THE **OFFICIAL** DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Dreamcast

Dreamcast

ISSUE 07 MAY 2000 £4.99 www.dreamcastmag.co.uk

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WORLD EXCLUSIVE REVIEW!

V-RALLY 2
MUDDY BRILLIANT!

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CHUCHU ROCKET!
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AND...
MDK2, THE NOMAD SOUL AND MORE REVIEWED
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PLAYER GUIDES: CRAZY TAXI, NBA 2K, TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION AND RESIDENT EVIL 2

ON THIS MONTH'S COVER DISC

EXCLUSIVE FULL GAME PLUS TWO DEMOS!

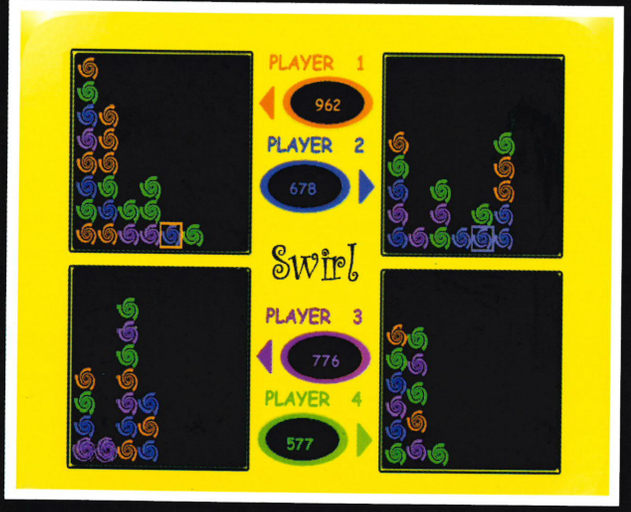


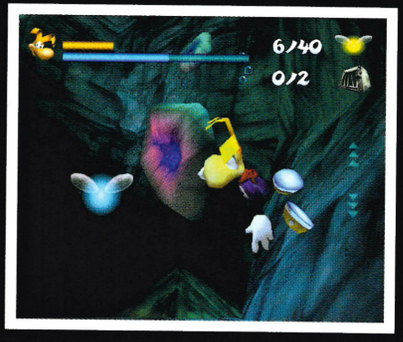
SEGA SWIRL

EXCLUSIVE FULL GAME

Windows users have *Minesweeper;* now Dreamcast has its own free, compulsively addictive puzzle game. *Sega Swirl* enables up to four players compete at once using its split-screen mode, the idea being to clear the screen of swirls and racking up spectacular points combos along the way.

The controls are simple: move around using the D-pad, and use the A button to remove swirls. Lining up swirls of the same colour gives you combos, and the bigger the combo the more points you score. Whenever you remove a swirl that isn't next to another of the same colour you lose 100 points, but sometimes it's worth it to line up a combo. More detailed instructions are provided in the game's opening menu. You can take on the level challenge mode on your own, or play against up to three friends in the split-screen multiplayer mode.





RAYMAN 2

EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO

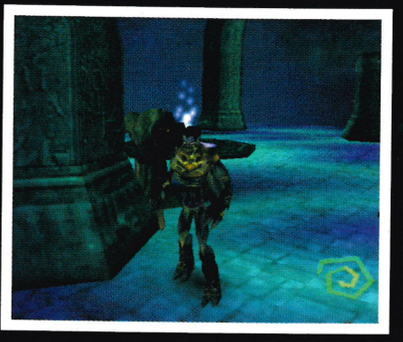
Here's a brand new demo of Ubi Soft's spectacular platform game, in which you help Rayman to rid the world of pesky robo-pirates that have been making a nuisance of themselves by kidnapping his mates, throwing him in jail and stealing parrots (probably).

The demo sees you in the game's Sanctuary Of Water And Ice level. Watch out, as right from the start you'll be dodging shots from an angry pirate.

If the visuals and gameplay take your fancy, the game's in the shops now.







SOUL REAVER

EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO

Legacy Of Kain: Soul Reaver, to give Eidos's game it's full title (in the shops now). Take renegade vampire Azrael on a mission of vengeance against his former buddies in this atmospheric 3D action adventure.

In the demo, you must discover and cast the Fire Glyph, which is one of the glyph spells that must be found in the game. First, you must find an unlit torch, and then seek out a flame to light it. Then you need to find the great statue and offer up the fire to it to receive the Fire Glyph.





FAULTY COVERDISC?

If your demo disc is damaged or faulty and you're a subscriber, please return it to *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, CD Replacement, Customer Interface, Bradley Pavilions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 0BQ, UK. We will endeavour to replace it as soon as possible. If you're not a subscriber, please request a replacement from your point of purchase.

NESTLING ON THE COVER OF THIS COPY OF *OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE* IS THE LATEST INSTALMENT OF DREAM ON. WHAT DO YOU GET? READ ON...

V-RALLY 2 EXPERT EDITION

MOVIE

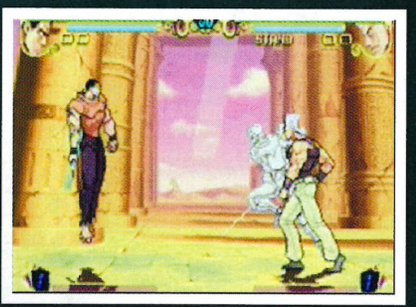
So it's not called '*Millennium Edition*' as it says on the disc sleeve – the name changed late in the day. The subject of our cover feature is a razor-fast rally racer that gives you the chance to drive like a real pro. Check out the movie, then read our cover feature starting on page ten.



JO JO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE

MOVIE

As if one quirky 2D Japanese game wasn't enough, *Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure* is definitely one of the strangest beat 'em ups we've seen in a long time. If you like your Capcom beat 'em ups, then chances are that this will be right up your street. Check out our review on page 82.



WETRIX+

MOVIE

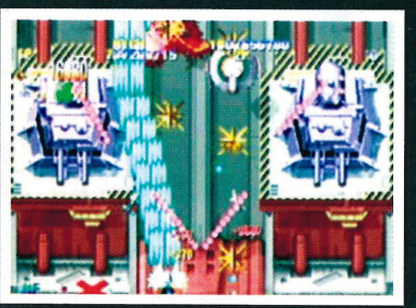
It's a good month for puzzle game fans. Not only are we giving you a free copy of *Sega Swirl*, but we've also got the lowdown on Infogrames' watery new puzzler *Wetrix+*, with a movie to show you what it's all about. Once you've had a butcher's at the movie, take a look at the review on page 80.



GIGA WING

MOVIE

It's retro vertical shoot 'em up action, except with even more flying bullets, enormous explosions and absurdly huge boss enemies. *Giga Wing* might not stretch Dreamcast's 3D processing power, but it looks like being a fun blaster nonetheless. To find out more, turn to our preview on page 63.





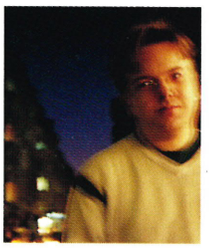
HIDDEN & DANGEROUS

MOVIE

Have you got a thing for men in camouflage? Well, better keep that to yourself. But if you like commando games, *Hidden & Dangerous* promises to be quite a title, putting you in control of a crack team behind enemy lines. The final game will feature a split-screen four-player mode.

06.04.2000

CH-CH-CH-CHANGES



ANOTHER MONTH ALREADY? If you're new around these parts, then welcome to *Official Dreamcast Magazine*. But, hey, where have you been?

If you're a regular reader, then thanks for coming back. You may notice a few changes this issue. We've expanded our Hints & Tips section, for starters. We've also created a new regular section called Dreamcast Owner's Guide, which includes a directory of every game we've reviewed, plus a round-up of websites worth a look (this month featuring music sites) and a series of Frequently Asked Questions.

These changes, along with others, have been made because our research showed that you, the readers, wanted them.

We're always happy to hear what you think about the magazine and, indeed, about the world of Dreamcast in general, so if you have chance then please do drop us a line (you'll find contact details on page 128 – but please, please don't phone!).

While we can't promise to respond to all the letters and emails we receive, I can assure you that every single one is read by *everyone* on our editorial team and, of course, the best of the bunch make it on to our letters page each month.

There are plenty of other ways you can contribute to *Official Dreamcast Magazine* too. You can, for example, vote for the games you're most looking forward to playing in Readers' Most Wanted (see page 33). And you can share your thoughts on our reviews and the games you've bought in Reader Reviews (page 120). You can also put questions to some of the world's finest games developers (page 96), or have your general Dreamcast queries answered by Sega (page 129).

You can share your favourite cheats with us (page 112), or if you're stuck in a game you can write to Help! (page 111) for some advice. Think you're good at games? Then why not enter one of our challenges (page 113) and prove it to the world – and maybe win a prize?

The thing is, you see, it's us who put *Official Dreamcast Magazine* together, but it's *your* magazine. Get involved!

Till next time,

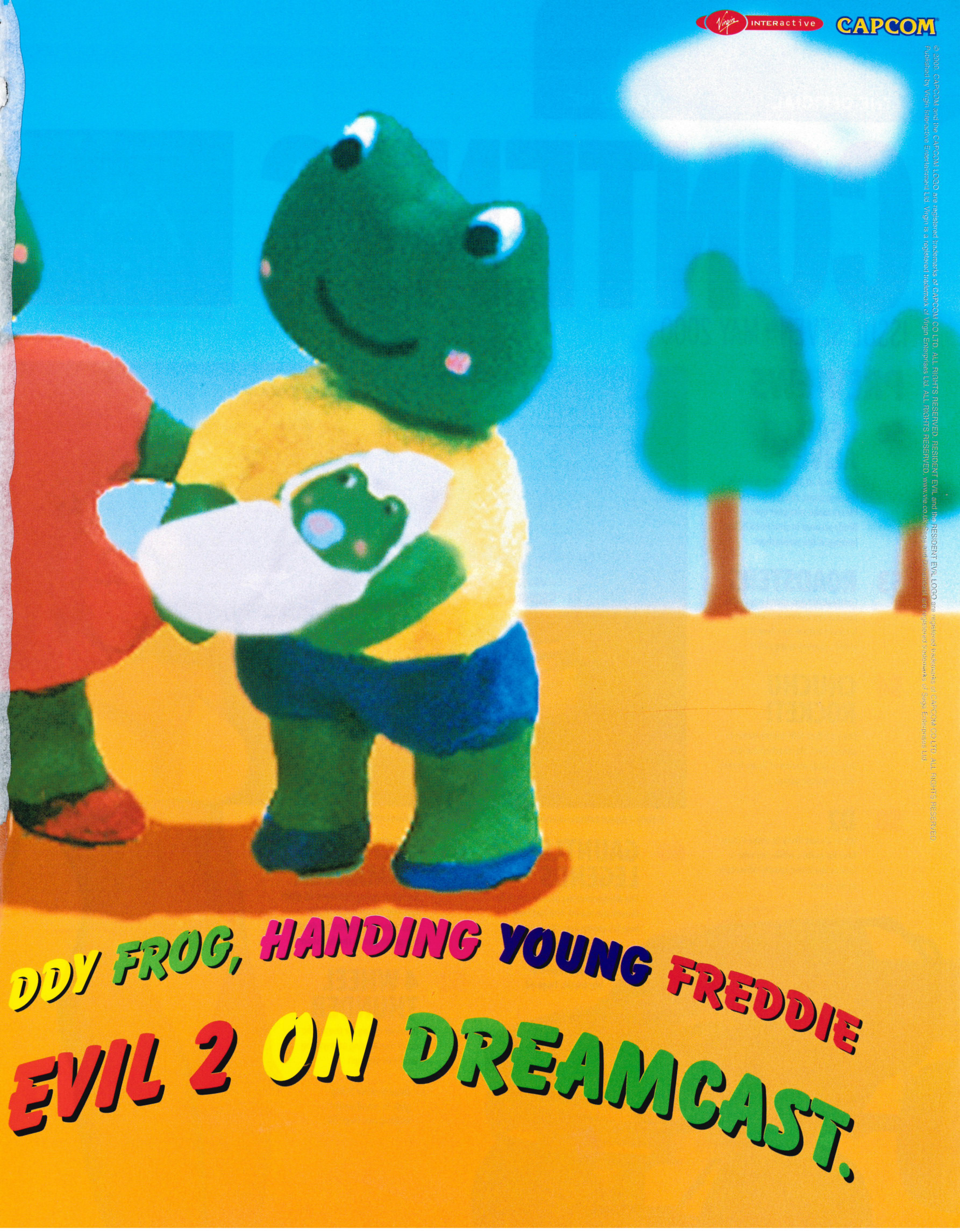
Warren Chrismas, Editor

PS: DON'T MISS THE NEXT, EXTRA SPECIAL ISSUE OF *ODM*, ON SALE THURSDAY MAY 4 (SEE PAGE 37 FOR DETAILS).



"GO AND HAVE SOME FUN" SAID DA

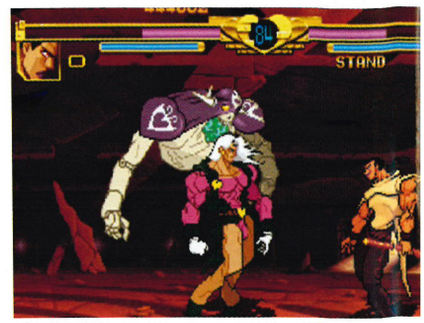
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54 CHUCHU ROCKET!
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58 D2
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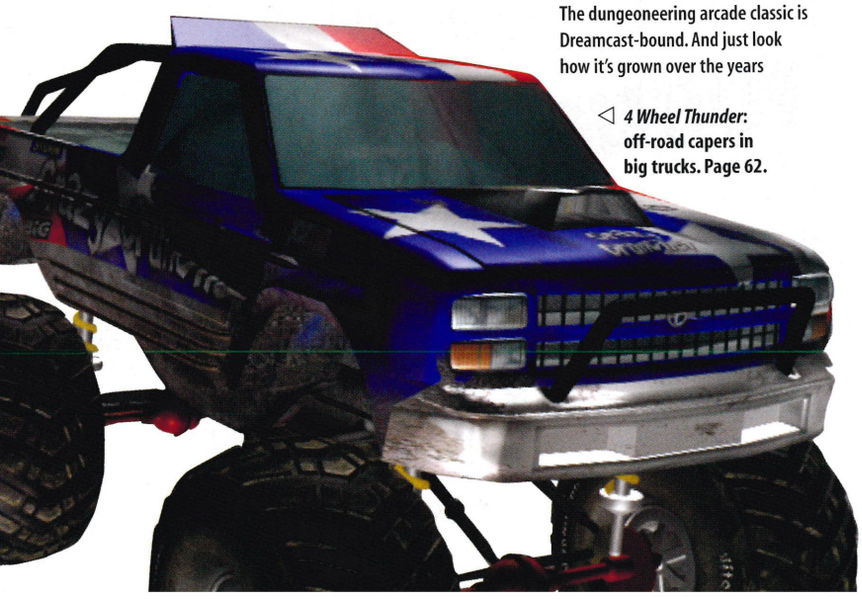


△ *V-Rally 2 Expert Edition*: massive coverage of the muckiest, funkiest rally game around. Page 10.

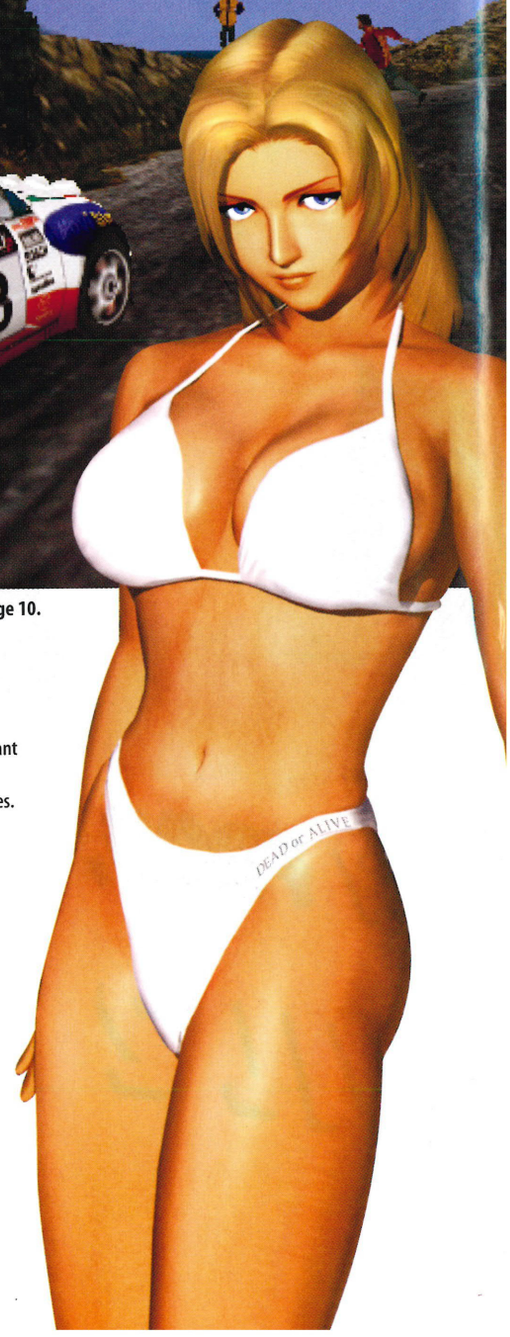
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Other than the free one on the disc with this magazine, this is the first puzzle game to hit Dreamcast

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Yet more fights, only this time it's a gang of mad cartoon characters and their ghostly friends doing the scrapping

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We delve into the heart of Infogrames' massive *V-Rally 2 Expert Edition* in a massive 14-page feature. Buckle up!

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For only 40 pounds you can now buy yourself a second life in an alternate dimension. But is it worth the hassle?

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WHO DOES THIS STUFF?

MEET SOME OF THE PEOPLE WHO HELP PRODUCE *ODM*



ED LOMAS

Probably best known for his work on *Sega Saturn Magazine* and *C&VG* "when it was good", Ed is *Official Dreamcast Magazine*'s reviews editor and responsible for chasing the games featured in each issue. He's also responsible for approximately ten per cent of HMV's annual turnover (he visits the main Oxford Street branch at least twice a week). This month Ed has mostly been drooling over *Dead Or Alive 2*, previewed on page 50.



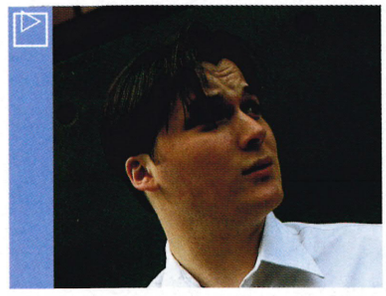
STEVE OWEN

Just back from the land of Oz (Australia, not that weird place with the yellow brick road), Steve has returned to his first love – reviewing driving games! Indeed, he's the man behind this month's mammoth cover feature on *V-Rally 2 Expert Edition* (starting on page 10). Although trained as a programmer, Steve has spent the last five years writing reviews and features for likes of *Edge*, *PC Gamer*, *Arcade*, *Focus* and *The Daily Star*. He is a Pisces.



STEVE FULLJAMES

The other Steve has been playing lots of *Wetrix+* this month – find out what he thinks of it on page 80. He's also written for loads of other games magazines in the past, including *Mean Machines Sega*, *Official Sega Saturn Magazine*, *PlayStation Plus* and *C&VG*. These days though, Steve's day job is in Web design. Bizarrely, in his spare time he writes a website about, yes, videogames (coming soon at www.gamesculture.co.uk).



ADAM HAYES

Adam is *Official Dreamcast Magazine*'s art editor but he has an indentical twin brother so we're never *really* sure who it is sitting in the corner of the office. Adam previously worked on ultra-cool skate mag *Lodown*, and has created typefaces used by the likes of *Mixmag*, *Loaded* and the *Cartoon Network*. He's also designed album covers for drum 'n' bass artists Bad Company and Hardware. No, we've never heard of 'em either.

NEED SOME HELP OR ADVICE?

A GUIDE TO THE TELEPHONE NUMBERS THAT MATTER

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Calls charged at standard rates except: [1] local call rates; [2] 60p/min; [3] 75p/min; and [4] £1.50/min. If you're under 18, ask permission from whoever pays the phone bill before calling these lines. NOTE: Sorry, the magazine's editorial offices cannot accept telephone calls from readers.

Dreamcast.

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THANKS THIS ISSUE
Bedrock, Slice PR, ON Digital, Pizza Hut, HMV, Camel, Silk Cut, Crown & Sceptre, Denim bar, the ladies

DEADLINE CHOON OF THE MONTH
Electrotheque – *Every 1's A Winner*

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THINK DRIVING GAMES

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ARE STUCK IN THE MUD?

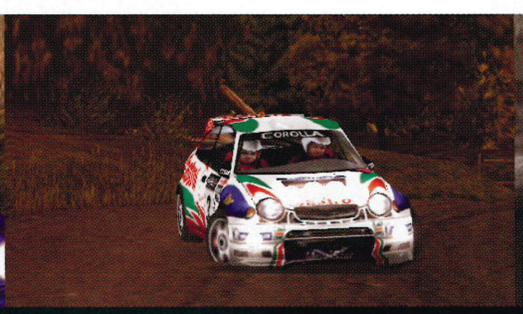
WELL, CLEAR THE WAY FOR THE SMOOTHEST,



FASTEST RALLY GAME EVER!



△ Unlike with most rally games, you can race against three other cars at the same time. Cool.

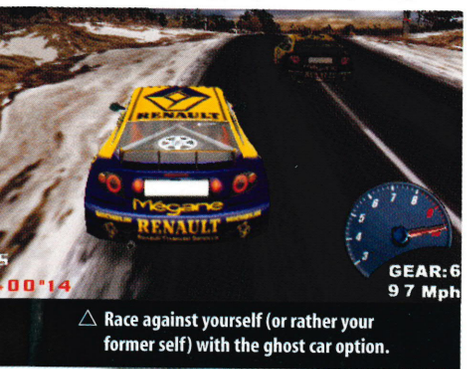


△ Look closely and your can see the little heads inside. The co-driver is always smiling, bless him.



△ Take a long, hard look at the lovely scenery here – you won't have the chance when you're racing.

V-RALLY 2 EXPERT EDITION



△ Race against yourself (or rather your former self) with the ghost car option.

AT LAST, A DRIVING GAME OF DEPTH ON DREAMCAST. *AND* IT'S ENTERTAINING. **STEVE OWEN** BUCKLES UP FOR THE RIDE

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**
DEVELOPER: **EDEN**

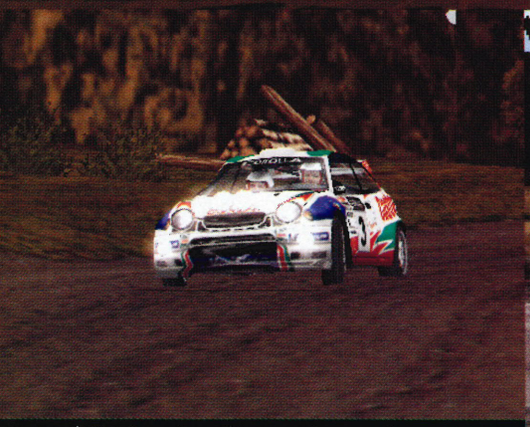
ON THE CD

WALES: LAND OF OUR FATHERS; the home of rugby (well, after Rugby), Cerys from Catatonia, Tom Jones and Puff the Magic Dragon (maybe); and rain-sodden enough to be about as miserable a location for rally driving as you can get. Which is perhaps why it's one of the countries not to get a look in in *V-Rally 2*.

For driving fans, Dreamcast seemed to be on its last legs even before it started walking. While for PlayStation owners the shelves are bowing under the weight of some excellent driving titles (and loads of dodgy ones, of course), us DC chaps struggle to show off anything of note. *Crazy Taxi* has helped in its entertaining fashion, but *Sega Rally 2* is just a simple, if beautifully presented, arcade game. What we need is a beautiful, deep, involving and hugely impressive driving game to really get our juices going.

Wait a minute… Is that the telephone? Could it be…? Yes, it's *V-Rally 2*. A wrong number, if you like. Another addition to the ever-expanding genre, another enjoyable game, more rather glaring mistakes. God damn. It's not perfect, it's missed some rather obvious tricks, but with *V-Rally 2* (originally to be subtitled *Millennium Edition*, but changed at the last minute to *Expert Edition*) Infogrames have given us lots of depth, lots of eye candy and, most important of all, lots and lots of fun.

Rally driving is something that's sometimes overlooked, and rather unfairly. Admittedly it isn't the most astonishing spectator sport (imagine, if you will, standing knee-deep in the mud, rain lashing your grimaced, numb visage, macintosh sweating on the inside, just to see a driver skid round your corner at 60 miles an hour and spray you with small, sharp pebbles). It's not even great telly – which is presumably why the BBC still has the rights to show Rally Championship highlights. But it does make a great game. The courses are long and look the same (perhaps I'm not selling this too well), but this means that every twist and turn is a surprise. Your only hope of competing is to ▶



△ Use the replay option to watch your performances again and again… and again.



△ *V-Rally 2*: so detailed that you can actually make out the halogen bulbs.



△ If you can't get around opponents you can always try bumping into the back of them. It's not a good idea in *V-Rally 2* though, especially at high speed – your car will almost certainly suffer from damage.



△ Can you guess what happens next, readers? Yep, we plough straight into the back of him.



△ Make life really difficult for yourself by using the in-car view at night. Doh!

"THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST THRILLING AND HEART-SEIZING GAMES YOU CAN GET FOR YOUR DREAMCAST"

keep your foot down, the windscreen wipers going at full speed, and rely on the clues bellowed to you by your co-driver.

Unlike traditional motorsport, rally driving relies on the inherent instability of your car, and the lack of grip between your tyres and the road surface. Rather than slowing down at corners, the trick is to power-slide round. This involves slamming the brakes on, turning slightly to send the back end round, then flooring it on opposite lock so that you don't lose speed or momentum. It's a trick that takes some getting used to, but if you've played *Daytona USA* at the arcade or *Sega Rally 2* on your Dreamcast then it's one that you'll have mastered by now.

Master that trick and imagine – go on, try – what it's like to tear at 80mph along a muddy road barely wider than a bridle path. On one side is a steep bank – clip it and you turn the car upside down; on the other side is a ditch and some large rocks buried in the long grass – hit those and that's the wheels and suspension buggered. Rallying is a hugely skilful sport and, best of all, the crashes are very messy.

And if ever a game recreated the sheer gravel-tossing joy of rallying, it's *V-Rally 2* (er, *Expert Edition*). Lovingly created by French developers Eden, it's more than just a conversion of last year's PlayStation game (which, on the Sony machine, was always outdone by Codemasters' *Colin McRae Rally* anyway).

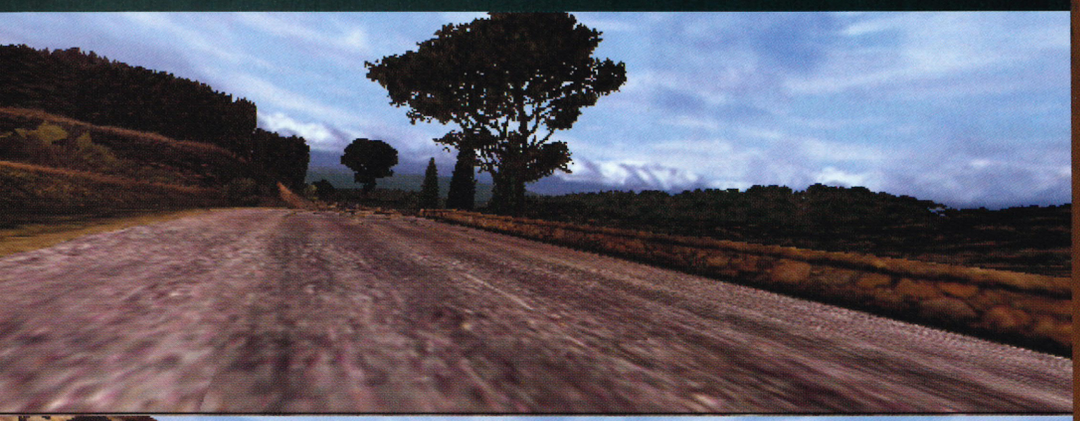
Just take a look at the screenshots scattered around this feature, imagine them shooting past at around 25 or 30 frames a second, and realise that this is one of the most thrilling and heart-seizing games you can get for Dreamcast. When you play, your teeth are clenched, your buttocks ache, your hand controller is punished. Anyone walking past is drawn in, and you can see them stomping on an imaginary brake pedal as you come into a tight bend much too fast. *V-Rally 2* is extremely impressive, even if it isn't perfect. We like.

(UN)LICENSED TO THRILL

Although it lacks a competition licence (which, if it had one, you probably wouldn't recognise anyway), there's no shortage of familiar aspects to *V-Rally 2*. There are 16 1999 World Rally cars available, plus ten hidden bonus cars, each modelled using more than 2,000 polygons. Think Subaru Impreza, Golf, Lancier, Ford and Skoda – these are the cars that are used by the champion rally drivers, and each handles individually.



△ Suicidal spectators try to get the best camera shots before legging it out of the middle of the road.





△ See what happens when you let a couple of work experience boys try *V-Rally 2*'s split-screen mode?

There are differences in power ratios, grip, balance, acceleration and steering lock, and when you get out on a stretch of dirt you can feel those differences. Some cars are suited to taking corners hard and fast, others perform better when thrown into wide arcs. And no other game has given you so many to test drive from the start.

If you like to tinker with your vehicles and understand a little about how motorsport works, then you can even play mechanic. Gear ratios are the easiest to comprehend, altering cars' top speeds from around, say, 100mph in sixth gear up to perhaps 130mph, with a loss of acceleration the consequence. As you get to know the courses better, you can gamble that the lack of acceleration is far outweighed by screaming past your competitors on the long straights or fast bends.

Depending on your driving style you might prefer to stiffen the suspension (handy for increasing a car's response), decrease the turning circle or alter brake balance. Moving the centre of braking nearer to the front of the car increases turning sensitivity into corners and sends the back end round more, while shifting it backwards keeps the car straighter but makes steering harder. At the start of each stage your car is given an average set-up, but your own driving style might mean that a bit of tinkering shaves those precious few seconds off your time.



△ Baby you can drive my car… but it'll cost you.

FOR REAL!

Fancy a go at the real thing? Well it'll cost ya, but maybe not as much as you think. **DAN TRENT** investigates

IF YOU FANCY YOURSELF as the next Richard Burns or Colin McRae, then take heart: you don't need to be a millionaire and you don't have to join the hair-gelled muppets who lurk around the supermarket car park in their Fiestas.

For those who think a Scandinavian flick is something you get from the top shelf of the video shop, the first step for any budding rally star is to head down to one of the many driving centres that offer beginners' courses. They're not cheap, costing around £150 for a full day, but they provide an excellent introduction and basic tuition.

If that whets your appetite, the next stage is to find your local club, join and get involved in the local scene. As John Richardson, chairman of the Association of Northern Car Clubs explains: "You get an enormous amount of help from people of a like mind. They can give you lots of advice and everyone is really enthusiastic."

Armed with a licence from the Motor Sports Association (MSA), all you need is a car with the relevant safety equipment and you're off. While off-the-peg cars are available for the well-heeled (Fiat will sell you a fully kitted out and souped-up Group N Punto for a shade under – gulp! – £80,000), your car doesn't need to be anything special.

"At club level you could enter your mum's runabout if she'd let you!" adds John. "As long as it has a roll cage and fire extinguishers you can enter anything. As an example, you could pick up a used Skoda Favorit with all the necessary kit for about £1,500 and you'd be ready to go." Stop sniggering at the back, Skoda have made quite a name for themselves in the world of rallying.

If you've got your sights set on the world championships, then there's no way you're going to escape paying out an awful lot of money. Unless, that is, you get lucky, like Richard Burns, and show enough promise to win a scholarship from a rally school to fund your ambitions.

• For more information, contact the Motor Sports Association at www.msauk.org/home.html or on 01753 681736. For info on circuits, try Bill Gwynne Rally School International (Northamptonshire), tel 01280 705570); Forest Experience and Rally School (Wales), tel 01686 420201; Silverstone Rally School Ltd (Northants), tel 01327 857413.



△ Each car becomes steadily more compressed as you, ahem, push it to the edge of the envelope.



△ "Left. I said left. Go left! Left! LEFT!" After several wrong turns, Brian and Dave ended up in Buxton.

But while *V-Rally 2* offers you these garage adjustments, it's a bit of a shame that the game doesn't attempt to explain, even in basic terms, what it is that you've achieved. *Colin McRae Rally*, some two years old but a good point of reference here, includes this basic information, and it's a feature that would doubtless encourage more tinkering.

DRIVE, BABY!

To some driving, then. As a single player your options are numerous. For depth you might consider the Championship mode; the fairly straightforward European Championship gets the ball rolling with eight rallies consisting of two stages (you can change car set-up before each of the stages).

When it comes to the actual driving, *V-Rally 2* can't be beaten by anything on *any* console. The gorgeous graphics

THE CAR'S THE STAR

You've seen them on the telly, you can drive them in *V-Rally 2*, but what's the best road-going rally rocket to drive?

While car companies no longer have to build a minimum number of road replicas to comply with the Group A regulations for rallying, the cars you see on the road and in the supermarket car park are not that far removed from the ones used to compete in the World Championships. Our colleagues at top car mag *Auto Express* have driven all the cars in the game for real and know them inside out, so when it came to finding out which is king of the road we knew who to ask.



RENAULT MÉGANE COUPÉ 2.0
£14,995; 124MPH

The glamorous member of the practical Mégane family is a purposeful-looking machine with the grunt to match.
***Auto Express* says:** "Distinctive-looking, urban roads are where the Mégane feels at home. Along a country lane, the boomy engine and choppy ride combine to limit the amount of fun that can be had by the enthusiastic driver. Easy to drive but outclassed on the road."



SEAT IBIZA GTI 16V
£15,600; 134MPH

SEAT's popular super-mini has been a regular high finisher in the rallies, but has a seemingly undeserved low profile on the roads in the UK.
***Auto Express* says:** "The Ibiza GTi looks every inch the racer and has lightning responses through the bends. Every tyre squirm is transferred through the steering wheel, giving the driver a real feeling of control. Superb value and great to look at, but uncompromisingly sporting for everyday use."



PEUGEOT 206 GT
£15,695; 129MPH

A firm favourite on the rally circuit and with boy racers, this spiritual heir to the throne of the classic 205 GTi promises much.
***Auto Express* says:** "On twisting roads the Peugeot demonstrates brilliant composure and is hugely enjoyable to twirl through the corners. From steering response to mid-corner adjustability, few cars delight as much as this, and the 206 is one of the best driver's cars as well as being well screwed together."



△ Passing through the quaint villages of Corsica, you're barely noticed – as long as you don't scrape the side of their villas.



△ You can turn the car stereo up to 11 on this course – no-one's gonna hear you. Ask your co-drivert first though, eh?

scream past, and look astonishingly crisp on computer monitor (with the aid of a Dreamcast VGA box), but still beautiful on a telly. Little touches help you to learn some of the shorter stages, such as pockets of spectators, some of which demonstrate their extreme stupidity by attempting to photograph you from the middle of road and then diving for cover when you're just a few metres away. It's probably much as it is in real life, but those insane fools don't half put you off.

There's the obligatory choice of racing views, of course, with the BonnetCam being a personal favourite, and the driver view the most difficult to contend with (and why isn't the dashboard animated to show speed and revs?). Watch a replay and you're treated to a variety of excellent camera angles, which also enable you to see yourself and your co-driver inside your car. Disconcertingly, the latter is always smiling, the fool taunting you to drive more terrifyingly. Scream if you want to go faster!

Cars get battered as you (invariably) drive them into immovable objects which, rather disappointingly, include everything on the side of the road. Ropes and spectators are made of steel – hit one head-on rather than with a glancing blow and you're infuriatingly brought to a standstill, with precious seconds being lost. Nevertheless, except for the occasional tearing of textures on roads as they fade into the distance, this is a beautiful-looking game.

With a steering wheel or controller there's a definite thrill to be had by throwing your vehicle round the corners. Flooring the accelerator is the order of the day, positioning your car on the outside of the bend, ready to be thrown into the corner nice and early to accelerate through. Dust, gravel, snow or water are flung from the back of the car as the tyres scrabble to attain some grip; catch the edge of the road and you lose all traction; touch a kerb and you might find your car flipped over – a stunt that's worryingly easy to do. The crashes look convincing enough until you manage to flip the car over its bonnet, when it seems to spin on the spot at least three times – it'd be fun to see that happen in real life.

One of the biggest disappointments is the lack of 'spot' sound effects. While the engines roar convincingly and excitingly enough, there's no sense of driving on a particular road surface. Again, the two-year-old *Colin McRae Rally* successfully added to the haste and excitement by having the sound of gravel kicking on to the underside of your car, with a satisfying spray of stones as you slid into a bend. Snow crunched, water sploshed, sand… er… well, sand ▶



VAUXHALL ASTRA SRI
£15,800;130MPH

Vauxhall's otherwise dull mid-sized hatchback comes alive in SRi form, seeking to emulate success in the British Rally Championship.
***Auto Express* says:** "Once positioned behind the chunky three-spoke steering wheel with the two-litre engine running, it's clear that this Astra means business. But despite high build quality and impressive thrust, the Astra feels more like the choice of an armchair enthusiast than a finely honed rally replica for would-be world champions."



FORD FOCUS T-ONE90
£25,000; 140MPH

In the absence of a pukka hot Ford tuning company, DPRS have launched a seriously hotted up version of Colin McRae's championship drive.
***Auto Express* says:** "Composure over uneven surfaces is unerring, and pin-point steering definition allows easy and accurate cornering at outrageous speeds. The DPRS T-one90 makes the most of the Focus's considerable dynamic abilities. Blisteringly fast, a serious sports machine that enthusiasts will love."



SUBARU IMPREZA P1
£30,000; 150MPH

The Impreza has become something of a cult classic, blending tank-like strength and reliability with performance to shame Porsches and Ferraris alike.
***Auto Express* says:** "When the turbo kicks in the drive becomes addictive with terrific mid-range acceleration. The P1 is more composed than any rival, and the four-wheel drive chassis feels raw and nimble. Predictable rather than intimidating, this is a pure driver's car."



MITSUBUISHI EVOLUTION IV
£30,995; 150MPH

Utterly bonkers road car that is a pure rally car barely tamed for road use. Choice of world champion Tommi Mäkinen, and the car to beat.
***Auto Express* says:** "The Evo has fearsome acceleration that allows you to breeze past other traffic with the ease of a supercar, and to make things more entertaining, gear changes are accompanied by a distinctive exhaust crackle. The ride feels ferociously hard, but grip levels feel almost limitless."

Pictures courtesy of Auto Express *magazine.*
All prices and top speeds are approximate.

AND HERE IS THE WEATHER

Just for the sake of completion, please enjoy our round-up of typical rallying conditions. Thank you



△ It's another beautiful day in sunny Corsica. Factor 20 lotion is the minimum.



△ The weather may be good, but overnight snow has made the verges treacherous.



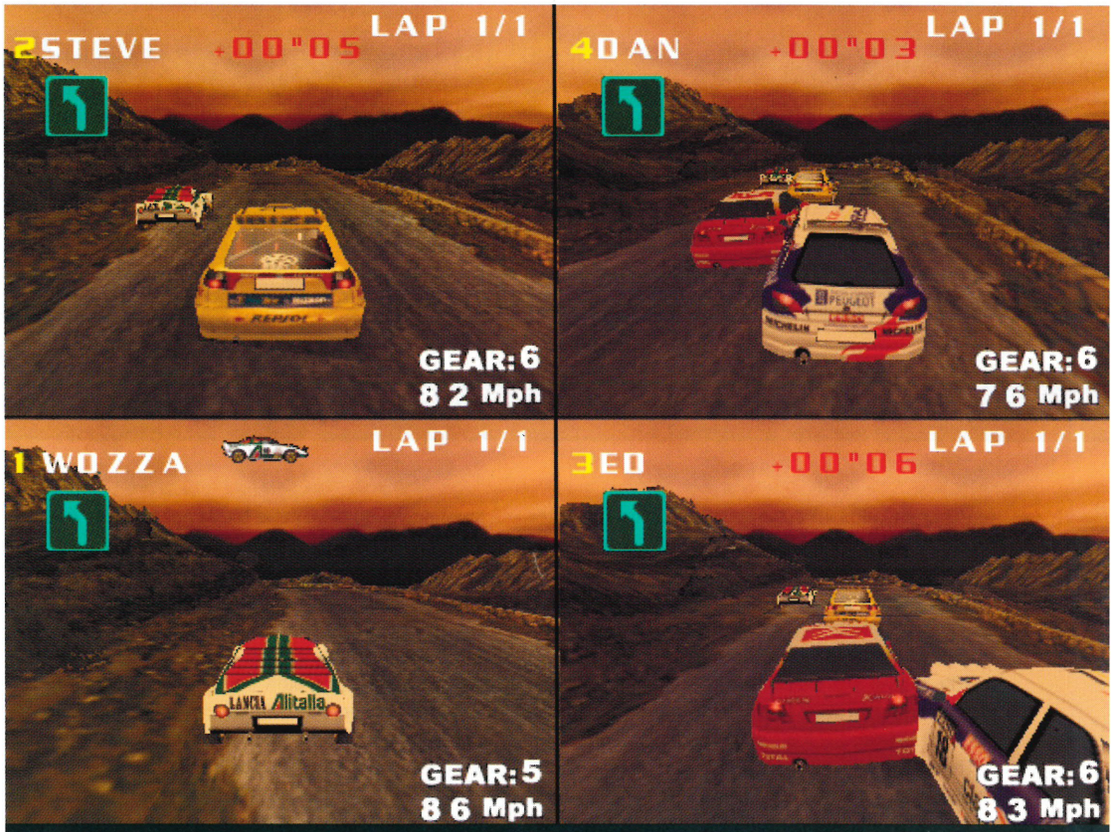
△ Doh! Who turned out the lights? If you look closely you can just about make out... something.



△ A calm evening on the gravel of West Yorkshire, but the bends are still difficult to spot.



△ Muddy Indonesia in the rain makes for a fantastic race, but staying on the track is a nightmare.



△ The wider, dustier tracks produce the best four-player action – plenty of opportunities to slide your opponents off the road.

"IF EVER A GAME RECREATED THE SHEER GRAVEL-TOSSING JOY OF RALLY DRIVING, IT'S *V-RALLY 2*"

kind of 'fumphed', if you see what we mean. But not in *V-Rally 2*. In fact all you get are the car growls, the kick-back of the gearbox (manual or automatic, naturally) and a thankfully subtle techno-rock soundtrack.

It seems like such a minor point until you race, when you find yourself trying to work out what's missing. It's a bit like staring at a friend who looks different and not being able to put your finger on the fact that he's shaved all his hair off.

Also missing – and you'd think your co-driver would be just as surprised – is water. "Fast right, over crest, through water," you're reliably informed. Except that since the pace notes were made there's been a bit of a drought, because barring the odd lake to one side of some stages there's barely a drop of the wet stuff on the road, despite several promises from your passenger.

And while we're having a go at the co-driver – who can be the more traditional fella, or a quite incredible-sounding woman with a Hollywood-style Russian spy accent – they don't always seem to get it right. In real rally driving you rely on your co-driver, often for both your lives. It's all a matter of trust, so that as you begin to work out their pacing you can prepare for turns before you even see them, thanks to the early warning in your ear. But when they get it wrong or miss out the odd corner it can be a real killer.

In one Monte Carlo stage, you're racing along a narrow road carved into the hills when you're warned about a fast right-hander. You can make it at top speed, so there's no need to slow down; unfortunately your number two seems to have forgotten about the hairpin off to the left. Meet that at full speed and you can expect repairs to last longer than 30 minutes at the service stop.

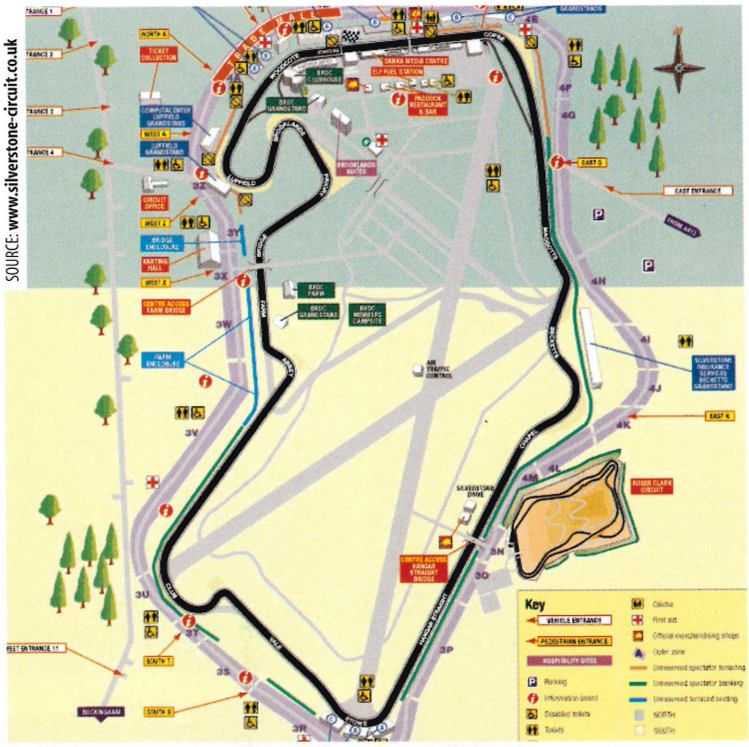
RACING A LA MODE

It's a Championship mode by name, then, but unfortunately it doesn't even attempt to replicate a proper championship. Two stages in each of eight countries is pretty good going, but perhaps extending each leg to take in a number of stages would be better. It's all over rather quickly – about 40 minutes in total – with a points victory unlocking the International Championship which has 12 legs and tougher opposition.

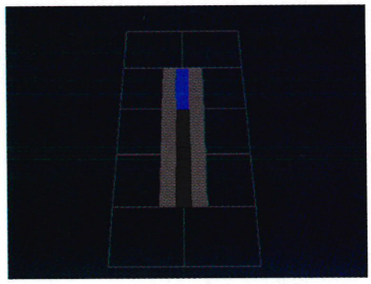
There are only seven opponents, too, and while this should still be enough to ensure that you

MAKING TRACKS

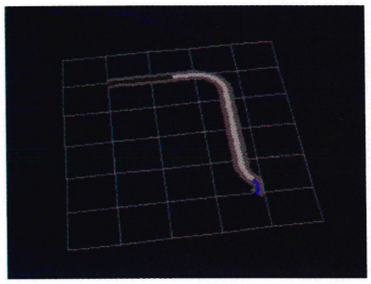
One of *V-Rally 2*'s handiest features is the rather simple-to-use course designer. While you won't be painting the faces of the crowd or planting your own trees, it is possible to fashion some impressive twists and turns into either a traditional rally stage or a loop. Perhaps an example is in order…



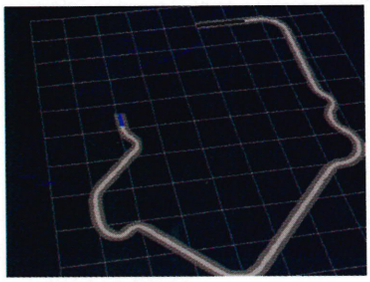
△ Silverstone, home of the British Grand Prix: we can rebuild it. We have the technology.



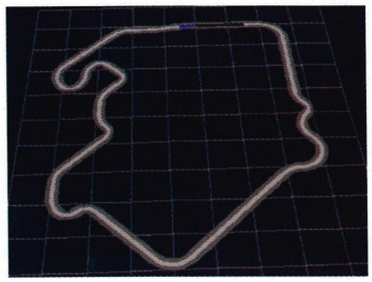
△ 1.While it's easy to just go off and create a twisting nightmare, we've decided to recreate the Silverstone GP circuit.



△ 2. Rotate the track and zoom out to ease the process and reorientate the start finish line, then put in the first curves.



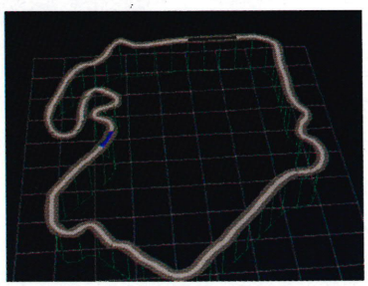
△ 3. Half a circuit and it's not bad. The corners are a little off and the scale is dodgy but, hey, we've spent two minutes on this so far.



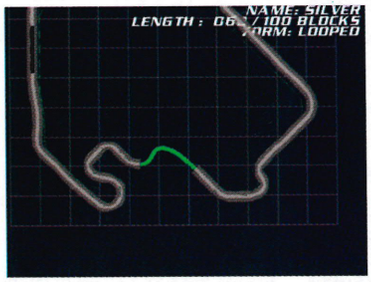
△ 4. We need to set it in England to get some greenery, then we can give it a quick test drive to see how it's coming along for real.



△ 5. Hurrumph. It's lacking some features – such as any contours, for starters. The whole thing is pretty flat and, to be honest, a little dull.



△ 6. Unfortunately the picture we had of the track doesn't show the climbs and dips, so we've decided to make some of our own. It's as easy as placing Scalextric track pieces.

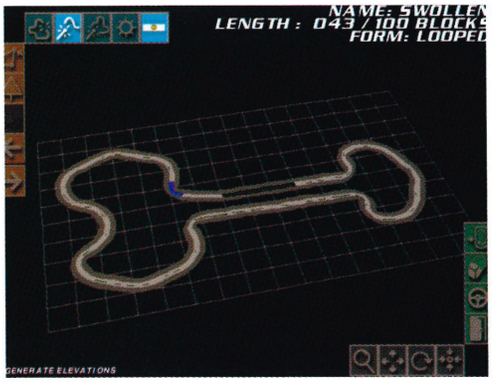


△ 7. Aha, we've found a bend edit control that enables us to to make the bends slightly more realistic and varied. It's coming on quite nicely now.

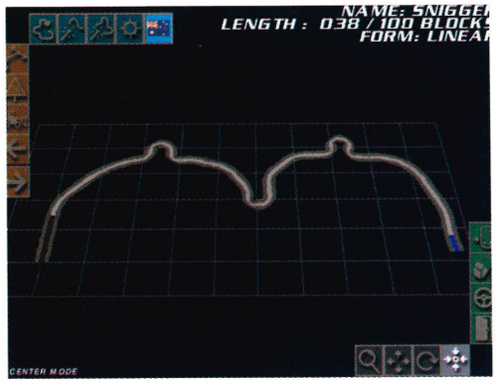


△ 8. A final play and it's just perfect. Well, except for the gravel. And the cars. And the scale and the crowds. Not bad for five minutes work though.

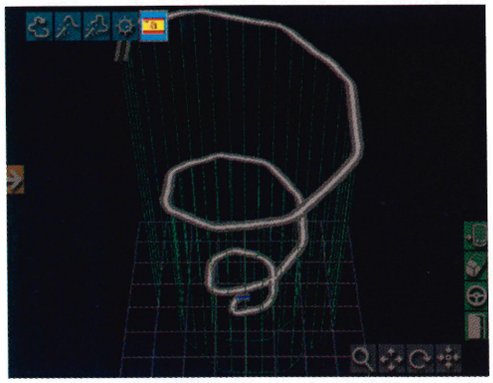
AND HERE ARE SOME WE MADE EARLIER. WE CHALLENGE YOU TO MAKE A MORE CHILDISH COURSE!



△ A sign to show peace and love to our Argentinian friends. This is what we thought of World Cup '98.

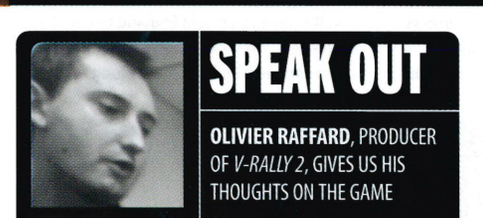


△ The perfect Australian track, we reckon. And a surprisingly pleasant drive, actually.



△ A Dreamcast spiral – slightly more mature, and it's all downhill from here.

△ The victory celebrations should be savoured each time you finish a rally in first place.



SPEAK OUT

OLIVIER RAFFARD, PRODUCER OF *V-RALLY 2*, GIVES US HIS THOUGHTS ON THE GAME

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?

Undoubtedly the high graphic quality and attention to detail, which is really incredible thanks to Dreamcast.

WHICH DREAMCAST GAMES (OTHER THAN YOUR OWN) ARE YOU PLAYING AT THE MOMENT?

I'm playing *UEFA Striker*, *Soul Calibur* and *Sega Rally 2*, and since last week *Crazy Taxi*.

WHICH IS THE HARDEST GAME YOU'VE EVER PLAYED?

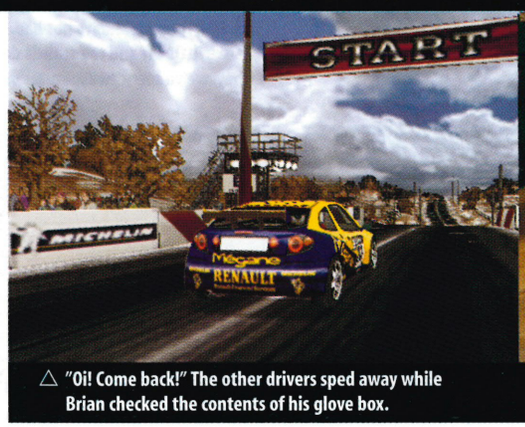
At the beginning of my career I was a tester in the QA department, and I can assure you that RPGs are the hardest games for me. When you master a game, especially a racing game, you can take it to another level and gain immense satisfaction from your new echelon of expertise, even if at the beginning the game seemed hard. Moreover, in each game there's a knack, and sometimes you'll find it easy, sometimes not. When there's no knack, that's when the sucker's hard!

WHICH IS BETTER, RALLYING OR FORMULA ONE, AND WHY?

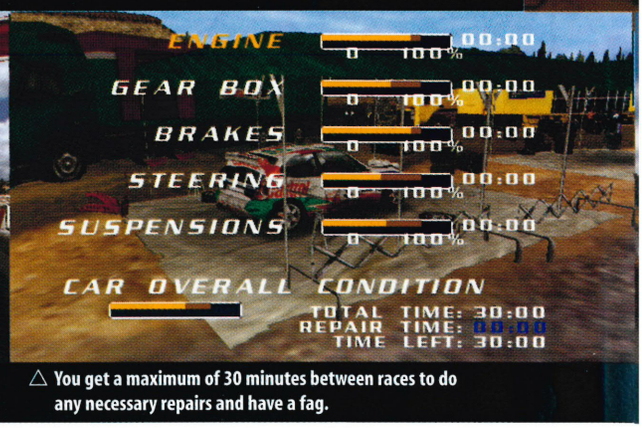
When I was young I was a fan of GP on PC and a fan of formula one, but today the rally scene is more interesting because there are many more teams who can win the championship. Unfortunately it's no more the case in formula one. Moreover, rallying is more spectacular, fun and attractive.

WHY DOES THE DREAMCAST VERSION OF *V-RALLY 2* HAVE THE TAG *'EXPERT EDITION'*?

Because you really need to be an expert to master this game! When you play in 30fps with the dashboard view, you need to have the same reflexes as Ari Vatanen in a real rally car, because the speed is so great!



△ "Oi! Come back!" The other drivers sped away while Brian checked the contents of his glove box.



△ You get a maximum of 30 minutes between races to do any necessary repairs and have a fag.

▶ don't come in last, it does serve to make *V-Rally 2* feel more like a videogame than a simulation of rally driving. Had it gone for 20 or so drivers with names and nationalities, there'd be a greater element of pride when you win.

There are three other modes. Time Trial is just a way to try out all the available stages. There are well over 80 different courses across 12 different countries (New Zealand, England, Australia, Monte Carlo, Indonesia and Corsica are some of the highlights – see the And Here Is The Weather panel on page 20), which we are told equates to more than 400km of driving, so you could do with all of the practice you can get.

FANCY A FOURSOME?

There's also an Arcade mode which has you racing a selected stage with three other Dreamcast-controlled drivers, and this is undoubtedly one of the game's best features. Unlike with most rally games, these guys start at the same time and race against you, so you can batter opponents out of the way, bump them into solid rock formations or push them wide on the slippery corners. The V-Rally Cup is like a cross between Arcade mode and the championship, with a series of linked stages raced by four regular competitors for a best overall time.

If you have friends, not only are you very lucky but you can also get them to play along. While there's the obvious split-screen mode for two, there's also a three- and four-player option, with each driver squinting at his quarter of the screen. Remarkably, there seems to be little drop in frame rate, although the game does compensate for its exhausting extra work schedule by happily incorporating a modicum of pop-up.

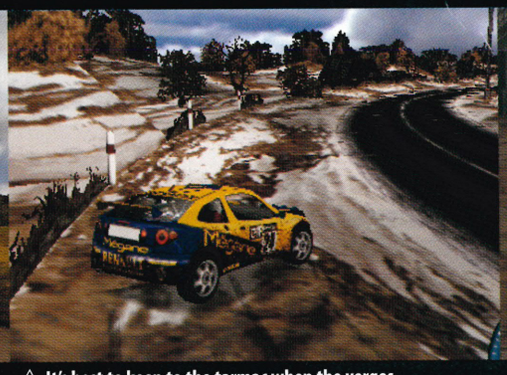
Best of all, the two- to four-player modes act exactly like the single-player games, with Time Trial, Arcade and V-Rally Cup modes all available, along with the extremely satisfying opportunity to bump your best friend into last place by sending them head-first into a large rock.

V-Rally 2 also provides an outlet for your burgeoning streak of creativity, with the extremely simple-to-use

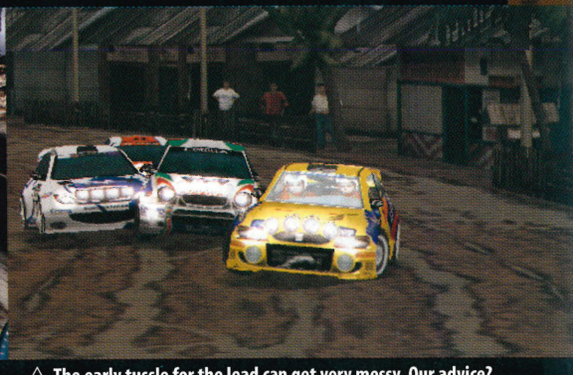
△ "Wooooooooooooaaah!" Bags it's not my turn to clean the co-driver's underpants tonight.



△ Ahhh, the traditional English church. Makes you proud to be British, doesn't it?



△ It's best to keep to the tarmac when the verges are this treacherous. No, really.



△ The early tussle for the lead can get very messy. Our advice? Shut your eyes and *floor it!*

track designer. Worth an extra mark on its own, we'd urge you to cast an eye over the Making Tracks panel on page 21.

OOOH, SO CLOSE

It all sounds so good that by rights *V-Rally 2* should have scored higher than seven out of ten. On the other hand, for all its undoubted fun there are also niggles that grate and grate. It's a love it *and* hate it game, but deep down the hatred is not for what you've been given, but for what's missing – or what should have been tidied up.

The collision detection isn't perfect – you'd do well to keep well away from the side of the road to be on the safe side – while anything that makes you car stop dead, short of a rock face, is frustrating. How much better it would be to throw your car off balance, making it correctable, not uncontrollable. And when you crash, the car rights itself far too quickly – there's no serious penalty for driving too fast on unfamiliar territory. You gain so much extra time by flooring it, when perhaps you should be a bit more careful to remain ahead of the competition even when you're accelerating away post-crash.

Missing spot-sound effects, bone-dry tracks and any variation between surface types on any particular stage are odd faults, and ones that we'd have thought obvious enough to any development team from the outset. In some daytime stages the shadows are so prominent that you can't see the road ahead of you, just a brilliant blue sky. Argentina's brown dusty roads look exactly like the verges, which means you keep trying to drive across country because you can't figure out where the road goes.

Although *V-Rally 2 Expert Edition* has been a fair while coming, perhaps another six months of development time would have created a considerably better experience. Nevertheless, we've been desperate to play something this deep and this much fun on Dreamcast – and we're sure you have been too – and it'll do for now. We'll be playing this one a *lot*. At least until a DC version of *Colin McRae Rally* appears.

