THE OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Dreamcast™

Dreamcast™

SPECIAL ISSUE 1999 £4.99

GAMING IS ONLY THE HALF OF IT



TURN ME ON!

Dreamcast SPECIAL ISSUE 1999

THE GET-STARTED ISSUE

OVER 60 DREAMCAST GAMES • ALL THE LAUNCH TITLES REVEALED • THE FUTURE OF CONSOLES • SEGA RALLY FASHION

TOP VIDEO ACTION

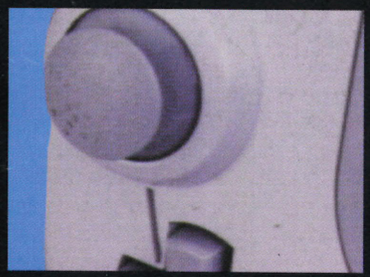
SEEN THE VIDEO WITH THIS SPECIAL ISSUE OF *OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE*? WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT, THEN?

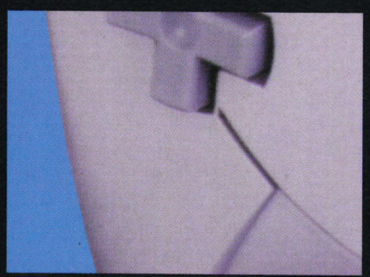
DREAMCAST REVEALED

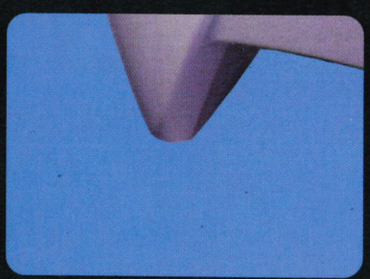
Discover what your Dreamcast can do. Take a look at all the elements that make Dreamcast the finest games machine money has ever been able to buy.

For a full run-down of the system's capabilities, turn to page 8





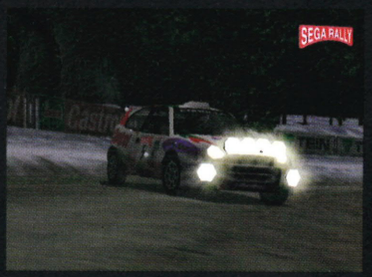




DRIVING

Plenty of driving games are lined up for release in the first month after Dreamcast goes on sale. Check out the lighting effects in *Tokyo Highway*, the awesome gameplay of *Sega Rally 2*, and the stupidity of *Pen Pen*.

See pages 39 and 64





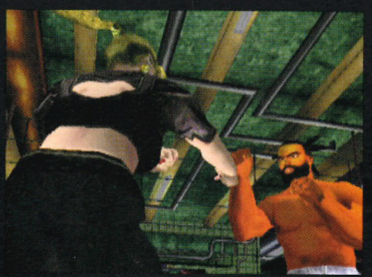




FISTICUFFS

This console is a lean, mean fighting machine with the games to match. Awesome classics like *Soul Calibur*, *Virtua Fighter 3tb* and *Mortal Kombat Gold* guarantee that you'll keep your fists well primed.

See pages 41 and 90









SPORTS

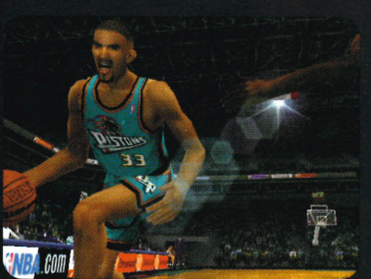
These days you don't even have to step foot outside to enjoy the world's greatest sports. Whether you're into basketball, soccer, football or even fishing, Sega have got your interests covered.

See page 44







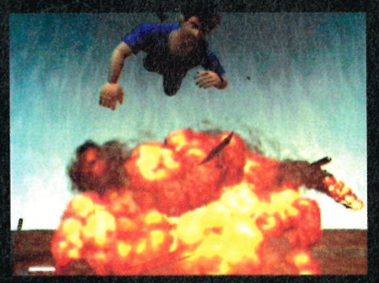


ACTION/ ADVENTURE

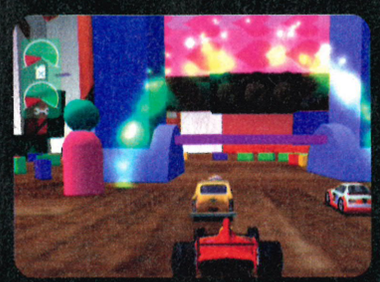
Dreamcast is capable of some truly awesome special effects. Its power is never demonstrated more than with the diverse array of titles like *Sonic Adventure, Toy Commander, Ecco* and *Blue Stinger*.

See pages 46, 68 and 82









BANG BANG

Keep that trigger finger well-toned – you'll be needing it a lot very soon. *House Of The Dead 2, Deep Fighter, Expendable* and *Incoming* are just some of the hits coming your way.

See pages 49, 93 and 94









23.09.99

BUCKLE UP FOR THE RIDE OF YOUR LIFE



IT'S COMING. Thursday 23 September will see the start of a new chapter in gaming history. Welcome to the *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, the only title to deliver you a CD packed full of demos every month and give you the inside scoop on all things Dreamcast, long before the unofficial titles know anything about it.

If you're like me, the Editor's intro is the last thing you read in a magazine. Therefore I won't drone on about what a wonderful system Dreamcast is, because you know that already. Instead I'm going to use this space to tell you a bit about the magazine itself, the first proper issue of which launches on Thursday 30 September.

The magazine you're holding now was first conceived in a dingy little office at the beginning of the year. We were one of four publishing companies competing to produce the official Dreamcast magazine for Sega, and we were the outside chance to get it. As such we could take a risk by coming up with a title that is very different from anything else on the shelves.

We wanted to create a stylish magazine that reflects the stylish nature of Dreamcast. To that end we got professional writers, designers and photographers from the style press involved at every step. Our reviewers and writing team are some of the most experienced in the business, so you can guarantee that not only you can trust what we say, but you'll also be entertained along the way. But words and appearances were only the start of it.

The whole multiplayer side of Dreamcast inspired us to get you, the gamers, involved wherever possible. As a result, we came up with lots of ways to get your stories and triumphs into the magazine. We didn't know it at the time, but Sega's entire ad campaign was focused around the fact that all the best games enable us to challenge real, living, breathing people, rather than a machine's artificial intelligence. They loved the fact that we honed in on this sense of community.

I've been editing magazines for nearly ten years, but what has made this one my most rewarding yet is the fact that we threw away the rule book when we created it. I like to think that this is a magazine about games, rather than a games magazine. Instead of treating you like a myopic computer geek who's totally obsessed with games, we recognise that you're an adult, with plenty of interests besides gaming. As a result, we've still got everything you'd expect from a magazine about games – reviews, previews and tips. And we take advantage of our official status by delivering top-secret info that no one else knows about. But then we take all that and see how your interests fit in, and come up with ways in which we can get you involved – as you'll see over the coming months.

It's nearly nine months since the start of this project, the four-man team has more than doubled in size, and the product of all those months of hard work is finally in your hands. It's scarey. But have we got it right? We're not patting ourselves on the back until we hear what you think. At the end of the day, you're the games player, you're the consumer, and this is your magazine. We hope we've got it right, but it's only by hearing what you've got say that we'll know for sure. So send me your thoughts, however brief, by emailing me at mhigham@dennis.co.uk, or writing to me at ODM, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. I look forward to hearing from you.

Mark Higham, Editor-in-Chief

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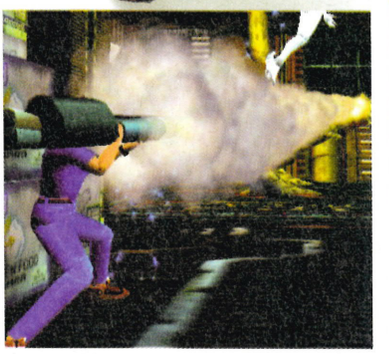


◁ Is it a skateboard or is it a lawnmower? See for yourself on page 36.

FREE COVER VIDEO

Wanna see what Dreamcast can do? Check out the video, and stand by to be blown away by footage from over 30 games coming your way





△ Meet Elliott Ballade on page 82.

8 **WELCOME TO DREAMCAST!**

Inside and out, the crucial guide to the new console: how it works, what it does, and what you'll be playing



▷ School days and *Sega Rally 2* in the Grange Hill gang reunion. Page 54.

△ Forget the fashion – just ogle the babes! Page 100.

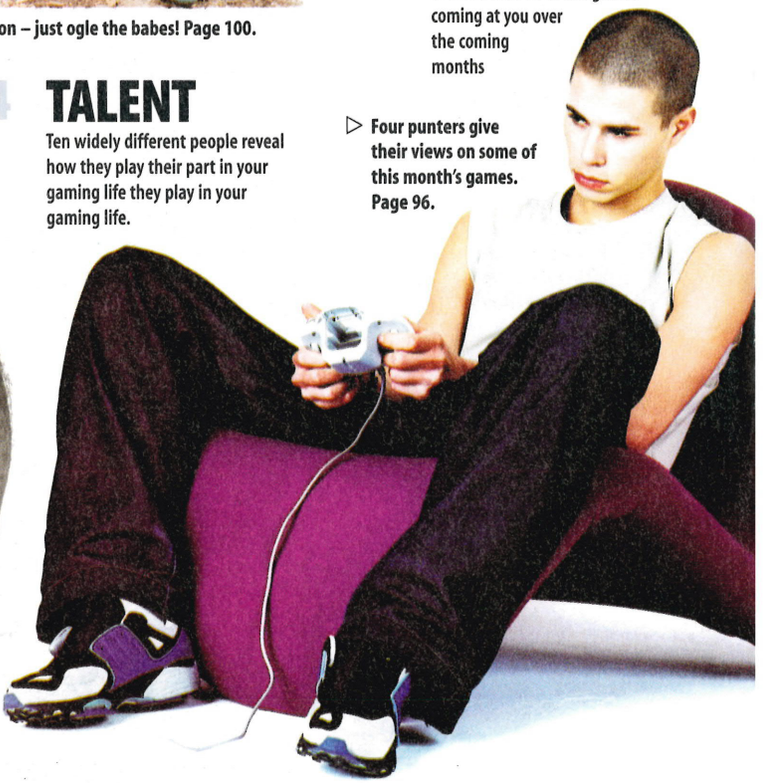
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Speed
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Fisticuffs
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Sports
Is fishing really a sport? That's open to debate. But check out *Sega Bass Fishing* along with more active pursuits such as *UEFA Striker* and *NFL 2000*

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The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Sega group



Babes with brawn. Page 42. ▷

Good new

We're trading A

for a Dream



Say hello to the new top dog in gaming. Dreamcast is the most powerful and flexible games console ever, far more powerful than any of its competitors. It packs a whopping great128-bit processor. It's also the first ever console with on-line capabilities. So now

SEGA™

ws. kids.

Rex

ncast

console



you can surf the net and e-mail players from around the world from the comfort of your armchair. The chunky new Dreamcast console. No wonder top gamers recommend it.

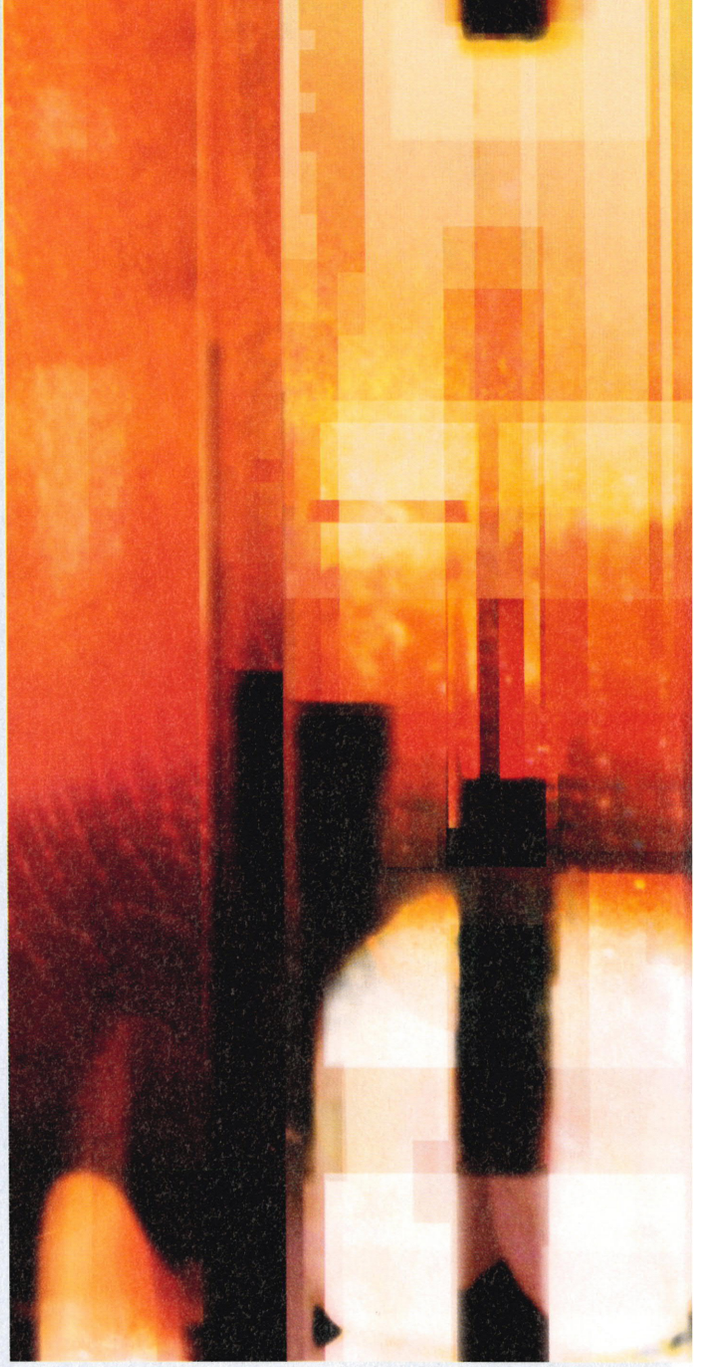
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Dreamcast.

Up to 6 billion players

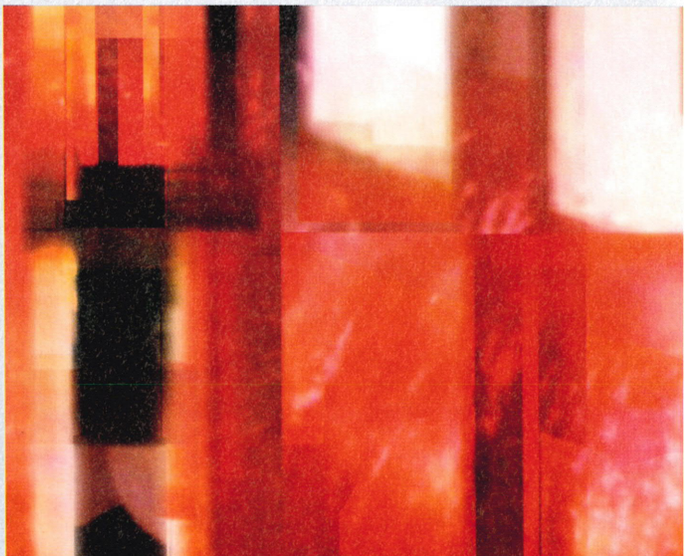
www.dreamcast-europe.com

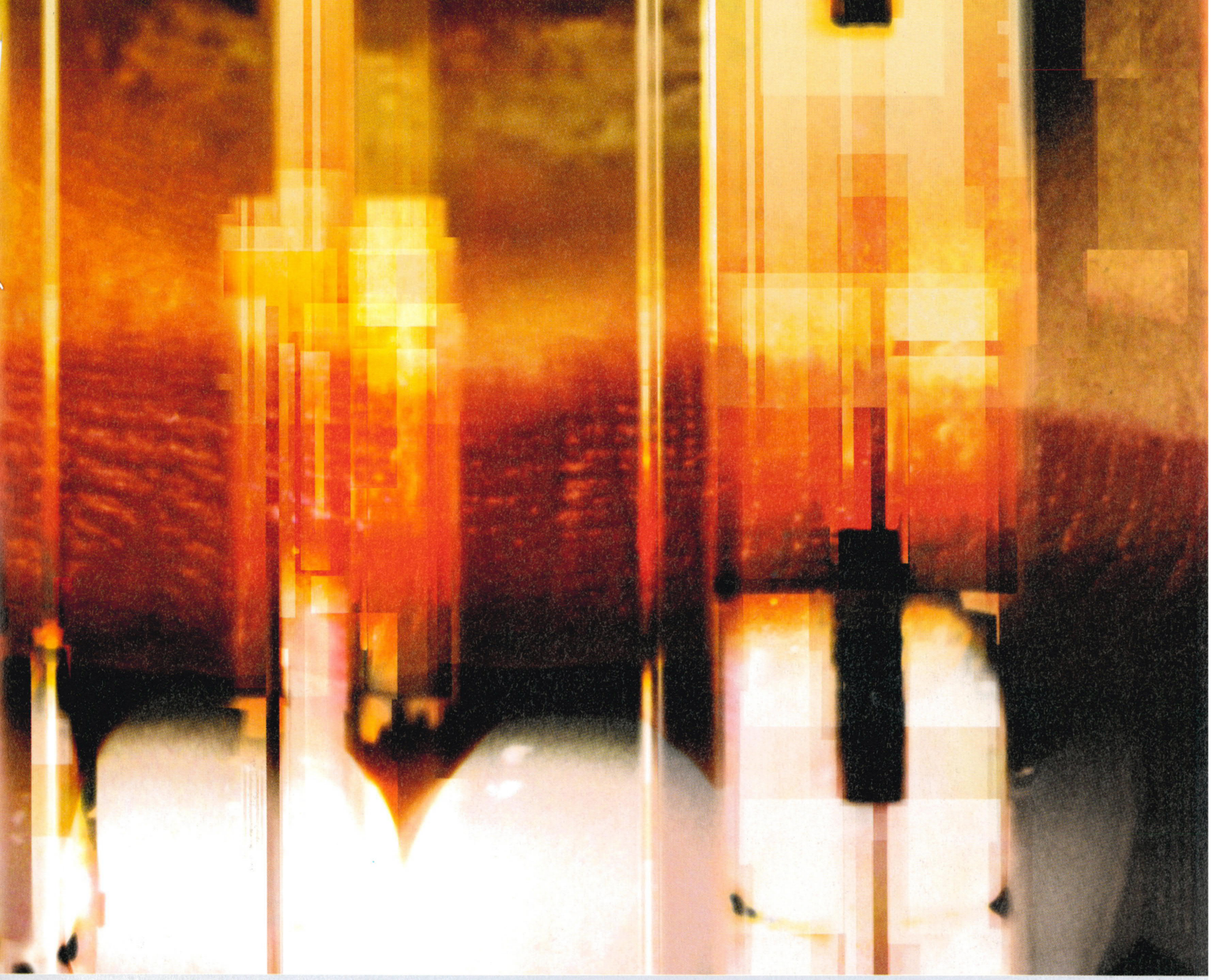
YOU'VE SEEN
THE ADS.
YOU'VE HEARD
THE HYPE.
NOW GET
THE FACTS.
DISCOVER WHY



DREAMCAST IS THE FASTEST AND MOST GRAPHICALLY

DREAMCAST
WILL BLOW
YOUR MIND





FOUR MILLION POLYGONS PER SECOND...360 MILLION INSTRUCTIONS PER SECOND...2.6 MILLION COLOURS...

INTENSE CONSOLE EVER LAUNCHED. BUT SPEED AND GRAPHICS AREN'T EVERYTHING...

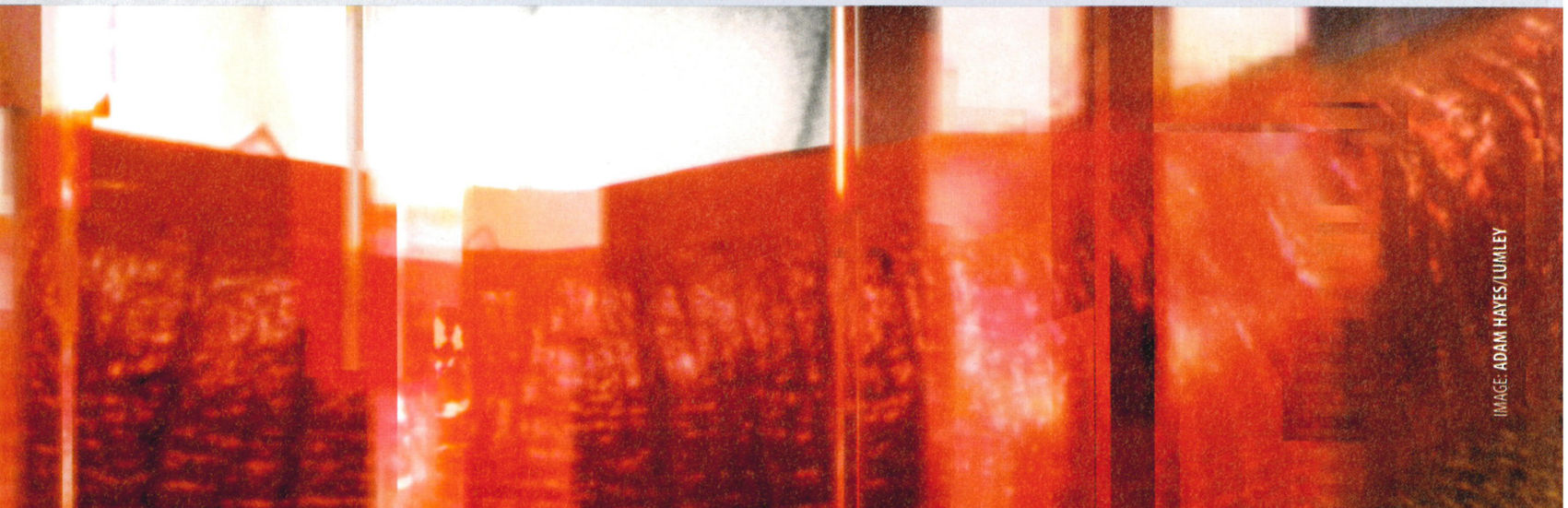


IMAGE: ADAM HAYES/LUMLEY



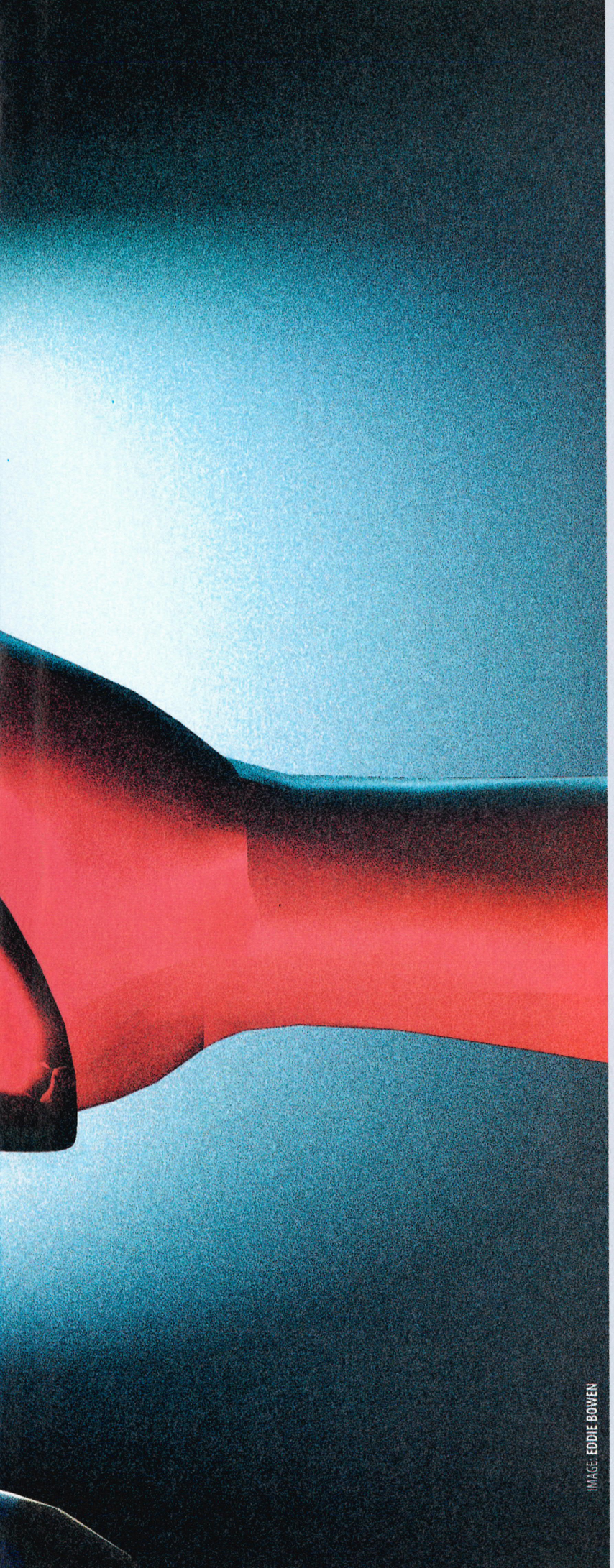
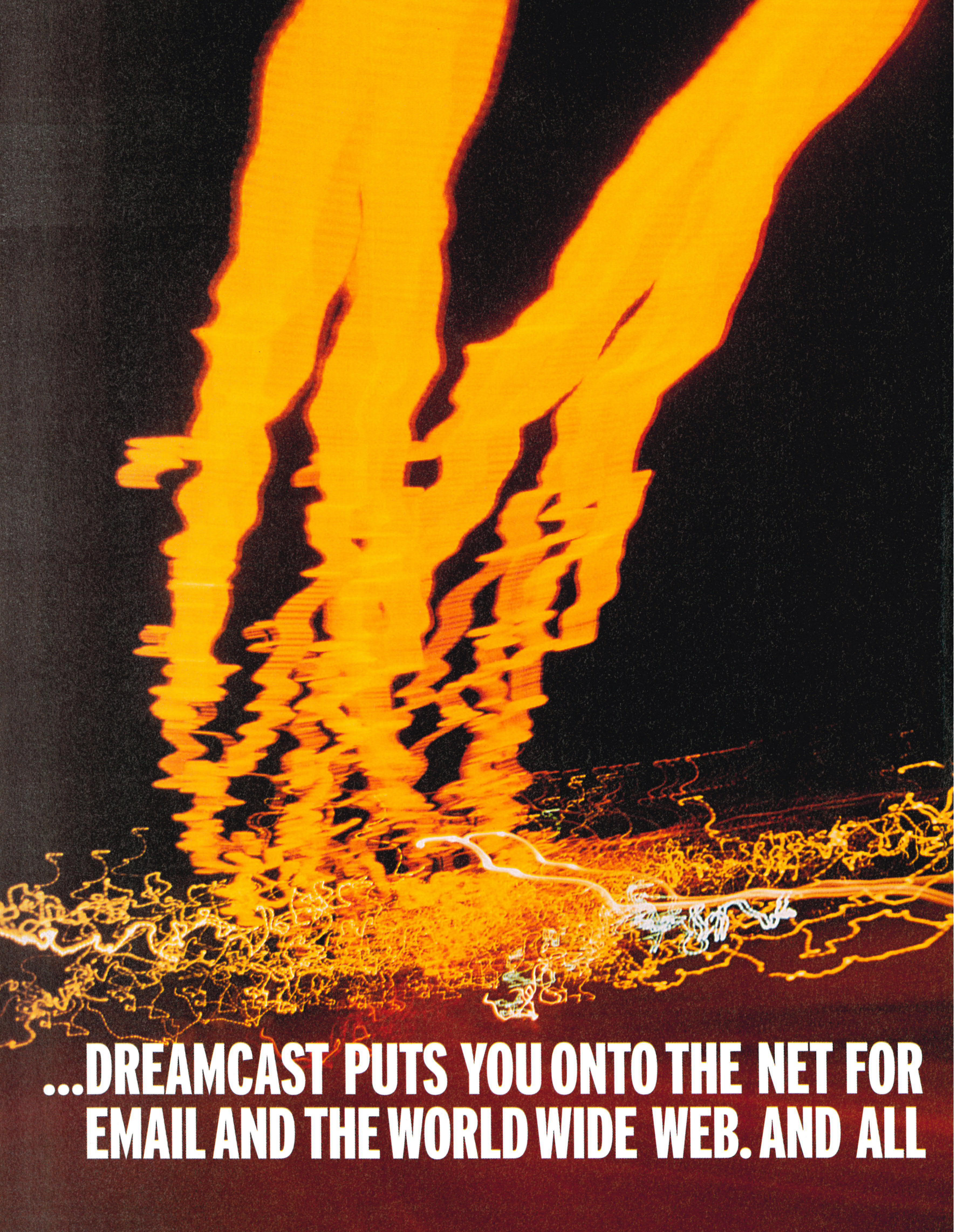
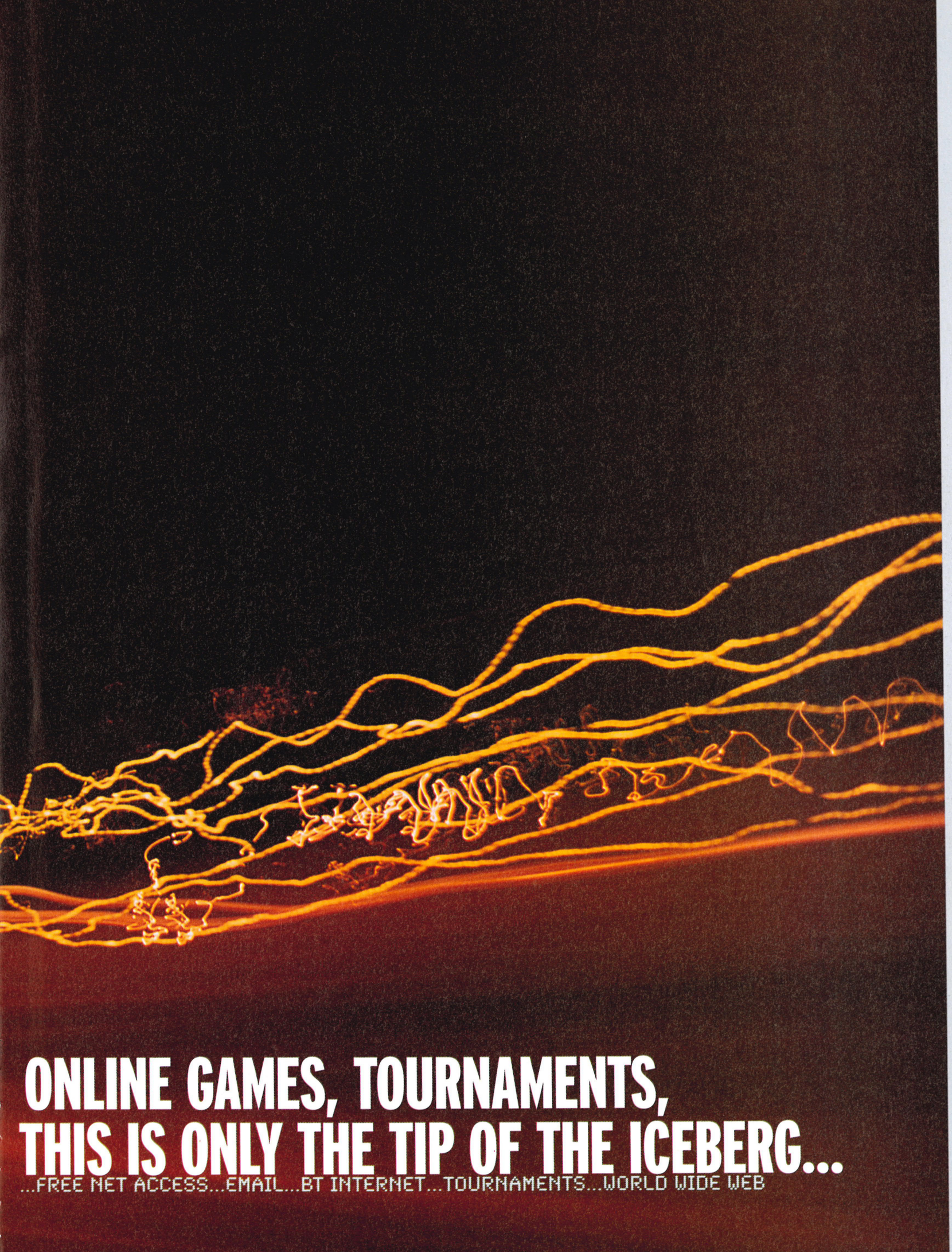


IMAGE: EDDIE BOWEN

...DREAMCAST BRINGS THE ARCADE INTO YOUR HOME WITH OVER 500 CUTTING-EDGE GAMES ALREADY IN DEVELOPMENT. BUT GAMES AREN'T EVERYTHING...

...VITUA FIGHTER...SEGA RALLY 2...
POWER STONE...SOUL CALIBUR...


...DREAMCAST PUTS YOU ONTO THE NET FOR
EMAIL AND THE WORLD WIDE WEB. AND ALL


ONLINE GAMES, TOURNAMENTS,
THIS IS ONLY THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG...
...FREE NET ACCESS...EMAIL...BT INTERNET...TOURNAMENTS...WORLD WIDE WEB

DREAMCAST HAS LANDED

AFTER MORE THAN 3 YEARS IN DEVELOPMENT AND 18 MONTHS OF INTENSE SPECULATION SINCE DREAMCAST WAS ANNOUNCED, THE CONSOLE THAT WILL FOREVER CHANGE THE FACE OF GAMING IS FINALLY HERE. AND IT'S ABOUT TIME TOO. AFTER 5 YEARS OF PLAYSTATION, THE CONSOLE MARKET IS CRYING OUT FOR A SYSTEM THAT TAKES US INTO THE NEW MILLENNIUM AND WHICH CAN FINALLY DELIVER THE SORT OF GAMES WE'VE SO FAR ONLY BEEN ABLE TO DREAM OF

DREAMCAST WAS designed with you in mind and to fit into your riotous lifestyle. From Thursday 23 September, the small sum of just £199.99 will kit you out with the most advanced console money can buy – and at the lowest price at which any other console has ever been launched. Dreamcast not only enables you to play an awesome array of mind-blowing games, it also gets you onto the Internet at a fraction of the cost of buying an overpriced PC. And it makes the most of all the opportunities which that affords, with the development of online gaming that enables you to play against anyone anywhere in the world – up to six billion players, as the ad reminds us.

There are ten games available on the day Dreamcast launches, and a further 30-odd splashing down before the end of the year. We've looked in more depth at these 10 games, starting on page 63. The range and diversity of the games are shaping up to be mighty impressive too. Sega are wisely porting over their much cherished coin-op titles exclusively to Dreamcast, including classics like *House Of The Dead 2* (with the obligatory plug-in light gun) and *Sega Rally 2*. As well as their coin-op range, Sega are developing Dreamcast-only titles such as city racer *Metropolis*, and *Shenmue*, an epic arcade adventure boasting one of the world's largest ever game budget.

AND THERE'S MORE

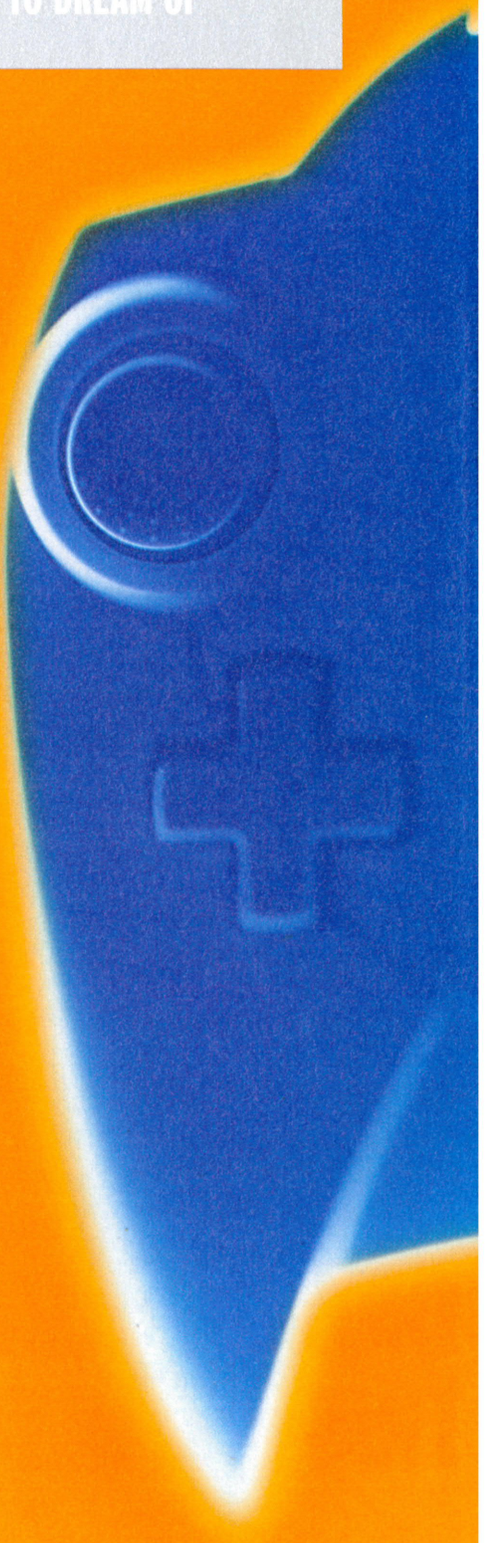
But these are only the games which Sega are working on. There's a groundswell of programmers and developers gagging to work on Dreamcast. Big names like Namco, Midway, Capcom and Konami are already close to finishing their first Dreamcast chart-toppers, and a mass of PC conversions are also on their way, ensuring that the whole breadth of gaming genres from strategy to role-playing is covered. Here at *ODM* we've seen many of these titles already (see pages 38-51) so we know they're breaking the mould as far as the gaming experience goes, but these are just the first titles to exploit Dreamcast technology, and over the coming months the games are going to get better and better.

Keeping one eye on the future, Sega have also included a modem as standard with the console. Using special online gaming areas, Dreamcast owners will be able to slug it out with citizens from all over Europe. The machine also comes with DreamKey, an Internet browser specially created for the console which enables you to surf the Web, chat with fellow gamers and send emails. While the console comes with an on-screen keyboard, Sega are also releasing a keyboard that you can plug into your console in order to speed up Net navigation.

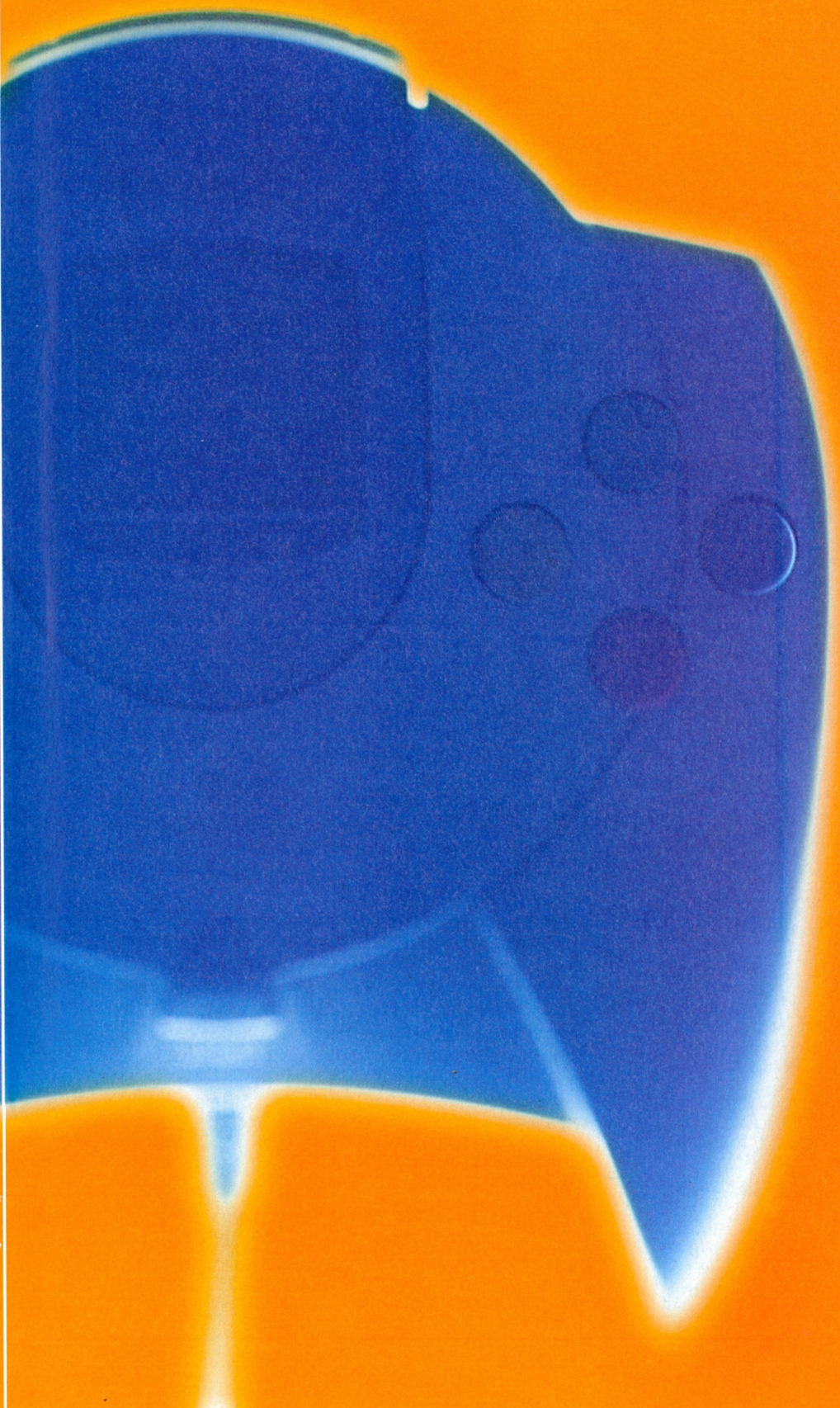
As well as offering free access to the Web, the Dreamcast start-up package also includes a controller, which features four buttons, an analogue joystick and two analogue triggers, neatly packaged in a user-friendly ergonomic design. You can also plug in a further three controllers straight away, ensuring that none of your mates will be left waiting around for a turn during a major four-player gaming session.

Another intriguing Dreamcast device – and

"IT'S GOT EVERYTHING – CUTTING-EDGE HARDWARE, A BURGEONING SUPPLY OF TOP-QUALITY GAMES, A MASS OF PERIPHERALS, NET GAMING, AND INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS SUCH AS THE VISUAL MEMORY UNIT"



PHOTOGRAPHY: **NICK ALLEN**



another first – is the Visual Memory (VM) unit. Slotting into the front of the controller, this small, robust unit features an LCD screen, a mini-joypad and four buttons, offering you the ability to save game data. On top of this, the VM can also be used as a kind of Tamagotchi (remember those?) which plays its own standalone games. Taken out of the controller, a VM can also plug into another VM so you can play head-to-head against a mate. As if that wasn't enough, you can also save your game data on the VM, then take it to the arcades, plug it in and use it there. In Japan you can already save your game characters in *Power Stone*, then take them along to the arcade to play them.

This theme of expanding the console's abilities beyond the start-up package is reflected in Sega's plans for other peripherals to complement Dreamcast – all aimed at tailoring the machine to your exact gaming requirements. Plug-in light guns, arcade sticks, racing wheels, vibration units and more will be available at launch time or soon after [see Some Hard Options panel on page 19].

Even to the cynics among us, Dreamcast appears to have all the right bases covered. It's got everything – cutting-edge hardware, an already burgeoning supply of top-quality software ready for release, a mass of game-enhancing peripherals, all-important Net gaming in development, and innovative products such as the VM unit.

For those who know their gaming history, it's obvious that things have certainly come a long way since *Hungry Horace*. For those who don't, it doesn't matter – simply sit back, turn your Dreamcast on and experience the future of gaming.

I WANT ONE

As of Thursday 23 September, you can buy a Dreamcast from all good retailers for just £199.99. If you can't wait that long, most stockists offer you the chance to pre-order, guaranteeing that you don't miss out.

ONLINE AND OVER

ONLINE GAMING IS ALREADY A MASSIVE SUCCESS IN THE PC GAMES MARKET. NOW THE CONSOLE WORLD WANTS A SLICE OF THE ACTION. ENTER DREAMKEY

THE CLOSEST MOST OF US have come to indulging in multiplayer action is by having everyone crowded round four controllers plugged into an old console in front of the TV screen, with a selection of games, fine beers and packs of Marlboro. It's an experience that any self-respecting console should offer, and one that Dreamcast will naturally deliver in spades. Bottom line though, is that there's a lot more to this multiplaying lark than that apres-lager gaming fest on a Saturday night.



△ The Dreamcast Europe site offers all the facts.

The online gaming world has exploded over the last few years, with classics like *Quake* and *Half-Life* on PC feeding the ever-hungry appetites of hard-core gamers as they hook up with fellow players from all over the planet. Professional tournaments have sprung up, both here and in the US and Japan, offering you the chance not only to compete against real humans instead of the console, but also to scale league tables and become one of the most respected players out there.

Whether you want to become a proverbial gaming god in the eyes of your global peers, or simply wish to play against someone in Australia, online gaming is regarded by many as the 'next gen' in gaming.

Before Dreamcast, if you wanted to play games online it would have cost over £800 to buy a PC with a suitably fast processor and modem. For under £200, Dreamcast is the first machine – never mind console – to enable Joe Bloggs in Didsbury to repackage himself as the Colin McRae of the Sega Rally world to all and sundry.

To achieve this, nestled in the Dreamcast box is the DreamKey CD. Popping this into the GD-ROM drive and flicking on the console opens up an array of possibilities. After entering a few registration details, Dreamcast stores your log-on details on a VM and you're ready to rumble. You can now access the Dreamcast Portal site by using the DreamKey browser.



'BEFORE DREAMCAST, IF YOU WANTED TO PLAY GAMES ONLINE IT WOULD HAVE COST OVER £800 FOR A PC'

SITE FOR SORE EYES

When you log on, you're immediately confronted with your own homepage, featuring four main areas. You've got an email service, games section, online shopping, and lifestyle information.

The Games area enables you to access information, previews and reviews of all the games coming up on Dreamcast, along with hints and tips and screenshots. This is the best place to find out what's happening in the world of Dreamcast gaming. Once the first online game is launched in Europe, this area will also show you what game sessions are available and enable you to hook-up with other players for multiplayer mayhem. You'll be able to track your performances in leagues and championships against other players from all over Europe.

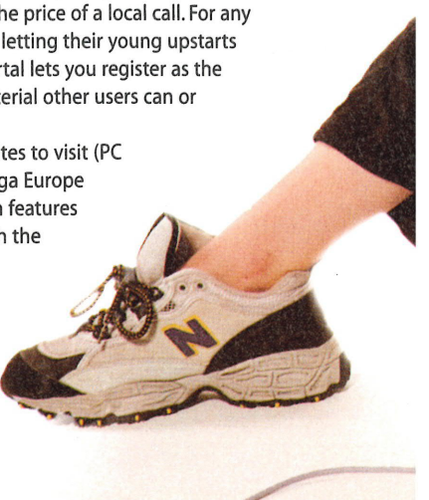
The email and chat areas put mass communication at your fingertips! When you buy a Dreamcast you get free unlimited Internet access for the price of a local call and five email accounts per machine, so all members of your household can have their own email address. The chat service enables you to talk live online to other Dreamcast owners about a range of subjects.

The online shop will offer you products from Sega and other companies via the Dream Arena. You can find out details about games, music, travel and any number of other products available, then order them at the press of a button.

Dream Arena's Lifestyle section features information and news from around the Net, giving you easy and quick access to international news stories, sports results and features, and information on music and films.

In addition to all this, Dream Arena gives you access to the Web free of monthly charges and all for the price of a local call. For any parent who is concerned about letting their young upstarts loose on the Net, Dreamcast Portal lets you register as the master user and decide the material other users can or can't access.

There are two other official sites to visit (PC owners included). The first is Sega Europe (www.sega-europe. com), which features the official corporate pages with the usual press releases and news. The second is Dreamcast



PHOTOGRAPHY: **LUMLEY**, MODEL: **AILSA MARSHALL AT PREMIER**, 'EGG' STOOL (£289) FROM: **PURVES & PURVES**

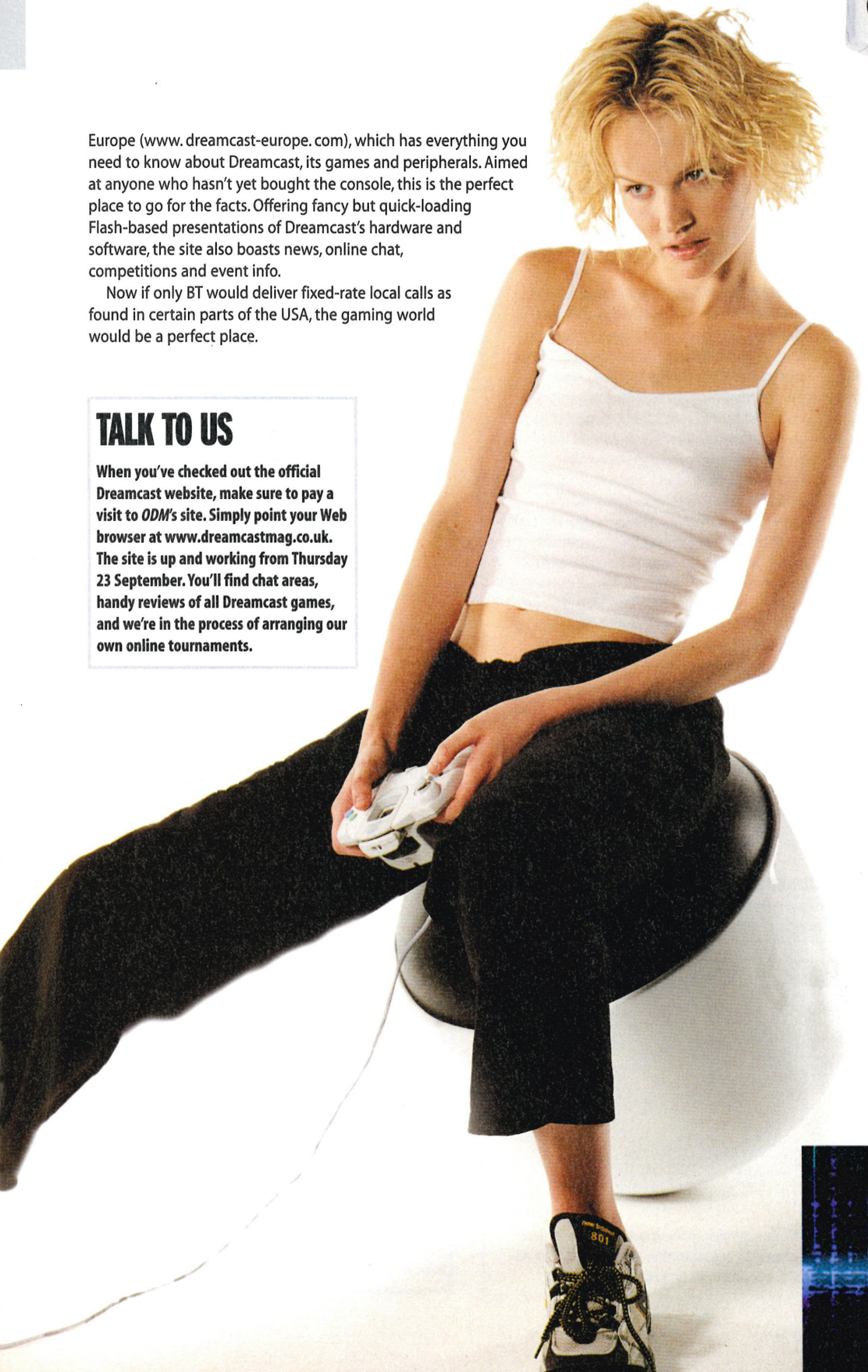
HERE

Europe (www. dreamcast-europe. com), which has everything you need to know about Dreamcast, its games and peripherals. Aimed at anyone who hasn't yet bought the console, this is the perfect place to go for the facts. Offering fancy but quick-loading Flash-based presentations of Dreamcast's hardware and software, the site also boasts news, online chat, competitions and event info.

