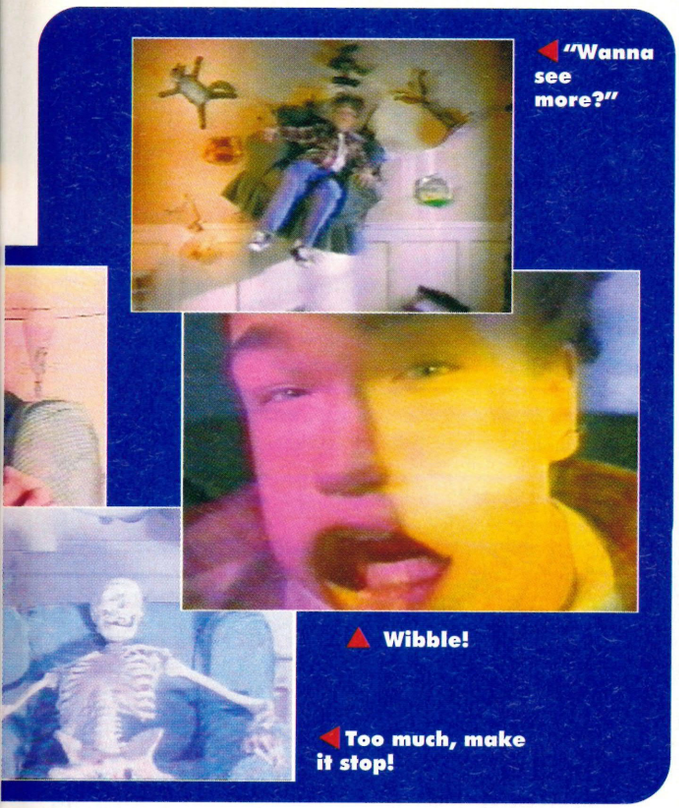
We have been told that we can expect to see Rebel Assault before the summer but this is looking unlikely.











"Wanna see more?"

Wibble!

Too much, make it stop!

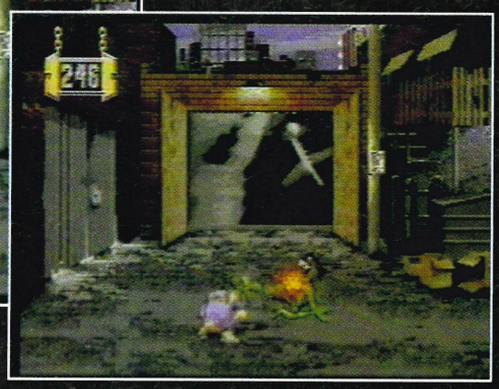
HAMMER VS EVIL D IN SOUL FIRE CD

Can you believe this one - a CD game based on rap star Hammer (who rather maturely dropped the MC some time ago)! Not only does it include a digitised sprite of Hammer himself but the soundtrack is all his own work too.

Very little background info is actually known on this title so what Hammer has to do (other than torture his enemies by singing at them!) is beyond us. But from what we've seen there's some sort of big video screen in the background - no doubt playing Hammer's vids - and some green sludge-type monsters than growl a lot. You thought the Make My Video series was bad enough, well think again!



Oh no it's death by singing. Arghhhh!



If the Make My Video Series drove you bonkers you ain't gonna survive this game







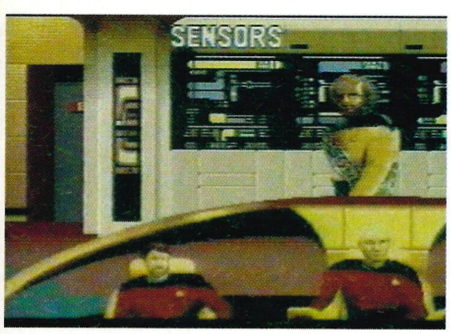
STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

With Star Trek: The Next Generation (ST: TNG) reaching its seventh and final series on satellite TV, it seems a little odd that it has taken so long for a game to surface here or in the States. ST: TNG is the most popular programme on American TV at the moment and after a six year long run why hasn't somebody picked up on a game licence until now?

However, it's finally here - and about time too. The game will not follow any of the stories outlined in the episodes or be in any way related to the first movie which is due to be screened later this year. The crew of the Starship Enterprise will be facing a brand-new adventure as you attempt to solve the 'Trinity Puzzle'.

As an action styled RPG we can expect to see ship-to-ship combat as well as 3D isometric adventuring, and cinematic sequences on the bridge itself. You will be able to take control of most of the major characters including Captain Picard, Commander Riker (Steady Allie! - Ed), Counsellor Troi and Commander Data, as you utilise each character's unique skills and attributes to solve the puzzles.

Sega is proud to boast that ST: TNG has over 100 hours of gameplay included, and from what we have seen already both Trekkies and RPG fans will be more than pleased with the game's content. ST: TNG is due for release in America this March at a retail price of $60 - the British release is set for sometime around June.











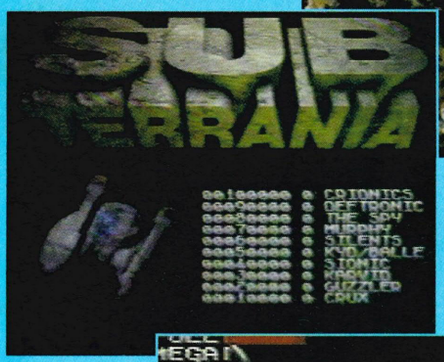
SUB-TERRANIA

When we first saw Sub-Terrania most of us ancient gamers instantly thought of Oids on the ST and Thrust on the C64. All the best games are based on tried and tested classic formulas but with Sega's new cart-based game, the resemblances are uncanny!

OK, so the graphics have been updated and brought in to the '90s but the basic gameplay stays the same. You control a small ship and it is your mission to help save an underworld mining colony from invading aliens - with full 360 degree craft rotation you can propel yourself through the caverns and narrow gaps with considerable ease. There are numerous special weapons to pick up (the bigger the better in our opinion!) that will aid you against some really mean-looking enemies and bomb-wretching guardians. But this isn't simply a nifty little blast-fest, you must also pay attention to your fuel reserves and shield power, seeking out new reserves of energy and power wherever possible.

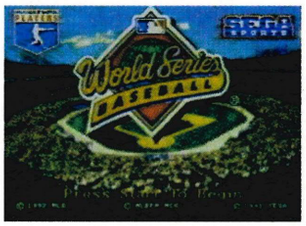
Sub-Terrania should be released in May and this one will be well worth looking out for if you are gagging for a decent shoot'em-up.







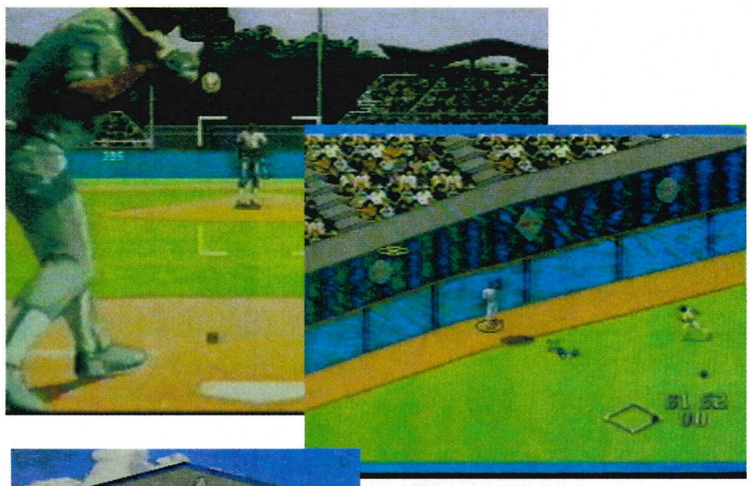
WORLD SERIES BASEBALL

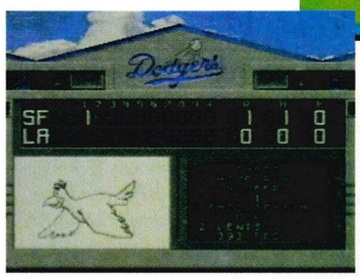


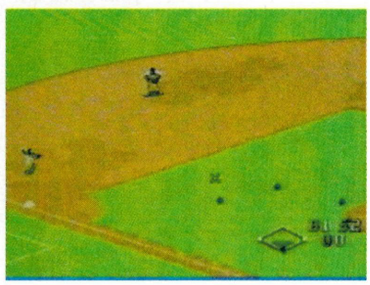
When we first saw this we thought it had to be a CD game, but to our surprise this one is coming out on cartridge. The main thing that had us believing it was CD is the incredible new 'in the batter's box' view, whereby a HUGE batter sweeps into shot, striking out at the ball. The view then switches to a standard overhead perspective with considerably smaller sprites.

World Series Baseball is the first officially licensed Major League Baseball (MLB) game for the Mega Drive. It features all 28 Major League teams as well as the official logos, 1993 player stats and kits, and allows the gamer to select between over 700 official MLB players!

There is a full speech soundtrack with a wide array of play lines and calls, as well as a euphoric crowd. The game will be 16 meg and includes a battery back-up for the season's save games, and we should hopefully be seeing it sometime in May.







PRIZE FIGHTER CD

Prize Fighter is yet another CD game directed by a noted Hollywood director. This time we see fight choreographer Ron Stein who staged fight sequences in "Rocky III" and "Raging Bull" taking the reins of Sega's interactive first-person perspective boxing game.

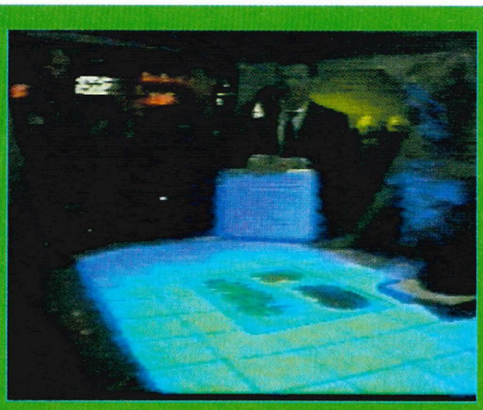
Featuring 'boxing legend referee' Jean LaBelle and famed announcer Michael Buffer, you dive in to the ring with 'real' opponents and try to knock them out while they duck, dive and throw punches back! The picture is in black and white (in Raging Bull style) and shows your opponents prancing across the canvas like prima donnas as you attempt to throw successful attacks.

Your gloves appear at the bottom of the FMV window and as you strike you witness your pixelated arm flying out towards the face of the enemy. To create a realistic 'in the ring' atmosphere, whenever you receive a punch the screen bounces around violently as an accompanying thud belts out from the TV/ monitor speakers. Again Prize Fighter is another of Sega's newies that is recommended for mature audiences. A release date for this title has not yet been confirmed.





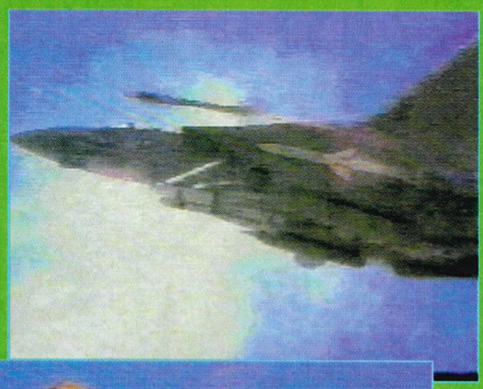




TOMCAT ALLEY CD

Tomcat Alley is, according to a Sega press release, "the first aerial combat game for Sega CD to utilise actual flight footage and puts players into the cockpit of the navy's most lethal jet fighter, the F-14X Tomcat". From what we have seen both here and at the Las Vegas CES, Tomcat Alley is graphically very impressive featuring some incredibly clean FMV, but it seems that the gameplay may be lacking somewhat.

The game features plenty of FMV showing your ground crew, aerial sequences and stunning combat footage. As a combat sim rather than a standard flight sim, we feel that this project may be a little ambitious with FMV footage being used throughout all the combat sequences to generate 'realism' and a cinematic feel. However, the version seen in Vegas was not complete and it would be unfair to make any rash judgements at this stage.



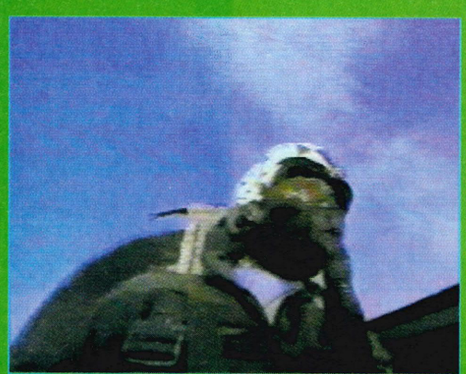


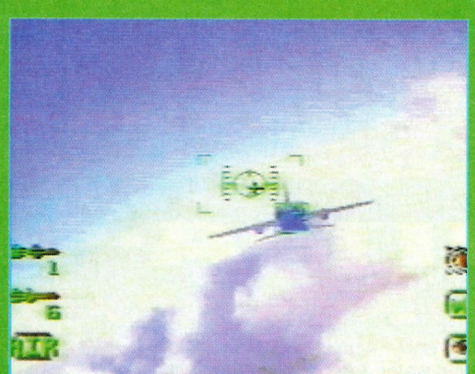


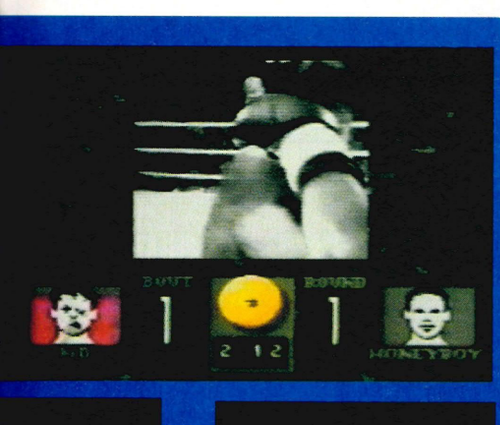
The game has been directed by Sam Nicholson, a Hollywood visual effects specialist who has worked on films such as Highlander II, Ghostbusters and Star Trek The Motion Picture. It would seem that with every new game released the video industry takes one more step closer to Hollywood, and it is CD games such as Tomcat Alley that feeds these opinions.

Due to the aggressive content of the game Sega USA is slapping an MA-13 rating on the title and recommend that Tomcat Alley be played by mature audiences only, or at least with parental guidance. Tomcat Alley gets a US release in March but a UK release is not yet known.