VERDICT

SCREAMINGLY QUICK, A GREAT DRIVE, BUT NOT QUITE WHAT IT COULD HAVE BEEN

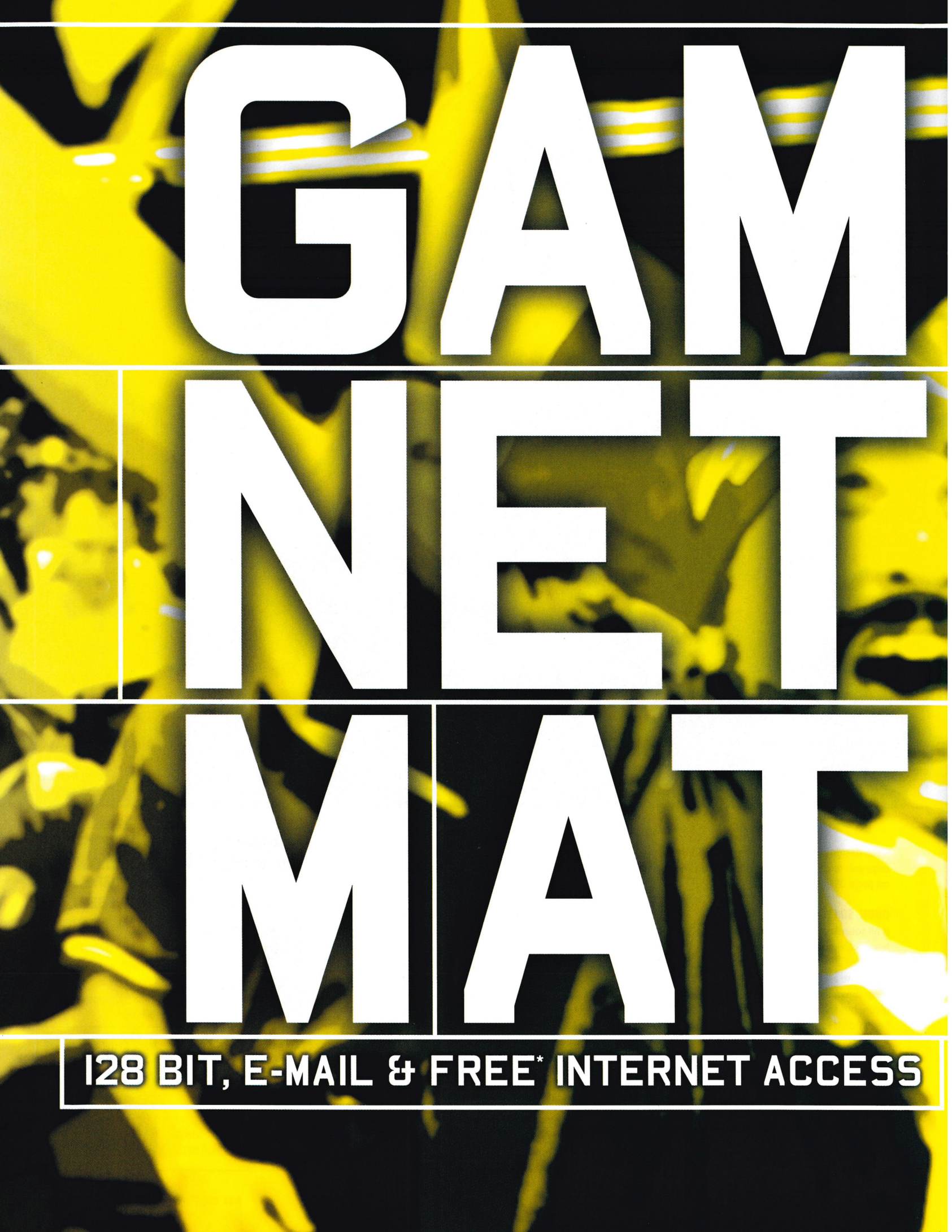
UPPERS
Astonishingly fast and good looking • Loads of cars and tracks • Simple course designer

DOWNERS
Missing the little touches • Lacks real competition structure • Some graphical glitches

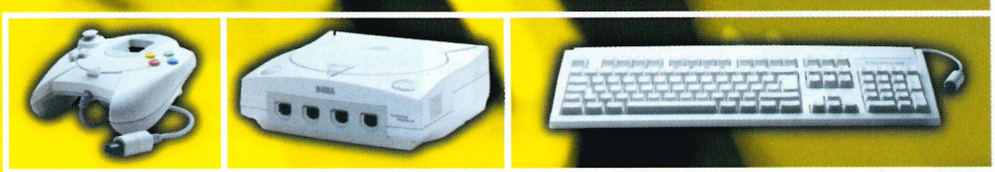
IN ONE HOUR Took part in and won the European Championship. Hurrah!
WEBSITE www.infogrames.com
MAX PLAYERS 4
VIDEO MODES Full-screen PAL, 60Hz option, VGA comp

ODM RATING OUT OF 10

7


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ANYONE FOR TENNIS?

New balls please! A second *Virtua* sports title is coming to Dreamcast

SEGA HAVE CONFIRMED that their arcade hit *Virtua Tennis* (featured in *ODM* #3) is coming to Dreamcast, and we've got exclusive shots and details of the game, which is due out this autumn.

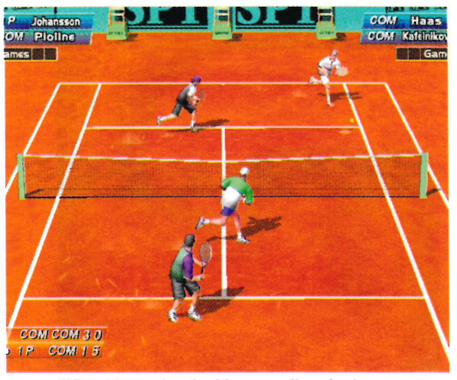
The conversion will feature eight of the world's top male tennis players, including Tim Henman, Carlos Moya, Jim Courier, Yevgeny Kafelnikov, Mark Philippoussis, Tommy Haas, Cedric Pioline and Thomas Johansson. It's thought players such as Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi were ruled out due to licensing problems.

As well as the original game's arcade and exhibition modes, *Virtua Tennis* will also include a completely new trial challenge mode in which you can compete in a series of competitions around the world, winning prize money to buy special items or even a doubles partner.

Arcade mode is similar in style to its equivalent in *Virtua Striker 2*: you play through stages, needing to win every match in order to progress to the next round. However, you can opt to play one-off games at either singles or doubles. Exhibition mode enables you to play individual matches with your preferred rules, options and court type, again with your choice of singles or doubles. Both Arcade and Exhibition modes support up to four players at once.

"We're thrilled to have this game coming to Dreamcast and European gamers will love it," says a Sega spokesman. "The pace of the game is excellent, and the graphics really do Dreamcast justice. Tennis games have never really been big sellers, but this one is set to change all that."

Sadly the game won't be out in time for Wimbledon, but it's currently pencilled in for a September release. Watch out for a preview of *Virtua Tennis* in *ODM* soon.



△ **You'll be able to play doubles as well as singles.**



△ ***Virtua Tennis* will feature arcade-perfect presentation.**



△ **Henman, about to bottle it. Possibly.**

BUFFY HEADS FOR DREAMCAST

Start buffing your stakes as Fox Interactive vamps it up



△ The game will include Sunnydale High School.



△ Buffy prepares to make a sharp exit.

IF *SOUL REAVER* hasn't sated your thirst for vampire blood, prepare for a feast. Fox Interactive are bringing *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* to Dreamcast, and the game should make it to the UK this year.

As you can see from these first screenshots, the game looks not a million miles away from, er, *Soul Reaver*, although with a considerably more attractive central character and the gameplay will be a mixture of action, exploration and puzzle-solving.

Fox are promising the game will feature all the main characters from the show and also its main locations, including Sunnydale High School, the cemetery, Buffy's home and the library. The show's producers will be closely involved to ensure the game is an accurate rendition of Buffy's adventures.

"Buffy is the franchise gamers have been asking for," said a Fox Interactive spokesperson. "Now's our chance to give gamers the opportunity to live out their own Buffy adventures whenever they feel the need to kick some serious vampire butt."

The game will be released this autumn in the US, and should make it to the UK shortly afterwards.

UBI GOING FOR GOLD

DreamWorks epic CG film set for Dreamcast debut

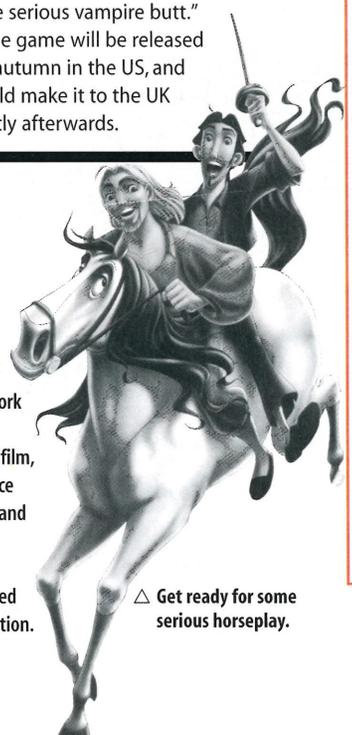
UBI SOFT HAVE ANNOUNCED that they'll be bringing out a Dreamcast game based on *The Road To El Dorado*, a new animated film produced by Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks studio.

The film follows the adventures of two Spanish conmen, Tulio and Miguel, who discover El Dorado, the legendary city of gold. The game will be a 3D action adventure, and is due out at the end of the year to tie in with the film's UK release.

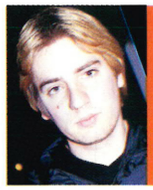
"We were attracted by the inspirational ideas behind the film," said Yves Guillemot, Ubi Soft's managing director. "It's a magnificent saga that combines nerve-tingling adventures with sumptuous scenery, making it the ideal framework within which to create a game."

The game will include 3D elements from the film, but it's not yet known whether there will be voice input from the movie's main actors, Kevin Kline and Kenneth Branagh.

The Dreamcast game will be developed by Revolution Software, who have previously worked on *Broken Sword* and *Broken Sword 2* for PlayStation.



△ Get ready for some serious horseplay.



NEWS ANALYSIS

BROUGHT TO YOU BY STUART DREDGE



TV HEAVEN

It's a bumper month if you're a fan of American TV drama – and let's face it, many of us are. For a start, there's *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*, which has just been confirmed for Dreamcast (see left), and even those of us who don't go weak at the knees at the sight of Sarah Michelle Gellar are looking forward to this title. The two screenshots released so far are pretty impressive and with the television producers on hand to make sure it's a faithful adaptation, *Buffy* fans should be in for a treat.

Likewise *VIP* is coming to the DC (page 28), although we reckon Pamela Anderson is still more famous in the UK for *Baywatch* (that and her home videos, but that's a subject we'll stay well away from!). If *VIP* is as good as its Ubi Soft stable-mate *Rayman 2*, it should be well worth a look. It'll be interesting to see how the computerised versions of Pammy and Sarah perform against the likes of Lara Croft and the *Dead or Alive 2* bikini bunch.

Talking of Lara Croft, those of you who've been complaining about the lack of Sega advertising should be cheered by the news of *Tomb Raider: Last Revelation*'s million-pound telly ads (page 30). Whatever you think of the game, the ads are sure to get people talking about Dreamcast again. We've also heard that Sega may be planning a big-budget campaign to support the release of *Sega Bass Fishing*. We're just relieved that the game's finally coming out (page 37).

The steady flow of PC conversions has continued with *Urban Chaos* (page 31) and *Player Manager 2000* (page 37) both confirmed. We're especially pleased about the latter, if only because it might reduce the flood of emails asking when a footie management game is coming out. Okay, it's nice to have Dreamcast-exclusive games, but as long as the developers of PC conversions keep adding extra stuff – as should be the case with *Black & White* – we're happy.

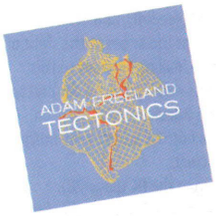
Finally, the news that *Samba De Amigo* is definitely getting a Dreamcast release (page 34) is great, but Sega aren't sure whether the potential audience in the UK is big enough for them to bring it out over here. Why not let us know your thoughts? If enough of you are in favour, Sega might change their minds and it'll be mad monkey maracas malarkey all round. Well, maybe...

HEAR THIS!
DA BEST NEW MUSIC



VARIOUS ARTISTS
NU-BREED: ANTHONY PAPPA
BOXED

A spin-off from the excellent Global Underground collection, this is the first in the *Nu-Breed* series designed to showcase new (well, lesser-known) DJs. On the evidence of this funky, deep house and trance mix-up, Aussie Pappa will soon be in the superleague with the likes of Sasha and Digweed. Possibly Australia's best export since Foster's lager. Well, except for Kylie, of course. *WC*



VARIOUS ARTISTS
TECTONICS
MARINE PARADE

Adam Freeland – leader of the nu-breaks revolution, Brighton's second biggest DJ (after Mr Slim) and a big fave with *ODM*'s south-east crew (that's, um, Ed and myself) serves-up a mighty fine collection of dirty, funked-up beats. Includes cuts from Layo and Bushwacka! and Freeland's recording partner, Beber, as well as their collaboration with BT (the mighty *Hip Hop Phenomenon*). Sadly, it's only one disc but, hey, if you want something longer, play it twice! *WC*



DOVES
LOST SOULS
HEAVENLY

Formerly one-hit dance wonders Sub Sub, Doves now create the sort of downbeat mood music that sent The Verve supernova a couple of years ago. Tracks like *Here it Comes* and the seven-minute *The Cedar Room* take morose feelings and then blows them up to epic scale. That's not to say it's depressing stuff – Lost Souls is perfect chillout music, and we could all do with some of that. *SD*

SHOOT TO THRILL

We've got some Very Important Pammy news

UBI SOFT HAVE SNAPPED up the licence for *VIP*, the American TV series featuring ex-Baywatch star Pamela Anderson Lee, and will be releasing an action adventure based on the show later this year.

In the show, Pammy plays Vallery Irons, bodyguard to some of Hollywood's most famous stars and the game will enable you to step into her stilettos, with each level requiring you to protect a different celebrity. Ubi Soft are promising plenty of tongue-in-cheek humour, along with some "outlandish weapons" – as well as a variety of guns, you will be able to use silk stockings and beaded handbags to outwit your enemies.

"We're delighted to be working with such a big TV star as Pamela," said a Ubi Soft spokesperson. "We know that developers Kalisto will put as much attitude and style into the game as Pamela has into the series. It's a big coup for us to sign as a licence, and there's already been a huge amount of interest in the game."

VIP was first broadcast in 1998 and is currently being shown in more than 60 countries. According to viewing figures, it's currently the most popular show among American teenagers.



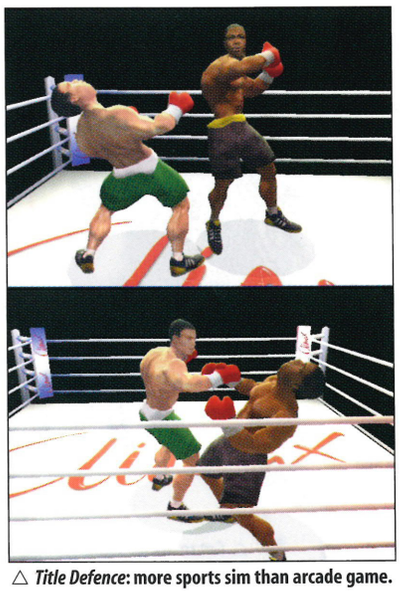
▷ **Careful that piece doesn't go off in yer face, Pam!**



△ ***VIP* stars Pammy and... some other people.**

CLIMAX ARE BOXING CLEVER

Has *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing* met its match?



△ ***Title Defence*: more sports sim than arcade game.**

British developers Climax are working on a new Dreamcast-based boxing game which, they claim, will combine slick action with simulation elements of the sport.

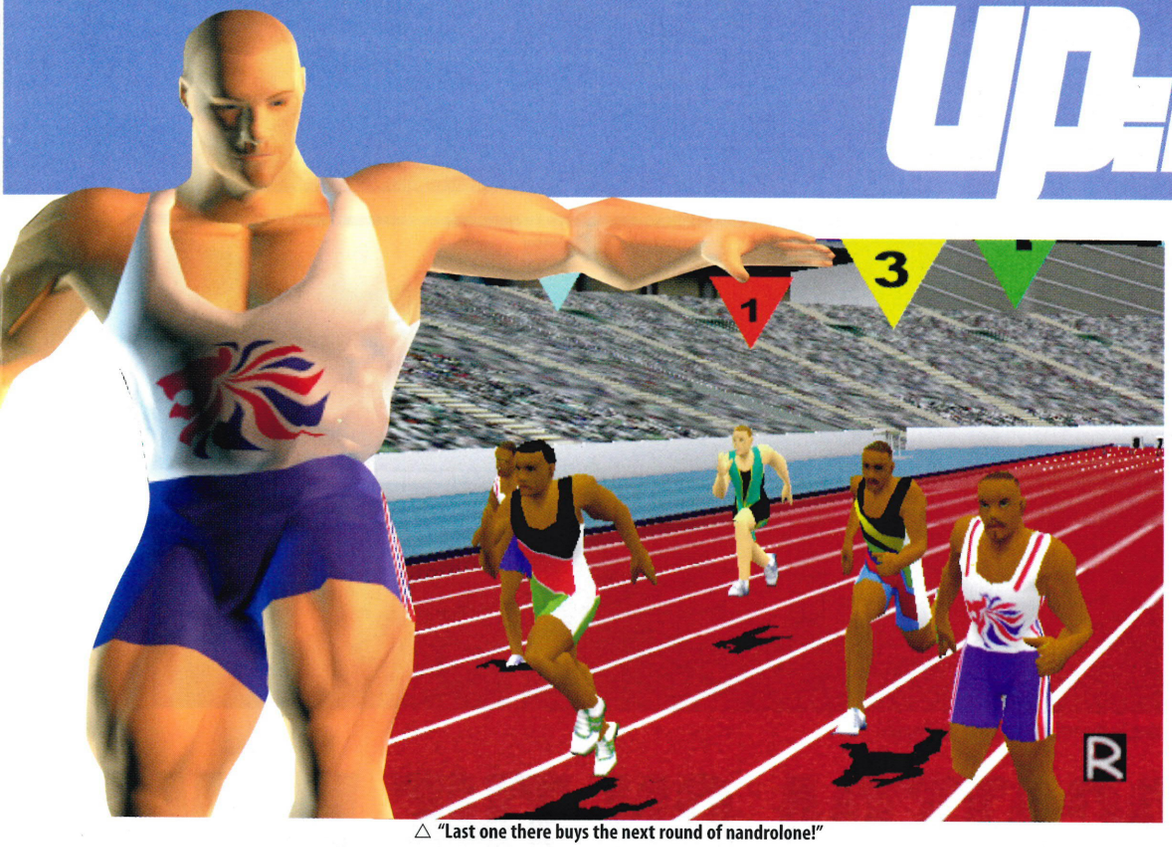
According to the company *Title Defence* will be far more realistic than Midway's *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing* (ODM #1, 9/10).

"*Title Defence* is an enhanced sports simulation rather than an arcade game, using a proprietary physics system to give realistic movement and responses to punches," producer Chris Hadley told us. "To put it another way, if we were talking driving games, then *Ready 2 Rumble* would be *Ridge Racer*, while *Title Defence* would be *Gran Turismo*."

Options will include a tournament system where your chosen boxer must work his way up from the small domestic rankings to world championship fights in Las Vegas.

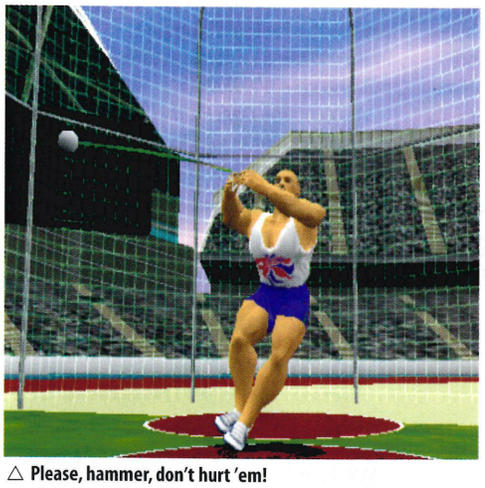
Climax are still unsure whether the game will feature real-life boxers at this stage, but it's looking unlikely. "Due to licensing issues, the game is currently being developed using new characters rather than real-life boxers," said Hadley. There will, however, be an option to create your own fighters using various configurable options.

The game is not due out until the start of next year at the earliest, but these early screenshots show it's already shaping up rather nicely. And if Climax's claims prove to be true, Midway may have a fight on their hands when they bring out the keenly anticipated sequel to *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing*.



△ "Last one there buys the next round of nandrolone!"

EIDOS GO FOR GOLD



△ Please, hammer, don't hurt 'em!

Olympics game will soon be up and running

EIDOS HAVE RELEASED the first screenshots of *Sydney 2000*, due out on Dreamcast this August to coincide with the Olympic games.

Among its featured events will be the 100m sprint, 110m hurdles, hammer, javelin, triple jump, high jump, 100m freestyle swimming, sprint cycling, skeet shooting, weight-lifting and diving.

As well as competing against the console or up to three friends, the game will also enable you to take a team of athletes and train them up to progress from lower ranking competitions up to the Olympics themselves.

"We'll be publishing a top-quality game that will let people the world over participate in the excitement," said Eidos chief operating officer Mike McGarvey.

Eidos haven't released any details of how the game will play, but something tells us button-bashing may well play a significant part! We'll have a full preview for you soon.

THE TRUTH IN BLACK & WHITE

Dreamcast-exclusive features for Lionhead's epic

Following last month's report that *Black & White* is coming to Dreamcast, we've dug up some details on features exclusive to DC, as well as more info on the game's online capabilities.

According to Lionhead's Mark Webley, the man in charge of the conversion, the DC edition will feature some new creatures that won't be on any other platform. He also claimed the title will feature a number of VM games based around the abilities of the creature that you develop during the main game.

Webley also promised the Dreamcast version will definitely support online play: "There are a lot of very cool online features in *Black & White*."

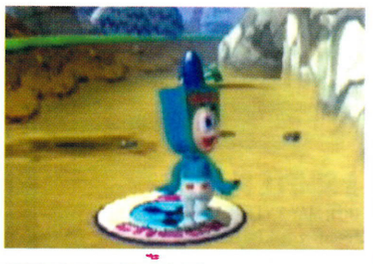
Dreamcast owners will also have access to a website where they can chat to other players, compare creatures and set up multiplayer games.

The game is due out before Christmas. Watch out for a first look at the DC edition in *ODM* real soon.



△ "Moo? Grr...!"

GAMES NEWS



POLE TO POLE

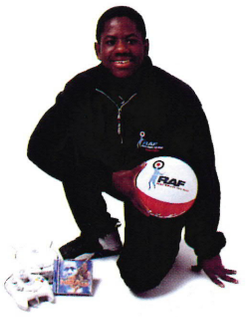
Crave have announced they're bringing *Super Magnetic Neo*, a colourful 3D platform adventure, to the UK later this summer. The game sees you playing Neo, a cutesy robot created by a mad scientist. You have to save an amusement park, which is being attacked by a gang called the Pinkis. We'll have more shots and details for you soon.

RUGGED PERSIAN

Mattel Interactive's US arm has announced they're working on a Dreamcast version of *Prince Of Persia 3D*. The game was released on PC last year and, while it received a mixed reaction, Mattel is reportedly implementing loads of new DC features to improve it. There's no news yet on a UK release but we'd be surprised if we don't see it by early next year.

OUR RADIO ROCKS

If you read our *Metropolis Street Racer* preview a couple of issues ago, you'll know that Bizarre Creations and Sega are cooking up something special for the game's audio side. Each city in the game will have its own radio stations that you can tune into. We've got an exclusive four-minute sample which is downloadable from our website at www.dreamcastmag.co.uk, and it'll work on your DC!



SEGA'S B-BALL STANCE

Sega have announced a new sponsorship deal with the RAF's Youth Basketball programme. They will be supporting the RAF's junior and cadet leagues, and will be promoting *NBA 2K* (ODM #5, 8/10) alongside matches. Demo pods with the game will be at matches around the country, while leaflets at venues will let fans get money off the ace hoops sim.

VIRTUAL ON OR OFF?

Rumours are that Activision are going to pick up the rights to publish Japanese mech battle game *Virtual On: Oratorio Tangram* in the US, raising hopes that it'll eventually make it to the UK. According to Sega Europe, there are currently no plans to bring the game to the UK, but we'll keep you posted.

WATCH THIS!
NEW MOVIES ON VHS



A SIMPLE PLAN
OUT: MAY 1 • CERT 15 • £14.99

Feedstore clerk Bill Paxton, his dim-bulb brother Billy Bob Thornton and their drunken no-hoper mate find a crashed plane under a snowdrift, and inside the plane is a holdall stuffed with four million dollars. Realising that it's drugs money, the trio decide to stay schtum until the heat is off. But the fortuitous find turns out to be a big, bad boil, breeding greed, hatred and paranoia.

A taut, twisty-turny thriller which marked a triumphant return for director Sam *'Evil Dead'* Raimi. *CE*



THE DEBT COLLECTOR
OUT: MAY 1 • CERT 18 • £14.99

Nicky Dryden is an ex-con whose new life as Edinburgh's premier sculptor is suddenly shattered by the arrival of the copper who nicked him. Hounded by the obsessed policeman, the former loan shark is not only forced to confront the dirty demons from his past, but also has to deal with a deranged teenager who's putting into practice some of his old techniques. A grim and powerful Scotland-based thriller with gritty performances by Billy Connolly, Ken Stott and newcomer Iain Robertson. *CE*



VIRUS
OUT NOW • CERT 18 • £14.99

Donald Sutherland, Jamie Lee Curtis and William Baldwin ham it up in this sci-fi horror about the crew of a stricken salvage tug who find refuge on a seemingly deserted Russian research vessel. Their greedy plans to sell it are scuppered when they discover that it's inhabited by an extra-intelligent alien lifeform which sees humankind as a troublesome virus that needs to be eliminated. Top schlock, with lashings of borrowed special effects (*Alien*, anyone?), ludicrous scenarios and loads of things that go bump. *CE*







△ See, fighting in the streets isn't just for drunks.

ARCATERA ON THE WAY

Hunbelievable! Ubi Soft bringing German point 'n' click adventure to Dreamcast

You probably haven't heard much about *Arcatera: The Dark Brotherhood* before but we've managed to get hold of some early screenshots and, as you can see, it's looking pretty impressive.

Developed by German company Westka, it's a point 'n' click adventure with role-playing elements. You'll take control a party of four characters, which must bring to justice an evil satanic gang that's wreaking havoc in the city of Arcatera.

Westka are promising complete freedom of action, and multiple endings depending on how you choose to play the game. It will feature more than 200 locations and 150 non-player characters that are fully interactive.

"It's an adventure with better graphics and atmosphere than any role-playing game, and more freedom of movement and features than any point 'n' click adventure," said Westka's Christophe Kabelitz. "We want to give players the feeling of complete immersion in a fantastic, astonishing but also credible world."

Arcatera: The Dark Brotherhood is due out in the summer via Ubi Soft. Watch out for a preview in *ODM* real soon.

LARA STARS IN CHEEKY TV AD

Why? Because she's worth it, of course



△ **"You talkin' to me?" Lara, as seen in the new *Tomb Raider* television advert.**

If you've been surprised by the lack of TV advertisements for Dreamcast games, here's some good news: Sega and Eidos have teamed up with top ad agency BMP DDB to create an eye-catching advert for *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* (ODM #6, 7/10). The 30-second commercial – which has been showing since late March around ITV and Channel 4 shows like *TFI Friday*, *South Park*, *The Ali G Show* and, er, *Blind Date* – spoofs some well-known advertisements for a very famous cosmetics company.



In the ad, a computer-generated Lara strolls around a real flat, explaining that: "My secret is Dreamcast. I tried it, and I've never looked so good." There's also a science sequence that will be familiar if you're a Jennifer Aniston fan. The ad finishes with the star cocking her pistol and saying: "Because I'm Lara."

Sega are also planning a high-profile TV advertising campaign to support *Sega Bass Fishing* which should finally reach stores on April 14 (see page 39).



△ Any similarities to events in South London are purely coincidental.

CHAOS COMING

Mucky Foot's PC title confirmed to make the trip to Dreamcast

BRITISH DEVELOPERS Mucky Foot have announced that their critically acclaimed PC title *Urban Chaos* is to appear on Dreamcast later in the year.

In the game you play D'Arci Stern, a rookie cop who must foil an evil plot to destroy the world. The game will feature 30 missions for you to fight, drive and shoot your way through, some of which see you play as a mysterious ex-soldier called Roper.

It's all set in a gritty urban environment which, from these first screenshots, is already looking comparable to the PC version, but Mucky Foot are promising that the game won't be just a quick port over.

"Dreamcast is the perfect platform for *Urban Chaos*," said co-project leader Mike Diskett. "We're retaining every feature of the PC version, but the gameplay will be even further enhanced. This should be the best version of *Urban Chaos* yet."



△ The scenery certainly looks evocative.

NAMCO A GOGO

Top Japanese developers working on new DC title

NAMCO HAVE CONFIRMED that *Mr. Driller*, their forthcoming PlayStation puzzle game, is also in development for Dreamcast, which indicates that DC still figures in the giant Japanese developer's plans.

The game is said to play like a combination of classic puzzlers *Mr. Do* and *Bust-A-Move*. You drill down through stacks of coloured blocks, forming combos of similarly coloured ones along the way which protect you from other blocks collapsing in on you.

Like *ChuChu Rocket!*, the 2D graphics might put off some gamers, but Namco promise that the gameplay will be as fast and frantic as Sonic Team's action-strategy title. There's no news yet on a UK release.



△ Aw, ain't he cute!

GAMES NEWS



DELAY FOR DECAY

Sega have put back the release of *Zombie Revenge* (*ODM* #6, 7/10) from March 24 (the date we were given when we reviewed the game last month), until – gulp! – June 23. We haven't been able to get an answer out of Sega for why it's slipped, but we'll bring you more news next issue.

INFOGRAMES GO CAR'AZY

Infogrames' US arm has announced three new driving games for Dreamcast. They are *Demolition Racer*, *Test Drive Off Road 3* and *Looney Tunes: Space Race*. However, Infogrames' UK office has said that there are currently no plans to bring the games over here. We're hoping that they change their mind, and as soon as we hear anything we'll let you know.

LET ME BE YOUR PHANTASY

Sega of Japan have announced that *Phantasy Star Online*, their Internet role-playing game, will be getting a worldwide release later this year. The idea is that you'll be able to play with people in the US and Japan, with a special icon-based dialogue system smoothing over any language differences. Unfortunately, as we went to press Sega Europe were unable to say exactly when we can expect it to be released over here. More news when we get it.



MORE TOKYO

Genki have confirmed that they're working on a follow-up to *Tokyo Highway Challenge* (ODM #3, 5/10) which is set to feature a longer track and a wider choice of cars. Crave, publishers of the original game, could not confirm whether they'll be handling the new game in the UK.

OOPS!

An admin error in last month's Group Therapy debate on advertising (*ODM* #6, page 122), led to Alison Turner being described as "European Product Manager – Advertising at Sega Europe". The lovely Ms Turner is in fact Head of UK Marketing at Sega.

WATCH THIS!
NEW MOVIES ON DVD



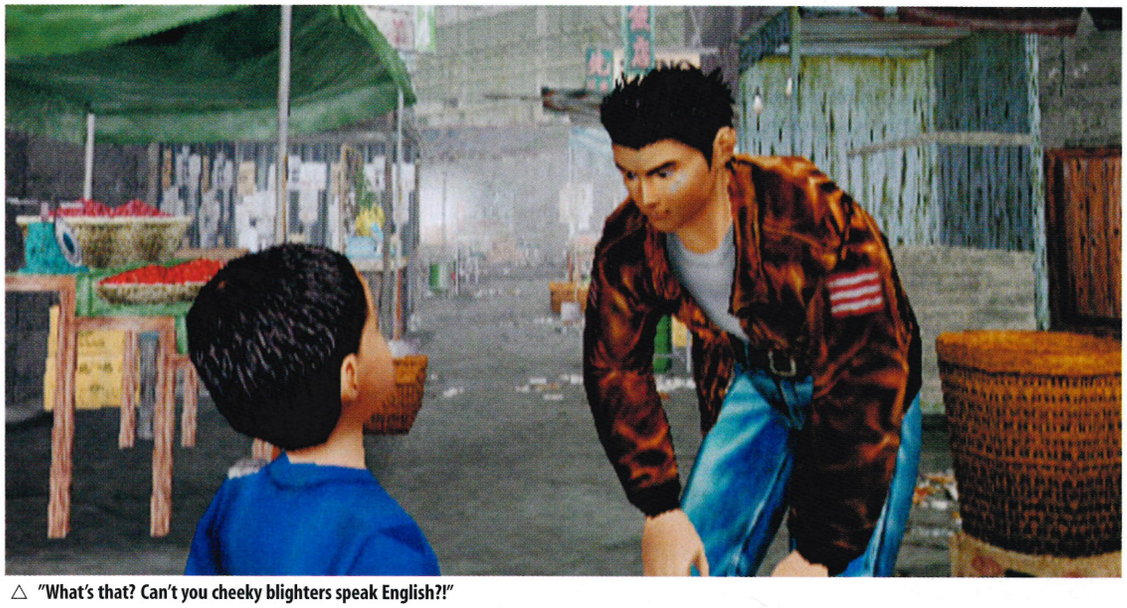
RUN LOLA RUN
Out: April 10 • Cert: 15 • £19.99
Superb German indie told from three different perspectives about a small-time mob courier who accidentally leaves a sack of drug money on the subway and rings his girlfriend for help. She has 20 minutes to stump up 100,000 marks or it's lights out. Added to this exhilarating cocktail of film, video, animation and thumping techno are commentaries by the director and flame-haired star Franka Potente, plus cast and crew biogs and a music video. *CE*



THE LAST BROADCAST
Out: April 10 • Cert: 18 • £19.99
In 1995, four New Jersey cable-show guys went into the woods to look for the legendary Jersey Devil. Only one came out alive – and was subsequently jailed for the horrific murders of the other three. Two years later this documentary was made. It's vastly superior to *The Blair Witch Project*, with a nasty twist at the end. Also included here are behind-the-scenes shots, a slide show, filmographies and a short film on the true story of the Jersey Devil. *CE*



VAMPIRES
Out: April 10 • Cert: 18 • £19.99
A blood-fest about a vampire-slaying gang who get ambushed by a 600-year-old ghoul called Valek while on a stake-out in New Mexico. Team leader James Woods must figure out a way of preventing Valek from getting his claws on an ancient artifact which will give him the power to prowl in daylight. Extras-wise there are interviews with Carpenter and cast, commentary, filmographies and the usual behind-the-scenes bit. *CE*



△ "What's that? Can't you cheeky blighters speak English?!"

SHENMUE IN ENGLISH

Yu Suzuki shows off English *Shenmue* and reveals sequel

SEGA HAVE SHOWN an English language version of *Shenmue* for the first time and revealed details of the sequel, which is currently in development.

With the immense task of translating *Shenmue*'s script into English completed, American voice actors are now hard at work recording the game's dialogue.

Yu Suzuki, the game's producer, showed two early scenes with English spech and subtitles at the Game Developer's Conference in March.

It's not yet known whether Western gamers will have a *Sonic Adventure*-type option to use the original Japanese voices with English subtitles, but it's thought the sheer amount of dialogue will make this extremely unlikely.

The scenery in the ground-breaking adventure is to be left unchanged where possible, so objects like street signs and posters will remain in Japanese.

Suzuki also revealed that the follow-up to *Shenmue: Chapter 1* will *not* be *Chapter 2*. Confused? The sequel will be called *Shenmue 2*, and will contain chapters two, three, four and five.

The action will take place entirely in Hong Kong, with castle, city and bay areas among the locations. It's been reported that the game's graphical engine has been improved to enable up to 50 characters on screen at once. Happily for us Westerners, *Shenmue 2* is set to feature less dialogue than the original in order to make translations to English that much easier.

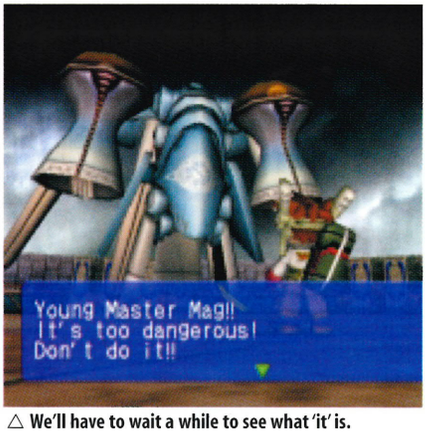
What does all this mean for us Brits waiting anxiously for concrete news about *Shenmue*'s release in the UK? Well, Sega still aren't giving anything away, but the fact that work is progressing smoothly on the English translation has to be good news.



△ An, er, animated Yu Suzuki (sorry!)



△ Imagine this with 50 characters. Nice.



△ We'll have to wait a while to see what 'it' is.

EVOLUTION: THE NEXT STEP

Ubi Soft sign sequel, but where's the first game?

UBI SOFT HAVE ANNOUNCED that they'll be publishing *Evolution 2* in the UK later this year, despite the fact that the first game still hasn't made it into shops.

***Evolution 2: Far Off Promise* will feature the same characters as its predecessor, with a few new ones to boot. The gameplay will be a similar mix of exploration and battles, although it will now include voice acting.**

The sequel will also feature improved graphics, including a new camera angle enabling you to follow the action from behind your character when exploring.

"We're very excited to have this opportunity," said an Ubi Soft spokesperson. "With impressive graphics and diverse gameplay, *Evolution 2* will give players the best elements of the original, and deliver more in-depth gameplay."

Meanwhile, *Evolution* (*ODM* #3, 8/10) should finally be on the shelves by the end of the month (probably April 28).

WHAT A RUSH!

Midway's going to San Francisco (flowers in hair optional)

MIDWAY HAVE ANNOUNCED that their futuristic driving game *San Francisco Rush 2049* will come to Dreamcast this autumn.

The arcade conversion is set in San Francisco in, yep, the year 2049. It's a racer with a unique twist, though: the cars can glide, enabling you to perform some spectacular jumps and stunts as you race through the city. All four tracks from the arcade original will be included, along with two new courses, and all six can be reversed to add more of a challenge.

Midway have confirmed that a split-screen mode will enable up to four players to race at once, and there will also be extra stunt and obstacle modes to take on.

The most exciting news, however, is that Midway are hoping to support online play of some description. It's not yet known whether this will be full head-to-head racing over the Sega network, or merely an online rankings system similar to that of *Sega Rally 2*. Either way we'll let you know as soon as we hear.



△ **"Honestly, officer, one minute I was driving along as normal, and then suddenly..."**



HAVE YOUR SAY

Vote for the best up-and-coming Dreamcast games and you could grab yourself a free Visual Memory unit!

There are a zillion Dreamcast games in development around the world, but which ones are getting you most excited? Let us know and, courtesy of Sega, you could blag a Visual Memory unit (worth around £19.99) for absolutely nothing.

To vote, simply e-mail us at vote@dreamcastmag.co.uk using the subject heading 'Vote DC!'. Please include, in order, a list of the five games you're most looking forward to, with the most keenly anticipated at the top. You must also include your name, age and full postal address. Note: these details will not be passed on to anyone else.

A couple of important rules: It doesn't matter if a release date for a particular game has yet to be set (they rarely are until the last minute), but you can only vote for games which have been *confirmed* as forthcoming Dreamcast releases.

There's no closing date, as this is an on-going competition with a winner drawn from the virtual hat each and every month. Only one entry from each reader will be accepted each calendar month. Anyone submitting more will be disqualified from the competition. For logistical reasons we can *only* accept votes by email.

This month's winner is Adam Wigley, aged 18, from Rotherham in South Yorkshire. His top choice is *NBA 2K*, followed by *Metropolis Street Racer*, *Resident Evil Code: Veronica*, *Sega GT* and *Shenmue*. Your VM unit is in the post, Adam. Thanks to everyone else who voted. Keep 'em coming!

YOUR MOST WANTED

THE DREAMCAST GAMES WHICH YOU, THE READERS, SIMPLY CAN'T WAIT TO PLAY



1 (1) SHENMUE (SEGA)

FIRST 32% | TOP 5 69% | ETA TBC

Yep, *Shenmue* is still your most wanted title, but it's slipped since last month, when 80% of you placed it in your top five. Maybe our news about the English translation (p32) will prompt another rise next month.



2 (3) METROPOLIS STREET RACER (SEGA)

FIRST 18% | TOP 5 66% | ETA JUL

That's more like it! *MSR* regains second spot despite (or maybe because of) the news that it won't be out until the summer. Still, work is progressing well on Bizarre Creations' grand project, so we'll keep you posted.



3 (2) RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA

FIRST 17% | TOP 5 66% | ETA JUN

Only a hair's breadth separates this and *MSR*, although since our preview last month more of you have placed *Code Veronica* in top spot. The PAL version is almost ready, so we'll have an exclusive review for you soon.



4 (4) HALF-LIFE (HAVAS)

FIRST 7% | TOP 5 49% | ETA TBC

At last it's official: *Half Life will* be coming to Dreamcast after all. And the announcement has spurred half of you to include it in your top five. Although it won't feature online play, Valve's PC classic will still be a premier title.



5 (6) ECCO THE DOLPHIN (SEGA)

FIRST 6% | TOP 5 39% | ETA JUN

Ecco leaps over *Sega GT*, so obviously last month's preview impressed a fair number of you. Our man Dan's just got back from Hungary where he saw the latest version, and he reckons it's all going, ahem, swimmingly.



6 (5) SEGA GT (SEGA)

FIRST 3% | TOP 5 38% | ETA TBC

Although it's slipped a place in the rankings, more of you had *Sega GT* in your top five this month. We want a UK release as badly as you do, but as we went to press nothing had been announced. Maybe next month.



7 (-) DEAD OR ALIVE 2 (ACCLAIM)

FIRST 3% | TOP 5 18% | ETA APR

We were the first to tell you than *DOA2* had been snapped up by Acclaim, and you responded by sending it straight into the charts. We reckon it'll be higher next month though, once you've read our preview on p50.



8 (9) GTA2 (TAKE 2)

FIRST 3% | TOP 5 14% | ETA MAY

You should be getting used to this by now – *GTA2* has slipped again, so we haven't got a review for you this issue. Still, we're told that it will be hitting the shelves in May, so it won't be long before you can get criminal.



9 (-) BLACK & WHITE (TBC)

FIRST 1% | TOP 5 11% | ETA TBC

Black & White is another game that we think will be higher in the Your Most Wanted chart next month. On page 29 of this issue we've got new details of its online play and VM facilities. Sounds like a corker already.



10 (-) ALONE IN THE DARK IV (INFOGRAMES)

FIRST 1% | TOP 5 9% | ETA TBC

We still haven't had official confirmation of when this game will be coming out, but we hear that it's already looking suitably mean, moody and magnificent. We're hoping to have more news and shots next month.

TBC = to be confirmed

FIRST	Percentage of voters placing the game at the top of their Most Wanted lists
TOP 5	Percentage of voters including the game in their Top 5 Most Wanted lists
ETA	Estimated time of arrival (release in UK)

SPECIAL REPORT: SAMBA DE AMIGO



△ Top choons. Er... maybe not.



△ Notting Hill never looked like this!



△ Dreamcast *Samba* is looking great.



△ Dreamcast maracas! Call the cops!



△ Could you control your feet?



△ Don't be sad, little monkey fella. Maybe Sega will let you come to Europe after all.

¡HOLA AMIGO!

Sega's monkey-tastic maraca madness is on the way to Dreamcast. Or is it?

BACK IN OUR NOVEMBER issue (*ODM* #1) we covered the announcement of four new games from Sega's Sonic Team. One of them was *Samba De Amigo*, an arcade game that had you dancing and shaking maracas in time to tunes, with your moves represented on screen by a monkey.

Back then, although a Dreamcast conversion of the game looked unlikely, we thought it might still happen. And you know what? We were right! We've played the Dreamcast version, and we took these exclusive screenshots to prove it.Sadly, however, it's still uncertain whether the game will get a UK release, as Sega aren't convinced that there's a big enough market over here for this type of game.

The Dreamcast version of *Samba De Amigo* was officially confirmed last month by Sega of Japan, and it's due for a May release. Although Sega are producing a custom-made maracas controller and dance pad, they won't be bundled with the game. Instead Japanese punters must pay 7,800 yen (about £45) to get them separately.

There are four modes of play in the game, including a Challenge mode (which sees you progressing through five increasingly difficult levels), and an Original mode which will have three new songs exclusive to the Dreamcast. Sega Europe's choonsmith Richard Jacques is currently putting the finishing touches to one of them, which is "a Latin/house/party kind of thing".

Party mode enables you and a friend to play at the same time in three ways: Battle (where you compete against each other), Love-Love (a co-operative mode in which you must stay in sync), and five mini-games – Mole Panic, Pose & Pose, Monkey Replay, Power Rush and Speed Judgement. Mole Panic is a fairground whack 'em up game using the maracas, while Monkey Replay is a Simon Says-type game where you memorise certain moves and then repeat them. And the other three? Er... we're not sure, but they're bound to be barmy.

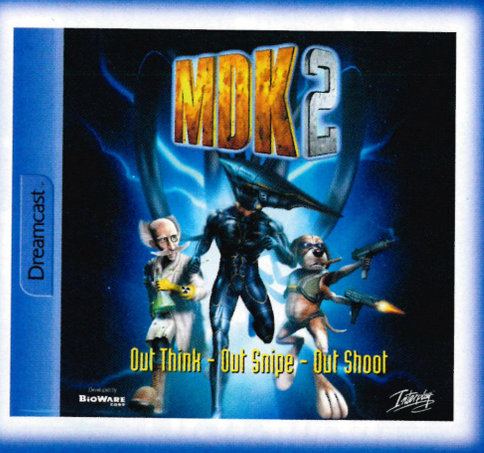
So why no European release? "If we were to bring it out here with the maracas controller, the price would be higher than what we think consumers would be prepared to pay," explained a Sega spokesperson. "However, if enough people express interest then that could all change."

Just in case it does, we asked Jacques what tunes he'd like to see in a UK release. "I'd want some really funky stuff to shake my maracas to – *Dirty Harry*, *Starsky & Hutch* and so on. Also, some Latin house stuff and some good cheesy pop would go down nicely." Umm...

• *Would YOU buy* Samba De Amigo*? Write in using the usual contact addresses (see page 128) and let us – and Sega – know!*

HMV

seriouslyaddictive...



MDK 2

Three unlikely heroes, one ultimate goal. Kurt and his amazing sniper helmet are back. This time he is teamed with the genius Dr. Hawkins and Max, a six-legged gun-toting robotic dog. Together they must use their unique abilities and warped attitude to out-think, out-snipe and out-shoot their enemies as they attempt to reclaim the earth from a vile alien menace.



Toy Story 2

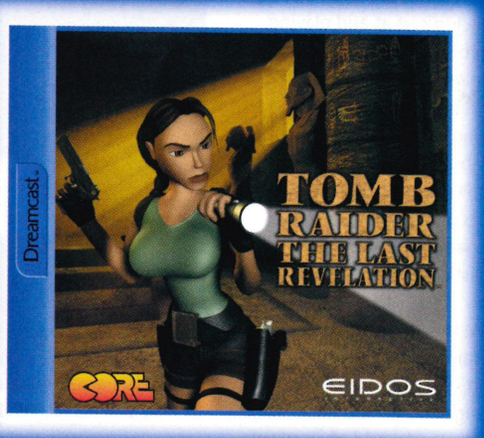
Help Buzz Lightyear save the day and rescue Woody in this third person, free-roaming 3D platform extravaganza. Interact with key characters and enlist the help of Hamm, Slinky Dog and Rex across 15 huge levels. Use special powers and toy accessories such as rocket jet boots, grappling hooks, arm lasers and spring boots to defeat Zurg and his henchmen.



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Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver

A story of betrayal, intrigue and revenge. As Raziel, stalk the shadows of Nosgoth preying upon your former vampire brethren in a quest to destroy your creator - Kain. After being betrayed and executed by Kain, return to Nosgoth on an epic mission of revenge. Gorgeous graphics and staggering atmosphere make this a milestone in 3D adventuring. "A genuine masterpiece." 90% Dreamcast Magazine



Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation & Lara Croft © & TM Core Design Limited 2000. © & Published by Eidos Interactive Limited 2000. All Rights Reserved.

Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation

At last the ultimate adventure series comes to Dreamcast and Lara never looked so good. While exploring in Egypt, Lara Croft discovers a lost tomb and unwittingly unleashes its ancient evil, fulfilling a prophecy that threatens to plunge mankind into eternal darkness. In a race against time, Lara must use all her wit and skill to re-imprison Set and save the world from armageddon.

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△ Why watch one screen when you can watch three?!





ARCADE TEST

△ "Did you order a vegetarian meal, sir?"

"THIS IS YOUR CAPTAIN SPEAKING"

DAN TRENT takes to the skies with Sega's latest 'real career' arcade simulation, *Airline Pilots*

FED UP OF BLASTING ALIENS, shredding zombies, racing cars at and playing overblown beat 'em ups? If so, then the latest game in Sega's professional series could be for you.

Refreshingly slow-moving and featuring absolutely no death or destruction (unless you're very inept) *Airline Pilots* is something of a rarity: an arcade game that's actually a highly realistic and demanding simulator.

In simple terms the game puts you in the captain's seat of an anonymous airliner and sets you a variety of tasks and challenges that could forseeably happen in the real world of air travel. The tasks themselves sound simple: take off, follow a predetermined course, land. But in practice the balance of skills this demands results in as much lip-biting concentration as any racer or zombie shooter.

If you've had a spin in *F355 Ferrari Challenge*, then you'll be familiar with the set up of *Airline Pilots*. Surrounded by three giant monitors that shut you off from the outside world, you have a control wheel, two throttles, rudder pedals and a variety of switches to operate flaps and undercarriage. As in *F355*, you can select different levels of assistance depending on your confidence, with the plane either doing everything bar the flying automatically or leaving it all to you. Choosing free flight or training, you buckle up and taxi out to the runway.



△ Keep your nerves steady until you're down, then it's off to the hotel with a stewardess.

The game guides you all the way, and your co-pilot assists you by telling you how to set the throttles, when to put the flaps up or down and the like, but when it comes down to it you're the one at the controls, and if the Business Class toffs spill their gin and tonics because you can't fly straight, there'll be hell to pay.

Straight off, it's obvious this is a serious simulator and like nothing else you'll play in an arcade. Dramatic manoeuvres get you nowhere; in this game you must think about every move in advance. As with a real plane, most controls affect each other, so the knack comes in successfully balancing the control column, rudder pedals and throttles, and performing every action in a smooth, measured manner.

While this may not appeal to those after more visceral thrills, it soon becomes incredibly immersive, and even a seemingly straightforward landing will have your palms clammy and your senses buzzing. In the training mode you might have to land in a strong crosswind, requiring deft balancing of the throttles to maintain a straight approach, while the free flight mode requires you to fly through airborne checkpoints to gain extra time and points.

Clearly a game that isn't to everyone's taste, *Airline Pilots* is an interesting break from the norm that really tests your abilities. Whether Sega are planning an updated version that sees you fighting off troublesome holidaymakers or having to handle complaints about the dodgy food remains to be seen, but as it stands *Airline Pilots* is definitely worth a ride.

SEGA AIRLINE PILOTS

DEVELOPER: **SEGA**
FORMAT: **NAOMI**
COST: **£1**
AVAILABILITY: **LARGE ARCADES**
DUE ON DC: **UNLIKELY**



△ Mind that skyscraper!

BACK ISSUES

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ISSUE #0

OCTOBER 1999

INSIDE: Beginner's guide to Dreamcast; spotlight on more than 55 upcoming games; the *Grange Hill* gang check out DC games
REVIEWS: *Sega Rally 2, Sonic Adventure, Speed Devils* and more
ON THE VIDEO: Exclusive footage of 35 future Dreamcast games
PRICE: £5.99



ISSUE #1

NOVEMBER 1999

INSIDE: Exclusive *Shenmue* report; special report on the Tokyo .Games show; Japanese gaming debate
REVIEWS: *Ready 2 Rumble, Power Stone, UEFA Striker* and more
ON THE DISC: Playable demos of *Sonic* and *Millennium Soldier*
PRICE: £5.99



ISSUE #2

DECEMBER 1999

INSIDE: Extensive *Soul Calibur* review; the future for videogames; *House Of The Dead 2* player's guide
REVIEWS: *F1 World Grand Prix, Marvel Vs Capcom* and more
ON THE DISC: Playable demos of *Dynamite Cop* and *Buggy Heat*
PRICE: £5.99



ISSUE #3

JANUARY 2000

INSIDE: World exclusive *Metropolis Street Racer* preview; real life imitating games; guide to getting online
REVIEWS: *Worms Armageddon, Evolution, Shadow Man* and more
ON THE DISC: Brand new *Toy Commander* level; playable demos of *Snow Surfers, Suzuki Alstare* and *F1 World Grand Prix*
PRICE: £5.99



ISSUE #4

FEBRUARY 2000

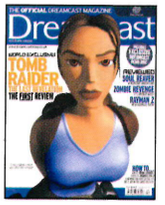
INSIDE: Exclusive *Code: Veronica* preview; violence in games; *UEFA Striker* and *Soul Calibur* tips guides
REVIEWS: *Virtua Striker 2 , Resident Evil 2, Deadly Skies* and more
ON THE DISC: Playable demos of *Sega Worldwide Soccer* and *Re-Volt*
PRICE: £5.99



ISSUE #5

MARCH 2000

INSIDE:: Exclusive *Crazy Taxi* review; 2D vs 3D games; *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* preview
REVIEWS: *NBA 2K, Red Dog, Slave Zero*
ON THE DISC: *Rayman 2, Street Fighter Alpha 3 and Red Dog* playables
PRICE: £5.99



ISSUE #6

APRIL 2000

INSIDE: World exclusive *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* review; jobs in the industry; *Virtua Striker 2* tips guide.
REVIEWS: *Rayman 2, Soul Reaver, Zombie Revenge, Wild Metal*
ON THE CD: Rolling demo of Metropolis Street Racer; playable demos of *MDK 2* and *Slave Zero*
PRICE: £5.99

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☐ D001	Issue #1	November 1999	☐ D004	Issue #4	February 2000
☐ D002	Issue #2	December 1999	☐ D005	Issue #5	March 2000
			☐ D006	Issue #6	April 2000

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NEXT MONTH

LOOKING GOOD!



DEAD OR ALIVE 2

Yes, it's beautiful, but what about the brains, brawn and... gameplay, eh? Check out our huge, exclusive review of the full UK (PAL) version.



ECCO THE DOLPHIN

Ecco is back and looking very tasty, but will the game, um, sink or swim? Find out in our world-exclusive review.



THE BEST DEMO DISC EVER!

Fully playable demos of *Fur Fighters* (shown above), *4 Wheel Thunder, V Rally 2, Worldwide Soccer 2000: Euro Edition* AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE JUNE ISSUE ON SALE THURSDAY 4 MAY

DON'T MISS IT!

Contents may change due to circumstances beyond our control.

THE RESIDENTS
WHO ARE THEY?



JILL HENRY
31, mortgage broker
FAVOURITE PLAYSTATION GAME
"Er..."
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME?
House Of The Dead 2
WOULD YOU SWAP?
"It's a tough one, but I think I would."



NICK SCANLAN
35, IT consultant
FAVOURITE PLAYSTATION GAME
FIFA Soccer 2000
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME?
Crazy Taxi
WOULD YOU SWAP?
"Yeah, definitely."



MARK HALL
29, IT consultant
FAVOURITE PLAYSTATION GAME
FIFA Soccer 2000
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME?
Crazy Taxi
WOULD YOU SWAP?
"Yes I would, actually."



BEN GIRDLESTONE
27, press officer
FAVOURITE PLAYSTATION GAME
FIFA Soccer 2000
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME?
Crazy Taxi
WOULD YOU SWAP?
"Not unless there was a decent footie game."



△ **Ben, Jill, Mark and Nic (plus Nic's girlfriend Jackie). Empty champagne bottles and piles of cash not pictured.**

YUPPIE HEAVEN!

"We all play games," say Sega, and that includes slick, city-dwelling types like this month's challengees. **DAN TRENT** heads to London's Docklands, Dreamcast in hand...

ARRIVING AT THE PLUSH entrance to our doorstep challengees' apartment block in the shadow of London's Tower Bridge, it's immediately obvious why this area has a reputation for being the location of choice for thrusting city types working in the City just over the water. But once inside, any fears we'd be meeting a herd of braying merchant bankers were soon squashed – normal people live here too!

While most of the household *do* work in the City, it's not all champagne and fast cars – unless you count the action on the TV, of course.

With the PlayStation comfortably settled beneath an extremely large television, and the popular sports titles such as *FIFA Soccer 2000* on top of a pile of games, it was obvious the Dreamcast was going to have its work cut out if it was going to convince the residents it deserved to take the place of their well-loved Sony console.

As Nic explains: "We'll sit down on a Sunday afternoon, watch the football and then play it on PlayStation."

"When we're not out on the beers or watching football," Mark continues, "we'll all be in playing football games. It's very much a sports flat." On PlayStation, at least.

But sport-type games aren't so important for the girls, according to Jill: "I cheer in the background but I don't usually get involved, except with the fighting games. I'm very good at them."

Many people agree that Dreamcast is crying out for a really killer footie title, and in Ben's view this is its major weak link: "There's no doubt Dreamcast is excellent for arcade-style stuff, but I love football games and I wasn't that impressed with *Worldwide Soccer 2000*. It's a big disappointment that there doesn't seem to be anything like *FIFA* or *ISS*."

So important is this to Ben, that he wouldn't be happy to swap consoles unless there was a suitable replacement for his beloved *FIFA*, although Lara Croft's Dreamcast debut has, ahem, aroused his interest: "I haven't seen *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* yet, but given the choice I'd much rather play it on Dreamcast than anything else."

One game that seemed to have the flatmates united in gushing praise was *Crazy Taxi*. "It was brilliant," enthuses a very vocal Ben, "and I really got into it, which surprised me because arcade-style things usually bore me. I've always had a bit of a thing for racing games and, while it obviously isn't a racing game, it is a very original idea."

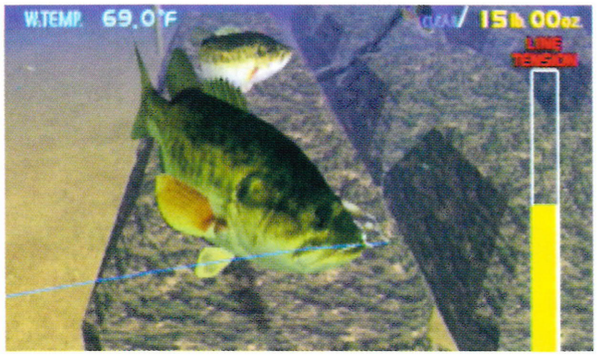
One visitor to the flat was particularly impressed, as Mark explains: "My mate Nathan came round, and was so amazed by *Crazy Taxi* he went out and bought a Dreamcast of his own!"

House Of The Dead 2 also won top honours, with Nic particularly keen on the teamwork aspect of the game: "I prefer to play with people rather than be anti-social and play on my own. Playing with your mates is a laugh and *House Of The Dead 2* is particularly good for that."

So despite Ben's reservations, it was pretty clear the Dreamcast was in this household to stay and it was the end of the road for the venerable PlayStation.

As Nic puts it, "Armchair fishing – it has to be the way forward!"

BASS IN THE PLACE... SOON!



△ *Sega Bass Fishing*: catch it while you can. Ha ha.

Sega Bass Fishing finally gets the go-ahead

IF YOU'VE SPENT THE LAST SIX months wondering what happened to *Sega Bass Fishing*, Sega are ready to put you out of your misery. The game is due to finally get a release on Friday 14 April.

The delay was due to production problems with the innovative fishing rod controller which was to be supplied with the game – basically, Sega couldn't make enough of them for the UK market.

Sega have got around the problem by granting Madcatz and InterAct an official licence to manufacture Dreamcast peripherals, and both companies are now bringing out rod controllers to tie in with the game's release.

InterAct's Fission (groan!) controller closely resembles the Sega original, and also includes an internal vibration unit that responds to casting, reeling-in and hooking a bite in the game. The Madcatz Rumble Rod includes a vibration feature, plus an actual line attached which moves realistically when you're reeling in a fish. Sega's own rod controller will not officially be available in this country.

Sega will ship the game on its own, and it will be up to retailers to bundle it with either the Madcatz or InterAct rods (they're also available separately for around £24.99).

Whatever you do, don't be tempted to buy the game *without* also getting a rod with which to play it – it's really not that much fun with a standard controller. Oh, and don't forget that the rod can also be used to play *Soul Calibur*!



△ Don't take *Sega Bass* home without one.

IT WAS THIS BIG!

Just in case you've forgotten our *Sega Bass Fishing* review (it was way back in issue 1, after all), here are the highlights. We gave it 7/10, and said the following...



"The game is like an arcade representation of what fishing would be like if it was exciting."

"You end up hammering the fishing rod, shouting at the screen and swearing whenever the fish threatens to break the line."

"The lakes are nicely rendered but it's the fish that stand out the most. They're grumpy little buggers, skulking around your bait morosely until they fancy a bite. It's a pleasure to catch them."

"Knockabout fun, worth a look even if you don't like fishing."



△ Watch the match ebb and flow from, er, the rafters.

ANCO KICKS OFF ON DREAMCAST

Player Manager 2000 to be first DC management game?

ANCO HAVE CONFIRMED that they're planning to bring the latest installment of their football management series to Dreamcast later this year.

Player Manager 2000 is set to be released for PC and PlayStation, but Anco are intending to make the most of Dreamcast's capabilities to produce a truly state-of-the-art footie simulation.

