THE **OFFICIAL** DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Dreamcast

Dreamcast

ISSUE 11 • SEPTEMBER 2000 • £4.99

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EXCLUSIVE DEMO DISC! 3 PLAYABLE GAMES!

LET THE GAMES BEGIN

SYDNEY 2000 – EXCLUSIVE REVIEW PLUS VIRTUA ATHLETE, UEFA 2001, SEGA EXTREME SPORTS AND MORE



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PLUS...

DEAD OR ALIVE 2
JET SET RADIO
SAMBA DE AMIGO

ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP • SPACE CHANNEL 5 • ECCO THE DOLPHIN PLAYER GUIDE

ON THIS MONTH'S COVER DISC

THREE AWESOME PLAYABLE DEMOS!



VIRTUA TENNIS

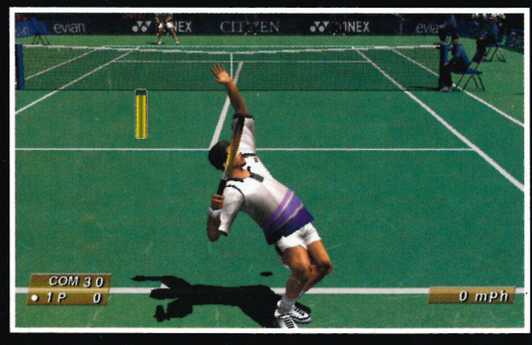
EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO

Play a one-game demo of this ace (sorry) arcade conversion that's heading to Dreamcast in September.

Play as one of four real pros, including the nation's favourite Tim Henman. Or maybe you'd prefer the all-round skills of American Jim Courier, Cedric Pioline of France or German's Tommy Haas. Try them all, as they all have very different skills.

The finished game will feature plenty more stars, and some unique modes, including the chance to play on the grass at Wimbledon. So, until the full game is released, use the hard court of Australia to practice, or perfect your backhand in a game of doubles on clay.







F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX II

EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO

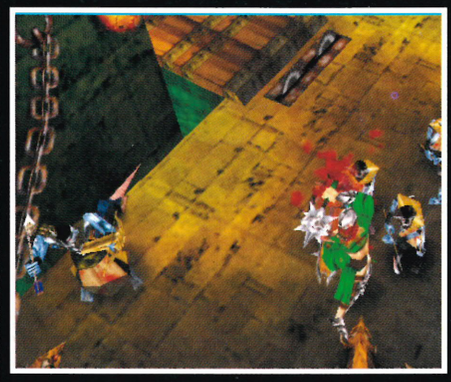
The sequel to the popular F1 racing game is set to feature greater realism in both the car handling and the look of the circuits.

See for yourself in a one-level demo that enables you to compete in a three-lap race around the Hockenheim circuit, home of the German Grand Prix, with a choice of McLaren, Arrows and Jordan cars. The new game is based on the 1999 season, so you can still race as Damon Hill during his goatee phase, or see which of Hakkinen or Coulthard is the better of the McLaren drivers.

If you find the going tough, you can practice using a Tutorial mode that's also included in this demo. The full game is due in the shops in September.







GAUNTLET LEGENDS

EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE DEMO

A two-level demo of this hack-and-slash adventure in which the action never lets up for a second.

Gauntlet Legends is a revamp of a classic coin-op from the mid-eighties, expanded for a new generation of gamers. While the look of the game has changed dramatically, the basic principal and action have been retained: choose a character from a wide range of sword and sorcery types, and prepare to enter a land of orcs, skeletons and killer rats.

The full game features 20 quests, plus plenty of power-ups, magic spells, and items to buy and use as you progress through the adventure. Best of all, get some joypads and gather some friends to see how the game is transformed in multiplayer. *Gauntlet Legends* is available in shops now.

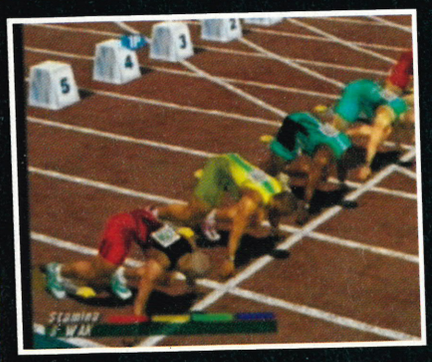




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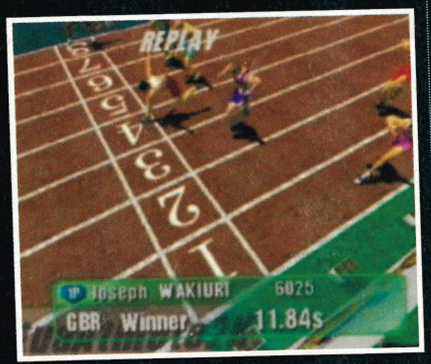
NESTLING ON THE COVER OF THIS COPY OF *OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE* IS THE LATEST INSTALMENT OF DREAMON. WHAT DO YOU GET? READ ON...



VIRTUA ATHLETE 2K

MOVIE

A new sports game from Sega that hopes to capture the spirit and excitement of the Olympics, but without the sweat and pain of competing for real. Here's your chance to participate in a videogame decathlon. With a variety of track and field events featured, the 100 metres, high jump, shot and many more are waiting to be conquered in what could be a multiplayer treat. Set to include online features such as worldwide Net ranking and the ability to create your own athlete, the finished game is set for release in the autumn.





POWER STONE 2

MOVIE

Super-charged sequel to the popular Capcom fighting game, with many enhancements over the original. Now four players can fight each other at once! With multi-tiered levels that can change in mid-bout, four new characters, plus vehicles that add to the fun, this sequel could walk all over its predecessor.



AEROWINGS 2: AIR STRIKE

MOVIE

Another sequel boasting a long list of improvements is the successor to the popular flight simulator. The main incentive for buying *Airstrike* is that the once peaceful game now has weapons! Yes, instead of commercial and leisure craft, you get to play with fighter planes that can blast each other out of the sky. There's also a two-player dogfight mode and deadly military craft, plus the same stunning replays that were present in the original. See review on page 70.



03.08.00

SPORT FOR ALL (LAYABOUTS)



HELLO AND WELCOME to this special sports-themed edition of *Official Dreamcast Magazine*. Football, tennis, basketball, downhill mountain biking, snowboarding... we love our sports round here. Some of us have even been known to participate in them. Yeah, like, for real.

As you might expect, none of us have come close to breaking the world record for the 100 metres, scoring a hat-trick against Manchester United or winning the Open tournament at Wimbledon in real life.

Thanks to the Dreamcast though, we're sporting legends in our virtual world here in the *ODM* basement. Ed currently holds nearly every record in *Sydney 2000* (reviewed on page 10), Dan is unbeatable at *NBA 2K* (the sequel to which is previewed on page 13), while Alex and I 'rule' at *Virtua Tennis* (which you can try for yourself on this month's cover disc).

Well, actually I'm in the reigning office *Virtua Tennis* champ, but only because I've refused to play Alex since I last beat him. What do you mean that's childish?

Also featured this month are *Samba De Amigo* (see news, page 22, and a preview on page 56), *Space Channel 5* (page 46) and *Jet Set Radio* (page 50). What these Dreamcast-exclusive games have in common is that they're all wholly original. They're also all from one company – Sega.

We often hear from people (admittedly they're usually old and cynical industry types) who say they're getting bored with the gaming scene; tired of new beat 'em ups, football games and racing simulations which are a *bit* better than the last.

Sega should be applauded for bucking the trend and developing games that offer something a little bit different, but will those titles prove to be a success? Ultimately, only you and your wallets can decide after the games are released.

Anyway, we hope enjoy this issue. As always we'd love to hear your thoughts on your magazine and/or the Dreamcast scene in general. You can email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk or write in to Mailbox, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

Next month's issue – which does go on sale on Thursday 7 September – is shaping up to be something very special indeed, so don't miss it. Now if you'll excuse me, I need to rest by blistered thumbs.

Take it easy,

Warren Chrismas
Editor

PS: SUBSCRIBE TO *ODM* AND YOU'LL GET THE MAGAZINE DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR EACH MONTH, OFTEN DAYS BEFORE IT REACHES SHOPS – AND YOU'LL SAVE SOME DOSH! TURN TO PAGE 60 FOR DETAILS.

AN APOLOGY

This month we were hoping to bring you the world exclusive review of Bizarre Creations' stunning-looking driving sim *Metropolis Street Racer*. Unfortunately this has not been possible due to circumstances beyond our control. At the time of *ODM* going to press *Metropolis Street Racer* is due for release on Friday 22 September. We hope to bring you the review and a playable demo real soon.

THE OFFICIAL Dreamcast MAGAZINE

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△ *Sydney 2000*: stage your own Olympic games, now with 200m flying competition.

△ *Alone In The Dark:* well, with a torch.

◁ *Dead Or Alive 2*: "Ah, I've been expecting you."

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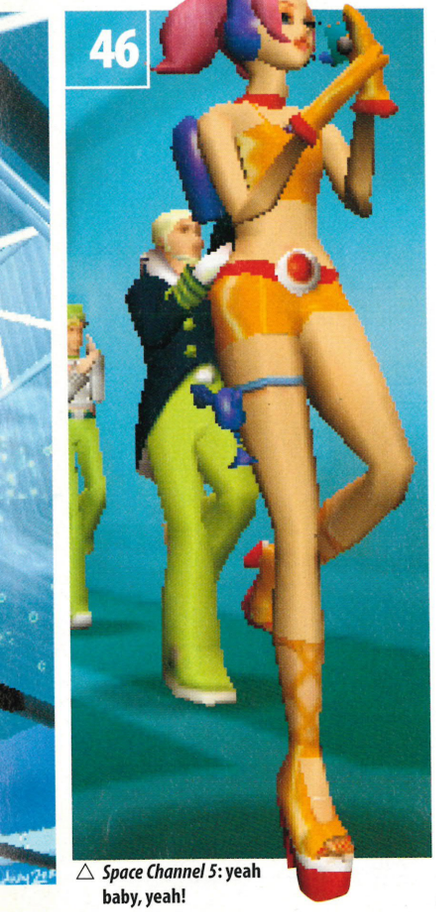
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WHO DOES THIS STUFF?

SOME OF THE PEOPLE WHO HELP MAKE *OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE*



GARETH RAMSAY

Hailing from Aberdeen, the "home of oil and fish", Gareth is in charge of the *ODM* website, describing himself as "an electronic newshound sniffing out stories for *ODM* online". He's been at Dennis for years, and has worked on a variety of online and print computer and games magazines. His favourite game? "Trying to get a controller off one of my 'friends' at our frequent late-night *Soul Calibur* sessions."



POGGY

Describing herself as "the last known cider drinker in London", former *Financial Times* journalist Poggy has been involved in our Four Play and Doorstep Challenge features, and now concentrates on finding the best websites for you to visit on your Dreamcast. Her formal qualifications for this job are "years of experience titting around the Internet when I should have been paying attention to Sudanese grain exports."



SIMON OSBORNE

Bryan Adams lookalike Simon is one of the talented team of designers who ensure that *ODM* looks stylish each month. He's a busy man. Having previously worked on *MacUser,* he's now cultivating a flourishing freelance career for IT magazines on both sides of the Atlantic. He says the best thing about working on *ODM* is "the people" (aw, shucks), and he can't wait to get his hands on *Virtua Tennis*: "I've played the demo and it's fantastic!"



DAVE WOODS

Moonlighting from his day job as Deputy Editor of *PC Zone*, Dave has reviewed *Star Wars Episode I: Racer* for this month's *ODM*. He's under the misguided impression that his home town of Coventry is the spiritual home of football, a delusion which has fed his "fervent" following of Coventry City and his continued misfortune in football bets: "But I am unbeatable at *Quake III Arena*." Favourite Dreamcast games? "*Code: Veronica* and *V-Rally 2*."

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A GUIDE TO THE TELEPHONE NUMBERS THAT MATTER

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19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ
Tel: 020 7631 1433; Fax: 020 7917 3973
Email: letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk
Website: www.dreamcastmag.co.uk

EDITOR Warren Chrismas 020 7917 5672
PRODUCTION EDITOR Paul Henderson 020 7917 5691
REVIEWS EDITOR Ed Lomas 020 7917 5633
NEWS EDITOR Alex Huhtala 020 7917 5634
STAFF WRITER Dan Trent 020 7917 5632
SENIOR DESIGNER Aston Villain 020 7917 5695

CONTRIBUTORS
Radion Automatic, Simon Clemenger, Matt Dymond, Chris Edmondson, Caroline Elliott, Stephen Fulljames, Steve Hill, Joe Howatt, Steve Key, Tim McDonald, Simon Osborne, Steve Owen, Matt Parselle, Adam Phillips, Gareth Ramsay, Joe Roberts, Benjamin Wachenge, Simon Watts, Dave Woods

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Laetitia Jauze, Michael Eavis, our mums and dads

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GROUP PUBLISHER Tim Ponting
PUBLISHER Helen Cribb 020 7917 5644
ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER Mandy Hewitt 020 7917 3873
SENIOR SALES EXECUTIVE Richard Downey 020 7917 7708
GROUP CLASSIFIED CONTROLLER Emma Regester 020 7917 3867
GROUP SALES DIRECTOR Ian Westwood 020 7917 7618
DEPUTY SALES DIRECTOR Duncan Tickell 020 7917 7651
MARKETING MANAGER Paul Smyth 020 7917 3946
LIST RENTAL MANAGER Nerys Church 020 7917 5663
DIRECT MARKETING DIRECTOR Julian Thorne 020 7917 7812
RESEARCH DIRECTOR Lesley Downey 020 7917 7702
EPU MANAGER Sarah Gilliver 020 7917 7715

PUBLISHING DIRECTOR Christine Martin
CIRCULATION AND MARKETING DIRECTOR Sean Farmer
FINANCE DIRECTOR Ian Leggett
MANAGING DIRECTOR Alistair Ramsay
CHAIRMAN Felix Dennis

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What games do you like? Action ☐ Adventure ☐ Sports ☐ Role Playing ☐ Racing ☐

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LET THE



GAMES BEGIN!

OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE TAKES A LOOK AT THE SPORTS GAMES YOU'LL BE PLAYING LONG AFTER THE SUN'S GONE DOWN

THERE'S MORE TO THE sporting calendar than the football season and that annoying bit in the middle of the year when you're waiting for the new football season to start. Believe it or not, some sporting events actually take place over the summer – this little thing called the Olympic Games, for example.

While the world's fastest, strongest and longest-jumping athletes go for Gold in glamourous Sydney, we'll all be stuck here with TV replays of England's classic 1977 Ashes victory covering up the fact that it's bucketing down outside. But thanks to the invention of Dreamcast, this is no longer our only option.

For a start, Eidos are ready to release the official Olympic videogame *Sydney 2000*, which will enable us all to experience the thrill of competing in the greatest sporting event on earth without having to organise travel insurance or wash our shorts.

On top of that there are lots more exciting sports titles in development for our favourite console.

To keep you in a sporting frame of mind throughout the remainder of the British 'summer', we've taken an exclusive look at the most promising of these over the next ten pages. So join *ODM* as we race towards the podium (*ODM* – po-di-um. Geddit? No?) and check out the entrants in Dreamcast's summer sport spectacular.

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SYDNEY 2000

Can't afford to fly across the globe to watch the real thing? Then how about enjoying an Olympics on the relatively cheap from the comfort of your own home? **STEVE KEY** is gets on his marks

THE OLYMPIC GAMES may not be everyone's cup of Lucozade, but seeing as how Great Britain is actually okay at track and field events, the nation feigns an interest for a few weeks when they come around every four years.

Think back to recent Olympics and there's usually something that stuck in your mind as a classic moment. Who can forget Ben Johnson and his steroids; Linford becoming the fastest man on the planet; or Redgrave and Pincent destroying all before them in the rowing? Yes, rowing. You see, the most mundane sports take on added importance in the Olympics. Even the opening ceremonies can be recalled, like in Barcelona 1992 when an archer fired a flaming arrow to ignite the Olympic flame – and missed.

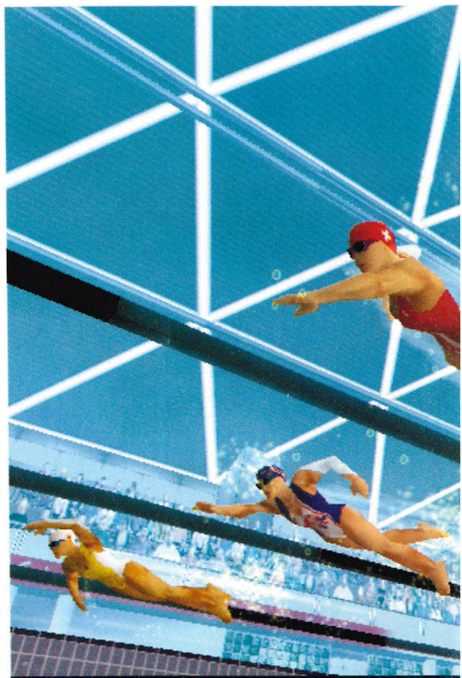
And that's the point – the Olympics are a huge event in both real and videogames terms. Gaining the official licence is something of a coup, even if all it means is that the big company bosses get to go to the entire event for free. *Sydney 2000* for Dreamcast has promised much, including lavish visuals, lush TV-style replays and ultra-realistic gameplay. Now it's time to see how much of it has been delivered.

Sydney 2000 is split into two main modes of play – Arcade and Olympic. These are primarily geared towards multiplayer and single-player respectively, which is rarely seen in games of an athletic nature. Selecting Arcade throws you right in at the deep end, as it were, putting you into the finals of each of the 12 featured events. You then simply pick whichever one of those that you fancy competing in. There's a fair variety of events available, but most still require you to frantically pummel the buttons until your fingers bleed. Said buttons can be configured to suit your style of play, as long as you have two 'power' buttons to build up speed or strength, and an 'action' button to make runners dip for the line or throwers set their angle of release, for example.

Perfecting your own personal style for using the power buttons is essential. The key is having the button layout configured in a way that enables you to hit the action button easily while building up speed, and also keep the pad steady and secure while you hammer away like a lunatic. Many people will use pens, bits of plastic or anything small and solid to act as an aid and to prevent fingertip skin melting, but it's an unwritten gaming law that this is cheating. To be a true *Sydney 2000* champion you must use fingers alone.

EVENT HORIZON

Let's take a quick look at the way each of the events plays. First up, the two track events – 100m and 110m hurdles – work in a similar and simple fashion. As soon as the gun goes, you whack the power buttons alternately as fast as you can. Hurdles obviously require you to jump, but once you've got into the 'ten steps then jump' pattern it becomes easy. Dipping at the end can also make a difference to an



△ Swimming is all about stamina. And water.



△ As of the 2000 Olympics, competitors in the skeet shooting have to wear blindfolds. Yes mate, that's a gun you've got there.







△ The classic *Track & Field* events have developed and improved over the years. The pole vault is actually possible now.

ESPN INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD

The great joypad destroyer returns at last! A concerned **ED LOMAS** is trackside

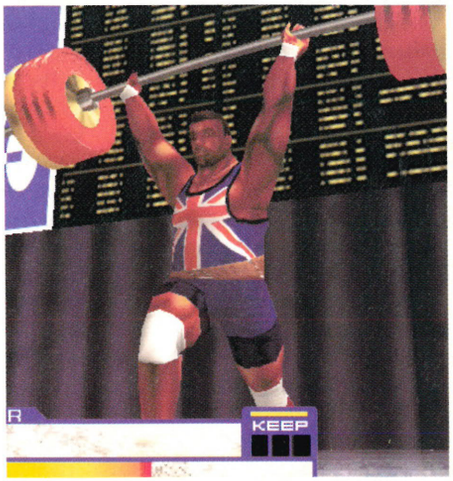
THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **OCTOBER**
PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**
DEVELOPER: **KONAMI**

AS WE REVEALED in last issue's news section (*ODM* #10), Konami's classic sports series is on its way to Dreamcast, and it's looking a whole lot more impressive than ever before. The original '80s *Track & Field* arcade game spread the button-bashing vibe around the world, hooking legions of fans with its simple yet skillful gameplay and wacky sense of humour. A 1996 PlayStation update kept the gameplay almost exactly the same, but updated the graphics with 3D characters and arenas. Now it's being brought into the 21st century with an all-new Dreamcast edition.

Along with all the original *Track & Field* events – including the 100 metres, javelin, long jump, and discus – the new edition will feature events like weightlifting and skeet shooting to add even more variety. Gameplay-wise, things will stick to the traditional method of hammering two buttons alternately as fast as possible to set your power level, then pressing or holding an 'action' button at exactly the right moment to throw something, dip for the line, jump, or whatever. Details such as close-up slow-motion replays from multiple angles will add to the tension and let you see exactly where you went wrong – or right.

Graphically, the Dreamcast version is already looking fantastic, with solid, detailed characters and locations, as well as lovely, smooth motion-captured animation. Expect a full exclusive preview of *International Track & Field* in an issue of *ODM* very soon.



△ Geri Halliwell's influence on fashion is still visible.

△ Watching the slow-motion replays lets you work out exactly how you could improve your technique. It'd be nice if you could improve your costume as well – green and orange? With his legs? Ooh, no.





△ You can tell from these screenshots how lifelike the animation is – you can see how everyone is running differently. But oh, those costumes! That yellow and black number really is a shocker.

athlete's placing in close races, so don't be afraid to use that either.

Swimming is exactly the same except that the event is considerably longer – you need arms of steel to maintain a serious pace without flagging. The action button is used to spin-turn at the end of a length, and to make a last-minute stretch for the finish. These race events are bound be the most popular of the lot, because they simply require speed and not much else.

Hammer and javelin, the two field events, are also easy to get the hang of. Both initially require you to hit the power buttons repeatedly to build up speed. The javelin thrower then runs towards the line, and when he gets close enough to it an angle meter appears and the speed he's running at freezes. You must then decide when to press and hold the action button, stopping it as close to the ideal angle of 45 degrees as possible, but still keeping within the throwing area.

The hammer is even easier, as there's an idiot-proof meter to show you when to release the power button. As the rotation speed increases, a marker moves along the blue section of the bar. When it gets to the green section you must press and hold the action button, letting go of it exactly as the green part changes to red. Doing this perfectly gives you a 45-degree angle release of the hammer at exactly the right time.

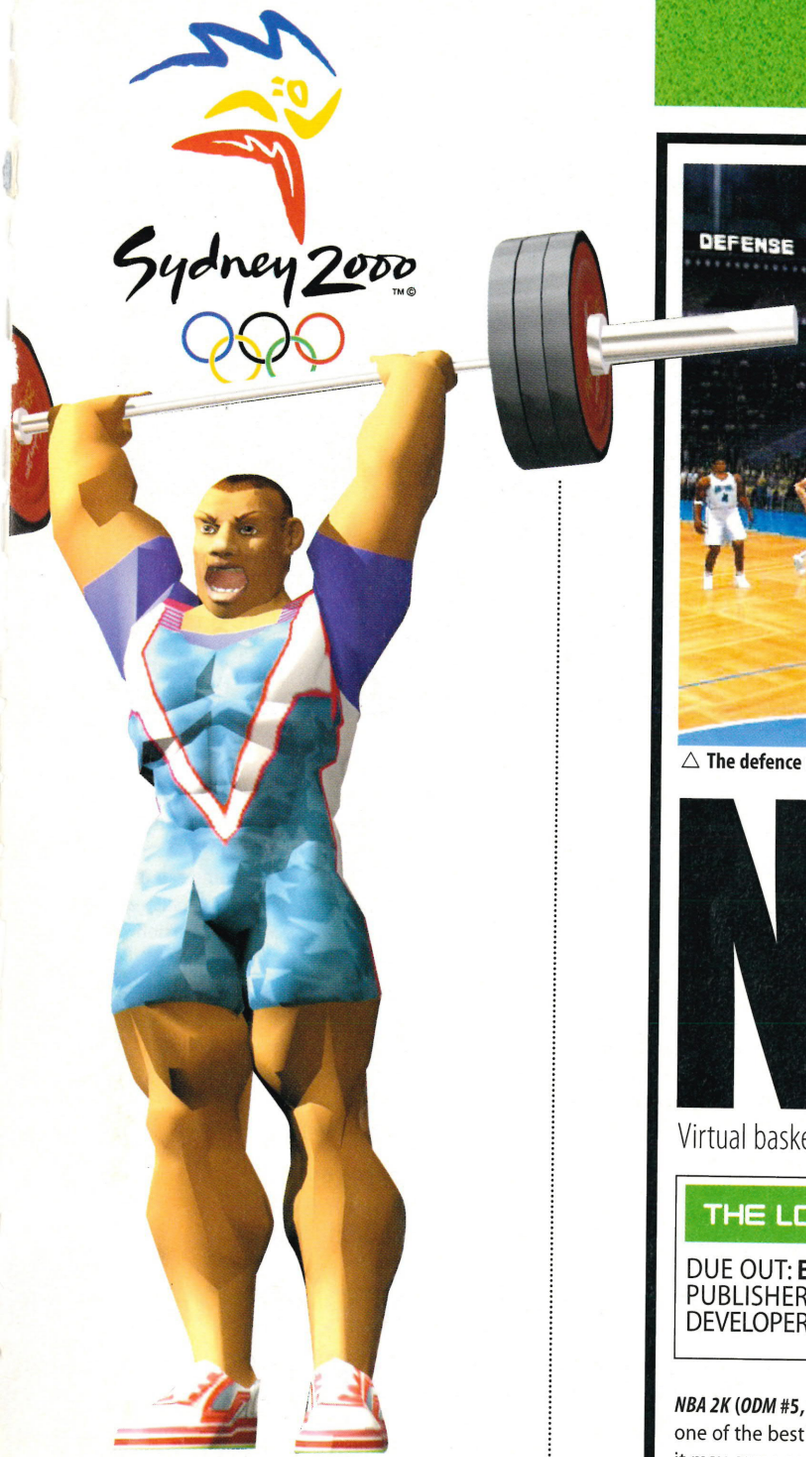
There are similar 'idiot'-proof modes built into the other events. In the triple jump, you must press and hold the action button to perform the first take-off, but after that it's just a case using the action key again to stop the second and third angles at 45 degrees. The high jump is similar in that as a jumper approaches the bar they perform a tiny skip of sorts, telling you that you need to press the action button now. If you hit the button exactly as the jumper hops up that small distance, you get extra spring needed to clear the bar.

The less familiar events, such as skeet shooting and kayaking, need a fair bit of skill in order to get the best scores. Shooting is good, because the target doesn't move around the screen as it would if you had a small weapon; it's supposed to be a great big shotgun, so everything is a lot slower and more difficult to line up. It also has a hefty kickback, so lining up for the double clay pigeons becomes even harder.

Kayaking is just a case of manoeuvring your way through 21 gates in the correct order and direction (some need to be paddled through from the rear) while trying to use the water current to your advantage.

Cycling adds a stamina element, because it has an overall energy level for your team of bikers. Going like the clappers from the start will get you into an early lead, but the lack of power will slow you down to a crawl, giving the other team a chance to nip in. Each of your three team members must perform one lap before you retire them by using the action button.

The diving uses a colour-coded icon system to show you when and where you're supposed to press each button to perform the dive you've selected. Each pre-selected dive is rated with a degree of difficulty (3.5+ being the most difficult), and divers are judged on



technique, how quickly the dive was performed, and the quality of entry their into the water.

And finally there's weightlifting. Apparently the 3D strongmen have been created with facial motion-capture to accurately reflect the immense strain and physical effort that goes into lifting dangerously heavy weights. There definitely is facial detail, but one can't help but wonder whether it was just very constipated people who were used to capture that authentic forehead-bursting strain look. When you see the expressions you'll see what we mean. As for controlling the event, in addition to using the power buttons to get the bar above the lifter's head, the action button must be pressed at two key points. The first comes as you get enough power to get the weights to



△ The defence may well be tighter, but there'll still be plenty of slam dunks, all in gloriously smooth detail.

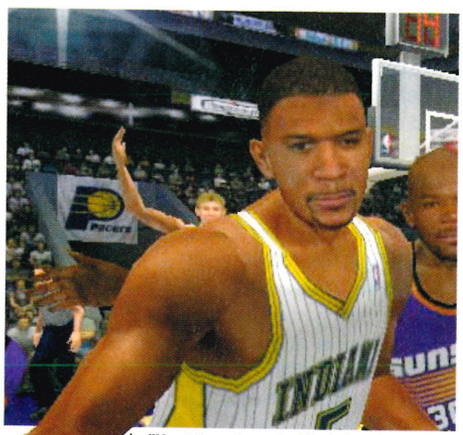
NBA 2K1

Virtual basketball over the Internet? **DAN TRENT** has his fingers firmly crossed

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **EARLY 2001**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **VISUAL CONCEPTS**

***NBA 2K* (*ODM* #5, 8/10)** is widely accepted as being one of the best hoop-shooters on any platform, so it may come as a surprise to hear that work is already well under way on a sequel. Visual Concepts, the developers of both *NBA 2K* and *NFL 2K* (which unfortunately never saw a UK release), have earned something of a star reputation on the back of their Dreamcast sports titles, and they haven't been resting on their laurels. In addition to more general improvements, all the '*2K1*'-flagged games will feature full online play, bringing us the exciting possibility of network gaming for up to eight people (four on each Dreamcast).

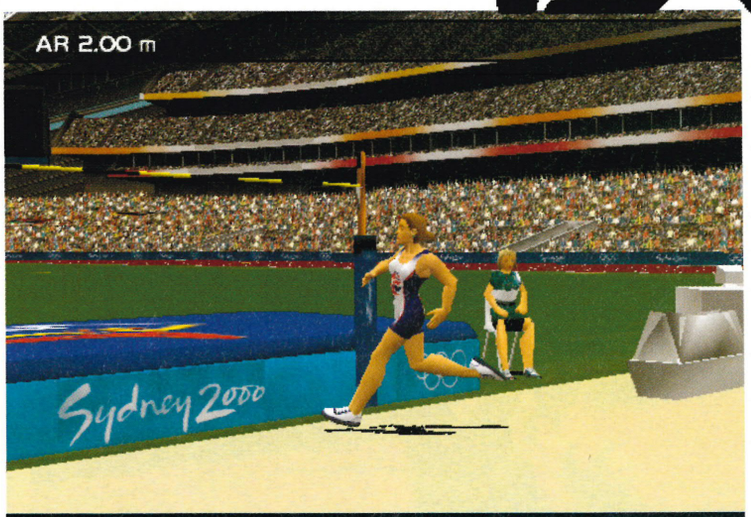


△ "Hey! Over here, behind the big guy!"

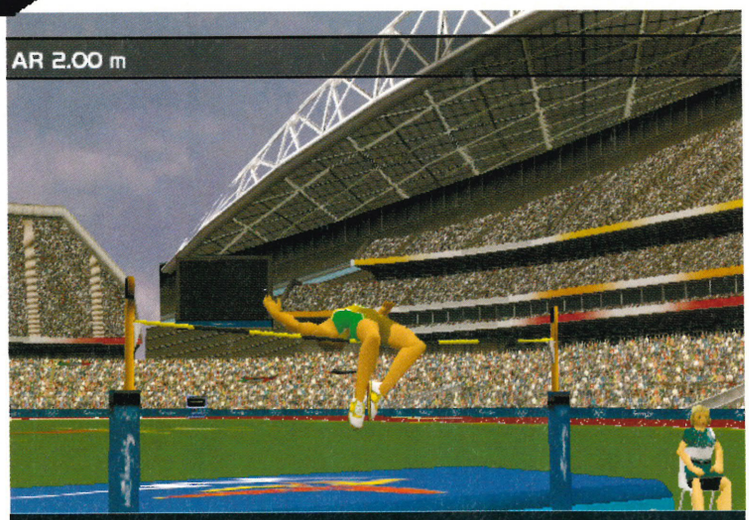
In a move aimed to silence sceptics about the practicalities of online play, Sega demonstrated *NBA 2K1*'s abilities with a live showcase match at their party at the recent E³ show in Los Angeles, with rapper Ice T taking on a competitor playing in San Francisco. The game moved with all the speed and accuracy you would expect from the *2K* games, although the exact details for the European market remain unclear at this time.

As important as the online aspect is, there's a great deal more to get excited about with *NBA 2K1*. As you would expect, general gameplay and graphics have been improved, but the managerial side of things has been greatly enhanced to give you far wider control over your team. You'll be able to sign new players and scout for promising newcomers who you reckon have the potential to reach the top, plus 'smart' VM features mean that you'll no longer need to use a whole VM to save your game; you'll save only what you need.

The previously offensive-friendly play has been modified to strengthen the defence, and increased use of motion-capture should ensure that matches are as slick to look at as they are to play.



△ The graphics are relatively simple, but stylish. That judge looks like a blow-up doll though.



△ Oooh, it's close! The bar's bending, but it might not fall. The inflatable judge looks enthralled.

your chest, the second is when lifting them above your head. Then whack those buttons furiously to keep the whole lot steady and you'll clear that weight.

KEEP IT REAL

The Olympic mode is the second main section to play and, as we've touched on already, is rather surprisingly aimed solely at the single player. With the Arcade mode supplying you with all the best athletes in the events at the touch of a button, the Olympic option puts you right back at the start of a career, with the job of training and producing athletes of the highest order.

The way you do this is quite novel and interesting. You have the choice of all 12 events, each of which has three levels of skill. One athlete is required for each event, and you can train for as many or as few of the competitions as you wish. Each athlete has four attributes linked to the sports they're hoping to excel at, and a percentage rating for each. By entering the virtual gym and perfecting the tasks set for them, small amounts are added to the attributes of each athlete. There are two virtual gym workouts for each event, with a third unlocked once you start to progress through the ranks. Once you have completed one of the gym sessions, the stats increase to show your unproven potential. When you feel that you're ready to test how far you've come, you head out to the practice track to pit your skills against one opponent – the clock. You must qualify for your first competition by finishing with a set number of points, time or distance, thus giving you the chance to progress further. In the beginning, however, the athletes will be much more laborious because of their reduced ability, increasing the need for you to quickly run through the lower ranks. Once you've qualified from the first level of competition, your potential will be realised and your previously unrealised statistics will stay with you permanently. Basically, it's all about finding what you're capable of, and then proving yourself for real.

Once you've realised your potential, there are more difficult versions of the same training exercises to complete, and some frantic button bashing is in order. Don't think that all this training is restricted to playing against the computer – you can save your team of wonder athletes on to VM and take them to a friend's house to pit them against his or her home-grown team.

PLASTIC FANTASTIC

There's an unusual graphical style to *Sydney 2000*. You may think some of the screenshots here look quite strange, but it's a deliberate and consistent look throughout the entire game. The animation is very good, if a little odd in places. It's difficult to pinpoint exactly why it's weird, and it's not necessarily a bad thing, but it's as though the athletes are made up of a cross between super-realistic detail and a strange, rubbery, elastic band kind of texture.

The commentary is a strange old bird as well. Each territory has the genuine Olympic TV commentators doing the voiceovers for the game, and in our case it's BBC stalwarts Steve Ryder, Stuart Storey and Paul Dickenson waxing lyrical. But the comments from each of them don't flow together at all, giving a very disjointed feel. You can almost hear the machine picking a random selection from a phrase book for each of the events, and throwing them out in a variety of tones and pitches.

The four-player mode is always good fun, but play can grow dull after a while, especially if the people playing are of widely varied standards of skill. The ability to turn the replays off is a very useful addition, and one we recommend you do from the start – continually skipping them after every attempt at an event is tiresome to say the least.

Much has also made about the potential for Internet use within the game, such as being able to download new world records as and when they're broken in real life, but sadly everything has been dropped due to time constraints. You can't help feeling that another opportunity to really do something with the Dreamcast's Net capabilities has been passed over in the rush to get the game out. Admittedly this is a more time-sensitive game than most, but even so it's still frustrating

Sydney 2000 is a good game, but it lacks the pull that made games such as *International Track & Field* (DC version previewed on page 11) so popular. If you want to get some friends around and have a good laugh over the summer, don't waste your time watching the Olympics – play them instead. But be ready to buy something else to keep you going through the autumn.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**
DEVELOPER: **ATD**

"THE FOUR-PLAYER MODE IS ALWAYS GOOD FUN"

VERDICT

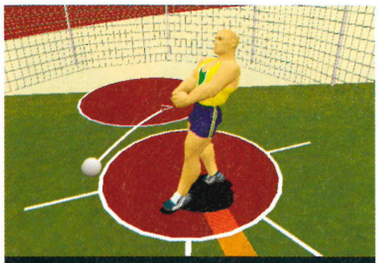
YOU'LL WEAR YOUR FINGERS TO THE BONE – AND ENJOY IT

UPPERS
Good variety of events • Quality one-player mode • Good long-term value • Difficult in the harder skill level

DOWNERS
The replays get a bit annoying • No real VM use or Internet capabilities • Disjointed commentary

IN ONE HOUR Got through the first two disciplines in the Olympic mode
WEBSITE www.eidosinteractive.com
CHECK OUT www.olympics.com/eng for the official Sydney 2000 Olympic Games site
MAX PLAYERS 4
VIDEO MODES Full-screen 50Hz, VGA compatible

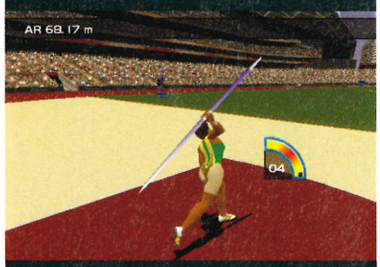
ODM RATING OUT OF 10
7
GOOD



△ There's no need to watch your athlete...



△ ...just concentrate on the coloured bars.



△ Get your angle right and it's a new record.





△ The players were all too shy to pose for a screenshot, and hid behind our virtual camera. Sorry.

EUROPEAN SUPER LEAGUE

Fantasy Football is coming to Dreamcast. **ALEX HUHTALA** is your statto

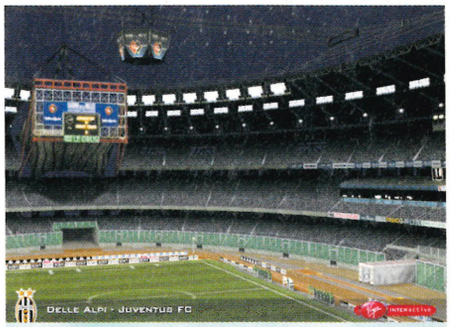
THE LOWDOWN

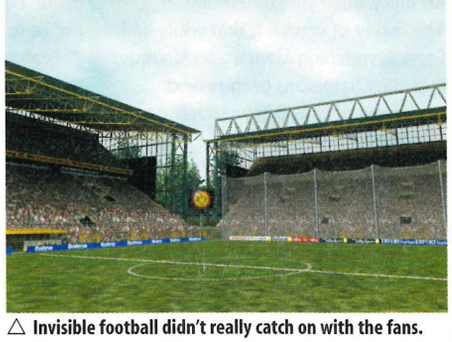
DUE OUT: **NOVEMBER**
PUBLISHER: **VIRGIN**
DEVELOPER: **CRIMSON**

FOR YEARS THE BIGGEST European football clubs and the richest of TV bosses have been trying to form a breakaway European super-league. Unfortunately for them, the expanded format of the Champions League has put any such project on the back burner. But what could you expect from the cream of Europe battling it out week in week out? *European Super League* should provide the answer, bringing together the top teams in Europe with the sole of proving who really is the best.

The emphasis in *European Super League* is clearly on realism. Real players and stadiums are set to be included, as the biggest clubs from each country are being licensed individually. Unfortunately, due to this process we can't bring you any screenshots of the players yet, as negotiations between developers Crimson and the clubs concerned is still ongoing. While no teams have been confirmed for inclusion, Man Utd and Liverpool are expected to represent the best of the Premiership in the game.

We can, however, show you the stadiums to convey the accuracy the game is aiming for, and tell you about some of the planned features. Most interesting of these is the way free kicks and corners are taken. The technique is similar to that seen in most golf games, with a power bar that requires you to tap a button twice to set the power, and then again for the accuracy of the kick. If it's implemented well this could be quite a skilful innovation.





△ Invisible football didn't really catch on with the fans.

Hopefully the inclusion of the best teams in Europe will inspire the programmers to make the best football game on Dreamcast. We'll bring you a better look once the licensing is sorted out.

UEFA 2001

Rejoice! A new football season is upon us, which means even more football games!

STEVE KEY gets ready for the kick off

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **SEPTEMBER**
PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**
DEVELOPER: **INFOGRAMES**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Play as the best European teams
- Ultra-realistic player intelligence
- Actual crowd reactions
- Detailed player physics

FORTY-THREE DAYS isn't a great deal of time. Okay, so if you were, say, God, you could have created the Earth six times over and had a bit of time left over to have a go at building Rome. But for mere mortals it's the amount of time between the end of Euro 2000 and the dawn of the new 2000/01 football season. Forty-three days in which to dream about your team going on a decent Cup run, avoiding mid-table mediocrity just for once or, if you're really lucky, qualifying for Europe.

The reality, of course, is that while half of Essex is watching Manchester United play in the Champions League next season, most of us will have to rely on Dreamcast footie games to bring some continental magic into our lives. And *UEFA 2001* could well be the game we're all playing.

Strictly speaking it's not a sequel to *UEFA Striker* (*ODM* #1, 8/10). Although both are published by Infogrames, they have each been created by different development teams: Rage handled the first game, but Infogrames' in-house team based in Sheffield have been handed the task of making the latest title. "It's a totally new game. There's been no crossover between the two products," explains Jon Watson, development producer for *UEFA 2001*. "I liked the practice and certification modes in *UEFA Striker*, but I think that it was lacking on the player intelligence side of things. In *UEFA 2001* the overall attention to detail is something that everyone will notice immediately, not just in the way the game looks but also in the way it plays."

One of the biggest problems faced by developers of football sims is how to offer something new to the player, over and above what can be found in the wealth of titles already available. And that's something that Jon and his team are well aware of. "Obviously the main rivals will be whatever the latest *FIFA* or *International Superstar Soccer* is," he tells us. "It'll be difficult to break the stranglehold that those two games have on the market at the moment, but we believe that the features our game contains, and the overall playability, will make it difficult for the game-playing public to ignore."

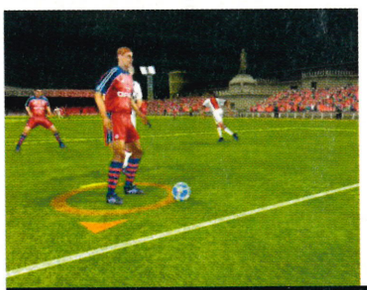
Features such as? "Well, we believe that our artificial intelligence is the most advanced of any football game available. Every player on the pitch is constantly thinking about his position, who is supporting him, the position of the ball and the position of the opposition players. They'll make supporting runs according to the team's formation and style of play, hold their position if necessary, link up with team-mates and so on.

"We have over 20 stadiums, which we believe are the most accurate available in any football game; the stadium

"PLAYERS WILL HAVE REALISTIC ATTRIBUTES"



△ Recognise this stadium? Nope, us neither. We only know Third Division grounds round here.





△ Look at the screenshot on the right – the fans have set off a red flare up in the stands!





△ Obviously someone's not playing too well here. Just check out all those empty seats.



△ Hmmm... that's a nice shirt, mate!

technology is second to none. We have decided to concentrate on the really big teams in Europe, as we believe that it's better to concentrate on quality rather than quantity. This also enables us to model individual players and bring out their attributes." Bad news for Everton fans, then, but it should keep lots of the armchair Barcelona supporters happy.

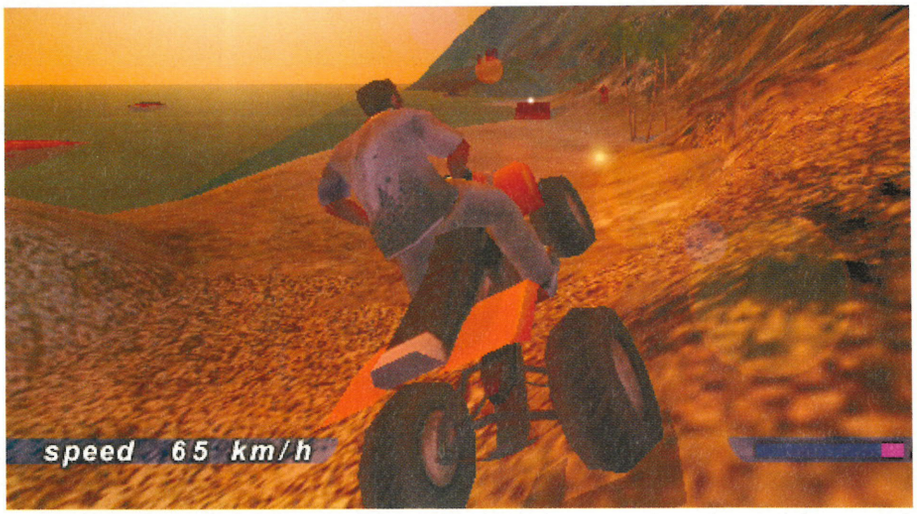
One aspect of football that is usually neglected in simulations is the behaviour of the crowd, but Infogrames are looking to change all that with context-sensitive chants and events.

"The crowd will react to what is happening on the pitch," explains Jon. "So, for example, if your team is losing by a lot your fans will start to leave the ground!" In addition to that there will be specific animation sequences for the spectators, and even home and away fans that will be distinguishable from the pitch.

The more traditional features of football games haven't been neglected. There will be varying weather conditions which will affect the playing surface, plus improved player likenesses. The players will also have realistic attributes – a feature partly inspired by the quality of play during Euro 2000 (and, no, we're not talking about England's shambolic efforts).

"We've adjusted some of the team and player stats to reflect what happened in the tournament," explains Jon. "So you should instantly be able to see that Figo, Rui Costa, and Zidane are very skilful on the ball, Beckham's crossing is the best in the game, and Raul can't take penalties!"

Sounding good? Yeah, we think so too. Look for a full review of *UEFA 2001* in *ODM* real soon.



△ These shots are from an unfinished version of the game, but things are already looking good.

SEGA EXTREME SPORTS

Dangerous sports from the comfort of your own home? Daredevil **DAN TRENT** investigates, showing no regard for his own personal safety

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **NOVEMBER**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **INNERLOOP**

DO YOU DRINK PEPSI MAX? Use the word 'dude' on a regular basis? Reckon real sport is about risking life and limb in the mountains? Then there's a possibility that you're from New Zealand. But whether you are or not, you'll be interested in this latest offering from the Sega Sports stable.

Comprising snowboarding, speed gliding, mountain biking, quad bike racing, bungee jumping and base jumping, *Sega Extreme Sports* will be packing a lot of action into one game when it hits the shelves in November, and has attracted big-name support from some trendy companies.

The characters will be dressed in the latest threads from top clothing brand 55DSL (part of the Diesel empire), and ride bikes by Specialized, sponsors of snowboard champion turned downhill biker Shaun Palmer. And all this to a soundtrack by Ninja Tunes, featuring DJ Food and London Funk Allstars, among others. As Jim Pride of Sega says: "Having cutting-edge companies like this involved is really exciting and a great boost for the game."

Matt O'Driscoll, the game's producer, is particularly enthusiastic about the structure of the game: "You can have more than three sports on one track, and they'll just flow into each other with no loading break. And the environments are vast, with many different features." He also revealed that there will be plenty of online features to keep us all busy: "Users will be able to upload their best times into a ranking system, upload and download ghost replays, and gain keys from the website to unlock bonus tracks."

There will also be online competitions, and with support from the aforementioned companies you can expect some mondo-cool prizes.



△ Formation snowboarding! Not really, it's the start of a race.

VIRTUA ATHLETE

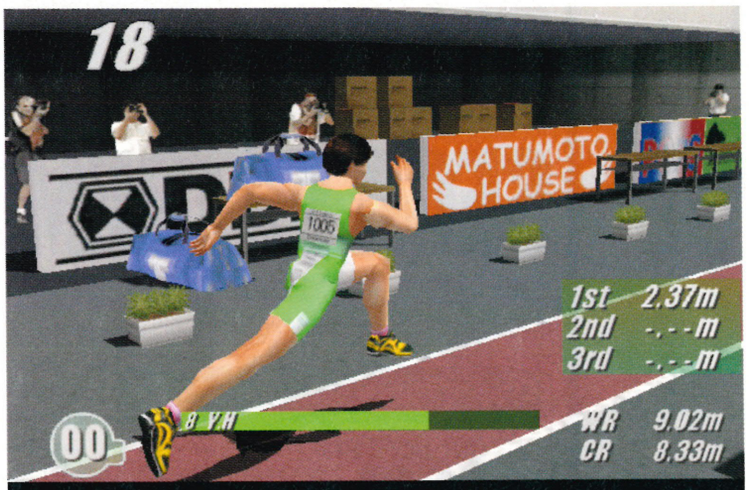
Button-bashing fans are in for something of an Olympic bonanza as Sega Sports play their athletics card. **DAN TRENT** limbers up

THE LOWDOWN

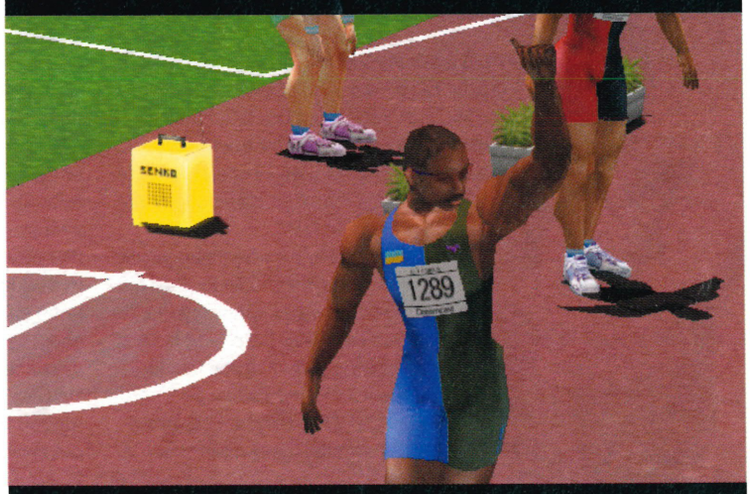
DUE OUT: **SEPTEMBER**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **HIT MAKER**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Seven different sports to master
- Custom athletes that respond to training
- Online features
- Up to four players at once



△ Our man in the green has some way to go before he challenges the record.



△ Realistic victory celebrations are included to make it all as close as possible to the real thing.



△ The detail being lavished on the characters is



△ Blistered fingers ready!

UNUSUALLY FOR A member of the *Virtua* franchise, this is a Dreamcast-exclusive release with no arcade predecessor to familiarise ourselves with. Anyone who remembers the polygon-'enhanced' athletes of *Athlete Kings* on the Saturn and in the arcades will recognise the points-based gameplay and stylised approach, but fundamentally *Virtua Athlete* is a brand new and more realistically pitched title.

On a recent visit to Sega's UK headquarters we were given an exclusive look at an in-progress version of the game, and chatted with producer Dan Llewellyn to get the gen on their bite at the Olympics pie.

Button-bashing seems to be an accepted standard for games of this genre, and *Virtua Athlete* isn't going to be any different. Things have moved on a long way from the days of the rubber-keyed ZX Spectrum though as you go for Gold in a total of seven track and field events.

You'll be able to sprint the 100m and 110m hurdles, slog it out in the 1500m, hurl javelins and putt the shot. There'll also be long and high jump competitions that will require speed and expert timing if you want to record some decent score.

"All the sports will be available from the start," explained Dan, "and you'll be able to increase character abilities to attain record-breaking times and distances. There's a quick match option where you can participate in all seven events, and an exhibition match with different difficulty settings that you can set up to your individual requirements. There's also a practice mode if you think you need to work on a particular event before participating in a tournament."

Virtua Athlete is looking good, with a colourful flavour, and smoothly animated competitors thanks again to motion-capture technology. "We've used the optical motion-capture that has also been used to great effect in *Virtua Tennis*," Dan explained, "but at the end of the day there's still a lot of work that goes into making everything gel together smoothly."

The athletes certainly look sufficiently muscular, and plenty of attention is being lavished on the backgrounds to ensure that the game feels as realistic as possible. To this end there will be detailed crowds, stadiums and hoardings, plus marshals and photographers taking a keen interest.

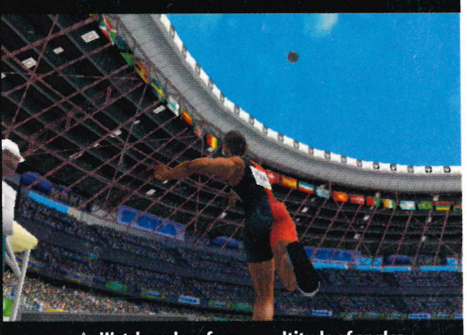
Another exciting feature will be the customisable athletes that you'll be able to create. All Dan would say on the subject was that "you'll be able to play around with their abilities to make them as competitive as possible".

Dan did, however, go into some detail about the online features to be included in the game: "There'll be an online world network ranking system, where you'll be able to upload your record-breaking scores and play against the best players in the world using downloaded data. You'll begin with ten selectable characters, but effectively you have thousands of potential participants thanks to the downloadable guest character feature."

If you've created an athlete that you reckon can't be defeated, and your



clear from this close-up view of the shot contest.



△ Watch replays from a multitude of angles.

button bashing is good enough, then you can save him or her to VM, and take it round to your mate's where up to four of you can compete against each other.

If it matches the high standards set by other Sega Sports titles such as *NBA 2K* (*ODM* 5, 8/10) and the forthcoming *Virtua Tennis* (a demo of which is on this month's cover disc), then we should be in for a treat with *Virtua Athlete*. The game is nearing completion, and you can expect to see a full review in he next issue of *ODM*, on sale Thursday 7 September.

NFL 2K1

Shoulder pads and tight white trousers! No, not the return of *Dynasty*, but 'football' played American style. **DAN TRENT** is our man in the stands

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **TBC**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **VISUAL CONCEPTS**



△ **The detail on the players is even better than *NFL 2K*.**

DESPITE POSITIVE REVIEWS in the United States, Sega's excellent American football game *NFL 2K* never made it to these shores. Fans of the sport over here have had to make do with Midway's amusing but far from realistic *NFL Blitz 2000* (*ODM* #1, 7/10) and the disappointing *NFL Quarterback Club 2000* (*ODM* #2, 5/10) from Acclaim.

Thankfully it's looking like the sequel to *NFL 2K* could well come to the UK, complete with online play. "*NFL 2K1* will be out in the US around Christmas," says Sega spokesman Stuart Turner, "and we would hope that both this and [basketball sim] *NBA 2K1* would be over here with online play after localisation in early 2001."

If you follow the NFL then you'll be happy to hear that all the league's teams and players will be represented, all fully updated for the 2000-2001 season, and the already good commentary has been expanded and improved. American football is a confusing sport if you don't know the lingo, but hopefully even gridiron virgins will be taken in by *NFL 2K1*'s rookie-friendly controls and crunching realism. To this end the motion-capture has been expanded and improved upon in replays and the game proper.

As with sister title *NBA 2K1* though, the big news on *NFL 2K1* has to be its Internet connectivity and full online play for up to eight players per match. That's a huge feature, and if Sega's servers can deliver the speed and smoothness that's been promised, then *NFL 2K1* could turn out to be a bigger hit than many people believe possible.

There's still a small doubt whether Sega will release the game in the UK, but you rest assured that *ODM* will recommend that they do.