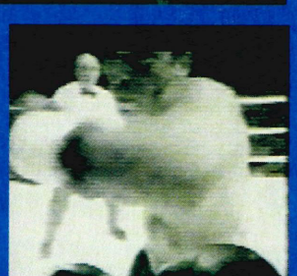










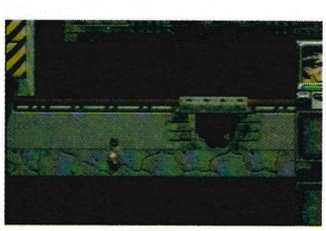


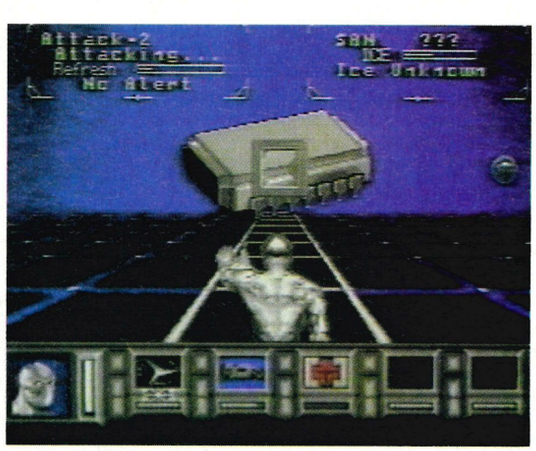
SHADOWRUN

There have been some absolutely fantastic RPGs on the Mega Drive up to this point – the stunning Landstalker as an example. However, none have been as eagerly anticipated as the forthcoming Shadowrun, based on the table top RPG of the same name.

Late last year the Super Nintendo version of Shadowrun met with rapturous applause from both the specialist press and games players alike - it was a superb piece of programming and adventuring. The Mega Drive version follows the same theme as the SNES game, but it apparently does not utilise the same story-line thus offering a whole new Shadowrun adventure for the fans.

Set in Seattle in the year 2053 Shadowrun has a cyber-punk theme whereby the main characters are a bizarre blend of flesh, cybertechnology and magic powers. As a Shadowrunner it is up to you to solve a massive corporate mystery and take advantage of the computer nets that link up the futuristic city of Seattle.





The main bulk of the game is played on a 3D isometric play area viewed from above with the view switching to a conventional 3D perspective when you enter some buildings. You can also 'jack' into a computer matrix and at these points the graphics become more stylised and polygon based to generate a high-tech, circuitry feel.

Look out for Shadowrun on import in April and then officially sometime before the summer.

TECHNIQUE ZONE

Hello there, one and all. Welcome to another Technique Zone, brought to you this month by a big pile of fish. In among the throbbing lump of scales lurks a piece of blotting paper. On that paper lies the answers to that most famous of computer-related questions ever – the question invented by one Derek Griffiths during an episode of Heads and Tails, in which he asked "Have you got any cheats for Monty on the Run on the Commodore?". Tonight we answer that question and more.

On the lighter side of things, why not do some cheats and send 'em to us, along with some money? We all live in a big plastic funnel that floats on a lake in Bangor, but the postman's boat is kept at 16/17 Hollybush Row, Oxford, OX1 1JH, so it would be wise to write to that address for your mail to be passed on to us.

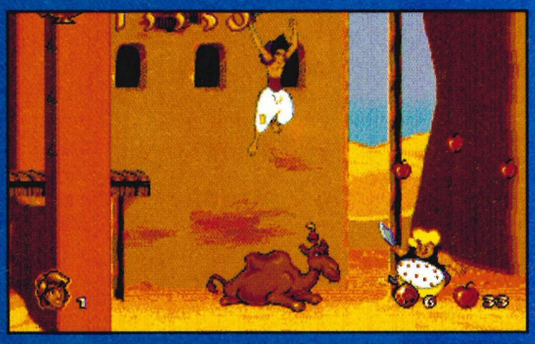


SPIDERMAN VS KING PIN

Spiderman, Spiderman, lost his knickers in a frying pan. Can he swim? Can he heck. If he tried, he'd break his neck. Look out – here comes the Spiderman. King Pin, King Pin, his brother's called Rolling and his Dad's called, er, Jum. Can he shave? Maybe so. My his bumfluff looks tidy, thanks to Miracle Gro.

Enough of all that chalfont – here are some car-azy places to find comics of questionable value:

1. Starret Leight Building
2. Harlem Meer
3. West 70th
4. St Patrick's Cathedral
5. Bus Terminal
6. Civic Centre
7. Clarkson St (Hy Ho, Ocean/Nick, He Ha)
8. East Harlem
9. Central Park Zoo
10. Court St
11. Empire State Building
12. West St
13. Bleeker St
14. South Power Station
15. First Avenue
16. Houston St
17. Jillard School of Music
18. Washington Street
19. Central Park North
20. Henry St
21. Riverside Drive.



ALADDIN

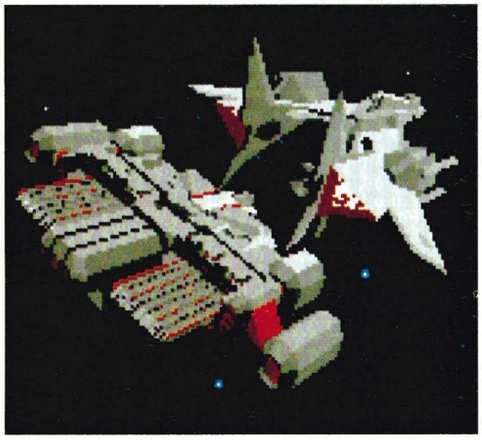
Smokin' Joe Egg from Fingerbobs is a real rascal at Aladdin and he visited one Adrian Hilston from Cornwall while Hilston slept. The result of these daring antics? A mess on the carpet, fingermouse – dead, and this strange thing scratched on the Vymura wallpaper…yes, a cheat for Aladdin.

When you see the title screen, why not hit A and then C four times and then B four times? Why, a menu is there! A menu that we have never looked upon before. A menu that is so good it has plumage.

SILPHEED

Many years ago, man set out on a mission. A quest to find water. After a long search, the bloke found water and alongside the water was a parchment. On the parchment were the following words: 'Extra continues can be had on Silpheed should you play a normal game until one continue remains. When this easy task is done and the demo has begun, press Right, Up, A, B, C, Left, Left, Down, C, A and Start. If a title screen you see, 10 continues are given free'.

The bloke was so amazed by his discovery that he forgot his troubles, left his small village to dehydrate and die, and set about colonising the patch by the river. A place we now call Denmark.

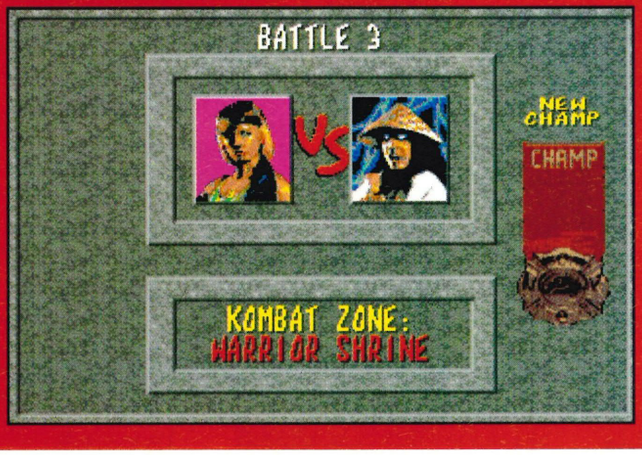


MONTY ON THE RUN

So what IS the answer to Derek's question? We put the question to our resident 'copper-top' and pickle eater, Dave Newbury.

"Cheers, thanks. Thank you ladies and gents, my name's Dave Newbury and I'm here to let you in on the invincibility thing, y'know, on Monty on the Run. Erm, Commodore. Aye. OK, so if you get a good score, like, and then you die, yeah, well if you type, like, 'I Want To Cheat' on the high-score table, like, then the screen sort of changes, colour that is, and you're right. Like." Dave's question next month? Don't know yet, but it'll be taxing.





MORTAL KOMBAT

On a remote island lies a box full of shells. Shells of different shapes and sizes, different colours and shades – they shine. There are too many shells to soak, but if you select 30 of them and toss them into a small clearing with Swarfega, then Game Genie codes are born!

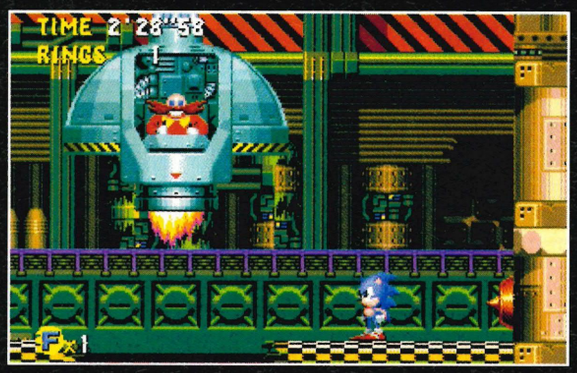
We tried this ancient ritual round at Lloyd's house and got these codes:
The first is for midget men – BBCA-AAZ6
The second is for a black background – CJ1A-AA22
The last is for an appearance by Shadows – ABCA-BBAA.

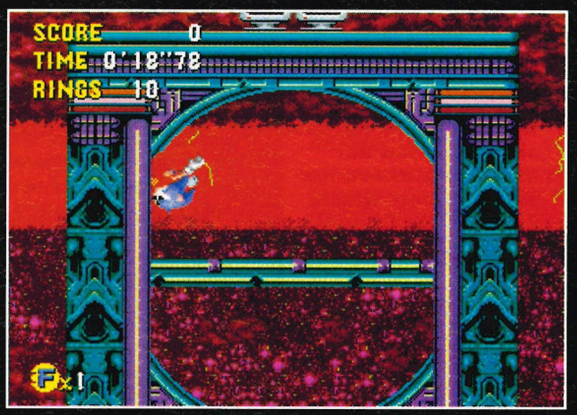
TECHNIQUE ZONE

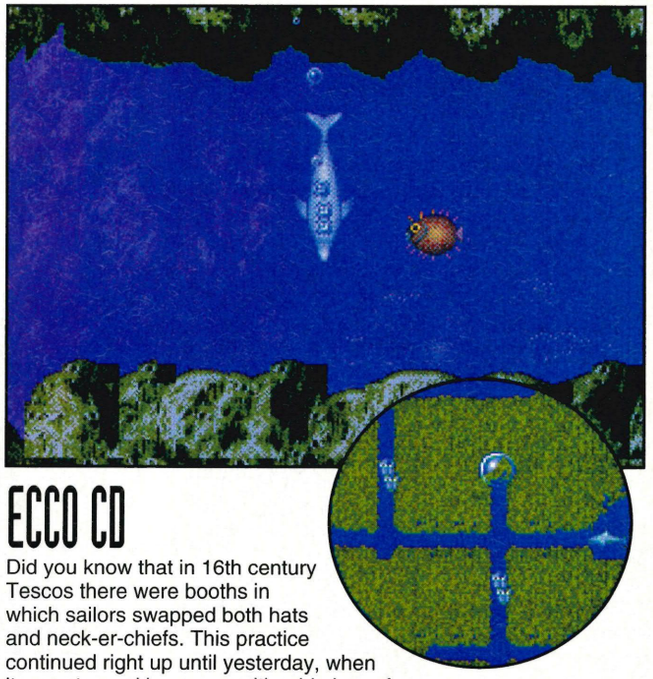
SONIC CD

I remember when my mum used to make a big loaf of fresh baked bread and we'd all sit around and have a slice while it was still warm. The bread that is. If there's one thing she taught me, it was how to make a lovely cup of tea and how to cheat on Sonic CD. On the title screen, I'd press Down, Down, Down, Left, Right, then A to enter the music test screen. Then I'd enter FM40 PCM 12 DA 11 and wet my pants when I saw Tails next to a car. My mum would mop up my accident with her magic broom thing, while I started a game and pressed A to change the screen character and C to place it where I thought best, B played the game as normal, but if I wanted to time trial myself, A or C jumped and B passed objects! No. Passed through objects.

I drink Yorkshire Tea nowadays. It's expensive travelling from Kent every day, but I'm on the change. Shut that door, Kent.







ECCO CD

Did you know that in 16th century Tescos there were booths in which sailors swapped both hats and neck-er-chiefs. This practice continued right up until yesterday, when it was stopped by a man with a big bag of plaster. The man said "Pause the game when Ecco is facing you, sailor. Press B, C, B, C, Down, C, Up and the menu will appear for your perusal".

The man, called April, then beat the booth to a pulp with his bag of plaster, spilling grains of the valuable bag contents all around. We call this plaster casting now, of course.

The sailor died of scurvy, naturally.

LLOYD'S BARBER SHOP

The 'alternative' wacky letters page with everyone's fave reviewer – Lloyd 'Zip' Howe.

DEAR LLOYD **I was recently made homeless because my wife left me for the milkman and I could no longer afford the mortgage repayments on my two-up-two-down hovel in Whalley Range. I had to vacate the property before I had a chance to salvage anything except my Mega Drive, a few clothes, a copy of Razzle and a pen and paper. It is raining as I write this, so excuse any smudge marks, I am cold, hungry and have nowhere to go. I have lost all my cartridges except one – Afterburner III...and a dog has just urinated on my head as I sat in a puddle.**

Please cheer me up by replying to my letter and if possible could you send me a couple of posters to use as sheets to sleep under. Could you?

Barry Nohouse, The Pavement, High Street, Barnstaple.

LLOYD REPLIES What a shame, eh? Still, every cloud has a silver lining I suppose. Except yours that is. Ha Ha! So you're sat in a gutter with nothing to your name except Afterburner III, you poor git. What you expect me to do about it?

Sorry I can't send you any posters, but I need them all to light the fire in my lovely warm, paid-for house (the ignition on the gas fire's knacked). By the way, I'll have two pints of gold top and plenty of cream! Ha ha hup! Hey, could I have one extra please! Hoo Hee Ha!

I tell you what – send me that copy of Razzle and I won't talk about your smelly dog-urine clothes, or your dyslexic handwriting – sorry – that's because of the rain, isn't it? Or is it wee? Anyhow, send Razzle quick. Not that I'm desperate or anything. No, I could get a bird anytime. I'm so quick witted and funny. Course I could. No, really.

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SHADOW OF THE BEAST 1 2 &3	0891 445 943
MORTAL KOMBAT	0891 445 987

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TECHNIQUE ZONE

ETERNAL



Ever since we reviewed Eternal Champions in Issue 25 and gave it a massive 82 per cent, we've been inundated with requests for tips for the game, so here is the Eternal Champions Technique Zone. As the manual already contains all the special moves, here are all the characters' more powerful normal moves in the game, as well as tips for each player on how to defeat the Eternal Champion.

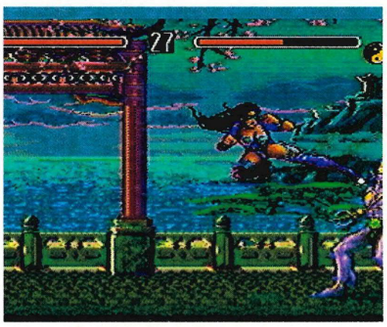


SHADOW
(Shadow Yamoto)
1993 AD

Trained in Ninjitsu and Taijitsu, Shadow is quick and agile with great defensive abilities. Her most devastating attack moves involve her razor-sharp fan and her exploding mines. Her smokescreen attack, followed by repeated hard kicks (Z) will usually throw an opponent as she reappears.