Now if only BT would deliver fixed-rate local calls as found in certain parts of the USA, the gaming world would be a perfect place.

TALK TO US

When you've checked out the official Dreamcast website, make sure to pay a visit to *ODM*'s site. Simply point your Web browser at www.dreamcastmag.co.uk. The site is up and working from Thursday 23 September. You'll find chat areas, handy reviews of all Dreamcast games, and we're in the process of arranging our own online tournaments.





SMALL BUT PERFECTLY FORMED

The Visual Memory unit is one versatile little fella

A UNIQUE INNOVATION in Dreamcast's arsenal is the Visual Memory (VM) unit. The unit features an LCD screen, mini D-pad controller and an additional four buttons. While its ability to save game data is nothing new, Sega have also designed the VM to be used in the same way as a Tamagotchi, the ridiculously successful virtual pet simulator which first hit these shores a couple of years ago.

Titles such as *Sonic Adventure* already feature sub-games and characters that you can download into the unit. The saved characters can be nurtured independently of the game itself, and can even be made to fight other players' characters when you connect your VM back into your Dreamcast.

Classic titles like the beat 'em up *Power Stone* also download sub-games in to the VM as you progress further and further into the game. These can then be taken away and played independently.

The local coin-op arcade is also fair game as far as the VM is concerned. Because of its compatibility with Dreamcast-based Naomi arcade machines, Dreamcast's VM will be able to transfer its data in to the Naomi coin-op and vice-versa via a special port on the coin-op. With Sega currently developing plans to increase the VM's productivity online and give away special VM games via the Net, the cute unit looks set to become as successful as its big brother.

A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL?

Sega turn to Bill Gates

NOBODY SEEMS TO LIKE BILL GATES. Why? Well, some would say he's the modern-day anti-Christ hell-bent on infiltrating every corner of the media with his Midas/Microsoft touches. More cynical pundits reckon that we're all just a tad jealous that he's the richest man in the world, while the rest of us struggle to pay off the mortgage.

Whatever the case, when Sega were looking around for an operating system to run Dreamcast's software, they decided to go with Bill's Windows CE, a customised derivative of the operating system used by the PC. At the time, it was a controversial choice within the industry, but what it means for us gamers is simple: it's a doddle for games makers to port their finest PC titles over to Dreamcast.

Which is damn fine news considering the PC boasts some of the most diverse and imaginative games ever to grace a software retailer's shelf (just a shame you have to cough up £800 to buy one). Sega have vowed they will not allow any half-arsed titles to make the leap from PC to their beloved console – only the very best will do.

Be warned though, Sega: we'll be holding you to that commitment in future issues of *ODM*.

THE HARDWARE

OUTSIDE AND IN

A LOOK AT WHAT £199.99 WILL BUY YOU, COME THURSDAY 23 SEPTEMBER



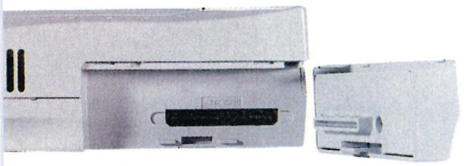
OUTSIDE

Eight ports litter the casing of Dreamcast, and seven buttons and two slots can be found on the controller. What the hell do they do? Let us explain

THE DREAMCAST CONTROLLER comes complete with a 360-degree analog joystick which enables you to decide how fast your on-screen character moves. For example, in *Sonic Adventure*, if you push slightly forward the character walks slowly; shove the joystick all the way forward and the character runs. It's invaluable for players wanting more precise control over their on-screen counterpart. Below the joystick, you can find the tried-and-trusted joypad, which is ideal for more traditional games such as *Tetris 4D*. The controller features seven buttons; one for starting and pausing games while the other six are vital for any self-respecting fighting game fan. Two of these buttons are analogue triggers which you can find on the underside of the controller, making them ideal for accelerating and breaking in racers such as *Sega Rally 2*.



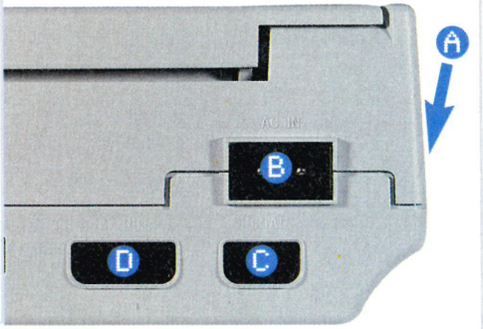
THE FOUR PORTS enable up to four controllers to be plugged in at any one time – ideal for getting together with friends for four-player games.



DREAMCAST'S 33.6 KILOBYTES PER SECOND MODEM is detachable so it can be upgraded in the future. Its port can also be used for other hardware.



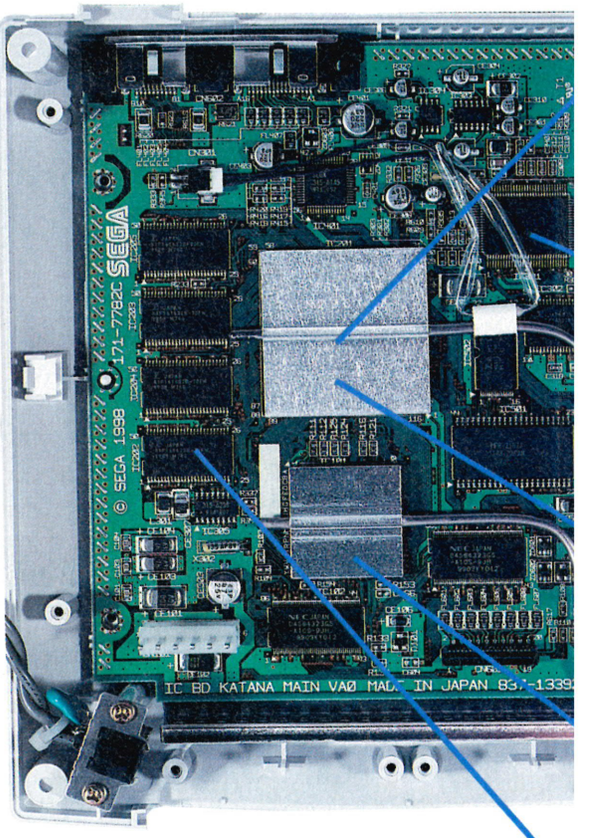
THERE ARE THE TWO slots in the front of the controller, which you can use to dock two VMs or a VM/vibration unit combo.



THERE ARE FOUR PORTS on Dreamcast's rump. A This is where your phone line plugs into the modem. B The power cable slots in here. C The serial port will be used for expanding Dreamcast's capabilities in the future. D The AV-Out enables Dreamcast to be plugged into your TV either via a SCART connector or an external RF adapter.

INSIDE

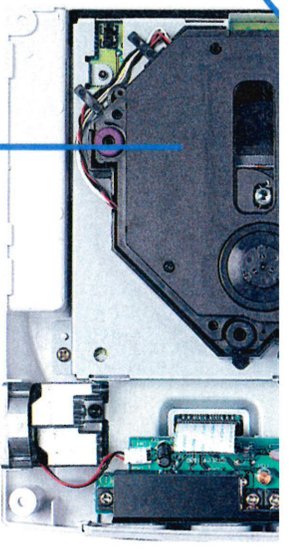
A quick look at the awesome technology that delivers all these ground-breaking games



NAME: GD-ROM DRIVE

WHAT IS IT? A special 12-speed drive developed by Yamaha. It accepts discs holding some 1Gb (1,000Mb) of data. Sega also hope it will stop pirates from copying discs

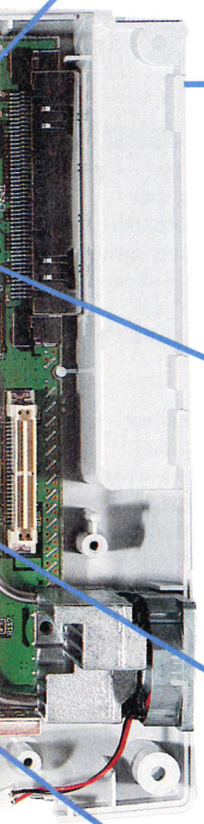
IN ENGLISH PLEASE: Mountains more data storage available to game makers so that games can boast bigger worlds and more effects. The GD-ROM has the largest capacity of any CD format ever developed (CDs usually hold about 600Mb of data). It's also quick, meaning that there's minimal delay when downloading info between levels



SOME HARD OPTIONS

With Sega's sights focused on the future, *ODM* takes an in-depth look at some of the peripherals that will soon be available for Dreamcast

PUTTING THEIR MONEY where their mouth is, Sega have lined up an extensive set of hardware extras for Dreamcast, either out now or in the very near future. The keyboard is certainly a good investment if you intend spending time chatting to your mates online; the VM is crucial for saving games; and the fishing rod controller is a laugh.



NAME: LIQUID COOLING SYSTEM

WHAT IS IT? Two pipes containing purified water that stop the CPU and graphics chip from overheating

IN ENGLISH PLEASE: The liquid cooling system was originally necessary when the console was launched in Japan. Since then the processor has been re-specced so this cooling system won't be needed when the UK machine goes on sale

NAME: MODEM

WHAT IS IT? A 33.6KBps modem, of course

IN ENGLISH PLEASE: With a modem, you can access the Net and virtually beat up other gamers online. The modem is also upgradeable, enabling you to move up to an even faster modem in time. The upgradeability ensures that Dreamcast can keep up with the rapidly evolving Net and its ever-increasing speed-hungry requirements

NAME: YAMAHA AICA SOUND CHIP

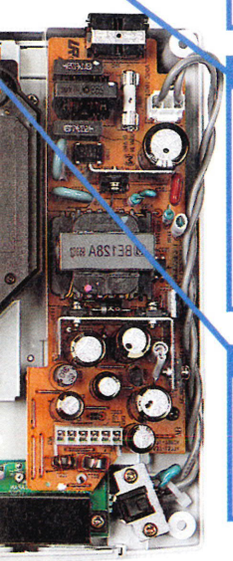
WHAT IS IT? The AICA boasts 64 channel output and Digital Signal Processor effects, plus surround-sound support

IN ENGLISH PLEASE: There's no point in having a graphically gobsmacking game without the latest sound technology from the people who know their stuff – Yamaha. With the right set-up, the clear and multi-layered sound adds yet another dimension to the Dreamcast experience

NAME: NEC/VIDEOLOGIC POWERVR CLX1 GRAPHICS CHIP

WHAT IS IT? A specialist graphics chip designed to enhance 3D graphics capabilities

IN ENGLISH PLEASE: Adding more power to Dreamcast's muscle, the graphics chip helps out the CPU by taking care of all those fancy effects seen in 3D games, such as special lighting and fog effects



NAME: HITACHI SH4 CPU

WHAT IS IT? A 128-bit graphics engine with an on-board RISC processor

IN ENGLISH PLEASE: The heart of Dreamcast's power. Capable of throwing around 3D graphics at four times the speed of your average high-spec PC, it means we can expect frighteningly impressive conversions of our favourite arcade titles such as *Sega Rally 2*

NAME: 16MB OPERATING RAM

WHAT IS IT? The amount of memory inside Dreamcast, used to store information on the fly

IN ENGLISH PLEASE: The more memory you have on board, the quicker games shift, and Dreamcast has eight times more memory than PlayStation



VISUAL MEMORY UNIT

PRICE: £19.99 AVAILABLE: AT LAUNCH

This is an essential accessory for every Dreamcast owner. When plugged into Dreamcast's controller, the VM can save game data; pull it out and you can swap data with other VMs, play mini-games on the LCD screen, use it in the arcades, and even let it help you out online.



LIGHT GUN

PRICE: £69.99 (with game) AVAILABLE: OCT

Sega's classy-looking light gun will come bundled with the Dreamcast version of the popular arcade shooter *House Of The Dead 2* when it comes out in October. It features three fire buttons, a digital directional pad and a slot for a VM or vibration unit.



CONTROLLER

PRICE: £19.99 AVAILABLE: AT LAUNCH

One controller comes with Dreamcast at launch, but you can plug another three in straight away. With four buttons, two analogue triggers, an analogue joystick and a multi-directional D-pad, it's a very versatile device.



VIBRATION UNIT

PRICE: £19.99 AVAILABLE: AT LAUNCH

The VM-sized vibration unit plugs into your Dreamcast controller or the light gun. Provided your games are compatible (and many are) then the unit will vibrate at particular moments in the action (such as when you get hit or crash).



ARCADE STICK

PRICE: £29.99 AVAILABLE: AT LAUNCH

A rugged, arcade-style controller primarily designed for fighting games. It features a tough joystick, six buttons (in a classic three-by-two formation) and, of course, two slots for a VM and/or a Vibration unit (see below). An essential purchase for fans of the beat 'em up, *Virtua Fighter 3tb*.



RACING WHEEL

PRICE: £34.99 AVAILABLE: AT LAUNCH

With so many cool racers either here or on the way (*Sega Rally 2* and *Metropolis* to name just two), Dreamcast needed a steering wheel. And this is it. Designed for table-mount, it features two analogue levers and, of course, a VM slot.



FISHING CONTROLLER

PRICE: £69.99 (with game) AVAILABLE: OCT '99

This little beaut – a replica fishing reel, no less – is bundled with the Japanese fishing simulation *Sega Bass Fishing*. Originally the game and controller seemed unlikely to make it to the UK because it was felt we wouldn't appreciate the game. However, after a lively celebrity event at Party in the Park in July, it was decided to bring it here afterall.



VGA BOX

PRICE: £TBA AVAILABLE: TBA

This is a little converter box which enables you to plug your Dreamcast into a VGA-compatible computer monitor (instead of your TV) to achieve amazingly clear, ultra-sharp picture quality.



HEADSET MICROPHONE

PRICE: £TBA AVAILABLE: TBA

This is soon to be available in Japan, but at the moment it isn't officially bound for Europe. In theory this headphone and microphone combo could be used for shouting abuse at your competitor while you're playing multiplayer games online.



ZIP DRIVE

PRICE: £TBA AVAILABLE: TBA

There has been much speculation about the possibility that Sega may release a Zip drive for Dreamcast. If so, it will sit under your Dreamcast and give you 100Mb into which you can save any games, levels, players, add-ons etc. that you download from the Net or get from our coverdiscs. The device will plug into the expansion port where the modem usually resides, and the modem itself will then plug into the drive. We'll keep you updated on developments with this peripheral in our monthly news section.



KEYBOARD

PRICE: £19.99 AVAILABLE: AT LAUNCH

Aimed primarily at those of us using the Internet capabilities of Dreamcast, this keyboard plugs into the controller port and enables you to easily write emails, chat and surf the Web. The on-screen keyboard is okay, but it can be a bit fiddly if you're using it to type lots of text, for example emails.

WHERE TO BUY IT

You can get all the peripherals mentioned here from most good high street stockists. Check out Sega's website at www.dreamcast-europe.com for more information and release dates.

IT'S ONLY A GAME

NOW YOU KNOW WHAT DREAMCAST IS CAPABLE OF, WHAT ABOUT THE GAMES?

THE WORLD'S BEST

To put it all into perspective, here's a look at how Dreamcast rates against the two leading console systems on the market. It makes the tired-looking PlayStation seem a bit sorry for itself.



	SEGA DREAMCAST	NINTENDO 64	SONY PLAYSTATION
PROCESSOR	200MHz, 128-bit RISC-based	93.75MHz, 64-bit RISC-based	33.9MHz, 32-bit RISC-based
PROCESSOR POWER	~360 MIPS*	~125 MIPS*	~30 MIPS*
MEMORY	16Mb RAM, 8Mb vid, 2Mb snd	4Mb total	2Mb RAM, 1Mb vid, 512K snd
DISPLAY (MAX. RES., COLOURS)	640x480, 16.77 million	640x480, 16.77 million	640x480, 16.77 million
GRAPHICS POWER	~4 million polygons/sec	~1 million polygons/sec	~360,000 polygons/sec
SOUND CHANNELS	64	Unlimited**	24
STORAGE (MAX. CAPACITY, SPEED)	GD-Rom (1Gb, 12-speed)	Cartridge (4Mb, N/A)	CD-Rom (660Mb, 2-speed)
MODEM	33.6K (upgradable)	Non-existent	Non-existent

* MIPS = millions of instructions per second
** Each channel uses 1% processing power

FACT: EVERY GENRE IS COVERED.

From the promising *Metropolis* and the sublime beat 'em up *Power Stone*, to the *Toy Story*-gone-mad *Toy Commander*, the arcade strategy game *Wild Metal Country*, and the visual feast that is *Tokyo Highway Challenge* (check out our cover-mounted video). Sega's philosophy seems simple – give the punters what they want, and plenty of it. Oh, and surprise them along the way as well.

FACT: THERE ARE 31 GAMES

coming out for Dreamcast before the end of the year. Such an extensive software release schedule at launch is unprecedented.

FACT: THERE ARE ALREADY

more than 100 games in development and over 500 developers working on Dreamcast games as we write this.

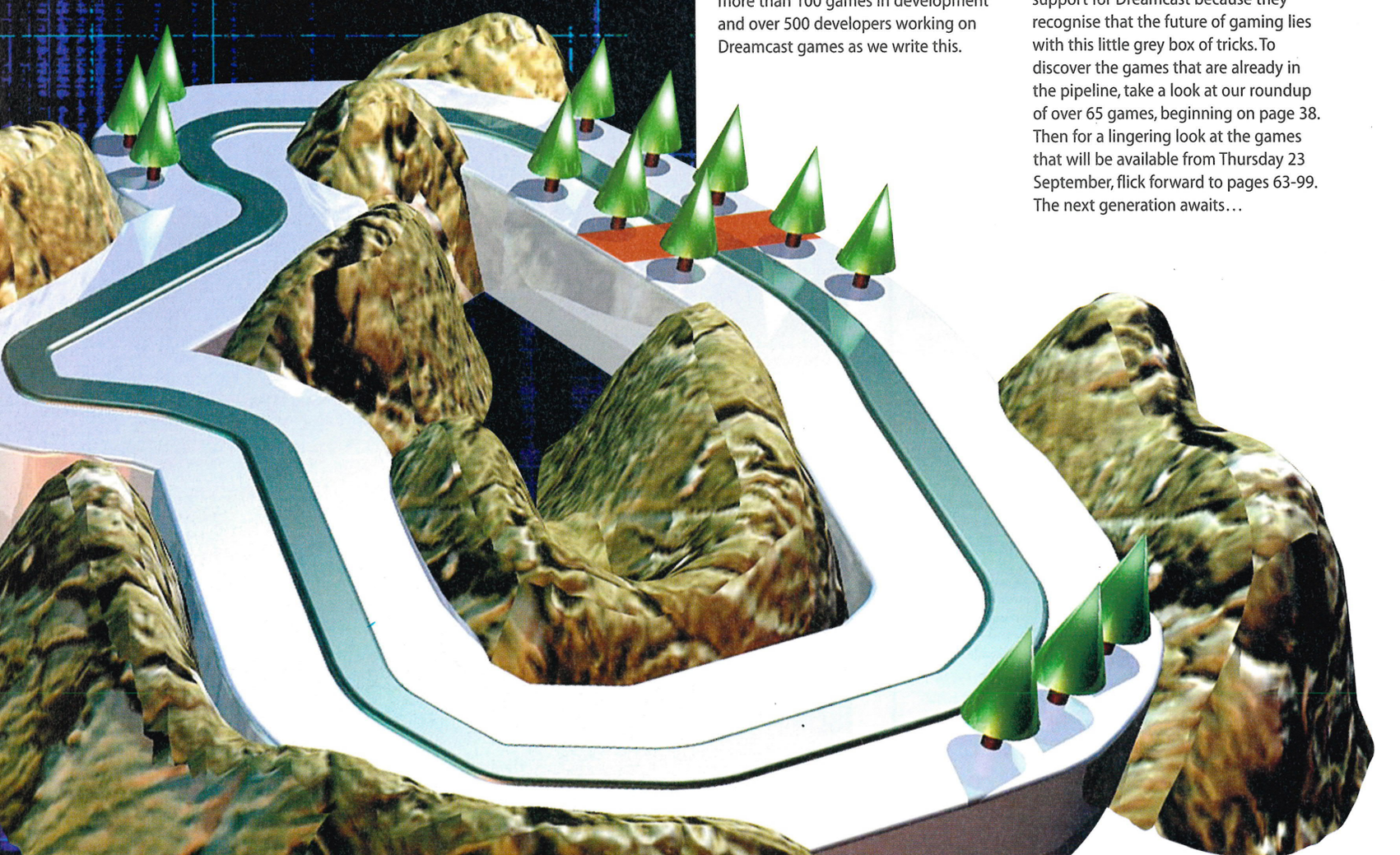
FACT: MAKING GAMES IS EASY

thanks to the Windows CE operating system. Developers can convert PC games over to Dreamcast easily, then spend extra development time making the most of Dreamcast's advanced hardware.

FACT: SEGA SOLD ONE MILLION

Dreamcasts in Japan in its first four months. Such was its popularity that when *Sega Rally 2* became available, the ability to race against one another online saw the console sell out in shops all over the land of the rising sun. Sega now intend to sell 250,000 consoles in the UK in the run-up to Christmas.

Developers are already showing their support for Dreamcast because they recognise that the future of gaming lies with this little grey box of tricks. To discover the games that are already in the pipeline, take a look at our roundup of over 65 games, beginning on page 38. Then for a lingering look at the games that will be available from Thursday 23 September, flick forward to pages 63-99. The next generation awaits…



You've played the game, now see the movie!



SONIC THE HEDGEHOG THE MOVIE

OUT ON 1ST NOVEMBER 1999!

The prayers of millions of Sega game players have been answered. Everyone's favourite hyper hedgehog returns in an animated spectacular that will blow its U.K. counterparts right off the planet. Speed, buddies, romance, humour, high-tech and cool blue attitude combine to form A.D.V. Films' ***Sonic the Hedgehog!***

PG



***SONIC THE HEDGEHOG* IS AVAILABLE TO BUY FROM ALL GOOD VIDEO STOCKISTS AND MAIL ORDER FROM A.D. VISION ON 01248 421000.**

ADV FILMS

www.advfilms.com/advuk
email: advuk@advfilms.com

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Dear Jo

Just because

kill yo



This evening, reach out to someone, embrace them and then thrash them. Dreamcast is the most powerful and flexible games console ever, far more powerful than any of its competitors. It has a whopping great 128-bit processor. It's also the first ever console with on-line capabilities.

SEGA™

hn,



e I want to

U doesn't mean I don't love you.

Jane@dreamcast-europe.com

So now, in between games, you can surf the net from the comfort of your armchair. Or even e-mail friends to invite them round to bond over a game. Gandhi would approve. Though so would Attila the Hun.

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Dreamcast.

Up to 6 billion players

www.dreamcast-europe.com

TO CELEBRATE THE LAUNCH OF THE FUTURE OF GAMING, WE TAKE A LOOK AT NINE PEOPLE AND A FOOTBALL TEAM WHO, IN THEIR VARIOUS WAYS, HAVE CONSPIRED TO MAKE DREAMCAST THE MOST DESIRABLE CONSOLE EVER LAUNCHED

PLAYER 1

YUJI NAKA

THE CREATOR OF SONIC THE HEDGEHOG HAS BEEN INVOLVED WITH DREAMCAST FROM DAY ONE. HE ALSO REALLY LIKES HIS CARS

"I AM ALWAYS THINKING about games. I watch, hear and feel for creating games. The only time I think about something else is when I'm having meal."

These are the kind of obsessive thought patterns that make you one of the world's leading game designers. Yuji Naka, a 15-year veteran of videogame design and still only 33, is treated with all the reverence of a rock star in his native Japan. He gesticulates. He thrashes his arms. He almost froths when describing the ever-present glory of his flagship DC game *Sonic Adventure*.

"Now, Sonic can finally jump out to the 3D world from the 2D world because of the Dreamcast's ability." he enthuses, "I've never seen such a wonderful machine."

Yuji was involved with the Dreamcast console from a very early stage and was more than ready to throw his weight around when it was needed. "First there was this idea that we will sell it without a modem in US, but I shout out loudly that I won't release *Sonic* if you won't built in the modem," he laughs. "I think there are still many children who are not used to the Internet."

Yuji created Sonic way back in 1992, in the golden era of Sega when kids with car tools slugged it out on the street to decide which was best – the Nintendo or the Megadrive. The blue hedgehog was born out of frustration with the slowness of rival icon Mario.

"Didn't you feel like you wanted to run through those stages?" he says. "That's why I created a high-speed character with Sonic. I didn't expect him to be this popular though."

Ten years down the line, Sonic has penetrated deep into the speed demon's life – a Sonic-coloured Porsche and a Tails-coloured Ferrari F355 B Fiorano A sit in Yuji's garage. "The Ferrari really is the princess for me, so I've never let her out of the garage when it's raining."

He has, however, always dreamed of racing Sonic. "I will drive my car though. Which will win?" he asks, straight-faced.

Um… I dunno.

The Japanese? Mad.



ILLUSTRATION: **ADAM HAYES,** FONT: **UNDA SQUARE BY IDENTIKAL**



PLAYER 2

JEAN FRANCOIS CECILLON

IN CHARGE OF EUROPE. WELL, SEGA EUROPE

WHEN NOT EULOGISING DREAMCAST in his native Provence or signing deals with the likes of his beloved St. Etienne football team, Jean François Cecillon (or 'JF' to his soldiers) is the big cheese, the top dog, *il barone* at Sega Europe.

"Football is more than a sport," he says in his treacly French accent, "it is one of the strongest entertainment propositions in Europe today. I feel regrets for the people who don't like it! We picked up football in priority because this sport's audience matches extremely well our target audience."

In the quest to find a talented general to overlord the Sega Europe operation, this football lover was recruited from EMI, and so brought a shedload of experience from the only industry more fickle than the videogames world.

His job is to ensure the total success of Dreamcast in Europe through, he explains, "advertising, sponsoring, media, trade, software and electronic programmes". He also represents the company as a figurehead, using his breeze-blocks of charisma to woo the press and buoy his 40-odd crew.

"This is a great moment in the life of the company," he says with obvious enthusiasm, "and for the staff who have been spending the best part of the last two years getting everything ready for this big event."

Jean François was also instrumental in the current ad campaign, right down to the choice of music. "Our communication is focused on 'up to six billion players'," he says, "which strengthens our message encouraging people to join their own community though social gaming. I thought that the two Robbie [Williams] tracks were incredibly matching the tone of the ads, so I used them."

But – here comes the crucial question – can he do the Desert stage of *Sega Rally 2* in under 0'58"?

"I discover games all the time, and I am fascinated by the complexity and expertise involved in the making of a game."

He grins. "When I joined, someone very important told me: 'You don't have to be a gamer to be a player.' I hope he's right."

PHOTOGRAPHY: **TANYA CHALKIN**





PLAYER 3

JEZ SAN

TALENTED BRITISH GAME DESIGNER WORKING ON THE FIRST MULTIPLAYER DREAMCAST GAME, AND ALSO A GADGET FREAK

"*RED DOG* IS ONE very fast and furious tank combat game. We designed it to be incredibly good fun in multiplayer, since that's the Dreamcast's forte."

The MD of Argonaut is on a roll. "We've really pushed the hardware to see what it can do, and chucked in loads of gratuitous special effects," he says. "We wanted to make it better-looking than any PC or PlayStation game to date."

He's not stopping. "Gameplay-wise, its kinda *Quake* meets *Battlezone* meets *StarFox* – in a tank…"

Done. The game lover pauses to take breath.

"…A highly agile, off-road, articulated, armed-to-the-teeth, fun-to-drive-around tank."

With the money he's made from coding gaming classics like *StarFox*, *StarGlider*, and *Croc*, San has invested heavily in his two main passions.

Films: "I'm a huge movie buff. I just co-produced a feature film with my brother Danny San, called *Understanding Jane*. It stars Kevin McKidd [Tommy – "the one who dies" – in *Trainspotting*] and young, up-and-coming actor John Simm [of *Human Traffic* fame]. It's really funny. They took it to the festival in Cannes recently, and right now they're looking for a distributor."

Gadgets: "I recently got a 'home cinema' installed in my bachelor pad lounge. It's got an electric screen that comes down from the ceiling, and a huge kick-ass projector with a killer DVD player. The day hasn't yet come when the magazines announce a gadget I haven't already seen months prior."

But, says the gadget lord, his ultimate toy is his Dreamcast. "Multiplayer, out of the box! Built-in modem! Great performance. Easy-to-use features. Beautiful graphics. It's a very cool console, and with some very cool games coming out for it."

PHOTOGRAPHY: **LUMLEY**



PHOTOGRAPHY: LUMLEY

PLAYER 4

BOB DUDANI

THE GAMES OBSESSIVE WHO WAS FIRST TO BRING THE DREAMCAST INTO THE UK

OVER A VODKA & RED BULL in a torrid theme bar off London's Oxford Street, Bob Dudani explains what people do in his shop: "There's gaping and gawping and some dribbling going on."

The 30-year-old videogames obsessive runs CEX, the Computer Exchange, a chain of independent second-hand games shops sprinkled around London and the Home Counties. He was the first to bring the Dreamcast into the UK on import, first to sell it to the pale but passionate hard-core gamers who come to graze and dribble at the stuff in his shops. Despite an initial almighty £1,000 price tag, the consoles were snaffled up in seconds.

"Yeah, it's been really good," he says, giggling like a schoolboy. "I'm really excited. We've sold 2,000 machines already. I can't wait for those great Sega arcade conversions. It's been too long."

But the arch collector and businessman has a philosophical side to his character. He believes that videogames are our generation's contribution to cultural history. "Our job is to nurture them and look after them," he believes.

His own colossal console collection is housed in The Retro Games Shop, a museum dedicated to the dusty PCBs and long-forgotten classics of gaming history, where they stand in glass cases, like jewellery. "If anyone brings me the entire history of a console in a bag," he says, "I'll buy it."

It's a passion that has earned the 30-year-old an estimated £10 million, making him the sixth richest young entrepreneur in the UK according to *The Observer*. His first shop sprang from the grotty ruins of a computer shop in the West End back in '92. Now there are ten branches in his fiefdom, and Department One, the second-biggest games mail order company in the UK – all staffed by obsessive gamers like Bob.

"They've got to enjoy what they're selling, because independents are the heart and soul of gaming," he says of the staff working at his shops. "This is where Dreamcast will find its core audience, its user base. And *Power Stone*, *Shen-Mue*, *Ready To Rumble* – these games will rule."

He giggles over his drink. "I'm really really excited."

HELEN ARNOLD

PLAYER 5

YOUNG, SVELTE, RUNNING MARATHONS, AND CO-ORDINATING THE EUROPEAN ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN FOR DREAMCAST

HELEN ARNOLD IS BUSY. Not just today. The 24-year-old hasn't stopped, it seems, since 1993.

From TV production assistant and actress in the Edinburgh Festival, to marketing assistant in investment management in Hong Kong, to hostess at the Hard Rock Café in Berlin, Helen has packed it in. Oh, and she speaks Italian, German, French and Cantonese. Oh yeah, and her jobs have taken her all around the world – Bologna, Florence, Cambodia, Salzburg…

Anything else?

"I went clubbing for six months in Berlin."

Impressive. Last year she snagged a job as account executive at famed ad agency M&C Saatchi, working on the Sega account and laying down the preliminary foundations for the Dreamcast launch. She was there a year, a month and a day before being offered the enviable position of Sega's pan-European products advertising manager. "A confusing title which basically means I will be co-ordinating all the Dreamcast advertising across all five territories – France, Italy, Germany, Spain and the UK."

Now she has no small number of things to do. "It's basically co-ordination – sorting out the press ads, making sure everyone agrees with layouts, making sure voice-overs and ad copy is the same in all the countries, organising media schedules, mucking in on the websites, sponsorship deals, direct marketing…"

Somewhere in this massive 'to do' list was a six-week training spree for the London Marathon this year (completed in under four hours), and yet more sweaty evenings around town for the New York marathon in November. "I'm rubbish at training, but my dad, who's this major marathon runner, trains me up."

If there's one thing she *can't* do it's play games. "My first proper console was the original Nintendo, and I finished the first *Zelda* with my sister in two weeks," she remembers. "We spent three full days trying to defeat Gannon. I'm a girl and I get very over-excited, so I'm not that good at games. Although," she adds thoughtfully, "I seem to be quite good at *Sega Bass Fishing*!"

PHOTOGRAPHY: **TANYA CHALKIN**





STEVE WILSON

MAKING SURE THE DREAMCAST GETS INTO HIS COMPANY'S HIGH STREET STORES. ALL 187 OF THEM

LIKE EVERYONE CAUGHT UP in the Dreamcast maelstrom, it seems that Steve Wilson is rather excited. "A new product launch is the most exciting thing you can do when working in retail," he says, his face gleaming. "All the more so with the genuine technological leap forward of Dreamcast."

Steve is console buying and product allocation director for Electronics Boutique, the country's largest specialist retailer. In English: "My department buys all console product for our stores and ensures they stay in stock of all ranges".

First and foremost though he's a games-lover. The 36-year-old is one of those who was awed as a child with the glory of videogames, and later took his destined glowing place in the industry which makes and sells them.

Now, after four years in the job and 13 years in the industry, he remains philosophical. "A wise man once said: 'When your hobby becomes your job, it is time to get a new hobby,'" he muses. "Having said that, I do still play games."

A good thing too for a man who stares at shelves and shelves of top-notch, high-quality, first-class videogame merchandise on a daily basis.

"But my favourite games ever come from my youth, when gameplay was unsurpassed and I had more time," he says, citing classic resource 'em up *Civilization* and space-based trading game *Elite* on the impressively antiquated home computer the Commodore 64 (so slow it would probably take 50 of them just to draw the Dreamcast's start-up screen).

Steve's job has been to construct a detailed masterplan for the Dreamcast invasion. "We're planning to stock the console in all 187 of our stores and support the system to the hilt," he states. "The buzz for Dreamcast is tremendously exciting. All our staff are enthusiasts, so their response is very positive. People always want something new if it pushes back the boundaries as this console does. We can't wait"

PLAYER 6

PLAYER 7

MARTYN CHUDLEY

BRITISH GAMING TALENT BRINGING YOU THE BEST RACING GAME EVER

"WHERE ELSE COULD YOU cycle up to a train station, leave your bike unlocked outside all day, and know it will still be there when you return?"

Martyn Chudley, MD of Liverpool-based games developers Bizarre Creations, has just come back from Japan and he just can't quite get the place out of his head.

"It's so different from here – you feel like it's a different world. Apart from the constant bombardment to the senses – the sights, sounds, smells – you get an overwhelming sense of the organisation, politeness and positive attitude that runs their society."

After ten years in the games universe, Martyn and the company he started instead of going to university have been selected by Sega to be part of the European 'Dream Cast' of game developers (their pun, not ours)

Bizarre's first game will be *Metropolis Street Racer*, an awesome gang-racing game set in three famous districts – Tokyo, London and San Francisco. In beyond-intricate, near-microscopic detail, two square miles of each of those cities are modelled from 32,000 photographs and 30 hours of videos. Central London features everything from landmarks such as Buckingham Palace and Piccadilly Circus, right down to road signs, dustbins and, er… tramps?

"Nope," says Martyn, with a grin. "Due to the car manufacturers' wishes, I'm afraid you can't run over tramps. But you can drive over 20 top-of-the-range cars from 13 manufacturers."

He and his 20-strong team of cheery Liverpudlians ooze enthusiasm from every pore. The crew includes ex-dishwashers, shelf stackers, 'retired' accountants and games testers. "There's a whole variety of backgrounds, but all with a common interest – games. That's what we enjoy doing, and that's why we're here."

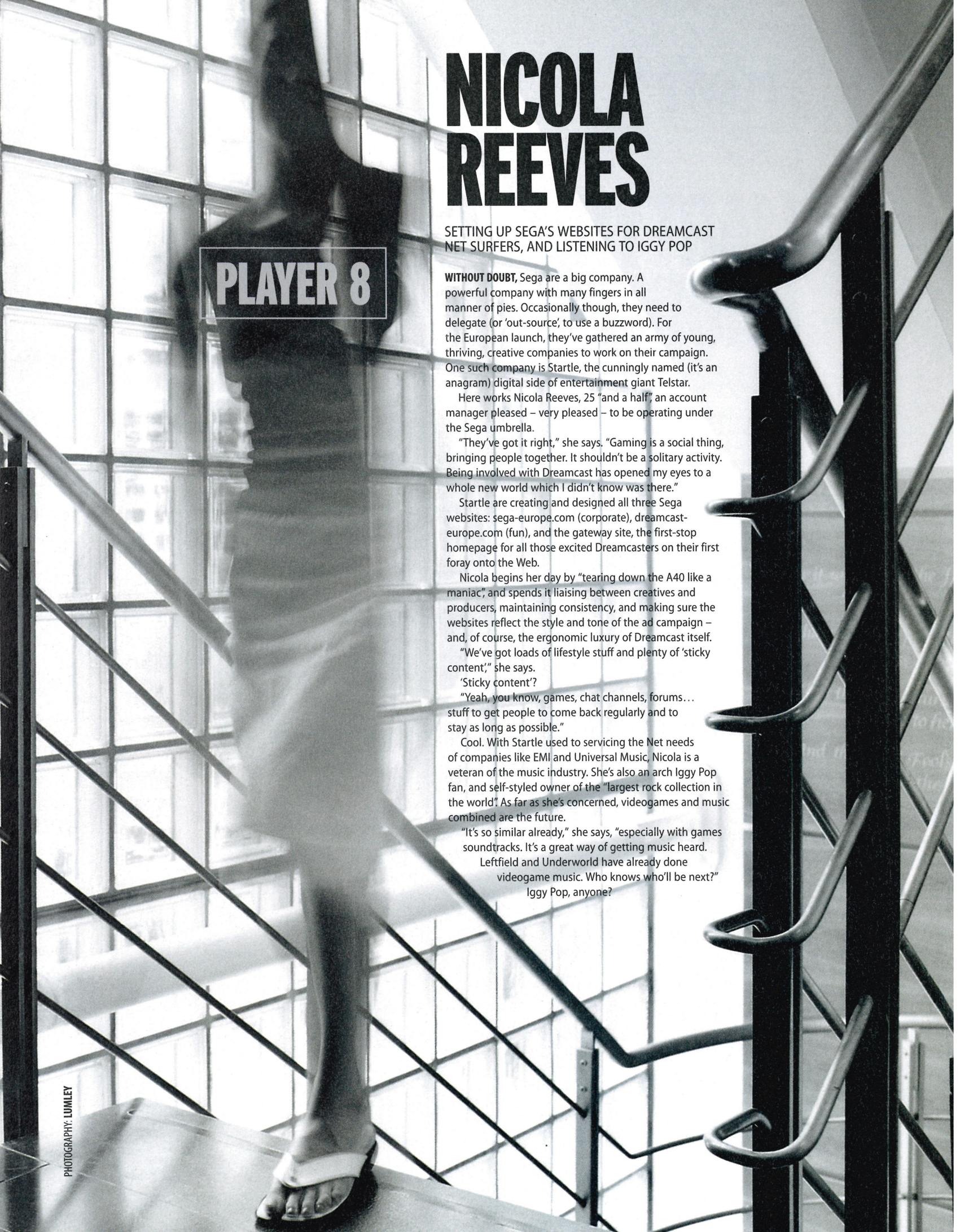
He looks pained for a second.

"In fact, it's difficult to walk around the TV at home without treading on consoles of one kind or another."

PHOTOGRAPHY: **LUMLEY**



PHOTOGRAPHY: **LUMLEY**



PLAYER 8

NICOLA REEVES

SETTING UP SEGA'S WEBSITES FOR DREAMCAST NET SURFERS, AND LISTENING TO IGGY POP

WITHOUT DOUBT, Sega are a big company. A powerful company with many fingers in all manner of pies. Occasionally though, they need to delegate (or 'out-source', to use a buzzword). For the European launch, they've gathered an army of young, thriving, creative companies to work on their campaign. One such company is Startle, the cunningly named (it's an anagram) digital side of entertainment giant Telstar.

Here works Nicola Reeves, 25 "and a half", an account manager pleased – very pleased – to be operating under the Sega umbrella.

"They've got it right," she says. "Gaming is a social thing, bringing people together. It shouldn't be a solitary activity. Being involved with Dreamcast has opened my eyes to a whole new world which I didn't know was there."

Startle are creating and designed all three Sega websites: sega-europe.com (corporate), dreamcast-europe.com (fun), and the gateway site, the first-stop homepage for all those excited Dreamcasters on their first foray onto the Web.

Nicola begins her day by "tearing down the A40 like a maniac", and spends it liaising between creatives and producers, maintaining consistency, and making sure the websites reflect the style and tone of the ad campaign – and, of course, the ergonomic luxury of Dreamcast itself.

"We've got loads of lifestyle stuff and plenty of 'sticky content'," she says.

'Sticky content'?

"Yeah, you know, games, chat channels, forums… stuff to get people to come back regularly and to stay as long as possible."

Cool. With Startle used to servicing the Net needs of companies like EMI and Universal Music, Nicola is a veteran of the music industry. She's also an arch Iggy Pop fan, and self-styled owner of the "largest rock collection in the world". As far as she's concerned, videogames and music combined are the future.

"It's so similar already," she says, "especially with games soundtracks. It's a great way of getting music heard. Leftfield and Underworld have already done videogame music. Who knows who'll be next?"

Iggy Pop, anyone?

PHOTOGRAPHY: **LUMLEY**



PLAYER 9

VAUGHAN ARNELL

DIRECTOR OF THE DREAMCAST ADS AND SOME RATHER FAMOUS POP VIDEOS

CHECK THIS OUT FOR A CV: videos for hard-core eighties acts (Terence Trent D'Arby, Simply Red, Paul Young, Paul Weller). Promos with Robbie Williams for *Millennium*, *Let Me Entertain You* and *Angels*. For George Michael: *Fast Love* and *Outside*, the latter famously set inside a disco toilet.

And then, to cap it all, the definitive Spice Girls promo, *Say You'll Be There*, with the five young strumpets high-kicking on the El Mirage salt plains in Arizona.

"It was a one-day one shoot with eight hours of sunlight," he remembers. "The wardrobe department was five hours late and Geri threw a kung fu kick and hit an Oscar-winning hairdresser. There was lots of blood."

He's done a few ads as well. Recall the very famous Levi's Creek commercial where two attractive young Amish girls watch a guy river washing in the nude? That was him. Plus a smattering of 30-seconders for Virgin Atlantic, Powergen, Orange and Stella Artois.

And now, of course, Sega's innovative Dreamcast movie and TV ads – 'Shave' and 'Buoy' – the first of which is being shown at cinemas with *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace*.

The workaholic 37-year-old started as a runner for a film production company in Soho and has never looked back. He is famed within the industry for never writing down his ideas – he just films himself talking passionately to the camera, and hands the tapes to prospective clients.

"In the case of Robbie, he says something like: 'I wanna be James Bond.' I start feeding him with ideas and he says:, 'What if…" It's quite a sparky relationship."

When he's depressed or in need of inspiration, Vaughan goes and looks at his collection of American "muscle cars" from the '60s. "They're beautiful," he sighs. "Pieces of design genius. When my mechanic mates go to America they can play a car down the phone to me. If the engine sounds good, I'll buy the car there and then".

But is he into games? "Yeah. I've got a Nintendo 64 which I love to bits," he tells us.

"I'm still saving up for a Sega Dreamcast," he adds, tongue firmly entrenched in his cheek.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ZED NELSON



THE TEAM

ARSENAL

RESPONSIBLE FOR SEGA'S EUROPEAN MARKETING CAMPAIGN. SORT OF

YOU SIGN A THREE-YEAR shirt deal with Arsenal for a sum reportedly in the range of £10-12 million – the highest club sponsorship deal in the UK. Ever. You make similar handshakes on the continent with the recently relegated but equally famous Italian side Sampdoria, and the French club St. Etienne.

You accept that the deals were probably driven – or certainly influenced – by your president's love of the beautiful game. You also realise that Arsenal have a role in this season's UEFA Champions League – the world's richest and most prestigious club tournament – and that people who play and follow football are, statistics suggest, twice as likely to play videogames than those who don't. Basically, you get yourself some pretty nice exposure.

As well as gambolling around the Premier League, the Gunners will also be playing at least six – and maybe as many as 17 – games in the Champions League this season, watched live by a prime-time audience all across Europe on Tuesday and Wednesday nights right through the winter.

Millions will tune in to see 'Dreamcast' (home strip) and 'Sega' (away strip) emblazoned on the shirts of an international ubersquad featuring the likes of Bergkamp, Overmars, Vieira and Petit plus the new signings Silvinho, Luzhny, Henry and Suker.

Then, of course, there's Nwankwo Kanu, whose nimble footwork and boundless imagination will surely make up for the loss of the precocious Nicolas Anelka, and should ensure that Arsenal don't repeat the patchy start of last season.

"We took ten points out of 21 at the start, and that's where we lost the Championship to Manchester United," says Gunners manager Arsène Wenger, "but overall our squad is stronger now than it was then."

Half of north London will be cheering them on, along with, no doubt, a small pocket in the west of the capital where Sega's European headquarters are based. Europe awaits.

PHOTOGRAPHY: **LUMLEY**



to feel the power is to play the game

"Massively addictive, cleverly realised and simply *beautiful* to look at, Capcom's *Power Stone* is truly a jewel in the Dreamcast's crown." Edge 9/10*

"*Power Stone* is probably the closest any game on a home system has come to the *coin-op quality* that videogames have always strived for." Arcade 6/6*

CAPCOM

Dreamcast.

www.eidos.com

EIDOS INTERACTIVE

* Import/NTSC version reviewed.

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VISIT THIS!

Websites with a difference



SEGA EUROPE

www.sega-europe.com/

For the official word on Dreamcast, no sites come more reliable than this one. Details and all the inside gossip on Sega's new console, plus information on its oodles of peripherals. Other features on the site include job vacancies at the corporation, links to Sega-sponsored football clubs, MTV, Sky and BT. Be sure to visit the news section for all the latest on Sega products.



IGN DREAMCAST

http://dreamcast.ign.com

The latest goings on from one of the industry's key sources of gaming news across all platforms. Rammed with all sorts of stuff, from the exclusive reviews and previews, to detailed looks at hardware and the latest happenings in the industry. Clear and authoritative, this is one to keep an eye on if you take your gaming seriously.



UK RESISTANCE

http://ukr.seganet.com

For those who prefer to actually play games rather than live them. Genuinely funny and not shy of sticking the knife in where they feel it's deserved, it's the perfect antidote to the plethora of sites that take it all far too seriously. Far too much stuff to go into here, just go and see for yourself.

TOYS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS...

Time and money to burn? Then look here for the essential guide to non-essential consumables. This month, scare yourself silly on an overgrown skateboard, bounce on an office-friendly space hopper, and get trolleyed playing chess



MOUNTAINBOARD SPORTS SUPERCHARGER

Snowboarding may well be the best buzz going, but this country's temperate (read: wet) climate and lack of serious mountains mean that most of us have to go abroad to get our gravity fix. Not any more! You don't need snow if you've got wheels. This puppy turns any moderate incline into a potential playground, and utilises mountain bike suspension technology to smooth out the bumps. Completely useless if gravity's against you though.

£550 from MaxTrack: 01531 635564

SEIKO FREQUENCY WATCH

Isn't it a pain when you're in a club, largin' it away and you need to know exactly how many bpm you're dancing to? You can't really ask the DJ, and counting is out of the question, so what's the musically inquisitive clubber to do? Well, if you've got a Seiko Frequency watch, simply press the button and it tells you. Useless but fantastic, it can even knock out a rhythm of its own.

£150 from Seiko: 01628 770988



HOT SHOT CHESS SET

Chess may well be a test of intellect but the life and soul of the party it ain't. Until now, that is. Fill the pieces with a mind-altering liquid of your choice, and down the contents of each one you take off your opponent. Will you remember any of the moves after four goes? Will you care? Not likely!

£99.95 from The Gadget Shop: 01482 871001

SLAPSHOT! AIR HOCKEY GAME

'Arcade perfect' is a term much employed to describe Dreamcast conversions of popular coin-op games. It's a term that sadly doesn't apply to this miniaturised version of the fast 'n' furious arcade table hockey which was fast and furious for all of three minutes before the batteries ran out. Nice idea, might be worth including a plug in feature though.

£10 from The Gadget Shop: 01482 871001

PALLONE II CHAIR

Do you have any idea how many man hours (women don't slouch, apparently) a year are lost due to back pain? Neither do we, but we hear it's a lot. Designed to keep you sitting correctly without giving you a sore bum, the Pallone II may look weird but it's surprisingly comfortable. Better still, when you get bored you can take the ball out and bounce past reception on your way to get the 4pm muffin.

£159 from Back In Action: 0171 930 8309





COMIN' ATCHA!

OVER 55 GAMES CURRENTLY IN DEVELOPMENT AND ON THEIR WAY TO A DREAMCAST NEAR YOU!



WORDS: GARY CUTLACK, JON MAHONEY AND WARREN CHRISMAS

SURE,, IT'S BASED ON SOME KICK-ASS TECHNOLOGY but Dreamcast is a useless games machine. Useless, that is, without games to play on it. Good job, then, that Sega and some of the finest games developers in the world have got loads of titles lined-up for the little grey dream machine, eh?