△ **All the players from the NFL are included – not that anyone here really cares.**



INFOGRAMES

INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT™

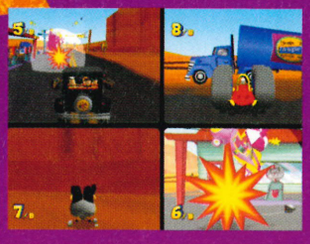
Dreamcast

GAME BOY COLOR

Be nice: your competitors best short cuts.









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△ *Samba De Amigo*: mess up and it's a journey into a monkey nightmare.



△ To appreciate *Samba De Amigo* you must play it. No, really.

SHAKE IT, BABY!

It's party time as Sega Europe reveal that *Samba De Amigo* is heading to the UK after all

AFTER MUCH DELIBERATION, Sega Europe have confirmed that *Samba De Amigo* will be released in the UK this Christmas – because you demanded it.

We revealed exclusively in our May issue (*ODM* #7) that Sega Europe were unlikely to release Sonic Team's bizarre maraca-shaking game over here due to the specialist nature of the title and the high cost of producing the unique maraca controllers. However, the company admitted at the time that they'd reconsider if enough Dreamcast owners expressed an interest in it.

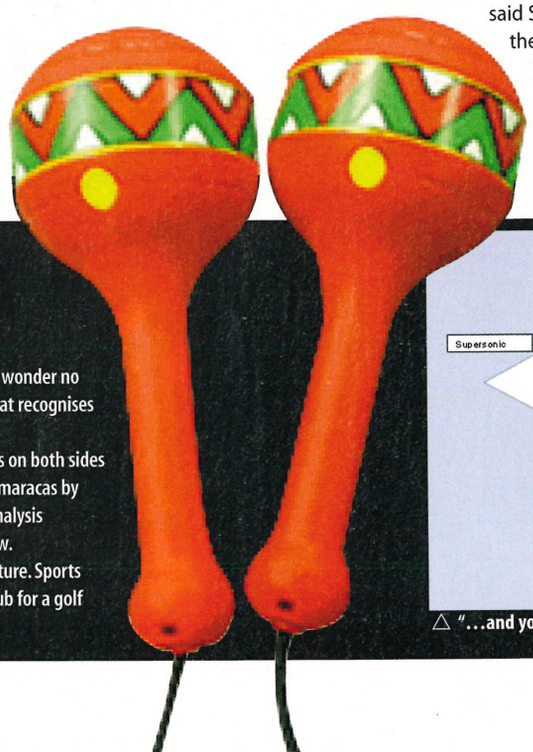
Following our appeal, dozens of you wrote in begging Sega to release the game and, sure enough, it seems to have prompted a turnaround. A question mark does, however, remain over the price at which the game will be sold.

"It's not going to be cheap, as the maracas are very expensive to manufacture," warned a Sega Europe spokesperson. "The game can be played without the maracas, but you really lose the magic without them."

There's also some confusion over how *Samba De Amigo* and the maracas will be distributed. Reports suggest that it may be available only via Sega's online portal, Dreamarena, and not in stores, in order to keep costs down.

"The cost of getting *Samba* into shops is minimal," said Sega. "[But] we have to guess the demand for the product and, therefore, the best way of selling it."

Samba De Amigo is scheduled to be released in December. We'll keep you posted on developments over the coming months, but in the meantime you can find out more about the game in our preview starting on page 56.

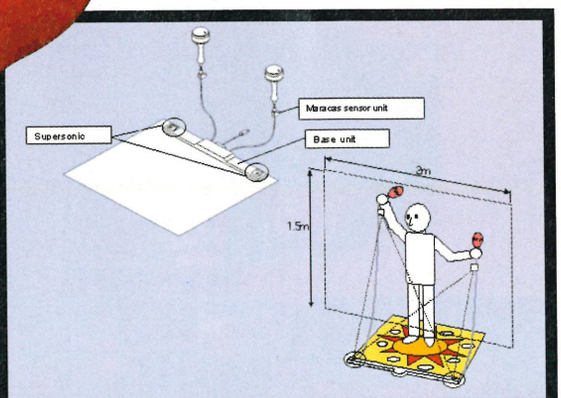


HOW IT WORKS – #53 IN AN OCCASIONAL SERIES

Wondering how the electronic maracas for *Samba De Amigo* work? Well wonder no more. Allow us to introduce space recognition technology – a system that recognises players' actions as a means of game control.

A supersonic signal is sent from the maraca's sensor unit, and sensors on both sides of the base unit (floor mat) calculate the distance from the base to the maracas by using the time it takes to receive the supersonic signal. A co-ordinate analysis algorithm enables pinpointing of the player's position. So now you know.

Sega are planning to use the technology with other games in the future. Sports sims in particular look set to benefit, as you'll be able to swing, say, a club for a golf game, or a racket for a tennis game.



△ "...and you can find your life jacket located beneath your seat."

DINO-MITE!

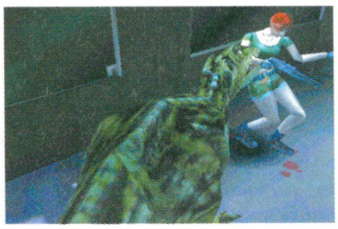
Confirmed: *Resident Evil* team is bringing *Dino Crisis* to Dreamcast



△ "I don't care if the leather sofa smells like your sister, clean it up."



△ "Don't stand on the table... Oh, now you've done it."



△ "No, I don't want to play fetch with my arm if you don't mind!"



△ "Why can't I have a nice, friendly purple one like the one in The Flintstones?"

***DINO CRISIS* IS COMING** to Dreamcast. The game's producer hinted at it in last month's issue of *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, and now Capcom's monster hit has been confirmed.

Originally released on PlayStation, *Dino Crisis* is similar to the *Resident Evil* titles in terms of gameplay, but with fast, vicious, intelligent dinosaurs like the tyrannosaurus rex, pterodactyl and velociraptor in place of the slow marauding zombies.

Like *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* (*ODM* #8, 9/10), *Dino Crisis* takes place on a remote island, and the similarities between the games don't end there. You play Regina, a military agent sent to the island to rescue a scientist previously thought dead. Dr Kirk it, seems, has been very busy on the island – as Regina and the other members of her unit soon discover.

Dino Crisis received critical acclaim when it was released on PlayStation last year. Among the features praised were the moving cameras, and backgrounds constructed with polygons (as opposed to the pre-rendered scenery that was used in the early *Resident Evil* games). The same innovations were put to similar dramatic use in *Resident Evil Code: Veronica*.

Shinji Mikami, creator of the *Resident Evil* series and producer of *Dino Crisis*, revealed in last month's issue of *ODM* (In The Hot Seat, *ODM* #10) that there was a good chance the dinosaur game would be coming to Dreamcast. What he didn't mention was that the Dreamcast version is practically completed and should be out in Japan this September.

Details on a European release have yet to be announced, but we expect either Virgin Interactive or Eidos to publish the game in the UK. We'll bring you news as soon we get it.

• Note: the screenshots shown above are taken from the PC version of the game. The Dreamcast edition should look similar.



NEWS ANALYSIS

BROUGHT TO YOU BY ALEX HUHTALA

MONKEY SEE MONKEY DO

The biggest news this month is over there on the left – yep, *Samba De Amigo* is coming to the UK. Finally, after many months of deliberation, Sega Europe have decided: "Hey, let's have a party right here!"

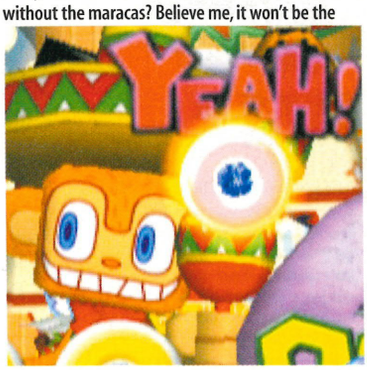
Many of you may not see this release as being particularly important; indeed the average consumer who walks into a shop may have trouble spotting it on the congested shelves come Christmas (you may not see it on the shelves at all if Sega decide to sell it via Dreamarena). Fact is, when faced with the decision of buying another poor football game or one with a dancing monkey and maracas, the majority would probably go for the former. But those people would be missing out on another Sega great.

Originality, it seems, is often overlooked these days, but *Samba De Amigo* is something to stick your neck out on, to experiment and have some fun with. Who cares if you look ridiculous while playing it, shaking the maracas and singing along with songs that you don't even like? I don't.

It's a game to be dragged out at parties – any social gathering will do. It'll certainly make the occasion a much brighter and colourful one. If you ever come to my house and play it though, put your drink on the table, extinguish any smoking objects, and respect the laws of the mat – mess it up and you're paying for a new one. How much? I don't know, but Sega claim its going to be pretty expensive. Really, put the drink on the table.

It seems that Sega could be onto a real winner with *Samba De Amigo*. The only people who want to stop the party are Sony Music, who have apparently refused Sega permission to use the Ricky Martin hit *Livin' La Vida Loca* in the game. Oh, wait a minute... Thanks a lot, Sony, you spared us.

The only problem for Sega now is how much to charge for *Samba De Amigo* with the maracas. A bit of a sore point, as most people are not prepared to spend over £40 on a game. Still, Sega thought that about *Sega Bass Fishing* too. Abandoning the rod controller in the UK meant they could sell the game for under £40, and they even allowed third-party manufacturers to produce the rod. The result was number one game for Sega, and happy customers, many of whom invested in the rod as well. *Samba* without the maracas? Believe me, it won't be the



△ *Samba De Amigo*: the (monkey) business.

HEAR THIS!
DA BEST NEW MUSIC



VARIOUS
Y3K: SOUNDTRACK TO THE FUTURE
DISTINCTIVE BREAKS

DJ Hyper follows up the critically acclaimed *Y3K: Deep Progressive Breaks* with another mash-up of mad beats, squelchy noises, ultra-deep bass lines and weirdo vocals from the likes of Hybrid, Way Out West, Tsunami One and Timo Maas. Some of the big-name tracks are a little over-familiar (I mean, *Hip Hop Phenomenon* again?), but exclusive mixes and excellent programming make this essential if you're into your breakbeats. And we are. *WC*



MJ COLE
SINCERE
TALKIN' LOUD

If you like tasteful music… well, what are you, some kind of ponce? Anyway, MJ is the current king of tasteful, articulate music, knocking out the cream of superior, posey UK garage. This is garage with all the tools put back in the right racks and the Workmate neatly folded up. It's also pretty boring unless you really like: a) two-step, or b) dinner parties. In which case it's a must buy. *RA*



QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE
RATED R
INTERSCOPE/POLYDOR

Somehow that scary guy from *Kurt And Courtney* who says "You play pussy, you get f**ked" is now part of the year's most talked about guitar band. A fuzz-rock juggernaut hurtling down the motorway with its engine on fire, QOTSA make loud, soupy grunge which stretches the definition of 'catchy' a bit but is bound to score big with Marilyn Manson fans. *RA*

LIFE'S A BEACH

Ex-Manchester United star Eric Cantona and his French chums spend a day playing in a large Dreamcast-sponsored sandpit

FOOTBALL WAS definitely the winner when the inaugural Dreamcast Beach Football Challenge took place in London in July. The main attraction was French ex-Manchester United captain Eric Cantona, whose presence ensured a media circus along with some very skilful football.

Competing at the Richmond Athletic Ground on the 750 tonnes of imported sand were European stars of yesteryear, with teams representing Arsenal, Manchester United, Liverpool and France competing for the trophy. Among the familiar faces taking part were Mark Lawrenson, John Barnes, Frank Stapleton, Kenny Samson, Bruce Grobbelar, Paul Parker and Paul Davis.

So what's the deal with beach football? Eric Cantona explains: "It's a good thing for young players. You don't need to buy a pair of Nike boots that cost £60, and you can play anywhere. It's for everybody."

The rules are simple: teams of five play two six-minute halves, and there are no draws – 'golden goal' extra time and penalty shoot-outs see to that.

"It's a very exciting game for the players and fans, and you can see many spectacular goals," added Eric. "I travel all around the world playing in the [beach] European Championships, the World Cup and club soccer. In the last few years the sport has become bigger and bigger."

So why did Eric decide to stop playing on grass and start playing on sand instead? "I lost my passion for the game, so I decided to quit. When I lose a passion for something, I quit. There are so many things to do in life, and now I'm enjoying playing beach football."

The tournament certainly proved why Eric's left his boots behind. A party atmosphere surrounded the pitch, with a Caribbean steel band, face painting and, as you'd expect at a Sega-sponsored event, a Dreamcast games zone where you could play all the latest games.

And the winners? France beat Manchester United 6-4 in the final. For the record, *Official Dreamcast Magazine* entered a crack team in the 'trade' competition. We were beaten by Sega Europe in the quarter-finals, so let's move swiftly on, shall we?



△ Eric Cantona: still pretty handy.



△ Think you're the master at *Soul Calibur*? Then prove it.

GLADIATORS READY?

It's not too late to enter the inaugural UK Console Championships

THE SEARCH IS ON to find the best *Soul Calibur* player in Britain, and there's still time for you to enter.

As we reported last month, your favourite Dreamcast magazine (that's us) has teamed up with Gameplay.com, The Playing Fields and the *Daily Mirror* newspaper to launch the UK Console Championships.

Four regional heats have been organised to find the greatest *Soul Calibur* players from around the country. Finalists from each will compete for a £1,000 prize at the grand final to be held at the Live 2000 exhibition, Earls Court, on Saturday 23 September.

For full details, the rules and a registration form, visit www.ukconsolechamps.com. If you want to enter though, you'll have to be quick.

The dates and locations of the regional qualifiers are as follows: August 5 (Welsh qualifier, Hilton Hotel in Cardiff), August 12 (Scottish qualifier, Airport Posthouse in Glasgow), August 19 (Northern region qualifier, Hilton National Garforth in Leeds) and September 9 (Southern region Qualifier, Posthouse Regents Park in London).







△ "... then put your right foot forward, turn and smile for the camera."

SHENMUE GETS A DATE

Presenting Sega's official autumn-winter collection 2000

SEGA HAVE UNVEILED their software release schedule for the remainder of the year. While it's short on surprises, we now have official release dates for a number of major Dreamcast titles.

The biggest game on the list is undoubtedly *Shenmue*, the Dreamcast-exclusive adventure that has lead your Most Wanted chart (see page 27) since it began in our January issue (*ODM* #3).

Yu Suzuki's epic is scheduled to reach the UK on Friday 1 December, two weeks after its release in the US. The mammoth conversion process from Japanese to English is very close to completion, and a Sega Europe spokesperson told us that *Shenmue* is "bang on schedule for the UK release".

Another key release for Sega is *Quake III Arena*, as the online multiplayer portion of the game should test the European network far greater than *ChuChu Rocket!* does. You should be able to see how the European servers cope with such an ambitious title from Friday 10 November.

The major omission from the schedule is *Black & White*. With the PC version of the game the main priority for developer Lionhead, we now won't see the Dreamcast version until next year. Peter Molyneux's team is already facing a tight deadline to get the PC version ready before Christmas, and nobody wants them to rush and possibly spoil what seems to be a very exciting concept.

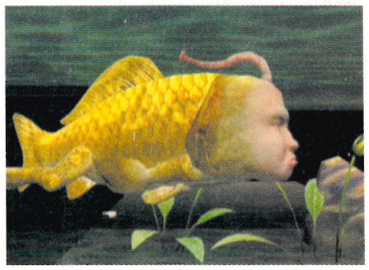
Note that all the dates are liable to change. We've seen a number of games slip down the release schedule throughout the year, most notably *Metropolis Street Racer*. Bizarre Creations' awesome-looking driving simulation is now due on September 22 – almost a year after its original release date.

Of the titles on the list, Sonic Team's *Phantasy Star Online* (currently due on December 15) is the game thought most likely to slip into the New Year.

SEGA RELEASE SCHEDULE 2000

Virtua Athlete	Sept 1
Virtua Tennis	Sept 8
Metropolis Street Racer	Sept 22
Space Channel 5	Oct 6
Time Stalkers	Oct 13
Sega Extreme Sports	Oct 27
Quake III Arena	Nov 10
Jet Set Radio	Nov 24
Sega GT	Dec 1
Shenmue	Dec 1
Samba De Amigo	Dec 8
Sega Worldwide Soccer 2001	Dec 8
Phantasy Star Online	Dec 15

GAMES NEWS

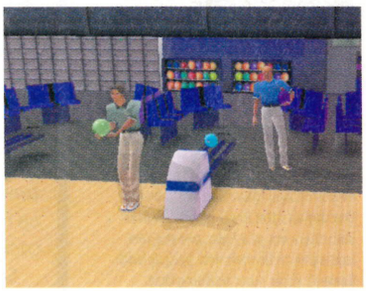


SPOCK'S SEAMAN

Star Trek's most famous Vulcan is giving vocal support to Sega and the release of *Seaman* in America. Leonard Nimoy, most famous for playing Spock and directing *Three Men And A Baby*, will provide a voice-over for the bizarre creature game. His logical voice will inform you how well you're doing and give you an idea of your pet's condition.

SAMBA FAN

Nintendo legend Shigeru Miyamoto has confessed his love for *Samba De Amigo*. The creator of Mario, *Donkey Kong* and *Zelda* said in an interview with www.famitsu.com that he was a fan of Sonic Team's game. That's high praise given that Miyamoto is possibly the world's most respected game designer.



BOWL LOTS

Bethesda Studios have announced a bowling game that is set to feature online play. *PBA 2001* is endorsed by the Professional Bowlers Association and will enable you to create your own bowler and strike ball. The game due in October but currently does not have a UK publisher.

BLEEM ME UP

The developers behind PlayStation-emulator *Bleem for Dreamcast* (see news, *ODM* #9), are hoping to bring the product to the UK in October. Dubbed 'Bleemcast', the emulator will be sold as four separate discs, each of which will enable 100 PlayStation games to be run on Dreamcast. Each of the discs is expected to cost less than £20.

BET ON BLACK

The launch of a new all-black Dreamcast console in Japan has sparked a buying frenzy on Sega's D-Direct online store. Sales reports indicate that the first day of trading through the re-launched service generated sales worth 352 million yen (£2.2 million), which is 30 per cent of the Japanese site's usual monthly revenue.

WATCH THIS!
NEW MOVIES ON VHS



AMERICAN BEAUTY
OUT NOW • CERT: 18 • TO RENT

In case you were in space last April, this fab film by Brit director Sam Mendes cleaned up at this year's Oscars. Set in small-town suburbia in the US, it tells the tale of middle-aged Lester (Kevin Spacey), who gets the hots for his daughter's beautiful schoolfriend and decides to break free of the shackles of a crap marriage and job. It's a match made in movie heaven, with faultless performances from the cast and some of the most exquisite photography ever to be committed to celluloid. Not to be missed. *CE*



A ROOM FOR ROMEO BRASS
OUT: AUG 21 • CERT: 15 • TO RENT

Hefty Romeo and skinny Knocks are neighbours and best mates who shield each other from the ups and mostly downs of their bleak 'oop Norf' lives. One day an utter low-life called Morell bails them out of a fight, and the two lads agree to fix their new hero up with Romeo's sister – not realising that they're about to unleash a large can of worms. From Shane Meadows (*Twenty-Four Seven*), who once again shows his knack for eliciting superb performances from a cast of unknowns. *CE*



THE TALENTED MR RIPLEY
OUT: AUG 14 • CERT: 15 • TO RENT

Faithful realisation of Patricia Highsmith's famous '50s novel about broke college boy Ripley (Matt Damon) who, in exchange for a large sum of cash, is sent to Italy by his mate's dad to check out what his son is up to. It turns out that the errant lad, Jude Law, is living it up on the Riviera with his gorgeous girlie Gwyneth Paltrow. Ripley wants in, and devises a plan to grab a piece of the action. A twisty-turny plot with luscious landscapes, classic cars and gorgeous retro togs. *CE*

SPECIAL REPORT: JAPANESE RPGS

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

The RPGs are coming! **ALEX HUTALA** reports on the Japanese epics that should go down a storm





△ ***Grandia II*: remember the original on the Saturn? Oh, okay then.**



△ ***Grandia II* will be full of bizarre creatures to battle against.**



△ ***Skies Of Arcadia*: the captain gets his pistols out.**





△ ***Skies Of Arcadia*: experience naval battles in mid-air.**

ROLE-PLAYING GAMES ARE BIG business in Japan. If you're not convinced, then check out the sales figures for *Final Fantasy IX* on PlayStation: one million copies sold on pre-order, 2.6 million copies shipped on first day of sale.

Squaresoft's game won't sell anything near that amount in Europe, but if the Dreamcast is going to do well in Japan it clearly needs RPGs – and good ones at that.

We've already told you about Sonic Team's awesome-looking *Phantasy Star Online* (see our July issue, *ODM* #9), but there are two other major RPGs heading to Dreamcast that look worthy of some more attention.

Sega's *Skies Of Arcadia* has been in development for so long that its already been graced with three different names. Originally known as *Project Ares*, then the more familiar *Eternal Arcadia*, the game will now known as *Skies Of Arcadia* in the West. The team behind the game are something of an RPG super group, with staff previously responsible for hits such as *Sakura Wars*, *Dragon Force* and *Phantasy Star*.

Skies Of Arcadia is a pirate adventure with a difference. Set high above the high seas, the action takes place in the air with huge islands floating in the sky. Between these islands fly huge sailing ships, which the more adventurous use to discover new lands and seek their fortune.

Navigating the skies can be dangerous for the inexperienced with the threat of Sky Pirates. There are two categories – Black Sky Pirates and Blue Sky Pirates – and the difference is ethical. The former attack anybody, striking with no discrimination, stealing riches and taking lives. Blue Sky Pirates, which you take control of, are far more chivalrous – they steal from the rich and give to the poor.

Another big RPG hope for Dreamcast is *Grandia II* from Japanese developer Gamearts – follow-up to the adventure that appeared on the Sega Saturn in 1997.

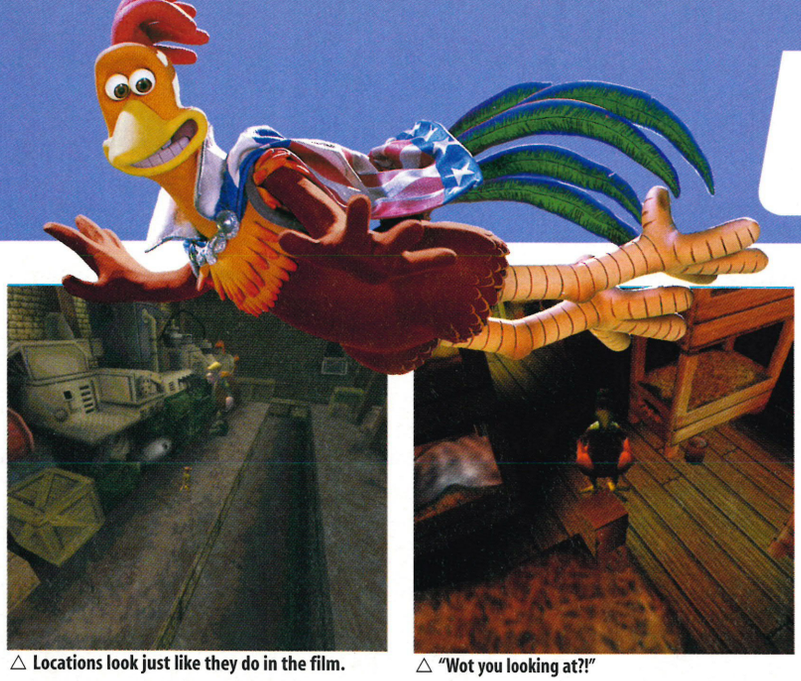
The sequel is set to impress far more, ditching the child stars of the original game and replacing them with an older cast and the promise of a more adult-oriented storyline.

Grandia II takes place in a land divided in two by a giant crack called the Granacliff. Fall into the crack and it's believed you'll go straight to hell. The crack is so large that trade between the people on each side is virtually impossible. The game begins in a country village surrounded by forest. Vicious monsters prowl the village at night.

Apart from these details, and basic information on the main cast of characters, little else is known about the two games. Secrecy from developers in this field is not unusual, however, as discovering surprise elements in a role-playing games is a major part of the appeal.

Grandia II will be published by Ubi Soft in UK some time next year. The French company must be impressed by what they have seen of it so far, as they've ditched plans to release *Evolution 2* in Europe (although the Sting-developed title may still arrive here via another publisher).

Phantasy Star Online is currently scheduled for a simultaneous worldwide release in December, with *Skies Of Arcadia* set to follow from Sega in 2001. We'll bring you more on the games as further details are revealed over the coming months.



△ Locations look just like they do in the film.

△ "Wot you looking at?!"

FOWL PLAY

Flee the coop! *Chicken Run* game coming to Dreamcast

THE ANIMATED STARS of *Chicken Run* are heading to Dreamcast later this year in a game based on the hit film.

Faithful to the movie, it's set in a 1950s Yorkshire chicken farm and follows a group of loveable chickens who plan to break out of their poultry prison. Stopping their great escape are barbed wire fences, and the evil owners of the farm who want to turn the heroes into pies. Your task is to help Rocky, Ginger, Nick and the rest of the poultry crew to escape.

Combining exploration and stealth, you must locate objects that will be required for the breakout. There are puzzles to be solved, and seven mini-games including strapping chickens to fireworks. You'll also get the chance to control the main characters individually.

The movie is the first feature-length animation from Aardman Animations of Bristol, who are responsible for the award-winning *Creature Comforts* and *Wallace And Grommit* short films. Aardman's Peter Lord and Nick Park, creators and co-directors of *Chicken Run*, are very keen on the game: "We're very excited. It's another step forward for chickens and for the studio."

Chicken Run the game is being developed by Blitz Games, who were responsible for *Glover* and *Action Man on PlayStation*. Look out for a release in November.



HAVE YOUR SAY

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

THERE ARE LOADS of Dreamcast games in development, but which ones are getting you most excited? Let us know and, courtesy of Sega, you could grab yourself a Visual memory unit (worth around £20) for absolutely nothing.

To vote, email 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. Your order of preference is important, as different points are awarded for each place. Also include your name, age and full postal address. Note: these details will not be passed on to anyone else.

A couple of 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 released on Dreamcast abroad, or confirmed as forthcoming DC releases.

There's no closing date, as this is an on-going competition, with a winner drawn from the virtual hat each month. Only one entry from each reader will be accepted each calendar month; anyone submitting more will be disqualified, or forced into an Iron Man Man match with The Rock. For logistical reasons we can only accept votes by email.

This month's winner is Louise Brown from the Vale of Glamorgan. Her top choice is *Black & White*, followed by *Shenmue*, *Half-Life*, *Metropolis Street Racer* and *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing: Round 2*. Well done, Louise, your VM is in the post. 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	26%
TOP 5	63%
ETA	DEC

Many of you are ironically adding 'surprise, surprise' before this title. Which is quite apt considering that *Shenmue* holds on to the top spot once again. But no surprise, really, as it's another stunner that's exclusive to Dreamcast.



2 (2) METROPOLIS STREET RACER (SEGA)

FIRST	15%
TOP 5	50%
ETA	SEP

The wait is almost over. Knowing what's happened in previous months, we're stroking a rabbit's foot, touching wood, throwing salt over the shoulder and standing on one leg as we write this. Please be released this time, *MSR*!



3 (4) HALF-LIFE (HAVAS)

FIRST	10%
TOP 5	40%
ETA	AUT

A mammoth preview of the game last issue has helped *Half-Life* regain third place. Featuring Dreamcast-exclusive features, and better visuals than the original game, this conversion of the PC hit is going to be a blast.



4 (6) PHANTASY STAR ONLINE (SEGA)

FIRST	3%
TOP 5	29%
ETA	DEC

From *ChuChu Rocket!* creators Sonic Team, this promises to be a mammoth multiplayer adventure, and is set for a simultaneous worldwide release. But that's not all they're working on, as you can see below.



5 (NE) SONIC ADVENTURE 2 (SEGA)

FIRST	5%
TOP 5	28%
ETA	2001

The highest new entry we've had in quite some time. It could have gone higher too, except that many of you put the game fifth on your list. Still, as it's not due until early next year we expect it to continue climbing.



6 (3) BLACK & WHITE (SEGA)

FIRST	6%
TOP 5	19%
ETA	2001

You're the god with a virtual pet to do your bidding. Your pet grows, as does your following, depending on their treatment. Which means that no two pets should ever be the same. Fingers crossed that this is going to be good.



7 (8) JET SET RADIO (SEGA)

FIRST	7%
TOP 5	20%
ETA	NOV

Jet Set Radio looks like a cartoon, and has similarities to the tricks of *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding*. But add graffiti, cops and rival gangs and you've got a completely original game. Turn to the preview on page 50 to find out more.



8 (7) QUAKE III ARENA (SEGA)

FIRST	3%
TOP 5	20%
ETA	NOV

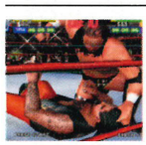
Another PC biggie that's heading to DC with all the thrills left fully intact. It's the multiplayer deathmatch that one person can enjoy, thanks to intelligent 'bots' that recreate a deathmatch without the need for other players.



9 (NE) VIRTUA TENNIS (SEGA)

FIRST	2%
TOP 5	18%
ETA	SEP

If you didn't vote for this one, play the demo on this month's cover disc to see what all the fuss is about. Simple to play and also highly enjoyable, it looks like being one of the best sports games ever.



10 (NE) WWF ROYAL RUMBLE (THQ)

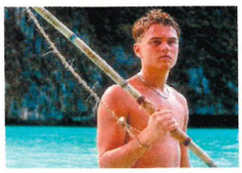
FIRST	2%
TOP 5	10%
ETA	OCT

This is already looking the business thanks to the processing power of our favourite console. What other box of tricks can put nine wrestlers in the ring at once? The answer is actually none, but you knew that, right?

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)

WATCH THIS!
NEW MOVIES ON DVD



THE BEACH
OUT: AUG 21 • CERT: 15 • £19.99

Leo DiCaprio is the backpacker in Bangkok who's tipped off about a perfect paradise island. With a sexy French couple in tow, he hops off to find it. Already resident on The Beach is boss-lady Tilda Swinton and her motley crew of hippies, who welcome the trio into their fold – until it all goes pear-shaped. This Hollywood-ised (ie a distinct lack of drugs) take on Alex Garland's bestseller is surprisingly good in its own right. Lucky – because there aren't any extras. *CE*



THE BONE COLLECTOR
OUT NOW • CERT: 15 • £19.99

Denzel Washington is a paralysed forensics detective who is seconded by the NYPD to nab a copycat serial killer. He enlists the help of Angelina Jolie, a rookie cop who discovers, somewhat unwillingly, that she's got a rather good nose for sussing out all things grim. Nail-biting *Seven*-style stuff with plenty of gruesome gore, great photography, and several slices of cheese slapped on for good measure. There are also interviews with director Phillip Noyce and cast, a feature length commentary and filmographies. *CE*



BRINGING OUT THE DEAD
OUT: AUG 14 • CERT: 18 • £19.99

Martin Scorsese drama that bears more than a passing resemblance to his classic *Taxi Driver*. Nic Cage is burnt-out New York ambulance driver Frank Pierce who, after years of cleaning up the mean streets of Hell's Kitchen, hits rock bottom. Over three nights he begins to claw his way back toward daylight – with the help of ex-junkie Patricia Arquette. Bloody, dark, moody and eerily compelling. Extras-wise: zillions of subtitles (including Icelandic) and a short 'on location' featurette. *CE*



△ ***Sega Marine Fishing*: far more variety than *Sega Bass Fishing*, with swordfish and giant barracuda among the exotic fish you can catch.**

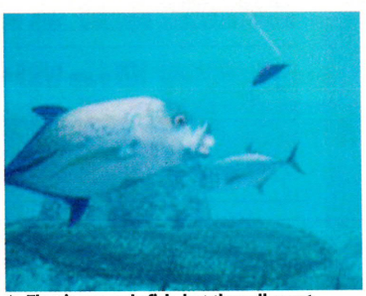
CAN YOU REEL IT?

Hear about the one that got away? "It was this big!" claims **ALEX HUHTALA**. The liar

IF YOU THOUGHT a game where you catch fish couldn't get your pulse racing in the same way as a beat 'em up or racing game, then think again.

Sega Marine Fishing is the sequel to *Sega Bass Fishing* (*ODM* #1, 8/10), aka *Get Bass*. If there's one small flaw in the original game, it's the fact that you can only catch, um, bass.

Sega Marine Fishing takes you out into deeper water and home to plenty more kinds of marine life. Leaving behind the bass, travel on the Sega Princess in search of exotic big-game salt-water fish. Among the catch of the day are blue marlin, sailfish, tarpon, barracuda, tuna, swordfish and the dangerous mako shark. Bass are like a domestic cat compared to this lot. As you'll soon find out.



△ **That is one ugly fish, but they all count.**

There are three locations in which to try to catch fish: shallow waters, deep sea and coral reef. Pass these and you're taken to a special bonus stage. There's also a range of casting positions, and the choice can be crucial as the fish gather in different areas depending on the weather conditions and time of day.

Then there's the choice of lure. A wider selection than before, they work in a similar way, with some floating on the surface while others sink to the depths. Make the right choice and the fish will be constantly biting, and vice versa. If you mess up, don't worry, just select a different lure. But be careful: the timer is ticking away and you must catch a set weight of fish before it reaches zero.

Once you cast, the view shifts to below the surface, where you can watch the end of your line and the surrounding sea life. Graphically the game doesn't appear to be as impressive as its predecessor, but the fact that *Sega Bass* took place in shallower water may play a part in that, as lighting effects were used to great effect. In *Sega Marine* the action takes place at far murkier depths.

As with *Sega Bass*, excitement is added to the game by the rod controller, which enables you to reel in the fish and fight them as they twist and turn, trying to unhook themselves from your line. A bar at the side of the screen indicates the line tension: if it goes red there's a danger of the line breaking. The fight between you and the fish once you hook one can be a real struggle, especially with some of the bigger fish featured in the game.

Far more challenging and with more variety than *Sega Bass Fishing*, *Sega Marine Fishing* deserves to be as big a hit. However, newcomers beware: the difficulty level seems far greater than Get Bass, with the swordfish, giant barracudas and the like putting up much more of a fight than any bass could.

SEGA MARINE FISHING
DEVELOPER: **SEGA**
FORMAT: **NAOMI STANDARD AND DELUXE CABS**
COST: **£1**
AVAILABILITY: **ACROSS THE UK NOW**
DUE ON DREAMCAST: **TBC**



X-MEN AND MARVEL PRIZES TO BE WON!!

PREPARE FOR A MUTANT MOTHERLOAD OF PRIZES

Universal Pictures Video and Virgin Interactive have given us a bundle of prizes to give away to celebrate the release of brand new *X-Men* videos and *Marvel Vs Capcom 2* (*ODM* #10, 7/10) on Dreamcast. Five lucky winners will each receive three X-Men vids and a copy of game.

The new videos contain some of the greatest *X-Men* stories ever told, with classic *X-Men* tales such as Days Of Future Past and the four-part Dark Phoenix Saga. The three tapes contain more than four hours of mutant madness.

Once you've had your cartoon fix, it's time to turn the action up a notch with *Marvel Vs Capcom 2*, the beat 'em up which features *X-Men* stars such as Wolverine, Cyclops and Rogue. More than 50 characters are featured in this mammoth game, with more heroes and villains from the pages of Marvel Comics and the circuits of Capcom arcade hits than ever witnessed in one place before.

All you have to do to be in with a chance of winning the videos and the game is answer the simple question below and send it, along with your name, address and age, on a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope, to: X'cellent, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

The closing date for this compo is Thursday 7 September.

QUESTION: **WHO IS THE LEADER OF THE X-MEN?**

Terms and conditions: Only entries received before the closing date will be entered into the prize draw. The winners will be notified by post. No cash alternative. No correspondence will be entered into. The editor's decision is final. He's great, you know. All the other usual competition rules, conditions and restrictions (available on request) apply. Okay?



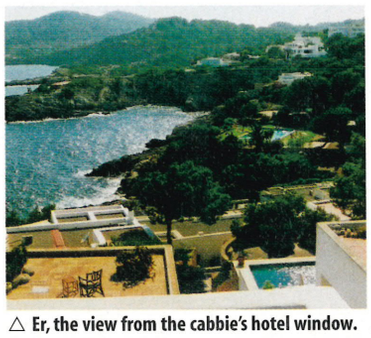
△ Radio One's Dave Pearce, Alex P and friends.



△ The Crazy Taxi in Ibiza, yesterday.



△ Some random bird. Note registration plate.



△ Er, the view from the cabbie's hotel window.

CABBIE'S GUIDE TO IBIZA

If you're heading off to the party island of Ibiza this summer, just be careful when you shout "Taxi!"

CRAZY TAXI has hit the beaches, bars and clubs of Ibiza. No, it's not a bizarre remix of the game featuring new levels, but Sega's latest plan to get the Dreamcast message on to the streets.

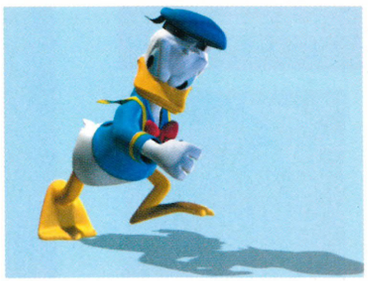
You may have already spotted Sega's real-life 1960s Cadillac taxi on the roads of Britain, but right now the famous car is on holiday in the clubber's paradise. The 19-feet-long car won't be tanning itself on the beach or dancing till dawn at one of Ibiza's famous clubs, instead the real-life Crazy Taxi will be put to good use chauffeuring some of the UK's most famous DJs around the island.

Dave Pearce, Alex P, Roger Sanchez, Brandon Block, Tall Paul and Boy George are some of the talent that will be screaming in the passenger seats as the taxi gets them to their important destinations with plenty of time to spare. Hopefully they won't be forced into the kind of hair-raising short cuts you can experience in the game.

Geoff Teague, who you may remember from our May issue (see End Game, *ODM* #7), is the lucky driver of the yellow cab. So what's it like driving the cab around Ibiza then, Geoff? "It's the Island of love," he deadpans. "Everyone keeps bowing to the car, and the locals love it. When I drove off the ferry on to the Island I got a round of applause."

Sega have placed Dreamcast demo pods at popular Ibiza clubs and bars including El Divino, Eden, The Sunset Café, Club Paraiso and Oasis. There's also a competition to win a truckload of vodka at one of the Dreamcast Sunset Sessions which take place every Thursday evening at the Mezzanine Bar. The richest cabbie collects the prize, and will no doubt become very popular and extremely drunk. And why not?

GAMES NEWS



DUCK TALES

Ubi Soft are bringing Donald Duck to Dreamcast in a game called *Donald Duck's Quack Attack*. Donald's famous mood swings are set to be a prominent feature, with the moody duck getting into a rage whenever he falls or is hit by an enemy; when angry he'll become tougher to control. Joining Donald will be his extended family of Uncle Scrooge and nephews Huey, Duey and Louie. There's no release date yet for the platform game as it's in the very early stages of production.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Reports from Japan suggest that Amusement Vision (formerly AM4) are working on an arcade sequel to the classic *Space Harrier*. *Planet Harriers* is said to resemble the original game, with plenty of alien enemies to battle, plus new lock-on missiles and bombs. The arcade machine, which uses Sega's new Hikaru technology, will apparently support two players simultaneously.

OC UNITED

Continuing the trend of aligning themselves with the cream of European football clubs, Sega are to sponsor Deportivo De La Coruna next season. The reigning Spanish Premier League champions are the fourth team to sign a deal with Sega Europe, following sponsorship deals with Arsenal, Saint-Etienne of France and Sampdoria of Italy which began last season.



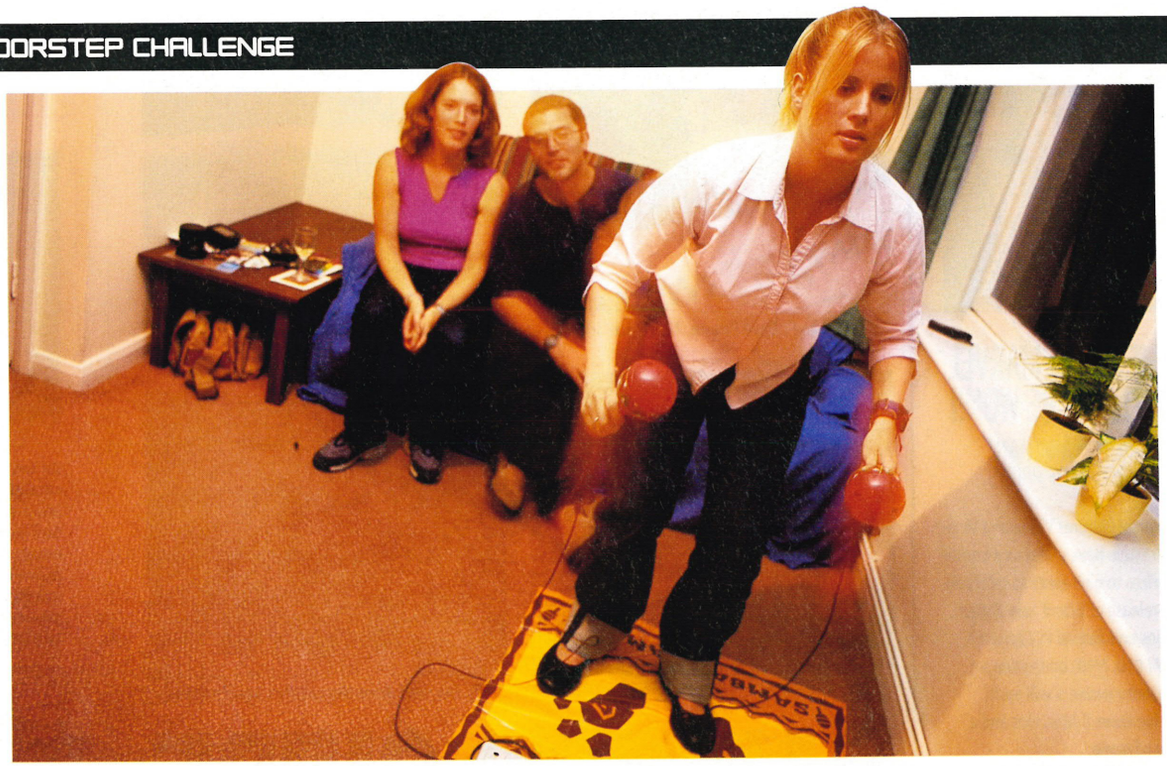
DREAMSCREENS

Sega have announced their first content deal for Dreamarena. The company has joined forces with Virgin Net, the UK's number one online entertainment and leisure service, to offer a film channel called Dreamscreens. Further content deals with sports.com and dotmusic are expected to be announced soon. The new service coincides with a redesign of Dreamarena, an early version of which is shown in the screenshot above.

MRS DRILLER?

Mr Driller hasn't been released over here (indeed a UK release has ye to be confirmed), but it's gone down so well in Japan that Namco are already planning a sequel. It seems that the company have returned to their past for inspiration, dusting down *Ms. Pac-Man* and thinking: "What if Mr Driller was a woman?" The new game is set to feature online play, a two-player head-to-head mode and a blonde... drillerette?

THE DREAMCAST DOORSTEP CHALLENGE



△ For the first time in Doorstep Challenge, a household says no to an affair with Dreamcast in favour of continuing their relationship with PlayStation.

SHAKY GROUND

It had to happen. **DAN TRENT** finds a group of challengees who make the unprecedented decision to stick with their beloved PlayStation rather than swap it for a Dreamcast

DREAMCAST HAS HAD a smooth ride in our Doorstep Challenge up to this point. There's been the odd dissenting voice, but the run of luck seems to have been broken with month's threesome from London's Muswell Hill. Even an exclusive look at *Samba De Amigo*, acquired specially from Sega, couldn't break our household's bond with their beloved PlayStation.

It seems to come down to the choice of games, as Hannah outlines: "For me the quantity of PlayStation games available is important, even though the quality on Dreamcast is so much better."

Rosie, on the other hand, was sticking up for Sega's machine: "I really like the way Dreamcast has a lot of unusual and interesting games. They do loads of really great things, like *ChuChu Rocket!*, which is an amazing idea, totally bizarre. *Samba De Amigo* is incredible too. It appeals because it's fun. It's a proper game, rather than living out some fantasy about driving a racing car or something like that."

As far as the Dreamcast games themselves go though, the general opinion of our three challengees is high. "The fighting games in particular look great," reckons Adrian. "*Soul Calibur* is one of the most impressive-looking games around, and I was close to buying a Dreamcast a while ago when I first saw *Ready 2 Rumble*. The thing is, I got a bit burned buying an N64, and it's made me a bit cautious about shelling out loads of money on another new console and all that goes with it."

A lack of adventure games seems to be the key to Hannah's unwillingness to break her allegiance to PlayStation. "I like all the arcadey stuff," she says, "but the games I like playing on PlayStation are the sort of thing I can lose myself in for six hours at a time. With the fighting and driving games, I tend to just get bored quite quickly." Even the might of *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* isn't enough to tempt Hannah to make the swap: "It's great, but it comes back to the choice. If there were three or four really big adventure games I might be tempted. *Shenmue* sounds very interesting though."

Once again, Adrian is in agreement: "They're the type of games where if you're by yourself you do get a bit bored, but if there's a gang of you it's a lot of fun. Not that we're sad loners or anything!"

Once we'd managed to prise the *Samba De Amigo* maracas out of Rosie's hands, she once again found herself fighting Sega's corner: "Personally I'm more into the games that you can play with people; I'm not so into playing on my own for hours at a time."

Dreamcast certainly impressed our three housemates with the originality and strength of its games, and if a few more games had been available then they would have made the swap. "Ideally it would make sense to have both," Rosie decides, "because they both have different strengths."

After the release of *Shenmue* and *Half-Life* we'll be calling round for the re-match, but until then PlayStation remains the king of this household. Can't win 'em all, I suppose.

THE RESIDENTS
WHO ARE THEY?



ADRIAN
29, sound engineer
FAVOURITE PLAYSTATION GAME
Metal Gear Solid
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing – "I almost bought one for that."
WOULD YOU MAKE THE SWAP?
"No, there isn't enough variety of games for Dreamcast at the moment."

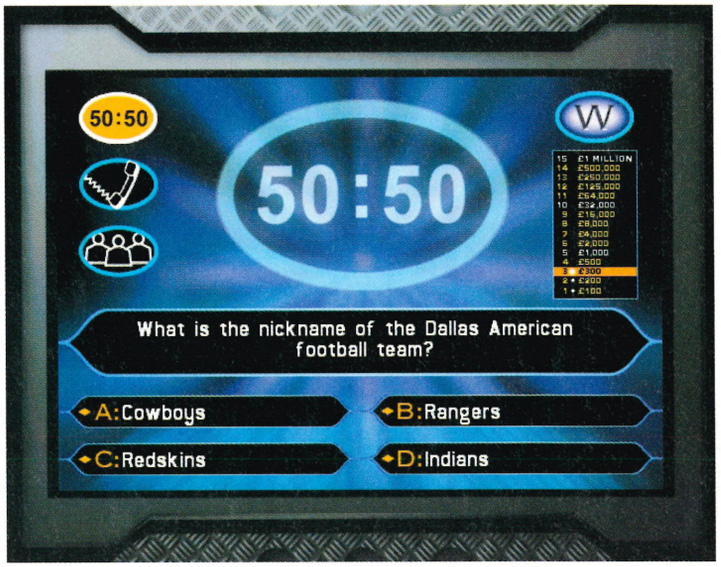


HANNAH
25, singer/songwriter
FAVOURITE PLAYSTATION GAME?
"Er, *Resident Evil 3*. I love *Oddworld* too."
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME?
House Of The Dead 2
WOULD YOU MAKE THE SWAP?
"No. To be honest, the quality of the graphics and stuff are better on Dreamcast, but I'm really into the *Tomb Raiders* and the *Resident Evils* and things like that. A few more adventures might sway me.

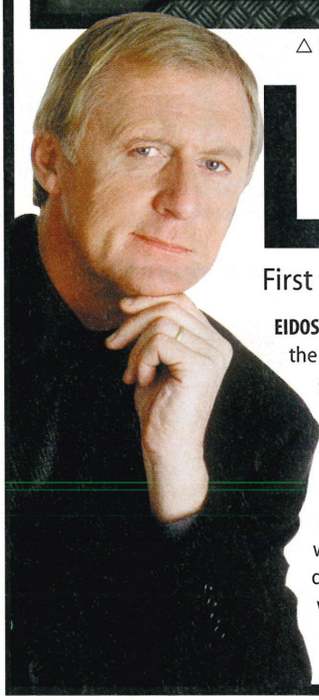


ROSIE
25, chef
FAVOURITE PLAYSTATION GAME?
"*Fear Effect*, *Ape Escape*, er..."
FAVOURITE DREAMCAST GAME?
Samba De Amigo. "I like *ChuChu Rocket!* too."
WOULD YOU MAKE THE SWAP?
"I'd rather have both, but I prefer the more original games on Dreamcast. If I can keep *Samba De Amigo*, then definitely."





△ Like the Chris Tarrant-hosted quiz show, the questions in the game start off fairly easy, but get progressively harder as the financial stakes get higher.



LET'S GET QUIZZICAL

First look at the million-pound game. Can it generate the same level of tension as the TV show?

EIDOS HAVE REVEALED more information and the first screenshots of their forthcoming game *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* (See news, *ODM* #9). Unsurprisingly, it looks near-identical to the hit television show on which it's based.

The simple presentation visually recreates what real contestants see when they're in the hot seat of the TV quiz. The screen shows a question along with a set of four possible answers, only one of which is correct. It's up to you to choose the right answer and progress to higher value questions. Answer 15 questions correctly and you'll pick up the virtual million pounds.

Adding further to the TV feel are more than 140 pieces of music and sound effects from the show, plus Chris Tarrant himself, who is at hand to ask the questions and add pressure with his "Is that your final answer?" catchphrase.

Additional multiplayer modes should ensure the game becomes a real party favourite. The first of these is Fastest Finger, which tests who can put four answers in the correct order quickest, with the winner entering the game proper. Head to Head and Team Game modes pit players against each other, with the highest up the money escalator winning.

"I'm very excited to be involved with this project," says Tarrant. "Families and friends will now have the ability to play *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* on the console."

Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? is scheduled for released at the end of September. We'll show you more of the game in the next issue of *ODM*.

DRIVE YOU DAFFY

Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck and the rest of the Looney Tunes gang are heading to the races



△ It's like a cartoon version of *WipEout*. Kind of.

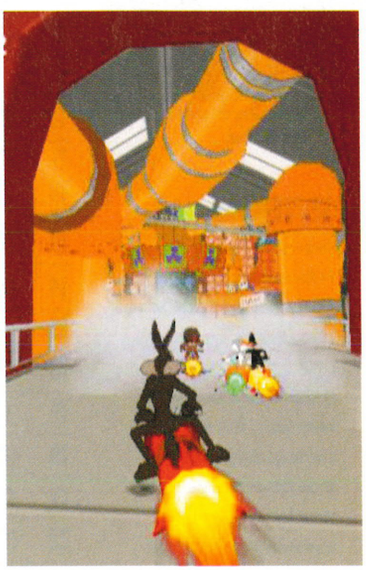
INFOGRAMES ARE SET to bring the *Looney Tunes* characters and their unique brand of humour to Dreamcast this autumn with a hovercraft-style racing game.

The Dreamcast-exclusive *Looney Tunes Space Race* will see the cartoon cast embroiled in a contest that spans six planets across the galaxy, with 60 events spread across 12 different tracks.

Among the racers are Bugs Bunny, who rides a rocket-powered carrot (no, really), Wile E Coyote, Daffy Duck and Elmer Fudd.

Added excitement comes courtesy of the latest inventions from the ACME labs. Power-up weapons such as anvils, instant storms and falling elephants will be available so that you can gain that extra advantage over your bitter rivals.

The game will support four players and will feature an additional Visual Memory unit-based pinball game. *Looney Tunes Space Race* is scheduled to reach shops in October. Watch out for a preview in the next issue of *ODM*, out Thursday 7 September.



△ All your *Looney Tunes* faves feature.

RELEASE DATES
AUGUST/SEPT 2000

These are the Dreamcast titles due out in the next two months, compiled with the help of HMV, Sega Europe and the individual game publishers. Release dates are very flexible, so please allow for the odd slip, delay and maybe a complete no-show.



△ *Walt Disney World Quest*: long name, not long to wait.

AUGUST 4
Street Fighter Alpha 3 (Virgin)
Super Magnetic Neo (Crave)

AUGUST 11
ECW Anarchy Rules (Acclaim)

AUGUST 18
Railroad Tycoon II (Take 2)
Sydney 2000 (Eidos)

AUGUST 25
Aerowings 2: Air Strike (Crave)
Magforce Racing (Crave)
Street Fighter III: Double Impact (Virgin)
Walt Disney World Quest: Magical Racing Tour (Eidos)



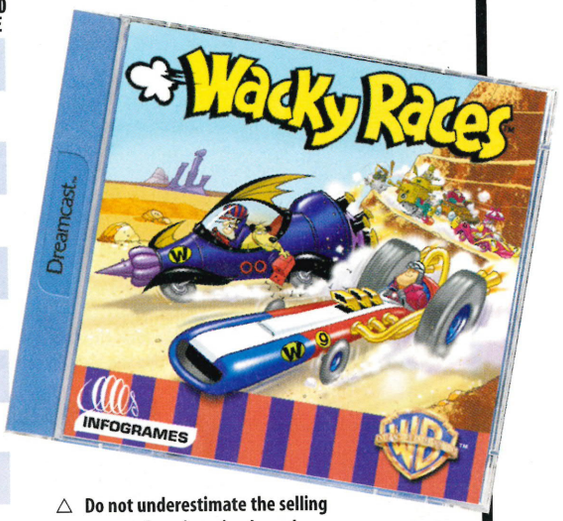
△ *Virtua Tennis*: served up in September.

SEPTEMBER
Deep Fighter (Ubi Soft)
F1 Racing Championship (Ubi Soft)
International Track & Field (Konami)
Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000 (THQ)
Metropolis Street Racer (Sega)
Power Stone 2 (Eidos)
Vanishing Point (Acclaim)
Virtua Athlete 2K (Sega)
Virtua Tennis (Sega)
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? (Eidos)

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 IN ISSUE
1	(-)	WACKY RACES	INFOGRAMES	7/10	9
2	(-)	NHL 2K	SEGA	7/10	9
3	(-)	TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING	CRAVE	8/10	10
4	(2)	RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA	EIDOS	9/10	8
5	(1)	ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DOTF	SEGA	9/10	9
6	(RE)	UEFA STRIKER	INFOGRAMES	8/10	1
7	(RE)	TEE OFF	ACCLAIM	7/10	3
8	(9)	CRAZY TAXI	SEGA	9/10	5
9	(RE)	FIGHTING FORCE 2	EIDOS	3/10	4
10	(5)	V-RALLY 2: EXPERT EDITION	INFOGRAMES	7/10	7



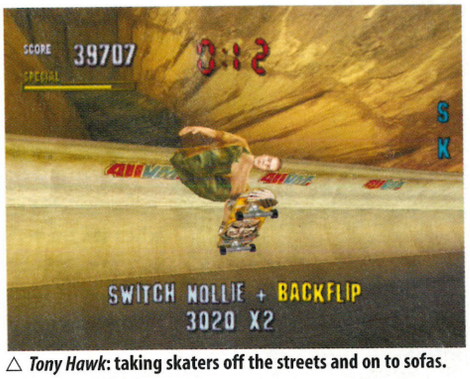
△ Do not underestimate the selling power of a sniggering hound.