The swing throw, 14 per cent damage, F + (Z) or F + (Y)



The jumping punch, 11 per cent damage, U/F + (Y)



The low stick slash, 12 per cent damage, D + (Z)



The triple stick slash, 12 per cent damage, F + (X)

Repeated hard kicks to the head with (B) are your best bet against the Eternal Champion. If you get boxed in a corner use the smokescreen to escape.



The sliding kick, 11 per cent damage, D + (C)



MIDNIGHT
(Mitchell Midleton Knight)
1967 AD

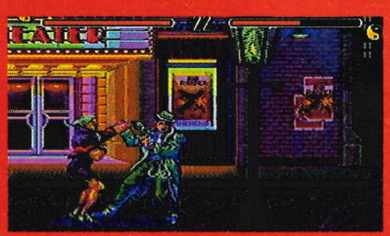
Midknight uses Jeet Kune Do. He is extremely fast and strong, and excellent in defence yet slow to recover from injury. Use his speed as an advantage to avoid being hit, while attacking with his life drain and flying wall smash. The best attack is to bedazzle your opponents and then hit them hard.



The raised throw, 16 per cent damage, F + (Y) or F + (Z)



The tornado, 10 per cent damage, D + (C)



The multi-hit, 14 per cent damage, (Z)

The Eternal Champion is best defeated with the (B) kick. If he insults you try a wall smash, if he blocks then throw him hard.



TRIDENT
(Trident)
110 BC

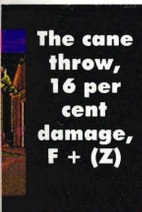
He used Capoeria as an Atlantean gladiator, and now uses his spinning trident to inflict extreme damage, while his plasma bolt unleashes all his power in a bolt a flame. Trident is both quick and powerful, yet was created by a peaceful race.



LARCEN
(Larcen Tyler)
1920 AD

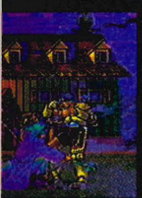
Larcen is slower than some of the champions, yet is more able in both his ability to take and recover from injury. His Praying Mantis Kung Fu-style means he can jump to the ceiling and drop with devastating force. He uses his grappling hook to good effect with his power sweep.

CHAMPIONS



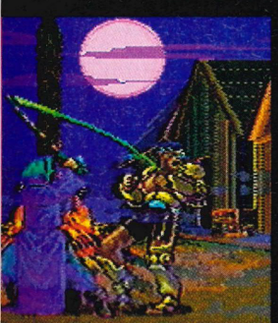
The cane throw, 16 per cent damage, F + (Z)





XAVIER (Xavier Pendragon) 1692 AD

Burned at the stake as a Warlock, Xavier was invited to the contest as an alchemist. His defence is very strong, and he uses his Hapkido Cane Fighting techniques to perform his dragon trap and attract and smack techniques.



Use a jumping punch U, (Z) to defeat the Eternal Champion. If he insults you try and hit him with the Midas touch. Use D + (B) if you can get close enough to him.



SLASH (Slash) 50,000 BC

Slash likes to inflict pain and in fact uses that principle as his fighting style. He recovers quickly, but his attacking power is incredible. He destroys people with his spinal crush and finishes them off with a running head-butt.



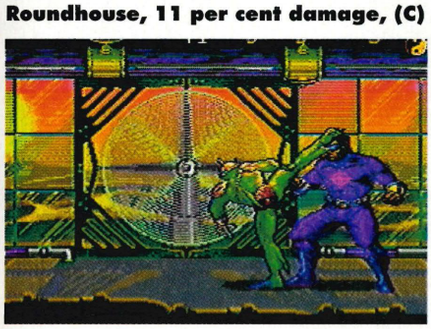
The baseball shot, 10 per cent damage, F + (Z)



The twisting club, 12 per cent damage, D + (C)
(INSET) The cartwheel, 10 per cent damage, (C) at a distance

Use the Power Thud attack to hit the Eternal Champion when he isn't blocking. When he is dizzy hit him with F + (Z).

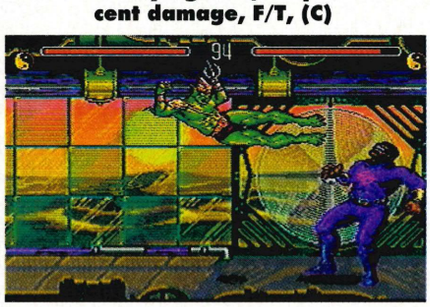
Roundhouse, 11 per cent damage, (C)





The jumping kick, 10 per cent damage, U , (B)

The flying kick, 11 per cent damage, F/T, (C)



Defeat the Eternal Champion using a jumping kick, (C). If you corner him, use D + (C). If you are cornered use U + (Z) to escape.

The hard throw, 16 per cent damage, F + (X) or F + (Z)





The flying kick, 11 per cent damage, U/F + (C)

The backflip, 5 per cent damage, D;D/B/B, (A)



The Eternal Champion is best beaten using a jumping (C) kick. If you get caught in a corner, use the F + (Z) to throw him away.

TECHNIQUE ZONE



BLADE
(Johnathan Blade)
2030 AD

Blade performs his Kenpo style with great power but at very slow speed. This makes him vulnerable to attack from the faster fighters. He makes up for his lack of speed with the dangerous tracking blade and the fury of his wild attack.



The flying punch, 12 per cent damage, U/F , (Z)



The back-kick, 11 per cent damage, D + (C)



The double chop, 12 per cent damage, (Z)

Jump at the Champion with (B) to hit him hard. When he is insulting you, stun-bolt him.



RAX
(RAX Coswell)
2345 AD

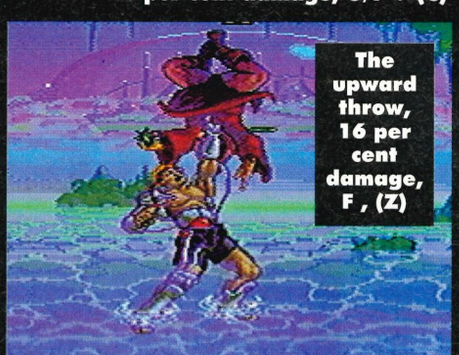
This man-machine can take an unbelievable amount of punishment. He trained in Muay Thai kickboxing as a human, before becoming the R-obotic A-rtificial X-oskeleton. He is also powerful when delivering the cyber kick and overload moves.



The downward jumping kick, 12 per cent damage, U/F + (C)

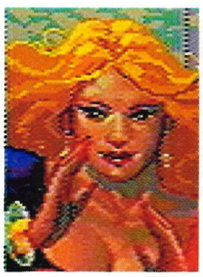


The flying spin, 12 per cent damage, U , (Z)



The upward throw, 16 per cent damage, F , (Z)

The Eternal Champion will take a few lock and load attacks while insulting you if you can release them. Use jumping kick U , (B) to defeat him finally.

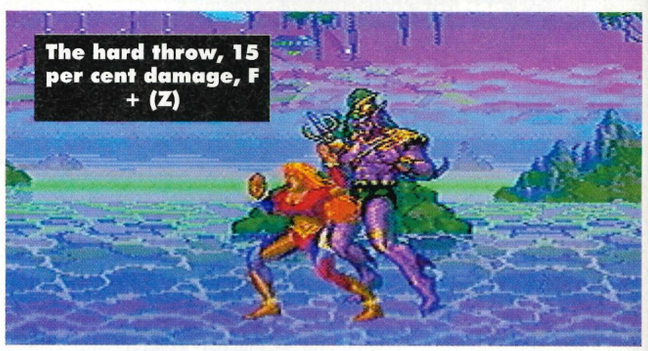


JETTA
(Jetta Maxx)
1899 AD

Jetta learnt her Savate and Pencak Silat fighting styles while an acrobat in a Russian circus. She is extremely fast and incredibly strong, but slow to recover from injury. Her best attacks are the flying choke hold and the death dive.



The cartwheel kick, 10 per cent damage, (C)



The hard throw, 15 per cent damage, F + (Z)



The triple kick, 16 per cent damage, (B) close

Jump attack with (C) to do most damage on the Eternal Champion. The Phase attack works well against him.

So there you have it – every character's strongest moves fully explained, plus tips for each character to beat the Eternal Champion. Now you have no reason not to be reborn and change the future for the better.

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As always we'll be bringing you a huge review of one of the biggest games of the moment. Watch out for something truly stunning!

ISSUE FIVE ON SALE FEBRUARY 28

NEXT MONTH

TECHNIQUE ZONE

LANDSTA

Even after last month's Landstalker extravaganza we have had loads of people ringing in asking for help with the later levels of the game. By now anyone following this guide should be proficient in controlling young Nigel, which is why we are going to miss out some of the simpler, less important parts and concentrate on the vital areas where most people get stuck. At the end of this instalment we will have conquered Mir's Tower, sailed across the high seas and uncovered a devious plot hatched by someone who was supposed to be a friend. Read on dear readers, for soon you too will be able to complete the largest Mega Drive game ever!

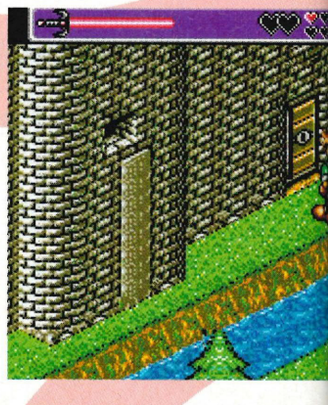
MIR'S TOWER

Last month we finished just after picking up the green armlet from the crypts in Mercator. The next step is to wander all the way over to Mir's tower. When you reach it Nigel will hold up the armlet and break the spell over the entrance, which means you can now go in. There are lots of signs inside which you should read. They will all ask if you are sure you want to carry on, to which you should obviously say yes. This will open up secret doors so that you can carry on through.



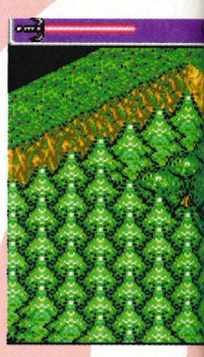
All of the following rooms are pretty simple and basically involve you killing monsters to gain access to the exit. If you can't do this by this stage of the game, then you don't really stand a chance! Soon you will meet Miro who is a complete double of your fine self. To get past him pick up the clove of garlic hidden a couple of rooms below him and use it – the smell will make him run away! Follow him and he will disappear through a solid wall. Walk through it yourself.





You will come to a teleport pad that whisks you away when you touch it. You will arrive in one of a set of rooms with teleport pads in. Keep jumping on the pads until you appear in a room with a gate and a switch. Use the switch to open the gate and then leave. When you find a key, return to this room and jump on the pads again until you arrive in a place filled with mummies. Kill them all and jump up the steps.





If you are quick enough you will see Miro disappear through a door. Unlock it with the key and follow him. He will attack you, but you can beat him because you have the love of a good woman on your side (puke).

Keep on going and you will meet Mir, the evil wizard of the castle. After turning Miro to the dust from whence he came, he will whiz about chucking fireballs at you. Once you have mastered a good technique with which to hit him, he is relatively easy to kill. The best trick is to stand roughly on the edge of the carpet and walk towards him. As he whizzes off, turn to one side and lash out with your sword which will hopefully hit him. Keep doing this until he gives up.

When you are victorious, Mir will tell you that the Duke of Mercator is not what he seems and that it is he who has kidnapped the princess. Time to go back to Mercator!





LKER

THE CASTLE DUNGEONS

Go back to Mercator castle and talk to the duke. As you arrive you will see Kayla, Wally and Ink being chucked into a pit, which you get thrown into as well! It is now a simple task of working your way back up out of the dungeon and back into the castle. Go through all of the doors and rescue any innocent villagers held there. Kill all the guards and keep going upwards until you meet Zak and the princess.





Jump down off the ledge and go back into the castle to the soldiers' quarters. Save Arthur from the overgrown knight who is fighting him and he will tell you to go upstairs and hit the suit of armour. Do exactly that and a ladder will appear. Climb up and get the key from the chest.





Leave the castle and walk down the strip of grass by the castle wall and you will arrive here, at the door where you saw two guards come out of earlier. Unlock the door and go inside. In one of the rooms is a switch that can only be accessed by jumping up an obscured set of stairs. Activate the switch and there will be an earthquake. Leave the room and go outside again and you will see that the fountain has disappeared and that there is a hidden doorway there. Go through it.



Work your way through the tunnels until you end up in Greenmaze, where there are two blue trees blocking an exit – remember them because they come in handy later on. Greenmaze really lives up to its name...it's green and very maze-like. On some of the screens, killing all the monsters reveals a chest. Keep roaming around making note of the paths you have already been down until you find a dog lying on its side. Walk up to it and Friday will cure it. The dog, whose name is Einstein, will run away. Follow him along the platform and round the hidden path to the woodcutter's house, who will give you a whistle.



Keep walking around the maze until you can see the sunstone hidden behind a row of trees. Friday will come out of your backpack and talk to you. Use the whistle and the woodcutter will come along and chop the trees down. Pick up the sunstone and then go all the way back to Ryuma and climb up to the top of the lighthouse. Give the sunstone to the old man and open the chest. It is now safe for ships to leave the harbour through the fog. Go to Mercator and head south to the docks. On one of the jetties is a ship – climb aboard and talk to the three blokes at the front of the ship. You will now sail away to the next part of the game.



Land at the port and go straight into the village. All of the villagers have been kidnapped and evil knights are inside the houses instead. Save the game and then head off westward and up the mountain path.

TECHNIQUE ZONE

When you have fought your way to the top of the mountain, enter the cave and fall down the ladders that you will see, right to the bottom. You will arrive at a junction and you should go out of the west exit. In the following corridor is the exit to the dungeon but it is not yet open.

Keep on going and you will find a door with no visible way of opening it. Go past this and you will come to a room with lots of spiked balls moving up and down, and some skeletons that attack. Fight your way past these, carefully avoiding the balls and then activate the switch that you will find. Go back to the sealed door and it will now be open.





Through the door is a narrow passageway with lots of moving balls in it. It is possible to walk down the very edge of the platform without getting hit, but this is very hard and you will probably fall off into the lava below. Your best bet is to steam along the passage taking all the hits in your stride and then topping up with Eke Eke or Dahl later on.

You will now come to a room that has two sets of platforms that move up and down. Jump across the platforms to the exit high up on the north wall and you will be able to rescue some prisoners. Go out of the exit in the south wall and you can get some Eke Eke.



Go right back to the start of the dungeon to the point where you first fell down to the bottom of the ladders. Now take the east exit. You will come to another room with platforms that move up and down, but this time they move to different heights and are different distances apart. Try to jump onto the next platform when it is at its lowest point – you should easily make it across. If not, you will fall into the pit and have to climb out again.