We've covered the ten titles available on Thursday 23 September in detail elsewhere in this issue, starting on page 61 (this, incidentally, is a record number of games available on the launch day of any console). But those ten really are just the very beginning of an awesome line-up.

Across the following 14 pages we take a sneak peak at over 55 other titles – thumb-blistering arcade beat 'em ups and shooters, adrenalin-pumping sports games, pant-wetting racing games, brain-hurting adventures and much, much more. The one thing they have in common is that they're all due on a Dreamcast near you sometime soon.

If there's nothing here that takes your immediate fancy, you ain't gonna like Dreamcast. Then again, if none of these games take your fancy you obviously aren't into videogames. If that's the case, get outta the way, grandma, some of us have got some serious gaming to do…



VIGILANTE 8: SECOND OFFENSE

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
LUXOFLUX/ACTIVISION
DUE: **NOVEMBER**

The car-combat genre is a relatively new one. *Vigilante 8: Second Offense* is a sequel to a game that originally started life on PC where it was known as *Interstate 76*. The Seventies setting and themes with the appropriate hairstyles, fashion and music gave the game a lot of charm.

This update promises to include more of everything that made the original a hit, along with updated graphics and improved multiplayer gameplay. There's plenty of fun to be had here: weapons, power-ups, and you can destroy anything and everything in your path. Yeah!



SPEED

VROOOOOM! RACE EVERYTHING FROM F1 AND SUPERCARS TO SPEEDBOATS AND, ER, PENGUINS





CRAZY TAXI

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **SEGA AM1/SEGA**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

IN A NUTSHELL: **PURE ARCADE RACING ACTION GIVEN A NEW TWIST BY SEGA**

A game focusing on how you always seem to spend 50 quid on a two-mile cab journey home when amazingly drunk? Or maybe a racing game where mounting the pavement and pretending not to notice people hailing you gains bonus points?

Nearer the latter, *Crazy Taxi* sees you racing around cities – realistically modelled, as is the trend for Dreamcast games – picking up fares and racing cross-city to their destination. The real-life cities have been given a super-colourful sheen, and Sega have even stuck realistic buildings in there for extra cool points – KFC, Tower Records and Pizza Huts are all over the place; and San Francisco looks… just like San Francisco.

The game enables you to pick your own route across the cities, with huge play areas and no set rules giving *Crazy Taxi* a thankfully new angle in the saturated race game market. Yes, there's a time limit to beat when racing your punters across town, but that's about the only nod to convention here.

Basically, *Crazy Taxi* is an arcade racing game programmed by Sega – which automatically makes it good by default. It's already up and running on Naomi (the arcade equivalent of Dreamcast), and while a release date for the home version has yet to be confirmed, you can slap our thighs and call us Sheila if it doesn't appear on Dreamcast sometime next year.



BUGGY HEAT

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **CRI/SEGA**
DUE: **NOVEMBER**

ON THE VIDEO

The closest most 4x4 owners get to off-road driving is parking their Suzuki Vitara with two wheels on the pavement. *Buggy Heat*, however, is an off-road racing game in the true spirit of the term. You select from eight different buggies and race them over desert, mountain and road stages.

Visually it looks impressive, and it should play well too. If you're looking for an alternative to the mighty *Sega Rally 2*, then watch out for this one.



MIDNIGHT GT

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **RAGE/TBA**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

It's very early days for this, Rage's fourth Dreamcast title in development, but we already know that it's going to be a racing game set over a dozen different "tight winding and demanding" city streets and open rally environments, with all the races taking place from dusk 'til dawn. Hence the name – kind of.

There will be several game options in *Midnight GT*, including a league and arcade modes and, of course, a split-screen mode as well. The hot metal beasts available for you to thrash will include several concept cars as well as a selection of eight "real world inspired Japanese cars". Whatever that means.



HYDRO THUNDER

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **MIDWAY/MIDWAY**
DUE: **OCTOBER**

ON THE VIDEO

Midway are kings of the no-brain-required coin-op world. *Hydro Thunder* is a good example of simple fun. Indeed, it's been a huge hit in American arcades where they like 'em dumb and fast.

This speedboat racer gives Dreamcast the perfect opportunity to buff its special effects skills – transparent water, reflection, rippling waves and the complex 3D backgrounds all look great and move bloody fast too. There are short cuts and speed-boost power-ups to aid victory, some very detailed courses, and 13 different boats to mess about with on the river.



F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **VIDEO SYSTEM/SEGA**
DUE: **SPRING 2000**

ON THE VIDEO

This is proof positive of Dreamcast's magnetic lure, attracting those third-party games like some pied-piper of the development community.

F1 World Grand Prix is an improved version of the officially endorsed Nintendo 64 title (one of the only decent racers on the game-starved N64), and with Dreamcast powering the action it should be the most realistic F1 sim yet. So realistic that all the exciting bits happen during randomly occurring advert breaks, Damon Hill appears on-screen to moan every two minutes, and Johnny Herbert is interviewed from the pit lane during every race. Possibly.

METROPOLIS STREET RACER

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **BIZARRE CREATIONS/SEGA**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

IN A NUTSHELL: **REALISTIC CITY-BASED DRIVING ANTICS**



We just can't get enough of good racing games. But with your average circuit-based racers being ten-a-penny these days, developers are looking to expand their ideas.

Enter *Metropolis Street Racer* from Bizarre Creations, the mob responsible for the hugely popular *Formula One* and *Formula One '97* on PlayStation.

The game is set in three major cities: London, San Francisco and Tokyo. The team from Bizarre visited each location to map out a 1.5 square-mile area of the city, taking into account famous local landmarks. So expect to see Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly Circus and Buckingham Palace when you're in London. Just be careful to mind the corgis, eh?

You get to choose from more than 20 cars, all with something in common: they're all convertibles, based on genuine manufacturers' models – everything from TVRs and Mercs, to Renaults and MGFs. They all boast 'real-life physics modelling' too, which in English means they should handle like the real thing. It's not all serious simulation though, with various arcade modes for those who like to 'get the back out', boy racer-style.

One look at these screenshots is enough to demonstrate how Bizarre have got to grips with Dreamcast already, and if they can crack the gameplay too then *Metropolis Street Racer* will definitely be one to add to your must-buy list.





△ **Ah, that'll be Tokyo then.**

SUZUKI ALSTARE EXTREME RACING

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **CRITERION STUDIOS/UBI SOFT**
DUE: **NOVEMBER**

ON THE VIDEO

Or The Game Formerly Known As *Redline Racer*. If four wheels aren't your thing and you don't want to join the alarmingly high motorcycle death statistics by riding those nasty, dangerous, real-life motorbikes, this game should be right up your street. This tasty-looking racer sees you hurtling through long and varied tracks made up of sweeping country roads or twisty mountain climbs. The gameplay looks more than testing, with changing track surfaces waiting to catch you out and send you somersaulting over the handlebars. Great then, for recreating those Raleigh Chopper moments.





PEN PEN

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **GE/INFOGRAMES**
DUE: **OCTOBER**

ON THE VIDEO

You want originality? Try this: mutated penguins, cute hippos and retarded dogs racing around courses made from jelly and snow, sliding down ice on their tummies, and racing on land and underwater. They even throw their own poo at enemies to slow them down.

Okay, the poo bit is a lie, but the rest is true. *Pen Pen* is a mental racing game designed to give four players the crazies tracing experience yet. It was only a moderate success in Japan last year, but it could prove popular with us 'zany' Brits.



STUNT GP

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **TEAM 17/ HASBRO**
DUE: **DECEMBER**

Remember the burning desire to own a remote-controlled car? *Stunt GP* is a crazy, colourful and unique racer based around bouncy mini-cars. The designers reckon the driving game genre is predictable, and want to create "something that looks, feels and plays differently to other racers".

It looks like they've done it. *Stunt GP* is about racing, but takes the track design to ludicrously intense levels, with ramps, loops, jumps and obstacles making it more of a destruction derby than a round-and-round average racer. And there are 16 cars and 24 tracks. Yep, that'll do nicely.

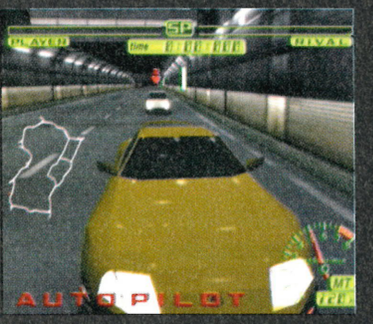


TEST DRIVE 6

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **ACCOLADE/INFOGRAMES**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

The *Test Drive* series is getting on a bit now, as demonstrated by the fact they've reached this sixth edition. You can hardly accuse the title of being original, but it's certainly bristling with features – more than 40 customisable cars, 30 tracks based on real-world locales, and a plethora of gameplay modes will be on offer.

Keep your driving within the law though, or the local constabulary will be all over you, sending legions of squad cars to hunt you down and a helicopter to track you from above. Thankfully this looks like an improvement on its predecessors.



TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **GENKI/CRAVE**
DUE: **OCTOBER**

ON THE VIDEO

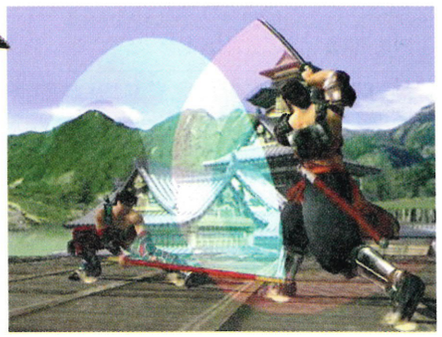
Get behind the wheel of a customised sports car (you can even choose your spoilers!) and wait for another car to flash its headlights. That's the sign for you to put the pedal to the floor and tear around the streets of, er, Tokyo. Stay ahead of an opponent for long enough and his power bar will diminish giving you a win – weird, yeah, but different.

The super smooth graphics, especially blurring taillights and bodywork reflections, are stunning. If it plays as good as it looks it'll be a winner.

FISTICUFFS

FIGHT! CLASSIC AND BRAND SPANKING NEW 2D AND 3D BEAT 'EM UPS. OH, AND A BOXING GAME TOO







▷ ***Soul Calibur*: a visual feast or what?**

SOUL CALIBUR

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **NAMCO/NAMCO**
DUE: **NOVEMBER**

IN A NUTSHELL: **3D WEAPON-BASED FIGHTING WITH GLORIOUS VISUALS**

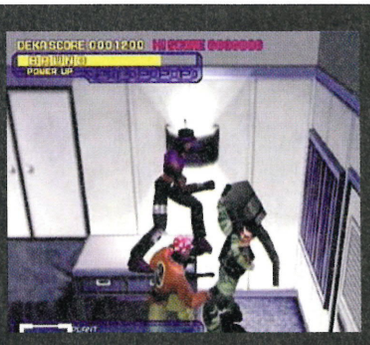
If there's one game guaranteed to draw in the average Saturday afternoon Dixons punter, it's *Soul Calibur* (sequel to *Soul Blade*). Just take a few moments to look at the quality of these screenshots. Impressive, eh?

Originally a respectable arcade hit, the game has undergone an extensive reworking for its console appearance, and it really caught the world's attention at the huge E^3 games show in the US recently.

Combat is weapon-based (as in hefty swords, big sticks and traditional Japanese fighting instruments), with contestants facing each other in impressive 3D arenas. Ten characters are available at the start, with another seven becoming available as you proceed.

There are plenty of different modes for you to tackle – arcade, versus, practice, team battle and survival. The first three are self-explanatory, the team battle mode enables you to select a gang of fighters to make up your team, while survival mode enables you to select a character and pit him or her against as many fighters as you can manage on one energy bar.

If you think *Virtua Fighter 3tb* is a too 'hardcore', then the easy-to-get-to-grips-with *Soul Calibur* will suit you down to a T.



DYNAMITE COP

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **SEGA AM1/SEGA**
DUE: **OCTOBER**

ON THE VIDEO

Really old people might call this *Streets Of Rage* in 3D; younger people would say it's "a bit like *Fighting Force*"; and for people new to games it's just a rock-hard fighting game with loads of characters on-screen together instead of the usual one-on-one stuff.

It's not quite as cutting-edge as Sega's amazing *Spikeout* coin-op, but it fills the arcade-frenzy hole in the market well enough, with *Virtua Fighter 3*-standard characters, great backgrounds and your usual level/boss format. Safe.

DEAD OR ALIVE 2

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **TECMO/TBA**
DUE: **TBA**

IN A NUTSHELL: **STUNNING 3D BEAT 'EM UP WITH STUNNINGLY SEXIST FEMALE CAT-FIGHT ACTION**

Are you a colossal pervert? Do you enjoy videogames? Do you like watching attractive women fighting in their underwear? You'd better – *Dead Or Alive 2* represents the ultimate culmination of the ridiculously sexist current games market.

Featuring realistic cliché-babes fighting in discrete, girl-girl fun, the prospect of a Dreamcast conversion of this Naomi-based arcade beat 'em up is certain to have had every teenage male gamer rubbing himself with joy over the last few months.

It's their skin that makes the difference – there are no joins! We've never seen a fighting game with graphics this smooth, solid, realistic and sexy before. The female characters all have the kind of airbrushed beauty that would get them on the cover of any lads' mag.

Plus they're not all pointy and glitchy like the Toblerone-chested Lara Croft; they're curvy, rounded, smooth and, yes dammit, attractive. Think Caprice wrestling Kelly Brook.

The first *Dead Or Alive* game was equally pervy, and luckily also critically acclaimed as a brilliantly playable fighter, so we rather think *DOA2* will be something special.

Maybe a sad development in the downward spiral of taste, but one that should gather massive hype and sales when it appears. Babes in their undies can sell anything these days.







△ **Girl fighters – that's *gotta* sell.**



FIGHTING FORCE 2

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **CORE DESIGN/EIDOS**
DUE: **NOVEMBER**

Core Design, the people behind *Tomb Raider*, released *Fighting Force* on PC and PlayStation to an, er, 'mixed' reception a couple of years back with detractors describing it as simplistic and monotonous. While similar in essence – it's still a *Final Fight*-a-like, 3D scrolling beat 'em up – this all-new sequel should address those problems.

There are over 20 different types of weapons and more than 50 different enemies for starters but, more importantly, we're also promised varied gameplay involving adventure, strategy and proper interaction. In other words, you'll have to do more than hit a punch/kick button repeatedly.

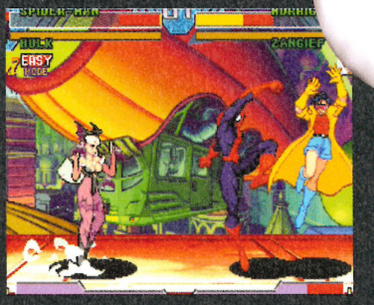


KING OF FIGHTERS '99

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **SNK/TBA**
DUE: **TBA**

A knowing nod to the hardcore gaming massive, the *King Of Fighters* series is about as serious as fighting games get. It's also as complicated as fighting games get too, thanks to its unique combat system setting it apart and fuelling SNK's intense rivalry with Capcom over who's the hardest kid in the arcade.

SNK win. *King Of Fighters '99* is the Dreamcast conversion of arcade hit *King Of Fighters '98*, containing an amazing 38 characters which are all drawn from the series' past, plus some secret fighters too. There'll be a lot in it and it'll also be bloody hard. Which, some would say, is exactly how beat 'em ups should be.



MARVEL VS CAPCOM

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM/VIRGIN**
DUE: **OCTOBER**

ON THE VIDEO

"Only four buttons? What about Capcom games?!" sobbed fight fans after first glimpsing the switch-bereft DC pad. "Ah, but there are two underneath," countered Sega.

MvC sees regular warriors Ryu, Wolverine, Hulk and Chun Li mixing with B-list celebs such as War Machine, Venom, Strider and MegaMan. Boosting the character count to over 40 are random assist characters (Juggernaut, Cyclops, Iceman and Thor are but a few), making this the biggest selection of fighters from The Vaults yet (but you only play as Ryu). Will keep arcade frequenters happy.



"IT'S THEIR SKIN THAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE – THERE ARE NO JOINS" **DEAD OR ALIVE 2**





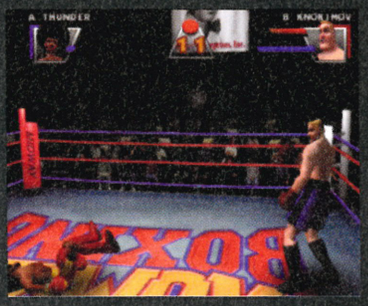
MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
EUROCOM/MIDWAY
DUE: **OCTOBER**

ON THE VIDEO

A lot of people slate *Mortal Kombat* games, bitching about the 'simple' gameplay and the lack of 'combos' and 'depth'. But they all forget one thing: everyone is mad for the gore-fest that is *Mortal Kombat*!

The Gold edition is a conversion of the arcade *Mortal Kombat 4*, except it's been massively enhanced for Dreamcast. Characters from *MK2* and *MK3* join in (making more than 20 in all), along with new backgrounds and a visually spot-on copy of *MK4*'s ace 3D visuals. It'll get mixed reviews but do well in the charts, such is the paradox of *Mortal Kombat*.



READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
MIDWAY/MIDWAY
DUE: **THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER**

ON THE VIDEO

Let's get ready to rummmbbbble! Forget yer weapons, high kicks and leg sweeps. This is fighting, Queensbury style. You know: right fist, left first, left fist, right fist. And then a whole lot more of both. In your face.

Pleasingly devoid of pointless celebrity endorsement and tie-ins (bar the voice of announcer Michael Buffer), *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing* features fabulously over-the-top cartoon-style characters, each with special attacks. A championship and management mode should add longevity but we'll have to wait a few weeks to see if this one truly lasts the distance.



SOUL FIGHTER

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
TOKA/TBA
DUE: **LATE 1999**

Somewhat akin to a nineties version of that classic Sega side-scroller *Golden Axe*, *Soul Fighter* is a fully-3D, fantasy hack 'n' slash affair with swords and dragons and magic potions. And stuff like that.

This type of game can be extremely limited but fortunately Toka have a few clever tricks up their sleeves to make it worth a look – smooth, flashy visuals, a first-person perspective mode, fully-interactive environments, a wide selection of weapons and special moves, and a large range of enemies with good artificial intelligence. What more could you ask for?



STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
CAPCOM/VIRGIN
DUE: **NOVEMBER**

If you owned each *Street Fighter* game Capcom have ever released then you'd need a room the size of the moon just to store the instruction manuals Well, maybe. *Alpha 3* is the best incarnation yet; but then each *SF* game tends to be the best yet, as you'd expect.

The most notable change here is the return of pie-consumer extraordinaire, E Honda and green dude, Blanka. If nothing else the game should prove how good Dreamcast is at handling 2D games. Plus it should keep 'the kids' off the streets for a few months more while they're busy learning all the new moves.

SPORTS

BASKETBALL! GRIDIRON! SNOWBOARDING! SNOOKER, POOL AND DARTS! FISHING! OH, AND FOOTBALL. PHEW!



▽ **Expect to say "whoooah" a lot.**





SNOWSURFERS

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **UEP/SEGA**
DUE: **NOVEMBER**

IN A NUTSHELL: **SLOPE-SLIDING SHENANIGANS**

ON THE VIDEO

We're sure there are loads of people who'd really like to give snowboarding a try. Trouble is, before you can be accepted into the boarders' world, you first have to master a totally new language, and then be prepared to invest heavily in expensive designer gear and strange woolly hats, and generally be a 'crazy, radical dude' out to 'grab some major air', or something like that.

However, you can always spare yourself the embarrassment by playing *Snowsurfers* in the safety (and warmth) of your own living room. You should pretty much know what to expect from a game like this. There are various modes on offer to you: Free Play enables you to take to the slopes for no reason other than to show off and look cool as you perform fancy tricks etc; in Super Pipe you can take to a long ice pipe and perform tricks like the ones seen in skateboarding competitions; while Match Race is a two-player racing mode with both vertical and horizontal split-screen options.

The graphics are gorgeous, with clever lighting effects as the sun shines through the clouds or from street lamps in the alpine villages, and realistic board trails and flying snow when you turn sharply. The baggy trouser-clad characters are well animated too.

This looks like being an excellent snowboarding game, definitely worthy for fans of the genre. Others might like to check it out too. Man.

• ***See our compo on page 60.***



JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **AWESOME DEVELOPMENTS/VIRGIN**
DUE: **OCTOBER**

ON THE VIDEO

Ah, Jimmy White. He's lost his hair, allegedly gambled away a sizeable chunk of money, and he'll probably never win the World Snooker Championship, but everyone still loves him. Luckily he can still coin a few bob lending his name to videogames too.

Here you test your cueing action in two beautifully realised 3D pool and snooker rooms fitted out in the appropriate decor. Get bored with the ball-and-stick action and there are some charming bonus games to muck about on, such as draughts, darts and a fruit machine. Looks good.



NBA 2000

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **VISUAL CONCEPTS/SEGA**
DUE: **DECEMBER**

ON THE VIDEO

It's those deformed Americans with that sport that goes from left to right and then, er, right to left for ages and only gets interesting for the last five seconds of the game. Strangely, the end-to-end nature of the tall people's sport actually makes a good videogame, thanks to the fast-moving, in-your-face action.

It's the most realistic basketball sim yet, thanks to Dreamcast's power and the inclusion of real teams and players which enables you to play with the man of your choice. Should be good. If not we'll send a cricket game to the US as punishment.

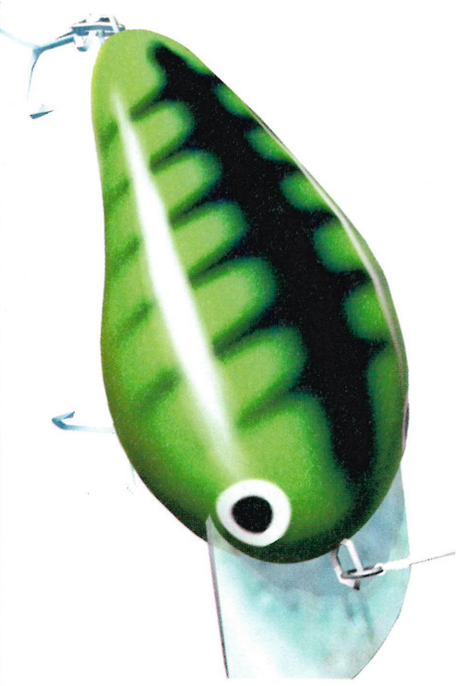


NBA SHOWTIME

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **MIDWAY/MIDWAY**
DUE: **NOVEMBER**

NBA Jam has been one of the coin-op and console success stories of the last decade, entertaining gamers with its simplified, two-on-two, comedy basketball fun. *NBA Showtime* is pretty much the same as *Jam*, only with 1999's standard requirement of spunky 3D graphics and an all-round visual knob-polishing.

Basically, it takes basketball and makes it more enjoyable, filling its size 29 boots with OTT special moves, dunks, spins and what can only be described as 'thrills and spills'. *NBA Jam* was always a cool arcade bounce 'em up, so we expect much of this new update.





SEGA BASS FISHING

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **SEGA AM3/SEGA**
DUE: **OCTOBER**

IN A NUTSHELL: **INSANE JAPANESE FISHING SIMULATOR!**



△ **It's *waaaay* more fun than it looks. Really.**

ON THE VIDEO While fishing and videogames may seem like the least intelligent pairing since Posh Spice and David Beckham, Sega's totally bonkers fishing sim (originally known as *Get Bass!*) is actually one of the most enjoyable coin-ops to have appeared over the last couple of years.

Coming in a huge custom cabinet, the coin-op also came with a hand-held rod, attached to the machine by a wire which pulled against you as you struggled to reel in the fish of your dreams. Sounds rubbish, yes, but ask someone who's played it – it's one of those games which puts a smile on the face of even the most jaded gamer.

The home version will come with a hand-held reel, sadly missing the line gizmo but having the added comedy value of a vibrating device in the handle, enabling you to feel what's actually going on underwater (and make plenty of 'vibrating rod' gags too).

The Japanese love these games, but if you're an easily embarrassed Brit you might squirm at the thought of sitting in front of your TV reeling away like a madman. Those of you with social skills will love it though, as it's a great game for impressing people and, well, having a laugh. Which is why we're here, right?

In a world full of easy-money sequels, beat 'em ups, racing games and *Quake* clones, *Sega Bass Fishing* should blow a fresh waft of fishy air in Dreamcast's direction. Rubber waders are optional.



NFL BLITZ 2000

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
MIDWAY/MIDWAY
DUE: **NOVEMBER**

ON THE VIDEO American Football is often described as the 'fastest-growing' sport in the country. In other words, two people liked it last week, and now four people like it.

Anyway, whether you like watching grown men running around in tight trousers or not, *NFL Blitz 2000* looks like a winner. Like *NBA Showtime*, also from Midway, the emphasis here is on fun, fun, fun rather than realism. That means: vastly simplified rules, over-the-top tackles, in-your-face visuals and excellent, er, in-your-ears sound samples. Hut, hut, hike! (whatever that means).



SUPREME SNOWBOARDING

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
HOUSEMARQUE/INFOGRAMES
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

Snowsurfers isn't the only game to look out for if you're into snow-based fun; this title from pretty much unknown developers Housemarque looks equally promising. Lots of snow, lots of extreme action, and the promise that there'll be some new ideas injected in to an otherwise 'samey' genre.

"Snow looks and feels like snow, levels have freedom never seen in a snowboarding game before and the most complex landscape formations ever seen in a snowboarding game," they reckon. Judging from the screenshots, they could well be right, but we'll keep you posted in coming months.



UEFA STRIKER

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
RAGE/INFOGRAMES
DUE: **OCTOBER**

ON THE VIDEO It must have cost a formidable amount of cash even by football player wage standards, but Rage's latest incarnation of their *Striker* boot 'em up series comes with an official UEFA licence. That means proper European teams with proper player names – none of this David Bookham and Paul Scones nonsense.

We can't wait to see how the *Striker* series turns out on Dreamcast – it should offer a more technical alternative to Sega's arcade game *Virtua Striker*. Look out for Dreamcast logos on the shirts of Arsenal, Sampdoria and St. Etienne.



VIRTUA STRIKER DC

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
SEGA AM2/SEGA
DUE: **TBA**

Five or so years of hurt hasn't stopped Sega dreaming of thrashing Sony eight-nil in the console World Cup, and a quality football game is always a bonus, Brian, when it comes to flogging consoles. After the shame of Electronic Arts and their six-monthly *FIFA* 'update' debacles, footie games need a new champion.

Virtua Striker DC (working title) will be more 'arcadey' than *FIFA*, as you'd expect of a football game designed by Sega's AM2 team (the people behind the *Virtua Fighter* and *Daytona* games). The bad news? We're unlikely to see it until well into next year.

ACTION/ADVENTURE

FINGERS HURTING FROM ALL THE BUTTON-POUNDING ACTION? TRY SOMETHING MORE CEREBRAL INSTEAD



△ *D2*: probably not a game for the under-fives.

D2

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **WARP/TBA**
DUE: **TBA**

IN A NUTSHELL: **PAINSTAKINGLY REALISTIC AND SCARY ADVENTURE SHOCKER**

D2 was supposed to be released with Dreamcast in Japan last year. Actually, it was supposed to be released on the 3DO M2 (no, don't worry, we don't remember it either) about three years before that, too. Let's just say that Warp have had enough time to get it right.

This one is all about realism. Not in terms of the alien/zombies plot, which sees our Laura having visions of catastrophes and terrorist attacks, but the world in which the game actually takes place – a spot where nature and the elements rule.

D2's avowed aim is to create a game where you can "freely explore the outside world", so everything is generated real time. From the changing weather right down to the intricate facial expressions of Laura and the other people in the game, Warp have specifically tried to create realistic physical responses for each character in order to add to the game's spooky atmosphere.

Exploration is another key element. Events aren't handed to you on a plate, it's up to you to discover what's happening through wandering around and looking.

If all that sounds a little tame, don't worry. The game features plenty of action, with the game camera switching to what you see when you come under attack. Again, this is part of Warp's cunning plan to create a flowing, believable and genuinely scary experience.

It's kind of like *Tomb Raider*, then, but with a massively enhanced, interactive story, and much more emphasis on discovery and realism. We reckon *D2* will be something of a cult smash when it eventually comes out.



ALONE IN THE DARK IV

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **DARKWORKS/INFOGRAMES**
DUE: **AUTUMN 2000**

A PC classic credited with creating the 'survival horror' genre, *Alone In The Dark* returns in its fourth incarnation and looks set to scale new heights of cinematic scariness.

Ian Carnby returns as the embattled hero, at much at war with his own personal demons as the more deadly real ones, a reflection of Darkworks' desire to bring greater depth and character development to a series already acclaimed for its visual innovation. Don't be surprised if you're left cowering behind the sofa...



CASTLEVANIA: RESURRECTION

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **KONAMI/KONAMI**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

Castlevania is one of the longest-running and loveliest game franchises there is, and you can always bank on it for a quality title.

The Dreamcast game sees the regular Belmont family resurrected to battle Dracula. Wasn't that the plot of every other *Castlevania* game? Anyway, it's all about tough, terrorising and visually sexy action, and the Dreamcast game offers the first fully-3D outing for *Castlevania* (apart from the N64 game, but that was rubbish). It also looks very nice, by the way.

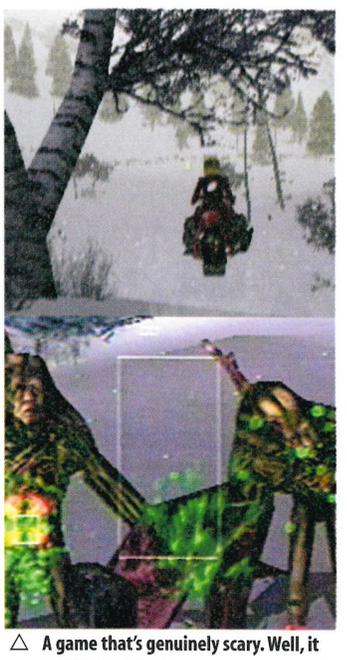


SHADOWMAN

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM TEESIDE/ACCLAIM**
DUE: **NOVEMBER**

Best described as a darker, more horrifying version of *Tomb Raider* spiced up with *Turok*-style action. This comic book-inspired 3D adventure sees you assuming the mantle of Mike Le Roi, a hitman brought back from the dead and possessing mystical voodoo powers.

There are 19 huge levels to explore where Mike has to do battle with his enemies – all undead serial killers. Don't worry though, Mike has enough weaponry on hand to make even Charlton Heston drool like a baby.



△ A game that's genuinely scary. Well, it scares us, anyway.











△ Early shots from *Ecco*. It's already looking great.

ECCO THE DOLPHIN

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **APPALOOSA/SEGA**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

IN A SEASHELL: **SUPER-REALISTIC UNDERWATER CHILL-OUT-A-THON**

ON THE VIDEO

This update to the Sega Megadrive's dreamy and relaxing dolphin sim has the potential to be an all-time classic if ever there was one. The Dreamcast-based sequel runs entirely in 3D and is looking absolutely gorgeous – definitely one of the console's finest-looking efforts so far.

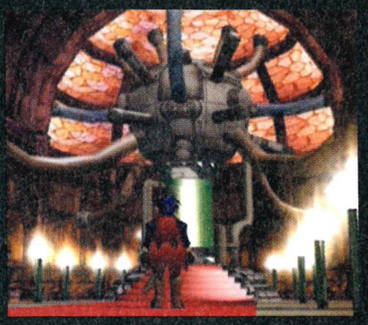
A 'real' dolphin swims around a 'real' undersea world featuring 'real' sea monsters, plants, sharks, little fishies and constantly stunning water effects. Ecco himself is smooth, rounded and totally lifelike with over 100 animations.

Bizarrely, the plot involves Ecco rescuing the world from aliens – presumably a mundane daily chore for our brainy underwater chums – but the story takes second place to simply 'having fun' and exploring this beautiful world.

The developers stress that Ecco will be a "happy game" with no blood and gore. This, they hope, will also help make it appeal to younger gamers eager to just enjoy swimming around, playing with the other dolphins, taunting the sharks and learning the out-of-water acrobatics and tricks. The producer predicts that players will spend hours and hours just dicking about (so to speak) with the dolphin without playing the game properly.

Indeed, this 'playing and interacting' theme runs throughout the whole game. Rather than just filling the worlds with loads of inanimate objects, Appaloosa want everything to be intelligent, and to react and interact with Ecco as he explores the underwater environments.

Ooh, did we mention that it's looking absolutely gorgeous? Make no mistake, we are *very* excited about this one. But for God's sake stay away from the tuna, Ecco!



CLIMAX LANDERS

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
CLIMAX/SEGA
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

These guys were also responsible for *Blue Stinger*, but here they've tried their hands at the classic-style RPG. If you thought *Legend Of Zelda* on the N64 looked good, wait till you see this. The 3D visuals are hi-res and vividly detailed with lavish attention to detail. The game takes place over several time periods, ranging from medieval times to 1980s Japan.

Expect to meet the usual elves and wizards along the way and take part in turn-based combat encounters. Not for everyone, but RPG fanatics will lap it up.



CROC 2

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
ARGONAUT/FOX INTERACTIVE
DUE: **SPRING 2000**

Ahh, it's an ickle kwockodile! Just what we need – another cutesy platform game starring some big-eyed, cartoony animal twit. But wait! Some people liked *Croc* on PlayStation. Sure, the *Mario 64* clone was never going to be ranked among the classics, and few adults would have rushed to buy it, but loads probably got one for Christmas from a relative, and it really wasn't that bad.

This sequel was also fairly well received on PlayStation but, bearing in mind Dreamcast's superior power and the time delay between releases, we expect significant improvements to make it even better. We may even buy it ourselves. For our nephews and nieces, of course.



SHEN MUE

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **AM2/SEGA**
DUE: **TBA**

IN A NUTSHELL: **SEGA'S MAMMOTH RPG LOOKS SET TO REDEFINE THE GENRE**

Sega are rather amusingly referring to *Shen Mue* as a FREE game – Full Reactive Eyes Entertainment – which means... well, we think it's just a trumped up name for a role-playing game. Although calling this visually unsurpassed feat of design a mere role-playing game is something of an insult to the very heart of gaming.

What does it play like? That's what we all want to know. Sega refer to the gameplay as a series of 'events', which worries us slightly – how much interaction do we really have with those amazing real-time locations and people? Quite a lot, thankfully, with exploration of the environment being a crucial part of the discovery-based plot, which sees our hi-res hero journeying across realistic portrayals of China and Japan.

What we do know is that there's a good deal of fighting in here, so seeing characters of that level of detail battling in such gorgeous locations will be a spectacle to behold. Fighting is in the 'Simon' style of pressing buttons in the right order to progress, which is rather odd considering the game's design team is headed by Yu Suzuki, Sega's arcade hero, and the man behind the *Virtua Fighter* beat 'em ups.

Shen Mue has taken on *Phantom Menace* levels of hype in Japan. In development for years, it's already become Sega's most expensive videogame production to date. So it cannot fail, it simply must be a big seller!



△ **Looks so great you'd think you were really there.**



FURBALLS

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **BIZARRE CREATIONS/TBA**
DUE: **SPRING 2000**

One for the kids? It's hard to say. With subversive Liverpudlians Bizarre Creations behind this one, it could easily turn out to be some kind of adults-only bestiality simulator. But of course it's not. That would be silly and Sega would have to put them in jail.

No, *Furballs* is a cute 3D platformer – the kind loving played by innocent children across the country every single day. Bizarre know their stuff so, despite the rather 'basic' visual look so far, we have no doubt that the finished game will be a rather impressive jaunt. In 3D!

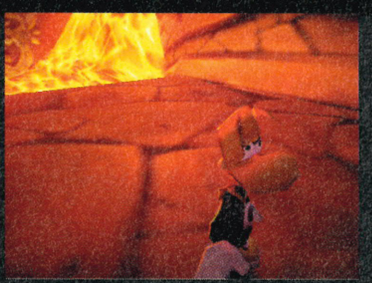


HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **3DO STUDIOS/UBI SOFT**
DUE: **LATE 2000**

"Grab your weapons and prepare to cast your magic spells..." says the press release. What it should actually say is: "Grab your anorak and prepare to cast your magic spells".

HOMM III, you see, is a fantasy/mediaeval turn-based strategy game. On the *ODM* Social Acceptability Scale [a] that puts it a place below "Supporting Chester City" and just one above "Trainspotting in Crewe". Still, the Dreamcast version promises full online support and the series has sold by the truckload in the past. A million PC owners can't be wrong now can they?



RAYMAN 2

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT/ UBI SOFT**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

A game designed by French people which looks like being quite good? Good lord, next thing you know the Germans will be losing to us on penalty shoot-outs!

Rayman 2's strength lies in its characters and animation – it really does feature some of the smoothest and best-designed work yet, and is certainly a huge step up from the underachieving original. Baring disasters, this looks like being a real quality platformer. Looks like dear old Sonic may not have the 3D platform market all to himself after all.



RESIDENT EVIL: CODE VERONICA

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM/EIDOS**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

Open your window and shout: "*Resident Evil* is coming to Dreamcast!" That's big news. When asked to explain why they are a-cheatin' on Sony, Capcom's answer was that they want Dreamcast to be a success to stop Sony gaining a monopoly.

It's billed as a side story to *Evil 1* and *2* rather than a sequel, tying up all the loose ends and following the odd unexplained event from the first two games. Capcom are also planning to use Dreamcast's modem to enable you to download extra features. This should be the best *Resident Evil* game yet.

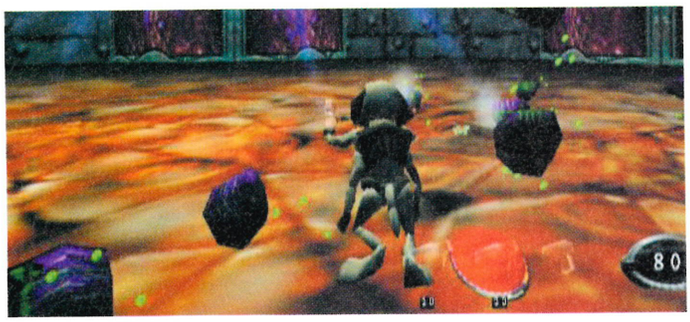


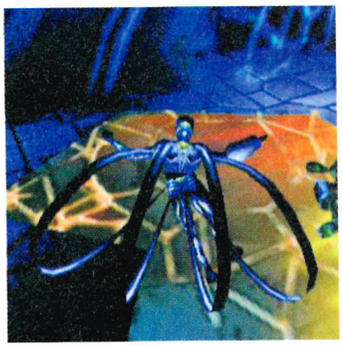


"BRILLIANT-LOOKING SURREAL BACKDROPS AND SOME INTENSE LIGHTING EFFECTS" MDK2

BANG BANG

GOT AN ITCHY TRIGGER FINGER? FEELING LUCKY, PUNK? THEN THESE ARE THE GAMES FOR YOU







△ **Weird, wacky, strange, odd, bizarre – take your pick. Whatever, *MDK 2* is one game that looks like a corker.**

MDK2

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **BIOWARE/VIRGIN**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

IN A NUTSHELL: **WEIRDO ACTION-ADVENTURE WHICH IS... WEIRD**

The original *MDK* was one of the weirdest games ever released. The main hero, Kurt Hectic, ran around with a huge gun on his head, fighting strange alien invaders who'd beamed through space on energy streams to attack Earth. *MDK2* promises more of the same bizarre action, but adds a whole lot more in to the bargain.

For starters, you can play as the two other characters who were in the first game – mad scientist and space hermit Dr Hawkins, and his six-legged robot dog Max. That's where the game title comes from: Max, Doc, Kurt – MDK, see? Or does that stand for Murder Death Kill? Whatever...

Each character has their own special set of abilities and can be used at different points throughout the game's nine levels. Kurt has a sniper mode (a la *GoldenEye*), and a parachute for gliding long distances, along with chameleon and cloaking modes for more covert ops; Mad Doctor Hawkins has the ability to cobble together bits and pieces he picks up and build outlandish items and weapons out of them, A-Team-style; while Max the dog has a jetpack and up to four different weapons to hand.

The game certainly looks the part too, with brilliant-looking surreal backdrops in each level and some intense lighting effects on display. Considering Dreamcast is such a new console, developers really do seem to be squeezing some amazing visuals out of it already. Combined with the diverse gameplay and a touch of wacky humour, *MDK2* looks like being a bit special.



AERO WINGS

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **CSK/CRAVE**
DUE: **OCTOBER**

ON THE VIDEO

With not a single Sidewinder missile in sight, *Aero Wings* caters for those who want to fly US military jets but don't want to kill anyone! (And, yes, we know it doesn't belong in this category but where else could we put it?).

The thing is, it's not some anal flight simulation either – it's all about performing Red Arrows-style aerobatics and stunts. As part of the Blue Impulse troupe, you perform manoeuvres in formations of two, three or four planes with up to four players on screen at a time (kind of like *PilotWings* on Nintendo 64).



AIR FORCE DELTA

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **KONAMI/KONAMI**
DUE: **TBA**

ON THE VIDEO

3D shoot 'em ups are as suited to Dreamcast as fish are to water, and with Konami behind the stick this should be a top-notch blaster, old bean.

Air Force Delta uses very detailed models of real planes, such as the B2 Stealth bomber, Apache AH-64 chopper and US F-16, all being called into duty in an arcade-style 3D dogfight fest. Urban and country backgrounds accompany the action, making this already one of the slickest and sexiest-looking games so far. Tally ho, then!



DEEP FIGHTER

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **CRITERION STUDIOS/UBI SOFT**
DUE: **TBA**

ON THE VIDEO

In which a boxing champion ponders the meaning of life. Yeah, right. No, the "Deep" of the title is a reference to the sea (you pilot a submarine-type-thing) and the "Fighter" bit stems from the fact that the game features plenty of blasting action.

Or is it because you have to 'fight' to save an underwater civilisation? Whatever, *Deep Fighter* – sequel to PC hit *Sub-Culture* – is an underwater shoot 'em up with offensive and reconnaissance missions. And fish.



HIDDEN & DANGEROUS

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **ILLUSION SOFTWORKS/ROCKSTAR**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

There's a definite move towards realism in the 3D shooter genre at the moment, and this WWII-based game is one of them. Currently wowing PC owners, it looks set to have exactly the same effect on Dreamcast owners. Set in 1943-45, it includes more than 24 scenarios in six different locations throughout Europe.

The currently trendy 'stealth' techniques need to be used and you need to have a quick trigger finger to ensure your survival deep in the heart of 'Jerry' territory. Should be appealing to all budding Lee Marvins.



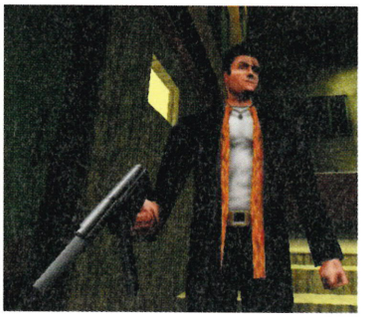
HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **AM3/SEGA**
DUE: **OCTOBER**

ON THE VIDEO

You thought you'd stopped the outbreak of zombies and destroyed all the unholy monsters? (Well, you might have if you'd played the original). Well now they're back! back! back! in this perfect conversion of the arcade sequel.

The object, as ever, is to shoot 'em all – using the Dreamcast gun (see page 19 for more details) or standard controller – while avoiding and saving the innocents. You can play the console version with one or two players simultaneously and the game includes several new features such as training grounds, a boss mode and a save game function. Should be a blast.



MAX PAYNE

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **3D REALMS & REMEDY/ROCKSTAR**
DUE: **SPRING 2000**

As if being a New York cop wasn't hard enough, Max Payne returns home one day to find his family slaughtered by thugs high on a new drug called Valkyr. Max goes undercover to track down the killers, but then ends up being accused of the murders himself.

That's the storyline behind this great looking 3D shooter from the same people who brought us *Duke Nukem 3D*. And *Duke*-style hyper-violent shooting is the order of the day here, as Max goes on a mad killing spree in a desperate need to seek his revenge. Already looking amazing, and with some big names behind it, this game should be massive when it eventually comes out.

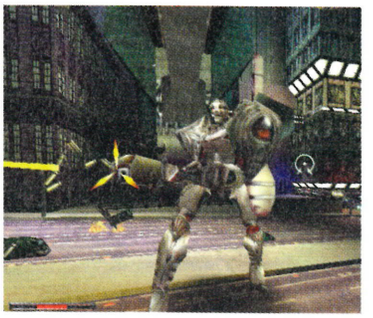


RAINBOW SIX

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **SAFFIRE/ROCKSTAR**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

Based on a thriller novel by novelist Tom Clancy – which if it were ever made into a film would undoubtably star Harrison Ford – this 3D strategy-shooter was rather well received when it came out on PC.

Playing a member of an elite fighting force, it's your job to tackle the evil terrorists and make the world a much better place – by killing people! You need to research missions beforehand though, or you'll end up wiping out a primary school bus queue by accident. *Rainbow Six* is kind of like *Quake*, except that it demands more tactical play, investigation and thinking out of you. Nice idea.



SLAVE ZERO-X

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **ACCOLADE/INFOGRAMES**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

ON THE VIDEO

Set in a fully-working dark, industrial city 500 years into the future (*Blade Runner*, anyone?), *Slave Zero-X* sees you taking control of – get this – a 65ft tall bio-mechanical robot fighting tanks, aircraft and other robots.

There's some plotline nonsense about Sovereign Khan, ruler of the First Corporate Dynasty of the Second Millennium (snigger), who is polluting the Asian countryside (no, really), but who cares? You're a bloody big robot! You can knock-down buildings! You can crush cars and buses! And people! What else do you need to know!?!?! We want this bad.

RED DOG

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **ARGONAUT/SEGA**
DUE: **OCTOBER**

IN A NUTSHELL: **FAST-PACED COMBAT SHOOTER WITH MULTIPLAYER MODE**

ON THE VIDEO

Yet another big-name developer signs up for Dreamcast. World-renowned British company Argonaut are most famous for their huge-selling Nintendo game *Star Fox*, and their debut Dreamcast outing *Red Dog* owes something to that game. In fact, it's already being touted as '*Star Fox* in a tank'.

This 3D combat-shooter sees you controlling your Red Dog assault vehicle type thing (okay, so it's not really a tank) over a variety of terrains on a futuristic alien landscape, where, according to Argonaut boss Jez San (interviewed on page 27), gameplay will be focused on "shooting the crap out of mean alien scum". Which in our book is always a good ingredient for a game.

You have a free rein as to where you can go in each of the levels, and there are plenty of pick-ups and extra weapons you can find along the way. The whole thing keeps up a pretty hectic pace as well, with the enemy vehicles attacking you from all angles.

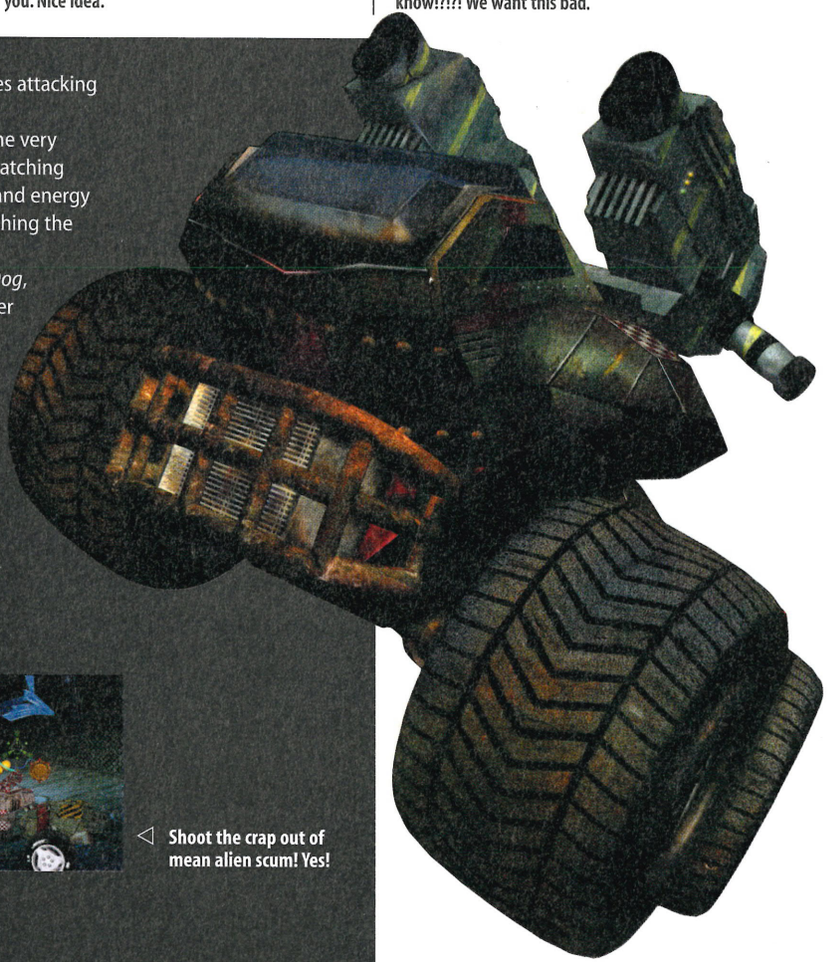
Graphically the game displays some very neat tricks. There are plenty of eye-catching explosions to witness, missile trails and energy blasts, and the team claim to be pushing the console to the limit.

The biggest selling point for *Red Dog*, however, has got to be its multiplayer mode. Making use of all four of Dreamcast's joypad ports, this could be what sets the game apart from the rest, and should guarantee its status as a definite 'after the pub' favourite.





◁ **Shoot the crap out of mean alien scum! Yes!**





TOY COMMANDER

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **NO CLICHÉ/SEGA**
DUE: **OCTOBER**

IN A NUTSHELL: ***TOY STORY* MEETS *SMALL SOLDIERS* MEETS *MICRO MACHINES*!**

ON THE VIDEO

Hugolin Bear has taken command of your toy collection (the sod!) and now it's up to you to defeat him by taking the controls of planes, trains and automobiles. Er, actually we're not sure about the trains but there are over 35 different miniature vehicles to play with, including tanks, personnel carriers (with deployable soldiers) and helicopters. Cool.

Set in a H-U-G-E, beautifully-realised house split into eight separate areas, *Toy Commander* is packed-full of neat touches. Wake-up the giant black cat and it comes after you! Hit a knob on the cooker and a gas burner lights up! Shoot a tap and water glushes out into the sink! Strike the light switch and – yep, you guessed it – the lights go out! It's just like real life! Missions combine action with a little bit of strategy. You have to race cars around tables (*Micro Machines*, anyone?), collect and deliver sugar cubes with a helicopter, bomb a naval base (which you find in a bath!) and, well, loads more besides.