THE ChartTrack TOP TWENTY

ELSPA

POS	LW	TITLE	PUBLISHER	RATING	REVIEWED IN ISSUE
1	(1)	TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING	CRAVE	8/10	10
2	(3)	WACKY RACES	INFOGRAMES	7/10	9
3	(2)	RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA	EIDOS	9/10	8
4	(4)	ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DOTF	SEGA	9/10	9
5	(5)	CRAZY TAXI	SEGA	9/10	5
6	(7)	SILVER	INFOGRAMES	4/10	10
7	(6)	V-RALLY 2	INFOGRAMES	7/10	7
8	(13)	TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION	EIDOS	7/10	6
9	(9)	UEFA STRIKER	INFOGRAMES	8/10	1
10	(12)	SEGA BASS FISHING	SEGA	7/10	1
11	(10)	SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER EURO EDITION	SEGA	7/10	8
12	(8)	THE NOMAD SOUL	EIDOS	5/10	7
13	(15)	SOUL CALIBUR	SEGA	10/10	2
14	(20)	RAYMAN 2: THE GREAT ESCAPE	UBI SOFT	8/10	6
15	(-)	NHL 2K	SEGA	7/10	9
16	(14)	BUST-A-MOVE 4	ACCLAIM	7/10	9
17	(-)	DRAGONS BLOOD	INTERPLAY	6/10	10
18	(RE)	WWF ATTITUDE	ACCLAIM	3/10	2
19	(17)	POWER STONE	EIDOS	8/10	1
20	(RE)	FIGHTING FORCE 2	EIDOS	3/10	4

UK sales for week ending 8 July 2000. Compiled by Chart Track © ELSPA 2000



△ *Tony Hawk*: taking skaters off the streets and on to sofas.

CHART ANALYSIS

THE CARTOON CAPER *Wacky Races* almost does the double this month, making it to the top of the HMV chart and reaching second place in the Chart Track top 20. It was a big hit on last issue's demo disc, and we've noticed older fans of the TV show crowded round the Dreamcast demo pods in stores.

If there's a thorn in *Wacky Races*'s side, it's that man Tony Hawk with his superior skateboarding game. Again, our demo disc (*ODM* #9) made a lot of you sit up and take notice. We're not blowing our own trumpet, but we've received a lot of positive feedback about these two games after you played the demos.

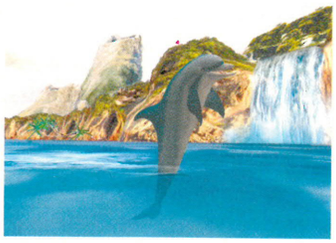
The other notable entry is Sega's ice hockey sim *NHL 2K*. And if you want a copy you better be fast, as only a limited quantity is being released in the UK. So what are you waiting for, eh?

THE PLAYLIST



OUR FAVOURITE GAMES

YOU CAN SAVE £5 OFF A GAME AT HMV WITH *ODM*. BUT WHAT SHOULD YOU BUY? THIS MONTH, ED LOMAS PICKS HIS FAVE TITLES FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES



1 ECCO THE DOLPHIN

SEGA • *ODM* #9, 9/10

Just like the old Mega Drive *Ecco* games, this has hooked me and is driving me mad at the same time. It looks and sounds beautiful, and the feeling of freedom you get when playing is fantastic. The thing is, it's easy to get stuck in the same place for ages at a time. I now have to leave a week or so between sessions so as not to get too wound up.



2 RAYMAN 2

UBI SOFT • *ODM* #6, 8/10

After despising Rayman for years, I've ended up being one of his biggest fans. I've completed the game twice now, but still play it because there's so much variety between levels. Also, everything looks and sounds so lush that it's nice to just wander around looking for things I might have missed before. And the multiplayer Globox bonus game is always a lot of fun.



3 4 WHEEL THUNDER

MIDWAY • *ODM* #8, 8/10

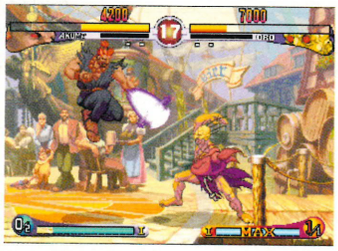
This excellent racer manages to combine the mad over-the-top-ness that Midway are famous for, with the kind of quiet coolness that French developers seem to do so easily. All the design is ace, the music's mad, the game's stupidly fast, and the two-player modes are brilliant fun. And it's worth playing all the way through just to see the insane end sequence!



4 CHUCHU ROCKET!

SEGA • *ODM* #9, 9/10

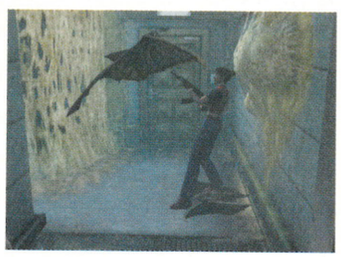
Sonic Team are my favourite game designers. Everything they've ever made is worth playing, and *ChuChu Rocket!* is certainly no exception. It's mad and incredibly confusing at first, but the perfectly balanced gameplay soon becomes second nature. It's also one of the best multiplayer games ever with four people playing, either online or on one machine.



5 STREET FIGHTER III: DOUBLE IMPACT

VIRGIN • *ODM* #8, 7/10

It's not the best *Street Fighter* on Dreamcast, but it's the one I'm most into at the moment. I've now figured out some excellent combos for Yun and Yang, and that's where a lot of the fun lies in *SF* games. I still can't be bothered with Urien though, he's got to be the crappest character yet in the series.



6 RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA

EIDOS • *ODM* #8, 9/10

One of the games that really shows what Dreamcast is capable of. The graphics are so far ahead of anything on any other format that they amaze everyone who sees them. And the game's fantastic too. Okay, so it still plays like the first *Resident Evil* did four years ago, but it's done with such class that you've got to love it.

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

Fun for all the family when games cost nowt

THERE ARE A LOT of things you could do with ten new games. You could steal the wheels from cars by propping them up with those chunky game cases. You could build yourself some incredible platform shoes. There are literally hundreds of uses. Best of all is placing them into your Dreamcast and playing them. Not only is this more practical, but it should also be far more entertaining.

Imagine the fun you could have with all the top ten games in this month's HMV chart! To be in with a chance of winning the lot, all you have to do is answer a simple question.

Let's have a quick glance at the games you could be winning. Top of the pile is *Wacky Races*, a madcap racing game based on the classic cartoon. If that's not your bag, try out some ice hockey with *NHL 2K*, or experience the greatest skateboarding game ever with *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding*. Also included are heavyweight releases *Code: Veronica*, *Ecco The Dolphin* and *Crazy Taxi*.

If you fancy owning the whole lot for free, just answer the so-easy-it-hurts question below, fill in the form and pop it in the post – not forgetting the envelope and stamp, of course.

Complete this coupon, then cut it out (or make a photocopy), stick it inside an envelope and post it to: *ODM* Top 10 Games Comp (Sept), c/o Simon Moore, HMV Marketing Department, Film House, 142 Wardour Street, London W1V 4LN.

The closing date for entries is Thursday 7 September 2000.

THE QUESTION: WHICH OF THESE IS A VEHICLE FEATURED IN WACKY RACES?

A) ARKANSAS CHUGGA-BUG
B) K.I.T.T.
C) URBAN ASSAULT VEHICLE

ANSWER (circle one): A B C

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AGE:

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EMAIL ADDRESS:

☐ 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. 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 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.

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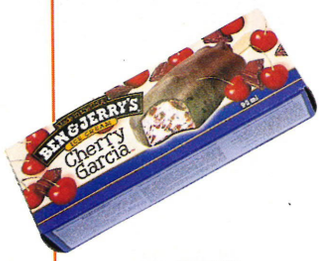
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HMV

EAT THIS! POSH ICE CREAMS



CHERRY GARCIA

£1.40 • BEN & JERRY'S

Created in a homage to the eponymous ice cream makers' favourite guitarist, this is a blinding combination of dark chocolate and fruity ice cream. Unlike some, it actually tastes of cherries, and is a wonderfully rich combination that flies in the face of good sense and healthy



BAILEYS

£1.20 • HÄAGEN-DAZS

Baileys is a pretty sickly concoction even on its own, but smother it in chocolate and blend it into ice cream and you have the ideal sugar overload for the sweet of tooth. Lightweights need not apply; this is ice cream for the hardcore fanatic only, and should be tackled only if you can handle the really rich flavour. And no, it's not alcoholic. *DT*



MAGNUM CLASSIC

£1 • WALL'S

An example of the power of marketing if ever there was one. Stick a glorified choc-ice on a stick, give it a nondescript but mysterious name and go for the old phallic advertising campaign, and you have yourself a winner. To be fair, the Magnum doesn't taste bad and is available everywhere, but it can't match the Cherry Garcia for taste and quality. *DT*

TOYS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

A pocket-sized guitar amp, a space rocket alarm clock, an exploding gold ball (snigger) and a CD deck designed for DJs are among this month's technological toys and gadgety wanna-have-its



DEER HUNTER

If shooting cute wildlife is your thing but you're a bit squeamish about actually going out and killing things, then this game from Tiger Toys could well be the answer. Boasting "kickback vibration"," bolt action reloading" and three game modes to test your marksmanship, this is hand-held gaming taken to extremes. While the actual gameplay is clumsy and the sound effects will irritate everyone else in the room, the silliness of the whole enterprise is strangely addictive, and you find yourself having turn after turn in an attempt to wipe out more of those oh-so-cute little deer. And bunny rabbits. And whatever else is foolhardy enough to cross your path. Don't play in public though – you'll look stupid.

Price: TBC
Contact: Tiger Toys
Website: www.tigertoys.com



SMOKEY GUITAR AMP

Electric guitars are all very well, but as any guitar nerd will tell you the instrument are no good without a decent amp, and those don't usually come cheap. Add to that the need for iron biceps to lift the darn thing, plus the need for extremely understanding neighbours, and it all becomes something of a bind. Unless you have a Smokey amp. For a smidgen more than 20 notes you can have a fully operating amplifier capable of powering a 4x12" speaker cabinet (yes, really!) or operating on its own as a pocket-sized, self-contained unit. To prove claims that it will fit into a cigarette packet, the amp is available in a plastic casing or... a recycled cigarette packet of your choice, and has found favour with recording artists all over the world. Apparently.

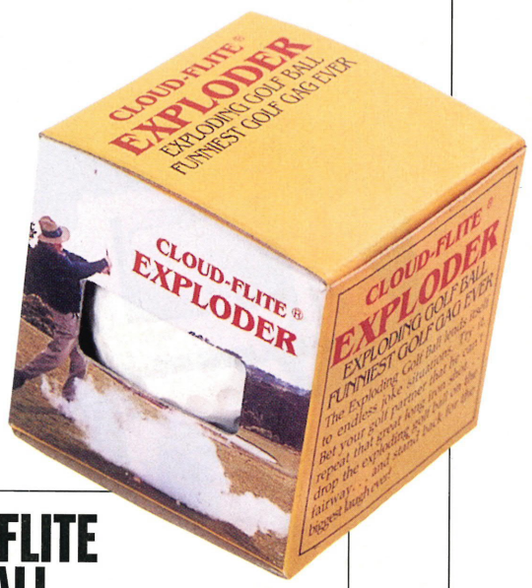
Price: £21.49 inc p&p
Contact: ADM
Tel: 01245 477020
Website: www.smokeyamps.com

ROCK 'N' ROLL SPACE CLOCK

There may not yet be any official *ChuChu Rocket!* merchandise (sort it out, Sega!) but if you really can't get enough of the mouse mania then you'll have to get a bit more creative with your gadget hunting. This rocket alarm clock does all the things you'd expect from an alarm clock, and also bears a passing resemblance to the rockets in the aforementioned game. Tenuous link, admittedly, but it's fun in a kitsch kind of way, and won't break the bank if you yearn for something streamlined and rocket-shaped near your bed. And if you think the *ChuChu Rocket!* music is irritatingly catchy, wait until you here the tinny version of the Spice Girl's *Wannabe* that it hits you with when it's time to get up.

Price: £12.99
Contact: Arthouse
Tel: 0116 270 5522
www.gadgetsontheweb.com





CLOUD-FLITE GOLF BALL

Golf is a silly game, there's little doubt about that. But that's not to say there's no fun to be had at golf courses – the bunkers make excellent jumps for bikes, and the comedy value of golfers' clothes is not to be overlooked. And now there's another reason to head down to your local course for a bit of fun: the exploding golf ball. It's made of compacted chalk and moulded to the exact size and shape of a real golf ball, and the look of astonishment on the face of someone who's spent hours building up to taking that special shot, only to see the ball explode over their feet, is priceless. But beware: canny golfers will spot the weight difference and rumble your rouse unless you're very surreptitious. Oh, and lots of policemen play golf, so watch yourself.

Price: £2
Contact: Boys Stuff
Tel: 01902 86 18 18
Website: www.boysstuff.co.uk



PIONEER CMX-5000

DJs are the new rock 'n' roll stars and, even if it is hard to look sexy and cool behind a mixer, the cult of the bedroom DJ is growing all the time. The thing is, unless you're a committed vinyl junkie the chances are that most of your music will be on CD, and therefore fairly useless for mixing. Pioneer have recognised the potential for DJ-worthy CD decks that can do (almost) all the things a traditional turntable set-up can offer, and the CMX-5000 sits at the top of their DJsounds range. There isn't space to go into all the tricks and widgets this unit contains. It doesn't come cheap (and you'll need to buy a mixer too), but it shows what can be done, and there are cheaper models available. Check out the excellent website for the full gen, and be prepared to shop around for the best deal.

Price: £900 [approx]
Contact: LeisureTech
Tel: 01525 850085
Website: www.djsounds.com



PHOTOGRAPHY: **DAN TRENT**





KRAJICEK THIS OUT!

You've got to be committed if you want to attend Wimbledon, so we thought we'd liven up the queue by giving them an exclusive preview of *Virtua Tennis*. **DAN TRENT** was utterly serious

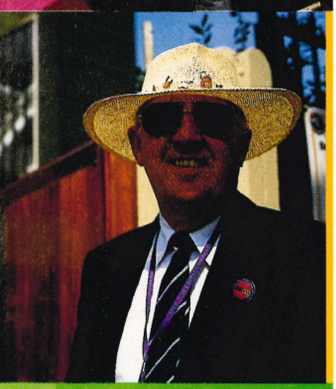


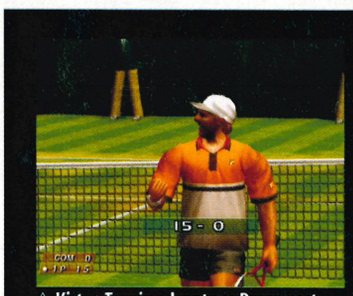












△ *Virtua Tennis*: advantage Dreamcast.

For many tennis fans, and indeed players, Wimbledon is the most exciting tournament on the circuit. The traditional flavour and the quintessentially English atmosphere – it rains a lot and costs a bomb – make it a must-see for thousands of tennis fans.

With queues at the weekend stretching up to three miles, it pays to make an early start if you want to see the stars in action. Following an unnaturally early start to the day for *ODM*, we thought we'd help to make the queuing more pleasurable by giving punters a peek at Sega's *Virtua Tennis*.

Many of you will know the game from the arcades, but this was the first time out in public for the enhanced Dreamcast version. If the views of our pundits at Wimbledon are anything to go by, then it's going to be a huge smash (sorry) when it arrives in September.

Try it out for yourself with this month's coverdisc, and look out for a full review in the next issue of *ODM*, on sale September 7.

• Dutch tennis player Richard Krajicek *doesn't* feature in the game but we weren't going to let that get in the way of a half-decent headline.





△ EMILY, 17, STUDENT

WHO ARE YOU HERE TO SEE?
Today? Patrick Rafter.
WHO DID YOU PLAY AS IN THE GAME?
Philippoussis.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?
Brilliant. Easy to control, and the graphics are superb.
WHAT STANDS OUT?
It's easy to pick up.



△ PHILIP, 20, INSURANCE BROKER

WHO ARE YOU HERE TO SEE?
My sister wants to see Rafter, and we're going to see Mary Pierce.
WHO DID YOU PLAY AS IN THE GAME?
Mark Philippoussis. He's got a powerful serve.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?
Really good. The graphics are excellent. I've played it in the arcades.
WHAT STANDS OUT?
It looks real.



△ JACQUI, 25, SALES MNGR

WHO ARE YOU HERE TO SEE?
I'm going to see Henman, and I'm delighted!
WHO DID YOU PLAY AS IN THE GAME?
Boringly, Henman. I lost.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?
Excellent. I'm not usually that good at games, but it was fun.
WHAT STANDS OUT?
I didn't have to get all hot and sweaty!



△ SHINY, 25, BUSINESS ANALYST

WHO ARE YOU HERE TO SEE?
Being and Aussie, I'd like to see Philippoussis.
WHO DID YOU PLAY AS IN THE GAME?
Philippoussis, of course!
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?
Considering I haven't played anything since an Atari, it's pretty cool.
WHAT STANDS OUT?
Easy to get into.



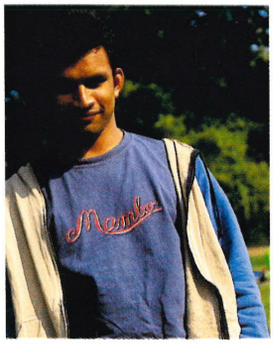
△ ROGER, 78, RETIRED PHYSICIAN

WHO ARE YOU HERE TO SEE?
Sampras. We're from Florida, so he's our man.
WHO DID YOU PLAY AS IN THE GAME?
Courier.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?
Really fun, especially as I won.
WHAT STANDS OUT?
The authenticity –very accurate.



△ BARNABY, 19, STUDENT

WHO ARE YOU HERE TO SEE?
No one in particular, but we're going to see Rafter.
WHO DID YOU PLAY AS IN THE GAME?
Thomas Haas. He's pretty solid.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?
I was really impressed.
WHAT STANDS OUT?
The gameplay. Often on tennis games it's hard to control the players, but here it's simple to angle the shots and stuff.



△ SHOUMA, 27, ACCOUNTANT

WHO ARE YOU HERE TO SEE?
I'm with some Australians, so they want to see Rafter.
WHO DID YOU PLAY AS IN THE GAME?
Pioline. He's an exciting player to watch.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?
It was excellent – better than anything I used to play on Mega Drive.
WHAT STANDS OUT?
It's very quick to learn, but it's well-balanced with all the different player's abilities.



△ STEVEN, 19, STUDENT

WHO ARE YOU HERE TO SEE?
Nobody in particular.
WHO DID YOU PLAY AS IN THE GAME?
Mark Philippoussis.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT
I love it, because I won!
WHAT STANDS OUT?
I won!



△ AMANDA, 20, STUDENT

WHO ARE YOU HERE TO SEE?
Agassi!
WHO DID YOU PLAY AS IN THE GAME?
Henman. I lost, which says a lot.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?
Really good, very straightforward.
WHAT STANDS OUT?
The graphics in particular – the reaction shots are excellent.



PHOTO: **DAN TRENT**

READY TO RUMBLE

MIDWAY'S PRODUCER EXTRAORDINAIRE METRO MUSTAFA LETS US IN ON HIS UNUSUAL ROUTE INTO THE GAMES INDUSTRY

TO SAY THAT METRO is a bit larger than life would be something of an understatement. Having burst on to the games scene nine years ago as national Nintendo champion, he's since worked his way round the industry and the world and now finds himself as head of UK production at Midway.

Working in the games industry is a dream come true, and it all came about from entering a simple competition: "Nintendo organised a UK contest and I thought 'Why not?' Games were something that I always excelled at – I was always beating my mates and people down at the arcade – so we played a whole series of games and I came top." Simple as that.

After that came TV appearances on *Gamesmaster* – "I've still got my golden joystick on the mantelpiece!" – and various other 'challenge the champion' features, and shortly afterwards the offer of a job at Nintendo. "I started in NIntendo doing public relations and sales," Metro tells us, "but I soon knew that I wanted to move into development, as I thought that was the best use of my talents. I got a job with Ubi Soft and worked for them in London, New York and Paris, but I decided I would be more at home somewhere with more of an arcade history. Midway was a natural choice."

With his over-the-top personality and huge enthusiasm for the job, Metro is something of a minor celebrity within the games industry. But when it comes to his job, he's very serious: "My whole life has been structured around games. I'd like to think that I'll still be in production in ten years time, as I'm a creative person, and if I can give back some of the happiness I've received from games then I'll feel like I'm justified."

Unsurprisingly, he's full of good things to say about the games he's been involved with: "I'm looking forward to *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing: Round 2*. And San *Francisco Rush 2049* [previewed on page 45] is going to be really good. There are lots of different ways of playing it, which means it should appeal to a large number of people. You'll be able to play it as you want."

As you might have guessed, Metro's fighting skills go beyond the joypad, although he assures us that it's more for the exercise value than for any closing-time heroics: "I'm not going to fight anyone if I can avoid it. I have boxed though, and once got hit full in the head by a heavyweight boxer. Man, I was counting little tweety birds one by one after that, and I could just about hear my corner man shouting at me. It was all a bit blurry!"

Best keep it on the screen, then. But it does beg the question of which *Ready 2 Rumble* character he feels the closest affinity with. "I think it would have to be Afro Thunder," Metro decides, "because he's good at what he does and he's not afraid to shout about it! He may not be the most powerful or the best, but like me he reckons it's better to look good and lose than to win and look bad!"

Dan Trent

"GAMES WERE SOMETHING THAT I ALWAYS EXCELLED AT"



TURNING JAPANESE

EVER WANTED TO BE IN A GAME? LUKE VALENTINE IS IN ONE

IF YOU READ THE PREVIEW in last month's *ODM*, then you'll have heard about how the development team of *Virtua Tennis* based the Dreamcast-specific bonus characters on friends and colleagues at Sega of Japan. Luke Valentine is one of those people, and is now the proud possessor of a fully fledged Croatian alter ego within the game.

"I wasn't actually motion-captured for *Virtua Tennis*," Luke explains. "That was done with a professional Japanese player, and the gestures were done by Tatsukawa-san, the director, but they did photograph my face and make me into the character."

Luke is modest about his input on the game – "I'm only in there because there are only four guys who work here who aren't Japanese, and they wanted a Western face!" – but he's worked on some of the big Dreamcast titles since starting at Sega: "I've worked on *Virtua Fighter 3tb*, *House Of The Dead 2*, *ChuChu Rocket!*, *Maken X*, *Virtua Tennis* and *Sega Bass Fishing*, to name a few, and my role is, according my job description, game localisation and manual production." Obviously we play the games inside out, and I've got to know all the development teams really well."

Luke originally came to Japan on the JET (Japan Exchange and Teaching) programme, fresh from his studies in Manchester. "I didn't speak a word of Japanese, had never tried sushi, couldn't use chopsticks, and had never been that far from home before!" he jokes. "I worked as an English teacher at a rural high school about two hours north of Tokyo. When I left JET in 1998 my Japanese was good enough to translate easy stuff like game manuals and game system files – the kind of work that I do at Sega."

He admits that he was never a hardcore gamer as such, but "since working here I've met some real 'otaku' [Japanese game fanatics], especially bug testers and the like. Everyone here is passionate about games, and being surrounded by it all has totally changed my perspective."

Dan Trent

"SINCE WORKING HERE I'VE MET SOME REAL 'OKATU'"

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△ Prepare yourself for a fistful of fun.

Smashing people in the face will never be so much fun. **JOE HOWATT** charts the rise of bloody realism gone mental

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **NOVEMBER**
PUBLISHER: **CRAVE**
DEVELOPER: **ANCHOR**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Superb realism
- More moves and combos than you can shake a stick at
- Create-a-fighter mode for all the anal retentives out there
- More than 5,000 polygons per character

WHEN AMERICANS 'DISSUADE' any kind of physical activity in 49 states, you know there's more than a little problem with it. After all, we're talking about a country that unashamedly boasts pig wrestling, nude sky-diving, and the almighty charades of WCW and WWF as legitimate, televisable pastimes. Seems like the Ultimate Fighting Championship was just a little too much for the censors, even in the Land of the Free.

UFC is a no-holds-barred, blood-soaked, bone-snapping fighting event where the idea is to beat your opponent to a crimson pulp in a metal cage in front of a maddened, baying audience. Do this enough times and you win some money. In a very real sense, it's the human equivalent of dog-fighting, a fact that failed to escape the attention of America's politicians. Luckily, although you're banned from seeing fighters like the brutal Royce Gracie and Tank Abbot literally trying to kill each other, you'll soon be able to recreate the feeling of family fun the show exudes with your lovely Dreamcast and the software version on your very own TV. Aren't games great?

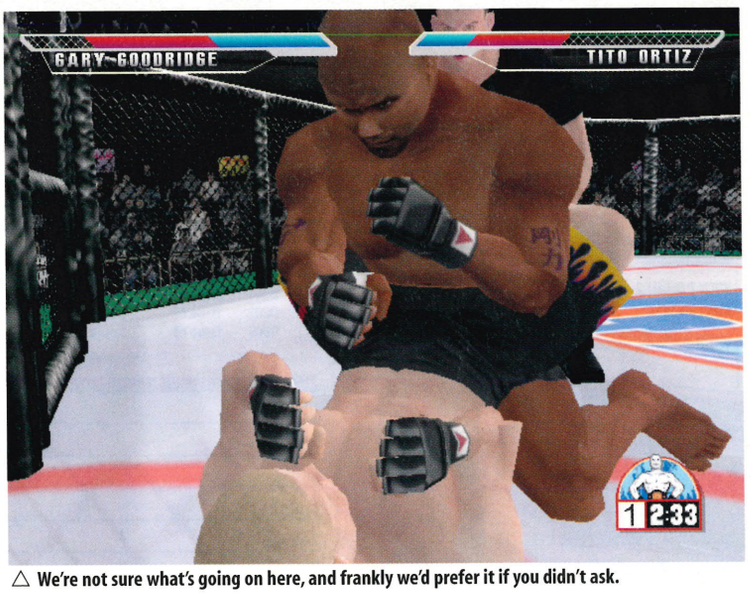
In case you haven't got the picture yet, this is strictly one for the older members of the audience. *UFC* (the game) is a straight simulation of the 'sport', a vicious re-enactment where every punch feels like exactly that, where blood sprays the canvas in the manner it should, where heads snap back under the weight of fierce blows, fighters look like they're coupling on the stained mat of the ring, the ref yells "Let's get it on!" before the start of every bout, and contenders are lucky to escape with their lives. Scary stuff.

Developers Anchor are still part-way through development of *UFC*, but if you've got any kind of soft spot for contact sport, you're going to love this. 22 of the greatest fighters from the league are featured, such as Tim Lajcik and Tsuyoshi Kosaka. These men are frightening in every sense of the word, monosyllabic monsters on the very edge of professionalism. Dozens of different fighting styles are represented, in theory adding an almost infinite variety to the way you play. Want to grapple? No problem. Want to wrestle? You got it. Want to karate someone into hospital? Why son, that's what we're here for.

When you scratch the surface of just hitting opponents in the face and kicking them occasionally, *UFC* is a



△ The level of graphical detail for each fighter is nothing short of astonishing.



△ We're not sure what's going on here, and frankly we'd prefer it if you didn't ask.

△ Tim and Ron get it on.

"1,200 COMBOS IN THE FINAL VERSION"

△ "When mummy and daddy love each other very much, they have a special cuddle."

genuinely complex fighting game. According to Crave, over 3,000 moves and 1,200 combos will make it into the final version. Most of the extra moves are throws, but submission fighters and wrestlers have plenty of arm- and leg-breaking moves on the floor of the octagon-shaped arena. Add to that left and right punches, left and right kicks and variations of all the above, and you have what could potentially be the most intricate fighting game this side of *Virtua Fighter 3tb* (*ODM* #1, 7/10). And that's a very bold statement indeed.

All of this complexity comes down to nothing more than the developer – Japanese firm Anchor Inc – and its quest for absolute realism. "We wanted to make a real fighting game," says Jeff Barnhart, producer of the title. "It's like, there are so many fancy fighters out there, with swords and fireballs and such. We wanted to have the same fun, with a really well-made game, but with a whole lot more in terms of realism. The Ultimate Fighting Championship is absolutely perfect for this." Looking at the game, it's hard to disagree.

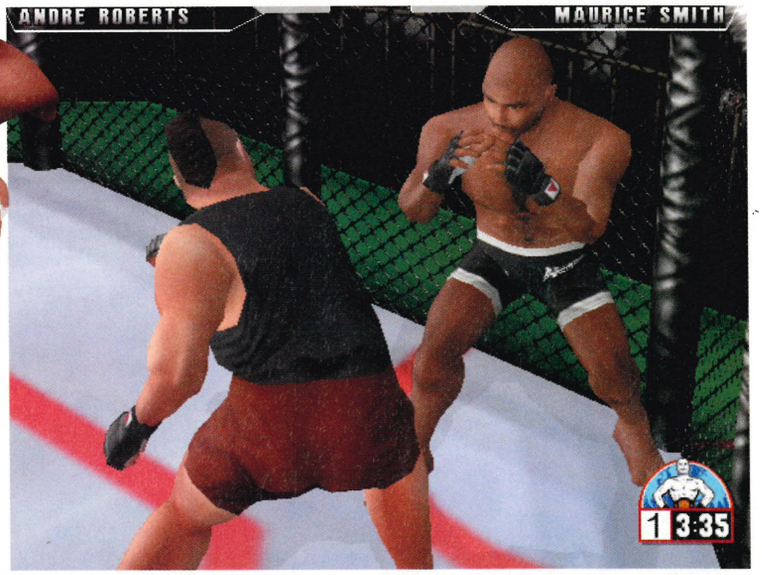
FIGHTING STYLES

Modes for *UFC* are extensive, and have the potential to add a great deal of replay value. Only the UFC and Versus modes were available in the early versions we played, but throw in a Tournament option where up to 15 fighters go head to head, Build a Fighter mode – strictly for the hardcore in the house – a Career path where you fight your way to the top of the bloodiest tree in sport and attempt to hold onto your crown, a Training mode to beef up your fighters and hone your button-pressing skills for the rigours ahead, and you get a beat 'em up destined to keep you coming back for more. Crave is convinced it has one of the finest fighters ever created on its hands.

UFC is brutal, but even from the early versions we've seen, there's plenty of wide-eyed enjoyment to be had from pummelling flattened faces into canvas. Barnhart insists that, although the sport has received a less than stellar reception from America's decision makers, the actual situation is nowhere near as bad as people assume. "It's not banned in any



△ Moves include a swift karate chop to the back.



△ As befits the tough image of the sport, the wrestlers have names like... er, Maurice and Andre.



△ *Ultimate Fighting Championship* promises to be as slickly violent as its real-life counterpart.



△ After the fight, everyone holds hands to show that there's no hard feelings. Aaaah!

States. It's just sanctioning. More and more States are getting sanctioned, but it's not actually banned anywhere," he says. Good job really, as the sport is about to get a massive boost from Crave's game.

From the ultra-realistic movement of the characters and the anal attention to detail in terms of fighting styles, counter moves and wrestling techniques, it's obvious there's some serious experience involved. Step up Anchor Inc, a team comprised of some of the most prestigious fight-coders in the entire industry. "The developers on board for *UFC* are very talented indeed," says Barnhart. "We have members of the *Fighting Vipers*, *Tekken*, *Soul Edge* and *Toy Fighter* teams working on the game right now." Think about that when you're even considering saying, "But all it is is punching and kicking." Try and tell that to Anchor and see how far it gets you.

BLOODY MESS

Punching, kicking and bending people's arms means blood. Lots of it. We'd been told by the rumour mill that the final version would be swimming, that the canvas would be awash with claret. Not so, according to the man himself. "We've focused more on realism than spraying the place with blood. The game is very representative of a UFC event where, yes, there is some blood, but it's certainly not a bloodbath."

At the moment, it's only the occasional hard-hitting smacks to the chops when straddling on the mat which bring out the red stuff. The final version will let you mash the faces of adversaries, but there'll be none of the thick red fountains of, say, *Mortal Kombat Gold* (*ODM* #1, 5/10). This is real. Throw your fist into someone's mouth with enough force and you'll see flying teeth. What you won't get is jets of vein juice coating the lights.

While this may disappoint Dreamcast gore fans, the effect is far more disquieting than arms and legs being ripped off in a pseudo-comic manner. Fighters wince as they cower under rains of punches, and their faces go slack-jawed and unconscious as the final blows knock them off their feet and into the harsh wire frame on the edge of the octagon. Any game that makes grown men (ie us) screw up their eyes and emit "Ooohs" and "Aaahs" in unison has to be doing something right.

UFC already runs at a silky-smooth 60 frames per second, and each fighter comes replete with around 5,000 polygons, the two specs coupling together to create a seriously good-looking piece of code.

22 fighters from the crazy world of UFC will be included in the retail version, but we got a good idea of how they'll shape up from the seven we've tried out. Graphically, the game is nothing short of amazing, even in the early stages – just check out these screenshots. There's been plenty of detail and muscle added to the figures since the impressive

"UFC IS LOOKING GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT"

demonstration version shown at the Los Angeles E^3 trade show in May; the crowd has apparently been doctored to include almost as many polygons as the fighters themselves, and the sultry lady parading around the side of the ring between rounds, aside from an almost undead look on her trailer trash face, merely adds to the disturbing, uncanny sense that all this is maybe a little too close to the bone. Literally.

Anchor are now in the final stages of development, and the substantial contingent of combatants is firmly in place. "All the fighters are in the game now. We're very close." But is Mr Barnhart pleased with the almost-finished product? Um, ever so slightly... "It's turned out to be everything we hoped for and much, much more. It has that magic to it that's so rare in videogaming these days. We're extremely happy. It's one of the true greats."

Ultimate Fighting Championship, even with seven fighters and a fraction of the modes to be included in the final version, is looking good enough to eat. The chances of this getting away with anything less than an 18 rating in the UK are as slim as Kate Moss's ankle, but for those of you with a slightly twisted sense of humour, Anchor and crew look likely to hit the nail fully on the head. Dreamcast's graphical capabilities are pushed squarely to the limit in terms of character detail, and although the actual style of fighting will take a little getting used to for some gamers – there's going to be an awful lot of rolling around on the floor trying to gain the upper hand – the depth of play verges on the astonishing for what is essentially a game where you merely have to beat the opponent to a pulp.

Are you ready to get it on? You'd better be. Look out for the full *ODM* review, coming soon.

SAN FRANCISCO RUSH 2049

Hoverboards, holographic cinemas and self-drying jackets are things of the past. **ED LOMAS** reports from the future

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **NOVEMBER**
PUBLISHER: **MIDWAY**
DEVELOPER: **MIDWAY**

THE ORIGINAL *San Francisco Rush* was rubbish. In the arcades, on Nintendo 64 and on PlayStation, it was just plain dump. So it's a relief to find that Midway have decided to do things very differently for this (semi-) sequel. Naturally, being set 49 years in the future, San Francisco will look quite different from the simple grid-style set-up of the first nineties-based game. In addition to quicker freeways, the towering skyscrapers of futuristic San Fran have all manner of hidden tunnels and twisting flyovers running over, under and around them which, if you're quick enough, will help you gain position. The thing is, they're very rarely simple short cuts; often you'll need to use your flying skills to really take advantage of these extra routes. Yes, flying skills.

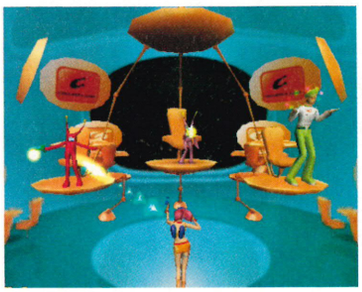
Although the cars in *Rush 2049* won't be able to fly properly, they're all fitted with retractable wings which can be used to glide short distances. By holding one of the buttons when you drive over a hill or off a ramp fast enough to get some air, you'll be able to extend your wings and guide your car over any obstacles. Actually keeping control of your airborne car is going to be one of the main challenges in *Rush 2049*, with even the slightest touch on the analog stick sending you twisting out of control.

Along with regular races, you'll also be able to take your future-mobile into specially designed stunt arenas where you can show off your 'falling with style' skills; battle arenas where up to four players can pick up and use weapons against one another; or a bizarre obstacle course where you must avoid swinging spikes and lava pits, among other things. With Ed Logg – the creator of such legendary titles as *Asteroids*, *Centipede* and *Gauntlet* (not *Gauntlet Legends*) – working on it, *San Francisco Rush 2049* has a lot of promise. Hopefully it will live up to it come November.

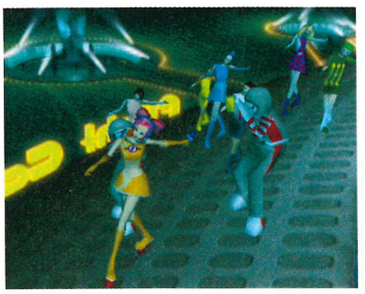


△ **Finding short cuts is one thing, actual.your advantage is another.**


△ Ulala sure is one 'saxy' lady.


△ Zap aliens and free humans with your gun.


△ Best videogame legs ever? Oh yes.


△ And sliiiide! Ulala's on the slope to success.

SPACE CHANNEL 5

An alien invasion that can be stopped only by dancing. **ALEX HUHTALA** gets his groove back



"YOU MAKE ME FEEL like dancing" sang Leo Sayer back in the '70s. The only white man in history to have an Afro hairdo and still be alive to tell the tale. If you're too young to remember the song, count yourself lucky, but Leo's sentiment is perfectly echoed in Sega's forthcoming dance-a-thon, *Space Channel 5*. His musical action game will have you tapping your toes, humming along to the funky music – maybe even ditching your control pad and performing a backspin in front of the TV.

How is this possible? How are you going to be transformed from a sitting position into wanting to bust some moves and show the world that you actually possess rhythm? The answer is Ulala, the voluptuous star of the show, complete with candyfloss-coloured hair and the longest, most incredibly animated legs in game history.

Ulala, pronounced as though you're French (ooh-la-la) is sexy, make no mistake. The way she moves, the way she dresses, and especially the way she dances. Much more than a match for the artificially enhanced Lara Croft, Ulala is the woman of the future, or at least the woman for the 25th century, seeing as that's where the game is set. As top reporter for Space Channel 5 – much classier than the Channel 5 we're used to – it's her job to travel around the galaxy covering the latest stories. We catch up with Ulala during her latest newscast, covering the live events of an alien invasion at the Space Channel 5 studios.

THE LOWDOWN

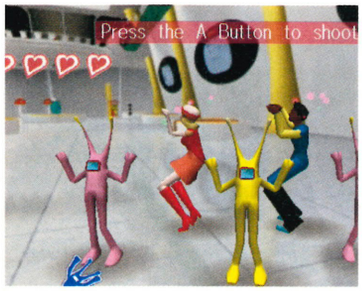
DUE OUT: **SEPTEMBER**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **SEGA AM9**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Introducing a great female icon for Dreamcast
- Stunning animation and dance moves
- Funky retro-future tunes
- Space Michael Jackson!

Here's where the game is going to break rules. In 99 per cent of videogames, an alien invasion means one thing: carnage. In *Space Channel 5*, an alien invasion is the excuse Ulala needs to prove her dancing prowess. It seems the invading Morolians are just as keen on grooving as Ulala. Their plan to take over the world involves the funkiest form of mind control ever conceived: dancing.

As Ulala, it's your duty to match the moves of the aliens in an intergalactic version of Simon Says. As you sashay through the space station, the day-glo aliens appear and challenge Ulala to dance. Match their movements when you're told to and the aliens will be defeated. For the sake of gameplay, the Morolian dance routines are like a Mister Motivator fitness regime, but instead of saying the word 'gang' a lot they have squeaky voices and shout out the moves they're about to perform. There's nothing too fancy, just bending left and



△ The Morolians get busy on the dancefloor.

right in time to the beat, and occasionally raising their hands or touching the floor.

A small symbol appears in the bottom left corner of the screen that tells you when it's your turn to take the floor. You can even make mistakes, but this is such a nice, happy game that messing up a routine doesn't result in Game Over – not at first, anyway. The only punishment is that more humans are trapped by the alien groove. You can also tell how well you're performing by the number of humans that join Ulala to form a dancing troupe. As the Morolian dances become more complex, mind-controlled humans are incorporated into their routine. You must free the humans with a zap of your gun, but at the same time be careful because there are two fire buttons – one to blast the aliens, the other to free humans. Mix these up and your score will be deeply affected; get it right and the humans you free join Ulala. Do well and you can gather an impressive gang of choreographed followers, all controlled by you and your dancing fingers.

Space Channel 5 is going to be a crazy game, make no mistake. It has original ideas, and a soundtrack that wouldn't sound out of place in Austin Powers's boudoir. Anyone should be able to pick up and play, as you only use six buttons (four directions and two shots). Even those with two left feet stand a chance, as long as your brain can tell your fingers the difference between left and right. Judging by the game's success in both Japan and the US already, we're guessing that *Space Channel 5* is going to get a fanatical following over here come September.



△ These very early shots show the basics. Expect mud, dust and tyre tracks in the final cut.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2.0

Hold on tight, Colin McRae is on his way to Dreamcast. **DAN TRENT** rides shotgun

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **DECEMBER**
PUBLISHER: **CODEMASTERS**
DEVELOPER: **CODEMASTERS**

THE FLYING SCOT has had a mixed bag of luck over the last 18 months, but for console owners Colin McRae remains a name synonymous with one of the best driving videogames ever. As revealed in our recent preview special (*ODM* #9), the sequel to his massively successful PlayStation and PC racer is heading our way soon, promising Dreamcast owners the most in-depth and realistic rally title we've yet seen.

If you've played the first game, then you'll know that the handling is a world away from that of arcade hit and Dreamcast launch title *Sega Rally 2* (*ODM* #0, 8/10), and is being tweaked and refined for the trip to the Sega console. The big news, though, has to be the addition of a fully fledged arcade mode for those moments when you just want to have a laugh with your mates. You'll be able to race a full grid of rival cars in a first-to-the-line battle on one of eight circuits, broadening the appeal of the game, especially if you find yourself needing a break from the time-trial format of the championship proper.

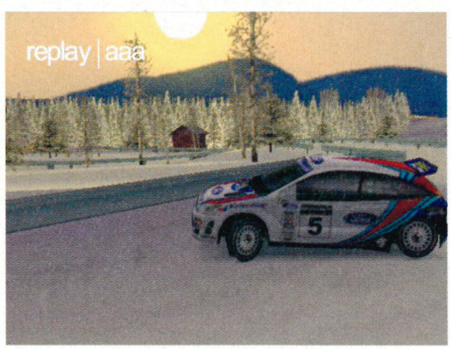
Other extra features include new cars like McRae's current ride, the Ford Focus, and a selection of machinery past and present rumoured to include a souped-up Mini and monsters from the outlawed '80s Group B.

Car damage, something of a *Colin McRae Rally* trademark, is being enhanced and will see the car leaving pieces of bodywork behind, smashing windows, and accurately deforming according to the impact in a progressive and realistic manner. Obviously you'll be doing your best to keep it on the straight and narrow, but even champions like Colin have their off days. The weather will be more random, and specific to each country represented, so careful choice of tyres will be critical.

The screenshots here are taken from a very early Dreamcast version, so expect to see some major graphical improvements between now and the December release date.



△ Colin McRae's Ford Focus in rare forward motion.



△ Each country has its own realistic weather conditions.

ALONE IN THE DARK

It may look a bit like *Resident Evil*, but *Alone In The Dark* did it first. Honest. **STEVE OWEN** is looking for some clean underwear



***RESIDENT EVIL*: THE EPITIOME** of Japanese gameplay genius. The ultimate combination of action, bad dialogue, creepy locations, and plenty of undead-looking things to kill. Japan at its most conventional best.

Except that the French got there first. Back in 1992, in fact, when PC owners were wowed by the appearance of the astonishing and unique *Alone In The Dark*, an interactive horror adventure set at the turn of the 20th century. Fortunately, *Alone In The Dark* on Dreamcast isn't a case of updating an eight-year-old game, but an entirely new adventure. By rights it should be called *Alone In The Dark IV* (there were three adventures released between 1992 and 1995 on the PC), but Infogrames are instead playing around with a number of alternative titles for the game, with *The New Nightmare* the current favourite.

"We have been influenced by the original games, but this isn't a sequel and you don't need to have played the other titles," says Guillaume Gouraud, artistic supervisor on the new *Alone In The Dark* and co-founder of developer Darkworks. "Instead we are creating a game using the same premise, but entirely new in design and implementation, and using the latest technology."

Primarily, the 'all-new' *Alone In The Dark* is another third-person action-adventure game. In a weird twist of imagination, you actually view your own character as if through security cameras (although, um, the game is still set at the turn of the last century). The designers

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **OCTOBER**
PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**
DEVELOPER: **DARKWORKS**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- The original 'survival horror' returns
- Great tension-inducing camera angles
- Spooky music, gruesome beasties
- There's an *X-Files*-style torch in it



△ **"I'm not coming on to you, but those jeans look really good on you. Doing anything tonight?"**



△ **Edward Carnby was one of the first to discover how much the new Millennium Bridge wobbled.**



△ The librarian had his own way of dealing with the kids booking out the special interest novels.



△ With a stance like Tom Cruise, Carnby is ready to take on any zombies coming his way.



△ Ring-a-Roses is dangerous. Be warned.



△ Aww, look. He just wants to be petted...



△ ... Oh, he's very playful, isn't he?



△ It's nothing like *Resident Evil* – honest.

are creating a number of atmospheric and scenic camera angles for each location, so that as you walk towards the edge of one view it switches to a new angle. As such the backgrounds are static, with the 3D characters overlaid.

CHASING SHADOWS

The benefit of this system is that not only will *Alone In The Dark* ooze tension and filmic atmosphere, but also that the static backdrops look astonishingly beautiful. Indeed, Darkworks have employed seven full-time artists to painstakingly paint every view, which the artists then scan and touch up before importing them into the game. With more than 120 locations, each with between five and 20 different angles, it's this aspect that's taking the greatest time, but also the reason why the Dreamcast community is getting so excited by the game's beauty.

"Each background actually has between two and four images with different lighting levels," explains Pascal Luban, lead designer on the new game. "Many rooms have light switches, while you will always have your trusty torch with which to try to look into the darkest of corners."

The torch is actually *Alone In The Dark*'s most important addition. While it might seem straightforward enough to cast a bit of light on to a background, full 3D models of all of the rooms will be used to accurately create real-time lighting and shadows. Just as in *X-Files*, your torch beam will be worryingly narrow, illuminating just a small proportion of the room, while casting even deeper shadows on any obscured areas. The torch is also used to highlight important game items which, if caught by the beam, sparkle intriguingly. Unfortunately for your heart, the best way of progressing through the game *is* to turn off the lights.

"The torch effect is the technology that has caused us the greatest problems," Gouraud admits. "In order to accurately create real-time lighting, we have to build 3D meshes to approximate the 2D backdrops. A table needs to cast a shadow, even though it's just part of a flat background."

Darkworks' patience and dedication appears to be paying off. Certainly *Alone In The Dark* looks creepier and more atmospheric than even *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* (*ODM* #8, 9/10). That the dark corners can hide all manner of gruesome, fearsome gothic and supernatural creatures means that soiling of undergarments while playing the game is a given thing.

BEASTS, GUNS AND GHOULS

The plot is being kept rather quiet at the moment. You can play as either Edward Carnby, the male protagonist from the original, or Aline Cedrac, a gutsy female from the days of women's suffrage. The story is the same no matter whom you choose to play, although each character approaches it from different locations, and with different intentions and motivations. But you've got to hope that there's a pretty good reason why Victorian characters armed with only old pistols would want to find out exactly what's going on in a creepy house built in somewhere called Shadow Island.

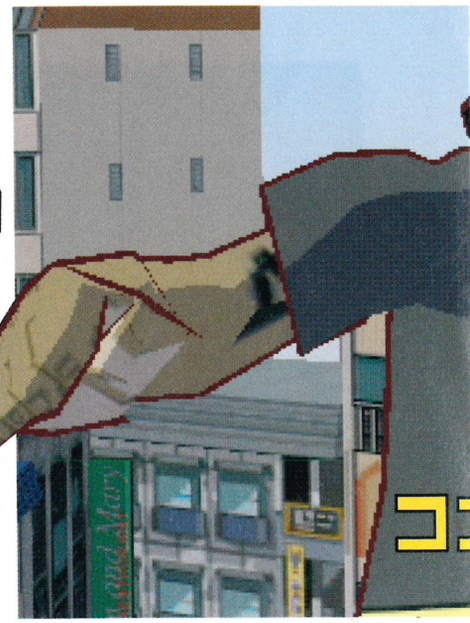
True to its name, Shadow Island is inhabited by a range of scary characters that seem somewhat more relaxed staying in darkness than in sunning themselves on a beach. No, they're not gothic teenagers, but giant insect beasts, lolloping arachnids and drooling, flesh-worn zombies.

"Some creatures are startled by your torch beam or by you turning on the room light," Pascal says, "others will use the beam to find you." In fact light plays a more important part in the game than just creating atmosphere. Among the more conventional weapons available (for the start of the 1900s) are some fantastical designs based on light and lasers. But one type of monster is blind, and tracks you using sound. *Alone In The Dark* is a game of constant discovery.

"We really want the player to finish this game," Guillaume Gouraud says, "we don't want them to stop halfway through. There won't be anything frustrating in it, just a beginning, middle and end. The puzzles will be logical."

We only have Darkworks' word on that. We've had just limited opportunities to play elements of the game, but it's the quality of the puzzles, not just how gorgeous *Alone In The Dark* looks, that will ensure the success of this intriguingly mysterious game.





△ This is Combo, a funky member of your gang.

JET SET RADIO

Will you stop playing with that radio of yours! **STEVE FULLJAMES** is trying to get some sleep!

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **NOVEMBER**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **SMILE PIT**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

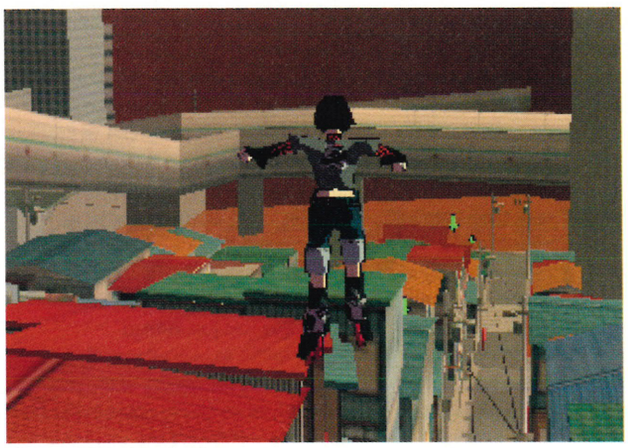
- Incredible-looking 'cell-shaded' graphics
- Super-cool characters and music
- Funky, anarchic attitude
- Mixture of skating and rhythmic action

ROLLERBLADING IS THE least picked-on of the so-called 'extreme' sports. It's not often you get gangs of bladers, causing avalanches or damaging sensitive concrete jungle ecosystems. No, the humble rollerblade is the preserve of street hockey, the Central Park-dwelling layabout, or any new media types who haven't yet bought one of those little metal scooters. Throw in the random variables of 'Japan', 'the future' and 'graffiti', however, and it's a whole different story. It's *Jet Set Radio*, in fact.

Jet Set Radio is the work of Smile Pit, one of Sega Japan's semi-independent development teams. The concept behind the game is deceptively simple. You skate, collect cans of spray paint and tag a number of targets with graffiti before the time runs out, and you need to do it without being collared by the long arm of the law. Not all the tag locations are easy to reach, so jumping and grinding skills are required to reach some out-of-the way areas. There are also 'safe' areas on each map if you're taking a beating.

The story is narrated between levels by Professor K, the boisterous pirate DJ who runs the Jet Set Radio station. It seems that all is not harmonious in futuristic Tokyo-toh. Rival skate gangs are causing a bit of a nuisance, while claiming that their graffiti antics are just "freedom of expression". Gangs such as techno troublemakers Noise Tank and the sewer-dwelling Poison Jam are making a bid for the turf of fresh-faced popsters the GGs – your gang. It is, of course, up to you to pull on your magnetic in-line skates and fight back. But watch out, because Police Captain Onishima, with his enormous *Dirty Harry*-style Magnum, is waiting on the sidelines to slap the handcuffs on anyone he can catch.

It's the kind of scenario that you might expect to find in an early '80s arcade classic: simple, yet completely off-the-wall.



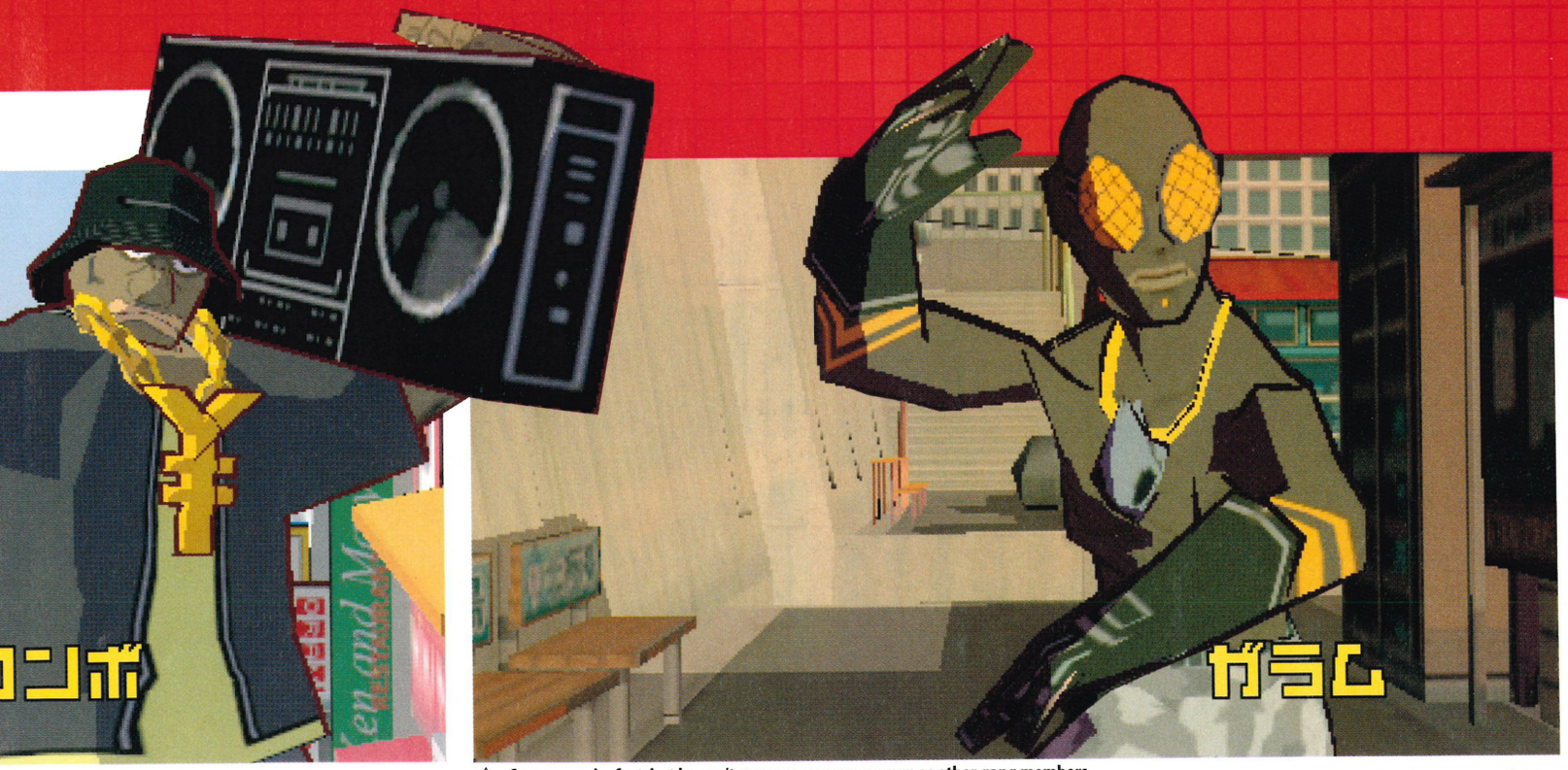
△ Jump down into the city...