Anco have consulted several Premiership managers during the game's development, including Gordon Strachan, Harry Redknapp, Graham Taylor and John Gregory. The game combines strategic management with 3D match action.

In an exciting development, Anco have also claimed that they'd like to offer some kind of online mode to the Dreamcast version, possibly even full online play. However, it's still early days, so we can't be sure that this will indeed figure in the final game.

No release date has been set, but we expect to see it sometime in the autumn to tie in with the start of the new football season.



△ Plan your referee-hassling tactics.

RELEASE DATES
APRIL/MAY 2000

Here's a list of Dreamcast titles due out in April and May, compiled with the help of HMV, Sega Europe and various game publishers. As we explained in our 'slippage' feature last month, release dates are flexible, so expect the odd slip.



△ *MDK 2*: coming atcha soon.

APRIL 7
MDK 2 (Virgin)
Roadsters (Titus)

APRIL 14
Resident Evil 2 (Virgin)
Sega Bass Fishing (Sega)

APRIL 21
Caesars Palace 2000 (Interplay)
Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure (Virgin)
Red Dog (Sega)
Slave Zero (Infogrames)
Star Wars Episode I: Racer (Activision)

APRIL 28
Dead Or Alive 2 (Acclaim)
Dragons Blood (Virgin)
Evolution (Ubi Soft)



△ *Ecco*: on the way in May.

MAY
4 Wheel Thunder (Midway)
ChuChu Rocket! (Sega)
Ecco The Dolphin (Sega)
Giga Wing (Virgin)
Grand Theft Auto 2 (Take 2)
Hidden & Dangerous (Take 2)
Sega Worldwide Soccer Euro Edition (Sega)
South Park Rally (Acclaim)
Street Fighter Alpha 3 (Virgin)
Super Magnetic Neo (Crave)
Tech Romancer (Virgin)
Tony Hawk's Skateboarding (Crave)
V-Rally 2 Expert Edition (Infogrames)

THE HMV TOP TEN

The ultimate guide to what's hot in the world of Dreamcast games on the streets of Great Britain

POS	LM	TITLE	PUBLISHER	RATING	REVIEWED ISSUE
1	(-)	CRAZY TAXI	SEGA	9/10	5
2	(-)	SOUL REAVER	EIDOS	7/10	6
3	(-)	NBA 2K	SEGA	8/10	5
4	(-)	RAYMAN 2	UBI SOFT	8/10	6
5	(8)	NBA SHOWTIME	MIDWAY	6/10	2
6	(2)	VIRTUA STRIKER 2	SEGA	7/10	4
7	(-)	TEE OFF	ACCLAIM	7/10	3
8	(9)	HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2	SEGA	9/10	1
9	(RE)	POWER STONE	EIDOS	8/10	1
10	(7)	NFL BLITZ 2000	MIDWAY	7/10	1



△ Just as we predicted, *Crazy Taxi* has shot to the top spot in both the HMV and ChartTrack charts.

THE ChartTrack TOP TWENTY

ELSPA

POS	LW	TITLE	PUBLISHER	RATING	REVIEWED ISSUE
1	(1)	CRAZY TAXI	SEGA	9/10	5
2	(-)	NBA 2K	SEGA	8/10	5
3	(-)	RAYMAN 2	UBI SOFT	8/10	6
4	(2)	SOUL REAVER	EIDOS	7/10	6
5	(-)	ECW HARDCORE REVOLUTION	ACCLAIM	3/10	7
6	(3)	TEE OFF	ACCLAIM	7/10	3
7	(4)	DEADLY SKIES	KONAMI	5/10	4
8	(5)	SONIC ADVENTURE	SEGA	9/10	0
9	(6)	SOUL CALIBUR	SEGA	10/10	2
10	(9)	VIRTUA STRIKER 2 V2000.1	SEGA	7/10	4
11	(7)	HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2	SEGA	9/10	1
12	(11)	WWF ATTITUDE	ACCLAIM	3/10	2
13	(16)	UEFA STRIKER	INFOGRAMES	8/10	1
14	(13)	JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL	VIRGIN	7/10	1
15	(17)	MONACO GRAND PRIX RS2	UBI SOFT	6/10	1
16	(10)	RE-VOLT	ACCLAIM	7/10	3
17	(8)	VIGILANTE 8	ACTIVISION	5/10	3
18	(19)	TRICKSTYLE	ACCLAIM	7/10	1
19	(20)	READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING	SEGA	9/10	1
20	(18)	NBA SHOWTIME	MIDWAY	6/10	2

UK sales for week ending 17 March 2000. Compiled by Chart Track © ELSPA 2000



△ This game's making some crazy money!

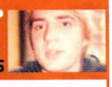
CHART ANALYSIS

NO, IT WASN'T HARD to predict that *Crazy Taxi* would storm straight into the top spot on its release, and it's stayed there since, beating off strong challenges from *NBA 2K* and *Rayman 2*. The game has benefited from being in retail pods around the country, allowing gamers to have a quick go and get hooked.

Thankfully *NBA 2K* has performed strongly, justifying Sega's decision to release what could be considered a minority title. It would be nice if this success helps convince Sega to give sister title, *NFL 2K*, a UK release too, but we'll have to wait and see. It's good to see *Rayman 2* debuting high as well.

Finally, *ECW Hardcore Revolution* sneaks in at number five, aided by the fact that it beat the reviews to the shelves. As you can see from our review on p84, we weren't impressed at all. As usual, if you disagree, write to us and let us know.

THE PLAYLIST



OUR FAVOURITE GAMES

YOU CAN SAVE £5 OFF A GAME AT HMV WITH ODM. BUT WHAT WOULD WE BUY? THIS MONTH, STUART DREDGE PICKS HIS FAVE TITLES FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES



1 CRAZY TAXI (SEGA)

It took a while to grab me, but once I'd been enlightened in the ways of the Crazy Dash and Crazy Drift, I was hooked. The learning curve is fantastic, and I've seen my scores steadily improve to the point where I'm just a couple of thousand dollars off getting my Crazy licence. And I haven't even started on the original city yet! Despite my initial concerns, this one will run and run.



2 VIRTUA STRIKER 2 VER. 2000.1 (SEGA)

Yeah, so it's got its problems, but until a better football game comes along this will be getting plenty of play. It does get easier the more you play, although the console teams' occasional Pelé-like runs down the wing still make me want to throw my Dreamcast out of the window. Even so, I haven't been able to stop playing it.



3 NBA 2K (SEGA)

Although I haven't had the time to sit down and play through a whole season yet, I'm still marvelling at the way the gameplay feels so... right. The movement, the console intelligence, and even the commentators feel spot on. It's also come into its own as a four-player game, booting *NBA Showtime* off my home console. I'll be playing this one till, ooh, the release of the next version!



4 RAYMAN 2 (UBI SOFT)

It's the most accessible platform game I've ever played, and speaking as someone who's generally crap at them, that's a compliment. Initially, I was worried that the game might be too cutesy, but was quickly won over by the the intuitive controls, stunning scenery and puzzles just the right side of frustrating. It's also been great for showing off Dreamcast to sceptical friends.



5 TEE OFF (ACCLAIM)

It's a shame that it's taken a while to come out in this country, as *Tee Off* is actually great fun. It's nice to see a golf game that's easy to get into, and the Japanese characters only add to the appeal. Okay, so it'd be nice to have a realistic *PGA Tour Golf*-style game as well, but *Tee Off* definitely has hidden depths. Unlocking all the extra characters is keeping me glued to my joypad.



6 SOUL CALIBUR (SEGA)

An obvious choice, perhaps, and I don't know how much I'll be playing it once *Dead Or Alive 2* arrives. Still, *Soul Calibur* is still the premier Dreamcast beat 'em up in my opinion. Admittedly, it's not the hardest of games in one-player mode, but then we all need to start somewhere. Besides, with two players who know what they're doing, it provides totally absorbing entertainment.

WIN THIS MONTH'S TOP TEN GAMES FROM !!!

Expand your collection without mortgaging your granny

IT'S NOT A CHEAP life being a gamer, particularly when there are so many good titles coming out. With stellar games like *Crazy Taxi*, *Soul Reaver*, *NBA 2K* and *Rayman 2* all arriving within a few weeks, you'd have to be rich or have an extremely accommodating bank manager to be able to afford all of them. So even though you want them all, you have to settle for one, or perhaps two.

Well not now you don't. This month's competition gives you the chance to win every single game from this month's HMV Top Ten. Yes, not one, not two, not even five, but ten top Dreamcast titles. Hell, you'll probably need to build a new shelf or something. If you're too lazy to look opposite, this means you get: *Crazy Taxi*, *Soul Reaver*, *NBA 2K*, *Rayman 2*, *NBA Showtime*, *Virtua Striker 2*, *Tee Off*, *House Of The Dead 2*, *Power Stone* and *NFL Blitz 2000*. Fancy them? Then just answer the following multiple-choice question and send in the form below.

THE BIG QUESTION: WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE FEMALE DRIVER IN *CRAZY TAXI*?

A) GENA
B) JANE
C) GINO GINELLI

Complete this coupon, then cut it out (sorry, photocopies can NOT be accepted), stick it in an envelope and post it to the address shown below.

ANSWER (circle one): A B C

NAME:

AGE:

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

Send your entry to: *ODM* Top 10 Games Competition, c/o Simon Moore, HMV Marketing Department, Film House, 142 Wardour Street, London W1V 4LN
Closing date: Thursday 4 May 2000

☐ Please tick if you do NOT wish to receive details of special offers or new products from HMV or other companies

Terms & Conditions: Strictly one entry per person. You must send in this entry form – photocopies will NOT be accepted. Additional entry forms can be obtained before April 20 by sending a stamped addressed envelope to HMV Form Request (May issue), *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ (please DO NOT send entries to this address!). Only entry forms with the correct answer, received before the closing date, will be entered into the prize draw (no, really). No cash alternative. The acting editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. All the other usual *ODM* competition rules, conditions and restrictions (available on request) apply.

£5 OFF ANY DREAMCAST GAME*

CUT OUT THIS COUPON AND TAKE IT ALONG TO AN HMV STORE TO RECEIVE £5 OFF ANY FULL-PRICE DREAMCAST GAME

Terms and Conditions:
1. This voucher entitles you to a saving of £5 off any Dreamcast game priced £39.99 or more at participating HMV stores. 2. Valid until Thursday 4 May 2000. 3. Only one voucher per transaction. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other voucher or promotion. 4. Offer is not open to employees of HMV, Dennis Publishing, their agencies or anyone directly connected with the offer. 5. Photocopied, damaged or defaced vouchers will not be accepted. 6. Cash value 0.001p

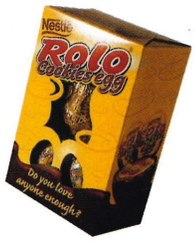
** Applies to full-price software only*

EAT THIS! EASTER EGGS



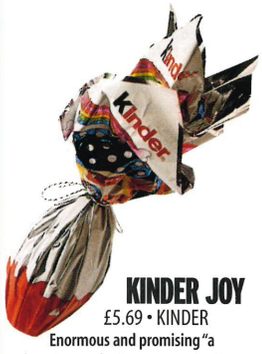
SQUEGG
£3.49 • CADBURY

Truly a revolution in Easter egg technology, the squegg is – gasp – square! In a world of egg-shaped eggs, the Squegg certainly cuts an exciting, modernist dash, and is really quite reasonably priced. Run-of-the-mill Dairy Milk provides the casing, and the contents are anonymous chocolate chunks, which makes for a slightly overwhelming sickly taste unless taken in moderation. Top marks for innovation and value for money though. *DT*



ROLO COOKIES
£1.99 • NESTLÉ

This relative newcomer makes up for the diminutive size of the main egg by including two deliciously sickly Rolo Cookies eggs containing a sticky toffee mixture with biscuit bits. Healthy, nutritious and ideal for a balanced diet. The chocolate is slightly better than the sickly Dairy Milk of the Squegg, and the price makes this extremely good value for money. *DT*



KINDER JOY
£5.69 • KINDER

Enormous and promising "a gigantic surprise", we were excited at the prospect of this overblown Kinder Surprise Egg. The vast amount of horrifically sweet and synthetic chocolate won't win favours with connoisseurs, but it's strangely appealing even if it does make you feel a bit odd if you eat too much. Expensive, but just like a bigger Kinder Egg and therefore cool. *DT*

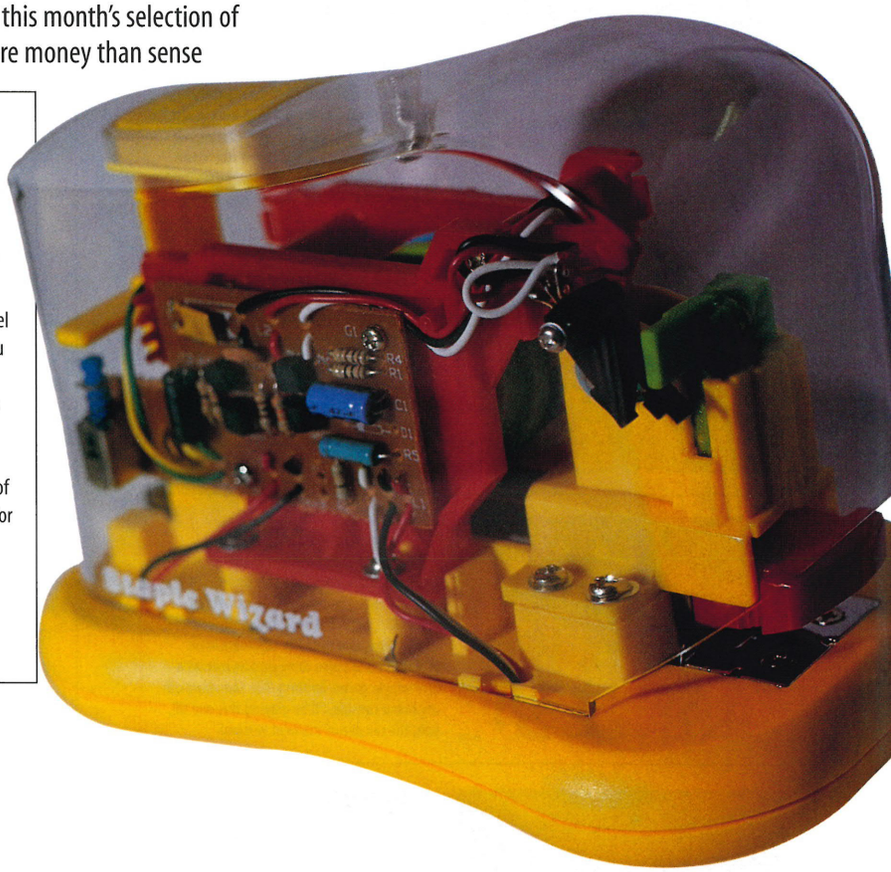
TOYS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

Music on the move, music in the home, something flash for the office and some cool face furniture are this month's selection of gadgets and gizmos for those with more money than sense

THE STAPLE WIZARD

Stapling – such hard work, isn't it? According to a new report it's overtaken typing as a major cause of repetitive strain injury (RSI) in office workers across the country, so it must be with this in mind that Revel launch this transparent beauty. Battery operated, you simply insert the items to be stapled into its mouth, then gaze in awe as the powerful mechanism grinds into action and smoothly marries your paperwork. Satisfying to the point where you'll find yourself wandering about desperately seeking lonely pieces of paper longing to be joined by the bond of a staple. For electrically powered stationary junkies everywhere.

Price: £19.99
Contact: Gadgets On The Web
Tel: 0116 270 5522
Website: www.gadgetsontheweb.com





CASIO WRIST AUDIO PLAYER

It seems that the MP3 music revolution is barely out of its nappies and already we're seeing the hardware shrinking to an unbelievably small size. Unburdened by the problems of moving parts or bulky storage media, Casio's boffins have managed to cram a fully functioning MP3 player into a timepiece not much bigger than their trendy G-Shock watch. A little over half an hour of playback doesn't sound like much, but considering the size of the whole thing it's actually pretty amazing. Download some tracks for the morning bus ride, find some different ones for the journey home and you're sorted. Casio are also working on another watch with a built-in mini-digital camera, due for release around the same time.

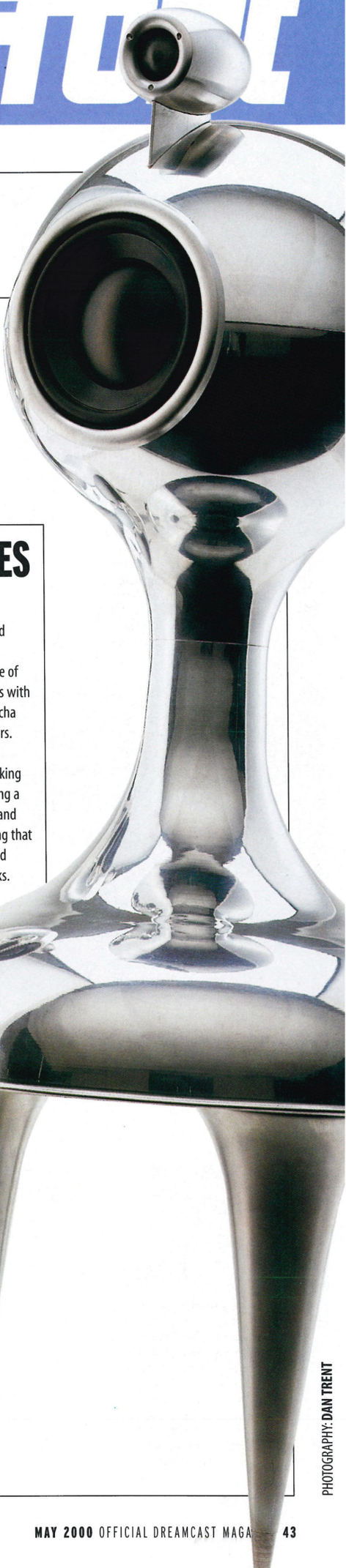
Price: £TBC (available July)
Contact: Usual stockists
Website: www.casio.com



OAKLEY JULIET

Companion to the larger Romeo, soon to be seen as Tom Cruise's gadget-ridden shades in *Mission: Impossible 2,* the Juliet is the latest in Oakley's range of hideously overpriced yet undeniably cool high-tech eyewear. They feature, to quote Oakley, "contoured orbitals and fluid sculpturing of the chiselled intake ports with interchangeable nose bombs, flex couplers and temple shocks to ensure a comfortable fit around the skull". Right. In English that translates to super-sharp design and Oakley's trademark bulletproof (literally) lenses to round off the ultimate in posing shades. Remember, kids, you've got to be able to carry them off or you'll look like a cyber golfer, and wearing them on your head is *not* cool!

Price: £199
Contact: Oakley
Tel: 01462 475470
Website: www.oakley.com



O'HEOCHA D2 SERIES SPEAKERS

Until recently, speakers were predominantly chipboard boxes with fabric covering, and the main differences between them were sound quality and size. In the age of the iMac though, nothing is safe from 'design', and it is with this in mind that former car designer Aonghus O'Heocha set about creating these weird and wonderful speakers. Intended to work with hi-fi and home cinema, and constructed from wonderfully polished and sleek-looking aluminium, they certainly demand attention, and bring a very 'bright' sound to any room. A great deal of time and complicated, jargon-filled work has gone into ensuring that the sound is second to none so that your sophisticated home entertainment centre sounds as good as it looks.

Price £TBC
Contact: O'Heocha Design
Tel: 01564 782502 /
oheocha_design@yahoo.co.uk



MINI-PHONE

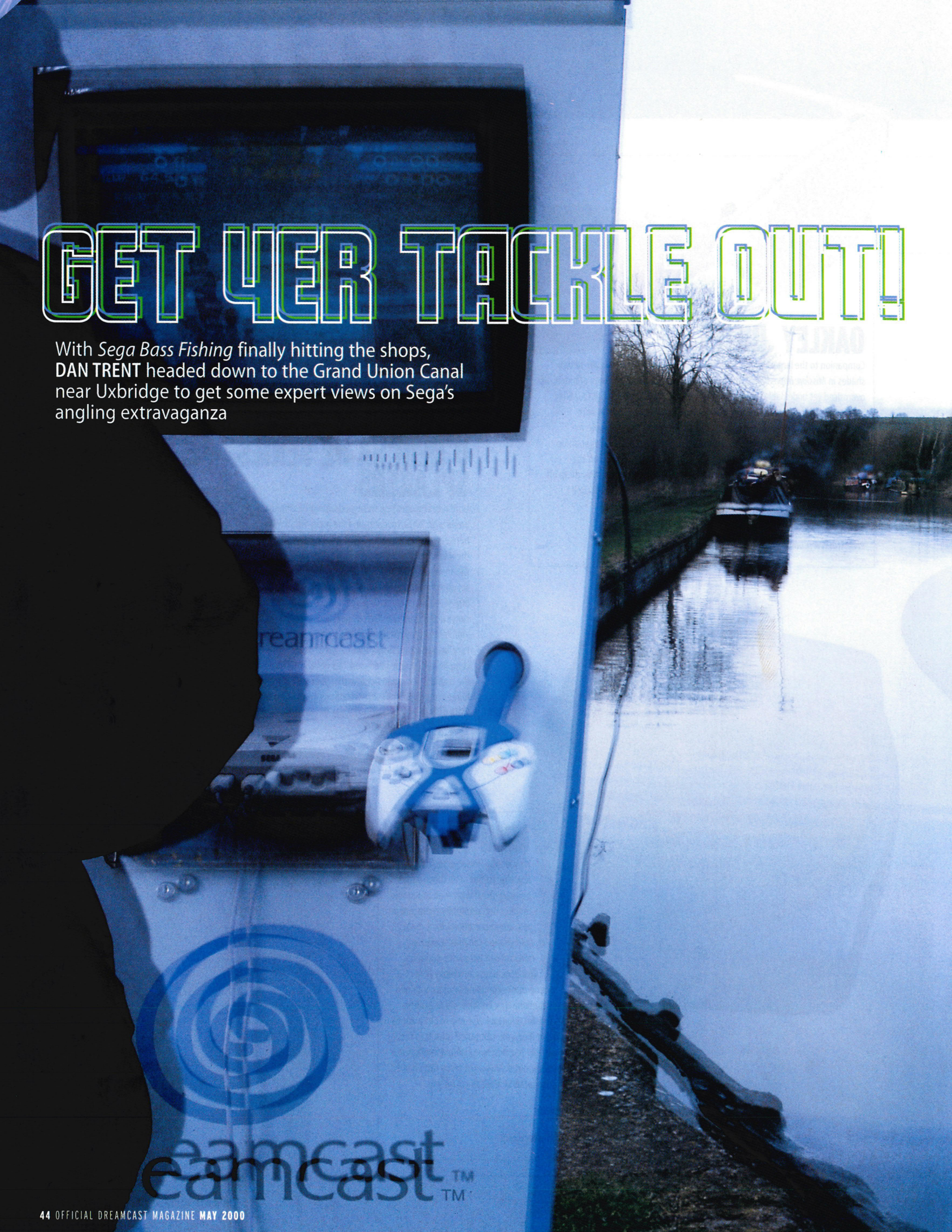
It's a hands-free phone! With a cord. If you're jealous of all those people poncing about with their minuscule mobiles but are strictly terrestrial in your communications, for a mere 20 quid you too can grab a piece of miniaturised telephone gadgetry. Just 5cm across, this dinky little phone comes complete with a combined earpiece and microphone that enables you to gesture wildly or have your hands free for whatever else you might want to do while on the phone. Mount it on your computer! Stick it to the fridge! It surfs the extremely fine line between being actually quite cool and being utterly pointless, but if you've got teeny little hands that are always busy then this could be the gadget for you.

Price: £19.99
Contact: Gadgets On The Web
Tel: 0116 270 5522
Website: www.gadgetsontheweb.com

PHOTOGRAPHY: **DAN TRENT**

GET YER TACKLE OUT!

With *Sega Bass Fishing* finally hitting the shops, **DAN TRENT** headed down to the Grand Union Canal near Uxbridge to get some expert views on Sega's angling extravaganza

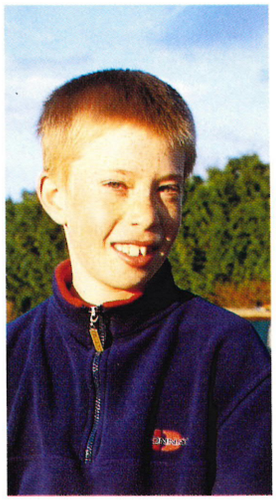




△ *Sega Bass Fishing* versus the real thing.

ARRIVING AT THE CANAL towpath, we discovered our first error: fishermen are famous for getting up early, whereas we scribes are… well, let's say we're not known as 'morning people'. While most of the anglers had packed up and gone home by the time we finally manoeuvred the pod into position on the towpath, we did manage to snare a couple of passing boaters and interrupt a few peaceful Sunday afternoon walks to find out what the Great British Public make of Sega's wacky and wonderful *Sega Bass Fishing*.

Wising up to the fact that even the most hardy of angler needs to warm up eventually, we then headed down to the Boat And Horses, favoured hostelry for the canal's many fishermen, to see what we could catch in the way of feedback from the people on the front line.



△ BEN, 11 SCHOOLBOY

BIGGEST FISH CAUGHT IN GAME?
"Average. No, wait [winks]… 4lb something!"
BIGGEST FISH (AND WHAT TYPE) CAUGHT IN REAL LIFE?
I went but it didn't quite work out. I never caught a thing.
IMPRESSIONS OF THE GAME
It's okay, but not that many people are into fishing, and it needs to be more exciting.
WHY HAVE YOU COME TO THE CANAL TODAY?
We saw you carrying the pod and came over to have a go.



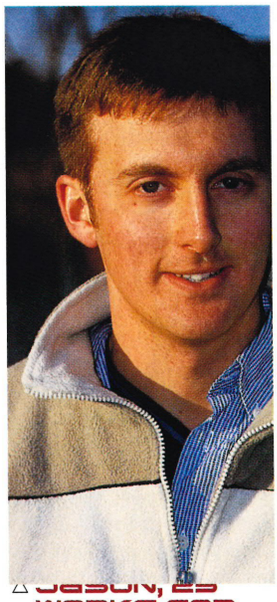
△ SARAH, 25 IN MARKETING

BIGGEST FISH CAUGHT IN GAME?
4lb something.
BIGGEST FISH (AND WHAT TYPE) CAUGHT IN REAL LIFE?
Crabs [blushes]. No, not those ones, proper ones!
FISHING: WHAT'S THE POINT?
Oh, I reckon it's quite contemplative, if that's a real word.
IMPRESSIONS OF THE GAME
It seems fun, but I wouldn't want to play it for ages.



△ MICHAEL, 16 STUDENT

BIGGEST FISH CAUGHT IN GAME?
Just over 4lb.
BIGGEST FISH (AND WHAT TYPE) CAUGHT IN REAL LIFE?
A 2lb roach.
IMPRESSIONS OF THE GAME
Excellent and really addictive.



△ JASON, 23 WORKS FOR RENAULT

BIGGEST FISH CAUGHT IN GAME?
5lb 12oz.
BIGGEST FISH (AND WHAT TYPE) CAUGHT IN REAL LIFE?
I won a Scouts fishing competition when I was a lad, but it was only a tiddler.
IMPRESSIONS OF THE GAME
I was gobsmacked to see the Dreamcast by the canal. I was really impressed with the game.
WHY HAVE YOU COME TO THE CANAL TODAY?
Taking my boat out for a spin – I live on it.



△ ASHLEY, 11 SCHOOLBOY AND FISHING EXPERT

BIGGEST FISH CAUGHT IN GAME?
5lb 5oz
BIGGEST FISH (AND WHAT TYPE) CAUGHT IN REAL LIFE?
I've been sea fishing and I caught a massive fish. I also caught a puffer fish, and it puffed up and nobody could pick it up.
IMPRESSIONS OF THE GAME
I like it cos I like fishing.



△ BEN, 24 ADVERTISING

BIGGEST FISH CAUGHT IN GAME?
Pretty big – 11lb 6oz. Not bad for a beginner.
BIGGEST FISH (AND WHAT TYPE) CAUGHT IN REAL LIFE?
Nothing. I'm not a big fisherman.
IMPRESSIONS OF THE GAME
Surprisingly good fun. The idea sounds rubbish, but the game makes a great change.
WHY HAVE YOU COME TO THE CANAL TODAY?
I'm out on a boat ride.



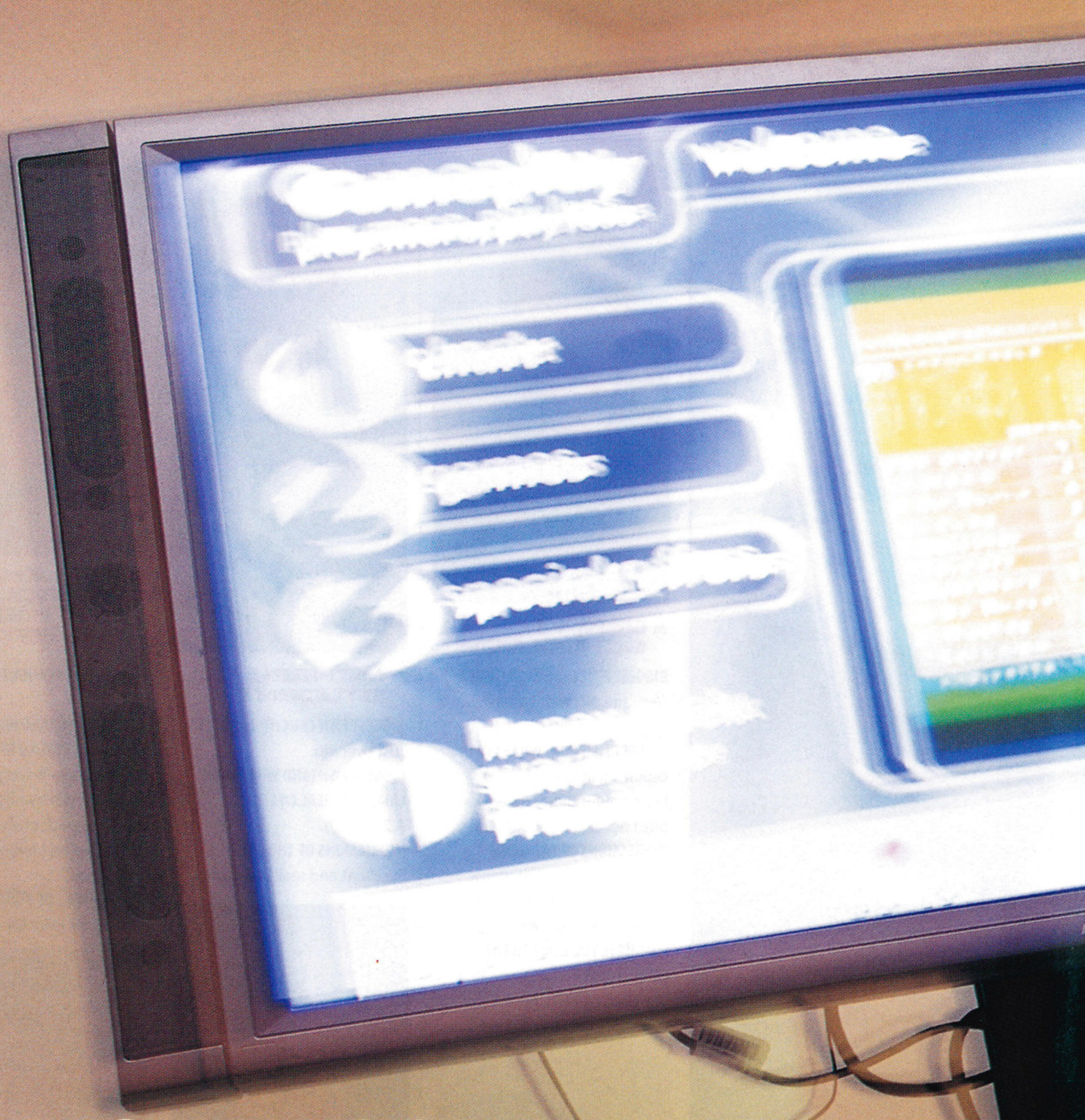
△ TONY, 25 BUILDER

BIGGEST FISH CAUGHT IN GAME?
A big one, about 5lb.
BIGGEST FISH (AND WHAT TYPE) CAUGHT IN REAL LIFE?
Nothing.
FISHING: WHAT'S THE POINT?
You sit at the bank, catch a fish and throw it back in. I can't see the point.
IMPRESSIONS OF THE GAME
For a fishing game that I though was going to be crap, it's really good. Really playable and addictive.



△ MARION, 50+ TEACHER

BIGGEST FISH CAUGHT IN GAME?
I didn't catch anything.
BIGGEST FISH (AND WHAT TYPE) CAUGHT IN REAL LIFE?
A crab, but not a fish.
FISHING: WHAT'S THE POINT?
Peace and quiet, I suppose.
IMPRESSIONS OF THE GAME
Okay as games go, but I'd go for it more than I'd go for a fighting or a racing game.



LOADSOFMONEY.COM

FORMER FISH FOOD SELLER AND NOW GLOBE-TROTTING MULTI-MILLIONAIRE BUSINESSMAN DYLAN WILK PROVES THAT LOVING GAMES DOESN'T HAVE TO BE BAD FOR YOUR BANK BALANCE

IT'S THE KIND OF STORY that would have Rocky weeping into his boxing gloves with envy. Back in the early '90s, a hacked-off fish food seller living in Bradford had an idea for a company, subsequently worked his proverbial nuts off for five years and has ended up being worth £14 million (on an average day on the stock market, mind you).

Games-head Dylan Wilk's rags-to-riches story began when he was 20 after he quit his fishy dead-end job and decided to start his own software mail order company, ICE. When he took his idea along to the banks, he was told he had a "lovely business plan" but he should come back "when I was 30 because they thought I was too young".

Next stop was the Prince's Trust: "They said that it was a big risk," explains Dylan, 25. "They reckoned the business would either fly or fall flat on its face in the first month – but they decided to lend me £2,500 anyway."

Indeed, the Prince's Trust's concerns would have been well-founded if a mistake hadn't occurred that enabled Dylan to carry on the business during its first few months of trading: "I'd sent a hand-written advert down to *Mean Machines Sega* and they mistyped the price for the Mega Drive version of *Mortal Kombat 2*. It was a hot release and there were thousands of people who wanted it. The mag advertised the game for £5 cheaper than I intended to sell it for so that made me the cheapest place in the country to buy the game."

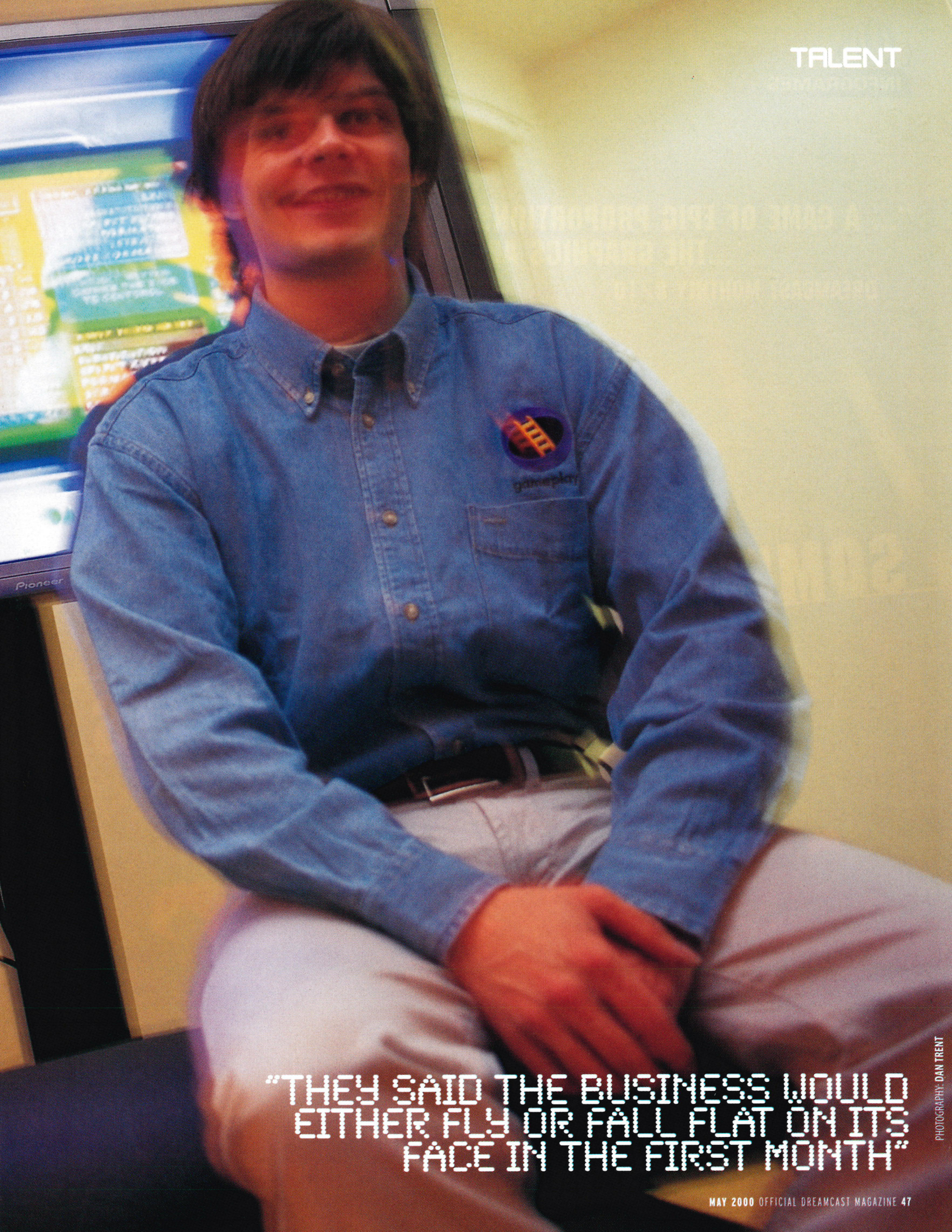
Dylan realised two things: he could either sell the game at that price and watch his business croak, or he could put the price back up, nobody would buy it and he'd still go bust. Being a bit of a Richard Branson, he dreamed up a third way of tackling the conundrum: "I went back to Acclaim (the publishers of the game) and harassed them for days and days and days. Eventually they got so sick to death of me they gave me the game at the price I wanted!"

With this potentially fatal blow fended off, Dylan built up the mail order company over the next four years into a lucrative operation. Then last year he was approached by Mark Strachan, a top dog in the games industry, who had a cunning plan to buy up BT's successful PC-based multiplayer gaming community, Wireplay, and create a massive e-commerce company in the process. Dylan loved the idea and got on board. The resulting company, Gameplay.com, is now worth about £500 million.

Indeed, such is his hectic lifestyle as a high flyer that Dylan rarely has time to sit down and play games any more. Thankfully though, he has allowed himself a fair few spins on *Crazy Taxi*: "It's an ideal game – I'm a mad driver and have two bans for speeding. The last one was for nine months. I got stopped in my Ferrari doing 70 in a 30 zone and I already had nine points on my licence. So *Crazy Taxi* just lets me get that need for speed out my system!"

And being such a kingpin in the world of games retailing, what are his thoughts on Dreamcast in general? "Sega really need to make DC a big online gaming platform," says Dylan. "If they can get broadband in there, if they can get cable modems in there, if they can get some of the things over here we're seeing coming out of Japan, like an online footie management game, then the DC has a bright future."

Adam Phillips



"THEY SAID THE BUSINESS WOULD EITHER FLY OR FALL FLAT ON ITS FACE IN THE FIRST MONTH"

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAN TRENT

INFOGRAMES

Dreamcast.

PC CD ROM

"... A GAME OF EPIC PROPORTIONS
...THE GRAPHICS ARE SUPERB..."
DREAMCAST MONTHLY 8/10

"...A TOP ARCADE TITLE,
WITH STORMING ACTION..."
PC GAMER 82%

SOMETHING BIG IS ABOUT TO HIT THE STREETS









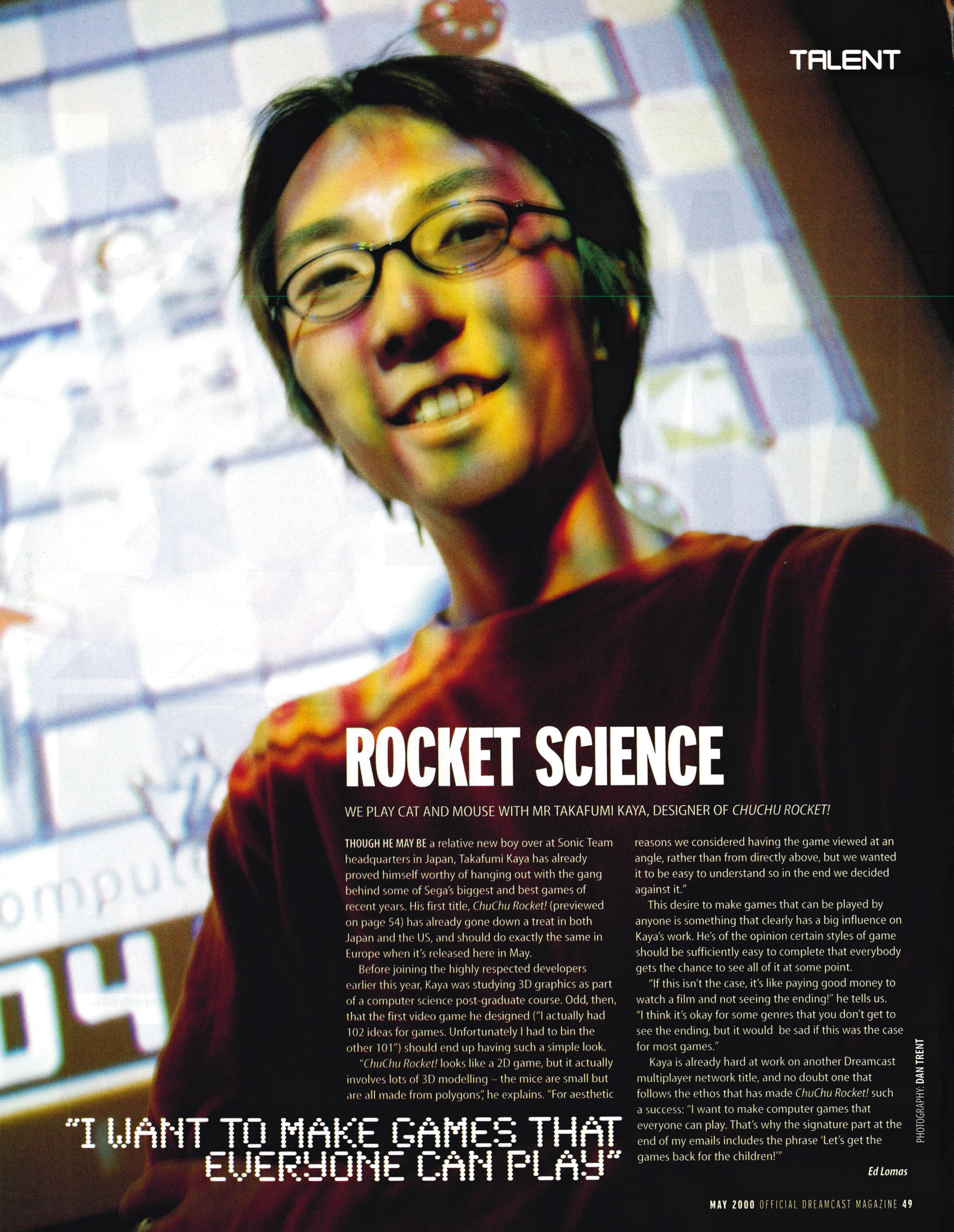
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ROCKET SCIENCE

WE PLAY CAT AND MOUSE WITH MR TAKAFUMI KAYA, DESIGNER OF *CHUCHU ROCKET!*

THOUGH HE MAY BE a relative new boy over at Sonic Team headquarters in Japan, Takafumi Kaya has already proved himself worthy of hanging out with the gang behind some of Sega's biggest and best games of recent years. His first title, *ChuChu Rocket!* (previewed on page 54) has already gone down a treat in both Japan and the US, and should do exactly the same in Europe when it's released here in May.

Before joining the highly respected developers earlier this year, Kaya was studying 3D graphics as part of a computer science post-graduate course. Odd, then, that the first video game he designed ("I actually had 102 ideas for games. Unfortunately I had to bin the other 101") should end up having such a simple look.

"*ChuChu Rocket!* looks like a 2D game, but it actually involves lots of 3D modelling – the mice are small but are all made from polygons", he explains. "For aesthetic reasons we considered having the game viewed at an angle, rather than from directly above, but we wanted it to be easy to understand so in the end we decided against it."

This desire to make games that can be played by anyone is something that clearly has a big influence on Kaya's work. He's of the opinion certain styles of game should be sufficiently easy to complete that everybody gets the chance to see all of it at some point.

"If this isn't the case, it's like paying good money to watch a film and not seeing the ending!" he tells us. "I think it's okay for some genres that you don't get to see the ending, but it would be sad if this was the case for most games."

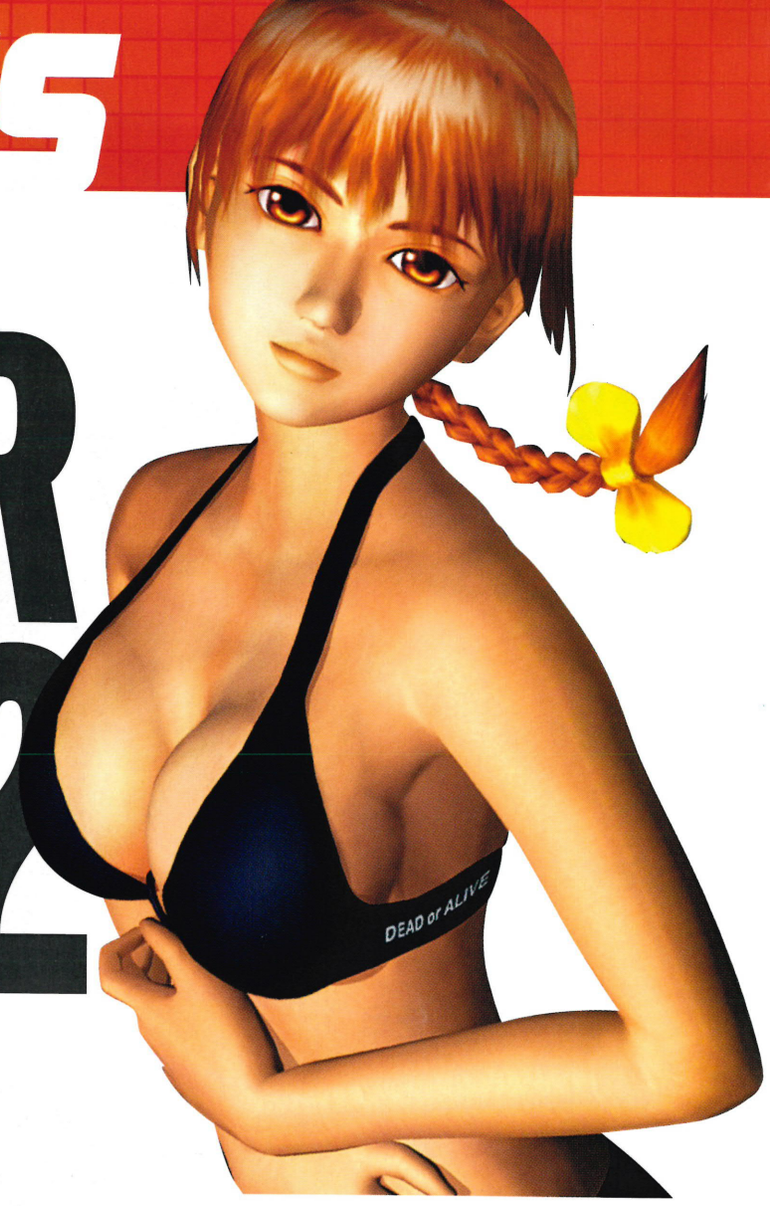
Kaya is already hard at work on another Dreamcast multiplayer network title, and no doubt one that follows the ethos that has made *ChuChu Rocket!* such a success: "I want to make computer games that everyone can play. That's why the signature part at the end of my emails includes the phrase 'Let's get the games back for the children!'"

Ed Lomas

"I WANT TO MAKE GAMES THAT EVERYONE CAN PLAY"

PHOTOGRAPHY: **DAN TRENT**

DEAD OR ALIVE 2



What better way to finish off a night out on the town than with a good, old-fashioned fight? **ED LOMAS** checks out the latest virtual alternative

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **APRIL**
PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM**
DEVELOPER: **TECMO**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Just look at it. Hoo-boy!
- Loads of brilliant characters
- Fast, deep fighting gameplay
- Tag-team battles for four players

FIGHTING GAME-WISE Dreamcast's already doing amazingly well. With classic titles like *Virtua Fighter 3tb*, *Soul Calibur* and *Street Fighter Alpha 3*, it's the machine fighting game connoisseurs just *have* to own. And very soon its collection of scrapping masterpieces is going to be boosted with the addition of Tecmo's amazing-looking *Dead Or Alive 2*.

The first game became a minor arcade success thanks to its similarity to Sega's *Virtua Fighter 2*, partly in terms of graphics (it also used the same Sega 'Model 2' arcade system) and partly because of its lightning-fast, snappy style of play. And, of course, the way the female characters' generous knockers wobbled about in their skimpy outfits didn't harm its popularity with the slightly more perverted end of the gaming spectrum.

Tecmo's follow-up is only just starting to appear in arcades outside of Japan but, as it was created on the Dreamcast-based Naomi system, the home translation is all but finished. So, just take a look at what's in store when the enhanced Dreamcast version hits the UK at the end of April.

A REAL LOOKER

Graphically, not a lot needs to be said.



△ He may be getting on a bit, but Gen-Fu's certainly still got it in him. The fighting spirit, that is.



△ The amount of detail on each of the characters is quite spectacular. Their super-smooth movement makes them look like living mannequins, which can be quite freaky at times.



△ By using the 'hold' button, it's possible to counter attack easily. Here, Hayabusa has tried to punch Kasumi but she's managed to grab hold of his wrist and is about to do something very nasty to him.

"STAGES HAVE WALLS THAT ELECTROCUTE PEOPLE"

Just look at the quality of the screenshots, and rest assured the characters all move as realistically as you could hope for. As do the backgrounds – they're packed with the tiniest of details yet cover massive areas and still move at a super-smooth 60 frames per second.

The game is certainly one of the most spectacular-looking we've yet seen on Dreamcast, rivalling *Soul Calibur* (*ODM* #2, 10/10) in terms of both detail and animation. But it's not the look of the game that makes *Dead Or Alive 2* such an exciting prospect, it's the way it plays.

Similarities to the *Virtua Fighter* series aren't accidental, as the man responsible for the original game is a good friend of *Virtua Fighter* creator Yu Suzuki. The two games even share some basic programming code. And though the idea is the same as in most fighting games (beat up the other person until they run out of energy – duh!), *Dead Or Alive 2* has a few special touches that make it stand out a mile from the rest.

Firstly, to stop dull fights where one person ends up rattling the buttons while the other stands still blocking everything thrown at them, it's easy-peasy to turn an attack against your opponent. A simple tap of the 'hold' button at the right time and you'll grab their flailing extremity and proceed to do nasty, painful things to it.

There are also ways of using the massive fighting arenas to do extra damage to your opponent. Certain stages have walls that explode or electrocute people when hit hard enough, and there are often high ledges to knock foes off if you want to really do some damage. Whenever anyone falls off the edge of an unwalled arena (or is smashed through a wall/fence/window), the view changes to show their fall in dramatic style. But the fights don't end there – the other character jumps down in an equally dramatic fashion and carries on the scrap in a completely new location.

This may look spectacular while you're playing, but it remains to be seen



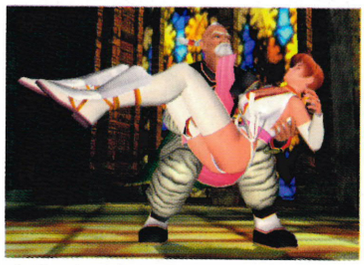
△ Zack's mad new costume makes him look like a cross between the T-1000 and a Teletubby.



△ Real-time cut-scenes explain the stories.



△ Hitting opponents into walls hurts baaaaad!



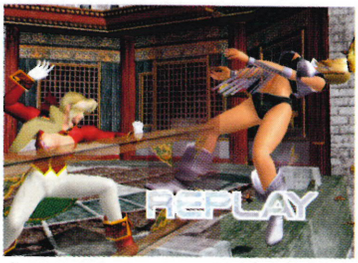
△ That doesn't look like a fighting move to me.



△ In tag mode both fighters can work together.



△ She's not playing Premier League footie again.



△ The fences must have been built by cowboys.

whether or not the tactical element of pushing enemies off cliffs and waterfalls is really going to work properly in the heat of battle.

WANTED: DEAD OR ALIVE

Dead Or Alive 2's collection of playable characters is another of its best features, with fighters that use loads of classic fighting styles. There's Jann-Lee, the Bruce Lee-alike with an even better line in dragon print shirts than Jamie Theakston; Tina the wrestling cowgirl; Lei-Fang, with her amazing wavy arms; acrobatic ninja Hayabusa; pointy-fingered old man Gen-Fu; plus other favourites from the original arcade game. There are also the two characters added for the PlayStation release of *Dead Or Alive* – Bass (big Hollywood Hogan-style brawler) and Ayane (floaty, white-haired girl), along with a bunch of new characters to check out.

Leon is a power-hitter based on the original game's Bayman. He shares his taste in limb-snapping throw combinations, but has totally different dress sense. And really beady, evil eyes. Helena's a glamorous opera singer who can switch fighting styles in the middle of a scrap, and Ein's a heroic karate expert with some slinky leather trousers and a stylish string vest. There are more characters to find as you play through the game, but they're staying secret for now.

The number (and variety) of character costumes is also bound to help attract new fans to *Dead Or Alive 2*. Everyone starts with a selection of outfits but has more which you unlock as you finish the various game modes. Now, while some of you may think you're far too macho to waste your time playing a game to earn *clothes*, we'd just like to point out that some of the female characters have outfits that would barely hide Mel C's embarrassment, let alone the big girls in *Dead Or Alive 2*.

As anyone who's played the original game will tell you, the female fighters have had a lot of development time spent on them, making sure they look and move as nicely as possible. In fact the development team even includes a bloke whose job it is to make sure the girls' bums and breasts are as smooth as possible. We expect he must have had to do a lot of 'research' for that.

One thing that may disappoint the pervs among you though is that the breasts don't wobble about as ridiculously as they did in the first game, at least not straight away. To make up for it, Tecmo have added more exciting gameplay features, such as a fantastic tag mode. Here you get to pick two characters to make up a team, and can switch between them at any time during a fight, much like in *Marvel vs Capcom* (*ODM* #2, 5/10). A whole bunch of new possibilities open up, making fights even more tense and tactical than before. There are even times when you



△ Oooh, doesn't Lei-Fang look scary?



△ You could be forgiven for finding the girls in the game attractive. Well, in a kind of very sad way.

"TECMO HAVE ADDED A FANTASTIC TAG MODE"



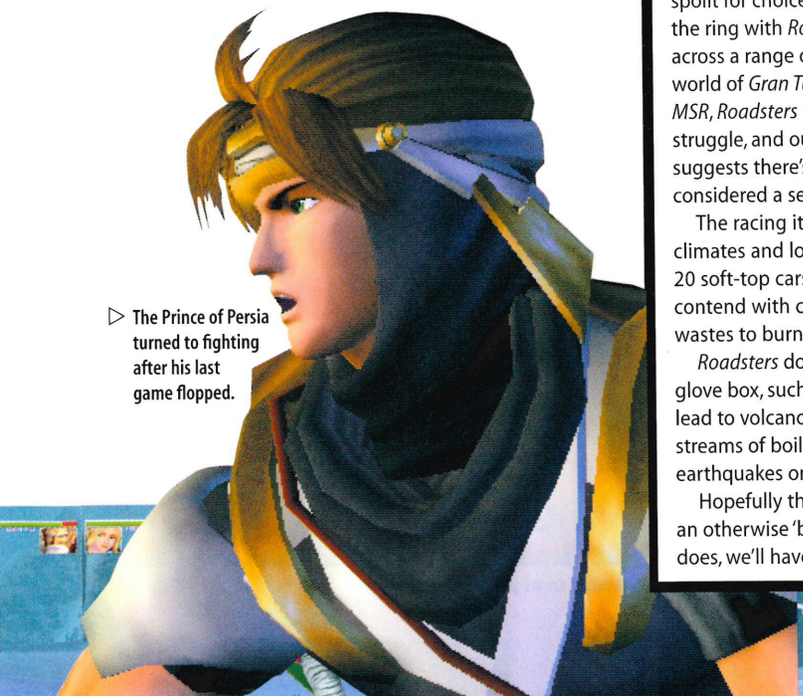


△ Bass falls from the window onto the camera!

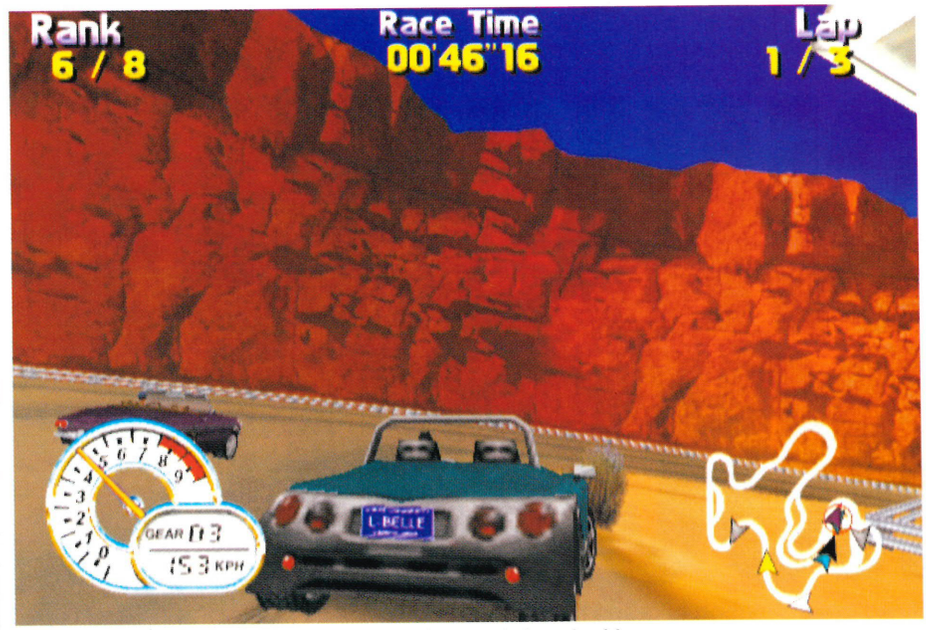
can use both fighters together, teaming them up to do seriously large amounts of damage. Certain combinations of characters have special throws that they can only perform together and, if you know what you're doing, it's possible to create your own attack combos using moves from both fighters.

The Team Battle mode is similar to the one in *Virtua Fighter 3tb* (*ODM* #1, 7/10) enabling players to pick up to five characters each, then fight with them one by one until an entire team is knocked out. However, the most impressive about *Dead Or Alive 2*'s version is that, as soon as one fighter loses, the next simply jumps straight into the arena without the game pausing at all. Consequently, team battles are more frenetic and exciting than they've ever been before.

Dead Or Alive 2's technical brilliance is looking as though it's going to combine with its fast, fun fighting gameplay to produce one of the best Dreamcast titles yet. We'll be bringing you the exclusive review of the UK version of the game in the very next issue of *ODM*, on sale Thursday 4 May. Don't miss it, y'hear?



▷ The Prince of Persia turned to fighting after his last game flopped.



△ The racing promises to be fast and furious, and the environments look… colourful.

ROADSTERS

We've all driven virtual open-top sportscars at high speeds before, but not through an earthquake. **DAN TRENT** takes a look-see at what's going on

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **APRIL**
PUBLISHER: **TITUS**
DEVELOPER: **PLAYER 1**

WITH *METROPOLIS STREET RACER* (perpetually) just around the corner and the impressive *V-Rally 2 Expert Edition* out in May, driving fans are getting spoilt for choice. Titus are throwing their hat into the ring with *Roadsters,* having launched the title across a range of platforms in recent months. In a world of *Gran Turismos* and the aforementioned *MSR*, *Roadsters* was always going to face an uphill struggle, and our first glimpse of the game suggests there's some way to go before it can be considered a serious contender.

The racing itself takes place in a variety of climates and locations, and you have more than 20 soft-top cars to choose from with which to contend with conditions ranging from frozen wastes to burning desert.

Roadsters does have a couple of tricks up its glove box, such as environmental disasters which lead to volcanos livening up the racing by pouring streams of boiling lava on to the track, or earthquakes or floods forcing you to change route.

Hopefully this random element should liven up an otherwise 'by-numbers' racer. To find out if it does, we'll have a full review in *ODM* very soon.