In fact, French developers No Cliché reckon that there's over 50 hours of gameplay in the mission mode alone. And then there's the two to four-player split-screen option with three different game modes – Deathmatch, Capture the flag and Cat & Mouse modes. This looks like one for kids of all ages. We want this game *now!*











▷ Take command of over 35 different types of vehicle as you try to regain control of your toy collection. Boo hoo, they're mine, mine, mine...



TAKE THE BULLET

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **RED LEMON/SEGA**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

Now this looks interesting. *Take The Bullet* is an action shooting game set in the USA in the late Sixties. You take the role of Jack Travis, who is employed as a bodyguard during the course of a presidential election campaign.

The game comprises 12 levels and includes 18 weapons. It's also compatible with the Dreamcast light gun, and promises two multiplayer modes, either at home or by making use of the modem where up to 16 players can compete in a simultaneous deathmatch. Cool.



WILD METAL COUNTRY

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **DMA/TBA**
DUE: **EARLY 2000**

3D tank battles with a touch of old-skool flavour. In *Wild Metal Country* the action takes place on three planets, all devoid of biological life after a group of tanks went haywire and then took it upon themselves to kill everything in sight. Now these tanks have taken on the characteristics of the animals they wiped out, in a novel twist to the usual staid style of tank games.

It's a tad more tactical in nature than the usual arcade shooters, but a selection of innovative weapons and the inclusion of a multiplayer deathmatch mode make it one to watch.



WORMS: ARMAGEDDON

DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER: **TEAM 17/ HASBRO**
DUE: **NOVEMBER**

The original *Worms* was a massive success on virtually every games format ever invented, and our own little trouser worms are wiggling like crazy at the thought of a Dreamcast version.

As you'd expect there are plenty of 'new things' in this third and final instalment – new weapons such as aqua sheep(!), mole bombs(!!) and earthquakes, plus all-new levels and training modes to enhance the cute, turn-based war fun.

Thanks to Dreamcast's abundance of willing and able holes, there's also a four-player battle option. Which is good news because, trust us, *Worms* is one of the best multiplayer games ever.



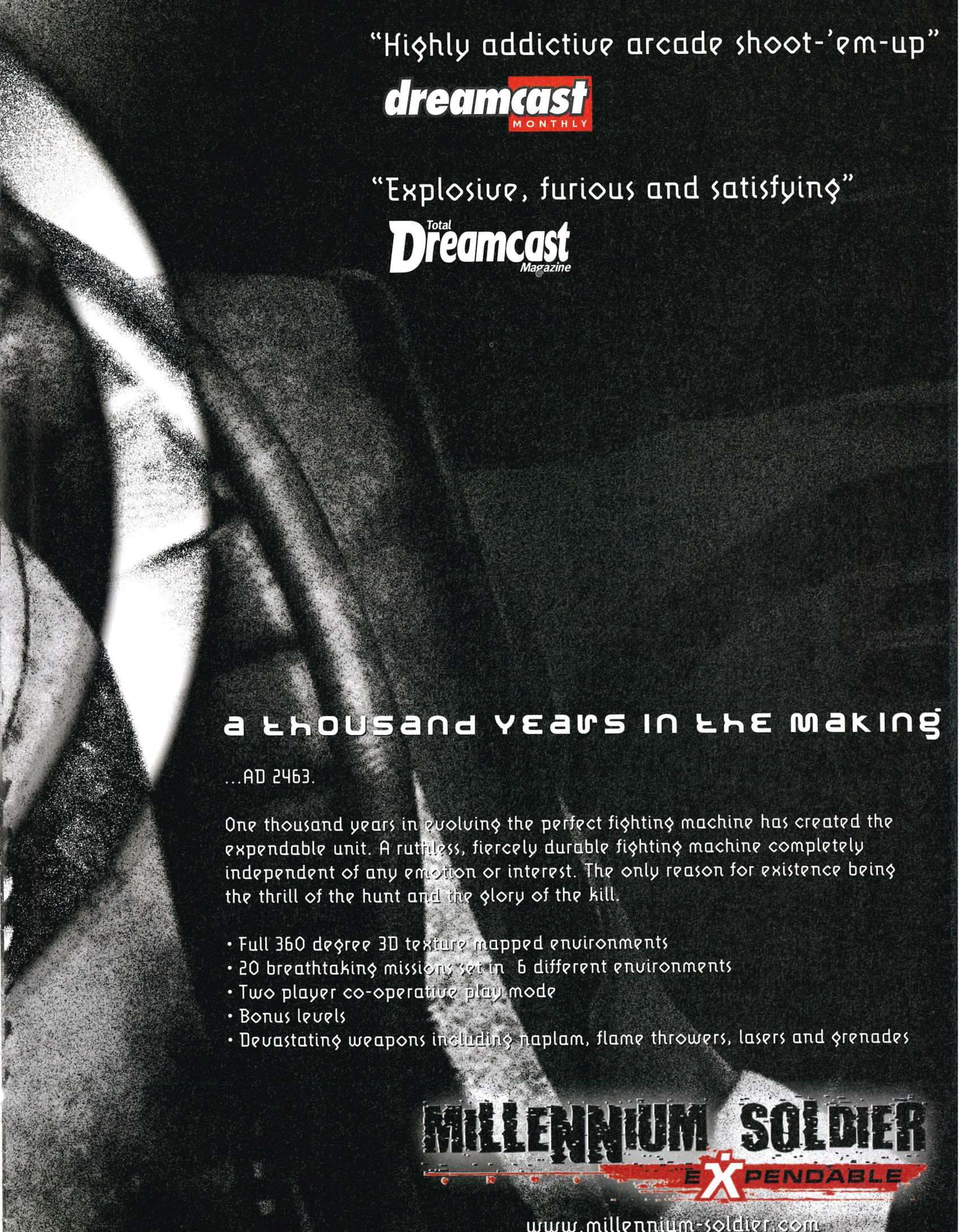
Dreamcast™

INFOGRAMES

Rage Software plc

PlayStation

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"Highly addictive arcade shoot-'em-up"
dreamcast MONTHLY
"Explosive, furious and satisfying"
Total Dreamcast Magazine
A THOUSAND YEARS IN THE MAKING
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One thousand years in evolving the perfect fighting machine has created the expendable unit. A ruthless, fiercely durable fighting machine completely independent of any emotion or interest. The only reason for existence being the thrill of the hunt and the glory of the kill.
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OLD SKOOL

You should recognise the faces on this page. After all, you went to school together. And what better way to get reacquainted with some old friends than to invite them round for an evening in with your Dreamcast? Welcome to the class of *Grange Hill*. Welcome to your school reunion

TEXT BY **DAVID MCCANDLESS & CHARLIE BROOKER** PHOTOGRAPHY **BY LUMLEY**

WANOW-WOW-WAAOW. Sing that aloud. Recognise it? Of course you do. It's the sound of the final four notes of the *Grange Hill* theme tune – the original one, that is, not the sacrilegious plinky-plonky abomination that replaced it some time in the early nineties.

If you're a twenty-something with working eyes, chances are you were an avid *Grange Hill* viewer as a child, during the series' undisputed golden era from 1978-88.

Here at *ODM* we grew up, like you, gawping slack-jawed at *Grange Hill*. The nicknames alone stir up memories: Tucker, Benny, Gripper, Pogo, Ziggy, Ro-laaand, Zammo, Gonch. See? You can picture them all. And what about those shocking set-pieces? Smack-addled Zammo going cold turkey in the school bogs; Danny Kendall's glassy-eyed corpse lolling from the back seat of Mr Bronson's car; shouting, bearded 'Bullet' Baxter toppling from a cliff while orienteering with chubby Roland Browning…

So when the idea for a games tournament with the *Hill* superstars of yesteryear unexpectedly presented itself during an office chinwag, we knew we had to follow it through. Partly because we thought it would make a great feature, but mainly because we wanted to put Benny, Zammo, Roland, Kevin, Danny Kendall and Mr Bronson in the same room and then stand there and see whether or not it did our heads in.

GRANGE HILL





NAME: SAMUEL 'ZAMMO' MAGUIRE
REAL NAME: LEE MACDONALD
FAMOUS FOR: **Baby-faced scallywag's harrowing descent into heroin-addled despair**
CURRENT AGE: **31**
POST-GRANGE HILL CAREER PATH: **Semi-pro boxer until car accident in 1990**
CURRENTLY: **Acting part-time, working as a locksmith full-time; getting harassed by tabloid journalists and Internet stalkers**
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME: ***Ready 2 Rumble***
WHAT DO YOU THINK WHEN YOU SEE YOURSELF ON TELLY? **"You watch it and you just remember everything you did – why you were filming it, what you did that day. It's like being there 15 years ago. How many people would like to see their childhood on video?"**



SCENE 1

ODM: Why do you think *Grange Hill* is so fondly remembered?
CHRYSTIE: It was a breakthrough TV drama series – gritty and realistic to an extent that hadn't been seen before.
MUSTAFA: Yeah, there were no other programmes about school. Every child in Great Britain grew up with it.
SHEARD: I think it was excellently made. I could be flippant and say because I was in it, but there was a damn good cast. We enjoyed working together. The scripts were damn good too.
ODM: Do you still get recognised today?
MACDONALD: Every day. There isn't a day that goes by when I'm not called Zammo.
MUSTAFA: Because I'm getting older and balder, it's not happening so much. You get stopped on the street. Gets a bit boring but it's part of the job. Someone once said to me: "Roland, you fat git." And I said: "I got paid to be a git – what's your excuse?" He just looked at me and said: "Oh, alright then mate."
SUE PATT: People ask you if you went to school with them.
SHEARD: I went to have lunch with a very important film director recently. We had a great time. And I got the part, of course. When I was walking back to the Tube, this little lass – she couldn't have been more than ten – said: "Hello, Mr Bronson." She must of seen the repeats on UK Gold.
MACDONALD: It's still as mad now. I had such good fun doing it.
CHRYSTIE: You get every reaction under the sun, from adoration that surpasses belief, to the aggressive geezer who wants to beat you up instantly because of something you've done on TV.
ODM: Does your *Grange Hill* celebrity status ever come in handy?
MACDONALD: Never pay to get in clubs. Get in a cab now and it's like: "Don't worry about it, Zammo."
CHRYSTIE: When we were 16 we were all going out to Stringfellows and nasty clubs like that, getting VIP treatment and champagne. The irony was that a lot of us were skint and we'd go home on the night bus at the end of the night.
ODM: Did you used to get much attention from 'the ladies'?
MACDONALD: Yeah, loads of girls. You'd do PAs, and when you turn up there's like 2,000 people, and girls all screaming at you.
ODM: Do you meet up much?
MACDONALD: Yeah, occasionally for stuff like this. And we still get on as well now as we did then. Last year was 20 years of *Grange Hill* and we did *Richard And Judy*. That finished at 11 in the morning, and we were still on a session at 12 at night. We went to Pogo Patterson's dad's pub.
ODM: Surely people must have gone: "Bloody hell, it's the cast of *Grange Hill* getting pissed?"



NAME: MR MAURICE BRONSON
REAL NAME: MICHAEL SHEARD

FAMOUS FOR: **Super-stern toupeed bastard; hounding Danny Kendall to death – literally. Also made Ant Jones leave school. And had a go at Zammo**
CURRENT AGE: **Undisclosed**
PRE AND POST-GRANGE HILL CAREER PATH: **You name it, he's been in it: 38 movies, 800 TV parts, notably Admiral Ozzel in *Empire Strikes Back*, and Hitler in *Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade*. "I've played Hitler, also Himmler, and they offered me the part of Goering. I couldn't turn that down"**
CURRENTLY: **Releasing second volume of memoirs, *Yes, Admiral* (sequel to *Yes, Mr Bronson*)**
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME: ***Sega Rally 2***
WOULD YOU CONSIDER REPRISING THE ROLE OF MR BRONSON FOR A BIG-SCREEN BLOCKBUSTER VERSION OF GRANGE HILL?
"I will consider every script I'm offered on its merit. I don't think I'd want to play Mr Bronson versus Godzilla. I think that would belittle him"





NAME: ROLAND 'RO-LAAAAND' BROWNING
REAL NAME: ERKAN MUSTAFA

FAMOUS FOR: **Being bullied simultaneously by 'Bullet' Baxter and the terrifying Gripper Stebson**
CURRENT AGE: **30**
POST-GRANGE HILL CAREER PATH: **Parts in *Chef!* alongside Lenny Henry, and *Blackadder* (which has made him famous in Latvia)**
CURRENTLY: **Head of A&R at Union Star Records**
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME: ***Sega Bass Fishing***
DID YOU NICK ANYTHING FROM THE GRANGE HILL SET? **"I've got the first issue of the *Grange Hill* magazine and a copy of the original script of the first episode I was in. And my first ever GH tie. And my last script. Every time I do a shoot I try to nick something from the set"**



MACDONALD: Yeah. Hahaha. There was about 15 or 16 of us.
[Everyone else is suddenly distracted by hilarious boxing game Ready 2 Rumble*]*
MACDONALD: This is absolutely superb. I mean, the effects in it, with the guy's tits wobbling up and down. Brilliant. This is great.
[MacDonald – ex-boxer himself – proceeds to whip Chrystie's arse. Twice]
MACDONALD: You can move around the ring, a lot more control over the punches. It's really good fun.
CHRYSTIE: Yeah. Enough.
SUE PATT: I love this. The characters are really great.
ODM: How about Mr Bronson versus Danny Kendall? Grudge match.
SHEARD: Jon Lambeth and I are great chums. We walked part of the Penine Way together. It was great, great fun.
[Lambeth and Sheard proceed to have a head-to-head grudge match on Ready 2 Rumble*]*
SHEARD: Oh, this is terrific.
[Sheard's character, a superfly guy, clouts Lambeth's fat boxer with hilarious results. Eventually Sheard is pummelled to death by Lambeth]

GRANGE HILL

SCENE 2

ODM: What's your favourite on-screen moment from the series?
SHEARD: There was a scene with Ricky Simmonds [Ant Jones]. Through no fault of his own he was late, yet again, for a French class. I bawled him out. He stood up to me. We did it one take, the whole thing, and – I say this with modesty, which is not very easy for me – it was magic. I don't know where Ricky is now, but wherever you are, mate, thank you. It was really magic.
TERRY: I liked chucking the benches in the swimming pool. We were having swimming lessons and we decided to have a race, but there was nothing around so we chucked the benches in.
MACDONALD: It would be the bit in the toilet, when I was just off it on heroin. That was brilliant.
ODM: Did they make you take real heroin?
MACDONALD: No. It was actually Horlicks. When I dabbed it off the floor it was Horlicks and hair.
ODM: Well you'd definitely say "just say no" to that.
CHRYSTIE: When I find him with the smack and he lays me out with a punch. At the time, Lee was a top, top amateur boxer, one of the best in the country. In rehearsals he was doing these swings. They were whistling past my nose, getting closer and closer, and on the take he got so much adrenalin that he went an inch too far and smacked me in the mouth. Sent me flying.
ODM: Loads of 'Hillers went off to *EastEnders*. Would you do it?
TERRY: I've been up for it four times. Yeah, I'd take a part in it.
MUSTAFA: Yeah, I'd be one of the Mitchell brothers. My agent said that as well. Ross Kemp's leaving, so you never know. Speak to any actor, they all want to do soaps. It's regular money. But I want to do comedy.
CHRYSTIE: I was offered an audition but turned it down. It was at a time when I believed I wanted to be a character actor. Sue Tully, although she was good in *EastEnders*, I don't think you've seen half of what she's capable of. She's a great character actress.
MACDONALD: Everyone ended up there. I just think I missed the boat. I know a few of the producers up there. If something comes up, my name's there. That's where I'd like to end up.
ODM: Do you play videogames much?
MUSTAFA: To be honest, I don't own a console. I've played Nintendo, which is rubbish. This Dreamcast – the graphics are excellent. I go to arcades a lot – and just stand in corners.
SHEARD: Well, this car thing. There's only one danger, which is that you could get hooked to such an extent that everything goes out of the window.
MACDONALD: I've got a PlayStation but I don't actually play on it. I got two games: *Tomb Raider* I can't do, I can't get off level one, and *Die Hard* is monotonous, just the same thing all the time. I prefer games like *Sonic*. I had more fun with *Sonic* on my Megadrive than I did with my PlayStation.

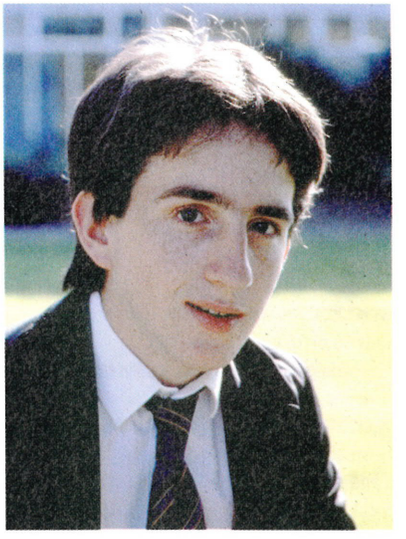


LAMBETH: I don't know a lot about technology, but the Dreamcast is pretty good. Once some newer games come out it will probably storm the market.
ODM: Would you reprise your *Grange Hill* role for a big-screen adventure?
MACDONALD: I live it every day. The people I work with ask me if they can call me Zammo.
CHRYSTIE: I'd do *Grange Hill*. Nude. In space. Definitely. I wouldn't do a straight one.
TERRY: No. I turned down *Tucker's Luck*, which was a good idea.
ODM: Do you ever dress up in the *Grange Hill* uniform and parade in front of a mirror?
MACDONALD: I'm a bit fat now for the uniform.
CHRYSTIE: No, I get my girlfriend to.

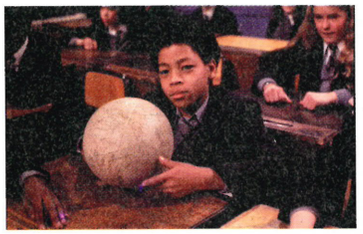
SCENE 3

ODM: What was that *Just Say No* record all about?
MACDONALD: It was crap, but it had a message at the time. I mean, that was absolutely surreal. You're 16, you've got a record at number five in the charts. We went over and did the record in front of 80,000 people at Yankee Stadium, which was mind-blowing.
ODM: Tell us something we might be shocked to hear about *Grange Hill*.
SHEARD: Well, we overran a couple of times.
CHRYSTIE: There were loads of cans of worms behind the scenes of *Grange Hill*. It's a documentary waiting to happen. We were just as naughty as any other kids but we had a squeaky clean image, especially with the 'just say no' stuff. There was masses of stuff that could come out.
ODM: What do you reckon to these games?
MUSTAFA: I like the fishing game.
SHEARD: I did very well at the fishing one. You can't eat the fish though, because they're bass.
ODM: What about *House Of The Dead 2*?
MACDONALD: It's really good. My shooting was all over the shop. The fishing was superb. That and the boxing I enjoyed today.
CHRYSTIE: I've played *House Of The Dead 1*. I think it's great.
ODM: Right, everyone. It's tournament time on *Sega Rally 2*. *[The* Sega Rally 2 *tournament begins. It soon becomes clear than Michael Sheard will come last as he ping-pongs from one side of the road to the other]*
SHEARD: Oh, it's wonderful. Very sensitive controls. *[He crashes into another wall]*
LAMBETH: It's a bit of a nightmare at first. You get good feedback with the vibration unit. I felt the car slipping around.
[John sets the time of 1'03'885, which MacDonald, Sue Patt and Mustafa fail to beat]
MUSTAFA: Shit! I'm rubbish at games.
[Chrystie takes the pad. He looks confident]
CHRYSTIE: I had a Megadrive for years.
[Silence falls as he bullets round the Desert track. On the tense third lap, he crushes Lambeth's time with a stunning time of 0'59'550]
CHRYSTIE: Yes! I was better, stronger, faster.
ODM: Finally, what was with that sausage in the *Grange Hill* intro sequence?
MACDONALD: No idea.
CHRYSTIE: I used to wonder about that too. Kids' interest in sexuality? I dunno.



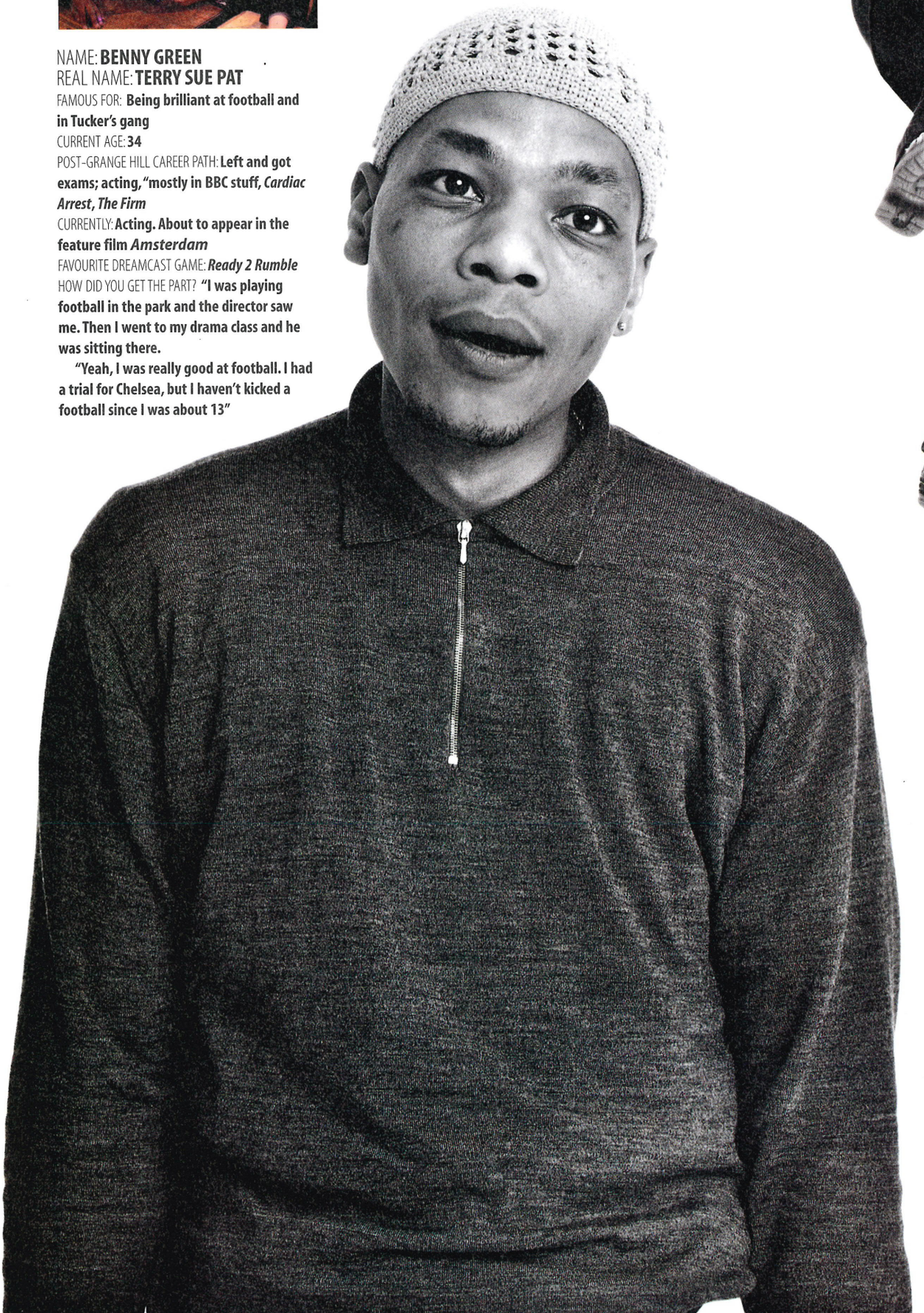


NAME: **DANNY KENDALL**
REAL NAME: **JONATHON LAMBETH**
FAMOUS FOR: **Being miserable, and committing suicide in the back of Bronson's car**
CURRENT AGE: **28**
POST-GRANGE HILL CAREER PATH: **No more acting; went to University; travelling**
CURRENTLY: **Journalist – news editor on a daily Internet news service**
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME: ***Sega Rally 2***
WHO WAS THE SCARIEST TEACHER? BULLET BAXTER? BRONSON? **"Of course, Danny was never scared of anyone, but I should think Mrs McClusky – played brilliantly by Gwyneth – could be the scariest when she chose"**



NAME: **BENNY GREEN**
REAL NAME: **TERRY SUE PAT**
FAMOUS FOR: **Being brilliant at football and in Tucker's gang**
CURRENT AGE: **34**
POST-GRANGE HILL CAREER PATH: **Left and got exams; acting, "mostly in BBC stuff, *Cardiac Arrest*, *The Firm***
CURRENTLY: **Acting. About to appear in the feature film *Amsterdam***
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME: ***Ready 2 Rumble***
HOW DID YOU GET THE PART? **"I was playing football in the park and the director saw me. Then I went to my drama class and he was sitting there.**

"Yeah, I was really good at football. I had a trial for Chelsea, but I haven't kicked a football since I was about 13"







NAME: **KEVIN BAYLON**
REAL NAME: **MMOLOKI CHRYSTIE**
FAMOUS FOR: **Finding Zammo going heroin-crazy in the toilets**
CURRENT AGE: **30**
POST-GRANGE HILL CAREER PATH: **Played Frazz in *Press Gang*. Also appeared in *Didn't You Kill My Brother?* alongside Alexei Sayle**
CURRENTLY: **Studying as a director at the National Film School**
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME: ***House Of The Dead 2***
GIVE US A BIT OF *GH* TRIVIA **"A lot of people don't know that there's an instrumental rap version of *Just Say No* on the B-side which is basically just me. Rapping"**



GET FROSTY!

WIN A SNOWBOARDING HOLIDAY

We've got a a couple of snowboarding holidays for two, plus snowboards, copies of *Snowsurfers*, and tickets to the Daily Mail Ski & Snowboard Show all up for grabs!

FIGHTING FOR A TINY PIECE OF BEACH, burning yourself to a crisp and largin' it in an overpriced cattle market of a nightclub may well appeal to many, but a growing number of clued-up types are trading sun for snow and heading for the mountains to strap on a snowboard, get that adrenalin hit, and *then* large it in an overpriced cattle market of a nightclub (some things are compulsory!).

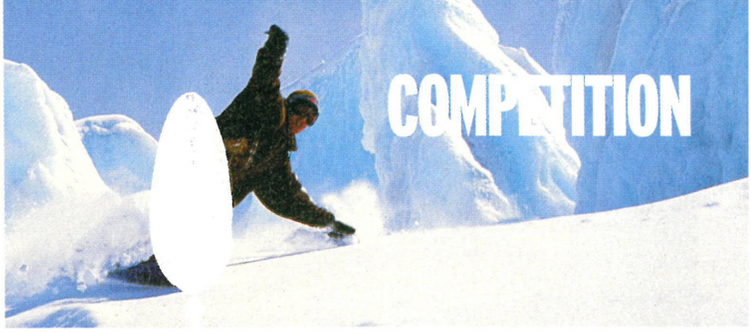
While most of us aren't lucky enough to be able to go snowboarding every day, you can experience the next best thing from the comfort of your own living room, without the hassles of frostbite, errant skiers or extortionate lift pass fees. By simply banging a copy of *Snowsurfers* into your Dreamcast, you too can be carving down the slopes and grabbing air like a pro. With its beautifully rendered scenery and super-smooth control, you'll soon be pulling tricks like you'd spent your life in a Pepsi Max advert.

Once you've played *Snowsurfers* you'll be itching to give it a go for real, and that's exactly what you could be doing if you enter our fabulous competition.

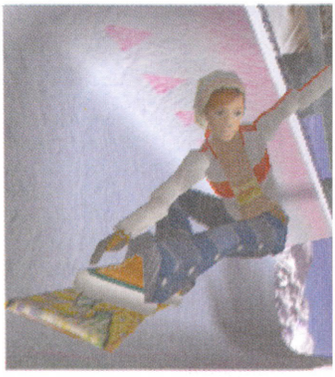
If you're one of our two lucky winners, you and a friend could find yourself in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, one of the USA's premier luxury winter resorts, where you'll find some of the best snowboarding in the world. You'll also get a Dreamcast machine and a copy of *Snowsurfers* to show people what you did (better than showing them the holiday snaps of you on your arse in the snow) and get in training for your next trip. A hundred runners-up will win tickets for the Daily Mail Ski And Snowboard Show where you can see all the latest gear, watch displays from the stars, and even have a go for yourself on a specially created slope. Someone has to win, and it could be you.

PHOTOGRAPHY: RICHARD PRICE/TELEGRAPH









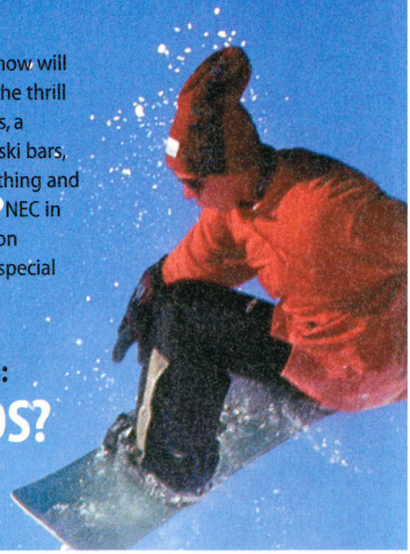
FIRST PRIZE

Two expenses-paid one-week holidays for two to Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, courtesy of *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, The Daily Mail Ski & Snowboard Show and Ski 93.

Resort of choice for New York's rich and famous, Bretton Woods is fast overtaking Colorado as America's premier winter sports destination, and you'll be staying in the luxury of the Mount Washington Hotel. The prize includes meals and board hire for the full week, which means all you have to worry about is getting out there and exploring the all-terrain snowpark and floodlit half-pipe.

RUNNERS-UP

For the runners-up, the Daily Mail Ski & Snowboard Show will give you the opportunity to experience at first hand the thrill of winter sports, with live displays from top freestylers, a demonstration slope, virtual reality mountain , après-ski bars, and hundreds of exhibitors showcasing the latest clothing and equipment. The show runs from October 15-17 at the NEC in Birmingham, and October 29 to November 7 at London Olympia. For tickets and information, please ring the special hotline on **0990 900090**.



To stand a chance of winning this superb prize, all you have to do is answer this easy question:

IN WHICH US STATE CAN YOU FIND BRETTON WOODS?

Terms and conditions: Only entries with all the questions completed and received before the closing date will be entered into the prize draw. Winners will be notified by post. No cash alternative. Prizes not necessarily as shown. No correspondence will be entered into. The Editor's decision is final. All the other usual competition rules, conditions and restrictions apply. And all that. Phew!



DAILY MAIL SKI & SNOWBOARD SHOW





Just answer the question, complete the coupon and post it (or a photocopy, or a postcard with all the information requested) to the address shown below

ANSWER: .....

NAME: .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

POSTCODE: .....

DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER: .....

EMAIL ADDRESS: .....

JOB TITLE: .....

COMPANY NAME: .....

Send your entry to: Get Frosty! Competition, CDC910A, Customer Interface, Bradley Pavilions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol [illegible]2 0BQ, UK. (Closing date: Friday 22 October)

☐ **Please tick if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers or new products from other companies**

☐ **Tick if under 18 years of age (this information is required so we do not mail inappropriate material to minors)**

HYDRO THUNDER

FINISH

BURN WATER.

THE #1 ARCADE SMASH POWERS IT'S WAY HOME.
IT'S THE MOST INTENSE RACING ACTION YOU'LL EVER FEEL!



"HYDRO THUNDER IS ABOUT SPEED AND EASE OF PLAY, RADICAL STYLE AND SPARKLING GRAPHICS."
GAMER'S REPUBLIC AUGUST '99



"HYDRO THUNDER IS A THRILL-A-SECOND EXPERIENCE FROM BEGINNING TO END. THE GAME IS INCREDIBLY FAST AND FLUID AND THE TRACK DESIGNS ARE TO DIE FOR..."
IGN DREAMCAST JUNE '99



"...A MIX OF DEATH-DEFYING LEAPS, TIGHT RACING ACTION, AND THRILL-A-MINUTE TURNS AND BURNS."
GAMEPRO JUNE '99

Dreamcast

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THE BIG 10

SO, THEN, THE VERY FIRST GAMES ON DREAMCAST – ALL TEN ON SALE THE VERY DAY THE CONSOLE LAUNCHES ON THURSDAY 23 SEPTEMBER. AND BOY WHAT A START!

If you're anything like us, you'll gasp when you see our little blue hedgehog friend spinning at (what seems like) 500mph in *Sonic Adventure* for the first time. And you'll drop yer chicken tikka sandwich when you cop the explosions in the staggeringly beautiful shoot 'em up *Incoming*.

You'll literally feel the pain when your kid brother thrashes you – yet again – at *Virtua Fighter 3tb* (may we suggest you turn to page 120 for some advice?). You'll punch the air and dance around your lounge when you finally pull off the triple back flip on your hoverboard in *Trickstyle*... at the twenty-third attempt (even though you probably won't do it again for another three weeks).

You'll scream loud enough to wake the whole street when you miss out on the record lap time on the Riviera stage of *Sega Rally 2* by 0.01 sec (and scream even louder when you beat it next time). You'll fall in love with Rouge, the pretty Arabian princess in *Power Stone*, and laugh your socks off when she unleashes her awesome Power Fusion moves. Feel her wrath!

You'll sulk like a four-year-old when friends won't let you back to have a go on *your* copy of *Speed Devils*. You'll turn the air blue (pun intended – sort of) when you get stuck for an hour in action/adventure *Blue Stinger*; and then curse even more when you realise – finally – that the solution has been staring you in the face all along. Doh!

You'll hurl your joypad in frustration (although, really, it's not a good idea) when you lose the lead in *Monaco Grand Prix* on the final bend of the final lap in the final race of the season. And you'll feel guilty as hell when you realise that the "one last quick go" at *Expendable* means you're now well over an hour late for the pub meet-up (even if you did get further in the game than ever before).

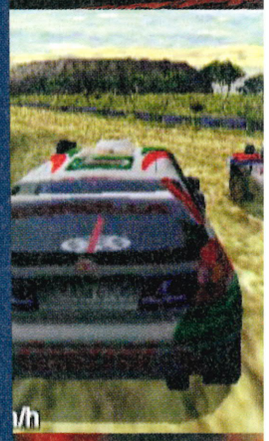
But above all else, you should wet your pants (well, okay, metaphorically at least) when you realise that as great as these first games are, this really is just the beginning for Dreamcast. Owners of other, lesser gaming consoles may just be left crying.

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ODM RATINGS

A guide to *Official Dreamcast Magazine*'s stringent scoring system. If we say a game is no good, then it ain't worth buying. If it is, it is. Simple, really

10 PERFECT! A GAME WHICH EVERYONE *MUST* OWN. 9 AN ESSENTIAL BUY. GET IT, GET IT, GET IT! 8 EXCELLENT STUFF. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. 7 A GREAT GAME WITH A MINOR PROBLEM OR TWO. 6 GOOD BUT WITH AT LEAST ONE MAJOR SHORTCOMING. 5 STRICTLY AVERAGE, RUN-OF-THE-MILL STUFF. 4 BELOW AVERAGE. PLAY BEFORE YOU BUY! 3 OH DEAR, OH DEAR. THIS REALLY ISN'T VERY GOOD. 2 THE GAMING EQUIVALENT OF LEYTON ORIENT. 1 NOT WORTH THE PLASTIC IT'S PRESSED ON!


Alfa
Alitalia









"SEGA RALLY 2 IS AS SMOOTH AS SILK, WAXED WITH VASELINE, WEARING SHADES, SMOKING A CIGAR, IN A JACUZZI"

SEGA RALLY 2

The classic arcade racing game is back, and it's coming to a Dreamcast near you. STEVE HILL slips on a pair of sling-backs for extra purchase



ON THE VIDEO

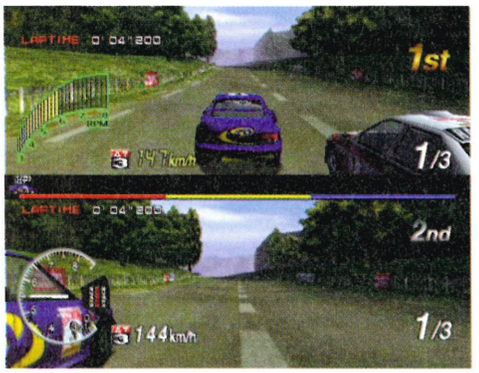
***SEGA RALLY* WAS** a key release on the Saturn, and some cynics have maintained that it was that console's one saving grace. Despite what followed, Sega have again gone down that road by hauling the sequel out of the arcade and into your house.

'Arcade perfect' is a term glibly bandied around by chin-stroking types, as often as not in reference to a game that has as much place in an arcade as a horse does in a tree. But Sega know their arcades, and *Sega Rally 2: Sega Rally Championship* is just that – a near-perfect conversion of the classic arcade game. For the ultimate in arcade authenticity, fit out your living room with a sticky carpet, and set every appliance in the house to maximum volume. Then invite a bunch of puffy-jacketed plastic gangsters to pace around while talking on their mobile phones about the respective merits of Honda Civics and Toyota Corollas while trying to tap you for a fag. And, of course, throw away a couple of quid every five minutes to complete the authenticity.

So how does *Sega Rally 2* justify that 'arcade perfect' tag? Clearly, the graphics have a considerable part to play. And here they are, splashed invitingly all over these pages, almost as if we intended you to look at them. So go on, treat yourselves, peer lasciviously at every intricate detail. You might even allow yourselves a little drool – the magazine is certainly sturdy enough to absorb it. Now imagine those very same pictures moving at a frightening pace on your telly, accompanied by the sound of growling engines and some frankly woeful music. It's almost more than your mind can cope with, isn't it? Incidentally, for the full effect, it goes without saying that a big TV is paramount; there's no point trying to play it on a 15-year-old black-and-white portable.

PICTURE THIS

What you can't tell from these pictures is how smooth the whole thing is, so you'll have to take our word for it. *Sega Rally 2* is as smooth as silk, waxed with vaseline, wearing shades, smoking a cigar, in a jacuzzi. The feel of it is simply superb, the controls are touch-sensitive, and there's an exhilarating sense of speed. It's extremely



△ Split-screen mode for the crucial mates-round situation.



△ Now, you really didn't want to do that, did you?



△ "Check it out, man! Me Toyota Corolla is the wickedest! Listen to the sound of the bass bin. Apache Indian comin' atcha! Safe!"



△ A leisurely cruise through the mountains is not an option.



△ Don't just sit there, put your foot down, you tit.



△ You are entering a long, dark tunnel...



SPEAK OUT

WE FIRE A FEW QUESTIONS AT **JOSE ALLER**, PRODUCER FOR THE PAL VERSION OF *SEGA RALLY 2*

WHAT ARE THE MAIN INSPIRATIONS BEHIND THE GAME?
"The great success of the original game was the primary reason for the sequel. There were also so many features we wanted to add, and Dreamcast was the perfect platform to show them on."

WHAT'S THE ONE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?
"There are so many, but the large range of options available over the arcade version is a good starting point."

WHICH DREAMCAST GAMES FROM OTHER COMPANIES ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO PLAYING?
"Ready 2 Rumble, Trickstyle, Rayman 2, UEFA Striker."

WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT DREAMCAST?
"The untapped power that is still to be seen."

satisfying when you get the corners right, and there's a palpable sense of achievement to be had when crossing the finishing line. As we might have mentioned already, it's just like being in an arcade.

However, while arcade-quality graphics are clearly a good thing, adhering so closely to the arcade model is not without its pitfalls. Arcade games are designed solely to relieve you of your money, and by their very nature are heavy on the 'one more go' factor, consequently lacking any real depth. While the Dreamcast version relies heavily on this aspect of the gameplay, Sega have gone to some lengths to give the game more depth with the introduction of a 10-year Championship mode which offers progressively tougher tracks and access to the bonus cars as incentive to win.

As well as a more involved structure, the Championship mode enables you to set up your car according to the conditions, and does so in a pleasingly accessible way without descending into meaningless techno-babble. For the true fan, you can even save these configurations and use them against your mates. While it doesn't seem to have much appreciable effect on the car's handling (other than the tyre selection), it's good to see Sega waking up to the fact that console buyers now expect more from their games, and super-slick arcade conversions alone are not enough.

Of course, this being rallying, all the action involves racing against the clock. And while there are other cars on the road they're little more than obstacles, as there's no actual racing involved. Obviously, this changes with the split-screen two-player game, although even this ends abruptly, with the action grinding to a halt the second one player crosses the line, and not even offering a chance to see how close a race it was. Having said that, you'll have to wait until the end of the year you're playing before you get to see it. .

Sadly, the highly anticipated online play option which has been causing chaos on Japanese servers won't be available at launch due to "technical difficulties" although it may come with a re-release at some point in the new year. Hopefully.

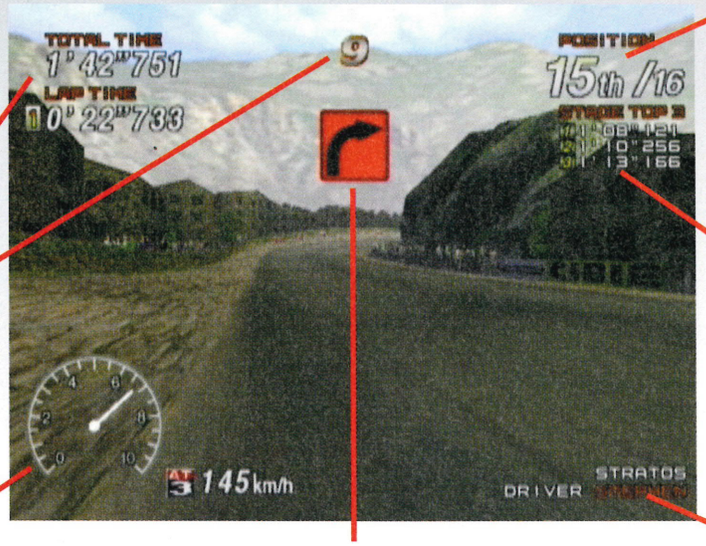
CONSUME

This is all very interesting, but what you really want to know is whether or not you should buy the game. And of course you should. In fact you'd be a tit not to, if only



"UNDENIABLY TECHNICALLY SUPERB, AND A WORTHY LAUNCH TITLE" **SEGA RALLY**

INFORMATION STATION: For the hard of thinking, here's what everything means...



Total time elapsed, and the current lap time.

Time remaining.

Your position in the current stage, relative to other drivers' times.

The three best times of this stage.

The engine room, showing revs, gear, transmission mode and speed.

The direction of the next bend, in this case a fairly hard right.

The car you're driving, and your name, in case you forget in the ensuing panic.



△ Drive like that on a public highway and you'd deserve to be called a raving maniac.



△ Break out the Thermos flask, boys. This looke like a nice place for a cup of tea.

to gloat at your non-Dreamcast-owning mates. If you want to be clever, you can pick holes in it – the cars don't roll, you can't look behind, you can't reverse – but these niggles are outweighed by the good things: different road surfaces, disparate locations, a variety of cars, cunning track design, variable weather conditions, and, if you're into that sort of thing, the option to set up your car in terms of brakes, tyre type, transmission, gear ratio, suspension and steering. And although it's not a deal-clincher, you can even choose whether to have a male or female co-driver.

Sega Rally 2 is undeniably technically superb, and a worthy launch title for Dreamcast. It looks great, it goes like the proverbial shit off a shovel, the track design pushes you to the very limits – of both driving and swearing – and it's extremely addictive. For relentless arcade action, it's the slickest, fastest rally game there is. So check it out, you funk soul brutha.

PRICE: **£40**
OUT: **SEPTEMBER**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **SEGA AM2**

VERDICT

TOP-SPEED ARCADE ACTION IN YOUR OWN HOME

UPPERS
Superb graphics • Tremendous speed
Good handling • Variety of terrain

DOWNERS
No crash damage • No online play (yet)

HIGH SCORE We managed to clock up 1'07"32 after an hour on stage two
NET SITE www.dreamcast-europe.com
CHECK OUT www.sega.co.jp to find all the high scores achieved by our Oriental friends

SCORE 8/10

DRIVETHROUGH

WEATHER, MAN

Sega Rally 2 features a variety of different weather conditions, which can make the handling of the cars difficult



1 ▽ Bleedin' typical. You set out for a pleasant drive in the country and it starts pissing down with rain.



2 ▽ Snow is a different bag altogether, causing skidmarks on the road as well as your undercrackers.



3 ▽ That's more like it. Rolling hills, purple skies. Slow down, enjoy yourself, it's not a race. Is it?

NICE CAR, MISTER!

In addition to the eight cars available from the off, the 10 Year Championship gives you access to a diverse range of vehicles to continue your campaign. Finish a year in first place and you win a car, simple as that.

A rally anorak's wet dream, the cars featured are classics from the archives, like the outlawed Group B Peugeot 205 T16 and Lancia 037 Rally, the old-skool Fiat Arbarth, and the cute but ultimately useless Peugeot 106 Rallye. Best of the bunch is the Lancia, but the snag is that you don't get it until you've won the tenth year of the championship. Time to get practicing...



SONIC ADVENTURE

"ONE DAY ALL GAMES WILL LOOK THIS GOOD. RIGHT NOW, ONLY THIS DOES"



He's got a faintly demonic smile and he carries fleas. But we asked **CHARLIE BROOKER** to review Sonic the Hedgehog's latest outing anyway

ON THE VIDEO

SONIC ADVENTURE. Now there's a good name for a band. It also happens to be the name of this game, this Dreamcast showpiece, in which Sega's spiny mascot makes a triumphant return to the gaming stage. Real-life hedgehogs are well-known for carrying fleas and lying disc-flat in the middle of the road with their intestines crushed into the tarmac – but Sonic is a tad more glamorous than that. For one thing, he's a vivid *navy blue* hedgehog who got his name by breaking the sound barrier on foot. And if *that* isn't enough he also wears gloves, has bulging cartoon eyes, and can talk. In fact, all things considered, he bears about as much relation to a genuine hedgehog as a monkey does to the moon.

Sonic's favourite hobby is running… and we mean *really running*. He runs *way* fast. He runs like a startled murderer. Phone Sonic and invite him round your house for a spot of civilised afternoon tea and he'd be ringing the doorbell before you'd had a chance to hang up and tidy away all the pornography you'd secretly been thumbing through that morning.

It follows that since speed is central to Sonic's character, it's equally important to the games he stars in. Most platform games require you to inch your way along, stuttering through each level, ponderously timing and judging every other move in the nervous manner of a high-school virgin at an eight-way pool-hall gangbang. *Sonic* games, on the other hand, invite you to toss caution to the wind and rip through the stages like a Hell's Angel at midnight.

The first game, *Sonic the Hedgehog,* was fast. *Sonic Adventure* is about a billion times faster. It's the fastest videogame ever, and one of the most visually spectacular to boot. Once Sonic really gets into his stride, the game pisses a string of high-colour, high-res, high-energy images into your face and eyes with such unrelenting haste, your brain won't be able to cope with all the information it's expected to process. It'll shrivel, whimpering, to the back of your skull, while your fingers dance lovingly around the joypad, tapping out a



△ The A40 Shepherd's Bush flyover. If you drink Barcardi.



△ How'd they get planning permission for that?



△ Blue fur, green eyes, pink belly, white gloves. That's some pretty sick colour co-ordination.



MUSIC SOUNDS BOTTOM WITH YOU

They pulled out all the stops for *Sonic Adventure*'s soundtrack – and they should have pushed some of them back in. It's not that it's bad, it's just... well, call us pedantic, but didn't 'soft metal' die out in the late 1980s? Despite the occasional electro interlude, the bulk of the game's musical accompaniment consists of sub-*Beverly Hills 90210* LA-rock noodlings, often complete with lyrics. Frankly, we don't approve.

The one exception is Tails' theme, which is called "Believe in Myself". It's terrible too, but it's weirdly catchy at the same time, and we've been humming it on and off for the last fortnight. Got us some funny looks down the crematorium, that.

The character voiceovers are a little suspect too. For one thing, the lip-syncing is *waaaay* off (as in Kung Fu movies), and the actors themselves sound like the sort of people who overdub Scandinavian pornography. Except Tails (above), that is: his voice is cool, but it's not by Jake Lloyd (from *The Phantom Menace*) as has been previously reported cos he wasn't good enough.

push-button tango. Ever watched a dog sitting in the back of a speeding car on a hot summer's day, head sticking out the window, tongue flapping madly in the wind, its face a caricature of dumb, grateful exhilaration? Well, if you like good graphics, you'll be pulling expressions like that.

One day *all* games will look this good. Right now, only this does. Welcome to the pioneering days of DC.

OH YOU PRETTY THING

The game isn't called *Sonic Adventure* for nothing. There's a distinct narrative flowing through the game. The story runs as follows: Dr. Robotnik, the rotund, four-eyed, slap-headed supervillain of yore, has made friends with a monster known as Chaos. Chaos is made entirely from water, which presumably comes in handy whenever he fancies a Pot Noodle. Anyway, in order to transform Chaos from an antisocial drip into a super-powerful beast from heck itself, Dr. Robotnik needs to locate the seven Chaos Emeralds which are scattered throughout the world. Once Chaos has been transformed, Robotnik intends to turn Planet Earth into a dark ball of sickness: slaughtering dissidents, oppressing the masses, and reinforcing the ban on Sunday trading. Sonic, naturally, intends to stop him.

Okay, so as plots go, it's down there with the likes of *Best of the Best IV*, but there is more to it than meets the eye. We'll explain why later – first we'll tackle the bulk of the gameplay itself.

Sonic's world is split into two distinct regions: hubs and action stages. The 'hub' sections are sprawling, exploratory areas in which Sonic wanders around chatting to people, uncovering the occasional secret, and most important of all, gaining access to the action stages. Several different stages are linked from the same hub – but you can't just visit them in any order you like (not at *first* anyway). They have to be 'unlocked' one by

"SONIC GAMES INVITE YOU TO THROW CAUTION TO THE WIND AND RIP THROUGH THE STAGES LIKE A HELL'S ANGEL AT MIDNIGHT"

one, usually by solving a simple puzzle.

The exploratory hub segments are leisurely and relaxed; the action stages are anything but. Sega have taken the familiar Sonic staples – collecting rings, rolling around in a ball, jumping around and bashing enemies on the head – and dragged them kicking and screaming into the third dimension. Whereas in the famous 2D platform games Sonic was viewed side-on, in *Sonic Adventure* we're given a roving camera view, which by and large sticks behind our hero as he hurtles along. You steer him around using the joypad's analog stick. Even for anyone accustomed to the similar control method employed by *Mario 64*, this takes some getting used to; particularly when Sonic's cruising at top speed.