△ ...grind along some handy phone cables...



△ ...somersault for extra points...



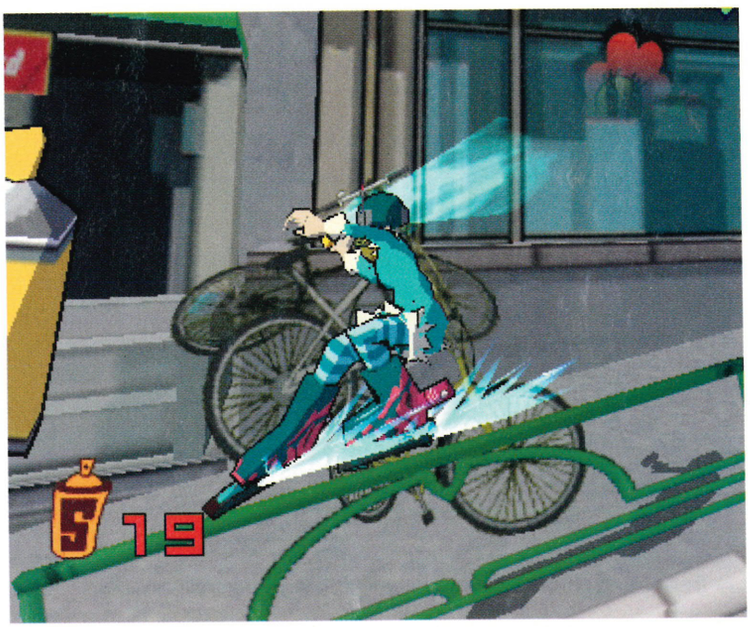
△ Garam may be fast, but he can't carry as many spray cans as other gang members.

Starting out with three streetwise GG kids, Beat, Gum and Corn, you'll be able to build up their crew to ten members by completing the training challenges that pop up after most levels. If you beat the challenger, you get to play as them. And they're all fresh, fashionable designs, ranging from Combo, a huge, ghetto blaster-toting dude, to vampish indie-chick Cube. Hell, even Yo-Yo the anorak-wearing ginger kid is cool. (Some of the character names may change for the UK version.)

PAINTING AND DECORATING

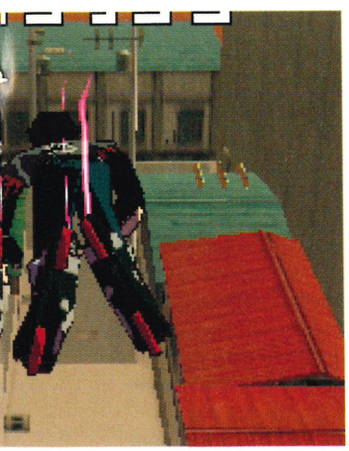
To paint a graffiti tag, you move the Dreamcast controller's analog stick to match green arrows flashed up on-screen, almost as though you were controlling the spray can itself. The rider you're playing as affects the complexity of the moves that make up each tag. Some use simple up and down motions, while others require half and full spins in alternate directions. If you mess up, the sequence is broken and you lose bonus points, but you can always carry on trying until you run out of paint.

The city (not-so-loosely based on Tokyo) that plays host to *Jet Set Radio* is divided into three areas. The GGs home turf, Shibuya-cho, is set in daylight, while the other two are enemy territory, and events there take place at sunset and ▷



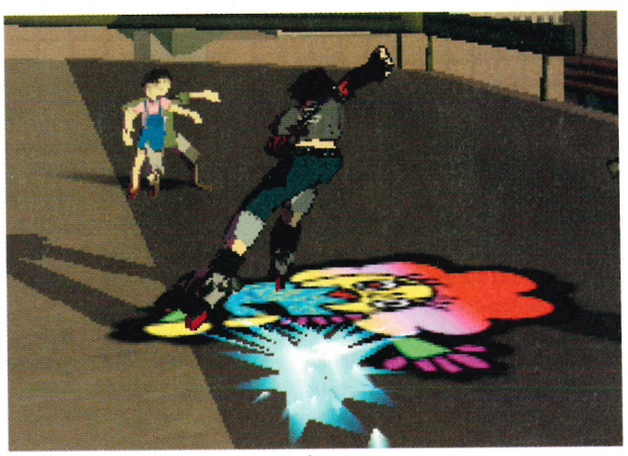
△ Spray tags while grinding and get some awesome replay angles.

"IT'S GONNA BE ONE OF DC'S HIGHLIGHTS THIS AUTUMN"





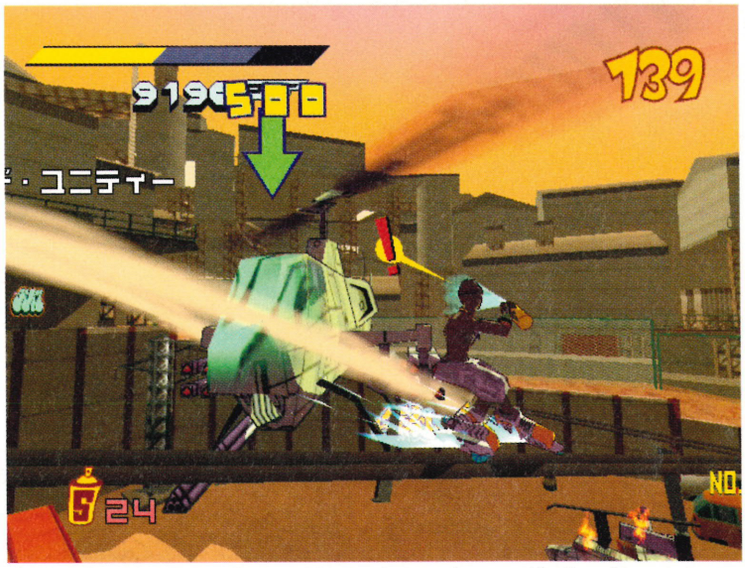
△ ...skid to a halt...



△ ...and indulge in some more vandalism.



△ There's always loads going on while you're playing. And it looks just like Tokyo.



△ The action gets pretty hectic, but tagging cop choppers gives you a bit of breathing space.



△ The built-in tag editor lets you create your own graffiti. Here's one we made earlier.



△ Spraying tags on the motorway. Don't try this at home, kids.

▷ at night. Naturally, each area has plenty of tagging opportunities, helpfully marked out by large red and green arrows for the rollerblader on a tight schedule. Some levels focus on a small area, such as the famous Shibuya bus station (as also featured in *Metropolis Street Racer*), while others give you a whole district to vandalise.

There have been rumours suggesting that the US and European versions of the game will feature a whole extra district on top of those in the recently released Japanese game. Jim Pride, Sega's European product marketing manager, explains: "That's a rumour that's founded in truth. There will be a period of time during localisation where certain members of the team will not be as busy on localisation. The team's wish is to add more content to the game if time permits." So keep your fingers crossed for now, in other words.

Collecting radio icons during the levels unlocks new graffiti tags, so you can choose exactly what you're spraying. The game also contains a tag editor which is pretty flexible and enables you to choose the style of your text, rotate it in 3D, change the proportions of each letter, and then apply a colour scheme or shade it yourself.

And there's more. Tags can be submitted to Sega, and approved ones will be posted on their website. You can even grab any JPEG picture file from the Internet, using *Jet Set Radio*'s built-in browser, and spray it all over the city.

This is how it works in Japan, anyway. But with online gaming now under way in Europe, Sega are keen to make sure that *Jet Set Radio*'s Internet options are intact for the UK. "We're looking at replicating the online features as much as we can," Jim says. "Because it's all dynamic, we may also be able to use Dreamarena to add more score data or do some different things [to the Japanese version]."

FUNK SOUL BROTHER

One of *Jet Set Radio*'s selling points is clearly its amazing visuals. Rather than trying to cram in as much detail as possible, the team at Smile Pit have instead used a relatively new graphics technique that involves shading each frame a number of times to a create a flat yet still three-dimensional look. While the characters all move in 3D, their thick black outlines and the smoothly animated shadows that flow across their bodies give the effect of a living cartoon. While *Wacky Races* (*ODM* #9, 7/10) is the first game that you can actually buy that uses the technique, *Jet Set Radio* is far slicker-looking.

The music in the game is as important as the graphics or the gameplay, and is another element that makes *Jet Set Radio* far cooler than you can ever hope to be. For the Japanese version, roughly half of the music is licensed from real-world artists, while the rest was composed in-house. Styles range from pure Japanese pop to rock, rap, dance



and turntablism, and Western influences are obvious, with numerous recognisable samples. Even Richard Jacques, Sega Europe's musical man man with the master plan, has contributed a track.

For the West, plans are afoot to tweak the music to local tastes. "Over in America," says Jim Pride, "they're working on a deal we can take advantage of." It seems that some of the quirkier elements of the Japanese soundtrack may be getting the chop and, although the deals are yet to be finalised, Rob Zombie and the ultra-cool Jurassic 5 are said to be on the 'incoming' shortlist.

It's likely that most changes made for the American release will make their way over to these shores, but Sega Europe have the final say on what makes the cut. "We're in the middle of discussions for licensing European music as well," Jim reveals, "so if there's anything in the American version that we don't think works we can put in a few tracks of our own instead."

Jet Set Radio seems to have it all: stunning graphics, meddling street punks, a fantastic soundtrack, built-in graphic design tools, Internet options, crazy Yakuza bosses, four-deck mixing, the works. Jim Pride is confident that the game will knock the collective socks off UK gamers: "It's gone down a storm so far. What retailers and consumers have seen has made a great impression, because it's such a cool-looking game that's also really original."

For what we're told are trademark reasons, the game is going by the name *Jet Grind Radio* in the US, but Sega have confirmed that it will be hitting UK streets under its original name. We'll update you on other changes being made for Europe as we hear about them, in time for the projected November release. And you'd better be ready, because *Jet Set Radio* is certainly gonna be one of Dreamcast's highlights this autumn. Wessside! Aiight?



△ Chun-Li's new animation is particularly cool. Check out her one-handed fireball!

STREET FIGHTER III FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE

The fighting game that will never die comes back for yet another go. **ED LOMAS** thinks he's hard enough

THE LOWDOWN

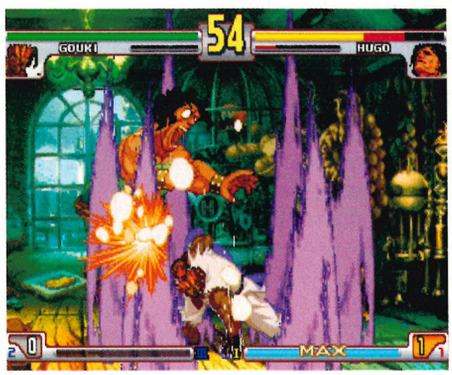
DUE OUT: **SEPTEMBER**
PUBLISHER: **VIRGIN**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**

NO, YOU HAVEN'T picked up an old issue of *ODM* by accident. And no, you're not seeing things; there really is *another* new *Street Fighter* game on its way to Dreamcast – this time it's the third part of the most recent *SF* series, *Street Fighter III 3rd Strike: Fight For The Future*. With the first two parts having barely arrived in UK stores (as *Street Fighter III: Double Impact*, *ODM* # 8, 7/10), Virgin are already gearing up to release the latest and, as many arcade-goers believe, greatest part of the trilogy.

Gameplay remains basically the same as it has for years, except with exactly the kind of additions and upgrades that fans will go crazy for, not least of which is the *Street Fighter III* debut of the original videogame super-babe, Chun-Li. She's one of five new characters that includes an Inspector Gadget-style robo-spy and a young karate-kicking lass called Makoto. The classic car-smashing bonus stage from *Street Fighter II* also returns, giving you a chance to vent your frustration and earn valuable extra points between fights.

This time around it's not just friends that you'll be able to impress with your fighting skills. After a fight, the game itself will now rate your style and ability with the new Grade Judge System. Additionally, you'll be able to save your most exciting battles to Virtual Memory and watch the replays over and over again, so that you (and your victim) need never forget that eight-second perfect knockout you got.

Judging by the way two previous Dreamcast *Street Fighter* games have been delayed considerably in the UK, we're not entirely confident that *Street Fighter III 3rd Strike: Double Impact* will make its proposed September release. But you can be sure that we'll be reviewing it in full just as soon as the PAL version is ready for release. Hang in there, street fighters!



△ Gouki has a new, all-conquering Super Art.



DISNEY'S DINOSAUR

It's taken a while, but the first movie tie-ins are starting to appear on Dreamcast. **STEVE KEY** checks out the latest animated dino exploits from Disney

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **NOVEMBER**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**
DEVELOPER: **DISNEY INTERACTIVE**

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- 3D platform adventure with a touch of RPG
- Three different dinos to control
- Follows the plot of the film
- Cinematic sequences from the movie

WE'VE HAD THE cartoony dinosaur film (*The Land Before Time*) and the computer-generated, scarily realistic action movie (*Jurassic Park*), so it was only a matter of time before the two were put together. And you just knew it was going to be Disney that would do it.

The hype machine for *Disney's Dinosaur* has already begun – impressive teaser clips were shown before *Toy Story 2* and trailers have just started to appear in cinemas. No doubt about it, this is going to be a monster of a movie when it's released in October.

The game, due a month later, will follow the plot closely, but with a few extras thrown in for good measure. "It follows the overall story," comments Joel Goodsell, producer at Disney Interactive, "although there are several moments in the film that have been embellished to generate entire levels."

Here's the basic plot: a small egg has been stolen from an iguanodon nest, and dropped on a small island as the thief dinosaur attempted to escape with it. The egg is found by a group of friendly lemurs, adopted by the family, and Aladar is born. He grows up as part of the lemur family, until a meteor shower destroys their tranquil island and they're forced to travel to the mainland.

"Although you have to get the herd to their new home, the goals in each level are mission-based and completely different from level to level," explains Joel. Even though Aladar is the central character, you also have two other creatures (Zini, a lemur, and Flia, a pteranodon) who are just as important to your quest. "Each character has unique abilities. You can switch between any of the three at any time to accomplish tasks individually, or play them as a party, which is better for combating enemies," adds Joel.

Given that the movie uses computer-generated animation, you might expect the transition to videogame to be easy. But as Joel points out: "There's really no difference to us. The developer still has to generate the assets from scratch, although it can help to have the original film model to compare with the game model." But the development team did liaise with the top brass involved in the movie: "Both the producer and one of the directors of the film were involved with helping us achieve the right look, including backgrounds, animation and character models. We had very good access to the film as well, and had assets from the movie right from the very beginning of production."

Joel, who has also worked on *Toy Story 2* for PlayStation and Nintendo 64, is very optimistic about the game's success: "*Dinosaur* is an action-role-playing game – it's nice to see Disney titles beginning to touch other genres.



△ Aladar's tail will see off most enemies.



△ Use Flia the pteranodon to scout ahead.



△ Look after all three characters carefully.

"REALLY SHOWS WHAT DREAMCAST CAN DO"

The biggest thing is that it's the first real-time title I've ever seen that really attempts photo-realism and shows what Dreamcast can do."

The added power of Dreamcast will mean far more realistic textures, landscapes and characters. Although the release of the game was originally planned to coincide with the release of the movie, a slight delay has pushed it back a month or so.

Presumably though, the game designers are lucky enough to have seen the film already? "Yeah, several times," shrugs Joel. "It's very good, and amazing-looking and sounding." Did you honestly expect him to say anything else?

TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX

If you fancy yourself as a budding military strategist, then this game could be the answer to your dreams. A stealthy **DAN TRENT** investigates

THE LOWDOWN

DUE OUT: **OCTOBER**
PUBLISHER: **TAKE 2**
DEVELOPER: **RED STORM**

AIRPORT NOVELIST *par excellence* Tom Clancy has made a tidy living from his expertise in the murky world of special operations and counter-terrorism. In addition to penning the blockbusters *The Hunt For Red October*, *Patriot Games* and *Clear And Present Danger*, he has now expanded into games with *Rainbow Six*, based on the book of the same name. Already a successful PC franchise, the *Rainbow Six* moniker has become synonymous with ball-achingly realistic simulations of special ops missions such as hostage rescue and bomb disposal. After delays and even rumours of cancellation, the Dreamcast version of the game is almost upon us, so we thought it about time to take a look.

At first glance it might be easy to mistake *Rainbow Six* for a first-person shooter in the mould of *Half-Life* or *Quake III Arena*, but you'll be in for a nasty shock if you do. Placing as much emphasis on tactics and strategy as it does on action means that you're only going to get into this game if you really have the time and patience to sit down and learn it.

Having chosen everything from your team's weapons to their route into the mission (even their clothes), you can order them to attack certain areas, hold back, or cover your escape route. Budding Rambos will soon be cut down to size, and caution will be rewarded with success as surely as arrogance will lead to carnage. Expect a full roster of training missions to enable you to rehearse those all-important tactics and marksmanship skills, and intelligent enemies to make your task more difficult.

Packing this level of control into a console joypad was never going to be easy but, judging by the version we've played, it seems to have been accomplished without too much need for hurling the controller onto the carpet in frustration. Again, patience will be rewarded, and learning the controls will not be something you can expect to have nailed in a single evening. We'll be taking a detailed look at the game very soon.



△ Don't worry, these scary-looking chaps are part of your team. Just as well, seeing as you're standing right next to 'em.

SAMBA DE AMIGO

It's got dancing monkeys, you shake maracas for points, and it's got Chumbawumba's *Tub-thumping*. **DAN TRENT** tries to make sense of it

THE LOWDOWN

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

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- Utterly original and bonkers concept
- You play it with special maraca controllers!
- It's got a dancing monkey wearing a hat!
- Loads of mini-games being added

HOORAY FOR THE power of the consumer! After much shoulder-shrugging and non-committal "We'll be looking into it" statements from Sega Europe, they've finally confirmed that the Japanese smash hit *Samba De Amigo* will be coming to the UK.

While you can understand Sega's caution at whether or not such an expensive and peripheral-dependant game would be viable here, the sheer response to the game has been such that Sega haven't really had any option but to go ahead with a European release. We spoke with José Aller, UK producer for the game, to find out why the decision was made.

"It was a similar situation to that of *Sega Bass Fishing* [*ODM* #1, 7/10]," he explained. "Nobody could predict the reception it was going to get because of the unique nature of the game and the extra cost of the rod. The fact that it has done really well meant that when *Samba De Amigo* came along there was a decision across development and marketing departments to investigate it, and the general reply was 'Go for it'." José wouldn't be drawn on whether or not the money men had been convinced by a board-level demonstration of the game, but the idea of a room full of stuffy suits beaming maniacally, maracas in hand, and green-lighting the project is an attractive one.

The simple concept of the game – shake the maracas according to which circle the spheres head for – is one thing but it can't have been easy to convince people that they had a money-spinning idea. Sonic Team Director Shun Nakamura disagrees: "Sega is a very creative company so you are always given an opportunity to try an idea. Shaking the maracas with the bouncy music makes you feel good, and it also gives your friends watching the game something to enjoy. Once you play it you will get addicted!"

José agrees: "It's basically a rhythm game, but the main emphasis is on fun, colour and excitement," he explained. "It makes me think of the summer and parties! You get a ranking according to how good you are at following the instructions and, depending on your score, you can access other tunes or progress to another track."

ORIGINAL WIN

The structure of the game will be similar to other Sega arcade conversions in that there will be both Arcade and Original modes to play. "In Arcade mode you'll start with only a couple of tunes to choose from," José continued, "but if you play them successfully you'll unlock a secret one. In the Original mode, which is unique to the Dreamcast version, you're given a tune to play against, and the skill with which you play changes your ranking and releases other songs."

"THE EMPHASIS IS ON FUN, COLOUR AND EXCITEMENT"



△ The little fella reflects your shaking skills in his facial expressions. He seems happy enough.



△ The couples game is for lovers only.



△ This happens if you ain't got rhythm.



△ If you like your games brooding and gothic, then this probably isn't for you.



△ If you're doing well, the backgrounds change and everything gets even more colourful and crazy. The bar at the top shows your progress.



△ If you don't do well, it goes dark. Spooky.



△ Synchronize your maracas for big love.



△ There are plenty of sub-games to enjoy.

"PLENTY OF SURPRISES FOR MUSIC FANS"

Those songs will then be available for you to play in the Arcade mode and, with the potential to unlock well over 20 different tracks, there's going to be plenty of maraca-shaking required to get them all. The actual line-up of tracks has yet to be finalised for the European release, as there are various licensing issues to be addressed before they can be announced. We were under strict orders not to reveal the titles, but if the line-up is anything close to the working version of the game then there'll be plenty of surprises for music fans, including samba versions of some very unlikely pop classics. Watch this space for more information as we get it.

There's more to the game than the arcade and original modes though, as José revealed to us: "There's a whole new challenge mode where you've got to work your way through the ranks, each of which has its own sub-games. You're given a tune and a level you have to achieve in order to progress, which might be that you have to achieve a certain grade or percentage, or even play a mini-game. On some of them you can go through only if you get a perfect score, so it does get quite tough."

PARTY TIME

There will also be a 'party mode' for those of you rich enough to invest in a second set of maracas, with extra games varying between the competitive and the co-operative. You'll be able to take on a mate with a bomb that swells according to your success rate before exploding and disorientating your opponent, or, for the more peaceful among you, play the 'couples game', where love points are awarded for moving in harmony with each other.

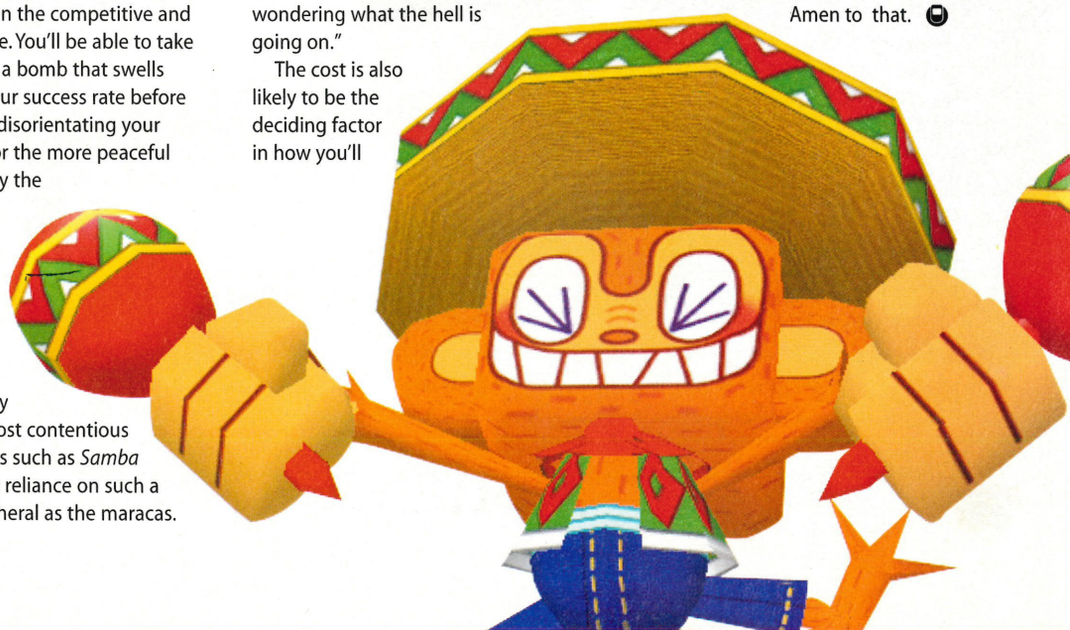
This is all very well, but the most contentious aspect of games such as *Samba De Amigo* is the reliance on such a specialist peripheral as the maracas. José concedes that this is going to be the deciding factor for a lot of people: "We just don't know yet how much the maracas are going to cost or how much we could bundle them with the game for."

But as he explains, the game is still playable with the standard controller: "Strangely enough, the control pad is actually easier, but you lose out on a lot of the fun. I've noticed that if you're playing it on your own with the control pad, nobody really pays any attention, but as soon as you get the maracas out people start crowding around and wondering what the hell is going on."

The cost is also likely to be the deciding factor in how you'll be able to buy the game, and there are rumours hinting that, in an effort to keep costs down, Sega might sell the game only via Dreamarena's DreamShop. Again, José wouldn't be drawn: "It still hasn't been finalised as to whether it will be sold via e-commerce or in retail. Everyone loves it, but until we get a firm price on the hardware we can't confirm anything."

As he concedes though: "Once you've gone through the initial embarrassment about looking daft, it's difficult to pull people away. It's such a fun party game, it's difficult to be hard-headed about it."

Amen to that.



"STUNNING UNDERWATER ODYSSEY THAT'S ENTERTAINING THROUGHOUT 9/10"
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re:news

WE NEED CRAP GAMES EVERY NOW AND THEN TO REMIND US WHAT MAKES GOOD GAMES GOOD. RIGHT?



AS WE'VE SAID BEFORE, we here at *Official Dreamcast Magazine* do our best to fill our reviews section with the games you'll be able to buy during the month that each current issue is on sale. Okay, so sometimes things go a little bit wrong when publishers decide to delay their games by six months right at the last flaming minute – after we've done the review – making us look like stupid idiots, but most of the time you'll find that everything we review appears in shops within a matter of weeks of the magazine coming out.

A slightly rarer occurrence is a game making it into the shops *before* we've had the chance to review it. Take *Roadsters*, for example. It turned up in the shops at the beginning of July, completely unannounced, and before reviews of the finished game had been published. No big deal, you may think. But just take a quick look at the review of *Roadsters* on page 76 and you'll understand. There are going to be some unfortunate people who bought the game thinking that it might be okay.

We're always suspicious of games that get released before we've the chance to review them, as they're practically guaranteed to be complete arse. The best we can do in these cases, however, is to go down to our local HMV (or wherever) and buy a copy of the game to review as soon as possible. Our review may not appear until some time after the game does, but we promise to cover every Dreamcast game that's released in the UK, no matter how good or bad it may be.

So there is a simple way to avoid blowing £40 on rubbish games: just don't buy anything until you've read our review of it in *ODM*. Not even if the pictures on the box make it look good. You may have to wait a couple of weeks to find out what we think, but if we end up saving your wonga from something crap it's well worth it.

There's plenty of great stuff for you to be spending your wad on at the moment anyway. Tecmo's eagerly awaited fighting extravaganza *Dead Or Alive 2* is finally here in its new, improved form, and we've given it a thorough going over, starting on the next page. There's no doubt that it's one of the best-looking games yet seen on Dreamcast, but it doesn't seem to have the same near-universal appeal as *Soul Calibur* (*ODM* #2, 10/10).

We've also got the first review of the official Olympic Games game, *Sydney 2000*, in our summer sports feature starting on page eight. It's just the kind of game that rounds off a summer's day perfectly, with a group of friends stuffed on undercooked/overcooked barbecue sausages and fizzy pop, whacking joypads until they make themselves sick. Lovely.

Make sure you have a read through the rest of our reviews as well, as there are some interesting games this month, even if they're not the most gargantuanly fanriffic we've ever seen. And don't forget to stay special, ya hear?

Spread some, get some!
Ed Lomas, Reviews Editor

REVIEWED THIS ISSUE...

AEROWINGS 2: AIR STRIKE (CRAVE)	70
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STAR WARS EPISODE I: RACER (ACTIVISION)	68
SYDNEY 2000 (EIDOS)	10

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!













DEAD OR ALIVE 2

The latest Dreamcast fighting game promises to be the ultimate in armchair martial arts. **STEVE FULLJAMES** is hogging the sofa

CREATE YOUR OWN CUSTOMISED martial arts technique! It's easy when you know how. Just take the first syllable from your surname and the last one from your first name. Roll a dice, and if you get an odd number, add Fu to the end; If it's even, add Jitsu. Now get a pair of white pyjamas and go and pretend to direct traffic in the park.

Okay, so we're not going to get very far thinking that the ancient arts of causing extreme pain are as easy to learn as working out your porn name. Therefore for those of you looking for a ruck but unwilling to spend 15 years training in a Himalayan monastery, a decent fighting game is a much more practical option. And for anyone with an eye on the hospital bills, pressing buttons on a joypad for a couple of hours is unlikely to cause massive internal injuries. Unless you're really unlucky.

One fighting discipline that's almost as simple as shifting bits of your moniker about is *Dead Or Alive 2*, the latest in scrapping action to hit Dreamcast. Already released to large applause in America, the UK version was held back a few months in order for some final improvements to be made. Now it's here, and looks like it may even give the mighty *Soul Calibur* (*ODM* #4, 10/10) a run for its money. And that's the God-honest truth, or my name isn't Pepper Watkins. ▶





△ Some of the throws in this game will make you wince.



△ Game developers: for the love of God get out more!



△ Chuck your opponent into a live electric fence.

"AS UP-TO-DATE AS FIGHTING GAMES CAN GET"

ART OF FIGHTING

There was a time when all fighting games featured animated stick men shuffling left and right on a flat, 2D plane. You can still see the evolution of the species in today's technicolour *Street Fighter* games on Dreamcast. At around the same time, some computer boffins came up with the polygon as a way of representing 3D objects on a flat screen. It wasn't until the early nineties that the clever chaps at Sega thought to combine punching and polygons, resulting in the first *Virtua Fighter*.

Early 3D fighting games still featured the same old left and right gameplay, but it wasn't long before developers started to take advantage of the extra dimension. Now everyone's at it, and even the flat fighting maestros at Capcom have rewritten the 3D fighter rule book with the superb *Power Stone* (*ODM* #1, 8/10). Enough of the history lesson though, because *Dead Or Alive 2* is as up-to-date as fighting games get.

The controls are about as basic as they come, with one punch and one kick, plus the 'free' button, which is what controls all the 3D shenanigans: holding it down enables you to move freely around the arena, while pressing it in combination with punch is the key to throwing your opponent. It also pops up as a combo button, adding spice to what would otherwise be a pretty simple recipe.

When it comes to combos, there are no preset attacking patterns (ie complex, illogical sequences of button-pushes) to learn. Instead pretty much any selection of random buttons results in a flowing, sometimes even graceful wave of attacks. Like all the best fighting games, *Dead Or Alive 2* works on many levels. The gap between attacks that count as a combo is greater than with most fighters, so inexperienced players will find it easy to join moves together, while masters can use the pace of the system to their advantage to produce devastating results.

A vital part of gameplay is counter-attacking your opponent's moves. Just about every fighting game review will tell you the same thing, but here it is actually is something you must learn. Just blocking by holding back on the d-pad doesn't work very well, so instead must to be able to predict your opponent's next move

WHAT'S THE STORY?

FAR-EASTENDERS

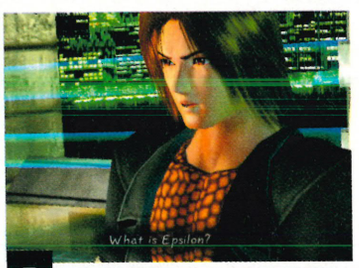
Dead Or Alive 2 has a ludicrous storyline to match that of even the cheesiest soap operas, except with much less in the way of incest and domestic violence. You get fed chunks of it between fights – here are some of the 'highlights'...



1 Helena reckons that Ayane murdered her mother.



2 Everyone thinks Ein is actually some guy called Hayate...



3 ...but he's lost his memory. Something to do with Project Epsilon.



△ Hmm... you can write your own caption for this one.



△ In a spot of bother? Time to call in your tag partner.



△ Urrrrrrrrrrgh-aah!



△ Jann Lee's ankle-breaking world record attempt continues...



△ Ein didn't appreciate Kasumi's neck massage technique.

and perform the appropriate counter-measure. It's a bind to get used to, but you can't deny that grabbing someone's leg mid-kick and casually flipping them over your shoulder doesn't look dead cool.

THE CLOTHES SHOW

Fighting games always bring the weirdos out of the woodwork. We're not talking about the people who play the games, just the freaks who star in them. *Dead Or Alive 2* has more than its fair share of headcases (12 to be exact), many of whom have some a very interesting fashion sense. We've got Ayane, a deadly assassin who thinks nothing of flouncing to the fighting stage in bows, lace and tassels (see right); Zack, the DJ with a natty line in crop tops, tight pants and mohicans (he's a bloke, by the way); there's Leon, the Italian Special Forces chap who fights while looking like Lawrence of Arabia; and then there's Bass, who just *is* 'Hollywood' Hulk Hogan. Finishing the game with any character supplies them with extra costumes, which just get weirder and weirder the further you go. All credit the developers though, because the complex flowing clothes and accessories are superbly animated.

All this sartorial silliness is actually outdone by that of the game's plot, which changes depending on which character you choose in Story mode. Everyone, it seems, is related to or has a vendetta with everyone else, so there's often a verbal slanging match before the actual fighting. Significant moments are played out with real-time cut-scenes between bouts, with plenty of flashbacks and reverse coloured hallucinations, all backed up with fantastically cheesy Japlish subtitles.

The real innovation in *Dead Or Alive 2* is the provision of massive, multi-section fighting arenas that play can move between at any moment. For example, if you're fighting in a church tower or on a high terrace overlooking a valley, a powerful move can bust your opponent through a window and down to their ▷



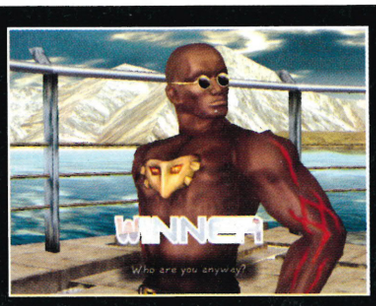
4 Hayabusa has sworn to protect Kasumi. ▷



5 Tina wants to be a Hollywood star. Her dad, Bass, doesn't know yet. ▷



6 Meanwhile, Zack has a thing for tight silver PVC. ▷



WHAT HAPPENED?

THE REASON WHY *DOA 2* HAS TAKEN SO LONG

Dead Or Alive 2 was originally scheduled to hit UK shops back in May, not long after the US release So what's with the delay? Fact is, Japanese developers Tecmo weren't 100 per cent happy with the game and wanted to spend a few extra months tidying things up for us here in Europe. For a start, they added a full-screen, full-speed 60Hz mode, something that wasn't intended to be in the original release.

Also, the game's one-player modes have been made more entertaining with the addition of new costumes (with some really cool ones based on other Acclaim titles), and features to collect each time the game is completed. On top of that, certain fighting arenas have been extended with whole new sections to discover. The result is that the entire game feels a lot tighter than it would have done had it been released three months earlier.



△ Tag mode contains some awesome tag combos, like this one.

"TEXTURE DETAIL ON WALLS AND FLOORS IS FANTASTIC"

▷ apparent doom. But it ain't over yet, because your fighter is hot on their heels, ready to carry on the match at a lower level. This is the moment that next-generation fighting really takes off, since even *Soul Calibur* and the technically adept *Virtua Fighter 3tb* (*ODM* #1, 7/10) take place in small, enclosed stages.

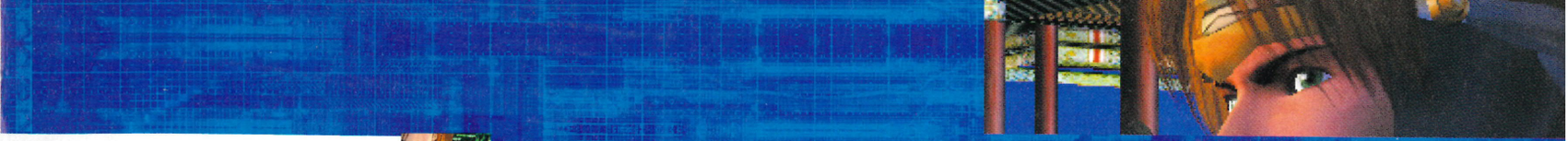
Texture detail on walls and floors is fantastic, and largely pointless but welcome little touches include fireflies, ripples and splashes when you fight through water, and characters sinking into undulating snow. The fighters are a joy to look at as well. With fully animated faces and fingers, the flowing wardrobes and rounded, muscular bodies, for our money these guys easily have the edge over the *Soul Calibur* crew.

NOT DEAD, JUST RESTING

A welcome bonus is the addition of Tag Battle mode. Up to four players can take part in this one, because the fighters buddy up into teams of two. You won't all be playing at exactly the same time though, because characters still fight one-on-one, and tag their partner into the ring by pressing all three attack buttons when they need to conserve energy. There are also tag combos to learn, where both fighters on a team attack simultaneously. With four people at the controls you're obviously going to be sitting out half the fight, but this kind of innovation is pretty much a first for a 3D fighting game, wrestling excluded.

You'll also find a standard Versus mode, training, a Survival mode (win as many fights as possible with a limited life bar), Time Attack (finish the game as quickly as possible) and Team Battle (choose a whole carload of fighters and try to finish off an equally sized opposition). That might sound like fairly standard equipment for any self-respecting fighting game, but this is loads more than you get in the now fairly shoddy *Virtua Fighter 3tb*.

Despite the lushness, at heart *Dead Or Alive 2* is a simple game. And while there are loads of throws and counter-techniques to master, it is possible to finish the game with a few basic moves. The same thing can been



"DESPITE THE LUSHNESS, AT HEART THIS IS A SIMPLE GAME" **DEAD OR ALIVE 2**





△ Team up to inflict double pain on your enemies in tag mode.



△ Zack and Leon's game of Fetish Twister neared the cliff edge.

said about many fighting games, but something like *Soul Calibur* has the glitz to go with the gameplay, making extended sessions a more appealing experience.

That's not to say you won't enjoy your time with the game. Play is often fast and furious, with rounds lasting less than ten seconds if you can get in early and deliver a pounding. Plus the relaxed attitude to combos means that even beginners can score big on the hit-o-meter. But when the promise of unlocking an extra costume for one of the 12 fighters is your only reward for playing through again, you start to wonder if there's maybe something better you could be doing with your time.

A wide selection of foppish freaks and large-chested ladies in Jean-Paul Gaultier costumes makes *Dead Or Alive 2* the Eurotrash of fighting games. However, there's only so much of it you can take before tedium sets in. But while the spark remains, the game's considerable assets are ones that everybody can enjoy.

OUT: **AUGUST**
PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM**
DEVELOPER: **TECMO**

VERDICT

CHEESY, GRATUITOUS BUT WELL-EXECUTED FIGHTING ACTION

UPPERS
Stunning graphics • Simple controls, loads of moves • Massive interactive arenas • Four-player tag battles

DOWNERS
Easy to win with a couple of moves • Not as flashy as other fighters • Gameplay gets repetitive

IN ONE HOUR Completed game with Kasumi and Jann-Lee
WEBSITE www.acclaim.com
MAX PLAYERS 4
VIDEO MODES Bordered PAL, full-screen 60Hz option, VGA compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
8
VERY GOOD

WALKTHROUGH
ENJOY YOUR TRIP

One of the most impressive things about *DOA2* is the sheer size of the fighting arenas.Some levels have up to five different areas



1 ▽ The fighters are unable to leap from tall buildings, but are quite happy to fall off them.



2 ▽ You might think it's clever to break windows, but someone has to clean it up you know.



3 ▽ The opera house is the perfect place in which to throw people to their death. Repeatedly.



4 ▽ There's no time to look at the scenery, we're too busy falling to our doom. Wish you were here.



5 ▷ This dragon room is well-hidden in one of the stages. See if you can find it.



△ Track design is excellent, with narrow winding tunnels opening out into wide open spaces.

STAR WARS EPISODE I: RACER

DAVE WOODS has seen the film, read the book, and worn the T-shirt. Now he gets to play the game

EVERYONE'S BEEN TO SEE *Star Wars Episode I* by now, and most people have come away from it feeling rather soiled by the whole experience. It's not that it's a terrible film, just that it couldn't hope to live up to the crushing weight of expectation cultivated by three generations of *Star Wars* freaks. Even if it had been the single best film in the world ever, it would have been dissected and tossed aside like a common garden frog.

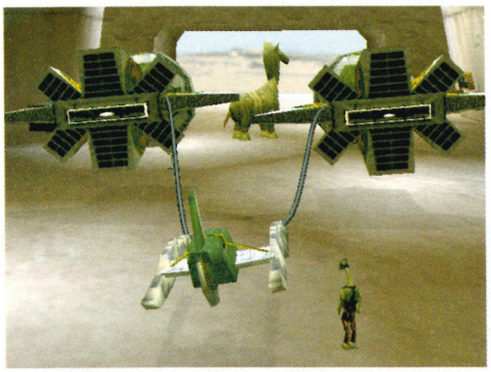
Still, it has its moments, most notably the 'Pod' racer sequence that places cutesy Anakin inside a 600mph death trap and suspends belief by having him actually win the competition against the best and baddest that Tatooine can offer. That was swiftly translated into a Nintendo 64 and PC game to coincide with the film's launch, and now, almost a whole year later, it's finally landed on Dreamcast.

If you can't stand the smell of Lucas's beard and you haven't been to see *The Phantom Menace*, then don't turn the page just yet, because the game ain't all bad.

Focus onPlayStation classic *WipEout*, place it in a *Star Wars* universe and you're halfway home. There are a few crucial differences. There are no weapons in *Racer*, unless you count the jet-flame add-on that you get when you unlock Sebulba's vehicle (we don't). That's to maintain celluloid accuracy, but it's frustrating, especially when you're in a jam and want to clear a path to the front. The vehicles themselves are also pretty unique. Each of the 23 available racers (bar one) consists of two engines which are attached to the cockpit by a metal cord, and held together by a bolt of sparkly energy. It sounds like a nightmare, but the chariots (as we like to call them after seeing *Gladiator*) handle like a dream.

Pulling the nose up slows you down, but it makes handling a lot easier. Pushing the nose down gives you greater speed and more difficult handling, and also gives you access to a massive speed-boost that you can use whenever you want for however long you want to, with the proviso that if you use it for too long your craft will catch fire. Which is fair enough, really.

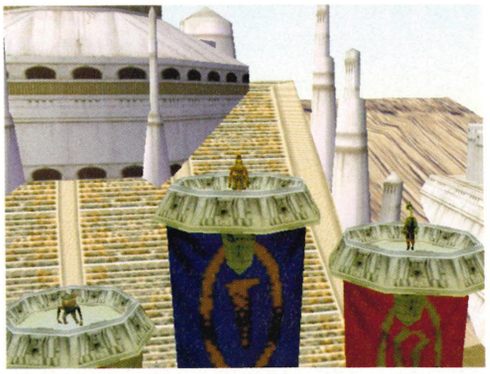
"*RACER* DOES GET ONE THING RIGHT: IT DAZZLES YOU WITH SPEED"



△ You can buy more pit droids to speed up the repairs that need doing to your pod.



△ Swing your racer on its side to enable you to squeeze through the narrowest of gaps.



△ Win a tournament and you'll be stuck up on a podium and forced to endure one of the worst cut-scenes ever.



△ It's not all dust, snow and water. *Racer* also features some breathtaking futuristic tracks.



△ The graphics are mostly the same as in last year's PC release.

Every time you hit the sides of the track or another vehicle, you take damage (not visibly, unfortunately), and if you don't do your running repairs quickly enough you explode into tiny little pieces and die a horrible, bloody death. Only joking – this is *Star Wars*, after all. You merely get put back on the track after a few seconds delay. Finish in front and you can use your winnings to upgrade your racer at the spare parts shop or the junk yard. Rather stupidly though, you can also change pods at any time, and they vary so widely that you can end up wasting all your cash from the first ten races on the default racer, before realising that you could actually have started out with a better one than you've ended up with.

The 21 different tracks are spread across eight different worlds, and range from snow- and dust-filled valleys to narrow, winding nooks in mountain walls, through roller coaster-like metal structures, and anti-gravity tunnels jammed with flying meteors. Jumps are scattered around, along with short cuts (although these are incredibly hard to hit at 600mph), narrow passes where you must turn your racer on its side to squeeze through, and even dual tracks where if you fall you end up on a lower and slower track.

Graphically, *Racer* is adequate. No more, no less. Tracks are sparse, and landscapes angular, although every now and again a huge spaceship or weird *Star Wars*-like alien flies past, causing you to crash as you try to get a better look at it. Even less frequently, obstacles such as turning cogs or mining machines litter the track itself, and again this helps to lift the game out of the drab browns that account for 90 per cent of the visuals.

That is almost forgivable, because *Racer* does get one thing right: it dazzles you with speed, and the tracks are so well-designed that every now and again you end up making every corner and squeezing through every narrow gap without knowing how you did it. It's pure reflex action, and although it doesn't match the intensity or put you in the same hypnotic state as *WipEout* it comes pretty damn close.

Now the bad news. If you're playing by yourself, then the single-player races aren't going to last you until the leaves fall off the trees. In the first few hours you'll have finished the tutorial levels and scraped through the semi-pro tournament; the rest will fall within a few days. There is a split-screen two-player option, which is equivalent to a month's stay of execution, but what this game is really crying out for is Internet play.

Playing online with real people the world over would save *Star Wars Episode I: Racer* from ignominy, but unfortunately there's no such redemption. But while it doesn't play online, you can upload your high scores to the Internet. It's not the same thing but it's better than a slap round the face with a Jar Jar Binks toy.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**
DEVELOPER: **LUCASARTS**

VERDICT

KIND OF FUN, AS LONG AS YOU'RE NOT EXPECTING MUCH

UPPERS
It's Star Wars • Fast, hypnotic action • Excellent vehicle design and handling • Varied tracks

DOWNERS
It's *Star Wars* • No waepons or power-ups • Sparse graphics

IN ONE HOUR We completed all the tutorial levels, and got our arses creamed at the Invitational.
WEBSITE www.starwarsracer.com
CHECKOUT www.starwars.com for all things Star Wars related
MAX PLAYERS 2
VIDEO MODES Full-screen 50Hz, VGA compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
6
PRETTY GOOD



△ The new mean and moody *AeroWings 2: Air Strike* leaves airy-fairy aerobatics behind in a cloud of missile smoke.

AEROWINGS 2 AIR STRIKE

AeroWings is back for another sortie, and with the new installment it's grown some teeth! **DAN TRENT** takes to the skies and assesses its bite

ON THE CD

TYPICALLY RELEGATED to a relatively small but fiercely loyal band of PC users, there has yet to be a flying game that has really caught the imagination of console owners despite many attempts, including two so far on Dreamcast.

AeroWings (*ODM* #1, 6/10) looked great, whereas *Deadly Skies* (*ODM* #4, 5/10) was much more frenetic. And while the former had the superior graphics and controls, its skill-based aerobatic and formation flying format simply wasn't as entertaining as the more violent latter. We said that *AeroWings* could be a much improved game with the addition of a bit of dogfighting action, and here we are with the new and improved *AeroWings 2: Air Strike*, now with Sidewinder missiles.

If you've seen or played *AeroWings*, then you'll pretty much know what to expect with *AeroWings 2*. Starting with the graphics, this is without doubt one of the lushest-looking flight sims yet to grace a console. The plane models are superbly detailed and smooth in texture, with lots of attention to nerdy detail like moving control surfaces, jet nozzles and air brakes. It's worth using the dynamic exterior view to enable you to have a good look at all that lovely detail, and aeroplane buffs will be more than satisfied with the way the aircraft are represented.

If there are some graphical disappointments, they lie with the boring textures of the ground. It's not an issue when you're high up, but if you fancy a bit of low-level flying it all looks a bit featureless and two-dimensional. The explosions and crashes are also a bit pants, but are offset by things such as the vapour trails that spray from the wings and fuselage of the planes in high-G turns and add to the sense of speed.

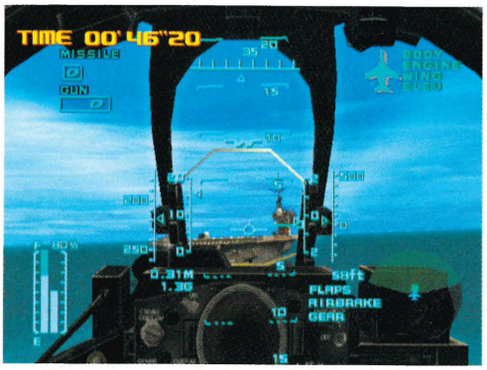
GRAB YOUR JOYSTICK

As with its predecesor, control is excellent and makes good use of the limited number of buttons available. Any fears that many of the controls would have to be automated to make room for weapons controls are generally unfounded; one button is all you need to fire your weapons, as the computer automatically locks on and selects either guns or missiles as appropriate to the range and direction of your target. Strangely, controls such as raising the undercarriage can still be activated manually, although there's an automatic override that kicks in and retracts your wheels when you're travelling above a certain speed, which makes it a somewhat redundant function.

There are plenty of views to choose from, but practically speaking you'll probably only ever use the cockpit view, or the aforementioned dynamic exterior view which moves around according to your direction.

As far as playing the game goes, you have three major options to choose from – Fighter Pilot Missions, Tactical Challenges and Freeflight – plus a new Versus mode. The first of these modes is the closest to the original game, and sees you performing a series of challenges (see the Up, Up And Away panel opposite) in which to earn your wings and extra planes along the way.

The missions vary greatly in difficulty, ramping up very steeply towards the end where you fly against instructors and try to lock on to them as they use every



△ **Landing a fighter on a carrier at nearly 200mph will certainly test your skills to the limit. Get it wrong at your peril.**



△ **Get the landing wrong and you'll bruise more than your ego.**

trick in the book to escape. Progression through the Fighter missions is strictly linear, unlike the Tactical Challenges which are designed to test your sharpshooting skills with a series of fairly tough assignments. These involve shooting a certain number of balloons or aircraft within an extremely tight time limit, and you'll have a lot of trouble succeeding you haven't already completed your training.

Freeflight is just as it sounds: an opportunity to try out the planes you've earned and practice your skills against opposing aircraft, or to try your hand at landing on the carrier – no mean feat.

Also new to *AeroWings 2* is a two-player versus mode that enables you take on your mates in a head-to-head battle, and is a welcome addition. And while the battles are all over the sea (presumably to save the frame rate), little has been sacrificed in terms of detail on the planes, and the whole thing runs very smoothly. A 'proper' widescreen mode makes for lots of fun if you have a suitably large telly; small screen owners must make do with the usual microscopic split screen.

TALLY HO!

While *AeroWings 2: Air Strike* is fundamentally a well-made and good-looking game, it's difficult to see how it will win over anyone who ranks flight sims along with filling in tax returns when it comes to the excitement scale. The flying is on the realistic side of excellent, and the graphics are undoubtedly lovely, but without any real sense of gameplay the game is going to struggle in terms of longevity.

The training mode is a good example: it's not a bad idea, and motivates you into completing the course and becoming fully qualified, but when you finally do… it ends. Just when you start to expect some juicy missions to get stuck into, bang – credits. The Tactical Challenges are better, and really test your flying skills, but at the same time there seems to be little point – who really wants to go around shooting balloons, after all?

AeroWings 2 would have been a far better game if the emphasis had been placed on putting the gameplay into some kind of context and provide at least some sort of storyline or plot to the whole affair. As it is, you end up simply flying about for the sake of it and the novelty soon wears off.

The lack of an option on your choice of weapons or any tactical element will also disappoint flight sim fans. And while there's obviously a limit to the number of controls you can include on a console joypad, you sometimes feel as though you're along for the ride rather than actually in control.

AeroWings 2: Air Strike is a solid game, with much for seekers of airborne thrills to enjoy, but ultimately it lacks the depth to match its slinky-smooth looks.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **CRAVE**
DEVELOPER: **CRI**

VERDICT

GREAT TO LOOK AT AND SMOOTH TO FLY, BUT LIMITED GAMEPLAY WILL LEAVE YOU FRUSTRATED

UPPERS
Best graphics of any console flight sim • Dogfighting adds much to already solid game • More bases, planes and missions over first game • Two-player Versus mode

DOWNERS
Uninspiring missions • Potentially frustrating training • Limited options in control and view • Gets monotonous

IN ONE HOUR We'd done our basic training and started in the T-4 jet trainer – come on!
WEBSITE www.cravegames.com
MAX PLAYERS 2
VIDEO MODES Bordered 50Hz with widescreen option

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
6
PRETTY GOOD

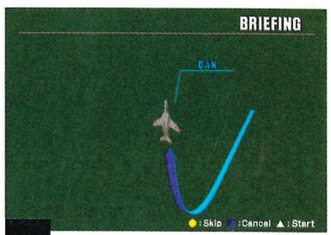
"A SOLID GAME, BUT ULTIMATELY IT LACKS THE DEPTH TO MATCH ITS SLINKY-SMOOTH LOOKS"

WALKTHROUGH
UP, UP AND AWAY...

You're going to have to learn the basics. Training is harsh, but it teaches you the skills you'll need to rule the skies



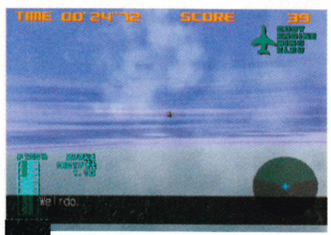
1 ▽ **In the briefing, the instructor gives you the parameters within which you must complete the exercise.**



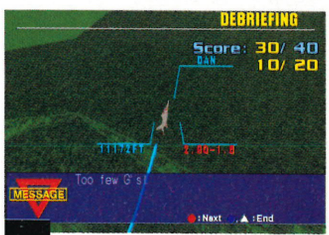
2 ▽ **The diagrams show you where you need to be in the sky to keep that mouthy instructor happy.**



3 ▽ **Remember the briefing, and keep an eye on all the gauges to make sure you're where you're meant to be.**



4 ▽ **If it all comes together, you might even get some praise from your instructor – a rare thing indeed.**

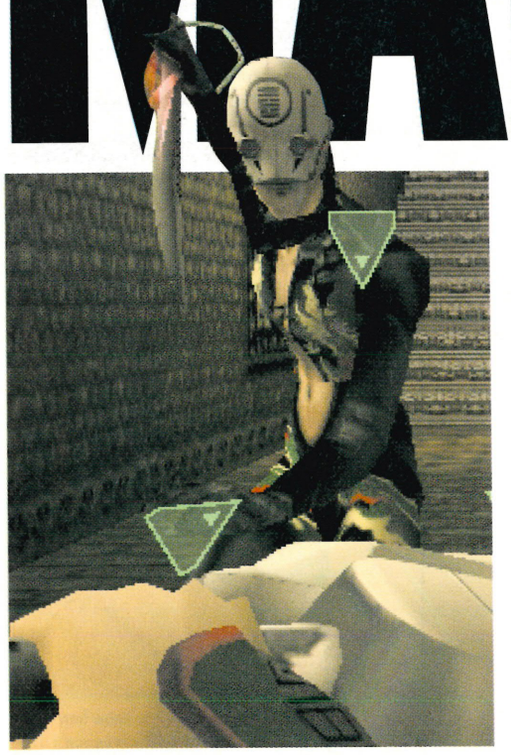


5 ▷ **Debriefing lets you know how it all went. If you did it wrong you'll find out why, and what to do next time.**



△ This, allegedly, is the Tower of London. And it's not a bad likeness, actually.