△ Toyota's new MR2 features in the game, alongside non-licensed but familiar looking rivals.



△ As well as slippery conditions under tyre, you run the risk of being buried by errant avalanches.

CHUCHU ROCKET!

Online gaming is almost here and the first title is Sonic Team's manic puzzler. **STUART DREDGE** checks it out



△ When you capture a special mouse, all hell breaks loose.

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **MAY**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **SONIC TEAM**

WHATS THE BIG DEAL?

- First online game in Europe
- Simultaneous four-player action
- Frantic pace
- Create your own puzzles

IF YOU'RE FED UP with the lack of online gaming for Dreamcast, join the club. Japanese gamers have been kicking each other's arses over phone lines for months, while the Yanks have just got in on the act. Us Brits, meanwhile, have been left kicking our heels.

Well, it's almost time. Sega have confirmed that *ChuChu Rocket!* will be the first European online game, currently down for a May 12 release. You'll be able to play four-player matches against gamers throughout Europe, and there'll also be a full online rankings system.

Don't be fooled by the seemingly basic graphics, either. Although *ChuChu* is certainly no *Quake III Arena* in the visual department, Sega are hoping the addictive gameplay will entice thousands of gamers to play online.

Like all classic puzzlers, it's based on a simple concept: you must guide mice (called 'chuchus' in Japan, hence the name) into rocket-shaped home bases. Like *Lemmings*, the mice just blunder straight on until they reach an obstacle, whereupon they turn right and carry on.

You guide them using arrows to change their direction, also helping them avoid cats that are prowling about. Doesn't make sense? Don't worry, it's the sort of game where five minutes play teaches you all you need to know.

Broadly speaking there are two games in *ChuChu Rocket!* There's the battle mode, where up to four people can play at once, then there are the more sedate one-player challenge and puzzle modes.

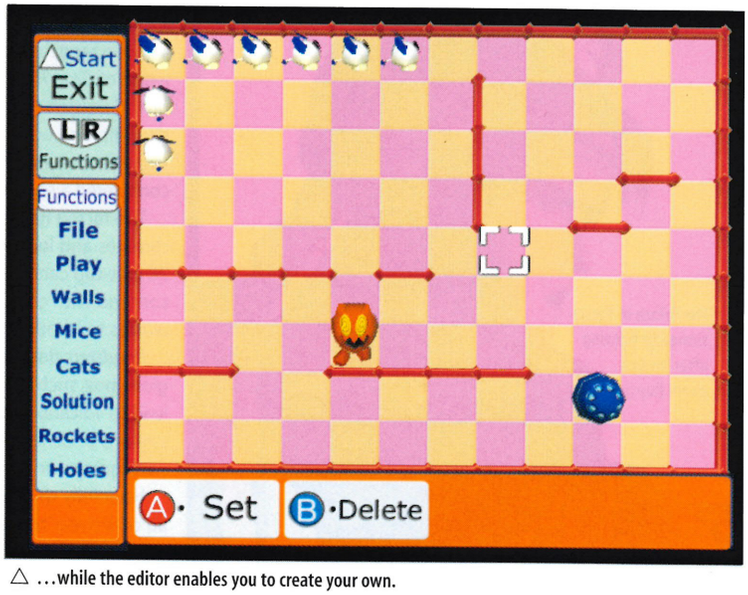
In puzzle mode, each level presents you with a screen with some mice, a rocket and perhaps the odd cat or four. You must direct the mice to the rocket without getting any of them killed. The game includes a puzzle editor which enables you to create your own levels, and Sega have confirmed you'll be able to store these on your VM and upload them on to a special Internet site for other gamers to download. There's also a stage challenge mode where you must complete 25 tasks as quickly as you can.

Although these solo modes look as if they're going to be worthwhile in their own right, it's the four-player battle mode that's likely to get the most attention. So, here's how it works. Battle matches always feature four players, each with their own rocket. If you can round up three mates, you can all play at once. If not, you can either log on to find online opponents, or make up the numbers with console-controlled players.

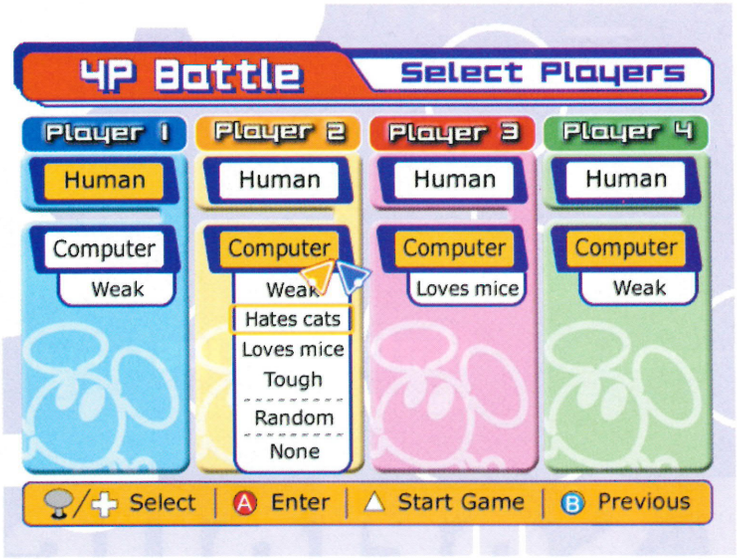
The rules in four-player battle mode are a little different. A constant stream of mice flow from holes around the arena, as well as the occasional cat. You must guide as many mice as possible to your rocket by using three arrows (when you place a fourth, the first disappears). Whenever a cat walks into your rocket it reduces your score, but you can also use



△ Puzzle mode tests your brain power...



△ ...while the editor enables you to create your own.



△ You can choose your console opponents.

the arrows to divert them in the direction of your opponent's rockets.

Confused? Takafumi Kaya, the game's designer, says that it's simple. "If you can understand the sentence, 'The person with the most mice wins,' then you can understand the game." Kaya claims that tests in Japan have shown the average gamer needs just three minutes play before they "start getting excited".

What we've neglected to mention so far is that the whole thing runs at light speed. You don't have time to plan your moves; you live by your instincts – and the UK version is every bit as frenetic as its Japanese incarnation. Battle games are a blur of moving pointers, lumbering cats and confused mice changing direction every two seconds.

This is all complicated by the special mice that are wandering around the board, some of which when captured give you 50 bonus points, while others kick-start special features; Mouse Mania floods the screen with what seems like hundreds of mice, while Cat Mania brings on a heap of cats looking for trouble. There's also the self-explanatory Speed Up and Slow Down, as well as a mode that swaps the position of each player's rocket.

Matches can include several rounds of battling – the default mode is best of the three – but you can opt for one-round shoot-outs or longer marathons. The idea is that for your first few games you're playing on instinct alone, but as you get used to the pace you start to get a grasp of the strategy involved.

Matches between four *ChuChu* experts are simply barmy to watch – in fact, so are matches with four beginners!

There's also the team battle mode which involves two-on-two matches where you co-operate to beat your opponents.

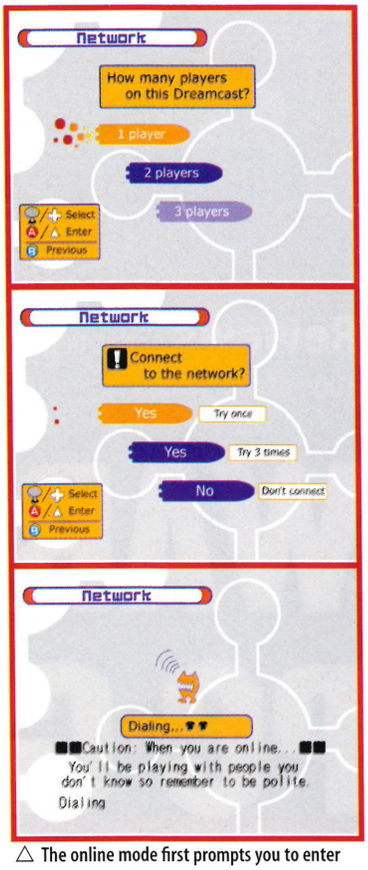
Well, that's the game, but what about the online play? You're probably dying to know just how to log on and find other people to play against.

Trouble is, that's the part that hadn't quite been finished when we did this preview. What we do know is that you select the Network option from the game's main menu, then select how many players are on your Dreamcast. You can select one, two or three (with four you don't need to use the online option). Then… well, on our preview version we couldn't connect – after all, there was no one out there to play against.

In the US there's a special Internet portal where you can meet other gamers, and join matches with players who have a similar ability to you. Though they haven't confirmed anything yet, we expect Sega have got something like this in mind for Europe.

It's been a long time coming, but online play is finally within touching distance. If you really can't wait, we advise you to check out Sega Japan's website which, as we reported last month, has a Shockwave demo of the game that's playable on PCs and Macs (head to www.sega.co.jp/sega/puzzle/game.html to get some practice in).

We'll have full details of all of *ChuChu Rocket!*'s online facilities in our review next issue, on sale Thursday 4 May.



△ The online mode first prompts you to enter how many players are at your console, then connects, with helpful 'netiquette' provided while you wait.

"BATTLE GAMES ARE A BLUR OF POINTERS"



△ In team battle mode you play in pairs, working together to get mice to your combined rockets.



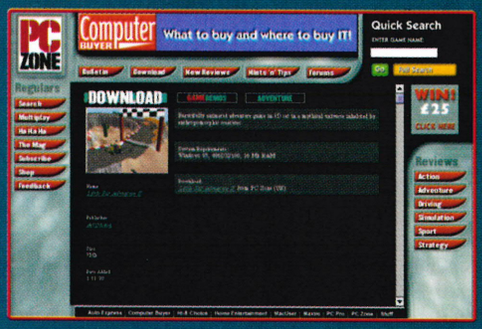
△ It takes razor-sharp reflexes to compete in the frantic four-player battle mode.

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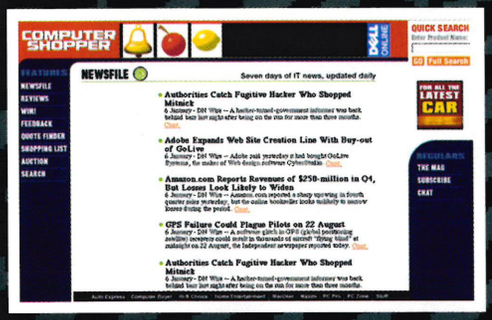
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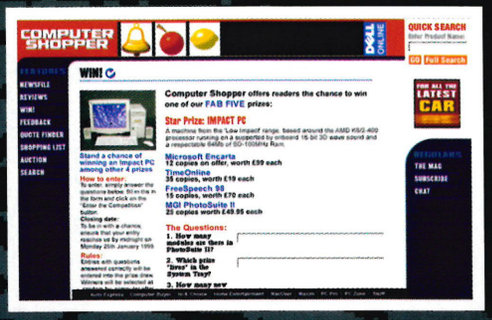
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The world as we know it is about to end, so what's a girl going to do? **IRENA POGARCIC** finds out

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **TBC**
PUBLISHER: **TBC**
DEVELOPER: **WARP**

WHATS THE BIG DEAL?

- Engaging story with great characters
- Impressive atmospheric graphics and sound effects
- Gameplay mixing adventure gaming with first-person shooting
- Disgusting aliens with gloopy tentacles

CHRISTMAS DAY 2000, and a group of terrorists hijack a plane flying over Canadian mountains. All of a sudden a meteorite speeds past and hits the mountains, causing the plane to crash. Thus ends the opening movie, and the real game begins…

Laura Parton, one of the survivors, wakes up in a log cabin nearby, and soon gets attacked by one of the surviving terrorists who have strangely mutated into alien freaks. It's down to Laura, with the help of other crash survivors, to figure out what's happened and save the world in the process.

Part adventure game, part first-person shooter, *D2* sets out to seamlessly combine the two gameplay styles into one. When inside rooms, Laura can explore them, pick up objects and interact with other characters. Once she's outside in the snow, the game turns to action mode, with enemies sporadically appearing out of nowhere. Each enemy killed gives Laura experience points that improve her skill and, eventually, health.

The enemies look like humans badly mutated into hideous tentacled alien lifeforms, and as you progress in the game they only get tougher and more numerous. But killing enemies isn't the only thing Laura can do as she runs around searching for clues,she can also hunt wildlife for food. Equipped with a sniper rifle and a portable cooker, she can kill animals and eat them to replenish her health. While the RSPCA might not aprove, it's has to be done – there are too many enemies for Laura to rely purely on her first-aid bottles. Besides, hunting wildlife is good target practice.

Set entirely in a still, snowy landscape, the game has a great feeling of space and an eerie atmosphere. The graphics generated by Dreamcast in real-time 3D, especially the backgrounds, are amazing and very detailed. For example, as it's snowing all the time and virtually impossible to see more than ten feet, you can use the scope on her hunting rifle to see what's further away – what appears to be a

"HUNTING WILDLIFE IS GOOD TARGET PRACTICE"



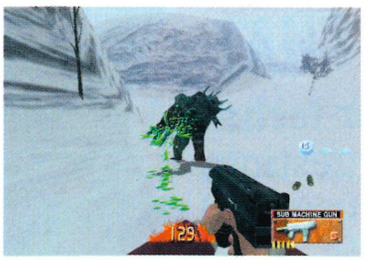
△ The arrows show that there are more freaks.



△ Looks like a really scary Cabbage Patch Kid.



△ The snow hides hundreds of vege-monsters.



△ Another mutoid gets it in the tentacles.



△ You get a great feeling of space in *D2*.



△ Pitty Laura didn't bring a change of clothing.



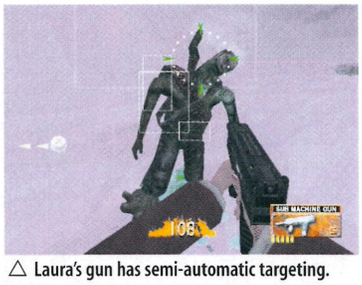
△ The old man and his talking parrot offer



△ Making friends pays off: this old woman gives you soup that replenishes Laura's health.



△ The snowmobile cuts down on the leg work.



△ Laura's gun has semi-automatic targeting.



Laura some useful advice.

barely visible dot on the screen could be a Laura's future lunch.

The characters are extremely well animated, having more in common with *Toy Story*-style computer-generated animation than we're used to seeing in videogames. Even close up you don't really see any blocky joints on their bodies, limbs or tentacles. The movements are smooth and seamless and faces full of expression. Another great feature of the game is the excellent sound effects – while the characters eat dinner in one scene, you can hear the light clatter of a fork on a plate, and water being poured from a jug.

ALIEN RESURRECTION

One of the best things about *D2* has got to be its storyline. It has everything from shamen to DNA cloning, total eclipses to strange poems about roses. Every now and then Laura passes out and has visions that involve movie clips of historical events and history lessons from her mother. These lapses somehow involve a make-up 'compact', a gift from her mother that Laura carries everywhere with her.

Fans of Warp's previous games will find this familiar. Laura also starred in *D*, one of the first games released on the Saturn, in which mad scientists were turning into vampires. Too weird for many people to be a big hit, *D* did have a cult following in Japan, but unfortunately lacked the character interaction that would have made it more appealing.

Warp have tried to fix this with *D2*. Laura makes friends and gets help from the other survivors of the plane crash, and also meets inhabitants of the barren landscape. Talking to characters constitutes a large part of the game – every time you discover something, you must go back and talk to someone about it and get advice on what to do next.

Soon, though, Laura finds out that most of the people she encounters are infected with the virus that turns them into aliens – the story is somewhat reminiscent of John Carpenter's *The Thing* – and she must fight her former friends and acquaintances as they turn against her.

During the course of the game, you pick up weapons and also can use a snowmobile. Handy, that, as there's a lot of ground to cover in *D2*, and running around, having to stop every minute to kill more aliens, can be a bit tiresome.

There isn't a UK publisher or release date confirmed at present, and it probably won't hit the shelves over here before Sega's much-talked about *Shenmue* (ie at the end of the year).

The two epic games do have similarities, with promises of impressive graphics, sound and character interaction, but as they both come on multiple GD-ROMs there's a hell of a lot of translation work to be done before either of them reach the UK.

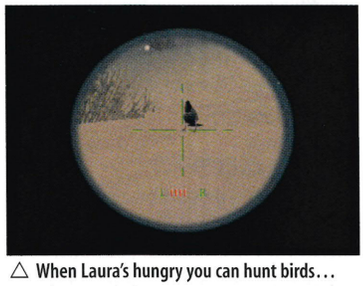
"THE MOVEMENTS ARE SMOOTH AND SEAMLESS"



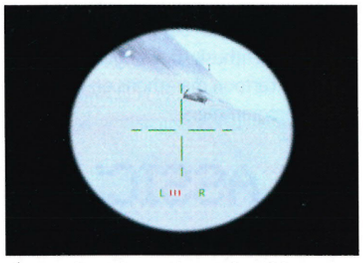
△ At first enemies are easy to take down...



△ ...but soon they become tougher to kill.



△ When Laura's hungry you can hunt birds...



△ ...or hares, but you have to be quick.

GAUNTLET LEGENDS

As the legendary sword 'n' sorcery 'n' sword coin-op heads Dreamcast-wards, **RADION AUTOMATIC** girds his considerable loins



△ Magic potions can act as smart bombs or special localised attacks, depending on how you use them.

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **JUNE**
PUBLISHER: **MIDWAY**
DEVELOPER: **ATARI GAMES**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Update of the revered arcade classic
- Multi-player cooperative slaughter
- Numerous gigantic levels
- Has orcs in it

IF YOU'VE GOT elderly relatives knocking around the house, they may have frightened you with talk of how, once upon a time, when hobgoblins stalked the lands and videogame arcades were where all the glue sniffers hung out, they and their friends assumed fantastic identities and roamed dungeons, hacking and slaying and picking up treasure. It's okay – stay calm. Chances are they're just talking about how much they enjoyed *Gauntlet*, Atari's arcade classic of yesteryear.

FOUR'S A CROWD

Gauntlet was a ground-breaking smash hit when it was first released into arcades in 1985. It had an innovative cabinet which enabled four players to participate simultaneously. The concept, as with many mid-'80s games, came from over-enthusiastic *Dungeons & Dragons* cartoon marathons on the part of the programmers.

Players adopted the identity of one of four characters (Barbarian and Elf were best because their controls faced the screen) and battled through a whole farm of dungeons, searching for keys, treasure, things to kill and the mystical Exits. Now I'm the grandad, and it's time for the *Gauntlet* to be thrown down to a new generation with the advent of *Gauntlet Legends*.

Already released in the arcades, and with conversions for PlayStation and N64, *Legends* is the inevitable 3D update of the *Gauntlet* formula. The basic premise, unshockingly, is the same. Even a lot of the 'classic' enemies, such as lobbers (who throw stuff), make a return. The player-characters are somewhat different – for example the Elf, favoured character of the *Gauntlet* supremo, has apparently been axed for being 'sexually ambiguous', replaced by a stridently female and undoubtedly heterosexual Archer. And pity the fool who picks the dwarf, whose uncanny resemblance to Mr T is about his only redeeming feature.

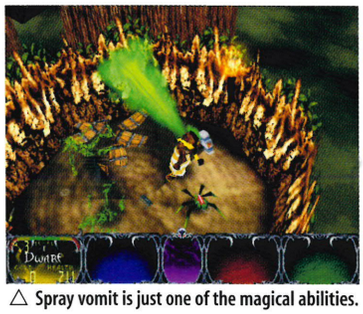
The characters have new abilities too, such as a turbo feature which allows them to press through large swarms of opponents. This might sound like a useless feature, but *Gauntlet* veterans will know how easy and frustrating it is to be surrounded.

NEW EXPERIENCE

Of course, while still aiming squarely for the nostalgia buck, Midway have

"'CLASSIC' ENEMIES SUCH AS LOBBERS MAKE A RETURN"


△ "Fee, fi, fo, fum, I smell... What comes next?"


△ Spray vomit is just one of the magical abilities.


△ Co-operative team play is fun!


△ Each stage has one unique giant monster.



△ Each level has features hazards and monsters specific to the environment.

implemented a raft of new features. Chief among these is the way the levels are structured. The previously flat underground dungeons have been replaced by a veritable tapas banquet of different environments, from mountains to forests to swamps to temples to psychedelic stun chambers (that last one's a secret level).

The relatively simple 'find key, open door' style of puzzle has been replaced by a marginally more sophisticated 'find key, open door, then find rune and raise bridge' system, whereby certain parts of each level are closed off until you activate a (usually hidden) runestone.

The spectrum of violence has also been expanded with the basic attacks augmented with a range of new power-ups and stuff. Don't get too excited, it's nothing you haven't seen before. What is particularly interesting though, is the introduction of experience points,



△ Careful you don't get outnumbered like this.

which open up new attacks and abilities for your chosen warrior – all saveable on your Visual Memory unit, of course. We all know how annoying it is to lose a level 50 Valkyrie because your tea's ready half an hour early.

MONSTER MADNESS

Just because *Gauntlet Legends* has increased the complexity of its environments and added a few 'puzzles', don't confuse it with games like *Soul Reaver* (*ODM* #6, 7/10). It might sound like there's an RPG method to its madness, but *Gauntlet* is all about shooting the soap out of a whole bunch of ugly monsters. Plus, as with the original, it's likely the multi-player mode will be where all the fun goes down.

So if *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* is too much like hard work on your brain, *Soul Fighter* is missing that essential element of fighting fantasy nerdity, and if 'Warning team! Temporal disruption imminent!' means anything to you, then keep your bespectacled eyes peeled for *Gauntlet Legends*.



△ Fast-moving and colourful, *Tech Romancer* promises to be a fun addition to the Dreamcast line-up.

TECH ROMANCER

Click-clack-clock-click! Robots in disguise! **DAN TRENT** goes to war with the machines

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **APRIL**
PUBLISHER: **VIRGIN**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**

GIVEN THE JAPANESE OBSESSION with giant, tooled-up androids it can only be a matter of time before some corporation actually builds one for real and families will be trading their Toyotas for the TerraBot Extreme GSX™. Before you know it the roads will be filled with enormous clanking robots wielding swords the size of skyscrapers pummelling each other into the ground. In the world of *Tech Romancer*, Capcom's latest madcap fighting extravaganza, this has already happened, only it is you at the helm at one of these monstrosities and ready to raise hell.

Recently released in Japan, *Tech Romancer* aims to build on *Power Stone*'s warmly received animé flavour and ridiculously high-speed action. The manga-style graphics look very smooth and the action promises high levels of satisfying destruction as cities are flattened and forests disappear in the mech's wake. The Japanese feel dominates and huge combos and complicated sequences will be the order of the day if you want to succeed.

To bulk out the otherwise straightforward beat 'em up format, expect to see VM games and bonus animated films together with a whole range of innovative moves and weapons.



△ Crazy designs abound, and more 'conventional' robots meet wackier creations built of, well, buses and sheds.



△ The mechs' basic attacks and weapons can be upgraded and added to by gaining power-ups.

4 WHEEL THUNDER

No terrain is too harsh when you've got a monster truck as your guide. **STEVE KEY** tries his hand at off-road racing

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **MAY**
PUBLISHER: **MIDWAY**
DEVELOPER: **KALISTO**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- High-speed off-road racing
- Super-sharp, super-smooth graphics
- Indoor and outdoor circuits
- Loads of upgradeable vehicles

IF EVER THERE WAS to be a fairy tale story to accompany the history of a game, then surely *4 Wheel Thunder* has it. French developers Kalisto took an early version to E^3 (the big US games show) to show off their Dreamcast programming skills. The people at American games giant Midway took one look and thought: "Yeah, we'll have some of that" and promptly signed up the game.

They then decided to beef it up a little and add it to their fledgling 'Thunder' range of games, along with speedboat racer *Hydro Thunder* (*ODM* #1, 6/10). And that's where we pick up the story.

4 Wheel Thunder is an off-road driving game that doesn't claim to have any particularly ground-breaking gameplay elements – it's all-out arcade-style action all the way. You can race indoors or out, and take part in championships or simply in an arcade race against three other competitors, human or computer-controlled. Since we first previewed *4 Wheel Thunder* in our February issue (*ODM* #4), much about it has changed.

The first thing you're likely to notice is the pristine graphics. They were excellent when we first saw the game, and they're now even sharper and have more definition. No matter how hard you look, there's not a single bit of scenery popping up anywhere in any of the levels. There's an impressive amount of detail, from huge buildings gradually coming over the horizon way off in the distance, right down to leaves on the road that blow up as you hurtle through them.

But it's the gameplay elements that have undergone the biggest changes in the last few months. To make it more fun and exciting to play, each car has now been fitted with a boost option, just like the one in *Hydro Thunder*. You must pick up the gem-shaped boost icons that litter the tracks, with blue ones giving you four seconds of increased speed and red ones giving you nine. You can only hold 20 seconds of boost at any time, and it's activated by holding the A button. This adds a tactical element to the game. For example: if your boost bar is running low, you must decide whether to blow it all straight away and hope for

"COULD BE ONE OF DREAMCAST'S HOTTEST RACING TITLES"





△ The small cars may be nippier, but the monster trucks provide a more rugged drive.



△ The indoor arenas are more compact.



△ The game is now more strategic.



△ Leaves on the track? No problem here.



△ Upgrade your car by, er, gambling.

more icons around the next corner, or hold off until you near the end of the lap. It's also impossible to beat the computer-controlled racers without the aid of boosts, so again you must use them sparingly, at least until you've learned the layout of the tracks.

There's going to be a large variety of cars to drive as well, each of which will have very different specifications. Monster trucks, for example, are quite slow but have immense grip, whereas the sand buggies are lightning-quick and can skip through corners but come a cropper at the slightest nudge from a rival driver. The handling changes depending on the game mode too. In the outdoor mode, cars aren't as responsive, simply because the courses don't throw up as many harsh twists and turns as the indoor circuits.

4 Wheel Thunder has improved dramatically since the earlier version we saw (which was already surprisingly cool), and is now looking as though it could be one of Dreamcast's hottest racing titles. And considering the quality of those we've already got, that's certainly saying something.





△ When you trigger a force bomb, the effects are spectacular, filling the screen with explosions.

GIGA WING

If you're a fan of classic vertically scrolling shoot 'em ups, you're gonna love this. **STUART DREDGE** checks out Capcom's retro title

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **MAY**
PUBLISHER: **VIRGIN**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**

ON THE CD

WE ALL LOVE A SHOOT 'EM UP. Well, most of us, anyway. In the days before swish 3D graphics, vertically scrolling shooters ruled the roost in arcades and bedrooms across the land. You don't see as many of them nowadays, but the upcoming release of *Giga Wing* shows that there's still a demand for old-skool blasters.

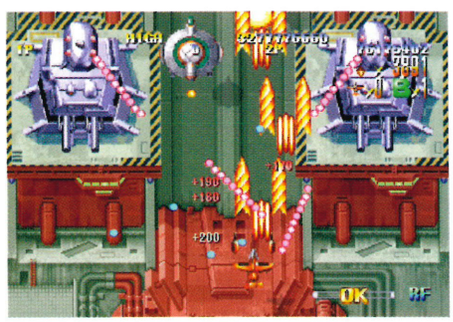
The gameplay is simple to grasp: you control a craft that can fire forward, activate temporary shields and detonate spectacular force bombs; you progress through the vertically scrolling levels shooting anything that moves, picking up power-ups and score bonuses along the way.

A twist is added by the way you can choose different characters, each with their own unique ship and force bomb. Capcom have also made a respectable attempt at integrating a sketchy storyline into the game. The game's appeal is in its trigger-happy action – along with the obligatory two-player simultaneous mode, of course.

Okay, so *Giga Wing* doesn't look like it's exactly stretching Dreamcast's graphics technology, and there's also a question over its depth after complaints that the Japanese version was too short. Once we've seen a final UK version, we'll let you know whether that's still the case, and assess whether it will appeal to more than just a niche minority of gamers.



△ At any given point the screen is full of bullets.



△ You get points bonuses for destroying certain enemies.

DEEP FIGHTER

Ever seen *The Abyss* and wished you could get down there and kick some alien arse? **STUART DREDGE** hasn't, but we got him to write about this game anyway



△ There might not be any wooden legs or parrots aboard, but that's a pirate ship – go get 'im!

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **JUNE**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**
DEVELOPER: **CRITERION STUDIOS**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- It's got more to it than just mindless blasting – you need to use your brains
- There's a variety of different missions so as to avoid any monotony
- The artificial intelligence is set to be the most complex yet on Dreamcast
- Loads of upgradeable vehicles

THE FIRST TIME we saw *Deep Fighter* was last year while visiting developers Criterion Studios to see *Suzuki Alstare Extreme Racing*. Back then there was only an early version of *Deep Fighter* running on PCs, but even so it still looked pretty interesting, and we were told that work was about to start on a Dreamcast version. Then it all went quiet for a while.

And then this month we received the first playable version of DC *Deep Fighter*. As you can see from the screenshots, it's an underwater submarine game. It's actually the follow-up to a previous Criterion game, *Sub Culture*, which came out on PC a couple of years ago.

Deep Fighter puts you in the shoes of a newly qualified submarine pilot in the specialist Defence Force. Your civilisation is at risk of being destroyed by the combined forces of volcanic activity, evil pirates and a mysterious alien enemy called The Silents.

"The storyline is an integral part of the game," says project manager Gruffydd Jenkins. "We've actually got a short novel that's going to be released with the game to set the scene. Once you get into the game, your actions will drive which route the storyline takes."

Effectively, your aim in *Deep Fighter* is to defend local mining installations against the various predators, explore the surrounding environment, and also help construct a mothership, the Leviathan, to take your people to safety.

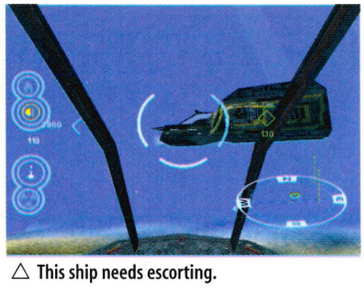
The game takes a mission-based structure, complete with admirably cheesy briefing sequences. Missions can involve anything from collecting radioactive materials or escorting a convoy, to plumbing the murky depths of an abyss or battling a giant octopus.

Rather than create an action-heavy shoot 'em up, Criterion have opted for a more tactical approach, emphasising the need for crafty wits as well as a fast trigger finger. "Although it is very much action-orientated, the game requires the player to think strategically and use their exploration skills to complete missions successfully," says Jenkins. "It adds an extra dimension of realism to the game."

In terms of influences, *Deep Fighter* is already provoking comparisons with the epic PC *Wing Commander* series, although Jenkins also mentions *Star Fox* on Super Nintendo as an influence. "What we've managed to do is take the inspiration from some of these space shoot 'em ups, and expand on it by using an underwater setting," he says. "There are natural objects and obstacles like rocks, buildings, plant life and creatures that you couldn't have if the game was set in space."

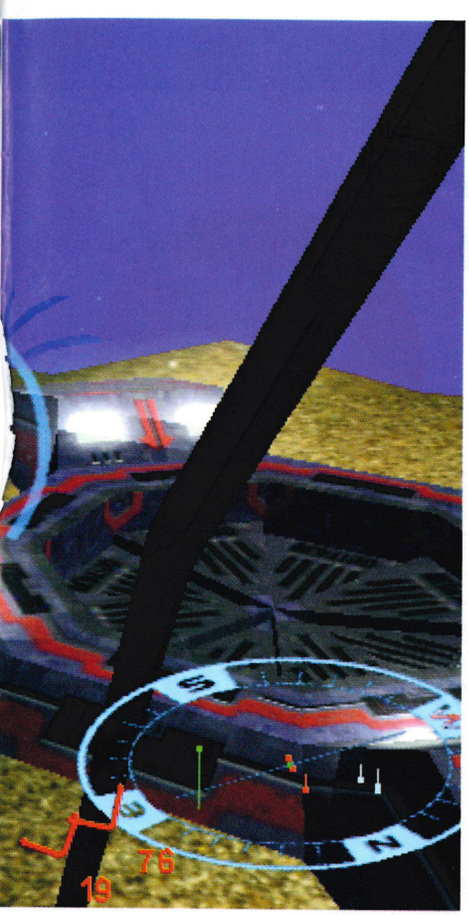
Another major part of the game is the complex artificial intelligence (AI) that's being developed. Jenkins: "There's AI and behaviour patterns for every living creature in the game, be it baby fish

> "THE GAME REQUIRES THE PLAYER TO THINK STRATEGICALLY"


△ This ship needs escorting.



△ Best get tooled up before going on a mission.



following their parents, or attack patterns of numerous crabs, spiders or jellyfish," Jenkins continues. "And then there's the pirates. And I won't even start on The Silents!"

The game is due out in June, but there's still a fair amount of work to be done. For example, the game's cut-scenes haven't yet been fully added to the version we've been playing. Sadly Criterion have opted to use proper voice actors throughout the game, rather than the comedy voices supplied by the development team when we saw it last year. Nevertheless, everything looks nicely on track for its release. Watch this space for more details as we get 'em.



△ Spiders? Underwater? Eh?!



△ The new game will be faster than its predecessor. Silicon Dreams have promised.

SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER EURO EDITION

Its predecessor had a need for speed, and our prayers look like they've been answered. **STUART DREDGE** finds out more

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **MAY/JUNE**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **SILICON DREAMS**

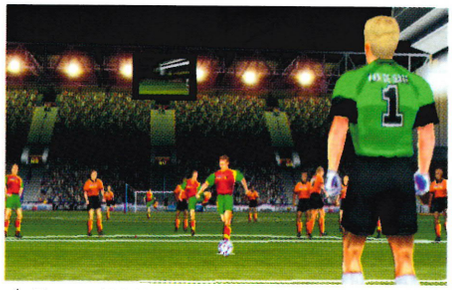
YES, WE KNOW. *Sega Worldwide Soccer 2000* (ODM #3, 6/10) didn't exactly set the world alight when it was released last year. Although it had some nice touches, the game was hampered by its slow pace and lack of atmosphere. So you could be forgiven for not cheering the news that its developers, Silicon Dreams, have been working on a follow-up.

But don't jump to any rash conclusions. According to producer Matt Molloy, *SWWS Euro Edition* will be vastly improved. "We've taken on board a number of the criticisms that were aimed at the original, the main one being the speed of the gameplay," he says. "We've increased it significantly in order to give a more fast-paced and fluid challenge."

But that's not the only change. The new game will apparently feature smoother animation and better-looking player models, and the players will act more realistically thanks to the increased amount of motion-capture.

Screenshots of *SWWS 2000* often caught several players facing the wrong way entirely. This has now been fixed, according to Molloy, along with the introduction of improved artificial intelligence all round. "For example, we've got CPU team management now. If your team's three-nil up, the CPU team will obviously have to come out and attack, so they'll change their formation."

Obviously we'll wait for the finished game to make our judgement. Dreamcast owners are still waiting for the definitive footie game to arrive, so fingers crossed that Silicon Dreams can make a decent stab at it.



△ Player artificial intelligence will be better...



△ ...and animation will be smoother.

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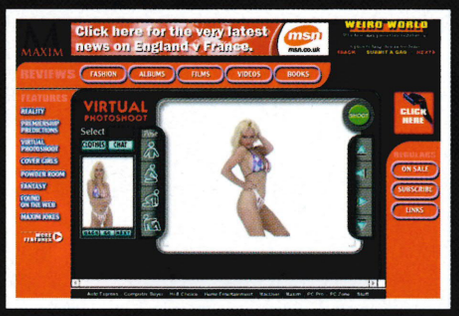
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re:views

BUYING GAMES ON THE STRENGTH OF THE PICTURES ON THE BOX LOOKING 'NICE' IS VERY STUPID. READING OUR REVIEWS IS CLEVER



HEY THERE, Dreamcasters! Having fun? Good! That's what we like to hear. You're lucky enough to have found your way to our reviews section, which is where we go through this month's UK Dreamcast releases on your behalf so that you can figure out exactly how you're going to spend all that dosh of yours.

Plenty of variety this month, which is nice considering the relatively small number of games. Dreamcast finally gets its first proper puzzle game (unless you count *Sega Swirl* on this month's cover disc, that is) in the shape of *Wetrix+* and, while it's not quite up there with the classics, it's certainly got all the ingredients that have been known to force all-night high-score sessions.

Dreamcast's selection of big adventure games grows again this month, with both *The Nomad Soul* and *MDK 2* guaranteeing many hours of gameplay. Followed by many hours of therapy to get over the stress caused by some of their more frustrating sections. If you're patient enough to stick to something and really want to get your 40 quid's worth of play out of an adventure, *MDK 2* is certainly one to check out. Don't blame us if you can't get off the first level though.

This month's fighting game release is *Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure*, another 2D scrapper from Japanese combat masters Capcom. To the untrained eye it may seem like the same old thing they've been churning out for years, but it's actually got a few neat original ideas. Thing is, with the *Street Fighter* series still on top form (and with two of the best *SF* games on their way to Dreamcast… eventually), most people are happy to stick to that. Can't blame them – I'd certainly rather play as Ryu, Oro or Blanka than Iggy the dog.

Still on the subject of fighting games, there's *ECW Hardcore Revolution*… Right, that's quite enough about that heap of arse. Must stop before it makes me too depressed.

And of course there's our cover game, *V-Rally 2 Expert Edition*, up the front end of the mag. It's the high-speed test of skill and concentration that many racing fans have been waiting for since the launch of Dreamcast. Rewind 60-odd pages to find out what we made of it.

Whoah! Is that the time? I gotta get going. Lots of important sleeping to do, I'm afraid. Come back next month though, y'hear?

Please, don't have nightmares,
Ed Lomas, Reviews Editor

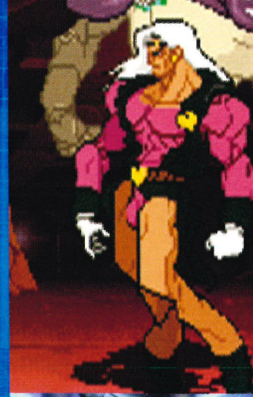
REVIEWED THIS ISSUE...

ECW HARDCORE REVOLUTION (ACCLAIM)	84
JO JO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE (VIRGIN)	82
MDK 2 (VIRGIN)	70
THE NOMAD SOUL (EIDOS)	76
V-RALLY 2 EXPERT EDITION (INFOGRAMES)	10
WETRIX+ (TAKE TWO)	80

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

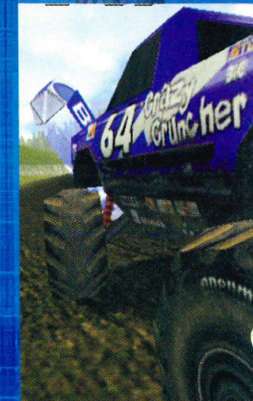
10 PERFECT! A GAME WHICH EVERYONE *MUST* OWN. 9 AN ESSENTIAL BUY. GET IT, GET IT, GET IT! 8 EXCELLENT STUFF. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. 7 A GREAT GAME WITH A MINOR PROBLEM OR TWO. 6 GOOD BUT WITH AT LEAST ONE MAJOR SHORTCOMING. 5 STRICTLY AVERAGE, RUN-OF-THE-MILL STUFF. 4 BELOW AVERAGE. PLAY BEFORE YOU BUY! 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!















MDK 2

Don't worry, you haven't missed the first one. At least not on Dreamcast. **STEVE HILL** explains

THE HISTORY OF GAMES is littered with acronyms, but few more contentious than *MDK*. When the game was first unleashed on the PC in 1996, the received wisdom was that it stood for Murder, Death, Kill – a charming idea but one unlikely to invoke favour from readers of the Daily Mail.

Massively hyped at the time, *MDK* nevertheless struggled to sell half a million copies worldwide, the reason offered by the developers was that it was simply too unusual for the mass market. Those developers were Shiny Entertainment, the team behind 16-bit platform hit *Earthworm Jim*, and they certainly had a point. A game in which the lead character is a leather-clad man with a cone-shaped helmet is admittedly somewhat removed from the traditional action hero, although having said that, an earthworm in a space suit is hardly conventional.

Whatever the reasons, *MDK* wasn't the hit it could have been, but was nevertheless a pioneering game, introducing the now ubiquitous sniping mode, for instance.

As the big two in the title would suggest, *MDK* is back. Shiny, however, are not. Still firmly entrenched in the biblical shooter, *Messiah*, they relinquished the opportunity to develop the sequel, the honour instead falling to Canadian outfit BioWare, the team responsible for a number of PC-based goblin extravaganzas, notably *Baldur's Gate*. However, the Dreamcast version of *MDK 2* is out first, and make no mistake, this is a DC game through and through. No beard required.

MUST DO KNOWLEDGE

The story continues literally minutes after the conclusion of the first game, in which the long-headed Kurt Hectic saved the Earth from alien hordes. Toasting his success with his mentor, Doctor Fluke Hawkins, and his six-legged robotic dog Max (look, we said it was odd), a blip on the radar reveals a second wave of invaders, signalling a return to action for the hard-working Kurt.

However, the big difference between this and the first game is that he doesn't have to do it all by himself. In *MDK*, Doc and Max were merely idle onlookers whilst Kurt went about the messy business of ridding the planet of alien aggressors. ▷



△ Max takes on an end of level boss with three chainguns and a handgun – all at the same time. Hardcore or what?

▷ This time round, they both have ample opportunity to get their hands – or, in Max's case, paws – dirty, as the action switches between the three characters.

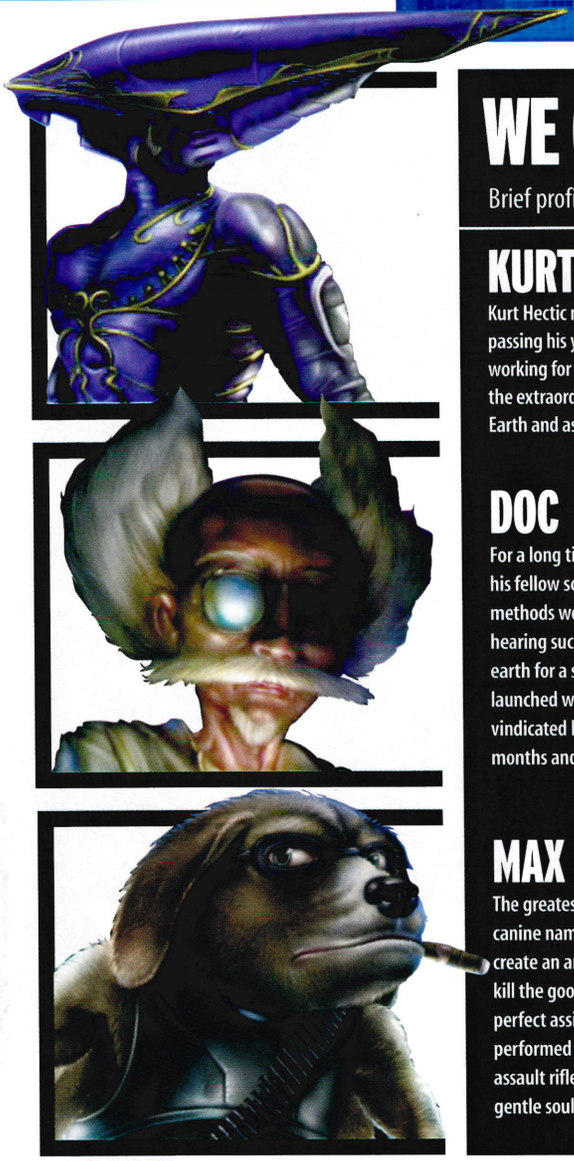
That action is viewed from a third-person perspective (*a la Tomb Raider*), and in general works pretty well. The camera system is logically implicated, with your character even becoming invisible when you back up against a wall. As for controls, the entire pad is utilised with the analog stick used for looking about, the coloured buttons for movement, the triggers for jumping and shooting, and the D-pad for special character-dependent functions. Your manual dexterity is tested to the full and, while by no means perfect, with practice it's a pretty good system.

MAX DOC KURT

Having three different characters certainly makes for a change, although it must be stressed that this is by no means a role-playing game (thank God). The choice of character is dictated by the plot, which loosely works on a cliff hanger basis. Almost every level ends with one character being rescued while another is captured, with the onus to save the day being shared liberally between all three. *MDK 2* offers three levels for each of the characters, as well as an end level in which the player gets to choose which character to use in finishing the game.

So who's best? Well, it's not so much a question of superiority, but more a case of adapting the character's skills to the given situation. Kurt is the traditional *MDK* hero comprising a combination of stealth and heavy firepower. With an upgradeable chain-gun seemingly welded to his right arm and a nice line in hand grenades, he's capable of handling himself in a melee. However, Kurt really comes into his own over distance, with his sniper scope enabling him to blow enemies' heads off from an impressive range. Also fitted with an improbable ribbon chute, he can glide about silently, thus capable of surprise attacks from the air. In the main, he's a fairly useful character, although switching to the sniper mode and back can often prove somewhat irksome.

There are no such complications with Max, the six-legged robotic dog constructed by the Doctor. This obviously being a work of fiction, Max can run about on his hind legs, leaving the other four limbs free for carrying guns. These are largely traditional affairs, such as a magnum, a shotgun and the good old Uzi. With all four firing simultaneously, this offers some devastating firepower, capable of bringing down the biggest of enemies. Also able to operate a jet pack, Max is a useful dog, and probably the easiest of the three characters to get to grips with. His sections are geared towards all-out warfare, which means that in the heat of a battle



WE CAN BE HEROES

Brief profiles of the playable characters in *MDK 2*

KURT

Kurt Hectic never wanted to be a hero. He would have been content passing his years in quiet anonymity. But it was not to be. Kurt was working for Doctor Fluke Hawkins which meant occasionally doing the extraordinary. Eventually it meant him leaving his beloved Earth and assuming the unlikely title of first janitor in space.

DOC

For a long time, Doctor Fluke Hawkins had suffered ridicule from his fellow scientists. They claimed he was too eccentric and that his methods were questionable at best. In time, Hawkins grew tired of hearing such things and, seeking to work undisturbed, he fled the earth for a self-imposed exile. His ship, the Jim Dandy, was launched without fanfare, and he swore not to return until he had vindicated himself in the eyes of his peers. Weeks turned to months and months slowly turned to years...

MAX

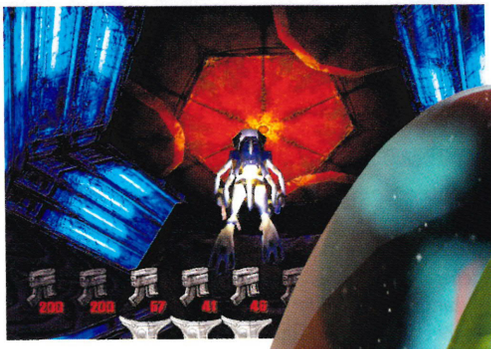
The greatest of the Doctor's inventions in exile was a six-legged canine named Max, the first successful attempt by Dr Hawkins to create an artificial intelligence. 'Successful' meant he never tried to kill the good doctor and had no plans for global domination. The perfect assistant, Max kept the Doctor grounded in reality, and performed much the same function as the safety catch on an assault rifle. He was eager to please and adaptable to any task, his gentle soul oddly balanced with an affinity for firepower.



△ One of the sub-games is a pseudo-*Asteroids* affair.



△ When you've got to go...



△ You'll believe a dog can fly.

the gun management system can become slightly tricky, as taking your eye off the screen even for a second can prove fatal.

And so to the Doctor, which is where the game takes something of a change of pace, transforming briefly into a point-and-click adventure (albeit without the pointing or clicking). Being a frail old man, the Doc isn't particularly partial to armed combat, preferring instead to rely on guile and cunning. In American parlance, he 'McGuyvers' things, *McGuyver* being a US detective show in which the titular character uses what sparse materials he has to hand in a cunning, not to say improbable, fashion. If you remember *The A-Team*, it's a bit like when they would retire to a barn with some old paint tins and a piece of alabaster, emerging an hour later with a nuclear warhead. The Doc creates some equally unlikely contraptions, for instance combining a hand-dryer with some pipes to create a leaf blower, ideal for blowing some tree monsters out of his lounge. Slightly more logical are his Molotov cocktails, made from bottles of strong liquor and some old towels, although things get a bit weirder when he starts to make atomic toast, using an atomic toaster (obviously) and a seemingly inexhaustible loaf of bread. This latter contraption actually provides the Doc's main weapon, which he utilises during the occasional skirmish. ▷



SPEAK OUT

GREG ZESCHUK IS THE JOINT CEO OF DEVELOPERS BIOWARE. WHICH IS NICE

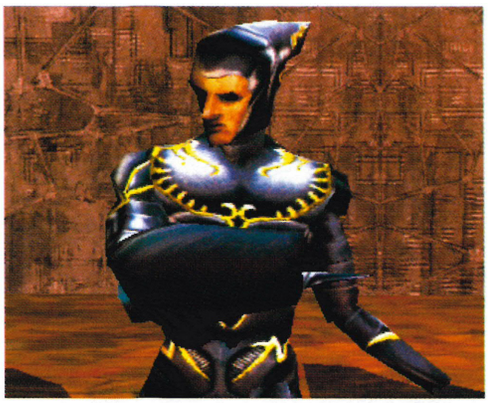
WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?
I'd say the best thing about *MDK 2* is the sheer variety – players continually learn new skills.

WHICH DREAMCAST GAMES (NOT YOUR OWN) ARE YOU PLAYING AT THE MOMENT?
I've got a copy of *Space Channel 5*. I'm itching to check out on one our Japanese DC's.

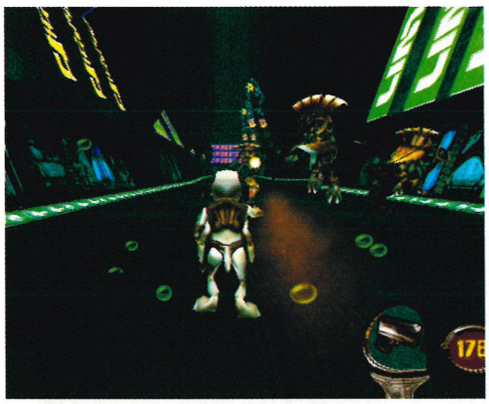
WHICH IS THE HARDEST GAME YOU'VE EVER PLAYED?
***Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* on PlayStation. My thumbs ached for days after playing it.**

WHAT'S BETTER: RALLYING OR FORMULA ONE? WHY?
Formula One seems more repetitive, and I really like driving in mud, so the answer must be rallying.

WHAT DO YOU THINK 'MDK' STANDS FOR?
'MDK' stands for Multiple Deadly Kicks! *MDK* was actually a fighting game – no one seemed to notice.



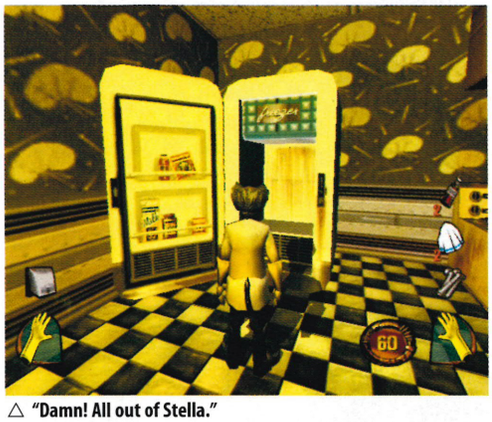
△ Bet it takes loads of talcum powder to get into that outfit.



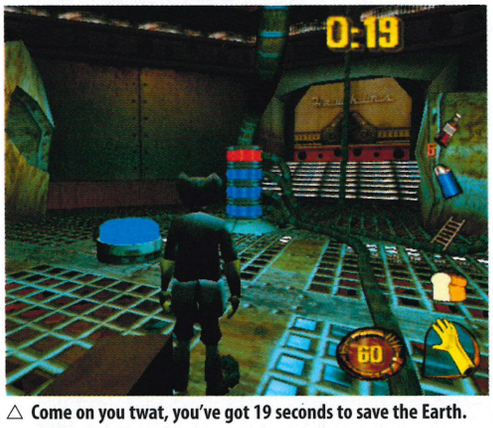
△ It'll take more than a Magnum to fell that lot.



△ Take that you filthy hound.



△ "Damn! All out of Stella."



△ Come on you twat, you've got 19 seconds to save the Earth.



△ Now wash your hands.



MY DREAMCAST'S KNACKERED

As alluded to earlier, the missions are geared towards the skills of the relevant character, which does make for some variation in the gameplay. Hence Kurt will generally be required to shoot something in the distance, usually under extreme duress, Max will have to shoot everything in sight and the Doc will be called upon to use his brain, in diffusing a bomb, for instance. The action is interspersed with numerous cut scenes, in which the main characters converse in an unnecessarily camp fashion.

As those among you with the capacity to see the smattering of screen shots in this mag will have realised, it all looks rather splendid. It's even better when it's moving, with no discernible slow down or pop-up to be seen. However, there is a pay-off in that entire areas are loaded from the disc at once. This means that at numerous times throughout the game you find yourself running down a contrived tunnel, falling down an unnecessarily deep hole, or floating into the sky whilst the disc drive whirs into life, loading up the next scene. Sometimes, a door will even refuse to open until the disc drive has settled down. Admittedly, it's not a problem on a par with the flooding in Mozambique, but this *is* supposed to be the most powerful console on Earth.

However, far more annoying is the lack of manual saves, the game instead offering only four or five automatic checkpoints per level. This is far too few, and crucially they are too far between. *MDK 2* is by no means an easy game – some parts are excruciatingly difficult – and to spend 20 minutes fighting the forces of evil only to die at the last and have to do it all over again is simply not fair. We're all for a challenge, but if a man has paid forty quid for a game, he should be able to save it any time he likes. They could easily have included twice as many checkpoints without compromising the game, as their scarcity means having to go over old ground time and time again. It wouldn't be so bad if it was just the main battles that had to be re-won, but the game often forces you to repeat tedious donkey-work – such as taking out a host of wall-mounted guns – before even getting near the crucial area. It might not sound much on paper, but in reality it's enough to make you swear profusely, break household goods, and want to strangle small animals. None of which comes under the category of fun.

MORE DIFFICULT KINETICS

There is only one level of difficulty in the game, and that's rock hard. Having to make pixel-perfect jumps is something that belongs in the world of 2D gaming, and it's infuriating to fall to your death simply because you held down a button for a nanosecond too long.

Frantic battles come thick and fast, and they generally involve endlessly strafing, or circling your prey until he drops. In the absence of a crosshair, it is sometimes difficult to see exactly what you're shooting at and you often find yourself relying more on the health bar of your enemy than its actual whereabouts. Also death more often than not comes as a result of cack-handedness rather than tactical error, as the control system doesn't stand up to intense reflex action. Even worse, there are a couple of sections where you die simply as a result of bad luck, with random holes appearing in the floor, for instance. It's almost as if the developers have gone out of their way to wind you up.

MDK 2 is a vast game – made even bigger by having to repeat everything ten times – but it is an extremely patient man that will complete it. That's not to say it's a bad game by any means. It features some genuinely ingenious moments, allied with first-rate graphics, and a typically zany 'computer game' story. It's just the structure that lets it down, but if you're happy to endure this then by all means consider a purchase, as you'll certainly get your money's worth. Just don't try playing it pissed.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **VIRGIN**
DEVELOPER: **BIOWARE**

VERDICT

SOME EXCITING MOMENTS TEMPERED BY FRUSTRATION

UPPERS
Tremendous graphics • Three different characters • Variety of gameplay

DOWNERS
No manual saves • Constant repetition • No multiplayer mode • Inconsistent difficulty

IN ONE HOUR We'd steamed through most of the first level
WEBSITE www.bioware.com
MAX PLAYERS 1
VIDEO MODES Full-screen 60Hz option, VGA compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10

6


THE
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△ Since it's a constant ice age outside, the weather is regulated by giant domes. The population of Jaunpur are lucky, the beige, posh gits.

THE NOMAD SOUL

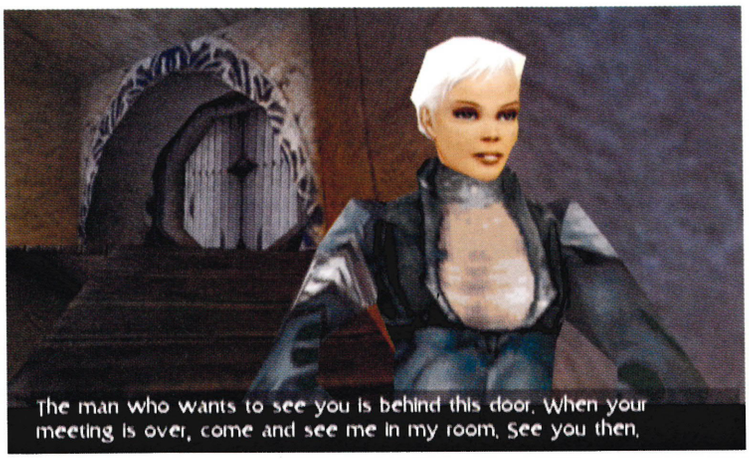
A David Bowie collaboration? Encouraging cynical smirking, more like. Laughing goblin **STEVE OWEN** loses his soul

MY MOTHER TOLD ME to be wary of parallel universes. She also told me to avoid women with warts, milkmen with stutters, and Swedish furniture superstores at the weekend, so you can't trust everything she says. But the parallel universe thing isn't as bonkers as it might sound.

You see, just the other day I picked up a review copy of *The Nomad Soul* and discovered that it isn't a game at all, but actually a gateway to another (parallel) dimension. I thought I was just playing a piece of electronic entertainment, but what I actually did was open my soul to Kay'l (apostrophe-laden names are essential in this alternative world). By agreeing to help his planet by occupying his body, I've now left myself open to soul absorption by some unknown evil force, to the extent that I will never be able to return to my own reality, leaving my body an empty, soulless shell.

It's a none too original idea that is stubbornly followed throughout the game, and breaks down only when you turn off your Dreamcast and go to the pub – explain that one using science fiction mumbo-jumbo, you wierdy developers.

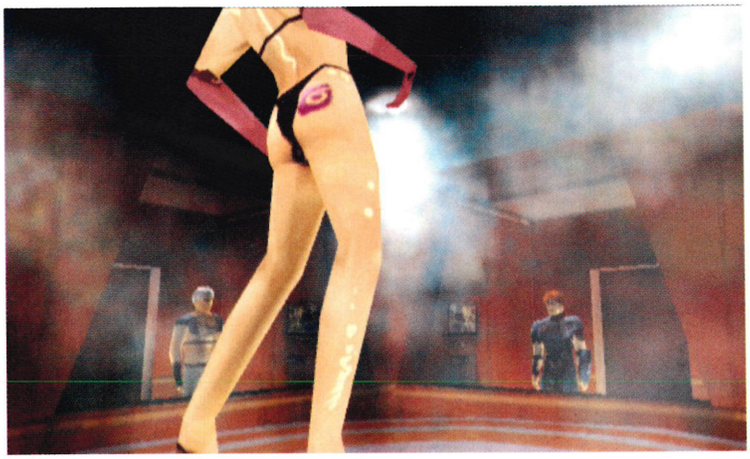
So there you are, occupying the head of a slightly pathetic police officer, standing in the city of Omikron, in a rather dark and depressing district known as Anekbah. With little idea of what's going on or where you should be going next, it's essential to know the adventure gamer's first edict: check your inventory. Sure enough, you not only have a key to your apartment, but also a handy little gadget known as sneak. As well as storing any items of interest, this is also capable of calling taxis for you (or 'sliders', as they're known in this parallel



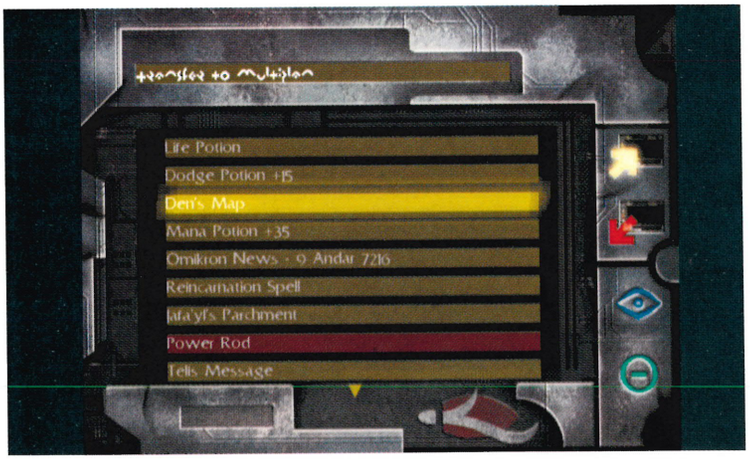
△ Anything you say, sweetie. Anything you say.



△ Fights are generally rubbish until you inhabit a better character.



△ You don't have to waste time solving crimes, you can just make use of the 24-hour bars and clubs.



△ Your inventory only holds 18 items, but the towns are littered with devices for storing anything else.

universe). Within seconds you're successfully drawn into developers Quantic Dream's imagination, intrigued as to the purpose of your visit and keen to explore the world that's been lovingly created for you.

WHERE DID IT ALL GO WRONG?