HASTE VERSUS TASTE

The level design might not be to everyone's taste. Generally speaking, the levels resemble a cross between





△ **Run! It's Doctor Robotnik! In! A! Space! Ship!**

SIDETRACK CITY



Aside from the main quest, *Sonic Adventure* includes several impressive sub-games, any one of which could have been released as a full-blown release in less enlightened times. Visit the Casinopolis stage and you can play a game of pinball (anyone remember *Sonic Spinball* on the Megadrive?)... and there's more than one table too. Later, in the Twinkle park stage, you can play a hovercar racing game, which should seem eerily familiar to anyone who's ever played Nintendo's *F-Zero*. There's also a diverting 'whack-a-mole' game to play with Amy's hammer, and several 3D shoot 'em up sessions in Tails' bi-plane. But the most impressive example of subgame insanity has to be the whole A-Life deal.Get this: if you've got the VM gizmo plugged into your joypad, you can breed and raise a little creature in the game, then transfer it to the VM and nurture it, Tamagotchi-style, as you go about your daily business. Once it's big and strong you can transfer it back into the game proper and enter it into a series of races against other wee beasties. You can even join two VMs together and get the little tinkers to mate (although you won't see any close-up shots of anything rude happening, you pervert you).

a platform game and an insane thematic racecourse, and therefore there's often as much running as jumping involved. Furthermore, every past *Sonic* title has included lengthy 'hands-off' segments during which Sonic gets thrown, spun, or fired round his surroundings without any input from you whatsoever, and *Sonic Adventure* is no exception. Hop on a spring, for instance, and you find yourself rebounding around the scenery, pinball-style, for an absolute *age* before coming to rest on the next section of track. There are also several 'show-stopper' segments – a good example occurs in the first stage, as Sonic is pursued by a gigantic whale – during which the interaction is reduced to a minimum while the camera pans round to show something spectacular happening. The majority of players will be too busy gasping in awe to worry about this; hard-core gamers might feel a little short-changed. At which point it's worth remembering that *Sonic* games have never been aimed at the sniffy hardcore niche; this game has been designed to garner mass-market acceptance, and therefore the difficulty level is low, and the spectacle level is high. If you're too damn snooty to deal with that, go play *Magic: The Gathering* with your fat, pus-faced pals while the rest of us have some fun. Okay?

PEDIGREE CHUMS

As he ploughs through his adventure, Sonic occasionally hooks up with a few of his old buddies. Tails the Fox (a.k.a Miles Prower, which is a *terrible* pun) is there, as is Knuckles the Echidna. Generally, they arrive to prop up a few of the game's impressive cutscenes – most of which are rendered with the game's own engine, since it's proficient enough to produce eye-popping 'cinemas' (as the Yanks like to call 'em) without breaking into a sweat. But Sonic's companions aren't mere window-dressing; you can play through the game as them too. And that doesn't just mean the same game with a different

WALKTHROUGH 01

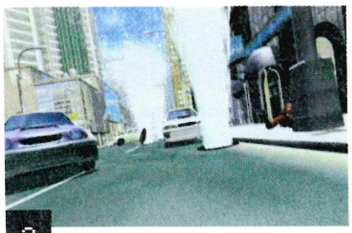


SETTING THE SCENE

The introduction sequence alone has all the pomp and spectacle of a big-budget Hollywood movie



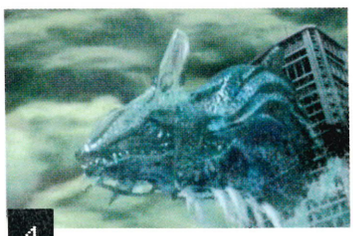
1 ▽ **In the beginning... just another pleasant summer afternoon in the big city...**



2 ▽ **...until something appears to be going spectacularly wrong with the city sewerage system...**



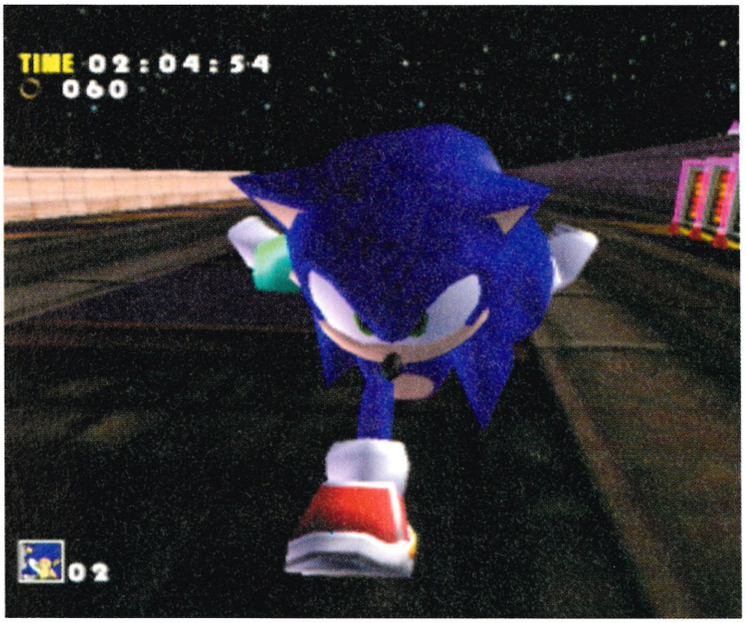
3 ▽ **...and we're not talking about a few flooded basements here, either – this is a cataclysm.**



4 ▽ **And here's the devious culprit – Chaos. With a face that only his mother could love.**



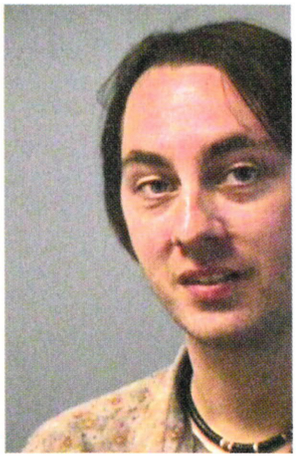
5 ▽ **Only one hedgehog can save us now... it's Sonic, glowing like some crazy Messiah.**



△ Sonic's too cool to fall from the roof of a building – instead he sprints down the side, *Matrix*-style.



△ At top speed, Sonic runs with his arms flapping behind him, like a dork.



SPEAK OUT

WE TALK TO **DAVE NULTY**, PRODUCER OF THE PAL VERSION OF *SONIC ADVENTURE*

WHAT ARE THE MAIN INSPIRATIONS?
"Yuji Naka and the Sonic Team are creative visionaries. If I knew the answer to that question I'd be the man responsible for a very lucrative hedgehog! Actually, South America was quite an inspiration for Sonic's latest outing. Sega flew the team there for research purposes (what a hard life game developers lead, eh!). The result is the Mystic Ruins, one of the splendid adventure fields Sonic and Friends visit in the game."

WHO IS THE GAME AIMED AT?
"The core audience is primarily the kids but the innovative gameplay and visual splendour also attract a more mature audience, and then of course you've got the nostalgia angle!"

WHICH IS YOUR FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME (FROM ANOTHER COMPANY)?
"*Soul Calibur* is pretty fab, but I'd have to say *Toy Commander* – it brings out the kid in me."

graphic for the lead character; each of the supporting cast comes complete with their own unique characteristics. Tails, for example, can fly, while Amy the token female runs around bashing people with a massive hammer. They also tackle the stages in a different order and with a set of totally different objectives too. Playing from beginning to end with, say, Knuckles, takes about half as much time as it would with Sonic, but it's just as much fun, and more importantly, is sufficiently different to qualify as a separate mini-game in its own right. A lot of the fun is derived from seeing how these supporting stages fit into the overall story. Remember how in *Pulp Fiction* you'd sometimes watch a familiar scene, but from the point of view of a different character? Well, *Sonic Adventure* is a bit like that. Except no-one takes a heroin overdose or gets their head blown off in the back of a car. And there's no Uma Thurman. But then you can't have everything.

SMELLING OF ROSES?

So far, this has been nothing but an outpouring of cloying, undiluted praise, the likes of which would have Sega running around rubbing their palms together and shouting "ka-*ching!*" Well, now it's time to get picky and serious. And unfortunately, *Sonic Adventure* has a few factors to get picky and serious about. So stop whooping and *sit down*.

The original Japanese version of the game came out last year and looked a little as though it had been rushed out in time for Christmas. Amid all the glitter and gloss lurked a few ugly and unwelcome errors, standing out like pubic hairs on a meringue. And sadly,

SPEED IS GOOD FOR YOU



SO GOOD, IT HERTZ

Sonic the Hedgehog breaks UK speed record!

Ever wondered why so many UK videogames have nasty black borders at the top and bottom of the screen? This is because here we use a different TV system (called PAL) to Japan and America (NTSC) and the two systems run at different screen refresh rates (50Hz and 60Hz respectively). If developers re-code NTSC titles to run on UK systems and neglect to take into account different refresh speeds (sometimes for technical reasons but often because they can't be arsed), we're left with a squashed, bordered image and a 17 per cent reduction in game speed.

The good news is that UK Dreamcasts can output a PAL-encoded signal at 50Hz (with borders) or at a non-standard 60Hz (without borders). Not all games will have an option for the latter but *Sonic* does (hurrah!) as does *Incoming* (see page 93). Around 80% of UK TVs can display a 60Hz signal, so give the option a go if it's available.





△ On the left is *Sonic Adventure* running in 50Hz mode, while the right shows the same screen running in 60Hz mode – without the borders.



"A SLICE OF STATE-OF-THE-ART, VISUALLY STUNNING ENTERTAINMENT" **SONIC ADVENTURE**



△ *Sonic* features loads of spectacular set-pieces. This 'Killer Whale' sequence occurs in the first level.



△ The snowboarding stage is short-lived, but fun while it lasts.

"ONCE SONIC GETS INTO HIS STRIDE, YOUR BRAIN WON'T BE ABLE TO COPE. IT'LL SHRIVEL WHIMPERING, TO THE BACK OF YOUR SKULL"

these problems remain in the European release. Luckily, most of the glitches are merely cosmetic – the disconcerting way Sonic judders like an epileptic on fast-forward when he runs into a wall being a case in point – but several are decidedly more grievous. First, there's the camera, which sometimes gets 'stuck' behind a piece of scenery or against a wall, making it hard to see where you're going. You can shift the viewpoint manually – but that isn't the point: you shouldn't *have* to. This problem ruins an otherwise eye-popping snowboarding stage.

Worse still, the collision detection occasionally fails, sending Sonic tumbling through ostensibly solid barriers or walls, often at the expense of a life. Infuriating bugs, yes, but fortunately they're infrequent too; they don't occur with enough regularity to spoil your enjoyment of the game. Still, it's a crying shame Sega didn't see fit to iron them out.

LAST WORD(S)

So, then. Is *Sonic Adventure* the 'killer app' Dreamcast needs to make a big gain in the next-round of the console war? In a word, yes. It's fast, it's furious, it's a lot of fun, and it's the best looking videogame we've ever seen. It may not be an epoch-shattering gigantic leap forward for gaming kind, and as we've already mentioned, it won't be to *everybody's* taste (die-hard gamers are likely to rip through it within days – although there *is* plenty to go back for). Overall, though, it *rocks bells*. If you're looking for a slice of state-of-the-art, visually stunning entertainment, you've found it. Welcome back, Sonic. You big-eyed mangy fleabag, you.

PRICE: **£40**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **SONIC TEAM**

VERDICT

A MASTERPIECE... WITH A FEW MINOR FLAWS

UPPERS
Blindingly fast • Awesome graphics • Lots to discover

DOWNERS
Some problems with glitching and camera positioning

HIGH SCORE By the end of your first hour of play, you should've completed the first stage of the Casinopolis level. And if you haven't... well, you're rubbish
NETSITE www.sonicteam.com
CHECK OUT The bonus graphics included on the disc – ideal for use as your PC or Mac desktop wallpaper.

SCORE 9/10

CHARACTER ROUNDUP

MEET THE GANG

...cos the boys are here, the boys to entertain you. And there's a token girl as well. Here's a few of the other characters you can 'be' aside from Sonic. As you progress through the game, you 'unlock' the ability to use them. Each has their own nifty set of sub-games; a pleasant aside from Sonic's main quest...



1 'Tails' has two tails and can fly. Hey, who said games had to be realistic?



2 Amy's got a crush on Sonic, and we sort of fancy her too. Must be the eyes...



3 Knuckles the Echidna. Not sure what an echidna is, but you can bet they don't look like this.



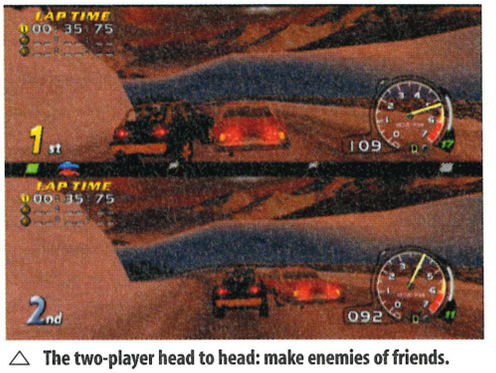
4 Play as Big the Cat and you get to take part in a diverting little fishing simulation.



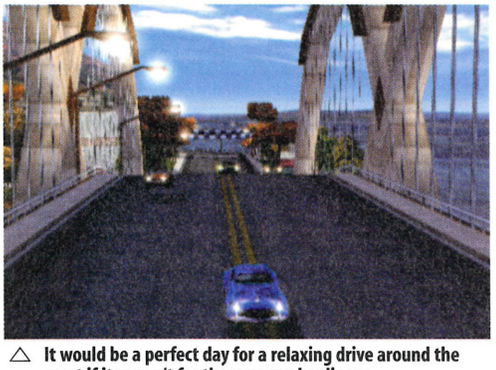
△ It's not the end of *Grease 3*, but a road-level view of one of our more impressive driving stunts.



△ Approaching this trap, your life is suspended by a thread.



△ The two-player head to head: make enemies of friends.



△ It would be a perfect day for a relaxing drive around the coast if it weren't for those young hooligans.



△ The draw of some fictional Nevada gambling town, but you've got no time for sightseeing.



△ Isn't the sky simply breathtaking in its beauty following a nuclear attack?

SPEED DEVILS

Just another racing game, you think? What about the short cuts, traps, fantastic locations and gambling? asks **STEVE OWEN**

"EACH TRACK IS LIBERALLY PLASTERED WITH INGENIOUSLY FRUSTRATING TRAPS DESPERATE TO SEND YOU SPINNING OFF THE ROAD"

ON THE VIDEO

AS DEVELOPERS FALL OVER themselves to demonstrate what Dreamcast is capable of doing, there's one game that seems to have been missed by the big-name hunters. *Speed Devils*, from French company Ubi Soft, may be just another racing game to the unenlightened few, but we reckon it could end up being a hell of a lot more than that.

Sega Rally 2, for instance, is a fast blast along some short but great tracks, a game you learn like the back of that thing on the end of your arm if you want to get the best times. *Monaco Grand Prix*, on the other hand, is a simulation of a complex sport, a game that demands plenty of attention before you're lavished with the rewards appropriate for a Formula One success. *Speed Devils* is a bit different though. If anything, it leans towards the *Sega Rally* camp, as it's without doubt an arcade game, but there the parallels end.

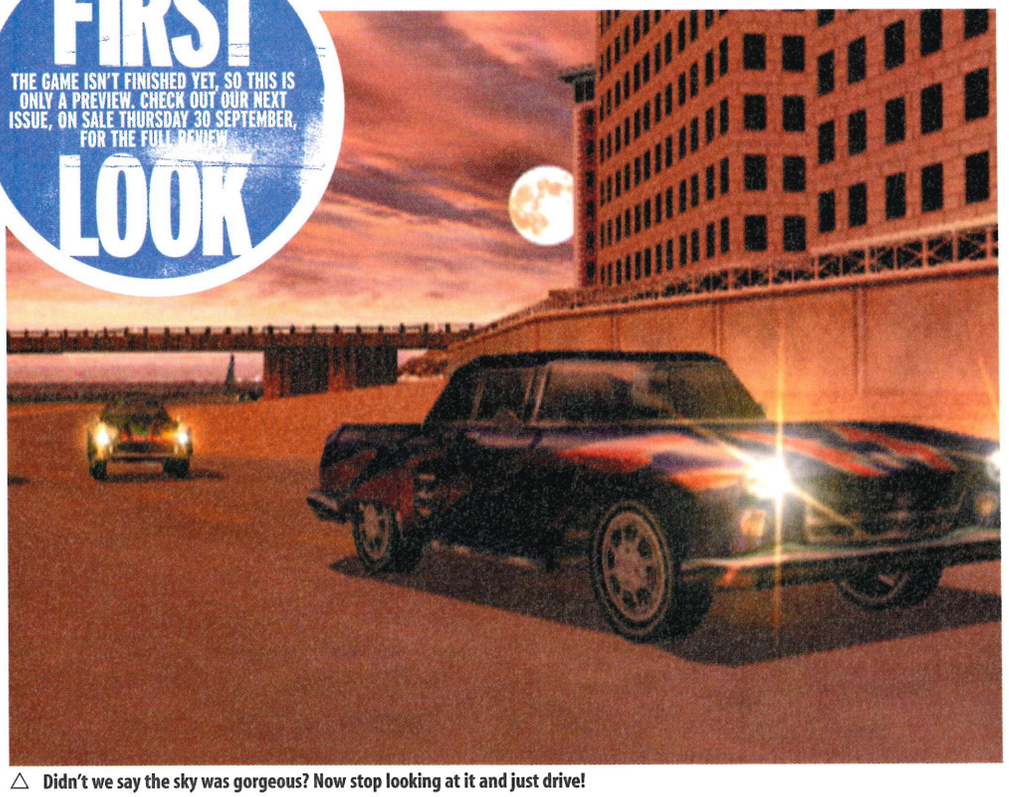
For a start, the tracks are far from straight out of real life. While they're loosely based on locations around the United States, the developers were clearly singing on the happy cloud when they put these little beauties together. Shockingly long (we reckon it takes around five to seven minutes to complete just a single lap), each track is liberally plastered with ingeniously frustrating traps desperate to



"THERE'S MORE POTENTIAL IN THIS GAME THAN WE PROBABLY DESERVE" **SPEED DEVILS**

FIRST LOOK

THE GAME ISN'T FINISHED YET, SO THIS IS ONLY A PREVIEW. CHECK OUT OUR NEXT ISSUE, ON SALE THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER, FOR THE FULL REVIEW



△ **Didn't we say the sky was gorgeous? Now stop looking at it and just drive!**

send you spinning off the road; rock falls pick the most inopportune moments to be disturbed; JCB diggers swing their buckets like they've actually got work to do rather than tabloids to read; and dangerous invisible corners leap out of the distance like disturbed cats.

CUT TO THE CHASE

There are also short cuts everywhere, some clearly marked, others that you only discover by taking quiet wanders around the landscape. These might involve leaping onto the top of a train and enjoying a free ride, leaping into a large concrete tube, or handbrake-turning into a seemingly invisible right-hander.

Each track is 'themed' to add to your driving pleasure. For example, the Hollywood track charges through a film lot scattered with set-pieces such as Jaws (or rather a non-copyright-infringing large shark) leaping out of the water, teeth bared, or King Kong pounding the floor with his bison-sized fists. Other tracks have you slip-sliding away through the snowy wastes of a Colorado ski resort, or through a 'fictional' gambling city in Nevada.

You can tell from the shots here that the game looks stunning, and despite the huge leap in track detail *Speed Devils* still runs at a comfortable 30 frames per second. It's a stunning demonstration of what Dreamcast is capable of displaying, and blows away anything seen on N64 or PlayStation. What's so surprising is that despite the length of each lap there are no repeated sections. Several miles of track have been painstakingly created, each packed with so much detail that we'd be tempted to say that you can have almost as much fun watching it as driving it.

It's not just the tracks that award *Speed Devils* the grand prix. There's a huge variety of cars (see Mirror, Signal, Manoeuvre panel, right), each of which can be increasingly damaged and upgraded, but of particular interest is the wholly original method of gambling in the championship.

It all begins like *Gran Turismo* on PlayStation where you compete in a lowly championship driving a wreck of a car. Succeed at this beginner level and you're awarded hard virtual cash, not just for winning races, but also for finding short cuts, top speed and getting the fastest lap times. This money can, as you would imagine, be blown on the upgrades, new nitros for almost instant acceleration during the race, or a complete new car, but you can also wager some of the dosh against a competitor. Getting the fastest lap time again, for instance, can double your pile. Should you rather overtly nudge a competitor during a race, you may find him exacting his revenge by challenging you to a one-on-one, again for money.

As you move through the four classes of race the competitors and the courses get tougher, but each driver has been given a unique personality, and can even be seen through the windows of his car. We really think that this feature gives the single-player game even more appeal, as you become increasingly familiar with the different driving styles of various computer-controlled competitors.

As you'd hope, there's also a split-screen two-player mode, which *still* doesn't seem to slow the frame rate. Head-to-head battles have never looked quite so good, and in the best tradition of *Mario Kart*, it could be essential that you make it through the tricky short cuts if you intend to win.

Frankly, there's more potential in *Speed Devils* than we probably deserve. We've yet to play a finished version, but we've been promised that one will arrive in time to be reviewed next issue (on sale Thursday 30 September). Only then will we know for sure whether or not this gorgeous game is all that it seems.

PRICE: **£40**
PUBLISHER/DEVELOPER:
UBI SOFT

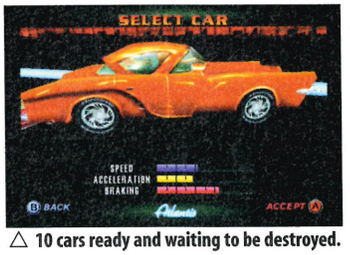
MIRROR, SIGNAL, MANOEUVRE

Speed Devil's cars are given a quick MOT

The important aspect of *Speed Devils* is of course the cars. There are ten different models, based on real vehicles from the 1950s and 1990s, including the more unusual limousine and jeep. Each handles differently, as you'd hope, but of particular interest is the damage modelling.

Each car has six different damage points on the body, each of which has three levels of destruction. In order for the cars to behave as if they're falling apart section by section, each proportion of denting must correspond to a negative effect on handling and performance, as well as updating the image of your motor on-screen.

And just when you thought you might be getting used to the different handling of each vehicle at various levels of destruction, don't forget that with the various car upgrades at your disposal, you can never really settle into your seat.



△ **10 cars ready and waiting to be destroyed.**

SPEAK OUT



WE TALK TO **ALEXANDRE THA BET**, PRODUCER OF *SPEED DEVILS*

WHO IS *SPEED DEVILS* AIMED AT?
"I believe this game will appeal not only to all racing fans, but also to any gamers just looking to play a fun game."

WHAT'S THE SINGLE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?
"I would definitely have to say the garage in the Championship mode. This is an environment where the player can actually see his progress through the accumulation of trophies, banners, vehicles and cash, and get more personal with opponents willing to bet on the outcome of a race."

WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT DREAMCAST?
"Its power – Dreamcast enables us to do far nicer and more realistic games. Also, the VM and the modem capability widen our possibilities."

WHICH DREAMCAST GAMES FROM OTHER COMPANIES ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO PLAYING?
***Crazy Taxi*, *Ready 2 Rumble* and, of course, *Shen Mue*."**



TRICKSTYLE

"A STUNT-BASED RACING GAME, AS OPPOSED TO A RACING GAME WITH STUNTS"



FIRST LOOK

THE GAME ISN'T FINISHED YET SO THIS IS A PREVIEW ONLY. CHECK OUT OUR NEXT ISSUE, ON SALE THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER, FOR THE FULL REVIEW

Bored of boarding? Try *Trickstyle*. **STEVE HILL** gets radical



ON THE VIDEO

YOU JUST CAN'T TURN ON THE TELLY THESE DAYS without someone in a goatee beard prancing about on a board. A gross exaggeration maybe, but the Pepsi Max brigade do seem to be dominating the airwaves more and more at the moment, foisting their various brands of extreme sport onto an unsuspecting public. With them seemingly attempting to outdo each other all the time, we're constantly bombarded with images of surfing, skateboarding, snowboarding, wakeboarding, bodyboarding, street luge, and even sky surfing (otherwise known as launching yourself out of an aeroplane with a piece of wood stuck to your feet).

All well and good, if that's your bag. However, any Dreamcast owners with a penchant for all things board will soon be able to experience the thrills and spills of the above 'disciplines' in the safety of your own home, thanks to the forthcoming *Trickstyle*. And apart from negating the risk of you snapping limbs at macabre angles, the game can thankfully be played clean shaven – no chin glove required.

STORYBOARD

Boarding it is, then. But games being games, *Trickstyle* is set in the future – the middle of the 23rd century, to be precise. Those of you who require an elaborate storyline to justify pressing buttons while staring at a TV screen won't be dissappointed, because it's a convoluted – not to mention tedious – affair. In summary then: some Japanese blokes have invented anti-gravity technology; no-one's interested; said Japanese blokes then decide to flood the world using global warming; everyone's interested; hovering cities spring up; world order breaks down; nobody needs to go to work; boredom sets in; someone invents the hoverboard; a new sport is born.





△ Mia Pharroh: a snake-hipped 'stunter' character.



△ The Velodrome: the place to be seen giving it some.



△ Neo Manhattan: in the luge position, arse on fire and going like a train.

FUTURISTIC CITY PLANNING

The races in *Trickstyle* take place over three themed cities, each loosely based on the real thing, albeit futuristic. In that sense it's a bit like Las Vegas, but with hoverboarding. And no slot machines













NEO MANHATTAN

Following the radical climate shift of the 21st century, New York sweltered in tropical temperatures. Vegetation now runs riot across sidewalks and up buildings, and the canopy of trees that covers the once vibrant city gives it a dark and foreboding atmosphere. Some day real rain will fall here.

In the meantime, *Trickstyle* takes in locations such as the Empire State Building, Liberty Island and the Brooklyn Bridge.

FUTURE LONDON

The metropolis that is The Big Smoke is bursting at the seams thanks to the refugees from the Pacific Rim floodings who came to the city and never left.

The London of *Trickstyle* is an unlikely mix of old and new, with once famous landmarks such as Big Ben and Nelson's Column dwarfed by shiny new glass carbuncles. And you still can't get a cab to take you south of the river.

AERIAL TOKYO

Nestled among the clouds over what remains of Japan, Ariel Tokyo is a masterpiece of engineering and design. Kept aloft by the magic of Sosumi Hover-Tec, it's become a haven for the famous and powerful.

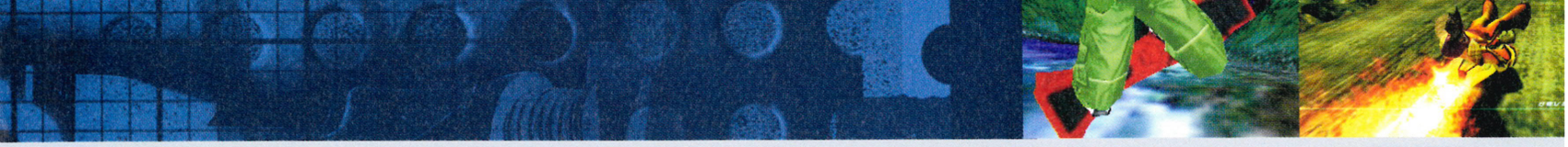
In the midst of the city lies the Tokyo Sky Dome, a mecca for every fan of hoverboarding. Every year the final of the championship is held within its pristine walls, and is watched by billions around the globe. Yeah, right.

"HOVERBOARDING CERTAINLY ISN'T A NON-CONTACT SPORT, AND RACES WILL BE KEENLY CONTESTED AFFAIRS, WITH ALL MANNER OF DIRTY TRICKS BROUGHT INTO PLAY"

Which, if you still haven't guessed, is where *Trickstyle* comes in, enabling you to participate in the futuristic sport of hoverboarding, which as the name might suggest is similar to other types of boarding, the crucial difference being that you hover a couple of inches above the ground. Which is nice.

NO FUTURE

In the crazy mixed-up world of videogames, the words 'future' and 'sport' mentioned together generally set alarm bells ringing, as the vast majority of games with this sort of description have been utter muck. *Trickstyle* is at least loosely based on an established genre though, and anyone who's ever played the imperious *1080° Snowboarding* on Nintendo 64 will be aware of the potential this type of game has. By their own admission, the designers of *Trickstyle* are big *1080* fans, and they have clearly been influenced by the game, most notably its elaborate stunts. However, they're keen to stress that *Trickstyle* is a stunt-based racing game –- as opposed to a racing game with stunts – in that performing all the tricks is the key to success, as



"PERFORMING A BARREL ROLL ENABLES YOU TO SMASH STRAIGHT THROUGH A SHEET OF GLASS" **TRICKSTYLE**



△ **Aeriel Tokyo: no cars and no pedestrians to get in the way, and plenty of room to strut your hoverboarding stuff.**



SPEAK OUT

CRAIG SULLIVAN (IN THE MIDDLE AT THE BACK), LEAD DESIGNER OF *TRICKSTYLE* REVEALS ALL

WHAT ARE THE MAIN INSPIRATIONS BEHIND THE GAME?
There were various inspirations including films (*The Running Man, Rollerball, Back to the Future II*), comics (*The Midnight Surfer* and *The Silver Surfer*), and games (*Top Skater, Diddy Kong Racing* and *1080°*). Plus extreme board-sports such as sky surfing, snowboarding, skateboarding, street luge, and wake boarding.

WHO IS THE GAME AIMED AT?
I think the game will especially appeal to fans of extreme sports as Trickstyle aims to be the ultimate adrenaline experience.

WHAT'S THE SINGLE (ONE!) BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?
The freedom you get to race around the massive futuristic race worlds of Manhattan, London and Tokyo. You are not constrained to a circuit, but are given the opportunity to discover new routes.

WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT THE DREAMCAST?
Making the system open and accessible like the PC was a great move. There are some great games on PC.

WHICH DC GAMES ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO?
There are some great titles, including *Ready 2 Rumble*.

opposed to simply a way of showing off. For example, assuming the luge mode gains more speed on a straight section of track; performing a barrel roll enables you to smash straight through a sheet of glass.

The various stunts are introduced gradually in the game's central area, known as the Velodrome. Once you're adept at the basics, you can head for one of three cities and have it out with eight other opponents – something that the N64's *1080° Snowboarding* couldn't manage, offering only head-to-head races.

ELBOWS

Hoverboarding isn't a non-contact sport, and races will been keenly contested affairs with all manner of dirty tricks brought into play. The game will feature nine unique characters, each with different attributes and personalities, and can loosely be put into three groups: bullies, who are more inclined to knock opponents off; racers, who focus on speed; and stunters, who are more inclined to use their stunt abilities.

Visually, all the characters are very stylised, and can loosely be described as *2000AD* meets Manga, with clear comparison to the kind of oddballs that populate fighting games. The similarity doesn't end there, as each character is blessed with an array of special moves. When the game is released, the VM will also host a number of bonus games, where your success enables you to acquire special boards and so forth.

We've had a brief dabble with *Trickstyle* already and it certainly looks very fancy, with other influences observed including *The Silver Surfer* comic, as well as films like *Rollerball*, *The Running Man*, and that pinnacle of cinematic genius *Back To The Future II*, which Eighties enthusiasts will remember actually featured a hoverboard.

Acclaim are expecting to have *Trickstyle* out in time for the Dreamcast's launch, so hopefully next issue we should be able to let you know whether it's above board. Be back here for Thursday 30 September.

PRICE: **£40**
PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM**
DEVELOPER: **CRITERION**

BOARDTHROUGH



CUNNING STUNTS

Tricks and stunts play a major role in *Trickstyle*. Here's just a few of 'em (with made-up names)...



1 ▽ The "I'm The Lead Singer in The New Radicals" move. Dunno why he's looking so happy, the ponce.



2 ▽ The "Mashed Polygon" move. Do I look cool or what? Well, do I? Do I look cool?!?



3 ▽ The basic "Head" move. Warning: do not attempt this unless you are wearing a stoopid hat.



4 ▽ The "Oh Shit, I've Broken My Neck" move. You'll only do this once, but at least it *looks* good.



5 ▽ The "Fart" move. Strike a light at this point and you'll blow-up all your enemies. And the city.









△ (Top) Wang Tang unleashes a Dragon Flash. The Power Fusion moves kill you in one go unless you change the Game Options. (Bottom) The lovely Rouge gets to grips with the Bazooka.



△ Valgas gives Rouge some serious hate. The big meany.



△ Jack, a very weird mummy-type character, hits Wang Tang with a Power Fusion move.

FIRST LOOK

THE GAME ISN'T FINISHED YET SO THIS IS ONLY A PREVIEW. CHECK OUT OUR NEXT ISSUE, ON SALE THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER, FOR THE FULL REVIEW

POWER STONE

There was, quite literally, a fight in the office over who got to preview this game. **WARREN CHRISMAS** won the race back from the hospital

"IN MOST RESPECTS THIS IS A VERY DIFFERENT FISH-FILLED KETTLE FROM YER BOG-STANDARD FIGHTING GAME"

ON THE VIDEO

IT WAS THE SOUND THAT GRABBED their attention initially – the screams of "Hi-ya!" and "Oh no!" resonating from the speakers; our laughs and yelps of delight/despair which echoed throughout the building as we pummeled each other into submission again and again. And ("okay, just one last go") again.

One by one they flocked to our office to see what was going on. And as they crowded around the television to witness the madness of it all for themselves – the explosive effects, the frantic leaping about, the ridiculous yet utterly brilliant special moves, the sheer joy to be had in smacking each other over the head with a giant mallet – so each became convinced that this Dreamcast, this little grey box which everyone has been talking about for the last few months, might indeed be a Very Good Thing.

"What *is* this game?!" they'd all ask.

"Piss off back upstairs to the Accounts department," we'd reply. "We're working."

VIVE LA DIFFERENCE

There are, it's fair to say, tougher jobs in the world than playing a game for two or three (or, ahem, five or six) days then knocking up a few words about it. But believe us, it makes all the difference when said game is truly fun to play and, just as importantly, original in concept. *Power Stone* is most definitely both.

Sure, in essence it's a beat 'em up. The eight main characters are the usual mix of huge, lumbering oafs and small, nippy types (including a couple of nubile



"AS A MULTIPLAYER GAME IT RANKS AS A TRUE GREAT" **POWER**

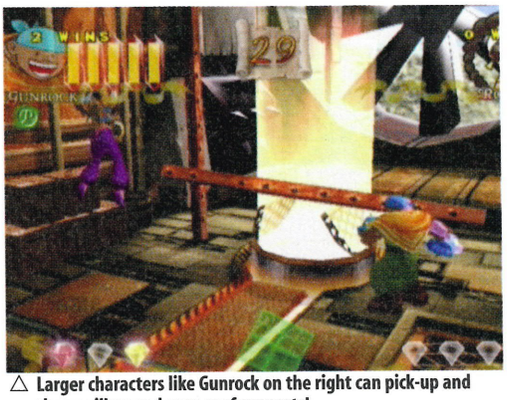


females, of course), and the ultimate objective is – quelle surprise – to knock the crap out of your opponent, but in most other respects this is a very different fish-filled kettle from yer bog-standard fighting game.

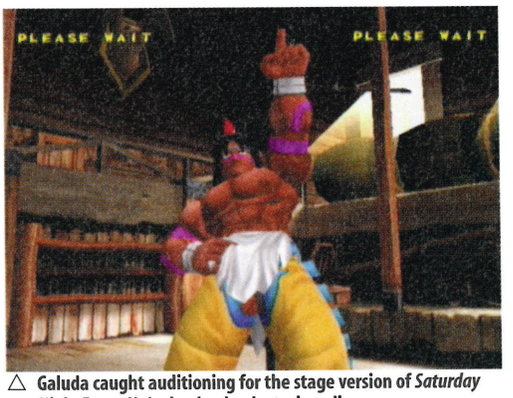
For starters, bouts take place in fully interactive, truly 3D areas – everything from a pub courtyard and a shopping arcade, to a pirate ship and Arabian palace – each littered with movable objects (crates, chairs, benches, pillars and so on) which you can chuck at your enemy or use to pull off a special move.

The standard jump, kick and punch moves are pretty basic, but weapons – hammers, swords, pistols, time bombs and more besides – appear intermittently to spice up the action. These last only a short time though, and you need to use them wisely. The bazooka, for example, may be very powerful, but you only get four shots and it slows down your fighter considerably.

The most important items, however, are the Power Stones which give the game its name. Each character starts carrying a single stone, with a third appearing at random a few seconds into the fight. Strike with a heavy blow or a combination of quick hits, and your opponent drops a stone.



△ **Larger characters like Gunrock on the right can pick-up and throw pillars and even roof supports!**



△ **Galuda caught auditioning for the stage version of *Saturday Night Fever*. He's ah, ah, ah, ah staying alive.**

Go on to collect all three and, for around ten seconds, you enter Power Drive mode, transforming you into a super-strong alter-ego character with at least four different energy-sapping super-attacks available.

There are no blocking moves, so the only way to survive such attacks is to utilise clever evasive techniques (use the dodge move or just leg it fast), or get in and finish your opponent real quick.

Played against friends, *Power Stone* is an absolute riot – highly amusing when neither player knows what they're doing (and yet manages to pull off fancy moves), and highly rewarding when you do finally get to grips with it.

In fact, as a multiplayer game it ranks as a true great, combining fun, over-the-top action with a subtle hint of strategy. One minute you think you're on the way out, the next you're in Power Drive mode and dumping on an opponent from a great height.

As a one-player game it's extremely challenging (opponents show considerable intelligence) and, pleasingly, it offers a decent amount of depth too. *Power Stone* is actually a port from a Naomi-based arcade game (it looks, sounds and plays almost exactly the same), but Capcom have gone to the trouble of adding a slew of hidden bonuses to increase longevity (see Really, You're Spoiling Us panel above). Applause all around for that.

PS, I LOVE YOU

As you may well have guessed, we absolutely love *Power Stone*, but we've only seen the Japanese version to date. We'll be bringing you the definitive review next issue (on sale Thursday 30 September) once we've got our hands on a finished UK (PAL) edition.

REALLY, YOU'RE SPOILING US

Complete *Power Stone* in Arcade mode to reveal an extended options screen which enables you to tinker with various settings. You also unlock one of 15 rewards which are collected and shown in the Collection Book (below). Some of these add new weapons to the game, including an expandable stick (ideal for getting opponents from long-range), a huge rapid-fire Gatling gun and a 50s-style ray gun.

And there's more. Other endings offer a first-person perspective view and a split-screen two-player mode, and the chance to play as any of the three boss characters. Best of all, though, are three secret VM games – a 1942-style shoot 'em up, a shooting gallery and a simple gambling game.

Collect 1,000 coins in any of these VMS games and you unlock a *Power Stone* Art mode which shows off some of the conceptual sketches of the game's characters and stages, promotional art and so on. Collect 2,000 and you unlock a special soundtrack mode. In other words, there's a *lot* to be discovered.



△ **Collect up to 15 rewards and save 'em.**

We know of at least one change – for a patently obvious reason, the British bi-plane pilot Fokker (ahem) has been re-named Falcon. We're also hoping an adjustment is made to the final levels, because in the Japanese version the penultimate boss character is extremely difficult to defeat (even on the easiest of the eight difficulty levels), while the last guy is dead easy (we did him first time).

If Capcom do a decent conversion, *Power Stone* will surely join *Sonic Adventure* as one of the early 'must have' Dreamcast titles. Regardless, judging by the reactions of everyone in our neighbouring offices, it's definitely going to help Sega shift a shedload of consoles.

One thing's for sure: playing *Power Stone* is a whole lot more fun than fiddling with spreadsheets all day. Hey, now there's a great line for the adverts. Er, maybe.

PRICE: **£40**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS INTERACTIVE**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**

"IT MAY HAVE ITS FERAL MOMENTS BUT THERE'S ITS LOVE OF THE CEREBRAL TOO"

BLUE STINGER

It's a cliché, sure, but as **STEVE OWEN** discovers, *Blue Stinger* really is like playing a film on your Dreamcast



ON THE VIDEO

CHEESY DIALOGUE IS AS IMPORTANT a part of Japanese games as it is of any martial arts film, but perhaps *Blue Stinger* has gone too far to fit its Eastern ideal. "She's my kind of girl," claims the story's protagonist, Eliot Ballade. "Groan," says the rest of the world.

"Whaaaaaat!" growls Dogs, Eliot's new sidekick, and the second character you can play in the game, in response to being told that Eliot doesn't know where he is either.

And then there's the wonderful, touching moment when Eliot tries to make a joke to Janine over his radio – the love interest – and she blanks him completely. "I guess she doesn't understand jokes," guesses Dogs. To which a very politically correct Eliot replies: "I love those kind of chicks."

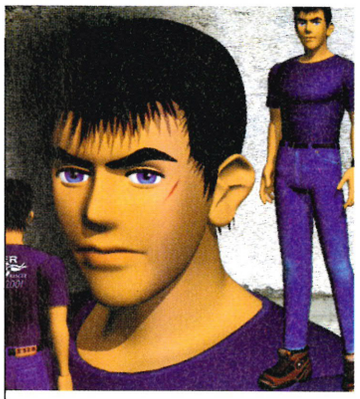
If anything prevents you from enjoying *Blue Stinger*, it will be your lack of appreciation for the cultural differences between Europe and Japan. If this puts you off though, then you're missing out on one of console land's finest and cleverest adventures, a slick combination of *Tomb Raider*'s exploring and puzzle solving, and *Resident Evil*'s all-out weirdo extermination.

A ten-minute opening video sequence does a more believable job of telling the slightly futuristic plot, so be content with knowing that you're stuck on an island swarming with mutant creatures, bereft of a sidearm, and not much of a clue about what to do. You're also being followed around by a mysterious glowing apparition known as the Nefilim, a seemingly nosy will o' the wisp who can occasionally be useful for finding out where to head next. *Blue Stinger*'s cross-genre style means that it takes some getting used to. There's a control and camera system similar to *Mario 64*, where each of


NO DENYING

TEAMING UP

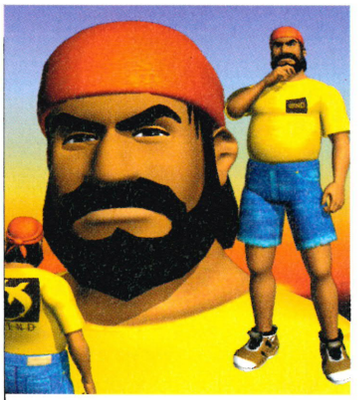
Blue Stinger concentrates on four main characters, with a large cast of walk-on parts and expendable mutants



ELIOT
Right at the start you're introduced as Eliot, the hero. Working for a rescue service, Eliot has indescribably rubbish hair and a mean line in chat-ups ("You're handsome," says a ten-year-old girl. Wisely Eliot leaves her alone).



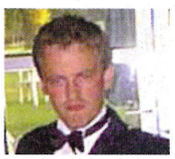
JANINE
Janine is the savvy female, armed to the teeth but guarding the island's technical centre. She seems like the hard type, but still falls for Eliot's terrible chat-up lines.



BS DOGS
Dogs is Eliot's heavy-set sidekick, who joins in the island-hopping fun just minutes into the game. Slower but stronger than Eliot, playing him doesn't fundamentally change the game, but it does provide a new angle on the story.



NEFILIM
Finally, your spiritual guide is the Nefilim. Nothing to do with gothic bands, she does have the fringe benefit of lighting up dark passages as she flies by.



SPEAK OUT

CHRIS LEWIS, ACTIVISION'S UK PRODUCT MARKETING MANAGER

WHAT ARE THE MAIN INSPIRATIONS BEHIND THE GAME?
Action movies have been a major influence, as have some of the gaming classics, like *Resident Evil*.

WHAT'S THE SINGLE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?
We're particularly proud the camera management system implemented for the European version.

WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT DREAMCAST?
I'd have to say the online potential offered by the modem. This is the first time a console has had a crack at multiplay beyond the confines of the players' sitting room. Where this goes is entirely in the hands of Sega.

YOUR FAVOURITE DC GAME (FROM ANOTHER COMPANY)?
Namco's *Soul Calibur* is looking rather special...

around 230 different locations have predetermined views which sweep and buck as you walk or run around. A menu system is used to switch between 22 weapons, all of which are hidden around the island. Fortunately, aiming is automatic as long as you're pointing in roughly the right direction, but ammunition is limited.

HEAD HURTS

And then there's the puzzle-solving, of which there's plenty. *Blue Stinger* may have its feral moments, but there's no denying its love of the cerebral too. In the best tradition of *Tomb Raider*, doors are locked shut until you string together an occasionally complex list of sub-tasks, the completion of which should reward you with a key (see Sleep With The Fishes panel below). If you tend to play games in 20-minute stretches, then avoid this because it's too easy to forget what it is you're looking for unless you can complete (and save) sections in one go.

The game is packed with atmosphere, and that's your inspiration to get the job done. Musically it's stunning, with one of gaming's finest synth scores: set pieces are dropped in effortlessly at key moments, tension stretched taut by a screeching of strings. Well-choreographed cut-scenes reward the completion of puzzles, but these pre-rendered moments use the game's 3D engine. Even playing the game is a jaw-dropping experience, as the 3D landscapes surprise you with their detail, variety and scale. It's worth spending some time just walking around and enjoying the view, but the game still impresses every few hours, such as the first time you walk into the freezer (complete with condensing breath and falling body temperature), or when you take your first swim.

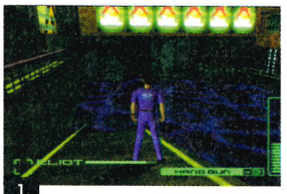
The puzzles are logical and satisfying, although there are moments when the game cruelly sets you up to be defeated. There are only set positions in which to save the game, and you'd be advised to take advantage of all of them. For example, having completed a long key search, I set out for the freezer unit (don't ask), only to be wiped out by a giant boss creature. Having neglected to save in the convenient locker room, I had to work through 30 minutes of puzzles again.

The battles occasionally seem a bit out of place and can get in the way. Inexplicably for a game of this complexity, monsters that you killed a moment ago

WALKTHROUGH

SLEEP WITH THE FISHES

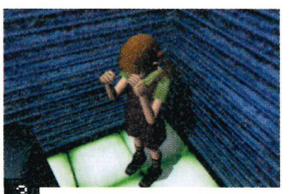
Blue Stinger is packed to the, ahem, gills with puzzles, and most are fairly convoluted. The piranha problem we're going to look at here is a perfect example



1 It's clear when you first enter this area that you need to get across the water, but it's infested with deadly piranhas.



2 Where next, then? Well, you can always climb through this small window in the toilet to find a rail gun and somewhere to wash your hands.



3 Then it's on to the arcade where a small girl there will give you a token to play the Safari game if you talk to her.



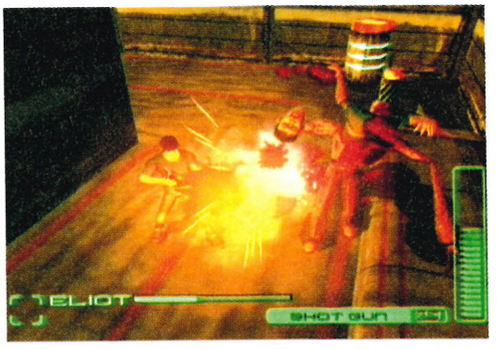
4 Bast the animals with your rail gun and you get a prize; give it to the girl and she gives a subtle clue to getting through a locked door...



△ Redneck readers of *Soldier Of Fortune* can drool over Eliot's impressive collection of weaponry.



△ Not to say that Dogs would be any better at handling this thing, but he is a little bit tougher than Eliot.



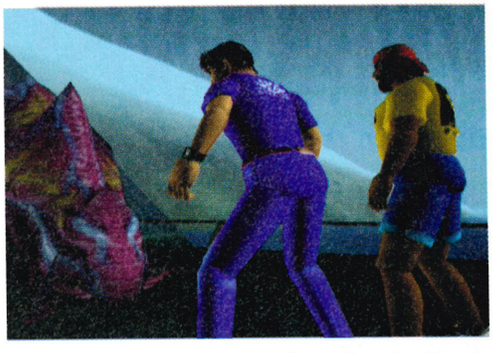
△ Some of the deaths can be a little gruesome, but they aren't human so it doesn't matter, right?



△ Large boss characters can take you by surprise in some rooms, but at least you know you're progressing.



△ It's great fun to bomb around the city in one of these things. Oh, in real life we mean. The one in the game doesn't work.



△ Oooh, you don't want to get too close to that thing, it's not house trained.

reappear when you come back to an area, demanding another pounding. As a reward, every creature killed spews forth golden coins, which can be traded for health-giving food or death-giving ammunition at any of the numerous vending machines scattered around the complex. Some non-essential items can be bought for vast sums, and you just know that the game's developers are asking you to walk in and out of sections for a couple of hours to build up thousands of credits. Very tedious.

COMBAT PANTS

The problem with the combat is that it's generally simple and predictable. The creatures always lumber towards you, and provided you get your punch in first they stagger back without retaliation. It's because combat is so simple and repetitive that having to kill the same creatures again is that much more frustrating.

Sometimes the camera system doesn't help either. It's been 'enhanced' since the game's Japanese release, but having played both versions I'm not sure which is better. The UK disc attempts to keep the camera at a set angle so that it doesn't sweep around your body, but this often means you're staring at your feet, and you find yourself playing the game with a twisted neck as you subconsciously attempt to shift your view upwards.

These problems may seem to put a bit of a downer on the game, but frankly they only tarnish what is a clever and involving adventure. It's inevitable that you'll get stuck at some points, but all we can recommend is that you check and re-check everything you see – read signs and labels, explore every nook and cranny, and the solution presents itself.

With atmosphere and good looks, *Blue Stinger* is the kind of game that attracts the casual gamer, but it's tough and it's long. The mix of game styles is brave but, on the whole, Activision have pulled it off. It's not much of a spectator sport, but if you predict having a few weeks spare this is the perfect antidote to the high-speed high jinks of Sonic and co.

PRICE: **AROUND £40**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**
DEVELOPER: **CLIMAX**

VERDICT

HEAD-SCRATCHINGLY SATISFYING ACTION ADVENTURE, AND GOOD-LOOKING TOO

UPPERS
Astoundingly good-looking • Packed full of puzzles • Atmospheric and exciting • Seriously heavy weaponry

DOWNERS
Occasionally painful camera view • Fighting can get repetitive • The acting is utter rubbish

HIGH SCORE After playing the game for and hour, you should have reached the first time-limited puzzle, and be rescuing a man trapped in a lift
WEBSITE www.activision.com
CHECK OUT Visit the newsgroup 'rec.games.video.sega' for lively discussion about *Blue Stinger*

SCORE 7/10



5 There's never a moment's rest in *Blue Stinger*. Even when you're just walking between locations you get attacked.



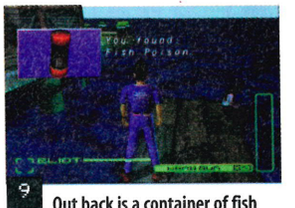
6 ...Which gets you to a barber's. Mutated monster for the weekend, sir? Smash your way through, and at last you've found...