MAKEN X



△ "Hello, sir!" Give C3PO the slapping you've always wanted to.

Not every sword is just a big, sharp-edged piece of metal. Some swords are also intelligent, as **STEVE FULLJAMES** will now attempt to explain

FEW THINGS IN LIFE are as reliable as a videogame plot. You can't predict the weather (not properly, anyway), and no one really has a clue as to how the mind of the opposite sex works. But come rain or shine, you can be sure that videogame plots will always be really, really silly. How does the following one, masquerading as some kind of proper story in Atlus's *Maken X*, grab you?

Maken is an advanced artificial intelligence with a really cheesy grin, created by Dr Sagama in his high-tech underground lab. In order to operate it must feed on the 'psi' energy given out by certain humans, one of whom is the tutor of the good doctor's daughter Kei. As the AI is brought online, it forms itself into a sword covered in important-looking symbols.

Meanwhile, a masked intruder breaks into the lab, spits a few kitchen knives out of his mouth, kills Kei's tutor, kidnaps the prof and legs it. Duty-bound by the promise of a Dreamcast first-person action game, Kei grabs the Maken sword and sets off in hot pursuit. There's only one problem: the intelligent sword has taken over her mind, and will completely destroy her personality unless the folks back at the lab can unlock the doc's secret files.

While *Maken X* starts out with you in the shoes of a relatively weedy blue-haired Japanese schoolgirl, every so often there's the opportunity to 'brainjack' a new character. The plot suggests that this is the Maken sword taking over their minds, but in practical terms it means you get slightly harder and start to use a different weapon. Most characters also have a life-sapping special attack, which is activated by holding the X button until your EX gauge fills up.

FREAK OR UNIQUE

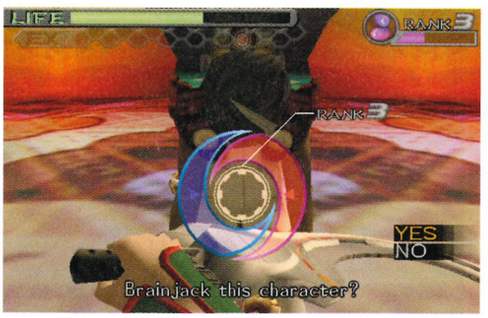
Between most levels are story sequences that help to explain the convoluted plot. And unless you forget to save your game, you'll fortunately only have to watch them once. While the cut-scenes clearly have a purpose,



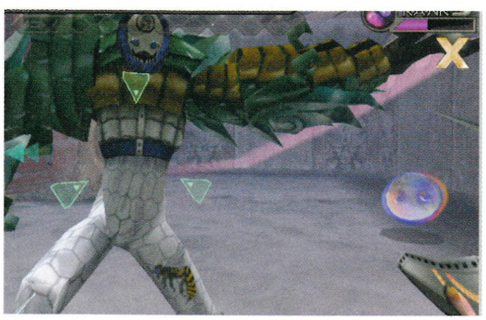
△ In the hospital in Istanbul there are some very what you might call... special patients.



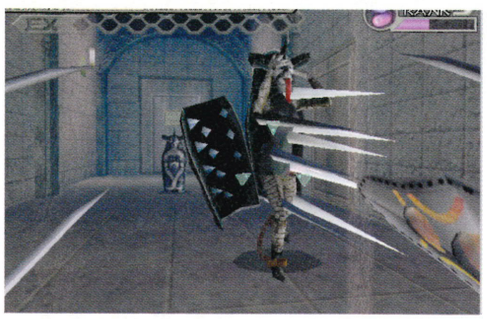
△ Hakke Shaja's aviator shades and Mao Tse Tung suit are the height of future fashion.



△ You swap between characters by 'brainjacking them', like this.



△ All the enemies are into fetish gear. This one is looking pretty WASP-ish too.



△ As the game progresses, the baddies just get weirder and weirder.



△ Locking on to your enemies is the easiest way to fight them. No matter where they move, you turn to track them.

they're crushingly dull, with largely static characters delivering long-winded monologues in a flat monotone while you pound the start button and discover that you can't skip them. Even worse, half of them are presented as black-and-white still screens. For goodness sake! It's Dreamcast! It's the 21st century! Make us want to play this game!

Once the cut-scenes have been waded through, at least the game looks nice. Each level is full of detailed textures that fit with the supposed location. The British stage, set at the Tower of London, actually looks reasonably like the real thing, and Hong Kong has just the right futuristic animé edge. Your enemies are also well-drawn and move fluidly, even if most wouldn't look out of place at an S&M convention.

In your quest to save the day you're taken all over the world, from the streets of Hong Kong and Moscow, to the temples of India, to Amsterdam, Lisbon, London and South America. Once the first few scene-setting levels are out of the way you're able to move around the globe freely, attempting stages with different brainjacked characters. Some are able to unlock areas that others can't, so if you run into a barrier in one area it's worth trying out a few different characters until you're able to proceed.

Attacking enemies is tricky until you start to use the lock-on function: pressing Y while in range of an enemy makes them the focus of your attention. No matter where they move, you turn to track them. This makes hitting them a lot easier, and if you jump over them by getting close then pressing A and forwards, you can deliver a double-damage hit to their backside. In fact, this technique will help you see off even the most stupendous badasses. And to prevent the enemy from hitting back you can also hold down on the analog stick to block and defend yourself.

TWO LEFT FEET

However, the controls are a little awkward and, crucially, there's no option to reconfigure them to your liking. You're stuck with using the analog stick to move around, the main buttons to attack, jump and lock on, and the triggers to activate looking around and strafing. In the heat of battle this proves to be clumsy, and nowhere near as fluid as the controls in, say, *Fur Fighters* (*ODM* #9, 7/10) or *MDK 2* (*ODM* #7, 6/10).

Games that take themselves too seriously are generally no fun, and *Maken X* is no exception. The plot is delivered in a Very Serious manner, even though the stilted cut-scenes make it sound about as exciting as your dad explaining how to fill in insurance forms; lifeless voices and a tendency towards monochrome slide shows don't help the general ambience of tedium either.

We might be able to live with that if the parts of the game that you actually play were interesting. But apart from killing the occasional enemy and solving basic puzzles, there just isn't a whole lot to do. The same types of bad guy crop up over and over again, and when you get killed for the fifth time after forgetting to block again it takes enormous strength of will to want to try again.

Once you figure out that *Maken X* must be played like a tactical first-person perspective fighting game rather than like a hectic *Quake*-style shooter, then you can just about see the point of it all. You might even grudgingly admit that there are a few good ideas– such as switching characters – to be found in the game. But with its pedestrian pacing and awkward control system to contend with, most players will probably have given up long before that.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **ATLUS**

VERDICT

A WORTHY ACTION GAME WITH FEW REDEEMING FEATURES

UPPERS
Fast, detailed graphics • Some good ideas • Loads of playable characters

DOWNERS
Really, really boring • Long and tedious cut-scenes • Clumsy control system

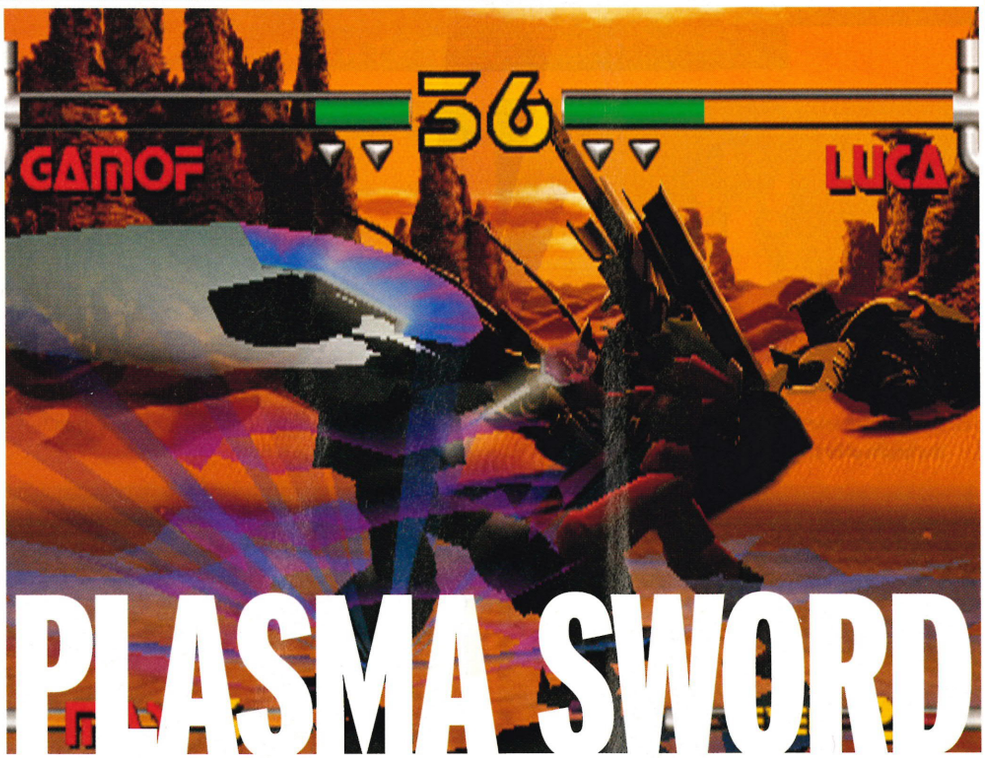
IN ONE HOUR Reached second boss. Lost will to live
WEBSITE www.sega-europe.com
MAX PLAYERS 1
VIDEO MODES Full-screen 50Hz, VGA compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10

5

AVERAGE

"GAMES THAT TAKE THEMSELVES TOO SERIOUSLY ARE GENERALLY NO FUN, AND *MAKEN X* IS NO EXCEPTION"



PLASMA SWORD NIGHTMARE OF BILSTEIN

Too right Bilstein had a nightmare – he dreamed he was in this game. **STEVE KEY** tries to keep himself awake





△ Looks like Saturn is, quite literally, going to get hammered.



△ Blood arms himself with a pair of lethal fried eggs.

ONE OF THE KEY parts to making a successful fighting game is having decent characters that have a bit of personality, and don't just look like rehashed versions of people from other titles. For example, mention *Street Fighter* and the first names that spring to mind are Ken and Ryu; think *Virtua Fighter* and Akira and Sarah will undoubtedly pop up in most answers. Now think of the 1996 arcade and PlayStation fighter *Star Gladiator*… and you'll probably draw a blank. While the game was okay in its own right, it never compared to the more established fighting games. Now that the sequel, *Plasma Sword: Nightmare of Bilstein*, is here, it's frustrating to say that it still suffers from exactly the same problems as its predecessor. 'Average' is a word that you'll find describes most things in *Plasma Sword*.

One of the main differences between this and the original game is that the rather silly combo system has been completely reworked. Previously, the all-powerful 'plasma' moves were executed by completing a chain of commands culminating in a final, extravagant attack. To make this easier, the button combinations were even displayed on-screen as you played. This time around, the plasma moves come via *Street Fighter*-style 'fireball' movements and a press of two buttons simultaneously. Not only is it simpler, but it also gives you the chance to string together some better combos and moves – a very important part of every fighting game.

However, there is a second type of plasma move. Pressing the 'B' attack and kick buttons together activates the plasma field, which makes a bubble of energy momentarily form around the enemy. If the bubble hits your opponent (it can still be blocked, so make sure you use it wisely), you're taken into a warped background where you have the chance to do some real damage. You then have a short time to pummel your opponent while you have increased strength and speed. The type of move depends on the character, but they all



△ Sadly, the combo moves are pretty limited.



△ Plasma attacks turn the heat on your opponent.



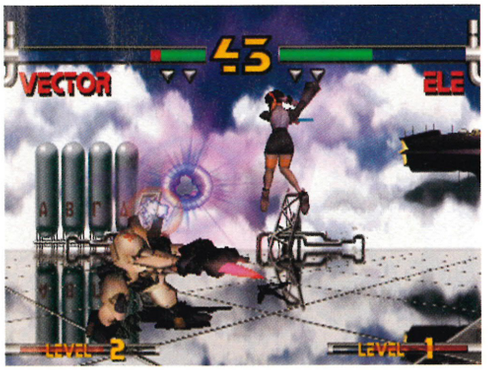
△ Most of the moves are simple to execute.



△ A mysterious force... Obi-Wan Kenobi's wind complaint?



△ Burn, baby, burn!



△ It's all over too soon. A bit like, er, certain other things.

amount to roughly the same thing: you have ten or so seconds to get in close and whack the buttons to slice, dice and do any damage you can. Again, these moves can be blocked if the enemy is quick on the defence, so you must use them only at the right moment.

There's only one task you need to have completed in order to activate the plasma moves, and that is to have at least one full plasma bar, located in the bottom-left corner of the screen. This, again, works in a very similar fashion to that of the good old *Street Fighter* series in that you can store a maximum of three full bars, and the meter increases every time you attack or take a hit. Each plasma move drains one full energy bar, with the odd exception using up all three.

FOUR-PLAY

As we've touched on already, most of the moves can be blocked by simply holding back on the joypad. But there are also two counter-attacks you can call upon to swing the balance back in your favour. These work in much the same way as the plasma field in that you press two buttons to call up a small field of energy around you. Should an enemy attempt to attack you while this is visible, they'll be struck with an energy field and stunned momentarily, handing you the initiative to go on and finish the job. This move only uses up half a full plasma bar.

And therein lies the main problem for *Plasma Sword*. We've just described the four main moves in the game. And that's about it, to be honest. There's virtually no scope to develop and learn your own specific chain moves, because the combo system is totally preset. Go into the training mode and you'll see what we mean: you're greeted with the same display as in a normal battle, except that your enemy stands still, and the combos are highlighted in the top-right corner, showing you exactly which moves link with what. At the very most this throws up ten, maybe 15 different combos, but none of them carry an ounce of satisfaction because you've been spoon-fed through them all.

It's not as if there are loads of different characters, either. The programmers manage to create an immense optical illusion by showing 22 playable characters from the start. In actual fact, half of those contestants are nothing more than alternate costumes for the other half, as they have identical moves apart from the plasma attacks. Once you've mastered Hayato, for example, you can pick up Black Hayato in an instant because they're one and the same.

There are two secret fighters to uncover, but that doesn't add anything to the flagging longevity of *Plasma Sword*. Within the first hour or so of play you'll have seen everything you want to see. You'll finish the game with at least two different people, and you'll have seen all of the plasma moves for each character. The number of backgrounds is also limited, leaving you with an extreme feeling of *déjà vu* as you play.

Capcom have rightly earned themselves a reputation as being one of the leading developers of the one-on-one fighting game. Indeed, if it wasn't for Capcom, then who knows what we'd have in place of *Street Fighter*, the game that started it all. But *Plasma Sword* does nothing to enhance that reputation, if anything actually damaging it. Even with the undoubted power of Dreamcast, Capcom have failed miserably to make a game that entertains, even for players with goldfish-like memory, because we've seen it all before. If that sounds harsh, then maybe *Plasma Sword* is your kind of game. But if you're fed up with seeing an endless stream of cash-hunting sequels, then steer well clear.

"DOES NOTHING TO ENHANCE CAPCOM'S REPUTATION"

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

VERDICT

BARELY AVERAGE FIGHTING GAME THAT YOU'VE SEEN BEFORE ON MANY OCCASIONS

UPPERS
Plasma moves are easy to pull off • Improved combo system • Flashy replays

DOWNERS
Too easy to finish • Moves are too similar • Nothing to keep you coming back • Not enough variety

IN ONE HOUR We'd finished the game twice
WEBSITE www.capcom.com
MAX PLAYERS 2
VIDEO MODES Bordered 50Hz, Full-screen 60Hz option, VGA compatible

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
4
BELOW AVERAGE



△ Is *Roadsters* the worst driving game ever? It's certainly down there with the worst. Make sure it's not on your Christmas list, eh?

ROADSTERS

Traditionally a bastion of calm and reason, **STEVE HILL** suddenly develops a severe bout of road rage

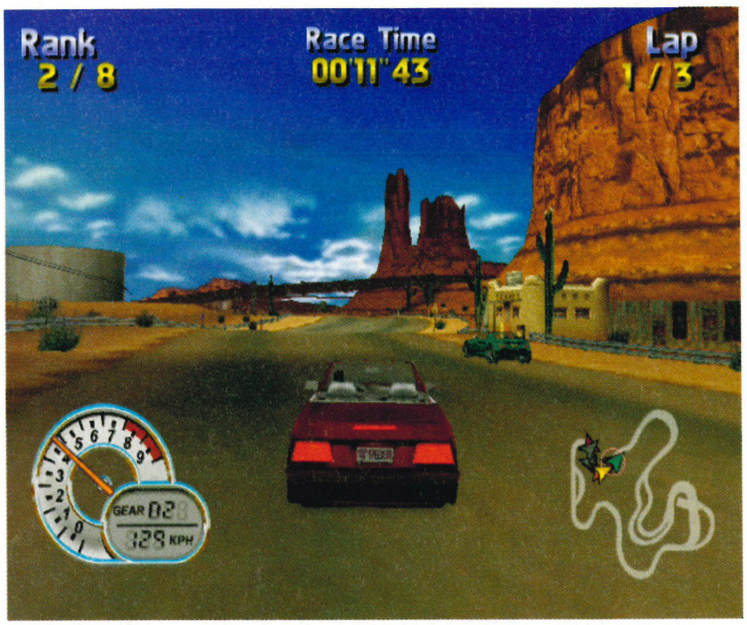
THERE'S NO TEDIOUS PLOT to bore you with here, so let's start with an analogy. Imagine going to a reasonably upmarket restaurant; it seems clean enough, the décor is unpretentious, it's intelligently lit, the menu is varied, the music is suitably in the background, the staff are polite and the service is brisk. You've worked up an appetite, and you're looking forward to a decent feed. Whereby you're served up a great big steaming plate of poo.

In a manner of speaking, that is what has happened with *Roadsters*. All the ingredients are in place for a generic racing game, but ultimately prove worthless in the face of a fundamental oversight. The problem? The problem is that the cars are all but undrivable. Sure, they go forwards, they just about manage left and right, and with an adroit gear change there's even a bit of reversing to be had. But it's all handled in such a stiff, laborious manner as to make you swear out loud. Physics may not have been everyone's favourite subject at school, but when developing a driving game it might have been an idea to at least acknowledge its existence. Momentum, inertia, friction even, are all roundly ignored in favour of a leaden driving model that bears little or no relation whatsoever to the cars that employ it. If you'd paid good money for a top-of-the-range motor, you'd be more than a little disappointed to get it home and find that it handled like a broken shopping trolley. Car bores may be interested to learn that the game features the best efforts of the likes of Mitsubishi, Fiat, Renault, Lotus and Toyota, but for all the difference it makes, they might as well have secured a license from Tesco. Sadly, it's no exaggeration. Your car veers towards the crash barriers as if drawn by an unseen force, and even then shirks the opportunity to merely skim them in an arcade fashion, preferring either to stop dead or bounce off at a totally random angle.

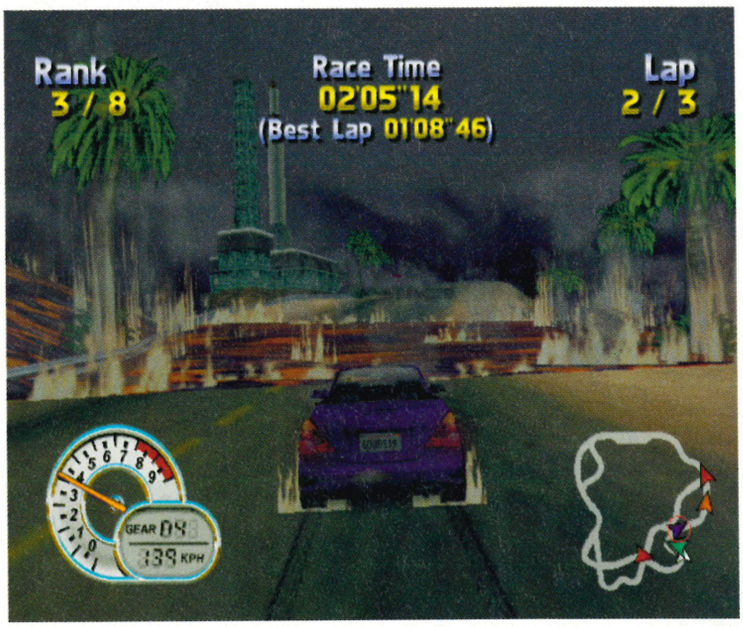
TROLLEY DASH

And the other cars are no better, with the artificial intelligence displaying some remedial, not to mention aggressive qualities. We're not expecting them to obey the Highway Code, but some kind of evasive action is standard, if only for their own sakes. Rival drivers will happily career across your path, as if on rails, with no regard for either your or their safety.

Accidents are commonplace, and even then they don't have the decency to apologise, continuing to pointlessly buffet your stationary car while the race continues without you. Often, situations are only



△ The ubiquitous Area 51. One for the tiresome conspiracy theorists out there.



△ Spontaneous combustion of the scenery is a further hazard.

"TO DESCRIBE *ROADSTERS* AS A RACING GAME IS SOMETHING OF A MISNOMER"

resolved by another car ramming into the carnage like a dodgem and clearing the congestion, and it's not uncommon to come across four or more other cars locked together at the side of the road.

It's no better when it comes to overtaking, as rivals will eschew conventional methods in favour of simply driving into the back of your car, hardly a finely-honed racing experience. In fact, to describe *Roadsters* as a racing game is something of a misnomer as essentially it's about bouncing around the track, avoiding other cars, and attempting not to get stuck on the scenery.

The best way to win is to be arbitrarily placed on the front of the grid, get a decent start, sniff out the odd shortcut and succeed in blocking the cars behind you while avoiding the numerous pitfalls that the ropy collision detection presents. There is an ill-conceived nitro system in place, whereby you have to hang around in the pits for the privilege of making your car even more uncontrollable for a few seconds. Add to this the inherent tendency of your vehicle to lurch all over the road, and the game takes on the appearance of a drink-driving simulator. In fact, watching a replay is akin to a slightly more glamorous edition of *Police, Camera, Action!* (thankfully without luvvie dwarf Alistair Stewart).

SOUND & VISION

There's no logical reason to buy *Roadsters* then, but if you accidentally did, let's have a look at what you would have won. Graphically, it's certainly no tour de force. Riddled with pop-up and the occasional glitch, the visuals are barely better than your average PlayStation title. The game features eight stylised characters, each with their own 'hilarious' catchphrases, which allied to waspish engine sounds and some frankly indefensible background music hardly makes for a sonic delight.

Roadsters is high on the novelty factor, with volcanoes, earthquakes, plane crashes, eclipses and tornadoes all adding to the visual mix, not to mention making it even harder to navigate, particularly when caught up in a twister. Some of the tracks are quite well-designed, although a few of the locations seem to have been plucked straight out of the book of racing game clichés. There's a half-arsed tournament mode in place, whereby a top three finish opens up the next track, and stockpiling money enables you to buy more cars. All standard stuff, then. It's just a shame that the game is complete muck.

PRICE: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **TITUS**
DEVELOPER: **PLAYER 1**



△ An impromptu car wash. Great!



△ "Two more laps? Ooh dad, do I have to?"

VERDICT

INFURIATINGLY FLAWED, IT FEELS UNFINISHED

UPPERS
Some reasonable environmental effects • Quite funny, actually

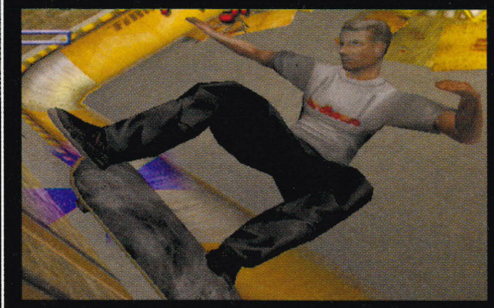
DOWNERS
Appalling handling • Ropy collision detection • Moronic artificial intelligence • Plenty of pop-up

IN ONE HOUR We realised it was an absolute stinker
WEBSITE www.titusgames.com
CHECKOUT Any other driving game – most are better than this
MAX PLAYERS 4
VIDEO MODES Full-screen 50Hz PAL

ODM RATING OUT OF 10
2
RUBBISH

UP FOR DISCUSSION

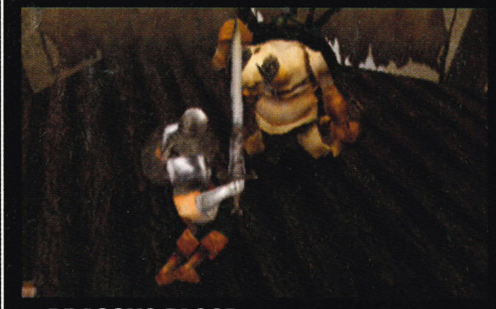
THE *OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE* TEAM TAKE SOME TIME OUT OF THE OFFICE TO DISCUSS FOUR OF THE MOST INTERESTING RECENT RELEASES. THIS MONTH:



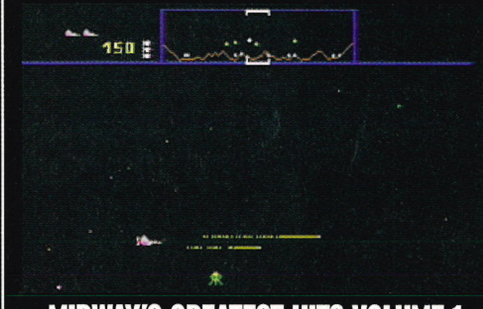
▲ TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING



▲ MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2



▲ DRAGONS BLOOD



▲ MIDWAY'S GREATEST HITS VOLUME 1

PHOTOGRAPHY: SIMON CLEMENGER







REVIEWS ROUND-UP

DRINKING...

Where better to host our regular chat in this sports-themed issue than London's Sports Cafe? **DAN TRENT** dishes out the medals



"This is not the place to bring a girl on a first date," remarks Warren, as the *ODM* team and freelancer Steve Owen (our last-minute substitute for the out-of-action Alex), arrive at the sports fan's heaven that is the Sports Cafe. Best described as a Hard Rock Cafe for sports fans, the place is stuffed with memorabilia, and every possible line of sight leads to a TV blasting out live events from across the globe.

Where most theme bars are happy with the odd signed shirt or ball, the Sports Cafe takes things a lot more seriously. On one wall hangs a Williams Formula 1 car, and the rest of the place is covered with artefacts from all manner of sports, most of them autographed by their famous former owners.

Warren has a point: if you want a quiet corner in which to gaze into your beloved's eyes and make poetic conversation, then this probably isn't the place to be. With a television in every booth, there's no escaping the sports action. Well there is, but would you be strong enough to switch off if there's, say, a crucial football match or a Grand Prix on the box?

What's more, the PlayStations that are connected to each of the booths are about to be replaced by Dreamcasts, so you'll be able to have a quick blast on *Virtua Tennis* between courses, or surf the Net for all the latest results. Bang goes any chance of meaningful conversation, then.

• The Sports Cafe (020 7839 8300) is on Haymarket, just around the corner from Trafalgar Square. Opening times are 12pm-2am (3am at weekends). There are also cafes in Birmingham and Cardiff, with a new Manchester branch opening in September. For more information visit www.thesportscafe.com

...& THINKING

TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING

(*ODM* #10, 8/10)

A wild-card success on PlayStation, *Tony Hawk's* makes the hop over to Dreamcast as smoothly as you would hope. In case you haven't heard, you play as the eponymous skating hero (or one of his compardrés) and rack up points by pulling off ever more outrageous stunts without risking so much as a scabbed knee.

DAN: Where's Alex when we need him? He's the expert on this.
WARREN: Alex is *ODM*'s skateboarding king.
ED: No he's not, he's *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* king. I bet if he got on a real skateboard he'd just fall right off it.
DAN: But, in his absence...
WARREN: Yeah? Are you going to tell us all about it Dan?
STEVE: You may laugh about Alex falling off a skateboard but I know I would actually fall off one before I'd even moved anywhere.
ED: I wouldn't. A few years ago I could do a shove-it, I could just about do a kick-flip, I could do a bert...
STEVE: You're making these up aren't you?
ED: No, a bert is a real move!
WARREN: But back to the game...
DAN: I reckon compared to other PlayStation ports this is definitely one of the better ones. It does actually look like a Dreamcast game unlike some I could mention...
STEVE: I don't think it looks that good, really.
ED: It looks like a PlayStation game running on Bleem [the forthcoming PlayStation emulator for Dreamcast].
WARREN: Yeah, certainly no better than a high-res PlayStation game. The textures are still really bland – too many greys and browns.
ED: But there's a lot of detail, actually. If you look at the ramps they are actually propped up on bricks and that, and the textures aren't as basic as they first seem. The colours are drab though.
STEVE: Some of the animation is a bit weak too.
WARREN: But hang on, we're laying into this a bit and it is actually good.
ED: But the point is it does only look like an upgraded PlayStation game but at least it looks like it has actually been upgraded.
DAN: You can tell they've put some work into it.
STEVE: Fundamentally, though it is a fun game in the first place, it could have done with looking a bit better.
WARREN: You need to put some effort in. That's definitely going to put some people off. It's a game you have to work at.
STEVE: Hmmm... I wonder whether if they'd given you a bit more at the start that didn't need unlocking, or some sort of tutorial, that it might have made things easier.
DAN: You pick it all up quite quickly, even if you do end up on your arse most of the time at the beginning.
WARREN: There are people with very short attention spans and if you're one of them you're going to get very frustrated very quickly.
STEVE: I wonder if I'd sat down and played it without having watched people who knew how to play it beforehand whether or not I'd have figured out any of the moves myself. I guess that's half of it and you need to experiment a bit.
WARREN: That's how it eventually pulls you in though. You do stuff, it flashes up the name of the trick and you're like "Ooh cool, how did I do that?" and then you have to figure out how to do it again.



"IT'S THE FIRST IN THE 'VERSUS' SERIES THAT SEEMS SEPARATE FROM THE *STREET FIGHTER* SERIES"
– ED ON *MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2*



"YOU PICK IT UP QUICKLY, EVEN IF YOU DO END UP ON YOUR ARSE MOST OF THE TIME AT THE BEGINNING"
– DAN ON *TONY HAWK'S*

DAN: I like the controls; really intuitive.
WARREN: And the physics are amazing – better than any skating game we've seen before.
ED: It's fun to just cruise about, that's where the free-skate bit comes in handy, especially when you've unlocked some more areas to skate in.
WARREN: I think in terms of environment we've been spoilt by *Crazy Taxi* because if you compare it directly then it's not that hot but that's not to say it's a bad game at all. The demo from our July issue is going to be a good indication of whether or not you'll get into it.

MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2: NEW AGE OF HEROES

(*ODM* #10, 7/10)

Another month, another 2D Capcom beat 'em up. The enormous array of prequels, sequels and sub-sequels will be totally bewildering if you haven't done your homework. Still, this is one of the maddest and most entertaining we've seen yet.

WARREN: Do we care?
DAN: Ed does!
WARREN: Does anyone else?
STEVE: They're quite fun to play. Briefly.
WARREN: Very briefly.
DAN: How many do you need?
WARREN: Exactly. This is one of the better ones though.
DAN: We say that every time we get a new one!
STEVE: All the special moves look great, it has to be said, and it is good to see something completely mad and over the top like this.
WARREN: Yeah, some of those moves you were pulling off before we came down here were mental.
STEVE: Oh, I can pull off with the best of them...
WARREN: The Incredible Hulk one was the best.
ED: The one where he goes into space and grabs the molten asteroid?
DAN: That's the one!
ED: I think that it's the first in the 'versus' series – and this includes all the versions in the arcades and on the Saturn and even *Marvel Vs Capcom* [*ODM* #2, 5/10] – that actually seems separate from the *Street Fighter* series. They've always been just a bit too close in style and the other versus games just haven't seemed quite mad or been totally set up for a console. This one actually feels like it's been designed for the Dreamcast, mainly due to the new button set up.
WARREN: The backgrounds are awesome too.
ED: Yeah, it is nice but... Oh, I don't know!
DAN: It is nice but how many of these games have we had so far? [blank looks] Too many, anyway. But the point is that if you're not up on the games you're just going to think: "Oh, another one. It looks exactly the same as the others, why should I care?" I know there are differences, and it is really good fun to play, there's no doubt about that.
ED: It is a specialist thing though.
DAN: But we say the same thing every time another one comes out.
ED: Exactly, because it is specialist you guys aren't necessarily into it but there are loads of people...
WARREN: Hang on! Loads?
ED: Okay, *some* people who are really into them; and it must be a decent number or it wouldn't be worth their while bringing them out. So there are people who want them all or at least want the choice and this is one of the better ones. Personally I don't like it as much as the *Street Fighter* games but it is just mad and you





"SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAD BETTER BE SUPERIOR TO *LEGEND OF ZELDA* OR YOU MAY AS WELL NOT BOTHER"

– STEVE ON *DRAGONS BLOOD*

have to get carried away by it.

WARREN: If you want random madness and laughs you should go for *Power Stone* [*ODM* #1, 8/10] or wait for *Power Stone 2*.

DAN: My problem with all these games is that if you don't know the series and the characters and all that then you don't really get the most out of it. With most games you can pick it up and get an idea of the story and the characters but with these you're scuppered if you don't know it all. I realise that is one of the reasons the people who are into it love it so much but from the outside as it were it seems a bit cliquey.

ED: One of the coolest bits in this which got me screaming with excitement was where I was playing as Jill from *Resident Evil 2*. She did this special move which brought on the Tyrant from the end of *Resident Evil 2*, and I got everyone round saying: "Look at this! Look at this!" And they were just like: "What?"

WARREN: Exactly!

STEVE: I'm not much of a beat 'em up person really...

WARREN: Yeah, you keep getting beaten up!

STEVE: And it's not a lot of fun. But anyway, if I was going to play a beat 'em up I'd choose *Power Stone* or *Soul Calibur* [*ODM* #2, 10/10], where you don't have to know all the moves to enjoy playing it.

WARREN: So it's one for the fans.

DAN: Yeah, *another* one for the fans.

DRAGONS BLOOD

(*ODM* #10, 6/10)

A fantasy slash 'em up along the lines of *Soul Fighter* (*ODM* #2, 6/10), *Dragons Blood* boasts the usual suspects of orcs, goblins, elves and barbarians and a storyline involving a missing mystical trinket. Legions of 'intelligent' baddies to hack up and voices by Murdoch of *The A-Team* attempt to liven up what is an otherwise by-the-numbers fantasy.

WARREN: Steve, you play a lot of PC games, you must be into this sort of thing!

STEVE: Er, no. I don't really like fantasy games as a rule.

WARREN: That's my line!

STEVE: They're unnecessary and, ironically, unimaginative.

WARREN: It's just too easy to create a fantasy world. All you do is enlarge some small creatures like rats or something, throw in some orcs and elves, and there you have it.

STEVE: There'll be a wizard too, with a name that's got loads of apostrophes and no vowels.

WARREN: And you could write the plot on the back of a cigarette packet.

ED: Have you actually seen the character names in this?

DAN: Hrk and Gnk or something, isn't it?!

WARREN: Shocking! I wouldn't play it.

ED: I get really fed up with games that always have the same storyline. You live in a village, and something gets stolen or someone gets kidnapped or something, and you must go on a quest to get them back. Yawn. It's just the same old same old, and what's worse is that it is never done with a sense of humour.

STEVE: If you're going to do something like this, it had better be superior to *Legend Of Zelda* or you may as well not bother.

WARREN: Exactly what I was thinking.

STEVE: And it is absolutely nowhere near in any respect.

DAN: It certainly doesn't look as good. The graphics are far from impressive.

STEVE: They're atrocious!

DAN: Perhaps if it looked stunning and the fighting was sorted out it might be okay.

WARREN: In fairness though, Rad [freelancer Radion Automatic] has played it all the way through and gave it a fairly reasonable mark, and he got quite into it along the way.

DAN: The monsters are quite good, I guess, with the various characteristics.

WARREN: But the artificial intelligence on the early levels was pretty bad.

ED: It's not something I'd like to persevere with.

STEVE: Rad must have enjoyed it, but I couldn't see it.

ED: If you're going to use a fantasy setting then you need to make it more interesting and perhaps a little more believable, not the same old characters and locations.

DAN: I'm not advocating style over content, but at least if it looked amazing and had a great sense of style then you might be more encouraged to play it.

WARREN: We're not fans, are we, really?

STEVE: Nope.

MIDWAY'S GREATEST HITS VOLUME 1

(*ODM* #10, 3/10)

Another console, another compilation. A retro-gamer's delight, this collection of classics from the archives includes *Defender*, *Defender II*, *Joust* and *Robotron*. If you're expecting flashy graphics and tasty cut-scenes look away now. This is gaming at it's chunky-pixelled and basic best. Things have moved on though.

ED: Tell us what you think, grandad.

WARREN: Hmmm... *Defender*. Fantastic at the time, but...

STEVE: Anyone who says that they don't make games like they used to should have a look at this and see why that's a good thing.

WARREN: Well, yeah. Anyone who wibbles on about retro-gaming should buy this, because although it is a great nostalgia trip for those who remember them, they're not much compared to what's about today.

STEVE: *Defender* is still good though.

WARREN: But it's so difficult! It always was, but it seems soooo hard now.

STEVE: Yeah, you're lucky if you survive five minutes.

WARREN: It's just mad. It was designed like that, for the quick thrill and everything, but people expect more out of games now. *Sinistar* was always another favourite of mine. I absolutely loved it. And I like *Robotron*.

ED: Alex reckons *Robotron* is one of his favourite games, but I'm not a fan. I just don't even think it's that good a collection. If you're getting a compilation of games like this for your Dreamcast, you want to be getting 40-50 at a time, but there aren't really enough to choose from. You want to be getting 20 years' worth, and you want secret ones to unlock – say, unlock *Defender II* by completing *Defender*, or something like that.

DAN: Considering that you can get half of them on the Net [for PC and Mac], it seems a lot to ask £25 for this small collection.

STEVE: If you do have access to a PC, then that's a valid point.

WARREN: And many Dreamcast owners will have, or have had at some point, PlayStations, Saturns and the like, and it's exactly the same collection. They've been doing the rounds for ages on other platforms.

ED: A depressing thing. Why are we talking about it?

WARREN: The games that should have been on there are games like *Pac Man* – even if it is Namco – or *Asteroids*, but the ones on this compilation aren't even the best retro-games .

ED: The other thing is that with modern games you expect to get some sort of reward when you complete a level, but with these all they could do was speed it up and make it harder.

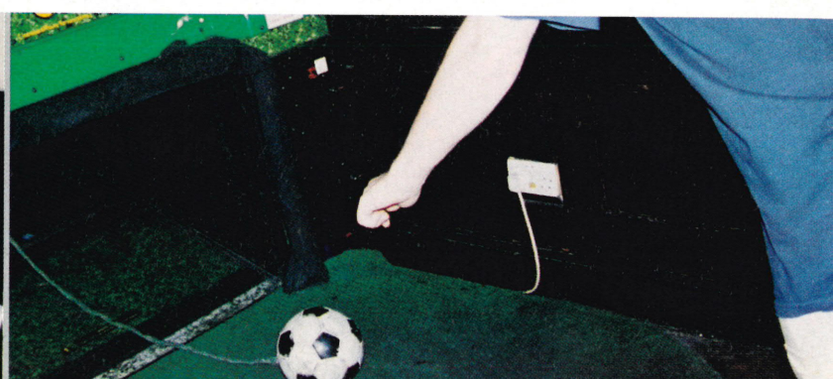
STEVE: Yeah, it's a different way of playing. There's no end to them as such. Other than your sanity.



"*DEFENDER* WAS DESIGNED FOR THE QUICK THRILL, BUT PEOPLE EXPECT MORE OUT OF GAMES NOW"

– WARREN ON *MGH VOLUME 1*





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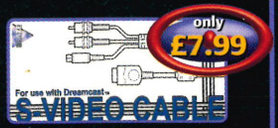


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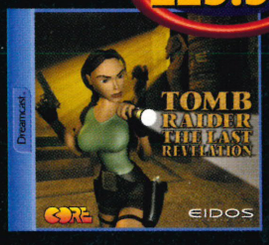
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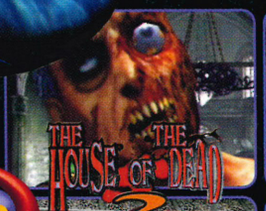




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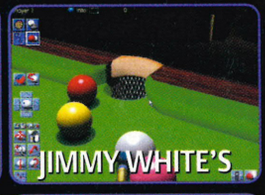






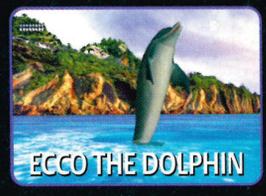














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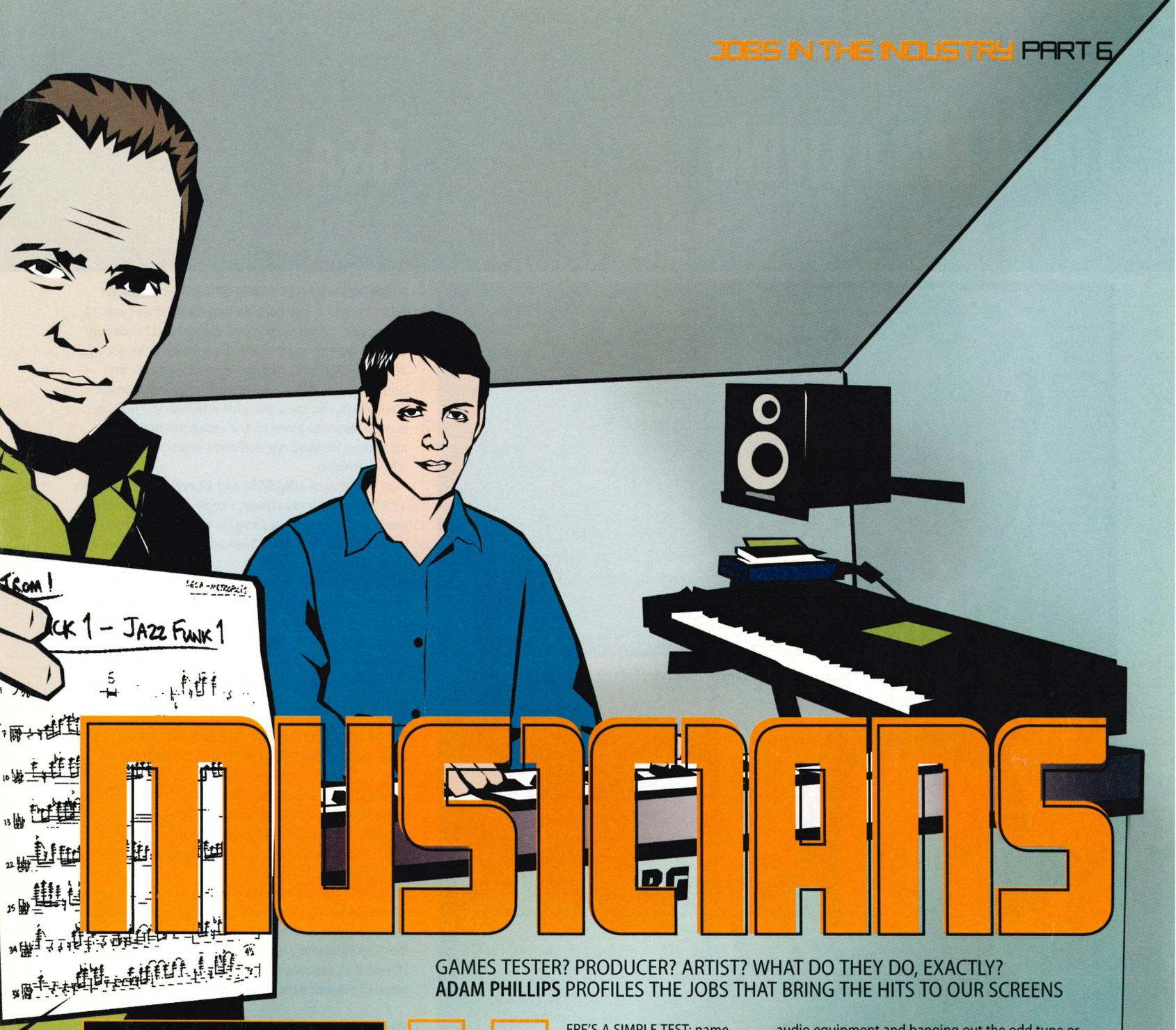
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MUSICIANS

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MUSICIANS

RESPONSIBILITIES: Composing, producing, recording and mixing the music for a game soundtrack. In many cases the musician also takes care of creating, editing and implementing the sound effects.

PROSPECTS: Potentially top-notch. A great musician can turn their skills to the music, TV and film industries as well.

SALARY: Start off at approximately £15,000 and can end up at £30-40,000 plus bonus packages.

QUALIFICATIONS: While some kind of music qualification is preferred, it's not absolutely vital. Just as important is a good showreel, the ability to work at speed under pressure, and the versatility to write music in a wide range of styles.

HERE'S A SIMPLE TEST: name three pieces of videogame music that you can hum and that have grabbed your aural attention. Not easy, is it? That isn't because videogame music is below par on the talent front, but because, nine times out of ten, a good soundtrack should complement the game rather than dominate it. It's the musician's responsibility to dream up the music not only for the in-game action, but also for the front end (the menu screens and so forth) and the FMV sequences. Usually the musician is also responsible for the game's sound effects, either creating them, or selecting and editing samples from sound libraries.

If the term 'videogame musician' conjures up images of a bloke with a goatee, relaxing lazily in front of thousands of pounds' worth of high-tech audio equipment and banging out the odd tune or two, then you're mistaken. Creating videogame music is no walk in the park. Musicians usually work by themselves and are generally the last port of call in a game's production cycle. The key skills are therefore the ability to work very quickly under immense pressure, and deliver music in a variety of musical styles – from orchestral and hard rock through to drum & bass and techno. Also, having to write scripts and directing voice-over artists is not uncommon in these days of narrative-driven videogames.

Despite the relatively low profile of musicians in the industry itself, the competition to land a job is huge, with everyone from school kids to film composers trying to get in on the act. College and university leavers are the main candidates though, and can find it difficult to get the break they need. It's not all doom and gloom though, and persistence, making contacts and researching the market can all pay off over time. In other words, to make it in the biz you'll need talent, dedication and balls of brass.

I DO IT FOR A LIVING

We profile three musicians, taking a brief look at what helped them land the gig, and which games they've had the most fun working on



MUSICIAN 1

NAME: Nathan McCree
AGE: 31
BACKGROUND: Has been writing music since the age of 13. Originally trained as a computer programmer, and landed a job at Core Design. Got a break there scoring tunes and went on to write the classic *Tomb Raider* theme. Has now gone freelance and co-founded Meode Productions.
JOB HIGHLIGHTS: *Bubba 'N' Stix* (Mega Drive), *Swagman* (PlayStation), *Tomb Raider I, II & III* (various).



MUSICIAN 2

NAME: Richard Jacques
AGE: 27
BACKGROUND: With an impressive array of musical disciplines, from piano and trombone to guitar and drums, Richard has followed the path of the classically trained musician, garnering himself a university-based education. Landed his first musician job at Sega after spotting an ad in *Music Week* and hasn't looked back since.
JOB HIGHLIGHTS: *Shinobi X* (Saturn), *Sonic R* (Saturn/PC), *Metropolis Street Racer* (Dreamcast), *Jet Set Radio* (Dreamcast).



MUSICIAN 3

NAME: Allister Brimble
AGE: 29
BACKGROUND: A freelancer who got his first break after penning music demos and sending them in to software developers. Codemasters heard some of his stuff and he landed his first gig.
JOB HIGHLIGHTS: *Alien Breed* (Amiga/PC), *Driver* (PS), *Jimmy White's 2: Cueball* (PC/DC/PS), *RollerCoaster Tycoon* (PC).

Q&A

What's it's like to be a musician, in the words of the maestros themselves

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED AS A MUSICIAN?

NATHAN: I've been writing music since I was 13. My parents forced me through college and I ended up doing a systems analyst course. I subsequently got a job at Core Design as a computer programmer. My first project was programming a music sequencer for the Mega Drive. I finished ahead of schedule so I told my boss I'd do some tunes on the sequencer in the meantime. He liked my stuff and I practically changed jobs overnight!

RICHARD: I did GCSE and A Level music and then a BA (Hons) degree in music. I knew I wanted to write music and involve technology in some way, so I was very lucky to see a job at Sega advertised and then to actually get it.

ALLISTER: I began by creating music demos for the Commodore Amiga and sending them to the public domain software company 17 Bit. They advised me to send some demos to established software companies. I did, and Codemasters got back to me. They were impressed, and asked me to write the music for *Italia '90*.

WHAT DID YOU EXPECT THE JOB TO TURN OUT LIKE, AND HOW DID IT ACTUALLY TURN OUT?

RICHARD: I knew it would be fun because I've always loved videogames. I thought it would probably be hard work because of having to work under pressure. I also knew that I'd be writing in different styles, which I enjoy doing. The job turned out to be pretty much as I expected.

ALLISTER: I honestly didn't have a clue how the job would be. All I knew about game music was what I'd read in magazine interviews. I was probably too worried they would hate my music to think about anything else. I found it all extremely rewarding though. I felt a real sense of achievement when they liked what I'd done.

WHAT DOES THE JOB ENTAIL ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS?

RICHARD: In the morning I'll probably work with a sequencer, either continuing a track I started the previous day and finishing it off, or beginning a new one; I like to have the game I'm working on running in the background. I write a few bars and then go back to the game, checking that the feel and pace is right. After lunch I do the same in the afternoon. We also have design meetings where we go over storyboards, scripting, scheduling and budgeting. If you're doing sound effects, you'd also be working on creating your own sounds or working with a sound library.

WHAT ARE THE PROS OF BEING A VIDEOGAME MUSICIAN?

NATHAN: It's good to be working with the latest kit and to see the latest games being made – in a way, you're seeing the future.

RICHARD: It's excellent fun and it can be very rewarding. It's also nice when you get people emailing you saying: "I love your music!"

CASE STUDY

Creating music on the move for *Metropolis Street Racer*

AND WHAT, IF ANY, ARE THE DISADVANTAGES OF THE JOB?

NATHAN: The high stress and pressure. Unfortunately, there isn't really any time to perfect your work. It's got to be absolutely right first time round, so you've got to learn to pull your heart out, stick it on a plate and eat it a bit. You also sometimes have to do a huge number of tracks in a short time – to give you an example, for *Tomb Raider III* I did 50 tunes in a week!

RICHARD: You don't seem to get a huge amount of recognition or respect for what you do, especially outside the videogames industry. People's perceptions of what videogame music is all about are still not that brilliant.

ALLISTER: Many British software companies don't see music and sound effects as an important part of a game and will often settle for far less than the musician is actually capable of, just to save a bit of money on their budget. It's also a great shame that I often get details of most jobs only weeks before the game is due for release. This means you often have to rush through the job rather than take your time and try to do your best work.

WHAT SKILLS DO YOU NEED TO BE A VIDEOGAME MUSICIAN?

RICHARD: If you've had some formal music training, you'll have a distinct advantage over anyone else. You should also learn to listen to different styles of music and break them down in your head – ie what they're doing and how they're doing it. Find your strengths and weaknesses, then try to embellish the strengths and work on your weaknesses. I have my weaknesses – some styles of music that I don't write particularly well – but I always try to work harder at those.

FINALLY, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A BUDDING MUSICIAN WANTING TO GET THEIR FOOT IN THE DOOR?

NATHAN: To be honest, you have to be a bit of a pest. People aren't likely to phone you if they don't know who you are, so you mustn't let people forget about you. You can send your showreel in, but if they haven't got a position available – which is more than likely – it goes in a pile and gets forgotten about. You need to keep making a new showreel every four to six months and keep sending them in.

RICHARD: Definitely send in your showreel, but I think people shouldn't be disillusioned if they hear nothing back. Unfortunately we don't have time to listen to a lot of them because we're so overworked. In the meantime, take a friendly attitude; don't keep badgering people, but every six months phone up and say hello, or go and meet people at trade shows. Perhaps approach some of the smaller developers at first who don't have an in-house musician, and try to do some freelance stuff for them if you have your own equipment.

GAME: **METROPOLIS STREET RACER**
DEVELOPER: **BIZARRE CREATIONS**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**

AS WELL AS BOASTING some of the world's greatest console graphics, *Metropolis Street Racer (due in September)* also has a soundtrack to die for. Richard Jacques was brought on board back in '98 and was briefed by the producer. "He said that the game was set in three cities," explains Richard, "and asked my opinion on how we should approach the music. I discussed the idea of implementing a radio system simply because we wanted to give players lots of musical choice – everyone listens to their own choice of music in their car, so we thought that we would try and do that in the game. The best way to tie that together was to have three radio stations in each city."

Richard then started to write and program the 30 tracks that make up the game's massive soundtrack, which includes a huge array of music styles from drum & bass and hard rock, to country & western and modern jazz. "Some of the music tracks were pastiches of current pop or dance music at the time," says Richard. "For example, there's an Oasis-style track, and some generic pop music which is based on quite a few other artists and bands. So some of the process was researching what music was popular at the time and either doing something in a similar style or combining a few styles together."

The monolithic task of putting the soundtrack together took more than two years, and required a mass of different disciplines on Richard's part: arranging and recording tracks with session musicians; recording car engine sounds; making sure that the radio station concept was successfully carried out by using eight different voice-over artists to add realism. Various trips to the game's developers up in Liverpool and meetings with Sega's producer ensured that the team were kept up to date, and they approved any work he was carrying out.

Seeing it all pulled together has obviously been hugely rewarding for Richard, although the production process hasn't been without the odd incident or two: "When we were doing the car engine recordings, we blew up the gearbox on a Mercedes SLK. That was quite funny. I hope the producer has got his insurance back now – it's taken him ages to sort out!"

"EVERYONE LISTENS TO THEIR OWN CHOICE OF MUSIC IN THEIR CAR"

– RICHARD JACQUES



△ *MSR*: **features a massive soundtrack, with everything from drum & bass to jazz and country & western.**

FIRST CONTACT

Think you're ready to be a videogame musician? Then try 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 details of university or college courses, talk to your career advisor or check out your local library for more information.