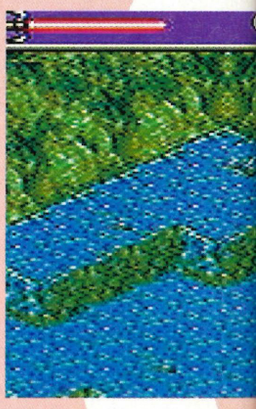
When you come to a room that is full of spikes, jump on the moving platform and wait for it to carry you to safety. In the next room there are loads of monsters. The north exit takes you to a room with a locked door and lots of mushrooms, but you have no key so go through the east door instead.





There are tons of monsters in the next room, and five pots. Resist the temptation to chuck the pots at the monsters because you must use them to build a ladder to reach the next exit. Keep heading west, fighting through the hordes of monsters and you will come to a hole in the ground. Fall down and you will find a switch that you could see before but not reach. Activate it and then go back up, retrace your steps and keep on heading east.

Soon you will meet some villagers who have a chest in front of them. Open it to find a key. Go back to the room with all the mushrooms in and unlock the door. Forget the exit to the south as this only drops you further back in the level, instead fall down the hole in the ground.



TECHNIQUE ZONE

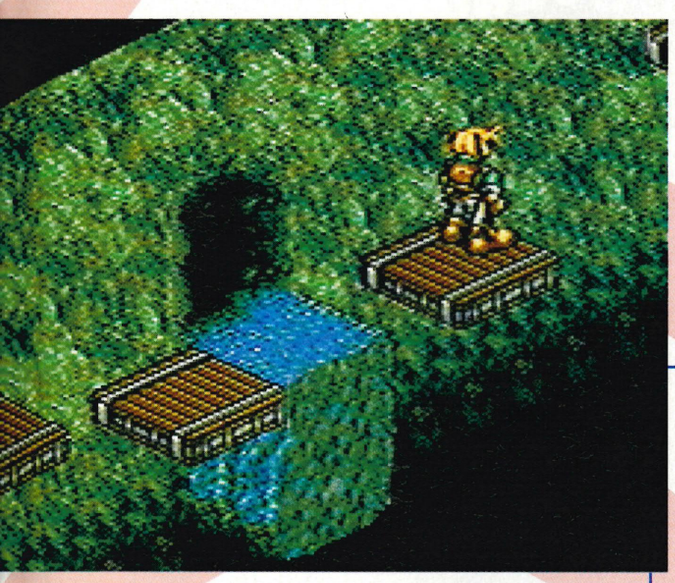


Raid all of the chests you find and activate the switch. Leave the room and jump off the platform into the unknown. Keep going until you come to a room full of fire, making sure you don't fall in. Jump across the platforms, get the armour and put it on. Go through the exit and rescue the remaining villagers.

Now you must trek all the way back to the dungeon's exit, ie the door near the start of the dungeon that was sealed. Go there and keep walking until you eventually come to the next village. Save the game in the church.

Explore the surrounding area, talking to all of the people you find, and then leave by the stairs in the north. Soon you will come to a vast expanse of water. Stand on the pier and Mercator and his minions will sail past. Go east until you come to a hill you can climb. Stand right at the top and the duke will sail past and go into a temple on the other side of the water. Go back to the village and you will find that a big pit has been opened. Jump down it into the dungeons below.





Most of this dungeon involves you trying to keep your balance on moving platforms. If you fall off, the chances are you will fall right the way down into the pit full of ghosts and have to start all over again!

In one of the rooms there are four holes and three chests. If you put the chests in the holes and stand in the other hole, a chest will appear. Keep jumping between the moving platforms and work your way right up to the top of the dungeon. Eventually you will come to a room with four exits and lots of skeletons. Kill the skeletons and three of the gates will open.

Go in each one of them in turn. Kill all the monsters and a chest will appear containing a key. When you have all the keys, unlock the remaining gate. You will be attacked by many different monsters, but don't kill them. Run away and find the pot in the corner of the room. Place it next to the raised platform so that you can climb over it and the monsters can follow. If you can get one of them to stand on the switch in the centre of the room, a platform will momentarily appear and you can jump on it and out of the exit.



A large knight with a giant hammer will now attack, but he is easily dealt with. Kill him and the healing boots will appear. Pick them up and put them on. Unlock the exit and you will end up outside again.

Climb up the mountain path until you reach one of the temples of Gaia. Open both chests and stand right in front of the statue to get your energy back. Use one of the silver statues of Gaia and lots of rocks will fall. These will land in the lava nearby which means that the exit is no longer blocked.



Go out of the door and follow the path around the building and you will find yourself outside the temple you could see from the top of the hill earlier. Inside you will find your hardest challenge yet, but you'll just have to wait until next month for the final part of the Technique Zone Landstalker guide!

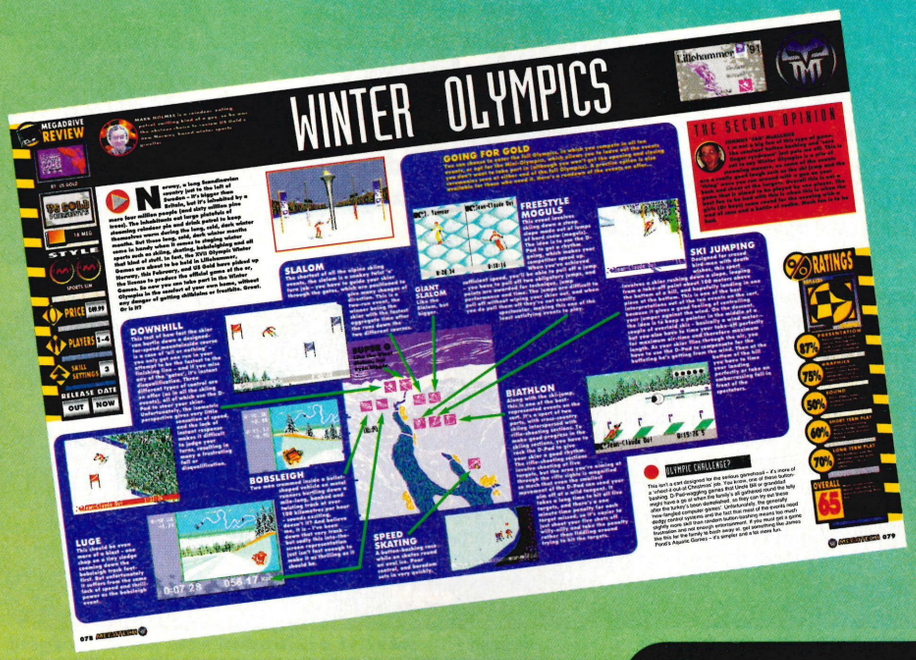
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VS MODE

PLAT G

Fed up of mindlessly beating your sprites about the head and nether regions? Bored to tears of wandering adventures and RPGs? Simply can't bear to stare another footy sim square in the goal-mouth? What you need to do is immerse yourself in a good old-fashioned platform game. We take a look at our four faves...

SONIC 2
SEGA

Hailed as perhaps one of the finest sequels ever, Sonic 2 although excellent in design, is really nothing more than a hashed up version of the original with a new character. There are some nice new scenes and sequences within the game such as the tunnel run and the roller-coaster-style causeways but this is more or less the same game. Beats the crap out of most other platform games though!



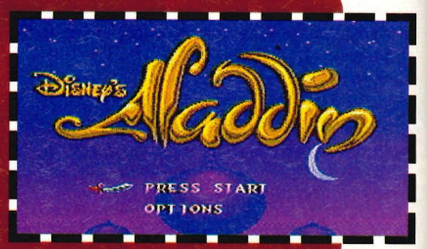


FLASHBACK
US GOLD

Flashback utilises the same game engine as Another World, wherein fully rotoscoped sprites feature in a cinematic-style adventure. Developed by Delphine, Flashback is challenging, entertaining and like its counterpart, has changed the face of platform games. Flashback is considerably different to the three other platform games seen here but it is still one of the all-time greats.

ALADDIN
SEGA

Based on the incredible film of the same name (No, really?) Sega's Aladdin is a visual circus thrust together with some intricate and absorbing gameplay. At the time of release it was praised for its beautiful graphics and fluid sprite animation, and now a couple of months on this game still manages to impress.

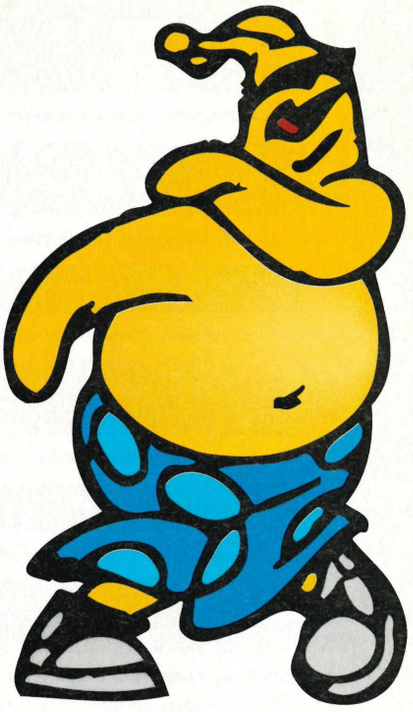




TOEJAM & EARL 2
SEGA

ToeJam & Earl 2 receives its official release this month and because it is so good, we simply had to tell you all about it again. This is an absolutely fine sequel to the original T&E but the game has been completely redesigned. Now we find a more structured platform game that funks along at quite a heady pace.

FORM GAMES



GRAPHICS

If the gameplay is absorbing it doesn't usually matter if the graphics are a bit below standard, but it is always nice to see something that is aesthetically pleasing. Lately, we have been witnessing some absolutely stunning graphics emerging in all forms of games, but especially in the latest batch of platformers.

SONIC 2

The original Sonic was incredible to look at and considering how fast the game zipped along it was quite surprising how so much detail had been incorporated. Sonic 2 is very similar to look at, and by any standards is still bloomin' impressive, but it is the smooth tunnel run which sets this game aside from the original. 4/5

FLASHBACK

Flashback takes a completely different graphical approach to most other platform games – the backgrounds are simple, but there is some nice foliage and other little details which give this an aura of realism. The pièce de résistance however, is the amazing rotoscoping effects used to create the sprite. Although rotoscoping is nothing really new anymore, it still manages to send shivers down your spine when you see how frightenlingly 'real' the character actually is. 4/5

ALADDIN

Gorgeous, but not as good as the SNES version. Again we see some fantastic sprite animation with a staggering number of frames making up Aladdin's movements. It helped that the graphic artists had a beautiful source to work from, but the magical essence of the film has been captured within the game with some colourful backgrounds and imaginative sprites. 5/5

TOEJAM & EARL 2

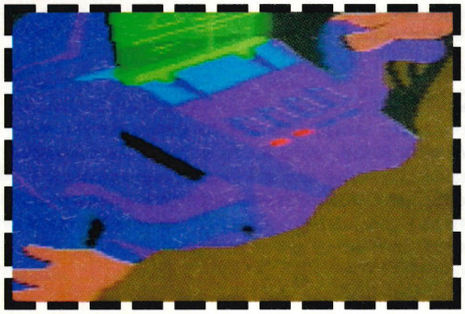
Drastically improved from the original



ALADDIN: **By 'eck, this looks yummy, scrummy and reet garrjius! "Pass the cheeps and greyvay, and where's me whippet? Dorn't it. Yeah?")**

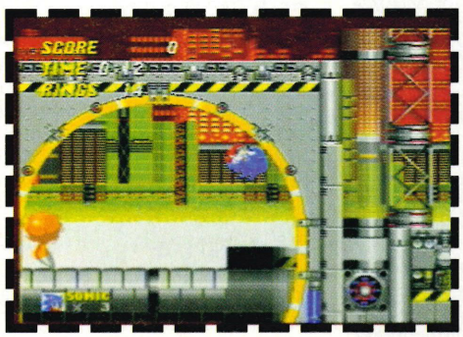
TOEJAM AND EARL 2: **Oh I say this is absolutely spiffing, what? Pukka, daarrhhling! Fancy a scone and luvvy pot of tee?**





FLASHBACK: **Eh, carm down! Whaat you seying like? Day doo day don't day doh. (In a very high pitched squeek) Are you tellin' me Flashback's a good game? I smoke tabs and drink beer, me**

SONIC 2: **Lubbly jubbly guvna. Sonic's a diamond geezer, know what I meen, me ol' china! Cor luv a duck...**



game, the graphics are bright, bold and completely over the top. Here we witness an exaggerated use of colour, and a large amount of humour injected into the overall look. If your TV can handle the visual bombardment then you are in for a real treat! 5/5

ENJOYABILITY

What's the point of playing a game if you're not going to get any pleasure out of it. Bugger the graphics, bugger the longevity! Isn't it the participating that counts?

SONIC 2

Highly enjoyable and instantly accessible. There is so much to do and the levels are riddled with little quirks and objects to rebound off, interact with and ultimately, have a good time mucking around with! The two-player mode is fun too, something that was missing from the original Sonic. Isn't this just a little too similar to the first Sonic though? 4/5

FLASHBACK

This is more of a thoughtful game than an all-out platform frenzy. However, the challenging nature of the game makes Flashback highly enjoyable as you try to outwit your opponents, work your way through the maze-like levels and simply stay alive! Enjoyable – yes, but not as wacky as the other platform games mentioned here. 3/5

ALADDIN

Although we finished this in a drastically short amount of time, all of us still enjoyed sprinting through the city streets, bounding through the dungeons and riding high on a magic carpet. This is one of those games that you could return to again and again, and still find something new. 5/5

TOEJAM & EARL 2

Probably the wackiest of the games on

VS MODE



▲ ALADDIN: THE GAMEPLAY. Basic running, jumping and swinging from poles. All good fun but doesn't strain the brain



▲ TOEJAM & EARL: THE GAMEPLAY. Lots of action, plenty to pick up and more jumping around than climbing around platforms



▲ FLASHBACK: THE GAMEPLAY. Very structured and reasonably difficult. This is more of your thinking man's platformer but incredibly enjoyable nonetheless



▲ SONIC 2: THE GAMEPLAY. Probably the most hectic platformer after Sonic 1! Great fun, lots to do, phenomenally fast and Sonic has a little friend

offer here and also, the most enjoyable. This offers something more than Aladdin which we also consider to be entertaining, in that it holds far more gameplay than the former example. There is so much humour bubbling out of your screen that you simply can't help but guffaw every few seconds. Very funny. **5/5**

CONTROLS

Don't you find that some games have all the buttons in the wrong place and one action won't respond well, while others simply appear to be clumsy in their execution? It is said that a bad workman blames his tools for his mistakes, poppycock! If the controls are bad how are you supposed to have fun?!