7 ...Rat's Bar. He's hiding in a basement, where you can take a few of his customers' belongings including a key to a Fish Shop.



8 Now, we don't know what you'd expect to find at the Fish Shop, but it's full of giant mutant fish. Don't say we didn't warn you, okay?



9 Out back is a container of fish poison. At last. Make your way back to the pool and you're through. Game time? Oh, about two hours.

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THE FIRST ISSUE GOES ON SALE ON THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER, OR SUBSCRIBE AND RESERVE YOUR COPY

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EXPENDABLE

Play your way through the entire first level of *Millennium Soldier – Expendable*. This extravaganza is yours with our first issue.



TOY COMMANDER

Check out the awesome visuals of this game before it even goes on sale. We've got movie files that reveal the best the game has to offer.



SPEED DEVILS

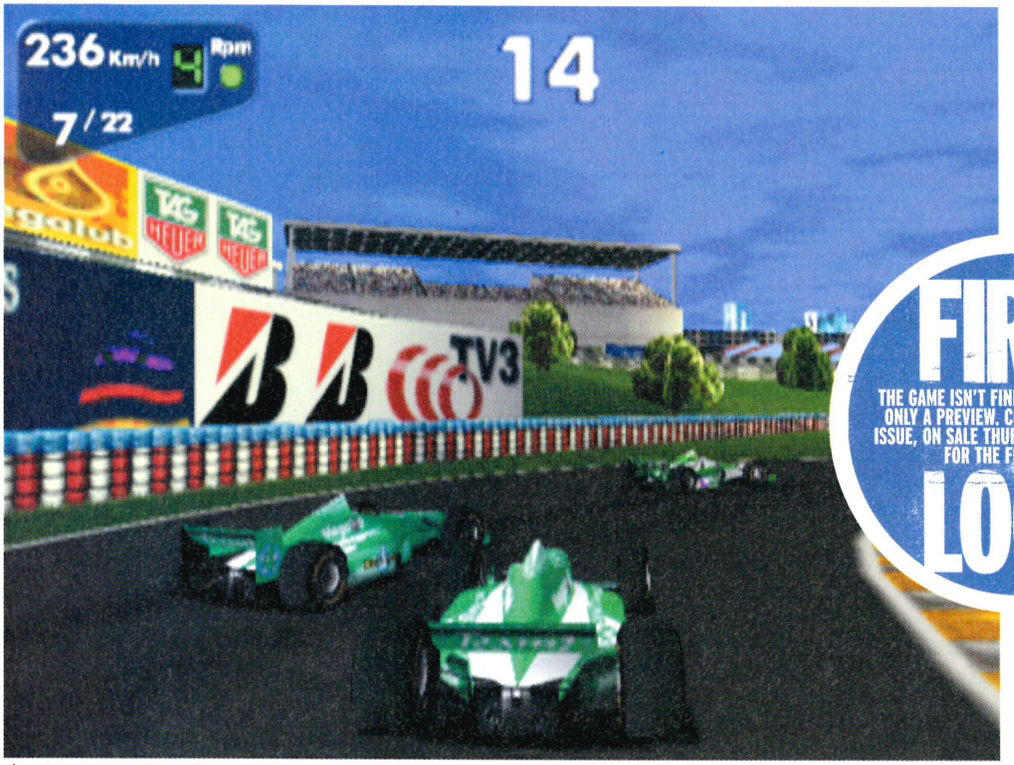
Not convinced by our preview on page 74? Then take a look at our *Speed Devils* intro and make your own mind up.



BUGGY HEAT

Discover why *Buggy Heat* is shaping up to be one of the most anticipated releases so far. Racing games don't get any more bizarre than this.





△ Those tyre marks on the road point out the racing line, which makes it a little bit easier for you. But this isn't Scalectrix – when there are other cars around you'll need to find your own racing line.

FIRST LOOK

THE GAME ISN'T FINISHED YET SO THIS IS ONLY A PREVIEW. CHECK OUT OUR NEXT ISSUE, ON SALE THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER, FOR THE FULL REVIEW



△ Pointing the wrong way? Do a Schumacher and wheel-spin it.



△ If the grass at Hockenheim is good enough for Damon Hill, then it's good enough for you.

MONACO GRAND PRIX

"And now the boot is on the other Schumacher," said Murray Walker. **STEVE OWEN** interrupts himself to bring you this…

"IT'S A TOUGH GAME THAT WILL TAKE A LOT OF PRACTICE TO PERFECT BUT THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT SOME PEOPLE WANT"

ON THE VIDEO

"THERE ARE ONLY THREE SPORTS," claimed Ernest Hemmingway. "Bullfighting, motor racing and mountaineering. The rest are just games." How right the depressive author was, because there's little more exciting than a Formula One race. Well, a *good* Formula One race, anyway.

And it would be remiss if the Dreamcast were to be launched without a 'proper' driving game, even – and this is a slight stumbling point – if it's one without official Formula One credentials.

"FOUR RED LIGHTS…"

Proudly displaying the Automobile Club de Monaco's approval instead, Ubi Soft's simulation (and it *is* a simulation) lacks the tracks and genuine drivers of the real sport. It's not as bad as it sounds though, because the tracks are (almost certainly, er… by coincidence) virtually identical to the circuits used in the 1998 season. Drivers by any other name would drive as sweetly, and you can always use the editor to change Damon Hughes to something a little more familiar.

One track that is identical is the gorgeous Monaco, hence the strange full title (*Racing Simulation Monaco Grand Prix* which seems like Ubi Soft collected five words together and threw them on to the box at random), and this is always the way to test the graphical capabilities of a Grand Prix game. Sure enough, *Monaco GP* passes our stringent 'pretty test', and best of all the frame rate keeps up, even when you're zipping through the famous tunnel, with yachts getting a free view to your left.

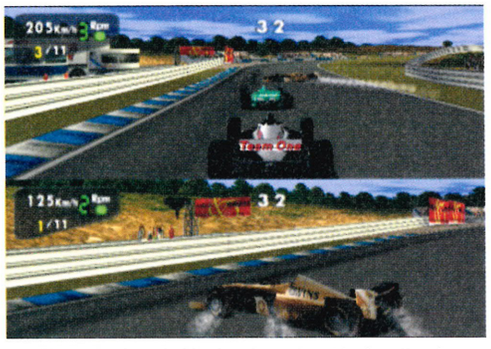
The Japanese version (which sold shockingly well, incidentally) was criticised for slowing down when the action got a bit frenetic (frankly, the very worst time it could happen). Ubi Soft have promised that the whole game has been speeded up for its UK release, and our attempts to woo the girls with our impressive driving seems to bare this out.



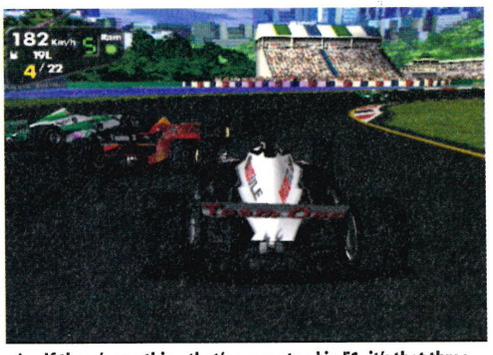
△ Tunnels are great ways of getting roads through mountains, but it's a bugger to see where you're going.



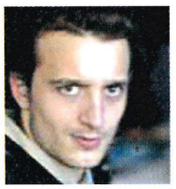
△ In Arcade mode you've got just a few precious seconds to pass through checkpoints.



△ Player Two is probably already used to this view. Keeping your car on the road is harder than keeping 'good wood'.



△ If there's one thing that's guaranteed in F1, it's that three cars into one corner won't go.



SPEAK OUT

WE TALK TO CLAUDE FARGE, PROJECT MANAGER OF RACING SIMULATION *MONACO GRAND PRIX*

WHO IS THE GAME AIMED AT?
It's aimed at people who enjoy feeling real sensations of driving and who like the technical aspect of it. Mostly men between 20 and 30.

WHAT'S THE SINGLE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?
The best thing is without any doubt the realism – the artificial intelligence and the mechanical behaviour of the car.

WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT THE DREAMCAST?
First, the technical performances that are huge. Second, the games that are not only technological demonstrations, but are strong games with a huge gameplay.

WHICH DREAMCAST GAMES ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO PLAYING?
I think *Shen Mue*, which should be a new step in the evolution of gaming.

"FIVE RED LIGHTS..."

If you're looking for an arcade game, then this probably isn't the direction in which to stare. *Monaco GP* is an exceedingly tough simulation. There's an 'arcade' mode in there, but even this doesn't let up on you too easily. While your car is certainly a little easier to control in arcade mode, the game still expects you to reach milestones before the viciously low timer hits zero.

Once you've got the hang of the control system, it's inevitable that you'll be drawn to the Championship mode (possibly stopping off for a quick Single Race, or even your own customised competition). There's a host of options and rules to use or abuse as you see fit, some of which mean you can't help but think that *Monaco GP* is slightly influenced by the FIA. Perhaps.

Driving is made slightly simpler if you elect to work with the game's anti-skid, anti-spin and ABS options, for example. These are slight misnomers, however, as they really ought to be known as skid-, spin- and lock-resistant – your first hour on this game will be beset with major crash incidents.

You can also elect to have random failures on your car, everything from the minor problem of a broken radio, to the slightly more car-fatal brake, gearbox and engine turkeys.

Other options would have you introducing real personalities to the various drivers so that they behave exactly as... ahem... the people with similar sounding names in Formula One do. As such, Arrows, or whatever they're called in this game, are almost guaranteed to qualify in last place, as you would expect.

Weather effects are possible too, from the sunny day that would have your tyres clinging to the road like an over-affectionate child, through the average cloudy day, to the slip-sliding away experience during the rain. For that extra challenge, request a random outlook.

Races can last a set percentage of the total race distance (no one really wants to go for 72 laps, do they?), while you can select the little touches – false starts, free practice and qualifying length, qualifying within 107 per cent of the time of the pole position driver, and only having one replacement car for each weekend (so you'd better not hit that barrier too hard).

"AND IT'S GO, GO GO!"

And then the race. Well, don't go thinking that you're going to make the podium on your first go. Frankly, you probably won't make it round the track on your first go, and if you do it's likely to be bringing up the rear. This is a tough game that's going to take a lot of practice to perfect. It's hard-core, but this is exactly what some people are looking for. When some games offer little more than a weekend's entertainment, it's refreshing to think that your 40 quid could actually bring several months of enjoyment. After the success *Monaco GP* enjoyed in Japan, it seems likely that the improved version is going to wow racing fans over here too.

Unusually *Monaco GP* doesn't have any running commentary. We'll know for sure if the lack of voices is a benefit or a pain when we get to review the finished UK version next issue.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**
DEVELOPER: **UBI SOFT**

PASS ME THE SCREWDRIVER

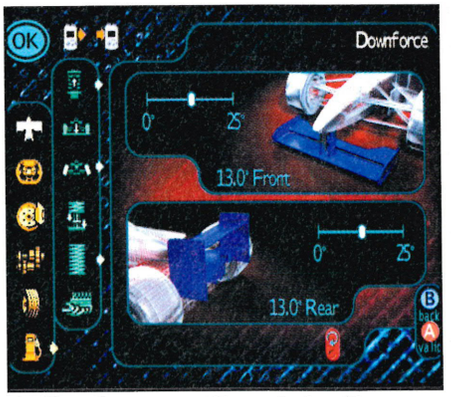
IF YOU LIKE TINKERING, YOU'LL REALLY LIKE THIS

Mr Walker is famous for his Murrayisms, and a personal favourite has to be: "He's obviously gone in for a wheel change. I say 'obviously' because I can't see it." And when you're in the pit, there's a shocking amount of fiddling that you can do.

Getting the fastest lap times on each circuit requires careful adjustments to your car during testing. *Monaco GP* handles this engineer's heaven comprehensively, from the basics such as altering downforce (by changing the angle of the front and rear fins), selecting linear or non-linear steering, shifting brake balance from front to back, setting gear ratios and tyre types, and even deciding on fuel load and race strategy.

It can get even more anal if you're prepared to experiment with dampers, ride height, wheel camber, bump stops, springs and maximum engine revs.

If you think you know what you're doing when it comes to Formula One, prove it to us by sending your preferred car set-ups for each track and lap times. We'll try them out and print the best. Send them to *ODM*, 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ. We're looking forward to it.



△ The options screen enables you to play with suspension, gear and tyre settings etc. Scary.









△ The graphics are far more detailed than those in *Virtua Fighter 2*. Note the impressive uneven floor (bottom right) – a first for a beat 'em up.



△ Bet he's hot and sweaty in that tight-fitting black leather-look outfit.



△ Look, no one actually wants to smack a girlie around but you've got to, ya know?

FIRST LOOK

THE GAME ISN'T FINISHED YET, SO THIS IS ONLY A PREVIEW. CHECK OUT OUR NEXT ISSUE, ON SALE THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER, FOR THE FULL REVIEW

VIRTUA FIGHTER 3tb

There's fighting, and there's Virtua fighting. But what's the difference? And why on earth should we bother getting excited about yet another videogame translation of everyone's favourite natural instinct? Iron man **ED LOMAS** explains

"YOU DON'T NEED TO BE TOLD HOW GOOD *VIRTUA FIGHTER* IS – JUST CHECK OUT THE SCREENSHOTS"

ON THE VIDEO

THE YEAR IS 1994: Sega have just forced fighting games into the third dimension with *Virtua Fighter*, immediately changing the way developers look at one-on-one combat titles. Gamers all over the world have spent years getting used to games based around Capcom's *StreetFighter* combination of side-on battles packed with over-the-top special attacks and magical fireballs, but are now forced to learn all-new skills for use with Sega's latest challenger.

The change is far more than just a graphical one, as fights take on a whole new dimension – literally. With





△ Drunk old man Shun in his 'home' and 'away' kits. Nice.



△ Jackie and Pai audition for the next series of *Come Dancing*. Maybe.

YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY

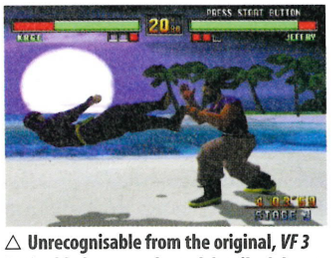
A brief graphical history of *VF3tb*



△ *Virtua Fighter* was released in arcades in late 1993. It was the world's first 3D beat 'em up. And my, don't those flat-shaded polygons look dated?



△ *Virtua Fighter 2* (1995) used four times as many polygons, plus textures, and therefore looked much more detailed. It had proper 3D backgrounds too.



△ Unrecognisable from the original, *VF 3* ('96) added unprecedented detail, elaborate backdrops, uneven floors and clever effects.

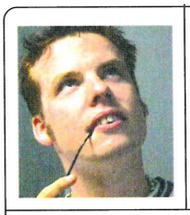
3D arenas and fighters comes a much more realistic game, requiring more realistic skills to test players to new levels. Okay, so the characters look like people wearing costumes made from cereal packets, and yeah, there aren't that many crazy moves happening here, but it's definitely started something new.

TIME FLIES

Fast-forward to 1999: The world is now full of 3D fighting games; they're falling out of developers' arses every other week, plopping onto the shelves seemingly for no other reason than to get in the way of the few decent games out there. Only a few titles manage to really stand out – Namco's *Tekken* series, which has created its own brand of fighting, based around memory-testing button combinations and some super-damaging super-natural attacks; and the king of the heap (you guessed it), Sega's popular *Virtua Fighter* series, now onto its third majestic incarnation.

You don't need to be told how good *Virtua Fighter 3tb* looks – just check out the screenshots for yourself. Not only are the fighters as detailed as most games' rendered introduction sequences, but the arenas in which they fight are now properly three-dimensional, with hills, walls, and beautiful scenery going right off into the distance. But it's not just looks that have made *VF3tb* such a hit with games players, it's the way it plays. Instead of spending time learning complex special moves and combinations, you're forced to use natural instincts to throw opponents off guard, counter-attack at the right moment, and link moves together for maximum damage. And the main reason for all of this is a so-simple-even-a-stupid-monkey-could-understand-it control system.

You've only got four buttons to worry about: Guard, Punch, Kick and Escape. Punch and Kick are self-explanatory (they make you swing your arms or legs around in a menacing fashion), and Guard is easy enough to work out (it makes you cover your head to avoid any aforementioned menacing limbs), but what about Escape? Tapping this makes your fighter duck backwards or forwards in the arena, enabling you to



SPEAK OUT

WE TALK TO **MATT O'DRISCOLL**, PRODUCER FOR THE PAL VERSION OF *VIRTUA FIGHTER 3tb*

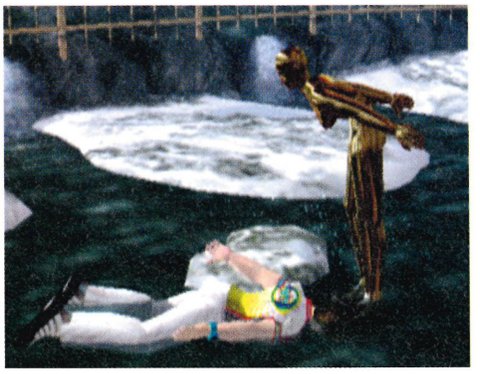
WHO IS THE GAME AIMED AT?
The game is aimed at beat 'em up fans but not only them. I think the beauty of *VF3tb* is that it can appeal to all types of game players. You can get to grips with it easily but it will take ages to master.

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?
Dare I say beating people up? Seriously, I'd say the fact that it is so true to the original arcade version.

WHICH DREAMCAST GAMES FROM OTHER COMPANIES ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO PLAYING?
***Soul Calibur, Ready 2 Rumble, UEFA Striker* and *Ecco*. I know *Ecco* is a Sega game but how can you not look forward to something like that?**



△ Something tells us he's just scored a knockout.



△ "Urggh! Your feet need a wash, girl."

"EVERYONE WILL HAVE THE CHANCE TO LIVE OUT THEIR KUNG FU MOVIE FANTASIES IN THEIR OWN LIVING ROOM DOJOS"

dodge attacks and manoeuvre yourself into a more profitable ass-kicking location. A very handy ability to have, for sure. These four little buttons give you the opportunity to do just about everything you'd do in a real fight (other than bite and scratch) without having to constantly think about what you're pressing.

So, we've got groovy graphics, easy-peasy controls, and the kind of depth that's disappointingly rare in games today. What more could Sega want to add?

TONY BENNETT?

Notice that the upcoming Dreamcast version of *Virtua Fighter 3* has the letters 'tb' after its name. They're not just there for fun, they stand for 'Team Battle', a feature added to the arcade version which enables you to choose your three favourite fighters (or the same one three times over if you're boring) and take them into an epic scrap against another three, fighting one by one until a complete team has been knocked out. As well as this, new moves have been added to each character, others have been tweaked to be more balanced, and the whole thing has been speeded up. Oh yeah, and the fights are now set at a different time of day so you get slightly different backgrounds. Great!

Naturally, a lot of people got very excited at the prospect of all this being available on a home console for the first time.

LAND OF THE RISING FUN

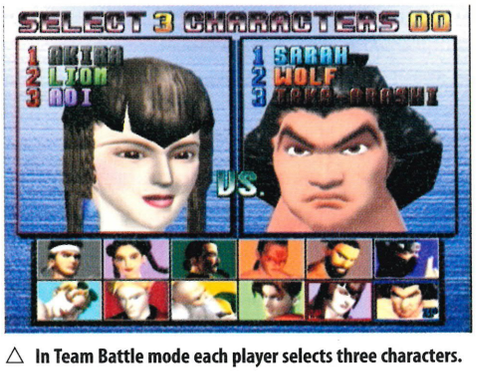
Dreamcast was released in the videogames capital of the world, Japan, back in November of last year with *Virtua Fighter 3tb* as its only decent launch game, but it still managed to sell out immediately. The reason is that in Tokyo, massive entertainment arcades have whole floors dedicated to *Virtua Fighter 3tb*, with machines linked back-to-back in rows which enable players to take one another on anonymously. A game this massively popular couldn't have been anything other than a hit on Dreamcast.

One of the most popular and impressive arcade games ever (*Virtua Fighter 3tb* of course) is now being played in living rooms across Japan, but some people are still not entirely happy. Though all the arcade game's features have been translated almost to perfection, a lack of time meant that no major new additions were included for the home version – something gamers have become used to getting in recent times, especially with Namco's *Tekken 3* and its bundle of new game variations. The most noticeable feature missing from the Japanese release of *VF3tb* is a Versus mode, meaning every time you lose a fight you've got to press the Start button to continue. Also, if you win you're forced to use the same character until you lose. To get round this it's necessary to restart the game whenever you want to change fighter. But when you're on a roll, smashing your mate's face into a pulp every round, this isn't something you want to be concerning yourself with. Thankfully, it's a simple enough feature for Sega to add to the UK version, so us lucky Brits shouldn't have to worry about frustrating restart dilemmas. Phew!

ON ITS WAY

Virtua Fighter 3tb is on its way, and it's going to cause a stir – not only among hard-core arcade fighting freaks with their pockets worn out from carrying stacks of pound coins around, but among real people too. Everyone will have the chance to live out their kung fu movie fantasies and, with the option to practice alone in their living room dojos, could even find that fighting games are actually a hell of a lot more fun to play than they might seem. If any game can do it, *Virtua Fighter 3tb* can.

PRICE: **AROUND £45**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **GENKI/SEGA**



△ In Team Battle mode each player selects three characters.

THE DREAM CAST

The characters you can play and the threads they wear



AKIRA YUKI
A hard-working fighter dedicated to his technical style of martial arts. He hasn't got many friends.
Wears: kung-fu pyjamas and lucky headband.



JACKY BRYANT
A spiky-haired Daytona driver going after the gangsters responsible for kidnapping his sister Sarah.
Wears: drainpipe jeans and a funky leather jacket.



SARAH BRYANT
She's been captured and brainwashed into being an assassin for the evil J-6 syndicate.
Wears: a slinky catsuit or a slapper's leopard skin miniskirt.



LAU CHAN
A chef by day, and Pai's evil father by night. Enjoys stomping on people and laughing like a Bond villain.
Wears: psychedelic jackets and an impressive moustache.



PAI CHAN
A young schoolgirl who was taught to fight by her father, Lau. Now she just wants to kick his head in.
Wears: smart clothes topped off with a natty little hat.



AOI UMENOKOUJI
A graceful fighter, Aoi prefers to turn her opponents' strength against themselves rather than attack all-out.
Wears: long robes with sleeves big enough to hide rabbits.



TAKA-ARASHI
This enormous Sumo is slow to move, but so heavy he's hard to knock down. Got a powerful hug on him, too.
Wears: little pants that go up the crack of his flabby bum.



JEFFRY MCWILD
An Australian shark fisherman who's mastered the ancient Greek gladiatorial art of Pancratium. It hurts.
Wears: bandana and T-shirt, or string vest and shinpads.



WOLF HAWKFIELD
A Native American who's a bit of a wrestling star. His favourite way of relaxing is to sing karaoke songs.
Wears: lycra shorts and menacing lipstick/face paints.



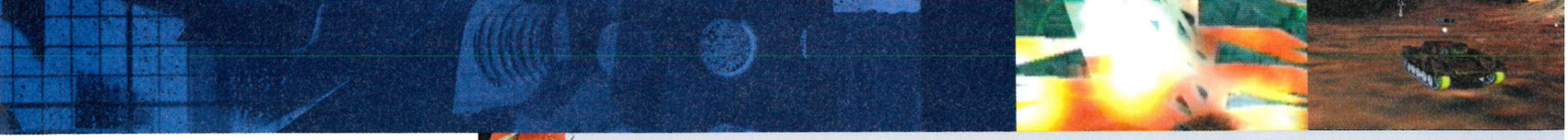
KAGE-MARU
Being a ninja, Kage can leap all over the place to avoid his enemies. Under his facemask he's got a little pair of fangs.
Wears: a ninja stealth outfit, or a pair of shiny silver slacks.



SHUN DI
This crazy old man drinks during fights, getting more and more pissed as he goes. Falls over a lot.
Wears: embroidered costumes (soaked in wine/puke?).



LION RAFALE
A young French aristocrat who practices Praying Mantis kung fu. Being small, he's a bugger to hit.
Wears: a bright orange bodywarmer, like Marty McFly.



"IT'S TERRIBLY GOOD FUN, YES, BUT IT'S ALSO RATHER SAMEY" **INCOMING**



△ **Pretty, or what? It takes an expensive PC to do this. Or a £200 Dreamcast.**

INCOMING

Real life seems so plain after you've played this. **STEVE OWEN** wants to end it all now, but first he wants just one more go

ON THE VIDEO

RECREATIONAL DRUGS certainly have their uses, but very few of them produce the kind of dazzling effects that you can witness in *Incoming*. As a game there's not too much there, but as a visual (and indeed aural) feast it's fit for a king.

Like its stablemate *Expendable* (see page 94), *Incoming* is a battle between looks and originality, and it's 'novelty' that's going home with a bloody nose. For all its future-story postulation (of which there's thankfully little), *Incoming* is nothing but a brainless shoot 'em up.

With a premise no greater than 'shoot the baddies, don't shoot the goodies', the game is certainly simple. From the moment you're strapped into your gun turret, you're assaulted by wave upon wave of brain-dead enemy craft which happily fly into the path of your lasers simply so that they can drop a bomb or two onto your base. Two minutes later you're asking yourself: "Is this it?"

Thankfully it isn't, as the first few missions surprise by throwing you into a variety of different craft and situations. In a helicopter you find that you have to cope with the terrain, using the trigger buttons to change your height. Then you're straight into a tank, rumbling over the hills to halt an invasion by enemy tanks. Back into the helicopter again and you're rescuing and then collecting a damaged tank, before popping back into the turret as another wave comes in to attack. Now you're off in a Harrier-style fighter, where your trigger buttons no longer control height, but speed.

After eight to ten missions in the various vehicles you successfully complete that scenario and then you are whisked off to another location. But the new vehicles and locations are just make-up and trinkets on this painted tart of a game.

It's terribly good fun, yes, but it's also rather samey. Plus it's a direct translation of the version that was released on PC some 18 months ago (minus a terrible strategy section, thank god), and you can't help but wish they'd done a bit more with it than that.

VERDICT

LOOKS STUNNING BUT IT'S SHORT-LIVED ENTERTAINMENT

UPPERS
Jump straight in • So much eye candy • Simple to play • Several different vehicles

DOWNERS
Repetitive gameplay • Arcade mode tedious • Identical to PC version

IN ONE HOUR We haven't stuck it out for an hour in one go
WEBSITE www.rage.co.uk

SCORE 6/10

PRICE: **£40**
PUBLISHER: **IMAGINEER**
DEVELOPER: **RAGE**

WALKTHROUGH

AROUND DA WORLD

The gameplay may be rather monotonous, but *Incoming* whisks you off to lots of different locations around the world and beyond. Here are some of them...



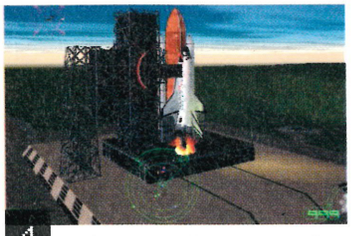
1 ▽ **Kenya, Africa. Alien forces are closing on the unfinished tracking facility. You must stop the invasion.**



2 ▽ **The Arctic. Here you need to destroy shield generators, ack-ack guns and installations, and protect allied aircraft.**



3 ▽ **North Atlantic. Defend oil fields from alien attacks and drifting icebergs (no, really), and sink enemy subs.**



4 ▽ **California. The Allies are preparing for a visit to the moon. Defend the shuttles, put out fires and recover alien fighters.**



5 ▽ **Unknown planet in the Crab nebula. You're in space! You get to pilot a *Star Wars*-style skimmer. Cool!**



△ In the great tradition of the arcade shoot 'em up, most levels finish with a boss, and you've got to find their weak points.



△ Despite the apparent openness of the 3D levels, there's still a definite path through the game.



△ There's no end of explosive action all over the screen.

MILLENNIUM SOLDIER: EXPENDABLE

Don't think, just shoot in this surprisingly enjoyable modern remake of classic '80s arcade games. **STEVE OWEN** gets trigger happy

"THE REASON YOU GET SO INVOLVED IN THE FIRST PLACE IS THE ASTOUNDING GRAPHICS"

ON THE VIDEO

IT ALWAYS STRUCK ME THAT sticking the word 'millennium' into any title is going to make it seem so old-fashioned in a few months' time. It's suitable, then, that *Millennium Soldier: Expendable* should make it to Dreamcast well before the New Year, because there's a reasonable chance you won't be playing it much in the year 2000.

Not the most encouraging of opening paragraphs perhaps, but if this is one of your first Dreamcast purchases, then the next few weeks will be interspersed with some astoundingly enjoyable brainless blasting.

Expendable, you see, is just good old-fashioned arcade gameplay. Forget strategies, forget reconnaissance and forget tactical withdrawals. The aim is simple: run up the screen and fire like your flares are going out of fashion.

Set within some pointless storyline (you're a kidnapped soldier, fighting for your freedom by killing aliens on a series of 20 planets), the game does what it does very well. Imagine yourself with controller in hand – the analog d-pad runs you around the screen, one button fires, another lobs grenades, a third changes weapon.

EIGHTIES THROWBACK

As a little guy, seriously outnumbered by the enemy, you can't help but think of classic '80s arcade games like *Rambo* and *Commando*. You can run and shoot in eight directions, or the preferred method is to use the strafe button, which locks your view in the direction you were last facing. For example, point up the screen, press and hold strafe, and you always fire up the screen.

So, the entire game is explained in one paragraph – an indication of *Expendable*'s simplicity. The pathway isn't straight up and down, as it turns off, sometimes confusingly, at right angles. While it initially appears that you can run almost anywhere, the landscape is actually deliberately and subtly constricting, forcing you into the path set by the designers. Inevitably, and in a typical arcade style, routes lead to large end-of-level bosses that require more attention before their toes are curled.

It all seems too simple and sensible when printed in black and white, but that's because it's difficult to convey the feelings you have when playing the game. Its simplicity is its undoing as a game of long-term interest, but also its strength as a fantastic time waster. With a pal playing alongside you (both soldiers appear on screen at once, and have to stick together to make it through) it's the perfect way to blow a spare half hour.

LOOKING GOOD

The reason you get so involved in the first place is the astounding graphics. Developers Rage made a name for themselves last year by developing this game and *Incoming* (see page 93) on PC, stretching the machine's graphical capabilities to the limit. But whereas you needed a computer costing over £800 to see what *Expendable* (PC) could do, Rage have converted the

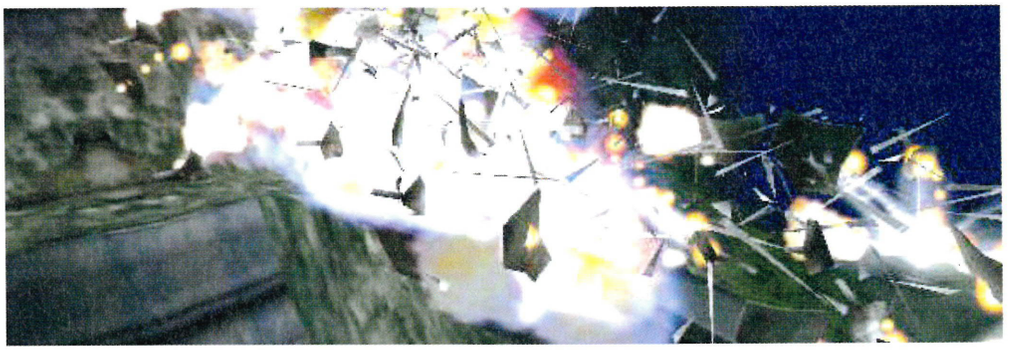




△ Various sections of each level are blocked by coloured lasers that can only be opened once you've discovered the right key.



△ You'd think this final boss would be a right pain in the arse to kill. Well he is.



△ Occasionally the game pauses for a cinematic moment, which uses the existing 3D engine. It can take you by surprise at times.



SPEAK OUT

WE TALK TO **ALAN WEBB**, LEAD PROGRAMMER ON *MILLENNIUM SOLDIER: EXPENDABLE*

WHAT ARE THE MAIN INSPIRATIONS BEHIND THE GAME?
"The classic *Ikari Warriors*, and also *Commando*. *The Terminator* didn't go unnoticed either. The emphasis on pick-up-and-play fun."

WHAT'S THE SINGLE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?
"The real-time cut-scenes. The designers have done a great job – you can just relax and watch them while your trigger finger chills out."

WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT DREAMCAST?
"Online gaming. The idea of playing games against multiple players sounds great."

WHICH DREAMCAST GAMES ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO PLAYING?
***"Soul Fighter*, *Soul Calibur* and *Metropolis Street Racer*."**

game to Dreamcast perfectly. That our humble console can produce such a stunning light show apparently so effortlessly is testament to how inexorably technology marches onwards. There's such an incessant array of special effects that *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* looks like it was made using an old washing-up bottle and sticky-backed plastic.

Compared to a PC, the controls are a dream. Dreamcast's excellent pad suits this game perfectly as your little guy legs it around the landscape shooting anything that moves and most things that don't. In the age-old tradition, your sole mission is to get as far as you can and score as many points as possible.

Short-lived, then? You betcha. At first you giggle like a hyena possessed, but it takes just an hour before your interest wanes and something more intellectual begs for a play. Sure, you return on and off for weeks but, as with a new pop album you've just bought, there'll soon be a day when you never play it again. And that's not ideal.

Even if you don't like this style of game we'd recommend you buy it as a coffee table title – something to impress the visitors. If someone says: "So, how is Dreamcast better than PlayStation?" you know exactly what to give them.

PRICE: **AROUND £40**
PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**
DEVELOPER: **RAGE**

VERDICT

PLAINLY SIMPLE, PLAINLY ENJOYABLE, GREAT TWO-PLAYER

UPPERS
Simple to start playing • *Huge* explosions • Great arcade feel • Co-operative two-player mode

DOWNERS
Short-lived entertainment • More style than substance • Quite difficult from the start

HIGH SCORE IN ONE HOUR We managed to get all the way to level ten in single-player mode, and as far as level seven in co-operative multiplayer mode
WEBSITE www.rage.co.uk
CHECK OUT Visit www.rage.co.uk/expendable/expendab.html for the game's homepage

SCORE 7/10

WALKTHROUGH

SCENE TO BE BELIEVED

Expendable may be dark, but if you look closely each level is set somewhere unique. The mission, however, is the same – kill everything that moves



1 Urban sprawl, or Los Angeles post-riot, the opening level is a concrete jungle and it's full of surprises.



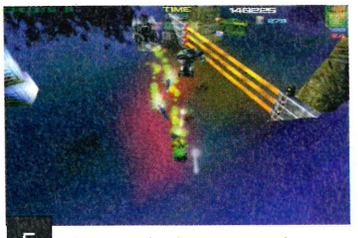
2 Stone and rock dictate the layout of this pollution-thick environment.



3 Leaping from rooftop to rooftop in an early level – there's even a swimming pool up there somewhere.



4 In the jungle, the mighty jungle, there are no soldiers sleeping tonight.



5 The snowy landscapes are perhaps your best chance of enjoying the colourful lighting.

FOURPLAY



▽ **HEATHER NEWMAN**
AGE: 26
OCCUPATION: teacher and wannabe model (Heather posed for our first cover image)
FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME: *GoldenEye 007*.
MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO: *Time Crisis 2*. "I've got to shoot people. I think it's something in my blood. Good therapy."

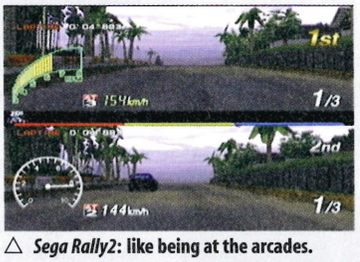
▷ **DANNY FISCHER**
AGE: 22
OCCUPATION: student
FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME: "I love playing *FIFA*, but it's *Driver* at the moment."
MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO: "Any footie game. Now the season's started again I'm dying to take part. What does *Sega Soccer* look like? Or *UEFA Striker*?"

▽ **CAMERON YORK**
AGE: 24
OCCUPATION: account executive
FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME: "*Tomb Raider*. No, *Gran Turismo*. I can't decide."
MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO: *Shenmue*. "It looks fabulous. I'm not worried about everyone dissing the lack of interaction."

▷ **JOHN MOORE**
AGE: 26
OCCUPATION: assistant retail manager
FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME: "*Mario Kart* on the SNES."
MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO: "Any driving game, I suppose. I haven't really been following the build-up, but I've heard great things about *Metropolis Street Racer*."

OUT TO LAUNCH

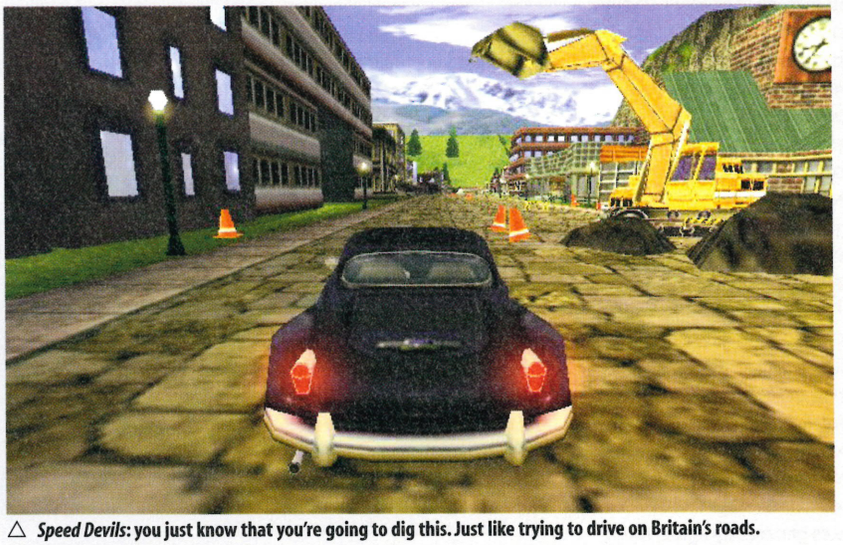
Launch day is a nervous time for any new console. We ask four *ODM* readers to sit down with three of the finest Dreamcast games available from day one. **STEVE OWEN** orders the pizza



△ ***Sega Rally2*: like being at the arcades.**



△ **Lob luggage at limbs in *Power Stone*.**



△ ***Speed Devils*: you just know that you're going to dig this. Just like trying to drive on Britain's roads.**



THERE'S SOME DEGREE OF EXCITEMENT as we approach the launch date of Sega's Dreamcast console. The hard-core put down their £30 deposits back in the summer, while the casuals become increasingly bombarded by mind-altering adverts. As you can imagine, it wasn't too difficult to find four punters willing to test out four of Dreamcast's first batch of games. Lured into our exotic studio in Central London, Danny, Cameron, John and Heather were soon seeing blue swirls in front of their eyes as they sat down to try out Sega's *House of the Dead 2* and *Sega Rally 2*, Capcom's *Power Stone* and Ubi Soft's *Speed Devils*. For most of our four gamers, this was their first taste of the Dreamcast.

"A guy in my house bought a Japanese one when they first came out," says Danny. "It cost him about 600 quid, so he's hardly got any games. He's also a bit protective. But I've played *Sega Rally* in the cinema – you know, the pods they've got."

"The last few years have passed me by," shrugs John. "I'm still playing *Mario Kart* on my SNES, which I reckon is the finest multiplayer game ever, but I'm ready to try something new."

"I've got a PlayStation and I love it," enthuses Heather. "My ex- had an N64 as well, and I used to play *GoldenEye* all the time. That's why we fell out, actually. But that's a long story."

"I see games more and more like films," explains Cameron. "There are loads of good ones about, and loads of shit ones too, but it's got to suit your mood at the moment you want to play in order to be really good. I absolutely love *Driver* on the PlayStation, and yet there are times when I really can't be bothered to play it."

But enough of this banter, there are games to be played, opinions to be made and arguments to be had. So with no further ado, let's cut to the chase…

PHOTOGRAPHY: **STEVE DOUBLE**

FOURPLAY

SEGA RALLY 2
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
PRICE: **£39.99**
SEE REVIEW ON PAGE 64



△ **It gets dirty as Danny's Impreza pulls away from Heather's Lancia.**

THIS SEEMS LIKE A NATURAL START: an opportunity for the competitive boys to show off in front of Heather. Danny and Cameron are up first for a two-player battle, and while Cameron bravely tries to flick through the various cars, Danny is excitably clicking his way through the options, desperate to start power sliding. A few minutes (and a predictable victory for Danny) later, everyone seems pretty impressed.

"You can pick it up instantly and have a fairly gripping race," reckons Cameron. "I think that with more time you could learn the tracks and get the hang of sliding round properly, and how much brake to apply."

"Definitely," agrees Danny. "This is only the second time I've played it, but already I feel more at home. Can I have another go? Winner stays on?"

The others generously agree. After an hour, everyone has had a few goes and Danny is no longer unbeatable.

"I think we can all take away something from my victory this afternoon," says Heather proudly.

"The catch-up option makes all the difference," says Danny. "And I cocked up the last corner."

"There are a lot of tracks," says John. "I counted 15 while we were playing."

"I thought I'd played this before, at the arcades," says Heather, "but I think it was the first one. That only had three tracks. Track one was too easy and the last one too hard. But this seems to have a great variation. Not a dog among them. The graphics weren't as good as I expected – not much better than *Colin McRae* on PlayStation."

"Yeah, there was loads of draw-in in front of you," points out Danny. "I thought the point of Dreamcast was to get rid of that."

"Have I got big hands, or are these controllers a bit small?" asks Cameron.

"I didn't like using the shoulder buttons for accelerate and brake," complains John. "It's hard to use the joystick with your thumb at the same time as braking unless you have the hand span of a Japanese infant."

"At least it gives me an idea of how Nigel Mansell must have felt trying to squeeze into a Formula One Car."

Time is pressing on, so we turn to something slightly more violent.

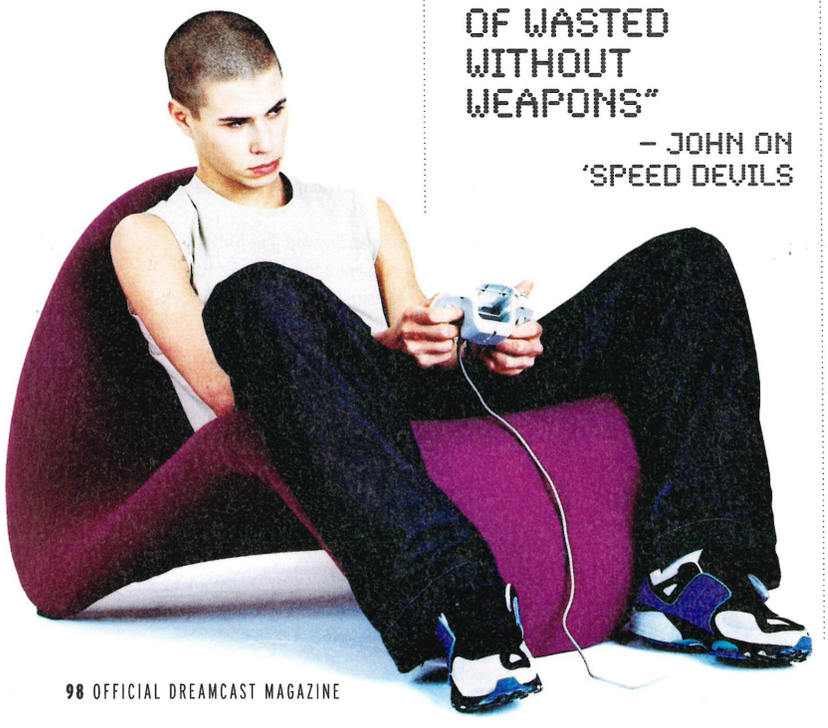


"A GREAT VARIATION OF TRACKS – NOT A DOG AMONG THEM"
– HEATHER ON 'SEGA RALLY'



△ **Full-on weather effects for total realism.**

"THE 'BATTLE' ASPECT IS KIND OF WASTED WITHOUT WEAPONS"
– JOHN ON 'SPEED DEVILS'



POWER STONE
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**
PRICE: **£39.99**
SEE PREVIEW ON PAGE 78



△ **Just bashing the controller wildly seems to work wonders.**

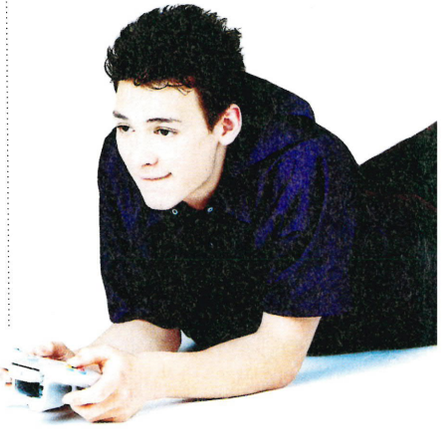
THIS INNOVATIVE BEAT 'EM UP seemed to surprise everyone. Never before has this type of game brought non-stop giggling from the group as they came to terms with timing their attacks, and throwing objects at each other.

"There's a huge bazooka!" shouts John to Heather, who has just opened a treasure chest. But she's kicked into a wall by Cameron (who is, by his own admission, "just pressing buttons randomly") before she can collect it.

"I'll put my big sword between your bazookas!" shouts Cameron in one of his many *Carry On*-inspired dialogues, but he's crippled as Heather throws what looks like a suitcase at his shins.

An hour later and everyone looks more dishevelled than they did 60 minutes ago, and the photographer is relieved that he took the pictures before the play test.

"We nicknamed this a 'collect 'em up' rather than a beat 'em up," informs Cameron, "as there were so many interesting objects, weapons and furniture to investigate while beating



the hell out of each other. Each location is an Aladdin's cave of surprises."

"Some of the power-up effects are very entertaining," enthuses Danny. "You had to have sympathy for the recipient of the demonic, supercharged martial arts assault.

"There wasn't much in it at first, but you could tell by the end that Heather had figured out the controls. Her attacks seemed far more organised."

"I've not really liked fighting games in the past, but we just kept laughing when we played this," says Heather, avoiding the indirect question. "Some of the characters definitely seem to be more powerful than the others. That mummy character – Jack, wasn't it? What kind of name is that for a mummy? Jack seems to be the best, crawling around on all fours, but the more you played it the more you realised that you were getting better. You can learn timing as well as just which buttons to stab."

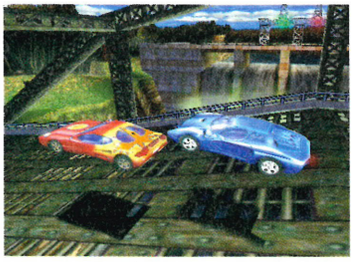
"I've never seen a fighting game with such a wide range of objects and weapons and such fluid 3D movement," admits John. "The different stages are amusing to explore, the characters seem quirky and original, and I'm sure I chanced upon some impressive special moves from time to time. It's got a nice combination of humour and cartoon-style violence, with a pleasing nod towards the platform genre."

A definite success, then, as everyone is keen to have another go. But, cruelly, *ODM* insists it's time to move on.

SPEED DEVILS
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**
PRICE: **£39.99**
SEE REVIEW ON PAGE 74

SPEED DEVILS doesn't have the reputation that pushes the other three games, but arguably the astounding graphics are the best demonstration so far of what Dreamcast is capable of doing. But it doesn't seem to capture the imagination of the group.

"This is certainly the most visually stunning game," claims Cameron. "The sky and landscape are awesome but as a driving game it lacks any feeling of being in a race."



△ **"Can you you go any slower?"**



△ **Psychedelic tunnel sequence hurts eyes.**

"The cars look good," concedes Danny, "but are very unresponsive. You have to slow almost to a stop to make anything other than a gentle bend."

"The whole 'battle' aspect is kind of wasted without weapons, or at least a smaller gap between the participants," says John. "On the other hand, different locations are good and the short-cuts look fun. If the controls were improved and it was speeded up, this may appeal to anyone who isn't too hard-core."

At that moment, John's point is proved as Heather struggles to race a lap using every short-cut or perceived short-cut she can see. It does seem to rekindle some interest from Danny and Cameron, who both point out bits of the scenery that might hide a quicker route back to the finish line.

Despite several failed attempts at completing a jump through an airline hanger, and spinning off into a tar pit, Heather is more magnanimous: "It seems really sedentary after *Sega Rally*, but I like the variety of cars and tracks, and all the different routes you can take. Looking at the single-player options, I think there's more there than we're giving it credit for. I think you could place bets with other drivers to improve your own car. It's not perfect, but it's easier and more enjoyable to play than *Sega Rally*. There's nothing wrong with sightseeing."

"THERE ARE SO MANY INTERESTING OBJECTS, WEAPONS AND BITS OF FURNITURE TO PICK UP"

– CAMERON ON 'POWER STONE'



△ **Cameron becomes a major fan of *House of the Dead 2*, thanks to its two-player option.**

"THERE WAS LOTS OF DRAW-IN IN FRONT OF YOU. I THOUGHT THE POINT OF DREAMCAST WAS TO GET RID OF THAT"

– DANNY ON 'SEGA RALLY'



HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
PRICE: **£69.99 WITH LIGHT GUN**
SEE PREVIEW ON PAGE 50

GENEROUS TO A FAULT, *ODM* obtained a second gun so that we could get two people playing at once. It was just as well, as we were very over-schedule.

For the full effect the volume came up and the lights went down, as the group spent half an hour blasting zombies with their light guns, running up sweat like it was a high score.

"That's a lot harder than I thought it would be," admits Heather. "There's no let up, even at the start."

"I agree," says Danny. "Terrifying, *and* really difficult. I got through *Time Crisis* on the PlayStation easily, but this is going to take ages to finish."

"I enjoyed it but I can't see myself playing it forever. It's not much of a spectator sport, is it?" says John.

"Oh, it is!" Cameron is indignant. "I could watch *or* play. It was superb. I wasn't sure before, but now I'm definitely buying *House Of The Dead*. *Time Crisis* really missed a two-player option. I can see myself perfecting my technique for weeks, and then going to the arcade to show off."

"Sad" is John's final word.

• Next issue, four readers will be playing an unfinished game and suggesting improvements to a nervous developer. If you want to participate, write to **ODM, 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ,** or email us at **Letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk.**



NO ORDINARY RALLY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **TANYA CHALKIN,** STYLING **DARIA LINGENBERG**

PHOTOGRAPHIC ASSISTANCE BY **TYRONE O'DEA.** MAKE-UP BY **NATASHA LAKIC AT CAROL HAYES USING URBAN DECAY.** HAIR BY **JEAN-MARIE AT MARINA JONES.**
MODELS: **KATE GROOMBRIDGE AT PREMIER AND MEYRICK AT MODELS ONE (MEN).** CARS: **DARE DZ SUPPLIED BY DARE UK LTD.**
SHOT AT **YATELEY HEATH, GREAT BRITAIN - THANKS TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION**



Jumper by Teddy Smith.
Grey corduroy trousers by Christophe Lemaire. Trainers by Converse.