That this isn't a pink and fluffy adventure for the Nintendo 64 soon becomes apparent when you get to shag your missus at the apartment (calm down, teenagers, you don't get to see anything), and your investigation includes obligatory visits to the strip clubs and lap dancing bars of the precinct. Perhaps of more interest is that the game doesn't work in real time, nor are you forced into particular locations or situations. By all means spend your first few days sprawled drunk over a table, stuffing folding local currency into some bird's G-string; walk around the shops, buy food; take part in shooting and fighting competitions for cash to pay for your debauched lifestyle; hell, you don't even have to turn up for work.

Nevertheless, boredom is likely to find you wandering into police HQ to discover your motivation, darlings. Having found your own office, it's possible to read some of your current case files in an effort to discover what it is that Kay'l might have been working on before you took over his body. Well, I say it's possible to read, but Quantic Dream overlooked one rather important factor when converting this PC game to Dreamcast: even on a 29-inch television it's almost impossible to read what has to be one of the ugliest typefaces ever seen. Only when using a VGA box with a computer monitor was it possible to finally piece together some of the clues, or even understand the names of people who must be visited. Quite a shocking oversight.

Assuming you have better eyesight, you might notice that one of your case files has been classified. A chat with your immediate boss indicates that you've been taken off the case (again, a classic film cop situation: you can only solve the case once you've been taken off it; that you still get on well with your wife seems to be the original touch). Thus your first real task becomes apparent: to get a look at the classified file.

Although the city is large and eminently explorable, it's only the discovery of certain items that trigger events. In the classic adventure style, some incidents seem strangely unconnected until you get much further into the game – such as a shoot-out in a supermarket. This acts as your first taste of the non-adventure elements in the game that occasionally rear their incredibly ugly heads.

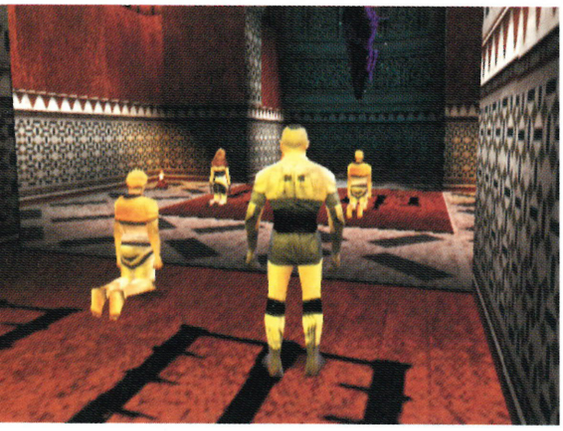
Terrorists have taken hostages in the dried produce aisle, knocked over the tinned displays, and blockaded the doors with frozen ready-made meals. With the promise of back-up ringing in your ears, it makes much more sense to go for glory with a single-handed attack. With that, the camera switches from its traditional 'cinematic' third-person view to a first-person one, complete with crosshair. Black-draped terrorists leap from their hiding places to fire at your seriously well-protected body, while your juddery crosshair attempts to get somewhere near the bad guys and your Waver gun dispatches the fools back to some other dimension.

This sequence, which goes on for about 15 tedious bad guys, is atrocious – nowhere near as good as a dedicated first-person shooter such as *Quake* on any system. The control system is just downright nasty: the analog stick controls your view, while the digital pad moves your character, which means it's impossible to move and look around at the same time. You must stop moving to aim, leaving yourself a sitting duck. Strafing is an extraneous addition to the shoulder buttons, but these would have been much better utilised as forward and backward controls, with the analog stick controlling view and direction and the four buttons for firing and strafing. But instead you're stuck with this awful system. ▷

"ANOTHER CONVENIENT PC CONVERSION THAT DESERVED TO STAY ON THE BEIGE BOX"



△ Bump into the rocker himself in one of the local clubs.



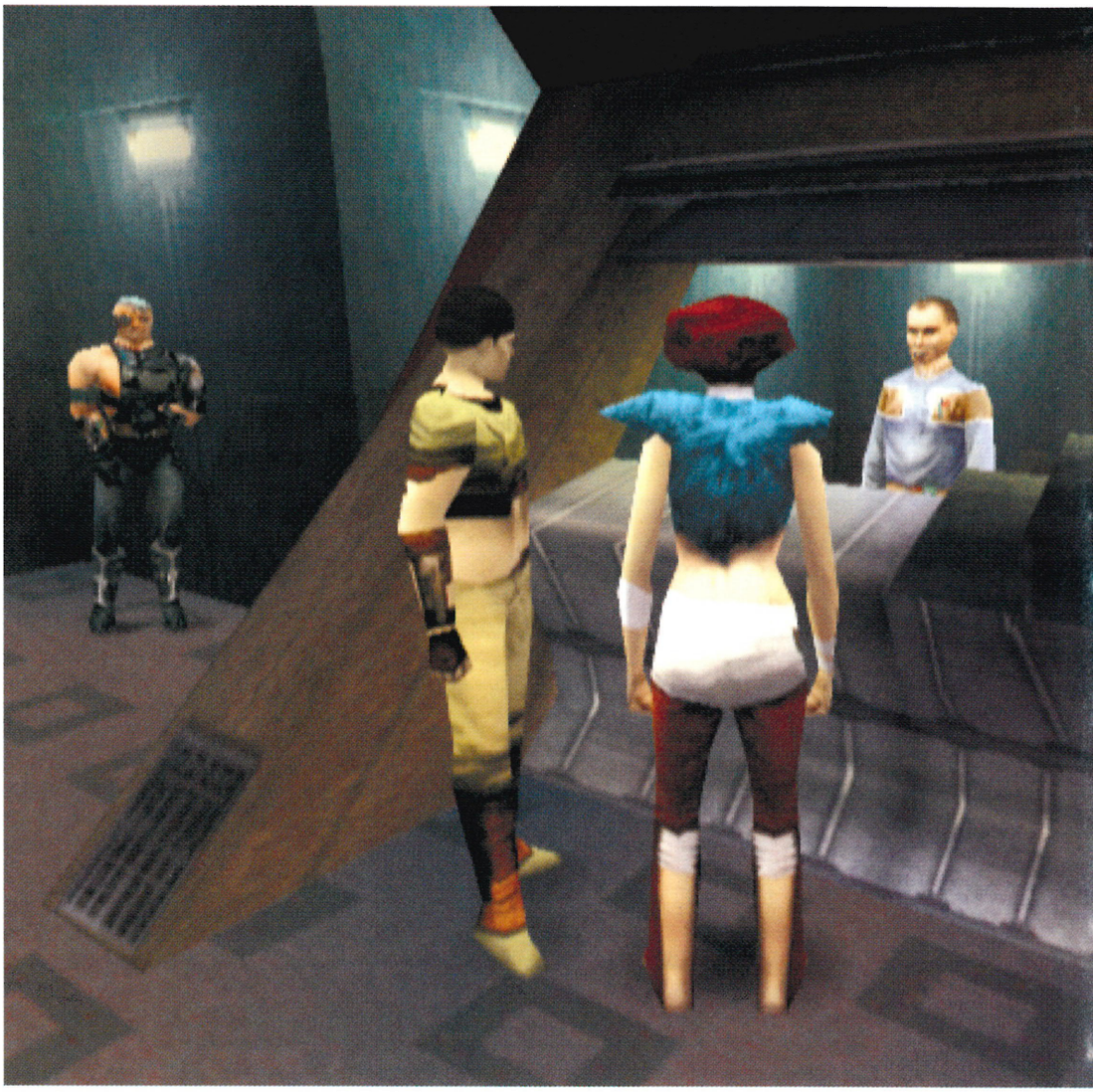
△ Even in the future people put their faith in temple decorations.



△ "These are, we imagine, *candles* that you're selling here?"



△ Don't ever sneeze with a bowl of tomato soup on your lap.



△ It's possible – nay, encouraged – to make use of the various facilities in each city in order to stock up on energy and ammo.

▷ After you've found and killed the lackeys, it's time to head for the basement to take on the leader, which is your first proper fist fight (it's possible to train up first using a simulator). The fighting, which is a rudimentary variation of your usual one-on-one beat 'em up, isn't anywhere near as bad as the shooting sections, but strip it out and sell it as a standalone fighting game and it would get laughed at. As such it doesn't really deserve too much forgiveness just because it's part of a greater whole. In fact the game seems terribly unresponsive at first, and your character utterly inept, but it turns out that these two items are linked. Your character should train extensively before reaching this point, improving speed, combo possibilities and attack strength.

Incidentally, the importance of this section is that you suspect that you were sent into this situation, and that back-up never arrived. Someone at HQ doesn't like you.

The story gradually unravels to suggest an evil presence stealing the souls of gamers in our dimension, and the existence of demons within Omikron. Only a group known as the Awakened can see and defeat these demons, a quasi-religious group of terrorists that you're initially sent to investigate. The second half of the game has you meeting up with and joining this group, whereupon the game is lengthened a little to include a few terrorist missions of your own, including a rather interesting bridge-blowing exercise (but spoiled by another rubbish first-person shooting exercise).

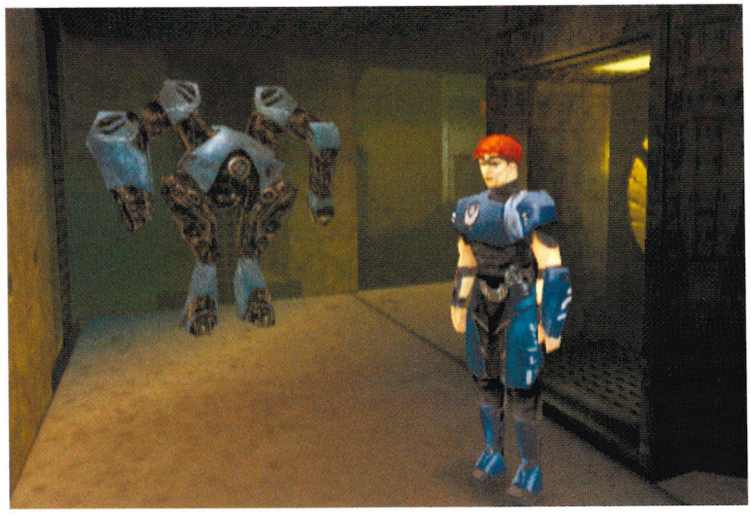
Thankfully, most of your time is spent walking, talking and puzzle solving. It seems as if publishers Eidos, who also 'do' the remarkably similar *Tomb Raider* (*ODM* #6, 7/10) and *Soul Reaver* (*ODM* #6, 7/10), have insisted that there should be a bit of swimming in there too, because the few times you do it the effects are appaling – the animation is considerably worse than the original *Tomb Raider* from 1996.

MOTION SICKNESS

Depressingly, the animation throughout the game is generally poor. Quantic suggested that they used motion-capture on all the characters, but this just highlights what a misunderstood technology it is: it's not the Holy Grail of animation, but rather a lazy short cut. *Tomb Raider* still has some of the finest character animation in gaming, and it was all done by hand.

The backgrounds aren't stunning either. The first two areas you visit are depressingly dark. While they're heavily populated and full of life, the fog can be thick, although the developers should be congratulated for keeping the frame rate high, despite all the detail. Once outside there are huge areas to explore with virtually no disc access. Step through a door and you might be left





△ Mecaguards look after the secret parts of the cities, and look *nothing* like ED-101 from *Robocop*, oh no.



△ Become a terrorist for part of the game, and blow stuff up. It's more fun.

waiting for a second or two for the next section to load in, but it's rarely frustrating.

Perhaps more interesting is that as it's just your soul in the world, you can inhabit the body of many different characters in Omikron. Sometimes it's to your advantage to swap bodies: become instantly better built, or occupy the body of a guard to sneak past a security system. If you die in a fight, then sometimes you can switch to a nearby character rather than reload.

The adventure element is certainly above average – the puzzles are generally logical, and progress is swift but challenging. If the shooting was taken out and the fighting improved a little, then this game would have received a much higher score. Certainly if you have a VGA box and monitor you can add an extra mark, which just tips it into the 'intriguing' category. But the somewhat dodgy control system, tedious shooting, unreadable typeface and laughable alternate dimension premise leave *The Nomad Soul* in the realms of soulless. It's definitely worth a look for the intrigued, but deep down it's just another convenient PC conversion that probably deserved to stay on the beige box.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**
DEVELOPER: **QUANTIC DREAM**

VERDICT

INTERESTING IDEAS COLOURED WITH AN AMATEURISH BRUSH

UPPERS
Large, living cities • Complete freedom of movement • Reasonable and logical puzzles

DOWNERS
Poor fighting • Risible first-person shooting • Easy to get lost and confused

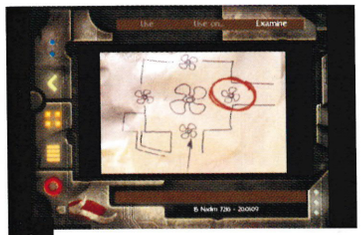
IN ONE HOUR We gave our wife a good seeing to (in the game, naturally)
WEBSITE www.eidos.com
MAX PLAYERS 1
VIDEO MODES Full-screen 60Hz option, VGA compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10

5

WALKTHROUGH
I'M YOUR BIGGEST FAN

Told that you must access your boss's office, but faced by two huge guards, it's time to turn to your inventory and unexplored areas



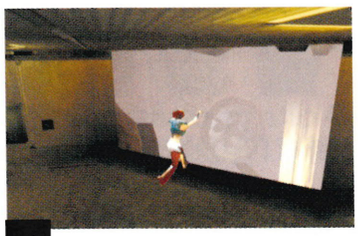
1 ▽ We got this map from a colleague's cupboard, and it seems to refer to the air conditioning system in cop HQ.



2 ▽ Here we go. Well, we're not getting down there in a hurry, cos that fan's spinning and there's glass in the way.



3 ▽ Kay'l's security card is enough to access the control lever and switch off the entire system.



4 ▽ A leap through the open window sees us landing in some water below, and not sliced up by the once spinning fan.



5 ▷ After discovering a bit of wire, we can return to the control room to shut down the smaller fans.



△ If you drop a bomb on an existing hole you get a 'rebomb' – loads more bombs fall at random and cause chaos.

WETRIX+

A cute, psychedelic puzzle game based on collecting water and rubber ducks. STEVE FULLJAMES needs a bucket

ON THE CD

THE BRITISH FIXATION WITH THE WEATHER is great. It gives us something to talk about when we get stuck in lifts or on a broken-down train, and the art of predicting it has given us such legendary figures as John Kettley, Michael Fish and Suzanne Charlton. So it's surprising that no one has thought of making a game based on the fractal randomness of clouds and cyclones and stuff. Actually it isn't, because *Crazy Meteorologist* would be a rubbish idea.

But maybe there is something in it. Maybe some kind of puzzle game where you could collect water in a big pit and then lob fireballs into it to evaporate the water and turn it into points would be cool. And rubber ducks – it would have to have rubber ducks in it. If that sounds weird to you, start worrying, because you've just read a rough description of *Wetrix+*.

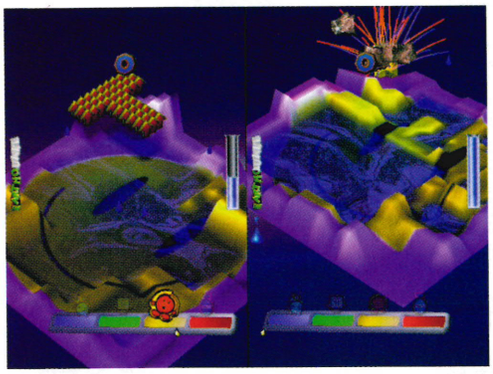
Allow us to elaborate. *Wetrix+* is like some kind of bastard love child of *Tetris*; the kind of thing you might expect to see if *Tetris* got a bit randy and mated with, oh, the office water cooler or something. You have a square of real estate, presented isometrically (or 'kind of diagonally overhead', for the thickies out there), and the idea is to build up land into containers for water that drips and then gushes from the sky. You can evaporate the water with fireballs to score points, but if too much leaks over the edge of the playing area and fills up the drain then it's game over.

That's pretty much all there is to it. You must keep an eye on the earthquake meter, because if you build up too much land it becomes unstable and collapses. As you progress, the gameplay gets faster, and new hazards like ice cubes and depth charges appear. It needed explaining though, because if you watch someone playing *Wetrix+* your first reaction is likely to be "Eh?" as playing pieces and water vapour and fireballs fly about the screen with no apparent logic. But there is a pattern to it, and once you've sussed that you're sorted.

The keys to scoring well in *Wetrix+* are ducks and rainbows. A rubber ducky appears when you create a lake of a certain depth, and each one gives you a 2x multiplier. So if you attract three, all the points you score are multiplied by eight. If you get a rainbow, which forms once you've collected a certain volume of water, you get a further 10x multiplier on all points scored. Once you get into this the numbers in the corner of the screen start to go up very quickly.

All the playing pieces you have control over appear in the boxout (see Walkthrough, right), and the game also throws a few random elements into the mix. Ice cubes start to fall once you hit level 2, and they freeze any water they come into contact with for a short while. Any water you dump on ice also freezes, meaning you could be in for a nasty surprise when it melts. Depth charges appear later in the game and float about for a while before fizzling out; if you drop a fireball near one it detonates, blowing a massive hole in the ground and enabling loads of water to escape.

The easiest way to play is in Classic mode, which drops you in at level 1 and gets on with it. You can also choose to play in Pro mode, where the action starts at level 5 and there are new hazards like double bombs and uneven water droplets. *Wetrix+* also includes a number of preset challenges to test your mettle, including timed games, games with limited numbers of



△ Split-screen two-player can get intense as both players start to fling loads of water at each other.



△ Build up too much land and you trigger an earthquake, which basically wrecks your game.



△ This is *Wetrix+* at full pelt, with ducks, rainbows, fire and ice flying everywhere.



△ Fireballs melt ice, so make sure you've got enough land in place before you let rip.

playing pieces, and one rather nasty scenario which starts with a play area full of holes, and loads of water just seconds away.

Wetrix+ is a simple game visually, but there are some nice effects. The lakes look great, and water sloshes about realistically as you dump more in, spilling over the side if it gets too deep. Water also finds its level, just like the real stuff, so if there are any gaps in your walls it seeks them out. Evaporations and explosions throw steam and debris about, and there are some mad psychedelic backgrounds that warp and change when you move on a level, maaan.

Sadly the backgrounds are about the only things that do change as your game continues. Once you have a pattern of lakes and ducks and rainbows established, you can then pretty much play for hours on auto-pilot until it gets too fast for your eyes and brain, or your fingers seize up. There are also times when there's just too much on screen to keep tabs on what's happening. Try slotting a vital bit of wall into place when there's an ice cube warning, clouds of steam and a score multiplier in the way and you'll understand exactly what we mean.

Puzzle fans with friends are catered for with *Wetrix+*'s split-screen two-player mode. Here you're battling against the elements and each other, and while the gameplay remains, most of the more complex special effects of the game are missing. With only half a screen to play on it can also get tricky to keep up with everything that's going on, especially as your view insists on snapping back to the centre after you've dropped a piece into place.

We're curious as to why *Wetrix+* has gained its '+' suffix. The originally game was released around two years ago on Nintendo 64 and PC, and while the Dreamcast version is visually an improvement on its predecessors, there doesn't seem to be much new meat to justify the 'plus' tag.

It does seem a bit unfair to rain on *Wetrix+*'s parade, because at heart it's a nice, inoffensive puzzler that'll keep you amused for hours. But the best thing about *Tetris* was that you could play it forever and never beat it, whereas once you've sussed *Wetrix+*, playing on feels like going through the motions for little reward.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **TAKE TWO**
DEVELOPER: **ZED TWO**

VERDICT

CUTE, QUIRKY PUZZLER THAT GETS BORING QUICKLY

UPPERS
First UK Dreamcast puzzle game • Simple to pick up and play • Funky, fresh style • Excellent water effects

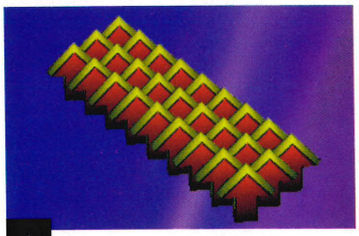
DOWNERS
Repetitive gameplay • Screen can get busy and confusing • Essentially a two-year-old N64 game

IN ONE HOUR One meeeellion points in Classic mode
WEBSITE www.zedtwo.com
CHECK OUT *Singin' In The Rain*, the city of Manchester
MAX PLAYERS 2 (split-screen)
VIDEO MODES Full-screen PAL, 60Hz option, VGA compatible

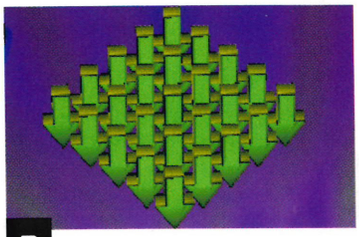
ODM RATING OUT OF 10
6

WALKTHROUGH
UPPERS AND DOWNERS

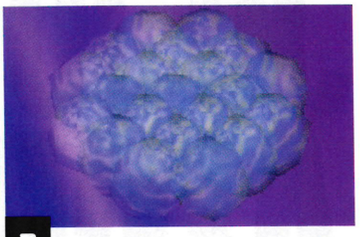
There's quite a cocktail of playing pieces in *Wetrix+*, and you need to know what they all do if you want to score



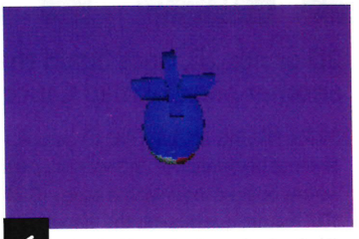
1 ▽ Use uppers to build walls to catch water; too much causes earthquakes.



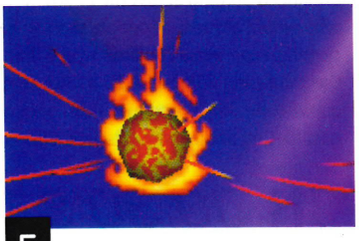
2 ▽ Use downers to trim barriers between lakes – be careful when using them near the edge.



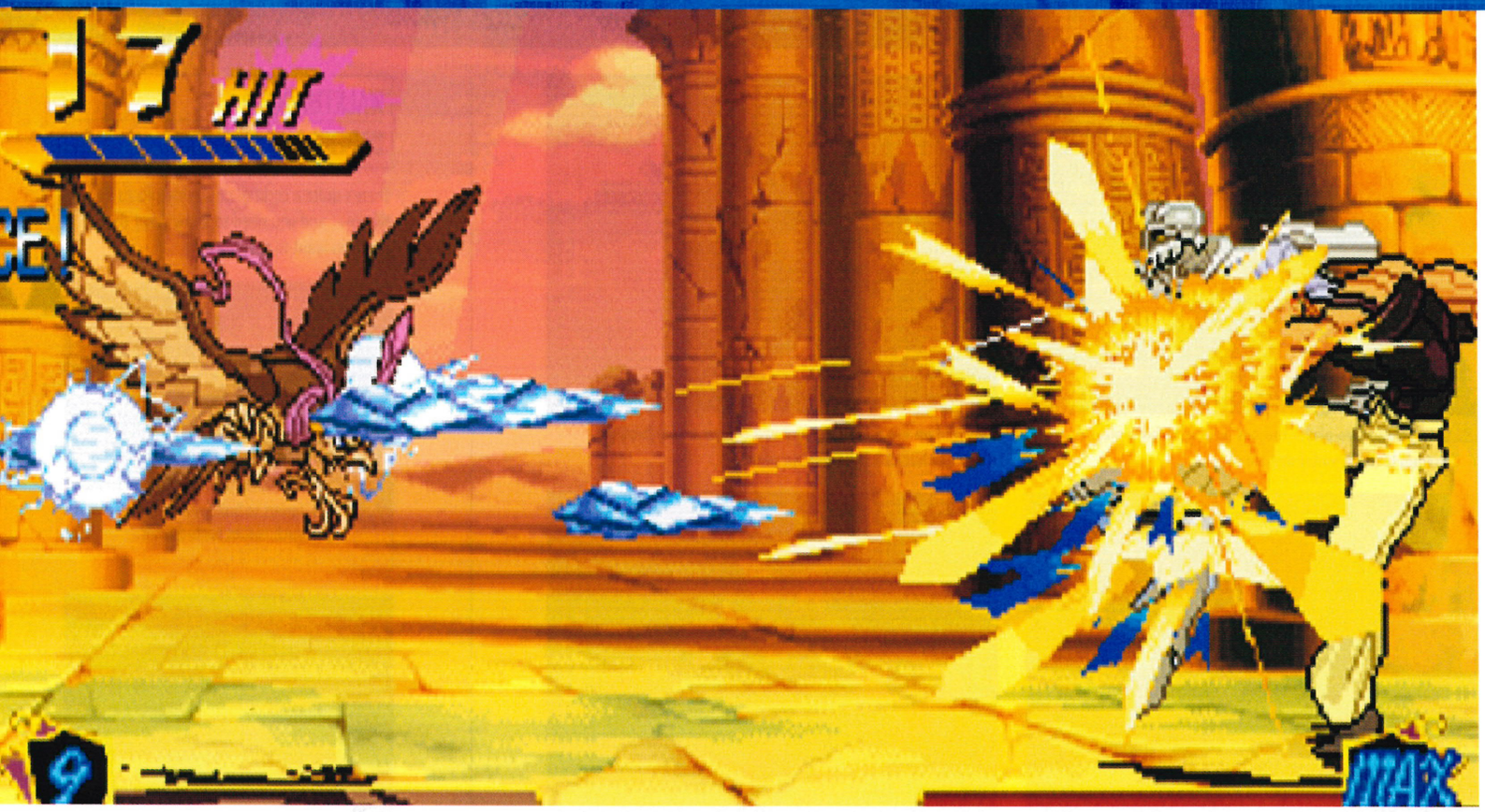
3 ▽ Make sure you place water in completed lakes. The amount you get each time varies.



4 ▽ Bombs blow away large chunks of walls and leave holes in the ground.



5 ▷ Fireballs evaporate water, melt ice, and act like less powerful bombs when they strike bare land.



△ Store up the combos and unleash them at the right moment, then watch the devastation pile on to your foe.

JO JO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE

2D or not 2D, once again that appears to be the question. **DAN TRENT** grabs another piece of mad Capcom action

DO ALL-SINGING, ALL-DANCING 3D graphics come at the expense of gameplay? This was the particular can of worms opened inour March issue's (*ODM* #5) '3D or not 3D?' feature questioning the assumption that 3D is the be all and end all, and that 2D games have no place on such a powerful console as Dreamcast.

Few would disagree that super-slick graphics have enhanced gaming across the board, but there are those who would argue that people seeking a more 'pure' gaming experience could do worse than to check out the increasing number of 2D games that are heading our way, be they brand new titles ones or revived from past glories. Sonic Team's frenetic *ChuChu Rocket!* (previewed on page 54) takes the back-to-basics ideal to extremes, but the buzz surrounding this title demonstrates that gameplay can take precedence over graphical prowess and get the juices flowing.

All of which brings us rather neatly to *Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure*, the latest warped fighting game from Capcom, ironically the company who brought us the hugely popular and most definitely 3D *Power Stone* (*ODM* #1, 8/10), a game rarely absent from any top ten list.

ANIMÉ MANIACS

It doesn't take a degree in gaming (if such a thing exists) to realise that *Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure* is a 2D beat 'em up with an Oriental flava – a quick glance at the screenshots will tell you that – but for the record here's the lowdown.

The game is based on a successful comic/cartoon series in Japan, and follows the fortunes of a bunch of comrades with the ability to project psychically generated extensions of their personality (still with us?) to increase their power in battle. Known as 'stands', they are unique to each character, and enable them to perform all manner of amazing feats and spectacular moves. Ranged against them are a motley collection of rival stand users under the command of the evil Dio, and including comedy rapper Vanilla Ice in their number.

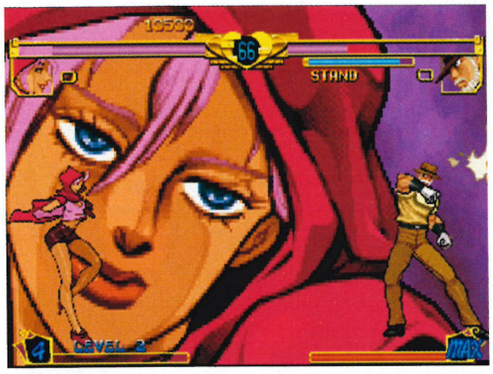
What you have here is actually two games in one; also included on the disc is the confusingly titled *Jo Jo's Venture* that covers the period before Jo Jo's explorations actually became bona fide adventures or, for that matter, bizarre. In practice this means that you get two basically very similar games for the price of one, which should make it something of a bargain.

STAND BY ME

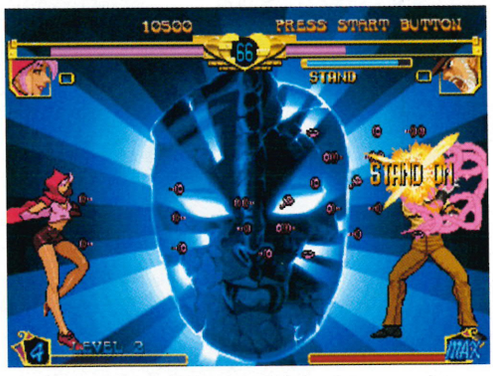
Without wanting to descend into marketing speak, the unique selling point of *Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure* is the stand system, which varies wildly from character to character and makes the fighting extremely varied. For the characters that possess stands (the ones that don't have weapons or other skills to make up for their lack of foresight), activating it is a simple button press away, and opens up all sorts of possibilities of the foe-crushin' combo variety. They don't stop, either: hit all the right buttons and you have the potential to rack up some fearsome 90-plus-hit combos that pile on the damage with lunatic speed.

You won't want to keep your stand on all the time though. Certain moves, such as dodge, can be performed only when the stand is switched off, and

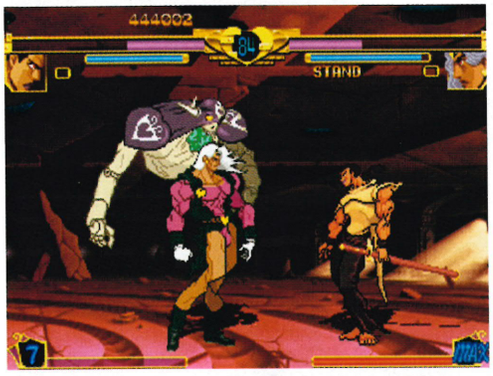
"IN *JO JO'S* THE COMBO IS KING, AND BUTTON BASHERS AREN'T WELCOME"



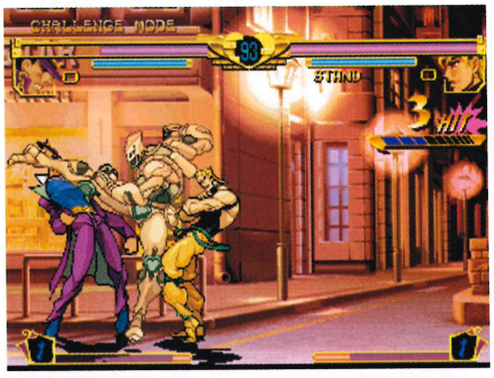
△ The girls in this game play as hard as the boys.



△ Mariah's projectile breasts are as lethal as they are amusing.



△ Switching your stand on is like bringing your big brother along.



△ Dress like that in Barnsley and you deserve to get a kickin'.

from time to time you need to recharge energy by reverting to solo play. If you don't you could end up experiencing the painful-sounding 'stand crush', which temporarily dumps you in the big, wide world on your own and leaves you wide open to your opponent's super-combos.

On the subject of combos, it's important to bear in mind that if you can't combo with the best of them, then you're not going to get very far in this game before you end up using the game disc as a beer mat. In *Jo Jo's* the combo is king, and button bashers aren't welcome. This may come as something as a shock if your fighting game experience doesn't extend much beyond *Soul Calibur* or *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing*, with their ability to flatter the cack-handed beginner and the lightning-thumbed expert alike. There *is* a choice of easy or normal mode, and selecting the former enables you to unleash super-combos at the push of a single button, but ultimately you're not going to succeed in the game if you can't master the full moves.

MOVE ALONG

Other than the stand system, the other distinctive feature of *Jo Jo's* is its very Japanese feel, and the unashamed way in which it wears its comic book and animé heritage on its sleeve. Whether this is a reason to be cheerful or fearful is subjective, but you'd be hard pressed to find someone who'd rave about the game's graphical prowess. What it lacks in polish is certainly makes up for in quirky humour and madcap nature, but whether these will find favour in a world of games like the aforementioned *Soul Calibur* remains to be seen. The storyline is certainly basic, and the subtitles unintentionally amusing in translation, but the sense of knockabout fun is endearing – the chattering teeth that swallow you into the ground and give you a good molar mashing are a particular favourite.

In the end though, *Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure* is a little too specialist for its own good. Fighting game purists may love it, but unless you're particularly fleet of finger and determined to master endless combos then you're not going to get the most out of it.

If you like the look of *Jo Jo's* and haven't tried *Power Stone* yet, there's no contest as to which one you should throw your cash at. While *Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure* is a harmless bit of fun, it's probably fairly safe to say that most people expect more from a Dreamcast game.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **VIRGIN**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**

VERDICT

FRENETIC, BUT ULTIMATELY TOO SPECIALIST FOR ITS OWN GOOD

UPPERS
Good clean fun • Stand system adds a new twist • Loopy super-combos • Strongly defined characters

DOWNERS
A little tricky to master • Clunky graphics • Limited appeal

IN ONE HOUR It was *Ice Ice Baby* for the flat-topped fool of the rap world
WEBSITE www.capcom.com
MAX PLAYERS 2
VIDEO MODES Full-screen 60Hz option

ODM RATING OUT OF 10

5

WALKTHROUGH

STAND BY YOUR MAN

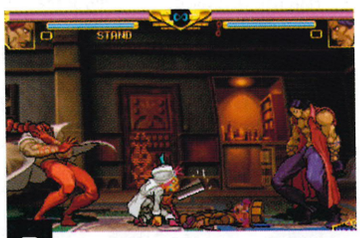
To give and idea of the change in pummelling power the stand bestows, check out the run-down of characters' different stands.



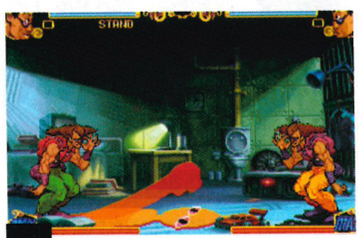
1 ▽ On his own Iggi can do little more than nip his opponents' ankles, but call up his giant robot dog and you're laughing.



2 ▽ Advol's eagle mate is one of the more powerful stands, and is strong and fast-moving – a good choice of character.



3 ▽ A wide range of weapons, high-speed combos and being too small to hit makes D'bo's strand a tough opponent.



4 ▽ Shrink your opponent with the strange, ghostly grabbing arms, then blast him with a gun. Nice style!



5 ▷ Votoaro is one of the main heroes of the game, and has a fearsome stand that can rain down punches with great speed.



△ **Four wrestlers can be in the ring at the same time, although two of these appear to be more interested in spectating.**

ECW HARDCORE REVOLUTION

Acclaim may have lost the WWF licence, but that doesn't mean they've given up on grappling action. **STUART DREDGE** pulls on his Lycra shorts and checks it out

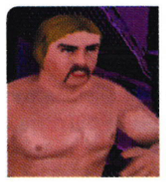
FIRSTLY, LET'S GET ONE THING CLEAR. We think American wrestling is great. After we gave *WWF Attitude* a bit of a panning in our review a few issues back (*ODM* #2, 3/10), some of you wrote in accusing us of being biased against the game simply because we don't 'get' pro wrestling. But even those of us at *ODM* who've spent many a late night glued to WWF events on the box thought *Attitude* was rubbish. The graphics were jerky, the controls were unresponsive, and the gameplay was duller than Cliff Richard's dishwater.

Anyway, *Attitude* was Acclaim's last WWF game as their licence ran out. So they swiftly signed up ECW, a rival wrestling federation which, although not as famous over here as WWF or WCW, is apparently catching them up in the States, fuelled by its extra lashings of blood and violence. Although *Hardcore Revolution* uses Acclaim's much-maligned *Attitude* game engine, we're told the last few months have been spent knocking it into shape.

LICENCE TOO ILL

We'll get to the game itself in a minute. The first problem with *Hardcore Revolution* is the licence – or rather the lack of it. ECW's low profile in the UK means it's unlikely you'll have heard of any of the wrestlers in the game, save for the odd WWF or WCW cast-off. The likes of Axl Rotten, Amish Roadkill and, er, Justin Credible may be rising stars on the other side of the Atlantic, but over here they're nowt. Okay, so having unfamiliar characters doesn't condemn a game outright – just look at *Virtua Striker 2* or *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing* – but it just isn't the same.

Happily, the fact you don't know any of the wrestlers is offset by the inclusion of Acclaim's create-your-own



SPEAK OUT

WE SPOKE TO ACCLAIM'S **GREG MURPHY** TO SEE WHAT THOUGHTS HE HAD ON THE GAME

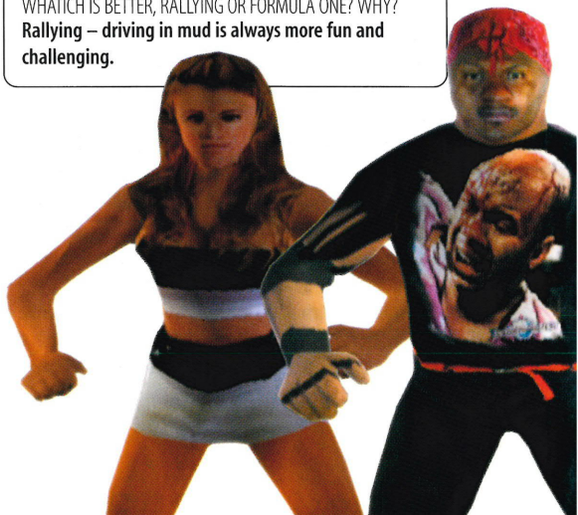
WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT THE GAME?
All the different options, from creating a character to multiple variations of matches. Especially the barbed wire match.

WHO'S YOUR FAVOURITE REAL-LIFE WRESTLER?
Mike Awesome.

WHICHT DREAMCAST GAMES (NOT YOUR OWN) ARE YOU PLAYING AT THE MOMENT?
***Crazy Taxi*.**

WHAT'S THE HARDEST GAME YOU'VE EVER PLAYED?
***Life Force* – NES.**

WHATICH IS BETTER, RALLYING OR FORMULA ONE? WHY?
Rallying – driving in mud is always more fun and challenging.





△ Ouch! That's got to hurt. And we don't mean the wristlock.

wrestler option, which is probably the best part of *Attitude*. It's excellent fun creating your own fighter, and you can set them up to have whatever special moves and ring entrances you want. Naturally, most people will set out to create utter freaks, a task made simple by the variety of strange costumes, bizarre accessories and comedy facial hair available.

Hardcore Revolution's various game modes and options are also impressive and should be enough to keep any wrestling fan happy. Of course, there are one-on-one and tag team matches, but you can also get to grips with a host of different types of fight. Some are available from the start, others are unlocked by playing through the Career mode. If you've always fancied taking part in a Battle Royal or Hardcore battle, this is your chance. And *Hardcore Revolution* Career mode is good, where you take your wrestler through the rigours of an ECW season, competing for belts at all levels.

But the thing is, no matter how good options and game modes are are, it's irrelevant if the game itself is still pish. Well is it? Er…

MEDIOCRE MATCH-UPS

Basically, *Hardcore Revolution*'s match engine is pretty much identical to that of *WWF Attitude*, except faster. Acclaim have thus solved one of the previous game's biggest faults: it's sheer sluggishness. Wrestlers now bound around the ring, and moves are executed much more quickly. Good work, developer fellas.

The problem is it's difficult to spot any other differences. The control system is still unwieldy, for example, although with practice you can get used to its quirks. Each wrestler can perform a set of generic moves: body slams, hip tosses, suplexes and so on, and also their own unique moves. Basic moves are handled with the punch, kick and tie-up buttons, while more complex manoeuvres involve hammering buttons in traditional beat 'em up style.

The action might be faster, but *Hardcore Revolution* still feels unresponsive. The gap between pressing the buttons and moves being executed is still long enough to leave you feeling completely divorced from the action. The result is about as far as you can get from the adrenalised thrills and spills of real-life wrestling. Just like *WWF Attitude*, matches end up as a stale sequence of move and counter-move that's likely to have you reaching for the off button.

Look, if you're a hardcore wrestling fan, and disagreed with our review of *WWF Attitude*, chances are you'll love *Hardcore Revolution*. Whether it's worth shelling out £40 for a faster version that has wrestlers you've never heard of is up to you. If you love wrestling but hated *Attitude*, don't expect the sequel to float your boat. You'll get more enjoyment from buying a couple of decent WWF videos than from this sorry excuse for a grappling game.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM**
DEVELOPER: **ACCLAIM**

VERDICT

BETTER THAN *ATTITUDE*, BUT THAT'S HARDLY A COMPLIMENT

UPPERS
Wealth of options and game modes • Great wrestler creation system • Faster than *Attitude*

DOWNERS
Unresponsive controls • Tedious gameplay • Unknown wrestlers

IN ONE HOUR We were yawning
WEBSITE www.hardcore revolution.com
MAX PLAYERS 4
VIDEO MODES Bordered PAL

ODM RATING OUT OF 10

3

WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY
MAKE YOUR IDEAL MAN

The best part of *ECW Hardcore Revolution* is the way you can create your own weird wrestler. And they sure are weird…



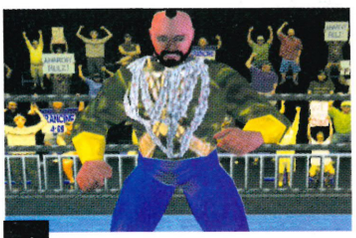
1 ▽ Started off as Hercule Poirot, but descended into silliness once we found the pyjama trousers/sunglasses combo.



2 ▽ Ugh. You can create fat, ugly female wrestlers too. Insert your own 'Vanessa Feltz changes career' joke here.



3 ▽ Yup, it's Afro Thunder from our fave DC boxing game. Okay, so it doesn't really look like him, but we tried.



4 ▽ Our attempt at creating Mr T went surprisingly well, although we couldn't manage a Murdoch for him to terrorize.



5 ▷ Is it man or woman? Or is it that bloke from Slade? You can blend your genders, so bearded ladies are inevitable.

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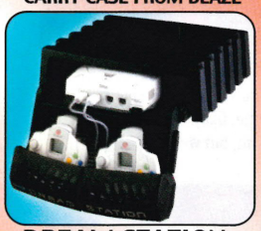
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REVIEWS ROUND-UP

DRINKING...

The local: a British institution. Everyone has their favourite, and for this month's Drinking And Thinking we thought we'd show you ours, the Crown And Sceptre. **DAN TRENT** is our man at the bar

THE CROWN AND SCEPTRE isn't an exceptional pub, but then few locals are. The whole point of going to the nearest pub is that it isn't necessarily about looking cool or being in the trendiest place, it's more about being in familiar surroundings. Favoured haunt of most of our esteemed colleagues here at Dennis Publishing, as well as our neighbours at Radio One and other media types, the Crown is not the place you should be going if you're after a quiet drink. Most nights are busy, but come six o'clock on a Friday the place is packed to the rafters as people rush from the office for a quick one before heading off home – for a few more.

The Crown has exactly the type of traditional ambience to encourage the 'just one more' in anyone, and many a swift one has turned into something far more raucous than intended. Indeed, turn up towards closing time and you'll no doubt find the evidence in the crumpled suits, smudged make-up and loud, over-excited conversations of the punters. The only downer is the ill-judged and over-loud chart dance-lite being pumped out of the sound system, drowning all attempts to chat to anyone other than the person next to you. But then what's the point of a local if you can't slag it off?

Beer choice at the Crown is strictly by-the-book pub fare, but the prices are steep considering its location. On the plus side, the food is good, and the range of bar snacks to keep your stomach lined during those extended sessions is particularly fine. After a couple of Stars (aka Staropramen, *ODM* tipple of choice), the generously sized bowls of chips taste like the food of the gods, and should be more than enough to see you through to the kebab shop on the way home. ▶

• The Crown And Sceptre is at the junction of Langham Street and Great Titchfield Street, London W1 (020 7307 9971). Opening times are normal pub hours.

...& THINKING

MDK 2

(REVIEWED ON PAGE 70)

The action-adventure games that people were crying out for are now coming thick and fast, and *MDK 2* sees the return of Kurt and his now playable friends Dr Fluke Hawkins and Max. A combination of wacky humour and tough gameplay could well be the ticket for top honours.

STUART: It's much better than I'd expected, to be honest. I wasn't hoping for too much but I quite like it.
DAN: Yeah, it sucks you in right from the start. While it gets really tricky quite quickly, it's really addictive.
ED: The controls are good – does everyone agree? It's just that a lot of people seem to really not like them and can't get on with the game because of them. I really like it. The way you use the buttons to move and the analog stick to look around makes it handle like a keyboard and mouse game like *Quake* or something.
STUART: It takes a little getting used to if you're used to playing console games and haven't necessarily earned your dues on a keyboard and mouse.
DAN: The control is really intuitive. I didn't have any trouble getting used to it.
ED: Granted, but sometimes the characters are a bit slow to react. You want to jink out of the way from people firing at you, and they're a bit slow to get going and then have too much inertia.
WARREN: It's weird how the game itself is quite dark and the cut-scenes are all funny and 'light'.
ED: It is really twisted.
WARREN: But it's a bit odd how the cut-scenes are so detached from the game itself.
STUART: The way the enemies laugh at you is cool.
ED: Yeah, if you watch them they run behind walls and peer at you, and then there are ones who wave their arses at you. There's also 'the world's most interesting bomb' thing that's kind of funny.
WARREN: I like the nuclear toaster.
ED: The dog really *isn't* funny though. He looks stupid and just doesn't have the same amount of character as the other two.
WARREN: The sound effects are fab, and the music isn't bad either.
DAN: All the ingredients are there: the controls are good once you get the hang of them, the sound is great and it's easy to get into.
WARREN: But it's so damn tough!
ED: The thing I found toughest was working out where to go. I know it's supposed to be all alien and stuff, but the rooms are absolutely huge and at times it's really hard to find your way out. It's like the scale is all wrong. The other thing that ruins the atmosphere is the way you always go through a massive room and then run along a corridor for a bit while the next room loads up. It all gets a little monotonous.
DAN: The variety in gameplay is good – each characters has a different style of play – the Doctor's parts of the game are more puzzle-based and Kurt's are more running about. It makes the game less tedious.
STUART: All in all not bad, then.

WETRIX+

(REVIEWED ON PAGE 80)

Using blocks to contain water while contending with all manner of natural disasters could make in this a complicated but interesting 3D puzzler. But is *Wetrix+* the Dreamcast's answer to *Tetris*, or is it just a damp squib?

STUART: Frenetic, furious fun! [groans all round].
WARREN: Every H_2O-me should have a copy! [groans all round again].



"THERE'S LOADS OF BITS THAT MIGHT ADD UP TO A NICE GAME, BUT IT DOESN'T QUITE COME TOGETHER"
– STUART ON *WETRIX+*

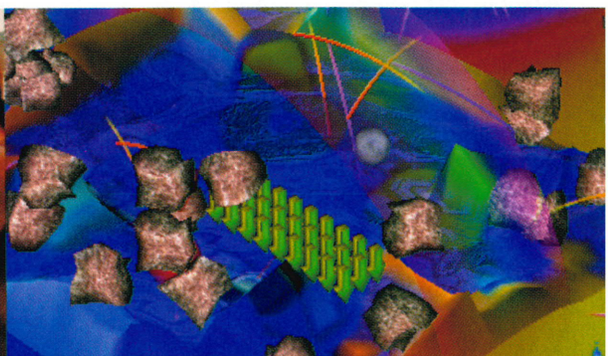


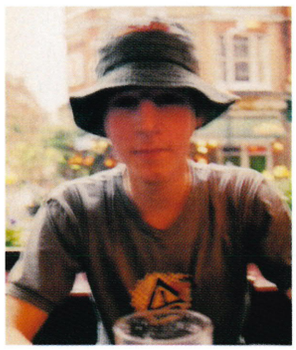
"IT'S WEIRD HOW THE GAME ITSELF IS QUITE DARK AND THE CUT-SCENES ARE FUNNY"
– WARREN ON *MDK2*

ED: It's nice...
DAN: But?
ED: It's nice but a bit dull. The kind of excitement that you get from games like *Tetris*, *Super Puzzle Fighter* or even *Bust-A-Move* just isn't there.
STUART: It doesn't grab you in the way that a lot of those games do. You don't look at it and think, "I want a go on that."
WARREN: It looks more complicated than your typical puzzle game.
ED: It's not that complicated but...
STUART: It looks it.
ED: Once you get going you just carry on, and you don't ever feel like, "Aah, quick, it's all going wrong and I've got to be really skillful to get myself out of this," you just think, "I'll just slam another block down in the corner and hope that something comes along."
STUART: That's just like *Tetris* though.
DAN: Puzzle games rely on having a simple concept. and I don't think *Wetrix+* does.
ED: I don't even know what the concept is! What is the idea? To make puddles?
DAN: Something like *ChuChu Rocket!* [previewed on page 54] has a fairly simple structure.
ED: That's a bloody confusing game!
DAN: It is to play, but at least you know what you have to do from the start. Actually trying to do it is another matter, but you know what you have to do.
WARREN: This is 40 quid though, isn't it?
STUART: Yeah.
WARREN: This is the problem. You could expect puzzle games to be cheaper. I like puzzle games, things like *Bust-A-Move*, not to mention *Baku Baku* on the Saturn, which was the dog's, but I wouldn't want to pay full whack for a puzzle game.
STUART: I think I'd pay it for *ChuChu Rocket!*
WARREN: Yes, but it'll have the online thing.
ED: I happily payed it for *Mean Bean Machine* on the Mega Drive and *Baku Baku* on the Saturn.
DAN: I may be missing the point here, I'm not a huge puzzle game fan, but I 'd say that hand-helds are the more natural place for puzzle games than home consoles.
WARREN: I don't know, *Bust-A-Move* on PlayStation head to head is a real blast. Girls love puzzle games, too. It's a proven fact!
STUART: It's probably something to do with logic or something, putting things into order.
WARREN: Nah, it's because they're non-violent.
DAN: *ChuChu Rocket!*'s dead violent – you've got nasty cats eating mice.
WARREN: Football, racing, fighting... girls just don't tend to be into that.
ED: Back to the game, I just don't think it's clear enough and, like Dan says, simple enough. The view's a bit awkward sometimes and it doesn't feel like you've got anything to do with what's going on. It's just a bit too random.
DAN: It's diverting for a short time, but I wouldn't want to play it for a long period, and that's not a very good sign.
STUART: I find it stressful to listen to while I'm playing.
DAN: Eh?
WARREN: I like the little rubber duck that multiplies your points.
STUART: There's loads of individual bits that might add up to a nice puzzle game, but for some reason it doesn't quite come together in the mix.
ED: It's not totally without fans though. I've seen people playing it who are really, really good and are totally into it.
STUART: But there are fans of even the most rubbish of games. I bet there's somebody out there who spends whole afternoons on *Fighting Force 2*.
WARREN: Couldn't do that with *Dynamite Cop* though, not unless you played it eight times through.
ED: You should be able to play good puzzle games for hours at a time.









"YOU TRY TO PUNCH PEOPLE AND YOU WALK THROUGH THEM, YOU CAN'T RUN, IT LOOKS RUBBISH"
– ED ON *HARDCORE REVOLUTION*

WARREN: *Wetrix +* just makes me want to go to the loo, all that dripping water.
ED: But the water's nice, and I've got a *Wetrix+* sponge at home!

ECW HARDCORE REVOLUTION

(REVIEWED ON PAGE 84)
After the hugely disappointing *WWF Attitude* (*ODM* #2, 3/10) comes a new game based on the same engine and featuring the less well-known (on this side of the pond, anyway) ECW league. Can it overcome its roots and unknown wrestlers, or is this another grappling game that should never have left the locker room?

WARREN: Well, I loved having a grapple with you guys, but...
STUART: And what about the game?
DAN: It just didn't grab me, hur hur.
ED: It made me really miserable. It's one of the worst games I've ever played.
WARREN: Wrestling can be really good.
STUART: We'd better be clear that it's the game we're talking about, because a lot of people think we don't like wrestling as we gave both *WWF Attitude* and this one really bad scores.
ED: If someone gave me loads of money and programmers, I could come up with the best wrestling game ever. There's so much scope for a really good game. In wrestling games why do the wrestlers always shamble about really slowly, and you always end up just going punch, punch, kick, kick? *Hardcore Revolution* is absolutely terrible too. There are about five interesting grapples and that's it. You try to punch people and you walk through them, you can't run, it looks rubbish...
STUART: The reason it got three and not zero is that there are people out there who like *Attitude*, and this is faster than that.
ED: It's worse than that.
STUART: No, if people like *Attitude* they'll like this.
DAN: But nobody does like *Attitude*!
ED: The thing that makes playing *WWF Attitude* bearable is that you can play as the people you know from the real thing – your Rock or your Kane. You've got all your favourite people from the real WWF.
I doubt very much whether there are many people over here who've heard of any ECW wrestlers, and they all look like a bunch of goons anyway. Perhaps if you had a decent choice of some good-looking wrestlers ...
DAN: Fancy wrestlers, do you?
ED: Yeah! Macho Man Randy Savage is my kind of man. He's got a beard and that mad voice.
STUART: Is he still married to that woman, his manager or something?
ED: He's not really married!
STUART: I know that.
WARREN: Stuart, it's all pretend!
STUART: I'll tell you a good wrestling game, that arcade one that used to be in chip shops, with Hulk Hogan, Randy Savage, Big Boss Man...
ED: Yeah, that was great!
STUART: But that's the thing – they've taken something really exciting and made it dull.
DAN: But it could be so good! Imagine this but like *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing* with four players and all the taunts and stuff. It would be superb!
WARREN: Well Midway are working on it and if you're after a good wrestling game wait till that comes out.
ED: And that's the bottom line, 'cos Warren said so!

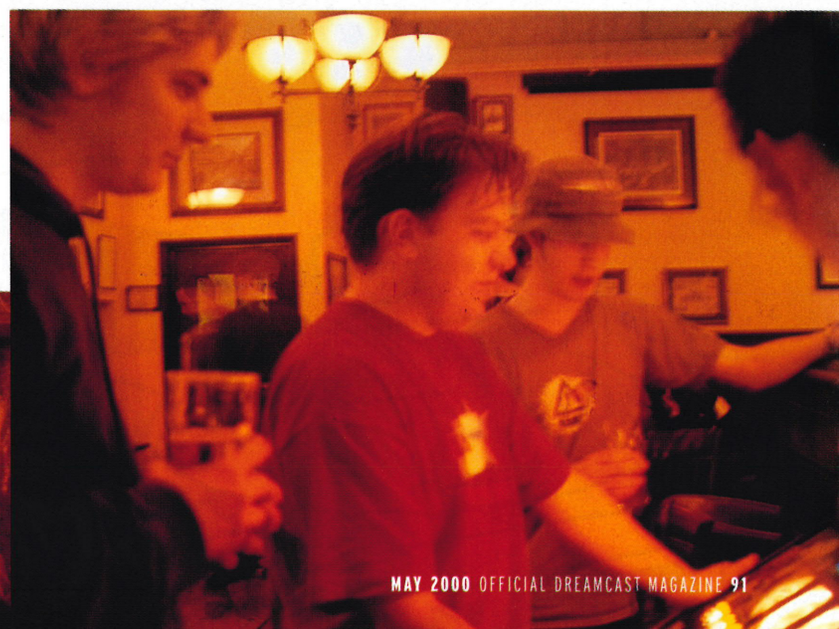
V-RALLY 2

(REVIEWED ON PAGE 10)
With *Metropolis Street Racer* still some way off, *V-Rally 2* has the potential to carry on where *Sega Rally 2* left off. It promises much in the form of multiplayer action and super-smooth graphics, but is it anything more than just a straightforward cast-off from PlayStation?

DAN: Dead good. I was really looking forward to *Sega Rally 2* originally, but I think it's rubbish.
WARREN: No, it's not rubbish.
STUART: A bit disappointing, maybe.
DAN: I don't like it. The handling is pants.
ED: It's just the same as it's always been in the arcade.
DAN: Maybe, but the tracks are dull too and it's so uninspiring.
STUART: But anyway, *V-Rally 2*.
DAN: So, having been disappointed by *Sega Rally 2* and being something of a rallying fan, I think it's good, really challenging. The tracks are better and it moves really fast. One of the best driving games we've had so far.
STUART: I think it's quite accessible. I was really worried you'd have know loads about cars and rallying and stuff, but it's really easy to get into, and I actually found it quite easy to play even though there is a bit of car customising car and all that.
WARREN: You can leave it if you want, though.
DAN: I used to spend a lot of time on the original *V-Rally* on the PlayStation, and it's got the strengths from that. If you try to make a game based strictly on the time trial aspect of rallying it doesn't necessarily make for a good game. *Colin McRae Rally* managed it but doesn't have such broad appeal.
WARREN: I'd say the best thingoverall about *V-Rally 2* is that you have four cars on the track at the same time and you're racing three other cars that start at the same time. *Sega Rally 2* is alright, but the other cars are just markers.
DAN: The artificial intelligence in *V-Rally* has always been superb. The computer-controlled cars really cut you up and you have to be on the ball to beat them.
STUART: You can play dirty and shunt them off though, which is always cool.
WARREN: There are a few problems with it though.
ED: I don't like it. I like rally games and real-life rallying, but the cars in this are just too light for me; there's no sense of being in contact with the ground, or that you're having to pull a big, heavy car around a corner. And if you just clip the edge of a bank your car flips over straight away. It gets to the point where if you go over 40 miles an hour you start thinking, "Oh god, the car's going to tip over!"
WARREN: The four-player mode is good, although you wouldn't want to play it on a 12-inch screen. Something we haven't mentioned is the graphics, which are fantastic, especially compared to the PlayStation version. It's in the textures.
ED: Looks like a glitchy PC game to me.
ALL: Oooooh!
ED: Compare it to a proper Dreamcast game and it looks rubbish.
DAN: But it is a converted game, and bearing that in mind it looks superb. Even if it were a 'proper' Dreamcast game I don't really think anyone would let down. There's enough in there to make this stand out from any other versions.
WARREN: Okay, it does have its faults, but it is the best 'proper' driving game on Dreamcast, for now at least.



"THE COMPUTER CARS REALLY CUT YOU UP AND YOU HAVE TO BE ON THE BALL TO BEAT THEM"
– DAN ON *V-RALLY 2*



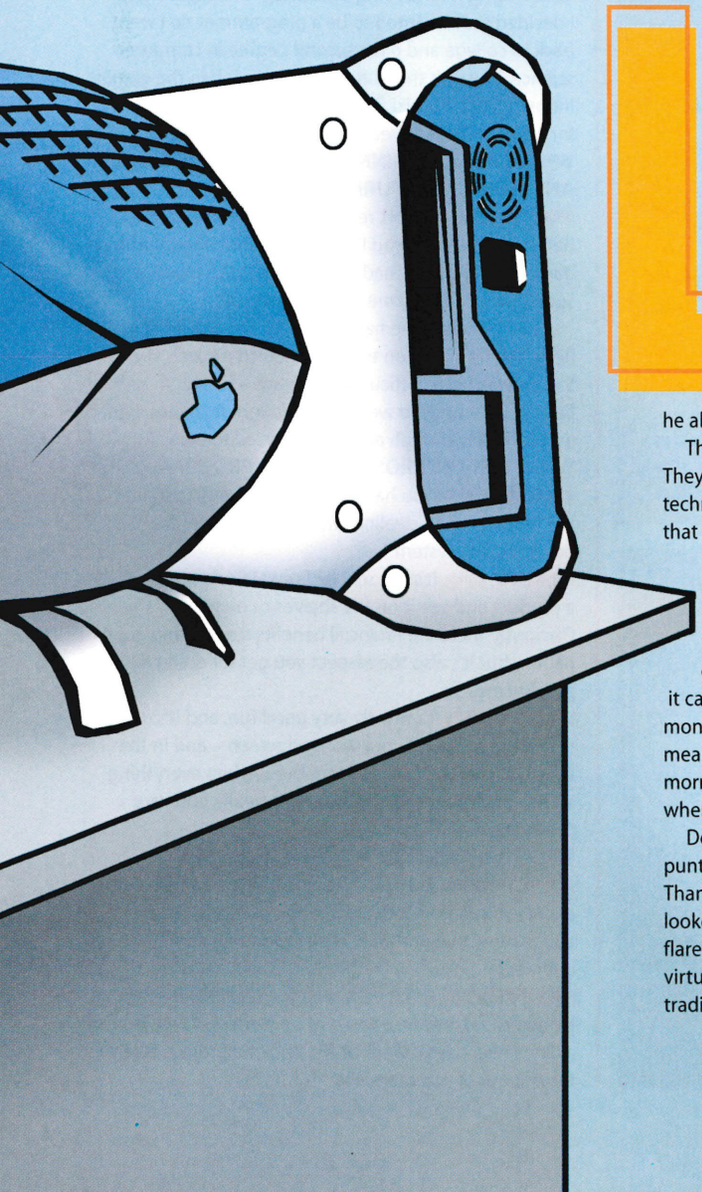


ILLUSTRATIONS: **BEN WACHENJE**

JOBS IN THE INDUSTRY PART 2

PROGRAMMERS

GAMES TESTER? PRODUCER? CREATIVE DIRECTOR? WHAT DO THEY DO EXACTLY? **ADAM PHILLIPS** PROFILES THE JOBS WHICH BRING THE LATEST GAMING HITS TO OUR SCREENS



LET'S BE FRANK: it's the least 'sexy' job in the videogames industry. Slaving over a keyboard and typing in a language that's alien (and downright scary) to the average Joe Bloggs on the street is hardly the most enticing job description. Indeed, coders are regarded by the uninitiated as being a bit 'geeky'. Bear in mind though that software 'geeks' like Microsoft boss Bill Gates and Jon Carmack at Id Software (the company behind the *Quake* series) are having the last laugh – Carmack has not only earned himself millions, he also owns a small fleet of Ferraris.