VERDICT

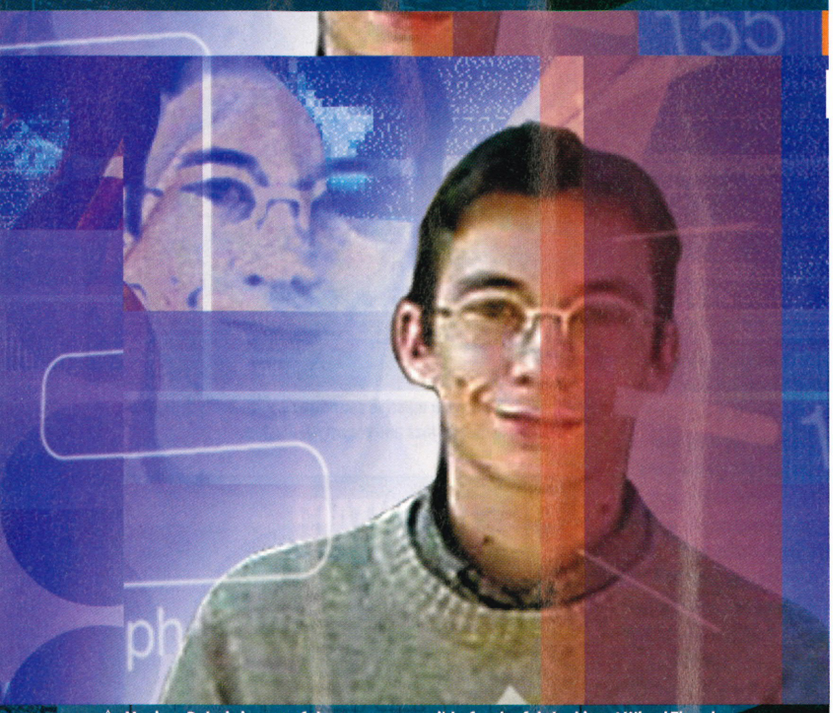
WHILE LANDING A JOB IN THE INDUSTRY IS TOUGH, ONCE YOU'RE IN, WRITING MUSIC FOR GAMES IS VERY FULFILING. IF YOUR WORK REALLY SHINES, IT CAN HELP YOU GET INTO OTHER INDUSTRIES AS WELL

UPPERS

Can be very rewarding creatively • You get to write stuff for all different types of genres • Expect the odd email from fans patting you on the back for a job well done • If you're very good it can open doors into other industries such as film and TV

DOWNERS

It's a bugger getting into the industry as a musician in the first place • Don't expect kudos from your peers • It's damn stressful, and you can't be precious about your music. At all.



△ Maxime Deleris is part of the team responsible for the fab-looking *4 Wheel Thunder*.

IN THE HOT SEAT WITH MAXIME DELERIS

THE ART COACH AT BORDEAUX-BASED KALISTO ENTERTAINMENT FACES YOUR QUESTIONS IN THIS MONTH'S HOT SEAT INTERVIEW

COMING UP: NEXT ISSUE WE'LL BE PRINTING THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS YOU SENT IN FOR THE *ECCO THE DOLPHIN* TEAM

FORMED AS Atreid Concept back in 1990 by president Nicolas Gaume, the now renamed Kalisto Entertainment has grown to employ more than 250 people worldwide. With titles such as *Al Unser Jr Arcade Racing*, *Dark Earth*, *Nightmare Creatures*, *Ultim@te Race Pro* and *The Fifth Element* under their belts, they recently teamed up with Midway to create the top-notch off-road racer *4 Wheel Thunder* (*ODM* #8, 8/10) exclusively for Dreamcast.

With *Nightmare Creatures II* due for release in the next few months, and a number of other top-secret projects underway, the team have got their work cut out for them. 'Art Coach' Maxime Deleris kindly took time out to go through the questions supplied by *Official Dreamcast Magazine* readers.

LOVELY WEATHER

The weather and time-of-day effects in *4 Wheel Thunder* are amazing. How did you make them so realistic and exciting?

Peter Tweedie, Surrey

MAXIME DELERIS: The realistic rendering of tracks and weather effects is the result of painstaking planning and experimenting with settings. Once the tracks were modelled, we chose the best possible position for the sun, because the lighting provides the atmosphere. The lighting also enabled us to establish the colour balance of the tracks.

For example, in the Far West Daylight track, we've put the sun high in the sky and exaggerated all the contrasts. The shadows are really defined, with blue as the main colour to contrast dynamically with the red hue of the ground. Once this atmosphere had been created we added a little ochre fog to simulate atmospheric dust. We've done the same for each track, making them all unique.

2 WHEEL THUNDER?

Why didn't you make *4 Wheel Thunder* support four players? The special modes would have been a great laugh with four players, especially the Bomb and Tag modes.

Peter Tweedie, Surrey

MD: Though our engine is very efficient, we have chosen to offer only a two-player mode for reasons of graphical and gameplay consistency. As far as graphical consistency is concerned, we wanted to keep the 450-metre distance of view in the two-player mode, and we didn't want to reduce the amount of detail.

Regarding the gameplay, a screen divided into four parts is very small and awkward in the special modes like Bomb and Tag, which require a clear view of the track and of the opponent.

WORLDWIDE APPEAL

Do you think that a game without cars, sport, guns or serious violence would put off gamers?

Anon, via email

MD: Videogames have now reached a certain maturity because their public has evolved with the games themselves. Though videogames win new followers every single day, the gamers' expectations don't amount to just letting off steam in arcade or violent games. I'm sure they are more and more demanding, and expect original games with living experiences and emotive choices.

Fortunately, players aren't satisfied with just racing, sports, or violent games, otherwise we'd just have to create the same games all the time and decline the gameplay principles. Eventually videogames would die from a lack of interest and innovation, no matter how high the quality was.

WHAT NEXT?

What have you got planned for Dreamcast after *Nightmare Creatures II* (if anything)?

Metin Hasan, via email

MD: We're working on several projects on different formats which have to remain secret for now.

POP TARTS

How come there's no pop-up in *4 Wheel Thunder*?

Charmaine Standen, via email

MD: We studied the technical capacities and display power of Dreamcast for a long time, which enabled us to define the best number of faces (polygons) that can be visible on-screen. Then, using XL Tech (our engine), we decided how to distribute the



△ Here's how Maxime appears in *4 Wheel Thunder*'s bizarre end credits! You *have* to see them.

number of faces at our disposal between the vehicles, the scenery, the visual effects… and therefore define the view distance in order to have a maximum amount of detail and effects.

As long as we kept the view distance at exactly 450 metres we were sure not to have any 'clipping' [where objects pop into view suddenly].



△ **Particular care was taken over the weather and lighting effects.**



△ ***Nightmare Creatures II* will have its own unique atmosphere.**

VOCAL TALENTS

Who does the voice at the start of the game – the one that goes "Four Wheel Thundaaaaaaah!"?

Peter Jacobson, via email

MD: *4 Wheel Thunder*'s voices were done by a professional actor, who worked closely with our musician and the team developing the game. We wanted to get as close as we could to the *Hydro Thunder* spirit and still have a personal touch very peculiar to *4 Wheel Thunder*.

FIRST-NAME TERMS

What were you going to call *4 Wheel Thunder* before Midway made it part of their 'Thunder' series?

Lloyd Mangram, via email

MD: The game went through several evolutions and changes as it became more defined. It was first called *XLeration*, then *Offroad Thunder*, and finally *4 Wheel Thunder*, which fitted better with the game's spirit.

JUST A QUICKIE

Will *Ultim@te Race Pro/2* be coming out on Dreamcast?

'Budballs' Chris, Scarborough

MD: No.

ROLLING START

Would you be able to do a perfect conversion of *Daytona USA 1 & 2* if Sega let you (hint hint)?

'Budballs' Chris, Scarborough

MD: Considering the power of *4 Wheel Thunder*'s engine (XL Tech), I think we could develop a product with the same level of quality.

MONSTER, MONSTER

Did you get to drive monster trucks while making the game – you know, for 'research' purposes?

Phil Sawyers, Chatham

MD: Unfortunately we didn't have the opportunity to drive a real monster truck, but we comforted ourselves by buying toy cars which we have a lot of fun with anyway!

RACING ACES

What are your favourite driving games ever, not including *4 Wheel Thunder* of course?

Tom Sosa, via email

MD: My favourite racing games are *Colin McRae Rally* and *Gran Turismo 1* and *2*.

WIKKID CHOONZ

Who inspired the music in *4 Wheel Thunder*? I really like it and want to buy some albums of that kind of music. What should I get?

Robin Poynter, via email

MD: The music was composed by our musician at Kalisto, El Mobo. Here is his answer to your question: "The music was inspired by many electronic music bands, which are a little bit 'underground'. I distribute the albums of some independent techno artists that you should maybe try, on my website at www.elmobo.com. I'd be happy to answer any other questions there."

NIGHTMARE SITUATION

Will the Dreamcast version of *Nightmare Creatures II* be different in any way to the PlayStation version?

Simon Rebuck, via email

MD: Both were developed together and have all the expected attributes and atmosphere you would expect from the *Nightmare Creatures* universe.

CORPORATE IDENTITY

Why is your company called Kalisto?

Jon Sykes, via email

MD: The name originates from a Greek legend, and carries certain imagery and messages that we liked. *ODM* readers should do some homework on who Kalisto was and what became of her, and write in with the answer. Maybe they could get a prize! [*ODM* note: No you won't get a prize, because we're far too tight.]

VIVE LA FRANCE

For years, all French game developers and footballers were rubbish. Now you're all making great games and winning every football tournament. Why is this?

Stephen Callaghan, Birmingham

MD: Coming from England, do you think it's wise speaking about football? Just accept the inevitable!

ONLINE ON THE CARDS?

Are you planning to use Dreamcast's online capabilities in a future game?

Kamaljit Singh, via email

MD: While not being format-specific, online gaming is a major part of our future plans. We've already announced exciting projects such as *Highlander* and *FIA GT Championship* for PC.

BACK CATALOGUE

Which games did Kalisto develop before *4 Wheel Thunder*?

Daniel Waugh, via email

MD: *Dark Earth*, adventure game on PC (1997), *Nightmare Creatures* on PlayStation, Nintendo 64 and PC, *Ultim@te Race Pro* on PC, *The Fifth Element* on PlayStation and PC (1998)

There are also many other games, such as *Cogito*, *Fury Of The Furries*, *Pac In Time*… If you want the opportunity to play some new Web games based on some of these older titles, you should visit our website at www.kalisto.com.

DRIVING LESSONS

Which would you say is the best vehicle for me to buy and upgrade when playing *4 Wheel Thunder*'s championship mode? Also, can you give me any helpful driving tips?

Shaun Barber, via email

MD: The choice of vehicle depends mostly on the way you play, because they all offer the same capacities but with a particular style of driving. For example, better grip for monster trucks, which are slower, or the speed and edginess of buggies which slide more.

Here's a little tip to drive better: use the boost at the end of a turn to get some grip back, and start again on the best path possible.

CREDIT IS DUE

What on earth is going on with the credits at the end of *4 Wheel Thunder*? You're all mad! It did make me laugh though.

Ian, via email

MD: No comment!



"ONLINE GAMING IS A MAJOR PART OF OUR FUTURE PLANS"

YOUR CHANCE TO INTERVIEW THE *WACKY RACES* TEAM!

Previously known as Gremlin Interactive, Infogrames' Sheffield development studio are the team behind the recent *Wacky Races* (*ODM* #9, 7/10) and the forthcoming *UEFA 2001* (see page 16). If you have anything at all that you'd like us to ask them on your behalf, get in touch right away. Don't forget that games programming legend Tony Crowther was responsible for developing part of *Wacky Races*' unique feel. Send all your questions to questions@dreamcastmag.co.uk, or to Infogrames In The Hot Seat, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

HINTS & TIPS





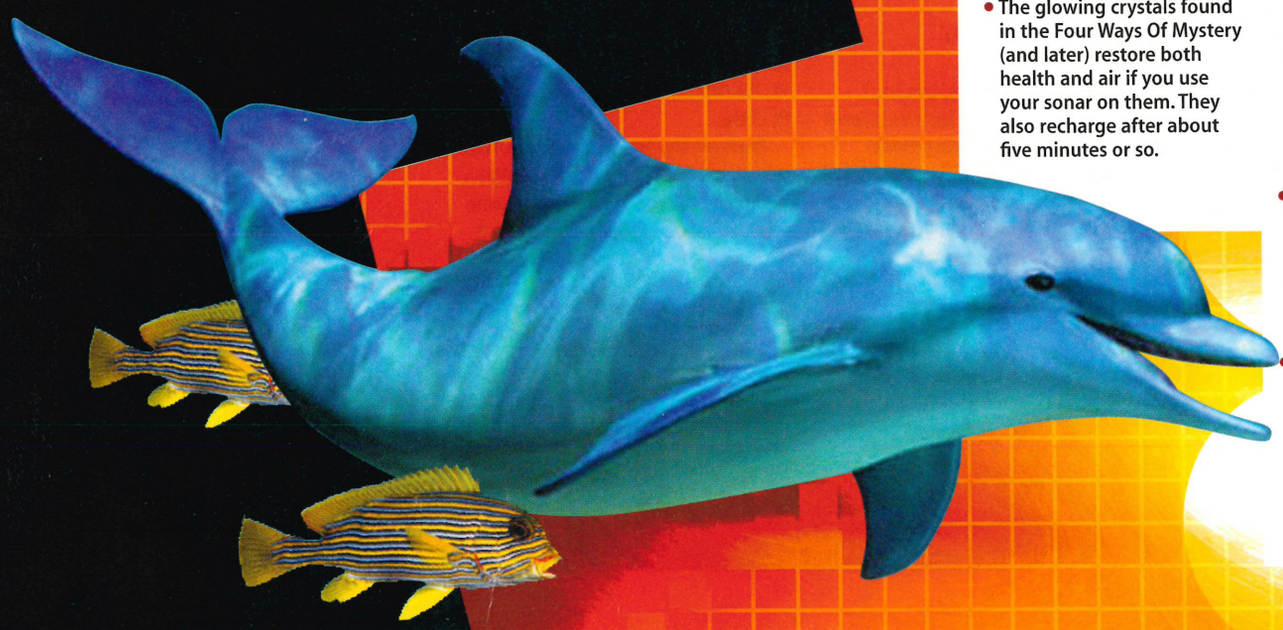
90 ECCO THE DOLPHIN DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE
The first part in our guide to staying afloat

96 RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA
The third and final part of our hints and maps guide

100 HELP!
Your gaming questions answered

101 CHEATS
If at first you don't succeed... then cheat, of course!

102 CHALLENGES
Win a free game – this month, *V-Rally 2 Expert Edition*

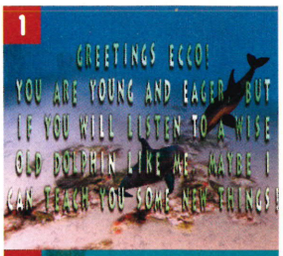


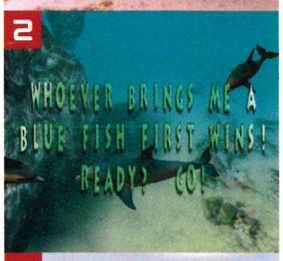
ECCO THE DOLPHIN
DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE
SWIMTHROUGH PART 1

TRANQUIL AND PEACEFUL-LOOKING IT MAY BE, BUT *ECCO THE DOLPHIN* (*ODM* #9, 9/10) IS ONE OF DREAMCAST'S MOST CHALLENGING TITLES. GOOD JOB **STEVE KEY** IS HERE WITH THE FIRST OF OUR STEP-BY-STEP GUIDES TO EVERY LEVEL, THEN

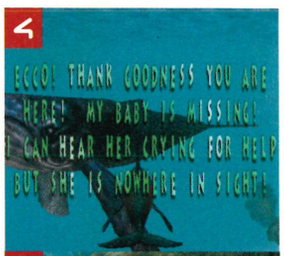
BEFORE YOU DIVE IN

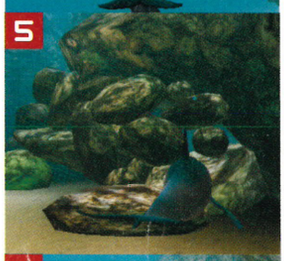
- Certain fish give you more energy than others, and some you can't eat at all. Generally, blue fish restore the most health, whereas the golden scaly-looking ones will cure you from poison.
- If you're short on health, look out for things such as clams and crystals. Use your sonar on a clam and it opens up, giving you a pearl that restores health; the small pocket of air it releases can also be absorbed.
- The glowing crystals found in the Four Ways Of Mystery (and later) restore both health and air if you use your sonar on them. They also recharge after about five minutes or so.
- Jellyfish can be killed by being charged in to. Once you have the power of sonar, that will also kill them. Tentacles on plants that harm you can be avoided by simply charging through them.
- Items above the surface can be seen without leaving the water. If you line yourself up beneath one, and use the charge so that you swim out of the water vertically, you'll find it much easier to get at the item.
- Don't forget that you do have a map. Hold down the sonar button for a short while and it appears on screen, showing your location, the walls and caverns immediately around you, and any other dolphins, sharks or creatures nearby.
- Once you've mastered Song Of Sharks, it's still risky to attack them head-on. The safest bet is to get underneath or above one – you'll have a much easier time of it.
- Use your look buttons as often as you can. These come in especially handy in situations where you must check if something is following you, like the great white in the Perils Of The Coral Reef.



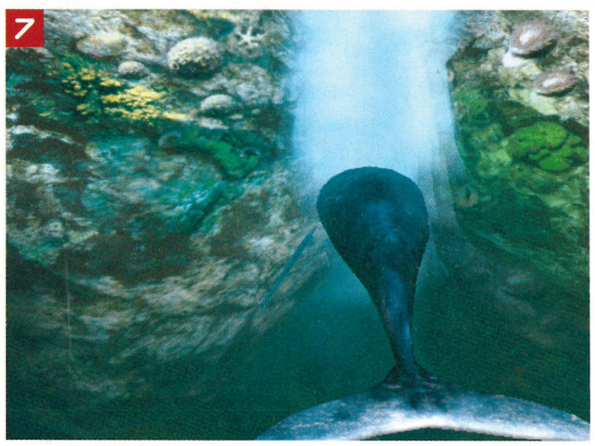












AQUAMARINE BAY

1 First you need to listen to the wise dolphin that teaches you the basic moves in the game. None of these are particularly difficult, so you should be up and running no time.

2 Once you've mastered the basics, head over to the group of three dolphins playing nearby. If you talk to the coach dolphin it'll tell you that they're having a hunting game. Use your charge to grab the colour fish it asks for, and then return it.

3 It'll give you the prompt to do a victory tail-walk, so head for the surface and start walking the walk. Once you reach the surface, the screen display a blue crystal – swim and jump to get it.

4 Now head towards the far end of the level and you'll find the two whales. Speak to the smaller one and it'll ask you to do some tricks. After this a scene starts and the Foe attack the Guardian Spirit. When you're back with Ecco, the baby whale is missing and you must find it.

6 Look to the left of the waterfall. As you look at it, follow the wall around. Eventually you'll come to this rock formation – the baby is trapped behind it.

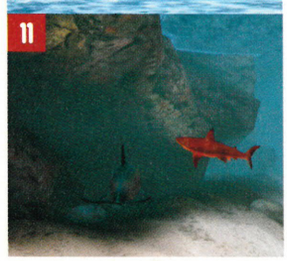
5 Go and find your dolphin friends and they'll agree to help you. Swim to the rocks and another cut-scene runs, showing the three dolphins nudging the rocks away and freeing the whale.

7 Head back to the giant whale and she thanks you for helping her baby and gives you a safe passage though the waterfall. All you have to do now is follow her and you're through.

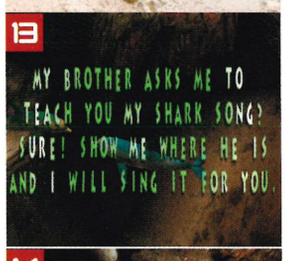


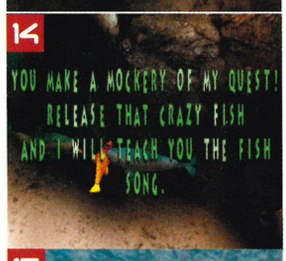


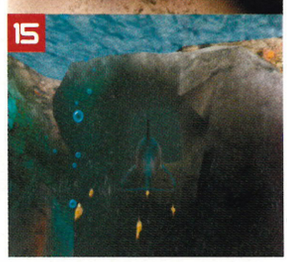


















PERILS OF THE CORAL REEF

8 Look for the two dolphins having a racing competition near the start. Speak to them and they'll invite you to join in. Catch the red fish as they ask, and you'll race. Keep using the charge button and you'll beat them in no time, winning you a Vitalit.

9 Look for the narrow passage behind the first pillar you went around the outside of during the race. Follow it down, and talk to the dolphin there who wants you to find his brother, who's playing with a turtle. Continue to the end and you'll get another Vitalit.

10 Swim to the surface near this dolphin and you'll see a small ledge that you can jump over. Do that and you'll be in the second major part of this level. Avoid the sharks and keep swimming away from them and you'll come to a clearing. To the left of this is another clearing, in which there's another gem – talk to it.

11 Look nearby and you'll see a dolphin chasing a fish. Talk to him and he'll offer you the chance to catch the fish too. Charge at it until you've caught it, and it'll teach you the Song Of The Fish that makes shoals of fish follow you around.

12 Search this area some more and look for another small passage. This leads you to the dolphin that is playing with a baby turtle. However, sharks are attacking the turtle, and you must kill all three of them to save it.

13 The dolphin thanks you by giving you the Song Of The Turtle, which makes turtles follow you one by one. Now speak to the dolphin again and he'll mention its brother, whom you spoke to back at the start of this stage. Go back to him.

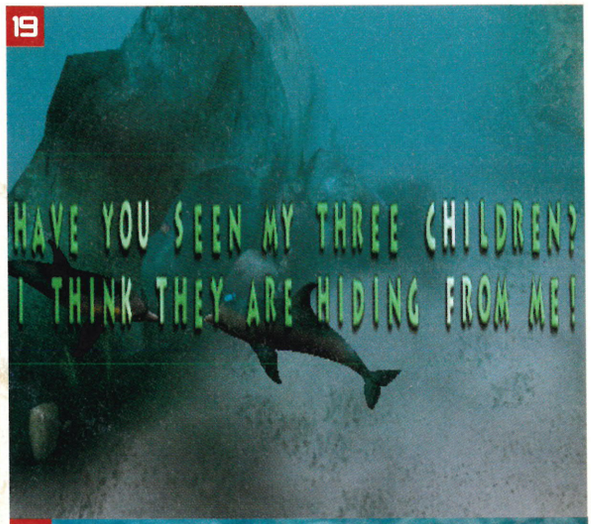
14 Jump back over the ledge and the dolphin will be there. Talk to it and you'll be prompted to take it to its brother. Jump back over and they're reunited, and as a reward you get the Song Of The Shark. Now you can stop small sharks attacking you by blasting them with your sonar.

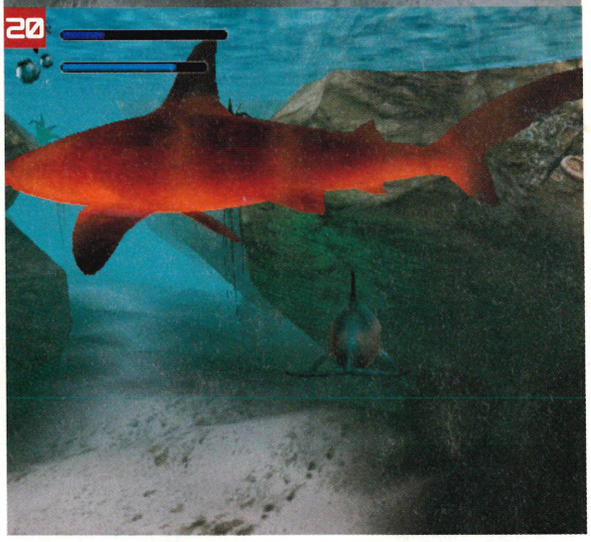
15 Return to the section with the dolphin chasing the fish. You must make a small shoal of fish follow you, so find the golden-looking group (about six of them) and sonar them. With the fish in tow, head to the small tunnel in the north-west corner of the level. As you swim through, the piranhas that would normally devour you eat the other fish and you scoot through.

16 Once through, you'll notice the great white shark swimming about. In order to beat him you must first use your sonar to attract its attention, then you must swim towards the rock in the centre of the level. Check that the shark is still following you, and swim through the holes in the rocks. It'll take a few goes, but eventually it'll get stuck in the hole. Now charge the nose of the shark and you'll be able to use the Power of Vigor.

17 Once you've obtained the glyph, you must defeat the shark. Try to get behind the shark, so that it's constantly trying to circle towards you, and keep charging it. You must have the Vigor to do any damage, and after five hits it'll die.

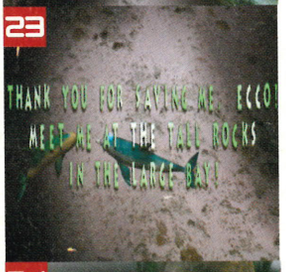
18 Go back to the section where the dolphin is chasing the fish. Once you can see the glyph on the left, swim down the far right-hand passage here. Kill the three sharks in this corridor and you'll reach a Vigor at the end, and a bright light. Pick up the Vigor and use it to swim through the current and into the next level.



























TRIAL WITHOUT ERROR

19 Swim forwards (killing any sharks you find along the way) until you see a dolphin. Talk to it and she tells you that she's lost her three children, so you must find them.

20 Head to the left and through the small passage, into an area with two hammerhead sharks. You need to kill them both, as they pack a nasty punch (and it might be an idea to collect the Vigor in the area where you first spoke to the dolphin). Once they're dead, speak to the baby dolphin at the rear of the room and take it back to its mother.

21 Speak to the mother and you'll drop the baby off. Now look for this big rock propped against the wall – the second baby is behind there. Speak to it and it'll swim away, asking you to catch it. Use your charge to do that, and once you've nudged it it then goes back to it's mother.

22 Now swim to this section behind the mother. Go into the cave with the vines hanging over the entrance, and use your sonar on a group of glow fish. The third baby is concealed in here, so talk to it and it'll return.

23 With the glow fish still in tow, look for the other exit, as you're still inside the cave. As you emerge, there's a crystal that you need to get info from. Swim forward and defeat the five sharks around the stone formation (there are lots of fish nearby which will give you health). Now swim into the passage, where the scared dolphin is waiting for you. He says thanks, and tells you to meet him at the tall rocks in the large bay.

24 You must return to the area where the mother and her dolphins are, and head towards the circle of rocks pointing upwards. The dolphin you saved will be swimming above them. Go and get the Vigor from nearby, and push the broken rock into the centre of the circle. Talk to the dolphin again and swim through.

25 Swim down and you'll see the giant octopus. Speak to the dolphin again (who has followed you down), and he tells you that if you work together then maybe you can get through. He swims up to the octopus and is grabbed by one of its tentacles.

26 Once it's grabbed, you must quickly swim past the octopus while it's distracted, and on to the next level.

FOUR WAYS OF MYSTERY

27 Swim forward until you see a dolphin swimming about. Speak to it and it'll give you a big rant about how important you are. Just behind that you should see a group of rocks and weeds with a star-like shape in the middle. Swim through this and you'll master the power of air. This enables you to extract air from pockets along the sea bed.

28 There are basically three passages that you can go down from this room. One leads to a red crystal, one leads to a yellow, and another to a green one. You must find the passage entrance that has two small plants growing at the bottom of the entrance (these have white leaves at the top of them that damage you if you brush over them).

Follow the path until you get the choice of three forks. Take the one with the most plants in it and follow it around. At the second big fork, again go down the poison plant route. Use your dash to go

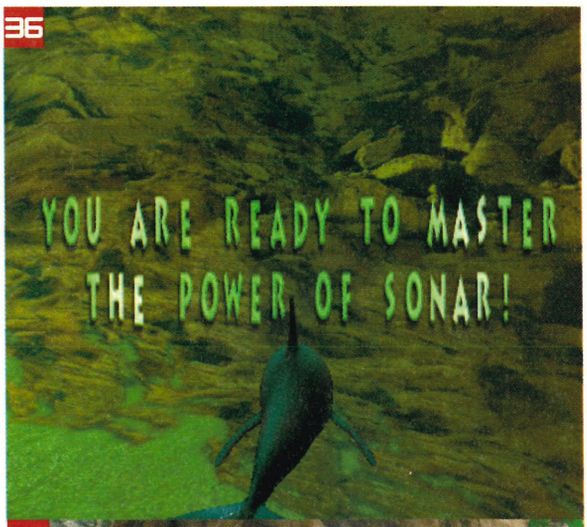
















past unhurt. You emerge in this pool and you find the reclusive dolphin you're looking for, so speak to him.

29 Now head for the main pool again, where the preacher dolphin was and where you found the power of air. Inside this area are three fish that are bigger and quicker than the others. There's a red one and a black and yellow one, but ignore both of those. You need to catch the blue and yellow fish and take it back to the recluse. He'll teach you the Song Of Ray.

30 Head back to he main pool again, and this time look for the small tunnel where you can see a conger eel snapping a way in. Go down this tunnel, using the charge to get past the eels. If you're going in the right direction you'll come to these red crystals. If you use your sonar on them, you refill your air and life completely! Now go straight on.

31 You'll emerge in a pool, with a Vitalit at the top and a power of air at the bottom. Take care not to get touched by the jellyfish as you collect these, or you'll get poisoned. This is the toughest part of the game so far.

32 Basically, you must use the Song Of Ray to direct the manta swimming in this pool into the tunnel you've come from and back into the main area of the level. Guide it into the tunnel first, them swim back and get the power of air so that you have a full health bar. The direction you're facing in when you use your sonar on the ray is the direction the ray will move in.

33 Once it's in the main part, it gets harder. You must now guide it over to the giant eel in this area. When it's swimming right next to the eel, you must duck underneath it, and through into the previously unreachable tunnel.

34 As you go through the stone ring, grab some air and then nudge one of the rocks loose from the bed. It'll fall down the passage, so make sure you stick right behind it so that the current doesn't push you back.

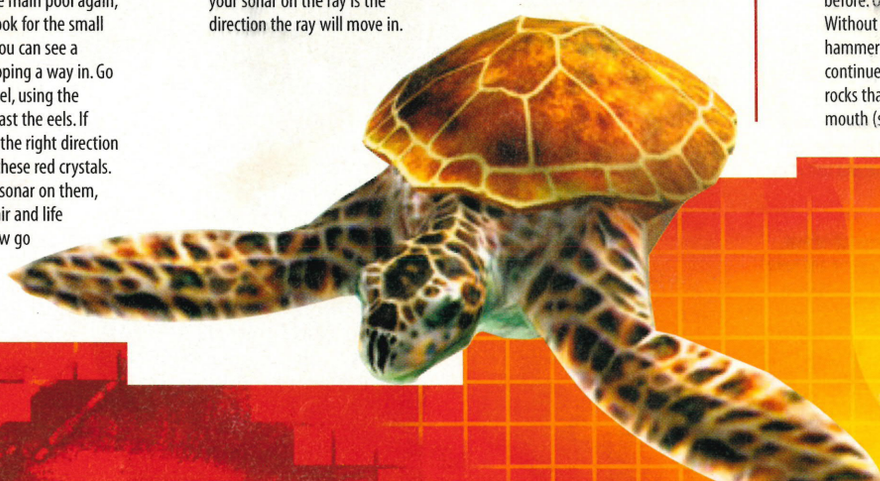
35 You'll reach this blue crystal with lots of paths to choose from. You must go down the one with two eels around the *first* corner you turn. If you've been travelling along the tunnel and have seen no eels, turn around and pick another one. You'll go through an exit that will take you back out to the Perils Of The Coral Reef.

PERILS OF THE CORAL REEF (AGAIN)

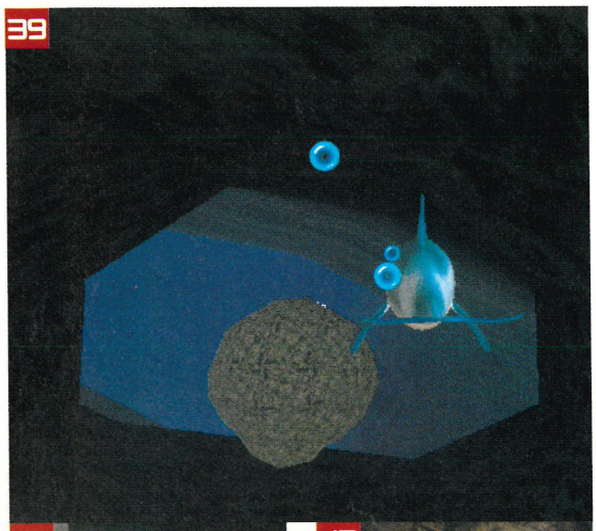
36 When you emerge, pick up the power of sonar from in front of you. You can now break down weak rocks and scatter enemies with this power. Collect the glyph to give you the power, and sonar the rocks to the left of the green mesh thing to go through.

37 You'll emerge in the pool very near the exit to this level. Swim a little to your left and exit in exactly the same way as you did before. Once back inside the Trail Without Error area, swim past the hammerhead sharks and continue until you reach the rocks that look like a crocodile's mouth (shown in pic).

38 Swim past it and down the left-hand side of the split. Pick the Vigor and go down the right-hand passage you just ignored. At the end of that is a power of sonar that you can get only with the Vigor. Once you've collected them both, return to the croc mouth and sonar the rocks. They'll crumble, and you can go through to the next level.





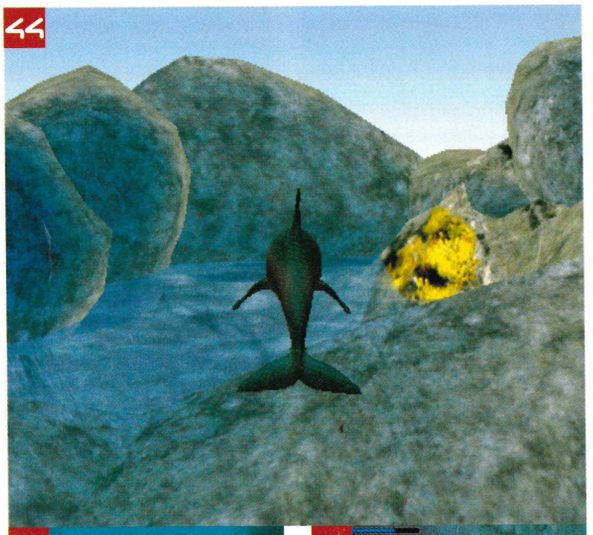








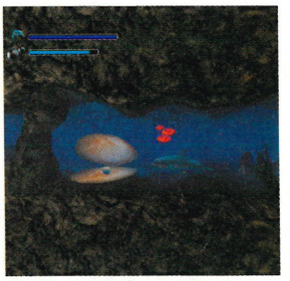












PASSAGE FROM GENESIS

Does this look familiar to you? In a nostalgic look back at the way *Ecco* used to be, the programmers have added a few bonus levels. There's no exit to this stage, and the only reason it's here is to give you the chance to earn a couple more Vitalits. There are two of them in this stage – one in the bottom right of the level, and another where you jump out of the water and over a rock and use the power of sonar to break through to the second.

UP AND DOWN

39 Swim forward and pick up the power of endurance. Now swim around the level until you see the glyph, and speak to it. Look behind the glyph and you'll see a rock. Push it down the hole at the back and swim down after it.

40 Pick up the power of sonar and swim down. You should see a circular shape in the floor, and four tower like objects surrounding it. Use the sonar to light each of the four towers, and the floor opens up. Swim through to get to a secret 2D level (see Passage From Genesis).

41 Once you're back up in this stage, collect the power of sonar again and swim back up to the section where you began. Sonar the rock a couple of times and it'll explode, sending a plume of air upwards.

42 Collect the extra energy and air glyphs, then follow the plume upwards. This is an excellent little section where you must dodge the falling rocks and weave in and out of obstacles. Use your charge to get you past the falling rocks, and look out for three Vitalits on the way up as well, then you'll be at the surface.

43 There's another secret level in this section, and it's easy to find. All you have to do is find five crystals in this top area and take them through the ring in the centre. The fifth one is hidden behind the bamboo-like platform; two are also above the water. If you fall down the waterfall, don't worry, just jump back inside it and you'll be taken up again.

44 Once the gems are found, a rainbow points the way. Jump into the small pool and you'll be taken to another 2D level called The Pathways From Nowhere. This one is a lot bigger, and you must find the five crystals inside here just to reach the second half of the mini-level!

45 Once you've had enough of that, return to the main game and jump back over the waterfall. When at the bottom, speak to the turtle and make it follow you.

46 Swim over to the large manta ray that's near the power of stealth with the turtle in tow. Now hit the turtle so that it drops on to the ray and it'll move out of the way. Underneath should be the power of stealth, so grab it and collect the glyph nearby.

47 Use your new-found power on this mirrored door and you'll be able to pass through and go on to the next stage.

• *That's it for this month. Watch out for the second part of our guide in the next issue of* ODM, *out Thursday 7 September.*

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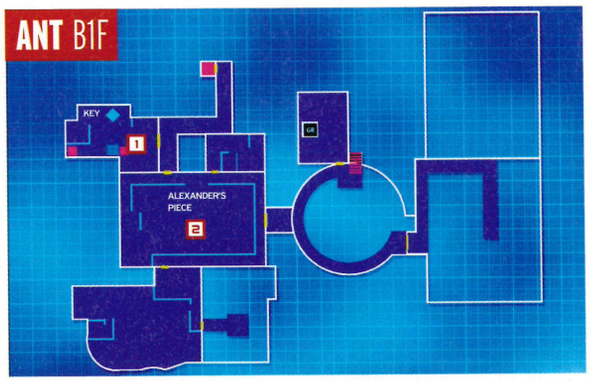
PLAYER GUIDE PART 3

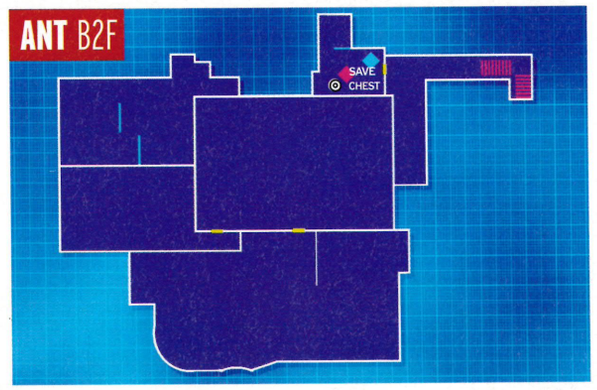
THE END IS VERY, VERY NEAR, AS CHRIS REDFIELD DELVES DEEPER INTO THE MADNESS OF ALFRED AND ALEXIA ASHFORD. **STEVE KEY** IS HERE TO GUIDE YOU THROUGH THE FINAL STAGES AND EXTRAS

KEY FOR MAPS

- GH — GREEN HERB
- RH — RED HERB
- BH — BLUE HERB
- FIRST AID SPRAY
- HB — HANDGUN BULLETS
- GR — GRENADE ROUNDS
- BG — BOW GUN ARROWS
- INK RIBBON
- SAVE — SAVE POINT
- CHEST — STORAGE POINT
- EA — EXPLOSIVE ARROWS
- SS — SHOTGUN SHELLS

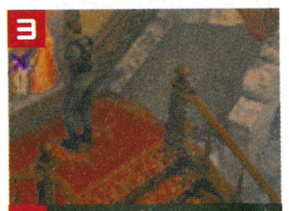








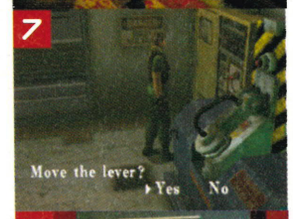


















ANTARCTIC BASE

1 Once you've picked up the octa valve handle from inside the tiger statue, combine it with the valve and take it to this room. Use it on the hole above the pool of water and drop down to the key. Before you pick it up, get ready with the shotgun, because a hunter will burst through just after you pick it up.

2 Return to this frozen room and use the crane key you've just got on the control panel in the hut. This starts the crane, and through the ice comes Nosferatu! However, the black widow that emerges form the hole is your biggest problem. Don't fight it, just make sure you pick up Alexander's piece and get out!

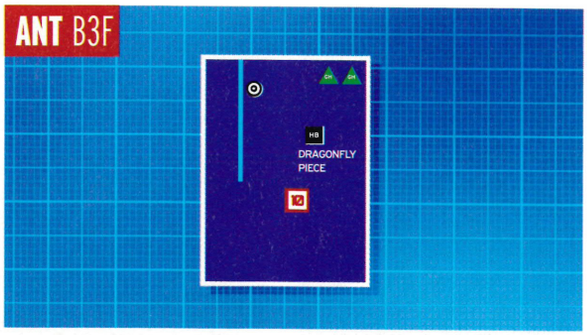
3 Take the three jewels to this room, the main hallway from the old mansion. Climb the stairs, and place the jewels in the painting, which will drop to reveal a door and a new set of rooms.

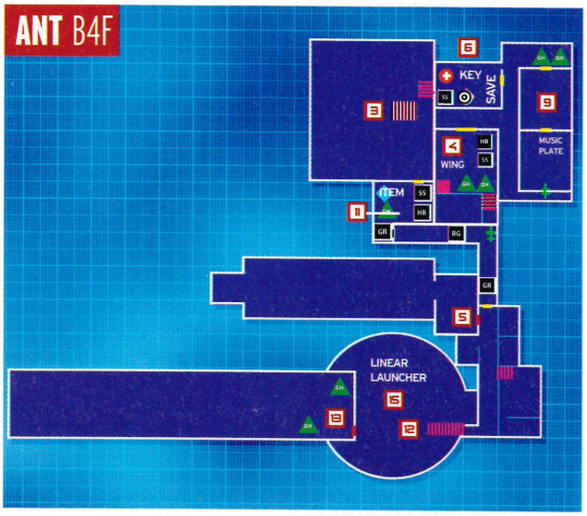
4 Go into this room first. Use the lift and drop down a level, and hit the blue switch on the panel to open the container. Pick up the item inside and you now have all four of the wings.

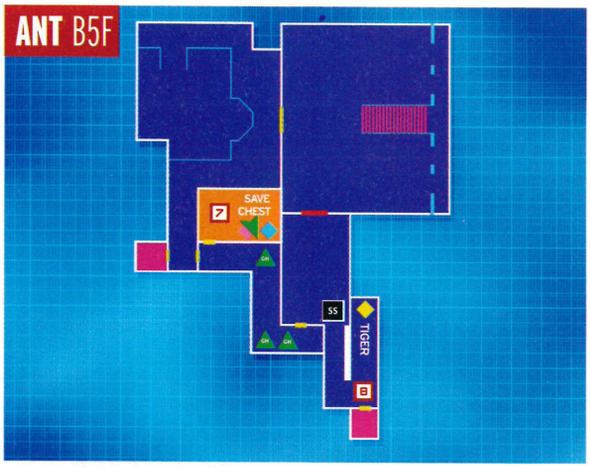
5 Chris hears Claire crying behind the door and tries to bust her out. He can't, but after being informed about the fate of Steve, Chris gets a security file that Claire slides under the door. Check the file, flip it around so that the pages are facing you, and press A. This reveals a security card.

6 You must get the sterile room key from this room. Walk to this position and press A to open the drawer and get it. There's also a first aid spray in the coat hanging up in the corner of the room. The key unlocks the double doors in the main hallway on this floor.

7 Return to this room and turn off the power at the terminal. This is where unlocking the sterile room is vital, because you must travel















back through it to get to the tiger statue. Make sure you have two spare inventory slots too.

8 Because the power is off, the tiger doesn't spin around once you've taken a jewel out, so you can take both of them. Now you must go back through the door that was behind the painting.

9 Stop the music box and put the red jewel in the top. The lid lifts up and you can take the music plate. Now go through the stone door to the other bedroom, and use the blue jewel to lift the second box. Put the plate in and the bed drops. Go up the ladder.

10 Run around the table until you get to the flower pot, and inside that is the dragonfly piece. Combine the wings and you have the complete key. Pick up the two herbs and the handgun bullets if you need them.

11 This save room is very, very handy. Remember that it's easy to get to, and well worth visiting whenever you think some herbs or first aid spray's in order.

12 Put the dragonfly into the slot at the top of this room. Before you go through the door, however, return to the save room. If you've followed our tips, you should stock up on something similar to this: sub-machine gun, shotgun (no ammo), grenade launcher with whatever ammo you have most of, magnum plus one round, three triple herbs or first aid sprays, and the security card.

13 Go through the door you unlocked with the dragonfly, and kill the two zombies with the shotgun. Climb the ladder and use the security card on the terminal. Type 'VERONICA' as your password and the countdown starts. Pick up the herb as well.

14 As Claire faces off against Alexia, hold down the aim button, even though you don't have control. As soon as you do, fire off a shotgun round and you're treated to another cut-scene.

15 Use the grenade rounds from the start. If you run to the far left corner and shoot from there, you'll rarely take damage from the huge tentacle, but the small bugs are a nuisance. The beauty of the grenade launcher is that its range is wide enough so that if you aim at the floor you'll kill the bugs and still get a hit on Alexia.

16 Once you've used them, switch to the magnum and use all the rounds. Switch to the shotgun and use the fourremaining rounds to shoot any bugs and Alexia. If she hasn't mutated after that, the sub-machine guns will finish her off. All the time, keep tabs on your health, as the bugs can do lots of damage.

17 Once you've scored with enough hits, Alexia separates from the huge body and she takes to the skies. Once this happens, pick up the linear launcher from the side of the building. To use it simply hold the R trigger; use the L trigger to zoom in. Don't bother trying to aim directly for Alexia, either side of her is better as she's more likely to fly into the path of the shots. She fires four blood showers at you before flying around for a while, so once the four have hit the deck you then have about 20 seconds to get your shots off before she spits out four more attacks.

18 One shot and Alexia is history, and you can marvel at the end sequence and the newly unlocked Battle mode. But it's not over yet!

BATTLE MODE

This is your reward for finishing the normal game in any time limit, and is a decent challenge if you think you've clocked everything else. You get the choice of first- and third-person views each time you start with a character, so we'll tell you which of the two is better to use. There are also details of how you get an 'A' rank for each character, what's in each room, and many other titbits of information.



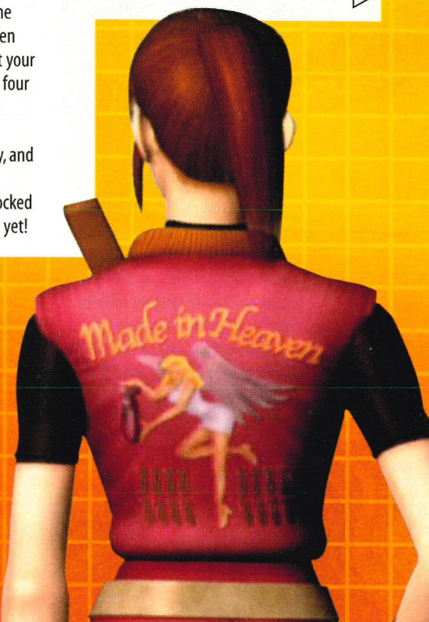
CLAIRE

The best weapon for her by far is the bow gun. It has infinite explosive arrows that kill zombies in one hit, and a tremendous rate of fire. First-person view is good for Claire as you can see where all the enemies are coming from, and if you know where they're located, it's even easier.

TIME	RANK
06.09.99 and lower	A
06.10.00 – 06.19.99	B
06.20.00 – 06.29.99	C
06.30.00 – 06.39.99	D
06.40.00 and above	E

ALTERNATE CLAIRE

To earn the second Claire (who is wearing a rather revealing new outfit) you simply have to finish the Battle mode with Claire. She's got a completely different set of weapons, of which the grenade launcher with flame rounds is the best. Also, playing with the third-person view is better simply because the grenade launcher isn't as accurate to fire.



BATTLE MODE



TIME	RANK
07.59.99 and lower	A
08.00.00 – 08.59.99	B
09.00.00 – 09.59.99	C
10.00.00 – 10.59.99	D
11.00.00 and above	E



CHRIS

No competition in picking Chris's best weapon – it's the magnum with infinite ammo all the way. It kills all zombies, bandersnatchers and hunters with one shot, and is pretty quick with the reload. If two or three zombies are lined up behind each other, you can take them all out with one shot, especially if you're in the first-person mode.

TIME	RANK
06.29.99 and lower	A
06.30.00 – 08.29.99	B
08.30.00 – 09.29.99	C
09.30.00 – 10.29.99	D
10.30.00 and above	E



STEVE

To unlock Steve in the Battle mode you must recover the Luger replica from the draw puzzle in the main game. His two semi-automatics are not to be sniffed at, and Steve causes absolute carnage with his preferred choice of weapons. It doesn't really matter which view you use with Steve, as they're both as effective as each other.

TIME	RANK
09.59.99 and lower	A
10.00.00 – 12.29.99	B
12.30.00 – 13.29.99	C
13.30.00 – 14.29.99	D
14.30.00 and above	E



ALBERT WESKER

Again, Wesker needs unlocking and this is a simple task because all you have to do is finish the battle game with Chris and Wesker is there. But he is definitely the toughest because the only weapon he has is the combat knife! As you can see though, there is no time limit for Wesker, so you can pick up every item and not worry but using the third person view is essential.

TIME	RANK
59.59.99 and lower	A

ROOM BY ROOM GUIDE

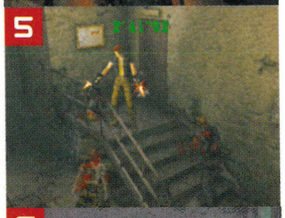
1. Four zombies
2. Six zombies
   Green herb
3. Three bandersnatchers
   First aid spray
4. Four zombies
5. Six zombies
6. Two hunters
   Green herb
7. Two hunters
   Green herb
   Blue herb
8. Four zombies
9. Six zombies
10. Six zombies
11. Four zombies
    First aid Spray
12. Four zombies
    Green Herb
    Blue Herb
13. Green herb
    Blue herb
    Slot machine
14. Hunter
    Sweeper
    First aid spray
15. Seven zombies
16. Four zombies
17. Five zombies
18. Three bndersnatchers
    First aid spray







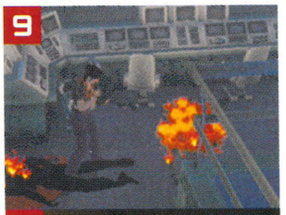
















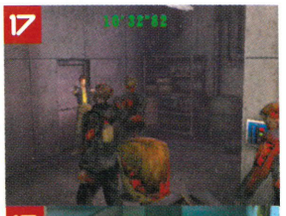


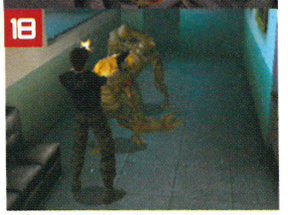








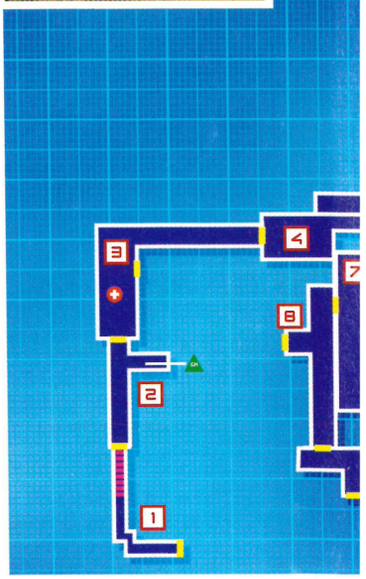




SECRET ROOM

Room 13 on the map is a vital room to visit for two reasons. The first is that it contains some handy herbs if you're not bothered about the time limit, and the second is that if you're controlling Wesker, it holds the magnum that's needed to beat Alexia. Go up to the slot machine with every character and they'll kick it to open a panel. Inside there's a different item for every character – provided they've already seen D.I.J's diary. It's worth reading this diary too, because some cool secrets are revealed in there.





BOSSES

Once you've taken each character through these rooms, each one has a different boss to face. They're all enemies from the main game, so you shouldn't have too much to worry about, but we'll go through them anyway.



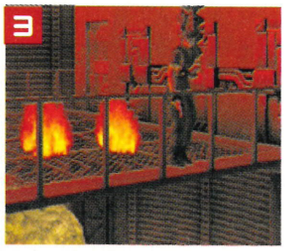
1 CLAIRE: NOSFERATU

If you don't move from in front of the ladder (which is your starting position) it will prevent you from being knocked over the edge, but that's a little risky. Unload as many bow gun rounds into Nosferatu as you can before his poison gas starts to seep around the helipad. Then simply run to the opposite side of the arena and repeat.



2 ALTERNATE CLAIRE: T-078

Again you're on the helipad, but this time it's the T-078 from the back of the plane that you have to battle. Because you have lots of extra room to use, this shouldn't provide you with any problems at all. Every two grenade rounds will have the creature reeling back a short step, so after every eight or so rounds run to the other side of the platform.



3 CHRIS: MUTATED ALEXIA

This is slightly harder for Chris because it's tougher to pick off the little bugs with just the magnum. But run back around to the far left corner and just keep shooting. You can usually kill the bugs before they get too close, so just keep shooting. Once she's flying again, wait until her four attacks have landed, then run right up to her and keep shooting. Repeat this to kill her for good.



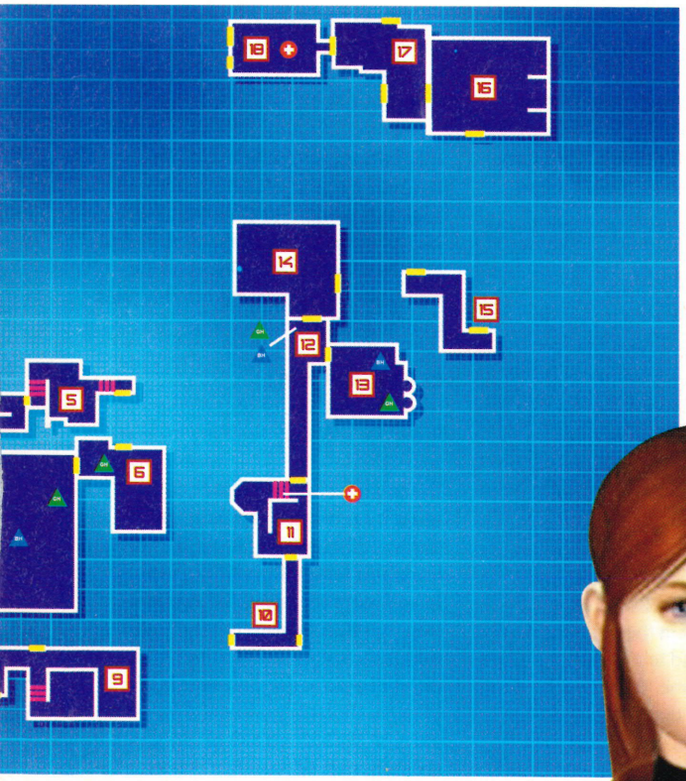
4 STEVE: GULP WORM

Probably the easiest boss of the lot because its attacks are so predictable. The first time it bursts through the floor, spin and unload the machine-guns into it. The second time, it will appear only briefly before ducking under again. The third time, you can shoot it again. Keep repeating this and you'll kill it easily.



5 WESKER: HUMAN ALEXIA

Unless you've picked up the magnum, you may as well forget about this one. Once Alexia has reached the bottom of the stairs, fire as many rounds as you can provided you have a clear shot. If Alexia gets too close you'll die, so simply run to either side and take the shots, but *only* when you're certain they'll hit. Six shots later and she's down.









FUN STUFF

In the Battle mode, the characters also have strange animations that you can make them perform by heading to the relevant room or item and performing the tasks listed below. Note: they must all be done in the third-person mode, and all the enemies in the room must be killed first.