Black and grey biker jacket by Katharine Hamnett.
Orange turtle neck by Strenesse.
Black leather jeans by CK Jeans.



White cotton blouson by Christophe Lemaire at Euforia (Portabello Green Market).



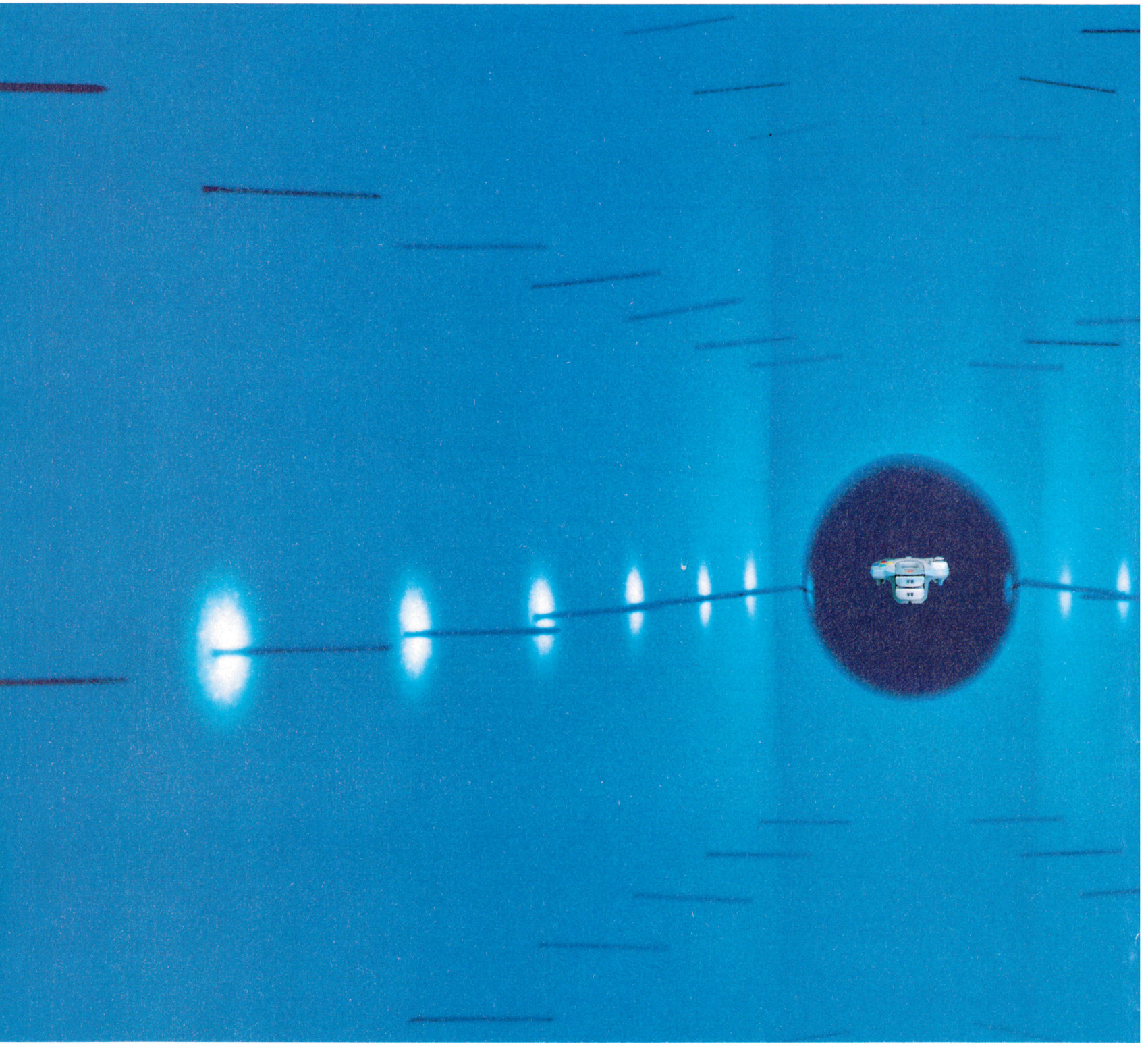

POSITION
1st/16
STAGE TOP 3
1 1'05"665
2 1'05"985
3 1'06"096
AT
1

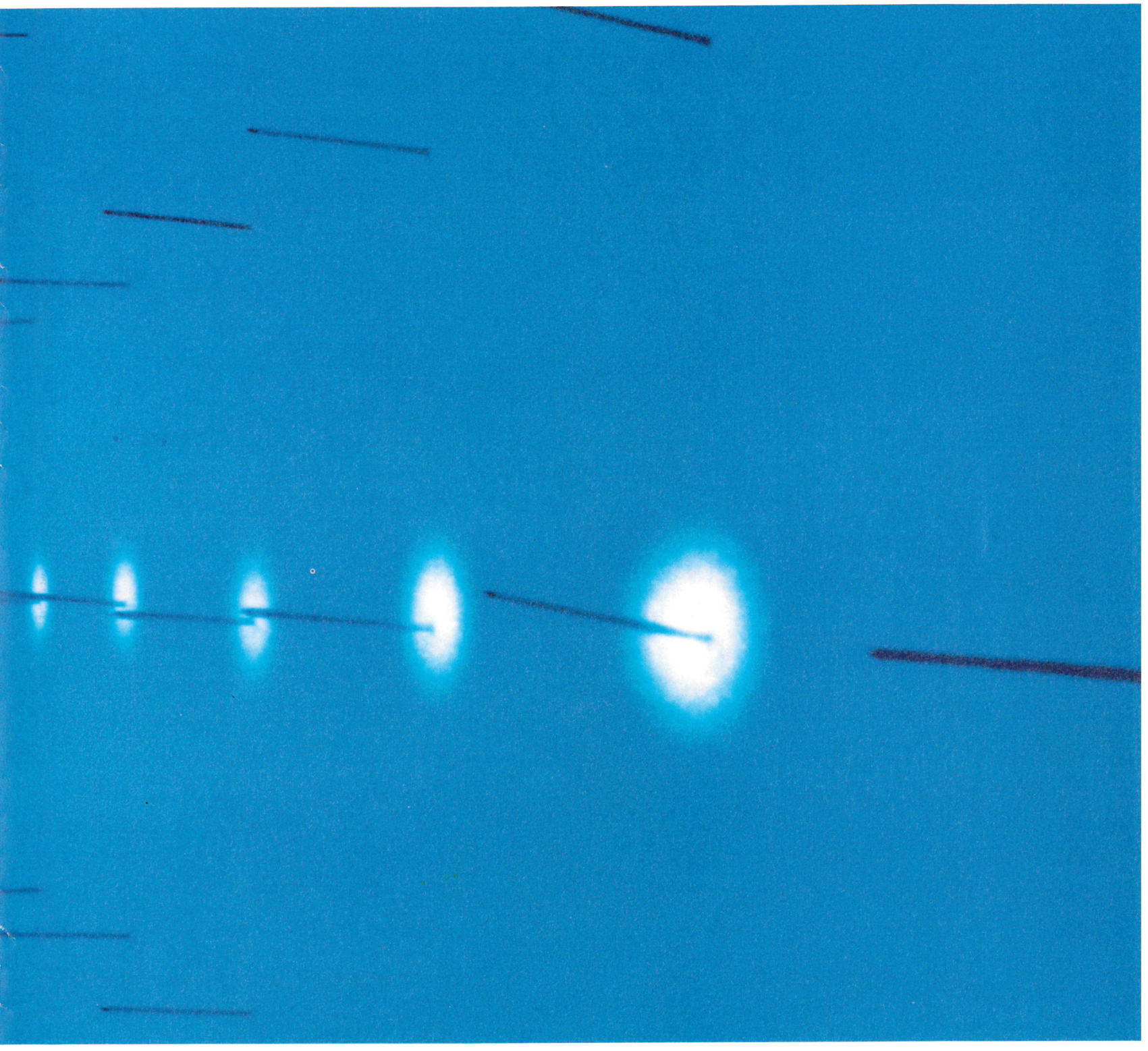


Metallic grey high-neck leather jacket
by Christophe Lemaire.
Pink calf-length trousers by Vulcanic
at Euforia, Portobello Green Market.
Stockings from Portobello Market.
Turquoise suede ankle boots by Faith.
Silver leather neck purse by Bill Lamberg.



Sunglasses by Cutler and Groff.
Navy blue fitted leather jacket by Mischiko Koshinr.





THE FUTURE IS HERE, THE FUTURE IS NOW

It seems like only yesterday that we all had Sega Megadrives and were calling Nintendo owners "big girlies". Pulling ourselves in Holodecks? David McCandless finds out

PHOTOGRAPHY **THE GREEN PROJECT**

COMING SOON ON DREAMCAST NEAR YOU

The games industry moves fast. It takes great, hulking leaps every five or so years. Consoles rise. Consoles die. Boom. Bust. Everything changes and each generation gets faster, better and cooler. Only 20 years ago, two sweating workmen dragged a stand-up *Space Invaders* cabinet into your local fish and chip shop. Just five years later, a cursing Santa was shoving the first home game systems under your Christmas tree.

Suddenly, what seemed like seconds ago, kids were fighting in the playgrounds over which was best – Sega or Nintendo. And, Jesus, has it really been four years since Sony PlayStation was launched?

Ten years ago, the 8-bit machines of the day could barely squit a handful of pixels around in 16 colours. If you asked for something in 3D, shop assistants would fall about laughing. If you wished for beyond Bontempi sound effects, you had to make them yourself. With your mouth.

But now we're on the cusp of the next generation. A revolutionary machine like Dreamcast thinks nothing of drawing 15 million pixels a second. It barely breaks stride when asked to generate CD-quality music or calculate devious artificial intelligence. And it just sits there, watching telly and picking the fluff from between its toes, while spinning and rotating every goddamn thing in sight in glorious 3D.

The three big names in gaming – Sega, Nintendo and Sony – have their plans. One console is already out, one is coming, the other is still under wraps. Between them, these three companies will decide the future of gaming for our next five-year chunk.

However, this time, bigger things even than gaming are at stake. The keyword here is 'convergence'. In the next few years all entertainment – be it gaming, TV, Internet, films, DVD, shopping, email – will begin to merge under one roof, inside one digital box. Anyone who gets in there and establishes a standard now could well rule the roost forever. These are exciting times.

Dreamcast

The future is looking very bright indeed for Dreamcast. It's the first console for the new millennium. It's the first with a built-in modem and free Net access. First to be 128-bit. First to shove a not inconsiderable four million polygons around on your TV. Plus, it's upgradable and scaleable. A DVD add-on, separate hard and zip drives (potentially), the portable Visual Memory unit and loads of other peripherals will ensure it won't end up rotting in the shed.

"Anyone who is circumspect about Dreamcast's chances of success," says Charles Cornwall, head of *Tomb Raider* publishers Eidos, "must be on drugs."

Technologically speaking, Dreamcast tastes a lot like a high-end PC. At its heart is an Hitachi SH4 central processor running at 200MHz. This chunky little CPU can deal with more than 360 million commands and 1.4 million floating-point operations per second. As far as 3D graphics calculations go: it's damn fast. A second set of PowerVR2 chips handle all the graphics rendering, while a good Yamaha sound processor provides CD-quality audio, music and 3D surround sound effects. "Sega's new system kicks ass," says Sam Bishop, editor-in-chief of the PSX2.COM gaming website. "It's a given. The quality and amount of time Sega is pouring into their next-generation flagship is insane. After playing a number of games, I know Sega are back."

One big feature is the Dreamcast modem, making it the first connected games console ever. Once it's properly up and running, this means not just mad hours spent playing head-to-head *Sega Rally 2* with Swedish people over the phone, but also Net access, email and online shopping – all just a joypad away.

"Many game developers in the US are already making vast profits with their online content," says Pete Hawley, a games producer at GT Interactive. "We'll be seeing recognised and professional official gaming leagues and divisions; world black belt championships for *Virtua Fighter* online; the creation of 'real' worlds and cities and space stations that thrive and develop 24 hours a day – all online."

Not only that, but you'll also be able to 'upgrade', re-injecting life into games months after you've bought them by downloading new levels and new characters.

Most of this power comes from the PC architecture and the operating system, the Sega-customised version of Microsoft Windows. This makes it very, very easy for developers to make games for Dreamcast.

"We're using hardware features that have been little used so far on other Dreamcast games," says Jez San, legendary games producer at Argonaut Software. "Suffice to say the hardware can do a lot more than the first few games have utilised."

Normally it takes a console and its developers years to 'warm up' before the technology is exploited to the full. But all this groundwork has been done on the PC already. Classics like *Quake II* and *Half-Life* have created a bedrock of unbelievable new technologies and have pushed games in new directions. Transferring – or 'porting' – a game from PC to the Dreamcast is relatively effortless for developers, ensuring that over the next year we'll see a steady stream of – to use the vernacular – 'kick-ass' titles.

"ANYONE WHO IS CIRCUMPSECT ABOUT DC'S CHANCES OF SUCCESS MUST BE ON DRUGS"

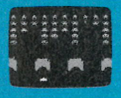
– CHARLES CORNWALL, EIDOS



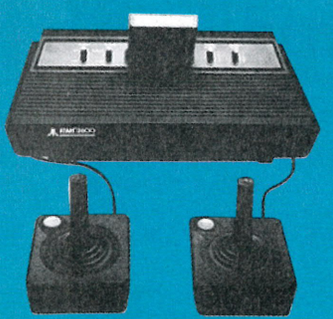


TIMELINE

21 YEARS OF GAMING HISTORY



1978
SPACE INVADERS HITS ARCADES... AND JAPAN RUNS OUT OF 100 YEN COINS



1978
ATARI 2600 LAUNCHED – IT'S THE FIRST PROPER HOME GAMES CONSOLE



1982
THE ZX SPECTRUM LAUNCHES – COLOUR COMPUTING COMES TO THE LIVING ROOM

1984
CRASH! VIDEO GAMES MARKET BOTTOMS OUT. UNSOLD ATARI GAMES BURIED IN MEXICAN DESERT



PLAYSTATION: THE NEXT MILLENNIUM

It's on its way, but there's no big rush. With 50 million+ PlayStation sales, Sony obviously believe they can afford to pick their nails and drag their feet over the sequel to the PSX, unofficially dubbed "PlayStation 2".

"It's an ultra-powerful, developer's wet dream," says games producer Pete Hawley. "Separate processing segments help game creators focus on gameplay and content, while the hardware enables the generation of realistic and immersive environments without crucifying the frame rate." Others aren't so rapturous, concerned that the multiple processors and limited RAM will make life overly complicated for developers.

Technology-wise, the PlayStation 2 looks impressive. Apparently it made even George Lucas spill his coffee by computing more instructions than the behemoths used to render *The Phantom Menace*.

Driven by a custom Toshiba-developed 300MHz CPU called the Emotion Engine (EE), the Pentium II can throw around a good 8-16 million polygons per second (*Zelda* on the Nintendo 64 manages only 180,000). Meanwhile, a separate graphics synthesiser running at 150MHz (not a stunning speed, but very capable) pulls off special effects such as transparency, depth of field, multi-pass rendering, and even fluff and fur.

"SONY HAD BETTER OFFER SOME KICK-ASS DEV TOOLS OR DEVELOPERS WILL BE SCRAMBLING TO MAKE GAMES FOR OTHER SYSTEMS"
– SAM BISHOP, EDITOR-IN CHIEF, PSX2.COM

The machine is set to include a DVD drive, rather than a CD-ROM drive as standard although this feature, along with the inclusion of expensive-to-produce tailor-made processors, has led some industry analysts to predict a high launch price for the console – possibly as much as £400 in the UK. This factor plus, perhaps more significantly, the need to protect sales of stand-alone DVD movie players, has fuelled speculation that the console will not support DVD movies.

Significantly, Sony VP Phil Harrison has gone on record to state that the Playstation 2 will not ship with a modem, ostensibly to give consumers the choice to buy hardware "appropriate to the kind of content they're using." With the built-in modem a key selling point of the Dreamcast, it remains to be seen whether buyers will be sympathetic to this omission.

On the back of the machine will be hi-tech Firewire and USB connections, meaning it will hook up to digital cameras, scanners, printers, mice and keyboards. This is a hint of Sony's master plan for convergence, although whether you want all these peripherals cluttering up your living room is open to question.

A lot of the early visual demos – in-game graphics like rendered intro cut-scenes, on-screen monsters exhibiting intelligent swarming behaviour, realistic lip sync and emotional facial expressions – are stunning. But then demos are meant to drop jaws and set off hair triggers. Actual real-life, up-front, fully playable games which exploit the full potential of PlayStation 2 are still a way off. And they will be for a while.

"Sony had better offer some kick-ass dev [development] tools, or developers will be scrambling to make games for other systems," says Sam Bishop of PSX2.COM. "It's the same problem Sega's Saturn had."

And indeed, game developers are getting sweaty under the collar at the thought of expensively upgrading their tools to match the power of the system.

"The learning curve to full control of the system will not happen overnight," says Andy Beveridge of SN systems, who design PlayStation development kits. "Don't expect to see products that stretch this much power for a couple of years."

Incidentally Sony's next machine will be backwardly compatible with existing PlayStation titles. Of course, by the time the console is released – and in the UK we're talking the end of 2000 at the earliest – Dreamcast will be well established. And, make no mistake, Dreamcast games make PlayStation titles look utter pap.



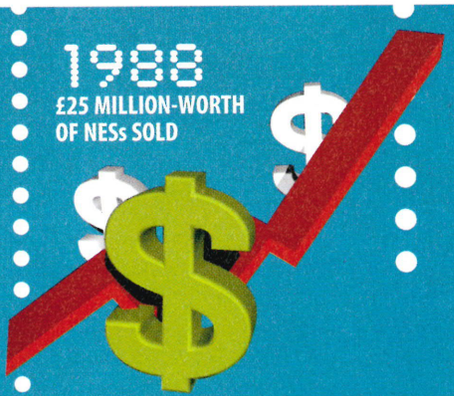
1985
NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM (NES) LAUNCHED AS THE SECOND VIDEOGAME BOOM BEGINS





1987
SEGA MASTER SYSTEM LAUNCHED IN THE UK AND THE NINTENDO v SEGA BATTLE COMMENCES

1988
£25 MILLION-WORTH OF NESs SOLD



1989
HANDHELD CRAZE KICKS IN WITH RELEASE OF NINTENDO GAMEBOY



NINTENDO'S SECRET PLANS



The games industry moves fast. It takes great, hulking leaps every five or so years. Consoles rise. It's been only a few months now since Nintendo announced their next-generation console, code-named Dolphin. And announce is all they did, giving few details of technical specification, and no details on a launch date or games… Nada, nothing.

Since then the project has been shrouded in rumour and innuendo, with nothing coming out of Nintendo's Osaka HQ, while developers and insiders remain zipper-mouthed about what they know.

What we've managed to piece together is this: for the first time in their history, Nintendo are likely to dump cartridges in favour of a CD/DVD-based machine. The system will be powered by an IBM-designed 400MHz custom version of the PowerPC microprocessor (found in Apple Macs) dubbed the Gekko. This will be paired with a special graphics chip, designed in Silicon Valley, running at 200MHz. All in all, exactly what Sony are offering, plus a token but nonetheless impressive 25 per cent. ETA? 2001 at the earliest.

"Never count Nintendo out," argues Pete Hawley. "There's no way they'll allow Sony or Sega to completely overshadow any new technology they have in the wings. Miyamoto and the *Zelda* development team will ensure the best in entertainment and game creation."

If Nintendo are going to go the Sony route and try to supplant Sega with extra mod-cons, add-ons and convergence features, they may find the terrain hard going. Although the company is very talented at pushing old technology to new limits (look at the Game Boy Colour – aged technology, new appeal), they have a lot to learn about peripherals. Their 64DD disc drive for N64 has been touted for years now and is only just about to see the light of day. It's being partnered with a new online service which gives hints to where they plan to go with Dolphin.

Their EnterNet Service (pun probably intended) offers game purchasing, digital magazines, email, Web access, and digital music downloads. Most noticeably, the 64DD is heralding a new brand of 'maker' titles. Programs like *Sound Maker, Video Jockey Maker* and *Game Maker* will make the N64 a creative toy as well as a console. The same power on a system like Dolphin could make it into a home supercomputer.

"Nintendo traditionally treat anywhere outside Japan and the US as irrelevant markets. They are not hard-hitting with their marketing, and they usually position their formats as toys, as opposed to Sony's 'consumer electronics' stance," says one developer, who preferred to be anonymous. "But their internal R&D departments are easily the best in the world. A Nintendo-developed game guarantees an unrivalled depth of playability and longevity."

"NINTENDO USUALLY POSITION THEIR FORMATS AS TOYS, AS OPPOSED TO SONY'S 'CONSUMER ELECTRONICS' STANCE"
– ANONYMOUS DEVELOPER

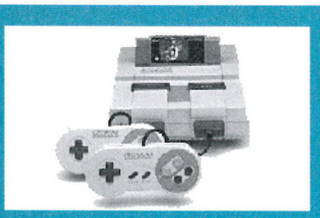


There's no word on whether the Dolphin's PowerPC processor will make it Mac-compatible in the way that Dreamcast is PC-related. Prediction for the future: there's still life in the old N64 dog yet. Still at least two years away, Nintendo are in no rush to get their next-gen machine out of the starting blocks.

"I desperately would love to see a really, truly healthy console war again," says Sam Bishop of PSX2.COM. "The Sega versus Nintendo war waged forever, but made for probably the best games ever seen. A new battle could spell the greatest games ever."

1990
SEGA FIGHT BACK WITH THE COLOUR HANDHELD GAMEGEAR BUT IT'S DOGGED BY ULTRA-SHORT BATTERY LIFE





1990
SUPER NINTENDO (SNES) LAUNCHED IN JAPAN (LAUNCHED IN UK IN 1992) – THIS IS THE FIRST 'NEXT GENERATION' 16-BIT CONSOLE

1990
SEGA HIT BACK WITH THE UK LAUNCH OF THE MEGADRIVE. IT QUICKLY DOMINATES THE SCENE





1993
ILL-FATED ATARI JAGUAR RELEASED. IT FLOPS AND BECOMES THE LAST ATARI CONSOLE EVER

TAKE YOUR PICK

The facts and stats are one thing, the reality is another. Dreamcast is here now, offering the sort of gaming you've only been able to dream about. What are you waiting for?

Things are about to get very cool indeed. No doubt about it. All these pleasure boxes competing for our attention. All this hardware. All these games. "Things are already moving at a somewhat frightening pace," admits Simon Jones of gaming giants THQ. "I'm sure the average games player is caught between pant-splitting excitement and wallet-splitting fear of what may come next and what it'll cost."

It's difficult to know when to take the plunge when the technological ante keeps getting raised. But such is the leap-frogging nature of the games world. PlayStation is thoroughly pissed on by Dreamcast; on paper, PlayStation 2 craps on Dreamcast; and from what we've seen, Nintendo Project Dolphin will no doubt open its bowels and drop four tons of Dundee cake on PlayStation 2.

But none of the other future consoles are going to be here any time soon. Fair dues to it, the Dreamcast got there first. It's here now, carving out its niche.

One massive chunk of the future is without doubt in online gaming. Sega are exceptionally well placed to make huge, six-carriage inroads here. Built-in modem, online networks in place and proven PC hardware, plus hordes of experienced network gamers just waiting to take on the first wave of Dreamcasters as they stagger online.

> "I'M SURE THE AVERAGE GAMES PLAYER IS CAUGHT BETWEEN PANT-SPLITTING EXCITEMENT AND WALLET-SPLITTING FEAR OF WHAT MAY COME NEXT"
> – SIMON JONES, THQ

Plus, all the network code is in place. Most people think you just hook up a console to the Internet, and wham – instant online armies fighting it out live every night. Not so quick. Online gaming on the PC has taken more than four years to be refined, pared down and have all the bugs and loopholes ironed out. Dreamcast can draw on this technology while PlayStation 2 and Dolphin are still in the chocks.

Then comes portability. Nintendo GameBoy Colour has proved that people want to game on the move, and a mobile phone link for downloading new game features has recently been announced. Sega's Visual Memory unit is at the forefront of the moves for gaming to hijack mobile communications. The pocketable little device is going to feature heavily in future gaming, and will no doubt be aped by other manufacturers before time.

Then comes this concept of 'convergence'. All consoles want to be the VCR, the Hoover, the Mindless & Pagy Desktop Masturbation Machine (you may have missed that one): they all want to be the set-top box of the future. "The next two years will revolutionise the way games are developed, marketed, sold, played and perceived," says games producer Hawley. "To achieve mass-market penetration, film industry revenues and mainstream acceptance, games consoles need to take the next logical step and become an integral part of the family living space, part of living room furniture along with TVs, videos and hi-fis."

Entering this field puts a console in direct competition with PCs. Sony have made a big song and dance about the Emotion Engine's ability to out-perform the current fastest home processor, the Pentium III. It's true, the EE is faster, but it's designed solely for games, and cannot multi-task, run a game, download stuff from the Net, process a digital image, and play the saxophone in the background – as a Pentium can. By the time PlayStation 2 arrives here, PC technology will have doubled in power. Dreamcast, with its scaleable architecture, at least has a chance to exploit that inevitable shift and will keep itself vital for a good five years.

Ultimately though, the bottom line is games. The quality of ideas and titles will decide the winners and losers. All stables have considerable talent here. Nintendo have amazing in-house games designers – Miyamoto, and GoldenEye developers Rare (see page 128) to name two. Sega have their own game design legend Yu Suzuki and unrivalled arcade game pedigree. And Sony have recruited thousands of talented developers to their cause.

Either way, we – the gamers – benefit. Better consoles and more aggressive manufacturers means better games. No question. In the good old days, when Nintendo and Sega were out there rolling punches at each other like drunken sailors, neither quite dominating the other, the games were sensational. With three parties in this generation's fight, the games can only get better. Game on!

THE NEXT 100 YEARS

Gaming technology is developing at a silly, stupid pace. In ten years we've leapt from four colours and doorbells for sound effects to near-movie quality sound effects and visuals. How much further can we go? What's going to happen?

5 YEARS

CONSOLES WILL BE ALL OVER THE PLACE and DVD will have made the convergence of entertainment systems inevitable. You won't need a video recorder, Internet access machine, stereo, or games console any more, as they'll all be wrapped up in a single 'super-console'.

10 YEARS

PHOTO REALISTIC ENVIRONMENTS, character interaction – even communication with digitally created 'film stars' online. Games will be on a par with major film releases. Playing games in the home will be part of daily life and will compete with television ratings and viewing figures for the first time.

25 YEARS

GAMES INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM FILMS and vice versa. You'll log into any film you want and be the protagonist in a narrative of your choosing. People all over the world will compete and interact together in online worlds. No such thing as game consoles – just a wall-hanging interactive screen.

100 YEARS

HOLODECKS AND EXPLORING THE GALAXY in overly-large spaceships. The ascendancy of interactive 3D erotica and teledildonics means that everyone has become addicted to pornography. The entire human race is taken over by machines and grown in suspended animation plugged into a vast computer simulation of reality called The Matrix. Hold on…

1994
MEGADRIVE 32X ADD-ON LAUNCHED BUT THE PUBLIC DON'T BUY IT. LITERALLY



1995
IN SPRING, SEGA LAUNCH SATURN, THE FIRST 32-BIT CONSOLE. SEPTEMBER SEES THE LAUNCH OF SONY'S PLAYSTATION

1996
NINTENDO RELEASE THE N64… BUT IT'S *STILL* CARTRIDGE BASED





1999
SEGA DREAMCAST LAUNCHED. IT'S THE FIRST 128-BIT 'NEXT-NEXT GENERATION' CONSOLE

GAMEplay

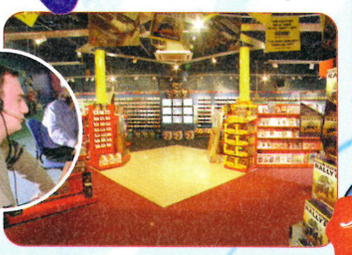
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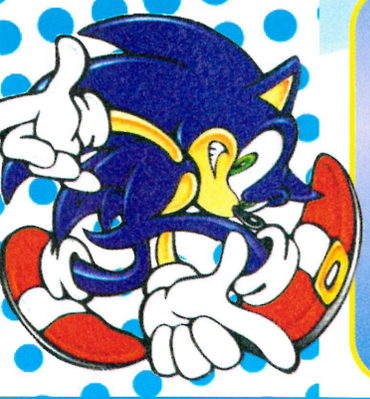
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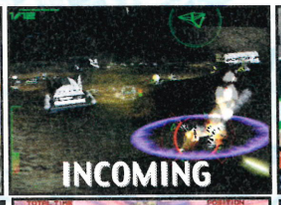
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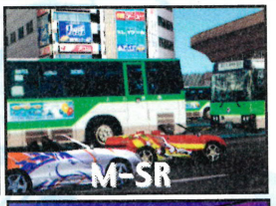
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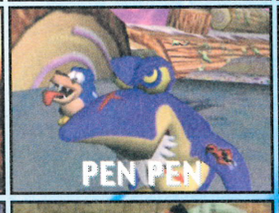




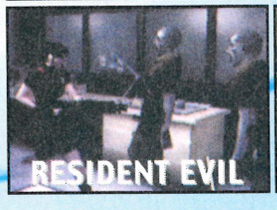


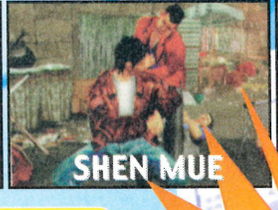














UK DREAMCAST GAMES

Due to the immense extra pleasure that you will get from your Dreamcast by playing games online, we strongly advise against buying imported games or machines. You can ONLY play online with a UK machine and UK games.

Expected for release on Dreamcast launch day:

Blue Stinger	£33.99	r.r.p £39.99
Buggy Heat	£33.99	r.r.p £39.99
Cool Boarders	£33.99	r.r.p £39.99
Dynamite Cop 2	£33.99	r.r.p £39.99
Echo the Dolphin	£33.99	r.r.p £39.99
Formula 1 Racing	£33.99	r.r.p £39.99
House of the Dead 2	£33.99	r.r.p £39.99
Incoming	£33.99	r.r.p £39.99
Metropolis Street Racer	£33.99	r.r.p £39.99
Millenium Soldier	£33.99	r.r.p £39.99
Monaco GP Sim 2	£33.99	r.r.p £39.99
NBA 2000	£33.99	r.r.p £39.99
Pen Pen	£33.99	r.r.p £39.99
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All the games below are expected to be available prior to Christmas this year. Ring or visit our web site at www.gameplay.com for a more up to date schedule.

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Cue Ball	£ CHEAPEST	r.r.p £39.99
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Marvel vs Capcom	£ CHEAPEST	r.r.p £39.99
Mortal Kombat Gold	£ CHEAPEST	r.r.p £39.99
NFL 'QBC 2000'	£ CHEAPEST	r.r.p £39.99
Re - Volt	£ CHEAPEST	r.r.p £39.99
Ready to Rumble	£ CHEAPEST	r.r.p £39.99
Shadowman	£ CHEAPEST	r.r.p £39.99
South Park Rally	£ CHEAPEST	r.r.p £39.99
Tokyo Highway Challenge	£ CHEAPEST	r.r.p £39.99
TrickStyle	£ CHEAPEST	r.r.p £39.99
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→ WHAT DO *AUSTIN POWERS* FANS MAKE OF SEGA'S NEW CONSOLE? WE VISITED THE VIRGIN CINEMA IN LONDON'S TROCADERO CENTRE TO FIND OUT

OH BEHAVE!

ALTHOUGH DREAMCAST HAS only just hit the streets, the cinema lovers among you have probably noticed that pods containing Dreamcasts appeared in cinema foyers across the country some time ago, giving people their first glimpse of Sega's new baby.

With the launch of Sega's advertising campaign timed to coincide with the opening of *Star Wars*, and the flicks packed with crowds flocking to the summer blockbusters, the pods have been doing brisk business, with people queuing up to try out games like *Sega Rally 2*, *Sonic Adventure* and *Ready 2 Rumble*.

To get an idea of people's first impressions of Dreamcast, we paid a visit to the Virgin Cinema in London's Piccadilly and spoke to a selection of *Austin Powers* fans about the new console and their reactions to it.



△ Steven from Malmö, Sweden

Initially sceptical, PC gamer Steven was soon hammering the Dreamcast controller's buttons, making Sonic fly, and wearing the biggest grin of the evening. Was he impressed with the machine? "Yeah!"

INTERESTED IN GETTING A DREAMCAST?
"Mmm, might do."
WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME?
"*Championship Manager*."
WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT DREAMCAST?
"The graphics. They're excellent."
WHAT'S THE LATEST YOU'VE EVER STAYED UP PLAYING A GAME?
"All night!"
WHO MAKES YOU HORNY, BABY?
"Cameron Diaz."

▽ Toby from Manchester

Fleet-of-foot Toby is at ballet school, but before you snigger just bear this in mind: he's one of only two lads in a class of more than 30! No wonder he looks happy. But what does he make of Dreamcast?

IS THIS THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE SEEN A DREAMCAST CONSOLE?
"Yeah."
INTERESTED IN GETTING ONE?
TOBY'S MUM: *[pointing at the pod]* "Do you get all that with it? No? Just the machine? Oh, right!"
TOBY: *[looking at mum]* "Er, maybe, yeah."
WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME?
"*Command & Conquer*."
WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT DREAMCAST?
"The modem."
WHAT'S THE LATEST YOU'VE EVER STAYED UP PLAYING A GAME?
[Nervous laugh and glance at mum] "Er… dunno. I go to boarding school, so I don't really get the chance that often."
WHO MAKES YOU HORNY, BABY?
[Flushes and looks at mum] "Er, well… I can't really say!"
TOBY'S MUM: "What about that girl…"
TOBY: "Mum!"





△ Katrina from Kingston

A fan of Sega since Megadrive, Katrina was enthusiastic about the little fella's latest incarnation and was keen to see more.

INTERESTED IN GETTING ONE?
"Yes. I used to have a Megadrive."
WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME?
"Definitely *Sonic*."
WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT DREAMCAST?
"The Internet access."
WHAT'S THE LATEST YOU'VE EVER STAYED UP PLAYING A GAME?
"Until about 12."
WHO MAKES YOU HORNY, BABY?
"Seth Green."

▽ Harry from Germany

Smartly dressed Harry is not convinced about surfing the Net in the public arena of his lounge (?!), but certainly seems impressed with Dreamcast.

INTERESTED IN GETTING ONE?
"Probably, yes. It depends on the price."
WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME?
"*Gran Turismo* and *Quake*."
WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT DREAMCAST?
"For me it would be the games."
WHAT'S THE LATEST YOU'VE EVER STAYED UP PLAYING A GAME?
"Through to breakfast."





△ Jason from Dulwich

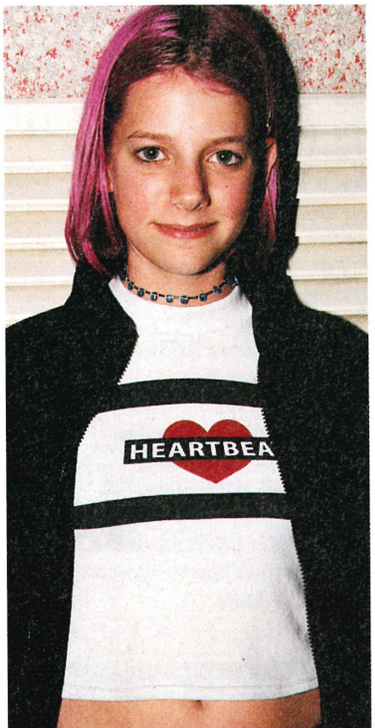
Another lucky blighter with a mate who's had an imported Dreamcast for some time, Jason is a self-confessed games addict and is already hooked by Dreamcast's capabilities.

INTERESTED IN GETTING ONE?
"I'm in two minds. I might wait for PlayStation 2. What, you can play online as well? In that case I'm definitely interested!"
WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME?
"*StreetFighter*."
WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT DREAMCAST?
"The graphics are beautiful. My mate's got *Soul Calibur* and its really amazing."
WHAT'S THE LATEST YOU'VE EVER STAYED UP PLAYING A GAME?
"Five in the morning – I started playing at 11am though!"
WHO MAKES YOU HORNY, BABY?
"Felicity Shagwell."

▽ Joanna from London

A shared love of pink hair gave Joanna an affinity with Sonic's chum Amy, and she was soon getting the hang of the game and raving about the incredible graphics.

INTERESTED IN GETTING A DREAMCAST?
"Yeah!"
WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT IT?
"The girl hedgehog [Amy] looks like me!"
WHAT'S THE LATEST YOU'VE EVER STAYED UP PLAYING A GAME?
"I don't play games - but I might start now."
WHO MAKES YOU HORNY, BABY?
"Austin Powers!"





△ Clare and Ollie from Greenwich

Old-skool Sega fans Clare and Ollie were getting well stuck in on *Sonic*, and were particularly happy that Sega are focusing on the things they do well.

INTERESTED IN GETTING ONE?
CLARE: "Not personally, but I reckon my little brother will want one."
OLLIE: "I'll definitely be thinking about it."
WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME?
CLARE: "*Toejam & Earl* on Megadrive. I can't stand all these things like *GoldenEye*."
OLLIE: "*Mega Bomberman*."
WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT DREAMCAST?
CLARE: "Having the Internet is really good, it means you can do more than just play games. I like *Sonic*, too."
OLLIE: "It's good to see them re-doing the old games like *Sonic*, which was always really good."
WHAT'S THE LATEST YOU'VE EVER STAYED UP PLAYING A GAME?
OLLIE: "Six in the morning."!
WHO MAKES YOU HORNY, BABY?
TOGETHER: "No comment!"

▽ Michel from Malmö, Sweden

Scandinavian games fan Michel pronounced himself impressed with the Dreamcast but, bizarrely, couldn't make his mind up about whether Heather Graham was suitably 'shagadelic' – there must be some real beauties over there in Malmö!

INTERESTED IN GETTING A DREAMCAST?
"Mmm, maybe."
WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE GAME OF ALL TIME?
"That's a difficult question to answer. Perhaps *Civilization II*."
WHAT'S THE LATEST YOU'VE EVER STAYED UP PLAYING A GAME?
"About two in the morning."
WHO MAKES YOU HORNY, BABY?
"Er… don't know. Heather Graham? Maybe."



IN THE HOT SEAT WITH SEGA

EVERY MONTH, WE GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK DIRECTLY TO SEGA. SEND US YOUR QUESTIONS AND WE'LL PUT THEM TO THE PEOPLE BEHIND DREAMCAST, THEN PRINT THE RESPONSES HERE

ALL IN A LETTER

Why use new-format CDs (GD-ROM) instead of CD-ROMs or the increasingly popular DVD-ROMs?

Steven Groats, Liverpool

SEGA: We have worked very closely with Yamaha to develop a number of cutting-edge components for Dreamcast. One of them is the proprietary format GD-ROM drive. This enables us to fit a little over 1GB of data on just one disc, which is about 50 per cent more than a conventional CD. The result is that we can sell bigger and better games without having to charge for two CDs. DVD-ROMs are great for films and so on, but they're not really right for videogames at the moment. When they are, Dreamcast will offer a solution to consumers.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

What are the differences between Japanese, American and European Dreamcasts?

David Ingles, London

SEGA: Different continents use different TV signals and different power supplies. The Dreamcasts available here will run anywhere in Europe using the correct plug and video cable.

TRUE BLUE

Why is the Dreamcast swirl orange in Japan but blue in Europe?

Sam Field, London

SEGA: Different countries can have very different tastes, especially when it comes to things like fashion and design. We felt that the metallic blue was a more European colour and worked better for us than the orange used in Japan. At the end of the day it comes down to personal preferences, but the Dreamcast metallic blue got a big thumbs up in our European research groups.

WHY SO FEW?

Is it true that only 15 games publishers are allowed to write games for Dreamcast? If it is true, why is that the case?

Adam Lewis, Bristol

SEGA: Sega are working closely with many of the best games publishers in the world in order to ensure a varied and high-quality line-up for Dreamcast, both now and in years to come. Publishers to date include Acclaim, Activision, Capcom, Crave, Eidos, Fox Interactive, Hasbro, Infogrames, Interplay, Konami, Midway, Rage, THQ, Take 2, Ubi Soft and Virgin Interactive. We are currently in negotiations with a number of other publishers who I hope will join the list shortly.

AUSSIE FUN

Can I play American or Australian games on my UK Dreamcast?

Dave Roberts, Chester

SEGA: The version of Dreamcast available in the UK is a PAL system, which is designed to work on European TVs. You will only be able to run PAL versions of games on your PAL machine. Australia, like Europe, uses the PAL system, so the software and hardware on sale there is the same as in the UK.

WHY DELAY?

It usually takes an age for Japanese games to reach Europe. Will this be the case with Dreamcast titles, and if so, why?

Martin Rhodan, Lincoln

SEGA: Each game is different, and not all games in Japan are appealing to European consumers. When they are, we try to bring them over as quickly as possible. The great thing about the line-up of games for Dreamcast is that many of them are developed here in Europe, so we will get them at the same time as Japan (sometimes before!).

VIRTUAL GIRLFRIEND

Who or what is this Naomi I keep hearing about?

Jane Gill, Luton

SEGA: Naomi is the latest arcade machine from Sega. Its cutting-edge technology is very similar to that of Dreamcast, which will enable us to have some compatibility between the two machines. Some games will enable you to carry data from your Dreamcast to the Naomi arcade machine using your Visual Memory unit.

RETRO FUN

Will Sega be releasing classic Megadrive and Saturn games on Dreamcast?

James Lee, Chew Magna

SEGA: Maybe.

POCKET DC

Since Dreamcast uses a proprietary CD format to cram 1Gb onto a standard CD, can it still play traditional audio CDs?

Dave Milligan, Leicester

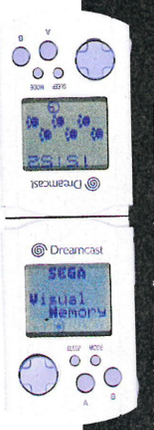
SEGA: Dreamcast can play audio CDs without blinking an eye.

RIP SATURN

Is the Saturn now a dead system?

John Roberts, via email

SEGA: We issued a press release in March stating that the Saturn has run its course and will be phased out. We are now totally focused on Dreamcast.



HOW TO... MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR VM

The size of the VM (Visual Memory unit) belies its versatility. Here's some of what it can do...

SAVE GAMES

First and foremost, the VM pack is a memory card. It saves your *Sonic Adventure* high scores, your *Sega Rally* fastest laps, or your progress in *Shenmue*. Alternatively, plug it into a friend's VM and transfer your high scores and/or saved games straight onto theirs, or vice versa.

DOWNLOAD NEW GAME LEVELS

Another innovative feature is its ability to download and store data from the Net. Log on to the Dreamcast website to learn about new *Sega Rally 2* tracks, cars or whatever, and then download them into the unit. Next time you play *SR2*, select 'load data' and hey presto – there's a whole new dimension to the game. Similarly, you could retrieve new levels in *Sonic* games.

NURTURE CHARACTERS

If you're a whizz at *Sonic*, you're no doubt aware of the puny characters you can find and drop into the VM to nurture and raise. When you've finished playing *Sonic*, you can remove the VM, stick it in your pocket, then continue to feed, water and perform the usual Tamagotchi-type pampering. Next time you load the little fella into the main Dreamcast unit, your virtual pet is stronger and better-equipped to help you out of your many various predicaments.

PLUG INTO ARCADES

With fighting games, you can play a game at home, save your character's data onto the VM, then take it down the arcade, plug it into the arcade version of the same game, and slaughter everyone in sight with your home-brewed warrior from hell. The only trouble is other players can do exactly the same. Still, when it comes to competitive tournaments, the prospects are looking very exciting. The arcade machines are yet to appear in the UK, but should be arriving on these shores towards the start of next year.

WRITE TO US

Want to get something off your chest, or get the official response to a query that's been bothering you for ages? What are you waiting for, then? Get writing. Address your letters to:

Sega Q&A, ODM, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Alternatively, email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk using the subject heading 'Sega Q&A').

YOU KNOW LIFE'S TOUGH WHEN...

...YOU'RE ARRESTED FOR DRESSING UP AS LARA CROFT

'Michelle' wishes to remain anonymous. You can hardly blame the girl – here she explains why tequila, a tight top and a pair of fake guns don't mix

"LAST MONTH I WENT TO a fancy dress party as Lara Croft. I'd gone the full hog – an appropriately figure-hugging costume and a clip-on ponytail. I'd even managed to get hold of two fake but authentic-looking guns and strapped them to my thighs so I really looked the part. The party was a blast and my fancy dress costume went down very well – especially with the blokes, perhaps unsurprisingly.

"After polishing off several glasses of tequila and coke and dancing away well into the early hours, me and my friend 'Beth' decided to call it quits. To be blunt, *she* decided, because by this point I was pretty much 'out to breakfast, lunch and dinner'.

"Such were my high spirits after a top evening, that on the way home I got it into my head that dressing up as Lara wasn't enough – I wanted to *be* Lara. Much to Beth's horror, I ran off down the street, drawing my guns (just like Lara does) and shouting: 'I'm coming for you, Nadia! Bam! Bam!'

"I don't remember how long I ran round shouting and waving my guns; what I do recall vividly though were the flashing blue lights and the sight of two police cars screeching to a halt up ahead of me.

"Two coppers got out and said something like: 'Be calm, young lady. Be calm. Put the guns down. It's all right.' God knows why – maybe it was the tequila worm – but I didn't take them seriously.

"According to Beth, I giggled and shouted: 'Hello, boys!' and then raised both guns, pointing them at the police cars. In a flash, one copper leapt behind his car while the other dived to the ground.

"It's amazing how you can go from blind drunk to acutely sober in a split second. I suddenly realised where I was, what I was doing, and could hear Beth shouting at me. 'Encouraged' by the poor sod who'd hit the deck, I gingerly put the guns down on the ground and placed my hands on my head.

"The coppers rushed up, handcuffed me and then took me back to the station. After being given a grilling and an absolute bollocking, I was cautioned.

"I left with my ponytail between my legs, feeling embarrassed and a wee bit ashamed. And to make matters worse, the bastards wouldn't give me my guns back."

LUCKY, LUCKY, LUCKY LARA

JUST SLAPPED WRISTS AND A CAUTION? MICHELLE GOT OFF LIGHTLY

Over the last few years there have been several cases of people 'innocently' fugging about with fake guns and finding themselves in hot water.

Back in '96, fancy dress salesman Andrew Houchin decided it would be 'a right good laugh' to wave a fake gun out of his car window as he drove down the street. He finally pointed the gun at the wrong man – firearms officer PC Trevor Thompson. Fortunately, the officer was off duty and wasn't carrying his own gun. "I was extremely scared," the copper told magistrates. "If I had been armed, I would have shot him."

Houchin may have been lucky that day, but he was later jailed for three months for causing an affray.

Lara wannabes and 'comedy' fancy dress salesmen aside, even three-year-olds have been known to cause Her Majesty's Constabulary anxiety attacks.

After receiving calls from perturbed passers-by, police surrounded a car which they believed harboured an armed man. After ordering Marie Schillemore and her parents out of the suspect car, the cops discovered that the armed villain was in fact Marie's three-year-old son, who had been waving his toy cap gun about in the back of the car.

The police left soon afterwards. The word 'embarrassed' springs to mind.

PHOTOGRAPHY: **LUMLEY**. MODEL: **JENNIFER @ TOP MODELS**. CLOTHES BY **GAP**. BAG BY **PURVES & PURVES**

FROM ZERO TO HERO*

FED UP OF HAVING THE SAND KICKED IN YOUR *VIRTUA FIGHTER* FACE BY YOUR MATES? FEAR NOT, WEAKLING! OUR EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND GUIDE WILL TRANSFORM YOU FROM WIMP TO WARLORD IN A MATTER OF MINUTES



△ Pai settles the argument with Sarah over who has the worst clothes...



△ ...While Shun gazes in wonder at the enormous bogey up Lau's nose.

FIGHTING GAMES

A SUPREME TEST OF SKILL AND DEXTERITY, OR A MATTER OF RANDOMLY PRESSING ALL THE BUTTONS IN ONE GO? DISCUSS

As with anything in life there are always those who take matters too seriously and forsake things others take for granted – regular meals, a healthy sex life, daylight etc – in return for the ability to be the undefeatable champion of a particular beat 'em up. Let's face it though, these people are dull. If this is you, it's probably worth you going and making a cup of tea right now, because this guide will not tell you how to defeat the flying neck chop of death, or even perform the famed shinto backflip arse-wipe and elbow jab. No, this is a guide for the normal people out there, the ones who like the idea of fighting games but fail at the early hurdle of being able to do more than run around pathetically, landing a feeble slap on their opponent every couple of rounds.

Of all the fighting games coming at you on Dreamcast, the one you'll encounter in the post-pub games session will, in all probability, be *Virtua Fighter 3tb*. An old Sega favourite in arcade and console form, it's an easy game to get to grips with, and with a little patience and practice you soon find yourself gaining confidence and pulling off more and more moves. Before you know it you're a beat 'em up champ – just make sure you don't forget to go outside every now and again.

• *Turn to page 90 for our full review of* **Virtua Fighter 3tb.**

STARTING OUT

Rather than try to give you all the moves for all the characters, our workout focuses on two of *Virtua Fighter*'s 12 characters. Whether you discover the moves for yourself or practice with game guides, the principle is the same. And as before, once you gain confidence with a couple of characters, you find it a breeze to master the others.

The two characters we're going to look at are Shun, the dipsomaniac pensioner, and Pai, the fragile-looking Oriental beauty. While both these characters look frail, they have a surprising number of really rather deadly moves that can easily defeat more obvious favourites like Jacky and Kage. Let your mates scoff at your choice of character, beacuse you'll be getting the last laugh.

TOP TIPS FOR THE BEAT 'EM UP WIMP

• THE TRAINING MODE enables you to practice those all-important moves in peace. Note which moves are effective in which arenas and against whom.

• WHILE IT MAY be tempting to rest on your laurels once you've learnt a few moves, you'll soon become predictable. As with any fighting game, it's crucial to keep your opponents guessing to prevent them from blocking you.

• WHICH BRINGS US neatly to defence. In the heat of battle it's easy to forget that defence is as important as attack. Use the guard and evade buttons (A and B respectively) and watch what your opponent is doing.