SONIC 2

Incredibly simple to get to grips with – you run, you jump, and have a ball. Extremely responsive and we all found ourselves immediately immersed into the game without panicking about pressing the wrong button at a rather inopportune moment. **5/5**

FLASHBACK

More tricky to come to terms with – Flashback's control system is quite complex and can be fathomed out but it will either take you a couple of minutes to scan the manual or a few practice tries at the beginning of the game. Definitely not the most intuitive system. **2/5**

ALADDIN

Again, very simple to get used to. Like Sonic you run and jump, slash about with your sword and climb up ropes – these manoeuvres need nothing more than a smidgen of common sense rather than endless sifting through a manual. Features a few more moves than Sonic to comprehend though. **4/5**

TOEJAM & EARL 2

This game is a little more involved in its design and therefore you have to think a bit more about interacting with objects and other characters. At first everything seems very straightforward but you will need to scan the manual at later stages in the game when you encounter bonus levels and work out exactly what buttons you're supposed to be pressing. **3/5**

DIFFICULTY

Difficulty factors are always hard to consider when reviewing a game. The game could be the most enjoyable bundle of fun you've ever clapped eyes on, but if it only takes you half an hour to complete then the longevity of it all greatly outweighs the remotest essence of enjoyment.

SONIC 2

This is one of the games that you can finish in no time at all – we did. If you want to finish it properly by collecting all the Chaos Emeralds however, you could be at it for a very long time. We found it boring after a while though and gave up trying to find the precious stones simply because we were satisfied that we had finished the game. **3/5**

FLASHBACK

Very difficult. The game is quite lengthy and the obstacles that thrust themselves

in your face are tricky to overcome. This game requires thought, patience and clever manoeuvring – you can't whiz through this in a hurry. It took us considerable time to finish it. 5/5

ALADDIN

Like its SNES counterpart, Aladdin presents very little in the way of longevity. We finished it on our first go in under two hours. Whoops, not much lastability there! The last sequence presented a few headaches, but overall this was a breeze. 2/5

TOEJAM & EARL 2

Despite being highly amusing we soon got bored with this, but it didn't help that we almost got to the end on a first go. Sadly we had very little incentive to go back and have another go. It's far too easy for its own good and this is probably the biggest disappointment to be found with this otherwise excellent platformer. 2/5

HIDDEN EXTRAS

It's always nice to stumble across some bizarre bonus levels that take you completely by surprise, there's nothing worse than lack of variety in a game. But what does our selection have to offer in the way of secret stages and punching surprises?

SONIC 2

The main point about Sonic is that all the levels are different and that itself provides the variety. The levels also expand far off into the distance so you can spend ages searching for little bits and pieces that you would otherwise have missed. The tunnel run is a superb touch, but even this gets dull once you've played it a few times, however added quirks like flying a plane later in the game continue to keep the player's attention. 5/5

FLASHBACK

This game doesn't really offer much in the way of hidden extras. It's is pretty linear in design with platforms, platforms and more bloomin' platforms. There are some weird obstacles which you come across later in the game, but nothing that is really different to the rest of the game. 1/5

ALADDIN

It seems that around every corner of Aladdin's gameplay you find something new, with fruit-machine bonus sections and weird stages that unravel as quickly and surprisingly as the film. Don't expect anything quite as revealing as the bonus stages in a game like Mario for example! Unfortunately, it's all over far too quickly. 3/5

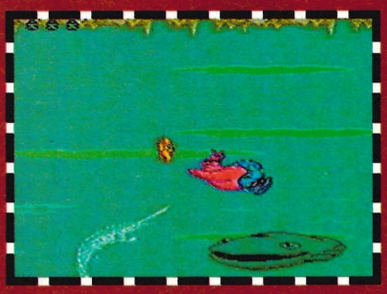
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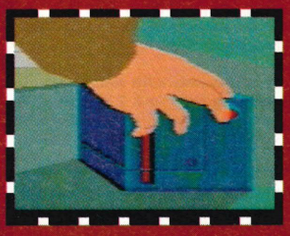
Wow-ee! Lots of secret stages to find and explore here, from funking down at the local disco to running maniacally though the Funk Dimension picking up loads of pressies! Totally wacky and bizarre, it is quite amazing how much there is to find here. 5/5



◀ ALADDIN: The bonus section for Aladdin sees you playing a massive fruit machine. Smart, eh?

TOE JAM & EARL 2 ▶ This has oodles of bonus sections to seek out and plough through. You can even have a bash at dancing...





▲ FLASHBACK: No bonus sections here but has some nice animated story bits



▲ SONIC 2: Absolutely fabulous race sequence as seen here! Enough said...

GAME OVER

	GRAPHICS	ENJOYABILITY	CONTROLS	DIFFICULTY	HIDDEN EXTRAS
SONIC 2	4	4	5	3	5
FLASHBACK	4	3	2	5	1
ALADDIN	5	5	4	2	3
TOEJAM AND EARL 2	5	5	3	2	5

SONIC 2

Hardly surprisingly, Sonic 2 wins the game hands down, however only a small margin exists between that and the brand-spanking-new ToeJam & Earl 2. Despite already having a highly successful predecessor on the market, Sonic 2 still manages to impress the pants off us even though we've seen it all before. What will Sonic 3 hold in store for us, and how can it possibly surpass Sonic 1 AND 2? 21/25

FLASHBACK

Flashback didn't do badly, but it couldn't compete with the more energetic platformers that we investigated here. Don't get us wrong, Flashback is a great game, after all we gave it 94 per cent when originally reviewed, but it is more of a thinking man's platform game and simply fails to offer as much all-round action as the others. 15/25

ALADDIN

The main thing that let Aladdin down dismally was the ease at which it can be completed. If you are after a graphically excellent game with plenty to do then this is your man, but if you want to get value for money then you may be very disappointed with Aladdin's lack of difficulty. 19/25

TOEJAM & EARL 2

Falling only millimetres short of the winning post ToeJam & Earl is fantastic to look at and brilliant to play. It just about matches Sonic 2 on every aspect of gameplay, but its downfall is the lack of difficulty (something that is all too familiar in most platform games). However, you could do far worse than purchase this when released this month – fun, fun, fun. 20/25

THE WINNER

SONIC 2 21/25

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C64 old version with two joysticks, 44 games on tape including shooting, racing, platform etc. User and games manuals included. Must sell for £75 ono.
Karl James, 45 Old Road, Stone, Staffordshire, ST15 8JE
Tel: 0785 815107

Cyberball on Mega Drive for sale, all bids considered. Also, will swap Sonic 2 for X-Men.
John McGurk, 97 Berwick Road, Greenock, Renfrewshire, PA16 OHL

For sale: Mega Drive boxed, two control pads, 8 games including Sonic 1 and 2, Ecco, Super Kick Off, EA Hockey, Kid Chameleon, Strider and Streets of Rage. Excellent condition, will accept no less than £250, worth £365. Stephen Klapdor, 33 Centenary Crescent, Norton, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland, TS20 2JN

For sale: PGA 2 and John Madden '93 at £25 each ono, or swap for Micro Machines. Ian Nicholson, 14 Forcefield Road, Cullompton, Devon, EX15 1QP Tel: 0884 33611

For sale: US RBI 4, UK Corporation £20 each. JAP Crackdown £10. Issues 1-9 of MAG £15, issues 3-24 of Sega Pro £35. Issue 1 £10. Swaps considered especially Road Rash II, Bulls vs Blazers, Cool Spot, T2, Tiny Toons, Sonic 2 games or magazines.
James Tel: 081 778 2678

For sale: Mega Drive, two pads, 12 games including Sonic 1 and 2, Ecco, Desert Strike, Lemmings, Robocod, Road Rash. All boxed £300 ono. Paul Dalton, 12 The Gables, Aston Cantlow, Solihull, West Midlands, B95 6JD
Tel: 0789 488205

For sale: Super Kick Off £25, 688 Attack Sub £15, Spiderman £11, John Madden '93 £23, ESWAT £15.
Kevin Gunther, 54 Weatherill Street, Goole, Morth Humberside, DN14 6EH Tel: 0405 761893

For sale: Ecco the Dolphin for Sega Mega Drive, great condition, £27.
Stephen Paxford, 37 Clarkes Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HT

For sale: A Turbo II joypad, good condition, still boxed will sell for £7. Also, football table sell for £5.
Alex Stanton, 96 Westway, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH9 3DZ
Tel: 0202 512593

Lynx for sale with adapter, carrying case and 7 games – 70 ono. Matt Wardle, 33 Squires Ride, Grove Hill, Hemel Hempstead

Game Gear, 5 games, rechargeable battery pack and power supply. Games include Lemmings, Chuck Rock, Streets of Rage, Sonic and Spiderman. Will accept £130 ono.
Robyn Evans, Cynynion Ucha, Rhydycroesau, Owestry, Shropshire, SY10 9BD.
0691 653552

Games; Mortal Kombat £35, Jungle Strike, Cool Spot, Super Kick Off, Fatal Fury, Muhammed Ali Boxing – £30 each. Micro Machines, Monaco GP 2, Sonic 2, NHLPA '93, Madden '93 – £25 each. Another World £20.
Matt Sawbridge, 56 Heath Park Drive, Heath, Cardiff, South Glamorgan, CF4 3QJ.
Tel: 0222 754518

Mega Drive, 2 control pads, 18 top games (Super Kick Off, Flashback, Lemmings etc) mint condition, everything boxed. Total value £700, amazing at £480.
Call Rob on 0375 679296

Sega Power magazine. The complete set to date, including the very rare launch issue, all freebies etc. Still intact, mint condition, 52 issues in all, only collectors need apply, no timewasters please.
Ring Tim, 0525 713920

Game Gear plus TV tuner, Super Wide Gear, car adapter, AC adapter, battery pack, nine games including Sonic 1+2, Mickey Mouse, Outrun etc. All boxed in mint condition £175 ono.
Phone Michelle, 0525 713920

Mega Drive in good condition, two joypads and a joystick plus 10 games, boxed with instructions, eg; NHLPA '93, PGA Tour Golf, Speedball 2, Streets of Rage 2 plus six others. All for £300 ono.
Neil Stone, 23 Download Way, Tattenham Corner, Epsom, Surrey, KT18 5SL. 0737 353371

Ecco, Flashback, Landstalker, Shining Force, Aladdin, Haunting – all Mega Drive, £20 each. Also Buck Rogers £10. Will send by recorded delivery. Dan Ashton, Cliffash Cottage, Idridgehay, Belper, Derbyshire, DE56 2SE

Will sell Italia '90 for £10 or swap for EA Hockey. Instructions not included. If interested contact Dave at 010 353 94 71191

Mega-CD, excellent condition, still boxed, unwanted gift. Any offer considered over £120. Also, swap FIFA Soccer for Sensible Soccer
Stephen Talbot, 7 Patricks Well, Aughagower, Westport, Co Mayo, Eire

WANTED

Mega Drive games - UK Chase HQ 1 and 2, also 'Cisco Heat. Fully boxed with manuals. Also have Road Rash 2 to swap for Sonic 2. No personal callers or clowns. Richard Scott, 2 Crown Buildings, 7 Durham Road, Birtley, County Durham, DH3 1LG

Outrun for Mega Drive, must be in fairly good condition and an OK price due to its old age. Also, Tempest arcade machine wanted. Does anyone have these? Please help! Darren Payne, 41 Long Close, The Slade, Oxford, OX3 8TT
Tel: 0865 777685

Wanted, Lemmings or Outlander. Offered, PGA Tour Golf. Must be in mint condition for swap.
Adam Conrad, 6 Chestnut Drive, Coxheath, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 4QX Tel: 0622 744325

SWAP

I will swap my PGA II for your WWF, Olympic Gold or Summer Challenge. Must be fully boxed with instructions. My PGA II is only six weeks old with instructions and box. Barry Rabbitt, Raynestolan, Dunshaughlin, Co Meath, Eire

I would like to swap Buck Rogers and Moon Walker for a Pro Action Replay. Peter Thomas, 2 Skeffington, Whiston, Knowlsey, Merseyside, L35 3JQ
Tel: 051 4931610

Mega Drive games to swap: Mortal Kombat, Sunset Riders, Road Rash, Strider, Revenge of Shinobi, Streets of Rage, Magical Hat, Robinson's Supreme Court, Fantasia and more. Or for sale from £10.
Daniel Masters, 30 Stuarts Green, Off Redlake Drive, Pedmore, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY9 OXR Tel: 0562 883516

Mega Drive games to swap: Jurassic Park, Streets of Rage, John Madden Football and Sonic for Taz, Flashback, Euro Club Soccer or Terminator 2. Will sell.
Stuart Campbell, 2 Cochrane Place, Windlesham, Surrey, GU20 6ED

Swap Fantasia, Road Rash, Rolo, Italia '90, Castle of Illusion, Robocod, Altered Beast for Afterburner II, Monaco GP 1 or 2, Ghouls 'n' Ghosts, EA Hockey or NHLPA '93, Speedball 2, Kick Off, Chuck Rock, Rainbow Islands, Fatal Fury, Leaderboard (UK or US versions). Paul Dalton, 12 The Gables, Aston Cantlow, Solihull, West Midlands, B95 6JD
Tel: 0789 488205

Swap my Mega Drive II, two joypads, Taz-Mania, Thunderforce IV, Atomic Runner, Phelios and £50 for your Amiga 1200. Eddy Parchment, 55 City Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B16 OHL
Tel: 021 454 9160

I want to swap FIFA Soccer for Sensible Soccer. Stephen Talbot, 7 Patricks Well, Aughagower, Westport, Co Mayo, Eire

PENPALS

12-year-old boy looking for 11-13-year-old girl. I enjoy Sega, basketball and listening to music. Please, somebody reply!
Daniel Irons, 11 Blaen Wern, Myodleton Park, Denbigh, Clwyd, North Wales, LL16 4AW

16-year-old Aussie male looking for male and female Sega freaks as penpals. All letters will be answered, so get writing!
Quintin Graham, 5 Cheetham Court, Bundaberg, Queensland, Australia, 4670

Happy, weird and a gaming nut! If you're female, 16-25 and those three words describe you then write to me. Your photo gets mine but looks do not matter at all.
Mr Gavin Cheadle, 53 West Parade, Dunstable, Beds, LU6 1EN

If you want to have penpals from all around the world I'm in the Worldwide Club for penpals. Send details, photo and SAE. Write now and I'll send it to them.
Nicky Kelly, 48 Beechwood Lawns, Rathcoole, Co. Dublin, Ireland

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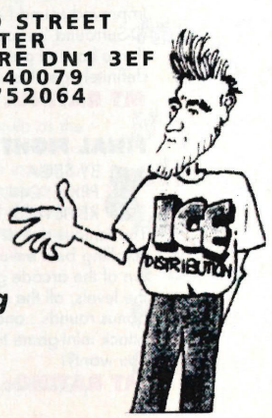
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GAME INDEX

Welcome to the MegaTech Game Index, the ultimate buyers' guide for Mega Drive and Mega-CD games. We've trimmed off the fatty games, leaving just the leanest examples to give you a balanced gaming diet. So don't get fat, get fit – with the MegaTech Game Index!

By the way, the high scores will be back in a different form and the entry form is directly below. See it? Good...