1. As Alternate Claire, walk though this room (don't run!) and she'll begin to feel the cold and start shivering.
2. Have Chris look at the tiger statue and he'll begin to rummage underneath. Don't ask us why, he just does, okay?
3. If that wasn't enough, once Chris gets into the locker room he starts preening himself in the mirror. Get on with it, pal!
4. Steve obviously gets a little thirsty on his travels, and becomes a little miffed when this drinks machine doesn't supply the goods.
5. Wesker becomes strangely intrigued by the human model in this freaky lab. Quite why he does is still a mystery, but it's nice to know anyway.





SECRETS

So what's with all this ranking nonsense, then? Let us explain...

If you finish the battle mode with every character so that they all have an 'A' Rank, then from now on you get the linear launcher to use in the Battle mode. It appears in the characters' inventory from the start.

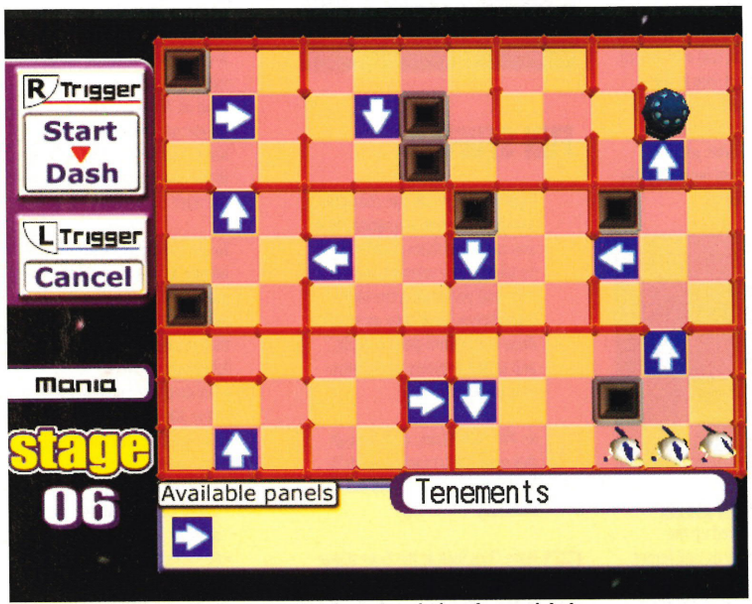
To get the rocket launcher with infinite ammo to use in the main game, you must get an 'A' ranking for the entire adventure. To get that you need to have done the following:

- Finished the game in less than 4hrs 30mins.
- Not used any first aid sprays.
- Not saved your game.
- Not died or re-tried.
- Saved Steve from the Luger trap quickly.
- Returned the medicine to Rodrigo.



HELP!

STUCK ON A LEVEL? BAFFLED BY A PUZZLE? WELL WRITE IN (CONTACT DETAILS BELOW) AND WE'LL TRY SOLVE YOUR GAMING PROBLEMS. **SIMON WATTS** ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS



△ **Stuck on puzzles in *ChuChu Rocket!*? We have the solutions for you right here.**

CHUCHU ROCKET!

I can't seem to work out how to do the final Normal Puzzle in Puzzle mode. How do I get that darn mouse into the rocket? I really am at the end of my tether.

Paul York, via email

The solution to this puzzle is quite simple when you know how. Here are co-ordinates for the squares you should place the tiles on; the first digit is the number of squares across, while the second is the number of squares up. For example, 1:1 would be the top left square. To solve this puzzle, place the Up tile on square 6:5 and the right tile on square 10:8. Level complete!

I' stumped on the Tenements stage of the Mania puzzles.Please tell me what I need to do to finish this puzzle?

Gary Peterson, via email

This is quite a tricky puzzle due to the large number of tiles. Using the same co-ordinate system as above, put down tiles on 5:2, 7:5 and 7:8. Now place the left tiles on 4:5 and 10:5. The up tiles go on 2:4, 2:9, 11:7 and 11:3. The three right tiles must be placed on 2:2, 6:8 and 7:3. Hope this helps.



△ ***Ecco*: the secret of the labour harness.**

ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE

On Atlantis Lost [level 9] I've managed to find four of the Crystal shards, but the Guardian is asking for one more. I've searched the whole area but I still can't find it. Please help! I've spent hours on this level and I'm getting really fed up.

Gavin Childs, Devon

First you must leap through all the rings that the Guardian forms above the main buildings. This unlocks the viewing rooms. Explore them all, then leap over the little wall to enter the main building through its roof. Inside, activate all four globes, which restart the jump rings in the nearby chasm.

Leave the building and swim down here to get the vigour glyph. Now dash through all the jump rings and leap over the tall building to grab the final crystal shard suspended over the roof.

Turn to page 90 for the first part of our level-by-level guide to *Ecco The Dolphin*.

On Shrine of Controversy [level 10], how do you get the labour harness? The game tells you to reunite the clans, but how are you supposed to do that?

Marlon Bishop, via email

First swim down until you meet the young dolphin who wants to race, and chase it through the tunnels. After you've beaten it you must fight its mother – just charge her until she gives up. Meet the mother near the top and she'll follow you to the temple.

To get another clan member, go and talk to the nearby dolphin swimming in circles, then swim down to the bottom and locate a leaking pipe. Close it by rotating the handle with your nose, then return to the dolphin. For the last one, follow the tunnel opposite the ones you raced through and get sprayed with the red dye.

Now go and talk to the dolphin that's complaining about losing a sacred mark and he'll follow you to the temple. These three dolphins give you access to the harness.



△ ***Code: Veronica*: we have the Battle tactics.**

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA

I've just taken off in the sea plane on disc one, and have had to go and fight Tyrant for the second time. I can't beat him! The main problem is that I only have a few handgun bullets and two explosive crossbow bolts. Can I still defeat him?

Colin Redahan, via email

It certainly is! It's just slightly harder. You'll find things a lot easier if you have a few healing items. First run around until the eject mechanism is ready. Now run close to the rear of the plane and wait for Tyrant – hold the run button while doing this.

When he performs the large downwards claw attack, run out of the way and straight to the lever, and pull it to launch the crate at him. If he's close to the exit of the plane he'll be pushed out; if he's too far in he'll stop the crate in time, so you'll have to try this again.

Eventually you'll get it just right, and see him go flying into the distance – without having wasted a single shot on him.

Turn to page 96 for the third and final part of our complete walkthrough.



△ ***Soul Reaver*: what's the point of the city?**

SOUL REAVER: LEGACY OF KAIN

I found a human city by jumping to a new ledge from the waterfall area. Is there any point to this new area?

Thomas Follin, London

This is where you find the Water Glyph. Jump into the moat and use your force projectiles to break the grate here. Head past the statue to find a large block. Push it over the waterfall and back towards the statue, place it in the ground here and you'll get the new Glyph.

EVOLUTION

How do I beat the Ice boss on the Sheol Ruins? He keeps on thrashing my team!

Lee Jones, via email

This boss is very difficult to beat, as the attack it does when it flaps its wings increases all its defence ratings. The middle row of your team will get hit by a confusion spray if you're not careful. Use a defence-reducing attack regularly to keep it vulnerable, and just keep hitting it with everything you've got. The bosses in this game are affected by the level of Mag; if he's powerful, the boss will also be very strong. If necessary, train up your other characters for an unfair advantage.

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

CAN'T QUITE FINISH A DREAMCAST GAME? WANT TO GET A LITTLE BIT MORE OUT OF IT BY UNLOCKING HIDDEN EXTRAS? THEN THIS IS THE PAGE YOU NEED, YOU LITTLE CHEAT YOU.



△ *NHL 2K:* **Why are game developers obsessed with big head modes, eh?**

NHL 2K

Big head mode

When the Black Box screen appears, hold both triggers and press B,A,B,Y on pad four to give players huge heads.

Black Box Team

To unlock the Black Box super-team, hold both triggers at the Black Box screen and press B, B, X.

DRAGONS BLOOD

Level Select

On the PRESS START screen, type XYYXXYYX. Now go to the options menu and type XYA at the same time for the level select. Easy.



△ **Unlock the Nightopians and the Sonic chaos in *ChuChu Rocket!***

CHUCHU ROCKET!

Replace mice with chaos

To change all the chuchus (mice) into chaos from *Sonic Adventure,* you must finish all the Stage Challenge levels, then highlight the first question mark in the options menu and press A.

Replace mice with nightopians

To turn them all into Pians from Sega's Saturn classic *NiGHTS*, you must finish Puzzle mode on all four levels, then highlight the second question mark in the options menu and press A.

WACKY RACES

To enter these cheats you need to start a new game or continue one of your old ones , then crash into the sign in the middle of the field. This gives you access to the cheats menu, where you can enter the following codes and toggle the cheats on and off.

All abilities

To select any of a character's abilities without having earned them in the main game, type the code BARGAINBASEMENT then turn the cheat on.

Hard mode

As if the game isn't difficult enough already, there's a super-tough mode. To access it, type in CRACKEDNAILS at the enter code screen.

RED DOG

Extras for completing levels on Normal with an A grade

LEVEL	EXTRA M'PLAYER LEVEL
Volcano	Black ice
Ice	Ganymede
Canyon	Acid jump
Hydro	Medieval mayhem
City	Industrial zone
Alien	Virtuam

Extras for Hard levels with A grade

LEVEL	EXTRA
Volcano	Assistance bot
Ice	Permanent boost
Canyon	Infinite shield
Hydro	Trippy trails
City	Assistance bot
Alien	Permanent charge

Extras obtained for finishing the challenges in the given times

	REQUIRED	EXTRA
1	Under 1.10	Infinite bombs
2	Under 2.15	Infinite Vulcan
3	100% health	Infinite homing
4	20 secs left	Infinite rocket
5	Under 2.40	Infinite swarm
6	Under 2.40	Infin. power laser
7	Under 1.30	Infinite electro



△ **Play as Akuma and unlock the hidden options easily in *SF3: Double Impact*.**

STREET FIGHTER 3: DOUBLE IMPACT

Unlock Options

Instead of having to finish the arcade mode with no continues, you can just enter the following to unlock the hidden options menu.

1. At the Mode Selection screen, hold L and R and enter the options screen.
2. Highlight Game Option and press Left, Left, X, X, Right, Right.
3. Move the cursor to Button Config and press Left, Left, Y, Y, Right, Right.
4. Highlight Screen Adjust and hit Left, Left, X, Y, Right, Right.
5. Move the cursor to Sound and press Left, Left, Y, X, Right, Right.

Play as Akuma and Shin Akuma

Highlight Sean, then move the cursor up before pressing a button to select Akuma. To play as Shin Akuma, hold Start while highlighting Akuma, and press a button.



△ *Zombie Revenge*: **give Stick Breitling and gang new costumes.**

ZOMBIE REVENGE

Alternate costume

To play in a new costume such as Linda's nurse uniform, hold Start when selecting your character.

Level select in Fighting mode

If you hold Start while choosing a character, a new menu comes up enabling you to select where you fight.

Free Play and blood colours

If you finish Original mode on all three game settings you unlock Free Play in Arcade mode. If you finish the arcade, then you'll be able to change the blood character.

All cheats the easy way

If you follow the link in the main menu to the *Zombie Revenge* website, you can download VM files which give you infinite continues in both modes, and also invulnerability and a level select in Original mode.

Hidden costume

To get a hidden character costume colour you must press light kick and hard punch simultaneously when choosing your character.



△ *Sword Of The Berserk*: **play in No Limit mode with infinite items and ammo.**

SWORD OF THE BERSERK: GUT'S RAGE

Mini-game

To unlock the Pak mini-game you must finish the game on Very Easy. You now get to play as Pak and defend Gatsu's Bag from attack.

Battle Arena

The Battle Arena mode has you fighting all the bosses from the game, and groups of enemies against the clock. To get this you need to complete the game on Easy.

Picture gallery

To see some new pictures of characters in the game, you must finish the game on Normal.

No Limit mode, and level select

The No Limit mode gives you infinite items and ammo. The level select enables you to pick any chapter to start playing from. Finish the game on Hard to unlock these extras.

KNOW SOME GOOD CHEATS?

Well don't keep them all to yourself – send them in to help other gamers out and to show off your greatness. Send your Tips to: Tips, *Official Dreamcast Magazine*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Alternatively, email them to us at tips@dreamcastmag.co.uk. Thanks this issue to Daniel Plantin, Aryud Worra, Mike J, Ryan Jones, Tom Imgram, Tasmin Hossain, Dominic Holmes, Shaun Locker, Stephen Hills and countless others. Sorry we don't have room to list everybody.

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...

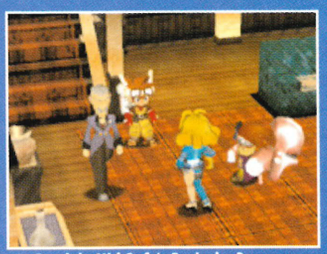
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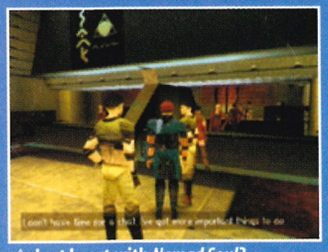
OPEN SEVEN DAYS A WEEK, 8AM-11PM
On the rare occasion that they can't help, your query will be passed on to a support team who guarantee to find you an answer within 24 hours.



△ Get that sinking feeling with *Ecco?*



△ Stuck in Ubi Soft's *Evolution?*

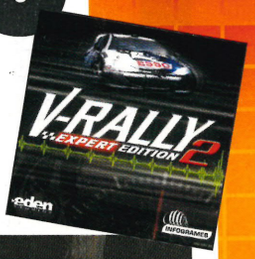


△ Lost heart with *Nomad Soul?*

• *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 0870 800 6155 (UK); +44 870 800 6155 (Eire).*

CHALLENGES

WANT TO BE A VIDEOGAME LEGEND? THINK YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO COME TOP IN OUR CHALLENGES? THEN PROVE IT, AND WIN A GAME FOR YOUR TROUBLE

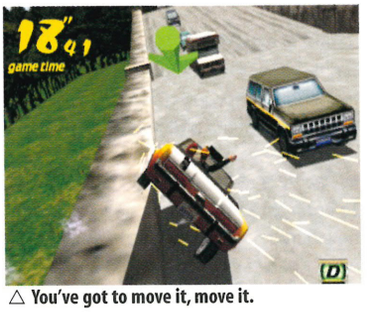


THIS MONTH

The sender of the top entry for each of this month's challenges will win a copy of top notch racer *V-Rally 2 Expert Edition*, courtesy of Infogrames



△ Learning the short cuts is a key factor.



△ You've got to move it, move it.



△ Gentlemen, choose your weapons.

4 WHEEL THUNDER

Outdoor, Far West level, fastest lap time

The Boost items are vital to your success in this challenge. Take the time to find the quickest route around the track, and make use of all of the short cuts if you want to win.

CRAZY TAXI

Crazy Parking, fastest time, any character

Use the Crazy Drift to corner quickly, but you've got to make sure that you cancel quickly so that you don't end up hitting the walls. Send us a photograph showing your fastest time to be in with a chance of winning.

ZOMBIE REVENGE

VS Boss mode, Zed, fastest completion time

Pound Zed into submission using whatever weapons you have at your disposal. Remember to attack even when getting up. Take a picture of the high scores table.

RESULTS

Did you enter a contest in our June issue (*ODM* #8)? Well here's a list of the top ten entries for each of the challenges in that issue. Congratulations to the winners, who each win a copy of *The Nomad Soul* thanks to the nice people at Eidos.

CRAZY TAXI
Original mode, most money earned in five minutes

1.	**18,84.25**	**SHAUN LOCKER, NORTH'LAND**
2.	15,547.28	HUGH PRITCHARD, LEEDS
3.	12,492.92	JOE KNAPP, ROMFORD
4.	10,381.26	STEVE WICKS, LONDON
5.	8,049.00	ROBERT SMITH, BRIGHTON
6.	7,457.75	ADRIAN BLATCH, DURHAM
7.	6,789.77	DEAN TALLON, CORNWALL
8.	6,657.77	ADAM DAVIS, BOURNEMOUTH
9.	5,289.85	JESSIE DALE, ESSEX
10.	4,482.71	PETER WHYTE, MIDDLESEX

SOUL CALIBUR
Extra Survival mode, most wins, any character

1.	**73**	**STEPHEN HILLS, LEEDS**
2.	70	PHIL BAILSTOW, LONDON
3.	65	BEN BLACKNER, BEDS
4.	62	TONY PAYNE, LONDON
5.	51	CHRIS SHIPLEY, NOTTINGHAM
6.	48	MITESH SINGH, MANCHESTER
7.	45	DAVID WILLIAMS, CARMS.
8.	40	RICHARD WOOLFREY, HERTS
9.	33	DAVID GEE, CHESTER
10.	31	ANDREW LAWSON, RICHMOND

RE-VOLT
Museum stage 2, fastest time, any car

1.	**0:44:834**	**A NEWTON, SURREY**
2.	0:46:735	GREG WATSON, LONDON
3.	0:49:137	CHRIS LORD, WALES
4.	0:50:579	MARK LEE, LONDON
5.	0:54:617	PETER HICKS, LEEDS
6.	0:55:771	DARREN HOTES, BATH
7.	0:58:821	OLIVER CLARK, CAMBRIDGE
8.	0:59:113	STEVE LINCHFORD, LEICESTER
9.	1:01:792	JAMIE FOSKETT, SURREY
10.	1:03:165	GEORGE LAURELSON, WALES

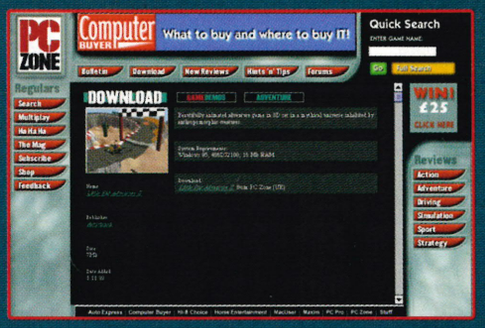
HOW DO YOU ENTER?

Play the challenge with your 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 before you do). Now 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 videos or VM units to confirm your scores. The items will not be returned and you will not be included in the competition. Also, *ODM* regrets that we cannot return photos sent in. The closing date for the above challenges is Thursday 7 September.

PC ZONE



Reviews and ratings for 100s of top games



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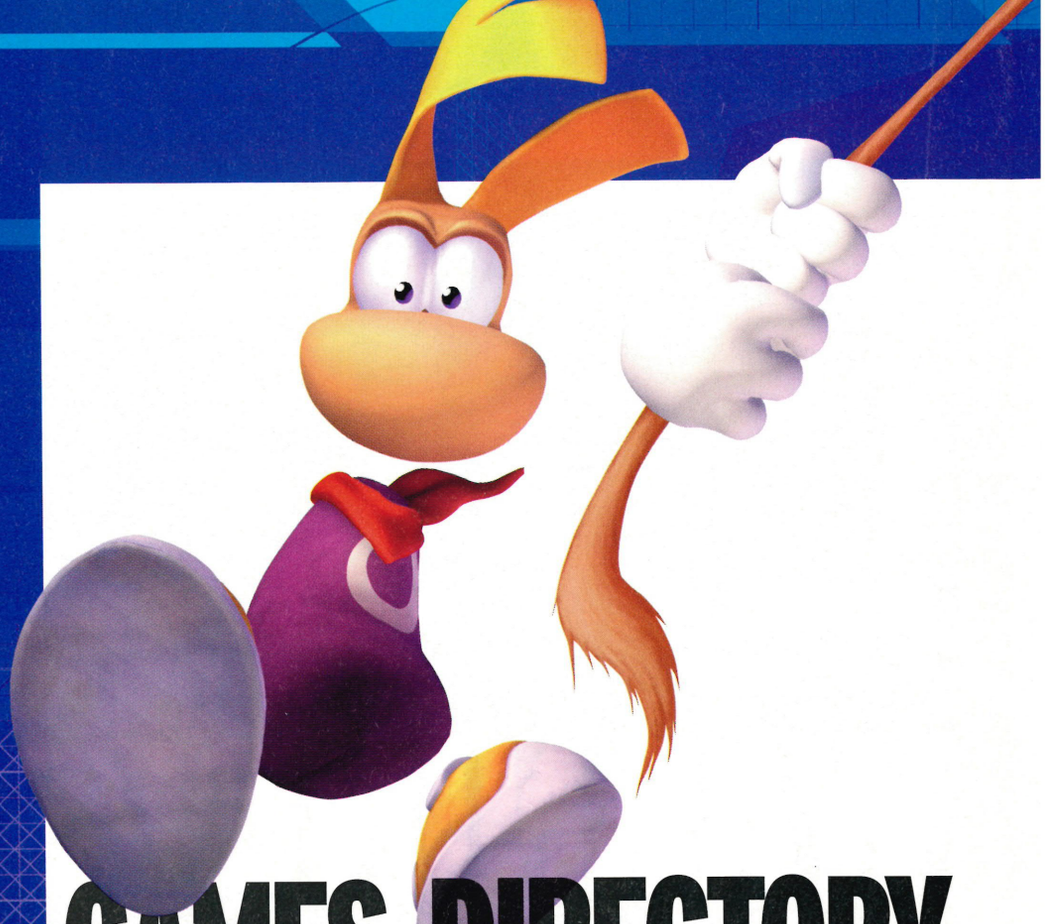
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Health Warning: The PC Zone web-site can feed your addiction to games

Dreamcast™

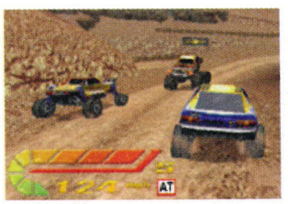
OWNER'S GUIDE

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WEBSITE REVIEWS p114



GAMES DIRECTORY

THE LOT. A SUMMARY OF EVERY DREAMCAST GAME REVIEWED IN *ODM*



4 WHEEL THUNDER
MIDWAY • ISSUE #8 • 8/10
Race monster trucks and dune buggies around long outdoor courses and indoor arena tracks. Collect cash bonuses as you go to upgrade your mud plugger, and grab nitro boosts to help outrun the competition. Excellent handling, and great graphics with no pop-up make this one of the best DC racers so far.



AEROWINGS
CRAVE • ISSUE #1 • 6/10
Show off your aerobatics skills in *Aerowings*, a pacifist's flight sim that concentrates on how well you fly rather than what you shoot. Learning to fly in formation is unique for a videogame, and you can save replays of your best performances to VM. Pretty graphics, but sadly the gameplay is pretty vacant.



BLUE STINGER
ACTIVISION • ISSUE #0 • 7/10
Playing as Elliot Ballade or his sailor friend Dogs, you must rid a mysterious island of freaky mutants by shooting them in the face, solving the occasional puzzle along the way. Looks swanky, but dodgy controls, rubbish camera system and badly paced story mean you're better off with *Code: Veronica*.



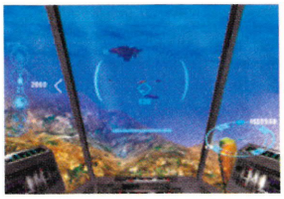
BUGGY HEAT
SEGA • ISSUE #2 • 4/10
Dreamcast's other off-road monster truck/dune buggy racer. Race around reasonably well-designed courses. Bonkers internal view features an inset look at your steering and gear changing antics. One of the first games with online features, but *4 Wheel Thunder* makes *Buggy Heat* redundant.



BUST-A-MOVE 4
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #9 • 7/10
Fiendishly simple: clear your quota of bubbles by firing ones of the same colour up the screen to group at least three together, making them disappear. Play in puzzle mode, against the computer or a friend. Looks basic, but the secret addictive ingredient is enough to make you play it non-stop for hours.



DEADLY SKIES
KONAMI • ISSUE #4 • 5/10
A violence-oriented flight sim that puts you at the controls of a number of exotic jet fighters. The twist is that you're out to earn money, and if you trash a plane you must pay for a new one. Fast moving, detailed graphics and simple controls, but a lack of imagination leaves the playing experience a little cold.



DEEP FIGHTER
UBI SOFT • ISSUE #10 • 6/10
A mission-based shoot 'em up set underwater. Your sub is heavily armed, and comes with a variety of appendages useful for manipulating important objects. The storyline keeps you involved, and patrolling the oceans makes for an original experience. Interesting ideas, but not very interesting execution.



ECW HARDCORE REVOLUTION
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #7 • 3/10
ECW isn't the most well-known of grappling leagues, and basing the game on the dodgy *WWF Attitude* engine wasn't too smart. As usual you can create your own mutant wrestlers, and there are tons of play options, but the controls are unresponsive and gameplay is tedious.



FIGHTING FORCE 2
EIDOS • ISSUE #4 • 3/10
You are hard-as-nails Hawk Mason, a one-man army out to save the world from the evil Nakamichi corporation. The action moves around the world, and there are plenty of guns and explosions, but the drab, 'tarted-up PlayStation' graphics and dull, linear gameplay make this one to leave on the shelf.



FUR FIGHTERS
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #9 • 7/10
Six cartoon killers set out to rescue their stolen children in this massive action adventure. Looks like a cute platform game, but plays like a rock-hard shoot 'em up. Intermittent puzzles keep you on your toes. Funny, nice to look at and easy to get into, but the puzzling and shooting don't quite fit together properly.



DRAGONS BLOOD
VIRGIN • ISSUE #10 • 6/10
Another fantasy-themed action game, this time starring a chap with a really big sword who's out to decapitate as many monsters as possible. A little more wit than most games of this type – creatures you fight have personalities – but playing it is an unengaging experience. Not the greatest looker on Dreamcast.



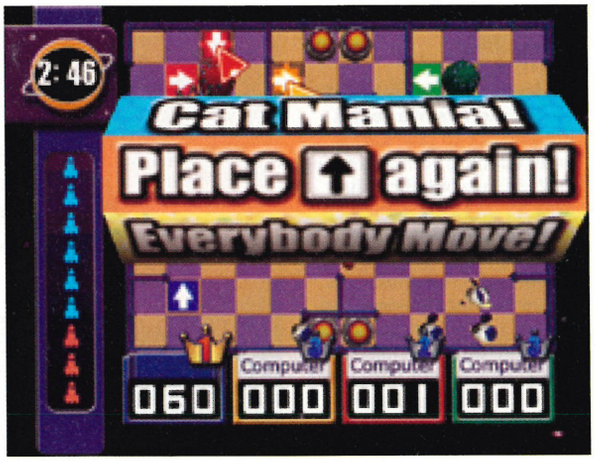
EVOLUTION
UBI SOFT • ISSUE #3 • 8/10
One of the first role-playing games on Dreamcast. *Evolution* will keep genre fans happy as well as entertain novices, because it combines a great storyline with a simple, intuitive interface. Cutesy graphics, but the underlying challenge will keep anyone busy for a good while.



DYNAMITE COP
SEGA • ISSUE #2 • 5/10
Kick, punch, throw, shoot and bludgeon your way through a terrorist-infested cruise liner with the aim of saving the President's daughter. Most of the scenery can be picked up and chucked or used as a weapon, and there are amusing set pieces. Just a shame it's slow, not very thrilling to play and over far too quickly.



F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX FOR DC
SEGA • ISSUE #2 • 8/10
A serious driving sim with gorgeous graphics and all the features you can eat. Real drivers, real teams and real courses are all in, plus a solid split-screen option. The only real downer is that it simulates the 1998 season, which is now no use to anyone. A sequel is due soon.



CHUCHU ROCKET!
SEGA • ISSUE #9 • 9/10
The first online game for Dreamcast, and free to boot! Guide as many mice as possible into your rocket while avoiding the cats, playing either single-player puzzles, or against others locally or online around Europe. The simple graphics are not without charm – remember that this is from the people behind *Sonic Adventure*. Online there's a delay between pressing a button and the corresponding action, which can get really irritating, but the sheer strength of gameplay shines through. A bargain even if you had to pay for it.

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 CR2032 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*.

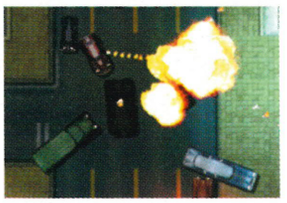
WHICH DC TITLES INCLUDE VM MINI-GAMES?
Try the likes of *Sonic Adventure*, *Trickstyle*, *Power Stone*, *Zombie Revenge* and *Tech Romancer*. *Sega Rally 2* also has a high-score browser, which is a game in theory but isn't actually very entertaining.

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 (er, hopefully). 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



GAUNTLET LEGENDS
MIDWAY • ISSUE #10 • 4/10
A long-awaited 3D update for the top-down, dungeon-based classic. Up to four players can take on the evil hordes of Skorn, and there are head-stomping battles, massive dragon bosses and fairly shambolic graphics along the way. Repetitive and frustrating to play, and generally not worth your money.



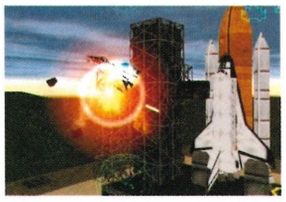
GTA 2
TAKE TWO • ISSUE #8 • 7/10
Steal a car and cause trouble on the streets of an anonymous near-future city. You're free to do pretty much whatever you want as long as you carry out your missions, but most problems can be solved with extreme violence. Not as 'controversial' as the original, but worth a look for the sheer amount of car carnage.



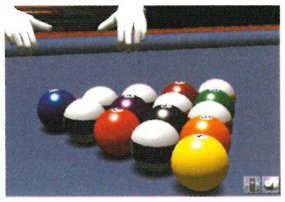
CRAZY TAXI
SEGA • ISSUE #5 • 9/10
You're a cabbie in a virtual city, taking passengers where they want to go as fast as possible. Fares are graded by distance, and there are definite routes through the city to learn. There are clever gameplay bonuses based on scaring passengers and driving like a loon, and the DC version adds a whole extra city and challenges over the arcade original. A gorgeous-looking, classic Sega 'score attack' game. You'll never stop playing it.



HYDRO THUNDER
MIDWAY • ISSUE #1 • 6/10
A refreshing change from conventional driving games. You race powerboats, so the action is fast and furious, and there are power-ups to collect and short cuts to discover. Has some nice touches, but the whole experience doesn't really come together as well as it could or should. Worth renting, at least.



INCOMING
RAGE • ISSUE #1 • 6/10
Gorgeous-looking shoot 'em up that boils the genre down to the basics: shoot the bad guys and try not to hit the good guys. Fighters and tanks are among the military hardware on offer. Gameplay soon becomes repetitive and uninvolving, despite the looks. Disengage your brain before you play.



JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL
VIRGIN • ISSUE #1 • 7/10
You have a choice of snooker and various versions of pool, with darts and old arcade games thrown in as a bonus. It's well-designed, with an intuitive interface and astoundingly realistic ball motion. Jimmy White is here in name only; the actual playing experience is fairly anonymous.



JO JO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE
VIRGIN • ISSUE #7 • 5/10
Certainly one of the weirdest fighting games we've ever seen, and as Japanese as they come, registering way off the end of the 'crazy biscuits' scale. The flat fighting action is frenetic, and there are some fantastic attacks which need finger mangling combos to pull off. One for committed fighting game fans only.



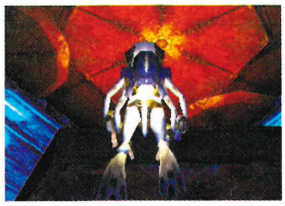
LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER
EIDOS • ISSUE #6 • 7/10
Playing as undead dude Raziel, you're faced with a massive quest through the physical and spiritual planes. Sharp graphics, cool special effects and some massive levels. The real-time shifting between dimensions is particularly nice. A lot to do, but the rewards are there as long as you have the patience.



MARVEL VS CAPCOM
VIRGIN • ISSUE #2 • 5/10
It's games versus comics in a 2D tag team battle royale to the death. Loads of recognisable heroes, loads of flashy special moves, loads of cartoon carnage, frantic but easy-to-learn gameplay. What more could you ask for? It will have its fans, but the much calmer *Street Fighter Alpha 3* is a better bet for most.



MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2
VIRGIN • ISSUE #10 • 7/10
Fifty-six Marvel and Capcom heroes face off in one of the most over-the-top fighting games ever. Special moves are easy, and screen-filling pyrotechnics are common. Familiar characters and smart backgrounds give *MVC 2* a bit of new-fangled gloss. Overwhelming to play at first, but fight fans will soon work it out.



MDK 2
VIRGIN • ISSUE #7 • 6/10
Inventive action adventure that combines shooting, role-playing and puzzle elements with three unique main characters. Looks great, and some of the locations are really, really strange. It's involving too, with loads of alien baddies to blast. A massive adventure, but the intense difficulty level can be off-putting.

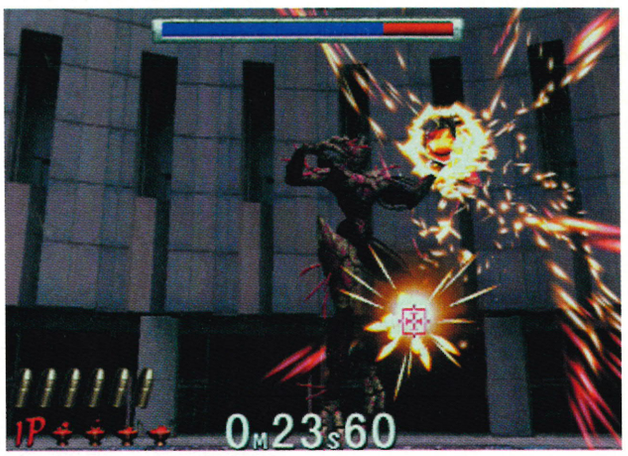


MIDWAY'S GREATEST HITS VOL 1
MIDWAY • ISSUE #10 • 3/10
Loads of classic old games on one disc, the highlights here being *Defender*, *Joust!* and *Robotron*. The emulation is perfect, but the jarring colours and tiny pixels can make the action hard to make out. A wealth of archive material for retro fans, but this package was doing the rounds with the last generation of consoles.

ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE
SEGA • ISSUE #9 • 9/10
Underwater odyssey based on the exploits of a young dolphin out to save Earth. After learning your swimming skills in the chilled-out first area it's on to more than 20 levels of hardcore dolphin action. The plot tells of trouble with timelines, and it's up to Ecco to restore the true course of history. Looks amazing, sounds brilliant and plays like a dream, with loads of mind-bending puzzles. Possibly a bit too tranquil.



HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2
SEGA • ISSUE #1 • 9/10
Grab your light-gun and take out the rampaging zombie hordes before they trash an entire city. The way you play affects your route through the game, so you need to keep your finger on the trigger and an eye on your ammo. Get a second gun for two-player games, or John Woo action on your own. Set in a beautifully realised Italian-style city, and with a thrill at every turn, this is a Dreamcast must-have, although replay value is limited.

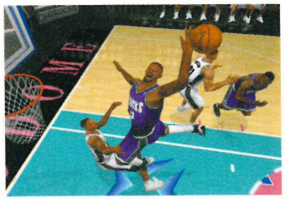




MILLENNIUM SOLDIER: EXPENDABLE

RAGE • ISSUE #0 • 7/10

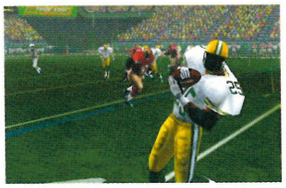
A mindless shoot 'em up inspired by crusty classics like *Commando* and *Ikari Warriors*. It's an old idea, but the graphics are suitably updated and the game is easy to pick up and play. But its simple nature is also its downfall, with nothing of substance here to keep you interested.



NBA 2K

SEGA • ISSUE #5 • 8/10

One of the finest-looking sports games you'll ever see. More details and statistics than you'll ever need, but the game itself plays like a dream. Gorgeous graphics, and matches flow like the real thing. Basketball may have limited appeal in the UK, but *NBA 2K* is worth checking out to see how sports games should be done.



NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB 2000

ACCLAIM • ISSUE #2 • 5/10

NFL Quarterback Club used to play a great game of Yank footie, but this first DC version has gone wrong somewhere. Graphics aren't great, and the control system is sluggish. Comprehensive stats and options, but who cares? Average football games don't sell, so what chance average American football games?



NHL 2K

SEGA • ISSUE #9 • 7/10

Finally out in the UK, *NHL 2K* follows in the footsteps of *NBA 2K*. And doesn't disappoint. It looks superb, and gameplay is smooth and fast-moving. Multiplayer modes are excellent, but not enough is done to attract new fans to the sport. Plus the goalies are impossible to beat! It will please hockey fans though.



MONACO GRAND PRIX RACING SIMULATION

UBI SOFT • ISSUE #1 • 6/10

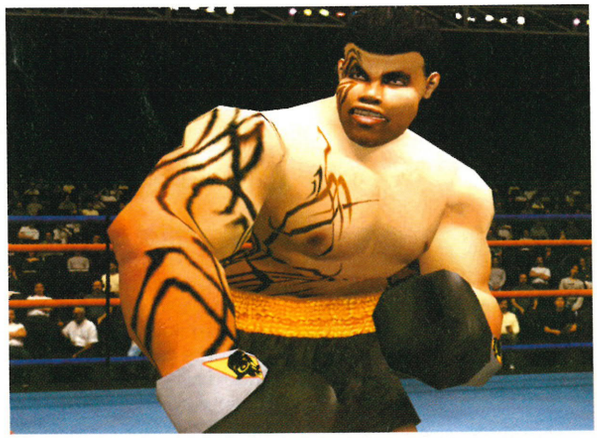
A reasonably accurate F1 simulation, hampered by the lack of an official licence – meaning no real driver or team names – and slightly basic graphics. That said, it plays well enough, and there are the usual car tuning options, but overall *F1 World Grand Prix* is a better option.



NBA SHOWTIME: NBA ON NBC

MIDWAY • ISSUE #2 • 6/10

The basketball counterpart to *NFL Blitz*. The real rule book is thrown out in favour of fast and furious gameplay, pared down to the bare minimum. Doesn't look as good as the superlative *NBA 2K*, but with three friends this is loads of fun. Long-term appeal is limited, but it's fun for the occasional spare ten minutes.



READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING

MIDWAY • ISSUE #1 • 9/10

Most boxing games rely on realism, making them accurate but dull as dishwater. *Ready 2 Rumble* takes the opposite approach, and brings in cartoon boxers, over-the-top special moves, and the insane, super-charged Rumble mode that will have your opponent bleeding on the canvas in seconds. Controls are fluid and easy to pick up, and there are no statistics to worry about – this game is all about hitting. Remarkably, this is a boxing game that's actually fun to play. It's among the best multiplayer games around, and still one of Dreamcast's highlights.



MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD

MIDWAY • ISSUE #1 • 5/10

The greatest hits of *Mortal Kombat*, with most characters from the series, with gallons of blood and guts. Despite being in 3D it looks a little shaky, and gameplay isn't a patch on more modern fighters. The Mortal Kombat games went a bit wrong some time ago, and this does nothing to repair their reputation.



NFL BLITZ 2000

MIDWAY • ISSUE #1 • 7/10

American football, and not taken at all seriously. All the better for it too, because it has simpler rules, fewer players on the pitch, and ridiculous flaming ball power-ups. Violence is also acceptable without penalty. Originally an arcade game, so it is hampered by a lack of depth, but this is chaotic fun and great with four players.

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 has partial support for Javascript as well as Macromedia Flash (version 3). Version 2 of DreamKey should offer more advanced multimedia capabilities.

WHEN WILL VERSION 2 OF DREAMKEY BE RELEASED?
Real soon. Watch out for a full preview next issue.

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 in the UK 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?
Not officially. There is a work around but, as many have you have found, it's very unreliable. Sega assure us that you'll be able to write emails offline with version 2 of DreamKey.

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 sites like Hotmail.

HOW DO I SWITCH OFF THE PARENTAL LOCK?
Log on, press the left trigger and select Option from the menu. Now select Modem, followed by AT Setup. Choose Delete Memory, and select Yes to confirm. Now switch off your Dreamcast as instructed. Switch the machine back on. Enter your personal details and you'll be taken to a new screen where you can choose a user name and password. At the bottom you're asked if you wish to turn off the Internet filter. Check the box and continue. Note: you can only do this if you are over 18.

CAN I ACCESS NEWSGROUPS ON DREAMCAST?
Yes, via sites like www.remarq.com and www.deja.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?
ChuChu Rocket! is currently the only Dreamcast game that can be played against others online. There are many more due to follow though, including *Quake III Arena*, *Black & White* and *Phantasy Star Online*.

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 A US OR JAPANESE DC ONLINE IN THE UK?
Yes, but only to surf the Web. You won't be able to play on Sega's European gaming network.

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



PEN PEN
INFOGRAMES • ISSUE #2 • 6/10
Cute, wacky penguin-based characters compete over a combination of running , swimming and tobogganing events. Easy on your own, but slightly more appealing with three others. Bonus items increase replay appeal very slightly, but it's slow to play and not very engaging. Possibly worth a go in four-player.



POWER STONE
EIDOS • ISSUE #1 • 8/10
A lunatic fighting game with complete 3D freedom of movement. Appealing characters, insane combo attack, well-designed fighting arenas, and loads of weapons and other power-ups. Power Stone is colourful, fast, clever and great in two-player mode. A sequel is due out soon.



PSYCHIC FORCE 2012
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #2 • 7/10
An inventive 3D fighting game that takes place in mid-air, with massively powerful characters flinging psychic attacks at each other. Quality visuals, and the animé-style heroes have the obligatory big hair and enormous fireballs. Plenty of gameplay depth, but *Psychic Force 2012* has the whiff of the obscure about it.



RAYMAN 2: THE GREAT ESCAPE
UBI SOFT • ISSUE #6 • 8/10
Not the most endearing game character, but *Rayman 2* is nevertheless a classy platform adventure. Well thought out controls, excellent level design, some stunning set pieces, and even an entertaining plot. Possibly even more universally appealing than *Sonic* because the pace is calmer.



RED DOG
SEGA • ISSUE #5 • 5/10
A futuristic shoot 'em up that puts you at the controls of the titular Red Dog, a versatile and heavily armed tank. Graphics are sharp and detailed, and the multiplayer options are great, especially with four people. On the downside, the high difficulty level can be frustrating, spoiling the overall experience.



RESIDENT EVIL 2
VIRGIN • ISSUE #4 • 7/10
Classic survival horror hits Dreamcast. Playing as Claire or Leon, it's up to you to rid Raccoon City of a zombie infestation. As well as the shooting, puzzles need to be solved, and limited ammo adds to the tense atmosphere. A straight port of the PlayStation version, so slightly pointless now that *RE: Code Veronica* is out.



RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA
EIDOS • ISSUE #8 • 9/10
A brand-new installment of the brilliant *Resident Evil* series, and available only on Dreamcast. Looks far better than any of the previous versions thanks to the gorgeous, fully 3D graphics and special effects. It's tough as well – you'll run out of ammo every five minutes – but the storyline, atmosphere and ultra-violence will keep you playing through the night – possibly from behind the sofa.



RE-VOLT
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #3 • 7/10
Race remote-controlled toy cars around larger-than-life locations. Crisp graphics, inventive tracks and fast, power-up grabbing gameplay mean you'll be impressed initially, but sadly a lack of depth means that the novelty soon wears off. Multiplayer modes are worth checking out, though.



SEGA BASS FISHING
SEGA • ISSUE #1 • 7/10
The kind of oddball but appealing game that Sega excel at. Fishing rod controller in hand, it's your job to catch the biggest fish you can find, within a strict time limit. Looks gorgeous, but you'll only get a couple of weeks of play before the attraction wears off. Still, it's the ultimate game to bring out at parties.



SEGA RALLY 2
SEGA • ISSUE #1 • 8/10
Sega Rally is an all-time arcade classic, and nearly all the magic is brought home in this DC conversion. More cars and tracks have been added, but the real appeal is the car handling, which is tuned to near-perfection on Dreamcast's analog pad. There's more depth in *V-Rally 2*, but this *SR2* comes top in terms of gameplay.



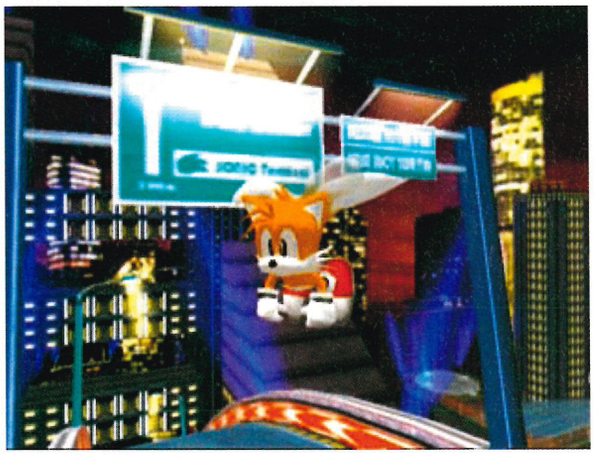
SEGA WORLDWIDE SOCCER 2000
SEGA • ISSUE #3 • 6/10
Once the best football games on the Saturn gets its first Dreamcast outing. As you'd expect, the graphics are vastly improved, but gameplay is too slow, which in turn means there isn't much of an atmosphere. The potential is there, but we would advised you to go for the newer *Euro Edition* instead.



SEGA WWS EURO EDITION
SEGA • ISSUE #8 • 7/10
Sequel to Sega's own-brand football game. Much needed improvements have resulted in more detail and a faster pace. Player animation is now smoother, and their artificial intelligence has been upgraded too. As good as you're going to get for the time being, but still not the killer footie game Dreamcast needs.



SHADOWMAN
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #3 • 6/10
An adult-orientated 3D adventure converted from Nintendo 64, packed with gore, swearing and voodoo magic. Gameplay switches between the living world and the afterlife. Cool but freaky music and sound effects, and the storyline is good, but dull level design lets the side down badly.



SONIC ADVENTURE
SEGA • ISSUE #0 • 9/10
One of the gaming world's most familiar characters returns in a stunning 3D adventure. A combination of jaw-dropping, incredibly fast set pieces and more laid back exploration sections. Six playable characters mean you get six different adventures of varying lengths, and there's a cool plotline to tie everything together. Occasionally dodgy camera angles, but this is an amazing experience that shouldn't be missed. *Sonic* in full effect shows what Dreamcast can do.



SILVER
INFOGRAMES • ISSUE #10 • 4/10
A rare thing, this: a role-playing game developed in the UK. A mixture of detailed, pre-rendered locations and console-friendly controls make *Silver* easy to get into, but the spark that makes the best RPGs take over your life isn't there. An attempt at something a little different, but the results are boring.



SLAVE ZERO
INFOGRAMES • ISSUE #5 • 6/10
Take control of a 60-foot robot and stomp around a futuristic city, shooting stuff, blowing things up and trampling on innocent bystanders. Fifteen single-player levels and a four-player deathmatch mode mean there's plenty of meat here. Sadly a lot of slowdown and a high difficulty level spoil the party.



SOUL CALIBUR
SEGA • ISSUE #4 • 10/10
We gave *Soul Calibur* our first 'perfect' score for a very good reason: it's the best fighting game money can buy. Fantastic character design, silky-smooth animation and perfectly balanced gameplay. You can pick it up and play straightaway and do well, but there's also an ocean's worth of depth to get into. More moves and combos than you'll ever be able to learn, and if your mates are as good as you are you'll be playing it together forever. Don't even think about not owning this game.



SPEED DEVILS
UBI SOFT • ISSUE #1 • 7/10
An offbeat racing game featuring police chases, speed traps and UFO invasions. A strong two-player mode, and always fun to play. Excellent funky music, and cars can be upgraded. Courses are massive – possibly even too big – but they're all full of detail and animated hazards. Fairly easy to complete though.



SNOW SURFERS
INFOGRAMES • ISSUE #2 • 6/10
Choose a board and rider and leap off the top of a mountain. Courses look nice, but on the whole the graphics aren't great. Competent in terms of gameplay, but a bit slow, when breakneck speed is what the sport is all about. Dreamcast's only snowboarding game so far, but that isn't enough to make it worth buying.



SOUL FIGHTER
CRAVE • ISSUE 2 • 6/10
Fantasy fighting adventures are popular on Dreamcast. *Soul Fighter* also has adventure elements, and using attacking combos to build up magical power is a good idea. A worthy challenge, but the gameplay remains the same throughout. It's too easy to wander from area to area using the same few buttons to win.



SOUTH PARK: CHEF'S LUV SHACK
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #3 • 3/10
A quiz game for up to four players, featuring all the *South Park* kids and their mates. You play mini-games and answer questions. Success comes through a knowledge of useless trivia rather than having any particular skill. You either love or hate *South Park*, but everyone is going to hate this. The worst game on DC.



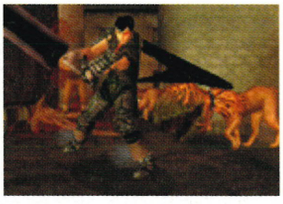
STREET FIGHTER III: DOUBLE IMPACT
VIRGIN • ISSUE #8 • 7/10
Bringing two versions of the *Street Fighter III* arcade game together, *Double Impact* has well-animated characters, loads of moves to learn, and endless appeal if you can find a similarly skilled mate. As technical as *SF* games get, but not as much fun as *SF Alpha 3*.



STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3
VIRGIN • ISSUE #2 • 8/10
All your favourite Street Fighter characters in one place, in one of the best 2D fighting games ever. Cartoon looks are great, and there's an excellent World Tour mode to keep you busy. Gameplay is the same as it's ever been – tuned and balanced to perfection. You'll need arcade stick controllers to get the most out of it.



SUZUKI ALSTARE EXTREME RACING
UBI SOFT • ISSUE #2 • 7/10
A superbike racer, meaning high-speed two-wheel action, and with the endorsement of the Suzuki racing team. You also get varied, twisting courses and a good two-player option. It's very, very fast, but bikes aren't as appealing as cars, and there's some dodgy pop-up and collision detection problems.



SWORD OF THE BERSERK: GUTS' RAGE
EIDOS • ISSUE #10 • 5/10
More fantasy hacking and slashing. The main character, Guts, certainly gets a bit of strop on as body parts fly everywhere. Good storyline, impressive graphics and lots of secrets to discover, but loads of cut-scenes mean play is fragmented and gets repetitive. Perhaps worth renting.



TECH ROMANCER
VIRGIN • ISSUE #8 • 6/10
More manic fighting action from the creators of Street Fighter and Power Stone, this time with giant robots scrapping it out. The graphics are colourful and detailed, but the essential spark that makes Capcom's best games brilliant is missing, and after a weekend's play the attraction wears off.

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. For the record, there's a button marked 'Print' on the Dreamcast keyboard simply because it's based on a PC model.

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 were supply problems, but keyboards are now readily available in stores and via 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. DreamEye should be out before Christmas.

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 haven't officially released VGA boxes in this country, but you you'll find one if you look hard enough.

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.

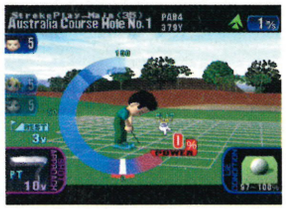
WHAT'S A RUMBLE PACK, AND DOES IT WORK WITH ALL GAMES?
It's an add-on that plugs into you controller and makes it vibrate in time with the on-screen action. Expect to pay £14.99 for an official Sega one. It's compatible with virtually all games, and really good with *Crazy Taxi*, *Sega Rally 2*, *Soul Calibur*, *Hydro Thunder* and *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing*.

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

GAMES DIRECTORY



TEE OFF
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #3 • 7/10
Golf games are generally pretty straight-laced, so it's refreshing to see one that doesn't take itself seriously. *Tee Off* features exaggerated cartoon golfers, simple gameplay and attractive courses, with no statistics to weigh you down. Up to four players can take part, and the more the merrier.

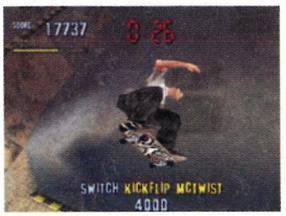


THE NOMAD SOUL
EIDOS • ISSUE #7 • 5/10
A futuristic, alternate-dimension action game featuring David Bowie, *The Nomad Soul* is a huge adventure with plenty of shooting, fighting and puzzle solving. There are some interesting ideas here, but they don't work as well as they might. Obviously converted from a PC game to make a quick buck.



TOMB RAIDER: TLR
EIDOS • ISSUE #6 • 7/10
Lara Croft arrives on Dreamcast for the fourth incarnation of her franchise. Set almost entirely in Egypt, *The Last Revelation* gets back to what makes *Tomb Raider* great: mind-bending puzzles, and loads of them. The best *Tomb Raider* game, but nothing new has been added for Dreamcast.





TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING
CRAVE • ISSUE #10 • 8/10
The sport's leading light, Tony Hawk, is now under your control. Excellent control system and genius level designs. As with the best score-attack-type games, you're always trying to beat your last best trick. Loads to do in the single-player levels, innovative split-screen options, but sadly only PlayStation-quality graphics.



TOY COMMANDER
SEGA • ISSUE #1 • 8/10
A tough, mission-based wargame which gives you control of toy tanks and planes rather than real military hardware. All the action takes place in a giant house, which gives rise to some inventive locations to discover and tasks to complete. A lot harder than the 'for kids' appearance might suggest.



TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE
CRAVE • ISSUE #3 • 5/10
Racing for cash against other drivers on the highways of Tokyo. In fact, make that 'highway', because there's only one really long course. Great graphics, but the cars are all lookalikes rather than the real thing, and the lack of variety soon gets boring. May appeal to car nuts, but hardly a well-rounded racing experience.



TRICKSTYLE
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #1 • 7/10
Futuristic hoverboarding on the streets of London, New York and Tokyo. There are stunts to learn, in the style of snowboarding games, but you're also racing against other riders. Lovely graphics, and VM mini-games are an incentive to keep playing, but a lack of speed lets it down.



UEFA STRIKER
INFOGRAMES • ISSUE #1 • 8/10
More realistic and accessible than *Virtua Striker* and more playable than *Sega WWS*. It's not the greatest-looking kickabout, but the official UEFA licence means it features loads of European teams and competitions. It doesn't do anything spectacular, however. A sequel is due out soon.



VIGILANTE 8: 2ND OFFENSE
ACTIVISION • ISSUE #3 • 5/10
The idea of cars with guns strapped on is very American, and *Vigilante 8* is even set in the Deep South. Varied locations, and all the vehicles have different handling characteristics and unique weapons. Motorised combat is fun for a while, but the game doesn't rank very high on the 'spectacular' scale.



VIRTUA FIGHTER 3TB
SEGA • ISSUE #1 • 7/10
The third incarnation of the original 3D fighting game hits DC. Some of the best beat 'em up gameplay you'll find, with characters you might actually care about. On the downside, the conversion from the arcades added hardly anything. Once an innovator, *VF3tb* now looks a little shabby next to *Soul Calibur*.



VIRTUA STRIKER 2 (VER. 2000.1)
SEGA • ISSUE #4 • 7/10
Football, arcade style. National teams, Cup modes, rankings and tournaments, plus extra stuff to uncover. Graphics are excellent, as you'd expect from a Sega arcade game. As an arcade conversion it doesn't play like you'd expect it to, but it does have its charms. Take time to masters the controls and you'll enjoy it.



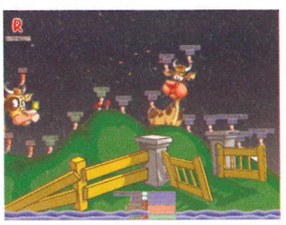
V-RALLY 2 EXPERT EDITION
INFOGRAMES • ISSUE #7 • 7/10
V-Rally 2 sent back to the garage for DC, resulting in the heavily reworked *Expert Edition*. Fast-moving, loads of courses and cars, nice graphics, multiplayer modes and so on, but slightly suspect handing spoils the experience – you feel like the car could tip over at any moment. Still, it has more substance than *Sega Rally 2*.