• PRACTICE (but not too much!).

• USE THE FORCE and stretch out with your *feelings*, as someone once said.

SHUN DI

HIS DRUNKEN STUMBLING MAY BE AMUSING, BUT SHUN IS ONE OLD MAN WITH A FEW TRICKS UP HIS SLEEVE

While he may be old, Shun can still move quickly, but he needs to sneak a swift swig every now and then (▽+P+K+G) to keep his power up. Keep him topped up and he gains 'drunken points' (DPs) which unlock more moves. Shun also has the habit of sitting down in the middle of bouts (▽,▽), which is incredibly frustrating for opponents, who are left flailing wildly in thin air while Shun gazes up nonchalantly. Try drinking while sitting (P+K+G) to gain extra DPs, and let the fun begin.

SHUN'S MOVES

△,P	Powerful two-handed chop.
△+K	Simple but effective – a double low donkey kick. Ouch!
▷,▷,K	Flying roundhouse kick.
◁,K (◁+△,K for both feet)	Flying kick and evasion.
▷+△,P	Spinning head-butt and powerful elbow drop on floored opponent.

PAI CHAN

DON'T LET THE CUTE SMILE FOOL YOU – PAI'S GOT MOVES THAT WILL HAVE OPPONENTS CRYING FOR MUMMY

She may be slim and coy-looking, but with a little practice she's as deadly as a tank full of piranhas. By using speed and agility, Pai can inflict great damage before her opponent has even realised what's going on; although you have to use care against the bigger, more powerful characters. While she doesn't have any eccentric habits like Shun, her moves have a certain balletic style and elegance which make a pleasant change from the more thuggish fellas.

PAI'S MOVES

◁+△,K	Combined back-flip and high-kick.
▷+△,P	Two-handed chop (knee-drop if you've floored your opponent).
▷,▷,P,K	Two-handed uppercut and high kick – sweet!
P,P,P,K	Very fast triple punch and roundhouse kick.
▽+K,K	As they block the low kick, catch them off guard with a swift kick to the head.

LESSONS FOR LOSERS

RECKON YOU'RE A LOST CAUSE? FOLLOW THE IDIOT'S GUIDE...

For the purposes of this article, we've written the moves thus: ◁△▽▷ correspond to the directions on the control pad while P, K, G and E are Punch, Kick, Guard and Evade (X, Y, A and B keys respectively).

Commas between symbols mean you have to press the buttons in that order, while a + sign indicates that you need to press the buttons simultaneously. Simple, eh? For example, ▽, P, K means down followed by punch and kick, whereas ▽+P+K means down, punch and kick together. Easy as pie. Now go and kick some!

Look on the Internet and you can find any number of websites listing endless easy-to-understand combos and all you need to know to be an immortal ass-kickin' kung fu master.

*IN A FEW EASY MOVES

YOU KNOW YOU'VE HIT THE BIG TIME WHEN...

...YOU WIN A FERRARI IN A GAMING COMPETITION

You win 65,000 dollars worth of pure Italian thoroughbred racing car. Are you Michael Shumacher? No, you're a kid called Dennis 'Thresh' Fong from California who loves playing games. Feeling sick with envy yet?

"THE FIRST TIME I SERIOUSLY GOT into games was at the age of 11 when *Doom* was released on PC. By the age of 17 I'd won my first tournament, winning a $10,000 PC with a 21-inch monitor.

"I entered other competitions over the next few years but they didn't really offer any major prizes. The Red Annihilation tournament, on the other hand, was huge. Every gamer had heard about it – John Carmack, top programmer on *Quake*, was going to give away his Ferrari to the winner.

"The competition was based around *Quake* deathmatches, starting off with entrants from all over the country playing against one another over the Net in free-for-all deathmatches. Over the next couple of months I worked my way up the ranks as the number of competitors got whittled further and further down. Fortunately I don't feel shaky when playing in competitions – when it's a precision-oriented game like *Quake*, if your hands are shaking and you're not thinking clearly it can really affect your game.

"When I made it to the final held at E³ in Atlanta, playing against a gamer called Entropy, I felt confident. There was a time limit of 20 minutes for each of us to try to kill each other as many times as possible. I was up to 13 kills against his minus one, and I remember looking at the on-screen countdown and seeing that I had only 10 seconds to go. For the first time I got really nervous.

"Because of the way my computer was set-up in the E³ arena, I could see the reflection of the actual Ferrari in my monitor. I started counting down from ten and realised then that I'd won the car, because I knew there was no way that the other guy could catch up.

"When I won I was obviously very happy, and celebrated with my friends that night. It didn't really sink in that I'd won a Ferrari until the car arrived at my doorstep two weeks later. It was pretty cool climbing into the car, but I didn't drive very far – round the block and down to the park. It was way cool, but to be honest cars aren't that big a deal to me.

"I guess the only problem was being 19 years old. The insurance ended up being not too much of a hassle. The real issue was that I'd just moved to Berkeley, a small town with a lot of pedestrians! It's also not the safest place to keep a Ferrari, so I actually leave it back at my folks' house which is an hour away.

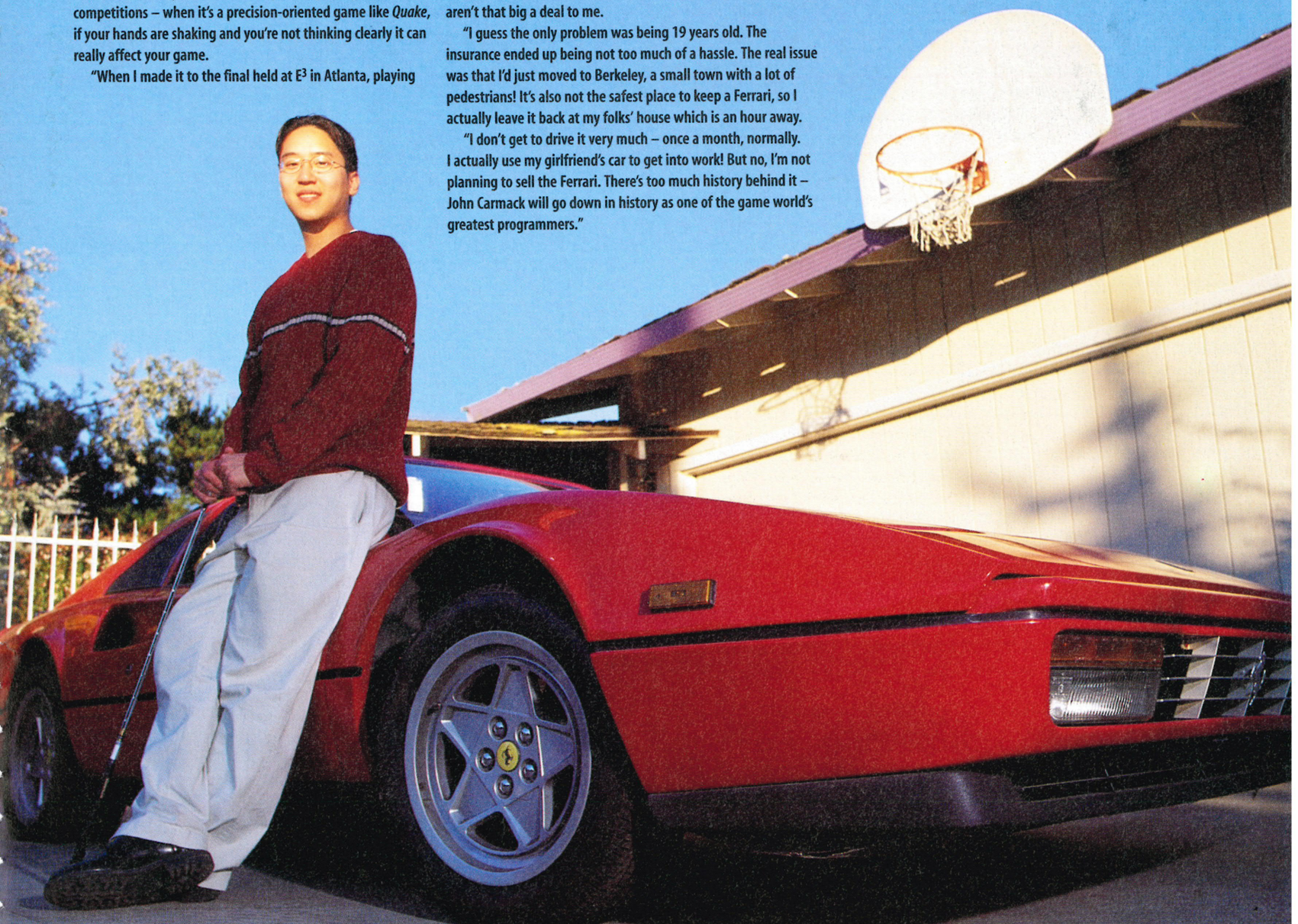
"I don't get to drive it very much – once a month, normally. I actually use my girlfriend's car to get into work! But no, I'm not planning to sell the Ferrari. There's too much history behind it – John Carmack will go down in history as one of the game world's greatest programmers."

THAT CAR

KICK THAT PORSCHE TO THE KERB – A FERRARI IS THE CAR TO BE SEEN IN. AND OUR DENNIS WON ONE. THE GIT

MODEL: Ferrari 328 GTS convertible
VALUE NOW: around £40,000
0-60MPH: five seconds.
PREVIOUS OWNER: ID Software's programming god John Carmack, he of *Wolfenstein 3D*, *Doom* and *Quake* fame. It was the very first Ferrari he ever bought, paid for with the riches from *Wolfenstein 3D*. Carmack decided to put it up for grabs in a competition when he ran out of room in his garage – he has several other Italian stallions as well, and one of them had to go. He also felt he should give something back to the people who'd made him so successful, ie us, the game-buying public.
SERVICE HISTORY: Carmack managed to blow up the car's engine, but had it replaced. Even though it's been owned by Dennis Fong for the last three years there are only 8,000 miles on the clock. The car's last service cost $2,000 (£1,200). There's always a catch, eh?

PHOTOGRAPHY: **STEVE DOUBLE**



YOU KNOW YOU'RE OBSESSED WHEN...

...YOU HAVE A VIDEOGAME CHARACTER TATTOO ON YOUR ARM

Two hours of agony. Bloody scabs for a week afterwards. Not many people would go to the trouble of having a game character etched onto their leg. Meet the exceptions – 28-year-old Nick Wiswell and his wife

"I'VE LOVED GAMES EVER SINCE 1980 when I got my first computer, a ZX-81. Over the years I've amassed a mountain of consoles, and now work in the software industry as an associate producer at Bizarre Creations.

"I'd been thinking about getting a videogame character tattoo for ages. I already have a normal one – it's a tribal-type design – and decided that a videogame tattoo would be ideal because the wife's got a Sonic The Hedgehog one already, which she's had for about eight years.

"Sega's *Nights* on Saturn is one of my all-time favourite games, and I love the main character, so I thought: 'That's the one for me.' I downloaded an image off the Internet showing the pose I wanted, then scaled it to the right size using *Photoshop*, and used a *Nights* player's guide book I've got to help the tattoo artist get the right colour palette for the character.

"The tattoo artist was a local one. I hadn't used him before but he has a very good reputation for cartoon-style work. He was surprised by my request because he'd never done a videogame character before. He was up for the challenge though, because the design work was so intricate.

"The actual tattooing hurt badly, especially during the outline and detailing stages. It took two hours to do and cost the wife £45 – it was her wedding present to me. At first the tattoo bled and scabbed up, but after the scabs fell off six days later I was really impressed with the tattoo.

"The first time I showed it to my mates they were like: 'Oh, my god, what have you done?!' They reckon it's a well-done tattoo, but they all think it's a bit sad because I've got a videogame character – especially one that not many people know about. As for the folks, my parents don't really approve of that sort of thing, but I'm not much bothered.

"My bosses at Dreamcast software developer Bizarre Creations love the tattoo, and it gets shown off quite a bit when people visit the office. Unfortunately the wife's bosses aren't so happy with her Sonic tattoo – let's just say her employer is also a four-letter word beginning with 'S' who make a rival console.

"In the meantime, we're happy because we went to E^3 this year and were introduced to the Sonic team who made *Nights*. They'd already seen our tattoos on the Net and knew who we were in advance. That was a very proud moment.

"I am planning to have another one done. I'm not sure which character yet, but I'm definitely interested in one of the Capcom ones."

PHOTOGRAPHY: **LUMLEY**

TASTE THE PAIN

IF YOU THINK NICK'S A TAD EXTREME IN TERMS OF HIS TATTOO, CAST AN EYE OVER THESE EXAMPLES OF SKIN DECORATION

After developing a disfiguring skin disease eight years ago, 41-year-old Julia Gnuse, current record holder for the world's most tattooed woman, covered her body with more than 400 tattoos. Highlights include Marge and Homer Simpson on her breasts, and a *Guinness Book Of Records* logo on her backside.

The male of the species isn't being left behind either. Tom Leppard is also something of a tattoo fanatic, his claim to fame being a leopard 'motif' tattoo that covers the surface of his entire body.

Full face/body tattooing and piercing are all the rage in certain quarters. *ODM* came across the following delightful posting on one online tattoo forum: "My penis tattoo basically says: 'Kill me'. Also, due to my penis piercings I can now pee from six holes."

His mum must be proud.

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ACCESSORIES

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DREAM PAD - £17.99 (£16.99 for two or more)
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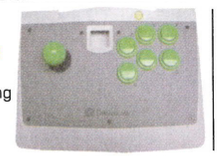
VMS MEMORY CARD - £19.99





KEYBOARD - £19.99

ARCASE STICK - £29.99
- A must for fighting games.



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- Slot for VMS. Works great with a Rumble Pack.



DREAM BLASTER - £22.99
- Precision optics for increased accuracy. 3 fire modes. Slot for Vibration Pak. Ergonomic. Ambidextrous.

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-High quality. Very responsive.





MAD KATZ STEERING WHEEL - £35.99

FORCE PAK - £15.99
- Works with all compatible Vibration games, adds realism. Available in White, Red, Blue, Green, Yellow & Purple.



DREAM STATION - £17.99 - Don't make a mess on the floor, The Dream Station neatly holds your console & pads and makes a cool piece of furniture.



CONSOLE CASE - £17.99
- Roomy, durable, lightweight and waterproof.



VIBRATION PACK	**£19.99**
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S VIDEO CABLE (gives superior quality with s-video compatible TV's)	**£9.99**
AV CABLE	**£9.99**
JOYPAD EXTENDER CABLE	**£9.99**
RF UNIT	**£15.99**

GAMES

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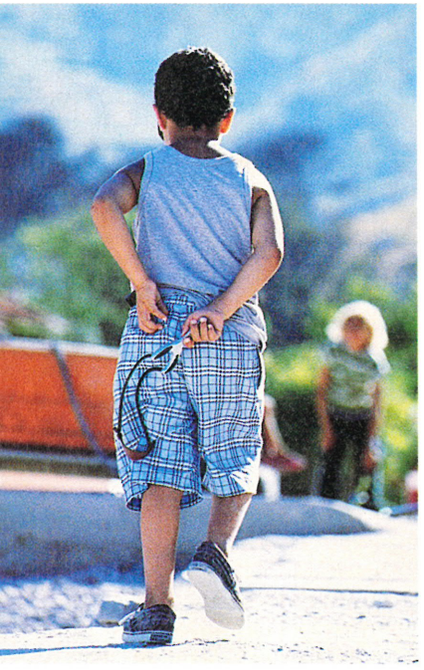
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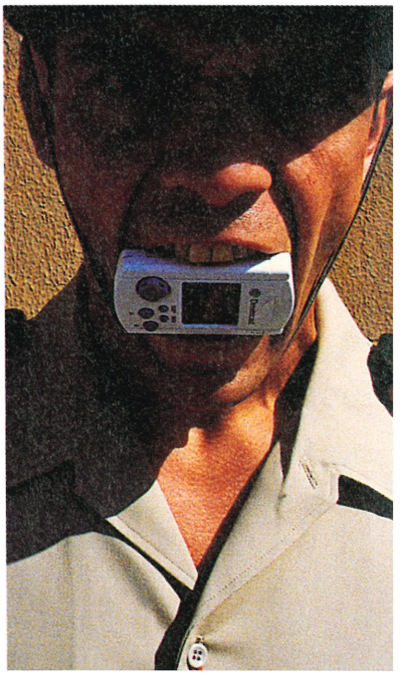
△ JAKE SMITH, 24, MULTIMEDIA DIRECTOR AT SUBNET NEW MEDIA

Jake started with a ZX Spectrum about 14 years ago, and now owns about 20 consoles, including an import Dreamcast.



△ DAVE BUTLER, 24, SENIOR PURCHASER FOR THE GAMES DIVISION OF COMPUTER EXCHANGE

Dave's passionate about his N64, but PlayStation is the machine he plays most. He's keen on role-play and arcade games, and his favourite Dreamcast title is *Sega Rally 2*.



VIBE GROUP THERAPY

THE WAY IT IS

DREAMCAST HASN'T EVEN GONE ON SALE YET, BUT THERE ARE ALREADY GAMERS WHO KNOW IT INSIDE OUT. WE SIT FOUR OF THEM DOWN IN A ROOM WITH A GUY FROM SEGA

ODM: Dave, you've been selling imported Japanese Dreamcasts for months. Who's buying them?

DAVE: Originally it was the games enthusiasts who don't care about money, but as the price dropped, word got around and people just started buying it because it's the latest machine. It's also kids – you know how all kids want the best thing around.

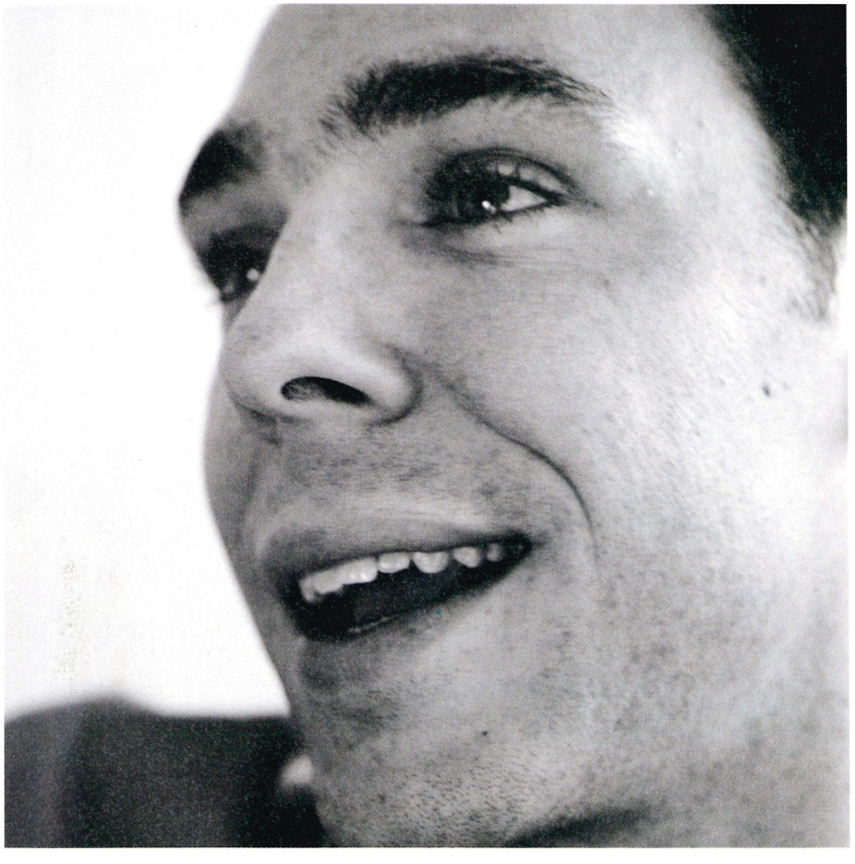
MARK: People will buy different games depending on their taste, but the machine itself is open to anyone.

EDDIE: The feeling that I get from my friends and family is that there's quite a lot of optimism there. I think they're quite looking forward to Dreamcast. It's come at the right time









△ MARK HARTLEY, 27, MARKETING MANAGER FOR SEGA

Mark started gaming years ago with a Sinclair ZX81, owns and plays all the consoles, and is one of the few lucky gits to already have a true English Dreamcast.

▷ EDDIE DEIGHTON, 33, PARTNER/CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF A DESIGN AGENCY

Designing packaging and ads for games and record companies, Eddie has an avid interest in games because of work. He has a PlayStation, N64 and Megadrive, and has already reserved a Dreamcast.





△ MEGAN DAVIS, 24, RESTAURANT MANAGER OF ASK PIZZA, WARREN ST, LONDON

Megan's favourite console is PlayStation, and she loves "kicking butt" in fighting games. She's pre-ordered an American Dreamcast so she can get hold of it a couple of weeks early.

because of the onslaught of all the next-generation consoles.

ODM: What's the ad campaign going to be like, Mark?

MARK: The first TV ads don't show any gameplay, they don't even show the machine, they just show people playing – not on videogames, but playing. Our theory is that people don't play games because we've made a console or we've made a great game, people play anyway. So the idea is that Dreamcast supplies new and different ways of playing the games that you play anyway in real life.

EDDIE: It's communication as well, it's the whole idea that with the modem anybody can communicate with anybody – with billions of players.

MARK: Yes, at the end of the ad there's a sequence that says it's 128-bit but it's also got email, it's got Internet surfing, it's got multiplayer gaming, and the end line is 'up to six billion players', which is the number of people on the planet.

ODM: What do you think of that advert?

DAVE: Personally I'm a big fan of the Sony ad campaign, because in a similar way they don't thrust the game in your face, they do something that's really catchy and interesting.

MEGAN: I liked that Sony one, 'And conquered worlds'. That was really good, and it included kids and older people.

ODM: That's probably got more in common with what you're trying to do, hasn't it, Mark?

MARK: A bit. But when you look at the visuals, regardless of what he's saying, he's a grubby kid in a black-and-white looking ad, it's very dark, it's very solitary.

MEGAN: Yes, it's about hiding by yourself in a room.

MARK: And an ad is always just the tip of the marketing iceberg. It's supported by millions of pounds worth of marketing.

ODM: Such as?

MARK: The biggest tool is always the demo unit, and we're going to put them in places where you don't usually get them. Putting them in places like Top Shop, so we can go after the boyfriend who sits there bored while she's trying on the clothes.

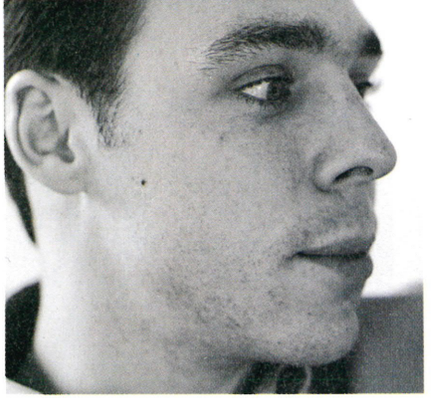
JAKE: I can see the guys saying: "Come on, love, let's go and shop in here!"

MARK: The whole way Dreamcast is going to be marketed is going to be much more inclusive, and not based around all the negative, lonely ethics that are behind PlayStation's advertising. If you took a football match, for example, the way Sony advertises they'd be looking at one of the hard-core fans up against the grilles yelling out the abuse and everything, whereas we'd look at a five-a-side knockabout in the park with, dare I say it, jumpers for goalposts.

PHOTOGRAPHY: LUMLEY

PHOTOGRAPHY: LUMLEY









ODM: Or you might do it by sponsoring Arsenal?

MARK: We're not sponsoring them because they're Arsenal, we're sponsoring them because they're a football team. From a marketing view it makes a lot of sense. If you play football actively – at the weekend or whatever – you're twice as likely to be a videogamer than if you don't. Now, usually in marketing you're looking for the extra four or five per cent, this is 100 per cent. And that told us that this is right – sponsoring football is right. We've got our logo on the moving players who actually kick the ball around. If we picked just one team we'd be mad, so we haven't. We've picked Arsenal, we've got St. Etienne, we've got Sampdoria, and we might have another one coming as well. But right at the other end of that spectrum we've just sponsored the Millennium Cup football tournament, which is Britain's biggest ever five-a-side tournament, with more than 2,500 teams entering, and any five-a-side team can enter.

ODM: Which is the one game that everyone's going to want to buy Dreamcast for?

EDDIE: I think *Soul Calibur* has got to be the benchmark title. I saw it at the E^3 games show and it just pisses over the arcade version. When I saw it I just thought: "I'm going to buy this machine just for that game." *Resident Evil: Codename Veronica* would be another. They're the genres that I'm interested in, but there are a number of titles that are going to be very, very good. You won't be relying on just one game to sell this console.

JAKE: There's an awful lot ready for launch. I love *Streetfighter Zero 3*, and I'm looking forward to *Crazy Taxi*.

ODM: What do you guys think of *Power Stone*?

JAKE: That was good. It's a beat 'em up with a novel twist, cos you're in a full 3D environment.

ODM: And *Sonic Adventure*?

DAVE: Unless you go for every single token, it's completed in about two days' play, but it's nevertheless a nice game to play. The thing with *Sonics* is they're so nice you just want to play them anyway.

JAKE: It's a fast, balls-out title, and it really shows off what the machine can do. There were a couple of levels in particular, where you could say to your friends, "Here you are, cop a load of this."

DAVE: I think it will be a year or two before you see people really tapping into what Dreamcast can do. Look at *Metal Gear Solid* on PlayStation. It's taken three or four years to evolve to that level.

EDDIE: I think it's going to take one developer to do one real killer title, and then everybody else will go: "Ah, we can do this with it."

MEGAN: It's probably going to be a smaller company.

DAVE: The thing I'm looking forward to is the next generation of software. We'll have to wait and see whether the companies put their major programmers and major teams into making their leading titles for the machine. They're all putting in slightly tentative bids at the moment, producing their biggest titles for PlayStation or PlayStation 2, and then their second-string titles for Dreamcast. They're all holding back a bit, and it's down to Sega to convince them.

JAKE: A lot of my friends said that PlayStation 2 would blow Dreamcast out of the water, but it's going to be so long before you get it you might as well sit back and enjoy the games for a year or two. And who says it's going to be better? The games now are fun, and that's what I enjoy most about it – I prefer playing a game that's good instead of it being technically perfect.

ODM: What do you think of the graphics and the gameplay of your Dreamcast compared with, say, PlayStation or N64?

JAKE: I got it home and got it plugged in, put *Sega Rally 2* on, and I was just, "F**king hell, it's so smooth." There's so much depth to it. It just breaks what you thought was good on PlayStation and says that's rubbish. And you know these are just first-generation titles too.

ODM: Are you going to produce games that are cool as well as being good, like *WipEout* on PlayStation?

JAKE: Yes. With *WipEout* the music fits perfectly, and *Cool Boarders* did really well with punk music for snowboarding.

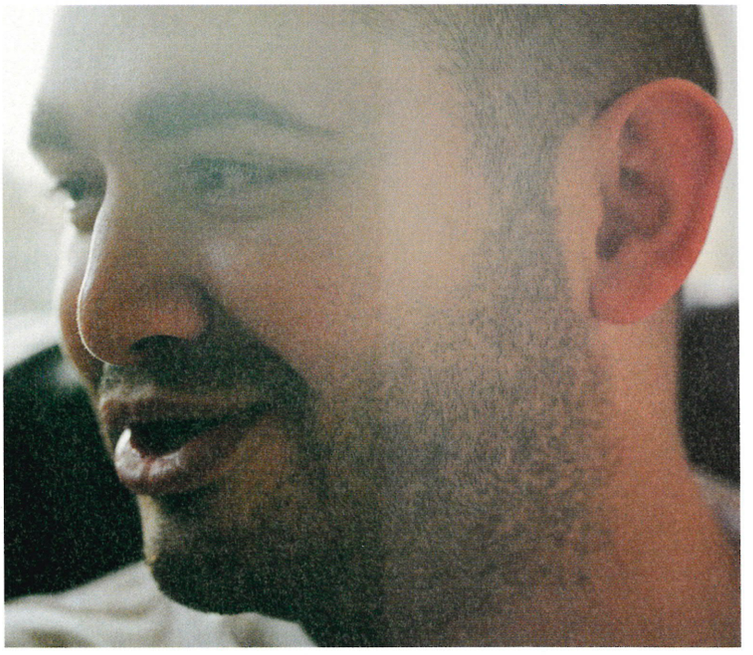
DAVE: One thing that Sega have

"YOU'RE GOING TO FIND PEOPLE WHO WANT TO BUY IT JUST BECAUSE OF THE INTERNET ACCESS"

– MEGAN DAVIS







always done traditionally is cheesy Japanese rock.

MARK: That will appear in some of the games, but we'll avoid it wherever we can. One of the games we've got coming up, *Metropolis Street Racer*, is based around Tokyo, San Francisco and London. The stages will look like these cities, and when you're racing in Tokyo you'll have Japanese cars and heavy rock guitar music, but if you race the car in London you'll be tuning in your radio to London stations and British music. And you'll have an Angus Steakhouse in the road, not Dunkin' Donuts.

ODM: Are you embarrassed about being gamers, or is it cool?

EDDIE: I think to a great extent that Sony dispelled the geek image. It became cool to like games.

JAKE: And it became cool by association, with the Ministry Of Sound having a chill-out room with games, and all that kind of stuff.

DAVE: They haven't made being a gamer cool, they've just made it normal. But Internet use is still seen as nerdy, so Dreamcast could make that more acceptable.

ODM: Will multiplayer games be available from day one?

MARK: No, that'll be the second phase of games, a few months after the launch. We've got to be very careful about how we explain that. We don't want people to assume that you can take any game and play it on the Internet, but right from the start some games will enable you to upload your high scores.

EDDIE: It's the ease of use thing as well. There are a lot of people out there who still don't know how to use the video, so you've got to really entice them into it and get them to actually use the modem.

MARK: The great thing about consoles is that you never have to know how it works. There's just an on button – if the light comes on then the picture will come on the telly, and that's all you need to know. The modem has plastic on the outside and it bolts in – it may as well have been designed by Fisher-Price. The day you get a screen appearing with a menu on your telly saying: 'Please configure your sound card' is the day I leave Sega.

ODM: Are you looking to target the same genres of multiplayer game that have been a success on PC – things like *Quake* or *Ultima Online*?

MARK: Those will have to come, because they're so damn good and they're so much fun, but we've got the chance to give all sorts of games a multiplayer option.

JAKE: I get a grim satisfaction out of beating my best friend, but he lives in Brighton. If I played him over the Net, I'd enjoy it because I'd know exactly what he'd be thinking when he's getting pounded, throwing his pad around and getting angry. And with the chat rooms, you don't have to play just anyone; you could hang around until someone came up and said: "I'm from Manchester."

DAVE: Is Internet access definitely going to be free?

MARK: Yes. Free, unlimited access to the Internet, with five email addresses, Web surfing and exclusive access to what's called our portal site, with exclusive information for Dreamcast owners – chat rooms, news, sports results. And you'll be able to buy a keyboard for about 20 quid.

JAKE: You just pay for your phone calls?

MARK: Yes, and it's all at local rate.

ODM: What's the official line on why the UK gets a slower modem than the one they get in the US?

MARK: It's because we're running on very different networks. Through our partnership with BT we can basically guarantee the speed of our network.

> "I PREFER PLAYING A GAME THAT'S GOOD INSTEAD OF IT BEING TECHNICALLY PERFECT"
>
> – JAKE SMITH

We're not on the Internet as such; it's like reserving the hard shoulder of the M25 to be used only by Dreamcast users, so there's no fluctuation in speed. The assumption that a 56k modem is quicker is not in fact true. It depends on the whole system. The 33.6k modem is right for what we're going to deliver. There will be modem upgrades later, and as those come out the games will be programmed to take advantage of that.

ODM: Do you think the Internet access will attract non-gamers too?

MEGAN: It's such a good price that you're going to find people who want to buy it just because of the Internet access. It's a lot cheaper than a PC.

ODM: Are you going to target users who buy it as a cheap Internet machine?

MARK: Absolutely, yes. I envisage selling to people who would never buy a videogame in their life. That's a long-term mission. It's a great solution for light users of the Internet. I can see lots of people buying it just for that, and we will target them actively a bit later on.

ODM: How do you see the future of Dreamcast?

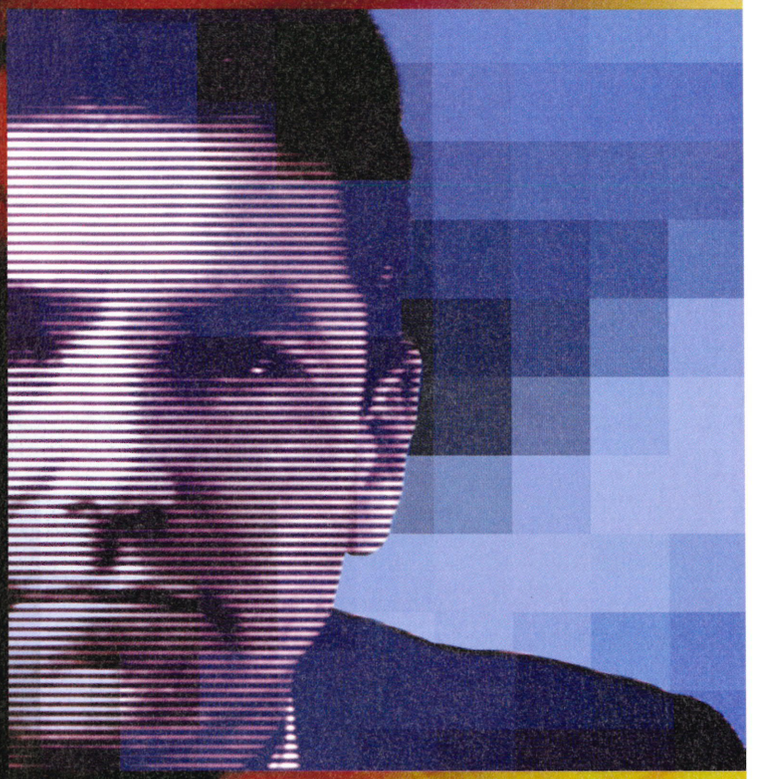
MARK: We're taking a very long-term view. Traditionally three years is your life cycle, but we believe Dreamcast has got legs for five years at least, especially because we can tweak the machine, change the service, all that kind of thing.

ODM: Looking six months ahead, with the advent of much faster phone lines, are you going to equip Dreamcast with a high-speed modem?

MARK: Possibly, yes. The modem, like I say, just bolts onto the side. As soon as it's financially viable and worthwhile to build an upgrade, it'll be out there, whether it comes from Sega or a licensed third party. If there's a need for the unit, someone will make it, someone will sell it, and someone will buy it.

COMING SOON

If you want to get involved in future 'Group Therapy' sessions, write to us at ODM, 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ. Alternatively, email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk, using the subject heading 'Group Therapy'.



IN THE HOT SEAT WITH PAUL FINNEGAN

EACH MONTH WE NAB TIME WITH DREAMCAST'S LEADING DEVELOPERS AND FIRE SOME REAL POSERS AT THEM. THE QUESTIONS WE ASK HAVE COME STRAIGHT FROM YOU LOT – THE PLAYERS

Rage Software are one of the UK's premier development teams. *Incoming*, already a huge hit on PC, was the first non-Sega game to appear on the Japanese Dreamcast, followed soon after by 3D *Commando* remake *Millennium Soldier: Expendable*. Both titles are ready for Dreamcast's release day in the UK, but Rage aren't putting their collective feet up just yet. Dreamcast's first football game has a Rage logo proudly blasted onto the box and is due in October, while *Midnight GT* zooms in next year.

Ladies and gentlemen, fire away at Paul Finnegan, Rage's managing director…

POWER HUNGRY

Incoming and *Expendable* don't look like they use all the power of Dreamcast. Are they straight ports?

James Hunt, Elloughton

PF: Don't underestimate the power that these games use. Both *Incoming* and *Expendable* are serious programs. *Incoming* on PC had a plethora of options to turn on or off; only the hardened PC games player would have the ninja machine to run them with everything turned on full blast. On Dreamcast we can turn these on permanently and achieve a satisfyingly smooth frame rate. That's the beauty of console development, as opposed to PC – we know what system the user has, so we can utilise every feature.

HIDE AND SEEK

Are there any surprises in *Incoming* and *Expendable* – any hidden areas or levels that we should look out for?

Bruce Paignton, Exeter

PF: Have you played the Old McDonald level, where you protect the farmyard from lethal farting cows? Or have you seen the monster disco in *Expendable*? They're all there to be found.

KEEP THE FAITH

How easy is it to develop games for Dreamcast?

Colin Goodge, Litchfield

PF: I suppose *Expendable* was less problematic than *Incoming*, as we'd already gone through a serious learning curve. You must remember that *Incoming* was the first third-party title released for Dreamcast. We were developing it at the same time as Sega were putting together their development kits. All the manuals we had were machine-translated from Japanese to English. For the first month or so you need a lot of faith, but eventually things start to appear on screen and everyone can breathe a sigh of relief.

The background is usually the first target. At first it's just flat-shaded without textures, but at least it's a start. Slowly but surely you have something recognisable. Obviously it doesn't stop there – you have the menus to rework, the controller to implement, and the save games on that trendy Visual Memory unit thing.

NICE FIGURES

What do you think of PlayStation 2? Does it sound the death knoll for Dreamcast before it even arrives?

Kerry Jones, Tunbridge Wells

PF: The specifications released for PlayStation 2 are pretty astounding, and we're really looking forward to seeing what the system can actually handle. But my years in the games industry makes me very wary of engineering figures for each chip. It's the way they work together that counts. I always say: "Better a Dreamcast in the hand than a PlayStation2 in Sony's labs." Well, I don't actually go around saying that out loud, I just think it, and write it down for interviews.

FOOTIE FACTS

What options are available in *UEFA Striker*? What multiplayer modes? Also, you don't have any real teams or players, do you?

Joe Stanley, Liverpool

PF: We support up to four players in simultaneous play. There are 51 UEFA national squads, 44 club squads and at least 20 bonus teams. Each squad has 22 players with 16 real-life attributes. The game is also totally customisable. You can add new teams, edit existing player and team names, and even edit the names of the cups and leagues.

Competitions include a European trophy for the club squads, three different competitions for the national squads, and eight classic matches – scenarios or challenges based on historical games.

ODM: Is it anything to do with *International Soccer 2000* on PC?



△ *Incoming*: plenty of surprises are in there, and it's up to you to go and find them.



△ *UEFA Striker*: 51 national squads and 44 clubs, 22 players per squad, and the game is totally customisable.

PF: *IS2000* is the PC version of the latest *Striker* generation and will be published by our partners Microsoft. It bears some similarities to *UEFA*, but the core engines have been coded from the ground up.

It's looking fantastic at the moment. We're ironing out a few tweaks in the gameplay, but the visuals are stunning.

IT'S UP TO YOU

Will you be doing any Dreamcast-only titles in the future?

Steve Hegenderfer, Seattle

PF: There are no plans for Dreamcast-only titles at present, but it will depend on the eventual installed base of the system. So if enough of you guys go out and buy the console, it may become very worthwhile for us to develop Dreamcast-only games.

LIMITED EDITIONS

What do you say to the assertion that Rage have mastered stunning graphics, but that the games are no more than just something you pop in for a few minutes when you're bored? While *Incoming* and *Expendable* are simple, beautiful shoot 'em ups, they're both limited games.

Richard Cook, Orlando

PF: I think that's a tad unfair. What we tried to do with these titles was to produce fast, playable arcade games. And I think we succeeded. I think shoot 'em ups are still a very interesting genre, and I think there will be elements of this in some of our next-generation titles, but we won't rely solely on this element to produce the whole game.

ADVICE SHOP

What advice would you give someone who wants to become a games developer?

Duncan Sutherland, Dulnain Bridge, Scotland

PF: Some people may think it's a doddle being in the games industry, but I can assure you we still have the same pressures of deadlines, responsibility and long hours. Commitment is the key. I believe that if your heart is in it success will always follow.

BETTER THAN PC?

Does the power of the Dreamcast mean that you can do things that you can't do even on a PC?

Anna Harding, Manchester

PF: I wouldn't go as far as to say that. We equate the Dreamcast to a top end PC with a high end 3D graphics card.

LOOKS LIKE...

Expendable has been likened to the old arcade game *Commando*. Was this a genuine influence, or merely an incorrect attribution?

Evandro Martin, London E1

PF: Yes, several retro games were used as influence in the design of *Expendable*. No-one had been successful in replicating these type of pure arcade games. We believe we achieved this objective using the latest technology and keeping the gameplay simple for out and out fun.

PLAYS LIKE...

PlayStation games have got better over the last five years. Can we expect Dreamcast developers to find new tricks as the months go by?

John Harvey, Liverpool

PF: Yes I would say this is a fair assumption. Developers are still limited in some terms, as we still have to use the Sega or Microsoft APIs, which are forever changing at the moment.

[ODM: APIs are special libraries of commands that communicate directly with the console, making the process of creating games that little bit easier. The APIs form part of the Developers Kit which Sega provides for games companies.]

• Both *Incoming* and *Millennium Soldier:Expendable* are reviewed in this issue – see pages 93 and 94 respectively.

NEXT MONTH...

Monaco and *Speed Devils* people Ubi Soft are willing to take the hot seat next month. If you have questions about those or other Ubi games on the shelves, their forthcoming titles *Deep Fighter* and *Team Suzuki*, Dreamcast, or games development in general, email letters@dreamcast mag.co.uk, or write to *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Closing date: Friday 10 September.

"WE KNOW WHAT SYSTEM THE USER HAS, SO WE CAN UTILISE EVERY FEATURE"

– PAUL FINNEGAN, RAGE SOFTWARE

LOOK BACK IN RAGE

A quick roundup of the games that have brought fame to Liverpool-based Rage



STRIKER

The success of this much-loved Amiga arcade football game prompted a remake as *UEFA Striker* on Dreamcast.



DARKLIGHT CONFLICT

Published by EA, this was a clever combination of space combat and strong story line, leading your character from a seemingly dull day through a conspiracy theory and waves of 3D baddies.



JONAH LOMU RUGBY

Often referred to as the greatest rugby game ever (though competition has been weak), Rage's rugby sim – published – brought the ruck, the back pass and the conversion to leagues of PC and console owners.

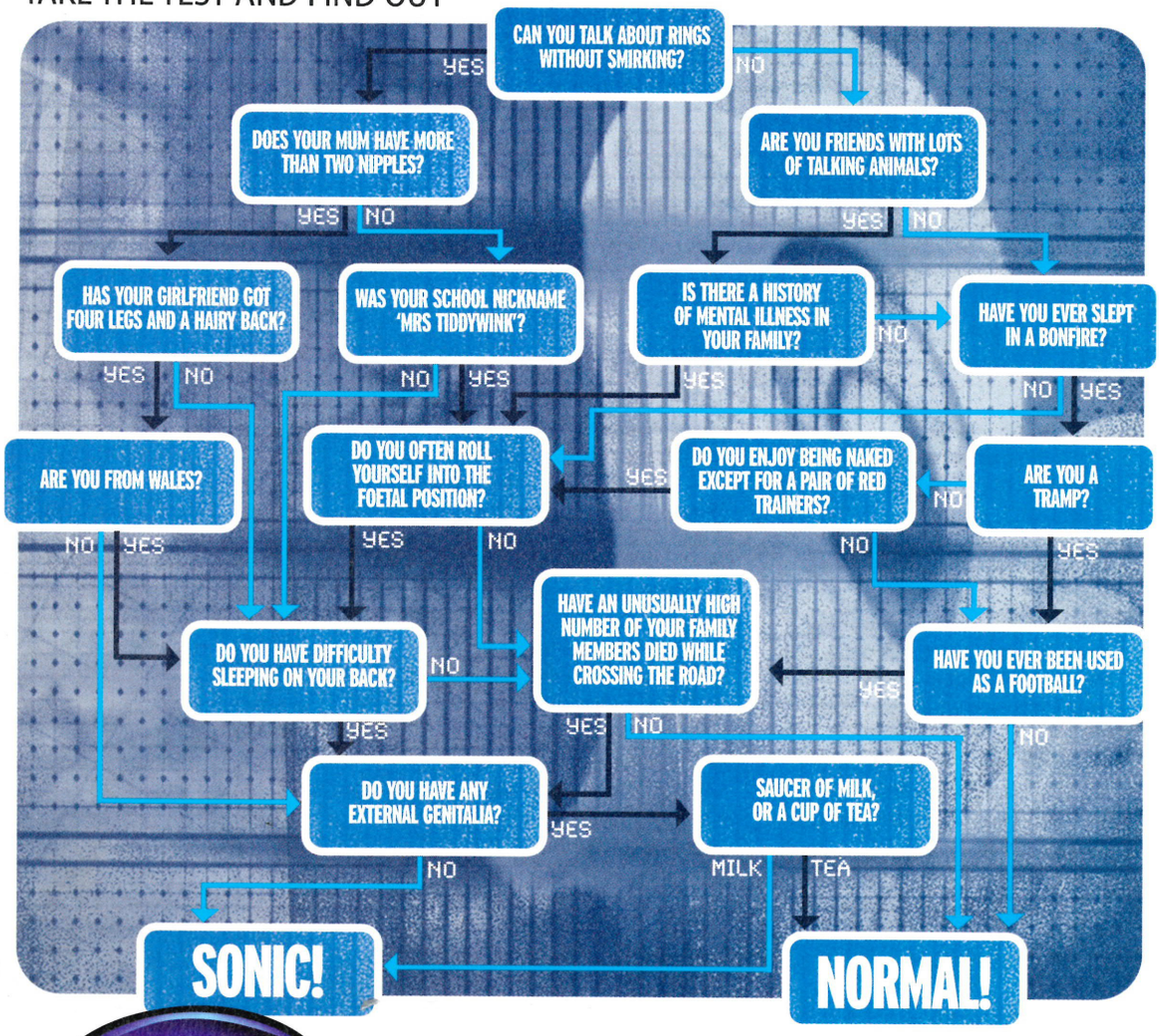


SAVAGE ARENA

A futuristic take on football, but in a Rollerball time when violence isn't so much frowned upon as actively encouraged. As fast paced as *Striker* ever was.

ARE YOU SONIC THE HEDGEHOG?

TAKE THE TEST AND FIND OUT





COMING SOON TO DREAMCAST?

ANNA KOURNIKOVA'S FANTASY TAMAGOTCHI TENNIS

Like tennis, but using the Awesome Power of Dreamcast™ to realistically create your own 3D version of Anna. Just like a Tamagotchi, Anna needs to be trained to increase her skills, fed regularly, played with and, of course, showered and bathed often to keep her clean.

Our first Anna died because we bathed her too much; the second one died because we kept trying to mate her with other female tennis players; the third one we had to reset as we fed her too much and she mutated into Lyndsey Davenport; the next one died after being forced to train naked continuously for 72 hours. It's a learning process.

STAB AINSLEY!

Using the Awesome Power of Dreamcast™ to simulate a fully 3D kitchen environment, you use the Dreamcast pad to control a steel fork. Celebrity chef Ainsley Harriot is locked in the kitchen with you.

The aim is to hurt the cheery sod as much as possible via vicious fork attacks about his person. Power-ups include steak tenderisers, pans of hot chip fat, meat grinders, garlic crushers and corkscrews.

Take Ainsley's beloved kitchen utensils and turn them against him!

• Send us your ideas for other new Dreamcast games. Write to: ODM, *19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Alternatively, drop us an email at: letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk.*

Dreamcast

OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE
19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ
Tel: 0207 631 1433; Fax: 020 7917 3973
Email: letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk
Website: www.dreamcastmag.co.uk

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Mark Higham 020 7917 5681
ART DIRECTOR
Paul Kurzeja 020 7917 5680
PRODUCTION EDITOR
Paul Henderson 020 7917 5691
FEATURES EDITOR
Warren Chrismas 020 7917 5672
SENIOR STAFF WRITER
Ed Lomas 020 7917 5633
STAFF WRITER
Dan Trent 020 7917 5632
STAFF WRITER
Stuart Dredge 020 7917 5634
PHOTOGRAPHER
Lumley 020 7917 5665
DESIGNERS
Rachid Ahouyek, Mada Shaye, Aston Villain
CONTRIBUTORS
Nick Allen, Gary Cutlack, Tanya Chalkin, Eddy Bowen, Charlie Brooker, Steve Double, The Green Project, Steve Hill, Identikal, Daria Lindenberg, David McCandless, Jon Moore, Zed Nelson, Steve Owen, Adam Phillips, Caramel Quin, Richie Shoemaker, Hugh Threlfall
THANKS THIS ISSUE
Matt Beaks, Danny Gregory, Andy Johns, Nick Levine

GROUP PUBLISHER
Tim Ponting 020 7917 7666
PUBLISHER – MARKETING & PROMOTIONS
Helen Cribb 020 7917 5644
ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER
Mandy Hewitt 020 7917 3873
GROUP SALES DIRECTOR
Ian Westwood 020 7917 7618
DEPUTY SALES DIRECTOR
Duncan Tickell 020 7917 7651
MARKETING MANAGER
Paul Smythe 020 7917 7802
LIST RENTAL MANAGER
Nerys Church 020 7917 5663
DIRECT MARKETING DIRECTOR
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NEWSTRADE DIRECTOR
James Burnay 020 7917 7810
RESEARCH DIRECTOR
Lesley Downey 020 7917 7702
EPU MANAGER
Sarah Gilliver 020 7917 7715

PUBLISHING DIRECTOR
Christine Martin
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Alistair Ramsay
CHAIRMAN
Felix Dennis

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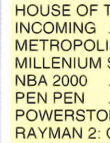
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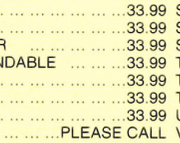
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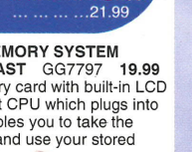


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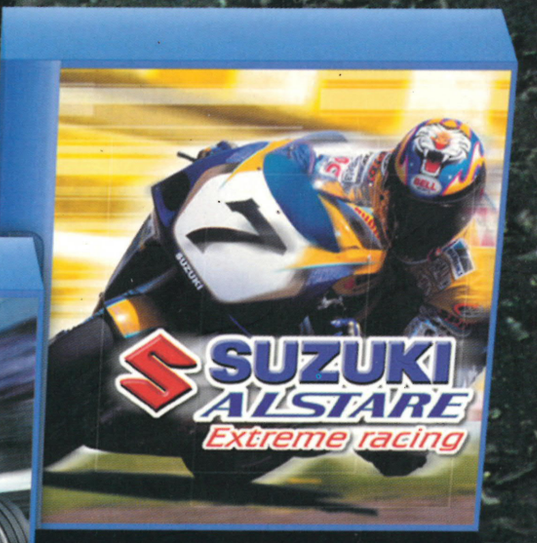
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