The programmer's lot is a tough one though. They are the spods who get stuck into the deeply technical side of any game: they create the code that makes that 3D game run; they're the ones who take the ideas from the artists and designers and actually make them work. Without programmers there would be no software industry. To make it as a coder you need enthusiasm and dedication by the shedload – it can be a thankless task sitting in front of that monitor, typing in an endless stream of seemingly meaningless words until the small hours of the morning, knowing that you're going to leave only when the damn thing's right.

Despite these challenges there are plenty of punters out there trying to muscle in on the scene. Thankfully software companies are always on the lookout for someone who shows programming flare; if you've got what it takes, your skills are the virtual equivalent of gold dust. The best and most traditional way of catching the eye of any potential employer is to create a demo of your work. It could be just a short sequence that shows your programming prowess, but if it's impressive enough and stands out from the crowd, then you'll get noticed – and hired.

As the software scene has matured from a cottage industry into a full-blown multinational nightmare, many companies also like to see a university degree tucked away somewhere on your CV to show that you've had a formal education and you're something of a 'bright spark'.

Sounds like a tall order, doesn't it? But the potential for earning kudos and cash is tempting enough for most wannabes.

THE PROGRAMMER

RESPONSIBILITIES: The programmer creates the basic engine that the game will use, and co-operates with artists and designers to turn their vision into a playable and workable reality.

PROSPECTS: The sky's the limit. Forge a reputation for yourself as a top-class programmer and you could end up running your own company.

SALARY: Trainee programmers can expect to start on £12,000 a year. Depending on your talent and which company you work for, you could be looking at £50,000 and upwards. Oh, and royalties on top of that.

QUALIFICATIONS: Enthusiasm, dedication, and either a damn fine demo showing off your talents, or a degree in computing or a maths-related subject.

I DO IT FOR A LIVING

We profile some programmers, taking a brief looking at what helped them land the gig, and which games they've had the most fun working on



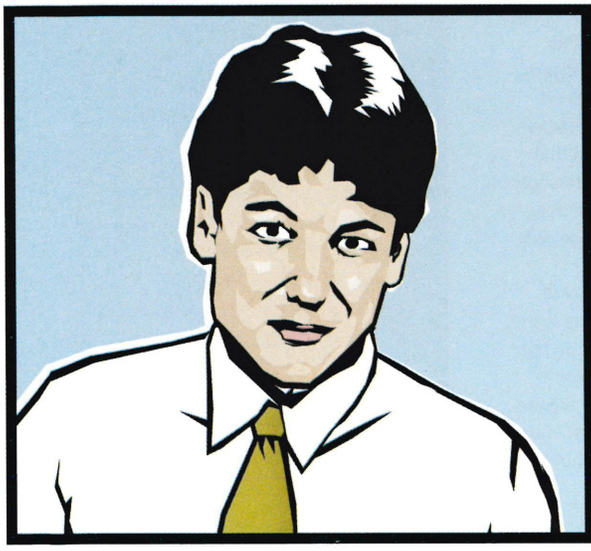
PROGRAMMER 1

NAME: Archer Maclean
AGE: 38
BACKGROUND: Started tinkering with electronics back in the '70s. Found computers far more flexible. Created the classic *Dropzone* and *International Karate*. Has now gone on to create some classic snooker/pool sims and has his own company, Awesome Developments.
PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS: *Dropzone* (Atari/Commodore 64), *International Karate/IK+* (Atari/C64), *Archer Maclean Pool* (Amiga/ST/PC), *Jimmy White's 2: Cueball* (Dreamcast/PC/PS)



PROGRAMMER 2

NAME: Martyn Chudley
AGE: 31
BACKGROUND: Began creating games while still in his teens. Small-fry stuff at first as a freelancer, without staff, contracting to Psygnosis. When PlayStation surfaced he created his own company, Bizarre Creations, but he still programs.
PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS: *Killing Game Show* (Mega Drive), *Formula 1* and *F1 '97* (PC/PlayStation), *Metropolis Street Racer* (coming soon to Dreamcast)



PROGRAMMER 3

NAME: Patrick Dickinson
AGE: 32
BACKGROUND: After tinkering on his BBC computer during his teens and doing a degree in computer science, Patrick landed his first programming gig at Rebellion Software working on a Sega Saturn title. Then programmed the AI for the classic PC game *Aliens Vs. Predator*. Now works at Awesome Developments.
PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS: "Some weird stuff on the Saturn," according to his boss, Maclean, *Aliens Vs. Predator* (PC), *Jimmy White's 2: Cueball* (DC/PC/PS)

Q&A

What it's like to be a programmer, straight from the horses' mouths

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO TAKE UP PROGRAMMING GAMES, AND HOW DID YOU GET STARTED?

ARCHER: *Space Invaders* came out, and I took one look at it and proclaimed: "I could do that!" No one believed me, but I just went and did it – to everyone's amazement.

In 1980 I was one of the very first people to obtain an Atari 800 home computer, and I set about learning everything about it. *Dropzone*, in 1983/4, was the result of all that hard work – it sold by the bucketload and was a number one game. A dream was realised.

MARTYN: I bought myself a Commodore 64, and subsequently myself and a school mate decided that we didn't want to go into further education so we decided to give games a go instead. We ended up doing a game called *Combat Crazy*, a budget game, which sold about 2,500 copies, so we were made up!

PATRICK: I started programming for fun when I was in my early teens. I didn't really think seriously about doing it for a living until after I'd left university. I decided that I wanted to be a programmer, so I went back to college and did a second degree in computer science. It wasn't that difficult to find a job in the games industry. Just after I'd finished studying I saw an advert for programmers at Rebellion and got the job.

WHAT DID YOU THINK THE JOB WOULD BE LIKE, AND HOW DID IT TURN OUT?

PATRICK: I didn't really know what to expect. Before I saw that job ad I'd never thought about writing games for a living; it had never occurred to me that someone would pay me to make games!

At first it was quite hard work. When I arrived at Rebellion I was put on to a Sega Saturn project. The Saturn was really difficult to program – unlike Dreamcast – and we were facing tough deadlines. I got into it quickly though and really started to enjoy it.

WHAT ARE THE PROS OF BEING A PROGRAMMER?

ARCHER: You have a great time battling against the hardware and dealing with all the bugs of the development system.

MARTYN: It's the sense of reward when you finish a product and see it on the shelves or on telly. Obviously there are financial benefits for creating good games, but it's also the respect you get for doing a good game.

PATRICK: It's mostly very good fun, and it's great to see the results of your work on screen – and in the shops. You can get a real 'team buzz' when everything starts coming together, which I personally find very rewarding.

WHAT ARE THE CONS OF WITH THE JOB?

ARCHER: You get labelled as a geek, and people expect you to be spotty and eating pizza all the time – and assume you probably have BO and no social interaction skills.

MARTYN: The long hours. You really do have to be dedicated, because you end up working 12-14 hours a day, seven days a week at the end of a project. It really takes it out of you mentally.

PATRICK: The cons are that when things are going badly it can get really depressing. There tends to be a lot of pressure on everybody at the end of the project, and that can be a soul-destroying experience.

HOW MUCH INVOLVEMENT DO PROGRAMMERS HAVE IN THE CREATIVE PROCESS?

ARCHER: Collectively you can usually achieve a better result by airing all the ideas on to how to solve a problem. Everybody at Awesome has the opportunity to be creative and express it artistically or through programming.

MARTYN: It all depends on the way the company works, but at most places it seems that everyone gets a say at one stage or another. It's important to get everyone's input, and then someone – who could be an artist, programmer or specialist game designer – needs to focus the design from all the ideas.

PATRICK: From a technical point of view, the programming team needs to be involved in designing a game, because they can identify what is achievable and what is not.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO BE A PROGRAMMER?

ARCHER: When you get competent enough, start applying for junior programming positions with games companies. Alternatively, you could go off and do a computer science degree or any physics or maths-based course where computers have to be used.

MARTYN: Get access to a PC – there's loads of shareware software offering graphics and compilers. Start to learn a bit of C [a computer language], or even start with BASIC [a far more simple language]. It's just a case of getting something up and running on the screen and then expanding it to create a demo.

Anyone can do a spinning cube [the bane of second-rate demos] but that's only the first step; you should create that spinning cube but then do something with it. At the end of the day, if you have a cube and you attach four cubes to the corners then put it over a big flat cube, you've got a car driving over a road. Then you put more polygons into the cubes and you end up with something that looks more like a car. Programming is all about layering – it's about taking something and adding more and more to it. We see so many demos that are just the first step; we want to see steps two, three, four and five!

PATRICK: You need to have a genuine enthusiasm for games and programming, because that's what employers are really looking for.

"PEOPLE EXPECT YOU TO BE SPOTTY AND EATING PIZZA ALL THE TIME"

– ARCHER MACLEAN

CASE STUDY

From drawing board to tarmac with *Metropolis Street Racer*

GAME: **METROPOLIS STREET RACER**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **BIZARRE CREATIONS**

IT'S THE RACER that everyone's been talking about, and it typifies the punishing programming schedule that any game must go through if it's to make an impact upon its release.

The first rule of thumb is to get the right technical team together. "Our programming team is made up of a core of six people," offers Martyn Chudley. "There's Walter, the technical director who, because of the 3D engine he created for the game, has given us an edge on how many polygons we can actually get out of Dreamcast. Then there's Roger, who's basically taken all that technology and put in the special effects over the top. He's the lead coder in a more technical sense."

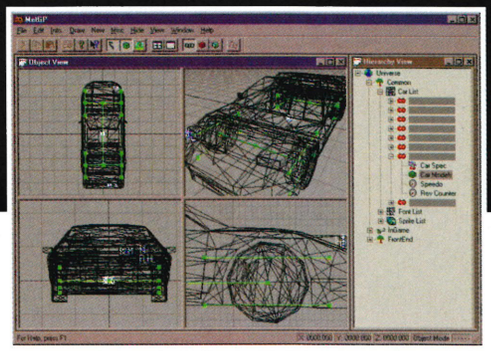
They also have a programmer working on that vital ingredient the artificial intelligence, which dictates how challenging the computer competitors will be in a race, and another coder doing 'tools' such as MetGP, which are the pieces of software that enable artist-created designs such as 3D models to be turned into something that the game can use and display on screen. There's also a guy working on sound.

Martyn describes his own role as "artistic programmer. I deal with the game design and content. In a racing game, I decide and code how the cars will interact with one another, how you progress from race to race, and what the general goal is. I program in the content and all the structure."

He sees the programming process as a series of small tasks that need to be tackled and delegated to each department before reaching the finished product: "For example, at the moment I'm programming the presentation results screens, so I know I have to liase with the artist to work out screen layouts. I have to know what sort of data needs to be represented on the screen as well – like how quickly you completed the race, and so forth. As the programmer, you then talk to people and discuss issues such as whether you want animation on the results screen or if it will just be a static screen. If it's animation, then you have to get the artist to build and animate the actual 3D model."

This kind of interaction between artist and programmer is typical – the artist produces the environments, and the programmer works out how to put them together. However, as with many creative people, programmers can be hyper-critical of their own work. "You always feel that a game needs to be 100 per cent perfect," says Martyn, "but you also have to know where to draw the line. It's alright being a perfectionist, but you can take it too far, and fussing for ages on something that people probably won't notice is a waste of time and generally results in a game getting delayed. It's therefore my responsibility to work out when we've reached the point where we've reached maximum quality without going over the top."

We'll soon find out if he drew that line in the right place with *Metropolis Street Racer*.



△ **MetGP: one of the vital tools created by the programmers of *Metropolis Street Racer* to help edit the game's exact specifications, from the car specs through to city layouts.**

FIRST CONTACT

Think you're ready for a shot at pro programming? Then check out the following recruitment agencies, of the many that are out there, for job listings. Remember: don't waste their time with frivolous phone calls.

Aardvark Swift Consulting
www.ardswift.co.uk
01709 876 877

Datascope Recruitment
www.datascope.co.uk
020 7580 6018

OPM Response
www.opmresponse.co.uk
01206 544 044

Pelican Consultants
www.pelican-consultants.com
020 8423 3400

• For university course details, talk to your careers advisor or check out your local library for more details.

VERDICT

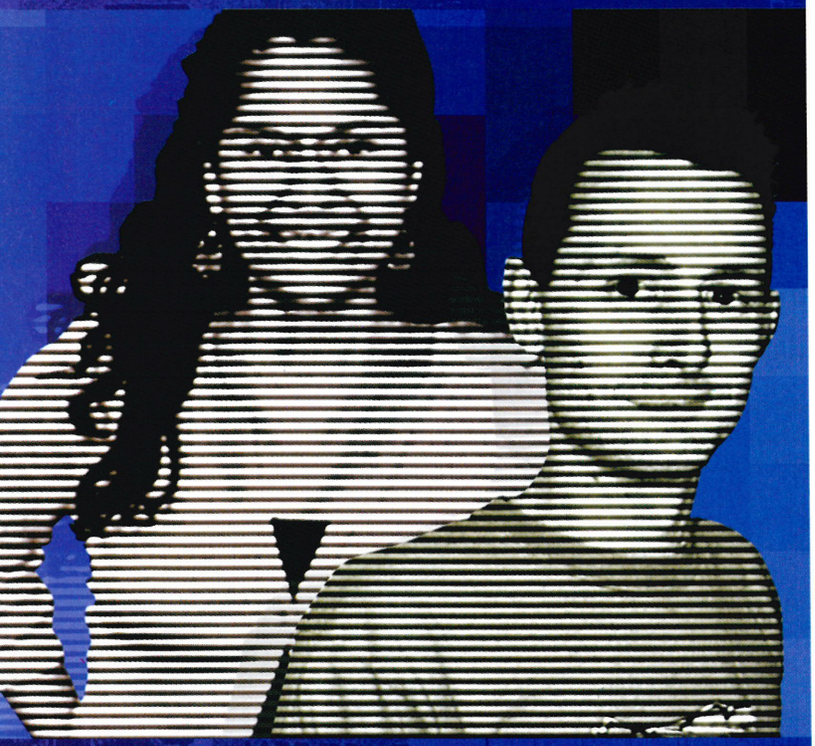
It's a tough job, but the prospects can be excellent. If you're tempted, start sending off those ideas and CVs to publishers, recruitment agencies and developers. And drop us line to let us know how you get on.

UPPERS

Genuine potential to earn real money, including royalties • You're a creative and vital part of a team • The job satisfaction is enormous (if the game's any good, that is)

DOWNERS

Salaries do start low • Long, punishing hours, especially as the production heads towards deadline day • Some people are going to think you're a geek – times are changing rapidly, but there's still some way to go; image-conscious punters need not apply



IN THE HOT SEAT

WITH CRYSTAL DYNAMICS

THIS MONTH, *SOUL REAVER* CO-PRODUCER **ROSAURA SANDOVAL** AND SENIOR DESIGNER **RICHARD LEMARCHAND** ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR RECENT DREAMCAST HIT AND FORTHCOMING PROJECTS FROM CRYSTAL DYNAMICS

COMING UP: GET YOUR QUESTIONS IN FOR *RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA* PRODUCER SHINJI MIKAMI AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE

CRYSTAL DYNAMICS have developed games for practically every major format available in recent years, even managing to get some decent games out of the ill-fated 3DO system. Their recent PlayStation titles have earned them a great deal of respect, and have enabled them to expand in size – just over 100 people now work at the company. With games like *Broken Helix*, *Pandemonium!*, *Legacy Of Kain: Blood Omen*, and the *Gex* series already under their belts, they recently released their first Dreamcast title – *Legacy Of Kain: Soul Reaver*.

Co-producer Rosaura Sandoval and senior designer Richard LeMarchand kindly took the time to answer the questions sent in by readers of the *Official Dreamcast Magazine* website.

MONSTER MASH

Which are your favourite horror movies, and did any in particular inspire the look and feel of *Soul Reaver*?

Gez Lloyd, via email

RICHARD LEMARCHAND: All kinds of movies, books and art inspired *Soul Reaver*. We like stylish vampire flicks, whether they be Hollywood blockbusters like *Blade*, *Interview With The Vampire* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, or the more arty renderings of the old black-and-white *Nosferatu* and a great film from the '80s called *Near Dark*.

We're influenced a lot by animé , and you can probably see manga styles in the character design: *Vampire Hunter D* is a classic. We're always pulling out our imported 'Art Of' Hayao Miyazaki books for inspiration for levels, and sometimes characters – Miyazaki-san is the genius animation director behind *Princess Mononoke* and *Nausicaa: Valley of the Wind*.

LET'S HAVE GEX

With platform games like *Sonic* and *Rayman* translating so well to Dreamcast, are you planning to make a DC *Gex* game, and who would do you most like to be his voice in the UK this time around?

Richard Joy, via email

ROSAURA SANDOVAL: Crystal are always looking for opportunities to take our games to new platforms, especially when they can flourish so well as on Dreamcast. Currently there are lots of plans to take the *Gex* license to as many different platforms as possible. All I can say is that something good is cooking in the kitchen, but I cannot release any of the details just yet.

As far as the voice, we'll almost certainly use Danny John-Jules [aka Cat from *Red Dwarf*] again. He did an excellent job last time, as I'm sure gamers will agree.

REAVING A STORY

It's great that *Soul Reaver* is so different from the original *Legacy Of Kain*, but still carries on the same story. How different is *Soul Reaver 2* going to be?

Elliot Goldner, via email

RL: *Soul Reaver 2* is going to keep delivering the story of the blighted world of Nosgoth in all its richness and complexity, but this time we're plunging into the deep pre-history of the world to show just how, shall we say, implicated Raziel is. Unfortunately we had to cut *Soul Reaver* short for scheduling reasons, and though it didn't interfere with our gameplay ramp too badly it hurt the shape of the story structure. So with the next game we're picking up where we left off.

In a way, Raziels's story is still only just beginning to unfold. Kain knows that Raziel is more important to Nosgoth's fate than anyone has yet guessed, and has hurled himself across time to lure his prodigy into new perils. As became obvious right at the very end of *Soul Reaver*, there are other characters from *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain* lurking in the wings, waiting to take their place in the vampires' intertwined destinies. The Elder God is not as benevolent as at first appeared to be, either. All in all, Raziel's in a world of hurt.

TOMB REAVER

Were you under pressure to make *Soul Reaver* a 3D game following the success of things like *Tomb Raider*, or was it something you were always going to do?

Courtney Lee, via email

RL: The move to 3D was a natural progression for a cutting-edge action-adventure, and synthesising the timeless gameplay of Metroid and Zelda with the direction set by older 3D games like *Ultima Underworld* and *Fade To Black* was something that we'd all always wanted to do.

Eidos is a great company to work for precisely because they don't pressure you to make a certain type of game that's perceived as successful, they just let you

"WE'RE NOT REALLY INTO GRATUITOUS VIOLENCE"

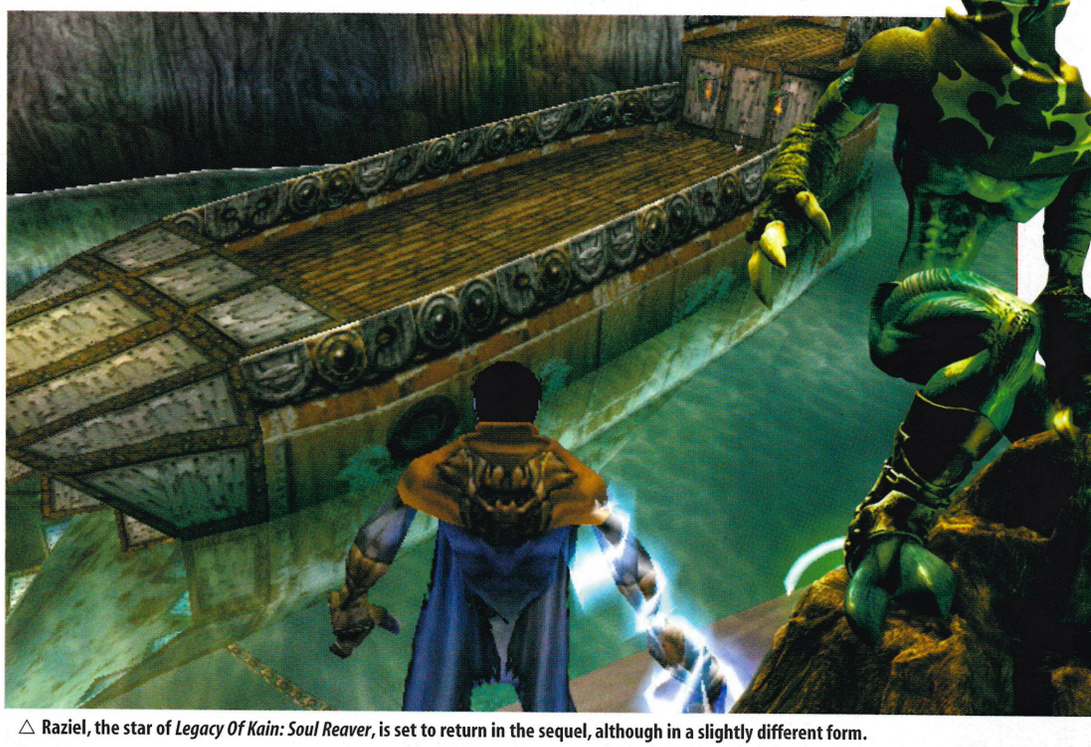
RICHARD LEMARCHAND



△ The *Gex* series is one of Crystal Dynamics' best-known.



△ *Unholy War* was an unusual 3D action combat game.



△ Raziel, the star of *Legacy Of Kain: Soul Reaver*, is set to return in the sequel, although in a slightly different form.

make the great games that you want to. There are superficial similarities between *Tomb Raider* and *Soul Reaver*, but when you really take a close look at their mechanics (the camera and the combat are good examples) they're so different as to almost be distinct genres.

RE-ANIMATION

Was Raziel's smooth animation motion-captured from a real person, or was he animated by an artist?

John Harper, Reading

RS: All of our animations were done in-house by our wonderful lead animator James Guilford, who was traditionally trained at Disney. Many people have assumed that such incredibly smooth animations cannot possibly be accomplished by hand, but they are. It's a true testament of the talent that Crystal have under their wings (and the long hours spent burning the midnight oil).

MIGHTY MORPHING

The 'morphing' between the dimensions in *Soul Reaver*: how long did it take to design both versions of each section and work all the puzzles into them?

Steven Price, via email

RL: A long time! It's not quite as bad as having to make the whole world twice over, but almost! However, we design every level on paper first, so we can work through a lot of problems and issues without having to waste time reworking things we've built. The plane-shifting is actually a great game mechanic to have at one's fingertips, and we're constantly thinking of new puzzles and action set-ups to use it in. I'd say it took roughly two months to design each level on paper, and even longer than that to implement and refine.

GREAT ADVENTURE

Which is your favourite ever adventure game other than *Soul Reaver*?

David Gibbs, via email

RL: That's a tough one. *Zelda: The Ocarina of Time* on Nintendo 64 is an amazing piece of software, and I think we're going to be learning things from it for many years to come. *Shenmue* also looks extraordinary, and we can't wait to play it when the official US version comes out later this year (some of us have already played it, despite not understanding the Japanese coming from the characters' mouths!). *Metroid* for Super Nintendo also had a big effect on us as designers. It's such a good blend of action and intriguing puzzles. The *Final Fantasy* series has done many great things over the years, too.

DEATHMATCHES?

Do you think *Soul Reaver* could work in a deathmatch-style multiplayer mode, and are you planning to put one in future games?

Phil Brocklehurst, via email

RL: It's possible that, with some changes to the combat system, *Soul Reaver* could inspire a very interesting multiplayer brawl game with richly interactive environments, maybe a little like *Power Stone* for Dreamcast. Of course, the mood of the game would be much more sinister than that colourful title! However, we're not planning anything like that for now, we're much too busy making *Soul Reaver 2*! Who knows, maybe on one of the next-generation formats.

"THE MOVE TO 3D WAS A NATURAL PROGRESSION"

RICHARD LEMARCHAND ON *SOUL REAVER*

VIOLENT CONTENT

Did you have any trouble with the level of violence in *Soul Reaver*, or did you get away with it because the things you have to kill are already dead?

Andrew Marshall, via email

RL: *Soul Reaver* is a grisly game, it can't be denied. One of the things people seem to like most about it is the originality of the grim demises that the foul creatures infesting the world meet. We're very lucky to have a brilliant team of very skilled animators, who don't just come up with cool combat sequences, but who also have the skills to make them work in an interactive context. That's quite a rare talent to find!

We're not really into gratuitous violence, not least because we believe that 'less is more', and that our game will be much more chilling if we use it sparingly! I think we do have less of a problem (ie we get into less trouble, and our consciences are clearer!) because it's mainly undead creatures that you're fighting. However, like the monsters in Clive Barker's stories, Raziel's kindred are people, with hopes, fears, loves and hatreds, who just happen to be blood-sucking ghouls as well, and we think that this adds a lot to the story we're telling.

MOOD MUSIC

What music did you guys listen to while making *Soul Reaver*? It must have been pretty moody stuff, judging by the way the game came out!

Dave Fairhurst, via email

RL: We listen to all sorts of everything, and many different types of music influenced the soundscape of the game. Our composer and sound effects specialist is Kurt Harland of the band Information Society, who were rather like an American Kraftwerk – very early electronic music pioneers. However, somewhere down the line their sound took a much darker, esoteric turn, and Kurt used a track from their last album *Don't Be Afraid* as the main theme for *Soul Reaver*.

He, and also the rest of the design team, are influenced by everything from The Sisters Of Mercy to Clan Of Xymox, and all the shadowy shades in between. When we're working we listen to all kinds of pop and rock, not just goth or industrial stuff.

GOT SOME QUESTIONS FOR CAPCOM?

Next month we'll be printing the replies to your questions for the *V-Rally 2* team one month later than planned. You've therefore got a bit longer to send in questions for the following month where we'll be interviewing Shinji Mikami, producer of the classic *Resident Evil* series on your behalf. Send your questions to questions@dreamcastmag.co.uk, or to Capcom In The Hot Seat, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

HINTS & TIPS





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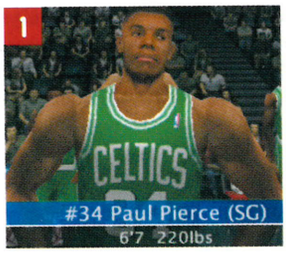
GET TO GRIPS WITH NBA 2K

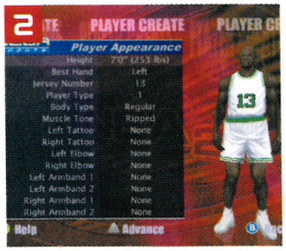
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CHOOSE YOUR TEAM

For your first few games it's a wise idea to use one of the better NBA teams – probably the Lakers or the Blazers, although we can also recommend the Miami Heat, San Antonio Spurs and New York Knicks. Don't choose the Chicago Bulls though – they're rubbish. Whatever team you opt for, make sure you spend some time on the practice court – you need to be aware of each player's strengths and weaknesses.





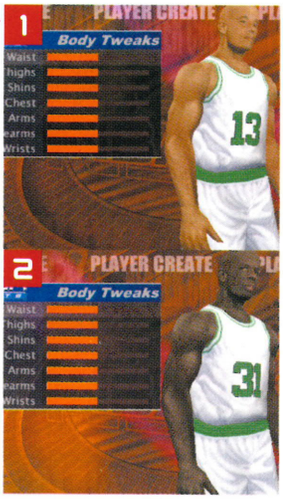
TEAM CREATION

When creating a team, make sure you get yourself enough players to cover for injuries. You need 15 players – three for each position – to have strength in depth.

1 An important consideration when creating players is the overall balance of your squad, which is essential on court. Your aim should be to have at least three big guys, three outside shooters and three slam dunkers.

2 One thing we found when first playing the game is that it's tempting to underestimate the heights of players. You might think 6'4" is tall, but by NBA standards it isn't. As a rule of thumb, add five inches to the height you first thought of.

This is important: when creating your players, make sure you keep a record of their abilities. During the season, you need to know who's good at what, and you can't look it up in the game. So get that pen and paper out early.



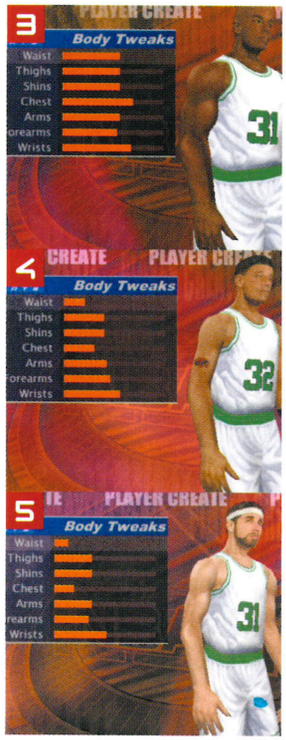
POSITION GUIDE

1 CENTRE: Above all, a centre needs to be big – think of Shaquille O'Neal as a good example. Give them a height of 6' 8" and a decent strength rating. They also need the ability to dominate defensively, so a high blocking rating is important.

Likewise rebounding – at both ends of the court. You should lower other abilities to increase all these ratings, and speed is one of the non-essentials. A centre needs to be able to get around the court at a fair pace, but they don't have to be a Linford Christie.

2 POINT GUARD: The PG is the starting point, initiating plays for most of your attacks – the basketball equivalent of football's midfield general. They need to possess high passing and ball-handling ratings to ensure they can kick-start attacks quickly and effectively. Speed is another useful attribute to enable them to take the other team by surprise and sprint down the court.

A decent three-point shooting rating is also handy attribute, enabling them to step up in the dying seconds of matches to nail crucial shots. Finally, a good stealing rating wouldn't go amiss.

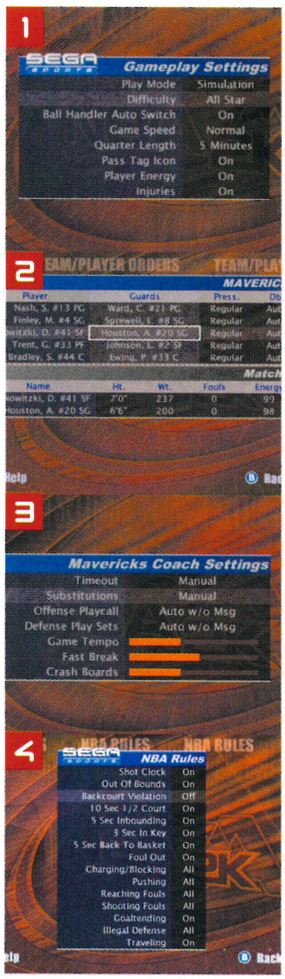


3 POWER FORWARD: The most important attribute for a power forward is his defensive rebound rating, as he needs to be coming away with the ball as often as possible. A good passing ability enables him to make the most of this possession.

PFs need to be able to mix it up around an opponent's basket too, so a good offensive rebound rating and decent height and physique would also be useful. Like centres, power forwards don't need to be that fast, so if necessary skimp on speed in order to boost the ratings of other attributes.

4 SHOOTING GUARD: His key characteristic is ball handling, as he needs to have safe hands and quicksilver dribbling. A high speed rating is also important so he can burst down the wings to get in behind the other team's players. He's also one of your main outside weapons, so give him devastating three-point potential. SGs must cover every inch of the court, so they need a high stamina rating. In defence they must be a jack of all trades, so try to make them at least average in all attributes.

5 SMALL FORWARD: SFs are the skinny runts of the team, so don't worry about making them tall and powerful. They need to be able to score three-point shots at will, so give them the maximum possible rating for that ability. They also need excellent speed so as to get open for outside shots and enable them to scorch past the defence once in a while to get a dunk. You might as well lower their inside shooting and dunk ratings though – they won't need 'em.



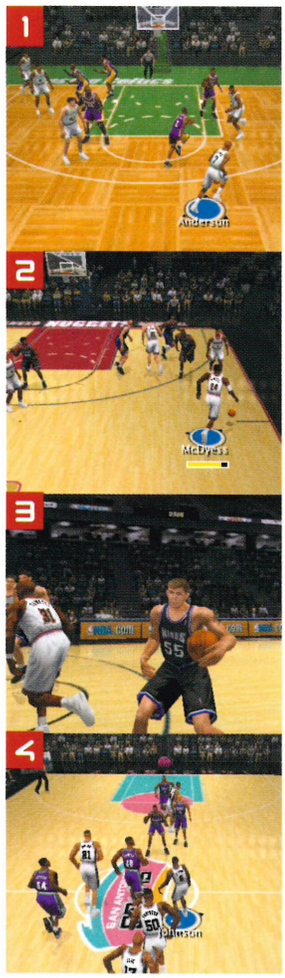
SETTINGS

1 There are three levels on which to play the game: Rookie, Pro and Allstar. Strange as it may sound, it's not a good idea to play on Rookie for more than a couple of games, otherwise you're going to get used to the way it plays and develop bad habits.

2 Pausing a match enables you to bring up the coach menu in which you can change your team's orders. Our advice is to leave it alone until the final minutes of a match, then order your players to tighten up or loosen off as required.

3 Meanwhile, the coach settings are set up to be handled by the console as default. You should keep the offence play-call and defence play sets automatic, but take on the responsibility for time-outs and substitutions yourself. Trust us, it gives you more control.

4 In the options menu, you can opt to choose which basketball rules to use. We generally play with the back court rule switched off, for example, because it's more trouble than it's worth. But make sure you understand every rule that's switched on, and how to avoid infringing it.



OFFENCE

1 In matches, it's essential to keep the ball moving around the court, preferably at speed. Pass often and quickly, almost as if the ball's a hot potato. Not only does this help you keep possession, it's also more likely to drag the defence out of position and leave one of your players open near the basket.

2 When you're running up the court with the ball, always use the turbo (right trigger). If you're controlling a speedy player, you may be able to leg it right to the basket; even if not you'll spread the defence.

3 When using the turbo, tapping the B button executes a neat spin move. It's not just for show either – when you're bearing down on the basket, spinning can often take you past the last defender for an easy score.

4 Often when you get a defensive rebound or steal the ball, your players stream upfield ahead of the other team. Get the ball to your most forward player as quickly as possible and go for the easy dunk. It's simple, but it's an effective way to make turnovers really count.

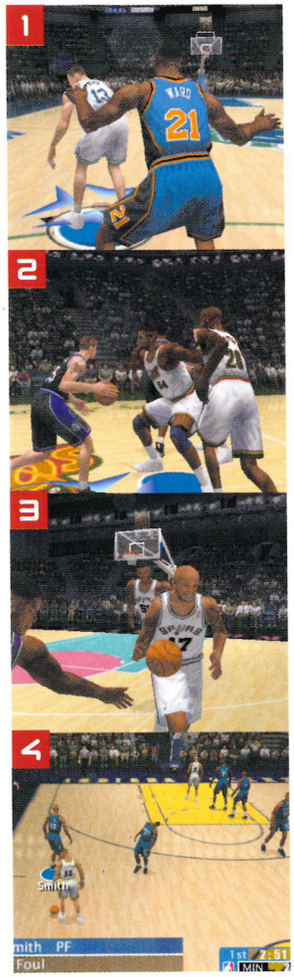


5 Faking shots is an essential skill in *NBA 2K*. You do it by tapping A, and if you haven't already dribbled you can then run with the ball. If you're being closely marked this is the best way to get free and fire a successful three-point shot.

6 Dunks are probably the safest way to rack up points, especially if you've got a big guy right under the basket. However, be wary of attempting dunks with the smaller players – they tend to get blocked out embarrassingly.

7 You can do flashy alley-oops by hitting the D-pad and pressing the right trigger. Watch for your forward players waving their hands to signify that they're ready. Be warned though: alley-oops often result in a foul.

8 Hitting three-pointers is the best way to stretch out a lead or catch up quickly, but the risks are obvious. Get to know who your good outside shooters are, and always get them free before shooting. If they miss, make sure you get the rebound.



DEFENCE

1. When defending around your three-point line, always use the left trigger to hunker down in front of your opponent. It should stop them driving past you to the basket, and also puts you in a good position to jump and block.

2. When the other team's sniffing around your baseline it's never worth marking one of their guys with two of yours. Double-teaming in this way leaves another opposing player free to receive a pass and shoot, so you should always go one-on-one.

3. The time to steal is when you're between your opponent and the basket, if they're facing you. Hammering B often dislodges the ball. If they pass the ball, hit A to change player and quickly start tapping B. It works.

4. You can try to steal by hitting B, but don't try it when you're running down the court alongside an opponent, as most of the time you'll be penalised for reaching in. Only try it if your player has a high steal rating.



5. Don't give your opponents an uncontested shot if you can help it. If you're marking closely, it should just be a case of jumping up. Even if they're in space, try to get a man jumping nearby to put them off.

6. We've already mentioned playing on the break, but you can get stung by the other team using the tactic against you. If you give up the ball, concentrate on legging it back to your basket before they can fire off a long pass – switch to your fastest player.

7. Defensive rebounding is a vital part of the game, but there's no sure way to prevent the other team pipping you to the ball. We've had some success by jumping across the basket from right to left or vice versa, rather than leaping towards it. Still, you must accept that the other team will often get to the ball first.

8. When you've scored a basket, always run back into your own half, otherwise you're left with a player stranded at the wrong end of the court. This might sound like an obvious point, but you'd be surprised how easy it is to forget.



FITNESS

1. If you're playing with Player Energy on, your players will get knackered if kept on court too long. The key here is to keep checking up on their energy through the substitutions menu. We advise resting anyone who's below 75 per cent.

2. Just as in the real world, a well-timed time-out enables your players to get their breath back. So if you want to keep your first five on the court, calling a time-out replenishes their energy levels and gives them a second wind. If you're playing with shorter periods, you can use time-outs and avoid ever having to bring on substitutes.

3. When the time does come to make substitutions, pay close attention to the balance of the team you have on court. You always require at least one big guy and one long-range shooter; neglect either and you'll be hampered.

4. When you're playing a full season, injuries can be a big problem, especially if a couple of your players get sidelined for several months. The rule here is to replace them with players whose stats are similar, even if they normally play in a different position.



END GAME

1. In the final minutes of the match, playing catch-up can be really frustrating. Our first tip is not to take the long-shot route – every missed three-pointer is effectively another nail in your coffin. Concentrate instead on getting quick dunks.

2. If you haven't tinkered with the coach settings screen, your players may start intentionally fouling in the last two minutes. To avoid this, go to the settings screen and select manual for both offence and defence play sets.

3. If you're less than three points behind with only seconds on the clock, make like the movies and chuck it from wherever you are on the court. Surprisingly your chance of sinking a match-winning basket isn't as low as you might think.

4. If, on the other hand, you're ahead going into the last two minutes, the way to win is to waste time. Use the left trigger to turn your back on the opposition and hog the ball – often you'll get fouled and end up with free throws.

CHEAT CODES

BIG HEADS

Yep, the old favourite. Give your players heads that are twice the size, although it's doubtful whether their brains expand to fill the space. Enter FATHEAD at the code screen.

BEACHBALLS

Fed up with normal balls? Why not try chucking something around the court that's twice the size and much more floaty? Enter BEACHBOYS at the code screen for the big ball.

FAT PLAYERS

The NBA might contain some of the fittest people in the US, but imagine what a match would look like if the average American couch potato got on the court. Enter DOUGHBOY to find out.

BIG FEET

Ho ho, it's just like playing as a team of yetis,except without all the hair. So, er, not much like a team of yetis, then, but those feet are huge. Enter BIGFOOT at the code screen.

THIN PLAYERS

You've seen the fat players cheat, but what about the opposite? A team of thinnies is surprisingly capable on court. See for yourself by entering SQUISHY at the code screen.

BIG PLAYERS

Grr… Imagine if players weren't just big and tall, but were *huge*. Well, the monster cheat should satisfy your curiosity. Enter MONSTER at the code screen to have it large.

SMALL PLAYERS

If that's too big and scary for you, why not try the micro-players? They're tiny, but they leap like fleas. Probably itch like them too. Enter LITTLEGUY at the code screen.

HIDDEN TEAMS

Just as in *Virtua Striker 2.1*, *NBA 2K* has some hidden Sega teams to unlock. There are squads representing Sega, Sega Sports and *NBA 2K*. Enter DEVDUDES to play them.

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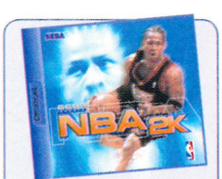
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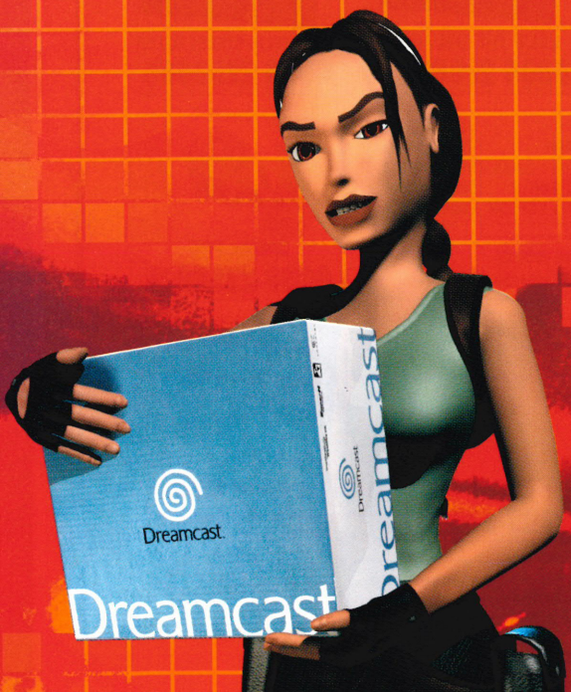
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TOMB RAIDER THE LAST REVELATION

WALKTHROUGH PART 1

LARA'S FIRST OUTING ON DREAMCAST PROVES TO BE A TRULY MASSIVE ADVENTURE THAT YOU WON'T BE COMPLETING IN ONE NIGHT'S SITTING.

FOR THOSE IN NEED, **MARK HILL** TAKES YOU THROUGH THE FIRST HALF OF THE GAME.





THE TOMB OF SETH

1 After the training mission, follow the guide down the dark cave as he lights all the torches. When the block lowers, activate the button in the hole in the wall and go back to the previous room to pick up the golden object. You'll find another one later on, but you need to wait until your escort sets off the blade trap before collecting it. Combine it in your inventory with the first one, and use the result in the cavity to your right. Pull the chain inside the room with the tiled floor. To open the door at the end of the room you must light the torches by stepping or jumping on the shining tiles. Each time, go for the one nearest to you, and pick up the Timeless Sands clock before rejoining the guide. When you come up to the statue, place the sand clock in its hands. Finally, crawl into the mouth of the sphinx to finish the level.

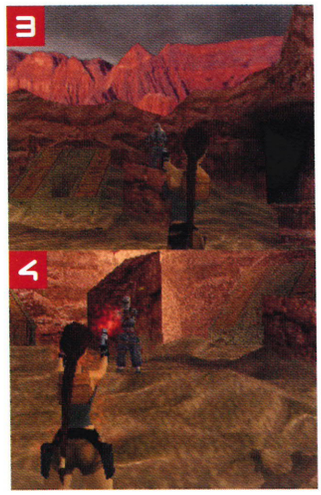


BURIAL CHAMBERS

2 After picking up the Hand of Orion, make your way through the traps and slide down the slope until you can put the Hand in an appropriate hole. Recreate the final sequence of Blade by picking up the Amulet of Thorns in the sarcophagus, and making blood flow in tiny rivers through the macabre draining system. Follow its course into a room with a statue in the middle. It won't stay there for long though, as you must push it onto the symbol on the floor.

In the next room, take the Golden Serpent and go through the gate in the wall, sliding down and sprinting towards the left.

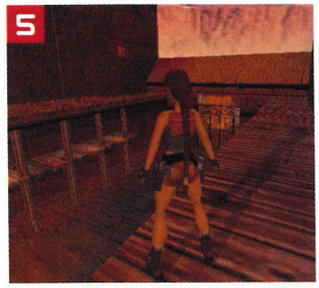
When the room has filled with sand, head to the main cave, up the steps and over the bridge to the hole in the floor that eventually leads you to a lever. Pull the next one as well, and go back to the main room to pick up the Hand of Sirius and enter the new hole in the wall. Place the Hand in the star-shaped hole, and take another Golden Serpent, using it with the other one in the obvious place to get out.



VALLEY OF THE KINGS

3 A very straightforward level, this one. Pick up the car keys after killing everyone who stands in your way, and drive round the track.

4 Don't worry, you won't get lost, but be careful not to drive over the edge.



KV5

5 When you reach the locked gate, get out of the jeep and get rid of the Tuareg. Climb up on to the scaffolding on the right-hand side of the gate. Use the rope to swing over to the other scaffolding, and then jump on to the switch on the wall to open the gate.

Get back into your vehicle and drive through, making sure to avoid some nasty spike balls. If you want to make sure you get out of the level safely, stick to the right-hand side of the road as much as you can.



TEMPLE OF KARNAK

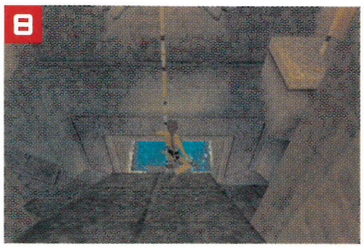
6 When you go into the building, you'll notice how Lara looks over her shoulder on the right-hand side of the entrance. That's where you need to climb up, pressing the buttons in each of the holes and collecting the Canopic Jar 1.

Back in the open, make your way up the ruins on your left and into a hole in the floor. Press the button on the platform. Shimmy over the empty pools, after which you can go through the door and into the room with two statues. Leave the jar behind the statue on your right, and you'll find that the door back near the doorway has opened.



THE GREAT HYPOSTYLE HALL

7 You don't need a degree in archeological adventuring to figure this one out. Just go out, dropping down the opening in the ground and jumping over the pit through a corridor until you reach the end. You can now expect every level to be packed to the hilt with puzzles and action, can't you?





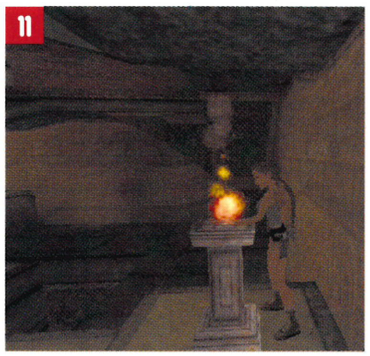
THE SACRED LAKE

8 Make your way round the lake and slide down the pole. Jump on to the other pole. Pull the chain to open one of the gates.

9 Go through it into the room with a mirror and go up to collect the Canopic Jar 2. Back in the lake, go through the second opening back to the temple of Karnak. Place your newly recovered jar behind the other statue and swim into the tunnel where you eventually find the Hypostyle key and the statue of the Sun Goddess. Back in the Hypostyle Hall, use your key through the narrow tunnel above. Make your way to the second hall by pulling on the switch, and you end up in a set of three rooms with lightning rods in them. Make them face the spiked pillar, pull the chain below, and pick up the Sun Disk, which you can combine in your inventory with the statue of the Sun Goddess.

Drop through the hole near the light crystal and back into the lake, and place the combined statue between the two pillars in the centre of the island.



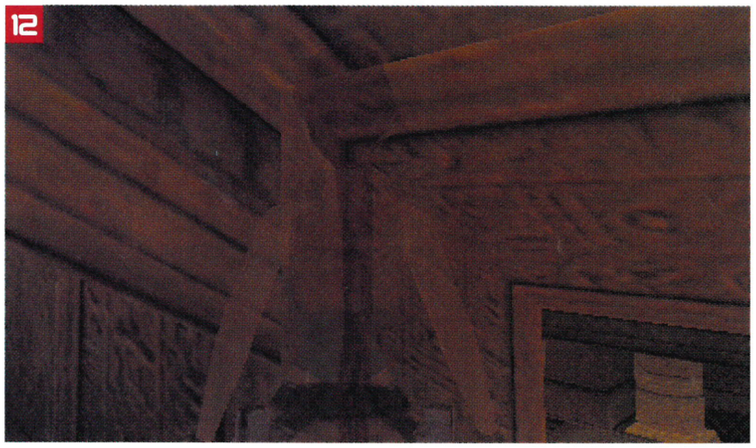


TOMB OF SEMERKHET

10 If you cling onto the ceiling, Lara avoids getting bitten by those nasty looking beetles.

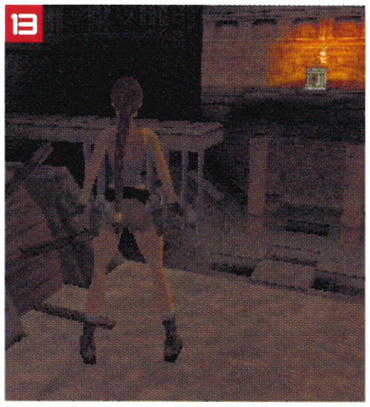
11 Before sliding down the pole, light the piece of wood and drop it down the hole. There are two floors below you – go down to the bottom one and activate all the buttons hidden in the walls (use the torch to scare off the insects) and go up to the middle floor.

After climbing up some ladders, you end up in front of three flames. First take care of the flame on your right, and then the one in the middle. There are more buttons to be pressed and more ropes to be swung before finding the rules to an ancient Egyptian board game. You play by jumping on the tiles of the corresponding colours. Move one piece at a time (winning isn't difficult) and make your way to the room with three mirrors. In the room above it, move the stones of the same colour as the tiles in order to block the light and finish the level.



GUARDIAN OF SEMERKHET

12 As soon as you reach the map room you must make a left and climb until you see a hole to crawl through.



13 The next move requires a lot of precision with your gamepad, not to mention speed. Turn the switch next to the wheel about five times, then sprint like hell and jump through the door before it closes, not pausing for even half a second. Pick up the Golden Vraeus and use it in the map room. Get the Guardian key in the same room to open a trapdoor which takes you to a corridor. After pulling the lever, a beast comes charging out. Get away from it and shimmy your way into the room with flame holes – put your hand in each one twice and go down. The only way to get through this door is to wait in front of it and jump away at the last minute as the beast charges towards you. Use the same trick on the pillars in the next room. The Guardian may be strong, but he's also thick. ▷



DESERT RAILROAD

14 This is a much more arcadey level, as you work your way across the train carriages

On the last carriage, hang over the side to find a room containing a crowbar. This is an essential item throughout the rest of the game, so make sure you pick it up. Use the crowbar on the lever to get out. Back at the first carriage, use it on the broken switch to disconnect the train and end the level.



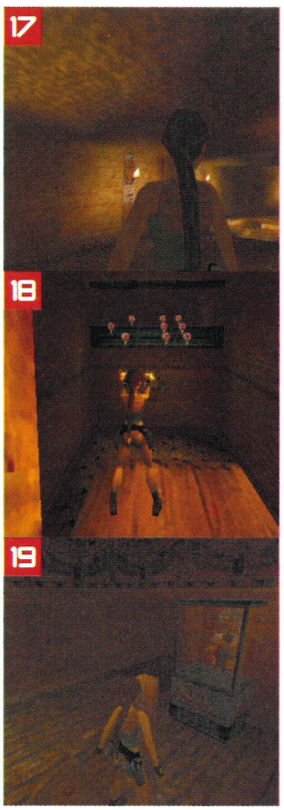
ALEXANDRIA

15 This level is short on action, but you must speak to your friend in the office on the top floor of the main building.

As with the rest of the levels, you find a couple of hidden extras, such as ammo and health kits scattered about if you can be bothered to explore.



16 After you've had the chat, go up on to the roof with the orange tiles, and shimmy your way round until you reach a switch on the wall. Drop on to the switch, pressing the action key to activate it.



COASTAL RUINS

17 Blast the boards to get inside a fun house. In the room with a mirrored wall you can find a crossbow. Make your way to it very carefully, looking in the mirror to see where the floor has been booby-trapped.

18 Then go into the shooting range, where you need to hit all the targets in a very short time. The easiest way to do this is to select the explosive ammo for the crossbow and let off one big bang.

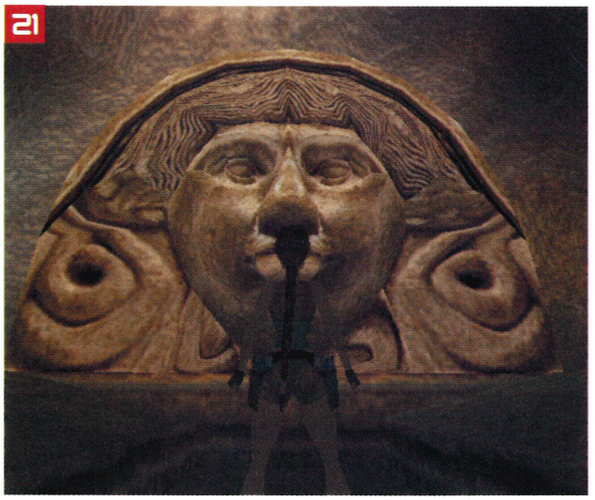
19 Get the key and use it on the snake charmer machine. Climb up the rope and, using the crowbar, get the hook off the wall and combine it with the broomstick. You can use this to get the keys that are lying in a small, closed room – use these on the door past the water.



CATACOMBS

20 Press the symbol on the wall, then go straight back to the large rock suspended from a rope. You can find a torch in the pit beneath it. Light it and set the rope on fire, making sure you're standing out of the way. Crawl through the new opening and use the crowbar to open the door. Move the pillar on to the brown tile and head back to the catacombs. When you push the block as far as it'll go against the wall, a ghost is released that chases you until you can put it at peace by reuniting it with its body.

To do this, run into the other room, then slide down the bamboo pole and pull the switch. When you make your way across the water, pulling switches and jumping about, another ghost is released. To exorcise this one you must swim to the gold statue underwater, picking up all the tridents you can find along the way – there should be four in total. Use the crowbar on the gate, and walk up the white steps of the catacombs.



TEMPLE OF POSEIDON

21 Place one of the tridents on each of the Poseidon statues you find through the doors; the order in which you do it doesn't really matter. When you've finished, make your way to the room with four small pools, and pick up the left gauntlet in the coffin. To get out, you just need to crawl through a small corridor that you can find near the ceiling.

LOST LIBRARY

To kill the knights you must shoot them in the gems embedded in their chests. The one on the horse is the hardest to kill, requiring quite a few shots before giving up the struggle. When he dies he leaves his gem heart behind. Take it and place it in the receptacle a few rooms back to open a door into an underwater area. Before you do that though, pick up the Golden Star from the middle column in the room with the swinging chains. Now head into the water and get two more Golden Starts.

Right back at the start of the level, go through the door next to the big vase, put the stars into the slots and push the planets onto their corresponding circles; once again, Lara makes use of her incredible colour co-ordination skills. Next, push down the first statue and do the same with the rest, walking round clockwise until they're all done.



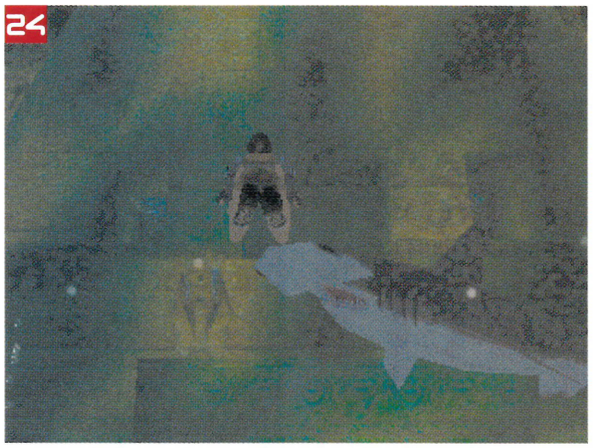
22 You must avoid the fire spirit as you make your way to the first room. When you reach it, climb down on to the big monkey's nose and slip into its mouth. Pick up the Pharos Pillar and get the torch. To light the torch you must step on to the two grates that light the pedestals, then use it to burn the wooden floor.

Before you leave you must collect the music scroll and take it into the room with the harp which you can now play – Lara is a woman of many talents, after all.



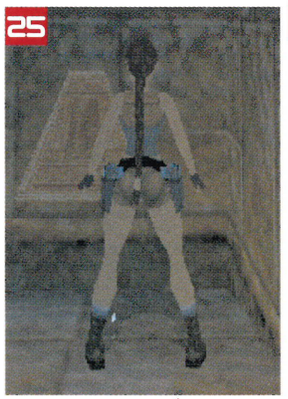
HALL OF DEMETRIUS

23 This is another short one. Pick up the Pharos Knot. You'll notice some scratches on the floor, and this isn't the kind of game where any of the details you find are there for no reason. It's a hint that the lantern has been moved. Move it back to its original position, which opens the door.



PHAROS, TEMPLE OF ISIS

24 Be careful with the Jaws lookalike – if you swim straight towards the openings in the temple it shouldn't harm you too much.



25 Use the Pharos Pillar on the receptacle on the left, and the Pharos Knot on the one on the right, then swim down the open door. When you reach the three green doors, open them all and prise the black beetle and the broken beetle from the wall by using the crowbar. Get the winding key, and slide down the ramps in the room with the small pyramid to get two more black beetles.

Head up towards Cleopatra's Palace to collect the last black beetle, and use them all on the small pyramid. This gets you the mechanical scarab, which you can now combine with the winding key.



CLEOPATRA'S PALACE

26 Use the combination of the scarab and the key in the space in the floor of the first spike hall.

Running behind the insect avoids you getting speared to death. Pick it back up from the floor and collect the right gauntlet from the coffin. Repeat the process with the mechanical scarab in the other spiked halls, after which it blows up. When that happens, go down the second spiked hallway. In the room near the two birds painted on the wall, you can pull a lever on the wall by jumping on to it and holding on. Now you can shimmy along the crack to another casket, where you can find the right greave. Another door should now be opened where you can find the Pharos Knot in yet another coffin. You can put the Knot on the semicircular steps towards the left.

Look after the statue of Lara that appears, since you will sustain any damage inflicted upon it. Pull the two switches situated at the top ledges, and grab the ornate handle and the Hathor effigy. Combining them creates the portal guardian, which you can then place on the stand by the door. To get the left greave and the breast plate, you must kill the guardians protecting the coffins they're in.



CITY OF THE DEAD

28 Shoot the soldier on the ledge, get on the motorbike and make your way along the level; shooting the red triangle on the white object behind the machine-guns makes your life a whole lot easier.

When you come up to a building near the construction site with an opening, you can crawl through, find the dead body inside and move it away from the grate. Before you can climb through the hole above the grate, you must first go up the ledge into the building. Inside, pull the switch and get back on your wheels.

29 With the bike, jump over the sand hill and go into a room with a blue lamp where you can pick up the laser sight. Combine it with the revolver you can take from the soldier at the start of the level and shoot the lamp. Drive through the open gate, up the stairs, and jump through the opening in the wall. Next you must shoot the helicopter from the rooftops. Alternatively, you can hit the barrels to destroy everything. Pull the switch that opens the last gate.

• *Next month we take you from the Chambers Of Tulum through to the completion of the game.*

RESIDENT EVIL 2

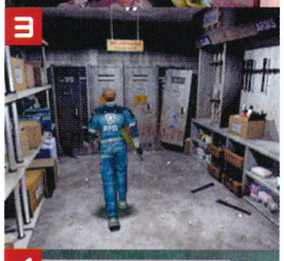
WALKTHROUGH PART 2

JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT THE SURVIVAL HORROR WAS OVER, YOU GET THREE MORE VERSIONS OF THE GAME TO BLAST YOUR WAY THROUGH. HERE'S **STEVE KEY**'S BRIEF RUN-DOWN OF CLAIRE'S TWO SCENARIOS AND LEON'S 'B' GAME

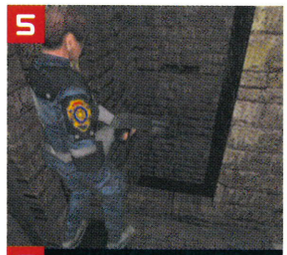




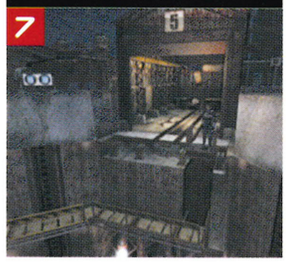




















LEON SCENARIO B

You start the second scenario near to the location of the valve handle in the first scenarios. As you work your way up to the Police Station, you can see an excellent cut-scene that explains how the helicopter crashed.