NAME:

ADDRESS:

GAME:

DIFFICULTY SETTING:

LEVEL:

SCORE:

GAME:

DIFFICULTY SETTING:

LEVEL:

SCORE:



MEGA-CD GAMES

Disc games, official and unofficial here revealed. Backward writing already enough of this. Forward gear engage!



BATMAN RETURNS

BY SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 19

The stars of the show in this game are the amazing 3D driving/shoot'em-up sections in which the Mega-CD's hardware is used to great effect as you blast The Penguin's henchmen from their vehicles. Plus you get the (largely unchanged) old cartridge platform batgame too. Excellent!

MT RATING: 94%

BLACK HOLE ASSAULT

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 14

One or two-player robot beat'em-up with fast action and quite good clanking sound FX. Cyborg Justice is better though and that's only a 4meg cart.

MT RATING: 61%

CHUCK ROCK II: SON OF CHUCK

BY: CORE
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 26

Chuck Rock junior was at a bit of a loss when his dad got kidnapped, so he set out with a club as big as him to bash the baddies in this above average CD platform romp. The intro is brilliant and so is the in-game animation. There are quite a lot of brain-taxing puzzles as well.

MT RATING: 86%

DEVASTATOR

BY WOLFTEAM
PRICE: IMPORT ONLY
REVIEWED: MT 20

A robot-based platform shoot'em-up with flying sections bolted on. Basic, 'blast everything in sight' gameplay.

MT RATING: 62%

DRAGON'S LAIR

BY: SONY IMAGESOFT
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 26

Similar to Mad Dog McCree, but set in the future instead of the Wild West. Aliens have invaded and disguised themselves as humans, so you must work out who the bad guys are and shoot them! Decent graphics make this better than Mad Dog.

MT RATINGS: 85%

DUNE

BY VIRGIN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 23

Graphic adventure with impressive talking characters and smart 3D flying sequences. Although there's nothing really taxing in terms of strategic scenarios or game plans, it's a playable interpretation of the David Lynch film.

MT RATING: 73%

ECCO CD

BY SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 21

CD retune of the underwater puzzling classic. The cartridge game plus an FMV intro, seven extra levels set in a sunken galleon, and improved sound FX thanks to Sega's Q-Surround 'surround sound' system. If you haven't got the cart version, definitely get this.

MT RATING: 92%

FINAL FIGHT CD

BY SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 17

The famous one or two-player scrolling beat'em-up gives you all the fun of the arcade game on CD – all the levels, all the characters, all the bonus rounds...and a new time-attack mini-game too! What more do you want?!

MT RATING: 94%

GROUND ZERO TEXAS

BY: SONY IMAGESOFT
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 26

Similar to Mad Dog McCree but set in the future instead of the Wild West. Aliens have invaded and disguised themselves as humans, so you must work out who the bad guys are and shoot them!

MT RATING: 85%

HOOK

BY SONY IMAGESOFT
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 16

The top-grossing film of 1991 turned into a platform game, in which Peter Pan has to fight, leap and fly his way past Hook's men. Nice graphics and plays quite well too.

MT RATING: 80%

JAGUAR XJ-220

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 16

Similar in style to EA's Lotus Turbo Challenge, this allows you to race Jaguar's supercar in tournaments or against a friend in split-screen head-to-head style. Also features a track construction option and smart music.

MT RATING: 87%

JURASSIC PARK CD

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.95
REVIEWED: MT 26

Once again the computer game hype machine went into overload, building up all expectations for this average adventure game. Initially the bad presentation is off-putting, but the game itself is quite involving.

MT RATING: 79%

KEIO FLYING SQUADRON

BY VICTOR ENTERTAINMENT
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 22

Similar in style to Konami's Parodius, this is a scrolling shoot'em-up with loads of weird and wonderful beasties to blast. Good music too.

MT RATING: 90%

KRISS KROSS: MAKE MY VIDEO

BY SONY IMAGESOFT
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 16

Acting as a 'VJ', your aim is to splice together three constantly-running tracks of FMV to fit each of the three Kriss Kross songs and satisfy the whims of each caller to the Make My Video Show. Different and fun (for a while).

MT RATING: 80%

LETHAL ENFORCERS
BY KONAMI
PRICE: £74.99 (WITH ONE GUN)
REVIEWED: MT 22
Operation Wolf-style into-the-screen shoot'em-up, converted from the arcade game. Good fun, especially in two-player mode if you're both tooled-up with the special Konami plastic hand guns (and if you've got over £90 to get kitted up with same, of course).
MT RATING: 80%

MAD DOG McCREE
BY: AMERICAN LASER GAMES
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 26
Half-decent arcade conversion with loads of FMV, that puts you in the boots of a cowboy who is the only hope against Mad Dog McCree. Use a joypad or Menacer to blast your way through the various scenes. It's good, but it's just a shame about the graphics.
MT RATING 61%



MICROCOSM
BY PSYGNOSIS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 25
'Fantastic Voyage'-style journey through an ailing president's body. Basically an into-the-screen shoot'em-up which is enjoyable but just not long-lasting enough.
MT RATING: 60%

NIGHT TRAP
BY SONY IMAGESOFT
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 17
The game that caused all the tabloid controversy is basically an hour and a half of fairly entertaining FMV footage. More B-movie shlock than serious shock, with gameplay that mostly relies on trial and error.
MT RATING: 79%

PRINCE OF PERSIA
BY SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 10
Evil henchmen and evil traps are everywhere in this 12-level platform game in which you have to run, leap and swordfight on your way to releasing the luvly Princess of Persia. The brilliantly animated characters and cunning traps will grip you right from the start, but fine control and in-depth route-learning are required. This CD version would have benefited from more levels.
MT RATING: 70%

SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND
BY: LUCASARTS
PRICE: £TBA
REVIEWED: MT 26
Point-and-click adventures don't come any finer than this. Splice the main brace and jig the jiggy thing across the seven seas. There are hours of swashbuckling fun here as you walk around Monkey Island trying to find out about the mysterious pirate, LeChuck.
MT RATING: 93%

SEWER SHARK
BY SONY IMAGESOFT
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 16
In this fast 3D into-the-screen shoot'em-up, your aim is to find your way through a vast maze of a sewer system, blowing away all the mutant ratagators in your way. Atmospheric when you get into it, but make one mistake and it's Game Over.
MT RATING: 87%

SHERLOCK HOLMES: CONSULTING DETECTIVE
BY SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 16
Three chilling cases for Holmes and Watson to solve in this FMV extravaganza. A good idea nicely presented.
MT RATING: 79%

SHERLOCK HOLMES II
BY SEGA
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 21
Same format as the first one, but the three cases are longer and the game comes on two CDs.
MT RATING: 84%



SILPHEED
BY SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 21
Undoubtedly one of the best games for the Mega-CD, although the gameplay is basically your 'spaceship blasting through enemy ships and meteorite showers' kinda thing. Stars of the show are the cortex-warping 3D graphics and smart Q-Surround sound.
MT RATING: 94%

SONIC CD
BY SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 21
More of the same Sonic-style gameplay, with CD-quality music and an animated intro thrown in. There's also a novel time-travel capability, but overall it's a disappointment offering nothing radically new for Sonic-o-philes.
MT RATING: 94%

SPIDERMAN VS KINGPIN
BY SEGA
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 24
Basically the same formula as the Spiderman cart game, but with a big 50 levels and more moves for Spidey himself. Plus there's a Q-Surround soundtrack and loads of animated cartoon intermissions.
MT RATING: 84%

TERMINATOR CD
BY: VIRGIN
PRICE: £49.99
REVIEWED: MT 26
The cart-based game wasn't really as good as everyone first thought, but it sure was a lot better than this effort. The FMV is taken from the film, but you can't tell because it looks so appalling. All you do is run around shooting robots and it gets quite tiresome.
MT RATING: 69%

THUNDERHAWK
BY CORE DESIGN
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 22
The first game to really use the Mega-CD's 3D chips, and a highly impressive combat game it is, too. A fast and furious shoot'em-up featuring 3D effects that knock Nintendo's Mode 7 efforts into a cocked hat, with a raucous rock soundtrack to boot. A real 'must have' for Mega-CD owners.
MT RATING: 91%

WOLFCHILD
BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 16
A conversion of an old Amiga platform game, this puts you in the skin of an unfortunate chap who turns into a wolfman at regular intervals. Not bad, with lots of blasting, nasties and intricate locations to shoot your way out of.
MT RATING: 82%

WONDER DOG
BY JVC
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 12
Wonder Dog has just crash-landed on Earth and has to get back to his home planet by hopping around platforms and dodging hostile weirdoes. Great graphics and sound, but a bit easy to beat.
MT RATING: 82%

WWF RAGE IN THE CAGE
BY: ACCLAIM
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 26
Acclaim continues its wrestling series by releasing yet another game that is almost identical to the others. None of the CD's features have been used, apart from the obligatory atrocious FMV. Get Royal Rumble instead.
MT RATING: 72%



MEGA DRIVE GAMES

If you're after a game for Sega's 16-bitter, these are the top titles to look out for!

A

AEROBIZ
BY: SEGA
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 21
An airline management sim for the Mega Drive... and it's really good, too. Strategy buffs will cream over this!
MT RATING: 90%

ALADDIN
BY: SEGA
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 23
Probably the most gorgeous-looking MD platform game you're ever likely to see. It's very playable too, although there's nothing really new gameplay-wise and it plays very similarly to Cool Spot. Definitely a treat for the eyes though.
MT RATING: 90%

ALIEN 3
BY ARENA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 9
Nothing like the filmof the same name, this game puts you in control of a megaweapons-toting Ripley on a platform crusade to waste those aliens and rescue the cocooned humans. It has excellent sound effects, music, graphics and gameplay, plus it's really challenging too.
MT RATING: 94%

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.
MT RATING: 85%

AMAZING TENNIS
BY ABSOLUTE ENTERTAINMENT
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 19
Playable, smart-looking tennis sim with a novel behind-the-sprite view. Plenty of strokes to master and opponents to beat, and a two-player mode too. However the guy at the far side won't be able to see very well past the enormous foreground sprite.
MT RATING: 82%

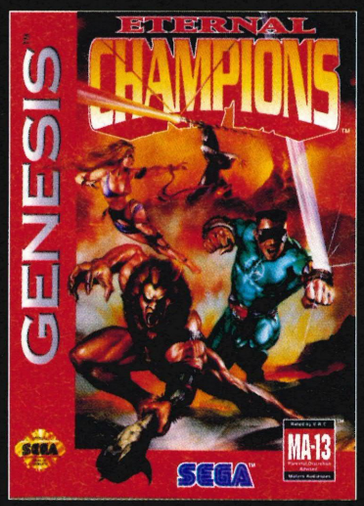


ANOTHER WORLD
BY: VIRGIN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 14
A scientist is transported by a twist of fate and a particle accelerator to Another World, where he has to somehow evade death at the hands of evil spudhead aliens. It's a one-time trip, but the ace



WIN!

ETERNAL CHAMPIONS TIPS BOOKS



With Sega's latest and incredibly amazing beat'em-up vying for the top position against the long-reigning champion Street Fighter II, Virgin Publishing is releasing a new tips book for the 24meg Eternal Champions in the hope that it will aid gamers. The book is an insight into the special moves and tactics of all the Eternal Champions, and is available this month through all good bookshops such as WHSmiths, but we have FIVE to give away to the first five entries we receive here in the office.

To win one of these great tactical books, all you have to do is write your name and address on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope, and send it in to us here at our new address. The first five entries will automatically win a book. Woah, that was easy!

Send your entry to:
3am Eternal,
MEGATECH,
16-17 Hollybush Row,
Oxford,
OX1 1JH.

graphics and animation, and the way puzzle, adventure, platform and shoot'em-up action is combined make it worth it.

MT RATING: 86%

ATOMIC RUNNER

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 10

Bizarre blend of platform and shoot'em-up action – leaping and blasting through alien-infested levels is the order of the day – although the main sprite's a bit weedy.

MT RATING: 80%

AWESOME POSSUM

BY: TENGEN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 26

Tons of speech make this game seem good at first, but the gameplay soon shoots it in the foot. Run a bit, jump a bit, then run a bit more. It tries to be 'green' with lots of environmental questions for you to answer, but unfortunately this only serves to make it even tackier than ever.

MT RATING: 49%

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 pictures of Ayrton Senna looking decidedly grumpy. However, F1 World Championship has recently stolen this game's 'Best MD Racing Game' crown.

MT RATING: 90%

B

BATMAN RETURNS

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 12

Based on the second Batmovie, this pits Batman against Catwoman and The Penguin in a variety of platform beat'em-up scenarios with lots of levels and quite a lot to do. Action is very frustrating, though. Not for novices.

MT RATING: 76%



BELLE'S QUEST

BY: ACCLAIM
PRICE: £39.95
REVIEWED: MT 26

In an attempt to please both sexes, two Beauty and the Beast games have been released and they are both completely patronising. This is the girls version and is all twee with lovey dovey pukey bits in (and is dead easy as well). Having said that, Julian loved it (his feminine side showing?) because there is a fair bit to do, even though it is on the whole a bit too easy.

MT RATING: 78%

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. It features spectacularly gross graphics and good extra weapons systems.

MT RATING: 88%

BLOCK OUT

BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

A sort of 3D Tetris in which you have to dump oddly-shaped blocks together in a well to make solid layers. A totally addictive one or two-player puzzler.

MT RATING: 91%

BUCK ROGERS

BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £49.99
REVIEWED: MT 4

Role-playing game based on the TSR board game in which you have to lead your six rookie troopers around numerous space scenarios in a quest to vanquish the evil RAM organisation. Lots of gun battles and strategy-based spacecraft battles with a soupçon of puzzle solving, but rather basic graphics.

MT RATING: 88%

BULLS Vs LAKERS

BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 10

Probably the best of EA's basketball simulations, featuring all the American big-name players complete with their speciality moves. Good graphics and realistic simulation feel.

MT RATING: 80%

C

CASTLEVANIA

BY: KONAMI
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 26

The popular Nintendo series makes a welcome debut on the Mega Drive, and a darn good one it is too. Run around the platforms killing vampires and various other monsters in a bid to rid the world of Count Dracula and family.

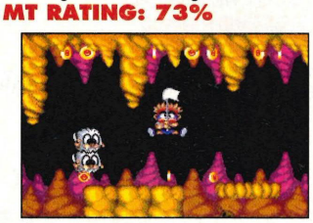
MT RATING: 83%

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, but there's 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 lads go on a platform treasure hunt, swiping at cuddly monsters with their swords and magic weapons. Unfortunately, it lacks the arcade game's excellent two-player mode.

MT RATING: 80%

CHUCK ROCK II

BY: CORE
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 21

Chuck's club-wielding son is the star of this sequel to Core's original crazy caveman caper. Colourful, fun platforming with the same blend of humour and prehistoric sprites as the original, but nothing really new.

MT RATING: 86%

COLUMNS

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £19.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

Sort out coloured gems as they fall down the screen in this Tetris-style classic puzzle game featuring hypnotic music and an excellent two-player competition mode. Unputdownable.