WACKY RACES
INFOGRAMES • ISSUE #9 • 7/10
Dick Dastardly and the gang in a stunning-looking *Mario Kart*-style racer. Cars and characters are recreated well, and the power-ups are suitably insane. Four player split-screen is, as ever, the highlight. Far better production values than the cartoon ever had, but you'll get the feeling you've seen it all before.



WETRIX+
TAKE TWO • ISSUE #7 • 6/10
A puzzler in which you build up land into pools to collect water, then zap it with fireballs to score points. Ice cubes, bombs and reverse-building blocks eat away at your containers. Psychedelic looks hide a two-year-old Nintendo 64 game. Tries hard, but gameplay is just too monotonous.



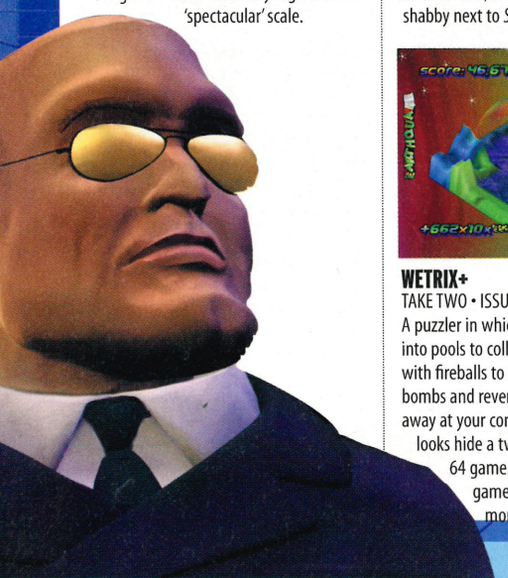
WORMS ARMAGEDDON
HASBRO • ISSUE #3 • 8/10
Basic 2D graphics hide one of the greatest multiplayer games ever created. Turn-based gameplay can be slow, but it ensures no-one gets overwhelmed by the action. Crammed with humour, and the graphics are crisp and well-animated despite their simplicity. The infamous 'one more go' factor is very strong.



WWF ATTITUDE
ACCLAIM • ISSUE #2 • 3/10
WWF is a licence to print money, so it's almost criminal that *Attitude* is so bad. Badly animated wrestlers don't respond to clunky controls, and gameplay is just uninspiring. We don't hate wrestling, but we do hate bad wrestling games. And this is one of them.



ZOMBIE REVENGE
SEGA • ISSUE 6 • 7/10
A House Of The Dead spin-off, but ditches the sharp-shooting for a more wholesome fists-and-feet approach. Superb graphics, and with two players its like an undead *Streets Of Rage*. Another arcade-perfect conversion, with DC extras such as VM mini-games.



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Tee Off Golf Enter
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Tomb Raider 4
Tony Hawk's
Toy Commander
Trickstyle
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READER REVIEWS

THE BIT OF THE MAG WHERE YOU TELL US WHAT *YOU* THINK OF GAMES. HAPPY WITH A PURCHASE? DISAPPOINTED THAT YOU'VE PICKED UP A DUD? THEN WRITE IN AND TELL US



△ ***Tony Hawk's Skateboarding*: gnarly!**

TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING
REVIEWED: *ODM* #10, 8/10

WE SAID: "Even if you've never shown any appreciation for skateboarding before, we're sure you'll enjoy it."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT
This is the most addictive game that I have ever played on Dreamcast. The graphics are amazing and the gameplay is even better. Career mode is full of little challenges that encourage you to try over and over again to get that elusive tape to unlock the next level.

At two minutes per game, this is a title you can just pick up and play for a few minutes if you're bored, although it can actually turn into much longer. 'Just one more go' has resulted in hours passing before I knew it.

Tony Hawk's Skateboarding is easy to pick up for both novice and experienced game players alike. Just a few minutes will see you zooming around the warehouse level performing all manner of exciting tricks, before landing unceremoniously on your head after a particularly difficult trick goes horribly wrong!

This is not a game to be played quietly. You find yourself leaping around and yelling after finding a hidden tape or completing a level, and I've often caught myself singing along to the soundtrack while frantically pushing buttons.

Louise Brown, via email

Yep, there's little doubt that this is one of the best Dreamcast games of recent months. You can find out what each of the *ODM* team thinks of it in this month's Drinking & Thinking feature (see page 78). Oh, and watch out for a player guide in next month's issue, on sale Thursday 7 September.



△ ***NHL 2K*: get it while you can.**

NHL 2K
REVIEWED: *ODM* #9, 7/10

WE SAID: "Fundamentally a very good game, and one that you should certainly look at if you fancy a slightly different slice of the sporting pie."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT
I have no interest in watching ice hockey on TV, but the videogame versions always seem to have that something special. NHL games by EA Sports on the Mega Drive had the playability that always made you come back for more, and *NHL 2K* is exactly the same (in the playability stakes, anyway).

It looks fantastic, with good player animation, superb-looking stadiums, and several neat touches such as the incredible player reflections in the ice and in the plexiglass. However, I must admit that the sound is disappointing, with very limited commentary and no real atmosphere from the crowd. Even the good old organ from previous games is sadly quiet.

The artificial intelligence of the CPU players is spot on (just like EA's versions on the Mega Drive), with wingers and central players making darting little runs for you to pass the puck around the rink, and making space for you to deliver one-timers or the demon-like slap shot. The goalkeepers are even more amazing as they dive about so realistically to stop everything that's thrown at them. Yes, they are difficult to beat, but not impossible.

Anyone who enjoyed the Mega Drive versions will love this. If you're new to ice hockey, give *NHL 2K* a go and you'll soon realise that it ranks among the very best sports games around.

Jeff Anderson, Hartlepool

NHL 2K is not a game that I was especially looking forward to, but after playing *NBA 2K* [*ODM* #5, 8/10] I felt it would be worth a look. And I was not disappointed.

The graphics are smooth and realistic, and the commentary is varied (if a little slow). The controls are easy to pick up, but even in rookie mode the computer is not easy to beat. This is a refreshing change from some games where you can beat a console-controlled team 50 to 0.

Playing against human-controlled teams is the most fun, as it makes a fast and furious game even more competitive. I've yet to see the fighting mode (obviously I'm not playing dirty enough!) but it sounds like a good idea.

It seems as though there have been some distribution problems with this game – I had to trawl around about five shops before I managed to find it – which is a shame, as many people may miss out on a very good game.

Louise Brown (again), via email

There haven't been "distribution problems" as such. Sega Europe produced only a limited number of copies of *NHL 2K* because they didn't expect it to be that popular.



△ ***Resident Evil 2*: above average!**

RESIDENT EVIL 2
REVIEWED: *ODM* #4, 7/10

WE SAID: "A class game – which is why it's been such a massive success on PlayStation – but there's no disguising the fact that this is a disappointing release."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT
Why did you say this? [quote above]. Is it because *Resident Evil 2* has ageing graphics? Or is it the fact that the game code has not be overhauled since the original PlayStation release?

I think the *Resident Evil* series is pure genius, and *Resident Evil 2* is no exception. Fair enough, the graphics haven't been changed since it was released on PlayStation some time ago, but who cares? First of all, the backdrops are pre-rendered, so they look great anyway. Secondly, the PlayStation version never had bad graphics in the first place!

You gave this game an average score essentially because it isn't new or ground-breaking. But it's still a great game. As the game code was already written by the time Dreamcast was released, it was very little effort for Capcom to make a Dreamcast version. They had two choices: release a Dreamcast version at the cost of a little effort, or don't release a Dreamcast version. I'm glad it was released. Why deny people the chance to play one of the finest survival horror/adventure games of all time just because it's a little old? Eight out of ten would have been more appropriate.

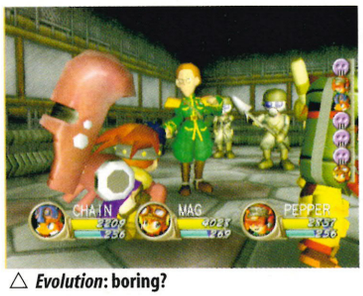
Simon-James Boyles, Oxford

We said in the review that *Resident Evil 2* is a class game. Our main reason for giving it a 'low' score is that we were disappointed with the graphics, especially the backgrounds. Without significant enhancements (over the PlayStation original) it seemed like a pointless release considering *Code: Veronica* was on its way. And, as it happens, it only beat it to stores by a few weeks.



△ *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding*: scores well on the 'just one more go factor', reckons Louise Brown.

Incidentally – and how many times do we have to write this?! – seven out of is *not* an "average score" in *ODM*! Check out page 61 for a guide to our ratings system. Please.



△ *Evolution*: boring?

EVOLUTION
REVIEWED: *ODM* #3, 8/10

WE SAID: "If you're looking for an introduction to the world of RPGs, it's perfect… the difficulty won't leave you floundering."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

I thought *Evolution* was enjoyable at first. The storyline and the intro were good, and exploring the town was enjoyable. Then I got to the ruins.

Yaaaawwwwn! It's just so boring. Corridors seem to be the main feature of the game, with the occasional square room and treasure chest to prevent you from falling asleep.

The next ruin was bigger than the last, and therefore even more boring. And it seemed to follow that trend for the rest of the game. Also, you only get one town to explore in the whole game. It's a good little town, to be fair, but I expect more.

Evolution is repetitive, which is a shame considering that it started out so promising. A classic case of too little too late. If you're desperate for a role-playing game, I suggest you buy *Silver* instead. At least that isn't so repetitive.

Chris Day, via email

Well, yeah, it was late alright – ridiculously late, in fact. As for *Silver* (*ODM* #10, 4/10), we'd be interested to hear what you lot think of it.



△ *Zombie Revenge*: best Dreamcast game?!

ZOMBIE REVENGE
REVIEWED: *ODM* #6, 7/10

WE SAID: "Once completed, the replay value obviously decreases massively. But even if you can't be fagged with the Fighting mode, *Zombie Revenge* will never lose its appeal, especially in two-player mode."

WHAT YOU THOUGHT

In a word: wow! Sorry, Capcom, Namco and all other developers, but *Zombie Revenge* has taken top spot in my list for the best game on Dreamcast. The playability is out of this world, and the graphics are nothing short of stunning, bettered only by the likes of *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* and *Ecco The Dolphin*.

Anyone looking for a brainless kill 'em up should be looking at *Zombie Revenge* – a great stress reliever. Well, until the braking bit on train level, if you see what I mean! I would have given it nine out of ten.

Now I'm off to play it some more.

'Wiluk', via email

We like *Zombie Revenge* too. It's a fun little game that's been rather forgotten (primarily because it took so long to come out). But as for it being the "best game on Dreamcast"? We think you're probably on your own there.

WHAT DO *YOU* THINK OF THE GAMES YOU'VE BOUGHT?

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MISCELLANEOUS

WHAT'S A GD-ROM?
A custom type of compact disc used for Dreamcast games. They hold up to 1Gb (1024Mb), which is more than a regular CD-ROM (650Mb).

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. The fab-looking *Metropolis Street Racer* will be released in Europe first too. Eventually.

WHAT IS THE RRP (RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE) OF A DREAMCAST?
The RRP is £199, but shop around and you should be able to get a DC for less than £150, and several stores now offer the machine bundled with games.

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.

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*, *Dead Or Alive 2*, *Jambo! Safari*, *F355 Challenge*, *Spawn* and *18 Wheeler American Pro Trucker* 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 IN THE UK?
Early December, according to Sega Europe's latest release schedule. *Shenmue* is a huge game, and the translation is taking a while. Naturally, we'll keep you posted on developments. Hey, we want to play it too!

WHEN IS *FIFA SOCCER* COMING OUT?
FIFA Soccer is published by Electronic Arts, who haven't signed to Dreamcast yet.

WHEN IS…
Arrrgh! If there's any major news on release dates we'll tell you in our news pages. Please, please, please stop emailing us for information on release dates. Pretty please?

• *Have we missed something? If there's anything else you need to know (except release dates, please), email us at letters@dreamcastmag.co.uk*

SPORTS WEBSITES

NEED NEWS ON THE LATEST FOOTIE TRANSFERS? WANT TO FIND OUT WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN THE WORLD OF, UM, CYCLING? **POGGY** GETS HER KIT ON



BICYCLING
www.bicycling.com
Cycling is great. Unless you live in the city, that is, when you will for a short time be very fit and on time for work, but then very squashed indeed under the wheels of a bus or an articulated lorry. Whatever, the quest for the perfect saddle height continues here.



ELECTRONIC TELEGRAPH
www.telegraph.co.uk
With columnists at the head of their field in almost all sports, this site of the broadsheet newspaper offers some of the best commentary online. Easily seeing off critics who accuse them of sporting snobbery, they are just as at home at the footie as at Henley.



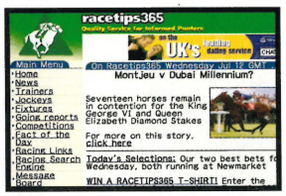
ORMONDROYD
www.ormondroyd.co.uk
Starting out as a fan site for the irrepressible Fulham FC, Ormondroyd has become a Net legend. Done mostly in cartoon form, with a disarming number of anti-Brummie jokes thrown in for the kids. New for this season are player pin-ups featuring the latest in stick-based art, and Auntie Orma's problem page with all the latest in cheap shots at your favourite players. So far lacks a comprehensive guide to terrace singalongs, but you suspect that it's only a matter of time.



BOXING ONLINE
www.boxingonline.com
Don't try this at home, kids. To fill all that free time between watching bouts that cost millions to stage and last half a minute, surf this site, where all your looking-dead-tough-with-a-bleeding-eye queries will be comprehensively met.



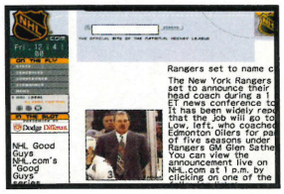
FOOTBALL UNLIMITED
www.footballunlimited.co.uk
Sport from *The Guardian*. Admittedly not a lot of sport. Only the two, in fact (the cricket sister site is at www.cricketunlimited.co.uk). Although the news reporting is a little shaky, you can receive daily news by email, and the cricket site includes *Wisden* records.



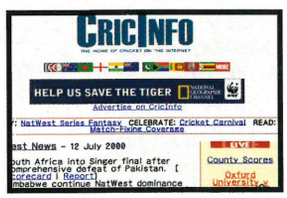
HORSE RACING
www.racetips365.com
Horse racing, and thankfully free from John McCririck and his comedy hats. Sadly there's no explanation of all those obscure'tick-tack' hand gestures, but there are plenty of amusing 'Frolicking Filly'-type headlines to give you a laugh, and you can vote on Horse Of The Week.



MLB
www.majorleaguebaseball.com
And sterrrrrrike! Baseball's popularity is increasing rapidly in the UK, so get in quick smart with handy hints and tips to prevent embarrassment. As if playing a sport in pedal pushers isn't bad enough. Consult the injury round-up if it gets too much.



NHL
www.nhl.com
A sport so violent that they keep the fans fenced in, and the teams have names like Thrashers. Hop scotch it is not. It is, however, fine entertainment, and this site is essential for everyone from part-time enthusiasts to the scarred, twitching man with the big stick.



CRICINFO
www.cricinfo.com
We're great. No, we suck. No, we're great again... One of the only sports with the potential to carry on for several days and include meal breaks, cricket is a game you can become horribly addicted to here. Plus the very latest on Nasser Hussein's broken fingernail.



GOLF.COM
www.golf.com
NBC brings you all the roughs, greens and silly jumper/hat combinations that you need for a jolly day pretending to be a doctor. You can find all the usual stats and profiles, and for the millionaires among us there's a guide to properties with en suite golf on the market.



INTERNATIONAL TENNIS FEDERATION
www.itftennis.com
With a catchy name like that, you know you're not here for the amusing Anna Kournikova jokes. All the tennis in the world in stored here though, in their ninja database. Kill some time by finding out when the last English tennis player won something.

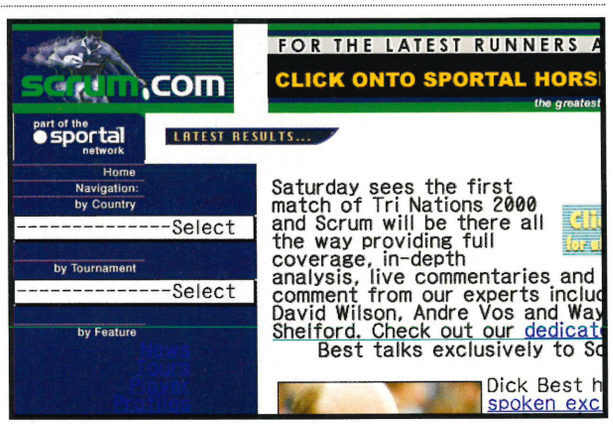


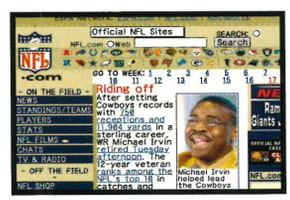
NBA
www.nba.com
Once again the Americans get all confused about what is and isn't netball. The home of basketball meets all your needs, both action and merchandising-wise. Can't be bothered to buy a ladder? Find out here who'd be best for painting your kitchen ceiling without one.



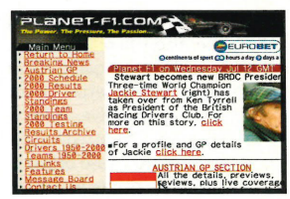
OLYMPICS
www.olympics.com
You know the four-year drill: big flame, big fuss, big bunch of weird sports no one's ever heard of. An excuse for a new and innovative drinking game if ever there was one. You can even volunteer to put an athlete up (it is being held in Sydney this time, remember).

SCRUM.COM
www.scrum.com
Top commentators on the art of throwing a ball to people the size of a rhino and throwing yourself around on similarly sized folk in cleated boots congregate here. If rushing around in the mud and getting flattened if you hold on to the ball for too long is your idea of entertainment, then you need look no further. The site offers news, fantasy rugby and reports, and Web cams ensure that you can keep warm and dry without missing a thing. For the uninitiated there's even a dictionary. 'Lifting', it appears, is the act of lifting. See?





NFL
www.nfl.com
If you like your rugby played by players all dressed up so they don't get nasty grazes, then you'll be very happy here. All the latest news for the pigskin-obsessed, including handy stats and chats. And an NFL credit card, which you can then use to buy merchandise of your favourite team from the NFL shop.



PLANET F1
www.planetf1.com
Ooh, will you look at that – Schumacher's won again. Happily there's more to this site than news, with team listings and standings, and maps of the circuits in case you feel like replicating them in your nearest park. You can also compare the stats of formula one drivers past and present.



SPORTING LIFE

www.sporting-life.com

All the sporting news all of the time all over your screen. The site of the now defunct newspaper prides itself on its weekend football section which features constantly updated scores, bringing an end to constant fighting with your landlord over control of the remote of a Saturday – which is a sport in itself. Losers in the battle for the remote can console themselves with complete televised sport listings, so you can stalk out of the room yelling "Well, its time for underwater kabaddi anyway" with their dignity intact.



PLANET FOOTBALL

www.planetfootball.co.uk

Sounding a like a sci-fi series in which everyone wears the same clothes, chants the same chants and er, drinks the same drinks, this site distinguishes itself from *Star Trek* with its storming news coverage, often getting exclusives before bigger sites get a look in.



SKY SPORTS

www.skysports.com

The channel responsible for stripping the BBC of everything apart form championship bowls, Sky shows you why here. A little dry, with some suspect features, but if it's straight news you want then you can get it here. Plenty of polls in which to assert your opinion on too.



SPORTS.COM

www.sports.com

Bog-standard sports portal with a URL others would kill for. The home of bad punning ('Wimble-gone'), which is some distraction. Endearing only for its punters' tips, although we'd be the last to encourage gambling. Tenner each way on Koala's Revenge, then.



ROCK LIST

www.rocklist.com

Fancy hanging off a big rock by your fingertips like Tom Cruise in *MI2*? Well before you rush off to find a suitable ginger mate check out this site. Listed as 'essential items' are lighters and pocket knives. See? You were more prepared than you thought.



SNOOKER NEWS

www.snookernews.com

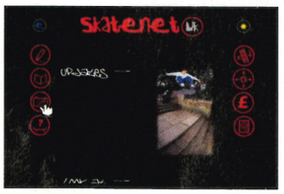
Eight out of ten cats said they prefer staring at it on TV, although the same can't always be said for their owners. Snooker, pool and billiards can be found here, along with the startling news that South Koreans can get billiard scholarships to university.



SPORTS LINE

www.sportsline.com

Covers US sports with a distinctly "Yee haaa, get some damn fine" edge to them, but useful if you want to spend your evenings harassing Yanks in Leicester Square. Hours of mockable facts to be learned here on CBS's site. And a place to avoid the ubiquitous Beckham debate.



SKATENET UK

www.skatenetuk.co.uk

Decent starting point for those of you who are getting good at *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* and now fancy trying the real thing (hint: it's not as easy in real life). US site Skateboard.com (at www.skateboard.com, strangely enough), is better but doesn't work properly on Dreamcast.



SPORTAL

www.sportal.com

Good links, good content and good fun on this omnipresent sports portal (note the clever name), although it is a little ad-heavy. Read blow-by-blow accounts of the latest Spanish fishing tournaments (in Spanish), or enter the competition to win a Dreamcast. Ahem.



SWIM INFO

www.swiminfo.com

The debate over whether to allow full body costumes rages on here, while those of us who thought lathering yourself in animal fat was the way ahead look on in wonder. Check here for how to avoid accidentally attending the local OAP swim meet.



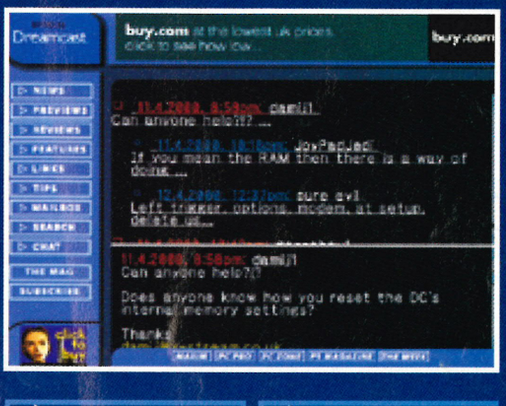
SPORT POD

www.tripod.co.uk/pod_central/pods/sports/

Never one to turn down a pod-related activity, this site, part of Tripod's fan-run pages, is a top place to linger and pontificate about anything from David Beckham's new haircut to his 'suspect' temperament and back again. Particularly worth a look is the 'best of pod', which features gripping conversations about Thai boxing and the best way to grip your mache niblick. Not the most thrillingly designed site, but it's the nearest thing you'll get to ranting about sports in the privacy of your bedroom.

www.dreamcastmag.co.uk





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OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAG
WEBSITE

Okay, so you've read the mag. Well that's just the half of it – our website is second to none.

ODM Online is updated daily with the latest news from the world of Dreamcast. If it's happened or happening, then you can bet you'll find out about it here first.

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 Dreamcast users in our Live Chat and Chat forums.

www.dreamcastmag.co.uk



△ RUSSELL PETERSEN, 28, SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION FOR BANK OF NEW YORK
Originally from South Africa, he made the move to Blighty a year ago. Has been a PC gamer for a while now; Dreamcast is his first console.

△ PAUL BENJAMIN 23, I-SPORTS PRODUCT MANAGER, INFOGRAMES
Started out at Gremlin three years ago and has ended up at Infogrames. Managed games such as *UEFA Manager 2000* and *V-Rally 2*.

△ SERGE PLAGNOL, 29, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, SEGA
Worked briefly at Infogrames on the original *Alone In The Dark*. Later worked on the classic adventure series *Little Big Adventure*.

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAN TRENT

THE BIG DEBATE

PREACHING TO THE CONVERTED?

CONVERTING PLAYSTATION AND PC GAMES TO DREAMCAST IS BIG BUSINESS. WE ASKED A FEW INDUSTRY PUNDITS AND READERS FOR THEIR VIEWS ON HOW IMPORTANT THE CONVERSION SCENE IS TO THEM AND TO THE SUCCESS OF DC

ODM: How important to the success of Dreamcast are conversions? Was it a selling point for you when you bought your DC?

BRUNO: I think it's quite important. PlayStation is such a dominating platform that if a game doesn't get converted over to DC it makes Sega's machine look somehow inferior. Also, conversions were a selling point for me. As a former Saturn owner, I remember the games for that system just drying up after a while.

STEPHEN: The conversion issue wasn't a big deal to me when I bought my Dreamcast. It didn't particularly motivate me, because I already had a PC and most of the other formats; it was the specific DC-only titles that really convinced me to buy the console. The conversions that I've seen so far haven't really impressed me. I mean, *Resident Evil 2* was a bit bloody



△ STEPHEN AUGUSTYN, 29, FREELANCE PRODUCT DESIGNER
Says he's been gaming for longer than he can remember. Owns or has owned pretty much every console and computer under the sun.

△ PETE HAWLEY, 30, PRODUCER, LIONHEAD STUDIOS
Is looking after the Dreamcast *Black & White* conversion, plus he oversees games in development at Lionhead's satellite companies. Previously produced several games including smash hit *Driver*.

△ BRUNO AMORELLI, 25, CONTRACTS ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE, IKON OFFICE SOLUTIONS
A bona fide console-head, his current collection includes Dreamcast, PlayStation and Nintendo 64. Follows the games industry religiously.

pointless, because it really did seem like a stopgap. On the other hand, *Code: Veronica* is fantastic.

PAUL: I do think that conversions can help Dreamcast. They can broaden the market slightly, depending on the title. I guess if you want DC to go 'mass market' then you have to have PlayStation and PC games converted over to make the console even more appealing in the marketplace. Personally though, I got my Dreamcast to play Sega games like *Crazy Taxi*.

PETE: I think everyone's greatest concern about DC hasn't come true – thankfully. A lot of people had a downer on the machine because there was a big fuss about how easy it was to convert PC games to DC. The danger was that all the smaller publishers would throw 'shovelware' on to DC. Thankfully that never happened. I think DC has really surprised people because there's been a lot of quality Dreamcast-specific titles.

SERGE: We were afraid that we would get a lot of conversions which would not offer high quality, but that wasn't the case. There have been some, but people didn't really buy them. We do need big, quality PC franchises though, like *Quake III Arena*, which is coming to DC. They are important because a lot of people haven't had the chance to play that game.

ODM: So is Dreamcast and its conversions a tempting offer for those who can't afford an expensive PC?

STEPHEN: That's definitely a big thing. Also, Dreamcast hopefully isn't going to crash every three games like a PC does!

RUSSELL: Also, on the PC side, I would like to see PC-style real-time strategy games like *Railroad Tycoon III* [Which is coming to Dreamcast – Ed].

PETE: That's interesting. Traditionally, games like that don't port well to consoles because you don't have a mouse. Of course, it's not just down to the control method. I also think that there's a certain level of intimacy you have with a strategy game when playing on PC – you're normally sitting in the corner within your own little 'universe'. If you're laying back on the sofa with the TV and a DC you don't get that intimacy.

Control methods are a big issue though, and that's why for the DC version of *Black & White* it's one of the first things we're addressing. After all, the game is essentially a mouse-driven strategy game, and it's very difficult to work with a DC controller when trying to replicate the accuracy and flexibility of a mouse.

RUSSELL: Won't you be able to use the DC keyboard and mouse?

PETE: It may be supported, but obviously we can't limit it to just that – unless Sega decide to sell *Black & White* with a mouse and keyboard!

SERGE: Even then you need a desk for the mouse, but in your living room you don't always have a desk.

BRUNO: The PC set-up of mouse and keyboard doesn't sit well with Dreamcast or consoles.

SERGE: Well, you can sit the keyboard on your lap so it's still possible to use it easily with a console. A mouse is going to be difficult though. But we are doing one, because the mouse is important for some gamers.

BRUNO: I got *Rainbow Six* on import for DC, and there were so many controls! You couldn't even remember them! While you wanted to play the game, you just ended up trying to learn the controls instead.

STEPHEN: Another interface ▷



Anything to declare?

issue is that I can't stand playing strategy games on consoles because of the television resolution. With strategy games, particularly real-time strategy, you're concentrating on fairly small levels of graphical detail for a long period of time. A monitor is designed to show up as much detail as possible, whereas televisions are designed to cover up as many defects as possible. So it does become a real strain if you're trying to work with small detail on a TV.

ODM: How would you define the differences between Dreamcast and PC/PlayStation games in general?

PETE: Console games are more immediate and impact-driven. In some cases that's better, it just depends on your mood.

BRUNO: People still think that PC games are complicated.

STEPHEN: Since I got my Dreamcast I really haven't picked up my PlayStation. It just doesn't have anything to offer now. I wouldn't say it's just an issue of depth though, with PCs versus consoles, because a lot of the really successful PC games at the moment are the antithesis of that. They've distilled the gameplay. Look at *Quake III* [*Areana*]. That's got no depth at all but it's still a blinding game. It's the ultimate distillation of the first-person shooter.

BRUNO: It all depends on what the actual player prefers in a game. If you prefer RPGs and strategy games, then you'd go for the PC; if you love racing games and beat 'em ups you'd go for Dreamcast.

ODM: What do you guys make of the conversions to Dreamcast that you've seen?

STEPHEN: *Legacy Of Kain* [*Soul Reaver*] was an enjoyable game but it was a shit conversion. It was bloody awful! It really seemed to be the PlayStation version but with slightly smoother textures and quicker frame update. I was really disappointed. When you compare it to *Code: Veronica* or *Soul Calibur*, it looks like they must have done the conversion in an afternoon when they didn't have much else to do.

BRUNO: *Tomb Raider* was diabolical. I just don't know why they released it, because it has created such negativity in the Dreamcast market. They hyped everyone up about Lara, but ended up disillusioning people.

PAUL: Instead of *The Last Revelation* they should have done a *Tomb Raider* game specifically for DC, in the same way *Code: Veronica* was DC-specific.

PETE: At the end of the day, DC has got a lot of good titles which are fresh, original and bold, so you go for them. That's why I bought one!

SERGE: But with conversions now, we do see a lot more people doing co-developments – they develop on PC and DC in parallel; it's not just: "Let's do the PC one and then find a cheap company to do the conversion for us."

ODM: Let's say a PC game got a pretty good score and was being converted to Dreamcast. Would you expect the designers to tweak and change the gameplay to maximise the game's potential in the conversion?

BRUNO: You've got to learn from your mistakes. Once it's out there and the press review it, a conversion offers a great opportunity for the programmers to see where they went wrong and how

> "I'D BE SURPRISED IF A DEVELOPER ACTUALLY ADDED EXTRA ORIGINAL CONTENT TO A CONVERSION"
>
> – PETE HAWLEY



they can improve the game for DC.

PETE: But it's quite a difficult enough process to convert a game to another console, without adding features. And if you even mention the mere thought of adding features to a conversion, in most cases a lot of publishers would say: "Forget it. Just get it out there!" I would be surprised if a developer actually added extra original content to a conversion. Having said that, it does depend on the peripherals as well. Dreamcast has the VM unit, so that should be taken advantage of – like we are doing with *Black & White*. As for actual gaming additions or changes, it is a bit pie-in-the-sky to expect something very different.

STEPHEN: Some extras that you do get in conversions can be so bloody useless anyway – like the art gallery in *The Last Revelation*. Did anyone really give a toss about that?

BRUNO: The main thing with DC is that you've got four ports at the front of the machine as well, and you should see a lot of conversions utilising that.

"I DON'T THINK £40 IS FAIR FOR A CONSOLE GAME WHEN IT'S ONLY £30 ON PC"

– STEPHEN AUGUSTYN

ODM: Do you think conversions to Dreamcast should sell at the same price as their PC or PlayStation counterparts?

BRUNO: Personally, I'd expect to pay the same amount as I do for a normal Dreamcast game. I know that some games get priced at £25, but I think that's negative, because you instantly think that because it's cheaper it's not as good as a full-priced game.

STEPHEN: *ChuChu Rocket!* must be absolute shit then.

[Everyone laughs]

STEPHEN: Seriously though, I don't think £40 is fair for a console game when it's only £30 on PC. I do think it's taking the piss to charge more, particularly when you hear developers and publishers telling us that they sell ten times as many units by putting a Dreamcast logo on the corner of the packaging instead of a PC one.

PAUL: You have to bear in mind that for us to release a game on Dreamcast we must pay Sega massive duplication fees and stuff, whereas with PC games we don't.

SERGE: Yeah, Sega do charge royalties to the publishers, because Sega created the market for them. The machine is sold at a very low price if you compare the manufacturing price to the retail price. We don't really make any money on the hardware, so we have to make money somewhere – in order to create that market, to market the machine and so forth – and that all costs. On Dreamcast we also have the GD-ROM format, which is hard to duplicate but in the long run could actually help the consumer.

PAUL: Overall though, if you look at prices now, there's not much difference between formats any more compared to the market two years ago.

ODM: Finally, do we really need conversions on Dreamcast?

STEPHEN: The best reason to buy a Dreamcast at the moment is for the specific Dreamcast-only titles that you can get. I'm sure, though, that conversions are good for some friends of mine who own a Dreamcast but can't afford a £1,500 PC; they're looking forward to playing *Quake III [Arena]*, *Half-Life* and the rest.

RUSSELL: The reason I got a Dreamcast was for Sega's games. Before, you had to go into an arcade to play their games.

SERGE: Exactly. We've brought the arcade into the home.

LETTERS

Got some thoughts on Dreamcast or your magazine? Then why not share them with us and, if your letter is interesting enough, thousands of other readers (see below for how to get in touch). Editor Warren Chrismas responds to this month's best letters

WORRIED

I eagerly await the arrival of *Quake III Arena* for the sole reason that I have a huge passion for online gaming, yet my PC is years out of date. I'm hoping for a playable version on Dreamcast, but have reasons to believe that when it arrives I'll be bitterly disappointed.

First of all, the 33.6k modem in my Dreamcast is going to slow things down considerably. I'm not interested in technical issues, but the fact of the matter is that a 33.6k modem for online games like *Quake III Arena* will be interesting, to say the least.

Modem-friendly games like *ChuChu Rocket!* online should run fine, but there's still a one-second delay, and there are ridiculous flaws with the server at times which stop you placing arrows, which is a real pain in the middle of a heated game.

Not only that, but on the English 60Hz servers there are no more then 40 people online, and this is a game for up to only four players; how is *Quake III Arena* going to stand 16?

Kirk Wagstaff, via email

As we've pointed out before, and as Sega explain across the page (see the question headed Slow Down A Minute), the lag (time delay) in *ChuChu Rocket!* is *intentional*. Given the type of game that it is, variations in lag would give some players a major disadvantage and others an advantage. As it is, everyone plays at the same speed.

Small variations aren't so important in games such as *Quake III Arena*. Indeed, that particular game has been designed to take discrepancies into account, effectively filling in players' actions when there are short delays.

You say you're not interested in technical issues, Kirk, so we'll save the details for a feature in a future issue of *ODM*. There are, however, many, many reasons why Dreamcast should cope well with online action games, not the least of which is the fact that games are being optimised to run on uniform hardware, using dedicated game servers which are independent of Internet traffic.

NETIZENS

You have given us as much help and as many website addresses as we need, but there is a side to Dreamarena that you have forgotten: the users themselves.

Many 'Net gangs', such as ICW and BRAHMADAVE, have been formed using DC Chat. This might seem a little sad to some people, but it's only a bit of fun.

Also, many users have made their own homepages using Dreamcast. Could you at least consider doing a piece on what people have done using the online power of Dreamcast?

William (aka TRIPLE_H), Cornwall

We are aware that, in some ways, we're neglecting part of the Dreamcast online community. Unfortunately it's difficult to accurately reflect in a magazine what goes on in chat rooms. I mean, was Brian's joke in the chat room last night really *that* funny? Who's Brian, you ask? Well, exactly.

Several people have written in during the past couple of months regarding the creation of websites with a Dreamcast. We'll be running a feature on it sometime in the future.

FINISH 'EM!

Man, you think you guys are sick of all the whining bastards banging on about release dates/slips, how many of those people have finished the games they've got? Anyone who spends £40 on a game and doesn't at least try to turn it upside down and shake the life out of it is a fool.

Dreamcast has way more soul than the populist PlayStation. Four hundred games? Yeah, but how many of them are worth your time?

Life is precious, children. Anyone with a Dreamcast has made the right choice. Press the power button and have a little patience.

Tony Turner, via email

Right on, brother.

SORRY!

First I want to say that Dreamcast is ace! It's actually my boyfriend's, but when he's at work I'm kicking butt at *Soul Calibur* and *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing*. Then he wonders why I beat him all the time!

Anyway, the reason I'm mailing is to say that I'm really disappointed with this edition of the mag [*ODM* #10]. You promised a demo of *Metropolis Street Racer*, a game which me and blokey have been waiting for for ever since we first heard about it. Rushing out to buy the magazine was therefore a bit of a let down when, lo and behold, no *MSR* demo.

If you break your promises to your readers, how can you expect us to be loyal? You're the most expensivemag, questionably objective and not keeping your word. Remind me why you're worth a fiver a month?

Sorry if this has seemed a bit harsh, but we want *MSR* and, more importantly, for promises to be kept!

Sarah Jefferies (and Brian Anderson), via email

Your main point has, I hope, been answered on page three. What more can I add except sorry?

For the record, your email seemed more than "a bit harsh". I mean, "questionably objective"? Do you read the magazine?!

LEYTON ORIENT 0

I'm very displeased by your magazine after a couple of comments in your July issue (*ODM* #9), which would have insulted some groups in society.

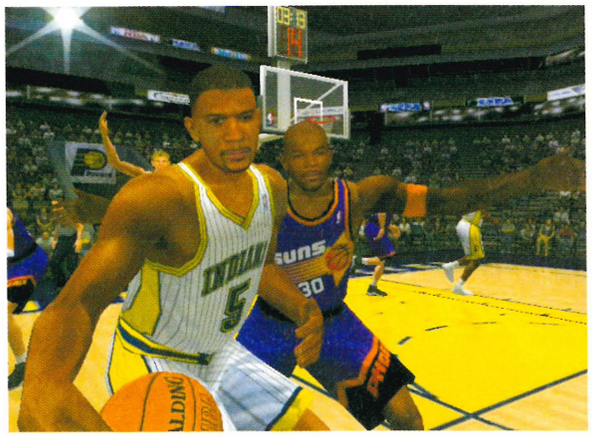
The first is more serious. In your *Metropolis Street Racer* preview one of your captions was: "Alas, no anti-capitalists rioters to mow down." Most of the people at the anti-capitalist demonstrations were anarchists, who I don't like (anarchism is like politics, but without the hard work). However, I do feel this was a very unfair comment. They were just demonstrating for something they believed in. There's no law against it. True, things did get a bit violent later on, but that was only because they were being intimidated by the police. Therefore I think your comment was totally unfair and uncalled for.

My second complaint is about a comment in the explanation of your marking system. You say that a game with a score of two is "the gaming equivalent of Leyton Orient". I'm an Orient supporter myself, and this is very unfair. True, we didn't have too good a season, and you didn't compare us with a game with a score of one, but it was still unfair. If we hadn't lost in the play-off final in the 98/99 season we could have been in the second division this year. We may even have stayed up. Also, I can assure you that a game with a score of two would have had a lot more money put into it than our chairman puts into the team. So your comment, although not totally untrue, is also not fair.

That's enough of my rantings. I expect an apology soon.

Liam Brown, 14, London

The *Metropolis Street Racer* caption was a joke, nothing more. As for the reference to



△ *NBA 2K* is a stunning basketball game, but where's the footie, eh?

FOOTBALL MAD

The reason why Dreamcast enjoys considerably more success in the US than Europe is, I would have thought, blatantly obvious. In the States they have top-notch conversions of their national sports – *NBA 2K*, *NFL 2K* and *NHL 2K*. The closest thing we have to a quality football title are rumours of a Konami-developed game, which probably would have been shown at the E³ trade show in May had the rumours been true.

Marketing disaster follows marketing disaster, and no one had the foresight to develop a football sim which is worthy of Dreamcast!

Despite the extreme lack of quality in the early PlayStation 2 releases, Sony's machine will have both a *FIFA* game from Electronic Arts and a version of *International Superstar Soccer* from Konami by time it's released in the West. And that, more than anything, will sell it to the 'casual gamers'.

Sega had better wake up. There are quality titles either here or on the way in almost every other genre, but the football lets Dreamcast down. Even a lazy port of *ISS Evolution* would do until a brand new title arrives!

Gary Maguire, via email

As you suspect, Gary, it doesn't look as though a version of *International Superstar Soccer* is coming to Dreamcast. There's been talk of one for a while but, according to Konami's European office, it's not currently on the agenda.

Which is doubly disappointing because, as you say, quality football sims undoubtedly help sell game consoles. More so than games in any other genre, in fact, except perhaps racing games.

Of course, the lack of a killer footie game on Dreamcast is especially ironic given Sega's sponsorship of Arsenal, Saint-Etienne, Sampdoria and Spanish champions Deportivo de La Coruña (see news). Here's hoping that Infogrames' *UEFA 2001* (previewed on page 16) is the business, eh?

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.

Leyton Orient in the reviews intro (see page 61), we'll happily change it if they get into a top-seven position in Division Three at any point in the coming season. Okay?

MORE PLEASE!

Compared to the trials and tribulations associated with getting an online-enabled game up and running on a PC, Sega should be congratulated for making the process so simple and user-friendly with *ChuChu Rocket!* Obviously it was very welcome to receive the game for free, and it is a decent reward for all those who have been chomping at the bit for the power in their little grey box of tricks to be truly unleashed.

I must admit to having been highly critical of the lack of online functionality in previous releases. I certainly didn't shell out £200 on my Dreamcast just so I could look at high-score tables online, and *ChuChu Rocket!* was just what I, and no doubt thousands of others, have been waiting for.

I hope we don't have to wait very long for further online titles, as my appetite for further online gaming has been more than whetted.

Darren McKay, via email

You can rest assured that there are plenty more online games coming. Something like 40 per cent of the Dreamcast games that Sega showed at the E³ show in May had online options. We'll all have to show a bit of patience before things really take off though – the game we're all waiting for, *Quake III Arena*, isn't scheduled to arrive until the end of the year (November, hopefully).

HAPPY CHAPPY

I would just like to take a different angle on Sega's customer relations policy. Everybody seems to be giving out about how Sega don't look after their customers in smaller countries.

I'm from Ireland. I registered online for Dreamarena on Wednesday last week, and *ChuChu Rocket!* arrived in my mailbox first thing on Monday morning. I would say that Sega are taking things very seriously judging by their swift response. I would like to congratulate them on wonderful marketing and on such a wonderful product. Thanks, Sega, for looking after even the smaller markets.

'Mack The Chef', via email

Cool. Good to hear that Sega are looking after the little people.

TRIPLE-A

I was sceptical about the staying power of Dreamcast, but after reading the '100+ New Games' issue [*ODM* #9] I can honestly say that Dreamcast has the upper hand in the next-generation console war.

Dreamcast has ten triple-A titles out before the end of the year, including ground-breaking games like *Metropolis Street Racer*, *Shenmue*, *F355 Challenge* and *Virtua Tennis*, and that makes it a winner in my book.

Dave, Somerset

And in ours, Dave.

GOING HOME

I've figured out a way to access the Dreamarena homepage by using either the *ChuChu Rocket!* or *Sonic Adventure* discs.

Within *ChuChu*, go to the homepage, select the jump option by pressing the left trigger, and type portal.dream-key.com. With the *Sonic* disc it's a little different. There's no menu system, so press CTRL + O on the keyboard to bring up the Jump option, and then type the above URL.

Mark (Choko) O'Connell, via email

We've run the short cut before, but the address for the Dreamarena homepage is news to us. I guess that someone may find it useful. Maybe.

THE LATE SHOW

Why is your magazine always late hitting the shelves? I look forward to your mag every month, but I'm always disappointed when it doesn't appear on the day you say it will.

'Svisnjevac', via email

Only one issue of *Official Dreamcast Magazine* (the June issue) went on sale 'late', and that was because we were forced to make last-minute change to our schedules. Every other issue has been available on the Thursday (usually the first Thursday of the month) as advertised. If you've had trouble finding *ODM*, try a larger or more reliable newsagent. If you persistently have problems, email us with details, including your location and the names of the newsagents you've tried.

Excuse the blatant plug, but if you subscribe you'll save money, guarantee delivery each month, *and* get the magazine days before it reaches shops. See page 60 for details.

The next issue hits the shelves on Thursday 7 September.

ASK SEGA

Every month, you can talk directly to Sega. Send us your questions and we'll put them to the people behind the world's greatest console

SOFTWEAR

I would really like to buy some Sega, Dreamcast and Sonic T-shirts, but where can I get them from?

Ben Willcock, via email

SEGA: Keep your eye on Dreamarena. We will shortly start selling merchandise through the shop.

BOXES SHIFTED

How many Dreamcast consoles have been sold worldwide?

Ben Willcock (again), via email

SEGA: No up-to-date figures are available at this time. However, around 800,000 have been sold in Europe alone.

NO GUNS?

Why did Sega take the [official] light-gun off the market? Can I still get it anywhere?

Richard Carder, via email

SEGA: Er… we haven't! There are still a small number available in the shops, and a further 7,000 will be available from September.

IRELAND FOR HIRE

Are Sega planing to make Dreamcast games available for rent in Ireland via video stores such as Chartbusters and Extravision?

Niall, Dublin

SEGA: We are currently in talks with several rental chains in Ireland about the possibility of getting a rental system in place.

SATURN NO-GO

Will there ever be a way of playing Saturn discs on Dreamcast?

Al Hine, via email

SEGA: Sorry, there are no plans to release a Saturn emulator.

DAMAGED SOUL

I've damaged my copy of *Soul Calibur*. It's my fault, admittedly, but is there anything I can do about it?

Dan Coleman, via email

SEGA: Sorry, there is nothing we can do. GD-ROMs are very delicate and should be treated carefully as per instructions. [Try taking it back to the shop where you bought it – Ed.]

DREAM PC?

Is it possible to access Dreamarena through a PC?

Ben Roberts, via email

SEGA: Not at the moment. However, this is a side that the new Dreamarena Ltd company are looking into. Expect an announcement shortly.

FAULTY CHU?

I'm having problems getting my copy of *ChuChu Rocket!* to load. I received my game from Dreamarena and would be grateful if you could tell me how to get a replacement.

David Newman, via email

SEGA: Call the helpline on 08456 090 090.



△ **How will *Quake III Arena* online fare?**

SLOW DOWN A MINUTE

I'd like to know how you plan to do games such as *Quake III Arena* and *Half-Life* online when you can't even get *ChuChu Rocket!* running without slowdown?

J McNulty, via email

SEGA: The slowdown I believe you are referring to is the in-built function that delays arrow placement so that all players can play on a level playing field, rather than one person being at a disadvantage because their lag is greater than their opponents'.

***ChuChu Rocket!* was the first attempt at an online console game in Europe. The Dreamarena team has been working solidly to connect telecommunications companies around Europe so that online gaming is possible for you.**

A crack Dreamarena unit is on its way out to the US to talk with Sega Of America network team to utilise the US expertise in this field. Rest assured that there will not be a problem when the likes of *Quake III Arena* hit Europe in November.

IT'S BROKEN

I've had my Dreamcast since Christmas. When I try running a game, 99 times out of 100 the main menu comes up or it crashes on the Sega symbol (and, yes, Auto Start is on). It's so bad I can hardly use it. Help!

Phillip, via email

SEGA: It sounds like there is a problem with your Dreamcast. Call the helpline on 08456 090 090. They will be able to advise you where you need to send your console to have it checked out.

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 choose 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 105.

YOU KNOW YOU'RE GONNA HAVE FUN WHEN...

...SEGA PAY YOU TO BE A SUBVERSIVE FOR THE NIGHT

PD3 are responsible for Sega Europe's 'ambient advertising'. What does that mean? Let Dermot McPartland, guerrilla marketer and co-founder of PD3, explain

"WE DO THE ambient advertising for Sega Europe, so we work in France, Spain, Germany and the UK. We add value to the traditional campaign – cinema adverts and the rest – by doing street-level and 'ambient' promotions. In layman's terms, it means doing attention-grabbing and innovative stuff at street level which stands out from the usual press and TV ads. It's about getting people when they least expect it, and not waiting for them to turn on their TVs to see the Dreamcast ads.

"Our campaigns can be anything – putting ads in urinals, fly-posting, or doing PR-oriented stunts like the projection we did for Dreamcast in London. For the campaign, we'd been talking to the ad agency behind the German, French and English stereotypes commercials. We came up with ideas which would add value to the TV stuff. One idea was to have a battleship come down the Thames with a German flag on it, and on deck would be 50 guys like the bloke in the ad, with shell suits and mullet haircuts, shouting: "Come and have a go if you think you're hard enough!"

"We ended up going with the simple projection. We planned it for a week, then two of us got in our jeep with a generator and a slide projector. We projected the ads on to whatever building we were doing, using the mega-powerful projector set up on the back of the jeep. We went out at midnight and projected until about 2.30am. We did Marble Arch, the new Tate Gallery, and the Houses of Parliament.

"Normally, if you're projecting an image or an ad for 20 minutes or so, the police will tell you to move along. You do, of course, but then you probably come back again and do it an hour later.

"The actual projection process is simple though. Once you've set up the slide and started projecting it, you just leave it. There's nothing else you can do, really, other than making sure that the photographer you've hired gets the right shots. The photographer who came along that night supplies news desks on national newspapers. He got the shots he needed then sent them to all the newspapers via the Net. The next morning, the PR company for Sega Dreamcast chased it up to see how the newspapers were reacting to the stunt.

"Doing stuff like this is just about being street-wise and knowing the best time and place to do it. Normally when you're doing stunts, you put aside a little money for fines. For example, let's say that for *Metropolis Street Racer* you were contemplating going round and painting chequered flags on Park Lane. There's a fair chance that you'd get fined."



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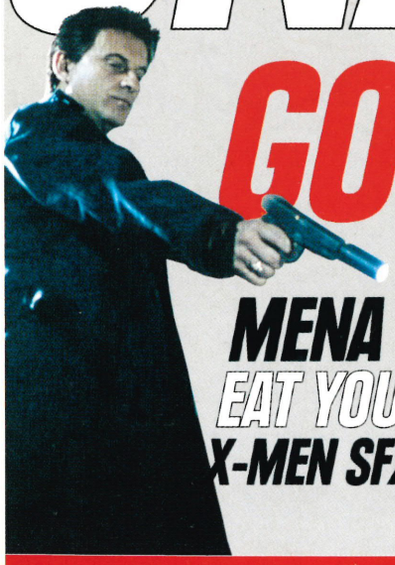
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BRAD, VINNIE AND GUY RITCHIE

* Sodding title correct at time of going to press'd



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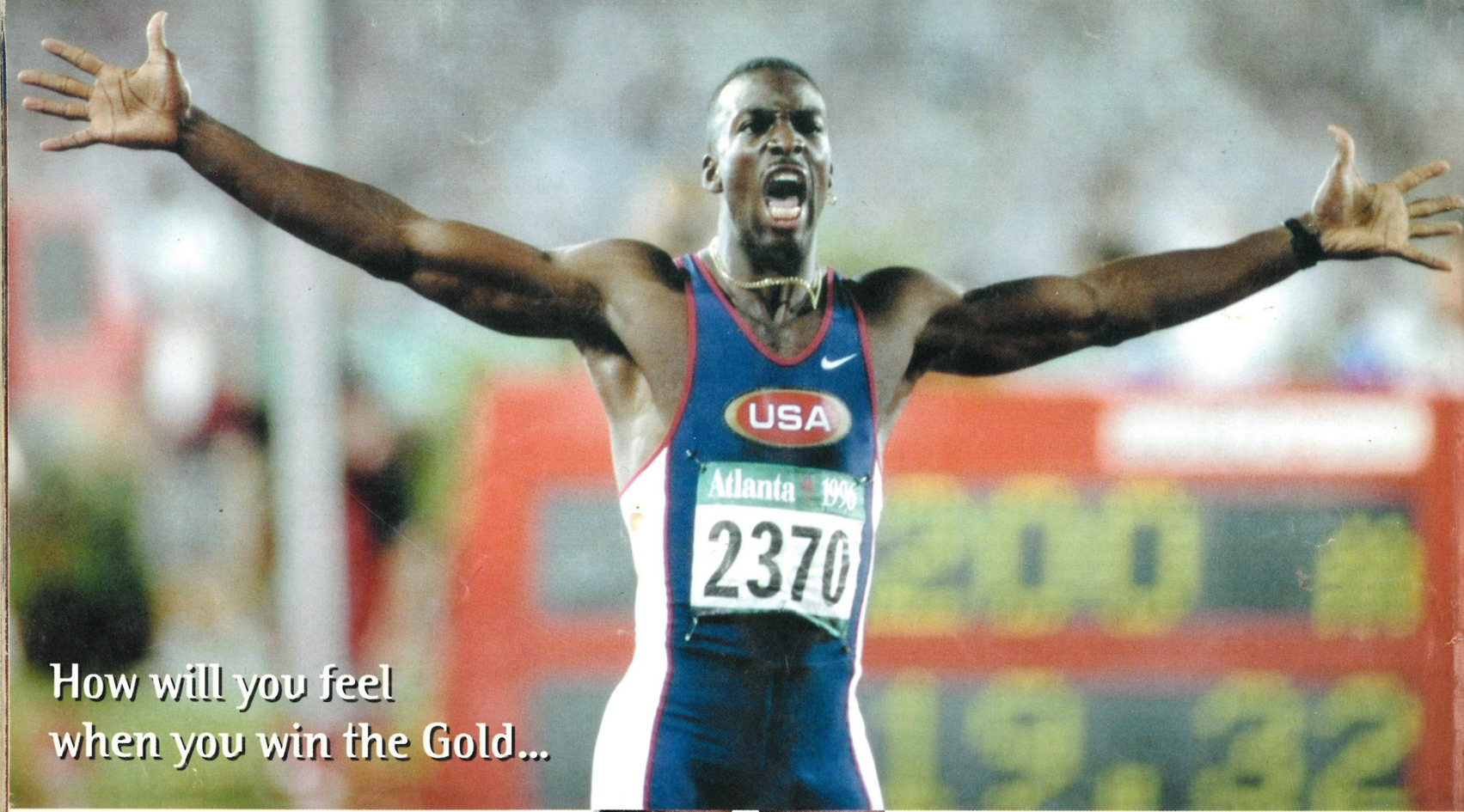
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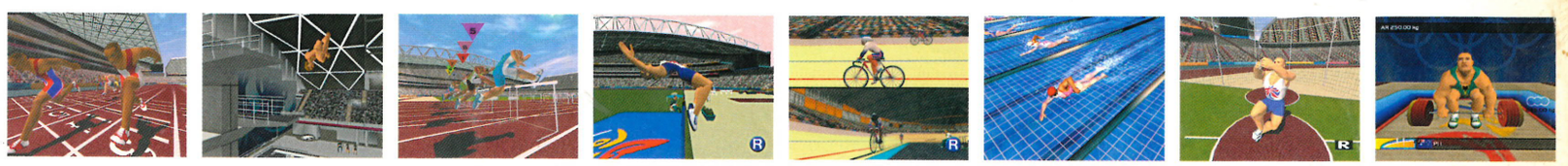


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