1 The keys are located in different positions. The first time you see Sherry when playing as Leon, she crawls through a small hole, dropping the diamond key in the process. The spade key is still in the statue in the main hall, but the unicorn medal is in a wall on the balcony overlooking the main hall. The heart key is found in the room where Marvin turned into a zombie, but the club key is still found through Ada's puzzle solving.

2 Once you've put out the fire burning the helicopter, as you try to re-enter the police station you get a movie showing a new enemy. As you go through the hall with the crows, you encounter the Terminator thing for the first time. Dodge it until you have better weapons, although shooting it gives you some magnum rounds (it normally takes three to four magnum shots anyway).

3 Remember that depending on how generous you were feeling in the first scenario affects the booty in the weapon storage room. It's best to leave the side pack for Leon.

4 Some of the keys and keycards have simply swapped locations for the second scenario. For example, the room in the first scenario that holds the diamond key now holds the blue keycard instead.

5 The Plugs are all found in the same place and use the same puzzles too.

6 When you find the weapon attachments, remember that once you've equipped them you get a free reload, so use all the existing ammo in the chamber first.

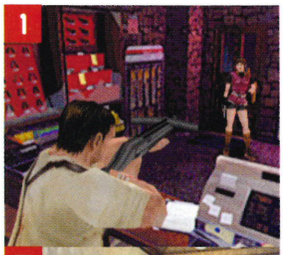
7 The main switch between scenarios occurs when you get in the lift from Vacant Factory. The lift has already gone down to the lab, so you must go down yourself. Go into the control room, pick up the key and dispose of the Tyrant thing that appears. Now you can raise the lift and get down.

8 Once the lift has stopped due to overheating, you come out and find yourself in a new room. You must move the block on to the lift, take it down a level and move it right to the end of the corridor, to the north. This provides a platform up to the power room.

9 The Power Lab key is found just after the room where you get the Magnum attachments. Use it to get to the power room you've just gained access too.

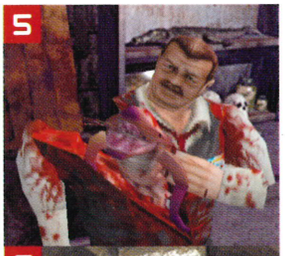
10 Once Leon has the master key from Ada and has got Sherry from the safe room, use the master key on the panel at the back of the elevator to open up a third floor of the lift and an escape route.

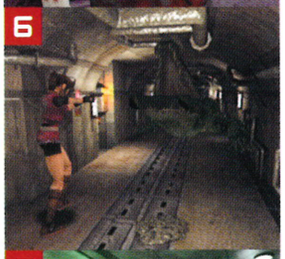
11 New Tyrant bosses: there are two at the end of the game, that you don't get in Leon's first scenario. Look out for the final final boss too!















CLAIRE SCENARIO A

Not too much is different in terms of item location, just that the items you're looking for are different and Ada is no longer an issue – it's little Sherry Birkin.

1 Once you get the section with shopkeeper, you notice that the owner points a different gun at her, a bowgun. It's worth discarding this as soon as you can, because the grenade launcher, which is found in the S.T.A.R.S office, is much better.

2 Sherry Birkin is the other major character in Claire's scenarios. You bump into her quite early on and must rescue her from zombies chasing her. As you find out more about her, you realise that she is fact the daughter of the Tyrant! You get to control her in a similar way to the way you used Ada when playing as Leon.

3 In the Police Files room, kill the zombies and be sure to pick up a very important item – the plastic explosive. In the adjoining room, where you first met Marvin, pick up the detonator and combine it with the plastic explosives. Now put that on the burned-out helicopter inside the police station to blow a new hole through.

4 The plugs from Leon's scenario's are replaced with stones – the blue stone is in two pieces, both of which must be found. Once you have all four, put them into the slots behind Chief Iron's desk, in the room which you created by blowing up the wall near the burned-out helicopter. The heart key is on his desk – pick it up.

5 The chief in this scenario goes in much the same way as Ben Bertolucci from Leon's game. Once he's dead you must fight the spitting mutant again. Use the acid rounds, as they're the most effective.

6 If you kill the alligator in the sewers, it won't be there in the second scenario whichever character you use.

7 With Claire you must make a vaccine to use on Sherry. The room where you pick up the MO disc is also where you create the vaccine, and the lab where you pick up the magnum attachments with Leon also has the machine to complete the vaccine.





CLAIRE SCENARIO B

By now you should be so good at *Resident Evil 2* that there's very little you can't work out for yourself. Even though we've managed to put together a couple of tips, by now everything else should be a doddle.

The grenade launcher is located in the main hall of the police station, where you can find the computer that controls the door locks. The lighter is located in the Police Files room, where you would normally push the set of stairs around to get the crank.

1 When Sherry is following Claire, if you run too quickly through some of the levels Sherry gets left behind and sits down. You won't be able to go through doors unless she's with you, so take it easy.

2 The fingerprinting isn't necessary, but for those of you who want to see every room in the game it's worth taking the time out to do. Go to the room with the moth in it, and kill everything so that you can get to the computer. Enter your registration name as 'guest', and enter your fingerprints. As long as a second person enters their prints at the locked door on Lab B1, you can enter the room.

SPECIAL ITEMS AND CHARACTERS

There are many reasons to play through all the different scenarios. At the end of each game you're given a rank, and depending on that rank you get various secrets at the end. See how quick you can play through the game, because some treats await.





INFINITE AMMO ROCKET LAUNCHER

1 You can find many different ways in which to gain these bonus items. Some are right and some are wrong, but this is exactly the way we managed to get it. You must finish scenario B with either character in under three hours, using no more than six saves (we used one) and using none of the special items that take up two slots (except for the rocket launcher to defeat the boss at the end). That's all we did and it worked!

INFINITE AMMO GATLING GUN

This one is slightly tougher. Again, this is exactly how we got it to work. You must finish scenario B again, but this time in under two and a half hours without using *any* saves. Oh, and you can't use the two slot items again, except for the rocket launcher at the end. That's not difficult to do, especially if you've got the infinite ammo rocker launcher already, as that doesn't count against you. It's all getting very confusing.

SECRET COSTUMES

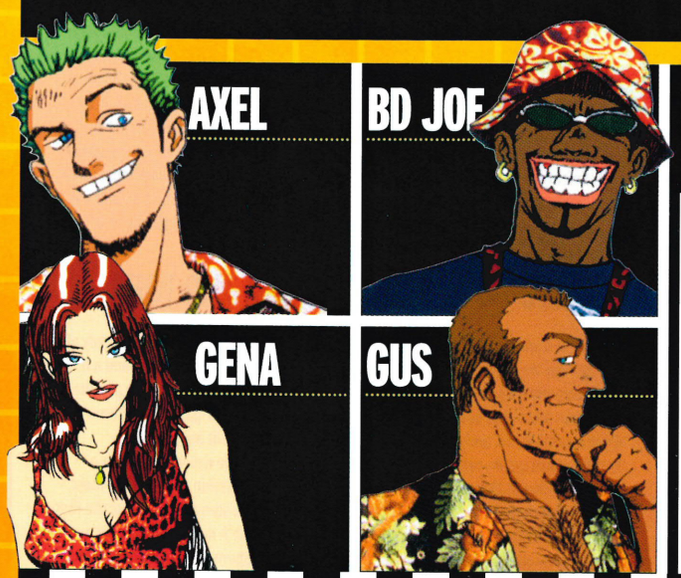
2 Now this is much simpler. From the start of the game, you must get to the final room just outside the police station without picking up a single item or shooting a single zombie. As you go through the gates to the station and are faced with the choice of going through the park or down the stairs, go down and you see Brad Vickers as a zombie. Shoot him (he takes a whole gunful of bullets), then search the body to get the special key. Take it to the dark room under the stairs on the first floor of the police station to get the new costumes.

HUNK AND TOFU

This secret game can be played only after you've completed both an A and a B scenario with an A rank. Basically, these are two new sub-games that throw a slightly different angle on the proceedings. To get Tofu, which is a super-hard version of Hunk, you must complete six scenarios in a row; the first two must be A rank, and you can't use bonus weapons (two slot ones). It's not worth it, to tell you the truth, as you'll be bored of this game by then.

GET TO GRIPS WITH CRAZY TAXI

GOING CRAZY, OR JUST HAVING TROUBLE WITH THE TAXIING? NO WORRIES. **TOM GUISE** IS ON HAND TO SHOW YOU SOME TURBO-CHARGED TRICKS AND HOW TO USE THEM TO BEAT CRAZY BOX MODE, PLUS SECRETS FOR BOTH CITIES AND CHEATS TOO.

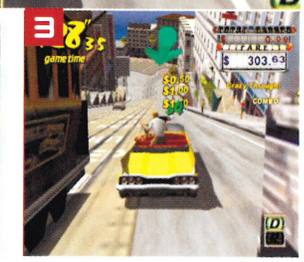


DRIVER CRAZY

There are differences between the cabbies. They're slight, but enough to affect performance in Crazy Box mode. BD has good top speed but slides a lot; Gena accelerates well but is light and jumpy; Gus is slow but hugs the road well; Axel is the all-rounder.







TAXI TECHNIQUES

It isn't just accelerate and brake, although it's amazing how many people don't know that. To stand a chance (and complete any of Box mode) you must learn some serious stunts. Here's the compendium of craziness.

1 CRAZY DASH
While driving: A, B+R trigger
The most essential move in the game. Shift into reverse, then slam into drive and hit accelerate at the same time to super-accelerate. Keep repeating for incredible speeds. Easy once you get the feel, but painful on your right forefinger.

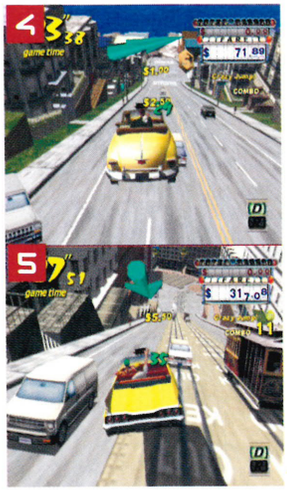
2 CRAZY DRIFT
While dashing: A,B + direction
Fun for the City modes, vital in Box bode. During a Crazy Dash, shift into reverse, then into drive real quick, and spin the wheel. If you're having difficulty, just rub your fingers across A and B rapidly while turning.

3 CRAZY THROUGH
Happens whenever you shave past traffic or walls. Only effective for tips when you have a passenger; there's no benefit when just racing to a new customer.

4 CRAZY JUMP
Happens whenever you send the car flying. Zooming off a ramp is obvious, but you can even do it by Crazy Dashing up a slight kerb. Like Drifts and Throughs, these score valuable tips from customers.

CRAZY STOP
B, A+ L trigger
The opposite of a Crazy Dash. Shift into reverse and slam on the brakes together. It won't stop you dead, but near enough. If you do it in the air you land drifting.

CRAZY DRIFT JUMP
Pull off a Crazy Drift just as you leave a ramp or platform. Important when you need to land facing in a different direction to the one in which you're moving.



CRAZY DRIFT STOP
Do a Crazy Drift, then pull off a Crazy Stop. Useful for parking facing the way you want to exit. The real trick though is sliding one right up to a waiting passenger without getting too close. The ultimate way to save time!

5 COMBOS
Multiply your tips massively by clocking up Crazy Through, Jump and Drift combos during the City modes. You perform these by repeating the techniques without smashing the front of the cab. For example, perform separate jumps and still add to the combo as long as you don't crash.



CRAZY BOX MODE

Seems like just a mini-bonus game, but Box Mode is the most challenging part of *Crazy Taxi*. Complete it and you can do anything in the City Modes.

1 CRAZY JUMP (1-1)
Racing off a ski-ramp, you must fly a minimum distance. Just Crazy Dash all the way down it.

2 CRAZY FLAG (1-2)
Hit a flag behind you before the time runs out. Do a Crazy Dash and hold a direction before Go – you spin on the spot. Now Dash out of the spin and Dash for the flag.

3 CRAZY BALLOONS (1-3)
Burst them all. To gain a good time you must use Drifts to turn. But just to complete it, plot a tight course, Dash about, don't overshoot, and hit the balloon clusters dead centre to stop them scattering.

4 CRAZY BOWLING (1-S)
Rock hard! Knock down all the skittles in time. Unless you're a Drift master you'll never do it, because you must drift into each set perfectly. Use Dashes along the straights and stay out of the gutter.

5 CRAZY DRIFT (2-1)
A good way to learn Drifts. Crazy Dash around in circles, then activate a Drift and keep the direction held tightly. As the spin slows, kick into a Dash and do it again. You need a combo of 15, but you should soon be doing 30-plus.

6 CRAZY TURN (2-2)
Get through a set of hairpins in time. Just Dash along the straights and Drifts while hugging the corners real tight. Don't over-Drift or over-Dash and end up grating the wall uselessly.

7 CRAZY BOUND (2-3)
Jump across ramps without falling into the sea. Use Drift Jumps for a fast time; beginners should Dash strategically, and aim and brake when needed. Don't brake in the air or you'll skid into the sea.

8 CRAZY ZIGZAG (2-S)
Unbelievably hard. Follow a narrow hairpin pier. Unless you're an expert Drifter, forget it. You need to Drift Stop too, or you'll just slide off some of the tighter bends.

9 CRAZY RUSH (3-1)
Five passengers in the middle, five locations on the outside. It's important that the customers don't jump out your way. Time is too tight. Experts will Drift Stop at the destinations, but careful Dashing and route-planning will get you through.

10 CRAZY JAM (3-2)
Get to destinations through busy traffic. Easy, but be sure to drop off where another gets in so you don't start and stop. Heading into the traffic, keep to the kerbs.

11 CRAZY POLE (3-3)
Slam into poles to brake – don't hit them! Dash between poles, and Drift-slam into them, facing your exit path if you can. Otherwise, reverse out quickly and Dash away.

12 CRAZY ZIGZAG 2 (3-S)
Few people will ever finish this one, it's that hard. Just like Crazy Zigzag, but with six grannies in your car. Each destination is a perfect Drift Stop right at the road edge. There's no other way.

13 CRAZY THROUGH (S-1)
Get a 30-hit Crazy Through combo. Your best bet is to stay on the right side of the road and take it fairly easy. If you lose your combo after the bumpy section then you probably won't do it.

14 CRAZY PARKING (S-2)
Get to the top of a multi-storey car park. Quite basic. Crazy Dash all the time, Crazy Through between cars, and Drift into the turns. Provided you don't collect parked cars on your fender you'll do it.

15 CRAZY PARTY (S-3)
A mad trip with seven fat blokes. Not too tough if you've learned all the skills to a fair level. Head up the tower on the left first, drop down to the phone boxes, then to the crates, round to the cars and up the second tower, flying off for a run to the ramp.

16 CRAZY ATTACK (S-S)
The final box is a time attack of the Arcade City. Just finish a normal direction lap in under four minutes (not so hard if you use the short cuts on page 110). Once completed you get the bike without having to cheat.

CHEAT CODES

Spot your cabbie one of these nice tips, otherwise the crazy bugger might just bite off a chunk of your cheek.

ANOTHER DAY

At the character screen, press the R trigger, then click and hold it again while picking your driver. The words 'Another Day' appear on screen. Your start and passenger locations are now different.

NO ARROWS

A good thing in Original mode! Hold R and Start while picking your driver. 'No Arrows' appears.

NO DESTINATION MARK

Gets rid of the destination targets. Hold L and Start while picking your driver. 'No Destination' appears.

EXPERT MODE

Basically, no arrows or destination marks. Just hold L, R and Start on the character screen.

BIKE UNLOCK

Can't do Crazy Box? Don't worry, just click L,R,L,R,L,R very quickly on the character screen, then select one. You should hear a bell, and start with the prized rickshaw.



DIFFERENT VIEWS/ SPEEDOMETER

Plug an extra pad into port 3. When the game starts, hit B for a driver's-eye view (through the windshield), Y for the intro view, and A to return to normal. Hit X five times to bring



ARCADE CITY

Both cities are very different. The arcade one is much like a race course. These tips should save you bags of time when heading the normal way through.

1. There are five green and yellow fare customers in the water at the beach.
2. When heading from the park to the Levi's Store, Tower Records or KFC, take a short cut through the multi-storey car park. You can also get to a secret roof customer if you exit slowly.
3. Heading to the church, it's quicker to turn left at KFC. There's also a girl waiting in the KFC drive-thru.
4. Heading down to the RB Station, there's a short cut up a driveway and through some crates on the right.



5. Going from the helipad to the baseball Stadium, Crazy Drift off the left of the road some distance before the RB Station, then cut through the outdoor parking.
6. Enter the freeway by cutting the right corner. It's quickest by keeping to the central reservation – unless you want big Crazy Through combos.
7. Arriving downtown, take the first left then first right. There's a driveway on to a roof. From there Crazy Jump on to the opposite roof for a secret customer.
8. Exiting the mall, use the central subway exit as a ramp over the crossroads. On the right there's a mini-mall with one secret customer.



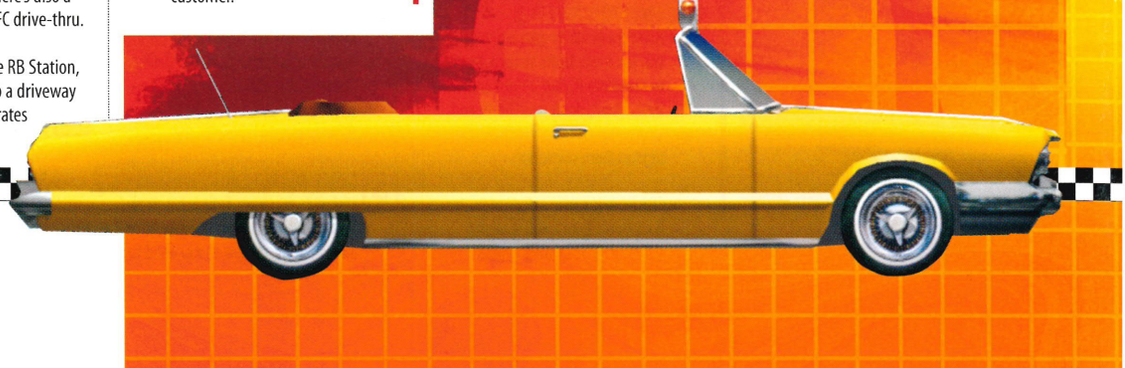
ORIGINAL CITY

The Dreamcast-only metropolis is far more complex. Ignore the arrows. The knitted street means they point you through buildings and confuse you. The only way is to learn the layout and use these short cuts.

1. Crazy Dash over the raised bridge when heading to Marine Park. You'll clear the buildings on the others side. There's a secret customer on those buildings, mind.
2. When landing on the Marine Park side of the bridge, head left into the water. There's a secret customer submerged.
3. Near King's Park in Downtown, you can use the tube station exits as ramps on to roofs packed with secret customers.

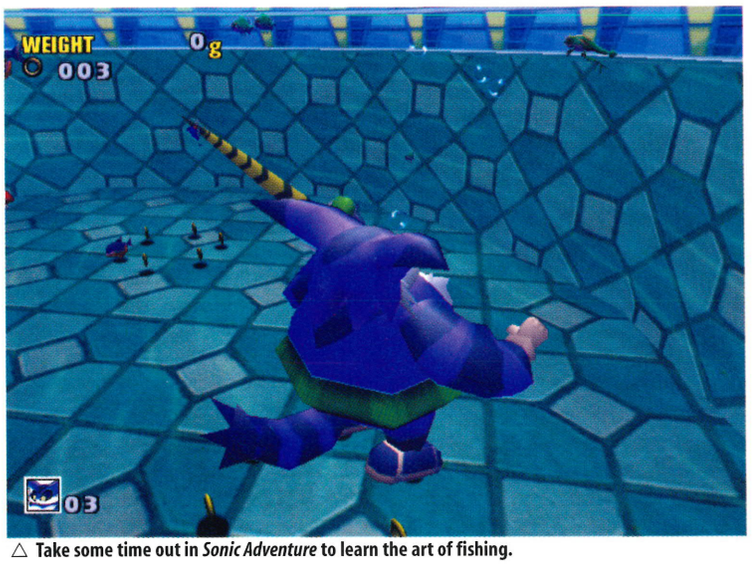


4. Going up the motorway flyovers, wait until the road separates then rejoins. On either side you can drop off on to building tops where there are more punters.
5. Head up the road from the police station and turn right. On the right-hand side there's a stairway on to a roof; you can also drop on to it from the flyover.
6. A careful ride with a passenger through the used car lot can rack up a nice Through combo.



HELP!

COMPLETELY STUCK IN A GAME? HAVEN'T A CLUE WHAT TO DO? WELL WRITE IN (CONTACT DETAILS BELOW) AND WE'LL DO OUR BEST TO HELP. **SIMON WATTS** ANSWERS YOUR QUERIES



△ **Take some time out in *Sonic Adventure* to learn the art of fishing.**

SONIC ADVENTURE

Can you tell me the location of all the hidden items for Sonic and Knuckles in *Sonic Adventure*?

Alistair Owen, via email

Sonic: 1) Light-speed shoes – go to station square after defeating egg hornet, and go down the manhole. 2) Crystal ring – after getting the light-speed shoes, go into the hotel and up the stairs, and do the spin until he says "Ready?" then walk on to the button. 3) Sacred light – on a rock on the way to the floating Island.
Knuckles: 1) Shovel gloves – in a cave below the entrance to Tails' house. 2) Battle gloves – in the Aztec forest, climb to a ledge above Big's house.

I can't catch Big's frog friend in *Sonic Adventure*. Please help me. I've finished the game with all other characters.

Martin Kay, via email

First find out where it's swimming, then cast as close to it as possible. Reel in the lure slowly until it takes a bite. Hook it and then reel it in, being careful to release the reel when the line tension gets too great.

On the Internet, I read this cheat claiming to enable you to play as other super characters. Is there any truth in it?

Goldenarmz, via email

As far as we know it's untrue. As with many bogus cheats floating around, this one is very time-consuming and difficult to test. For some reason certain gamers get pleasure out of making up stuff like this.

MARVEL VS CAPCOM

How do I get Onslaught as a playable character? I've seen a lot of tips, but many don't work.

Andrew Hughes, London

Reach battle seven without losing a character and you should be challenged by a secret fighter. Who challenges depends on how many super-finishers and variable cross-finishers you use. Beat this character and they become selectable; beat all six and Onslaught becomes playable.



△ **With the fearsome Soul Reaver blade, few enemies can stand up to your wrath.**

SOUL REAVER

How do I get out of the Crypt area of Melchia's Castle?

Sam Townsend, via email

Warp to the spectral plane, and climb the new platforms. Now flip the block here into the hole in the wall to open the gate. In the next room, jump on to the platform on the right to make the one on the left rise. Now use the blocks to get out, and jump across the newly raised platform in spirit form.

How do I get the Soul Reaver weapon from the first game?

Doug Nash, via email

After defeating Melchia (the first boss), head to the sanctuary area and use your new ability to pass through the right-hand gate. Fight Kain inside and beat him to earn Soul Reaver as a weapon.

WORMS ARMAGEDDON

How do I finish the last level in *Worms*? I keep losing the crate.

Stuart Davis, via email

Blowtorch right and retreat. Stand on barrel to get worm to die. Shotgun out of the tape. Blowtorch down towards crate. Blowtorch to crate, make sure you get it. Run back to start and blowtorch left. Do this for another two goes and then place a girder next to you.

RAYMAN 2

I can't seem to get past the river after the Echoing Cave. Can you help me ?

Colin Elliot, via email

After falling down the pit, head to the bridge and shoot the plum. Ride this downstream to the metal barrier where you need to grab the web. Follow this until you need to use some purple lums to reach the wooden platform. Let the henchman blow up the deck with an exploding barrel and drop into the ship. Fall down the pit in front of the chair when you are done here.

How do I beat the Guardian of the Cave of Bad Dreams?

Alex Newton, Sutton

Dodge his fireballs, then shoot the skulls to make platforms. Climb these to reach his platform. Repeat this twice then grapple on to the purple lum, repeat the first part, and jump across the platforms. Repeat the first part twice (once in mid-air) to make your bad dream run away from you.

TRICKSTYLE

I've finished everything in the game except for the last race in Japan. I keep on falling off the course. Can you help?

Martin Goodison, via email

Get as much speed as possible before the loops on this stage or you'll fall. Using the speed board can help, but really it's just a matter of using moves to speed yourself up.

BLUE STINGER

How do I defeat the end boss in Blue Stinger? He is driving me up the wall.

Chris Wells, Surrey

Run left and right in front of the boss to make yourself a hard target, and fire your bazooka whenever possible. Avoid his foot at all costs. When he falls into the ground, back up and use the same technique until he dies.



△ **Having difficulty finishing *House Of The Dead 2*? Try these hints.**

HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2

I can't finish the game. Are then any cheats, or a way to save before I die?

Jeffrey Adamson, Manchester

There's no way to save the game. Try playing it through in Original mode – hopefully you will find a +10 continue or even an infinite continue icon. Just remember to remove the VM unit if you want to keep these items.

NEED SOME HELP?

Then send your gaming problems to us at: Help!, *ODM*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ, or, email us at tips@dreamcastmag.co.uk with the subject heading 'Help!' and the name of the game you need help with. Please note: each month we print a selection of questions and answers in *ODM*, but we regret that we're unable to provide personal replies.

CHEATS

STUCK IN A GAME, OR DO YOU JUST WANT TO GET MORE OUT OF IT? THEN TRY THESE, YOU LITTLE CHEAT YOU



△ Play as the team mascots and access the hidden courts in *NBA Showtime*.

NBA SHOWTIME

Play as team mascots

Enter the following names and PIN codes to play as these team mascots.
Atlanta Hawks: HAWK 0322
Charlotte Hornets: HORNET 1105
Chicago Bulls: BENNY 0503
Denver Nuggets: ROCKY 0201
Houston Rockets: TURBO 1111
Indiana Pacers: BOOMER 0604
Minnesota Timberwolves: CRUNCH 0503
New Jersey Nets: SLY 6765
Phoenix Suns: GORILA 0314
Toronto Raptors: Raptor 1020
Utah Jazz: BEAR 1228

Play as programmers

Enter the Names and PIN codes at the enter intials screen to unlock these characters
Alex Gilliam: LEX 0014
Beth Smukowski: BETHAN 1111
Brian Le Baron: GRINCH 0222
Dan Thompson: DANIEL 0604
Jenifer Hedrick: JENIFR 3333 or 1111

Hidden courts

After choosing your players, hold the following buttons until the match begins to unlock a hidden court that you can then play.
Island court: Right+Turbo
Midway court: Up+Shoot+Pass
NBC court: Down+Shoot+Pass
Street court: Left+Turbo

SONIC ADVENTURE

Sonic and Super Sonic Chaos

Give about 25-30 pink rabbits to an ordinary chao to make it evolve into a blue spiky Sonic Chao, or give the animals to a golden chao to make it a Super Sonic chao.

PSYCHIC FORCE 2012

Play as gold and silver Emelio

To play as silver Emelio you must log 16 hours of gameplay or play as Emelio 30 times. To play as gold Emelio you must rack up 18 hours of gameplay or play as Emelio 50 times.



△ *Soul Reaver*: going one-on-one with Kain even if you've only just started playing!

SOUL REAVER

Various cheats

Once you reach the Sanctuary of the Clans you can activate the following cheat codes. Pause the game and hold the R trigger before entering them on the D-pad. These cheats must be entered quickly, so it may take a couple of goes before you get it right.

Shift dimensions at any time

To shift from living to spectral at any time as long as your energy is full, hit Up, Up, Down, Right, Right, Left, B, Right, Left, Down.

Health and Magic

Refill Health: Down, B, Up, Left, Up, Left.
Raise Health coil to next level: Right, A, Left, Y, Up, Down.
Raise Health coil to maximum: Right, B, Down, Up, Down, Up.
Refill Magic: Right, Right, Left, Y, Right, Down.
Raise Magic to maximum: Y, Right, Down, Right, Up, Y, Left.

Abilities – you earn these after beating the bosses

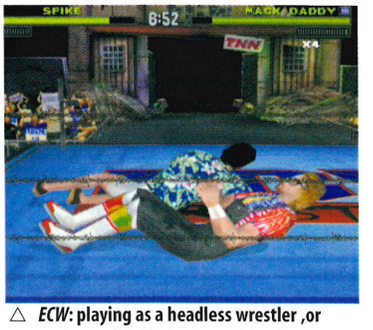
Pass through barriers ability: Down, B, B, Left, Right, Y, Up (hold towards a gate in spirit mode).
Soul Reaver ability: Down, Y, X, Right, Right, Down, Down, Left, Y, Down, Right (Soul Reaver weapon when energy is full).
Wall-crawling ability: Y, Down, X, Right, Up, Down (climb cracked walls).
Force projectile ability: Left, Right, B, Left, Right, Left (Y to fire projectiles).
Swim ability: Up, B, Down, Right, B, Left, Up (L+A to high jump).
Constrict ability: Down, Up, Right, Right, B, Up, Up, Down (run round an object to constrict).

The Soul Reaver

Forge Soul Reaver with fire: Down, Up, Right, Up, Down, Left, B, Right, Down (pass Soul Reaver through fire to activate).
Red Reaver: Y, Right, Down, B, Up.
Yellow Reaver: A, Right, Up, Up, Y, Left, Left, Right, Up.
Red & Black Reaver: A, B, Right, Y, Left, Left, Right, Up.

Spells – appear next to shift to spectral spell

Force Glyph: Down, Left, Y, Down, Up.
Stone Glyph: Down, B, Up, Left, Down, Right, Right.
Sound Glyph: Right, Right, Down, B, Up, Up, Down.
Water Glyph: Down, B, Up, Down, Right.
Fire Glyph: Up, Up, Right, Up, Y, X, Right.
Sunlight Glyph: Left, B, Left, Right, Right, Up, Up, Left.



△ *ECW*: playing as a headless wrestler ,or perhaps with big hands and feet!

ECW HARDCORE REVOLUTION

Unlock hidden features

To unlock these hidden features you must beat career mode with the characters listed.
Big Feet mode: Balls Mahoney
Big Hand mode: Jason
Big Head mode: Rhino
Custom Wrestler Textures: Tommy Dreamer
Ego Mode: Chris Chetti
Fat Man mode: Spike Dudley
Hangman mode: Sal E. Graziano
Headless mode: Taz
Little Head mode: Roadkill

TEE OFF

Get new characters and clubs

Finishing World mode gives you another character and club each time. If you play 15 holes of the last course and save, then after you win you can load up the saved game and do it again for another hidden character.



△ *Slave Zero*: you too can be God. For a while.

SLAVE ZERO

Infinite ammo + God mode

Plug in another pad, hold L+R and press the following buttons while playing: A turns on AI firing; B activates God mode; X gives you infinite ammo; Y drops ammo in front of you.

KNOW SOME GOOD CHEATS?

Well don't keep them to yourself – send 'em in and help everyone else out! Send your tips to: Tips, *ODM*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Alternatively email them to us at tips@dreamcastmag.co.uk. Thanks go to Tasmin Hossain and Aryud Worra for sending in tips to us this month – you both win a copy of *Tee Off* courtesy of Acclaim. Thanks also to Ryan Jones, Darren Riches, Gary Bourne, Robbie Gillibrand, Billy Hope, Andrew Owen, Michael Berry, Steven Holmes, Andrew Hughes, Mike Davies and countless others. Sorry we don't have the space to list you all!

CHALLENGES

CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE A VIDEOGAMES LEGEND? WELL, PROVE YOU'RE THE BEST AT A PARTICULAR GAME AND WIN A LOVELY GAME TO BOOT

THIS MONTH

Win one of the challenges below and grab yourself a copy of *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* courtesy of Eidos Interactive.



△ Collect those fares – and step on it.

CRAZY TAXI

Arcade mode, most money earned

Play through Arcade mode collecting as much money as possible before the time runs out. Now take a photo of the end results screen to prove you're the top cabbie.

Tip: See pages 108 and 109, where you might just find a few ideas to help!



△ Get that pedal to the metal and go for it.

SEGA RALLY 2

Fastest time for five laps, Riviera in Arcade Practice mode

Start Arcade Practice mode and load up the Riviera course. Now try to rack up the quickest time possible.

Tip: Brake as little as possible when clearing the corners. If using a manual gearbox, change down to reduce speed.



△ Get Tails flying – *really* flying.

SONIC ADVENTURE

Fastest Time, speed highway, with Tails

Race through this level as quickly as you can and take a photo of the end results screen showing your time.

Tip: Use Tails' flying abilities to cut out some of the course. Hitting the mid-air rings gives you that extra boost of speed that could make the difference.

RESULTS

Did you enter one of the contests from our February issue (*ODM* #4)? Well here's a list of the best entries. Congratulations to the winners.

SEGA RALLY 2
Fastest Time, Desert stage, Arcade practice mode

1.	**0'57"004**	**MATHEW CASEY, Lincs**
2.	0'57"021	TASMIN HOSSAIN, Surrey
3.	0'57"251	EAMONN TOWNSEND, Staffs
4.	0'57"420	AMY NEWTON, Surrey
5.	0'57"504	RICHARD HOWELL, Beds
6.	0'58"220	DAMON HORSEFIELD, London
7.	0'58"521	DANIEL BAILEY, Kent
8.	0'59"535	NIGEL JONES
9.	0'59"600	JON NOURSE, Kent
10.	1'00"125	NIGEL LOOMES, Shropshire

SOUL CALIBUR
Survival Mode, most wins, any character

1.	**72 WINS**	**ANDY ROBERTSON, Notts**
2.	69 WINS	ARYUD WORRA, London
3.	60 WINS	JAMES CARTER, Surrey
4.	58 WINS	P TRIPP, Manchester
5.	54 WINS	LLOYD VOCKINS, Devon
6.	50 WINS	JORDAN WOOLLEY, Kent
7.	48 WINS	CHRIS STYLES, York
8.	43 WINS	MILES BUCKLEY, Essex
9.	38 WINS	PAUL COLTAS, Manchester
10.	37 WINS	SIMON RICHARD LARKIN, Kent

SONIC ADVENTURE
Fastest Time, Lost World, using Sonic

1.	**2'50"11**	**MIKE J, London**
2.	2'52"03	MATHEW CASEY, Lincs
3.	2'55"06	JAMES CARTER, Surrey
4.	2'59"44	ALEX MACCLEOD, Manchester
5.	3'25"36	COLIN PORTER, Cardiff
6.	3'39"55	STEPHEN LAMBERT, N. Ireland
7.	3'42"10	NICOLA CRAIG, Newcastle
8.	4'15"00	MARK KNIGHT, London
9.	5'33"09	G BOURNE, Shropshire
10.	5'38"22	JON NOURSE, Kent

HOW DO YOU ENTER?

Play the given game with a camera at the ready. When you get your score/time, quickly take a picture of the screen (it's a good idea to darken the room and turn your flash off first). Post the photo, along with your name and address to: Challenges, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Note: please do not email digital photographs to us or send in any videos or VM units to confirm your scores. We can not take responsibility for their return and you will not be included in the competition. Also, *ODM* regrets that we can not return photographs.

PHONE FOR HELP

Having trouble with a game and can't wait to see a reply in these pages? Then you need to check out...

THE OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE TIPS HELPLINE

09064 664477

OPEN SEVEN DAYS A WEEK, 8AM-11PM
On the rare occasion that they can't help, your query will be passed on to a support team who guarantee to find you an answer within 24 hours.



△ Plagued by robotic pirates, piranha fish and pesky hairy caterpillars?



△ Are giant block puzzles driving you and your family insane?



△ Or are you stuck in a spike-filled tomb? The *ODM* tips line can help!

• Calls cost £1.50 per minute at all times. Charges will appear on your standard telephone bill. If you do not pay the bill yourself, seek permission from whoever does before calling. In the case of problems, please call Customer Services on 01753 755937.

Dreamcast™

OWNER'S GUIDE

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GAMES DIRECTORY

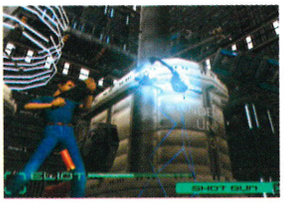
THE LOT. A SUMMARY OF EVERY DREAMCAST GAME REVIEWED IN *ODM*



AEROWINGS

CRAVE • ISSUE #1 • 6/10

AeroWings is a take on the world of formation aerobatics, which boasts bags of style but not much in the way of content. This flight simulation rewards your flying skills rather than your fighting skills, but when it boils down to it it's little more than a pleasant afternoon diversion.



BLUE STINGER

ACTIVISION • ISSUE #0 • 7/10

Blue Stinger, an early Dreamcast release, sees you wandering around killing freaky monsters and solving occasional puzzles – much like *Resident Evil 2*, in fact. However, a long, drawn-out story and dodgy controls slow down the action, and much of the acting wouldn't even make it into *Sunset Beach*.



DEADLY SKIES

KONAMI • ISSUE #4 • 5/10

Aka *Airforce Delta*. Completely average and rather drab-looking blaster that fails to improve upon *Aerowings*' flight sim aspirations, and doesn't really make it as shoot 'em up in its own right. A little more imagination and some more nimble planes could have made this game a lot better.



ARMADA

ACCLAIM • ISSUE #4 • 4/10

Armada puts you in charge of a small gunship to stop aliens threatening the peace of the universe. Just like classic title *Asteroids*, in fact, except with lots of extra upgrading and role-playing story elements. It's a good idea, but somehow it's ended up as a samey game that's a waste of time.



BUGGY HEAT

SEGA • ISSUE #2 • 4/10

The idea of getting behind the wheel and racing buggies and monster trucks off-road has plenty of potential, but it's wasted on this poor game. It's slow, unresponsive and dull to play. The online features are innovative, but otherwise *Buggy Heat* is firmly at the bottom of the pile.



DYNAMITE COP

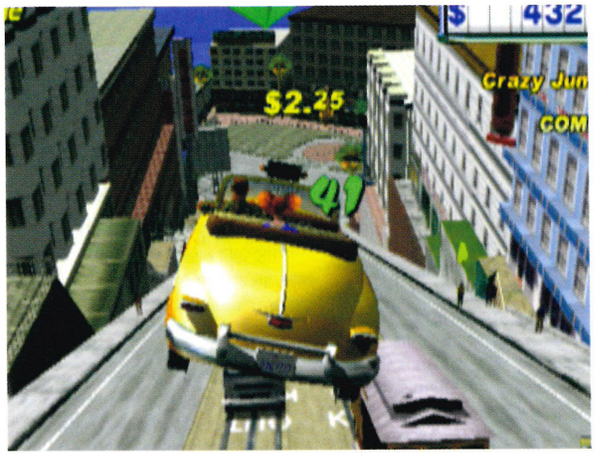
SEGA • ISSUE #2 • 5/10

Yes, you're a cop, but you're also a martial arts expert, which is handy. Using your fists and a variety of weapons, your job is to take on gangs of enemies and rescue a kidnapped damsel. To be honest, it's not a great game though. It's slow, gets dull pretty quickly, and is far too short to hold your attention for long.

CRAZY TAXI

SEGA • ISSUE #5 • 9/10

On the surface, *Crazy Taxi* might not appear to have much depth. Yeah, it's fun to race around the city picking up rides and smashing into things, but the novelty soon wears off, right? Wrong. Mastering skills like the Crazy Dash adds almost unlimited scope for skilful play as you try to top your highest score. The game looks amazing, has bags of character and there's plenty of DC-exclusive features, including a whole new city to terrorise. One of the best games money can buy.





EVOLUTION

UBI SOFT • ISSUE #3 • 8/10

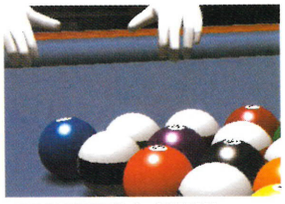
Heavily delayed since we reviewed it, but by the time you read this it should be on the shelves (we hope). Role-playing games fans have been ill-served on DC so far, but *Evolution* should keep them happy, while also being the perfect entry point for novices. Its simple interface and absorbing storyline mean that it's far more than a stat-heavy nerdfest.



HYDRO THUNDER

MIDWAY • ISSUE #1 • 6/10

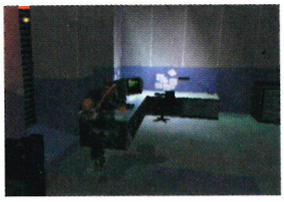
Another simple idea that's been well executed. Pick a super-fast speedboat, then a track, and race, collecting turbo boosts and zooming down short cuts along the way. *Hydro Thunder* has plenty of nice touches, but the whole is somewhat less than the sum of its parts. Still worth a punt, but don't expect to be dazzled by it.



JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL

VIRGIN • ISSUE #1 • 7/10

Well, it's a snooker game, so it's not going to appeal to everybody. Still, it's well designed and good fun to play, albeit a bit jerky in the graphics department. You get to play against an assortment of characters, including Jimmy White himself. Of course, if you're snooker loopy, you'll love it. If not, it might not be your cup of tea.



FIGHTING FORCE 2

EIDOS • ISSUE #4 • 3/10

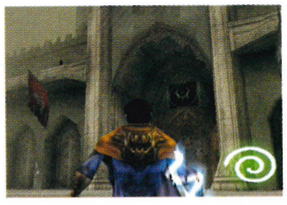
Core Design's first DC game, in the days when we were still unsure whether *Tomb Raider* would ever make the leap. *FF2* borrows elements from the Lara games, as well as old MegaDrive fighting game *Streets Of Rage*. Unfortunately, the results are uniformly dull.



INCOMING

RAGE • ISSUE #1 • 6/10

The definition of a brainless shoot 'em up: kill the bad guys and avoid killing the good guys. You get to control an aeroplane, tank and Harrier jet (among others), and although it looks amazing, the action soon gets repetitive.



LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER

EIDOS • ISSUE #6 • 7/10

Eidos's creepy classic is ported across to Dreamcast, complete with sharper, smoother graphics. The sheer scale of the levels is impressive enough, and the gameplay is a nice mixture of killing and puzzling. You need a fair amount of patience to get through it, however.



FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

VISUAL MEMORY

WHAT'S A VM?

A VM (Visual Memory) is a memory card that plugs into your Dreamcast controller and enables you save game data. It's absolutely essential for titles like *Sonic Adventure* and *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* where you want to save your game position. The official Sega Visual Memory unit costs £19.99.

WHY DOES IN HAVE AN LCD SCREEN BUILT INTO IT?

To show additional information (hit ratios in *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing*, player data in *NBA 2K*, for example) when you're playing games. Also, when the VM is unplugged from a controller you can play mini-games (eg the Tamagotchi-style *Chao* game from *Sonic Adventure*). These are 'downloaded' via Dreamcast games or direct from the Net, and are stored in memory.

HOW MUCH INFORMATION DOES A VM HOLD?

128k, divided in 200 'blocks'. In other words, enough to store save data from several titles and/or a mini-game.

HOW MANY BLOCKS DOES EACH GAME USE?

It depends on the game, but here are some examples: *Crazy Taxi* (23 blocks), *Sega Rally 2* (20, plus 61 for high-score browser), *Sonic Adventure* (10 for save games plus 28 for Chao data), *Soul Calibur* (12 blocks), *Virtua Fighter 3tb* (12 blocks), *Vigilante 8* (5 blocks).

WHY DOES MY DREAMCAST BEEP WHEN IT STARTS UP?

The beeping is your DC telling you that the VM unit's batteries have run out.

WHERE CAN I GET NEW BATTERIES FOR IT

Try Tandy if there's one near you. You can also order them online at www.chipsworld.co.uk. The model number is CR2302 and they cost about £4 for a pair.

WILL I LOSE MY SAVE GAMES IF THE VM'S BATTERIES RUN OUT?

No. You won't be able to play mini-games on it, but it will still work as a memory card.

I'VE HEARD OF A VM ANIMATOR FOR PCS. WHERE CAN I GET ONE?

You can download the animator and loads of sample animations from Booyaka (www.booyaka.com) and Planetweb (http://dreamcast.planetweb.com/community/vmu/).

WHAT'S THE POINT OF VM ANIMATIONS?

There isn't a point as such, it's just a bit of fun. *Ghostface* (based on the movie *Scream 3*) is our favourite. Others well worth a look include *Star Wars: Episode II*, *Alien Encounter* and *The Great Battle*.

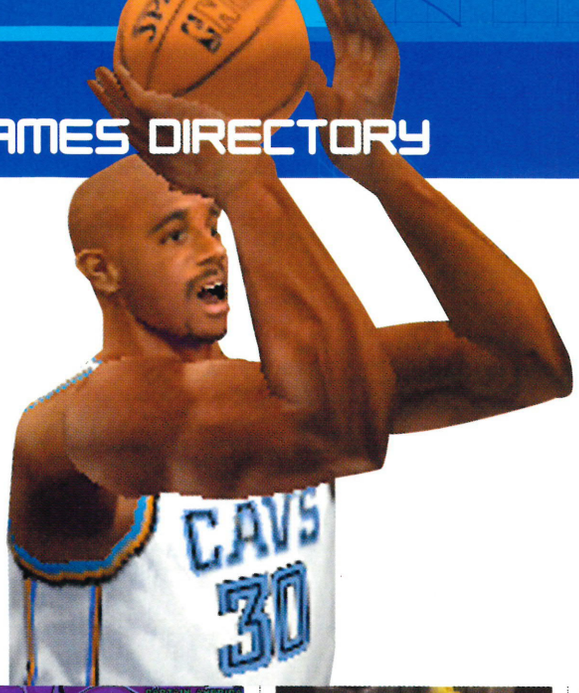
WHICH DC TITLES INCLUDE VM MINI-GAMES?

Try the likes of *Sonic Adventure*, *Trickstyle* and *Power Stone*. *Sega Rally 2* also has a high-score browser, which is a game in theory but isn't actually very entertaining.

CAN I DOWNLOAD MINI-GAMES OFF THE NET?

Yes you can, although there aren't many about yet. Sega America have released an American football game (see www.sega.com), and Sega Europe are expected to release something similar in the future. You can find some other bits and pieces at Booyaka and Planetweb (site addresses above).

Have we missed something? If there's anything else you need to know about Visual Memory, email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk



NBA 2K
SEGA • ISSUE #5 • 8/10
The best Dreamcast sports sim yet, and effortlessly outclasses the somewhat lacklustre football games that have been produced in Europe. There's a wealth of detail and statistics, , but the game itself also plays like a dream. Matches ebb and flow like the real thing, and the player creation system means it could be you outjumping Shaq and his mates on court. Our only big reservation is the way saved seasons fill up a whole VM, so you must splash out £20 extra to get the most out of it, but for sports fans it's worth it.



RAYMAN 2: THE GREAT ESCAPE
UBI SOFT • ISSUE #6 • 8/10
One of the most unappealing characters ever has been spoiled with a particularly classy 3D platform adventure. With spot-on controls, loads of clever levels, an entertaining storyline and tons to keep you coming back for months, it's a challenger to *Sonic*'s crown. And the four-player bonus game is superb.



RESIDENT EVIL 2
VIRGIN • ISSUE #4 • 7/10
It's a classic, but the Dreamcast version is a fairly standard port of the PlayStation and PC original. It's exceptionally spooky and shocking, but also genuinely funny in places. Although the combinmation of puzzles and gory action will see most people play through to the end, it has to be said that the game has dated.



MARVEL VS CAPCOM
VIRGIN • ISSUE #2 • 5/10
The ultimate tag team fight, with heaps of classic game and comic book characters duking it out. It's certainly crazy. Often it's difficult to tell what's going on, making button-bashing the only way to go. It's fun at times, but if you want a quality 2D fighting game, check out *Street Fighter Alpha 3*.



MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD
MIDWAY • ISSUE #1 • 5/10
Once upon a time, *Mortal Kombat* was great, spiced up by gallons of blood, death moves and predictable tabloid condemnation. Sadly, over time people have realised that actually the whole concept is a bit rubbish. This 'Gold' edition has lots of new characters and moves, but is still nothing to write home about.



NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB 2000
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #2 • 5/10
Considering that average football games don't go down particularly well in the UK, an average American football game has no chance. Weak graphics and very slow controls mean that *NFL Quarterback Club 2000* is certainly not going to get anyone into the sport. Play the Sega release *NFL 2K* soon.



RED DOG
SEGA • ISSUE #5 • 4/10
Drive a buggy around alien landscapes blowing everything to pieces. It looks and sounds good, but we found that the action soon became somewhat repetitive. Last-minute changes to the game have been made, however, so it may well be better by time it reaches shelves. Expect a report next issue.



RE-VOLT
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #3 • 7/10
Right from its initial premise, *Re-Volt* is different: racing remote controlled cars is a novel idea. There's crisp graphics, speedy action and a cool multiplayer mode. However, it's not the most complex of games, and it will only hold your attention for so long before you start to tire of the novelty.



MILLENNIUM SOLDIER: EXPENDABLE
INFOGRAMES • ISSUE #0 • 7/10
If you're a fan of old-skool games like *Ikari Warriors* or *Commando*, then you'll probably love this. Shoot anything that moves, and plenty of things that don't. However, for the rest of us it's not exactly long-term fun, and at times the action can get too confusing.



NBA SHOWTIME: NBA ON NBC
MIDWAY • ISSUE #2 • 6/10
It's the counterpart of *NFL Blitz*: fast, over-the-top, and based on a US sport that's not so popular over here. It's great when played with three friends, but its long-term appeal is limited. Still, if you're a fan of the old *NBA Jam* games it's bound to float your boat. We're sticking with the more heavyweight *NBA 2K*.

POWER STONE
EIDOS • ISSUE #1 • 8/10
Certainly one of the most original beat 'em ups for a long time. You've got full freedom of movement around the 3D arenas, your aim being to collect three power stones, transform into a super-powered version of yourself, and give your opponent a good thrashing. Of course, there's also loads of explosive weapons, massive combos and stuff to throw around. It takes longer to master than, say, *R2R*, but it's still amazingly fast, beautiful and very cool.





MONACO GRAND PRIX RACING SIMULATION 2
UBI SOFT • ISSUE #1 • 6/10
As it's not officially licensed the lack of real driver names doesn't endear *Monaco* from the start. The plain graphics don't help much either. That's not to say it's bereft of ideas – the classic races are cool – but you only really need one F1 game and this ain't it.



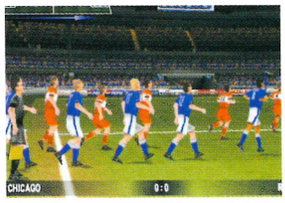
NFL BLITZ 2000
MIDWAY • ISSUE #1 • 7/10
Like *Ready 2 Rumble*, *Blitz* puts fun ahead of realism. That's why it has simpler rules, fewer players on the pitch at once, and flaming balls, if you'll pardon the expression. You can stomp on the other team as much as you like without fear of a penalty, too. In four-player mode it's great, chaotic fun.

READY 2 RUMBLE
SEGA • ISSUE #1 • 9/10
Alongside *Soul Calibur*, probably the best Dreamcast multiplayer game so far. *Ready 2 Rumble* majors on almost cartoon-like arcade action, so there's a variety of larger-than-life boxers, lots of outrageous special moves, and the bone-crushing Rumble mode to ensure that few matches go beyond three rounds. As a one-player game its appeal might wear off after a few weeks, but if you're playing 'winner stays on' matches with a bunch of friends it'll last and last.





PEN PEN
INFOGRAMES • ISSUE #2 • 6/10
Well, there's nothing else like it, for sure. *Pen Pen* sees you racing a variety of cute, cuddly characters by walking, sliding on your belly and swimming. It's relatively easy in solo mode, but the four-player split-screen option is a hoot. Still, at full price *Pen Pen* is far too shallow to make it worth your hard-earned pennies.



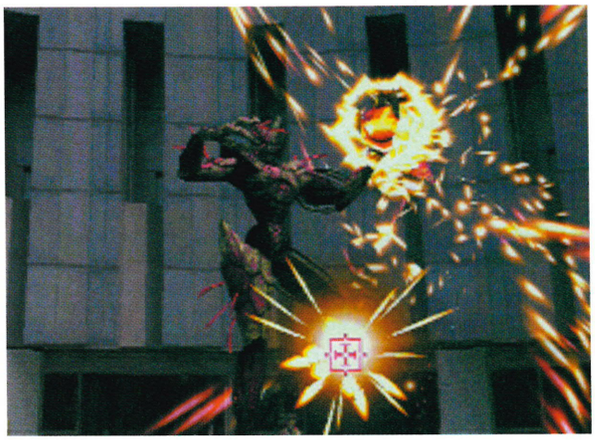
SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER 2000
SEGA • ISSUE #3 • 6/10
Originally an excellent Saturn game, this latest Dreamcast incarnation isn't up to scratch. It's slow, for a start, with your players crawling rather than running round the pitch. There's also a chronic lack of atmosphere. Despite some nice touches, it's definitely a Leyton Orient rather than a Manchester United.



SEGA BASS FISHING
SEGA • ISSUE #1 • 7/10
We promise we had no idea when we reviewed it that *Bass Fishing* wouldn't make the shops until this month. It's the ultimate novelty game – fun for a while, but after a couple of weeks its allure goes. The fishing rod is ace though, and if you're having a party, people will be queuing up for a go. Funny lot.

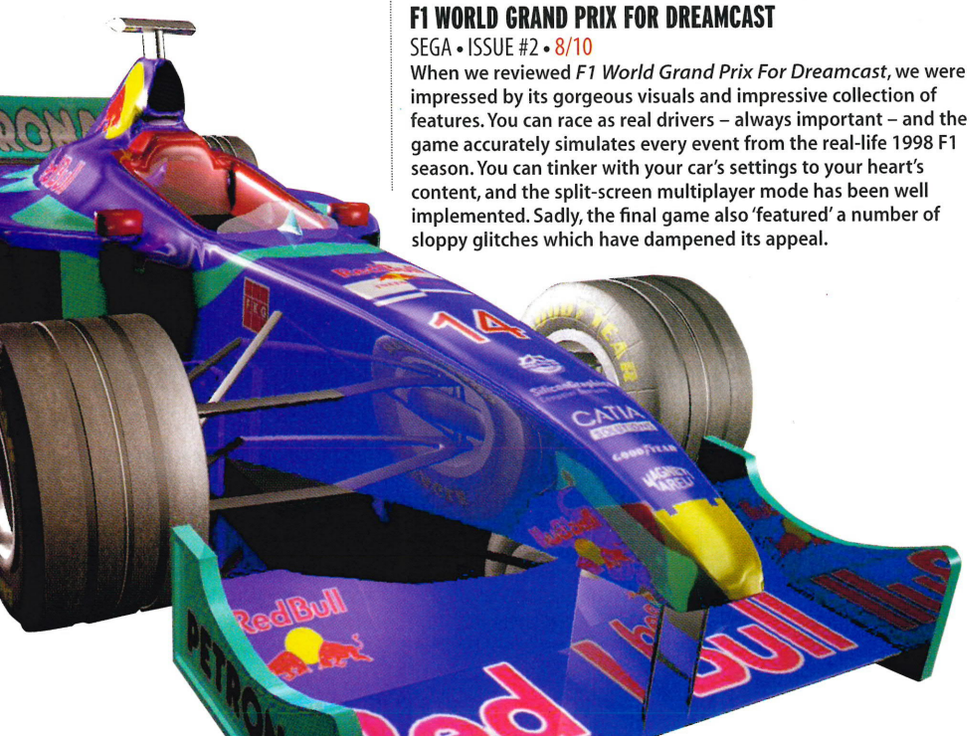


PSYCHIC FORCE 2012
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #2 • 7/10
It's got everything you'd expect from a Japanese Animé game – stylish big-haired heroes, enormous fireballs and the whole thing takes place in mid-air. It's got niche appeal, but fighting fans looking for a new experience may well find what they're after here.



HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2
SEGA • ISSUE #1 • 9/10
They don't come much more simple to play than this. *HOTD2* is Dreamcast's first light-gun-compatible game, although it's also playable using a normal controller if you're strapped for cash. There is a storyline, but we're arsed if we can remember it: all you need to know is that you progress through the levels blasting zombies away. There's plenty of replay potential, with scores depending not only on killing all the zombies, but on killing them with the maximum precision. If you're rich, you could even splash out on two guns and make use of the excellent two-player mode. One of our faves, even several months after its release.

F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX FOR DREAMCAST
SEGA • ISSUE #2 • 8/10
When we reviewed *F1 World Grand Prix For Dreamcast*, we were impressed by its gorgeous visuals and impressive collection of features. You can race as real drivers – always important – and the game accurately simulates every event from the real-life 1998 F1 season. You can tinker with your car's settings to your heart's content, and the split-screen multiplayer mode has been well implemented. Sadly, the final game also 'featured' a number of sloppy glitches which have dampened its appeal.



FAQ
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ONLINE

WHY CAN'T I PLAY .WAV FILES ON MY DREAMCAST?
You can, as long as they're embedded in Web pages. The Dreamkey browser can also play .au and .aiff sound files and .mpg movie files. Dreamkey v2 should offer more advanced multimedia capabilities.

WHEN WILL DREAMKEY V2 BE RELEASED?
Sometime this summer. We'll keep you posted.

CAN I USE MY OWN INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER (ISP) WITH DREAMCAST?
No.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO USE MY DC ONLINE?
Calls are charged at nationwide local rate.

WHAT NUMBER DOES THE DC DIAL?
The number is 0845 757 6339.

CAN I ADD THE NUMBER TO MY BT FRIENDS & FAMILY LIST?
Yes. And if you nominate the number as your 'best friend' number you can get further discounts.

CAN I WRITE EMAILS OFFLINE?
Yes. Once you reach the compose screen, go into the L trigger menu and select 'disconnect'. Write your mail and then reconnect to send it.

WHY CAN'T I ACCESS CERTAIN WEBSITES?
Because Dreamkey has a built-in child lock to filter out 'inappropriate' content. Annoyingly, this also includes some legitimate email sites like Hotmail.

HOW DO I TURN THE PARENTAL LOCK OFF?
Make a note of your username and password. Go into options in the L trigger menu and select Modem, followed by AT Setup. Choose Delete Memory, and select Yes to confirm. Now reset your DC and select Restore Me on the main menu. Select your country and choose Restore. When you enter your username and password again, look for the check box that disables the filter.

CAN I ACCESS NEWSGROUPS ON DREAMCAST?
Yes, via sites like www.deja.com and www.remarq.com which provide a Web interface for newsgroups. Sites like these aren't among the easiest to browse on DC, however.

WHICH NEWSGROUPS ARE WORTH LOOKING AT?
That depends on your personal tastes. For Dreamcast gaming, uk.games.video.dreamcast is a good place to start.

CAN I STILL RECEIVE EMAILS EVEN WHEN MY DC IS SWITCHED OFF?
Yes! Your mail is stored on Sega's servers and isn't affected by what you're doing with your Dreamcast.

HOW CAN I PLAY GAMES AGAINST OTHERS ONLINE?
You can't right now. Online play is coming very soon with games like *ChuChu Rocket!*

OKAY, SO WHICH GAMES CURRENTLY HAVE ONLINE FACILITIES?
Sonic Adventure (ranking table and chao nursery), *Buggy Heat* (ranking table and ghost opponent mode) and *Sega Rally 2* (ranking table) are among those with online facilities. Others, like *Rayman 2* and *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*, include bonuses which can be unlocked by going online.

ARE SEGA GOING TO RELEASE A FASTER MODEM?
Eventually, but nothing definite has been announced yet.

CAN I USE ANAMERICAN OR JAPANESE DC ONLINE IN THE UK?
Yes, but only to surf the Web. You won't be able to play online with an import DC when full the gaming service is launched.

I'M HAVING PROBLEMS WITH MY DC ONLINE. WHO CAN I CALL FOR HELP?
Call Sega's Internet Support Line on 09066 544544 (calls charged at 60p per minute. Seek permission of the person who pays the telephone bill before calling).

Have we missed something? If there's anything else you need to know about using the DC online, email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk

GAMES DIRECTORY



SHADOW MAN
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #3 • 6/10
It's a platform adventure, yes, but it's definitely not something just for the kids. *Shadow Man*'s gore, swearing and voodoo magic mean that it should appeal to older gamers, but the dull level design mean that it probably won't. Still, the storyline's involving, and we're big fans of the freaky music and sound effects.



SNOW SURFERS
SEGA • ISSUE #2 • 6/10
If you're a fan of *Cool Boarders* on PlayStation, you'll feel instantly at home with this snowboarding simulation. The courses look nice, but overall the visuals are nothing to brag about. What's ultimately lacking is that crucial edge, and sadly the game just isn't fast enough to give you the thrills that boarders crave.



SEGA RALLY 2
SEGA • ISSUE #0 • 8/10
One of the finest arcade racers ever. Loads of edge-of-your-seat racing, looks to die for and some superbly designed tracks. There's also the innovative online rankings system which enables you to compare your best times with other gamers. If it's arcade action you want, then *Sega Rally 2* will have you smiling.