MT RATING: 88%

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 accompany unusual and absorbing gameplay.

MT RATING: 87%

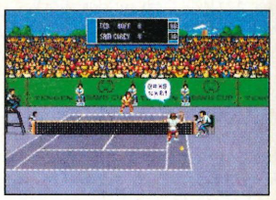
D

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. Strikes the right balance between realism and fast arcade action.

MT RATING: 83%



DAVIS CUP TENNIS

BY: DOMARK
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT19

The best tenis game on the Mega Drive features superfast gameplay, an excellent range of features – loads of players to play against, a good range of moves, different surfaces to play on and singles and doubles tournaments around the world to compete in.

MT RATING: 90%

DESERT STRIKE

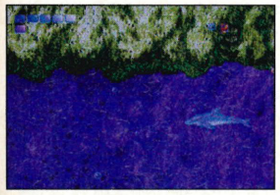
BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 3

Lay waste to a mad dictator's desert army, rescue hostages and blow up his 'baby milk factories' in this helicopter shoot'em-up with lots of variety, great graphics and terrific gameplay.

MT RATING: 93%

DRAGON'S FURY
BY TENGEN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 1
Originally reviewed as Devil Crash (the Jap 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. Great graphics and sound, with a superb pinball feel.
MT RATING: 91%

E



ECCO THE DOLPHIN
BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 13
Take the role of a dispossessed dolphin who has to solve the puzzles blocking your way in over 20 undersea mazes, in order to find your mates who have all mysteriously disappeared. The original concept combined with wonderful graphics and amazingly engrossing gameplay make this a classic.
MT RATING: 94%



ETERNAL CHAMPIONS
BY: SEGA
PRICE: £59.99
REVIEWED: MT 25
Rock hard one-on-one beat'em-up with massive longevity, although it loses out to Street Fighter II CE in the instinctive play and fluid combos departments. It's worth a look at if you are terminally bored with repeatedly defeating Bison, though.
MT RATING: 82%

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, it captures the atmosphere of the comic well, although the graphics are a bit cheesy.
MT RATING: 89%

F

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
BY: DOMARK
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 20
This official Formula 1 game, featuring all this season's international tracks, is the best racing game money can buy. An incredible sensation of speed, a real racing 'feel', excellent sound and a smart two-player split-screen head-to-head option put it right up there in pole position on the grid.
MT RATING: 94%

F22 INTERCEPTOR
BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 1
The first Mega Drive '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. It's fast, fun and simple to get to grips with, and there are loads of little missions to complete.
MT RATING: 88%

FIDO DIDO
BY: KANEKO
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 26
After Cool Spot, another 7-Up character gets to star in his own game – this time it's Fido Dido's turn. The gameplay is quite varied with lots of weird and wacky sub-games, but some of the main platform parts can be quite frustrating.
MT RATING: 82%

FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER
BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 24
Certainly the best footy game on the Mega Drive, probably the best on any system, FIFA is everything you could ever want from the game. Incredible animation, loads of spectacular moves, fine strategic options, great playability and the radical new 'Grandstand' isometric perspective make this a real classic. The sound helps to give a real 'big match' atmosphere too. At the end of the day football is the winner, Brian.
MT RATING: 92%

FLASHBACK
BY: US GOLD
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 18
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 antics abound in the five levels, although finishing it doesn't take all that long.
MT RATING: 94%

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 challenging mission to free the universe of space pirates.
MT RATING: 84%

GAUNTLET 4
BY: TENGEN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 22
The classic coin-op from the mid-'80s finally converted to the MD, and it's not just arcade-perfect – it's arcade-better! You get not only the original version, but also three other modes and up to four-player simultaneous action too. A classic.
MT RATING: 94%

GHOSTBUSTERS
BY: SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
Choose your favourite Ghostbuster, ready your proton pack and exorcise a whole load of unwelcome spooks from platform-laden houses, thus uncovering a supernatural plot to plunge the entire city into the seventh level of Hell. It goes on for ages.
MT RATING: 86%

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.
MT RATING: 93%

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 your quest to solve puzzles and generally embarrass the gods of Olympus. Excellent graphics with decent puzzle/shooting/platforming gameplay, although it is frustratingly difficult.
MT RATING: 89%

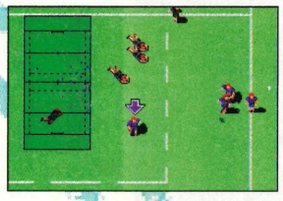
GUNSTAR HEROES
BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 21
Mega-blasting arcade shoot'em-up action of the finest order, with ear-splittingly superb sound. One or two-player mayhem ensues as you blast your way through a variety of graphically superb backdrops swarming with gangs of baddies and frighteningly impressive bosses. Incredible animation, plenty of high-octane action and a high degree of originality. Buy, buy, buy!
MT RATING: 95%

GYNOUG
BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 5
Angel Gynoug has to rid the underworld of all sorts of nasty demons in a horizontally-scrolling shoot'em-up with fast gameplay, lots of power-ups and spectacular bosses.
MT RATING: 91%

H

HELLFIRE
BY: SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: MT 5
A little-known Toaplan coin-op which became a very popular Mega Drive game. What makes this different from other horizontally-scrolling blasts is the unusual rotatable guns fitted to the player's ship, which allow for some clever, tactical blasting. Hellfire's graphics are great (of course) and it's all just very good fun.
MT RATING: 92%

I



INTERNATIONAL RUGBY CHALLENGE
BY: DOMARK
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 19
This Kick-Off-esque rugby simulation allows you to play in the big three international rugby union tournaments – Triple Crown, Five Nations and World Cup. Just about all the rules of the sport are observed, and clever control devices make it easy to carry out more unusual moves, although the computer teams are a little too good.
MT RATING: 75%

ISHIDO
BY: ACCOLADE
PRICE: £35.99
REVIEWED: MT 2
A board game based on some other ancient puzzle game, in which you have to fill squares on a board with tiles by matching shapes and colours. Unlike most Mega Drive puzzle games Ishido doesn't appear to have its roots in Tetris. This is dead difficult, and as such is one for real puzzle maniacs only.
MT RATING: 80%

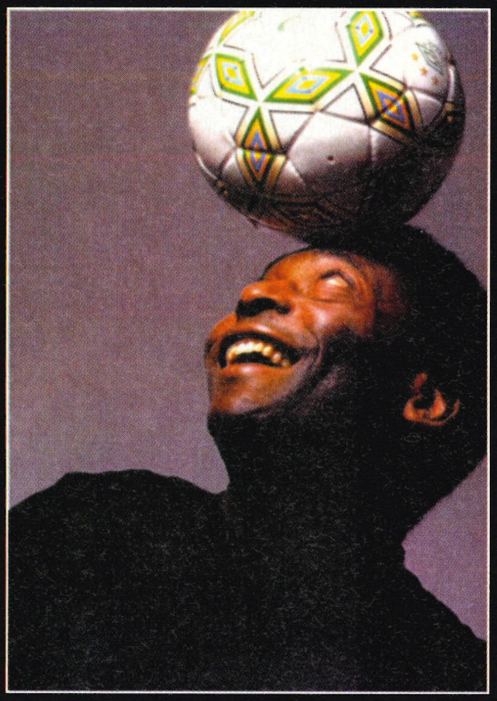
J

J-LEAGUE PRO-STRIKER
BY: SEGA
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 19
J-League Pro-Striker is a Japanese import, but until FIFA Soccer came along this was by far the best and easily the most playable football game available for the Mega Drive. It's the official game of the Japanese League, featuring all the teams and a choice of tournaments. The style is reminiscent of Kick-Off, but the graphics and player animation are miles better and the ball



WIN!

PELÉ GARB



Those nice people at Accolade have given us some fancy merchandise to promote the new footy game sponsored by, and based on, the legendary Pelé. Just in time for the World Cup we have got FIVE exclusive Pelé mini footballs and FIVE brilliant Pelé sweatshirts to give away. So even though Britain won't be represented out in the States this year, you can wear a swanky Pelé sweatshirt and play footy in your own backyard with one of the Pelé footballs!

There will be five lucky winners, each of whom will receive a sweatshirt as well as a football. To win just answer this really simple question:

Which national team did Pelé play for?

A: Brazil
B: Almond
C: Hazel

Send your entry to:
Orange Peelee,
MEGATECH,
16-17 Hollybush Row,
Oxford,
OX1 1JH.

movement has been captured perfectly. It's compatible with the Sega Tap too, so up to four players can enjoy the high-energy footie action. The only drawback with this game is that all the text is in Japanese!

MT RATING: 93%

JOE MONTANA 3

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 11

More Amerian football action in a game which combines all of the features of the first two Joe Montana games, including the full spoken commentary, the different pitch views and all the teams and plays you would expect from an American football game. It is good fun, with smart graphics and gob-smacking speech, but 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 really are in the thick of the action. In fact, John Madden '92 is such a smart game that you are bound to enjoy it even if you don't care too much for American football, especially when you play the game's superb two-player mode.

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 game has over John Madden '92. Apart from that, it is practically the same game, so don't consider buying this version if you've already got the other (unless you're a real gridiron nutter).

MT RATING: 88%

JOHN MADDEN NFL FOOTBALL '94

BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £49.99
REVIEWED: MT 23

Gone is the original Park Place game engine, to be replaced instead by a tweaked version of the Bill Walsh College Football enginel. In this version, over 50 NFL teams plus great teams from the past and John Madden's all-time great team are featured, but sadly the graphics and gameplay of JM '94 are inferior to those of the previous two versions.

MT RATING: 84%

K

KLAX

BY TENGEN
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

This is an extremely playable, Tetris-derived puzzle game in which coloured tiles roll down a conveyor belt and have to be caught and tossed into a bin in order to make point-scoring patterns.

MT RATING: 85%

L



LANDSTALKER

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 23

The Mega Drive's answer to Nintendo's Zelda series, and an excellent graphic RPG it is too. Loads to explore, a brilliant story-line and loads of other stuff – basically it's excellent.

MT RATING: 93%

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.

MT RATING: 92%

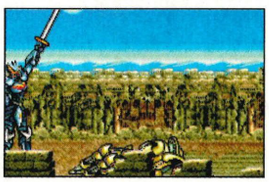
LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE

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. Excellent split-screen two-player mode. The weather effects are nice, but as a whole the graphics look like they could have been better.

MT RATING: 85%

M



MAZIN WAR

BY SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 18

Dash along a series of levels, hacking apart anything and everything you encounter. You're presented with challenge after challenge, including some absolutely massive bosses. Could be better-looking, but it does play well.

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 quirky touches (such as the digitised speech) make it fun from start to finish.

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 progress. 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, but it lacks the arcade game's two-player feature.

MT RATING: 90%

MICK AND MACK: GLOBAL GLADIATORS

BY: VIRGIN
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 15

Mick or Mack join up, somehow, with McDonalds (of international hamburger infamy) to fight various environmental threats (such as blobby slime monsters and mad beavers) in this platform game. It's all a bit too simple to be interesting for very long, although the graphics are smart and gameplay is fast and jolly.

MT RATING: 81%

MICKEY MOUSE IN CASTLE OF ILLUSION

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: PRE MEGATECH

The notorious Mickey Mouse has to rescue his missus, Minnie, from an evil witch by the name of Mizrabel in this cute and cuddly platform adventure with lots of Disney-esque monsters. It's very playable, but a bit easy to complete.

MT RATING: 84%

MICRO MACHINES

BY: CODE MASTERS
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: MT 15

Simple but superb 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, but really recreates the childhood feeling of driving toy cars around your back garden.

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. You have a good level of control over your bloke, but the game doesn't have the arcade game's two-player mode.

MT RATING: 85%

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. Might and Magic's vast depth should keep even hardened role-play fanatics going for ages.

MT RATING: 79%



MORTAL KOMBAT

BY: ACCLAIM
PRICE: £49.99
REVIEWED: MT 21

A faithful conversion of the incredibly popular coin-op, this is your typical one-on-one beat'em-up in a sub-Streetfighter style. Digitised fighters with easily pulled-off special moves, lots of corny gore via the well-known cheat mode and an excellent soundtrack make it enjoyable to play, but not quite in the same league as you-know-what.

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 right-there-in-the-ring atmosphere better than any other boxing game.

MT RATING: 92%

N

NHLPA HOCKEY '93

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 for when the players start to get under each others' feet. Superb, fast, end-to-end hockey action with a wonderful two-player option.

MT RATING: 89%

NHL HOCKEY '94

BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 22

Electronic Arts' latest hockey update features slightly faster gameplay, more statistics, new one-timer shots, improved action replay facility and, most importantly of all, compatability with the Four-Way Play. Sadly, the punch-ups have been cut out, but if you really feel you need to have superfast, four-player ice hockey action then this is definitely the game to get.

MT RATING: 90%

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 settings for this prime golf simulation. Superb control method provides a perfect feel, as do the excellent graphics. With multi-player and skins tournaments, on-screen advice from the professionals and battery game save – this cartridge is just loaded with features.

MT RATING: 94%

PHANTASY STAR III

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £49.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

Another gigantic RPG with a futuristic fantasy theme. The plot can take several routes across several worlds and through different generations of heroes, so it really does take ages to conquer.

MT RATING: 89%



POWERMONGER

BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 14

Lead your gang of savages to supremacy of 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's slower, less fun and takes a much more serious tack. It's very samey throughout, too.

MT RATING: 81%

PUGGSY

BY: PSYGNOSIS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 21

Well designed and thought-out platform-based puzzler which is slightly different than your average game of this type. There is no set solution for each problem, and there are several solutions which will enable you to get off each level. Puggsy himself can make use of over 40 different objects.

MT RATING: 90%

PUYO PUYO

BY: SEGA
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 22

This is a brilliant Columns-style one or two-player puzle game, soon to be officially released as Dr Robotnik's Mean Bean Machine. Highly addictive, requiring fast logical thinking and swift reflexes to get your little blobs linking up.

MT RATING: 91%

Q

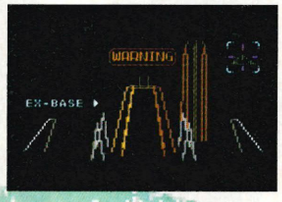
QUACKSHOT

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 1

Donald Duck has a lust for gold which leads him on a massive around-the-world platform-based treasure hunt, in which he has to enlist the help of various Disney characters and do over various other rather nasty Disney characters. Superb graphics and quite a testing game, although infinite continues do make it much easier to finish than it really should be.

MT RATING: 82%

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. You must travel across the many scrolling zones, taking out a particular type of target and anything else that fires back. Fancy graphics and tough bosses raise this above the common herd of shooters.

MT RATING: 94%

RAMPART

BY: TENGEN
PRICE: IMPORT
REVIEWED: MT 13

Rampart is an odd mix of strategic blasting and a Tetris sub-game in which you have to rebuild the damage done to the castle that you have constructed. Although the game looks about as basic as you can get, it plays superbly, especially in two-player mode. Brilliantly simple mix of game styles.