SUZUKI ALSTARE EXTREME RACING
UBI SOFT • ISSUE #2 • 7/10
Suzuki has certainly divided the *ODM* office. Reviewer Stuart liked it for its high-speed, varied tracks and fun two-player mode, everyone else hated it for its blatant pop-up and poor collision detection. If superbikes are your thing you should give it a go, but don't expect it to hold your attention long-term.



TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE
CRAVE • ISSUE #3 • 5/10
The idea behind this game is simple: challenge the other drivers on the road to a race and get lots of money if you beat them. The trouble is, with only one track the fun is limited, even with the extra bits that occasionally get added. Although it looks nice, *Tokyo Highway Challenge* is a lacklustre game overall.



SLAVE ZERO
INFOGRAMES • ISSUE #5 • 6/10
It's not the fantastic first-person shooter that Dreamcast owners are crying out for, but *Slave Zero* is still a pretty decent game. Its potent mixture of big robots and *Blade Runner*-esque scenery is entertaining, but it's spoiled by chronic slowdown and a high degree of difficulty.



SOUL CALIBUR
SEGA • ISSUE #4 • 10/10
There's no doubt that this is the best-looking beat 'em up ever, with excellent characters, super-fluid animation and hundreds of perfectly balanced moves. The best thing about the game is the way that anyone can pick it up and start having fun straight away. That said, it takes a long time to master, and if you're battling against a similarly skilled mate it's a game that'll have you entranced for hours at a time. If you've got a Dreamcast, you *must* own this game.



SOUTH PARK: CHEF'S LUV SHACK
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #3 • 3/10
Chef's Luv Shack is a quiz game for up to four players, where you play mini-games and answer questions. Unfortunately you need a lot of useless trivia knowledge to succeed, and although it does feature all your favourite characters it's nowhere near as good. One to avoid, in other words.



TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION
EIDOS • ISSUE #6 • 7/10
Lara Croft finally makes it to DC in what we reckon is the best *Tomb Raider* game yet. Everything that's made the series so popular is here, and it all looks better than ever. It's just a shame that more work wasn't put into really making the most of Dreamcast's capabilities.



SPEED DEVILS
UBI SOFT • ISSUE #1 • 7/10
It's no surprise that a crazy racing game with hurricanes, police chases and UFOs went down a storm here when it was released. The two-player and arcade modes are ace, and the music most definitely has The Funk. However, it is a little easy at times, and has since been superceded by the likes of *Crazy Taxi*.



SONIC ADVENTURE
SEGA • ISSUE #0 • 9/10
If you mis-spent your youth on the original *Sonic* games, you're going to love this. *Sonic Adventure* is a massive 3D action adventure packed with variety and stunning set pieces. Not only are there the high-speed platform levels that you'd expect, but there's also a healthy dose of proper exploration. The camera angles are occasionally dodgy, and the speed can sometimes be overwhelming, but this is a quality act through and through.



SOUL FIGHTER
CRAVE • ISSUE #2 • 6/10
An unspectacular fantasy fighting game with adventure elements running through it. There are some good ideas – such as the way you can use attack combos to earn magic power – but overall the gameplay is too samey, with you wandering from room to room tapping buttons as you go.



TRICKSTYLE
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #1 • 7/10
We weren't quite sure what to make of *Trickstyle* when it first surfaced in our office. It's a great idea and looks lovely, but its lack of speed made it a little hard to get into. Still, if the idea of racing on futuristic hoverboards and performing flashy tricks appeals to you then it's certainly worth a look.



STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3: SAIKYO DOJO
VIRGIN • ISSUE #2 • 8/10
The best *Street Fighter* game ever, with a bunch of exclusive features including the excellent World Tour mode. This 2D game has far more depth than most 3D fighters could even dream of. Be warned, though: you really need to splash out on an arcade pad to make the most of it.



TEE OFF
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #3 • 7/10
No, we didn't expect to like a golf game this much either. *Tee Off* is actually fun, unlike 99.9% of golf games, because it's entertaining rather than over-realistic, and its cute manga characters are a step up from Colin Montgomerie and Nick Faldo in the charisma stakes. With four players it's even more entertaining.



UEFA STRIKER
INFOGRAMES • ISSUE #1 • 8/10
UEFA Striker looks a bit ropy at times, but it's definitely better than *Sega Worldwide Soccer* and far more accessible than *Virtua Striker 2*. The biggest bugbear about this footie sim is the goalies, who seem to save anything that's not a header or volley. Still, with two (or more) players it's great fun.



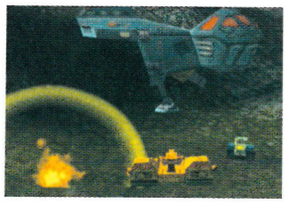
VIGILANTE 8: 2ND OFFENSE
ACTIVISION • ISSUE #3 • 5/10
Another example of an average PlayStation game that's been turned into, er, an average DC game. Its mixture of cars with guns and driving round shooting each other is initially appealing, but the result is hardly spectacular. Still, rented from a video shop it makes for a good night's fun.



VIRTUA FIGHTER 3tb
SEGA • ISSUE #1 • 7/10
With slightly disappointing graphics and sound, and only a few extra features, this arcade classic had lost a lot of its impact by time it reached Dreamcast. It's still a beat 'em up, of course, but with classy rivals like *Soul Calibur* around, *Virtua Fighter 3tb* feels a little ragged around the edges.



VIRTUA STRIKER 2 (VER. 2000.1)
SEGA • ISSUE #4 • 7/10
Arcade perfect but with extra bits too. Cup modes, rankings and tournaments all add to what was already a very good game. However, it doesn't play much like real football – it's more a quirky arcade interpretation of it. It's definitely a grower, and if you take time to master the controls you'll start really enjoying it.



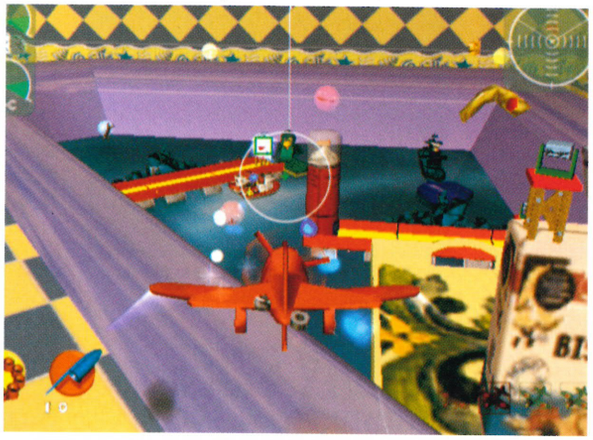
WILD METAL
TAKE TWO • ISSUE #6 • 5/10
It's a tank game, but with the emphasis on strategy as much as on blasting. Choose from five tanks, and roll off to pit your wits against some impressively intelligent enemies. Sadly the gameplay is on the boring side, and even the split-screen deathmatch is dull.



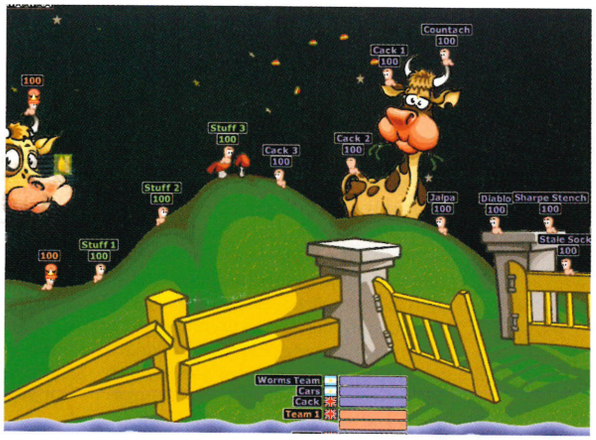
WWF ATTITUDE
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #2 • 3/10
No, we didn't slate this game because we've got anything against wrestling, we slated it because it's dull. The wrestlers are badly animated and unresponsive, while the gameplay is clunkingly uninspiring. *Attitude* has succeeded in making one of the most entertaining spectator 'sports' plain boring.



ZOMBIE REVENGE
SEGA • ISSUE #6 • 7/10
It's *House Of The Dead*, except in 3D! Sort of. Another arcade-perfect conversion, complete with lots of DC-exclusive extras. Best is the VM support, which enables you to download your character, beef them up with a few mini-games then load them back into the main game. Sadly it's been delayed until June.



TOY COMMANDER
SEGA • ISSUE #1 • 8/10
At first sight you'd be forgiven for thinking *Toy Commander* is just for kids. In fact most kids would have problems getting past the first level! It's a tough hardcore wargame that just happens to feature lots of cute toys, targeting a more mature audience than your average *Pokemon* fanatic. The missions are varied, and there are masses of vehicles to master. Unfortunately the multiplayer mode isn't half as much fun as it should be. Nevertheless, *Toy Commander* is still one of Dreamcast's more imaginative titles.



WORMS ARMAGEDDON
HASBRO; ISSUE #3; 8/10
There's no doubt that this is one of the most enjoyable multiplayer games around. It doesn't make full use of Dreamcast's graphical power, but the 2D graphics are crisp and well animated, giving the Worms oodles of character. It's another simple concept – blow up all the enemy worms – with a well-executed turn-based system. The solo modes are good enough, but they're really more for practicing your skills. The real fun comes from humiliating a few mates.

FAQ
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PERIPHERALS

I'VE HEARD THAT THE SEGA LIGHT-GUN WON'T WORK WITH SONY SUPER TRINITRON TVS. IS THIS TRUE?
Turn off the Auto Picture facility of the television and you'll be okay.

I HAVE A 100HZ TELEVISION, AND THE DREAMCAST LIGHT-GUN DOESN'T WORK. WHY?
This is because the screen refreshes faster than the game, so the light-gun hits aren't registered properly. There's nothing you can do about this, we're afraid.

WHY SHOULD I BOTHER WITH A SCART LEAD?
Simply because it will improve picture quality compared with using the RF cable (or 'TV lead') which is supplied with the DC. A fully wired RGB SCART cable is the best option, but check that your TV is compatible before shelling out.

WHEN WILL THE DVD PLAYER BE COMING OUT FOR DREAMCAST?
Nothing official has been announced yet.

WHEN WILL THE ZIP DRIVE BE RELEASED?
Sega are working on one, but there are no details yet on when we're likely to see it in the UK.

WHAT'S A ZIP DRIVE?
It's a storage device which uses discs which can hold 100Mb of data (ie approximately 700 times more than a VM).

ARE SEGA RELEASING A MICROPHONE, AND IF SO WHEN?
Yes, if and when the weirdo Japanese pet simulator *Seaman* is released.

WILL SEGA BE RELEASING A PRINTER SO I CAN PRINT WEB PAGES?
It's extremely unlikely.

ARE SEGA RELEASING A HARD DRIVE?
It's also unlikely. You won't need one as well as a Zip drive.

WHY CAN'T I FIND A DREAMCAST KEYBOARD?
There have been supply problems but they should be in stores now. You can also buy them online through the Dreamshop on Dreamarena.

WHAT'S ALL THIS I HEAR ABOUT A DC CAMERA?
Sega announced a camera add-on recently. You'll be able to use it take pictures and take part in video chat on the Internet. There are no release details as yet.

WHAT'S A VGA BOX?
It's an adaptor that enables you play DC games on a PC monitor, offering much improved picture quality. Sega hasn't officially released it in this country but you can get third party versions.

WHY DON'T ALL GAMES SUPPORT A VGA MODE?
Because it takes extra time for the developer to include support, and some don't think it's worth their while since only a tiny proportion of gamers have a VGA box. If support is included, then it should be a seen as a bonus.

WHAT'S A RUMBLE PACK, AND DOES IT WORK WITH ALL GAMES?
It's an add-on that plugs into you controller and makes it vibrate in time with the on-screen action. Expect to pay £14.99 for an official Sega one. It's compatible with virtually all games, and really good with *Sega Rally 2*, *Soul Calibur*, *Hydro Thunder* and *Ready 2 Rumble*.

IS IT WORTH GETTING AN ARCADE STICK?
If you like fighting games, yes it is. They cost £34.99 and are practically indestructible, but aren't much use on racing or action games.

IS IT WORTH GETTING A STEERING WHEEL?
Only if you feel like splashing out – the official Sega model costs £44.99. Obviously you can only use them for driving games, and the standard DC pad gives you analog steering, acceleration and braking, so there's really no need.

Have we missed something? If there's anything else you need to know about the Dreamcast peripherals email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk

READER REVIEWS

LOVE OR HATE A DREAMCAST GAME? THINK WE'VE GOT A REVIEW SPOT ON OR COMPLETELY WRONG? THEN WRITE IN AND TELL US - WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YA

CRAZY TAXI

REVIEWED: *ODM* #5, 9/10

WE SAID: "A game that will impress anyone who sees its incredible visuals. And one that anyone can get into. Definitely a DC title you'd be crazy not to own."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

Only two words come to mind when I think of *Crazy Taxi*, and those are 'bloody brilliant'. *Crazy Taxi* shows off Dreamcast's amazing 128-bit graphic capabilities and the gameplay is even better.

Sega have done an excellent home conversion and have even put in a whole new city for us to drool at. In my view this has to be the best Dreamcast game yet. It should have gotten 10/10!

Darren Riches, via email

Crazy Taxi is a great game, but I think that you were a little generous giving it 9/10.

It's good to play in the arcades, but once you've played it for a few hours at home it doesn't seem quite so special any more. What it needs is an extra mode where you can upgrade your car and complete the game.

As it stands, there isn't an ending. I know they put the extra city in, but you don't do any thing new in it. I've also noticed the scenery 'pops up' in the extra city and I didn't think this was supposed to happen on the Dreamcast.

It would have also been cool to have a mode where you could just cruise around without having to worry about a time limit or picking up customers, so you'd get a chance to see the city's great features. Don't get me wrong – I love *Crazy Taxi* but it could've been a little bit better.

Chris Andrews, via email

My God, I'm gobsmacked! I saw *Crazy Taxi* when I was browsing through Woollies, and remembered you gave it a good rating so I bought it. How unprepared can you be? I stuck it in my Dreamcast and was blown away by the awesome music and stunning intro sequence.

The game is so easy to pick up and play – you just get going without having to read the instructions. Wow! I had doubts about its longevity, but after 48 hours of gameplay I still get a buzz from it. Buy it!

Peter Bridekirk, via email

Crazy Taxi is crap! That's all I can say about a game you "have a good feeling about".

To start with, there are only one and a half tunes that annoyingly play in the background and if you're not a punk fan you tire of it pretty quickly. Secondly, the game crashed on me within the first hour, leaving me with a black screen and that bloody soundtrack. I'm not even going to start on there being only two cities.

Crazy Taxi comes across as a rushed game.I wish I hadn't bothered buying.

Gary Warick, via email

We've heard from a couple of readers who don't like *Crazy Taxi* (hey, you'll *always* get a few), but, pleasingly, the vast majority of you lot seem to love the game as much as we do. To our minds it's easily the best Dreamcast game of year so far and a perfect example of why we only give truly deserving games 9/10.



△ ***Crazy Taxi*: you may well have heard of this game.**



△ ***Deadly Skies*: readily available in your local**

DEADLY SKIES

REVIEWED: *ODM* #4, 5/10

WE SAID: "Ultimately it's difficult to get worked up about *Deadly Skies* and it's all down to the details – or rather the lack of them."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

Deadly Skies is without doubt the finest-looking flight sim ever made. I bought it on the strength of the demo and was awestruck by the splendidly gritty and realistic look of the game.

Your review misses some crucial points. Firstly, the sensation of speed and altitude is absolutely spot on. Make no mistake, *Deadly Skies* is a thrilling game. Who can ignore the hair-raising experience of swooping down on a land target before pulling up to the cloud cover, only to find yourself upside-down, feeling disorientated and dizzy?

It seems this exciting concept was lost on your reviewer. Put simply, the adrenaline rush created by this game is unparalleled. Forget that the planes have turning circle akin to a "barge going through treacle", this adds to the challenge and gives the game a thoroughly intense and uncompromising edge, which is something sorely lacking from the usual sugar-coated games which rely on spoon-feeding the gamer through to the end. Some of us are fed up with treacle and all this 'casual gamer' bullshit, so when something like *Deadly Skies* comes along it's like a breath of fresh air.

There are many criticisms I could level at the game and your review did make some valid points, but that isn't my point. I just wanted to send out a positive message to those who might have missed out on this gem of a game.

Nick Casey, via email

Deadly Skies is certainly not the best flight sim in the world, but it does offer a lot of fun in an arcade type of way. It's very similar to *Ace Combat* on PlayStation, but has better planes and graphics. The levels are quite samey but it's worth buying second-hand.

Alex Whitaker, Leeds

The "finest looking flight sim ever made," eh Nick? We can only assume you've never seen a PC-based flight sim. Sorry, it didn't do much for us at all.



△ ***Dynamite Cop*: five was generous.**

DYNAMITE COP

REVIEWED: *ODM* #2, 5/10

WE SAID: "Playing can seem like a real grind after a while… It's extremely short – you can fly through it in 20 minutes once you know what you're doing."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

This is possibly the world's easiest game to complete. I finished it on my first go in about half an hour; even the weakest of gamers could finish it first time. The graphics aren't that good and there's nothing new here. I would have to give it 3/10. Sorry if you like the game, but this one should have stayed on paper. If *Zombie Revenge* is like this then I'll be very disappointed with Sega.

Mark Newton, via email

Trust us, *Zombie Revenge* is *much* better than *Dynamite Cop*, although sadly it's been delayed until June. In retrospect we probably were a little generous to *Dynamite Cop* but, hey, it's just a personal opinion. And we did, after all, point out that it's very short.



△ *Chef's Luv Cack*, more like! Ha ha.

SOUTH PARK: CHEF'S LUV SHACK

REVIEWED: *ODM* #3, 3/10

WE SAID: "A lacklustre affair that, even at a few coppers under 30 quid, is simply too slow and tedious to merit putting down the readies for."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

This game was made for Dreamcast! It's the reason Dreamcast has four joypad ports! It's a pure party game. Me and three mates played this and think the game is brilliant.

Fair enough, it does have its flaws. There could have been loads more *South Park*-related questions, and the game could've loaded better between questions, but then, lets face it, who cares about a three-second loading period if you're laughing like idiots?

My Dreamcast games collection includes some of the best out there, including *Soul Calibur*, *Sonic Adventure* and *Power Stone*. *Chef's Luv Shack* is a worthy addition to it.

Paul Lovell, via email

COMMENT

***Chef's Luv Shack* is a party game, true, and if we drunk enough, say, vodka and Red Bulls we would probably have a laugh playing it. But would we *buy* it? No chance – not even at £30. Besides, *South Park* is *so* last-year.**

BUGGY HEAT

REVIEWED: *ODM* #1, 4/10

WE SAID: "Even at top speed you rarely feel as if you're out of second gear... The online stuff's great – it's just a shame that the main game's so weak."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

Hmmm, even though you gave the game 4/10 the demo really impressed me. The graphics are good and the speed is just right as is the lovely, slippy slidey handling as you hurtle round a corner.

Where is the, and I quote, "massive unmarked desert full of slow-down sand"?



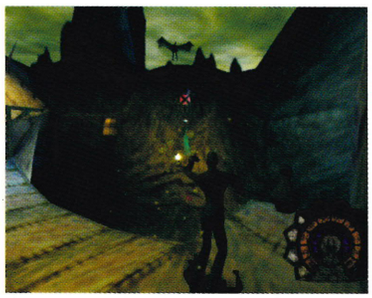
△ *Buggy Heat*: don't buy this game!

If you mean the Egypt track then it has got some dunes on the last couple of corners. And loose sand *does* slow you down.

So *Buggy Heat* is worth at least 6/10. Go on, try it. You might just like it. I did.

James Glen, via email

We can't try *Buggy Heat* again, James – we smashed the disc to stop it upsetting anyone else. Seriously, there's very, very little we like about the game. Forthcoming off-road racer *4 Wheel Thunder* (previewed on page 62) shows just how ordinary *Buggy Heat* is.



△ *Shadow Man*: not bad, but there are better.

SHADOW MAN

REVIEWED: *ODM* #3, 6/10

WE SAID: "A game we've all played before but wearing a voodoo dress and some cheap claret sprayed on the walls, and some real-life serial killers thrown in for shock value."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

I have to say that you guys got it wrong in your *Shadow Man* review. I'm not saying that this game is fault free (the open structure doesn't quite work), but it is an engrossing title with a lot of merit. *Shadow Man* is the only serious adventure game currently available for Dreamcast. I say 8/10.

David Addiman, Basildon

It isn't the only serious action-adventure on Dreamcast now, there's *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* (*ODM* #6, 7/10), *Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver* (*ODM* #6, 7/10), *MDK2* (reviewed on page 70) and *The Nomad Soul* (see page 76). Oh, and the lovely platform game *Rayman 2* (*ODM* # 6, 8/10). None of them are perfect but they all give *Shadow Man* a run for its money.

WHAT DO *YOU* THINK ABOUT THE GAMES YOU'VE BOUGHT?

Send your comments to Reader Reviews, Official Dreamcast Magazine, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Alternatively, email them to letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk with the words 'Reader Reviews' and the name of the game you're commenting on in the subject line. We reserve the right to edit, spell check and add punctuation to submissions before publication.

FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

MISCELLANEOUS

WHAT'S A GD-ROM?
A custom type of CD used for Dreamcast games. They hold up to 1GB (1024MB), which is larger than a regular CD-ROM (650MB).

CAN I COPY DREAMCAST GAMES?
No you can't. It's illegal anyway.

WHY CAN'T I PLAY JAPANESE OR AMERICAN GAMES ON MY UK DREAMCAST?
Dreamcast games use something called 'territorial lock-out', a data track specific to the part of the world in which the game is supposed to be sold and played (ie Japan, Europe or America). This helps stop illegal imports of foreign goods.

WHY DO GAMES COME OUT IN JAPAN AND AMERICA MONTHS BEFORE THEY DO IN THE UK?
Because it takes time to convert them for our TV system (PAL) and to translate them into all the European languages. Games developed in Europe, like *Toy Commander* and *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation*, generally come out first here though.

HOW COME DREAMCASTS COST £100 AFTER CHRISTMAS BUT £200 NOW?
Tower Records held a special promotion in January but only had a limited number at that price. It was effectively just a gimmick to attract people into their stores. If you shop around on the Internet you should be able to get a Dreamcast for under £200.

WILL SEGA BE REDUCING THE RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE OF DREAMCAST?
Eventually, yes, but probably not for a while yet.

WHEN'S DREAMCAST 2 COMING OUT?
A little impatient, aren't we? The average lifespan of a console is five years, so there's a while to go yet.

WHY DO RELEASE DATES KEEP CHANGING?
Making games isn't an exact science, so it's often hard to tell how long it will take to finish them. Games are usually delayed to make them better though. (See the investigation on page 36, *ODM*#6).

WHO'S NAOMI?
Naomi is Sega's latest arcade hardware and it's very similar in design to Dreamcast, so coin-op to DC conversions are easy to do. *Crazy Taxi*, *Virtua Striker 2 (v2000.1)*, *Dead Or Alive 2* and Namco's *World Kicks* are all Naomi games.

WILL ALL NAOMI GAMES COME TO DREAMCAST?
Not necessarily. Some arcade games don't work well as home conversions.

WHY CAN'T MY DC PLAY WINDOWS GAMES?
Because it isn't a PC. Some Dreamcast games use Microsoft's Windows CE technology, but that doesn't make your Dreamcast a PC.

WHEN IS *SHENMUE* COMING OUT?
There's no confirmed release date yet. *Shenmue* is a huge game and the translation will take a while.

WHEN IS *FIFA SOCCER* COMING OUT?
FIFA is published by Electronic Arts, who haven't signed to Dreamcast yet. A version of Konami's *International Superstar Soccer* – which many consider to be the best football game around – is coming sometime though.

WHEN IS...
Arrrgh! If there's any major news on release dates we'll tell you in our news pages. Please, please stop emailing us for information on release dates!

• Have we missed something? If there's anything else you need to know (except release dates!), email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk

MUSIC WEBSITES

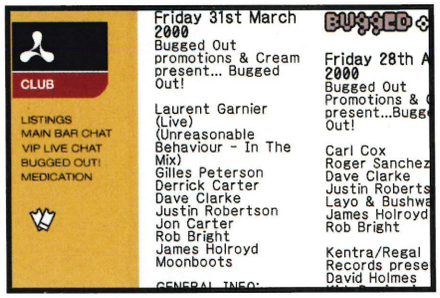
WANT TO FIND THE LATEST MUSIC NEWS, REVIEWS AND HAPPENINGS ON THE NET? LOOK NO FURTHER. **POGGY** CHECKS OUT THE BEST WEBSITES AROUND



ADDICTED TO NOISE

www.addict.com

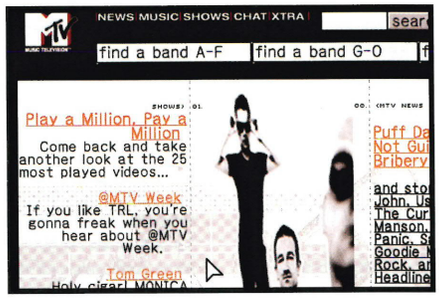
Monthly rock and rap site whose readers' poll proves what we knew all along: that it's okay to like Blur *and* Britney. The debate over whether there's any point buying the new Oasis album if you already own *Sergeant Pepper* rages on.



CREAM

www.cream.co.uk

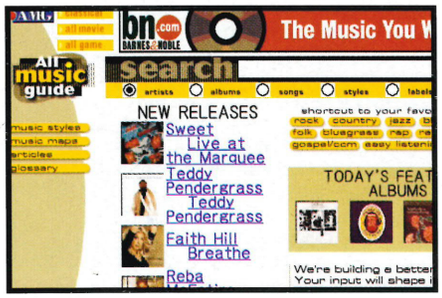
The home of all that is house and garage on the Web, where the UK's original superclub leads you around its CD, clothing and record bag emporium. The ideal solution for those who can't make it off the sofa to go clubbing.



MTV

www.mtv.com

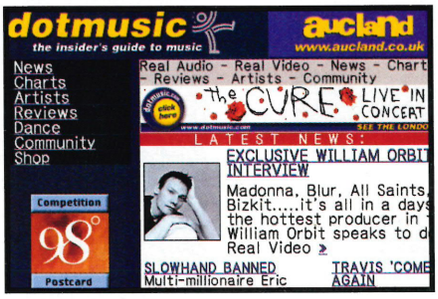
The home of flashing lights and ten-second attention spans that would give your parents an epileptic fit. Take the opportunity to impose your will on the masses by choosing an hour of videos to be shown on digital channel M2.



ALL MUSIC GUIDE

www.allmusic.com

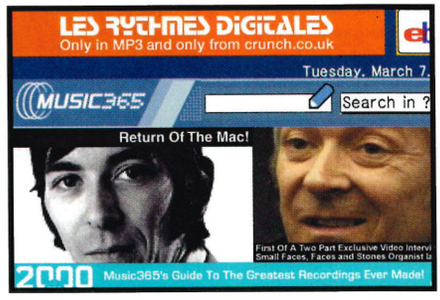
The definitive music database, with most genres catered for and comprehensive cross-linking. Accusations that it's a bit humourless fade when you find you can look up Christina Aguilera while researching Herman's Hermits for your boss.



DOTMUSIC

www.dotmusic.co.uk

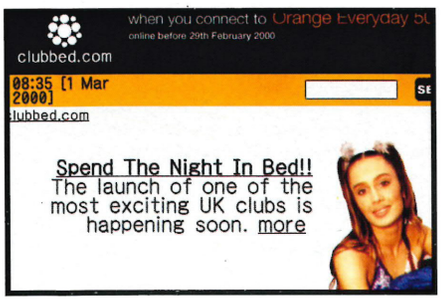
View charts from around the world so you can mock the Scandinavians from the comfort of your own home. You can also marvel at exactly how many bands named after destinations of London Transport made it big over the years.



MUSIC 365

www.music365.co.uk

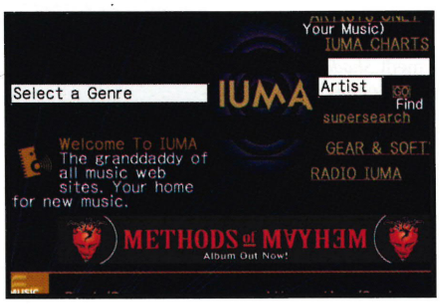
News, reviews and obscure polls. Only 32 per cent of the users said they'd buy a ticket for shouty female rock group L7's raffle for a one-night stand with their drummer. Overly conservative or rightly cautious? You decide.



CLUBBED

www.clubbed.com

Bangin'! Top one, nice one! Clubbing site with a cheesy Quaver feel to it for those who miss the thrill of spending 12 hours in a car park. Can also be translated into a variety of European languages. Sacre spacious!



IUMA

www.iuma.com

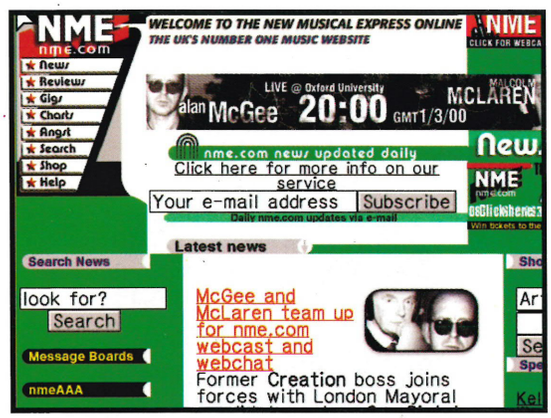
Contact details for thousands of unsigned acts so that your garage band needn't feel so alone. Organise your own folk festival now! Also has the potential to act as an informal dating service for those lonesome goths in provincial towns.



Q ONLINE

www.qonline.co.uk

The NME site's grown-up, more responsible rival brother. Less Boyzone and more Bowie here, for people who thought Kurt Cobain was a cheeky young whippersnapper and that you may as well dance around a car alarm as listen to the Prodigy.



NME

www.nme.com

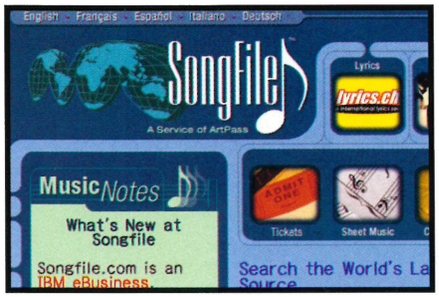
Indie rock-oriented site with added angst. Try the free-for-all chat room to find an outlet for that 'The Beatles weren't really up to much' diatribe that's been boring your mates for the last five years. Daily news updates, live chats plus the chance to buy CDs and tickets online make this an essential site for fans of alternative music, although maximum happiness can be gained from the random quote generator. Fookin' blindin', mate, as Liam Gallagher might say.



RAP MUSIC

www.rapmusic.com

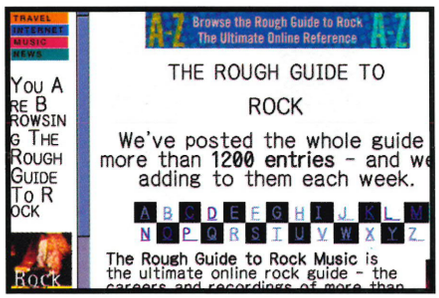
Get down with your homies and sort out your bitches while catchin' the latest in bangin' choons. No word on where to get those UV car lights, but plenty of advice on which backwards cap not to wear this season.



SONGFILE

http://songfile.snap.com/

Settle those long-running *American Pie* arguments on this encyclopedic lyric site: yep, it's 'levee', not levy. Driving a Chevy on to a dry tax is both silly and impractical – not to mention nonsensical. No word on Agadoo, however.



ROUGH GUIDE TO ROCK

www.roughguides.com/rock

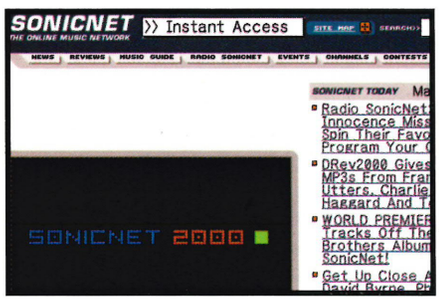
Find out what your favourite band were called before their record company stepped in, with the definitive rock bible. The reviews come from online readers, so here's the place to spread gossip about what AC/DC got up to in your town.



TAXI

www.taxi.com

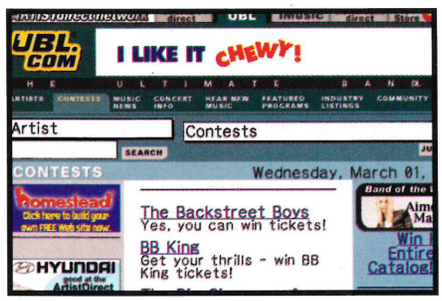
Snatch fame from the jaws of those nasty A&R men who told you that the world didn't need another Take That. Bear in mind that they may have been right about your next-door neighbour's Rick Astley-meets-the-Monkees.



SONICNET

www.sonicnet.com

Perfect for those who love gigs but can't quite come to terms with the crowd-surfing/beer-spilling. Live big-name webcasts remove the need for touts, late-night taxis or leaving your warm bed, but you'll need a PC/Mac.

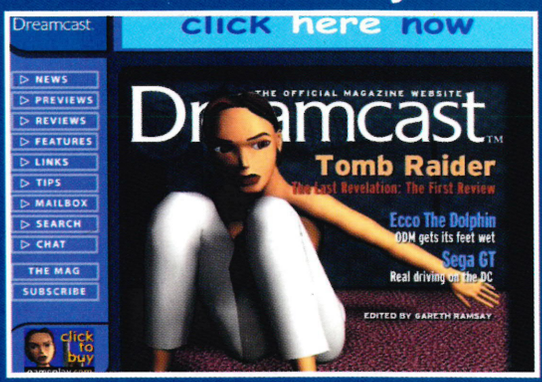


ULTIMATE BAND LIST

www.ubl.com

The place to prove that the band your mate made up in order to sound cool doesn't exist. You can then exact revenge with in-depth knowledge of the latest didgeridoo/barbershop quartet efforts from darkest Kent.

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As well as our ever-growing archive of definitive reviews, previews and features, there's also the chance to make new friends and swap hints and tips with thousands of other DC users in our Live Chat and Chat forums.

www.dreamcastmag.co.uk



△ CHRIS KINGSLEY, 33, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR AT REBELLION

Has been creating top games with his brother for the past seven years, including *Aliens Vs. Predator* on PC.



△ DAVID DAVIES, 22, TECHNICAL ANALYST

A regular *ODM* reader, New Zealand-born Dave has been playing games since the age of six when he started off with the good ol' Sinclair ZX81.



△ FIONA SPERRY, 29, SENIOR PRODUCER AT CRITERION STUDIOS

Started off in book publishing, then moved to Criterion three years ago where she worked on *Redline Racer* and produced *Trickstyle*. Currently working on sequel to *Trickstyle*.

THE BIG DEBATE

TOO HARD? TOO SOFT? TOO LONG? TOO SHORT?

ODM LOOKS AT HOW MUCH VIDEOGAMES HAVE TO OFFER GAMERS THESE DAYS

ODM: In general terms, are games too easy or too difficult these days?

DAVE: For many hardcore gamers like myself, a lot of the games coming out at the moment are too easy. You're not replaying them and you get to the end within a couple of days, so you just end up looking for the secrets and stuff.

CHRIS: From a developer's point of view, one of the things we like to do at Rebellion is give people a *range* of difficulty levels. So on *Aliens Vs. Predator* [on PC] we have easy, medium and hard settings so that people can choose to play it on whatever difficulty level suits them. Also, one thing we put into *AVP* was the number of save games you could have – the higher the difficulty level, the fewer saves you get.



△ ALEX WARD, 28, FREELANCE GAMEPLAY CONSULTANT

Used to work in acquisitions for Acclaim, where he spotted such winners as *Trickstyle*, *Vanishing Point* and *Fur Fighters*.



△ DAMIAN HOSEN, 25, LEAD DESIGNER AT VIRGIN INTERACTIVE

Has just started at Virgin, working on a new game. Before that he worked on Pure Entertainment's PlayStation game *Rat Attack*.



△ MARK MASLOWICZ, 32, MANAGER OF THIRD-PARTY LICENCES AND ACQU ISITIONS AT SEGA EUROPE

Has working at Sega for the last eight years, covering systems like the Mega Drive, Saturn and Dreamcast.

ALEX: Easy games aren't necessarily bad though. I finished *Metal Gear Solid* on the PlayStation in a weekend; there's not that much to do and it's a rather linear experience. Was it difficult? No, it was more a case of a story unfolding in front of you. Once I'd finished it I could've gone back and explored all the extra secrets. Personally though, I only play through games once, but I suppose there's a lot in there if you can be bothered.

ODM: With short but content-rich games, like *Metal Gear Solid*, did you come away feeling that you'd got value for money from the game despite it being easy?

ALEX: Definitely. It's an absolutely brilliant game.

DAMIAN: My favourite game ever is *NiGHTS* on the Saturn and I finished that in a day – but I played it for two years! It was easy to complete but it has a lot of hidden depth and has replay value. It's more about skill than just learning the levels and achieving level completion.

MARK: Judging a game's difficulty is a fine line though – you can go too easy or too hard. It's not always easy to judge the level just right, especially for the people who are around the game for 18 months making it. That's why focus groups and things like that have become quite important to get outside opinion from the sort of people who'll ultimately be playing the game.

ALEX: Some developers can sit too close to their games for too long. Acclaim are a prime example. They made *Forsaken* [on PC, N64 and PlayStation], this sprawling shoot 'em up where no one could get past level three! Only the designers ever got past the third level, and we didn't realise! We'd play on the first two levels and say: "The game's doing great, fellas. We can't wait to release it!" It looked amazing but it was so hard!

DAMIAN: I think that's true of the new *Quake* game as well. I think it's become an expert's game now, because if you've never played a *Quake* game before then *Quake III Arena* [on PC; hopefully coming soon to Dreamcast] is too hard. The game caters for the hardcore and is too tough for most people.

CHRIS: I think great games will enable people to play them in the way that they want to. We all play games differently, and great games will cater for this.

FIONA: If you look at arcade games though, the reason they're so wonderful is the way they tell you everything three times, and 80 per cent of the controls are made very clear in the first five minutes. Developers always say that they're going to make their games easy to pick up and hard to master, but so few people actually achieve that goal. Sega's arcade games are the perfect example of getting it right.

ODM: But those games are ▷

PHOTOGRAPHY: **DAN TRENT**



designed for the arcade. What about Sega's conversions – are they adding enough to their Dreamcast ports?

DAVE: Definitely. In the DC version of *Soul Calibur*, the story mode adds heaps of replay value because you want to earn the art and all the other stuff. Also, I remember playing *Crazy Taxi* in the arcade and not finding it very interesting because I didn't last long enough. I was pumping too much money into it because the learning curve is quite sharp. But since I've played it on DC with the extra city I've been converted into a really big fan. I've only just got it, but I know that I'll still be playing it in the future.

MARK: With *Crazy Taxi* we added a whole new city, all the crazy box features and a lot of mini-games; it's not just a straight arcade conversion. If you look at all the ones we've done, like *House Of The Dead 2*, for example, we've added training missions and other stuff. Some games are easier to add new features to than others, but as a rule Sega will always try to add as much as possible to a conversion.

ALEX: It's good for the development team to add more stuff to a game as well. If you're a developer, you're not really interested in doing the same thing again and again. To add new stuff is good fun, because when you did the first version you may not have had the chance to add all the exciting things that you would've really liked to because of deadlines.

SIZE MATTERS

ODM: Turning to the other side of the coin, Bruno Bonnel, the head of Infogrames, said recently that games are actually too long these days, and that there's no need for end sequences because nobody bothers playing games all the way through. What are your thoughts on that?

ALEX: I'd say that it takes more than a bald head and a smart pair of glasses to work out this games industry. I read his quote and I think it's unbelievable how he can say just make it short and quick and dumb it down.

CHRIS: I think it depends on who you're aiming at. If you're aiming at the mass market then, to be fair, I think it's a reasonable comment. Personally I'd prefer to put more effort into fewer levels and make them brilliant, rather spread that effort out over more levels.

MARK: Bruno's comments are true to some extent. Maybe on a one-off, short-term basis it doesn't matter so much, but if you're looking to build a brand and customer loyalty then everything counts. I think the more you can add to the package as a whole, the better. For example, when you finish a game you're rewarded with new features.

ODM: How important are end sequences though, when they can cost so much money, time and resources?

CHRIS: I've heard of a few situations where developers have made the last level too difficult to complete so there isn't actually an end sequence!

DAVE: A lot of hardcore gamers will get excited about a game and stuff like its end sequence. They'll talk about it, and people who are 'light users' will listen to them. If hardcore gamers say: "Buy this game!" the light users will. You have to keep hardcore gamers happy, because they're the ones who are helping spread the word.

ODM: And how important is the length of a game?

DAMIAN: Surely it's not so much about the length of time as about the *quality* of time you have with a game – a ten-hour game can be much more fun than a 20-hour game. Even *Zelda 64*, which is brilliant, made a lot of my mates give up. Many of them were thinking: "Oh no, not another dungeon." It's like when you go to the cinema: if a movie is five hours long, you'll probably

"SURELY IT'S NOT SO MUCH ABOUT THE LENGTH OF TIME AS ABOUT THE *QUALITY* OF TIME YOU HAVE WITH A GAME... IT'S THE FREQUENCY OF THE FUN YOU HAVE"

– DAMIAN HOSEN



"THEY'RE WORKING ON GAMES THAT WILL JUDGE AND MATCH YOUR PLAYING ABILITY"

– CHRIS KINGSLEY

get bored even if it's the most perfect film ever made. It's the *frequency* of the fun you have – how much fun you have every minute.

ODM: So is it down to quality and not quantity?

[Murmurs of agreement.]

CHRIS: Quality gameplay will always be the most important thing.

ODM: Length and end sequences aside, what about the depth of gameplay in software these days?

FIONA: A lot of people never see the depth of some games! It's only when you see someone who's really good at a game that you suddenly see the next level of depth. That's true of so many games that people criticise, because they never see that depth.

DAMIAN: Yeah, it's like *Virtua Fighter 3tb*: if you're good at it then it's the best fighting game ever, but 99 per cent of people aren't good at it because it has such a steep learning curve and does nothing to bring you in. You have to practice for hours and hours before you actually get good at it.

MARK: With a lot of the games we're talking about here though, a lot of it comes down to the software's artificial intelligence. Take football: there's no next level to go to, it's a straightforward game. A lot of the longevity appeal is down to the AI and how well it's done.

COUNTRY CODES

ODM: Turning to the worldwide scene, how are games tweaked for different territories?

CHRIS: Well, there are a huge number of ways in which you can tweak the difficulty: the number of monsters, hit points, how often they shoot, how accurate they shoot, the amount of damage you take when they hit you, and so on.

FIONA: US publishers always say you've got to make the game easier!

MARK: Japan tends to have the easiest games, then America, and finally Europe, which wants the toughest games. That's not to say we're the best games players here in Europe, it's just the way people here like their games.

CHRIS: I think it's also to do with attention span. In general the Americans have a shorter attention span. Or so everyone tells us. [Laughter erupts all round, with almost everyone proclaiming: "It's true!"]

FIONA: It's like American advertising – really obvious: "It's a car. Buy it!" We like irony over here, but in the States it's just in your face, and that's the kind of games they like.

MARK: In Japan people like to be lead through the game, like in the *Final Fantasy* series, whereas less linear games like *Tomb Raider* have been less successful. If Core wanted *Tomb Raider* to be successful in Japan, they'd need to insert a guide to offer hints and help. That approach has already proven to be successful – *Crash Bandicoot* is one of the few games that's done well in Japan because they made it a hell of lot easier. They aimed it at younger kids and spent a lot of money marketing it, but they made it so simple that you always know exactly what to do next. It wasn't a difficult game to begin with, and they simplified it even further.

FIONA: That example is actually being used as a case study by European developers to learn how tweaking a game for a market like Japan can be achieved successfully.

ODM: Finally, are there any ideal solutions to the overall issue of the degree of difficulty in games?

CHRIS: Automatic difficulty level adjustment is one thing that people are starting to focus on. They're working on games that will judge and match your playing ability. Lots of people are working on that kind of technology, so I think we'll see it coming out more and more.

ODM: Could that be the ultimate answer to the too easy/too hard question: that the degree of difficulty in a game increases as you become better at it?

CHRIS: In an ideal world. In reality it's not going to happen every time, but that would be the perfect solution. It's much easier said than done though.

LETTERS

Got some thoughts on Dreamcast or your magazine? Well, share them with us and, if your letter is interesting, every other reader (see below for contact details). Editor Warren Chrismas responds to this month's best letters



△ The original Lara Croft, ahem, 'lookalike' Natalie Cook, possibly appearing in a pantomime near you sometime soon.

LORRA LARAS

Rhona Mitra was *not* the first Lara Croft promotion girl, as was stated in the latest issue [ODM #6, April] of your magazine, but the second (and probably most famous). The first was actually Natalie Cook , so there have been a total of four Lara promotion girls – Natalie Cook, Rhona Mitra, Nell McAndrew and Lara Weller – with Ms Weller being the current one.

Sorry to start slagging you off, but I felt it needs to be corrected for all the Lara/*Tomb Raider* fans.

Any chance of putting pictures of models/page three girls or cyberbabes in the back cover (or elsewhere) in the magazine in future?

Andrew, via email

Actually, we didn't state that Rhona Mitra was the first Lara, we said she was "the first model to make her name as Lara Croft". The fact is that Rhona became famous by playing Lara, Natalie Cook didn't. Indeed, our Ed Lomas looks as much like Lara Croft as Natalie does.

As for models in *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, if – and only if – they've got a relevance to Dreamcast gaming (like *Bass Fishing* fan Kate Groombridge featured in issue 2), then yes. Maybe.

HMMMMM...

Metropolis Street Racer – nice!

Rob Payne, Winchester

We take it you saw the rolling demo on last issue's cover disc then, Rob?

OUTRUN!?!

Could you tell me why we Dreamcast owners are not playing *Daytona USA 2*, *Scud Race*, *Star Wars Arcade* and *Virtua Cop? [Er, cos they haven't been released? – Ed]*. Instead we're playing crap like *Speed Devils*, *Tokyo Highway Challenge* and *Re-Volt*!

Yes, we have very good games, but PlayStation 2 owners will have *Ridge Racer*, *Gran Turismo 2*, *Final Fantasy IX* and all the games and developers that made PlayStation *the* console to have.

"We'll be getting *Sega GT*," people cry, but that game's terrible. The tracks are too narrow and sooooo boring, there's no atmosphere (ie cheering crowds), the night-time tracks are beyond a joke...

I don't want too sound negative, but now that PlayStation 2 has been released [in Japan], if Sega don't pull their socks up they could have another Saturn on their hands with Dreamcast. Let's have Dreamcast versions of *Outrun* and all the great games that made Sega stand out from the crowd!

Anthony Fuller, via email

While we have no desire to fill these pages with tedious Sega verses Sony debates (other readers please take note!), we were rather intrigued by the suggestion that Sega should do a new version of *Outrun*. It would be very, very cool,true, but wouldn't you prefer to see stunning *new* games on Dreamcast?

OLD GIT?

When I think of the happy times I've had as a wee lad playing videogames, I realise that with today's games there's something missing and completely wrong, and I've never felt like that before.

I know that I may begin to sound like one of those old computer game gits who think that *Pong* is still the best thing since sliced bread. But I'm referring to the days of 16-bit glory when Sega and Nintendo ruled the roost, and playing games was still a new and hip thing to do.

The games world was still in its infancy, and owning a console made you more popular than Elvis. The concept of playing games on your television was still quite revolutionary, as all we had before that was board games.

Videogames have lost their true greatness and everyone seems to have forgotten the real meaning of playing games – fun! Not for the amazing lighting effects or the surround sound, but for *fun*.

I love games, I really do, and I'm not here to slag people off, say 3D is stopping the playability of future titles, unleash some prejudice I have about game violence, or praise my favourite console over another. I'm here because I wish to let my thoughts be heard and maybe bring some awareness to people who maybe weren't there the first time round.

You may think I'm a preacher of doom or something, but to bring Dreamcast games into this next next gen of games, programmers should maybe look at games gone by to make the games of the future the way they should be. As they say: 'to understand the future you must look at the past.'

Peter Bridekirk, via email

You make some valid points, Peter, and for that alone we've made yours the letter of the month. But it *does* just sound like you're getting old, mate. Tried golf? Proper golf, that is. You know, funny jumpers, long walks and stuff.

DVD AGAIN

Quite a few months ago I heard that the DVD would be out in March. So where is it? Is it coming out, or is another lie from Sega just to get people to buy Dreamcast? I bought a Dreamcast for three reasons: its gameplay, online gaming, and also because it would be DVD-compatible. So far I've got only one of my reasons – the gameplay.

I bought a Dreamcast instead of a PlayStation 2 because I wanted to play online games. Now I read in your news pages that I'll have to wait until "later this year". What chance does Dreamcast have against Sony's superior technology without online gaming? The future for Dreamcast looks worse every day.

Rob Foster, London

Sega have been known to be looking at producing a DVD drive of some sort for a while, but they've never made an announcement regarding a release in the UK.

To be honest, the prospect of a DVD add-on doesn't excite us that much; everyone at *Official Dreamcast Magazine* who's interested in DVD-based movies has already bought a quality standalone player.

As for full online gaming, well, it's taken its time, true, but it's on its way to Dreamcast owners very, very soon. We hope to have full details in next month's issue of *ODM*, on sale Thursday 4 May.

BEEN 'AD?

I'm worried about Sega's promotion – or lack of it. A couple of mates think that *Crazy Taxi* has crap graphics and that *Soul Calibur* has 2D backgrounds. And I can't blame them, because they haven't seen it anywhere, although I know the truth.

When PlayStation 2 comes out later in the year everyone will be saying how good it is. We'll claim that Dreamcast has been doing it for a year already, but they won't believe it cos they haven't seen it.

People need to see what Dreamcast can do, so buy a prime-time advert and show them!

I know what people need to be fed and, believe me, what there is now is not good enough.

Tom Vincett, via email

Sega won't thank us for saying so, but we haven't been overly impressed with some of the marketing either. You're right, they should be showing off the games to the public.

Just one thing though, Tom: if your 'mates' don't know how great Dreamcast games look, why don't you show them yourself? Just an idea.

ADD-ON HELL?

What are Sega up to? When I bought a Dreamcast I was after an out-of-this-world graphical experience, which I got. But every day Sega are coming up with more and more add-ons – Zip drives, DVD drives, digital cameras and even microphones, saving the effort of

GOT SOMETHING INTERESTING TO SAY ON DREAMCAST OR THIS MAGAZINE?
Email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk or send a letter to Mailbox, ODM, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Please note: all letters and emails sent to us are read by all the ODM team. While we respond when we can, we simply do not have the time to send personal replies to everyone. Sorry! Also, we reserve the right to edit letters before publication.

actually pressing any buttons. I feel that these things are ruining the gaming experience.

I didn't set out to buy a PC that requires assembly, and I'm getting worried that Sega aren't going to concentrate on game development. The main reason I bought a Dreamcast was for the games.

Jeremy, Gillingham

And games are Sega's business! The peripherals are, by definition, just extras. With the odd exception (like the Japanese voice-activated pet simulation *Seaman* which comes bundled with a microphone), you don't *need* to use extra equipment to play games.

Anyway, some games are much *better* with peripherals. Have you tried playing *House Of The Dead 2* without a light-gun, or *Sega Bass Fishing* without the rod controller? Oh, and for the last time, Sega have *not* announced a Dreamcast DVD drive. Arrrrgh!

REALLY AMAZED

I've recently bought a Dreamcast and I think it's good, but not good enough. I expect more from games like *Sega Rally 2*, which isn't much of an improvement on the first one. I've played quite a few games and I haven't seen any really amazing graphics except maybe in *Soul Calibur*.

Admittedly, sending emails and going on the Internet is great, but you can't print anything. Are Sega going to bring out a printer? When are we going to get games that show Dreamcast's full potential?

David Reddin, via email

Sega Rally 2 is a first-generation Dreamcast title. While fun to play, it isn't particularly stunning in terms of graphics, which is one of the reasons why we gave in eight out of ten (way back in issue 0). Check out more recent titles such as *Crazy Taxi* (*ODM* #5, 9/10), *Rayman 2* (*ODM* #6, 8/10) and *NBA 2K* (*ODM* #5, 8/10) to get a better idea of what Dreamcast is capable of.

Sega have made no announcement regarding a Dreamcast printer, and here at *ODM* we think it's highly unlikely that they'll ever produce one.

WAITING GAME

It's kind of annoying to find out so late that Eidos are releasing *Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation* and *Soul Reaver* on Dreamcast when I've already bought them on PlayStation. The Dreamcast version of *Soul Reaver* is a lot faster, more exiting and has better graphics, and I have no doubt that *Tomb Raider* will be much the same.

***Urban Chaos* and *Fear Effect* are both coming out on PlayStation soon, but I'd be prepared to wait longer if there were Dreamcast versions being made. Any possibility? *Ecco The Dolphin* and *Hidden & Dangerous* both look fantastic, by the way.**

Maurice Pierse, via email

We understand your frustration, but there's obviously no way of knowing which platforms a game will appear on until the developer or publisher makes an announcement. With Dreamcast now established, however, we expect a lot more simultaneous releases (or at least announcements) in the future.

Incidentally, while there's no news on a Dreamcast version of *Fear Effect*, Eidos have announced that *Urban Chaos* is coming – check out page 31 for details.

YOU WANT MORE?

I really love your entertaining, review/preview/news-packed magazine, but could you just have a few more lovely pages? I struggle to read slowly, so I always finish reading before the next exciting issue is out. Sorry to offend or upset you excellent news collectors and so on, but I'm just used to reading fast.

Although I may seem a little unappreciative, I'm not. I read these great magazines you write inside and out. It really is that good! A great price (well, it *has* got a demo on it), loads of perfectly presented reviews, previews etc. What more could I ask for but a few more pages?

Giorgia Brigg, aged 10

We think you're excellent Giorgia. No, not because you've written nice things about us (although that's appreciated, of course), but because your hand-written letter didn't contain a single spelling or grammatical error. Please remember to include your address next time though.

Anyway, to answer your point, we'd love to produce more pages – and we probably will in the future – but the mag is very hard work for us as it is. Indeed, we're answering these questions at… well, let's put it like this: long past your bedtime!

ASK SEGA

Every month, you can to talk directly to Sega. Send us your questions and we'll put them to the people behind the world's greatest console

THIRD-PARTY TIME

I read about Sega officially licensing MadCatz and Interact to make Dreamcast peripherals. What does this mean? Will things made by other companies not work as reliably?

Damon Russell, Orpington

SEGA: MadCatz and Interact have both proved their ability to produce peripherals that are 100 per cent compatible with Dreamcast, to the same standard that we manufacture our own products. You should only use officially licensed products with your Dreamcast, as it's the only way to ensure you won't face any incompatibility problems. This very magazine is a shining example of the quality you can expect from a licensed product!

NET HEADS

I've seen an advert for a standard £9.99 charge per month for free evening and weekend Internet use with BT Internet. Is this available to Dreamcast owners?

Michael Caller, via email

SEGA: Our call charges for using Dreamcast online are set across Europe, and there are no plans to change them at the moment. Thanks to our partnership with BT, all online Dreamcast users in Europe benefit from local call rates, regardless of where they're calling from.

PICTURE THIS

When will the DreamEye digital camera be released in this country?

Mike Lees, via email

SEGA: The DreamEye was only just announced in February at the Milia show in Cannes, France. We're hoping to bring this innovative peripheral to Europe early in 2001.

POCKET SNOOKERED

There's a rumour going round that you're going to trade [the intellectual properties of] *Sonic* with Nintendo for *Pokemon*. Is it true?

Andrew Owen, via email

SEGA: I'm afraid that it's just a rumour. However, *Sonic* has just appeared on the Neo Geo Pocket Color hand-held console.

IRISH INTERNET

Could you tell me when the Dreamcast Internet service will be up and running in Ireland? The games have been great so far, but I'm itching to get online.

David Murphy, Dublin

SEGA: We're happy to confirm that our consumers in the Republic of Ireland will be joining the Dreamcast online community in time for Easter.

SIZE MATTERS

Have you got any plans to release larger memory cards?

Glyn Sanderson, Ilford

SEGA: Not at the moment, we're afraid.

ON THE BALL

I've just read in the March issue of *ODM* that Sega are releasing a new, greatly improved version of *Worldwide Soccer*. Does this mean I can send back my pants original version and swap it for the new one without charge?

Nick King, Sheffield

SEGA: Of course! You can also take this issue of *Official Dreamcast Magazine* back to the newsagent and get it replaced every month with the new one, completely free of charge!

[For the benefit of readers who still believe in the tooth fairy, that stateemt was an example of sarcasm. This is no more likely than the possibility of exchanging your old *Worldwide Soccer* for the new one.]

HOW TO BOOKMARK

I can't seem to be able to bookmark pages. I follow the instructions, but it doesn't work. What am I doing wrong?

Bryan Murray, via email

SEGA: To add and save a bookmark, follow these steps. Once you're on the website you want to bookmark, pull the right trigger to bring up the menu. Highlight 'add bookmark' and press the A button. This adds the address to your *temporary* list of bookmarks. This new address stays on your bookmark list until you switch off your Dreamcast. To save this bookmark permanently, pull the right trigger again while you're on the Bookmarks page, highlight 'save' and select it with the A button. You now need to choose which VM unit you want to save the file on (to make life easy you should use the same VM that holds your DreamKey save data). Once saved, you'll be able to see a small VM icon next to the address in the Bookmarks page, which tells you that it's saved on to the VM. Next time you go online with Dreamcast, use that VM as your memory card and you'll find all your saved addresses in the Bookmarks page.

COP OUT

I know *Virtua Cop 2* is coming out on DC in Japan, but will it be coming out over here?

Mark Botham, Glasgow

SEGA: It's very unlikely. The version on sale in Japan is a simple port of the Sega Saturn game. All our programming teams are working on new games for Dreamcast.

GOT SOMETHING YOU WANT TO ASK SEGA?

Email your queries to us at sega@dreamcastmag.co.uk or send a letter to Ask Sega, Official Dreamcast Magazine, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Please note: each month we chose the best of the queries, pass them on to Sega Europe and print their responses. Before writing, please check that your queries haven't been answered in our FAQs starting on page 115.



YOU KNOW YOU'RE...

...A CRAZY TAXI DRIVER WHEN YOU RISK LIFE AND LIMB ON THE M4

It's good work if you can get it: Geoff Teague has been hurtling around in a bright yellow 'Crazy Taxi' for the last two weeks. And doing his best to get on *Police! Camera! Action!*

"SEGA RAN A COMPETITION in the *Evening Standard* [London newspaper], and they needed somebody to drive the competition winners in the Crazy Taxi to an Arsenal match and a slap-up meal at the Sports Café down in Haymarket. As well as doing freelance PR for them, I also got the job because I love cars like Cadillacs.

"A couple of other people had tried to drive the '68 Cadillac but they ended up bunny-hopping it round the car park – you've got to be brave to drive it. Or crazy. I normally drive a Fiat Panda; the taxi is the equivalent of about eight Fiat Pandas in terms of capacity and area covered. In fact, when it comes to parking we're generally charged for two parking spaces because the car is 20 foot long!

"The response we get from people when we're out on the roads is fantastic. We were stopped in traffic on the A4 once, and a driver offered to swap his Jag for the taxi. He fell in love with it instantly. I was tempted, but I don't think Sega would have been particularly pleased if we'd exchanged motors.

"The most hair-raising moment I've had in the taxi was when driving some journalists to the airport. We were bombing along on the M4 – at a *legal* speed – in the fast lane, and the wind caught the leather cover that covers the hood when it's down. It blew off in the fast lane, so I had to pull over onto the hard shoulder. I then reversed along the hard shoulder for 150 yards and had to run into the fast lane to get the thing back.

"There was no way I was going to jeopardise my future with Sega by telling them that I'd lost the cover! The two hacks were both sitting there saying: 'You're a braver man than us.' I'm sure that the incident will make for a great segment on *Police! Camera! Action!*

"Another time there was a guy in a sports car who'd been following us for a while. He finally pulled alongside us at a set of lights and shouted: '*Gran Turismo* on the PlayStation is the game, mate!' and then proceeded to burn rubber away from us. Unfortunately for him he only got ten yards, because the lights had changed up ahead.

"The strangest moment was when I got an email from a friend in Australia who told me she'd heard that I was driving an open-top Cadillac around London. My reputation has spread across the world!

"The whole experience of driving around in it has been great. People do stop and talk to you when they see the taxi, and lots of tourists want their pictures taken with the car. The only people who aren't impressed are articulated lorry drivers, who look down at you and go: 'Ha!' They smile, but you can tell they're thinking: 'Hey, that's nothing, mate! You may as well be in a Mondeo compared to the size of my truck!'

"I know I'm going to miss the taxi when the promotion for the game is over. I hear they're going to give it away in a competition. It's a great car to drive – as long as you don't have to pay for the petrol. It only does about ten miles to the gallon.

"Ultimately, I would have to say that I am a crazy taxi driver, but a very *safe* crazy taxi driver."

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