MT RATING: 90%

REVENGE OF SHINOBI

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

Joe Musashi, top ninja, is out to rid the world of a band of gangsters who have bases on both sides of the Pacific. Eight lengthy levels of platform beat'em-up action lie before the player, in which you have to get the mighty Joe past all sorts of supernatural soldiers with only the power of his fists, sword, shurikens and mystical ninja magic. Excellent graphics, gameplay and sound (music by Yuzo Koshiro of Streets of Rage fame).

MT RATING: 93%



ROAD RASH 2

BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 12

More no-holds-barred motorbike racing/beat'em-up action from EA, this time with an extra weapon for your biker (a heavy chain) and a split-screen two-player mode. Good, fast, violent fun.

MT RATING: 89%

ROAR OF THE BEAST

BY: SUNSOFT
PRICE: £39.95
REVIEWED: MT 26

This is the blokes version of the two Beauty and the Beast games (see also Belle's Quest), which naturally means it has got lots of fighting and general macho hardness in it. It also means that the game is very repetitive and boring.

MT RATING: 40%

ROBOCOD

BY: ELECTRONIC ARTS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 1

Nasty Dr Maybe 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 and hidden bits, dodging Maybe's multitudinous monsters as only an exceptionally gifted fish can.

MT RATING: 85%

ROBOCOP VS TERMINATOR

BY: VIRGIN
PRICE: TBA
REVIEWED: MT 24

Loads of weapons, loads of shooting and loads of violence as you take the role of Robocop with the aim of blowing everything on screen out of sight. This is an ideal game for any prospective serial killers out there.

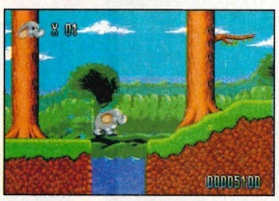
MT RATING: 90%

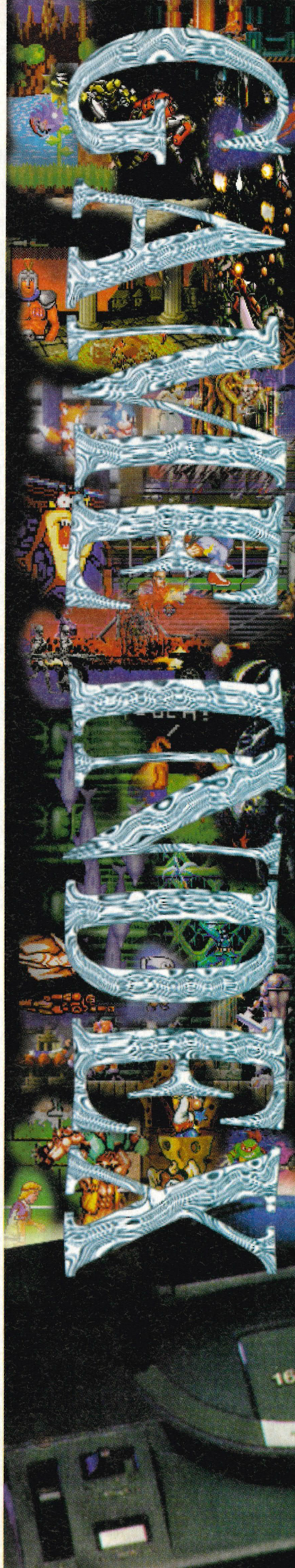
ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES

BY: KONAMI
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 20

Rocket-powered opossum Sparkster has to defend the planet Elhorn against the Black Lord and his pig troops in one of the best platform shoot'em-ups we've seen for a long time. Excellent-looking, with lots of big bosses and original, inventive levels, although it's a bit easy.

MT RATING: 85%





WIN!

LIMITED EDITION SONIC SOUNDTRACK CD



Hot from the CES show in Las Vegas this January we have a very limited collectors edition CD of the music from both Sonic CD and Sonic Spinball. The soundtrack features 23 specially written ditties for both games, some dance-orientated, some orchestral and some which are downright funky!

We have ONE COPY ONLY of this superb CD which is not available in the shops, and we are putting it up for grabs – but for a price! To win the CD we want you to answer the following question, and then send your answer to us on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope along with your name and address (you'd be surprised how many people forget those little details!).

Which is faster?

A: The speed of sound
B: The speed of light

Send your entry to:
Sonic Boom,
MEGATECH,
16-17 Hollybush Row,
Oxford,
OX1 1JH.

WIN!

LIMITED EDITION NBA JAM T-SHIRT



Acclaim is getting ready to launch its long-awaited licensed basketball game, NBA Jam, and to promote the launch it is letting us give away three limited edition, special launch date T-shirts. Emblazoned with the NBA logo, the T-shirts are really quite nifty. All you have to do to win one is name one famous American basketball player – anyone will do, as long as we've heard of him!

Send your entry in on the back of a postcard or a sealed envelope to:

Strawberry Jam,
MEGATECH,
16-17 Hollybush Row,
Oxford,
OX1 1JH.

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 out to find the circus owner who kidnapped his mother and locked up all the other animals he could find. Rolo has to recruit the freed bunnies, squirrels etc, and use their varied skills to help him find the keys and bits of map which can lead him to his pilfered parent. Its simple puzzle gameplay has been well thought-out and is enjoyable. Over 100 levels and no password system.

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 is at the bottom of the plot and eliminate them. This is your basic 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. A great conversion of the arcade game, with lots of levels and action.

MT RATING: 89%



SENSIBLE SOCCER

BY: SONY
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 24

Sensible Software's classic football simulation finally reaches the Mega Drive, but compared to the likes of J-League and FIFA, it comes across as decidedly old-fashioned. Playability is it's strong point, but the tiny sprites and dire sound make it drop down the League Table when compared to the two Premier League leaders mentioned above.

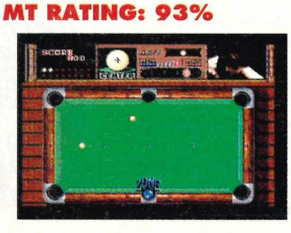
MT RATING: 80%

SHINOBI III

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 21

Joe Mushashi's third visit to the Mega Drive produces one of the best MD action titles around! Great, fast-paced action, brilliant graphics and sound and a few new tricks up Joe's sleeve make this a must for all action fans – there's even a horseback section and a level where Joe takes to a rocket-powered surfboard in order to take on his arch-enemies, the Zeed.

MT RATING: 93%



SIDE POCKET

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: MT 17

An American pool simulation 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, although pool and snooker purists may turn their noses up at it.

MT RATING: 80%

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

If you don't know about this already, WAKE UP!!!.

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 against 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! It's a bit easy to complete, though definitely not as easy as the first game.

MT RATING: 95%

SONIC SPINBALL

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £49.99
REVIEWED: MT 24

Sonic goes pinball with five huge levels and a good feel from the flippers and Sonic-ball. Fun and very addictive – the first four levels are pretty easy, but the last one's dead hard. However, there's not really enough there to warrant the asking price.

MT RATING: 86%

SPIDERMAN

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH

The nasty King Pin has planted a bomb under New York and blamed your friendly neighbourhood Spiderman! As Spidy, 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 in the one game that really makes good use of the character. Loads of challenging levels, excellent fun.

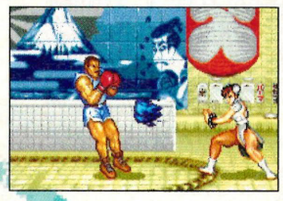
MT RATING: 91%

STAR CONTROL

BY: ACCOLADE
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: PRE MEGATECH

It's up to you to take on the 12 spaceships of the Empire race in one of the 12 ships of Earth's Alliance in open space combat. Take on a friend, head-to-head, or play a drawn-out strategy game variation. One of the best two-player Mega Drive games ever. Learning the tactics and using the wild weapons is great fun.

MT RATING: 90%



STREET FIGHTER II SCE

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £59.99
REVIEWED: MT 23

After much controversy and a very long wait, this legendary game eventually arrived and delivered everything that was promised. 12 fighters compete in the ultimate competition using all the special moves and techniques available to them. The best Mega Drive beat'em-up to date. If you don't own a copy of this game then I advise you to get it now. Best with two six-button pads

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 bars to rescue their captured buddy from the clutches of an evil gangster and his many and varied cronies. Amazing graphics and sounds, plus really enjoyable gameplay, although it is rather easy.

MT RATING: 94%

SUNSET RIDERS

BY: KONAMI
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 16

The only cowboy shoot'em-up on the Mega Drive is similar to Rolling Thunder, with much leaping onto saloon roofs, filling bad guys full o' lead and rescuing Wild West women. Two-player co-operative mode, shoot-out option and horseback section are added bonuses. Excellent fun, but a bit short with only four levels.

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, various weather conditions, strip colours – the lot. Plus you get real teams, British and Continental (although 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 Mega Drive at the moment. £45 is a bit steep, isn't it?

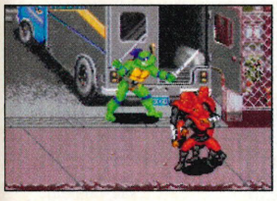
MT RATING: 75%

SUPER OFF-ROAD

BY: ACCOLADE
PRICE: £34.99
REVIEWED: MT 6
Super Sprint-style race game in which you drive a 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.
MT RATING: 83%

T

TAZ-MANIA
BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 6
Another Saturday morning cartoon becomes a Mega Drive platform game. Taz (the Tasmanian Devil) has to whirl his way around the deserts, jungles and abandoned mines of the Tasmanian islands on the hunt for some giant eggs for his breakfast. Marvellous cartoon graphics, music and sound FX, but it's one of the easiest Mega Drive games ever.
MT RATING: 82%



TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES: THE HYPERSTONE HEIST
BY: KONAMI
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 16
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 and sound, but the fighting isn't hard work at all and experienced players will be able to beat the game easily.
MT RATING: 87%



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. Watch out! – the third level is so hard it's mega-annoying!
MT RATING: 86%

THUNDERFORCE III
BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
Six-level space shoot'em-up with loads of extra weapons, massive boss monsters and weird scenery to keep the player occupied. A very addictive blast.
MT RATING: 89%



THUNDERFORCE IV
BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 9
More space shoot'em-up action in Thunderforce IV, 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.
MT RATING: 94%

TINY TOON ADVENTURES: BUSTER'S HIDDEN TREASURE
BY: KONAMI
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 17
One of the best platform romps around – takes all the best bits from the genre and welds them together into a great-looking, fast-moving, funny, massive, fluffy and loveable concoction. It's a bit easy though, despite its loveliness.
MT RATING: 94%

TOE JAM AND EARL
BY: SEGA
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: PRE-MEGATECH
Toe Jam and Earl are two 'spaced out' aliens who have crash-landed on a strange world of 20-odd levels arranged like floors in a department store. Lots of wacky noises, kooky graphics and the two-player option make the very basic gameplay fun.
MT RATING: 82%

TOE JAM AND EARL 2
BY: SEGA
PRICE: £49.99
REVIEWED: MT 25
Toe Jam & Earl's second outing on the Mega Drive is a massive 16meg affair with a more accessible traditional platform format, but crammed with a load of fresh ideas. The idea is to trap all the horrible humans who are causing havoc on Funkotron, but you can have loads of fun (on your own or, even better, co-operating with a friend) just exploring the wild and wonderful planet and meeting all TJ & E's funky friends. The crazy off-the-wall humour, psychedelic graphics and big, funky sounds will hook you instantly.
MT RATING: 91%

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 our two heroes grabbing anything they find (telephone poles, cars, tanks, each other) to club the opposition into submission. Great graphics, great fun, but dead easy.
MT RATING: 84%

U

UNCHARTED WATERS
BY: KOEI
PRICE: £44.99
REVIEWED: MT 26
Disappointing strategy game from the people who brought us the fantastic Aerobiz airport simulation game. Poor graphics and poor sound accompanies repetitive gameplay. Yawn-a-minute action all the way.
MT RATING: 65%

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 scenarios, 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.
MT RATING: 85%

WINTER OLYMPICS
BY: US GOLD
PRICE: £49.99
REVIEWED: MT 26
This is one of the better multi-player sports sims available, but it still isn't as good as it could have been. There are lots of events, some of which are really good fun, but single players will tire of it very quickly. A game for four players only.
MT RATING: 65%

WIZ 'N' LIZ
BY: PSYGNOSIS
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 22
Manic and superfast game where the aim is to save bunny wabbits. Two-player mode is great fun and there are loads of bonus games which are accessed by casting fruit spells, helping to pad out the basic gameplay
MT RATING: 86%



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, and they've got to get around numerous levels of platforms and other obstacles, helping each other out (if your playing with both characters in two-player mode). Features 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). Definitely aimed at younger players – very easy to finish.
MT RATING: 90%



WWF WRESTLEMANIA
BY: FLYING EDGE
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 13
Take the role of your favourite fat, spangly wrestler and use his 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.
MT RATING: 84%

Z

ZERO WING
BY: SEGA
PRICE: £19.99
REVIEWED: MT 5
Evil space pirates 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 deal out some hot-laser treatment to the space pirates.Unfortunately, there are only three weapon types to play with, and the action isn't particularly varied.
MT RATING: 82%

ZOMBIES
BY: KONAMI
PRICE: £39.99
REVIEWED: MT 22
Eek! Assorted B-movie baddies are running amok and it's your job (as a male or female hero) to round up all the civilians before heading for the next stage. Numerous film tie-in ideas add to the fun, and there are dozens of power-ups and special weapons to collect as you go. An excellent game!
MT RATING: 90%

NEXT MONTH



IMPORTANT NOTICE

Oops, sorry about that little white lie last month – the powers that be forgot to send us our Ryan 'Taff' Giggs Soccer and it would seem Sensible Soccer CD decided to lose itself in the post too. Fear not though footy fans, these two footy games along with the official FIFA football game, World Cup Soccer, should be winging their way to the rooms of Fortress Maverick. However, the big news is that Fatal Fury 2 (top fighting game) will be reviewed next month.

While we're on the subject of beating the crap out of each other, King of the Monsters 2 should also be dropping in for a quick cuppa and a scone. More on the sporty front as we bring you the full run-down on Brett Hull Hockey, and from Psygnosis comes Shadow of the Beast 2 on CD.

Remember – we at MegaTech are still miles ahead of anyone else when it comes to reviews, previews and first-hand news.

MegaTech – On the shelves: Friday 18 March.



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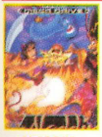
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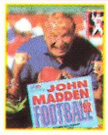
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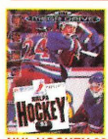

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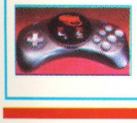
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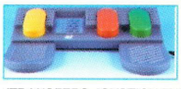

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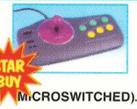

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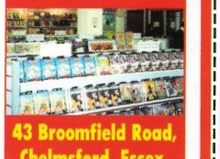
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